

Tubney, Oxfordshire: Medieval and Later Settlement

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SUMMARY

This paper is concerned with changes in the settlement pattern in the parish of Tubney, formerly in North Berkshire. Its main focus is upon the medieval period, from its first mention as a name in the 10th century to the observation by John Leland in the early 16th century that the former village here had disappeared. Its history shows it to have been a modest but not diminutive settlement which survived at least to the end of the 14th century when it still had twenty tenants. The forces at work in the succeeding period, particularly enclosure, are examined for their contribution to the desertion apparent by the 1520s. The later history of the parish, including gradual resettlement away from the earlier site, is considered, and the physical traces of the manor-house, church and village are located.

On a modern map Tubney is marked nearly two miles east of Kingston Bagpuize and just south of the modern A420 road. The name is attached to a small, scattered group of settlement elements, such as Tubneywarren House, Tubney House, and Tubney Farm (see Fig. 1). The picture is at first sight unexceptional, although further consideration suggests possible settlement changes. Tubney is small by comparison with neighbours such as Fyfield and Frilford, it lacks the clear nucleation of most local settlements (both features for which it might be thought Tubney House and its park could be responsible), and it forms part of a combined parish of Fyfield and Tubney. There have, in fact, been substantial changes in settlement at Tubney, but the key to understanding them lies about one and a half miles to the north-north-east. Here can be found Tubney Manor Farm and two surviving arms of a medieval moat. Here also stood the medieval church and medieval village.

At the beginning of the 20th century Tubney was still a separate parish of 1,152 acres.¹ It formed a strip, aligned north-north-east/south-south-west, about two and a half miles in length, and less than one mile in width except in the vicinity of present-day Tubney. Its boundaries were partly defined by natural features, watercourses flowing ultimately southwards as tributaries of the River Ock (see Fig. 1). The boundary followed such features along the whole of the long western and short southern sides (the Osse Brook), and for part of its course on the east (Freya's Dyke).² The situation is reflected in its place-name, meaning 'Tubba's island',³ as are similar positions in North Berkshire (e.g. Pusey, Cholsey). Geologically, the whole parish lay on the Corallian beds, a formation long favoured for farming and settlement sites and giving rise to a band of villages running

¹ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379.

² *Ibid.*

³ M. Gelling, 'Place Names of W. Berks.' (Univ. London Ph.D. 1957), 147.

