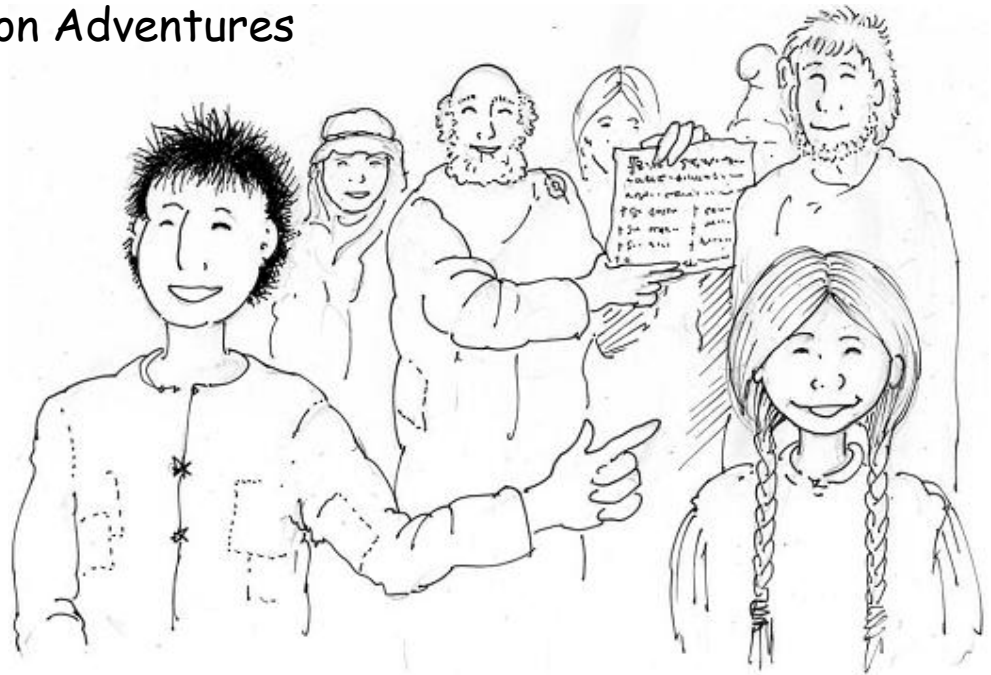


CUTHA'S CHRONICLES

Anglo-Saxon Adventures

Eala! Hello!



Let us show you something very special:

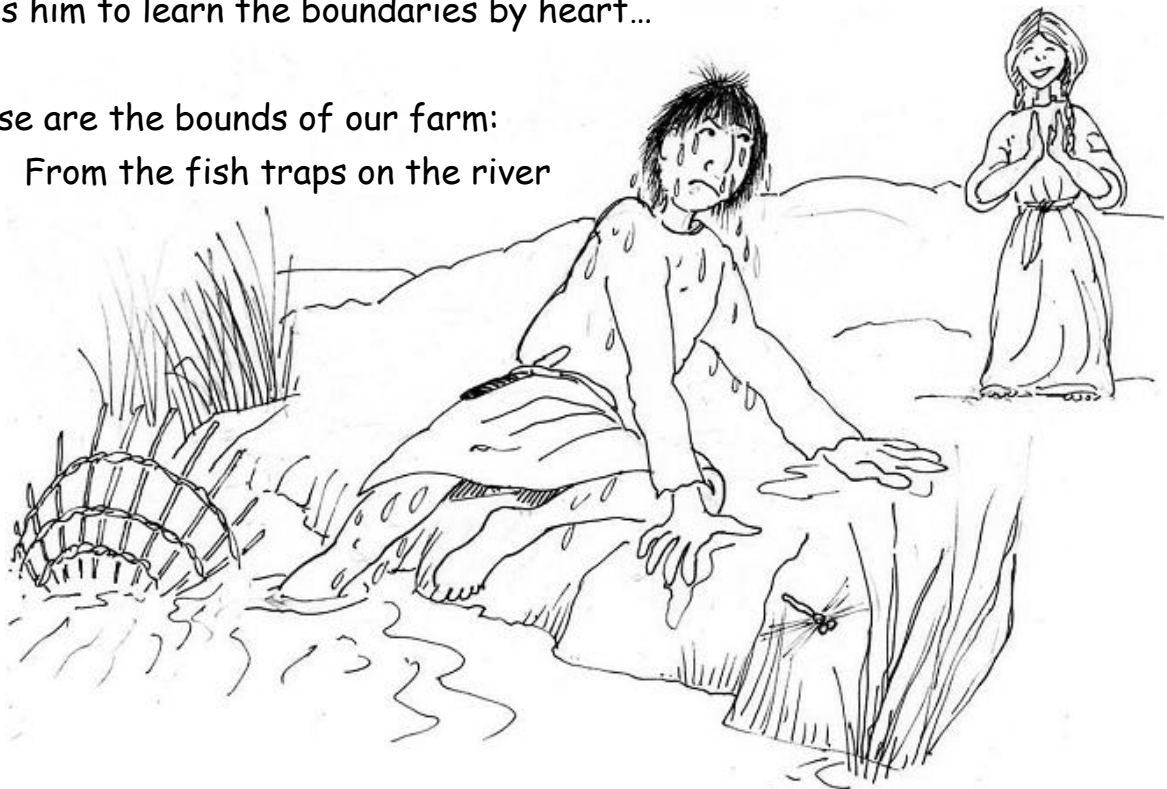
This is our **BOC** — the Book of our farm. A monk wrote it out for our lord the Earl: it tells us what the boundaries of our farm are.

