

## Looking for DITTON

While researching Blanche Parry's family for the book '*Mistress Blanche, Queen Elizabeth I's Confidante*', we found the Inquisitions Post Mortem of Blanche's father Henry Myles and of her brother Mylo ap Harry. See previous article: Parry Family Lands in 1524, 1543, 1544 & 1545 from IPMs, with glossary. The land in all the IPMs could be identified except for one entry and that is Ditton. We had two questions: (a) in which parish was Ditton and (b) could it be more precisely located within this parish. The IPMs' entries are:

### **1524 IPM Henry Myles' property** [Blanche's father]

(Source: IPM of Henry Myle [1524] reference National Archives C142/42)

Inquisition taken at Weobley 18 October 16 Hen VIII [1524] before Thomas Monyngton esq. (probably Henry's brother-in-law) by virtue of a writ directed to him to enquire following the death of Henry Myle [1522].....

**Ditton** - 1 message and 1 carucate of land

Value: 33s 4d per annum

Held: part of the premises of the heirs of Richard Delabere knight, by a mill of pepper.

Identification: ?

Notes: Sir Richard Delabere of Kinnersley & Tyberton, Sheriff of Hereford in 1483, is recorded as holding lands by service from the Crown in his IPM of 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 1514 .

A mill of pepper was the rent payable if demanded, similar to the more modern peppercorn rent. Pepper in 1524 was an imported luxury item costing around 16d per pound [c. £31 now] for black pepper and about 24d per pound [c. £47 now] for white pepper.

### **1545 IPM Mylo ap Harry's Herefordshire property** [Blanche's elder brother]

(Source: IPM of Mylo ap Harry esq. the 31 October 37 Henry VIII [1545] reference National Archives C142/73/no.94)

IPM of Mylo ap Harry esq. taken at Hereford before Richard Palmer Eschaetor for the King in the said county, on the 31 October 37 Henry VIII [1545]. There were 13 jurors. Mylo ap Harry died 12<sup>th</sup> January 1543, Friday before the Feast of the Epiphany last past..... His lands included:

**Dytton / Ditton**

Value: 33s 4d

Held: held of the heirs of Richard Dalabere knight by service

Identification: ?

In 2011 Ditton as a placename no longer exists so it is clear that it has been renamed. These IPMs prove only that Ditton was in Herefordshire and was probably adjacent to the other named lands and property, placing it in the west of the county. This inference is supported by the **1424-25 IPM of Edmund Mortimer** 3 Hen VI (Reference: AL2 abstracts at HRO) which has a long list of lands including Clifford Castle, Brodemedowe, Dutton, Middelwode, and Ballarddeslonde. Of these:

*Clifford Castle* survives as a standing monument in the village of Clifford.

*Brodemedowe* is Upper and Lower Broadmeadow in Clifford west of Mynydd Brith.

*Dutton* is identified with Ditton.

*Middlewood* is in Clifford parish, the second site of this name (given in Winforton parish, 1086 Domesday) is close despite being across the River Wye.

*Ballarddeslonde* is identifiable as being in Dorstone as it is probably the field at Fowmine (Mynydd Brith), called Cae yr Mallard in 1621 and Ka yr Malard in 1671.

As these several names are listed in this order it is reasonable to suggest that these holdings were geographically close and that Ditton was in the Clifford / Dorstone area.

However, a more precise location is given in the **1428 Clifford Priory Rental** of 6

Henry VI (Reference: TNA SC11 257 & 258). The Clifford Priory lands named include the placenames of **Ditton**, **Dittonsfield**, **Dittons Cross** and **Dittons Way** and, importantly, they are all located in Dorstone Foreign:

Duttonesfeld	3a past in campo vocat'
Dyttonfeld (or Dyttounfeld)	4a in Dorstone Foreign
Dyttoneswey	2½a ext ultra in Dorstone Foreign
crucem vocat' Dyttonscrosse	1a desuper in Dorstone Foreign

So, this 1428 document not only firmly places Ditton in Dorstone Foreign but also proves that it was an area that included a field, a named roadway, and a preaching cross that was accorded a name. Such a cross was placed where most people would see it and so it became a local landmark. Many were actually sited at crossroads anyway but even the few that were not usually became sited at crossroads through becoming landmarks. So it is a reasonable assumption that Ditton's Cross was a preaching cross standing at a crossroads.

