

III.—ON A CHARTER OF FEOFFMENT OF GORTON, BY THOMAS LA WARR, CLERK, 12TH BARON OF MANCHESTER, TO THOMAS [LONGLY] BISHOP OF DURHAM, AND OTHERS. DATED 20TH MAY, 10TH HENRY V., [A.D. 1422.]

*By John Harland, Esq., of Manchester.*

In an old book, whether still existing or not is unknown to me, but which was once a sort of cartulary of the ancient family of the Byrons of Clayton, in Lancashire, and of Newstead Abbey,—ancestors of the poet-lord of that name,—which volume bore the name of “The Blacke Boke of Clayton”—in this ancient book is the copy of a deed by which messuages, &c., at Gorton are demised to the Bishop of Durham and others, in perpetuity. The deed is a curious one, and throws additional light on the life and objects of the founder of the Collegiate Church of Manchester. There have been several errors of transcription, probably by the person who copied from the entry in the Black Boke of Clayton; but the following appear to be the terms of the deed. The entry in the book has this title:—

“Carta feoffment: de Gorton, facta per Thomam La Warr, Dominum Maincestr’ Thome Episcopo Dunelm: et aliis.”

“Omnibus Christi fidelibus ad quos scriptum pervenit, Thomas Dominus La Warr, salutem in Domino sempiternam. Cum teneam Manerium de Maincestr’ and Keuerdeley, et advocacionem ecclesie de Maincestr’, cum pertinentibus in Com: Lancastr: pro termino vita mea ex dimissione Thome Longley episcopi Dunelm, John Henege, Nicholi Motte, p’sone eccl’ie de Swyneshevede, Ricardi Lumbard, nup’ p’sone eccl’ie de Holtham, and Ricardi frith, reversione inde post decessum meum prefatis Thome episcopo, Johanni, Nicholo, Ricardo, et Ricardo, heredibus et assignatis suis spectante. Novistis me prefatum Thomam, Dominum La Warr totum statum et possessionem quos habeo in omnibus messuagijs, terris et tenementis, redditibus et servicijs cum pertinentijs in hamellis de Gorton and

Grenelowemarshe, in villa de Maincestr' infra metas et divisas de Ardewyke, Openshagh, Aldewynshagh, Denton, Rediche, Levensholme & Greneloweheth, excepta una placea terre in Gorton, prout quadam una (vina in MS.) sepe includit, cum quadam grangia desuper edificata pro bladis decimalibus michi intrandis, que sunt parcella predicti manerii de Maincestr', dimississe et sursum reddidisse prefatis Thome episcopo, Johanni, Nicholo, Ricardo, et Ricardo, heredibus et assignatis suis in perpetuum. Ita v'o quod nec ego prefatus Thomas Dominus La Warr, nec heredes mei, nec aliquis alius nomine meo, aliquid juris vel clamei in predictis messuagijs, terris, tenementis, redditibus et servicijs cum pertinentijs, excepte prius exceptis de cetero exigere vel ven' dicar (sic in MS. vindicare?) pot'imus in futuro, sed ab omni actione juris et clamei inde sumus exclusi in perpetuum per presentes. In cujus rei testimonium huic presenti scripto meo sigillum meum apposui. Dat' vicesimo Maij, anno regni Regis Henrici quinti post conquestum Angliæ decimo."

I offer the following translation :—

To all the faithful in Christ to whom this writing shall come, Thomas, Lord La Warr, sends everlasting greeting in the Lord. Whereas I hold the Manor of Manchester and Keuerdeley, and the advowson of the Church of Manchester, in the County of Lancaster, with their appurtenances, for the term of my life, by the demise of Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, John Henege, Nicholas Motte, parson of the Church of Swyneshevede, Richard Lombard, late parson of the Church of Holtham, and Richard ffrith, the reversion thenceforth after my death appertaining to the aforesaid Thomas bishop, John, Nicholas, Richard, and Richard, their heirs and assigns. Know ye that I the aforesaid Thomas, Lord La Warr, the whole estate and possession which I have in all the messuages, lands, and tenements, rents and services, with the appurtenances, in the hamlets of Gorton and Grenelowe Marsh, in the vill of Manchester, within the metes and divisions of Ardwick, Openshaw,

