

ROSE HALL, BECCLES.

THE Lordship or Manor of Roos Hall, appears to have taken its name from a family of de Roos, who were Lords of Roos Hall in the reign of Henry III, or in the beginning of the 13th century. "They were not only very ancient," says Sir Richard Gipps, "but also very great, as appears "from their several inter-marriages with the best families "in the county." William de Roos was at the siege of Karlaverock, in Scotland, in 1300, and gained his spurs by his great valour there.

In 1321, Sir Robert de Roos, who probably resided at Roos Hall, was one of the founders of the Carmelite Friary at Blakeney, in Norfolk. By the marriage of Joan, daughter and heiress of Sir William de Roos, to Sir Roger de Willington, Roos Hall passed, says Suckling, in 1427, to the Willingtons, a family long seated in the neighbouring parish of Barsham. From the Willingtons, who do not seem to have lived at the Hall, the manor passed by sale to the Garneys, of Redisham. The exact date of this transaction is not known; but it must have been soon after the purchase by the Willingtons, for in the Close Rolls, at the Tower of London, is preserved a letter from Piers or Peter Garneys, to one of his "Feoffees in Trust," dated in the 27th year of Henry VI, *i.e.* within twenty years of the alleged passage of the manor from the Roos family to the Willingtons. Of this letter I have been favoured with a copy, transcribed from the Davy MSS. in the British Museum,* by Mr. S. Wilton Rix, editor of the *Diary and Autobiography of Edmund Bohun*. It gives us an insight into the turbulent and contentious spirit of those unsettled times, and the piteous state of mind of the writer, and has never been published.

* Add. MS. 19,112, Wangford Hundred, Vol. ii, No. 98, p. 20.

Syr—It is meritory to reforme that wrong is into right, in all that might grow to wrongful disheritauns or other. Wherefore be it p'fytely knowe and goodly considered, alle rev'ens and hono' of God, to alle that these l'res shal here or se, that where as I, Piers Garneys, of Becclis, Esquier, and late S'rvitor of oure Sov'aigne Lord Kyng Henry the Vte that ded is, whom God of his m'cy assoyle, was pesibeley sesed, and my fader before me, of a maner cleped Jeraldys, in Becclis, other wyse called Rose's maner, with an hyl lyeing by cleped Jeraldys hyl, and a litel pasture annexed thereto, adjoyning and app'tent to the seide maner, of which hyl and pasture, I, the seide Piers, my father, and alle other whos estat I have in the seide maner, have be pesibely sesed of the forseide hyl and pasture as p'cel of the forseide man'r wythoute the tyme of mynde, and all the p'fite thereoffe be all the seide tyme wyth oute desturbaunce have take. In which seide man' I enfeoffed my rev'end lord of Suff., Sir John Hevenyngham, and other, on trust to p'forme my wyl. And now of late tyme, sethe the seide feffement made, certain p'sons of Becclis not my welwyllers, of malice confereed mee of the same town to hem, and in myn absence, in riotous wyse, cam to the seide hyl, and certain brom and brakes there grouying have and kyt up, and bare it away, seyng there opynly, wyth gret cry and clamor, this is oure comown: Whereupon I toke an oyer & det'myner agenst them, as my lerned counsel gaf me. And whanne thei coude not justifie this here dede and ryot, thanne thei voyced that it was the p'per and sev'al ground to the hous of Bury, as app'tenant to here lordship of Becclis, and to fortifye this thei informed dann William Dalvington, monk of the seide hous of Bury, late Chamberer of the seide hous, and now abbot of the same hous, to which office of chaumberer the seide town and lordship of Becclis is assigned, that this seide hyl called Jeraldys hyl, with the seide pasture annex'd, and lying betwix the same hyl and the gate of my seide maner was app'tenant to his saide maner and lordship of Becclis, which were unlike to any resonable mannes discrecyon, and to this thei required & lab'ed to hym to sue for it as fo' the seide hous right, and to here discharge, and excuse of here seide ryot and wrong, be whose lab' informacon and mesne the seide Dann William Dalvington, wyth the supportacon of myghti lordship, toke an ansire agenst me, and had a panel and the contre redy for the seide hous, er I had wetyng theroffe, so that I sey at the day of thasseres that I was like to have be disherited, and myn heires, I thanne stondyng in gret age and febilnesse of spyryt, takyng gret hevynesse, sorowe, and no counsel coude get there ayenst the seid hous, at that tyme semyng to me better to trete thanne to se that puerie* passe. And so I offered tretees in such wyse that oure titles myght be examined be oure colkers † councel lerned, and therupon suerte made to abyde the awarde of the Abbot of Bury. So that I shulde have be warned to have had my lerned councel to have declared my titel and right to the seide abbot. And therupon I cam to Bury to have had a day assigned to have had my lerned councel to have enformed the seide abbot

