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The Tribal Hidage

THE ancient territorial list which Maitland named the 'Tribal Hidage' is known in two slightly differing forms, which may for convenience be designated the 'English' and the 'Latin', from the circumstance that one form is in English throughout while the other has been partially translated into Latin. The only 'English' text now known was discovered by Dr. Birch in the Harleian MS. 3271, fo. 6*b*, and printed by him in full,¹ but the names and figures had been published by Spelman in 1626 in his *Glossarium* (s.v. Hide), from what he calls a *veterrima scheda* (perhaps a loose leaf or gathering) in the possession of Francis Tatum.² The volume in which Dr. Birch found it is occupied mainly with grammatical treatises, but some miscellaneous pieces are entered, in several hands, all of much the same period. The 'Tribal Hidage' fills up what had been a blank page near the beginning.³ In the same or a like writing at the end of the book are chronological notes, ending with the statement that it was 6,132 years from the Creation; that Easter would fall on 2 April; that it was a leap year and the fifteenth indiction. These conditions are satisfied by the year 1032. In the 'Hidage' the numbers are written out at length; the whole has been corrected by another and perhaps somewhat later hand. Thus *hund* has been added in *Herefinna* (twelf *hund* hyda) and in the final total (twa *hund* thusend), and some words have been corrected;⁴ while to *Færpinga* has been added the marginal note—'Is in Middel Englū Færpinga'. This text and some later ones are collected in the *Cartularium Saxonum*, i. 414–16.

¹ *Brit. Arch. Assoc. Journal*, 1884, p. 29; whence printed in Earle's *Land Charters*, p. 458. Cf. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, pp. 506 ff.

² *Archaeologia*, p. 353. In later editions Tatum is changed to Tantum.

³ At the foot of the page are some notes of the characteristics of different nations, ending with 'Ira Bryttanorum, stultitia Saxonum vel Anglorum, libido Iborniorum'.

⁴ In the fourth place *ti elf* has been made *tpelf*, and in the sixth *eyi an*, *syfan*.

THE VERSIONS COMPARED

' ENGLISH ' FORM			' LATIN ' FORM		
Myrena landes is . . .	30,000	hyda	(M)yrcheneland est de	30[000] ^c	hid'
Wocen sætna . . .	7,000		Porcensetene . . .	7,000	„
Westerna . . .	7,000		Yesterne eac . . .	7,000	„
Pec sætna . . .	1,200		Pechsetena . . .	600	„
Elmed sætna . . .	600		Elmethsetena . . .	600	„
Lindes farona . . .	7,000		Lindesarere . . .	7,000	„
mid Hæth feld land ^a			Midheðfelda		
Suth Gyrwa . . .	600		Suðgyrpa . . .	6,000 ^d	„
North Gyrwa . . .	600		Norðgyrya . . .	6,000 ^d	„
East Wixna . . .	300		Eastpyrna . . .	300	„
West Wixna . . .	600		[missing] ^a		
Spaldn . . .	600		Syaldn . . .	600	„
Wigesta . . .	800		Pygesta . . .	800	„
Herefinna . . .	1,200		Herfinna . . .	602	„
Sweord ora . . .	300		Speedora . . .	300	„
Gifla . . .	300		Gyfla . . .	300	„
Hicca . . .	300		Hicca . . .	300	„
Wiht gara . . .	600		Pythgare . . .	600	„
Nox gaga . . .	5,000		Hexgaga . . .	5,000	„
Oht gaga . . .	2,000		Ochtgaga . . .	2,000	„
	66,100 ^a				
Hwinca . . .	7,000		Hinca . . .	7[000] ^e	„
Ciltern sætna . . .	4,000		Cylternesetene . . .	4,000	„
Hendrica . . .	3,500 ^b		Hendrica . . .	3,000	„
Unecungga . . .	1,200		Ynetunga . . .	1,200	„
Aro sætna . . .	600		Ærotena . . .	600	„
Ferpinga . . .	300		Ferpynga . . .	300	„
Bilmiga . . .	600		Bilmiliga . . .	600	„
Widerigga . . .	600		pyderinga . . .	eac sya	
East Willa . . .	600		East pella . . .	600 hid'	
West Willa . . .	600		pest pella . . .	eac sya	
East Engle . . .	30,000		East Engla . . .	30,000 hid'	
East Sexena . . .	7,000		East Sexa . . .	7,000	„
Cantwarena . . .	15,000		Cantparena . . .	15,000	„
Suth Sexena . . .	7,000		Suðsexa . . .	100,000	„
West Sexena . . .	100,000				
	242,700 ^a			[200,700] ^e	

^a Spelman omits the phrase 'mid Hæth feld land' and the totals, but these omissions may have been intentional. There are some small variations in spelling also.

^b Spelman gives 3,000, in agreement with the 'Latin' texts.

^c In two cases the transcriber or translator has omitted the line over the numeral which would make it thousands; and in the total he has transposed it, reading "cc. h' et dcc. h'" instead of "cc. h' et dcc. h'".

^d This vii. instead of dc. is probably a slip in translation, but it points to a single original for the 'Latin' form.

^e In the Hargrave MS. alone of the 'Latin' texts is there an entry answering to West Wixna. That manuscript reads 'Herstina 600'; but this may be merely a mistake for 'Herfinna' entered here by anticipation and correctly in its own place. Still, it is worthy of a note.

The 'Latin' form, as found in the Red Book of the Exchequer (King's Remembrancer's Miscellaneous Books, 2, fo. 296, about 1230), is printed above. It bears obvious marks of being translated from an English original in which the numbers were written out in words (as in the manuscript above described) instead of in the Roman numerals usual in the 'Latin' form. The other copies are in Hargrave MS. 313, fo. 15 *b*, copied about 1250 from the 'Red Book';⁵ Oriel College MS. 46, and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS. 70⁶—both about a century later; and Claudius D. ii, fo. 1 *b*, a fifteenth-century copy.⁷ The obvious differences are due to the inability of later scribes to distinguish between the old letters *y*, *p*, and *p*; the initials in Ynetunga and Hexgaga appear to be mistakes for *U* and *N*. It is, therefore, safer to adhere to the 'English' text in the spelling,⁸ for it was written while the older alphabet was still in full use.

After the first entry of 30,000 hides is added the sentence *Thær mon ærest Myrcna hæet* in the 'English' text and *Ab eo loco ubi primum Mircneneland⁹ nominatur* in the 'Latin'. Though probably an interpolation, it was earlier than the separation of the two forms, and it will be noticed that the Latin is not an exact translation of the English, which may here be defective. The meaning is not quite clear: if historical, it seems to be an assertion that the Mercians at first took their name from the country which nevertheless was called the 'Mercians' land'; if geographical, it may be expanded into 'Beginning from that district which is the first to be called Mercia', viz. the *Wocen sætas*, and so on, the word *ærest* being understood as 'first' or nearest with respect to the commentator's point of view.

A marked difference between the two forms is seen in the totals. The 'English' form has a total at *Oht gaga* and another at the end; of these the former is correct if each separate hidage is to be regarded as independent, but the latter is not. The 'Latin' form has a total only at the end, and falls far short of the sum of the separate items, but is nearly correct if the total down to *Oht gaga* is regarded as 30,000. This seems to prove that the list is composed of two portions; the 'English' compiler

⁵ Hall, *Red Book of Exchequer*, introd., l. In the 'Red Book' the rubricator has overlooked the initial *M*, and the Hargrave MS. omits it also.

