

THE RISE AND DEVOLUTION OF THE MANORS IN HEPWORTH, SUFFOLK.

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The eighth volume of the Proceedings of the Society contains an article on the Rectors of the Parish of Hepworth, which includes a description of the parish church. Unfortunately, since that article appeared, namely, on Easter Monday, 1898, the church was, with the exception of the tower and south porch, almost destroyed by fire. The restoration of the building is now in progress, and will be completed when the necessary funds for the purpose have been obtained.

In collecting information about the Rectors of the parish, some knowledge of the various owners of the advowson and the manors and lands in the parish was necessarily acquired, and subsequently further information has been obtained, which will enable us to trace to some extent the growth of the manors in the parish and their devolution from the date of the Norman Conquest to modern times.

The earliest authentic record we have of Hepworth is contained in two passages in the Domesday Book (Vol. II., fol. 365 b and 439 b). It would seem that the clearest idea of the state of Hepworth before the Conquest, and in 1086, will be obtained by giving a free English paraphrase of what is stated in Domesday as well as the entries themselves. In this way we can amplify and rearrange our material, adding at the same time what we deem to be the conclusions to be derived therefrom.

The entries in Domesday read thus :—

(A.) fol. 365 b. Terra Sancti Edmundi.

In Hepworda xx liberi homines de ii carucatis et dimidia terræ ; et habent iii villanos et iii servos. Semper viii carucæ, Et iii acræ prati. Silva ad vi porcos. Ecclesia de xv acris liberæ terræ in elemosina. Hi omnes potuerunt dare et vendere terras suas ; sed saca et soca et commendatio et omnes consuetudines remanerent Sancto (Edmundo), et servitium in Stantuna et Cunegestuna (quicumque terram emeret). Tunc valuit xx solidos ; modo xl.

De hac terra tenet Fulcherus de Abbate i carucatam (et) de omni (consuetudine) medietatem ; et Petrus de Walenus xxx acras et iii bordarios. Et valent xxxii solidos in eodem pretio.

(Hepworde) habet in longitudine vii quarentenas et v in latitudine ; et in geltum (reddit) xvii denarios et ferdingum. Alii ibi tenent.

(B.) fol. 439 b. Terra Roberti Blundi.

In Hepworda dimidius liber homo (de) xl acris ; et i bordarium ; et semper dimidiam carucam ; et dimidiam acram prati ; et valet x solidos.

The meaning of the above passages appears to be as follows :—

The township of Hepworth lies in the divisions of Suffolk called the hundreds of Blackbourne and Broadmeer. Roughly speaking it measures seven furlongs in length and five in breadth. For assessment purposes it is reckoned as forming $\frac{1}{2}$ of the two hundreds* and accordingly has to contribute the sum of 17½d. towards every £2 levied upon the two hundreds whenever the King imposes a geld or tax.

The township is not held of the King as a single whole, but is divided between two fiefs, held respectively by the Church of St. Edmund at Bury and by Robert Blund.

The part of the township forming St. Edmund's fee, is reckoned to contain 2½ carucates of arable land, and to these are attached 4 acres of meadow land, and also woodland sufficient to pasture 6 hogs. There is further a church with a glebe of 15 acres of arable land held in alms on a free tenure. In the time of King Edward the Confessor this fee was held by 20 freemen.† The conditions of their tenure were as follows :—In the matter of alienation they were quite free, and could dispose of their land either by gift or sale ; but they were all commended to the Abbot of Bury, and owed him not only customary dues in money and kind,‡ but personal agricultural services on his manors at Coney Weston and Stanton. The Abbot, moreover, had sac and soc or jurisdiction over them for judicial and police purposes, and could amercé them at his court of the two hundreds to which they

* This appears if the assessments of all the townships in Blackbourne Hundred are extracted from Domesday and compared.

† Reckoning the carucate at 120 acres, this gives 300 acres among 20 tenants, or an average of 15 acres apiece. It is unlikely however that the holdings were all equal.

‡ At a later date the dues seem to have included hidage, averpence, warpence, fodder corn, and perhaps faldage.

all owed suit. When a freeman alienated his land, the Abbot's right to sac and soc and commendation remained untouched, and could be enforced against the purchaser; the same was the case with the customary dues and services, for the Abbot's claims were burdens on the land and were not based merely on contract. There were 8 plough teams altogether on the different holdings, and the annual value to the Abbot of his rights was 20 shillings.

At the present time there are still (? 20) freemen who have 3 villains and 4 slaves under them, and still 8 plough teams; but the relation of many of the tenants to the Abbot is altered. For the Abbot has subinfeofed one carucate of the arable land to Fulcher, one of his knights, who holds it by military service. He has also placed some of the freemen under him, and granted him a half of all his rights in the town. Another subtenant, Peter de Valoins, has similarly been subinfeofed with 30 acres of the arable land, and also with 3 cottagers. The annual value has been increased by these changes and is now set at 40 shillings. Towards this the fees of Fulcher and Peter contribute 32 shillings.

The part of the township, forming Robert Blund's fee, is reckoned to contain 40 acres of arable, and half-an-acre of meadow land. In the time of King Edward this was occupied by a freeman, half commended to the Abbot of St. Edmund's, and half elsewhere;* and he possessed half a plough team.

At the present time he still has half a plough team, and he also has 1 cottager under him, and the annual value is reckoned to be 10 shillings.

From this description may be gleaned two facts of paramount importance for the compilation of the history of the Hepworth Manors.

The first is, that even on the eve of the Conquest, Hepworth still belonged to the free village type of community and was without any manorial organisation. No mention is made in the Domesday Survey either of the existence of a manor, or of a separate estate of any size in the town; all the land was divided between small free landowners, the chief of whom held only 40 acres in the common field. The monks of Bury it is true had a general overlordship, but their position can hardly be described as that of manorial lords; for they had no demesne land in the town, and what agricultural services they were entitled to were performed elsewhere at Stanton and Coney Weston.

The second point that stands out clearly is, that the

* One result of this would be that, if the man was killed, the lords would share the fine or "manbot."

Conquest altered the status of the occupiers of the soil, and gave the persons who held the land in capite of William I. a new position. Formerly the abbot and monks of Bury had been overlords of the freemen, but they were by no means owners of the soil. Now their position is so far improved that they are recorded as granting away both the soil and the freemen by subinfeudation, while the freemen's rights of alienation are spoken of as things of the past. To a certain extent then it seems clear we must consider the tenants in capite of 1086 as owners of the soil, and the surviving Saxon freemen as less independent than before. The survey, however, is not so clear on the question whether, as a result of the change, any manor or manors, as the term afterwards came to be used, had sprung up. As none of the plough teams are stated in the record to be in the demesne of either the Abbot or Robert Blund, it seems a little difficult to believe that the estates of the tenants in capite in Hepworth had been re-organised on manorial principles. If, however, such were the case, the question arises;— Were either Fulcher or Peter de Valoins the owners of manors, or were they likely to become so?

The answer to this query may be obtained by referring to the Feodary compiled for Baldwin, the first Norman Abbot of Bury, copies of which are preserved in several of the Bury registers. This document, contemporary with the Domesday Book, fortunately supplements the survey on the very point in question.

The entries relating to Hepworth in the Feodary are as follows (Reg. Nigrum., f. 132):—

Ad Hepworde tenet Fulcerius de Sancto Edmundo lxxx acras terræ et xiiii liberos homines de xxxvi acris terræ.

Ad Wattisfelde et Hepworde tenet Roricus de Sancto 1 carucatam terræ et iii bordarios et iii liberos homines de viii acris terræ.

Ad Hepworda tenet Peter de Valoiniis de Sancto dimidium liberum hominem de xxx acris.

The first of these entries shows that Fulcher at any rate had taken a long step towards converting his estate

at Hepworth into a manor of the type which was to become universal.

While the Domesday Book simply states that he had obtained a carucate of land from the Abbot, the Feodary establishes the fact that he did not merely lease it to the fourteen freemen, who had presumably occupied it before, but that he made an entirely new arrangement, dividing the estate into portions, keeping 80 acres, or as much as two-thirds, in demesne, and only leaving 36 for the freemen; but it is not clear whether he went on to subdivide the 80 acres between himself and his villains, or not.

We may conclude that from the year 1086 there was at least one manor forming in Hepworth. Fulcher, however, does not appear to have possessed a residence within the manor, for he held altogether three knights' fees of the Abbot, and the capital manor of his fief was probably at Little Saxham.

The Feodary gives no more information than Domesday as to what Peter de Valoins did with his estate; apparently it did not become a manor, for we do not hear of any such manor in later times, though we again meet with the Valoins' fee.

