

# PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

## Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

21 OCTOBER, 1895, TO 27 MAY, 1896,

WITH

### Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXXVIII.

BEING No. 2 OF THE NINTH VOLUME.

(THIRD VOLUME OF THE NEW SERIES.)

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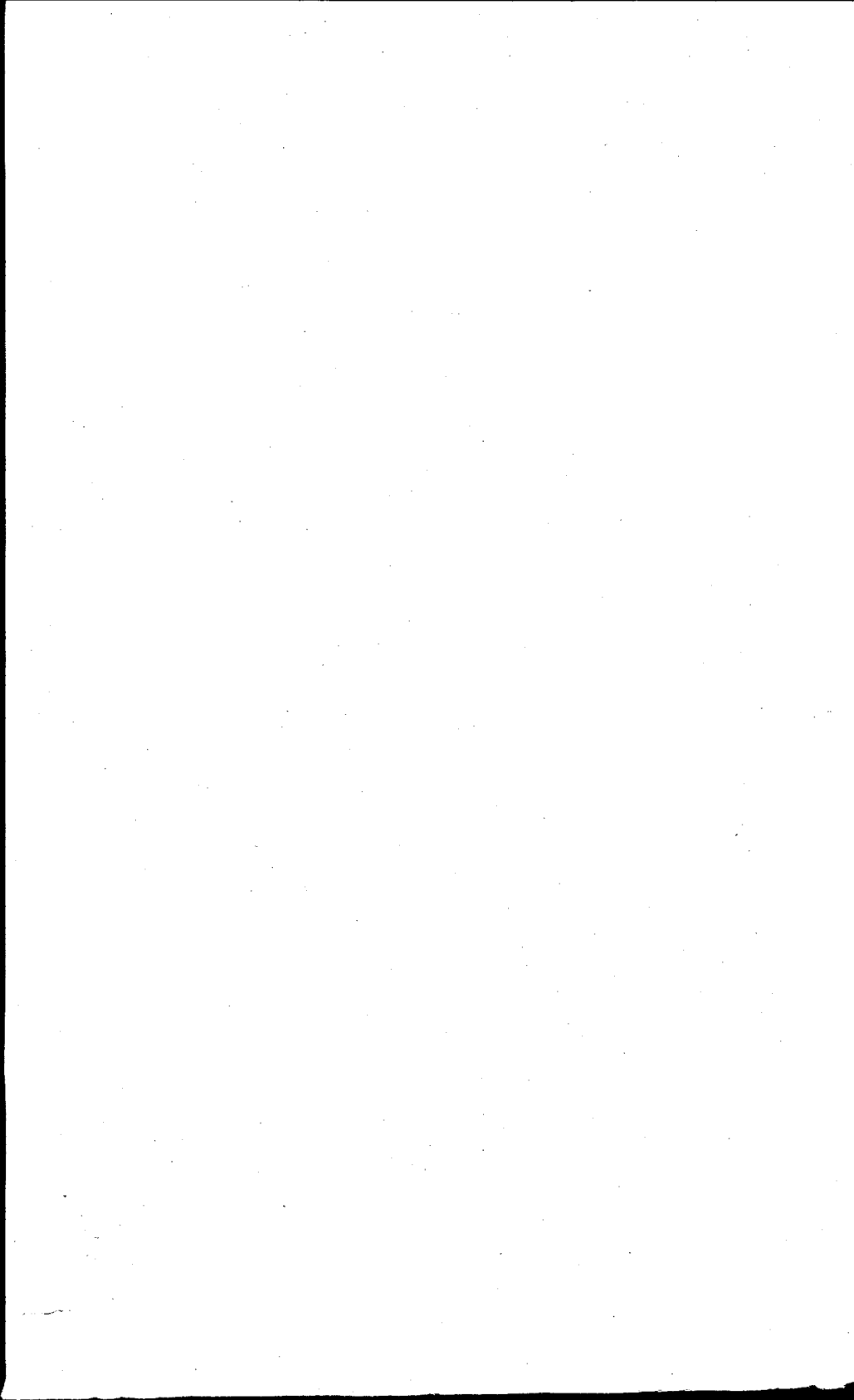
Cambridge:

DEIGHTON, BELL & CO.; MACMILLAN & BOWES.

LONDON: G. BELL AND SONS.

1897.

*Price 5s.*



February 17, 1896, at 8.30 P.M., W. M. FAWCETT, M.A., President, in the Chair,

The following members were announced as having been elected :

Miss Mary Bateson, 74 Huntingdon Road ; H. J. Edwards, M.A., Trinity College, and Selwyn College ; Miss Alice Gardner, Newnham College ; the Rev. F. C. Kempson, B.A., M.B., Gonville and Caius College ; Mr F. W. Leach, S. Mary's Passage ; H. Y. Oldham, M.A., King's College ; Professor Lord Acton, M.A., LL.D.

