

NOTES ON TWO ANGLO-SAXON CHARTERS RELATING TO HAMPSTEAD
IN THE TIMES OF KINGS EADGAR AND
ÆTHELRED.

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I.—EXTRACT FROM KING EADGAR'S CHARTER TO MANGODA.

Þiŕ ġýndon þá land ġemæra to hámftebe; of Sandgatan řúð anblanz
pegeŕ to fox-hanzpan; of ðam hanzpan peŕt to Wæclinga-ġŕæte;
norð anblanz ġŕæte oð coccinge pól; fram coccinge póle éart oð
Sandgate.

Translation.

These are the land boundaries at Hampstead: from Sandgate South
along the road to Foxhanger; from the hanger, west, to Watling
Street; north along the Street to the Cucking-pool; from the
Cucking-pool, east, to Sandgate.

II.—EXTRACT FROM KING ÆTHELRED'S CHARTER TO ST. PETER'S,
WESTMINSTER, A.D. 986.

Æpeŕt æt Sandġete řá éart to Bebezareŕ Stypic leaze; þæŕ uřð
to Deorġodeŕ pican; of Deorġodeŕ pican to mebeman Hemftebe;
řá řorið anblanz hazan to řuġc leaze; of řuġc leaze peŕt æfteŕ meŕġce
to þom beariupe; of þam beariupe peŕt anblanz mearġce to Stanzrafe;
of þam ġrafe innon Wæclinga ġŕæte; řá norð anblanz Wæclinga
ġŕæte to mæŕi-burġnan; of mæŕi-burġnan eft éart æfteŕ mearġce to
Sandġete.

Translation.

Starting from Sandgate, east, to Bedegar's "Stywic" (?) lea ; there south to Deormod's house ; from Deormod's house to Middle Hampstead ; so forward, along the hedge to the rushes ; from the rushes, west, by the side of the marsh to the barrow ; from the barrow, west, along the boundary to the stone-pit (?) ; from the stone-pit to Watling Street ; so north along Watling Street to the boundary brook ; from the boundary brook, back, east, by the side of the boundary to Sandgate.

I trust I shall not have to apologise for calling attention to what may seem at first sight unimportant and even frivolous. If we look minutely into these charters we shall find that they are very suggestive not only with regard to Hampstead but with regard to Anglo-Saxon England. There are three ways in which the study of these old documents seems to be especially important. In the first place it is a great help to our knowledge of Anglo-Saxon ; it is wonderful to discover how many Anglo-Saxon words have not yet been registered in our current dictionaries ; in the next place it is of great interest in casting light on the social life and customs of ancient eras ; and in the next place it makes us thoroughly realise how very old the limits of property are in this country. We are very apt to think of the old Anglo-Saxon times as times of disorder and anarchy, and popular histories often speak of them as such. We may therefore be surprised to find with what curious accuracy the limits of property were defined one thousand years ago. We are hearing a good deal just now of the Boundary Commission, and the boundaries of the

new borough of Hampstead have just been defined. It is extremely interesting to note that one hundred years before the Norman Conquest the boundaries of Hampstead were precisely the same as have just been so adopted. I wish only just to throw out these hints and now turn particularly to these two charters.

The first is a charter of King Eadgar, the date of which is uncertain, and the second is a charter of King Æthelred, the date of which is 986. I am sorry to find that copies of these charters have not been ready to put in your hands, but possibly this rough map may be of use in enabling you to follow what would otherwise seem to be a very obscure and confusing matter.

The first of these two charters has been known for a great many years. The original exists in the archives of Westminster and is printed in the appendix to Park's *Hampstead*. It is printed also in Kemble's *Codex Diplomaticus*, and in Madox's *Formulare Anglicanum*.

The other document, I think, we are now calling attention to for the first time. It has only lately become accessible; it is one of the Stowe MSS. lately secured by the British Museum. This charter has, I believe, never yet been printed, except in Mr. Maunde Thompson's catalogue of the Stowe MSS. It is No. 10 in that catalogue.

