

# The Origins of Local Society in late 'Anglo-Saxon' England\*

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The purpose of this paper is to show the issues surrounding the origins of local society in late 'Anglo-Saxon' England, by examining a single original document from 968. A local society not only has real existence but is also a construct formed by mutual communication between central authority and the local inhabitants.

Under the pressure of expanding northern powers, King Alfred of the West Saxons succeeded in building a defensive line, strongly coalescing with the Mercians (Angles)<sup>1)</sup>, King Edward, his son, pushed forward, and Aethelstan spread his rule over all England, although the word 'England' only appeared in c. 1000<sup>2)</sup>. The word 'Anglo-Saxon' was only used to express the kingship of both peoples, Angles and Saxons, from Alfred to Aethelstan (see Figure 1); it was

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\* To Ian, my dear friend and great country-fellow.

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1) D. Hill and A. Rumble, eds., *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Urbanization* (Manchester, 1996).

2) Patrick Wormald, "Engla Lond - the making of an allegiance," in *Legal Culture in the Medieval West* (London: Hambledon Press, 1999), pp. 371-72.

King Aethelstan who first used the title 'king of the English'. Therefore, 'Anglo-Saxons' denoted not a people but an idea of unification. This is the reason why I place a quotation mark around 'Anglo-Saxon' in the title of this paper. Only when the kingdom was unified did the title 'king of the English' (*rex Anglorum*) come to be used. The word 'English' (*Angli* in Latin) might already have been applied to the peoples separate from the Britons (the Welsh; see, the law code of King Ine)<sup>3)</sup>. However the application of the word 'English' to a whole people owed much to Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English people*<sup>4)</sup>.

It was the reign of King Edgar of the English (943-75; r. 955-975) which marked an important stage in making an 'official' Christian state, that is, the English monarchy, for which unction and coronation, conducted by the 'bishop', was an essential element<sup>5)</sup>. The ritual of coronation gave an ideological overtone of 'empire' and 'emperor' to the king of the English, although his court made a constant tour from region to region in the southern part of England<sup>6)</sup>. Table 1 shows the

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3) *Englisc* vs. *Wilisc*, chs 23.3-4; *Wealh* vs. *Englisc*, ch. 32; *Englisc* vs. *Wilisc*, ch. 54.2; *Wylisc* vs. *Englisc*, ch. 74; *Wealh* vs. *Englisc*. F. L. Attenborough, ed., *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings* (Cambridge, 1922, rep. 1974). Cf. N. Brooks, "The English origin myth" in do., *Anglo-Saxon myths: state and church* (2000); Sarah Foot, The making of Angelcynn: English identity before the Norman Conquest, *TRHS*, 6th series 6 (1996): 25-49.

4) P. Wormald, "Bede, the *bretwaldas* and the origins of the *gens Anglorum*," in *Idea and reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society*, eds. P. Wormald et al. (Oxford, 1983), pp. 99-129. For a more general and wider view, see T. M. Charles-Edwards, "The Making of Nations in Britain and Ireland in the Early Middle Ages," in *Lordship and Learning* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 11-37.

5) Simon Keynes, "Edgar, rex admirabilis," in *Edgar, King of the English 959-975: New Interpretations*, ed. D. Scragg (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 48-51.

6) David Hill, *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1981).

typical titles used in the charters (*rex Angliae*, used only in later forged charters, should be ignored).<sup>7)</sup>

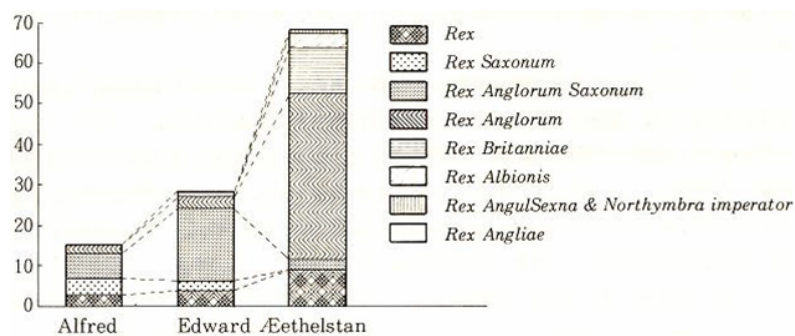


Fig. 1 Royal titles of three kings

Based on my own data base.\*

Table Royal titles of King Edgar

(1)	ego Eadgar tocius Brittannie gubernator et rector (961; S698) <sup>8)</sup>
(2)	ego Eadgar rex tocius Brittanniæ Christi favente gratia sublimates (963; S723)
(3)	ego Adgar rex Anglorum ceterarumque gencium in circuitu persistencium gubernator et rector (963, S730)
(4)	ego Ædgarus totius Brittanniæ basileus( 970 ; S780)
(5)	ego Edgar annuente altritono Anglorum basileus ceterarumque gentium triviatim persistentium gubernator et rector (973; S793)

7) The first appearance of 'king of England' (*rex Angliae*) seems to belong to the reign of King John, but has been generally attributed to King Henry II. However, the charters on which this attribution is based contain abbreviated forms, such as *r. Angl.* Henry was also designated *dux Hiberniae*, therefore his title *rex Angliae* may be a deduction of modern historians.