Dr W. M. PALMER, introduced by the President, made the following communication :

#### ON THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE ASSIZE ROLLS.

The Cambridgeshire Assize Rolls offer, I believe, almost an entirely unworked field to the local antiquary, topographer, and genealogist. And the objects of the following paper are, to introduce to your notice the periods for which these little known records exist, to indicate the character of the more important rolls, and to give some examples of the information to be derived from them. There is no phase of old country and town life which could not be illustrated from this class of record. Manorial descents, the rights and privileges of religious houses, the names of the early parish priests, priors &c., the value of farm produce and household goods, the crimes and customs of our ancestors, are frequently touched upon. But perhaps the most important information is to be derived from the records of rebellions in Cambridgeshire. The revolts of the barons in the 13th century, and of the peasants in the 14th century, are those most fully reported. But there are also, amongst the early Indictments of the King's Bench, records of a Yorkist rising in this country in 1452, and of a Lancastrian rising in 1463.

There are really four classes of records, which ought to be considered together, namely, the Assize, Coroner's, and Gaol Delivery Rolls, and the Early Indictments. But they would together make too long a subject for one paper, so I have confined myself at present to the Assize Rolls. An excellent official list of the first three was published in 1894, in the volume called *List of Plea Rolls*.

My method in the following paper is, first, to take the Assize Rolls in chronological order, and to make such remarks as occurred to me during a somewhat cursory examination of them about two years ago (my object then being to look for information relating to the hundred of Armingford only), and secondly to give some extracts from the earlier rolls. These extracts do not pretend to have been selected for their especial interest, they are fair examples of what occurs on every membrane.

The early Assize Rolls of Cambridgeshire, although they are neither so numerous, nor so ancient as those of some of the other counties, are well represented in the latter part of the reign of Henry III, and in the reign of Edward I. There was no period when this class of record was more carefully preserved than in the reign of the latter monarch. The whole class of Assize Rolls in the Public Record Office are numbered consecutively, the counties being taken in alphabetical order, and the rolls relating to each county taken chronologically. The Cambs. Rolls begin at No. 80, 19 Henry III, and end at No. 108, 15 Henry VI. The first two reputed Cambs. Rolls, Nos. 80 and 81, have little claim to be found in this division, as they contain little or nothing relating to Cambs. They would have been more properly placed amongst the 'Divers Counties' Assize Rolls. So the first true Cambs. Roll is No. 82, 45 Henry III (1260). This is a roll of thirty-six membranes, in an excellent state of preservation. It is beautifully written, and the contractions are not so numerous as in some other documents of this reign. It consists roughly of two parts. (1) The 'placita de assisis' or civil pleas, such as lawsuits

relating to property, acknowledgments of debts, enrolments of deeds. (2) The 'placita corone' or pleas of the crown, such as relate to murders, robbery and other felonies. This second part is arranged under hundreds. The 'pleas' consist of presentments made by twelve jurymen from each hundred, the names of whom are always given. These lists of jurymen are very valuable in themselves as they are nearly 70 years earlier than the earliest county Subsidy Roll. The following extracts from the crown pleas relate to the hundred of Armingford only.

The lists of jurymen are given all together on the last membrane.

*Membrane 36. Hundred' de Arneford'.*

*Jur' elector'*

- |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| (a) Will' de Abbinton.    | Hunfr' de Clopton.     |
| (b) Hunfr' de Monasterio. | Wydo de Crawden.       |
| (c) Rob' de Fugers.       | (c) Walt' de Fugers.   |
| (d) Will' de Trayley.     | (a) Rad's de Abbinton. |
- Thom' Ruffus de Meldeburn.  
 Alan' filius Joh' de Morden.  
 Simon de la Kyne.  
 Mag<sup>r</sup> Rob' de Tadelowe.

Godefr' de Muleswurth, *ballivus*.

- (a) Held land in Abington and Stepel Morden.  
 (b) Alias 'le Moyne,' held land in Abington.  
 (c) Held land in Abington.  
 (d) Held land in Melbourn under the Prior of Takeley.

*Membrane 26 in dorso.*

Hundr' de Arningford venit per xij.

1. 'Laurence of Clopton was found hanged in the barn (*horreo*) of Peter Tailor (*cissoris*) of Cranden. John le Novel-horne, the first finder, comes, and is not suspected. No one is suspected of it. Judgment "felo de se." His chattels were worth 45<sup>s</sup> 4½<sup>d</sup> for which the Sheriff will answer.' The chattels of all felons were forfeited to the crown, unless the felony took

place within a franchise such as that of the Knights of St John, to whom the king had by charter granted the goods &c. of felons and fugitives.

