

Two Thomas Chards.

A CORRECTION.

BY REV. F. W. WEAVER, M.A.

WOOD in his *Athenæ* (Bliss II, 751) distinguishes between Thomas Chard, Abbot of Ford, and Thomas Chard, Prior of Montacute and Bishop of Solubria.

But other writers, following in the wake of Dr. Oliver, (*Monast. Dioc. Exon.*, 341) have identified the two.

Indeed, the last named writer, after specifying the numerous preferments held by the Bishop, writes : " Had Wood been aware of these accumulated preferments and emoluments, besides the king's pension of £80 a-year ('with fourtie wayne lodes of fyre wood to be taken yerely during his lyfe') from the dissolved Abbey of Ford, he might have spared his expression of sympathy as "all little enough, God wot, to support his honourable dignity."

To Mr. Maxwell Lyte, C.B., belongs the honour of proving Wood right by an independent process : namely, by examining the handwritings of the two men as preserved in documents in the Public Record Office, and he courteously communicated his important 'find' to the present writer before he put it on record in the eighth volume of the Somerset Record Society's Proceedings, p. lxxv. As I had written an account of Thomas Chard in the Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archæological Society, vol. xxxvii, and, following Oliver, had identified the

two persons, I take this opportunity of making a recantation, and of stating shortly what I believe to be the true state of the case.

It is well summed up in a letter from Mr. Maxwell Lyte to myself, bearing date 19th Sept, 1895, which he kindly allows me to quote :

“The distinction between the two Thomas Chards appears pretty clear.

One, educated at the Cistercian College at Oxford, becomes Abbot of the Cistercian house at Ford, signs himself Abbot of Ford, writes a large irregular hand, dies 1544.

The other, at first at any rate, a secular priest, holds several benefices, becomes prior of the Chuniac houses at Montacute and Kerswell, signs himself Bishop of Solubria in a letter dated at Kerswell, writes a better hand than his namesake, dies 1541.”

Having proved Wood in the *Athenæ* and *Fasti* right in the main point as to there being two persons of this name, living at the same time, and heads of neighbouring religious houses, it seems perhaps ungenerous to point out any inaccuracy in his accounts of them: still, in the interest of historical truth, it is best to try to secure accuracy however difficult of attainment it may be.

And I still think that Wood is wrong when he asserts (*Fasti* I, 22) that Abbot Chard, of Ford, was a native of Aulescombe, in the County of Devon, and I still believe that his name was Thomas Tybbes, and that he was born at Chard, in Somerset.*

If one of them was born at Aulescombe, then I think it was the Bishop.

Wood also hints, but in a guarded manner, that, “as ’tis said,” Abbot Chard “founded a hospital at Honyton in his own country,” but Oliver shews that this hospital was already

* See S.A.S. *Proceedings*, xxxvii, ii. 5.

in existence in 1374, for on September 12th in that year, Bishop Brantingham granted an indulgence of twenty days "to all true penitents who would give of their charity to the support of the poor lepers in the hospital of St. Margaret, at Honiton."

With these two exceptions, I think that Wood's accounts of the two men are accurate, though by no means exhaustive. His assertion (also a guarded one) that Bishop Chard was educated at Oxford (*Athenæ* II, 751), may be true, but there is nothing in the extant registers of the University to shew it, though it is only fair to state that the early registers of the University are very imperfect.

I append two lists giving, as far as I have been able to gather them, the dates in the lives of the two Thomas Chards.

THOMAS CHARD *ALIAS* TYBBES,
ABBOT OF FORD.

- 1505-6. Jan. 18. Adm. B. Can. L. Oxon.
1507. May 2. Offers a Sermon at Frideswide's Cross, or at St. Paul's Cross, London.
1507. Oct. 24. Takes the degree of D.D. Oxon.
1517. Apr. 25. Writes letter as Thomas, Abbot of Forde.
1528. Builds the tower entrance of Ford Abbey.
1529. Apr. 15. Instituted to Vicarage of Thorncombe, which he holds till his death.
1534. May 3. Writes a letter from Ford Abbey to Thomas Cromwell.
1534. June 9. Grants, John, son of Robert Tybbes, lease of tithes of Burstock.
1534. Aug. 20. Grants the same a lease of the Grange of Otehill.
1535. Appointed visitor of certain Cistercian Monasteries.

1535. Oct. 11. Writes to Cromwell for permission for himself and the monks of Ford to leave the precincts of their Monastery.
- 1538-9. Mar. 8. With thirteen monks, surrenders Ford Abbey before Wm. Petre.
1540. Mar. 22. Appointed Minister of Ottery.
1543. Oct. 20. Resigned his office as Minister of Ottery to John Hunte, for a pension of £2 6s. 8d.
1544. Mar. 25 (about) died.

THOMAS CHARD, PRIOR OF MONTACUTE,
AND BISHOP OF SOLUBRIA.

1504. Sept. 8. Instituted to Vicarage of Montacute on presentation of the Priory. Resigned 1507.
1508. Consecrated "Episcopus Solubriensis."
1508. Sept. 23. Holds his first Ordination in the Chapel of the Palace at Exeter.
1508. Sept. 26. Instituted to the Vicarage of Torrington Parva.
- 1508 (*circa*). Collated to the Rectory of St. Gluvias, Cornwall.
1509. Sept. 27. Holds an Ordination in the Church of the Dominican Convent at Exeter.
1512. June 8. Instituted to the Vicarage of Wellington, Somerset.
1513. July 22. Consecrates the Church of St. Petrock, Exeter.
1513. Oct. 9. Appointed Warden of the College of Ottery St. Mary.
1514. June 18. Elected Prior of Montacute.
1516. Sept. 6. Holds an Ordination in the Chapel of St. Katherine's Almshouse, at Exeter.

1518. Instituted to the Vicarage of Holbeton, Devon. Resigned Oct. 24, 1520.
1519. Holds an Ordination in the Priory Church of Montacute.
1521. Holds an Ordination at Wells.
1521. Aug. 26. Instituted to the Rectory of Tintinhull.
1523. Aug. 21. Receives commission for the benediction of Simon Rede, elected Abbot of Tor.
1523. Holds an Ordination in the Priory Church of Montacute.
1527. Apr. 20. As Prior of Montacute, presents to Vicarage of East Chinnock.
1527. Dec. 2. Officiates at funeral of Lady Katherine Courtney, daughter of Edward IV.
1532. Apr. 10. Instituted to the Rectory of Northyll, Cornwall.
1532. June(*circa*). Resigns Priory of Montacute.
1532. June(*circa*). Appointed Prior of Carswell.
1532. Sept. 20. Hold his last Ordination as suffragan of Exeter, in the chapel of the Priory of Carswell.
1533. May 18. Writes a letter from Carswell to Lady Lisle.
- 1538-9. Gives 13s 4^d towards vestments, at Tintinhull.
- 1540-1. Gives 6s 8^d to the bells of Tintinhull.
1541. Oct. 1. Makes his will; he is living at Taunton.
1541. Oct. 16. His will proved at Wells.
1544. Nov. 4. His will proved in London.*

* It is somewhat remarkable that the will was not proved in London till more than three years after it was proved at Wells; yet such is the fact. No will of the *Abbot* is extant.