

Philip Soiden was keeper of the port of Weymouth. In the early fifteenth century Sir Percival Souden was lord of the manors of Fitelton and Combe at Enford, Wiltshire.

A Robert le Sowden is recorded in the Hundred Roll fiscal enquiry of 1274-5 as holding half a virgate of land in Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire; Robert could have been either a forebear or a relative of the Sibford Gower family.

These Sodens of Yorkshire, London, the home counties, and the West of England, have been briefly mentioned to show that there must have been several widely-scattered families bearing the same name, though probably unrelated, in the period from seventy-five years after the Conquest - and perhaps before then - to the beginning of the fifteenth century. From the research so far undertaken none of them seem to have any direct connection with the Sodens of Sibford Gower in Oxfordshire whose history is described in later chapters; further details from the early records about these families will be found in Appendix I.

The study of etymology shows that surnames can often indicate a family's early occupation or the place or locality from which they have derived their name. Hereditary surnames were first introduced into England by some of William the Conqueror's followers, but the custom of applying such names to all of a man's children did not begin until late in the twelfth century. Can we then discover any meaning from the name variously spelt