

The Banwell Charters.

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THE Dean and Chapter were so obliging as to lend me their large Liber Albus last spring, and I made a rough abstract of the contents. For which, perhaps, or for a short account of the more remarkable things in it, room may be found in your transactions at a future time. I will merely remark now, in correction of my notice of this book in the volume of indexes, that I have found documents in it dated 1493, which bring down the transcription of it quite to the close of the 15th century. The most remarkable thing that I found was the following deed, relating to Banwell and Compton Bishop, and lands in the marsh and at Cheddar, attached to Banwell.

I lost no time in informing a friend of mine of my find, and mentioned several odd things about it which made me doubt its authenticity. I supplied him with a copy, and the following is an article in the *Saturday Review* which he wrote in consequence, and which is printed here with the permission of the editor.

After a reference to the sale of Combe, and to the article on that subject in our last volume of transactions, the article continues as follows :—

“The present document is a grant of William the Conqueror, by which he confirms Banwell and some other lands in Somerset to Giso, Bishop of Wells. Banwell is well known to antiquaries for a fine church, and to palæontologists for its bone-caves. Along with Congresbury, it formed a possession which Cnut gave as a private estate to Dudoc, the Saxon Bishop of Wells, the predecessor of the Lotharingian Giso. Dudoc by his will left the lands to the see; but his intention was hindered by Earl Harold. Giso, however, continued to claim them; and it appears

from Domesday that, at the time of the Survey, Banwell, though not Congresbury, had been given to the see. This is the plain story, as it is told by Giso himself; in the hands of later writers it has grown into various wild fables about Harold despoiling the see, driving away the canons, and what not. But it is plain from Giso's own narrative—our only authority—that Harold took nothing from the see which the see had ever possessed, but merely hindered the carrying out of Dudoc's will. The presumption therefore is that Harold acted on some legal claim; as, for instance, that the Saxon Bishop, being a foreigner, could not make a will, but that his property went to the King or to the Earl. That this was the ground is a mere possible conjecture; but it is certain that such a claim would have been good in law in some places both of England and of the Continent. However this may be, we learn from Giso's own story that he never gave up his claim to the disputed lands, and Domesday shows that, with regard to Banwell, his claim in the end succeeded. It is singular, however, that Giso himself says nothing about the grant of Banwell, though he does record how he obtained from William the possession of Winesham, with which Harold had nothing to do, but which was kept from the see by another person, one Ælfsige. However, the Domesday entry is enough for the fact, and now we have the deed which shows the time and circumstances of the fact.

“In judging of the genuineness or spuriousness of a document of this kind, a study of the signatures is one of the most important points. Can the persons whose signatures are added to the document have ever met? It does not affect the genuineness of the signatures if some of the witnesses are described by titles which they did not bear at the alleged date of the writing, but which they did bear afterwards. It often happened that merely the name was written at the time, and that the description was added afterwards as a kind of gloss. In an original such an addition might be detected by the difference of ink or handwriting; in a copy there would be of course no difference

between the original writing and the gloss. In this case, however, we need not apply this argument. If we look through the signatures, it is easy to see that the persons who sign it could very well have met at one particular time, though they could not have met at any other time, earlier or later. The deed is signed by King William, Queen Matilda, the Archbishops Stigand and Ealdred, the Bishops Odo (Bayeux), Hugh (Lisieux), Geoffrey (Coutances), Hermann (Sherborne), Leofric (Exeter), Æthelmær (Elmham—for this Bishop must be meant by the meaningless *Gilmeer*=*Ægelmær*), William (London), Egelric=*Æthelric* (Selsey), Walter (Hereford), and Remigius (Dorchester). There is another episcopal signature of "Wulfsig," which one can only suppose was meant for Wulfstan of Worcester. These bishops could not have met together before the Christmas of 1067, when Remigius was consecrated; they could not have met after the death of Ealdred in September 1069. But the only time when they could have met in the presence of Queen Matilda is between her coming to England for her coronation at Pentecost 1068, and her return to Normandy in the former half of 1069. The Earls ('*Duces*') who sign are William—that is, William Fitz-Osbern, Earl of Hereford—Waltheof, and Eadwine. After them follows '*Rotbertus frater regis*;' that is, Robert Count of Mortain, lord of nearly all Cornwall, but who, as Professor Stubbs shows, was never Earl of it. Then comes '*Rotgerus princeps*;' that is doubtless Roger of Montgomery, afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury. We have then the date fixed more narrowly again to a time when Waltheof and Eadwine were still Earls, when William Fitz-Osbern was already an Earl, but when Roger of Montgomery was not yet an Earl. The moment of Matilda's coronation exactly suits that state of things. William Fitz-Osbern was appointed Earl in 1067; Roger of Montgomery could not have been appointed Earl till later in 1068. At the time of the Queen's coronation neither Waltheof nor Eadwine had yet revolted; Eadwine was still Earl of the Mercians; Waltheof,

