

Tintinhull - Saxon Charters, Glastonbury Abbey and Domesday.

This is a synopsis prepared by tlhg of a detailed investigation done by F & C Thorn in 2009. The complete work is published in full, with the kind permission of the authors, at <http://www.tintinhull-localhistory.org.uk/pdfs/Tintinhull%20Charters%20and%20Domesday.pdf>

Summary.

Tintinhull may have been granted from the royal estate of Yeovil and the hundred of which it was the caput was probably created for or by Glastonbury Abbey. The estate probably once amounted to 10 hides granted in two 5-hide portions, one of them having an outlying portion at 'Hiscombe'. By 1066, 'Hiscombe' and Tintinhull were managed as separate estates and, after the Conquest, 'Hiscombe' was acquired by the Bishop of Coutances while Tintinhull and the rest of the hundred were taken by Robert of Mortain, Tintinhull itself being nominally an exchange for Camerton. F & C Thorn 2009

Hundreds were created in the mid-tenth century and drawn on a landscape in which there was already a network of relationships between places that became members of different hundreds. Sometimes these ties were so strong that one place became an outlying part of a hundred where a related place lay; especially so where one manor needed access to resources (woodland, upland grazing, salt-marsh) that it lacked at home. Sometimes, after the creation of a hundred, a powerful landholder, often ecclesiastical, would add or deduct manors to or from particular hundreds so as to group them into a single dispersed franchise: the church of Wells was already doing this in Somerset in 1086; see Thorn, 'Hundreds and Wapentakes', Somerset Domesday, p. 36. Sometimes, as in Worcestershire, a hundred from the outset was scattered and had a single owner; see Thorn, 'Hundreds and Wapentakes', Worcestershire Domesday, pp. 32-37.

It has not hitherto been noticed that Tintinhull Hundred is almost certainly of this last kind, that it was a small scattered hundred created for or by Glastonbury Abbey and from which, in addition to the revenues of its manors, it received the profits of the hundred itself.

It seems that Tintinhull Hundred in 1086 consisted of Tintinhull , Kingstone , Stoke-sub-Hamdon and East Stoke , Draycott , 'Hiscombe' and Bishopstone-Montacute . Of these 'Hiscombe' no longer exists on the ground. It was a detached tithing of Tintinhull in West Coker parish (see

VCH Somerset, i. p. 446 note 1), now represented by the field-name 'Hiscombe Mead' (see Tithe Award of 1844). The detached position of 'Hiscombe' is emphasized by a note in the Tax Return for the Yeovil group of hundreds (Exon folio 79a1). It records tax on 2 hides and 3 virgates. (This statement of hides is important when considering the estates granted to Glastonbury below). Tintinhull Hundred thus described is territorially odd. In totalling no more than 40 hides, it was not even a half-hundred; on the ground it was pinched between Martock Hundred and Stone Hundred (which contained Yeovil, see fig.....) and it had two other detachments other than 'Hiscombe'; they were at Draycott (in Ashington) and at Kingstone eight miles away near Ilminster.

The estate or estates at Tintinhull granted to Glastonbury Abbey in the tenth century probably originated from a large royal estate (perhaps of 200 hides) grouped around the River Yeo (formerly the Gifl) and centred on Yeovil. The putative Yeovil estate had been divided into the hundreds of Tintinhull, Stone, Houndsborough and Martock and the manor-hundred of *Liet* (Coker) by 1086. It is possible that Tintinhull had actually been granted out of Martock but Martock itself probably originated as a grant out of the land of Yeovil by a king to his queen, and some or all of Tintinhull may have come directly from the land of Yeovil rather than via the land of Martock.