8) P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*

The document to which we refer here is an agreement in notification form<sup>9)</sup> of 968<sup>10)</sup>. It is now classified as S. 1215, and the original is kept in London, British Library, as Stowe Charter 30. This document was brought to its present state by some additions by the same hand of the main part. The scribe might have been a monk of Christ Church, Canterbury. The document was written in a mixture of Latin and Old-English. It is reproduced in part 3, plate 31 of the Ordinance Survey Facsimiles. Here I show you the facsimile (Fig. 2)<sup>11)</sup> text and English translation (below). The Italic letters and the underlined letters show Latin and later insertions respectively.

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(London, 1968) [cited by document number].

- 9) The documentary sources for pre-Conquest England fall into three categories, charters, notifications and letters. Some survive as 'single-sheet originals', defined as texts written on a single piece of parchment in a contemporary or near-contemporary hand. Others are later copies, either on single sheets, or in the cartularies (collections of charters and deeds) produced from the eleventh century onwards by ecclesiastical institutions. Charters may be royal diplomas or non-royal grants. Notifications are a much more varied group, including grants and leases, sales and exchanges of land, contracts, legal and fiscal records, inventories and surveys, manumissions of slaves and wills. Letters can be sub-divided into private letters, intended for the eye of the recipient alone, and letters intended to be read before the public audience; the latter include the sealed writs issued by the last Old English kings. Though there is some overlap, each group has its own characteristic form and function. This lies outside the scope of this paper, although I show you an example. Ann Williams, "Charters, Notifications, and Letters," in *Medieval Documents in Japan and England*, eds. H. Tsurushima and N. Haruta (Tokyo, 2008), pp. 39-67.
- 10) Simon Keynes, "Conspectus of the Charters of King Edgar, 957-75," in *Edgar, King of the English 959-975*, p. 72..
- 11) A copy from *Archaeologia Cantiana* 49 (1937).

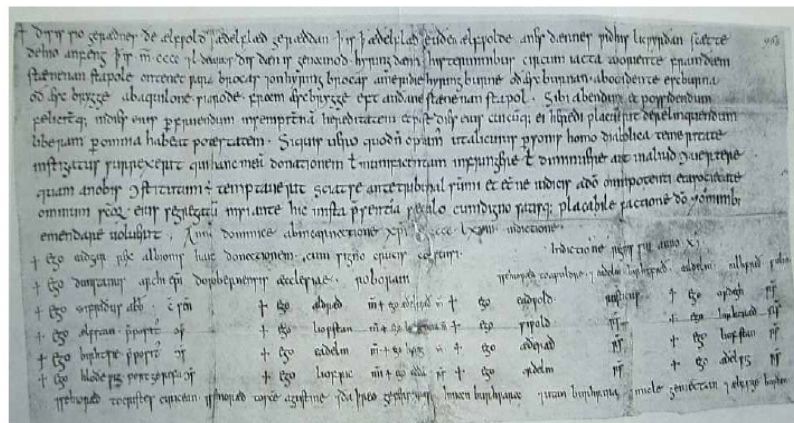


Fig. 2 Facsimile

From *Archaeologia Cantiana*, vol. 49 (1937)

First of all I show you the composition of this document and the inserted portions.

### Text

[line 1]+ Ðis is sio gerædnes ðe Ælfwold 7 Eadwold/ 7 Æðelflæd  
 geræddan . Ðæt is þæt Æðelflæd 7 Eadwold/ geuðen/ Ælfwolde anes  
 dænnes wið his licwyrðan scætte [line 2] ðe hio anfeng þæt is .m.cccc.  
 7 .l. denarios . Ðis dæn is genamod . Hyingrdænn . [boundary  
 clause]his terminibus circumiacta Ab oriente fram þæm [line 3]  
 stænenan stapole on Tenetwara brocas 7 on hyring brocas A meridie  
 hyringburne oð Æscburnan . Ab occidente Escburna [line 4] oð

æschrygge *Ab aquilone* . sia rode . fram æschrygge eft an ðane  
 stænenan stapol . *sibi abendum et possidendum* [line 5] *feliciterque in*  
*dies eius perfruendum in sempiternam hereditatem et post dies eius*  
*cuicumque ei heredi placuerit derelinquendum liberam per omnia*  
*habeat potestatem* . Si quis uero quod non optamus ut alicuius  
 personis homo diabolica temeritate [line 6] *instigatus surrexerit qui*  
*hanc meam donationem uel munificentiam infringere uel diminuere*  
*aut in aliud conuertere* [line 7] *quam a nobis constitutum est*  
*temptauerit sciat se ante tribunal summi et eterne iudicis a Deo*  
*omnipotenti et a societate* [line 8] *omnium sanctorum eius*  
*segregatum nisi ante hic in ista presentia sæculo cum digno satisque*  
*placabile factione Deo et ominibus* [line 9] *emendare uoluerit* . Anno  
 dominice ab incarnatione Christi .dcccc.lxviii. indictione