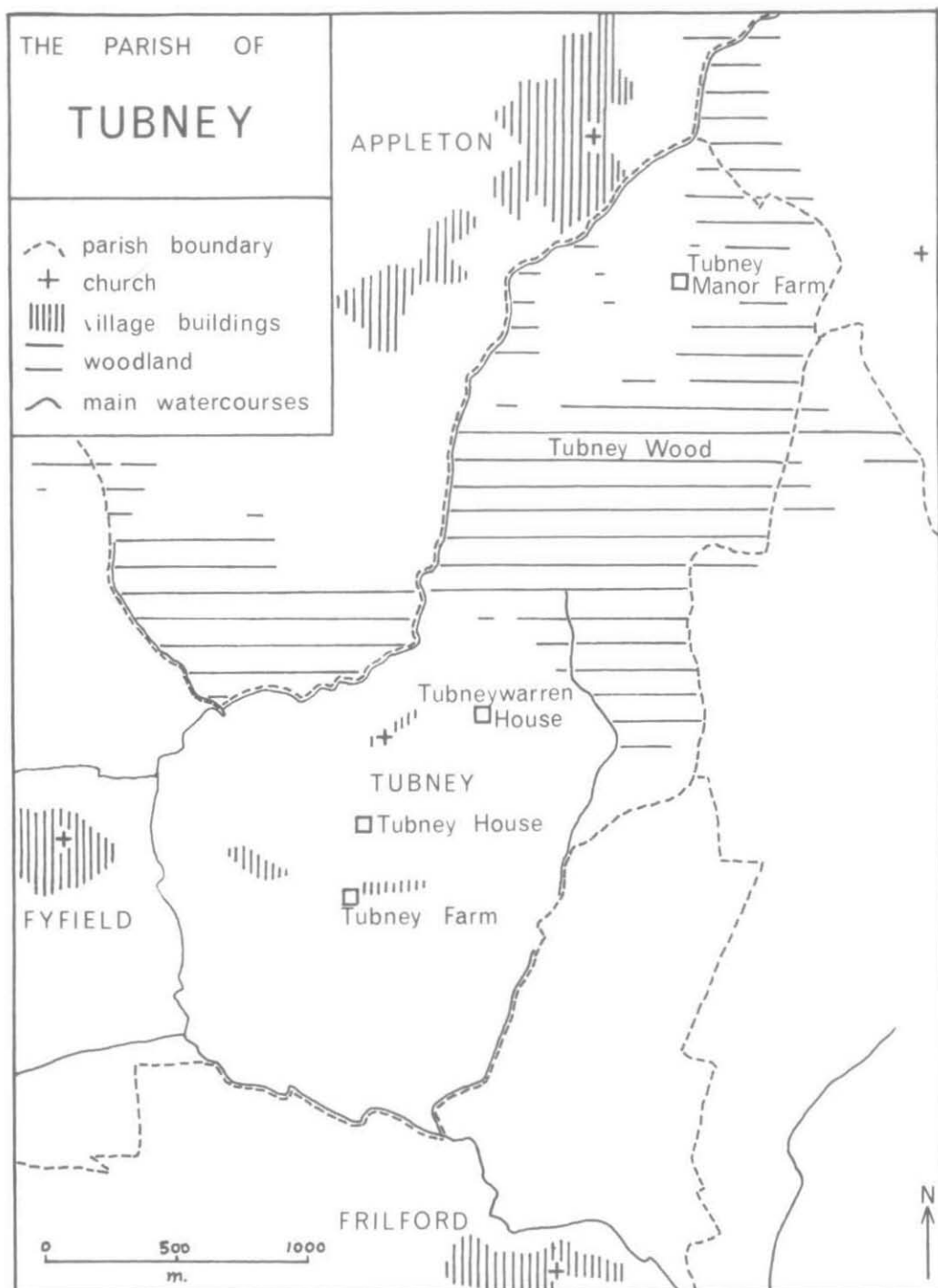


Fig. 1.

across the north of the former county of Berkshire from Cumnor to Shrivenham. The medieval village of Tubney lay at the northern end of the parish, and thus in close proximity to the surviving village of Appleton and the now abandoned medieval site of Bessels Leigh, marked by its now isolated church (SP 45650108).⁴ The former site of Tubney today lies in a relatively small area of cultivation largely surrounded by woodland: Collier's and Holt Copses to the north-east and west respectively, and the extensive Tubney Wood (much of it relatively recent plantation) to the south. Modern Tubney lies central to the largest area of cultivated land in the parish, south of Tubney Wood.

Tubney was included in the fifty hides at Marcham granted to Abingdon Abbey in 965, and the Abbey retained the overlordship throughout the medieval period, although the manor was already in the hands of a military tenant in the late 11th century.⁵ The descent of the manor has been discussed in the *Victoria County History* and, more recently, by P.J. Jefferies.⁶ The latter emphasizes the importance of continuity between the tenants, a point not fully spelled out in the earlier work. Rainald, tenant of the manor in 1086, was son-in-law of the Abbot, but his relationship with later tenants is uncertain. The late 12th- and early 13th-century holders, John and Henry, shared in common at least the derivation of their names, de Tubney, from the village.⁷ The late 13th-century tenants, the de Bois or Bosco family, succeeded to the manor by marriage to Henry de Tubney's daughter.⁸ Roger Corbet, in possession by 1312-13, was a relative of the de Bois family, and the manor descended through the male line of the Corbets until 1417, when it passed via a daughter to John Greville of the notable Chipping Camden wool-trading family. Upon Greville's death in 1444 it reverted to a relative of his wife, another Roger Corbet.⁹ Corbet, like Greville, leased land in the parish to others.¹⁰ The descent continued via ties of blood and marriage until by 1470 it was in the hands of Sir John Lenham alias Plummer, citizen and grocer of London, who had already acquired in 1465 a small estate here formerly held by the Frankeleyn family.¹¹ Lenham also adopted a policy of leasing, in 1474 granting the manor for ten years at a rent of £21 to Dame Margery and William Besiles of Bessels Leigh.¹² Lenham died in 1479 and his widow Margaret subsequently agreed terms with the Bishop of Winchester for the grant of Tubney to his foundation of Magdalen College: Margaret received £400, and the provision of a life annuity of £10 and a priest to pray for the souls of Sir John and herself.¹³ The College, which has held Tubney ever since, was in 1535 in receipt of £14 for the farm of the manor and unspecified lands which were held by an un-named tenant.¹⁴ However, the College was not the sole landowner in Tubney. William Bessels had a virgate here in 1487, and the Fettiplaces, the succeeding lords of nearby Bessels Leigh, had a holding here called Goldys (named after a late fourteenth-century freeholder) in 1521.¹⁵

⁴ J.E. Brooks, 'D.M.V.s of N. Berks.' (Univ. Reading Ph.D. 1982), 284-92.

