Sussex, Painted by Wilfrid Ball

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PART I

THE PHYSICAL NATURE OF THE COUNTY

The English counties differ in two ways from the divisions into which other European countries have fallen: in the first place, they are somewhat smaller than the average division, natural or artificial, of other countries; and in the second place, they have in many cases a more highly-specialised life. Both these features have been of great value in building up the history of England, and, before one sets out to understand any county, it is always worth one's while to remember them and to appreciate their importance in our national development.

The strong local character of counties is more discoverable in some than in others. Thus Cheshire with its distinctive plain; Cornwall with its peculiar racial and, till recently, linguistic features; Devon, all grouped round one great lump of hills, almost make little nations by themselves. Again, those who are acquainted with the north of England will mark the quite separate character which Durham contrasts against Yorkshire on the south and Northumberland upon the north. There are other districts where several counties group themselves together, and where the whole group differs more from the rest of England than do the separate counties of the group one from another. This is particularly the case with East Anglia, and to some extent it is the case with the Shires.

When (to return to the case of particular counties) some strong local differential is discoverable it can nearly always be traced to a combination of historical and topographical causes. It is our business to examine these first in an appreciation of the county of Sussex.

Sussex was created from the sea. Its inhabitants and its invaders at all periods, save perhaps in the height of the Roman prosperity, and again during the last hundred and fifty years, have had a difficulty in going northward, because there spread north of the most habitable region the long belt of what is called the Weald. Sussex is, in a word, a great range of hills along the south coast inhabited upon either slope and upon either plain

at either base, but cut off from the Thames valley by a soil long uncultivated and more suited to forest than to habitation.

[Sidenote: THE HARBOURS]

From the coast side it presents a number of clearly-defined harbours, from which it has evidently been colonised, and from which we know it to have been invaded; these harbours are the mouths of its small, parallel, characteristic rivers-the Arun, the Adur, the Ouse, the Cuckmere, and the Rother. Of natural harbours other than the mouths of the rivers it now has none, though it is probable that in the remote past plains, which are now dry land guarded by small elevations (as for example, Pevensey and Winchelsea), formed natural harbours afterwards artificially developed. These harbours are small for our modern scale of shipping, and the strong tide that runs in them is rather a disadvantage than otherwise for those who use them to-day. But in early times such tides were nothing but an advantage, and the smaller draft and beam of the shipping found ample accommodation in the river mouths. It is also to be noted that these river mouths stood at fairly even distances one from the other. There is not in the whole length of the coast of England, from the South Foreland to Penzance, a strip of coast so exactly divided by refuges set at regular distances into which small craft can run. Moreover, Sussex also provides a multitude of those even, sloping, and safe beaches which were of such immense importance to early navigators, with whom the beaching of a whole fleet was among the commonest ways of effecting a landing. The typical Sussex example of this early advantage and of a town springing around it is, of course, to be discovered at Hastings.

It may next be inquired what limits eastward and westward existed to form natural boundaries for the county. This is a point of great interest which has been but little examined, but which a consideration of the geography of Sussex should make sufficiently plain. The early settlements along the river mouths were grouped together in one countryside by the comparative facility of communication along the sea-plain, and again by the comparative facility of communication along the well-watered belt to the north of the Downs. It may be imagined that the settlements around the harbours of the Ouse, of the Arun, and of the Adur, would, from the earliest times, have been in touch with each other along the flat of the coast, and that their extensions along the river valleys to

the north of the hills, as also the separate harbour at the mouth of the Rother, would equally have been in communication by that ancient track most of which subsists to this day, and of which further mention will be made later on in these pages. But, when the primitive inhabitant attempted a similar communication

eastward into what is now Kent, or westward with what is now Hampshire, his way was barred by two great tongues of marsh.

[Sidenote: THE MARSHES]

Traces of these marshes still exist after two thousand years of cultivation, and in the very earliest times they must have presented a most formidable obstacle to travel. The one group which lies to the east of the valley of the Rother is still in part undrained; the other, which forms a mass of tidal creeks and inlets round about Hayling Island, Bosham, and Chichester harbour, is almost equally difficult. These two, then, set the limits of the county; for marsh is, of all obstacles, the most considerable at the beginning of a civilisation, as it is the least remembered in the height of one. It cannot be forded as can a stream, nor swum nor sailed upon; mere effort, such as that required for the climbing of mountains, is of no avail against it, and, whereas some considerable toil will clear a track through a forest, and a track which, in our climate at least, can be maintained, once it is formed, with little labour, no such effort is of avail to primitive man in attempting to cross a morass. To drain it is quite beyond his power, and the formation of a causeway of hard land is, even in our own day, a most expensive and long process, as those readers who are acquainted with the history of our engineering will remember when they recall the building of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway across Chat Moss.

It may be remarked in passing that there are scattered up and down England many examples of the difficulties which Fenland and bog present to an imperfect civilisation, and these are to be found in the "Stretfords," "Stratfords," "Standfords," etc., which invariably mark a place where a hard Roman road was conducted across a river and its adjoining wet lands. In such places the straight line of the old Roman road can usually be traced, and one can also usually see how the modern road follows a devious track given to it after the decline of the Roman civilisation, when the imperial ways had been allowed to decay, and the half-barbarian traveller of the Dark Ages picked his way as best he could from one dry patch to another. These

deviations of the modern from the Roman lines across rivers and marshes in England are one of the most striking evidences of the gulf into which civilisation sank after the advent of the Saxon pirates.

[Sidenote: DATE OF TOWNS]

Sussex, then, has been naturally delimited in its growth by the forest of the Weald all along the north, and by these two groups of marshes at the extreme east and west of the county; and the older our record the greater importance assumed by towns within reach of, or upon, the sea. Thus Midhurst, Petworth, Pulboro, Horsham, Mayfield, Battle, come all of them comparatively late in the history of the development of the county. Chichester, Arundel, Lewes, Hastings, Pevensey, come early in that development, and so does Bramber with its harbour of Old Shoreham. Pevensey and Chichester are associated with a Roman name; Bramber, or rather its neighbour Shoreham, and Pevensey (again) with the first of the Saxon invasions. Arundel with the reign of King Alfred; Hastings and (for the third time) Pevensey with the Norman invasion; whereas the other towns that lie in a belt northward upon the edge of the Weald are not heard of till the Middle Ages.

The present boundaries of the county are necessarily somewhat artificial, though they conform fairly closely to the natural features which we have just been considering. Their artificiality is most easily seen along the north. The true line of division should run along the ridge of the forests: St Leonards and Ashdown.

As a fact, political and organised Sussex overlaps this ridge and takes in part of what is geographically Surrey upon the north. The reason of this is that during many centuries the Weald was so sparsely inhabited that the Surrey villages under the North Downs, and the Sussex villages under the South Downs, thrust out long extensions into the forest, a custom which gave to those parishes a most peculiar shape. They were drawn into strips, as it were, whose inhabitants dwelt clustered at one end of the elongated band. A phenomenon of much the same kind is to be discovered along the St. Lawrence in Canada, where each village clustered upon the river claims a long strip of hinterland behind it into the forest of the north.

The line of division between these Surrey parishes, which stretched out southwards into the forest and these Sussex villages which stretched out northward to meet them, was probably never clearly defined, and was, indeed, of little importance. The

[Sidenote: PARISHES OF WEALD]

farther one got from the village church and the group of houses, the less it mattered under whose jurisdiction one fell, and when, with the growth of civilisation and the necessity for exact

boundaries, a line was at last drawn, it was drawn somewhat in favour of the Sussex parishes, whose manorial lords were of greater political importance than those of Surrey: for the reason that they held the great castles which defended the south of England. It was, presumably, in this way that the ribbon of land which lies to the north of the forest ridge came to be included within the political boundaries of the modern county.

Viewed in the light of such a development from the sea, the topography of Sussex falls into a comparatively simple scheme.

The whole county is determined by the great line of chalk hills which stand steep up against the Weald, that is, with their escarpment facing northward, and which slope gradually towards the sea plain upon the south in such a fashion, that a section taken anywhere in that range resembles in form a wave driven forward by the south-west wind and just about to break over the Weald. It is not the least of the unities which render Sussex so harmonious that this main range of the South Downs, which are the strong framework of the whole county, should have all the appearance of being blown forward into its shape by those Atlantic gales which also determine the configuration of the trees in the sea-plain and upon the slopes of the hills.

Were this range of the South Downs to run parallel to the sea throughout the length of the county the topographical scheme of which we are speaking could be set forth in very few words. The whole county would fall at once and without qualification into four long parallel belts: the sea-plain, the Downs next inland to it, the belt of old villages at the foot of the Downs to the north (that is, the southern edge of the Weald), and the forest ridge to the north of the whole. As a fact, however, these lines, though parallel to one another, are not strictly parallel to the sea coast; they tilt somewhat from the north-west to the south-east, so that the plan of the county resembles a piece of stuff woven in four broad bands which have been cut in bias, or, as the phrase goes, "on the cross." Each belt has, therefore, its termination on the sea. The coastal plain gets narrower and narrower, and comes to an end at Brighton; the Chalk Downs run into the sea just beyond this point, and are cut off, in sharp white cliffs all along Seaford Bay, in a

face of white precipice which culminates at Beachy Head. The southern Weald and the flats, which run all across the county just north of the Downs, come to the sea in that great even stretch between Eastbourne and Hastings for which the general name is Pevensey Level; and, finally, the somewhat complicated and

diversified forest ridge, with its mixture of clay and sand, runs into the sea in the neighbourhood of Hastings.

[Sidenote: THE FOUR BELTS]

These four great belts may be traced, not only in the relief of the county, but also in its superficial geology; the sea plain is throughout of a deep, strong, brown loamy soil, among the most fertile in England, and fetching by far the highest rents paid anywhere in the county. In the best of its stretch, between Chichester and Worthing, it is from four to six miles broad, closely inhabited and, though recently marred by the growth of a whole string of watering-places, still preserving a very characteristic life of its own. Except Chichester no town of any antiquity stands upon it, but it nourishes a great number of prosperous agricultural villages, the size and the architecture of whose churches are sufficient to prove their economic condition in the past.

Among the most characteristic of these is Yapton, which is supposed to be the "tun" or hamlet of Eappa-a comrade of St. Wilfred's, the missionary and the first bishop of the county. Lyminster is another excellent example of what these places were in the past, and its great church is the more striking from the decay of the parish around it.

The forest ridge (to take the farther boundary first) has, though somewhat confused, a geological characteristic of its own, for it consists of sand rising from and mixed with the clay of the Weald. This clay, in its turn, lying between the forest ridge and the Downs, though diversified by occasional outcrops of sand, is fairly uniform. From the beginning it has been covered, not very thickly, but very generally, with those short, strong oaks which have furnished the timber for all the old buildings of the county. We will turn later to the question of whether this stiff and somewhat ungrateful soil of the Weald was ever wholly uninhabited: in this initial survey it must suffice to remark that even to-day the development of that soil is difficult. Places specially favoured with good water have been occupied for centuries, and form at the present time the market towns of the Weald. The spaces between them are remarkable

[Sidenote: WATER ON THE WEALD]

for the isolation of their farmhouses, and to-day for the way in which the Londoner is discovering to his cost the stubborn nature of the county. Modern invention, and especially the invention of the motor car, has made this situation tempting enough to townsmen,

but the new buildings which they attempt to found upon places whose desertion is incomprehensible to them are met with continual difficulties. The water is often bad, the soil much damper in winter than the summer promised-for these experiments are nearly always the result of a first view taken in the height of summer. The long, and often futile, digging for good water, the cost of pumping it when, if ever, it is found, combine to make the new attempts at building on the clay of the Weald grow slacker as time proceeds. There are, however, more grateful opportunities scattered here and there in those outcrops of sand and gravel of which I have spoken. Haywards Heath has grown up in this way, and there are a multitude of villages half-way between the forest ridge and the Downs which owe the greater part of their beauty to the sharp contours of the sandstone.

These outcrops have formed centres of population from the very earliest times, as, for example, at Burton, Egdean, Thakeham, Ashington, and in many other places.

This belt of clay interspersed with occasional heights of sand, and lying between the forest ridge and the Downs, is the broadest of the four; it is rarely less than ten miles in width and often as much as fifteen. Just between it and the escarpment of the Downs runs a narrow belt of green-sand, and again, right under the hills, a narrow belt of loam, which last affords almost the best arable land in this part of the county. It is this narrow belt of loam which has given their value to a procession of famous estates under the shadow of the hills, as Heyshott, where was Cobden's Farm; Graffham; Lavington, which was Sargent land, and of which Wilberforce and Manning were in turn the squires; Burton, which was the first to appear in history; West Burton; Bignor, which the Romans developed; Bury, upon the Arun. To some extent Parrham, the most typical of Sussex houses, and Wistons, the best example of the renaissance, draw their wealth from this narrow belt of loam, as, farther east, does New Timber, and many another great house. The list might be extended indefinitely.

This long stretch under the escarpment of the

[Sidenote: THE BRITISH TRACK]

Downs contains, perhaps, the oldest remaining monument of man's activity in the county: all the way from Heyshott to Ditchling Beacon, and, as it is claimed, even right on to Lewes, there runs what is evidently a prehistoric trackway. Its antiquity is proved by many indications, but chiefly by this, that it has sunk deep, even

into the hardest soils. There is a point near Sutton, under Cold Harbour Hill, where it is perhaps twelve feet below the general level of the soil, and there are many places where it is over six. This old way, which is utilised almost throughout the whole of its length by modern lanes, links up centres of population which are as old, one must imagine, as the existence of mankind in this island. Their names are those which we have just seen in connection with the great estates to which these villages belong-Lavington, Bignor, Bury, Amberley, Storrington, Washington, Steyning, Bramber, Povnings, Fulcking, and so on eastwards to Lewes.

It was not only the fertility of the loam, nor only the proximity of the Weald for a hunting-ground, that produced these little prehistoric villages, but also the excellent supply of water.

Sussex is, perhaps, of all the English counties that one in which it is most difficult to find good water, as we have already seen in speaking of the Weald, and as we shall see further when we come to talk of the Chalk Downs. But these little villages, standing as they do just upon the crack where the chalk (which is permeable and full of water like a sponge) comes sharp on to the impermeable soil of the Weald, are all fed by a multitude of delicious running streams filtered through hundreds of feet of the pure carbon of the hills and bursting out along the old road. They turn mills, they water orchards and small closes, they spread into teeming fish-ponds, and have, more than any other cause, created these little villages. There is hardly one without its stream.

Having reviewed these three belts-the coast-plain, the forest ridge, and the southern belt of the Weald-it remains for us to describe that which is by far the most important, namely, the South Downs. It will be necessary to devote to those hills a closer attention than we have given to the rest of the county, for one may call them, without much exaggeration, the county itself. Sussex is Sussex on account of the South Downs. Their peculiar landscape, their soil, their uniformity, give the county all its meaning.

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[Sidenote: THE CHALK-RANGES]

The principal hill ranges of South England, the Chilterns, the Cotswold, the Mendips, the North and South Downs, the Dorset Downs, and the Berkshire Downs, roughly converge upon Salisbury Plain. Of the importance of that site in the history of our island there is no space to speak here, but it is necessary to remember

the disposition of the ranges in order to appreciate how great a rôle the South Downs must have played in the early history of Britain; for they furnished, as did the other three great chalk ranges (the Dorset Downs, the North Downs, and the Chilterns, with their continuation in the Berkshire Downs), the main routes of travel in early times. They were bare of trees, dry, and fairly even along their summits, and, save in a few places, they afforded a good view upon either side, so that the traveller could in primitive times beware of the approach of enemies.

The great mass of chalk which forms the Hampshire Highland splits, before the eastern boundary of that county is reached, into two branches; the northern one of these runs through Surrey, straight to the Medway in Kent, crosses that river, and turns down to meet the sea at Dover. The southern branch enters the county of Sussex just beyond Petersfield, and thence eastward forms this range of the South Downs.

There is no other stretch of hills precisely like them in Europe; their nearest counterpart is that other northern range formed much upon the same model, and of the same material, which looks at them from thirty miles away across the Weald. They run in one straight wall for sixty miles, maintaining throughout that length a similar conformation with a similar escarpment turned perpetually to the north; a similar absence of water; a similar presence from place to place of groups of beech-trees which occasionally crown their highest summits; a similar succession of comparatively low passes, and a similar though rarer series of what the people of the county call "gaps," that is, gorges, or rather rounded clefts, in which their continuity is completely broken by the passage of a river. They are the most uniform, the most striking, and the most individual of all the lower ranges to be discovered in this island or in neighbouring countries. They might be compared by a traveller to the line of the Argonne, or to the steep, even hills above the Moselle before it enters German territory. But they are more of one kind than are even these united ranges. Coming upon

[Sidenote: NATURE OF SOUTH DOWNS]

them from the north, as so many do now, motoring and bicycling south from London, their steep, sharp face showing black with the daylight behind it, is the principal feature of the south-east of England.

Their contours depend, of course, upon the chalk of which they are built. This lies in regular layers five, six, and sometimes eight

hundred feet deep from their summits to the level of the plain beneath them. It is weathered into rounded shapes that have no peaks and no precipices, or at least no precipices save those which man has deliberately created, where he has dug straight out of their sides for chalk, or where they meet the sea and are washed into perpendicular cliffs. These rounded lines of theirs against the sky, when one is travelling along them, seem in some way to add to their loneliness, and that loneliness is among the most striking of their features.

They have never been built upon; it is to be believed (and profoundly to be hoped) they never will be built upon. The depth to which wells have to be sunk before water can be found is so great as to check any experiment of this kind. There is in the whole skyline, from Petersfield right to Beachy Head, not a single human habitation to break the noble aspect of these hills against the sky save one offensive shed, or what not, just north of Brighton where, it may be presumed, the economic powers of vulgarism are too strong even for the Downs.

Cultivation is also very rare upon them. They are covered with a short, dense, and very sweet turf suited to the famous flocks of sheep which browse upon them, and of little value for any other agricultural purpose than the pasturage thus afforded.

Those who best know the Downs and have lived among them all their lives can testify how, for a whole day's march, one may never meet a man's face; or if one meets it, it will be the face of some shepherd who may be standing lonely with his dog beside him upon the flank of the green hill and with his flock scattered all around. The isolation of these summits is the more remarkable from the pressure of population which is growing so rapidly to the south of them, and which is beginning to threaten the Weald to their north. But no modern change seems to affect the character of these lonely stretches of grass, and it may be noted with satisfaction that, when those ignorant of the nature of Sussex attempt to violate the security of the Downs, that experiment of theirs is commonly attended with misfortune.

[Sidenote: THE SUSSEX RIVERS]

Thus an open space of park-land beyond Madehurst invited the eye of a very wealthy man (presumably from the north) somewhat more than a century ago. He had not, indeed, the folly to build upon the crest of the hills, but he built not far from their summits for the pleasure that the view afforded him. The house was large

and pretentious. To this day it depends for its water upon chance rains, and in the drought it pays for water as one may have to do for any other valuable thing.

We have seen that the unison of the Downs is broken by a certain number of regular gaps-the valleys, that is, of the Wealden rivers. For the rivers of Sussex, by an accident which geologists have attempted to explain, are not determined by the rise of these great hills, but on the contrary cut right through them from the Weald to the sea. The Arun, from the Wealden town of Pulborough to its seaport of Littlehampton, the little Adur from various sources round by Shipley and Cuckfield to its harbour town of Shoreham, the Ouse from the Wealden town of Uckfield to its harbour town of Newhaven, all cut right through the chalk hills and form narrow, level valleys of alluvial soil between one section of the Downs and the next.

These valleys where they cut through the Downs were never used for roads before modern times. The good road along the little Adur to Shoreham is fairly old, but it must be remembered that at this point the Downs come very close to the sea. Along the Ouse and along the Arun no road was attempted until quite lately. There does now exist, and perhaps has existed for two or three hundred years past, a road from Lewes to the mouth of the Ouse, but even to-day there is none along the Arun valley. The soil was too marshy for such a road to be constructed in early times, and the dry hill-way once fixed and metalled has become the only permanent road to Arundel.

The afforesting of the range of the Downs is worthy of remark. The woods are of two kinds-those that crown the foot-hills towards the sea and here and there the high slopes of the Downs themselves, and those that have caught on to the slight alluvial drift of the hollows. In both cases they are principally of beech, while in the open around them, along the old tracks and clinging to the crest of the escarpments, are lines of very ancient and somewhat stunted yews. In both cases, whether over the round of the hills or in their hollows, the Sussex woods are somewhat limited in extent and fairly clear of undergrowth. Through all the forest

[Sidenote: THE BEECH AND THE YEW]

known as the Nore Wood a man can ride his horse in pretty well any direction without following a path; the same is true of Houghton Forest and of the other large woods of the Downs. This ease they owe to two things: first, the character of the

beech-trees, which forms under its branches a thick bed of mast, out of which but few spears of greenery will show; and, secondly, that quality of the chalk by which (to the salvation of Sussex!) it is but slightly fertile, and by which it therefore preserves itself intact from the invasion of man. Indeed, it is remarkable that the two trees of the Downs, the yew and the beech, both make for a clear soil, and there is a proverb in those parts-

Under the Beech and th' Yow Nowt'll grow.

The valleys of the Downs differ very much according to whether they are upon the south or upon the north of the range. Those to the south are valleys of erosion, shallow, broad, and funnel-shaped, with their wide mouths opening towards the sea and the south-west wind. They are usually called Stenes,-a word which is sometimes spelt "Steine,"-the best known of which hollows is the valley running through Brighton. There are any number between that point and Goodwood. In their lower parts they support farmhouses, and occasionally they carry one of the great roads which cross the Downs from the north. They are wind-swept, and hold the snow very late; but in summer they are among the most sheltered corners of South England.

Upon the north the steep escarpment of the hills forbids any such conformation. Here the valleys take the shape of very steep hollows of a horseshoe outline known as combes, a Celtic word, and frequently hung with deep woods which are known both here and in Kent (and in other parts of the south country) as hangers. The most sombre and the most silent of these are perhaps those of Burton, Lavington, and Bury.

The woods upon the slopes, the foot-hills, and the summits are of a different order. Those upon the actual crests are commonly artificial, and are known as "clumps" or "rings." The Dukes of Richmond have planted a few such near Goodwood, but the most famous is the great landmark of Chanctonbury Ring, above Wiston, which is a resting-point for the eye not only up and down forty miles of the Channel, but also up and down forty miles of the opposing northern range. The woods of the foot-hills and of the slopes are, on the

[Sidenote: DEW PANS]

contrary, primeval-as can be proved from the absence beneath them of Roman or prehistoric remains.

