

# ‘THAT MOST FAMOUS *MONASTERIUM* AT BATH’, ITS HUNDRED HIDES AND ITS ESTATES, VIEWED FROM SOUTH STOKE

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## *Summary*

*The essential facts of the early history of South Stoke are straightforward: it was granted to the ‘monastery’ at Bath by King Ethelred of Wessex some time between 865 and 871, then re-granted to Bath Abbey by King Edgar in 961 and it was still in the hands of Bath Priory, successor to the abbey, at the Dissolution in 1539. These bare facts are not enough to satisfy, but can only be amplified by conjecture and speculation. On balance, it seems that the Wansdyke was a late 6th-century temporary line of demarcation between the Gewissae of the Thames valley and the ‘Welsh’ of the south-west peninsula, with no lasting effect on land arrangements, while the significant later boundary was the River Avon, marking off Mercia from Wessex. The severest critic would treat both the 676 grant of 100 hides to a religious house for women (Appendix: Document 1) and the 757 x 758 grant of North Stoke to a house for monks as complete forgeries and insist that the earliest evidence of the existence of a religious house in Bath was from 781 when Bishop Heathured surrendered to King Offa the ‘very famous ‘monastery’ at Bath’. If 100 hides were really granted in 676 to endow a religious house for women at Bath, South Stoke will not have been among them; as a possible ‘stoke’ of a Saxon land-unit called ‘Combe’, it will have lain within Wessex and will probably then have looked towards the nearest royal centre, at Frome. When 30 hides south of the River Avon were acquired by the Bishop of Worcester and then by King Offa from him in 781 (Appendix: Document 2), Monkton Combe and South Stoke, perhaps a unit, will have been among them. They would have become part of the land of Bath and were perhaps taken into Mercia. As Mercian power weakened and that kingdom was absorbed by Wessex, it was kings of the latter who began to amplify the lands of the house for monks at Bath. It is assumed that Monkton Combe and South Stoke were granted as a unit by King Ethelred, but that South Stoke subsequently became detached and was restored by King Edgar. Thus the early history of South Stoke involves a fascinating but uncertain exploration of the antiquity of the two earliest religious houses in Bath, the size and location of their lands, and the relationship of these lands to the changing boundary where the people of Wessex faced the Mercians.*

## INTRODUCTION

This article begins from the charter of AD 961, by which South Stoke was restored to the Church of Bath, then looks at the periods before and after, starting from the supposed foundation of a ‘nunnery’ in Bath in 676, to which 100 hides of land were said to have been granted, and finishing with the

dissolution of Bath Priory, the successor to the Benedictine abbey, in 1539. The River Avon long marked the boundary between Wessex and Mercia, Bath being in Mercia and South Stoke in Wessex. Thus a necessary study of the beginnings of South Stoke inevitably means engaging with a ‘nunnery’, a ‘monastery’, a ‘minster’, an abbey, a priory and two kingdoms.

Today South Stoke<sup>1</sup> is a quiet, still rural, ecclesiastical and civil parish, the successor to an Ancient Parish,<sup>2</sup> that lies to the south of Bath. Its church is barely two miles from Bath 'Abbey'. Although they seem to belong to different worlds, the two have been intimately connected for at least 1000 years. The village itself is on the south-facing side of a spur of hill that rises to 450 feet and which is bounded by the Horsecombe, Midford and Cam Brooks; these also delimit three sides of the parish in which the only other significant settlement is Midford.

What became known as Ancient Parishes arose from the construction of a church with jurisdiction over an area of land which was often identical with that of a manor (Fig. 1). South Stoke was bounded on the north side by the Ancient Parishes of Lyncombe-with-Widcombe and Monkton Combe. Close to the ford that named Midford, South Stoke met the Somerset Ancient Parishes of Freshford and Wellow and a part of Norton St Philip (the chapelry of Hinton Charterhouse), as well as Limpley Stoke, an area in Bradford-on-Avon Ancient Parish in Wiltshire. Combe Hay Ancient Parish confined South Stoke from the west, while at its north-west corner, South Stoke touched the Ancient Parish of Englishcombe.

From the mid-10th century, when shires were subdivided into administrative districts called hundreds,<sup>3</sup> South Stoke, Lyncombe-with-Widcombe, Monkton Combe and Freshford were placed in Bath Hundred, while Hinton Charterhouse, Norton St Philip, Combe Hay, Englishcombe and Wellow were in Wellow Hundred, which itself was one of the three hundreds centred on the ancient royal site of Frome.

#### THE CHARTER OF 961

There are few early notices of South Stoke and it rates no more than a passing mention in the County histories.<sup>4</sup> Its first appearance in records is in 961 when King Edgar (959–975),<sup>5</sup> restored to St Peter's of Bath what he called *ruris quandam particulam, quinis subestimatam mansiunculis* ('a small portion of the countryside, assessed<sup>6</sup> as five small homesteads') at *Tottanstoc*.<sup>7</sup> The charter is phrased in the grand style and *quinae mansiunculae* appears to be no more than an elegant variation for *quinque hidae*, that is 5 hides of land. The hide had once been a measure of area, what was considered enough to support a 'family' or to keep a plough occupied

for a year.<sup>8</sup> No doubt it had varied in extent according to the nature of the terrain and had probably once included woodland, meadow and rough grazing in addition to the arable that it later particularly described. It was a unit from which service and food, or money in lieu, were demanded; in the early 10th century, men from each hide were responsible for the construction and upkeep of each fortified *burh* as part of the effort to expel the Danes<sup>9</sup> and, later in that century, geld was levied on each hide to buy off these same Danes.<sup>10</sup> Thus the hide shifted from an agrarian measure of uncertain and variable size to a measure of tax and other liabilities: if the tax burden was reduced, the number of hides could be similarly reduced even though the actual size of the estate remained the same. So the definition of 'hide' is complex and as a measure of area it is uncertain and still controversial: there is no simple and universal relation between the hidage of an estate and a modern measure of parochial acreage, even when early estates and later parishes have the same bounds.<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless the approximate relative size of South Stoke can be judged from the fact that at the time of Domesday Book (1086), Bathford contained 10 hides, Lyncombe 10 hides and Bathampton 5 hides.<sup>12</sup>

This charter gives the bounds of *Tottanstoc* (Fig. 2) in Old English, which in translation are: 'First it is bounded by the Wansdyke on the north-west. Then to the Horsecombe Springs,<sup>13</sup> along the brook into the *Camelar*. Along the *Camelar* upstream to the boundary brook. Along the brook upstream to the western[most of the] seven springs. Then up on to the hill along the boundary brook. Then straight north for some time; then a little way west around a gore as far as the old made road. Along the made road to the Wansdyke once more.'

These bounds are fully traceable:<sup>14</sup>

- (1) 'First it is bounded by the Wansdyke on the north-west'. The bounds start at ST734617, a few yards west of the Foss Way, and they follow a well-preserved stretch of the Wansdyke eastwards to the Cross Keys Inn (ST747618). The construction and widening of the turnpike road (now the B3110) has destroyed the earthwork which will have crossed it and the pub forecourt.
- (2) 'Then to the Horsecombe Springs'. The Horsecombe Springs no doubt lay just to the east of and below the Cross Keys Inn at the head of the vale: the exact line of the boundary is still marked by the borough boundary and turnpike stones on Southstoke Road and by a bank

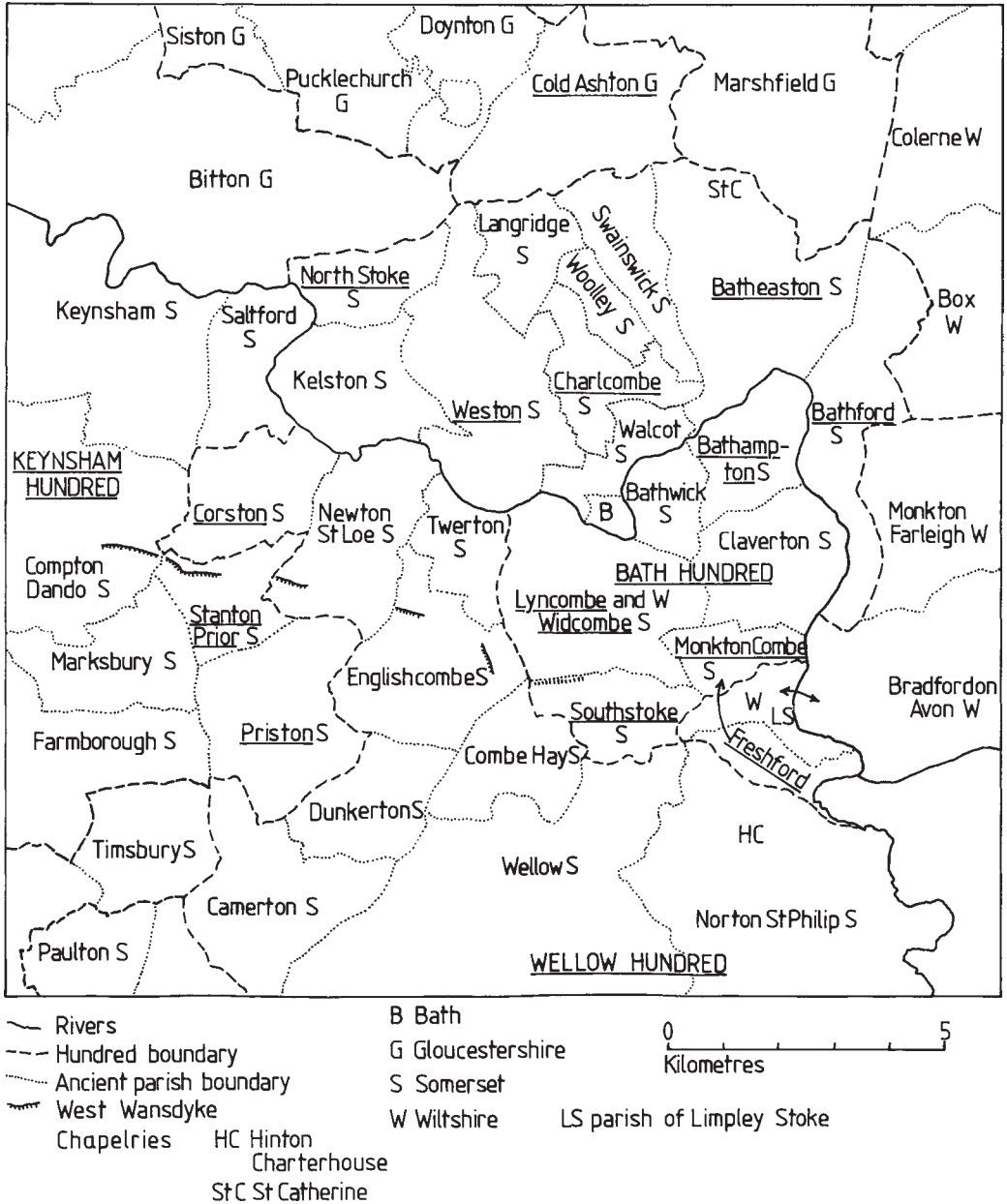


Fig. 1 The area around Bath: hundred boundaries; underlined names represent areas held partly or wholly by Bath Abbey in 1086

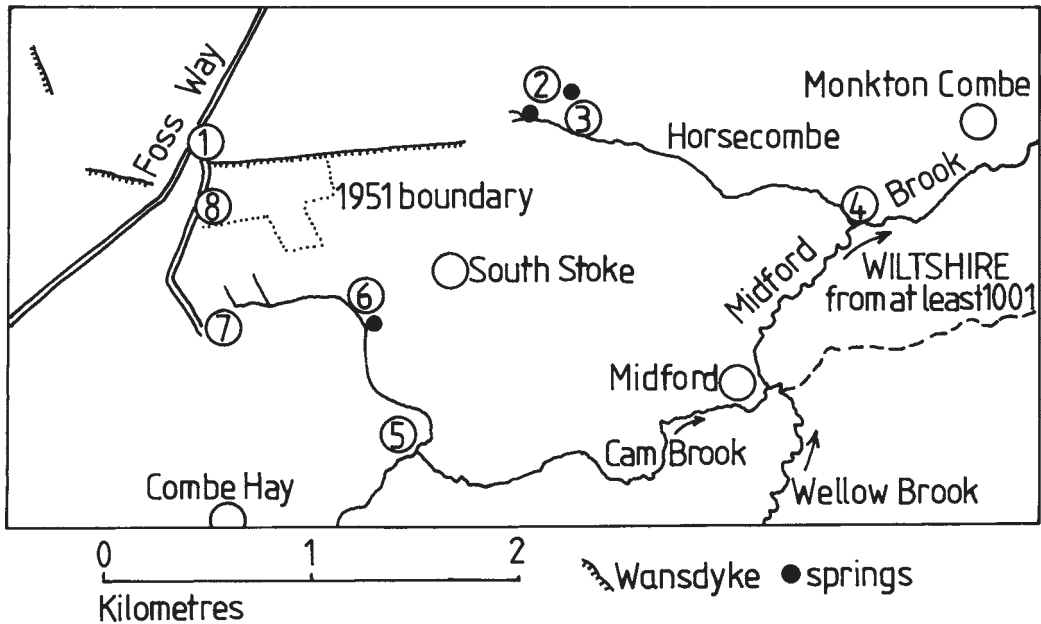


Fig. 2 Charter boundaries around South Stoke: 961AD

forming the boundary between two gardens.<sup>15</sup> The bank cannot be traced further, but no doubt gave place to the stream which appears as a pool, fed by several springs at ST749619.

- (3) 'Along the brook into the *Camelar*'. The boundary follows the Horsecombe Brook to its junction (at ST766614) with the *Camelar* which is now called the Cam Brook or the Midford Brook on different stretches.
- (4) 'Along the *Camelar* upstream to the boundary brook'.<sup>16</sup> The line follows the Midford Brook to Midford, then from its junction with the Wellow Brook at ST761606 (after which it becomes the Cam Brook) to the junction with the unnamed stream which is the 'boundary brook'. The confluence will have been at ST744603 where the parish boundary leaves the Cam Brook, but there is no stream here now. The outfall of the 'boundary brook' has been interrupted by the arrival of the Somerset Coal Canal (which probably took its water) and the Limpley Stoke to Camerton branch of the Great Western Railway and by the more recent infilling of the canal at this point.
- (5) 'Along the brook upstream to the western[most

of the] seven springs'. The 'boundary brook' probably ran where the parish boundary does along what is now the first half of the flight of locks that replaced the caisson lock on the canal.<sup>17</sup> The boundary then goes northwards up the stream but without much climbing to reach the corner of Rowley Wood (ST742609). The 'seven springs' may have lain near here, some being marked at ST743609 on modern maps.

- (6) 'Then up on to the hill along the boundary brook'. The brook now turns westwards and climbs up the narrow combe.
- (7) 'Then straight north for some time; then a little way west around a gore as far as the old made road'. As one goes upstream the brook abruptly turns to the north at ST736610 and can be followed up the contours. The combe itself continues on a little to the west. The stream emerges from the hillside at ST735611 close to what are described as 'Works' on the Ordnance Survey map. However, the bounds do not mention the stream beyond the turning point. Nor does it really go 'straight north for some time' unless this is really a measure of time and effort rather than distance, for the boundary rises up

the contours. It then passes around a ‘gore’ of land. A ‘gore’ (Old English *gara*) is a projection or triangular piece of land, often enclosed, and this deviation from the straight upward line is most evident on the Tithé Apportionment map of 1842 (surveyed in 1840) where the field called Foxmoor 7 meets Lower Souls Field 6.<sup>18</sup> Here the boundary actually turns east to the apex of the gore, before turning westwards; rather than suppose that the modern boundary is the reverse of that in the charter, one can assume that the writer is thinking of the second or return side of the gore. The boundary then runs northwards again before reaching the ‘old made road’. Old English *stræt* (from Latin (*via*) *strata*, meaning ‘laid road’ or ‘flattened road’) is often used of a Roman road or of any road that is well-made or has a man-made surface: Stratton-on-the-Fosse [Old English *stræt-tun*] preserves the word. However, it is not certain that those who supplied charter bounds could distinguish one well-made road from another or Roman work from Saxon, or judge the antiquity of a route. The reference in the charter is not to the Foss Way but to the road from Combe Hay to Odd Down.<sup>19</sup>

- (8) ‘Along the made road to the Wansdyke once more’. The boundary joins the ‘old made road’ at ST734615 and follows it until it is crossed by the Wansdyke just before it reaches the Foss Way at ST734617 where the bounds began. In effect, the bounds described in the charter are those of the manor and ancient parish of South Stoke as they survived until 1951 before a small portion at the north-west corner was incorporated into the city of Bath.<sup>20</sup>

*Tottanstoc* means the *stoc* of a man called Totta. There is a house called ‘Tottanstoc’ on Southstoke Road, but the name (like ‘Hantone Hill’, a road in Bathampton) is a ‘learned’ revival. The centre of the ancient settlement probably lay down the slope near the church and what is now the Packhorse Inn, where water is available on a site protected from the north and west. In subsequent mentions of the place *Tottanstoc* is replaced by *Sudstoc(a)*, *Sustoc*, *Sustok*, *Soutestok*, *Suthstoca*, *Suthstok*, *Southstok(e)*, and once by *Siccestoca* and *Suthstokeham*.<sup>21</sup> It is the southern ‘stoke’, either in relation to Bath (as Weston is the western *tun*) or in regard to North Stoke which had been granted to St Peter’s ‘monastery’ by charter 200 years before in 757 x 758.<sup>22</sup> ‘South’ and ‘North’ would be a way in which the church could distinguish its ‘Stokes’, rather than being a usage of those who

actually lived on the estates for whom confusion would be unlikely. The Church of Hereford thus distinguished Lydbury North in Shropshire from Ledbury in Herefordshire, 40 miles away, as they have the same medieval spellings.

*Stoc* is itself an important Old English place-name element, with several significant meanings. From some original notion of ‘place’ grew the meanings ‘holy place’, ‘monastic site’, ‘outlying dependency’ and ‘cattle farm’ or ‘dairy farm’; these last two meanings may well be an extension of the notion of dependency.<sup>23</sup> Basingstoke (a dependency of Old Basing) and Meonstoke (the *stoc* of Meon), both in Hampshire, show the common sense of dependency, but in the case of South Stoke, the particular meaning is difficult to fix. However, as a name, it does stand out from the simple topographical names that surround it: Lyncombe, (Monkton) Combe, Combe (Hay) [earlier Combe *Hauwey*], Englishcombe, Midford, Freshford, Wellow (a British name for the brook). Such basic topographical names are probably more primitive than settlement names in *-tun* and in *-ham*, which like *stoc* imply hierarchies and relationships between estates. It would be in line with early charters to suggest that the area of South Stoke was once part of a larger area designated by a ‘Combe’ name and that the *stoc* name only arose when this particular portion of ‘Combe’ was separated and became part of or related to something else. It may well have the same simple sense of dependency as in (Limpley) Stoke and Radstock.<sup>24</sup>

#### THE ORIGINAL GRANT (865 x 871)

So the name *Tottanstoc* probably implies a dependency that predated the grant to St Peter’s of Bath in 961, Totta being the name of an early holder from an unknown overlord. In fact, King Edgar’s ‘grant’ was a restoration. In the grandiose preamble to the charter, King Edgar says ‘I have generously bestowed under the authority [of St Peter’s of Bath] forever, ... by restoring to it and retrieving for it, a small portion of the countryside, ... formerly taken inappropriately and maliciously from the church of the blessed Peter, head of the apostolic company ...’.<sup>25</sup> In the second of the two cartularies of Bath Priory there is a document that lists those kings and others who granted lands to the monks and, incidentally, uses their anniversaries as an excuse for much feasting. According to this document, there

had been an earlier grant of South Stoke (*Suthstokeham*) by King Ethelred of Wessex (865–871): ‘King Ethelred gave to God and the church of Bath and the monks serving God in it South Stoke and he confirmed Grenta’s land of North Stoke’.<sup>26</sup> The fact that in this reference to an earlier grant, the place is called *Suthstokeham*<sup>27</sup> need not be a problem as the document was written in the 12th century and no doubt employed the names that were then in use. Grenta held North Stoke in the time of King Henry I.<sup>28</sup> If South Stoke had indeed first been given by King Ethelred, then it may have been given under the name of *Tottanstoc* unless it was simply a ‘stoke’ or had some other prefix at that time and Totta was a tenant only after the church acquired it. As North Stoke had been lost to the church, it may have been only when Ethelred granted *Tottanstoc* and restored North Stoke, that there was a pressing need to rename *Tottanstoc*, as the church now possessed two places called ‘Stoke’.<sup>29</sup> If South Stoke was granted by Ethelred, it would appear to have been given earlier than the adjacent lands belonging to the Church at Bath: Lyncombe (including Widcombe) had been granted by King Athelstan (929–939), then re-granted (under the name of *Cliftune*) by King Edgar (959–975),<sup>30</sup> while Monkton Combe is first found in Domesday Book (1086), though it had certainly been held by the abbey before the Conquest.<sup>31</sup>

#### THE ‘RELIGIOUS HOUSE OF HOLY MAIDENS’ AT BATH

So all that is tolerably certain about South Stoke’s early history is that it was granted to the Church of Bath by King Ethelred of Wessex some time between 865 and 871, then restored by King Edgar in 961. This is effectively the beginning of its history, but its boundaries are mostly so straightforward, being defined by such simple landscape features, that it may well have existed as a unit of land from earlier times. However, to speculate about the pre-history, as it were, of South Stoke involves the earlier history of the religious houses in Bath,<sup>32</sup> the extent of their foundation grants and South Stoke’s relation to the boundaries of Mercia and Wessex.<sup>33</sup>

Bath has long seemed an inseparable part of Somerset, linked ecclesiastically to Wells and administratively to Somerton or Taunton. The Three Shires Stones standing beside the Foss Way on Bannerdown,<sup>34</sup> mark the point where Gloucestershire, which was shired out of the

kingdom of Mercia, met Somerset and Wiltshire both of which arose from Wessex. Somerset (land of the Somerton-dwellers) and Wiltshire (the *scir* dependent on Wilton) probably date from the 9th century,<sup>35</sup> while Mercia was not sub-divided until later, perhaps in the late 10th century. The name Gloucestershire itself occurs only in 1016.<sup>36</sup> Thus the significance of these stones is not as old as it seems, and the boundaries that led to them from west and east appear late and artificial, for in the late 7th century and for at least another 200 years Bath was in Mercia, and the boundary with Wessex lay somewhere to the south of it.

