

DRAYTON AND BEAMONDS IN FARLINGTON PARISH

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ABSTRACT

Any historical study of the parishes immediately to the north of Portsea Island gives rise to a number of questions to which only extensive research will provide the answers. Among the issues which present themselves are those of early medieval landholding and the elongated rectilinear appearance of medieval boundaries, the effects of the establishment of Southwick Priory (and possible creation of a new parish out of Boarhunt and Wymering), the relationship to the forest of East Bere to the immediate north (which contracted as encroachment was licensed or at least tolerated), the pressures generated by military and defence requirements, and the development of a suburban relationship with Portsmouth to the south. Some of the questions are known to be already under study by others and will in any case be much easier to investigate with the publication of the Southwick Priory Cartulary in the Hampshire Record Series.

In the meantime this paper is the first (and shorter) of two which attempt to lay foundations for wider studies by discussing particular aspects of the history of the area. Here the history of the western part of the parish of Farlington is considered. It is hoped to follow this in the near future with an account of the neighbouring manor and medieval parish of Wallsworth, which is identified in the Victoria History of Hampshire as Wellsworth in Chalton parish, but which should correctly be sought within the later bounds of Widley. Some points noted here will be picked up more fully in the later paper.

from east to west; then came a more general slope down the less productive lands later comprised in Purbrook Park, Purbrook Heath, and the rough pasture and woodland of the Forest of East Bere. The principal settlements lay around Farlington church, at Drayton, and at Stakes Hill, although a small community also grew up near Purbrook Heath in the 18th century. Today the southern part of the parish is built over with housing estates.

This paper is primarily concerned with the western tithing of the parish, Drayton, which extended in an elongated rectangle both north and south of Portsdown Hill. There are two particular purposes here. One is to correct and amplify the account of the descents of the manors which appear in the *VCH* (Page 1905, 3: 148–50) and in this context the *VCH* account should be read in conjunction with this paper. The other purpose is to identify the site of Beamonds House, which in the 17th century was perhaps the biggest in the parish, but whose identity was subsequently lost to the extent that it is usually assumed today to be identifiable with Belmont Castle in the neighbouring parish of Bedhampton.

INTRODUCTION

The parish of Farlington lies to the north-east of Portsea Island. Historically its southern boundary was formed by the marshes and salterns along the north shore of Langstone Harbour (in which are also islands within the parish); proceeding north there was a belt of fertile arable land, much of it held until the 18th century at least in common fields regulated by manorial courts, before the steep scarp of Portsdown Hill crossed the parish

THE MEDIEVAL MANORS

In the early 16th century the parish of Farlington was divided into three manors – Farlington, Drayton, and Beamonds – and the last two together formed the tithing of Drayton mentioned above. Presumably Drayton and Beamonds had been one fee in the distant past, but they were already divided in the mid-13th century, when Roger de Merlay and Geoffrey de Beaumont shared the tenure of Drayton for one-eighth of a knight's fee each (*TN* 231). Similar shared tenancies are

recorded in the feudal aids of 1315 (Thomas Sandford and John de Beaumont) and 1346 (Lawrence de Pagham and Thomas Beaumont) (*FA* 2: 336). It is a fair presumption that the Beaumont share represented the 16th century 'Beamonds' and the Merlay/Sandford/Pagham share likewise 'Drayton' (otherwise called Drayton Pagham).

The descent of Drayton manor is clear, passing in the Pagham family in the 14th and 15th centuries until some time, probably in the 1460s, it was purchased or otherwise acquired by Thomas Pound. He died in 1476 and was succeeded first by his son Sir John Pound (1446–1506) and then by his son William Pound (1474–1525) (HRO 5M50/403–5; cf Salzman 1937, 9: 82). The descent of Beamonds, however, is not so clear, and no inquiries post mortem or other sources have so far been traced to elucidate it. According to 16th-century pedigree notes, the manor was purchased by the William Pound mentioned above, but the *VCH* says that his mother Elizabeth (née Holt) died in 1511 seised of part of it. At all events, William Pound died in 1525 in possession of both Drayton and Beamonds, but the union was shortlived.