Peter de Valoins was a conspicuous Norman baron, who, besides holding much land as a sub-tenant, had no less than 20 manors in chief in Norfolk and six in Suffolk granted to him after the Conquest, together with other properties in Essex and Hertfordshire. His principal estate in Suffolk was at Orford, and he held his barony for 30 knights' fees. He married Aldreda, sister to Eudo Dapifer, steward to King Henry I., and had amongst other issue a son and heir, Roger de Valoins, who in his turn was succeeded by his eldest son, Peter de Valoins.

This Peter seems to have died childless, for in 1166 we find his younger brother, Robert, in possession of the barony.* Robert lived till 1182, but died without male issue, whereupon the barony passed to a still younger brother, John. This John de Valoins married Isabella de

* See Black Book of the Exchequer.

Creke, and their son was a second Robert, who married Roesia, one of the sisters of Sir William Blund of Ixworth. The Hepworth property seems to have been retained by the family through all these descents; for the Valoins' fee in Hepworth is mentioned in a Survey or Calendar of Services compiled in John's reign for Abbot Samson.* The exact date of John de Valoins' death is unknown, but Robert was in possession soon after the accession of Henry III.

Robert Blund was also a prominent Norman baron, the head of whose barony was at Ixworth. His Hepworth estate apparently formed part of his demesne lands, and with Ixworth descended in a direct line to Sir William Blund mentioned above, for Samson's Calendar states that there was still a Blund fee in Hepworth in King John's time. It was not, however, a separate manor, but probably parcel of the manor of Walsham le Willows, which the Blunds held in demesne.

It will be observed that Baldwin's Feodary mentions an estate at Hepworth held by one Roricus, of whom the Domesday entry of Hepworth says nothing. Roricus, however, is duly inserted in Domesday under Wattisfield, so it is probable that only a small portion of his fee lay in Hepworth, and for manorial purposes was parcel of Wattisfield. It is impossible to trace this estate in any later Hepworth record.

Before leaving the Hepworth of 1086 one more question arises—what became of the land, about one and a half carucates, which the Abbot did not sub-infeod to either Fulcher, Peter de Valoins, or Roricus?

Domesday throws no light on this, nor does Baldwin's Feodary. There is, however, a document, which, to a certain extent, supplies the omission. This is a list of tenants in socage without date, but which apparently belongs to Abbot Baldwin's time, being appended to the copy of the Feodary contained in the *Registrum Nigrum*, the oldest of the Bury registers.

The part relating to Hepworth enumerates 15 tene-

*This Calendar is now in the possession of Prince Frederick Duleep Singh.

ments occupied by sokemen, containing in all $43\frac{1}{4}$ acres of land, and paying an annual rent of 4s. $9\frac{1}{2}$ d. to the Abbot. This list may be tabulated as follows:—

	ACRES.	RENT. d.
1. Alstan	12	12
2. Odin	9	9
3. Turstinus clericus	5	6
4. Uluric	5	6
5. Godric	2	4
6. Godric cum fratre	3	6
7. Godwin	1	2
8. Stubhart pape	$1\frac{1}{2}$	3
9. Algar	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
10. Odin filius Crispin	$1\frac{1}{2}$	3
11. Leswine Scanches	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
12. Beranger	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
13. Leswine Barun	$\frac{3}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$
14. Blacheman	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
15. Moder	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
	<hr/> $43\frac{1}{4}$ <hr/>	<hr/> $57\frac{1}{2}$ d. <hr/>

The explanation of these rents will become clearer when allusion is made to a similar list of sokemen dating from John's reign. It may be here noticed that even these tenements leave one carucate of land still unaccounted for.

Some of this may have been waste in 1086, as in later times there is mention of a fold course; but, as some of our earliest records also tell of the existence of a better class of sokemen holding of the Abbot by petty serjeanty, it is natural to hazard a guess that this class also existed in Baldwin's time, though his registers are silent about them. If this were so, the distribution of estates in Hepworth about the year 1100 was somewhat as follows:—

1. A manor held by the Abbot of Bury by knights' service and occupied by Fulcher.
2. The Valoins fee held of the Abbot in socage.
3. The Blund fee, part of the Blund barony, perhaps parcel of the manor of Walsham le Willows.
4. 15 tenements held by sokemen the successors of the Domesday liberi homines, and rendering a fixed rent to the Abbot.
5. One or two tenements held of the Abbot by petty serjeanty.
6. The waste land, enjoyed in common by the tenants, but tending to become the property of the Abbot.

Let us now try and trace the subsequent history of these items.

Fulcher, as already mentioned, held, in addition to his property at Hepworth, a larger property at Little Saxham, from which his descendants assumed the name of "de Saxham." In Baldwin's Feodary it is referred to as follows:—

"Ad Saxham tenet de Sancto Fulcherius unam carucatam terre et dimidiam, et septem villanos et quinque bordarios."

The De Saxhams continued to hold both Hepworth and Little Saxham, so that the records of Little Saxham help to trace the descent of the Hepworth part of their property.

Until the year 1180 no mention is made of the De Saxhams, but we can infer that towards the end of the 12th century the estates were owned by one Ralph de Saxham; for Abbot Sampson, shortly after he began his rule at Bury St. Edmund's in 1180, had, as already mentioned, a Survey or Calendar of his estates compiled, in which the following quotation occurs:—

"In alia Saxham tenet Gilbertus filius Radulphi feudum militis de domino Abbate."

The Calendar further states that Gilbert Fitz-Ralph owed one suit to the Hundred of Thingoe for his knight's fee; and he is also mentioned in the account of Hepworth.

In 1198 Gilbert de Saxham was still in possession; for, in that year by a fine levied before the King's Justices* he acknowledges that he owed Samson the service of three knights' fees for his lands in Saxham, Thelnetham, Hepworth, Gissing, and Roydon, and also castle-guard at Norwich Castle. Joscelyn, in his Chronicle, mentions this Gilbert in 1200.† Gilbert was succeeded by his son William de Saxham, and he in his turn by his son Ralph.‡

This second Ralph de Saxham, about the beginning of Edward I.'s reign, sold his fief in three portions. His Hepworth manor formed one lot and went to Giles, the son of William de Neketon.§

* Registrum Nigrum, f. 108 a. † Memorials of St. Edmund's Abbey, Vol. I., p. 318.
‡ Gage, Thingoe Hundred, p. 120. § Reg. Album., fol. 264.

This Giles took his name from Neketon Hall in Great Barton where his family had long been seated, and where he may have resided; but there are documents which prove that this was by no means the first connection of his family with Hepworth. On the contrary, Giles' family, if not himself, were already owners of land in the village, for Giles' father, William, the son of Robert de Neketon, was purchaser of an estate there from Marcella de Hepworth, of whom more presently. Further than this the rectors of Hepworth for the preceding quarter of a century had been de Neketons, beginning with Robert de Neketon, Giles' uncle, from whom Giles' grandfather bought the next presentation somewhere about 1248, and continuing with James de Neketon who had been presented on Robert's resignation in 1256. This *James remained rector for many years, and seems to have been a well-to-do parson. He may have been Giles' younger brother; anyhow he owned land in several of the neighbouring villages, and in 1277 acquired a charter of free warren from Edward I.† The date when Giles de Neketon bought the Saxham fee was probably not later than 1279, for in that year we find James de Neketon accounting to the Abbot of Bury for the scutage taken to meet the expenses of the late war against Llewellyn.‡ This can only have been paid by the Saxham fee, for no other land in Hepworth was held by knight's service, and it is not likely a de Neketon would make the payment if the estate had not yet changed hands. Anyhow Giles was in possession in 1283.§ Giles de Neketon married one Sibyl, by whom he had a son, a second William de Neketon, who had succeeded his father about the year 1300; for in Abbot Northwold's Feodary,|| compiled at this date, occurs the following statement:—

“Adam de Geddinge, Willelmus hæres Egidie de Neketon et Mattheus de Thelnetham tenent tria fœda militum, quæ Radulfus de Saxham, olim Gilbertus filius Radulfi, (tenuit) pro indiviso tenemento. Unde dictus Adam tenet unum fœdum in parva Saxham; Willelmus de Neketon unum fœdum in Hepwortha; et Mattheus de Thelnetham unum fœdum et dimidium in Thelnetham, Reydon, Hopton, Gnatteshall et Berningham.

* Proceedings Suff. Inst. of Archæology, Vol. VIII., p. 392.

† Calendar. Rotul. Chart., p. 106.

‡ Reg. Pinchbeck, f. 123 a.

§ Lay Subsidy Roll for Suffolk.

|| Reg. Pinchbeck, f. 121 b.

Other records show that at this date this William de Neketon was still a minor in the custody of the Abbot of Bury, but in 1307 he did homage for his lands to Abbot Thomas de Tottyngham at Elmswell, on Sunday, St. Mark's day.* By this time he certainly owned both the estate bought by his grandfather from Marcella de Hepworth, and the Saxham fee bought by his father; and the two together formed what has ever since been known as the North Hall Manor.

