

**REMAINS HISTORICAL & LITERARY
CONNECTED WITH THE PALATINE COUNTIES
OF LANCASTER AND CHESTER, VOL. XXX.
DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE PRIORY OF
PENWORTHAM, AND OTHER POSSESSIONS IN
LANCASHIRE OF THE ABBEY OF EYESHAM**

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W. A. HULTON

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PRIORY OF PENWORTHAM,

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OF THE

Abbey of Evesham.

EDITED BY

W. A. HULTON, ESQ.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE documents now presented to the CHETHAM SOCIETY relate to the possessions which the Abbey of Evesham held in Lancashire, and principally, of course, to the Priory of Penwortham. They have been drawn from various sources. The muniment chests at Penwortham and Werden have been with great liberality placed at the command of the Editor for the purposes of the Society. The Tower Rolls have been searched, and have furnished some documents, while others have been extracted from the great book of the Abbey now in the British Museum (Harl. MS. 3763.)

The latter work most probably passed at the dissolution of the Monastery into the family of the Fleetwoods, the grantees of the Priory of Penwortham, and remained amongst the muniments of that family until the early part of the last century, when it became the property of Lord Harley. This appears to have been the case from a memo-

randum in the initial leaf of the book, in the following terms :

Memorandum : When Henry Fleetwood of Penwortham Esquire disposed of this book to my noble Lord Harley, he reserved to himself and his family a right of borrowing the same out of the Library whensoever upon occasion of contests with the bishops of Chester it shall be necessary to produce it at trials in public. And accordingly my Lord was pleased to lend it to Mr. Fleetwood for that purpose the last Somer. In token of this covenant which was made with my privity, and for the certain information of posterity, I do hereby put my name the second day of March 17 $\frac{2}{3}$.

Humfrey Wanley.

But before discussing the grant under which the Priory of Penwortham was founded, it may not be altogether unprofitable to glance at the few remaining records which in any degree affect the previous history of the district in which the possessions assigned for that purpose are situated.

Of course, a search for written records previous to the Roman era would be fruitless. Beyond the mere fact that the district now so well known as Lancashire was then peopled by the Setantii, a tribe of the great Western Brigantes, written history is silent. But the traces of the aboriginal inhabitants may be sought for in their singularly expressive local designations. Nor are these wanting in this district. For instance, three important rivers, flowing from east to west, intersect it and empty themselves into the Irish Sea. At the precise point on each of these rivers where the first available ford is found, a local name is discovered, into the composition of which the term *werid* enters. Two of