

BOOK REVIEWS

The Cartulary and Charters of the Priory of Saints Peter and Paul, Ipswich. Part 1: The Cartulary (Suffolk Charters XX). Edited by David Allen. xix + 292 pp., b&w pls, bibliography, maps. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78327 354 6. Price £30 hb,

Here is a long-awaited volume; the only known cartulary from an Ipswich priory, and the first volume in the Suffolk Records Society charters series since 2012. The SRS has been publishing documents of fundamental importance for the history of our county since 1958, and the present volume continues this fine tradition. The editor worked for a long period in the Suffolk Record Office, and with his wide knowledge of the history of Ipswich and its town muniments, as well as his profound experience as an archivist, he is the ideal editor for this cartulary. Each deed is presented with an introductory summary and dating information, followed by a complete transcription of the Latin text. In some cases, the editor has identified the original document of which the cartulary contains a copy, and presented an edited version of this original. When the date of a deed is uncertain, which is often the case, a final note presents the editor's justification for the proposed date.

The cartulary has a curious history; it was deposited in a library in Lexington in Kentucky, via an uncertain route, and was bought by the Suffolk Record Office in 1970. David Allen unravels some of this mystery in his superb introductory chapter, which as well gives us a detailed history of the priory, its landholdings, and of the gentry families who were amongst its benefactors. No other religious house in Ipswich has preserved as much documentation. The other large priory, Holy Trinity, has left us two detailed rentals of the thirteenth century, but with this publication we now have for the first time much additional data relevant to the history of Ipswich.

Superficially, a cartulary such as the present one merely contains copies of deeds recording grants of lands to the priory. But for the modern scholar it is much more than this; it is indirectly a history of the priory (if only a partial and secular history), and of its place in the social structure and economy of Ipswich. It is also a record of some of the family history of the upper levels of Ipswich society. And since many of the priory's estates were in villages surrounding Ipswich, it is a historical geography of these places, with much information about agricultural practices. For onomasticians, those interested in the linguistic history of the names of people and places, it is a basic source of data. For place-name scholars, there is valuable new information, such as the identification of another farming settlement called *Carlton* (in Newbourne); the element *Carl-* here being evidence of Viking settlement.

Much of the effort in editing medieval documents is in determining the correct reading in cases of ambiguity between, for example, the scribal forms of *c* and *t*, *u* and *n*, *e* and *o*, and *C* and *T*. In the Latin text, the context will nearly always fix the correct reading. But in names, both place-names and personal names, difficulties are frequent, and here an appeal to a basic principle of onomastics can help considerably. This principle states that names are most often compounded of known elements, and so are interpretable. This is especially true of the numerous field and tenement names in the present cartulary, and the principle allows to disambiguate many cases of doubt. Thus, for example, in deed 31, *Goldhaveth* is nonsensical, and should be read *Goldhavech* to agree with *Goldhavek* in 43. It is the personal name meaning 'Goldhawk'. Similarly in 31, *Gedescalc* should read *Godes-*; it is the surname of the Ipswich *Godescalk* family. The same applies to place-names; for example the unintelligible *Comeres* in 122 should read *Tomeres* to agree with 99. The name means 'two meres', and was

a place in Hintlesham. It is perhaps a matter of editorial policy whether an apparent *Comeres* should be rendered otherwise in print, but I suggest that at least a comment is needed to avoid misleading the naive reader. Sometimes a misreading can have consequences for interpretation; in 151, I suspect *Willelmi de Bodelle* should be *Willelmi de Bodesle*, where *Bodesle* is a known place in Foxhall, and thus this William does not belong to the *de Badley* family. When we read *Helioch* in 44, we lose the interesting fact that there was a ‘holy oak’ (i.e. *Holioch*) in Brooks to the north of Ipswich. I counted about thirty such cases of mistranscriptions of just a single letter in names, many of which render an intelligible name unintelligible. The following clarifications to place-names can also be made: *Childemelne* in 20 cannot be Chelmondiston, but must be an unidentified mill. In 24, *Aldulueston* is not Alston in Trimley, but the place in Grundisburgh or Culpho called *Edulestuna* in Domesday Book (DB), and further recorded in the Leiston and Blythburgh cartularies published by the SRS. *Fachendune* in 27 and elsewhere is the place in Bramford recorded as *Fachedun* in DB. On page 280, *Theford* is not Thetford (in Norfolk), but the ford on the Belstead Brook to the south of Ipswich, which is recorded in the descriptions of the bounds of the liberty of Ipswich.

Despite these quibbles, this volume will be an essential source for everyone interested in the history of Ipswich, and the concluding second volume, containing further documents and the indices, is keenly awaited.