Having thus traced the fortunes of Fulcher's manor down to the opening of the 14th century, it is now time to return and see what information may be obtained prior to this date with regard to the other inhabitants of Hepworth. Naturally we turn first of all to Samson's Calendar, for this work is a many-sided document, and gives almost as complete a picture of the village under King John, as the Domesday Survey gives under William the Conqueror.

In the first place this work shows how the double Hundred of Blackbourne was divided into 14 integral townships (*integræ villæ*), otherwise called "leets," and how Hepworth with Honington and half of Ixworth Thorpe formed the seventh leet. Further, Hepworth is said to have comprised half the leet; and, therefore, one-twenty-eighth of the double Hundred. This naturally reminds us that the Domesday geld assessment of Hepworth showed the same arrangement,† and prompts one to make a comparison between the leets of Samson's Calendar and the assessment of all the villis in Blackbourne Hundred in 1086, a comparison which at once leads to the conclusion that the 14 leets existed in the days of William I., and

* Harleian ms. 230, f. 67.

† It may not be out of place to give the list of these leets with the assessment of each as it appears in Domesday—(1) Stanton 34½d.; (2) Bardwell 34½d.; (3) West Stow, Norton, 34½d.; (4) Wordwell, Culford, Little Fakenham, Barnham, 33½d.; (5) Great Fakenham, Sapiston, 34½d.; (6) Ingham, Little Livermere, Troston, 34½d.; (7) Hepworth, Honington, ½ Ixworth Thorpe, 34½d.; (8) Ixworth, Elmswell, 34d.; (9) Hunston, Langham, Stow Langtoft, ½ Ixworth Thorpe, 34½d.; (10) Great Ashfield, Badwell Ash, Walsham-le-Willows, 34½d.; (11) Rickinghall Inferior, Wattisfield, Hilderclay, 34½d.; (12) Thelnetham, Market Weston, Hopton, 34½d.; (13) Barningham, Coney Weston, 34½d.; (14) Rushford, Knatteshall, Euston, 34½d.

were all assessed at approximately equal sums. Presumably, therefore, the leets of Abbot Samson's day were still divisions for fiscal purposes, used, for instance, in the distribution of fines levied on the Hundred; later the integral villis were used for police purposes, as in Henry III.'s writ, issued in 1252 for enforcing the system of "watch and ward." It would be impossible to discover the exact reason why Hepworth was united with Honington and Ixworth Thorpe, for these two villis though they adjoin each other, are four miles from Hepworth.

After describing the leets, the Calendar next surveys each integral vill in turn, setting forth the names and services of such of its inhabitants as the Abbot of Bury had an interest in. For Hepworth this heading takes the form of a list of sokemen holding tenements of the Abbey. This account should be compared with the list of sokemen in Abbot Baldwin's time, but for our purpose it is chiefly interesting as helping to trace the descent of the family of de Hepworth, which about the end of the 12th century had acquired a status of some importance in the village.

The list opens with the more important sokemen, who held "in alto socagio." This apparently means by petty serjeanty, for no services are mentioned, while we find both the predecessors and successors of these sokemen claiming to hold by this tenure (see *infra* Abbot Anselm's deed and Wynesia de Riveshall's claim to dower). In the Registrum Pinchbeck (fol. 123 b) a passage may be found stating that there were many of these serjeancies,—

"Quae respiciant dominum regem et suum exercitum tempore quo dominus abbas personaliter facit suum servitium domino regi in suo exercitu."

—and that they were especially common in Blackbourne Hundred and existed at Hepworth among other places.* But to return to our record which runs thus:—

"Nunc de septima leta dicendum est. In Hepeworth est dimidia carucata, que est de alto socagio; de qua Willelmus filius Walteri et

* These tenants seem to correspond to the riding men of Anglo-Saxon times; in Domesday, *radmanni*, *radchenistres*; in Bracton, *rod knights*. Our record tells us that Abbot Hugh of Northwold exacted this service when he went in person to the siege of Bedford in 1224.

Walterus filius Edwardi tenent ii partes ; unam partem tenet (quisque) istorum. (Et) Turton Mitte, vidua, et filius ejus tenent xx acras de wara, quæ sunt una pars (istius) dimidia carucatae."

This William filius Walteri is elsewhere called the son of Walter de Hepworth, and Walter filius Edwardi was most probably his cousin, holding with him an undivided inheritance, or otherwise their holdings would hardly be mentioned as one.

The Calendar next proceeds to name the less important tenants holding in common socage, and rendering the more ordinary services known as hidage, warpenny, and fodder-corn, together with the aids due either to the sheriff or the bailiffs of the Hundred. These holdings are called tenements, and were 13 in number ; a table will best show the dues on each.

Sokemanni et Tenementa.		Hidagium.	Warpennies.	Auxilium Vicecomitis.	Auxilium prepositorum.	Summæ.	Fodder Corn.
		denarii.				denarii.	Summæ avenæ.
1	Turston - -	2	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	5	$\frac{1}{2}$
2	Godwin Opilio - -	1	...	...	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	...
3	Gilbertus Copping - -	1	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	...
4	Herveius - -	4	1	1	1	7	$\frac{1}{2}$
5	Odin - -	3	1	1	1	6	$\frac{1}{2}$
6	Aluric filius Habene	3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	6	$\frac{1}{2}$
7	Rodbertus filius Matilde -	4	1	2	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$8\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
8	Walter presbyter - -	2	...	...	...	2	...
9	Ivo - -	2	1	5	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$9\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
10	Odin filius Godcild et parcenarii - -	2	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$3\frac{1}{2}$	...
11	Ivo Baf et parcenarii - -	2	...	...	2	4	1
12	Ulmera et Ulveva - -	1	...	...	...	1	...
13	Gilbertus et Alfred - -	1	...	...	...	1	...
	Summa - -	28	6	11	12	57	4

The Calendar only gives the total of the hidage : viz., 2s. 4d. ; but it is noticeable that the grand total of money payments given above, viz., 57d., corresponds within a halfpenny with the total rent given in the list of Baldwin's sokemen, though neither the number of sokemen, nor many of the individual dues agree.

The Calendar concludes this heading with the following paragraph :—

“In eadem tenet de domino Abbate Gilbertus filius Radulfi, qui est de suis militibus.

“Et alii domini sunt in illa villa, et plures tenentes alii, qui de socagio (tenent), qui cum prædicto (Gilberto) reddunt vicecomiti in anno III solidos.

“Omnes predicti sokemanni, præter Willelmum filium Walteri et præter Walterum filium Eadwardi, colligunt inter se III averpennies.”

Abbot Samson's Calendar further contains a list of the suits or services due from the leets to the Hundred court, which also helps to trace the descent of the properties. It is as follows :—

“Nunc de sectis duorum hundredorum dicendum est.

“In Hepwortha sunt III (secte) ; una de terra Walteri filii Berardi ; una de terra (Walteri*) filii Eadwardi et sociorum ; una de terra Blundi et de terra Valencensi.”

This extract apparently means that Walter, the son of Berard, was bound to perform in respect of his lands at Hepworth suit at the Hundred Court, and that the son of Eadward and his companions were bound in respect of their lands also to perform their suit at the same Court, and a third suit was bound to be performed by the owners of the feofs formerly held by Robert le Blund and by Peter de Valoins.

We can now supplement the information given in Abbot Baldwin's Feodary and in Abbot Samson's Calendar, by that given in the manuscript known as *Registrum Curtis*. The manuscript contains at fol. 90a, a memorandum as to certain very ancient deeds handed by Wm. Cakermal of Tivetshall, on the 26th of Sept., 1368, to John, Abbot of St. Edmund's. The first of these docu-

* This name is supplied from the list of Sokemen.

ments was a deed addressed by Abbot Anselm to the men of Blackbourne Hundred, by which he granted to Berard, son of Aldstan, all the lands which his father held in 1134, by the following tenure :—

“Quod ibit in exercitum cum equis suis in corrodio Abbatis; et ad placitum Abbatis, cum abbate vel cum Dapifero suo, ibit cum equis suis longe et ibit ad comitatum et ad hundredum.”

No vill, it will be observed, is here mentioned, but the context seems to show that Hepworth is meant, and that we here have one of the Petty Serjeanties we have already alluded to. Aldstan it must be remembered was the name of the Chief Sokeman in Abbot Baldwin's list.

By the second deed Anselm grants 10 acres in Bardwell to Berard.

By the third addressed to the men of Thedwastre Hundred, Anselm grants to Berard all the land of Hereward in Barton, and Goda, his daughter, to wife.

