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THE WESTENHANGER CHARTER OF 1035.

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It is not generally known that the history of Westenhangar can be carried back to the days of Canute. This is in part due to the fact that the charter which mentions it is not included in any of the well-known collections, such as those of Birch or Kemble. It is a further stumbling block that even when this charter is discovered (*Ordinance Facs.*, iii, 42) it will not be found to mention Westenhangar by its present name but by the much older one of Berwic. It is fortunate that the boundaries of this Berwic are given in detail and are plainly those of Westenhangar for it is on these boundaries that the identification is based. But the charter is also of interest for several other reasons which will be dealt with in their proper place. It is reproduced as an illustration to this paper not only because there is no other method of showing the changes of writing and occasional injuries of the original but also because the document as a whole is a very typical example of the charters of this period.

The first eight lines can be translated and then abbreviated as follows :—

In the name of God the Highest . . . I, Cnut, freely give to my faithful Bishop Eadsin for his ready obedience the land of half an aratrum in East Kent where the countrymen in the common speech have given it the name AET BERWICAN . . . by these bounds the said land
 * is encircled.

On this paragraph it may be noted that Eadsin or Eadsige was what might now be called a Secretary of State to Canute and was Bishop of St. Martin's by Canterbury. The form "Aet Berwican" would now be rendered only as "Berwic" but the use of an initial "Aet" was common in place names of the Saxon period, for example the modern Deal was written both Dela and Addelam in

Domesday Book. Lines 9-13 are written in a different language, Anglo-Saxon instead of Latin, and in a different hand to those of the earlier lines. It is clear that space has been left for these five lines but has not been completely occupied. They contain a statement of the boundaries of Berwic and also of a wood at Gimmincege which belonged to Berwic. These are noticed further below. The end of the thirteenth line begins the dating clause: "This aforesaid donation was made in the one thousand and thirty-fifth year from the incarnation of the Lord, these witnesses consenting whose names are seen written below." One of the most interesting of these is Earl Godwin, the father of King Harold, who is recorded as "godwine dux" at the head of the second column of witnesses and next below him comes the almost equally well known Earl Leofric of Mercia, husband of Lady Godiva.

The statement of boundaries may be translated as follows and places which can easily be identified or are still named on the map are added in brackets:—

These are the landmarks of Berwic (Westenhanger), that is, first it starts at Stanforda (Stanford) and Pinnince; and so south along stanstraete (the Stone Street) to the church land (the junction of Saltwood and Lymne parishes, both being then in the hands of the church); then along the church lands (along the north edge of the manor of Berewic in Lymne) to Oterespoles (Otterpool) mark; and along Otter pool mark so far that it cometh to Cynges forda (King's ford—not identified); and so forth till it cometh into the sture (East Stour); and along the sture till it cometh to fif aaceran (the Five Acres); and then lieth the Five Acres on the north side of the Stour . . . (charter stained, query if the words "between the" are lost) Stour and sturtunes (Brook Farm, South) mark; and so along Sturtun's mark till it comes to the east of Five Acres; and so east to the Stour; and so along the Stour till it cometh to Stanford and Pinnincege.

These boundaries are easily picked out on the 6 inch map (*Kent 74 N.W.*), except one or two. Commencing at Stanford where the Stone Street crosses the East Stour near Westenhanger station, the line follows the Stone Street south to New Inn corner. On Sale Particulars of 1885 the Inn is noted as having been built as a shooting box on the park of Westenhanger Manor. The boundary next turns west and follows Stanford parish boundary to just north of Otterpool on the Ashford-Hythe road. Here the parish boundary turns north to the Stour. Where it joins this river, or very near, must have been the unidentified King's ford but the modern 6 inch map strongly suggests some artificial diversion at this point since 1035. The parish boundary of Stanford (in which the old parish of Westenhanger was incorporated) here follows a branch of the East Stour coming from Gibbins Brook but the charter boundaries follow the main stream back to where it crosses the Stone Street, lying wholly on the south side of the river except for the area called the Five Acres. It is not to be taken for granted that this was five acres in extent. At this period, and for many years afterwards, the mention of so many acres, and especially if the total is some multiple of five, seems always to imply the number for assessment purposes and not the actual number of acres on the ground. It is remarkable that the boundary of Westenhanger manor as sold in 1885 also included a portion north of the Stour at the point required by this charter of 850 years earlier. This area in 1885 included a field called Brickhouse Field (a large field immediately west of Westenhanger castle on the map) which completely fits the requirements of the charter for the position and bounds of Five Acres. We are still left without any identification of Pinninge. It would appear to have been at or very near the ford but the name seems to have disappeared.

