

THE MANOR of TWYFORD

The geographical position of the manor of Twyford within the parish of Eardisland is illustrated on the "Introduction" page of this work. The position shown does not have the benefit of a surviving 'perambulation' as is the case with Burton and Hinton, but the parish boundary to the west and the likely course of the boundaries of the other adjacent manors has allowed lines to be drawn.

The place name "Twyford" has been interpreted as 'double ford'; either across a river with parallel streams, or perhaps a place where there were two fords side by side in the same river.¹ A much less expert, but much more local source mentions that:

*Twyford lies, as its name suggests, between the fords, starting just below the Arrow bridge at Pembridge and flanking the river on both banks for about one and a half miles, not quite reaching the ford near Eardisland.*²

But what of the people who had control over, worked within, had families and died in the manor of Twyford over the centuries?

It is reputed, but with no archaeological evidence of which I am aware, that "*Twyford.....occupied by the Romans.*" This is from Cassey's Directory of 1858,³ but there is no indication where the idea came from. This contention is repeated in Littlebury's Directory, 1876-7⁴ and much more recently, circa 1975, by Norman Reeves who uses much the same wording.⁵

The earliest documentary reference of which I am aware relates to the year 1091 when the King (William II 'Rufus'), gave lands in Herefordshire to William (i) de Braose of Bramber (in Sussex). De Braose brought various knights from Sussex to this region, to one of which he may have given lands at Barland in Radnor and at Twyford, here in Eardisland. It is suggested that this knight may have been referred to as 'le Poitevin' by which name his descendants became known. But ... "It was in William (ii) de Braose's day that the Poitevin family of Peytevin's Castle (now Pytingwyn) in Llanddew, Breconshire (but who also had lands at Twyford in Eardisland and Barland in Radnor) first come to notice. In 1155 a William le Poitevin witnessed a charter of Abbot Hamelin of Gloucester..."⁶

The de Braose connection ended in 1230 when William (iv) de Braose was hung by Llewelyn the Great. De Braose left four infant daughters as heirs, one of whom, Maud (Matilda) was betrothed to Roger son of Ralph (ii) de Mortimer of Wigmore. Both the betrothed were still in infancy and the manor of Twyford, together with many others of Maud's inheritance, were administered by Ralph de Mortimer, the father, on behalf of his infant son who was to inherit when his betrothed, the de Braose heiress, and he came of age. The Poitevin family must have continued as lords of the manor holding from (de Braose)/Mortimer, tenant-in-chief of the Crown, since there is solid evidence that in 1371 Sir Thomas Peytevyn made complaint that his manor of Twyford had been besieged whilst he was overseas with Edward, Prince of Wales.

This, and all other subsequent dated references to Twyford, will be dealt with as a succession of individual Papers.

¹ Ekwall, E. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place names. 4th Edition, 1959.

² W.I. Book, page 66. Published in 1956.

³ Cassey, Edward, & Co. History, Topography and Directory of Herefordshire. Preston, 1858.

⁴ Littlebury's Directory and Gazetteer of Herefordshire, 1876-7...in Hereford Library.

⁵ Reeves Notebook No.10, pages 63 and 70.

⁶ Coplestone-Crow: other.