⁵ 'Berks. Charters', ed. G.B. Grundy, *Berks. Bucks. and Oxon. Arch. Jnl.* xxxi (1927), 125-26; *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379; *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, ed. J. Stevenson (1858), ii, 5.

⁶ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379-80; P.J. Jefferies, 'A Consideration of Some Aspects of Landholding in Medieval Berkshire' (Univ. Reading Ph.D. 1972), 394-96.

⁷ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379; *Liber Feodum*, 844, 847, 852. Jefferies, 'Landholding', 394.

⁸ *Cal. Inq. post mortem Edw. I*, ii, no. 222; Jefferies, 'Landholding', 394.

⁹ W.D. Macray, *Magdalen Coll. Oxford TS. Cal. Deeds, Berks. i* (hereafter abbreviated M.C.D.), Tubney 76 and *passim*; Jefferies, 'Landholding', 394-95.

¹⁰ M.C.D. Tubney 70 and 18.

¹¹ Jefferies, 'Landholding', 395 and 377; M.C.D. Tubney 53.

¹² M.C.D. Tubney 29.

¹³ M.C.D. Tubney, *passim*.

¹⁴ *Valor Eccles.* ii, 277.

¹⁵ *Magd. Coll. Estate Archives* (hereafter abbreviated M.C.E.A.), 18/21; M.C.D. Tubney 8.

Whilst the history of the manor in the medieval period can be traced with some confidence, that of the settlement which it embraced is only rather patchily discernible. As with many places, the starting point is the entry in the Domesday Book of 1086 although it cannot be safely assumed that Tubney at this date was of nucleated form and on its later site.¹⁶ Most of the data relating to it suggest a settlement of only modest importance: an assessment in 1065 and 1086 at one hide, a former value of £2 and a current one of £4, the presence there of six ploughlands and six ploughteams (the latter all worked by tenantry rather than on the demesne), and of fifteen acres of meadow. On the other hand, its recorded population of twenty was not negligible: of the eighteen places in Ock hundred for which such figures are available, twelve were admittedly larger, but Tubney lay with seven others in the range sixteen to twenty-six.¹⁷ However, the population composition, of two villeins, two serfs and as many as sixteen bordars, was rather unusual. S. Harvey has recently drawn attention to the possible significance of this phenomenon in terms of the late 11th-century relationship between settlements and their environments, suggesting that high bordar and/or cottar numbers in 1086 may be indicative of either fullish population levels, or active expansion and woodland association, or both.¹⁸ Harvey cites Berkshire as one of seven counties in which this element constituted more than 40 per cent of the recorded population, but this characteristic is not in fact found in the hundreds of the eastern part of the county. However, it is marked in north Berkshire, where mapping of the distribution of the high percentages shows a broad similarity with that of later deserted settlements. Amongst such settlements in particular, six had percentages higher than Tubney (82 per cent.): Whatcombe, Bessels Leigh, Hodcott (all 100 per cent.), Bockhampton (94 per cent.), Compton Beauchamp (90 per cent.), and Beckett (87 per cent.), while nine had lower, but still substantial figures: Odstone (78 per cent.), Catmore (71 per cent.), Newton (67 per cent.), West Betterton (63 per cent.), Fulscot, Seacourt and East Betterton (all 56 per cent.), North Denchworth and Lollingdon (both 50 per cent.). In a situation in which places later deserted were noticeably better represented among those with high bordar/cottar numbers than as a proportion of all recorded Domesday settlements, only four such sites had lowish percentage figures.¹⁹ Many of the later-deserted villages recorded in the Survey may thus have been, by comparison with other settlements, at only an early stage in their history of development in the 11th century.

References to non-manorial matters are subsequently scarce before the early 14th century. The hypothesis of secondary status, implied by the Domesday data, is given some support by the earliest reference to the church, in the 12th century, as a chapel.²⁰ However, the area under cultivation seems to have been expanded significantly in this period: a survey of ploughs *c.* 1220 recorded two demesne and eleven and a half other ploughs, and the carucage of 1220 was paid on ten.²¹ However, colonization was not pursued to the total removal of woodland, since Tubney Wood (of admittedly unspecified size) is first mentioned *c.* 1250.²²

Magdalen College deeds from the early 14th century onwards name, in connection with land transactions, a number of individuals, some of whom also feature in the earliest

¹⁶ *Domesday Bk. Berks.* (1863), 6; C. Taylor, 'The Anglo-Saxon Countryside', in *Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Landscape*, ed. T. Rowley, 5-15.