2. 'William Bodeghe of London and Peter of Sautre were arrested with stolen clothes (*pannis furatis*) at Bassingbourn, and taken to the courthouse (*curia*) of Peter of Savoy, and there imprisoned. Then they arose by night, and unbound themselves, and killed Robert son of Geoffry Wulwrith, and William Swift (*celer*) of Bassingbourn, who guarded them, and so escaped from the custody of the said town. Therefore they are outlawed. They had no chattels, since they were strangers, and not in the tithing. Judgment on the town of Bassingbourn for the escape.' Peter of Savoy who then held the royal manor of Bassingbourn (granted to him in 1240) was the king's uncle. The penalty for allowing a prisoner to escape was a fine of half a mark.

3. 'Robert de Turvye fled to the church of Knesworth, and acknowledged there that he was a thief, and abjured the realm before the coroner.' More will be said about the right of sanctuary later on. Kneesworth church, dedicated to St Mary Magdalene, was really a chapel, annexed to Bassingbourn.

4. 'Aumphelisa, daughter of Margaret widow of William the clerk of Crandon, gave birth to a certain male child, and she or her mother killed it immediately after birth. And they stayed in the town of Crandon for 8 days after the death, and then withdrew themselves. They are outlawed. Chattels of Matilda 11<sup>s</sup> 6<sup>d</sup>, of Aumphelisa 10<sup>d</sup>. They also had land of which the King's year and waste were worth 18<sup>d</sup> (*terram unde ann' domini regis et vastum xvij<sup>d</sup>*). And it is testified that Edith la Penycresce heard the said child cry when it was being killed, and so knew it was being killed, and raised hue and cry. But the said town of Crandon harboured the murderers for 8 days after the deed, and were unwilling to arrest them at the hue and cry of Edith. Therefore the town is amerced.' Crying was then perhaps the only legal evidence of live birth. It was some centuries later when Coke pointed

out that in the case of a dumb child it was of no value whatever.

5. 'Concerning the business of the king's bailiff, they say that Ralph of Litlington, when he was king's bailiff, took unjustly and by extortion of John de Canz, 3<sup>s</sup>, representing that he had been amerced, when it was not so. And also that he unjustly took 2<sup>s</sup> of Richard son of Margaret and 12<sup>d</sup> of John Andrew for Ward' penny.' Ralph appears and gets off with a fine of one mark.

6. 'The jurors present that John de Wangeford arrested Richard Baldry of Whaddon and Matilda his wife. They were imprisoned for 6 days at Whaddon, and then escaped. The jury say that they suspect them only of stealing bread during the great famine (*de panibus furatis in magna caristia*). Therefore they may return if they wish.' Medieval justice was often very harsh on convicted felons, but nothing could be more humane than this result.

The remaining 24 presentments of this jury relate to encroachments on the highways, the farm of the hundred, offences against the regulations for selling wine &c. besides others similar to those given above.

*Assize Roll* No. 83 is one of the most interesting in the whole series. It consists of 34 membranes closely written, usually on both sides, containing the inquisitions of the hundreds concerning the depredations committed during the Barons' war, and many of the pleadings and judgments following these inquisitions. The proceedings were held before William de St Omer and others in the 53rd year of Henry the Third. Extracts from this roll were printed by Hunter in the volume published by the Record Commissioners under the title *Rotuli Selecti*. These extracts are taken from membranes 3—10. It is difficult to understand on what principle, if any, they were made. But I would offer the following explanation as to why the transcriber began at membrane 3. At some period, probably centuries ago, the membranes were bound in a wrong order, the first two

having been put last. As they now stand, the membranes have been renumbered in modern figures 1 to 34, but the old number of 1 is *ij*, and those numbered 33 and 34 have *j* and *ij* written on them in ancient characters. These two membranes consist entirely of presentments concerning lands seized by the king's adherents after the battle of Evesham, and lands granted by the king. Besides these misplaced presentments, which are comparatively short, all the hundreds being contained on two membranes, there is another series, which refers to robberies &c. committed by adherents of the Barons. These are much longer, the presentments for the hundred of Armingford, for instance, taking up a whole membrane. None of these hundred records are contained on membranes 3—10, but they are to me the most interesting part of the roll. From them it can be ascertained which side the different landowners took, whether they were at the battle of Lewes or at the battle of Evesham, also who were killed at these battles, and who were in rebellion in the Isle of Ely. As far as I have examined this record, it appears that there were disturbances in every village in the county, and that most of the landowners were acknowledged partisans, on one side or the other, but the preponderance was on the side of the barons. For information about change of ownership at this period, this roll is invaluable. For doubtless there were many who were unable to pay the enormous fine imposed by the Dictum of Kenilworth, without selling their lands. And by the terms of the dictum, those to whom the king had granted the lands, until they were redeemed, had the first chance of buying. The names of these grantees are usually mentioned.

