

SERFDOM IN ENGLAND
AND
THE TRANSFER OF SERFS IN BUCKINGHAM-
SHIRE.

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THE three Charters relating to the transfer of serfs, copies and translations of which are appended to this paper, are from the Chartulary of the Abbey of Great Missenden, and are Numbers ix., xxii., and xxxi. The actual sale of slaves in this country is scarcely realized in these days, except by those who have closely studied our early history. The contents of the muniment room of the Monastery, when carefully preserved, are among the invaluable resources of the historian; and the comparatively obscure religious house at Missenden yields much in its Chartulary, which proves the light that may be thrown on our laws and customs in early times, gleaned from the monastic records.

Before making some general observations on Serfdom in England, I will first call attention to the particular Charters referred to in this paper. The first one is the Charter of Hugh de Noers, or Nuiers; the second, of Johanna de Sandford; and the third, of Hugh de Plessets. Now all three of the grantors were descendants of William de Missenden, the founder of the Monastery in 1133. Hugh de Noers appears to have been the grandson of William, the founder. The third document of the Chartulary is an agreement between his father, described as Hugh de Nuiers the younger, and the canons, relating to certain land, wood, and pasturage, and rights pertaining to them in which he is mentioned as the son of William de Nuiers.

The pedigree gives the son and grandson of the founder as both of the name of Hugh; William, the son of Hugh, referred to in Charter ix., would, therefore,

have been the founder's great-grandson. It appears not to be known whether William de Missenden was of the Noers family, or took the name. The de Noers only became of importance from Sir William de Nodarius' marriage with the daughter and co-heiress of the wealthy Sir Peter of Stoke Goldington (this was after 1253, and before 1257).

Gothurst, or Gayhurst, was their seat. Apparently the first record of the Gothurst Noers was of Ralph, who held the Manor in 1206. The family probably originally came from St. Martin des Noyers, in Calvados, near Liseux. Sir William's great-great-granddaughter carried the property in Gothurst, Salden, Mursley, and other places, to the Nevilles.

We now come to the Charter of Johanna de Sandford.

1212, Hugh de Sandford had confirmed his ancestral rights—ordered to have rights in Missenden Abbey, possessed by his ancestors, *ex parte uxoris sue*.*

This Hugh de Sandford married a daughter of Hugh de Nuiers, the grandson of William, the founder of the Abbey. Johanna de Sandford was clearly the wife of Hugh. She is the Lady Joan de Sandford who is described in No. ii. of the Chartulary (being an agreement between herself as the Patron and the Convent of Missenden) as the daughter of Hugh de Noers the younger. The agreement relates to the appointment of a guardian of the goods of the Abbey during the vacancy of the office of the Abbot. Johanna was, therefore, the great-granddaughter of William, the founder. Why she in her Charter claimed in right of her widowhood, and not as heiress of Hugh de Nuiers, is open to question, unless Walter the serf, being "a serf in gross"—a term to be explained hereafter—was the property of her late husband, Hugh de Sandford.

The branch of the Sandfords connected with Missenden, I should mention, was the Aston Sandford family.

The third Charter appended to this paper is that of Hugh de Plesssets. On the death of Hugh de Sandford, in about 1234, the patronage descended to his two daughters and their heirs, and they constantly present

* "Literæ Claus." 14 John.

conjointly. Hugh de Sandford's only son, John, died s. p. His two daughters were Christiana, who married John de Plessets, and Agnes, who, it is conjectured, first married Henry Huse, and whose second husband was Peter de Breos. John de Sandford, the brother of these ladies, held a fee in Missenden, of Crendon Honour. The Manor was held of the King *in capite*, by the Giffards, Earls of Buckingham, then by the Clares, so to the Straffords. It was only an under Manor, therefore, that the Missendens had. The distinct moieties of the advowson of the Abbey, it is worth mentioning, are still found to be separate in 1398.*

