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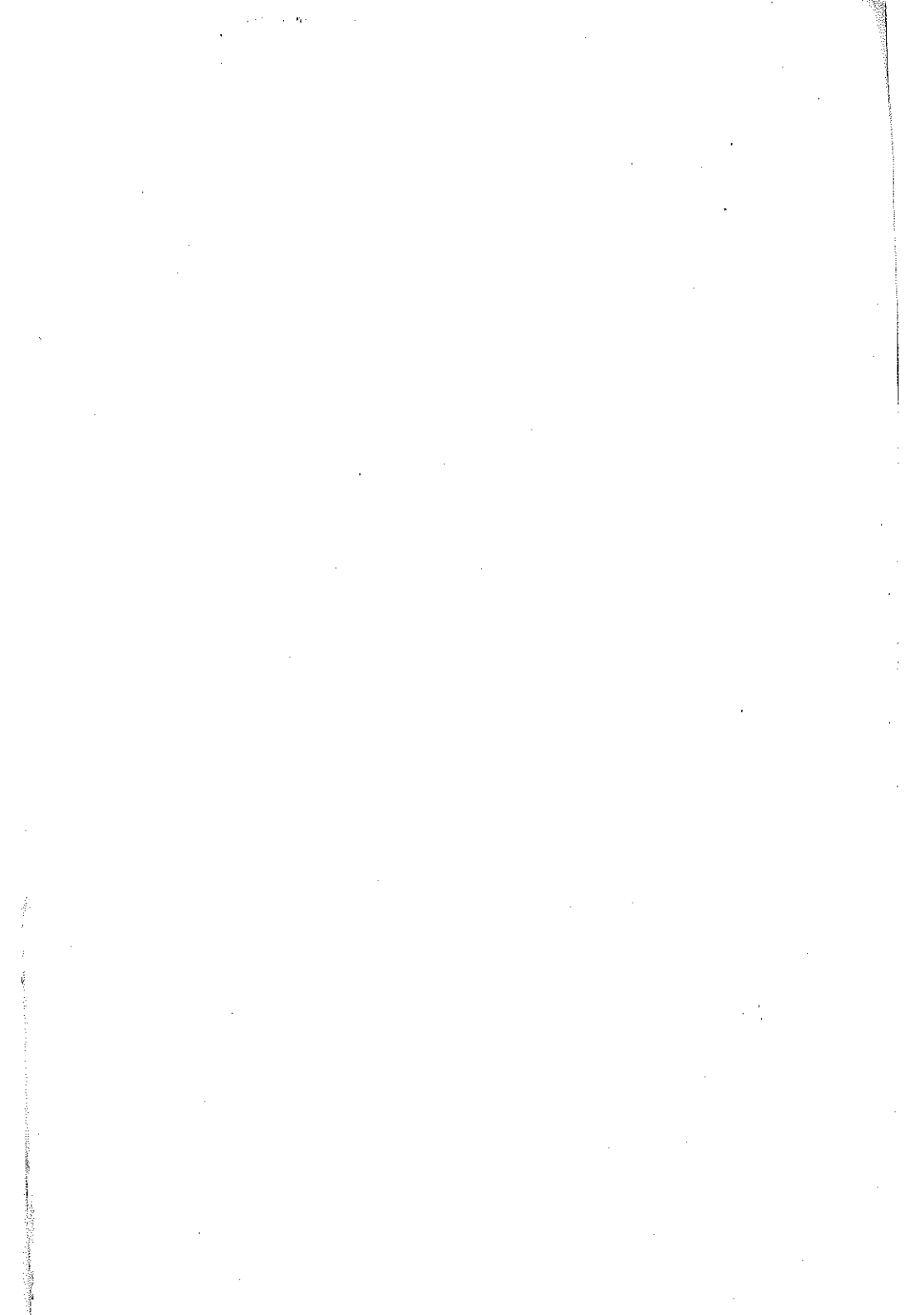
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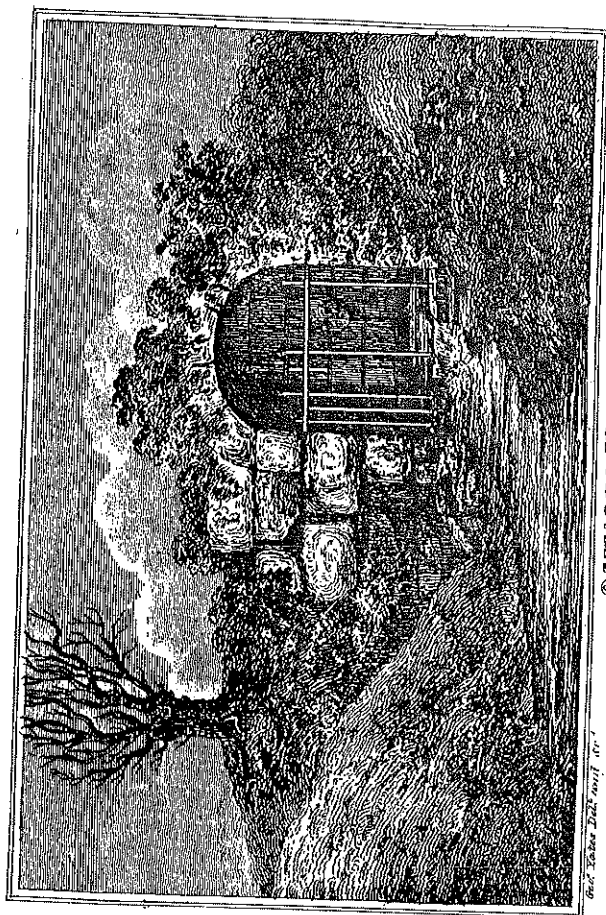
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OSVALDS WELL.

Litho by Woodall & Venable, Oyster.

THE BELLS OF SHREWSBURY ABBEY.

By DAVID DAVIES.

MUCH obscurity rests on the early history of the Abbey bells. When the monasteries were suppressed, there was a ring or peal of five bells in each of the two towers belonging to this church, the aggregate weight of which is estimated at 145 cwt., one peal weighing 33 cwt., and the other 112 cwt.

In an old paper three items are found, two giving the weight of the bells and the other the measurement of the roof lead over one of the towers,¹ from which it is inferred by Owen and Blakeway that the large bells hung in the rood, or centre tower, and the small ones in the tower now remaining. Some difficulties, however, attend the adoption of this conclusion.

In the two items giving the weight of the bells, one steeple is called *new* and the other *great*, while the steeple, which is measured, is styled *old*. The old steeple and the great one are, therefore, identical, and that then known as the new steeple must have been smaller in some way than the old one.

Ten yards in length and ten yards in breadth are the plumber's measurements of the old tower roof, for the purpose of ascertaining the value of the lead by which

¹ In the new styppill V bells of one accord, 1.XI°. 2.VIII°. 3.VI°. 4.V°. 5.III°.

In the great styppill V bells of one accord, 1.XV°. 2.XX°. 3.XXII°. 4.XX°. 5.XXX°. page 63.

Item, the rooffe over the old styppyle in lengthe X yardes, and in breadth X yads, p. 54.

Mr. Gough's manuscripts in the Bodleian, quoted in Owen and Blakeway's *History of Shrewsbury*.

it was protected, and are less reliable than if they had been taken by an architect with the design to obtain the exact dimensions of the tower itself. Out of 22 of the plumber's measurements quoted by Owen and Blakeway 19 are stated in exact yards, which fact points to the probability that excesses in yards, in some cases, were counted against deficiencies in others.

If we measure the lead, which was placed on the present tower in 1646 or '47—including gutters and taking into account that on the surface only, at the joint lappings—we get 32ft. 6in. by 31ft. 6in., which give nearly six square yards more than the plumber's measurements. The space between the embattled brickwork measures 30ft. 6in. by 29ft. 6in., which is near enough to call 100 square yards. The inference, therefore, is that this is the tower which was measured at the dissolution, or that both tower roofs were equal in size.

Assume the latter; then the tower called *great* could only deserve such a distinctive epithet from its comparative superior height. Ignorant as we are of the original height of either tower, we can only form a conjectural comparison from circumstances or facts, which are supposed to be ascertained, or are accepted as such. Owen and Blakeway speak of an old painting in which the present tower is represented with a *fourth* story above that of the bell-chamber, built with *light grey* stone, in which, it will be remembered, they profess to see "very good reason" why this should be called the *new* steeple. But may not this addition be as good a reason for its being called the *great* one? And it may not be unworthy of remark here that Browne Willis, in describing the remains of the Abbey in 1710, calls this "the great broad tower at the west end."

The authors of the *History of Shrewsbury* argue that one tower only was measured, and because one, therefore that doomed for destruction, and not the present one, which, "being attached to the parochial part of the church, was not taken into the estimate of materials to be disposed of, as was the fate of the middle

tower." The old steeple is said to denote the *centre campanile*, "evidently," and thus the matter is supposed to be "satisfactorily solved."

This, it must be admitted, is a most important statement, but much of its force is destroyed when we remember that the bells in the western tower belonged equally to the parochial part of the building with the lead on its roof, and in the same old paper—assumed to be an inventory of materials to be sold—the bells of both towers appear. We learn, too, from history that the bells of both towers were seized. Some better reason than the one given is required, therefore, before we can consider this matter "satisfactorily solved."

We have seen that the *old* tower was the one measured at the dissolution—that the old tower was the *great* one and that in the great tower the *great* bells were hung. We incline to think the present is this tower. Owen, himself, seems once to have held this view, for in his history, published in 1808, he says—"In this tower anciently hung four very large bells, besides the great bell of St. Wenefrid," and we have seen that the main argument by which his change of view is shielded is far from being impervious.

We cannot prove this view to be absolutely correct, but to prove it is not, may be equally attended with difficulties. The great question in either case is, which was the *campanile* known as the *old*, and which as the *new* steeple, at the time of the dissolution? The basements of both towers were probably equally old, and the superstructure, or bellchamber of one of these towers must have been of more recent date than that of the other. We know the probable date of the superstructure of the present tower, but of the bell story of the centre tower—which, possibly, may have been rebuilt at a more recent date—we know nothing, and until we have some clue to its style and date, a *decisive* comparison between the two towers is impracticable.

But corroborative evidence of at least the plausibility of our supposition may be drawn from the fact that

the large bells are known to have been in the present tower not long after the dissolution. How, when, and under what circumstances did they get there? Here is a difficulty which our learned historians were fully conscious was most unfavourable to *their* conclusion. With them, indeed, it seems to have been the only difficulty, and yet it is one on which they have bestowed little or no effort to remove. Their hypothesis is that the large bells were removed from the centre campanile "and placed in the western tower previous to, or shortly after, its destruction;" but proof of this is not attempted.

That such a change took place *previous* to the work of destruction is too improbable to call for refutation, and we have only to recall the unsettled state of the times and truly to realise the extensive alterations, the enormous expense, and the long delay it would necessarily involve, to be convinced of this. The other part of the hypothesis deserves serious attention, and it is well to remember that the work of demolition could not have commenced earlier than the latter part of 1546, or after Mr. William Langley purchased the Abbey.

It is looked upon as a matter "of course" by the author of "Some Account of the Ancient and Present State of Shrewsbury," that Langley hastened to place his purchase beyond restitution by an immediate demolition of the greater parts of the fabric and the sale of its materials, from a desire to make the most of his precarious property.

To place the building out of the reach of restitution was without doubt one of the conditions of purchase, but beyond that we demur to the "of course." Some of the monasteries, we know, were destroyed with what looks like irreverent haste; sometimes even gunpowder was employed as the agent of destruction, and a sort of boasting is still on record of the expedition with which, in some cases, this work of havoc was accomplished. But we have little cause for supposing there

was anything like unseemly haste in the taking down of this monastery. Nearly two centuries afterwards considerable remains of it were still standing, and demolition which could have remained incomplete so long could hardly have been begun in the spirit of determined and reckless eagerness for selfish profit.

To have begun and carried out this work in such a spirit, and from such a motive, would be for Langley to have made his name hateful to all men around him. All esteemed the building an ornament to the town. Some regarded it with reverence, and devoutly breathed treasonable imprecations when they entered their closets and shut to the door. Some evidenced their public spirit and desire for the progress of the good old town by speculating on the attractive uses to which the building might be converted. The Corporation petitioned the King to make it a mansion for the lodgment of royal visitors; the principal inhabitants pleaded that it might be spared for a college or a school, and when no response was made to these petitions, general regret and mortification must have been felt at its approaching doom.

Langley was powerless, save to lessen or increase the bitterness of this disappointment. He could do either, just according to the way in which he went about his work, and we fail to see how it can be so much a matter "of course" that he should have chosen to do the latter. As a townsman and a tradesman-tailor, Langley would have every reason to avoid rash and wanton offence. It would be his interest to conciliate, but his bane to needlessly enrage his fellow-citizens, and it is not at all improbable that these induced him to make his purchase, from a desire to prevent that hurried havoc and reckless plunder with which he seems to be undeservedly charged, but which there was too much reason strongly to apprehend, had the building remained in the hands of strangers.

Langley lived to be possessor of the Abbey about twenty-eight years, and it is more than probable that he

left much of its destruction to other hands. In 1566 we find him selling stone to the churchwardens, and if there be any truth in the tradition that the White Hall was built of material from this Abbey, much stone yet remained to be sold. The foundation of this hall—first called Prince's Mansion—was laid fifteen or sixteen years after this date, and the addition of the fourth story above the present bell-chamber of the Abbey tower, built with light grey stone, affords presumptive evidence that the red stone of which the mansion is built was not to be procured from neighbouring quarries. When Langley was selling stone to the churchwardens, much of the material of the hall probably lay undisturbed in the Abbey walls; for when he had sufficiently reduced the building to be regarded as an irreparable ruin, he would best consult his own interest by further taking down material as purchasers were found; and it is improbable he was personally benefited at all by the sale of stone to Richard Prince, for when the foundation of his mansion was laid, Langley had rested from his labours and had lain in his quiet grave for some years. The demolition of this abbey, therefore, seems to have been a slow work, and Langley, in retailing two shillings' worth of stone, twenty years after the Abbey had been transferred to him, shows that he was in no great hurry to recoup himself for the outlay of his purchase, but that, like ill-used men of his craft, he could patiently await his returns. Up to the time of Langley's death we can discover no trace whatever that the large bells had been transferred from the centre to the western tower. But there is a parish tradition respecting the bells, and our way is now clear to consider it.

Owen and Blakeway say—"There is a tradition in the parish that the bells were seized by the lay possessors of the Abbey, and that a suit was commenced by the parish for their recovery, in which they succeeded, by the exertions of the then eminent lawyer—Mr. Prince, of the Abbey Foregate; but still it does not

appear which of the peals this was." Certainly the tradition does not tell us which, but if we consider it, aid may be supplied in determining which bells they were.

At the outset, some evidence of the credibility of the tradition is afforded by the fact that both peals of bells are found in the inventory, and were, therefore, intended to be seized.

By the bells referred to in the tradition we understand those in the parochial tower; for the parishioners would have no cause to consider themselves aggrieved, had the bells of the centre tower only been seized. Assume, in accordance with the hypothesis of our authors, that the latter were the large bells, then the parish had no claim on them; the suit was for the small bells—the parish succeeded. Their success, therefore, was the recovery or retention of these; but here we are met with difficulties again. By some strange process these bells disappear from the parish tower, and the large ones are found in their place. How shall we account for the change? Shall we suppose that the losing litigants had been taught a lesson of unbounded charity by their loss, and that they said to the parishioners—"You have beaten us legitimately and fairly over the small bells, we will now reward you for your victory by gratuitously making over to you the large ones also." That is hardly human nature; and to suppose that the parishioners purchased these bells from their recent opponents in law is scarcely less improbable.

But however or whenever this change may be supposed to have been effected, it should be borne in mind that it must have taken place *after* the law-suit, if it took place at all.

When then did the law-suit take place? We learn from the tradition that Richard Prince conducted the case, and he is described as the *then* eminent lawyer of the Abbey Foregate. This must guide us. A lease is granted to Richard Prince of the two chambers over the

Abbey north entrance, dated 1553, and it is supposed that the suit took place before this date, and that this lease was a reward for his professional services in respect of the bells. But this can hardly be. In 1551 Richard Prince is described as *literatus*, a title which, it is thought, was probably intended to denote his destination to the study of the law; and on May 4, 1554, he is admitted to the Inner Temple. We are, therefore, compelled to refer the suit to a later period.

The difficulty, however, is to fix a date. But if a deserted tower and silent bells, and the nuisance of large flocks of steeple birds, be any indication of the time when this suit was pending, we have at least some semblance of evidence that it took place much later than the above date.

The words "lay possessors" do not seem strictly applicable to Mr. Langley, nor can we discover to whom they are more applicable. But the seizure of the bells was not a matter of imperative haste, and the parish would be benefited just as delay was extended. It could be conveniently and safely deferred till favourable circumstances or inclination prompted; and, in the order of time, it was one of the very last things necessary to be done in the work of demolition.

We have evidence that Mr. Langley claimed these bells as a part of his purchase. But as the parish claimed them too, it is quite possible he deferred the seizure of them time after time as an unpleasant piece of business, till he himself was seized by death. And it is quite possible, also, his successor—a young gentleman of 26—thought the seizure had been delayed long enough, and made it at once.

Mr. Langley died Oct., 1574. If the bells were seized this year or the year following, Mr. Prince would be 44 or 45 years of age when he was called upon to conduct the suit, at which period of life we may well suppose he had earned much of his eminence in the legal profession for which he is renowned.

In this seizure little further could be needed on the

part of the lay possessors than to lock the bell-chamber door, take possession of the key, and await a purchaser. And that this was done at this time, seems not altogether improbable, from the fact that not one single item for bell-ringing is to be found in the Churchwardens' accounts from 1574 to 1576, when the bell-ringers receive xijd in Nov. for ringing on the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's proclamation.

During the same interval, too, wild birds appear to have made the church their home or place of gathering, and the cawing from the steeple must have been beyond endurance, for the Clerk¹ is paid "for kyllyng the crose" a sum equal to that paid to the woman for keeping St. Gyles's Church clean for twelve months.

We are thus brought to the year 1575, and if we could rely upon every step in the process by which we have arrived at this date, we may conclude from this suit alone that the great bells were in the present tower before the dissolution, when the dissolution took place, and had since remained there undisturbed.

The same would be the result were we to remove the law-suit as far back as 1565, and it is hardly worth while to inquire whether the legal victory and the exchange of the bells afterwards could take place before Mr. Prince was 35 years of age. But any date consistent with the tradition would show that the seizure of the parish bells was long delayed.

This could not be the case with the bells of the centre campanile. Before the destruction of this tower could commence at all, it was necessary first to remove its bells. Langley's right to these is undisputed. Who can doubt that these had long ago been sold? For when Richard Prince entered the Inner Temple to study law and argue imaginary cases, Langley had had

¹ Phillips says : " One John Capper, Clerk of the Abbey Church, was drawn through Shrewsbury and afterwards hanged at Kingsland, for treason " (March 24, 1581). The above Clerk was probably Capper. His name appears in the Parish Books before this date, but Richard Norton appears as Clerk after.

nearly 8 years' practice in making "the most of his precarious property." Every way then the exchange of bells is improbable.

Besides, if it did take place, why is there no mention of it in the tradition? To have recovered the small bells by law, and then by some strange process to exchange them afterwards for the great bell with its four noble companions, and which together were about four times the value of the small peal; that, indeed, were a triumph for the parish to glory in, and to hand down proudly from generation to generation. But the tradition is silent on this matter. It says, the bells that were seized were the bells that were recovered. And the plainest and most natural interpretation we can place on that which it leaves unsaid is this: that the bells that were recovered were the bells that remained in the tower.

Remarks of a similar character are applicable to Churchyard's description of the bells. In noticing the Abbey Forehed, he says:—

Where Abbey stands, and is such ring of belles,
As is not found from London unto Welles;
The steeple yet a gracious pardon findes,
To hide all blasts, all wethers, stormes, and windes.

The bells upon which so much praise was bestowed could not have been the tinkling little peal of five, the smallest bell of which was not one-half the size of the present treble at St. Chad's. For the bells of Wells—and they were hung in one of the western towers of that Cathedral—were held to be second to none in the Kingdom. The "ring of belles" of which the poet speaks must have been the large peal, whose crowning glory was that grand old famous bell which, amid much pomp and ceremony, had long ago been dedicated to St. Wenefrede.

Had this ring of bells been transferred from the centre to the western tower, Churchyard, as a contemporary native of Shrewsbury, must have been aware of it; and could he have such knowledge, and

glance at the debris of the unpardoned steeple, as he must have done, without being at once fired by the grateful thought that these noble bells had been rescued from its fall. But no such thought occurs to him. He proceeds,

"The steeple yet a gracious pardon findes."

Who can doubt that he rejoiced not alone for the steeple, but that in it and with it the bells were spared too. The latent thought of the lines seems to be this: That as from this steeple the far-famed bells had long been heard in the past, so were they likely to be heard long on in the future, since now the steeple itself was spared

To bide all blasts, all wethers, stormes, and windes."

We now turn to consider how far back we can trace the old large bells in the present tower.

Owen and Blakeway say: It is recorded in 1570 two women were slain and two men greatly hurt in ringing the Abbey great bell. And Phillips says: In 1570 two men were killed by the fall of the clapper out of the third bell, while they were ringing the great bell, commonly called St. Wenefrede's bell, at the Abbey Church. There is much discrepancy here about the killing, but there is agreement in this that it happened in 1570, and that it was connected in some way with the great bell. We accept it as a fact, therefore, that the great bell was in the present tower in 1570.

We think we can safely go five years further back. The churchwardens' accounts begin in 1565, and one of the earliest items is, "Payd to the clerke at Easter for the ryngers, xijd." In 1568 there are the following items:—

"For lyker for bells agaynst Whitsontide... ijd.

" " Allhallowtide... ijd."

Now if trifling items like these could be deemed worthy of record, an important item like the transfer of the large bells to the western tower could not be omitted. But no such entry is found, and, therefore, no such transfer was made during these five years.

In the Parish Registers there is the following entry :—
1578. 17 Feb. "I buried Rog. Deaconne mynstrell
sonne in lawe to Tompson the mynstrell who was
buried at St. Gyles and had his kneele ronge w'th the
great bell in the Abbey."

Edmund Bennett was Vicar when this strange record was made. He entered on his duties the year of Queen Elizabeth's coronation, and was Vicar still after her death. The compiler of the "Notes relating to the Abbey Parish Church Estate" has deemed the entries made during Bennett's incumbency, which commence in 1560, of sufficient importance to occupy more than one-fourth of the space allotted to all the registers he has extracted, and how far the extracts are from being exhaustive of the original registers, may be inferred from these facts :—That out of six specimen registers of this period, quoted by Owen and Blakeway, two are not found in the extracts. And in 1570, the total of births, marriages and deaths, stand at forty in the registers, while the number in the extracts is six.

If Tompson's burial took place between 1559 and the 17th Feb. 1578, it should appear in these registers, but careful search has been made for it without success. For several years prior to 1560 the registers are defective, and possibly Tompson's knelle might have been ronge with the great bell at the Abbey in that interval. But that it was so, we have no available proof to offer.

We are equally at fault in respect of the time when this bell was first placed in the Abbey. It is said to have been famous for its fine deep mellow tone; but much of its fame was derived from the fact that it had been cast and baptised in honour of St. Wenefrede, whose pious memory could not fail to be lovingly cherished by the common people. Wenefrede was a pretty, pure, Welsh girl, who had her head cut off by the wicked Prince Cradocus. St. Bueno—her pious uncle—picked up the head and reunited it in a very clever and miraculous way to the headless body, and she lived to regard her uncle's kindness

with grateful recollections for fifteen years, then died again. The two Latin inscriptions on the bell show what qualities and powers were ascribed to her after her death.

“ Sancta Wynefrida Deo nos comendare memento,
Ut Pietate sua nos servet ab hoste cruento.”

“ Protege. Pvra. Pia. Qvos. Convoco. Virgo. Maria.”

We have no lack of witnesses as to the time this bell remained at the Abbey.

The author of “Some Account of the Ancient and Present State of Shrewsbury” says it was sold in 1673.

Phillips says: “About the year 1700, it was cracked, and sold to Mr. Rudhal, of Gloucester, and the money applied to the new pewing of the church.”

Owen and Blakeway say: “It was broken in ringing for the safe return of Corbet Kynaston, Esq., from France, in 1730, and sold to Mr. Rudhall, the renowned bell-founder of Gloucester.”

Unfortunately not one of these statements is strictly true, which momentarily shakes our faith in history. On the other hand, no one doubts the veracity of our local historians, and it is but charitable to suppose that each deemed he had good ground for his statement. In respect of the first statement, we know that the parish passed a resolution in 1673 that the great bell should be taken down, broken, and converted into money. And in respect of the second and third statements, we know that the bell was sold to Mr. Rudhall, of Gloucester—not, however, in 1700 or 1730, but in 1733. Possibly Phillips may have had more ground than we can at present discover for his statement that the bell was cracked about the year 1700. We know that it was in a cracked state at least five years before the *History of Shrewsbury* states it was broken. For in 1725 the Churchwardens pay £1 1s. 0d. for an ineffectual attempt to restore its tone, or, as the item states, “For trying to mend the great bell.” A similar unsuccessful attempt was made a few years ago to

restore the seventh bell at the Abbey, after it had been cracked ten years, and for which nearly five times the above amount was paid, and the present great bell of Tong has been in a cracked state over thirty years.

The following resolution in relation to the sale of the great bell appears in the parish books :—

"Nove^{mb} y^e 7th. 1731. Memnd it is agreed by a Genaral Parish meeting y^t y^e great Bell now cracked and useless & ornament

shall be sold for y^e use [^] of ye church, Provided a faculty may be obtained for so doing. Witness our hands

"JOHN LATHAM, Vicr., &c."

The interpolation of "ornament" is suggestive of the thought that a little warm discussion might have taken place at this Parish Meeting on the subject of church ornamentation. For John Latham was the obnoxious Parson who had removed the painting of the crucifixion from the church against the wishes of many of the parishioners, and of whom it was said—

"The Parson's the man
Let him say what he can
Will for gain leave his God in the lurch;
Could Iscariot do more
Had it been in his power,
Than to turn his Lord out of the church."

Official authority for selling the bell must have been obtained forthwith. For in the same year Benjⁿ Povey is paid £1 2s. for taking down the bell, and 2s. 8d. is paid for drink for men that broke the bell. The Parish, however, seem to have had some trouble in finding a customer for the metal, for it is not until the early part of 1733 that Abraham Rudhall becomes purchaser, and in the same year Tho^s. Evans is paid 3s. for carrying y^e bell to y^e water side, and W^m. Haynes is paid 13s. 9d. for carrying y^e bell to Gloucester, and another item states, P^d for carriage of ye bell mettall 3d.

The parish soon determine how they shall appropriate the proceeds, as the following shows :—

"March 10, 1733.—At a Parish meeting held this day, according to notice given, it is unanimously agreed that the charges of repairing the houses late in the possession of Powell be defray'd and paid by ye churchwardens out of the money due from Mr. Abraham Rudhall for the great bell, according to the power given them by a faculty granted from the courts.—Witness our hands the day year above written,

"J. B. BENION, jun.,
JOS. BARNES, &c., &c."

But the "money due" from the "renowned bell-founder of Gloucester" was not so easy to get. Over 15 months pass, and the following resolution appears on the Books :—

"June 30, 1734.—At a 'Publick parish meeting of the Parishioners of the Parish duly assembled, according to the usual notice given, it is agreed that the last and present churchwardens, or such of them as Council shall advise, shall commence, prosecute, or proceed agt Abraham Rudhall and John Latham, clerke Vicor of the Parish, or either of them, in such action or suite in Law or Equity as Council shall advise for recovery of the money due from the said Rudhall, for the metal of the great bell sold to him, which he refuses to pay for, under pretence that he has given a note for the same, which is in the hands of the said Mr. Latham, and w^{ch} he refuses to deliver, and that all the said churchwardens shall be indemnified by us and the rest of the parishioners.'

"As witness our hands,

"RICH^d JENKINS, Warden, &c., &c."

Proceedings were instituted against Rudhall alone, as the following items show :—

Received of Rudhall, in part	...	...	£80	0	0
Of Rudhall in further part	...	...	63	0	0
			£143	0	0

On March 30, 1735, the following resolution was passed :—

"At a parish meeting held this day, according to notice given, it is unanimously agreed that the church shall be white-washed, and several places of the covering repaired, and the charges thereof defrayed and paid by the churchwardens out of the money paid by Mr. Ab^r Rudhall for the great bell, according to the power given them by a faculty granted from the court.—Witness our hands,

"RICH^d JENKIN.
"WM. BETTON, &c., &c."

The following items appear later :—

Of Rudhall's attorney towards costs	...	7	7	0
Do. towards the bell metal	...	5	19	10
Of Ball & Harries to Bal. ...	...	0	11	8
		<hr/>		
		£13	18	6

It does not seem clear whether the 11s. 8d. was for law expenses or for bell metal, or both, which leaves us in doubt whether the bell fetched £148 19s. 10d. or £149 11s. 6d., or something between these two sums. But in either case the very explicit statement of Owen and Blakeway, That the bell weighed "35 cwt., and £147 was received for the metal at the rate of 9d. per lb.," cannot be correct. Thus ends the sad history of the great bell.

Its four companion bells, the second of which had been recast in 1589 by "Larry oldfield and Larry Danne, of Notingham," with three small bells from St. Gyles', weighing together 104 cwt. 1 qr. 20 lbs, left the Abbey in 1673, when eight new bells were cast for the tower by Mr. George Oldfield of Nottingham.

The following are the items and resolutions relating to these bells :—

"1672—Paide Thomas Jones for taking down St. Gyles' bells, 10s."

"Paide John Everall for carrying Saint Gyles' bells down to the Abbey Church, 1s. 6d."

"In goods of the parish—3 bells from St. Gyles."

"Apl. 15, 1673—Mem. that it is agreed upon by the assembly of the parish this day that ye Churchwardens shall treat with a bell-founder about the casting of the foure lesser bells, St. Gyles' his bells to make a ring of eight, and to let the greate bell remaine as at present."

"At an assembly of the parish of Holy Cross and St. Gyles, upon 7 Octr. 1673, ordered that the greate belle, called by the name of St. Winefred's Bell, or the greatest of the 5 old bels, be taken down, broken, and converted for the use of the Parish Church, in consideration of the great want of money for the satisfying and supplying of the work now in hand, which is the making of 8 new bells in the said church."

"1674—Recd. of Mr. Oldfield for 15 hundred and 46 lbs. of bell metal—St. Gyles' bells being included—the sum of £65 0 0."

"1674—Pd Mr. Georg Old of Nottingham for casting of 8 bells wayeing four score (tons) and nine hundred and two pounds £89 0 3."

Seven of these bells have been recast or replaced since that date—two of them more than once—and the Abbey tower is now distinguished by containing the oldest and the newest church bells in Shrewsbury.

The eighth or tenor bell was recast in 1682 by Tho^s. Roberts, with additional metal, which naturally leads to the inference that the original tenor was not sufficiently powerful for the peal, as was the case with the original tenor of St. Chads. It was recast again in 1713 by Abraham Rudhall. Motto, Religion and loyalty do make the best harmony.

The sixth bell was recast in 1745 by Abel Rudhall. Motto, Prosperity to the Church of England.

The fourth bell was recast in 1743. This was cracked in 1807 in ringing at the election of that year, when the Hon. William Hill and Tho^s. Jones, Esq., were returned Members of Parliament, and was recast again in 1812 by Mr. J. Briant, of Hertford.

The treble and second bells were replaced in 1825 by voluntary subscription, the old bells being ill-tuned. T. Mears, of London, founder.

The fifth bell was recast by C. G. Mears, of London, in 1846. Motto, Come when I call to serve God all. The old bell was cracked on Sunday, the 1st of Nov^r. 1840, in ringing for the Rev. Edward Bickersteth (now Dean of Lichfield) and his bride, who had just returned from their wedding tour.

The seventh or Victoria Bell was cast by John Warner and Sons, London. On one side it bears the following inscription:—Victoria, cast 1877. Purchased with subscriptions raised by David Davies, in lieu of old bell, 1673, P. Whitcombe, B.A., Vicar, H. Wade, T. Wilkes, Churchwardens. On the other side is a well executed profile of Her Majesty—a duplicate of

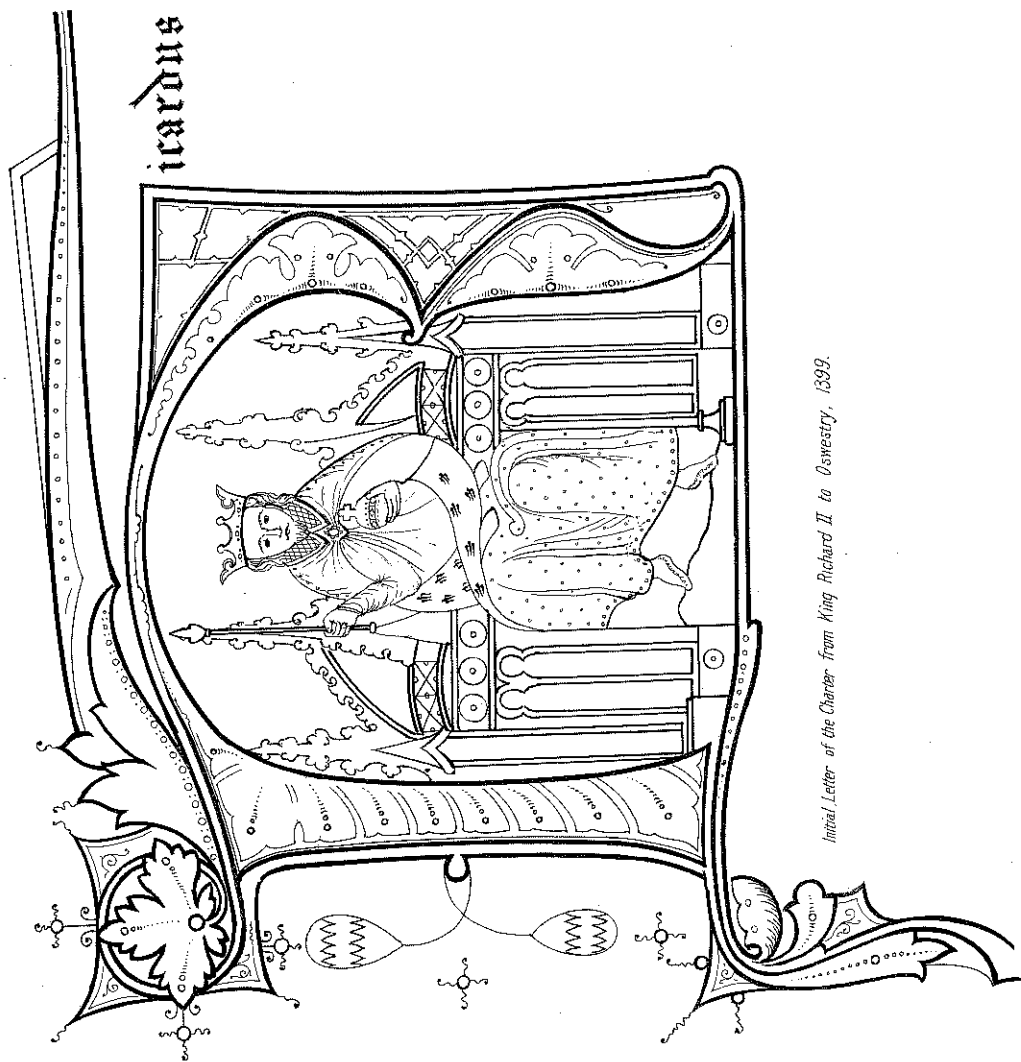
the one on the great bell at Leeds Town Hall—and is the only one which has been struck from the same stamp.