⁶ This copy has been extensively corrected by erasure, &c. The thousands have been carefully marked, e.g. the *xxx* at the beginning, instead of *xxx* as in all the other 'Latin' copies.

⁷ Printed in *Liber Albus* (Rolls Series), iii. 626. The manuscript is interesting as having numerous initials decorated with the Cotton and Bruce arms and alliances.

⁸ The forms of the names have been retained, though they are genitives plural, because the nominatives are not certainly known.

⁹ The termination *land* seems to be derived from the *hæt* of the 'English' text, which word is nevertheless translated by *nominatur*.

or editor showed that he understood the division by making a special addition for the first part, while the 'Latin' editor regarded the whole of the first portion as a detailed statement of the components of the Mercian 30,000 hides, and so he made no needless summation at *Oht gaga*, contenting himself with a final total which can be explained at once. The 'English' total may be a mistaken attempt to amend an older one. The point here touched is of the first importance for the explanation of the 'Hidage'. It is obvious that if all the items from *Wocen sætma* down to *Oht gaga* can be regarded as details of the initial 30,000 hides, a vast amount of useless speculation will be saved; for these obscure details can be reserved for a special inquiry, and in any case must be sought within the limits of the Mercian kingdom as it existed when the table was originally compiled.

The next important difference between the two forms is in their endings. A hidage of 100,000 is absurd for the South Saxons and grossly excessive for the West Saxons, compared even with the East Angles. While the 'English' form is certainly right in giving 7,000 hides to the South Saxons, being corroborated by Bede,¹⁰ it is as clearly wrong in its subsequent detail. Probably the original ended thus: *Suth Sexena 7,000. 100,000*; without any explanation at all of the final figures. Then either by corruption of the copies, or by mistaken emendations, the two forms which have come down to us took their rise.

Another difference may be noted. While the 'English' editor regarded all the Mercian details as independent and thus made 30,000 into 66,100, he was more cautious or better informed as to the second part of the table and gives a final total of 242,700 instead of 244,100. As he could add correctly, the inference is that he regarded some of the hidages in this second part as details of the larger ones, and therefore omitted them in adding. The 'Latin' editor, on the other hand, regarded all as independent, being not so well informed here as in the earlier part of the table. Both of these divergent attempts at summation must belong to a time when the true meaning of the 'Hidage' had been forgotten; and therefore the original compilation must be thrown back a long way beyond the beginning of the eleventh century when the earliest extant copy was written. In one respect this may have been an advantage, for the copyists, not understanding it, would transcribe the ancient document as exactly as they could.

In the figures there are three other divergences which must be considered. (1) The 'English' form gives the Peak-dwellers 1,200 hides as against 600 in the 'Latin' one. (2) It gives *Herefinna* 1,200 hides against 602.¹¹ (3) It gives 3,500 hides

¹⁰ *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 13.

¹¹ 'dc. v' in the Hargrave MS. for 'dc. ij'.

to *Hendrica* against 3,000. For this last difference a solution is offered below; in the other cases it seems possible that an original 'six hundred hides. ii.'—meaning twice 600 hides—was read erroneously as 600 hides in one case and 602 hides in the other.

As to the place of compilation there can be little doubt. An enumeration of English districts which begins with Mercia can only be of Mercian authorship, just as a school geography which begins with 'the British Isles' has its origin marked upon it. It is here that the 'Hidage' becomes an historical document of importance. Scarcely anything is known of the early Mercian kingdom or kingdoms. The English conquest and settlement of Central England are unrecorded by tradition¹²—as, indeed, are those of the eastern counties, though perhaps for other reasons—and so a mere list of tribal districts is welcome, and all the more if these districts can be defined with any degree of accuracy. Bede states¹³ that the Mercians were divided by the Trent into two great bodies, the North Mercians with 7,000 hides (or families) and the South Mercians with 5,000 hides. He cannot be writing of the conditions of his own time, when Mercia was the dominant kingdom, but must be recording some tradition of the settlement of the midlands in the time of Peada, son of Penda. The rest of the country was parted among numerous smaller tribes, and their union seems to be due to the great Penda, probably king of the South Mercians,¹⁴ who by his conquests on all sides raised the central kingdom to a position of supremacy, which it held from his overthrow of Oswald in 642 till his own defeat and death in 655. After a brief eclipse Mercia recovered under Wulfhere, and retained the leading place till the rise of Wessex in the ninth century. It had no 'sacred prophet', like Bede in Northumbria and Alfred in Wessex, to record its story; but its political importance is of the first rank in the formation of a united England, and its dialect has become the English language in spite of the literary importance of its northern and southern neighbours.

The date of the 'Tribal Hidage', assigning, as it does, 30,000 hides to Mercia against Bede's 12,000, cannot be earlier than Penda's time. Again, assuming that the first part gives the details of those 30,000 hides, its date cannot be later than Wulfhere; for among those details appear the 600 hides of the

¹² All that Henry of Huntingdon (ed. T. Arnold, p. 48) can tell is that 'many came over from Germany and occupied East Anglia and Merce, but were not under one king'. He gives no names.

¹³ *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 24.

¹⁴ During the brief tyranny of Oswy, Peada was allowed to have the rule of the South Mercians. This was probably because it was his father's hereditary right; the son would succeed to that, but not to the conquests of Penda.

people of Wight, and it is on record that in 661 Wulfhere laid the island waste and in 678 gave it¹⁵ to the newly converted king of the South Saxons. From that time it has no record of any Mercian connexion. In 686 it was conquered by the West Saxons. A more precise date may be suggested, for there is an obvious connexion between the 'thirty legions' of Penda's army at Winwæd¹⁶ and the 30,000 hides of the Mercians. May not this table have been compiled in 655¹⁷ with a view to the assembling of the army defeated by Oswy? If so, it would account for the absence of any reference to Northumbria such as might be expected in a Mercian table of a later age.¹⁸

Three other remarks may be made here. First, the compiler had an accurate mind geographically speaking. Where the districts he mentions are certainly known they are arranged in proper order. Thus the East Angles are followed by the East Saxons, Kentishmen, and South Saxons without any confusion; the districts of the Peak, Elmet, Lindsey with Hatfield, and the Gyrwa country also come in regular sequence. Hence in more obscure cases it may be assumed that there is some ascertainable topographical grouping. The second point is that the Mercian hidage recorded in Domesday Book very closely agrees with the 30,000 hides of our table; it may be urged that if the total, then the details should agree. How this can be worked out is shown in the sequel,¹⁹ but we do not claim that no other or better way can be found, having regard to ancient and well-established boundaries, such as those of dioceses, counties, and hundreds, and any references to political association that have survived. The third point is that place-names afford practically no assistance in this inquiry. The tribal name *Gifla*, for example, has possible traces as far apart as Somerset and Bedfordshire; but even should any or all of these be established, the position of the 300 hides assigned to the tribe would not be settled, because each and all of the place-names might represent nothing more than isolated settlements by straggling detachments from the main body. So also *Spalda* appears in several place-names, but the tribal district cannot be determined by them. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the *Gyrwas*, whose position is known, have left no

¹⁵ Bede, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 13, Wight and the province of the Meonwaras. It may be assumed that it was under the immediate rule of Wulfhere from 661 to 678; whether or not Penda had previously held it is matter for speculation only.

¹⁶ Bede, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 24.

¹⁷ Mr. Corbett, in his essay on the 'Hidage', advocated a somewhat earlier date; see *Trans. of the Royal Hist. Soc.*, New Series, xiv. 207. His explanation of the document is radically different from that here put forward.

