



## Beating the Bounds of Brightwalton.

---

SO far as has been ascertained, the Bounds of the Parish of Brightwalton had not been beaten since the year 1720, but at a recent meeting of the Parish Council, it was resolved that the ceremony should take place on Holy Thursday (Ascension Day), and that notice of such should be given to the authorities of neighbouring parishes. The invitation was not responded to by representatives of these, but on the given day a party of about 20 persons assembled at Dunmore Pond and, headed by the Rector, a start was made about one o'clock, after the singing of a hymn, begging God's blessing on the fruits of the earth. For such appears to have one of the original motives of the ceremony, the other being the preservation of the rights and boundaries of the parish. Indeed in early times the perambulation was actually regarded as an acknowledgement of the principle of ownership, of the equity of tithe and church-rate, and a recognition of the terms upon which property was held.

The following account of the ceremony, as performed in the year 1720, is recorded in an old M.S. book, now in the possession of Mr. Wroughton, the writer being William Savory, wheelwright and village leech, who died in 1772.

### PROCESSIONING.

"Anciently amongst us there were in each parish customary processions of the Priest and the Patron of the Church, with the chief flag or holy banner, attended by other parishioners, each Ascension week, to take a circuit round the limits of the parish, and pray for a blessing on the fruits of the earth, of which custom there still remains a shadow in that annual perambulation still called processioning, though the order and devotion of the ancient procession be almost lost. I should be very glad to see that ancient custom have a renewal, because I think it a very necessary one, but at the same time I am very sorry that so useful a thing should be so much neglected as it is. The last perambulation round the limits of this parish was, according to the best account that I could get, about the year 1720\*, which

was about two years before the decease of the Rev. Mr. House, Rector of this parish. Now I shall give you a short description, but it is the best that I could get concerning the custom of trial day's perambulation.

The Farm carried cake and ale down to Lilley.

John Taylor, Samuel Taylor carried cake and ale down to the further Holt Gate.

Yew Tree carried cake and ale to the upper end of the lane next Thickett.

The Comb Farms (1) carried cake and ale down to the Cross at Stacorn.

The tithe of Rowdown Bank was lost ye last year, as they went round, the cross being made at the farther Holt Gate, instead of going up to the upper corner of Taylor's ground (2). There was Mr. House and two younger daughters, Ann and Sarah.

Sarah 1689—1720 ... .. 31

Ann 1686—1720 ... .. 34

Henry Hatt, Joseph Sparrow carried cake and ale to the Knole, by Holly Street Lane.

Mr. Giles Blaggrave carried cake and ale to the cross at the Boarded House.

John Tame, Thos. Blackney, Rd. Fulbrook carried cake and ale to Knight's Cross.

Robert Brown, Henry Bonner carried cake and ale to the cross in the Green, where the stocks stand.

The begun (*sic.*) at Dunmore, all round by Stacorn, by the Boarded House to Lilly, to the Holt, and round by Thicket Lots to Dunmore, then to Knight's Cross, the Green and the Knole by Hatt's.

### ROWDOWN BANK.

Peasemore hath the tithe above the rising ground, and Brightwalton below.

Whitelands pay 1s. 4d. per annum, quit-rent to the Dean

\* The first Enclosure Agreement was 8 Geo. i, 1721.

(1) There were two farms at Combe, in the parish of Brightwalton, from early days until the first part of the nineteenth century.

(2) The Tithe of Rowdown Bank may have been forfeited for the year in question by some custom imposing such a penalty; if so, it was recovered later. For *cross* one should probably read *crossing*.

and Chapter of Westminster, all the tithe of Whitelands belongs to Peasemore (3).

Rd. Bird's, Hughes', Herbert's, Esqr. Tipping's, and Tayler's, half the tithe to Peasemore, and the other half to Brightwalton.

Lilly Hill, the tithe of Lower post to Brightwalton, the upper part to Peasemore. It was lost by Peasemore carrying a corpse from Brightwalton up to a certain place on Lilly Hill; before this time all the tithe of Lilly Hill belonged to Brightwalton (4)."

The parish of Brightwalton is of irregular shape, resembling as much as anything the sleeve of a coat, the elbow slightly bent, and the wrist-band pointing north-west. On part of the southern and the whole of the western side, it is contiguous with the parish of Chaddleworth, while the north-western extremity touches Fawley, and is bounded by Letcombe Regis, and turning northwards meets the southern point of Wantage parish.

