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AVALONENSIBUS COXENDRUM

BY H. F. SCOTT STOKES, F.S.A.

(I)

"Seedy-lookin' lot, the Surrey Arx," said old Mr. Uvedale Lambert of Bletchingley in the County of Surrey, in those booming tones in which the deaf are so often betrayed into making what they suppose to be discreet asides, as he gazed round at the members met together, some 50 years ago, in a Surrey church. "But, not so seedy as the Sussex Arx," he added meditatively.

"Lord" (he went on), "if *there* isn't old Henry, goin' up into the pulpit. Goin' to give us a sermon, I suppose?" And he is said to have added something about, "Goin' down hill backwards, like the Devil in Hell." But, this is only hear-say.

"Old Henry" was his brother Henry, afterwards Sir Henry Lambert (of the Colonial Office, as it then was). There, within 20/25 miles of London, they were that rarity, the descendants of landed gentry long established in and around Banstead. Not but what Sir Henry would joyfully name and enumerate the landless men and poachers who were among his forefathers, as surely as the bewigged lawyers and sword-armed Officers whom his family delighted to remember.

Sir Henry is long since dead. His son and I were at school together, and I am in sight of my 70th birthday; by which I intend the 69th anniversary of my birth. For, as the one wholly rational man of my acquaintance has pointed out, it is absurd to pretend that the day on which you were born was not a birth-day of yours. Which only shows, once more, what an imperfect guide pure reason is in human affairs.

Sir Henry was one of the pioneers of local history as a thing-in-itself, and his 1934 "Inaugural" (as President of the Mid-Surrey Historical Association) is a model of what these things should be.

He speaks first of "the face of the country". Why, he would have asked, was "the Mead" at Street within the parish of Glastonbury, down to the last century? Why had Street that semi-detached annexe at its N.E. corner, running right down to the Brue? Why does Street stretch South to the "18-foot Rhine", just North of Dundon? And why are Walton and Ashcott those extraordinary shapes, reaching right down to the said Rhine in the South, and North to the railway line? Why are Catcott and Edington and Chilton Polden such odd slabs, one above another, like the layers of an American 3-decker sandwich?

He goes on to speak of "the condition of the people", as witnessed to by the cost of building a "house" in Banstead in 1276, about 20/-. Even at those days' prices, "it must have been a mere hovel." And it was.

He deals, next, with Court Rolls and Church-Wardens' Accounts, and the Poor Law and "the descent of land" and the Records of Quarter Sessions, and of the Justices of the Peace, and with the effect of the Dissolution of the Monasteries; with Wills and Tithes; and, finally, with our Churches and the monuments in them — all, common-place enough now, which is a very good thing. It is to Sir Henry Lambert and his like that we owe it that it is so.

(II)

It is an everyday experience and a matter of common comment that a long habit of command coupled with a firm grasp of the obvious is an excellent substitute for the more complicated mental processes of "we" 2-A-level types. You see, I am doing my best to get "with" the technological idiom — General de Gaulle is a case in point?

Nevertheless, the things of the mind do matter. And the present improved and improving condition of these premises and of the appurtenances thereof is Somerset's lasting memorial to my friend Arnold Whittaker and his Chairmanship of the County Council, from 1956 to 1959. We owe it to him and to General Evans and to the late A. W. Vivian-Neal that the County Council ever took Taunton Castle and the County Museum under its wing. I myself, as one of the County Council representatives on the Museum's Governing Body, and, as such, that Body's representative on your Council, am but one link in the chain — and, too often, a missing link. Although not "gainfully employed" in any way, for some years past, I am still usually busy on Fridays and Saturdays; and I cannot help it.

(III)

Walking one day, with this occasion much in mind, across London Town, as far as the East is from the West, as I often do— it is the pleasantest way across, and it may even be the quickest!— I passed with seasoned relish through Covent Garden, with its hard-faced men of business from every nation under heaven, busy getting their produce where they wanted it, and then and there selling it, and in getting it away again; out across Drury Lane and past the great Masonic citadel, foundation-stone-laid and later opened by H.R.H. the late Duke of Connaught.

Hard by it, as prudence dictates and as custom warrants, was a shop selling Masonic emblems or *insignia* — I speak with respect of what I do not understand — I hope I have not used words wrongly, nor used the wrong words?

The shop was on my side of the street and, knowing that I could not be tempted, I looked with care-free curiosity at its colourful window-displays. One in particular caught my eye and excited my

Latinist's curiosity, with its motto, LAPIS REPROBATUS CAPUT ANGULI, which covers in the decent obscurity of a learned language our old friend "The same stone that the builders refused, is become the headstone in the corner" (Psalm 118, at verse 22), though the New Testament quotations of it (Matthew 21, 42, Mark 12, 10, and Luke 20, 17) have made us more accustomed to the word "rejected".