It has already been remarked that the hydrographical system of the South Downs is a peculiar one, that the rivers of Sussex are in no way determined as to their courses by that range of hills, and that the heights themselves are devoid of water, because all that falls upon them percolates through the chalk and does not spring out again until it finds the clay at their base. But there is upon the Downs a traditional method of water-getting handed down, perhaps, from prehistoric times when the camps of refuge, of which we shall speak in a moment, were hard put to it to water their garrisons. This method is the formation of dew pans. A space is hollowed out, preferably towards the summit of a hill. It is circular and shallow in form, and is coated with some impermeable substance-to-day, usually, with concrete. In a very short time this pan will fill with the dew and the rain, and in such a pond, if its dimensions are sufficiently large, there will but rarely be lack of water after it is once formed. It is true that no great strain is laid upon them, though the present writer does know of one case, outside the boundaries of the county, where a large one has been constructed to supply all the needs of a considerable household.

A further matter which every one who is familiar with them must have remarked upon the Downs, is the presence of numerous earthworks raised apparently for defence, and often of very great size. The classical instances of these and the most perfect examples are upon Mount Caburn and Cissbury, one of the foot-hills towards the sea, upon which research has proved that the prehistoric, the Roman, and the barbarian pirate inhabitants have lived in succession. Here was discovered that regular manufactory of flint instruments which is among the most curious prizes of modern prehistoric research, and here also Roman and Saxon ornaments have been found succeeding those of the neolithic men.

But though Cissbury is the most perfect, it is but one of very many similar camps. There is hardly one of the greater summits of the Downs that does not bear traces of these enclosures, and upon some of the hills, notably east of Ambery and again east of Bramber, they are as perfect as they are enormous. There can be little doubt that they were created for the purposes of defence, and the late General Pitt-Rivers conducted an

[Sidenote: THE TUMULI]

exhaustive inquiry into the number of men that would be required to garrison them, upon their structure, positions, and numbers in this and other countries. But the historical, or rather prehistoric problem which they present does not end with the discovery of

their original use, for it is difficult to understand, first, where the multitudes can have come from which sufficed to man such considerable embankments; and, secondly, where provision, and above all water, can have been found for such garrisons; for though, as we have seen, the dew pans will always furnish water in certain amounts, they would never have sufficed for the large numbers which alone could hold from half-a-mile to a mile of rampart and ditch.

Associated with these old camps are the tumuli to be found throughout the whole length of the Downs, especially upon their main ridge. But the reader who is interested in such things must be warned against accepting too uncritically the evidence of the Ordnance Survey upon this matter. In the majority of cases it is right, especially with regard to the very interesting group of tombs just beyond the kennels at Upwaltham, above the Chichester road where it crosses the Downs at Duncton Hill; but there is at least one case, and there are probably others, where the heaps of material accumulated in the making of the roads have been erroneously ascribed to our prehistoric ancestors, and, if the present writer is not mistaken, there is an error of this kind marked upon the map close to the new London road which climbs Bury Hill on its way to cross the Downs at Whiteways Lodge.

The complete isolation of these heights, their loneliness, and their wild charm, is enhanced by a line of towns and of villages especially dependent upon them and standing at their feet towards the south. The northern line of villages which lies just under their escarpment on the edge of the Weald, which we have described as being probably prehistoric sites, and which are connected by what has certainly been a prehistoric road, are not directly made by or dependent upon the Downs themselves. Their farmers are not usually large sheep farmers; their shepherds are few; their lives and their industries are those of the plain; their building materials are oak and plaster; their inhabitants but rarely climb the very steep hillsides immediately above them. The villages and towns to the south, on the contrary, owe their very existence to the Downs, and show in their every aspect the

[Sidenote: THE SOUTHERN FORT-HILLS]

influence of the range which backs them and by which they live. From these villages proceed the principal flocks of sheep; in one of them, Findon, is the principal sheep fair of the country. Their plough lands are commonly poor, from the admixture of the last slopes of the chalk; their wealth is in flocks and in folds. In the

Middle Ages they added to this the pannage which the beech mast of their woods afforded to swine. Right along from the Hampshire border to where the Downs fall into the sea beyond Brighton, from Goodwood that is, through Halnaecker, Eartham, Slindon, Arundel, Angmering, Lancing, to Rottingdeane-or rather to what Rottingdeane used to be before the æsthetes turned it pure Cockney twenty years ago-runs this row of little ancient places which are the typical Sussex homes of all.

They grew up, as did those others of which we have spoken, where water could be found, and also, it may be presumed, where there was some local opportunity for defence now forgotten; the growth of Arundel certainly depended upon these two factors, to some extent probably that of Slindon (which centres round its great pond), and it may be supposed that of Lancing as well.

In their architecture these villages are, as it were, a physical outgrowth of the Downs. The oak, which one sees so commonly in the Weald, is but rarely present here; the roofs are of thatch, the walls of flint.

Flint is, of course, the stone of the chalk, and the supply is unfailing because, by a curious phenomenon which has never been thoroughly explained, no matter how many flints are taken from the surface of the soil, others continue to "sweat up" through the chalk and to take the places of those that have been removed; there is never for very long a lack of surface flints in the fields adjoining these villages. There are some such villages in which every old building without exception, even the squire's house and the church, are entirely built of flint, as are the boundary walls of the parks and of the farms. The material has, however (at least in the constructions of the last few centuries), one great defect, which is that the mortar does not bind it as strongly as it will bind brick or stone. This defect has been explained as being due to the extremely hard nature of the silex, for to bind material together it is essential that the binding flux, the mortar, should penetrate more or less into the pores of that which it binds, and for this reason brick and stone are

[Sidenote: FLINT-BUILDING]

wetted before being laid upon the mortar. Obviously no wetting can be of the least use where one is dealing with flint. Nevertheless, the old work of the country is singularly enduring. Of this a first-rate example is afforded to the traveller by the one great slab of wall which is all that remains of Bramber Castle. Here is a piece

of masonry standing perpendicularly for perhaps fifty feet in height, not particularly thick, made entirely of flint, and yet standing upright in spite of sieges and artillery fire, the destruction of all its supports, and the passage of at least six hundred years.

It would be for an expert to discuss what were the causes of this superior excellence in the older work; but it may be suggested by one who has looked closely into several specimens of mediæval flint-building, that two rules were almost invariably observed by our ancestors before the Reformation. The first was to preserve as carefully as possible the natural casing or "skin" of hardened chalk which surrounds every large flint, and to have none of the smooth stone surface showing except on the outside of the wall. The second was to use nothing but the fine sand which the county affords so plentifully in the mixing of the mortar. It may be, of course, that here, as in so many other cases, the argument applies that we merely imagine the older work to be better because the best of it alone survives, but it is at least remarkable that hardly any flint work of the last three hundred years has come down without some distortion from the perpendicular.

A very marked way of handling this stone is the cutting of the outer surface. This treatment is not peculiar to Sussex; it is to be found in East Anglia and in other parts of England where flints are common, but it is perhaps more general in Sussex than elsewhere, and may have originated in this county. The separate dressing of so many small stones is an expensive matter, and it is probably the very expense which is so incurred, or rather the great expenditure of energy connoted by the appearance of such work, which impresses and is designed to impress the spectator of it. Perhaps the most perfect specimen of a modern sort is the great house at West Deane; but all those who love their county are pleased to remark that in the new work at Arundel Castle this true Sussex style has been observed.

There is but one further point to be remarked with regard to the Downs country, and that is the nature of the communication across the hills.

[Sidenote: THE PASSES]

It has already been said that the main river valleys were not much used for such communications; that there is no case of both sides of one of the river gaps being so used throughout the whole length of the county; and that there is but one case of a road following a river before modern times (the case of the old road from Bramber

to Shoreham); while to this day (it will be remembered) the Arun valley is utilised by nothing but the railway.

Crossings from north to south in Sussex, from the Weald to the sea-plain, are therefore invariably carried over the crest of the hills, and it is a matter for some astonishment that in a county so near London, and to reach a district so thickly populated and so wealthy as is the South Coast, the passages should be so few. With the exception of the Falmer Road from Lewes to Brighton (which can hardly be said to cross the main range), there are but five roads leading from the Weald to the sea-plain. The main Brighton Road which goes over Clayton Hill, the Worthing Road over Washington, the Arundel Road over Bury, the Chichester Road over Duncton, and the second Chichester Road over Cocking.

The uniformity of type which distinguishes the Downs causes all these roads to take much the same section: they choose a low saddle in the range (the Arundel Road is something of an exception here, for the saddle of Bury Hill is a high one); they rise up very sharply to the summit and then fall easily away towards the sea-plain; and though Cocking Hill is perhaps the shortest, Bury Hill the longest, of the five, it is an error to attempt, as do many who are insufficiently acquainted with the county, to avoid the steepness of the ascent by taking a detour. All or any one of these roads will try the traveller or the machine which he uses, and it must be remembered that these five are the only roads of any sort which cross the Downs. Many a track marked as crossing them is, when one comes to pursue it, nothing but a "ride" of grass in no way different from the rest of the grass of the Downs. All these roads have, however, one advantage attached to them, which is the astonishing view of the coastal plain which greets one from their summits, especially the view from Whiteways and the sudden and unexpected panorama at Benges, which is the second and highest summit of the Duncton Hill Road.

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This topographical division of our subject cannot

[Sidenote: THE SUSSEX RIVERS]

be concluded without a more particular description of the Sussex rivers. Of these the first in importance and the largest is the Arun. It rises in a lake which is little known, and which is yet of great beauty, in St. Leonard's Forest, runs as a small and very winding stream through Horsham and the northern Wealden parts of the

county, and only begins to acquire the importance of a true river in the neighbourhood of Stopham. Here it is crossed by an old bridge which is itself among the most beautiful structures of the county, and which spans the river at one of its broadest and most secluded reaches. It is also the true dividing line between the Upper and the Lower Arun, because it is the extreme limit that the tide has ever reached even under the most favourable circumstances of high springs and drought. Just below Stopham there falls into the Arun a little river called the Rother, or Western Rother, to distinguish it from the Eastern Rother which is the principal stream at the other end of the county. This little river, which was canalised and usable for traffic until, like all the rest of our waterways, it was killed by the railroads, waters a most charming valley strung with towns and villages whose names we have already mentioned in another connection. At its head is the millpond of Midhurst; it runs through the land of Cowdray (which is the great park of Midhurst), past Burton Rough, south of Petworth, where it turns one of its several mills, and on past Coates and Fittleworth, where it runs close to that inn which most English artists know, and the panels of whose coffee-room have been painted in landscapes by such various hands.

When the Rother has thus fallen into the Arun, the two streams uniting run beneath the houses of Pulborough, and under its bridge, of which the reader will hear more when we come to speak of the historical development of the county; for this was the spot at which the great Roman road which united London with the coastal plain crossed the Arun, and the foundations of Pulborough are almost certainly Roman.

From the little hill upon which this town stands one looks south across a great expanse of dead level meadow, flanked with sandy hills of pine, towards the dark line of the Downs. The river turns and makes for these, aiming at the gap which cuts them clean in two just south of Amberley. Often during the year these flats are covered with floods, and as the river is embanked and the entry of water through the meadows can be regulated by sluices,

[Sidenote: ARUNDEL GAP]

the pasturage of these flooded levels is of great value. The stream rolls on, more and more turbid with the advent of the tide, spreads out into the willow thickets of Amberley Wildbrook where there is good shooting of snipe, runs on right under Bury, leaving Amberley Castle upon the left, passes beneath the causeway and the bridge at Houghton, and so enters the Arundel Gap. Here it is completely

lonely. There are not even small footpaths by which the villages of this narrow valley can be reached from the north, though their names of "Southstoke" and "Northstoke" indicate an early passage of some sort, for this place-name throughout South England refers to the "staking" by which the passage of a river was made firm. Two new dykes, cutting off long corners, have been dug in the course of this valley, and they take the main stream, while the old river runs in a narrow and sluggish course by a long detour towards Burpham. The main channel, as it now exists, continues to keep to the right hand side of the valley, where it is continually overhung by the deep woods of Arundel Park; and at last, a little below the Blackrabbit Inn, one sees, jutting out like a spur from the bulk of the hills, the great mass of the Castle.

The attitude of Arundel, standing above the river at this point, is hardly to be matched by any of the river towns of England. It stands up on its steep bank looking right down upon the tidal stream and towards the sea. The houses are natural to the place (the hideous new experiments upon the further bank are hidden from the river), and all the roofs are either old or at least consonant to the landscape, while the situation chosen for St. Philip's Church, and its architecture, happen by an accident that is almost unknown in modern work, to be exactly suited to the landscape of which it forms the crown, and to balance the background of the Castle and the Keep.

Below the bridge at Arundel the Arun becomes a purely maritime river. It runs in a deep tidal channel with salt meadows upon either side, and with a very violent tide of great height scouring between its embankments. There are no buildings directly upon its sides save one poor lonely inn and church at Ford, and in seven miles it reaches the sea at Littlehampton, pouring into the Channel over one of the shallowest and most dangerous bars upon this coast.

The other rivers merit a much briefer attention.

The Adur is but a collection of very small

[Sidenote: THE ADUR]

streams which meet in the water meadows above Henfield, where it becomes a broad ditch; it cannot be called a true river until it is close upon the hill of Bramber within a few miles of the sea. It is, in fact, a sort of miniature Arun, but its effect in history has been almost as great as that of the larger river, as we shall see farther on, for it also has pierced its own gap through the Downs, and this

gap has been, like Arundel, from the earliest times one of the avenues of invasion, and therefore one of the strong places for defence. It runs through this gap, past two delightful and almost unknown relics of mediæval England, parishes that have decayed until they are merely small chapels attached to lonely farms (their names are Coombes and Buttolphs), and comes to where its mouth used to be, at old Shoreham, where was a Roman landing-place, and where the Saxons are said first to have landed also. But the river has built up between itself and the sea a great beach of shingle. Its mouth has gone travelling farther and farther down along the coast, and, had not modern work arrested this process, there probably would have happened to Shoreham what has happened to Orford upon the East Coast. For Orford was also once a great mediæval harbour, the mouth of which has drifted farther and farther off and silted up as it travelled.

The Adur will perhaps cut its largest figure in literature from the fact that it has been the occasion of one of the most ridiculous pieces of pedantry which even modern archæology has fallen into. A statement has been made (it has been taken seriously in our universities) that the Adur had no name until about 200 years ago, that the name it now bears was given it by Camden the historian, and that the Sussex peasants took the title of their river humbly from a writer of books, and have continued to use an artificial and foreign word! If anything were required to prove that a contention of this sort was nonsense it would be enough to point out that the word Adur is, like so many of our Sussex names, Celtic in its origin, and means, like so many Celtic names for rivers, "the water"; it is the same as the southern French name Adour.

The third river, the Ouse, also bears a Celtic name. It is somewhat larger than the Adur, but considerably smaller than the Arun. Like the Adur it flows from insignificant streams until it gets to its water meadows near Lewes, and also like the Adur it has cut its gap through the Downs,

[Sidenote: THE OUSE]

and has therefore created a point of high strategical importance in the fortified hill of Lewes. But, unlike the Adur, the maritime portion of its course is of some length, and during these eight miles or so between Lewes and the mouth at Newhaven it rather resembles the lower part of the Arun. It has the same treeless, marshy sides, highly embanked for the formation of water meadows, the same strong, scouring tide, the same violent current, but, luckily for the London, Brighton, and South Coast

Railway, not the same bar. The entry at Newhaven is particularly easy, the best in the county, and would be fairly easy even without the dredging that is carried on, or the breakwater that defends it from the south-west.

These three rivers between them form the main hydrographical features of the centre of the county; their three harbours standing at almost exactly regular intervals are the sole entries to the west and middle of Sussex; the three gaps in the Downs behind those harbours are the three gates to South England from the sea; the three castles that defend those gaps complete the significance of the series.

The Cuckmere is but a very small stream coming out just beyond Newhaven with Seaford at its mouth, and would be scarcely worth mentioning were it not for the fact that, like its larger sisters, it shows that singular capacity for cutting right down through the chalk hills and making a gap through which it can pass to the sea.

This feature, which is common to the Sussex rivers, is also discovered in the streams which cross the northern chalk range into the Thames valley. These also are three in number-the Wey, the Mole, and the Darent. And it is conjectured by scientists that these three rivers, like those other three in Sussex, the Arun, the Adur, and the Ouse, run independent of the chalk hills, and cut through them from the following cause: the Wealden heights, the forest ridge that is, in which all six take their rise, is conceived to be geologically much older than the North or the South Downs, and it is presumed that the rivers had already formed their valleys, and were already beginning to erode the surface of the land before the chalk hills began to arise, so that as the Downs gradually rose the little rivers continued their sawing, and kept to their original level while the great heaps of white shell which were building up our hills rose upon either side of their valleys. This theory, unfortunately, like most scientific theories, and especially geological ones, is traversed by another theory equally

[Sidenote: THE EASTERN ROTHER]

reputable and stoutly maintained by precisely the same authorities, to wit, that the shells of which the Chalk Downs are composed are those of marine animals and were laid down under the sea. If this was the case it is impossible to see how the little rivers can have continued their erosion while the chalk hills were rising upon either side, for no rivers run along the bottom of the sea. The fact is that this, like ninety-nine out of a hundred other geological theses,

reposes upon mere guesswork; we have no evidence worth calling evidence to tell us how the contours of the land were moulded.

The last of the Sussex rivers stands quite outside the scheme of those with which we have been hitherto dealing. It is the Eastern Rother, which rises, indeed, on the same Wealden heights as the others, but does not encounter the chalk hills, for these come to an end west of it in the cliff of Beachy Head. The Eastern Rother runs, therefore, not through a gap but a wide plain, which is marked off on the coast-line by the flats of the marshes before Dunge Ness.

This little river nourishes no considerable town, but a great number of very charming villages stand either upon it or above it; others also less charming, as for instance the somewhat theatrical village of Burwash, whose old church tower, avenue of trees, and Georgian houses, have bred a crop of red-brick villas.

Robertsbridge, however, is a paradise for any one, and contains or did contain in the cellars of its principal inn, the George, some of the best port at its price to be found in England. Within the drainage area of this river also stands (upon the Brede, a tributary) the height which was known until the Norman invasion as "Hastings Plain," but has, since the great conflict, supported the abbey and the village of Battle. The harbour mouth of this river is the town of Rye, a haven which it is still possible to make, though with difficulty, but which was until quite the last few generations a trading-place of importance.

With the mention of the Eastern Rother our survey of the river system of Sussex must close, for, though tributaries of the Wey rise within the political boundaries of the county, while the source of the Mole is also within those boundaries, their systems properly belong to the Thames valley and to Surrey.

We have now some idea of the general configuration of the county, of the nature of its

[Sidenote: GENERAL VIEW OF THE COUNTY]

landscape and its soil, and of the relief upon which it is built. The reader may perhaps grasp in one glance the Wealden heights running along the northern horizon, the wide rolling belt of the clay weald between those heights and the Downs broken here and there by rocks and sandstone, patched with pines, the Downs themselves running in one vast wall for their fifty or sixty miles of stretch from the Hampshire border to Beachy Head, and the coastal plain to the

south of them. There have also been indicated in this first part of the book, though briefly, the various types of towns and villages and buildings which these four belts produce; it has been shown how the parallelism of all the four tilts somewhat from the north-west to the south-east, so that all four end at last upon the sea; and it has been shown how the rivers run from the Weald, cut right through the Downs, and form along the coast the main harbours of the county.

With such a general plan before us we can go on to speak more particularly of the history upon which modern Sussex reposes, and to describe in more detail the towns and the sites connected with the story of this countryside: of Chichester which was its spiritual capital; Arundel, Bramber, and Lewes, which were its defences; Midhurst, Petworth, Pulborough, Horsham, Steyning, Uckfield, and the rest, which are still its Wealden market towns; its six ancient harbours, and the recent change which more numerous roads and more rapid methods of locomotion have begun to bring upon the county, not wholly for its good.

PART II

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SUSSEX

The pre-history of Sussex is unknown. The county does not lie (as a first glance at the map might suggest) upon the main track between the metallic districts of the West of England and the Straits of Dover. That track was forced north by the indent of Southampton Water, and pursued its way, perhaps originally through Salisbury Plain, ultimately through Winchester, and so by Farnham, where it struck and followed the North Downs to Canterbury, which was the common centre for the ports of the Kentish coast. Sussex, moreover, was not only off this main prehistoric trade route, but also, as has been previously explained in the first portion of this book, was cut off to some extent on the north by the Weald, and to the east and to the west by Romney Marsh and Chichester Harbour respectively.

We may, therefore, presume that before the advent of the Romans the district was a very isolated and perhaps a very backward piece of Britain. Convenient as were its harbours, and comparatively short as was the trajectory from the opposite coast, it suffered from what handicaps all such coast lines, that is, the absence of a wealthy hinterland. London was more easily made through Kent or

by sailing up the estuary of the Thames, and the great roads to the north which converged on London were better arrived at through Kent and by way of the Watling Street than through Sussex.

All we can positively say is that the western part of the county was presumably inhabited by a tribe called the Regni, whose capital was, we may believe, upon the site of Chichester. For the rest all is conjecture.

It is equally true that we have no direct history of Sussex during the 400 years of the Roman occupation. But here, as is the case almost everywhere in England, the material evidences of Rome and of the vast and prosperous civilisation which she founded in the island, are in number quite out of proportion with the meagre documents that speak of her occupation. The whole soil of

[Sidenote: THE ROMAN BASIS]

England is strewn thickly with the relics of Rome; and the reader will perhaps pardon a digression on a matter of such historical importance, because, though it does not concern Sussex alone, it does concern the history of England in general very much, and therefore the history of Sussex in particular. Nor can any one understand an English countryside unless he has already understood what the Romans did for this province of theirs, Britain.

There has arisen in the last two generations a school which is now weakening, but which has already had a very ill effect upon the general comprehension of European history. This school was German in its origin, meticulous in its methods, feeble in its historic judgment, and very strongly influenced by the bias of race and religion. It attempted to establish the thesis that the effect of Rome upon Europe had been exaggerated, and that the North especially had been but little moulded by the Latin order. This was partly true in the case of Northern Germany, for though the German civilisation is a Latin civilisation, yet it is and remains Latin only in the second degree. German thought, building, law, religion, and the rest are Latin, or they are nothing; but they are imported Latin. They are not of that Latinity which grows up and lives and takes root in the soil. There lies behind them a sort of vague thing which has never taken form, never is expressed, but evidently colours all North German life and makes it different from the life of Southern, Western, and civilised Europe; for Rome never occupied the Baltic plain.

