

Introduction

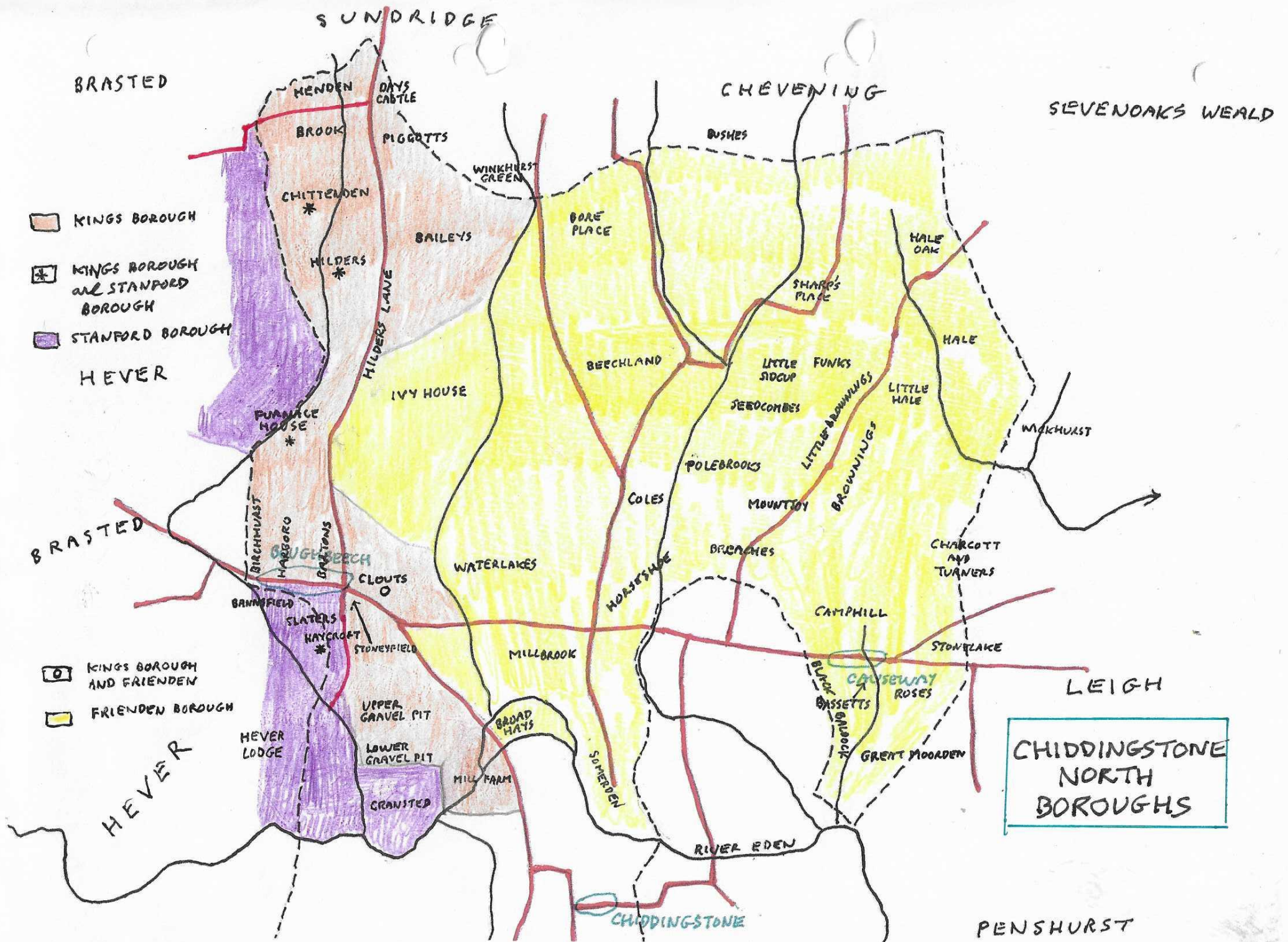
This is a survey of farms and houses in Chiddingstone parish from early times up to the 1851 census. I chose the 1851 census because when I started my research long ago the 1851 census was the latest one published. Also, it is close to the 1838 Tithe Award Survey which is a complete record of all the farms and houses in Chiddingstone and elsewhere complete with maps which I have utilised here. Chiddingstone is a large parish divided into North and South by the river Eden. I have excluded from this survey Little Chiddingstone which is a small outlier near Four Elms which I have included in my companion work on Hever.

My main source of information is the overseers' assessments which begin about 1700. I have copied them by hand and to save effort have copied only every third year. Many properties are identified by name. When there is no name, the property can usually be located either from its place in the assessment list or from its value (which often remains constant or charged as a fraction of the adjacent value for that property). The overseers' accounts can be supplemented by the Land Tax assessments and by the borough assessments. I have fewer of these, but they are particularly useful for the early years. Boroughs (taxation boroughs) or townships are divisions of the hundred and in the Weald at least have a quite different patterns to the parishes. Chiddingstone is in Somerden hundred and is mostly in Frienden Borough, but there are also elements in Kings Borough and Stanford Borough which extend into Hever and Edenbridge parishes. The boroughs raised Land Tax and also money to maintain bridges. They were abolished in 1832.

Another way of organising the land was by manor. The pattern of manors is highly complicated. Originally Chiddingstone must have been an extension of Sundridge parish and so belonged to a division of Sundridge manor called Sundridge Weald. Another division of Sundridge manor extends into the north of Chiddingstone and is called Sundridge Upland. I believe that the manors of Chiddingstone Burghurst and Chiddingstone Cobham were offshoots of Sundridge Weald. There are several other manors which I have attempted to locate on maps. The quality of the manorial records varies. Sundridge Weald is good, but others are fragmentary and also the lawyers who drew up the manorial records were often ill-informed of the actual facts. Manorial records often use redundant names for properties that were not in use in the 19th century.

Wills are another major source of information. Most Chiddingstone wills were proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC) and can easily be accessed on the internet. The other probate court for Chiddingstone was the Peculiar of Shoreham (PS) which can only be read by going to the Maidstone Archives. Then there are title deeds and other documents e.g., when a property owner nominally transferred the ownership of a property to his wife to give her security if she outlived him. There are leases. And there is also the Maidstone Journal, details of which I have placed on this website.

This work should not be regarded as the final version. There will be errors and omissions. Several of my findings will raise eyebrows. When I have completed work on the people of Chiddingstone, which will take several years it would be possible to improve the current publication considerably. As I am aged 86 nothing can be guaranteed



CHIDDINGSTONE
NORTH
MANORS

NO INFORMATION
ON MANORS BASED
ON PENSHURST,
LEIGH, SEVENOAKS
OR OTFORD

SUNDRIDGE

CHEVENING

SEVENOAKS WEALD

- H = HENDEN
- = SUNDRIDGE UPLAND
- B = BROXHAM
- X = HEVER BRO CAS
- = SUNDRIDGE WEALD
- M = MILLBROOK
- = CHIDDINGSTONE-BURGHESH
- X = CHIDDINGSTONE-COBHAM
- T = TYHURST
- ≠ = BOWSELL

IVER

BOUGHBECH

CAUSEWAY

LEIGH

RIVER EDEN

CHIDDINGSTONE

PENSHURST

