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Notes on Part of the County Boundary between Somerset and Devon.

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THE point at which the county of Somerset touches Devonshire on the extreme north-east is a place called Keats' Mills, a tenement on the eastern bank of the small river Yarty, at a natural ford over the stream, and just below a fork where the two principal branches or feeders of the stream unite. Here the north-eastern angle of Yarcombe parish, in Devon, is met by the three Somerset parishes of Combe St. Nicholas, Buckland St. Mary, and Otterford. Of the two branches, the smaller rises immediately under the south-west angle of Neroche Castle, flowing south through the parish of Buckland. The larger rivulet, coming down from a point in the Blackdown Hills further west, divides Buckland St. Mary from Otterford.

The Yarty river, still flowing south, falls into the Devonshire Axe below Axminster. Its ancient name, Æarta, being inflected in the genitive to Æartan, gave its name to the valley which the stream has helped to form—Æartancumb. This, in Domesday, appears as Herticome, was afterwards varied to Yerticombe, and is now Yarcombe.

From Keats' Mills the county boundary runs nearly due west over Brown Down, between Otterford on the north and Yarcombe on the south, till it reaches a ford on another river, the Otter, at a point where the south-western angle of Otterford parish, in Somerset, is bounded on the south, south-west, and west by the Devonshire parishes of Yarcombe, Upottery, and Church Stanton. The Otter rises at a very conspicuous spring head, near the road between Otterford Church and Holmen Clavil,[1] and flowing in a southerly and south-westerly course, passes Honiton and falls into the sea at Ottermouth, having given its name to a large number of places. These appear in Domesday as Otrit,[2] or Otri.

The boundary having touched the Otter follows it to its source. It then strikes north-west, and traversing one of the lower levels of the Blackdowns, crosses a third river called the Culm. This stream first appears within a few yards of Holmen Clavil, and flowing also in a south-westerly direction, but more westerly than the Otter, falls into the Exe above Exeter. This also gives its name to a large family of manors —Culm David, Culmstock, Cullompton, Columb John, etc.

Having crossed this rivulet, the boundary continues its north-west course to a point in the Blackdowns where there is a natural gap in the line of hill, and where the barrier is most easily crossed; hence, where several roads meet, where the parishes of Pitminster and West Buckland in Somerset join Church Stanton and Clayhidon in Devon, and where a gallows *(furcæ)* once stood, whence its name of Forches Corner.

It is to this portion of the county boundary, from Keats' Mills to Forches Corner, with its three points at each of which four parishes meet, that attention is invited in this paper.

(1). The words "Holmen Clavil" are said to signify a shelf or mantel-piece of holly, and in the public house at Holmen Clavil, the wall above the kitchen fire-place is supported by a beam, said to be of holly, about 8 feet long and 6 inches square, bonded into the walls on either side.

(2). The local pronunciation of Otter in Devon is Auter. The place spelt Fen-Ottery is pronounced Ven autrey.

The first thing that strikes us in observing the line of the boundary is that it cuts off, so to speak, the heads of the three Devon streams—the Yarty, Otter, and Culm, and we wonder why it does this; why it does not here follow the watershed of the hills as it does elsewhere. The reason is probably this. We have the best reasons, short of direct statement, for believing that when the Saxons first invaded this part of the country, the decisive battle in the year 709, in which Ine, King of Wessex, defeated Geraint, King of Dyfnaint (Domnonia), was fought on the crest of these hills. It was only after an obstinate fight, in which one of Ine's ealdormen, Sigbald or Higebald, was slain, that Geraint and his followers "turned their faces from the English and fled, leaving their arms and spoils to the pursuers."[3] Not for half a century or more was any further attempt at conquest made in this direction. A barrier, we may conclude, in the shape of a rampart and foss, was thrown up to mark the new limits of England and Wales for the time being, and as the fortress of Neroche would be sure to fall into the hands of the conquerors, the result would naturally be to force the boundary line down south to the fords over the Yarty, Otter, and Culm, where we find it now lying.

So matters remained for about 50 or 60 years, at the end of which period, in about 760 or 770, Dyfnaint was subdued and colonized by Saxons entering the district most probably along the line of the Devonshire Axe.[4] By this time the English

(3). Hen. Hunt. *Monumenta Historica Britannica*, 724 B. It should be noted that the Saxon Chronicle says "And in the same year" Sigbald was slain.

(4). Earlier colonies must have preceded the general conquest of Devonshire, if a Saxon thane was really in residence at Crediton, when Winfrith is reputed to have been born there in about A.D. 680. It is worth observing that Winfrith's father is represented by the biographer of Boniface as trying to dissuade the youth from his religious studies and meditations by offering to give him a share or partnership in his property, and to make him his heir (ut temporaneo eum transitoriæ hereditatis subiungeret lucro et, sese quandoque defuncto, suæ terrenæ facultatis custodem immo etiam heredem relinqueret; Jaffè, p. 432). Unless this is merely the biographer's rhetoric, it follows that the Saxon thegn felt as secure in the hereditary possession of his property at Crediton, as if he had been resident in Hampshire or Wiltshire.

and Welsh boundary had become so far fixed in the habits of the settlers, that it became adopted as the dividing line between the Sumorsætas and the Defnas, as the new settlers from the Yarty to the Tamar were called. In those parts of the hill country of the Blackdowns, which are still in their wild state, the old dyke, with its ditch always to the north, shewing it to have been a barrier raised by the south against a northern enemy, is still to be observed.[5]

This portion of the line derives importance from the fact that for a time part of it, and subsequently the whole of it, formed the southern limit of the Bishop of Winchester's great manor of Taunton Dean, which here came down to the extremity of the county.

The first benefactor to the Church of Winchester in Somerset, is said to have been Frithogyth, queen of Æthelheard, who succeeded Ine upon his abdication and departure for Rome in 726. This statement is repeatedly made in the Winchester charters, not only in those suspected to be spurious, but, by way of recital, in others which are reputed genuine, and hence may be taken as an established fact. Neither the date, nor the exact locality, nor the extent of Queen Frithogyth's grant, is stated; all that is said is that she gave land (rus), or a tract of land (spacium telluris) in Taunton, in satisfaction of a vow for having escaped some imminent peril.

Æthelheard, in whose reign this took place, was the brother or kinsman of Æthelburh, the wife of Ine, and Ine, as we know, whilst he did not neglect Winchester,[6] was a greater benefactor to Glastonbury, and he founded the see of Sherborne. Queen Frithogyth's bounty, however, did not flow in the same channels. In the year 737 she went on a pilgrimage

(5). This dyke, even where least worn down and ruined by neglect, cannot compare in importance with the Wansdyke, or the Bokerly and Vern ditches of Dorset. Seemingly it could never have been used in warfare, and was only meant as a line of demarcation.