All of which is a rather elaborate way of saying "Thank you" for the totally undeserved honour which you have done me, this day. I will do my best to live up to it, during my year of office. Looking back over our list of Presidents, I see that, two times out of three, we choose some eminent *savant* not normally resident in Somerset. The third man is usually some local land-owner or other personage who counts for something in the County. Just once in a while, we are fortunate enough to find someone who is both — for instance, Sir Matthew Nathan and my immediate predecessor. After that, I suppose, we feel free to put up with someone who is neither, just for once.

That is exactly my case — I know my place, and I shall not forget it. I am simply a rusty old Latinist who has had the good fortune to live in Glastonbury for the last 40 years, and by the mere effluxion of time I have read most of what has been written about the place since the Saxons overran it, 400 years before the Norman Conquest; and I have a nodding acquaintance with what has been dug up there in the last 50 years.

That is all, and all that I shall speak about to you, today. AVALONENSIBUS COXENDRUM is, or was, the strange device carved on the wall of the Club Room in what was our Liberal Club and is now our Masonic Hall at Glastonbury. Those with little Latin may be puzzled by it. Those with rather more than a little will recognize it as a horse out of the same stable as *High-cock-o-lorum* and *Omnium Gatherum*; that is, school-boy gibberish which un-lettered men may "venerate where they are not able presently to comprehend"? Or, they may not.

Before I go on to elaborate a little about Glastonbury, may I turn aside to repeat just one anecdote about my distinguished predecessor, Professor Hamilton Thompson, who was our President in 1920? In 1938, I took my two elder daughters on what must have been almost the last of his personally-conducted tours of Burgundy. We started from Sens, where William of Sens came from, that built the choir of Canterbury. We went on South, visiting Churches and Abbeys, great and small, as far as Autun.

One of the Abbeys was in private occupation, and the *concierge* came running out, to stop us. The family were in residence, and we could not pass. "*Je ne peux pas aider cela*", said the Professor; and brushed him aside. And we entered. Thus do great men overcome their little difficulties, linguistic and other.

(IV)

So then, though I was and am no historian, and my brother-in-law Stephen Morland knew more about Glastonbury when I first met him as a very young Cambridge scholar than I know now, or ever shall — I still hope that, one day, he will find time to address you on the Saxon field-system, or on our medieval mills — I came early and often under the inspiring influence of his grandfather, John Morland, and by him was well-introduced to Dean Armitage Robinson, and to our Dr. Bulleid and to your Mr. St. George Gray; and to "Father Horne", one-time Prior of Downside and later titular Abbot of Glastonbury; and to Mr. Neville Grenville, the last squire of Butleigh, and our President in 1926. It was his boast that from his drawing-room window he could see 7 churches (2 of them, in ruins). Now, alas, Butleigh Court is itself a roofless ruin. It had "style but no plumbing", as Hailé Selassie truly said when he visited it, in exile, with a view to renting it. And so no one could be found to come and live there.

At John Morland's request, I translated William of Malmesbury and Adam of Domerham and parts of John of Glastonbury. He was not at home with Latin, though by no means totally unacquainted with it. "Harry", he said to me, early in our acquaintance, "What is PONS PERILIS?" "Dangerous bridge, Grandfather," I replied. "Oh," he said, "Is *Perilis* the Latin for 'dangerous'? I thought it was *Periculosus*?"

Which, of course, it is. *Perilis* is only dog-Latin. I walked more warily, after that. And under the eye of the great Dean, I translated and published William of Malmesbury in 1932. The one really scholarly feature of the little book was Stephen Morland's careful comparison of the manors in William, and their extent, with the same manors as recorded in Domesday Book. They agreed, pretty closely. One is surprised that they agreed at all.

Working with the Dean was what Lord Montgomery would have called a character-building experience —"I don't think I understand this passage," he remarked, at one point. "And I'm quite sure *you* don't." Happy is the man who has learnt early in youth to kiss the rod.

Actually, as I remember them, William of Malmesbury (*c.* 1100) is ordinarily quite straightforward. As you go on, through Adam of Domerham to John of Glastonbury and Appendices (*c.* 1500), the Latin gets more and more "medieval" and mixed up with "Norman" lawyers' Latin; and therefore more difficult.

I remember only one passage in William that really stumped me. Writing of "the old church" (of wattle and daub), still standing when he wrote, it was (he says) "QUAMVIS EX DEFORMI GRANDIS REVERENTIA CULTU". I couldn't make head or tail of that. It reads like Tacitus, and I never found Tacitus easy.