The fourth deed is a grant by Anselm of a toft in Bury to one Robert of Wordswell.

By the fifth Anselm grants the land of Melusia Aquenesima in Hepworth to Berard.

By the sixth King Stephen confirms the grant by Ording Abbot to his nephew, Berard, of the land of Alfewin Hosteyn.

The seventh is a writ from King Henry II., directing Abbot Hugo to grant Berard seisin of the land in Welnetham, formerly held by William of Sapiston, whose right heir he was.

The memorandum goes on to state that in course of time part of the lands dealt with came to John de Riveshall, the owner of Rushall manor in Hepworth, and that after his death Wynesia, his widow, claimed to be entitled to dower out of these and other lands, amounting in all to six messuages, 200 acres of arable, 20 of meadow, 40 of pasture, 10 of woodland, together with certain rents in Hepworth, Bardwell, and elsewhere. This happened in 1292.

From these documents and the pleadings in the actions

as to the right to present to the rectory of Hepworth, hereinafter referred to, we may deduce, with some certainty, the following pedigree:—

Aldstan, perhaps one of the 20 *liberi Homines* = a sister of Ording, who was of Domesday, Chief Sokeman in time of Abbot Baldwin, alive in 1134. cellarer of St. Edmund's Abbey about 1130, and Abbot 1138. Died 7th Feby., 1156.

Berard, son of Aldstan, nephew of Ording, = Goda, daughter of Hereward of Barton, and held lands in Hepworth, Bardwell, Welnetham, &c., m. between 1121 and 1138.

Walter, son of Berard, c. 1180 one of the suitors for Hepworth in = Edward =
the Blackburne Hundred Court (vide Abbot Samson's Calendar.)

William, son of Walter, = Matilda, who in 1248 claimed dower out of lands in Hepworth and other places from Jeremia de Caxton, her grandson's guardian (Coram Rege Rolls, 27 Hen. III. M. 7.)
tenant in *alto socagio* at Hepworth, *temp.* Samson. Defendant in a Grand Assize 1198 (Rotuli Curie Regis, pp. 237 and 283).
Walter, son of Eadward tenant in *alto socagio* in Samson's Calendar, and a suitor in the Hundred Court.

Walter filius Willelmi d. before 1248 = Berard, rector of Hepworth in 1215.

Willelmus filius Walteri = Amicia = Sir Henry de Riveshall, alive 1281, dead 1283 (Abbreviatio Placitorum, p. 200, Lay Subsidy Roll of 1283).
Jeremy de Caxton.

Helen = Richard de Champ named in the fine in 1275 to Sir Hy. de Riveshall. See fine in Davy's ms.
Susannah = Thos. de Stanton, assessor of the thirtieth in 1283.
Marcella sold share to Wm. the son of Robert de Neketon.
Agnes sold share to Sir Hy. de Riveshall.

Nicholas de Stanton.

Edmund de Stanton sold his Hepworth estates to Robert Ashfield in 1376.

Wynesia de Prevense, she = Sir John de Riveshall
claimed dower out of 200 acres of land, &c., in Hepworth and elsewhere in 1292.

Sir John de Riveshall in custody of Abbot of Bury in 1303, he being entitled to the guardianship of the infant. Johanna de Riveshall

Sir Oliver Wythe = Wynesia de Riveshall d. July, 1367. Hugo le Groos = Alesia de Riveshall d. 1367.

This pedigree has been introduced somewhat early in stating the evidence which supports it. The greater, and

more particularly the later part of it, is verified and supported by a long statement in the Registrum Lakingheath, Harleian ms., s. 743, fol. 86 b, entitled—

“Evidentiæ pro patronatu ecclesiæ de Hepworth,”

—which is in fact a statement of the evidence used or to be used in an action brought by one Nicholas de Stanton, who claimed to be entitled to a turn in the presentation to the rectory of Hepworth. The statement traces the title to the advowson back to the reign of Richard I., the date of legal memory, and reads as follows:—

Willelmus filius Walteri de Hepworth presentavit ad ecclesiam de Hepworth Berardum tempore Johannis Rēgis; quo mortuo, idem Willelmus presentavit Radulphum filium Simōnis tempore Henrici Regis.

Walterus filius prædicti Willelmi non presentavit quia ecclesia non vacavit tempore suo. Willelmus filius dicti Walteri non presentavit tempore suo pro eo quod fuit infra ætate et in custodia *Henrici Abbatis de Sancto Eadmundo. Et idem Abbas dedit prædictam custodiam cum advocacione ecclesiæ prædictæ Jeremie de Caxton; et idem Jeremias dedit eandem custodiam cum advocacione prædicta Roberto de Neketon; mortuo prædicto Radulpho rectore, predictus Robertus de Neketon pæsentavit Robertum filium suum ad eandem ecclesiam tempore Henrici regis predicti; et mortuo prædicto Willelmo filio Walteri succederunt ei quatuor filiæ, videlicet Elena, Susanna, Marcella et Agnes; quæ omnes fuerunt in custodia †Edmundi Abbatis de Sancti Edmundo. Mortuo eodem Edmundo Abbate, dominus Rex Henricus presentavit Jacobum de Neketon ad prædictam Ecclesiam vacantem per resignationem prædicti Roberti rectoris tempore vacationis dictæ Abbatæ (1256).

Quatuor Filiæ.	{	<i>Elena</i> quæ vendidit Henrico de Riveshall proportionem suam dictæ advocacionis.
		<i>Susanna</i> de qua precessit Richardus qui est professus in ordine fratrum prædicatorum de quo descendit jus dictæ advocacionis Nicholæ qui nunc petit
		<i>Marcella</i> quæ vendidit Willelmo filio Roberti de Neketon proportionem suam dictæ advocacionis.
		<i>Agnes</i> quæ vendidit Henrico de Riveshall proportionem suam dictæ advocacionis.

De Henrico de Riveshale emptore partis prædictæ Elene descendit advocacio predicta Johanni filio suo cui successit Johannes filius ejus qui fuit in custodia †Thome Abbatis de Sancto Edmundo quando prædicta ecclesia vacavit per resignationem predicti Jacobi de Neketon.

* Henry was Abbot from 1239 to 1248.

† Edmund was Abbot from 1248 to 1256.

‡ Thomas of Tottington was Abbot from 1301 to 1312.

De Willelmo de Neketon* emptore partis prædictæ Marcellæ descendit advocatio predicti Egidio filio suo cui successit Willelmus filius ejus qui fuit in custodia Thomæ Abbatis de Sancto Edmundo quando prædicta ecclesia vacavit per resignationem prædicti Jacobi de Neketon.

De Henrico de Riveshall emptore partis prædictæ Agnetis descendit advocatio prædicta Johanni filio suo cui successit Johannes filius ejus qui fuit in custodia Thomæ Abbatis de Sancto Edmundo quando prædicta ecclesia vacavit per resignationem prædicti Jacobi de Neketon.

Thomas de Stanton qui contraxit matrimonium cum prædicta Susanna tenuit advocationem predictam per legem Angliam et dimisit prædictam advocationem magistro Stephano de Hepworth, pro termino unius anni.

Et prædictus Thomas Abbas de Sancto Edmundo, ratione heredum prædictorum in custodia sua existentium, et Magister Stephanus de Heppeworth, ratione firme prædictæ, præsentaverunt Willelmum de Neketon tempore domini Regis Edwardi Regis nunc.

This statement of the title to the advowson of Hepworth, was apparently prepared in order to meet a claim which was put forward by Nicholas de Stanton, to the right to a turn in presenting to the rectory of Hepworth. The claim was made on an Assize of Darrein Presentment, and was to be tried before the Justices at York, in Trinity term 1303. Thomas Tottington, then Abbot of St. Edmund's, William, the son of Giles de Neketon, John, the son of John de Riveshall, Thomas de Stanton, Master Stephen de Hepworth, and William de Neketon, being defendants. Nicholas de Stanton, however, did not appear at the trial, and judgment was given for the defendants, and accordingly on 9 Kal Maij 1383, William de Neketon was presented to the rectory. The record of the trial is stated at some length in the Registrum Lakingheath.

It will be observed that the evidence as to the patronage of the church of Hepworth proves the greater part of the above pedigree, from the first Walter de Hepworth to the daughters of William, the son of the second Walter, and so onwards to the year 1300. The name of the wife of the first William is shown to be Matilda, from the proceedings she took in Trinity term 27th Henry III., to recover her dower from Jeremy de

* 16 Edw. III.

