

Deserted villages and hamlets in Northamptonshire

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OVERVIEW

This document provides an expanded list of deserted villages and smaller settlements in Northamptonshire with a brief description of each one. The reasons why villages were deserted are first summarised before the sources used to identify them are outlined. Criteria for inclusion are summarised along with the sources behind population estimates and their limitations. References to villages in the early 18th century in this document usually relate to John Bridges' history of the county and references to the early 19th century usually relate to George Baker's history. In all, 121 deserted sites are identified although several other places that might be considered for inclusion are listed in Appendix 1. The paper was compiled entirely from desk research.

DESERTED VILLAGES IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Deserted villages occur in many English counties and Northamptonshire is no exception. The number of villages and hamlets in the county peaked at around 460 in the 14th century but fell sharply in the following 200 years. Materials like stone and timber were often taken away for use elsewhere and sites taken into pasture or arable land. Although the above-ground material was often removed, the street layout and house platforms at many sites were preserved and earthworks could often be seen on the ground or from the air until well into the 20th century when many were completely or partially destroyed by ploughing.

As the destruction of sites gathered pace in the 1950s and 1960s then so did archaeological interest. Since then, more sites have been identified and our understanding of sites previously known has improved. Picking up on this theme of lost and deserted settlements, this paper identifies 121 deserted sites that are known to have existed in medieval Northamptonshire but for various reasons were later abandoned wholly or in large part.

Categories of deserted settlements

Although the terms 'deserted' and 'lost' are often used interchangeably in relation to medieval villages they cover a range of situations. Very few sites are truly lost in the sense that they are known to have existed but their location is unknown or at best known only approximately. Some 'lost' villages are lost in the sense that they have shrunk to a few houses or a farm on or near the original site, like Churchfield near Oundle. Others, like Overstone, are 'lost' only in the sense that they have shifted away from their original location which is sometimes indicated by an isolated farm, church or former manor house. Villages often show some level of migration but usually not very far. The remains of former settlement at Stoke Doyle, for instance, lie near the isolated church and manor house but the modern village is close by.

This leads to a problem concerning how to define a lost or deserted village which is not as easy as it first appears as there is no simple binary divide into deserted or not. As the reader will see, some settlements are more deserted than others. The following categories capture the range of situations that occur.

-Abandoned and deserted. This is the original focus of interest in deserted medieval villages and many such sites are often now largely or wholly under farmland. In some

cases the ground has been levelled, in other cases there may be well-preserved earthworks. The placename is often lost but may live on, for example in the name of a farm or field. Sometimes a site or somewhere close to it has been repopulated by modern development and the ancient placename retained, such as at Mawsley near Kettering. The Black Death that swept through England in 1348/9 is often said to be a cause of village desertion but in Northamptonshire this is only documented in one place, Hale in Apethorpe. However, plague seems linked to the sudden decline of Elkington and many other settlements began a process of decline after 1350. Pestilence probably contributed to their eventual abandonment although not always directly through mortality. Changes in land use by a recovering population may have had a greater effect. Some sites were doubtless abandoned because continued occupation was unsustainable due to flooding, poor water supply or unproductive land, for example.

-Clearance. The clearance of a settlement to make way for a stately home with extensive gardens and parks was commonplace and the placename usually survives, eg. at Boughton near Kettering and Burghley near Stamford. When clearance occurred to convert land to sheep pasture the placename has often fallen out of use.

-Shrunk sites. These are more or less in the same place as the medieval village but the modern village is much smaller than it once was and there has been continuous occupation to the present day.

-Absorbed. Some sites are lost due to expansion of a nearby settlement. The placename is often lost but may exist as a street name, such as Nutcote in Naseby. In other cases the placename is still used and several former isolated villages around Peterborough fall into this category.

-Shifted sites. These have shifted away from an original centre but there has been continuous settlement from the start. They are difficult to categorise since many villages show some level of migration raising the question of how far the shift needs to be before a site can be treated as deserted.

Identifying deserted settlements

The main sources used to understand settlement decline and to compile this list were as follows. The Northamptonshire Domesday survey shows how many manors and land holdings were present in a particular place and often includes the number of householders. For instance, Domesday Book tells us that there were four villagers, four small holders and one slave at Glendon in 1086. After Domesday, the amount of information increases throughout the medieval period and settlements are mentioned in a range of documents. One particularly useful source that also lists people at each place by name is a nationwide lay subsidy (taxation) taken in 1301 although the returns survive for only about half of Northamptonshire. Another lay subsidy exists for 1334 covering the whole county but it only gives the amount of tax collected in each place and smaller places were often combined with larger ones for the purposes of tax collection.

The poll tax of 1377 is also valuable but after that there is a long gap until the lay subsidies of the early 16th century and then another 150 years or so until the Hearth Tax returns of the 1670s. These are useful since they show how many houses there were in a particular place.

The next main source is John Bridges' remarkable *History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire* which describes most places in the county and he often comments on abandoned or shrunken settlements in a parish. His material was compiled in the early 18th century but it was not published until much later. A similar book compiled by George Baker, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton*, published in the early 19th century also includes brief information on some lost settlements. A recent and excellent source of information on lost villages in the north of the county is the survey of the medieval landscape in Rockingham Forest by Glenn Foard and colleagues.

The Deserted Villages of Northamptonshire published in 1966 lists 82 deserted sites and remains the gold standard on the topic. All villages listed in that document are included here. The amount of information about each site, however, is limited and more comprehensive descriptions of deserted villages are now available in the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England survey *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire* (six volumes) which are online. A few deserted sites such as West Cotton near Raunds and Faxton have been the subject of extensive archaeological investigation.

Coverage and the number of settlements

This list of deserted sites interprets 'deserted' rather generously such that any village known to have existed in medieval times is included but isolated mills, farms, lodges, religious houses, hospitals and parks are excluded. The term 'village' is also used in a broad sense and includes hamlets. This analysis covers the old county of Northampton but excludes that part of Rutland that was included in the Domesday coverage of Northamptonshire. Peterborough and some villages around it that were historically part of Northants were transferred to Cambridgeshire in 1972. Other transfers from the old county include Grimsbury and Nethercote to Oxfordshire, Little Bowden to Leicestershire and Wolfhamcote to Warwickshire.

Using *The place-names of Northamptonshire* and other sources, 458 distinct settlements (excluding mills etc.) were identified in medieval Northamptonshire. The total agrees well with the 636 medieval settlements of all types including 'ends' of which 465 were villages and hamlets previously recorded (Foard, 2013, p.81). Of the 458 settlements, 82 are mentioned before 1086, 282 are first mentioned in 1086 and 86 are first mentioned after 1086. The dates of eight settlements are uncertain but they are probably all post-Domesday.

However, most settlements had probably existed long before they are first mentioned in historical sources. Towcester, for instance, is first mentioned in 925 but has probably been continuously occupied since Roman times. Irthlingborough is first mentioned in 780 but the presence of a substantial Iron Age hill fort and the placename itself suggest much earlier origins. Likewise, Wellingborough is first mentioned in the 10th century but the placename suggests that it had been established by the end of the 6th century. Of the 458 distinct places, 121 (26.2%) are treated as deserted settlements of one form or another.

POPULATION ESTIMATES

Estimating the population of a village helps to understand how big it was and how its population changed over time. Sources are available to help estimate population but they can be misleading and need interpreting with care. Domesday Book tells us how many manors and holdings there were in a place and often gives the number of people, usually interpreted as the number of householders, in each case. However, the recorded population is much lower than the actual population because it excluded most women and all children. There can also be difficulties linking Domesday manors to specific villages and it seems clear that many small places were included in the Domesday assessment of a larger place nearby. Sometimes a manor in a place has a recorded population but another manor in the same place may have no recorded population.

There may also have been some under-recording of inhabitants in 1086 and there is some doubt over whether slaves should be treated as individuals or as heads of households. Lilford, for example, had a recorded population of 20 villagers, 16 smallholders and four slaves. A multiplier of four to five for a peasant household is often used to estimate total population which in this case, using a multiplier of four, gives 144 plus four slaves (148) or if slaves are treated as heads of households then a population of 160. A multiplier of five puts the population between 184 and 200. A mid-range multiplier of 4.5 puts Lilford's population at 180 in 1086.

Some of the lay subsidies of the 14th century list the names of people who paid tax at each place. In the surviving 1301 subsidy for Northants the lists are mostly of men so most women and all children presumably below early teenage years were excluded. Tax was paid as a proportion of the value of a person's goods so a small place with a rich resident could pay more tax than a larger place where no-one was particularly rich. In addition to the people listed, some people were too poor to pay anything and thus were exempt and some may have simply evaded the tax collectors. Again, a multiplier of 4.5 is often used to estimate population but this is probably underestimating the exempt poor. At Astwell, for example, 35 people paid tax in 1301 indicative of a population around 157.

The poll taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381 collected tax from all persons aged 14 and over apart from clergy and poor friars. The main omissions therefore are people aged under 14, some clergy, and those who evaded the tax. The proportion of the population aged under 14 probably ranged from 32-45 per cent and the poll tax of 1377 is thought to be the most reliable since evasion was higher in subsequent taxations. Taking a mid-range estimate for people under 14 of 38%, then the population at Astwell in 1377 from a recorded population of 57 would be 92 ($57 / .62$) plus those who were exempt and those who evaded tax.

Although the Black Death swept through the county in 1348/9 it is hard to estimate its effects at a local level. Headline figures of mortality of around a third to a half of the population are often used, but it came 47 years after 1301 and 29 years before the poll tax in 1377. Hence the population in a village shortly before the pestilence is usually unknown, and the next source for estimating population was nearly thirty years later. Some contraction might be expected, however, and in the case of Astwell (above) the population seems to have fallen from 157 in 1301 to 92 in 1377. This may be due to the mortality of inhabitants combined with survivors moving away for a better living.

The Tudor lay subsidies listed taxpayers aged 16 and over but there is some confusion over whether the lists include males of 16 and over or just heads of households. This may have varied from place to place and women were sometimes included. For simplicity and consistency, a multiplier of 4.5 per household can be used.

Hearth Tax returns from the 1660s and 1670s can be reliable estimators of population since they give the number of dwellings in a place. As with other taxations, however, some households were exempt through poverty and it is important to use a Hearth Tax listing that shows the number of exempt dwellings. Even then, the dwellings of some paupers may not have been listed because they were too poor to require even formal exemption. However, if exempt properties are included then a multiplier of 4.5 is sometimes used even though it may underestimate the true population.

The Compton Census of 1676 aimed to determine the number of communicants and non-conformists in a town or village and can give an accurate estimation of population. However, as with the Hearth Tax, most deserted villages in Northamptonshire had already been depopulated by the time of the census and are not mentioned in it.

Another general problem is that, even in the same county, the rate of exemption and evasion in one village may have been quite different to that occurring in the next village. Hence, given the difficulties in scaling-up population estimates from raw data any estimates must be treated cautiously. However, with that caveat in mind, and by way of illustration, Fawsley provides a good run of raw data from which tentative population estimates can be drawn and which are given below. Estimates exclude an unknown number of persons who may have been omitted or overlooked.

Fawsley	1086	1301	1377	1524	1674	ca. 1720
Recorded population	17	44	90	7	8	6
Estimated population	76	198	145	31	36	27

In the list that follows, grid references for most sites are included and the current landscape can be seen on various online map locators. Descriptions of former sites and the settlement remains in individual parishes can also be found in British History online, historicengland.org.uk, and elsewhere.

LIST OF DESERTED SETTLEMENTS

Abington

The ancient parish of Abington was dissolved in 1900 with part going to Weston Favell and part to the borough of Northampton. In the 11th century, 18 householders were recorded at Abington and it had a mill on the river Nene. Twenty-five taxpayers were listed in 1543. A map of 1671 shows about 30 cottages. In 1674, 33 householders were present and the same number was recorded in the early 18th century including a 'good manor house with park adjoining in which are a water-house and reservoir'. The park was enlarged and by the mid-18th century much of the housing in the village had been removed probably to improve the views from the south of the manor. Gradual removal of cottages continued and in 1820 there were thirteen houses including a farm in the fields. Many of the original features of the village have been lost but the fishponds in Abington Park are broadly on the site of much earlier and probably medieval ponds. The site is unusual as it is now situated inside a public park. SP 775615.