"*Quamvis ex deformi cultu*", came the answer —"Although of modest proportions", "*grandis reverentia*", "it was impressive by the awe it inspired". That says, in six words, exactly what I feel about Glastonbury itself. It is a little old market-town, like many another in the West Country. But, Lord, what a history it has behind it; and what legends, behind that history.

(V)

Before I did these translations, I had copied out (40 years ago) our Queen-Anne Charter; and published some extracts from the old Corporation Annals:

"Thy pride, poor Bumble,'s humbled in the dust.
Thy book is mouldy, and thy trumpet bust."

I still think that is a rather neat couplet, inspired by the junketings in our town which accompanied the Proclamation of King George IV in 1820. After all, there hadn't been a new king in England for 60 years; and they really did let themselves go. Before that, the only real incident recorded is when in 1811 the ferment or contagion of the French Revolution, and the "march of mind", so worked on our City Fathers that they decided to take down the old Market House in the middle of the Market Place; and they did take it down, because it was "a public nuisance". It got in the way of the traffic, 150 years ago. And yet their successors (or some of them) still allege that there is no traffic-problem in Glastonbury. Oh, well. Remember the United States' obstinate pretence that there is no such thing as Communist China. We all have our blind spots.

On the eve of the Hitler War, I translated and published Abbot Bere's Terrier and Perambulation, A.D. 1503-09, bound up with John of Glastonbury by Hearne, 250 years ago. Since then, I have only published, with some first-class photographs taken for me, a rather jaunty brief "history" of the place, a juvenile delinquency which I had actually committed to writing some 30 years before.

I also wrote anonymously an official Chamber-of-Commerce Guide, with a foreword by the Mayor. It contained the memorable sentences, "History is mainly a record of folly and crime, and down its dark pages piety and fraud go hand in hand — There was a great deal of piety in Glastonbury in the Middle Ages; and not a little fraud."

Like all my other little books, that too is out of print. Dom Aelred Watkin has himself characterized as "an impudent forgery" the so-called Charter of St. Patrick, which is included in William of Malmesbury but, by direction of the Dean, was excluded from my translation.

Consider also, you Museum-haunting antiquaries, the following items in the Catalogue of Glastonbury Museum, 700 years ago (bound up with "John of Glastonbury"):

The Holy Apostles. Some of St. Peter's hair. Some of the blood of St. Paul.

Relics relating to our Lord. Part of the fragments taken up, after the feeding of the 5,000. A bit of the jar in which Our Lord turned the water into wine . . . Two bits of the stone on which Our Lord stood, when he ascended into Heaven.

Item. Relics of St. Sapientia; and her three daughters, Spes, Fides, and Caritas . . . A vessel containing part of the flower which Our Lady was holding in her hand when she received the salutation, 'Hail Mary'.

And so on. This "vast mass of trumpery" (as Warner calls it) is evidence enough that the disastrous influence of "our travelled fellow-townsman", which did so much harm to our Museums in the 19th century, was rampant during the Crusades.

(VI)

One other thing — about 15 years ago, taking my translation of Abbot Bere in my hand, I walked round the first 50 miles of his 65-mile boundary:

On the first day (26.7.1503), he went East-away along (or behind) the Mead at Street, leaving the Parish Church outside. These Parish Churches were, all the way round, bastions of the bishop's, hemming him in: Street (and of course Walton), to the South; Baltonsborough and (I think) West Bradley and East Pennard, to the South-East; North Wootton, to the East; Draycott and Cheddar and, of course, Wedmore, to the North-West. Pilton Church was divided by a line drawn slap through the middle of it — the "business" end was outside the boundaries, the Western end within.

East-away then, he went, past where Stephen Clark's Folly now stands (a pretty piece of Bath masonry, lately salvaged from Bath and set up opposite his office-window), through the field still called "Anchorage", past Blagrove Farm (now Tibbs') and left-handed along a green lane to the bottom of the Squire's land at Butleigh, left-handed along the causeway and over Wallyer's Bridge ("built by Wulgar-with-the-Beard, in the time of the blessed Dunstan") to Baltonsborough, beside the Church Yard. Up round by Lottisham Green and left-handed to West Bradley. Right-handed, up on to Pennard Hill. Down across the stony bottom (then called "Hard-land") and up through Pilton Park, to the Abbot's Lodging at Pilton. And there stayed, that night.

On the second day (27.7.1503). In and out of Pilton Church, up on to the ridge, and left-handed down to North Wootton. Round the Church and right-handed, up on to Wormister Sleight; and left, over Wormister down along Launcherley, left-handed on to the straight stretch across the moor to Hartlake Bridge. And there made an end.

