



Examine the Value of Place-Names as Evidence for the History, Landscape and, Especially, Languages of South East Dorset.

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Overview

This paper analyses 40 place-names in South East Dorset, stretching from the modern boundary of Hampshire, along the Purbeck coast, to just east of Weymouth (Fig. 1). Continuing the trend of place-names throughout England, most names have Old English (OE) origins, as the Anglo-Saxons renamed places as they immigrated to land which was largely swamp or forest.¹ However, there are three names of Brittonic origin. Welsh influence is expected due to the relatively close proximity to Wales. Figure 2 shows the large amount of surviving Celtic names in Dorset. For a similar reason I have found no direct Old Norse linguistic influence because Dorset was securely in the Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Wessex when Danelaw was enacted in the 9th century to separate Viking invaders. Despite large Roman settlements at Poole, there is little evidence of the Latin language because it was not generally spoken in rural areas.² Although, Dorchester, to the west of my corpus, retains the *chester* element because a Roman road went from there to Wimborne Minster and down to Poole Harbour. On the other hand, there are many Old French (OFr) place-name elements which originate from Norman aristocratic family personal names.

I will be dividing the place-names by whether they are topographical, habitative or personal and within each category will study the names' linguistic origins, offering more insight into the area's history and language change.

Topographical Names

Topographical place-names can illustrate what the historical landscape looked like and which features were seen as most significant. However, there is often disagreement over name meaning. The first element of Owermoigne seems to be derived from OE *ofer*, but this is arguable because of the alternation between *Og-* and *Ou-*. Coates suggests it originates from Brittonic *oir* and *drust* meaning

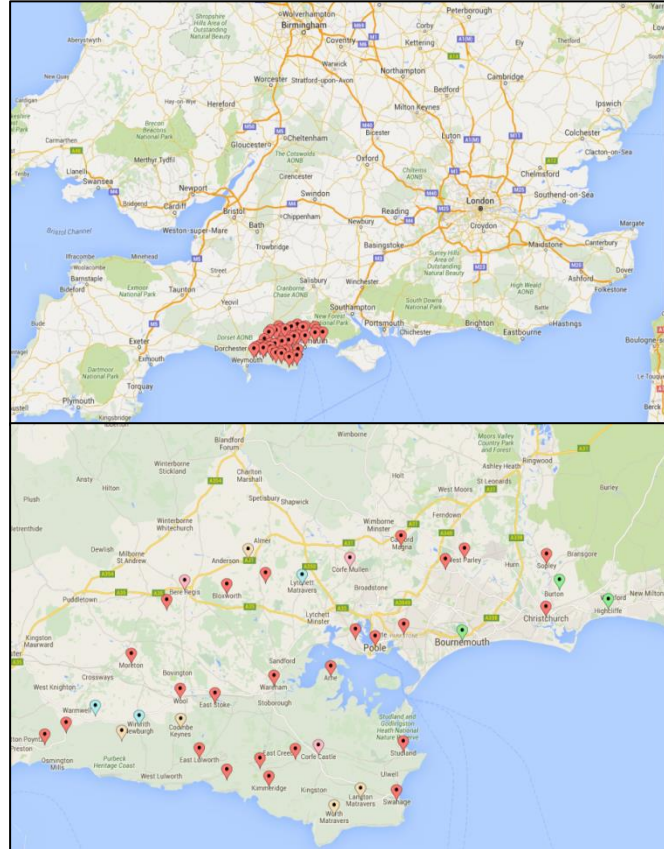


Figure 1 Maps illustrating the position of my corpus. Place-names marked in red are derived from OE, blue have Celtic elements, yellow have Norman family names, green are modern names, and pink have Latin or OFr elements

¹ Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2010), p. 11.

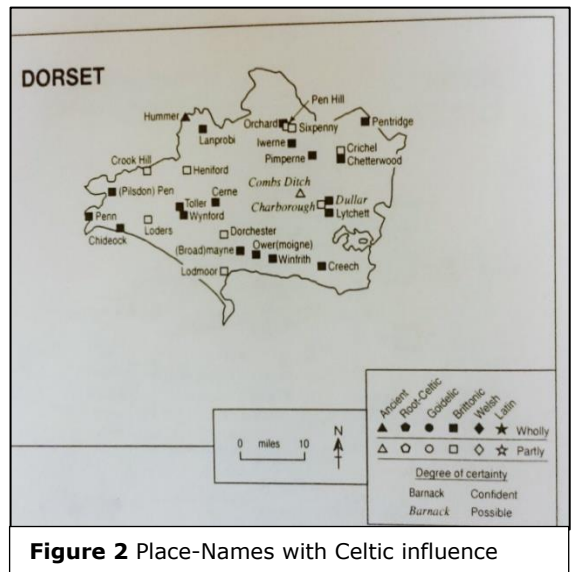
² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

