



RUINED TOWER,—OLDITCH COURT.

THORNCOMBE, DEVON.

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND  
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY  
DURING THE YEAR  
1898.

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*PART II.—PAPERS, ETC.*

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**Brook,**

OF SOMERSET AND DEVON ; BARONS OF COBHAM, IN KENT.

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OLDITCH VILLAGE AND CHAPEL OF ST. MELORUS.

**A**MID delightful rural surroundings, in the main upper reach of the valley of the Axe, the wayfarer, as he leaves the station of the railway junction to Chard, sets his foot on classic ground.

To the left, comparatively close by, nestled in luxuriant foliage, and glimmering richly in contrasting colour by being fabricated of spoil brought from giant Hamdon, is the ever-interesting Abbey of Ford ; where, in the early dawn of the twelfth century, the Cistercian founded a sanctuary, and established his home, under the fostering care of the earlier ancestors of the illustrious Courtenay, many of whom sleep in unmarked sepulchres beneath its shadow, for the consecrated structure wherein they were laid at rest has vanished, and its site is almost unknown. But the larger portion of the dwelling-

place of the monk has happily survived, and in the creation of its beautiful front the "spirit" of its architect, builder, and last abbot—Thomas Chard, who surrendered his tasteful home to the rapacious Henry—still "walks abroad."

Under the direction of a succeeding secular possessor, the shade of another renowned name haunts its precincts, that of the famous Inigo Jones ; but his alterations, however excellent in themselves, were altogether alien to the Abbot's design, in-harmonious and unfortunate. His employer, who spent large sums on the work, was a person, the turn of whose mind was, presumably, equally incongruous with the traditions of the Abbey. This was Edmond Prideaux, learned in the law, and Attorney-General to the Lord Protector Cromwell, by whom he was created a baronet. He, fortunately pre-deceased his powerful patron, and so probably escaped being sent to Tyburn at the re-entry of the Stuart. Not so fortunate his son, namesake, and successor, famed for his extensive learning, for which he was styled "the Walking Encyclopædia." He had entertained the unfortunate Monmouth when on one of his western progresses, and after Sedgmoor, although Mr. Prideaux remained at home, and took no part in the insurrection, he was nevertheless, on very slender presumption, deemed to be implicated, seized, and sent to the Tower. And it is related, he was handed over by the amiable James II—the prisoner being a rich man—to the brutal Jefferys as a "present" ; who, had he not been so valuable a prize, would doubtless have hanged him, but by whom he was ultimately released, on paying that atrocious disgrace to the ermine, fifteen thousand pounds ; and so, both father and son rest in peace in the Chapter House of the Abbey.

One further curious and interesting association claims notice. Here resided for a few years, at the commencement of the present century, the celebrated jurist, Jeremy Bentham, the quiet solitude of the place being doubtless congenial to the contemplation of his philosophic investigations.

Dismissing from our thoughts the Abbey—a most alluring subject, whose antecedents have occupied the attention of many investigators—a sharp turn to the right discloses the path that leads to the locality where our story takes its beginning, and which, expanding in its development as we pursue it, becomes second to none in the west-country in historic interest. A tree and bush shadowed lane, rising in easy elevation for about a mile's length, brings us to a gate on the right, where a trackway through a few pleasant meadows, ascending and descending in typical Devonian sequence, takes us to Olditch village,—for village it is, though of small dimensions—that includes two old farm-houses (one very antient), a trio or so of cottages, an elementary school-house, together with the usual adjunct, by rustic euphemism termed “a house of call,” but otherwise known as the wayside public-house.

The origin of this hamlet—an outpost of Olditch Court, which is located a short distance beyond—is soon apparent. The long building that faces us as we leave our meadow path, although now in large measure modernized to the requirements of a farm-house, still displays along its front considerable traces of venerable antiquity, that take us back five centuries into the past. The eastern portion, a building of some size and still fairly intact, assures the practised eye that it was originally a Chapel dedicated to the service of the Most High. A glance within the building immediately confirms it. There is an open waggon-shaped roof of close-set oak ribs, but little injured. At the east end, the pointed arch, splays, and sill of a window, now walled up, appear, the mullions and tracery gone. In the north wall is a similar but smaller window, also walled up, the arched mouldings and jambs visible from the outside. Beneath the east window, on each side, above where stood the antient altar, are two brackets or perks, whereon were probably placed figures of the patron saints of the Chapel and the mother Church of the parish. High up in the west wall is a small window, from which the inhabitants of the

adjoining house could observe the service. There is no piscina remaining, and the original side doorway was situate probably where the large opening appears, the structure being now used as a barn.

Stretching westward from the Chapel, joined to it, and bearing evidence of the whole having been one continuous and coeval erection, is the now farm-house, the further end still shewing much evidence of the architectural features of the original structure. The pointed arch of the doorway, flanked with narrow lancet windows, others above and behind, together with a regular set in the gable, strongly grilled with iron, and built into walls of great thickness, take us back to the concluding years of the fourteenth century ; and here, it may be, resided the priest that ministered in the adjoining sanctuary.