But though this insufficient influence of Rome be obviously true

with regard to Northern Germany, whose poor soil and shallow harbours had never tempted the Roman eagles, it is profoundly untrue of Britain. By far the greater part of our historical towns can be proved to be Roman in origin, and it is to be presumed that of the remainder most will ultimately furnish, or at least could furnish, proofs of a similar foundation. But though Britain was thoroughly kneaded into the stuff of the Empire, the accidents of the barbarian wars lend arguments to those who would minimise the vast effect of her early civilisation upon her subsequent history.

For the continuity of Roman speech and of the civilisation of the Empire was sharply broken in Britain by the invasion (gradual, but very disastrous) of the North Sea pirates,-raids which

[Sidenote: THE SAXON RAIDS]

exercised an increasing pressure throughout the end of the fourth century, and which in the middle of the fifth began to triumph over the resistance of the native population. How far the effect of these raids was constructive, the foundation of a race, and how far merely destructive, the marring of a social order, we will discuss later; it is sufficient for the moment to point out that they prevented us, when we re-entered civilisation, from harking back with certitude to our origins as Gaul or the Rhine or Spain could to theirs. We have, indeed, our hagiographers, but they are not, like the hagiographers of the Continent, in direct connection with the Fathers of the Church and with the Imperial centre. We had, indeed, a flourishing monastic system, but we could not say of it as could Gaul, that it went right up to the time of Julian the Apostate, derived from St. Martin, and was linked with the memory of a once strong and ordered state. There is, therefore, more room for discussion and for denial of the Roman influence in Britain than in any other province of the Empire; more even than in Africa, where the complete and sudden wiping out of the Roman genius by the Mahommedan religion has fossilised, as it were (and therefore preserved), enormous evidences of Roman activity.

With the darkness of the Saxon invasions to aid them, authorities of considerable weight have been found to advance such propositions as that the total population of Roman Britain amounted to but little more than a million souls; that the continuity of London, York, Leicester, and the other original cities is doubtful, and so forth. There is nothing so fantastic but it has had a home for a short space among the historians of our universities, so long as the phantasy was in opposition to the general spirit of Europe and to the grandeur of the Roman name.

It is best for a modern reader to forget these vagaries, and to found himself upon the constant judgment of permanent historical work-upon the common sense, as it were, of Europe as we receive it handed on through the historical traditions of the Middle Ages, and as we see it developing since the renaissance of learning in the sixteenth century. We can believe that Roman Britain, though we do not know its exact population, was very densely populated (Gibbon, the best authority, perhaps, puts it highest), and that, at least towards the close of the third century, it was full of flourishing towns, and intersected everywhere by great military roads; it was peaceable, wealthy, and a very close part of the Roman unity.

[Sidenote: THE ROMAN TOWNS]

Sussex was no exception to this rule. Small as was the extent of its then habitable or thickly-populated part (virtually confined to the coast-plain, for the Downs could not be inhabited, the villages of their foot-hills were few, and the belt between them and the Weald was difficult of access), small as was that portion, it contained two considerable towns-Anderida and Regnum. Anderida lay upon the site of Pevensey, Regnum is Chichester. What other settlements it had of a strictly Roman nature, as distinguished from the Celtic villages and the isolated farms held both by Celtic and by Roman masters, we cannot tell. The Roman remains of Lewes prove it (as does its site) to have been a place of importance since the beginning of history, but we cannot identify it with certitude. Arundel, a place obviously as old, has hitherto furnished no Roman relics. It is possible that Bramber was fortified; and it is fairly certain, though it is not positive history, that the mouth of the old estuary at Shoreham was the Portus Adurni. More than this we cannot say.

But there is contained in Sussex a further and more striking evidence of the power of Rome than even the line of the wall at Chichester or the ruins of Anderida. This is to be found in the great track of the Stane Street, the Roman road which led from the East Gate of Chichester to London, and of which so large a part is in actual use to-day.

This great monument of our past is equalled by little else in our island as a dramatic witness of the source from which we spring. The Roman wall between Tyne and Solway has afforded much more food for scholarship, and is in places of a more active effect upon the eye, but it does not appear before us as does the Stane Street, possessed of a constant historic use, and explaining the

development of a whole district.

This military way can be traced, with a few gaps, for a space of fifty miles and more; from the eastern gate of Chichester to the neighbourhood of Epsom, where it passes just between Lord Rosebery's house and the race-course, having crossed the Surrey border in the neighbourhood of Ockley, and pursued its way through Dorking churchyard across Burford Bridge, through the gardens of Juniper Hall, and so northwards and eastwards.

The line of it in Sussex is clear to any one who glances at an Ordnance map. It is a hard road over the first mile on leaving Chichester. At the village of West Hampnet, some unknown cause in the

[Sidenote: THE STANE STREET]

remote past has diverted it, and the original line is lost in the fields behind the workhouse of the place; but within another mile it once more coincides with the present high road and goes straight for the Downs. Close upon it was founded the Abbey of Boxgrove which, like Hyde and Westminster and so many others, owed its site to the presence of a great national way. It goes on over the shoulder of Halnacker Hill, then plunges through the north wood where it is no longer traceable as a road, but as a high ridge for several miles. It emerges upon the open grass of the Downs at Gumber Farm, where it still marks a division between ancient properties and modern fields. It then climbs down the escarpment of the hills upon the north side in a great curve which has given its name to the farm of Cold Harbour,-for the word Cold harbour, which so frequently occurs in English topography, is probably derived from the Latin "Curbare," and marks the points where the usually dead straight line of the Roman road was compelled for some local reason to adopt a curve.

Immediately at the foot of this curve is to be found the little village of Bignor, which contains one of the most perfect Roman pavements in England, and which has been conjectured to be the "Ad Decimam"-the tenth milestone from Chichester. It may be the villa of a private estate or (more probably) the military residence of a small garrison. From this point to Pulborough Bridge the track of the road is conjectural, with the exception of a few stretches, where, even to-day, the discoloration of the earth in the ploughed fields marks the old line in the Stane Street. At Hardham, however, just before it reaches the marshes of the Arun, its passage is clearly discernible due east of a still defined camp which stands in

between Petworth branch line and the main line of the L.B.S.C.R., just before their junction. Immediately beyond, on the farther side, stood the old Priory of Hardham which, like Boxgrove, must have owed its site to the neighbourhood of the way.

The remaining mile over the marshes to Pulboro' Bridge is, of course, absolutely lost. It is a universal rule of topography throughout Britain, that where a Roman causeway crossed a marsh, it has been lost in the barbaric centuries by a slow process of sinking into the soft soil below. But the direction which the Stane Street must have followed when the causeway existed is not difficult to determine; it is to be decided by a consideration which

[Sidenote: THE STANE STREET]

the historians of the county have not hitherto remarked. It is this. If one stands upon the height of Gumber above Cold Harbour Hill and notes the direction of the Stane Street as it crosses the Downs, one finds it pointing straight at Pulborough Bridge. Or again, if one lays a ruler along the line of the Stane Street upon an Ordnance map so as to cover the section between Halnacker and Gumber, the prolongation of that line strikes to within a yard or two of Pulborough Bridge. It is, therefore, as certain as anything can be that the road made for this point, that the Roman causeway across the marsh ran directly from Hardham to the bridge, and that the Arun was crossed sixteen hundred years ago at the same place as it is to-day.

The point though new can hardly be questioned. Roads of this sort were necessarily laid down by a method of "sighting" from one distant point of the horizon to the other. In no other way could their straightness be achieved, and there can be no doubt that the first surveyor, in laying down the track from the south to the north side of the Downs, was guided by signals from the crest of the ridge; the line was given him by watchers upon the summit who could observe the parties on the southern slope below and the distant Arun to the north, and who had already determined from that vantage place the point at which the river could be most easily crossed.

At Pulborough Bridge the Stane Street again becomes a hard road, and with such slight deviations as the long centuries of its history have caused at Adversane and Parbook (they never leave the straight by so much as fifty yards) it takes its way right through the heart of the county. Billingshurst stands upon it, breaking its exact line by a growth of little encroaching freeholds. It does not

cease to be a county road for many miles farther; it arrives at Five Oaks Green, there enters the heart of the Weald, where even to this day there are but very few houses; it dwindles to a lane, and so reaches its second crossing of the Arun at Alfordean Bridge, where traces of Roman fortification still appear. The remaining two and a half miles of its course through the county are either lost under the plough, overgrown in thickets (such as "Roman's Wood"), or preserved as stretches of foot-path. It is here a deserted track, and enters Surrey at last near Ruckman's Farm.

There may have been other Roman roads of the regular and military sort piercing the county.

[Sidenote: OTHER ROMAN WAYS]

Some have maintained that one such road ran from the mouth of the Adur up to London, and another from Pevensey through Mayfield also to London. It is absolutely certain that in the Roman time there must have been roads following some such tracks: evidences of one, at least, have been discovered at Haywards Heath and at Reigate, while it is a fair inference that the march of William the Conqueror from Pevensey through Hastings up on to Hastings Plain, where he fought his great battle, was made along an ancient way. But it may be doubted whether any of the other lines of communication in Sussex were of a true military nature, or possessed the permanence of what we usually call a Roman road. At any rate, they have left no evidences which warrant our asserting that they were ever of the same nature as the great Stane Street.

We know one or two more things about Roman Sussex. We know that the industry of the Eastern Weald was an iron industry. We may be fairly certain that there must have been a flourishing agriculture along the sea-plain to maintain its great towns; but we know nothing more until we enter with the Saxon invasions, the beginning of the second phase in the history of the county.

These invasions are themselves mythical in their details. Though the main fact of their success at the eastern and southern coast-line is historical beyond dispute their story reposes upon legends, which, as the reader need hardly be reminded, are not trustworthy. From the oral traditions of a very barbarous people possessed of hardly any continuous institutions, split up into dozens of little tribes which differed from each other in local patois, and were possessed of no unity or national spirit, the tales of the pirate raids were handed on till at last they were written down

hundreds of years after, when civilisation had once more penetrated into the southern and eastern part of the island, and a sort of rude literature could re-arise to give them for what they were worth. A traditional and probably mythical being, called in the legend "Aella," is reported to have effected the first regular landing upon the Sussex coast towards the beginning of the sixth century, or rather to have turned into a permanent settlement those temporary raids which had been common for a century and more before his time. The feature of this invasion which most powerfully struck the barbaric imagination was the fall of Anderida. So violent was the effect produced upon the victims and their

[Sidenote: THE BREAK-DOWN OF ROME]

despoilers, that the Saxon Chronicle some centuries later records a tradition to the effect that not one of its inhabitants was left alive when the city was stormed. This, of course, is no truer than any other history of the sort; but it is valuable as pointing to the violence of the struggle. Anderida was, moreover, one of the very few cities of Europe where, in the break-down of the Roman Empire, municipal life was actually destroyed. For we know by the evidence of an eye-witness (which is a very different thing from legend), that after so comparatively short a lapse of time as two hundred years from the time of the invasion, the ruined walls were still standing and the place was uninhabited.

What form the disaster took after this date we cannot tell; but we can derive some idea of its severity from the break-down of the native language. We know that, mixed with the Celtic roots of Sussex place-names, with the purely Celtic names of its main rivers, with the Celtic and possibly Roman names of its villages, there is a Teutonic admixture so welded in with the rest as to be inseparable from it. Billingshurst, for example, springs presumably from a Celtic source, and records, like Billingsgate, the worship of Belinus. But this "hurst," like all the other "hursts" up and down the south of England, is almost certainly a Teutonic ending.

It is to be noted that Teutonic terminations are particularly noticeable along the coast itself, from whence the invasion of the pirates came. Hastings is entirely an un-Latin and un-Celtic name. So is Selsea. So is Shoreham. Half the names along the Sussex coast must be purely Teutonic; and even of the remainder one cannot be sure how much of their framework has survived since the days before the pirate invasion. Thus "ness" (as in Dungeness) may be Northern, but it may also be Latin.

We can, again, be certain of the thoroughness of the cataclysm by the effect of the invasion upon the philosophy of the place. In Sussex, whatever may have happened elsewhere, there was a complete disappearance of the Christian religion. The raids must have been many and severe, and the last permanent settlement of the barbarians successful, to have produced such a result. For Britain round about the year 500 was obviously as Christian as any other province, and to have destroyed Christianity in the period which saw St. Eligius and Dagobert in their full power beyond the narrow English Channel necessarily means that the attack was very powerful and very ruthless.

[Sidenote: EXTINCTION OF CHRISTIANITY]

It is of particular importance to insist upon the Christianity of Sussex in this respect. For, as we consider the south of England, which was the more civilised portion of the island, we remark that in Devonshire and Cornwall Christianity made a stand which maintained a continuity of the faith. In Kent, again, there was very probably a relic of Christianity. A Christian queen was upon the throne there a hundred years before the neighbouring county had so much as heard of the gospel. A Christian church was in existence in Canterbury before Augustine landed-though whether it had survived from Roman times we cannot tell; nor do we know the fate of the central district of Hampshire and Dorsetshire, except that we may presume that the Christian religion and the tradition of civilisation could hardly have been quite destroyed upon the borders of the Christian Severn valley and of the Christian Damnonian peninsula, to which were so continually flowing the influences of Christian Brittany and Christian Ireland and Christian Wales. In Sussex, therefore, alone of the southern counties, we may state it as historically certain that civilisation was totally destroyed, and that the faith which is the central expression of civilisation was stamped out.

Another line of argument leads to the same conclusion. It is that drawn from the story of St. Wilfrid. In this story we see St. Wilfrid in his exile landing in Sussex, and finding the barbarians fallen to so low an ebb that they had even lost the craft of fishing. The Roman arts had, of course, long ago disappeared. It is quite possible that men had here even forgotten how to plough in the general break-down which followed the coming of the pirates. At any rate there was a famine when St. Wilfrid came. St. Wilfred taught them how to make nets, and there followed what always follows when savages come across civilisation (if that civilisation is beneficent)-the savages accepted it en bloc, customs, faith, and

all; even in their fragmentary records they talk henceforth of "Ides" and "Kalends." They made St. Wilfred their bishop, and he established his see (possibly from a vague tradition of the Roman times) at Selsea.

The place in which he built his first cathedral is now perhaps under the sea. The Roman buildings and the establishments of the city were already in danger, when, in the eleventh century, the see was removed to the neighbouring town of Chichester, where it remained in a continuous tradition which lasted till the Reformation. The district of Selsea

[Sidenote: SELSEA]

lingered on as a batch of islands, flooded at high tide, until comparatively recent times. It is said that even as late as the Tudors the patch now known as "The Park" was really a park, and that the rapid current known as the Looe stream corresponded to a ravine in that royal domain. At any rate the whole place is to-day a mass of tangled rocks and shallows, mixed up with which we may presume are the ruins of the Roman and early Saxon buildings. It is known as the "Owers," and there stands upon it a lighthouse which is one of the principal marks of the Sussex coast; nor can any ships of considerable burthen go between these rocks and the shore. The great liners on their way to Southampton all pass outside: the fishing-boats and coasting-vessels can take the shorter inner passage, if they have a tide with them, through the Looe stream.

The remaining history of Sussex until the advent of the Normans is obscure and meagre. Here, as in the rest of England, the barbarism of the Dark Ages was tempered, of course, by the existence of the historic and organised machinery of the Catholic Church, but they remained barbaric, and nowhere more barbaric than in Britain. The wound of the Saxon invasion was never really healed. There are those who maintain that we feel its effects to this day.

From the period of the conversion which may roughly be said to have occupied the last twenty years of the seventh century, right away down to the tenth, with its violent internal convulsions ending in the Danish conquest, Sussex almost disappears from history. It is true to say that in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of this period we hear more of Gaul than we do of the English county. It must have been singularly free from the storm of the Danish invasions until close upon the end of the ninth century, when we get the landing of Hasting and his march up the valley of the Rother. But even that

raid failed, for Alfred had already restored peace to the south of England.

It is at this period also that we begin to have historical evidence of the existence of the fortified places of Sussex.

The opportunities afforded by Arundel, Bramber, Lewes, and the rest must have been recognised from prehistoric times. There also existed from prehistoric times the great entrenchments on the Downs. But it is not until the close of the ninth and beginning of the tenth centuries that we get documentary proofs of the way in which these

[Sidenote: THE STRATEGIC POINTS]

advantages were seized. Thus we know from Alfred's will that at the beginning of the tenth century Arundel was already fortified and already a king's castle.

Of the smaller projecting spur of Lewes, similarly defended by marshes and similarly easy to isolate by a ditch across the narrow neck which connects it with the Downs, we have not indeed direct evidence so early. But several smaller places dependent upon it and in its neighbourhood are mentioned at the same time; and a little later, under Athelstan, the town itself is mentioned with this particular mark, that of the four Sussex mints (which were here and at Hastings and at Chichester) two were permitted to be established in Lewes, numbers which point to its being, even at that early date, the recognised capital of the whole county.

Bramber, we may be certain from the name, though documents are lacking, was fortified at least as early as this period.

In a word, all the gaps of the Downs were held in a military fashion, and had entered into the scheme of the county as strongholds, guarding the river passes for one hundred and fifty or one hundred and seventy years before they fell into the hands of the Norman invaders. But of the rest of the development of the county in Saxon times we know so very little that even conjecture is hardly worth our while. The place-names are all that indicate to us what Saxon foundation the towns and villages of the Weald may have received. Their gradual development, the granting of their charters, and the documentary proof of their existence and commercial importance we do not get until after the Conquest. These proofs we shall be able the better to examine when we come to that event, and especially when we analyse the way in which the

rape of Bramber grew up under the leadership of the Warrens.

The end of the barbaric period in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and its enormous effect upon the future of England, are, however, associated with the county; and the complete obscurity within which it had lain for so many generations is partially compensated for by the name of Godwin. That great earl, with his strength, his vices, and his ambitions, was altogether a Sussex man. He was the son of Wulnoth, a knight of the South Saxons.

It has sometimes been regretted that feudalism in England did not follow the line which it did on the Continent, and that the various districts of England were not coalesced under great overlords,

[Sidenote: GODWIN]

so as to form true provinces and thus to intensify the life of the nation. These regrets may or may not be just, but Godwin very nearly succeeded in satisfying that ideal. He was by far the greatest man in Sussex, as he was in England. He held nearly sixty manors, and that not merely in a technical sense and for a merely military reason, as did the great overlords immediately later under the Conqueror hold manors in yet larger numbers, but actually (we may presume) and with a true lordship. Among them are many names to be recognised to-day. There is Beeding which is under the Downs, beyond Bramber, a place called with fine irony Upper Beeding; it lies in a hollow, damp all the year round, while Lower Beeding is set upon a high hill. There is Climping, the seaside village near Little Hampton, of which little now remains. There is Rottingdean, Brighton itself, Fulking, Salescombe, Wiston (which is the master of Chactonbury), and Ashington and Washington close by. Godwin, indeed, for his economic power reposed upon Sussex, and it is curious that his connection with the county has been so little emphasised by historians.

With the Norman Conquest, Sussex, like the rest of England, re-enters history. And that in a peculiar manner, for, as has been seen, of all the districts of England, Sussex had suffered the deepest eclipse during the barbaric period, and by the peculiar fact that the invasion of civilisation came from Normandy, was most advantaged in the period immediately following. The contrast was abrupt and striking. Here was a district of which, as we have seen, practically no mention is made between the fall of the Roman power and the last efforts of Godwin. It is cut off from the rest of England by the Andred's Weald. The only considerable story in connection with it is that of its conversion. It can boast no great

monasteries founded in that time, as all the rest of England can boast; it can show no great military leader, nor even the scene of any great military disaster, for Ockley itself was beyond its borders. The advent of the last invaders, but invaders this time who bring with them constructive power and the full European tradition, is from the shore immediately opposing its own. A short day's sail away there ran the coast of Normandy, where a race of Gallo-Romans, with a slight but transforming admixture of Scandinavian blood, were chafing under their superabundant energy. Already for nearly a century a great intercourse must have

[Sidenote: THE NORMAN INVASION]

existed between the harbours to the north and the south of the Channel. It was from Bosham that Harold sailed; the Court of Edward had been full of Normans, and one has but to cross the Channel in a little boat to see how the advance of the arts after the darkness of the ninth century must have increased communication between Normandy and the shores of Sussex. A man will run in a five tonner from Shoreham to Dieppe close hauled into a fresh south-westerly wind between the morning and the evening of a summer's day; he will run from Dieppe into Rye with such a wind on his quarter during the daylight of almost any day in the year, except perhaps in the mid-winter season.

With such a wind William sailed from St. Valery in the autumn of 1066. He landed at Pevensey. He marched along the coast to Hastings, and then struck up north and a little east for four or five miles to where the Saxon force lay on the defensive upon a rounded height above the valley of the Brede, called "Hastings Plain."

A pedantic discussion, into which we need not enter, has waged round the exact name of the spot where the battle was fought. One of the principal authorities for the history of the battle (but not a contemporary authority) calls it several times "Senlac." It is just possible that he was mis-spelling some local name. Halnacker is similarly mis-spelt "Hanac" in the title deeds of Boxgrove Abbey. But the name as it stands is a Gascon name, and in all probability was given to some portion of the land long after the battle because a Gascon gentleman had acquired manorial rights there. Every other authority alludes to it as Hastings, or Hastings Plain, and every Sussex man can see why, for there is nothing commoner in the country than the calling of one of the uplands by the name of some neighbouring, inhabited, and settled spot in the lowlands, possibly because the inhabitants of that neighbouring and inhabited

spot had some sort of territorial rights in the upland place so named. Thus one has on the Downs, between Arundel and Goodwood, "Fittleworth Wood," six or seven miles away from Fittleworth itself, and the use of the word "plain" for a stretch of the uplands is as common as can be,-for instance Plummers Plain between Lower Beeding and Handcross.

