

Report by Derek Done (UK) to the Deacon John Done Research Committee (meeting to be held in July 2016 at Salt Lake City)

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REPORT SUMMARY

Introduction

This report attempts to make a contribution to two items on the Agenda of the **Research and DNA Committee**:

Item 3. Paul Martin Downen and

Item 5. John Done, Alvechurch, Worcestershire, England.

Pre 2012 research

a) John Done ‘cordwainer’

- Formulation of the hypothesis that John Done ‘cordwainer’ of Alvechurch, Worcestershire went on become Deacon John Done (See Appendix 2).

Research findings between 2012 and 2014

a) Hannah Laycraft

- Hannah Laycraft/ Lecraft baptized in England on January 1st 1628 married John Mayo in Eastham on January 1st 1651.

b) John Done’s apprenticeship record

- Discovery of an apprenticeship record for John Done of Alvechurch – the ‘cordwainer’, confirming the spelling of his name.

Research findings since 2014

a) Paul Martin Downen

- Y-DNA matches

We have found a full 12-marker match between Paul Martin Downen and DFA family members who share Deacon John Done’s ancestral signature. We have also found close 25 and 37 marker matches between him and that signature.

- Pronunciation of the name

We consider this to be a ‘Doane ’ match since the pronunciation ‘DOWEN’ is almost identical to the pronunciation ‘ DONE’

- Geographical distribution of the Downen and Done names

In 1881, although the DOWEN numbers were far lower than the DONE numbers, the distributions across the country were very similar, with a

concentration of the DOWEN name in the south of that county, close to the Worcestershire border and to Alvechurch.

- Paul Downen's birth near Alvechurch

Although he now lives in Bedfordshire, he was born in Walsall, Staffordshire, only some 12 or so miles from Alvechurch, the home of the cordwainer's father, Nicholas Done, and his grandfather, John Done.

- Alvechurch between the 16th and 21st Centuries

In John Done's time the Alvechurch area would have been quite rural, but at the time of the industrial revolution in the 19th century, people would have been attracted to work in the area around Birmingham and Walsall. It could be that some of the Dones in that area came to have their names recorded as Downen.

- Significance of this match

The 12, 25 and 37 marker matches with the Doane family's ancestral signature exceed what might have been expected, being much closer than those of several members of the DFA test group, and we may conclude that we are likely to have found the English family link we have been seeking for so long.

b) Lydia Leacroft (a speculation)

- Was John Done's second wife Lydia/Lidea, the sister of the Hannah Lecroft who married John Mayo?

Recommendations for further research and other action to address the 'cordwainer' = 'deacon' hypothesis

Main recommendations

- a) Target volunteers, especially Dowens, to join our Y-DNA testing project, including those resident in the US and elsewhere outside the UK. (I could help in contacting UK resident Dowens to take the test at the 67 marker level to find others with a link to the Doane family's ancestral signature, hopefully with the chance of finding someone with family tree that goes further back in time.)
- b) Take up the suggestion made by Steven Morrison that we should prepare an article detailing our research on John Done, conforming to US genealogical

proof standards, for submission to a major genealogical journal such as the New England Historical Genealogical Society quarterly.

- c) Track back, using the 'All Sources Analysis' spreadsheet and its parish and census records as the tool, to build Paul Downen's family tree, and to try to find out if, when and where the change in the spelling from Done to Downen took place in this area. Continue with the paper trail by continuing to log Downen births, marriages and deaths and census records (where available) in England into the late 19th and 20th centuries, recording those living in the Midlands to try to construct Paul's family to show what Downens were living in the Walsall area at each 10 year census period.

Other recommendations

- a) Consider funding an ad in an English magazine (as proposed by Maureen Scott) or a story for a local Midlands newspaper highlighting the fact that we may have found a link with a Midlands man who went to America in 1630.
- b) Continue to investigate the Leycroft/ Lecraft and Mayo family trees
- c) Review how far other research projects as identified in the 2012 and 2014 committee reports still need to be pursued (I have not seen the minutes of the 2014 Committee meeting).
- d) Share information among committee members.
- e) Each member of the committee should subscribe to a different genealogical research organization, and offer research to support from that organization for other members research.