The old seventh bell was cracked on the 9th of Nov., 1862, in celebrating the coming-of-age of the Prince of Wales. Motto, God save the King.

The third is the only bell remaining of the peal of eight cast in 1673, and bears this inscription, G. Oldfield cast thees 8. We call this the lying bell.



icardus



Initial Letter of the Charter from King Richard II to Oswestry, 1399.

THE RECORDS OF THE CORPORATION OF OSWESTRY.

THE manuscripts in the possession of the Corporation of Oswestry commence with a grant by a Fitzalan to the Burgesses in the year 1324.

There is, however, an old copy of a charter of the year 1263 preserved on the back of a lease of the time of Henry IV. We shall place this copy first in the catalogue.

Thus it will be seen that the original manuscripts in the custody of the borough begin two centuries and a half and the quasi-original two centuries after the conquest.

It is not our intention by way of preface to weave a local history from chronicles written long after the occurrence of the facts they profess to relate, or to repeat the stories and the myths which tradition has handed down to us of the romantic origin of Oswestry. We would rather draw the attention of the reader to the historical evidences still existing in original documents which can be seen and can be handled, and which have never passed out of the custody of the Burgesses.

In the Public Record Office, and in chartularies of several of the Religious Houses of Shropshire, but especially in those of Shrewsbury and Haughmond, much concerning Oswestry may be read of a date anterior to the earliest of the Corporation records. Perhaps hereafter an opportunity may arise for printing them in consecutive form.

Though shorn of the interest which a very early date never fails to create, the extant manuscripts of the

Corporation are nevertheless proofs of an unbroken corporate life, extending over a period of more than six centuries. Such an inheritance belongs only to the old towns of an old country.

The Norman Kings of England had already given place to the Plantagenets at the date of the passing of the first charter, which we transcribe. Our catalogue will be carried on through the reigns of the families of Lancaster and York, of the Tudors, of the Stuarts and the Guelphs. The changes and lapses which have befallen the royal houses of England faithfully exemplify the changes and chances which have overtaken the inferior owners of the soil. The names which occur in the early charters are names unheard amongst us now. The Burgesses, however, have maintained without interruption their corporate life through the length of years, they have continued to bear sway and to hold land, while all the lordships and broad lands around them have passed over and over again, by marriage or by purchase, to new comers.

We will make one other observation : Go where you will amongst the ancient towns of England and you will find it hard to discover work of man's creation which has survived even three centuries. Sometimes where the hand of the restorer has not been laid too ignorantly on our churches, some old work may be confidently vouched for on the outside ; sometimes where the same hand has not fallen sacrilegiously on the monumental stones of the interior, in order to provide a place for encaustic tiles and hot water pipes, here and there a quaint epitaph carved in stone will tell its old-fashioned story. But when you leave the precincts of the church it is only by a rare good chance that you are able to trace in the streets, or in the market-place, or on the Castle hill, or round the circuit where the walls once stood, a recognisable vestige of antiquity.

Parchments have held their own against men's insatiable love of destruction better than stones or bricks, or wood or iron.

There are in Shropshire six corporate towns of old and fair repute—Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Oswestry, Bridge-north, Wenlock, and Bishop's Castle. We venture to express a hope that the charters of all of them may not only be kept in due order by their present owners, but that some one may be forthcoming willing to save their contents from all possible danger in the future by editing and printing them.

No. I.

12 Jan. 47th Henr. III. A.D. 1262.

This grant is taken from an ancient transcript which appears on the back of a lease from the Abbot and Convent of Haughmond of the year 1432. The lease will be found in its proper chronological order.

John Fitz-alan the grantor was the son of John Fitz-alan and Isabel sister and in her issue co-heir of Hugh d'Albini last Earl of Arundell of that family. He was fifth in descent from Alan-fitz-Flaad who under the auspices of Henry the first was promoted to great power in Shropshire about 1101. He succeeded his father while yet a minor, died in 1267 and was buried in Haughmond Abbey. During the rebellion of Simon de Montfort he steadily adhered to King Henry III. He succeeded through the co-heirship of his mother to a fourth part of the estates of Earl Hugh d'Albini, and Arundell Castle fell to his share. It may be noticed that he is not called in this charter Earl of Arundell but merely Lord of Arundell, nor is he anywhere else correctly designated as an Earl. (*Eyton's Ant. Shrop.* Vol. vii., p. 253.)

Oswestry belonged to the Norman shrievalty of Shropshire. A castle was built there by Warin, the Norman sheriff. When the shrievalty of the county was conferred on Alan Fitz Flaad by Henry I. the manor of Oswestry passed into the hands of that family and remained with them. (*Idem*, vol. x., p. 320.)

Ome's (*sic*) ad quos presens hoc sc'ptu visuris uel aud'.
John's fil' Alani Dn's de Arundell Salt'm in Dn'o. Novit univst'

vr'a de special' gra et fauore q^a penes Burgenc' nostris ville
 n're d'oswaldestria gerim' et hem' in melioracione eord' Burgen'
 et incment' vtilitat' Bu'genc' n'ror' Dedissee et concessesse p'
 nobis et hered' n'ris p'fat Burgenc' n'ris et eor' hered' et
 successoribz plena' libera' potestat' et auctoritat' ordina'di
 faciend' et c^oficiend' infra sei'pos laudabil' ordinac'ones et
 'posiciones q^a erunt et son'at honest' et pficuu' ac emolument'
 p'dc'or' Burgenc' et eor' success' p'rogativa n'ra res'uat'. Ac
 si forincie' l' aliq's residens in d'ca vill' n'ra non 'hente lib'tat'
 burgencial' n^e aliq's ali' alienigene exeunt redeunt (?) surbarbu'
 n're d'ce vill' fraudulent' ad emend' victual' et aliq' Mercimonia
 et aliq^a res ad detriment' et p'iudiciu' lib'tat' dict' vill' n're et
 p'fic ac emolument' Bu'genc' dict' n'or:: anteq^a venerint ad
 locu' foru' (?) d'ce n're vill' vbi erunt vti et c^osuet' vendend'
 q^a empt' et (?) si (?) q' capient' et p' Ministros n'ros conduct'
 fuerint ad Ergastut' proiend' se'dum discrec'one' Ballivor n'or
 d'ce vill' n're:: Et qd' null' Minister n'ror in lib'tat' et
 vtilitat' d'cor' Burgenc' n'or' int'mitt' n^e ingrediant^u sz? in
 casu deffecco'is d'cor' Burgenc' et eor' success' p' hac con-
 cessione et c^ofirmac'one p'd'ci Burgenc' n'ri dederut' nobz
 vigint' Marc' St'ling': Ac ppt' hoc no' p'dc' Joh'nes et
 hered' n'ri ant'dict' concessiones p'dict' Burgenc'n' ris cont'-o'es
 p'pulos imppetuu' warantizabim' et semp' p'manea't rat' grat' et
 stabil'. In cui' rei testi'oniu' p'sent' sc'pt' n'ro fecim' roborari
 sigillo n'ro Hijs testibz Thome Constenn'e Nichol' de Roced (?)
 Will'mo de Stanton Walto' Deupton' M'ro de Welton et alijs
 Dat' in hospico' n'ro Lond' xij^o die Januarij anno regni reg'
 Henric' fil' regis Joh'nis post 'quest' xlvij^{mo} ista copia
 erat sc'pt' in capitulo' abbat' monast' de Haughmond p' me Dn'm
 Will'mm Ap=delwilck vnu' conuent' dict' abbat' anno D'ni
 inf^{ro} specificat.

TRANSLATION.

To all who shall see or hear of this present writing John Fitzalan, Lord of Arundell, greeting in the Lord, Know ye that we, of the special grace and favour we bear and have towards our Burgesses of our vill of Oswaldestry, for the bettering of the same Burgesses and the increase and wealth of our Burgesses, have given and granted for ourselves and our heirs to the aforesaid Burgesses and their heirs and successors, full and free power and authority to ordain make and pass amongst themselves laudable ordinances and agreements, which shall be . . . for the profit and well being of the aforesaid Burgesses and their successors, our own prerogative being reserved.

And if a foreigner or anyone living in our said vill not having the freedom of the borough or any other stranger go out into or return from the suburbs of our said vill fraudulently to buy provisions or any merchandise or any thing to the injury and prejudice of the franchise of our said vill and the profit and well being of our said Burgesses, before such things shall have been brought to the public place of our said vill where they are used and accustomed to be sold and bought, if any such persons be taken, they shall be carried by our officers to the prison to be provided by the discretion of our Bailiffs of our said vill.

And that no officer of ours shall interfere with or intrude upon the liberties or enjoyment of our said Burgesses except in case of the default of the said Burgesses and their successors.

For this grant and confirmation our aforesaid Burgesses have given to us twenty marks sterling.

Wherefore we the aforesaid John and our heirs warrant the abovementioned grants to our aforesaid Burgesses against all men for ever, and may they last for ever fixed gratuitous and established.

In testimony whereof we have corroborated the present writing with our seal.

These the witnesses ¹Thomas Constantine ²Nicholas of Roced

¹ The family of Constantine were seated at Eaton Constantine as feoffees of the Fitzalans. The manor was in the hundred of Bradford, and was held as a knight's fee by the service of 40 days' wardship at Whiteminster (Oswestry) in war time at the knight's own cost. Thomas Constantine was the son of Thomas Constantine and Isabella sister and co-heir of Robert de Girros. The sister of Isabella and co-heir of her brother married Walter de Hopton the father of one of the other witnesses to this charter. He was one of the four Coroners of Shropshire in 1256 and appears in that year as a knight empanelled to try causes of grand assize. In 1259 he is the first named of a number of knights who sat on a Forest inquest at Sheriff-hales. He appears as a witness often in conjunction with his relative Walter de Hopton to local charters. His estates were at Oldbury, Eaton Constantine, Burwarton, Knockin, Fitz and Woolstan. His daughter and sole heir Isabella married Adam de Montgomery.—(Eyton's *Ant. Shrop.* Vol. I., p. 134. Vol. III., p. 3, p. 33. *Ditto.* p. 78. Vol. X., p. 149-156-298).

² Roced, possibly Wroxeter, which was a manor appurtenant to the Barony of Oswestry and held by the Fitzalans of the King in capite.—(*Ditto.* Vol. VII., p. 310.)

¹William of Staunton ²Walter of Upton, Mro' of ³Welton and others.

Given in our house in London the 12th day of January in the 47th year of the reign of King Henry the son of King John after the conquest.

This copy was written in the capital abbey of the monastery of Haughmond by me Master William ap Delwilk one of the convent of the said abbey in the year of the Lord specified below.

No. II.

29 Sep. 18 Edw. II. A.D. 1324.

Edmund Fitzalan, Earl of Arundell, the grantor of this charter, was the son of Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundell and Alice, daughter of the Marquess of Saluce. He

¹ Staunton upon Hine Heath in the hundred of Bradford. The Lord of Staunton did ward of one knight for 40 days at Fitzalan's Castle of Oswestry at his own costs. The family of Staunton held this manor for several generations; the owner at the date of this charter appears to have been Stephen de Staunton who was a minor. Probably this William was a relative of his.—Eyton's *Ant. Shrop.* Vol. IX., p. 296.

² Walter de Upton or rather de Hopton was of Hopton Castle in Shropshire. He was of the legal profession. In 1288 he was sheriff of the county. In 1275 he was a Baron of the Exchequer. He was subsequently one of the justices itinerant and in 1290 was fined 2,000 marks for malversation in that office. His lineal descendant Thomas Hopton was sheriff of Shropshire in 1430, whose only child carried his great estates into the family of Sir Roger Corbet of Moreton. Thus far from Blakeway's *Sheriffs of Shropshire*. Eyton informs us that through his grandmother Joan the sister of Robert de Girros he was nearly related to Thomas Constantine and inherited considerable estates. In 1256 he was one of the four Coroners of Shropshire. He married Matilda Pantulf Baroness of Wem after the death of her first husband. This marriage made him doubly important though he was in his own right one of the first feudatories of Shropshire. In 1258 he was one of the justiciars of Shropshire. In 1268 he was sheriff. In 1277 he was sitting as justiciar at Ludlow. He appears constantly as a witness to local charters. In 1305 the annual value of the estates of his son, then a minor, situated at Fitz, Mytton, Grafton, Sandford (nr. Oswestry), Burwarton, Hopton, Shelderton and Broadford, was £22 11s. 4d. Most if not all of these manors were held under the Fitzalans. He held besides estates in Herefordshire under the Mortimers.—(Eyton's *Ant. Shrop.* Vols. III., p. 33; IX., p. 172; X., 149-156-298; XI., 256).

³ Welton possibly intended for Wellington.

was the great grandson of John Fitzalan II. the grantor of the first charter. He married Alice, sister and in her issue sole heir of John Plantagenet, Earl of Warren and Surrey. (Eyton's *Ant. Shrop.* Vol. VII., p. 228.) He was connected with the unfortunate favourites of Edward II., the Despensers, through the marriage of his son with a daughter of Hugh le Despencer. He was a staunch supporter of Edward II. and in the baronial rebellion which ended in the deposition and murder of that prince he was taken prisoner in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury by Sir John de Charlton of Powis, on the 27th Nov. 1326, the day after the capture of his sovereign. He was carried to Hereford, where he was executed. (Blakeway's *Hist. of Shrewsbury.* Vol. I., p. 161.)

Grant by the Earl of Arundell to the Burgesses of Oswestry of two shops in Legge-street.

Sciant p'sentes et futuri q'd nos Edmundus Comes Aru'dellie dedim' 'cessim' et hac p'senti carta nostra ad firma' ppetua' 'firmavim' burgencibz n'ris de Oswaldestre duas schoppas nostras in eadem villa in vico q' vocat' Leggest' iacentes int' schoppam filioru' Rici' ext'nei et tenementu' Will'i fil' Wil'i pistoris cu' paviam'to novo a ret'o int' d'cas schoppas et tenem'ta heredu' Joh' . . . Balle. Habend' et Tenend' de nob' et heredibz n'ris p'dcis burge'sibz et eoru' heredibz li'be q'iete bene et . . . p'tinenciis et aysiam'tis 'dcis schoppis et paviam'to spectantibz inppetuu'. Reddendo inde annuatim nob' . . . is tresdecim solid' et quatuor denar' argenti ad festu' 'sci Michael et Annu'ciac'o'is beate Marie p' om'ibz s'uiciis exacc'oibz et demandis. In cui' rei testimoniu' huic p'senti carte 'nre sigillu' nostru' apposum'. Hiis testibz 'Dno Ri'co Abbate de Hagemon Rog'o Carles Alexandro de Schavinton 'Dno Ri'co de Dounton Rectore de Feltun Jo'he filio Hugonis. Da't apud Oswaldestre die 'sci Michael' Anno Regni Reg' Edwardi fil' Reg' Edwardi decimooctauo.

TRANSLATION.

Let those present and those to come know that We Edmund Earl of Arundell have given conceded and by this our present charter have for ever confirmed to our burgesses of Oswaldstree two shops of ours in the same vill, situated in the row which is called Legges street betwixt the shops of the sons of

Richard the stranger and the tenement of William son of William the baker, together with the pavement at the back in rear of the said shops and of the tenements of the heirs of John Ball.

To have and to hold of us and our heirs by the Burgesses aforesaid and their heirs freely quietly well and . . . together with the appurtenances and easements to the said shops and pavement belonging for ever.

Paying yearly to us . . . thirteen shillings and fourpence in silver at the feast of St. Michael and the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary in lieu of all services claims and demands.

In witness whereof to this present charter of ours our seal we have affixed.

These the witnesses ¹Master Richard Abbot of Hagemon, (Haughmond) ²Roger Carles ³Alexander of Shavinton, ⁴Master Richard of Downton Rector of Felton John Fitzhugh.

Given at Oswestry on the day of St. Michael in the 18th year of the reign of King Edward the son of King Edward.

No III.

14 Aug. 22 Rich. II. A.D. 1398.

In the year 1394 King Richard II. threw off the restraints put upon him by his uncle the Duke of Glou-

¹ Richard de Broke canon of Kenilworth elected abbot in 1305, died in 1325.—(Eyton's *Ant. Shrop.* Vol. VIII., p. 301.)

² Roger Carles is a witness to a deed in 1326 of Edmund Fitzalan's to the Burgesses of Clun. He there signs immediately before Alexander de Shavynton.—(Eyton's *Ant. Shrop.* Vol. XI., p. 234.)

³ Alexander de Shavynton was the Earl of Arundell's steward of the marches.—(*Ditto.* Vol. XI., p. 234.) He was collector of a scutage for Shropshire in 1319 and 1320.—(*Ditto.* Vol. X., p. 8.) He witnesses a deed of Richard Fitzalan's which passed at Oswestry in 1332 in favour of Ruyton Vicarage, in which he is described as "the Earl's seneschall."—(*Ditto.* Vol. X., p. 118.) Shavynton where the family held land is in the neighbourhood of Market Drayton.

⁴ In 1322 Edmund Fitzalan questioned the right of Thomas de Cheneye to be Rector of West Felton and presented Richard de Downton. The Bishop admitted him on the Earl's presentation, but Thomas de Cheneye would not give way. Thus things continued till 1340 when Richard de Downton died, and Thomas de Cheneye was found by the Bishop "de facto" the incumbent in possession. A commission was appointed thereupon to deal summarily with Thomas de Cheneye.—(Eyton's *Ant. Shrop.* Vol. XI., p. 5 and 6.) Downton was a member of the manor of Upton Magna in which the Abbey of Haughmond had an interest through the benefactions of the Fitzalans.—(*Ditto.* Vol. VII., p. 276.)

cester, and partly by treachery, partly by an unwonted display of vigour, succeeded in seizing his uncle and with him his principal supporters, among whom were Richard Earl of Arundell and his brother the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Earl was at once impeached, attainted, and beheaded. The archbishop was banished from the Kingdom, and the Duke having been hurried off to Calais was found to have died suddenly, a circumstance which did not prevent sentence of attainder being passed upon him. Thus it happened that Oswestry was in the King's hands at this time as part of the forfeited estate of Fitzalan. To William Lescrop, Earl of Wiltshire, the confiscated estate was granted, and his name appears as one of the witnesses to this charter. When Henry of Lancaster, afterwards Henry IV., overthrew King Richard, the Earl of Wiltshire was executed without trial after the taking of Bristol, and a little time before the murder of his master at Pontefract. In 1398, the date of this charter, King Richard held a Parliament at Shrewsbury and on the same occasion visited Oswestry. A charter granted ten years before was confirmed this year by an "inspeximus" to the Burgesses of Shrewsbury.—(Blakeway's *Hist. of Shrewsbury*. Vol. I., p. 172.) There is frequent reference to this Shrewsbury charter in the Oswestry charter. The initial letter representing the King in his robes is the same in both.

Charter of Richard II. to the Burgesses of Oswestry.

Ricardus Dei gra' Rex Anglie et Francie et Dominus Hi'bnie Archie'pis Ep'is Ab'bibz Prioribus Ducibz Marchionibz Comitibus Baronibz Justiciar' Vicecomitibus Prepositis Ministris et omnibz Ballivis et fideliz suis' salutem. Sciatis q'd cum villa de Oswaldestre infra n'rm Cestr' in Marchia int' Angliam et Walliam situata existat ac de tempore quo non extat memoria de om'imodis li'btatibz ville et Burgo m'catorio p'tinentibus privilegiata extitit et adhuc existat vt accepimus. Nos de gra' n'ra speciali et p' meliora'coe ville predictae ac ad supplicac'oem Burgensium eiusdem ville concessimus pro nob' et heredibz n'ris eisdem Burgensibz et eor heredibz et successoribz Burgensibz eiusdem ville q'd in eodem Burgo p' co'e consilium villate eligant duos de legalioribz et discrecioribz

de Burgensibz ad custodiend' p'lita Corone et alia que ad nos et Coronam n'ram p'tinent in eodem Burgo et ad vidend' q'd Prepositi Burgi illius iuste et legitime tractent tam paupes q'm diuites Et q'd iidem Burgenses p' trangressionibz seu foris'feuris s'uiantum suor catalla et bona sua in manibz ip'or inuenta aut alicubi locor p' ip'os s'uiantes deposita quatenus sua esse sufficienter p'bare pot'unt non amittant Et etiam si p'fati Burgenses aut eor aliqui infra terram et potestatem n'ram testati decesserint vel intestati nos vel heredes n'ri bona ip'or confiscari non faciemus quin eor heredes integre ip'a h'eant quatenus dea catalla 'deor defunctor' fuisse constiterit. Dumtamen de dictis heredibus noticia aut fides sufficienter 'heatur Et q'd nullus vicecomes aut alius ballivus vel Minister noster decto capiat prisas aliquas infra li'b'tatem ville p'dce pret'q'm debet' et hactenus consuet' nisi de consensu illor quor res ille fu'int et q'd liceat eisdem Burgensibus distringere in Burgo p'dco debitores suos pro debitis que illis apud eundem Burgum accom'odauerunt et q'd de vadiis tam de terris q'm de aliis rebus infra burgum p'dem existentibus et ibidem inuadiatis p'litum ibidem teneatur Et q'd assise de victualibus f'ce et constitute p probos h'oies eiusdem Burgi et p' balliuos n'ros teneatur et conseruentur sup' foris'feuram n'ram Et q'd iidem Burgenses h'eant thol et theam sokam et sakam et Infangenthef infra eundem Burgum Concessimus eciam eisdem Burgensibus et eor' heredibus q'd h'eant gildam m'catoriam cum hansa et aliis consuetudinibus et lib'tatibz ad gildam illam p'tinentibus Et q'd nullus qui non sit de gilda illa m'candisam aliquam faciat in Burgo p'dco nisi de voluntate eordem Burgensium Concessimus eciam eis et eor' heredibus q'd si aliquis natiuus alicuius in eodem Burgo manserit et eciam in eo se tenuit et fu'it in p'fata gilda et hansa lot et scot cum eisd' Burgensibus p' vnu' annum et vnu' diem sine calumpnia deinceps non possit repeti a d'no suo set in eodem Burgo liber p'maneat Preterea concessimus eisdem Burgensibus et eor' heredibz q'd quieti sint p' totam terram n'ram de theloneo lestagio passagio pontagio stallagio et de lene et de Danegildes et Gaywytt et om'ibus aliis consuetudinibus et exaccionibz p' totam potestatem terre n're tam in Anglia q'm in omnibus aliis terris n'ris salua lib'tate Ciuitatis n're London Concessimus eciam et hac carta n'ra confirmavimus p'fatis Burgensibus n'ris q'd nullus emat infra Burgum p'dcm coria recencia vel pannu' crudum nisi sit in lotto et scotto et in assisa et tallagio cum eisdem Burgensibus Concessimus insuper et hac carta n'ra confirmauimus pro nob' et heredibus n'ris Burgensibus p'dcis q'd ip'i et eor' heredes imp'pm per totam terram et potestatem n'ram hanc h'eant

libtatem vide't q'd ip'i vel eor' bona quocumqz locor in potestate n'ra inventa non arestentur p' aliquo debito de quo fideiussores aut principales debitores non exit'nt nisi forte ip'i debitores de eor' sint comuna et potestate h'entes vnde de debitis suis in toto vel in parte satisfac'e possint et d'ci burgenses creditoribz eordem debitor' in iusticia defu'int et de hoc r'onabiliter constare possit Concessimus eciam eisdem Burgensibus p' nobis et heredibz n'ris q'd ip'i et eor' heredes imp'pm quieti sint de om'imoda contribuc'oe muragii faciend' in regno n'ro Concessimus eciam pro nobis et heredibus n'ris et hac carta n'ra confirmauimus p'fatis Burgensibus q'd nullus Burgensium seu h'oim n'ror eiusdem ville vel alior imp'litetur seu occasionetur sup' aliquibus appellis rectis iniuriis transgressionibus criminibz calumpniis ind'camentis seu aliquibz aliis rebus eis impositis seu imponend' infra lib'tatem ville p'd'ce fact' seu qual'cumqz emergentibus nisi solomodo coram balliuis eiusdem ville nec convincantur p' aliquos forinsecos set p' pares suos ville et lib'tatis p'd'car nisi res ille tangant c'oitatem eiusdem ville et tunc in casu illo deducantur secundum lib'tates Burgensium n'ror ville n're Salop' approbatas et hactenus racionabiliter vsitatas Et q'd nullus Burgensis d'ce ville de Oswaldestre ponatur in assisis iuratis recognic'oibz seu inquisicionibz aliquibus sup' aliquibus criminibz transgressionibus seu aliquibus aliis negociis et rebus coram aliquibus Justic' et Ministris n'ris capiend' nisi infra dictam villam de Oswaldestre coram balliuis eiusdem ville et hoc de rebus p'cis infra lib'tatem p'dictam nisi tantumodo de hiis que tangunt ad Coronam n'ram et infra easdem villam et lib'tatem de Oswaldestre fieri contig'it Et eciam q'd iidem Burgenses ville de Oswaldestre imperpetuum h'eant attachiamenta prisonam p'priam et custodiam omnium prisonum attachiator' et attachiandor' seu ad prisonam adiudicator' et adiudicandor' qual'cumqz infra lib'tatem d'ce ville de Oswaldestre eodem modo quo h'ent et h'ere debent p'fati Burgenses n'ri d'ce ville n're Salop' Et q'd om'ia p'lita et querele infra dictam villam de Oswaldestre et lib'tatem eiusdem emergencia coram Balliuis eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre teneantur et non alibi exceptis hiis que ad coronam n'ram p'tinent Et q'd nullus Burgensium seu h'oim n'ror dicte ville de Oswaldestre aut alior imp'litetur de terris et tenementis seu de aliquibz aliis rebus infra dictam villam de Oswaldestre et lib'tatem eiusdem existentibus seu em'igentibus coram aliquibus Justic' seu Ministris set solomodo coram Balliuis eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre p' quod . . . vel alio modo fu'int imp'litati Et q'd nullus vicecomes nec aliquis alius balliuus seu Minister n'r vel heredum

n'ror ingrediatur dictam villam de Oswaldestre aut lib'tatem eiusdem nec in aliquo se intromittat sup Burgenses et h'oies p'dictar ville et lib'tatis de Oswaldestre seu eor' aliquem de aliquo p'lito querela occasione transgressionem seu alia re infra lib'tatem eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre em'gent nisi in defectu eordem Burgensium. Saluis nobis et heredibus nostris p'litis Corone n're que attachiari debent p' eosdem Burgenses d'ce ville de Oswaldestre vsqz adventum Justic' n'ror et q'd p' totam terram et potestatem n'ram h'eant et teneant omnes et singulas lib'tates et libas consuetudines suas approbatas et hactenus racionabiliter vsitatas quas h'ent p'fati Burgenses nostri d'ce ville Salop' Prouiso semp' q'd Balliui d'ce ville de Oswaldestre pro tempore existentes de finibz am'ciamentis et excitibz forisf'is ibidem em'gentibus siue p'uientibus et de aliis p'ficiis eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre nob' debitis nobis et heredibus n'ris de tempore in tempus immutabiles existant p'ut ante confecc'oem p'sentis carte n're esse consueverunt Quare volumus et firmit' p'cipimus pro nobis et heredibus n'ris q'd iidem Burgenses d'ce ville de Oswaldestre et eor' heredes et successores Burgenses eiusdem ville in eadem villa p' coe' consilium villate eligant duos de legalioribus et discrecioribus de Burgensibus ad custodiend p'lita corone et alia que ad nos et Coronam n'ram p'tinent in eodem Burgo de Oswaldestre et ad vidend' q'd p'positi Burgi illius iuste et legitime tractent tam paup'es q'm diuites Et q'd iidem Burgenses dicte ville de Oswaldestre p' transgressionibus seu forisf'curis seruientum suor catalla et bona sua in manibus ipor' inuenta aut alicubi locor p' ip'os seruientes deposita quatenus sua esse sufficienter p'bare poterunt non omittant Et eciam si iidem Burgenses d'ce ville de Oswaldestre aut eor' aliqui infra terram et potestatem n'ram testati decesserint vel intestati nos vel heredes n'ri bona ipsor confiscari non faciemus quin eor heredes integre ip'a h'eant quatenus d'ca catalla dictor' defunctor' fuisse constiterit Dumtamen de d'cis heredibus noticia aut fides sufficienter habeatur Et q'd nullus Vicecomes aut alius Balliuus vel Minister noster decetero capiat prisas aliquas infra lib'tatem predictae ville de Oswaldestre ptq'm debet' t' hactenus consuet' nisi de consensu illor quor res ille fu'nt Et q'd liceat eisdm' Burgensibus de Oswaldestre distringere apud Oswaldestre debitores suos pro debitis que illis ibidem accomodauerunt Et q'd de vadijs tam de terris q'm alijs rebus infra p'dictum Burgum de Oswaldestre existentibus et ibidem inuadiatis p'litum ibidem teneatur et q'd assise de victualibus fce' et constitute per probos h'oies eiusdem Burgi de Oswaldestre et per balliuos nostros teneantur et conseruentur super

forisfacturam nostram Et q'd iidem et Burgenses de Oswaldestre habeant thol et thearn sokam et sakam et Infangenethief infra eundem Burgum de Oswaldestre. Et q'd iidem Burgenses de Oswaldestre et eor' heredes habeant gildam mercatoriam cum hansa et alijs consuetudinibus et lib'tatibus ad gildam illam pertinentibus Et q'd nullus qui non sit de gilda illa mercandisam aliquam fac' in predicto Burgo de Oswaldestre nisi de voluntate eo'dem Burgensium Et q'd si aliquis natiuus alicuius in prefato Burgo de Oswaldestre manserit et eciam in eo se tenuerit et fuerit in prefata gilda et hansa lot et scot cum eisdem Burgensibus de Oswaldestre p' vnum annum et unum diem sine calumpnia deinceps non possit repeti a domino suo set in eodem Burgo liber p'maneat Et q'd iidem Burgenses de Oswaldestre et eor' heredes quieti sint per totam terram n'ram de theloneo lestagio passagio pontagio stallagio et de lene et de denegeldis et Gaywytt et omnibus alijs consuetudinibus et exaccionibus per totam potestatem t're n're tam in Anglia q'm in omnibus alijs terris nostris salua libertate ciuitatis nostre London Et q'd nullus emat infra dictum Burgum de Oswaldestre coria recencia vel pannum crudum nisi sit in lotto et skotto et in assisa' et tallagio cum eisdem Burgensibus de Oswaldestre Et q'd iidem Burgenses de Oswaldestre et eor' heredes imperpetuum p' totam terram et potestatem n'ram hanc habeant lib'tatem videlicet q'd ipsi vel eor' bona quocumq'r locoz in potestate nostra inuenta non arestentur pro aliquo debito de quo fideiussores aut principales debitores non extit'int nisi forte ip'i debitores de eor' sint comuna et potestate habentes vnde de debitis sive in toto vel in parte satisfacere possint' et dicti Burgenses de Oswaldestre creditoribus eordem debitor' in iusticia de fuerint et de hoc rationabiliter constare possit Et q'd ipsi et eor' heredes imperpetuum quieti sint de omnimoda contribucione muragij faciend' in regno nostro Et q'd nullus Burgensium seu hominu' nostror' eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre vel alior' imp'litetur seu occasionetur super aliquibus appellis rektis iniurijs transgressionibus calumpnijs indictamentis seu aliquibus alijs rebus eis impositis seu imponendis infra libertatem dicte ville de Oswaldestre tis siue qualitercumqz emergentibz nisi solo modo coram Balliuis eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre nec conuincantur p' aliquos forincecos set p' pares suos dicte ville de Oswaldestre et lib'tatis eiusdem nisi res ille tangant c'oitatem eiusdem ville et tunc in casu illo deducantur secundum lib'tates Burgensium nostror' dicte ville Salop' approbatas et hactenus rationabiliter ysitas Et q'd nullus Burgensis dee' ville de Oswaldestre

ponatur in assisis iuratis recognicionibus seu inquisicionibus aliquibz sup' aliquibz criminibz t'nsgressionibz seu aliquibz alijs negocijs et rebz cora' aliquibz Justic' et ministris nostris capiend' nisi infra dictam villam de Oswaldestre coram Balliuis eiusdem ville et hoc de rebus factis infra lib'tatem eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre nisi tantu' modo de hijs que tangunt ad coronam nostram et infra easdem libertatem et villam de Oswaldestre fieri contigerit Et q'd dicti Burgenses eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre imperpetuum Habeant attachiamenta prisonam propriam et custodiam omniu' prisonu' attachiator' et attachiandor' seu ad prisonam adiudicator' et adiudicandor' qualitercumqz infra libertatem dee' ville de Oswaldestre eodem modo quo habent et habere debent p'fati Burgenses nostri de Salop' Et q'd om'ia p'lita et querele infra dictam villam de Oswaldestre et libertatem eiusdem emergencia coram Balliuis eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre teneantur et non alibi exceptis hijs que ad coronam nostram p'tinent Et q'd nullus Burgensiu' seu hominu' nostror' dicte ville de Oswaldestre aut alior' impl'itetur de terris et tenementis suis nec de aliquibus alijs rebus infra dictam ville de Oswaldestre et libertatem eiusdem existentibus siue em'gentibus coram aliquibus Justiciar' seu Ministris nostris set solomodo coram Balliuis eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre p' quodcumqz b're vel alio modo fu'int impl'itati. Et q'd nullus Vicecomes nec aliquis alius ballivus seu minister noster vel heredum nostror' ingrediatur d'cam villam de Oswaldestre aut libertatem eiusdem nec in aliquo se intromittat super Burgenses et homines ea'dem ville et libertatis seu eor' aliquem in aliquo p'lito querela occasione transgressionem seu alia re infra libertatem eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre em'gent' nisi in defectu eordem' Burgensium Saluis nobis et heredibus nostris p'litis corone nostre que attachiari debent per eosdem Burgenses dicte ville de Oswaldestre vsqz aduentum Justiciar' nostrorum Et q'd per totam terram et postestatem nostram Habeant et teneant omnes et singulas lib'tates et lib'as consuetudines suas approbatas et hactenus racionabiliter vsitatas quas habent prefati Burgenses nostri dicte ville Salop' Prouiso semper q'd idem Balliui dicte ville de Oswaldestre pro tempore existentes de finibus amerciamentis et exitibus forisfactis ibidem emergentibus siue provenientius de alijs proficijs eiusdem ville de Oswaldestre nobis debit' nobis et heredibus nostris de tempore in tempus computabiles existant p'ut ante confeccionem presentis carte nostre esse consueuerunt sicut predictum est Hijs testibus Venerabilibus pri'bus Rog'o Cantuar' tocius Anglie primate Rico' Eb'or Anglie primate Archiep'is R. London' W. Wynton E. Exon' Cancellar' nostro

G. Meneuen Thes' nostro Ep'is Joh'e Lancast'r' Edmundo Ebor Ducibus Auunculis nostris carissimis Joh'e Marchione Dors' Joh'e Sar' Thoma Gloucestr' Will'o Lescrop Wiltes' Cam'ario nostro comitbz Rico' Clifford custode privati sigilli nostri et alijs Dat' p manum nostram apud Westmonasserium quarto decimo die Augusti anno regni nostri vicessimo secundo.

p' b're de priuato sigillo et p' viginti marcis solutis in Hana[perio].