Of the identification of this venerable and interesting structure, it is believed no description appears in any county history ; nor is there that we are aware of, any local account or tradition extant respecting it, and but for a passing memorandum in the *Register* of Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, relative to a breach of ecclesiastical discipline connected with the parish, no information as to its history would have been available. This reference, with commentary, Dr. Oliver supplies.

"In this parish (Thorncombe), dependant on the parochial church, I have met with two Chapels. One I think at Holditch, viz. the Chapel of St. Melorus ; "*Capella Sancti Melori infra fines et limites parochie de Thorncombe.*" as Bishop Stafford describes it in a deed dated Crediton, 29th Jan., 1411-12, (*Reg.*, vol. i, p. 143) the parish church and chapel of St. Melorus having been placed under an interdict, the Bishop granted relaxation of the same. The other of St. James, at Leigh-Barton, which is mentioned in a lease of Abbot William White, of Ford, 7th Dec., 1490.

If we may credit the *Legenda Sanctorum*, compiled by Bishop Grandison, St. Melorus was the son of Melianus, King of Cornwall. by his wife Aurilla, a lady of Devon ; that at seven years of age he lost his royal father ; that his uncle, Rivoldus, by his father's side, returning from abroad cruelly treated the youth, and at length contrived his decapitation." [A parish in Cornwall is called after this saint—St. Mellion, in east Cornwall, mid-way between Saltash and Callington.]

In point of age this structure is apparently of the same date as Olditch Court. As there is no record of the grant of a private oratory to that mansion, as was usual to dwellings of



CHAPEL OF ST. MELORUS, OLDITCH VILLAGE.



PRESUMED PRIEST'S HOUSE, CHAPEL OF ST. MELORUS.

such importance, it is not improbable that the Brook family—the parish church being a considerable distance off—helped to found, or support it, and occasionally worshipped there, using it instead of a domestic chapel.

Leaving Olditch village, our path, traversing two or three fields further in the same direction, brings us to Olditch Court.

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### **Olditch Court.**

OLDITCH Court! Here our little history practically begins, and halting as we enter its leafy precincts, and glancing round, the query presents itself, where are the evidences of its former existence: where stood the mansion of the knightly Brooks, or the ruins thereof, so few and indistinct are the vestiges that remain to arrest the eye.

In a most retired spot, situated on a pleasant plateau, garnished with fine trees, and still exhibiting evidence of that indefinable distinction which continues to linger around these old places of gentle origin with inextinguishable charm; overlooking southerly, a spur of the Axe valley that extends beneath, and which gradually shallowing, is lost in the rising ground stretching upward to the Dorsetshire hills, known as Lambert's and Conig's castles, bounding the scene on the north, is the site—for little beside is visible—of Olditch Court.

What time and change has spared is soon described. Immediately at the entrance, and still dignified as Olditch Court, is a small and modern farm-house, but a scrutiny of its front shews that in it was incorporated a portion of what was apparently the gate-house of the mansion. This is indicated by a wide, depressed arch, now filled up and almost hidden by ivy, a pointed doorway by its side, strikingly similar in form to that found in the old chapel-house in the village, and a buttress, the intervening windows being of seventeenth century work, after the place had passed out of the possession of the Brooks. Within, a few old features have been preserved,



a trio of pointed arches opposite the larger one, which led into a demolished portion of the original fabric, and a couple of plain fireplaces of large dimensions.

Behind this building is the site of the Court. All that now exists of its structure is the portion of a tower of considerable height, clad with magnificent ivy. It appears to have been square in form, with a circular angle for a stairway. Leading from it is a comparatively large space, irregularly and tumultuously hillocked, shewing here and there, where bare of grassy covering, foundations of massive masonry. This comprises everything elsewhere to be seen, and in the absence of careful excavations, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to get an approximate idea of the ground-plan of the vanished edifice, but it may be surmised the ruined tower formed one of its angles.

The date of its erection may be assigned to the first half of the fourteenth century, and a license to crenellate (otherwise castellate) it, was granted 20 Rich. II, 1396. The Brooks doubtless continued to reside in it, until their purchase of Weycroft, and then probably alternately at both places, Weycroft apparently getting the preference, until their final migration to baronial Cobham.

Lysons records "that in 1773 there were considerable remains of the old mansion and the chapel, some traces of which are still to be seen." As to the Chapel, there is no record that we know of, of the grant of an oratory to Olditch. The site and estate were purchased in 1714, by William Bragge, Esq., of Sadborough, from Mr. John Bowditch, to whose family they had been conveyed by Lord Mountjoy.

Of its social history, a remarkable, but by no means unusual incident in those lawless times—when might, actuated by fierce party feeling, constituted right of reprisal or injury among the "nobles" of the land—befel Olditch. Its origin, in our modern and comparatively tame amenities, would be classed as political, but in those days desperately partizan, and

occurred during the wars of the Roses. The Brooks were staunch adherents of the house of York, and this Sir Edward Brook "was consulted by Richard, Duke of York, as 'a man of great witte and much experience;'" and was with the York faction at their first victory at St. Alban's, in 1455; the depredator of their home, a strong supporter of the rival Lancaster, in whose cause he ultimately lost his head at Newcastle, in 1461, after the battle of Towton. He was James Butler, Earl of Ormond and Wiltshire, and Lord Treasurer of England to Henry VI; and the then owner of Olditch, Edward Brook, who fought in several battles under the Yorkist banner, was the first Lord Cobham of that name, son of Sir Thomas Brook, who married Joan Braybroke, Lady of Cobham.

