ILCHESTER ALMSHOUSE DEEDS: FROM THE TIME OF KING JOHN TO THE REIGN OF JAMES THE FIRST, A. D. 1200-1625

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W. BUCKLER

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Ilchester Almshouse Deeds.

FROM THE TIME OF KING JOHN
TO THE REIGN OF JAMES THE FIRST.
A.D. 1200—1625.

WITH APPENDIX:

CONTAINING SOME BRIEF TOPOGRAPHICAL
NOTICES OF ANCIENT IVELCESTER.

BY THE
REV. W. BUCKLER, M.A.

QUID DIGNUM TANTO FERET HIC PROMISSOR HIATU?
HOR.

YEOVIL:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY W. H. COATES.

MDCCCLXVI.

INTRODUCTION.

In the Autumn of 1858, several Packets of old Deeds, relating to the Property of the Almshouse at Ilchester, were restored by the Representative of the late Lord Huntingtower, (formerly Sir William Manners) to the custody of the newly constituted Board of Trustees of the Ilchester Almshouse Charity. *

These Manuscripts follow in regular succession, from the time of King John and Henry III., through the reigns of Edw. I, Edw. II, and Edw. III, Richard the Second, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI, Edward IV, Hen. VII, Hen. VIII, Queen Elizabeth and James the First.

In some of them, the Regnal Date is wanting; and these undated Deeds are, most of them, anterior to the reign of Edward the First. One may probably be assigned to the time of King John, or to a period certainly not later than the commencement of Henry the Third's reign. The earliest recorded date is the seventh year of Edward I. Feb. 3rd, 1279.

They are written for the most part, in the usual contracted Latin; and some of the oldest of the manuscripts are very fine specimens of Calligraphy. A few, of the time of the Third Edward, are in Norman French; and two or three, belonging to the latter part of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th centuries, are in the quaint old English of the Period.

From the Reign of Henry VIII, the Deeds are few in number, of less comparative interest, and chiefly in the vernacular tongue.

* These Deeds are in the keeping of the Clerk to the Board.

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The Documents thus unexpectedly brought to light, by their restoration to the right owners, refer to Lands and Tenements situate in the Parishes of Stocklinch Magdalen, Stocklinch Ottersay, Montacute, Chilthorne Domer, the Manor of Sock Dennis, Ilchester, Northover, Limington, Somerton Erleigh and the Parish of Somerton; and a large proportion of the lands therein dealt with, including the Manor of Stocklinch, constitutes the Property of the Ilchester Almshouse Charity at the present time.

The most important of these Manuscripts, in relation to the Charity, are the two which bear date, respectively, on March 12, 1426, in the fourth year of Henry VI, and on Feb. 12, 1477, in the sixteenth year of Edward IV.

The former is the DEED OF FOUNDATION, executed by ROBERT VEEL; wherein he provides, that subsequently to the fulfilment of certain specified obligations, the Trusteeship of the Almshouse, and of the Charity Lands, should be vested in the Bailiffs and Burgesses of Ilchester and their Successors, for ever. The other Deed, is the Indenture made by Swanne, a Canon of Wells, and others, to the Bailiffs and Burgesses; by which the intention and will of the Founder in this respect, were fully carried out.

These TRANSCRIPTS are arranged in Chronological oderr; the contractions of the original text are for the most part omitted, and the abbreviated syllables are given *in extenso*. After each Transcript, is added an abstract of its contents, in English. The Appendix contains some brief notices of Mediæval Ilchester, arranged under separate heads, and elucidated by a Plan of the Town, on the basis of Dr. Stukeley's ISCHALIS.

W. BUCKLER.

THE RECTORY, ILCHESTER, 1865,

Ilchester Almshouse Deeds.

No. I. undated—Time of King John.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Willielmus Dacus dedi et concessi et hac presenti carta confirmavi Herwardo pro homagio et servicio suo Mesuagium quod Paganus Hoperius tenuit cum duabus dimidiis acris quas predictus P (aganus) tenuit Et cum la Rig acra Et cum duobus sextariis prati que jacent juxta pratum H de Spegeton Quorum unum jacet versus Orientem et aliud versus Occidentem juxta predictum pratum H de Spegeton Et cum una perticata prati que jacet versus Occidentem juxta Kinges furlang Habendum et Tenendum sibi et heredibus suis de me et heredibus meis libere et quiete plenarie et integre Reddendo inde annuatim Undecim Solidos per quatuor anni Terminos Scilicet ad Festum Sancti Johannis tres et triginta denarios ad Festum S'c'i Michaelis xxxiii denar. Ad Natale Domini xxxiii den. Ad Pascham xxxiii den. pro omni servicio salvo servicio extrinseco Pro hac autem donacione mea et concessione dedit mihi predictus H (erward) dimidiam Marcam Argenti in recognicione Et ut hec donacio mea et concessio Rata et Stabilis permaneat Presentem Cartam Sigilli mei apposicione corroboravi Hiis Testibus Giliberto Daco Thoma de Cirencestre Roberto Triz Galfrido de Hospitale Willielmo Raffe Will de Geddi'g Henrico Caretio Ricardo clerico qui hanc Cartam fecit Et multis aliis.

