

NOTICES OF DEORMAN OF LONDON, A DOMESDAY  
TENANT IN CAPITE.

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Through the obliging courtesy of Francis Woodthorpe, esquire, I have been favoured by the municipal authorities with the view of an Anglo-Saxon charter preserved in the archives of the City, that favour being extended into a permission to copy it.

This charter, which has not hitherto been published, is textually as follows:—

“Wifm Kyng gret Wifm þ and Swegen scyrgerefan and calle mine thegnas on East Scaxan frendlice. And ic kythe eow thæt ic habbe geunnen Deormanne minum men tha hide landes at Gyddesdune the him of geryden was. And ic nelle getholian Frenciscan ne Engliscan thæt him æt ænigan thingan misbeode”

In modern English it may be translated thus:—

“I William the King greet William the Bishop, and Swegen the Sheriff, and all my thanes in Essex, as a friend. And I make known unto you that I have granted to Deorman my man the hide of land at Gyddesdun that he was deforeced of. And I will not suffer any Frenchman or Englishman to injure him on any pretext.”

This charter is by its terms simply a confirmation made by the Conqueror to his English thane Deorman of a moderate estate already that person's property, and being directed to the Sheriff of Essex it is necessarily implied that Gyddesdun was situate within *that county*. This conclusion is verified by the Domesday survey, which places it in the hundred of Ceffcord, now Chafford:—

“Geddesdunam tenet Sanctus Petrus pro una hida. Semper unus villanus et unus bordarius. Tunc dimidium carucatæ, modo una. Semper valuit xx. solidos.”

From the hands of Deorman it had passed to the convent of St. Peter at Westminster.\*

The place of deposit of the charter, viz. London, would show that that city either was, or subsequently became, the domicile of Deorman.

Taking the latter inference to be correct, our information respecting Deorman will not stop here. In the *Domesday survey* of Middlesex I find the following entry:—

“ Terra DEORMANNI Lundoniæ, Osulfstane hundred.

“ Deormannus tenet de rege in Iseldune dimidiam hidam terræ et dimidiam carrucatam. Ibi est unus villanus. Hæc terra valet et valet X solidos. Hanc terram tenuit Algar homo Regis E. et vendere et dare potuit.”

In English this may be thus rendered:—

“ The land of Deorman of London, Osulstone hundred. Deorman holds of the King in Islington half a hide of land and half a carucate. There is one villan. This land is and was worth ten shillings. Algar, a man of King Edward, held the land, and could sell and give it.”

These two Deormans on paper can only, I think, be one in reality. Deorman a King's man, who, as depositing with the authorities of London the King's confirmation of his land in Essex may, without stretching, be inferred to be a Londoner, must be the same as the Deorman of London, who, as we have just seen, holds in chief of the King half a hide or so in the neighbouring vill of Islington.

This is not all. Deorman is again mentioned.

At folio 142a of the *Domesday* for Hertfordshire I find this heading:—

“ Terra tainorum Regis in Bradewater hundredo.”

Among the entries which follow this heading are some which speak specifically to certain extensive and valuable manors held by Deorman, whom the heading shows to have been one of William's thanes.

\* Geddesdun, Woehendun, and Wemtun, all in the hundred of Ceffoord, belonged to St. Peter at Westminster. See Morant's *Essex*, vol. i. p. 162, for the second, now Okendon. (J. G. N.)

These manors had been held by Alwin Horne, a thane of King Edward.

The entries themselves, though very interesting, are too long to insert in the present paper.

I should mention that in the brief index\* which recapitulates the estates in the county there are these words:—

“Derman et alii Anglici regis.”

This must, I think, be the same Deorman. He is a King's thane and an Englishman, an union of facts very rare after the Norman Conquest.

Being assumed to be the same man, his Hertfordshire manors demonstrate him rich and fortunate in the midst of the dispossession and poverty of his countrymen.

The entries which refer to his estates, both in Middlesex and Hertfordshire, show also that he had succeeded other Englishmen therein.

Whilst they had lost he had gained.

In other words we find Deorman attached by homage and fealty to the Norman king, and presumably rewarded by the latter with forfeited estates.

These facts are plain, but it nowhere appears what the services were which had entitled him to so bountiful a gratitude on the part of the foreign king.

Upon this, as upon all which concerns Deorman, history is silent.

But, though rich in the spoils of his countrymen and the favour of the new dynast, Deorman was still no other than Deorman the Englishman; in no way Normanicized save in his feelings and his interests. He could not change his baptismal appellation, for no law has ever permitted that, and his modesty perhaps forbade his assuming a surname after the Norman fashion.

But, though he did neither of these two things his descendants were of a different mind, and so Normanicized themselves that without the necessary clue it would be impossible to regard them as anything less than Norman.

\* Vol. i. p. 142.

The chartulary of the nuns of Clerkenwell, preserved in the British Museum, and from which Mr. Tomlins in his very excellent History of Islington has made copious and interesting extracts, enables us to pursue the history of this family.

By these extracts I find that Deorman had two sons, of whom the one, Algar, became a prebendary of St. Paul's London, while the other, baptised by the name of Thierry (*Theodoricus*), succeeded to his father's estates.

This Thierry—this Frenchified Englishman—has a son Bertram, who, not content with his Norman Christian name, takes a surname also after the Norman fashion.

He is Bertram of Barrowe—the manor of Highbury in fact.

The same chartulary also shows that the family never returned to English names. The descendant of Deorman, with whom the family terminated in the reign of Henry the Third, was named Alice.

These facts in the history, such as it is, of an English family of the epoch of the Conquest raise a suspicion that other presumed Norman families may be in the precise position of that of Deorman—English beneath a foreign disguise.