The record of this raid is preserved among the Harleian MSS.: the date is not given, but it must have taken place between 1449-61; and the document gives a graphic description of the proceedings. It is superscribed:

*Articles of the great wrongs, injuries, grev'nces, and trespasses, that Jamys, Erie of Wyllshire, and his servantes, hath don to Edward Broke, Lord Cobham, and his servantes.*

First—When the said lord was pesibelly in his maner of Holdyche, in Devonshire, the said Erie ymagenyng to hurte the said lord, the third of Janier last passed, at Holdyche foresayd, wyth many other of his servantes to the nombre of CC., and mo', of the whiche Rob't Cappys, esquier was on, with force and armes arayd in man'r of werre, that is to say, jackys, saletts, bowys, arrowys, swerdis, longbedeves, gleves, gonnys, colu'yns, with many other ablements of werre, bisegid, the said Lord Cobh'm there at tyme beyng in his place, and hym assauted contynually by the space of v owres, as hit had be in lande of werre. And at that tyme ther, the sayd erle, wyth his sayd servantes, brake a smythis house, beyng ten'nt of the sayd lord Cobh'm, and there toke oute grete aleggys and many barrys of yryn, and pykeys and mattockys to have mynye the sayd lord Cobh'm is place. And there, at that tyme, the dorys of the said lord is stablys and barnys brake, and his cornys beyng in the sayd barnys, to a grete notabell value, wych thaire horses yete, wasted, defoulyed, and distroid. And dyv's goodis of the sayd lord beyng in the said stablys, that is to say sadellys, bridell, peyterett, croperys, and also tronkys, clothesackys, stuffed with convenienn stuffe to his estate, for he was purposed to remove frothens to his place of Wycrofte, to a grete notabell value, toke and bare away to the utt'myst dishonour and shame to sayd lord, and grete hurte in lusing of hys sayd goodes.

Also the sayd erle, lat at Dorchest'r, by hys grete labour, excitati'n and steryng hath caused the sayd lord Cobh'm, and Piers hys brother, wyth other of the servantes of the sayd lord, to be endyted of felonye, wyth oute cause or dese'vnyng of thym, the which owneth as well to the destrucc'on of the said lord and hys brother, is p'sones and his sayd servantes as to the corrup'con of thaire blood."—From *Pulman's Book of the Aze*, and noticed by Mr. Waller in *Archæologia Cantiana*.

The "Robert Cappys esquier, who was one" that joined the "Erle" in this disgraceful foray, was a neighbour (?) of Lord Cobham's, and lived in the adjoining estate of Beerhall, which he inherited by marriage with Elizabeth daughter of John Jew, and widow of Sir John Hody. "This woman," says Pole, "disinherited her eldest son and conveyed her land, part unto Sir William Hody—Chief Baron—and part unto her issue by Cappis, betwixt whose issue theire contynewed a long contencion. But it is nowe in ye possession of a younger house issued from Sir William Hody."

It would appear from the foregoing account that Lord Cobham was staying at Olditch at the time of the "assaut," engaged in packing some of his "stuffe" in "tronkis" and other receptacles, prior to their removal to his other seat at Weycroft, about two miles distant, and had deposited the same in the stables and outhouses, ready for transit. Notwithstanding the "200 and mo'" retainers "Erle Jamys" brought with him, their "sleggys" and weapons of "werre," and the "five owres" attack; the "besegid" appear to have successfully resisted an entrance into the mansion, and the raiders contented themselves with pillaging the stables and outhouses, and carrying off the goods packed for removal. Lord Cobham probably left Olditch as soon as things were quiet, for Cobham in Kent: passing Dorchester on his way, the "Erle" apparently following and continuing the persecution, by there getting Sir Edward and his brother Peter, "endytet for felonye."

A similar outrage to this was made by Robert Willoughby, afterward Lord Willoughby de Broke, of Beer-Ferrers, on his almost neighbour on the opposite side of the river Tamar, Richard Edgcumbe, of Cothele, in 1470; and a document in the possession of the Earl of Mount-Edgcumbe gives a description of it with claim, couched in almost exactly similar language. The bottom of the quarrel was also, their adherence to the opposing Roses, although afterward they both held high



PORTION OF GATEWAY, OLDDITCH COURT.

office under the amalgamated rule of Henry VII. The well-known incident of the Courtenays sallying forth at night from Tiverton Castle to Upcott, sacking his residence first, and afterwards slaying the old lawyer, Radford, because he was "of counsel" to their opponent Bonville, described in the Paston letters, happened about the same time.

This lawless method of deciding quarrels was never legalized in England, but the shifting governments at that era, whose adherents were alternately guilty of this guerilla warfare, were either too weak or careless to effectually suppress it; if they did not secretly connive at it, as each had opportunity.

