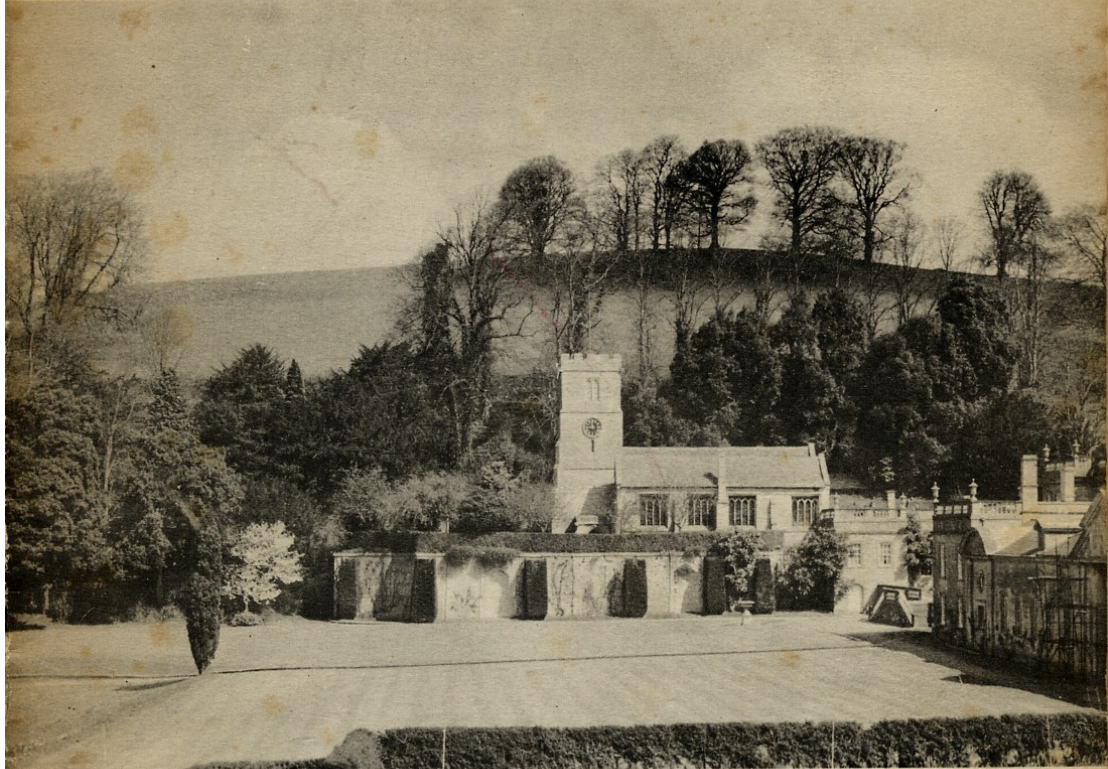


*This document was kindly donated by John Miller. The text was transcribed from a booklet provided by Pat Churchman to John Miller 11/01/2003. Minor punctuation changes only have been made.*

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## A HISTORY OF DYRHAM & HINTON



Dyrham Church in its setting within the Park



DYRHAM AND HINTON CHURCH APPEAL

## DYRHAM AND HINTON CHURCH APPEAL

*Chairman of the Appeal Committee:*

P. C. GIRDLESTONE  
DYRHAM  
CHIPPENHAM  
Wiltshire  
Telephone: ABSON 456

·DYRHAM·



1250 - 1960

*Treasurer:*

JACK SALMON  
HINTON  
CHIPPENHAM  
Wiltshire  
Telephone: ABSON 225

WE NEED £6,600.

Our Architect, Mr. Ernest F. Tew of Bath, has reported that the following Essential Repairs must be carried out within five years:-

1. The repair and renewal of the stone-tiled roofs, including the timber work and the lead gutters.
2. The repair of the stonework and the re-leading of all the windows.
3. The overhaul of the drainage system, the heating and the electric wiring.
4. The redecoration throughout.

We also want to improve the Church path and provide lighting.

This History has been prepared and is based on the manuscript by an unknown author lent by Mrs. Hillyer, with comments and corrections by the Squire, Mrs. F.L. Blathwayt, Mr. Kenworthy-Browne and Miss Ralph of the Archives Department of Bristol Corporation. Their help has been much appreciated.

