

SUFFOLK COURTS IN ENGLISH.

BY

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The following account of an exceptionally interesting court-book is here published as a memorial, however slight, of its recent owner, the late Mrs. Beatrice M. Andrews, of Bury St. Edmunds, whose life-long interest in everything which concerns the history of Suffolk is well-known to members of the Institute.

The book in question came to Mrs. Andrews with the collections of her father, Mr. Henry Prigg (Trigg), of Babwell Friary. It has just been acquired by the British Museum, in order that it may be re-united with a smaller fragment of the same record (Additional MS. 38795 G), which was already among the manuscripts there, having been purchased from Mr. Folger in 1913.

The chief interest in the book is its language, for the normal language of the manor court was Latin, and the only English records of these courts are those kept during the Commonwealth period. The courts in this book were probably kept in Latin, and the book is obviously a translation from the original and made at some time during the 16th century. Add. MS. 38795 G throws some light upon the date of the translation, for upon f. 86b there is scribbled in a hand contemporary with the book itself: "Anthonye Bull est verus huius libri possessor" (Anthony Bull is the true owner of this book), together with other notes, such as "midsomr is the feast of the nativitee of Saint John Baptyst."

The larger fragment of the book begins with a court held 29 October, 1399, for Glevering in Hacheston, a manor held by the Abbots of Leiston; and the names of several of the Abbots appear as lords. The smaller fragment (Add. 38795 G) begins with a court held on "the feast of the Holy crose Holi Rod" 17 Hen. VIII. (probably Holy Rood Day, 14 September, 1525), and carries on the Englished courts after the dissolution of the Abbey, having the first court of Thomas Seckford, Esq., the younger in April 1560, and the first court of John Bull of "Broodshewe Hall," Sproughton, 9 October, 1562. The next court (for 1566) is in Latin and so are those that follow down to 1578. Then follow a number of miscellaneous English entries relating to Sproughton and Hacheston.

The book is obviously connected with John Bull and his son Anthony, and must have been made by or for them. John Bull, who was of Sproughton in 1562, removed thence to Glevering before his death in 1574¹. He had numerous manors and lands in East Suffolk, in Ipswich, Bramford, Sproughton, Hintlesham, Washbrooke, Stoke by Ipswich, Burstall, Campsea, Earls Dallingho, Boulge, Ramsholt, Groton, Dunwich, Westleton and Flowton. His son Anthony was of Lincoln's Inn in 1583², and of Sproughton in 1595³, and it seems very probable that the translation of the court-book for Glevering manor was part of his legal training. It is the exact wording of the translation which has special interest, especially for those who recognise the Suffolk phraseology of the translator, e.g., in the use of "come" for "comes" or "cometh." The entries which follow represent practically everything of any special interest in the book.

¹ P.C.C. Will, 37 Martin.

² Chan. Proc. Eliz. I, 4/6.

³ Ibid. B, 19/12.

p. 1
Glauerynge.

The Generall Court ther houlden the Wensdaye next after the Feast of thapostells Symon & Jude In the fyrst yere of the Raygne of Henrye the iiijth after the Conquest. [i.e., 29 October, 1399].

Essoin.

Wyllyam Masson of Comon by Adam Gren'.

Inquisic'.

Inquysicion of Offyce ys taken by Robert Christyan Adam de Gren' and others Sworne.

m. vjd.

^{iijd.} D'Geffry petystre and Rychard Brundysse for yt they ded not warrant ther Essoin at the last Curt. ^{iijd.}

election;

The homag' doth chosse Adam dil Grene to supplye thoffyce of Collector for the Tenement Katelis on' parte for Brokdyshe and ys sworne.

(below betson)1.

Wylliam Blackson com her in the Court and doth to the lorde fealty for on' pece of lond fre in Hacheston which to him dyde descend in h² Ryght of heritage after the deathe of Margery Blackson his mother which held of the lord by the service of xijd. Rent by yere etc. And the forsaid Wylliam geue to the lorde the relyff.

Reliff xijd.

mercym't. xiiij.

^{iijd.} John Skynner, Malyne de Eston, Annys ^{ijd.} Wyffe of John Chapman, Robert Mannyng held of the Ten[emen]t Thomas Cauel[es] by fealt[y] and sut to Curt.

m. vjd.

