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978-1-108-05868-1 - The Chartulary of St John of Pontefract: From the Original Document in the Possession of Godfrey Wentworth, Esq., of Woolley Park: Volume 2

Edited by Richard Holmes

Excerpt

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## Fasciculus VII.

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THE SEVENTH FASCICULUS of the Pontefract Chartulary commences with folio 46. It is of the normal size of ten folios, but contains as many as seventy-seven charters, from No. 234 to No. 310.

Catton-on-Swale, mentioned in No. 235, was a manor in the neighbourhood of Thirsk, between Topcliffe and Skipton; and it is new to find that the Pontefract Priory ever had a property in that North Riding hamlet, though, as was the case with so many of their outlying possessions (for instance the two bovates at Smeaton given, in No. 269, by Alan son of Robert, and the "land" at Chivet in No. 267), the monks did not retain it in their own hands, but freed themselves from it as soon as they conveniently could do so.

The importance of No. 238 must have been considerable, for it was attested by representatives of most of the principal tenants in the neighbourhood. Otto de Tilli (afterwards the seneschal at Conisborough of Hamelin, Earl Warren); Robert the lord of Stapleton; Reyner the Fleming (the first witness to No. 207, another Swillington charter); Herbert de Arches, of the family that left their name at Thorp Arch; Robert the progenitor of the Swillingtons, and Walter the king's bailiff, the two younger sons of Hugh the former lord of Stapleton, and the uncles of the present lord; Humphrey de Veilly, the lord of Newton (Wallis); and Peter de Toulston, were all typical men, each of paramount importance in his own district in this third quarter of the twelfth century. And these great men were backed and supported by smaller but still important potentates; by Alan of Smeaton, Ralph son of Nicholas of Cridling (whose son Adam of Cridling in the next generation sold Cridling and Cridling Stubbs to Roger de Lascy), William of Darrington, Alan de Toulston, and so "many others" that the countryside must have been collected to give dignity to the transaction. For it is difficult to say who, of those holding any considerable position in the locality for many miles in the Pontefract direction and beyond, was not present to sanction this charter of sale made by Richard youngest son of Swain fitz Ailric to William son of Hervey of Ledstone.

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The family of the Domesday tenant, Ralph, who called himself Ralph de Featherstone, seems to have continued to flourish there, and there can be little doubt that most of the large number of owners and witnesses, who in these charters so called themselves, were his lineal descendants, with whom his prenomen was in considerable favour, even at the distance of a century and a half from his time. The *inq. p. m.* of this thirteenth century Ralph is 28 Henry III. [1244], No. 16. It reports that he had lived with a certain woman, Emma by name, for ten years before marriage, and had had by her a son Richard; that he then married, and had by her a daughter named Olive, aged 16½ years at the time of the inquisition; which Olive was declared to be the heir of the deceased, superseding the illegitimate Richard. His possessions had been—

|  | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| 30 acres at Featherstone, worth 4d. per year ... ..    | 10        | 0         |
| One messuage ... ..                                    | 2         | 0         |
| 5 acres of meadow at 6d. ... ..                        | 2         | 6         |
| Some pasture ... ..                                    | 14        | 0         |
| 2¾ bovates of land in villanage, at 4s. per bovatē ... | 11        | 0         |
| Rent of free men in Featherstone... ..                 | 49        | 3½        |
| Rent of Assize in Chevet ... ..                        | 13        | 4         |
| Rent of Assize in Stubbs [Walding] ... ..              | 0         | 3         |
| Total ... ..   | 102       | 4½        |

He had also in Featherstone a yearly rent of a pound of pepper and two pounds of cumin, so that he was on the whole a wealthy man, especially as his interests did not extend very much beyond the lordship in which he and his forefathers had so long dwelt. Now, however, as we learn from this inquisition, the legitimate male line had failed in 1244, and the property would have to find a new line by marriage. I have not, however, traced it in any subsequent escheat.

I may notice that, although Ralph de Featherstone is called "dominus" when he attests No. 246, the honorary title is not given to him in his *inq. p. m.* The probability, therefore, is that it was one of courtesy only, which had at the time a wider scope than that ultimately given to it.

No. 248 had a datal clause of the circumlocutory character usual to the twelfth century, one so characteristic of a people who had not a long past behind them. The date referred to may, however, be ascertained without much investigation, for as the king "took the Cross" in January, 1187-8, this charter was made in the Lent of 1189, only a few weeks before his sudden demise the following summer.

