

Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and Natural History.

CLOVESHÖ.

I. THE COUNCILS AND THE LOCALITY.

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It is well nigh impossible for us of these latter days to reconstruct the sympathetic veneration in which the Fathers of our Church were held at the end of the seventh century, and so to obtain a correct mental focus with which to regard the place whereat their great Councils deliberated those questions of procedure (ritual is now become too specialised a word) upon the basis of which the Church of our Fathers is constituted to this day. Its persistency for well over a thousand years in Suffolk is one of the most potential facts of our history. In the year 673 Eastengle had heard Christianity preached no more than half a century, for we may accept Felix's advent to practically synchronise with Ricbeorht's assassination of King Eorpweald in 628; and it is a striking commentary upon the proximity of former belief in the

Æscir gods that our 673 king, Ealdwulf, testifies that the particular but unlocalised temple in which his great-uncle, King Raedweald, had worshipped them about 617 "had stood until his own time and that he had seen it when he was a boy" (Bede). Some account of our eastern peninsula at that period will be found at p. 51 of the present volume. Hence we may well instil with the fullest neophytic ardour the great Councils "aet Clofeshoum": Councils of which we even now possess a fuller and more detailed account than of any other Saxon gatherings before the tenth century: Councils which rank as inferior only to those of Nicænum, Constantinople and Ephesus, Chalcedon, Rome and Latran, certainly basic throughout all Britain.

"In the synod of Hertford, which was presided over by Theodore in the year 670, as related by Bede (Hist. Eccles. iv., 5) it was ordained: 'Septimum, Ut bis in anno synodus congregetur; sed quia diversæ causæ impediunt, placuit omnibus in commune, ut Kalendis Augustis in loco qui appellatur Clofeshoch, semel in anno congregemur.' Where this once famous place was has been much questioned. The similarity of the name has led to its identification with Cliffe at Hooe in the angle between the Medway and the Thames: and this opinion has lately been revived and strenuously maintained by Mr. Kerslake in his pamphlet on 'The Supremacy of Mercia.' [Trans. Bristol and Glouc. Archæol. Soc., iii., pp. 130-62.] His point is that a road out of the centre of England came to the north bank of the Thames opposite Cliffe, that the river was there crossed by a ferry, that it was a highway out of Mercia to Canterbury; and hence the eligibility of the situation for a synod. After the two great synods under Theodore at Hertford and Hatfield, the synods were provincial and mostly under Mercian princes; and, when not at Clovesho, were at

Cealchyth which is generally supposed to be Chelsea, though Sunning has also been suggested. (Hefele, Eccles. Councils). Thus it seems necessary to find Clovesho in Mercia, or somewhere convenient for Mercian kings. Somner suggested Abingdon, because Sheovesham was said to be the older name of that place, and he thought Sheovesham might be identified with Clovesho, c being put for s. But the time when c and s thus changed places was centuries later. However, Gibson adopted this view, in which the central position of Abingdon was perhaps of more weight than the etymology. Kemble said 'I entertain little doubt that Cloveshoas was in the county of Gloucester and hundred of Westminster' (Saxons ii., 15); in another place he suggests that it was not far from Deerhurst, Tewkesbury and Bishops Cleeve: perhaps at Tewkesbury itself (lib. cit. ii., 191; cf. Haddan and Stubbs' Councils iii., p. 122). Stubbs says 'Clovesho, a now forgotten place in the Mercian kingdom, probably near London' (Const. Hist. i., 231)." All of which is appended, by Prof. John Earle in his Hand-Book to the Land-Charters and other Saxon Documents of 1888, p. 453, to a charter of A.D. 742 given 'in the celebrated place which is named Cl0feshos,' printed by him in two forms at p. 36 and by Kemble 87. A better precis of our knowledge of the site at that period were difficult to find.