^{iijd.} John of Brooke and John Houne for the same. ^{iiij.}

1 Marginal note.

2 Struck through.

prec.

It ys comaunded to exequat all the preceptes of the Curt presedent not yet executed.

other

And yt is comaunded to sease into the lords hand certaine lond of fee of on[e] Moun[er] which the pryorye of Campessey purchased without lycence, etc.

Summa iijs. jd.

The courts are recorded by the same hand, and in a similar manner throughout the next 49 pages. The business is that usually occurring in the court baron of a small manor. The following are extracts which are of interest either because of their language or their content:—

p. 2.

[Thurs. SS. Simon & Jude, 2 Hen. IV, i.e. 28 October, 1400].

pouner
loke for
harvy in ye
slayttes.

Item the Jury present yt Henrye pontre dyed and held of the lord as of fee of Brookdysshe one Tenement sumtyme John Bulles in Hacheston by fealtye and by service of vd. rent per annum. The which sayd Henrye long before his Deathe therof feoffed Rychard vycare of the T¹ Church of Wyckham and the¹ Edmond Spycer. Therefore yt ys comaunded them to distraine for the fealtye and to showe howe they be entred in the fee of the lord.

p[receptum]
alit[er]

Eleccyon

Item they do chosse Margerye Maggisson to supply the offyce of collector for this yeare for the Tenement Swonyldes.

p. 3.

As yt ys otherwys comaunded to sease into the hands of the lord certaine lands which the Prorye of Campssey purchased

¹ Struck through.

p[re]c[ep]ta]

of the fee of this manner wythout lycence, etc.

And yt ys comaunded to execute all the presep[te]s of the Curt presedent not yt executed.

Newe rent
vjd.

fyne ij[d].

The lord graunteth to John Brond on' pece of lond cont' iij Roodes nyne perches abbutting vppon the lond somtyme Wyllyam Erle toward the south wyth thapperteynaunces in Hachaston to hould to him and his heyres by service of vjd. Rent per annum to be payde at the termes vsuall and on advencyon at the Curt next after the feast of Saint Michaell for all services and geue to the lord for fyne, etc.

p. 3.

[General Court, Sat. after St. Andrew Ap. 3 Hen. IV, i.e., 3 December, 1401].

p. 4.

lyuerye

p[re]cept'
alit[er]

The Jury present that Thomas Judye dyed seassed of one pece of lond of the lords demean' of Newe Edyffied wth thapperteynaunces in Hacheston next Bertl[a]ughton² which he late toke vpp of the lord to him and his heyres of his ensewed by service of xijd. Rent per Annum and on[e] Advencyon at the Curt next after the feast of Saint Michell for all service and that Rychard Judye son of the said Thomas ys therof next heyre and of full age which came not Therefore yt is comaunded to sease, etc.

p. 5.

[General Court Tues. after the Invention of "Holye Rode" 4 Hen. IV, i.e., 8 May, 1403].

² Elsewhere, e.g., p. 8, "Berteslangthorne."

M. q. by the
Steward.

Wylliam Blayson who came not to warrant his Essoin at the last Curt, etc.

The lord graunt and to fyrm demys to John Copping and Thomas his son ye mell called the Fulling Mell at Glauer- yng To hould to them and to hir assignes (the terme of)³ at fyve yeres the terme begining at the feast of St. Michell last past rendring therof to the lord per annum xxxiijs. iiijd. at the feast of Easter and saint Michell tharchangell by equall porcyons. And the lord shall fynd to the forsaid John and Thomas fulling¹ Claye Earthe and bord for the said myll to repare wch shalbe necessarye w'thin the said terme/And the forsaid John and Thomas to do reparacyons of all things nedying reparacyons vpon the said myll w'hin his terme at his proper Costes yt is of the valore of xijd. and lesse and yt be more then xijd. yt then the reparacion to be done ad[sic] the Costes of the lord.

p. 6. [General Court, Mon. after St. Faith, V, 6 Hen. IV, i.e., 13 October, 1404].

