

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

Bath, Mercian and West-Saxon

by C. S. Taylor
1900, Vol. 23, 129-161

© The Society and the Author(s)

BATH, MERCIAN AND WEST SAXON.

BY THE REV. C. S. TAYLOR, M.A.,

Vicar of Banwell.

WHAT follows is not intended in any way to give a connected history of Bath before the Norman Conquest, but simply to trace the history of the place and of the district attached to it in connection with the successive changes of ownership which brought it under the power first of the West Saxon, then of the Mercian, and finally again of the West Saxon Kings. It will be convenient to give at once the chief points of time in the history of Bath. In 577 the West Saxons captured it after the battle of Dyrham. In 676, Osric, Viceroy of the Huiccians under Ethelred, King of the Mercians, founded the Abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul, which still remains there; so that at some time during the preceding century it must have passed from the West Saxon to the Mercian Realm. In 864 Burhred, the last King of the Mercians, held a Gemot at Bath, ten years before the Danes drove him from his kingdom; the borough, therefore, must have remained under Mercian rule for at least two hundred years. Finally, in the Gheld-Inquest of 1084 Bath is entered definitely under Somerset. But it is very difficult to state distinctly at what point of time during the two centuries preceding the Norman Conquest the place became once more West Saxon.

Thus it is that the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society has a very distinct inheritance in the history of Bath. When we held our meeting there in July last we were no strangers in a strange land as we had been at Monmouth, but were rather as natives returning to a land which had once been ours. The Abbey, at any rate, is a Mercian foundation; the twin foundations of Osric at

Gloucester and Bath mark by their dedication to St. Peter and St. Paul their connection with the Great Minster of St. Hilda at Whitby, where the earliest of the Huiccian Bishops were trained. Christianity came to Bath under Mercian and not under West Saxon rulers, from Whitby and Iona rather than from Canterbury and Rome, through Osric and Bertana rather than through St. Aldhelm. The fount and origin of the life of the Bath that we know was Mercian and not West Saxon; its birthday was the day of the foundation of the Abbey by a Mercian Viceroy; it grew to maturity as a Mercian town, and though now for eight centuries it has flourished as a West Saxon City, those north of Avon will do well to remember, as those south of Avon ought not to forget, that it is to Mercia rather than to Wessex that Bath owes both its civil and religious life. Both the men of Somerset and those of Gloucestershire have a rightful inheritance in the history of Bath.

Bath first appears in English history in the well-known entry in the Chronicles under the year 577: "Cuthwine and Ceawlin fought against the Britons, and they slew three kings, Comail and Condidan and Farinmeail, in the place that is called Deorham; and they took three fortresses,¹ Gloucester, and Cirencester, and Bathcester." In 552 Cynric had captured Old Sarum; four years later he and his son Ceawlin took Beranbyrig, no doubt Barbury Camp on the north-western edge of Salisbury Plain, above Swindon Station. In 568 the West Saxons defeated Ethelbert, King of Kent, at Wimbledon, thus obtaining control of the valley of the Lower Thames; and in 571, by their victory over the Britons at Bedford,² they obtained possession of Benson and Eynsham, thus commanding the Middle Thames. Their next step in the path of conquest was clearly indicated by circumstances. From the salt water below Wimbledon their territory stretched without a break to Barbury, seventy miles to the westward, and within four miles of Barbury the little streams run into the head waters

¹ Ceastra,—Chesters.

² Bedcanford.

of the Bristol Avon and point the way to the western sea lying just forty miles away.

It is a very remarkable thing that a straight line drawn from Barbury to the mouth of Avon passes within half a mile of Dyrham Camp, and the camp itself lies by the side of a very ancient way running from Christian Malford by Stanton St. Quintin and Nettleton to the low ground at Pucklechurch and Mangotsfield. It will be noticed that this road passes to the south of the Forest of Braden, and to the north of the valley of the Box Brook, which very probably contained an extension of the Forest of Selwood. It thus avoided as far as possible the wooded districts on either hand. We cannot doubt that this was the line taken by Ceawlin in his march to the west. We have absolutely no details of the fight; we are not even sure who were the besiegers and who the besieged. But if, as is likely, the West Saxons had marched to Dyrham and fortified a camp there, it would be absolutely necessary, if possible, for the Britons to drive them out. For the site of the camp was chosen with great skill. It was on the very edge of the Oolite escarpment, so that it would be hard to attack; it was within half a mile of the Ridgeway between Gloucester and Bath, and within about four miles of the Fosse between Bath and Cirencester, so that the communication between Bath and the other two cities would soon be cut off. In fact the Fosse and the Ridgeway are nearer to each other opposite to Dyrham Park than at any other point of their course; because the Fosse runs nearly south and passes to the east of Bannerdown, while the Ridgeway bends towards the west to Toghill, and enters Bath over Lansdown. Unless then the Britons of Gloucester and Cirencester were willing to leave Bath to a fate which would have been meted out to each of them in turn, they must make common cause against the enemy and fight the West Saxons entrenched in a fortress of their own choosing. This most likely they did, with the result that the three kings of the Britons were slain, their three cities were taken, and the corners of the

island were all that remained for the British race. Thus ended the Roman City of Aquæ Sulis, and the Bath which succeeded it, though it occupied its site, has no more to do with it than New York or Melbourne has to do with the Native settlements which preceded them.

Assuming for the moment the authenticity of Osric's Charter of 676, we see that by that time the Bath district had passed into the possession of the Mercians; what the extent of this district was, and the probable date of its change of ownership, we shall best ascertain from the few notices of the neighbourhood which we find in the Chronicles :

“628. Cynegils and Cuichelm fought against Penda at Cirencester, and then made a treaty.¹

“645. King Cenwalk was driven out of his kingdom by King Penda.

“648. Cenwalk gave Cuthred, his kinsman, three thousand lands by Ashdown.

“652. Cenwalk fought at Bradford by Avon.”

It would no doubt have been either in 628 or 645 that Penda took Bath and its neighbourhood into the Mercian realm; but there is really nothing to show at which date the territory passed. Even Mr. Freeman is not consistent with himself; writing at one time with regard to the annal of 628: “This I take to mean a cession of territory, most probably of the north-western conquests of Ceawlin. Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire must have been kept longer, as appears from the position of Dorchester as originally a West Saxon bishopric.”² And then again: “In 644 Penda came against him (Cenwalk), and drove him for a while out of his kingdom, and it was perhaps now that Gloucestershire and some of the other West-Saxon lands north of the Thames and Avon became part of Mercia.”³ A like uncertainty hangs over the extent of territory which would have passed with Bath. Dr. Guest, in a paper in the

¹ Gethingodan, Paciscor. Wright's *Vocabularies*.

² *Norman Conquest*, i. 36, ed. 1877.

³ *Old English History*, p. 65, ed. 1870.

Archæological Journal for June, 1859,¹ considers that the southern boundary of Ceawlin's conquests after the battle of Dyrham would have been marked by the river Axe, because he would have desired and obtained the lead-mines of Mendip; and that his south-eastern boundary would have lain along a line drawn from Englishcombe, near Bath, to the source of the Axe at Wookey Hole. This theory has been popularised by Mr. Freeman, and is probably the one now in possession of the field; though as Dr. Guest says, before his time the general opinion was that the Wansdyke marked the southern limit of Ceawlin's kingdom.