The IPMs of 1524 and 1545 describe one messuage and one carucate of land in Ditton worth 33s (shillings) and 4d (pence) per annum, which, in modern values, is c. £585 (1524) decreasing to c. £460 (1545). A messuage was a house, the associated outbuildings and land. A carucate was the area ploughed by eight oxen in one year, which varied according to the topography but seems to have been approximately 100 acres. So this holding was a sizeable farm for the time, with productive land that could be ploughed by an ox team. It is difficult to be certain if carucate simply meant an area that could be notionally, rather than actually, ploughed but it does seem that at least a major part of this designated area was sufficiently flat to be capable of being ploughed in this way. This holding was the least in value of the properties listed in 1524 but was by no means negligible. It is a reasonable assumption that all, or part, of the 1524 carucate of land was the same as the 1428 Dittonsfield.

To specifically name Ditton as in Dorstone Foreign implies that Ditton was definitely a separate community. The term *foreign* was usually contrasted with the *borough*, as in Ledbury. Even more useful is Bromyard where the Bishop's manor was described as *Bromyard borough and Bromyard foreign* meaning that Bromyard borough was the town and Bromyard foreign included a number of the surrounding villages and hamlets. So Ditton could well have been a hamlet, and it is possible that it had a preaching cross located at a crossroads. What it was not was Dorstone itself and the present Crossways names are too close to the village for Ditton to have been where they are now sited.

Blanche Parry's brother Symond (or Simon) bequeathed *To cos. John Parry, of Denton, £10* in his 1560 Will and as this is almost certainly Ditton then it was held by a Parry cousin in 1560. In the Kentchurch Court Archive of the Scudamore family an untitled document dated 6<sup>th</sup> October 1560 (Reference: HRO AL40/902) names John Scudamor of Keynchurch, esq., Watkyn Vaughan, esq. and Johan his wife, and Roulande Vaughan, esq. and Elizabeth his wife. All are known as connections of the Parry family. This document details manors and messuages and Dytton is among the latter.

A 1589 Glebe Terrier for Dorstone (Reference: HRO HD2/6/33) includes: *1 acre of arable between the land of Thomas Powell and Ridalls land there and the highway leading towards Ditton there on all parts...* The same terrier describes Riddalls land as next to the road to Bwlch Glas (the green pass) which is a further clue to identification. As other roads are also mentioned in this glebe terrier, such as *the highway there leading towards Peterchurch*, various roads can be discounted as the road to Ditton. Ridalls land also appears in a 1594 Quitclaim of land in the parish of Dorstone (Reference: HRO F94/II/87) which describes *4 acres of Rudhall lands, as bounded by road from Dorston to Dorstons Wood...*

The Register of Lewis Charlton, Bishop of Hereford 1361-1369, had mentioned

*Redewaldebok* in Dorstone (see note below). This Register also mentioned *Dudintone* which is Ditton. It is feasible that *Redewaldebok* had become *Ridalls* by 1589 and *Rudhalls* lands by 1594. It would, of course, clinch the location if a reference could be found to one of the brooks being called *Ridalls Brook* or something similar in a document! What we do know from these documents is that *Ridalls / Rudhalls* land was in the area of Ditton, and that the road mentioned in 1589 was very probably the *Dittons Way* in the 1428 Clifford Priory Rental. In addition, the 1594 deed *Rudhalls* land is described as then in the occupation of William Gannell and so this may place it in the neighbourhood of the modern Gannols Farm which is located west of Dorstone village - on the road to Mynydd Brith (see below).

Amongst the three roads considered the best candidates to have been *Dittons Way*, we soon discounted *Spoon Lane*, the track from *Crossway* north-west to the *Bage*. The *Mynydd Brith* area seemed far more promising. *Mynydd Brith* has, firstly, a crossroads of footpaths (SO 280402) with the adjacent fieldname *451 Cross Piece* and two missing fieldnames for *481* and *482* (Reference: *Dorstone Tithe Map 1839/1841*). There is also another crossroads that is still in use (SO 293403). Running north-east from this second crossroads was originally the track, shown on the tithe map, to *Penlan Farm*, past *Dorstone Mill* to exit in *Dorstone* village between *Dorstone Castle* motte and the *Pandy Inn*. While both these crossroads are recorded as linking enclosure roads it is true that roads continually utilise existing tracks and so it is feasible that one of these really was *Ditton* crossroads.