In 676,<sup>37</sup> Osric, self-styled king (*rex*) of the Hwicce and nephew of Wulfhere (who had ruled Mercia between 657 and 674), gave a charter to Abbess Berta,<sup>38</sup> bestowing on her ‘one hundred hides which lie close to the city which is called *hat Bathu* [Bath], for building a religious house of holy maidens’.<sup>39</sup> The establishment is often called a ‘nunnery’ and its successor in the 8th century, a ‘monastery’, but these terms are misleading if they imply a cloistered life conducted under a strict rule. It is easy to assume that these early foundations fell into clear categories like the Benedictine or Cistercian and other abbeys of later times, when in fact they were much more diverse, diffuse and mixed in character. It was only from the time of the monastic reform of the 10th century that the first houses became Benedictine and were governed by the *Regularis Concordia*. Here, as in other fields, Latin lacks the range of vocabulary that is needed for close definition. If one leaves aside the general term *ecclesia* (‘church’) and the specific *sedes episcopi*, *sedes episcopalis* (‘bishop’s seat’) and *sedes* or *basilica* or *ecclesia*, all paired with *cathedralis* (‘cathedral’),<sup>40</sup> Latin overwhelmingly employs only two interchangeable terms, *monasterium* and *coenobium*, and both can be used of houses that are uniquely or mainly for women or for men. Both are sometimes Englished as ‘minster’, which itself ultimately derives from *monasterium*,<sup>41</sup> but some modern historians reserve ‘minster’ as a shorthand for ‘secular minster church’.<sup>42</sup> King Osric may well have had in mind an establishment for single or widowed members of his wider family, but any such place would have needed a priest or priests to administer the sacraments within and perhaps outside, as well as taking care of secular business.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Osric or his ecclesiastical councillors are unlikely to have passed over the chance to make this religious house the centre of a parish, thus making it both a claustral and an evangelising place.<sup>44</sup>



The Hwicce whose bishopric was established at Worcester occupied lands that were later a part of Worcestershire, Gloucestershire and Warwickshire and the people were ultimately incorporated into Greater Mercia, whose royal centre was at Tamworth with a ‘monastery’ at Repton and an episcopal seat at Lichfield (established in 664). Mercia itself occupied Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, south Derbyshire and north Warwickshire with the Hwicce lying to the south and west.<sup>45</sup> They appear to have been a mixture of Anglians and Saxons and to have formed a separate kingdom but at this period were subject to an expanding Mercia: their rulers are sometimes styled kings (*reges*) or petty kings (*reguli*) or petty underkings (*subreguli*). It is possible that King Penda of Mercia (626 x 632–654)<sup>46</sup> was the first to create a province for the Hwicce. The earliest known rulers were the brothers Eanfrid and Eanhere. The latter may have been father of Oshere who ruled with or after Osric.<sup>47</sup>

The Mercians had only begun to be Christianised since the death of King Penda, and Bede particularly describes how a monk of Whitby, Otfar, after going to Kent to study with Archbishop Theodore (who, incidentally, was one of the witnesses of the 676 land-grant) and then to Rome, ‘on his return, when he reached Britain, he turned aside to the province of the Hwicce, over whom Osric was then king, and there he stayed for a long time preaching the word of faith and at the same time giving a lesson in how to live to those who saw and heard him’.<sup>48</sup> This was a period of the foundation of ‘monasteries’, seats for bishops and of the laying out of new dioceses. The see of Hereford dates from 669, that of Worcester from 680.<sup>49</sup> The same Osric also established a religious house for women at Gloucester.<sup>50</sup>

The grand and rather opaque preamble to the grant of land at Bath explains how King Osric, probably with others, was in the process of constructing a seat for a bishop according to synodal decrees;<sup>51</sup> moreover, ‘since Grace from above was beginning to shine more abundantly far and wide’,<sup>52</sup> he and they had determined to construct separate houses for monks and nuns.<sup>53</sup> The size of the grant (*centum manentes*, that is 100 hides)<sup>54</sup> seems very large but is not unusual: for example, the grant to Gloucester Abbey in 679 was of the land of 300 *tributarii* (equivalent to 300 hides); Pershore Abbey (Worcestershire) was also granted 300 hides at the same time.<sup>55</sup> Nonetheless, the preamble seems somewhat disconnected from the grant: it is not

apparent that Osric intended to build a cathedral at Bath. Taken at face value, it seems to imply a three-stage process: (1) Osric’s and/or his kingdom’s conversion to Christianity; (2) the building of a cathedral (elsewhere); (3) the further intention to establish religious houses, though not the normal double houses, but separate ones for men and women, leading, in the case of Bath, to the establishment only of a female religious house.

It is dangerous to erect too large a superstructure on the basis of one charter which is not genuine in its present form and whose authority has been doubted because of its dating, its preamble, its diplomatic and the lack of synchrony between some of its witnesses. Charter scholarship continues to improve, but is also subject to tides of fashion, especially in the case of early documents where there is a lack of good comparative evidence. The present charter, having sometimes been dismissed as an outright forgery, has been somewhat rehabilitated: while it may have been fabricated after its supposed date, it may well be based on good evidence; while it has been inflated, amplified and ‘improved’, its core could well be genuine and behind it may lie a simpler grant by Osric in favour of Berta for the founding of a religious house. Certainly all the witnesses who can be identified could have signed a charter in 676 and the points of detail used to undermine the authenticity of the charter (the erroneous indiction date, the dating from the Incarnation, the establishment of a single house for nuns rather than the more common double establishment, the fact that it is signed by two bishops who successively held the West Saxon see at Winchester, and the apparent allusion to a lapse into paganism otherwise unreported, are not fatal. Thus, it is possible that either the indiction date or the charter date is wrong: the charter date is 6 November 676, and the indiction is given as the fourth which may have expired on 31 August 676, but the indiction might be a simple figure error, or the scribe uncertain as to which of the two systems of dating by indiction to use.<sup>56</sup> The dating from the Incarnation was based on the calculations of Dionysius Exiguus, published in 527 and gradually adopted in France and then in England: Bede (672 or 673–735) uses it throughout his *Ecclesiastical History*, completed in 731. Its use here is unexpected, but that does not condemn it, especially as the mention of Dionysius’s calendar as the means of calculating the Incarnation, suggests that it was not yet familiar.<sup>57</sup> Although double houses of monks and

nuns were the norm, Archbishop Theodore, who witnessed the charter, was in fact opposed to them, although he was inclined to accept existing local practice.<sup>58</sup> That two successive West Saxon bishops, Leuthere (670–676) and Haeddi (676–?705), were also witnesses has been regarded as suspicious. However, Leuthere was still alive at that date and the custom was probably ‘once a bishop, always a bishop’. He adds to his sign the Latin *ac si indignus* (‘although unworthy’), which commonly represents episcopal humility, but could in the context suggest that a better man now occupied the seat.<sup>59</sup> The supposed lapse into heathenism is probably a misunderstanding of the timescale of the conversion of the Hwicce to Christianity.<sup>60</sup> In the first instance (*omnia simulachrorum figmenta ridiculosa funditus diruta*: ‘all the ludicrous representations of false idols had been utterly destroyed’), Osric is probably referring to a lengthy process of the suppression of heathenism and the Christianization of Mercia (as well as to his own conversion) and, in the second, alluding to the fact that Bath had once been Roman and pagan: *ubi truculentus et nefandus prius draco errorum deceptionibus serviebat ...* (‘where previously the cruel and detestable serpent was a servant of his allurements full of sin ...’). No dates or time-scale are given, but these are probably first generation converts, who must have felt within themselves and beyond that the old religion was still present and able to reassert itself. Moreover the conversion of a king does not automatically and rapidly produce the conversion of his people. It is not known how old Osric was at the time of the charter, but if he was at least in his 30s or 40s, if not older, he would have been alive, and presumably pagan, when Wulfhere, the first Christian king of Mercia, assumed the throne in 657. Further, the conversion of the Hwicce was partly done by Offor, who stayed ‘for a long time’ in the kingdom.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, it seems that most of the objections to the charter can be countered or mitigated, but since so few genuine charters exist for the period, it is difficult to impugn this or that phrase,<sup>62</sup> although one is left with the impression that the document is inflated, and in particular that the preamble was recast.<sup>63</sup>

If we assume that Osric intended a prestigious foundation at Bath, a grant of 100 hides would not be out of place, but there must remain the suspicion that an original smaller figure was later enlarged to match the size of the later local administrative unit (Bath Hundred) or to support the later Benedictine monastery’s ambition to be a 100-hide church. If

the figure is genuine and original, and the 90 hides reclaimed in 781 by King Offa largely confirms it,<sup>64</sup> then it was probably the grant *en bloc* of a pre-existing royal estate that belonged at that time to the Hwiccian royal house.<sup>65</sup> The land thus granted could have been the same as that in the later Bath Hundred. The earliest indication of the contents of that hundred is given in the Tax Returns (or Geld Rolls), bound up with the Exeter (or Exon) Domesday Book, but dating from 1084.<sup>66</sup> At that time it contained 95 hides and then (as in the 14th century) its outer circle was formed by the lands of Weston, Kelston, North Stoke, Langridge, Swainswick, St Catherine (a chapelry of Batheaston), Batheaston itself, Bathford, Claverton, Monkton Combe, Freshford, South Stoke, Lyncombe and Widcombe.<sup>67</sup>

But even if this 100-hide estate existed in 676, it need not have corresponded to the later Bath Hundred, and even allowing that it did, it is not certain how old a unit it was. Did it correspond to the hinterland of Roman Bath? Was it a Celtic (pre-Roman) or Romano-British administrative area? Too little is known about the relationship of Roman towns to the land around them, especially in the case of a town like Bath which, unlike, for example, Winchester, was not the capital of a Roman *civitas*. It is tempting to postulate continuity from pre-Roman times to the Middle Ages and beyond and to see the lands dependent on *Aquae Sulis* (also known as *Aquae Calidae*) as co-extensive with the medieval hundred of Bath. Certainly there are interesting local correspondences between Roman remains and later settlement sites at Keynsham, Bitton, Kelston, North Stoke, Monkton Combe, Bathampton, Bathford and at South Stoke.<sup>68</sup> But if a site is ideal for occupation it will be re-used, and a correspondence of settlement tells nothing about a coincidence of boundaries. What is more certain is that (according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle), following the battle of Dyrham in 577, the British kings of three ‘cities’ (Cirencester, Gloucester and Bath), were defeated by the English, that is probably by the English *Gewissae* who were settling or raiding the Cotswolds and whose centres lay to the north-east of Bath, probably in the Thames Valley.<sup>69</sup> They were possibly the same group who had, at the battle of *Bedcanford* (Bedford?) in 571, captured Limbury (Bedfordshire), Aylesbury (Buckinghamshire), Benson and Eynsham (both in Oxfordshire) from the British and who fought a battle at *Fethanleag*, possibly near Stoke Lyne (Oxfordshire) in 584.<sup>70</sup>

The very exactness of these dates in this part of



the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which was a Wessex production of the 9th century, can arouse suspicion and cause confidence in equal measure, depending on whether they are thought to have been invented precisely to gain credence or are based on contemporary, though lost, narratives. Allowing that something of the substance may not be untrue, if these three cities fell, it is possible that their dependent lands did as well and the British (often called the West Welsh in this context) were perhaps forced south of the River Avon, or accepted new overlords or were absorbed into the new population. It is impossible to tell whether Bath or its baths were abandoned, and how much continuity there was in the occupation of the city or in the arrangement of local land-units.<sup>71</sup> However, it is conceivable that the battle at Dyrham took place on the northern edge of Bath’s territory and that a southern boundary for this occupation, if indeed it was more than an incursion or raid, could have been the River Avon. Or it may be that the West Wansdyke, if it was not some earlier or later boundary, was constructed by the British to mark the northern boundary of lands into which they had moved or been driven, and to play a quasi-defensive role in limiting further attacks from the north. There is, however, a serious problem of language in interpreting this information: the use of ‘frontier’ rather than ‘boundary’ and of terms such as ‘warfare’, ‘battle’, ‘conquest’, ‘occupation’, even ‘army’, can easily suggest the power, weight, determination and purposefulness of a Roman legion or its modern equivalent, when the real events were most likely smaller in scale, more fluid and more complex.

The ditch of the West Wansdyke is on its northern side, the dyke itself being quite short, running from Maes Knoll (ST6066) in Norton Malreward parish via Stantonbury (ST6763) to the head of the Horsecombe Brook.<sup>72</sup> It appears to be designed to link the two hillforts and although presumably built by the Britons, it will have allowed the ‘English’ to have control of both banks of the Avon and of the Foss Way where it climbed southwards out of Bath. It might have been the result of a truce or treaty, but it is a boundary with gaps (perhaps where there was dense woodland) and it does not always occupy the highest ground with a clear view northwards, especially near Englishcombe and along the course of the Horsecombe Brook. Moreover, it is not clear that those who built it, if they were displaced Britons, had the resources to defend it and to man it permanently: Hadrian’s Wall was a burden on a great

empire and the fortified *burhs* built by King Alfred and his successors in a time of emergency would have been a mighty drain. However, although the Wansdyke is not precisely datable and it is not clear that the English flooded down the Cotswolds immediately after the battle of Dyrham, thus making the British think of permanent boundaries and defence, a late 6th-century date is the best guess for its construction.<sup>73</sup>

Bath was only briefly, if at all, in the hands of this group of ‘English’ occupiers from the north-east, because in their turn the Hwicce and Mercians expanded southwards and no doubt acquired Bath after the battle of Cirencester in 628. This event provides another possible moment for the construction of the Wansdyke: to delimit Wessex from Mercia,<sup>74</sup> although the battle at Cirencester was probably with the Gewissae of the Thames Valley who were only later to become known as the West Saxons. It was over 30 years later (in 662) that the Gewissae moved their bishopric from Dorchester-on-Thames (in the later Oxfordshire) to Winchester in an area (Hampshire and the Isle of Wight) that lay in the western part of the kingdom of the Jutes, and it was not until 705 that they established a forward ecclesiastical base at Sherborne (later in Dorset) by division of their bishopric. They only fully acquired this part of the Jutish kingdom c. 686 and any idea that they were present in force in north-east Somerset seems to be premature by at least a generation. If there were any there already, it may have been on their own initiative rather than with royal authority and they are likely to have been too few to justify the construction of a dyke.<sup>75</sup>

Nonetheless, it is unlikely that the centring of dioceses on Winchester and Sherborne could have taken place without a substantial presence there by the Gewissae, henceforth known as the West Saxons. It seems probable that those who colonised the future Wessex mainly came westwards from Hampshire, rather than south-westwards from the Thames Valley, some at least of the Gewissae having first migrated from the Thames Valley to Hampshire. However, it would be mistaken to think of an inexorable advance that conformed to a pre-conceived plan; it is much more likely that incoherent, undirected and sporadic periods of advance were balanced by long periods of inertia and stasis. The ability of kings to command such a westward expansion at this period is unknown and it may be that infiltration rather than incursion was the way in which ‘progress’ was made.<sup>76</sup> Yet there is no doubt that in some way the West Saxons

moved through the future Wiltshire, Somerset and Dorset and into Devon, while perhaps showing no great interest in north-east Somerset. It is unfortunate that not a single charter of the first kings of the West Saxons to make grants of land, that is Cenwalh (643–674), Centwine (676–685), Caedwalla (685–688) and Ine (688–726), is above suspicion, but if they contain any genuine information, they show these men granting land in southern Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Somerset although there are no grants of land north of the Mendips.<sup>77</sup> King Ine himself fought a battle with King Geraint of Cornwall in 710 and appears even to have granted 20 hides of land between the Rivers Lynher and Tamar in Cornwall to Glastonbury Abbey.<sup>78</sup>

According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, there were battles at Bradford-on-Avon in 652 and *Poennan* in 658. The latter is often assumed to be the root of Penselwood, the name of a large tract of woodland where Wiltshire met Somerset and Dorset, and it has been thought that, following this, the West Saxons moved rapidly through what became Somerset, perhaps heading south-westwards towards Ilchester and then on to Devon.<sup>79</sup> However, the extent to which the countryside was ‘conquered’, ‘subdued’ or emptied of its Old Welsh inhabitants is controversial. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for this period is part history, part foundation myth in unquantifiable proportions and tends towards portraying the inevitability of the triumph of a master-race.<sup>80</sup> The main narrative source on the British ‘side’ is the *De Excidio Britonum* of Gildas<sup>81</sup> which paints a lurid picture of his people being ‘cleansed’ for their sins by God’s Saxon agents. The archaeological evidence is equivocal, but one can point to the almost complete disappearance of British place-names from the landscape<sup>82</sup> and the arrival of furnished Anglo-Saxon style graves and typical building styles such as grub huts.<sup>83</sup> However, one should probably distinguish between those Britons who resisted and died or fled and those who accepted new masters. It has been argued that the English took over the Welsh multiple estate model of organisation.<sup>84</sup> Moreover the laws of King Ine (688–726) acknowledge the existence of ‘Welshmen’ in Wessex.<sup>85</sup> Whole British communities may well have survived in isolated pockets.<sup>86</sup> However, in the case of Bath, its southern boundary, whatever its exact alignment, will henceforth have effectively been between the Hwicce and their Mercian overlords and the West Saxons.

Meanwhile, the Mercians continued to expand and raid: in an incursion Ethelbald, their king, captured

Somerton in 733.<sup>87</sup> In their turn, the Saxons of Wessex seem to have marked their westerly progress by implanting a series of royal *tunas*, often with associated minster churches. These sites were the centres of pre-hundredal taxation, policing and justice and also the hubs of large ecclesiastical parishes. South and west of Bath, it was probably Bruton, Frome, Yeovil, Axbridge-Cheddar, Bedminster and possibly Keynsham and/or Chew-Chewton Mendip that were such centres of spiritual and secular management.