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### **The Manor of Olditch.**

"THE parish of Thorncomb," to quote the quaint language of Pole, "is the uttermost lymyt of Devonshire, and is an island compassed about w<sup>th</sup> Dorsetshire and Somersetshir on ye west; and took his name of ye Saxon names Thorn and Cumb, wh'ch is a familiar name in most parts, and signifieth a bot-tome, or lowe ground, subject unto thornes."

The principal manor of the parish had been given to, and belonged to the Abbey of Ford. The descent of the manor of Olditch and its acquisition by Brook, is thus described by the above historian.

"It was first belonging to the family of Flemyng, and was by Richard Flemyng given in marriage unto William de Sancer, a Norman, with Jone, daughter of the said Richard; which William with his wife and children revolting from King John unto the French king, the said manor was seized into the king's hands. But the said Richard so much prevailed with the king, that he restored it unto him again, and left it unto William Flemyng his son, and he unto William his son, which gave it and all other his lands to Reginald de Mohun, which Reginald alienated it unto Henry de Broc (or as now called Brooke) in which family it continued from the reign of King Henry III, unto the first of James, that Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham, being attainted, the said king gave this manor, with other lands, unto Charles Blount, Lord Montjoy, created by the aforesaid king. Earl of Devonshire, and he conveyed the same unto Montjoy, his base supposed son, who now enjoyeth the same."

"The family of Brooke long continued their dwelling in this place."

Similar to Pole, Risdon speaks of Thorncombe being "subject to thorns and briers (if manurance did not prevent it),

unto which it is naturally prone," and gives the text of the transfer mentioned by Pole.

*Willielmus le Bancar Normanus, tenuit Manerium de Holdich tempore Regis Johannis de Richardo le Fleming et idem Rich. ei dedit in Maritagio cum Johanna Filia sua, quae in separatione Anglorum et Normannorum remansit ad fidem Regis Franciae una cum pueris, quo facto Rex sessivit.*

And adds "that this manor was given by the King to the Lord Reginald Mohun, who in the time of King Henry III, gave the same to one of the ancestors of the Lord Cobham." But Pole's description of the descent is probably the correct one.

This Sir Reginald de Mohun is supposed to have acquired so large a portion of the Fleming property, by his presumed—but not absolutely authenticated—marriage with Avice or Hawis, a daughter of William Fleming, as his first wife. He was munificently inclined toward the Church, was the Founder of the Cistercian Abbey of Newenham, and a great benefactor to the similar foundation at Tor-Mohun, where he died, 20th January, 1257. Its possession by the Brooks continued for about three centuries and half.

The six succeeding Barons of Cobham, following Sir Thomas Brook, who married Joan Braybroke, heiress to the barony, held Olditch until the attainder of its last unfortunate possessor, Henry Brook, tenth Lord Cobham, K.G., in whom the title expired.' In 1604, James I gave it to Charles Mountjoy, Earl of Devon.

### The Manor of Weycroft.

THE early descent of the Manor of Weycroft, or Wycroft, antiently Wigoft, prior to its acquisition by Sir Thomas Brook, is somewhat obscure as related by historians in collation with the *Visitations* and the remaining deeds of transfer, but a fairly complete account may be made out. It is situate about a mile east of Axminster, on the road leading to Chard.

Its first recorded possessors appear to have been Adam and Henry de Gelond or Galland, and named of the place "de

Wigoft," who held it temp. Henry II (1154-89). Henry de Gelond or de Wigoft, gave it to his son John, last of that name, "in marriage," with Joan, daughter of Richard de Chudderlegh (of Chudderlegh, in Bickleigh, east Devon), temp. Edw. II (1307-27), by whom he had issue Joan his daughter and heiress, the wife of John Gobodeslegh, "some-time written de Wicroft." They had issue Thomazine, who married John Christenstow, and had issue William Christenstow, of Wycroft, who died without issue, and Alice his sister and heiress, the wife of John Dennys, of Bradford, in North Devon, whose grandson was Thomas Dennys, subsequently of Holcombe-Burnell.\*

"It appears," says Pole,

"that William Christenstow, who died in King Richard II's time (1377-99), had made some grant (of Wycroft) to Sir Thos. Brooke, Knt., which being imperfect, Sir Thomas Brook his son, had a new grant from Thomas Dennys, grandchild of Alice, sister of William Christenstow, and in recompense granted unto Dennys his manor of Holcombe-Burnell, anno 9 Henry VI, 1418."

This account must be read in conjunction with the following.

"Original deeds relating to the purchase of Weycroft are still in existence. By one of them dated 1395, Robert Deyghere, of Crukern, and Avicia his wife, daughter and heir of Adam Wycroft, convey to Sir Thomas "the manor of Wycroft and its appurtenances"; and by another, dated 1397, Robert Digher and Avicia his wife, daughter and heir of Adam Gobald, of Wycroft, convey the manor to Philip Holman, clerk, and John Swaldale. This deed is attached to a later one, dated "*die Jovis proximi post festum sancti Luce evangeliste*," 9 Henry IV, 1407, by which Holman and Swaldale convey the said manor to Thomas Brook, the younger."—Pulman's *Book of the Axe*, p. 579.