* ? Perjurie.

† (Sic.) Can this be *Colloquers* (see

Nares and Halliwell v. *Colloque*), in the sense of arbitrators.

of my titel and right, of which I coude gete of him no longer day, but at that same tyme. And so, I havynge no counceyl there, but such as were toward the hous, thei theted me pleyntly that thei shulde doo me lose a *Ch.* in damag and expens. Wherupon, I, stondynge as deseconsolat in such gret sorowe and hevynesse, that I was there ruled to take this hil and pasture of him to ferme undyr my seal, agenst right and consciens, as I mot answer before God, as far as ev' I coude knowe, and as it appereth be all reson. Wherfore I beceeche my seid feffees that thus were enfeffed of trust in this seide maner long before this disturbaunce moved, and alle other goode and trewe lordys, maysteres, and frendes, that it wull please you to helpe and remedie this disturbaunce of my right and disinhertauns, which I nev' in other wyse but be this duress, coher'con, & febelnesse of wyt and spirit, consented, and thus wyth outen advisement in such wyse fro my wyll, vexed, enseled, that thei made and bad me, but I never yet attorned, ne possessed hem of no ferme for that hil ne pasture, ne nought wul. Which mater above wreten is trewe, as I wul answer to God. In wytnesse of which thyng to these l'res I have set my seal, wreten the ix day of March, the year of the reyne of Kyng Henry VI^{te} aftyr the conquest xxvij.

Gerald's Hill, to which allusion is made in this letter, is doubtless that on which the Ashmans mansion has been built; the pasture now between Rose Hall and the road was, Mr. Rix informs me, between the hill and the gate of the Hall; the road having been diverted within the last century.

The result of the dispute is unknown, but several documents remain in the British Museum (Add. MS., 14,848, f. 1), bearing on the question. One of them is a charter of the Abbot of Bury St. Edmund's, to Peter Garneys, armigero, "super quibusdā monte et pasture in Beckles," fol. 140. Another document relates to the custody of the lands and tenements of William Garneys, on the marriage of Peter Garneys (fol. 29). Another is a Breve *districcōis obtentup' Abb'em de Bury con^a Petrū Garneys* (fol. 29). And a fourth is the final agreement between the Abbot and the Executors of the will of William Garneys (fol. 30). This William Garneys married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Ralph Bigot, Knight, of Stockton, and died in 1428. His only son Ralph dying in 1450, without issue, all his manors passed to his uncle Peter Garneys, Esq., of Beccles. Robert Garneys, of Heveningham, the father of William and Peter, died, according to the pedigree, in 1411. He bought the manor of Little Redisham Hall; and probably, also that of Roos Hall, for the letter of Peter Garneys refers to his father's

peaceable possession of that manor before him. We are thus able, by this letter, to correct the statement in Suckling that the manor of Roos Hall passed from the Roos family to that of Willington, in 1427. Peter Garneys, the writer of the letter, married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Ralph Ramsey, Esq., of Kenton.