Achurch

First mentioned in the late 10th century, there were 24 households in 1086, 28 taxpayers in 1301 and 24 at Thorpe and Achurch in 1523/4. Originally there was Achurch with the hamlet of Thorpe Waterville which later became known as Thorpe Achurch. The name may derive from the church of a person called Asi or Asa, ie, Asi's church and if so then the placename is unusual. A religious census of 1676 found 200 people at Achurch but that probably included people living at Thorpe Waterville. The modern settlement lies east of the church on one side of the road to Lilford but ran on both sides of the road in the 18th century. The isolated church may indicate the site of the original settlement. Robert Browne, the father of Congregationalism, was the vicar at Achurch from 1591 to 1631. A drawing of the Nene valley made by Tillemans in 1721 includes a view of Achurch from Wadenhoe. TL 022832.

Althorp

Ten households were recorded at Olletorp in 1086 and 51 taxpayers in 1377. The manor was sold to John Spencer in 1508 and the land converted to sheep grazing. By the early 18th century it was described as 'anciently a hamlet or township' but now the 'noble seat of the Earl of Sunderland standing in the midst of a park very elegantly laid out, well wooded and stocked with deer'. The site of the village is now occupied by Althorp house and its estate. The name may be derived from a personal name, Olla, combined with thorp, ie., Olla's thorp. Thorp is a common placename element and basically means a small outlying settlement in relation to a larger one.

Appletree

Appletree is a deserted village at the south-western end of the parish of Aston-le-Walls. It was not mentioned in Domesday Book but was probably included with Aston-le-Walls where 25 people were recorded. First recorded in 1175, it was taxed with Aston-le-Walls in 1301 when 23 taxpayers were at both places, most of them probably at Aston. Less than ten families were there in the 15th and 16th centuries. Little remains of the original site although two hollow ways were present in the 1980s. The placename is self-explanatory. SP 483497.

Armston

Armston is a deserted village lying to the southeast of Polebrook mentioned in 1086 along with Kingsthorpe which lay nearby. Between the two villages there may have been around 80-90 people. Twenty-eight taxpayers were listed in 1301 which indicates a total population of around 125. Ten taxpayers were listed in 1524. Armston was served by the church at Polebrook but St Leonard's chapel was present by the early 13th century. A hospital and chapel with burial ground were built there about 1232 and survived into the 16th century when depopulation began. The hospital, which was probably quite small and poor, was served by brothers who wore russet garments and relied largely on contributions from donors. In the 1530s, the Master of the hospital was petitioned for not praying for the souls of its founders and for not holding divine services in the chapel such that the people of Armston had to go to the parish church at Polebrook. Around 1720, Bridges described it as 'an hamlet of four houses'. It is now a hamlet in Polebrook parish. TL 060858.

Astwell

Astwell is a deserted village lying southwest of Wappenham. Located to the east of Helmdon, its name derives from east well or east spring. In 1086 there were 17 households but that may have included Falcutt. Together with Falcutt, 35 taxpayers were listed in 1301 and 57 in 1377. It was in decline by the 16th century probably brought about by creation of a deer park and sheep farming. In the early 18th century Bridges described it as having three houses in addition to the manor house so it was effectively deserted by then and most likely long before. In the early 19th century it was described with Falcutt as 'an extensive hamlet' with a water mill although the same source says that 'The old manor house, another farm-house, and the water-mill, comprise the population of Astwell. Earthworks have been mostly destroyed. SP 609441.

Astwick

Lying to the southwest of Evenley, Astwick was not mentioned in 1086 but has been shown to be that part of Evenley described as having nine people. It is mentioned separately in 1195 and in 1316 and several houses were there in 1510 but soon after the site was converted to pasture. In the early 18th century, Bridges recorded six houses there but there 'appears to have been formerly a large town, as may be seen from the ruins which are called the Old Town.' Bridges also saw the overgrown site of a former manor house and a substantial moat full of water. One house in Astwick was called Plowman's Furze or Plummer's-Furze. In the early 19th century there were a few scattered houses along the road through Aynho to Buckingham. A popular inn called the Barley Mow stood at the intersection of two turnpike roads. Good earthworks remain. SP 570342.

Badsaddle

Lying in the west of Orlingbury parish, Badsaddle was not mentioned in 1086 but was probably included with Orlingbury. It was always very small and is mentioned in records of the 12th to the 14th century. It was mentioned as a separate place in 1316 but seems to have been abandoned by the middle of the 16th century, if not long before, and the site converted to pasture. In 1720 the site consisted of a single house surrounded by a moat. Probably never more than a farm and a few houses, settlement remains have been largely destroyed by modern ploughing. The name derives from a personal name Baetti and hazel, ie., Baetti's hazel. SP 833730.

Barford

Barford lay southeast of Rushton in Rushton parish. Seven households and a mill were recorded in 1086, 14 tenants were listed in 1327 and under ten houses in 1428. It was always small and virtually the whole village was pulled down in 1515 when the land was converted to pasture. One taxpayer was recorded in 1524/5 and 500 sheep were grazing there in 1547. A church or chapel was mentioned in 1535 when the profits of the rectory accruing to Pipewell were valued at 60 shillings. The chapel or church which had probably been served by a priest from Pipewell Abbey stood in 1625 and Bridges recorded that parts were standing around 1655 but that 'it is now destroyed, the walls and churchyard intirely levelled, and laid open to the rest of the home ground'. It had all gone by about 1720 when only a single lodge remained although the remains of houses were still visible on the ground. Nothing is now visible, the remains having been lost to ironstone extraction and railway construction. Barford was often taxed with Glendon which is also a lost village. Barford and Glendon mustered five men aged under 45 in the 1777 Militia List. SP 853828.

Boughton

Lying near Weekley, 11 households were mentioned in 1086 and 12 taxpayers were listed in 1377 suggesting that it was one of the smallest villages in the county at the time. The process of emparkment began in 1473 so the village had either gone by then or soon after. One manor was obtained by Sir Edward Montague in 1532 who later purchased another manor there. Around that time the area was cleared for sheep grazing and also for the construction of an extensive house, park and gardens. In the early 18th century, Bridges noted that when creating a bowling green the foundations of buildings were disturbed along with human remains and that by tradition a chapel had occupied the site. Boughton House and gardens probably were probably built over part of the village although some earthworks remain northeast of the house. SP 901816.

Boughton

Boughton, near Northampton, was a relatively large settlement in 1086 with 39 households. The ruins of an isolated church at Boughton Green suggest that there was a settlement around it although if there was one it is poorly documented. The presumed settlement around Boughton Green may pre-date the existing village of Boughton and was abandoned by the early 16th century. The original church was built in the late Saxon period and was rebuilt in the 14th century. Bridges also noted that the church dedicated to St John the Baptist, 'stands upon the green about half a mile distant from the town. It now lyes in ruins, no part of the roof remaining and the walls in several places levelled with the ground.' A drawing made in 1721 shows the tower, spire and body of the church. The spire collapsed in 1780 and the site is unusual in that the churchyard is still in use. Little is known about Boughton Green but the triangular green, now arable land, lying east of the village of Boughton near Northampton is bounded by three roads. A fair was held on the green from around 1350 onwards on the vigil of the nativity of St John the Baptist. Bridges tells us that the fair was held 'with great solemnity' and that it 'is famous for its trade in brooms and wooden-ware'. Games and sports were played for various prizes and the *Northampton Mercury* in 1721 mentions cudgels, wrestling and horse racing. In 1730, the paper advises that on the first day 'all sorts of people' can buy and sell their goods, on the second day 'ladies and people of the better rank meet to raffle, see the shows, and thence adjourn to a ball at the Red Lion in Northampton'. The third day is for 'the trial of skill at Single Stick' and the fourth day is for wrestling. Wrestlers must not put nails in their shoes as had happened before. SP 763655.

Braunstonbury

Lying close to and southwest of Braunston, this deserted site incorporates a moat, a large fishpond and house platforms. The moat and fishpond were connected and fed by a stream off the river Leam. It was not recorded separately in 1086 but was probably included in the description of nearby Braunston and little is known about its population. In the early 18th century, John Bridges noted that there was a moated ruined building that he presumed was the mansion house of the former Bradestonbury. A former chapel is suggested by an old field name 'chapel-field'. Earthworks are well-preserved and are just a few hundred metres from the deserted village of Wolfhamcote on the county border with Warwickshire. SP 533656.

Brime

Brime was mentioned in 1086 when six villagers, five slaves and a priest were recorded there but it then disappears from the written record. It was once thought to be a deserted village in Culworth parish but more recently it seems that Brime was a manor that was absorbed into the southeast part of Culworth as it expanded. The presence of a priest at Brime in 1086 is important since the only known church in the area was at Culworth. As such, Brime may have simply merged with Culworth and its distinctive placename fell out of use. Little is known about it and it is not mentioned in Bridges' early 18th century account of Culworth suggesting that it was not in living memory at the time. The mystery deepens a little, however, since Bridges mentions a separate place called Cotes or Cotes-Culworth and it seems likely that in medieval times there were three distinct population centres. The locations of Brime and Cotes-Culworth are unknown.

Brockhall

Brockhall lies south-east of the deserted village of Muscott close to the M1. In 1086 it was combined with Muscott and there were six people between both places, so perhaps Brockhall had a total population around ten to 15. In the taxation of 1301, 48 people paid tax at Brockhall and Muscott but by 1377 only five people were taxed in both places. Given its proximity to Muscott which also saw a sharp population decline it may also have fallen victim to the plague in the mid 14th century but that is conjecture. In 1523/4, twelve people were taxed at Brokhole but that may have included any remaining at Muscot. In the early 18th century it was described as having about 12 houses most or all of which were taken down in the 18th century to create a park around a mansion house. Always small, it was probably never much more than houses along a single street. A curious feature of Brockhall's parish register is that before 1712 there were one or two marriages a year but from 1712 to 1753 there were upwards of 20 a year with few couples coming from Brockhall itself. This seems to be an example of a vicar using clandestine marriages perhaps to supplement his income. After Reverend Sheppard died 'while playing cards at the Revd Hammond of Flore' in 1753 the marriage trade at Brockhall stopped and the frequency of marriages returned to normal. SP 633626.

Burghley

Near Stamford, 11 people are identified at Burghley in 1086 three of whom were slaves. There was a chapel in 1289 and four taxpayers are named in 1301 but the site was deserted between 1350 and 1450. No earthworks or cropmarks have been found and the site has not been located for certain. The most likely explanation is that Burghley house which was built in the second half of the 16th century on the site of an earlier Tudor house was built on the site of the original village. Any remaining earthworks would have been destroyed by landscaping around the house.

Calme

Calme is mentioned in 1086 as having five freemen so perhaps a total population of around 22. The land was owned by the abbey of Bury St Edmunds in 1066 and 1086 and is listed alongside the relatively large settlement at Clipston in the list of the abbey's land holdings in the county. Calme then disappears from the historical record and nothing more is known about it. In the early 18th century, Bridges noted that Calme was part of Clipston and was then called Comb. The exact location of the site is unknown but it may have been located north of Clipston about half way to Marston Trussell. Another suggestion is that Calme was a variation of the placename Kelmarsh and was close to and perhaps part of it.

Canons Ashby

Sixteen households were recorded at Ascebi in 1086, 18 people paid tax in 1301 and 82 in 1377. It took its modern name from the Augustinian priory founded there in the 12th century and the village that at one time was quite large was located alongside the road leading north of Canons Ashby house. The Priory took land into its own use and at the end of the 15th century 100 acres were enclosed and people were evicted from their houses. Twenty-one taxpayers were there in 1524 and extensive sheep farming was present in the mid 16th century. The Hearth Tax of 1674 suggests only five families although the population recovered by the start of the 19th century. Bridges found six houses there but wrote 'there is a tradition that the village was formerly very considerable'. The church, now a museum, was originally part of the priory buildings and substantial remains of the original village including house plots, banks and ditches survive. SP 576507.

Caswell

Caswell or Carswell was a small settlement in the parish of Greens Norton first mentioned in 1200 although it was probably included with Greens Norton in the Domesday survey. Twelve people paid tax there in 1301. The site was enclosed in 1509 and converted to pasture. Five houses were pulled down which may have been the entire hamlet. Two thousand sheep were pastured there in 1547. Two houses were recorded in the early 18th century. No earthworks remain and the site is now occupied by a factory. SP 651510.