It cannot be said, however, that Dr. Guest's reasoning is very conclusive. No doubt Ceawlin would have liked to possess the Mendip lead-mines, as it is probable too that he wished he might get the iron-mines of the Forest of Dene, which would have been still more valuable to him. But the Welsh retained the Forest of Dene for two centuries more till the time of Offa; and if Ceawlin could not get the iron-mines, which lay within twelve miles of Gloucester, he would hardly have obtained the lead-mines, the nearest of which were at least sixteen miles from Bath.

Moreover, Dr. Guest's south-eastern boundary rests on very slight foundation. Sir R. C. Hoare² had mentioned a dyke steering from the south-west towards the Wansdyke, near Englishcombe. Dr. Guest found this with its ditch on the western side; he also found a similar ditch at Wallsmead, near Tisbury, and something like a similar ditch at Wallscombe, near Wells. On these three fragments of a ditch, and on the names English-combe, English-batch, Marksbury, Wallsmead, and Wallscombe the boundary rests. In any case it is not easy to see how Ceawlin's Saxons could have given a name to English-combe and English-batch. English Bicknor and Welsh Bicknor on either side of the Wye do not offer a parallel case, because the Forest of Dene

¹ Volume xvi., p. 105.

² *North Wilts*, p. 25.

was annexed by the Mercian Offa and attached to Hereford; its conquerors were, therefore, English and not Saxons. It is far more likely that the names English-combe and English-batch arose after the Mercian Conquest of Bath, or even after Bishop Heathored had bought his thirty cassates south of Avon.

In this connection something depends on the entry in the Chronicles under 652, and on the enemies against whom Cenwalk fought. Dr. Guest says they were Britons who still held the low ground west of Salisbury Plain including the valleys of the Frome and Avon; this is possible, though it is certainly strange that if the West Saxon kings had held for at least half a century Salisbury Plain on one side, and the country between Bath and Mendip on the other, they had not obtained possession of the narrow strip that lay between. Ethelwerd, however, writes thus about Cenwalk's fight in 652: "*Ipse bellum gessit civile, in cognominato loco Bradanforda, juxta fluvium Afene.*"¹ He thus makes it a civil war, and as he belonged to the West Saxon Royal House, he may be preserving here a true tradition. It is quite possible that if Ceawlin really had carried the West Saxon boundary south to Mendip in 577, and Penda had annexed this territory in 628 or 645, the fight in 652 was one between the Mercians and West Saxons. Cenwalk had guarded the approach to Wessex along the Ermine Street by committing 3,000 hides of land to his kinsman Cuthred in 648, probably the districts dependent on Malmesbury and Cricklade; and if he wished to revenge himself on Penda, he could best do it by an attack on the district south of Bath. Moreover, it is certain that Penda attacked Bamborough at some time between the death of St. Aidan on August 31st, 651, and his own death in 655,² and it is quite possible that Cenwalk took advantage of his absence in Northumbria to attack the southern extremity of his kingdom, and to take the district between Bath and Mendip from him.

¹ M.H.B., 506 B.

² Bede, H. E. iii., 17.

On the other hand, it is quite possible that as the Severn bounded Ceawlin's conquests on the west, so the Avon bounded them on the south, and that Cenwalk captured Somerset north of Mendip from the Britons after the fight in 652, as he captured Mid-Somerset as far as Parrett from them in 658. The first ascertained fact with regard to the relation of Bath towards the lands to the south of it is that in the time of Heathored (who was consecrated to the see of Worcester in 781) the Avon formed the boundary between Mercia and Wessex, for he had bought thirty cassates south of Avon from Cynewulf, King of the West Saxons, and had apparently annexed them to the estates of the Huiccian Abbey of Bath.

We pass now to the first mention of Anglo-Saxon Bath in the charter of 676, attributed to Osric; and first with regard to the authenticity of the charter. Against it may be urged that it is an extremely early instance in England of a reckoning from the Incarnation; that the Indiction is wrongly stated; and that the names both of Leutherius and Hedda, successive Bishops of the West Saxons, appear as witnesses. With regard to the Indiction, it is written in full "quarta," not in figures; and is so far wrong that the fourth Indiction ran from September 1st, 675, to August 31st, 676, and thus by November 6th, 676, more than two months of the fifth Indiction had elapsed. Still, the error, such as it is, is not very great. In 1878 the Trustees of the British Museum published in Part iv. of their facsimiles of Ancient Charters, a grant by Wulphere, King of the Mercians, dated "Añ ab incarnat' Dñi DCXXIII;" which must, by supplying one letter, be corrected to DCLXXIII, the last year of Wulphere's reign.¹ Osric was a nephew of King Wulphere, being a son of his sister Cyneburh, and it is certainly remarkable that the two most ancient instances of the use of the era of the Incarnation in England should be afforded by an uncle and nephew. Dionysius Exiguus published his Cycle in 527, and it was adopted in France perhaps a

¹ C.S. 32.

century later.¹ In 674 Benedict Biscop, by command of King Ecgfrith, a brother of Osric's father, Alchfrid, was building a monastery at Wearmouth, with the aid of masons whom he fetched from France. It is very probable that he brought the new reckoning back with him, and that Wulphere and Osric adopted it from him. Certainly Bede, who uses the era throughout his history, was a pupil of Benedict Biscop.

With regard to the succession of Leutherius and Hedda the Chronicles contain the following entries:—

“670. Hlothere obtained the Bishopdom over the West Saxons, Bishop Æthelbyrht's² nephew, and held it vii years. Bishop Theodore hallowed him.”

“676. Ascwine died, and Hedda obtained the Bishopdom and Centwine obtained the Kingdom” of the West Saxons.

Bede (H. E. iv. 12.) relates that Hedda succeeded on the death of Eleutherius, having been consecrated by Theodore, in the city of London. It is evident, therefore, that Leutherius and Hedda were not Bishops at the same time. But this may only mean that the arrangements for the foundation of the monastery had been commenced before the death of Leutherius, which must have occurred in 676. The rest of the witnesses might all have signed in 676.

Æthelred, King of the Mercians, 675—704.

Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, 668—690.

Wilfrid, Bishop of Northumbria, 664—678, died 709.

Ergnuald, Bishop of London, 675—693.

Saxuulf, Bishop of Lichfield, 675—691.

A strong argument for the authenticity of the charter lies in the fact that no name of a Bishop of Worcester appears among the witnesses. As Osric expressed his intention of founding an episcopal see, there would have been an almost irresistible temptation to a forger to insert the name of the occupant of the see; but, owing no doubt to the death of Tatfrith, the Bishop-elect, Bosel, the first Bishop of Worcester, was not consecrated till about 680.

¹ *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, i. 853.

² Of Dorchester.

The weight of authority is altogether in favour of the charter as genuine. Mr. Kemble passed it,¹ and it is the earliest charter except one that he did pass. Mr. Thorpe called it a charter "the genuineness of which there appears no reason to question."² Professor Earle prints it as a genuine document.³ Mr. Freeman, on the other hand, rejects it, or speaks doubtfully.⁴ If, however, it is genuine, then in 676 Bath was Mercian and not West Saxon; under Osric, King of the Huiccians, and Ethelred, King of the Mercians, soon to be cared for by a Bishop whose see was at Worcester, entirely severed from any connection either ecclesiastical or civil with Wessex.