{ WILLIAM WYTHIFORD. }
{ THOMAS SALTER. }

ABSTRACT OF THE CONTENTS OF THE ABOVE.

Richard by God's grace King of England and France and Lord of Ireland to the Archbishops Bishops Abbots Priors Dukes Marquesses Earls Barons Sheriffs Provosts Stewards and to all his Bailiffs and Liegemen greeting.

Know ye that whereas the Vill of Oswaldestre within (the Palatinate) of Chester situate in the March between England and Wales is and time out of mind has been privileged in every sort of liberty belonging to a Vill and Burgh-merchant, and still is so as we believe etc. etc.

The following is a summary of the franchises hereby confirmed:—

Right to elect two burgesses to hold pleas of the Crown. Crown to forego its right to seize goods on death of a Burgess.

Ouster of Sheriff's authority to collect taxes within the Borough.

Authority to the Burgesses to distrain within the Borough; authority for them to tax provisions.

Grant of "Thol and Theam, soke and sake and Infangenethef together with a guild merchant and a hanse." (These are common words, denoting the grant of a local jurisdiction.)

Ouster of the right of a lord to reclaim a tenant in villeinage who has been a year and a day within the Borough.

Exemption of Burgesses from the payment of the dues falling under the description of tolls lastage passage pontage stallage lene Danegeld gaywyrth throughout the whole kingdom excepting only within the city of London.

Restriction of claim of the Crown to seize goods of Burgesses in respect of debts.

Exemption from murage.

Burgesses to be tried by their peers and before the Bailiffs.

Burgesses not to be summoned for trials outside the Borough except only in cases touching the Crown which arise within the Borough.

Right to erect a Borough prison.

Trials to be held within the Borough.

Sheriff not to interfere with the franchises.

Reservation of rights of the Crown.

The franchises accorded similar to those granted to the Borough of Salop.

These the witnesses: the Most Venerable Primates Roger Canterbury primate of all England, Richard York primate of England, Archbishops. R. London, W. Wynton, E. Exon our Chancellor, G. Meneven our Treasurer, Bishops. John Lancaster, Edmund York, Dukes, our most dear uncles, John Marquess of Dorset, John Salisbury, Thomas Gloucester, William Lescrop, Wiltshire our chamberlain, Earls. Richard Clifford, keeper of our privy seal, and others.

Given under our hand at Westminster the 24th day of August in the year of our reign the 22nd.

No. IV.

25 Jan. 8 Henr. IV. A.D. 1407.

Henry the fourth on the throne, the attainder of Richard Earl of Arundell and Surrey was speedily reversed in the person of his son Thomas, the grantor of this charter. He married Beatrix natural daughter of John King of Portugal. His mother was Elizabeth daughter of William de Bohun Earl of Northampton. The Earldom of Warren and Surrey was brought into the family by the marriage of his great grandfather Edmund Fitzalan, the grantor of Charter No. 2, with Alise, sister and heir of John last Earl of Warren and Surrey. He died in 1416.

This charter is much more precise in its terms and fuller in the privileges it confers than the charter of King Richard, the existence of which it altogether appears to ignore. It refers, however, more than once to the customs allowed in the Borough of Shrewsbury as if as a precedent for those herein granted, in the same manner as they are referred to in King Richard's charter.

Charter of Thomas, Earl of Arundell, Lord of Oswestry.

[O]mnibus X'pi fidelibus p'sentem cartam inspecturis Thom's Comes Arundellie et Surr' Dn's Dosewaldestre Salt'm in D'no.

Sciatis q'd cum villa n'ra Dosewaldestre in Marchia Wallie tam ex concessionibus diu'sorum Antecessorum n'rorum p' diu'sa cartas sc'pta et munimenta p' nos et consilium n'rm inspecta q'm ex possessione antiqua de diu'sis lib'tatibus et franchisesis ville et burgo im' catorio p'tinentibus p'uilegiata extitit et adhuc existat videlicet q'd Burgenses ville n're p'd'ce p' commune consilium suu' elig'e. debent duos de legalioribus et discreciioribus burgensibus eiusdm' ad custodiend' p'lita corone et alia que ad nos p'tinent in eodm' burgo sub gub'nacone Sen' n'ri et heredum n'rorum qui p' tempe fuerit et ad vidend' q'd subballiui burgi illius iueste et legitime tractent tam paupes q'm diuites. Et q'd ijd'm burgenses p' t'nsgressionibz seu forisf'curis s'uiuentiu' suor catalla vl' bona sua in manibus suis inuenta seu alicubi locorum p' ip'os s'uientes deposita quatenus sua esse sufficient' p'bare pot'int non amitent. Et eciam q'd si p'fati burgenses aut eor' aliqui infra terram et potestatem n'ram testati decesserint vl' intestati nos nec heredes n'ri bona nec catalla ip'orum confiscari non faciemus quin eor' heredes seu executores ip'a h'eant quatenus d'ca bona seu catalla ip'orum deffunctorum fuisse constit'it clumtamen de d'cis heredibus aut executoribus noticia aut fides sufficient' h'eatur. Et q'd liceat eisdem burgensibus distring'e in burgo p'dco debitores suos forincecos et ext'neos p' victualibus eis venditis infra lib'tatem ville p'd'ce. Et q'd assise de victualibz facte et constitute p' p'bos ho'ies eiusdem burgi et p' ministros et balliuos n'ros teneantur et cons'uent' sup forisfact'm n'ram. Et q'd burgenses eiusdem burgi habent lib'am et plenam potestatem faciendi burgenses eis acceptabl'es vsuros lib'tatibus et franchisesijs burgi illius iuxta cartas et concessionis tam antecessorum n'rorum q'm p' nos ab antiquo et de nouo concessas et q'd nullus qui non sit burgensis eiusdm' burgi aliqua lib'tate burgensiali ib'm cont'a voluntatem burgensiu' p'd'corum infra villam p'd'cam nec lib'tatem eiusdm' quomodo lib't gaudeat nec vtatur. Et q'd burgenses p'd'ci quieti sunt infra villam p'd'cam et lib'tatem eiusdm' de theoloneis lestagio et stallagio. Et eciam q'd nullus emet infra burgum p'd'cm nec lib'tatem eiusdm' pannu' crudum nec coria recencia nisi sit in lotto et skotto in assissa et tallagio cu' burgensibus p'd'eis. Et q'd p'd'ci burgenses heredes nec successores sui nec eor' bona seu catalla quocu'qz locor infra t'ram seu potestatem n'ram inuenta non arestant' p' aliquo debito de quo fideiussores aut princip'les debitores non extit'int. Et eciam q'd nullus burgensiu' ville n're p'd'ce s'uiuentiu' nec tenentu' suor' infra lib'tatem eiusdm' ville residentiu' impl'itet' nec occasionet' sup' aliquibus appellis rettis iniurijs t'nsgressionibus criminibus

calu'pnijs indictamentis seu aliquibus alijs rebus eis seu alicui ip'orum imp'oitis seu imponendis infra libertatem d'ce ville factis seu qual'tcumqz em'gentibz nisi solomodo coram Sen^{lo} n'ro et balliuis eiusd'm ville nec convincetur p' aliquos fornicecos sed p' pares suos ville et lib'tatis p'd'e' nisi res ille tangant nos vl' Co'itatem eiusd'm ville et tunc in casu illo t'minent' s'cdm leges et consuetudines burgensiu ville Salopie approbatas et hactenus rac'onab'lit' vsitatas. Et q'd nullus burgensis eiusdem ville ponet^r in assisis iuratis recognic'oibz seu inquisic'oibz aliquibz, sup' aliquibz criminibz t'ngressionibz seu aliquibz alijs negocijs vl' rebus coram aliquibus ministris n'ris vl' heredum n'rorum capiendis nisi infra dictam villam n'ram Dosewaldestr' coram Sen^{lo} n'ro et balliuis eiusd'm ville, et hoc de rebus factis infra libertatem eiusd'm et non alibi. Et q'd ijdm' burgenses habent attachiamenta et p'sona' p'p'am ac custodiam o'im p'sonu' attachiator' et attachiandor' seu ad p'sona' adiudicator' vl' adiudicandor' qualitecuqz infra libertatem ville p'd'ce eodm' modo quo habent seu h'ere debent burgenses d'ce ville Salopie nisi de illis qui attachiati seu attachiandi fuerint p' ministros n'ros vl' heredum n'rorum diebus Curiar n'rar fornicecar. Et q'd om'ia pl'ta et querele inf^a d'cam d'cam villam n'ram seu libertatem eiusd'm em'gencia coram Sen^{lo} n'ro et balliuis eiusd'm ville ten'i deb'nt et non alibi du' tanem h'ui' pl'ta vl' querele in aliqua pte tangant burgenses tenentes seu s'uientes suos eiusd'm ville ex vna pte et Wallicos ex alt'a. Et eciam q'd nullus minist' nec balliuus nost' quicquz nec heredu' n'rora ingreditur villam n'ram p'd'e'am nec libertatem eiusd'm nec in aliquo se int'mittet sup' burgenses n' ho'ies quosecumqz ville et lib'tatis p'd'car seu eor' alique' de aliqua querela occasione t'ngressionem seu alia re quacu'qz infra d'cam villam seu libertatem eiusd'm em'gente nisi in defectu eord'm burgenciu. Et q'd nullus burgensis ville n're p'd'ce cogi pot'it a nobis nec heredibus n'ris fieri Receptor gen'alis dn'ij n'oi Dosewaldestr' sed tantu' modo collector exitum' quoreu'qz infra libertatem d'ce ville em'genciu'. Et q'd burgenses eiusd'm ville fugitivu' aliquem ad ecc'liam vl' cimit'iu' fugientem p' quacu'qz causa custodire non tenent' nec ad h'ui' custodiam obligant^r p'ter tantu' p' vnu' diem et vnam noctem p'mos post h'ui' fugicom'. Infra q'd tempus ip'i burgenses tenent^r inde p'munire balliuos n'ros hundredi Dosewaldestr' qui balliui siml' cu' alijs h'oibus n'ris eiusd'm hundredi custodiam fugitiui illius recipe et extunc facere tenent^r. Et q'd burgen's ville n're p'd'ce successores sui ac eor' tenentes et s'uientes quieti sunt et esse debent impp'un de oimodis feodis constabularij hostiarij ac janitoris Castri n'ri Dosewaldestr' p' quibuscumqz

felonijs tr'nsgressionibz seu occasionibz eis impositis seu imponendis ext^a lib'tatem d'ce ville factis p' quibz eos seu eor' aliquem contig'it imp'sonari in Castro 'nro p'd'co p'ter q'd constab'larius eiusd'm cast' n'ri p'cipiet semel annuati in festo S'ci Stephani martiris vnu' panem de singl'is domibz mansionu' d'coru' burgensiu' et eor' tenenciu' vl' alias nu'nu denariu' de singl'is aulis et vnu' obol'u de singl'is cotagijs mansionu' eiusd'm ville in elecco'm d'ci n'ri Constab'larij. Et eciam q'd burgenses ville n're p'd'ce non deb'nt cogi posicionem alicuius pene nec alio modo quocu'qz ad reddend' cont^a voluntatem suam aliquod iud'm int' p'tes p'l'itatum in p'ma nec in sed'a Curia si dicere seu allegare velint q'd ad illud iud'm tunc reddend' aliqua eis latet ambiguitas. Sed h'ere debent diem rac'onab'lem ad plenu' auisiamentu' capiend' ad illud reddend' Ita q'd h'ui' iud'm t'ciam curiam millatinus p' longetur. Et q'd burgenses ville n're p'd'ce ex antiquo tenent mesuagia sua in ballio eiusd'm ville scituata ab 'oimodis prisis et tolnetis c'uisie lib'a et quieta Ita q'd in eisd'm mesuagijs c'uisiam brasiare et vendere possunt sine aliqua prisa seu tolneto aliquo inde soluendo. Quibus lib'tatibus et franchisesijs p'd'cis p'd'ci burgenses n'ri et eorum antecessores ante hec temp'a vsi sunt et gauisi Nos autem p'd'cus Thom's Comes ex mera voluntate n'ra et p' auisiamentum consilij n'ri om'es et singl'as suprad'cas lib'tatu' et franchisesiar' concessionem et possessionem antiquas ratas et gratas h'entes p'iter et acceptas illas om'es et singl'as p' nobis et heredibus n'ris dilectis burgensibus n'ris p'd'cis eorum heredibus et successoribz plene imp'puu' vtendas possidendas et congaudendas approbam' ratificam' et in om'ibus p' p'sentes confirmamus. Volentes q'd licet p'd'ci burgenses n'ri vl' antecessores sui aliqua vl' aliquibz lib'tatu' seu franchisesiar' p'd'car' aliquo casu em'gente ante hec temp'a absque intru'p'one vsi non fuerint vl' eis vsi fuerint min' plene iud'm tamen burgenses eorum heredes et successores om'ibus et singl'is lib'tatibz et franchisesijs p'd'cis et earum qual't decet'o gaudeant et plene vtantur sine intru'p'one seu p'turbac'one quacu'qz n'ri vel heredum seu ministrorum n'ror' quor'cumqz imp'puu'. Et nos eciam id'm Thom's Comes de g'ra n'ra sp'iali ad releuiacom' et melioracom' ville n're p'd'ce Doswaldestr' p' Wallicos rebelles dudum combuste et deuastate volentes p't'ea burgensibus n'ris eiusd'm ville ac eoru' heredibus et successoribus gr'am in hac p'te fac'o vt'iolem. Concessim' p' nobis et heredibus n'ris et hac p'senti carta n'ra [confirmam'] eisd'm burgensibus n'ris eor' heredibus et successoribus q'd imp'pm' quieti sunt de 'oimodis theolonis lestagijs passagijs pontagijs stallagijs et de lene et de denegildes p' totam t'ram et potestatem n'ram tam in Anglia

q^m in Wallia et in Marchia Wallie: Et eciam concessimus eisd^m burgensibus n^ris eor^{um} heredibus et successoribus q^d om^{nia} mesuagia tenementa et burgagia sua infra d^ecam villam suburbm^{um} et lib^{er}tatem eiusd^m scituata imp^{er}p^{er}m^{um} teneant lib^{er}a et quieta ab o^mimodis pris^{is} et tol^{er}netis p^{er} brasiac^{one} et vendic^{one} c^{on}uisie ante hec temp^a nobis solui consuetis videlicet septem denarijs de qual^{it} bracena c^{on}uisie vendicoi^{um} expoi^{um} ib^{er}m eod^m modo quo tenent^{ur} ex antiquo mesuagia in ballio ville n^{ost}re p^{er}d^ece vt sup^a. Concessim^{us} p^{er}t^{er}ea p^{er}d^ecis burgensibus n^ris q^d tam ip^{si} eor^{um} heredes et successores q^m sui tenentes et s^uuientes quicu^{um}q^{ue} infra lib^{er}tatem d^ece ville vel ext^a vbilibet residentes imp^{er}p^{er}m^{um} quieti sint de o^mimoda consuetudine amobragij alias dicti leyrewyte. Et eciam concessim^{us} p^{er}d^ecis burgensibz n^ris eor^{um} heredibus et successoribus q^d nullus ip^{so}rum decet^{ur} o^mni imp^{er}ite^{ur} nec occasionet^{ur} sup^{er} aliquibus appellis re^{ti}is iniurijs t^{ra}ns^gressionibz criminibz calu^{er}p^{er}nijs indictamentis seu aliquibz alijs rebus eis imp^{er}oitis seu imponendis vbicu^{um}q^{ue} locorum factis seu qual^{it}cu^{um}q^{ue} em^{er}gentibz nisi solomodo in curijs Anglicanis p^{er} iud^{ic}m et det^{er}minacom^{um} anglicor^{um} tantum et non Wallicor^{um} conuincendus nisi res ille tangant nos vel heredes n^{ost}ros: Et eciam concessim^{us} p^{er}d^ecis burgensibus n^ris heredibz et successoribz suis q^d cu^{icum}q^{ue} aliquis ext^aneus seu alius quicu^{um}q^{ue} residens sup^{er} lib^{er}um tenementu^m vel lib^{er}am terram cuiuscu^{um}q^{ue} burgensiu^{um} illorum heredum vel successor^{um} suoru^{um} infra villam p^{er}d^ecam v^{el} lib^{er}tatem eiusd^m decesserit id^m decedens det^{er} burgensi illi sup^{er} cuius terram seu tenementum sic ib^{er}m residens fuerint rac^{on}abile h^{er}ietum eod^m modo quo h^{er}ui^{us} residentes sup^{er} terram lib^{er}orum tenenciu^{um} d^enij n^{ost}ri de hundredo Dosewaldestr^{um} vocat^{ur} vghelours eisd^m dare consueuerunt. Et concessim^{us} eisd^m burgensibz n^ris eorum heredibus et successoribus q^d nulli decet^{ur} o^mni liceat t^{ra}hun^{er}izare nec vendere c^{on}uisiam Salopie infra villam n^{ost}ram p^{er}d^ecam nec lib^{er}tatem eiusd^m in absq^{ue} sp^{er}iali licencia eor^{um} d^em burgensiu^{um} inde ei concessa du^{um} tamen sufficiencia abilis c^{on}uisie infra villam p^{er}d^ecam inveⁿⁱri pot^{est} ad vendend^{um} et hoc sub pena sex solidor^{um} et octo denarior^{um} argenti vnde vna medietas nobis et heredibus n^ris et alt^{er}a medietas C^{on}oitati d^ecor^{um} burgensium h^{er}ui^{us} penam fractam p^{er}sentanciu^{um} Concessim^{us} eciam p^{er}d^ecis burgensibus n^ris eorum heredibus et successoribus q^d nulli decet^{ur} o^mni liceat aliquam c^{on}uisiam ad vendend^{um} infra p^{er}riam n^{ost}ram Dosewaldestr^{um} brasiare nec aliquam c^{on}uisiam alibi locor^{um} q^{uam} infra villam n^{ost}ram p^{er}d^ecam brasiatam vender^{em} infra p^{er}riam n^{ost}ram p^{er}d^ecam sub consil^{io} pena sex solidor^{um} et octo denarior^{um} vnde vna medietas nobis et heredibus n^ris et alt^{er}a medietas burgensibus p^{er}d^ecis illam penam fractam p^{er}sentantibz et q^d det^{er}minaco^{um} h^{er}ui^{us} pene cum acciderit fiat in Cur^{ia} lib^{er}tatis

d'ce ville n're et non alibi si quis v'sus p'sentatores accom' inde p'sequi volu'it. Concessim' p'tea p'd'cis burgensibus n'ris eoru' hereditibz successoribz q'd nulli decet'o liceat t'hunt'izare nec vendere c'uism Salopie infra d'nia n'ra de Chirkelond' Melu'dley et Kynardley nec in aliquo eoru'd'm nisi solomodo infra villam n'ram de Chire sub pena que sup'a vnde vna medietas nobis et heredibus n'ris alt'a C'oitati d'cor' burgensium penam h'ui' p'sentanciu'. Concessim' insup' p'd'cis burgensibus n'ris eor' hereditibz et successoribz q'd nulli decet'o liceat cu' aliquibz au'ijs bladis victualibz m'candisis seu alijs rebus venalibz infr' d'nia n'ra Dosewaldestr', Melu'deley, Kynardeley, Eg'ley, Ruytoun seu vndecim vill' existentibus ad aliqua' feria nec aliquod m'catu' fornicecum ad ea ib'm vendend' t'nsire nec ead'm p' aliu' vendenda m't'e priusq'm cu' eisd'm m'catu' d'ce ville n're Dosewaldestr' ead'm ibi vendic'o'i exponendo attemptau'it ac si cu' eisd'm seu illor' aliquo ib'm sic vendic'o'i expo'itis et non venditis ad aliqua' feriam sive aliquod ali'd m'catu' fornicecu' extunc t'nsierit et deinde cu' eisd'm seu eor' aliquo in d'nia n'ra p'd'ca seu aliquo illor' redierit teneatur it'um m'catu' ville n're p'd'ce Dosewaldestr' attemptare tociens quociens sub consili pena vt sup'a. Concessim' eciam p'd'cis burgensibz n'ris eor' hereditibz et successoribz q'd nulli decet'o liceat pon'e nec p'sentare crucem nec penam aliqua' sup' aliquem burgensem ville n're p'd'ce p' quacu'qz causa sed inde p'sequat' v'sus eu' p' accom' in Curia n'ra p'd'ca Et eciam concessim' p'd'cis burgensibus n'ris eor' hereditibus et successoribz q'd nulli ip'or' decet'o indigeat nobis nec hereditibz n'ris reddm' aduocarie solu'e p' saluac'one bonor' seu catallor' suor' quor'cu'qz infra quodcu'qz d'nium n'rm existenciu' Sed q'd eor' bona et catalla quecu'qz rac'one h'ui' n're concessionis eisd'm salua sint et queta imp'p'uu'. Concessim' insup' p'd'cis burgensibus n'ris eor' hereditibz et successoribz q'd si aliquis decet'o fecerit affraiam pacis infra villam n'ram p'd'cam et p't' h'ui' affraiam factam ad stand' et obediend' aresto balliuor' eiusd'm ville inobediens seu in aliquo rebellis fu'it extunc h'ui' affraiam faciens et inde conuict' inc'rat penes nos et heredes n'ros penam viginti solidor' cuius pene volum' q'd nullus Sen'us nec alius Minist' nost' quicu'qz mitigacom' aliqua' fac'e valeat. Et eciam concessim' eisd'm burgensibz n'ris eor' hereditibz et successoribz q'd si aliquis ip'or' cu' ad aliquod tempus oportunu' p' balliuos n'ros eiusd'm ville seu eor' aliquem rac'onabl'it p'munit' su'monit' et vocatus fuerit ad int'nd' infra muros illius ville in meliori araa sua deffensibl'i p' custodia et deffenc'one eiusd'm sic in eand'm villam intre nolu'it sed se o'ino ext'a tenuerit o'imu'du' b'nficiu' lib'tatis

ville illius p' p'petuo am'tat. Concessim' p'tea p'd'cis burgen-
bus n'ris eor' heredibz et successoribz q'd nullus i'por' decet'o
coget' y' nullum ministru' nec s'uiemtem n'rm nec heredum
n'ror' aliquem equum ip'or' burgensiu' nec alicuius ip'orum ad
vsum h'iu' Ministri n'ri vl' s'uiemtis seu alt'ius cuiuscun'qz absqz
mera voluntate sua accomodare nec locare nisi solomodo ad
sp'ialem vsum n'rm et heredum n'ror' p' balliuos n'ros eiusd'm
ville tantu et non alios lib'and. Et eciam concessim' p'd'cis
burgensibus n'ris eor' heredibus et successoribz q'd si ip'or'
aliquis quod absit decet'o deueniat rebellis adherens et se
annectens p'ditoribus Regis et regni Anglie vel p'ditorie p'ponat
seu concenciat cum aliquibz p'ditoribus vel rebellis dampnu'
decepiom grauamen seu aliud p'iud'm quodecumqz inferre ville
n're Dosewaldestr' p'd'ce ceu alicui fideli h'oi eiusd'm seu eciam
si quis ip'orum cum ad aliquod onus statum d'ce ville vel c'oitatis
burgensium eiusd'm tangens decet'o ex c'oi considerac'one
eiusd'm c'oitatis assedatus et adiunctus fuerit et h'ui' onus
suum debite adm'te et portare noluerit sed co'mune factum et
iud'm C'oitatis p'd'ce oi'no contrariau'it et inde p' vtlag'iam seu
aliam qu'acumqz debitam det'minacom' in Curia n'ra ville
p'd'ce conuictus fuerit a lib'tate ville illius et oi' beneficio
eiusd'm cum tota sequela sua penitus imp'puu' priuet'. Et nos
p'd'cus Thom's Comes et heredes nostri om'es et sing'las
lib'tates et franchises p'd'cas dilectis burgensibz n'ris p'd'cis
eor' heredibus et successoribus plene et pacifice imp'pm'
vtendas possidendas et congaudendas Warantizabim' et imp'pm'
deffendemus. In cuius rei testion' huic p'senti carte n're
sigillum n'rm fecimus apponi Hijs testibus Johanne Boerlee
Doud Holbache Johanne Wele Johanne Babelake Ricardo de
Laken Johanne Bartelot Will'mo Ryman et multis alijs. Dat'
apud Osewaldestr' vicesimo quinto die mensis Januarij anno
regni Regis Henrici quarti post conquestum octauo.

ABSTRACT OF THE CONTENTS OF THE ABOVE.

To all the faithful in Christ who shall see the present charter
Thomas Earl of Arundell and Surrey Lord of Oswaldestre
Greeting in the Lord.

Know ye that whereas our vill of Oswaldestre in the Marches
of Wales as well by grants of diuers of our predecessors in
diuers charters writings and muniments inspected by us and
by our council as also from the ancient enjoyment of diuers
liberties and franchises belonging to a vill and burgh-merchant
has been and is still privileged to wit.

(Here follow an enumeration of the privileges granted or
confirmed, of which the following are the principal) :—

Right to levy distress.

Exemption from right of lord to seize goods on decease of a burgess dying with or without a will.

Right to levy a tax on strangers for selling provisions within the Borough.

Right to levy a tax upon provisions.

Right to elect who shall be burgesses.

Exemption from toll, lastage, pontage, stallage, lene and danegeld.

Prohibition on all who are not in scott and lott and under assessment and tallage from selling undressed hides or new cloth within the Borough.

Exemption of burgesses from liability to seizure of their goods by the Lord in certain cases of debt.

Right of Burgesses to be tried only before the Steward and Bailiffs and before their peers and not before foreigners, excepting only in matters affecting the Lord or the Borough in which cases the trial shall be according to the customs of the Burgesses of the vill of Salop.

Exemption of Burgesses from sitting on juries outside the Borough.

Right to have a prison.

Cases within the Borough to be tried before the Steward and Bailiffs.

No steward of the Lord to interfere with the franchise of the Borough.

No Burgess to be made the Lord's receiver-general for the Lordship of Oswestry but only a collector of the dues arising within the Borough.

The Bailiffs are not to be obliged to keep the custody of fugitives for more than a night and a day, but within that time to give information to the Bailiffs of the Hundred.

Exemption of Burgesses from all fees to the constable and officers of the castle in respect of offences committed outside the Borough for which persons are brought to the castle prison; nevertheless the constable may claim one penny from every mansion house and one farthing from every cottage once a year.

Rights with regard to pleading.

Exemption from tax upon beer within the Borough to wit the accustomed tax of 7 pence upon every brewing of beer.

Exemption from every kind of custom of amobragium otherwise called leyrewyte.

(This was a fee payable to the Lord of a manor on the marriage of his tenants.)

Burgesses to be tried in English Courts by Englishmen not by Welshmen.

Burgesses to be entitled to a heriot on the death of a tenant of their houses or lands in the same way that the Lord is entitled in the lordship of Oswestry to what is called "ughe-lours."

Fine of 8 shillings and sixpence of which half is to go to the Lord on the sale of beer within the Borough without a licence.

The same for brewing without a licence.

The same fine to be levied in Chirkland, Molverley and Kinnerley but Shrewsbury beer may be sold in the vill of Chirk.

No merchandise to be offered for sale within the Lordship of Oswestry Molverley Kinnerley Edgerley or Ruyton of the eleven towns until it has been first offered for sale in the Borough of Oswestry.

Penalty for affray within the Borough 20 shillings which the Steward shall not mitigate.

Any one refusing to assist in the defence of the Borough shall lose his Burgess rights.

No horse of a Burgess to be seized against the will of the owner for the use of the Lord's officers.

If any Burgess join the rebels or robbers or become an outlaw (quod absit!) he loses the benefits of his rights as a Burgess.

In testimony of which to this present charter of ours our seal we have caused to be affixed.

These the witnesses ¹John Boerley ²David Holbache, John

¹ "John Boerley, or Burley, was an eminent person in his day, and a barrister at law. He was nephew to Sir Richard Boerley, K.G., and father of William Boerley, Speaker of the House of Commons. His wife, for whom jointly with himself a chauntry was founded in the Abbey of Shrewsbury in 1414, was a lady of quality, daughter of Reginald Lord Grey de Ruthyn."—(Blakeway's *Hist. of Shrewsbury*. Vol. II., p. 139.)

"He was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1409. He was seated at Bromcroft in Corvedale. He was one of the standing council to the Earls of Arundell and Stafford, and in that capacity attests the charter granted by the former nobleman to the Burgesses of Oswestry in 8 Hen. IV. The family became extinct in the male line on the death of his son William, who was Speaker of the House of Commons in 1436."—(Blakeway's *Sheriffs of Shropshire*.) He was M.P. for Shropshire in 1399 and in 1410.—(Prynne's *Brevia Parl. rediviva*.)

² David Holbache, probably the same as the founder of the grammar school at Oswestry. Cathrall, in his *History of Oswestry*, says he was "a lawyer, steward of the towne and lordship, who was made a

Wele, John Babelake, ¹Richard de Laken, John Bartelot, William Ryman and many others.

Given at Oswaldestrey the 25th day of the month of January in the 8th year of the reign of King Henry the fourth after the conquest.

No. V.

25 Jan. 8th Henr. IV. A.D. 1407.

Of the same date as the foregoing is this Release by the Earl of Arundell to the Burgesses of Oswestry.

Deed of Release by the Earl of Arundell to the Burgesses of Oswestry.

Vniu'sis ad quos presentes l're p'uen'int Thomas Comes Arundell et Surr' sal'tm in D'no. Cum Ric'us auus n'r nup' Comes Arundell' et Surr' p' testamentum suu' legauit C'oitati Burgensiu' et tenencium ville sue Dosewaldestre in Marchia Wallie centum libras argenti in auxilium et releuamen genciu' illius ville p' mercandisis faciend' vt pro thesauro eiusdem ville ib'm p' p'petuo remansuras. Cuiusquidm' su'me Centum librar' due p'tes expendebantur p' C'oitatem genciu' pred'cor' in diu'sis arduis et necessarijs negocijs coe'm statum eor'd'm tangentibz temp'e quo Ric'us vltimus Rex Anglie D'nim n'rm ib'm occupauit et residuu' su'me suprad'ce p' maiori p'te in manibz taliu' creditor' remansit quor' quid'm p' p'sentem rebellionem Wallie finalit' depaup'ati decesserunt et alij quid'm in diu'sas p'tes regni Anglie p' victu eor' querendo et mendicando se retraxerunt unde nulla distrinco' capi potuit p'ut p' debitam examinac'oem inde p' nos et consiliu' n'rm factam plene concepimus Sciatis nos p'd'em Thomam Comitem p' auisiammentum consilij n'ri p'd'ei considerantes tam paup'tatem Burgensiu' et tenenciu' n'ror' p'd'cor' q'm graue onus quod ip'i ad sustentac'oem et saluam custodiam ville n're p'd'ce p' tempus p'sentis rebellionis Wallie sustinuerunt et adhuc sustinent

denizen or free citizen of England." As colleague of John Boerley he appears as knight of the shire in 1410, and in 1414 as colleague of Richard Laken.—(Prynne's *Brevia Parl. rediviva*.)

¹ Richard Laken, Kt., was of the ancient family of that name seated at Laken, or Lacon near Wem. By marrying the heiress of Hamond Peshall, of Willey, he greatly raised his family, as from this match a moiety of the barony of Corbet, of Caus, devolved upon his descendants. Sir Richard was ancestor in the seventh degree of Rowland Lacon, Knight of Kinlet, whose only daughter married Sir William Childe, Kt. He was knight of the shire in 1414, and sheriff in 1415.—(Blakeway's *Sheriffs of Shropshire*.)

Remissimus relaxauimus et om'io pro nobis et heredibz n'ris imp'pm' quiete clamauius C'oitati p'd'cor' Burgensiu et tenenciu' ville n're p'd'ce 'oimodas acciones iura clamea et demandas que nobis competeabant seu compet'e deberent quouismodo in p'd'cis Centu' libris argenti seu visu ear'dm' rac'oe legacionis aui n'ri p'd'ci. Ita q' nec nos p'd'eus Thomas Comes heredes nec executores n'ri aliquod ius clamen accionem vel demandam in pred'cis centu' libris argenti nec in visu ear'dm' decet'o exig'e vel vindicare pot'imus quouismodo set ab om'i accione iuris et clamei in eisdem p'p'sentes simus exclusi imp'pm. Et nos p'terea id'm Thom's Comes de g'ra n'ra speciali in auxiliu' et confortamen Burgensiu' quor'cumqz tenenciu et residenciu' ville n're p'd'ce p' nobis et heredibz n'ris remisim' relaxauimus et p' presentes p'donauimus p'd'cis Burgensibz tenentibz et residentibz ac eor' cuil't 'oimoda calu'pnia acciones querelas seu demandas que h'uimus habemus seu h'ere debuissim' vl' potuim' v'sus p'd'eos Burgenses tenentes seu residentes vel eor' aliquem tam r'one alicuius m'candise f'ce eum rebellis Wallensis in emendo vendendo seu excambiando au'ia victualia seu alias res quascumqz q'm alicuius insurrexionis transgrecionis colloquij seu comunicac'ois fact' cum h'ui rebellis vel eor' aliquo seu cuiuscuzqz manucap'ois vel plegiagij a principio mundi vsqz in diem confectionis p'senciu'. Ita q' nullus Burgensiu' tenenciu' nec residenciu' p'd'cor' p' nos heredes nec Ministros n'ros quoscuzqz occasione p'd'cor' seu eor' aliquo ex p'te n'ra nec heredu' n'ror' occasionetur molestetur nec quoquo modo grauetur infuturu' Sed ab oi'modis calu'pnijs accionibz et querelis v'sus eos vel eor' aliquem inde ex p'te n'ra vel heredu' n'ror' conceptis vel concipiendis que ante f'm Epiphanie D'ni vltimu' p't'itum in rotulis Curiar' ville n're p'd'ce p' plenu' et patens recordum det'minata non fuerunt quieti sint et quil't eor' quietus sit et indempnis conseruetus imp'pm. In cui' rei testi'om huic p'senti scripto n'ro sigillum n'rm fecimus apponi. Hijs testibz Joh'ne Boerly David Holbach Joh'ne Babelake Joh'ne Bartlet Ric'o Laken' et alijs. Dat' apud Oswaldest'r vicesimo quinto die mensis Januarij anno regni Regis Henrici quarti post conquestum octavo.

ABSTRACT OF THE FOREGOING.

A release of 100 pounds which the grandfather of Thomas Richard Earl of Arundell and Surrey had left to the Burgesses together with a pardon for all those who had held converse with the Welsh rebels during the late disturbances.