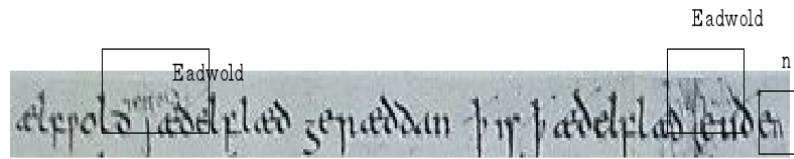


Fig. 3 The additions in the first line.

[witness-list A1]

[line 10] + *Ego Eadgar rex Albionis*<sup>12)</sup> *hanc donationem . cum signo*

12) The term 'Albion' had been used to designate the island of Britain, since the time of Pliny. "In the tenth century...Albion did have currency both as a geographical and as a political term...Edgar's style as king of Albion and Dunstan's spiritual stewardship of its people carried territorial implications...Albion also had a second meaning, at least in the tenth century...Albion lies at the root of Irish Alba or Albu, which before the tenth century denoted much the same" meaning. However, the political situation in the ninth century caused "Alba to be narrowed down to mean 'North Britain'". Julia Crick, "Edgar, Albion and Insular Dominion," in *Edgar, King of the English 959-975*, 158-170, at pp. 167-68

*crucis consensi. indictione regnis sui anno .xi.*

[line 11] + *Ego Dunstanus archiepiscopus Dorobernensis æcclesiae .  
roboravi*

[witness-list X2] 7 se hioræd to Apuldre . 7 Eadelm . Birhtfreð .  
Ealdelm . Ealhfreð . Sielm.

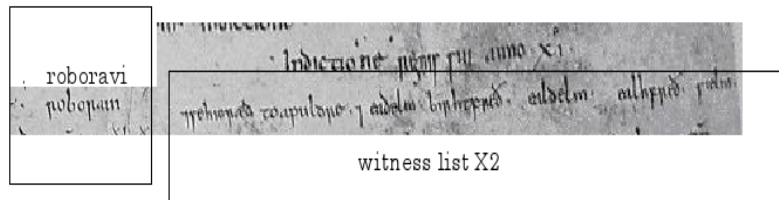


Fig. 4 the additions in the lines 10 and 11.

[line 12. col. 1] + *Ego Sifriðus abbas . consensi*

[line 13. col. 1] + *Ego Ælfstan . prepositus consensi*

[line 14. col. 1] + *Ego Birhtsie . prepositus consensi*

[line 15. col. 1] + *Ego Hloðewig . portgerefa consensi*

[witness-list A2]

[line 12. col. 2] + *Ego Aldræd minister*

[line 13. col. 2] + *Ego Liofstan minister*

[line 14. col. 2] + *Ego Eadelm minister*

[line 15. col. 2] + *Ego Liofric minister*

[witness-list D]

[line 12. col. 3]+ *Ego Æðelereð minister*

[line 13. col. 3]+ *Ego L[...]una minister*

[line 14. col. 3]+ *Ego Lifing minister*

[line 15. col. 3]+ *Ego Edda rusticus*

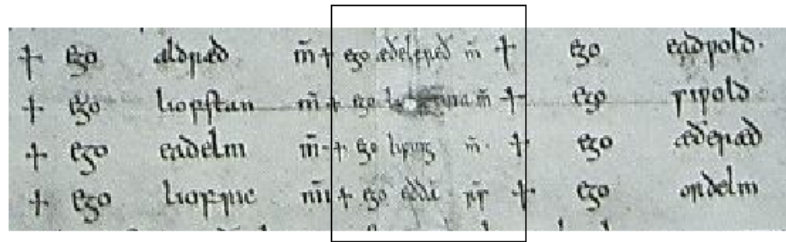


Fig. 5 The additions in witness-list D

[witness-list B]

[line 12. col. 4]+ *Ego Eadwold rusticus*

[line 13. col. 4]+ *Ego Siwold rusticus*

[line 14. col. 4]+ *Ego Æðeræd rusticus*

[line 15. col. 4]+ *Ego Ordelm rusticus*

[witness-list C]

[line 12. col. 5]+ *Ego Ordegh rusticus*

[line 13. col. 5]+ *Ego Birhtræd rusticus*

[line 14. col. 5]+ *Ego Liofstan rusticus*

[line 15. col. 5]+ *Ego Æðelwig rusticus*

[witness-list X1 & X2]