So by the time of the grant of 676, Bath was a Hwiccian and Mercian city. Somewhere to the south of it lay the border of Wessex. Where was South Stoke in all this? If the 100 hides then granted to the abbess were co-extensive with the later Bath Hundred, then South Stoke would have been within them and thus in Mercia as well as belonging to the female religious house. To the south of it would have lain the lands centred on the West-Saxon royal estate at Frome and which in due course became a triple hundred, composed of the hundreds of Wellow, Kilmersdon and Frome. This is where the name of that minor brook which features in the bounds of South Stoke becomes important. It is the *maer broc*, ‘the boundary brook’. When the charter says, in effect, ‘the boundary runs along the boundary brook’, this can only make sense if the brook was a pre-existing and important boundary: it would be tautological to say that ‘the boundary runs along the brook that forms the boundary’. So before South Stoke itself was defined, this boundary brook could have marked off the lands of Bath from those of Frome, for Combe Hay, which lay to the west of South Stoke, was never in Bath Hundred, always in that of Wellow. If the Mercian/Wessex boundary ever lay this far south, then this little brook could have divided the lands of Mercian Bath from those of West Saxon Frome. The continuation of this significant boundary eastwards would most naturally have been along the *Camelar* until its debouchment into the River Avon.<sup>88</sup>

But there are two other possibilities. If South Stoke was not among the *centum manentes* of the original grant, then its northern boundary, formed by the Wansdyke and the Horsecombe Brook, could have also been the southern boundary of the land of Bath, that line then continuing eastwards, again downstream, along the *Camelar* to the River Avon.<sup>89</sup> In that case, South Stoke, Freshford and ‘Woodwick’ in Freshford<sup>90</sup> (all of which lay on the southern edge of the later Bath Hundred) will have at that time

belonged to the kings of Wessex or nameless subjects. They will not have become associated with Mercian Bath unless purchased or leased from these kings.

The third possibility is that in 676 the River Avon was the boundary and that the prolongation of Southgate across the Roman Bridge led from Mercia into Wessex.<sup>91</sup> So Bath would then have been like London or Stamford or Bristol: its bridge led to a different kingdom and its river marked the boundary.<sup>92</sup> In this case the *centum manentes* would have stretched further north and the later Hundred of Bath would have been of the same extent but with less territory in the north and more in the south.<sup>93</sup> So one possibility is that South Stoke lay within the original grant to the religious house; in two other interpretations it lay in Wessex and it had yet to be granted to any foundation in Bath. Which of these possibilities is the more likely will appear in due course.

#### THE 8TH-CENTURY HOUSE FOR MONKS

It is not certain how long the house for women lasted. The later abbey possessed two late 7th-century charters, the second of them sounder than the first, which have been assumed to be grants to that house, although neither names it. The first is of 40 *manentes* at *Slaepi* [probably Islip in Oxfordshire]<sup>94</sup> and the second of 20 *manentes* next to the river Cherwell, possibly adjacent to the land at Islip.<sup>95</sup> The first is addressed to *Bernguidis* called a ‘venerable abbes’, the second to *Bernguidis* and *Folcburgis*, perhaps her deputy.<sup>96</sup> However, if the date (670–671) of the first of these charters is correct, then it will have preceded the supposed date of the foundation of the house for women at Bath. Even if that difficulty is discounted, it seems unlikely that a religious house at Bath would have possessed such distant estates. It is more likely that these grants are to the house for women at Eynsham (Oxfordshire), and that they became lodged in the Bath archive because Bath may have had a connection with Eynsham, perhaps because it was colonised from there.<sup>97</sup>

The next mention of a religious house in Bath is in 757, when it is occupied by monks, for in that year Cynewulf, King of the West Saxons (757–786), with the consent of Offa, King of the Mercians (757–796), granted to the brothers of St Peter’s ‘monastery’ in Bath, land at North Stoke (*Northstoc*) which was in his jurisdiction.<sup>98</sup> Like so many charters, this

document in its present form is not unquestionably authentic. A dispute brought before Bishop John in 1121<sup>99</sup> would have required the production of a charter relating to North Stoke and it is possible that the present charter was indeed ‘produced’ for and at that occasion, but it may also be that the facts were essentially correct. The monks themselves later believed that the grantor was *Kenulfus rex, pater S. Kenelmi*, that is the Mercian king Coenwulf (796–821), father of St Kenhelm,<sup>100</sup> but the giver is described as *rex Saxonum* (‘King of the Saxons’) in the charter. The fact that land in Mercia was given by a West Saxon king has also been thought problematic, as if Cynewulf had perhaps ‘edged into Mercia’.<sup>101</sup> However, there is no reason why Cynewulf could not have leased or been granted land close to the border of his kingdom, conveniently reached across the tidal ford at Saltford. The overriding consideration is that the land was in Mercia and the grant was assented to by the Mercian king: *Ego Offa rex Merciorum his statutis consensi* (‘I, Offa, King of the Mercians, have agreed to these arrangements’).

If the genuineness of the charter information is doubted, then it can be pointed out that the abbey’s archive had no other charters relating to North Stoke, and that the land was said to have been later confirmed (not granted) by King Ethelred (865–871), presumably after a period of alienation. This was at the same time that South Stoke was given to the house for monks. If we can assume that the information contained in the charter is substantially correct, then South Stoke had yet to be given, so the ‘North’ in North Stoke needs some other explanation. As the charter is probably not original, it is possible that the name was updated (from plain ‘Stoke’) when the replacement charter was produced; if not, then it was possibly north of some now lost local ‘stoke’, or it was the ‘stoke’ to the north of Weston which would have been the largest nearby land unit.

North Stoke, which lies north of the River Avon, would probably have been in the original 100 hides granted to the religious house for women. It is not clear if this patrimony was ever fully granted or was lost in whole or in part during the lifetime of that religious house; whether there was a lapse of time between the end of it and the establishment of the house for monks, whether its lands were transferred in whole or in part to the latter or whether the two establishments existed in parallel for a time.<sup>102</sup> However, this grant of North Stoke should have been unnecessary if the house for monks had inherited

anything like 100 hides, firstly because the estate will probably have been within these hides, and secondly because the house for monks would have had more than enough land to support it. It is much more likely that whatever the prosperity of the former house for women, the house for monks had never had or had lost a substantial endowment, was sustaining itself from very few hides of land and needed more. For this grant of North Stoke is not the foundation grant of a new establishment. It is possibly a restoration of land previously held, although the charter says nothing to that effect, but it seems to have been an isolated gift, the next grant to the house for monks being apparently of South Stoke by King Ethelred (865–871), 100 years later and accompanied by the confirmation (that is, restoration) of this same North Stoke.<sup>103</sup> The house for monks might already have possessed other lands, although it is not obvious where they might have lain. Among the possessions of Bath Abbey in 1086 was a part of the borough of Bath, although the mill and 12 acres of meadow would not have been enough to support it.<sup>104</sup> It also held Wilmington and Monkton Combe<sup>105</sup> for which there are no charters, but certainly in the case of Wilmington and possibly in the case of Monkton Combe, these lands will have been in Wessex, not Mercia, at the time of the foundation of the house for women and of that for monks. The first lands to be held by the house for monks are probably to be sought closer at hand, possibly among lands subsequently lost or exchanged when it acquired more, possibly among the estates that appear to be later grants, but might in fact be restorations.<sup>106</sup>

Fortunately, the early history of the lands of the house for women and then of that for monks and the relation of South Stoke to Wessex and Mercia are illuminated by a transaction that took place at the Synod of Brentford in 781. Here, Bishop Heathured of Worcester (781–798 or 800) responding to a claim by King Offa of Mercia that he (the bishop) wrongly held the inheritance of Offa's kinsman, King Ethelbald of Mercia (716–757), returned to the same King Offa 90 hides at Bath and also restored to him the 'very famous 'monastery' at Bath' and, in exchange for the return of land in the later Worcestershire and Warwickshire, also wrongly held, he gave him 30 *cassati* of land south of the River Avon that he had bought from Cynewulf, king of the West Saxons (757–786).<sup>107</sup>

The transaction involved surrendering 90 hides of land, which must have been in Mercia, plus 30

hides of land south of the River Avon that were or had been in Wessex and a 'monastery' at Bath. Crucially the document does not say whether any or all of these 120 hides were for the support of the 'monastery', or for the general use of the diocese of Worcester. Nonetheless, at that date, legitimately or not, the Bishop of Worcester held 90 hides at Bath. This must imply that at some stage the bulk of the grant of 100 hides to the religious house for women at Bath had come into the hands of the bishop in whose diocese it lay. They may even, though the foundation charter does not say so, have been given to the Bishop of Worcester, whose seat Osric was then building, even though they were intended for the endowment of the house for women. Whether they never reached that house in whole or in part, or were held by the bishop as overlord of the house or were given and subsequently taken away, or fell to the bishop when the house closed, is unclear. Even assuming for a moment that in 781 the religious house for women still existed, and lived off 90 of its former 100 hides, this leaves only 10 hides for a separate house for monks at Bath, if those 10 hides had been abstracted from the 100. This house for monks was presumably in existence then and had, just over 20 years before, received the 5 hides at North Stoke. This leaves just 5 hides which were either its foundation grant or inherited from the house for women.

Offa's claim that these 90 hides were the inheritance of his kinsman King Ethelbald, might have been an attempt by a powerful king to recover what had been royal land in the time of the under-king Osric, by falsely claiming that his immediate predecessor had held it; as Wessex was now more powerful and unified than it was in 676 at the time of the original grant, it may be that Offa now saw Bath as a strategic site. The claim, that land given away by a predecessor could be taken back, seems to have no legal basis.<sup>108</sup> Moreover, one of the Worcestershire lands, Stour in Ismere, had indeed been granted by the same King Ethelbald to one Cyniberht to found a 'monastery' there, and the gift by Ceolfrith, Cyniberht's son, of this estate to the Church of Worcester had been witnessed by King Offa himself.<sup>109</sup> On the land at Bredon, a church had been founded by Eanulf, grandfather of Offa, and Offa himself had given large grants to it.<sup>110</sup> So this claim of rightful inheritance looks like a pretext for high-handed greed. However, it is possible in the case of Bath, that the religious house for women had failed to establish itself in a single generation, or

that it had lost 90 hides of its endowment which had been taken by or had reverted to the Mercian King Ethelbald, successor to the under-kings of the Hwicce; that he had leased it to the Bishop of Worcester for the use of the see rather than for the endowment of a religious house at Bath and that one or other of them had given 5 hides of this to found a house for monks there, doubled in 757 by Offa’s assent to the grant of North Stoke by the King of Wessex. Yet there is difficulty in believing that in 781 there was only a house of monks in Bath, in possession of no more than 10 hides, since Bishop Heathured gave King Offa a ‘monastery’ that was ‘very famous’.

The solution to this difficulty lies partly in seeing the cornered bishop using a hyperbole to emphasise an enforced generosity by referring to the days of glory of the first foundation rather than to the re-generated rump that followed it.<sup>111</sup> Mainly, however, it lies in seeing the history of the religious house in Bath as a continuum. However straitened its circumstances, this was the same *monasterium* that was given 100 hides in 676, and was probably famous for that, for its Frankish abbess and for its location in a famous city, possibly for individual men or women that it produced of which nothing is known. Only the incidentals had changed, and this was quite common: a house founded for nuns could become one for monks; secular priests could be attached and then move elsewhere; what began as a foundation for royal kin, might, when the last died or moved away, be resumed by the king or by the bishop of the diocese, as would part or all of its endowment.<sup>112</sup> Thus at Gloucester, also founded by Osric and where he appointed his sister Cyneburh its first abbess, monks seamlessly replaced nuns in the same establishment following the death of the abbess Eafe in 757.<sup>113</sup> The continuity and change of the ‘monastery’ at Fladbury (in Worcestershire) from the grant (691 x 699) by King Ethelred of Mercia to Bishop Offfor (of Worcester) for the re-establishment of monastic life there can be viewed through a series of charters and from the pages of Hemming.<sup>114</sup>

These 90 hides evidently lay north of the River Avon, in Offa’s own territory of Mercia, and they are contrasted with the 30 hides of land that lay south of the river which Bishop Heathured had bought from the King of Wessex and which he also surrendered to King Offa. This suggests that before Heathured’s acquisition of the 30 hides, and therefore probably at the time of the grant to the house for women, the River Avon was the boundary between Mercia and

Wessex. After Offa’s acquisition of these 30 hides, it would be natural if he subjoined them to Mercia, thus expanding his kingdom south of the River Avon, in despite of the King of Wessex.<sup>115</sup> The exact identity of these lands is uncertain, but the general picture is clear. In Domesday Book (1086) there were 38 hides lying south of the River Avon in Bath Hundred: two estates at Bathampton, totalling 5 hides, 4 hides at Bathwick, 10 hides at Lyncombe, 5 hides at Claverton, 9 hides at Monkton Combe and 5 hides (divided equally into two adjoining estates) at ‘Woodwick’ and Freshford. From these might well be deducted the 4 hides at Bathwick, the *vicus* or *wic* of Bath and intimately associated with it, though just over the river, and the 5 hides of Freshford-‘Woodwick’, severed from Bath Hundred in 1086 by Limpley Stoke, itself a part of Bradford-on-Avon, though west of the River Avon. More importantly, Freshford-‘Woodwick’ was divided from the land of Bath by the primary boundary afforded by the River *Camelar* and would naturally have looked towards Frome. Its association with Bath may have been late and a consequence of the acquisition by Bath Abbey of ‘Woodwick’.<sup>116</sup> With these deductions, the estates total 29 hides<sup>117</sup> and it is probable that lying silently within them was South Stoke. If the land of Bath and indeed the kingdom of Mercia now extended south of the River Avon to the extent of 30 hides, it may well have been the moment (rather than an earlier occasion) when the ‘boundary brook’ mentioned in the 961 charter for South Stoke acquired its name, marking as it did where the land of Bath met that of Frome and Mercia marched with Wessex.

The effect of the transfer of the ‘very famous ‘monastery’ at Bath’ to King Offa was that he became its patron, and that Bath itself again became a royal estate. It is not obvious that Offa gave or restored any or all of the 90 or 120 hides to the ‘monastery’; the next recorded grants date from the last half of the 9th century, and the house for monks appears to have acquired its lands piecemeal, with an especially fruitful period beginning c. 925. Certainly, according to Domesday Book, 20 hides at which Bath itself was assessed were still royal land in 1066 and in 1086. Queen Edith had received them on her marriage in 1045.<sup>118</sup> Offa was credited with reforming the ‘monastery’ and introducing secular priests, but there is no evidence that he enlarged its endowment.<sup>119</sup> At some point, possibly under King Edgar (959–975), the ‘monastery’ adopted the Rule of St Benedict and became a Benedictine abbey.<sup>120</sup>



As a royal possession Bath was now on the circuit of the Mercian kings. It was in Bath that King Offa had the dream in which he was encouraged to found the 'monastery' at St Albans.<sup>121</sup> His heir Ecfriht met the West Saxon King Beorhtric in 796 at Bath, an appropriate boundary meeting place, and there granted land called *huntena tun* (unidentified). The record of this transaction says: *Et hoc gestum est in celebri vico qui Saxonice vocatur at Bathum* ('And this was done in the famous settlement which is called 'at the Baths' in [Anglo-]Saxon').<sup>122</sup> Likewise King Burgred of Mercia and his court held a meeting 'in that famous city which is called Hot Bath' in 864 when he sold land at (Water) Eaton on the River Cherwell to Eahlhun, Bishop of Worcester.<sup>123</sup>

The kings of Mercia acknowledged the overlordship of the kings of Wessex from c. 883, their kings being replaced by ealdormen.<sup>124</sup> In these years both Wessex and Mercia faced the threat of Danish marauding and settlement. King Alfred of Wessex (871–899) undertook the construction of a number of fortified *burhs* used as safe places and springboards for attack to repel the Danish invaders. Alfred's son, Edward the Elder (899–924), continued the policy and helped his sister Æthelflæd who was married to the Mercian ealdorman Ethelred, especially after the latter's death in 918. Bath was one of the *burhs* thus fortified and 1000 hides were allotted to it for the upkeep of its defences. It is likely that these hides lay both north and south of the River Avon, both in Mercia and in Wessex, and in this place as in others the boundary between the former kingdoms became increasingly blurred. The next kings exercised authority over the whole of England at times, but Mercia could be said to have finally ceased to exist when King Edgar, having become King of Mercia and Northumbria in 957, after their revolt against King Edwy, became 'King of all England' in 959 and was ultimately crowned as such in Bath on 11 May 973, in a Roman city which lay at the junction of the former kingdoms.<sup>125</sup>

Under the kings of Wessex 'sans frontières', the grants to the 'monastery' become more frequent or at least better recorded, although, as we have seen, there is sometimes reason to suspect that a 'grant' may in fact be a restoration or a confirmation. Thus according to that later record in the abbey's second cartulary,<sup>126</sup> King Ethelred (865–871) gave South Stoke and restored North Stoke;<sup>127</sup> Lyncombe was given by King Athelstan (924–939) along with Priston, Cold Ashton and Olveston, these last two being later in Gloucestershire;<sup>128</sup> Bathford and

Bathampton were granted by King Edwy (955–959) together with Tidenham (Gloucestershire west of the River Severn) and Corston.<sup>129</sup> Edwy is also said to have restored 5 hides in Weston, given by King Edmund (939–946), and Cold Ashton given by King Athelstan.<sup>130</sup> South Stoke was re-granted by King Edgar (957–975) along with gifts of *Cliftune* (that is Lyncombe and Widcombe, in fact already given by King Athelstan), Corston, Stanton Prior and 'Eversy' (in Dunkerton).<sup>131</sup> In their list of gifts and donors, the monks said nothing about Wilmington, Monkton Combe, Charlcombe, Batheaston, 'Woodwick' and Ashwick, all of which were in its possession in 1066 according to Domesday Book.<sup>132</sup> Of these, the abbey possessed the bounds of Charlcombe<sup>133</sup> and there was a post-Conquest grant, presumably a restoration, by William I and William FitzOsbern.<sup>134</sup> Abbot Wulfwold had held Batheaston in 1066, perhaps personally, and it may have come to the church by his gift.<sup>135</sup> 'Woodwick' in Freshford was acquired for the abbey by Abbot Ælfhere, from the will of Wulfwaru (984 x 1001);<sup>136</sup> Ashwick was acquired from King Edward by Abbot Wulfwold in 1061, and must have been given by him to the abbey before 1066.<sup>137</sup> There are no charters relating to Wilmington or, significantly, to Monkton Combe.

In Wessex the hundreds established in the mid-10th century were often a re-classification of the ancient lands of royal or ecclesiastical estates, or divisions of them. Thus Bath was placed at the centre of a single hundred and Frome of three hundreds. Whereas the River Avon had once been the boundary between Wessex and Mercia, and, by the acquisition of 30 hides in 781, Mercia may even have intruded south of that river, Somerset now had land north of it. A total of 100 hides had been granted to the religious house for women and there were now roughly 100 hides in Bath Hundred,<sup>138</sup> but these areas overlapped without being identical. The 30 hides south of the river were now part of the 100 hides as they had never been before and a corresponding 30 or so hides must have been deducted from the northern part of the original 100 hides. It is not certain if the shiring of Mercia and the creation of hundreds in those new shires were part of the same process,<sup>139</sup> but the effect of shifting the centre of the 100 hides of Bath southwards was to leave some of the original 100 hides in south Gloucestershire. If, as suggested above, Freshford-'Woodwick' (5 hides) and Warleigh (1 hide) had subsequently been added to the 30 hides,<sup>140</sup> then 36 hides needed to be removed to maintain the figure of 100. North of Bath,



in Gloucestershire and forming a solid block of land, were Marshfield (14 hides), Doynton (5 hides), Cold Ashton (5 hides) and Dyrham (apparently 10 hides), making 34 in all.<sup>141</sup> These are possible candidates for the northern portion of the original 100 hides,<sup>142</sup> and the possible inclusion of Dyrham, the site of the great battle in 577, is surprising and significant.

#### SOUTH STOKE IN DOMESDAY BOOK (1086)

The first comprehensive survey of the lands of England is provided by Domesday Book in 1086. Those possessions of the ‘Church of Bath’ (by then the Benedictine Abbey of Bath) that can be assigned to Bath Hundred were at Bath itself, Weston, Bathford, Monkton Combe, Charlcombe, Lyncombe, Batheaston, Bathampton and ‘Woodwick’ (in Freshford).<sup>143</sup> Neither North Stoke nor South Stoke is mentioned, although they were held by the ‘church’ both before and after this time: for example, in the confirmation of Pope Adrian IV (the Englishman Nicholas Brakespear 1154–1159) *Sudstocam* appears in the schedule between *Lincumbam* and *Cumbam* [Monkton Combe], while *Nordstocam* appears between *Westona quinque hidis* (‘five hides in Weston’) and *Cherlecumbam* [Charlcombe].<sup>144</sup>

The Tax Return dating from 1084, which assigns 95 hides to Bath Hundred, includes no place-names, but if it is collated with Domesday Book it shows that the latter contains no omissions apart from Kelston.<sup>145</sup> It is unlikely that South Stoke, though rated at 5 hides and therefore able to give Bath Hundred a true 100 hides, would have been omitted both from the Tax Returns and from Domesday Book, and it is more likely as suggested above, that the 5 hides are accounted for by the removal of Limpley Stoke. The implication is that just as Lyncombe in Domesday Book must have silently included Widcombe, and Batheaston accounted for St Catherine, so North Stoke and South Stoke are included under some other entries. North Stoke’s five hides are no doubt silently contained in the 15 hides allotted to Weston, leaving 10 hides at Weston itself.<sup>146</sup> For South Stoke the candidate is less obvious. It has been assigned to the 20 hides of Bath,<sup>147</sup> or to Freshford,<sup>148</sup> but it is far more likely that its 5 hides in fact lie in the 9 hides allotted by Domesday Book to Monkton Combe, leaving 4 hides for Monkton itself. Monkton Combe is separated from South Stoke by the Horsecombe Brook.