¹⁷ Brooks, 'D.M.V.s', 458-59.

¹⁸ S. Harvey, 'Evidence for Settlement Study: Domesday Book', in P. Sawyer (ed.), *Medieval Settlement* (1976), 195-99.

¹⁹ Brooks, 'D.M.V.s', 72-74.

²⁰ *Chron. Mon. Abingdon*, ii, 235; *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 380.

²¹ P.R.O. E 179/73/1A; *Liber Feodum*, 294.

²² Gelling, 'Place Names', 147.

surviving lay subsidy rolls. Twenty-one persons paid tax at Tubney in 1327, eighteen in 1332. The total payments made, 47s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. in 1327, 35s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in 1332, and 42s. 11d. when the quota was fixed in 1334, were in all years amongst the lower ones within the hundred of Ock, but in 1334, for example, four assessments were below Tubney's.²³ However, if by comparison with its neighbours it compared rather badly in terms of taxed wealth, its standing was relatively high compared with other later-deserted villages, the majority of which either had assessments below 35s. (about half the rural average) or were not separately assessed at all.²⁴ A significant component in Tubney's tax payment in 1332 was the contribution of 12s. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. (more than a third of the total) made by the lord of the manor Roger Corbet.

Later tax and other evidence suggests that Tubney continued to survive as a village in the late 14th century. The taxation evidence indicates that, in the wake of the Black Death, it was given no tax relief in 1352 and only 4s. (or 9 per cent. of its quota) in 1353, and that the poorly-surviving poll tax returns for Berkshire include a list of twenty-seven persons, perhaps representing sixteen households, making payments here in 1381.²⁵ A fuller picture emerges from an extent of the manor in 1394.²⁶

The extent suggests a persisting traditional manorial regime at the end of the 14th century. The demesne farm consisted of various types of land (an enclosed pasture, a carucate of arable, three meadows, and a pasture for sheep), the working of which was partially undertaken, at least potentially, by the use of a range of tenant labour services. Of the twenty-seven tenant holdings listed, eighteen were, or were supposed to be, burdened with labour services. Thirteen of the sixteen half-virgates, one of the two quarter-virgates, and four of the five cottager holdings were under such an obligation, declining in scale with the size of the tenancy. The nine holdings not owing services understandably included four free holdings, and five others on which such obligations were apparently no longer demanded. In only one case does this seem to have been by commutation to the financial advantage of the lord: amongst the half-virgates normally paying 6s. rent per annum was one without works paying 10s.

The twenty-seven holdings did not support twenty-seven tenants. The four free holdings had four current tenants, the two quarter-virgates two, but one of the five cottager holdings was in the lord's hands. More seriously, also in hand were six of the sixteen half-virgates, the remaining ten being held by eight tenants, two of whom had two holdings each. The obvious implication is that the local demand for land was rather slack. The extent also suggests a substantial turnover of population since the early 14th century, although the comparison of this list of tenants with the earlier lay subsidy lists naming only those counted as taxpayers can give only the broadest indication. Of the sixteen surnames amongst the 1394 tenants, only five seem to feature in the tax lists of 1327 and/or 1332. On the other hand, the association of family names with holdings in 1394 and the references to former holders imply the disappearance of thirteen families whose names were no longer amongst the current holders of land – nine of these family names occur in the early 14th-century tax lists, and one of them amongst the poll tax payers.

Tubney in 1394 had almost certainly shrunk since the early 14th century, but with twenty tenants it was hardly deserted. That condition developed, gradually or suddenly, over the ensuing one hundred and thirty years.²⁷ The collectors of the Tudor subsidy, unlike

²³ P.R.O. E 179/73/6 m. 14r.; /7 m. 13v.; /9.

²⁴ Brooks, 'D.M.V.s', 124–26.

²⁵ P.R.O. E 179/73/33 and 32; /51 and 52.

²⁶ M.C.E.A. 123/16.

²⁷ The protracted nature of many settlement desertions is particularly stressed by C. Dyer, 'Deserted Medieval Villages in the West Midlands', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, xxxv (1982), 19–34.

their medieval predecessors, ignored Tubney in 1524, 1525 and subsequently.²⁸ The date limits, 1394 to 1524, though wide, are somewhat closer than can be established for many desertions in North Berkshire. There are, in fact, some clues indicating a more precise chronology and the possible cause of desertion here.