We may take it, then, for the purposes of this short description, that among the Saxons of the time, or rather the local Sussex men of the time, "Hastings Plain" was the name given to the hill of stunted trees and grass up which the

[Sidenote: THE NORMAN WEALD]

Normans charged late on that October afternoon. By sunset the issue was determined, and the victory gave the crumbling and anarchic Saxon state back again to Europe. The disorders of the Church were reformed, a centralised and efficient government was introduced, the art of building received, as it always does with the coming of fresh vigour, a vast impetus, and the history of the England that we know began.

In connection with the Norman Conquest it is of some historical importance to ask one's self what was the remaining function of the Weald, the great forest which ran along the rising swell of clay and sand, and bounded Sussex on the north?

We have seen that in prehistoric times the Weald was undoubtedly the obstacle which delimited Sussex, and made all this district a maritime province with its towns on the sea. The Romans pierced the Weald with one great military road and probably several minor ways. But they did not settle it thickly. One may say that with the exception of a trace or two of fortifications it is practically destitute of Roman remains. It may possibly, or even probably, have contained many isolated farms in the prosperous middle and conclusion of the Roman period, but with the advent of the barbarians it fell again, as did so many other parts of Europe, into the prehistoric conditions, and we have at least one allusion in Anglo-Saxon history to its desertion, in the story of that Saxon king who fled during the tenth century from his enemies and hid in the Weald for many months. We know then that in Roman times it was traversed by at least one great military road and probably by several others; that in the Dark Ages it was certainly a dividing line between the coast district and the Thames valley; that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was thoroughly civilised again. The main historical question or doubt relates to the eleventh

century. Was this old wild condition of the forest a complete barrier to any travel northward from the coast at the time of the Conquest?

It may be seriously doubted that it was such a barrier. It is probable that a certain amount of communication between North and South had already arisen, and, as we shall see in a moment, it is certain that communication became very vigorous in the centuries immediately succeeding Hastings.

The nature of the obstacle, it must be remembered, has been mistaken by historians, notably by Freeman and by Green, and by all the smaller modern men, such as Mr. Davis and Mr. Oman

[Sidenote: THE WEALD]

of Oxford, who copy what they see written in the popular histories. The Weald was never an impenetrable forest; no Northern European forests are. It was not cut by great lines of marsh, which are the chief obstacle to men under primitive conditions. It was not even dense, as are some of the English forests, for example the beech forests of the Downs. Those pieces of the Weald which have been left uncultivated, and which remain to-day almost in their original state, show us clearly what the whole district once was. It was simply a vague, long belt which it did not pay to cultivate in early times. Small, strong oak-trees stood in it, never very close together. Here and there on sandy wastes and heaths were furze and ferns. The clay did, indeed, give rise to many pools, stagnant meres, and sodden patches of soil. But there could never have been great difficulty in getting across it northwards, nor any lack of forest tracks from one side to the other, nor any great prevalence of dense thickets in which enemies could hide. Its chief character as a barrier was that of loneliness. For some sixteen or twenty miles, for a full day's march that is, you had a chance in the early centuries as you went across the Weald of not meeting a man, and this old character is still remembered by any one who walks along the Stane Street from Five Oaks Green to Ockley. But you certainly could not have gone five miles without seeing some evidence of man's activities-a road, a wall, a well, a felled tree, or a cast weapon. The Weald was, therefore, never a military obstacle, and to talk about the "impenetrable forest of the Weald" checking William the Conqueror after the Battle of Hastings is to show complete ignorance of the nature of Sussex. It was, however, an obstacle to the spread of ideas, speech, folklore, and the rest, and did maintain the isolation of Sussex down to quite recent times. It keeps traces of that character still.

William then was not prevented from his march on London by the Weald. He went back at his leisure to the sea coast to secure his communications, marched up to Dover, garrisoning every harbour on his way, and then took the great north-east road through Kent, which has been the line of invasion, of commerce, and foreign travel in our island from the very origins of history.

His own personal effort appears after this to pass from the history of the county, but the effect of the invasion upon Sussex was, as we have just remarked, enormous. It will be seen from what has preceded this that the field lay open for the effects

[Sidenote: THE NORMAN ORGANISATION]

of the new vigour. Nowhere had the remnants of Roman civilisation more thoroughly decayed. The old British stock and the admixture, such as it was, of Teutonic blood had mixed to form a population very much what we see to-day in the villages of Sussex, where most of the people are short, with dark, keen eyes, but a few tall and large, with the light hair, the slow gait, and the heavy bodies of the marsh men from Frisia and the Baltic.

Again the reorganisation of Sussex begins from the sea.

In the administrative division of the county Rapes, as they are called, were mapped out, though it must not be imagined that there was anything original in the selection of the particular districts. The clear Norman brain and the weighty Norman power would certainly make definite boundaries where before there had been nothing but the vague, local feeling of the countryside to determine the limits of the separate parts of the county; but the general set of the divisions was certainly inherited by the Norman from the older and semi-barbaric state of things. Moreover, even after the Norman organisation was fully established, the exact boundaries of each Rape were not always very well determined. Thus the parish of Slindon remained for centuries doubtful between Arundel and Chichester Rape, to which last it has finally been attributed.

In number the Rapes were six, and were called after the towns of Chichester, Arundel, Bramber, Lewes, Pevensey, and Hastings.

It will be noted that in each case a town which could be reached by ships was chosen as the basis of the division, and that the tides of the Channel here, as always, were the creators of the county.

The importance which the county was to hold in the new state of affairs is marked at once by the names of those to whom four of the Rapes were given: Montgomery, Braose, Warren, and Moreton, all of them closely connected with the family of the Conqueror, and all of them set, not as proprietors, but as military overlords over a vast number of manors. It would probably be seen, if an exact computation were taken, that, with the exception of the counties Palatine, feudal power was nowhere more concentrated than on this stretch of the sea coast. Here it was that William's invasion had proved successful; here that new dangers might be expected; here, therefore, that he organised in the most thorough manner and under chiefs most closely connected with himself and his family, the

[Sidenote: BUILDING UP OF LEWES RAPE]

defence of the land. These few men count between them five-sevenths of the whole county.

Before speaking of what was probably the principal economic factor in the new life which Sussex received from the invasion, the foundation of monasteries, it is of interest to show how a rape was built up from the sea by the new-comers, and the best example we can take to exhibit this process is the rape delivered into the hands of Warren, the Duke's son-in-law, in overlordship. We shall see it spreading from the centre of its ancient capital, fed, it may be presumed, from its ancient harbour, and slowly extending northward a jurisdiction gradually acquired over the Weald, and later even overleaping the northern boundary of the forest ridge. The whole process occupied about two hundred years. Here then are the chief points in the growth of this Rape of Lewes.

Let us note, in the first place, its natural boundaries. The Ouse bounds it to the east and the Adur to the west, and the strip of land runs north and south between these two river valleys; it starts from the sea coast by which entry is made into the county, and loses itself in the forest to the north.

Its principal town, Lewes, has all those characteristics which distinguish the central towns of the countrysides of Western Europe, save that it possesses no cathedral. It is a place naturally susceptible of fortification. It is Roman, and probably pre-Roman in its origins. It possesses a natural means of approach in the shape of the river beneath it; good water, a dry and naturally well-drained soil, and (a peculiar feature which is to be discovered in every case

throughout Gaul, Northern Italy, Western Germany, and Britain) it lies, not in the centre, but right to one side of the countryside which takes its name from it. This feature, which is so marked in the case of the great Norman bishoprics and of most other divisions of the later Empire, is probably due to the fact that where a river or range of hills or great forest formed a natural boundary for a district, it at the same time formed the main natural defence for the chief stronghold of that district. Whatever the cause may be, the chief towns of the various divisions into which Western Europe has fallen are nearly always near the frontier of those divisions. Canterbury is near the sea; Edinburgh near the north of the Lothians. Rouen is by no means central as to Normandy. Even Avranches, Bayeux, and Coutances are upon the edges of their

[Sidenote: MILITARY VALUE OF LEWES]

respective dioceses. And in this county of Sussex, Chichester, the cathedral town, is close to the western border, Arundel is right up against the border of its own Rape, Bramber within a stone's throw of its eastern boundary. Pevensey alone is somewhat central. Hastings is again thrown up towards the eastern side of the belt which takes its name.

Lewes, then, is the stronghold upon which the chance division of the county had grown up in the Dark Ages. The Normans come; they add to the Saxon fortifications a great Norman castle, and they define more accurately the Rape whose general conception they have inherited from the men whom they have just conquered. They survey (the results of their survey remain in Doomsday), and, having done so, for the next four or five generations they push northward, increasing the agricultural value of the villages as they cultivate them, and extending the rule of man over nature farther and farther into the forest of the Weald.

The constructive effort of the Norman begins by his arrangement of government. He settles upon each of the great divisions the head of some great family, who is nominally the overlord of numerous parishes within that boundary, and who is practically the head of the garrison of the central castle, and the receiver of certain small dues from the numerous villages or manors of which he is technically the lord. In the case of Lewes this function fell, as we have seen, to William of Warren, who was a son-in-law of William the Conqueror, and had distinguished himself in the fight upon Hastings Plain. His residence is in the Castle at Lewes, and undoubtedly his chief political function is to guard this entry to the county. He rebuilds that castle, and he is the custodian of the local

survey.

What he does for a port we cannot tell at this distance of time. We know that the marshy land at the foot of the castle was not an estuary of the sea at this epoch, and was probably even passable in the eleventh century. We know this from the coins and relics which have been found in it. We know also that the present harbour of Newhaven was diverted later than the Conquest, and that the old mouth of the river ran somewhat to the east of it. We may conjecture with great probability that the port upon which Lewes was dependent for its commerce and provisions and reinforcements was somewhere near the old mill-pond between Newhaven and Seaford.

[Sidenote: LEWES RAPE INLAND]

Chief among the manors dependent on Lewes and the personality of De Warren we find Brighton under its old Saxon name. It is a large and important place. It controls the chief arable district which falls within the command of Lewes Castle and of the Rape thereto appertaining. Rottingdean, next to it, also comes into the great survey, for Rottingdean is along the sea, and the parishes along the sea, as we have so frequently had occasion to repeat, are historically the first and economically the most valuable of Sussex.

The next belt inland, the belt of the Downs, was uninhabited then as it is to-day, and will be perhaps throughout a remote future. But the old villages upon the strip of fertile land to the north of them are already well developed by the time the Normans come. Nay, they were Roman before they were Saxon, for Clayton and Ditchling, the two principal centres of the string of villages in this part, contain Roman remains. Keymer also is in Doomsday. So is Hurstpierpoint, under the name of Herste. Immediately northward you get the line of villages which are not developed until the wealth and the population of England have increased with the advent of the new civilisation. Typical of these is Cuckfield. It is not mentioned in Doomsday. It was then perhaps mere forest. It is not until the thirteenth century that it gets its market (from Henry III.), and we know that at that moment it was land held of the Warrens. Finally, at the very end of the same century, within a few years of the meeting of the great parliament of Edward I., and in the seventh year of his reign, we get the first hint of the demarcation of the Sussex border on the forest ridge. There is an inquiry into the rights of the Warrens to the free hunting of ground game in the forest of Worth, which extends over the crest of the forest ridge and down on to the Surrey side.

Here we have an excellent example of the way in which the overlapping of Sussex into what is geographically Surrey occurred. The Warrens are very powerful nobles, much more powerful than those lordships in the Surrey towns who hold positions of no strategic importance, and whose garrisons were therefore not heavily endowed at the time of the Conquest. Being great lords the Warrens extend their hunting as far north as they can into the Weald. They go right up through the forest, over the ridge, and down on to the Surrey side. There is (it may be presumed) some complaint against them for this extravagance,

[Sidenote: THE END AT WORTH]

or some jealousy on the part of the Crown. They are examined, and under the inquisition come out triumphant; so that the effect of their family and of the Conqueror's original disposition in the Rape may be said to have come to its final result when their claim over the extreme limit of the forest ridge was granted by Edward I., and Worth Forest was admitted to be within their jurisdiction and therefore within the county.

This sketch model, as it were, of the way in which a rape has been built up,-first, the sea fortress, then the Wealden market-town, and lastly, the definition of the forest boundary,-may be borne in mind as we deal with the other five similar divisions into which Sussex fell.

Lewes Rape, which we have just been considering, is the very central Rape of the whole county. If a line be drawn through Stanmer Park from north to south, and prolonged to the sea on one side and to the Surrey border on the other, such a line will be discovered to bisect the county into two almost exactly equal areas, and to bisect the Rape of Lewes in very much the same proportion.

Lewes Rape is not only central, but is also the backbone, as it were, upon which the county has been built up. It is this which makes its development so typical of the general history of Sussex. The three Rapes to the west of it and the two Rapes to the east have been somewhat more open from the beginning of history, but not until one has understood Lewes Rape does one understand the growth of the Bramber, Chichester, and Arundel Rapes to the west, nor of those of Pevensey and Hastings to the east. For all, like Lewes, grew up from the sea, from the harbour mouth and a castle at the back of it, on northward through the old British villages

under the Downs, till at last they stretched into the Weald and overlapped into what should properly be Surrey. But this process, though common to all, was modified in every special case by special circumstances to which we shall presently allude.

The Rape of Pevensey is of a curious shape. It narrows somewhat towards the middle and bulges out towards the top, or north end. This appears to be the contrary of what one would expect in a Sussex division, the important part of which always lay round the sea coast, but the cause of the shape thus assumed by the Rape is that in its northern part the iron industry had arisen long before the Norman Conquest, and had thus opened up the Weald; it had also made the

[Sidenote: PEVENSEY RAPE]

government of the area and the collection of taxes from it a subject of ambition for the strongest of the neighbouring lords.

Such a lord was found in the Earl of Moreton, the brother-in-law of the Conqueror, who held the Castle of Pevensey, and who was the first controller of the district after the full Norman organisation began.

Here, as in the case of Hastings, but unlike every other Rape, the seat of government, Pevensey, was actually upon the sea.

The name of Pevensey is instructive of its antiquity. It is probably derived from Celtic roots signifying "the fortification at the far end of the wood," which would exactly describe an important and fortified sea-coast town situated as Pevensey was situated to the forest from which it took its Roman name; for "Anderida," or "Andresio," certainly refers to the Weald, the Celtic forest of "Andred," of which the Saxons made "the Andredswald."

Incidentally one may digress to point out how crude and insufficient is the greater part of our hurried modern philology. But for an accident no one would have been able to work out the meaning of this name of Pevensey. It was gradually shortened (after passing through the strangest forms) to "Pemsey," a comparatively recent change in the spelling, due perhaps to local patriotism, or perhaps to the affectation of some studious landlord who, in reproducing the ancient form, gave us the present spelling of the word, from which we are able to trace its ancient Celtic roots; but how many place-names up and down South England must have been wrongly ascribed to Teutonic origin from our

ignorance of the local method of pronunciation!

It is doubtful whether anything of Roman structure remains in Pevensey, though much of the material used in the castle is Roman, and though the towers of that fortification are round. It is enough to remark, that after the long night of the Saxon period the town shared in the general renaissance of South England which followed the Norman Conquest. To give but one indication of this: it trebled in population in twenty years. There is little doubt that at this period, that is, throughout the end of the eleventh century, the whole of the twelfth, and beginning of the thirteenth, the harbour lay beneath the mound of the present ruins. The contour lines, slight as they are in elevation, and the nature of the soil are enough to prove this; nor is it difficult, as one stands on the height of Pevensey Castle, to reproduce the scene which must

[Sidenote: PEVENSEY TOWN]

have presented itself to the eye of a man living six hundred years ago when he looked northwards and eastwards at high tide. The great marshy flats of the Level were a shallow bay covered by the sea, out of which bay there rounded in towards him a harbour protected from every side except the north-east, and even from that side exposed to no long drive of the weather. This harbour, which was naturally shallow, was probably deepened artificially, whether before or during the Roman occupation; it remained serviceable until past the close of that twelfth century which produced so many great changes in the physical condition as in the political constitutions of Western Europe. Thus Pevensey is one of the first of the lesser towns of England to receive its borough charter. It gets that charter in the ninth year of King John, and it counts as being politically the most important of the Cinque Ports, until there falls upon it the fate which has fallen upon every south-country harbour in turn. It was destroyed by that upon which it had lived, the sea. The beginning of the disaster, a mixture of drift silting up the harbour and of encroachment and breaking-down of its defences, may be dated from the middle of the thirteenth century, and after this date the decline continues with such rapidity that before the end of the French wars Pevensey is hardly a town. It has declined ever since.

You get in the Rape of Pevensey, as in that of Lewes, the universal Sussex rule that the inhabited places are first found in the neighbourhood of the sea. But this rule is modified in the case of Pevensey Rape by the ironstone of the Eastern Weald. But for the industry arising from the use of this the forest ridge of Ashdown

would have remained as lonely as that of St. Leonards. As it was, many places upon either slope of the ridge are known to have been inhabited from the earliest times; for instance, Mayfield, which may properly be regarded as a foot-hill of Ashdown Forest, and as a part of the true Weald, is connected with the name of St. Dunstan, and formed one of that procession of ecclesiastical palaces which the See of Canterbury held all along the centre of the county, and of which the last westward is Slindon. Again, Rotherfield is, quite possibly, as old as Offa, or older; at least, dues from that parish were claimed by the Monastery of St. Denis near Paris, which dues were said to have been bequeathed by Bertoald, one of Offa's lieutenants, during the lifetime of Charlemagne, and before the close of the eighth century. Frant, though we do not hear of it by name

[Sidenote: HASTINGS RAPE]

until much later, was undoubtedly of great antiquity, and formed a sort of appendage to Rotherfield.

When, however, one gets over the empty ridge of Ashdown and south on to the slope which looks at the Downs, the natural isolation of the Weald is to be traced. Buxted, for instance, is not heard of before 1298, though later it has the fine reputation of having cast the first cannon ever made in England. Uckfield close by is of no importance until the sixteenth century. When we turn to the sea coast, on the contrary, everything at once proves the antiquity of settlements in that neighbourhood. For example, you have discoveries at Alfriston, just behind Beachy Head, of British coins; you have Hailsham, mentioned in the Norman Survey; and on Mount Caburn, just above the Vale of Glynde, are some of the most perfect prehistoric fortifications in the county.

The Rape of Hastings has, further, exceptions of its own, for here we come to the narrow eastern end of the county where there is no long hinterland of Weald to give us the normal development of the Sussex Rape. But even here there is a trace of that slower rising of the inland as compared with the sea-coast sites; thus Robertsbridge is the child of a monastery of the central Middle Ages. Battle was so little known until the great fight of 1066 that even its name appears in doubt at that epoch. On the other hand, Crowhurst we know to have been held by Harold. Bexhill is mentioned in Doomsday, and we know of the existence of Winchelsea and of Rye at the same epoch.

The mention of these two towns cannot be allowed to pass without

some description of their fate as seaports.

Winchelsea, like Pevensey, contained, hooked in behind a peninsula of land, a harbour protected from the prevailing south-westerly winds, and here, as at Pevensey, it is possible to stand to-day and notice what original opportunities must have led to the later and partly artificial harbour. Its importance continued, as did that of Pevensey, into the middle of the thirteenth century, when the first of its disasters began in an overwhelming high tide. Rye is still a port, the port of the mouth of the Rother; but what a port, only those know who have attempted to make it even in the smallest of craft! Unless there should arise some local industry which will make it worth while to dredge the river and establish an expensive system of leading marks into its mouth, Rye within another hundred years will be no more than Sandwich.

[Sidenote: HASTINGS TOWN]

The antiquity of the town of Hastings itself is among the most interesting points in the history of Sussex, as is also the name which the town bears. This name is usually ascribed to the pirate Hasting, or Hasten, who ravaged the coast and later sailed up the Thames, at the very end of the Danish invasions, during the reign of Alfred. It is at any rate one of the very few important Sussex names which are certainly and wholly Teutonic, and, if its derivation be exactly guessed, it is the only place-name in the county derived from the name of a man, for the derivation of Chichester from Cissa, the son of Aella, is obviously as legendary as the derivation of Portsmouth from "Port," or indeed any other of the Anglo-Saxon myths.

The antiquarian does not discover at first sight what feature it was which led to the early importance of Hastings. But, on a further consideration, it may be conjectured that the rise of the place depended upon the conjunction of two things not often found together, a safe beach and a strong isolated hill.

Allusion has already been made, in the earlier part of this book, to the importance of a good beach in early navigation. As common a way as any other of making land, until the development of shipping in the later Middle Ages, was that still adopted by our South Coast fishermen. The vessels, though large, were of a shallow draft and of a broad beam; they were run upon the beach with a careful choice of the right moment between the breakers, and before the momentum of their "weigh" was wholly spent, two or three hands standing ready forward had leapt into the shallow water, and had

prepared to direct the bows of the vessel over some form of roller when the next sea should thrust her farther up the shore. When once the bows had taken the roller above the sea line, the rest was easy. The advancing seas would necessarily push the vessel farther up the slope, and when a second or third roller had been placed under the keel a dozen or so of the crew could move even a heavy vessel up out of the way of the high tide. Nor would craft with so shallow a section as those used in the Dark and early Middle Ages have careened over to one side or another at all dangerously during the process of beaching. But for this manœuvre to be successful a particular kind of beach is required; the slope must be even, or one might damage one's vessel against an abrupt bulge of it. It must not be too steep, or the rolling of the vessel will be too laborious for the crew. It must not be too slight, or the distance along which the

[Sidenote: MILITARY IMPORTANCE OF HASTINGS]

vessel has to be rolled will be too great to make the effort worth while. In material it must be firm and hard-a quality which gave its pre-eminence to the sand of Deal, for if it be shifty or sinking the difficulty of beaching the boat may be insuperable.

Now all these characters are to be discovered in the shingle at Hastings, and added to these is the presence of a strong and easily fortified eminence.

The importance of this sort of refuge can easily be minimised by the modern historian, but those acquainted with the conditions of an earlier time will appreciate its value. A fortress now serves, as Napoleon well put it, "to save time," and serves little else in military purpose. In a sense this has always been the chief value of a fortress, but when one was dealing with smaller forces, more passionate and less constant in motive than those of to-day, and far more easily disintegrated than is a thoroughly civilised army, time was of far greater value in a campaign. Again, the defence was easier with a smaller body of men on account of the comparative inefficiency of projectiles, the comparative lack of training of the assaulting infantry, and the pre-dominance of cavalry tactics, between the fall of the Roman Empire and the invention of fire-arms. It may be roughly asserted that the power of the defensive behind properly constructed works grew to a maximum from the fifth to the middle of the twelfth century, remained almost stationary till the close of the thirteenth, and only slowly declined during the sieges of the French wars in the succeeding hundred years.