Although there is no consistent relation between hides and parochial acres, 9 hides (perhaps 10 originally) is disproportionately large for Monkton Combe parish alone, compared with, say, the areas of Lyncombe and Bathford, both rated at 10 hides.<sup>149</sup> The Domesday entry (SOM 7,7) for Monkton Combe is:

The Church holds *CVME* [Monkton Combe] itself. Before 1066 it paid tax for 9 hides. Land for 8 ploughs; of these 6 hides are in lordship; 3 ploughs there; 6 slaves; 6 villans and 8 bordars with 5 ploughs. 2 mills paying 13s 6d; meadow, 32 acres; underwood, 1 league in length and width. The value was £7; now £8.<sup>150</sup>

There is no charter in the abbey’s two cartularies relating to Monkton Combe, which is in itself surprising. Clearly there has not simply been a substitution of names: South Stoke cannot also have stood for Monkton Combe in the 961 re-grant, since its bounds are given there and they do not include Monkton Combe. It is possible that Combe (not yet called Monkton) and ‘Stoke’ (not yet called South) were among the original possessions of the religious house for women and then of the house for monks. However, both were south of the River Avon and South Stoke itself was south of the Wansdyke’s prolongation, the Horsecombe Brook. If the original 100 hides lay north of the Avon, then South Stoke and Monkton Combe were probably, as suggested above, in the 30 hides purchased by the Bishop of Worcester from the King of Wessex. Even so, these lands were not granted as a block to the house for monks, and to the minster and abbey that succeeded it, but estates therein were accumulated over time and never comprised all 30 hides, Claverton never being held by the abbey. Thus while South Stoke was granted, then re-granted, there was still no record of a grant of Monkton Combe. Certainly Monkton Combe and South Stoke were intimately connected: Monkton Combe was a chapelry of South Stoke and the two frequently occur together in documents.<sup>151</sup> Even more important for the present argument is that, sometimes, as apparently in Domesday, one name will stand for both.<sup>152</sup>

The explanation for the absence of a charter for Monkton Combe could be that it was in fact granted by King Ethelred (865–871) as a single unit consisting both of ‘Combe’ and its ‘stoke’. Throughout the Middle Ages, it was difficult for a church to hold on to its lands and frequent for estates

to be alienated in whole or in part; this was sometimes because a church let land for ‘three lives’, that is, it would pass from father to son to grandson and then revert to the church on the death of this last. Sometimes the reversion did not happen. The house for monks itself may have divided up the estate, letting out one or both portions (the line of division being the course of the Horsecombe Brook).<sup>153</sup> Totta may have been the name of one of the lessees of the house for monks and he or another did not return it. According to this theory, when it was restored by Edgar, new bounds were needed (since the bounds attached to the original grant would have been of the Combe-Stoke estate) and were indeed provided, but, as has been observed, in an unusual position in the charter. When the cartularies were compiled, there was no charter of Ethelred extant but, since the monks of the day regarded Monkton Combe and South Stoke as a unit, the absence of a specific mention of any grant of Monkton Combe was probably not noticed or was ignored. Much the same would be the case if Monkton Combe and South Stoke were the subject of different early grants, but subsequently treated as a unit.

#### FROM 1086 TO 1539

So long as Bath was in Mercia it was in the Diocese of Worcester; when it came into Wessex, it will have become subject to the new see that had been established at Wells in 909.<sup>154</sup> John *de Villula* (also known as John of Tours) became Bishop of Wells in 1088. For so worldly a man, and one looking to increase his income by practising as a physician, Wells was perhaps too rural a backwater; moreover, current ecclesiastical thinking was in favour of establishing cathedrals in major urban centres, but also in monasteries.<sup>155</sup> Between 1088 and 1091, William Rufus granted him the abbey at Bath, the 20 hides of Bath that had belonged to the king and permission to transfer his seat from Wells to Bath.<sup>156</sup> The abbacy of Bath was conveniently vacant, so the bishop became *de facto* the abbot. The day-to-day running of the abbey was left in the hands of a prior; thus Bath Abbey became Bath Priory and remained so until the Dissolution.<sup>157</sup> The lands that had belonged to the abbey were now taken into the bishopric. In effect, Bishop John acquired them from the monks whom he deemed *hebetes et barbari* (‘feckless and uncouth’). In 1106 he made, or

intended to make, a full restoration of the estates which he had taken from the monks: *reddidi terras eorum quas aliquamdiu iniuste tenueram in manu mea ita integre et libere sicut Alsius abbas ante me tenuit* (‘I have restored their lands, which I had been holding unjustly for some time in my hands, as wholly and freely as Abbot Ælfsige held them before me’).<sup>158</sup> However, that did not settle the matter and, as the years passed, the lands moved between priory and bishopric, as the need arose or as power or generosity dictated. In the early 12th century, the monks may have struggled considerably to regain and then to retain Monkton Combe and South Stoke: Bishop John (1088–1122) had certainly restored Bathford, Bathampton, Lyncombe and South Stoke to the prior and monks according to a confirmation by Bishop Godfrey (1123 x 1135).<sup>159</sup> Bishop Godfrey also appears to have granted these same estates himself in 1135 as well as restoring (Monkton) Combe to the monks.<sup>160</sup> In the first year of his episcopacy, Bishop Robert (1136–1166) confirmed the gifts of former bishops to the monks: five hides in Weston, the vill of (Monkton) Combe, the tithe of the ‘Barton’ and Lyncombe and the tithe of the vineyards in Lyncombe and *Beckenofna*. He also restored South Stoke to them ‘to supplement their victuals and clothing’.<sup>161</sup> Theobald of Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury (1139–1161), confirmed these arrangements.<sup>162</sup> Then Bishop Reginald de Bohun (1173–1191) confirmed previous confirmations and grants involving (Monkton) Combe, Bathford, Bathampton, Lyncombe and South Stoke.<sup>163</sup> Further, Savaric (1191–1205), styled Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury, confirmed the annual pension of the prior and monks in their churches of *Comba et Stokes* (1195 x 1205).<sup>164</sup> South Stoke was now a quasi-independent unit, and no doubt an agricultural entity, though occasionally grouped with other of the priory’s estates.

The church of South Stoke, dedicated to St James the Great, probably dates from this period. It has Norman, Early English and 13th-century features among its earliest phases. Its first recorded incumbent was in office in 1200. There is no evidence of a Saxon church. Before a church was built, the few residents of the village could have gone to the church of Bath Abbey for their communion or they could have been visited by a priest. Once built, the church (like the manor) remained in the hands of the priory until the latter’s dissolution on 27 January 1539. Thereafter, for some years, the church

came under the patronage of the monarch; the manor became crown property and was thus secularised and subsequently leased, granted and sold, a process repeated throughout the kingdom that gave real estate to the newly emergent middle-classes.<sup>165</sup>

## APPENDIX: TWO TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

### Document 1: King Osric grants 100 *manentes* to Abbess Berta for the foundation of a *monasterium* (676)

[For the text, which only survives in a 12th-century copy (in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS no. 111), see Hunt 1893, i. no. 7 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 51 = Finberg 1964, 109 (no. 355) = Kelly 2007, 53-62 (no. 1)]

Latin rubric

*De .c. hidis qui adiacent ciuitati Bathę*

Latin text

*Regnante ac gubernante regimonia regni Osrici regis, anno recapitulationis Dionisii, id est ab incarnatione Domini nostri Iesu Christi sexcentesimo septuagesimo sexto, indictione .iiii<sup>a</sup>., mense Nouembrio, .viii. idus Nouembris.*

*Cum nobis ęuangelica et apostolica dogmata post baptismi sacramentum Deo suffragante fuissent delata et omnia simulachrorum figmenta ridiculosa funditus diruta, tum primitus ad augmentum catholicę et orthodoxę fidei pontificalem dumtaxat cathedram erigentes iuxta sinodalia decreta construere censuimus. At uero nunc cum gratia superna longe lateque profusius enitesceret, cenobialia etiam loca sparsim uirorum sparsimque uirginum Deo famulantium erigenda statuimus, ut ubi truculentus et nefandus prius draco errorum deceptionibus seruiebat, nunc uersa uice ęcclesiasticus ordo in clero conuersantium Domino patrocinate gaudens tripudiet.*

*Quam ob rem ego supradictus Osricus rex, pro remedio animę meę et indulgentia piaculorum meorum, hoc priuilegium impendere ad laudem nominis Domini nostri decreueram, id est Bertanę*

*abbatisę, quę pro Christiana deuotione ac pro spe ęterne beatitudinis Dei famulam se profitetur, centum manentes qui adiacent ciuitati quę uocatur hat Bathu tribuens ad construendum monasterium sanctarum uirginum. Igitur subnixis precibus imploro ut nullus post obitum meum de ea cespitis conditione tollere uel auferre quippiam contra canonicę auctoritatis interdictum pertinaciter presumat. Si quis uero, quod absit, succedentium episcoporum seu regum contra hanc nostrę diffinitionis cartulam propria temeritate presumere temptauerit, sit sequestratus a communionem corporis Domini nostri Iesu Christi et a consortio omnium sanctorum in ęuum priuatus.*

*Signum manus Osrici regis qui hanc cartam donationis fieri rogauit. +*

*Ego ędelredus rex consensi et subscripsi. +*

*Ego Theodorus gratia dei archiepiscopus testis subscripsi. +*

*Ego Leutherius acsi indignus episcopus subscripsi. +*

*Ego Wilfridus episcopus consensi et subscripsi. +*

*Ego Hedda episcopus consensi et subscripsi. +*

*Ego Ergnualdus episcopus consensi et subscripsi. +*

*Ego Saxuulfus episcopus consensi et subscripsi. +*

*Signum Baldredi.*

*Osuualdi.*

*Gadfridi.*

*ędelmodi.*

Translation of the rubric

Concerning the 100 hides that lie near the city of Bath.

Translation of the text

During the reign and under the guidance of the royal authority of the realm of King Osric, in the six-hundredth and seventy-sixth year according to the recalculation of Dionysius, that is, from the Incarnation of our lord Jesus Christ, in the fourth indiction, in the month of November, 8 days [before] the ides of November.

When, with the intercession of God, the evangelical and apostolic doctrines had been conveyed to us following the sacrament of baptism and all the ludicrous representations of false idols had been utterly destroyed, then, at the outset, in order to

amplify the catholic and orthodox faith, we decided merely to construct a seat for a bishop, establishing [it] according to synodal decrees. But, since Grace from above was beginning to shine more abundantly far and wide, we have now also resolved that religious houses should be built separately for men and separately for maidens who are serving God, so that where previously the cruel and detestable serpent was a servant of his allurements full of sin, now, with changing times, let a religious host of those who, under God's patronage, are turning into holy people, dance in joy.

For which reason, I, the above-mentioned King Osric, for the healing of my soul and the indulgence of my sins, had decided to grant this charter of privilege in praise of the name of our Lord, namely bestowing on Abbess Berta (who in dedication to Christ and in the hope of eternal blessedness declares herself God's servant) one hundred hides which lie close to the city which is called *hat Bathu* [Bath], for building a religious house of holy maidens. So with the support of prayers I beg that after my death no one should stubbornly dare, contrary to a prohibition of canonical authority, to take or carry off anything at all from that grant of land. But if (let it not be so!) any of the bishops or kings who follow, through his own arrogance, attempts to dare [to do] this in the face of this charter containing our decree, let him be cut off from communion with the body of our lord Jesus Christ and deprived of the company of all the saints for ever.

The sign of the hand of King Osric who asked that this charter of gift be made.

I, King Ethelred, have agreed and signed.

I, Theodore, archbishop [of Canterbury] by the grace of God, have signed as a witness.

I, Bishop Leuthere [of Winchester], although unworthy, have signed.

I, Bishop Wilfrith [of York], have agreed and signed.

I, Bishop Haeddi [of Winchester], have agreed and signed.

I, Bishop Eorconweald [of London], have agreed and signed.

I, Bishop Seaxwulf [of Lichfield], have agreed and signed.

The sign of Baldred.

[The sign of] of Oswald.

[The sign of] of Eadfrith.

[The sign of] of Æthelmod.

## Comment

The grandeur of the proem is achieved partly by euphuism (*regnante, regimonia, regni, regis; simulacrorum figmenta; errorum deceptionibus*), partly by allusiveness, the general concealing the particular. Had Osric gone into detail, he might have said: 'We were born pagans, but after we were baptised, we learnt the doctrines of the apostles and the evangelists and we then destroyed all the false idols of the old religion throughout our kingdom. In order to propagate the Christian faith, our first, modest, ambition was to build a cathedral at Worcester in accordance with the decrees of the synod of Hertford in 672 requiring the establishment of more seats for bishops. However, through divine guidance (as interpreted by Archbishop Theodore), we further decided to establish religious houses (not double ones with monks and nuns together, but separately), including houses for women at Gloucester and at Bath. So where once on pagan sites (at Bath, Gloucester, Worcester, marked by Roman baths and fortresses) the devil's servant, the snake, tempted men to sin, now, a host of monks, nuns and priests, turned towards the true God, should dance in joy'. The 'snake' or 'serpent' is here taken as figurative, the devil's agent of temptation, derived from the Genesis story, but there are those who think that it might be an allusion to the representation of a snake in ruined, pagan Bath; see Kelly 2007, 59. Certainly the Celts had a snake-goddess.

The transition from the 'we' of the second paragraph to the 'I' of the third raises the question of identity. Had the 'we' been sustained throughout, it could easily be taken as the regal plural, standing for Osric alone. However, unless the whole second paragraph is a later addition, not fully integrated into an existing document, it is natural to assume that in that second paragraph Osric is speaking for others. These could be his brother (and perhaps joint ruler) Oshere, his leading men and the king(s) of Mercia, in which case Osric will be alluding to a project of Christianization that stretched back over some years and whose anteriority contrasts with the immediacy of the present grant.

Somewhat heavy weather has been made of this charter by commentators and by those who have hazarded a translation. In fact, although the Latin is dense and overflowing, it is clearly structured. One of the keys is to take *dumtaxat* as an adverb ('no more than', 'no less than', 'only', 'solely', 'merely'), rather than as a conjunction ('provided that'). Thus

the re-arranged skeleton of the second paragraph (with subordinate material bracketed and the main clause emboldened) is: (*cum dogmata nobis delata fuissent et figmenta diruta [fuissent]), cathedram construere censuimus (erigentes [eam] iuxta sinodalia decreta). at (cum gratia enitesceret) cenobialia loca erigenda [esse] statuimus, (ut (ubi draco seruiebat) nunc ecclesiasticus ordo gaudens tripudiet).* This means: ‘(When doctrines had been conveyed to us and idols destroyed, **we decided to construct a bishop’s seat**, (establishing [it] according to synodal decrees). **But** (when Grace began to shine) **we decided that religious houses should be constructed** (so that (where the serpent was servant) now let a religious host dance in joy)’. This interpretation means that it is unnecessary to suppose that *monasteria* or *ecclesias* (‘monasteries’ or ‘churches’) are missing as the direct object of *construere* (Kelly 2007, 57–8). There must be some doubt as to whether *seruiebat* is the correct reading (the serpent being ‘enslaved to’, or ‘serving’ his deceptions), when *saeuiebat* (‘raging’, ‘raving with his deceptions’) is possible; this would take *deceptionibus* as ablative rather than dative. The translation ‘devote himself to deceptions’ (Kelly 2007, 57) tries to make the best of this phrase.

Similarly, in the third paragraph the first sentence has caused difficulties, but its essential structure is *ego Osricus rex hoc priuilegium impendere decreueram, (id est, tribuens Bertanę centum manentes ad construendum monasterium): ‘I, King Osric, had decided to grant this charter of privilege* (namely bestowing on Abbess Berta one hundred hides for building a religious house)’. The participle *tribuens* is regarded as redundant by Heather Williams (reported in Kelly 2007, 60), but is essential to the structure of the particularising phrase after *id est*. The tense of *decreueram* (pluperfect) is a difficulty. It is true that the passive of the Latin pluperfect tense can be used in Medieval Latin as an imperfect, but that is because the form of the tense (*decretum erat* etc) looks like an imperfect and *decretum fuerat* had evolved to provide an undoubted pluperfect. However, it is hard to find examples where the pluperfect active is used as an imperfect tense. Unless this was a slip, it probably needs to be read as part of the transition from ‘we’ to ‘I’. Thus ‘we decided merely to construct a seat for a bishop, then subsequently to build religious houses also, but I Osric had already decided to give 100 hides to Berta’. Parallels for *donare* and *impendere* dependent on *decerno* are

cited from Sawyer 1968 (nos 231, 234, 1170, 1248) in Kelly 2007, 59.

The sentence *imploro ut nullus ... de ea cespitis conditione tollere uel auferre quippiam ... presumat* (‘I beg that no one ... should dare ... to take or carry off anything at all from that grant of land’) has also caused difficulty, with M. Lapidge (reported in Kelly 2007, 59) suggesting that *cespitis* is a partitive genitive dependent on *quippiam* (‘any soil’, ‘any land’). Latin word order is flexible, but not infinitely so and *cespitis* most obviously depends on *conditione*, the (defining) genitive typically ‘nesting’ in the middle of the prepositional phrase. Latin *c(a)espes* is ‘sod’, ‘clod’, ‘soil’ and it is a mark of the scribe’s straining after effect that *de ea cespitis conditione* could mean ‘the condition of the soil’. This is a good example of how Latin words, singly or in conjunction, gain their exact sense from the context: *de eo terrae dono* (‘grant of land’) would be unequivocal, but too plain and ordinary.<sup>166</sup>

Finally it should be said that Kelly’s translation (Kelly 2007, 55) of the opening flourish (‘Ruling and governing the government of the reign of king Osric ...’) cannot be right as there is no noun for ‘ruling and governing’ to agree with, while she makes *regimonia* the direct object of *regnante et gubernante*. The phrase is in fact an ablative absolute (*regnante et gubernante regimonia*), with the two participles agreeing with *regimonia*, and this is not altered by the fact that *regimonia* should perhaps be *regimonio* as the noun seems to be neuter (second declension) in its other rare appearances. This seems also to be an example of the scribe’s straining after effect in which clarity is sacrificed to density: he probably began with the intention of having, as usual, just *regnante Osrico rege*, but then amplified it for effect and failed to realize that *regnante* did not really fit with the *regimonia regni Osrici regis* after *gubernante*.

A commentary on points of detail arising from this charter will be found in the article above, especially notes 37–9, 51, 53, 54, 56–63.

## Document 2: Record of a settlement at the Synod of Brentford (781) of a claim by King Offa of Mercia against the Bishop of Worcester

[For the text (British Library, Cotton Tiberius A xiii), see Hearne 1723, 224–7, and Kemble 1839–1848, no. 143; it is calendared in Sawyer 1968, no. 1257, and in Finberg 1972, 95–6 (no. 228). There is a



translation in Whitelock 1979, no. 77, which is not exact enough for the present purpose.]

