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THE SUTTONS.

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IN the excellent publications of the English Place-Name Society "Sutton" is duly noted as derived from the O.E. "suth-tun," meaning the south farm. With no little courage the authors commonly proceed to consider how these south farms got their names but the result is apt to be disappointing, as witness the expressions "in relation to what place it is south is not clear" and "why 'south' it is difficult to say." The fact of the matter is that we have as yet no rule by which we may answer the questions posed by the E.P.N.S. If it is possible to formulate a rule, we may well expect to deduce it from the Kentish evidence, for our county has at least seven different Suttons and also an unequalled plenitude of those early charters and records upon which place-name study so much depends. This essay is therefore devoted to an investigation of the Kentish evidence in the hope that it may justify some definite statement as to what lines we should follow in determining the full significance of the place-name "suth-tun."

We must first of all clear the field of secondary and corrupted Sutton names. The secondary names are such as Sutton Hill in Little Mongeham and Sutton Downs in West Langdon, both of which are obviously derived from the neighbouring parish of Sutton. In the same group must be placed Chart Sutton for this was anciently Chart, and then Chart by Sutton, i.e. adjacent to Sutton Valence *alias* Town Sutton. East Sutton may originally have been part of Town Sutton and in any case its name must depend upon that of its neighbour and so does not need separate consideration. All these and several others are derived names of no importance for our present enquiry. The only corrupted name appears to be that of Sutton Street in Bearsted. This was formerly Scrutton Street and so is of no interest to us. We are left with six names which still appear on the 6 in. map, and one more which is mentioned in a Charter of 824. The seven names awaiting investigation are the following :

1. Sutton by Dover *alias* East Sutton.
2. Sutton at Hone (i.e. Sutton at the boundary).
3. Sutton Valence *alias* Town Sutton.
4. Sutton Baron *alias* Sutton Barne in Borden Parish.
5. Sutton Farm *alias* Sutton's Farm in Dymchurch Parish.
6. Sutton Hook Wood in Waltham Parish.
7. Suth-Tun in Chilham.

We may eliminate first of all the question whether these places derive their names from the fact that they lie to the south of some important natural feature such as a range of hills, or a river. A study of the map gives no support to this thesis. In no single case is there a natural feature likely to attract particular attention in the required position. Nor are these Suttons confined to the southern part of the county but are scattered indifferently throughout it.

We may next note that the Suttons are not so named in reference to particular north-tuns. The name Norton (north-tun) occurs in six different parishes but only in one case does it bear any relation to a Sutton. This is in Chart Sutton which, as we have already said, had no original right to the Sutton element in its name. Norton Court in this parish lies to the north of Chart Place and Chart Court Farm and it is no doubt from this relationship that it obtained its name. It seems to have been a subsidiary of Chart Manor as constituted at the time of Domesday Book. This digression concerning the place-name Norton, although it cannot be further developed here, tends to emphasize that importance of manorial relationships which is equally evident in the case of the Suttons. We must now pass to the consideration of the seven Suttons in the County of Kent.

1. SUTTON BY DOVER.

In the eastern part of Kent there lie three adjacent parishes which are of importance for our enquiry. The first of these is Little Mongeham which, until the reformation, was part of the possessions of the Abbey of St. Augustine, and, in spite of its name, seems to have been the oldest occupation centre. To the east of it lies Great Mongeham. This belonged to Christ Church, Canterbury, and in 1086 was esteemed part of Adisham Manor and is not separately described in Domesday Book. To the south of Little Mongeham lies the parish of East Sutton, whose church was a chapelry of Little Mongeham for many hundreds of years (*Arch. Cant.*, XL, 159). We know from the Domesday Records of the Abbey (*Notitia* in P.R.O. Misc. Bks. K.R.27) that the name Suttune was current at the time of the Conquest but our first knowledge of this area is very much earlier. In the year 761 King Eadberht of Kent gave to the Abbey of St. Augustine "six aratra on the south side of the

old settlement called Mundelingham" (B.C.S.190). This cannot refer to Little Mongeham itself and there can hardly be any doubt that it was East Sutton which was then acquired by the Abbey. We do not know whether there was a homestead in the area at this time but, if there was not, we may feel reasonably certain that the Abbey speedily provided one and named it as the South Farm of Little Mongeham. It seems to have been part of Mongeham as described in Domesday Book, i.e. a subordinate section of that manor.

