

This is the charter that gave the Abbess of Elstow the right to hold markets

Copy of Charter (circa 1130), Henry 1st to the Abbess of Elstow Abbey
Text extracted from; "Chronicles of the Abbey of Elstow" Reverend S R Wigram 1885

HENRY, King of England, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls; Sheriffs and all Barons, and his faithful French and English, greeting.

Know ye that I have granted and confirmed to the Church of S. Mary of Helenstowe, and the holy Nuns serving God there.

§ 4. "The Church of S. Andrew of Hiche (Hitchin) with lands and tithes and all liberties thereto belonging, freely and absolutely, exempt from all customs, as well episcopal as archidiaconal, except that once a year the archdeacon, with seven horses, shall be entertained there.

§ 5. "And the Church of Westune (Weston).

§§ 3, 2, I. "And, of the gift of the Countess Judith, the viII of Helenestowe, and the vill of Wilsamested, and in Meldone five and a half hides of land.

§ 6. "Of the gift of Richard of Langecote, two hides in Mulesho (Moulsoe, Bucks) together with his daughter.

§ 7. "Of the gift of Ralph his son, three virgates in the same viII, together with his daughter.

§ 8. "Of the gift of Nigeli of Staford, ten and a half virgates of land in Erendesby (Arnesby, Leicestershire), together with his daughter.

§§ 9, 10. "Of the gift of Nicholas Basset, four marks of land in Oxineford (Oxford), and two mills in Risendune (prob. Rissington, Gloucestershire).

§§ } I, 12. "Of the gift of Richard Basset and Jeva, land of Ivo Fridai in Avintone (prob. a manor in Middleton, Oxon), and one mill in Dentune (Denton).

§ 13. "Of the gift of Countess Matilda land of Wileliam Medicus of Burn.

"Wherefore I will, and strictly enjoin, that they have and hold all these well and in peace, freely and quietly and honourably, exempt from all aids and gelds and danegeld and assizes, and murders and pleas and all occasions and complaints and scutages and warpeny, and all customs and all land service *and that they have sac and soc, toll and team, ** and infangenethef, and all liberties which the free Churches of my land have.

"Witnesses. D[avi]d, King [of Scotland] (1124-53), T[hurstan] Archbishop of York (1119-53), R[oger] Bishop of Salisbury (1107-42), Ph[ilip] Fitzjohn, and R[obert] de Brus (ob. 1141). At Winchester."

* In Saxon Charters, 'toll' signified the right of buying and selling, or keeping a market; in later times, the dues paid to the lord for his profits of the fair or market, called "tolling pence."

Wigram sourced this copy of the Charter from the "Confirmation Roll of 2 Henry VIII", a copy of which is held in the Bodleian Library Oxford.