These the witnesses: John Boerley, David Holbach, John Babelake, John Bartelot, Richard Laken, and others.

No. VI.

13 Sep. A.D. 1432.

This is a lease by the Abbot of Haughmond of the Heath mill at Ruyton to Roger Adcot. On the back of this lease is a transcript of the first charter in this catalogue. There is also on the back another defaced document, which will be here copied as far as it can be deciphered.

The Religious House of Haughmond, originally a Priory, afterwards an Abbey, was founded about the year 1130 by William Fitzalan. It was the burial place of the family of its founder, and in successive generations was richly endowed by them and by others. The patronage of the Abbey was in the gift of the Fitzalans. Richard Burnell was elected Abbot in 1421 and resigned in 1463.—(Eyton's *Ant. of Shrop.*)

The Heath mill (molendinum de Bruerio) with its fishery was given to Haughmond Abbey by John Le Strange IV. about the year 1270. One moiety of the profits was to go to the Canons of Haughmond themselves; with the other moiety they were to provide two candles to burn at the head and foot of the tomb of Johanna, the grantor's wife.—(Eyton's *Ant. of Shrop.* Vol. X., p. 115.)

From the same source we learn that in 1468 John, Abbot of Haughmond, demised the Hethe-mill for 61 years to Richard Irlonde, of Oswestry, gentleman, at a rent of 10s. for 41 years and of 13s. for 20 years.

Perhaps this last paragraph may indicate the channel through which this lease has found its way among the Corporation records, for its term was only half run out when the new lease was granted.

The site of the Heath mill-pool and dam may still be traced on the Weir brook between Pradoc and Hanley Hall. The mill was taken down late in the last century, the embankment was levelled early in this, and cattle now graze where the swans used to swim. The mill-stones form part of the

pavement in front of a cottage which stands where the mill-house probably stood.

Lease by the Abbot and Convent of Haughmond to Roger Adecot, of Hethe Mill, in the Lordship of Ruyton.

Sciunt p'sentes et fut^ui q'd nos Ric'us Burnell Dei g'ra Abbas Monast'ij S'ci John'nis Euangl'iste de Haughmond' et eiusd'm loci conuent' ex vnaie' concessu concessim' et hac p'senti carta n'ra indentata ad firmam t'didimus Rog'o Adecot Molendinu n'rm aquaticu' vocatu Hethe Mulle cu' stangno et c'su aque eiusd'm Mol'i infra D'nm de Ruyton. Hend' et tenend' p'd'e'm Molend' et stangu' eiusd'm cu' c'su aque et om'ibz p'tin' suis de nobi et successoribz n'ris p'd'co Rog'o Adecot et suis a festo S'ci Mich'is Arch'i. Anno D'ni Mill'mo Quadringentesimo Tricesimo s'cdo vsqz ad fine' sexaginta annor' p'x'ior sequenciu' et plenarie completor'. Reddend' inde annuat' nobis et successoribz n'ris quatuordecem solid' Reddit' annual' ad festa Sci Mich'is Arch'i et Anunciacionis beate Marie p' equales porc'ones. Et edificando rep'ando manutenendo et sustentando p'd'em Molend' et gurgite' eiusd'm Mol' cu' stangno p'd'co et pisces eiusd'm stangni sup'tubz suis p'p'is et expensis m'emio D'ni d'co Rog'o et suis ad hoc lib'ato tociens quociens necesse fuerit t'm'io durante sup'a d'co. Et utlerius res'uand' nob' et successoribz n'ris medietate o'im pisc'm et Angillar' eiusd'm stangni et g'gitis ib'm. Et cu' stangu' fuerit fractu' et ad pisces capiend' nos et successores n'ri nec ne et ip'e Rog'us seu sui facient et rap'abu't d'em stangu' adeo b'n et secure sicut erat p'antea. Et ecia' p'd'eus Rog'us et sui custodiant duos vet'es cignos sup' stangu' ib'm ad cust' sustencom' ip'i Rog'i et sui t'm'io p'd'co durante res'uand' nob' et successoribz n'ris vna' medietatem anu' et pullor' eor'd'm de anno in annu'. Et si d'eus reddu's aret' fuerit in p'te vel in toto ad aliqua' t'mu' quo solui debeat q'd tunc b'n liceat nob' et successoribz n'ris in p'd'co Molend' cu' p'tiu' p' reddu' sic aret' distring'e et distrinc'oes captas retinere q'usq' de d'co reddu' sic aret' vna cu' Arreragijs si que fuerint plenar' fuerit satisfac'm vel p' solut'. Et si sufficiens distrinc'o in d'co Molend' inueniri non pot'it post vnu' quart'iu' anni q'd tunc b'n liceat nob' et successoribz n'ris in p'd'co Molend' cu' p'tiu' reint'are et in p'st'iuo statu rehabe'r. Concionibz p'd'cis in aliquo non obstantibz Et ecia' i'pe Rog'us et sui in fue t'm'j p'd'ci lx annor' p'd'em Molend' cu' omi' appatu eiusd'm Mol'i edificac'oe Molaribz ferris ac alijs om'ibz p'tiu' suis s'sum reddet et dimittet in adeo bono statu seu meliori qua' illud aliquo temp'e factu' fuerit pena C's D'no seu successoribz suis inc'renda vn' t'cia p's pene p'd'ce

leuab'lis D'no Curie in qua Cur' placitu fuerit. Et nos v's
p'd'ci Abbas et Conuentus p'd'em Molend' stangu' et cusu'.
Aque cu' om'ibz suis p'tiu' p'd'co Rog'o Adecone et suis vsq' ad
fine' p'd'ci t'nij sexaginta annor cont^a om'es gentes. War-
rantizabim' et indampne deffendem'. In cui' rei testiom' vni
p'ti hui' carte indentate penes p'd'em Rog'm remanenti nos
p'd'ci Abbas et conuent' sigillu' n'rm co'ie apposum'. Alt'i
vero p'ti eiusd'm carte indentate penes nos res'uati p'd'eus
Rog'us sigillu' suu' apposuit. Dat' in co'i cappit'lo n'ro die
Martis p'xi'a ante festu Sci Mich'is Arch'i Anno D'ni sup^ad'co.

[On the dorse of the foregoing document there is a copy of
a charter from the Earl of Arundel to the Burgesses in 47
Henry III., A.D. 1262-3. Also of certain "Compositions."]

ABSTRACT OF THE FOREGOING.

Richard Burnell, Abbot of the Monastery of St. John the
Evangelist, of Haughmond and the Convent of the same place,
to Richard Adecone.

Lease of Heath Mill with the mill-stream and stank, within
the Lordship of Ruyton, for 60 years at 14 shillings a year rent.

Agreement by lessee to repair, etc., and to preserve the fish
at his own cost.

Half of the fish and of the eels to go to the lessors.

Two full-grown swans to be kept on the pool, and half the
cygnets to be reserved for the lessors.

Power of re-entry in case of arrear of rent.

Premises to be returned on expiration of the lease in as good
or better state under penalty of 100 shillings.

No. VII.

This document, which is on the same parchment as
the preceding, is so greatly defaced, that we merely
print what can be deciphered without note of any kind.

Incip^t composiciones confect' Burgenc' vill' dos' In p'mis
q^d Caritas D maneat int' nosmetip's in et^ana vna
in assensu in nostris act'. Et q^d balliui n'ri vident
oe's cap'nos eccl'ie re sint et gerunt de bona gest
. et g ad exercend' diuinis suic' sed'm ordine'
clerical' et spiritual' et qd cap'ns s'ce Marie V'ginis q' p' tem-
pore fu'it sit paratu cotidie aselebrand' missa' in ca'e
rio b'te Marie q^d (sic) hora' sexta' in aurora p't' in
autu'pno tempore celebra ap^d horam quita' et q^d sacrista et
aquarij pulsent campanas igniteg' diatim dimid, hor' ante hora'

vij^o et dimidiu' post in vesp'e viatores att'at' ac
 alienigene p unt defendere hospiciu' et om'es artifice'
 cessare de labore . . mpana' die' in te'pore hyeme' et ver viz' de
 festo S'ci Luce euangelist' us^o fest S'ci c'o'gorie' pape et aiiuigene
 et artifice' p unt ut sup^a et q^d sac'ist custon'
 horitud' sic^t qseut' fuerit p' stipendis xx^{ti} solid' It
 q's de g^a statu erit moverit ac temptau'it mat'ia causa' l' aliq^u
 aliam reur sona't' et tangent' int'upc'one' et p'turbac'o
 confribz n'ris resident' l' libertat' et vtilitat' n'ra p tue
 ballui ac om'es 'fres congreg' aule sue p'
 nicone' dat ex 'satelit n'ror' hora' assignand' ad avisame
 p'pt' deffenc'one' abinde It'm eat alicui
 burgenc' h'ent' neq^o terras tenement' descendere in ope'
 ut non possit ad honest canf'ribz suis et libe vill'
 opportun' erit de quilibet tenec' es de ad
 suu' supportand' vnu' denariu' soluend' quilih't quatu
 ig'e vnu' honest' hoie'm forinc' de artifice'
 erit p't' mercat' de grossar' Et ille forincie' sit lib
 occupand' libertat' burgenc' p't' durant' vit dict'
 confr'is p veniet voc t' honest
 confratri.

The following is also on the dorse :—

Molin' dimitti'bat^u Edward Slym a^o xxxvrij^o Reg'
 Henric' vj^{ti} Et redd'us ij's dimitt' Ric'o p

a^o p'mo Edward iiij^{ti}

Et t'min' fuiet in a^o D'ni Mill'mo CCCC^{mo} monagesimo sed'o
 Et sic rem' aretro a^o xiiij an'i.

Also endorsed :—

Pertinet' Abbat Haugmond'.

(To be continued).

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE
RUCKLEY GRANGE ESTATE, SALOP,
AND THE FAMILIES CONNECTED THEREWITH.

By H. F. J. VAUGHAN.

THE following account has been drawn up principally from deeds relating to the estate and notes given by Rev. R. W. Eyton to a family formerly resident at Ruckley Grange. Other sources have been searched for information too numerous to mention, and since constant reference to each authority would break the continuity of the narrative, it has been thought best to omit them, with this explanation on the part of the writer, who is rather a compiler than an author. The use of the above-mentioned notes and other documents was placed at his disposal some years ago, in order that he might draw out from them a short history of this beautiful little estate for the owners of it.

Rokeley, Rocley, or Ruckley as it is now called, is a property of some 400 acres, partly in the parish of Tong and partly in that of Shiffnal, from which latter town it is distant about three miles. It originally formed part of the manor of Tong, which in the time of Edward the Confessor was held by Morcar, Earl of Northumberland, and is traditionally said to have been the seat of Hengist, the Saxon leader, who was invited by Vortigern, the British King, to assist him against the inroads of the Picts and Scots. In this tradition there is probably, as in most, a residuum of truth; but, like so many of those relating to the British Kings, which have been imported into Brittany and there localized, this also

was probably imported from Kent, which we know was given by Vortigern to the Saxons he had invited to assist him, and where also there is a Tong Castle, surrounded by very ancient earthworks, which may have formed the stronghold of the British King's brave but treacherous ally. At the Norman Conquest Tong was taken from its Saxon possessor, and conferred by William on Hugh de Montgomery in 1071. It must not, however, be supposed that the Saxons quietly acquiesced in the forfeiture of their estates, since they held out against the Norman rule, both in the Fen Countries and in the Western Counties; and even towards the end of the first William's reign, the Earls Morcar and Edwin were sufficiently formidable to make William Giffard, then Chancellor, induce the Sovereign to emancipate the Saxons from some of the most trying disabilities under which they were suffering, and restore some of the laws of Edward the Confessor. Earl Morcar survived until the reign of William Rufus, though then a prisoner on account of his having become an outlaw and being captured at Ely. William, however, acting upon the dying wish of his father the Conqueror, released him with others, but he again fell into captivity, and was finally killed by some of his own people. Roger de Montgomery, the Norman Lord of Tong, was one of the most powerful of William's friends, and connected with the Conqueror by his father's marriage with Joscelina, niece of Gunnora, Duchess of Normandy, who was great-grandmother of the Conqueror. He was created Earl of Arundel, and married twice. By his second wife Adeliza, daughter of Ebrard de Pusaic, he had a son, Ebrard, a priest and chaplain to King Henry I., and by his first wife Mabel, daughter and heir of William Talvace, Lord of Belesme in La Perche, he had, with other issue, Robert de Montgomery, generally called from his mother Robert de Belesme, Earl of Arundel and Shrewsbury, to which he succeeded on the death of his brother Hugh in 1098. This Robert de Belesme was the most powerful subject of his day, and, according to Orderic,

cruel and rapacious. He does not seem to have resided at Tong, though there was apparently a castle there at that date, (on a different site from the present one, however, and from which the name of Castle Hill is derived); but it was during his tenure of these lordships that the Churches of Donington and Tong were built. His principal foundation was the Castle of Bridgnorth, whither he fled when accused of treasonable conduct in favour of Robert, Duke of Normandy, against Henry I., calling around him his adherents, and bidding defiance to the King. Three months served to reduce Arundel Castle, and immediately, the monarch, pursuing his rebellious subject into Shropshire, laid siege to Bridgnorth, which contained a garrison of 700 men. The inhabitants of the town, however, at the invitation of the King, and probably also fearing the consequences to themselves if they abetted Belesme's treason, turned upon their defenders and delivered up the town. Thence Henry marched to Shrewsbury through a thick wood, which was felled to afford a passage to his troops, and upon his arrival the Earl in despair gave himself up. His life was spared, but he was compelled to quit the kingdom, and retired to Normandy, where he still possessed thirty-four castles after the forfeiture of his English estates. Here he continued to espouse the side of Duke Robert, until again falling into the hands of Henry, who was then trying to obtain possession of the Norman Dukedom, he was imprisoned for life in Wareham Castle, thus sharing a similar fate to that of the Royal Duke whom he had served. Belesme's connection with Tong ceased in 1102, when his English estates were declared forfeited, and his castle of Arundel was conferred on the Queen, Adeliza, daughter of Godfrey Lorraine, Duke of Brabant, who after the death of her first husband married William de Albini, in her right Earl of Arundel, and their great grand-daughter and co-heiress, Isabel de Albini, carried the Earldom and estate to the family of Fitzalan, by her marriage with John, son of William Fitzalan, Lord of Oswestry,

who married the great Shropshire heiress, Isabel, Lady of Clun, daughter and heir of Ingelram de Say, and with their representatives it remains to the present day. Henry Plantagenet did not long retain the manor of Tong in his possession, but conferred it upon an aspiring Churchman, Richard de Belmeis, Bishop of London. This family of Belmeis has been represented as belonging to that of Belesme, of which, however, there is no proof; but they certainly were in high favour with the Earl, and attest many of his charters. They may very probably have been stewards for his estates in this part of Shropshire, and took their name from their seat in the parish of Donington, now called Beamish. There was a most interesting and picturesque old house there called Beamish Hall, standing within the memory of man, but the Shrewsbury and Birmingham Railway passing over its site, it was pulled down, and a commodious, but ugly, farm-house built in its stead. Bishop Belmeis was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1102, and dying in 1127, was interred in the Priory of St. Osyth, the following inscription being upon his tomb:—

Hic jacet Richardus Beauveis cognomine Rufus London Episcopus, vir probus et grandævus, per totam vitam laboriosus, fundator noster religiosus et qui multa bona nobis et ministris ecclesiæ suæ Scti Pauli contulit. Obiit XVI. Januarii MCXXVII. Cujus animæ propitietur Altissimus.

He was succeeded by Philip de Belmeis, the son of his brother Walter de Belmeis, in his Lordships of Tong and Donington. It is difficult to say when these two lordships were divided, but the family of De Belmeis were Lords of Donington after the Lordship of Tong had passed away with an heiress of the elder branch. Philip de Belmeis took the side of Stephen in the civil war of that period, and was present at the siege of Shrewsbury. He was also a great benefactor to the church, being a co-founder of (or at least greatly enriching) Buildwas Abbey on the banks of the Severn near Ironbridge, and subsequently, having received a company of Canons of St. Augustin from Dorchester, about nine

miles from Oxford, where they had located themselves after their introduction into England in 1140, he gave them a temporary domicile at Lizzard Grange in Shropshire, and afterwards built for them—about 1150—the magnificent Abbey of Lilleshall, whose ruins still serve to beautify the estate of the Duke of Sutherland, at that place. It may be remarked in passing, that another author states that, on the death of Bishop Belmeis, the Lordship of Tong passed to his nephew Philip, that of Donington to Richard de Belmeis. Here the history of Ruckley becomes distinct from that of its parent estate of Tong, for it was this Philip de Belmeis who, in conjunction with Richard de Belmeis, gave the Ruckley estate to Buildwas Abbey, whence it became church land and a Grange, as Abbey farms were called. The following is the deed of gift :—

Notum sit omnibus ecclesie Christi fidelibus, clericis et laicis modernis et posteris quod ego Ricardus de Belmeis cum consensu et consilio uxoris meæ et fratrum meorum concessi et dedi Abbati et Monachis de Bildwas totam communem pasturam per totam terram meam ovibus suis et ceteris animalibus quæ habent apud Rochele. Et ut ad illam pasturam sine ullo impedimento possint venire dedi eis in perpetuum tres acras de terra mea juxta rivulum subtus Chalfesford, ubi pontem suam ultra aquam ponant. Hanc itaque terram cum predicta pastura dedi Deo et Sanctæ Mariæ et predictis Monachis in perpetuam elemosinam pro salute animæ meæ et patris et matris meæ et ceterorum parentum meorum ita libere et quiete ab omni terreno servitio et exactione seculari ut nihil mihi nec meis in ea retinuerim nisi tutelam et protectionem contra omnes qui eis in aliquo adversari voluerint. Hujus meæ donacionis et confirmationis isti sunt testes, Barnardus de Saint, cum Alano de Bildwas, et Adâ Sacerdote, Philippo fratre ipsius Ricardi, Radulfo Venatore, Humone de Shakerlaw, De Monachis Adam et Gaufridus cum fratre Rogerio, totusque conventus.

This Richard Belmeis is supposed to have been cousin to Philip Belmeis, Lord of Tong, though he calls him frater and apparently had other fratres. Indeed Philip, the donor of the Buckley estate, though he left two sons, viz., Philip, who died in 1159 without issue,

and Ralph or Ranulph, who died without issue in 1167, was ultimately represented by his daughter Adelicia, the heiress of her brothers and wife of Alan la Zouche. And yet, we have the following notices of members of this family at subsequent periods. Robert de Beaumes was a vassal at Tong in 1255, whose son, Hugh de Belmeis, fought for Henry III. at Kenilworth, where he had two horses killed. He was an attendant on that monarch, who granted him permission to hunt the fox, badger, and wild cat in the royal forests of Shropshire and Staffordshire, and in 1267 gave him the marriage of Isabella, widow of Robert de Beysin, as a recompense for his good services, and again somewhat later, viz., July 5th, 1270, the fine arising from Hillaria de Harcourt's marriage. Walter de Beaumes also appears as defendant in a suit at the assizes of 1221, for stopping up a road in Brewood to the injury of Leticia, relict of William de Omfreiston of Omfreston.

The Abbey of Buildwas, the ruins of which are beautifully situated on the river Severn, and attract the attention of passengers in the Severn Valley Railway, was founded in 1135 by Roger de Clinton, Bishop of Chester. It has, however, been asserted that the Bishop only gave the site, and that Matilda de Bohun, wife of Sir Robert Burnell, was its true founder, though this seems not to have been the case. It was dedicated to St. Mary and St. Chad, and was of the order of Sevigny, which was subsequently united to that of the Cistercians. The Abbeys of Ystrad Marchal in Montgomery, and St. Mary in Dublin, were subject to its Abbot as visitor. It will be seen, that the gift by Philip and Richard de Belmeis, of Ruckley, was amongst the earliest benefactions to the newly founded institution, the date of the above deed being about 1139, but it was not a very valuable gift so far as the land was concerned, since at that time it was probably little more than uncultivated common land, and being very sandy, its produce on the higher parts would not keep many sheep or other cattle; the valleys, however, near the streams

which after their union form the river Werf, would be much more productive of good pasturage. The monks are known to have been very good landlords, and in many instances studied agriculture with the intention of improving their lands, while the fact that their estates were preserved by the ban of the Church, before which, at that time, even kings trembled, enabled their tenants to live in peace, and expend with security far more labour and wealth on their holdings than the vassal of any lay lord dare attempt. There is no doubt that Church tenants were somewhat despised by those of the neighbouring Barons, who were more warlike, but the lands of the Religious must have been nearly the only ones which received proper and regular cultivation in that rude state of society, and they performed a valuable service to the community at large by the abundance and excellence of their produce, while they also enriched their immediate owners. It was probably from this cause that Ruckley has been always in a state of high cultivation, while the neighbouring land of Upton continued a wild common until within the memory of man. The only persons in those days who could in any sense be said to enjoy a peaceable possession of their property were those who were either themselves Churchmen, or held under some monastic body, and there are not wanting cases in which hard-pressed families resorted to the expedient of giving up their lands to a neighbouring Abbey and receiving them back as tenants, thus rendering them more secure than they would otherwise have been. The Cistercian Order was really a reformation of the Benedictine rule, which had been gradually relaxed, and numbers among its members many eminent men, such as the Abbots Stephen and Bernard. One of the rules of the Order was, that its houses should not be in cities, but that spots in the country should be selected, where the brethren might live a life of contemplation away from the world, and since a considerable portion of the time not employed in singing the Divine Office was given to manual labour in the fields, the lands

of the Religious were well cared for, and from their own knowledge of agriculture they were likely to introduce all possible improvements amongst their tenantry. We have only the names of the following Abbots of Buildwas: Nicholas in the time of Walter de Dunstanville, Simon, Henry II., Ed. II., and Stephen the last Abbot. In the Taxation of Pope Nicholas the Abbey and its lands is valued at £104 18s. 7d., by the Commissioners of Henry VIII. at £129 6s. 10d., or a net income of £110 19s. 3½d., and at the dissolution it contained 14 monks. Before passing on to the tenants of Ruckley, the following charter referring to the estate will be found interesting, marking as it does a subsequent grant of land on the Upton side, by Alan la Zouche, and this probably bears reference to the land near what is now called Monk's pool, and other parts which are in the parish of Shiffnal.

Noverint universi quod ego, Petronilla de Monteforti domina de Ideshale, filia quondam de Walteri de Dunstanville inspexi et sensibilter inspexi, cartam patris mei quam fecit viris religiosi Abbati et conventui de Bildewas &c. in hæc verba, Hæc est conventis facta annis regni regis Henrici xxxij inter Nicholaum abb et conventu de Buldewas et Dominum Walterum de Dunstanville, dominum de Ideshale, videlicet quod prædictus abbas et conventus remiserunt et concesserunt dicto Waltero et hæredibus suis villam de Upton cum pertinentiis suis quam habuerunt de Alano de la Zuche tenendam et habendam sibi et hæredibus suis de dicto Abbate et successoribus suis pro xl sol argenti annuatim ad duos terminos silicet ad Festum Beatæ Mariæ in Martio xx sol et ad Festum Stⁱ Michaelis xx sol apud ecclesiam de Ideshale dicto Abbati et successoribus suis, vel eorum nuncio, de liberis hominibus suis subscriptis et eorum hæredibus imperpetuum, videlicet de Herebertō de Wyke xvij sol pro una virgata terræ quam habet in Wyke, de Ricardo de Castello octo sol et dictus etiam Walterus remisit et quietam clamavit imperpetuum de se et hæredibus dicto Abbati et conventui et successoribus suis redditum iij quam ab eis annuatim percipere consuevit pro brueria de Hathtone. Dedit etiam et concessit prædictus Walterus præfatis Abbati et conventui pasturam habendam ad ccc oves per majus centum cubantes et levantes ad grangias suas de Haltone et de Roclege per totam infra has di-

visas, exceptis bladis et fratis scilicet a terra de Haltone per viam regiam quæ ducit de Bipeswic usque ad Villam de Upton, et de Upton per eandem viam usque ad Stauntone et sic subtus Stauntone per Sichetum quod vocatur Sparkmore descendo usque ad Wornh et inde usque ad pontem de Rocleg sine impedimento alicujus. Et sciendum quod bene liceat dicto Waltero appruare sibi et suis infra dictas divisas, ita tamen quod iidem Abbas et conventus et successores sui habeant liberum et largum ingressum et regressum et sufficientem pasturam omni tempore anni ad prædictas ccc oves, et postquam blada et fæna levata fuerint habebunt pasturam per totum infra prædictas divisas. Et prædictus Abbes et successores sui prædictam villam cum pertinentiis prædicto Waltero et hæredibus suis contra omnes homines varintizabunt &c. Hiis testibus, dominus Henrico de Penneburg, Waltero de Pedwardine, Johanne filio Philippi, Hugone de Westone militibus, &c.

This charter, confirming a previous one, was made by Petronilla de Montfort, who was the daughter and finally heir of Walter de Dunstanville, 1270, Lord of Idshale. The pedigree begins with Reginald de Dunstanville, 1124, the second husband of Adelina de Insula, daughter of Humphrey de Insula, a person of distinction in Wiltshire. They had issue, Alan de Dunstanville, Lord of Idshale, 1156, whose son Walter married Hawise des Priaux, 1195, and had issue Walter de Dunstanville, 1240, who married Petronilla, daughter of William Fitzalan, by whom he was father of another Walter de Dunstanville, 1270, who by his second wife Rohesia left a daughter and heiress Petronilla de Dunstanville, the wife of Robert de Montfort, whose son William de Montfort sold Idsall in 1310 to Bartholemew de Baddlesmere, and from that time, it has been said, it was generally called Shiffnal. The above Reginald de Dunstanville is also called Fitzroy, from being one of the numerous illegitimate sons of Henry I., by Adela or Sibill Corbet, the daughter of Robert and niece of Roger Corbet, Baron of Caus. This family of Montfort must not be confused with the family of the celebrated Earl of Leicester, who was descended from the Kings of France. The De Montforts of Shiffnal were akin

to Peter de Montfort, Sheriff of Shropshire in 1259, and their chief residence was at Beldesert near Henley, in Warwickshire ; they took the side of the Barons, it is true, and the head of the family fell at Evesham under the Earl of Leicester's banner. The Alan la Zouche mentioned in the deed was Lord of Tong, which came to him through Alicia, the sister and heir of her brother Ranulph or Ralph de Belmeis, last Lord of Tong of that race. He was himself descended from Geoffrey Viscount Rohan, whose son, Alan la Zouche, is called Earl or Count of Brittany ; he was father of Roger la Zouche, father of another Roger la Zouche, whose son Alan is the person before us. He was in high favour with the King, who made him Chief Justice of Chester, and North Wales was committed to his trust. It is related of him that about the year 1268, John, Earl of Warren and Surrey, had a grievous quarrel with him about some land, and the Earl when worsted in his suit, finding he would have to submit to the law, overcome by passion, vented his rage in foul language, and at length rushed upon Sir Alan and his son in Westminster Hall so violently, that he almost killed the one and wounded the other, immediately after which he fled to his Castle at Reigate, where, being too hotly pursued by Prince Edward and a large force, to remain in safety, he humbled himself and promised to make satisfaction. He was fined 10,000 marks, but the amount was subsequently considerably reduced. It is also recorded that during the Abbacy of John, the 23rd Abbot of St. Albans, in 1252, Queen Eleanor and her children visited that Abbey, and during her stay there a violent thunderstorm took place, the lightning striking and shivering to pieces the mantel piece of the room wherein the Queen was sitting. The laundry of the Abbey burst into flames, and such terror was caused by the elements, that Alan la Zouche, the King's Chief Justice of Chester and of the Welsh district (who was at that time escorting two carts full of treasure and had stopped to rest at the Abbey),

rushed out with his attendants into the highway, imagining the Abbey would be destroyed. Roger la Zouche had sided with the Barons against King John after the murder of his nephew Arthur, son of Geoffrey Duke of Brittany, and on this account the Lordship of Tong had been seized into the king's hands and given to Breose ; it was, however, recovered upon payment of 100 marks. Alan la Zouche gave this lordship in frank marriage with his sister Alicia la Zouche, 1267, to William Harcourt, by whom however it was again forfeited, he having adhered to the king's enemies, and only restored after his death to his two daughters, at the intercession of their uncle, Alan la Zouche. By his wife Helen, daughter and co-heir of Roger de Quinci, Earl of Winchester, Alan la Zouche had issue two sons, Eudo or Ivon, ancestor of the Zouches of Harringworth, Codnor, &c., and Roger whose son Alan left three co-heirs ; 1. Elene wife of Alan de Charleton, whence the Charltons of Apley ; 2. Maud, wife of Robert de Holland, and 3, Elizabeth, a nun of Brewood. Returning from this digression, which however seemed necessary to shew the last connection for some time between the lords of Tong and Ruckley, we must take notice of the tenants of Ruckley under the Abbot of Buildwas, but of these there is less known than even of the Abbots, since apparently none of their names survive until the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. That event is looked upon as a calamity or otherwise, for the most part, according, to the animus of individuals, but the temperate and unprejudiced must confess that their destruction was not an unmixed good, nor the way in which it was done a legal act of unmixed justice, though there can be no doubt that the clergy of that day brought it upon themselves by their overbearing pride, self-indulgence, and covetousness, all characteristics directly opposed to their duty as Christians and vows as monks. The last Abbot of Buildwas, Stephen, had granted a lease dated April 14th, 1521, of Ruckley Grange, and

some other land in Buildwas, to John Foster of Wellington and Isabella his wife, for the space of 99 years, at the rent of £6 13s. 4d. for the land in Buildwas and 10 shillings for Ruckley per annum, with a heriot, however, upon the death of each possessor, of 20 shillings, in addition to the rent. It is not certain whether the Foresters or Forsters had any previous connection with Ruckley, or whether the deed of gift was not signed by one of them under the Latin form of Radulfus Venator. The family is undoubtedly of very ancient date in the county, and has been said to derive its name from a common source with the Welds of Lulworth and Willey, that is, from Edric the Forester, called in Latin Edric Sylvaticus or the Wild, who was Lord of Wigmore and son of Alfric, brother of the celebrated Edric Streone or Stretton, Earl of Mercia, of whom it is related, that desiring the death of Alfhelm, one of the blood royal, he invited him to hunt with him near his residence at Shrewsbury, having previously placed in ambush in the thickest part of the forest, one Godwin Porchund, or master of the boar hounds, to kill him as he passed. Upon hearing of this treacherous murder of his relative, Ethelred, the Saxon King, put out the eyes of two of Edric's sons as a punishment for the deeds of their father. The first of the name of Forester mentioned is Hugh, son of Robert, in 1214, who at the request of King John, had married a niece of John le Strange, for which he was recompensed by a remission of certain sums of money which he owed. Robert le Forester of Wellington appears in 1287, and in 1319 his son Roger was made a Burgess of Shrewsbury. His son (or grandson) Roger was made keeper of the Chase of Wellington in 1416 by the co-heirs of Thomas Fitzalan, viz., his sisters Elizabeth, Duchess of Norfolk (at that time, for she had four husbands), and Joan, who had married George Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny. Richard, the son of William and grandson of the last mentioned Roger, was father, by his wife Alice, of William Forster, who married Elizabeth, daughter of John Roufford of

Butlos in Herefordshire, and had issue John Forster, who by Anne, daughter of Thomas Bannester of Hadnal, Sheriff of Shropshire in 1403, was father of two sons, Richard, whose issue died out, and John, who was the John Forster mentioned in the Abbot's lease. It is evident, from the alliances above and those which succeed, that the family of Forster ranked amongst the best in the county, and it is more than might have been expected from the various changes and chances of life, to find their descendants and representatives still holding a good position and ranking amongst the largest landed proprietors of Shropshire. John Forster married Isabel, daughter of William Lyster of Rowton Castle; she, however, was his second wife, his first being Alice, daughter of Thomas Charlton, by whom he had a daughter, Alice, wife of John Shee. The Lysters of Rowton Castle are a family still known in Shropshire. William Lyster, the father of Mrs. Forster, had married Elizabeth, the daughter of John Leighton by Angharad, one of the co-heirs of De Burgh. It will have been observed that the Abbot's lease of Ruckley, &c. would end in 1620; before that date however the Reformation had taken place, and the dissolution of religious houses, so that the Abbots had ceased to be owners of land, and the estates of Buildwas had passed into the possession of Henry VIII. He thus acquired the rights of the Abbot of Buildwas, but the rights of the tenants of the Abbey remained in force, and thus the Abbot's lease held good after the lordship of the estates had passed into the hands of a layman. The accounts of the Abbey of Buildwas had been sent to the King in 1536. In the following year the lands of the Abbey were conferred upon Edward Grey Lord Powis, and on July 4th, 1545, he received also the lands of the Abbey of Ystrad Marchall, so that John Forster was now tenant at Ruckley under Lord Powis, of whom we must say a few words. Sir John Grey, Kt., son of Sir Thomas Grey of Berwick, by his wife Jane, daughter of John Lord Mowbray (a descendant of the Albinis), was created in 1418 Earl of Tankerville,

in Normandy, on account of his great services in the French wars, and was also invested with the Order of the Garter. He married Joan, the elder co-heir of Edward Cherleton Lord Powis, who had died on March 14th, 1421, and thus left to his descendants a claim to that Barony, but he himself predeceased his wife, being slain in a marsh near the Castle of Beaufort, April 3rd, 1421. His son, Henry Grey, succeeded him as Earl of Tankerville, and was apparently a strong adherent of the house of Lancaster, since he is said to have beheaded Sir Griffith Vaughan in the courtyard of Powis Castle, at the order of Margaret of Anjou, without any trial and in violation of a promise of safe conduct which had been given in his name, because Sir Griffith was suspected of corresponding with the Yorkist leaders. Others have said that family motives influenced him in this, since Sir Griffith's grandmother was 4th in descent from Gwenwynwyn Prince of Powis, and stood on an equal footing as an heiress of Powis with Lord Tankerville's ancestress, Hawise, wife of John Cherleton. He married Antigone, the natural daughter of Humphrey (surnamed the Good), Duke of Gloucester, 4th son of Henry IV. by Mary, daughter and co-heir of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and by her had issue Richard, Humphrey, who died without issue, and Elizabeth, wife of Sir Roger Kynaston. Henry Grey, Earl of Tankerville, died on the feast of St. Hilary, 1450, having never been summoned to Parliament. Richard succeeded his father, and is said to have taken his seat in Parliament between Lords Lovell and Stourton, the position which his ancestors the Cherletons Lords Powis had held; he then swore fealty to Henry VI. Indeed, Richard Lord Powis lived in difficult times, for the struggle between the rival houses of York and Lancaster was at its height. At the battle of Blore Heath, 1449, Sir Roger Kynaston, who had married the sister of Lord Powis, slew with his own hand (it is said) James Lord Audley, the leader of the Lancastrians. A few years afterwards we find Lord Powis and Sir Roger Kynaston together

with Walter Hopton and Roger Eyton, Esquires, re-deeming their heads with their lands. In July, 1460, the battle of Northampton changed the aspect of affairs, and two years later Lord Powis was at the siege of Alnwick Castle with the Earl of Warwick. He married Margaret, daughter of James Lord Audley, and relict of Vaughan, by whom she had had two daughters. By Lord Powis she had a son, John Grey, six years old at his father's death, and a daughter, Elizabeth, wife of Sir John Ludlow of Stokesay. John Grey served in the French wars, and having married Anne Herbert, daughter of William, first Earl of Pembroke of that family, left at his decease in 1497 a son and heir, John Grey Lord Powis, who died at the early age of 19 years in 1504, having married Margaret, daughter of Edward Lord Dudley, K.G., son of John, who was son of Sir Edmund Lord Dudley by Joyce, sister and co-heir of John Tiptoft Earl of Worcester, and daughter of John Lord Tiptoft by Joyce, the younger co-heir of Edward Cherleton Lord Powis. Edward Grey Lord Powis succeeded his father, and through his mother represented the other co-heir of the Cherletons, thus uniting the blood of the old Lords Powis in himself. During his youth he had spent much of his time with Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, to whose care he had been committed. It will be remembered that this Charles Brandon had married Mary, daughter of Henry VII., and relict of Louis XII. of France, and was a person of great distinction, which points out the importance which was thought to attach to the education of young Edward Grey. He frequently visited Shrewsbury and spent his time at his house there, called from its builders, Charlton Hall. By his marriage with Anne, daughter and co-heir of his former tutor, he connected himself with the royal family, but died of the sweating sickness July 2nd, 1551, without any legitimate issue, his wife surviving him and marrying as a second husband Randle Hanworth. Lord Powis had, however, contracted an intimacy with Jane, daughter of Sir Lewis Orwell by Elizabeth,

daughter of Morris Ludlow of Stokesay Castle (or perhaps a former wife), and by her had several natural children, viz., Edward Grey of Buildwas, &c., Jane, wife of William Booth of Dunham Massey, Co. Chester, Anne, wife of Christopher Haywood, Joyce, wife of Humphrey Freewood, and Cecily, wife of Humphrey Freere of Charlton, Co. Worcester. This brings us down to the time of our History, for it was to his connection Edward Grey Lord Powis, that Henry VIII. granted the lands of the Abbeys of Buildwas and Ystrad Marchell as related above, at a rent for the former of £55 8s. 8d. After the death of Lord Powis, Jane Orwell married John Herbert, and survived until 1596. Edward Grey, the natural son of the last Lord, came of age in the year 1568, having been an infant at his father's death, but succeeding under a will dated June 11th, 1544, to the Barony and Manor of Powis, the Castle and Manor of Poole and other estates of his father, with the exception of the Castle and Manor of Cherleton and Manor of Pontesbury, which were settled on his mother for her life, but came to him in reversion. We may anticipate events so far as to say that immediately upon his succession, he was attacked upon all sides and entered upon a series of legals truggles with his opponents, of so costly a nature, that probably on this account he sold the Lordship and Castle of Powis in 1587 to Sir Edward Herbert, 2nd son of William Earl of Pembroke, and took up his residence at Buildwas. Having married Grisagona, the daughter of John Giffard of Chillington, by his wife Joyce, daughter of James Leveson of Lilleshall, he had issue five sons, Edward, Walter, Andrew, Thomas and Devereux, and four daughters, Jane, the wife of William Seldon, and afterwards of William Leighton, Lettice, Cecily and Grisagona, wife of Sir Moreton Briggs of Houghton (created a Baronet August 12th, 1641), by whom she was mother of Humphrey, Morton, Robert, Anne wife of Thomas Draper, Priscilla, Frances wife of Ferrers Fowke of Little Wyrley, and Martha. The family of Grey, so far as the representatives of Edward

