



## Six Early Deeds relating to property in Northgate Street, Chester

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ON the 19th March, 1888, I exhibited to this Society a number of Early Chester Deeds, relating to the Mediæval Cestrian Family of Doncaster. I am told that these deeds have proved to be of service to local historians and genealogists, and I am therefore encouraged to produce other similar records now in my possession.

This evening I exhibit half-a-dozen of these documents, referring to property in Northgate Street, close by St. Peter's Church, during the period 1270-1342. It will be noticed that they are all in a good state of preservation, and several of them have the seals attached.

The first deed is undated, but by means of the attestation clause we are able to fix the date as being at the end of the reign of King Henry III., or the beginning of that of King Edward I. It is written in courthand, and I here give the original Latin, with the translation.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Ric' de Knaresbur' civis Cestr' dedi concessi et hac presenti carta mea confirmavi Alicie filie mee juniore quamdam scoppam meam quam emi de Galfrido de Alretun, habentem in longitudine decem pedes et

dimid' et in latitudine sex pedes palpatos : que quidem scoppa jacet propinquior hostio domus que fuit Hugonis Selimon versus ecclesiam beati Petri civitatis Cestr' Habendam et tenendam sibi et heredibus suis vel suis assignatis de me et de heredibus meis vel meis assignatis libere quiete plene et pacifice cum omnibus edificiis in ea positis et ponendis libertatibus et aysiamentis omnibus dicte scoppe spectantibus : Reddendo inde annuatim heredibus Hugonis Selimon unum par cirotecarum albarum vel unum denarium argenti in Nativitate Sancti Johannis Bapt' Et Ric'o filio meo et heredibus suis vel suis assignatis unum obolum argenti in eodem festo pro omnibus serviciis exacconibus et demandis. Ego vero ei predictus Ric'us et heredes mei predictam scoppam cum omnibus pertinentiis suis prefate Alicie filie mee et heredibus suis vel suis assignatis contra omnes homines et feminas in perpetuum Warettizabimus. Et ut hec mea donacio concessio et presentis carte mee confirmacio in pleno portmoto Cestr' facte perpetue firmitatis robur optineant huic scripto sigillum meum apposui. Hiis testibus Joh' Arneway tunc maiore Cestr' Matth'o de Deresbur' et Will'o Cusin tunc Vic' Civitatis ejusdem Ric'o clerico, Symon' le Merc' Ric'o Apotec' Reginald Pinet' [Rinet?] Th(om)ja de Knaresbur' Ric'o de Tudenam Will'o Marel Th[om]ja clerico et multis aliis.

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Know all men present and to come that I Richard de Knaresbur', citizen of Chester, have given granted and by this my present charter confirmed to Alice my younger Daughter, a certain shop (scoppam) of mine which I bought of Geoffrey de Alretun, containing in length 10 feet and a half, and in breadth 6 feet, the which shop lies near the Inn (hostio dom') which was Hugh Selimon's, towards the Church of the Blessed Peter in the city of Chester.

To have and to hold to her and her heirs or assigns of me and my heirs or assigns, freely and quietly yielding therefor yearly to the heirs of Hugh Selimon one pair of white gloves or one penny of silver in the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, and to Richard my son and his heirs or assigns, one halfpenny of silver in the same Feast, for all services and demands.

And I have confirmed this my present charter in the full Portmote of Chester.

These being witnesses, John Arneway Mayor of Chester, Matthew de Deresbury and William Cusin, Sheriffs of the same City, Richard the Clerk, Symon le Mercer, Richard Apotet', Reginald Pinet, Thomas de Knaresbur', Richard de Tudenam, William Marel, Thomas the Clerk, and many others.

(Not dated.)

This record proves that at this early date there was an Inn close by St. Peter's Church, which belonged to one Hugh "Selimon." This surname is said to be a corruption of the name Solomon, and that the well-known Cheshire cognomen of Salmon is derived from it.

The reservation of a pair of white gloves as rent is interesting. Glove-making was at the time one of the staple industries of Chester, and the neighbourhood of St. Peter's Church was its business centre. It will be observed that the deed was confirmed and registered in the City Court of "Portmote."