Caxton, as the guardian of her grandson, out of the lands of her husband, William de Hepworth.*

The fact that Sir Henry de Riveshall did not marry any daughter of William, the son of Walter de Hepworth, as alleged by both Blomefield, vol. v., p. 340, and Page in his continuation of the *Suffolk Traveller*, is sufficiently shown by the above statement and by the fine by which Sir Henry de Riveshall acquired the share of Helen, the daughter of William, son of Walter de Hepworth, as from this fine it appears that Helen was the wife of Richard de Champ, and that Sir Henry was himself the husband of Amicia, the widow of William, the son of Walter de Hepworth. The fine is stated at length in Davy's mss. at the British Museum, but without any reference to the record. Next the document clearly shows that on the death of William, son of Walter, which took place before 1256,† his estate, subject to his wife's right to dower, together with the advowson, became divisible in equal fourth shares between his four daughters, that two of such shares, those of Helen and Agnes, were sold about 1270 to Sir Henry de Riveshall, that one other fourth share passed, by the marriage of Susanna, to the Stantons, and that the remaining fourth share was sold by Marcella to William de Neketon, the father of Giles who bought Fulcher's manor as already stated.

The subsequent descent of the various shares from the date of these events to the year 1302 is also rendered clear, and is found to agree with what we have learned from other sources. We need not repeat that of Marcella's share as it has already been stated in connection with the Saxhams and Neketons; but we may add something in stating that of the two Riveshall shares. As to Susanna's share there is little to say, for it remained the property of Thomas de Stanton the whole time; his wife, however, was probably dead before he demised her share to Magister Stephen.

* See *Coram Rege* Rolls 27 Hen. III., m. 7, No. 61 (1293).

† He was dead when James de Neketon was presented to the living of Hepworth by Henry III. in 1256.

The story of the Riveshall shares, is as follows:—in 1281 Sir Henry was still in possession, but in the interval that had elapsed since he bought the property he had considerably enlarged his estate by other purchases. This appears from an extent taken only a few years later. An examination of this extent will also enable the reader to realize the size of the estates we are dealing with, for it sets forth not only Sir Henry de Riveshall's purchases, but also the particulars and value of all the lands that William de Hepworth left to his daughters. Apparently when the extent was taken this still remained unpartitioned, for the valuers make no distinction between the different shares, but add up the different items into one lump sum. The Abbot for whom the extent was made was interested in three-quarters of the whole, for at the time he was guardian of the Neketon as well as the Riveshall shares. The property that William de Hepworth had enjoyed is found by the jurors to contain a messuage, 265 acres of arable land, 14 acres of wood, $15\frac{1}{2}$ acres of meadow and pasture, and a considerable sheep run or fold course, to which must be added $87\frac{1}{2}$ acres held by the villain or cottar tenants. Roughly speaking this makes a total of 380 acres, not including the fold course. The whole was valued at £11 11s. a year, but some of the lands lay outside Hepworth, in Walsham and elsewhere.*

To this Sir H. de Riveshall added $64\frac{1}{2}$ acres by various small purchases, and thus added a rental of £1 13s. $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.

As Sir Henry only acquired a moiety of the Hepworth lands, it results that his whole estate consisted of about 255 acres and a moiety of the fold course, while his rental comes to £7 1s. $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. His stake in the village was considerably less than that of William de Hepworth, but he also had considerable estates at Rushall in Norfolk, Semer in Suffolk, and in Essex. His descendants were found to hold these lands by knight's service and not in socage.

* Wynesia de Riveshall's claim to dower, afterwards stated, mentions land in Bardwell, Stanton, Ixworth, Wattisfield, Barningham, and Market Weston.

The death of Sir Henry de Riveshall occurred probably in 1282. He is not mentioned in the Subsidy Rolls for the year 1283, his name being replaced by that of his son, John, who did not long survive him.

This John de Riveshall married Wynesia, the daughter of Sir Ralf de Prevense. Wynesia de Riveshall when a widow in the year 1292, took proceedings against the Abbot of Bury, claiming her dower in her husband's property at Hepworth, Bardwell, Stanton, Ixworth, Wattisfield, Barningham, Weston, Walsham, and Thetford. The Abbot did not dispute her right to a third of the rents of the property, which would be the proper dower, if the lands were held by military service, but Wynesia claimed a moiety on the ground that the tenure was common socage or at the most petty serjeanty. Finally, it was held that she was only entitled to a third, except as to certain lands at Bardwell, the decision probably being due to the writ known as the distraint of knighthood, which was issued in 1278, and ordered all freeholders possessed of lands worth £20 a year to be knighted. The proceedings are given in the Reg. Pinchbeck, f. 192 b. In 1369 the Riveshall estate was accounted half a knight's fee.

In these proceedings the Abbot was sued as having the custody of the lands of John de Riveshall, the son of Wynesia, as his guardian in socage.

Subsequently, by an agreement indented, dated on Michaelmas day in the 23rd year of King Edward I. (1295), and made between John, Abbot of St. Edmund's of the one part, and Wynesia, formerly the wife of John de Riveshall, knight, of the other part, the Abbot demised all the lands which he had and held in his custody at Hepworth, Stanton, Bardswell, Ixworth, and Wattisfield, with the appurtenances to Wynesia to hold from the aforesaid day of St. Michael, until the aforesaid John de Riveshall, the younger, or his sister, Johanna, should attain their full age, at the rents therein mentioned. This deed is given at some length in Registrum Curtis, fol. 92.

While this John de Riveshall was still a minor, the extent was made which has already been alluded to. It has been preserved in Reg. Pinchbeck, f. 202, and is as follows:—

Extenta Manerii quod quondam fuit Willelmi de Heppewurth in Heppewurth, tam de antiquis dominicis quam de perquisitis, &c., facta per extentores videlicet Adam Baf, Willelmum Pikele, Henricum filium Cler, Thomas de Grimesyk et Thomas le Chapetur.*

Est ibidem unum mesuagium de antiquo dominico, &c., et valet per annum v sol. Summa v sol.

Item in crofto mesuagii prædicti xxx acræ terre; valet acra per annum xiii d. Summa patet.

Item juxta Brockeleye xi acræ terre; precium acræ terre vii d. Summa vii s. iiii d.

Item apud le Brethe xxvi acræ terre; precium acre vd. Summa xs. xd.

Item una acra in mesuagio Willelmi Bret et super Lirantischorin una acra terre; precium acre xiii d. Summa ii solidi.

Item apud Longelond iiii acræ et super le Redeles iii acræ et in Leyt i acra et i roda super le Knol iii acræ et dimidium et juxta Swegneshawe in uno campo xi acre vocato Eleven acræ et super Swegneshawe xviii acræ et apud Oldegate x acræ et apud Upwelle vi acræ et apud Wrotheland v acræ precium acræ vd. Summa acrarum lxi acræ et dimidium and i roda Summa argenti xxvs. viii d. obolus (et) quadrans per annum.

Item apud Walsham xvii acræ et xviii acræ apud Tuftis et apud Newehawe xviii acræ et apud Tuyst Castel ix acræ et in Reyses xviii acræ et apud Oselaks Pit xviii acræ et juxta Esthawegate ii acræ et super Brunescroft xiii acræ precium acræ iiii d. Summa acrarum vi^{xx} et ii acræ. Summa argenti per annum xxx solid vi d.

Item super le Nabbe viii acræ de antiquo dominico de quibus Elena qui fuit uxor Walteri de Soham vendidit Thome de Stanton i acra et i rodam precium acræ vd. Summa in argento per annum xxi d.

Item super Reycroft v acræ de dominico antiquo de quibus dicta Elena vendidit Radulpho Turoid seniori pro parte sua scilicet i acra

* Adam Baf, William Pikele, Thomas Stanton, and William de Redgrave were the assessors of the tax of a thirtieth on moveables, levied in 1283 to pay for the expense of the war in Wales. The return for this tax (Lay Subsidy Roll, Suffolk, 1283), which exists in a somewhat mutilated condition in the Record Office, shows that 53 persons in Hepworth paid for this tax sums amounting in all to £4 3s. 3½d. on a value of £120 2s. 9½d. Of this Giles de Neketon paid 7s. 5d. on chattels worth £11 2s. 6d., and Amicia domina et Willelmus de Bret filius ejus 7s. 6d. on chattels worth £11 4s. 2d. Dominus John de Riveshall paid 1s. 1d. on chattels worth £1 10s. 8d., the smallness of the value of his chattels here being accounted for by the fact that he probably resided at Rushall in Norfolk.

Amicia de Bret must have been a different person to Amicia, the widow of Sir Henry de Riveshall.

et i roda precium acræ *vd.* Summa in argento per annum *xviii d.* ob quadrans.

