

A DOCUMENT RELATING TO WHADDON
CHASE, IN THE 16TH CENTURY.

By the great courtesy of Lady Pigott-Brown, some of the numerous documents from Doddershall formed the subject of an address to the Society in General Meeting on 10 May, 1937; the papers then described and exhibited it is hoped to publish together, as they bear directly upon the history of the County. Papers of family or manorial interest were excluded, and the imperfect document here printed was not mentioned as it relates to Whaddon Chase, the keepership of which Serjeant Pigott¹ inherited from his mother,—heiress of the Giffards. The Serjeant died on 25 Feb. 1520 N.S. and his widow was called to account for waste and destruction within the Queen's Chase and Park of Whaddon,² from the time of her husband's death till Michaelmas 18 Hen. VIII (i.e. 1526). Our fragment is undated but since it summarizes certain allowances, wages to keepers, &c. for five years there seems no reason to doubt that it forms her reply or defence to the charges brought against her. One of these charges was that she had felled trees and carried them to Doddershall "for the building of her new house there;" this is not specifically answered, and it would be interesting to know whether any of the great wall-posts and heavily moulded ceiling-beams in the Stone Hall (which the Historical Monuments Commissioners place early in the 16th century), actually came from Whaddon,—and how such massive timbers were taken there.

Coming to our document we find mention of gates and fencing for Creslow, and the pounds at Swanbourne³ and at Whaddon; later on an allowance of twenty loads of fire-wood for the Prior of Snelshall occurs, and

¹ Who is commemorated by a magnificent canopied tomb in the N. chapel of Whaddon Church.

² See *Victoria County History*, vol. II., p. 141, quoting from *Forest Proceedings*, K.R. hdl. I., No. 11.

³ *V.C.H.* III., 428, says that the overlordship was still in the Crown in the 16th century.

further allowances for the keeper of the park, and for deer-browse. Finally, she comes to the sales of timber necessary to pay the wages and liveries of the keepers, which were:—

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Yearly wages.</i>	<i>livery allowance.</i>
Robt. Wyllyott ...	40s.	6s. 8d.
The parker	26s. 8d.	6s. 8d.
Thos. Clarke	20s.	6s. 8d.
Rd. Cocks	20s.	6s. 8d.
John Sewyster	20s.	6s. 8d.

The total of this is £8, which comes to £40 for the five years, whilst 1300 load of wood were sold, at 6d. a load, for £32 10s. 0d., so the balance of £7 10s. 0d.; “was made off other woode in the queny’s Chace.”

Imperfect fragment as it is, the facts and figures contained in it seem to deserve recording.

. hereunto the said Elizabeth sayth as
 Tymber for fellyng off whicche warrants to show
 matter off dyssarge that is to say iiij tres
 were fellyd by the queny’s warrant for makyng of
 stakes, yatys, & yate posts for the kyng’s maner of
 Craslowe in the Counte of Buck,’ & lyke wyse xv okes
 were fellyd for the makyng off the queny’s pownde at
 Suanburne & iij okes were fellyd for . . . off the quenys
 pownde at Whaddon, & vi okes were fellyd . . . to pyn
 hoggs & ij okes were assygned to Walt’ Taylor & Robt.
 Ry... tennants for the reparacyons off ther howsys, & xx
 okes were fellyd for the reparacyons off the queny’s ten-
 nants at Whaddon, & xl okes were fellyd for the repar-
 acyon off the parke pale & raylle in the said parke and
 also for makyng off stakes to be sett in the said parke for
 preservacyon off the were fellyd by the said
 Elizabeth for the reparacyons off her maner off
 Whaddon were fellyd for ploughbote &
 cartebote the whycch she & all other whos astate she
 hathe in the said maner off Whaddon hath had tyme
 owt off mynde appendant to the said Maner off Whad-
 don, & xx okes were wyndefalls the whycch allso the
 seid Elizabeth & all they whos astate she hathe in the
 said maner of Whaddon hath usyd to have tyme owt of

mynde. And as to y^e remnant off y^e okes & asshes the said Elizabeth saythe that they were olde tres dottods⁴ & wranglynges whyche were felde for fyer bote & the said fyer woodd was delyvered to certen persons that ought to have certen lodys off woode yerly to ther fyer out off the said parke & chaes, that ys to say to the Prior off Snelsalle yerly xx^{ti} lode, summe off hys woodd for v yerys a c lode, & to every keeper off v kepers off the parke & chaes yerly xx^{ti} lode, summe off thys woodde for v yere last past ccccc lode. And also the seid Elizabeth saythe that the keeper off the parke hathe usyd to have alway alowyd hym yerly for kepyng off the palle vi^s viij^d whycch amounthyth to thys v yerys xxxiiij^s iiiij^d whycche hathe byn made every yere off the said okes & asshes & further more the seid Elizabeth [saythe] that the feller off the deer bruys ys alowyd yerly vj^s viij^d whycche cummythe to xxxiiij^s iiiij^d whycch also hath byn made yerly off the said okes & asshes, and also seythe that the makyng off the stakes set in the parke for preservacyon of the also was made off the seid okes & Asshes, & furthermore the said Elizabeth seyth other whos astate she hathe in the seid Maner off Whaddon hathe usyd to take fyer bote in the said parke & chaes, the whycche she extemyth to be yerly a c lodes summ off her wode for v yere ys v^c lodes the whycch she saythe hathe byn also made off the said okes & asshes. And furthermore seid Elizabeth that she ys redy to avow the resydue off the said okes & asshes over & besyde ij^c & xxviiij wheroff no moo number off lods off woode then was afore rehersyd, & as to the xiiij^c lode off underwoode & bowes fellyd & cut downe in the seid parke & Chace the seid Elizabeth seythe that yt was fellyd for dere browys every yere a parsell duryng the space off v yerys last past and after that every yere solde to make the keper's wages whyche was as yt ys prysyd at vi^d a lode cummythe to xxxijⁿ x^s and the keper's wages cummythe to yerly with ther lyvere viijⁿ, that ys to say to Robte. Wylyott xl^s & for his lyvere vi^s viij^d, to the

⁴ *Rectius* "dotard," meaning a decayed trunk without branches,

parker xxvj^s viij^d & for hys lyvere vj^s viij^d, to Thomas Clarke xx^s & for hys lyvere vj^s viij^d, to Richard Cocks xx^s & for hys lyvere vj^s viij^d, to John Sewyster xx^s & for hys lyvere vj^s viij^d, summe off all ther wages wythe ther lyvere duryng the space off v yeres xlⁿ, And the resydue off ther wages over & besyde xxxijⁿ x^s, that ys to say vijⁿ x^s was made off other woode in the quenys Chace for the whyche she ys redy at all tymys to make ansuer & to geve account when she shall be by the quenys most honorable Cownsell requyred, & desyerythe to be dyschargyd off that same vijⁿ x^s for the payment off the kepers' wages in maner & forme aforerehersyd.