Grey are concerned, seems to have melted away, and left only a trace behind in those descended from the daughters. Indeed most of the estates were sold during Edward's life time, or granted to claimants to secure peace. It is thus that in 1600 we find him joining with Vernon to sell Charlton Hall, the old family house in Shrewsbury, to William Leighton of Stretton, though it was then, and had been for more than two centuries previously in the occupation of the Waring family, and it finally came to the Warings and descended through their heiress Dorothy Waring to Jonathan Scott of Shrewsbury, her son, who by Mary, daughter of Humphrey Sandford of the Isle, was father of John Scott-Waring and other sons, and Dorothy, his only daughter, wife of Henry Stokes. It will be necessary here to enter upon some explanation of the different claims and claimants on the estate of the last Lord Powis. Foremost amongst these, of course, stands his natural son Edward Grey, who claims under his father's will; then come the Vernons, who claim through their ancestress Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Grey Lord Powis, and finally come the Kynastons, who claim as representatives of Lady Elizabeth Grey, sister of Richard Lord Powis and daughter of Henry Grey, Earl of Tankerville. It will be remembered that the last Lord Powis died in 1551 or 1552, and as early as 1554, Thomas and George Vernon began to prefer claims to the estates and title of Powis, especially the latter, since the former might follow the will of the deceased peer, and of right pass to his son Edward Grey. From which, it is evident, that there was no secret as to the Vernon claims, nor were they preferred after so long an interval that any reasonable doubt of their justice could arise. Elizabeth Grey, daughter of Richard Grey Lord Powis, who died in 1466, by his wife Margaret, daughter of James Lord Audley, married Sir John Ludlow of Stokesay Castle, and was by him mother of two daughters and co-heirs, Anne the elder, and Alice the younger. Anne married Thomas Vernon, a younger son

of Sir Henry Vernon of Tong Castle, and was in her right of Stokesay Castle. They had issue a daughter, Elinor, wife of Francis Curzon, and a son and heir, Thomas Vernon, who married Dorothea, daughter of Sir Francis Lovell of Norfolk (whose mother was aunt of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk), and was father of a son, Henry Vernon, claimant to the Barony in 1584, and a daughter, who on the death of her brother without issue became his heir, named Dorothy, the wife of Humphrey Ludlow, by whom he had a daughter and heir Elizabeth Ludlow, who married Humphrey Hill of Hill's Court, and was by him mother of George Hill and other sons, and a daughter Anne Hill, wife of Charles Adams of Caynham, and subsequently of Cleeton, by the marriage of his grandson Francis Adams with Anne, daughter and heir of William Adams of Cleeton. Anne Adams survived her husband, and was living as a widow at Broseley in 1637. The younger co-heir of Sir John Ludlow and Elizabeth Grey, Alice Ludlow, married Humphrey Vernon, in her right of Hodnet (also a son of Sir Henry Vernon's), and was mother of George Vernon of Hodnet, father of Richard Vernon, who died without issue, and John Vernon, who succeeded to Hodnet, and was father of Sir Robert Vernon of Hodnet, the father of Sir Henry Vernon of Hodnet, from whom derived the Vernons of Hodnet. It would take us too long and draw us too far from our subject to enter on the various proofs adduced by Henry Vernon of his right to the Barony of Powis; one however must be noticed, namely, certain books of pedigrees shewing his descent from Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Lord Powis, as above related. These books were referred to the Heralds' College for their opinion upon the subject, and the answer of the Heralds was to the effect that though their own books contained no record of any daughter of the later Lords of Powis except Elizabeth, wife of Sir Roger Kynaston, yet the documents sent up showed that there was a daughter of Richard Lord Powis, called also Elizabeth, and that they considered

them worthy of credit in that behalf. There would appear then every reason to believe that Henry Vernon of Stokesay would duly have received his summons to Parliament as Lord Powis, but unfortunately he died at this time without issue, and nothing further was done. So far the Kynastons seem to have made no claim; indeed the matter rested for more than a century after the death of Henry Vernon, but upon being revived in 1729 by Sir Nathaniel Curzon, he was opposed in January 1730 by John Kynaston (a descendant of Sir Roger Kynaston and Lady Elizabeth Grey), who in 1731 claimed the right to the Barony of Powis, asserting that there was no such person as Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Lord Powis and wife of Sir John Ludlow. He accounted for none of his ancestors having laid claim to the Barony, by saying that though of good birth and position they were too poor to do so effectually. It is certain, however, that from the first the Vernons and Kynastons were interested in the Powis estates, which at the accession of Edward Grey were estimated to be of the value of £5,000 or £6,000 per annum; and he undoubtedly gave the Manors of Plas y Dinas and Trewern, Co. Montgomery, to Edward Kynaston in 1568, in satisfaction for any claims of his on the Powis estates, and thus bought his interests against the Vernons; but it must also be remembered that a moiety of the Manors of Charleton and Pontesbury descended to the Vernons, and that, when the latter was alienated by Edward Grey to William Leighton, the title to the estate was not considered secure without the confirmation of Henry Vernon. There is extant a letter from Edward Grey to his loving cousin, Edward Kynaston of Hordley, dated at Buildwas 29th Sept., 1597, which says that Vernon intended to indict him, his cousin, Mr. Leveson, and their servants, for an affray at Bridgnorth, in revenge for their having indicted some men of Vernon's. From what has been said it is evident that, as previously observed, Edward Grey, upon entering into possession of his father's estate, found that he had

only entered upon a disputed title, and was obliged to buy off his opponents or make some compromise with them. This bears considerably upon the History of Ruckley, which formed part of the disputed possessions, and it would be impossible to understand it without some explanation of the claims of the claimants, and of these persons themselves a short account may not be uninteresting. The Vernons became connected with Shropshire through marrying the heiress of Tong. It will be remembered that that estate passed from the family of Belmeis to that of Zouch. Alan la Zouch and his wife were succeeded by their son William, who died in 1199, when his brother Roger succeeded, during whose tenure Tong was forfeited and given to De Breose. He died in 1238, when his son Alan la Zouch became Lord of Tong, which he settled as a marriage portion on his sister Alice, wife of William de Harcourt, by whom it was again forfeited, but restored, as previously stated, at the intercession of their uncle Alan la Zouch, on his daughters and heirs, of whom the younger, Margery de Harcourt, married John de Cantilupe of Snilfield, brother of Walter Bishop of Worcester, and uncle of S. Thomas of Hereford. She, however, died without issue. The elder co-heir, and finally sole heir, Orabel de Harcourt, married Henry, son of Henry de Pembruge by Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Godfrey de Gamages, and grandson of another Henry de Pembruge of Pembruge, Co. Hereford. The father, Henry de Pembruge, was an adherent of De Montfort's party, even after the battle of Evesham, and is said to have insulted Prince Edmund and set fire to Warwick. He was, however, taken prisoner and handed over to the Mortimers, who consigned him to the dungeons of Wigmore Castle and took possession of his lands, from which they refused to part even upon the release of Pembruge, who never regained the whole of them, though his estate was considerable; and we find that his son, besides his wife's dower, had lands in Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Wiltshire, and Leicestershire. King

Henry III. granted to Henry de Pembruge a charter for a market at Tong on Thursdays, and an annual fair to be held on the Vigil, the Feast Day and the morrow of St. Thomas the Apostle. At his death in 1296, he left his son and heir, Fulk de Pembruge, an infant five years old, who afterwards took part with the Barons against the King's favourites under Thomas Earl of Lancaster, and was amongst those who received a pardon for the execution of Gaveston. There is some difficulty as to the exact descent of Tong here, but a third Fulk de Pembruge, his son probably, succeeded him in 1326, who died without issue in 1334, when his brother Robert succeeded, father of Fulk de Pembruge, Lord of Tong in 1371, who married firstly, Margaret, sole heiress of William Trussell of Cublesdon, and secondly Isabel or Elizabeth Lingen, who is sometimes called the Foundress of Tong Church. Fulk de Pembruge died in 1408, leaving no issue by either wife, the latter of whom indeed survived him and had a grant of the Church of St. Bartholemew at Tong in 1411, for which she paid £50, and being piously disposed rebuilt to a great extent the church (the arcade of the south aisle being part of the original structure), to which she added a College consisting of a Warden and Canons. Henry V. subsequently endowed it with the Manor of Lapley and lands in Leicestershire. In 1446 Tong came into the possession of Sir Richard Vernon as heir, being the grandson of Juliana de Pembruge, sister and heiress of Fulk de Pembruge, with Richard Vernon of Harlaston, in Staffordshire, which he derived from an heiress of the family of Fraunceys, and of Haddon Hall in Derbyshire, which he derived from heiresses of the families of Avenel and Peverel. This Richard Vernon had by his wife Juliana a son and heir, Richard Vernon, who married Joan, the sole issue of Sir Rhys ab Griffith of Wichnor, and his first wife Isabel, daughter and heir of Sir Robert Stackpole. It was thus that the Vernons became representatives of the Stackpoles, though not of the Griffiths of Wichnor, which estate passed on to the descendants of Sir Rhys by his 2nd wife Margaret,

daughter of Nicholas Zouche of Codnor, now represented by Sir Henry Boynton, Bt., of Burton Agnes. Richard Vernon and his wife Joan had issue Sir Richard Vernon, who succeeded to the Tong estate, and married Benedicta, daughter of Sir William (or John) Ludlow of Stokesay Castle and also of Hodnet through an heiress of the De Hodnet family, they had issue Sir William Vernon, who married Margaret Swynfen, heiress of Pipe, her grandfather, Robert Swynfen, having married the daughter of William and sister and heir of Sir Robert Pipe of Pipe Ridware, Co. Stafford. William Vernon and his wife lie in a tomb erected to them, of free stone, with a grey marble slab inlaid with figures and scrolls of brass, near the south-west pier of the tower in Tong Church. He died in 1467, and his wife in 1460. They were succeeded by their son Sir Henry Vernon, K.B., 1467, Lord of Tong, Haddon, &c., &c., and governor or tutor of Prince Arthur, the elder brother of Henry VIII., who resided with him both at Tong and Haddon, and subsequently held a miniature Court at Ludlow Castle. Sir Henry Vernon rebuilt his Castle at Tong about 1500, and it substantially forms the present edifice. Prints of the building as it stood last century show that it consisted of a centre, wherein was the great Hall, and two projecting wings, all of brick with stone facings and mullions, many of the principal corners being ornamented by octagonal turrets; the chimneys were also of brick, some twisted, some constructed with other ornamental devices, so that the whole formed a mass of most picturesquely broken buildings, though rather a castellated mansion than a castle. It was probably the second castle built upon the present site, since in Fulke de Pembrugge's time, circa 1320, mention is made of land called "The Olde Castle." Sir Henry Vernon married Lady Anne Talbot, the daughter of John Talbot, 2nd Earl of Shrewsbury (who was killed in 1460), by Elizabeth, daughter of James Butler, 4th Earl of Ormond. (This line of Talbot died out with Edward Talbot, the 7th Earl of Shrewsbury). Both Sir Henry and Lady Anne

are buried under a richly carved alabaster tomb in Tong Church, which partly forms a screen between the Golden Chapel (which was a chantry of the Vernons) and the chapel at the east end of the south aisle. He died in 1515, and Lady Anne in 1530. There seems some difficulty as to his issue, since for the most part he is called the father of:—1st. Sir Richard Vernon, his heir, who married Margaret, daughter of Sir Robert Dymoke of Scrivelsby. 2nd. Thomas Vernon, *jure uxoris*, of Stokesay. 3rd. Humphrey Vernon, *jure uxoris*, of Hodnet. 4th. Sir John Vernon, of Sudbury. 5th. Sir Arthur, a priest, Rector of Whitchurch, and some daughters, of whom Elizabeth was the wife of Sir Robert Corbet of Moreton Corbet; but another authority calls Thomas and Humphrey Vernon younger sons of Sir Richard Vernon, and so grandsons of Sir Henry, which seems very probably correct. The arms of Vernon were, *argent fretty sable*; those of Pembruge, Barry of 6 *or* and *azure*; those of Harcourt, *or* two bars *gules*; those of Zouche, *gules* 10 bezants 4, 3, 2, and 1. These last arms surmounted by a chief *or*, are also given as those of Belmeis. The arms of Ludlow were *argent*, a lion rampant *sable*. With this knowledge of the persons mentioned before us, we may return to the Ruckley estate, which had been leased to John Forster by Stephen, last Abbot of Buildwas. Through the contentions of the various competitors for Lord Powis' estate, Ruckley became divided into two moieties. On June 22nd, 1599, Henry Vernon gave a lease on Cosforde or Gosforde, Byldwas Hayes and Ruckley Grainge (late in the occupation of John Forster), to Thomas More of Reding, Berkshire, gent., at the rate of £4 per annum. It has been supposed that this lease was given principally to strengthen Henry Vernon's position, but his right to give it was questioned in 1657. It would itself have expired June 10th, 1679, but could not take effect until the expiration of the lease given by the Abbot. This latter lease had descended after the death of John Forster, by gift and grant to Richard

Forster of Brockton and Ruckley Grange, who however was sued for it by Robert Cressett, gentleman, though without success. Cressett seems to have been connected with the Forster family, though it is rather difficult to see how he had any claims in the matter. Richard Forster of Brocton, Ruckley Grange and Sutton Madoc, was the son of John Forster and Isabel Lyster, and brother of John Forster of Upton and Easthope, 1544, an attendant on Henry VIII., who granted him a license in 1520, "to use and were his bonet on his hede at all tymes and in all places, as well in our presence as elsewhere." This John Forster married Joyce, the daughter and heir of Philip Upton, called in one place of Upton under Haghmond, in another of Oteley, Co. Salop; and left a numerous issue, of whom Edward, the 5th son, had by his wife Margaret, daughter of Thomas Bostock, a daughter, Isabel, who married her cousin John Forster. The eldest son of John Forster, of Upton, was William, who by Mary, daughter and co-heir of John Weaver of Strangford, Co. Hereford, was the ancestor of the present Lords Forester of Willey, who still retain the right of appearing covered in the royal presence. On February 6th, 1603, Thomas More of Reading, Berks, entered into a bond for £60 to Gilbert Watkis (probably Watkins) of Peplowe, in the County of Salop, yeoman, binding himself to keep certain agreements, the purport of which is that by a deed dated February 15th, 1604, More should sell to Watkis for the sum of 40 marks *i.e.* £26 13s. 4d., his interest in Gosforde Grange, &c., and other lands in the occupation of John Forster of Sutton Madoc, for the residue of the term of 80 years then unexpired, that is, his interest in the lease given by Henry Vernon, and which would, if undisputed, come into operation after the convent lease of 99 years (under which John Forster held those lands) had expired. It is evident from what has been said, that this interest which was bought by Watkis could not be of any very great value at some sixty years before it could come into operation; and, indeed, the whole of such an interest seems to have been

created by Henry Vernon for his own purposes. However, it seems subsequently to have been deemed of some value, or if not of much value in itself, still the possession of it might prevent further disputes. It also speaks well for the improving state of the Ruckley property, when we find the tenants, John Forster and his heirs, anxious to obtain the lease, and thus extend their right over it. This was done by a deed dated June 16th, 1604, wherein Gilbert Watkis of Peplowe assigns to Francis Forster, eldest son of John Forster of Sutton Maddock, the remainder of the term of 80 years, reserving however to himself Cosforde Grange. To this deed is added a memorandum, stating that Gilbert Watkis having purchased the lease from Moore, subject to a rent of £4, payable by him for all the lands to Henry Vernon, Francis Forster would be liable to the same rental, but in consideration of the reduction of Gosforde Grange, he should pay to Henry Vernon, his heirs, and assigns, the sum of £3 11s. 8d. during the time he should enjoy the premises. But before going further we must speak of Richard Forster, the son and heir of the John Forster to whom the Abbot's lease was given. He married Margery, daughter of Wildgose or Wildgote of Wolverhampton, by whom he had several children, viz., John, his heir, born 1554; Elizabeth, wife of Robert Bowyer; Anne, wife of Richard Baxter, and Frances, wife of William Adams of Cleeton, some of whom were born before the marriage of their parents. This John Forster, son and heir of Richard, who also succeeded to the Abbot's lease, states that in the year 1604, June 16th, his grandfather John Forster, the original lessee, was dead, and he himself was in possession of the lease of a moiety of Ruckley, the reversion of which would rest in Henry Vernon and his heirs expectant. He, therefore, promises to pay to Henry Vernon half the sum of £6 13s. 4d. per annum, and also to defend his title to that moiety of the estate; and Henry Vernon promises upon his part to pay back

to John Forster the rent if he be evicted of his title, and also to acquit John Forster of all arrears due, either to himself or to his grandfather Thomas Vernon. This agreement was, of course, entered into on account of the disputes affecting the estate of the last Lord Powis, and indeed legal disputes and litigation seem an heritage entailed upon the Ruckley estate and its possessors. In 1606 Henry Vernon died without issue, and we hear little more of him, until at a later date a claim to the Barony of Powis was taken up by the Curzons, the descendants of his aunt. It is worthy of remark, however, that on the very day on which John Forster entered upon the above agreement with Henry Vernon, *i.e.* June 16th, 1604, he also entered upon a similar agreement with Sir Robert Vernon as to his moiety of Ruckley, and the same conditions are recited with respect to Sir Robert's father, John Vernon; so that it is evident the two Vernons acted together, deriving their rights from the same source, their ancestress Elizabeth Grey, wife of Sir John Ludlow. They had both given leases on Ruckley, and both these leases were vested in their joint tenant John Foster, son of Richard, son of John Forster, the Abbot's lessee. He seems to have had so great an affection for the place that he was desirous of extending the period of his holding there, after the expiration of the Abbot's lease, which would expire, be it remembered, on April 4th, 1620; and so he obtained from Sir Robert Vernon for the sum of £50 a further lease of his lands in Buildwas Hayes, Ruckley Grange, &c., for 21 years beyond the term of the Convent lease, at a yearly rent of £3 11s. 8d. The death of Henry Vernon, without any issue, seems to have simplified matters, and Sir Robert Vernon was able in September, 1609, to come to an agreement with Edward Grey of Buildwas, who was the son of Edward Grey, the natural son of Lord Powis; and on Dec. 2nd, 1610, there is a deed between Thomas Harryes, Sergeant-at-Law, Rondle Crewe of Lincoln's Inn, Edward Grey of Buildwas, Esq., William Jones of Lincoln's Inn, Esq., and on the

other part John Forster of Sutton Maddoc, gentleman. The object of this deed is, that Edward Grey should guarantee John Forster against all claims made by him or by Henry Vernon, deceased, and renew the Abbot's lease of 99 years for 21 years more, at the rate of £6 13s. 4d. per annum. In fine it covenants that nothing shall bind to further warranty Harries, Crewe, or Jones. The leases given by Henry Vernon and Sir Robert Vernon included Buildwas Hayes, Abbot's Orchard, and Ruckley, but though their joint claim upon Ruckley was allowed, that upon Buildwas was conceded to Grey, no doubt by an arrangement of compromise. Forster then would receive from the Vernons only the renewal of the lease upon Ruckley and would have to look to Edward Gray for the renewal of that upon Buildwas; he may have obtained the foregoing deed as a precaution against any claims of Edward Grey on the Ruckley estate. It is remarkable that John Curzon (son of Francis Vernon by Eleanor, aunt of Henry Vernon) unites with Sir Robert Vernon in alienating their claim upon Buildwas in 1612 to Thomas Chamberlain. On the 3rd November, 1634, Sir Robert Vernon, Kt., obtained from the Crown a permission to alienate the fee simple of his portion of the estate of Ruckley Grange to Francis Forster, gentleman; the deed is signed by Lord Bacon under the great seal of England. The Francis Forster here spoken of was one of the sons of John Forster previously mentioned, who was the only son of Richard Forster, to whose property he had succeeded, and had married his cousin Isabel Forster, daughter of Edward Forster, 5th son of John Forster of Upton, by whom he had issue three sons, Francis, Basil, and Edward. Sir Robert Vernon soon acted upon the permission he had obtained, for by a deed of Nov. 8th, 1634, he, for the sum of £100, enfeoffed Francis Forster of Sutton Maddoc, gentleman, in the moiety of Ruckley Grange, which belonged to him, and John Huxley of Broseley, gentleman, acted as Vernon's attorney in this matter, so that Francis Forster

thus became actual possessor of a portion of the Ruckley property. But on the 5th of November in the same year Francis Forster assigned Ruckley Grange, as held by him by virtue of two several indentures of demise, to his brothers Basil Forster and Edward Forster, gentlemen. On the following tenth of November, seizin was given to Francis Forster by John Huxley in the capital house, so that he now entered on possession of his property. The capital house here spoken of was doubtless old Ruckley Grange, a farm house facing the south, and of which some vestiges remain in the kitchens of the present mansion, though the greater portion was pulled down. Francis Forster married Mary, daughter of Thomas Scott, but died Dec. 17th, 1652, apparently without issue, and she married again. The family of Scott became much connected with Shropshire, probably through an early intermarriage between one of them and Lord Wenlock. The principal branch of the family, which came from Scot's Hall, in Kent, was that seated at Shrewsbury and Betton Strange, through a marriage of their ancestor with the heiress of Betton. Mary Scott, the wife of Francis Forster, and who subsequently bought up the interest of her nephews in the Ruckley property, was the daughter of Thomas Scott of the Heath, Shiffnal, who died about 1630, by Elizabeth Mitton, his wife. This family of Mitton were owners of Weston, which had come to them by the marriage of Richard Mitton (son of Reginald Mitton of Shrewsbury) with Margaret, daughter and co-heir of Sir Adam Peshale, whose great-grandfather, Sir Adam Peshale, had married as his first wife the heiress of John Weston of Weston-under-Lizzard. The Mittons of Weston finally vested in the Wilbrahams, whose heiress married a Newport, and the estate thus passed to Sir Henry Bridgman, ancestor of the Earl of Bradford, the present possessor. Thomas Scott was the son of Anthony Scott, who is stated, in a manuscript formerly belonging to Scot's Hall, Kent, to have married the heiress of Betton Strange, Co. Salop. Anthony was son of Charles Scott of Egerton, in God-

mersham, who died 1617, and Jane, his wife, daughter of Sir Thomas Wyatt of Allington Castle, who was beheaded in the second year of Queen Mary's reign. Charles was the son of Sir Reginald Scott of Scot's Hall, by Mary, daughter of Sir Bryan Tuke, who had formerly been a secretary of Cardinal Wolsey. Sir Reginald was son of Sir John, Sheriff of Kent, by Anne his wife, daughter and co-heir of Reginald Pympe of Nettlestead, who was attainted in 1483 for assisting the Duke of Buckingham against Richard III., but the attainder reversed by Henry VII. Sir John Scott was the son of Sir William, and Sybella his wife, daughter of Sir John Lewkenor, slain at the battle of Tewkesbury, 1471. Sir William was son of Sir John Scott, by Agnes, the daughter and heir of William Beaufitz, son of William Scott, by his second wife Isabel, daughter of Vincent Herbert or Finch of Netherfield, son of John Scott by the heiress of De Cumbe, son of William, son of Michael, son of Sir William, son of John le Scot, of Brabourne, Co. Kent, son of Sir William Baliol le Scot, youngest brother of John Baliol, King of Scotland; he died circa 1313, and is buried at the Monastery of the Whitefriars, in Canterbury, being the son of John le Baliol, Lord of Bernard Castle, and founder of Baliol College, Oxford, who died 1269, by Devorgilda his wife Countess of Huntingdon, and Lady of Fotheringhay Castle, foundress also of the Abbey of Dolce Cor, where she was interred in 1288, together with the heart of her husband. The Lady Devorgilda was heiress of the Crown of Scotland, through her mother, Margaret, who was the direct descendant of the Kings of Scotland and Saxon Kings of England. It must, however, be observed that these Scotts who were of Cosford and Tong Norton were not the eldest branch of the family, which was seated at Shrewsbury, and which has previously been noticed as representing through marriage the very ancient family of Waring. We must now turn our attention to the other moiety of Ruckley, concerning which changes also were shortly made, for on October 1st,

1656, Sir Humphrey Briggs, of Haughton, Kt., and Bart., gave to John Smith for the sum of £90 the moiety or half of Ruckley Grange, all which premises were given to Sir Humphrey for 500 years from the date Novr. 6th, 1654, by Thomas Grey, Anne, his wife, and Walter Grey, of Hatton Grange, to be held by the said John Smith, during the remainder of the 500 years, i.e., until Novr. 6th, 2154, and that he shall have all the rents, &c., during that term of years after the expiration of the interest in the estate now claimed by the executors of Frances Forster, deceased, who died Decr., 17th, 1652. On the 2nd of October, 1656, John Smith granted all his interest in the said Grange to his brothers Thomas and William Smith. Sir Humphrey Briggs was acting as trustee of Walter Grey, when he granted the above lease. He was connected with the Grey family through the marriage of his son, Sir Morton Briggs, with Grisagona, the daughter of Edward Grey, of Buildwas, by Grisagona, daughter of John Giffard, of Chillington, and grand-daughter of Edward Grey, the last Lord Powis. He was also connected with the Forster family, through his wife Anne, the daughter and co-heir of Robert Morton, whose sister Elizabeth married George Forster, great grandson of John Forster, of Evelith. Sir Humphrey Briggs was the son of Oliver Briggs, of Ernestree, by Ann, daughter of Humphrey Coningsby, of Neen Sollers, son of Brian Briggs, by Cecilia, dr. and h. of Oliver Gilpin, of Westmoreland, son of Simon Briggs, son of Thomas, son of Simon, son of John, son of Edmund, son of John Briggs, Lord of Sall. They are represented in one branch by the family of Brooke, of Haughton, near Shiffnal. Walter Grey is called the son of Thomas Grey, of Hatton Grange, and is (probably erroneously) said to be of Enville or Enfield; his mother's name was Anne, and he himself, is said to have married Dorothy (probably Briggs). Thomas Grey was one of the sons of Edward Grey, of Buildwas, and may have named his son Walter after his brother, but there is evidently a

confusion between this family of Grey and the Greys of Enville, which are an entirely distinct family. The Greys, Lords Powis, were a Northumbrian family, and bore as arms, *gules* a lion rampant within a bordure engrailed *argent*. The Greys of Enville, were the descendants of Reginald, 2nd Baron Grey de Ruthyn (a descendant of John de Croy), by his wife the Honble. Joan Astley, daughter and heir of William Lord Astley. Robert Grey, the third son of the above Reginald Ld. Grey, married Eleanor, the daughter and heir of Humphrey Lowe of Enville, and thus brought that property into his family, where it continued until it was purchased from them by their cousin Henry Lord Grey, of Groby, father of Henry, 1st Earl of Stamford, and Ambrose Grey, whose daughter Mary married Sir Walter Wrottesley, of Wrottesley. The Greys of Enville, now represented by Lord Stamford, bear Barry of 6 *argent* and *azure*. By a Deed dated October 6th, 1650, Walter Grey, for the sum of £120, to be paid at once, and £90 which had been previously paid to Sir Humphrey Briggs by his appointment, enfeoffs John Smith, yeoman, in his moiety of Ruckley Grange for ever, and promises that he and Dorothy Grey, his wife, will duly deliver the said premises to John Smith. It will be remembered that Sir Robert Vernon had sold his part to Francis Forster, for the sum of £100, and thus it is evident that about the year 1640, the whole estate, consisting of Ruckley Grange and Ruckley Wood, was sold for the sum of £310; the possessor of Ruckley Grange, being Francis Forster, gentleman, and that of Ruckley Wood, being John Smith, yeoman. In the same year in which he acquired his new property John Smith gave Walter Grey a lease of 98 years, on a messuage called the Hole or Heath House and Cosford Leasows (i.e. the portion of Ruckley Wood which adjoins Cosford, now called Hell Bank), the rent to be £10 per annum so long as the interest of the assigns of Francis Forster, in Ruckley shall continue, and after that at a peppercorn rent. There were evidently

cross interests in the two moieties of the Ruckley property, of which more is evident hereafter, but in order to preserve the sequence of events we must here return to Mary, the daughter of Thomas Scott, who had married 1st Francis Forster, of Ruckley Grange, but had by him no issue; she married subsequently, Sir William Glascock, of Hertfordshire. Basil Forster, her first husband's brother, had married a wife whose Christian name was Frances, and had by her a son Francis Forster of London, named after his uncle. This Francis Forster (the nephew) sold his property in Ruckley Grange, on June 26th, 1657, to his aunt Mary Forster, of Wormley, Co. Herts, relict of Francis Forster, of Sutton Maddoc, for the sum of £60 paid, and £140 secured; the whole affair was concluded upon the same day, the receipt for the £60 and security for £140 bearing that date. It is evident that the value of the property was increasing, since this is double the sum paid to Sir Robert Vernon for it. But the troubles arising from the disputed state of Lord Powis's Estates were not yet over, for about this time Walter Grey as complainant instituted a suit in Chancery against Mary Forster, widow, defendant, pressing her to produce a title to her Estate of Ruckley Grange. This suit has been supposed to have been instituted in favour of John Smith, to whom Walter Grey had sold his moiety of Ruckley, but who found his claims met by the counter claim of Mary Forster, the widow, who declared her rights to include the fee simple of one part of the estate, and a term of years on the other part. We next find a tripartite Deed dated July 26th, 1659, between firstly John Smith, of Ruckley Grange, yeoman, secondly William Salter of Tong Norton, gentleman, and Edward Jobber, of Woodhouses, gentleman, and thirdly Thomas Smith, of the Hem, yeoman, by which John Smith, for the sum of £210 paid by Thomas Smith, grants half of Ruckley Grange to William Salter and Edward Jobber, firstly to the use of John Smith and Mary his wife, or the survivor of them, at £10 per annum. Secondly after the decease

of John and Mary Smith, or in default of payment for 20 days to William Salter and Edward Jobber, to the use of the said Thomas Smith and Anne, his wife, and their heirs. The contending claims between the owners of the two moieties make it necessary again to refer to the other part. Mary Forster, the widow, had married as her second husband, Sir William Glascock, of Wormley, in Hertfordshire, and by a deed of April 4th, 1664, devised all her interest in the Ruckley property to Henry Dunster, of London, Esq., John Easby, of London, merchant, and John Bruere, of Wormley, Herts, gentleman, in trust for her husband after her death. She died before him, on March 31st, 1670, when the Trustees conveyed the property to Sir William, by a deed bearing date May 5th, of the same year, and therein is a declaration that her rights in the Ruckley Estates are—the fee simple of one moiety and a term of years on the other moiety; these rights, therefore, passed to Sir William Glascock. On the 12th of November, 1671, some further trouble seems to have fallen to the lot of John Smith, of Ruckley Wood, for a Latin deed is still extant by which John Smith, and William Smith, ‘quer’ (sic) agree to give Walter Grey, armiger, and Richard Basnett and Margaret his wife, the sum of £100 for full and quiet possession for themselves, and their heirs in perpetuum. This would seem rather unjust to the Smiths, if it referred in any way to the fee simple which they had already purchased, but it may have had reference to some other interest which had been created in John Smith’s estate as that by the deed of October 14th, 1656. However, they seem at length to have had a better prospect of peace, for on December 12th, 1673, Sir William Glascock, and Anne Smith of the Hem, let Ruckley to John Smith, of Ruckley, yeoman, for the space of 14 years, at the rent of £20 per annum, reserving timber, &c., of which £10 was to be paid to Sir William and £10 to Anne Smith, widow. A note on the agreement says that until ‘June 10th, 1679, (which evidently

refers to Henry Vernon's lease of 1599, for 80 years), Smith is to pay all his rent to me W. G.' There were numerous claims upon the Ruckley Wood property (the portion of land held by John Smith). The original John Smith, named in the deed of July 26th, 1659, and also his wife Mary, were dead. Thomas Smith, who is mentioned therein, was also dead, so that the fee simple vested in his widow, Ann Smith; but Sir William Glascock had derived from his late wife certain interest in the property during a term of years, and hence we find him uniting with Anne Smith to grant the above lease. Land had rapidly risen in value, since an estate, which in 1521 was let for ten shillings was worth so much higher a price rather more than a century later, that the half of it produced a rental of £20 per annum. It is also curious to observe the fate of the two moieties of the Ruckley property, one of which was transmitted through the hands of gentlemen while the other became the property of yeomen, and this may account for the fact of the former receiving the name of the whole estate, and being in after times the seat of the owner's residence, while Ruckley Wood sank in importance, and became a dependent farm. Sir William Glascock, at his death, bequeathed the property given him by his wife to their son, William Glascock, of Barton Mills, Co. Suffolk, who married a wife also named Mary. This latter William Glascock is called esquire, and bore as his arms *ermine*, a chevron between 3 (crescents?) Crest, a stag's head. There can be little doubt but that these arms should be, *ermine*, a chevron between 3 cocks, *azure*. The Glascocks were an Essex family, and their pedigree is traced to John Glascock, who was living in the 38th year of Edward III. On the 27th Novr., 1691, William Glascock, of Barton Mills, sold to Goldsmith Mills, Proctor of Doctors Commons, for the sum of 10 shillings, his moiety of Ruckley Grange, to be held for one year, and next day (Novr. 28th) he sells it for ever for the sum £200, and enters into a bond of £40 to perform the above contract, and also gives

a receipt for £100, having received security for the other £100. Thus the Ruckley estate became entirely estranged from the Forster family and its connections, after they had held it for about 200 years, and their only interest remaining in the neighbourhood was what they possessed in Ruckley Wood. This, however, did not long continue, for John Smith had already sold the fee simple of that farm to Roger Roden, and on February 9th, 1692, there is an agreement of sale of certain lands between Roger Roden, plaintiff, and Goldsmith Mills, gent., and Francis Forster, gent., for which acknowledgment Roden pays £100. These lands are marked on the Duke of Kingston's map as acres 142 3 24, being the Ruckley Wood Farm, and thus it is to be presumed Roden became quietly possessed of Ruckley Wood, having bought up all the Forster interest in that property. Before quitting this name, which has been so long before us, it may be allowable to mention some members who are distinguished, in both branches of the family, for the Forsters of Evelith and those of Ruckley are evidently of the same family, though the connection between them is not known. Isabel Forster, of Tong, daughter of Thomas Forster was so handsome and engaging as to captivate Edward, 12th Baron Stafford, and it is she of whom Rowland White peevishly writes to Sir Robert Sidney, 'My lord Stafford's son is basely married to his mother's chambermaid.' Though the Forster family was not so illustrious as the great House of Stafford, still it was of no mean antiquity and was of good standing in its own county as its connections prove. It is true that her immediate forefathers may have been poor, and indeed her grandfather, Robert Forster, of Tong (Evelith), is called a 'yeoman,' yet he married the daughter of William Barker, of Coulshurst, what we now call a good family, and her uncle, Robert Forster, married Joane, daughter of Edward Mitton, of Weston, who was undoubtedly of a good family. Another member of this family has been written down by a more illustrious person than Rowland