Please help us in any way you can in raising this large sum of money. Contributions can be put in the brass slot of the green wall sare in the tower, or sent to me or to the Treasurer.

Yours sincerely,

Chairman of the Appeal Committee.

## THE HISTORY OF DYRHAM AND HINTON

The modern village of Dyrham got its ancient name of "Deorham" at the time when the stretch of ground from the banks of the Bristol Avon to the Cotswolds was a forest. This was called the "King's Wood", and Deorham was "the home of the deer".

It will always be famous in history as the site of the Battle of Deorham (577). The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says "This year Cuthwin and Ceawlin fought with the Britons and slew three kings. Commail and Condidia and Farinmail, on the spot that is called Derham, and took from them three cities, Gloucester, Cirencester and Bath". This battle entirely separated the British in the west, in what is now Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, from their brethren in Wales and to the northward, and led to the settlement in this part of the country of the Saxons.

There is still to be seen on Hinton Hill the remains of a camp of about 18 acres which traditionally was the site of the battle, but whether it was occupied at the time by the Britons or by the West Saxons has often been disputed. At all events the result was decisive. The battle was a turning point in Gloucestershire history, for this part of the country became settled by the English and in time formed part of Wessex, the kingdom of the West Saxons.

Before the Conquest, in the time of the Confessor, Deorham was held by a Saxon named Aluric. By the time Domesday Book was compiled he had been replaced by a Norman, William fitzWido. In the survey it is stated that by the King's order, Durand the Sheriff had endowed St. Mary of Pershore with three hides but that these were held by this same William. These hides Earl William had given to Turstin fitzRolf with this manor.

Afterwards, the manor of Dyrham which Turstin held passed to the Barons of Newmarch, the descendants of Bernard de Newmarch. William Newmarch seems to have been the first of the family to hold the manor. He was succeeded by his son Henry, who left it to his brother James. In 1216 James Newmarch died, leaving two daughters under the guardianship of John Russel, of Kingston Russel, Dorset. Russel married the elder daughter Isabel to his son Ralph. The younger, Howise, was first married to John de Botreaux, and after his death to Nicholas de Molis.

Ralph, thus being the owner of Dyrham, gave it as dowry with his daughter Matilda (? Maud), in marriage to Robert Walerand, Governor of St. Briavel's Castle, a fortress on the borders of the Forest of Dean. Robert Walerand was a distinguished man in his day and his name is often met among those of the great barons. He must have been extremely rich, for on the marriage of the daughter of Henry II he was assessed at twenty-five knights' fees towards the expense. He died in 1272, without issue, and the manor reverted to his wife's elder brother, Robert Russel. He was succeeded by his son William who died at Dyrham in 1311, his son and heir, Theobald, being aged ten.

In 1330, John Canlop, Rector of the parish, was seized of the manor, but he was only trustee, and in 1337 another Ralph Russel was in possession and was followed by Sir Maurice Russel who died in 1416, also leaving two daughters, co-heiresses. The brasses in the south aisle of the Church commemorate Sir Maurice and his wife.

The elder daughter, Margaret, married Sir Gilbert Dennis and the younger, Isabel, married, first, Sir John St. Loe, and secondly, Sir John (? Walter) Drayton. Both the daughters were jointly seized of

the manor but in 1422 Sir John Drayton sold his share of the manor to Sir Gilbert Dennis who thus became Lord of the whole manor. He was succeeded by his son Sir Maurice, and his grandson, Sir William. By a grant of September 22nd, 1508, William Denys conveyed the manor or Dyrham and lands in Dyrham and Hinton to others (in trust for himself).

On September 8th, 1539 Sir Nicholas Poyntz of Iron Acton by a grant conveyed the manor of Hinton with lands in Dyrham and Hinton to Thomas White. It is not known how Sir Nicholas Poyntz came into possession of Hinton Manor. However, the Conveyance was further assured by a Common Recovery suffered by Poyntz to Thomas White on June 28th, 1540. On January 14th, 1541 Thomas White granted his manor of Hinton and lands in Dereham to Robert Ellyot, Major of Bristol, so that the rents and profits should be used to relieve Severn shipping from paying tolls in Bristol port. This property remained in the hands of the Corporation of Bristol until 1921 and Corporation Clump obviously derives its name from this period.

