

## CHAPTER 1

### ORIGINS?

Who were the Sodens? Where did they come from? What were their occupations and social position? How was their name derived and were there several different families of similar name?

None of these questions is easy to answer until the fourteenth century; before then there are contradictory indications and little certainty. The name is first recorded in the Pipe Rolls for Yorkshire between 1164 and 1168, when Alanus Solden (Alan Soden) was fined one mark for encroaching on his neighbour's land. No further references occur until 1242, when Hugonis Sodan (Hugh Soden) is recorded as tenant-in-chief of St. Augustine's abbey at Canterbury and holding several military fiefs in Kent. Hugh's son Stephen was a military knight and marshal of the royal household of Henry III,; he sided at the battle of Evesham in 1265 with Simon de Montford against the king, as a result of which all his lands were confiscated, though they were later restored to his son Hugh. In 1300 these Kentish Sodens are recorded in the Inquisitions Post Mortem as tenants-in-chief of the king, holding manors in the county and the guardianship of Dover castle, but after this date they can no longer be traced.

There are a number of fourteenth century records relating to Sodens in the West of England. In 1326 someone of that name (or Southedene) held the manor of Lympstone in Devon, and in 1364