'the wind-gap(s)' because British *ogrodrustr-* would have led to prWelsh plural *oirđrösou*.³ The chalk Purbeck hills funnel wind off the sea which has created wind-gaps. One can be found south of the modern village. Also, there are many nearby ridges so it would not be very effective for describing the location. Furthermore, the close proximity of this settlement with Winfrith Newburgh, which derives from Brittonic *winn* and *frud*, suggests a larger enduring colony of prWelsh speakers. *Winfrith* is an early name, in the category of Celtic names which denoted uninhabited areas, before the convention of naming places based on their connection to people.⁴

Water courses are vital for settlement so it is understandable that many place-names are based on these, and there are numerous rivers in Dorset. The county contains many Brittonic river-names, for example, Stour, Frome, and Moor. Through England the language survives mostly in river-names.⁵ Although there are no surviving Roman names, Rivet and Smith suggest that the mouth of the rivers Stour and Avon in Christchurch harbour may have been called *Alaunus*, mentioned in Ptolemy's 'Geography', because they both have tributaries called Allen.⁶ This shows the ability of place-name studies to uncover names which are far removed from the modern ones.

Winterborne Zelston is one of many parishes in Dorset named after the river Winterborne, which feeds into the River Stour. Its OE origin *winter burna* tells us that it only flows in winter (Fig. 3).⁷ This compound name structure is common: The first element is a specific descriptor and the second element is a generic noun. Another river name is the OE Turners Puddle named after the River Piddle.⁸ The change from Piddle to Puddle also occurs in the surrounding settlements, possibly altered deliberately to make the area sound more attractive. The pre-11th century name for Christchurch, Twynham, means 'place between the rivers', and refers to the town's positioning at the meeting of the major rivers Avon and Stour.⁹ Wareham provides evidence of Anglo-Saxon utilisation of the rivers Froome and Piddle because of OE *wer*, or weir. Also it was originally *ham*, land hemmed in by water or marsh, which points to Wareham's positioning closely between the rivers, and the surrounding marshland on its north eastern side (Fig. 4).¹⁰ This probably became *ham* through phonetic confusion as the last 'm' was left unstressed, and through analogy as the settlement built up to form a village. The same change seems to have occurred in Hamworthy, which is on a peninsular. This offers us an example of how small changes in spelling can change the place-name's meaning.

Kimmeridge also suggests use of the sea. *Ric* means strip of land. 'Kimme' may be derived from OE personal name 'Cýma' or OE *cýme* 'convenient', because of its easy access to the coast. *Ric*



³ Richard Coates and Andrew Breeze, *Celtic Voices, English Places* (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 2000), pp. 100-105.
⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
⁵ Kenneth Cameron, *English Place Names* (London: B T Batsford Ltd, 1996), p. 39.
⁶ A.L.F Rivet and Colin Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London: Book Club Associates, 1981), p. 247.
⁷ A. D Mills, *A Dictionary of British Place-Names* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), *Oxford Reference* <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199609086.001.0001/acref-9780199609086>> [accessed 10 January 2016].
⁸ *Ibid.*
⁹ *Ibid.*
¹⁰ English Place-Name Society, *Survey of English Place-Names* <<http://www.epns.nottingham.ac.uk>> [accessed 10 January 2016].

was later replaced by *hrycg* because of their phonetic similarity and the positioning of Kimmeridge on a steep cliff.¹¹ However, because of the many hills in the Purbecks, the manageable path to the sea was likely more significant for early settlers than the steep landscape.