Enclosure, on some scale, had occurred here by 1445, when Sir Robert Corbet made two leases. The first, to Dame Margaret de la Pole, lady of nearby Fyfield, concerned lands in Tubney which she had previously leased from John Greville, and, in addition, a close for which a previous tenant had paid first 5s. and then 8s. 4d. per annum, the whole now to be held for seven years at an annual rent of 65s.²⁹ The second lease, also for seven years but describing the assets involved in some detail, was to George Skydmore.³⁰ He was to receive 'all the houses within and without the boundary of the manor, that is the hall with the upper and lower chambers, and all the houses within the courtyard, the grange, cow-house and stable, with a garden adjacent, a meadow annexed, and two pastures called Costowes, Westmede, Westfelde (with the right of rabbit-catching, without excessive destruction) and Horsbriggemed.' Provision was made for the residential accommodation (if necessary) of Corbet, for the payment by Skydmore annually of 7 marks and two cartloads of best hay, and of royal taxation. The tenant also agreed to 'enclosing all the lands with hedges and ditches, and being liable to rebuild the hall if by negligence it be burned down.'

The lands leased bear some resemblance to the demesne assets described in 1394. These had included the farm complex and attached meadow, an enclosed pasture called Costows, meadows called Horsebrygge mede, Westmede and Rychs, a carucate of land and a pasture for sheep. Several of these features were also clearly the subject of the 1445 lease. The item leased which was apparently not mentioned in 1394 and which implies far-reaching change by 1444 is Westfelde. Nothing is known of Tubney's earlier field system, but it may be inferred that Westfelde was one element in a two- or three-field system. The inclusion of such a unit in the lease with the demesne lands suggests the drastic curtailment or cessation of open-field farming. The clause on enclosure probably implies maintenance of enclosures in the case of the earlier established pastoral demesne lands; in the case of Westfelde it may have meant maintenance or initiation of enclosure.

Various manorial documents from the late 15th century cast some light on conditions at Tubney, but their utility is reduced by the combined treatment of Tubney with Frilford and Denchworth. Thus a rental of 1465-79 lists holdings some of which were said to be, and others of which were probably, in places other than Tubney.³¹ Similarly, a court roll of 1487 deals partly with persons and places elsewhere, although it does refer to the pasture of Tubney and, in particular, to William Bessels's virgate of land in (*infra*) the pasture and to Bedestone's unlawful occupation of the pasture with his animals.³² A farmer's account of 1488-90 makes it clear that the College's lands here were leased, to Edmund Sharpe for £24 per annum.³³ By 1502-3 a different farmer was paying £26 per annum for the lease of 'pastures and tenements here.'³⁴

Magdalen College encountered a series of difficulties locally in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, but the documents relating to these make no mention of a village.³⁵ There

²⁸ P.R.O. E 179/73/134 and 128.

²⁹ M.C.D. Tubney 70.

³⁰ Ibid. 18.

³¹ M.C.E.A. 81/12.

³² Ibid. 81/21.

³³ Ibid. 79/37.

³⁴ Ibid. 79/36.

³⁵ Ibid. 125/22, 123/27, 103/34, 123/25, 123/18.

were problems over the failure to maintain mounds between grounds and allegations of overcharging of land with livestock. One party involved in the latter charges was Edward Fettiplace. Another Fettiplace, John esquire of Bessels Leigh, in 1521 leased out his holding in Tubney called Goldys.³⁶ The holding was described as 'lesures', meadows, pastures and underwoods. This Fettiplace land appears to have been a source of friction with the College, but the problem was probably resolved by the exchange of lands agreed between Edmund Fettiplace of Bessels Leigh and Magdalen in 1538, presumably to secure a more rational distribution of their estates.³⁷ The College granted to Fettiplace twenty acres in Bessels Leigh and Tubney, the two parties agreeing to hedge and ditch them, while Fettiplace granted in exchange his lands called Goldys and his right in any other lands within the manor of Tubney.