(6). He bestowed on Winchester 30 hides at Yaverland and 50 at Brading in Wight.

to Rome, and in the same year Forthere, the second Bishop of Sherborne, made a like journey, probably as her confessor and attendant. But it was to Winchester that her devotional attachment remained constant. In the year of her departure, Æthelheard, at her request, and in fulfilment of the same vow, by a deed to which she and the Bishop were both signatories, is said to have made a further grant of land to the church of the Apostles at Winchester.[7] The lands were in two localities, neither of them in Somerset. Four manses were granted for the pasturing of cattle at a place called Wiðiglea, which Kemble has identified with Widley, near Havant in Hampshire; and three manses at Cearn, for the manufacture of salt. Cearn has been supposed to be Carhampton, but Mr. F. H. Dickinson has pointed out that it was probably Charmouth, Dorset, and the suggestion is fully borne out by a comparison of the boundaries of Cearn with those of part of Charmouth in a fourteenth-century deed.[8]

This state of things continued for a century and nineteen years. Winchester enjoyed Queen Frithogyth's gift of land, wherever it was, but possessed nothing else that we know of in the vale of Taunton. Meanwhile great changes had taken place. Devonshire, as above observed, had been added to the list of English counties; the Danish invasions were increasing in number and violence; and the consolidating power of Ecgberht had arisen, and was in the hands of his son, Æthelwulf. In the reign of this king came a vast augmentation of the Winton estate in Somerset. Æthelwulf, in his

(7). Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus*, *MII. (v. 44). The gift is stated to have been confirmed by Æthelstan, two centuries later, in 938; Ib. *CCCLXXIV. (ii. 209, iii. 412. Both deeds, however, are marked as questionable, and in 956 and 961 we find successive grants of part of the same lands, namely those at Wiðiglea, to Bishops of Winchester, Ælfwold (Æthelwold), and Cenwulf, as new and original gifts. These latter Kemble admits to be genuine; Nos. MCLXXXVI. (v. 351), and CCCCLXXXVIII. (ii. 375, iii. 457).

(8). Printed in Oliver, *Monasticon*, p. 352. The Abbot of Ford, to whom Charmouth belonged, was minded, in about the year 1319, to turn part of his manor into a borough, but the design was never carried out.

youth, being as the historian[9] states, of gentle and tractable disposition, had been brought up under the care of an eminent prelate, Alhstan, of Sherborne. Afterwards he was placed by his father under the tutorship of the more famed Swithun at Winchester, and was actually, it is said, a sub-deacon[10] of that church when he was called upon to succeed to the throne. After this it is not surprising that Swithun should have been raised by his former pupil to the bishopric, nor that the King preserved his attachment to the scenes of his early days. His well-known gift of one-tenth of his lands to the church will be remembered. The great cession of Taunton to Winchester is represented as being part of this gift. Copies of two deeds are preserved, both in the year 854. These copies are marked as doubtful,[11] but the transaction is authentic, being recited in subsequent documents to which no suspicion attaches. By the former, eight manors at Ruishton and eight at Stoke-at-Orchard,[12] that is, Stoke St. Mary, were conveyed; and by the latter[13] as many as one hundred and thirty-three manors in Taunton Dean, and ten more at Brendon were conferred, by Æthelwulf, upon the church at Winchester.

(9). Malmsbury, *De Pont.* ii. 79.

(10). Ib. ii. 75.

(11). It is often difficult to guess the degree of infirmity intended to be noted by Kemble's famous mark. His words are "The charters which are either ascertained forgeries, or which from any cause appear to me liable to suspicion, are marked with an asterisk." (C. D. i. Intr. p. cxv.) In this instance, however, we have a clue. The date of the deeds being 854, the indiction is given as i., whereas it ought to be ii. (Saxons in England, ii. 486). Canon Stubbs declares the Winton cartulary, from which all these deeds are cited, to be "of the lowest possible character"; *Councils*, iii. 368.

(12). K. C. D. *MLI. (v. 99). Æthelwulf purports to make this grant and also the text, by the counsel of Bishop Ealhstan, and of his spiritual father (altor) Swithun, Bishop of the Church of Winchester, "ubi nutritus a pueritiâ fueram." He also makes them "tocius regni michi a deo collati decimans rura." They were part, in fact, of that gift of the tenth of the King's lands in Wessex, which has been so often discussed.

(13). K. C. D. *MLII. (v. 101); confirmed by Eadred in 947 (Ib. MCLVII., v. 307); and again by Eadgar in an undated instrument (Ib. DC., iii. 142). To neither of the two latter has exception been taken.

This second grant includes the subject of the former, namely, the land at Ruishton and Stoke.[14]

Of the above one hundred and thirty-three manors, which lie as it were in a ring fence, the boundaries are given. The text is Latin, shewing itself to be a translation of an earlier English original. The area thus marked out nearly corresponds to twenty-four modern parishes—Taunton St. Mary, Taunton St. James, Ruishton, Stoke, Orchard Portman, Corfe, Otterford, Anger's Leigh, Trull, Wilton, Bishops Hull, and thirteen more, with which we are not at present concerned, on the north side of the Tone. Pitminster, for the present, was not included. These twenty-four, with the after acquired Pitminster, and the outlying two, Withiel Flory, near Brendon Hill, and Rimpton, towards the east of the county, make up the twenty-seven parishes enumerated by Toulmin.

As Otterford is a border parish, it follows that part of this long Latin boundary is coincident, for a small part of its course, with the county boundary. Leaving the Tone, or Tán as it was then called, at the point where Bath Brook falls into it, the line skirts the eastern side of Stoke St. Mary, Orchard Portman, Corfe, and Otterford. The valley by which it reaches Keats' Mills, being that of the western branch of the Yarty above-mentioned, is called Withycomb. The point at which Devon is first touched is Æartancumb's ford (9).[15] From this point the description is as follows:—

"Hinc per riuuli decursum ad uadum quod Æartancumbes

(14). From this early mention of Ruishton and Stoke St. Mary, we are led to form a conjecture as to the locality of Queen Frithogyth's original grant. Amongst the five "hundreds" of Taunton Dean, was one called Holway, which included portions of the parishes of Ruishton, Taunton St. Mary, Stoke, Wilton, and perhaps others. Holway itself, which gave name to the hundred, is in Taunton St. Mary. See a paper on the Customs of Taunton in the *Proceedings* of 1872, by the Rev. Wm. Arthur Jones (xviii. 82), and Toulmin, p. 46. Probability points to Holway as being the earliest of the possessions of Winchester in this valley. The hill of Holway was probably at that date much more raised above the valley than it is now. All the hills in this vale have been lowered, from the joint effects of denudation and alluvial deposit. Pilgrimages were probably made to a cross, crucifix, or chapel, on Holway Hill.

