

1086 & ALL THAT

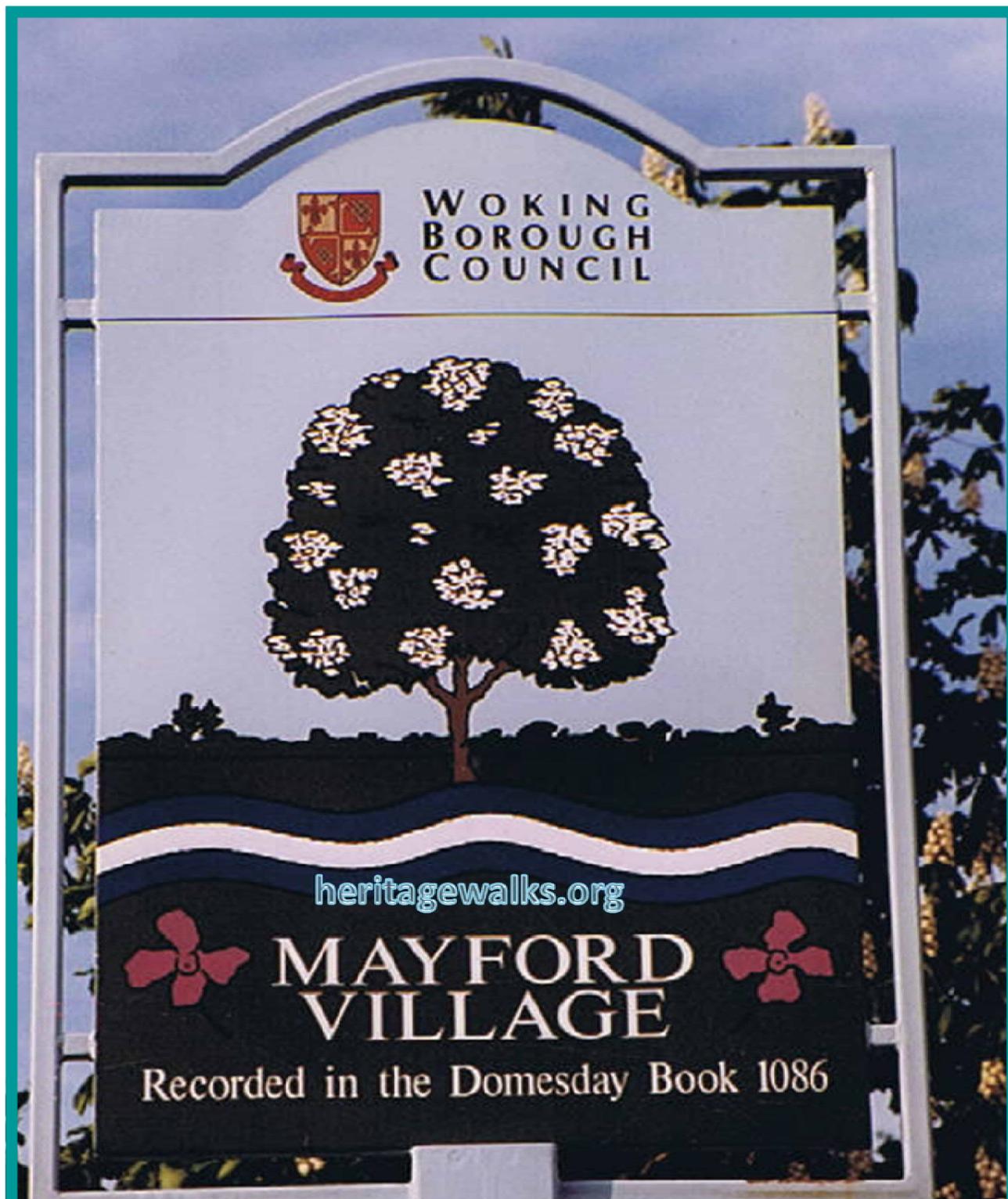
The Domesday Book section for the county of Surrey begins with 'Terra Regis, In Wochinges Hundred' (The Land of the King in Woking Hundred). The Hundred of Woking is top of the list, starting with the manor of Guildford (that's right the little town of Guildford was then part of Woking!), closely followed by the King's Manor of Woking itself.