Item i acra juxta Croftum Walteri de Coneston precium acræ *xiii d.* et iii roda juxta Croftum Goldyng precium *ix d.* Summa in argento per annum *xxi d.*

Item sunt ibidem de antiquo dominico *xiiii acræ* bosci unde possunt amputari per annum *iiii acræ* et dimidium precium acræ *iiii s. iii d.* Summa in argento per annum *xvs.*

Item apud Esthawe *ix acras* pasturæ precium acræ *vi d.* Summa in argento per annum *iiii s. vi d.*

Item *iiii acræ* prati falcabilis precium acræ *iiii s.* Summa per annum *xvi solidi.*

Item juxta prædictum pratum *iii acræ* et dimidium pasturæ precium acræ *xiii d.* Summa in argento per annum *iiii s. vi d.*

Item Libertas unius falde que valet per annum *xxxviii s.* *

Item sunt ibidem *x villani* qui tenent *iiii^{xx} acras* terre; reddunt per annum *xis. iii d.*

Item faciunt per annum *vi^{xx}* et *xvi** opera et unumquodque opus valet *id.* Summa in argento per annum *xxiiii s. iii d.* pro utraque summa.

Item *iii villani* faciunt *iii arruras* iemales et valet *xiii d.* precium arruræ *iiii d.* et debent *xii averagia* que valent *xiii d.* precium cujuslibet *id.* Summa in argento per annum *ii s.*

Item *x villani* superscripti debent per annum *x gallinas* precium gallinæ *id.* et debent *lii ova* et valent *ii d.* Summa *xiii d.*

Item sunt ibidem *v cotagii* qui tenent *vii acras* terre et dimidium et reddunt per annum *ii s. vi d.* et faciunt per annum *xli opera* precium cujuslibet operis *id.* Summa *vs. xid.*

Item *iii Cotagii* sunt ibidem quorum unusquisque reddit per annum *i Gallinam* precium *id.* et unusquisque reddit *v ova* et valet *obolus.* Summa *iiii d. obolus.*

Item sunt ibidem *iii ex villanis* qui metant in autumpno, scilicet unusquisque eorum *iii acras* ordeï vel *iiii acras* frumenti precium acras ordeï *iiii d.* Summa *iiii s.*

Item est unus Villanus qui reddit per annum *i quartam avenæ* precium *ii s.* Summa *ii s.*

De perquisitis Domini Henricus de Riveshale videlicet quod Dominus Henricus perquisivit medietatem totius predicti tenementi et etiam idem Henricus perquisivit unum mesuagium quod domina Anna tenuit ad totam vitam suam quod valet per annum *iiii s.* Summa *iiii s.*

Item in crofto ejusdem mesuagii *v acræ* et dimidium precium acræ *viii d.* Summa *iiii s. iii d.*

Item apud Anselescroft et le Stubbing *v acræ* et dimidium precium acræ *vd.* Summa *ii s. iii d. obolus.*

Item apud Tuftes *ix acræ* terre et apud Hawyswod *xi acræ* terre

* The text has *xix* here, but the number wanted is evidently *156d.* = *13 shillings*, which added to *11s. 4d.*, gives *24s. 4d.*

et apud Brunescroft xvi acræ precium acræ *iiii*d. Summa *ix*s. per annum.

Item apud Folates Bushes xvi acræ unde pars est pastura et pars est subboscus precium acræ *viii*d. Summa *xs*. *viii*d.

Item ii acræ prati qui fuerunt Frederici de Heppeworth sicut jacent in prato de Hepworth precium acræ *xiii*d. Summa *ii*s.

Item Dominus Henricus perquisivit de Salamano de Ingham *iiii*s. *iiii*d. de redditu per annum et de aliis perquisivit *viii*d. de redditu, etc. Summa per annum *iiii*s. et *iiii*d.

Summa totius perquisitionis per annum *xxxiiii*s. *viii*d. obolum.

Summa totius istius extenti ex utraque parte cum perquisitis domini Henrici de Riveshale *xiii* *lib*. vs. *viii*d. obol.

The descent of the lands held by the de Hepworths the chief socage tenants of the Abbot in Hepworth, has now been traced down to the beginning of the 14th century, and their history brought down to the same point as has been reached with regard to the North Hall Manor.

At what period the estate of the de Hepworths acquired the characteristics of a manor is not manifest, but it evidently was considered to be one before the death of William, the son of Walter, brought about its partition among his four daughters; for after that event the part acquired by Sir Henry de Riveshall became known as Rushall or Riveshall manor, while the part that Thomas de Stanton acquired received the title of the manor of Master Stephen's, and not Stanton's, probably from the fact that the manor was leased to Master Stephen at the time when its court rolls first came to be kept, and some style for the manor had to be adopted.

These three manors, Riveshall or Rushall, Master Stephen's, and North Hall, still exist in Hepworth; nor have their names been altered, for their stewards have always copied the names on to successive court rolls. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, however, there was yet another manor in Hepworth, styled Brett's, which is now extinct, the origin and fate of which now claim attention.

It will be remembered that the descent of the lands held in Hepworth by the families of Blund and Valoins

down to the reign of Henry III. have been traced, and it has been shown that in all probability in the earlier years of this king, the one was held by Sir William le Blund, and the other by Robert de Valoins, Blund's brother-in-law. The matter is obscure, but it seems most likely that Brett's manor was formed by a coalition of these two fees, which came about in the following way.

Sir W. Blund took part in the Baron's War, but met his death at the battle of Lewes, 1264. As he left no issue, his estates went to his sisters,* with the result that part fell to Robert de Valoins in right of his wife, Roesia. Now it is clear that Roesia's share included Ixworth and Walsham-le-Willows, for both these manors were found to be in the possession of her son, Robert de Valoins III., in 1282, when he died leaving no heir male.† Presumably, therefore, the Valoins family acquired the Blund fee in Hepworth by the same partition, it being so far as we can see parcel of either Ixworth or Walsham. We do not, however, find any mention of Robert de Valoins in the list of persons assessed in Hepworth to the thirtieth levied in 1283. William le Bret and his mother, Domina Amicia, are, on the other hand, duly entered, and the mention of William's father, Adam le Bret, occurs slightly earlier. The conclusion to be drawn is that, after the union of the Valoins and Blund fees in 1264, Robert de Valoins and Roesia his wife subinfeofed Adam le Bret with these estates, which thus ceased to be held in demesne of either the Blund or Valoins baronies and became a separate manor, styled Bretts, after the name of the holder when court rolls were introduced.

William le Bret, mentioned in 1283, was still a minor in 1302, and the Abbot of Bury had the custody of him in virtue of his over lordship of the Valoins fee; later he had a son, John le Bret de Heppeworth, who appears to have succeeded him, for a rent roll of his estates is preserved amongst the papers of the Corporation of Bury

* Inq. Post Mortem 48 Henry III., No. 25.

† Inq. Post Mortem 10 Ed. I., No. 15.

St. Edmund's. Soon after this, however, the manor passed under the control of the Feoffees of the Bury Charities, having been acquired by the well-known Jankyn or John Smith, the great benefactor to Bury, and given by him to charitable uses by his will, which is printed among Tymms' Bury Wills. The lands, nevertheless, continued to be known as Brett's, and they still form part of the estate of the Bury charities.

We have now to trace as well as we can the descent of the three manors known as Riveshall, otherwise Rushall, Master Stephen's, and North Hall, from the year 1300 onwards.

First, then, as to the manor of Riveshall, which we left in the hands of the Abbot of Bury as guardian of Sir John de Riveshall, the younger. All we can say of this Sir John is that he married, and as it appears had two daughters, namely Wynesia and Alesia, but no male issue.

Wynesia, who inherited one moiety of the Hepworth property as one of the co-heiresses of her father, John de Riveshall, married Sir Oliver Wythe, the son of Sir Jeffery Wythe, who, according to Blomefield, resided at Hepworth. She became Sir Oliver's widow, before the 4th of July, 1367, as on this date by two deeds preserved in the Public Record Office,* she sold her lands and hereditaments in the town of East Mersea in Essex, to Robert de Nayllinghurst, clerk.

Alesia de Riveshall married Hugo le Groos, and died in 1367. By this marriage there were two sons, William and Thomas.

An Inquisition was held in the 40th year of Edward III. (1367), on the death of Alesia, the wife of Hugo le Groos. Another Inquisition was held on the death of her son, William, at Rickinghall in Suffolk, before Roger de Wolfreston, the king's escheator, on Wednesday, on the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, in the 42nd year of King Edward III. (1369). The jurors found that William, the son and heir of Hugo le Groos, held on the day of his

* Ancient Deeds, B 2496 and 2509.

death a moiety of the manor in Hepworth in his demesne as of fee of the Abbot of St. Edmund's, by the fourth part of a knight's fee, and that William le Groos died about the feast of St. Margaret the Virgin last past (1369), leaving Thomas, his brother, his heir, and that he was eight years of age.

