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OLD SOAR MANOR, NEAR PLAXTOL: HOUSE, LAND AND OCCUPANTS OVER SEVEN CENTURIES

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The fortified, stone solar wing of Old Soar Manor is a nationally important building in the story of the evolution of the medieval dwelling. Built at the end of the thirteenth century, and still largely intact, its layout looks back to the early medieval pattern of detached units surrounding a hall and also forward to the drawing together of different functions under one roof. Old Soar Manor has been cited by many authors (see below) for its architectural features, which are discussed here. In addition, this paper seeks to place the house in its landscape setting and to explore its manorial history.

Old Soar Manor lies isolated on the eastern slope of the Bourne valley in West Kent (NGR TQ 6195 5410). Its position is secluded, reached by deep narrow lanes from the nearby villages of Plaxtol and Crouch. Half a mile to the east, on the Chart, begins the woodland called the Hurst and Mereworth woods, which in medieval times extended to Maidstone. The Bourne valley is fertile and the land has been cultivated at least since the Iron Age.¹ A Romano-British villa was excavated at Sedgebrook, two fields away from the manor house, in 1986-8² and five hundred yards to the south at Allens Farm is a Romano-British villa, discovered in 1857, a bigger farm complex of higher standing than Sedgebrook but probably associated with it.³ Old Soar Manor may be the successor to a very old agricultural unit.

In the Middle Ages it was a sub-manor of the Archbishop of Canterbury's manor of Wrotham whose demesne land was three miles distant from Old Soar on the scarp slope of the North Downs. Wrotham manor was roughly eight miles long by four miles wide and divided for administrative purposes into six boroughs or tithings. The land of Old Soar Manor lay in Hale, Roughway and Winfield, the three southern boroughs of Wrotham manor. It was probably created in the thirteenth century, not later than c.1290, when sub-infeudation was prevented by the statute of 'Quia emptores'.

The Hore Family

As no early charters or grants of land have come to light, tracing the early history of the manor depends upon two clues. The first is the surviving medieval part of the manor house which most historians date to between 1280 and 1300 on stylistic grounds.⁴ The second is the name. Until the nineteenth century, the manor was always referred to in documents as 'Sore alias Hores'.⁵ The 's' on Hores indicates an owner called Hore. 'Sore' is more difficult to interpret as a name for this property as the earliest written form dates from 1483.⁶ There are thirteenth-century references to Shur and Soore as a location and surname in Wrotham. In 1245 Thomas de Shur' gave to his daughter Alice 'A messuage, 41 acres of land and 21s of rent in Shur' in Wrotham'.⁷ Alice and her heirs were to hold it of Thomas and his heirs, paying 1d. yearly at Michaelmas and doing the services due to the chief lords. Alice paid her father £10 to seal the bargain. It is likely that 'Shur' was a variant of 'Sore'. The gift could be a marriage settlement for Alice by her father Thomas. If Alice then married a Hore this would explain the nomenclature being 'Sore alias Hores'. This messuage and 41 acres was perhaps the kernel of the manor. John le Suur de Wrotham (1254) and Roger le Soure (1292) both appear in the Assize rolls.⁸

Le Hore was a common English surname in the thirteenth century and there were several local occurrences. In 1263 a John le Hore was one of those enquiring into the Kentish holdings of the late Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford.⁹ Clare held Tonbridge castle, five miles to the south of Sore.

In a survey of Archbishop Pecham's manors in 1283-5 the heirs of John le Hore and others held 13 acres ($\frac{1}{4}$ yoke) of land in Winfield borough.¹⁰ The name occurs again in the same survey when William le Hore appears twice under the borough of Hale in Wrotham. He heads the list of names owing services for 1½ yokes, with associates whose family names are Adam, Godere, *Peny*, Tybaud, Gavelerer, le Pol, Huntelot, *Wolverich*, *Marchont*, *Hubell*, at Chete, and Person. One and a half yokes possibly signifies an area of about 75 acres.¹¹ The entry for the quarter yoke which precedes the 1½ yokes features John *le Smale*, Roger Campayn, Walter Aleyn, the heirs of Henry *le Smale*, William son of John *Peny*, John Wolnord, John Cardin, Richard and William of *Styckylheld* and the heirs of Richard at Hale. The names in italics correspond with the names in Geoffrey Colepeper's land purchase in 1348 (see below). It is perhaps the same William le Hore who was witness to a deed concerning the Peckham family of Yaldham manor, also in Wrotham, in about 1300.¹² William le Hore's dates make him the best candidate for the builder of the manor house in about 1290, or at least for the stone part that remains.

Subsequent Hores appear in certain fourteenth-century tax returns where lists of names are given. In 1327 Mabil Hore paid 5s. 2d., a quarter

of the sum that Isolde Inge, the wealthiest person in the hundred, paid for Ightham Manor.¹³ In 1332 Thomas Hore paid 3*s.* 11½*d*¹⁴ and in 1334 a Walter le Hore paid 6*s.* when Mabel and Thomas le Hore each paid 4*s.*¹⁵ This Mabel was perhaps the widow of William le Hore whose son Walter, in 1331, granted her for life a property in Maidstone and East Farleigh.¹⁶ She and Thomas must have died in the ten years before the next taxation list. In 1337, Walter le Hore appeared alone paying 5*s.*¹⁷ Ten years after that, in 1347, Margery Hore, perhaps the widow of Walter, was assessed at 2*s.* 6*d.*¹⁸ The Hore family may have enjoyed the manor house for about fifty years until they were replaced by the Colepepers (see below).

The Medieval Manor house

The manor house consisted of an aisled, timber-framed hall which has gone, and a fortified solar end built of local, rough coursed, galleted ragstone which survives. There is negligible evidence for a service end and no clue as to the existence of a gate-house or encircling wall. The sloping site with its underlying stone would make a moat unlikely. The remoteness of the situation perhaps contributed to the partial survival of the house (Fig. 1).

The aisled hall, or a later successor, was replaced in 1780 by the present brick farmhouse attached to the south-western side of the stone solar block.¹⁹ The only remains of the hall are at the upper end where an elaborate corbel beside the doorway to the solar has three colonettes



Fig. 1 Old Soar Manor in 1989, the eighteenth-century farm house to the left, the thirteenth-century solar and chapel to the right.

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Fig. 2 Arcade corbel in the former hall with floreate carving.
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carved with foliage on the cap and at the base (**Fig. 2**). This was a respond to the north-western arcade of the aisled hall. A large block of Bethersden marble sits on top of the corbel supporting a beam that probably relates to the post-medieval flooring of the hall. Rough stonework close by at the base of the solar wall, is the remains of a dais. The segmental arched doorway to the solar staircase also remains.

The Y-shaped solar block is made up of three units with similar plans at both levels (**Fig. 3**). The principal or upper floor consists of the solar of the same width as the former hall, with a large projecting garderobe