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Contemporary with this large owner was a second Ralph, who might have been uncle or cousin. He calls himself both “de Fetherstana” and “de eadem villa:” and follows William in No. 252. There was also a second Richard, who cannot have been the Richard son of the above Ralph; for he would have been an older man, as he had a son, possibly a third Ralph, to follow him in the attestation clause of No. 246. But the concurrence in each case of a Ralph and of a Richard tends to lead to the inference that all were of the same family, with a common respect for their founder, the original Ralph de Featherstone of 1086.

No. 247 concludes the Featherstone series, and the Chartulary takes up next that of Whitwood and the Mere.

Whitwood had belonged to Ligulf in the time of Edward the Confessor, but when Ilbert de Lascy received his large fee he subinfeudated that manor to Roger Pictavus, who obtained Altofts also. When the Chapel of St. Clement's was being founded Roger made a contribution from Altofts; but as he gave nothing from Whitwood, the inference would be that he had already lost his proprietorship there, though if so, Whitwood does not appear among Ilbert's possessions enumerated in the foundation charter of St. Clement's in the Castle. However, when Robert, son of Ilbert, succeeded to the fee, and founded the Priory of St. John's, Whitwood and the Mere were both in his hands, and by him conferred upon the monks by the original endowment charter (No. 1). To this grant Roger Pictavus gave his assent by testing the document, and thenceforward those two manors appear to have been held by the monks, who granted them out to various sub-tenants, if not in fee, certainly with a tenure nearly as good.

The charter No. 248 evidences that the monks had been asserting claims as if they felt that their rights were being infringed, and asserting them so successfully that the holder—a Pictavus—was glad to give them in settlement of all dispute, “from his demesne” (wherever that was), the churchman's portion of two bovates, roughly about sixteen acres.

There were two independent gifts to the monastery from this lordship; that referred to here, which had dated from the time of Paganus de Land, “of two-thirds of Peckfield,” and another from Hugh de Stiveton of the remaining third. Neither is referred to in any way in the Consecration Charter, possibly because the house held them as tenants, subject to rent, but in the charters of King Henry II., No. 71 and No. 73, made at Northampton in the opening of his reign

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(five years before the second dedication of the monastery), the latter witnessed by Henry de Lascy himself, both are duly enumerated as "all the land of Peckfield, that is to say two parts in perpetual alms and the third part at fee for sixteen pence each year." They are also catalogued in the pontifical charter of archbishop Theobald (No. 57), which is a few years later, but with the difference that the monks are therein said to hold all Peckfield at a yearly rent of four shillings. In the original charters (No. 311 and No. 317), as here, they are said to possess, attached to this larger share of the property, a common right in Micklefield; but this common right is not named in either of the royal charters or in that of the archbishop, while the rent named in each of those charters is here commuted for a payment in kind.

This Robert, son of Jordan de Land, was the great grandson of the donor, Paganus de Laland. See No. 317.

Walter de Byram, now developing into an influential local man, was a youngest son in the fourth generation (the latest generation with which the original part of the Chartulary has to deal) of that important magnate, Ailric of Ledstone. Ailric had four sons, named with himself in No. 206. These were Jordan and his company of three brothers, Reginald (of Aberford), Roger (of Ledstone), and Walter (of Micklefield and Wheldrake). Jordan, the eldest, had Hervey, whose second wife was Agnes widow of Henry Wallis. Hervey's son William, by his first wife, called "my lord" in No. 263 and No. 264, had two brothers, the elder of whom was the Robert here referred to, the younger being the Adam de Byram named in this charter as the father of Walter, at this time in possession. Adam's brotherhood is not here mentioned, but as, in No. 264, he calls William his "lord and brother," the fraternal relationship of the three is established.

Walter, the grantor of No. 262, thus belonged to the fifth generation, reckoning from the foundation of the monastery; and this charter seems to have been granted by him when, as a young man, in the lifetime of his father, he received his portion and went forth to establish an independent name and home, and to outlive the transaction by at least thirty years.

There were two Smeatons, separated by the river Went, and soon afterwards allotted to different parishes, but at this time in the same hand. Each had been an important place, and the larger, Kirk Smeaton, had had a pre-Domesday church which must have been

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built 1070–86, and therefore by the then lord Ramosville or Reineville. Being surrounded on every side by manors with churches (hemmed in by Campsall, South Kirkby, Badsworth, Ackworth, Darrington, and Womersley, each either bordering it or being close upon its borders), when the parochial arrangements were made, a century after Domesday, only one manor, that of Kirk Smeaton, was retained under the jurisdiction of the church there—Little Smeaton, on the other side of the river, the Smeaton without a church, being allotted to Womersley.