(15). The figures in brackets, 9 to 14, are stations in the long Latin boundary of the one hundred and thirty-three manors above-mentioned, in the second deed of 854. They will be found marked in Map No. I, below.

ford nominatur; hinc ad latum fossatum; hinc tendit ad occidentalem plagam in aquiloni parte nemoris quod Duddincg bearuðu; hinc a lato quodam fossato ad uadum quod Oteriford nominatur; hinc contra riuulum usque ad caput fontis; hinc ad aquilonalem plagam usque in Wiðigcumb."

In English:—

Hence by the downflow of the rivulet to the ford called Æartancumbes ford (9);

Hence to the broad ditch (10);

Hence it extends towards the west along the northern part of the wood called Dudding grove (11);

Hence by a certain broad ditch to a ford called Oteriford (12);

Hence up the stream to the spring head (13);

Hence towards the north as far as to Withycomb (14).

After the lapse of more than ten centuries these stations are still recognizable.

Æartancumbes ford (9) is the ford over the Yarty abovementioned, near Keats' Mills; the broad ditch (10) is the ancient barrier thrown up by the West Welsh, of which we have spoken; the Dudding bearuðu[16] (11), or wood called Dudding, was a grove, perhaps a swine pasture, in Yarcombe, in which there existed centuries later,[17] and probably also in 854, certain rights of common. The second "broad ditch" (12) is a little ravine,[18] formed by a rivulet flowing westward from Brown Down to the Otter, near a tenement called Knacker's Knowle. At the point where this

(16). Bearuðu is of singular form. Kemble (C.D. v. 102) prints bearuwu, but it is clearly bearuðu in the original (Cod. Wint. f. 57*b*). The word appears to be some form of bearu (gen. bearwes), a grove; but, if so, there must be some peculiar qualification attached to the term. Perhaps it was a common wood to which the tenants of the manor had a right to resort for their botes—house-bote, plough-bote, &c., as well as for pannage for swine.

(17). See entries in the *Cartulary of Otterton Priory*, printed by Dr. Oliver, *Mon.*, p. 259a; *Trans. Devon Assoc.* (1880), xii. 464, 473.

(18). Throughout this part of Somerset and the adjoining counties, wherever a layer of green sand caps the hills, the valleys consisting of marl or lias, and a spring rises in the green sand, it always cuts down the soil to a depth wholly out of proportion to the size of the rivulet. These miniature ravines are called either by the English name of "cleaves" (cliffs), or by the French name "goyles" (gueules).

rivulet falls into the Otter is the ford now (*i. e.* in 854) called Oteriford, from which Otterford parish takes its name, and where the four parishes meet as above-mentioned. From this ford the line went up the Otter to its source (13), and then struck northward to another Withycomb, which is in fact the shallow depression in which the Culm river first appears. Here, at a point now marked by the 6th mile distance on the old disused Taunton and Honiton road, the Latin boundary of 854 leaves the county boundary on its way northwards back to the Tán.

Pitminster not having been included in the grant of 854, we have next to consider how and when this important addition was made to the episcopal estate. During the 84 years which elapsed after Æthelwulf's grant, great developments again took place. The bishop's sees of Ramsbury, Wells, and Crediton were founded, and to the Bishop of Wells[19] was booked, or assigned by charter out of the folc land of the district, the parish now known as Bishop's, or West Buckland. At the end of the period, in 938, sixteen hides of land at Pipingmynstre were granted by Æthelstan to a thane named Ælpheah.[20] Upon the origin of "Piping" we forbear to speculate; the "minster" shows that at the spot where the church now stands, there existed a residence for one or more secular priests, who from that point, as a centre, went about visiting the sick and doing duty, from time to time, at the neighbouring crosses and chapels. The grant was confirmed, three years later, in 941, by Eadmund the Elder, to the same grantee.[21] The boundaries in these two grants are identical, and as Pitminster is also a border parish, it follows that a portion of this line also is coincident with that of the county. A third grant of Pipmynstre, this time to the apostles, Peter and Paul, in other words, to the old monastery, at Winchester, by Eadweard the Confessor, occurs in 1044.[22] Now, at any

(19). Three bishops occupied the See before 938—Æthelm, Wulfhelm, and Ælpheah.

(20). K. C. D., MCXVII., v. 231.

(21). K. C. D., MCXL., v. 271. (22). K. C. D., DCCLXXIV., iv. 88.

rate, if not before,[23] this extensive and fertile tract of country was finally secured. The quantity of land granted by King Eadweard was not sixteen, as before, but only fifteen hides. According to the boundaries, however, the area was the same in 1044 as in 938 and 941. This leads to the idea that on the occasion of Æthelred's assessment for the Danegelt, the hidage was reduced. At Domesday it was fifteen hides.

The two sets of boundaries are made from independent surveys, but correspond very fairly. The older one begins at a point just above Burnworthy, to the east of Forches Corner, and goes, first westward, then northward, eastward, southward, and again westward, all round the parish. The later one begins at Forches Corner itself, and follows the same course. The stations upon and near the county boundary may be thus compared:—

Boundary of 938 and 941.	*Boundary of 1044.*
Along Withyslade to Henna thorne (20);[24]	From Piples barrow to Withycomb's head (20);
Thence west along the old dike (21); then some while along the dike (22);	From Withycomb's head west straight on to the red ditch (21);
Then north over Withycomb (23); then east to Fearrescumb's head (24) (1); from Fearrescumb's head west along the highway till it reaches the eastern oak woods (2);	From the red ditch north straight on to the eastern oak woods (22);
Then north along the right of the western oak woods to the Bishop's boundary on Bennancumb (3).	From the oak woods west along the highway to the hoar apple tree (23); from the apple tree back to Binnacumb's brook (24).

(23). According to one tradition, Queen Emma Ælfgifu (Ann. Winton, *New Monasticon*, i. 206), according to another her son, Harthacnut (Leland, Coll. i. 614), was the first to bestow Pippeminstre along with Westwood, Wilts, upon the church at Winchester; the explanation given in the Ann. Winton being that the Queen made the grant out of her morning-gift, and that her son confirmed it in perpetuity. Queen Emma Ælfgifu was one of the signatories to Eadweard's charter of 1044. The spelling of Pitminster in Domesday, namely, Pinpeministra, seems to shew that the old pronunciation, "Pipingminster," was preserved to that date.

(24). These figures in brackets will be found in Map No. II, below.