Catesby, Lower

The desertion of the two Catesbys along with Newbold is complicated. Lower Catesby is a hamlet in the parish of Catesby just south of the river Leam probably formed after 1086 to serve a priory established in the late 12th century. For some time after, the settlement was known as Shopes or Seld which presumably related to houses near the market held outside the priory. The name Lower Catesby came later. About 32 houses are recorded in a rental of 1428/9 compared to 34 at Upper Catesby although some were empty or dilapidated. Both Lower and Upper Catesby shrank in the late medieval period and were much poorer by the 1530s. While the demise of the priory in the 1530s did nothing for the village, decline had set in long before perhaps because of changes in land use from arable to pasture and because Newbold and the two Catesbys were always small and less wealthy than average. In the early 18th century Bridges described it as 'one seat made out of the ruins of the convent with a park adjoining'. Nearby earthworks of possible earlier site. SP 515596.

Catesby, Upper

Now a hamlet, Upper Catesby was once a larger village that in 1086 had a recorded population of 25 but that included Lower Catesby and Newbold (also both depopulated). Thirteen people paid tax at Catesby and Newbold in 1301 but the number of taxpayers increased sharply by the 1370s. With the onset of sheep farming fourteen houses were taken down on orders of the Prioress in 1491 with the accompanying removal of 60 people but whether this happened at Upper or Lower Catesby or at Newbold is uncertain. Another 60 people were displaced in 1517/8. The priory was dissolved in 1536. A survey of the state of churches in the diocese in 1631 found that the priory church of Catesby was derelict and had been demolished save for the steeple and bells. Bridges includes a drawing made in 1721 of the church in ruins on top of a mound and he noted that 'In Upper Catesby are eight houses with about five and twenty inhabitants'. Remains of the village used to lay south and north of the current hamlet but are now all but lost. SP528594.

Charlock

Lying south-east of Abthorpe near Silverstone, Charlock or Challock is a deserted hamlet first recorded in 1250 but which probably existed long before. It was presumably always taxed with Abthorpe and very little is known about it except that it appears to have had its own field system, hence some level of independence. The placename means cold streamlet. SP 662447.

Chelverdescote

Chelverdescote is a little mysterious because it is mentioned in 1086 as having 14 households and mentioned again in the 12th century but its location has never been confirmed. Three theories have been put forward. First, that Chelverdescote was another name for Newnham which is not mentioned in Domesday Book and the large western green in Newnham is a possible location since an area of land called Cott Lands was nearby. Second, that it was located south of Great Everdon. Third, and based on interpretation of the Badby charter of 944, that Chelverdescote had the same boundaries as described in the charter which included Badby, Everdon and Newnham and that the single estate was broken up in the 12th century into three estates. Domesday Book tells us that there was a priest at Chelverdescote and since there was probably a church at Newnham before the Conquest this supports the idea that it was Newnham.

Chester

Chester was a medieval settlement in Irchester parish located near Chester House on ground sloping towards the river Nene and close to a small Roman town. First mentioned in 1236 as part of the manor of Higham Ferrers, it was described in 1309 as having two water mills, a fulling mill, arable, meadow and pastureland, and 24 freemen, villeins and cottars although they might not all have lived in Chester. From a moderate size in 1309 it was in decline by the end of the 15th century if not before. Six properties were taken down in 1498 when 36 people were displaced. Bridges described it as 'anciently an hamlet of four or five houses' named after the 'adjoining Roman encampment or Castra.' Only one house and the manor house remained in the early 18th century although other houses had been incorporated into farm buildings. The site has been substantially damaged by farming and an old ironstone tramway. Also called Little Chester and Chester by the Water. SP 920669.

Chilcote

Chilcote is a deserted settlement that lay southwest of Thornby in a narrow spur of land that gives the parish a 'frying pan' shape and it was separated from Thornby by a stream. It is mentioned in Domesday Book as having two smallholders and after that not much is known of its population as it was always taxed with Thornby. Chilcote was possessed by Pipewell Abbey from the 12th century until the Dissolution. Almost nothing of the former hamlet remains on the surface. The name means cottages of the young men or servants and has survived in Chilcote's Cover in Cold Ashby and in Chilcote's fields in Thornby. SP 658747.

Church Charwelton

John Bridges remarked that Charwelton was once divided into Great and Little Charwelton and in the early 18th century into Church Charwelton and Town Charwelton. He says that Church Charwelton 'was formerly a considerable village, and famous for affording safe and convenient inns to travellers who passed from Warwick and other places to London.' He also tells us that during the War of the Roses travellers had to rest in Little Charwelton which had suffered from 'the depredations of the soldiers'. The lands were used for extensive sheep farming in the mid-16th century. Probably the same place as Nether Charwelton. SP 545555.

Churchfield

Lying about halfway between Benefield and Stoke Doyle close to Harley Way, Churchfield was mentioned in a charter of 964 and is one of several deserted settlements in the Lyveden valley. The placename suggests that a church or chapel was present in the Saxon period, since it was already so-called by 964, and Chapel Close seems the likely site of a chapel mentioned in 1189. It was always small and the lay subsidy of 1301 lists nine taxpayers which suggests a population of about 40 people. Churchfield had its own field system and in common with other settlements in the area decline appears to have started after 1350. By the middle of the 16th century the area was held by the Tresham family and converted to grass for sheep pasture. Only one house, probably a farm, was recorded in the Hearth Tax of 1674 and one farmhouse was recorded by Bridges around 1720. Reasons for desertion are unclear but may relate to changing land use after the plague possibly in combination with wet soil conditions. Earthworks have been mostly lost to ploughing. TL 006878.

Cotes

Lying southwest of Gretton towards Rockingham, Cotes or Coten was always a small settlement on land obtained by clearing on the edge of Rockingham Forest. A leper hospital run by Peterborough Abbey was present at Cotes 1229 and in 1301 the flesh of an illegally snared deer was sent to the lepers at Cotes in keeping with the laws of the forest at the time. There was a water mill since in 1322 John le Goht the miller at Peterborough Abbey's mill at Cotes was found drowned in the river Welland by his daughter Alice as testified by Geoffrey the shepherd and Richard Goht. In 1355 Cotes was described as a house with outbuildings plus arable, meadow and pasture. One house was there in 1587 but it does not appear on a map of 1615 and Cotes may never have amounted to more than a substantial farm and mill. A few hollows, platforms and stone scatter were observed during fieldwork in the early 1970s. The modern road from Rockingham to Gretton cuts through the site. SP 876926.

Cotes

Cotes or Cotes-Culworth is mentioned around 1200 and again up to the mid-16th century. It appears to have been a third settlement in Culworth parish and little is known about it. It seems very likely, however, that Culworth always consisted of multiple settlements (Culworth, Cotes and Brime) and has a complex history. The location of Cotes-Culworth and the reasons for its decline are not known but it was probably absorbed by Culworth as the village expanded. See also Brime.

Coton

Coton lying between Guilsborough and Ravensthorpe merited a separate entry in Domesday Book when nine householders were mentioned perhaps indicative of a population around 40 although four people were described as slaves/servants. A mill was also recorded in 1086 and a water mill was present until the late 19th century. About eight people were listed at Coton in a Tudor lay subsidy but the entry is illegible. The next indication of its size is a Hearth Tax taken in 1673 when eight householders were listed and around 50 years later John Bridges recorded 17 houses of which three were for the poor. The modern hamlet is largely on the east side of a street but dwellings once existed on the west side where Coton Manor is located. Most of the remaining earthworks have been destroyed by recent ploughing. SP 673717.

Cotton

Cotton or Cotes near Grendon is mentioned in 14th century sources. Features including a hollow way, embanked closes and enclosures consistent with a lost hamlet were visible on air photographs northwest of Grendon close to a stream but have now been ploughed out. Medieval pottery scatter and building stone in the area also suggest former settlement. Cotton is not mentioned in Bridges' description of Grendon so it was presumably unknown in the early 18th century. Possibly located at SP874610.

Courteenhall

The village was divided into two manors in 1086, one had 15 householders and none was recorded at the other. Seventeen people paid tax in 1524. The Hearth Tax of 1673 shows 43 householders and Bridges recorded that around 1720 the village had 39 houses and about 182 inhabitants. He also noted that the church was located at the 'upper end of the town, but within the memory of man had many houses standing beyond and about it, which since enclosure have been destroyed.' Later in the 18th century most of the rest of the village was removed and the area emparked. By the end of the 18th century a new manor house had been built and only a few houses remained. The village has been repopulated in recent times.

Crowthorpe

Recorded in the 12th century, Crowthorpe was a small settlement located on the Barnwell side of the river Nene near the south bridge in Oundle which is still called Crowthorpe bridge. There was a mill and a wharf but the exact location is unknown although archaeology suggests that it might have been more or less opposite the lake in Barnwell country park. A possible wharf that was most likely linked to the lost settlement was found near the bridge. Crowthorpe is not mentioned in the 1301 taxation of Polebrooke hundred in which it was presumably located. It was last mentioned in 1336 and was presumably abandoned not long after. The reasons for desertion are unknown but the location seems vulnerable to heavy flooding which may have proved catastrophic.

Cumberford

John Bridges' description of Watford tells us that it contained 'Catesby an inclosed manor with no house; Cumberford a depopulated village in an inclosed manor, now reduced to one house; five houses in Murcott; Silsworth a depopulated hamlet consisting at present of a single house; and Watford-gap a noted inn upon the Watling street road.' Bridges also tells us that, 'The old manor house of Comberford is the Crown alehouse'. Little is known about the origins, location and decline of Cumberford but it was probably in the northwest of Watford parish lying just west of Watling Street around SP 578695.

Dagnall

Dagnall was a hamlet lying in the parish of Wicken that is known from archaeological evidence. It was first recorded in 1319 but was probably much older. It was not identified separately in taxations suggesting that it was always a small place. Great and Little Dagnall fields are shown on an estate map of Wicken made in 1717 lying southeast of Wicken village. In medieval times Dagnall probably had its own field system but it had reduced to one farmhouse and two cottages by the early 18th century. SP 759391. See also Elm Green.

Doddington Thorp

This small settlement was northwest of Great Doddington close to Wilby in an area called Thorpe Field. William of Thorp is mentioned at Wellingborough around 1300 and this could have been either Wilby Thorp or Doddington Thorp. The growth of Wilby as a village in medieval times restricted how much land Doddington Thorpe could use and it eventually declined. The location which has revealed large amounts of limestone and medieval pottery is now arable land and is approached by a hollow way leading from Wilby. SP 871656.

Downton

Downton, which lay northeast of the deserted village of Stanford on Avon, is first recorded in 1229 but the presence of 12th century pottery shows that it had earlier origins. Called Doune juxta Stanford in an appeal of 1302/3 in which Richard Bykyn and Walter Le Rede of Doune were accused of receiving stolen sheep, it was always taxed with Stanford and little is known of it except that it was small and was abandoned by the mid 17th century if not earlier. The reasons for desertion are unknown but may be related to clearance for sheep farming. In the early 18th century, Bridges remarked that it was called Down-hill or Down-town. The Grand Union canal cut through the northeast of the site which was well-preserved until it was completely lost to ploughing in the 1960s. Earthworks before destruction showed a broad street with closes and houses on either side. SP 613801.

Eaglethorpe

Eaglethorpe, first recorded in 1297, was a hamlet in the parish of Warmington. Five tenants are recorded in 1398 although there were probably some other people there with families. Eight taxpayers are named in 1523/4 indicative of a population around 36 but it was depopulated later in the 16th century to accommodate the building of Elton Hall. The medieval site lies under or adjacent to the Hall and is now in Cambridgeshire. Around 1720, Bridges recorded that it was a depopulated hamlet 'formerly of about ten houses, now all destroyed.' The modern hamlet of Eaglethorpe, formerly called Mill End, lies northwest of Warmington. TL 089929.