DD June 30th 2016

MAIN REPORT

Introduction

This report attempts to make a contribution to two items on the Agenda of the Research and DNA Committee:

Item 3. Paul Martin Downen and

Item 5. John Done, Alvechurch, Worcestershire, England.

Pre 2012 research

This research resulted in the hypothesis that John Done ‘cordwainer’ of Alvechurch, Worcestershire went on become Deacon John Done (for details see Appendix).

Research findings between 2012 and 2014

a) Hannah Laycraft

Discovery of a facsimile of the baptism of Hannah Laycraft in England on January 1st 1628 and a transcript of the marriage of Hannah Lecraft in Eastham on January 1st 1651, making her, if our hypothesis that the two records relate to the same person is correct, just over 22 years old at the date of her marriage to John Mayo.

b) John Done’s apprenticeship record

Discovery of an apprenticeship record for John Done of Alvechurch – the ‘cordwainer’ This is consistent with the hypothesis that the ‘cordwainer’ was the man who went on to become the Deacon, since the apprenticeship record makes it clear that, despite the fact that the Alvechurch parish records show the family name as Donne, this was not the way he spelled his name. Also, families who spell and pronounce their name DONE (=Doan) are unlikely to be related to families who spell and pronounce their name DONNE (=Dunn), as indicated by the poet John Donne in his famous quote “John Donne, Anne Donne, undone”.

Research findings since 2014

a) Paul Martin Downen

- Y-DNA matches

We may have found one of the English DNA matches we have been looking for in the person of Paul Martin Downen who has a full 12-marker match with Albert and the other family members who share Deacon John Done's ancestral signature. We have also found close 25 and 37 marker matches with that signature. 67 level matches were not feasible since most DFA participants in the DNA program had not had a 67 marker test.

- Pronunciation of the name

We may consider this to be a 'Doane' match since the pronunciation 'DOWEN' is almost identical to the pronunciation 'DONE', certainly in the way we speak in most of England. One explanation might be that, in much the same way as the Deacon's descendants in the US changed the spelling to DOANE, some DONEs in England may have changed the spelling of the name to DOWEN to avoid the name being pronounced DUNN. Perhaps equally possibly, the priest or other person who recorded the name in the parish records may have relied on the way an illiterate person pronounced, rather than wrote, the name and wrote it down accordingly. As Jim Doane has explained, 'Many people encountering our name for the first time pronounce it as "Do-en," with an unstressed schwa for the second syllable: in other words, indistinguishable from the name "Downen." Perhaps the original 16th-17th-century pronunciation was closer to that form'

- Geographical distribution of the Downen and Done names

A geographical analysis of the UK 1881 Census records for those with the names DONE, DOWEN, DOANE and DOAN shows that, then, although the DOWEN numbers were far lower than the DONE numbers, the distributions across the country were very similar, being concentrated in the Midlands, once you remove the Cheshire records (where the name DONE was well known and unlikely to have been recorded as DOWEN).

Crucially, the distribution of the name DOWEN was centred in Staffordshire. The more detailed Poor Law Union boundaries show a concentration of the name in the south of that county, close to the Worcestershire border and to Alvechurch, the birth place of John Done, 'cordwainer' (and 'deacon').

- Paul Downen's birth near Alvechurch

We have now established email contact with Paul Downen, and confirmed that he currently lives in Bedfordshire, and was born in Walsall, Staffordshire, only some 12 or so miles from Alvechurch, the home of the cordwainer's father, Nicholas Done, and his grandfather, John Done. The cordwainer's great uncle Thomas lived in Henley - in-Arden, again, less than 20 miles from Walsall.

- Alvechurch between the 16th and 21st Centuries

In John Done's time the Alvechurch area would have been quite rural, but the hypothesis is that, much later at the time of the industrial revolution in the 19th century, people would have been attracted to work in the area around Birmingham and Walsall. Walsall is part of an area to this day known as 'The Black Country' and at that time, Birmingham was 'the workshop of the world'. It could be that some of the Dones in that area came to have their names recorded as Downen for the reasons already mentioned.

