

**THE ENGLISH VILLAGE, THE  
ORIGIN AND DECAY OF  
ITS COMMUNITY; AN  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL  
INTERPRETATION**

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The English village, the origin and decay of its community; an anthropological interpretation by  
Harold Peake

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**HAROLD PEAKE**

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# THE ENGLISH VILLAGE

THE ORIGIN AND DECAY OF  
ITS COMMUNITY

An Anthropological Interpretation

BY

HAROLD PEAKE, F.S.A.

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## PREFACE

THE material contained in the following pages formed the substance of a course of lectures delivered in Newbury in the spring of 1918, at the request of the Newbury Trades and Labour Council. In the first eight chapters an attempt has been made to elucidate the origin of the Village Community by utilising the recent results of anthropological and archæological research. In this the author has found himself in substantial agreement with the suggestions put forward by the late Sir Laurence Gomme.

The next four chapters contain little that is new save the attempt to show that the evolution of the community was a struggle between two racial ideals. The author has accepted the conclusions of Seebohm, Maitland and Vinogradoff, so far as these authorities are in agreement, and where they differ he has usually followed the last named. He has, however, purposely avoided dealing with exceptional cases, and has confined himself, as far as possible to a plain statement of the case as it appears in the south and east of England, especially in Wessex. For obvious reasons local instances alone were cited in these lectures, and the author has decided to let these stand, as there is some advantage in tracing successive stages of development within a single region.

The last portion of the book is an attempt to trace the final struggles of the dying community, and to inquire what hope there may be for a revival of the community spirit in a form more in consonance with modern conditions.

The lectures were repeated in their present form under the auspices of the Sociological Society, at Leplay House in the autumn of 1921.

The Author has to thank Mr. Paul Waterhouse, P.R.I.B.A., for kindly permitting him to reproduce the map of Yattendon which forms Figure IX.

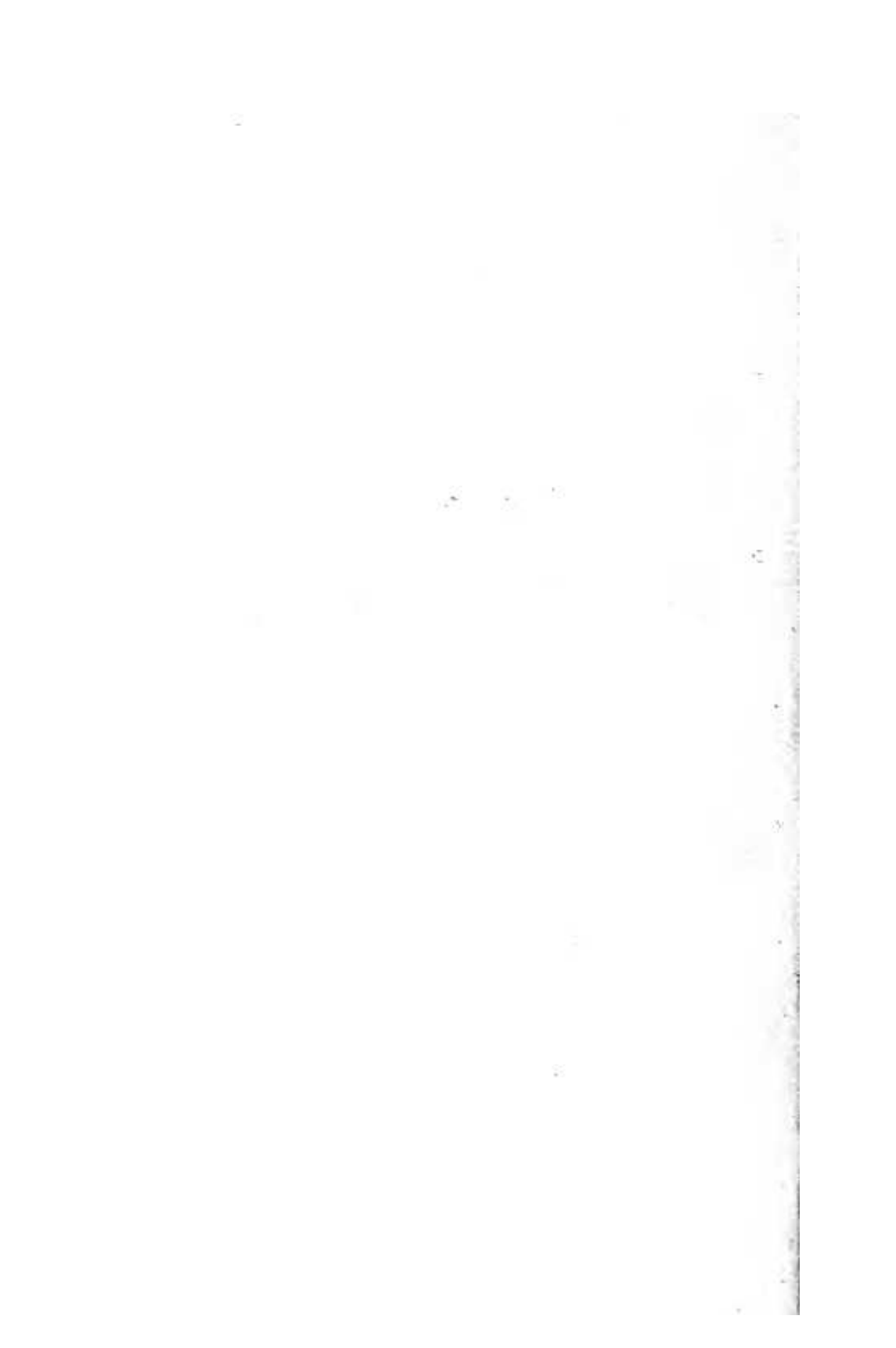
HAROLD PEAKE

*March, 1922*

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