I now come to the family of the de Plessets, and there is much that is interesting in connection with that family. Hugh de Plessets' father, John de Plessets, was first married, as we have seen, to Christiana or Christine, daughter of Hugh de Sandford; and Hugh, as her son and heir, was grantor in the third Charter quoted. As John de Plessets, the father, is described in this Charter as Earl of Warwick, it will not be out of place to account for his assumption of the title. His second wife was Margery Beaumont, sister and heiress of Thomas, Earl of Warwick. She was first married to John Marshall, and was a widow when the Earldom descended to her.† Her position in these times was so far powerful, that an alliance with her was of importance to the State, and the King (Henry III.) promised her in marriage to one of his principal military officers, John de Plessets, a Norman by birth, governor of Devizes Castle. A slight incident in connection with this marriage is handed down to us.

"So well pleased," says the Chronicle, "was the King with the Countess for taking this husband, that he gave her three bucks."‡ On his marriage, John de Plessets assumed the title of Earl, which seems to have been recognized by the crown. It would be too large a subject to discuss the very interesting question,

* In the foregoing observations on the families of the Noers and Sandfords, I have obtained valuable information from the Rev. Thomas Williams, Rector of Aston Clinton.

† See Dugdale's "Antiquities of Warwickshire," 2nd Ed., p. 383.

‡ *Ib.* 384.

whether, in the days of the Plantagenets, the husband of a Countess had the title of Earl for life by the custom of England, as he would, in like manner, under certain circumstances, be entitled to his wife's lands on her death, for his life, by what is termed "the Curtesy of England," "because this is not used in any other realm, but only in England."* In any case, it would be essential that the King, as the fountain of honour, should recognize such a title.

John de Plesssets died 26th February, 47 Henry III. (1263), and it is recorded that he was honourably buried in the choir of the Abbey at Missenden. Hugh de Plesssets, his son, and, as I have before explained, the grantor in the third Charter, being the son of his first wife, had nothing to do with the Earldom of Warwick; he was summoned to Parliament after the death of his father up to 27 Ed. I. He, too, it is believed, was buried at the Monastery, as he directed his burial to be by his father, with his palfrey and armour.

It may be truly remarked how few at the present day are aware that an Earl of Warwick lies in the precincts of the secluded Abbey of Missenden. Other distinguished persons besides the Earl and his son lie buried there. We yield to the touch of romance in reflecting that, in times of turbulence and unrest, the Knight should select for his last resting-place a spot so greatly in contrast to his life's experience.

The subject of serfdom in England has engaged but little attention in these modern days; it is one, however, that must be examined and thoroughly understood by him who claims to be a student of the social problem in this country, and who is probing to the foundations of primitive society. Such a subject will be of little concern to the political orator whose environments are bounded by the circumstances of the passing day; but to the serious politician and the historian it is one that demands very careful investigation.

To trace the very gradual stages by which the

* "Les Terms de la Ley," 216.

Englishman of to-day has attained his social and political freedom, would be a very laborious task. Periods of history may be clearly set before us through the investigations of the historian, or incidentally unfolded in the pages of legal authorities, but be sure there will be a break here and a defect in the continuity of evidence there, which will convincingly prove that we need a consistent treatise, commencing with the position of the unfree at the period of the Saxon invasion. It is quite foreign to my purpose to do more, in the limited space afforded me, than to show to the reader how much might be brought to light by patient investigation, if systematically pursued. The Act of Charles II. simplifying tenures in land and reducing them in legal language to free and common socage, is, as it were, a landmark in the social history of this country; but the copyhold tenure still exists, and the customs of each Manor vary, and were we acquainted with those customs, we should be astonished to find how many are the survivals of early times, which, at all events, bring to the mind a state of society, when the free and the unfree were under a common Lord and within the boundaries of the same Manor.

