

Documents Relating To Bampton Among Archives of D & C, Exeter.

GENERAL; DEEDS, ETC.

Date.

1247. Composition concerning Tithes.
- c.1275. Extract from Quo Warranto Roll concerning tenures.
1288. Bond of obligation to pay rent for Vicars' house (see opp.)
- 1262; (copy) Grant of land in Chimney.
- (13th Cent. Bailiff of Aylmer de Valence allowed certain rights at the Manor Court.)
- 1307-8. Confirmation of the rights of the D & C to manorial privilege in Bampton.
1318. Composition concerning common of pasture.
- 1308-19. Records in suit (depositions of witnesses, etc.) concerning the tithes of Standlake; and concerning the burial of the people of Standlake in Bampton parish church.
- c.1360. Judgement in a suit against the chaplain of Standlake.
- c.1406. Memoranda about the burials of the people of Standlake and Herdwyk away from Bampton parish church.
1445. Copy of an earlier grant, exemplified by Edmund Lacy, bp of Exeter, by the Bishop of Lincoln of portions in the parish church of Bampton to the D & C of Exeter.
- mid 15th cent. Draft letter recommending Richard Daber as Vicar of Bampton.
- late 15th cent. Group of letters about the manor of Bampton, addressed to the bailiff of the manor.
- 1503-4. Reference to the re-building of the chancel of Bampton church.
- (Repairs made in 1496 at a cost of £20 - in the accounts spread over 20 years.)
- late 15th cent. (?) Reference to a suit between the Earl of Shrewsbury and the D & C concerning ~~right~~ common of pasture in Bampton.
1670. Certificate by Bp. of Oxford re William Hodge's resignation of the vicarage.

The Chapter & Rectory shall present the Vicar to us when any position falls vacant & the Institution, will be carried out by us. But the control of the parish remains with the Bishop & his vicars: the institution to be carried out by the Archdeacon of Oxford

The Vicar Robert de Lacy had to pay 100/- & John, son of John, Archdeacon of Totnes to pay 3 marks annually to the D.C.

1245. The chapel of St Leonard at Rottol (Radcot) was in a bad state in 1245 - it had been recently rebuilt by Leonard who held one of the parishes.

1691. Receipt by Mr Veysey for the court rolls of Bampton.

ORIGINAL GRANT.

1069. Grant by William I to Bp. Ieofric of Exeter of Bampton with Chimney, etc. for the use of the Church of Exeter.

MANORIAL COURT ROLLS.

Rolls of the court of the manor of Bampton Deanery, with members (Aston and Chimney) for years. Broken series.
1397 - 1505. 1544-5. 16261 1641. 1647. 1657. 1670.
1676. 1678-96. 1718. 1751-1860.

BAILIFF'S ACCOUNTS.

1416 - 18, 1419 - 22, 1497-98, 1530 - 31.

SURVEYS etc.

temp Ed. II. Extent of Manor.

30 Eliz. Custumal of the manor.

1640. Survey.

1650. Parliamentary Survey. (Diff. to read. Refers to Merororum B on Bampton in the Bush.)

14. Chas. II. Court of Survey of the Manor.

1690. Calculation of values of the manor.

1788. Translation of the Extent of temp Ed. II above.

1789. Survey of manor.

1775. Allotment of land in lieu of tithes.

1800. Terrier of tithe of hay in Bampton.

1811; 1818; 1828. Surveys of manor.

1835. Valuation of manor.

LEASES.

1430-19th cent. Leases of parsonage house.

16th-19th cents. Leases of manor, demesne lands, tithes, closes, etc. in

Bampton, Aston, ~~few~~ and Chimney, and land called Lew leaze.

ENCLOSURE

One box of paers late 18th cent.ect, relating to enclosure of the manor of Bampton.

GENERAL.

There are references to the receipts from Bampton in the general accounts of the D & C from the late 13th cent. onwards (when the series of accounts starts) and to appointment of farmers of the estate, bailiffs, etc. in the Chapter Act books from the 14th cent. onwards.

A SURVEY, VALUATION and PLANS
of the TOWNSHIPS & ESTATES
situate in the COUNTIES OF
OXFORD, BERKSHIRE, WORCESTERSHIRE, SALOP & CHESTER
belonging to the RIGHT HONOURABLE
CHARLES TALBOT
EARL OF SHREWSBURY in England
EARL OF WEXFORD & WATERFORD in Ireland
in 3 volumes
by Thomas Bainbridge of
September & October, 1789.