Sir Oliver Wythe and Wynesia his wife left a son, Sir Jeffery Wythe, their heir-at-law, who, on the death of Wynesia, became possessed of her share of the Riveshall manor. Sir Jeffery Wythe married Alice, and left a son, John Wythe. This John Wythe married Sibella, the daughter of Sir Edmund St. Omer. After the death of her first husband she married Sir William Calthorpe. Robert Ashfield, in the proceedings hereinafter mentioned, alleged that John Wythe, by a deed dated "die lune proximo post finem claus Paschæ anno Ric. II.⁷," i.e. 1384, granted to Robert Ashfield, John Rokewood of Little Fakenham, and Edmund Lakynheath, all his part of the advowson of the church of Hepworth and all his right of presentation (and probably all his share of Riveshall manor), to the said Robert Ashfield, John Rokewood, and Edmund Lakynheath, and their heirs and assigns.

John Rokewood subsequently died, and by another deed, dated at Bury in the ninth year of Richard II. (1386), the said Edmund Lakynheath released all his right in the said advowson unto the said Robert Ashfield, his heirs and assigns in fee.

But notwithstanding these allegations the Riveshall share of the advowson remained the property of the Calthorpe's for many years.

The above particulars of the claim to the Riveshall share of the advowson are obtained from the proceedings in an action of Darrein Presentment recorded in the De Banco Rolls for Michaelmas Term of the first year of Henry V., m. 458, A.D. 1413. The action being brought by Sir Wm. Calthorpe, knight, and Sibella his wife, formerly the wife of Sir John Wythe, as plaintiffs, against the said Robert Ashfield, the younger, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury,

Nicolas Conyers and Johanna his wife, as defendants. Sir William Calthorpe claiming in right of his wife to share in presenting to the church of Hepworth, then vacant by the resignation of Magister John Bury. Robert Ashfield defending on the ground that Robert Ashfield, his grandfather, had by the deed of 1384 above mentioned, purchased all the rights of Sir John Wythe in the said advowson.

The pleadings put in by the defendant, Robert Ashfield, in this action, trace the descent of the advowson from the first William de Hepworth, who is stated to have held one carucate of land in Hepworth to which the advowson of the church was appendent.*

From this pleading may also be traced the descent of the manors of Master Stephen's and North Hall down to the date of this action.

With regard to the manor of Master Stephen's, it will be remembered that we last heard of it in 1302 in possession of Thomas de Stanton, as tenant by the curtesy, and demised by him to Master Stephen de Hepworth, from whom it acquired its name. On Thomas's death it descended to his son, Nicholas de Stanton, and it appears that he leased it for a year from Michaelmas, 1303, to one John Thorold,† who concurred in presenting Peter de Buttele to the living.

Afterwards Nicholas de Stanton died, and was succeeded by his son and heir, Edmund.

By a deed executed at Stanton, and dated on Friday in the festival of St. Lawrence, in the 49 Edward III. (1376), Edmund de Stanton granted his share of the lands of William de Hepworth and all his lands and tenements in Stanton, Halstede, and Maplestede, in Suffolk and Essex, and his share of the advowson of Hepworth to the first named Robert Ashfield, Margaret de Bedingfield,

* We should have been glad to have had the record of this action printed at length at the end of this article, but we are told that want of space forbids it.

† The Thorolds are mentioned in the Hundred Rolls for Hepworth, and also in the Subsidy Roll of 1283.

James de Bedingfield, William Jacot, capellanus, and John Julian, and their heirs for ever.

Afterwards Margaret Bedingfield died, and by a deed dated Monday post Hillary, 49 Edward III., Jany., 1377, James Bedingfield, William Jacot, and John Julian, released the said lands in Stanton, Hepworth, Walsham, Wykes, and Bardwell, acquired by them under the grant of the said Edmund de Stanton, unto the said Robert Ashfield in fee.

The last statement with regard to the Manor of North Hall showed how William de Neketon, on coming of age in 1307, did homage for it to Abbot Thomas. The pleadings delivered by Robert Ashfield state that on the death of William he was succeeded by his son and heir Giles, and he in his turn by another William. This latter statement seems to have been inserted by mistake, and should have been omitted; for as a matter of fact Giles had no son, and was succeeded by his daughter Margaret, who married John Crulle, whereas the pleadings make out that Margaret was his granddaughter.

Of the actual relationship of Margaret to Giles there can be no doubt, for it is vouched for by an inquisition post mortem held in the 37th year of Edward III., No. 53 (1363) in which the Jury find that Giles de Neketon held certain lands and tenements in Hepworth "*sibi et hereditibus suis de corpore suo procreatis*," which were conveyed to him by his father, William de Neketon, by a fine levied for that purpose in the King's Court, and Giles enfeoffed John de Tomeston, parson of Hepworth, John, parson of the church of Fornham St. Martin, and Alexander Godchild, of the said lands, and that Giles died Monday next after Michaelmas, 1361, and that Margaret, then aged eight years, was his daughter and heir, and that the King had the guardianship, because Giles died during the vacancy of the Abbey of St. Edmund's, caused by the death of William of Burnham, the last Abbot.

Margaret, the widow of Giles de Neketon, on Oct. 15th, 1363, had her dower set out. It consisted of the east chamber in the capital messuage, the Little Grange,

40 acres of land, 10 acres of wood, and six shillings and eight pence rent.

In 1364 the King* granted the custody of the lands and tenements in Hepworth, which had belonged to Giles de Neketon, to his valet, Helming Leyst, until the heir should come of age, and the King subsequently granted† to John Crulle, who had married Margaret, the daughter and heiress of Giles de Neketon, then deceased, the custody of her lands and tenements, with the appurtenances in Hepworth, at a yearly rent of 100 shillings.

From the Ashfield pleadings we find that John Crulle and his wife died, leaving issue an only daughter, Johanna, who married Nicholas Conyers.

By the verdict in the action of Ashfield *v.* Calthorp, it was found that Robert Ashfield ought to recover the presentation against the said William Calthorp and Sibella, and that he ought to have a writ addressed to the Bishop of Norwich, that "non obstante William Calthorp, &c.," and that a writ to the sheriff should issue to inquire whether the church was then filled up, and whether the time for presentation had lapsed since it became vacant, and how much it was worth per annum. In Davy's ms. it is added that the See of Norwich being then vacant by the death of Alexander, formerly Bishop there, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury had presented Thomas Watlington, clerk, to the said living of Hepworth.

This rector's name was omitted in the List of Rectors given in the eighth volume of the Society's Proceedings. The omission arises from the fact of his being presented by the Archbishop of Canterbury during a vacancy of the See of Norwich, and, therefore, no record of his presentation exists at Norwich.

It appears that in the year 1420, the living was again vacant by the death of Thomas Watlington and on this occasion an action was again commenced by Robert Ashfield as plaintiff claiming a right to present to the living against Nicholas Conyers and Johanna his wife, and

* Abbrev. Rotul. Originales, Vol. II., p. 275.

† Ibid, p. 287.

Walter Gerard, clerk, as defendants. The facts alleged by Robert Ashfield were similar to those stated by him in the former proceedings. The action was apparently tried at Ixworth, on 18th Oct., 1420, before twenty-four jurors, twelve being nominated by Ashfield and twelve by Conyers. Six clerks and six laymen were nominated on each side.

The Jurors on the part of Robert Ashfield were :—

Roger Lylie, Vicar of Sapiston.
 John Gidding, Rector of Langham.
 Richard Wilby, Rector of Honington.
 Robert Dancaster, Chaplain of Ashfield Magna.
 John Balhead, Chaplain of Walsham.
 John Edward, Chaplain of Ixworth.

Walter Louding, Stanton
 Thomas at Han, Stanton.
 Simon Cluf, Stanton.
 Bartholomew Wymboll, Langham.
 John Billu, Sapiston.
 John Lyster, Stanton.

Whilst those nominated by Nicholas Conyers and his wife were :—

Simon Sisterne, Rector of Ringshall.
 John Hawy, Rector of Conyweston.
 John Boull, Rector of Barnham St. Martin.
 John Carleford, Rector of Troston.
 Walter Shikere, Rector of Barnham St. Gregory.
 John Sowsye, Vicar of Bardwell.

John Smythe de Weston.
 Stephen Hows de Weston.
 John King de Weston.
 Nicholas Berard, Great Fakenham.
 Giles Gerard, Great Fakenham.
 Thomas Davy, Sapiston.

It does not appear what the result of this action was, except that Walter Gerard was presented to the living by Nicholas Conyers and Robert Ashfield, on Feb. 3rd, 1420.

The history of the manors of Hepworth has now been carried to about the year 1420. It is proposed that in a continuation of this article the descent of the various manors should be traced to the present time.



ORFORD.

ANNUAL EXCURSION, 1898.

STAVERTON, BUTLEY, ORFORD, AND CAMPSEY ASHE.