Other water features are found in OE *ford* from Canford and OE *pōl* from Poole Harbour,

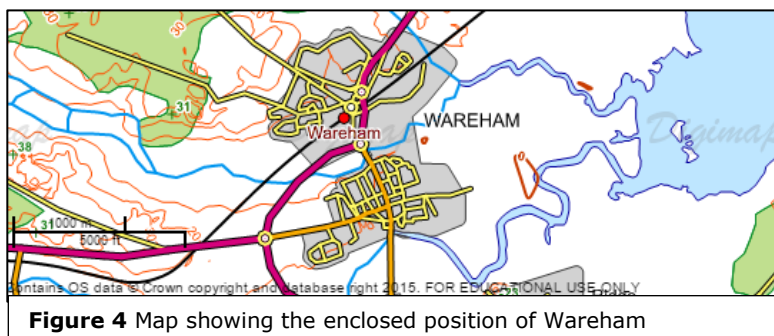


Figure 4 Map showing the enclosed position of Wareham

arguably the largest natural harbour in Europe, so central for human settlement.¹² Also Wool, previously *Welle*, denotes a spring, although not one has been identified as there are three to the south.¹³ This change in vowels could have occurred by gradual vowel shortening. The second element in Poxwell has been argued to mean 'steeply rising ground' because of its hillside position but could also refer to a spring belonging to someone of the name 'Poc'.¹⁴ Also there is a neighbouring settlement named Warmwell which suggests they may derive from the same spring.

Although Bournemouth was named *La Bournemowthe* as late as 1407 it shows the continued reliance on water ways. The area was named by fisherman and smugglers and recorded in the Christchurch cartulary.¹⁵ It was named descriptively; meaning 'mouth of the stream' and gives an example of how travellers can be responsible for naming an area. Also, it is less common for OE *burna* to be the first element of a complex name.¹⁶ The town was later founded in 1810 as a seaside tourist resort and named 'Bourne' or 'Bourne Cliffe' up to 20th century, which demonstrates how a historical name can be resurrected.¹⁷ Similarly, Highcliffe is a tourist destination, named by the common modern convention of using descriptive words for the landscape.

North of the Purbecks the place-names reflect a more wooded landscape. 'Lytchett' in Lytchett Minster and Matravers contains the Celtic *l̥ēd* + **c̥ēd*, meaning 'wood'.¹⁸ Wood-names are the smallest surviving group of the main Celtic word groups, most words surviving in hills and rivers.¹⁹ Although Bere Regis could derive from OE *bær* or *bearu* it is probably the former, a pasture in Woodland, due to the large surrounding Wareham Forest, and not the latter, which suggests only a small grove.²⁰ Near the border of modern day Hampshire and the New Forest is more wooded area. The complex names West Parley and Sopley stem from the same OE *l̥ēah* and they are neighbouring areas, whereas Bere Regis is more Western which could explain the different term for wood.²¹ However, *soppa* seemingly referring to the adjacent marshland is used in OE much later so it could be a personal name.²² Also, in nearby Morden and Moreton OE *mōr* is used to mean marshland, although in Northern England it is more likely to refer to barren upland.²³

Hill is often used in English place-names, with 28 OE words for the term, because Modern English's smaller vocabulary means translations are much less specific than they were originally.²⁴ Morden and Chaldon both use the common OE *dūn* which generally refers to land 200-500 feet above sea level, good for settlement.²⁵ The hilly landscape is also shown in Steeple and the adjacent Church Knowle which are on the side of hills, although Steeple is more in a valley which would explain the differentiating word choice. OE *cumb* in Coombe Keynes means valley, usually broad, and is very common in Dorset and South West England, suggesting a regional dialect.²⁶ However, Coombe Keynes does not match the common description of a valley with three steep sides. This is because *cumb* was so frequent in Dorset that other forms of 'valley' may have been forgotten. *Cumb* is a loan word from

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Mills, *Dictionary*.

¹⁶ Margaret Gelling and Ann Cole, *The Landscapes of Place-Names* (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 2000), p. 10.

¹⁷ Frank Henson and I.K.D. Andrews, *Bournemouth: Images of England* (Stroud: The History Press Ltd., 2004).

¹⁸ Mills, *Dictionary*.

¹⁹ Cameron, *English Place Names*, p. 39.

²⁰ Mills, *Dictionary*.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Richard Coates, *Hampshire Place-Names* (London: B T Batsford Ltd., 1989), p. 152.

²³ Cameron, *English Place Names*, p. 208.

²⁴ Gelling and Cole, *Landscapes of Place-Names*, p. xiii.

²⁵ Ibid., p. xv.

²⁶ Mills, *Dictionary*.

British 'valley' so its frequent usage could be explained by the relative propinquity to Wales.²⁷ Also, Corfe Castle and Corfe Mullen both include OE *corf*, specialised in the South West as 'the gap'.²⁸ The latter is in a clear gap in a steep Purbeck ridge, and the former is between two hills (Figs. 5 and 6).