The Reinevilles first appear as donors to the foundation of St. Clement's Chapel, Ilbert having a manor in Campsall and Girard in Smeaton and perhaps Stubbs, from which each made a contribution. At the time of Domesday Ilbert had obtained Badsworth also, with Upton, Rogerthorp, Womersley, South Elmsall, South Kirkby, Moorthorp, Frickley, and Bramley, a group which continued in his descendants for some generations; while Stubbs and Smeaton had fallen to Robert, apparently by inheritance from his father Gerald. Whether Robert's branch of the Reinevilles was dispossessed or died out, or adopted a new name, I have seen nothing to show, but they never made such progress as that made by the branch which looked up to Ilbert for its head; and certain it is that even in 1166 only one de Reineville was reported as holding knights' fees, a William who held four, and who must have been two or three generations from the original Ilbert. There was, however, "of the new feoffment," *i.e.* enfeoffed under the new order of things which commenced with King Stephen, a William son of Gerold who held a third of a knight's fee, and it is evident from Testa de Nevill that it was he who was still possessed of Darrington, where his holding is represented as having diminished to a sixth part of a knight's fee. In No. 315 we shall find him described more fully as Willelmus filius Geroldi "de Dardingtona." But both Smeaton and Stubbs were at least as early as the return of 1166 in the possession of the descendants of Siward at Smeaton, and of Walden at Stubbs, though neither of the tenants was returned as holding by military service.

In Dodsworth's *Monasticon*, page 862, is a charter of "Robert de Lascy," which might easily be rejected as being probably spurious and certainly corrupt. By it Robert de Lascy is represented as giving to Kirkstall (1) the vaccarium near Roundhay, (2) common at Winmoor, (3) the wood at Roundhay, (4) an acre in Wenet, which Warin Lorimer held on the west side of the bridge. The charter

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professes to be tested by fifteen witnesses, but when examined these prove to belong to two different generations. They are (1) Osbert the archdeacon [who ceased to hold that office soon after 1166], (2) Ralph son of Nicholas [who tested the Kirkstall confirmation charter of 1153], (3) Robert de Stapleton. [His father William held 4 knights' fees in 1166, and his own many gifts to Nostell were confirmed by Pope Urban in 1186; while he lived well into the last decade of the century.] (4) William de Busli. [With (6) Adam de Reineville, and (11) to (15), he tests many Pontefract charters belonging to *cir.* 1193.] (5) Hugh de Tilli [as the father of Otto, Ralph and Roger, he, on the other hand, belongs to the earlier generation]. (6) Adam de Reineville. [He could hardly have come of age before 1170 or 1180.] (7) Richard his brother. [He is thus definitely mentioned in this charter only.] (8) Eudo de Lungvilers. [He had 1 knight's fee in 1166.] (9) William, his brother. [These two married the two co-heiresses of Sweyn, son of Adam Vetus.] (10) Burnell. [He witnesses P 8, P 12, and P 231, all belonging to late in the century. In P 12 he is described as dapifer to the earl of Warren (1164-1201).] The last five witnesses, (11) Elias the chamberlain, (12) Richard de Lewis, (13) Gilbert de Lascy, (14) Ralph Cocus and (15) Adam Pincerna, all appear with William de Bulli on P 5; (11) and (13) both test P 8, while (12) and (13) appear on P 240; but I trace Ralph Cocus and Adam Pincerna nowhere else, except that Ralph Cocus was in 1202, the deforciant of a bovate of land in Ribston. *Fines, John No. 267.* Thus this charter contains two groups of witnesses; of which (1) (2) (5) (8) and (9) belong to the middle of the twelfth century, and the remaining ten to its last decade.

In reading No. 278 it must be remembered that Reiner the father of the grantor is Reginald, one of the brothers of the great Jordan of Ledstone, and that Shippen is a hamlet in the fee of Hillam (see No. 210). This charter is somewhat out of position; it should have been between No. 175 and No. 173, Elinor having settled down as the wife of Elias of Aberford. To the earliest in date of these three charters, (No. 175), was appended a memorandum that Hugh son of Walter de Swillington, the final witness, was from the wapentake of Skyrack, Aberford, to which so many of the parties belonged, being in that wapentake, while the land itself was in Barkston Ash.