White, being none other than Anthony Forster, of Cumnor Hall, in Berkshire, whose name Sir Walter Scott has introduced into his tale of Kenilworth. He was the son of Richard Forster, of Evelith, by Mary Groseley, and grandson of John Forster, of Evelith, by Isabel Kyffin, of Abertanat. Anthony Forster would appear to have been a second son, his elder brother being Thomas Forster, who by Frances Giffard, his wife, had a son George, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Morton by his wife Cecilia, daughter of William Charlton. This Elizabeth had a brother, Robert, who by Jocosa, daughter of Thomas Lee, of Langley, had two co-heiresses, Anne, wife of Humphrey Briggs (vide supra), and Jane, wife of Thomas Corbet. She had also a sister, Margaret Morton, wife of Roger Fowke of Gunstone, whose daughter Joan married Roger Fowke, of Brewood, the grandfather of Ferrers Fowke, who married Frances, daughter of Sir Morton Briggs, by Grisagona, daughter of Edward Grey, of Buildwas. Anthony Forster probably became connected with Oxfordshire (on the borders of which county Cumnor is situated) through his wife, Anne, niece of Lord Williams, of Thame, by whom he had three sons, John, Robert, and Henry. His connection with Leicester, and the fact of his possessing the house wherein the unhappy Amy, Countess of Leicester, passed some years of her life, suggested the idea of introducing his name, though with a fictitious character, into the romance. It is singular that Amy Robsart's mother was Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Scott, of the Mote, Iden, son of Sir William Scott of Scot's Hall, by Sybilla Lewknor. There is also the tomb of one of this family under an arch on the North Side of the Chancel of Shiffnal Church, with the arms, quarterly per fess indented *sable* and *argent* in the first and fourth quarters, a pheon point downwards, second and third a hunting horn stringed, all counterchanged. He is lying on an altar tomb, in the sacred vestments, above which is the inscription:—"Here lieth the body of Thomas Forster,

sometime Prior of Wombridge, Warden of Tongue, and Vicar of Idsall, 1526." Francis Forster went up to London after selling his interest in Ruckley to his aunt, and his third brother Edmund is stated to have been one of the City Captains in 1633, and to have married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Marmaduke Rawdon, another of the City Captains. It will be remembered that Roger Roden had made himself entire master of Ruckley Wood, having purchased up everybody's interests therein, but in order to do this money had to be borrowed, consequently William Roden (whose interest appears to have been identical with that of Roger Roden) gave a deed of mortgage on the Ruckley Wood property for the sum of £200 to John Smith of the Hem. The deed is dated Nov. 25th, 1718, and recites that the estate was to be held at a peppercorn rent for 200 years, unless the sum borrowed were returned before Nov. 25th, 1719. The above William Roden, together with John Roden, were executors of Roger Roden's will, and we find them constantly acting together in matters connected with Ruckley Wood. William Roden gave a note of hand for £3 12s. 9d to Mr. Humphrey Pitt on Oct. 30th, 1731, the receipt for which was given by Mr. Pitt, on Nov. 11th, 1746, probably by Roden's executors, for his will is dated July 1st, 1735. This was a long time to take for the payment of so small a sum, and we are not surprised to find that the Ruckley Wood Estate was at this time purchased from Roden, by the Duke of Kingston, and so reunited to its parent estate of Tong. The family of the Rodens, who were yeomen, had members living in the neighbourhood of their former property, the Ruckley Wood Farm, as late as 1860, when one of them was tenant of the Neachley Farm, which borders upon it. It may be remembered that we left Tong in the possession of Sir Richard Vernon, the son and heir of Sir Henry Vernon and Lady Anne, daughter of John, second Earl of Shrewsbury, and its history from that time until it came into the hands of the Duke of Kings-

ton is as follows : Sir Richard Vernon had issue by his wife, Margaret, daughter of Sir Robert Dymoke, of Scrivelsby, co. Lincoln, Sir George Vernon, of Haddon and Tong, who lived in great magnificence, and married Maud, daughter of Sir Ralph Longford, by whom he had issue two daughters and co-heiresses, Margaret and Dorothy, the latter so well known for her escapade with Sir John Manners, whom she married, and to whose family she carried the Haddon Hall property. Margaret Vernon, the heiress of Tong, married Sir Thomas Stanley, second son of Edward, third Earl of Derby ; he was reported by the Puritans to be "a great and notable papist," but now lies quietly in Tong Church, where is a very fine monument to himself and his lady, formerly placed in the chancel, but afterwards removed, by Mr. Durant, to the East end of the South aisle. Sir Thomas Stanley died Dec. 18th, 1576. They left issue Henry, who died young, and Sir Edward, who succeeded to the estates in Shropshire, and also to that of Eynsham, in Oxfordshire. He married Lady Lucy Percy, daughter and co-heir of Thomas, seventh Earl of Northumberland, and by her had several daughters, of whom Frances married John Fortescue, of Seldon, co. Bucks, and Venetia married Sir Kenelm Digby, of Drystoke, Rutland, but, before his death, he sold Tong Castle (circa 1610) to Sir Thomas Harries, an eminent lawyer of Queen Elizabeth's time, son of John Harries, of Cruckton, co. Salop, which estate was in the family two centuries earlier, and still continues in their line. There are two families of Harries, of some distinction, in Shropshire, not at all related to each other, but much connected ; one is the ancient family of which Sir Thomas, of Tong, was a member, and which bears as arms : Barry of 8 *ermine* and *azure*, over all 3 annulets *or*. This Sir Thomas was created a Baronet in 1623. The other family, however, which bears *or* 3 hedgehogs, 2 and 1 *azure*, had also a Sir Thomas Harries, who was created a Baronet in 1622, and was

also a lawyer. The two families owned property in the same parishes, and seem to have been occasionally executors of each other's wills; they became indeed subsequently connected by marriage with the same families, so that there is considerable danger of confusion between the two. Sir Thomas Harries, of Tong Castle, and Dame Ellinor, his wife, had two daughters and co-heiresses, the elder of whom, Ann, married John Wilde of Droitwich, Co. Worcester, and died after the birth of her first child, May 6th, 1624, being then in her sixteenth year; she was buried in Tong Church, where there is a monument to her. Elizabeth, her sister, and finally sole heiress of her father, succeeded to the Tong Estate about 1640, having married the Honble. William Pierpont (second son of Robert, first Earl of Kingston), who was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1638. His arms are *argent semée of cinquefoils gu., a lion ramp. sable*. William Pierpoint's brother George married Mary, daughter of Isaac Jones, Esq., of Berwick Park, near Shrewsbury, whose sister Sara married Sir Thomas Harries, of Boreatton, and William's aunt, Grace Pierpont, married Sir George Mannors, of Haddon, thus making a sort of connecting link between the Vernons (Dorothy Vernon being mother of Sir George) and the Pierponts. The first Earl of Kingston had been a zealous royalist, and lost his life in the service of Charles I., but his son William was more inclined to the principles of the Parliamentarians, and there are several notices of his having troops at Tong. The north side of the church bears traces of the small cannons of that period, probably owing to a few stray shots from a passing troop. Indeed, parties were much divided in this part of the country at that time, Tong being in the hands of a Parliament man, while in the neighbourhood were the Royalist Giffards, and the Humphrestons, whose old moated Hall in the neighbouring parish was nearly destroyed between the contending parties, though a Mr. Waring settled himself there, having expelled the old family, and

became Sheriff of Shropshire. Tong Castle itself does not seem to have sustained any very great injury, and William Pierpont was a very moderate man, apparently no great enemy to either side. By Elizabeth Harries he had a large family, of whom Gervase Pierpont, a younger son, was created Baron Pierpont, of Hanslop, and took much interest in Tong. He gave a large and valuable library to the church there, for the use of the Curates, who were then Chaplains at Tong Castle. His only daughter, who died September 1st, 1697, in the eleventh year of her age, was buried in the church, and he himself was also placed in a vault there, upon his death, which took place on May 22nd, 1715, in his sixty-sixth year. The eldest son of William Pierpont, Robert, married Elizabeth, the daughter and co-heiress of Sir John Evelyn, but died during the lifetime of his father, leaving Robert his eldest son, who succeeded his great uncle, as third Earl of Kingston, but dying in 1682, unmarried, his honours passed to his brother William fourth Earl, who also died unmarried in 1690, when his youngest brother, Evelyn Pierpont, succeeded as fifth Earl, and was created Duke of Kingston, by Queen Anne in 1715. It was he who purchased the Ruckley Wood property from William Roden, and reunited it to the Tong Estate after a separation of about 580 years, and there for the time we must leave it, and return to the other moiety of the property. Ruckley Grange, which was at the time we last spoke of it in the hands of Goldsmith Mills, next became the possession of a family named Wightwick, which is of very ancient date on the borders of Shropshire and Staffordshire. Alexander Wightwick, of this family, was great grandson of John Wightwick, uncle of Richard, co-founder of Pembroke College, Oxford. The daughter of Alexander Wightwick married Edward Jorden, and had issue, Edward Jorden, who married the daughter and heiress of John Wyke of Prior's Lee, near Shiffnal, by whom he was father of another Edward Jorden, of Prior's Lee, who was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1720. At his death

he left a daughter and heiress Sarah, who carried that estate by marriage to Humphrey Pitt, the original possessor of the old Ballads which now bear the name of *Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, from the clergyman who arranged and edited them. This no doubt was the way in which Humphrey Pitt became connected with the Ruckley property, and accounts for William Roden's note of hand to him. On Dec. 9th, 1802, a lease for 60 years was given by Sarah Wightwick to Thomas Wightwick, at the rental of £105 per annum, and his name occurs in deeds of 1803, 1804, 1805, and 1810. On November 23rd, 1805, George Durant, of Tong Castle, gave a lease of the small tithes of Ruckley to Anthony Titley, of Seighford, Co. Stafford, and upon the same day we find Thomas Wightwick making arrangements by which Titley had power to erect some flood gates. Titley's lease was to last for 21 years, from March 25th, 1805, at a rental of £18 per annum. And now we must take leave of old Ruckley Grange, which stood upon part of the same ground as the present house, but faced the south. The farm yard which was attached to it is now occupied by part of the walled gardens, and indeed part of the wall on the south-east side seems to be identical with that of the old farm yard. Mrs. Wightwick, a widow, was the last inhabitant of the old house, and was living within the memory of some who were alive in 1860. On June 19th, 1810, Thomas Wightwick sold Ruckley to Moreton A. Slaney, a gentleman remembered in the neighbourhood as the last who wore a pig tail. The old house of Ruckley received many improvements, and was fitted up as a gentleman's residence, to receive the new owner and his wife, Mary daughter of Richard Prince Corbet, by Mary, daughter of John Wickstead, of Wem. The Slaneys are traditionally said to have come from Bohemia. Their seat, however, before coming into Shropshire was at Mytton in the neighbouring County of Stafford, where they resided for several generations. Robert Slaney, in 1672,

married Anne, daughter of Thomas Moreton, of Brocton Grange, son of Richard Moreton, whose elder brother Robert had, as previously mentioned, two daughters and co-heirs, Anne, wife of Humphrey Briggs, through whom he got Haughton, and Jane, who in 1588 married Thomas Corbet of Longnor. Robert Slaney had two sons; the elder, Robert, had a daughter and heir who married William Mackworth Praed, but died without issue. The younger son, Moreton Slaney, married the daughter and heir of John Aglionby, of Knoll, in Warwickshire, and had issue by her, Robert Aglionby, Moreton and Elizabeth, wife of John Wallhouse, of Hatherton, Co. Stafford. The eldest son, Robert Aglionby Slaney, married Frances Teresa, daughter of William Plowden, of Plowden, by Mary, daughter of John Stonor, of Stonor, and had issue, Plowden Slaney, of Hatton Grange, and Richard, of Shiffnal, whose son Moreton Aglionby Slaney, is the gentleman mentioned above as purchaser of Ruckley, who married Mary Corbet, by whom he had an only child, Mary, wife of John Somerset Packington, of Westwood, Co. Worcester. Plowden Slaney married Martha, a daughter and co-heir of Humphrey Pitt, of Prior's Lee, by whom he was father of Robert Slaney, the father of Robert Aglionby Slaney, and William Henry Slaney, of Hatton. It will thus be seen that the Slaney family were connected with Ruckley, not only through the Moretons but also through the families of Wightwick, Jorden, and Pitt. On December 1st, 1810, there is an agreement between Robert Slaney and Moreton Aglionby Slaney for making floodgates, stank, and weir in Far Moor and New Moor, and this is the beginning of the large sheet of water at Ruckley. Moreton Slaney laid out money upon the estate with a more lavish than prudent hand, and his affairs becoming embarrassed the estate was sold on March 25th, 1813, and purchased by Thomas Bishton, on behalf apparently of John Bishton, who was born in 1802, and was hence quite a boy at the time of the sale, but he subsequently lived

here, and made Ruckley the beautiful place it is at the present day. The Bishtons had held land in Donnington, the neighbouring parish, for three centuries, and were descendants of the ancient Cheshire family of Beeston, of Beeston Castle. Their arms are *argent*, a bend between six bees *sable*. John Bishton, of Ruckley, enlarged the sheet of water in the valley below the house and planted the woods which now adorn the estate; he also built nearly a new house, only reserving a portion of old Ruckley Grange, for the kitchen and scullery of his new mansion, which had its principal fronts to the North and the West. The new house was built about 1820, all the farm buildings of the old Grange giving way to grassy lawns and pleasure grounds. Traces of former buildings were found in 1865, when a mound of earth on the west side of the house was cleared away. It is evident that though Mr. Bishton thus formed the nucleus of a lovely spot in future days, and a memorial of his excellent taste, yet the sums of money expended upon the place were large, and the returns very small in comparison. He consequently found himself like his predecessor involved in difficulties, and having sold the Ruckley Grange Estate, emigrated with his family to Van Dieman's Land. Ruckley now became the property of the Rev. Ralph Harvey Leeke, sometime Rector of Longford. This kind and amiable gentleman, was the brother of Thomas Leeke, of Longford Hall, and son of Ralph Leeke of the same place (which he had purchased in 1786 from the Earl of Shrewsbury), by Honoria Frances, his wife, daughter of the Rev. George Augustus Thursby, Rector of Abington, and Vicar of Penn. Records of the Leeke family appear as early as 1324, and the line is regularly deduced down to the time of Thomas Leeke, of Wellington, a lawyer, who went out to India, under the auspices of his relative, the Governor of Calcutta, where he amassed a large fortune, and upon his return purchased Longford as previously related, from Lord Shrewsbury, to whose forefather it had descended upon

the death of the last of the Talbots, of Longford, in 1743. Mr. Leeke had delicate health and lived a somewhat retired life with his sister at Ruckley, taking an interest in the beautiful Parish Church of Tong, to which he presented some handsome service books. He died at Ruckley about 1849, when the estate was again sold, and purchased by George Jones, of Shackerley Hall, in the Parish of Donnington, who was the descendant, and upon the death of John Jones, of Chilton, in 1816, the representative, of a family seated for many generations in the Parish of Atcham. He was the son of John Jones, of Broseley, by Anne Adams, his wife, and grandson of William Jones, whose father-in-law, Mr. Kyffin, of Oswestry, was an agent for Lord Bridgewater. Mr. Jones, in the early part of the present century, purchased estates in the parish of Donnington, and its neighbourhood. The greater portion of his property and wealth he left to his only son, but the Donnington estates he entailed upon his descendants, giving his son only a life interest in them. By his wife Catherine, born 1775, daughter of Daniel Turner of the Brownhills and his wife Sarah, daughter of William Hanbury, of Norton Caines, whose wife was grand-daughter of Ferrers Fowke, of Little Wyrley, Mr. Jones had issue, besides two daughters, Theodosia and Eleanor, an only son, John Jones, of Ruckley Grange. George Jones purchased the Ruckley Grange Estate for about £15,000, and upon the sale of the Tong Estate by George Durant in 1855, though unsuccessful in securing the bulk of that property, he bought the Ruckley Wood Farm, which was sold separately, for about £4,000, and thus these two portions of the Ruckley Estate were conjoined, which had formed distinct properties since the time of the Abbots of Buildwas. It will be remembered that the Ruckley Wood Farm had been sold by Roden to the 1st Duke of Kingston, and so was united to the Tong Estate. The Duke married twice; by his second wife, Isabella, daughter of William, Earl of Portland, he had issue, Anne,

who died unmarried, and Carolina, wife of Thomas Brand; by his first wife, Mary, daughter of William Earl of Denbigh, he had issue, Mary, wife of Edward Wortley Montague, Frances, wife of John, Earl of Mar, Evelyn, wife of John, Lord Gower, and a son William, who died during the lifetime of his father, but by his wife Rachael left a son, Evelyn, who succeeded his grandfather as second Duke of Kingston, and a daughter Frances, who married Sydney, son of Sir Philip Meadows, and ancestor of the Earl of Manvers. Evelyn, the second and last Duke of Kingston, was famous, not only for the extravagance of his own character, but also as being the husband of the unfortunate lady who was tried for bigamy, she having married the Duke during the life of her first husband, Captain Harvey, who afterwards became Earl of Bristol. His Grace seems not to have lived much at Tong Castle, which was let at one time to the Hon. Henry Willoughby, youngest son of Lord Middleton, who died here in 1734, and was buried in Tong Church. There was in the dining room of Tong Castle, in the time of the last Mr. Durant, a magnificent suite of carved ebony furniture, which had belonged to the Duke of Kingston, and also what then were used as two side tables, but were said to have originally formed the cover of a large silver punch bowl, which had belonged to the Duke. Besides Tong, and the Nottinghamshire estates, he possessed others at Bradford, in Wiltshire, where there is on the banks of the river Avon a house of his, a singularly beautiful specimen of Elizabethan architecture, and admirably restored by its present owner. Evelyn, second and last Duke of Kingston, who had succeeded his grandfather in 1726, died without issue in 1773, when his sister became sole heir of what was left of his great possessions. He had sold the Tong Estate in 1762 to George Durant; but before speaking of this family it may be interesting to revert to some facts connected with the Church and Tithes of Tong. Gervais Lord Pierpont granted an annuity of £30 out of the Manor of Tong, on trust for

the use of the Minister of Tong, so long as he was unable to enjoy the small tithes of the parish. He had also the privilege of holding a certain chamber in Tong Castle, with its furniture and presses of books, and also stabling in the Castle stables, for one horse, with pasture for it in the Park. In order to ensure the performance of these grants Lord Pierpont gave the trustees three other annuities of £5, forty shillings, and forty shillings, issuing out of the said Manor, Castle, and premises, to be respectively forfeited and to continue payable so long as the Minister should not enjoy the aforesaid chamber, stabling, and pasture. By an Indenture of August 11th, 1725, it is recited that the premises had descended to Evelyn, Duke of Kingston, upon the death of Gervais Lord Pierpont, and that the Castle had been for a long time uninhabited, and the Park disparked and enclosed, and that the said Duke at his own charge had built with brick a strong, handsome, and convenient house in Tong with a room for a library and stable, &c., for the habitation of the Minister, and had delivered the books to him and his successors, so that the covenants made by Lord Pierpont were no longer necessary, and the annuities granted to enforce them should be repealed, and that the common fields of Tong having been enclosed and converted into pasture, the revenue of tithes granted to the Minister had been reduced to £12 per annum, but that the Duke was willing, on condition that the said small tithes should be vested in himself and heirs, to be discharged from the trust, that the said annuity of £30 should be absolutely and indefeasibly settled and assured to the said Minister and his successors for ever, which together with the annuities of £30, £14, and £6, make altogether £80 per annum. George Durant, who purchased the Tong Estate from the Duke of Kingston, was a military man, and the son of a clergyman. Having been asked when a young man, by the first Lord Holland, to allow a friend of his to succeed to a position which would have come by rotation to Mr. Durant, Lord Holland never

forgot his acquiescence, and subsequently obtained for him a most lucrative post at the Havannah, where he speedily amassed so large a fortune, that upon returning to England, and looking out for some estate in the neighbourhood where his family had been long seated, he was able to make terms with the Duke of Kingston for his property at Tong, of which he desired to dispose. The Durant family was of Norman extraction, and the name appears among those of William the Conqueror's companions. They seem to have settled in the South West of England, and we find Sir John Arundell married Jane, daughter of Lupus, of Carantoch, and heir of her mother, who was a daughter and heir of Durant—*sable*, a fess indented and in chief three fleurs de lis *argent*; and again, three generations later, Margaret, daughter and co-heir of John Durant (she died January 1st, 26. Henry VIII.), married James Erisey, of Cornwall, whose daughter Julian married John Arundell, of Trefise. The branch of the family with which we are concerned were settled in Worcestershire, and it is related that one of them, who was Vicar of Barcheston, Co. Warwick, during the civil wars, was ejected from his home during an inclement winter night, with his wife and eleven children, by some of Cromwell's soldiers. The Durants had been at Barcheston for some time, since John Durant bought it in the eighth year of Henry VI., who was succeeded by Thomas Durant, in the time of Edward IV., then William in the time of Henry VII., whose son, Henry Durant sold the Manor to William Willington, on September 14th, 23 Henry VII. In the market place, at Worcester, is a curious half-timbered house, bearing over its entrance the inscription "Love God [W.B. 1577. R.D.] Honor the King." In this house Charles II. is said to have stayed before the disastrous battle of Worcester, and here he retreated with Lord Wilmot when all was lost, but so closely pursued by Colonel Corbet that he only just effected his escape by the back door, as his enemy entered by the front. The house was at that time the residence of Richard

Durant, to whom the second part of the Inscription applies, the first part having reference to William Berkeley, who built it at that date. The father of George Durant, who purchased the Tong Estate, was Rector of Hagley, and the Lord Lyttleton, known by the ghost tale attached to his memory, speaks somewhat slightly of the young man who was so happily patronized by Lord Holland, but there had been some unpleasantness arising out of Mr. Durant's official duties, which may account for the animus exhibited in Lord Lyttleton's words. He returned to England, while still a young man, and after acquiring the Tong Estate spent a large sum in embellishing it; indeed it is said on good authority that £100,000 was spent on the Castle, and improvements on the estate. It was he who made the place what we now behold it, though he never lived to see the fruits of his outlay, dying at the early age of 48 years. There can be no doubt that judged from our point of view, much of Mr. Durant's work would be condemned; it must indeed be allowed that the present Castle, imposing as it is, is very incorrect in detail, and scarcely recompenses us for the turrets, twisted chimneys, and mullioned windows of the old brick and stone castellated mansion of Sir Henry Vernon, which is enclosed within the present structure, and portions of which are still visible. And again in the beautiful old parish church, though there is a gain in the removal of the Stanley Monument from the chancel to its present position, near the Vernon Chapel, yet, to say the least, the propriety of stripping Richard Vernon's tomb of its carved alabaster work in order to ornament or make the communion table, is very questionable; and when we know that the vaults below were invaded, and the dead removed from their places in order to make way for the family place of sepulture of the Durants, it becomes difficult to withhold strong censure. The first George Durant, of Tong Castle, married Miss Beaufoy (whose family still live in Lambeth), and was succeeded at his death, which is said to have resulted

from his physicians having mistaken his symptoms, by his son, George Durant, then a minor, and it was during this period that Mr. Plowden was tenant of the Estate. Tong, like Holyrood, has its tragedies, and its oaken floor like that of the northern Palace, is stained with the deep and ineffaceable traces of human blood, though the story has less of romantic interest than that of the death of the ill-fated favourite of the lovely Scottish Queen. The incident, as related to the writer by his friend, the late Madame Durant, was as follows:—Mr. Plowden had a companion who had been brought up with him, been to the same college with him, and lived with him at Tong Castle. One day Mr. Plowden was sitting in one of the reading rooms or studies which adjoin the Library, and the windows of which look out to the south across a path to the flower gardens, and then over the Castle Pool on to the lands and woods of Neachley and Kilsall Hall. His friend who had been out shooting came with loaded gun along the garden walk and so must pass the windows of the study, when presently a scuffle was heard, then a loud report, and the servants rushing into the reading room to ascertain the cause, found the body of the unfortunate man streaming with blood, lying lifeless upon the floor while near stood Mr. Plowden, who explained that he had attempted to get through the window with his loaded gun, which had exploded with fatal effect; hence the dark stains which at least a few years ago were still visible on the floor of one of the reading rooms. The second George Durant, of Tong Castle (who gave the lease of the tithes of Ruckley Wood to Anthony Titley), married Marianne, daughter of Francis Eld, of Seighford, Co. Stafford, in 1779, by whom he had a numerous family, but their life was not a happy one, and resulted in a separation, after which Mr. Durant spent his time principally upon the Continent, near Paris, where he had a villa, over the gates of which were the family Arms and Crest, the fleur-de-lis. In the revolution of 1830 the mob tore down these emblems, and broke

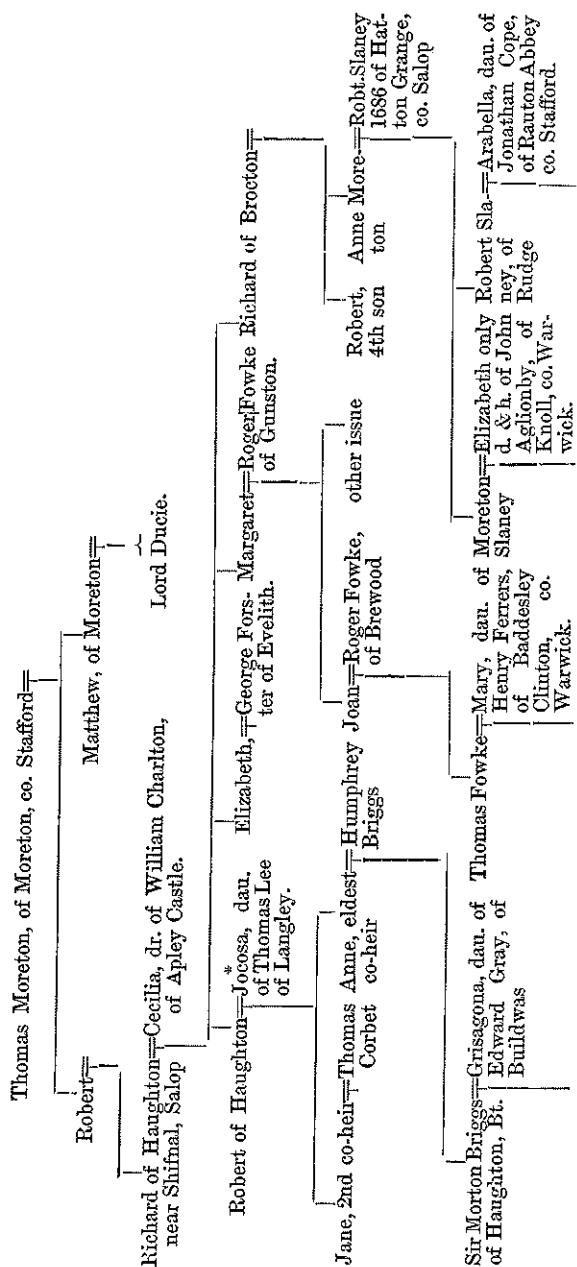
them to pieces, at the same time plundering the villa of its wines and its plate, and carrying off as a trophy the state carriage. It was the fate of the building itself to survive until the Franco-German war, when it was blown up by the Prussians. The first Mrs. Durant died in 1829, and Mr. Durant subsequently married Madlle. Celeste, daughter of Monsr. Cæsar Lefavre, of Lorraine. This amiable, handsome, and accomplished lady preferred their continental home, or their town house in Kensington, to the country which had been the scene of so much which was painful, and consequently they resided little at Tong Castle, which, however, was kept ready for their reception whenever they might wish to visit it, though the fishing and shooting of the estate had been let by Mr. Durant to his neighbour and friend, John Jones, of Kilsall Hall, the only son and heir of Mr. Jones, of Shackerley, who was devoted to field sports. The grounds of Kilsall, adjoining those of Tong Castle, with only a stream to separate them, made this arrangement convenient. Mr. Durant had by his second wife seven children, and settled upon their mother and them his property at Childwick Hall, near St. Albans. His eldest son, George Stanton Eld Durant, predeceased his father in 1831, but left an only son named George, who succeeded to the Tong Estate, upon the death of his grandfather, on November 29th, 1844, and having no pleasant associations with the place, and little interest in it, he sold the Estate in two lots, the chief competitors being the second Earl of Bradford, whose Weston Estate joined the Tong property, and Mr. Jones, of Shackerley Hall, whose Estate also adjoined that of Tong, on two sides, and who desired it as a family seat. The former was successful, and obtained Tong for about £190,000, while the second lot, which, as before stated, consisted of Ruckley Wood, became the property of Mr. Jones. Many of the paintings, and most of the beautiful inlaid cabinets which Mr. Durant had taken an interest in collecting at Tong Castle, remained in London for some years until a large sum of the purchase money of

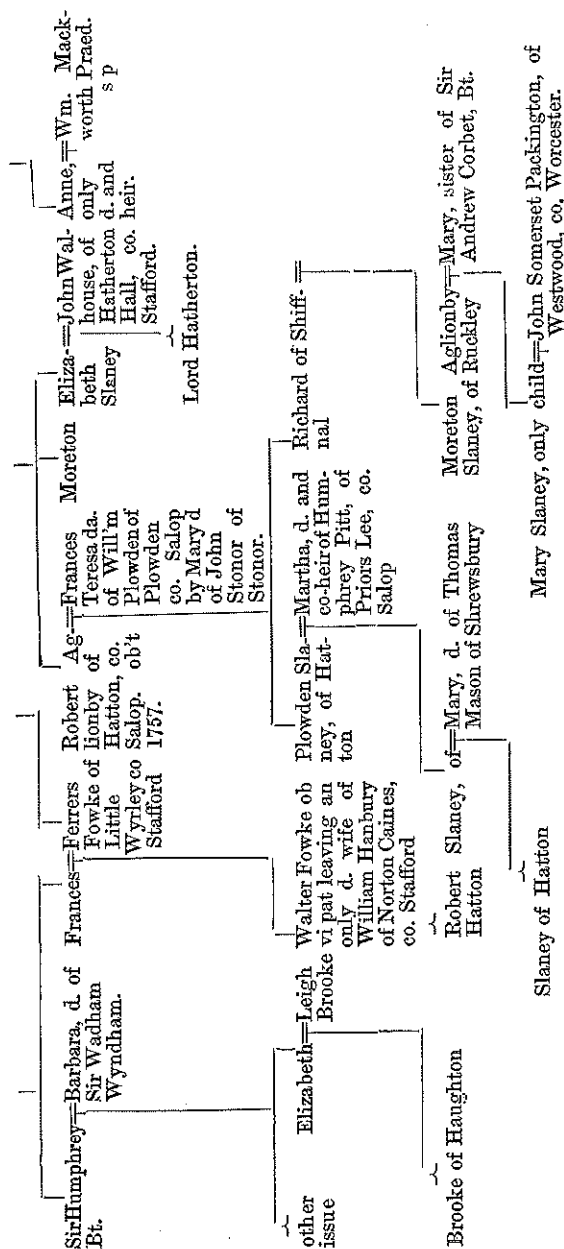
the Tong Estate being lost in an unfortunate speculation, and the George Durant, who sold the Tong Estate dying without male issue, they were all disposed of to various collectors. We have seen the Ruckley Estate again united in one owner by the purchase of Ruckley Wood, in 1855, after a division of about three Centuries. George Jones, of Shackerley Hall, lived a quiet and retired life on his Donnington Estates until his death, which took place in March, 1857, employing his time and wealth in works of charity, but his only son, John Jones, of Kilsall Hall, removed to Ruckley in 1851, and upon succeeding to the estates at the death of his father prepared to make that the future seat of the family, with which intention he laid down much of the estate in turf, altered the arrangement of the woods, and had plans prepared for considerably extending the house, building also a wall as a boundary, near the high road, where formerly there had been a dilapidated fence; thus he quite changed the character of the place. Being so ardent a lover of field sports, he kept the coverts well stocked with game for shooting, and foxes for hunting, but like his predecessors his affairs became entangled, and he lost large sums of money; then numerous lawsuits ensued, when Ruckley seemed to vacillate between its former owners and a new one, George Jones, of Shackerley Hall, having entailed his Donnington property on his descendants, but left Ruckley with the bulk of his wealth and other estates absolutely to his son. Finally, however, it was ordered by the Court of Chancery to be sold, and was purchased on July 28th, 1874, by T. E. Horton, of Prior's Lee, near Shiffnal, for the sum of £15,700, who also at a subsequent period purchased the Ruckley Wood Estate, and is the present possessor of the whole. There is a superstition in the neighbourhood that the Ruckley Estate brings "ill luck," but the foregoing account shows that there was a considerable connection between the several persons and families owning the property, up to the present century, and when it is considered that some of those who came

in later times were not rich men, but expended the bulk of their capital upon a property which afforded a very low rate of interest, and further, laid out considerable sums in ornamental woods, sheets of water, and buildings, it is not surprising to any prudent man that their affairs became embarrassed ; such would probably be the case under any circumstances, and such "ill-luck" cannot be laid to the account of the Ruckley Estate in particular. We may hope, therefore, that the future of this property will prove the folly of the popular impression.