Figure 5 Photograph from the ridge summit to the east of Corfe Castle, looking towards the western ridge

Habitative Names

From the place-names of an area we can assume a lot about the lives of the early settlers as well as how they interacted with the landscape. In this corpus there are many references to agriculture.

OE *tūn* is an often recurring word throughout England, generally meaning farmstead. It is also widespread throughout Dorset, sometimes as part of a complex name where the first section is an OE personal name, for example, Kinson. Other names have a descriptor and then *tūn*; Moreton, for the surrounding marshland; Langton Matravers, 'long' because the village is on one street almost a mile in length today; and Burton.²⁹ Although this latter name can refer to fortifications, it is more likely to mean 'secondary settlement' in reference to one of the surrounding villages, as there is no evidence of forts and the village was named later in the 18th century.³⁰

Stoke is another name for secondary farmsteads common in West Dorset and Somerset. As is often the case with frequently occurring simplex names, another word is added to differentiate it from nearby settlements. Although here it is geographical, 'East', the added name is often from a later family name who owns the estate.

The place-names also give detail about what kind of livestock were reared in the area. The names studied in this paper are mostly south of the arable chalk hills in Dorset, so because of the valleys and heaths most of the land was pastured (Fig. 7).

Swanage could equally denote a dairy farm or swannery and the neighbouring Studland tells us horses were reared there.³¹ This was recorded as *Stollant* in the Domesday Book. Many place-names were recorded differently in the document because it was written by Norman-trained writers.³² Tyneham was probably a goat's enclosure, hemmed in by the hills on either side, and the *hamm* element referencing this has lost its final 'm'.³³ Chaldon suggests calve grazing, and if we accept that Bere Regis comes from OE *bæ̆r*, as discussed earlier, there were likely swine reared there, because they are often associated with that type of Woodland pasture.³⁴

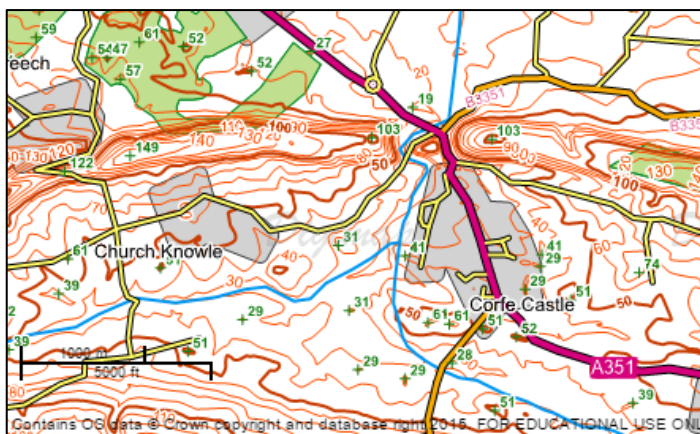


Figure 6 Map showing the positioning of Corfe Castle in a gap between two ridges

²⁷ Gelling and Cole, *Landscapes of Place-Names*, p. 107.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

²⁹ Mills, *Dictionary*.

³⁰ Gelling, *Signposts*, p. 147.

³¹ Mills, *Dictionary*.

³² Coates and Breeze, *Celtic Voices*, p. 207.

³³ Mills, *Dictionary*.

³⁴ Mills, *Dictionary*.

The 'Regis' in Bere Regis, meaning 'of the king' was added later because King John (reigning 1190- 1216) had houses there.³⁵ Although medieval written Latin is not often represented in place-names, it was used by the nobility and for administration after the Norman Conquest, which explains its emergence here. Similarly, the affix added to Corfe Castle refers to a Norman castle still standing. Another later building is mentioned in the affix of Corfe Mullen added in 1176.³⁶ The OFr



Figure 7 Above; view of the Purbeck Hills, below; remaining heathland at Canford Heath

molin indicates a mill here probably on the nearby River Stour. It is recorded in the Domesday Book as earning 20 shillings, so was a large part of the economy and defined the region enough to be added to 'Corfe' to distinguish the town from Corfe Castle.³⁷

Although Arne seems to refer to a building, derived from OE, this would be the only example of a simplex name with just *ærn*. Thus it is argued that it actually derives from OE *hær*, meaning 'heap of stones'.³⁸ Dorset has a large number of tumuli dating between 3000- 4000 years old and these would have been more pronounced before the decline of heathland. Furthermore, a Bronze Age tumulus is still noticeable on Arne Hill today (Fig. 8). The highlighting of this structure suggests it may have been a significant meeting place.