#### Latin text

+ *In nomine dei summi. Tempora temporibus subeunt et uicissitudinum spatiis euenit ut prisca iam dicta irrita fiant nisi scriptis confirmemur. Quare ego Heaðoredus, deo dispensante supplex Huicciorum episcopus, insimul etiam cum consensu et consilio totius familiae meae quae est in Uuegerna ciuitate constituta, diligentissime scrutans cogitauit atque de pace uel statu aecclesiastica rimatus sum. Equidem de aliquibus agellis conflictationis quaerulam cum Offano, rege Merciorum dominoque dilectissimo nostro, habuimus. Aiebat enim nos, sine iure haereditario propinqui eius, Æðelbaldi scilicet regis, haereditatem sub dominio iniusto habere, id est, in loco qui dicitur aet Beathum .xc. manentium, et in aliis multis locis, hoc est, aet Stretforda xxx. cassatos, aet Sture .xxxviii.; simili etiam uocabulo aet Sture in Usmerum .xiii. manentium, aet Breodune .xii., in Homtune xvii. cassatorum. Haec autem praefata contentionis causa in sinodali conciliabulo demissa in loco qui dicitur aet Bregentforda. Reddidimus quoque illo iam nominato regi Offan, monasterium illud celeberrimum aet Baþum sine ullo contradictionis obstaculo, ad habendum uel etiam, cui dignum duxisset, ad tribuendum semperque fruendum iustis eius haeredibus libentissime concessimus; et in australe parte fluminis ibi iuxta quod dicitur Eafen .xxx. cassatos addidimus, quam terram mercati sumus digno praetio a Cyneulfo rege Uuestsaexna. Quapropter idem ille praefatus rex Offa, ad reconpensationis satisfactionem et pro unanimitate firmissimae pacis, praefata loca, aet Stretforda, aet Sture, aet Breodune, in Homtune, aet Sture in Usmerum, extra omni controuersionis et ammonitionis causa, ea libertate ad supradictam aecclesiam nostram, id est in Uuegerna ciuitate †libertas† concessit, ut nullo maiore cessu alicuius rei essent subiectae quam praememorata sedis episcopalis. Nec non et trium annorum ad se pertinentes pastionis, id est .vi. conuiuia, libenter concedendo largitus est.*

*Nunc ergo ego Offa dei gratia rex praescriptam libertatem terrarum, pro remedio animae meae concessam, in synodo aet Bregentforda, una mecum consedente lamberhto archiepiscopo, nec non omnes episcopi, abbates et principes consenserunt et subscripserunt. Propria manu signum sacratissimae*

*crucis Christi pro firmitatis stabilimento conscripsi. Conscripta est haec cartula aet Bregentforda, anno ab incarnatione Christi .dccc.lxxx. Indictione .iiii.*

+ *Offa, rex Merciorum.* + *Iaenberht archiepiscopus.*  
 + *Brorda princeps.* + *Eadberht episcopus.*  
 + *Berhtuuald princeps.* + *Hygeberht episcopus.*  
 + *Eadbald princeps.\** + *Æþelmod episcopus.*  
 + *Esne princeps.\** + *Ecgbald episcopus.*  
 + *Eadbald princeps.\** + *Ceoluulf episcopus.*  
 + *Eadberht princeps.\** + *Heathoredus episcopus.*  
 + *Diera episcopus.* + *Gislhere episcopus.*  
 + *Æthelulwf episcopus.* + *Eadberht episcopus.*  
 + *Heardred episcopus.* + *Aldberht episcopus.*

\* Hearne 1723, 226–7, has *presbiter* ‘priest’ here

#### Translation

In the name of the greatest God. Eras succeed eras and as a result of intervening periods of constant change it happens that spoken instructions [which are] already ancient would become void unless we were to confirm them [reading *confirmemur*] in writing. So I, Heathured, by God’s dispensation the humble bishop of the Hwicce, also with, at the same time, the agreement and advice of my whole community which has been established in the city of Worcester, while conducting most careful research,<sup>167</sup> have pondered and examined [every detail] concerning the tranquillity or rather the standing of the church. The fact is that we have with Offa, king of the Mercians and our most loved lord, a suit and dispute concerning some small pieces of land. For he said that, without hereditary right, we had under illegitimate lordship the inheritance of his relative, namely King Ethelbald [716–755 or 756], that is, in the place which is called *aet Beathum* [Bath, Somerset], consisting of 90 *manentes*,<sup>168</sup> and in many other places, that is, 30 *cassati* at *Stretforda* [Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire];<sup>169</sup> 38 at *Sture* [‘Stour’];<sup>170</sup> at [a place] with a similar name, *Sture in Usmerum* [Stour in Ismere], consisting of 14 *manentes*;<sup>171</sup> at *Breodune* [Bredon, Worcestershire], [consisting of] 12;<sup>172</sup> in *Homtune* [Hampton Lucy, Warwickshire], consisting of 17 *cassati*.<sup>173</sup> Now this previously-mentioned cause of contention has been brought for settlement<sup>174</sup> at the (minor) synodal meeting in the place which is called *aet Bregentford* [Brentford, Middlesex]. In addition we have returned to King Offa, already named, that very famous ‘monastery’ at Bath, without any obstructive



counterclaim, [for him] to have, or even, to grant to anyone he had considered worthy, and we have granted it with the utmost willingness to his rightful heirs to be fully enjoyed always. And on the southern side of the nearby river there [in Bath] which is called *Eafen* [Avon], we have added 30 *cassati*, land which we purchased at an honourable price from Cynewulf the West-Saxon king. For this reason, the self-same aforementioned King Offa, in order to fulfil the need for reciprocity and in exchange for the harmony afforded by a very stable peace, has willingly<sup>175</sup> granted to our aforesaid church, that is in the city of Worcester, the aforementioned places, at *Stretforda*, at *Sture*, at *Breodune*, in *Homitune*, at *Sture in Usmerum*, laying aside every reason for dispute or rebuke, with the privilege that they should not be subjected to any greater exaction in any matter than the aforementioned episcopal seat.<sup>176</sup> Moreover, in willingly granting them, he generously bestowed three years’ victuals, that is 6 banquets, belonging to him.<sup>177</sup>

So now I Offa, king by the grace of God, with Archbishop Jaenbeorht sitting together with me, and moreover all the bishops, abbots and leading men [ealdormen],<sup>178</sup> have agreed<sup>179</sup> to and signed below this above-written land-privilege, granted for the healing of my soul in the synod at Brentford. With my own hand, for the reinforcing of stability, I have written the sign of Christ’s most holy cross. This small document was written at Brentford in the year 781 from the incarnation of Christ during the 4th indiction.

[Witness list; column 1]

- + Offa, king of the Mercians.
- + Brorda, ealdorman.
- + Beorhtweald, ealdorman.
- + Eadbeald, ealdorman.
- + Esne, ealdorman.
- + Eadbeald, ealdorman.
- + Eadbeorht, ealdorman.
- + Deora, bishop [of Rochester].
- + Æthelwulf, bishop [of Elmham].
- + Heardred, bishop [of Dunwich].

[column 2]

- + Jaenbeorht, archbishop [of Canterbury].
- + Eadbeorht, bishop [of Leicester].
- + Hygebeorht, bishop [of Lichfield].
- + Æthelmod, bishop [of Sherborne].
- + Ecgbeald, bishop [of Winchester].
- + Ceolwulf, bishop [of Lindsey].

- + Heathured, bishop [of Worcester].
- + Gislhere, bishop [of Selsey].
- + Eadbeorht, bishop [of London].
- + Ealdbeorht, bishop [of Hereford].

#### Comment

The document essentially consists of Heathured’s narrative and Offa’s consent, each part presumably being supplied by themselves or their clerks. Whatever the rights or wrongs, Heathured appears to be uncomfortable: he is clearly troubled by the threat to himself and to his church because he has had to re-examine every aspect of ‘the tranquillity or rather the standing of the church’ and he is pleased to have avoided dispute and rebuke (*controuersionis et ammonitionis*). At the same time, he belittles the amount of land involved (*agellis*), and even, possibly, the synod itself, for he uses *conciliabulum* instead of *concilium* and the former, apart from being a (possibly dismissive) diminutive, has among its meanings ‘irregular assembly’; however, it could be a finely crafted insult, in that the word can also be used simply as a ‘council’. The grand preamble (‘Eras succeed eras ...’) suggests a possible line of defence (‘these land grants were by word-of-mouth, not committed to writing’), which he (no doubt calculatedly) does not pursue. By using the passive (*demissa [est]*), he credits and blames no one for the appearance of the case before the synod and he cannot bring himself to mention his surrender of the 90 hides though they are implied in *reddidimus quoque*. What Heathured wishes to be remembered is his generosity in giving (without, he wants it to appear, being asked or compelled) the ‘monastery’ at Bath (‘without any obstructive counterclaim’) and the 30 hides south of the River Avon. While he gives *libentissime*, Offa, in Heathured’s words, gives only *libenter*, and whereas Heathured appears to be ‘leaned on’ by Offa, he stresses that his transaction with the king of Wessex, was not done through misuse of authority, but by paying ‘an honourable price’. He does presume somewhat, however, in allowing the king to ‘have’ and to ‘grant’, and his heirs to ‘enjoy fully’ land that the king claimed was his and which any way he could grant away so that his heirs would never have it.

Offa’s motives are unclear, but, since he appears to have been active or acquiescent in giving some of the lands that were later in Worcestershire and Warwickshire to or for the Church of Worcester, then to have suddenly asked for them back, his real

intention was probably to acquire Bath, for its beautiful location, its prestige and its strategic siting on the border with Wessex. Thus his plan would have been to invent a pretext for taking all the church's lands in question, then generously re-grant the lands nearer to Worcester, so that the bishop could not protest about the loss of Bath.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My interest in South Stoke was aroused by a question from Mrs Betty Cavanagh of that village and I prepared some notes on the subject for their celebration of the Millennium. At that time there was a fruitful exchange of information with Mr Robert Parfitt, chairman of the South Stoke 2000 History Group. These notes were re-written in association with a lecture entitled 'Domesday Book and the Locality' which I gave to the South Stoke Local History Society in October 2003 and in which I suggested that South Stoke, not mentioned in Domesday Book, was to be sought in the entry for Monkton Combe. The paper was then laid aside because of the pressure of other work and in the knowledge that a new edition of the Charters of Bath and Wells, by S.E. Kelly, would be appearing. This arrived in 2007 and has been an invaluable tool in the re-drafting of this article for publication. As stimulating have been discussions with Teresa Hall and Mick Aston who both commented on a draft. Their especial knowledge of early religious foundations, the displacement of peoples, the history of settlement and the archaeology of the landscape saved me from excess simplicity and shone a light in the penumbra of what I thought I knew. My wife Caroline has not only read the article with her usual acuity at every stage of the intermittent gestation, but has also made many suggestions of substance. I could not resist Mick Aston's offer to draw the maps, and I am grateful to Peter Ellis for accepting this article and for his customary care in its production.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> This is not the place to engage in debate about the spelling of the name of the parish and village which has become a matter of local passion. In these matters there is always a fruitless quest for authority because there is no ultimate arbiter; moreover, the maps of England are dotted with

parish-names spelt differently from the settlements that named them. The medieval evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of a single word spelling, Southstoke, because in unpunctuated documents, two words will count as two places. For practical purposes, it is sensible to follow the spellings of the Ordnance Survey, but even that mighty organisation has wavered, with a preponderance of South Stoke for the village and a single word for the parish, but with Southstoke for the village itself in the 1970s and 1980s. Word division or lack of it reflects emphasis: in Southstoke the stress is on South; in South Stoke the stress is on Stoke. On those grounds, South Stoke is preferable, since this southern Stoke is distinguished from North Stoke. The current on-line Ordnance Survey maps have South Stoke.

<sup>2</sup> Youngs 1979, 437.

<sup>3</sup> Hundreds were a layer of administrative units between the shire and the vill dating from the mid 10th century and responsible for taxation, policing and justice. See Anderson 1939, 209–17; and Loyn 1974. In Wessex the hundreds probably arose as divisions of older land-units, especially of royal or ecclesiastical estates. On the Somerset hundreds, see Thorn 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Collinson 1791, i. 136–7; Humphreys 1906, ii. 647. Anyone interested in the full history of the parish can only await patiently the magisterial volume of the Victoria County History which will contain Bath Hundred.

<sup>5</sup> This and subsequent regnal and episcopal dates are taken from the *Handbook of British Chronology*.

<sup>6</sup> Latin *subestimatum* could mean 'underestimated', suggesting that the estate was larger, but 'beneficially rated' at five small homesteads by a generous giver, who is falsely modest. This would tie in with *particulam* and *mansiunculis*, both being diminutives. However, the grand style often involves adding to words extra syllables that give bulk but are in themselves meaningless. The verb *subestimare* is found in the plain sense of 'to assess' in the 12th century according to Latham 1965, under *subestimo*.

<sup>7</sup> Hunt 1893, i. no. 20 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 694; Finberg 1964a, 141 (no. 485); Kelly 2007, no. 14). The charter is usually thought to be genuine, but see Whitelock 1959. Kelly regards the witness list as wholly acceptable and her few reservations seem not to undermine the essential

authenticity of the deed. The placing of the boundary clause after the list of witnesses is unusual, and possibly suspicious, but as this was a restoration, it might have been added later; a further possible reason is given below.

<sup>8</sup> The word is Old English *hid*, connected with the words *hiwian* (‘to marry’), *hiwung* (‘marriage’), *hiwa* or *higa* (‘a family member’), *hiwen* (‘a family,’ or ‘household’) and *hiwisc* (a ‘family’ or ‘household’ or ‘hide of land’). This last yields the place-name Hewish or Huish. Latin alternatives (*mansus*, *mansa*, *mansum*, *manens*, *mansio*, *mansiunculus*, all from *maneo*: ‘to remain’, ‘to stay’, ‘to settle’) and *cas(s)atus* (from *casa*: ‘house’, ‘hut’), all contain the notion of dwelling, but the hide is also sometimes glossed as *tributaria* (‘tax-land’) or *terra unius tributarii* (‘land of one tax-payer’ or ‘tribute payer’, in cash or kind) and sometimes simply as *familia* (‘family’ or ‘household’). The hide is treated by Bede as ‘land for one household’; see Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 72 and note 3; Maitland 1897, 357–520.

<sup>9</sup> These *burhs* are listed in the Burghal Hidage; see Maitland 1897, 505; Hill 1969; Hill and Rumble 1996.

<sup>10</sup> Danegeld was first levied by King Ethelred the Unready (978 x 979–1016). The impost was abolished by Edward the Confessor in 1051 (Anglo-Saxon Chronicle), but appears to have been re-imposed (simply as geld), by William the Conqueror, perhaps annually.

All citations of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and quotations from it are from Whitelock *et al.* 1965. Other translations are by the author of this article.

<sup>11</sup> The assumptions and methodology of Eyton 1878 and Eyton 1880 were heavily and rightly criticized by J.H. Round in *VCH Somerset*, i, 386–93.

<sup>12</sup> Domesday SOM 7,6;9;11. For a brief description of Domesday Book and a commentary on an entry, see Thorn 2008, 1–11. The manuscript was set in a special type and published in 1783; see Domesday Book (Record Commission). On the immense bibliography, see Bates 1986 supplemented by the list in Hallam and Bates 2001, 191–8. For more recent publications, see the (selective) bibliography in Roffe 2007, 322–47. There have been two significant modern editions; see Domesday Book (Phillimore) and Domesday Book (Alecto) below. References in

this article are to the chapter and section number of the Phillimore edition prefaced by a three-letter county abbreviation. For the Phillimore volume for Somerset, see Thorn and Thorn 1980.

<sup>13</sup> Old English *thonne on horscum wyllan*. Kelly 2007, 117, translates ‘Then on dirty springs’. This assumes that *horscum* is a dative plural of a hypothetical Old English word *horsc*, connected with *horu* and *horh*, meaning ‘filth’, whereas Horsecombe, the modern name of the vale, is Old English *hors* (‘horse’) and *cumb* (‘valley’). She says: ‘The proximity of *horscum wyllan* and Horsecombe would seem to be a coincidence’. This seems incredible. The name of the stream occurs as *Horscumbes broc* in the bounds of *Cliftune* (= ‘the *tun* by the cliff’ and referring to Beechen Cliff, but standing for Lyncombe) in the charter of 970 (Kelly 2007, no. 18) and it is likely that the names are in fact connected; either that *horscum* should have a final *b* (*horscumb*) or that *Horscumbes* lacks a *-c-* (*Horscumbes*). Thus either the springs are the ‘Horsecombe Springs’ or the vale is a ‘dirty combe’. The ground is contaminated by fuller’s earth.

<sup>14</sup> They have been worked out by Grundy 1935, 206–10; see also Kelly 2007, 117. The analysis which follows agrees with Grundy.

<sup>15</sup> The bank divides no. 19 (‘Wayside’) Southstoke Road from no. 161 (‘Avalon’) Midford Road.

<sup>16</sup> The *mær broc*, Old English (*ge*)*mære-broc*. Kelly 2007, 117, treats the ‘boundary brook’ differently. She applies it both to the *Camelar* west of Midford (that is, to the Cam Brook) and to the unnamed stream that joins the *Camelar* and forms much of the western boundary of South Stoke. This interpretation seems improbable. It is discussed below together with the implications of this name; see note 88.

<sup>17</sup> The brook leaves the canal at ST742606, just at the northern tip of Engine Wood, a name which probably refers to the caisson lock.

<sup>18</sup> A copy was made for the 1994 centenary of Southstoke parish council with field names inserted by Mr. M. Chapman. This kink in the boundary is unclear on Ordnance Survey small-scale maps, and on the first series 2½ inch-to-the-mile sheet of 1948 (sheet ST76) the boundary follows a straight line at this point. However, on the six-inch maps of 1887 and 1939 and on the twenty-five-inch map of 1888, for example, as on the 1:25,000 sheet of 1976 (ST66/76), the feature is clearly shown.

- <sup>19</sup> Old English *tha ealdan stræt*. By identifying the ‘street’ with the Foss Way, Kelly 2007, 117, is forced to conclude that ‘in this section the charter survey follows a different route from the later parish boundary which does not reach the Fosse Way’.
- <sup>20</sup> See Youngs 1979, 437. This intake includes St Gregory’s (formerly Cardinal Newman) School and a private house, Sulis Manor (formerly called Over). Its incorporation in Bath was ostensibly for the erection of two schools, of which only one was built, but it allowed the city to expand south of the Wansdyke, eroding both the dyke and the belt of green land which separated the city from South Stoke.
- <sup>21</sup> See Hunt 1893, *passim*.
- <sup>22</sup> For editions of this charter, see note 98.
- <sup>23</sup> See Ekwall 1960, under *Stoc*.
- <sup>24</sup> (Limpley) Stoke was a *stoc* of Bradford-on-Avon. Radstock was a *stoc* of Wellow and is represented by *Welewestoca* in a spurious charter (Hunt 1893, i. no. 26 = Sawyer 1968, no. 854 = Finberg 1964a, 148–9 (no. 525) = Kelly 2007, no. 20). The combe in question might be the whole valley of the River *Camelar*, in which case it will have produced both Combe (Hay) and (Monkton) Combe. On the other hand, another combe containing the Wellow Brook joins this combe at Midford, and it may be that the valley of the *Camelar* was regarded as, in effect, two combes, rather as the *Camelar* itself changes its name from Cam Brook to Midford Brook at Midford.
- <sup>25</sup> Latin *ruris quandam particulam ... pridem indepte distorteque a beati Petri apostolici agminis primatis oraculis ablatam, restituendo et recuperando ... in perpetuum ius largitus sum*. The word *oraculis* (‘oracles’, here meaning ‘churches’) is probably an error for *oraculo* (‘church’).
- <sup>26</sup> Latin *Ethelredus Rex dedit Deo et ecclesiae Bathoniensi et monachis ibi deo servientibus, Suthstokeham et terram Grentae de Norstoke confirmavit*: Hunt 1893, no. 808. The King Ethelred in question is almost certainly the king of Wessex, but Kelly considers King Ethelred of Mercia (675–704) or Ethelred the Unready (978 x 979–1016). The monks clearly thought that the grant of South Stoke and the restoration of North Stoke were made by the same king. King Ethelred of Mercia is too early to have restored North Stoke (granted in 757 x 758; see note 98) and Ethelred the Unready is too late to have granted South Stoke which was restored in 961. Kelly 2007, 34, suggests in passing that the monks might have ‘mangled a reference to *Welwestoc* (ie Radstock, Somerset) which Ethelread the unready is said to have donated in 984’, but this seems improbable; see note 132. Incidentally, there is no celebration described in the Cartulary for the birthday of this king, in contrast to Edgar’s: *Edgarus Rex dedit Deo et ecclesiae Bathoniensi et monachis ibi Deo servientibus Corstonam, Stantonam, Cliftonam et Evestiam; Suthstokeham quoque prius ab Ethelredo Rege eidem ecclesiae datam et postea ablatam devote restituit. Cujus anniversaria dies in alba solemniter celebretur et mensa fratrum copiosius procuretur et c. pauperes reficiantur* (‘King Edgar gave to God and the church of Bath and the monks serving God there Corston, Stanton (Prior), Cliftona [Lyncombe] and ‘Eversy’; he also piously restored South Stoke previously given to the same church by King Ethelred and later taken away. His anniversary should be celebrated with solemnity in an alb and the brothers’ table more copiously supplied and 100 poor people fed.’)
- <sup>27</sup> *Suthstokeham* is in the accusative case and the *-h-* has intruded as if the scribe was thinking of a name in *-ham*. The nominative would be *Suthstokeha*. These forms are probably aberrant, rather than representing a variant name.
- <sup>28</sup> See Kelly 2007, 35, 70–1.
- <sup>29</sup> North Stoke was so named (*Northstoc*) at the time of its first grant (757 x 758).
- <sup>30</sup> For Athelstan’s grant, see Hunt 1893, ii. no. 808; for Edgar’s, see Hunt 1893, i. no. 25 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 777 = Finberg 1964a, 145 (no. 512) = Kelly 2007 no. 18).
- <sup>31</sup> SOM 7.7. This entry does not give the 1066 holder, but there is a general statement at the end of the chapter (SOM 7.15): ‘The whole of this land lay in (the lands of) this church before 1066; it could not be separated from it’.
- <sup>32</sup> The story has been told before, but there is more to add. See *VCH Somerset*, ii. 69–80; Cunliffe 1984; Cunliffe 1986; Manco 1998; Davenport 2002; Kelly 2007, 2–24.
- <sup>33</sup> See Taylor 1900, 129; Aston 1986; Costen 1992, 138–9.
- <sup>34</sup> At ST796700.
- <sup>35</sup> According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the men of Somerset occur in 845, the *Wilsaete* in

802 and *Wiltunscir* in 878; see Ekwall 1960, under these names.