Vol.1 contains

Heythrop and Bampton	in the County of Oxford.
Burghfield	in the County of Berks.
Grafton & Huddington	in the County of Worcs.
Ashton Gifford	in the County of Wilts.

(Vols.2 & 3 are devoted to estates in the Counties of Salop and Chester).

Charles Talbot had succeeded to the Earldom and estates on the death of his uncle in 1789.

BAMPTON is situated 70 miles west of London, 41 miles north-west of Reading by Wallingford, Abingdon and Buckland, 6 miles south-west from Witney, 7 miles south-east from Burford, 6 miles north-east from Faringdon and about 22 miles from Heythrop (also the property of the Earl of Shrewsbury) by Woodstock and Whitney or by Chipping Norton and Burford.

It was formerly a market town but from the vicinity to Whitney, Burford and Faringdon the market is fallen into disuse. It is near the navigation of the River Thames but coals are very dear and fuel is scarce.

The Manor of Bampton extends over the three hamlets or townships of Bampton, Weald and Lew all within the parish of Bampton and the Hundred of Bampton covers the parish and several parishes adjoining.

The Earl of Shrewsbury and Mr. Bulkely Coventry Esqre were formerly joint overseers of the Estate, Manor and Hundred, but in the year 1660, the Estate was divided by deed one-third to the Earl and two-thirds of Mr. Coventry, very injudiciously as the estates are much intermixed and interfere with each other in a very inconvenient manner which might have been prevented had the division been carried out by men of judgement.

They remain joint Lords of the Hundred and Manor and the Court Baron which is held every year at Bampton and the 6 Courts Leet which are held every year at different places within the Hundred are in the name of both, but Robert Yeatman, Mr. Coventry's Agent has for several years had the Deputation to kill game.

There is a fair at Bampton every year on the 15th day of August every year and the tolls taken thereat are let to Mr. Robert Plaster at 45 shillings per annum, one-third to the Earl of Shrewsbury and two-thirds to Mr. Coventry.

There are several cottages upon the Waste which pay acknowledgements amounting in the whole to about 20/- per annum which is allowed two-thirds to Robert Yeatman and one-third to Walter King for collecting and their expenses in attending the several courts.

The Parish of Bampton is very extensive and includes the Townships and Hamlets of Alston and Court, Lew, Bampton and Lew. There are three Parsons who do duty alternately, their livings are equal and together worth £750 or more. The Church at Exeter presents to the Livings, the Parsons have the principle part of the Tithes, the other part is held by Lease under Exeter College by Miss Frederick.

There is but little inclosed Ground, the principle part of the Parish consists of Common Fields and Common Meadows which are extensive. The Land lies in very small parcels and the Farms are widely dispersed and the inconvenience which nothing but a general exchange or Inclosure can remedy but an Inclosure is not likely to take place as the Tithe Owners oppose it on the Supposition that it will lessen the value of their Tithes and Mr. Coventry's estate being entailed and he having no son is not willing to be at any expense. Though the several Hamlets above named have their separate and respective Common Fields and Common Meadows but they all pay Great and Small Tithes to the three Parsons or Miss Frederick the Lessee.

The principle part of the estate belong to the Earl of Shrewsbury lies within the Hamlet of Weald, there is only one field and some cottages in Bampton and a cottage in Lew both under leases for lives. Weald Sheep Commons are in the common plowed fields of Weald from the time the crop is in until Seedtime again, in the Common Meadow from All Saints to Old Lady Day; Half Sharney Mead in Als court Parish from the time the Hay is off till Old Lady Day; the parish of Claville have the other half. In the Pasture called Great Nipnam in Bourton belonging to the Duke of Marlborough and in Mr. Hord's Cow Leaze from Old Lammas till Old Lady Day. By the custom of Bampton the off-going tenant has the winter corn and lent grain, the coming-on tenant has only the fallow and the enclosure grounds and commons. The off-going tenant carries away his crops unless restrained by covenant.

The estate was double taxed until the infancy of the late Earl when it was reduced and when an Attempt was made afterwards to double the tax again the late Earl to pay £16-12-6d towards Sir Robert Throckmorton's double tax over and above the single tax as it was thought hard by the Commissioners that Sir Robert should be double taxed and the Earl only single taxed. The Land Tax is about 3/6 in the £.