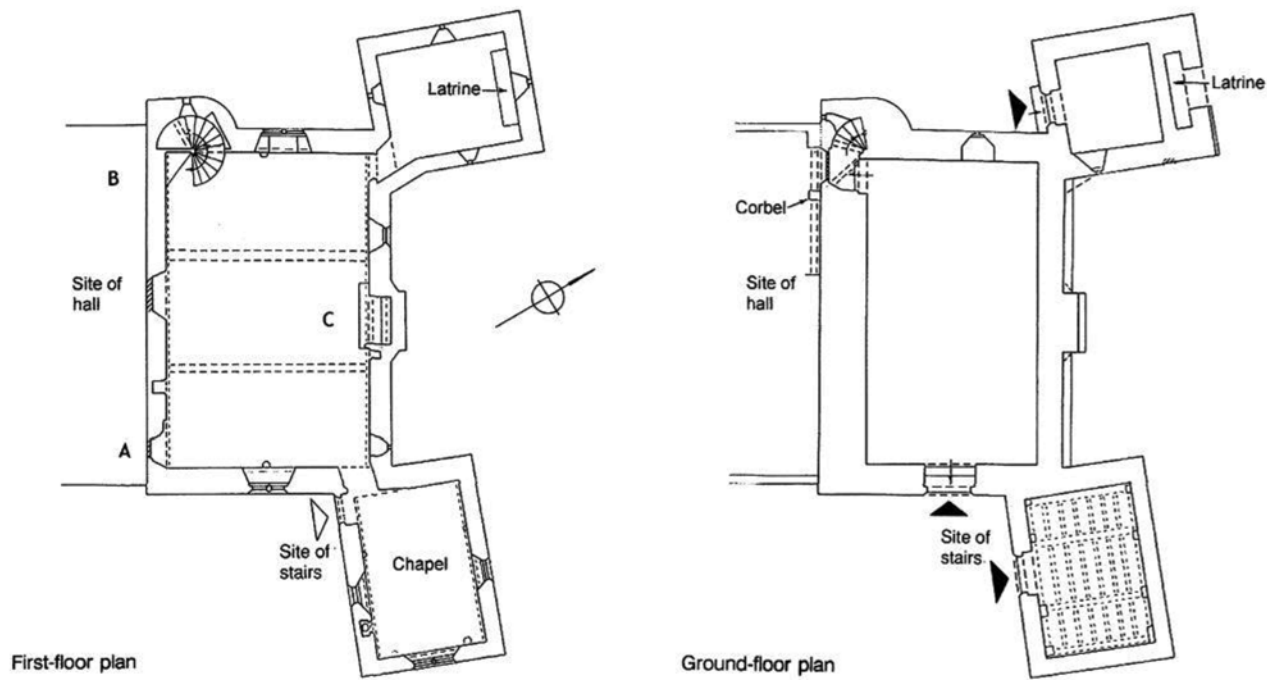


Fig. 3 Plans of the upper end of Old Soar Manor, 1:200. After RCHME *Gazetteer of Medieval Houses in Kent*.
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attached by the width of a doorway at the north corner, and a chapel attached by a similar feature at the east corner.

The three ground-floor rooms are undercrofts or cellars. Each has its own external entrance and they do not connect internally. That beneath the solar has a stone barrel vault. The other two have replacement wooden floors. The room under the solar has an entrance into the former hall at the foot of the spiral staircase. These undercrofts were used as storage space by the lord of the manor and were vulnerable points that had to be integrated into the protective system of the house. The weakest point for an intruder is the outer entrance to the solar undercroft in the south-east wall. No opening at all would have been the best defensive policy but this would have left the interior poorly lit by a single arrowloop. Previous authors have been in doubt as to whether the opening was a doorway or a window.²⁰ Clarification is provided by a photograph taken by the Ministry of Works in 1949 when restoration was in progress, showing the doorway in the process of being cleared of five courses of brick above the threshold along with lath and plaster infill above (Fig. 4). The segmental headed arch and jambs are those of a complete and original doorway.

The floor of the solar undercroft is reached by three downward steps.



Fig. 4 Original doorway to undercroft with later infill.
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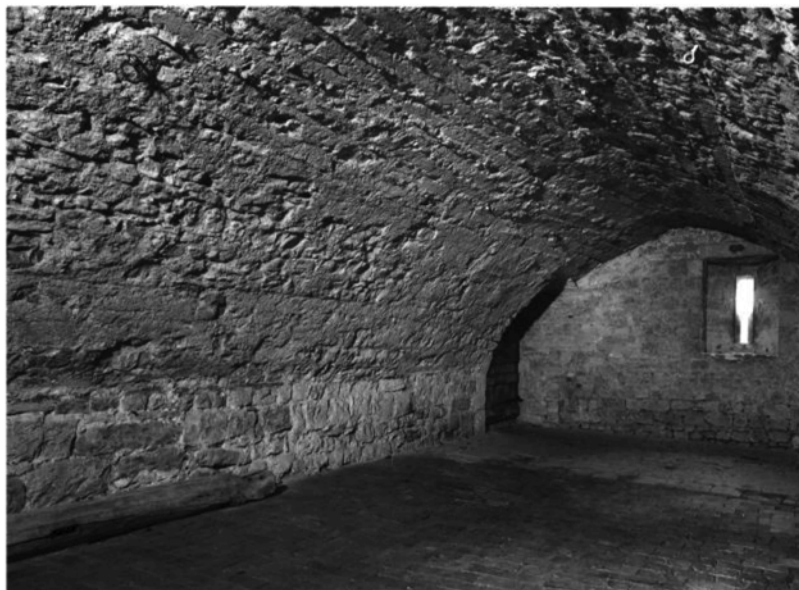


Fig. 5 Undercroft showing shuttering mortar lines, arrowloop and door to staircase and hall. © Crown Copyright NMR

The undercroft has a ragstone barrel vault on which can be seen the mortar lines marking the edges of the boards used for shuttering during construction. An arrowloop in the north-west wall gives a range of fire to cover the external area between the staircase projection and the doorway to the garderobe undercroft (**Fig. 5**). In the west corner two steps rise to reach the base of the spiral staircase and the hall entrance.

The doorways are narrow and the clockwise staircase is steep and constricted, to the disadvantage of an intruder. The stair has a stone newel and vault and is dimly lit by two arrowloops. At the top, a doorway with a segmental arched head has a door opening outwards across the head of the stair in the face of an enemy. A recess in the outer wall of the turret allows the door, which may be fifteenth-century, to remain open without obstructing traffic on the stair. The stair extends beyond the doorway continuing the spiral into the floor of the solar, bringing a visitor face to face with the room's south-west wall. This may be intended to disorientate an enemy, but the stone newel continues above the last step for another four and a half courses, strongly suggesting missing steps and that the staircase may have continued further, perhaps into a lookout tower over the valley, or to a viewpoint over the hall (or that such a plan

was considered but abandoned). The stone newel continues above the last step for another four and a half courses strongly suggesting missing steps. At some time the west corner of the solar was walled across from the stone newel to the south-west wall to a height of six and a half feet hiding any evidence of any original plan to take the staircase higher.

The solar is an elegant and lofty room lit by two large Y-tracery windows on the north-west and the south-east sides, further evidence for a building date in the late thirteenth century (**Fig. 6**). The Y-tracery was restored in 1949, based on fragments of window heads in Bethersden marble, or paludina limestone, recovered from an excavation outside the eastern corner of the chapel undercroft and once on show within the house. The north-west window has a hollow chamfered rear-arch, a window seat in Bethersden marble, hinge-hooks for shutters but no shutter recesses. Some original stone flooring remains by this window but the brick of which the rest of the floor consists was probably laid in the sixteenth century. The south-east window has no evidence for a window seat but does have pointed recesses in which shutters could be folded back. Between the fireplace (C on **Fig. 3**) and the garderobe doorway is a window with a shouldered lintel. Derek Renn suggests that it may have replaced an original arrowloop, a companion to the arrowloop in the eastern corner.²¹

The fireplace was not restored in 1949 for lack of evidence. The chimney breast is square and battered externally, as is the entire north-eastern wall. Part of the worked stone jamb and a small section of hearth kerb on the right hand side of the opening have survived and beside them a small cupboard.

On the south-western wall (at A on **Fig. 3**) is a blocked window, now obscured by the eighteenth-century farmhouse, but originally offering a view over the south-eastern aisle of the hall. Close by is another small cupboard. Centrally on the wall is a roughly blocked opening with no worked stone visible. It would have been a suitable position for a squint looking over the hall and may subsequently have been chosen as the point at which to breach the wall for a doorway when the hall was floored or rebuilt in the seventeenth century.

This imposing solar retains its original three-bay, crown-post collar-purlin roof. The crown posts have moulded caps and bases, the braces are straight and square sectioned and the lateral braces extend to soulaces. The crown struts at the gable-ends rest on stone corbels. The tie beams are roll-moulded and were reinforced with steel in 1949.

The garderobe undercroft is entered from the south-west. A wall separates the room from the wide privy shaft, which has an unusually large external arch to give access for cleaning out the shaft. In the south-east wall there is an arrowloop covering the base of the solar north-east wall. On the floor above there is an arrowloop in each wall, one of them

