

PRODUCE OF AND SUPPLIES FROM SUSSEX.

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ANXIOUS as we may be to know more of the places around us, and of the persons who, in days long past, peopled our towns and villages, we have in such researches but the dry skeleton of history. If we can learn more of the social condition and modes of life of our ancestors, we shall help towards putting live flesh upon dry bones. Nor are the materials for the latter enquiry less abundant than for the former. Ponderous-looking records and long-unfolded rolls are not inviting subjects for examination; yet they afford us ample evidence of what was the early state of our county. Time and diligence only are needed to extract the most valuable items from the general mass.

With the view of showing what produce the county afforded, and how men lived, I have selected from the MS. collections of a friend (who is also a member of our Society) entries which will not be wanting in interest to our readers.

Here we shall find some account of the timber and the corn; of the deer, pheasants, partridges, hares, and rabbits; of the peacocks, chickens, and eggs; of the "good" sea fish, with "congers"¹ amongst them, and fresh fish of good money value; and notices of serious affrays, to which the keeping of deer and game gave rise.

There has been great doubt as to the time when pheasants were introduced into this country; and an early mention is made of them in 1299 (temp. Edward I.), when the price of each was fourpence: we now know that they were breeding in Sussex fifty years earlier—1245: although, in pro-

¹ Conger soup is still a favourite dish in Guernsey.

portion to partridges, they were a scarce bird.² They seem to have been general in the parks throughout the county in the reign of Edward III.

Nor do the records fail us in mention of military equipments. The horse-shoes, provided from the first-class iron of Roughey, and the well-sharpened arrows of the same district (Horsham), stood the English horsemen and archers in good stead in Scotland and Normandy.

We shall also find some slight additional notices of hunting in our chaces and woods.

The TIMBER of Sussex was plentifully used in public works, as well without as within the county.

On 20th March (9th John), 1208, timber was given out of the Wood of the Bishopric, for the repair of the King's Castle of Chichester; and on 6th April, other timber for a like purpose, wherever the Sheriff could find it without the Broyls.

Edward II. cut down 619 oaks in Ashburnham Woods, whilst the estates of John de Ashburnham were in the King's hands by reason of the quarrel with the Duke of Lancaster, which were sent to Dover,³ for the works of the Castle there; and 60 more oaks, which were sent to the works at Pevensey Castle.

The Sheriff had to deliver, in 1337, to the Constable of the Tower of London, the two large oaks in the Forest of Worth, which John de Warren gave the King for the beams of a certain great engine in the Tower.⁴

The Prior of Wilmington had license, in 1351, to cut and sell trees in his Wood at Wilmington, to the value of £20, to pay his farm to the Crown.⁵

John Earl of Richmond, in 1358, had timber sent from Sussex to build a bridge at Boston,⁶ at the same time that he was repairing his manor of Crowhurst.⁷

² In the "Forme of cury," which is ascribed to the chief master cook of Rich. II., circa. 1381, there is a receipt for boiling !! pheasants and partridges.

³ Fourteen of the Dover oaks were worth 20s. each; 105 were worth 10s. each; and 500 worth only 2s. each. The 60 oaks for Pevensey were worth only 6s. 8d. each. In 1329 Edw. III. paid to

John de Ashburnham £136 10s., the value. Pat., 3 Edw. III.

⁴ Rot. Cl., 11 Edw. III.

⁵ Pat., 25 Edw. III.

⁶ Ibid, 32 Edw. III.

⁷ See Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. vii., p. 44, for an account of the remains of this manor house.

The fortifications of Rye were restored by aid of the oaks of Crowhurst and the Trees of Brede.

HORSE-SHOES and NAILS were the common manufacture of the county. In 1253 the Sheriff was ordered to have 12,000 nails, for laths and shingles, sent to Freemantel,⁸ to be used for the roof of the hall; and in the next year he had to furnish 30,000 horse-shoes and 60,000 nails for the Queen.