Now under such conditions the importance of hills such as that of Hastings was very great. Here a garrison could, properly commanded, hold out almost indefinitely; it could, therefore, cover a landing or repel an invasion; it could gather under its protection a large and increasing population. The shape of the hill was precisely that required for fortification in the Dark and Middle Ages. It is, in its best form, an example of what you will find also at Chateau Gaillard in Normandy and, to a lesser degree, at Lewes and Arundel in this same county of Sussex, namely, a sort of peninsula or spur with a crowning summit of its own, united with the hills behind it by a comparatively narrow neck, over which assault should be impossible. In the modern sense and referring to modern artillery, such positions are extremely bad, for they are commanded by the higher range at their back; as Arundel is commanded by the heights of the

[Sidenote: MILITARY IMPORTANCE OF HASTINGS]

Park, Lewes by Mount Harry, and Chateau Gaillard by the woods locally known as "La Ferme"; indeed, in the case of this latter castle the conquest of Philip Augustus was largely due to the fact that missile weapons, even in his age, were just within range of the castle from the heights to the south and east. But though, under modern conditions, such situations are bad, under the conditions of at least the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, they were ideal. When William the Conqueror held Hastings there were no methods by which projectiles of sufficient strength could be thrown at the castle from the hills to the north-east, though a hundred years later, by the time of the Third Crusade, and later still, during the attack on the Norman castle already mentioned, such weapons had been developed. One has but to stand on the platform of the ruined stronghold of Hastings to see that, for at least the first hundred years after the Conquest, the place must have been, under any proper command, impregnable. And indeed we find attached to it in Anglo-Saxon times the epithet "ceaster," which is never given to any place that has not been properly fortified, whether by the Romans or by their successors.

This fortification of Hastings Hill leads one to mention two other castles which lie within the Rape, and which are illustrative of a feature to be discovered in Sussex alone among the English counties. This feature is the presence of subsidiary castles to strengthen the gates of the county, and to stand behind those principal castles whose primary function it is to defend the entries into the land. These subsidiary castles may be best explained to

modern readers by using a modern metaphor, and saying that they act as “half-backs” to the great seaport castles of Sussex.

The seaport castles have already been mentioned; we will repeat the list to refresh the reader’s memory: they are Hastings, Pevensey, Lewes, Bramber, and Arundel.

Of these Lewes alone did not, so far as history knows, possess a subsidiary castle to the north of it, and that for this sufficient reason, that the road immediately north split eastward and westward, and forced an army either to pass within striking distance of Hurstmanceaux or within striking distance of Bramber, for the old road did not go over the bleak and deserted ridge of Ashdown as the modern one does. And the historic marches down south upon Lewes were undertaken in a

[Sidenote: THE SECONDARY CASTLES]

circuitous manner, as, for instance, that famous one of Henry III., which ended in the defeat of the King in 1264.

In the case of every other great defensive work a secondary work exists behind it. Hastings has Bodiam, Pevensey has Hurtsmanceaux, Bramber has Knepp (which has been more completely ruined than any of the others), Arundel has Amberley. Hurtsmanceaux should logically fall into the Rape of Pevensey, to which it strategically belongs. The accident of a river course makes it fall into the Rape of Hastings, and on this account we mention it here. The other castles will be dealt with in their proper place under each Rape as we deal with it; for Knepp is in the Rape of Bramber, and Amberley in that of Arundel.

As Moreton had been given the overlordship of Pevensey, the government of its Rape, and many manors within it, and as Warren had been given Lewes, so Bramber fell to Braose, and that great name still stands written like a title over the history of this part of the county. The castle itself and some few of the many manors with which the family was richly endowed enjoyed a fate extremely rare in the case of English land, and on account of its rarity the more pleasing, when it is discovered; there has been a long and true continuity in their manorial lordship. With the French this continuity was quite common up to the Revolution, and to this day there are many French families, several Italian, and a few German, who can trace their lineage and their connection with particular portions of the soil well beyond the crusading epoch and even to the ninth or early tenth century. But our English aristocracy is

exceedingly modern. The bulk of such few families as boast any antiquity at all can barely trace themselves to the Reformation; the mass of those who pose for lineage end in the mist of the seventeenth century. Bramber and some of the De Braose lands had better luck. For ten generations it remained in direct succession. When this ended (much at the same time as the Lancastrian usurpation) in an heiress, this heiress married a Mowbray, upon which family, almost immediately afterward, was conferred the Duchy of Norfolk. Ten successors, Mowbrays, held it in the direct line when, about a century after the first change, and a generation before the Reformation, it ended again in an heiress who married into the then undistinguished family of Howard, whose various branches had been careful, above all things, to increase their wealth by opportune

[Sidenote: BRAMBER RAPE]

alliances. To this new family the Duchy of Norfolk was soon conveyed, and after another ten successors the De Braose inheritance of Bramber is still to be found in their hands. It is a remarkable and a delightful example of a succession unbroken by purchase.

The last sign of the ancient importance of Bramber lay in the fact that it returned, until the Reform Bill, two members to Parliament as a borough. It was then as it is now a small village, and there remained then as there remains now of its ancient castle nothing but one vast wall.

Here, as is the case throughout all the other Rapes, the parishes along the sea coast or near it come earliest in history, and those of the Weald come last. Thus Lancing is in Doomsday; so is Coombes; so is Buttolphs (under Annington); Beeding is actually in Alfred's will. Shoreham, as we have seen, entered history hundreds of years before, and Henfield is in the great Norman survey under the lordship of the Bishop of Chichester; but as you go northwards the names begin to fail you. Shipley, if we may judge by its church, was probably a development of the next century. Horsham is first mentioned as a town of importance in the thirteenth century, when it sends two members to the Parliament of the twenty-third of Edward I. And little Rusper, up in the far north, we do not hear of until there is mention of a convent of the same date. As for the forest of St. Leonard's we know that De Braose held it, but, no more than in the case of Worth, is there any proof of its inhabitation or even importance till a much later date.

The port of this Rape, Shoreham, has an interesting history as being yet another of those many ports which the long history of Sussex has seen decline. It lay so directly south of London, and, once communication was established across the Weald, it was so excellent a port of disembarkation for any one coming from the mouth of the Seine or any of the Norman ports, that it maintained a very high political importance right on into the fifteenth century. Thus it was the landing-place of John when he returned to England after the death of his brother.

In the French wars under the third Edward it was assessed to furnish as many ships as Plymouth and two more than Bristol or London. Shortly after its decline began. That great bank of shingle, which is now covered with a very unpleasant little town of iron bungalows, grew up and obstructed

[Sidenote: SHOREHAM TOWN]

the issue of the river, so that to-day the mouth of the harbour is far eastward of New Shoreham. The burgesses complained that they could no longer pay the old taxes, the borough rights lingered on; but even these at last disappeared in the eighteenth century, when the town was disfranchised and the whole Rape was represented together in its stead. Oddly enough it was at this very moment that the town began to revive; the trade in coal proved useful to it; it became, before the railways, the natural port for Brighton, which lies close by, and, year by year, it gradually though somewhat slowly recovered its old position. It now has probably as much trade as any other Sussex port except Newhaven, though the bar is still difficult for vessels of any draft, and the sharp turning at the entry of the harbour adds to the inconvenience of that refuge, as does the narrowness of the river and the steepness of its banks opposite the town itself.

Its gradual revival did not re-enfranchise it; the Rape still remained the parliamentary unit to which it belonged, and the first member to sit for that division was a Burrell of Knepp Castle.

With this name we get not only one of the famous Sussex squires, whose position will be dealt with later, but the principal historian of the county residing in one of its most ancient centres. The Burrells were lawyers of Horsham who purchased Knepp in the second half of the eighteenth century, a true Sussex family growing upon Sussex soil. The founder of the present baronetcy collected all the new material which has been worked in by subsequent writers into the history of the county. Much of this is luckily preserved in the

British Museum, but some parts, unless the present writer is misinformed, disappeared during the recent fire in the modern house of Knepp Castle.

Of the original fortification nothing remains but one little fragment in the south of the estate to the right of the Ashington road. The land has still one local distinction, however, in that it holds a sheet of water, Knepp mill-pond, which is said to be the largest unbroken area of water south of the Thames.

Next in order to the Rape of Bramber comes that of Arundel. Here again the typical upgrowth of a Sussex Rape is modified by local conditions, for the Weald at the northern end of this Rape has been traversed since the beginning of our history by the great line of the Roman road. Arundel Rape has therefore been always accessible from

[Sidenote: ARUNDEL RAPE]

the Thames valley, and the Thames valley from it. On this account there occurs, as one might imagine, a very early and very thorough development of all its habitable portion. A mere list of the places mentioned in Doomsday in this Rape, places which are still most of them quite small, and have never supported any great number of inhabitants, is surprising. Some, such as Arundel itself, and Climping and Felpham, go back to Anglo-Saxon times. One, Amberley, counts as part of the original foundation of the Church at the close of the eighth century, and Lyminster had a convent before the arrival of the Normans, while Littlehampton was certainly a port before the same date. Meanwhile a rapid survey of the names appearing in Doomsday, all within a walk of the sea coast, are sufficient to show how thoroughly the Arun valley, the subsidiary valley of the Western Rother, and the coastal plain west of the mouth of the river, had developed before the close of the eleventh century.

Thus Barnham (to begin with the flat lands along the sea) is in Doomsday; so are Eastergate, Walberton, Tortington, where later was the famous priory which preserved the early records of the mayoralty of London, and in whose destruction the chief monuments of London history were lost. Binsted is in Doomsday. Turning to the slope of the Downs we find Goring is in Doomsday. Angmering below it, and on the belt of good loam land to the north of them Sutton, Barlavington, Duncton, Burton, Stopham, and Petworth are all to be found, as are Bury, Bignor, and Hardham, where later was to spring up the priory of the Hauterives. On the

far side of the river Parham and Burpham are mentioned, so is Storrington, and on the river itself Pulborough; while even such lonely nooks of the Downs as Upper Waltham come into the Norman Survey.

All this fell to the Montgomerys. Very shortly afterwards, by the failure of that family, the guardianship of the castle at Arundel and the headship of the Rape went to the De Albinis; to them succeeded the Fitz Alans, and to them again, when they ended in an heiress, succeeded the ubiquitous and ever watchful family of Howard, who snapped up that inheritance before it could fall to any other, and the new Duchy of Norfolk added not only the Rape of Arundel to that of Bramber, but also a sort of headship over the Rape of Chichester,-for Chichester had gone with Arundel in the original grant to Montgomery.

[Sidenote: ARUNDEL TOWN]

The town of Arundel is singular among English sites of the first rank, from the fact that it has neither increased nor diminished to any considerable extent for at least a thousand years.

It is probable that there was here in Roman times a crossing of the river, though the point is hotly denied by the more pedantic among our historians, because, so far, no Roman remains have been found under the soil of the town, or at least none have been identified by casual visitors. But, whether it was a Roman town or not, it is certain that from the moment the isolated spur upon which the castle stands was crowned with strong fortifications and garrisoned by the central authority of England, a town of much the same size as the modern Arundel must have been grouped round its base.

Those who deal most with the statistics of the early Middle Ages seem most blind to the conclusions of common sense. When they are told that only ten or twenty burgesses are to be discovered in a particular town, according to the evidence of some taxing list, they are willing to jump to the conclusion that only ten or twenty families existed in the place at the time the list was made. Instead of appreciating the very natural attitude of any tax-gatherer to save himself all possible labour, and the certitude that he would put down only those who were assessed in his particular tax, and instead of grasping the fact that, until the later Middle Ages, men paid taxes, not by localities, but by categories (some as King’s men, some as local baron’s men, some as the Church’s men, others according to all manner of local apportionments), they take the very crude way of estimating the particular document they

have as an index of total population. It is this, for example, which has led to the astounding conclusion that England at the time of the Norman invasion held less than two million souls, and it is this which makes people misunderstand, if they read modern histories, the nature of a town like Arundel.

So long as the spur above the Arun was protected by marshes and isolated by a narrow neck from the main range of the Downs, so long would it tempt men to form a stronghold there, and the moment that stronghold was held by national forces under the obedience of a national King, it presupposed a county town. It presupposed defence for a market (the later license for a market is quite a different thing; the market existed often for centuries before the license which was usually

[Sidenote: ARUNDEL TOWN]

only the proof of the King's growing power); it presupposed butchers under the castle walls, money-changers, men coming to and from the garrison for every sort of purpose, carriers, and-to quote a particular point-barbers; the men of the Dark and early Middle Ages were clean shaven. An Arab fortress does not arise nowadays without a town at its foot, still less would the civilisation of the Dark and Middle Ages produce the stronghold without producing a town as well. And a town means something more than a village.

The bridge at Arundel, which one may believe, though one cannot prove, to be Roman in its origin, used to cross the river somewhat farther down the stream. The line of the modern High Street points directly to that part of the town which now looks very like a continuation of the market-place, and has become a sort of backwater in the traffic of the place. It was originally the direct line to the old bridge. Those acquainted with Arundel will best appreciate the site of the old crossing of the river when they learn that the modern Bridge Hotel lies exactly between the ancient and the modern bridges, and the line of the causeway eastward can further be traced by the existence at the farther end of it, up against the high land, of the old building which is seen from the station between the railway and the rising ground.

Amberley Castle, which lay at the north end of Arundel gap, is not preserved in its entirety, but is still a fine ruin, and occupies, as Arundel did, a position of great military strength, though it does not dominate the landscape as does the larger fortress. The strength of Amberley lay in this, that from the north and west it

was quite unattainable. If the culture of those fields now known by the highly descriptive name of "Amberley Wildbrook" were to cease for a generation, the old conditions would be reproduced; the floods would soon turn them into marsh again. From the east the approach is not easy: it lies over the rolling spurs of the Downs. From the south there is only one narrow passage on the shelf of the Downs as they slope down to the Arun. It is a tradition in the county that the two castles of Arundel and Amberley were linked together in their system of fortification by an underground passage, and stories are told-with what authority the present writer cannot say-of men who have attempted to explore either end of this passage and succeeded for a certain distance. The thing is possible enough.

[Sidenote: HOUGHTON BRIDGE]

Amberley is at any rate one of the very, very old sites of human habitation in Sussex. It is the fashion to decry monastic charters, and it would be difficult to prove, though it was for centuries constantly asserted, that Amberley was part of the original foundation of the Church of Selsea. We have regarded it as sufficiently historical to be included in former pages of this book, but whether the monastic traditional charter be true or false, its very existence proves that the popular legend attributed to the place the highest antiquity.

Houghton, which lies in the neck of the gap, is certainly equally old. That British trackway which was mentioned when the topography of Sussex was being described, and which runs all along the rich loam belt immediately to the north of the Downs, had to cross the river at some point. Now it is the universal rule of the old British trackways that they spy out the narrowest part of the wet lands when they attempt to cross a river. They descend by the nearest spur upon the one side, and make for the nearest firm land upon the other. At this spot the river Arun curves strongly eastward and runs right under the Downs. The marshes to the westward of it are still often flooded and were once wide and impassable, but at Houghton there is a spur coming down across them which, while it does not actually bridge the gap, comes near to doing so. That hollow sunken lane, which is the modern descendant of the old British road, runs from Bury just above the flood line on dry soil; it climbs up on to the spur close to an old and reverend inn called "The St. George and Dragon," and then turns sharp to the left down along the crest of the spur, making for the shortest possible crossing which the marshes afford. It is not too much to say that we are certain the Arun has been crossed at this

point since prehistoric men first attempted to pass the river as they journeyed north of the Downs.

The connection of the place with modern history is also not without interest. It was here that Charles II., escaping in disguise after the battle of Worcester, took what was perhaps his last glass of ale, or at least his last glass of ale in the saddle, on his way to Shoreham, from which happy port he got away to his long exile. The house is still licensed, and cursed be the man who takes that license away.

The historical importance of Houghton is further evidenced by the name of the wood which lies up beyond Whiteways on the slope of the

[Sidenote: THE RAPE OF CHICHESTER]

Downs, which still retains the name of Houghton Forest, indicating that the Crown hunting lands, or, if the modern phrase be preferred, the national preserves, of the neighbourhood depended upon this valley village two miles off. There is little more to say with regard to the historical development of the Rape of Arundel. The villages and towns of the Weald are here, as elsewhere, of a late development. Slinfold, for example, is not mentioned in Doomsday, nor is Billingshurst, though the latter is probably Celtic in origin. Pulborough, which like Billingshurst lies on the Roman road, is the last of the outposts of the Weald to be spoken of in that document, while the excellent village of North Chapel was actually not detached from the parish of Petworth until as late a date as 1693.

The Rape of Chichester has this character to differentiate it from the other rapes of the county, that it is not military. Two explanations of this fact concur and supplement each other. The Rape of Chichester led nowhere, and had no gap in its hills, and the Rape of Chichester was dominated by the Church.

We have seen that all the Rapes of Sussex, leading as they did from north to south, tended to group themselves round highways from the Channel to the Thames valley, and Chichester, with its large though shallow harbour, certainly did afford an admirable entry into England for early navigation; but, once one had made the town, one's way to London and the North lay up the Stane Street, and this Roman road went through no populous districts nor through any of those gaps which men (after Roman times) would naturally seek for their advance, but went straight over the bleak and desolate Downs, and by the time it got to the crest of these it

was within half an hour's smart riding of the garrison of Arundel. Westward no man would go. The marshes prevented him. Neither would he advance northward; he would have found in that direction, after crossing the pass at Singleton, a fertile valley indeed to raid, but no good opportunity for further progress. Before him would have lain the large sandy wastes which began at what is now the Sussex border by Fernhurst, and continued right on to the neighbourhood of the Thames. They are to-day filling up with villas, but they were, throughout the centuries in which our history was made, empty deserts yielding no corn and affording no shelter of towns or villages to an army. Supposing that an enemy, as for instance a pirate raid of the Danes, were

[Sidenote: ITS ECCLESIASTICAL CHARACTER]

making for the lowlands of the Rother valley, or farther on for the rich pastures of the Wey (where later was to spring up the wealth and magnificence of Waverley), such a sailors' raid would certainly have proceeded up the Arun and tried to force its way past Amberley Castle. It would never have made the attempt through Chichester.

There is, then, a clear topographical and strategical reason for the immunity of the Rape of Chichester from military conditions. There is also an ecclesiastical reason. It is a thing not to be forgotten, that from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Renaissance the contrast between the ecclesiastical and the civil method of government was a reality. It afforded for men's minds something of the foil or background which to-day the legal aspect of society gives us as against the commercial, or the conception of a gentleman as against the conception of a rich man. The contrast was, of course, much more vigorous and satisfactory than any of our modern contrasts can be. We see it in a thousand ways illuminating the history of the Middle Ages; by way of sanctuary, by way of the ecclesiastical courts, by way of the atonement which men paid for violence when they founded great monasteries, by way of the technical abstention from capital sentences which the Church rigorously preserved. It is not fantastic to ascribe to this cause the fact that the Rape of Chichester held no important castle and was the site of no great battle. Nor is it ridiculous to imagine that the somewhat ungeographical inclusion of the parish of Slindon into the hundred of Aldwick, and therefore into the Rape of Chichester, had something to do with this ecclesiastical quality. For Slindon was Canterbury's; Stephen Langton died there.

Here, as in the Rape of Arundel, everything within a march of the

sea was in Doomsday, and the actual entries from the sea are known before Doomsday; for example, there is Bosham, from which we have seen that Harold sailed on that pleasure trip of his to Normandy. Right up in the Downs Doomsday parishes continue, as Singleton, which is the mother of West Dean, and lies in the same internal valley or fold of the hills as does that other parish of Upper Waltham, which we have already discovered to be included in the Doomsday Survey in the Rape of Arundel. So with the loam belt to the north of the Downs in this Rape. Graffham is in Doomsday, Cocking is in Doomsday, and while Heyshott is not actually in

[Sidenote: SCILLY SUSSEX]

Doomsday, it is alluded to a little later as Percy Land held of the Montgomerys. But once we get into the neighbourhood of the Weald the dates fall later. Midhurst is a full borough in the early fourteenth century under Edward II., and not before.

The Rape of Chichester is not only the principal ecclesiastical influence in the county; it is, one might say with no great exaggeration, the only one. By which it is not meant that the Church as a whole did not have its full effect in the county; on the contrary, in moulding the type of Sussex character the Church had, if possible, a greater influence than it had in moulding the character of any other county. To this day we talk of "Scilly Sussex," which means "holy Sussex," just as we talk of "Hampshire hogs" or "Kentish men with tails"; and all up and down the soil of the county are to be seen the noblest collection of parish churches in England, the proofs of an ancient devotion.

But ecclesiastical influence, exercised as an economic power and with deliberate intention, is less strong in Sussex during the Middle Ages than in any other county. The monasteries were not very numerous, and when they were rich (which they rarely were) they do not seem to have had a very considerable effect upon the life of the county. The towns, of course, possessed their monks, as did all the towns of England; Lewes had its Benedictines, Arundel its Dominicans, and so forth. But the monks who, throughout the west of Europe, reclaimed land, opened up empty and uncultivated spaces, and were the pioneers of the mediæval civilisation, did nothing for this county on the same scale as they did, say, for the North country, or for East Anglia. The reason is plain. Sussex was cut off while the earlier part of the monastic effort was at work, and was very rapidly developed by a civil influence the moment that isolation ceased with the coming of the Normans.

Hardham and Boxgrove are almost the only examples which point by their sites to the economic work of the early monasteries, for they both lie along one of the old Roman roads; but both of them came comparatively late. Boxgrove was founded by the lords of Halnacker under Henry I., Hardham was later still. Robertsbridge, also a development of the central Middle Ages, may be cited as an example of the monks opening up wild country, but Battle was quite artificial, the result

[Sidenote: THE MONASTERIES]

of a vow paid and of the accidental site of a battle. Moreover, Battle, thus artificial, was by far the wealthiest of all. At the time of the dissolution Hammond, the last abbot (who surrendered with great pusillanimity to Henry VIII., and against whom the gravest charges have lain), gave up revenues of £1000 a year in the currency of the times-far more than £10,000 of our money. Boxgrove itself could only count about one hundred and fifty pounds.

The priory of Tortington, next to Arundel, is interesting in the history of England for reasons already mentioned, but it was not wealthy. Almost every other foundation, as the Dominicans of Chichester or Winchelsea, or those we have previously noted at Arundel, or the Franciscans of Winchester and Lewes, or those near the north gate of Chichester, or the Carmelites of New Shoreham, or the Friars of Rye, are connected with towns and do not therefore concern the development of the county.