It is probable these parties were intermediate holders of the manor, or some part of it, derived from William Christenstow or his assigns, whose interest Sir Thomas Brook, senior, purchased, and subsequently his son completed the title and possession by exchange of lands at Holcombe-Burnell with Thomas Dennys, the grandson of Alice Christenstow, sister and heiress of her brother William, whose interest in Wycroft had descended to him.

\* Arms of Chudderlegh, *Argent, on a chevron sable, three acorns or, between three ravens heads erased sable*; of Gobodesley, *Party per pale argent and sable, an eagle displayed double-necked sable and or*; of Christenstow, of Wycroft, *Azure, a bend indented or and ermine, between two cotizes ermine*; of Dennys, *Ermine, a chevron between three Danish axes gules*.

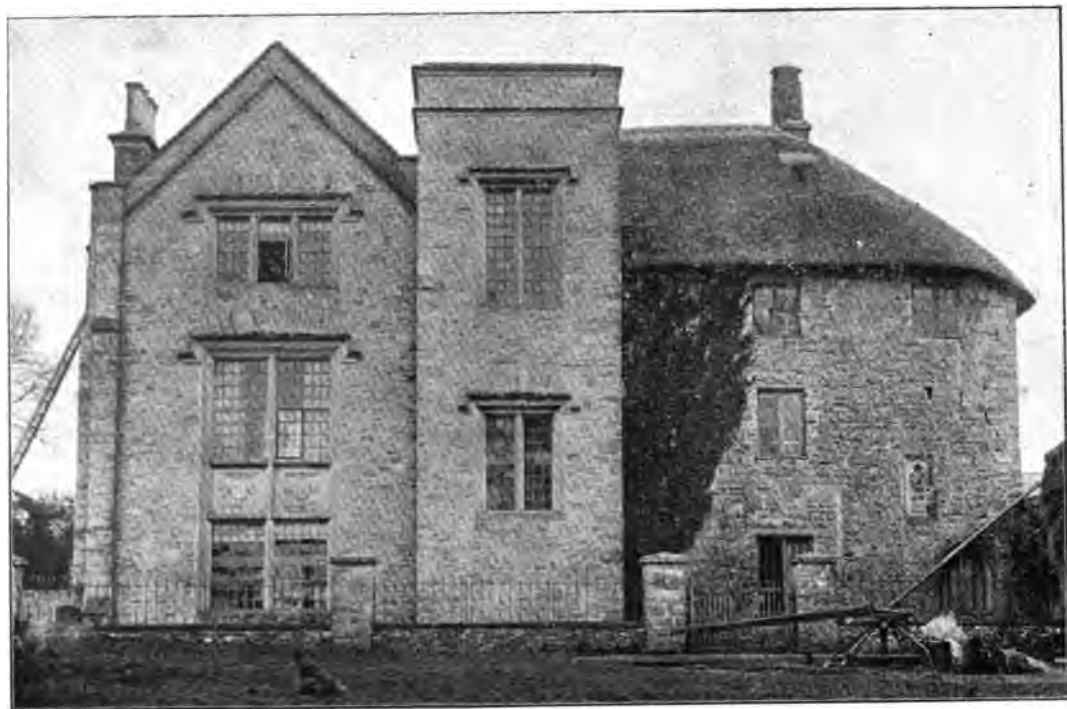
The manor of Holcombe-Burnell had been possessed from a very early date by the family of de Kaul or Kaile, whose last male owner appears to have been John Kaile, son of Thomas Kaul, *alias* Kaile, temp. Rich. II (1377-99); and in the *Visitation* for 1564, it is set down that Sir Thomas Brook married Johanna the daughter and heir of John Kaile, and so presumably acquired the manor; and it is added that Thomas Brook, his son, "*qui cum praedicta Johanna matre ejus venderunt manerium praedictum Thomae Dennys ar.*" But the herald is evidently in error as to Sir Thomas Brook marrying a daughter of Thomas Kaile; no such alliance is on record. Sir Thomas doubtless purchased it, about the same time he acquired the part interest in Weycroft, and exchanged it with Thomas Dennys to complete the title, the entry in the *Visitation* confirming Pole's account. There was a family of Kaile or Kaull that held lands at Chard, where also Sir Thomas Brook had considerable possessions. Arms of Kaul—*Quarterly embattled argent and sable.*

At the death of ~~Diana~~ Johanna and the migration of her son to Cobham, the glory appears to have departed from Weycroft, and Risdon writing about 1630, remarks—

"Sir Thomas Broke, the father of him that married with Joan Bray Broke, who brought the barony of Cobham into that family, built here, on the rising of an hill, a fair new house, castle-like, and enclosed a large and spacious park, being a very pleasant scite over the river, and hath a good prospect. It continued in this family until the attainder of the Lord Cobham, in the reign of King James, who gave it to Charles (Blount), late Earl of Devon, whose feoffees have sold it unto Mr. Bennet, Sheriff of London. The park is destroyed, and the house begins to decay for want of a worthy dweller to make his abode there."