[line 16] 7 se hioræd to Cristes ciricean . 7 se hioræd to sancte  
 Agustine 7 ða þreo geferscipas innan burhwara 7 utan burhwara 7  
 micle gemettan 7 Ælfsige burðen.<sup>13)</sup>

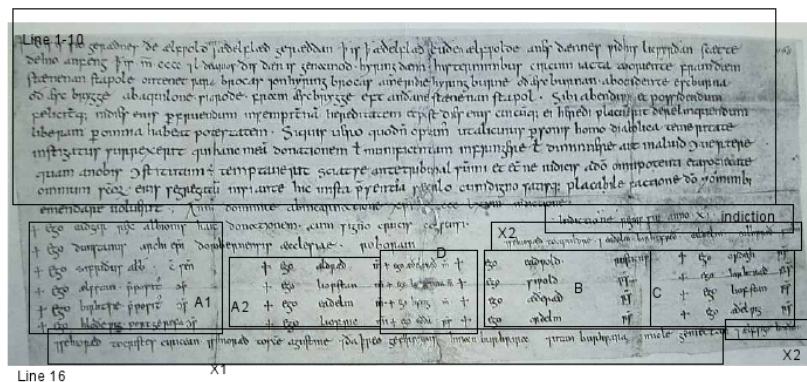


Fig. 6 The composition of the document

#### Translation<sup>14)</sup>

[pictorial invocation] +This is the agreement that Ælfwold <and  
 Eadwold> and Æthelflæd have reached: that is that Æthelflæd <and  
 Eadwold> granted Ælfwold one denn for his pleasing money, which

13) G. Ward, "Saxon Records of Tenterden," *Archaeologia Cantiana* 49 (1937): 229-246. Cf. K. P. Witney, *The Jutish Forest* (London, 1976), p. 268; N. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 28, 378 n. 153, treats as contemporary.

14) Based on Ward 1937, pp. 229-30; *Charters of Christ Church, Canterbury*, eds. N. P. Brooks and S. E. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters (The British Academy, forthcoming), no. 128, with the translation of the Old English portion of the witness-list by David A. E. Pelletier.

she has received, that is 1300 (+100) and 50 pence. This denn is named Heronden<sup>15)</sup>.

[boundary clause] This denn is named Heronden and is surrounded by these bounds. On the east: from the stone column to the Thanet people's brooks and to Hying brooks. On the south: *Hyingburna* as far as Ashbourne. On the west: Ashbourne as far Ash bridge. On the north: the road from Ash bridge back to the stone column. [corroboration] To have and to hold happily during his life time in perpetual inheritance and after his day to have power to leave it to whatever heir he shall please, free in every way. [sanction] If anyone indeed, which we do not desire, or the servant of anyone, instigated by the rashness of the devil, shall arise and shall be tempted to infringe or diminish this my gift and munificence, or to in any way upset what has been agreed by us, let him know himself arraigned before the tribunal of the highest and eternal justice by Almighty God and to all men with proper and sufficient compensation. [date] In the year of 968 from Incarnation of Christ. *Indiction*.

[witness A1]

[line 10] + I Edgar, king of Britain, have approved this gift with the sign of the cross. In the indiction of his reign and in the eleventh year.

[line 11] +I Dunstan Archbishop of Canterbury Church. I have confirmed.

[witness X2] And the community at Appledore and Eadhelm, Beorhtfrith, Eadhelm, Ealhfrith, Sigehelm.

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15) J. K. Wallenberg, *Kentish Place-Names* (Uppsala, 1931), pp. 295-98; Do., *The Place-Names of Kent* (Uppsala, 1934), pp. 345-46.

[line 12. col. 1] + I Sifrith abbot have approved.  
[line 13. col. 1] + I Aelfstan reeve have approved.  
[line 14. col. 1] + I Birhtsie reeve have approved.  
[line 15. col. 1] + Ego Hlothewig portreeve reeve have approved.

[witness A2]

[line 12. col. 2] + I Aldræd minister.  
[line 13. col. 2] + I Liofstan minister  
[line 14. col. 2] + I Eadelm minister  
[line 15. col. 2] + I Liofric minister

[witness D]

[line 12. col. 3] + I Æthelereth minister  
[line 13. col. 3] + I L[...]una minister  
[line 14. col. 3] + I Lifing minister  
[line 15. col. 3] + I Edda countryman

[witness B]

[line 12. col. 4] + I Eadwold countryman  
[line 13. col. 4] + I Siwold countryman  
[line 14. col. 4] + I Ætheræd countryman  
[line 15. col. 4] + I Ordelm countryman

[witness C]

[line 12. col. 5] + I Ordegh countryman  
[line 13. col. 5] + I Birhtræd countryman  
[line 14. col. 5] + I Liofstan countryman

[line 15. col. 5] + I Æthelwig countryman

[line 16] [witness x1]And the community at Christ Church and the community at St Augustine's and the three fellowships of residents within the walls of the town and of residents outside the walls of the town and many meters<sup>16)</sup> and Ælfsige [the] chamberlain.

