

EXTENTS OF THE ROYAL MANORS OF
AYLESBURY AND BRILL, CIRCA 1155

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The remarkable little Roll from which the sub-joined extracts are taken is one of the earliest, probably the earliest, document of its class at the Public Record Office. Its reference to the time "when the Constable received the Shire" places it as shortly subsequent to the appointment of Henry of Essex, the Constable of England, to the Shrievalty of Bucks and Beds. Henry was Constable from 1154 to 1160, and was Sheriff in 1155/6, but not after Michaelmas, 1157; our Roll therefore refers to a period not earlier than 1154, or later than 1157; it is probably the Extent or Survey of the Royal Manors in the two Shires as the result of which he expended¹ the very large sum of 69li. 12s. 8d. in restocking the royal demesnes which had been wasted during the struggles of Stephen and Matilda.

Henry of Essex, son of Robert of Essex and Alice de Vere, grandson of the Swegen de Essex of Domesday Book, was already conspicuous in Stephen's reign. On the accession of Henry II. he was made Constable of England, and as such was responsible for the organisation of the forces. During the Welsh War of 1157 the English army was trapped in the pass of Consilt; the cry was raised that the King was slain, and a rout was only averted by the prompt action of Richard de Clare and of the King himself. That Henry of Essex had not failed signally in his duty is shown by the facts that he remained Constable till 1160, continued to attest royal charters, and, jointly with Thomas Beckett, then the Chancellor, was entrusted in 1159 with the defence of Toulouse. But

¹ Pipe Roll 1156 (Rec. Com.), 21/22.

in 1163 he was accused by Robert de Montfort of high treason in having thrown down the Standard and fled at the battle of Consilt six years before; he contested the assertion, but was put to the Ordeal by Combat on an island hard by Reading Abbey, and was vanquished. The monks of Reading were allowed to carry him off as if for burial; under their care he recovered, and became a monk of that Abbey which had saved his life. A personal motive for his impeachment by Robert de Montfort has been ingeniously suggested² by Dr. Round; it seems likely that the tragical end of his career was undeserved, and that he was a judicial victim of the chances of the Ordeal.

The Roll opens with a list of the Jurors of Luton; in a long space below their names should have been entered the Extent of the Royal Manor of Luton, and probably also that of Houghton Regis; as these were not filled in, a later scribe enrolled in the blank space a charter³ of Richard I. to his minstrel Vassal in 1189. Then follows a list of the Jurors of Leighton Buzzard, and a full Extent⁴ of that Manor. At the end of the Roll come the Extents of Aylesbury and Brill here printed.

[TEXT]

Juratores de Ailesberia Radulfus Blacheman Adwi
Walterus fil. Tovi Ricardus de Burcote Hoc Manerium
valuit L li. tempore Regis Henrici cum pleno instaura-
mento. Instauramentum huius manerii xxx boues
quisque de ijs. et iij affri quisque de iijs. et x vacce
unaqueque de ijs. et ix. juence unaqueque de xijd. et
j taurus de vs. et xxviiij porci unusquisque de viijd. et
xxiiij porc[uli] quisque de iiijd. et j verres de
xijd. et cccc et lvij oues unaqueque de iiijd.
et ij rusce queque de xijd. [in margine]
Summa xiiij. lli. vs. Et j porcaria de xijd. et j
gallinaria cum xxv gallinis de xijd. et j plumbum

² J. H. Round, Geoff. de Mandeville, 326/7.

³ Printed in Beds. Hist. Rec. Soc., ii, 268.

⁴ Printed in Beds. Hist. Rec. Soc., viii, 22-24.

cum tripede de xijd. et aliud plumbum cum utensilibus Daie de xijd. et iij plaustra quidque de xxjd. Ibi debet esse j grancia LX ped. in longitudine et xxx ped. in latitudine cum alis et xxiiij ped. in altitudine usque ad festum tota plena frumento. Ibi debet esse alia grancia L ped. in longitudine et xxviiij ped. in latitudine cum alis et xx ped. in altitudine usque ad festum tota plena auena Ibi extra granciam j tassus auene de xij carretatis ter circumdatis super rellias. Ibi alius tassus de frumento de xvj ped. in longitudine et xij ped. in latitudine et xvj ped. in altitudine usque ad cooperturam et debet esse cumulus de auena Hunc ultimum tassum inuenit ibi Constabularius et non plus Ibi iij bouarie debent esse unaqueque de vs. Et ad has grancias et bouarias reficiendas oportet habere Lxs cum auxilio foreste de Bruhella Et pro semine debet remanere x librata bladi ad firmam faciendam

Juratores de Bruhulla Robertus presbiter et Liuricus prepositus. Firma huius manerii xxli. Instauramentum huius manerii xxx boues unusquisque de ijs. et j affrus de iiijs. et c et Lxviiij oues unaqueque de iiijd. et x scrofe et j verres unaqueque de xijd. et x porci unusquisque pro viijd. Summa vjli. et xvijs. et viijd. Ibi debet esse j grancia de L ped. in longitudine et xxx ped. in latitudine cum alis et xx ped. in altitudine usque ad festum In eadem grancia debet esse j tassus xxx ped. in longitudine et xxv ped. in latitudine cum una alarum et altitudine usque ad festum bladi mixti de frumento et siligine Et alia ala contra ostium tota plaena auena Et in eadem debent esse ij carrate ordeï Et quedam parua grancia in qua debet esse xx carrate frumenti et ij siliginis Ad has grancias reficiendas oportet mittere xxxs. cum auxilio foreste Ed ad j bouariam reficiendam vs. Ibi debent esse ij plaustra quidque de ijs. Et pro semine debent remanere in grancia c s. ad firmam faciendam Et semen emptum est XL s.