Another interesting point about these inquisitions is, that they frequently give the prices of the goods and farm produce stolen, at a period when Court Rolls and bailiffs' accounts are rare. Below I have given a few extracts, which may give some idea as to the contents of this record.

This roll is not nearly so easy to read as the preceding one. The ink is paler, the character smaller, and the abbreviations more intricate. Moreover there are many corrections, inter-



lineations, and marginal notes, which of course when deciphered make the record all the more valuable.

My first extract is the presentment of the hundred of Armingford on the part of the Barons.

Hundr' de Aringforde.

Jur' present' q'd com' Glovern' cito post bellum de Evesham seis' terra' Rad'i fil' Rad' Fuke in Wendeye & Will' Giffard fr' Archep'i Ebor' cep't ibi ad festum S'c'i Mich' prox' sequ' de redd' ix<sup>s</sup> p' man' Ricardi le Brustlere & postea dominus Rex dedit illam terram predicto Will'o q' valet per ann' x marc'.

Ralph Fitzfulk possessed also the manors of Shepreth and Malton, which were seized at the same time by the Earl of Gloucester.

They present also that Roger de Leyburn, immediately after the battle of Evesham seized the land in Whaddon (Qwadone) which had belonged to Thomas de Qwadone, who died in arms against the king in the battle of Lewes. And Henry de Whaddon, brother and heir of Thomas, took at the feast of St Michael next following 5<sup>s</sup> rent. And afterwards the king gave that land to the aforesaid Roger.

This land was the manor of Ladybury. Henry must have redeemed it, because it soon passed by a female heir into the family of Deschallers.

They present also that Warin de Bassingburn immediately after the battle of Evesham seized the land of Giles de Argentine in Meldeburne and took at Michaelmas next 20<sup>s</sup> rent by the hand of Nicholas le Bachelor. And afterwards the king gave that land to Roger de Mortemer. And the aforesaid Nicholas (? Giles) afterwards made a fine with Roger for the redemption of his land, and had it back again.

This was the Giles de Argentine who took such a prominent part in the war. The redemption consisted in paying as much as the land was worth by the space of five years.

The following are from the other series of presentments.

The jury present that Nicholas de Staundon, parson of the church of Shelford, despoiled the parson of the church of Bassingburn faithful to the king, of corn and other goods, to the value of 60 marks.

This Rectory was in the king's gift, and it was held by foreigners frequently.

They also present that John de Caxton, John de Trayli, Alan le Moine and Alan de Berle de Abinton, Luke Bolam and others, despoiled the Lady Alicia de Schales at Neweseles of 200 sheep value 15 pounds, and they did this robbery after the battle of Evesham. They do not appear, and are amerced according to the dictum (of Kenilworth).

The first four were mesne tenants. In a previous presentment it was stated that John de Trayli of Melburn had robbed the king's faithful throughout the whole land.

They present also that Richard Francis of Gravele in Co. Hunts. despoiled Basil de Watdon of one brass pot price 2<sup>s</sup>, 3 sows price 4<sup>s</sup> and 6 little pigs (*porcellis*) price 12<sup>d</sup>. Of which Herbert of Melreth, whose chattels are worth 4<sup>s</sup>, bought 2 sows price 30<sup>d</sup>.

Phillip de Stanton, who has land in Lolworth worth 100<sup>s</sup> per annum, and others robbed Phillip de Crowden of a whole plough team (*de tota caruca*), that is to say, 2 horses (*affris*), 4 oxen (*bobus*) and 3 bullocks (*juvenculis*), also of utensils to the value of 40<sup>s</sup>, and timber (*maheremium*) to the value of 20<sup>s</sup>. And also they imprisoned him till he paid them 15 marks.

Simon Berlewe of Orwell is fined 20<sup>d</sup> (one half his goods) for receiving his son who was in the Isle of Ely in rebellion against the king.

*Assize Roll 84.* This consists of the civil pleas enrolled in the Iter of 1272. There are 35 membranes in excellent condition. I shall give an interesting example of its contents later on.

*Assize Roll 85* contains the pleas of the crown for the same year, the two parts not having been bound together as in 1260.