The Jury as above present yt Margery Maggesson out of the Curt surrendred into the hand of Robert Christyan Copey houlder in the presence of Wylliam Masson and other of homage accordyng to the Custome of the Manner one Rood of lond cople of the Tenement lanas of the fee of Brookdyshe w'h thapper- teynaunces in Hacheston to the vse of Robert Dassa and of his heyres To whom

³ Altered from "sins."

¹ Struck through.

fin[e] iiijd.

ys delivered therof Seson To hould to thym and to ther heyres at the wyll of the lord by service and coustome Saving the Right, etc., and geue to the lord for fyne, etc.

Elect[ion]

Item they chosse the Tenement Royes wch ys in the lords hand to supplye the offyce of Collect^r thes yeare.

p. 7.

precepte

It ys otherwys comaunded to dystraine John Skymere for the Rent of ob. per Annum ye yssev of iij. Roods and half of lond fre somtyme Henrye Sexten beying behind by diverse yeares past, etc. And for doying fealtye.

[General Court Frid. bef. St. Margaret V, 7 Hen. IV, i.e., 9 July, 1406].

precept

The Jurye present yt John Brond have ared¹ upp one Rod at Wrytescrofte betwene the fee of thabbot of leyston and the fee of Thomas Charles in Hacheston and yt is Comaunded to emend on this syde the next Curt vnder the payne of half to be americyed, etc.

Election

Item they chosse the Tenement Canons wch is in the lords hand to supplye the Collectors offyce this yeare.

[General Court Frid. bef. St. Margaret V. 7 Hen. IV, i.e., 9 July 1406].

fealty

And John leving Com here into the Curt and doth to the lord fealtye for one pece of fre land which he claymethe to hould of the lord by the servyce of iiijd: Rent per Annum.

¹ i.e., ploughed.

p. 9.

[Court, Tues. after Translation of St. Thomas M. 13 Hen. IV, i.e., 5 July, 1412].

Fealtye

Roger Bettysson Come here into the Curt and doth to the lord fealty for one pece of fre lond in Hacheston which purchased of Wylliam Blacksson frelye by deed and yet ys houlden of the lord by service of xijd. rent per annum, etc.

p. 10.

Election

The homage do chose John Bysshop to supplye the Collectors Offyce this yeaere for the Tenement somtyme Robert Christiane on the part of Brundysshe.

p. 12.

[Court Wed. after "St. Lucke the Evangilist," 5 Hen. V, i.e., 20 Oct., 1417].

M. iijs. iiijd.

precept.

The Jury present yt Gregory Judye have occupied one pece of lond of the lords Demeane by xij yeres past on the Demyse of Rychard Judye wythout the lycence of the Curt therfor he ys amerced etc. And js comaunded to sease into the lords hands.

precept

It ys comaunded to dystraine the Tenaunt of the londes somtyme John lanas to shewe to the lord by what meane he ys entred into the fee of the lord on this side the next Curt, etc.

[Wed. after the Annunciation 2 Hen. VI, i.e., 29 March, 1424].

fee fyrm
iiijd.

The lord graunteth to Roger betysson iiij. Rood of lond of the lords Demeane abutting vppon allmans Waye wth thappurtenaunces in Hacheston to hould to the same Roger and to his heyres at the wyll of the lord rendring therfore to

fyne xijd.

the lord per annum iiijd. at the Termes vsuall and geue to the lord for fyne, etc.

p. 13.

Item [the Jurye present] that John Brooke, of Eston dyed seased of one medowe voc' Pyesfen wth thappurteynaunces in Eston which was houlden of the lord by the service of xvjd. rent per annum and that John his son ys his next heyres and of full age which geue¹ to the lord for Releff as on the hed appereth and doth to the lord Faltye, etc.

Relyff

fealtye

p. 21.

[Court General Tues. bet. St. Augustine the Bishop, 9 Hen. VI, i.e., 20 February, 1431].

m. xijd.

Wylliam Masson bycause he ded not supplye his office to gather the Rent the last yere as he was chossen by the homage therfore, etc.

p. 22

Glavering

Court Generall ther houlden the Thursday next after the Feast of Saint Michell Tharchaungell In the xj. yere of the Raigne of King Henrye the Syxt after the conquest of Inglond the xj. [i.e., 2 Oct., 1432].