- Significance of this match

Regarding the significance of the matching information, I think the 12, 25 and 37 marker Y-DNA matches between Paul Downen and the ancestral signature exceed anything we might have expected. These represent closer matches even than those between the ancestral signature and many others in our test group. I am pretty much convinced that, through our DNA testing program, we have found the English family link we have been seeking for so long. Of course we should carry on by asking Paul Downen to give us what he knows of his family background.

b) Lydea/Lidea Leacroft (a speculation)

One record of interest is the christening of Lidea Leacroft, sister of Hanna on 21 February 1626 in London. I am speculating that this was the Lydea that married John Done after the death of his wife Ann (based on no evidence other than purely circumstantial evidence relating to the names and the dates) that Hannah and Lidea both crossed the Atlantic sometime around 1650 to arrive in Eastham at the same time, Hannah to marry John Mayo in 1651, and Lydea (Lidia) to marry widower John Done at around the same time. In 1651, Lidea would have been around 25 years old and Deacon John around 59. This may not be too fanciful when you realize that the population of Eastham at that time was less than 100 and a widower wishing to remarry would probably not have been able to look far for a new bride and an older man marrying a younger woman would have been quite likely.

Recommendations for further research and other action to address the ‘cordwainer’ = ‘Deacon’ hypothesis

There are two competing hypotheses for the origin of Deacon John Done. These were that he was either:

- John Done of Alvechurch, the ‘cordwainer’; or
- John Donne, the son of John Donne, the Rector of St Benet, Gracechurch Street in the City of London.

The following recommendations only address the first of these topics.

Main recommendations

- a) Target volunteers, especially Dowens, to join our Y-DNA testing project, including those resident in the US and elsewhere outside the UK. (I could help in contacting UK resident Dowens to take the test at the 67 marker level to find others with a link with the Doane Family Association’s ancestral signature, hopefully with the chance of finding someone with a family tree that goes a long way back in time.) I think we should test Dowens in North America as well as the UK because Americans are much more likely than Britishers to document their ancestry.
- b) Take up the suggestion made by Steven Morrison that we should prepare an article detailing our research on John Done, conforming to US genealogical proof standards, for submission to a major genealogical journal such as the New England Historical Genealogical Society quarterly. I am fully in support of Steven's proposal as the best way of getting wide acceptance of our research conclusions.
- c) Track back, using the spreadsheet and its parish and census records as the tool, to build Paul Downen’s family tree, and to try to find out if, when and where the change in the spelling from Done to Downen took place in this area (perhaps in the late 18th century, since the records provide little evidence of the Downen spelling in the 17th and mid-18th centuries.) Continue with the paper trail by continuing to log Downen births, marriages and deaths and census records (where available) in England into the late 19th and 20th centuries, but perhaps only recording those living in the Midlands to try to construct Paul’s family to show what Dowens were living in the Walsall area at each 10 year census period.

Other recommendations

- a) Consider funding an ad in an English magazine (as proposed by Maureen Scott)
That would seem a good idea if we could find a magazine that would be likely to be read by our target audience, the problem there being that the names we are targeting would be such a small proportion of any readership. We might pay for a national campaign offering a large prize to anyone who could persuade a male Done to take the test. If we were looking for people in a small geographical area, we could try the local press in that area if we could make a good story for them to publish. Maybe a story for a local Midlands newspaper highlighting the fact that we may have found a link with a Midlands cordwainer who went to America in 1630, especially if written by an American, and linked to a request for Dones or Dowens to take the DNA test?
- b) Continue to investigate the Leycroft/ Lecraft and Mayo family trees
- c) Review how far other research projects as identified in the 2012 and 2014 committee reports still need to be pursued (I have not seen the minutes of the 2014 Committee meeting)
- d) Share information among committee members as proposed by Maureen Scott and supported by Dick Doane who has come up with a solution to the security issue.
- e) As proposed by Maureen Scott, each member of the committee should subscribe to a different genealogical research organization, and offer research to support from that organization for other members research.