Audenshaw, Denton, Reddish, Levenshulme, and Grenelowe Heath, (except one plot of land in Gorton, as the same is inclosed within [or by] a hedge, with a certain grange built thereupon, for depositing my tithes of corn, which are parcel of the aforesaid manor of Manchester)—have above remitted and released to the aforesaid Thomas bishop, John, Nicholas, Richard, and Richard, their heirs and assigns for ever. Further, that neither I the aforesaid Thomas, Lord La Warr, nor my heirs, nor any other person in my name, any right or claim to or in the aforesaid messuages, lands, tenements, rents and services, with their appurtenances, except as excepted, for the rest, shall in future be able to disturb or sell; but from all action of right or claim thenceforth we are for ever excluded by these presents. In testimony of which thing [or whereof] to this my present writing have I affixed my seal. Given the 20th day of May, in the 10th year of the reign of King Henry the 5th after the Conquest.

A few points may be noted. The grantor, Thomas la Warr, 12th Baron of Manchester, who succeeded to the Manor in 1398, being in holy orders, was precluded from marrying. He vested his estates in trustees, in trust for himself for his life, after his death for his half-sister Joanna, wife of Thomas, Lord West, and her issue; and thus the Wests became Lords of the Manor, to the exclusion of the heir-at-law, one of the Griffin family. On the 5th of August, 1421, his charter of foundation erecting the parish church of Manchester into a Collegiate Church, was executed "in our manor of Heywood." The present grant was made nine months afterwards, to the same trustees or feoffees, so often named in the deeds of Thos. La Warr. The manor of Cuerdley came into the possession of the Barons of Manchester, by the marriage of Albert Grelle, Juvenis, with the heiress of Nigel, Baron of Halton.—The Thos. Longley, or more properly Langley, the first of the feoffees, was the celebrated cardinal and chancellor of that name. He held the great seal from 1405 to 1406, resigning it when he became Bishop of Durham. He was

created cardinal by a bull of Pope John XXII. in June 1411. He was greatly in favour with Henry IV. and Henry V., and was Lord La Warr's powerful ally in effecting the collegiation of the parish church of Manchester. He was feoffee of the will of Henry V. (who died the year this deed was executed), and he then again took the seals. He was a prose author, a poet, and a munificent patron of literature. He died Nov. 20th, 1437, and was buried in the Galilee of his Cathedral at Durham. [Vide Dr. Hibbert Ware's Foundations of Manchester, vol. iv.] John Henege [Ibid, p. 125] was of an ancient Lincolnshire family, and was possessed of the manor of Haynton, in that county.—Of the other feoffees nothing is known, save what the deed itself reveals. Swineshead is the Monastery in Lincolnshire, part of the possessions of the Grelles or Grelleys, Barons of Manchester.—Gorton is an old chapelry, in the parish of Manchester, about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles E.S.E. of Manchester, and now best known by its large reservoir of water for the supply of the town.—The hamlet of Greenlowe Marsh is the N.W. part of the chapelry of Gorton, between Kirkmanshulme and the Hyde and Stockport roads: its name is now corrupted into Grindlow Marsh. These two hamlets, forming the chapelry of Gorton, are still bounded by the two parishes or chapelries of Ardwick and Openshaw to the North, Audenshaw (the modern corruption of Aldewyn's-shaw) and Denton to the E.; Levenshulme, Reddish and Rusholme to the S., and Kirkmanshulme to the W. It does not appear where this deed was made; but other documents warrant the supposition that it was at the Monastery of Swineshead.

A somewhat later demise within the same year, however, from Thomas La Warr to the same persons, and apparently of the same, or a part of the same estates, including the advowson of the church, dated the 8th Nov., 1st Hen. VI. [1422] will be found in Dr. Hibbert Ware's Foundations, vol. iv., pp. 170 et seq.