However, the third road considered is the lane now known as the *Old Road* which runs to the west of *Dorstone Wood*, past *Llanerch* and *Bedw Farm*. It is perhaps significant that the *Old Road* is still specifically named. It runs in the direction of *Drain*, a name which is likely to derive from the Welsh for thorns / brambles / briars, and where a ditch has been recorded, suggesting a boundary also noteworthy enough to be named. The *Old Road* follows a valley with a tributary of the *River Dore* flowing along its length and as such is sheltered land with a water supply. While the valley below, and east, of *Penlan Farm* is now *Grade 3* land, the *Old Road* valley, although primarily *Grade 4*, has a pocket of *Grade 2* land which adjoins the *Grade 2* (and *Grade 1*) land along the *River Dore*. So this land was always fertile with some areas that were easily ploughed.

The evidence detailed here is necessarily a summary of the enquiries made. However, it does appear that *Dorstone Wood* is the key to the location of *Ditton*. *Ditton* was a settlement area sufficiently far from *Dorstone Village* to be identified as in *Dorstone Foreign*. Therefore *Ditton* could have been located on one of the two valley sides of *Dorstone Wood*. We also know that *Ditton* had a farmhouse, buildings and land that could be ploughed. There was a trackway and a crossroads with a preaching cross. Until a document is found that provides incontrovertible evidence, such as giving the modern name *alias Ditton*, we can still only surmise the precise location. However, the evidence so far suggests that the focus is in the area of *Mill Wood*, *Penlan* and the *Old Road* to *Llanerch* and *Drain*. Indeed we would specifically conjecture that the **Old Road was Dittons Way and that this valley, west of Dorstone Wood, is the settlement site once known as Ditton.**

Our research has certainly answered (a) the first question posed and has provided reasonable evidence for (b). If further evidence is found we shall publish it here. Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped with the research so far. Written by Ruth E. Richardson and Sue Hubbard. Additional research by John Freeman and David Lovelace.

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Note from John Freeman: re *Redewaldebrok* in Dorstone... According to the printed edition of The Register of Bishop Lewis Charlton, page 57, this document is found on the fly-leaf of the register of Bishop Trillek 1344-1360. The witness-list of the document includes the name of *Petro, tunc Herefordensi episcopo*. This was Peter de Aquablanca/Aigueblanche Bishop of Hereford 1240-1268 so the use of this name, *Redewaldebrok* in Dorstone, can now be dated to 1240-1268.

### **Further Evidence for DITTON**

John has identified *Dudintone*/**Ditton** with the Domesday Book manor called *Dodintune* (DB 186c, Phillimore DB para. 23/2), an estate of seven hides held by Drogo *filius Ponz* (Drogo son of Poyntz). It is in a group of three manors of Drogo, *Dodintune*, *Burcstanestune* (unidentified) and *Ruuenore*. *Ruuenore* is the later Mynydd Brith. In the *Herefordshire Domesday* of c.1160-1170 *Dodintune* is glossed *i[d est] Dorsinton'*, identifying it as (being in) Dorstone. John has found several other instances of the name in the 13th and 14th centuries, where it is called *Dudinton'*, *Dodinton'*, *Dodyngton'*, *Dodynton'*, *Dotton' iuxta Dorston'*, *Dodinton' iuxta Dorsinton'*, and *Dodyton' in Dorstone*. Unfortunately, these citations give little clue as to the exact whereabouts of the place, apart from its being 'in' or 'next to' Dorstone. However, John adds that the Domesday Book identification is interesting in itself, and the connection with Mynydd Brith of course adds some support for the arguments discussed in the earlier paper.