2. SUTTON AT HONE.

In 1066 a great man called Levenot (i.e. Leofnoth) was living at Sutton. We know from the Textus Roffensis that there was a church there, and it was certainly the place of assembly of the lathe of Sutton, which argues at least a reasonable amount of local accommodation. Nevertheless Sutton at Hone is not separately described in Domesday Book but is included in the general description of Dartford Manor. Its church, together with those of Wilmington and Hawley, made up the "three small churches" recorded in D.B. as part of the Royal Manor of Dartford. There is therefore no doubt that in 1086 Sutton was a dependency of Dartford Manor in the southern part of whose territory it lay. The post-conquest history in relation to Dartford is difficult to trace because Sutton Church was given to the Priory of Rochester by Gundulf and the Manor was presented to the Knights of St. John before the year 1200.

3. SUTTON VALENCE.

The history of this Manor goes back to the year 814 when King Coenulf gave to Earl Suithnoth one aratrum next to the wood called Caert, i.e. the Chart (B.S.C.343). A contemporary endorsement, "Tunes Boc," shows that this aratrum was at Town Sutton *alias* Sutton Valence. We do not know when the name Sutton was first used but it was certainly before the Conquest, for Sutton is a separate Manor in Domesday Book. Since the suth-tun could not be south of itself we must look for some place, probably a parent Manor in Saxon times, lying to the north of it. To discover this place we must devote some attention to that great stretch of woodland which was in Saxon times, and still is in many places, known as the Chart. It extends along the sand hills from Great Chart in Kent westward to Churt in Surrey. So much of it as remains in the neighbourhood of Sutton Valence is called the King's Wood. There is evidence that this wood belonged to the Manor of Faversham, which was a Royal Manor. The first item of evidence is the fact that the Manor of Kingsnoth (sometimes corrupted to Kingsnorth) in Ulcombe and Boughton Malherbe was always a detached Borough of the Hundred of Faversham. The second

item concerns so much of the wood or chart as forms the southern boundary of Lenham. In a Charter of the year 850 (B.C.S.459) this is called the "Cyningessnade to Feferesham," i.e. the King's Wood belonging to Faversham. If we add to this the fact that King Coenulf was the grantor in 814, and the persistence of the name King's Wood, there need be no doubt that the whole of the chart in this area was formerly appendant to the Manor of Faversham, although practically the whole hundred of Eythorne intervenes between them. It is now seen to be a reasonable explanation of the name Sutton that it was the suth-tun of Faversham, although it actually lies south-west of the parent manor.

4. SUTTON BARON.

If the evidence of Hasted (II.68) is to be accepted, and I know no reason why it should not be, there was no Manor of Borden other than that whose Court Baron came to provide a second name for what is described as Sutton in Borden in 1379 and, no doubt, in earlier records also. The small Manor of Borden Hall *alias* Borden Court, if it really existed, seems to have been composed of the lands of the Rectory only. Borden Church, as has been shown elsewhere (*Arch. Cant.*, XLV, 78), is called Niweeyree (Newchurch) in the Domesday Monachorum, although it is called the church of Borden in later records. This suggests that about 1066 Sutton was the chief settlement in what is now Borden Parish and that a new church was built about a mile away at a settlement which was only then becoming known as Borden. The parent manor of all this area is the Royal Manor of Milton, and Borden undoubtedly lies on the southern side of that manor, if we exclude the detached portion far away at Marden in the Weald. It is reasonable to suppose that Sutton Baron was so named because it was the suth-tun of Milton Regis.

5. SUTTON FARM IN DYMCHURCH.

This place is called Sutton's Farm on the 6 in. map but is Sutton Farm on the Tithe Map and in common parlance to-day. It should no doubt be considered here even in the absence of earlier forms of the name. There was a John Suttone hereabouts in the fifteenth century (*Brit. Academy*, Vol. VII, 188) and it is likely that he took his name from this farm, but the farm is not mentioned. Dymchurch itself is the southern part of Eastbridge Manor and it is possible that it was actually called the suth-tun before the building of the church gave it a new name. But more evidence is needed about this settlement.

6. SUTTON HOOK WOOD.

This presents us with a really knotty problem and we had better first get rid of the "Hook Wood" element in the name. It means a

wood which is on a bend and it is in fact at the angle of a V-shaped stretch of woodland at the head of a valley. We have now to discover the Sutton from which it took its name. It is proposed to show that the Sutton in question is probably Waltham itself, and in support of this thesis to adduce evidence that Waltham was the southern part of the Manor of Petham and that it has probably no right to the -ham ending which now distinguishes its name.

Waltham is not mentioned in Domesday Book but is included in the paramount Manor of Petham. This is said to have two churches and, since a D. Mon. Record shows that Waltham and Petham churches together paid the Easter fee of a single church, there can be no doubt that the second church in Petham Manor was that of Waltham lying to the south. Other records in the D. Mon. speak of named places, now in the parish of Waltham, as being parts of Petham Manor. There is therefore no doubt at all that Waltham was part of Petham Manor and, since it lay directly to the south of it, may well have earned and obtained the name suth-tun.