Sir William's son, Sir Walter, retained the Dyrham part of the estate. He married Margaret, daughter of Sir Richard Weston of Co. Surrey. His will dated 2nd February 1570 describes him as of St. Augustine's Green, by Bristowe. He bequeathes to his son, Richard, all his armour at Dyrham and elsewhere, also his best bed at Bodrington, and to his sister Mary, his second best bed. (This Mary was a nun at Lacock and afterwards Prioress at Kington, and was buried in St. Gaunts on the Green, Bristol in 1593). He also mentions his brother, William, and his son, Thomas, also his son, Sir Walter, a parson of Dyrham. The will was proved on 12th. May 1571 by his widow and Thomas Ivie. Walter, the Rector of Dyrham, was buried there on 3rd July, 1577. Earlier in 1571 Sir Walter joined with his son, Richard, in conveying the manor, by sale or mortgage, to George Wynter, brother of William Wynter, of Lydney.

George Wynter married Anne, sister and co-heiress of Robert Brayne of Bristol. Their eldest son, John, married Mary Brouncker of Erle Stoke, Wiltshire. He sailed on a voyage with Drake as his vice-admiral, and the property was left in trust "till he should have cleared himself of the charge of piracy".

His son, Sir George Wynter, succeeded him in 1581 and married Mary, daughter of Edward Rogers of Cannington, Somerset. She brought to the family the Porlock Estate. He died in 1638 leaving a son, John, then sixteen years old.

John Wynter married Frances, daughter of Thomas Gerard of Trent. He died in 1668, leaving an only daughter, Mary, who in 1686 married William Blathwayt, Secretary of State to William III. He was also Clerk of the Privy Council to Charles II, James II, William III and Anne, and Commissioner for Trades and Plantations. It was he who built some, if not all, of the west front of the mansion after designs by Talman, the famous architect, and many of the pictures and much of the furniture show signs of his connection with Holland in his early life, and when Secretary of State. He died in 1711.

This is the first entry of the Blathwayts into the history of the manor, and they have remained in possession of it until it was acquired by the Nation in 1957/58.

The following of William Blathwayt's descendants have been Lords of the Manor:-  
William Blathwayt, m. Thomasine Ambrose. Died 1742.  
William, m. (1) Penelope Jenkinson of Hawkesbury,

(2) Frances Clarke.

(3) Mary Creighton.

Died 1787.

William, m. Frances Scott. Died 1806.

George William, m. Marianne, daughter of Rev. Thomas Agmondisham Vesey.

Died 1871.

George William, m. Charlotte Amelia, daughter of Major Baker. Died 1899.

Rev. Wynter Thomas Blathwayt, m. (1) Frances Elisabeth, daughter of Robert Philips.

(2) Mary Sarah, daughter of George Hibbert Oates.

In 1909 he was succeeded as owner, Lord of the Manor by

Robert Wynter Blathwayt who died in 1936. After a prolonged law suit -

Justin Robert Wynter Blathwayt became Lord of the Manor, but the Park House was sold to the Nation in 1957/58 and handed over to the National Trust in 1960.

### **DYRHAM PARK**

There are no records to show when the first manor house was built here. We get the first written record about it from John Leland, who was commissioned by Henry VIII to investigate England's antiquities. He wrote in his "Itinerary" (1540-6) –

"From Coderington to Derham a Mile and Halfe of, where Mastar Dionise dwellithe, havinge a faire Howse of Achelei (ashlar) Stones and a Parke ..... Dereham Village is a 2 Mils from Tormerton. There is a fayre Manor Place longginge to Mastar Dionyse. The Lordeshipe of auncient tyme longyd to the Russels. One John Russell and Elizabethe his Wyfe lyethe there buryed in the Paroche Church, but they had a meane Howse there. From them it cam by Heyre Generall onto the Dionisies of whom one Gilbert Dionise was countyd as one of the first that there possessyd. Then cam Maurice, and he there buildyd a new Courte. And Ser Guliam Dionise buildyd another Courte of late yeres. The Dionysies hathe here a fayre Parke, and also a fayre Lordeshipe and a praty Howse and 2 Myles from Dereham at Siseton, and a nothar Maner and Place cawlyd Alnestone 2 Myles from Thornebyry".