To Germany we must look for the origin of the particular practice of serfdom which was transferred to this country. War, conquest, and crime, were the original grounds of servitude. J. M. Kemble, in his work on "The Saxons in England" (Vol. I., p. 191), gives the clear definition of the distinguishing mark of the unfree, he says:—"The not being able to dispose of property hereditarily is the true badge and proof of slavery." The Anglo-Saxon would define serfdom from his own point of view:—"The being in the mund of another and represented by him in the folemót."—Ib. p. 185. Tacitus would be the most reliable authority on the subject of serfdom, and the condition of the serf amongst Teutonic tribes. He gives two most interesting phases of the state of the unfree. The one occasioned by the improvidence and infatuation of the gambler; the other discloses the position of the serf attached to the land, much as we may accurately associate that condition with the state of the Russian serf before his recent emancipation. Let us then refer to Tacitus first, as to those

who, by their own acts, forfeit their freedom. He says, "They play dice (strange as you may think it) when sober, and as a serious occupation; and such is their rash infatuation for the alternative of gain and loss, that they will even venture on a last throw, of the strangest kind, in which they stake their freedom and persons. The loser enters into voluntary slavery, though younger and stronger (than the winner) he submits to be fettered and sold. Such is their obstinacy in the vicious practice, they themselves call it keeping faith. Slaves of this kind they usually sell, to get rid of the shame which attaches to winning them in this way."—Tacitus, "Germaniæ," Cap. xxiv.

Let us now take the description of serfdom as a condition hereditary, associating the serf with the soil. This latter condition is one with which our early history is most familiar, and is, therefore, deserving of our special attention.

"As to their other slaves (or serfs)," Tacitus says, "they do not employ them as we do in the prescribed services of the household. Each is master of his own land and his own house. The lord demands of him a certain quantity of corn, or cattle, or woollen cloth as of a tenant farmer; and the obedience of the serf is limited to this. The rest of the duties of the house [*i.e.*, the house of the lord] the wife and the children (of the serf) perform.* To flog a slave, or to put him in fetters or to compulsory labour, is rare. They sometimes kill them, not by whipping and hard usage, but by haste and rage, attacking them as you do an enemy, except that it is without risk (the slave not being able to resist). The freedmen are not much above the slaves in position. They seldom have much influence in the household, never in public matters, except only in those tribes which are governed by sovereign chiefs. In such tribes they acquire a position superior to the free born and even the nobles; in other tribes, the inferior social position of the freedman indicates that he has been

* *i.e.*, The wife and children (sequela) are liable to personal service in the house of the lord, while the serf himself is exempt from it. This is worthy of notice in connection with the character in which the sequela are maternal, to be hereafter referred to.

freed (from the still lower states of slavery).”—Tacitus, “Germaniæ,” Cap. xxv.

The cause and origin of a certain class of people being serfs or slaves among the Germans, and, therefore, among the Anglo-Saxons, are subjects which naturally would claim enquiry. They are divided into two sections, serfs *casu* and serfs *natura*. In the first division we consider a serf becoming such by fortune of war, by marriage, settlement, voluntary surrender, crime, superior legal power or injustice. In the second, we consider him as such by birth.*

The first quotation from Tacitus gives us an instance of the serf becoming such by “voluntary surrender.” The second reminds us of the serf who inherits his position from the *fault*, using that term in a technical sense, of his ancestors. Now, in considering serfs under the first division, we can realize that the serf, by fortune of war, would be left to abject dependence on the conqueror. The serf by marriage was the free man or free woman who married a slave, and amongst some of the German races the free sank to the condition of the unfree,† and so a like custom prevailed in this country, for Glanville says:—“It is laid down, but with some doubt, that if a free man takes to wife a woman born in villenage, whilst he so continues bound to the state of villenage, he shall, as a consequence, lose his law, as if he himself were a villein born.‡

Kemble describes the serfs by settlement as those who had taken up their abode in a district exclusively inhabited by the unfree; but we need not dwell on this particular condition of slavery, as it has nothing in it corresponding with the position of the serf in this country. The serfs by surrender, Kemble describes as those who had bent their heads in the evil days for food, or had submitted through debt, incurred either through poverty or crime. It is presumed that this kind of servitude, in the case of a debtor, did not involve a life-long restraint, but that a certain period of servile labour was considered equivalent to the debt.§

* Vide “Saxons in England,” Vol. I., p. 194.