William Dacus, (Dacres?) grants to Herward, for his homage and service, a Messuage held before by Hoper the Countryman; Also two half-acres held by the same country-

man ; and the Ridge acre, and two sixth parts (of an acre) of Meadow adjoining land of H. de Spegeton ; and one quarter of an acre of meadow, eastward near Kinges furlang To Have and to Hold in consideration of a yearly rent of twelve shillings, to be paid quarterly, at the Feasts of St. John and St. Michael, at Christmas and Easter: in lieu of all service except special service. For this Grant Herward pays to Dacus as an acknowledgement or Fine half a mark of silver. Dacus ratifies the agreement by setting his Seal to the Deed—In the presence of Gilbert Dacus, Thomas of Cirencester, Robert Triz, Geoffry of the Hospital, Willm Raffe, William of Gedding, Henry Carter, Richard the Clerk, who drew up the Deed ; and many others.

Note.—The Charter of the Borough of Ilchester will assist in fixing the approximate age of this MS. In this Charter, granted by Philip and Mary, earlier Charters are cited; and this extract from one of them is quoted—"King John gave to William Dacus a parcel of the Town."

No. 2, undated—Henry III.

Omnibus ad quos presens scriptum pervenerit Willielmus Cocul de Lumyntona Salutem in Domino Noverit universitas vestra me dedisse concessisse et hoc presenti scripto meo confirmasse Radulpho Herward de Ivelcestre in liberum Maritagium cum Matillida Filia mea unum mesuagium cum curtillagio et cum omnibus pertinenciis suis in villa de Lumyntona Illud scilicet quod jacet inter tenementum meum et tenementum Willielmi Busshup et quatuor acras terre arabilis in eodem manerio quarum una jacet in Suht broc furlange inter terram Willielmi le Vyngnur et terram Gyleberti clerici Et una jacet in Mydenhulle ex parte occidentali juxta terram que fuit Ricardi le Mey et terram Ade le Rus Et due jacent super la Dydehulle inter terram Roberti le Rat et terram Ade le Rus Et unam perticatam prati que jacet in la Mere inter pratum meum et pratum quod quondam fuit Domini Radulfi

filii Herward Habendum et Tenendum dictum mesuagium cum curtillagiis et dictam terram cum prato predicto et cum omnibus aliis pertinenciis dictis Radulfo et Matillide et heredibus suis de predictis Radulfo et Matillida legitime procreatis De me et heredibus meis sive meis assignatis libere quiete bene et in pace jure hereditario imperpetuum Reddendo inde annuatim mihi et heredibus meis vel meis assignatis Unum Par Albarum Chirothecarum vel unum denarium ad Pascham pro omni servicio exactione et seculari demanda Et si contingat quod dicta Matillida sine herede de se et de predicto Radulfo legitime procreato obierit Volo et concedo pro me et heredibus meis sive meis assignatis quod predictus Radulfus sine aliqua contradiccione habeat et teneat dictum mesuagium cum curtillagio et dictam terram cum prato predicto et cum omnibus aliis pertinenciis per predictum servicium toto tempore vite sue Ita scilicet quod post terminum vite dicti Radulfi dictum mesuagium cum Curtillagio et dicta terra cum prato predicto et cum omnibus aliis pertinenciis mihi et heredibus meis sive meis assignatis sine aliqua contradiccione heredum suorum sive suorum assignatorum plenarie revertat Ego vero dictus Willielmus et heredes mei sive assignati dictum mesuagium et dictam terram cum prato predicto et cum omnibus predictis pertinenciis dictis Radulfo et Matillide et heredibus suis de predictis Radulfo et Matillida legitime procreatis Contra omnes mortales sicut predictum est Warantizabimus acquietabimus et per predictum servicium defendemus Et ut hec mea donacio concessio et presentis scripti confirmacio firmitatis robur obtineat Hoc presens Scriptum admodum chirographia confectum Sigilli mei impressione roboravi Hiis Testibus Johanne Albe Hugone de la Venele Willielmo Daubeny Roberto Tryz Stephano de Bromlyghe Will[o] Bbastard Willielmo Teissun clerico Et aliis.

William Cocul (otherwise le Keu) of Lumynton, gives to