It is difficult to locate any part of the building erected before the Blathwayts took possession, except possibly some mullioned windows and a fragment of stone stairs in the cellar.

Sir Robert Atkyns gives a bird's eye view of the building in his History of Gloucestershire (1712). This shows the gardens laid out in Dutch style which was fashionable in those days. In the picture can be seen the waterworks, which supplied the house with water, at the head of which was a figure of Neptune. The figure is still to be seen on the east side of the house on the top of the hill where it stood formerly.

The east and west fronts of the house are designed with great architectural beauty. On the east side there is a fine entrance, and as many as thirty eight windows can be seen, many of them ornamented with carvings. Along the whole length extends a parapet, designed after the style of a balustrade, and ornamented at various points with vases, and a large stone eagle, the Blathwayt crest, in the centre. The west front is similar in design, and is reached by a double flight of steps, leading to a flagged terrace with a balustrade. A charming view is to be had of the grounds sloping down below.

The Saloon contained a fine collection of pictures and many splendid specimens of works of art and elegant furniture. The Diogenes Room is so called from the fine Mortlake tapestry hanging on the walls representing Diogenes disputing with the philosophers from his bath tub. The Leather Hall is so named from the stamped Cordova leather which covers the walls.

The pictures included royal portraits of Charles II and James II by Lely, and of William III and Mary, Anne, Prince George, and the Duke of Gloucester by Kneller. There were also many valuable pictures by famous Dutch artists and a series of family portraits of both the Wynter and Blathwayt families.

The White Drawing Room was equipped with furniture of Chippendale style in white and gold made by Gillow. The account for the suite dated 1779 was still held at Dyrham.

The two grand staircases are rich in bold carving and over them and on the ceiling of the Saloon are some paintings by Casali which came from Alderman Beckford's house at Fonthill.

The Library on the ground floor contained some very valuable books and documents. An extremely interesting copy of the Bodleian Library Catalogue dated 1605 was presented to its then owner, R. Bower, by Thomas Bodley himself. There is a doorway which leads to the Church through a passage and vestry.

The Balcony Room is panelled in perfect style of the time of William III and has a very handsome ceiling.

The walls of the Tapestry Bedroom are hung with valuable tapestry portraying garden scenes, and there was a painted four-post bedstead said to be over two hundred years old.

## **THE CHURCH**

The Church of St. Peter, Dyrham, stands near the mansion on a steep slope which has been levelled up from the south. It consists of a chancel, a nave with two aisles which reach to the east end, and a western tower with a porch attached to the south wall. The position of this porch is peculiar. As there was no room for it on the south side of the south aisle it was built on to the south side of the tower. However, the stonework of it is not attached to the tower and yet it seems to be as old, if not older. The eastern part of the south aisle opens into the chancel with two arches.

The oldest part of the Church dates from the XIII Century, and is to be seen in the arcade of three arches between the north aisle and the nave. The position of the ancient rood loft can be discerned by the two heavy piers north and south. Later, the arch east of the fine clustered pillar was cut away to let in the handsome oak Jacobean pulpit.

The Church was restored by Sir Morris Russel at the close of the XIV Century and contains four beautiful figures representing St. John the Baptist, holding a lamp, St. Mary as a child, holding a book, St. John the Divine holding a chalice, and a female saint, with hand raised, probably St. Anne. The figure of St. John the Divine has been restored, the head being later. In the top of the west window of the north aisle is a piece of rare old, grisaille glass showing the Rose of York.

The Chapel in the south aisle was once used by the Guild of St. Denis. This Guild was founded in 1520 by Sir William Denys and his wife, Lady Anne, daughter of Sir Maurice Berkeley. It was an important guild, having a large number of members, some of whom paid 10d. and others 20d. per quarter as subscriptions. A curious window is to be seen in the south wall of the south aisle. It was possibly a confessional window where the chantry priest might be confessed to, in the place of the parish priest. No-one can be certain about this. It may have been a leper window or it may have been the place where the Sanctus bell was rung. On the floor of the Denys Chapel is a brass commemorating Sir Maurice Russel, in full armour, and his wife Isabel, both under a double canopy.

The late-Norman font is cushion-shaped, and stands on a high shaft. The font cover is surmounted by a turtle dove. This was given by parishioners in memory of the Rev. Frank Blathwayt who was Rector from 1926 to 1953, and who was a great bird lover.