† *Ib.*

‡ Glanville, Translation by Beames, Cap. vi., p. 109.

§ Kemble’s “Saxons in England,” pp. 196, 197.

The laws of Henry I. describe the *servi redemptione* as those whose means were insufficient to pay the fine for a crime committed, and who surrendered to one who paid the sum by agreement with the person aggrieved. The same laws disclose another condition of serfdom, viz., *servi alterius datione*, including in this category the serfdom of a son or daughter by the act of the father. The father had supreme control in his family, as we learn from the codes of German races, as he appears to have been the arbiter of the life or death of his child, or of its liberty or slavery.* Serfs becoming so by crime was the direct punishment of their offence. The last division of the *servi casu* comprises those who, among the lawless communities of Teutonic tribes, were reduced to slavery by violence, or fraud, or by any other illegal means.

We now come to the other important division, the *servi natura-nativi*—the serfs by reason of unfree birth, whose parents were unfree. The principle by which offspring were classed among the free or unfree here claims our consideration.

We find, by the laws of Henry I., the children follow the father's right. "Si quis de servo patre natus sit et matre libera, pro servo reddatur occisus,"† on the principle that "semper a patre non a matre generacionis ordo texitur." Authorities such as Fortescue and Fleta confirm the rule, and though Glanville appears to adopt a contrary view, following the maxim of the civil law, yet Kemble, as a modern authority, thus concludes the argument: "To the English principle I am bound to give my adhesion, inasmuch as the natural and the original social law can recognize none but the father, either in the generation or in the subsequent rule of the family." The English proverb often quoted, "Mine is the calf that is born of my cow," applies to the claim of the lord to the child of a free father and unfree mother, if the parents were not married, and is an example of the *servi natura* which should not be omitted. Serfdom, as a taint of blood, it should also be remarked, descended among the Saxons to the remotest generations.

In dealing with such a subject as serfdom, however

* See "Co. Litt.," § 187, 188.

† Ll. Hen. I., lxxvii., § 1, 2; Kemble, 205

superficially, one feels that the writer may well be charged with the dryness which is associated with black letter law; but such only is the source from which we gain our knowledge. Let us then very briefly consider, having before us the same authorities, the state and condition of the serf. "*The Terms de la Ley*," very tersely acquaint us with his position. "The lord may rob, beat, and chastise his villein at his will, save only that he may not maim him, for then he shall have an appeal of maihem against him."* We further discover that the serf had no standing in any public court. If he were slain by a stranger, the lord claims the damages, and not his children. Again, he cannot defend himself by his own oath or the oaths of compurgators, but must submit to the severe, uncertain, and perilous test of the ordeal.† Glanville says, "No one in a state of villenage can purchase his freedom with his own money." The slave could be sold like any other chattel, and we learn even as late as Ethelred and Cnut, "the law ventured only to prohibit no more than the selling him into heathendom, or without some fault on his part." The villein of tenure, however, was so far attached to the land, that he could only pass with the land on its changing owners. This bondman was known in England as a *villain regardant* to a Manor. He and his offspring we recognize as inseparably connected with the land. The other bondman was distinguished in this country as a *villain in gross*, and is described as one "who was immediately bound to the person of the lord and his heirs."‡ It would appear that the serfs referred to in two of the Missenden Charters I have made the text of my few observations on serfdom, namely, in those of Hugh de Noers and Johanna de Sandford, come under the term of *villains in gross*, whilst the Charter of Hugh de Plessets grants to the Abbey the virgate of land and Agnes Mone, the wife of Gilbert, who held the land of the lord with all her issue, and Alan, son of Gilbert, with all his issue, these latter serfs come, therefore, clearly under the classification of *villains*

* "*Terms de la Ley*," p. 594.