On the third day (31.7.1507). They went, from Hartlake, West along the double ditch (still shewn on old maps as "Fountains Wall", or "boundary of the Archdeacon of Wells"), across the moor to Godney and Bleadney, over the Wells-Wedmore road near the Piccadilly Inn (lately and for many years George Horsington's), away down the River Axe past Marchey Farm (now ruinous) and about half-way to Nyland, down the right bank.

On the fourth day (1.3.1509). They went right-handed from above Nyland right up on to Mendip beyond Draycott, to where the walls either side of a shallow ravine still mark the parish-boundary, up one wall and down the other, back round Nyland and left-handed up the left bank of the Axe to near the long straggling village of Theale. Right-handed up over through Theale; and down again over the hill, right-handed to the causeway, and left-handed to the toll house that now is; and right, to the Brue at Westhay. And there made an end.

On the fifth day. But here the narrative is only in draft. Whether they ever walked it or not, the boundary clearly went down-stream for a mile or two, then left-handed to what is now the railway-line; and up, more or less along that line, back round Sharpham to Street, from which we started.

(VII)

That was a good walk, which took me many days. Naturally, not a land-mark remains, to mark the limits of the abbot's property and jurisdiction. They have all been removed by interested parties, long ago. Here and there you are on a hard road, but not often. For instance, you are on one from below Butleigh to Baltonsborough, from West Bradley towards Pennard Hill, and from North Wootton towards Wormister Sleight, and from below Launcherley to Hartlake Bridge. These are on the first two days. On the fourth day, you are on the main Wedmore road, coming back to Westhay. Otherwise . . .

I lost the scent round Lottisham Green, and near "Dunstan's Dyke". I am not sure of the precise route between Hartlake and Bleadney; nor again, coming back, at what point the boundary leaves the River Axe. There is a good deal of 18th century "wall" (or embankment) in those parts, and I am ashamed to say I might not know t'other from which. But, in the main, the route is pretty clear, though heavily obstructed and over-grown, particularly down from Pennard Hill to Pilton Park.

And, as I trod it, hour after hour, alone with the birds and the beasts and all the sights and smells of the countryside with, now and again, the familiar landmark of Glastonbury Tor and tower coming into sight, 5 or 10 miles away; as I breasted some hill-top, or rounded some corner — well, I am not an impressionable or imaginative sort of man, as a rule; but, for the first time in my many years in Glaston-

bury, I felt at one with the place and almost back among the Middle Ages, walking "with but after" the lord abbot with his stoutly stumping monks and clerks, and the rest of his retinue — Henry Colmer, the chaplain — John Martin, the sub-prior — William Jones, vicar of Pilton — Thomas Ashurst, the steward — Thomas Gunwyn and Thomas Somerset, clerks in the Treasury — William Helyer, bailiff of divers his Manors — William Ferryman, ranger of Norwood Park — William Rowley, head-cook — John Cornish and Thomas Hopper, secretaries — and many others . . . *Daftar-Wallahs* they may have been, and mostly were; but, as on the North-West Frontier when I was a young soldier there, 50 years ago, the only way any man could go about his business was to walk or ride.

Only the cow-catching live wires with their distrust-worthy low "pumping" sound, new to me at that date, brought me back with a jolt to the cold light of our technological age.

On Monday of this week, spurred on and accompanied by most energetic and inquiring grandson Openshaw I (here and now present, by kind invitation), I set out for the first time, on the fifth and last leg of Abbot Bere's Perambulation. We had already (on four earlier days) gone over the first four, or most of them.

We set out, in the teeth of half a gale, down the Brue from the bridge at Westhay. I shall never forget that first half hour, and I don't believe he will.

Four hours later, he said (in a moment of weakness, as I turned away from the flesh-pots of Street and headed North, again, over the moor), "It seems a long way." And I don't blame him. We had covered ten or a dozen miles, of which only 300 or 400 yards were along any sort of road — the only boring part of the whole.

But he rallied well, and we finished strongly, together, some 200 yards from the Mead, from which we started.

Thank you, Tom!

(VIII)

By far the largest of the ancient monuments within the XII Hides is a thing so large that neither the globe-trotter, "doing" Glastonbury in 10 minutes, nor the feet-in-ancient-timer, with his mind darkened by enthusiasm, ever notices it.