*Assize Roll 86.* Hitherto, we have been dealing with rolls which are unique, only one copy of each having been preserved, but for the year 1285 (14 Edward I), there are no less than five copies of the same roll. One of these was made for the king and is marked 'Rex,' and the other four for the justices, being marked respectively, 'Loveday,' 'Mettingham,' 'Saham,' and 'Vallibus.' These rolls are numbered 86—89, 91 and 92, the last two numbers referring to the copy of John de Vallibus, which is divided into two parts. The first four consist of about 50 membranes each, and are mostly in good condition, and of course where one happens to be injured, it is always possible to supply the missing reading from another roll. They contain the Gaol Delivery Roll, in addition to the Civil and Crown Pleas. From the former we can obtain the record of the punishment of such as were convicted on the presentments of the hundreds. But this part of the record is very brief. Some extracts from these rolls relating to the town of Cambridge are to be found in the Baker MSS., and were used by Cooper in his *Annals of Cambridge*.

*Assize Roll 90* consists of the Civil and Crown Pleas held at Ely during the vacancy of the Bishopric in 1285. In most of the other rolls the proceedings in the Isle are bound up with those in the rest of the county.

*Assize Rolls 93 and 94* are fragments of Civil Pleas for the years 1288—9.

*Assize Rolls 95 and 96* are duplicates of the proceedings in the Cambridge Iter of 1298—9 (27 Edward I). The first is marked 'Rex,' the second 'Berewyk,' John de Berewyk being the senior justice. They are very large rolls, consisting of 77 and 83 membranes respectively. They contain, as before, the Civil Pleas, the Crown Pleas and the Gaol Delivery, but an addition of great interest is this. The hundred juries present the names of the landowners who claimed manorial privileges

such as markets, tolls, view of frank-pledge &c. Whereupon the justices investigated these claims, the results being shown in the *Placita de quo warranto* printed by the Record Commissioners, the materials for which work were apparently taken from these rolls. But whilst all the *Placita* here recorded are in the printed volume, there are several presentments by the hundred jury, which do not appear to have been examined by the justices. Thus the claims of Joan de Acra (daughter of Edward I and widow of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester) and William Lenveyse in Meldreth are given by the hundred jury, but not pleaded before the justices. They must however have been allowed, for the privileges claimed exist to this very day. Amongst the Crown Plea presentments on this roll are many interesting particulars concerning wardships, fees and sergeancies appropriated unjustly. For example take the following from the hundred of Stane.

‘Concerning sergeancies (the jury) say that William Loveday holds a messuage and four score acres of land in Great Wilbraham of the lordship of the king in capite, worth per annum 40<sup>s</sup>, by the sergeanty of mewing one young sparrowhawk; and when he has done this of bringing it to the courthouse of his lord the king, and of staying there for 12 days, with 2 horses, 2 groomes, and 2 greyhounds at the king’s cost. And foreasmuch as the king gave that sergeanty to a certain William Pikot, who is dead, and it is not known how it came to be alienated, therefore let the aforesaid William come and show if he has anything from the king concerning the said sergeanty &c. And William appears and can show nothing. Therefore the Sheriff is ordered to take the sergeanty into his hands. Afterwards the king ordered that the record of this presentment should be sent to the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer, and it is sent to them &c.’

And William Loveday would probably hear from them in a short space of time in a manner not to his advantage.

Some extracts from this roll also are to be found in Cooper’s *Annals*.

The record of the Crown Pleas in this roll is preceded by a list of Sheriffs and coroners who had held office since the last iter in 1285, and also by this peculiar notice. "The County" records that no Englishry was presented in this county, and the same was recorded by the whole county in the Iter of John de Vallibus (14 Edward I), and his fellow justices. And then it was found by the rolls of the Iter of Roger de Seyton (56 Henry III), being the last Iter before that of John de Vallibus, that Englishry was presented on the part of the father or mother, for one male above the age of 15 years..... Therefore judgment on the whole county.'

*Assize Rolls* 97—102 consist chiefly of Crown Pleas dating from 7 Edward II to 42 Edward III, but No. 101 contains trials for petty felonies.

*Assize Roll* 103. This consists of the presentments of the hundreds, and the indictment and trial of the Cambridgeshire rebels, in the villein insurrection of 1381. This has only lately been added to the series of Assize Rolls, having formerly been amongst the Miscellaneous Records of the Chapter house. Transcripts or abstracts of the whole of this roll are printed in the monthly publication *East Anglian Notes and Queries* for the present year.

*Assize Roll* 104, 11—12 Richard II. This is interesting from the notoriety of some of the people engaged in the one suit to which it refers. This is an action brought by Alice, widow of William de Wyndsor, against Robert de Lyle chivalier, John de Wyndsor, Robert de W., William de W., and others for unjust disseisin of the manors of Rampton, Westwick, Impington and Cottenham Lises. In their defence the defendants stated that 'predicta Alicia per nomen Alicie Perrers' had been banished by Parliament in the first year of the king's reign. From which it appears that the plaintiff was the notorious favourite of king Edward's dotage. There is a lot of ink and parchment used in this roll, which with writs and panel of juries, runs to 10 membranes, and then the case is left unfinished. But it appears again in 'Divers Counties' Assize Roll

1499, 12 Richard II, and yet again in Roll 1505, 13 Richard II where 4 large membranes—written on both sides—are taken up with similar proceedings, and being still unfinished, the wearied reader is referred to a certain ponderous De Banco Roll, to which I had neither the time nor courage to follow it.