¹⁸ In view of its absence from the 'Hidage' it is interesting to notice that Northumbria as a whole has not been included in England.

¹⁹ A preliminary attempt, founded on Maitland's figures, was printed in *Notes and Queries*, 11th series, ii. 212.

traces—at least, no obvious traces—in the names of the region they inhabited. Consequently it is on relative position, on hidage, and on traces of early association that the present argument mainly rests; and for early association the ecclesiastical divisions may afford evidence as important as the secular ones.

The two other early hidages extant have some bearing on the matter. The total of the 'Burghal Hidage' agrees very closely with the record of Domesday Book for the southern counties concerned—27,170 against 27,621—showing that the hidages recorded in 1086 were those already established about 900;²⁰ and the same conclusion may be applicable to other counties.²¹

The 'County Hidage' names thirteen midland counties with the number of hides in each. In seven cases this number agrees with Domesday Book, in two others it is somewhat in excess, while in the remaining four it is double or more. These cases are Cambridgeshire 2,500 against 1,230, Northamptonshire 3,200 against 1,360, Shropshire 2,400 against 1,380, and Cheshire 1,200 against 500. In the first of these it seems possible that Hertford was included with Cambridge, for these counties together had twenty-five (or twenty-six) hundreds and a recorded hidage of 2,360 (or 2,460). In Northamptonshire it seems clear that there had been a reduction before the Domesday survey was made, and in this article the Geld Roll, which gives 2,673½ hides for the county (including part of Rutland), has been treated as the old hidage;²² but it still falls short of the 3,200 named in the 'County Hidage'. Cheshire, like Cambridgeshire, may be accounted for by the inclusion of neighbouring districts, such as Derbyshire or South Lancashire, but this explanation will not serve for Shropshire, which affords the critical test. According to Domesday Book there were in Shropshire (excluding Shrewsbury with its 100 hides) fourteen hundreds assessed at 1,380 hides—figures which have a normal appearance; but there was apparently²³ 'land for 2,550 ploughs', or rather more than the 2,400 hides of the 'County Hidage'. The figures in this document may therefore indicate that an attempt had been made to raise the assessment of the county. In Cheshire also there was 'land for 1,000 ploughs', or but little short of the 1,200 hides required. On the other hand, it may be argued that the figures in the 'County Hidage' are those of the counties when they were first formed,

²⁰ See an attempt to arrange the details in *Notes and Queries*, 11th series, iv. 2.

²¹ The exceptional cases of Northampton and Nottingham are mentioned in the text.

²² See F. H. Baring, *ante*, xvii. 495.

²³ The details are not given in every case.

and that the figures of Domesday Book, when they disagree, in all cases show later reductions or readjustments; but one would expect border counties like Cheshire and Shropshire to have been rated very lightly to begin with. Seeing that Staffordshire was assessed at 500 hides, the hidages in 1086 for the more western counties seem fair.

MERCIA

If we may judge from the 'Tribal Hidage', the Mercia of 660 was a confederation of some seventeen or eighteen independent communities, each with king, underking, or alderman, which had been gathered round the central power by kinship or self-interest or conquest. In its small way, except for the cities, it resembled medieval Germany. But amalgamation under the Mercian kings must have proceeded rapidly, for not only are the smaller tribal names otherwise unknown to history, but before the end of the seventh century the whole appears to have been reduced to four or five main groups with which the bishoprics of Lichfield, Leicester, Lindsey, and Worcester were associated.

The list opens with *Wocen sætas*, 7,000 hides. *Wocen*, therefore, is a territorial name. The 'Latin' texts suggest that the true spelling is *Worcen*. In a charter of Burghred, king of Mercia, dated in 855, it is stated that the 'pagans' were then in *W'reocensetun*,²⁴ but there is nothing in the charter itself (a Worcester one) to identify the district, and nothing is known of any Danish invasion in that year. A century later 'in provincia Wrocensetna' defined the position of lands in Shropshire round the Wrekin.²⁵ But it is difficult to assume the identity of *Worcen* with the Wrekin, because in any official statement it is natural, almost inevitable, to begin with the central or dominant district, which in the case of Mercia was probably the present Leicestershire.²⁶ The components of the 7,000 hides are suggested below in the section about the *Nox gaga* and *Oht gaga*.

The *Westerna* will then be the tribes to the west of the central people—in this case those known to us as Hwicci, Hecana, &c., their position being that of the dioceses of Worcester and Hereford. The West Saxons fought with Penda at Cirencester in 628, and the treaty which followed is supposed to have handed the whole region over to him. The inhabitants may not have been West Saxon by race, so that they could join readily with the Mercians, and there is no trace later that they desired to separate.

²⁴ Birch, *Cart. Sax.* ii. 89.

²⁵ *Ibid.* iii. 355, 650.

²⁶ Penda's defeat of Oswald at Oswestry may be a sign that he was specially interested in Shropshire. In Leicestershire are the river Wreak and the village Wartnaby (D. B. 'Worenobie').

The Domesday Book hidage of the two dioceses falls much below the 7,000 :

Worcester	{ Gloucestershire	2,388 ²⁷	
	{ Worcestershire	1,189 ²⁷	
	{ Warwickshire (part)	610 ²⁸	
			4,187
Hereford	{ Herefordshire	1,324 ²⁷	
	{ Shropshire (part)	749	
			2,073
			<u>6,260</u>

There is thus a defect of about 750 hides. If the 'County Hidage' figures be accepted for Shropshire, it is obvious that most or all of it will be made up at once; but if not, then it may be suggested that the north-west part of Wiltshire was at one time in the hands of the Hwicci.²⁹

The *Pec sœtas* have 1,200 hides allotted to them. The Peak is central for Derbyshire and Cheshire, and in Derbyshire there were nearly 700 carucates, which with 500 hides in Cheshire make up the total. Both counties were in the Mercian diocese of Lichfield, in spite of the inclusion of Derbyshire in the Danelagh, which might reasonably have caused a separation.³⁰ The earliest English connexion with Cheshire is Ethelfrith's famous victory at Chester in 613, which was probably the final effort of his conquests in this direction. He would descend from Northumbria by the Ribble Valley and South Lancashire, which by history³¹ and tradition³² was Northumbrian until 923; but he may then or earlier have overrun what is now Derbyshire. The same hundred name, Hamestan, occurs in the north-east of Cheshire and the adjacent north-west of Derbyshire. Thus the entry in the 'Tribal Hidage' may mean that there was a small Northumbrian district (ruled from the Peak) which fell under Mercian sway after the defeat of Edwin or of Oswald and remained ever afterwards closely united with the Mercian kingdom. The 'County Hidage' figure for Cheshire may be a reminiscence of the 1,200 hides of the Peak-dwellers, and (as already suggested) may show an intention on the part of the king to raise the old county assessment to that figure.

²⁷ These figures are taken from Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, pp. 400, 401.

²⁸ B. Walker in *The Antiquary*, 1903, p. 183.

²⁹ The hundreds of Malmesbury and Chippenham contain about 600 hides. An outlying part of Gloucestershire is upon the eastern edge of the former.

³⁰ For the later importance of the Peak see F. M. Stenton, *Types of Manorial Structure in the North Danelaw*, p. 72.

³¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a. 798.

³² Medieval verses state that King Oswald had a great love for Winwick.