Piplesbarrow (otherwise in the same document called Pidlesbarrow), is a barrow which stood on a hill, once called Ringwold's Hill, at the head of the rivulet which flows down past Pitminster church. Withycomb, or Withyslade, is the source of the Culm River, already adverted to. Fearrescomb's Head is the point from which the water runs to Strawbridge's Farm. The eastern oak woods seem to have been south-east, the western oak woods north-east, of Forches Corner. Bennan or Binnacumb's Brook, is the rivulet, of which two branches, each bearing the same name, bounded Pitminster and Anger's Leigh respectively, on the west; and the Bishop's boundaries are the boundaries of West Buckland.

Three centuries after the Conquest, the subject again comes into prominence, in the shape of a patent of the 9th year of King Richard II (4th Feb., 1386), reciting an earlier patent of King Edward III (1st July, 1367), nineteen years before. At the date of this earlier patent, in 1367, William of Wykeham had been elected Bishop of Winchester, and appointed Lord High Chancellor. Shortly after the same date he was confirmed as Chancellor, and consecrated as Bishop. He was still Bishop in 1386, at the date of the later patent.

This latter instrument, King Richard's patent, is an exemplification, at the request of the Bishop of Winchester, of the "record and process" (a technical term, which we will hereafter call "the record") of a perambulation of the boundary between Taunton, in the county of Somerset, and Churchstanton (there called Cheristanton), in the county of Devon, already made in 1368, as a result of the patent of Edward, dated 1367. The use of the name "Tanton" in this document is very remarkable. No mention is made either of Otterford or of Pitminster: the two parishes (both of which at this period belonged to Winchester) are merged in the one general designation of "Tanton."

The patent of Richard sets out the record of the former patent in full. That earlier patent of Edward was addressed to

nine persons: the Abbot of Glastonbury, Hugh de Courtenay, Earl of Devon, William of Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, Guy de Briene, William of Wychyngham, John Delues, William of Botreaux, John of Wylyngton, and Edmund of Chelreye. The patent of Edward states that various dissentions and disputes had arisen between the men of the two counties, about lands and tenements in the neighbourhood of the boundary—the metes and bounds having in several places disappeared, and that great evils and grievances had thereby arisen, and were likely to arise in future. In order to avoid such evils, and to restore peace and tranquillity, the King had appointed the above nine persons, and any eight, seven, six, five, four, or three of them, to be justiciars, to make a perambulation from the parish of Buckland St. Mary to the parish of Buckland Bishop, and to fix metes and bounds, and do all other things necessary and expedient in the matter. It states, moreover, that the King had directed the sheriffs of either county to make proclamation, desiring all persons concerned to meet the justiciars on a certain day at a given place, and to summon before them a number of men, either of civil or military rank, by whose assistance the perambulation might be better made, and the truth of the matter ascertained.

The record then sets out the precept, founded on the patent, addressed to the Sheriff of Somerset, requiring him to summon before the justiciars at Buckland St. Mary, on the 7th of August, 1367, twenty-four persons of the view of Buckland St. Mary, Bishop's Buckland, and Taunton, for the purposes above mentioned; and a similar precept to the Sheriff of Devon, requiring him to summon before the justiciars at Yarcombe, on the same 7th of August, 1367, twenty-four persons of the view of Yarcombe, Hidon, and Churchstanton, for the like purposes.

It then states the returns made by the sheriffs to the precepts. The writ to the Sheriff of Somerset is set out in full, and then the record goes on to state that John Langelond,

Sheriff of Somerset, had made return that he had made proclamation in the towns of Bridgwater, Taunton, Wellington, Milverton, Wiveliscombe, Wells, Ashill, Ilminster, Chard, and other places; and, moreover, had returned a panel of jurors. Then follows the writ in similar terms, addressed to the Sheriff of Devon, and then the return of Richard Brenkescombe as such sheriff, stating that he had made proclamation in Exeter, Barnstaple, Crediton, Totnes, and other places, and, moreover, had returned a panel.

The record next states that the justiciars themselves had made proclamation, calling upon all persons whom it might concern, to attend and give evidence.

Lastly, it sets forth the perambulation itself, made in the presence of the communities of Buckland St. Mary, Buckland Bishop, Taunton, and the adjoining villages in Somerset, and of Yarcombe, Hidon, Churchstanton, and other villages in Devon; and upon the oath of twelve men of the county of Somerset, and twelve of Devon. The Somerset jurors were, Sir Richard de Acton, Knight; Sir John Ralegh, Sir Hugh Durburgh, Sir John Beauchamp, Sir Edmund Cheyne, Sir Edward de Clyuedon, Matthew de Clyuedon, John de la Mare, Walter Guphegh, John Panes, William Forde, and Henry Forde. The Devonshire jurors were, Sir John Ferers, Sir Walter Bluet, Sir John Fitz-Payn, Sir Robert Cornu, John Dabernon, Richard Chuselden, John Waskham, William Stile, James Vautord, William Luscote, John Speke of Braunford, and Richard Beaumond.

These jurors said that the metes and bounds between the said counties of Somerset and Devon, from Buckland St. Mary towards the east, and so descending to Buckland Bishop, towards the west, begin at Yertyngebregge (Yarty Bridge), between Buckland St. Mary and Yarcombe, and are as follows.

Then follows a series of stations, which may be reckoned as thirty-five in number (as marked in Map No. I):—

At the

(1) Channel of the stream below Yertyngebrygge,

Along a ditch towards the west, straight to

(2) Well, lately filled up with stones;

So ascending by the said ditch straight to a

(3) Small fountain, freely gushing (having rocks on the northern side of the water);

So ascending towards the west to the

(4) Mere weye;

Thence straight between a certain oak and a holly bush, as far as to a

(5) Dry oak at the eastern head of the mere;

By the middle of the mere to a

(6) Well, newly made, on the south side of Brodok;

Thence to a

(7) Well, newly made, on the south side of Grosweye;

So ascending straight to the

(8) Head of Grosweye, in the Wodeslade at Landshoreweyesend;

So ascending on the south side of Landshoreweye, as far as to the

(9) Head of a lane;

So by the middle of the same lane, to the

(10) South side of Putland (where the road branches into two, and where a landmark has been made in the shape of a well);

Thence ascending straight to the west, by Lansehoresweye, as far as to

(11) Crosweyheued;

Thence as the ditch proceeds by Lansehoresweye to

(12) Narwecombe;

Thence by the same ditch and Lansehoresweye, towards the west, straight to the

(13) Land of John de Beauchamp, called Mountery;

Thence descending as the path of the Lansehore-weye leads, as far as to

(14) Suthchurchampford;

Thence ascending towards the north by the ancient watercourse on the

(15) South side of Otriford mill;

Thence by the water-course called Oldestrem, towards the west, as far as to

(16) Wykepol;

Thence ascending towards the north, by Ewilm-lake, to the spring called

(17) Ewilme;

Thence to a

(18) Corner of a croft of the Prior of Taunton;