Easton Neston

Originally lying south of Easton Neston House and south of the isolated church, Easton Neston had a population of 14 in 1086 but may have been larger. After that its size is unclear as it was taxed with Hulcote and 65 people were taxed at both in 1301, 117 at both in 1377 and a taxation of 1524 lists about 40 taxpayers at Easton and Hulcote. The Priory of Swardsley (Showsley) in the parish of Easton was founded in the 12th century. It was a poor place and the nuns lived in poverty for much of the time. In 1378 the church at Easton was granted to the priory as the Black Death had ravished the priory lands to the extent that they could not sustain the nuns. Easton was partly emparked around 1500 with accompanying evictions and gradually depopulated thereafter. Probably totally deserted by the end of the 17th century. In the early 18th century Bridges remarked that 'The only house now in Easton is the magnificent seat of the Earl of Pomfret or Pontefract.' The remains of the village have been extensively lost to landscaping although the medieval field system around the village is well preserved. Poor water supplies to Easton may have contributed to its decline. SP 701490.

Edgcote

Lying southeast of Chipping Warden on the Oxfordshire border, Edgcote was one of the larger settlements in the county to be later depopulated. The recorded population in 1086 was 25 indicative of a total population of over 100. Fifty-six people paid tax in 1301 indicative of a population around 250 and 95 people aged over 14 paid tax in 1377. Partial enclosure occurred in 1502 when some houses were taken down and by 1547 there was extensive sheep grazing in the area. Bridges found 18 families there in the early 18th century but the village was later removed as part of landscaping west of Edgcote House. Some new cottages were built outside the park. Church and rectory remain. A decisive battle in the Wars of the Roses took place near Edgcote in 1469. SP 503480.

Elkington

Lying part way between Yelvertoft and Cold Ashby, 17 people were recorded at Elkington in 1086 although that may have included some people living at Cold Ashby. Thirty people paid tax in 1377 but by 1412 this had reduced to a handful of people linked to Pipewell Abbey which owned the village and the land. After the monasteries were disbanded the land was divided amongst several people and by the mid-16th century the area was given over to large-scale sheep grazing. A religious census of 1676 recorded no-one at Elkington although this may mean that anyone still living there was attending churches nearby. In the early 18th century, ten houses were there of which seven were scattered in the fields. There was once a church served by the Abbot and Convent of Pipewell but its location is unknown. Most of the site of the village has been levelled by agriculture and little remains on the surface. See also Pipewell. SP 626760.

Elm Green

A hamlet lying south of Wicken that was created in the 12th century but abandoned by the middle of the 16th century. The site is now lost to agriculture. See also Dagnall.

Elmington

Two estates lying in Elmington were recorded in 1086 both owned by Crowland Abbey. One estate had nine householders and the other had four. One estate lay northeast of Oundle and was deserted from the late 15th century to the end of the 17th century due to enclosure and conversion of land to pasture. Ten taxpayers were listed

in 1301 indicative of a population of around 45 but only two houses were recorded in 1674. The A605 runs adjacent to the site which has been repopulated with a small modern development. TL 053896. The other Elmington estate was in Tansor and had 11 taxpayers in 1301 but by the early 18th century had only four or five families. TL 053909.

Falcutt

Falcutt, also Fawcote or Fancote, is a deserted village lying southeast of Helmdon. It was not mentioned in 1086 but was probably included with Astwell although it was mentioned separately in 1220. In the 1301 lay subsidy, 35 taxpayers were listed at both Astwell and Falcutt and 57 people aged over 14 were at both places in 1377. Nine houses were depopulated in 1517 and ten people paid tax at Falcutt in 1524 suggesting considerable decline in the 15th or early 16th century. A chapel served by Wappenham was present in 1536 but had been demolished by 1655. See also Astwell. SP 595430.

Fawcliff

Lying northeast of Braunston on the side of a hill, Bridges in the early 18th century wrote that there 'was formerly a hamlet called Faleclive or Fawcliff whereof mention is made in a charter granted by Edward III to the nuns of St Mary de la Pre near Northampton: but this hath been destroyed some ages since. In the neighbouring enclosures, however, there are some wells still to be seen, with a lane entire.' The reasons why it was abandoned are unknown. Baker noted that the name persisted in a small field where the boundaries of freehold and copyhold lands were marked by an ancient stone. Fawcliff seems to have been the original name of the settlement which was later called Braunston Cleves. SP 54376 68176.

Fawsley

The boundaries of Fawsley are described in a Saxon charter of 944 and Domesday Book records 17 householders indicative of a population around 75. In the 1301 taxation, 44 taxpayers were present indicating a population around 180 and the Poll Tax of 1377 listed 90 taxpayers aged over 14. Sixty-six were listed in 1379 but the drop may have been caused by tax evasion rather than a real population fall. The manor was obtained by the Knightley family in the early 15th century and it remained in the family for centuries. In 1477, the village was described as a manor house plus ten messuages and six cottages one of which was 'le presthows'. Ten taxpayers were listed in 1523 of whom two were Knightleys. Seven houses were recorded in the Hearth Tax of 1670 and 40 people in a religious census of 1676. In the early 18th century, Bridges described it as a village of six houses of which Mr Knightley's seat and the vicarage were close and the other four 'dispersed in the fields'. Sixteen men aged 18-45 were listed in 1777. The village was depopulated for sheep farming and gradually shrank over time before being absorbed into parkland. Settlement remains suggest that the village may have been concentrated on two sites, one around the church and one around the hall. The church and hall remain. SP 566567.

Faxton

The former parish of Faxton lay northeast of Lamport and 35 households were recorded in 1086 indicative of a population of about 155 although that may have included other places such as Mawsley. Despite it apparently being a sizeable village when the Domesday survey was completed, no 11th century material has been found on the site which may mean that the original Faxton was located somewhere else and the village was re-planned in a different location about a hundred years later. The poll tax of 1377 listed 94 taxpayers together with Mawsley, again a sizeable settlement.

Faxton seems to have expanded quickly up to the late 14th century after which it declined. A taxation of 1545 lists 22 taxpayers but a religious census taken in 1676 found 180 conformists there. The Militia List of 1777 names seven men aged 18 to 45. Fifteen houses were present in 1801 down from 32 in 1729. Population increased in the 19th century but declined in the 20th century and Faxton was depopulated by the 1960s. In this sense, Faxton is unusual as being an example of a place that was finally deserted relatively recently. The church described by John Bridges, almshouses and manor house have been demolished. SP784753. Faxton has received more archaeological attention than most sites and is extensively documented. SP 784753.

Field Burcote

Like Caswell, although it was not mentioned separately until 1200 it was probably included in the Domesday survey with Greens Norton. Nine people paid tax at 'Burcot' in 1301 and little is known of it until the settlement was enclosed in 1499 when four houses were taken down and 200 acres converted to pasture. By the mid-16th century the area was extensively under sheep farming. In the early 19th century only two houses remained. A farm now occupies the site and there are few if any remains above ground. SP 667508.

Foscote

Located about halfway between Towcester and Abthorpe, Foscote is not recorded before 1200 but it is probably older. There were ten taxpayers in 1301 and it was partly enclosed in 1488 with the eviction of 12 residents. Five taxpayers were listed in 1525. An estate map shows only a few houses around a green in 1726. It seems likely that in terms of its size little changed for 400 years, maybe more, until some of the houses were removed in the late 19th century. SP 660473.

Foxley

A deserted village in the northeast of Blakesley parish mentioned in 1086 but no households were recorded which may indicate that it had been abandoned at the time. However, there was a field system and since Foxley occurs in later records it may have been occupied at the time of Domesday. It is not mentioned in Tudor tax records suggesting that it was small and included with Blakesley. The De Foxley family pastured sheep there from the 15th to the 17th centuries and it may have been largely depopulated for that reason. In the early 18th century, Bridges recorded that there was only a manor house, three houses and a water mill. Not much of the site remains but there is a hollow way along with the probable sites of former houses and a pond to the south of the small green on Banbury Lane. Modern development exists on and around the site. SP 640518.

Furtho

Lying about halfway between Cosgrove and Potterspury, 15 people were recorded at Furtho in 1086 indicative of a total population of around 65. It was not taxed separately in the medieval or Tudor lay subsidies hence its population around that time is unknown. It was partly converted to sheep pasture by the mid-16th century and by 1600 the village was enclosed and the people moved out. A religious census of 1676, however, found 20 people at Furtho. In the early 18th century, Bridges recorded, 'In this lordship is now only one house, with the church; tho' the remains of a former village are still to be seen.' Bridges also noted that before enclosure around 1600 the 'great road passed from Northampton to London; and by means of this inclosure the town is supposed to have been depopulated.' SP 774430.

Glassthorpe

A deserted village lying about halfway between Flore and Harlestone, six people were recorded at Glassthorpe in 1086 of which three were slaves. Sometimes called Classtrop or Claxthorp, there were 14 taxpayers in 1301. Two taxpayers were listed in the lay subsidy of 1523. The Spencer family of Althorpe acquired a manor there in the early 16th century and used it for sheep grazing and this probably triggered further depopulation. In the early 18th century, Bridges remarked that Claxthorp 'was anciently a village or hamlet in the parish of Flore, but hath been long depopulated, and is now only the name of a shepherd's house'. Baker observed that only two or three houses remained 'but tradition, and the broken appearance of the ground, point out Great Bury-field as the site where the village formerly stood.' SP 662617.

Glendon

Glendon, now in the parish of Rushton, had nine households in 1086, ten tenants in 1327 and by 1428 less than ten people lived there. The parish was enclosed and converted to pasture in 1514 and most of the houses were pulled down. One taxpayer was listed there in 1524/5. By the early 18th century only two or three houses were left. In the 1777 Militia List, five men under 45 are listed at both Glendon and Barford. Little survives of the village except for hollow ways although Glendon Hall indicates the former site. The church was taken down probably when the grounds of Glendon Hall were landscaped sometime around 1758. Ten burials were found in 2004 which seem very likely to be related to the church. A *Time Team* dig took place at Glendon Hall in 2005 but the site of the church which was described by Bridges could not be located possibly because it had been incorporated into the Hall. Earthworks have been mostly lost. SP 847814.

Hale

Lying southwest of Apethorpe, Hale was listed in 1086 as having only a villager and two smallholders. Together with their dependents, this suggests a very small population of around 14 people. A church or chapel was recorded in Halefield in an ecclesiastical taxation of 1291 but its value was one of the smallest in the county. As a small settlement Hale was usually taxed with Kings Cliffe and in 1304 only three tenants were recorded. In 1340, John of Hale parson of the church of the Holy Trinity at Blatherwycke gave (enfeoffed) Thomas of Hale ten messuages and two cottages in Hale which if all occupied by families could have accommodated around 45 people. However, in 1356 it was said of Hale that no-one has lived there since the Black Death and Hale is significant because it seems to be the only Northamptonshire village known to have been depopulated directly because of the pestilence which swept through England in 1348/9. The families there may have fallen victim to the plague or moved away in search of a better living. Either way, the hamlet in Apethorpe parish was abandoned but as clergy were appointed to the church or chapel of Hale until 1448 there may have been some repopulation. The ruins of houses and streets were visible in the early 18th century but have since been destroyed. TL 015943.

Halse

Once a separate parish between Brackley and Greatworth, Halse (also pronounced Hawes) is listed in 1086 but it is impossible to determine how many people lived there. Thirty taxpayers were listed in 1301 but this probably includes some from Old Brackley likewise the 107 people taxed in 1377. The next indication of size comes from the early 18th century when nine houses were at Hawes and the settlement got smaller in the 19th century. The parish church dedicated to St Andrew is by tradition said to have been located near Manor Farm probably along with much of the early village.

Baker noted that 'the site is now occupied by the farm-house west of the manor house. In the exterior wall is still visible one of the pillars and arches which divided the nave from the aisle' and other features existed inside. Modern development occupies the site. SP 566404.

Hantone

Hantone is one of two places mentioned in the Domesday coverage of the county for which no location has ever been found (see also Chelverdescote). All we know is that it was in Navereslund hundred which was on the east side of the river Ise so it was somewhere around Finedon, the Addingtons or Kettering. Hantone occurs twice in Domesday Book as there were two landowners and 18 householders were recorded there of whom three were slaves. The population could have been around 80 and if so then it was not a small settlement by comparison. As such, it is a mystery that no further mention of Hantone occurs after 1086. The placename may mean high farm unless it is a corruption of ham-tun which means manor farm.