The situation of *Elmed* is known by the distinguishing affixes of Barwick-in-Elmet and Sherburn-in-Elmet still in use for two places between Leeds and Selby. It was the name of a British kingdom which retained its independence till Edwin of Northumbria seized it; after his overthrow, or Oswald's, it would probably acquiesce in a union with Mercia. According to Domesday Book there were 326 carucates in Skyrack wapentake and $246\frac{1}{2}$ in Barkston—together 570, or only 30 short of the hidage attributed to Elmet in our list. The southern boundary of the country may be assumed to have been the Aire; this is not only a hundred boundary, but also the limit of the deanery of York, and it is possible that this deanery was formed by York and the Ainsty united with Elmet. Its northern boundary is the Nidd, which is also the archdeaconry boundary, for in this part of Yorkshire the ridings and archdeaconries have different limits. That the Nidd was the boundary of Northumbria in 705 seems certain from the story of St. Wilfrid, for it was there that the synod was held at which the final peace was made, when he was allowed to return to his Northumbrian bishopric.³³ Ripon, to the north, was in Northumbria.

In the next district there can be no difficulty in identifying the names given with Lindsey³⁴ in Lincolnshire and Hatfield in the West Riding of Yorkshire. That the West Riding on the whole was Mercian is shown by its dialect. Thus Elmet, left untouched by the great king Ethelfrith, seems to have been for a time a 'buffer state' between Northumbria and Mercia. With so large a hidage as 7,000 it is clear that the 'dwellers in Lindsey' must have had wide rule outside the district from which they took their name; 'Hatfield' may then have included all the West Riding south of the Aire, and the northern end of Nottinghamshire.³⁵ That part of Yorkshire contains 1,300 carucates;³⁶ Lindsey and Kesteven about 3,900,³⁷ and Nottinghamshire only 567³⁸—less than 6,000 in all. In this last county there is some reason to suspect a considerable reduction in the assessment for geld.³⁹ There was 'land for 1,166 ploughs', and if this be taken as showing the older rating, the total will rise to 6,400 carucates. The remainder may have been found in Rutland and the Framland wapentake of Leicestershire. Those who maintain that the 'County Hidage' records the primitive

³³ Bede, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 19.

³⁴ The bishop was styled 'episcopus Lindisfarorum'.

³⁵ The phrase 'Cuckney upon Hatfield' occurs; Thoroton, *Nottinghamshire*, iii. 372. Hatfield Grange, close by, preserves the name. The Hatfield division of Bassetlaw appears as 'Hatfield in the wapentake of Bassetlaw' in a roll of 1544; *Lay Subsidies*, 159 100.

³⁶ Mr. W. Farrer's figures.

³⁷ Maitland, *l.c.*

³⁸ Maitland, *l.c.*

³⁹ Stenton, *op. cit.* p. 48.

assessment of Cheshire will supply the defect from Derbyshire.⁴⁰ The total is probably identical with the 7,000 hides which Bede ascribes to the North Mercians. He states that the Trent separated the North and South Mercians, and this is true if Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire be taken as the typical counties of the two peoples. The people of Lindsey were Mercians and extremely hostile to Northumbrian rule, as is shown by their angry objection to St. Oswald's relics staying among them.

According to Bede⁴¹ the country of the Gyrvi included Peterborough. He relates also⁴² that Tonbert, the first husband of St. Etheldreda, was early in the seventh century prince (not king) of the South Gyrvi. The 'Tribal Hidage' places the South before the North Gyrwa, indicating either some political ascendancy or the origin of the compiler of the 'Hidage'. Bede may have used the adjective merely to distinguish these midland people from his own Gyrvienses around Jarrow, not in the sense of the 'Hidage'. Thomas of Ely states that Tonbert gave Ely to his wife as her dower, to which she returned after separating from her second husband. Ely, therefore, was in Tonbert's principality. Bede says it had 600 hides, and these may correspond with the 600 hides of the North Gyrwa in the 'Hidage'; but Etheldreda's dower was perhaps a third part of it, viz. the 200 hides contained in Ely proper (80) and Chesterton (120). This latter hundred is so obviously artificial⁴³ that it is not out of reason to suggest an assignment of dower as the origin of it; while the phrase 'two hundreds of Ely' later used of the Isle of Ely may be a tradition of the time when Ely, in the narrower sense, did contain 200 hides, i.e. before Chesterton became a distinct hundred. The rest of the North Gyrwa hidage might then be drawn from North Stow hundred in Cambridgeshire (112 hides) and Holland in Lincolnshire (about 280 carucates).

The South Gyrwa 600 hides may be identical with that district of eight 'hundreds' in the south of the county which had some sort of political unity at the end of the tenth century; for about 975 it is recorded⁴⁴ that at a great public assembly at Whittlesford the men of those hundreds met to hear evidence and decide in a dispute concerning land at Swaffham and 'Berlea'; Alfric of Wickham was one of the witnesses. Unfortunately the

⁴⁰ That is, 500 carucates might be taken from Derbyshire, leaving 200 in the Peak district to be added to the 'land for 1,000 ploughs in Cheshire' and complete the 1,200 hides of the 'County Hidage'. This makes the formation of county and diocese difficult.

⁴¹ *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 6.

⁴² *Ibid.* iv. 19.

⁴³ It consists of three separate and well-defined parts: Chesterton, 30 hides; Histon, Westwick, and Cottenham, 60 hides; Dry Drayton and Childerley, 30 hides.

⁴⁴ *Liber Eliensis*, ii. 34.

names of the hundreds are not given : but it is natural to suggest that they were Whittlesford (80 hides), Chilford (54), Radfield (70), Staine (50), and Flendish (46) on the east side—300 hides in all ; and Wetherley (80), Triplow (90), and Armingford (100) on the west—270 hides.⁴⁵ The total is thus very near the 600 hides of the South Gyrwa.

Respecting the next following districts of the 'Hidage' some suggestions may be offered, though with hesitation. So far as the figures are concerned *East Wixna 300* corresponds best with the Cambridge hundred of Longstow (100 hides) joined with Toseland (215) in Huntingdonshire ; this ignores the conjunction of Longstow and Papworth hundreds to form an ecclesiastical deanery,⁴⁶ while it emphasizes the importance of the Cambridge-St. Neot's road as an ancient tribal boundary. *West Wixna 600* may then be the north-eastern half of Bedfordshire, viz. Biggleswade 100 hides, 'Weneslai' 50, Wixamtree 110, Barford 105, Stoden 100, Wiley 104, and 'Buchelai' 52—621 hides in all.⁴⁷ Here Wixamtree may preserve the tribal name.⁴⁸ *Spalda 600* will be the remaining part of Huntingdonshire—Leightonstone with Kimbolton 200, Normancross 180, and Hurstingstone 150⁴⁹—together with the hundred of Papworth (96) in Cambridgeshire,⁵⁰ making in all 626 hides. Here Spaldwick (D.B. 'Spaldewic') may show a trace of the old tribal name ; in 1086 the place was included, non-naturally, in Hurstingstone, but soon afterwards it was in Leightonstone.

The next tribal district, *Wigesta*, has 900 hides in the 'English' version but 800 in the 'Latin' one. Now the north-eastern end of Northamptonshire (including part of what is now Rutland) had a district of 805 hides divided into hundreds as follows : 'Wicesley' (Rutland), 160 hides ; Willybrook, Polebrook, Navisford, and Huxlow, 62 each ; Navesland (two), 160 ; Higham, 150 ; Corby, 47 ; Stoke, 40. These correspond (except as to Wicesley) with the deaneries of Oundle, Higham, and Weldon. The chief place therein is Oundle, and the 'Eight Hundreds' of Oundle

⁴⁵ This is the total of the *Inquisitio Com. Cant.* ; that of Domesday Book itself is 285.