† Vide Kemble, pp. 209, 210.

‡ Vide Tomlin's "*Law Dictionary*," "Villain."

regardant. I think we may consider the condition of these serfs as not far removed from the farm labourers of the beginning of this century, who, before the railroad had revolutionized the habits of our rural population, had few aspirations beyond the homestead and the boundaries of the village in which their forefathers had settled time out of mind, and whose names are familiar in that most interesting of all local records, the parish register. Even so far back as Saxon times evidences are not wanting that the serf was "tolerably provided for," still the distinguishing mark of his position is, that he was *unfree*. If he was sheltered from oppression, he was under a protectorate, and the true badge and proof of his state was the not being able to dispose of property hereditarily. He had no standing in any public court. He was even in England, as late as the fourteenth century, the actual property of his lord, with the consequences which flowed from that condition, only checked by the light of freedom, slowly, though feebly penetrating through the darkness of the Middle Ages.

Much more might be said on the taint of serfdom, and how it affected the offspring of parents, one of whom, father or mother, might be unfree; but space will not allow anything more than allusions to the question; and so of the manumission of the serf I can only touch on one or two instances. On both these subjects, the "*Terms de la Ley*" treat concisely and clearly. "Some are villeins by title of prescription—that is to say, that all their blood have been villains regardants to the Manors of the lord, time out of mind; and some are made villeins by their confession in a Court of Record. Also, the lord may make a manumission to his villein, and enfranchise him for ever."*

The ceremony of emancipation by the law of William the Conqueror is interesting. "He who would emancipate his serf shall deliver him to the Sheriff by the right hand in full county, shall proclaim him free from all yoke of servitude by manumission, shall show him open roads and doors, and shall deliver unto him the arms of a free man, namely, the lance and sword; henceforth, the man is free."†

* "*Terms de la Ley*," p. 506. † *Ll. Will. Conq. III.*, § 15.

Thus we find both in the laws of the Conqueror and Henry I., evidence that complete publicity was given to formal manumission. "Si qui vero velit servum suum liberum facere tradat eum vice comiti," etc.* "Qui servum suum liberat in ecclesia, vel mercato, vel comitatu vel hundredo," etc.† By the latter laws, the serf was to give, as manumission, 30 pence to the lord, namely, as the price of his skin, for a testimony that he is thenceforth himself its master, or, as Kemble explains, that he is no longer liable to corporal punishment.

The same authority considers that, gradually, emancipation at the altar was taken to convey all the privileges of manumission, and it was the mode generally, though not exclusively, in use.‡

There is but one other instance of the serf obtaining his freedom, which we may class under the head of manumission, that I shall touch upon; it is of much interest as showing the growing importance of towns, where freedom first found a home in England, either gained by prescription, or by special Charter of our kings.

A villein who had fled to a privileged town, within a year and a day of his entering the lord might seize, but after that time, if he remained in the town, and were received into the community or guild as a citizen, he was from these circumstances freed from villenage. Out of a privileged town seven years was the period required before freedom was gained.§ The question naturally occurs, what was a privileged town? By it is meant a town that had franchises by prescription or Charter, it might have been of ancient demesne of the king, and here a further explanation is required. *Ancient demesne* is a tenure relating to Manors held of the crown, conferring certain privileges on the tenants. No Manors were held of this tenure except such as appear in Domesday. Gradually, however, succeeding kings granted Charters, or confirmed and extended

* Ll. Will. Conq. III., § 15.

† Ll. Hen. I., § 78.

‡ Vide Kemble, pp. 224, 225.

§ Vide "Terms de la Ley," pp. 595, 596; Translation of Glanville by Beames, p. 108.

existing ones to towns, as the power and importance of these communities advanced and became objects of royal favour, in return for substantial aid in times of national troubles. The privilege of a citizen, the membership to a guild, therefore, were quite inconsistent with the restraints and degradation associated with villenage. Serfdom could not but pale before the light, that municipal institutions gradually spread, the influences of which by degrees penetrated to the remotest districts of this country.