The foregoing points establish that enclosure, on an uncertain scale, was a feature at Tubney from the mid 15th century onwards, but this does not necessarily establish the reason for the desertion of the village. Other potentially relevant factors, such as a mobile population and net loss of tenants, were already apparent by the end of the 14th century. The apparent conservatism of the manorial regime noted at that date may have been a particular factor encouraging emigration. Further engrossing of holdings, an increased emphasis on pastoral farming, and piecemeal enclosure would be predictable, although in this case undocumented, actions by the remaining tenants. It is possible that the village community was wholly or partly undermined from within rather than destroyed from without.³⁸

It can, however, be suggested that enclosure was a positive agent of depopulation at Tubney. Most of the now deserted villages in North Berkshire displayed signs of relative 'weakness' before or by the early 14th century.³⁹ Such places, whilst admittedly vulnerable in the face of forcible enclosure, were probably the 'natural' victims of retreat in the changed conditions after the mid 14th century. Villages that survived the process of retreat but were instead depopulated as a deliberate act of human will are likely to be those which had earlier demonstrated relative 'strength'. Using the admittedly crude criterion of possession of at least one of the characteristics of (i) a recorded population above ten in 1086; (ii) separate mention, or first mention in combined entries, in the 1316 *Nomina Villarum*; and (iii) a tax quota above 35s. in 1334, a list of now deserted sites apparently possessing this characteristic can be compiled. For all of them there is some evidence, although varied in quality, that early enclosure took place.⁴⁰ Tubney, despite the evidence noted above for its secondary status and relatively small size in its local context, was amongst this group of 'stronger' villages deserted, meeting characteristics (i) and (iii) above. Its deliberate depopulation, wholly or in part, can be plausibly suggested though not proved.

While the reasons for, and exact date of, desertion are unclear, it had certainly occurred by the early 16th century. In addition to the negative Tudor subsidy evidence already mentioned, there exists the specific testimony of John Leland to this effect. 'From Legh I rode half a myle and cam to Towkey, wher had ben a village. The church or chapell yet remayneth, and ther by in a wood was a manor place now clene downe. It longethe now as a ferme to Magdalen College in Oxford.'⁴¹ Despite the unusual form of the place-name

³⁶ M.C.D. Tubney 8.

³⁷ Ibid. Tubney 20.

³⁸ On such processes elsewhere see, for example, R.H. Hilton, *The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages*, ch. 9; C. Dyer, *Lords and Peasants in a Changing Society*, ch. 11; and Dyer, 'D.M.V.s', esp. 31-33.

³⁹ Brooks, 'D.M.V.s', 123-26.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 98-103.

⁴¹ *The Itinerary of John Leland . . . 1535-1543*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith, pts. ix-xi, 73.

there can be no doubt that Leland was referring to Tubney, the site of which indeed lay just over half-a-mile west of Bessels Leigh church. The desertion of the village may by now have been an event of over a century earlier, but the decay of the manor house had occurred since 1445. The description 'clene down' may well imply that it had gone out of use well before c. 1540, possibly in the context of its redundancy after the transfer of the manor to Magdalen College in 1480. The church was similarly redundant in the absence of parishioners in the early 16th century, and later followed village and hall into decay. Thomas White's references, in a letter to Magdalen College in 1557/8, to 'such tyme as Tubneye was a Town' and 'the decay thereof' cast no light on the date of desertion but demonstrate persisting consciousness of the former village at a slightly later date.⁴²

As in some other cases, such as Eaton Hastings,⁴³ the desertion of the medieval village site by the early 16th century was followed by modest re-population of the parish, although on an apparently different pattern. Ten households here contributed to the hearth tax in the 1660s, and there were reckoned to be twenty-four adult inhabitants in 1676.⁴⁴ This later 17th-century population probably lived largely in the southern part of the parish. Settlement here could have been a continuation of earlier occupation co-existing with the medieval village, but the absence of Tubney from the 1524 and 1525 subsidy returns (which include places with as few as two tax-payers) suggests an essentially empty parish at that date. Dr. Langley's residence, assessed on twelve hearths, was probably Tubney House which includes a 17th-century window: and another hearth tax contributor, Stephen Chandler, was later described as of Tubney Warren.⁴⁵ Two other tax-payers, Robert Southby and John Young, also feature in a particular of the manor at about this time, as the two tenants of Magdalen College here, each paying the substantial annual rent of £105.⁴⁶ The woodland was clearly an important feature of the contemporary landscape, the use of which to provide oaks for the navy had been proposed in 1631.⁴⁷ The part of Tubney referred to as 'Appleton Tubney' in the particular probably lay north of the wood and, if so, would have included the site of the former village and its immediate environs. This land was described as 'apt and proper' for corn, but its ploughing was viewed, beyond the present profit, as a means of improving the pasture. The College had earlier shown a less flexible attitude to changes in land-use: in 1611 it had sought an injunction against its farmer 'to cease ploughing up certain old meadows and pastures, and sowing them with woad'.⁴⁸

Magdalen College was still paying a parson £44 per annum in the 17th century, but the position was clearly a sinecure, certainly by 1731 when a parishioner argued against being compelled to become a church-warden on the grounds of lack of both church and services.⁴⁹ He alleged that 'Beyond the memory of man now living, there hath not been nor is at present any church or chappel . . .', for which reason 'the Parishioners . . . do usually and have always resorted to the neighbouring churches . . .' He went on to add that 'the Several and respective Incumbents have customarily time beyond the memory of man to the contrary, been inducted to the living of Tubney under a Hawthorn Bush growing within the parish aforesaid.'