⁴⁶ The best alternative seems to be to join Hurstingstone (without Spaldwick) with Longstow and Papworth, making 327 hides. The remainder of Huntingdonshire (with Spaldwick) will be 614 hides.

⁴⁷ F. H. Baring, *Domesday Tables*.

⁴⁸ The older forms—Wichestanstou (D.B.) and Wyxconestre (Hundred Rolls)—agree better with *Wigesta* ; the part of Bedfordshire south of the Ouse contains almost exactly 900 hides.

⁴⁹ Another 50 hides belonged to the borough of Huntingdon, but the borough hidages have been left out of consideration as obviously later than the 'Tribal Hidage'.

⁵⁰ Two hundreds in Cambridgeshire (Radfield and Cheveley) have not been reckoned because they are beyond the Devil's Dyke and in the diocese of Norwich ; they must, therefore, have been East Anglian at the date of the 'Hidage'. The difficulty is to account for their inclusion in Cambridgeshire.

formed an established district in 963, when it was confirmed to Peterborough.⁵¹ No names or boundaries are recorded; ⁵² but whatever its meaning may have been then, it is legitimate to suggest that the phrase preserves the tradition of a time when a district of 800 hides was subject to the lord of Oundle, thus forming a parallel to the 'two hundreds' of Ely. When in 1329 the abbot of Peterborough was required to name the 'eight hundreds' he claimed in virtue of that confirmation, he said they were the vill of Peterborough, the hundreds of Nassaburgh, Polebrook, Navesford, Huxlow, North Navesland, South Navesland, and the hundred of the vill of Thingden.⁵³ Thus the old number was maintained, but it is obvious that the first and last are artificial; indeed, Thingden or Finedon (in Huxlow) is not otherwise known as a hundred, and the lordship at the Conquest did not belong to the abbey but to the Crown.⁵⁴ At the Dissolution the hundreds pertaining to the abbey were Nassaburgh, Polebrook, Huxlow, and Navesford. The inclusion of Nassaburgh (Nasso, 108½ hides) with the Oundle group named at the beginning of this paragraph would raise the hidage to over 900, and thus account for the figures in the 'English' form. The 'Latin' form would then show the extent of the lordship of Oundle after Peterborough had been cut off from it to make an almost independent state and before Oundle had been granted to the abbey.

The whole of the compact district of 3,600 hides just surveyed was perhaps the Gyrvian principality of Tonbert, corresponding with the country of the South Angles mentioned in the history of St. Botolph. The places chiefly associated with this saint are Botolph Bridge near Peterborough and Boston; both within the bounds. The Middle Angles, properly so called, would in that case occupy the country to the south-west, in the north of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, being 'middle' between the other Angles and the West Saxons. Peada was alderman of the Middle Angles in his father's lifetime, but king of the South Mercians afterwards. Bede makes a distinction between the 'Mercians' and the 'Middle Angles', but all these terms were confused later.⁵⁵ The Gyrwa were in origin and sympathy East Anglian. This is known as well from incidental references as from the express statement of Bede. Thus Thomas, second

⁵¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

⁵² Bounds of some Peterborough lands at Oundle are printed in Birch, *Cart. Sax.* iii. 368, but do not appear to have any connexion with the 'Eight Hundreds'.

⁵³ *Placita de quo Warranto*, p. 553.

⁵⁴ The members of Thingden were in the hundreds of Navesland, Huxlow, Higham, Rothwell, Orlingbury, and the otherwise unknown 'Geritone'—27 hides in all.

⁵⁵ In Florence of Worcester (ed. Thorpe, p. 242) 'South Angles' is used of the people round Dorchester. The phrase also meant all the Angles south of the Humber, i.e. in the whole of Mercia. Henry of Huntingdon says that Mercia was called Middle England.

bishop of the East Angles, was a Gyrvian; in the story of St. Botolph (c. 650) the king of the East Angles appears as overlord of the South Angles; and when (c. 670) the Abbot Ceolfrid wished to learn something of Botolph's foundations, he visited the East Angles.⁵⁶ Their inclusion within the Mercian confederation may have been due to conquest by Penda in 635,⁵⁷ or his later ravaging of East Anglia in 654. The group as a whole points to invasion by the Ouse and Nen, the immigrants meeting the main stream of the Mercians, coming south from the Trent valley, about Kettering, and perhaps also the advance-guard of the West Saxons about Bedford.

As to the *Herefinna*, with the large district of 1,200 hides, nothing whatever is known. From their position in the table it can only be surmised that they occupied part of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire,⁵⁸ and belonged to the Middle Angles above mentioned. They became Christian in 653 by the efforts of Diuma. It is possible that Finmere (Finemere) in Oxfordshire may indicate a place on the tribal boundary.

The small areas of 300 hides which occur in Central England in this early document appear again in 1008, when the lord of 300 hides was ordered to supply a ship for the fleet.⁵⁹

Of the Mercian 30,000 hides the details given account for all but 900. These may have embraced the 600 hides in south-west Bedfordshire not reckoned above, together with 300 hides in Hertfordshire or else the district of 300 hides round Banbury. This district, however, may be the *Sweord ora 300* which follows *Herefinna*. Otherwise these figures may refer to the Winchester district.⁶⁰ There is no record of the capture of Winchester by West Saxons or Mercians, and it seems possible that in 655, if the 'Hidage' is of that date, the city was still the centre of a little British principality,⁶¹ in which case it would not be included in this document at all.

The next details, *Gifla 300*, *Hicca 300*, and *Wiht gara 600*, may from the last named be presumed to form the 1,200 hides which Bede⁶² ascribes to the island of Wight. Unfortunately the hidage for the Jutish portion of Hampshire cannot be calculated

⁵⁶ Earle and Plummer, *Two Saxon Chron.* ii. 24.

⁵⁷ Bode, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 18.

⁵⁸ In Buckingham the Ashendon (335) and Buckingham (330), or north-western quarter; in Oxford the hundreds of Ploughley (269) and Bullingdon (210): in all, 1,144 hides.

⁵⁹ In the Peterborough version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. There are various readings, for which see Mr. Plummer's note, *Two Saxon Chron.* ii. 185. Reference is there made to a Worcester charter of 964, 'not wholly genuine,' in which three hundreds are stated to be a 'scyppfyllith or scyppsocne': Birch, *Cart. Sax.* iii. 380.

⁶⁰ There are the Swere river in North Oxfordshire and Swarraton near Winchester as possible clues.

⁶¹ *Vict. County Hist., Hampshire*, i. 384, 391.