The eighteen acres in the Fields of Ferry (now Ferrybridge), afterwards the "territory" of that manor, appear to have been in three separate Fields, and probably in different parts of the manor. For

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the Fields or “territory”—it is called each in these charters indifferently—was the land bordering on neighbouring townships which had not been brought into cultivation so early as the Domesday carucates. Each carucate was a nucleus round which population clustered, while the Fields or “territory” were the outlying portions which belonged to the manor, but which had not been subjugated so early, and the boundaries of which had not indeed been fixed in many cases.

The six charters entered under the common title of No. 283, seem to be a number altogether disproportionate to so small a quantity of land; but their number was thus large, in a great measure because they belonged to a transaction which was being completed contemporaneously with the compilation of the Chartulary, and when the relative importance or insignificance of each could not be hastily determined. When, however, they are examined, they are practically reducible to three, 283*b* being triplicated, and 283*d* duplicated. Of the copy in triplicate, 283*b* seems to have been the original, No. 282 and No. 283*a* being later and having had additional witnesses, H. parson of Rothwell and Robert de Stapleton, of Cudworth in that parish, the head of the family at Stapleton in Darrington. Similarly 283*d* and 283*e* are duplicates, the second having not only the addition of “in perpetuum.” but the statement that Roger de Blackburn was “parson” at that place, and the description of the witnesses as being not only “multis” but “aliis”; while the first adds the information that the full name of the parson of Rothwell was “Henry de Nottingham.” This, however, is an addition sufficient to identify him as a canon of Southwell, whom we have already had testing No. 23 and No. 230 as Henry, parson of Rothwell, and who in 1234 tested the ordination of St. John’s Hospital, Nottingham, as recorded in archbishop Gray’s Register, page 168*n*. It may be noted that the names of these early parsons of Rothwell and Blackburn are not on record elsewhere.

To account for the presence of the name of Sir John Fiton on the deeds 283*d* and 283*e*, it may be observed that he was connected with the manor of Great Harwood, in Lancashire. His brother Richard had had a grant thereof from Henry de Lascy, which was confirmed by Robert II., his son, by a deed which is fully abstracted in the *Chartulary of Whalley*, p. 845. Richard’s son Hugh, and his grandson Edmund, successively inherited, and the latter transferred the manor to Richard his second cousin half removed, the son of this witness. This last Richard had no male heirs.

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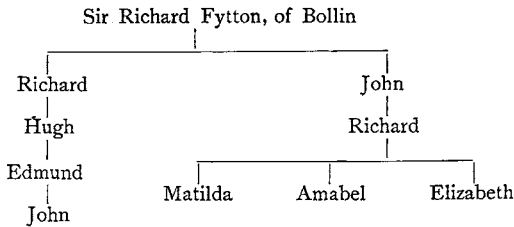
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The following is the line:—



From whom the Fyttons of Bolling and Gawsworth descended.

Of the co-heirs of the younger branch, Matilda married William de Hesketh, Amabel married Edmund de Leye, and Elizabeth married Roger Noel of Read.

During the two generations which had elapsed between No. 288 and No. 289, it happened that the lords of Frystone had twice failed in male heirs, and that by marriage they had changed their name as many times.

Their descent was from Gerbodo who, in the time of Domesday, held Crofton and the united manor of Wheldale and Frystone, and appears to have subsequently obtained Warmfield, for he gave the church there to Nostell. Gerbodo had two sons named in the Nostell Chartulary, William and Robert, to the latter of whom Frystone fell. Robert was the father of the William here named and of another Robert who inherited Wheldale, while William had Frystone from his father and obtained Ferry[bridge] also. The last-named manor was in the time of the Survey owned by one Hamelin, of whom I have traced nothing further than that he erected a water-mill on the Frystone Beck, where Frystone and Ferrybridge meet, which was called by his name (see No. 73 and No. 167); and that, perhaps at his death, Ferry with Hamelin's mill passed into the possession of the Frystone lord, who transferred this latter to the monks by a charter which has perished. The grant to the monks was confirmed by his son William (see No. 167) without mentioning his father's name, and only by a mere accidental annotation in the ecclesiastical confirmation of No. 57 we discover that it was Robert. Bertram, the son and heir mentioned in No. 89, dying, his sister Alice married Geoffrey Haget, whose father Bertram had founded the convent of Augustinian canons at Healaugh Park. Geoffrey was thus by inheritance the lord of Healaugh, the patron of its ecclesiastical establishments, and by marriage the lord of Frystone. But he had



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no male heir, and at his death his substance was divided among his daughters. Lucy, the eldest, had Wighill and the neighbouring Esdike; the second, unmarried, whose name does not occur in these documents, had Brayton; the third, Alice, had Healaugh and Frystone; but the fourth, Gundreda, had lands only. Alice married Jordan de St. Mary, but again the male line ceased, and Elizabeth, to whom Frystone came, married Henry Wallis II., whose son Richard inherited in his father's lifetime.