Our entry records that before William the Conqueror held Woking the revenue went to King Edward when it 'answered for 15½ hides; [although] they never paid tax' – a fact, perhaps, that Mr Osborne might like to take note of!

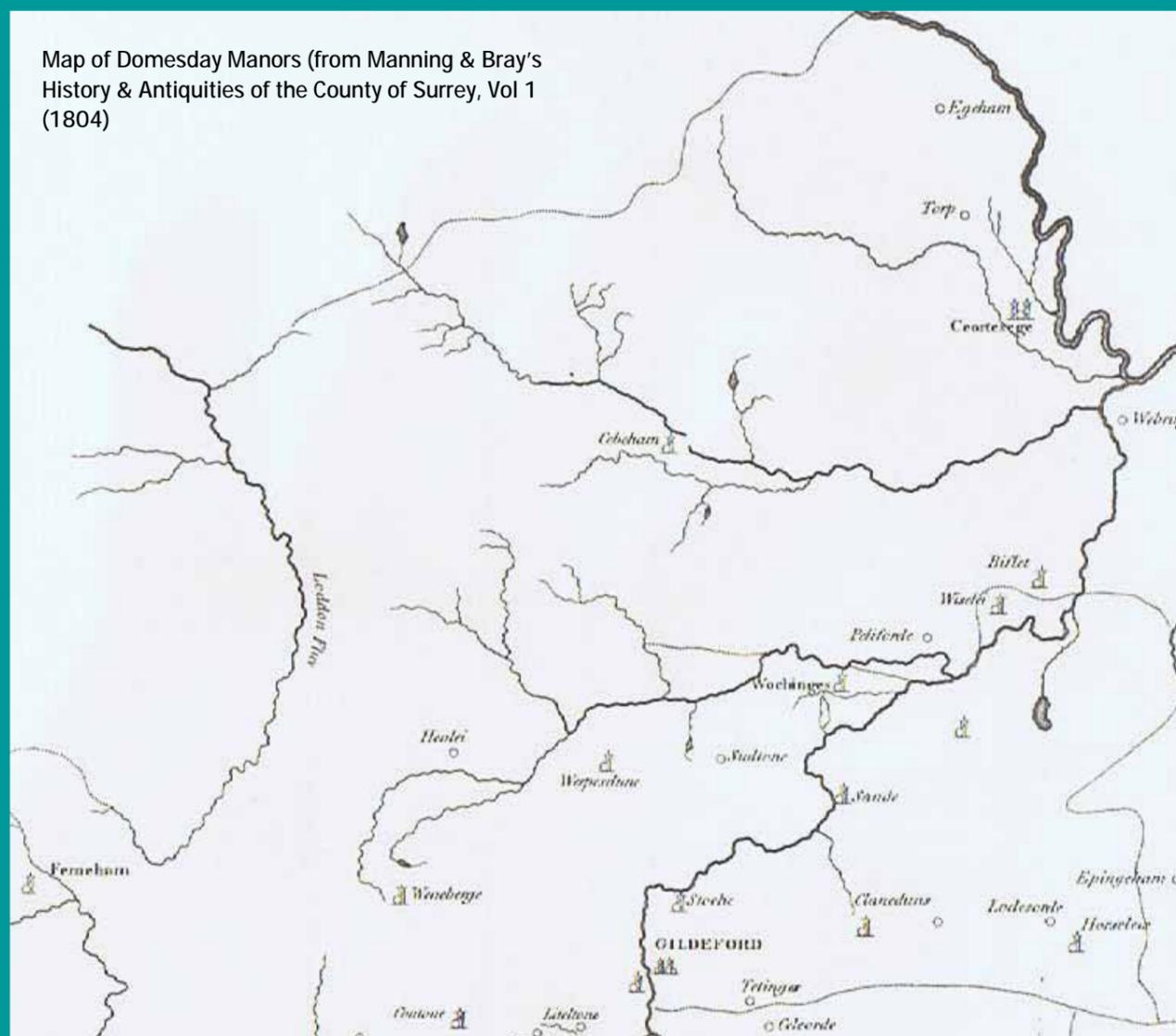
A 'hide' was a unit of land – nominally the amount one family with a pair of oxen could plough and maintain in a year - but in Domesday it was a sort of uniform monetary unit as some lands were easier to plough than others.

