

THE MANOR OF BOUGHTON ALUPH AND
SIR THOMAS DE ALDON

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HASTED's account (1) of the descent of the Manor of Boughton Aluph in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is meagre and at certain points inaccurate. Particularly he dismisses to a footnote a good public servant who controlled the fortunes of Boughton for at least thirty years, with the remark that "by some means this manor at the beginning of Edward III's reign was in possession of Sir Thomas Dalton." The history of the manor at this period is given with remarkable completeness in the *Patent and Close Rolls*, and it seems worth while gathering together the material, if only because of its probable bearing on Boughton Church as it now stands, and on the heraldic glass of which an account is given elsewhere in this volume. To summarize Hasted's story of the origins; Boughton next Wye, earlier distinguished as Boughton-in-the-Bush, was owned in Saxon times by Earl Godwin and his son Earl Harold. After the Battle of Hastings the Conqueror gave the estate to Eustace, Earl of Boulogne, whose it was when the Domesday Survey was compiled. "In the lath of Wiwarlet," as Hasted's translation of the entry runs, "in Wi hundred, Earl (Eustace) holds Boltune . . . there is a church and 17 servants; two mills of seven shillings and 2 pence and 26 acres of meadow. Wood for the pannage of 200 hogs."

Thus began the long connection of the Manor with the Honour of Boulogne. No less long-continued was the grant by Count Eustace to the Leper Hospital of St. Mary Magdalene, Boulogne, of "a rent of 20 marks in the manor of Boutona," confirmed by charters of Henry I, Stephen and Henry III (2). Under King John, certain dues, recorded in 1210 (3), were paid by one Alulphus of Boughton, who then held the manor. Can it be the fact of his having replaced

the Saxon church of wood by one of stone which led to the perpetuation of Alulph's name at Boughton? The two thirteenth century chancels have round columns reminiscent of the work of William the Englishman in Canterbury Crypt.

The family of Alulph enjoyed an eighty or ninety years' tenure of the place. Stephen de Bokton, who died in 1286, however left three daughters, co-heiresses; Idonia, married to Thomas de Gatesden; Joan, wife of Ralph de Otringden and Isolda, the widow since 1273 of Adam Paynel (4). Partition of the family estate became imminent. Before this was effected the three daughters and two sons-in-law met on November 4th, 1286, and agreed jointly to pay their widowed mother, Matilda, 20s. in addition to her dowry, which included certain rents in Boughton and Boughton Wood (5). The partition was solemnly made, on December 14th, by Master Henry de Bray, the King's Clerk and Bailiff of Abergavenny, in the presence of Edmund, Earl of Cornwall; the record is full of interesting detail (6).

The remains of large and extensive buildings discovered under parts of the garden of Boughton Court, on the slope of the hillside, may well be relics of the de Bocton homestead here described; while a crypt, displaying twelfth century masons' marks, vaulted with small chalk blocks and five-sided ribs, still exists under the present dwelling house,

Thomas and Idonia, we learn, had for their share "a hall with adjoining chambers which is part of the chief messuage of Bocton, Kent, together with a knight's chamber, a kitchen, bakehouse with oven, a new stable, a byre with two fowlhouses, a great barn, a granary, dovecot, a house called 'pithuse,' a new gate with the court before it, certain trees growing here and there both within the garden and within and without the court." Joan and her husband had the second part of the chief messuage, barns and cowhouses. Isolda had a house in Essex, but she was not overlooked at Boughton, where she was assigned the messuage of La Beleassise, with the timber of a barn standing in Idonia's garden. The division of the acres was exceedingly intricate, and must have been as cumbersome a plan as the shared-out mansion and the third part of fishpond, watermill

and windmill which fell to each sister's lot. The document contains a wealth of local field and other names, e.g. places are mentioned called La Dane, Kingesfeld, Brumden, Hebbing, Prikesland, Clopham, Lingreshoke and so forth. Some of these names are still in use for fields close to Boughton Court.

The advowson of the church being part of the manor, the three sisters and Matilda their mother were to present in turn; Thomas and Idonia first; Ralph and Joan; Matilda upon the third voidance; Isolda upon the fourth; "and thus successively for ever."

The scattered thirds of the estate soon began to draw together again. Idonia's husband, Thomas de Gatesden died in 1303, and Idonia received permission to grant in fee simple her third of the manor to Sir Robert de Burghersh and his wife Matilda (7). Royal licence was requisite because the property "being of the honour of Boulogne is in the king's hands by the service of doing suit at the king's court of Wytham from month to month and of rendering £6 13s. 4d. yearly to the lepers of Boulogne" (8).

The new owners now proceeded further to acquire Joan de Otringden's share. This was a more complicated matter. In 1304 Laurence de Otringden, perhaps her son, for Ralph had died in 1287, made a grant of a third of Boughton Manor and advowson to John de Campania (an ancestor of the Kempes of Wye) to become effective on the death of the tenant, George de Laverton or de Laverinton (9). Two years later Gregory (George) de Laverinton had licence to enfeoff Robert and Matilda with the coveted lands (10). Isolda's third for the moment remained in abeyance. Let us now turn to Sir Robert de Burghersh and his wife, Matilda, sister of the notorious Bartholomew de Badlesmere.

