



AN ANCIENT DEED BOX.

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A few months ago a small ancient deed box was discovered by Mrs. Holt Wilson, of Redgrave Hall, connected with the muniment room of that house. It is apparently hewn out of the branch of a tree, is 6 inches in diameter and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches high. The top or lid is flat, and not connected with the box save being held to it by two leather thongs, which passing above the lid are placed through two small holes in the side, where the thongs can be tied. On the lid of this little receptacle for title deeds there is in lettering now rather indistinct, "XXIIII peac for Bullym, Whenm-et Gipswyche," that is "Bulmer, Wenham and Ipswich."

As all the documents connected with various estates held by the Bacons of Redgrave recently passed through my hands, and as I have made a complete list of the 1,500 charters relating to the same, I am well assured that this little box with its contents came into possession of its present owner through the Bacon channel, and that the said contents are part of the title deeds of some small properties purchased about 1300 by Robert de Reymes of Wherstead. Unfortunately, the bulk of the twenty-four documents once kept carefully in the box have become mixed with other charters, and only six of them were within when brought to me.

I give here a brief outline of each of these charters, which will show that the description on the lid of the

box gives an idea of whereabouts was situated the lands of which the deeds constitute the title.

1. No date, therefore certainly 13th century, and from the style of writing and ink used, might be as early as King John, c. 1208. A grant by "Wills Goub de Binesle" (a hamlet of Bolemere or Bulmer in Essex) to Reginald de Binesle of $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land in the parish of "bolemere." Then follows a description of the same with a list of witnesses, all of which names are unknown to me, and this again suggests an early date.

2. No date. A grant by Legard de Binesle to Reginald de Binesle, "in totu mariscu qd vocat Bromheling in Boleme." There is a further description of the marsh, which is situated, I think, by the banks of the river Stour, adjoining the marshes of several other people. This is of similar date to No. 1, as the name of "Will. de ponte" occurs as a witness to both.

3. Dated "apud Wauchm die Mercur post festu. Sce Scolastice Virginis Anno Regn. Reg. Edwardi fil Henrici nono (1280)." It is a grant by "Ricardus de Cant (?Gant, but it looks C on the seal) de lamburne et Roesia de Beweys uxor mea" to "Johi Dew de lamburne et heredibus suis et assignatis, etc." of "una pecia tre mee qm hab in villa de Boleme q vocat Gouibescroft." It lies in the hamlet of Binesle. Then follows the list of witnesses of whom the chief was "henrico fil Aucher milite."

4. This is in no way connected with the Essex property, and is previous to dates, and from the various names included, I should put it down as early in the reign of Henry III., that is about 1220-30. It consists of four charters in Norman French on one sheet of parchment.

(1). Relates to land in Bergholt granted by Robert de bolevile to Sir John de Hutebovile and Isabella his wife.

(2). Relates to land in Bergholt, granted by Augnes sometime wife of Robert de Munehedon to John de Hutebovile and Isabelle his wife.

(3). Relates to lands, etc., in Munehedon, granted by Henry de Munehedon to Sir John de hutebovile "ou Isabelle ma sor, en franc mariage Willelme le fiz Regille monesaym."

(4). Relates to land in Otley (Otelehe) granted by Augnes de Gretingham to John de hutebovile and Isabelle "ma filie et hir heysr."

5. Dated in the twenty-first year of "Édward fil Reg Henr" (1293). It is a grant of two acres of land in Wenham parva by "Ricardus de Gant (? Cant) de Villa Aldebge" to "John filio George' Lenuieyse de Wenham Parva et Isabelle uxi sue." Then follows a description of the land, which shows that it adjoined the property of Gervase de Vaux at Wenham. In testimony of the grant the said Richard placed his seal, and this is followed by the names of several witnesses, of whom four are knights, Ralph de Sancto Mauro, Thomas Charles, John de Holebrok, and Robert Cokerel.

6. Outside this deed is "Carta Robti de Reymes." It was dated "apud Wenham Combusta sexto die Julii Anno Reg Regis Edvardi vicesimo nono (1299). It is a grant by "Gervase de Vallibus (Vaux) et Roesia uxor mea" to "Robti de Reymes," "totum terram et tenementu cum pert^{is} in villa de Wenhm Combusta." Then follows the list of witnesses of whom two are knights. Robert de Reydon and Alan de Goldingham

I will only add further that from a perusal of my list of charters, both the families of Reymes and Reydon were collecting small properties in Wherstead, Reydon, and around Ipswich in the 13th and early 14th centuries which before 1400 had passed into the hands of Sir Andrew de Bures of Acton, which later on nearly all became Butts property. The heiress of this latter family, Anne the daughter, and heiress of Edmund Butts, described on the monument at Redgrave as "half Butts and half Bures" married Sir Nicholas Bacon 1st Baronet, and thus this little deed box has been resting in the Redgrave monument room since about 1600. The extraordinary portion of its history is, its continuous changes of owners during the first three hundred years or so, of its existence. I must express my deep gratitude to Mrs. Holt Wilson, for having brought it to my notice. I hope it may find a final home in the Ipswich Museum.

E. FARRER.