Religious infrastructure is often indicated. In my corpus churches are referenced in Lytchett Minster, Church Knowle and Christchurch. The latter changed its name from *Twynham* after the building of the Priory church around 1125.³⁹ Christchurch is an interesting example of how a place-name can be completely changed to reflect an important event.

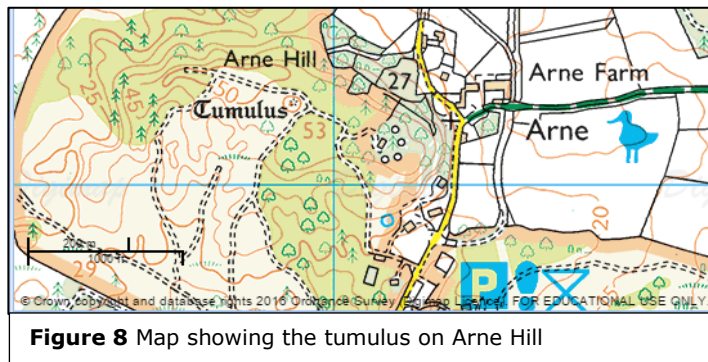


Figure 8 Map showing the tumulus on Arne Hill

Sometimes place-names can also show leisure activities. Parkstone, founded in 1326 from OE *stān* and Middle English *park*, translates to 'boundary stone' and it is assumed that this relates to a medieval hunting area in Canford Park, where a manor stood.⁴⁰

Personal Names

The use of personal names tells us historically who had control over land. They are sometimes the only surviving record of an important family. In Dorset these can be split into two main categories; OE personal names of an influential family living in the area, recorded in the Domesday Book as part of a complex name; and Norman aristocratic family names that were given the land, added as an affix. As is to be expected by its position on the south coast, my corpus has many of the latter OFr names.

Osmington includes the common OE element *-ing-*, used to easily identify a personal name because it roughly means 'associated with'. Although it would be expected that it was named after the

³⁵ EPNS, *Survey of English Place-Names*.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Mills, *Dictionary*.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Bishop of Salisbury, as many surrounding areas are, he was not consecrated until 1078 and *Osmyntone* is recorded in an Anglo-Saxon charter as early as 843.⁴¹

Bloxworth and Poxwell both contained genitive OE *-es-*. This *-kesw-* element has undergone assimilation through time so that in the 15th and 16th centuries the phonetic sound was recorded as *'x'*.⁴² Again, no other records exist of who these people were. Other OE personal names include Canford, 'Cana's ford' and Lulworth, 'Lulla's enclosure'. The former also gave his name to many places in the area.⁴³

Lytchett Matravers and Turners Puddle differ from the above because the personal name was added in the mid-13th century and both families are known. Turners Puddle was named after Henry Toner, a knight in the service of King Edward I, and a manor at Lytchett was granted to Hugh Maltravers after the Norman Conquest and the family's name was latter affixed.⁴⁴ John Mautravers held this manor and Langton Matravers in the 13th century. In the following century his family acquired the neighbouring Worth Matravers. They also held Morden.⁴⁵ The names of the towns were changed, Langton Matravers having been Langton Wallis, from the family of *le Waleys*, for two hundred years. In these settlements the manorial affix replaces a previously used *'-in Purbeck'*, demonstrating that these are just used for distinction.⁴⁶

Similarly, Coombe Keynes is derived from the prominent Keynes family who originate from North-Eastern France. The earliest member in England was William de Cahaigues who took the manor here in 1199.⁴⁷ Also, Winfrith Newburgh is named after the family of Robert de Neubourg, Chaldon Herring derives from the Harang family, and Owermoigne from the Moigne family.⁴⁸ Winterborne Zelston differs slightly from the other place-names because the manorial name was used as a prefix until the 19th century and the village is recorded as the simplex *'Seleston'* in 1428.⁴⁹ It is rare to find a modern place name which only compromises of a personal name. Most of these Norman families owned manors and land in many places across England.