*Assize Roll 105* consists of Civil Pleas, of no interest to me.

*Assize Roll 106* consists of presentation of hundred juries during the time of Edward III. The writing is bad, and the membranes not in good condition. I could find nothing interesting in the records of Armingford and Stowe, which are on a small piece of parchment stitched on to the side of membrane 16.

*Assize Roll 107*, 3—6 Richard II, contains inquisitions concerning felonies committed in various parts of the county. I find that I have made no note as to what the felonies were, except the negative one that they appeared to have no connection with the villein insurrection, but the following is a list of the places mentioned:

*Membrane 1.* Baryngton, Longstowe, Hingston, Haslingfield, Crandon, Brunne (*d*) Newmarket. *Membrane 2.* Wyvelyngham, W. Wratting (*very long*), (*d*) Swavesey, Dokeswurth. *Membrane 3.* Stowe, Wilbraham Magna, Swavesey, (*d*) Barnwell, Ely, Fenditton, W. Wratting, Cambridge.

*Assize Roll 108.* This consists of 11 special assizes concerning novel disseisin, trespass &c. varying in date from 33 Edward I to 15 Henry VI. Some of the former give long descents of the lands in dispute. One disadvantage about these special assizes is that a definite result is seldom arrived at, at least, not in the local proceedings. But of course that is not nearly of so much importance to us, as to the original parties in the dispute. For after the lapse of five centuries, the false statements of the wrongful owner are often as interesting as the unvarnished facts of the rightful owner. The places to which the assizes refer are Bartlow, Tadlow, Hildersham,

Shelford, Harlton (lords of the manors of Shepreth, Malton, and Barrington mentioned), and Stepel Morden. The actions for trespass are by the Prior of Barnwell, John Case, Carpenter, William Crochman, and Margaret de Pol, Countess of Pembroke.

I have now got to the end of Rolls in the Cambridge class, but they do not nearly exhaust the Cambridgeshire Civil Pleas. There are over 70 other rolls which give the pleas of several counties together, including Cambs. Of these the earliest in date is 33 Henry III (1248—9), and the latest 19 Henry VI (1440). Some of these are of great bulk, thus Rolls 1298, 1311, 1323, (20—32 Edward I) consist of 126, 150, and 143 membranes. Handy references to these rolls may be obtained from the Calendars to the Patent Rolls; as pointed out in the 42nd report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records.

I shall now proceed to give some further extracts from these rolls, asking you to bear in mind meantime, that they are only as chips from a large block.

The following is from Assize Roll 84, (56 Henry III). For convenience in writing and reading, I have extended the original Latin—I hope correctly:

“Rogerus de Trumpeton attachiatus fuit ad respondendum Milone de le Mesey de placito quare venit ad vivarium ipsius Millonis in Mellerethe, et in vivarium suum piscatus fuit et pisces ad valentiam lx<sup>s</sup>. cepit et asportavit, ad gravem dampnum ipsius Millonis et contra pacem &c. Et unde queritur quod predictus Rogerus die dominica proximo ante festum Sancti Gregorii hoc anno venit ad predictum vivarium in Mellereth et in eodem vivario piscatus fuit, et pisces cepit, et asportavit scilicet lupos aquaticos, brennas (breñ) et alias pisces ad valentiam sexaginta solidorum, unde dicit quod deterioratus est, et dampnum habet ad valentiam lx<sup>s</sup>. &c.

Et Rogerus venit et defendit vim et injuriam que dicitur. Et dicit quod ipse tenet quandem terram in Mellerethe de hereditate cujusdam Agnetis quondam uxoris sue de qua suscitavit prolem. Ita quod ipse tenet vivarium illud, scilicet

cum terris, et tenementis que fuerunt ipsius Agnetis in predicta villa per legem Anglie. Et bene concedit quod in eo piscatus fuit sicut ei licuit in suo proprio vivario. Et predictus Millo dicit quod predictus in vivario non fuit de hereditate predictæ Agnetis nec ipsa an predictus Rogerus aliquo tempore in eo piscari solebat. Et quod ita sit petit quod inquiretur per patriam. Et Rogerus similiter. Ideo stat inde jur'..."

Apart from the interesting question opened up by the query 'Who was Milo de la Mesey, and with what manor had he and Roger de Trumpington any connection in Meldreth,' there are two points in this case to which I wish to draw your attention.