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APPENDIX 1

Comparison of Paul Downen's Y-DNA test results with John Done's archetypal signature (Albert?) and Doane Family Association Members' results

		GENETIC DISTANCE FROM ALBERT AT EACH LEVEL OF TESTING		
		12 marker	25 marker	37 marker
ORIGINAL MATCHING GROUP	Albert	0	0	0
	Ted	1	2	4
	Virgil	X	2	4
	Dick (AZ)	X	X	4
	James Thomas	X	X	X
	Jim (FL)	0	0	1
	Dick (TX)	1	X	3
	Ken	1	2	4
	Paul Downen	0	1	1

NOTE: X = No significant match with Albert

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APPENDIX 2

Summary of pre 2012 research

John Done ‘cordwainer’ remains high on the list of candidates for the Deacon. What do we know about him so far?

- a) He was born in Alvechurch, Worcestershire on 28 May 1592, the son of Nicholas Done, the cousin of John Done ‘whitebaker’.
- b) On 30 April 1630, John Done ‘cordwainer’, appeared in court in person to request that administration of the estate of John Done ‘whitebaker’, be awarded to him. This followed a continuing court case initiated by him in June 1628 against Agnes Done, the whitebaker’s widow, in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, contesting the validity of the will. However, he did not appear in person at any subsequent hearing. He was granted administration of the estate on 6 May 1630, following Agnes Done’s excommunication for failure to respond to a summons to attend the court.

(The ‘Handmaid’ sailed for New England on 10 August 1630. According to Gilbert Doane, John Done arrived in America in 1630. No passenger list has been found for the ‘Handmaid’ but he was not listed as travelling on any other vessel recorded as arriving in America in that year)

- c) A ‘Bill of Complaint’ brought against him and others by Agnes Done, the whitebaker’s widow, in the Court of Chancery, alleged that he had conspired with others to defraud Agnes Done out of her inheritance. He responded to this Bill sometime in 1631 or 1632 (document is undated) stating that since Agnes Done had been excommunicated, he had no need to respond, and asking for costs to be awarded to him. This response, unlike that of other respondents, was in handwriting that suggested it had not been written by a professional scribe. Could it have been handwritten by the cordwainer himself, assuming he did not have access to such professional services, and sent by a messenger to the court?

(Deacon John is likely to have been in New England at this time)

- d) In this Bill he was described as ‘cordwainer’, although it is worth remembering that defendants were frequently described in unflattering terms in legal documents prepared by the plaintiff. The Lists of the ‘Court of Assistants and Liverymen of the Worshipful Company of Cordwainers of London’ did not include any Dones (or variants) at the relevant time, but he could just have been an apprentice, or might have been a member of a guild outside London.
- e) Elizabeth Done and Richard Evans also raised a Bill of Complaint against John Done ‘cordwainer’ and others, including Agnes Done, in which they stated that John Done ‘sayler’, the nephew of John Done ‘whitebaker’, was the true heir to his estate, but that, following his death at sea between 1626 and 1629, his daughter Elizabeth should have inherited it. The Bill alleged that there was a conspiracy on the part of Agnes Done and the cordwainer to defraud Elizabeth of her inheritance. (Richard Evans, her stepfather, the joint complainant, had married Susan, the sailor’s widow). The Bill makes reference to witnesses who ‘depart this realm or remayne in foraigne parts’. Although there is no indication that this comment refers to John Done ‘cordwainer’ (the document is illegible at this point) there was clearly a sense that some of the witnesses listed were very likely to have left the country. John Done ‘cordwainer’ did not make a response to this Bill of Complaint, a response on his behalf being made by fellow defendants, John Betteson and Richard Kilvert in October 1632.

(Deacon John was in New England at this time)

- f) Early research into his background suggests that immediately before going to America, John Done lived in London, a city where much research into parish records has been carried out (e.g. Percival Boyd’s index of citizens of London) showing that the city had relatively few families with the name of Done (or Donne). John Done ‘cordwainer’ is the only person of that name, and with birth dates that match, recorded as living in London at the relevant time.

g) He used the name 'Done', and he was referred to under that name by others, in all of the legal proceedings in which he was involved, including his suit against Agnes Done and the Bills of Complaint brought against him by Agnes Done and by Elizabeth Done and Richard Evans. At the same time, the Alvechurch (= Alchurch) parish register that records his baptism uses the spelling 'Donne'. However, the relationships described both in the lawsuits and in the register itself clearly relate to the same family.

(Gilbert Doane points out that Deacon John himself always spelt his surname 'Done' and that it was only the next generation that used the spelling 'Doane')

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