⁶² *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 16.

exactly, but from what is recorded it is clear that 1,200 hides is very near the total. Hence *Gifla* may be those otherwise known as Meonwara; *Hicca*, the people round Southampton; and *Wihl gara*, those of the island itself with the closely associated New Forest district.⁶³

Then the first or Mercian part of the table closes with the mysterious entries: *Nox gaga*, 5,000 hides; *Oht gaga*, 2,000 hides. As the total of 30,000 is practically made up without them, they may refer to subdivisions of one of the large districts of 7,000 hides each, recorded at the head of the list, more probably the first. Bede's statement that the South Mercians had 5,000 hides appears to be contradicted by the 7,000 hides assigned to the *Wocen sætas* in the 'Hidage'—for these must be the South Mercians, if there is force in the argument that the central and dominant tribe takes first place in any orderly enumeration. But if they were subdivided into two well-known sections of 5,000 and 2,000 hides, then Bede's statement is at once reconciled with the 'Hidage'. His South Mercians will be recognized as the *Nox gaga* division of the *Wocen sætas*, i.e. the main or original part; while the *Oht gaga* will be either emigrants or colonists who had conquered and settled lands outside or else 'foreigners' of these lands who had been incorporated with the central tribe. The diocesan division between Lichfield and Lincoln probably went back to the partition of Mercia into dioceses in 679.⁶⁴ The hitherto uncounted part of Mercia in the latter diocese includes Leicestershire (say 2,500 carucates⁶⁵), the greater part of Northamptonshire (1,760 hides), and the north-eastern corner of Buckinghamshire (710 hides), with possibly part of Bedfordshire, should it be found that the deficiency in the men of Lindsey's hidage must be made up from Leicestershire. The 2,000 hides of the *Oht gaga* are almost made up from the hidage of the parts of the diocese of Lichfield not already accounted for, viz. Staffordshire, 500 hides;⁶⁶ part of Warwickshire, 704;⁶⁷ and part of Shropshire, 632 (without Shrewsbury).⁶⁸ The 7,000 hides of the Westerns, as shown above, seem to divide in similar fashion. It is probable, therefore, that the otherwise unknown *Nox gaga*

⁶³ See *Notes and Queries*, 11th series, iv. 482-4. and Mr. R. A. Smith's article in the *Vict. Hist. of Hampshire*, i. 373. There are possible traces of *Gifla* and *Hicca* in adjacent districts of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire—Northhill (Givle), Southhill, Yilldon and Ivel; Hitchin and Hiz. Should these names indicate the tribal districts, then 600 hides of the people of Wight will be part of the 'unrecorded' 900.

⁶⁴ The later diocese of Lincoln was then in three—Lindsey, Leicester, and Dorchester; but the last named did not prove permanent. There does not seem any evidence of the time when the Mercian districts of Nottingham and the West Riding were added to the diocese of York; perhaps it was after the Danish conquest: see *Vict. County Hist., Nottinghamshire*, ii. 38.

⁶⁵ Eyton's figures.

⁶⁶ Maitland, *l. c.*

⁶⁷ Walker, *ubi supra*.

⁶⁸ If the 'County Hidage' be used, the Shropshire figures will be 1,233.

and *Oht gaga* are not tribal names at all, but descriptive; and the problem becomes one for the philologist.⁶⁹ If the view here advocated be true, the formation of the diocese of Lichfield was extremely simple, viz. from the two ancient districts of the 'Pec-dwellers' and *Oht gaga*, with South Lancashire added after its annexation to Mercia in 923.

THE WEST SAXONS

The West Saxons, if their traditions as recorded in the Chronicle may be trusted, invaded and conquered their part of England from landings on the Hampshire coast. Either the traditions have become intermixed or else the Jutes, who took possession of the Isle of Wight and the southern part of Hampshire, were part of the invading host. The course of conquest is marked by a few place-names and dates: 495-534, Hampshire and Wight; 552, Salisbury; 556, Barbury; 568, battle with men of Kent; 571, Eynsham, Bensington, Aylesbury, Lenborough; 577, Gloucester, Cirencester, Bath.⁷⁰ Later battles are named, but the places are not always well identified; but the general effect is an advance north and north-east into Gloucestershire, Surrey, and Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. On the eastern edge of their dominions they came into contact with the East Saxons, a battle being fought between the two nations about 620, when two sons of King Sebert were killed.⁷¹ The rise of Mercia checked further advance. The people of Gloucestershire became Mercian under Penda in 628; and he was able to drive the West Saxon king from his throne for a few years. It would be natural, therefore, in a Mercian table of that time to place the West Saxons next after the dominant people: they were in process of absorption.

Of the two entries in the 'Tribal Hidage', *Hwinca* 7,000 and *Ciltorn sætas* 4,000, the former are not known by that name, but the latter, the dwellers in the Chilterns, were probably West Saxon in Penda's time and for a century later,⁷² till Offa took Bensington in 777. When in 636 the West Saxon king became a Christian, he gave Dorchester, at the north-western edge of the

⁶⁹ It has been suggested that they are corruptions of Noxinga and Ohtinga, on which see Mr. W. H. Stevenson's remarks, *ante*, iv. 353. For another attempt to solve the difficulty see *Notes and Queries*, 10th series, ix. 384.

⁷⁰ These statements appear to show that by about 570 the West Saxons had fully colonized their districts south of the Thames, and were then compelled to make advances east, north, and north-west.

⁷¹ Henry of Huntingdon, p. 57.

⁷² See *Vict. County Hist., Buckinghamshire*, i. 196. The 'Chiltern Hundreds' in Oxfordshire (see below, p. 642, n. 80) retained a kind of solidarity down to the end of the thirteenth century. The 'Chiltern Hundreds' in Buckinghamshire are united by a nominal stewardship under the Crown to the present time.

Chiltern country, to be the seat of Birinus, the missionary bishop who had baptized him. It seems certain, from the position of these names at the head of the second part of the table and from one of them being West Saxon, that the other (*Hwinca*) was West Saxon also. This is confirmed by the story that King Cenwalh on his restoration to the kingdom in 648 gave 3,000 hides⁷³ of land by Ashdown to his kinsman Cuthred; while William of Malmesbury changes this into the statement that Cenwalh 'conferred nearly the third of his kingdom' on his nephew, which is accurate enough if the West Saxon kingdom then had 11,000 hides.⁷⁴ There seems to have been a double kingship among the West Saxons, and this accords with the double naming in the 'Hidage'. Penda could scarcely have driven Cenwalh from his kingdom without invading and partially conquering Wessex, but the extent of his acquisitions is not recorded. If the date we have assigned to the 'Tribal Hidage' be correct, then it is not going too far to assume that in the next names on the list we have the West Saxon districts which he overran and considered more or less his own even after he had allowed Cenwalh to return to his kingdom. In that case, when Wulfhere in 661 overran the country as far as Ashdown, and also ravaged the Isle of Wight, he was repeating his father's exploit.

It is probable⁷⁵ that *Hendrica* (3,500 hides in the 'English', 3,000 in the 'Latin' form) includes *Uneungga* (1,200 hides,⁷⁶ the Wantage district in North Berkshire), *Aro sætas*⁷⁷ and *Færpinga*⁷⁸ (600 and 300 hides)—perhaps in Oxfordshire to the west of the Cherwell—and *Bilmiga* and *Widerigga* (600 hides each),⁷⁹ which

⁷³ The word 'hides' is omitted in the oldest copy of the Chronicle, but seems necessary.

⁷⁴ How this historian knew about the 'third part' is unexplained; probably he relied upon some local tradition. If the interpretation in the text be correct, Cenwalh gave about a third of each division, viz. 2,100 hides out of the Hwinca 7,000 and 1,200 out of the Chiltern 4,000.

⁷⁵ See *Notes and Queries*, 11th series, iv. 482.

⁷⁶ The hundreds approximately corresponding with the rural deanery of Abingdon are: Wantage 239 hides, Sutton 123, Marcham 141, 'Wifol' 144, Shrivenham 71, 'Hilleslau' 140, Ganfield 185, Blewbury 127, and Hormer 110; a total of 1,280 hides. These figures are from Mr. Baring's *Domesday Tables*.

⁷⁷ *Aro* should be the name of a district or dominant place (like *Pec*); but the only name of the kind in the locality suggested is Harrowden, on the wrong side of the Thames.