One feature at this Church to which the attention of visitors is always drawn is the number of finely designed encaustic tiles on the floor of the south aisle. They resemble the tiles at Hayles Abbey and must have been brought from there at the Dissolution, or have been made at the same place.

At the east end of the south aisle is the tomb of George Wynter, who died in 1581, and of his wife Anne. It is a fine freestone monument and the effigies are surmounted by a canopy supported on Corinthian pillars. On the south wall near is a tablet in memory of John and Frances Wynter erected by their daughter Mary and her husband, Sir William Blathwayt. Also on the south wall are three brasses. The first is in memory of Colonel George William Blathwayt of Dyrham Park, late 23rd Light Dragoons and King's Dragoon Guards, 1797-1871. The second is to the memory of George William Blathwayt, late King's Dragoon Guards, 1824-1899. The third is to the memory of Wynter Thomas Blathwayt, thirty four years Rector of the parish, 1845-1909. There is also a monument to William Langton, a former Rector who left benefactions for educational and other purposes. On the north wall are five small brasses to the memory of members of the Weare family, all of ancient date. These were found on stones in the aisle. One is to "Mary, late wife of Henry Weare, who concluded a holy and humble life with a comfortable death, 1639". In the chancel are two brasses, one to the memory of "Samuel Trewman, S.T.B. Hujus Eccles. Rector, Obiit XXX Dec. A.D. MDCLXXXVIII". The other is inscribed, "Here lyeth the body of Amii, late wife of Samuel Trewman, and daughter of Thomas Symes, late of Winterbourne, Esq., who departed this life ye 20th. day of October 1677, aged 24 years".

Among other memorials in the Church will be found a curious one of painted wood to "Ye Rev. Mr. Mervyn Perry, 58 years Rector of this parish, died 1753", a stone wall monument in the north aisle to Isaac Tyler, another to Francis Freeman, of Norton Malreward, and monuments in brass and marble to the Rev. W.S.Robinson, Rector from 1828-75, and his family.

On one of the chancel arch pillars is a marble tablet to the Rev. Peter Grand, a former Rector, containing words from his pen which remind us that "he, being dead, yet speaketh". His message is as follows:- "Be daily diligent in private, and if opportunity occurs, in public prayer. Frequently receive the Holy Communion, with humble, penitent, faithful, charitable, and thankful hearts. Live soberly, righteously, and Godly. Fear God and keep His commandments. The peace of God be with you all in Christ Jesus, Amen". The Rev. Peter Grand died Nov. 9th. 1792 aged seventy four and was for thirty six years Rector of the parish. There is also a tablet in the vestry which records the fact that he was Rector for that time, and that the amount he gave away in charity greatly exceeded

his stipend. He built and partly endowed a school for the parish. This was before the present school was erected in 1875.

In the wall near the family pew behind the Choir is a curious stone once used as a paving-stone, bearing the arms of the Dennis family. It was discovered face downwards, and unfortunately got broken. The holy water stoup is still there in its original position but it has been partly cut away.

On a stone in the churchyard, to Frances Sainsbury, died 1711, is the following epitaph: -

Thirty years and more I was a widowed wife,  
Up to the thirtieth year I lived a wedded wife,  
And now alas no more I'm in this world of strife,  
I'm neither married woman, nor yet a widowed wife.

There are six bells and their age can be ascertained from the stops between the words of the motto. These are the heads of Edward I and Eleanor, his Queen. Edward I began to reign in 1272 and died in 1307.

The Triptych at the back of the Altar depicts the Nativity, the Adoration of the Wise Men and the Flight into Egypt. It is Flemish work of the XVI Century. It stands on a shelf on the edge of which is carved, the first message sent by Morse in his code - "See what God hath wrought".

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### **RECTORS OF DYRHAM**

1350 John Cantop	1699 Mervyn Perry.
1520 Robert Lien.	1754 Peter Grand.
1570 Walter Dennys.	1803 George William Blathwayt
1577 John Hall.	1806 G. Swayne.
1587 John Halling.	1828 William Robinson.
1648 William Langton.	1875 Wynter Thomas Blathwayt.
1668 Henry Hoskins.	1909 Wynter Edward Blathwayt.
1680 Samuel Trueman.	1929 Francis Linley Blathwayt.

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