For the sake of reference and making the foregoing account more perspicuous and intelligible, a few Pedigrees of the principal families mentioned are added.

PEDIGREE OF MORETON.





* The mother of Jocosa was Jane dr. of Sir Robert Corbet of Morton Corbet by Anne dr. of Sir Henry Vernon of Tong Castle.

PEDIGREE OF GREY.

Hawise, sister and co-heir of—Sir John Cherleton, Lord of Charlton and Gruffind ab Owain of Powys Pontesbury, co. Salop, obt. 1353.

John de Cherleton—Maud, daughter of Roger Mortimer, 1st Earl of March.

John de Cherleton, obt. 1374.—Joan, daughter of Ralph Stafford, 1st Earl of Stafford.

Edward de Cherleton succeeded—Eliamor, d. and co-heir of Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, by Alice, d. of Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel.

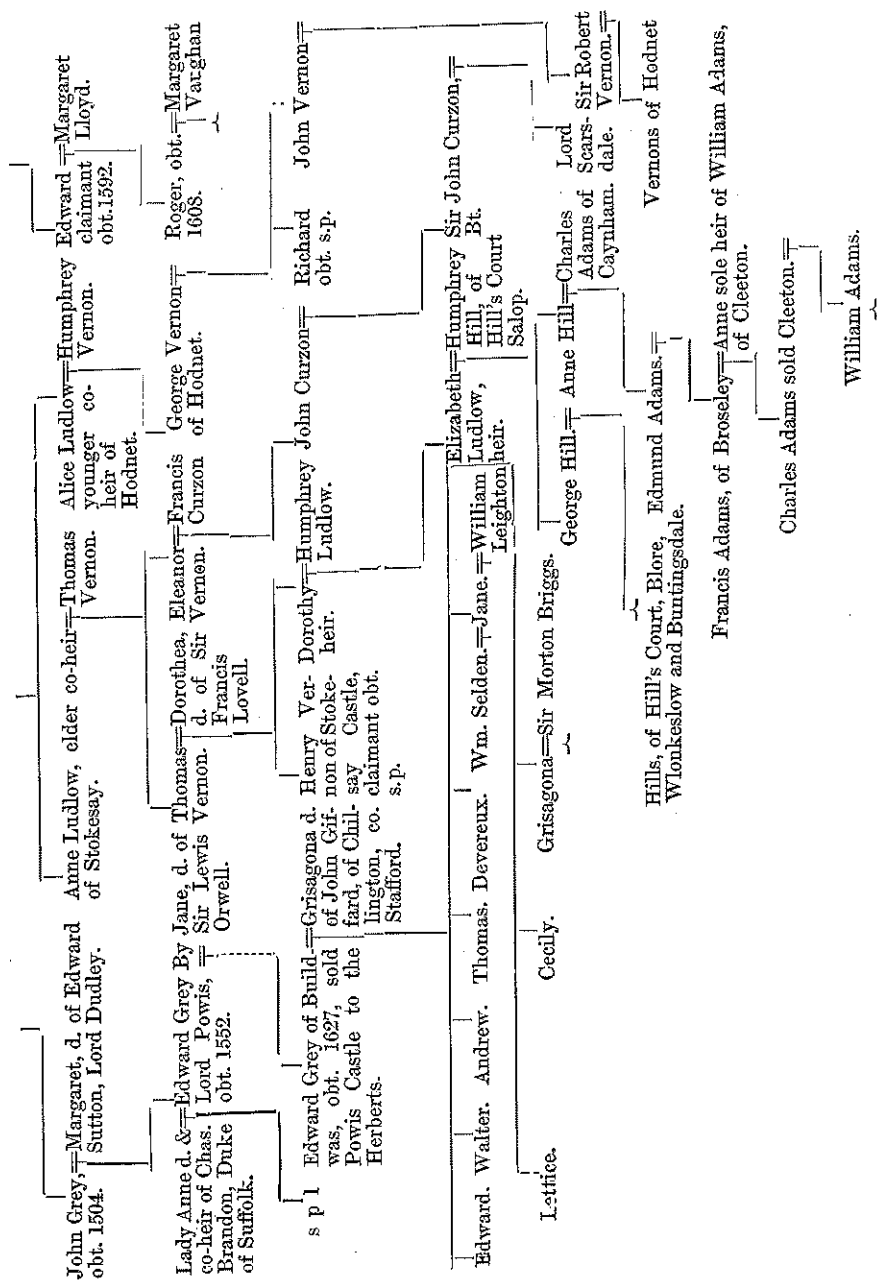
Joan, eldest dau. and co-heir, —Sir John Grey, son of Sir Thomas Grey of Northumberland, by Jane, d. of John, Lord Mowbray, obt. 1421. Created Earl of Tankerville.

Henry Grey—Antigone, nat d. of John, beheaded. Philippa—Thomas, Joan,—Sir Edmund Joyce,—Edmund, son Margaret Earl of Tan- Humphrey Duke of He marr'd three co-heir —Lord Roos. coheir. —Ingoldsthorp coheir. —and heir of a nun. John Lord Dudley.

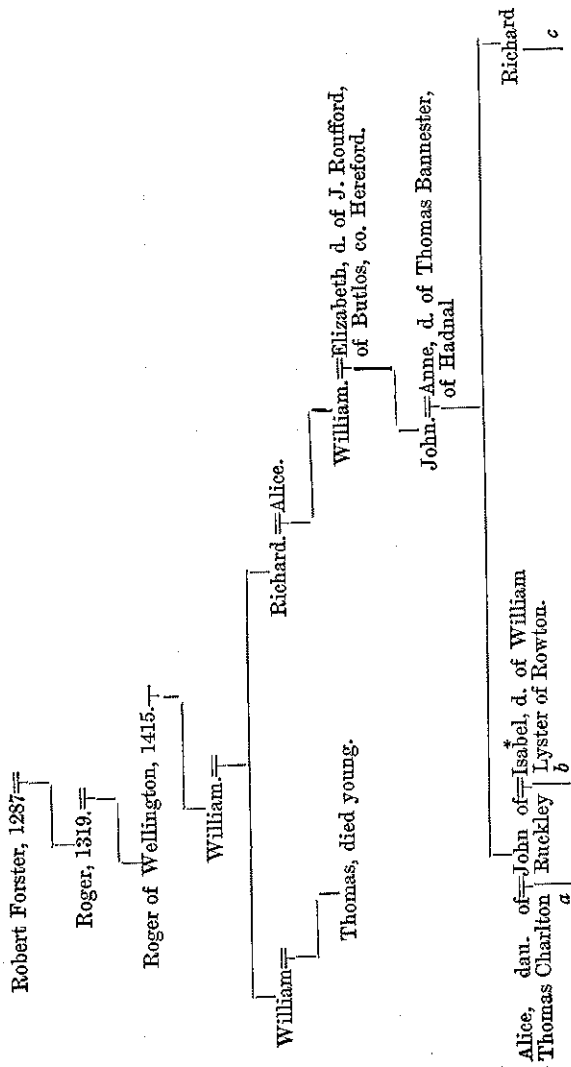
Richard Grey, Lord Powis, —Margaret, d. of James Humphrey Grey, Lady Elizabeth Grey—Sir Roger Kynaston obt. 1466. Lord Audley. obt. s.p.

John Grey, Lord Powis, —Lady Aune, d. of Elizabeth Grey,—Sir John Ludlow, of Stokesay William Herbert Castle, co. Salop. obt. 1497. Earl of Pembroke

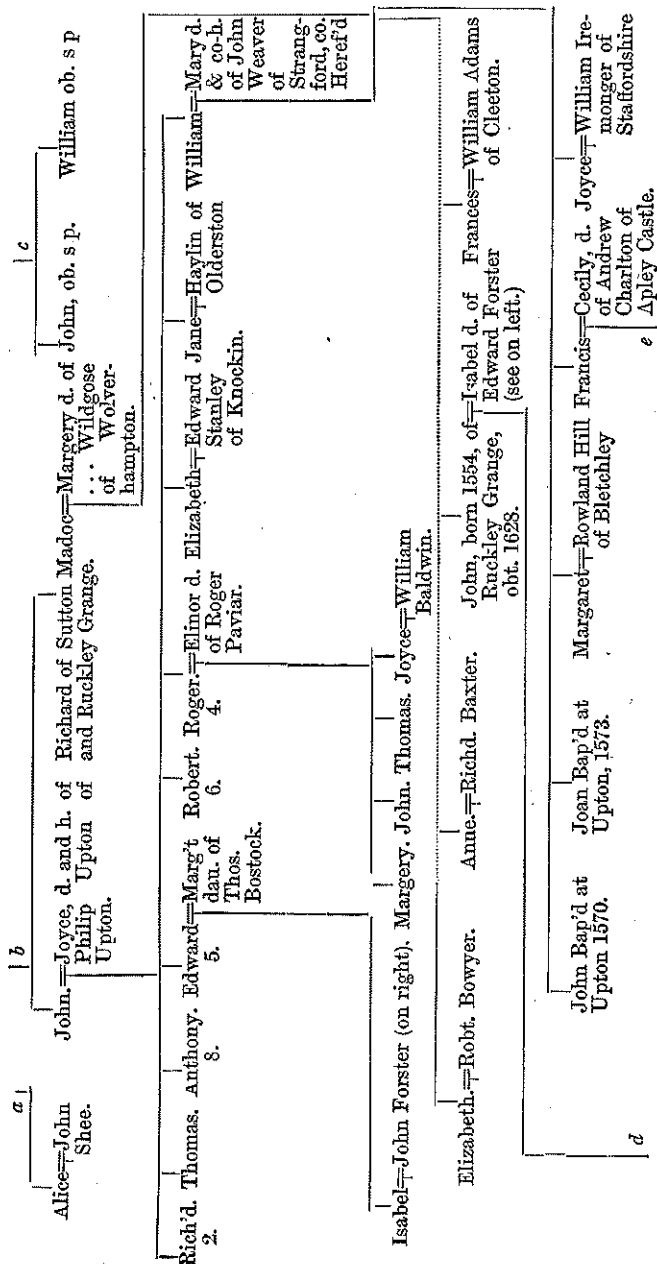
Humphrey,—Isabel Howel obt. 1534.

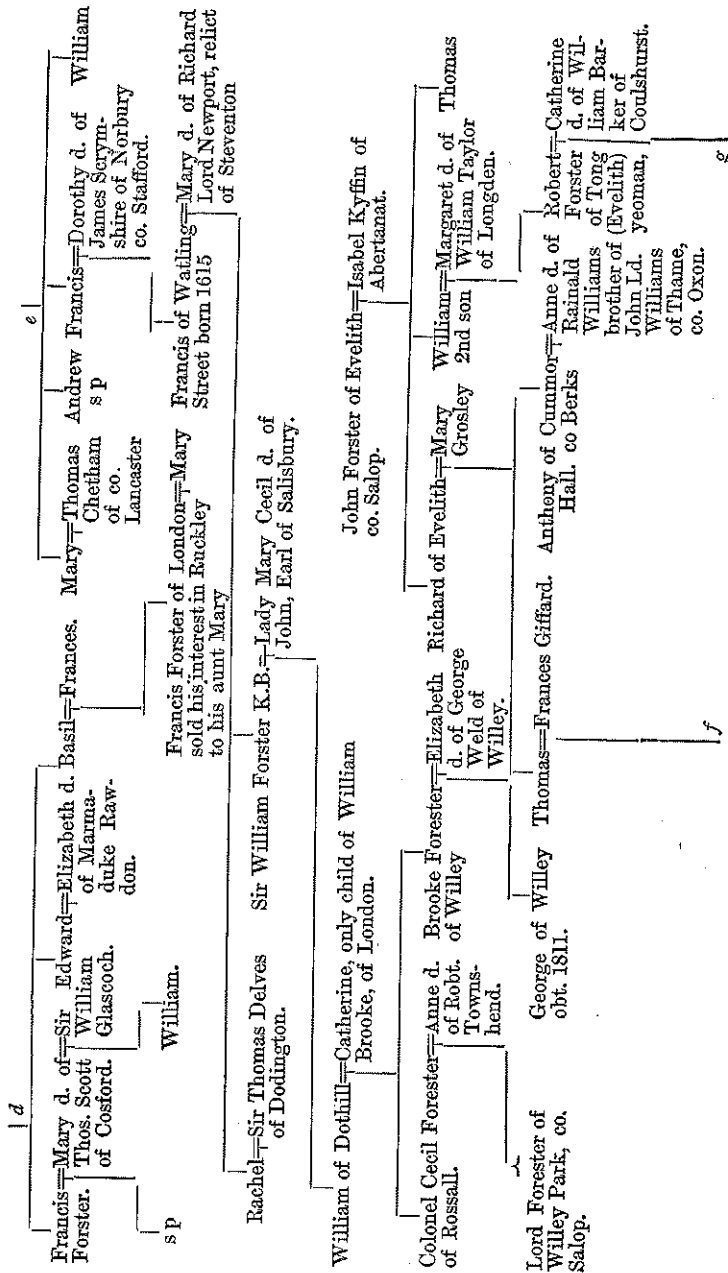


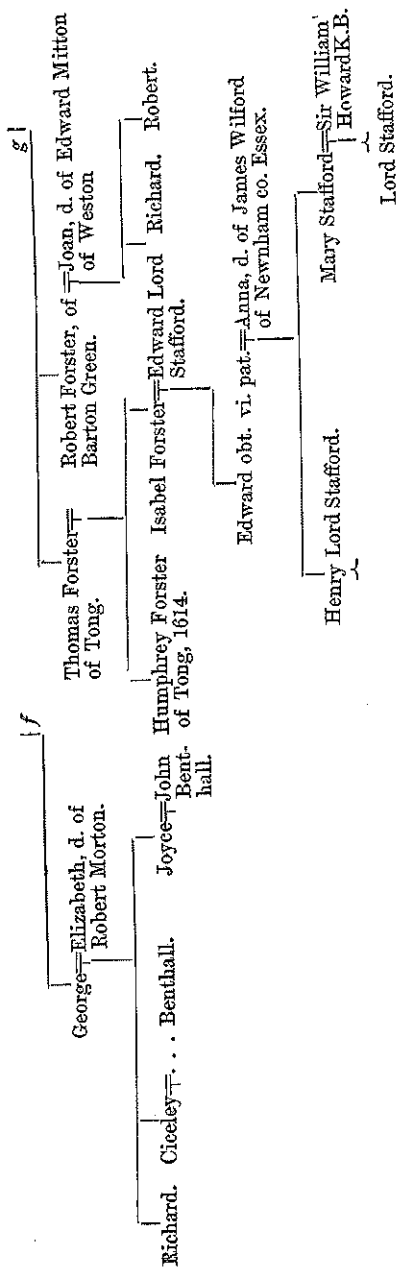
PEDIGREE OF FORSTER.



* The mother of Isabel was Elizabeth dr. of John Leighton by Angharad dr. and coheir of St. John de Burgh.







DIARY OF THE MARCHES OF THE ROYAL ARMY DURING THE GREAT CIVIL WAR

(SO FAR AS RELATES TO SHROPSHIRE),

KEPT BY RICHARD SYMONDS, A CAPTAIN IN THE ROYAL ARMY.

[Published from MS. in British Museum, by the Camden Society,

1859, from which book it is extracted].

1645.—Colonel Michael Woodhouse governor of Ludlow.
 (p. 168.)

Saturday May 17, 1645.—His Majesty marched by Tong, com. Salop, a faire church, the windows much broken, and yet divers ancient coates of armes remayne. [Vide for these C. 35, f. 18, 39, etc., Coll. Arm.] A fayre old castle neare this church called Tong Castle, belonging to Pierpoint this 18 yeares; it was the antient seate of Stanley, who came to it by marrying Vernon of the Peake at Haddon. Thence thorough Newport.

Newport Church, com. Salop. (p. 170).

North window, north yle, these two, old. Az. a chevron between 3 mullets *or.*—*arg.* a chevron *gu.* bet. 3 leopards' faces *sa.* [Newport].

East window, *ibidem.* Quarterly France and England—Quarterly France and England within a bordure *arg.*

East window, same yle—Quarterly 1. *or.* 3 roses *gu.* [Younge]; 2. *arg.* 7 lozenges conjoined *sa.* 3. 3. & 1; 3. *or.* a pale nebuly sable; 4 *or.* a fess *gu.* bet. 3 lions rampant. Younge's coate of Keynton, within 2 myle off.

An altar monument of alabaster, two statues of a man and woman. An escocheon within an orle of martlets; impaling barry nebuly, on a chief, a lion rampant. For Judge Salter, 1492.

Divers flat stones of common people.

His Majesty lay at Mr. Pigott's at Chetwynd, one myle beyond Newport. The two troopes at Edgmonde.

In Edgmond Church, com. Salop.

South window, chancel, very old:—*gu.*, a lion rampant *or.*—*or.* fretty *gu.* North window, *ibidem*:—*az.* a stag's head caboshed *arg.*—Checky *or.* and *az.* [Warren] Mortimer.

(p. 171). In north window, north yle church, and yle belonging to Mr. Young of Keynton, in this parishe:—Quarterly, shield defaced, third quarter apparently, *gu.*, 2 bars *erm.* impaling, *arg.*, a chevron between 3 martlets *sa.* Quarterly 1. "gone." [Younge]; 2. 7 lozenges conjoined; 3. *arg.*, a pale nebuly *sa.*; 4. *or.*, a fess bet. 3 lions ramp^t. *gu.*

In the upper south window of the church, these two coates and inscription at bottome of the window:—*az.*, a chev. bet. 3 roses *or.*,—quarterly, 1 and 4, *sa.*, 6 martlets *arg.*, 3. 2 and 1. *Arundel*; 2. *Scrope*; 3. checky, *or.* and *sa.*, a chief *arg.*, gutty de sang. Orate pro sta'tu Joh'is Pigot de Chatwyn Arqui hanc fenestram an'o D'ni, 1501.

This second coate is in 2^d. and 3^d. south window church, with this miter. As also in the east window of the church.

The same quarterly coats, surmounted by a mitre. [John Arundel b'p. of Lichf. 1496, transl. to Exeter.]

Upon a large flat stone in the middle yle of the church, the statues of a man and woman inlayed in brasse, two shields, and this inscription:—Quarterly, 1, Younge; 2, seven lozenges conjoined, 3, 3 and 1; 3, a pale nebuly; 4, a fess bet. 3 lions ramp^t.; impaling quarterly, 1 and 4, a fret [Eyton]; 2 and 3 two bars ermine. Quarterly, 1 and 4, a lion ramp^t., debriused by a bend; 2 and 3, ten roundles 4, 3, 2 and 1; impaling, 1 and 4, two bars; 2 and 3 checky.

Of your charite ye shall pray for the sowle of Francis Young, sometyme of Caynton, Esq., son and heire of Sir William Young, Knight, and dame Margaret his wife, daughter of Nich. Eyton, of Eyton, Esq., ob. 1533, &c.

Mr. Corbett is lord of this manor, 300*l.* per annum.

At Longford, the parish adjoining, and neare Newport, the Earle of Shrewsbury has a large brick house and seate, spoyld and abus^d.

A garrison of the rebels, 1644, delivered up to Prince Rupert.

(p. 172).

Garrisons in com. Salop.

R.—Tong Castle; first the King had it; then the rebels gott

it; then Prince Rupert tooke it and putt in a garrison, who afterward burnt it when he drew them out to the battaile of York.

K.—Longford Howse, the Earle of Shrewsbury; first the rebells made a garrison 1644, and held it till Prince Rupert tooke it at the same time he did Tong Castle. Colonel Young is Governour. Young's Estate 300*l.* per annum, his wife a clothier's daughter.

K.—Lindsill, three myle from Newport, a howse of Sir Richard Leveson's. (Lindsill Abbey.) Sir Richard L. made it himself aboute hallowmas 1644, and still remaynes so pro Rege, 160 men in it. (He lives in the lodge.) Bostock Governour obiit.

K.—High Arcall [Ercall]; a howse belonging to the Lord Newport, made a garrison about the same time that the former was, made a garrison by my lord himselfe. 200 men in it. Captain Nicholas Armer is Governour.

R.—Wemme, a towne pro Parl.; King, a Chandler in Chancery Lane, is Governour.

K.—Castle, Sir Henry Fred. Thinne owes it.

R.—Morton Corbet Castle. Sir Vincent Corbett owes it. Pro Rebells. 4 myles from Shrewsbury.

R.—Shrewsbury, betrayed to the rebells in winter 1644.

K.—Bridgnorth Castle, Sir Lewis Kirke Governour: 300 foot.

K.—Ludlowe towne and castle, Sir Michael Woodhouse.

K.—Stoake Castle, Captⁿ Danet commands it under Woodhouse. (Lost in June following.)

K.—Shraydon [Shrawardine] Castle. An Irishman under Sir W^m Ball commands it.

K.—Chirke Castle, Leift Colonel Watts, Governour.

R.—A howse within three myles of Bridgnorth.

(p. 173. 174). Chatwyn [Chetwynd] Church com: Salop.

East window chancel, this, very old: A male figure, having apparently wings depending from the shoulders, holding in the right hand a sword, and bearing on the left arm a shield, charged with *arg.*, a cross flory *sa.* [Peshall.]

Sa., a chevron bet. 3 crosses flory *arg.*, "old." [Chetwynd.]

Az., a chevron bet. 3 mullets *or.*, "newer."

Upon the ground in the chancel, against the north wall, lies a knight crosse-legged, with a shield on his left arme. They call it the monument of ——— Chetwyn, ante Conq.

In the middle of the chancel a flat stone, thus:

An ancient cross, with floreated staff, resting on a lion; on

the right side of the cross is a circular shield bearing the coat of Chetwynd.

This flowery cross is wrought handsomely and embosses out.

Against the south wall of the chancel two monuments, statues lying in armour about Henry 5 or 6 time. Alabaster, very curiously wrought. Under their heads upon a helme, forth of a wreath, a fox head. He next the east end oldest, and a chayne about his neck. The other in a different fashiond armor, and a chayne of collar of S and a rose at the end hanging about his neck. Two angells support at west end these two shields: Quarterly, 1. *Ermine*, 3 fusils conjoined in fess *sable*. [Pigott]; 2. *az.*, a chevron *or.* bet. 3 mullets *or.* [Chetwynd]; 3. *arg.*, a cross flory *sa.*, on a canton *gu.* a lion's head erased *arg.* [Peshall]; 4. *vert*, two lions rampant. *or.* Quarterly, but arranged perpendicularly, 1. Pigott, 2. Chetwynd, 3. Peshall, 4. *Vert*, two lions rampant in fess *or.*; with two impalements, 1. *arg.*, a lion ramp^t *gu.* within a bordure enrailed *sa.*, bezanty [? Cornwall]; 2. Barry nebuly *or* and *sa.* [Blount].

In the parlour windowes of this pretty howse of Mr. Pigott's:

A blank shield quarterly, above which is written "former quarterings."

Pigott; impaling, *az.*, a fess nebuly per fess *arg.* and *sa.*, bet. 3 laurel leaves slipped, *or* [Leveson].

Or, a raven *sa.*, [Corbett]; impaling Pigott. "And many more."

(p. 175). Tuesday, May 20, 1645. His Majesty with his army removed from Chatwyn through Drayton com. Salop, and lay a myle farther. Earl of Lichfield &c., at Norton, at a howse sometimes the habitation of Grosvenor, now Cotton's.

The King lay at Church his howse in Drayton parish.

This Grosvenor built it [*i.e.*, the house at Norton] temp. Qu. Mary.

Az., a garb *or*, a crescent for difference [Grosvenor] "This garb is impaled often in this howse, lately."

The elder howse of Grosvenor in this county is Bellaport in the parish of Norton, com. Salop.

These are painted in a chamber window of this howse:

A large crucifix, before which kneel the effigies of a male and female. The male is habited in armour, but without the helmet, and wears a surcoat embroidered with his arms, *viz.*, *arg.*, a cross flory, *sa.* In the upper part of the surcoat there is

a slight difference in the charge, being per saltire and a cross flory, counterchanged. Over his head is a talbot's head erased *or.* for crest. Upon the lady's mantle is this coat, *az.* 3 water-bougets *or.*

[in black letter.] Thomas Grosvenar Esq. and Margery his wife, da: of John Cottes of Woodcote, Esq.

[This must be an error. The male is a Peshall, and the female coat is not that of Cotes. Thomas Grosvenor of Bellaport marr^d Isabella d. and coh. of Richard Peshall.]

Wednesday the army rested, because Sir Marmaduke Langdale, the Major-General, was sent the night befor with a party of horse and foot to surprise Wemme, which then had but 150 men in it, but coming too late, fayled.

Thursday May 22 Wee marched from Drayton to Stone in com. Stafford.

(p. 218). Thursday [1645 Aug. 7] to Ludlowe. In this march he was accompanied by these horse: General Gerard's. His Life-Guards 300. Sir Marmaduke Langdale's—Sir W^m Vaughan's.

(p. 219). Friday 8 to Bridgnorth, a pretty towne, one church beside that in the castle. Sir Lewis Kirke is governour.

In the hall windowes of Ludlowe Castle:

Quarterly France and England, a label of 3 points *arg.*; impaling *gu.*, a saltire *arg.* [Neville.]

Arg., a fess bet. 4 barrulets *gu.* [Badlesmere.]

Or., a fess *gu.*

(Blank)

[*Azure*], three barnacles extended in pale *or.*, on a chief *or* a demi lion ramp^t *gu.* "Pembridge" [an error—Genesnell].

Sunday to Lichfeild 24 myles.

Three garrisons of the enemies lately erected in com: Salop, since Shrewsbury was lost—R. Stoke Castle. R. Broncroft, the howse of Mr. John Lutley in Dilbury parish. R. Benthall.

(p. 244). 1645 Monday Sep. 29. Leaving Oswestree (a garrison of the rebells) on the left hand, to Llandisilio and Llandrenio in com. Montgomery, where the army lay in the feild; some chief in some howses.

Tuesday, from thence early at day breake, marched, leaving Shrewsbury three myle on the left hand; that night late and teadiously to Bridgnorth; the rere guard gott to Wenlock Magna com. Salop. In this marche 3 or 4 alarmes by Shrewsbury horse, and 5 or 6 of them crosst the way and killd and took some.

Thursday 2nd The King marched to Lichfeild. Upon the rendezvous going to Lichfeild the King knighted Sir ———

Horwood [not mentioned in list of Knights Coll. Arms, nor is his pedigree in Vis. Shrop.] of com. Salop. no soldier, nor in armes. This day General Gerard's regiment returned from the rendezvous *quia* tired, to have refreshment under Bridgnorth garrison. *Ego etiam*. This day, by reason of the long and tedious marches, divers fell off, some, as six went into Bentall howse. Prince Maurice this morning, with his owne troope (partly commanded by Lord Molineux, and partly by Sir Thomas Sandys) went towards Worcester.

(p. 247). Alveley Church com. Salop, 5 myle from Bridgnorth.

In a south window, next the south dore of the church, three times this escocheon, and underneath coat, helme, mantle, and creast. —

A shield surrounded by a "glory," two coats one above the other; 1. Barry nebuly of 6 *or* and *sa.* [Blount]; 2. *arg.*, a lion ramp^t *gu.* within a bordure *sa.*, bezanty [Cornwall]; impaling, quarterly per fess indented *az.* and *arg.* a lion passant in the first quarter [Croft]; the whole surmounted by a helmet, with, for crest, Out of a ducal coronet *or*, a demi lion ramp^t *gu.*, crowned *or*, bet. 2 human arms embowed, "armes *gules* hands proper;" "mantle *gules*, dowed *argent*."

(p. 248). In the chancel, an altar tombe for Grove, a mercer of London. (Grocer *added*.)

Ermine, on a chevron engrailed *gu.* 3 escallops *or*, a crescent for difference, [Grove] of London.

Now Mr. Grove lives here.

Quatford Church com. Salop, a myle from Bridgnorth.

South window and north window of this church, this is old and small: —

Mortimer.

The same, the inescoccheon charged with 3 [? nails *sable*, *or*, a mistake for *ermine*].

An altar tombe against the north wall chancel; incirption in brasse circumscribed.

Quatt is the next parish, wher Sir Thomas Wolrich has an old seate.

Garrisons in com. Salop, 15 October, 1645.

K.—Ludlow. Sir Michael Woodhowse, Governour; *quond.* pag o' Marq. Hamilton.

K.—Bridgnorth. Sir Lewis Kirke, Governour. Sir Tho^s Woolrich was first Governour 3 years since; then Sir L. Kirke. 200 in the Castle.

Leift. Governour Thomas Wyne, Sir Rob^t W. [Wynne's] son.
Major Fr Billingley junr. com. Salop.

K.—High Arcall, the house of Sir Rich^d Newport, now Lord Newport. Armorer is Governour.

R.—Shrewsbury governed by a Committee.

R.—Oswestree.

R.—Wemm. Major Bryan is Governour.

R.—Lindshall [Lilleshull] Abbey. Sir Rich^d Leveson owes it; Major Duckenfeild lost it.

R.—Dawley Castle, 7 myle from Bridgnorth, 4 myle from Wellington. Fouke is Governour; Duckenfeild was, and lost it.

R.—Bromcroft Castle. Mr. Lutley owes it, the Lord Calvyn Scotus is Governour.

R.—Benthall. Mr. B. howse, 5 myle from Bridgnorth. Tho^s Brereton is Governour.

R.—Stokesay, a house of the Lord Craven's, 4 myle from Ludlow.

(p. 250). Captain Gatacre, of the county of Salop, killed in Bridgenorth by a quartermaster, the quartermaster killed too by him. One endeavored to hang himsele the next day here.

Bridgenorth Church.

East window, north yle, church:

The kneeling figure of a knight in chain armour, over which he wears a surcoat marked "*or*," round the waist a belt "*sable*" from which the "*sword*" is suspended "on the right side." In front of him is a shield *azure*, a cross *moline or*.

North window, north yle, towards the west end:

Two shields erased.

Gules, fretty *or*.

Azure, a chevron *gules*.

. . . . , on a chief *gules* three plates.

Gules, a chevron *or*.

Against the north wall, same yle, upon an altar tombe, lyes the statue of a man in armour and a woman. Many escoceheons painted on the side:

Gules [Argent] on a chief *or* a hawk *sable* "Hoord."

The same impaling a crescent bet. 3 roses.

The Hoordes lived in this parish. Hoord's park still.

Neare the former monument, and against the north wall, upon an altar tombe, lyes the statue of a woman fairely guilt in alabaster. This incscription is circumscribed and coate of armes:

Here lyeth the body of Frances Fermer, daughter of Thomas

Hoorde Esq. and wife of Thomas Fermer Esq. who dyed 10 day of July 1570. On w. s. I. h. m.

Quarterly; 1 and 4, *or*, on a fess *sa.* bet. 3 lions heads erased *gu.* 3 anchors erect [of the first, Farmer]; 2 and 3. a chevron bet. 3 escallops, impaling, 1, Hoord; 2, an inescoccheon charged with 3 roundles *or* within a bordure. [For the coat of Palmer see this and 6 other coats not here given, in Vincent's Salop. Coll. Arm.]

(p. 251). In the north window, neare the former monument very small:

Or, on a cross *gules* a hurt.

Or, a fess *gules*.

Or, three chevronels *gules* [Clare].

Quarterly *or* and *gules* [Vere].

Gules, three fleurs de lis within a bordure *or*.

Gules, a crescent subverted *or*, in base an escallop of the last.

In the same north window this picture of a saint:—

Rude sketch of a male figure, habited in a long robe marked "*or*." With his right hand he supports a staff having a cross pattée at the top, and on his left arm is a shield, bearing *arg.* a cross pattée *gules*.

In the middle yle of the church a flat stone, and these fashioned and numberless shields are embossed upon it, and worne: A sketch of the stone is given, upon which is sculptured the shaft of a cross raised upon 3 steps, at the top a shield, and on either side 6 other shields, all blank.

This coat in the west window, church:

Arg. on a bend cotised *sa.* 3 cross-crosslets fitchy *arg.*

In the church within the castle of Bridgenorth is nothing of observation.

Medeley. Upon this river of Seaverne they use here a little boate for one to sitt in; they call them corricles, laths within and leather without, from *corium*.

Friday, Oct. 17, came intelligence to Bridgenorth the King had left Newarke, and gone towards Scotland to Montros the Sunday before.

(p. 252). A parson may be tryed at a councill of war, and was so at Bridgenorth.

A Scott was tryed at a council of war there, and he putt on his hatt before them, and being reprehended for it by the Governour, he told them he was equall to all except the Governour, and they committed him for it.

20 Oct. Severall Colonels whose regiments were in Bridgenorth.

Foot.

Sir Lewis Kirke's, Governour; Colonel John Corbett's, Colonel Billingsley's, the trained band,—this regiment watches in the towne; Sir Mich. Earnley's, one company of them; Sir Charles Lloyd's came hither from the Devizes, 60.

Foot about in all, of all these 260.

Horse.

Sir Francis Otteley the high sheriffe, Sir Edw^d Acton 10, Governor's troops 60;—Horse not 100.

Wednesday Oct. 22. Leift. Colonel Slaughter marched out of Bridgnorth about 2 of the clock afternoon. Governour's troope commanded by Captⁿ Singe 40, Sir Francis Otteleyes &c. That night by eight to High Ercall. Thence marched 30 horse and 20 dragoons with us about 12 of the Clock that night. By nine next day to Chirke.

(p. 256). An. Dⁿⁱ. 1644. Sir W^m Vaughan was Generall of Shropshire. In the winter he made these his garrisons to quarter his owne regiment:—Shraydon Castle, commanded by Sir W^m his brother, a parson; lost it to the counties of Salop, Chester &c. Caves Castle, Davalier. High Arcall, Armorer. Linshull and Dawley, Major Duckenfield.

Oct. 1645. When the King was at Newarke, he made Sir W^m Vaughan Generall of the horse in the counties of Salop, Wigorn, Stafford, Hereford, South Wales and North Wales.

(p. 267). Leominster Church, com. Hereford.

An old altar-tombe with alabaster on the topp, in black lynes the two pictures, and in a large forme the effigies of our Saviour on the crosse.

