

Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society

MEETING AT SHAFTESBURY

..... The Rev. W. H. Jones then read the following paper on
THE WILTSHIRE POSSESSIONS OF THE ABBESS OF SHAFTESBURY

.... Now I admit that I am not able to bring home the proof so closely with regard to Domnitone (Dinton). Still, among the land-holders of Wiltshire in the time of the Confessor, we have the name of *Donno* or *Donne*. He held lands at Middleton, Terintone, and Wintreburne, all which estates were, at the time of the Domesday, in the hands of Osborn Giffard, the name of whose family is perpetuated in Ashton *Giffard*, in the parish of Codford St. Peter. Now, from the hundred Rolls, we know that 'Middleton' was in the Hundred of Warminster (the same in which Dinton is situated), and I have reason for thinking (it would be a long story to give you the steps by which I arrive at the opinion, and therefore, on a matter certainly not of the gravest importance, you will perhaps accept my conclusion without the production of my proof) that Terintone and Wintreburne were respectively in the Hundreds of Heytesbury and Branch and Dole. So that 'Domne' of the Confessor's time certainly held land at no great distance from 'Domnitone' (Dinton), and may not unlikely have left his memorial behind him in the name of this place. A suggestion has indeed been made that the word may be derived from the Saxon '*Domne*,' or lord, and may mean 'the lord's residence or fortress,' this same 'chief lord' being none other than the great Alfred, to whom the estate is presumed to have belonged, before it was granted by him, with other manors, to Shaftesbury. In reply to this I would say, that I do not think '*Domne*' a word that would be found in any composition that could claim to be at all pure Anglo-Saxon. The proper word to be employed, if we still hold that possibly a genuine term was used for the former part of our name, would certainly be '*hlaforð*,' from which our '*lord*' comes. And further, the whole theory is based on a supposition, which, as far as I can learn, is groundless. There is certainly no *proof* whatever that Dinton belonged to King Alfred, or that it was given by him to Shaftesbury.

I have not been able to ascertain how Dinton came into the possession of the Abbess. In the time of Edward I, the Abbess for the time being made a declaration, before the Court of the King's Exchequer, to the effect that she held Domnitone by the King in Chief, and that it appertained to her Barony by virtue of an ancient grant (*de veteri feoffamento*). In the survey of her possessions in the chartulary, the estate at Domnitone was assessed at 20 hides, which would probably represent its actual average, viz., 2600 acres. It was valued in 1293, for the purpose of levying the subsidy of *one-tenth*, granted for the King's use, at 37 l. 6s. This sum must be multiplied by about 20 to bring it to its relative value in the present day.

Two men, each of mark in their generation, have been connected intimately with Dinton. Here, on 5 Jan., 1595-6, was baptised HENRY LAWES, whose name is so closely identified with the Church Music of the 17th century. And here also, a few years afterwards, was baptised EDWARD HYDE, afterwards the great LORD CLARENDON.

Dinton of course derives its chief interest from the latter circumstance, it having been for some years the home of the 'Hyde' family. Lawrence Hyde, of whom I have spoken on my account of Tisbury, seems to have been the first owner of property here. He left the Rectory impropriate of Dinton to Lawrence, his *second* son, (who afterwards, as Sir Lawrence Hyde, was Attorney-General to Anne, Queen of James I.), but charged 40 l. Per annum to be paid out of its proceeds to Henry, his *third* son. This Henry Hyde was the father of Lord Clarendon. He lived at Dinton, in a house no longer standing, and there several of his children were born. Edward, his third son, was born on Feb. 18, 1608, and the entry of his baptism, a few weeks afterwards, may be seen in the Parish Register. In his life, Lord Clarendon tells us, that he was, in early childhood, 'taught by a schoolmaster, to whom his father had given the Vicarage of Dinton,' so that arrangement must have been made respecting the patronage between Henry Hyde and his elder brother, Sir Lawrence. It is provoking that in the Wiltshire Institutions (as printed by Sir Thomas Phillipps) there is

no presentation to the living record between 1570 (when Henry Earl of Pembroke appointed 'George Coryate') and 1661, when the Crown nominated 'Samuel Fyler.' From an inspection of the Registers, however, in which the Incumbents' names occasionally appear, I can have little doubt that 'Stephen Roberts,' who was Vicar between the time of 'George Coryate's' decease, and the Incumbency of Philip Pinkney (who signs as Vicar in 1634), was the person alluded to as the first tutor of Lord Clarendon.

The Church at Dinton, though too far off for us to visit on any of our excursions, is well worth a careful inspection. It is cruciform, having a chancel, nave, two transepts, with a central tower. The living was left by will, at the commencement of the 18th century, by one of the Hyde family, to the College of St. Mary Magdalene, Oxford. Dr James Hyde, a brother of Alexander Hyde, Bishop of Salisbury, (1665-1666), was Principal of Magdalen Hall about the same time, and his portrait still hangs on the Hall of that Society. It was by his son, Robert Hyde, who for many years was a Fellow of Magdalene, that the bequest was made.

(Salisbury and Winchester Journal, Saturday 24th August, 1861)