It is customary upon the Earl of Shrewsbury's Farms in Bampton for the tenants to repair the buildings being allowed rough timber on the estate for the purpose.

No plan or admeasurement has been made before of this estate, it is presumed by the great trouble and expence of making one, the land being dispersed so very wide and in such small parcels and for many years several of the tenants have occupied lands belonging to other persons which lie intermixed with their farms, which are not distinguished by any landmarks and which the tenants themselves cannot now distinguish which has rendered the present survey very difficult to obtain.

The account made in 1700 which has been copied by Mr. Hill in 1773 is part from the estimated Quantity and part from Supposition reckoning 32 acres

to the yardland both of which are very far from correct. The estimated acres in the Common Fields are but little more than half statute acres.

The land within Lew is but poor and cold but the Common Right is very extensive. The inclosed and Common Meadow within Bampton and Weald are flooded in wet Seasons by which the tenants often sustain very great losses. There are 4 common fields in Bampton about two-thirds of which are good land, one Field is fallow, another Wheat, another Beans, and another Barley or Oats every year so that they have three crops to a fallow.

There are also 4 Fields in Weald for the most part very good Land managed as above, three crops and then fallow, that is to say upon the Fallow they sow Wheat, then Beans after which they sow Barley then Fallow etc. There is also within Weald a small Common Field adjoining Ham Court called Ham Field which being lighter land they have only two crops to a fallow of which Widow Sammons Tenant to the Earl of Shrewsbury has one-third of the Common and Mr. Williams Tenant to Mr. Coventry has the other two-thirds in the right of Ham Court now divided between them to the exclusion of all others, but they have no other right of Common belonging to the Ham Farms as all other tenants have. (Note Ham Field is common from Old Lammas Day till Old Lady Day.)

The right of Common belonging to the other Farms within Weald are 10 cows and 32 sheep to a Yardland. The cow commons are from Old Lammas Day (Aug 12th to All Saints (Nov: 1st) in the Common Meadows called Weald Mead, Bourton M. and Norton M- and from Old Lammas to Old Lady Day half Boroughway Mead the inhabitant of Clanville having the other half.

Note: One horse is reckoned equal to 2 cows.

In this survey the Farms let at rack rent are arranged first and after them the Farms let upon leases for lives.

In the old account of 1700 each farm is numbered and the numbers put on the back of the old leases and in order more readily to refer to the old Leases the same numbers are placed above each tenant's name in this survey.

(The estate totalled 653 acres and was worth £456 - 17,- 8d annually.)

No: on old
Leases.

Number
on Plan.

1. 3.

6. 20.

21

Mrs Anne Sammons, Widow, Tenant at Will:
Ham Court, Burnt House, Pawlins and Pettifers.
The Ham Court Farm, formerly called the Castle:
Barns, Stables, Yards. 2 small gardens and
little plantation.

7

The Burnt House, Garden and Paddock.
Miss Sammons has repaired and now lets it to
Ann Waring who has planted and much improved
the Garden etc. at her own expense.

19

Pawlins Barn, Stables, Orchard and Cottage
formerly a farmhouse. The house is a very
mean dwelling now let to a labouring man but
there is a good barn.

18

Pettifers Barn, Close, Hovel and Garden.

This is the largest farm on the estate. The
buildings are in good repair and the land is
well managed but the farm is dispersed in a
very inconvenient manner which lessens its
value.

(Mrs Sammons had a total of 297 acres and
paid £193 a year.)

The tenant has 2 parcels 371 and 372 altern-
ately one every year and not the other. The
lots change their situation every year and
therefore cannot be shown on the plan. The
custom is to set them out and draw for them just
before moving time.

Nos:

8. 19. 23.

Walter King Lessee for 14 years

The Talbot, Fishers and Sadlers.

11. The Talbot Public House, Brewhouse, Stables, etc.

13. Fishers Ho: Barns, Garden and little close.

148 Sadlers Ho: Barn and Paddock.

The Talbot Public House is situate in Bampton Street. The house is very old and the rooms small and inconvenient but the tenant has the buildings in tolerable repair. The house late Fishers has lately been repaired by the tenant and the buildings late Sadlers are in a very ruinous state which he must also repair.