not yet Earl of the Northumbrians, was Earl of Northampton and Huntingdon. The meeting of these Bishops and these Earls, together with the Queen, is perfectly possible in the summer of 1068; it is not possible earlier or later.

“A kind of impulse leads the inquirer to look at the signatures first of all. But the document has a date. It was done ‘anno dominicæ incarnationis mill. lxxvii. Indict. vi.’ This date is impossible; the sixth year of the indiction is 1068, not 1067. The date is confirmed again by this kind of mistake, which forms an undesigned coincidence. We can hardly doubt that the real date in the original was ‘mill. lxxviii.’ and that the transcriber left out an *i*. This is much more likely than that he should turn *v* into *vi*.

“It is hardly possible that a forger should have drawn up a list of signatures which could stand so minute an examination as this. At the very least, he must have copied a real list of signatures attached to some genuine document. And for the purposes of general history it would be almost as important to know that these persons met at the time of Matilda’s coronation and signed anything, as to know they met and signed this particular grant of Banwell. But those whom we have mentioned are by no means the only persons who sign the grant, and the names and titles, together with the date, are highly instructive. The time is just after William had subdued the West, but while the North was still unconquered. The northern Earls were at his court, but their land and its people had not submitted. We see then that Giso came about William to get possession of Banwell almost as soon as William had power to do anything in Somerset. But this was not William’s first act on behalf of Giso. There is evidence to show that Winesham had been already restored. The writ of William restoring it will be found in the *Monasticon*, ii. 288. It is addressed ‘Ailnodo abbati et Tovi vicecomiti et omnibus baronibus [pegnas] Sumersætæ.’ That is to say, Winesham was held to be land unjustly retained by a private person; therefore the King sends a mere writ to the

Sheriff to have justice done. But Banwell had passed to the Crown, and its alienation needed the more solemn sanction of a Gemót. A writ would be sent off at once; the Banwell matter would be kept for the pentecostal Gemót. This does not explain why Giso does not mention his acquisition of Banwell; it does explain why he does not couple that acquisition with the recovery of Winesham. The date to which the document is fixed exactly agrees with the character of the signatures. We have mentioned those only which help to fix the date. But there are a crowd of others, Norman and English. In later documents of William's reign the English signatures die out. At this time, a year and a half after William's coronation, at a moment when no actual war was waging, when William really possessed only the southern and eastern part of the island, when he was in truth little more than King of the West-Saxons, the English signatures are naturally many. There are four English Abbots, and no Norman. Of these, Æthelnoth of Glastonbury was a person concerned, being addressed in the writ about Winesham. The description of the Earls as 'Dux' seems to point to an English scribe; a Norman would have used 'Comes,' and he would have added the title to Robert of Mortain, Count in Normandy, though not Earl in England. The description of Roger of Montgomery as 'princeps' is also English. He was a great man, but as yet he had no definite title. Tofig, the Sheriff of the shire concerned, signs with the English title of 'minister,' that is *thegn*. Among the Norman signatures, besides famous men like Walter Gifford—whose name is spelled in a very English way, *Gefeheard*—and Hugh of Montfort, we find 'Willelm de Curcello,' 'Serlo de Burca,' and 'Rotgerus Derundel,' all of whom appear in Domesday as landowners in Somerset. We have also, placed lower down in the list than we should have looked for him 'Richard filius regis,' which shows that William's young second son came to England with his mother. The chief Norman signatures come before the Englishmen, but some are mixed up with the Englishmen. This illustrates a law of