With regard to the first, Park suspected that it was a forgery. We know that monkish forgeries are common enough; but I think we may fairly believe in the genuineness of this document. The date given

is 978; King Eadgar died in 975; so that there must be some error there. But such errors of date do creep into old documents, or at least into apographs or copies of them. The probable date, I think, must be about ten years before that given; it cannot have been earlier than 963, because one of the signatures is that of the second wife of King Eadgar, the lady known as Queen Elfrida. There is no reason for believing that the monks forged this, because it is not a charter granted to them. It grants the land at Hampstead to a certain nobleman of the name of Mangoda. He is mentioned in the Latin or introductory part of the charter as *nobilis minister*; as receiving this grant in return for his most devoted obedience, *pro obsequio ejus devotissimo*. Its internal style is exactly like other charters of King Eadgar. There is another charter of King Eadgar, printed by Kemble, almost exactly like it. We shall, therefore, accept it as a genuine document. I may add what Park could not notice, that Æthelred's charter refers to this preceding one. I say Park could not notice this, because he never saw King Æthelred's charter. It was, in Park's time, in the possession of the Duke of Buckingham at Stowe, who promised Park a sight of it; but the death of his Grace prevented this.

I shall take each of these charters in detail, if you will kindly follow me on the map.

The first charter gives the limits of Hampstead very roughly. I will read what it says, and I hope to have some suggestions as to how far my interpretation is accurate. What you find on this map is quite conjectural, and I shall be extremely glad to consider

amendments. Taking the Anglo-Saxon part of it, it says, "These are the boundaries for Hampstead" (so that you see the name is well recognised). "From Sandgate along the road to Foxhanger; from the hanger west to Watling Street: north along the street to the Cucking Pool; from the Cucking Pool east to Sandgate." These limits are very simple. I venture to suppose that by Sandgate is meant what we now call North End. The present northern boundary crosses the road at North End. The charter ignores what is called the East Heath, and goes straight down the road to Foxhanger. It says that it goes along "the way"; I believe this is the main road through Hampstead—the road through Hampstead to Hendon. This is certainly a very old road. Norden and Camden believed that it was a Roman road—that it was indeed the Watling Street. It is quite clear they were wrong; but it is certainly a very old road. And there can be little doubt it is what is meant in the charter we are examining.

We may translate "hanger" "hill-wood," or "woody slope." Our friend Mr. Halliwell-Phillips defines it as a wood on the declivity of a hill. Such names as Foxhill and Foxhanger are very common in these old documents. I believe what is here meant is what is now called Haverstock Hill. I shall be very glad if any one can give me any information as to when the name Haverstock Hill came into use. I find the name not only in Park, but in Roque's map of London in 1741—5. I will just mention that I have suffered in studying this matter from the disadvantage

of not having seen that part of our friend Mr. Gardner's famous collection that concerns Hampstead. You will deeply regret to hear that some time ago he met with an accident which still confines him to his chamber. He has kindly promised to show me his Hampstead illustrations as soon as his health permits. Not only on archæological grounds we wish him a speedy convalescence.

I should like to make one suggestion about the derivation of the word *Haverstock*. I suggest that it comes from *aver*, the Low Latin *averia*, which means cattle. I suspect a pound once stood there. In Roque's map Pond Street is called Pound Street.

If you will look at the map again we will now proceed from the extreme south-east corner, exactly where the Adelaide Tavern stands at present, straight across to Watling Street. There is no doubt that Edgware Road is the Watling Street, and at this present time the western boundary of Hampstead extends for about two miles along the Edgware Road — from near the North-Western Railway Station, where Kilburn Priory once stood, to Cricklewood.

Following the charter, we go straight along the Watling Street to the Cucking Pool. Now, that is one of the most difficult of these old words. I have some reason for believing that there was a pool just at that point. In the first place, in Park's map there are traces of certain pools. In the next place, I find, just opposite, the old Saxon name "the Slade," which has been defined to mean flat marshy ground; and to this day, although you will not find it marked

even on the 25-inch Ordnance map, you will see if you visit the spot that the road rises slightly at this point, and that this rising is due to a bridge over a brook, or what has been one. Lastly, I find that in the time of Edward III., just after this part of Hampstead had passed into the hands of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, there is a complaint brought against the Knights of St. John by a jury for not keeping the road at that particular point in better order, for it was completely overflowed and made impassable (see page 193 in Park's Hampstead). They present that there was a certain ditch in Hampstead lying near the King's way in that part, leading from Edgware to London, that was so blocked up with solid matter and earth, and that through want of scouring (*scuriacionis*) and flushing (*inundiacionis*) the said road, by reason of the abundance of water in the rainy weather and at other times, was so broken up and bemudded that men with horses and vehicles were not able to cross over it as they used to do, to the great damage of the entire neighbourhood (*ad grave nocumentum totius patriæ*) and of all others who were wont to go that way; which ditch the Prior of St. John in England was bound to repair and amend. Putting all these points together we may conclude that there was a pool at this special point; and that this pool was used as a boundary marsh.