<sup>36</sup> See Taylor 1898, condensed in Finberg 1957, 17–51.

<sup>37</sup> Others prefer 675; on the date, see note 56.

<sup>38</sup> She is often referred to as Bertana, from the inflected form *Bertane* (for *Bertanae*, dative case) which appears in the charter. The name is Frankish and it may be that she was one of those women sent by Bertila, the abbess of Chelles in Francia, to found religious houses for local kings; see Sims-Williams 1975; Sims-Williams 1990, 110–14; Kelly 2007, 3–4; Foot 2000, i. 37; Yorke 2003, 2. The supposedly later deputy abbess, Folcburg, has a name, and possibly a history, of the same origin; see note 96.

<sup>39</sup> Latin *centum manentes qui adiacent ciuitati que vocatur hat Bathu tribuens ad construendum monasterium sanctorum uirginum*. For the charter, which only survives in a 12th-century copy (in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS no. 111), see Hunt 1893, i. no. 7 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 51 = Finberg 1964a, 109 (no. 355)). The best edition is now Kelly 2007, 53–62 (no. 1). For calendaring and/or discussion, see Haddan and Stubbs 1869–71, iii. 129; Plummer 1896, ii. 246–7; Taylor 1900, 136–7; Sawyer 1968, no. 51; Finberg 1972, 172–5; Harrison 1976, 67–9; Edwards 1988, 217–23; Sims-Williams 1988, 165–74; Kelly 2007, 2–3, 53–62. The text and translation of the charter are given (as Document 1) in the Appendix to this article. As a name *hat Bathu* looks corrupt. It might mean ‘Hot Baths’, but might be a misunderstanding or miswriting of *æt bathum* (‘at the baths’) or a shortening of *æt thæm hatum bathum* (‘at those hot baths’) found in Sawyer 1968, no. 210 of 864 (see note 123), or of *æt hatum bathum* (‘at the hot baths’) in Sawyer 1968, no. 777 (of 970); the latter is in Kelly 2007, no. 18, this being the grant of *Cliftune* (see note 128).

<sup>40</sup> Latin *cathedralis* derives from *cathedra*, which like *sedes* means ‘seat’.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Minster’ is from Old English *mynster*, itself from Old High German *munistri*, which is assumed to derive from the hypothetical popular Latin *monisterium*. The German speakers will have encountered ‘monasteries’ on the Continent in the late period of the Christianized Roman Empire.

<sup>42</sup> In this article, the Latin *monasterium* is rendered as ‘monastery’, and the word ‘nunnery’ avoided.

Where translation is not involved, and the exact nature of the establishment is unclear, the term ‘religious house for men/monks/women’ (or simply ‘religious house’ or ‘house’ where the context makes the meaning plain) is preferred. The term monastery without quotation marks is reserved for the Benedictine house in Bath and the term ‘minster’ is kept for those secular minster churches, usually royal in origin, which had a parish; on this last group, see Blair 1985. On these royal religious houses, see Yorke 2003. Apart from Bath, members of the Hwiccan royal family founded houses at Gloucester, Twynning and Withington (in the later Gloucestershire) and Fladbury and Inkberrow (in the later Worcestershire).

<sup>44</sup> The word *monasterium* (‘monastery’) is Latinized from the Greek. It shares the same first element as *monachus* (‘monk’) and *monacha* (‘nun’) both from the Greek *monos* meaning ‘single’, ‘solitary’, or ‘alone’; thus *monachus* is originally a ‘hermit’ and *monasterium* is his cell, although over time the words lose the notion of ‘solitary’. The word *c(o)enobium* is also Latinized from Greek and originally means no more than a place where men or women live in a community. In Christian use it refers to a religious community or religious house, but not specifically to one type. These two words, like English *mynster*, can cover hermitages, monasteries, nunneries, double houses of monks and nuns (usually ruled by an abbess), colleges and secular minsters. The people within them may have been ‘ministering to a flock’ outside in the church’s *parochia* (‘parish’) or been trying to look away from the world in contemplation of God, in some cases eremitically or ascetically. An early religious house might have been a community of people, of both sexes, who individually had different occupations and preoccupations, such as monks, nuns and priests. The particular mix at Bath is uncertain, but recent study of the general topic of early ‘monasteries’ cautions against the simplistic use of such terms and easy categorization; see Blair 2005; Foot 1992; Foot 2000, i. xiii–xiv, 26–30, 96–110; Yorke 2003, 3–4, 11; Foot 2006, 5–6; Aston 2009, 97, note 2. As John Blair, who uses ‘minster’ as a general term, says: ‘*monasterium/mynster* is a non-specific term and the rules and lifestyles followed in most early English minsters are irrecoverable’ (Blair 2005, 70). Of



Gloucester, an apparently parallel institution, Finberg 1972, 161, says: 'an establishment formed originally, like so many in its time, as a home for royal and noble widows and a place of education for their children, with a number of resident priests ministering to them, ceased to bear this character after the death of [the abbess] Eafe, but remained in being as a college of secular priests'. I am very grateful to Teresa Hall and Mick Aston for enlightening me about the complexities of early 'monasteries'.

<sup>45</sup> On the Hwicce, see Hooke 1985; on Mercia, see Bassett 1989, 8–17, and Brooks, 1989, 159–70.

<sup>46</sup> The *Handbook of British Chronology* places his death on 15 November 654; the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle assigns it to 654 or 655 according to the version. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, v. 24 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 564), has: *Anno DCLV Penda periit, et Merca sunt facti Christiani* ('In the year 655 Penda died and the Mercians became Christian').

<sup>47</sup> What is known of Osric spans the period 675–685, while Oshere is known from 679–693; on the princes, kings and ealdormen of the Hwicce, see Stenton 1971, 43–6; Finberg 1972, 167–80. Osric, styled *subregulus*, attested a charter-grant by Frithuold *subregulus* of Surrey, confirmed by King Wulfhere (672 x 675): Birch 1885–1899, no. 34 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 1165 = Gelling 1979, 148–9 (no. 309)).

<sup>48</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 23 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 408–11). Offfor became the second Bishop of Worcester (691–693).

<sup>49</sup> *Handbook of British Chronology*, 229, 260. In Wessex Aldhelm is said to have founded 'churches' at Bradford-on-Avon (according to Bede) and at Frome c. 680 and at Bruton c. 690; see *VCH Somerset*, ii. 4–5; all three were probably on royal estates. On Aldhelm, see note 63. The 'conversion period' has recently become a major focus of renewed scholarly enquiry; see, among others, Blair 2005 and Yorke 2006.

<sup>50</sup> Sawyer 1968, no. 70 (= Finberg 1972, 31 (no. 1), and see pp. 153–66). This was a grant by Ethelred, king of the Mercians (674–704), to Osric and Oswald, styled his 'noble *ministri*' ('servants'), so that Osric in turn could found a 'monastery' from his portion.

<sup>51</sup> Latin *ad augmentum catholice et orthodoxe fidei pontificalem dumtaxat cathedram erigentes iuxta sinodalia decreta construere censuimus* ('in order to amplify the catholic and orthodox

faith, we decided merely to construct a seat for a bishop, establishing [it] according to synodal decrees'). The decrees are those of Theodore of Tarsus (then in Cilicia, now in Turkey), Archbishop of Canterbury (668–690), on diocesan organisation, in particular the founding of additional bishoprics, discussed at the Synod of Hertford in 672. The synod ended with no resolution on the subject: *nonum [capitulum]: in commune tractatum est ut plures Episcopi, crescente numero fidelium augerentur, sed de hac re ad praesens siluimus* ('Ninth [Topic]: there was a general discussion that more bishops should be added, as the number of the faithful was increasing, but on this matter, for the present, we have not pronounced'); see Haddan and Stubbs 1869–1871, iii. 118–22, especially note f. The text is from Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 5 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 352). Nonetheless additional dioceses were created in the years following. On the career of Theodore, see Lapidge 1995, 1–29.

The Latin *censuimus* could mean 'we decided' or 'we have decided'. The former is more likely as, broadly speaking, the first paragraph seems to focus on a time in the past and the second on the present (see the Appendix for discussion). Moreover in the first paragraph, the *at uero nunc ... statuimus ...* seems to mark the point at which the remoter past ('we decided') becomes the more recent 'we have resolved'. The reference is probably to the construction of a cathedral at Worcester, but whatever the exact sense of *censuimus*, there is nothing to show that the building was not still in progress at the date of the charter. Worcester tradition attributed the foundation to Oshere, Osric's joint-ruler or successor; see Finberg, 1972, 174–5. Osric may have founded the church and Oshere completed it.

<sup>52</sup> Latin *at uero nunc cum gratia superna longe lateque profusius entesceret ...*

<sup>53</sup> Latin *cenobialia etiam loca sparsim uirorum sparsimque uirginum deo famulantium erigenda statuimus*: 'we have now also resolved that religious houses should be built separately for men and separately for maidens who are serving God'. Double houses, shared between monks and nuns, had been a common early arrangement; see Kelly 2007, 14. Latin *cenobialia* is an adjective from *c(o)nobium*, on which see note 44.



- <sup>54</sup> For the equivalence of *manentes* with hides, see note 8. At this early date, the church at Bath cannot have been given land that it must itself settle and cultivate, but rather the rents and services and tithes from 100 hides which had previously gone to the king.
- <sup>55</sup> For the grants to Gloucester and Pershore Abbey, see Finberg 1972, 31, 86 (no. 1), and pp. 153–66. The charter (Birch 1885–1899, no. 60) is calendared in Sawyer 1968, no. 70. Both Hereford and Worcester Cathedrals held 300 hides in 1086 (Domesday HEF 2,57. WOR 2,1), but, especially in the case of the latter, they may have been accumulated over a long period.
- <sup>56</sup> On the dating by Indiction, see Kelly 2007, 56. Some scholars assume that the charter date should be 675 in order to accord it with the supposedly correct indiction.
- <sup>57</sup> Another example of dating from the Incarnation sometimes cited is Birch 1885–1899, no. 32 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 67), a charter of 674 issued by Wulfher, the Mercian king and the uncle of Osric, but that is spurious, as is Sawyer 1968, no. 52, if it is not inflated; see note 61.
- <sup>58</sup> In his *Penitential* (Book II, vi. 8) under the heading *De Abbatibus et Monachis vel Monasterio* (‘Concerning Abbots and Monks, or the Monastery’), he writes *non licet viris feminas habere monachas neque feminis viros, tamen nos non destruamus illud quod consuetudo est in hac terra* (‘It is not permitted for men [i.e. monks] to have female monks, nor women [i.e. nuns] to have men [i.e. monks], but we should not abolish the existing practice in that area’). The alternative ending *consuetudinem istius provinciae non destruamus*: ‘we should not abolish the practice of the province’) amounts to the same; see Haddan and Stubbs 1869–71, 195.
- <sup>59</sup> Leuthere uses much the same words of himself as witness to his own grant of land to the monks of Malmesbury (*Ego Leotherius, ac si indignus, rogatus a fratribus, hanc donacionis cartam subscripsi*) in a charter of 675 (Sawyer 1968, no. 1245 = Finberg 1964a, 69 (no. 181) = Kelly 2005, no. 1) that is usually treated with suspicion, as also in a charter that was re-worked in the mid-8th century, but with a probably genuine core, where he signs as *Ego Leotherius quamuis indignus episcopus hanc cartulam donacionis subscripsi* (Sawyer 1968, no. 1164 = Finberg 1964a, 155 (no. 551) = Kelly 1996, no.1). According to Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 5 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 348), Archbishop Theodore used *quamvis indignus* of himself. The word *episcopus* (‘bishop’) is missing from the otherwise careful edition of the Bath charter in Hunt 1893, i. no. 7, but is included in Kemble 1839–1848, i. no. 12, in Birch 1885–1899, no. 43, and in Kelly 2007, no. 1. It is possible that Hunt was trying to correct what he perceived as an error. Haeddi may have been an assistant bishop while Leuthere was ailing, but still alive; see Finberg 1972, 173. Finberg cites Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 12 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 368), and it is true that the historian seems to imply that Haeddi was acting as bishop before Leuthere’s death: *ipsisque regnantibus defunctus est ille, et episcopatu functus Haeddi pro eo consecratus a Theodoro in civitate Lundonia* (‘And during their [the sub-kings’] rule, he [Bishop Leuthere] died and Haeddi, who had managed the bishopric, was consecrated in his place by Theodore in the city of London’.)
- <sup>60</sup> Finberg 1972, 174, observes: ‘It is more singular still that Osric should use language implying that the rulers of the Hwicce had only recently abandoned heathenism. The fact, as we have learnt from Bede, is that they and their people were already Christian a generation before Osric’s time ...’. Others have suggested a possible lapse into paganism after the great plague of 664; see Kelly 2007, 57.
- <sup>61</sup> On Oftfor, see above and note 48. John of Worcester (Darlington and McGurk 1995, 126) describes what was not a quick process of conversion under the nonetheless powerful Wulfhere: *Eodem etiam anno, ipse Wlfere, qui regum Merciorum primus fidem et lauacrum sanctae regenerationis accepit, et in tota gente sua demoniorum culturam destruxit et penitus eradicavit, Christique nomen ubique locorum regni sui predicare iussit, et in multis locis ecclesias edificavit. .xvii. anno ex quo regnavit ad uranica regna migravit* (‘Also in that same year [675], Wulfhere himself, who was the first of the kings of Mercia to receive the faith and the bathing of holy rebirth [baptism] and demolished and utterly uprooted among all his people the cult of demons, and ordered the name of Christ to be preached [reading *predicari* for *predicare*] in every place in his realm and built churches in many places, in the 17th year after he became king, moved his abode to the

kingdoms in the sky'). Osric claimed to have done much the same in his sub-kingdom. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 13 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 372), describes how Æthelwulf, king of Sussex, was baptised in the presence of King Wulfhere and was given the province of *Meonware* (probably the Meon valley, later in Hampshire) and the Isle of Wight. Æthelwulf's queen, Eafe, was already a Christian having been 'baptised in her own province, that of the Hwicce'. Bede records that she was daughter of Eanfrith who was brother of Eanhere 'both of whom were Christians together with their people'. Eanfrith and Eanhere appear to have been successive or joint rulers of the Hwicce, predecessors of the (under)kings Osric and Oshere; the name of the latter suggests that he was son of Eanhere. The gift of land to Æthelwulf is difficult to date, and it is unclear how long these men had been Christian, although it is probable that they were converted under Wulfhere, if they were members of his court, rather than earlier; see Finberg 1972, 181. It is unfortunate that Oshere's charter granting land (678 x 693) at Ripple (Birch 1885–1899, no. 51 = Sawyer 1968, no. 52 = Finberg 1972, 86 (no. 196)) in which he refers to following the *catholicam regulam maiorum meorum* ('the catholic rule of my ancestors', although *maiorum* need refer only to his father and uncle(s)), is at least inflated and possibly spurious. That the Hwicce were profoundly Christian at this stage seems doubtful.

<sup>62</sup> Overall this charter is very similar in form to that issued by Leuthere, also one of its signatories, to Aldhelm the priest of 'the land called Malmesbury' (Sawyer 1968, no. 1245 = Finberg 1964a, 69 (no. 181) = Kelly 2005, no.1), which is generally regarded as spurious or inflated; see note 59.

<sup>63</sup> No uncontested authentic charters of Osric survive. A genuine charter of Oshere, Osric's joint ruler or successor, is in a much simpler style and to the point (Sawyer 1968, no. 53); see note 173. For discussion of the preamble, see in particular Sims-Williams 1975; 1988, especially 165–74; 1990, 56–7, 104. Echoes of Aldhelm's *De Virginitate*, detected by Sims-Williams, and of his letter to Heahfrith, detected by John Blair, can be read as contemporary influences. Aldhelm was a monk of Malmesbury, then appointed abbot at about this time, before being made the

first bishop of Sherborne in 705 although the date of the composition of the *De Virginitate* is unknown. However, these echoes could date from a later time (especially the 10th century), when Aldhelm's prose style became popular; see Kelly 2007, 58. In some ways the most troubling phrase is the overblown first one (*regnante ac gubernante regimonia regni Osrice regis*), firstly because a mention of God might conventionally be expected here, and secondly because almost the same words, which are applied to God himself in another charter (Sawyer 1968, no. 1800, dated 709 x 716), have here been used of an under-king. That charter has *Regnante ac gubernante nos Domino nostro Iesu Christo* ('With our Lord Jesus Christ reigning and governing us') with which *Regnante inperpetuum ac gubernante Domino nostro salvatore saecula universa* ('With our Lord our saviour reigning forever and governing every generation') from Sawyer 1968, no. 52 (the spurious charter of Oshere granting Ripple; see note 61) and nos 227 (of 670) and 1249 (of 680) can be compared; see Kelly 2007, 55. The word *regimonia* is unusual as well as otiose and next occurs in a charter (Sawyer 1968, no. 268) issued by King Beorhtric of Wessex in 801 (*rex regni regimonia dispensans*), though there it is the plural of a neuter noun *regimonium*. Beorhtric had visited Bath in 796.

<sup>64</sup> For the transaction, see note 107.

<sup>65</sup> See Aston 1986; Sawyer 1983, 279–83; Manco 1998, especially 27–9; Davenport 2002, 32. For the idea that this was not a block of land, but an archipelago, see Campbell 1986, 109. However, if there was even partial continuity between these 100 hides and the later hundred of Bath, it seems as if this grant was of a single unit of land. An archipelago would imply that these 100 hides had to avoid including lands already granted to others, or that the king wished to retain, improbable at so early a period.

<sup>66</sup> The contents of Bath Hundred can be reconstructed from Domesday Book and the Tax Returns (sometimes called Geld Rolls) of 1084; the 'return' for Bath Hundred is in Exon Domesday, folio 76a1; see Morland 1990, 102–3; Thorn, 2005.

<sup>67</sup> See the *Nomina Villarum* (1316) in *Feudal Aids*, iv. 329; also Glasscock 1975, 261.

<sup>68</sup> See Aston 1986, 73.

<sup>69</sup> Recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 577.

The words used for ‘cities’ are *tunas*, *ceastra* or *civitates* according to the version; see Stenton 1971, 29. Mercia itself was not yet fully English. On the possible identity of these attackers, see Costen 1992, 71.

<sup>70</sup> See the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the years 571 and 584; see Costen 1992, 71; Yorke 1989.

<sup>71</sup> The Old English poem ‘The Ruin’ catches some of the urban desolation, but may be exaggerated; see Cunliffe 1984, 349–50. Neither the historical nor the archaeological record can show how far Bath remained occupied, but it is likely that people will have continued to live here and cultivate the surrounding area, even though Bath was no longer a ‘city’, if it ever had been. It was, after all, as Mick Aston says (pers. comm.) ‘a useful fortified site, in a good place, with hot water pouring out’.

<sup>72</sup> East of the Cross Keys Inn, the embankment can be seen descending towards the springs of the Horsecombe Brook; see note 15 and Fox and Fox 1938, 36. Earlier speculation had the Wansdyke running across Combe Down to Bathampton Down and a putative stretch is marked at ST765630 just north-east of Prior Park House on the two-and-a half inch Ordnance Survey map (no. ST 76) of 1948. Costen 1992, 73, accepts this as a portion of the original dyke.