The celebrated John Arneway (who is sometimes described as Sir John Arneway) is mentioned as the first witness in his official capacity as Mayor of Chester. This is a somewhat early instance of the use of the name "Mayor." Arneway, it will be remembered, was one of the founders of the original "Chester Whitson Plays." The Chronicle of St. Werburgh has the following entry respecting him:—

"1278. In the same year died John Arneway, a citizen  
"of Chester, who gave of his goods to God and St.  
"Werburgh, and to the monks serving there, an endow-  
"ment for the maintenance of two chaplains: as is  
"made manifest by the epitaph upon his tomb before  
"the altar of St. Leonard in the Southern part of the  
"Church."

The tomb is, alas! no longer "manifest." Nay, can anyone point to the spot in our Cathedral Church where formerly stood the Altar of St. Leonard?

The names of Matthew de Daresbury and William Cusin are also given as witnesses in their offices as Sheriffs of Chester. From this fact we are able to fix the date of the deed, as they and John Arneway filled the chairs as Sheriffs and Mayor together for the period 1270-3.

The Seal is not quite perfect. It is of green wax, and bears a star with eight points, with a legend—"S' Ric' De——ur." [Sigillum Ricardi De——].

The second deed is likewise in Latin, and undated, but from the same reason as in the last deed we can fix the date *circa* 1275.

The following is the original Latin and the translation:—

Sciant omnes presentes et futuri quod ego Johannes filius Hugonis Selimon civis Cestrie dedi et concessi et hac presenti carta mea confirmavi Will'o de Donecastel civis [*sic*] Cestrie totam terram meam in Nortgatestrete Civitatis Cestrie jacentem inter ecclesiam Sancti Petrie predicte civitatis ex una parte et terram que fuit Symonis le mercer ex altera in longitudine et latitudine. Habendam et tenendam dicto Will'o et heredibus suis vel suis assingnat' de me et de heredibus meis vel de meis assingnat' libere et quiete bene et pacifice cum omnibus libertatibus eysiammentis ubique dicte terre spectantibus.

Reddendo inde annuatim capitali dono quinque solidos argenti ad festum Sancti Johannis Baptiste et dicto Johanni et heredibus suis vel suis assignat' de me et de heredibus meis vel de meis assignat' xii<sup>d</sup>. argenti ad dictum festum Sancti Johannis pro omni servicio et exaccione quacumque. Pro hac autem mea donac'one et concessione dictus Will's dedit michi quatráginta [*sic*] solidos argenti pro manibus. Ego vero Johannes et heredes mei vel mei assignat' totam predictam terram cum pertinenciis sicut predictum est pro predicto servicio dicto Will'o et heredibus suis vel suis assingnat' contra omnes

et feminas in perpetuum warentizabimus. Et in huius rei testimonium hoc presens scriptum sigilli mei impressione roboravi. Hiis testibus Johanne Arnewey tunc Maiore Cestr'. Philippo clerico et Ran' de Deresbur' tunc vic' Cestr' Ric' clerico, Alex' Hurel, Joh' Grund, Hugone de Melis, Ric' de Totinham, Rog' de Totinham, Godefr' clerico et aliis.

Be it known to all present and to come that I John son of Hugh Selimon, citizen of Chester, have given granted and by this my present charter confirmed to William de Donecastel, citizen of Chester, all my land in Nortgate strete in the City of Chester, lying between the Church of St. Peter in the aforesaid City, on the one part, and the land which belonged to Simon le Mercer on the other part, in length and breadth.

To have and to hold to the said William his heirs and assigns freely and quietly with all liberties and easements to the said land belonging.

Yielding therefor yearly to the chief lord 5s. of silver at the feast of St. John the Baptist and to the said John his heirs or assigns 12d. of silver at the said feast for all services.

Moreover for this my gift and grant the said William hath given to me by hand 40s. of silver.

With clause of warranty.

These being witnesses, John de Arnewey Mayor of Chester, Philip the Clerk and Randle de Deresbury Sheriffs of Chester, Richard the Clerk, Alexander Hurel, John Grund, Hugh de Melis, Richard de Totinham, Roger de Totinham, Godfrey the Clerk, and others. (Not dated.)