Almost coevally, as it happened, Canon Manning announced (E. Angl. N. & Q., ii., p. 69) that the famous church Councils of Clovesho were most probably convened in Mildenhall at the extreme west of Suffolk, and not at Cliffe-at-Hoo in Kent, nor at Abingdon, Tewkesbury or Hertford as had been hitherto accepted. "It seems," comments Simpson in his 1901 History of Mildenhall, "to be now ascertained in the Notes and Queries almost beyond doubt that within the boundaries of Suffolk was situate the interesting

locality, so long buried in obscurity, of important early Councils known by the name of Cloveshoe.*

In the course of an examination of some ancient charters, grants of land of the time of Henry III. [circa 1250], belonging to the Earl of Leicester and relating to the north west portion of Mildenhall parish, Mr. E. J. L. Scott of the British Museum discovered certain references which leave little doubt that at Mildenhall is the identical spot known in early days by the name Cloveshoe: allusions to land lying 'ad viam Clouenhoe,' 'in campo de Clouenhoe,' 'extendentem ad quadriuium,' 'a ueteri via,' and 'in ueteri chimino' [a monkish-Latin word for a cart-track], offer in themselves strong evidence as to the precise situation of the disputed spot, viz., on the heath land at Mildenhall.

Manning [quoting Sir Henry Bunbury in *Archæologia* XXV., 1833, p. 609] points out that the whole of

*Defined by Manning (loc. cit.) as *Howe*, a hillock, at the cloven ways; or (E. Angl. N. & Q. II., p. 112, where the deeds are printed verbatim et literatim) cleft hills. But I consider it more exactly CLEFT HILL-SPUR, in the singular: by no means analogous with the "on clofenan hinc" of Birch's charter no. 625, nor the phrase "on thone clofenan beorh," cloven hill, in King Eadgar's grant of 962. It is not allowed to have a personal derivation by the erudite Searle in his 1897 *Onomasticon*; though it "is given in Bede as Clofes-hoh or hoch. The first element is seemingly a personal name in the genitive, and *hoh* means a promontory. Cliffe at Hoo is linguistically impossible. Cloves or Clofes could not become cliff. The early form of Closeworth in Somerset was in 1252 Cloves-wurthe and in 1270 Cloves-uude. The AS. *hoh*, pl. *hoas*, i.e. promontory, as in Cloves-hoas, Cloves-hoh, may be cognate with the Scand. *haug-r*, a bay or river valley; but Sweet makes this to be the same word as *hoh*, i.e. heel, which Torp in *Wortschatz* traces to a different Teutonic stem. The Hill of Howth involves the Norse *Hojth*, i.e. a high headland; an Old High German form appears in Donners haugk, and suggests that the *Clob* in Cloves-hoh may be mythological" (Maclure 1910, pp. 194 and 231). The meaning of the name is fundamental to the localising of the place: its spellings in the charters, sec. the impeccable Birch, are thus. 716: Cloves-hoh or in the Lambeth MS. Clovesho. 742: Clofeshos and Cloveshou. 747: qui vocatur Clovesho. 798: Clovesho. 803: aet Clofeshoum, Clofeshoas, qui dicitur Clovesho, qui vocatur Cloves hoas (Cloveshos et Clovesho in alia MSS.). 824: aet Clofeshoum, qui dicitur Clofeshoas seu Clofeshes. 825: aet Clofeshoum, Clofeshoas and qui nominatur Clovesho. No such personal name is known in Anglo-Saxon.—C.M.

this border-country was debateable land in Roman-British times, when Roman out-posts [see the coins for their pay, now in Bury Museum (Suff. Inst. I., 1849, p. 24)] were maintained as a protection against British irruptions [or, rather, piratical descents upon the Iceni by way of the old Fen Sea]; in fact, a true no man's land [on the contrary, there can be no doubt whatever that the treeless chalk country here was far more densely populated than the forests which everywhere clothed the prevailing boulder-clay of Suffolk. Hence] the whole district is well known as one of extreme interest, owing to the numerous traces which have from time to time appeared of primitive occupation.

Cloveshoe, it is clear, was a spot where four ways met, at no great distance from the boundaries of the Mercian and East-Anglian kingdoms, and so within easy access of the Bishops of Dunwich and Elmham. It was upon this open heathland of Cloveshoe that the synods of the Saxon Church were in all probability gathered."

THE COUNCILS OF CLOVESHÖ.