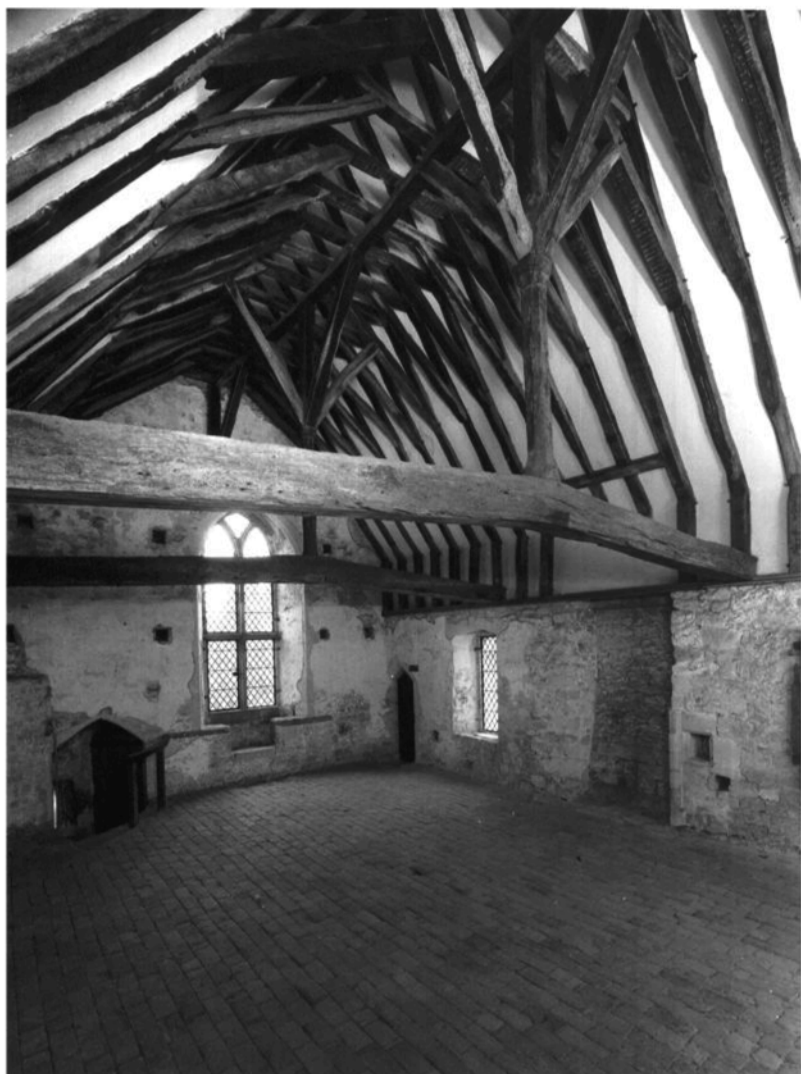


Fig. 6 Solar looking towards the north-west. © Crown Copyright NMR

being inconveniently above the privy shaft. The entrance from the solar is by a narrow passage skewed across the junction of the garderobe and solar blocks, so awkwardly managed that it must be deliberate. The large cleaning arch and the big privy shaft make the garderobe vulnerable to

entry at first-floor level. The narrow skewed entrance must therefore be defensive.

The chapel undercroft has a doorway at the south-west corner but no windows and there is no internal access to the chapel above. The chapel doorway on the first floor had an external staircase, for which no evidence survives, although it probably ran along the south-west chapel wall, thus preserving the privacy of the solar. The chapel has a collar-rafter roof

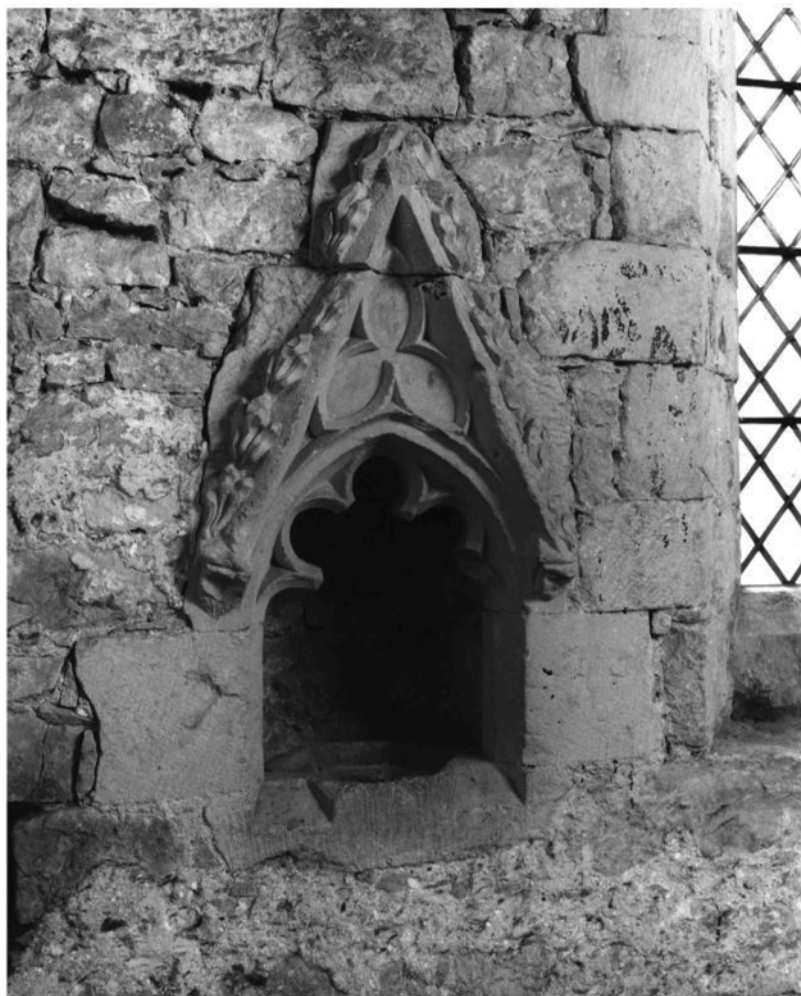


Fig. 7 Early fourteenth-century piscina in the chapel. © Crown Copyright NMR

with soulaces, three windows but no arrowloops. The breach in the wall between the solar and the chapel probably dates from the use of the solar as a grain store, when an agricultural door was made in the east window aperture (Fig. 4). The south-west wall holds a piscina with cinquefoiled head and triangular canopy containing a lobed trefoil and crockets (Fig. 7). The decoration of the piscina is more likely to be fourteenth- than thirteenth-century and is one of the reasons for suspecting that the chapel block is an addition to the rest of the house.²² Other reasons are its alignment, which is east-south-east rather than east, and the lack of any defensive features. When the agricultural door was removed from the east window in 1949, glazing-bar grooves were found. The lord of the manor must have felt life was reasonably secure to risk putting expensive glass into such a large window. Its scale is an additional reason for proposing a later date for the unfortified chapel block than for the fortified solar and garderobe.

Attached to the left-hand jamb of the east window of the chapel is an ornamented five-sided bracket for a candle or statue (Fig. 8). Its shaping is different from the arcade corbel in the hall (Fig. 2), while the floreate carving is similar but not identical. The bracket and corbel appear to



Fig. 8 Five sided bracket with floreate carving in the chapel.

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be by different hands and again may indicate a separate, later, building programme.

Allowing the chapel to be of a later date confirms Renn's survey of the defensive features. In addition to the arrowloops that survive on both floors, he suggests that others formerly existed on the site of the shouldered arched window in the solar, the breach between solar and chapel, and the window site overlooking the south aisle of the hall (at A on Fig. 3).²³ With outlying arrowloops in the garderobe this would have given all round coverage in the event of an attack.

There are nine remaining arrowloops. All, except the partially obscured one on the staircase, terminate in semicircular base oiletts, an uncommon feature in Britain at this date but found earlier in France (Fig. 9).²⁴ The



Fig. 9 Semicircular base oilet arrowloops in the garderobe.
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arrowloops' small size, high sills and unusual externally splayed cross-slits suggest that they were meant to be used by crossbows or short bows at close range.²⁵ They were commissioned at some cost by a man with an understanding of military features and they were intended for use. In the event of an attack, presumably the defenders would abandon the hall and concentrate their efforts within the stone solar wing.

Whoever the builder of Old Soar Manor was, whether William Le Hore or another, certain things can be said confidently about him. In common with most people in the troubled times of the late thirteenth century he felt insecure. He was rich enough to build the ragstone solar wing, install at least nine arrowloops for its defence and to embellish it with Bethersden marble window heads and a window-seat. The responds to the arcade in his large aisled hall were elegantly carved with floral motifs. If the same man also built the chapel, then the floreate bracket, ornamented piscina and fully glazed east window speak again of a man with money and taste. He may have been in the service of the Archbishop or involved in the military careers of the lords of Tonbridge castle or Leybourne castle. The antecedents of the arrowloops hint at foreign service.

Above all, the house is important for its place in the evolution of the domestic house. Early manor houses often consisted of a hall surrounded by detached buildings, which served the functions of upper and lower ends. Old Soar Manor represents an intermediate stage between this discrete collection of buildings and the grouping of elements under one roof. The solar is attached to the hall but the garderobe and chapel are only just attached to the solar, as Wood says, 'touching like playing cards at the corners'.²⁶ There is little that is comparable in Kent in date, layout or defensive features and the house should be compared nationally with Manorbier Castle, Dyfed; Charney Bassett Manor, Oxfordshire; and Little Wenham Hall, Suffolk.²⁷

The Manor Lands and the Colepeper family

For the medieval owner the manor lands were as important as the house. Agriculture was the basis of wealth in the Middle Ages and house building followed on from successful agricultural exploitation. The earliest lands probably associated with Sore were Alice Shur's 41 acres and the yoke and a half (75 acres) of William le Hore and his colleagues noted above.