Thence by the middle of the way, beside the ditch of the croft which leads to

(19) Payneshurne, towards the north;

Thence descending by the Saltresweye to the

(20) Whiteweye;

Thence turning back towards the west, as far as to

(21) Yealdeede, above Saltere-well (according as the metes and bounds are there made);

Thence crossing by the Lynch, as far as to a

(22) Well, called Frenshelonse (in which there lies a certain rock);

Thence by the Lynch, towards the west, as far as to the

(23) Whiteston, above Teneaker, beside Rixwell;

Thence decending beyond the moor, towards the north, straight to the

(24) Corner of Teneaker;

So by the ditch between Teneaker and Mountekynsemede, as far as to the water of

(25) Colm;

So by the said water of Colm, as far as to

(26) Baggeberes lane;

By the said lane, ascending towards the north, as far as to the tenement of

(27) Baggebere;

So by the gates of the court of the same tenement, to the lake below Ishangre, called

(28) Seggewellelake;

Thence ascending by the water-course of the same lake to a certain

(29) White thorne, growing in the wall of a croft, called Smalecombesleye;

Ascending by the wall of the same croft, as far as to

(30) Coggesdych (at the corner of the same croft);

Thence across the heath, as far as to

(31) Horspole (as the metes have been there made);

Thence as far as to the

(32) Horston;

Thence ascending towards the south, as far as to a

(33) Ditch near Kebarehurne;

Thence by the same ditch, as far as to

(34) Salterneweye;

Thence out by the same way, as far as to

(35) Merdela (which is the boundary between the aforesaid counties, from the aforesaid village of Bishop's Boklond, in the county of Somerset, as far as to the village of Hydon, in the aforesaid county of Devon).

Of these thirty-five stations, the greater number may be easily identified.

In the year 1368, the actual county boundary crossed the Yarty at a ford a few yards below the then Yarty Bridge. Keats' Mill, or the building which now occupies the site of the old grist mill of that name, stands on the north-east side of the modern bridge, and is an outlying portion of Yarcombe parish, in the county of Devon. This ford is station No. 1. Thence the line strikes west, up the hill. Here it forms the

southern boundary of Bishop's Wood, now a hamlet; which, as its name indicates, once belonged to the Bishop of Winchester.

Passing over six stations, No. 8 appears as the "Head of Grosway," in the wood-slade at Landshore-way. This is the first mention of Landshore-way, a lane which skirts the boundary, and was probably in existence when the boundary was first fixed. This lane still partially exists; its name is perfectly familiar to the people at Bishop's Wood; but a great portion of it has within living memory been appropriated, and the land thrown into the adjoining closes in Otterford parish. So difficult was it to prevent people from exercising their accustomed rights, that it was found necessary to erect *stone walls* across the old gateways in the lane. This, however, has been done, and the public are now effectually excluded.

Station No. 10, the south side of Putland, is taken to be a point where a foot-path from the north joins the Landshore-way, near the modern Pitlands. Still "the way" is followed westward to Crossway Head, where another road comes in from the south-west. Here the Landshore-way is diverted to the north-west, and its ancient track occupied by a fir plantation, evidently an old enclosure. No. 12, Narrowcombe, is a point on Brown Down, where a spring, rising a little to the north of the boundary, and flowing south, begins to form one of those depressions in the green sand soil, which lower south deepens into a steep and narrow valley, between Watchford and Stout Mill. At 13 the line enters or skirts the land of John de Beauchamp, called Mountery. This land must have been either in Otterford or in Yarcombe. Bearing in mind that Otterford at this date was wholly within the manor of Taunton, and vested in Winchester, and that the whole of Yarcombe (as far as we know) belonged to the Prior of Otterton,[25] as the land steward in this country of the Abbot of

(25). Or possibly to the Prior of St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall. See *Hundred Roll*, p. 93 *b*.

St. Michael's, Normandy, we are at a loss to conjecture what land this of Mountery was, or how it became the property of John de Beauchamp. Possibly he held it as tenant only, under one of the above ecclesiastical lords.

No. 14, Southchurchamford, is an important name. Churchingford, a corruption of the ancient "cyrican ford"—ford of the "cyrice," is now a hamlet in Church Stanton parish, Devon, about three-quarters of a mile off, towards the west. At this hamlet three roads intersect, forming six cross roads, at a point where, to all appearance, a highway cross once stood; of which, however, if it existed, no trace remains. The difficulty is, why should this hamlet have been called a ford? The only answer seems to be that as two of the six roads above mentioned lead down to and cross the Otter—one at some distance northwards, the other branching into two lanes at two separate fords southwards—it was from these two latter fords that the hamlet was named. From this patent we learn that in 1368 the lower of the two was called Southchurchamford; and this lower ford is the Oteriford of 854, from which the parish was named, as above mentioned.

From this ford the next few stations are easily recognisable. No. 15, Otterford Mill, is to be found at the upper of the two Churchingfords. No. 16, Wykepol—Wickpool, still survives as Wick; and so we are led up to No. 17, the ewelm or fountain-head of the Otter.

From the ewelm, the line goes to No. 18, the corner of a croft of the Prior of Taunton. This croft still remains; it is now called Yelham—where we can scarcely err in tracing the root, Ewelm-ham; and the boundary still runs by the corner of the garden. No. 19, Payneshurne, or Payne's Corner, is not so readily ascertained, but the Salters' Way remains in the form of a lane; and following this, the boundary comes out to the modern high-road at No. 20, Whiteway.[26] Here it turns

(26). The modern boundary at this point differs from that of 1368. Then it struck Whiteway a few yards north of Whitewall Corner; now it is brought straight to the Corner itself.

back westward, or rather south-westward, for a few paces, and arrives at No. 21, Yeoldeed—Old Head, now called Whitewall Corner, where metes and bounds were formerly set up.

The next three stations are more difficult to find. Presumably, No. 22, the well called Frenshelonse, was at the point where the old road from Taunton to Honiton crossed the frontier; the Hennathorne of the Pitminster boundary of 938.

A close search may possibly discover No. 23, the White Stone; but the names Tenacre, Rixwell, and Mountakin's[27] Mead, seem lost. At 25, the water of the Colm, or Culm, another recognised point, is reached.

No. 26, Bagbeer's Lane, is easily seen, leading to No. 27, Bagbeer. This farm is now called Strawbridge's. From the farm house the boundary now, as formerly, ascends by the water-course, anciently called Sedgewell Lake, past a white thorn, growing in the wall of a croft, and so to a horse pool, which was at the point where the boundary leaves the lane for the road. It formerly passed a hoar stone, No. 32, and, after another station, reached Salters Way, which brings the perambulation to its end, at the "Merdela," which must have been at the cross roads at Forches Corner.