The Lordship continued in the Garneys family till 1566, when Thomas Garneys, of Roos Hall and Kenton, Esq., bequeathed it, with other lands, for the term of twenty years, for certain uses specified in his will. From the *Inquisitio post mortem*, taken on the 6th of May, 1566, the manor seems to have been then held, but by what service is not stated, by Garneys of Thomas Playters, as of his manor of Sotterley; but, on the 6th of February, 1575, it was determined by a jury, to be held of the manor of Beccles.

In the following year, Thomas Colby, Esq., son and heir of John Colby, Esq., of Brundish, in Norfolk, by Alice, daughter and heiress of John Brewse, Esq., of Hardwick, occurs as Lord of Roos Hall, in the Beccles *Taske Book* for 1576.*

Suckling says that Thomas Colby married *first*, Beatrice, daughter of Thomas Felton, Esq., of Playford; his second wife being Ursula Rede, relict of Sir John Brand, Knight; but this appears to be inaccurate. Beatrice Felton must have been his second or last wife, for Mr. Rix informs me, she was married again as "Beatrice Colby, widow," to William Grimston, Esq., at Beccles, about two years after the death of Thomas Colby. In 1593, Grimston was assessed to the "taske" of Beccles for Rose Hall, in right of his wife.† Colby was the builder of the Hall, in the remains of which we are now assembled.

The tenure of the Colbys was very short, for soon after 1600, the manor of Roos Hall was purchased by Sir John Suckling, Knight, Secretary of State and Comptroller of the Household to King James the first and Charles the first, and Member for Dunwich. He married Martha Cranfield, sister to Lionel,

* "Thomas Colby, Esquier, for the manor of Rosehall, sometyme Mr. Garnyshe's Esquier, &c."—*Beccles Taske Booke*, 1576.

† "William Grymston, Esq., ux' p' man'u

Rosehall, late Thomas Coleby, Esquire, before M. Barneies [*sic. q.* Garneys?].—*Beccles Taske Booke*, 1593.

Earl of Middlesex, and occasionally resided at Roos Hall. At his death in 1627, he bequeathed it to his widow for her life, with remainder to his eldest son Sir John Suckling, the cavalier poet. Lady Suckling afterwards married Sir Edwin Rich, and, according to Suckling, "by a transfer not very clear, carried Roos Hall into that family." Sir Edwin Rich, by his will dated April 24th, 1675, charged the manor for the term of 500 years with an annual payment of £20, in favour of the poor of his native town of Thetford. Sir Robert Rich, of Rosehall, one of the Lords of the Admiralty and Member of Parliament for Dunwich, from 1689 to his death, which occurred 1st October, 1699, was created a Baronet. The "picture of Cromwell," which was in the possession of Sir Robert Rich, at Rosehall, is now in the British Museum. It is said to have been painted by Walker, and to be the best likeness of the Protector extant; but being placed over the mammalia cases, in the Natural History department, it is extremely difficult to be seen.

The estate was sold by Sir Charles Rich, in 1805, to Thomas Rede, Esq., of Beccles, where his family had been settled for several centuries; and that gentleman left it by will to his nephew, the Rev. Robert Rede Cooper (nephew of Sir Astley Paston Cooper, Bart., the eminent surgeon), and who assumed the surname of Rede by royal license.*

The Hall is a small, but well built edifice, of red brick, of two stories in the Elizabethan style, situated in low grounds, and encompassed by a moat, which in part remains. The staircase is wide and of rude character, each step being formed of a solid block of oak. One of the lower rooms retains its heavy pedimented mantelpiece; and some of the chambers are panelled with wainscot. Its turrets and chimneys are distinguished by richly moulded brickwork, and the initials of Thomas Colby, the builder, and Beatrice Felton his wife, with the date of its erection, 1583, may still be seen on the water pipes of the roof.

SAMUEL TYMMS.

* His representatives have since (1865) sold the estate to Frederick Darby Robin- son, Esq., of Barsham.