(Total 46 acres. Rent £43 a year.)

10

Robert Hudson Tenant at Will

12 House in 2 tenements, outhouse and yard. The buildings are in very bad repair.

22

John Seary. Lessee. Quarter Yard Land.

100 House, Barn, small garden and croft.

2½ Cow Commons in Weald Mead. The change

8 Sheep Commons. situation every year.

9

William Watts. Lessee. ⅜ Yard Land.

14 Small Garden.

15 Rick Yard let to Dr. Andrews.

5½ Cow Commons. Change every year.

16 Sheep Commons.

15

John Carter. Tenant at Will.

1 Two small thatched tenements and Garden in Broad St: He lets one cottage which is in very bad repair and lives in the other.

197 A Cow Common

- 13 4 Ann Gooding. Tenant at Will.
A stone cottage and Garden. In very bad repair.
A cow common.
- 12 5 Eliz. Lake. Tenant at Will.
A stone dwelling and very small garden. In good repair.
- 14 8 John Williams. Lessee.
House in 2 tenements with a large Barn,
Yard and Garden.
A cow common in Cottage Close.
- 4 9 Miss Frederick.
A dwelling and its supposed a garden. The house
was held by a lease for 99 years, which expired
in 1785 at a yearly rent of 11/- . It is called in
the lease 'A cottage and garden in Weald, a Beast
common in Cottage Close and a half in Weald Mead'.
It has been neglected and the lessees have much
altered it by building. It is not now known how
far the garden extended or whether any of the buildings
were erected on it.
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ Cow Commons in Weald Mead.
1 Cottage Close.
- 16 14 Henry Neal
A cottage and garden. $2\frac{1}{2}$ Cow Commons.
- 11 16 Robert Plaster and Edward Hutton.
A cottage in two dwellings. Wheelers shop and garden.
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ Cow Commons.
- 7 17 3 Samuel Hill. Lessee. 2 yard lands.
Farm House and Cottage adjoining. Garden,
Barns, Stables.
2. The Paddock.
6. A small hoppet.
The principle part of the Paddock has been
dug for gravel for the Turnpike road and no com-
pensation has been made by the Commissioners. The
three enclosed Grounds 378, 379 & 380 are flooded in
wet seasons and the crop is sometimes lost.
(Total 64 acres in very small lots.)

No: 20.

The Great House. Outbuildings, Green Court, Fish Ponds, Grove, Back Yard, Farm Yard avenue, Mount, pleasure, kitchen garden, orchard and a Home Close.

Tenant. Mr. Robert Kirke Esqre of Clements Inn, London.
Lessee for 2 Lives. 3 Yard lands called Coxeter.

Quantity. 4 a. 2r. 20p.

Value per acre. 30/-

Annual Value. £6-18-9d.

There is a Capital House (built in 1742) which cost the then lessee Mr. Coxeter £2000; there are some plantations of young elms which will be very fine timber and add greatly to the Ornament of the place. There are very good gardens and orchards which with the House Mr. Kirke holds in his own Hand but the rest is let to Wm. Townsend and lies dispersed over the common fields and meadows of Weald.

The lease was granted in 1746 and was renewed in 17.. when the received rent was advanced from £3-0-2d to £12-8-6¹/₂d for the life of Ferdinando Collins of Betterton, Berks, now aged 74 - the life of Henry Coxeter since dead and the life of the Rev: Kirke, son of the lessee now aged about 30. Since the death of Henry Coxeter proposals were made to Mr. Kirke for putting in another life but he objected to the five proposed by Mr. Hill.

Note: 1. The Land of Bampton was not enclosed until after the enclosure act of 1812.

2. Mr. Hill was the Earl of Shrewsbury's agent.

Lessees for Lives.

2	17 147 110	Robert Kirke Mill Close Also 25 and 27 in Ham Field $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre in Cowleaze Headland, changeable with Mr. Pawlin and the Abingdon Poor so that Mr. Kirke's Tenant has it only the Fallow and Wheat Year. 30 Cow Commons 96 Sheep Commons.	Total 116 acres. Value £81 per $\frac{1}{2}$ a.
18	10	Kepple Seary. Lessee for 2 Lives. A dwelling house consisting of 2 rooms adjoining the Court House. House stands opposite Talbot. Leased in 1784 for own life and that of Mery his wife. Rent 5/-. Heriot £1. The fine paid was £1. Tenant to repair, to do suit of Court and not to assign without license.	
5	149	Moses Pawlin, formerly a butcher of Leadenhall St. London. Lessee for own life. Dwelling House, Barn, small Stable, Yard and Outhouse. Let to John Seary. Leased in 1724 for 3 lives. Rent 9/2d. Heriot. the tenants best beast or 3 to be paid on the deaths of every principle tenant.	
24	381	Miss Susanna Frederick. Lessee for three lives. $2\frac{1}{2}$ Yard Lands called Molens in Lew. The Farm House at Lew.	