Conclusion

The study of place-names brings together many disciplines, for example, history, geography, archaeology, ancestry, and linguistics. It allows us to develop a fuller understanding of change through time of a community. Without this study, details of languages, families, and lifestyles of the past would be lost to us today. Although I have only covered a small section of Dorset, and some guess-work is necessary, I have been able to uncover the historical landscape of the area, from forests in the north, to the valleys and waterways, to the south coast. I have also seen how different peoples have used and affected the area, how different regions develop, and how change in language occurs. To end, I hope my paper was able to demonstrate the descriptive quality of English place-names and how they might recover forgotten facts.

⁴¹ EPNS, *Survey of English Place-Names*.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Mills, *Dictionary*.

⁴⁴ EPNS, *Survey of English Place-Names*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

A note on illustrations

All photographs are taken by me.

Figure 1. 'Maps illustrating the position of my corpus', was produced using Map data ©2016 Google, <<http://google.co.uk/maps>> (2016) [accessed 11 January 2016]

Figure 2. 'Place-Names with Celtic influence', is adapted from: Richard Coates and Andrew Breeze, 'Celtic Voices, English Places' (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 2000)

Ordnance Survey maps are sourced from and created with: Ordnance Survey online, <<http://digimap.edina.ac.uk>> (2015) [accessed 11 January 2016]

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Appendix

All names are taken from Mills.

- Arne Dorset.** *Arne* 1268. Probably OE *ærn* 'house or building'. Alternatively '(place at) the heaps of stones or tumuli', from OE **hær* in a dative plural form **harum*.
- Bere Regis Dorset.** *Bere* 1086 (DB), *Kyngesbyre* 1264. 'Woodland pasture', or 'wood, grove', OE *bær* or *bearu*. Affix is Latin *regis* 'of the king'.
- Bloxworth Dorset.** *Blacewyrthe* 987, *Blocheshorde* 1086 (DB). 'Enclosure of a man called *Blocc'. OE pers. name + *worth*.
- Bournemouth Bmouth.** *La Bournemowthe* 1407. 'The mouth of the stream'. OE *burna* + *mūtha*.
- Burton Dorset.** A common name, usually OE *burh-tūn* 'fortified farmstead', or 'farmstead near or belonging to a stronghold or manor'.
- Canford Magna, Little Canford Poole.** *Cheneford* [sic] 1086 (DB), *Kaneford* 1195, *Lytel Canefford* 1381, *Greate Canford* 1612. 'Ford of a man called Cana'. OE pers. name + *ford*.
- Chaldon Herring or East Chaldon Dorset.** *Celvedune* 1086 (DB), *Chaluedon Hareng* 1243. 'Hill where calves graze', OE *cealf* + *dūn*. Manorial affix from the *Harang* family, here from the 12th cent.
- Christchurch Dorset.** *Christecerce* c.1125. 'Church of Christ'. OE *Crist* + *cirice*. Earlier called *Twynham*, 'place between the rivers'. OE *betwēonan* + *ēa* (dative plural *ēam*).
- Church Knowle Dorset.** *Cnolle* 1086 (DB), *Churchecnolle* 1346. OE *cnoll* 'hill-top' with the later addition of *cirice* 'church'.
- Coombe Keynes Dorset.** *Cume* 1086 (DB), *Combe Kaynes* 1299. The valley', from OE *cumb*, a common place name, especially in the South West. Manorial addition from the *de Cahaignes* family, here in the 12th cent.
- Corfe Castle Dorset.** 'The cutting, the gap or pass', from OE **corf*. *Corf* 955, *Corffe Castell* 1302. The affix refers to the Norman castle here.