The supply of 3,000 horse-shoes and 29,000 nails, in 1319-20, for the expedition against the Scots, has been noted by Mr. M. A. Lower.⁹

In the first year of the reign of Edward III. (1327), the Sheriff was allowed, in his account, the following amounts:¹⁰ £43 6s. 8d., for the purchase of 200 quarters of wheat; £4 3s. 4d., for 1,000 horse-shoes; 2s. 1d., for measuring the wheat; 3s., for the carriage of the horse-shoes from Le Rogheye, near Horsham, where they were made, to Shoreham; 4s. 8d., for the purchase of 14 barrels to put these horse-shoes, and 3,000 others, and 80,000 nails in; 4d., for wooden hoops for the barrels; 2d., for iron nails to strengthen the bottoms of the barrels; 7d., for the wages of a workman cleaning and hooping the barrels; 14d., for the portorage of them to the ship; 100s., for freight from Shoreham to Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and 10s., for the wages of a clerk to take care of them on board ship.

ARROWS, also, were made near Horsham,¹¹ in 1338, when the Sheriff was allowed £14 10s. 4d. for the purchase of 6,000 arrows (240 sheaves at 14d. a sheaf, each sheaf containing 25 arrows) of good dry wood, with heads well sharpened, called "Dogebil," and for a cask to put them in, and for the carriage from Horsham to the Tower of London.

These were for use in the cross-bows.

The county supplied ARCHERS as well as weapons. Henry III., in 1257, ordered the Sheriff to provide 100 good archers,

⁸ Lib. roll, 37 Hen. III. Ibid. 38. Freemantel was a house of the King, near Southampton. The Sheriff of Wilts was also ordered to send seven

cartloads of stone from Hasebir for the works going on at Freemantel.

⁹ Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. ii., p. 178.

¹⁰ Lib. roll, 4 Edw. III.

¹¹ Ibid, 12 Edw. III.

and send them, with their bows and arrows, to Chester, to go with him against the Welsh;¹² and in 1266, John de Warren, Earl of Surrey, led 300 of our archers into Essex against the King's enemies in that county.¹³

PROVISIONS, &c.—Wheat went to London and Harflour in times of scarcity or war.¹⁴

The Royal table was frequently furnished with Sussex delicacies.

The Custos of the Bishopric of Chichester, in 1245, was, on 6th February, ordered¹⁵ to send no less than 500 hares and 200 rabbits from the Warren of the Bishopric, to Westminster, against the Queen's purification; and subsequently 300 rabbits for the King's use at Christmas. And in the next year, he was to send 100 rabbits for the King's use at Easter; and also 500 hares, 100 partridges, 24 pheasants, 200 more rabbits, 100 hares, 6 peacocks, and 10 "braones"¹⁶ (capons).

Whilst the Bailiffs of Winchelsea, five years later (1250), were ordered¹⁷ to provide 5,000 whittings for the King's use at Winchester at Christmas; and also to send to Westminster the like number of whittings, 150 haddock, and 100 congers, against the Feast of St. Edward (March 18th). They were also, within another ten days, to buy in their town 20 seams of plaice, 3,000 whittings, 300 congers, and whatever other good fish they could buy: so that the King might have them at Westminster at Easter, which happened on the 27th March in that year. They were also to send to Westminster, on the vigil of St. Edward, 4,000 good whittings, 3,000 good plaice, 6,000 good fresh herrings, and a sufficient quantity of fat congers, and other good fish.

When Queen Eleanor was going abroad, in 1254, the Sheriff of Sussex was, on 15th April, ordered to provide for her passage¹⁸ 60 quarters of coal (charcoal), 100 cart loads of wood, 20 quarters of salt, 30,000 eggs, 1,000 lbs. of tallow and lard, 1,000 ells of canvass, 30 doz. of chickens, 30 doz.

¹² Ibid, 41 Hen. III.

¹³ Ibid, 57 Hen. III., where the sheriff is allowed £70 for the expences.

¹⁴ Pat., 49 Edw. III.;—4 Hen. V.

¹⁵ Lib. roll. 29 Hen. III., m, 11.

¹⁶ Ibid, 30 Hen. III.