⁴² M.C.E.A. 123/21.

⁴³ J.E. Brooks, 'Eaton Hastings: A Deserted Medieval Village', *Berks. Arch. Jnl.* lxiv (1969), 1-8.

⁴⁴ P.R.O. E 179/243/25 nos. 480 and 496; 'A Religious Census of the County of Berkshire in 1676', ed. W. Money, *Berks. Bucks. and Oxon. Arch. Jnl.* v (1899-1900), 58.

⁴⁵ N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Berkshire*, 243; *Index of the Probate Records . . . Berkshire, 1653-1710*, comp. J.S. Howse, 27.

⁴⁶ Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. c 224 fo. 117r.

⁴⁷ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379.

⁴⁸ M.C.D. Tubney 104.

⁴⁹ Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. c 224 fo. 117r.; Bodl. MS. Oxon. Archd. papers Berks. c 88.

Eighteenth-century cartographers depicted a settlement pattern similar in essentials to the present one.⁵⁰ Tubney was regarded as the small settlement close to Tubney House, whilst on the unlabelled former village site to the north stood only Manor Farm with perhaps a cottage or two. The following century witnessed continued re-population: a population of seventy-nine lived in thirteen dwellings in 1801, and the populations recorded after 1851 lived in forty or more.⁵¹ This expansion followed the pattern probably established by the 17th century, being concentrated in the southern part of the parish, a shift recognised by the location of a new church here in 1846.⁵² The *Victoria County History*, at the beginning of the 20th century, described the parish as anciently enclosed, currently utilised in roughly equal proportions for arable, grass and woodland, and occupied by a very scattered population.⁵³ At the present time only three houses (Manor Farm, a house and a bungalow) stand in the vicinity of the medieval village site.

Leland's evidence implies, as one would expect by analogy with other local settlements, that manor house, church and village were in close physical association. The location of all three elements can be established with reasonable confidence. The manor house, of which the lease of 1445 cited earlier gives some details, should probably be identified with the moated site, at SP 44690103, which had a drawbridge and three water-filled sides up to c. 1840.⁵⁴ Only the north and east sides of the moat survive water-filled. The bank outside the latter has been ploughed down, and traces of the moat at its south-west corner have been destroyed (see Fig. 2).

The church outlived the manor house as a standing structure for an unknown length of time. It seems unlikely that there were structural traces in 1731, and Lysons in 1806 positively asserted that not a stone remained, although the churchyard was to be found in a field not far from Appleton.⁵⁵ About a century later the *Victoria County History* similarly noted the survival of the graveyard.⁵⁶ Whilst it is no longer identifiable on the ground, the churchyard may be located by reference to the tithe map of 1841 which shows it as a slightly irregular quadrilateral enclosure centred at SP 44660084 (see Fig. 2). The actual church site marked on Ordnance Survey maps at SP 44650087 would have been against the extreme north-west boundary of this enclosure. Several sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from this area in 1967.

Other archaeological material, mainly from the surface and including worked flints, Roman and medieval pottery, was reported from Manor Farm in 1946, but it was specifically claimed in 1963 that surface indications of the medieval village were lacking.⁵⁷ Although extensive traces are not to be expected in the light of arable cultivation of much of the area certainly since the 19th century, if not earlier, this view seems to have been unnecessarily pessimistic. An aerial photograph, also of 1963, shows in the fields related to the farm conceivably relevant patchiness in the ploughed land to the south, north-south ridge and furrow (now ploughed out) to the north-west, and, to the north, an apparent

⁵⁰ Reading Pub. Library, maps 47 (E. Bowen 1756) and 75 (J. Cary 1795); J. Rocque, *A Topographical Map of the County of Berks.* (1752-61), map xi.

⁵¹ *Population Abstract, Enumeration, 1801*, i, 9; *Census . . . 1851*, Population Tbls. i, 66; *Census . . . 1861*, Population Tbls. i, 264; *et al.*

⁵² Berks. Rec. Off. (formerly Bodl. Tithe Map 389); Ordnance Survey, *England and Wales*, 6" to 1 ml. (1st edn. 1866-86), Berks. v and ix; *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 380.