But none of *us* can read — so we have to **remember** what it says!

One day the farm will belong to Cutha. Every spring, the whole household helps him to learn the boundaries by heart...

These are the bounds of our farm:

From the fish traps on the river



... To the gorse-covered burial mounds ...



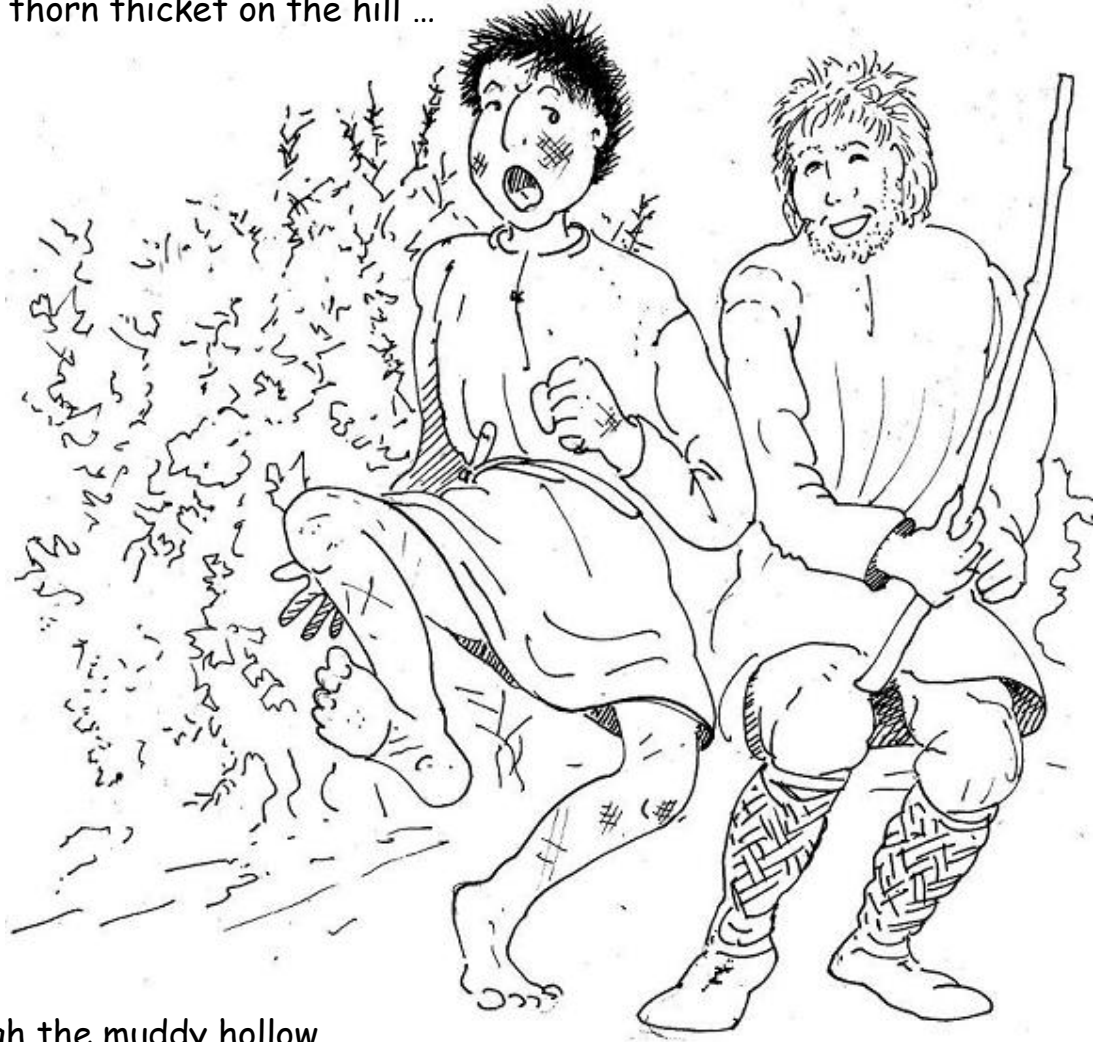
... Along the stone road
that the Romans made ...



... To the broken stone pillar ...



... To the thorn thicket on the hill ...



... Through the muddy hollow ...

... Back to the fish traps on the river!



I think he'll remember that!



Many estates in Anglo-Saxon times had their own "book" (*BOC*) — a special document that said who owned the land, who had given it to him or her, and the names of people who could be called as a witness in court to prove it. It might also set out things like how much rent had to be paid, and said what the boundaries of the estate were.

Many of these documents still survive today. We call them *charters*. The main part of the charter is often written in Latin, the language of the Church, but the boundaries of the estates are always set out in English.

Even today, some places have a ceremony called "beating the bounds" where boys from the area go around the ancient boundary with sticks, beating them on marker-stones, tree-stumps or stiles. In earlier times, the boys themselves got beaten *at* the boundary-mark, to help them remember where it was — just as happens to Cutha in this story! His family do still love him, of course: he is doing a painful and unpleasant job to make sure the farm is kept safe for the future.

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BM Box 4336 London WC1X 3XX

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