Two documents are recorded in the Bath book as dating from this period. One is a grant from Uighard to the Abbess Berguidis and to her monastery of forty manentes at Slæpi, dated in the fourteenth year of the reign of King Wulphere (672), in the month of October, in the ninth Indiction.⁵ The other is a grant from Æthelmod, with the consent of King Æthelred, of twenty manentes near the Cherwell, to the Abbess Berguidis and to Folcburg and to their monastery, dated in the month of October, in the ninth Indiction.⁶ Both purport to be witnessed by King Ethelred and Archbishop Theodore, as well as by Putta, Bishop of Rochester and Hereford (669—688), and Bosel, Bishop of Worcester (680—691); and the donor, Æthelmod, also witnessed the later document. October fell in the ninth Indiction in 665 and 680. Kemble stigmatises both documents, the former no doubt rightly in its present shape, because the fourteenth year of Wulphere agrees neither with the Indiction nor with the witnesses; but it is not easy to see why the later document is condemned, for all the witnesses named might have signed in October, 680. For us, however, the interest of the documents lies in the fact that documents found in the Bath book, and therefore

¹ K.C.D. XII. ² *Diplomatarium*, p. xx. ³ *Land Charters*, p. 6.

⁴ *Cathedral Church of Wells*, pp. 36, 177.

⁵ K.C.D. XIII., C.S. 28.

⁶ K.C.D. XXI., C.S. 57.

presumably connected with the Church of Bath, are witnessed by a Mercian King and Mercian Bishops.

The next document relating to Bath is a grant by "Cynulfus Rex Saxonum" to the brethren "fratribus" in the Monastery of St. Peter, at Bath, of five "mansiones" at North Stoke.¹ It is dated DCCCVIII., as though it were a grant of Kenulf of the Mercians, but the names of the witnesses clearly shew that the grantor was Cynulf, King of the West Saxons (755—786); as Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury (740-758), also signed, the grant must have been made between 755 and 758, and all the witnesses named might have signed at that time. The name of Offa, King of the Mercians, appears as consenting to the grant, no doubt because Bath lay in his kingdom. But there is nothing, either in this document or in any other early authority, to support the oft-repeated statement that Offa either founded the monastery at Bath or converted it from a house of women into one of men. Offa could not have become king before 757, and very little is heard of him for some years after that time; as the brethren were in possession of the monastery at Bath by 758, no doubt the change had been effected before Offa's time.

We find Offa, however, dealing very effectively with Bath in 781.² Heathored, who became Bishop of Worcester in that year, had bought thirty cassates south of Avon from Cynulf, King of the West Saxons, and had apparently added them to the estates of the monastery at Bath. Thus a very considerable tract of West Saxon territory, extending south probably as far as Monkton Combe, had been annexed to a Mercian religious house. It is not likely that Offa would regard this condition of things with favour, for two years before he had won a victory over Cynewulf at Bensington, in Oxfordshire, with the probable result that all the West Saxon territory north of Thames passed to Mercia; and it would be clearly a weak point on the Mercian frontier, if Bath with a wedge of territory projecting into the

¹ K.C.D. CXCIH., C.S. 327. ² K.C.D. CXLIII., C.S. 241.

West-Saxon realm, should remain in ecclesiastical hands. Therefore we may suppose he determined to take possession of Bath, and at a gemot held at Brentford, before the change of Indiction in 781, he laid claim not only to Bath but also to other estates belonging to the see of Worcester—Stratford, Sture, Sture in Usmere or Kidderminster, Bredon and Homtune, on the ground that they pertained to him as of the inheritance of King Æthelbald. Unless this is simply a high-handed claim which Offa had no right to make, it is not easy to understand it. Sture, in Usmere, had indeed been granted by Æthelbald to Cyniberht to found a monastery in 736; but the gift of Ceolfrith, son of Cyniberht, of the estate to Worcester had been confirmed by Offa himself.¹ Bredon had been founded by Eanulf, grandfather of Offa, and had received large grants from Offa, several given only in 780.² Sture is the subject of some doubtful charters of Bishop Egwine.³ Bath had been founded by Osric long before the time of King Æthelbald. It is, of course, possible that these estates had fallen into the hands of King Æthelbald in the period of confusion in the monasteries during his reign, but nothing is recorded which would show that Offa's claim had any foundation in fact.

However that may be, the claim was considered at an assembly attended by six "principes" or ealdormen—no doubt the ealdormen of the Mercians—and by every Bishop in England, and, as a result, Heathored surrendered his estate at Bath, together with the thirty cassates which he had purchased south of Avon, and Offa confirmed him in the possession of the other estates mentioned.

Bath now became a royal estate, belonging to the kings of the Mercians; and during the short reign of Egfrid, son of Offa, July 29th to December 17th, 796, he granted three cassates at Huntenatun to Æthelmund, Ealdorman of the Huiccians at Bath. The document occurs in two forms—one in the Cottonian M.S. Nero E. 1, placed by Kemble about

¹ K.C.D. LXXX., CXXVII., C.S. 154, 220.

² K.C.D. CXX., CXXXVIII., CXL., C.S. 210, 234, 236.

³ K.C.D. XXXIII., LXIV., C.S. 76, 130.

A.D. 1000, and the other in Heming's Chartulary. Both are Worcester authorities of good repute, and there seems to be no sound reason for doubting the genuineness of the charter.¹ It is worth noticing that among the witnesses appears Brihtric or Berhtric, King of the West Saxons. By another charter, Egfrid, at the request of Brihtric, sold for two thousand shillings the land of xxxv manentes at Purton in Braden to Malmesbury Abbey: this grant is dated 796 in the fourth Indiction. The fourth Indiction ended on August 31st; the grant must, therefore, have been made in the first month of Egfrid's reign, and as Berhtric signs both grants it is likely that the grant to Æthelmund was made about the same time, especially as he signs the grant of Purton to Malmesbury.

But the names of the witnesses would seem to show more than this; they include the King of the West Saxons and his Queen Eadburg, Egfrid's sister (who by her infamy deprived all future consorts of the West Saxon sovereigns of the title of Queen), the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Winchester, Sherborn, Worcester, and the Bishop-elect of Lindsey. And when we find these magnates assembled in the first month of the reign of a new sovereign, it seems probable they were assembled to celebrate his accession to the kingdom. Egfrid had indeed been "hallowed to King" at the contentious Synod at Cealchythe in 787, when the Archbishopric of Lichfield was set up, no doubt by Higerht, prelate of that see; and he had signed charters in his father's lifetime as "Rex Merciorum,"² but he would hardly have entered on his actual reign without some religious sanction. Yet the name of Higbert, Archbishop of Lichfield, does not appear among the witnesses to the Bath Charter, neither indeed does that of any acting Mercian prelate except Heathored, the Bishop of the Huiccians, in whose province Bath lay, though Unwona, Bishop of Leicester, was certainly alive at the time. It

¹ K.C.D. CLXX., CLXXI., C.S. 277, 278.

² K.C.D. CLII., CLVII., C.S. 253, 257.

would almost seem as though Egfrid desired the sanction of Ethelheard, Archbishop of Canterbury, and that Higbert was either of set purpose excluded or stayed away by his own wish. In either case if Egfrid really entered on his reign at Bath it is a mark of the importance which was once more attached to the place; and if he wished to avoid the Archbishop of Lichfield, Bath would be a very likely place for him to choose.