William, by which those Normans who had been naturalised under Edward counted as Englishmen. We thus find coupled together 'Bundi Stallere' and 'Rotbert Stallere.' The second, of course, is Edward's favourite Robert the son of Wymarc. The signature of Bondig shows that he kept his office under William; how long, we cannot tell. It may therefore help to support the genuineness of some Westminster writs in which he is also mentioned. And among the English signatures we have a good many local men whose names appear in the sale of Combe, and who are naturally called on to witness a document affecting their own shire. Such, beside the Sheriff Tofig, are Wulfweard, Herding, Adzor the seller of Combe, Brixi, and Brihtric, whether the obscure son of Dodda or the more famous son of Ælfgar.

"Here then we have in the summer of 1068 just such a set of signatures as we might look for in a document in the summer of 1068 affecting matters in Somerset. We turn to the body of the document, and we see in it something of the inflated style of the older Latin charters, while the style of William is characteristically made imperial—'Willelmus dei gracia tocius Brittanie monarches.' But one phrase follows which may be thought to go far against the genuineness of the document. Duduc makes the gift; 'Haroldus vero Rex cupiditate inflammatus abstulerat.' It is certainly not the manner of documents of William's reign to call Harold 'King;' and moreover Harold was not King at the time when the transaction, whatever we are to call it, happened. In itself this is ugly, but it is the only thing in the whole document which has anything suspicious about it. Is it then enough to make us set aside a document which has such a mass of curious and incidental evidence in its favour? Harold is certainly called King in one Westminster document attributed to William, but then it is a Westminster document. But even the compilers of Domesday, who so carefully describe Harold simply as Earl, have inadvertently let one entry stand where his rule is described by the word 'regnavit.' The English scribe may have risked the insertion of the title, and it may have

passed unnoticed in an assembly where the mass of those who could read or write were clearly Englishmen. There was as yet no subtle Lanfranc to spy out everything. Or again, we must remember that we are dealing not with the original, but with the copy. Was 'Rex' a gloss which the copyist transferred to the text? Was the original word 'Dux?' Did the translator get puzzled at it and turn it into 'Rex?' Any of these conjectures would seem more likely than that a forger should have been so preternaturally ingenious as to invent or light upon a set of signatures which exactly suit a short time of a few months, and which suit no time earlier or later.

"As usual, the body of the document is in Latin; the heading and the boundaries are in English. The boundaries are, of course, of high local, but only of local, interest. The grant itself certainly helps to give us a clearer notion of the state of things at a time less than two years after King William came into England. The process of confiscation of Englishmen's lands and of removal of Englishmen from their offices, which went on bit by bit through all William's reign, is as yet at an early stage. There is already one Norman Earl, one Norman Bishop; but no English Earl or Bishop has yet been removed from his post. A crowd of Englishmen of lower rank still hold a position high enough to be summoned to the Assembly and invited to sign its acts. In short, at Whitsuntide 1068, the Court of William was still more English than Norman. This one document, in itself of only local importance, sets all this before us; it lets us see more clearly than recorded history enables us to see who were the men, Norman and English, who stood by when Matilda the Lady was hallowed to Queen."¹

The following is a copy of the charter, fol. 246. v.

"*Dis is dære xxx hyda boc set Banawelle þe Willhelm*

(1). The Cottonian MS. Vitellius E. xii. at fol. 159, contains a litany with music, which appears to have been used at the coronation of Matilda. The book is cotemporaneous, and other parts of it belonged to the cathedral monastery of Winchester.

cyng gebocade Sancto Andrea apostolo in to þam biscoprice sæt pelle a on ece yrfe.