The obvious objection to this theory is that any name with a -ham ending (unless corrupted) must be regarded as amongst our oldest settlements and little likely to have had a subordinate position at any early date. It is therefore interesting to note that, although Waltham is written "Wealtham" in the D. Mon., there are other records which make it appear that it may once have been spelt differently. In a charter written three hundred years earlier, i.e. in 824 (B.C.S. 372, 378), the boundaries of Godmersham are described in some detail. One of these is "Northan Wol Tune" and its position shows that this must be the detached portion of Waltham which lies to the north of the main part of the parish. This charter is a record which still remains to us and the boundaries are carefully written and do not show any spellings which would cast doubt on the knowledge or carefulness of the scribe responsible for them. We must therefore accept Woltune as the then name of what we now call Waltham. There is a further record which bears on this point although it is known only from a very late transcription in the Monasticon (II. 373). In 1084 Lanfranc established the Priory of St. Gregory outside the walls of Canterbury. He endowed it, *inter alia*, with the tithes of Whiteacre and Wadden Hall (both of which are in the parish of Waltham) and with those of a place called "Wolton." In the valuation of the Priory's property at the Reformation it appears that it had responsibilities in respect of the church of Waltham, and I do not know what other place "Wolton" can possibly be. We have therefore two records which suggest that about the time of the Conquest Wolton became Waltham and so remained for ever afterwards. This change is not so surprising as it may seem. King Harold's foundation of the Holy Cross at Waltham must have been well known to all churchmen and a scribe who merely heard the name.

Woltun might well write it Waltham. Nor is it unusual for the syllable "ham" to creep into names in which it has no proper place. Thus Cobbecumbe, Ranecumbe and Shillinghell have become Coakham Rankham and Shillingham. Bossingcamp has become Bossingham and Coppingebury Cobhambury. A still more surprising and apposite example is modern Walthamstowe for ancient Wilcumstowe. Actual instances of -tun becoming -ham are hard to find but Cotham (D.B. Cotune) near Newark, and Smeetham (D.B. Smedetuna) in Essex, for which I am indebted to Ekwall's *Dictionary of Place-Names*, seem to be examples. We may therefore feel that we have overcome that objection to its occupying a subordinate manorial position at an early date which is inherent in the name Waltham.

We have yet to show that Waltham *alias* Woltune was ever called suth-tun, although there is no doubt that its position in the parent manor would justify the name. The most cogent evidence of this dual name is the presence of this Sutton Hook Wood in a position which obviously relates it to the early settlement around the church of Waltham. It is therefore concluded that the Sutton of Sutton Hook Wood was Waltham itself, the suth-tun of Petham.

7. SUTH-TUN IN CHILHAM.

This is no longer to be found on the map under this name but is cited as a boundary of Godmersham in the charter already quoted. The other boundaries leave little doubt of the general position of this suth-tun which seems now to be represented by East Stour Farm. This later name indicates a farm to the immediate east of the River Stour and is a descriptive name of a sort which might easily displace an earlier suth-tun. In this case Chilham was presumably the head manor, whose records, alas, were almost all destroyed in the recent fire at Chilham Castle.

DEDUCTIONS.

It is a great temptation to eke out this meagre list of Suttons with some notice of those occurring in other counties. But the writer has no sufficient evidence available and must content himself with a single example. The Royal Family of East Anglia are known to have had their residence at Rendlesham in Suffolk but the mounds of their ship burials are on a bluff over-looking the river at Sutton, some four miles to the south. Even on this evidence, and without any knowledge of local manorial history, it seems almost certain that this was the suth-tun of the Royal Manor of Rendlesham.

We must now see what we can deduce from the scanty evidence of our earliest history which bears on the question of the name suth-tun and how we are to ascertain its full meaning. The following

propositions seem to be justified as a basis for further enquiry in other counties :

1. Suttons lie south-west to south-east of particular inhabited centres and are not so named because of their relationship to natural features.
2. Suttons are of later organization than these centres.
3. Suttons are, or have been, subordinate members of Manors with their headquarters at such centres.
4. The churches of Suttons are often recorded as ecclesiastically subordinate to the churches of such centres.
5. Such centres are never named north-tun or Norton and commonly have names ending in -ham, or other names which we recognize as those associated with the very earliest settlements.
6. Suttons may be several miles distant from these primary centres, with parts of other manors intervening.

The names dealt with herein are (1) East Sutton, south of Mongeham ; (2) Sutton at Hone, south of Dartford ; (3) Sutton Valence, south of Faversham ; (4) Sutton Baron, south of Milton Regis ; (5) Sutton Farm, south of Eastbridge ; (6) Sutton Hook Wood, south of Petham ; (7) Suth-tun, south of Chilham ; and Sutton, south of Rendlesham.