Nothing more is heard of Bath for seventy years, when Burhred, King of the Mercians, held a gemot there on July 25th, 864, at which he sold land at Water Eaton, on the Cherwell, to Alhun, Bishop of Worcester. The Danes were pressing hardly on the Mercian kingdom, and no doubt Bath was chosen as the scene of the gathering on account of its remoteness from their attacks. Ten years later, in 874, the Danes took up their winter quarters at Repton; King Burhred fled from his country, and took up his abode at Rome, and from this time forward for more than two centuries it is very difficult to say whether Bath pertained to Mercia or Wessex.

In 906 the Parker MS. of the Chronicle tells us that Ælfred, Reeve of Bath, died; the hand in which the entry is written ends in 912,¹ so that it must be nearly contemporary, and we should suppose that either the place or the person must have been of considerable importance in the eyes of the Winton scribe. We might naturally think that it implied that King Edward took the district of Bath into his own hands; but Florence of Worcester, an excellent Mercian authority, tells us² that Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians, reigned over all the Mercian realm except London and Oxford, which her brother, King Edward, kept for himself.

We next come to the mention of Bath in the table of fortresses described in the paper on the "Origin of the Mercian Shires" (vol. xxi., pp. 51—55). Bath there appears as truly a border town with the great territory of

¹ Plummer, *Two Saxon Chronicles*, II., xxv.

² A.D. 912.

3,200 hides dependent upon it.¹ I have not seen any reason to doubt the correctness of the opinion expressed in that paper that the list was drawn up between the death of the Lady of the Mercians and that of King Edward, about 920; and that the area joined to Bath consisted approximately of some 700 hides of Somerset, the remaining 2,500 hides being drawn from the country north of Avon, including certainly the southern part of what is now Gloucestershire, and probably Herefordshire.

Here, then, is the first step in the return journey of Bath southwards. Its connection is still mainly Mercian, for it has probably taken the place of Gloucester under Æthelred and Æthelflæd; but it has stretched out its hand toward the south and annexed some of the territory which in due time will annex it. With regard to the Somerset district of 700 hides attributed to Bath, it is worth noticing that if Bath be credited with the thirty Somerset hides purchased by Heathored, and the *Domesday* hidage of the Hundreds north of Mendip, a total is reached very closely approximating to 700 hides. Thus:—

			H.	V.	F.
Bath, south of Avon	...	...	30	0	0
Bedminster Hundred	...	...	6	2	0
Keynsham	„	...	104	0	0
Chew	„	...	35	2	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
Chewton	„	...	135	1	0
Hartcliff	„	...	82	0	0
Portbury	„	...	84	0	2
Wellow	} Divisions of	...	97	0	0 $\frac{2}{3}$
Kilmersdon		} Frome Hundred	...	94	3	0
			<hr/>		
			669	1	1 $\frac{1}{3}$ ²
			<hr/>		

This is offered only for what it is worth; for as every student of *Domesday* knows, its figures are beyond all measure

¹ Maitland, *Domesday and Beyond*, 503.

² Eyton's *Somerset Domesday*, ii. 7, i. 162.

flexible in the hands of manipulators. But if anyone were to say that King Edward added to the military district of Mercian Bath the district of Somerset north of Mendip, he might draw some measure of comfort from the numbers given. It is worth noticing, moreover, in this connection that Mr. Eyton¹ considers that *Domesday* includes the manors of Wellow and Kilmersdon in the twenty hides of the borough of Bath. And it is likely enough that if King Edward did at this time annex some share of Somerset territory to Bath, he should definitely attach the capital manors of the nearest Hundreds to the borough.

We have now come to a period when all indications of a change of boundary must be very carefully noted; for it was almost certainly in the tenth century that Bath was transferred from Mercia to Wessex. It was certainly Mercian in 864, with almost equal certainty it was still so in the reign of Edward the Elder; but if as we have seen reason for believing the Mercian shire system came into existence early in the eleventh century, Bath was then already outside it.

King Æthelstan dealt more than once with Bath Abbey. In 931 he gave to it ten "mansas" at Priston and five at Cold Ashton, which he says had belonged to a certain Ælfred who early in his reign had tried to blind him at Winchester.² Ælfred, who may have been in Holy Orders, was sent to Rome to purge himself from the crime; but on taking oath of his innocence before the altar of St. Peter he fell to the ground, and died within three days at the English School. The great men of the English adjudged his lands to the King, who gave Priston and Cold Ashton to Bath Abbey, thinking he could make no better use of them than to give them to God and St. Peter, who had frustrated the plot and kept him safe.

On the west side of the Fosse, about five miles north of Bath, stand three stones, known as the "Three Shire Stones"; they mark the dividing line between Batheaston in

¹ *Somerset Domesday*, i. 153, 157. ² K.C.D. CCCLIV., C.S. 670.

Somerset on the south, and the Gloucestershire parish of Marshfield on the north, while the Fosse divides these two parishes from the Wiltshire Colerne on the east. If we could discover the date when these stones were first set up, we should have an indication of the period when Bath and its appendages were severed from Mercia.

Now it is a very suggestive fact that in *Domesday* there is found a small Hundred known as "Edredestane Hundred," which contains the modern parishes of Marshfield, Old Sodbury and Chipping Sodbury, Dodington, Tormarton and West Littleton; that is to say, the parishes which lie in the south-eastern corner of Gloucestershire. This little Hundred was afterwards absorbed into its greater neighbour, the Hundred of Grimbaldstow, or Grumbald's Ash. There is a strong temptation to connect the name of the Hundred with the "Three Shire Stones" at its south-eastern corner, and then to conclude that the stones were named after a certain Edred. Having gone so far, we might very naturally think that this was none other than King Eadred, who reigned from 946 to 955, and suppose that the stones were set up and the new boundary line to the north of Bath was laid down in his time. It is true that we have no record of any such dealing with Bath on the part of Eadred, but it would have been a very natural step for Dunstan to suggest and for Eadred to take. The treasure was kept at Glastonbury, and Bath as a West Saxon fortress would guard it against attacks from the north. As we have seen, King Æthelstan in 931 gave five "mansas" at Cold Ashton to St. Peter the Apostle and the venerable family at Bath. Cold Ashton is in Gloucestershire, though it is close to Bath; and at first sight it seems strange that if it belonged to the Church of Bath in the reign of Eadred, it was not included with it in Somerset. This difficulty is cleared up by a charter of King Eadwig,¹ in which he restores to the Church of St. Peter at Bath five "mansas" at Olveston, and a similar number at Cold Ashton, which he says King Æthelstan had

¹ K.C.D. CCCCLXI., C.S. 936.

given to the church, but which had lately been stolen from it. This so far tells in favour of the theory that Eadred separated Bath from Mercia, for it would have been altogether to the interest of the spoiler—no doubt someone in high position, and very possibly someone connected with Ælfred—that Cold Ashton should remain in Mercia severed as completely as possible from Bath.