It only remains for me to give a few of the principal authorities which may be referred to in a more thorough investigation of villenage in England, viz. :—

Ancient Laws and Institutes of England, comprising laws enacted under the Anglo-Saxon kings, from Ethelbert to Cnut; the laws called Edward the Confessor's; the laws of William the Conqueror, and those ascribed to Henry I., published by the Record Commission in 1840; *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*; *Opera*, J. M. Kemble, published by the Historical Society of England; *Glanville*; *Fleta*; Sir John Fortescue, *Coke on Littleton*.

MISSENDEN CHARTERS.

IX.

Carta Hugonis de Noers de Godefrido Fabro.

Sciant, etc.—Quod Ego Hugo de Noers consensu et concessione Willelmi filii et heredis mei concessi et dedi in perpetuum hereditario jure canonicis de Missenden Godefridum Fabrum cum uxore sua et tota progenie sua que de eis orta est vel orietur liberum et quietum et absolutum ab omni calumpnia et dominatione quam ego et heredes mei in eis habere

Charter of Hugh de Noers concerning Godfrey Smith :—

Be it known, etc.—That I Hugh de Noers by the consent and grant of William my son and heir have granted and given in perpetuity by hereditary right to the Canons of Missenden Godfrey Smith with his wife and all his issue born or to be born from them freely and peaceably and discharged from all claim and control which I and my heirs might in future

debeamus. Et sciendum quod pro hac donacione et concessione predicti canonici dederunt mihi duas marcas argenti ut ipsi canonici habeant in perpetuum et teneant bene et in pace prefatos homines videlicet patrem et matrem et totam progeniem uterinam.

Testibus.

have in them. And be it known that for this gift and grant the aforesaid Canons have given to me two marks of silver that the said Canons may for ever have and hold well and peaceably the aforesaid persons namely the father and mother and all the issue on the mother's side.

As witness.*

XXII.

Carta Johanne de Sanford que dedit nobis Walterum filium Cecilie de Messendena cum servicio suo et sequela.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod Ego Domina Johanna de Sanford in ligia et viduali potestate mea dedi et concessi ac quietum clamavi et presenti Carta mea confirmavi Deo et Ecclesie Beate Marie de Messendena et canonicis ibidem Deo servientibus in liberam et puram et perpetuam elemosinam pro salute anime mee Walterum filium Cecilie de Messendena et totum servicium suum et omnes sequelas ab eodem Waltero descendentes in perpetuum. Ita scilicet quod nec Ego Johanna aut heredes mei aliquod jus et clamium in predicto Waltero vel in toto

Charter of Johanna de Sandford by which she gave to us Walter the son of Cecilie of Missenden with his service and issue.

Let all present and to come know that I Lady Johanna de Sandford in virtue of my right of widowhood have given and granted and have quitted claim and by this my present Charter have confirmed to God and the Church of the Blessed Mary of Missenden and to the Canons there serving God in free pure and perpetual charity for the salvation of my soul Walter the son of Cecilie of Missenden and all his service and all the issue descending from the same Walter for ever. On the condition that is to say that neither I Johanna or

* No witnesses are mentioned.

servicio suo et sequela sua de cetero potuerimus vendicare. Pro hac autem donacione et quieta clamancia et presentis Carte Warantia predicti canonici dederunt mihi unam marcam argenti. Et in hujus rei testimonium et confirmationem presenti scripto sigillum meum apposui. Hiis testibus Rogero de Wymberville, Ypolito de Noers, Willelmo de Horwude, Waltero Parkere, Ricardo le Waleis, Simone de London, Symone de Borstalle et aliis.

my heirs may be able to claim any right and claim in the aforesaid Walter or in any service of his and his issue. But for this gift and quit claim and for the warranty of this present Charter the aforesaid Canons have given to me one mark of silver. And in testimony and confirmation of this thing I have placed my seal to the present writing. As witness, Roger de Wymberville, Hipolitus de Noers, William Horwood, Walter Parker, Richard le Waleis, Simon of London, Symon of Bors-tall,* and others.