They had three sons, Stephen, Bartholomew named after his uncle, and Henry, subsequently Bishop of Lincoln. Bartholomew and Henry have no concern with the history of the manor despite Hasted's statements and the fact that Bartholomew in 1331 helped to abduct Matilda, wife of John de Asceles at "Bukton Allulf" (11). In 1304-5 we hear of Sir Robert, then Constable of Dover and Warden of the

Cinque Ports, receiving a business call at "Oluesbocton" from the Mayor of Faversham (12). The date of his death is uncertain, but his eldest son, Stephen, was also dead by 1310, leaving by his wife Cicely a young daughter, Maud or Matilda, a ward of the Crown (13).

The connection of the de Pavely family with Boughton was not, as Hasted has it, by purchase but through Maud, the heiress's marriage with Sir Walter de Pavely the elder. By 1327 Maud was a widow, mother of one son, the second Sir Walter; by 1329 she had married Sir Thomas de Aldon, the King's Yeoman (14). He was an old friend of her family, an adherent of Bartholomew de Badlesmere at the siege of Leeds Castle, for which misdemeanour he eventually received in 1323 the Royal pardon and restitution of his lands and goods (15). With characteristic energy he set about the recovery of the missing third part of his wife's manor. Isolda de Bocton, as we have seen, had married into the Wiltshire family of Paynel; by 1326 she was apparently dead; at any rate in that year a certain Maud Paynel, possibly her grand-daughter, appears on the scene as owner of a third of Boughton Alulph Manor and advowson, which she has licence to part with to one John de Kyneleye (16).

John was either the incumbent of Wroxhall Gorges Church (Bath and Wells) or a kinsman of his, John de Kyneleye the younger, both of whom had dealings with Maud Paynel. Maud herself may perhaps be identified with Matilda, daughter of John Paynel, the owner of lands in Sussex, Wiltshire and Hampshire; she was born in 1289 and married Nicolas de Upton before 1319 (17). In the assessment for the knighthood of the Black Prince, Sir Thomas de Aldon is described as owning lands in Boughton Alulph, formerly in the tenure of Thomas de Gatesdenne, *John Paynel*, and George de Larketon (*Arch. Cant.*, X, p. 133). In his eagerness to recover the property Sir Thomas de Aldon acted more hastily than a man of his experience should have done. He acquired from John de Kyneleye Isolda's portion without seeking royal permission. He had, however, a friend at court, and in 1329 was pardoned at the request of his wife's kinsman, Edward de Bohun (18). Edward was

appointed "Keeper of the County of Kent" in 1332. In 1334, by one of those complicated arrangements dear to the mediaeval mind, Sir Thomas and his wife enfeoffed William atte Welle, parson of the church of Pette, of Boughton Manor and other neighbouring properties, which he (William) then re-granted in part to the heirs of Matilda, in part (and this applied to Boughton) to any children of the Aldon marriage. In default of such children two portions of Boughton were to go to Matilda's heirs, and the third portion to the right heirs of Thomas (19). That famous third is specially described as "Le Belle Assise," which was, as we know from the partition document, Isolda's share, and subsequently John and Maud Paynel's and John de Kyneleye's.

II

Sir Thomas de Aldon now settled down on the estate he had so fortunately rounded off. He obtained leave to crenellate the dwelling-place of his manor of Boughton Aluph (1339) (20). He engaged in a great variety of public work in the county of Kent; served with John de Cobham and John de Segrave on the Commission of the Peace during Edward III's absence in Scotland (21), and again with de Cobham and the Bishop and Prior of Rochester was appointed "to lay before the men of the county of Kent . . . at Rochester on the morrow of Holy Cross Day next, the decisions of the coming Council of Westminster and the king's intention in regard to the safety of the realm" (22). Now it is his task to investigate the grievances of the good men of "Brugges and Lescluses" whose ship called *La Godeyere* has been seized *ultra vires* and removed to La Rye by Wynchelse (23). He is called to take custody of the maritime land in county Kent, and remains away two years, accompanied by his household, men-at-arms and archers (24). Again, he superintends the making of a wall and dyke to preserve the lands of tenants of Wittersham, Rolvenden, Iden and Peasmarsh, on the borders of Kent and Sussex, where six hundred acres have been drowned by the sea (25).