So far we have been dealing with the historic basis upon which Sussex, like every other part of England, has been built.

We have seen that upon the prehistoric origin of which we know hardly anything came Rome. We have seen that the Italian race laid down the bed upon which all the rest was to rise-a bed, firm, hard, and even, like their own concrete. It was a process occupying in this island some four hundred years.

Upon Britain, as upon every other western province, fell the barbarian invasions of the fifth century. We have seen that they were somewhat more severe here than in other provinces, and that Sussex in particular was swept clean by them, not indeed of her race, but of her religion and her civilisation. The darkness resultant upon this catastrophe lasted for little more than a hundred years, but in that hundred years everything which gives dignity to

mankind had disappeared, and the countryside, from Romney Marsh westward away to Chichester Haven, had gone savage. We have seen that it was slowly re-Christianised and recivilised, but that the planting of good stems upon such a devastated soil was for long a difficult and an unfruitful business. The mission of St. Wilfrid coincides with the close of the eighth century. It is not till the middle of the eleventh that Sussex really re-enters the European unity; it is not till the close of it that the influence of that unity begins to be largely felt after the Norman Conquest.

[Sidenote: THE RISE OF THE SQUIRES]

Two hundred and fifty years pass, during which the social development of England and of Sussex keeps the main lines laid down by the Conquest; the central government is still strong, the conception of tenure still weighs upon the wealthy class, and all men are responsible somewhere to some lord. Briefly, the mediæval system is during that period alive; here, as in northern France. And this island and northern France form, between them, until the close of the thirteenth century, the heart of Christendom. It is in them that arise the great philosophic discussions of the new universities, the Gothic architecture, the feudal scheme, the true co-operative industry of the mediæval manor.

For as long as that society could endure, that society was organised; and in Sussex the organisation, or, to use a better word, the sense of authority, is to be discovered in the great "Rape" overlordships, Hastings, Pevensey, Lewes, Bramber, Arundel, and Chichester, whose growth has been already sketched.

It so happened that that mediæval system grew old and failed.

The period of time between its failure and the present day is comparatively short, as the history of mankind goes. Its break-down is only apparent to the historian with the middle of the fourteenth century; it is not suspected by its own victims till the middle of the fifteenth. We are to-day but in the beginning of the twentieth. It may be said, roughly, that four hundred years of change alone separate us from that organic unity which had survived for fifteen hundred years from the civilisation that the Mediterranean brought us. We feel a world away from that organic unity of the Middle Ages, because these last four centuries have been so full of an active intelligence and of an increasing material knowledge, that these take up nearly the whole horizon of our minds; but our detachment is but apparent and illusory. At bottom our morals, in so far as they are permanent, our conception of civic

life, our modern appetite for economic justice, are all rooted in the Middle Ages; and the more a modern man learns of them the more he feels that they are his native place.

The process of disintegration which the mediæval system suffered took in Britain a peculiar form, and in this most typical district of Britain, in Sussex, that form is clearly to be traced. The village, which was the unit of mediæval life, was essentially co-operative. As the segregation of individual industry arose, either the lord was certain

[Sidenote: THE RISE OF THE SQUIRES]

to become, from the head official of a corporation, a proprietor of the whole, or the villein, his tenant, was bound to become, from a member of a co-operative society, a proprietor of his part. There was not room for both. Elsewhere, in all northern France, and to some extent in the valley of the Rhine, the break-up of the mediæval system is the attack of the peasant upon his lord. It is (spread over a much longer period) something like the campaign which the Irish have inaugurated in our own time. It is a movement towards peasant proprietorship.

In England the development is very different. Feudalism in England, even when it was highly organised, as in Sussex, had to fight against a force which is almost inherent in the soil. For that force it is difficult to find a name, though it is a tendency clearly observable in the whole of English history. It may, perhaps, best be defined as the tendency of the English village group to submit to one lord, coupled with the lack of any tendency among these lords to coalesce under a superior. The system is essentially oligarchic, and its foundations were laid in the natural crystallisation of society during the anarchy of the Anglo-Saxon centuries. With his inheritance of law weakened, and his memory of a protecting government destroyed, the small man had not the wit or the courage to fight against the big man; hence the English squire. The big men had not the necessity forced upon them to unite in defence of an antique civilisation and a strong Roman tradition; hence the permanent insecurity and ultimate abasement of the English monarchy.

The latter of these two forces you see at work continually in the history of England during that space which lies between the Norman Conquest and the Barons' Wars, when the attempt to govern from a centre was made and failed. The village aristocracy is always stronger than the Crown, and in some sense expresses a

national action against the Crown. At first this aristocracy merely supported the barons (who were their nominal overlords) in the joint attack upon monarchy, but as the centuries pass the overlords themselves lose their hegemony. At last, round about the period of the Reformation, the lords of single manors, the squires, become completely independent, and their final, wholly successful effort matures when the Tudors are no longer there with their violent personalities to defend the symbol, the remaining symbol, of a central authority.

[Sidenote: THE SUSSEX FAMILIES]

The Stuarts break down. The squires arm. The Crown is defeated. A king is beheaded. From thence onward a process which was easily apparent in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which had taken on strength with the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth, which had become of further importance with the large transfers of land at the end of Elizabeth's reign, is completed. The seventeenth century sees in Sussex, as throughout England, the final victory of the village landlords, their complete possession of the soil and of the people who dwell upon it, and their complete independence from any authority over them.

There are many brief historical surveys which illustrate the rise of the landed families. Among the easiest for a general reader to take, and also the most instructive, is the list of the public offices of the county. We have a fairly complete calendar of the sheriffs from the purely feudal times to our own, and there we may trace the dignity falling more and more into the hands of county men. The local patriotism and its result, the strong local oligarchy, which are between them the warp and the woof of England, are exhibited here at one glance. The names mentioned are not always those of sheriffs for Sussex alone, especially in the earlier times; but their names and their places of origin are significant.

We begin that list not quite a hundred years after the Conquest, in the reign of Henry II. The names are drawn from all over England. They are merely royal officers and they do not concern us. But as the Middle Ages come to their end, the names which we can identify as those of the local gentry begin to tell. You get, just at the beginning of the Wars of the Roses, the Ashburnhams and the Stricklands. In Edward IV.'s reign you find for the first time a Goring (who was then not even a knight). You get the Gainsfords of Crowhurst, and the Coombes (honoured name!), presumably of Coombes in the vale of the Adur. Just before the Reformation the Oxenbridges of Brede and the Dawtreys of Petworth, who founded

Hardham Priory, and whose name proceeds from the high banks ("d'Haute Rive") of the water meadows of Arun. You get again that good Sussex name, the Palmers of Angmering, and so on to the Civil Wars. There are further Gorings and Morleys, also a Glynde, and, just before the struggle, a bishop a knight of Parham.

It is after the Restoration, of course, when the

[Sidenote: THE SUSSEX FAMILIES]

victory of the squires was complete and final, that the habit becomes fixed, and that you find (until quite recent times) nothing but Sussex names in the great roll of the sheriffs. There is a sort of gap under William and Mary, who were usurpers and disturbed the order of England; but with Anne reasonable things returned. The names of Blunt and Shelley appear, which still adorn the county; and under the Hanoverians, the Bartelotts of Stopham, and many another family which still holds land within the centre and in the west of the county, are to be found upon the rolls.

Not until the Reform Bill does the tradition begin to change. Then you find a Curzon coming in out of nowhere; and since then, one must dare say, many another man who is simply rich, and who simply happens to have settled upon Sussex land.

We may now turn to examine in detail those Sussex families which have become bound up with the history of the county; some of them originally territorial; some of them professional, acquiring wealth in their professions, and achieving territorial rank; many of them passing from one part of the county to another, but all remaining a true framework for the countryside.

Alongside with them we shall be able to trace a most deplorable vicissitude in the ownership of certain manors which has, most unfortunately, not ceased to-day, but has rather increased, and which very seriously menaces the future integrity of the county.

It is impossible, of course, to give a complete survey of the process in these few pages, but the consideration of a few typical manors and, after that, of a few typical families will suffice to fill in that general impression of the county which it is the object of this book to convey.

Consider, for example, the Manor of Cuckfield, and see the way in which the squirearchy develops. One may presume that throughout the true Middle Ages it preserved at least a semblance of

depending upon the overlordship of the Rape, and the Fitz Alans can count themselves its masters.

But as the Lancastrian usurpation breaks the great families a local consideration comes in. In the eighteenth year of Henry VI. the manor was divided between four co-heiresses, and so remained divided into four pieces (each still held by great families, but each holding the germ of a future squire in its small limits), until the last half of the sixteenth century, when two men, Bowyer and Covert, introduce (in the sixteenth and twenty-third

[Sidenote: GRAFFHAM AND LAVINGTON]

years of Elizabeth respectively) a new stock upon the old land.

Within a hundred years there comes in one Sigerson, perhaps of the middle class, a Commissioner of the Navy; he buys the estate, his family hold it throughout the eighteenth century, and are the principal owners at this day.

This tendency of lands to remain in the same hands till the close of the Middle Ages, and then to be bought up by a new race of squires, may be traced in many another parish. There is Graffham, which does not change hands until after the Armada, when a certain Garter of London buys it; it then passes by the marriage of an heiress to the first of the Sargeants; an heiress of the Sargeants after many generations marries the man who was afterwards Cardinal Manning; another heiress (by this time the family held Lavington close by) marries Wilberforce, the bishop, and, right in our own time, his son sells it to a Scotch distiller.

Or consider again Madehurst which, until the reign of Elizabeth, holds of the Arundel earls; then one Dixse has it in fee; then it passes to the Kemps, and they sell it to Sir George Thomas (whose family sold it again), after which it passes by a second sale in 1825 to John Smith; and at last we see it in the middle and end of the nineteenth century in the hands of a manufacturing family who had chosen to assume the ancient name of Fletcher.

Eartham (to quote another example) went to King Henry VIII. in exchange for Michelham Priory; in the middle of the eighteenth century a Chichester man bought it, one Hayley; a generation later, Huskisson, the politician; then the Milbankes; and then again, quite recently, a man whose name is connected with a custard powder.

Singleton went down traditionally until the Reformation; nay, till

that year after the Armada, when Graffham also had slipped; then, in 1589, it changes hands, passing from a noble to a squire. It remained in his family till the beginning of the eighteenth century; it is sold and re-sold, passing from hand to hand. Within present memory first a squire, and then a northern Quaker, and at last a wealthy racing family have held it, one after the other.

As might be imagined, the Church lands, their lineage abruptly torn apart at the Reformation, suffered fates even more revolutionary, and produced a squirearchy even more tenacious by its

[Sidenote: NEWTIMBER]

wealth, and even less attached by tradition to the county of Sussex. Thus Newtimber, which had come down from Doomsday, is seized by Thomas Cromwell. The King chucks it to Anne of Cleves; then you find a Darrell in possession; then a Bellingham (holding of Lord Abergavenney in the sixteenth year of Charles I.) It is left to one Woodcock, whose daughter, after the Restoration, marries a Cust; and then, following the universal fate, it is sold to a yeoman of Poynings, one Osborne, whose grandson in 1741 sells it to a Newnham, whose grandson, again, early in the last century, sells it to a Gordon, etc.

An historian might make many exceptions. The fortified places have most of them held out (as it is their nature to hold out) against change. We have already pointed out that Bramber and Arundel have had a continuous tenure. Bosham goes right down from the confiscation after the Conquest to the nineteenth century without alienation. But take Sussex land as a whole: the sixteenth century first and the Restoration afterwards have dug an impassable gulf.

It is pleasant for those who love certitude to pass from such vicissitudes to something allied to the tradition of the land, but more permanent than it: the tradition of the owners of the land. It is pleasant to note the continuity of certain Sussex families, their origin, and their grip upon the soil.

Thus the Shelleys have not only glorified Sussex by producing at the end of their line her chief poet, but have also welded themselves into the soil of this happy county.

Shelley, whose great name might almost add something to the splendour of the land upon which he was born, will be remembered because that birth of his was next to Horsham. The story of his

family will show how widely it was spread over Sussex land, and how worthy it was of inheriting such skies and such a landscape as could produce a master of verse.

The name, oddly enough, is from Kent; indeed there has been, since the centuries after the Conquest, a continual movement westward from Kent into Sussex of which the Shelleys are but one example.

Long before family names arose, while men were still called by their Christian names and their land was mentioned after them, the men of Shelley in Kent were lords of Shelley. They were there in the end of the thirteenth century, they were there until the middle of the fourteenth; at that epoch

[Sidenote: THE SHELLEYS]

one John Shelley went westward, for the good of England. The Lancastrian usurpation, that watershed in our social history, is apparent here. John Shelley is returned for the Commons of Rye, just after Agincourt. He had a son who went still farther west, and, coming to Mitchegrove, married the daughter and the heiress of the lord of that place, a certain John, who took his name, as was right, from his own land. This settlement of the family endured through the Reformation. After this latter date the Shelleys marry into Buckhurst; still further on before the Civil Wars they exchange their Warwickshire lands for further Sussex holdings; in the eighteenth century one finds them marrying into Maresfield. Already they had a hold upon Findon. Up on St. Leonard's Forest you find their name in one of the first of the ploughed lands which open that deserted belt, and they remain to-day Sussex in name, place, and position.

To take but one other example, and that of a very different kind, the Blunts of Crabbet Park are Sussex, though of a later stock. Here also we have a westward movement coming in with the last migration of the squires. For Thomas Blunt (a Collector of Customs in Kent) had a grandson, Elyas, fixed at Bolney; his name is not without significance of the time in which he lived. This man married the heiress of New Buildings after the Restoration, and perhaps in the Civil Wars the family acquired those waste spaces of the Crown which now make up the larger part of their holdings. At any rate that family has produced at the end of its line to-day another poet, and again a poet of Sussex.

The list might be multiplied, but it will be of little purpose to

develop it in so short a summary as this. It is our purpose rather to show how, until quite recent years, Sussex lands ran into the hands of a group of families who perpetually interchanged their holdings, and who yet remained full of the county air, until there came that modern diversion by which so much of the county has fallen to those who have nothing of its spirit, and who only come into it as into a sort of park, for their momentary pleasure.

For until the last two generations nothing was more tenacious than the Sussex squire to his soil. Long after the Reform Bill, nay, right into our own time, Sussex land was not sold to outsiders, and Sussex social conservatism was unbroken. The moral health of its villages was keen and singular; the squire was of no excessive wealth, the farmer

[Sidenote: SUSSEX JUST PAST]

securing his tenancy, the labourer glad of his wage, and living on from grandfather to grandson, secure also of his position in the village. The old arts, which are the test of vitality in any commonwealth, survived-to this day there are villages where the thatcher can thatch as he can in no other part of England; for instance, in Walberton he can do so. To this day Sussex retains in some of her remoter hamlets, for instance in Bury, the true Broadcast Sower.

There is a phase of English history which all lovers of England look back upon with regret; it is a phase whose complete literary expression is to be found in Gray's Elegy; it was in the purpose of whatever guides this county that such a phase should not be very long-lived, but while it lasted perhaps the happiness of the English countrysides was higher than it had been before within our historical memory, or will be again within the limits of our continuous tradition. Of this happiness it can be almost proved that Sussex presented the chief example, but just because the county had reached such a goal it was destined to a measure of change.

When Sussex had fallen into what seemed a permanent phase of large agricultural estates, held by the most contented gentry and tenantry in England, there fell upon this state of affairs a foretaste of what was to happen throughout the county with the great economic revolution of the nineteenth century; a great town began to arise and to grow with startling rapidity in one devoted portion of the countryside.

It is curious that Sussex, whose character and whose pleasure it

has always been to live its own life, and to stand apart from the development of the rest of the island, or at least to develop only after the rest of the island has made its particular experiments, and has proved its experiments wise,-it is curious that Sussex should in this one case, and that a most important one, have gone before the rest of England. For Sussex was the county to develop the great watering-places and the great centres of population (as apart from the centres of industry) which first created, then were so vastly increased by, the railway system.

The reason is, of course, not far to seek. Sussex possessed the nearest coast-line to London, and presented that coast in an aspect most attractive to Londoners.

No very considerable harbours disfigure it. The trade with France was not a trade of such a

[Sidenote: THE WATERING TOWNS]

volume as that which has created Liverpool or long ago created Bristol. It was a busy, small agricultural trade.

Again, all along the coastal plain there is a beach; and a beach, when people once begin to take their pleasure by the sea, is a necessity for that pleasure.

Again, the line to this coast was close and direct. Every one who has bicycled or walked from London to the Kentish shores knows what a different task it is compared to a half-day's run to the South Coast-the Sussex Coast is the "South Coast" for London, and the only one.

The first town to be developed in this manner was Brighton, and Brighton was not so much created by the fashion of the Prince Regent as by the fact of its proximity to London. It is the nearest point which Londoners can reach when they desire to enjoy the sea. It grew up in a manner to be paralleled nowhere else in England.

There are other characters in connection with the extension of this great town far more remarkable than the rapidity of its growth or the vastness of its population, as, for example, that it has affected to so slight a degree the neighbouring country around it; still the contemporaries of its growth were more struck by its rapidity than by any other feature. It began as a fishing town of 2000 souls. At the close of the last century it already counted 5000, in the year

1850 it measured 40,000-all this before the railway. When the effect of the railway was at its height, before the common use of the bicycle or the motor car, the development of Brighton was the most characteristically modern impress which the nineteenth century had made upon the landscape and nature of the county. It retains this pre-eminence in our own generation, but in a degree which is very probably to be lessened.

Somewhat later the other coast towns began to develop, and so long as the railway controlled that development, their growth was regular and almost according to a set law. Fashion or the doctors would recommend some point upon the coast. The long coastal railway from Brighton to Portsmouth afforded a station at the place, and the town increased in regular fashion, not with the station as the centre, but as the point from which branches spread out to the sea, so that these towns all more or less resemble a tree spreading from the railway station, and trippers hurrying from that station to the beach are like the deployment of a regiment

[Sidenote: THE WATERING TOWNS]

from column into line. These towns are, of course, stretched out along the beach; for their separate and successive organisation, the continual presence behind them of the coastal plain, with its railway parallel to the shore, has afforded admirable opportunities. That plain from Brighton to Bosham is perfectly flat; the crossing of the rivers has presented the only obstacle, and that obstacle was insignificant. The railway could run pretty well in a straight line and build up the towns along the sea.

Even to-day the villages are linking up with the towns. Rustington is full of bricks. Rottingdean, for twenty years a sort of suburb, has now long been full of painters and others. A curious collection of bungalows has sprung up on the long pebbly beach which shuts out the Adur from the sea. Opposite these barracks lies Lancing; and even upon the extremity of old Selsea a new settlement, now nourished by a light railway from Chichester, is arising. At Seaford, which is saved a little by its hills, the same attempt at rapid building is made.

There is one feature in this string of houses all along the coast of the county which Sussex men note with a pleasure not unmixed with malice. It is this, that while places of absolutely no commercial use and of no historical importance in the growth of the county are thus gradually being turned into appendages of London (so that all the way from Beachy Head to Chichester

Harbour you have within the space of some fifty miles at least sixteen miles of houses), yet the places characteristically Sussex, the places upon the sea-line, which have gone to the building up of the county, and in which the population naturally gathered, continue to resist with extraordinary tenacity.

You can do nothing with Newhaven except leave it a port. Littlehampton refuses to be the pleasure ground that its landlord desires it to be. Bosham is still the ancient harbour and village which its history demands that it should be. Shoreham will not consent to become a lesser Worthing or a second Brighton, and this is the more remarkable from the fact that these harbour towns and villages are geographically more in touch with London than those other towns whose special character it is to lie sheltered by the hills and far from the gaps by which a railway could approach them from the north.

One may discover precisely the same state of affairs upon the eastern coast of the county

[Sidenote: THE WATERING TOWNS]

beyond Beachy Head. Here, for example, is the enormous development of Eastbourne, in a place which was useless for sailors, but sheltered from the winds by the neighbouring hill. Bexhill has increased along a beach which was not used until speculation had built the new town. Pevensey between them, upon its flat inland, is still deserted.

To this list Hastings is a very considerable exception, because its beach and hill made it during the Middle Ages, and for very different reasons to-day, a necessary sea-town. But, with the exception of Hastings, every other town follows a general rule, that the new growth of watering-places along the south coast is extraneous.

This long series of new towns grates upon men who have known and loved the county throughout their lives. There is little of Sussex about them; they have not the Sussex method of building nor any of the Sussex industries. Even their permanent population is largely drawn from other parts of England, and you do not hear the full warm accent of the south country often enough in their streets. The only consolation which the county can give itself as it watches this increasing line of new buildings is that, a mile or two behind them, their very presence seems to be forgotten.

A closer observer has another consolation, which is that the new methods of communication are perhaps beginning to check the tendency which existed throughout the nineteenth century to over-populate the sea coast. If men, foreign to the place, are trying to spoil the Weald, at least they are applying a counter-irritant to their too great success in spoiling the coastal plain, and in the Weald they have a larger area over which to spread their limited faculties for evil.

It is even possible that the power which the county has shown itself possessed of for so many centuries to digest and to absorb new-comers, will save it altogether from these latter invasions-possible, but doubtful. Then the descendants of those who now own Brighton, Worthing, and the rest, the children of the men who build villas on Crowboro' top, and the heirs of the new-comers who have purchased, one would think, at least a third of the great old houses under the Downs, will be worthy of the soil which their ancestors certainly did not understand, and the historical development of Sussex will continue.

It is more likely that that development has already come to an unfruitful end.

PART III

THE INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER OF SUSSEX AND THE WAY TO SEE THE COUNTY

The efforts which many have made to describe a peculiar Sussex dialect and peculiar Sussex methods of architecture, have been somewhat too laborious. The example of other counties, notably of Devonshire, which did possess a strictly defined local dialect and set of customs, has tempted the patriotic historian of Sussex to find in that county something which is not there. There is, indeed, a South country way of speaking as all the world knows. It is to be found in the valley of Meon, and it is to be found in Kent, and it is to be found in the southern parts of Surrey. It occupies a large region, whose boundaries are very vague and ill defined; it lies, roughly speaking, between the North Downs and the sea, and is bounded westward by the New Forest. It is not peculiar to the county of Sussex.