Weycroft still exhibits in some degree a measure of its antient importance, is most picturesquely situated on a knoll overlooking the Axe river and valley, and there is a portion of the avenue remaining leading from the mansion across a field in the direction of Axminster. There are also remains of buildings, walls with arches built up, extending south of the present house, the site being now a garden.





WEYCROFT.



WEYCROFT.

## Brook,

OF LE BROOK, IN ILCHESTER, SOMERSET,  
OLDITCH, IN THORNCOMBÉ, AND WEYCROFT, IN AXMINSTER,  
DEVON.

THE earliest location of the family of Brook, and from which they presumably derived their name, was from a village so called near Ilchester. Collinson thus refers to it.

"At Ilchester without the walls toward Montacute, was an antient village called *Brook*, or *the Brook*, whence a family of great antiquity derived the name of *at Brook*, and *de la Brook*, this being the place of their usual residence. There are some faint mentions of this family in times approaching the Norman invasion, but in the time of Henry III (1216-72) and Edw. I (1272-1307), we can speak with certainty of the owners of this place, who had therein manorial rights under the commonalty of the town of Ilchester."

I.—~~William de Broc~~, or *de Brook*, lord of the manor of Brook, appears to have been the first of these, who died 15 Henry III (1231), leaving a son *Henry*.

II.—~~Henry de Brook~~. He is apparently the Henry de Broc, described by Pole as acquiring the manor of Olditch from Sir Reginald de Mohun, who died about 1257. He married ~~Nicholea~~, daughter of BRYAN DE GORITZ, *dominus de Kingesdun*. There was a Brian de Goritz, of Chipping-Blandford, Dorset, temp. Edw. II, whose arms were—*Vaire, five fusils conjoined in bend gules*. They left a son *Henry*.

III.—~~Henry de Brook~~ married Elizabeth . . . . and deceased 18 Edw. II (1324), leaving a son *John*.

IV.—~~John de Brook~~. He held at his death, 22 Edw. III (1348), "the manor of Brook, and a messuage with a curtilage and garden, and one carucate of land, without the town of Ivelchester, of the commonalty of that town, and also lands at Sock-Dennis, Bishopston, and Kingston." He married ~~Joan~~, daughter of SIR JOHN BRADSTONE, Knt.—probably of the Gloucestershire family of that name, of whom Thomas de Bradestone, a Knight-Banneret, was summoned to Parliament as a Baron, from 25th February, 1342, to 3rd April, 1360, in which year he died—and was succeeded by his grandson Thomas, who died about 1370, leaving an only daughter and

heiress, married to Walter de la Pole : their arms—*Argent, on a canton gules, a rose or, barbed vert.* John de Brook left a son *Thomas*.

V.—**Thomas de Brook.** He granted, 31 Edw. III (1358), “to Thomas Waryn and his heirs a certain yearly rent of twenty pounds, payable out of his lands and tenements in *la Broke juxta Ivelchester*, and in the town of Ivelchester.” He married *Constance*, the daughter of . . . MARKENSFELD, died 41 Edw. III (1368), leaving a son *Thomas*. The arms of Markenfield, of York, are given as *Argent, on a bend sable, three bezants*.

VI.—**Thomas de Brook.** He is included by Pole among “the men of best worth in Devon,” during the reigns of Rich. II, Henry IV, and Henry V (1377-1413), and styles him *Sir Thomas Brooke, de Holditch, Knt.* In him we reach the most important member of the family while resident in the west, owing in large measure to his marriage with the wealthy widow of Robert Chedder, which gave him considerable influence in the counties of Somerset and Devon.

He was Sheriff of Somerset (1389) ; Sheriff of Devon, 17 Rich. II (1394), 4 Henry IV (1403) ; Knight of the Shire, for Somerset, 10, 11, 15, 20, and 21 Rich. II (1388-98), 1, 3, 5, and 11 Henry IV (1400-11), and 1 and 5 Henry V (1414-19).

Sir Thomas Brook married *Johanna*, second daughter and coheiress of SIMON HANAP, or HANHAM, of Gloucestershire (according to Hutchins so denominated from a place of that name, situate a short distance east of Bristol) and widow of Robert Chedder, Mayor of that city in 1360-1, who died 1382-4 ; and by whom she had four sons. She held in dower extensive landed possessions, and several advowsons, in Somerset, Gloucester, and Dorset, which passed at her death to Thomas Chedder, her only surviving son by this marriage. This family of Chedder will be further referred to.\*

\* Arms of Brook, of Olditch—*Gules, on a chevron argent, a lion rampant sable* ; of Chedder, *Sable, a chevron ermine, between three escallops argent* ; of Hanham, *Quarterly or and gules, over all on a bend engrailed sable, three crosses formé fitché of the first*.

By her second husband, Sir Thomas Brook, she appears to have had two sons, *Thomas* and *Michael*.