Hartwell

The modern village of Hartwell is not centred around the original village for which Domesday Book records 26 households of which five were slaves and one was a priest. The original village and outlying farms and hamlets were located south of the current village. A 12th century chapel was located at Chapel Farm. The parish included the hamlet of Bozenham which was mentioned in the mid-12th century and later. There was also a settlement called Wyk juxta Hertwell in 1285 and later called Wikehertwell and Hertewellewyk the exact location of which is unknown. Medieval Hartwell was centred around SP 784489.

Henwick

The parish of Bulwick in medieval times contained another settlement called Henwick that is mentioned from the 12th to the 14th centuries and later and which was on other side of Willow Brook lying north of Bulwick Hall. Much of the site lies under the grounds of the Hall which was built in the late 17th century and the placename is still used locally in relation to the west side of Willow Brook. SP 958942.

Horton

Lying close to and southeast of the modern village, the original settlement in 1086 had a recorded population of 18 and comprised four manors one of which may have been waste land. The village lay either side of a stream and little is known about its size in the medieval period. However, the village paid £2-14-10d in 1334 which was close to the amount paid at Cogenhoe and Whiston with part of Denton. Working back from the tax paid indicates somewhere in the region of 36 taxpayers. Horton House was rebuilt in the late 1600s and around this time much of the original village was removed for landscaping. A religious census of 1676 found 70 people there. By the time Bridges saw it around 1720 he noted that Horton 'contains eight or nine families, besides the Earl of Halifax's who hath here a very good seat and gardens' suggesting that the bulk of the medieval village had already gone. Ten men aged 18-45 were listed in 1777 of whom five were farmers and five were servants. Horton House was demolished in the 1930s. Recent development north of the original site has repopulated the area. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. SP 821542.

Hothorpe

Lying to the southwest of Marston Trussel, Hothorpe was a chapelry in Theddingworth in Leicestershire. Only one person (a freeman) was recorded at Hothorpe in 1086 and given that there was only enough land for one plough but that there was only half a plough team it looks like Hothorpe was a very small manor at the time. By 1377 the village had expanded to 57 taxpayers but had contracted to 13 in 1523. About 1720 Bridges described it as a hamlet of about 20 houses. Hothorpe house was built at the start of the 19th century and any remaining cottages were demolished around 1830. The site now consists of a hall in parkland and little if any earthworks of the original village remain. SP 667852.

Hyde

Hyde or Hide, lying west of Roade near the boundary with Stoke Bruerne, was an estate held by St James' Abbey in Northampton. It was first recorded in 1200 although it may have been there by the time of the Domesday survey. Although it was a well-documented estate with a mill, a substantial house and other houses nothing is known of its population except that it was quite small. A hide was a unit of land measurement used at the time of Domesday and it is possible that the placename derives from its origins as a one hide manor. Hyde had reduced to a single farm by the early 16th century and in the early 18th century John Bridges wrote, 'About half a mile to the west of Rode lies Hyde a single house, which hath about it several marks of antiquity, particularly a stone doorcase and carved porch.' A single farmhouse is shown on a map of 1768. The site has been largely consumed by modern development but the name survives in Hyde Road in Roade. SP 749513.

Kelmarsh

Probably a sizeable village in 1086 although the total population at that time is unclear. Eighty-four people paid tax in 1377 indicative of a large village, 42 paid tax in 1523/4 and 26 households appear on the Hearth Tax in 1674. Twenty-three families lived there in the early 18th century. The modern village is mostly Victorian and little is known about why it shifted from its medieval location but the move might have been accelerated by the completion of Kelmarsh Hall around 1730. Extensive earthworks from the original site remain including hollow ways, tofts, crofts, paddocks, a fishpond, and ridge and furrow. SP 743794

Kingsthorpe

Kingsthorpe is a deserted settlement to the southeast of Polebrook about halfway to Hemmington. It was mentioned in 1086 along with Armston as having 18 households but allowing for families that suggests a total population of around 80-90. A chapel was present by 1396 and possibly long before. It seems that people slowly drifted away to find a better living elsewhere and by the late 15th century it was much smaller. In 1524 it was combined with Polebrook for tax purposes and it is unclear how many lived at Kingsthorpe. One taxpayer was listed in 1544 and the village is not mentioned in the Hearth Tax returns of the 1670s and no houses are shown on a map of 1710. Little remains of the original site. TL 079857.

Kirby

Lying in the southeast of the parish of Gretton and just south of Kirby Hall, the Scandinavian placename (meaning settlement with a church) suggests that it was formed, or taken over, after the Danish conquest around 870 but at a time when Christianity had become accepted. Six households were recorded at Kirby (Cherchberie) in 1086 suggesting a population around 27. The gradual depopulation of Kirby started

around 1500 and ten taxpayers were recorded in 1523/4 which allowing for families puts the population at around 45. Maps made in the late 16th century show that the church and about twelve houses remained and the village was largely abandoned when gardens around Kirby Hall were created at that time. Further garden enlargement took place in the late 17th century when the church and any remaining houses must have been taken down. Writing around 1720, John Bridges observed that 'The gardens here are beautiful, stocked with a great variety of exotic plants, and adorned with a wilderness composed of almost the whole variety of English trees, and ranged in an elegant order.' The medieval village lay southeast of Kirby Hall and significant earthworks remain including crofts, tofts, a fishpond and a manorial enclosure. The site is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. SP 925925.

Kirby

Lying about halfway between Blakesley and Bradden, Kirby was always small. It is not mentioned in 1086 but may have been a manor in Blakesley with a recorded population of two. The lands and church were granted to the Prior of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem around 1200 and shortly before 1500 the Hospitallers took down five houses and enclosed land for sheep farming. In the early 18th century, Bridges noted that 'Kirby is supposed to have been formerly a considerable village, but hath now no more than one house in it'. Remains include the lines of probable streets, house plots and a fishpond but have been damaged by building and agriculture. Now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. SP 636495.

Knuston

Knuston was mentioned in 1086 as having 12 households which allowing for families indicates a population of around 50. A list of tenants made around 1340 gives 33 names indicative of about 130 people although that only related to one of two manors hence the total population was mostly likely higher. Administratively, Knuston was part of Irchester parish which served the chapel of St Leonard. By the early 18th century it had shrunk to 20 families and gradual decline continued. The Knuston estate passed through several hands and culminated in conversion of the hamlet into parkland in the late 18th century. Like Overstone, the village was displaced to serve the interests of a dominant landowner. Little remains of the original village although Knuston Hall is now a residential centre. SP 938662.

Lilford

Forty households are mentioned in the Domesday description of Lilford suggesting that it was a relatively large settlement at the time. Thirty-one people were taxed there in 1301 indicative of a population around 140. Twenty-two taxpayers were there in 1523/3. By 1740 along with Lilford Hall there were 12 houses with a church, vicarage and a mill. Some houses and the mill were demolished around 1750 and the remaining houses were taken down in 1755 with the occupants removed, like their predecessors, to Wigsthorpe. Nineteen men aged 18-45 were listed at Lilford and Wigsthorpe in 1777 of whom six were employed at the Hall. The church, which lay southeast of the Hall, was taken down in 1778 with the churchyard landscaped into the new estate lands. Three arches from the nave were moved to The Lynch below Achurch where they still stand. Lilford is an example of a village that was gradually removed in the interests of successive lords of the manor. Lilford Hall is located close to the site of the original village. A drawing of the Nene valley made in 1721 by Tillemans includes the Hall, the church and several large houses. Near TL 029836.

Little Creaton

Lying close to and southeast of Creaton, and assuming it was a small manor linked to Creaton, there may have been four households there in 1086 and if so then perhaps a total population around 18. Little is known about it since it was always taxed with Creaton or Spratton and by the early 18th century it consisted of a hamlet of eight houses but they were probably mostly deserted by then. Little remains of the original site. SP 712716.

Little Newton

The site of Little Newton lies about halfway between Newton and Geddington. Newton, sometimes later called Newton Willows, is recorded in 1086 as having three manors of equal size with a total of 28 householders and one of these is likely to be Little Newton. It was not particularly small as 18 taxpayers were recorded in 1377 but only four families lived there in 1499. Around the early 16th century when Great Newton church (St Leonard's) had decayed Little Newton's chapel became the parish church (St Faith). Twenty-seven taxpayers were listed at Great and Little Newton in 1523/4, the majority at Great Newton. It seems likely that Little Newton was allowed to decline when the manors came under the control of a single lord in the 14th century. The already deserted village or part of it was probably levelled by a new mansion house built around 1600 and by the early 1700s only the isolated church remained. In Bridges' time the 'foundations of houses and the church of the demolished village' were clear to see. In 1971, a moated mound and moat 40 feet wide and a bank 28 feet long were visible. Newton was the site of a major conflict in 1607 when over a thousand people gathered there to protest against the enclosure of common land. Around 40-50 people were killed and the leaders of the rebellion were executed. The exact site of Little Newton is unknown as little evidence for a village has been found around the site of the church where it would be expected although quarrying may have destroyed part of the site. The placename, meaning new farm, is intriguing since it was well-established by 1086 hence a question remains regarding 'new' in relation to what. Possibilities include the migration of an established settlement that became unsuitable to a new location or the creation of a new settlement out of the pre-Conquest estates at Oakley. Located at or around SP 887833.

Little Oxendon

Little Oxendon is a deserted village located on high ground about a kilometre north of Great Oxendon. It is not mentioned in Domesday Book but was probably one of the two manors recorded at Oxendon. Fifty taxpayers were listed in the Poll Tax of 1377 and a chapel was licenced there in 1398 so it was quite substantial at that time. However, only three taxpayers were listed there in 1523 (25 at Great Oxendon) and much of the village had been cleared for pastureland. The process of depopulation probably started in the 15th century and by the early 18th century there was just a single house. A report in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1863 claims that when the Parliamentary troops victorious at Naseby were pursuing Royalists to Market Harborough and finding Lt Oxendon sympathetic to the king they 'almost totally destroyed the place'. In 1863 however, a lot of building stone was removed for road repair but the absence of squared stones at the time suggested that good quality materials had already been taken away. Nevertheless, substantial earthworks survive revealing rectangular closes either side of a former street and with ridge and furrow in the fields. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. SP 730846.

Littlethorpe

Not much is known about Littlethorpe but it is mentioned in 1276 and appears as a sub-heading at the end of the list of taxpayers at Hemington in 1301 showing 11 taxpayers there including Ralph Power. It was mentioned in a coroner's inquest of 1299 or 1300 held at Littlethorpe regarding the death of a two-year-old boy called William who was found drowned in a pit or well in the court of Ralph Power de Littlethorpe. He had been playing by the well and the inquest report says that the jurors came from Littlethorpe cum Lollington. Lollington is Luddington in the Brook. Its location and reasons for desertion are unknown but it may have been located at TL 105835.

Lolham

The deserted villages of Lolham and Nunton lie close to the village of Maxey which was built on an island in the fens. Lolham is first mentioned in 1191 and in 1301 eleven taxpayers were listed there indicative of a population around 50. In 1524 it was taxed with Maxey but the arrangement of the listing suggests that five taxpayers may have lived at Lolham. In the early 18th century there was a single farmhouse and four bridges 'of great antiquity designed to make the road leading to Lincoln passable over the meadows.' The bridges which were built on the site of a Roman crossing date from the mid-17th century are listed for their special architectural interest. Lolham Hall probably stands on or near the site of the village. See also Nunton. TF 111078.

Lower Radstone

Lower Radstone was about one kilometre due east of Radstone. It was always taxed with the larger Upper or Over Radstone so little is known about its size. However, 30 people were taxed at Radstone in 1301 which presumably included both settlements. By 1523, only 13 men paid tax which suggests that Lower Radstone was already small by then. In the early 18th century, Bridges notes that Radstone 'hath in it nineteen houses, and about one hundred inhabitants. The footsteps of the old demolished town are still remaining.' Lower Radstone appears to have gone by the late 17th century if not long before. A survey of the parish before intensive agriculture found fishponds and earthworks. SP 60134048.