At the Council of Hertford in September 673, Clovesho was selected as the annual rendezvous of the Synod of the English Church; but we have no record of an actual congress here before July, 716. Then there presided Æthelbeald, king during 716-757 of Mercia, and were present the bishops of Dunwich, Elmham, Winchester, Sherborne, Hexham, Worcester, Hereford, Lindsey, London and the archbishop of Lichfield. Birch's *Cartularium Saxonicum*, 91, Had-dan-Stubbs' *Councils III.*, 1878, p. 300, and the "Confirmation of a charter in the Council of 716" (Stowe Chart. Brit. Mus. no. 2), add: Æthelfrith comes, probably the 705 "patricius" of Wilts in

Birch 114 and Kemble 54 ; Æthelgils and Ludhere, *praepositi* ; the priests Beaduwine of Dict. *Christ. Biog.* I., 237, Bosel of Kent, Bultfrith, Eadbeald and Wilgeld, with the Mercian deacon Eored. The witnesses were Abba, Ayinges, Beornheard, Breguweald, Dunna, Eadwulf, Ecca of Kent, Fug of Kent, Geanbeald, Hereweald, Pohha seu Pohta, Scirheard, Sibba of Kent and Wilbeald.

In 742 another Council assembled, again under King Æthelbeald's guidance : it is probably for this reason that Clovesho has been accounted to Mercia ; and here we seem to gain some slight insight to the superficially obvious, but intimately quite unknown supremacy of that kingdom over Eastengle, which does not become apparent until after our King Ælfweald's death in 749. The bishops of Elmham, Leicester, Hereford, etc., were present. Birch 162, Kemble 87, H.-Stubbs III., 340, Sweet's charters 17 and Earle at pp. 36 and 38, add some of those present : Bishops Ecglaf of Dunwich, Hwaetlac (Sweet's No. 591 ; doubtless Heathulac of Elmham, though ascribed to Mercia), Sigcga seu Sicga of Selsey 733-56, Ealdwulf of ? Rochester, and Hunweald the bishop of some unknown see ascribed to Mercia. There were the Abbot Buna ; and the *duces seu ealdormen* Eadbeald and Beorcol, both of Mercia ; and the witnesses Cynebeorht and Freothorne, both also ascribed to Mercia. But actually there appear to be some grounds for doubting if any such Council really took place *here* this year. The authorities for it are, firstly, a late and doubtful MS. of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, under suspicion as being the only MS. which refers to the alleged privilege of Wintred ; and secondly, the charter given in H.-Stubbs, pp. 340-2. According to the latter the sole business that took place in 742 was the confirmation of the above privilege to the churches and monasteries of Kent a generation or two earlier.

H.-Stubbs recognise that the attestations cannot be correct, but do not dispute the text of the charter. However, if three successive Elmham bishops and two successive Dunwich ones appear as signatories, it looks as though the whole document were, as Mr. Stevenson tells me, "a much later concoction." Also, it is quite possible that Boniface's expression "synodus Londiniensis" were the more correct; but he himself complains of defective eyesight, so he quite possibly mistook the locale: I have not been able to consult Jaffé's edition of Boniface's Letters.

The most important of the known Councils of Clovesho was that of September 747, which met for the reformation of abuses, when upwards of thirty decrees were promulgated. This is the first Synod mentioned here by Sir Harris Nicolas: "Cloveshoviense; of Cliff or Cloveshou, also called of Abingdon, in September, wherein thirty canons were made, containing general advice to the bishops to fulfil their duties." The bishops of Dunwich (who was Eardwulf seu Heardwulf seu Herdulf, according to Birch, 174; H.-Stubbs III., 360-2; Stubbs p. 6 and D.C.B. II., 18 and 906; Elmham was then probably vacant), Selsey, Rochester, Hereford, etc., and the archbishop of Lichfield were present. This has been considered the last of such synods; but we cannot doubt Searle when he relies on a further Council of Clovesho in October 803, followed by another in October 804, at both of which the bishops of our Elmham and Dunwich sees were present, along with those of Lichfield, Hereford, etc.; and Nicholas enumerates others in the years 800 and 822, touching the usurpation of church lands by our King Coenwulf*; and Birch details proceedings

* "There was recently found in the neighbourhood of Mildenhall a penny of Coenwulf, King of Mercia; it has fallen into my possession and is a scarce coin. My coin is in fine condition, and, in size and type of obverse, resembles that figured in Ruding, pl. 6, no 20. The reverse, however, differs: it bears a small cross botone upon a quatre foil with a pellet in each angle, and the

“ ad sinodale concilium in loco qui nominatur Clovesho ” in 798.