DRAYTON

William Pound's possessions were split at his death between his two sons Anthony (son of his first wife) and William (son of his second). Drayton thus passed to Anthony (d.1547), to his son Richard (d.1548) (HRO unclassified wills 1548), and to Richard's son William Pound (d.1552) (HRO 4M53/I8). The succession then devolved on the latter William's two aunts, Honora, wife of Henry, Earl of Sussex, and Mary, wife of Edward White of Southwick. They divided the inheritance by a partition deed in 1560 in such a way that Honora took Drayton, whilst Mary's lands lay elsewhere (HRO 4M53/F20). The tenure of Drayton manor may be deduced from that of a freehold field in East Cosham held of Wallsworth manor which descended with it. Thus Drayton was sold in 1592 by the Earl of Sussex to

Robert Garth (d.1614) and by 1654 the heirs of his son Robert (d.c.1640) had sold it again to a Southampton merchant Edward Richbell, who in turn sold part to (Sir) Benjamin Newland before 1678 (HRO 44M73). Another part, apparently called Drayton Green and including extensive timber rights, was retained and is described in the will of Robert Richbell, proved in 1688 (HRO 28M60).

For lack of other sources, it is next necessary to consider a report, which appeared in the Farlington Parochial Report of 1800: 'In 1703 Mr Smith, who was previously seised of Farlington, in conjunction with a Mr Clemence, purchased the manor and land of Drayton of the co-heirs of Mr Robert Richbell and Sir Benjamin Newland, and divided the whole among themselves' (*HR* 2: 218–24). This appears to be substantially correct and Thomas Smith will be further discussed below in the context of Beamonds and Farlington, of which he was already the owner. One of the 1703 deeds of division actually exists: that relating to the share of Drayton taken by Smith, which it describes in some detail (HRO 11M56/70). From this it is clear that a simple partition was made along the line of Portsdown Hill, Smith taking the lands to the south and Nicholas Clemence those to the north (although Smith already held other lands to the north of the Hill, as will be seen below, by virtue of his Beamonds holdings).

Clemence was a timber merchant, whose portion of Drayton is first described in detail in a mortgage of 1713 and a conveyance of 1732. These show that besides various closes (139 acres in all), he acquired also a whole purlieu and half a shared purlieu in the Forest of East Bere. Purlieus were areas of forest reserved for the exclusive use of particular manors. The whole purlieu referred to here was no doubt that anciently appended to (undivided) Drayton, while the half is part of that anciently appended to East Cosham, but long divided between the manors of Drayton and Wallsworth, which had acquired or assumed manorial rights. The latter area, which lay to the north of Plant Farm, near the modern Waterlooville, was called 'The Partables', and will be

further described in the Wallsworth paper. In 1732 the premises were sold by Nicholas Clemence the younger to Thomas Missing of Stubbington, and the marriage settlement of his son Thomas in 1744 makes additional reference to 'a newly erected farmhouse near Purbrook Heath'. A third Thomas Missing agreed in 1777 to sell the property to Peter Taylor of Purbrook Park for £5,000, but the latter died and it was 1783 before his executors completed the purchase (HRO 4M53/234).

In the meantime the southern part of Drayton was united in 1703 to the manors of Farlington and Beamonds, and it would appear that Thomas Smith carried out a considerable programme of farm consolidation and improvement as a result. This probably included the enclosure of the common fields of Drayton, although no award has been found. Before considering later developments, however, the history of Beamonds needs to be brought up to date.

BEAMONDS AND FARLINGTON

When William Pound died in 1525, Beamonds descended to his second son, another William (d.1558) (HRO unclassified wills 1560, nos 231-2; bishopric wills 1561, no 159). He lived in a substantial house bearing the same name. In 1540 he acquired from the crown the manor of Farlington, hitherto a possession of Southwick Priory, and from then on Farlington and Beamonds descended together. William's probate inventory described the rooms in Beamonds House in some detail. It had a hall and chamber above, a parlour and chamber above, a chapel chamber, a schoolhouse and chamber above, a buttery and chamber above (with another adjoining), a gallery chamber, a malt loft and another loft, a men's chamber, husbandmen's hall, closet, kitchen, larder, brewhouse, and woolhouse (HRO unclassified wills 1560, no 232). The references to chapel and schoolhouse are particularly unusual and interesting in what was to be for over a century the house of a prominent recusant family. A son Thomas succeeded William, spending

much time in prison for his religious beliefs, and being buried at Farlington 'at night' in 1613 (Gasquet n.d., 54). In 1684 Thomas's descendant Henry Pound, who was still 'of Beamonds' and who had a house of five hearths in the 1665 tax assessment (PRO E 179/176/565), ran into financial difficulties. He mortgaged the manors and farms of Farlington and Beamonds to George Porter, transferring the mortgage to Thomas Smith in the following year (1685). Pound died in 1689, and three years later Smith obtained a court order making his title absolute (HRO 11M56/69).