⁷⁸ *Aro* is perhaps the district along the Thames and Cherwell, now the hundreds of Bampton (206) and Wootton (406), containing a little over 600 hides. *Færpinga* may be Chadlington Hundred, with 292 hides recorded. Possibly it was the 'Feppingum' in Middle England where Diuma, the missionary bishop, died. Charlbury is associated with a St. Dionia, supposed to be the same: Stanton, *Menology*, p. 742. It would not affect the general argument should it be found that either *Bilmiga* or *Widerigga* must be interchanged with *Aro*.

⁷⁹ Following the deanery boundaries, with one exception (Bucklebury), the centre and east of Berkshire thus divides: Newbury—Lambourn 73, Kintbury 133, Eagle 90,

were perhaps the remaining or eastern part of Berkshire; then *East* and *West Willa* (600 hides each) would be in North Hampshire around Basingstoke and Wallop respectively. The Hundred Rolls and Domesday Book show that groups of six 'hundreds' remained attached to these places at a later time, suggesting, in accordance with the argument already advanced, that political districts of 600 hides each had once been governed from them as centres. Yet the whole of the north end of Hampshire must have been united under one ruler at an early time, for the ancient 'farm of one day' was shared by three places there—Basingstoke, Kingsclere, and Hurstbourne Tarrant. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Hampshire was a distinct principality or administrative district in 755; a century later (860) Hampshire and Berkshire were acting together, under their respective aldermen, for the defence of Winchester. The identifications here suggested mark the parts of Wessex through which an invading Mercian army would pass on its way to the south coast and the Isle of Wight, the goal certainly reached by Wulfhere and probably by Penda before him. Then the phrase 'as far as Ashdown' in the Chronicle under 661 will mean 'as far *west* as Ashdown', showing that the West Saxons in Wiltshire were left alone for that time, though Wulfhere attacked them later.

The following are the hidages suggested for *Hwinca* 7,000:

In Wiltshire (part) and Dorset	4,900
In Berkshire (<i>Unecungga</i> , or Wantage)	1,200
In Oxfordshire (<i>Aro sælas</i> and <i>Færpinga</i>)	900
	<hr/>
	7,000

and for *Ciltarn sælas* 4,000:

In Oxfordshire (the former Chiltern Hundreds, ⁸⁰ with Dorchester and Thame)	800
In Buckinghamshire (the three hundreds of Ayles- bury and the Chiltern Hundreds)	800
In Berkshire	1,200
In Hampshire	1,200
	<hr/>
	4,000

The recorded hidage of the Aylesbury and Chiltern groups in Buckinghamshire amounts to 750;⁸¹ the other 50 hides may

Roeberg 128, Nachedorne 103, Thatcham 74, a total of 607; Reading and Wallingford—Bray 93, Ripplesmere 60, Charlton 145, Reading 153, Hoeslesford 117, Bucklebury 47, a total of 615.

⁸⁰ According to the *Hundred Rolls* (ii. 43) the king had held the four and a half hundreds of 'Ciltre' until Henry III gave them to the earl of Cornwall. In another place (ii. 751) the names of the hundreds are given—Lewknor, Pirton, Langtree, Benefield, and Ewelme (half)—being those still in use.

⁸¹ Baring, *Domesday Tables*.

have been drawn from some adjacent hundred in the county or from Tring in Hertfordshire. It is recorded in Domesday Book that before the Conquest eight hundreds 'in the circuit of Aylesbury' had paid a church scot to Aylesbury church.⁸² The names are not recorded, but whatever the 'circuit' may have become in its later history, it is in accordance with what has been said above about Ely and the *Wigesta* to suggest that in early times a district of 800 hides had been subject to Aylesbury politically.⁸³

In support of the *Hwinca* grouping may be adduced the Abingdon tradition that the abbey was founded by a King Cissa who was ruler of Wiltshire and the greater part of Berkshire, having his capital at Bedwin and bishopric at Malmesbury⁸⁴ (? Ramsbury). The abbey was also, curiously enough, said to be in the south of Oxfordshire; a statement which has some sort of basis in the grouping above.⁸⁵ Again, the Abingdon tradition also records that after Offa had seized upon Bensington in 777 (or 779) he ravaged all Berkshire, not only the part south of the Ridge Way, but also that north of it.⁸⁶ This distinctly suggests that Berkshire was under two rulers, the Ridge Way being the division. The union of Berkshire with the diocese of Salisbury is easily explained also if it be allowed that the northern and more important end had always been closely allied politically with Wiltshire and drew the east with it, when the two parts were united in one shire. It seems possible that Berkshire was never in the diocese of Winchester, so that the partition of this diocese would not affect it. The diocese of Ramsbury (or Salisbury) was entirely West Saxon; Winchester was composite—Jutes in the south, perhaps British in the centre, West Saxon in the north, and the men of Surrey in the north-east. There is the obvious difficulty to be met that the recorded hidage of Wiltshire (4,050)⁸⁷ and Dorset (2,321)⁸⁸ is greatly in excess of the 4,900 required; but it may reasonably be urged that so early as 650

⁸² *Vict. County Hist., Buckinghamshire*, i. 223, 233; Morley Davies in *Home Counties Mag.* vi. 136.

⁸³ There may also have been eight instead of six hundreds in the south of the county, 'detached parts' of hundreds having been originally independent. Aylesbury, according to the story of St. Edburga and her sister, had a monastery early in the seventh century. A little later the church of Buckingham is said to have received the relics of St. Rumbold.

⁸⁴ *Abingdon Chron.* (ed. J. Stevenson), ii. 268.

⁸⁵ Possibly Hormere Hundred, in which Abingdon stands, belonged to the Wootton district north of the Thames. In that case the Wantage district would have almost exactly 1,200 hides, but Wootton would have 700 instead of 600 hides.

⁸⁶ According to the *Abingdon Chron.* i. 14; Offa subdued all the West Saxon king's land 'ab oppido Walingfordie in australi parte ab Ichenilde strete usque ad Esseburiam, et in aquilonali parte usque ad Tamisiam'. As Ashbury is on the north side of the Ridge Way the second 'usque ad' cannot be intended to balance the first.

⁸⁷ Maitland. The figures of the Exon Domesday are about 100 less.

⁸⁸ Eyton (not including the boroughs).

the hidage of these counties, supposing them to have been entirely in West Saxon hands,⁸⁹ may have been estimated at a lower rate than in the ninth century, when this kingdom had grown immensely in numbers and importance. It has also been suggested above that part of the present Wiltshire may have been in earlier days in the hands of the Hwicci.⁹⁰

With regard to Buckinghamshire it will be noticed that the southern half is here assigned to the Chiltern-dwellers, the north-western quarter to the Herefinna, and the north-eastern to the main body of the Mercians. In the 'Burghal Hidage' to Buckingham and 'Sceaftelege' were assigned 1,500 hides, or about three-fourths of the hidage of the county. Possibly it was the north-eastern quarter (or third) which was omitted, on account of its occupation by the Danes.