Then comes the question what is meant by "cuck-ing"? I have been in correspondence with several eminent scholars about this word; everybody finds

it puzzling. Possibly it is the name of a punishment which prevailed in England as late as the last century, if not as the present,—the well-known punishment applied to “scolds.” You may ask whether this punishment is so old as the tenth century. The cucking-stool is mentioned in a Political Poem of Edward the Second’s time; see Wright’s Collection; and something of the kind is mentioned in Domesday Book; see Way’s *Prompt. Parv. s. v. Cukstoke*. But this word is very obscure; and I am by no means certain about it. One shrinks from insisting that “cucking pool” stands for “cucking-stool pool.” Possibly cucking means merely *stercoraceous*.

Then the northern boundary is from the Cucking Pool, whatever *coc cinge* means, back to Sandgate.

I shall now just run through the second charter, which is much more minute. I will first read it: “Starting from Sandgate East to Bedgar’s Stywic (?) lea. Then south to Deormod’s House. From Deormod’s House to Middle Hampstead; so forward along the hedge to the Rushes. From the Rushes west by the side of the marsh to the Barrow. From the Barrow west along the boundary to Stone-pit (?); then to Watling Street; then north to the boundary brook; from the boundary brook east along the boundary to Sandgate.”

This second charter includes what we now call the East Heath. I venture to suggest that Bedgar’s lea was near where “the Spaniards” now stands. There is a great deal of difficulty about the word “stywic.” It has been suggested that we should read

the word "styric," which would be connected with our word "steer." Thus "styric leah" would mean a kind of bullock-run. But one would rather make sense of the word as it stands. To change the *n* into *r* is cutting the knot rather than untying it. Perhaps it may yet be made out. It is conceivable that the word comes from the A.-S. *stige*, a sty; or is connected with the A.-S. *stow*, a place, a dwelling; or the A.-S. *stif*, stiff, hard. In the third volume of Kemble's Cod. Dipl. p. 409, I find "Tò ðam fúlan wege se hátte *stific* weg." The form *stywic* does not seem to occur anywhere else.

Then we go on to Deormod's Wick. Luckily, we have something to guide us in this matter; it is the phrase "Middle Hampstead." If you look at the map of Hampstead you will find that the middle of it is almost exactly where St. Stephen's church now stands. Just below that, to the east, is what is called South End. We must then assign Deormod's Wick to some spot between "the Spaniards" and South End. I place it just opposite the end of Well Walk, very near what is now called the Vale of Health.

Then we get to Middle Hampstead; and then in this second charter we come at the south-east corner to the Rushes. It is not at all difficult to believe that the land in that part of London, near Kentish Town, near the upper part of Chalk Farm Road and Prince of Wales's Road, if you look at the level of it, was once marshy and abounding in rushes. Then at that point we come just below to where the Adelaide Tavern now is. Then we turn west by the side of

the marsh. I believe that this spread where St. George's Square is now built. Then on to the Barrow. I believe that is part of Primrose Hill—the lower, the western, part. There are or were traces of the name barrow in that neighbourhood. The exact site of the barrow itself is now occupied by the reservoir of the West Middlesex Water Company.

Then we go west to "Stone-grave." I have walked over the ground, and I find that in the Boundary Road, on the piece just between St. John's Wood Park and Marlborough Hill, there is a very considerable rise in the ground, and that is the point where the present southern boundary of Hampstead goes most to the north. I think it is almost certain that this "stone-grave" stood at that point. I shall be glad to have any explanation of what this compound means. Possibly it means stone-pit; possibly the stone-grave; possibly the grave, or it may be the grove, near the stone.

From this comparatively high point the ground drops; and we go on to the Watling Street, which is reached close by where Kilburn Priory subsequently stood. *Watling* is here spelt with a "c" instead of a "t." Along the street we go until we reach the Mere-burn. At that particular point, as I have pointed out above, a bourne or brook runs across the Edgware Road. This is what I mentioned as probably forming the pool which is called the Cucking Pool. In other charters we read of a mear-pit and a mear-tree and a mear-stone. The word is probably cognate with our word mark. From the Mear-burn we go back to Sandgate.

These are the two special charters I wished to bring before the Society. I hope that if any kind of corresponding document for any other part of London can be found it will receive careful attention. There is a very interesting one about the Tyburn. I will only add that the grant given by these two charters was confirmed at Westminster a few years afterwards by Edward the Confessor.