- Corfe Mullen** Dorset. 'The cutting, the gap or pass', from OE **corf*. *Corf* 1086 (DB), *Corf le Mulin* 1176. The affix is from OFrench *molin* 'a mill'.
- Hamworthy** Dorset. *Hamme* 1236, *Hamworthy* 1463. OE *hamm* 'enclosure', here possibly 'peninsula', with the later addition of *worthig* 'enclosure'.
- Highcliffe** Dorset. *High Clift* [sic] 1759, earlier *Black Cliffe* 1610. Self-explanatory.
- Kimmeridge** Dorset. *Cameric* [sic] 1086 (DB), *Kimerich* 1212. 'Convenient track or strip of land, or one belonging to a man called Cȳma'. OE *cȳme* or OE pers. name + **ric*.
- Kinson** Dorset. *Chinestanestone* 1086 (DB), *Kinestaneston* 1238. 'Farmstead of a man called Cynestān'. OE pers. name + *tūn*.
- Langton Matravers** Dorset. *Langeton* 1165, *Langeton Mawtravers* 1428. A fairly common name, usually 'long farmstead or estate', OE *lang* + *tūn*. Manorial addition from the *Maustravers* family, here from the 13th cent.
- Lulworth, East & Lulworth, West** Dorset. *Lulverde* 1086 (DB). 'Enclosure of a man called Lulla'. OE pers. name + *worth*.
- Lytchett Matravers & Lytchett Minster** Dorset. *Lichet* 1086 (DB), *Lichet Maustravers* 1280, *Licheminster* 1244. 'Grey wood'. Celtic **l̥ed* + **c̥ed*. Distinguishing affixes from the *Maltravers* family, here in 1086, and from OE *mynster* 'large church'.
- Morden** Dorset. *Mordune* 1086 (DB). 'Hill in marshland', OE *mōr* + *dūn*,
- Moreton** Dorset. *Mortune* 1086 (DB). A common name, 'farmstead in moorland or marshy ground', OE *mōr* + *tūn*.
- Osmington** Dorset. *Osmingtone* 934, *Osmentone* 1086 (DB). 'Estate associated with a man called Ōsmund'. OE pers. name + *-ing-* + *tūn*.
- Owermoigne** Dorset. *Ogre* 1086 (DB), *Oure Moyngne* 1314. Probably 'the wind-gap(s)', from a Celtic (Brittonic) **oir* 'cold' + **drust* (plural **drōstow*) 'door', referring to gaps in the chalk hills which funnel winds off the sea. Manorial affix from the *Moigne* family, here in the 13th cent.
- Parkstone** Poole. *Parkeston* 1326. 'The park (boundary) stone', from OE *stān* with ME *park*, this probably referring to a medieval hunting park in CANFORD.
- Parley, West** Dorset. *Perlai* 1086 (DB). 'Wood or clearing where pears grow'. OE *peru* + *lēah*.
- Poole** Poole. *Pole* 1183. Usually '(place at) the pool or creek'. OE *pōl*.
- Poxwell** Dorset. *Poceswylle* 987, *Pocheswelle* 1086 (DB). 'Steeply rising ground of a man called *Poca', or 'spring of a man called *Poc'. OE pers. name + **swelle* or *wella*.
- Sopley** Hants. *Sopelie* 1086 (DB). Possibly 'woodland clearing of a man called *Soppa'. OE pers. name + *lēah*. Alternatively the first element may be an OE **soppa* 'marsh'.
- Steeple** Dorset. *Stiple* 1086 (DB). 'Steep place', OE *stēpel*.
- Stoke, East** Dorset. A very common name, from OE *stoc* 'outlying farmstead or hamlet, secondary settlement'.
- Studland** Dorset. *Stollant* 1086 (DB). 'Cultivated land where a herd of horses is kept'. OE *stōd* + *land*.
- Swanage** Dorset. *Swanawic* late 9th cent., *Swanwic* 1086 (DB). 'Farm of the herdsman, or farm where swans are reared'. OE *swānor swan* + *wīc*.
- Turners Puddle** Dorset. *Pidele* 1086 (DB), *Tonerespidele* 1268. 'Estate on the River Piddle held by the Toner family'. OE river-name (**pidele* 'a marsh or fen') with name of family here from 1086.
- Tyneham** Dorset. *Tigeham* 1086 (DB). Probably 'goat's enclosure'. OE **tige* (genitive *-an*) + *hamm*.
- Wareham** Dorset. *Werham* late 9th cent., *Warham* 1086 (DB). 'Homestead or river-meadow by a weir'. OE *wer*, *wær* + *hām* or *hamm*.
- Winfrith Newburgh** Dorset. *Winfrode* 1086 (DB). A Celtic river-name meaning 'white or bright stream'. Celtic **winn* + **frud*. Manorial affix from the *Newburgh* family, here from the 12th cent.
- Winterborne Zelston** Dorset. *Wintreborne* 1086 (DB), *Wynterbourne Selyston* 1350. Originally a river-name 'winter stream, i.e. stream flowing most strongly in winter', OE *winter* + *burna*. Affix means 'estate (*tūn*) of the *de Seles* family'.
- Wool** Dorset. *Welle* 1086 (DB). '(Place at) the spring or springs'. OE *wiella*.
- Worth Matravers** Dorset. *Wirde* 1086 (DB), *Worth Matravers* 1664. 'The enclosure, the enclosed settlement', OE *worth*. Manorial affix from the *Maustravers* family, here from the 14th cent.