“ One of the most solemn ecclesiastical acts on record, namely, that of archbishop Æthelheard’s synod at Cloveshoo in 803, by which the integrity of the see of Canterbury was restored, was signed by the following prelates : . . . 9. Alheard, bishop of Elmham. 10. Todfrith, bishop of Dunwich [whose profession is yet extant]. . . The English sees appear to have ranked in the following order. Province of Canterbury. . . 8. Elmham. 9. Dunmoc. . . ” to 12 (Kemble, Sax. in Engl. II., pp. 361-2). This Council of 803, when Eastengle was thoroughly dominated by the great Mercian king Coenwulf, is by far the most useful in the extent of its signatories, as one would anticipate when assisting at such an occasion : from it we are able to compile a most valuable list of names, mainly in Birch’s C.S. 310 and 312, Kemble’s C.D. 185 and 1024 and the Dict. Christ. Biog. The following appear as *abbots*, with their dioceses : Beonna of Leicester, Ceolmund of Selsey (D.C.B. I., 442), Cufa of Winchester (Sweet 635 ; D.C.B. I., 720), Cuthred of Hereford (D.C.B. I., 732), Daeghelm of Lindsey (Bardney ? D.C.B. I., 778), Eadbeorht of Sherborne (D.C.B. II., 3), Ealhmund of Leicester, Forthred of Leicester, Frithumund of Worcester (D.C.B. II., 562), Hygebeorht of Lichfield (D.C.B. III., 51), Hysebeorht of Worcester (D.C.B. III., 189), Lull who signs as of the diocese of Dunwich (Sweet, 554. According to the D.C.B., III., 757, he is identical with Lul, an abbot who was sent about A.D. 800 as a messenger of Alcuin :

moneyer’s name Tidberht [Tidbeorht, in Keary]. Weight, twenty grains. These coins are interesting apart from their rarity, as memorials of the Mercian dominion of East Anglia from Offa until Egbert in A.D. 823.—H. Prigg.” (Suff. Inst. 4ly Journ., June, 1869, p. 45). “ We can know no more of ancient Britain than what the old writers have told us,” quoth Johnson ! Will not some local investigators add yet further to the worthy Doctor’s confusion by producing more material evidence of the Mercian Kings’ presidency at Clovesho here ?—C.M.

Commission in 1807 contains the report of these Inquisitions. “In these Records it appears that the Parishioners of every Parish found upon their Oath the true Value (sometimes separately) of the Ninth of Corn, Wool and Lambs, then the amount of the antient Tax of the Church was stated, and afterwards the Causes of the Ninth not amounting to the Tax or Value of the Church were assigned, and when the Ninth did not exceed the Tax, it was assigned for Cause thereof, that within the Valuation or Tax of the Church there were other Articles included besides Corn, Wool and Lambs, such as the Dos or Glebe of the Church, Tythe of Hay, and other Tythes. And if any Abbey, Priory, or other Religious Corporation had Property within any Parish, the Ninth arising from such Property was found and returned.”

In form the Inquisitions differ somewhat in each County, and also in length. The returns from the County of Sussex are the longest, and cover 53 pp., and this is accounted for by the late Mr. W. R. Stephens (*Hist. of the Dio. of Chichester*, S.P.C.K., p. 130) by the fact that the subsidy of the Ninth is said to have been suggested by Robert Stratford, Lord Chancellor, and Bishop of Chichester (1337-1362), brother of John Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury. Some of the county returns are very short, those from Staffordshire going into 3 pp., Middlesex 5 pp., Worcestershire 7½ pp., and York 28 pp. The returns from Suffolk cover 42 pp.