Endorsed on the back :—

The land of William de Doncastr in Northegate strete near the church of St. Peter, which he purchased of John son of Hugh Selimon.

The Seal is of green wax, and slightly broken. It bears four ears of wheat, shaped as a star, and around it the legend—"S' Joh': Fil': Hug——"

The third deed is also in Latin, and bears no date. But in like manner as before we can prove the date to be *circa* 1292.

All the witnesses to this deed are mentioned in my paper of 1888. The Seal is of yellow wax, is *oval* in shape, and bears an ear of wheat arranged in the form of a Fleur de Lys. The legend is very much broken and worn—"SIGILL' E VRC'"

The original Latin and translation are as follows:—

Universis Christi fidelibus hoc presens scriptum visuris vel auditoris Johannes filius Hugonis Selimon de Cestr' salutem in domino sempiternam. Noveritis me dedisse concessisse et omnino de me et heredibus meis imperpetuum quiet' Clamasse Will'o de Dancastr' civi Cestr' duodecim denarios annui redditus quas [*sic*] de dicto Will'o annuatim percipere consuevi pro quadam terra in Northegatstrete Civitatis Cestr' jacente inter ecclesiam Sancti Petri ex parte una et terram que fuit Symonis le Mercer ex altera habendos et tenendos dicto Will'o et heredibus suis vel assignatis libere quiete bene et in pace in perpetuum. Ita quidem quod nec ego nec heredes mei aut aliquis per me vel pro me seu nomine meo quicquam juris aut clam' in dictis duodecim denariis annui redditus divertere exigere vel [vendi]care poterimus. In cuius rei testimonium huic presenti scripto sigillum meum apposui. Hiis testibus Hugon' de Brychehull tunc maiore Cestr'. Hugon' Payn, Andr' de Stanlowe tunc vic' Cestr', Ran' de Derisbur', Alex' Hurel, Rob' de Terven, Rogero de Tudynham, Ric'o Harald, Nicho' Payn, Rogero clerico et aliis.

To all the faithful people of Christ who shall see or hear this present writing John son of Hugh Selimon of Chester wishes everlasting salvation in the Lord.

Be it known that I have given granted and absolutely from me and my heirs for ever quitclaimed to William de Dancastr, citizen of Chester, 12d. annual rent, yearly received of the said William for certain land in Northegatstrete in the City of Chester, lying between the Church of St. Peter on the one part, and the land which belonged to Symon le Mercer on the other part. To have and to hold to the said William and his heirs or assigns freely and quietly for ever.

These being witnesses, Hugh de Brychehull Mayor of Chester, Hugh Payn, Andrew de Stanlowe Sheriffs of Chester,

Randle de Derisbury, Alexander Hurel, Robert de Teruen, Roger de Tudynham, Richard Harald, Nicholas Payn, Roger the Clerk, and others. (Not dated.)

The fourth deed is likewise in Latin, and bears date "at Chester on the Thursday before the Feast of Saints Philip & James (viz. :—May 1) Anno Domini 1310."

The Seal is gone. As in the last deed, likewise in the subsequent one, all the witnesses are named in my former paper. It runs as follows :—

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Will'us de Donecastre concessi dedi et hac presenti carta mea confirmavi Ric'o de Wheteley unam placiam terre jacentem in Northegatestre [*sic*] in Civitate Cestr' inter terram meam in latitudine ex una parte et terram predicti Ric'i ex altera et continet [*sic*] in longitudine quindecim ulnas regales et in latitudine ad finem versus alteram stratam [*sic*] unum quarterium ulne et ad alium finem versus solarium lapideum predicti Ric'i duas ulnas Habendam et tenendam predicto Ric'o et heredibus suis vel suis assignatis de capital' dominis feodi libere quiete bene et in pace jure et hereditarie imperpetuum cum omnibus edificiis in dicta terra positis et ponendis libertatibus commoditatibus et aysiamenis predictae placie terre ubique spectantibus. Et ego vero predictus, Will'us et heredes mei totam predictam placiam terre cum omnibus suis pertinenciis predicto Ric'o et heredibus suis vel suis assignatis contra omnes gentes Warentizabimus acquietabimus et in perpetuum defendemus. In cuius rei testimonium huic presenti carte mee sigillum meum apposui.