Between the years 1395 and 9 Henry IV (1407), Sir Thomas purchased the manor of Weycroft, in the parish of Axminster, situate about a mile from that town, and three from Olditch ; and there erected a residence of castellated form, on a picturesque eminence overlooking the river and valley of the Axe. Although, apparently from traces left, much of the original structure has been destroyed, the portion remaining is of considerable size, and if somewhat modernized, its antient features have been tolerably well preserved by subsequent repairs. In the extension of the building, at the rear, what was once the hall still exists, with side windows of transomed and cusped lights, and a handsome chimney-piece in the gable end ; as shown in the illustration.

An important event was now about to happen which raised the family of Brook to their highest position, and withdrew them soon after from their pleasant squire-built residence in this Devonshire valley, to the grand associations of baronial Cobham, in the fertile plains of Kent.

This was the marriage of Thomas Brook, their eldest son, born about 1391, with Joan Braybroke, the daughter, only surviving child, and sole heiress of Joan de la Pole, Lady of Cobham, in Kent, by her second husband Sir Nicholas Braybroke.

On February 20th, 11 Henry IV (1409-10), a contract was entered into between Sir Thomas Brook of the one part, and Sir John Oldcastle, and the Lady Joan, his wife, on the other (he was her fourth husband), that his son Thomas should marry Joan the daughter of the latter, before the Feast of Pentecost, next ensuing, if God should grant them life—*si Deus illis vitam concedit*.

On 29th November, 1417, Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, granted a license to Thomas Brook, Esq., and Joan his wife, to have a domestic chapel or oratory, "*infra Mans-*

*ionem suam de Wycroft in Parochiâ de Axmynstre."*

The death of Sir Thomas, according to the inscription on the brass is placed as occurring on the 23rd January, 1419, 5 Henry IV ; but the year is probably an error, as the probate of his will was granted 5th February, 1417-8.

In 1427, a license

"To enclose a park of eight hundred acres and to crenellate the mansion was granted to Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, Sir Thomas Brooke, Sir Giles Daubeney and others, who appear to have been acting as his co-trustees, probably in connection with a settlement made in 1410, on the marriage of the (then) owner, Sir Thomas Brooke, with Joan Braybroke. With stones and lime to enclose, crenellate, turrellate and embattle their Maner (House) of Wycroft, in Axminstre, and make a park there, with all liberties and franchises, so that no one should flee into it, or enter to seize anyone without leave—*Manerium suum de Wycroft in Axminstre, cum petris et calce includere krenellare et battellare et octingentas acras terre et bosci in Axminstre includere et parcum inde facere possint.*"—*Pulman's Book of the Axe*, p. 279.

In the enclosing of this park, an incident not uncommon of its kind occurred, pertinent to such operations, that of obstructing or closing certain rights of way belonging to neighbouring owners and the public, over the said park, and causing a dispute thereby.

At Shute, about four miles from Weycroft, there resided at that date Sir William Bonville, afterward Lord Bonville, K.G., of Chewton-Mendip, executed after the second battle of St. Albans, in 1460-61. He was the grandson of Sir William Bonville, of Shute, who died in 1407-8, to whose will "Monsieur Thomas Brooke," the husband of Lady Johanna was appointed an overseer. It is easy to see how the dispute arose, as between them.

On the other side of the valley, and nearly opposite Weycroft, is an estate or manor called Uphay, which belonged to Sir William Bonville ; and the residence thereon, which his family probably occasionally occupied, appears to have been of sufficient consideration for Bishop Brantyngham to grant him a licence for a domestic chapel there, 24th July, 1375—a further licence for the same object being granted or renewed by Bishop Lacy on 8th May, 1421.

By the imparking such a large tract of land as eight hundred



acres, by the widowed Lady Johanna and her son Sir Thomas, doubtless some public rights of way from Uphay and elsewhere across it, had been obstructed or stopped.

Accordingly the matter was referred to Nicholas Wysbeche, Abbot of the adjacent Abbey of Newenham, and others for adjustment, who, observes Mr. Davidson—

“Was appointed with five of his neighbours a mediator in a dispute between Sir William Bonville, of Shute, and Joan the widow of Sir Thomas Brooke, arising from the obstruction of several public roads and paths in the foundation and enclosure of the park at Weycroft by the lady and her son. The transcript of an instrument has been preserved which recites the circumstances of the case at great length, and concluded with an award, which as the Abbot was nominated by the Lady Brooke, does credit to his justice as an umpire, as well as to his hospitality; for, after deciding on every point in favour of Sir William Bonville, and directing all the ways to be thrown open to the public, it concludes by directing the knight and the lady should ride amicably together to Newenham Abbey on a day appointed, where they should exchange a kiss in token of peace and friendship, and dine together at the Abbot's table. The deed is dated at Axminster, 13th August, 1428.”