Brightwalton appears to have been the western boundary of the property of the Abbey of Abingdon here, for neither the manor of Chaddleworth, Fawley, Letcombe Regis, nor Wantage formed part of its belongings, consequently the bounds of none of these parishes are recorded in the chronicle. The exact location therefore of the points mentioned on the western and northern sides is more or less matter of guess-work. Still a critical examination of land-marks, field-names, and the lie of the country, give probability to the identification of these as figured in the map appended.

On the eastern and southern sides it is different, for there the parish is bounded by Farnborough, Catmore and Peasemore, which latter was formerly part of Chieveley, while most of its southern border is contiguous with Leckhamstead, all of which parishes, with the exception of Catmore, were the property of the Abbey. A comparison of the points mentioned in the Chronicle as occurring on the boundary of these parishes makes their location a matter of more or less certainty.

Dunmore Pond, the starting place of the perambulation of 1720, as on the present occasion, appears in the Chronicle as *Dunian mere*,

(3) The Priory of Poughley owned a small manor in Peasemore, of which Whitelands probably composed a part. After its dissolution by, and the subsequent fall of, Cardinal Wolsey, its possessions were given to the Abbot and Canons of Westminster, and to the present day the Rectory of Chaddleworth (and until recently Poughley Farm), is the property of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, but Whitelands has long passed out of their possession.

(4) The only corroboration of this is furnished by Roque's map (1759), which places the boundary on the top of Lilly Hill, but its accuracy is doubtful.

meaning the dark pond. North of the large pond is a smaller so-called fish-pond, and on the boundary line, dividing the parish of Chaddleworth on the west, are found two stones. The first field north of Dunmore Pond bears the name of 'Butts furlong, a "vestige of the reign of Edward IV., when it was enacted that every Englishman should have a bow of his own height, and that butts for the practice of archery should be erected near every village, where the inhabitants were obliged to shoot up and down on every feast-day, under penalty of being mulcted a half-penny."

From Dunmore the boundary runs northwards to *Hasel lea*, of the Chronicle, which appears to be identical either with what is now known as Dutshill Piece or Little Dutshill—they being separated from each other merely by the present high-road—the former of which is now underwood. At this point a difficulty arises from the fact that the parish boundary is undefined by any hedge; for, crossing the road, it runs in an irregular manner, so as to embrace that portion of Combe Field, now known as Little Dutshill, and joins the boundary hedge at a spot 303 yards northward. This piece of land,  $7\frac{1}{4}$  acres in extent, is not found in the recent rate-books of Brightwalton Parish, a lapse which will be corrected in future.

Thence the boundary proceeds westward to *Borsenan beorge*, of the Chronicle, which is said to mean the broken-open barrow. This point appears likely to be identical with a prominent headland now called 'The Beeches,' where is still to be found a large stone. Thence westwards, we proceed to the north-western extremity of the parish, where it touches the main Wantage-Hungerford road, and immediately turns north. This spot was probably marked by the *haran stan* of the Chronicle, or grey stone, an important point, since here four parishes meet—Chaddleworth, Fawley, Letcombe Regis, and Brightwalton. The land in the vicinity is now known colloquially as 'Stacun.' In 1720 the spelling was Stacorn, in the ordnance map of 1877-8 it was Stalkhorn, and in the later ordnance Staycorn. The boundary northwards from the *haran stan* is undefined by any hedge, but in the centre of the field is a large stone, which in spite of the tradition that it has been moved during recent times, is on the direct boundary line, and, moreover, the lie of the country is such that it is possible to say without much doubt that in early days the watercourse, taking the surface water running down

from the north-eastern slopes coincided exactly with the position of the boundary line thus defined. Still it is very possible that the stone now in that position has at some time been removed from the corner on the high-road, and that it was itself the very *haraŋ stan* mentioned in the Chronicle. The fact that the boundary follows the course of the old water-way is an exemplification of the rule that where possible such definite landmarks as the beds of streams were selected for parish bounds.

The further boundary is defined by a hedge, in an angle of which, until recent years, stood a barn, known as Staycorn Barn, close to the site of which lies a stone, and then proceeds straight to the top of the triangle, upon which stands Sparrow's Copse, the northernmost point of the parish. Here again four parishes meet, this time Letcombe Regis, Wantage, Farnborough, and Brightwalton. The point may be identified without room for doubt as the *Stancrundle* of the Chronicle, since the same name occurs in the Farnborough bounds, and any other spot is impossible of agreement with both.

It has been construed as the stone-barrow, or stone-heap, but whatever its meaning, the old name has been perpetuated to the present day in the modern 'Staycorn.'