Hiis testibus Hugone de Brichull tunc Maiore Cestr' Gilberto Donfoull tunc vic' Cestr' Alex'o Hurel, Ric'o Rossel, Ric'o Candelan, Will'mo fil' Petri de Brichull, Galfrido le Tavernere et aliis. Dat' Cestr' die Jovis ante festum Sanctorum Philippi et Jacobi Anno domini MCCC decimo.

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Be it known to all present and to come that I William de Donecastre have given granted and by this my present charter confirmed to Richard de Wheteley one place of land lying in Northegatestre[et] in the City of Chester, between my land in breadth on the one part, and the land of the

aforesaid Richard on the other part, and containing in length 15 royal ells, and in breadth to the end towards the adjoining street (alt'am st'tam) one quarter of an ell, and to the other end towards the stone sun-dial (solarium lapideum) of the aforesaid Richard, 2 ells.

To have and to hold to the aforesaid Richard his heirs or assigns of the chief lords of the fee, freely and quietly for ever.

With clause of warranty.

These being witnesses, Hugh de Brichull Mayor of Chester, Gilbert Donfoull Sheriff of Chester, Alexander Hurel, Richard Rossel, Richard Candelan, William son of Peter de Brichull, Geoffrey le Tauernere, and others.

Given at Chester, on Thursday before the feast of SS Philip & James (May 1) A.D. 1310.

The fifth deed is in duplicate. It will be observed that the deed and counterpart are written on one piece of parchment; that certain letters are written in the space between the two deeds; and that then the two deeds have been divided by being cut in an indented line through the letters. This is the origin of the word by which all deeds to which there are two or more parties are to this day called an "Indenture." The deed is in Latin, and bears date, "at Chester on the Wednesday in the Feast of St. Peter ad Vincula (August 1) 18 Edward II." *i.e.*, A.D. 1324.

Omnibus Christi fidelibus hoc presens scriptum visuris vel audituris Will' filius Will'i de Donecastr senioris et Alicie uxoris eius salutem in domino Noveritis quod vero Ric'us filius Joh'is de Stanlowe nos de quibusdam terris suis in Norgate strete jacent' inter terram Rogeri de Macclesfeld et terram Ricardi de Wheteleg' simul cum aliis terris et tenementis suis in Cestr' feoffaverit prout in carta sua nobis inde confecta de gratia sua speciali plenius continetur. Et nos predictas terras et tenementa cum pertin' eidem Ric'o concesserimus ad totam vitam suam tenendas prout in carta nostra eidem inde confecta plenius continetur. Quod nos prefati Will'us et Alicia eidem



Ric'o gratiam uberiorem facere volentes ut tenemur et concedimus et per presentes obligamus nos et heredes nostros ad sufficientem sustentac'onem et reparac'onem et emendac'onem omnium edificiorum in predictis terris et ten' in Norgatestrete impositis et imponendis ad totam vitam ipsius Ric'i faciend' et impendend' quotiens opus fuerit et racionabiliter fuerimus premoniti. In cuius rei testimonium tam nos quam prefatus Ric'us hiis scriptis indentatis alternatim sigilla nostra apposuimus. Dat' apud Cestr' die mercur' in festo Sancti Petri Advincla Anno regni Regis E[dwardi] fil' Regis E[dwardi] decimo octavo.

To all the faithful people of Christ who shall see or hear this present writing, William son of William de Donecastr senior and Alice his wife, send greeting in the Lord.

Whereas Richard son of John de Stanlowe enfeoffed us of certain lands in Norgatestrete lying between the land of Roger de Macclesfield and the land of Richard de Wheteleg', together with all other his lands and tenements in Chester, as in his charter to us of his special grace thereof made is more fully contained, and we have granted the aforesaid lands and tenements to the said Richard for his life as in our charter is fully contained. We the aforesaid William and Alice grant and bind ourselves and our heirs by these presents sufficiently to sustain and repair the said premises during the life of the said Richard.