Olveston and Cold Ashton appear in *Domesday* as the only possessions of the Church of Bath in Gloucestershire. With regard to the latter we are told that "two of its five hides are quit of geld by grant of Kings E. & W.," no doubt Kings Edward and William. Thus we see that Cold Ashton belonged to Bath Abbey in 931, and again in the reigns of Eadwig, Edward the Confessor, and William the Conqueror, but that it was lost to the Church at some time between 931 and 956; and we may be fairly sure that the boundary north of Bath must have been laid down at some time when Bath Abbey did not possess Cold Ashton.

This seems the best place to notice the story of the reception at Bath of refugee monks from the monastery of St. Bertin at St. Omer, which is told in Folcwin's "Gesta Abbatum S. Bertini," a chronicle written in 961 or 962.¹ "Whom [*i.e.*, the monks expelled from St. Bertin's because they refused to accept the reforms of Count Arnulf, 944 A.D.] King Athelstan receiving kindly, granted to them immediately the monastery which is called 'ad Balneos,' on this account chiefly that King Edwin, brother of the aforesaid noble King, had been buried in the monastery of St. Bertin. For in 933 this King Edwin, compelled by some trouble in his kingdom, took ship and passing over this part of the sea, a storm having risen and his ship being wrecked, was drowned, whose body, when it had been carried to the shore, Earl Adalolf brought to the monastery of St. Bertin for burial, because he was related to him. After his death King Athelstan, his brother, sent very many gifts to this place

¹ I owe this reference to the Rev. C. Plummer, C.C.C. Oxford.

as alms for him, and on this account he received the monks of the monastery kindly."¹

There is no reason to doubt the story. Edwin certainly was a brother of King Athelstan, and the Peterborough Chronicle records that in 933 Eadwine Atheling was drowned at sea; while Adalolf or Adulph, being a son of Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, by Ælfthryth, daughter of King Alfred, was a cousin of Eadwin. The only real difficulty which arises is over the date of the arrival of the refugees, for if they arrived in 944 Edmond was King at that time; but no doubt he would be equally willing with Athelstan to welcome the monks who had cared for his brother's body. St. Bertin's was a Benedictine house, but though Folcwin's expression that the King granted the monastery at Bath to the refugee monks² would seem to imply that they took complete possession of it, it is clear that either they did not bring their Benedictine system with them, or that if they did it did not last long. For in 956 the Abbey was ruled by a Priest Wulfgar, for whose use King Eadwig reserved three of the thirty "mansas" which he bestowed on the monastery, and of course a Benedictine Abbot would not have been able to hold land in this way. Indeed the colony of refugees seems to have left no mark of its presence on the history of the Abbey.

There are extant four grants of land to Bath Abbey in 956 and 957 during the joint reign of Eadwig and Eadgar, but they throw no light on the position of Bath.

The period and circumstances under which the Church of Bath became Benedictine may perhaps throw some light upon its position at the time.

In 956 after the change of Indiction King Eadwig granted to the monastery at Bath thirty "mansas" at Tidenham,³ reserving three for his priest Wulfgar, who presided over the monastery;⁴ it is evident from this that the Church was not

¹ Pertz, *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, xiii. 629.

² Concessit eis. ³ K.C.D. CCCCLII., C.S. 927.

⁴ "Meo sacerdote Wulfgaro qui præest supradicto monasterio."

then Benedictine, but rather a House of Canons. The document is witnessed among others by "Eadgar regis frater." In 957 before the change of Indiction Eadwig granted on the petition of the venerable priest Wulfgar ten "mansas" at Bathford, "to the brethren¹ dwelling and serving God in the Monastery of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles in Bath, which is acknowledged to be built with marvellous workmanship." The words would seem to point to recent work of restoration. This also is witnessed by Eadgar in the same way.²

In 965 King Eadgar granted ten "mansas" at Stanton Prior to Abbot Æscwig and St. Peter's Church "in urbe Achumanensi";³ and in 970 he granted ten cassates at Cliftune to St. Peter's Church at Bath "for the use of the monks abiding there," in exchange for ten other cassates at Cumtun.⁴ Æscwig is again mentioned as Abbot. He had signed two charters in 963,⁵ which also bear the name of Athelwold, Abbot of Abingdon, who was consecrated to the see of Winchester on St. Andrew's Eve in that year, and he remained at Bath until his consecration to the see of Dorchester in 978.

The land-boundaries of Cliftune mention that it was bounded on the north by Avon, that the line then ran up the hollow way, and afterwards from the Wansdyke to the Fosse Street, and an estate with these boundaries could only lie immediately to the south of Bath. I have no doubt that it is now represented by Lyncombe, which appears in *Domesday* as *Lincume*, an estate of the Abbey of Bath rated at ten hides.

It is clear, then, that Bath Abbey was not Benedictine in 956, and that it had become a Church of Monks by 970; but it is not easy to say when the change was made. The Canons were driven from the West Saxon Minsters and replaced by monks in 964, and the same change was made in

¹ Cœnobitis. ² K.C.D. CCCCLXIII., C.D. 1001.

³ K.C.D. DXVI., C.D. 1164. ⁴ K.C.D. DLXVI., C.D. 1257.

⁵ K.C.D. DIII., MCXLIX., C.S. 1120, 1124.

most of the Huiccian Minsters in 969; but as we have seen, Æscwig was Abbot of Bath before the earlier of these changes. We may notice, however, that all the Huiccian Minsters which became Benedictine under St. Oswald received a dedication of St. Mary; the Abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul at Gloucester escaped because it did not become Benedictine till the reign of Cnut. There does not seem to have been such a change of dedication in the case of the West Saxon Minsters, and the fact that Bath Abbey kept its ancient dedication is strong evidence that it was regarded as a West Saxon Church, and therefore that Bath had already passed from Mercia to Wessex.

On the Feast of Pentecost, May 11th, 973, King Eadgar was crowned with great pomp at Bath. It is difficult to account, not only for the time, but also for the place of the function; Winchester or Kingston, or possibly Glastonbury, would have seemed a much more natural spot. If, indeed, the purpose was to mark the completed unity of the English people under one Crown, then Bath as a frontier town having connection both with Wessex and Mercia, yet a place which having never been a seat of government was unconnected with any idea of Mercian and West Saxon supremacy, and which possessed a church recently "*mira fabrica constructum*," would be a place where all might meet on equal terms. And this would be even more completely the case if the town had within living memory passed from Mercia to Wessex. But there is nothing in the records to show definitely on which side of the border line Bath then lay.

We may, however, perhaps learn something indirectly concerning the position of Bath from the account of the campaign of Swegen in the autumn of 1013. About August he sailed up the Trent to Gainsborough, and there all the people of the old Danish region north of Watling Street submitted to him. First the men of Lindsey; then the Northumbrians; then the men of the five boroughs, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Derby; and soon after the whole army north of Watling Street, so that

England was once more divided, as it had been after the battle of Ethandune, 134 years before. So far the conquest had been a peaceful one, but when Swegen found that he was not accepted in the old English district he crossed Watling Street as into a hostile land, working the most evil that any host might do. He went first to Oxford, which soon submitted; then to Winchester, where the burghers did the like; and from both places he received hostages. Then, having isolated London, he attacked it without success; and crossing into Wessex at Wallingford, he sat down with his forces at Bath, whither came Æthelmær, Ealdorman of the men of Devon, and the western thanes with him, and they all submitted and gave hostages. Then we are told "all the people held him for full king," an expression which would seem to imply some form of national acknowledgment by the assembled Witan; and it is certainly strange that Bath, which had witnessed in the coronation of Edgar at Pentecost 973 the accomplishment of the reunion of England, should, forty years later, be the scene of the deposition of his son, and the submission of the English to a foreign and heathen conqueror.