“ † Regnante imperpetuum domino nostro Jesu Christo Ego Willelmus dei gracia tocius Brittanie monarches antecessorum meorum catholice et apostolice fidei integritatem colencium imitatus vestigia earum rerum que in hac convalle lacrimarum possidere videor datorem meum Jesum Christum participem facere proposui et ex terrenis atque temporalibus celestia et eterna ab eo commutare. Pulsatus quoque piis precibus Gisonis episcopi xxx mansus in loco qui a solicolis Banawelle dicitur quos antecessor ejus Dodoco episcopus pro anima sua Deo contulerat. Haroldus vero rex cupiditate inflammatus abstulerat. Sancto Andree Apostolo ad augendum ecclesiastice dignitatis commodum in proprium dominium episcopalis sedis et in sustentacionem fratrum Wellensis ecclesie in perpetuam libertatem restituo cum omnibus ad se pertinentibus id est silvis campis pratis piscuariis pro me et pro anima patris mei et pro antecessoris mei Edwardi Regis et pro omnibus mihi fideliter adherentibus. Hoc vero largitatis mee munus ab omni fiscali vectigalique jure absolvo tribus tantum exceptis expedicione pontis et arcis edificacione. Si quis hoc custodire et augere voluerit augeat ei Deus presencia bona et celestia gaudia consequatur. Siquis (f. 247.) vero quod non opto instigante Diabolo hoc frangere vel minuere ausus fuerit dispereat de terra memoria ejus et nomen ejus deleatur de libro vivencium.

“ Termini vero predicte terre hi sunt.²

* “ Dis syndan þa land gemæro sæt Banawelle. Ærest sæt hylsbrokes ea willme east on þone cumb eall abutan losa leh swa west on þone cumb & swa west of ðam cumbe to bibricge. of bibricge into ture broc. of ture broke into locxs of loxs into bridewell to pantes hyd ford. to fule welle ut on þone mære of ðam mære on ealden wrinn into catt widige up ford be cyng

(2). In Liber Albus there is confusion between *d* and *ð*, and it is thought best to follow Mr. Earle's advice and attempt to correct, and in doubtful cases read *d*.

roda aest in þone wrinnæst⁴ streame ford. þat hit cymð in þone hyls broc up þat it cymð æst inne þa eaa willme

† Dis syndan þa land gemæru into Cumbtune Ærest on hryges torr of hrygestorre east on þone smalen weg &lang³ wæges on ealmes feald eastwearde swa &lang wæges on þone scyte swa on þone norðernna weg on þa stygela & swa &lang weges on oearce rode of þære rode on ufe wearde calewen swa rihte nyðer on þa sand scapas þone rihte on þone holan weg &lang wæges on ceolc broc &lang broces ut on reod ræwe on axa to wæde wær swa &lang eaa to wiht hyrste of ðære hyrste on þa blindan ea. swa æst on axa &lang streames on loxan & lang loxan up on cyrces gemæro & on bertunes gemæru swa up ofer duna est on hricges torr.

“ And æt hiwisc þæra v hida c æcere mæde be suðan heawican & et ceoddor mynster viiii. heordas & þ gemena land uf bufen melc wæge & eall seo wyrd on sundran & se wudu of ðam forde up andlang ceodder cumbes on hean næsa. of ðam næse on þa gemær ac on eadbrihtes cumbe andlang cumbes æst þ hit cymð ut on þone feld

“ Ut autem que agimus per posteritates sibi succedentes rata et inuolata queant esse Anno dominice Incarnacionis Mill lx. vii. Indict. vi hac privilegii confirmamus kartula que apocrifas quaslibet vel anteriores si que huic forte non consenserint irritas faciat esse et multorum testium quorum consilio hec sunt diffinita subter annectimus nomina. Si quis hoc mee paruitatis dono Deum sanctumque Andream spoliaverit inremediabili percussus anathemate eterne dampnacioni subiaceat + Ego Willhelmus rex Anglorum crucis titulo meam confirmo donacionem + Ego Mathyld regina eodem signo adhibeo confirmacionem + Ego Stigandus archiepiscopus consensi et subscripsi + Ego Aldrædus archiepiscopus confirmavi + Ego Odo episcopus frater Regis conroboraui (f. 247. v.) + Ego Hugo episcopus consolidavi + Ego Goffrid episcopus consignavi

(3). Andlang is always written incorrectly as two words.