This document has two contemporary endorsements in the same hand. The main one reads “ðis is Hyring dænnes boc ðe Eadwold 7 Æðelflæd geuðan . Ælfwolde wið his licwyrðan scætte: This is Heronden's book, that Eadwold and Aethelflaed gave to Aelfwold in return for the agreed payment”. And the other reads “7 Ælfwold gesealde Eadwolde 7 his sunum .c. panega anuppan all ðis oðer wiððan ðe hit hiora unna wære butan ælcra anwædednesse: And Ælfwold has given Eadwold and his sons 100 pence in addition to all this provided that their gift remains undisputed.”<sup>17)</sup> They suggest that the additions were made to settle land-disputes.

In 968 the court of King Edgar was at Canterbury with his *witan* (councillors). The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle brought word down to us that “in this year (969) King Edgar ordered all Thanet [nearCanterbury] to be ravaged”, since “about the same time merchants coming from York landed in the isle of Thanet, and were at once taken prisoner by the islanders and robbed of all their goods, whence King Edgar, moved by anger, was so furious with these pillagers that he despoiled all of them of their possessions and even deprived some of life”<sup>18)</sup>.

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16) The word *gemettan* (literally, ‘fellow-diners’) implies dependants, who received food from their superiors.

17) Ward, “Saxon Records of Tenterden,” p. 233.

The king's court, held at Canterbury, authorized the agreement of a Kentish woman, Æthelflæd, with Aelfwold, on granting swine-pasture at Heronden in Tenterden, Kent, in return for 1350 pence. The witness group of A1 was the king and his councillors, with his officer at Canterbury (*portreeve*), although he was probably also a leading person in the city. A2 was probably a group of king's officers who were key persons, living in Kent. They were a sporadic body who only came to be king's officials when he and his ambulant court visited Canterbury or Kent. Judging from later cases, they might have played the role of king's thegns [the men who serve].

The witness group of B and C are a peculiar case. They were all designated as countrymen (*rustici*). It is unusual for them to appear as witnesses in documents. The only other case, of Aetheric countryman, who held 8 hides on the River Kennet (*viii. mansas iuxta flumen quod Cynete uocitatur, illud uidelicet rus quod Æþeric quidam rusticus prius habuisse agnoscitur*), comes from Berkshire<sup>19</sup>. Susan Kelly regarded this case as 'rare evidence for a landed ceorl' (equivalent to *rusticus* in Old English)<sup>20</sup>. It should, however, be stressed that the term *rusticus* itself rarely appears in contemporary documents, since it was not a word signifying exact status. The term *rusticus* had no connotation of social standing, but meant those who lived in the country<sup>21</sup>. This is also true of *villanus*, who lived in a

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18) *English Historical Documents*, i., p. 227

19) S 855 (dated 984): *Charters of Abingdon Abbey*, Part 2, ed. S. E. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters 8 (Oxford 2001), pp. 470-2 (no. 122).

20) On the possibility of ceorls as witnesses, see Robertson, no. 16. pp. 28, 290.

21) '*rustici*' was non-noble free men (like OE ceorls), whose ranks might include men of widely differing wealth and status. Cf. The Leges inter

village. It may be that *rusticus* and *villanus* were used interchangeably. They were fellow-country men, that is, the kindred and neighbourhood of both parties, standing surety for B and C as witnesses. They also shared a common memory of this transaction with the monks of Christ Church and of St Augustine's, and the three Canterbury fellowships, of residents within the walls of the town, residents outside the walls of the town, and their dependants (witness-list X1).

All of them agreed on this gift, and drafted a notification [this document]. However, it seems that after this agreement had been made, a certain Eadwold made a strong claim to the land concerned. He is assumed to be a relative, possibly a brother-in-law of Aethelflaed, the donor. The swine pasture in Tenterden was possibly her morning gift (*morgengife*), given to a wife by her husband on the morning after marriage. 'A widow retained her morning gift unless she remarried within a year'<sup>22)</sup>. But the general rule of inheritance at this time was still that the property of Aethelflaed should be divided by her relatives<sup>23)</sup>. The agreement meant that the swine pasture left family property for ever. To prevent serious strife, both parties might well have decided to make another agreement with Eadwold, which the two endorsements clearly show, on the payment of 100 pence to Eadwold and his sons.

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Brettos et Scottos, *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, eds. T. Thomson and C. Innes, 12 vols. (Edinburgh, 1814-75), i, pp. 633-35. I owe this information to Dr Ann Williams and Dr Alice Taylor.

22) A. J. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (1939), pp. 84, 333; Cf. II Cnut, 73 a.