But the question arises, Why should Swegen have gone to Bath at all? For it is to be noticed that he did not invade the west country, he simply sat down at Bath and the western thegns came to him and submitted. There was evident method and purpose in the march of Swegen. He first captured Oxford. Now Oxford at this time was a place of very considerable importance. In 1015, at a great gemot held there, Ealdorman Eadric treacherously slew Siferth and Morcore, the chief thegns of the seven boroughs. In 1018 the Danes and English agreed at Oxford to Eadgar's law, that is to say to law as it was held in the days of King Eadgar; an agreement which is alluded to by Cnut in his letter to his people: "I will that all people, clerk and lay, hold fast to Eadgar's law, which all men have chosen and sworn to at Oxford."¹ In 1036, soon after the death of

¹ Earle, *Land Charters*, 231; Stubbs, *Select Charters*, 76.

Cnut, a gemot of all the Witan was held at Oxford, and Harold was chosen King of all England. We have seen that King Edward the Elder did not recognise the supremacy which had evidently belonged to Gloucester in the time of his brother-in-law, and that about 920 military authority over a large part of South-Western Mercia pertained to Bath. But we hear no more of any pre-eminence of Bath in Mercia, and it is probable that about the time of Cnut Oxford was reckoned the chief place in the Mercian realm, and that it was on that account that Swegen attacked it first. He next captured Winchester as being the ancient capital of the West Saxon realm. But it is evident that the submission of Winchester was not supposed to involve the submission of Devonshire and the West, or the hostages given at Winchester would have suffered when the western thegns delayed their submission; and we know that they did not so suffer, for all the hostages given to Swegen were put ashore by Cnut at Sandwich in the following year after they had been cruelly mutilated.

It is evident that we have here a survival of the ancient division of Wessex between the parts lying east of Selwood Forest and the parts lying to the west of it; the capture of Winchester involved the submission of the eastern, but not of the western, district. We find this distinction very clearly marked in the account which Florence of Worcester gives of the battle of Sherston soon after Midsummer, 1016. The men of Hampshire and part of Wiltshire, he tells us, fought for Cnut, while those of Dorset, Devon, and part of Wiltshire fought on the side of Edmund Ironside. The men of Somerset are not mentioned, but as King Edmund found his last resting-place in their great minster at Glastonbury, they no doubt fought for him, striking a last stroke for a losing dynasty, as they did long afterwards at Sedgemoor. The Wiltshire men were thus divided at Sherston, and the dividing line can hardly have been any other than that of the forest of Selwood. It would seem likely, then, that as the submission at Winchester involved that of Eastern

Wessex, so that at Bath involved Wessex west of Selwood; that, in fact, what Winchester was in secular matters to the east, that Bath was to the west. And the conclusion is by no means an unlikely one. After the time of Edward the Elder it is evident that the relative importance of Winchester waned. All the greater kings were buried elsewhere—Æthelstan at Malmesbury; Edmund, Edgar, and Edmund Ironside at Glastonbury; only Edred and Edwy lay at Winchester; while Edward the Martyr was buried at Shaftesbury, and his brother, Ethelred the Unready, had no inheritance in his death in the ancient soil of Wessex. If it is true that in the reign of Edred the hoard was kept at Glastonbury, that place must have gone far to usurp the position of Winchester both in Church and State. But Glastonbury among the marshes would have been an impossible site for a civil capital, and it is likely enough that when Bath was taken into Wessex it became the secular capital of the district west of Selwood. All this, however, is probability or improbability, and not certainty; for we have no certain evidence that Bath lay in Wessex before the Gheld Inquest of 1084, when we find the 115 hides of Bath duly entered as lying in Somerset.

So also in the *Domesday* record for Somerset, compiled two years later, we find Bath entered as belonging to the King in succession to Queen Edith, who had held it in the time of her husband, and who no doubt retained it till her death in December, 1075. It paid gheld, for it cannot have been reckoned among the ancient estates of the Crown in Queen Edith's time, but that it had formerly been such an estate is shewn by the fact that the third penny of the Crown pleas of Bath was still paid by the sheriff to the King as Earl in succession by escheat to Earl Harold.¹

When Offa took possession of Bath in 781, it would have become a Royal estate, as it no doubt was when King Burhred held his gemot there in 864, and also when it appeared at

¹ For the *Domesday* status of Bath see Eyton, *Domesday Studies—Somerset*, i., 49, 72, 85, 106.

the head of a district of 3200 hides about 920, when Edgar was crowned there in 973, and probably when the western thegns submitted to Swegen there in 1013. It was not a Royal estate of Wessex when King Alfred made his will about 885, or it would appear in that document, and it must have ceased to be so when it was given to Queen Edith on her marriage in January, 1045, or subsequently. We may therefore sum up in this way the evidence for the probable date of the transference of Bath from Mercia to Wessex. It was certainly Mercian in 864, and with equal certainty it was West Saxon in 1084. It was not a West Saxon Royal estate about 885; as the head of a great military district, about 920, it appears as a border town with a Mercian connection largely predominating. On the other hand, when the Abbey became Benedictine its dedication was not changed as were the dedications of the Huiccian Churches, and the submission of the western thegns to Swegen there would seem to mark a West Saxon connection. We should be led, therefore, to place the transfer of Bath at some period in the half-century between 920 and 970; and if still more exactness were asked for, we should connect it with the Shirestones and the Hundred of Edredstanes, and place it during the reign of Edred, 946 to 955.

I once asked Mr. E. A. Freeman at what period he would consider that Bath was transferred, with a suggestion that possibly the transfer might have been connected with the foundation of the See of Wells; and his reply was as follows:—

“ May 8th, 1887.

“ Dear Sir,—I have often puzzled about that question of the movement of Bath to and fro, but without finding any certain clue. All trace of Mercian character must have gone long before *Domesday*, but I don't know when it went. I don't know whether the foundation of the See of Wells might not be used both ways.

“ Believe me, yours faithfully,

“ EDWARD A. FREEMAN.”

As all the authorities referred to in this paper, except possibly the list of fortresses, must have been known to Mr. Freeman, it would seem that after considering them he must have thought that they gave no certain evidence with regard to the period or manner of the transfer of Bath. Still, it can do no harm to state the conclusion arrived at after a careful consideration of the facts of the case; for the very summary of the evidence may enable another to come nearer to the truth.

It is, however, a very remarkable thing that Bath did pass so silently, for during the period when it must have been transferred there can have been few places of greater importance in England. When its reeve died in 906, the event was recorded in the chronicles of the nation; about fifteen years later it appears as the fortress at the head of the largest recorded district. To Bath are assigned 3,200 hides, while the next largest district, Hampton and Winchester—no doubt, Hampshire,—contained only 2,400 hides; and the largest district attached to a single centre, that of Bridian (Bridport or Bredy) in Dorset, with 1,760 dependent hides, was supported by little more than half the hidage of Bath. In 973 it was chosen as the scene of the coronation of Edgar, the great outward mark of the unity of the peoples of England. Half a century later thegns came thither even from distant Devon to submit to Swegen. In *Domesday*, it is manifestly the capital of Somerset. If it is difficult to fix a date for the transference of Bath from Mercia to Wessex, it is at least as difficult to account for the silence with which the change was effected.