First the description of the poached fish. To extend *breī* into *brennas*, and translate *bream*, is simple enough. But what were the 'lupi aquatici,' the water wolves? The only fish which seems to me to fit this description is the pike, or jack as it is called in Cambridgeshire. But there was a Latin equivalent for pike, viz. *luces*.

The second point is Roger's defence. He states that he held land in Meldreth, including the fish pond, in the right of Agnes formerly his wife, by whom he had live issue, and therefore by the law of the land ought to enjoy the same for life. This is called tenancy by the courtesy of England, a custom which has given rise to many lawsuits, in some of which physicians and surgeons have played no creditable part.

There are many actions for damages to property, brought either by owners against tenants, or by minors against their guardians. The following instances are taken from the roll for 27 Edward I.

(i) Joan, widow of William Peche, was summoned by Constantine son and heir of William Mortimer for having 'made waste' in the manor of Kingston, which she held as his guardian (she was his mother, William Peche being her second husband). It was alleged that she had pulled down a chamber (*cameram*) and a wardrobe (*garderobam*) worth 30<sup>s</sup>, had felled 12 oaks (*quercus*) worth 24<sup>s</sup>, 200 young oaks (*querculos*)



worth 40<sup>s</sup>, 40 maples (*aceres*) worth 90<sup>s</sup>, 10 ashes (*fraxinos*) worth 20<sup>s</sup>, 200 young ashes (*fraxinolas*) worth 40<sup>s</sup>, and 10 young maples (*aceres minores*) worth 10<sup>s</sup>, and had cut off the boughs, and uprooted the trees, in 100 acres of wood, and done damage in it to the extent of £40. Plaintiff assessed his whole damage at £200, but he lost his case. I have translated 'aceres' and 'aceres minores' as maples and young maples, because of the context and their reputed value. But it is possible that sycamores and maples may be intended to be understood. The older botanists called these trees respectively *Acer majus* and *Acer minus*, and they are so named by John Ray in his Cambridge Catalogue of 1660.

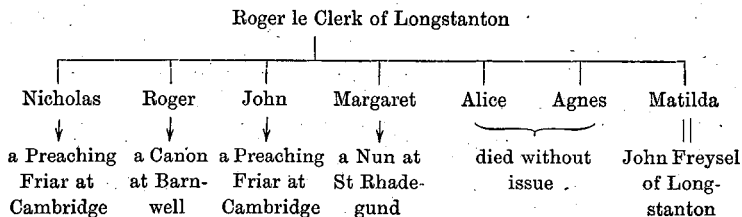
(ii) Nicholas Cheney was summoned by Henry Colville to account for the damage done by him in his manor of Longstanton, in pulling down a chapel worth 20 marks, a dovecot worth 40<sup>s</sup>, and in taking down and selling 3 pear trees and 3 apple-trees (20<sup>s</sup>), 4 young ashes, 'duas cottynarios, (quinces) et sex cyresarios' (cherry trees) (20<sup>s</sup>). The jury allowed the following damages, chapel half a mark, 2 pear trees 2<sup>s</sup>, 'duas cottynarios' 6<sup>d</sup>.

(iii) Geoffery de Sandyacre and Clemency his wife, had the manors of Newton and Tyd demised to them for life by Roger Colville, and Desirée his wife. Geoffery was charged with the following damages. Of having pulled down in the capital messuage of Tyd, a kitchen (*coquinam*) 40<sup>s</sup>, a bakehouse (*pistrinum*) 40<sup>s</sup>, a granary (*granarium*) 60<sup>s</sup>, a cowhouse (*boveriam*) 20<sup>s</sup>, and of having cut down in the manor garden 4 pear trees price 20<sup>s</sup>, and 10 ashes price £4. Also the following damage, the full significance of which I do not understand:—"Et etiam fodiendo in xxv. acris terre arabilis in eodem manerio ita profunde quod de cetero in culturam redigi non potuerunt." There is a similar statement with regard to 10 acres in the manor of Newton. Colville lost his case.

In a suit about 24 acres of land in Dry Drayton (27 Edward I), there is a peculiar account of the family of Roger

le Clerk of Longstanton. Roger had demised the said land, at 2<sup>s</sup> per annum rent, to Alexander Heved, and his direct heirs. In default of such heirs, the reversion to Roger and his heirs. Roger had 3 sons and 4 daughters, the youngest of whom, Matilda, now married to John Freysel of Longstanton, seeks to recover the land from the Prior of Barnwell, who is in possession of it. Matilda supported her claim by the following facts. After the death of Roger, the reversion of the land descended to Nicholas, his eldest son, who, however, assumed the garb of the Friars Preachers at Cambridge, whereupon Roger his next brother became heir. But Roger became a Canon at Barnwell, when the reversion fell to John the youngest brother. John also joined the Friars Preachers, and then his four sisters Margaret, Alice, Agnes and Matilda became co-heiresses. But Margaret entered the nunnery of St Rhadegund, Alice and Agnes died unmarried, and so Matilda became sole heir of Roger le Clerk. Alexander Heved had died without direct heirs, so she claims the land in Dry Drayton.