I refer, of course, not to the Tor — no hand of man ever made so large a mound. (I think I remember that Silbury Hill, near Avebury, is the largest man-made mound in these parts). Nor is it volcanic. Quite simply, it has a hard core, and therefore it was left high and dry when the waters of the Flood, receding, scoured out the valleys round-about, a great while ago — no, not the Tor. Not even "Ponter's Ball", that sizeable earth-work set astride what was once the only way into the Isle of Avalon, at Havyatt, between Edgarley and West Pennard. Not "Glastonbury Castle", that unexplained flat-topped oval mound South of Park Farm, across the

mill-stream from the Railway Station. That mound is some 50 to 100 yards across, at the base; and 10 to 12 feet high — and rising, local people say. I remember asking an old fellow who was throwing a ditch, hard by, what he thought it was? "Dunno," he said. "Who do you think made it?" I persisted. "Dunno," he said again. "But," he added hopefully, with that daft look which simple old fellows like to put on when being questioned by any cleverish young man, "S'wonderful what they moles do do."

It is wonderful, indeed. But no, not Glastonbury Castle—though, as the children say, "We are getting warmer." It is the double "wall" (or embankment) which contains the River Brue, from Wallyer's Bridge aforesaid below Baltonsborough for 4 or 5 miles, South of Butt Moor and between Kennard Moor and South Moor to Banker's Stile above Clyse Hole —"*Clyse*" is the Anglo-Saxon for a sluice, or water-gate.

It then carries the mill-stream, thereafter the main flow, on for another 3 or 4 miles round Northover past Beckery between the Railway Station and Paradise, and down beside the Meare Road, to rejoin the River Brue at Coldharbour —"Paradise" was so named in the Middle Ages when the medieval night-soil came to rest there — if it got so far. The place must have stunk to Heaven.

The high banks continue of course right down to Meare and beyond, down to about the boundary of the XII Hides, a mile or two above the junction of the Brue and the beginnings of that even more astonishing water-way "the Pill-Row Cut"— more astonishing, because wholly artificial, still water-tight and plainly visible for most of its course, through Mark and under Rook's Bridge, on the Bristol-Bridgwater road. It linked the Rivers Brue and Axe, and so made a water-way for sea-borne goods to be brought by water right up to Coldharbour. Those old monks hadn't our Mr. Kelting's "know-how", nor his mechanical aids. Nor had they his recourse to the County Council and the Rates, neither of which existed. But, they must have known a thing or two about water and the way it runs.

("Rates" are a by-product of the Reformation; and a County Council is a thing so new that Mr. Gladstone had never heard of it in 1886. "Corrupt Practices" are in the index to Morley's famous *Life* of him, and so is "Court Gossip". But, there is nothing in between them).

The purpose of this great embankment, from Wallyer's Bridge to Coldharbour, was to drain the marshes between Northover and Street, and up-stream and down. And, to supply water to the abbot's mills at Northover and Beckery. The two tanneries there still depend for their very existence on this daily supply of water so brought to their door, thus enabling Mr. Baily and Mr. Morland to continue their beneficent activities.

I know all about that, because I was at the head of Morland's when in the first week of the Hitler War the Bank gave way at Banker's Stile, for the first time on record. For two years, we had to pump every pint of water we wanted. And, it may be of some antiquarian interest, in addition to its gossip-value, to record that when Mr. Baily sought and obtained an injunction in the High Court at about the turn of the century to forbid Mr. Morland to go on taking water out of his mill-stream (which it was and is), it was upon the ground of the medieval rights of the medieval fulling-mill, the remains of which still form part of Mr. Morland's factory, that Mr. Morland succeeded in the Court of Appeal.

And yet, I suppose, the County Planning Officer will tell you, as he has told me, that Baily's and Morland's are all one; and that both are part of Clark's. Whereas in point of fact it is only our all-out competition at arm's length that keeps us all in good heart, and keeps us up to the mark. Oh, these experts! When will they ever learn that an "expert" is a man who has had experience, and that that is what the word means?

I feel I ought to add, in the interests of truth, that when in 1934 Mr. Baily again took Mr. Morland to the High Court, to cancel his registration of the Trade Mark "Glastonburys", and again won; and was again put down, by the unanimous verdict of 3 Judges, in the Court of Appeal; he took Mr. Morland to the House of Lords, who unanimously found for Baily, in 1938. And, I had and have, no doubt whatever that the House of Lords were right, and I at once said so; though it cost me £500 (less Tax), out of my own pocket. "Wealthy traders (I quote) seeking to enclose parts of the common speech of England" must expect to get it in the neck from the protector of the poor!

(IX)

Eighteen months ago there died at Glastonbury in her house at Chalice Hill, at the age of 100, Eliza Mary McLean, Lady of the Manor of Glaston XII Hides and the survivor of the two children of James John Rocke, Attorney-at-Law, Solicitor and Proctor (1819-1869), son of James Rocke of the City of Bristol, distiller, and of his wife Susannah, sister of the Reverend Thomas Parfitt, "incumbent of Glastonbury, 1812-1865".

