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Source: Canterbury Cathedral Archives (CCA)

Language: Latin

Date: No date given. [Date: late 12th century-early 13th century based on handwriting according to its CCA catalogue summary]

TEXT TRANSLATED

To all faithful men of Christ to whom this present writing may come. William de Bosco Rowardi [sends] greeting. Know you all, present and future That I, William de Bosco Rowardi have given and granted and by this my present charter confirmed to God and to St Thomas of Canterbury four acres of land in Hemest with the messuage that Heaet Dolle held, in perpetual alms, free and quit from all service or custom to me and to my heirs.

And in order that this my gift and grant shall remain agreed and inviolate for ever, I have confirmed by the witness of my seal.

These being witnesses: Martin de Fissaker, Wi[l]liam? de Vado, William the reeve, Hedewi de Bagest, Robert de Bagest, Roger de la Lane, Osbert Dorro.

COMMENTARY

- Registered versions in: CCA-DCC-Register/B, f400r, and CCA-DCC-Register/E, f395r (with slight variations in the spelling of personal names).
- Endorsed with: Description, showing that the grant relates to 'Dockumbe... Devonia', in mid & late 13th cent hands & note of registration in late 13th cent hand.
- The land of Hemest has been suggested as a reference to Hingston Down above the Doccombe tenement of South Kingwell that still has grazing rights on it. Its position at the top of a steep hill would not seem, however, a place for a messuage unless that is taken to be a plot of land for a house rather than its later meaning of a residential building with its outbuildings and assigned land.

- Only scant information has been found so far of any of the people mentioned in the grant:
 1. William de Bosco Rowardi: Possibly from a well-known family (aka Rohardi) settled in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire at the time of Domesday, tenants of Robert Toden, lord of Belvoir, and the progenitors of the House of Albini, one member of which succeeded to the inheritance of Belvoir by marriage with a co-heir of Robert Toden. They acquired the name of Bosco Rohardi from their residence at the place, part of the Honour of St. Sauveur in the Cotentin, the hereditary possession of the family. Alternatively there is Bosc-le-hard, a village south-west of the Cotentin and north of Rouen, found as Bosco Rohardi in 1080. Bosc-le-Hart 1460, Bollehart 1501, and le Bolhard 1715. Le bosc is Norman French for bois/wood and Ro[w]ard/Rouard is probably of Germanic origin.
 2. Martin de Fissaker: Sir Martin Fishacre of Combe-Fishacre, Ipplepen, Devon in the reign of King John - see *'The Worthies of Devon'* by John Prince. An alternative spelling as Fysshacre leads us to another Devon family at Hempston near Totnes in the reign of Richard I and John -see *'A view of Devonshire'* by Thomas Westcote
- With thanks to Jeff Southmayd for his help with the transcription and translation.