

Raynbrow Bolling - Duchy of Lancaster Pleadings

'18, Hen. VII.--Richard Tempest and others, freeholders and King's tenants of Bradford township, and plaintiffs. Raynbron Bolling, the King's bailiff, and others defendants. Deputed titles to lands, tolls of markets, partiality of kin, &c.

Contra, Pleading --

"Raynbron Bolling, bailiff of Bradford, and Godfrey Foljambe, Feodary of Tickill Honor, plaintiffs. Rich. Tempest, defendant, and others.

To the right worshipful Chancellor Duchy of Lancaster:

"We, Richard Tempest and Robert Leventhorp, esquires; Thos. Thornton, Wm. Rookes, John Rookes, Thos. Ellys, John Rawson, John Feld, James Webster, Thomas Bower, Wm. Bancke, Robt. Ledgard, Richd. Bancke, and others, freeholders and the King's tenants of the township of Bradford; John Threapland, John Ellingsworth, Rich. Hollins, John Whitacre, Thos. Aldersley, &c., freeholders and Kings tenants of Allerton; John Wilkinson, Thos. Roper, Wm. Byrkenshaw &c., tenants and freeholders of Thornton; Robt. Midgeley, William Mortymer, of Clayton; Richard Broadly, Thos. Stead, of Bowling; Christopher Sharp, James Sharp, Christopher Sharp, James Sharp, Christopher Thornton, &c., of Horton; Joseph Thornton, Roger Thornton, &c., of Heaton; William Northrop, Laurence Ellynworth, William Jowett, Thos. Mortymer, Richard Rodes, &c., of Manningham, deposed that whereas three faires have been held and kept within the lordship which were a great resort of merchants, chapmen, and others of the king's lieges of divers parts for the purpose of selling their wares to the great weal of the King's tenants of the said lordship and to the country adjoining. That Raynbron Bolling, the bailiff of the said lordship, wrongfully, by him and his deputies, taking excessive and unreasonable tolls of your said orators and others the King's tenants and others the King's lieges resorting to the said faires, the said merchants and chapmen have withdrawn themselves and their merchandise from the said faires, and that thereby the said faires are greatly decreased, to the great hurt of all the King's tenants and fermers and freeholders of the said lordship; and also that the said Raynbron Bolling, by reason of levying excessive mulcture at the King's mylnes to the great hurt of your orators and taking the cattel of your orators and keeping them in secret places, so that your said orators cannot gain knowledge of them, and after keeping them a certain time claiming the said cattel as waifs and strays to his own uses; that in the 16th year of Hen. VII. he caused certain women to shear twenty sheep of the King's tenants so that they were not known again by their owners; that he will not suffer any sheep of your orators to be unclipped after Whit-Sunday, but if there are the said bailiff will take them and cause them to be clipped, claiming and taking the wool to his own uses and to the great hurt of the King's tenants; that on the 5th of June, in the 17 of Hen. VII, he took from Ellen, late wife of Tristram Bolling, five ewes; from Elizabeth Bristowe, two key; and from Wiliam Wright one cow; that one William Gordon, a Scotch chapman, who was coming from Halifax with three packs of wool, wasy waylaid by the said bailiffs upon Manningham Moor, because the said chapman ought to have come through Bradford and paid toll, and cast him down and beat him, and caused him to pay 6s. 8d. and above in money.'

Raynbron's answer, which is filed in the Duchy records, states:--'That there were two very great fairs every year at Bradford, on the day of the Feast of St. Andrew, and the day of St. Peter in Cathedra, three days every fair--that he had to attend upon the King's daughter, the Queen of Scots, into Scotland, and in his absence Sir Richard Tempest went into the Tolbooth of Bradford and threatended his servants (the servants of the King's bailiff) if they took toll. That the inhabitants of Clayton, at the instigation of Sir Richard Tempest, waylaid John Aldworth, whom the said bailiff had sent to gather toll, and beat him unmercifully. So that he had been little able to do any work since; that the said Tempest had ordered all his servants and retainers, and had encouraged all others, to beat down the bailif's servants when they gathered toll, and declared that no man should bear rule in Bradford but himself.'

This interesting episode is illustrative of the exactions resorted to by the emissaries of King Henry VII., who made use of them to extort money and to heap up wealth for his own ends, which was the ruling object of his existence.