<sup>73</sup> On the West Wansdyke as a whole, see Fox and Fox 1938, especially 44–5; Iles 1988; Whittock 1988. The Wansdyke may be a much earlier boundary, although it is post-Roman. The name (*Woden* and *dic*: ‘ditch’, ‘dyke’) is Old English, but (*pace* Fox and Fox) this does not prove that the Saxons built the feature. Woden’s Dyke could have been applied to an impressive feature that the Saxons did not understand, as ‘Roman’ (bridge, steps etc) is still used. In the parishes of Stanton Prior and Marksbury there are a number of estates that certainly existed in the 10th century, but that probably dated from much earlier, and whose bounds take no notice of the Wansdyke; see Costen 1983; 1992, 71, 73; Aston and Iles 1988, 77. This however is not conclusive. The bounds of an estate are influenced by its size and the resources that the grantor intended to include in it. Some post-Roman estates use the Foss Way as a part of their boundaries, many do not.

<sup>74</sup> ‘In this year, Cyneigils and Cwichelmu fought against Penda at Cirencester and then they came to an agreement’; see the Anglo-Saxon

Chronicle, under 628. The implication is that Penda won. A further entry in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 645 may be relevant to the restriction of Wessex and the expansion of Mercia: ‘In this year Cenwalh [King of Wessex] was expelled by King Penda’. 628 is the preferred date for the construction of the West Wansdyke in Fox and Fox 1938, 45 (‘a West Saxon construction by King Cyneigils on a line imposed by Penda of Mercia after A.D. 628’). The ethnic composition of these Mercians, ‘the boundary people’, perhaps referring to the boundary with the Welsh of Wales, is uncertain at this period.

<sup>75</sup> On the minimal presence of Saxons in Somerset in the early 7th century, see Costen 1992, 73, and on the acquisition of the western part of the Jutish kingdom, completed c. 686, see Yorke 1989.

<sup>76</sup> On the westward expansion of Wessex, the important studies of Finberg (1953b, and 1964b, 95–115), and Hoskins 1960, seem over-dogmatic; Stenton 1971, 72, rightly observes that ‘few questions in early English history are more obscure’. For a more cautious and nuanced approach, see Todd 1987, 267–75, and Pearce 2004, 249.

<sup>77</sup> See Sawyer 1968, nos 227–52, 1665–73.

<sup>78</sup> For the grant, 710 x 722, see Finberg 1953a, 16 (no. 73).

<sup>79</sup> The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 652 has: ‘In this year Cenwalh fought at Bradford-on-Avon’. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 658 has: ‘In this year Cenwalh fought at *Poennan* against the ‘Welsh’ and drove them in flight as far as the [River] Parrett’. The people against whom he fought at Bradford-on-Avon are not named, but might be the same ‘Welsh’ whom he defeated at *Poennan*; however, Æthelweard in his *Chronicle* (Campbell 1962, 19) calls the battle *civile*, that is internecine, a falling-out within the house of Wessex (*ipse bellum gessit civile in cognominato loco Bradanforda, juxta fluvium Afene*: ‘He waged civil warfare in a place named Bradford near the River Avon’). Todd 1987, 272, reports a suggestion that the battle *at Poennan* took place at Penn near Yeovil. Even if the chronology is correct, the progress on the ground depends on the identification of *at Poennan* (for which Pinn Beacon just west of Sidmouth (Devon) or Pinhoe near Exeter have also been proposed) and on that of the *Posentesburh* of the Anglo-Saxon

Chronicle, for which Posbury (Devon) has been proposed. On all this, see Hoskins 1960, 14–16; Porter 1967, 35; Costen 1992, 73.

- <sup>80</sup> In this light, the battles it records at Old Sarum in 552 and at Barbury Castle (Wiltshire) in 556 appear as planned elements in a westward push. However, if they took place at all, they were probably raids by the Gewissae of the Thames Valley. Modern scholarship suggests that the first king of the Gewissae (later the West Saxons) who can be accepted as genuine was Ceawlin (560–591). On the whole question of veracity and bias in the Chronicle, see Dumville 1976; 1977; 1985.
- <sup>81</sup> The text and translation is in Winterbottom 1978. For an important study, see Higham 1994.
- <sup>82</sup> Frome, Wellow, Mendip and Avon, to give some local examples, are British (Celtic) words or contain British elements. The number of place-names identified as of British origin has recently increased, thanks especially to the work of Richard Coates, but the numbers are still very small by comparison with the Saxon names.
- <sup>83</sup> I am grateful to Mick Aston for this archaeological information.
- <sup>84</sup> On multiple estates, see Jones 1979. The criticisms of Gregson 1985, have led to a sharper focus; for Jones' reply, see Jones 1985.
- <sup>85</sup> See Attenborough 1922, 36–61, especially §§ 23–24, 32–33, 46, 54, 70, 74.
- <sup>86</sup> However, there are no certain examples of major names in Gloucestershire, Somerset, and Wiltshire which contain the elements *Brettas* ('Britons') or *walh* ('Welsh'). Detection of the latter element is made difficult by the fact that it can also mean 'foreigner' or 'slave' and that in the common name Walton, the first element can be 'wall' rather than 'Welsh'; see Smith 1956, i. under *Brettas* and ii. under *walh*.
- <sup>87</sup> On Somerton, see the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 733. The ability of Mercia to operate in land supposedly held by the kings of Wessex is shown by King Wulfhere's grant of *Meonware* and the Isle of Wight to the king of Sussex; see note 61.
- <sup>88</sup> Kelly 2007, 117, identifies the 'boundary brook', with stretches of two streams, firstly with the *Camelar* west of Midford (that is, what is now the Cam Brook), secondly with the now nameless stream that leaves the *Camelar* and passes the 'seven springs'. It is true that the Cam Brook also marked a boundary, that between South Stoke and Wellow, but the eastwards line of the *Camelar* to its junction with the River Avon also

did so, at least from 1001, when (Limply) Stoke was given to Shaftesbury Abbey as part of Bradford-on-Avon and became part of Bradford Hundred in Wiltshire, despite being west of the Avon; on the charter, see Finberg 1964a, 103 (no. 330) = Sawyer 1968, no. 899 = Kelly 1996, no. 29, and, for the manor, see *VCH Wiltshire* vii. 5, 13; Thorn 2009, 141. Here the *Camelar* may well have earlier formed a boundary between two land-units and possibly two kingdoms. Kelly does not give the name 'boundary brook' to this stretch of the *Camelar*, now the Midford Brook, because the interpretation of the bounds does not permit it. The bounds of South Stoke can only have been drawn up from local knowledge, and it seems unlikely that anyone then could apply the name 'boundary brook' to two different streams, especially as the *Camelar* was a major stream which names both Cameley (ST6157) and Camerton (ST6857). The former occurs as *Camelei* in Domesday (SOM 5,62) and is the 'leah on the River *Camelar*'. The latter is *Camelertone* in Domesday (SOM 8,31), that is the 'tun on the River *Camelar*'; see Ekwall 1960, under those names.

- <sup>89</sup> This suggestion implies that the Wansdyke, the Horsecombe Brook and the *Camelar* were re-used as boundaries in defining these 100 *manentes*. It is extremely unlikely that the Wansdyke itself was constructed in the late 7th century to separate the Hwicce from the West Saxons, for this would imply a Saxon use of the hill-forts which seem to be part of the plan of the Wansdyke. Moreover, the name Wansdyke is best explained as being applied by Saxons to a pre-existing feature that they did not understand; see note 73.
- <sup>90</sup> In Domesday Book, Freshford contained two estates: Freshford itself and 'Woodwick'. Freshford itself, assessed at 2½ hides (SOM 5,35), was held by the Bishop of Coutances, while 'Woodwick', also assessed at 2½ hides, was then held by the Abbey of Bath (SOM 7,12). 'Woodwick' lay in the western part of Freshford parish, centred on Peipards Farm (ST7760); see Aston and Iles 1988, 104. It seems very likely that the abbey had once held the whole of Freshford; see note 116.
- <sup>91</sup> There is a possible exception in Bathwick, the *vicus* or *wic* of Bath, lying on a patch of flat ground just across the river from the city, and

which could have remained part of it.

- <sup>92</sup> The original centre of Bristol (Old English *Bricgstow*: ‘stow with a bridge’) was on a promontory between the Rivers Frome and Avon. The Avon formed the boundary between Wessex and Mercia, a fact obscured by Bristol’s 19th-century expansion south of the river. See Aston and Iles 1988, 145.
- <sup>93</sup> Cold Ashton was a possession of the later house for monks (Sawyer 1968, no. 414 = Hunt 1893, i. no. 9 = Kelly 2007, no. 5); also see Sawyer 1968, no. 664 (= Hunt 1893, i. no. 13 = Kelly 2007, no. 12). It is possible that it lay within the original 100 hides. It was later in Gloucestershire and never formed part of Bath Hundred; see note 142.
- <sup>94</sup> Hunt 1893, i. no. 6 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 1168 = Gelling 1979, 123 (no. 258) = Kelly 2007, no. 2). This is a suspect grant by Wigheard with the consent of King Wulfhere of Mercia, dated 670–671 by Gelling and 671 x 672 by Kelly, but the induction and witnesses point to 681 (the date given by Sawyer), although that would be after Wulfhere’s death. Kelly is inclined to see the charter as genuine.
- <sup>95</sup> Hunt 1893, i. no. 8 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 1167 = Gelling 1979, 123–4 (no. 259) = Kelly 2007, no. 3). This is a grant by Æthelmod with the consent of King Ethelred of Mercia, dated 681.
- <sup>96</sup> These names are Old English *Beorngyth* and Old German *Folcburg*. The forms in *-i* in the charters are the Latin dative case and imply a Latinized nominative in *-is*.
- <sup>97</sup> See Kelly 2007, 4–5.
- <sup>98</sup> Latin *Ego Cynulfus, rex Saxonum, dedi fratribus in monasterio Sancti Petri quod situm est in ciuitate At Bathum aliquam terrae particulam mei proprii iuris, hoc est in loco qui dicitur Northstoc ...* (‘I, Cynewulf, King of the Saxons, have given to the brethren in the ‘monastery’ of St Peter, which is situated in the city of Bath, a small portion of land [that is] under my own jurisdiction, namely in a place which is called North Stoke ...’); see Hunt 1893, i. no. 19 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 265 = Finberg 1964a, 116 (no. 388) = Kelly 2007, no. 4). For discussion, see Edwards 1988, 223–7. Cynewulf’s other grants in his own right were predominantly south of the Mendips (see Finberg 1964a, 117–18 (nos 389–397)) but there is a tantalising grant (Finberg 1964a, 117–18 (no. 394) = Sawyer 1968, no. 262) of 11 *manentes* by the river *Weluwe* to the ‘monastery’ at Wells, dated 766 x 774 by Finberg and 766 for ?774 by Sawyer. Unfortunately the bounds cannot be reconciled with any around Wellow (Grundy 1935, 197–8). See also Whitelock 1979, no. 70.
- <sup>99</sup> Hunt 1893, i. no. 49 (*De Terra Grantae in Stochanord*).
- <sup>100</sup> Hunt 1893, ii. no. 808. The origin of the error may be in a slip of the pen in the date of the charter, *dcccviii* (808) being an error for *dcclviii* (758); see Finberg 1964a, 116.
- <sup>101</sup> Kelly 2007, 6.
- <sup>102</sup> That the original foundation was not a double house as usually understood (*pace* Davenport 2002, 35) seems clear from the foundation charter which refers to a religious house of holy maidens, although, as shown above, there may have been men present to perform duties that the Church denied to women.
- <sup>103</sup> Hunt 1893, ii. no. 808.
- <sup>104</sup> Domesday SOM 7.1. In the corresponding entry in Exon (folio 185a4) Bath is called a manor, but the term does not seem to apply, unless there was arable attached to the estate but unmentioned. The bulk of Bath was held in 1086 by the king (SOM 1,31).
- <sup>105</sup> Domesday SOM 7,4;7.
- <sup>106</sup> Kelly 2007, 35, attempts to identify some of these estates, but there seems to be no evidence for the individual cases she cites.
- <sup>107</sup> For the text, see Hearne 1723, 224–7; it is calendared in Sawyer 1968, no. 1257, and in Finberg 1972, 95–6 (no. 228). It is translated in Whitelock 1979, i. no. 77. For discussion, see *VCH Somerset*, ii. 69; Taylor 1900, 135; the text and translation are here given in the Appendix as Document 2.
- <sup>108</sup> See the Introduction to the document in Whitelock 1979, i. no. 77; Sims-Williams 1990, 159–65; Kelly 1997, 7.
- <sup>109</sup> Birch 1885–99, nos 154, 220 (= Sawyer 1968, nos 89, 1411); see note 171.
- <sup>110</sup> Birch 1885–99, nos 210, 234, 236 (= Sawyer 1968, nos 109, 117, 116).
- <sup>111</sup> It is not satisfactory to dismiss it as ‘an empty rhetorical flourish’ (Davenport 2002, 35) or as an epithet rhetorically transferred from the ‘most famous city’. A more radical solution, not followed here, would be to regard the religious house for women as still in existence with an ample endowment and the charter-grant of North Stoke as a forgery or an antedating, and therefore



to see the conversion of a religious house for women to a house for monks as the work of King Offa.

<sup>112</sup> The Council of Hertford had made a resolution which only affirmed an ideal: *Tertium Capitulum: ut quaeque monasteria Deo consecrata sunt, nulli episcoporum liceat ea in aliquo inquietare, nec quicquam de eorum rebus violenter abstrahere* ('Third Topic: as each and every 'monastery' is dedicated to God, no bishops are permitted to disturb them in anything, nor to take any of their possessions by force'); see Haddan and Stubbs 1869–1871, iii. 118–20. The text is from Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 5 (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 351). In reality, bishops as well as kings took a close managerial interest in religious houses and in their endowments.

<sup>113</sup> See Finberg 1972, 153–66.

<sup>114</sup> This charter (Sawyer 1968, no. 76 = Finberg 1972, 86–87 (no. 198) implies an earlier 'monastery', perhaps established only a few years before in Offa's episcopate. On other charters relating to Fladbury, see Sawyer 1968, nos 62, 185, 1250–1252; Hearne 1723, *passim*. Sims-Williams 1990, 37–8, 92, has some illuminating things to say. I am very grateful to Mick Aston for enlightening me on the vicissitudes of these early foundations and for offering the example of Fladbury.

<sup>115</sup> Offa had beaten Cynewulf in a battle at Benson (Oxfordshire) in 779, and this may well have deprived Cynewulf of all the land of Wessex that lay north of the Thames.

<sup>116</sup> The boundary of the estate at Bradford-on-Avon, given to Shaftesbury Abbey by King Ethelred in 1001 (note 88), in part ran from the River Avon at Freshford 'along the abbot's boundary to Midford'. Between Freshford and Midford the boundary would have run along the northern edge of Freshford, then of 'Woodwick'; for whose location, see note 90. 'Woodwick' was held by Bath Abbey in 1086 and was probably the same estate that had been granted (as Freshford) to the abbey in the will of Wulfwaru (Sawyer 1968, no. 1538 = Hunt 1893, i. no. 27 = Finberg 1964a, 148 (no. 524) = Kelly 2007, no. 21). But since 'the abbot's boundary' also describes the northern edge of Freshford, it seems very likely that the abbey had once held both 'Woodwick' and Freshford. Freshford-'Woodwick' was the only part of Bath Hundred

to lie south of the *Camelar*. The boundary between Freshford and Norton St Philip is largely secondary in nature, and it may be that Freshford had previously looked towards Frome.

<sup>117</sup> The abbey had also held land at Warleigh, its possession being alluded to in the phrase 'the abbot's boundary to Warleigh' in the charter granting Bradford-on-Avon to Shaftesbury Abbey (note 88). It was held as 1 hide by Hugolin the interpreter in 1086 (SOM 45,9). However, Warleigh, like Bathford, though then in Bath Hundred, lay and lies on the Wiltshire side of the River Avon. It is more likely that Monkton Combe was originally a 10-hide estate. The same figure (29 hides) is reached by totalling the estates held by Bath Abbey that lay south of the Avon in Bath Hundred: Monkton Combe (9 hides), Lyncombe (10 hides), Bathampton (5 hides) and at 'Woodwick' and Freshford (5 hides); see Domesday SOM 5,35. 7,7;9;11;12. However, these estates came to the abbey at various times and excluded Claverton. It is much more probable that the 30 hides acquired by King Offa from Bishop Heathured were a continuous tract of land.

<sup>118</sup> On the 20 hides of Bath, see Domesday SOM 1,31. The death of Alfred, the reeve of Bath (the king's agent), is recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 906.

<sup>119</sup> William of Malmesbury reports that Offa founded the 'monastery': *ibi rex Offa monasterium posuerat* ('There King Offa had founded a 'monastery'); see Winterbottom and Thompson 2007, 306–7 § 90. Leland in his *Collectanea* (Hearne 1770, vol i. tome i. 26, 84) and in his *Itinerary* (Smith 1907, vol. ii. 143) reports that Offa founded a college of secular priests and reconstituted the clergy. Although the timing is uncertain, it seems probable that the house for monks became a royal minster church (containing both monks and secular priests) before it became a Benedictine abbey.

<sup>120</sup> On the change from 'monastery' to abbey, see Dugdale 1817–1830, ii. 256–73 (especially ii. 263); Knowles *et al.* 1972, 27–8; Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 59. Taylor 1900, 146, points out that the grant of Tidenham in 956 (Sawyer 1968, no. 610 = Kelly 2007, no. 10) reserved 3 of the 30 hides for King Edwy's priest, suggesting that the church then contained secular priests, while the grant by King Edgar of *Cliftune* in 970 (Sawyer 1968, no. 777 = Kelly 2007, no. 18) is



to ‘St Peter’s Church and the monks dwelling there’, suggesting that the house was by then Benedictine. William of Malmesbury (Winterbottom and Thompson 2007, 306–7 §90) says: *Edgarus, sicut pleraque alia more suo auxerat, delectatus loci magnificentia, et quod ibi corona, regni susceperat* (‘Edgar had enlarged it [the ‘monastery’] in his own way, as he had a considerable number of others, out of pleasure at the grandeur of the place and because he had received the crown of the kingdom there’). The two reasons could be a baseless inference, but if William is right, it would place the enlargement after 973, although the ‘monastery’ could have been Benedictine before that.

- <sup>121</sup> The dream is reported by William of Malmesbury in his *Gesta Pontificum* (Winterbottom and Thompson 2007, 480–1 § 179) and by Matthew Paris in his *Chronica Majora* (Luard 1872–1884, i, 356).
- <sup>122</sup> The gift is recorded by Hemming (Hearne 1723, 108–109) and calendared in Sawyer 1968, no. 148 (= Finberg 1972, 42–3 (no. 51)). With Latin *celeber*, the notion of ‘famous’ derives from the sense of ‘frequented’. The ‘charter’ exists in two versions; the other has *in celebre monasterio quod Saxonice nominatur at Bathun* (‘in the famous ‘monastery’ which is called ‘at the Baths’ ’). If the latter version is correct, then the act took place in the ‘monastery’. However, it looks as if the mention of the ‘monastery’ (which would not itself have been called ‘at the Baths’) is a clumsy substitution and *nominatur* a purposefully grander version of *vocatur*. For *celebre*, read *celebri*.
- <sup>123</sup> Sawyer 1968, no. 210. The text in Hemming’s Cartulary (Hearne 1723, 64) reads: *in illo famoso urbe qui nominatur calidum balneum*, the name being glossed as *at thæm hatum bathum*. The Latin word *urbs* is usually feminine.
- <sup>124</sup> *Handbook of British Chronology*, 17.
- <sup>125</sup> Associated with Edgar seems to be an experimental new name for Bath: *urbs Achumanensis* in 965 (Sawyer 1968, no. 735 = Kelly 2007, no. 17) and *civitas Aquamania* in 972 (Sawyer 1968, no. 785 = Kelly 2007 no. 19). The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle describes the coronation itself (973) as taking place in *Acemannesceastre*. Perhaps a city called Hot Baths was unfit for a king; see Kelly 2007, 16–17.
- <sup>126</sup> Hunt 1893, ii. no. 808.
- <sup>127</sup> Ethelred’s charters do not exist; North Stoke was given in 757 x 758 by King Cynewulf of the West Saxons (Sawyer 1968, no. 265 = Kelly 2007, no. 4); see note 98. South Stoke was restored by Edgar (Sawyer 1968, no. 694 = Kelly 2007, no. 14).
- <sup>128</sup> For Lyncombe, the surviving charter is a ‘grant’ of King Edgar dating from 970 where *Cliftune* (standing for it) is given in exchange for an unidentified *Cumtun* (perhaps Compton Dando, or the further off Chilcompton; see Kelly 2007, 36). For the charter, see Sawyer 1968, no. 777 (= Finberg 1964a, 145 (no. 512) = Kelly 2007, no. 18). For the bounds, see Grundy 1935, 211–13. King Athelstan’s charter granting Priston and Cold Ashton in 931 survives; see Sawyer 1968, no. 414 = Kelly 2007, no. 5. His grant of Olveston no longer exists, but the monks appear to have obtained a replacement: a spurious restoration by King Edwy (955 x 959); see Sawyer 1968, no. 664 = Kelly 2007, no. 12.
- <sup>129</sup> For Bathford, granted in 957, see Sawyer 1968, no. 643 (= Finberg 1964a, 139 (no. 476) = Kelly 2007, no. 11). For Bathampton, granted in 956 to Hehelm, King Edwy’s *fidelis* (‘faithful [servant]’), and subsequently given to the abbey, see Hunt 1893, ii. no. 808, and Hunt 1893, i. no. 17 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 627 = Finberg 1964a, 138 (no. 474) = Kelly 2007, no. 8). Thirty hides at Tidenham were granted in 956; see Sawyer 1968, no. 610 (= Kelly 2007, no. 10). Just before the Conquest, these were leased to Archbishop Stigand then confiscated (1061 x 1065) by King William when Stigand was deposed and so were lost to the abbey. Corston was granted by King Edmund in 941 to a thane, Ethelnoth (Sawyer 1968, no. 508 = Kelly 2007, no. 7), then again granted by King Edwy in 956 to Ælfswith (Sawyer 1968, no. 593 = Kelly 2007, no. 9), who presumably gave it to the abbey. The grant by King Edgar (Sawyer 1968, no. 785 = Kelly 2007, no. 19) is spurious.
- <sup>130</sup> Edwy’s charter of restoration dated 961 (for 956) (Sawyer 1968, no. 661 = Finberg 1964a, 138 (no. 475) = Kelly 2007, no. 13) is spurious. The original grant by King Edmund was probably that to Æthelhere, his faithful *minister* (Sawyer 1968, no. 508 = Finberg 1964a, 135 (no. 457) = Kelly 2007, no. 7), dating from 946, from whom it presumably passed to the abbey. The full history of Weston has yet to be worked out.