From this point we are helped by the bounds of Farnborough parish, which are recorded in the Chronicle. For when compared with the Brightwalton bounds, although mentioned in opposite order, it is clear that there was a way leading in a southern direction from the *Stancrundle*—"the way over Beo-cumb," an abbreviation of Beorthwaldingtune or Brightwalton Combe—which led to a point at which stood 'the long tree.' The exact location of this is obscure, but it was, for one reason or another, possibly as placed at a turn in the boundary, or possibly as a meeting place, an important point. Its proximate position may be accepted as given in the map.

From 'the long tree' the boundary proceeds 'along the way to the Mærfloden' or boundary stream. This stream probably originated in springs arising on the higher land northwards, in the direction of Lockinge Kiln, whence the water flowed down to Farnborough Copse, and became the boundary dividing that parish from Brightwalton, in the bounds of each of which it finds mention. It is worth remark that judging from the present appearance of the land, the watercourse, which in these early times formed the boundary between the two parishes, is now

included in Farnborough, as is also the hard road which is itself further westward of what was apparently the bed of the old stream. The boundary line has probably followed the westward rule. Running southwards, and forming for some distance, the parish boundary, this *Mærfloden* was in those days the upper water of the stream which in the present year of grace coursed along the high-road towards Newbury, and eventually flowed by the present Chapel arch, the Ford and Hazelhanger, to run into the Winterbourne, and eventually into the Lambourne. The disappearance since those early days of some of the upland streams, can be accounted for to some extent by the knowledge that the country was then better wooded than now, and that the presence of trees has a great effect in increasing the rainfall.

The boundary of Farnborough parish is described in the Chronicle as meeting the *Mærfloden be eastan Lillinglea*, which translated probably means 'with Lilly meadow on the east.' On arriving at the hamlet of Lilly, in the parish of Catmore, a difficulty arises. The M.S. volume above referred to tells that the boundary of Brightwalton was formerly (*ante* 1720) farther up Lilly hill than has been the case since that date, but little corroboration of this can be found. At present the boundary at Lilly is defined by an elm-tree, and then running up the hill 73 yards, turns at a right angle southwards and includes a long strip of land eastward of the high-road, defined by a straight line drawn from a post on the hill-side to meet another post on Rowdown Bank. Thence the boundary runs irregularly, skirting the high-road, so as to exclude Whitelands, which is in the parish of Peasemore, and then rising to run along Rowdown Bank, where it was marked by various stumps and posts (see map), one of which is mentioned in the Court Rolls of 1700 as Copton Bush,\* until it reaches a post at the corner boundary between the three parishes of Peasemore, Leckhampstead and Brightwalton.

This point can be identified as *Curspandic*, *Cyrspandic* or *Crypsandic* of the Chronicle, which translated means Cherry-tree Ditch, Curly Ditch, or Crispin's Ditch. Thence it turns at right-angles westwards to *Acdene*, the oak valley, and thence straight by

---

\* "That whereas there was a bush called Copton Bush which was taken away by John Taylor, which he do promise to set another bush or stone with this engraven upon him:—'Here stood Copton Bush.'"—Court Leet Orders, 1700.

what are now known as Thicket Lots to *Wigferth's leage*, the meadow of Wigferth, which, occurring also in the Leckhampstead bounds, may be located without much chance of error, as in the immediate vicinity of the present Oak Ash. Continuing on its westward course, the next point mentioned in the Chronicle is *Pippes leage*, Pipard's meadow, Pippe's meadow, or the Pepper meadow, corresponding proximately to the land adjoining the spot where the boundary line between Brightwalton and Chaddleworth enters Spray Lane. Thence it proceeds northwards to the *brandan-stane*, the burning, or sacrificial stone, which would seem to have stood at a point in the vicinity of the north-eastern corner of Spray Copse, whence on to *Dunian mere*, the spot from which we started.

I have prepared a map, which is reduced from the six-inch Ordnance Survey of 1877-8, giving not only the ancient boundaries of the parish as described in the Charter of Athelstan, dated 939, granting the manor to the Abbey of Abingdon, but including the field-names extracted from the Tithe Apportionment Map of 1840, and showing the extent of the Commons remaining at the latter date.

Elaborate as the Victoria County History of Berkshire promises to be, it is hoped that the limits of space will not preclude the admission thereto of such material as the map affords, which, in the opinion of the present writer is worthy of being placed on record.

GEORGE C. PEACHEY.

---

## Some Notes on the Domesday Surbey of Berkshire.

*By J. E. Field, M.A., Vicar of Benson.*

---

**I**NTERESTING questions have been raised regarding the Berkshire Domesday and some unknown names that are found in it and some well-known names that are not found. The following haphazard notes, therefore, are offered in the hope that they may be of some value to the historian.