But the greatness of Bath did not long survive the Conquest. In 1088 Giso, Bishop of the men of Somerset, died, and in July of that year John of Tours was consecrated at Canterbury, by Archbishop Lanfranc, in his room. Ælfsige, Abbot of Bath, had died in 1087, and Bishop John obtained from William Rufus a grant of the Abbey of Bath for the increase of the Bishopric of Somerset, that he might place his episcopal seat there. The grant was made at

Winchester in 1088, and confirmed at Dover on January 27th, 1090. Shortly afterwards he granted the City of Bath to Bishop John for the increase of his episcopal see, and that with fullest honours he might have his pontifical throne there.¹ Of course it added to the dignity of Bath that the see of Somerset should be set in the Abbey, but when the city was granted to the see it ceased to be the capital of Somerset, and became a mere ecclesiastical borough as it had been before the days of Offa. Moreover, its ecclesiastical glory in Somerset was not long lived. Bishop John began a mighty church, which he was not able to finish. The superiority of Bath over Wells sank into nominal equality in the time of Bishop Roger by the decree of Pope Innocent IV., issued at Lyons on January 3rd, 1245; but, inasmuch as before that time Wells had become the chief place of residence for the Bishop, Bath was henceforward practically in a subordinate position. Its degradation was completed by the surrender of the Abbey on January 27th, 1539, and the Act of Parliament (34 and 35 Henry VIII., cap. 15),² by which the Chapter of Wells was declared to be the sole Chapter of the Bishopric of Bath and Wells. Since 1543 then the ecclesiastical supremacy of Bath has shrunk to a mere shadow of a name, as its temporal pre-eminence had departed some four hundred and fifty years before. The ancient borough is now a Niobe of the borderland, ever weeping hot tears of regret for her high dignity in the Mercia which she left, and of disappointment at her degradation in the Somerset which she entered.

It is necessary, in conclusion, to consider what is meant by the "Bath" whose history we have been considering. We have seen that there was no connection except that of locality between the Roman town of Aquæ Sulis and the Huiccian settlement which followed it. We have, therefore, only to take Osric's Charter as our starting point. We find Osric granting the land of "centum manentes" in 676 to

¹ Dugdale, *Monasticon*, ii. 266, 267.

² Dugdale, *Monasticon*, ii. 293.

Bertana to found a Monastery of Holy Virgins. In 781 we find Heathored, Bishop of Worcester, granting to King Offa the land of "xc. manentes" at Bath, besides xxx. cassates, south of Avon, which he had bought for a fair price from Cynewulf, King of the West Saxons. And we naturally conclude that the estate north of Avon which Heathored granted away was the same which Osric gave, less the land of ten "manentes" which in some way had been lost. We see that during the first century after Osric's gift the estate had been kept together fairly well, and some property, as for example North Stoke, had been recovered after it had passed away. Only the land of ten "manentes" out of the hundred had been altogether lost. Considering the disorganised state of the monasteries during the eighth century, and the frequent attempts to plunder them on the part of powerful men, it is remarkable that the loss was not much greater.

The following table (p. 156) of the estates which lay in the Hundred of Bath in *Domesday* is adapted from the table given in Eyton's *Somerset Domesday*, ii. 13, 14. It is to be noted, however, that though the hidage of Kelston is of necessity included, the modern acreage is omitted, because there are no materials available for calculating the acreage recorded in the survey. In the same way the *Domesday* acreage of White-ox Mead is omitted, because it is impossible to ascertain the corresponding portion of the manor of Wellow.

North Stoke and the three estates which follow were certainly contained in the *Domesday* hundred of Bath, though they are not expressly named. Of these South Stoke, an estate of the Abbey of Bath, with its chapel of Monkton Combe, is no doubt represented, at any rate in part, by the manor of Woodwick in Freshford; for the 1,757 statute acres contained in South Stoke, Monkton Combe, and Combe Down answer well to the 1,514 acres registered in the Survey under the heads of Wdewica and Cuma. St. Catharine's, no doubt, answers to one of the Batheaston

HUNDRED OF BATH IN "DOMESDAY."

ESTATE.	OWNER.	MODERN SITUATION.	HIDAGE.			ACREAGE.	
			H.	V.	F.	MODERN.	DOMES-DAY.
Burgum quod Vocatur Bada	Rex	Borough of Bath and Walcot ...	20	0	0	3348	12
Caput Abbatiz Lincuma ...	Abbot of Bath Ditto	Abbey Fee ... Lyncombe and Widcombe ...	10	0	0		1190
Wica	Alured	Bathwick ...	2	0	0	375	
Wica	Bishop of Coutances		1	0	0	120	
Wica	Ditto		4	0	0	650	
Willega added to Wica ...	Ditto	Woolley	1	0	0	366	260
Heorleia ...	Hugolin Interpreter	Ditto	1	0	0		390
Westona ...	Abbot of Bath	Weston	15	0	0	2600	1340
Westona ...	Ernulfdes Hesding	Ditto	5	0	0		943
Forda	Abbot of Bath	Bathford	10	0	0	1823	1212
Cuma	Ditto	Monkton Combe and Combe Dn. } Tadwick in Swainswick }	9	0	0	720 173	1112
Tatewica ...	Will Hosatus ...	Tadwick in Swainswick }	1	2	0	845	130
Tatewica ...	Radalfus frater Rogeri de Berceleia		0	2	0		121
Firforda ...	Bishop of Coutances	Freshford	2	2	0	561	414
Fescheforda ...	Roger de Corcelle	Ditto	0	2	0		138
Fescheforda ...	Ditto	Ditto	0	2	0	182	
Wdewica ...	Abbot of Bath	Ditto Woodwick	2	2	0	402	
Lancheris ...	Bishop of Coutances	Langridge	2	2	0	656	734
Estona	Rex	Batheaston	2	0	0	1863	1490
Estona	Abbot of Bath	Ditto	1	2	0		242
Estona	Hugolin Interpreter	Ditto	3	0	0	600	
Hamtona ...	Abbot of Bath	Bathampton	5	0	0	932	908
Cerlacuma ...	Ditto	Charlcombe	4	0	0	571	495
Clafertuna ...	Hugolin Interpreter	Claverton	5	0	0	1243	860
Witochesmeda	Roger de Corcelle	White-ox-mead, in Wellow ...	1	0	0	778 864 1041 186 ...	
		North Stoke ...	...	...	...
		South Stoke ...	...	...	...
		St. Catharine's Soper's Farm, in Walcot ...	...	...	...
		Kelston	5	0	0		
			115	0	0	16,670	14,320

manors, probably to that of Hugolin. North Stoke does not appear in the record; it would have been an estate of the Abbey of Bath, rated at about five hides, and it is not easy to see where it could come in. It is easy, but not justifiable without clear evidence, to suggest that it is altogether omitted. Swainswick, apart from Tatwick, also does not appear. But since it appears in 1362 as a possession of Sir Matthew Gournay, I have no doubt that it is represented in part in the record by the manor of Wica, rated at one hide, held under the Bishop of Coutances by Nigel de Gurnai. It has not seemed necessary, however, to alter Mr. Eyton's arrangement. It is clear, nevertheless, that Kelston nowhere appears in the *Somerset Domesday*. The Round Hill was also called Henstridge Hill, and the estate first appears in the Shaftesbury Register as granted in 950 by King Adred to his thegn Brihtric under the name of Hengstesrig, estimated to contain the land "v. carac-torum." King Eadred died in 955, but the grant is badly written, and the error of one year may very easily have been made.¹ The Abbess of Shaftesbury appears in the Gheld Inquest of 1084 as holding three hides in demesne in the Hundred of Bath, and the Abbey held Kelston till the Dissolution. We may say with certainty that it nowhere appears in *Somerset Domesday*; it may, however, of course, have been included in some other Shaftesbury estate, possibly in connection with the Abbess' great manor of Bradford-on-Avon. But it is necessary to reckon five hides as belonging to Kelston to make up the total of 95 hides which the Inquest attributes to the Hundred of Bath outside the borough in 1084.