Inequest of offyce taken by the Othe of John Falle Wylliam Masson Jury/ And by fedelity of Roger Betisson John Petistre John Howne and John Warden and other, etc.

The Jurye present that John Hacon which late dyed before his decesse beyng of perfytt and good remembraunce without the Curt surrendred into the hand of the lord by the hand of John

¹ Altered from "geuen."

p. 23.

fine ijs.

fealtye

Osburne copyehoulder in the presence of John Brond the yonger and other of homage according to the Custome of the Mannor fyve peces of lond called Brookes and half an Akre of lond of the Demeanes of the lord lying in Erles close abutting vpon the Common next ketlesse Crooff toward the North wth thappurteynaunces in Hacheston The wch said peces of lond wyth the foresaid half akre of lond of the Demeanes The same John late tooke of the graunt of the lord to him and to his heyres by fee firme of ijs Rent per annum as yt appereth in the Court here houlden the Wensdaye next after the Annuncyacion of Blessed Marye In the second yeaere of this king. As the lorde therof shall do his plesure And the lord so therof havying season of his speciall grace have graunted the forsaid peces of land with the forsaid half akre of the Demeans of the lord wth thappurtenaunces to Annys which was the wiffe of the forsaid John Hacoun To hould to the same Annys and to her Attornyes for terme of her lyffe rendring therefore to the lord per annum the olde ferme abouesaid and one Sute to the Court at the Feast of St. Michaell, etc. So that after the decesse of the said Annys the forsaid peces of lond wth thappurteynaunces and the forsaid half akre of lond of the lords demeanes, the remayndre therof To Thomas Hacoun son of the forsaid John and Anys. To hould to him and his heyres by service above said, etc. And the forsaid Anys

being present geue to the lord for fyne, etc., and geue to the lord fealtye.

p. 24.

precept
al'

It ys comaunded to Distraine the Prior' of Campsse yt he be here at the next Curt to shewe howe he is entred into one Rood of medowe somtyme Walter Brond' of ye lordes fe and by what tytle he houldethe and for doing fealty to ye lord, etc.

p. 25.

[Court, Tues. bef. St. Dunstan, 11 Hen. VI., i.e., 12 May, 1433].

It ys comaunded to dystraine my lady Anne Corbet ye Pryor[es]¹ of Campseye for one pece of Medowe lying in ye Redmedowe and for one pece of freland called the Slade lying in Hacheston somtyme called John of Kettleberghe and after the lord Robert of Uffurd Earle of Suff' which ys houlden of the lord by seruice Rendryng one payer of Gloves per annum and on' farthing at Ward/ And yt he² be here at the next Court to shew howe and by what Tytle yt ys houlden.

precept al'

p. 30.

[Mon. after the Annunciation, 13 Hen. VI., i.e. 28 March, 1435].

Also they saye that Richard Judye haue not repared his wast don' in his Tenement accordyng to the daye Therefore he ys amerced and ys comaunded to emende yt on' this side the next court vnder the penaltye of xls.

M. vjd.

precept

Afferators John Fall'
John Osburne.

¹ Altered later from 'Pryor.'

² Sic.

p. 30. [Court General Tues. after the Invention of Holy Rood, 15 Hen. VI, i.e., 7 May, 1437].

Inquest of Offyce. John Prill' { Jury John Howne } by
 John Fall' { John Osburne } fide-
 Thomas { Thomas } lity
 Seman { Gooche }

Which doth saye

p. 31. And that Wylliam Masson which late Dyed before hes dethe out of the Court surrendered into the lordes hande by the hand of John Ossborne copyehouder in the presence of John Brond and other of homage according to the Custome of the mannore one pece of lond conteyning by estymacion on' akre lying in his closse one thesst and southe, whos est head abbuttethe vppon Ketlesse waye wth thappurteynaunces to the vse of Wylliam Chapleyne To whom is delivered therof Season/ To hould to him and his heyres by the Rod at the wyll of the lord by doing both service and coustom' etc. Saving the Right, etc. And geue to the lord for fine.