⁵³ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379.

⁵⁴ Berks. R.O. (formerly Bodl. T.M. 389); *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379.

⁵⁵ D. and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia*, i(2), 389.

⁵⁶ *V.C.H. Berks.* iv, 379.

⁵⁷ F.M. Underhill, 'Notes on Recent Antiquarian Discoveries. . .', *Berks. Arch. Jnl.* xlix (1946), 58; Ordnance Survey, Arch. Div. Records, SP 40 SW, no. 30.

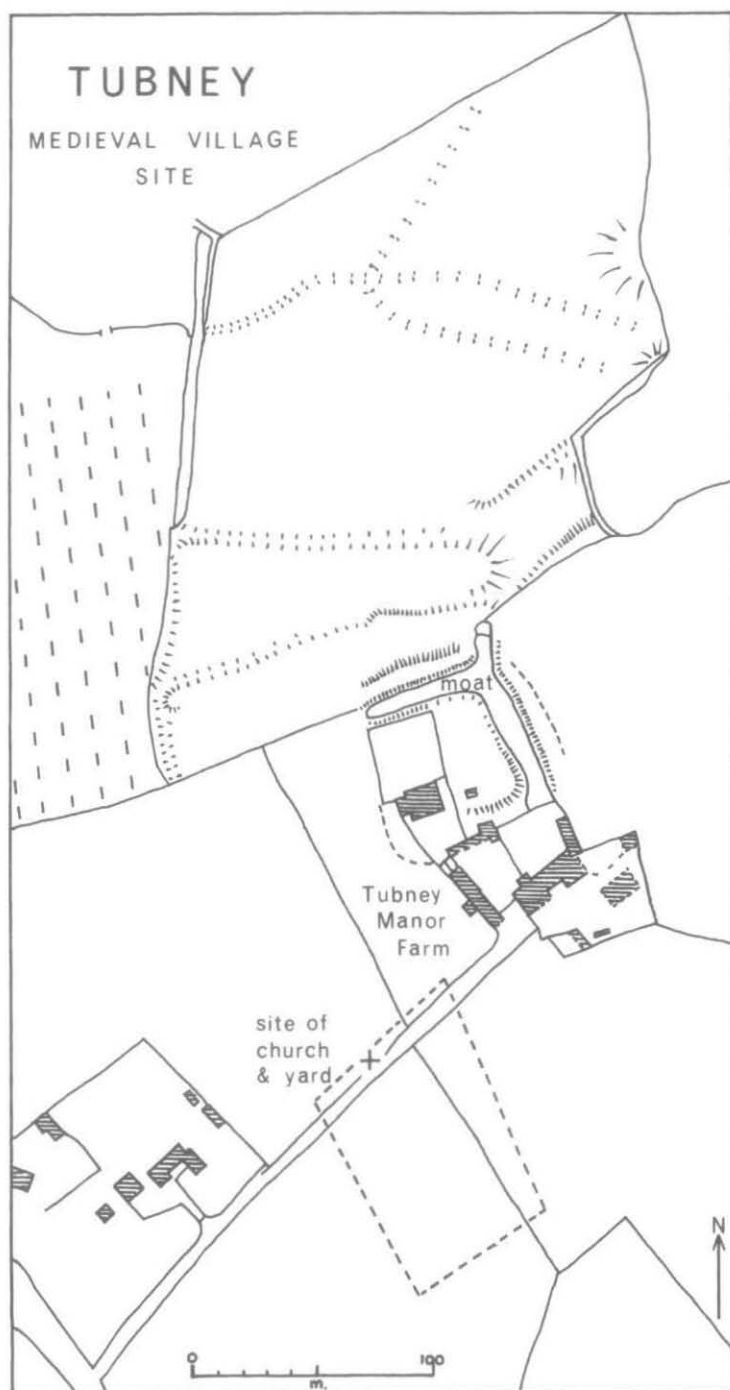


Fig. 2.

east-west hollow way and small 'crop'-marked rectangular outline.⁵⁸ Features in this last field were sketch surveyed in 1980 (see Fig. 2), and include banks well-marked in places and at times forming stretches of hollow ways. Although limited in extent, they almost certainly represent the traces of the medieval village of Tubney.

⁵⁸ Berks. County Council, Planning Dept. Fairey Survey 1963, Run 33 6.013.