We have seen that Mr. Eyton considers it probable that the manors of Wellow and Kilmersdon, as being the capital manors of two of the ancient hundreds of Somerset, were annexed to the borough of Bath. We are not, however, certain that this was so; and in any case we do not know what addition, if any, was made to the hidage of the borough

¹ K.C.D. CCCCLV., C.S. 923.

on this account. It will be better, therefore, to take the 115 hides which *Domesday* attributes to the borough and hundred of Bath as the equivalent at that date of the 100 manentes of Osric's grant, and the 90 manentes of that of Heathored, with the addition in each case of the 30 cassates south of Avon which Heathored had purchased. We see, then, that *Domesday* Bath had lost 15 holdings since the time of Osric, of which five had disappeared since the time of Heathored. It is a striking mark of the permanence of land boundaries before the Conquest that the change had been so slight.

The evidence of local names, too, marks the Hundred of Bath as an united territory from very ancient times. In the centre is Bath itself, "Hat Bathu" of Osric's Charter, with its Wic or appendant dwelling-place across the river; Batheaston on the one side and Weston, with Kilweston or Kelston, on the other; Bathampton marking even until now the site of the Bath of the elder time on Hampton Down before the people came down to the hot springs in the valley, and Bathford preserving by its name the tradition of the point where the Fosse once crossed the river; North Stoke guarding the approach along the Ridgeway on the one side and by the ancient road through Bitton from the sea on the other, and South Stoke standing sentinel by the Wansdike and the Fosse on the south. Nearer home, Charlcombe marks the valley where the ceorls abode, and Swainswick the dwelling-place whence the swine went out to feed; while Shockerwick,¹ on the extreme eastern border, may be a name of evil omen coming down from the ancient heathen time before Bertana and her holy maidens settled by the hot springs. As Osric puts it: "Ubi truculentus et nefandus prius draco errorum deceptionibus serviebat, Nunc versa vice ecclesiasticus ordo in clero conversantium domino patrocinate gaudens tripudiet." Shockerwick is the furthest

¹ Scucca or Sceocca, an evil spirit; the name would thus seem to mean the abode of evil spirits. Scuccanhlau is mentioned in a charter purporting to be of Offa (K.C.D., CLXI., C.S. 264), and Sceoca bróc, found in an Exeter charter (Earle, *Land Charters*, p. 329), is no doubt now represented by Shobrook, near Crediton.

point from the Abbey in the Hundred of Bath. There is hardly any other district in England where we can trace so clearly the process of colonisation from a centre.

We recognise the portion of Somerset north of Avon as the land of the hundred "manentes" which Osric, who had been born a heathen, dedicated to the service of God. And we think of Bertana and her companions settling now twelve hundred and twenty-five years ago on the very site of the perished Roman city, and building their church in the midst of its idolatries hard by its Hot Baths. Then we think how they and their successors went out to replenish the earth and subdue it, bringing it back piece by piece into cultivation; and how they called their lands by their own names, but always with reference to their minster, which stood on the edge of the Bath. And we of Bristol and Gloucestershire remember that the men and women who did this, who thus created the territory of Bath as we know it, were Mercians and not West Saxons, that Mercians laboured and West Saxons have entered into their labours. The Bath which the West Saxons took back was indeed a goodly heritage, but it owed its goodness to Mercian skill and Mercian industry.

But of the 115 hides which the Mercians brought under cultivation or purchased barely half remained to the abbey in *Domesday*. These were the remnants of the ancient estate:—

	H.	V.
*Lincuma	10	0
Westona	15	0
*Forda	10	0
Cuma	9	0
Wdewica	2	2
Estona	1	2
*Hamtona	5	0
Cerlacuma	4	0
	<hr/>	
	57	0
	<hr/>	

And even of these estates, those marked * had at one time been lost to the Abbey. In 970 King Eadgar granted Lyncombe, under the name of Cliftune, to the Abbey in exchange for property elsewhere; in 956 King Edwy granted to his friend Hehelm five "mansas" at Hamtun, and in 957 he granted to the abbey ten "mansas" at Forda.¹ On the other hand, some of the estates which did not pertain to the Abbey in *Domesday* had evidently belonged to it at an earlier time. About 957 King Edwy restored to the Abbey five hides at Weston which had been stolen from it; these may be part of the fifteen hides attributed to the Church in the Survey, more probably they are the five hides which then belonged to Ernulf de Hesding. The land at Hengstesrig or Kelston granted by King Eadred to Brihtric is said to have been "divino jure" free from all services except the inevitable three; it was therefore no doubt Church land which had belonged to the Abbey at Bath, and the grant to Brihtric led at last to the robbery of St. Peter of Bath to pay St. Mary of Shaftesbury, or, as William of Malmesbury put it in the case of the Cathedral at Worcester, the Claviger Paradisi was forced to give way to the Janitrix cœli. No doubt the chief loss of the Abbey lands took place after Offa assumed possession of Bath, and perhaps it is wonderful that after three centuries the Abbey still retained possession of as much as half the property which Heathored surrendered.

It is recorded in the Register of the Priory of Bath that Bishop Reginald (1174—1191), of blessed memory, among other good deeds for the church of Bath, obtained for it the body of St. Euphemia, virgin and martyr, and many relics of the saints with ivory chests for them. Euphemia was martyred by being cast to wild beasts at Chalcedon in 307; the fourth Œcumenical Council was held in her church, and the assembled fathers attributed the success of their efforts against Eutychiänism to her prayers. Her body must have been of almost priceless value, but Bishop Reginald was wealthy and influential, and visited Rome several times;

¹ K.C.D. DLXVI., CCCXL., CCCCLXIII., C.S. 1257, 973, 1001.

no doubt he felt that the presence of her relics would be a perpetual safeguard for the soundness of the teaching which would be given in the church of Bath. Also he founded a light to burn before the Body of the Lord and the relics of the saints, and assigned for its maintenance forty shillings from the church of Banwell at the hands of the canons of Bruton. It seemed therefore no unfitting thing that an attempt to throw some light, however little, on the early history of Bath should come from a spot which the Bishop of the diocese linked by a bond of service to the Abbey more than seven centuries ago, and where the vision of Bishop Oliver King passed for him into reality.¹

Bishop Oliver King died at his Court-house in Banwell on August 29th, 1503.