23) See the case of the dispute over Cray (in Kent); Textus Roffensis, fol. 147r; Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, no. 41.

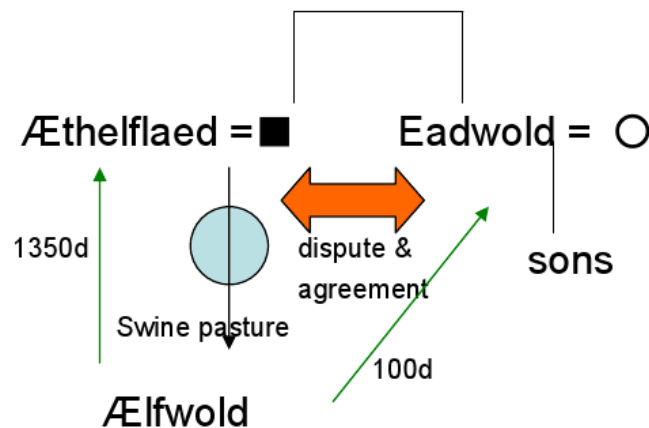


Figure 7 The family relations, dispute and agreement

This time, the king's court is assumed not to have been held for this particular and tiny matter. The meeting for this second agreement was held at Appledore, where there was an old minster church<sup>24</sup>). There, possibly, appeared the same scribe who drafted the first document, and with him Ælfsige the chamberlain<sup>25</sup>) from the king's court, Æthelflæd, Ælfwold, and Eadwold and his sons, and their fellow-countrymen as witnesses (D). There also appeared the community of Appledore, and five men (Eadhelm, Beorhtfrith,

24) D. C. Douglas, *The Domesday Monachorum* (London, 1944), p. 77; T. Tatton-Brown, "The Churches of Canterbury Diocese in the Eleventh Century," in *Minsters and Parish Churches: The local church in transition 950-1200*, ed. Blair (Oxford, 1988), pp. 105-18.

25) We do not need imagine the chamberlain as the officer of the later middle ages. The English word *bur* meant a private room, and *burðen* probably means some officer taking care of the king's daily life. Cf. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, p. 30.

Eadhelm, Ealhfrith, Sigehelm) [X2], who played the same roll as the common witnesses at Canterbury [X1], remembering this contract. They probably lived in or near Tenterden or Appledore. There was no affix of '*rusticus*' to their names, possibly because there was no room to write it in the parchment.

After the new agreement was made, the scribe did not draft a new document but made some necessary new additions to the old one. In line one, he inserted the name of Eadwold twice, and added the letter 'n' to *geuthe* to give the verb a plural form (see fig. 3). In the second line he added 'c' to *Mccc* to add 100d to the payment of 1350d, for Eadwold's share (see fig. 8). In the first document he had failed to put the year of the indiction. Therefore he inserted 'in the indiction of his reign and in the eleventh year'. And then in line 11 of the witness list, he added the word *rovoravi* (I have confirmed), after a punctuation mark following Dunstan's attestation (fig. 4). He inserted the witness group [D] of Eadwold between column2 [A2] and column 4[B] (fig. 5). And he added Ælfsige the chamberlain at the end of line 16, and continued to insert the common witnesses after the word *rovoravi* in line 11 (fig. 4 & fig. 6). Ælfsige the chamberlain perhaps presided over this second meeting.

Why did the scribe produce the new second document? Like diplomas, notifications were not in themselves dispositive but merely evidentiary; the legal force of the grant lay not in the diploma but in the oral ceremony of gift and in the common memory of the people as well as king's counsellors (the *witan*, wise men'). This was reason why the scribe inserted the second contract into the first agreement. It was the whole process of donation and settlement of dispute that ought be commemorated in the single sheet document<sup>26)</sup>.





Fig. 8 the addition of c in the second line

The document has a boundary clause, which shows the territory of the swine pasture in Tenterden<sup>27</sup>). The place-names were largely written down clockwise: 'On the east: from the stone column to the Thanet people's brooks and to Hying brooks. On the south: *Hyingburna* as far as Ashbourne. On the west: Ashbourne as far as Ash bridge. On the north: the road from Ash bridge back to the stone column'. Witney defines this territory as 'an area of rather more than a square mile, bounded by the Tenterden-Rolvenden road on the north, the Tenterden-Smallhythe road on the east, the Reading Sewer on the south, and the Newmill Channel on the west'<sup>28</sup>). The later hundred of Tenterden was based on this territory of the swine pasture (see Figure 3). The boundary might well be precisely acknowledged by the witnesses. We may say that those people who

26) Williams, "Charters, Notifications, and Letters," p. 43.