For example: A Sussex man will call a woodpecker a "yaffle," which is a name taken from its peculiar call-it is for all the world like a

mad laugh. Or again, he will talk of "steening a well," that is, lining it with bricks. Or again, he will call a toad stool a "puck" stool. He will speak of a ploughshare as a "tourn vour," that is, a "turn furrow"; and so forth. But these phrases are to be heard all up and down the district which I have mentioned. And the termination of place names, the peculiar epithet by which a steep wood is called a "hanger," or a horseshoe depression in the Downs a "coombe," though very Sussex, are not only Sussex.

So it is with the South country architecture, notably with the building of those fine "headed" chimneys which are its distinguishing feature. You will find them all along the valley of the Medway and of the Derwent, or the Stour, as much as you will find them in the valleys of the Arun or the Adur.

It is not in the establishment of a Sussex folklore, dialect, or architecture, that the peculiar and individual spirit of the county is best discovered. It is rather in the character of its inhabitants. And this again is fairly sharply divided between the eastern half of the county and the western.

[Sidenote: EFFECT OF THE IRONSTONE]

The East of Sussex, it seems fair to conjecture, has always been influenced by the presence of iron. The iron is no longer worked, but anywhere in the higher parts of the Eastern Weald one finds one's self treading upon ironstone, and one sees the streams running red with the ore, and until so late as the Napoleonic Wars the exploitation of Sussex iron was continued. It is perhaps on account of this tradition and its effect upon the inhabitants that East Sussex has, as contrasted with West, a livelier, and (in the impression of the West) a less pleasing manner. Though it is farther from London in actual distance, it is nearer London in feeling. The proximity of Kent, with its great international highroad running through the heart of it, may have something to do with this. So also has the early clearing of the forest, and therefore the early establishment of free communication with the Thames valley. This feature we have already touched on in the development of Pevensey and Hastings Rapes. But whatever be the cause, the effect is apparent to those who know the county. One very curious result of it to-day is the difference in the modern settlement of East Sussex and of West. The new-comers with their villas and their great search for something old, that they may destroy it by their admiration, have different chances in the two parts of the county. In the West they can form, as it were, islands which stand alone in the midst of a highly resisting environment. They will build you a

Haywards Heath which is like a London suburb, or a Ditchling or a Burgess Hill which is another such line of new houses, or those towns on the sea coast of which we have spoken, or the little group of red brick which defaces the landscape of West Horsham, or the lump which is beginning to destroy Barnham. But these encampments are tied close to the railway; they do not seem to spread their influence over the landscape or to change the character of the people in any way.

In East Sussex you get, on the contrary, whole belts of country into which the spirit of the great towns has penetrated, perhaps for ever. Thus there is such a belt in the line of Rotherfield, Mayfield, and Heathfield. There is another stretch east and west from the height of Heathfield to the valley of the Rother, and notably in a village which we have already mentioned for its bad eminence in this respect-Burwash-which is just such a place as the Londoner or the Colonial calls "old world." It is a village now only too conscious

[Sidenote: THE SUSSEX PEASANT]

of such a character and ready to exploit it for all it is worth. You have another example of this blight upon the top of Crowborough, which might as well be Hazlemere or Hindhead for all the South country feeling that is left to it.

The resistant quality of which we have just made mention, and which is especially discoverable in the western part of the county, is perhaps the most remarkable and, under modern circumstances, the most pleasing of the characteristics of the people. To those who have not been brought up in the county it becomes but slowly apparent. Those who know Sussex and its people take a somewhat cynical delight in observing that power at work. There is no peasant in the world so rooted in his customs and so determined to maintain them as is the Sussex peasant. He has been despoiled of his lands; he has been exploited by farmers from every other county, who come to use his rich belts of loam; he has been virtually bought or sold by families utterly out of the Sussex tradition (the Wyndhams, for example), or what is worse, Colonials and random rich men who make themselves great by the purchase of an ancient estate with whose traditional history they have not the remotest sympathy. He is, one would say, without defences against the modern world. But the modern world, as it is represented by the chance rich men who are now his masters, will very soon learn that the pressure of that proletariat is too much for them and not they for it. A Sussex man will not plant early. You may pay him to do so, and if you pay him enough he will do so

once or twice; but before you have your garden many years, you will find he is planting again at his accustomed dates. He will not use silos. You may prove to him in a thousand ways that he would be the richer for using them. You may pay him as your servant such a wage that he may begin using them, but his abhorrence of a new method of that sort will express itself in the result, that you will lose a great deal of money by your experiment. He will hatch no eggs in an incubator, he will keep no bees in a new-fangled hive. He will give his pigs too much barley meal if he can get it, and will remark when he has done so that pigs do not really pay. He will bargain in his traditional fashion if you send him to market, and you will not by any payment or pressure cause him to express dissent in any other manner than by silence.

It will be of interest to watch the near future and to see if his characteristics can be retained as

[Sidenote: SUSSEX PRONUNCIATION]

the county gets better and better known, and more thoroughly spoiled by the advent of what is called the leisured class. So far those who have been able to watch this peasant for the last thirty years have seen very little change indeed. And even the noble and rich south country accent, which education was to have destroyed, is as perfect in the little children of the last few years as in the mouths of the oldest men. And that peculiar emphasis upon the latter syllable-Amberley, Billingshurst, and the rest-has not disappeared, at least in the western half of the county.

A test may be applied by those who care to watch the progress of social disease and the resisting power of a social organism. Throughout the county the termination "ham" is kept separate, as though by a hyphen, from the first part of a place-name. For example: Bosham is pronounced Boz-ham or Boss-ham. To be accurate, the sound is a little between "s" and "z," but the "ham" is kept quite distinct. Or again, the name of Felpham, near Bognor (where William Blake indulged his eccentricities), is pronounced Felp-ham. Now it is evident that in many cases where a "t" or an "s" or a "p" comes before "h," any one not acquainted with this local method of pronouncing the words would run the two consonants together, and would pronounce Bosham "Bosh-am," or Felpham "Felf-am." Horsham has already broken down. Two generations ago everybody called the town Hors-ham. It became a considerable railway station. Many were led to read the name who had never heard of the little county town until the railway was built. Its own inhabitants did not defend the traditional

pronunciation with sufficient vigour, and Horsh-'m it has now fallen to be in spite of the most vigorous efforts of those who love their county to restore its original and significant name, and in spite of the fact that a horse even in Horsham is not yet a Horsh. If Bosham, Felpham, and the rest go in the same way, then one may take it that Sussex will not be Sussex any more. The test is small, but it is absolutely determining.

After the characteristic Sussex manner there should be considered the characteristic Sussex landscape. This has been dealt with at some length in various parts of the book when we were speaking of the Downs, the Weald, and the coastal plain, and of particular towns. But we will here consider it by itself as a mark of the county.

There are two elements in the landscape of Sussex, the first of which is more permanent than any

[Sidenote: THE MAIN LANDSCAPE]

other similar character, perhaps, in England; the second of which is more changeable than most. It is not easy to give a name to these separate elements, but with the one are connected the emotions aroused by the great views which Sussex presents, and with the other are connected the emotions aroused by its hollow and secluded places, those little isolated hills of sand and their small lonely valleys.

The great spaces of landscape which Sussex can afford have never changed and never can. No man will ever build largely upon the Downs. No forest will ever gather on so valuable a soil as that of the coastal plain. No mere extension of buildings or further cultivation will destroy the distant aspect of the Weald.

A man looking down from the crest of the Downs to the south and to the north of him sees much of what his ancestry have seen since men first stood upon those hills. The Weald was once a little denser in wood, the coastal plain a little less thick with villages, but that is all. The high, broad belt of the sea has always made a frame for that view. The flooded river valleys have always picked it out with patches of silver. The roll of the Downs has always stood, like a monstrous green wave, blown forward before the south-west wind. The simple and vivid green of the turf, and the sharp white chalk pits, have always stood making the same contrast with the sky and the large sailing clouds; and they will continue to do so for ever.

A Sussex man recognises his home when he sees it from the height above Eden Bridge, or from Crowborough top as he enters the county from the north or from the Surrey hills; he knows it when, as he gazes southwards, he catches along the horizon the dark wall of the Downs. The outline is not to be confounded with any other in the world, and these few simple planes of vision build up for him the major pleasures which the landscape of his county can afford. They have not changed in the past and they will not change in the future.

With the homelands, with the little valleys and the sandy rocks of the Weald, and the hills between the foot-hills of the southern side of the Downs, the case is different.

What the original aspect of these hollows with their clayey or sandy knolls on either side may have been in the beginnings of the county it is now very difficult to conjecture. They are certainly among the very first of its inhabited places, and it is perhaps most accurate to think of them as little packed groups of huts along the

[Sidenote: THE PINES]

stream which almost invariably flows beneath the small steep hillside, these huts surrounded by the pasture of the small pastoral community, and on the upland above by long stretches of open furze and fern. It is probable that the wooding of the knolls came later, and it is remarkable that there is very little ancient plough land in the neighbourhood of most of these villages. Within the last few hundred years their general aspect has completely changed through the introduction of the pine.

Along the whole belt of sand from Elsted right away to the valley of the Ouse you get bunches of this tree, making a peculiar note in the landscape; and the same is true of the forest ridge to the north.

It is not easy to determine at what date this foreign timber first invaded the county. It is certainly not Roman, and almost certainly it was not to be discovered in Sussex during the sixteenth century. The Elizabethan cottage of the Weald has oak for its material, and this not only on account of the strength of such wood, but obviously because it was the cheapest and commonest kind of timber; for instance, the thin lathes or strips to which the smallest tiles are affixed are of oak in the old houses as much as are the tie beams and the main rafters. We should hardly find this if the pine had been present in Sussex during that great period of activity in

domestic building; for the wood of the pine was far easier to split and to work where great strength was not required. It is thought by some that the tree came in, with all other Scotch things, in the time of James I. But it must be repeated, the point is undetermined. At any rate it has completely transformed the details of the landscape between the Surrey border and the Downs. There is, in the present day, no more peculiarly Sussex view than the sight of the bare line of the Downs caught in a framework of firs. For instance, such a fine sight as you get of them at Heyshott from the height that was once Cobden's land, or the wonderful bit close by between Selham and Burton. It is from a hill isolated and covered with this kind of timber near Hardham that the best view of the Arun valley may be obtained, and so forth all along the line from which at various points one may regard the range of the Downs.

A third and characteristic aspect of Sussex is, of course, that great stretch of the coastal plain to which so much allusion has been made that we need not emphasise it here: the sole impression of the county which those retain who have known it from a residence at Goring, at Lancing, at Findon, at

[Sidenote: MONOTONY OF THE COAST]

Arundel, at Slindon, at Eartham, or indeed at any of the villages built upon the southern foot-hills of the Downs. It may be mentioned in connection with this part of the county, that of all maritime districts possessed of remarkable inland scenery Sussex is the least to be remembered by those who have seen it from the sea. The Downs slope up so gradually, the line of the coast is so flat, and the reek of the coastal towns, though slight, so continuous, that the general impression a man has who runs along even upon a clear day from Rye harbour, let us say, to the Looe Stream inside the Owers, thus covering the whole stretch of the county coast, is one of monotony. The Downs make no impression upon the view to landwards, save at one place where, for ten miles or so from Eastbourne to Newhaven, one runs along their seaward end and the high cliffs of Beachy Head, Birling Gap, and Seaford.

For any one not fully acquainted with the county, and desirous of thoroughly learning its character, the best plan is to take one of the several routes which traverse it, and to make his journey slowly. The county is so diversified, its changes of scenery are so rapid, and the slight falls and rises of the Weald make each so considerable a difference to the view, that quick travelling will never teach a man the nature of Sussex. It is on this account that

the millions who have gone and come by the railway between London and the sea coast have not retained so much as the knowledge that they have passed through the most distinctive county in England. The same is undoubtedly true of the motor car of to-day. What man travelling at fifteen to twenty miles an hour recognises the moment when he crosses the county boundary, or picks out, as he flashes by, the brickwork of a true Sussex gable?

There are but two ways of learning Sussex: on horseback and on foot; and of these the first, for those who can afford it, is the best. As to the line to be followed, those who have the leisure should certainly traverse two-the one from north to south, the other from east to west. And for the benefit of those who may be inclined to try the experiment, there shall be detailed here the way in which such a journey may best be undertaken.

It will be remembered that we have seen, with regard to the Weald, that its original clearings with their isolated farmhouses were united by random winding tracks-not true ways, such as

[Sidenote: THE OLD FOREST TRACKS]

the old deep-cut British road under the Downs, still less properly engineered or civilised roads, but mere forest paths rambling with but a general direction, and linking up one steading with another.

Now it is a remarkable fact that the lines of these original tracks are in great part preserved; in places they have been destroyed by the plough, in others they have merged into the great highways of the county, but much of them still remains in the form of secluded and tortuous lanes which are sometimes partly metalled, sometimes flagged on a packhorse path with Sussex marble, and sometimes left green. If a traveller will take one of these where it enters the county and pursue it to the Downs, he will get as true a conception of the way in which the Weald has grown up, of its primeval woodland, and of the nature of its clearings as it is possible to obtain. He will discover that to this day very much of the curious loneliness of the Weald survives within a mile or two of its most populous towns, and the impression of his two days' march (or one day if he is a great walker-the distance will commonly be under twenty-five miles) will teach him more of the county than any amount of bicycling along its main roads.

Perhaps the best example remaining of such an old track is that which runs right for the Downs from the Surrey border where the road comes from Dorking to Warnham. Its place-names here and

there sufficiently indicate the historic importance of the way. Thus its entry into the county is the "shire mark"; its first farm "King's Fold"-fold is a characteristic ending of a Wealden name. Often before there were regular farmhouses in a place there was a pen or boundary within which forest cattle could be kept. Thus, Chiddingfold, Slinfold, Flitchfold, Dunsfold, etc., in the forest on either side of the border.

Next on the road, an hour within the county, is Warnham, and in the neighbouring hamlet of "Friday Street," a termination which is characteristic of village names along some ancient way; immediately afterwards the road skirts Field Place, where Shelley the poet was born, and becomes (a further characteristic of old tracks) a boundary-at present a parliamentary boundary. It crosses the Arun at New Bridge or Broad Bridge, and thence for many miles runs south, neglected and silent, crossing the main ridge of the Weald and coming down upon the "Greens," Barn's Green, where it throws off a little branch to the left, which passes through Brook's Green, Dragon's Green, becomes

[Sidenote: AN OLD FOREST TRACK]

King's Lane at Shipley, and thence goes on in a deserted green road towards Chanctonbury.

Meanwhile from Barn's Green the original track continues south and somewhat west, becomes again a parliamentary boundary in the neighbourhood of Coneyhurst Common, turns there once more into a highroad, crosses the marshy upwaters of the Adur by a bridge which recalls its twin to the north (Broad Ford Bridge), and makes straight for the village of West Chiltington, one of those characteristic villages which depend for their site upon the sandhills which rise so suddenly from the clay beneath the Downs.

After this village it suddenly ceases to be a road, but continues in the same line as a right of way to Roundabout (delightful name!), and thence onward as a lane again to Storrington, which settlement was probably the original goal of this very ancient forest road.

If any one will take such a walk in good weather he will thoroughly understand what the history of the central part of Sussex has been. Every name he finds and every building will enlighten him.

For an east and west line of travel two may be chosen, and both should be undertaken if this highly differentiated countryside is to

be fully appreciated. The first needs but little description, it is a highroad all the way, and holds the whole line of market towns spread out upon it like beads upon a string; but it is characteristic of the Weald that even this is not a road single in its intention, but is composed of various old paths which have been patched together.

In taking this walk you will go from Petersfield to Midhurst, where are two inns, The Angel and The Eagle; then from Midhurst through Cowdray Park you follow the Petworth road, and at Petworth is an inn called The Swan, remarkable for excellent mild ale. Then from Petworth you will go through Fittleworth and Stopham, over Stopham Bridge to Pulborough; and at this point the old marshes of the Arun, the line of heights from Broomer's Hill to Thakeham, and the marshes of the Adur beyond these cause the road to double. Cowfold is your object, some ten miles away in a straight line. You must either strike up through Billingshurst five miles north, and then take the straight road from Billingshurst to Cowfold, or else you must strike south to Storrington, and then take the road through Washington, which branches to the left just after Wiston, and so reaches Cowfold through Ashurst and Partridge Green. After Cowfold

[Sidenote: WAY ALONG THE DOWNS]

it is a connected road again as it was up to Pulborough. You go eastward through Cuckfield, through Hayward's Heath, past the railway which you cross close to Newick Station, straight on to Maresfield, down south to Uckfield, then on by the main road to Heathfield. A mile eastward of the railway there the road branches; but your better plan is to follow the old line up which came the army of Jack Cade-that is, to skirt Heathfield Park, to pass through Chapel Cross, go over Brightling Hill which has wonderful command of the whole district, and so come down upon the Rother at Robertsbridge. There you will find an inn called the George, of considerable moment. East of this you are no longer in the spirit of Sussex, but in that of Kent, and a very few minutes farther on you are over the legal boundary between the two counties.

The second line is, of course, that of the Downs. It has the disadvantage of ending abruptly at the sea, and does not show you the whole length of the county as does the line through the Weald. But it has the advantage that no other walk or ride anywhere is of the same kind: fifty miles of turf, broken only by four short gaps in the river valleys, lie before you between Harting Hill and Beachy Head. The itinerary of such a ride is as follows:-

You will leave Petersfield by the eastern road, and turn by that lane on the right which makes for the Downs, reaching their summit upon Harting Hill. There is no proper track, but it is open going round the northern edge of Beacon Hill and so onwards, always keeping to the escarpment, and passing to the southern side of the summit of Linch Down. This latter course has the advantage that it avoids going round deep combe or crypt, and, moreover, on the southern side of the summit you strike that ridgeway which will accompany you for many miles, and which here leads you between the two woods in the open. About a mile to the east of the summit of Linch Down you have to cross the somewhat low and steep pass where the Midhurst and Chichester road crosses the hills. Your ridgeway takes you straight across it over the top of Cocking Tunnel, and on up again to the Down on the eastern side of the gap. There it is a clear ride right away until you come above Lavington. At this point it is well to strike to the right or south-west, making for a little chapel which you will see below you in a sort of interior valley of the Downs. Here you will find a highroad

[Sidenote: WAY ALONG THE DOWNS]

which is the highroad to Petworth; and if you continue it to a group of cottages known as The Kennels, you may leave it again due eastward over some ploughed land until you find in less than half a mile the escarpment of the hills again.

The object of this somewhat complicated direction is to avoid the sharp angle of the Downs at Duncton Hill, but if any one thinks the short cut too difficult, he has but to follow round the escarpment, and he will come by a rather longer route to the same point, which is that steep combe above Sutton and Cold Harbour which those who live to the south of it call, from the nearest farm, "Gumber Corner," but which is also known as Cold Harbour Hill. It is well to pause here and make it, as it were, a centre of observation, for it is a spot from which the general character of the county, the divisions into which it naturally falls, and the special features which make up its landscape, may all be seized in one view.

There is, perhaps, no other place in England where the landscape is so full of history, and at the same time so diverse and so characteristic of its own country-side.

To the south of you, some 600 feet below, is the whole stretch of the sea-plain, and beyond it, up to the horizon, which is lifted right

into the sky, is the belt of the sea. On this, if it be near evening, you see the regular flashing of the Owers Light, which marks that group of rocks where once was a Roman town, and you note how the sea is eating up all that shore. Stretching out towards the light in a sharp point is the promontory of Selsea Bill-all that is left of the submerged land. Here was founded the first bishopric of Sussex. And as your mind dwells upon that foundation you catch, a little to the west and to the right, the great spire of Chichester Cathedral standing up eight miles away under the sunset-Chichester, to which was removed, and which is now the successor of, St. Wilfrid's original See.

The boundary here between the Sussex sea-plain and Hampshire is clearly marked, for the level light sends a gleam along the creeks of the upper harbours beyond Bosham, which undoubtedly were the first principal divisions along this coast between the South Saxons and their neighbours to the west.

As you look along that horizon eastward, you continue to see a chain of Sussex things. You see the port of Littlehampton, one of the Sussex river mouths; farther off, on the extreme limit of your view, you see the lights of Worthing,

[Sidenote: VIEW FROM GUMBER]

characteristic of the new great watering-towns which have grown up all along this coast. You have in one landscape all that maritime fringe of Sussex which is held in such detestation by the men of the Weald, and which is yet the side from which civilisation or change has always come into the county: the sea-plain upon which the Saxon pirates landed; the plain upon which the siege of the Roman town of Anderida took place. It was from this sea that Christianity came, and it was on the same flat, though in the eastern part of it, that William of Falaise landed with his army on the way to conquer at Hastings.

Between the high place from which you are thus looking southward and surveying the land toward the sea-between the main range of the Downs, that is, and the dead flat of the rich plough-land-you see, in one low summit after the other, those foot-hills of the Downs which are an essential part of the Sussex landscape, and which are so full of Sussex history. Here stand in a row, partly isolated from each other, Halnecker, with its gaunt deserted mill; Eartham, where Cowper for some little time wrote, and where perhaps the best portrait of him was painted. Next is the great wooded mass of the Nore Hill, now uninhabited and silent, but once

a stronghold; the neighbouring summit of Slindon, which was Canterbury land, one of the great houses of the Archbishop; the promontory of the Rewell Wood, which hides Arundel; and farther off eastward that semi-conical lift of Cissbury, which the men of the place call High Down. Here first the Briton, then the Roman, then the Saxon held their trenches, and here has been found that most fascinating and absorbing relic of prehistory-a manufactory of flint implements, finished and half-finished, with the cores and the chips lying beside the completed work.

This is what you see to the southward. Directly to the east and the west of you is the wall of the Downs, on the crest of which you stand. Nowhere else on the crest of that wall will you see them look so long or so sheer. You see them fall mile after mile on to the plain, some jutting slightly forward, as does Ditchling Beacon, upon the limit of one's gaze, and the whole forming one strict escarpment, the like of which is not to be discovered to our knowledge elsewhere in the world. From this point you perceive and are filled with the utter loneliness of these hills; there is not a house on them nor a man, and they are the more

[Sidenote: VIEW FROM GUMBER]

lonely that you have so immediately, and yet so far, below you the little farmhouses in their combes.