The above identification reveals an important error in the Ordnance Survey Map, sheet No. XXI., and also in the index to the Tithe Survey, which was engraved upon a duplicate of the same plate. The county boundary, as marked in the map, on leaving Keats' Mill, strikes too far north, and reaches the Otter at the northern of the two fords, formerly called Churchingford—that is to say, at the mill, instead of at the southern, or true Otterford. Thus a strip of land, two and a half miles long, and three furlongs broad at its western end, containing about 300 acres, is thrown into Devon, instead of being, as it should be, included in Somerset; and by the index to the Tithe Survey the same 300 acres are assigned to Yarcombe parish, whereas they are

(27). This diminutive of the word Mount is noticeable.

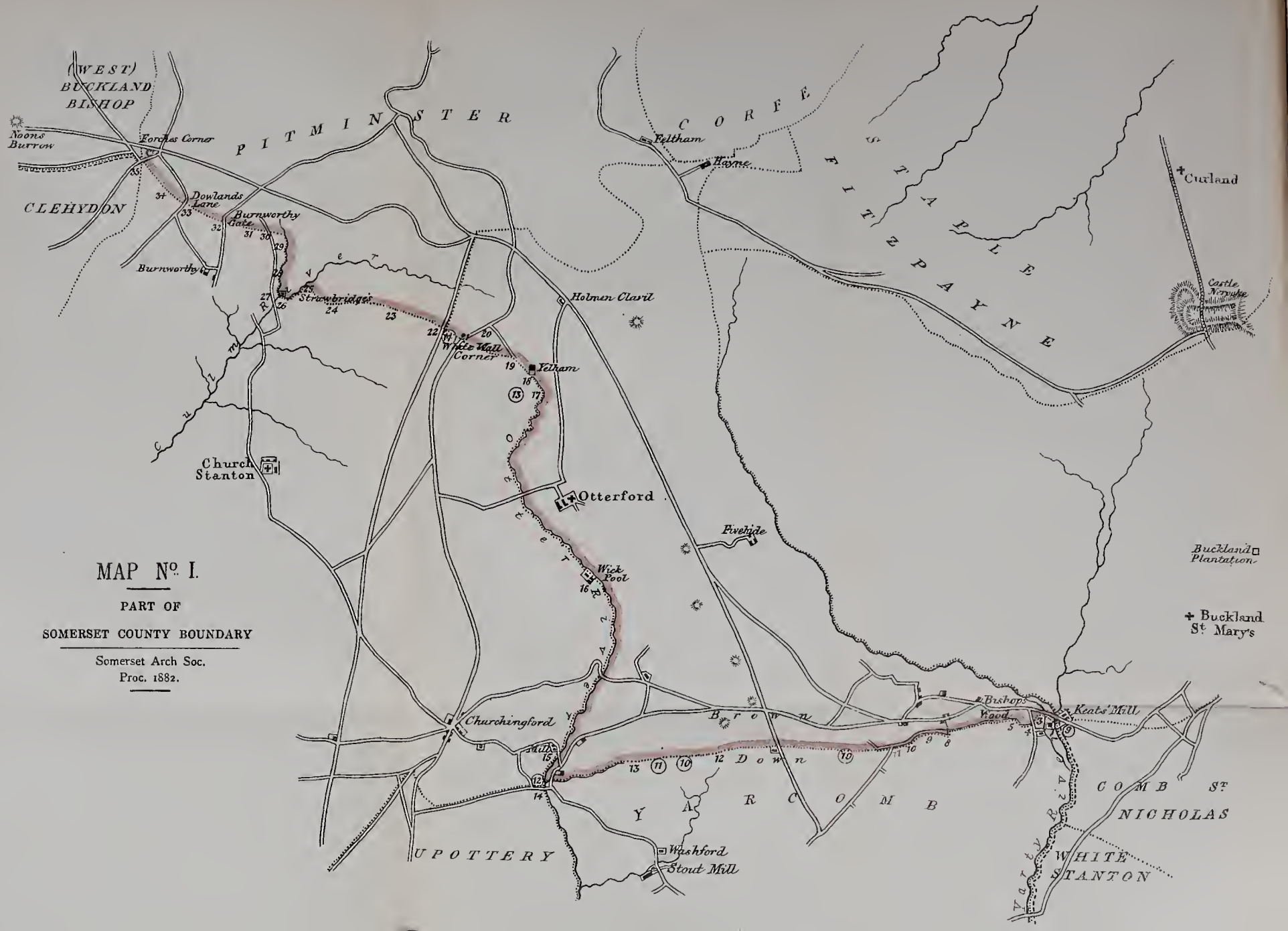
really in Otterford. Another mistake occurs further on, where the county boundary is so marked as to place Strawbridge's Farm in Devon, whereas it is in Somerset.[28] This error, however, is corrected in the Tithe Survey index, where the farm is correctly given as in Pitminster.

Other defects in this part of the Ordnance Sheet, No. XXI., are conspicuous. Tenements are marked, but no names are assigned to them; many names are omitted, and the few that are inserted are not always satisfactory. The writer knows of no authority for "Brice Moor," a place between South Churchingford and Watchford, in Yarcombe parish, where there is a small isolated patch of the chalk formation still left undenuded.

For "Sot's Hole," as the name of a tenement, there is no authority; but it is certain that this place did, until lately, bear the offensive or unmeaning designation of "Cuckold's Pit," which has now been changed to "Warren's."

To the antiquary the most interesting result of the restoration of the boundary line to its true place, is that it brings within Otterford parish, and within the county of Somerset, every one of the ancient mounds or barrows on Brown Down, called Robin Hood's Butts; whereas if the Ordnance Map were correct, the southernmost of them would be in Yarcombe, Devon. Four only of these mounds are delineated in the Ordnance; but the Tithe Commutation Map for Otterford marks five on Brown Down, and a sixth about a mile off, lying a quarter of a mile to the south-east of Holmen Clavil. The first five are nearly equidistant one from the next. The fifth, going northwards, opposite the turning down to Fivehide or Fyfet, stands in a small plantation of firs. It may be doubted by some whether this was really one of the series, or not. One of these mounds is said to have already disappeared, and probably before long the remainder will follow, if the soil

(28). All but a very small strip, between the rivulet and the lane, which, as Mr. Meyler has informed the writer, is in Clayhidon parish, in the county of Devon.



MAP No. I.

PART OF

SOMERSET COUNTY BOUNDARY

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on which it stands should turn out to be fertile enough to be worth ploughing up or enclosing. One of the advantages of the existing Ordnance Survey is, that the sites of these venerable monuments will be recorded, when they have shared the destruction which slowly but surely awaits every vestige of antiquity on these historic hills.