The Healaugh Chartulary in one place gives this rather differently, and introduces a John de Frystone as marrying Alice Haget and being father of a second Alice Haget, who inherited Healaugh, but it gives no confirmation of this bare statement, while it may generally be observed that the monks of the thirteenth century were poor genealogists, and that while their charter-evidence will generally bear investigation, their genealogical narratives fall to pieces at the slightest touch.

The following is the *inq. p. m.* of Dame Alice Haget, 31 Henry III. [1246-7], No. 33, as recently published in the *Record Series* (vol. 1, page 8):—

Inquisition made by Henry del Greve, Ralph de Federstan, William del Greve, Simon Marshall, William Russell, Peter le Passur, Adam Chamberlain, Richard son of Robert, Adam son of Ralph, Simon Terrici, Adam de Buckden, and Robert de Sculthorpe, who say by their oath that

Alice Haget had in demesne at FRISTONE and FERI (Ferrybridge):—

|  | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| 10 score acres of land, at 6 <i>d.</i> per acre ... ..         | 100       | 0         |
| In demesne; meadow, 26½ acres at 3 <i>s.</i> ... ..            | 79        | 6         |
| In bondage [let to tenants]; 15 bovates of land at 2 <i>s.</i> | 30        | 0         |
| The tenants render in work ... ..                              | 43        | 9         |
| Six cottars who pay no rent but do works worth ..              | 8         | 3         |
| Four other tenants ... .. pay                                  | 2         | 10        |
| Fifteen free tenants... .. pay                                 | 54        | 0         |
| A windmill there yields ... ..                                 | 26        | 0         |
| Rent from MARTON ... ..  | 6         | 0         |
| At FRICKLEY; in demesne, 64½ acres at 4 <i>d.</i> ... ..       | 21        | 6         |
| In demesne; meadow, 2 acres ... ..                             | 2         | 0         |
| In bondage [let to tenants]; 11 bovates at 5 <i>s.</i> ... ..  | 55        | 0         |
| The tenants render in work ... ..                              | 22        | 0         |
| In cottages, five acres ... ..                                 | 5         | 0         |
| Four free tenants... ..  | 12        | 7½        |
| Three women ... ..   | 23        | 0         |
| Sum of the whole ... ..  | £22       | 10 2½     |

The aforesaid Alice had two heirs: Richard Wallis, son of her first daughter; and Nicholas, her other daughter.

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Alice Haget thus had properties in Frystone, Ferrybridge, Marton and Frickley, and it is curious to notice their varying values. At Frystone the demesne land was worth 6*d.* per acre, at Frickley 4*d.*, and there is a corresponding value in the meadow, which was worth three times as much at Frystone as at Frickley. On the other hand, the bondage bovates were worth only 2*s.* at Frystone, while they were worth 5*s.* at Frickley. Nothing is said as to the possession of the lands at Healaugh by this "lady of Frystone," as she had probably been called while her widowhood lasted.

Dame Alice Haget, who thus retained her paternal name notwithstanding her marriage to Jordan de St. Mary, seems to have made an attempt to secure an absolute presentation to the church of Frystone without any intervention of the archbishop. She had presented William de Feugers, clerk, who had been duly instituted on 13 January, 1238-9; but on 6 October, 1248, Robert de Walleys, clerk, grandson of Dame Alice, and a younger brother of Richard Wallis her heir, was instituted on her presentation, although she had been dead many months and the writ for her *inq. p. m.* had issued on 3 February, 1246-7. This can be accounted for only on the supposition that on his grandmother's presentation Robert Wallis had taken possession, perhaps even years before, and that the archbishop had instituted him when he discovered the informality of his possession of the church. For by this middle of the thirteenth century, the right of the archbishop to institute to each living in his diocese had been firmly established.

This is a very interesting illustration of the manner in which Archbishop Gray maintained his rights. Nearly half a century before, in 1202, in the time of his predecessor, Archbishop Geoffrey, there was a somewhat similar state of things at Kellington, where (S 925) Thomas the son of the former rector, appeared in possession, and seems to have maintained his position independently of either presentation or institution. In the case of the Fryston church, the archbishop had evidently become strong enough to insist that the appointment, however belated, should pass through his hands. So slowly though steadily, was the constitution of our English church built up.