However, although Kelly 2007, 35, says ‘The fifteen-hide manor at Weston immediately to the west of the walled city is not thoroughly documented’, the abbey possessed two sets of bounds apparently relating to two different 5-hide estates, and the 15-hide figure (from Domesday) probably included the 5 hides at North Stoke. For a further 5 hides here, see note 146.

<sup>131</sup> Stanton Prior was given by King Edgar to Ælfsige in 963 (Sawyer 1968, no. 711 = Kelly 2007, no. 16), then to the abbey in 965 (Sawyer 1968, no. 735 = Kelly 2007, no. 17). Concerning ‘Eversy’, the surviving charter (Sawyer 1968, no. 692 = Kelly 2007, no. 15) is a grant by King Edgar to Æthelwold his *minister* (‘servant’). It may have been acquired by the abbey soon after, but the only recorded gift is c. 1066 by Abbot Wulfwold (Sawyer 1968, no. 1427 = Kelly 2007, no. 25), with Ashwick. On the location of ‘Eversy’, sometimes called ‘Evesty’, see Hart 1975, 383–4; Kelly 2007, 117–20.

<sup>132</sup> Domesday SOM 7,4;7–8;10;12;15. The church had also apparently held Radstock, although the grant of *Welwestoc* (that is, of ‘Wellow Stoke’) by King Ethelred in 984 (Sawyer 1968, no. 854 = Kelly 2007, no. 20) is spurious. It did not hold Radstock in 1066 or 1086 (Domesday SOM 5,47)

<sup>133</sup> Kelly 2007, no. 26.

<sup>134</sup> Bates 1998, nos 11–12.

<sup>135</sup> Batheaston was split three ways in 1086, between the king, the abbey and Hugolin the interpreter (Domesday SOM 1,30. 7,10. 45,10).

<sup>136</sup> Sawyer 1968, no. 1538 = Kelly 2007, no. 21.

<sup>137</sup> Sawyer 1968, nos 1034, 1427 = Kelly 2007, nos 22, 25. The latter transaction included ‘Eversy’, on which, see note 131.

<sup>138</sup> Bath Hundred was actually 95 hides in 1084 (see notes 66 and 117), and it is probable that the 5 hides needed to make the 100 hides had been alienated and drawn into another hundred. The discrepancy is probably due to the removal of Limpley Stoke from its tally in 1001 or later, on its transfer to Bradford Hundred, Wiltshire (see note 88). If Limpley Stoke had been rated at 4 hides, it is possible that 1 hide was taken from Monkton Combe to add to it. This would account for the odd hidage (9 hides) of the latter.

<sup>139</sup> Most of the names of the Mercian shires are first evidenced at the beginning of the 11th century (see note 36), although this is not a decisive date

for their creation, as some time may have elapsed before their names appear in surviving documents. The south-eastern corner of Gloucestershire was occupied by the Hundred of ‘Eddredestane’, which included Marshfield. The south-eastern point of this hundred is where the Three Shires Stones stand. Taylor 1900, 144, suggested not only that the hundred was named from the stone(s), but that the personal name refers to King Edred (946–955), who would thus have been responsible for establishing the boundary. If Mercia had yet to be shired, it is possible that what Edred did was to move the Somerset boundary northwards as a consequence of laying out the hundreds of that county.

<sup>140</sup> This assumes that the 10 hides of Bathford, part of which intruded into what might once have been a part of Wiltshire, east of the River Avon, had long been associated with Bath and probably part of the original 100 hides.

<sup>141</sup> The hidages of these four estates are taken from Domesday (GLS 1,20. 6,5. 7,2. 35,1–2).

<sup>142</sup> Cold Ashton had, of course, been held by the church at Bath in 931; see note 128. It is surprising that it was not included in Somerset, although the boundary may have been laid down during the period of its alienation; see note 106 and Taylor 1900.

<sup>143</sup> Domesday SOM 7,1;5–12. The abbey held lands in Gloucestershire (Olveston and Cold Ashton: GLS 7,1–2) and elsewhere in Somerset (SOM 7,2–4;13–15). The total, excluding the 30 hides of Tidenham (GLS 1,56) lost after the Conquest (see note 129), was 90½ hides.

<sup>144</sup> Dated 1156; see Hunt 1893, i. no. 74.

<sup>145</sup> The Abbess of St Edward’s [of Shaftesbury] is credited with 3 hides of lordship land in the Tax Return. It is known, from later evidence, that the abbey held Kelston, but that estate is omitted from Domesday Somerset. It does however appear (as *Alvestone*), an appurtenance of Bradford-on-Avon, in Domesday Wiltshire (WIL 12,4); for the identification, see Thorn 2009.

<sup>146</sup> There were a further five hides at Weston in 1086, held by Arnulf of Hesdin (SOM 41,1). Thus Weston, with North Stoke, was assessed at a round 20 hides. Arnulf’s heirs were his daughters Matilda, whose second husband was Patrick *de Caorces* (Chaworth), and Avelina, wife of Alan fitzFlaad and then of Robert fitzWalter. Bath Abbey’s holding at Weston was bought by Bishop John from Patrick de

- Chaworth in 1100; see Hunt 1893, i. no. 41; Ramsey 1995, nos 3, 10.
- <sup>147</sup> See Whale 1901, 147. There are, however, no hides in the abbey’s holding in Bath (SOM 7,1); the hidated portion was held by the king (SOM 1,31) and not granted to the abbey until 1088.
- <sup>148</sup> Eyton 1880, i. 103; ii. 13–14. Eyton’s argument was that the size of Freshford in Domesday was too large to stand for Freshford alone. But it was based on the mistaken inclusion of Domesday *Fescheforde*. That place is in fact Vexford (SOM 21,44–45), rated at 1 hide. Moreover, neither Freshford nor Vexford was held by Bath Abbey in 1086. Taylor 1900, 155, perhaps influenced by Eyton, opts for ‘Woodwick’ in Freshford as representing South Stoke.
- <sup>149</sup> Kelly 2007, 116, notes that ‘Bath’s Domesday holding at Monkton Combe was reckoned at a surprisingly high nine hides’.
- <sup>150</sup> The corresponding entry in Exon Domesday (folio 185b3) adds that the ‘villans’ (including the bordars) have 3 hides and 1 virgate, but gives the lordship hidage as 6 hides less 1 virgate, thus maintaining the overall total as 9 hides. The estate had perhaps once been rated at 10 hides; see note 138. Exon also lists the livestock: 1 cob-horse; 12 pigs; 72 sheep.
- <sup>151</sup> They are coupled (*Suthstok cum Cumba*) in Hunt 1893, ii. no. 327, and in the confirmation of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury (1138–1161) as *villam de Cumba, terram de Sudstocha* (Hunt 1893, i. 59–60 (no. 63)). South Stoke is *Southstok*’ in the Lay Subsidy of 1334 (Glasscock 1975, 241). In 1316 (*Feudal Aids* iv. 329) it and (Monkton) Combe are described as hamlets of Lyncombe: *Lyncombe cum hamelettis Combe et Suthstok*.
- <sup>152</sup> For example in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* dating from c. 1291 (Ayscough and Caley 1802, 203a), in an otherwise full listing of the lands of Bath Priory, South Stoke is omitted, but (Monkton) Combe included; the reverse is the case in the Dissolution documents: Caley and Hunter 1810–1834, i. 175, 180.
- <sup>153</sup> For the brief period in which the West Wansdyke was a significant boundary, Monkton Combe and South Stoke could have lain in different territories, divided from each other by the Wansdyke’s prolongation as the Horsecombe Brook. But there is no reason to think that either estate existed as a defined unit at that time.
- <sup>154</sup> *Handbook of British Chronology*, 205.
- <sup>155</sup> The impulse to use monasteries as episcopal seats probably derives from the desire of the other-worldly Archbishop Lanfranc to insist on episcopal spirituality and celibacy, while papal thinking was that with the growth of towns, the church needed a greater presence in them. In the case of Bath these two ecclesiastical impulses seem to have coincided with John of Tours’ baser motives; see William of Malmesbury’s portrayal of him (Winterbottom and Thompson 2007, 304–9 § 90), also Ramsey 1995, xxiv.
- <sup>156</sup> *VCH Somerset*, ii. 70; Hunt 1893, i. no. 38; see Davis 1913, nos 314, 315, 326. This was a grant by William II, confirmed by Henry I; see also Hunt 1893, i. nos 39–40, ii. no. 709; Illingworth and Caley 1818, ii. 132, 133, 135; Kelly 2007, 21–22.
- <sup>157</sup> Hunt 1893, xliii.
- <sup>158</sup> Ramsey 1995, xxiv and no. 3. The Latin *Alsius* for the abbot’s name can represent Old English *Ælfsige*: Feilitzen 1937, 151–2, under *Al-sige*. He was abbot from before 1075 to 1087; see Knowles *et al.* 1972, 28.
- <sup>159</sup> Ramsey 1995, no. 6.
- <sup>160</sup> Ramsey 1995, nos 7–8. (Monkton) Combe is consistently called *Comba* etc. in the cartularies. Regarding the affix Monkton, it is interesting that the name did not become ‘Monkscombe’: the element *tun* appears to intend the name Monkton as a substitute for Combe, not an affix to it.
- <sup>161</sup> Ramsey 1995, no. 10 = Hunt 1893, i. no. 61. See also Hunt 1893, i. no. 57, for a restoration by Geoffrey, Bishop of Bath, of the vill of *Cumba* to the monks, free of all except royal service. On the Barton of Bath, see Keevil 1996; *Beckenofna* might be represented by Beacon Hill on Lansdown.
- <sup>162</sup> Hunt 1893, i. no. 63.
- <sup>163</sup> Ramsey 1995, no. 63.
- <sup>164</sup> See Ramsey 1995, no. 183. The editor identifies *Stokes* as Radstock.
- <sup>165</sup> The manor was still held by the crown in the reign of James I. It was surveyed as one of the queen’s manors in VI James I (1608–9) and she was still patron of the living in 1618; see Humphreys 1906, 647; Gray 1959, 30, 49. I am grateful to Robert Parfitt of South Stoke for the latter reference.
- <sup>166</sup> The Latin spelling *conditio* might represent the noun from the verb *condo*, or *condicio*, the noun from the verb *condico*, as in medieval documents

the endings *-tio* and *-cio* are interchangeable. Of these the verb *condico* involves the notion of 'speaking' or 'pronouncing', 'making a contract or agreement', 'giving notice', 'setting a date or price' and the derived *condicio* can mean 'agreement', or 'condition' or 'legal position'. The most relevant meaning of *condo* is 'to found', and of *conditio*, 'founding' or 'foundation'. If the word is really *conditio*, then the meaning could have evolved from 'foundation' to 'foundation-grant' to (in the present context) 'foundation-grant consisting of land'. The meaning 'grant of land' is well attested in Latham 1965 (under *conditio*), but has (accidentally?) disappeared from its successor Latham, Howlett and others, 1975–97. A common continental meaning is 'tribute' (see Niermeyer 1997, under *conditio*) from which one might derive 'tribute land', since land-tribute is effectively what Berta and her sisters will enjoy. Alternatively, *condicione* (for *condicione*) *cespitis* here could mean 'agreement concerning this piece of land', but this document is not really an agreement and such a sense would require that 'to take or carry off anything at all' is used figuratively in the sense of 'alter'. A close parallel to the use of *conditio* as 'grant (of land)' is in Birch 1885–1899, no. 60 (= Sawyer 1968, no. 70), that is in the grant, already mentioned in note 55, of land at Gloucester and Pershore; it ends with *Facta vero est haec conditio in quinto anno regni Ethelraedi regis Merciorum* ('Now this grant was made in the fifth year of the reign of Ethelred, king of the Mercians'); for other apparently similar uses, see Birch 1885–1899, nos 189, 236, 348 (= Sawyer 1968, nos 29, 116, 125). Nonetheless, the medieval usage of *condicio* and *conditio* requires further investigation and disentangling.

<sup>167</sup> The phrasing probably implies a search of the archive for documentary proof.

<sup>168</sup> 100 hides at Bath were granted to Abbess Berta by King Osric of the Hwicce, with the permission of King Ethelred of Mercia in 676 (Sawyer 1968, no. 51); see Document 1 above.

Latin *manentium* and *cassatorum* are in the genitive case and are most probably genitives of definition, which state the extent of Bath, Stour in Ismere and Hampton Lucy, as well as, by implication, of Bredon, or define the inheritance. On the other hand the accusative *cassatos* used of Stratford(-on-Avon), and by implication of

plain 'Stour', is in apposition to *haereditatem*, mediated by *id est*: 'an inheritance, that is, 30 *cassati* at Stratford(-on-Avon) ...'.

<sup>169</sup> In an endorsement to a charter of King Ethelred of the Mercians (?697 x 699), which granted 44 *cassati* at Fladbury, Bishop Ecuine of Worcester records that he has granted Fladbury to Æthelheard [son of (under)king Oshere] for life so that he can recover from the latter 20 *cassati* at Stratford-on-Avon; see Sawyer 1968, nos, 1250, 1252 = Finberg 1972, 86–7, 89–90 (nos 198, 11). This implies that this land had previously been granted to the Church of Worcester and in fact King Ethelred is given as the original donor in Sawyer 1968, no. 1251; see Finberg 1972, 89–90 (no. 11). The Church of Worcester still held 14½ hides here in 1086 (Domesday WAR 3,2).

<sup>170</sup> No other evidence of the implied early grant to the Church of Worcester survives, but a lost charter of Offa giving 16 *manentes* at *Sture* after the death of Diera, son of Paddi, and of his son is listed in Hemming; see Hearne 1723, 564, calendared in Finberg 1972, 93 (no. 220). Unfortunately, it cannot be dated and it is not certain if these hides are additional to the 38 or a second grant of part of them. Later charters reveal the church possessing or receiving land by the River Stour; see Sawyer 1968, nos 61, 171, 180 = Finberg 1972, 93 (no. 219), 44 (no. 58), 99–100 (no. 242). It is likely that this land beside the River Stour was partly represented in Domesday by the estates held by the Church of Worcester at Tredington with Tidmington, Blackwell, Longdon, and Shipston-on-Stour (WOR 2,45–47;64), amounting to 31 hides. These, then and later, formed an outlying part of Worcestershire within Warwickshire.

<sup>171</sup> Fourteen *cassati* at *Sture* in the province of *Usmere* were inherited from his father by Abbot Ceolfrith and given by him to Worcester Church and bishopric (757 x 775) by permission of King Offa: Sawyer 1968, no. 1411 = Finberg 1972, 37, 92 (no. 28). This permission was presumably given by King Offa before he peremptorily reclaimed them. It seems probable that they are included in the large estate held by the Church of Worcester at Hartlebury in Domesday (WOR 2,82).

<sup>172</sup> By a lost charter King Ethelbald of Mercia gave *Breodun* (716 x 717) to his 'kinsman and companion' Eanulf [grandfather of King Offa]

for the building of a ‘monastery’; see Finberg 1972, 90 (no. 208). The very year before the council of Brentford, King Offa by an authentic charter, himself gave a total of 20 hides in three different places to St Peter’s at Bredon, the church built by his grandfather Eanulf for the use of the Bishop of Worcester, and by a less secure charter of the same year he gave it a further 35 hides; see Sawyer 1968, nos 117, 116 = Finberg 1972, 94–95 (nos 226, 42). The Church of Worcester held 35 hides here in 1086 (Domesday WOR 2,22).

<sup>173</sup> The implied earlier holding of Hampton Lucy by the Church of Worcester is not separately recorded, though 5 *manentes* at Ingon in Hampton Lucy were sold by Æthelheard and his brother Æthelweard in the reign of King Coenred (704–709) to [Abbess] Cuthswith. She had previously been given the land of 15 *tributarii* (that is, 15 hides) at two unidentified places, *Penitanham* and *Dyllawidu*, by Oshere king of the Hwicce in 693 for the building of a ‘monastery’; see Sawyer 1968, no. 53 = Finberg 1972, 135 (no. 382). The Church of Worcester held 12 hides here in 1086 (Domesday WAR 3,1). The writer distinguishes carefully between a habitative name (‘Hampton’, containing *tun*) with which he uses Latin *in* (‘in’) and names from topographical features (including the man-made baths) with which he uses Anglo-Saxon *æt* (‘at’ or ‘near’).

<sup>174</sup> Latin *demissa* (for *dimissa*) is here the main verb, so *est* must be supplied. The exact sense is difficult to pinpoint as the word can mean ‘to send to’, ‘to demise’, ‘to dismiss’, ‘to relinquish’, among other things.

<sup>175</sup> The received text has *libertas* here, which Hearne rightly obelized. It must stand for *libenter* (‘willingly’) which occurs correctly later on. The form has presumably been corrupted by the proximity of *libertate* (‘liberty’, ‘freedom’, ‘franchise’, ‘privilege’). For two or three other errors in this long sentence, see note 176.

<sup>176</sup> The Latin *subiectae* (feminine nominative plural) should presumably be *subiecta* (neuter) to agree with *praeſata loca*. Moreover, the Latin *sedis* is an error (perhaps induced by *episcopalis*) or an alternative form for *sedes* (nominative), the phrase being part of a comparative construction dependent on *maiore cessa* [for *censu*], the full version being *quam praememorata sedes episcopalis* [*subiecta est*].

<sup>177</sup> In Wessex, as apparently in Mercia, the needs of the king’s travelling household were met by mainly royal estates having, individually or in groups, the obligation to provide the ‘one night’s farm’ or ‘half-a-night’s farm’, that is enough food and other essentials to lodge and feed the retinue for a night’s stay. The gift is of two nights’ farm here glossed as *convivia* (‘feasts’, ‘banquets’) for three years, the obligations of two or more royal manors being diverted for this purpose. Alternatively, if the obligation to provide one or more night’s farm was borne by estates of the Bishop of Worcester, King Offa is here waiving it for three years.

<sup>178</sup> Latin *principes* is not specific, but the context suggests that it stands for ealdormen, and the singular *princeps* has been thus translated in the witness-clause.

<sup>179</sup> The Latin, if correctly transcribed, is awkward in that the subjects of the sentence are *ego* (‘I’) and the bishops, abbots and ealdormen. Collectively they should be treated as ‘we’, but the verbs *consenserunt* and *subscripserunt* are in the ‘they’ form. The structure is thus clumsily ‘I and the bishops, abbots and ealdormen they have agreed ...’.

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