Given at Chester on Wednesday in the feast of St. Peter Advincla (Aug. 1). 18. Edward II. (1324.)

(No names of witnesses.)

(The counterpart of this deed is preserved with it.)

The last deed is in Norman-French, and is, perhaps, from a Chester point of view, the most important of the set. It furnishes evidence that even in Edwardian times the Chester house was the merchant's place of business as well as his residence.

It consisted of three stories at least, viz.:—the cellar or crypt, with an entrance into the street; the shop above, set back from the line of the street, the space

between ultimately forming the passage or Row, to which access to the street was obtained; and the solar or living room above the shop. Perhaps above this again would be the gable or attic in which the merchant stored his light wares, in the same way as in the crypt he left his heavy goods.

This division of cellar, shop and solar, is the origin of the Rows, which form such an unique feature in the architecture of Chester.

The deed moreover proves that even at this early period the ownership of these three divisions of the house might be severed, as is the case to-day, and that the shop in the street or in the row need not necessarily belong to the same owner. As in the case of the two previous deeds, all the witnesses to this record are mentioned in my former paper.

The deed is dated at Chester, on the morrow of the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene, 15 Edward III., A.D. 1342.

The Seal is of yellow wax, and is in good preservation. In a Gothic ornamental circle it bears the arms of the Doncaster family, viz. :—a triple turreted tower, and around it is the legend, “S’ Felicia de Doncaster.”

The following is the original Norman-French, with the translation :—

Ceste endenture fait entre Felice de Donecastr’ dune part et William le fitz William de Doncastr’ dautre part Tesmoigne qe come mesme cely William tient un Celer en la Cite de Cestre’ en Northgatestrete et la dite Felice tient la Seude proscheyne-ment paramount: et le dite William un Soler paramount la dite Seude est acorde entre les parties qe le dite William de son frank tenement ieiniant la dite seude de vers le North ad quante per cestes endentures et done a la dite Felice deux aulnus [*sic*] et demy aulne un quarter et demy quarter et la quatre partie de un quarter en longure et un demy aulne en

laoure de mesme cele frank tenement ieinyaunt a la dite Seude en eschaunges pour la partie et lestat qe la dite Felice ad et clayme davoit en le dite celer a de south la dite seude et en le soler paramount la dite seude. Cestes eschaunges adurer entre les partyes et lour herys a toutz jours. En tesmoignace de qele chose a la partie de ceste endenture demaunt de vers le dite William la dite Felice ad mys sonn seal. Et a la partie demaunt vers la dite Felice le dite William ad mys sonn seal pro iceux tesmoignes. Richard de Capenhurst a dounk maire de Cestre: Hug' de Ruyecroft et Madok de Capenhurst viscountes de la dite ville: John Blound Hug' le Mercer, Thomas de Higreue, Warin Blound et aultres. Done a Cestre le Dymaigne en la feste de Seinte Marie Magdeleyne, lan du regne le Roi Edward tierce puy la conquete quinzime.

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This Indenture made between Felicia de Donecastr on the one part, and William the son of William de Donecastr on the other part.

Witnesseth that whereas the said William holds a cellar in the City of Chester, in Northgatestrete, and the said Felicia holds the shop next above, and the said William the room (*soler*) above the said shop. It is agreed between the said parties and the said William gives to the said Felicia, towards the north of the said shop, 2 ells and half an ell, quarter and half a quarter and the fourth part of a quarter in length, and half an ell in breadth, in exchange for that part which the said Felicia claims in the said cellar towards the south of the said shop and in the room above.

These being witnesses, Richard de Capenhurst Mayor of Chester, Hugh de Ruyecroft and Madok de Capenhurst Sheriffs of the said town (ville), John Blound, Hugh le Mercer, Thomas de Higreue, Warin Blound, and others.

Given at Chester on the morrow of the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, 15 Edward III.

I hope at a future time to give more of these deeds for insertion in our Journal.