The Hores were replaced in the fourteenth century by the Colepepers who added further acres to the landholding. In 1348 Geoffrey Colepeper and his brother John paid 100 marks to John ate Wealde and his wife, Agnes, for a messuage, or toft (decayed house), with 62 acres of land, 8 acres of meadow, and a rent of 14*s.* 1*d.*, a cock and four hens.²⁸ There follows a list of names of those who owe homage and service to the new owners which implies a transfer of manorial rights at some time from

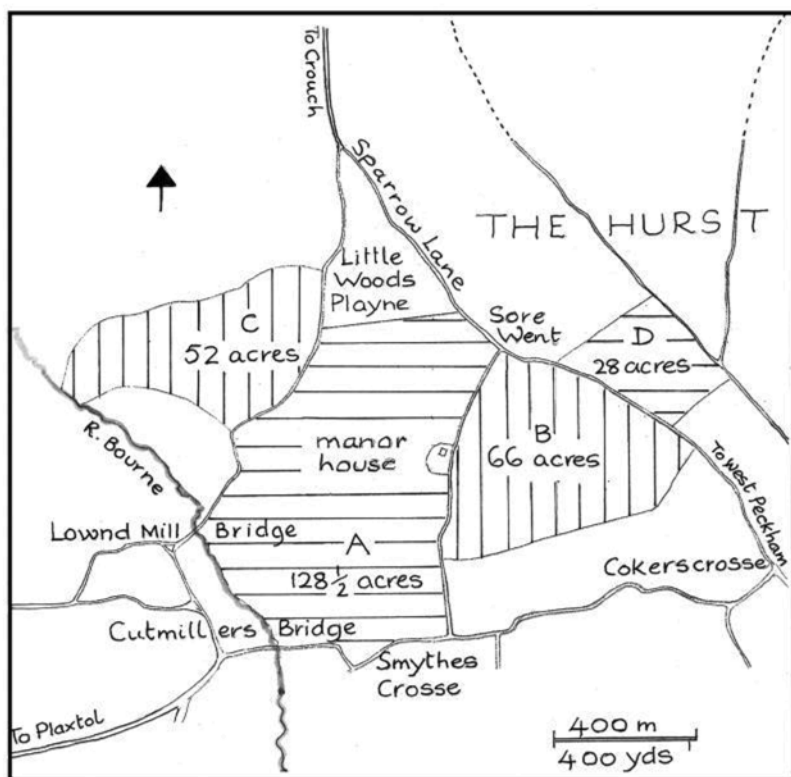


Fig. 10 Map of the manorial land of Sore when it consisted largely of blocks A, B, C and D. Based on the Wrotham tithe map, 1840, and the rental and survey of the manor of Wrotham, 1568.

Wrotham to Sore. Two generations have passed since Pecham's survey but many of the family names (in *italics*) are the same as the tenants' who held land with William le Hore: Walter, son of Ralph de *Stekefeld*, John son of Thomas de *Stekefeld*, John Ulford, John James, John son of Hamon, *Hobul*, William son of John Curteis, William *Marchant*, John son of John *Smale*, John ate Fenne, Richard Manning, Roger son of James *Wolverich*, Ralph *Wolverich*, John Draper, William Kyrayll, Isabelle Valdham, Simon Smith, Simon Henry and Richard *Peny*.

John ate Wealde is on the tax return for 1347 in the company of names long associated with Hale and Roughway, so that he can be assumed to be local to Sore.²⁹ He is assessed for tax at 2*s.* 5*d.* His holding of 70 acres may well be William le Hore's 1½ yokes and can probably be identified with block B in Fig. 10.

Geoffrey Colepeper appears as a taxpayer, in the borough of Hale, in the assessment list for 1352.³⁰ He paid 3*s.* 4*d.*, the third highest sum among Wrotham taxpayers and the same as other tenants of sub-manors in Wrotham such as Thomas Moraunt of Little Yaldham and Roger Soranks from Soranks manor at Stansted.

Hasted says that Walter Colepeper died possessed of the manor of Sore in 1327 but no documentary evidence for this has been found.³¹ In fact, Walter was executed in 1321 for withholding entry to Leeds castle from Queen Isabella. Walter was 'of Oxenhoath' manor, 1½ miles to the south in West Peckham and it has been assumed that he also held Sore.³² However, he and his successors do not appear in the lists of Wrotham taxpayers cited above and the Hores do, which inclines one to think that they still held the manor of Sore until the arrival of Geoffrey Colepeper c.1348.

The Colepeper family was widespread in Kent. The branch which owned Sore alias Hores also owned Preston Hall at Aylesford, 8 miles to the north-east.³³ Geoffrey (1321-1389), William (1390-1402), John (1402-1414), William (1414-1433) and Richard (1433-1484) probably lived at Oxenhoath. Richard's heirs were his three daughters, one of whom took Oxenhoath to her husband William Cotton. It is possible that Elizabeth, widow of William and mother of Richard, spent her widowhood at Sore. In the Wrotham court rolls for 1433 there is a reference to lands 'late William Colepeper's' implying that he is dead. In the same year, Elizabeth Colepeper is charged with failure to maintain ditches at Oxenwell at the Reede, near Cutmyllers Bridge, on the road to Sore.

Whether Sore was lived in by Colepepers, or leased off to tenants from the beginning, is unclear. Eight entries of Colepepers in the fifteenth-century court rolls only prove land ownership in Wrotham manor, not residence there.³⁴ The entry for 1483 concerns Richard and William's distraint for relief and fealty for the manors of Sore and Stansted (also in Wrotham) following the death of Elizabeth Colepeper, their mother. This is the earliest reference to 'Sore', by name, that we have. Through the 1490s the lessee was 'John Tanner of Sore', whose name appears when he paid his 4*d.* fine for suit of court in 1491. His name is entered after William Colepeper's name and also in 1496 and 1499 after Edward Colepeper's.³⁵ In 1515 Edward Colepeper 'of Arlesford', clearly not living at Sore, was presented at court for flooded ditches on Sore land. Who the lessee was at this time is unknown. Edward was interred in Aylesford church in 1533. He was followed as lord of the manor of Sore, based at Preston Hall, by John till 1550, Thomas till 1587³⁶ and finally Sir Thomas, who sold it in 1600 for £2,000.³⁷

Between c.1543 and 1576 other members of the Colepeper family occupied Sore manor and house. At the Reformation the Archbishop's manor of Wrotham, which included Sore, was surrendered to Henry

VIII and intending lessees had to seek a lease from the crown. In 1543 Richard Colepeper paid £26 per annum for a lease of 'the mansion house of Sore als Horis with barns, stables, dovecote, ... and all lands, tenements, meadows, pastures and woods...'.³⁸ Ten years later Edward Colepeper, gent., was in residence and he figures in the Wrotham court rolls on sixteen occasions between 1554 and 1576 when the birth of his daughter Elizabeth appears in the Wrotham register of births, marriages and deaths.³⁹

Richard and Edward were probably both sons of Thomas Colepeper, Esq., of Preston Hall, who appears as the tenant of Sore in a rental and survey of the manor of Wrotham in 1568.⁴⁰ For the first time we have a complete picture of the land holding that went with Sore (see **Appendix 1**). The description of the land follows the pattern of all such descriptions in the survey. First, in one long sentence, comes the principal part of the holding, beginning with the manor house and subsidiary buildings and itemizing each field and its acreage, amounting in this case to 128 ½ acres (block A, Fig. 10). Bounds, orientation and abutments were given showing clearly where and in which borough the fields lay. Block A, surrounding the house, is presumably the original part of the manor. Then follows the description of Block B of 66 acres, which so nearly corresponds to the purchase of 70 acres by Colepeper in 1348 that this must be the first major expansion of the manor. At what date Colepeper acquired the original manor of Sore from the Hores is unknown. Block C, of 52 acres in Winfield, is described in one sentence, but when the holding was acquired and from whom is unknown. Block D is 28 acres of woodland matched by another wood of 26 acres further to the south, not shown on the plan. The total acreage was 329.