John also reports another sighting of **Dutton**, or rather **Dutton field**. The reference is in the Ministers' and Receivers' Accounts, Dorstone, 15 to 16 Edw IV (TNA SC 6/860/28). This means it dates between 4th March 1475 and 3rd March 1477. John reads it ... *de firm' unius parcell' terr' iac' in Campo voc' Duttu[n]feld' supt' Wallesdene*. So we have a hint here of a location, 'under *Wallesdene*'. Unfortunately he cannot locate *Wallesdene*, although it occurs in other 15th century documents, in two cases with *sub* or *subtus*, e.g. '3 acres *subtus Wallesdene*' and '1 acre *sub Wallesdene*' in a rental of 1428 relating to the holdings of Clifford Priory (TNA SC11/257). John points out that the preposition 'under' is slightly odd, in that *dene* usually means 'valley', which in Old English is typically applied to long, narrow main valleys. This might just suit Pont-y-Weston Brook, but what would 'under' mean, said of a valley? Unless, of course, the name *Wallesdene* had by the 15th century become restricted to some place on the sloping side of the valley, so that a field in, or nearer, the valley bottom could be said to be 'under' it - or perhaps *sub(tus)* might mean 'lower down than'. However, Sue offers another possibility for *Wallesdene*. This is the valley running past the Beddw Farm and Llanerch Farm which has a brook running down it in a deep dingle to join the Pont-y-Weston brook below Llanerch Farm. Because of the way the land lies she suggests that the fields between the Home Farm and Woodlands could well be described as being 'below' or 'under' this valley, odd though that sounds. So, that gives us two possibilities in that same general area.

The Clifford Priory rental also has *Wallesheld*. John notes that *Walles* is unfortunately ambiguous by the 15th century. It might be 'a wall' (OE *wall*), 'a well, spring, stream' (OE *wella, wælla*), 'a Welshman' (OE *walh*) or a personal name *Walh*. More certainly the *-held* of *Wallesheld* is from Old English *helde* 'a slope', which is a particular kind of slope common in Herefordshire and Shropshire, often appearing as *yeld* or *yell*. Looking for a *helde*-type slope near where *Wallesdene* might be, could be the next fieldwork objective. In addition, this rental is full of place- and field-names relating to the holdings of Clifford Priory. In this the documentary forms for the **Dutton / Ditton** names are:

*3 acres of pasture in campo vocat' Duttonesfeld'*

*4 acres in Dytton'feld'*

*2½ acres extending ultra Dyttoneswey*

*1 acre desuper crucem vocat' Dyttonscrosse*

So, it would certainly be useful to examine the other place- and field-names in detail to try to piece

together possible interrelations of these names with tenants. Survivals of any of these names in the Tithe Awards may also help. This information could narrow the possibilities for determining the precise location of Ditton.

So far, then, the most recent use of the name **Ditton** that has been found is in the 16th century, in the 1589 Glebe Terrier for Dorstone also described earlier. It is entirely possible that further documentary research may find later references, or even 16th century, or pre-16th century references that can provide clues to location. We do know the general area of this location so another line of research would be the examination of already available LiDAR tiles (of grid squares) to look for settlement evidence. The IPMs certainly suggest the existence of foundations and boundaries which could possibly be discovered. Once these are securely mapped geophysical equipment, especially magnetometry, could then provide further detail.

LiDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) provides very accurate, high resolution 3D computer models of a landscape using an aircraft-mounted laser scanner. This geo-referenced data has a potential to reveal surviving features by measuring variations in the ground surface - even as subtle as a few centimetres in height! However, LiDAR does not always give the hoped-for information. It works best in unimproved pasture and woodland and is most useful for mapping large areas. The resulting 'dots' or 'spots' are converted into images, using a software package. Most of Herefordshire has now been LiDAR scanned at a horizontal resolution of one laser spot every 2 metres by the Environment Agency for the purpose of computer modelling of water catchments. This LiDAR is available for non-commercial uses for £33 + VAT per 1km x 1km Ordnance Survey grid square and is visualised by processing in Geographic Information System (GIS) software. Of course we may be unlucky and need more than grid square! David Lovelace's talk on Thursday 11th October 2012 will provide further details about this new tool for archaeology.

Meanwhile, the search for the precise location of **Ditton** continues. If you find further information please send it to us for the next paper....Thank you.

written by Ruth E. Richardson

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