Fine viijd.

p. 31. When at the last Court and at diverse Courtes precedent Richard Judy was Comaunded to repare of his copyehould Tenement next Betyssons in Hacheston on this syde the next Court Nowe at this Court the Jurye doth saye yt the said Wast ys not repared/ And more over they saye that Steaphan Staine vycare of the Church of Hacheston late the fyrmer of the said Richard vt [*sic*] as of the said Tenement allmanner of trees

p. 32.

precept and Tymber vppon ye said Tenement growing to Cut downe and cary awaye to ye valewe by estymacion xxs. and not anie other reparacions of the said Tenement.

Therefore It is Comaunded to seasse the said Tenement into the lords handes and to receyve for the yssewe.

p. 32. [Court general Tues. after St. Faith 19 Hen. VI., i.e., 11 October, 1440].

M. iiijd. The ple[dge] of John Caldewell bycause have not to Aunsweere to John Fall in a ple of debte.

p. 33. John Trowe alias Ward roper com[e] her[e] into the Court and doth to the lord fealtye for dyverse londes and Tenements with thappurteynaunces in Hacheston which he claimeth to hold by the Rod at the wyll of the lord in the Right of Elizabeth his wiffe.

Fealty

p. 34. Thomas Eston com[e] her[e] into the Court and acknowledges himself to owe to the lord iiijd. Rent per annum for on' Pitell called Balliaspytle in Eston and Hacheston for by cause the same Thomas before this tyme have for houlden the said Rent and refused to paye yt by many yeren past, etc., and moreover in the full Curt have paid to the lord the said Rente in full possession and put him self the lordes favor for the arrerages of the forsaid Rent so being behind/ And vppon thes the lord of his speciall grace doth pardonne thererages aforsaid /And have graunted the same Thomas

the resydewe to him and his heyres the same yerly Rent to be well and faythfully pd. to the lord as his successors or Antecessors of ould tyme wer accustomed to paye as apper by the lordes Evidences, etc.

p. 36. [Court general Thurs. after St. Michael Arch. 24 Hen. VI., i.e., 30 September, 1445].

The Jury above present that John Redbard which late dyed before his death out of the Court surrendred into the lordes hand of Walter Fulburne Steward of the lord in the presence of the homage according to the Custom of the Mann[er] one pece of medowe of the lordes demens cont' by estymacion on' akre xij. perches wyth thappurteynaunces in Wyckeham houlden of the lord by fee of fyrme of ijs. viijd. per annum and sut to Court houlden next after the feast of St. Michaell tharchaungell/ as the lord therof shall doo his pleassure. And the lord so therof having Seasson of his speciall grace graunted the forsaid medowe wth thappurteynaunces to Isabell the wiffe of the forsaid John and to the foresaid Walter Fulburne To hould to ther heyres and assignes by the Rod¹ fee firm and seut aforsaid, etc. Saving the Right, etc., and geue to the lord for fine, and do to the lord fealty.

firm ijs.
[viijd.]

p. 37. The lord graunteth out of his hands to Walter Fuburne and Katherine his wyffe on' Medowe inclosed voc' fullers-

¹ Struck through.

medowe cont' by estymac[ion] on' akre
 lying betwen' the Pasture of Thomas
 Puntre and the Ryuer Runnyng to ward
 Glauring wth thappurteynaunces in
 Hacheston To hould to the same Walter
 and Katherin and to ther assignes for
 terme of ther lyffe Rendring therfor
 to the lord per annum vjs. viijd. at the
 Terms vsuall in etc., and geue to the
 lord for fine.

firme vjs.
 viijd.

fine iijs. iiijd.

p. 40.

Glauring

The fyrste Court of the lord John
 Sprotling Abbute of leyston lord: ther
 houlden the Thursdaye next after the
 feast of Saint Margaret the Virgin;
 In the fyrst yeare of king Edward the
 fourth after the Conquest [i.e., 16 July,
 1461].

p. 42.

[next court]

The fyrste Court of Richard Dunmowe
 Abbut of leyston lord ther houlden the
 Tewessdaye In the fyrst weke of lent
 and In the nyntyne yeare of the kyng
 aforsaid, etc. [i.e., 21 Feb., 1480].