DRAYTON, BEAMONDS, AND FARLINGTON

Thomas Smith thus became owner of Beamonds and Farlington in 1692 and of (South) Drayton in 1703. No source has yet been found which described the Beamonds lands in detail at this time, but the Drayton lands are fully set out in the partition deed of 1703. Thus in order to identify Beamonds it is necessary to look at post-1703 descriptions of Drayton and Beamonds jointly, and then subtract those lands not known to have belonged to Drayton. This is not easy, because of the substantial rationalisation of farm boundaries which took place during the first half of the 16th century following union of the properties. Before turning to the question of identity, however, it will be convenient to round off the story of the ownership of the estates.

To cut a long and complex story short, the Smith lands were heavily encumbered with mortgages, the full record of which can be read in a lengthy abstract of title (HRO 4M53/232). After the death of the first Thomas Smith in about 1741, his widow, who soon remarried as Elizabeth Bridger, remained in ownership until in 1763 she passed over her interests to her son, a second Thomas Smith. He is said to have retired abroad and a third Thomas Smith finally sold the estates to Peter Taylor of Purbrook Park in 1769.

THE TAYLOR OWNERSHIP

Peter Taylor's purchase in 1769 was of the biggest property in the parish – the manors and farms of Farlington, Beamonds, and (South) Drayton – although by this time Beamonds had ceased to be mentioned in the documents. As was shown above, he also negotiated to buy the manor of (North) Drayton from Thomas Missing in 1777, and his heirs actually completed the transaction six years later. In 1768 he had further acquired a major group of farms in the extreme north of the parish and beyond (Wheat Lane End, Cox's, Days London, Kentage, and Cutler's). The nucleus of these had been assembled by John Suffield, owner of the manors of Widley and builder of a great mansion house there c 1700, and had been added to by his descendants. Taylor rounded off the picture by purchasing a number of small properties, mainly in the Purbrook Heath area (HRO 4M53/233, 241).

Peter Taylor was a considerable man, MP for Portsmouth, who built the first mansion called Purbrook Park to the design of Robert Taylor on a previously unoccupied site within his new lands. It was much admired at the time. According to various accounts the work was begun in 1764, but it is strange that he should build on land he did not actually own (even if he may have been the lessee), and it could be that the true date is somewhat later. A Portsmouth guide of 1775 suggests that construction work was still going on then. In fact that particular house was to be demolished in 1829 and the present building (of 1840) is now part of Purbrook Park School. Peter Taylor was succeeded in the ownership by his son Charles William Taylor, who after a few years began to sell off parts of it. The major section is described in sale particulars dated 18 November 1810 (HRO 4M53/231), and subsequently the ownership was fragmented between several people.

WHERE WAS BEAMONDS HOUSE?

The preceding account has indicated the extensive changes brought about by the amal-

gamation of properties in the 18th century and particularly by the (re)uniting of Beamonds with the southern part of Drayton in 1703. Since the name Beamonds apparently ceased to be used after that date, except for the purposes of legal continuity in title deeds, there are considerable problems of identification today. These are compounded by the fact that many manors in the area cannot be assigned clear boundaries, since the holdings attached to them were largely (or at least partly) made up of strips in the common fields intermingled with strips held of other manors. Thus Drayton and Beamonds manors both probably had strips in Drayton, Mark, and Potters Field in Drayton tithing, as well as in East Cosham, Court, Stitch, and Hook Fields in the neighbouring tithing of East Cosham in Wymering parish. The East Cosham fields were shared with Wallsworth manor (mainly in Widley parish), as was Drayton Field, and it may be that the fields of Drayton tithing generally were likewise shared with the tenants of Farlington manor. North of Portsdown Hill much of the land of East Cosham tithing to the east of the London Road were probably in Drayton or Beamonds manors (or both), to the extent that some sources (e.g. Robert Richbell's will in 1688) tend to refer confusingly at times to the 'manor of Farlington and Wymering' in contexts which indicate that it must have been used as an alternative name for the northern part of Drayton manor after the division. (The question of the partition of the East Cosham lands, originally one serjeanty, among the adjoining manors is too complex to be discussed here, but it may be noted that the part later attached to Drayton manor seems to have been acquired by Thomas de Sandford at the beginning of the 14th century (HRO Andrews Notes: Drayton).)