I knew her well, of course; and played Bridge with her, fairly often, down to within 2 or 3 years of her death. She remembered Glastonbury as it was before there were any motor-cars or 'buses or motor-bicycles, or indeed any bicycles at all. It must have been a very much nicer place, then. I called on her before going round the world, in 1962 —"I know — I know that journey," she said. "It will take you two years." In her young days, I suppose it did?

James John Rocke commenced practice at Glastonbury in 1842, in partnership with William Benjamin Naish, who had purchased

the Lordship of Glaston XII Hides from sundry persons, none of them then resident, in 1838.

In 1856 Naish retired, and Rocke succeeded to the entire practice; being joined in 1859 by W. T. Swayne. Whence in due course the local law-business still carried on as "Gould & Swayne".

In 1861, when Mayor for the second time, Rocke "purchased and became Lord of" the Manor of Glaston XII Hides, for £600. "Get you Lordship and Liberty" (I remember reading in the Paston letters) "*quia ibi pendet tota lex et prophetae.*"

He died in 1869, having married in 1856 Eliza Jane the second daughter of William Gooding and Rebecca Goss his wife, by whom he had issue Emily Susannah, b. 31 July, 1857; and Eliza Mary, b. 16 July, 1863.

Emily Susannah lived and died (in 1946) unmarried, the formidable "Miss Rocke" of Glastonbury memory — formidable, indeed, but oh! so good a neighbour to her neighbours, when they needed one.

In 1889 Eliza Mary married Captain Douglas McLean, killed (later) in the Boer War. As a childless widow, with the strong common-sense which characterized her family she bequeathed her Lordship of the Manor to our trusty and well-beloved George Hugh Harland, Esquire, the resident partner in her father's old firm. By his kindness and with his consent I have copied out and now make known to you the details of the 1861 Conveyance to her father. (The commas are for easy reading, and naturally are not in the original).

ALL THAT OR THOSE the Manor or Manors, or reputed Manor or Manors, or Lordship or Lordships, of Glaston otherwise Glastonbury and Edgarley otherwise Egarly in the County of Somerset—

AND ALSO ALL THAT the Hundred and Royalty and Liberties of the Twelve Hides of Glaston, otherwise Glastonbury—

AND all and singular Houses and Edifices, Buildings, Barns, Stables, Dove-houses, Yards, Orchards, Gardens, Commons, Wastes, Lands enclosed from Wastes, and Heaths—

all WAYS, paths, passages, rights, weirs, mill-dams, flood-gates, water-courses, rivers, streams, pounds, banks, ponds, fish-ponds, fishings, fishing-places, fowlings, woods, under-woods and trees—

all customs, rents, reversions, services, rights, jurisdictions, franchies (*sic*), courts-leet, courts-baron, and monthly and other courts—

all views of frank-pledge and perquisites and profits of all manner of Courts—

AND ALSO, the pound now (or late) near the Anchor Inn—

AND all other pounds and places, and waifs estrays goods and chattels of felons and fugitives, and felons of themselves—

all moors, heath, furze, marshes, wastes, coal-mines and all other mines, quarries, liberties, privileges, profits, rents of all sorts, fines,

tolls of fairs, markets and market duties, commodities, advantages, emoluments, rights, members and appurtenances whatsoever—

to the same Manor or Manors or reputed Manor or Manors Hundred and Royalty and Liberties thereto respectively belonging or in any wise appertaining taken as or known to be part parcel or member thereof, or now or at any time heretofore usually held, demised, leased or occupied or enjoyed as part, parcel or member thereof respectively—

AND ALSO ALL THAT place or parcel of ground being the Scite (*sic*) upon which a Capital Messuage or Mansion House formerly stood, situate at the North end of Northload Street in Glaston otherwise Glastonbury, in the County of Somerset—

AND ALSO ALL THAT Orchard or parcel of Orchard Land adjoining and belonging to the site of the said late Messuage or Manor House commonly called or known by the name of 'The Manor House Orchard', and formerly stated to contain in the whole two acres and one rood, more or less, but which said Orchard has lately been severed and divided into two parts—

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said Manor or Manors, or reputed Manor or Manors . . . unto and to the use of the said James John Rocke, his heirs and assigns, forever.

Note:

(1) VIEW OF FRANK-PLEDGE — For an explanation of this legal term *see* I. P. Collis, "The Struggle for Constabulary Reform in Somerset" (*Proc. S.A.S.* **99/100,** top of p. 77).

(2) A WAIF was "a piece of property found owner-less and . . . if un-claimed it fell to the Lord of the Manor — commonly, goods stolen, and thrown away by a thief in flight".

(3) SCITE is an alternative spelling of "site", common enough in documents dating as far back as Queen Elizabeth, though surely a "vulgar error". I myself have never come across it anywhere else, except in the late Regency Minutes of the Corporation of Glastonbury.