27) Wallenberg suggested that the name of Tenterden derived from the men of Thanet (*Tenet-wara-den*), citing a diploma of 724 (S 1180), by which Æthelberht, son of King Wihtred, grants one sulung (*aratum*) by the River Limen (the original name of the River Rother) to Minster-in Thanet. The River Rother has changed its stream many times. Before the thirteenth century, its mouth was located on the old coastline around Rye. The Rother Levels were once penetrated by the sea, and the Isle of Oxney, located to the south of Tenterden, was a real island. Appledore, where the Vikings seemed to have wintered in 893, was then on the coast (*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, E. 892; A. 893-4). This area, later called Tenterden, might well have been common pasture of the men of Thanet under the overlordship of the minster. However in 968, Tenterden was probably laenland, subject to the lordship of the archbishop of Canterbury, attached to the manor of Appledore.

28) Witney, *The Jutish Forest*, p. 85

could identify the boundary should be called the local men or the country men<sup>29)</sup>, and may conclude that the local society in the unified kingdom was the body of people who took part in the settlement of disputes. By them, the locality was to be carved out from the surrounding land and recorded, not only in memory and but also in written record. The proliferation of documents is the other side of creating local society in the long eleventh century.

The country-fellows made up a faction for mutual security, in the form of kindred, or lordship, or community, or political friendship. The king's court placed emphasis on the communal activity of 'local people'. As time went on, the rustici would be replaced by thegns. From A. D. 1000 onwards, they would accept the king's orders by means of royal writs, and the king in turn would appreciate their decision as the shire-community; 'for my [the king's] will is that the judgment given by my thegns shall be upheld'.<sup>30)</sup> There were no writs without thegns in the shire among the addressees<sup>31)</sup>. John Gillingham designates the years from 990s to 1130s as 'the

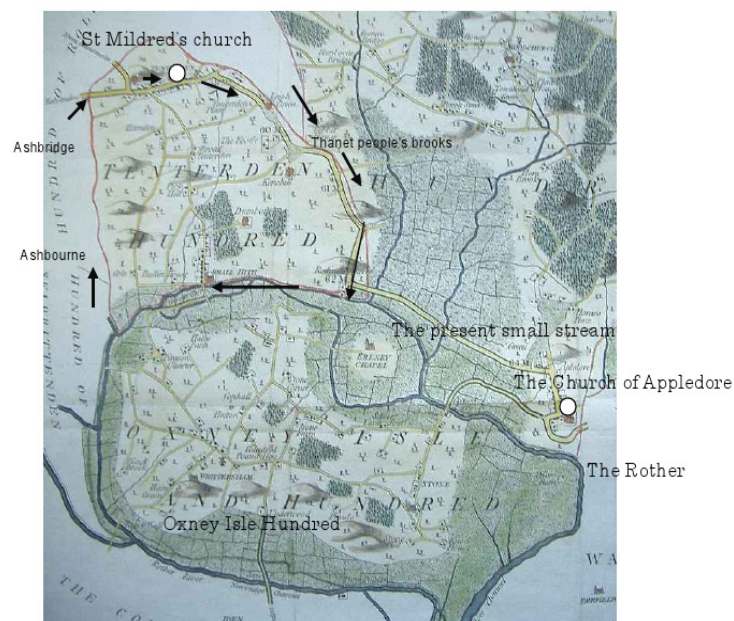
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29) The boundary description is the result of surveys carried out, in all probability, by local men and king's reeves. This process, of carving out a locality from the surrounding land and of memorizing it, is the action of grant. "In case of dispute, the bounds could be physically examined on the ground. Early in the eleventh century, the bishop of Hereford bought land at Inkberrow only to have the transaction contested by one Wulfstan, who raised the matter at the shire-court. The court decided that 'those who had traced the boundaries' for the bishop should do so again, in the presence of all parties. All concerned therefore 'rode round the boundaries, as they had been first traced for the bishop', and since they agreed that the boundaries had not changed, the estate was adjudged to the bishop's possession"(S.1460): Williams, "Charters, Notifications, and Letters," pp. 46-47.

30) F. E. Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs* (Manchester, 1952), no. 35, pp. 189-90. Cf. Richard Sharpe, "The use of writs in the eleventh century," *Anglo-Saxon England* 32 (2003): 247-91.

31) Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, pp. 45-54.

long-eleventh century<sup>32)</sup>. He put the birth of the gentry in this period, although this view of their eleventh-century origin has been criticized by Peter Coss.<sup>33)</sup> This theme, however, is beyond the range of this paper<sup>34)</sup>. Here I show you only one of the origins of local societies in tenth century England<sup>35)</sup>.



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Figure 8 The Map of Tenterden Hundred in c. 1786

32) John Gillingham, "Thegns and Knights in Eleventh-Century England: Who was then the Gentleman," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 5 (1995). Do., *The English in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 163-185, at p. 163.

33) Peter Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge, 2003).

34) See A. Williams, *The World before Domesday* (London, 2008).

35) For the second stage of the formation of local societies during King Aethelred II's reign, see Hirokazu Tsurushima, "The origins of 'the society of good men' and of their locality in eleventh century England," *The Haskins Society Journal*, Japan, 1 (Kumamoto, 2005): 33-37.