[TRANSLATION]

Jurors of Aylesbury

Ralf Blacheman Adwi
 Walter son of Tovi Richard of Burcott

This manor was worth 50li.¹ in the time of King Henry, with full stock. Stock of this manor:—30 oxen of 2s. each, 3 farm-horses of 3s. each, 10 cows of 2s. each, 9 heifers of 12d. each, one bull of 5s., 28 swine of 8d. each, 24 pigs of 4d. each, 1 boar of 12d., 457 sheep of 4d. each, 2 bee-hives of 1s. each; sum, 13li. 5s. And one piggery² worth 12d.; one poultry-pen worth 12d., with 25 fowls; one lead vat with tripod worth 12d.; another lead vat with dairy utensils worth 12d.; 3 wains each worth 21d. There should be a barn, 60ft. long, 30ft. wide with the aisles,³ and 24ft. in height to the ridge, the whole filled with wheat. There should be another barn, 50 feet long, 28ft. wide with the aisles, and 20ft. in height to the ridge, the whole filled with oats. Outside the barn there [should be] a stack of oats, of twelve cart-loads thrice lashed above the rails.⁴ There [should be] another stack of wheat, 16ft. in length, 12ft. in breadth, and 16ft. high to the thatch.

¹ In Domesday Book the total value of the manor of Aylesbury is 56li., but this sum probably included more than the mere profits of agriculture, which alone are in question here. They were assessed at 50li. in the time of King Henry I., that is, before the Civil War.

² The piggery was probably only for breeding sows. As a rule the swine ran free in the open under a swineherd, in woodland or on stubble.

³ The dimensions of the barn are interesting; its length clearly indicates that it consisted of four bays, which are commonly 15ft. 3ins. in length. The width of 30ft. "with the aisles" agrees with that of many barns in the county; thus the great barn at Edlesborough, of the mid-sixteenth century, is 30ft. wide, with the aisles; a barn of the latter part of the same century situate at Broughton, near Aylesbury, and within a mile of the hamlet of Burcott (whence, perhaps, Richard derived his name), is of the same width, with the aisles; and a third barn at Woodrow, near Amersham, belonging to the middle of the seventeenth century, is also 30ft. wide, with the aisles.—[EDITOR.]

⁴ The translation of this passage is uncertain. The word *rellia* has been found in no dictionary, but may mean the moveable rails at the sides of the old type of farm-cart (cf. New Eng. Dict., 'Rail,' 1 c.). The intention of the phrase is apparently to give a measure of a piled cartload.

And there should be a heap of [thrashed] oats. The Constable found this last stack and no more. There should be 4 cattlesheds, each of 5s. To repair the barns and cattlesheds needs 60s., together with the Aid from the forest of Brill.⁵ And for seed there should remain 10li. worth of grain, to yield the farm.⁶

Jurors of Brill

Robert the priest Liuric the reeve

The farm of this manor is 20li. Stock of this manor:—30 oxen of 2s. each, 1 farm-horse of 4s., 168 sheep of 4d. each, 10 swine and 1 boar of 12d. each, 10 pigs of 8d. each: sum, 6li. 17s. 8d. There should be a barn, 50ft. long, 30ft. broad with the aisles, and 20ft. in height to the ridge. In that barn should be a stack, 30ft. long, 25ft. broad with one aisle, in height up to the roof, of mixed grain of wheat and poor wheat (siligo). And the other aisle against the door wholly filled with oats. And in the same should be two cartloads of barley. And a little barn in which should be 20 loads of wheat and 2 loads of poor wheat. To repair these barns it is needed to spend 30s., together with the Aid of the forest. And to repair one cattle-shed, 5s. There should be two wains, each worth 2s. And for seed there should remain in the barn 100s.⁷ [worth], in order to yield the Farm. And seed has been bought for 40s.

⁵ The yield or Aid from the Forest of Brill (Bernwood) was 12li. of blanched silver in 1086. It does not appear on the early Pipe Rolls, and presumably was mutely included in the Sheriff's Farm of the County.

⁶ The yield of the seed is put rather high, if 10li. worth is to produce 50li.; probably the live stock would yield something like 10li., so that the yield on grain would be about 4 times the seed. Towards a century later, grain did not pay at 3 times the seed except in years of scarcity; in the highest farming it was reckoned that wheat might yield 5 times and oats 4 times the seed, but only in a good season. (Compare the early Treatises on Husbandry published by the Roy. Hist. Soc. in 1890.)

⁷ The live stock carried on the manor of Brill is light; the 5li. for seed is therefore probably in about the same proportion as at Aylesbury.