(X)

Hear, now, for comparison, the "privilege" or "donation" granted by King Edmund to Abbot Dunstan, in the year 944. "King Edmund" (says William of Malmesbury) "is buried at Glastonbury, in the tower of the great Church, towards the left." He must, surely, be the Edmund after whom Edmund Hill in Glastonbury is named? And "Saint Edmund's Lodge", on the slopes of it, is a Victorian variation *à la Galahad*? St. Edmund, King and Martyr, was an East Anglian gent of the previous century —Bury St. Edmunds is where he was buried.

In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, I Edmund king of the Angles, and lord and ruler of the neighbouring peoples round about me, by the advice of my chief men and with their consent,

and in the hope of eternal salvation and for the forgiveness of my sins, grant to the church of Holy Mary Mother of God, of Glastonbury, and to the venerable Dunstan whom I appointed Abbot there, the liberty and powers, rights, customs, and all forfeitures in all his lands, that is '*burghbrice* and *hundred setena*, *athas* and *ordelas*, and *infangenetheofas*, *hamsocne* and *frithbrice* and *forsteal* and *tol* and *team*', throughout my kingdom. And all his lands shall be free and discharged of all dues, as my own are to me.

But principally that manor of Glastonbury, in which that most famous 'old Church' of the Holy Mother of God stands, shall be free before all others up to its boundaries.

And the Abbot thereof shall have vested in him jurisdiction over all causes, known or unknown, great or small, and over everything which is above or under the earth, wet or dry, pasture or woodland, and the same authority to punish or dismiss delinquents that my own court has, according as my predecessors granted and ratified by their statutes — Edward my father and Alfred his father and Coentwine and Ina and Cuthred and very many others who have honoured that place and held it holy.

And by God's authority I forbid all men, whether bishop, prince or lord, or any of their servants, to enter there at all to deliver judgment or to requisition or to do any other thing which might be against the wishes of those who serve God there.

And whosoever labours with a loving mind to increase my donation, may he find in this world prosperity and felicity, and all the joys of eternal life in the next.

But if any man shall wantonly and rashly and violently presume to overthrow it, let him know that without doubt he shall answer for it in fear and trembling before the tribunal of a severe judge, unless he thinks better of it and makes adequate amends beforehand.

The original is in Latin, like all our "Saxon" charters. The Saxon terms have been translated for me, as follows:

BURGHBRICE	Breaking in and entering, within the town.
HUNDRED SETENA	Being absent from the Hundred Court.
ATHAS AND ORDELAS	The right to put parties on oath, or on trial by ordeal.
INFANGENETHEOFAS	The right to judge a thief, taken in the town.
HAMSOCNE	House-breaking.
FRITHBRICE	Breach of the peace.
FORSTEAL	Assault.
TOL AND TEAM	Freedom from Royal tolls, and the right to levy his own.

(XI)

Our 1861 document is common form (I understand), and almost identical with the conveyance to Naish in 1838, of which I have seen

a copy. There is also a sketch-map, indicating pretty much the same boundaries that Abbot Bere perambulated, but excluding all that caper down the Axe. But, of course, the loss of territory is as nothing compared with the loss of jurisdiction and revenue and other valuable rights — little enough in 1861, and now totally fallen into oblivion.

That too is common form. Rights are made by recognition, and there are no others. "Do you recognize the King of Montenegro?" someone asked Balfour at the Peace Conference in 1919. "We ought to," he replied in his sub-acid tone, "We pay for him."

Precisely. Nobody now pays for any Lord of the Manor, I suppose. And so nobody now recognizes one.

(XII)

The last Lord of the Manor of Glaston XII Hides to enjoy all these rights and privileges (and more also) was, of course, the last abbot of Glastonbury, butchered on the Tor on 15th Nov. 1539. Blessed art thou, Richard Whiting, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before thee.

Men of feeling have said to me, ere now, that there is a curse upon Glastonbury, for what was done here that day. I don't feel that, and I don't believe any born Glastonian does.

Those evil men came here and did their worst, at the behest of King Henry VIII, that prince of prodigals. And went away again, leaving the place desolate and desecrated. And desecrated it remains, but not wholly desolate. Men sojourn and walk up and down therein. Going about their small concerns, they may well get all the facts wrong, and their logic may be as faulty as their Latin. Nevertheless, they are steeped in the consciousness that, here all about them and in their midst, are the ruins of something truly memorable, which flourished here for 1,000 years. (We need not trouble about the odd months and days, nor indeed about the odd centuries). And that our history is part of the history of all England, and of the holy Church throughout all the world. And that that is why Glastonbury is "different".