¹⁷ Rot. Cl., 35 Hen. III.

¹⁸ Lib. roll, 38 Hen. III. The Sheriff was allowed 23s. in this year for the purchase of "Braones" and hens, sent to the Queen in the previous year.

hens, 40,000 dishes, 100 cakes, 100 gallons of vinegar, 4,000 onions, and 60 quarters of flour.

The number of hens must have been very large to supply so great a quantity of eggs.

The relative price of provisions in the county at this period is on record:¹⁹ for Richard le Waleys, who rented Terring manor, in 1277, had to supply his landlord, the Archbishop, with wheat at 18d. a quarter; oats at 8d.; four gallons of the best ale for a penny; the carcass of a fat ox for 16d.; a fat hog for 8d.; a fat sheep for 4d.; two fat geese for a penny; four fat hens for the same sum; and 100 eggs also for a penny.

The *Bishop's Stock*, in his manors, had been fixed in 1227, by Bishop Ranulph (Ralph de Neville, Lord Chancellor), at 152 ploughing oxen, 100 cows, 10 bulls, 3150 sheep, 120 she-goats, 6 he-goats, and 10 cart horses; which were to be perpetually kept, lest a newly-appointed Bishop should exact anything from the poor of the manors for stock.²⁰

Of *fresh fish* we find two not unimportant entries:—

The King sold, in 1381, to Sir Edward Dalyngrugge, for five pounds, all the common fish in a fish-pond in the manor of Malling—the temporalities of the See of Canterbury, then vacant, being in the King's hands.²¹ And on account of the great scarcity of eels and fresh fish, in 1391, at Chichester and on the coast between Dover and Portsmouth, the Collector of Customs was directed, till further orders, to allow them to be brought from abroad free.²²

AFFRAYS IN PARKS.—The Assize and other Rolls abound with records of prosecutions against those who broke into the parks, stole or shot the deer, and carried away the game; and the clandestine pursuit of game was, as it still is, accompanied by violence against the keepers. I give some examples of what took place in the 13th and 14th centuries:—

William de Stranes, Vicar of Cuckfield, was sentenced, in 1294, to three years' imprisonment for taking deer in John

¹⁹ Pat., 5 Edw. I.

²⁰ Chart., 11 Hen. III.

²¹ Pat., 5 Rich. II.

²² Rot. Cl., 15 Rich. II.

de Warren's park at Cuckfield;²³ and he obtained his pardon and release only after he had been confined at Guildford from 2nd February till the Feast of the Holy Trinity, 13th June.

Edward St. John had cause of complaint against Adam Parker, of Petworth, John de Dudelesfold, and William de Heresworth, for breaking into his parks and free warrens²⁴ at Beugenet, Berlavington, Flexham, Lodegarshall, Sutton, Cotes, Egdean, and Fittleworth, driving away his deer, and taking his hares, rabbits, pheasants, and partridges.

In 1344, not only did the Bishop of Chichester complain of John Bury, and others, for breaking into his parks, but Richard Earl of Arundel complained of John de Egeline of Crosham, John Pardieu, and others, for entering his warrens and chaces of Eastdean,²⁵ Westdean, Charlton, and Singleton; the complaints of both being for driving away deer, and taking and carrying away hares, rabbits, pheasants, and partridges.

Eleven years afterwards, a still worse raid was made in the Earl's seven parks, in his forest of Arundel, in his seven free chaces, and in his five free warrens;²⁶ and the "malefactors," not content with driving away his deer, and taking and carrying away his hares, rabbits, pheasants, and partridges, ill-treated and imprisoned his Bondswoman, "nief," and servant Alice atte Mulle, whom they found at Keurdford, and then took her to Worminghurst, and there imprisoned her again; so that he lost her services for a long time.

The Archbishop of Canterbury fared no better. In 1375, four men, named Cat of Rotherfield, and other malefactors of that place, Farenche (Frant) and Withyham, broke into his park of Franchame, in Wadhurst, took away some deer, and wounded others with arrows, and left them; and beat and wounded the park keeper⁷ and his servant so much that their lives were despaired of.²⁸

HUNTING has yet its great attraction for Sussex men. We have learnt from the papers of the Rev. Edward Turner

²³ Rot. Cl., 22 Edw. I.