The manor of Sore was a compact holding which seems to have been managed as a whole by the owner or his lessee.⁴¹ As it was a manor, from time to time manorial courts were held which dealt with small tenanted properties acquired separately from the demesne lands, mainly in Roughway and Hale boroughs. The tenants, living locally, were also tenants of Wrotham manor holdings. Whether the courts were held in the hall of the manor house, and how often, is not stated. The records of rentals and courts baron have survived intermittently from 1521 to 1681.⁴²

Sir Thomas was the last Colepeper to own Sore alias Hores. In 1600 he sold it to a wealthy local yeoman, Nicholas Myller. The yeoman replaced the knight and Nicholas continued to amass lands in Wrotham and mid Kent. In 1608 he wrote a will in which appears 'All my mannor of Sore and my tenement of Hartchamps (north of Little Woods Playne) with ... dovehowses and 400 acres now in occupation of William Gyles and Thomas Mun. And all woods and underwoods in mine own occupation, 100 acres in Wrotham'.⁴³ He died in 1621 and a year later there was an

enquiry into his extensive lands in Kent.⁴⁴ In Wrotham alone, in addition to Sore at 240 acres, he had 34 properties amounting to more than 1,600 acres. The will section of the document shows Sore to be in the occupation of William Gyles, Thomas ffenne, jnr, and Thomas ffenne, his father. All the woods and wood grounds of 100 acres were 'now in my own occupation and William Gyles'.

The Myller family remained proprietors of Sore from 1600 until 1716 when it passed to Elizabeth Bartholomew, the sister of the last of the Miller line, the second baronet, Sir Borlase Miller.⁴⁵

The Seventeenth-Century House

Gyles and the ffennes were succeeded as lessees of Sore by the Furner family. The manor became a prosperous yeoman's farm and the stone solar wing probably became farm buildings.

The will of the first William Furner 'of Sore in Wrotham' was made in 1647.⁴⁶ He left all his lands and tenements to his son William who died in 1691.⁴⁶ An inventory of his goods survives giving a picture of the interior of Sore but there is no direct mention of the medieval rooms.⁴⁸ The exterior of the house is minimally shown near A on an estate map of 1705 (Fig. 11).⁴⁹ This map shows a small drawing of a medieval house which has been modernized in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Today's medieval wing is represented by the tiny gabled block to the right which is the chapel. To the left of the house is a high crosswing which



Fig. 11 Detail from an estate map of Humphrey Miller of Oxenhoath, 1705, showing the manor house and two farm buildings at A.

may be a rebuilding of the medieval service wing. The main house, on the site of the medieval hall, has a central chimney stack, of some size to judge from the emphasis put on the drawing of the capping. The medieval open hall has had a first floor inserted, or has been rebuilt as a two-storey building, since it is taller than the two-storey chapel beside it to the right (compare Fig. 1). No windows or doorways are shown on the elevation. In the hearth tax of 1664 William Furner II was assessed on four hearths in Haleborough, the assessment borough in which Sore lay.⁵⁰

The inventory of 1691 records the contents of eleven rooms, four of which were heated (**Appendix 2**). The first seven appear to be ground-floor rooms. The assessors began their valuation in the hall and continued through the parlour, kitchen, brewhouse, cellar, butteries and malthouse. The typical local seventeenth-century room arrangement would place the hall and parlour at the front of the house, on either side of the chimney stack, accessed from a central lobby entrance. The hall was unimportant compared with its medieval predecessor. It was heated but sparsely furnished, the contents valued at only £1 10s. The parlour was more comfortable with a table, stools, chairs, cushions, andirons and tongs for the fireplace, a bedstead and all its trappings and a trundle bed, total value £6 6s. At the back of the house lay the kitchen and brewhouse. It is tempting to place the 'seller' in the medieval stone undercroft, which would have been cool for the 'milke leade and ten milke bowls' which were there. There is nothing to indicate whether the other rooms in the solar wing were in use. The butteries appear to have been used for baking. The malt house was a store for hops, apples and sundry items. Both could have been located in the service crosswing at the left-hand end of the building (Fig. 11), which was where the medieval buttery would have been.

The four first-floor rooms begin with 'the chamber over the parlor', perhaps the best room in the house, with contents valued at £8. It was heated and had a feather bed with all the trimmings, a chest, three chairs and nine stools. The location of the sparsely furnished 'servants' chamber' is not stated but may have been over the hall. Above the kitchen were two more chambers, both furnished as bedrooms. Household wealth was concentrated in bed and table linen, silver and pewter valued at £38 6s. 6d.

The manor produced wheat, barley, peas, oats, hops and apples. Wheat was the most valuable crop. Eighty copp of wheat and twenty copp of black wheat in the barns were worth £50 and fifty-seven acres of wheat on the ground were worth £74 12s. 0d.⁵¹ In the malt house were nine bags of hops worth £22. There were five cows, two oxen, one hundred sheep, forty pigs, five horses and four colts. The total value of the inventory was £410 1s. 0d., well above the average of £177 for yeomen's inventories in the area.⁵²

The remodelling of the medieval hall as a heated seventeenth-century dwelling may have been undertaken by William Furner II who became the farmer on the death of his father in 1649. He had probably been running the estate before this because his father's will, written in 1647, states that he was sick. William Furner II was a churchwarden of Plaxtol church which was being rebuilt from 1647. The new Plaxtol church had a false hammer-beam roof made of a mixture of old and new wood. The hammer beams and hammer posts were of new timber. The king posts, arch braces, struts and many rafters display old mortices, some empty, some containing sawn-off tenons which indicate a previous use. The position of the redundant mortices, close to the ends of the arch braces, indicates that arch braces from a larger roof were reduced to make the new church roof.

An attempt was made to date the old timbers by dendrochronology. There were not enough samples with sufficient rings to produce a firm estimate but tentative datings ranged from the late thirteenth century to 1400. It is tempting to speculate that some of the roof timbers of Plaxtol church came from the hall of the manor house of Sore, when William Furner rebuilt or floored over his hall.⁵³ The church accounts show him to have been actively involved in the work, being paid £36 for the transport and supply of building materials to the site in 1655-6.⁵⁴

William Furner III succeeded as tenant of Sore after the deaths of his father in 1691 and his mother, Grace, in 1692.⁵⁵ Among other goods and chattels, she left 'the chest of linen standing over the kitchen' to be shared by their four children. William Furner III died in 1721. He left no sons, only a nephew William and a daughter Jane.⁵⁶

The Eighteenth-Century House

The Furners were followed as tenants and farmers of Sore by the Knowles family, probably from the time of the marriage of William and Elizabeth Knowles in 1750.⁵⁷ The Land Tax of 1780 shows Leonard Bartholomew as the proprietor and William Knowles as the occupier of Sore manor.⁵⁸ It is taxed at £62 in Haleborough and £30 in Roughway, the highest assessments in either borough.

William was born in 1722, married Elizabeth Newman in 1750 and died in 1801.⁵⁹ A stone slab in the aisle of Plaxtol church commemorates four of their nine children who all died in August 1771. A final daughter, Mary, was born in 1772.

In 1780 William Knowles demolished most of the hall and service range and replaced it with a red brick farmhouse (Fig. 1). Two bricks in the front wall are inscribed with the initials GRK 1780 and WM.TK 1780. William's son, also William, died in 1811 and was buried in Plaxtol churchyard beneath a memorial stone which bears the modern spelling 'Old Soar'.

The Nineteenth-Century House

It is perhaps in the time of the Knowles, when grain prices were high throughout the Napoleonic War period, that the medieval solar had a floor inserted at tie-beam level. The solar became a granary (**Fig. 12**). A staircase was built in the south-east corner to give access to corn bins which were constructed on the new floor. This may be contemporaneous with the removal of the chapel window, its replacement with a door and the addition of a flight of stone steps (**Fig. 13**).

The next lessee of whom we have any knowledge was George Wildash, farmer of Old Soar, whose son, Thomas, was baptized in 1830.⁶⁰ This was a troubled year in West Kent. An agricultural depression followed the end of the Napoleonic wars and there was much poverty among the labourers. Disturbances, in which they demanded higher wages, took place at Wrotham where a mob of 300 men tried to induce the rector, Mr Moore, to reduce tithes, so that farmers could then afford to pay higher wages. Two of Mr Wildash's labourers, James Buss and William Harding, were among the leaders and Mr Wildash was also present at negotiations with Moore.⁶¹ In 1827 one of the family, Charles Wildash, wrote his name on the plastered ceiling above the corn bins (**Fig. 14**).



Fig. 12 View to the north-west of the granary in the roof of the solar. Corn bins stand on a floor inserted at tie beam level.