Lyveden

This puzzling area of deserted settlement was in the large area of the Lyveden valley adjacent to Harley Way where the modern parishes of Pilton, Benefield and Aldwinckle all meet. The Lyveden valley was an important centre for pottery production in the 13th century. The placenames that occur in the medieval period are Daundelynslyveden or Lyvedendaundelyn, Lyveden magna, Lyveden parva, and Potterslyveden. Parva and magna indicate at least two distinct sites and three sites about a kilometre apart are suggested by excavation along with pottery and stone scatters. A taxation of 1301 lists 27 names at parva Lyveden which may have included all taxpayers in the two or three scattered settlements. A court roll of 1406 identifies ten tenants some of whom were potters and this is the last mention of an occupied village. The sites were deserted in the 15th century and probably finally cleared in the 16th century coincident with the Tresham family acquiring land. One thousand sheep grazed there in 1547 and the unfinished Lyveden New Bield dating from the early 1600s is located nearby. Separate sites located at SP 983861, SP 99158630 and SP 990869.

Mallows Cotton

From the abundance of known Roman sites around Raunds, the earthworks at Mallows Cotton were once thought to be a Roman Camp. Excavation in 1909 found only medieval occupation and it is one of three adjacent abandoned Cotton settlements (see

also West Cotton and Mill Cotton). Almost nothing is known about its population except that it was always small. Located northwest of the Raunds by-pass and just north of Stanwick Lakes, it began in the 12th century but had been completely abandoned by the late 1700s. Mallows Cotton seems likely to be the manor of Middle Cotes or Middle Cotton mentioned in the 13th century and later. Morton's *Natural History* published in 1712 (p.517) described it as a 'knot of small closes about half a mile below Mill Cotton, upon the bank of the river, there being only a plain or meadow betwixt them: but formerly the area of a town as appears by the fragments and foundations of walls that have been digg'd up there.' Excavation revealed the sites of a possible manor house and church. The site is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. SP 97638 73360.

Mawsley

Located to the south of Loddington, little is known about Mawsley because it was always taxed with nearby Faxton (also deserted) which suggests that it was always small. It was not mentioned in 1086 but perhaps existed then because Faxton was located in the pre-Domesday hundred of Malesle which must be a much older placename. The meaning of the placename is uncertain but may be related to Wythemail (also deserted) which is not far away and may derive from a clearing on a stony ridge. The links between the name of the hundred and the name of the medieval village are also unclear but it is possible that the clearing on the stony ridge was first the open air meeting place for the hundred, and that the village came later on or near the same spot. The small hundred of Mawsley was absorbed into Orlingbury hundred by the 14th century. The village was probably much decayed by around 1400 and by the early 18th century it consisted of only one or two cottages and a wood. Eighteen people were recorded there in 1841 but this reflects people living on outlying farms not in a single hamlet. A modern village has been built southeast of the original site of which virtually nothing remains. SP801768/SP80557630.

Mill Cotton

Always a small settlement, the site is located at the end of Station Road in Ringstead near the river Nene and marina. First documented in the 12th century it was also known as parva Cotton, Little Cotton and Chamberlein's Cotes. Morton's *Natural History of Northamptonshire* (p. 516) describes a high earth bank and a deep ditch on the site which was largely abandoned by the early 18th century and only the water mill and a few buildings remained in the mid-19th century. The Victorian railway line, modern agriculture and extraction have destroyed most if not all above ground evidence although the mill pond is still there below a lock. Excavation of the moated site in 1974 before gravel extraction revealed a range of buildings and ovens. Pottery from the 12th to the early 14th century was also found. The site seems to have been associated with a ford across the river since in 1329 the Abbott of Crowland Abbey was acquitted of raising the water level at Wylewat mill (now Willywatt mill), the next mill downstream, to the disadvantage of men using the ford at Chamberleyn's mill (VCH vol. 4, p. 33). See also West Cotton. SP 968745.

Milton

Lying near Castor, 12 households were recorded at Milton in 1086 one of whom was a slave. Allowing for families this indicates a population around 50. Fifteen taxpayers were listed in 1301 and 14 in 1523 suggesting a population up to 60. By the time of the Hearth Tax the number of houses had reduced to five. Decline was probably due to enclosure for pasture and the creation of a deer park and desertion seems likely in the early 18th century when the mansion was enlarged. Milton was probably served by the

church at Castor but had a chapel of its own. Little trace remains of the original site which is marked by a mansion house. TL 145995.

Muscott

Located east of Norton, Muscott was occupied by the late 12th century and its western boundary was the Watling Street. Brockhall and Muscott were taxed together in 1301 when 48 people were listed. Since Brockhall is thought to have been always quite small, most of these taxpayers may have lived at Muscott. The village paid a sizeable sum in a taxation of 1334 but by 1377 only five people aged over 14 paid tax in Brockhall and Muscott combined. It seems that Muscott was depopulated during this time and it may have become unsustainable after the plague swept through England in 1348. Lands were taken into sheep farming by the Spencers of Althorpe in the 16th century. Three houses were there in the early 18th century and four houses including a water mill were there in the early 19th century. Fourteen men aged 18-45 were listed at Brockhall with Muscott in 1777 of whom six were servants. SP 627633.

Newbold

First mentioned in 1203 and lying northwest of Catesby above the river Leam, Newbold may have been included in the Domesday description of Catesby. Thirteen people were taxed at Catesby and Newbold in 1301 suggesting that only a handful of families were there. The prioress of Catesby Abbey was confirmed as Lady of the Manor in 1315/6. It seems to have been deserted by 1500 and the remaining earthworks were levelled in 1966 when ploughing revealed large quantities of 12th century pottery. In the early 18th century, Bridges described it as a hamlet 'which hath in it four houses, and about ten inhabitants'. SP 517606.

Newbottle

Lying north of Harrington and north of the Isebrook, Newbottle was recorded as having a mill, three villagers and a smallholder in 1086 making it very small even then. Its name, meaning 'New Build', suggests that it was an offshoot of Harrington. By 1583 it was a single house with the land used for sheep pasture. All above ground remains have been levelled but some crop marks are visible. The name survives in Newbottle bridge. SP 776814.

Newbottle

In 1086 Newbottle near Kings Sutton had a population of 32 households making it relatively large although 15 people were listed as slaves and the population probably included nearby Purston and Charlton. Twenty-three people were taxed there in 1301 when Purston and Charlton were listed separately. Six houses were taken down shortly before 1500 and part of the land was enclosed. Three people were taxed there in 1524 and extensive sheep farming was present by 1550 suggestive of depopulation. Bridges, however, recorded 'about forty families' there in the early 18th century indicative of a population around 180. Thirty-eight men aged 18-45 were listed there in 1777 which accords well with Bridges' estimate. Church and manor house remain. Population has coalesced in nearby Charlton which is in the same ancient parish. SP 524368.

Nobold

With a name meaning 'New Build', this settlement is not mentioned in documentary sources until the late 13th century when it was probably built as a late offshoot west of Clipston. Little is known about it except that it was abandoned by the early 18th century and probably long before. Bridges writing around 1720 described a settlement west of Clipston called Newbold and further west a site called Old Nobold where traditionally there 'stood anciently a town and church' and noted that the old churchyard tree was 'lately cut down.' Some earthworks remain but much has been lost to ploughing. SP 695821.

Nortoft

Once thought to be an unlocated deserted village, Nortoft was situated to the northeast of the triangular green in the middle of Guilsborough and the name is preserved in a street name leading off the green. It was listed separately in the Domesday survey but was small even then and little is known about it. About 14 taxpayers were listed at both Guilsborough and Nortoft in a Tudor lay subsidy and Bridges in the early 18th century recorded a hamlet of 18 houses. Effectively absorbed by expansion of Guilsborough. SP 676735.

Nunton

Lying southwest of Maxey, Nunton had 11 taxpayers in 1301 indicative of a population around 48. Six people were taxed at Nunton and Wakeramhall in 1524. Bridges recorded four families there in the early 18th century. Nunton, and also Lolham, are intriguing as they were situated close to Maxey which is mentioned in 10th century charters as Macuseige meaning the island of Maccus. Nunton and Lolham were located on the same island in the fens and Maxey church was built on elevated ground and possibly on earlier sacred ground. The church may have been built in a location that was safe from flooding and which was also accessible to the people of Lolham and Nunton. TF 120073.

Nutcote

The present village of Naseby appears at one time to have consisted of Naseby in the north part and a hamlet called Nutcote in the south part, probably separated by a stream that runs east-west. Tenth to 11th century pottery has been found in Nutcote which seems to have been around a green in the southwest part of the village and which has been built over. Twenty-eight people were taxed at Naseby in 1525 which presumably included the people living in Nutcote. A history of Naseby published in 1792 says that the south part of the village was still called Knutcoat which by tradition was a hamlet in the parish. It had a chapel the boundaries of which were still evident and when the windmill was built on the site human burials were disturbed. Stones from the chapel ground were taken around 1720 to repair a turnpike road. The name survives as a street name in Naseby. SP 688778.

Olney

Olney is a site mentioned in Silverstone in 1220. Little is known about it and the name probably means either lonely clearing or the clearing of someone called Ona. Presumably always very small and it may not have existed for long. Bridges does not mention it in his account of Silverstone which suggests that it was not known about in the early 18th century.

Onley

Lying west of Barby, Onley is first recorded in 1272. It was taxed with Barby in medieval times so its size is hard to gauge but 14 men paid tax there in 1523. If they all had families then the total population could have been around 60. In the early 18th century it was described a 'hamlet of seven shepherds' houses' and Baker later recorded that only three farmhouses dispersed in the fields remained. The fieldname Chapel Close supports the tradition that there was once a chapel there. Earthworks are relatively well-preserved. A prison now lies close to the site of the medieval village. SP 512706.

Overstone

The present village of Overstone is not in the same place as the medieval settlement. Overstone is not mentioned until 1167 but was almost certainly there in 1086 when it was probably included in the assessment of Sywell. A rental of 1398 lists 53 tenants indicative of a population of about 240 but by the end of the 15th century it was a little smaller. The Hearth Tax of 1674 suggests 42 dwellings and a population of around 190 although a religious census of 1676 recorded 226 people. A survey of 1672 shows a mansion house with gardens and orchards, the park, closes, 14 farms, 15 cottages and both watermill and windmill. By 1775 the village, apart from the church and manor house, had been moved to its present location on the road to Northampton. The church was taken down in 1803 and the present church consecrated in 1807 on the northern boundary of the park which dates from 1255 when the landowner was licenced to enclose animals for hunting. The location of the medieval park is not known for certain but may have been to the north of the original village bounded by the Northampton road. The park was later moved and much enlarged. The two roads that led north out of the village survive, one as a road in the park and the other as a hollow way. Basically, the owner of the land of Overstone moved the village to a new site that improved their situation and enlarged the park. SP 807657.

Papley

Papley is a deserted village lying to the southeast of Warmington toward Luton. The site was found, in part, because it lies at the meeting of four footpaths and two bridleways in a remote location. Twelve taxpayers were listed in 1301 indicative of a population around 55. It was enclosed and converted to pasture around 1500 with the accompanying destruction of seven houses. A taxation of 1523 names one person from Papley in the listing for Warmington but there may have been more. One house is shown on a map of the village in 1632 but that might have a symbolic representation of a shrunken site. Around 1720, Bridges described it as 'a depopulated village, now consisting only of three shepherd's cottages.' Some earthworks remain and two farms are close to the original site. TL 10691 88973.

Perio

Perio is a deserted site lying east of Southwick on the banks of the river Nene and may have been the original settlement from which Southwick evolved. It is mentioned in 1282 and a religious house with the unusual joint dedication to St John and St Martin was founded there by the late 13th century and continued into the 16th century. As Piriho, it is mentioned in an inquest conducted in 1358 into the death of John de Allynghon, the prior or master of the hospital, who was killed with an axe. By the early 16th century it seems that there was no longer a functioning hospital but a chapel remained. The village site had been abandoned by around 1600 and perhaps long before. However, Perio mill remained and was used as a paper mill in the early 1700s but it burned down in 1721.

A working mill remained well into the 19th century. The mill building and a barn remain. TL 044924.