They are a good second in length, and scarcely second in the amount of interesting information which they contain. In the County of Suffolk the records differ, both in form and substance, in different Hundreds. In some they are very meagre, and tell nothing which could be left untold, as, e.g., in the Hundred of Samford. In Thingoe Hundred they are not much

Rochester (l.c. 604 ; D.C.B. II., 849), Heathubeald of Hereford (l.c. 849), Hunfrith of Elmham (l.c. III., 179 : possibly the bishop there in 820) and Waerfrith of Hereford (D.C.B. : perhaps the subsequent abbot of Soham in Cambs). Of *other* witnesses there seem no more than three : Cynebeald of Selsey, Æthelhelm of London and Heahfrith of Selsey. All these are enumerated in the charters 1024 of Kemble and 312 of Birch.

Of the Council of Clovesho in 824 only three signatories appear to have survived, but cf. "Proceedings at the Councils in 824 and 825" in Stowe's charters in Brit. Mus., nos. 14 and 15. These, however, are interesting : Bynna "frater regis" Beornwulf, king of Mercia and Eastengle during 823-5 (charters nos. 218 and 220 of Kemble, and 379 and 394 of Birch) ; Uhtred ealdorman of Kent and Mercia, who is certainly the great dux of Worcester in Birch nos. 379 and 28 (Sweet, charter 57, Ordnance Survey Facsimiles, Birch 378) ; and Æthelhun a priest and "præpositus."

The last of the Clovesho Councils, touching which I can discover any names, was during 825 when the majority of those preserved consist, curiously, of ladies. Those of both sexes are enumerated in Birch's charters 384 and 386, and in Kemble's 220 and 253 : Torhthelm a prior of Middlesex, Bolam a witness of Worcester (Searle's Onomast, p. 541), Coenheard a witness of Middlesex and Ealhere, a witness of Mercia. The only other signatures are six feminine names : Ælfgyth who appears twice, Æscburh seu Exburh, Beagswith (Sweet 625), Beonne (Sweet 535) and Ealuburh seu Aloburg.

I find record of no later Councils at Clovesho ; and it is sufficiently obvious that this spot, convenient of approach by the Icenhild Way from the south, and

by water from both the north and west to Mercia, would have little merit in the eyes of the Wessex monarchy after Ecgbeorht's conquest of all Suthumbrian England during 827; also, it was one terribly exposed to danger as soon as the Norseman began to sail into the Fenland Sea.

"It is a most reasonable supposition," continues Simpson, "that Suffolk, a county where at the time of Domesday no less than three hundred and sixty-four churches [the 1086 total is found to be 450 at p. 9 of the present volume] existed which is a larger number than is recorded in any other county, and the most highly rated at the institution of the Peter-pence tribute of the eighth century, should be selected as a place having special claims for the high honour of holding these important Councils within its boundaries. The favourable position of Mildenhall with its natural physical advantages, its outlying islands, etc., to say nothing of other features which churchmen of the period would highly value, would offer many strong inducements for the bishops to select as a veritable land of councils" this Suffolk site. The last allusion is doubtless to E. Angl. N. & Q., 1888, p. 208, where the editor points out that "a numerously attended Synod is known to have been held, A.D. 977, at the village of Kirtling, also on the border-line that separates Cambridgeshire from Suffolk: so that the district may be regarded as a true conciliar centre."*

THE LOCALITY OF CLOVESH0.

The above tentative allocation of Clovesho to the township of Mildenhall met with astounding apathy; no one attempted more intimate research and no more

* The circular announcing "Harrow Historical Pageant, June 28 to July 5," 1923, introduces "The Council of Clovesho (825 A.D.)" as the second scene. No claim, the Secretary informs me, is laid to the locality.

was heard of the subject for a score of years. In 1907 appeared another notice of Scot's discovery (Report of Hist. MSS. Commission, iv., p. 320), giving pertinent quotations from the previously published deeds of 1250; but so full of inaccuracies*—not an unusual feature of our Government's publications—as to be worthless excepting solely for Dr. Jessop's personal opinion that "these early charters go far to settle the long standing difficulty as to where the site of Clovesho is to be looked for in our maps. These charters show that in the thirteenth century there was a place where four ways met and which still served as a landmark in the district, designated as the *via vetus, quadrivium, campus de Clovenhowe* and the *via de Clovenhoe*: and, as Mildenhall is situated exactly at the point where the Kingdoms [recte dioceses: Bede assigns the Isle of Ely to Eastengle] of Mercia, Wessex and East Anglia meet, it seems hardly an unreasonable conclusion which has been come to by those well qualified to decide the question, that these charters go very far to settle at last the problem which has been perplexing us so long."