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Fig. 13 Mrs P. de T. Evans on an excursion to Old Soar Manor in 1905 with an Archaeological Society. She is standing by the site of the chapel east window. The post-medieval staircase was demolished in 1949.

He was imitated in 1848, less elegantly, by the next lessee, Charles Noakes, (Fig. 14) who is on the 1841 census return, aged 30, living at Old Soar Farm with a sister and two brothers.⁶² Farming was difficult in the nineteenth century but a succession of farmers endeavoured to make it pay.⁶³

Other names, initials and drawings were fashioned over the next half century utilising the white plaster ceiling over the grain bins as their canvas (Fig. 12). They were photographed before their destruction in 1949 during restoration of the building after it came into the care of the Ministry of Public Building and Works. The pictures range from the

childish to the competent and reflect country life. Enlargements of details from the roof shown in Fig. 12 appear below (Figs 15-18).

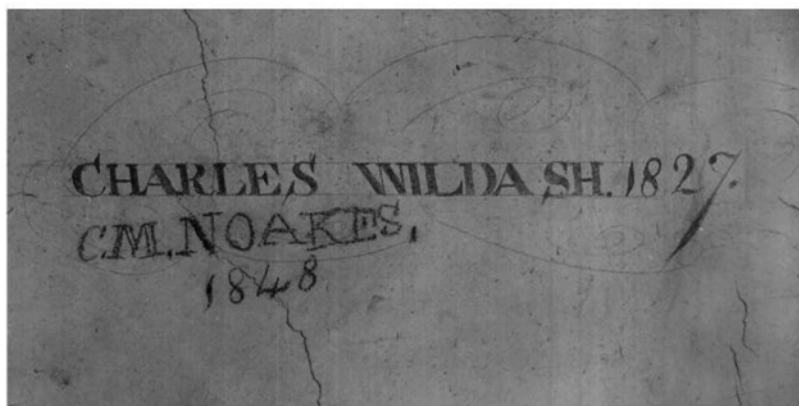


Fig. 14 The names of Charles Wildash, 1827 and C.M. Noakes, 1848 written on the south slope of the solar roof.
Reproduced by permission of English Heritage NMR.

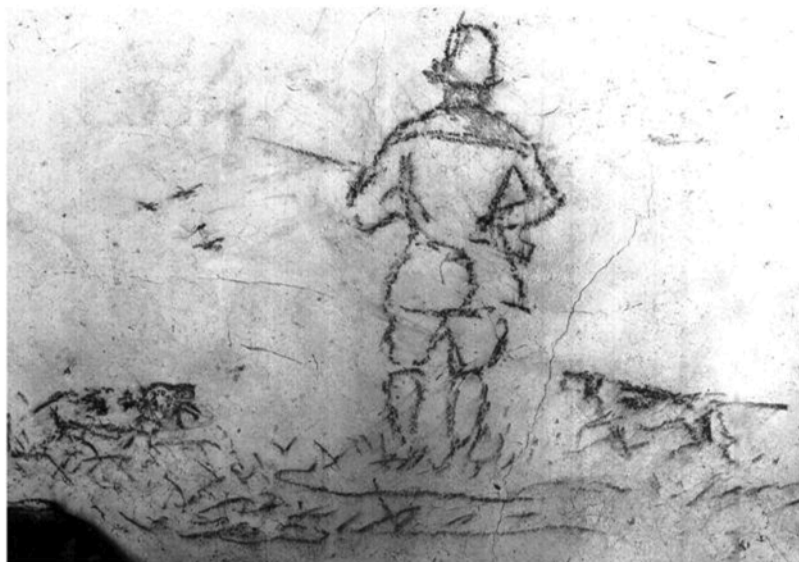


Fig. 15 A sportsman with pointer dogs shooting birds.
Reproduced by permission of English Heritage NMR.



Fig. 16 On the north slope of the roof are a pair of prize fighters and a total of eleven birds which may be pheasants or peacocks. The names of T. Hoppe, 1894, L Walters, J. Walters and J. Waghorn are all clearly written. The Waghorn family supplied agricultural labourers for Plaxtol throughout the nineteenth century. Reproduced by permission of English Heritage NMR.



Fig. 16a Detail from Fig. 16 of a bird riding in a truck behind a railway engine. The style of the locomotive suggests a date before 1870.



Fig. 17 Detail from the north slope of the roof of a pony tied to a tree. The rearing horse above is perhaps by the same hand as the drawing of the sportsman. Below the pony are two drawings labelled 'Old Ball the Carter'. The two house drawings are portraying the same house shown in more detail in Fig 18.

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Manorial dues were finally extinguished in 1899 when Sir William Geary of Oxenhoath paid Demetrius James, Esq. of Ightham Court £180 0s. 8d. and thereafter ceased to pay the annual rent of 7s. 5d. for lands in Winfield and £4 6s. 3d. for Old Soar Manor.⁶⁴ This last amount had remained unchanged since the rental of 1495.

The Twentieth-Century House

Sir William died in 1944 and Old Soar Manor passed to Mrs S.L. Cannon who gave the medieval wing to the National Trust in 1947. The Trust handed over its management to the Ministry of Public Building and Works which restored the medieval wing to as close to its original form as possible based on surviving architectural evidence. The windows were glazed rather than shuttered for maintenance reasons. The restoration work was undertaken by Mr Len Collyer who bicycled from Borough Green station to Old Soar, where he lived in a hut mid-week. The wing,

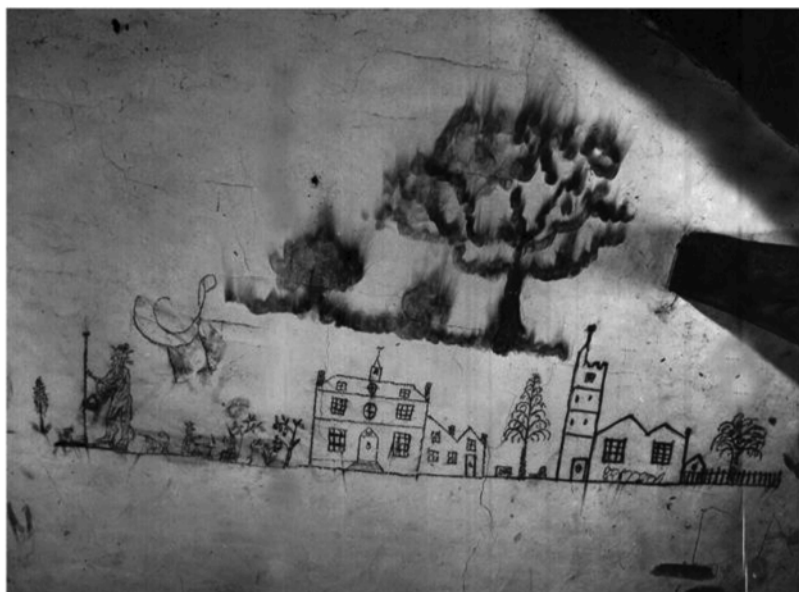


Fig. 18 A road-side scene with an aisled church and tower, a grand house with a cupola and a traveller with a walking stick followed by a dog. The house may be an attempt at a drawing of Old Soar manor with the solar and chapel shown as an extension to the right. The conifer between the house and the church is perhaps the same tree that can be glimpsed above the roof of the chapel in Fig. 13. Above the road-side scene is a picture of trees and bushes made with the smoke from a candle. Reproduced by permission of English Heritage NMR.

still owned by the National Trust, is open to the public and managed by English Heritage.

The manor house and the surrounding land have remained remarkably untouched by the twenty-first century. Viewed from the western side of the valley, the landscape could be the landscape of the sixteenth century as described in the survey of 1568. The roads follow their medieval courses and are still only the width of a horse and cart in many places. Visitors to the medieval wing, looking out through the windows or arrowloops, see fields little different from the acres bought by Geoffrey Colepeper in the fourteenth century. And William le Hore, if he were to return, would recognize his thirteenth-century private quarters and could congratulate himself on the survival of a house which is of national importance in the twenty-first century.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1

Extract from rental and survey of 1568, CKS U830 M25, p. 68.