The Prior's attorney answers as follows. That Roger truly demised the land to Alexander and his heirs at 2<sup>s</sup> annual rent; that Roger had a son Roger, who became his heir, which son Roger enfeoffed a certain Prior of Barnwell, Simon de Lascelles by name, of the said rent, and of the reversion of the land when it should occur; and that Alexander paid the annual rent to the said Prior. Which payment being deemed sufficient proof of enfeoffment, the jury decide the case against Matilda.



There is a great deal in the Crown Plea Rolls to illustrate the privilege of sanctuary during the middle ages. Every consecrated building was then a refuge for the murderer and thief.

There is not a parish church, or chapel in Cambridgeshire, of which there is not evidence of having been used for this purpose again and again. Many buildings which are no longer in existence, such as Kneesworth Chapel, Malketon Church, and the Hospital of St Nicholas at Royston, figure frequently in this connection. The question of sanctuary, however, could be more thoroughly dealt with in a paper on the Coroner's Rolls. For the coroner kept a special record called 'The Abjuration Roll,' on which full particulars of each abjuration were entered. But while on this subject, it may be mentioned, that in the year 1298, two men were fined 20<sup>s</sup> each for accompanying a man who had abjured the realm to the port of Yarmouth, when the port of Bristowe had been assigned to him by the coroner. And in the same year, a man was arrested and tried for not having killed an abjured felon whom he met on the road to Dover.

Much can be learned also from the Crown Plea Rolls about the ancient customs relating to the repair of bridges. Take the following from Assize Roll 96, m. 37 (27 Edward I):—

'Juratores de diversis hundredis presentant quod pons ultra ripariam in villa Cantabrigie diruptus est, et contractus ita quod transeuntes ibidem impedivit ad maximum dampnum totius patrie. Et quod multi tenentes terrarum in diversis hundredis ad reparationem illius pontis tenentur. Ideo preceptum est vicecomiti quod venire faciat omnes illos tenentes, &c. Et super hoc veniunt Willelmus de Sancto Georgio, Phillipus filius Ernyt, Johannes de Caldecote, Thomas de Elesworth, Henricus de Bokeswurth, John Umfrey de Swaveseye, et manuceperunt pro se et omnibus tenentibus qui ad reparationem predicti pontis tenentur, quod predictum pontem bene reparabunt citra festum Sancti Michaelis proximum futurum sub pena xx. librarum domino Regi solvendarum.'

There are also several interesting presentments concerning bridges in the Isle of Ely.

There are many peculiar names to be met with in these rolls. Here are a few examples. Johannes cum pede torto

(? clubfoot), Walter Aliquid, and Reginald Godknape, chaplains, Nicholas Nikere, William le Be, Gervase Hell, Adam le Fleshe-were, Salamandra wife of John le Rey, Pellagia daughter of Geoffry the Baker of Swavesey, Simon the Shobegere, William Sitequiet, Patricius Parsonnesservaunt, Hugh the Lyndraper, Stephen Cachefish, Robert Seggere, Aubry le Mattemakere, a woman who took sanctuary at Royston, and afterwards escaped is called 'quedam Eveltolle.'

Some further matters of interest which I find mentioned in my notes, I will only just touch upon. In a suit about a milldam at Meldreth in 1260, a curious derivation of the Cambridgeshire surname of Veysey, from the word Bishop, is shown. What was Levesque in 1222, had become Enveyse in 1260, Lenveyse in 1298, and Leveysie in 1316. In another suit we get the history of a chantry in the church of Fulbourn St Vigor's, unfolded from King John's time. An action about a corody in the hospital of St John the Baptist, Ely, gives some interesting particulars concerning the connection of a former bishop with the said Hospital. In the Crown Pleas we find records of murders committed by unknown men 'of the household of the king's son,' and of outrages by Master Andrew Skippditch and others, on the merchantes of the Colony at Baronesdelph (*de Colonia apud Baronesdelph*) which was somewhere in the hundred of Ely. The coroner's jury tell us of a boy who went on stilts (*lignipedes*) into the marsh to look for ducks' eggs (*ova anatum*) and was drowned, and of men who were sailing on Soham mere, and were upset by a gust of wind. But it is possible to go on in this way for hours, and indeed after a time, these trivialities, interesting enough when they occur singly, become wearisome when offered in bulk. It is hoped however that what has been said in this paper, has shown that many interesting matters are to be found in the Cambridgeshire Assize Rolls.

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