XXXI.

Confirmacio Hugonis de Plessetis de illa virgata terre quam pater suus nobis dedit.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Hugo de Plessetis filius et heres domini Johannis de Plessetis quondam Comitis Warwick concessi et hac presenti Carta mea confirmavi Deo ecclesie Sancte Marie de Messenden et canonicis ibidem Deo serventibus in liberam, puram, et perpetuam elemosinam pro salute anime mee dicti patris mei antecessorum et successorum

Confirmation of Hugh of Plessets of that virgate of land which his father gave to us.

Be it known to all present and to come that I Hugh of Plesset son and heir of Lord John of Plesset formerly Earl of Warwick have granted and by this my present Charter have confirmed to God and the Church of Saint Mary of Missenden and to the Canons there serving God in free pure and perpetual charity for the salvation of my soul

* Borstall in the Hundred of Ashendon, Bucks.

meorum illam virgatam terre quam pater meus eis dedit in villa de Missendena illam scilicet quam Gilbertus Mone et Agnes uxor sua de dicto patre meo tenuerunt in eadem villa cum omnibus pertinenciis suis in bosco in plano in pascuis in communibus in viis in exitibus et in omnibus locis predictæ terre pertinentibus. Et predictam Agnetem cum tota sequela sua de predicto Gilberto viro suo procreata. Preterea dedi de dono meo concessi et hac presente Carta mea confirmavi dictis canonicis Alanum filium predicti Gilberti Mone cum tota sequela sua in liberam puram et perpetuam elemosinam. Habendam et tenendam predictam terram dictis canonicis prout in Carta feofamenti quam de dicto patre meo habent plenius testatur. Et predictum Alanum cum tota sequela sua de me et heredibus meis vel assignatis quibuscumque libere et quiete ab omnibus serviciis consuetudinibus et exactionibus secularibus. Et ego dictus Hugo et heredes mei predictam virgatam terre cum omnibus pertinenciis suis et predictam Agnetem cum tota sequela sua de predicto Gilberto procreata prout in Carta dicti patris mei ple-

of my said father of my ancestors and successors that virgate land which my father gave to them in the town of Missenden. The same that is to say which Gilbert Mone and Agnes his wife held of my said father in the same town with all its appurtenances in wood in open country in pastures in commons in ways in egresses and in all places pertaining to the said land. And the aforesaid Agnes with all her issue by the aforesaid Gilbert her husband. Besides I have given and by this my gift have granted and by this my present Charter have confirmed to the said Canons Alan son of the said Gilbert Mone with all his offspring in free pure and perpetual charity. To have and to hold the aforesaid land to the said Canons as in the deed of feoffment which they have of my said father is more fully witnessed. And the said Alan with all his issue freed and discharged of all services customs and secular demands by me and my heirs or assigns whomsoever. And I the said Hugh and my heirs will warrant acquit and defend the aforesaid virgate of land with all its appurtenances and the

nius testatur et predictum Alanum cum tota sequela sua predictis canonicis warantizabimus acquietabimus et defendemus contra omnes gentes sicut decet liberam puram et perpetuam elemosinam in perpetuum. Hiiis testibus, Waltero de Wiltone tunc Senescallo meo, Willelmo de Draycote, Rogero le Porter, Nichó de Lecton, Johanne Markeday, Thoma del Erde, Hugone le Seriant, et aliis.

aforesaid Agnes with all her issue born of the aforesaid Gilbert as in the deed of my said father is more fully declared and the aforesaid Alan with all his issue to the aforesaid Canons against all persons as befits free pure and perpetual charity for ever. As witness, Walter of Wilton then my steward, William of Draycot, Roger the Porter, Nicholas de Lecton, Johan Markeday, Thomas del Erde, Hugh, the Serjeant, and others.