Pipewell

Originally situated in both Wilbarston and Rushton on either side of Harper's Brook, ten households were recorded at Pipewell in 1086 suggesting a total population of around 45. A Cistercian abbey was established in the middle of the 12th century and some depopulation occurred then to give the abbey the land and the seclusion that it required. As such it is perhaps the earliest deserted medieval village in the county. In 1380/1, three cattle rustlers were sentenced to hang for stealing the abbot's cattle from the East Grange and the West Grange at Pypwell. The buildings were in a ruinous state by 1412 and many inhabitants had abandoned their houses because the lands were barren. As a result, the Pope gave to the abbey the church of Elkington which had been virtually deserted since the Black Death. Whether this provided much useful income is not clear. After the abbey surrendered in the 1530s the buildings were taken down and robbed of re-usable materials. By the mid-16th century the area was given over to sheep grazing although 20 houses remained around 1720. A dispersed hamlet lies in and around the site of the abbey and former village. A drawing probably made in 1721 by Tillemans shows the site of the abbey and a hamlet consisting of row of cottages and houses along a roadway. SP 83767 85724, 84019 85653.

Potcote

Lying southwest of Cold Higham and lying close to the deserted settlements of Caswell and Field Burcote and several other shrunken settlements, Potcote is mentioned in relation to land holdings in the late 12th century and again in the early 13th century. Little is known about it but it was partly enclosed with destruction of houses and conversion to sheep pasture around 1500. A map from the early 1700s shows two farmsteads and little changed since in the early 19th century it consisted of 'two old inclosed farms of about 650 acres'. The farm that now exists on the site may occupy the site of the hamlet. SP 657527.

Preston Deanery

Lying in the parish of Hackleton, Preston Deanery had six households in 1086 of whom two were slaves. It looks like it was always small since it was not listed separately in taxation records. Nine houses were recorded in a Hearth Tax of 1670 and 53 people in a religious census of 1676. In the early 18th century Bridges described Preston as of 'ten houses which stand dispersed in the grounds' suggesting that by then the village had already been reduced and scattered. The church there is now redundant. SP 787555.

Purston, Great

The hamlet of Great Purston lay to the north of Newbottle and seems to have been partly in the parish of Kings Sutton and partly in the parish of Newbottle. Sixteen people were taxed there in 1301. Some houses were destroyed in 1495 when Hugh Parsons and others took down six houses to create sheep pasture. Five people were taxed in 1524 three of whom were called Parsons and the other two were a shepherd and a servant. In the early 18th century, Bridges noted that Purston had divided into Great Purston in Kings Sutton and Little Purston in the parish of Newbottle. SP 518395.

Rushton St Peter

Fifty households were recorded at Rushton 1086 including three slaves making it among the larger settlements recorded in Domesday Book. Rushton St Peter lay close to and west of Rushton All Saints and as they were taxed together it is difficult to know how

big each one was. In 1524, however, nine people were taxed at St Peter compared to 28 at All Saints. The manor was acquired by the Tresham family in 1428 who may have taken the land into their own use. Rushton Hall was built in the late 16th and early 17th centuries and later added to. By the early 18th century, Bridges recorded that the village consisted 'only of four or five shepherd's lodges, the parsonage and Lord Cullen's seat. It is pleasantly seated, declining towards the river Ise which runs here under a stone bridge of two arches.' The north part of the churchyard measuring about 56 yards by 21 yards was conveyed to Lord Cullen in 1737 to enlarge the court leading to his mansion. The two parishes were combined in 1780 and permission to demolish St Peter's church was given. Some ancient monumental sculptures were removed to All Saints and some inscriptions inside the church which stood close and east of the Hall were recorded by Bridges. Nothing of the village now remains above ground, the site having been incorporated in the grounds of Rushton Hall and features lost to landscaping. The village was sketched by Tillemans in 1721 and other drawings showing the church in relation to the Hall exist. SP 837827.

Seawell

A deserted village in the north of Blakesley parish mentioned in 1086 with a mill, woodland and 13 households which including dependents may indicate a population around 50. It was not listed separately in the 1301 lay subsidy or the Tudor lay subsidies suggesting that it was small enough to include with Blakesley. By the mid-16th century it had been enclosed for sheep farming. In the early 18th century it was described as a hamlet of two houses one of which was a farm. Nothing remains of the original site although there is a farm. SP 630525.

Shaw

Little is known about Shaw in Stoke Bruerne but it is mentioned from around 1200 to the 15th century. In the taxation of 1301, Henry of Schawe and Henry of Schawe junior are listed under Stoke Bruerne and Richard and Dennis both of Schawe are listed under Shutlanger. This suggests that at least a few families lived there hence its inclusion here. Its location and the reasons for desertion are unknown but the remains of small hamlet which may be Shaw occur at SP 740488.

Sibberton

Lying southwest of Thornhaugh, Sibberton, is first mentioned in 1189 and the name derives from Sigeberht's farm. It had a separate entry in the 1301 lay subsidy when 18 taxpayers were listed and 13 were recorded in 1377. The last appointment to the church was in 1389 and fragments of the church or chapel were built into Sibberton Lodge. Several stone coffins were also found in a field near the lodge. Tradition has it that the font was removed to the church at Wansford. Bridges stated that the hamlet had been reduced to a single house but that there had once been several houses on the basis of 'ruins and stones which have been dug up'. Few traces of the settlement which lies north of the Lodge remain and the reasons for its desertion are unclear. TL 064998.

Silsworth

Although it was not mentioned in 1086, Silsworth was probably included in the assessment of Watford. It is first mentioned in the early 13th century and was a hamlet in the 14th century that had shrunk by the early 17th century and only a single house remained in the early 18th century. The site has been largely destroyed by ploughing but the plots of some former structures probably houses are still visible. The parish of Watford contains other settlement remains one of which seems likely to be the unlocated hamlet of Cumberford. SP 617707.

Snorscomb

Located about halfway between Everdon and Farthingstone, Snorscomb or Snoscomb was mentioned in a charter in 944 and later described in Domesday Book as comprising of two manors each with two households. It was not listed separately in the taxations of 1301 or the early 16th century presumably as it was small and taxed with Everdon. It was acquired in the early 16th century by the Knightley family of Fawsley who enclosed 200 acres and took down nine houses. Extensive sheep farming was present a few decades later. Bridges described it in the early 18th century as a hamlet of five houses and a mill but noted that it had at some time been 'a more considerable village'. In the early 19th century it was reduced to a farm house, a water mill and a cottage. A single farm remains on or near the site. Little Everdon is a shrunken medieval village in the same parish. SP 598561.

Stanford

Stanford is recorded in 1086 as having 22 households including a priest hence the population presumably with Downton was perhaps around 80. The presence of a priest suggests a church. The poll tax of 1377 lists 131 taxpayers over 14 years old to which can be added other family members. Thirty-one taxpayers are named in a subsidy of Henry VIII indicative of a population of around 150 people probably including Downton and 34 households were listed in the Hearth Tax of 1674. By the early 18th century it had declined to 15 houses and 45 people were living there in the 1801 census. Enclosure for sheep farming in Tudor times may have triggered the gradual decline of the village. Earthworks survive in a relatively good state. SP 589788

Steane

Domesday Book recorded 19 households at Steane of whom six were slaves so the total population could have been around 80. The population was about the same in 1301 when 16 people paid tax there. Around the time of the Black Death in 1348 there were 28 tenants and 51 people over 14 paid tax in 1377. The village had shrunk by 1428 when there were four houses. Bridges wrote about Steane that, 'There is but one house in the parish, except the Duke of Kent's, though it is firmly believed in the neighbourhood that there was once a flourishing town'. Extensive sheep farming covered the area by 1547. The Militia List of 1777 records just a farmer and two servants residing there. Remains of the village including enclosures, gardens, houses and hollow ways remain southwest of the manor house but have been damaged by quarrying. In Farthinghoe parish, the site is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. SP 55219 38901.

Stuchbury

Once an independent parish and more recently in Greatworth, in the early 18th century John Bridges wrote that Stotesbury or Stutesbery was a parish with neither a church nor a village. He also noted that it had been enclosed, that four houses remained and that the church of St John was long demolished although there was a piece of ground called the churchyard where it once stood. At the time of Domesday 13 people were recorded there, 21 taxpayers were listed in 1301 and 59 people aged over 14 paid tax in 1377. Only four houses paid the Hearth Tax in 1674 but these may have been separate farms and it seems likely that the village, held by St Andrew's Priory in Northampton, was cleared to make way for sheep farming by the mid 16th century. SP 569440.

Sulby

Lying in the north of the county on the border with Leicestershire, two manors were recorded there in 1086. One had 13 householders but none were recorded at the other which may have been already abandoned. The abandoned site, if it was one, may have

been used for the location of Sulby abbey which was founded in 1155 and dissolved in 1538. The village was listed separately in a taxation of 1334 when it contributed the relatively small amount of £1-11s which indicates somewhere in the region of 20 taxpayers and thus a population around 90. In 1377, 89 people aged over 14 paid tax. By 1428, however, the population had declined and there were less than ten houses. Seven taxpayers were listed in 1534/4 one of whom was William the organ player. A large sheep flock was there by 1547 so it is fair to assume that depopulation was associated with a change of land use to sheep farming. Bridges recorded that on the abbey site there was only a shepherd's house but around it were bumps and hollows left by an old village. Sulby had a church dedicated to St Botolph which in 1451 had fallen into ruin although rectors were appointed to it until the Dissolution when it was pulled down along with the abbey. The abbey was located east of Welford at SP657800 and the village north of Welford at SP653816. There is a probable mass grave from the battle of Naseby in 1645 located in the old parish at SP 66978013.

Thorp

Thorp (Widetorp) in Earls Barton is thought to have been included in the Domesday survey and if so had only four villeins and so a population of around 18 people. In his description of Earls Barton, John Bridges mentions an ancient manor or hamlet called Thorp (also called Barton Thorp and Thorp juxta Barton) that is first mentioned in the 13th century. It was located to the south-east of the centre of Earls Barton close to the river Nene near the bottom of Mill Lane the lower part of which was once the main street. Probable house platforms lie on both sides of the lane. A water mill called Thorp mill is mentioned in a will of 1498 along with 12 houses, 250 acres of arable land, 40 acres of meadow, 100 acres of pasture and 20 acres of wood called Barton Broyl. Two watermills were there in 1580. In Bridges' time there was a tradition that there had been a chapel at Thorp. The site was completely deserted by 1772 and nothing is known about why it came to be abandoned. Flooding might have been a contributory factor given its proximity to the river. SP 865630.

Thorpe Lubenham

Thorpe Lubenham was a hamlet lying northeast of Marston Trussell just south of the river Welland. Its name suggests that was originally an offshoot from Lubenham which lies north of the Welland in Leicestershire. Called Thorp juxta Lubenham in an inquest of 1351/2 into the accidental drowning of two-year-old John Flour, 27 people were taxed there in 1377. It probably declined because the site was taken over for sheep pasture by the mid 16th century. A single manor house was there around 1700 but was taken down by 1800. A hall and moated site remain. SP 705866.

Thrupp

Lying north of Norton, Thrupp appears in the Domesday survey as having about 13 households distributed across four landowners. A survey of 1343/4 mentions a mansion house with 120 acres of arable land, eight acres of meadow, four acres of pasture and two cottages. A chapel dedicated to St John the Baptist was instituted in 1257 and was subsidiary to the church at Norton. The chapel was in a ruinous state at the Dissolution and an inventory of its contents is given in Baker (p.425). Lands were enclosed in 1489 by Daventry Priory and Thrupp was essentially depopulated thereafter. A house was built on the site of the chapel. Bridges described only one house there in the early 18th century but three dispersed farmhouses and a cottage were there in the early 19th century. Surface remains have been destroyed by ploughing. The medieval village was centred on the crossroads on the Long Buckby Road and Norton Road. SP 599651.

Torpel

The once fortified manor at Torpel near Helpston probably dates from shortly after the Conquest and is now a scheduled site with public access. Little is known about the associated hamlet of Torpel although a market was granted there in 1264 and there were eight taxpayers in 1301. Twenty-one tenants were recorded on the lord's land in 1329 but there would have been other occupants that were not recorded. By the late medieval period the hamlet of Torpel went into decline. A taxation of Helpston 1523/4 lists twelve names separated from the main list which might represent people at Torpel. It does not feature in the Hearth Taxes around 1670 but it may have been included with Helpston. TF 11050543 (Torpel Manor).

Trafford

The site of Trafford lies east of Chipping Warden and was part of the parish of Byfield until the late 19th century. Domesday Book records a mill, three villagers and three slaves there. The subsidy of 1301 lists 13 taxpayers but after that it was taxed with Byfield and is not mentioned separately. In the mid-16th century the manor was used for sheep farming which suggests that people had moved out by then. Some features can be seen on the ground including a hollow way and former fishponds. SP 527486.