Hale

[Block A, Fig. 10] Thomas Colepepyr esquire holds in the aforesaid borough of Hale the site of the manor of Sore alias Hores that is to say a capital messuage, two barns, a dovecote and other edifices called The Mannor Howse of Sore, a garden and an orchard adjacent and the demesne lands of the said manor : a croft of land called Culverhowsecroft containing by estimation 3 acres, 3 parcels of land and meadow called Watergate and The Brokes containing by estimation 7 acres, a piece of land called Brodfield containing by estimation 30 acres, 2 pieces of land called Great Reede and Lyttell reede containing by estimation 12 acres, a piece of meadow called Lowndmyll meade containing by estimation 11 acres, a piece of land called Blatchyngberyes containing by estimation 7 acres, 2 parcels of land called long Stonereede and Stonereede croft containing by estimation 9 acres, a piece of land called ffurlong containing by estimation 16 acres, a piece of land called Sumpfield containing by estimation 14 acres, a piece of land called lyttelwoodefeelde containing by estimation 7 acres, 3 crofts of land called Wooddens containing by estimation 10 acres and a croft of land called Pownd Croft containing 2 ½ acres lying together within the boroughs of Hale, Wyngfeelde and Roughway, the queens's highway leading between lyttelwoods playne and Lowndemyll bregge, the lane called Markes Lane and the lands of George Myller to the north, the queens highway leading between aforesaid lyttelwoods playne, Sore Went and Smythes Crosse, lands of Nicholas Chowne gt. called Wooddens, lands of Walter Myller called Boneashe and lands of John Myller called Austens to the east, said queen's highway and queens highway leading from Smythes crosse to Cutmyller's bridge to the south and the watercourse between Cutmyllers bregge and Lownde myll bregge aforesaid, the lands of George Myller and Markes Lane aforesaid to the west.

[Block B, Fig. 10] And he holds 8 parcels of land and meadow called

Homemeade, ffynches, ffynches croft, The Deane, Awcotts, Poles, Mylkehowse croft and Stansted containing by estimation altogether 66 acres lying together in the aforesaid boroughs of Hale and Roughway, the aforesaid queen's highway leading between Sorewent and Smythescrosse and the lands of Christopher Alleyn kt. called Bowerfeeld to the north and west, the lane called Sparrowlane and the lands of Thomas Hastelyn and Bowerfeeld aforesaid to the east, and the said lands of the aforesaid Thomas Hastelyn and the lands of Robert Myller and the lands of Robert Thomas and the lands of John Myller jnr. to the south.

Roughway

[Not shown on Fig. 10] And he holds a croft of land called Bysshopes Croft containing by estimation 2 ½ acres at Smythes Crosse in the borough of Roughway aforesaid queens highway there to the west and south, lands of the aforesaid John Myller to the east and north.

And he holds in the aforesaid borough of Roughway 2 pieces of land nearby called Roughwayfeelde containing by estimation 16 acres, the queen's highway between Smythes Crosse and Coker's Crosse and the lands of Nicholas Chowne to the north and same Nicholas' lands and the lands of Thomas Robynson to the east, lands of same Thomas and lands of Robert Myller to south and lands of the same Robert and John and Robert Byssshop to the west.

And he holds a parcel of meadow called Brodmeade containing by estimation 4 acres lying at Cutmyllers bridge in the boroughs of Hale and Roughway, queen's highway to the north and to the east the lands of William Myller jnr., Thomas Myller and Robert Thomas, to the south the lands of Robert Thomas and Thomas Robynson and the water-course there to the west.

And he holds in Hale a piece of meadow called Chytnollsmeade containing by estimation 6 acres at Cutmyllers bregge queen's highway there to the south and to the west the lands of William Tyrrey and Robert Thomas.

[Block C, Fig. 10] And he holds in the borough of Wyngfeelde certain parcels of land and wood called Bonattsfeelde, Maxeffeelde, Homefeelde, Alayndebrome, Ayland broke, Long shott, Northefeelde, Northstylefeelde, Bromefeelde, Taybeeche and Hyghelande containing by estimation 52 acres lying together, queen's highway between Lyttelwoods playne and Lowndmell bregge and lands of George Myller to the south, lands of same George and the watercourse between Burdens bourne and the aforesaid bregge to the west and his own lands once William ffen's and the lands of Robert ffen to the north, and to the east the lands of Thomas Willoughby esq. called Doldeane and the lands of Nicholas Wood called Adle.

[Block D, Fig. 10] And he holds in the aforesaid borough of Wyngfeelde certain woodlands called Hothebrok containing by estimation 28 acres, queen's highway leading between Horsenaylescrouche and Cokerscrosse to the west, same highway and Greene lane to the south, to the east the queens highway leading between Greene lane and Newpownde, demesne lands called Bechen Woode alias The Herst and his own lands once William Cotman's, to the north the said Cotman's land, and the lands of Nicholas Baker called Hertchampsland and the lands of Nicholas Wood and Robert Bysshop.

[Not shown on Fig. 10] And he holds in the aforesaid borough of Hale certain woodlands called the Wood brok containing by estimation 36 acres, aforesaid Greene lane to the north and Sparrow lane and the lands of John Doge to the west, lands of Sir Thomas Cotton to the south and the Herst Wood to the east which premises are demesne lands of the manor of Sore. And he has the tenants' rents of the same manor which manor was once William Colepeper then Edward Colepeper and formerly John Colepeper deceased. And the rent including remission of harvest work is £4 6s 3d.

APPENDIX 2

Lambeth Palace Library AA/V/H/97/3/476v. CKS PRS/I 6/68.

William Furner's Inventory 1691

Appraised by John Know and Thomas Knight

	£	s	d
Imprimis his purse and ready money and wearing apparel	5	0	0
In the Hall			
Item 1 table one frame 1 forme 1 cupboard 1 settle one pair of andirons and 1 still	1	10	0
In the Parlour			
Item 1 table and frame 6 joynd stools, 2 chaires, 1 chaire table, 4 cushions one pair of andirons and tongs	1	6	0
Item 1 joynd bedsted matt and cord 1 feather bed 1 feather boulder 2 quilts 1 blankett 1 coverlett curtains valence and curtain rods and 1 trendle bedstead	5	0	0

OLD SOAR MANOR; LAND & OCCUPANTS OVER SEVEN CENTURIES

In the Kitchen

	£	s	d
Item 1 table and frame 1 forme 1 little table 6 chaires 1 joyned stool 1 cupboard 1 paire of andirons, 1 paire of tonges, five sieves 2 spitts 2 dripping pans 1 pasty pann 2 paires of pothangers and a little safe cupboard.	1	10	0
Item 1 clock 1 muskett 1 fowling peece one iron mortar and pestle 3 iron potts 1 stone mortar 6 skilletts 3 brass kettles and other small implements of household	3	1	6

In the Brewhouse

Item 1 furnace 1 brewing tubb 3 keelers 1 cheese press and one bucking tubb	2	5	0
--	---	---	---

In the Seller

Item 1 table 1 milke leade tenn milke bowls seven crocks and other small things	1	0	0
Item 19 drinke vessels 4 powdring tubs 4 stalders 3 tubbs and 4 keelers	3	10	0

In the Butteries

Item 1 kneading trough 1 bunting hutch 2 meale bags 1 iron beam and scales some small weights	0	15	0
--	---	----	---

In the Malt House

Item 1 old quearne 1 sider presse one stamping trough 1 long keeler and one old fatt	1	0	0
Item 9 baggs of hopps	22	10	0
Item about 60 bushells of Apples	3	0	0
Item one old oast haire	0	10	0

In the Chamber over the Parlor

Item one Joyned bedsted matt and cord 1 feather bed 3 blanketts 1 coverlet 1 boulster 3 blanketts 2 pillows curtins valence and curtain rods	6	5	0
Item 1 joyned chest 3 chaires 8 stools and 1 little table and carpitt 1 pair of andirons and 1cussion	1	15	0

In the Servants Chamber

Item 1 old bedstead matt and cord one feather bed 2 blanketts curtins valence and 2 other bedstuffs 2 flock beds 4 blanketts and 3 boulsters	3	0	0
Item 1 presse	0	5	0

In the Chamber over the Kitchen

Item 1 joyned bedstead matt and cord 1 feather bed 1 boulster 2 pillows 2 blanketts 1 coverlett curtins valence and curtin rods	4	0	0
---	---	---	---

More in ye Chamber over ye kitchen

	£	s	d
Item 1 chest of drawers 1 presse and 5 chests			
In ye other chamber over ye kitchen			
Item 1 joyned bedstead matt and cord 1 feather bed 1 boulster 2 pillows 2 blanketts 1 coverlet curtins valence and curtin rodde	2	10	0

In Linnen

Item 16 pairs of course sheets	7	0	0
10 course tablecloths and 14 towells	5	6	0
9 pairs of fine sheets	9	0	0
7 fine tablecloths	2	10	0
1 pair of fine sheets more	1	0	0
6 pairs of fine pillow beers	1	10	0
7 dozen of fine napkins	4	4	0
1 dozen of course napkins	0	6	0
2 silver cuppes and 10 silver spoons	5	0	0
101 lbs pewter at 6d pp	2	10	6