There had apparently been two Anglo-Saxon charters in existence concerning Tintinhull. The first was a grant by King Edmund (939 x 946) to Wulfic of 5 hides at *Tintanhulle*. William of Malmesbury says (Scott pp. 114-15, section 55): *item prefatus rex Edmundus dederat eidem*

Wilfrico Tintanhulla v hidas, quas idem Wilfricus postea cum corpore suo Glastonie commendavit ('Also, the aforementioned King Edmund had given Tintinhull, 5 hides, to the same Wulfric; these [hides] the same Wulfric subsequently entrusted to Glastonbury with his body'). In the other lost charter a woman called Ælfswith gave 5 hides at *Tintanhulle* and other lands and gifts to Glastonbury Church (959 x 975).

In such circumstances (two lost charters for the same size of holding at the same place and only one of them granting land directly to Glastonbury Abbey), the question arises as to whether these are separate grants amounting to 10 hides or successive grants of the same land. There is no single route by which Wulfric's lands reached Glastonbury. There is evidence from other charters both for direct gifts and for lands passing via Ælfswith to Glastonbury, but Domesday also has 'evidence' that bears on this issue.

Domesday describes Tintinhull as having 7 hides and 1 virgate of land, but it pays tax for 5 hides. These figures do not, at first sight, help to decide whether Tintinhull was a 5-hide or a 10-hide manor. However, it may be that Tintinhull was once a 10-hide estate (the combination of two separate grants), which had benefitted from a halving of its tax and other obligations as had happened at other Glastonbury estates, such as Pennard. If the Tintinhull estate was formerly of 5 hides, then 2 hides and 1 virgate have been added from elsewhere; if 10 hides, then the lost hides need to be sought elsewhere. The estates adjacent to Tintinhull do not show obvious signs of addition or subtraction. The most obvious match is the detached portion of the Tintinhull Hundred at *Hescombe*. This 'Hiscombe' described as 2 hides and 3 virgates in Domesday, was held by the Bishop of Coutances, but claimed by Glastonbury Abbey. Tintinhull and Hiscombe together make an exact fit of 10 hides, though in itself and for other reasons, this is not conclusive.

On balance it seems likely that there were two separate grants by charter of 'Tintinhull', each of 5 hides but that one of them contained dependent land in 'Hiscombe'. By 1086 the 10 hides were divided between 7 hides and 1 virgate at Tintinhull and 2 hides and 3 virgates at 'Hiscombe'; the latter, as thaneland, had been subject to divisions and re-combinations, but had not changed its original size. The 5-hide rating for tax would thus be beneficial, the result of a remission in liability granted by some later king.

'Hiscombe' lacks a charter, a rare omission among Glastonbury estates which probably implies that when granted it was part of something else. Moreover, if it was part of Tintinhull originally, this would explain why it remained a detached part of Tintinhull Hundred. When grants of five hides

or more were made, especially in the late Anglo-Saxon period, even when the charter gives them a single name, they were not always discrete blocks, sometimes because an outlying portion would provide a resource that the core estate lacked or because the previous grant of nearby estates meant that the five hides (a standard size) could not be in one place.

If 'Hiscombe' was part of Tintinhull originally, then, by 1066 it formed a separate estate; this would make sense in terms of managing the land which was not contiguous to Tintinhull and it would be a typical example of the letting-out of an outlying part of an estate while the Abbey held the core in demesne: the four thanes who held in 1066 were presumably Glastonbury tenants. It is possible that the Bishop of Coutances simply seized the land from the Abbey, but equally possible that the thanes had begun to deprive the Abbey of it

In the general run of estates in Somerset held by Glastonbury Abbey, the new measure of capacity (the ploughland) is slightly more than the hidage and the number of ploughs employed, sometimes slightly less. A more exact parallel to Tintinhull is Pennard (SOM 8,21): 'Before 1066 it paid tax for 10 hides. However there are 20 hides there'. This suggests that at some point the church of Glastonbury was accorded a 50% reduction in the tax and other obligations of this estate: 20 original hides, related in some degree to agrarian capacity, have become 10 fiscal hides. However, the rating is only 12 ploughlands, with 13 ploughs there.

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