EXPLANATION OF MAP No. I.

The pink line shows the course of the modern county boundary. The numbers in circles o mark the stations of the boundary of 854. The other numbers mark the stations of the perambulation of 1367, so far as they can now be identified. There is no reason to suppose that the modern boundary has departed from that of 1367, except at the point near Whitewall Corner, above mentioned. Formerly the boundary followed Salter's Lane to the high road, then turned back westward to the Old Head, now Whitewall; whereas now the boundary crosses the road precisely at the Corner.

APPENDIX.

In the following table an attempt is made to compare the stations of three ancient boundaries of Pitminster. The earliest is the boundary of the Bishop of Winchester's estate, in 854, before he possessed Pitminster, and when his boundary only skirted that parish, then lying to the west and south of him. These stations accordingly are reckoned in an ascending line from south to north, and then west. They are numbered in Map No. II. from 14 to 28 inclusive. The second and third are boundaries of Pitminster itself, being of the dates 938 and 941, and 1044, respectively; and these stations, according to the almost universal rule in describing boundaries in ancient times, namely, that of following the sun, or of passing from east to west, through the south point, not through the north, are, throughout the line of coincidence, traced in the opposite direction, namely, from west to east, and from south to north. They are numbered from 1 to 24, and from 1 to 21 respectively in Map No. II. Corresponding stations are set in the same line.

COMPARISON OF BOUNDARIES OF PITMINSTER.

A.D. 854. K.C.D. *MLII. (v. 101).	A.D. 938 AND 941. K.C.D. MCXVII. (v. 231) and MCXL. (v. 271).	A.D. 1044. K.C.D. DCCLXXIV. (iv. 88).
	Sixteen Hides.	*Fifteen Hides.*
	1. From Fearrescumb's head west along the high road	22. North, straight on to the oakwoods eastward
	2. To the eastern oak woods	
&c.		
28. To Dove vale ...	3. North, on the right of the western oak woods to the bishop's boundary at Bennancumb	23. West along the high road to the hoar apple tree
		24. 1. To Binnacumb's brook
27. Downwards by the flow of the stream and off the stream west to Furesleage	4. Down along the bishop's boundary to Bennancumb's ford as far as to the north Fyrsleage ...	2. Along the brook to the hedging
		3. Straight to Fyrslege
26. Southward to the stream called Bennancumb	5. To Bennancumb's brook	4. To the eastern stream
	6. Up against the stream east of Tuchel's moor	5. Along the stream to Tugel's moor

A.D. 854. K.C.D. *MLII. (v. 101).	A.D. 938 AND 941. K.C.D. MCXVII. (v. 231) and MCXL. (v. 271).	A.D. 1044. K.C.D. DCCLXYIV. (iv. 88).
	7. From the moor straight on to Hardgate	6. To the fox hedge
25. To Hardgate		7. To Hardgate
	8. To the hedge ...	8. To Twintel's ham
24. Westward to Deepford ...		
23. By the downflow of the stream to Old ford ...	9. To Deepford	9. To Deepford
	10. Along the right landshore down to Sciter's stream	10. East straight to Drindlea
22. Westward by a wood to the stream called Sciter	11. Straight to the white stone at the northern woods	11. Along the brook to Wegel barrow
		12. To the gray stone
21. By the downflow of the stream to Redford ...	12. To Redford	13. To Redford
	13. East to the high road	14. Straight on to Shoreditch
20. To the fount of Blackbrook	14. South as far as to Langham	15. Along the highway to Langham
19. Straight to the gray stone on the west of Manhill	15. Within the yews to gray stone	16. To the gray stone
18. To the head of Snell's cumb	16. To Lindshore	17. Up along Epp's way to the great linden
17. To Oxenfield	17. To the old hedge at Wealden's way	18. On Oxenfield eastward up to the stone barrow
16. To Waldane's way		
15. To Ringwold's hill (barrow)	18. Up on the down to Hringwold's barrow	19. Up along Wealder's way to Pidle's (Piple's) barrow
	19. West along the down	
14. To Withigcumb	20. On Withislade to Hennathorn	20. To Withicumb's head
&c.		
	21. West along the old dike	
	22. Some while along the dike	21. West, straight on to the red ditch
N.B.—This column is to be read upwards.	23. North over Withicomb	
	24. East to Fearrescumb's head	

EXPLANATION AND NOTES ON MAP No. II.

The pink line represents the modern boundary of Pitminster parish. The yellow line represents the probable course of the boundary of 854. With some exceptions, the roads and streams are taken from the Ordnance Sheet, No. xxi., engraved in about 1810. Some of the roads, particularly at Forches Corner, and along the Blackdowns, have been since greatly altered. The boundaries of parishes are from the Index to the Tithe Survey, executed after the year 1834.

The numbers *inside* the pink line are the stations of the Saxon boundary of 1044. Those *outside* are the stations of the boundary of 938 and 941; and the numbers in circles ⓞ represent the stations of the earlier survey of 854.

Amongst the deviations from the Ordnance above mentioned, is one marking the outfall of the water which flows in a northerly direction, past Trull church—now called the Sherford—formerly Sciter's, stream. The village of Sherford, from which this water takes its name, is wrongly marked "Wilton" in the Ordnance, as if it were the site of Wilton parish church, which really stands much further north. The stream is further erroneously marked in the Ordnance as flowing towards the east, and so falling into the waters to the east of, or below, the town of Taunton. In truth, the whole of this water flows into the river west of, that is, above, the town. Its course is as follows. After making a turn northwards at Sherford village, it flows for about half a mile northward, through the meadows, to a point marked "*a*" in the map. Here it is artificially turned north-westward into a straight channel or goit, called the Mill Stream, reaching to Upper High Street. The Mill Stream goes under the street, and on the north side supplies the mills, called Pool Wall Mills. It then flows northwards, in a channel which some years ago was, if it be not now, in part open, and was called "Rhin," behind the Winchester Arms on Castle Green, and so to the precincts of the Castle, where it is dispersed, and finds its way into the Tone by numerous channels. The Mill Stream above mentioned is drained, or its surplus water carried off, by a cut made at right angles to it, whereby superfluous water flows down to a point near the east of Wilton church. Near this it is joined by the tail water of the mills, which flows down south-west past Hammett's Walk; and these two united currents, meeting near the church, flow in a nearly northern direction past the Gaol, under Shuttern Bridge—over which the Upper High Street road is carried, underground across the meadow opposite the Crescent, and so, in an open channel, near the east of the modern St. John's Church, into the river. This last, the writer feels no doubt, was the original natural course of the Sherford stream, before the diversion at point "*a*" was made.

