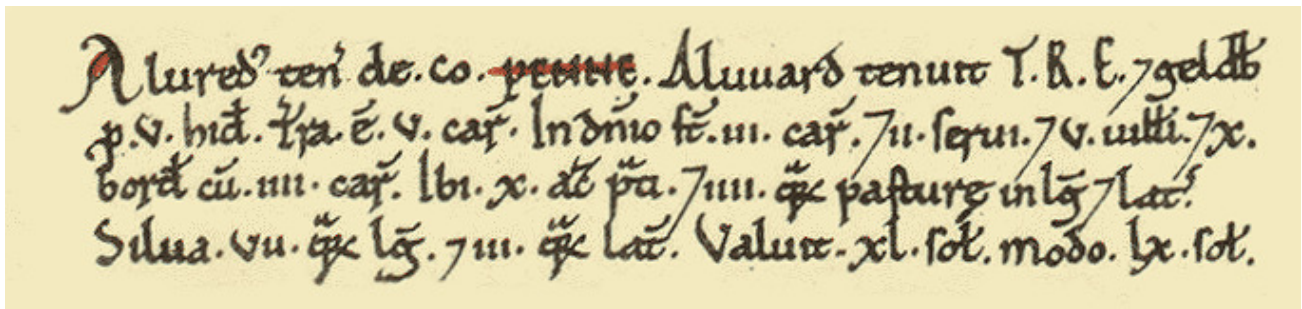


Pendomer in the Domesday Book



The Domesday Book was a record of the taxable value of every manor in England. It was made in 1086 by order of the first Norman King, William. Its value to us is largely in the way it depicts the feudal society of the age. At that time Pendomer was known as **Penne** and the relevant entry (shown above, in its original abbreviated latin) gives the following information:

- **Total tax assessed:** 5 units, one for each “hide” of land (about 120 acres, more or less depending on its productivity).
- **Value:** £3 (this at a time when the total value of all the land in England was about £75,000).
- **Households:** 5 of villeins (the superior villagers, granted about 30 acres of land); 10 of bordars (smallholders, with anything up to about 5 acres); 2 of serfs (the lowest class, with no land of their own).
- **Ploughland:** 5 ploughlands (i.e. of about 120 acres each); 3 lord's plough teams; 4 men's plough teams (2 men to a team, using up to 8 oxen to draw the plough).
- **Other resources:** Meadow 10 acres; Pasture 4 x 4 furlongs; Woodland 7 x 3 furlongs.
- **Livestock:** 2 cobs; 12 cattle; 35 pigs; 250 sheep.
- **Lord** (the person granted the lordship of the manor by the tenant-in-chief): Alfred the butler (a Norman officer in the royal household)
- **Tenant-in-chief** (the person granted the land – or “fief” - by the king): Count Robert of Mortain (King William’s half brother).

Penne is listed in the hundred of **Houndsborough** (a hundred being a group of manors worth about a hundred hides). The manors in this hundred were, in order of size, Coker, Chinnock, Hardington, Odcombe, Haselbury, Chiselborough, Perrott, Closworth, Norton, Penne and Sutton. At a later date Barwick and Chilton Cantelo were incorporated. Hundreds remained important administrative entities until the 19th century, their last function ending with the establishment of county courts in 1867, but they have never been formally abolished.