No sources so far examined, whether those mentioned above, or many others hopefully perused, have stated clearly where Beamonds House was, although Beamonds Barn and Beamonds Marsh do occur as boundary references in the 1703 partition deed of Drayton. Only two original plans so far seem to have

shown it: Speed's map of Hampshire (1611) places a little circle marked 'Beamonds' in an impossible position between Cosham and Wymering villages, and later copyists repeated this mistake. John Norden, however, in 1595 placed it between Cosham and Drayton, and this is (I am sure) a valuable clue. Both cartographers were at least convinced that it lay south of Portsdown Hill and not in the vicinity of Purbrook Heath. This is important, for it seems clear from certain 18th-century documents, and especially from a Smith family conveyance of 1763 (HRO 4M53/232) that Beamonds manor must have included lands to the north: the document mentions Purbrook Heath House and Purbrook Farm, both of them in Drayton tithing but definitely not in that part of Drayton manor that Thomas Smith acquired in 1703.

If one looks at a deed of 1752 which was concerned with mortgage interests in the Smith estates, John Knight is named as tenant at a rent of £260 a year of 'Beaumont Farm and Drayton Farm' (ESRO G/Ha 31). The Knights, in fact, are several times mentioned as farmers at Drayton, the earliest reference being found in a Wymering land tax assessment of 1704 ('George Knight for Part of Draitons farm £11 12s 5d') (HRO 5M50/1949), and the latest being an 1826 land tax assessment for Farlington parish, which shows James Knight as owner and occupier of Lower Drayton (HRO official land tax assessments). The 1827 owner of the latter premises, John Powell, can be located on the parish tithe award and plan of 1838, which fixes the site. However it is clear that Drayton Farm proper, also identifiable on the tithe map, in the 19th-century land tax assessments, and in various 18th-century sources, was only tenanted by the Knights for a limited period during the middle of the 18th century, and had other tenants outside that period. Thus in 1700-3 Thomas Perkins was tenant: 'Farmer Pirkens for Drayton Farm' occurs in a Wymering tithe rental of 1700 (HRO 4M53/H7) and he is also named in Smith's purchase deed of (South) Drayton manor in 1703. Stephen Cousens was farmer

before his death in 1733 (HRO archdeaconry wills 1733). It is thus evident that if Drayton Farm is deducted from John Knight's 1752 tenancy, the basic Knight property was Beamonds Farm, later to be called Lower Drayton Farm, and identifiable as such on 19th-century maps.

Looking further ahead to 1910, Lower Drayton Farm had become 'Drayton Manor' (Ordnance Survey 6 inch map 3rd edn.), and this ties up with an interesting comment in 1878: (Drayton Manor) 'is the residence of Miss Secker, who in 1872 built a very handsome Elizabethan residence upon the site of the old Manor House' (White 1878). If there really was an old manor house there before, then it had been used for many years as the farmhouse for Lower Drayton Farm, and, since it was in Beamonds, *not* Drayton manor, it was in all probability on the site of the Beamonds House of the Pound family. It may not, however, have been the original house, in view of a reference made in a report compiled in 1721 for William Heathcote, purchaser of the Hursley estate near Winchester, at a time when he was contemplating the purchase of various other properties in Hampshire. In it his agent comments: 'In the occupation of Geo. Knight a large Barne and very good, except the thatching, but the house and other buildings not worth repairing . . . 160 acres of land lett at £85 per annum, 4 years to come' (HRO 58M71E/B22).

As a final comment it might be reiterated that the pre-1703 division between the lands of Beamonds and Drayton was not one to which a clear boundary can now be set. Whenever the original partition was made – in the early 13th century or before – the then Drayton was split by assigning certain tenanted properties to one manor and others to the others, so that they became physically intermixed on both sides of Portsdown Hill. They each had also a share of the coastal marshes, of the common pasture on Portsdown, of the waste land around Purbrook Heath, and of the various rights in the Forest of Bere.

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