+ Ego Heremannus episcopus consensi
 + Ego Leofricus episcopus non renui
 + Ego Gilmær episcopus annui
 + Ego Willhelmus episcopus laudavi
 + Ego Egelricus episcopus confirmo
 + Ego Walterus episcopus favi
 + Ego Wulfsig episcopus confirmavi
 + Ego Remigius episcopus consignavi
 + Ego Æpelnod̄ abbas + Ego Leofweard abbas + Ego Wulfpold
 abbas + Ego Wulfgeat abbas + Ego Willhelmus dux + Ego
 Palpeof dux + Ego Eadpine dux + Ego Rotbertus frater regis
 + Ego Rotgerus princeps + Ego Walterus Gefeheard + Ego Hugo
 De muntforz + Ego Willhelm de curcello + Ego Serlo de burca
 + Ego Rotgerus Derundel + Ego Richard filius regis + Ego
 Waldtere fleminc + Ego Rambriht fleminc + Ego þurstan
 + Ego Balduinus de parten beige + Ego Othelheard + Ego Hei-
 mericus + Ego Toug minister + Ego Dinni + Ego Ælfge arde
 thorne + Ego Willhelm de palvile + Ego Bundi stallere + Ego
 Rotbert stallere + Ego Rotbert de ylis + Ego Rogerus pincerna
 + Ego Wulfpeardus + Ego Herding + Ego Adzor + Ego Brixi
 + Ego Brihtric."

Besides the things mentioned in the article, it is odd that the canons of Wells should be called *Fratres*, and that so much should be said about posterity, and a hint given that there were spurious charters nearly to the same effect as this. Such things are more likely to be in a spurious charter than a real one.

But even if not genuine the charter is early, and the boundaries contain curious matters of local history.

I have first to explain about Compton Bishop. There is a charter in *Kemble's Codex*, vol iii, p. 137, which is probably spurious, but is not late. It states that Edgar renewed the liberty of Taunton, which had been granted to the Bishop of Winchester by his predecessors, for 200 mancuses of gold, and 50 more given to his wife Ælfdryða, and a silver cup weighing 5 pounds, and that long ago 60 hides had been given to King

Edward for the liberty, whereof 10 were at Cumbtune and 20 at Banwylle. The charter of Edward is given—vol. v, p. 157, dated 904, and not marked as spurious,—and it says the same thing. Another charter of Edgar, which appears to be genuine, at p. 143 of vol. iii, mentions the same bargain, and makes Banwell contain thirty hides, and says nothing of Compton. It is plain, therefore, that Compton Bishop was considered part of Banwell. It also appears from the deed we are now considering that of the ten hides to be allotted to Compton, five were at Huish, near Highbridge, which is now part of Burnham. The assessment of moveables of the 1st year of Edward III rates Banwell at 38*s.* 1*d.*, Compton at 42*s.* 10*d.*, and the free manor of Hiwische juxta altum pontem at 20*s.*, Burnham paying besides 46*s.* 6*d.* Puxton, which was then part of Banwell, is not mentioned.

Collinson is wrong, therefore, in identifying (vol. iii, p. 582) Compton Bishop as the two Contunes held by Walter de Dowai. Possibly these manors, and another Contune held by Serlo de Burci, are Compton Martin and Ubley, and perhaps Eluuacre and Euuacre, who held them in the time of Edward, were the same person. The parishes are both in Chewton hundred.

In the older Liber Albus of the Wells Chapter, at folio 26, is a long document of Bishop Robert, dated 1159, which makes what remains of the estate at Huish into a prebend; it was then only one hide, and it is stated to have been of old a member of the Bishops Manor of Banwell. Some of the recitals are curious, and seem to show that Church property was dealt with in a very careless manner in the century after the conquest. "This property, as we have learnt from old people, and have seen overselves, has by the bounty of our predecessors been given over into the power and possession of various persons, as well lay as clerics, among whom we remember Master Walter de Moretania, whom we found possessing Hiwis when we were called to the Bishopric, after whom Master Alured, through our gift, and then Master Richard of Montacute obtained it. And because we have seen