Summarizing the boundaries, we see that on the east south and west they are those of the modern Stanford parish and on the north the East Stour with one field to the north of it. It is impossible in these circumstances to deny that the

place which the charter calls Aet Berwican was later called Westenhanger and was under that name incorporated in the parish of Stanford. This leads us to a further identification. In discussing the lists of Saxon churches in the Domesday Monachorum (*Arch. Cant.*, xlv, 63) I, with what then seemed plausible argument, identified the church of Berewic as a lost church attached to the manor of Berwick in Lymne. It is now clear that this identification was incorrect, for it appears that in the eleventh century the name Berwic covered the two manors of Westenhanger and Berwick-in-Lymne. We know nothing of any church in the latter but we do know that Westenhanger had a church of St. John which was later desecrated. We must now agree that this was the church which existed in Saxon times, as recorded in the Domesday Monachorum.

The charter gives us some further information about eleventh-century Westenhanger, namely, that it had a detached portion of woodland at "Gimmincege". It can scarcely be coincidence alone that Westenhanger Manor in 1885 had also a detached portion in Gibbins Brook ("brook" here means wet pasture, as it so often does in Sussex) which was sold with the manor. There is no doubt that the Gibbins Brook of the 6 inch map is the Gimmincege wood of 1035. The charter boundaries of this detached woodland are :—

These are the land marks to the wood at Gimmincege which belongs to Berwic. That is, first from Haegtunes (Hayton in Stanford) boundary as far as Sturtun's boundary; and then south to Wylmingtunes (Wilmington in Sellindge, now lost) boundary; and then west to Ges . . . rdes (unidentified) boundary; and so forth to Swanetunes (Swanton, lost, in Sellindge) boundary and so north to Hortunes (in Monks Horton parish) boundary; and so east to Haegtunes boundary.

If these boundaries are taken strictly as they appear the wood at Gimmincege is seen to have extended very far beyond the area to which that name is at all likely to have been given. But it is probable that they should not be so

taken. We know of Wilmington from several records and there is no doubt that it was in the south part of Sellindge. But it may well have had some detached woodland similar to that of Westenhanger and similar to that which Brook Farm in Stanford also had as late as 1885, in which year so much as remained unclosed of Gimminge brook was the subject of common grazing rights. Not very much was left and it is not difficult to believe that many manors had enclosed their shares in this wooded area, even as early as the Saxon era. In this case it is likely that the boundaries of the wood which belonged to Westenhanger are similar detached portions of wood belonging to other manors and not, as might at first appear, the parent manors themselves. It is not quite certain that this is the case, largely because Ges . . . rdes cannot be identified. The word looks like Gesfordes but even this resembles no local name of which any record remains.

On the map herewith an area is shown near Gimminge edged with heavy lines such as surround Aet Berwican on the same map. This small area is that shown as part of Westenhanger Manor in 1885 and may well be that which is mentioned also in 1035, in spite of the long interval between the two.

The map also shows various other places near Westenhanger and mentioned in pre-Conquest charters. The following brief notes on each will make plain which are certain identifications and which subject to revision.

SIBBANBURN. The name of a place, itself obviously named from a stream, in 993 (*Liber de Hyda*), which was a boundary of Brabourne. It is mentioned as Siborne in D.B. and is then in Street Hundred. It is possible that Southernhay represents the original settlement by "Sibba's bourne".

WINTERBURN. The northern boundary of land called Ulaham in 853 (*B.C.S.*, 467).

HODOWORTH. The western boundary of Ulaham in 853. Now Hodiford.

ULAHAM. Granted by King Ethelwulf to his thane Ealdhere in 853 (*B.C.S.* 467) as one aratrum. In 964 it was granted by King Athelstan to the nunnery at Lyminge as one "jugerum" (which is obviously an error) (*B.C.S.*, 1126). It is mentioned again in 993 (*Liber de Hyda*) as a boundary of Brabourne. There were fields called Great and Mydell Ewlham in Horton Parish at a later date (*Kentish Place Names*, 193).

BROMTEAG. The southern boundary of Ulaham in 853. The name might be freely translated as Broomy Farm. There is no place of this name in the vicinity but Sellindge Lees (now enclosed) was doubtless broomy and unenclosed in 853, being in fact the "lees" or open cattle pasture for the people of Sellindge. Some farm on the edge of the leas may well have been Bromteag.

PRATA TO LIMINGE, i.e. the meadow belonging to Lyminge, in 853 is named as the eastern boundary of Ulaham. It was, I think, in the position shown on the map, adjoining and part of Gimmince brook. Any open land shared in common by surrounding farms could fitly be called by a variety of names. Thus "prata" would signify that it was a grazing place while "lees" would mean that it was unenclosed. Since it was damp and wet the word "brook" in its meaning of wet pasture would apply and "wudu" would signify that some or all of it was overgrown with trees. There is therefore no difficulty in identifying the "prata to Liminge" of 853 with the "Wudu aet Gimmince" of 1035.

