Mar./72. The Conqueror's purpose in compiling the Domesday book was for taxation purposes, to discover the possibility of increased payments. It was barely finished by the time of William's death, and was very unpopular throughout the country.

A council was held at Gloucester, the result of which was a 'great numbering of the people' or general census. The Hundred Moot was called in each district, in Sparkenhoe at Croft, and collected together were the Sheriff, the thegns, the parish priests, the reeves, the franklins, who were examined on oath, of the numbers, names and holdings of the men of their place, both as they were in King Edward's days and at that time (1086). The lands had to be described, whether ploughlands or pasture,wood or waste; the mills (both windmills and water mills) and fisheries were recorded and each farmer's stock of oxen, cows, sheep or swine. The entire record included all England, except London and the four Northern Counties. It was preserved at Winchester and known as the Winchester Roll or Domesday Book. It was written in Latin but translations have been made. The original copy is still extant, showing what a wonderful work the French speaking scribes made with English names and places. It can be seen in the Public Records office in London. It is one of the most interesting records in existence, showing the exceeding antiquity of our existing divisions of townships, parishes and estates and in some cases of the families inhabiting them.

Apr/72. A further extract from Domesday concerning Newbold states: "Two ploughlands in Newbold,part of the lands of Hugo de Grentismaisnell were held at the general survey by Huard. The land was equal to two ploughs, and one was in the demesne, with two bordars."

By carefully considering the two entries we have an interesting picture of life in Newbold one thousand years ago. A ploughland - 120 acres, therefore 480 acres approximately were under plough. In addition there would have been meadow and grazing land, surrounded by rough uncultivated comman land, known as heath or waste, the latter word meaning wild or untilled not useless.

Before the conquest the land at Brocardescote and near was in the Queen's fee and we are told that this land was equal to 3 ploughs and 3 villians had one plough each; while the other part i.e. at Newbold, was equal to 2 ploughs and one in the demesne with two bordars,making 6 ploughs altogether A villian was a farmer and a bordar, a much lesser person possibly a cottager who had his cot and holding by working the demesne, or the lord's land. The name of the Sa xon Lord from whom the land was confiscated is not stated.

Both areas were given to Hugo de Grentismaisnell, a mighty baron and intimate friend of the Conqueror. He sublet to HarHuardus. It is evident that in this locality there was no opposition to William as the value of the land increased from 5/- in the time of King Edward to 20/- at the time of the Domesday survey, this showing that no burning or devastation had taken place, sush as there was in Yorkshire and Staffordshire.

May/72 After the Conquest Willaim shared out the land of the defeated English to his victorious barons; each parcel of land being known as a manor. To Hugh de Grantmesnil went the greatest share of the spoil in Leicestershire; sixty-seven townships scattered in different parts of the county, some of which were Newbold, Bosworth, Barlestone, Cadeby, Naneby, Kirkby etc. Another part of Bosworth was given to Robert Beaumont, Earl of Mellent, or Meulan.

De Grantmesnil restored Leicester Castle and the Church of St. Mary de Castro. He sublet the land at Newbold; at Cadeby to Ivo, at Barlestone to Ernald and Ralph; at Bosworth to Hugh .

Grantmesnil - a town in Normandy from which Hugh came. Hugh de Grantmesnil also built castles at Groby, Whitwick and Earl Shilton.

Next to the king in rank came the barons and their vassals, those in whom the barons put in charge of their estates. Next came the tenant farmer who rented lands from their lords. They were the conquered English land Owners. Next came the villeins. These were farmers who were tied to vill or township and held their lands by tilling the lord's land or reaping the harvest as well as grinding the corn. There were also cottars and bordars who had very small holdings. The lowest classes were the slaves or bondmen mainly the descendants of ancient conquered races. They wore round their necks an iron collar with their owner's name. They could be bought or sold ina market like cattle, but theirn owners were not allowed to kill them.

In Domesday no bondmen are recorded for Newbold, Barlestone or Cadeby. At Bosworth four are recorded, two in each manor. At Thornton there is still a farm called "Bondman Hays" and a field at Desford was known as "Bondman Piece".