and heard that the said Hiwis has come into the power and possession of many persons, as we said before, without any certain title; for these reasons, therefore, fearing that it might be given over into the possession of the laity altogether, through the pressure perhaps of the requests of those, whose prayers for the most part have the effect of commands, or through our carelessness, which God forbid, or that of our successors, we have determined to set it apart altogether to holy purposes, from which it may never be separated, and therefore at the request and with the advice of our clergy we have determined to make it a perpetual prebend of our Church of St. Andrew." This prebend was afterwards united to that of Brent, and both to the archdeaconry of Wells. And I fear that now, at last, the Bishop's wishes for the preservation of the property to the Church have been wholly frustrated, and it has gone with the other prebendal property into the hands of laics. The late Mr. Hugo has given a short abstract of this deed from Hutton's very interesting and useful collections in the Harleian library in our *Transactions*, volume ix. part ii. p. 5, and he makes the acute remark that the name Huish indicates that the estate consisted of but one hyde, following I suppose the "ancient laws, &c." (vol. i. p. 186),—a view which is strengthened by the fact that this name occurs so frequently in our county as if it were a homestead added to or distinguished from some larger district. In this charter, however, it is plainly stated that there are five hides at Huish. If there were five it is curious that four of them should have got into lay hands in less than 100 years, and any one who looks at the map may feel a doubt whether there is room for five hides between Highbridge and Burnham. I think it due to the memory of Mr. Hugo to give his remark, and state the difficulty which perhaps it solves.

Afterwards, at folio 27, Joscelin, in 1228, grants to Helias, canon of the prebend of Cumtun, and his successors, that the land of Hiwis, in Brent Marsh, which was formerly a member of our manor of Banwell, should be free of suit to Banwell hundred.

Here perhaps we have another portion of the estate at Hewish accounted for.

The following is a translation of the boundaries of Banwell : These are the boundaries at Banwell. First at Hillbrook water-source. (This brook, as will be seen afterwards, was the eastern boundary of Banwell from the hill to the River Yeo, following the water-course marked in the maps as the Bale Yeo. It rises now in Rowberrow or Shipham, but Mr. Llewellyn tells me that there are indications of springs between the turnpike road and the railway, on the present boundary of Banwell, and larger springs higher up on the boundary of Shipham and Winscombe. The former springs must be those which are mentioned here as the source) —east to the combe, all about looseley, so west to the combe and so west from the combe to Biberrow,⁵ from Biberrow to Tower brook (this cannot be the place marked Tower Head in the maps). From Tower brook into Lox (this must be the brook which gives its name to Loxton, and is still the parish boundary for near a mile)⁶ to Bridewell (Bridewell land is still the parish boundary against Christon) to Panteshide Ford (or as Mr. Earle, who has kindly helped me with this translation, would give it, “to Panteshide forward to Foulwell”) to Foulwell out to the mæR (the word means boundary, but seems to have some other signification here). To Old Wrinn to Catt Withy Upford or forward, by King’s Cross, east to the Wrinn’s eastward stream ford or forward. (The expression, Old Wrinn, shews that the River Yeo, which appears by the boundaries of Wrington to have had anciently the name of Wring—as might be expected from the name of the place,—had a disused channel; where this may have been is matter of guess-work, and it is the more puzzling, as I do not understand the boun-

(5). In the Mells boundaries (Kemble 6, 231) Tedbury, a very remarkable mound is *Todanbrigge* in the first line and *Todanberghe* in the last. It is very correctly called the *muchel dich*, and seems to remove any doubt about *brigge* meaning mound or barrow.

(6). There were two other Lox brooks near Bath, called perhaps after *lox*, a salmon.

daries after Bridewell Lane. The present boundary of Wick St. Lawrence, between the Yeo and the stream which flows from near Locking and Worle to Worspring is close by a place called Cross House. It is possible that this boundary may be in the place of the old disused water-course, and that Cross House may have been named from King's Cross. This boundary line is still the boundary of Banwell for a mile, and the brook from Locking and Worle, just mentioned, is also the boundary for nearly three miles on the west of the parish. It is probable therefore that the present outlet of the Yeo between Wick and Kingston Seamore is artificial, though older than the conquest. The chief difficulty in the way of this view is that it implies that West Huish, in Yatton, must have belonged to Banwell as well as Puxton. About Puxton there is no difficulty, and as Banwell, Puxton, and Yatton all belonged to the Bishop, it is conceivable that when Puxton was separated from Banwell an adjustment of the boundaries between the latter and Yatton was made also.) Until it comes to the Hill Brook; until it comes east to the water-source. (Here again it seems from the Wring to follow the Bale Yeo, and the stream which falls into it, to its head from which the boundary began. This, with some exceptions, is the present boundary of Banwell and Puxton on the east.)

