

THE NAME AND ITS VARIANTS.

THE name of PUNCHARD appears first in England on the Roll of Battle Abbey. Holinshed spells it PUNCHARDOUN; Duchesne and Stow PUNCHARDON; and on the Dives Roll it is found as PONTCHARDON. This last form is the nearest to Pontcardon, a village close to Neuffla, in Normandy, where the family was noted in the ninth and tenth centuries.

It is variously written, in the old documents, PUNCHARD, PONCHARD, and even PORCHARDON; PUNCHET is mentioned by Stow¹; PUNIGIANT, *alias* PUNIAN, is in Brady's Catalogue of the Great Tenants, taken from Domesday Book.² Altogether, in England and France, the word has more than fifty variants³; the chief of which, omitting the final "don" or "doun", are as follows:

PUNCHARD.	PONCHARD.	PUNTCARD.	PONTCARD.
PUNCHERD.	PONCHERD.	PUNCARD.	PONCARD.
PUNSHARD.	PONSHARD.	PUNSHON.	PONCHON.
PUNSHERD.	PONSHERD.	PUNGEON.	PONCYN.
PUNTCARD.	PONTCHARD.	PUNCYN.	PYNSON.

Many of these are obvious misspellings; written at times in haste, after imperfect hearing, or copied erroneously. The chief families have few varieties; and these, whatever they are, are mostly continued in the same line.

Mr. Folkard⁴ is inclined to look for the origin of the name beyond that of the Norman Vill where it is first recorded; and to see in it the relic of an office, rather than a locality. If so, its first intention was one of great importance—no less than the Keeper (Warden) of the Bridge. And as "pontifex" means the "builder of the bridge", so "ponte-chardon" means its guardian.⁵

"Pinchard" is not a form of "Punchard", though "Pynchard" looks very like the stepping stone between them. Anyhow the words are not interchanged in the English documents; the first "Pinchard" came from Normandy, in 1066; and his name appears on the battle roll, next to that of "Punchardoun."

¹ From Scriven's Roll.

² Appendix, 13.

³ See "Multiplication of Surnames," by Arthur Folkard, in the *Antiquary*, No. 81, vol. xiv. p. 84.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ The persistence of this Norman name, in all conditions of its bearers, points to one origin. Nameless men, who wandered into distant townships away from their birthplace, might be called after it: but not by its second termination, where it had one, like Heanton-Punchardon in Devon, Lydeard-Punchardon in Somerset, or Thikley-Punchardon in Durham.