Thome Phillips, ob. 1530, and Isabela ux. ejus.

(p. 276).

Bard Kye at Oswestree.

Mr. Jones of Caus, com. Flint, now prisoner in Chester Castle. 1645 Friday Dec. 3 to Kinver between Kidderminster and Bridgenorth.

Saturday 5 to Bridgnorth. Here Lt. Col. Slaughter's troope and Col. Dixies stayed, and Col. Gradyes.

Sir W^m Vaughan with his troope to Ludlow, but his men not admitted.

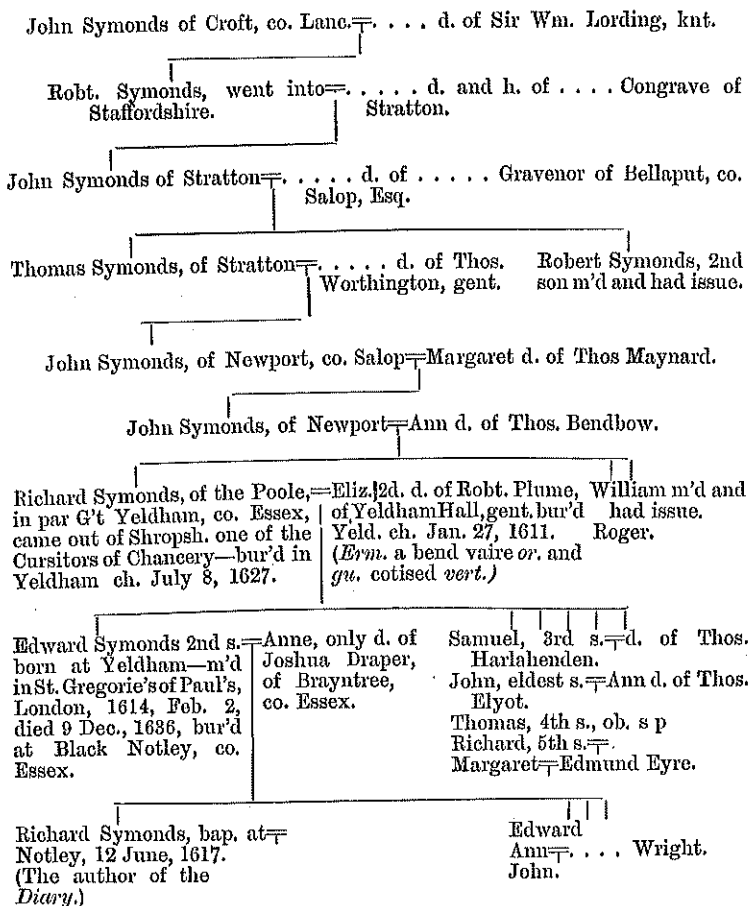
Capt. Bowmer and Capt. Vaughan to Arcall, which was shutt up by 3 or 4 petty garrisons.

Thursday Dec. 18 Sir W^m Vaughan drew out the horse he had with him afore, and some of Dudley and Ludlowe, 6 or 700 foot commanded by Lt. Col. Smyth, horse 5 or 600; marched from Bridgnorth, and had a rendezvous towards S.

Friday morning came intelligence to B. that Hereford was lost.

THE FOLLOWING PEDIGREE OF SYMONDS WILL EXPLAIN WHO
HE WAS AND HIS CONNECTION WITH SHROPSHIRE.

Arms: *az.* a chevron engrailed between 3 trefoils *or.* *Crest*; out of a mural crown *or.* a boar's head *arg.* tusked *or.*





REAL SIZE



Nº 1 ENLARGED

2



REAL SIZE



Nº 2 ENLARGED

3



REAL SIZE



Nº 3 ENLARGED

ON THREE ANCIENT RINGS FOUND IN SHROPSHIRE.

BY REV. W. A. LEIGHTON, B.A., CAMB., F.L.S., F.B.S., ED.

1.—THE COLE HALL RING (*See fig. 1*).

A PLAIN massive gold seal-ring, bearing on its oval face an incised figure of a pelican standing up in her nest, with wings displayed, and feeding a young one with drops of blood, which she is pecking from her breast, encompassed with an incised fretted border. This device is emblematical of the Blessed Saviour feeding the members of His Body with His own most precious Blood in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. This ring was found many years ago on the site of Cole Hall, Shrewsbury, and is now in the possession of Samuel Wood, Esq., F.S.A., of St. Mary's Court, Shrewsbury.

The family of Cole is one of the most ancient of those who lived in Shrewsbury, and members of it occur amongst our earliest Provosts in the time of Henry III. Their mansion was called Cole Hall, and with its appendant court, out-offices, and garden, occupied the space or "block" now and then bounded by Barker Street, Dog Lane, Mardol, and Hill's Lane, and was separated from Rowley's Mansion by the narrow shut or passage leading from Barker Street to Hill's Lane. The entrance was probably through the archway of the Trumpet Inn, in Mardol.

These ancient Mansions were not simply large houses

in or near a street, but were detached inclosures comprising large spaces of ground similar to what in India are termed "compounds." We have in Shrewsbury several of these Mansions, *e.g.*, Charlton's Mansion (now the Theatre) in Shoplatch, whose domain was bounded by the Lee Stalls, Swan Hill, Cross Hill, and St. John's Hill. The entrance was through a pointed arch nearly on the spot now occupied by the hall of the George Hotel—and the gateway to the inner court was through what is now called Scotland Yard. Vaughan's Mansion on College Hill (part of which is now our Museum and part the Music Hall) is another example, and enclosed a space bounded by the Talbot Chambers, Swan Hill, and College Hill, and by the attendant Coffee-House Shut. The chief entrance was on College Hill, into a vestibule from which a very fine pointed and elegantly moulded arch opened into the hall, now the Museum. The court-yard entrance was through the Fire-Office passage—and the Talbot Chambers were the principal out-offices, underneath which were the singular and intricate stone-vaulted cellars and their long passages. I can myself well recollect the boundary-wall along Swan Hill, from the Talbot Chambers up to the Museum on College Hill, and which had on the interior a row of timber trees whose branches over-shadowed the adjoining street. Ireland's Mansion in the HighStreet, Shutte Place, between Shoplatch and the Market Square, and Bennett Hall at the bottom of Pride Hill, are also similar examples. And I suspect we have another in the Turf Tavern on Claremont Hill, whose large court-yard was entered by a gate or archway near the top of Claremont Hill, and extended down to St. Romald's Chapel in Barker Street, which probably was the domestic chapel. This was most probably the Mansion of the old family of Gamel, of Romaldesham, of 12th century period.

We must be careful not to confound these Mansions with the ancient hostelries of which we have

many examples still traceable, as in the Old Fox Inn (which stood on the site of the present Working Man's Hall), the Raven and Bell, the Lion Hotel, the Unicorn Inn, and Elisha's Passage. All these had a wide entrance or approach from the street into a large open court, around which were the buildings of the hostel, and whose upper story was surrounded by an open balcony or corridor, from which access was obtained to the upper rooms, precisely as in the old Belle Sauvage and Four Swans, Bishopsgate Street Within, in London.

Again we must be careful not to confound the owners and occupiers of these Mansions with the tradesmen burgesses. They were not retired or wealthy tradesmen, but in reality the gentry and freeholders of the town, possessors of large or considerable freehold landed property, and having, as was required by the law and usage of early days, as freeholders, a special seal of each family, which they attached to all deeds or transfers of the patrimonial estates. Such were the Shutts, the Prides, the Bernards, the Gamels, and the Coles, and many others.

The Cole family, according to deeds, temp. Charles II., which I have seen, were possessors of the manors or lordships of Uprossall *alias* the Isle of Rossall, Yeaton, *alias* Yetton, Yagdon *alias* Jagdon, and Wigmore, co. Salop, and also other considerable property in Wigmore, Salop, Monkforagate, Oxton, Shelton, Montfort, Forton, Hunkington, Child's Ercall, Sarefeld *alias* Shutfeld, Old Wood, Uddington, and Frankwell, co. Salop. In 6 Elizabeth, 1564, they also owned "All that voyde place or ground upon the whyche heretofore was founded and builded a chappell dedycated to Sainte George commonlye nomynated Saint George's Chappell wythe all emoluments comodytyes and profites thereof to be taken, sett scytuate and beinge in Frankewell within the suburbes of the towne of Salop nighe the Walshe gate of the sayd towne and is in lengthe from

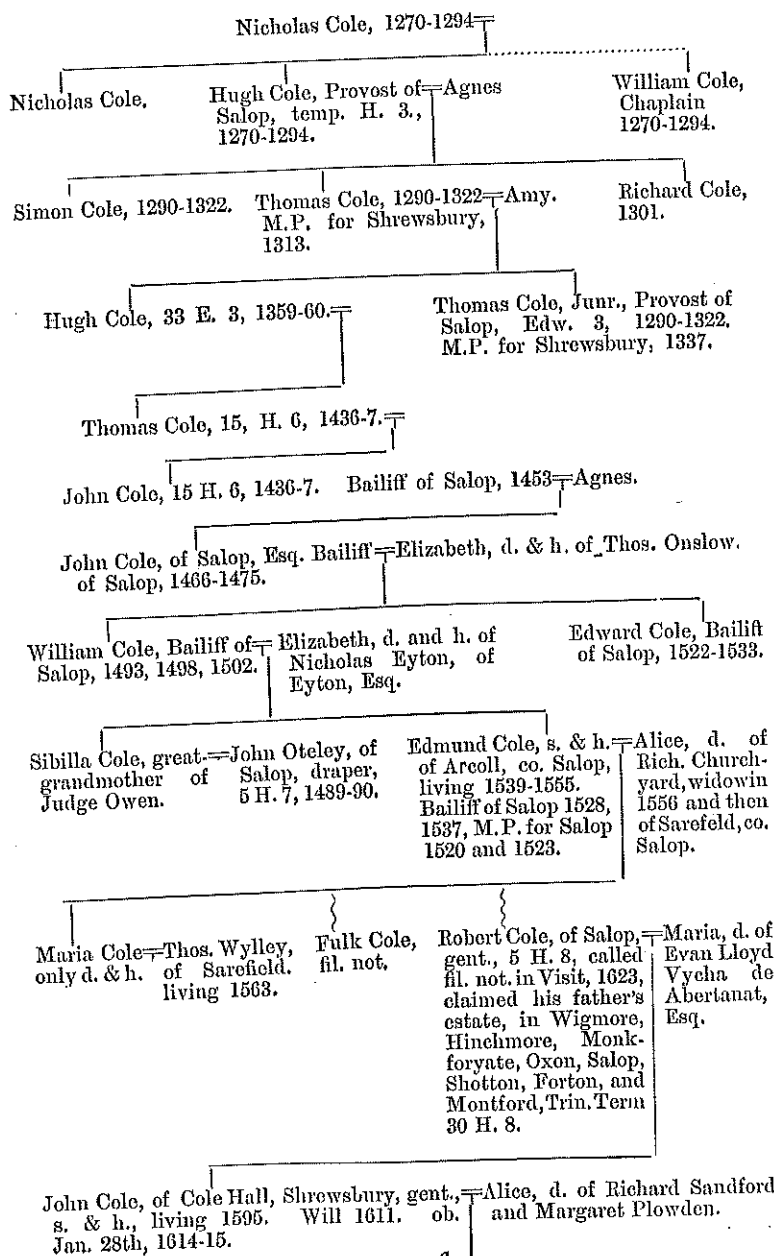
the howses or tenemets erected of charitye for the reliefe of the poor people co'monly called Coles Alms-houses to the King's highe waye leading towards Severne eighteen yards, & is in bredthe from a teneme't or howse now in the tenure of Hughe ap Yevan to the hyghe waye fowrete yards." A deed, 32 Elizabeth, 1590, informs us that John Cole obtained by purchase from Edwd. Mynton, draper, Richd. Mynton, his eldest son, and Richard Heynes, sher-man, "All that one messuage, tenement & Chappell with the appurtenances called Saincte John's Chappell lyinge and beinge in Franckwell aforesaid nowe or late in the tenure or occupation of the said Edward Mynton & Richard Mynton, and also all those three messuages or tenements called Saincte Johns Almeshouses to the saied tenemente and Chappell called Saincte John's Chappell adjoyninge now or late alsoe in the tenure of the said Edwd. & Ried. Mynton."

The Coles appear to have resided at Cole Hall until the year 1681, when it is stated in a deed to be in the occupation of Edward Grinshill, and perhaps their residence was continued even to 1751 when the last male Cole died. The hall itself has long ago disappeared, and we know nothing of its appearance or architecture. But of the extent of the domain around the mansion we have evidence in a deed of 14 James I., 1616, whereby Thomas Cole, the younger, grants a lease of a parcell of ground, being part of an orchard called Cole Orchard, situate in Shrewsbury aforesaid, in or near a certain "street called Dog Lane."

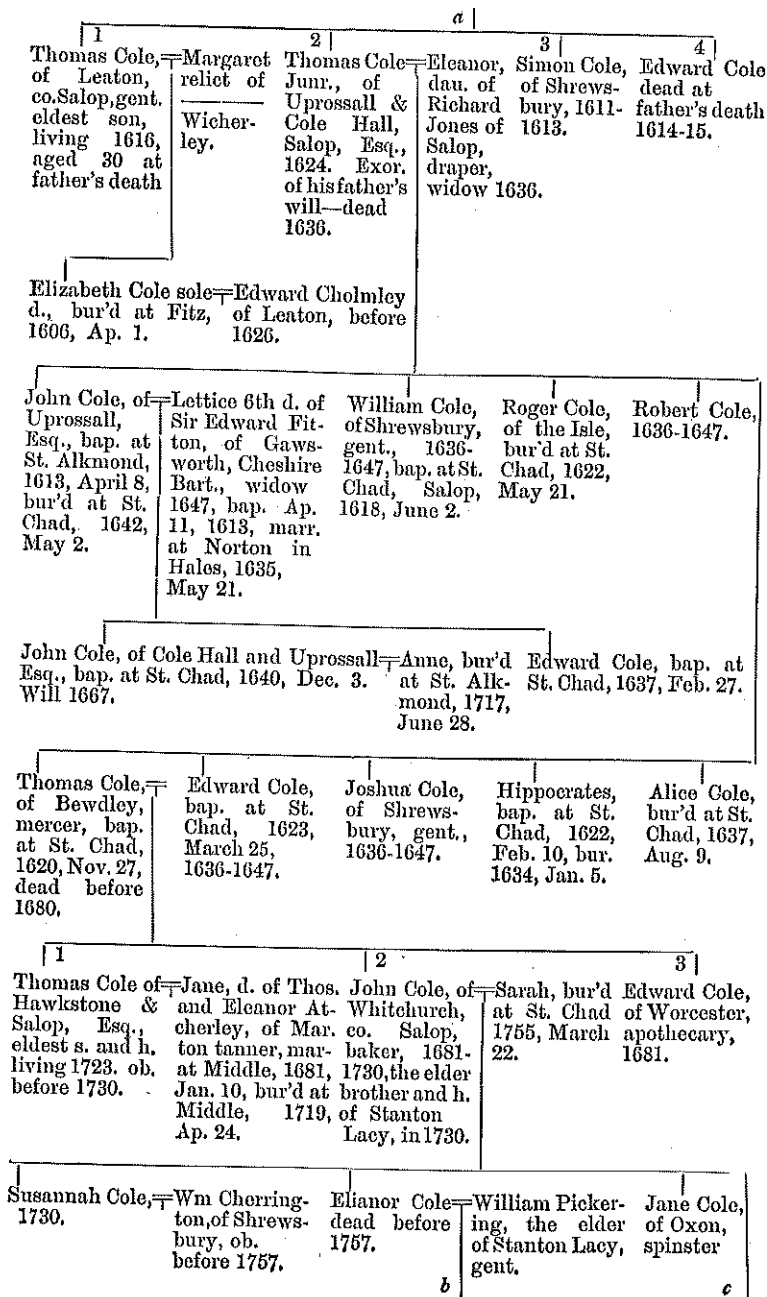
The arms of Cole were *arg.* a chevron *gu.*, between three scorpions reversed 2 and 1, *sa.*

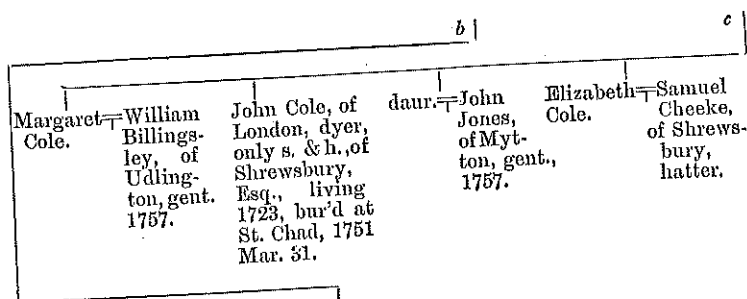
The following imperfect pedigree is drawn up from *Heralds' Vis. Shropshire*, 1623, Parish Registers, family deeds, &c.

The family is believed to be now extinct in Shrewsbury.



ON THREE ANCIENT RINGS





William Pickering, the younger, of
Wolverhampton, toymith, 1757.

2.—THE LEIGHTON RING (*See fig. 3*).

Among the ruins of Haghmon Abbey, co. Salop, some years ago, was found a gold seal-ring, massive, but of clumsy form, the broad rounded oblong face of which bore in shallow incisions the following device. In the centre a human skull, frontal view, below which was a thigh-bone lying horizontally, and on the right side a pick-axe and on the left a shovel; above the skull an hour-glass with a candlestick and taper on either side and a pair of expanded wings; around the verge the motto *QUAVLIS. VITA. FINIS. ITA*. Within the hoop were the initials *W.L.*

As the above emblems of mortality and the motto were identical with similar ones existing on the monument of Sir William Leighton, Chief Justice of North Wales in the time of Elizabeth, in the Chancel of Cardington Church, co. Salop, coupled with the initials, there could be no doubt in appropriating it to the Judge. It was no doubt one of the rings which it was the custom of those times for Barristers when raised to the rank of Serjeants-at-Law to present to each of the Judges of that time, and this particular ring was probably that presented to his contemporary Richard Barker, Recorder of Shrewsbury and Judge of North Wales, whose family then resided at Haghmon Abbey, and whose brother, Rowland Barker, of

Haghmon, had married for his second wife, Cecilia, daughter of Sir Edward Leighton, of Wattlesborough.

The large alabaster monument against the South wall of the chancel of Cardington Church may be thus described :—

A round arch, adorned with gilt roses, &c., spans a table on which is a life-size figure, recumbent on the left side on a cushion, the left-hand supporting the head, in scarlet gown, black tunic, ruffs round neck and wrists, head covered with black cap, the right-hand has held something now broken off. Emblems of mortality, as skull, spade, scythe, hour-glass, and flowers at the back of the recess, against which, on a black oblong tablet, is the inscription.

The panels of the table in front have figures of males kneeling on cushions, with hands clasped, as in attitude of prayer, the first in plate armour and spurs, the other two in civilians' gowns, all bare-headed. Four figures of adult females with black gowns and headdresses, kneeling in prayer, and the figure of a chrysom child in shroud, swathed and cross-banded, reclining on a skull. Above the centre of the arch are the arms and crest of *Leighton*, quarterly, per fesse indented, *or* and *gules*, with a crescent for difference. On either side of the arch is a square pilaster, bearing at the top within scroll work a shield of arms, terminated above by an apex formed of inverted scrolls converging. Dexter shield emblazoned with *Leighton*, as above, impaling *Onslow*, *arg.*, a fesse *gules* between 6 crowns *proper*. Sinister shield *Leighton* impaling *Corbet*, *or*, two crowns in pale *proper*.

The whole has been originally painted in proper colours and gilded, and these original colours, having by damp and neglect become defaced, have by the liberality of Mr. Stanley Leighton, M.P., been restored to their primal brilliance.

The inscription is as follows :—

QVALIS. VITA. FINIS. ITA.

Here lieth the body of William Leyghton of Plashe Esq. Chief

Justice of North Wales & one of the Council of the Marches of Wales wth places he exercised by the space of above 40 y^{rs} wth greate sinceritie & wthout complaint. he was humble in prosperitie, in hospitalitie genial, to the poor bountiful, loving to his familie & to his friendes ten^{ts} & neighbours comfortable and to all courteous and affable, contented wth competence wherewth God blessed him sufficiently for his calling.

He had 2 wives, the first Isabell daughter of Mr. Thomas Onslowe of London, Merchant, by whom he had 2 sons, William Leighton, Knight, & Richard & 4 daughters Dorothy, Ellinor, Mary & Elizabeth. The second wife was Ann d. of Renold Corbett of Stoke Esq^r one of the Justices of the King's Bench, the familie famous and antient, by whom he had Henrye and Penelope, in whose memorie the said Ann to shew the true affection of a vertuous good wife and S^r Roger Owen of Con-dover Knight and Edward Lutwich & Edward Vernon Esq^{rs}, his Executors, have caused this monument to be made.

He died the 20 of December 1607.

Nemo ante obitum beatus.

The entry of his burial in Cardington Register (which commences 1594) is thus :—

Ornatissimus ille vir Gulielmus Leighton, munificus hujus Ecclesiæ patronus, prudentissimus jurisconsultus, et aevi nostri judex antiquissimus vicesimo die Decembris e vitâ excessit, solenni in hac Ecclesia ritu sepultus fuit vicesimo tertio die mensis p'dicti 1607.

Vir bonus et prudens jacet hic sepultus in arcâ

Cujus post mortem fama perennis erit.

Fallax forma perit, pereat, fallacia fallax,

Flos decus et species quæ speciosa cadit.

Pulvis et umbra sumus, mens divi filia summi

Missa locis superis evolat ad superos.

His will is extracted from the Prorogative Court of Canterbury :—

In the name of God Amen. The eighteenth daie of December one thousand sixe hundred and seaven I William Leighton of Plaish in the County of Salop and Dioces of Hereford sicke in bodie but of sound and perfect memorie thanks be to God doe make my last Will and Testament in manner and forme follow-inge First I bequeath my Soule to God my Creator and Redeemer and my body to be buried in the Chancell of Card-ington And touching those worldlie goodes wherewth God hathe blessed me I give and bequeath as followeth First

I give and bequeath to Anne my Wief the moyetie and one half of all my plate money goodes cattels and debts whatsoever moveable and immoveable of what nature soev^r *Item* I give unto my sonne Henry Leighton one piece of plate being a guilte salte whereuppon his name is written wh^{ch} salte was given to my Son Henrie by John Thynne deceased *Item* I give and bequeath fiftie poundes for the making of a Tombe over in the Chauncell of Cardington *Item* All those several parcells of Lande comonlie called Church Land wh^{ch} I boughte of Mr. Tipper and Mr. Dow aboute twelve years last past I give and bequeathe to the Church wardens and Parishioners of Cardington theire heires and successors for evir the one moyetye yearlie to the use of the Poore of the Parishe and the other moyetye to the reparations of the Church of Cardington. *Item* I geve and bequeathe to Dorothea Leighton daughter of Sr William Leighton my Sonne the some of one hundred poundes of lawfull English money yf shee be ruled and ordered by mynow wief to be payde her owte of the other moytye of my goodes not formerlie given and bequeathed *Item* I geve and bequeath the moyetie or one half of all suche plate as is not formerlie given to my Wief and my Sonne Henrie Leighton to Harecourt Leighton my Sonnes Sonne Provided that if Sr William Leighton my Sonne doe put in good and sufficient sureties to my Executors that the same moyetye shall descend and come to Harecourt Leighton his Sonne when the said Harecourt shall come to the fulle age of one and twentye yeares then the sayde Sir William to have the use of the same in the mean tyme *Item* I geve all the residue of my plate goodes and cattels my debts funeral and legacies discharged to Henrie Leighton my Sonne *Item* I geve and bequeath to Mr. William Griffithes Vicar of Cardington the some of five poundes. *Item* I geve and bequeath to my Cozen Mr. Edward Vernon five poundes as a token of my Kinde remembrance of him *Item* I constitute and appointe Sr Roger Owen Knighte Edward Lutwich and Edward Vernons Esqrs my *Executors* to see this my last Will and Testament performed and fulfilled And lastly I revoke disannull and adnihilate all former Wills whatsoever In Witness hereof I have subscribed my name and putt to my Sealle the daie and yeare first above written. W. LEIGHTON.

Published and sealed in the presence of Guliel Griffithes
 —Thomas Hicks his marke—Robert Morther — Foulke
 Langley—Frances Smithe—John Davies marke—Tho Hasolle
 his marke

(Proved in Canterbury 1 June 1608 by two first Executors.)

Plash Hall, the residence of the Chief Justice, was in the possession of and the residence of the Sprengheaux, a branch of the family of that name of Longnor, about 1255. With them it continued until the time of Henry VII. (1422—1461) when the last Sir Fulke Sprengheaux of Plash died, leaving four daughters and co-heiresses, one of whom married Wm. Acton, of Aldenham; the 2nd married Wm. Sandford, of Lee, near Whitchurch; the 3rd married — Tindal; and the 4th married Wm. Leighton, a younger son of John Leighton, of Wattlesborough, Esq. The original mansion was of stone, portions of which still exist at the back of the brick edifice which the Chief Justice erected in front, and with which he incorporated portions of the ancient edifice. The present house is of brick, in variegated patterns, with especially fine and remarkable chimneys of moulded brick. The drawing-room is wainscotted with oak or sweet-chestnut, and the panels are exquisitely inlaid with paler and darker woods in geometrical and floriated patterns. The hall is evidently that of the older house, and has a music gallery at one end communicating with a corridor leading to the upper rooms. The divisions of the attic storey are singular and complicated. Plash now belongs to the Hunts of Boreatton, who obtained it by purchase, and is now a farm house. Views of it are given in Mrs. Stackhouse Acton's *Castles and Mansions of Shropshire*.

This interesting ring was purchased by the Salopian Lodge of Freemasons, to be used as an Official Seal, but was unfortunately soon after lost. It was exhibited in the Museum, formed by the Archæological Institute, on their visit to Shrewsbury in 1855, when I fortunately obtained a wax impression, from which an electrotpe was made, which is now the only existing representative of the lost seal.

THE PRESTON-GOBALDS RING (*See fig 2*).

A silver decade ring, chased with figures in low relieve. The central compartment has B. V. M. full-faced, seated on a chair, a portion of which is seen on her right. A plain circular nimbus surrounds her head which is covered with a double veil flowing down to the feet, and on the right looped up to the knee under the book on her lap. A tight fitting boddice or tunic clothes her body and right arm, with a simple border around the neck. This vest is gathered into folds at her banded waist and is continued in foldings to the feet. Her right hand rests on a large open book on her lap, to which she is pointing with the forefinger. On her left stands a boy, three-quarters front, without nimbus, similarly vested, and whom the Virgin's veil entirely envelopes on the left side; his left hand resting on the open book. Under the simple pedestal on which the figures rest is a full-front head of a demon with outstretched wings. The back-ground is punched with a minute delicate round crenated raised scale-like floweret, and is surrounded by a plain simple raised border.

If this groupe be intended for the B. V. M. with Christ as a boy and not as an infant, it is after the Byzantine fashion of the 9th century, as may be seen in Parker's *Catacombs of Rome*, plate 27, in fresco in the Church of St. Urban in the Catacombs. There, however, the Christ has a cruciform nimbus, but here there is no nimbus.

It may then be intended for St. Elizabeth instructing her daughter St. Ann as represented in the soap groupes which the Italians sell in Burlington Arcade, London.

Another conjecture may be hazarded. In the frescoes in the Catacombs of Rome, see Parker's plate 5, the Church is frequently represented as a robed female figure. The present groupe may then be intended as symbolical of the Church instructing her children out of the Holy Scriptures.

The compartments on either side enclose two male winged angels in loosely fitting vestments and flowing hair, kneeling, and with hands uplifted as in prayer. The back-ground is simply punched. Around the hoop are ten knobs, proving it to be a decade or devotional ring used in repeating Aves. On the left side as respects the central figure on the hoop is a very minute sunken circular space, on which the Gothic or old English letter E (Æ) is stamped in relief, enclosing what appears to be a minute figure standing in prayer before a faldstool, with uplifted hands. The form of this letter points to the 15th century as the date of the ring. Its weight is 1 pennyweight 14 grains. It was found in the restoration of Preston-Gobalds Church, near Shrewsbury,—under what circumstances I know not—but probably in the tomb or coffin of a Priest, such persons being buried in pontificalibus with paten, chalice, and ring. It is now in the possession of Mr. Harper, grocer, Market Square, Shrewsbury.

INCOME TAX COMMISSIONERS IN 1799.

THE following names are taken from an "Authentic List of the Commissioners for Executing the Income Acts in the County of Salop, May, 1799" :—

SHREWSBURY :

Nathaniel Betton, Esq., Mayor.
 Henry Bevan of Shrewsbury, Esq.
 James Mason of Ditto, Esq.
 Robert Pemberton of Ditto, Esq.
 William Smith of Ditto, Esq.

OSWESTRY :

Turner Edwards of Oswestry, clerk.
 John Gibbons of Ditto, Esq.
 Robert Lloyd of Swan Hill, Esq. [qu. Mayor.]
 John Robert Lloyd of Aston, clerk.
 Lazarus Venables of Woodhill, Esq.

PIMHILL :

William Challnor of Dudleston, Esq.
 Francis Lloyd of Ellesmere, Esq.
 B. Hatchett, jun., of Ditto, Esq.
 John Edwards of Great Ness, Esq.
 Joseph A. Cotton of Ellesmere, clerk.

BRADFORD NORTH :

Samuel Davies of Drayton, Esq.
 John Hill of Prees, Esq.
 John Hand of Whitchurch, Esq.
 Owen Roberts of Wem, Esq.
 William Wickstead of Whitchurch, Esq.

This was the first direct Income Tax ever raised in England. Mr. Pitt was the minister who proposed it, and his scheme was to tax incomes above £60 a year.

A.R.

AN INTRODUCTION TO
SOURCES OF SALOPIAN TOPOGRAPHY,

By MACKENZIE E. C. WALCOTT, B.D., F.S.A.,

PRECENTOR AND PREBENDARY OF CHICHESTER.

THOSE persons who have passed through a long literary career know, to their cost, how large a portion of the precious time, when invention and enthusiasm had not given place to criticism and deliberation, was wasted in the search for the names of such books as might assist them in their study and enquiries.

The counties of Sussex, Kent, and Cornwall have already the advantage of an index of books relating to their history, and at the commencement of the *Journal of the Shropshire Archaeological Society* its members may welcome similar aid in the prosecution of their work. *Shreds and Patches*, so successfully carried out in *Eddowes's Journal*, have already given help and indications where similar treasure trove may be found. Adventurous members of the Society will also be diverted from well-worn subjects to new fields, which will well repay their culture.

Parish Registers, and chests, and the muniment rooms of ancient families will furnish forth rich stores of information, whilst local memories and traditions must be carefully garnered up, whilst they survive the waste and wreck of time.

It will be an easy task for local antiquaries to fill up the outline which I give, and add fresh names of volumes, pamphlets, and views which necessarily must elude the keenest search by a person living at a distance

from the scene of the Society's labours. Even the cursory notices of past days contain new facts, as for instance with regard to Lilleshull Abbey, in *Gent. Mag.* lxxxix, i. 597, in which it is said "that the roof of the house fell down one night about the commencement of the 18th century, and that the place being made a garrison for Charles I. the Abbey was reduced to ruins," or the information in *Gent. Mag.*, lxxxiv, ii, 551, that the publication of a Salopian Magazine was projected.

I omit such familiar works as the *Magna Britannia*, Gough's *Camden*, Fuller's *Worthies*, Drayton, Churchyard; and Defoe's, Salmon's, or other well-known descriptive tours.

The Inventories of Church Goods and the List of Chantries in the Public Record Office are, I may say, unusually complete, and the Wills at Somerset House will be found full of curious details. I have given lists of the former in *Shreds and Patches*, ii, 95-98.

This Index Indicatorius will, I hope, serve to procure an economy of time when Salopians find it necessary to supplement their home-work with fresh researches in the libraries of London and Oxford. I know from a large experience, both personal and communicated by correspondents, friends, and strangers, extended over many years, how irksome is the toil of looking through huge catalogues, how great the difficulty of consulting them when there are so many, and how wasteful the time spent in discovering those which are really needed. For the collections of interesting tracts relating to the Great Rebellion, the British Museum possesses only a MS. catalogue in many volumes. There is a second series in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford.

If the expenditure of my own time and labour, devoted to the publication of this list, smooths the toil of younger students, who have not access to large libraries, I shall consider my endeavour to assist them well repaid.

- SHROPSHIRE, Agriculture, General View of, J. Plymley. 1804. 8vo.
- All round the Wrekin, W. White. 8vo.
- Antiquities found in, *Gent. Mag.*, 1855-62. *Phil. Trans.* v. 309, Barrow, *Journ. Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, xix. 317-9. Silver Seal, vii. 433. *Jo. Arch. Inst.*, vii. 77, 80, 195, 358, viii. 196, 197, xi. 414, 181, xiii. 417, 72. xviii. 161, 163, xxii. 76, 167.
- Antiquities of, E Lloyd, enlarged by T. F. Dukes. 1844. 4to.
- Antiquities of, R. W. Eyton. 12 vols. 1854-60. 8vo.
- Archdeaconry, its Extent, Population, and Clerical Incomes, *Gent. Mag.*, lxx, 1075.
- Armorial Bearings of Families of Shropshire. 1834. 4to.
- Arms and Lineages, by F. W. Kittermaster. 1859. 12mo.
- Bailiffs of Shrewsbury, 1372-1614, *Publ. Libr. Camb. MS.* Dd. iv. 38.
- Beauties of, J. Nightingale. 1813. 8vo.
- Blakeway's Collections, Bodl. Library, Oxford.
- Book of Funerals in Salop, &c., begun A.D. 1600, *Brit. Mus. Harl. MS.* 2041, *Lands. MS.* 879.
- Border Counties Worthies, E. G. Salisbury. 1878. Sm. 8vo. Woodall and Venables, Oswestry.
- Bowen's Collections, Bodl. Library, Oxford.
- Brasses, in Haines' Monumental Brasses.
- Bye-Gones, Reprinted from *Oswestry Advertizer*. 1871 to 1879, &c. Sm. 4to.
- Castles and Monasteries, *Journ. Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, xxviii, 58.
- Castles and Old Mansions of. 1868. 4to.
- Castles of, R. W. Eyton. 1860. 4to. *Collect. Archæol.*, 34-49.
- Catalogue of old Parchment Deeds from 15th to 18th cent., relating to, (lately) on sale by John Partridge, Wellington.
- Church Notes, 1584. Coll of Arms, Vincent MS. 195.
- Church Notes relating to Family of Cheyney, *Brit. Mus. Add. MS.* 8979.
- Claim of John Kynaston to Barony of Powys, see *Sess. Papers*, Feb. 1731—May 1732.
- Collections for, *Soc. Ant. MS.*, 139.
- „ „ *Gent. Mag.*, lxxxiv, ii, 136.
- „ „ Duke's and Parkes' *Brit. Mus. Add. MS.* 21-011—21-025.
- Collections for, S. Lyson's *Brit. Mus. Add. MS.*, 9459.

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