With regard to Compton Bishop, Ridges Tor is plainly Crook Peak, and describes it admirably as the Tor at the end of the ridge of Wavering Down, along which the boundary runs from west to east, following the Small way to Scyte, which is the valley between Shutshelve Hill and Wavering Down, through which the Bristol road from Cross and the railroad pass. The road along this high ground, which was and is the boundary, is the Roman road from the mines at Charterhouse to the port at the mouth of the Axe. One would like to know the present name of the field on Wavering Down, which seems to have been Ealmes Field, or Elmfield. We then come to the northern way, up Shutshelve Hill, and the stile and the Church cross or possibly road, which cannot be that of Compton, but apparently is near

Axbridge, and then on Ufe Wearde Calewen, which Mr. Earle translates over Calewa, the latter being the name of a place. (I am tempted to translate the words to Over Weare Calvary, and to suppose they mean Weare Church Cross. Mr. Pooley, in his interesting and valuable work on the *Crosses of Somerset*, shews that this cross is raised high on several steps.) To the sand pits (Mr. Earle corrects sand seadas, changing *c* into *e*), the hollow way, chalk brook, and reed row, we come then to the Axe at the Wæde Wær, probably salmon wear, from which the parish of Weare takes its name. The modern boundary, and there is no reason to suppose it has been altered, crosses the low ground and the Axe from the west end of Axbridge to near Weare Church. We must suppose that the places just mentioned were on the one side of the river or the other, because the sand pits must be just under the high ground at some old bend of the river, and the chalk brook also, where the water has for ages laid down its white petrification—a thing common, as well as the name, in lias countries—and the hollow way also in the hill behind, and I incline to think they must be all south of the Axe. If it be objected to this, that we have no notice of the boundaries crossing the river, we may reply with Mr. Skey that the river would not be mentioned unless it were a boundary, which probably it was not. Then along the water course to Whitehurst, the white coppice; from thence to the Blind Water, and then again to Axe. There is a water-course, apparently old, because it is the boundary now between Compton and Weare at Cross, which is probably this Blind Water. The boundary of the parishes now agrees exactly with the description in the charter, if this is the case. Mr. Skey tells me he cannot make out that the Cross river was ever called Blindwater. He says there used to be a backwater of the Axe running through the house where the Bridgewater Road meets Knotting way, which was once a mill, and he is told that the backwater was called blind-river, and that a rhine marking the line of the old stream is now called the blind rhine. One is

disposed to think that "blind" is a local term for "disused." A glance at the map leads one also to think that the Cross river is modern, and if so it is very remarkable that for more than half a mile it follows the ancient boundary of the parish, and what was probably a disused watercourse.

The boundary afterwards, for nearly three miles, followed the course of the Axe and the Lox brook, just as it does now, to Cyroes Gemæro, which is the boundary of Christon, and Berton's Gemæru, which is that of Barton, all that remains to bring it up over the down east to Ridges Tor, from which it started.

After the Compton Bishop boundaries follows a reference—that is all—to the five hides at Hiwisc (Hewish, at Burnham), the Hundred Acre Mead at South Hay Wick, and to rights of common, as well as property, at Cheddar and boundaries there, which I cannot explain. And at Cheddar Minster nine Heordes,⁷ and the common land up above Milkingway, and all the farm held in separate property, and the wood from the ford (what ford?) up along Cheddar Combe to the high point (or rock), from the point to the boundary oak at Eadbright's Combe, and along the combe east, until it came out on the field.

(7). The viiii. has no tail to the last stoke, as is always given if it is a numeral. The writing of this part of Liber Albus is bad, and the copyist ignorant, and did his work much worse than the copyist of the Combe Charter. If the viiii. is a numeral I suppose the 9 Heordes or Heordas to be pasture in Cheddar pasture common for 9 beasts for the Bishop's people, perhaps his own, in the King's land there. The reference to the road "for to milky" at Cheddar is interesting.