On the suppositions made, the country now formed into Oxfordshire had a complex history. At first West Saxon—if the *Herefinna* were part of that confederation—it had become divided by 650 into three parts. The *Herefinna* having allied themselves with Mercia, the Middle Angles had gained access to the Thames at Oxford, while west of the Cherwell the *Hwinca* branch of the West Saxons still held most of the land, and south of the Thame the Chiltern-dwelling branch of the same people were secure. The Mercians continued to gain ground. The removal of the West Saxon bishopric to Winchester, and the establishment of a Mercian one at Dorchester—even for a time only—indicates an advance. The battle at Burford in 752 shows that the West Saxons still held that corner of the present shire, but it may mean also that at that side of the Cherwell they had lost all except Bampton Hundred. As already stated, the Chiltern hundreds seem to have remained West Saxon without disturbance until 777. There is no record of the formation of the county, but the 2,400 hides assigned in the 'Burghal Hidage' for the defence of Oxford and Wallingford may be identified as the hidage of Oxfordshire, so that the county had been organized by about the year 900.

EAST ANGLES

In one respect this is the most difficult part of the 'Tribal Hidage', for though the district is known, the 30,000 hides assigned to it seem excessive. They allow an average area of less than 80 statute acres to each hide. The country was perhaps

⁸⁹ Cenwalh's battle at Bradford-on-Avon in 652 may mean that his kingdom had not till then extended over West Wiltshire.

⁹⁰ See above, p. 633. The north-west quarter of Wiltshire contains about 1,200 hides: Malmesbury and Chippenham (as above) 604, and Bradford, Melksham, Whorwelton, and Swanborough 636. The omission of these would make the *Hwinca* hidage numerically almost exact.

the most ancient of the Anglian settlements, so that the explanation may lie in the supposition not only that its population was great, but that it had become an 'industrial' population to a considerable extent, having trades as well as agriculture and important fisheries to depend upon.

EAST SAXONS

The East Saxon kingdom, according to the later boundaries of the diocese of London, contained the counties of Essex (D.B. 2,650 hides),⁹¹ Middlesex (880),⁹² and the southern and eastern fringe of Hertfordshire. At the date of the 'Hidage' the Mercian annexation of the last-named county may not have taken place to any great extent, but it is clear that some reduction of assessment was made. Assuming one of 40 per cent. the 7,000 hides of the East Saxons would be reduced to 4,200, so that Hertfordshire would have to supply about 600. Its total hidage in 1086 was 1,108. Mr. Rickword has ingeniously arranged the Essex assessments to show 70 hundreds, each reduced from 100 to 40 hides,⁹³ but his conclusions are invalidated by the omission of the East Saxon lands in Middlesex and Hertford. If the reduction above suggested were that effected, three of his hundreds would go to two of the original ones, making the primitive assessment of Essex about 4,400 hides and that of Middlesex about 1,500.

KENT

According to Bede⁹⁴ there were 300 hides in Thanet, which contains about 26,000 acres. In Kent and Surrey together there are about 1,480,000 acres, which on the above scale would allow 17,000 hides for the two counties. Thus, while remembering that the woodland of Kent and the heaths of Surrey were anciently extensive, the 15,000 hides of the Kentish men is not excessive if the two later counties were at the time of the 'Hidage' under one rule.⁹⁵ There is nothing improbable in the supposition, and it is to some extent borne out by the tradition that Chertsey Abbey, in the north-west of Surrey, was founded by Egbert, king of Kent. Before 675, however, Surrey had an underking of its own, who was subject to the Mercian king. Soon afterwards, in 686, the West Saxons ravaged Kent, and when one of their princes had been burned there, the outrage was, in 694, compounded for by a fine of 30,000 shillings,⁹⁶ or two for each hide.

⁹¹ Maitland, p. 400.

⁹² *Trans. Essex Archaeol. Soc.* xi, part 3.

⁹³ Mr. Corbett in his essay joined Surrey with Kent.

⁹⁴ There is confusion over this sum in the different texts of the Chronicle, but all give 30.

⁹⁵ Baring, *Domesday Tables*.

⁹⁶ *Hist. Eccl.* i. 25.

SOUTH SAXONS

As already stated, the 'Tribal Hidage' agrees with Bede's statement as to the ancient reckoning of the hides or families of this kingdom. The hidage in Domesday Book is 3,474, or about half the ancient one.

THE TOTALS

The 'Latin' total of 200,700 hides is thus formed :

Mercians	30,000
<i>Hwinca</i> and <i>Ciltern sætas</i>	11,000
<i>Hendrica</i>	3,000
<i>Unecungga</i> to <i>Widerigga</i>	3,300
<i>E. and W. Willa</i>	1,200
East Angles	30,000
East Saxons	7,000
Men of Kent	15,000
South Saxons	100,000
	<hr/>
	200,500
	<hr/>

The doubtful figure is the 3,000 hides of *Hendrica*, where the 'English' form gives 3,500: possibly the original was 3,300 (being the total of the subsequent group), in which case the 'Latin' total should be 200,800,⁹⁷ or 100 hides more than that recorded. The 'English' total also is attainable if 3,300 be read instead of 3,500; thus

Total to <i>Oht gaga</i> , as given	66,100
<i>Hwinca</i> and <i>Ciltern sætas</i>	11,000
<i>Hendrica</i> (amended)	3,300
<i>Unecungga</i> to <i>Widerigga</i>	3,300
<i>E. and W. Willa</i> 1,200	
East Angles	30,000
East Saxons	7,000
Men of Kent	15,000
South Saxons	7,000
West Saxons	100,000
	<hr/>
	242,700
	<hr/>

Some district of 1,200 hides must have been omitted to obtain this total, but possibly the compiler intended to omit *Unecungga* not *East* and *West Willa*.

⁹⁷ In two copies—Claudius D. ii and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 70 (but only as altered, not *prima manu*)—the total is written 200,800.

It may, therefore, in conclusion be suggested that the ' Tribal Hidage ' should be arranged as follows :

	<i>hides</i>		<i>hides</i>	<i>hides</i>
The Mercians have . . .	30,000	<i>Hwicca</i> have . . .	7,000	
[including]	<i>hides</i>	Chiltern-dwellers . . .	4,000	
<i>Wocen</i> -dwellers . . .	7,000			11,000
Western men . . .	7,000	[including]		
Peak-dwellers . . .	1,200	<i>Hendrica</i> . . .	3,300	
Elmet-dwellers . . .	600	[viz.]	<i>hides</i>	
Men of Lindsey } . . .	7,000	Wantagers . . .	1,200	
with		<i>Aro</i> -dwellers . . .	600	
Hatfield-land }		<i>Færpinga</i> . . .	300	
<i>hides</i>		<i>Bilmiga</i> . . .	600	
<i>South Gyrgwa</i> . . .	600	<i>Widerigga</i> . . .	600	
<i>North Gyrgwa</i> . . .	600			3,300
<i>East Wizna</i> . . .	300	<i>East Willa</i> . . .	600	
<i>West Wizna</i> . . .	600	<i>West Willa</i> . . .	600	
<i>Spalda</i> . . .	600			1,200
<i>Wigesta</i> . . .	900	East Angles . . .		30,000
	3,600	East Saxons . . .		7,000
<i>Herefinna</i> . . .	1,200	Men of Kent . . .		15,000
<i>Sweord ora</i> . . .	300	South Saxons . . .		7,000
[Unrecorded . . .	900]			100,000
<i>Gifla</i> . . .	300			<hr/>
<i>Hicca</i> . . .	300			
Men of Wight . . .	600			
	1,200			
	30,000			
<i>Nor gaga</i> . . .	5,000			
<i>Oht gaga</i> . . .	2,000			

There is nothing new or revolutionary in this solution of the problem afforded by the ' Tribal Hidage ' ; but if it be accepted, clear and definite areas will be substituted for vague approximations, and some advance will have been made in the conception of the formation of the Mercian kingdom and then of the later counties.

J. BROWNBILL.