(there follows a long account of the right
of the tenant to timber at Lew.)

THE WEALD SURVEY

Some Notes on a Survey and Valuation of the Manor of Weald in Bampton made by Mr. Thomas Bainbridge of Lincoln's Inn in the months of September and October 1789.

This survey was carried out by the orders of Charles Talbot the Earl earlier in the year 1789.

The survey begins with a short description of Bampton which is described as a small market town. One interesting item is that it is stated that the weekly market which had been held for centuries 'is fallen into disuse'. The interesting thing about this is that the Rev. J.A. Giles in his 'History of Bampton', 1849, states that the market was still being held although it was not a very big affair. It is possible that the market was revived sometime between the date of the Survey and the writing of the history.

Both Mr. Bainbridge and Mr. Giles blame the competition from Witney and Faringdon markets as the cause of Bampton's poor market show.

Another interesting item is the reference to navigation on the Thames. From what Mr. Bainbridge says, it seems that coal was brought up the river for use in Bampton and he adds a note that coal is very dear and difficult to obtain.

The survey is not easy to follow, as sometimes Mr. Bainbridge speaks of the Manor of Weald and other times of the Manor of Bampton, yet he appears to be speaking of the same property. This is typical of the muddle which seems to exist between the two manors.

At the time of Domesday, 1084, the two manors were separate and belonging to different people, but very soon, difficulties begin to arise and the two manors get mixed up. For instance, it is difficult to understand why Bampton Castle, which was the manor house of the Manor of Bampton, is situated in Weald. So is the parish church of Bampton. In the Seventeenth Century, the manors of Bampton and Weald appear to have become one, although the two field systems remained separate.

At the beginning of the 17th Cent: the manors were the property of the Earls of Shrewsbury of Ingestre Hall, Shropshire, and the Coventry family of Bilbury, Glos: each having a half share. In 1660, the estate was re-divided into three parts, one part going to Francis, eleventh Earl of Shrewsbury and two parts to Mr. Bulkeley of Coventry.

Francis Talbot is the Earl of Shrewsbury who is mentioned in the diary of Samuel Pepys. He was concerned in one of the biggest scandals of the reign of Charles II and lost his life as the result of a duel with the Duke of Buckingham on Jan. 10th, 1668.

Mr. Bulkeley, Coventry, was the younger brother of Sir William Coventry, who was Commissioner of the Navy, and is mentioned many times in ~~the~~ ^{his} Diary.

In the Survey, Bampton Fair is said to be held every year on August 15th. Nowadays, it is held in the last week of August, and the reason for this is believed to be the change in the Calendar which took place in the 18th Century when twelve days were taken out of the year 17....

In 1789, the tolls received from the Fair amounted to 45/-. In 1961, the Parish Council received £35 from the Fair people. The great increase is partly due to the change in the value of money, but it is also to show that the Fair is worth more money nowadays although it is only a pleasure fair.

A reference is made to the three parsons of Bampton, who, in 1789, did duty alternately- each doing a period of four months in turn. For this each parson had an income of £750 per annum which was an extremely high salary in the 18th Cent:

The most interesting and important piece of information in the Survey is in fact that the land in both the manor of Weald and Bampton Manor was worked under a four field system and not the usual three field system which was most common in England. Under the four-field system the following rotation was followed:-

1. Fallow
2. Wheat
3. Beans
4. Barley or Oats
5. Fallow

Three Crops to one fallow.

In 1789, very little land had been enclosed, and Mr. Bainbridge states that there is very little likelihood of it being so. He states that the three parsons are very much against the idea of enclosure as they believe that they will suffer a loss of 'tithes' from which they get their income. Actually, the land was enclosed in 1812.