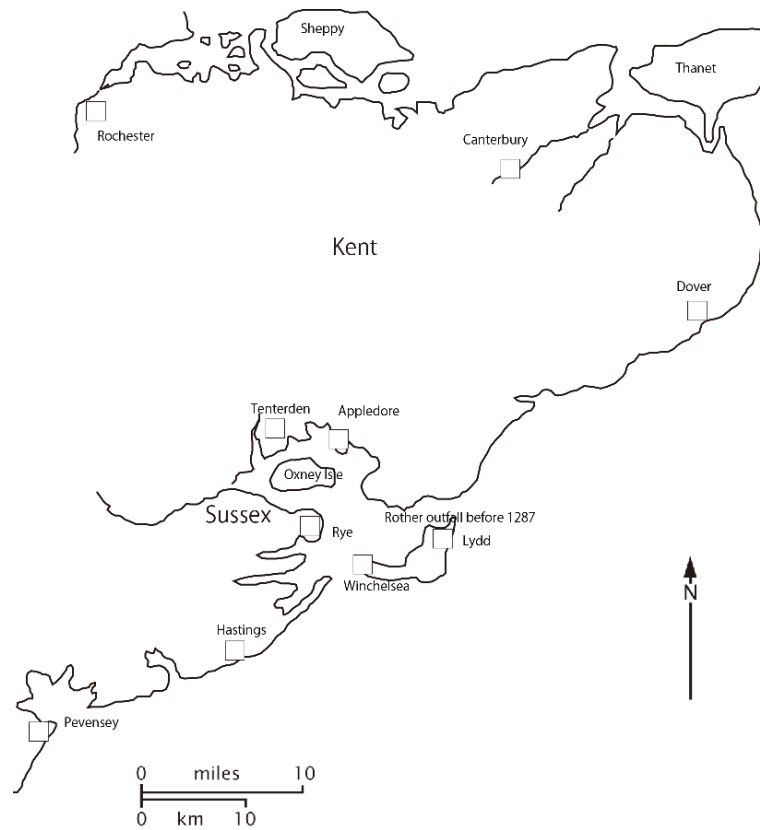


Fig. 9 Kent and Sussex in the 10th century

주제어

지역사회, 헤론덴, 앵글로색슨, 에드가 왕, Local Society, Heronden, Anglo-Saxon, King Edgar.

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/Abstract/

## The Origins of Local Society in late 'Anglo-Saxon' England

Hirokazu Tsurushima

The purpose of this paper is to show the issues surrounding the origins of local society in late 'Anglo-Saxon' England, by examining a single original notification (S.1215) from 968. A local society not only has real existence but is also a construct formed by mutual communication between central authority and the local inhabitants. The year 968 fell in the reign of King Edgar, whose coronation highlighted the process of the making of England as a unified kingdom. The document records that the king's court, held at Canterbury, authorized the agreement of a Kentish woman, Æthelflæd, with Aelfwold, on granting swine-pasture at Heronden in Tenterden, Kent, in return for 1350 pence. Both parties had their own witness-groups, including men designated as countrymen (*rustici*). It is unusual for them to appear as witnesses in documents, but the term *rusticus* had no connotation of social standing, but meant those who lived in the country. This is also true of *villanus*, someone who lived in a village. They were fellow-country men, that is, the kindred and neighbourhood of both parties, standing surety as witnesses. They also shared a common memory of this transaction with the monks of Christ Church and of St Augustine's, and the three Canterbury fellowships, of residents within the walls of the town, residents outside the walls of the town, and their dependants. The document also records the immediate and some later insertions by the same hand as the original draft. After the original agreement made, a certain Eadwold made a strong claim to the land concerned. He is assumed to be a relative, possibly a brother-in-law of Æthelflæd, the donor. To prevent

serious strife, both parties might well have decided to make second agreement with Eadwold on the payment of 100 pence to Eadwold and his sons. meeting for this second agreement was held at Appledore near Tenterden, where there was an old minster church. There appeared the fellow-countrymen as witnesses for Eadwold also appeared the community of Appledore, and five men, who played the same roll as the common witnesses at Canterbury, remembering this agreement. The document shows the effort of local people to prevent an unintended dispute over the lands in the local society. country-fellows recorded witnesses made up a faction for mutual security, in the form of kindred, or lordship, or community, or political friendship. The itinerant king's court depended on the communal activity of 'local people' for governance. time went on, the *rustici* would be replaced by thegns. A. D. 1000 onwards, they would accept the king's orders by means of royal writs, and the king in turn would appreciate their decision as the shire-community; 'for my [the king's] will is that the judgment given by my thegns shall be upheld'. There were no writs without thegns in the shire among the addressees. we call them as proto-gentry? theme, however, is beyond the range of this paper.