Another three virgates of land (or ¾ of a hide) was held by a 'forester' before the conquest, but after 1066 it was held by 'Walter son of Othere', although worryingly for poor Walter the survey records 'there is nothing there now'. Some have claimed that this land was at Windlesham – the outlying portion of Woking Hundred – whilst others maintain that Mayford (traditionally a semi-independent landholding from the Manor of Woking) was his. Not that we should feel too sorry for Walter as at the time of Domesday he also held Compton, Hurtmore, Peper Harrow, Kingston and West Horsley Manors in Surrey and was apparently associated with altogether 38 different landholdings throughout the south-east.

The entry for Woking goes on to record that there were 33 villagers and nine smallholders, although those figures are only the heads of the household, so you should probably multiply that



Map of Domesday Manors (from Manning & Bray's History & Antiquities of the County of Surrey, Vol 1 (1804))



Despite what the sign proclaims, Mayford is NOT recorded in Domesday (at least not by name).

by between four or five. The human population of Woking, however, is nothing when you consider that the number of pigs recorded in Domesday due as tax is probably only one third to one tenth of the actual number – Woking's woodland being valued at 133 pigs (i.e. between 399 and 1,300)!

The value of Woking's woodland is further increased when you look at the entry for Osbern, Bishop of Exeter's Manor (thought to be at Horsley although listed in Domesday as simply 'in Wocchingas'). It had woodland for 28 pigs, but noted 'this manor has and had a customary right in the King's woodland at Woking. That is why the lord of this village is able to have 120 pigs without pasture dues in that woodland'. Now that is what you call 'going the whole hog'!

The mill at Woking was obviously quite large as it was worth twice as much as many of the mills in the area.



The only buildings recorded in Domesday in our area are churches and mills, with Woking's mill valued at 11s, compared with Byfleet, Sutton and Pyrford (two mills), which were evidently valued at just 5s each.

Many people think of the Manor of Sutton – Sutton Place – as being part of Guildford, but 'Sudtune', as it was first recorded, means 'south manor' and so is firmly identified as the southern manor of Woking. At the time of Domesday it was held by a Norman called Robert Malet (whose father fought with William

at the Battle of Hastings) but before the war it was held by a Saxon called Wynsi. What happened to him we do not know – did he fight on Harold's side and lose his life in the battle?

Incidentally, the population of the south manor was just five villagers and five smallholders (with woodland for 25 pigs), but it should be noted that there were also six slaves (I am not certain how many in the village would consider themselves such now).