All the tenants in Weald have what is called a 'right of common'. This means that when the various crops have been gathered in they may turn their animals out in the fields. In certain fields the right of common lasts from Old Lammas Day, (August 12th) to All Saints Day, (Nov: 1st) ; on others it lasts from Old Lammas Day, to Lady Day in the following year. The reason for the difference in times is thought to be something to do with the ploughing time-table. There is a table setting out the number of animals which a tenant is allowed to turn out on the common land. The numbers are based on a yardland which Mr. Bainbridge states ought to be 32 acres. In some cases, they amount to very little more than half this.

Number of animals per yardland:-

Sheep	32
Cows	10
Horses	5

At the end of the survey, notes are made of the various properties and these are very interesting.

No. 21. Widow Sammons occupies what was formerly Bampton Castle. In 1789, it had already changed its name to Ham Court which is still what it is called. The farm is the largest one on the estate - 297 acres - and Mrs Sammons pays a rent of £193 a year, which works out at about 13/- an acre. This property is now the farm of Jesus College, Oxford, who bought it at the time of the sale of the Shrewsbury property towards the end of the 19th Cent:

No. 7. Widow Sammons is also tenant of a property called Burnt House, which she has repaired and lets to a woman called Ann Waring, who is complimented in the survey on the way she keeps her garden. This property no longer exists.

Mr. Bainbridge obviously regrets the continuation of the 'Open Field' system in Bampton. He praises Widow Sammons for the way she runs the farm, and points out how difficult her task is with so many strips spread over the four fields.

No. 23. This is the Talbot Public House, now known as the Talbot Hotel. Mr. Bainbridge says that the house is very old and that its rooms are small and inconvenient. This criticism is still true today. On a board outside the Talbot it is stated that it is an 11th Cent; building. This is a great exaggeration. The Headmaster suggests that it is not older than the 16th Cent:

No. 15. A cottage belongs to John Carter. The Carters have been well known in Bampton for several centuries, but have almost come to an end. The last member of the Carter family is Mrs Alec Townsend, and when she dies the Carters will be no more.

No. 9. A house belonging to Miss Frederick. Miss Frederick' was the sister of F. Frederick Esq, who rented a house now known as Bampton Manor at the top of the village. This is not the same house as Weald Manor. It was the manor house of the Deanery Manor which belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Exeter. The Fredericks were a very important family in Bampton for at least half a century. Mr. Frederick was a magistrate and Miss Frederick played the organ in the parish church for years. She and her sister, Mrs Susannah Frederick, were interested in the education of the village children. In 1792 they gave £400 to the Grammar School, on condition that the Headmaster would teach 10 poor boys elementary English subjects. It seems that the Headmaster was not prepared to do this and it is believed that the money was handed over to the parish school which was probably already existing in Bampton.

No. 20. The Great House. This is the residence now known as Weald Manor and the survey provides the piece of information which we have been looking for for a long time, that is, when the house was built. According to the survey, it was built by a Mr. Coxeter in 1742, for £2000. The Coxeter family had lived in Bampton for a very long time. Another Mr. Coxeter was very generous to the Grammar School when it was opened in 1651. This man gave £100 to the School which was a large sum of money in those days.

* See also in 1963.

The fact that it is called The Great House clears up another matter. In the past, Bampton Castle, later Ham Court, was the 'manor house of Weald' and it has been puzzling why another house should be called the manor house. As Mr. Bainbridge does not call it by that name it seems that the name has crept in in recent times.

When Cromwell captured Bampton Castle in 1643 he ordered it to be destroyed. Only a part of the Castle was left standing. This part was patched up and occupied. However, it was probably felt that it was no longer dignified enough to be the manor house and so in 1742 another house was built as a manor house.

It is very interesting to note that Mr. Bainbridge mentions that the occupier of the house, a Mr. Kirke, has laid down some plantations of young elms and prophesies that they will one day become very fine timber. In 1962 we can see for ourselves that his words have come true.

Heriot. In properties Nos. 10 (Mr.K.Seary) and 149 (Moses Pawlin) it is stated that 'heriot' has to be paid.

'Heriot' was a very old custom going back to the Feudal System. It meant that when a tenant of a property died, if his heir wished to take it over, he would have to pay the lord of the manor a 'fine'. In the case of Mr. Seary, the heir was expected to pay the sum of £1 and in the case of Moses Pawlin, the heir would have to hand over the 'best beast'.