A more personal matter was his appointment as executor to the Will of his old patron, Edward de Bohun, brother of John de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex and Constable of England (26). To Sir Thomas the arrears of Edward de Bohun's wages as Justice of North Wales were paid (27), while Edward's will demised the manor of Maningford Bohun to him for life. This connection and the fact that another de Badlesmere, Elizabeth, had married William de Bohun as her second husband, no doubt accounts for the presence of the Bohun Arms among the blazons in the church windows at Boughton (28). Later in his career Sir Thomas seems to have turned to sheep farming on a large scale, and we hear in 1345 how he sold to one John Malewayn, a London merchant, "nine sarplars and a pocket of wool," which were placed in an old ship at Faversham to await conveyance to London and there seized as bearing no customs' seal and having paid no dues (29). In 1352 he was impeached by some of the king's ministers for failure since the French war, to pay the obligatory rent of 20 l. to the lepers of St. Mary Magdalene, Boulogne. Enquiry, however, cleared him of the charge; the rent had been duly handed over but detained by the king for the period of hostilities (30). Before July 6th, 1361, Sir Thomas's life of manifold activity closed. One should perhaps add that the incident popularly connected with his name, the meeting in 1370 of Archbishop Simon of Sudbury with a band of pilgrims, his rebuke and the defiance of Sir Thomas de Aldon, must belong to the much less honourable career of his son and namesake, the ultimate heir of the Boughton estates.

It is not our purpose to follow the later fortunes of Boughton Aluph and its manor, but it must be emphasized that Sir Thomas de Aldon's tenure (*c.* 1329-61) appears to coincide with important changes in the fabric of the church and the building of the spacious nave. Canon Livett has called attention (31) to the resemblance between the bases and caps of the nave arcade and those at Great Chart, which he attributes to "the middle or third quarter of the fourteenth century."

After Sir Thomas's day the fortunes of Boughton Aluph

were for some years so insecure that nobody likely to have been a church builder remains on record. The presence among the heraldic shields existing, or known to have existed, in the nave windows of the arms of a number of persons associated with Sir Thomas as members of the Royal households, but not otherwise with the county of Kent, is also very interesting and significant. It must recall to us the practice, illustrated in Canterbury Cloisters and elsewhere, of giving, so to speak, a receipt in this manner for contributions to contemporary building funds. Sir Thomas in fact "bled" his friends for the benefit of Boughton Church. The details of these shields will be found in Mr. Councer's paper on the glass. Then, too, in 1343, Nicholas de Falle, parson of "Bocton Aluf" is known to have contracted a debt of 250 marks with Thomas Bek, Bishop of Lincoln, which may well be connected with large expenditure on his church (32).

In conclusion it may be of interest to note the names of several incumbents who served the church during the period these notes have covered :

- 1305. Stephen de Wylmington.
- 1312. John de Wylton.
- 1314. Robert Herbert.

- 1343. Nicholas de Falle.
- 1350. John Freboddy.

- 1499. William Wayte.

REFERENCES.

- (1) *Hasted*, III, p. 190.
- (2) *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1317-21, p. 150.
- (3) *Rotuli de Liberate*, *Misis et Præstitis*, Duffus Hardy (1844), pp. 184, 201.
- (4) *C.C.R.*, 1272-79, p. 48.
- (5) *Calendar of Close Rolls*, 1279-80, p. 404.
- (6) *Ib.*, p. 467.
- (7) *C.P.R.*, 1301-7, p. 163.
- (8) *C.C.R.*, 1302-7, p. 55.
- (9) *C.P.R.*, 1301-7, p. 245.

- (10) *Ib.*, p. 411, and cf. *Cal. Chancery Warrants* (1244-1326), p. 221.
- (11) *C.P.R.*, 1330-34, p. 135.
- (12) *Arch. Cant.*, XIV, p. 190. (Archives of Faversham).
- (13) *C.P.R.*, 1307-13, p. 480.
- (14) *C.C.R.*, 1377-81, p. 452, and cf. *C.P.R.*, 1324-7, p. 347, and *D.N.B.* art. Burghersch, Bartholomew de.
- (15) *C.P.R.*, 1321-24, pp. 326, 334, and cf. *C.C.R.*, 1318-23, p. 517.
- (16) *C.P.R.*, 1324-7, p. 208.
- (17) *C.C.R.*, 1337-9, p. 534, and cf. *C.C.R.*, 1318-23, p. 169.
- (18) *C.P.R.*, 1327-30, p. 419.
- (19) *Ib.*, 1334-8, p. 3.
- (20) *C.P.R.*, 1338-40, p. 253.
- (21) *Ib.*, 1334-8, p. 208.
- (22) *Ib.*, p. 504.
- (23) *Ib.*, p. 280.
- (24) *Ib.*, p. 324, and cf. *C.C.R.*, 1337-9, pp. 619, 626.
- (25) *C.P.R.*, 1340-43, p. 22.
- (26) *C.C.R.*, 1333-7, p. 491.
- (27) *Ib.*, p. 552.
- (28) *C.C.R.*, 1360-4, p. 199.
- (29) *C.P.R.*, 1343-5, p. 574.
- (30) *C.P.R.*, 1350-54, p. 298.
- (31) *Arch. Cant.*, XXVI, p. 107.
- (32) *C.C.R.*, 1343-46, p. 114.