With regard to the water which flows down past Haygrass on the west, anciently called the Black Brook, the Ordnance Map is less in


MAP No II.
ANCIENT BOUNDARIES OF PITMINSTER
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TONE RIVER
Bishops + Hull
St + James
Priory Farm
Priory
St Mary M.
Mill Lane
Bridgwater Road
Stream
Plat Bridge
Holway Bridge
Holway
Wilton
Gaisdom
Shuttern Road
Tucker Corner
Shuttford
Poole Farm
Fullands
Cotlake Farm
C Cottage
C Hill
Truel
Shoreditch
Orchard Portman
Dipford
Kibbear
Hay Grass
Baker's Hedge
Staple Hay
Sweet Hay
Duddlestone
Foss Grove
West Buckland
Cross
Rein
Fulford
Poundisford Park
Harpers Farm
Budleigh
Leigh Farm
Comte
Pitminster
Howley
Angers Leigh
Blagdon
Noons Burrow
Forches Corner
Feltham
Hayne
Dowlands Lane
Burnworthy Gate
Burnworthy
Strawbridges
Holmer Clavil
Whitewall
Yelham
Church Staunton
Otterford

error. Still, here, the stream should have been marked as flowing much further north of Holway than it is. The stream does, in fact, follow the boundary between West Monkton and St. Mary Magdalen as correctly marked in the Ordnance;* and flowing eastward, falls in near the Blackbrook Inn, having been recruited by several other rivulets.

Besides these natural currents, there is a third, artificial, flow of water which demands attention. Out of the above mentioned Haygrass stream, otherwise Blackbrook, there is turned off, at a point nearly opposite to the tenement known as Fullands, by means of a regular stone-built watercourse, a leat, or supply of water, which flows on to the town. After proceeding for a short distance nearly north, it turns west, running at the northern foot of Pool Farm, thence through the meadows, till it reaches the road south of the Convent, or Nunnery, grounds. At the western corner of the grounds, at a spot marked "*b*" in the map, it makes a turn to the east, flowing in a direction at right angles to Silver Street. Shortly before reaching the street, it turns again, running parallel to the street, going under East Street, where a pump in the street now stands, thence under the houses, under Magdalen Street (the modern name of Black Boy Lane),† and at the backs of the houses in Cannon Street, into and under a corner of the Priory grounds. Thence it passes into the Priory fields, and emerges at the western corner of the farm buildings in the fields, whence it flows northwards into the Tone. This stream is variously called Mount Stream, the Town Stream, and Winter's Stream (from the name of the present or a late owner of the Priory, and Priory fields).

Through the kindness of Mr. Meyler, whose able and readily-afforded assistance in discussing many doubtful points of topography the writer here gratefully acknowledges, it is believed some light can be thrown on the construction of this water-course. In Mr. Meyler's possession is a copy of a deed, dated the 24th June, 1332, whereby Alexander, Prior of St. Swithun's, Winchester, confirms to Ralph, Prior of Taunton, the Canons, and their successors, a grant, dated on Ascension Day (28th May) preceding, whereby John, Bishop of Winchester, granted to the Prior and Canons of Taunton, "the whole course of the Rivulet of Blackbrooke in our Manor of Taunton, with the whole profitt of any right to be taken to lead the said course into his Pryory of Taunton, instead of the course of the Rivulet of Sherford, as the said course of the Rivulet of Sherford was wont to be led and to run into the Priory aforesaid, to have and to hold the said water-course of Blackbrooke as afore-

* So far as the writer can judge, the boundaries of the parishes near Taunton have been inserted with great correctness, notwithstanding the errors in the plate of 1810, on which they had to be engraved. The case of Otterford, mentioned above, is, however, a glaring exception.

† The lane was lowered to make Magdalen Street, and the water is conducted by a channel under the roadway, near the Fire Office.

said to the said pryor and canons, and their successors, for ever, to doe with the said water in their Pryory aforesaid as to them shall seem expedient."

What seems to have taken place, then, is this. The original natural flow of the Sherford stream having been in a curved line from the point "*a*," round northwards and westwards, to the foot of Wilton church, and then out under Shuttern Bridge, to the river; a diversion was first made from the point "*a*" to the point "*b*," in order to supply the Priory. Then the bishop, requiring this diverted water for his own purposes, caused the straight goit or channel from "*a*" to Upper High Street to be made, and in order to compensate the prior and canons, gave them in return the right to use the Blackbrook rivulet—a right which they proceeded to exercise by making for themselves the water-course from Blackbrook to the point "*b*"; that is, the present Mount Stream.

The reasons why the bishop wanted the diverted water are not difficult to guess. In the first place, he wished to form a vivarium—"one of the luxuries of the day," as the late Mr. Eyton describes it.* This fish pool probably occupied all the ground between the Mill Stream and the foot of Wilton church, covering the site of the present Vivary Park. It was banked up at the northern end, and along the embankment the road was carried. Immediately north of the embankment wall was the Pool Wall Mill. The supply of this mill would be another object for requiring the water—if a mill did indeed belong to the bishop at this spot; and finally, the stream, after flowing to the west of Castle yard, might have been used, upon occasions (as Mr. Bidgood has suggested), to flood the trenches of Taunton Castle.

A few other points may be noted. Waldane's, Wealden's, or Wealder's Way—meaning the way of the woods, or the woodman's road, may be traced by the line of boundary which remains, though the road itself has been, probably long since, diverted. It is evident that the most ancient of the boundaries, that of 854, in passing to the west of Orchard Portman, followed the course of the Blackbrook down to Redford; not that of the road past Duddlestone. Here we find an instance—not unfrequent in ancient times—of a boundary moving away, so to speak, from a small stream, where it was originally fixed, and becoming settled on the water-shed line of the valley on one side or the other; practical utility being too strong for artificial rule. In passing from Redford to the Sherford rivulet, or Sciter's Stream, it seems probable that ancient line of boundary went nearly due east and west, instead of going north as far as Cotlake Farm. Somewhere between the two points was a white or gray stone, standing in a wood. Local observation suggests that this stone stood on Cotlake Hill, a few hundred yards south of Cotlake Cottage. The occurrence, at this point, of a deep ditch, forming a narrow foot or bridle-path between hedges, leads one to think that in this ditch we have the actual Saxon boundary itself; which, if so, must have reached the

stream considerably south of Trull church. This view is borne out by the circumstance that the line of 854, in passing from station 22 to 23, is said to follow the "downflow" of the stream to Old Ford, where the present bridge stands. Near this point is a public house, still called the Winchester Arms, the outbuildings of which are on the actual boundary. The inn was so called, probably because here once stood a boundary stone, bearing the arms of the See. Afterwards, it may well be, the bishop's armorial bearings served the purpose of a house sign, for the benefit of the numerous illiterates who could not read written names.

* *Staffordshire Domesday*, p. 21.