Mildenhall is the largest parish in our county and comprises nearly fourteen thousand acres, though fully a third of the township—all that part to the west of Kenny Hill and West Row may be at once eliminated as unreclaimed at our early date. West Row was then at the apex of a peninsula with the main town of Mildenhall at its base; Holywell with Beck Row, Holmes-eye, Little-eye and Kenny (the AS. cumulative plural *cyen-eye*, cows-isle) were islands, as their names show. Fortunately we have in our Proceedings iv., facing p. 356, one of the best maps ever published of a Suffolk township; though Gedge,

* Not only are there common errors, such as *peciam* for *partam*, but proper- and place- and trade-names are all misquoted (*Naute* for *Nautc*, i.e. AS. *Noriolt*; *Henrici* for *Heruei*; *Mildenthal* for *Midehal*; and *pictoris* for *pis(ca)toris*). Worst of all is the misleading error of *Clovenshoe* for *Clouenhoe*.

when compiling it in 1874, could have had no idea that somewhere within its bounds lay Clovesho. It is, therefore, the more satisfactory to find indicated the "Old Way," the *via vetus* of 1250, now a mere footpath along the south edge of Beck Row island to West Row; as well as Charnock Way running through Wamil Hall ("Twanhill" of the 1276 Patent Rolls, and Tawmell of 1576), on the edge of the high land along the River Lark's north bank; Thremil Way, parallel with the last, but high on the watershed; and Mondes Way (the "Mundesfeld" of 1596), a third track from the High Town to West Row, now elevated into the main road. There, too, are Stapenhow Way, now a mere footpath across Holywell Row and Beck Row, parallel with Old Way; but the key to Clovesho's position would seem to be Stiweye, of which this map shows nothing: a dead name. But it does show "Church Way," intersecting Stapenhow Way and running due north across Holywell Row, whence it probably continued by Aspal Hall (mentioned in 1326; Copinger iv., 186), to Holmes Eye ("Holmesey" in 1589) and, at a late period probably, to Coplow ("Coplowe Fen" in 1566), immediately east of Kenny Hill: Coplow has a very tempting similarity to Clovesho, though Suffolk colloquialism intrudes but never drops an *l*. Now, assuming that Clovesho would be on comparatively high ground and that "*juxta terram ecclesie*" places it next the Church Field whence leads the Church Way, the intersection of the last with Stapenhow Way in Holywell (itself a suggestive name) appears the most likely site: "*terra in campo de Clouenhowe juxta terram ecclesie extendentem a via que uocatur Stiweye versus aquilonem.*" But the best clue seems that in the fifth deed: an acre at Stapenhoe extending westward of the Sti (possibly the early division of Beck from West Row) as far as the road of Clovenhow, and half an acre eastward on Litleie seu Little-eye, but it leaves

the question of Clovesho being to the east or west of its own road open!

I went to Mildenhall with six memoranda: (1) Cloves-ho means Cleft hill-spur; (2) to north-west of High Town; (3) near junction of four ways; (4) still a local land-mark in 13th century; (5) half an acre between these cross ways and the fens; (6) lies next church land, extending to Stiway which is a lost name. In an open mind, Kenny Hill seemed the most likely district; and I found that, after a somewhat low stretch at the cross ways called The Field, one begins a slight ascent from 23 feet above sea-level in the scattered wood and follows the water-shed between the River Lark and Eriswell Lode to Cake Street. Thence to the inn at Beck Row is a long, gradual and but slight descent. Beyond the latter one comes almost immediately to fen-level and the subsequent rise to Kenny Hill new church is also nearly imperceptible; a few hundred yards beyond it, fen-level again begins and thence continues 8 miles to Littleport, across the old Fen Sea. The highest point of Kenny Hill is at Mr. Bell's farm, east of the church, and this seems little over a score of feet; neither is it anywhere at all abrupt, nor steep on its eastward side to the fens again at Coplow, which is entirely low-lying cattle-marsh. No one here knew such a name as Clofes or cloven-ho. North of Beck Row is a good deal more old cattle-pasture, surrounded still with ditches, than arable land, which seems to argue recent reclamation.