²⁴ Pat. 9 Edw. III.

²⁵ Ibid, 18 Edw. III.

²⁶ Ibid, 29 Edw. III.

²⁷ The usual wages of a park keeper

were 2d. a day, with sometimes a robe or a mark of silver in lieu of it: the wages increased to 3d. a day a century later.

²⁸ Pat., 49 Edw. III.

of the sports on Ashdowne Forest; and in the present volume of the Abbot of Battle's rights of hunting. The past glories of the Charlton Hunt have been recorded in our pages;²⁹ and now I give some early notices of the sport:—

So early as 1187, we find the Bishop of the Diocese, Sefrid II., not only hunting, but fined ten marks, for carrying his sport, without the licence of Henry II., into certain woods, which formed part of the King's escheats.³⁰ When, some hundred years later, Richard Earl of Arundel hunted without licence in the then Bishop Gilbert de St. Leofardo's woods at Houghton, he did not escape so easily: for the Bishop threatened him with excommunication; and even, when the affair was arranged, obliged the Earl to observe a fast for his error.³¹

We have, in 1287, an account of an accident which happened to an over-zealous sportsman—Walter de la Mare—when he followed some dogs in Cuckfield park, running after a deer wounded by an arrow.³² Walter went naked into a pond after it, and swam to a weedy place, where he was drowned.

In August and September, 1303, the King's huntsmen, John Lovel and his fellows, were sent with his dogs to Ashdowne Forest to hunt for the King's use, and were allowed £10 2s. 6d. for their wages and for food for the dogs.³³ These are still the months for hunting the red deer on Exmoor;³⁴ and, till the recent enclosure of the New Forest, the Queen's stag hounds hunted there in these months.

Richard Earl of Arundel obtained, in 1345, licence to hunt in Worminghurst park, which Edward had taken into his hands with other lands belonging to the Abbey Fecamp, and had granted to Alianor de Bellemonte, then the wife of the Earl.³⁵ And John de Spyney, a huntsman, obtained of the Archbishop of Canterbury (1349) the custody of the park, warren, and foreign wood of Slyndon for life, receiving a bushel of wheat

²⁹ Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. xv., p. 74.

³⁰ In 33 Hen. II. Madox, i., p. 562.

³¹ Gent. Mag. for March, 1865, p. 351.

³² Assize roll, 16 Edw. I.

³³ Lib. roll, 32 Edw. I. This was before the royal hunting seat was built: see Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. xiv., p. 45.

³⁴ See an excellent account of the Chace of Wild Deer in Devonshire and Somersetshire, published in 1862, under the name of C. P. Collyns, but the work of "one of Her Majesty's counsel learned in the law."

³⁵ Pat., 19 Edw. III.

weekly out of the manor, and 13s. 4d. a-year for a robe and shoes; and for his boy, half-a-bushel weekly of the coarser grain—barley.³⁶

A person of note, John Pelham, was appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury forester of the Forest of La Broille and of the woods of the Bailiwick of Southmalling, master of the game in the parks of the Plashet, More and Ringmere, and overseer of the fishery of Southmalling, for life; and had his appointment confirmed, in 1397, by the Crown.³⁷

There are many entries of the appointments of keepers to other parks and forests whilst they were in the hands of the Crown, by forfeiture or otherwise.

We have not many records of the HERONRIES, of which there must have been several in the county. Edward I. had one in his manor of Iden, which he reserved to the Crown, when, in 1297, he granted that manor to Robert Pauly, one of the Barons of Winchelsey, for life.³⁸

I might pursue my subject through the reigns of many subsequent Sovereigns; but the pages of our annual collections are not numerous enough to contain what would well fill an entire volume.

³⁶ Rot. Cl., 23 Edw. III.

³⁷ Pat., 21 Rich. II.

³⁸ Ib., 26 Edw. I.