The Annual Excursion this year took place on June 23rd, and was favoured by beautifully fine weather, in striking and acceptable contrast to the excursion of the preceding year, which, as ill-luck would have it, fell on almost the only thoroughly wet day of an exceptionally dry year. The route on the present occasion, which was last traversed by the Society in 1872, lay through a part of Suffolk comparatively little known except to the dwellers in its vicinity, but possessing for the naturalist, the geologist, and the artist, an interest and beauty all its own, and for the archæologist, attractions of no mean order.

Woodbridge Station was the *rendezvous*, and there a party of ladies and gentlemen, numbering over 50, including many of the familiar faces seldom missed from this annual excursion, took their seats in well appointed brakes. Leaving behind the narrow streets of Woodbridge, the village of Melton was speedily reached, where the remains of the old gaol, now converted into a malting, but which was formerly the House of Correction for the Liberty of St. Etheldreda, and was so used until 1588, was pointed out. The story of this "Liberty" carrying us back to the seventh century, when St. Etheldreda fled from her father's house at Kingston, near Woodbridge, and founded the Abbey in the Isle of Ely, is too long to be told here, but it may be noted that the advowson of Melton, and the manors of Melton and Kingston are still vested in the Dean and Chapter of Ely. Leaving Melton, and crossing the river Deben at Wilford Bridge, the spot at which the Moot or District Council of the Wilford Hundred met in Saxon days was to be seen on the right. The most conspicuous hill is still called "Gallows' Hill," having been the place of execution for capital offences within the Hundred. From that point the road gradually rises out of the Deben valley until the sand-lands are reached. Then come to view the wide stretches of heath land, broken only by the belts of dark fir, passing at one point a row of ancient thorn trees, which, perhaps, were old when the Priors of Butley rode to and fro on their "ambling naggcs."

And here, at the confines of the parishes of Eyke, Wantisden, and Butley, an unexpected treat was in store. Instead of keeping to the road it was suggested that the party should walk through the ancient manorial park of Staverton, rejoining the carriages later on. The members, guided by Mr. Thistleton Smith, visited the park, and were amply repaid for the exertion. Few, probably, are aware of the existence of this lovely spot. Grand old oaks, many of them centuries old, abound, most of them surrounded by holly trees of great age, grouped about in a most curious fashion. In some spots of the park tree grows within tree, beech upon oak. Beautiful green glades run through the wood, carpeted with sward and heather, and bordered by a profusion of bracken. There are now about 200 acres of the park, anciently it was more extensive. A Manor House stood upon its confines centuries ago. It may be noted that the name is always locally pronounced "Stävenger."

Leaving Staverton, Butley Priory was soon reached, a little known building of great interest, possessing some almost unique features. Nearly all the buildings of this once flourishing Abbey have disappeared—pulled down to furnish material for the farm steading which occupies their site; but the Gatehouse, commonly called the Priory, now converted into a residence for the Vicar of the parish, remains to testify to their former magnificence. Its plan is that of a wide and lofty carriage way, with a narrow foot-way by its side, both arched with vaulted ceilings, running through the building, with curious recesses on either side, formerly affording shelter for those waiting admission, porters' rooms on the right and left, and larger rooms above. Over the great archway is a remarkable series of 35 shields carved in stone, now, alas! becoming sadly weather-worn, but there may yet be identified the arms of noted Suffolk families, and benefactors of the Monastery.

Beautiful flint tracery of the Perpendicular period adorns the rest of the façade, while in the surmounting gable is a triple window of elegant design. Anciently, as old prints show, two towers flanked the façade on either side, but these have been taken down level with the roof. On the opposite or south face of the building, besides the perpendicular flint panelling there is a curious circular design like the tracery of a "Rose" window. It is said that its diameter was that of the great bell of the Abbey, which was sold to Hadleigh, and there re-cast into two bells.

In one of the rooms formed by the blocking up of the great archway, with its lofty and graceful vaulted ceiling, the party were courteously welcomed by the vicar, the Rev. C. T. Eland, and disposed themselves to listen to the paper by Mr. V. B. Redstone on Staverton and Butley Priory. When this was finished opportunity was granted for an inspection of other rooms, in one of which is an elaborately sculptured sedilium canopy of the late Decorated period, removed from the Abbey church and now forming a fire-place. A glance at the two rectangular fish ponds near by, at the mouldering wall and window

which alone remain of the Abbey buildings, and at the stone coffin dug up in their vicinity many years since, and then the party again took their seats for the drive to Orford.

Time could not be spared for the inspection of Butley church, with its Norman doorway; nor Chillesford, with its early font and piscine; nor Sudbourne, also with Norman doorway and traces of early workmanship; but by permission of Arthur Wood, Esq., the party were driven through the extensive and beautiful grounds of Sudbourne Hall, passing near the famous crag pits, from which many fossils of great interest to the geological world have been extracted. Arriving at Orford the archæological instincts of the party for a time gave way to cravings of a more material character, and the excellent luncheon provided by Host Hunt of the "Crown and Castle" Hotel, was done full justice to by the whole party, under the presidency of the Rev. E. M. Scott, rector of Orford. Luncheon over, Mr. Redstone read a paper upon the "History of the Sand District of Suffolk," in which he gave members the benefit of his researches among the hitherto unnoticed Rolls of the Manor of Sutton Hall, which yielded the usual crop of curious and interesting entries. At the conclusion of his paper he moved a very hearty vote of thanks to the Rev. Francis Haslewood, F.S.A., who, greatly to the regret of all members of the Society, has resigned the post of Honorary Secretary, which he has held for the past ten years. Mr. Redstone paid a high and merited tribute to the energy, ability, and courtesy, with which Mr. Haslewood had always carried out his duties; and Mr. Henry Miller, in seconding the motion, endorsed the preceding speaker's remarks, adding, however, that members would feel some compensation for the loss they had sustained, in knowing that the mantle was about to fall upon the shoulders of a gentleman who had shown, by the way he had organized the excursion of that day, that he was eminently qualified to fill the duties of the office. The Chairman having acknowledged the remarks which had been made about himself. Mr. Haslewood, who was warmly received, in thanking the company for the vote of thanks which had been so cordially passed, remarked that it was a pleasure and satisfaction to him, in resigning office, to know that it was to be undertaken by one so qualified to carry out the duties. He (the rev. gentleman) would, of course, be glad at all times to render all the assistance he could to his successor, and he hoped that the members generally would continue to give the Institution the benefit of their active co-operation, so that the good work in which it had been so long engaged might continue. The work of demolition of buildings of great antiquarian value had been arrested, and objects of historical interest had been preserved through the operations of that organisation, which, he might add, had been of the greatest use as a recognised Society in connection with all matters of archæological interest.

Orford Castle was next visited, standing on its green mound, overlooking the ancient borough, the river Ore flowing along its strange course of 10 miles parallel to the shore, and the blue expanse of ocean

beyond the half mile of shingle which alone separates sea and river. Members found much of interest to note in the curious plan of the keep, the very unusual mouldings of some of the Norman capitals, the curious little Chapel in the annexe, with its remains of stone altar, piscina and aumbry, the passages winding through the thick walls, and other features, which were pointed out by Mr. John Arnott, who also gave a brief resumé of the history of the Castle. There was no time to enter upon the history of the town itself, formerly a borough of no little importance, enjoying a large share of that trade with the continent which in mediæval times made the shipping towns of East Anglia so prosperous, returning two members to Parliament until 1832, and enjoying the privileges of a Municipal Borough until 1886. Once the town surrounded the Castle on all sides, and there were at least three churches. Now, one street with a few off-shoots winds down to the almost deserted quay, its market has long been discontinued, its municipal insignia (including a mace of fine workmanship) removed, and its ruined Town Hall sold.

The fine church of St. Bartholomew was next inspected, and its features pointed out by the Rector. Great interest was attached to the ruined Norman chancel, which it was explained was probably the nave of an earlier church. The fine south porch and west door were also examined.

After the inspection of the church was finished, members and friends were kindly entertained by the Rector and Mrs. Scott, on the rectory lawn, where a photograph of the group was taken by Mr. Wm. Vick, whose camera had been very busy during the day recording the various places of interest visited. Very shortly afterwards the waggonettes were *en route* for Campsey Ashe High House, the Hon. Wm. Lowther having kindly given permission to members to visit the famous gardens. Under the guidance of Mr. Andrews, the head gardener, as much of the charming grounds were covered as time would permit,—the wonderful cedars, one 110 ft. high; the far reaching avenues of lime, chestnut, and beech; the almost unique bowling green, with its fence of yews clipped into weird fantastic forms; the fine terrace gardens, and other striking features exciting the admiration of all present. This proved a fitting termination to a most enjoyable and interesting series of visits, which will rank among the most successful outings of the Society in recent years.