In the Barns

Item about 80 copp of wheat and about 20 copp of black wheat	50	0	0
Item about 70 copp of barley	14	0	0
Item about 10 qrs of pease	9	0	0
Item about 120 copp of oates	16	0	0
Item 1 parchment scry 1 old wire scry 1 old bushel 1 halfe bushel 2 wire sieves 1 fann 1 wheat sieve 1 oate sieve and 18 old sacks	1	6	0
Item abt 57 acres of wheat on the ground	74	12	0
Item 2 four yearling steers	5	0	0
Item 5 cows	10	0	0
Item 2 oxen	7	0	0
Item 4 heafers	8	0	0
Item 4 twelve monthings	5	0	0
Item 4 weaners	2	10	0
Item 100 sheep	26	0	0
Item 5 begge swine	14	0	0
Item 14 smaller swine	3	4	0
Item 5 horses and 4 colts	25	0	0
Item about 14 loads of hay and clover	10	0	0
Item 2 old wagons 7 plowes a pair of plow wheels draughts and other implements thereunto belonging 1 ox yoake	10	0	0

OLD SOAR MANOR; LAND & OCCUPANTS OVER SEVEN CENTURIES

	£	s	d
Item 1 Tugg 2 carts with wheelles 7 harrows 1 wheelbarrow and a dewrake	10	10	0
Item 1 Tymber chaine and J..cher	0	5	0
Item 6 horse harness and other plow harness	3	10	0
Item the stock of hoppoles upon 3 acres of hop ground	15	0	0
Item a few old rotten hop poles and old lumber and things of small value	0	15	0
Sum total of this inventory	410	1	0

Signed William Furner

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ An Iron Age site exists south of Plaxtol Street at NGR TQ 65 605 534.
- ² Sedgebrook NGR TQ 65 615 537.
- ³ *Archaeologia Cantiana*, II (1859), 1-8.
- ⁴ 'Not far from 1300', T.H. Turner (1851), 175; c.1300, Nathaniel Lloyd (1931), 180; c.1300, Arthur Oswald (1933), 12; c.1290, M. Wood (1950), 38; 1271-99, S. Pearson *et al.* (1994), 100; 'late thirteenth century', D. Renn (2001).
- ⁵ 'Old Sore' appears on the tombstone of the Knowles family in the nave of Plaxtol church in 1771 and 'Old Soar' on the memorial stone to William Knowles, 1812, in the churchyard.
- ⁶ CKS U55 M15, court rolls of the manor of Wrotham.
- ⁷ Calendar of Kent Feet of Fines to the end of Henry III's reign. Kent Records XV, KAS, 29 H. III, 186.

- ⁸ Wallenberg J.K., *The Place Names of Kent*, Uppsala 1934, 156.
- ⁹ *Archaeologia Cantiana*, IV (1861), 314.
- ¹⁰ Witney K., *The Survey of Archbishop Peckham's Kentish Manors 1283-85*, Kent Records, Vol. XXVIII, 300.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 294.
- ¹² BL Add. Ch. 16498.
- ¹³ TNA: PRO E179/123/10.
- ¹⁴ TNA: PRO E179/123/11.
- ¹⁵ TNA: PRO E179/123/12.
- ¹⁶ Kent Fines, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XX (1893), 162.
- ¹⁷ TNA: PRO E179/123/14.
- ¹⁸ TNA: PRO E179/123/22.
- ¹⁹ Date inscribed on two bricks on the front wall of the farmhouse, GRK 1780, WM.TK 1780. K refers to Knowles, farmer at the time.
- ²⁰ T.H. Turner (1851) shows a doorway; J.F. Wadmore (1897) shows external and internal drawings of a window; M. Wood (1950) describes a window and shows it on her plan, but describes it as a doorway in her Ministry of Works guide-book (1950) although a window is still shown on the plan.
- ²¹ Renn (2001), 241.
- ²² M. Wood (1950), 38, thought the sexfoiled drain of the piscina might be earlier than the fourteenth-century date she proposed for the upper part but gave no reason.
- ²³ Wadmore F.J. (1897), 311. Wadmore notes 'At the west end of the chapel there is a crossed slit window similar to those in the chamber'. Wadmore's plan, p. 314, is inaccurate and there is no trace of an arrow slit where he shows it.
- ²⁴ E.g. Loches Castle, 1204; D. Renn (2001), 243.
- ²⁵ Renn (2001), 243, 244.
- ²⁶ M. Wood (1950), 38.
- ²⁷ Thirteenth-century houses in Kent include Luddesdown Court (early to mid thirteenth century); Eynsford Castle; Temple Manor, Strood; Nettlestead Place; Stone Castle; Squerryes Lodge, Westerham (all mid thirteenth century); Newbury Farmhouse, Tonge and Nurstead Court (1299-1319). Newbury is dated 1187-1207 (*Vernacular Architecture*, 32, 2001, 91-2), enlarged by stone solar wing in the early fourteenth century.
- ²⁸ CKS TR 465/1 no. 810 Feet of Fines. The writer is grateful to Ann Elton for drawing this to her attention.
- ²⁹ TNA: PRO E179/123/22.
- ³⁰ TNA: PRO E179/123/24.
- ³¹ Hasted, E., *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (1797) vol. 10, 2nd ed., 23.
- ³² Lawrence, M., 'The families and house of Oxenhoath, West Peckham', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXI (1993), 238.
- ³³ *Ibid.*; Wadmore F.J., 'The manor of Old Sore', 313.
- ³⁴ CKS U55 M13-16, 1410, 33, 34, 44, 63, 67, 74, 83.
- ³⁵ Court rolls of the manor of Wrotham, CKS U55 M17.
- ³⁶ TNA: PRO PROB11/72.
- ³⁷ CKS U1108 T114.
- ³⁸ TNA: PRO SC6 Phil and Mary 136, p. 100.
- ³⁹ CKS P 406 1/1.
- ⁴⁰ CKS U830 M25.

⁴¹ Du Boulay, F.R.H., *The Lordship of Canterbury*, New York, 1966, 141. Du Boulay is mistaken when he writes that Old Soar 'lay mixed almost beyond distinction with the archbishop's manor of Wrotham'. The field in two ownerships cited by him lay on the fringe of Sore manor at Roughway.

⁴² BL Add. Ch. 37748 (1521), Add. Ch. 34154 (1550), Add. Ch. 37752 (1575-1580), Add. Ch. 37754 (1616, 1619), Add. Ch. 37755, 37757 (1646), Add. Ch. 37758 (1681).

⁴³ CKS U31 T53 U2.

⁴⁴ CKS U31 T53 U4.

⁴⁵ Lawrence, M., *op. cit.* (see note 32), 241.

⁴⁶ TNA: PRO PROB 11/210/162 Fairfax.

⁴⁷ CKS PRS/W/6/100.

⁴⁸ CKS PRS/I 6/68.

⁴⁹ BL 188 j.2. (20).

⁵⁰ *Kent Hearth Tax*, eds D. Harrington *et al.*, KAS/British Record Society, 2000, 158.

⁵¹ A copp was a heap of unthreshed grain, or a stook.

⁵² Lansberry, H.C.F. (ed.), *Sevenoaks Wills and Inventories in the Reign of Charles II*, KAS, Kent Records, vol. XXV, 1988, 18, 44, 82, 109, 117, 139, 141, 163, 170, 174.

⁵³ For a fuller account, see J. Semple, 'Notes on Plaxtol church roof', in KAS Newsletter, no. 19, 1991.

⁵⁴ CKS P406C.

⁵⁵ CKS PRS/W 6/101.

⁵⁶ CKS PRS/W 6/130.

⁵⁷ CKS P406C1/1.

⁵⁸ CKS Q/RPL 43.1.

⁵⁹ CKS P406C1/1.

⁶⁰ CKS P406C1/3.

⁶¹ Kentish Sources IV, *The Poor*, ed. Elizabeth Melling, Kent County Council, 1964, pp. 187-8.

⁶² CKS HO 107/464.

⁶³ Census returns: 1851, George Ledger (CKS HO 107/1612); 1861, Sarah Ledger (CKS RG 9); 1871, Frank Martin (CKS RG10); 1881, David Singyard (CKS RG11), bailiff; 1891, Arthur Hart (CKS RG12), bailiff; 1901, Harry Stonham (CKS RG13/745).

⁶⁴ CKS U830 T6/8.