SWANETUNE. The only pre-conquest mention is in this 1035 charter but Svanetone in Street Hundred is mentioned in D.B. It has never been satisfactorily identified. There is good reason to look for it within Sellindge parish since Swanstonstowne paid rent to the manor of Sellindge in the sixteenth century (*Middleton Rolls*) and there is nowhere else a similar name in Street Hundred. The modern "Swan Lane" may very likely retain a memory of the name and Swanetune may have been about where Ashley House now

is, in which case its existence would account for the curious projection of Sellindge parish at this point.

HORTUNE. In 1016-20 a charter was witnessed by "Leofwine Godwines son at Hortune" (*K.* 732) and we have "Hortunes gemeaeran" in the 1035 charter. There was also amongst the charters of St. Augustine as listed in the White Book a "charter in English of Aelburg of the land of Baburne that is Hortune". This is translated from the White Book in which the error "Baburne" for "Braburne" occurs. It seems that West Horton manor, in which the church lay, was part of Brabourne manor before and after the conquest and was later given to the monks of Horton Priory. East Horton (see also *Hasted*, viii., 56) on the other hand belonged to St. Augustine although it also had been part of Brabourne until Aelburg gave it to the Abbey. In 1066 it was stolen by Hugh de Montfort but is said to have been restored. I have seen no record of its restoration other than *Hasted's* statement.

HÆGTUN. Now Hayton in Stanford. In 1142 the men and land of Hayton belonged to Horton Priory and were part of the founder's endowment (*Arch. Cant.*, X, 270.)

STANFORD. The church of Stanford is mentioned about 1072 (*D. Mon.*) but the actual stone ford is probably intended by the Stanforda of the 1035 charter.

BERWICAN IN LYMNE. In 1032 (*K.* 745, *Thorpe* 328) Eadsige gave some land at Berwican to Christ Church and this is presumably Berwick manor in Lymne since it cannot be the Aet Berwican which Eadsige did not acquire until 1035. It is the church land of 1035, the southern boundary of Westenhanger.

WIEGHELMESTUN FORMERLY BERDELHAMES WIC. This is mentioned in a charter of 697 by which it is given as four aratra to the nunnery of St. Mary at Lyminge. It is hoped to deal separately with this important charter in a later number of *Arch. Cant.* The apparent position and boundaries are shown on the map, the latter being Bereueg.

Meguinespaed and Stretleg. The charter does not mention their relative positions.

STURTUNE. This formed the north-west boundary of Westenhangar in 1035 and must therefore have been in about the position of the more southern of the two Brook Farms in Stanford. The other one was presumably once called Gimmince.

This charter is interesting as giving us the boundaries of the lost parish of Westenhangar and as affording a clue to its early history. But it leaves us a little uncertain as to whether the Berewic of Domesday Book should be identified with Westenhangar or with Berwick Manor in Lymne. The answer is perhaps to be found in the precise wording of Domesday Book, "Willelmus de Eddesham tenet de archiepiscopo Berewic pro uno Manerio". He holds it "*pro uno Manerio*"—for *one* manor. This certainly suggests that it may have been two manors previously. The same suggestion arises from the fact that Berewic was valued at £3 in the time of King Edward but at £7 in 1086, and even then the tenant paid £11. So great an increase in value suggests that additions had been made to the manor, although it is true that the assessment had not gone up. So far as one can gather from the rather dubious statements of Hasted both Berwicks had the same owners "as high as the reign of Richard I" (viii., 69) and this supports the idea that the two were one manor also as early as 1086, but Berwic in Lymne may of course have remained an entity in individual ownership although held of the paramount manor which was presently called Westenhangar.

It is a further interesting point about this charter that it does bring us up against just such problems as are mentioned above. It is not mere chance. There was something about the small manors of this part of the sandstone ridge or Chart country which made them particularly difficult to study. This something was their varying degree of attachment to parent manors. Like many other manors in the Chart area they were originally grants of woodland

cut out of the royal forests for the benefit of church or nobleman. There are many charters of such grants although none survive concerning the manors named in this paper. Even in 1086 Stanford was still attached to Lyminge, part at least of Lymne belonged to Aldington and much of Horton was in Brabourne Manor. The same story is told by the names Berewic alias Bertun (as it is once written in the D. Mon.) and the older name of Wilmington, that is, Berdelhames wic. A "wic" and particularly a "berewic" or "bere-tun" were outlying parts of an estate. There are many so described in the D.B. Sussex although not many in Kent, where the independence of these Berewics seems to have been more rapidly attained. But a full discussion of the particular lines of development which characterized the Chart country would go far beyond the permissible limits of an essay on Westenhanger.

There is one final point to which the map incidentally draws attention. In the left hand lower corner the road is labelled "Roman road to Ashford gap". This road is sometimes spoken of as joining Lymne to the Weald. A glance at the map of Roman Britain will show that there are two roads, one from the Weald and the other, this road from Lymne, converging on the Ashford gap through the sandstone ridge. A study of the southern approaches to Ashford leaves little doubt in the writer's mind that the two roads met there and passed northward towards Wye and Canterbury.