These combes, their names and their great hollows, recall to you the enormous antiquity upon which Sussex reposes. Their name is a Celtic name. It has outlasted the three great foreign invasions of the land-the Roman civilisers, the German pirate, and the re-entry of the Latins with the Norman Conquest. Their woods also have outlasted every destroyer, every cultivator, and engineer. No one can plough these steep hollows-the beeches have clung to them from the beginning and will cling to them always. Immediately beneath you is one such horseshoe, bitten into the mass of the Down; and if you stand still you can hear moving in it the life of beasts which men have never seriously disturbed. Small as these woods are, they are as primal and as isolated as anything you will find in any distant valley. They are not cut for profit, or at least very rarely, because the ground is too steep for haulage. They live their own life and are secluded.

Indeed, all over the broad back of the Downs, for seventy miles and more, these patches of woods, both in the combes and up on the shoulders of the hills, are a necessary part of Sussex. They exhibit the unconquerable nature of the county, its strongholds of

silence and of desertion within an hour or two of London, and within a short walk of those flaring new places which have sprung up upon the sea-shore. The past and the very meaning of the county can still be remembered in the names of those woods. Here are certain of the "forests" remaining. Right at your feet is Houghton Forest, the remnant of a great royal wood lost to the Crown perhaps in the civil wars.

This view along the Downs tells you many other things about the county: you have, for instance, close beside you, not three miles away, perhaps the earliest and until latterly one of the most used of the "Passes" over the Downs-the cross-roads at Whiteways. The London road and the road which had followed along under the Downs from Lewes unite at the summit of the Saddle, and lead travellers from the capital or from the Weald to Arundel or to the sea-plain. It is an example of those passages over the hills which have been mentioned as running from Cocking near Midhurst right away to Lewes, and which have their best roads at Duncton, here at Whiteways, at Washington, and beyond New Timber at Clayton.

[Sidenote: VIEW FROM GUMBER]

Those river valleys which we have seen to be so peculiar to the modelling of the South country-trenches cut right through the chalk and appearing to ignore the natural watershed which the hills would form-come also into this landscape. The greatest of them is right before you in the Arun valley. If it is winter you will see in the sheets of water surrounding the river why these valleys were not used for communication, and why to this day, though the railway has built itself an embankment across the marshes, no road runs through along the level floor, which would seem at first sight the obvious gate through the Downs from the Weald to the sea.

You can also see from this point of vantage one of those castles which guard the gates of the county, for you can see to the north of the gap the ruins of Amberley. In a word, you have the whole nature of the Downs and of the sea-plain before you as you look from Gumber.

But you have also much more. Turn to the northward, and there lies before you the whole stretch of the Weald: its towns, its little sandy pine-clad heights, its irregular plan, the large remains of its old woods and heaths. Far beyond it you may see, like another wall answering the southern wall of the Downs, the line of the Surrey hills; and all Sussex which is not maritime lies between you and them in one sweep.

You have to the north-westward the great bunch of Hindhead, where the three counties of Hampshire, Sussex, and Surrey meet; you have to the eastward an interminable succession of low heights, one behind the other, which stretch out to the Kentish border and make up the Sussex Weald. You may see, at the farthest point which the eye can reach, the lonely fir-trees upon Ashdown, which stands so high as to hide the Kentish "hursts" behind it.

One of those small towns of the Weald which are most characteristic of Sussex is beneath you, the little town of Petworth, with its great house insolently overshadowing it and swallowing it up. There is also beneath you something more Sussex and more dignified than the blatant grandeur of such a palace-the squires' houses all the way along from Burton to Parham. You are too far to see how well they illustrate the county,-Parham especially, which is built of chalk, and is altogether a sort of natural growth of Sussex,-but you may easily grasp in their continuous line what sort of house it was round which the old manors clung.

[Sidenote: VIEW FROM GUMBER]

From Gumber also you judge how far it may be true that the Weald was ever uninhabited. You see indeed great patches of woodland, and many more patches of what may have been recent, but what are most likely ancient, clearings. You see belts of heath on which nothing has ever grown or will grow, and you see everywhere villages which are certainly of great age, because they lie along the main lines of communication.

Speaking of these, it is worthy of notice that you have next to you, as you stand here on Gumber, that most distinct and the best-preserved Roman road in England. The Stane Street crosses this saddle of the range; it is raised several feet above the surface of the hills. It is like a rampart, and comes straight from the spire of Chichester on the south-western horizon. Here are visible all the points of the Stane Street which have been detailed upon a former page, the way in which it negotiates the escarpment of the Downs in a great curve, and the way in which, when once it has struck the plain, it darts right for the crossing of the Arun at Pulborough. Hence also may be caught that gap in the Surrey hills at Dorking for which the road makes northward, and beyond which it is lost in the turf at Epsom.

As you trace that taut line across the Weald you may note every

period of the Sussex past. You see it crossing at Bignor the winding elbowed British lane which has sunk so deep through centuries of traffic below the surrounding fields, you see the famous ruins of the Roman villa, and the ruin of the Priory of Hardham, which stood upon its highway.

The watershed which divides the Sussex from the Surrey rivers stands up in the midst of the Weald before you plainly enough, though it is lower than the ridge of the Downs to the north or the south. There is to be distinguished very clearly to the north-east that part of it called St. Leonard's Forest from which flows the Arun to the south and the Mole to the north: the Sussex river of Arundel, and the Surrey river of Dorking.

All those things, then, which are especial to the county, and which we have remarked elsewhere to be the distinguishing marks of Sussex, stand out in this view from Gumber: the historic sites, the forests, the escarpment of the Downs, their foot-hills; the encroachments of the sea; the ancient and the modern parts which the sea-line plays in Sussex history; the small old ports which have so much, and the great modern pleasure towns which

[Sidenote: WESTBURTON HILL]

have so little, to do with the life of Sussex men; the river crossing the chalk hills; the oaks, the pines, and the heaths of the Weald; the Roman foundations of our state; the great Roman road and the Roman villa; the squires' houses, its successors; the little towns; the marshes of the gaps through the hills; the roads over the passes,-all these are combined in such a view, and if a man has but very little time in which to comprehend the nature of Sussex he cannot do better than to leave the Chichester road for awhile, either at the top of Duncton hill, or half a mile farther at The Kennels, and walk up to Gumber corner to see the sight which has been here described.

Next after the Saddle, from which is seen this great view, the traveller will go on eastward along the ridge, down the somewhat steep side of Bignor Hill, and he will find on the other side of the cleft, which here separates Bignor from Westburton Hill, the first of those dew pans of which we spoke in our first description of the county. From just beside it there is a straight green track leading just south of the crest of the hills, and just north of the line of Houghton Forest, and falling at last into the highroad from London to Arundel, just before the cross-road of Whiteways, where is the lodge of Arundel Park. Here he has the choice of two routes: he

may go through Arundel Park down on to the town of Arundel some two or three miles away, or he may go straight down Houghton Hill and so across the bridge at Amberley. It is this latter course which he had better take if his object is an exploration of the Downs.

Going down Houghton Hill he will note the old road running steeply down the side of the Downs and the new one curving more gently to the south. They reunite at the entrance of Houghton village, just where the old inn, the George and Dragon, stands. A hundred yards farther there comes in that ancient track which links up all the prehistoric village sites under the Downs, and for which there is no name.

It is interesting, as one leaves Houghton village, to notice how the road (which is now identical with the old British track) approaches the marshy land of the river, following the spur of dry land which pushes out into the marshes, and making for the nearest similar spur on the farther side of the stream. All old British ways approach a river in this fashion, as, for instance, the track to which we owe London Bridge, the crossing of the Medway near Lower Halling, of the Mole just north of

[Sidenote: RACKHAM HILL]

Dorking, and of the Darent at Oxford. The last few yards of the road where the marshy land begins are carried on the modern causeway; the Arun itself is crossed by a fine bridge, on the farther side of which is an inn which makes a very good stopping-place, whether a man has ridden or has walked, for, by the time he reaches this inn, he will have gone between fifteen and twenty miles. Moreover, it is always wise, when one is exploring the Downs, to rest in the river valleys which cut them rather than to come down off their main summits on to the plain, for to do this last is to waste much effort in the climb of next morning.

Half a mile after leaving Houghton Bridge inn the traveller will find a lane leading straight up to the top of the Downs, a summit here called Rackham Hill; and thenceforward he has before him a ridgeway of five miles of unbroken turf of the finest sort in England, midway along which he should note upon the steep escarpment beneath him (along the northern side of what is called Kithurst Hill) the great embankment which may perhaps be defensive earthworks, or may perhaps be some religious emblem of the prehistoric ancestors of the county.

At the end of the five miles he comes down upon what is known as

Washington Gap, where the Worthing road crosses the hills, and as he does so he leaves upon his right Highden, the original home of the Gorings, and the centre from which has spread the influence of that Sussex family. The gap is low, but a little over 300 feet, and when he has crossed it he must go up nearly 500 more to the height of Chanctonbury Ring, which is the knot or pivot, as it were, upon which the whole system of the range turns. Though it is not exactly central between the Hampshire borders and the sea end of the Downs, being a good deal to the west of such a centre, it is a place of observation from which the range may be discovered stretching to the left and right through the whole of its extent. Ditchling Beacon to the east and Duncton Down to the west are twenty or thirty feet higher, but neither is so conspicuous as the Ring. Here also, immediately to the east and just below the clump of trees, is the largest dew pan on the Downs.

It is possible to go down from Chanctonbury straight to Steyning, but, if one desires to see all one can of the hills, it is better to keep upon them until one sees below one a spur pointing towards Bramber; there is a lane down this spur, and at

[Sidenote: THE DEVIL'S DYKE]

Bramber another excellent inn called the Castle Inn. Here the second river valley of the Downs is crossed: the valley of the Adur. From the Arun to the Adur is a very short day, yet it is good policy to rest here, as there is no other break in the hills between this valley and that of the Ouse at Lewes, which is almost as long a journey as that of the first day.

After Bramber the line of the range becomes somewhat confused, and does not follow that strict and unbending direction which has hitherto marked it. There is a projection northward in Wolstonbury Hill, and fairly deep depressions between the principal heights. The course to be followed is further complicated by the near presence of Brighton, which has thrown out a railway almost up to the top of the range, and has brought the influences of a town to the deep combe known as Devil's Dyke.

This unfortunate spot cannot be avoided save on foot, for, on horseback, the escarpment to the north is too steep to be followed; it is therefore best to take it boldly, unpleasant as it is, to go well south of the Dyke and make for the hamlet of Saddlescombe, the first passage of the Downs after Bramber. Thence the traveller will go due north-east over the shoulder of New Timber Hill, in the valley beyond he will cross the two Brighton roads (that from

Crawley and that from Cuckfield) just before they join, he will leave Wolstonbury Hill wholly on his left and will make for the summits of the Downs before him, going due eastward from the highroad when he has crossed it.

When he has once reached these summits beyond the road he has another straight run of seven miles of splendid turf and of glorious views along a lonely and unwooded ridge, past Ditchling Beacon, and catching beneath him as he goes, at the foot of the hills, the last miles of the old British track which here links up Westmeston, Plumpton, and Offham.

When he comes at last to the fall of the hills down upon the Ouse valley, he will see before him the town of Lewes and its castle, and as he goes down towards it he will note the race-course upon his right, which stands upon the site of the great battle of 1264, wherein the Barons defeated the King and laid the foundations of Parliament. Lewes, when he reaches it, should form his third resting-place, lying as it does upon the third of the rivers which cut the Downs.

Upon the fourth day the way lies along the main Eastbourne road for the first two or three

[Sidenote: BEACHY HEAD]

miles, until Beddingham is reached. There one turns to the right just by the church, and after half a mile of going one finds a lane leading straight up on to the Downs; a ridgeway takes one along the crest (the height of which is here called Firle Beacon), and in about five miles one comes down upon the valley of the Cuckmere and the very old village of Alfriston.

For the last few miles of the journey there is a choice of ways: one may turn to the right after Alfriston bridge and, going past Lullington Court, take a lane which leads one straight to the village of Jevington, thus cutting off the projecting corner and height of Winddower Hill, or one may turn to the left after the bridge and go round over the top of the ridge, and so down on to Jevington from the north. From Jevington a short lane leads straight up on to the height of Willingdon Hill, and thence it is a straight southerly line along the escarpment with a few slight rises and falls until, just four miles on, one stands above the precipice of Beachy Head where the Downs fall into the sea, and one’s journey is ended. These four days, if they are spent in weather of passible clearness, teach one the whole of that lonely and wonderful belt of England,

the landscape and character of which have built up the county on either side to the north and south of hills.

It would, of course, be possible to devise many another journey by which those who do not know the county might better appreciate somewhat of its aspects. But these three of which we have spoken are the best in general for an exploration of Sussex, unless one pleases to add a fourth of a somewhat monotonous and truncated character, which would be to cover in one day the coastal plain from Chichester to Brighton, and in another the sea coast and the marshes from Eastbourne to Rye. The second section of this is straightforward enough, taking one through Pevensey, Hastings, and Winchelsea. As to the first, it is advisable not to follow the main road through Arundel, but to go by lanes nearer the sea from Chichester to Eastergate, thence to Yapton, and so on through Littlehampton, West Ferring, Worthing, and along the sea coast to New Shoreham. It is possible also to take either section right along its beach. There is no interruption, but it would be a dreary and a heart-breaking thing to do, and would leave upon a man a general impression of red brick and boarding-houses, and esplanades and tin bungalows, interrupted by intervals of tufted grass growing

[Sidenote: THE SUSSEX SEA]

rank upon deserted sand-hills. Nay, even these are not all deserted, for in places Londoners can be seen upon them playing golf.

It is best to wander inland, to pass every night at some one of the small market towns, and, when one has returned from the county, to be able to remember the many unbroken woods, the isolated clearings, the primeval tracks, now metalled and now green, the little patches of swamp, the clay pools and the short oaks of the Weald, the abrupt sandstone ledges crowded with pine, the bare Downs beyond seen between such trees, and the large levels of the four rivers which, between them, make up the county, and explain the history of its soil and of its families, and the peculiar tenacity with which it maintains under all modern vicissitudes its unique and enduring character.

It may not be without utility to close these pages with a few remarks upon the last way in which the county can be explored in the course of a holiday. We will consider the approach from the sea and learn something of the way in which a small boat should regard the harbours of this coast; of how the rivers are to be ascended, and of the particular difficulties at the mouth of each.

Those of our readers who have the opportunity to explore the county in this way from the coast and the Channel may not be numerous, but they can at least boast that their method of travel can give them the best appreciation of its history, for Sussex grew up from the harbours.

We have already remarked that the Sussex harbours come at fairly regular intervals, especially those between Beachy Head and the Isle of Wight, but they are not by any means equally easy of access, even for a small boat drawing, let us say, six feet of water; and the most difficult of all five is Rye, at the mouth of the Rother.

It is an almost universal rule that old harbours from which the sea has retreated, but to which the waterway still exists, are difficult of access, and Rye is no exception to this rule. There extends for more than a mile from the shore a mass of peaty mud through which the sea-bed of the river winds in a most tortuous fashion; at half-tide it is almost impossible to follow it if one has had no local experience. The matter is made worse from the fact that the channel is very poorly marked; its first entrance from the sea is impossible to discover in thick weather and not too easy upon a clear day. All this is a pity, for if Rye were still as accessible

[Sidenote: HASTINGS BAY]

as is say Arundel, or even Bosham, it would form the most charming of all entries into the county, with its pyramid of old red roofs and its deep and visible history.

From Rye all the way across the bay to Beachy Head there is no haven, nor for the matter of that any difficulty for a small craft, save that the shore is very flat between Hastings and Eastbourne, and that, as one’s course takes one well out, it is not easy to fix landmarks. In good weather, of course, Beachy Head is a most prominent object all the way, and the light below it a perfect mark at night, but a very little haze is enough to make a yachtsman who is following alongshore get a mile or two in or out, especially as a strong tideway runs in between Pevensey Bay and the Royal Sovereign shoals. Rounding Beachy Head itself is easy enough work except when a strong northerly wind is blowing. On these occasions the Head, which is very abrupt, and the cliffs to the west of it, have a way of spilling sharp gusts unexpectedly down on to the water beneath. The present writer has seen a five-tonner under three reefs and a storm jib all but swamped within half a mile of the shore by one of these puffs, which are especially dangerous

from the fact that there is no telling quite in what direction they will come. A full north-easterly wind on the starboard quarter as one rounds the head can give one a set-back in the shape of an unexpected gust coming round from right ahead out of Birling Gap. The only rule when the wind is blowing strong off-shore is to keep well out-irritating as it is to have to do so when one is making Newhaven, since every tack towards the outside means another mile to be beaten inwards against the weather.

Some years ago it would have been necessary to warn the reader of a small reef which runs out from Beachy Head and is especially dangerous at high water, but a new lighthouse is now fixed upon this reef and the old danger no longer exists.

Newhaven Harbour, as we have seen upon a previous page, is the most serious commercial harbour upon the coast. It is the only one before which there is not some considerable bar, and it goes without saying that small boats, such as we are supposing, can enter freely at any state of the tide; but it is by no means the easiest of the Sussex rivers for a small boat to lie in. It has a heavy traffic both of trade and passengers, conveyed in large steamers along a rather narrow river, and until a dock for large craft has been constructed it

[Sidenote: SHOREHAM HARBOUR]

will always be a rather anxious place to get in and out of, especially as there is a very strong tide in the Ouse. A dozen miles or so farther westward along the coast is the modern entrance of Shoreham Harbour. This harbour has a rather awkward bar, and it is not infrequently necessary to wait for the tide; moreover the tideway runs like a stream right athwart the mouth, and therefore tends to make one run dangerously near the pier-heads if the wind is light, but, once this bar is crossed and the piers past, Shoreham still affords very good moorings for a small boat, and it also is well situated for proceeding in any direction inland; but one must be careful to take the right-hand or eastern branch of the harbour, and not to go up the river on the left-hand side, as the former is deep, secure, and well-wharfed, while the latter has steep, shingly banks, and soon becomes extremely shallow.

At much the same distance from Shoreham that Shoreham is from Newhaven will be found the harbour of Littlehampton, which is in some ways the best of all as a centre or goal for small craft. Its great drawback is its bar, which is the worst in the whole county, worse even than that of the Rother. In spite of continual dredging

this bar is perpetually appearing above the surface at low spring tides, and it is hopeless to attempt to enter at any draught of water before half-tide. The bar is, however, quite close to the end of the pier; there is good holding ground for anchor, and signals of showing from the pier-head signal-staff clearly indicate the depth over the bar at any moment. The heavy gales from the south-west, which are the only dangerous ones on those parts of the coast (with the exception of some very rare south-easterly gales), are broken for Littlehampton by the Owers Bank, and to some extent by the group of rocks which run eastward from them, and there are very few days when it is not safe to anchor outside and wait for the tide.

Once inside, the Arun will be found the most practicable and the most delightful of Sussex rivers for the sailor. There is depth for seagoing vessels all the way up to Arundel, the approach to which is perhaps the most striking approach to a port to be found in England. Half-way on this journey is a rolling railway bridge, but there is no other obstruction and plenty of water all the way. At Arundel is the first permanent bridge, but a small boat, or a boat with a lowering mast, can go on much farther up the river. The tide will carry one, when there is

[Sidenote: THE ARUN]

no backwater or flood, as high as Pulborough in the heart of the county.

Formerly all the Sussex rivers gave this opportunity for entering from the sea into the centre of the countryside, to which was doubtless due the only too thorough results of the pirate raids in the early part of our history. Thus a Danish ship has been found right up the Rother on the Kentish border near Northiam, at a place where the river is now no more than a brook. Similarly it was easy to sail up the Ouse far beyond Lewes. As we have previously remarked, the Adur was a navigable river till recent times almost as far as Shipley. At present the Arun alone of these waterways remains. It owes its preservation to the fact that the care of man has never been allowed to lapse upon its banks. Its high dykes (still called by the Norman-French name of "rives") have always been carefully maintained, and where the old river was silting up (as for instance in the great bend by Burpham) new cuts have preserved the scouring of the channel. We must, however, regret that in this direction the canal system by which the Arun was linked up with the rest of England has been deliberately allowed to go to pieces. There used to be a waterway from Ford to Chichester, which

made the most delightful of inland excursions, and of which Turner has painted a famous picture. It is now nothing but a dry ditch. Higher up near Hardham another waterway led across the great bend of the river to Stopham and continued, as a canal parallel to the stream, across the Weald until the upper waters of the Wey were reached, and through them the Thames valley. It was therefore quite easy until the destruction of the canal to go by water from the Sussex coast to Weybridge. It is typical of our modern politics that a national advantage of this sort should have been thrown away by Parliament in its subservience to the railway interest, and it is to be hoped that that advantage will soon be regained. The trench is still there and the emplacement of the old locks, and the sum required to put the canal into use again would certainly be recovered in a few years of pleasure traffic alone.

The last of the harbours we have to consider is that ramification of creeks on the extreme west of the county known collectively as "Chichester Harbour." Here also there is a very bad bar and a complicated entrance. From Littlehampton a small boat should make for the point of Selsea Bill and so creep through Looe stream. But she

[Sidenote: CHICHESTER HARBOUR]

must take care to do this on an ebb-tide, for it is impossible to get through against the flood.

Even for quite small vessels the entry of Chichester Harbour is navigable only at high tide, but the exploration of it is delightful, whether one runs up Fishbourne Creek (which lands one near to Chichester) or, leaving this on the right, one goes straight on to the wharf of Bosham. There is, unfortunately, no river running from these creeks up into the county, but they form an excellent and sheltered mooring from which to start upon sails into the Solent just to hand.

This method of learning the county, the entry from the sea, is the most natural, the most historic, and the most germane to the nature of Sussex. Every port one enters is the port of Rape, every river up which one's dinghy takes one is the river along which the penetration of the county has proceeded in past times, and one upon which its principal market-towns will be found. So Chichester, Arundel, Steyning, Lewes, can be reached, and with more difficulty towns farther up the country. The whole manner in which Sussex has grown up is impressed upon the man who enters it from the Channel.

Unfortunately it is the least familiar and perhaps least easy of all the ways in which the county may be approached, but those who care to try the experiment will find themselves well repaid for the exertion the method involves, especially as they explore one of those valleys which lead through the Downs and reveal section by section, as one goes up stream, every distinctive portion and contrast of the countryside, until the heart of the Weald is reached, and the traveller can see from his boat, as the pirate of the fifth century saw from a wider and more marshy stream, the long, straight escarpment of the hills closing the horizon and defining the land to which he was to give his language and his tribal name.