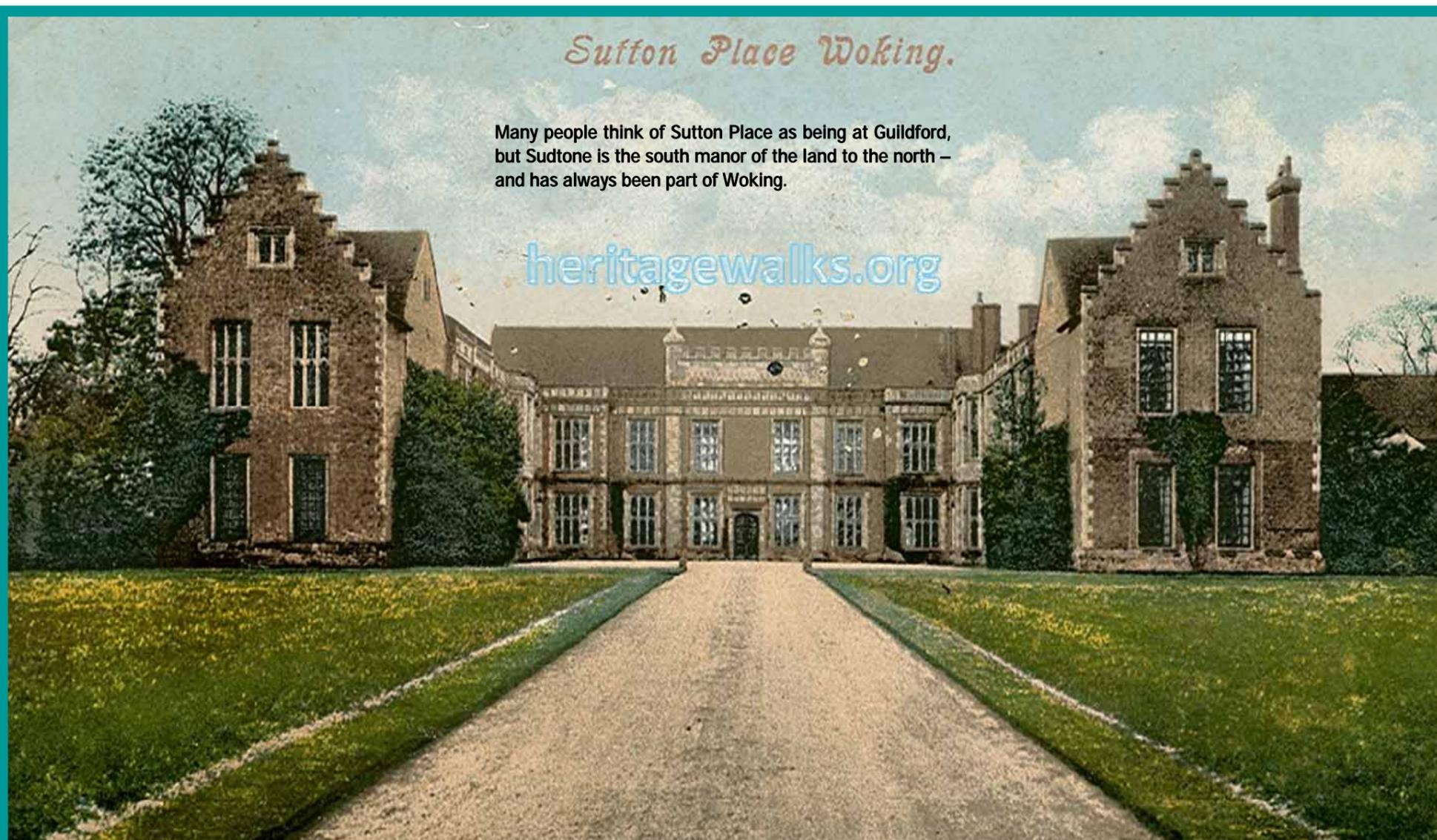
Pyrford, it should be remembered, covered not