Visitors (and newcomers) have been heard to deny this, but I think they are mistaken? Farmers and other country-folk do not easily wax lyrical about sunrise or the scenery. The countryside is where they must do their hard and heavy work, and dawn is when they must be up and doing it. But, offer them Part III Accommodation, or Heaven itself in lieu, and you will get the answer, "Gi'e I Cumby Dundy".

So too at Glastonbury. We don't say much about it. We are not on our honeymoon. And if you expect us to wax lyrical about our good old wife/husband, and (when we don't) infer that we have ceased to love her/him — well, if you must know, we don't much care for "foreigners"; and we prefer to keep ourselves to ourself.

"Different?" Of course Glastonbury is different. It isn't every little old West-country town that can boast that, two or three years after the date of Magna Carta, it joyfully got rid of the unwanted style and dignity of a Cathedral City, put upon it by Richard Coeur de Lion (to effect his ransom) in 1192, and endured with much lamentation throughout the rest of his reign, and King John's.

Hear now the premature promise of deliverance held out by certain emissaries, writing from Rome in 1201/2:

Herbert, and Adam, and Martin de Summis, to the Abbey (undated).

To the religious community at Glastonbury, if it please you, Herbert and Adam and Master Martin de Summis, your faithful sub-deacon of the Pope, with our humble duty. You know, brethren, you cannot fail to know, how long and earnestly we have laboured, howsoever inadequately, for the glory of God and the defence of the Abbey. You know all about our sufferings and hardships, and the persecutions and dangers we have been exposed to. It would be a bore to go over it all point by point, and we refrain; though a time will come when you shall hear the whole story.

When the enemy withdrew from Rome, we were ordered by the Holy Father to remain there, and we had audience of him again and humbly begged him, with tears in our eyes, to do more for the Abbey than he had. He protested very amiably that what he had done, he had done in good faith, but would do more if he could. And he too fell to weeping and said 'I will now give and grant whatever is best for your community. When the matter is settled, I will do all I can for you.' And then just as we were beginning to make progress, William Pica and the others fell ill and died, and God in his infinite mercy removed them from this vale of tears. May God have mercy on their souls, and do you likewise pray for them.

And the good God looked down from Heaven on our desolate state, and in his infinite mercy (which the earth is full of) spared his spouse, our Abbey, from destruction, and saved it from the very jaws of death.

We therefore beg and implore you to take comfort in the Lord, and to do all that you have to do in love and charity; for, 'please God, we shall be with you shortly, bringing such news from the Holy Father as will make your hearts rejoice exultingly. We ought to mention by the way, that our labours have not been brought to this happy issue without considerable expense and, of course, some corruption — the Holy Father himself sent us in a pretty bill, though he charged the Bishop nothing — and the fact is we have spent 800 marks and more in Rome, and the gentlemen who lent us the money are travelling to England with us, and are due to be paid at the next Fair at Troyes.

We therefore earnestly beg you to be ready to pay them, so that they may be ready to do a deal again if necessary. They have been unfailingly kind to us and have interested themselves continuously in the success or failure of our mission. We are particularly obliged to them, and we are, etc.

But is was not until 1219 that Glastonbury was allowed to have its own abbot again, and "Jocelin, bishop of Bath and Glastonbury" (and abbot of both) became "Bishop of Bath" simply, as his Norman predecessors had been. It was not until his death in 1242 that his successor Roger was given the upstart title "Bishop of Bath and Wells", which continues to this day. Thus do men, with much labour, attain their heart's desire to their own undoing. But for this fatal triumph of Glastonbury diplomacy, Glastonbury Abbey Church would still be standing, as "Glastonbury Cathedral"— the counter-part of Durham Cathedral, which also began life as a Benedictine Abbey Church, with the Lady Chapel at the West end, connected with the great nave by a Galilee. And, Wells Cathedral would never have been built?

That is too awful to contemplate. I suppose it was "meant" to be built at Glastonbury.

These might-have-beens of history are always sad; but not so sad as what has actually come about. For, the one we can only imagine, and its bright hopes have never had to make the pilgrimage of disillusion which fulfilment always brings in its train. The other we know, and must live with till the end.

For the art of living, like all the other arts, is not a process of making perfect beauty out of perfect materials perfectly. It is the art of making something somehow good out of the given, with all its imperfections. "That, when the best things are not possible, the best may be made of those that are."

Thus spake the judicious Hooker.

Not long ago, one of those terrible great gardeners came by invitation to our house, and he said not unkindly as he walked across the lawn, "You know if you was to kill all the weeds in your lawn, really there would be nothing left."

"Precisely", I said. "That is why I don't do it".

I have done my best; and I have done.