Next I tried Beck Row to Jude's Ferry; and found the road from the above inn flat and running between the fens and an everywhere quite gradual acclivity on the east; only to Western Ditch is there a slight east and west ridge of higher ground fenwards. At the north of West Row a recently-metalled road, Cooks

Drove, runs westerly; but this is hardly above fen-level, even at its east end. West Row is the highest of the Mildenhall hamlets, rising to 24 feet above sea-mean, and exceeding Holywell by three feet; yet nowhere could I discover an abrupt acclivity. The descent to the Lark at both Judes Bridge and Bargate farm is comparatively gradual, though the river here must, allowing for subsequent siltage, be pretty well on the level of virgin bog. Looking across it from the higher ground at West Row nothing peculiar is apparent, but the somewhat abrupt sinuation of the road to the bridge.

Finally I explored from the High Town to Holywell Row and beyond. Here one is upon the eastern side of the water-shed and there is some low, still swampy ground at the east end of the above wood by The Field, as well as eastward of it towards St. Helena farm. Thence the road rises slightly to cottages but falls immediately beyond them to fen-level, which on the east extends to Eriswell, and on the west, and north (apparently including Wild Street, at 15 feet above sea-level, descending to 12 at the north parish boundary) interminably to the far horizon of the fens. Holywell Row itself stands on a well defined though very slight rise, with an abrupt declivity nowhere. On the north-east, just where the footpath meets the plantation, the fen-level begins and here at its junction with the heath is a little elevation of some ten feet, close to a northerly drove. Small as this bank is, it is the sole one within "half an acre of the fens" of the least note in the entire district, as far as my observations extended: it is pretty surely Gedge's Goldholm Hills. Aspal Hall is quite small, does not appear to have ever been of consequence, and its moat, though rather broader, is otherwise indistinguishable from the ubiquitous fen-ditches, nor is it above their level.

After thus scouring all Mildenhall between the Lark and Eriswell Lode, upon more than a single occasion, my tentative conclusion was that, allowing Gedge's Stapenhow Way to be synonymous with that of the 1250 deeds, we are upon safe ground in stating 'the only "viam de Clovenhoe" which could then approach it "versus occidentem" must come from the island of West Row: no other land in tilth is at all likely to have then existed in that direction. Thus we restrict Clovesho to West Row; and at once find ourselves upon the most probable spot, on account of its superior altitude to any other land on the north-west of High Town: actually it is very nearly due west. Throw your mind back to West Row in A.D. 673: what see you? An elongate-oblong island, surrounded not by reeds and boggy pools but by clear and glittering tidal sea-water: and upon its highest point there yet crumbles the remnant of a Roman Villa (Raven 1895; p. 42). A Pagan fane the Christian Saxons thought it, so perhaps it is already re-erected as a church. Here would soon meet the four-ways of the isle, beaten by the feet of the pious. Such seems to comprehend all our old deeds read into Clovesho, excepting its mere name and here we have nothing but the uncontrollable passage of time to blame for ultra-millennial modification. We may as truly say of Clovesho as Maclure in 1910 said of Rutupia, "it was an island, probably regarded as a part of Thanet [Mildenhall]. The whole region has been so much altered physically by the upheaval of the littoral and the blocking up of the river by sands that it is impossible to obtain an accurate mental picture of what it was in the fifth century."

Thus far I had actually written (in my MS. Saxon Suffolk history) in May, 1923; and was then recounting some of its negative evidence to Mr. Harris, as we motored from Freckenham Castle eastwards over Jude's Bridge, when he suddenly exclaimed——