Upton

Upton near Northampton had 20 householders in 1086 and 49 taxpayers in 1301 indicating a population around 220, so quite large. It was purchased by the Knightley family in 1420 and probably partly cleared for sheep farming. In 1523/4 there were 18 taxpayers including Richard Knightley. Upton was sold again in 1600 and 13 households were listed in the Hearth Tax of 1674. Bridges in the early 18th century found 'eleven houses including the mill.' Between 1700 and 1750 the parkland around Upton Hall was redesigned which probably brought about further depopulation. The site is important due to its well-preserved earthworks showing among other features former house sites aligned with a hollow way that was once a main street. SP 71677 59949.

Wakefield

Located west of Potterspury, Wakefield is mentioned in 1086 as having four householders so even allowing for families it was very small. After that, little is known about the manor and settlement which may have been abandoned sometime in the 13th century. The name, lived on, however, in Wakefield Lodge and Wakefield Lawn. Baker's *Antiquities* includes a sketch (vol. 2 p.230) of the Wakefield Oak which was supposedly upwards of a thousand years old in the early 19th century and grew near the forest gate to Puxley. SP 7284 4195.

Walcot

Located west of Ufford and north of Southorpe, 18 taxpayers were listed at Walcot in 1301 indicative of a population around 80. Forty taxpayers were listed in 1377 and eight in a taxation of 1523/4. By the end of the 17th century the hamlet had reduced to two houses, one of which was an inn and the other a substantial residence. This coincides with the sale of the manor and the building of a mansion house although the events may not be causally connected. Bridges noted that there 'was anciently a chapel of ease' served by Barnack. The placename Walcot also occurs in Fotheringhay parish possibly in relation to a small medieval settlement (TL 051937) first mentioned in 1262 and likewise in relation to a possible small settlement between Weekley and Warkton. The name means 'cottage of the serfs or Britons'. TF 080042.

Walton

Located part way between Aynho and Kings Sutton, Domesday Book tells of ten householders at Walton. Seventeen taxpayers were listed in 1301. Partially enclosed in 1487 when five houses were taken down and 80 people were expelled. Large scale sheep farming in the area by 1547. Bridges observed that Walton lay within the parish of Kings Sutton but consisted only of two houses. In Bridges' time Chapel Field was assumed to be the site of a chapel dedicated to St Rumbold who was supposedly born 'upon this spot' in the year 662. Remains of the village lasted until 1960 when they were all but lost to ploughing. SP 506346.

West Cotton

The deserted settlement of West Cotton was the subject of a large archaeological study before the site was bisected by the Raunds by-pass near Stanwick Lakes. The area is rich in prehistoric and Roman sites but West Cotton dates from early Saxon times. A substantial late Saxon hall was built there and evidence of three water mills was found. Wooden buildings were replaced by stone in the 12th century and in the 13th century a series of six houses forming a hamlet was built around a small green. The site seems to have been deserted between 1400 and 1500 most likely due to extensive flooding not of the settlement itself but of the arable land around it. One house remained in the 1500s but was probably located just outside the original hamlet. In the early 18th century, Bridges described three deserted hamlets (Mallows Cotton, Mill Cotton and West Cotton) and there are several references to a manor called Wylwewynecotes or Willowcotes from the 14th century the placename meaning cottages by the willows and which may have been West Cotton. However, Willywatt mill on the river Nene is close to the deserted village of Mill Cotton and was called Wylewat mill in 1329 and Willicoat mill in 1544. The similarity of Wylewat and Willencoat might indicate that the mill took its name from one of the Cotton manors in the area. Alternatively, it may simply derive from 'willow water'. See also Mill Cotton and Mallows Cotton. SP 97520 72573.

Westhorp

First mentioned first in 1219, in the early 18th century Bridges recorded a hamlet of about 20 houses in the parish of Marston St Laurence but close to and west of Greatworth. It was absorbed into Greatworth where Westhorp occurs as a street name on the west side of the village.

Wick Hamon

Wicken contained two manors in the 11th century; Wick Hamon and Wick Dive. They were close but were separated by a stream and Wick Hamon was on the south side. Both had their own field systems and their own church until the churches were united in 1587 when the church at Wick Hamon was abandoned. The parish register of Wicken which starts in 1559 begins with the note that it includes "all such as have bine baptised, maried and buried within the parishe of Wickdyve and Wickhamon" which may suggest that the church at Wick Hamon had already fallen out of use by then. In the early 19th century, Baker noted that the church at Wick Hamon was supposedly pulled down around 1619 and the bells removed to Wick Dive. The site of the church was then traceable in a close called 'old church yard' but nothing of the building remained above ground. The deserted hamlet of Dagnall was in Wick Dive and Elm Green in Wick Hamon. The reasons for the decline of Wick Hamon seem to be emparking and general consolidation of two villages into one.

Wilby Thorpe

Wilby Thorpe is mentioned in the 13th century and later but the site is now lost. It may have been located at or near the site of Wilby Hall which stood in the northeast of the parish. A large medieval pottery scatter was found in Wellingborough near where Burns Road meets Queensway and on the site of Ruskin Infants School which may also indicate the site.

Winwick

Winwick, near West Haddon, is still there but again the medieval village more or less surrounded the modern village. It was relatively large at the time of Domesday having 23 households. A manor house marks the focus of the original site. Extensive earthworks survive around the existing village the layout of which was similar to its present layout at least two hundred years ago. SP 62363 73990.

Woodcroft

Lying in the parish of Etton and first mentioned in 1140, a taxation of 1301 listed 35 taxpayers at Woodcroft and the hamlet of Glinton suggesting that Woodcroft had the majority of the population. Six taxpayers were listed in 1523/4 and by 1674 only five houses were recorded in the Hearth Tax. A small sheep flock was present in 1547 and sheep farming may have contributed to its decline. It is the site of Woodcroft castle (a fortified manor house) which dates from the late 13th century and parts of which were incorporated into later buildings. The 'castle' was a Royalist garrison in the civil war and in 1648 and was the site of the gruesome death of the Reverend Dr Michael Hudson when it was attacked by Parliamentarian troops. TF 138045.

Wothorpe

Tradition has it that Abbot Turketyl of Crowland Abbey gave his lands in Wothorpe to the abbey in the 10th century. Twenty households were recorded at Wothorpe in 1086 which suggests a population around 90. Nineteen taxpayers were named in 1301 and 22 in 1524 suggesting that its size had not changed much in 400 years. Little Wothorpe, nearest to Stamford, had a nunnery of St Michael. A Benedictine nunnery at Great Wothorpe, nearer to Easton-on-the-Hill, became a victim of the Black Death with all the nuns but one dying or moving away due to poverty. Agnes Bowes, the survivor, was made prioress of Wothorpe but the priory never recovered and it was attached to the nunnery of St Michael's in Stamford in 1354. Agnes, however, could not settle there and ran away some years later. The manor was held by Crowland Abbey until the dissolution after which the area was given to Richard Cecil at nearby Burghley and the village levelled when Burghley House was built. The church and priory have completely disappeared. Modern expansion of Stamford has repopulated the area. TF 030056.

Wythemail

Lying west of Orlingbury between Orlingbury and Badsaddle (see above), Wythemail was described in 1086 as having 18 households including two slaves and a priest. It is possible, however, that some of the population recorded in Domesday Book lived at Orlingbury not Wythemail as there is no evidence of a church there although a chapel was mentioned in 1357. The meaning of the placename is unclear but it does fit with meaning a place located at the foot of a stony ridge, which it was. The village was substantially reduced by the late 14th century and it is not mentioned in the poll tax of 1377 or a taxation of 1545 and it was probably deserted by then. The site was converted into a park in 1614 and only one house with a wood remained by the early 18th century. Settlement remains have been completely destroyed by ploughing. The reasons for

desertion are unclear but may have been connected to changing weather patterns in particular wetter conditions. A legal case from 1318 reveals a little about what it was like. Alice wife of Nicol de Wythmale had made waste there by demolishing a chamber costing 60 shillings, a byre (cowshed) costing 50 shillings, a stable costing 30 shillings, cutting down and selling in the woods of the manor 400 oaks worth two shillings each, 200 ash trees worth two shillings each, and cutting down 30 pear trees in the gardens of the manor worth one shilling each and 40 apple trees at a shilling each. John, the son of Alice and Nicol, who stood to inherit the manor was most displeased. SP 840719.

Appendix 1. Other possible settlements

Sites included

All sites listed in Allinson and colleagues' list of deserted villages are included in the list above along with others now known to be a deserted settlement of one type or another. However, there is a grey area around inclusion as although some places are documented little is known about them and it is not clear how small they were.

Three deserted sites at Lyveden are included in the total of 121 although Lyveden could be treated as one site given the proximity of the sites to each other. Chelverdescote is included but if it was Newnham, as has been suggested, then it is included both in the count of all villages (458) and also as a deserted village. Hantone is included even though it is only mentioned in Domesday Book and not thereafter.

Sites excluded

Many Northamptonshire parishes contain evidence of medieval settlement such as pottery scatter but for which there is no documentary evidence of a settlement. Examples occur in Old Stratford (SP 773422) and Moreton Pinkney (SP 567487). These unnamed sites are excluded. In addition, several named sites were omitted as information about them is sparse although further evidence relating to their size and status may come to light. These are listed below and some may account for the difference of seven settlements (465 to 458) noted above.

Biggin (which means 'building') was the site of a deer park near Oundle and some sources describe it as a hamlet.

Bozenham in Hartwell may only have been the site of a mill. However, William de Bosenho was a tax collector at Hartwell in 1301.

Buscott (Britwincote, Brywyncott) was a manor in the parish of Higham Ferrers possibly to the southeast and now lost. The name survived as Buscote in a field name. No definite site has ever been identified. Possibly only a farmstead.

Cotnam which lay at the southwest end of Aynho is treated here as part of Aynho but it might have been a separate settlement.

Cotton End in Long Buckby may have started as a separate site that became integrated with the larger village.

Cotton End and Far Cotton which while once distinct settlements in Hardingstone are treated as one in the list of all settlements.

Ditchford in Irchester is the site of a medieval river crossing and a mill on the Nene. It seems to have had continuous activity but it does not appear to have ever been a hamlet.

Drayton was a manor in Lowick mentioned in the 12th century survey of Northamptonshire. Foard and colleagues (2009) suggest that there was once a hamlet at Drayton but the exact location is unknown. It may have been on the site of Drayton manor or, more likely, nearer to Lowick.

Drayton which was as hamlet near Daventry is excluded since it was absorbed by expansion of its larger neighbour.

Hardwick may have been a small hamlet in medieval Bulwick.

Hardwick near Oundle is suggested by a 1565 field book (TL 0087 8836).

Hemphow lying southwest of Welford (SP 625787).

Little Purston which may have been only a single farm.

Littethorp was a small outlying settlement north of East Carlton.

Maxey. There is a little mystery surrounding Maxey since a pre-Conquest charter mentions Maxey and 'the other Maxey' suggesting that Maxey was at one time two settlements. Speed's 1611 map of the county shows it as Maxey East. This could be interpreted as evidence for a lost settlement perhaps located near to Maxey church.

Overbury, Middlebury and Netherbury were three manors in Helmdon by the early fifteenth century. Evidence of settlement may exist for Overbury.

Puxley north of Deanshanger is excluded since it seems to have been a small, scattered settlement.

Shenley is a possible deserted site lying west of Yelvertoft that is suggested by the shape of the parish although there is no documentary evidence of it.

Snossells in Nassaburgh hundred is first recorded in 1404 and occurs again in the sixteenth century.

Southorpe in Warmington is treated as part of Warmington.

Stoneton on the county border was linked with Chipping Warden but is now in Warwickshire.

Walcote near Barnack is included, but Walcot in Fotheringay and a possible Walcote between Weekley and Warkton are excluded.

Wicken Hurst which is recorded in Bridges as adjoining Whittlewood forest and as having four or five houses is excluded.

Wolfage was an important manor in Brixworth with evidence of former habitation visible in Bridges' time.

Wolfhamcote which lay on the county border is excluded since it is usually treated with Warwickshire.

Wyk juxta Hartwell. This lost settlement is first mentioned in 1285 but may have been a single farmstead.

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