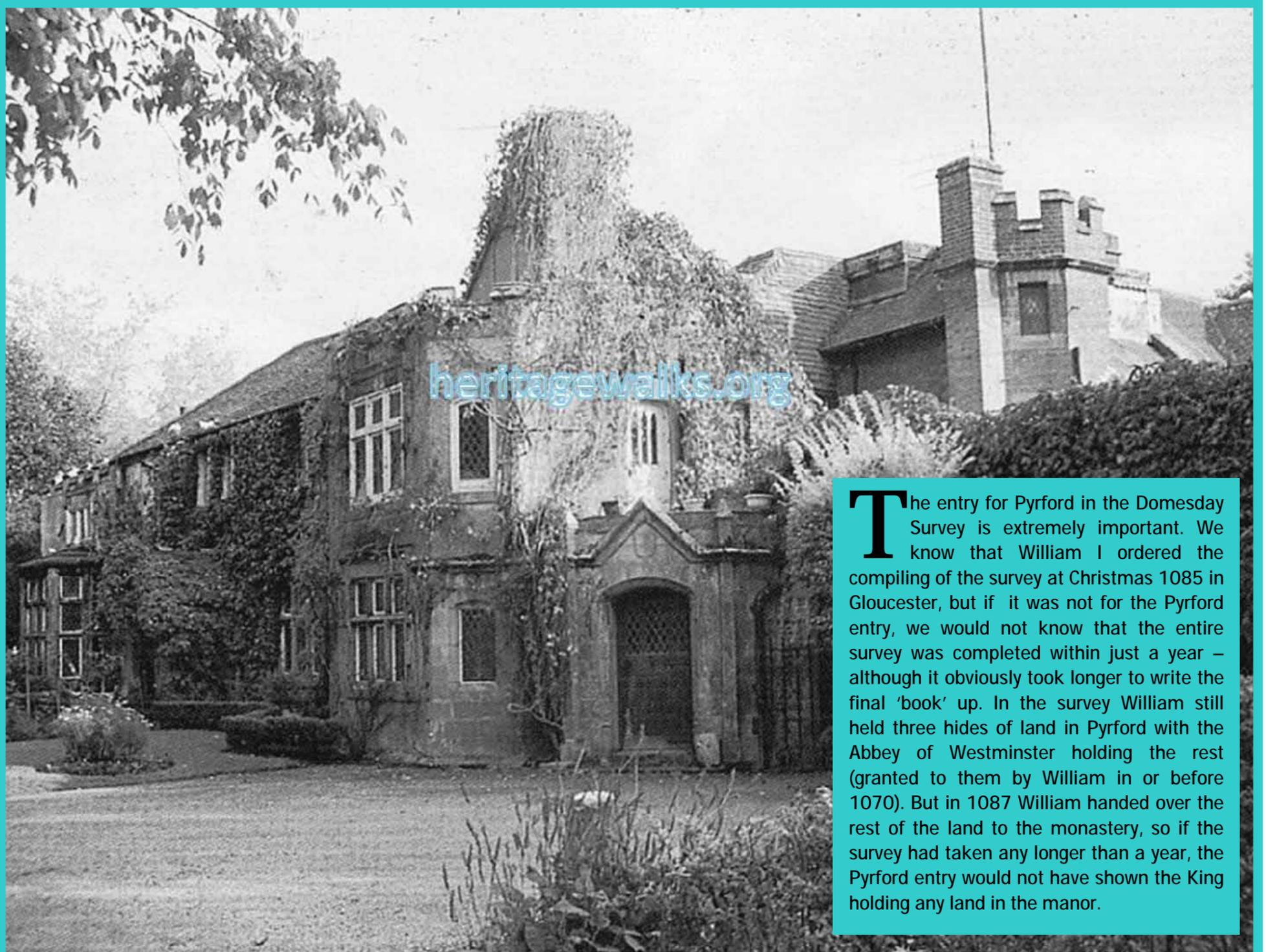
just the present day village, but also Horsell, so that its population in Domesday of 37 villagers, 14 smallholders and three slaves (and 80 pigs) probably makes more sense, when compared to Byfleet's seven villagers, two smallholders and three slaves (and ten pigs).

Modern-day census' are nowhere near as interesting as Domesday – we have no idea how many pigs there are in Woking now - let alone slaves.

Sutton Place Woking.

Many people think of Sutton Place as being at Guildford, but Sudtune is the south manor of the land to the north – and has always been part of Woking.





The entry for Pyrford in the Domesday Survey is extremely important. We know that William I ordered the compiling of the survey at Christmas 1085 in Gloucester, but if it was not for the Pyrford entry, we would not know that the entire survey was completed within just a year – although it obviously took longer to write the final ‘book’ up. In the survey William still held three hides of land in Pyrford with the Abbey of Westminster holding the rest (granted to them by William in or before 1070). But in 1087 William handed over the rest of the land to the monastery, so if the survey had taken any longer than a year, the Pyrford entry would not have shown the King holding any land in the manor.

When the first Manor House was built at Byfleet we do not know, but the first known reference to the manor dates from 727 AD when Frithwald, the Governor of Surrey, confirmed the area to be part of the lands of Chertsey Abbey. King Edgar confirmed Frithwald’s charter in 967 AD, but there was still no mention of a manor house at that time. The Domesday Survey of 1086 records that the manor was sublet by Chertsey Abbey to a Saxon by the name of Wulfwin (sometimes spelled Ulwin). He also held it from the Abbey in the time of Edward the Confessor, which is unusual as not many Saxons held onto their land after William’s victory at Hastings.

Manor House, Byfleet.