Lady Johanna Brook survived her second husband just twenty years, and died on 10th April, 1437, and they were both buried at the east end of the north aisle of Thorncombe *old* church, where two fine brass effigies were placed to their memory on a stone in the pavement, with a ledger inscription and four shields. The figures have fortunately been preserved, but only a small portion of the inscription remained, and the shields were gone. The new church at Thorncombe does not occupy the same site as the former one, but the effigies have been preserved and inserted in another stone and placed in a relative position therein on a low tomb, with this restored inscription around them :

“Here lyth Sir Thomas Brook Knygte the whiche dyed the xiiii day of Januere the yere of oure lorde MCCCC & XIX and the fyfte yere of Kynge Harry the V. Also here lyth dame Johan' Brook the wyfe of the sayde Thomas the whyche died the x day of Apryll: The yere of our lorde MCCCC & XXXVIJ and the xv yere of Kynge Harry the vj: on whois Soules God haue mercy & pite that for vs dyed on the Rode tree. amen.”

The effigies are two of the most distinguished to be found



remaining of that era. Sir Thomas is clad in a long gown, with deep dependant sleeves, guarded with fur around the skirt and collar, and pulled in at the waist by a belt studded with roses. Within the gown a second garment appears, with four rows of fur around the skirt. His hair is polled, and his feet rest on a greyhound couchant, collared. Lady Johanna wears a long robe fastened across the breast by a cordon with tassells, over a plain gown. Her hair is dressed in semi-mitre shape, and confined by a richly jewelled net, over which is placed the cover-chief, edged with embroidery, and dependant to the shoulders. At her feet is a little lap-dog, collared and belled. Both wear the collar of S.S., their arms are in tightly-fitting sleeves, and the hands are raised in prayer.

At the death of Lady Johanna Brook, the large possessions she had held in dower of her first husband Robert Chedder, which included the manor of Cheddar and the advowson of the Chantry of our Blessed Lady in the church there, was inherited by her only surviving son by him, Thomas Chedder (ob. 1442-3), who had married a Devonshire lady, Isabel Scobahull, of South-Pool, a parish in the southernmost angle of that county.

Thomas Brook, her eldest son by her second husband, succeeded to Olditch, Weycroft, Brook-Ivelchester, and other landed property of considerable extent belonging to his father—and he had made a distinguished match with Joan Braybroke, only daughter and heiress of the Lady of Cobham, in Kent.

Of the other son, Michael Brook, we get no account, and he probably died without issue.

VII.—**Sir Thomas Brook**, the son of Sir Thomas Brook and the Lady Johanna, was born about 1391, he being twenty-six years of age at the death of his father, 23rd January, 1417-8. He was Knight of the Shire for Dorset, 1 Henry V (1413-4): for the county of Somerset, 8 Henry V (1420-1),

and 1 and 5 Henry VI (1422-3 and 1426-7), and was knighted between 1416 and 1422.

His marriage with **Joan**, only surviving child and sole heiress of **JOAN DE LA POLE**, Lady of Cobham, by her second husband **SIR REGINALD BRAYBROKE**, took place in 1409-10, and she proved a prolific mother, bringing him ten sons and four daughters. Of the sons (1) *Edward*, eldest son and heir was summoned to Parliament as a Baron by writs from 13th January, 1444-5 (23 Henry VI), to 28th February, 1462-3 (2 Edw. IV), as "*Edward Broke de Cobham, Chivalier*." He was a strong adherent of the House of York, and as previously related, had his mansion at Olditch sacked by the Lancastrian Earl of Ormond; was present at the first battle of St. Alban's, 23rd May, 1455; took part in the solemn procession to St. Paul's, London; and commanded the left wing of the Yorkshire men at the battle of Northampton, 10th July, 1460. He married *Elizabeth*, daughter of *James Touchet, Lord Audley*, and died in 1464. (2) *Reginald*, was of Aspall, in Suffolk, with descent still in existence. (3) *Hugh*: he married *Petronel* . . . . and his descendants settled in Somerset. *John*, his son, Sergeant-at-law to Henry VIII, married a daughter of *Mericke*, of Bristol, and had three sons: *Thomas*, married *Joan Speke*, and had issue; *Hugh*, of Long Ashton; *Arthur*, whose son *Edward*, was of Barrow-Gurney, and he had issue *Hugh*, who married *Dorothy Preston*, of Glastonbury; *Thomas*, also of Glastonbury Abbey (1623), who married *Rebecca*, daughter and co-heir of *John Wyke*, of Ninehead; and *Sir Davy* or *David Brook*, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, Knighted 1 Mary (1553), who married *Catherine*, sister of *John Bridges*, Lord Chandois—this descent is given in the Somerset Visitation for 1623. (4) *Thomas*; (5) *John*; (6) *Robert*; (7) *Peter*; (8) *Christopher*; (9) *Henry*; (10) *Morgan*; all died without issue. Of the daughters: (1) *Margaret*; (2) *Christian*, died without issue; (3) *Joan*, or query *Isabel*, married *John Carrant*; (4) *Elizabeth*, *John St. Maure*, whose

daughter *Joan* married *John Blewitt*, of Holcombe-Rogus, whose son *Nicholas*, ob. 22nd August, 1523.

Although his wife styled herself Lady of Cobham, her husband was never summoned to Parliament as a Baron—the title remaining in abeyance thirty-two years, from 22nd March, 1413, temp. Sir John Oldcastle, until Sir Thomas Brook's son, Sir Edward Brook, had summons, 13th January, 1445. He survived his mother seven years, his mother-in-law five years only, and died in 1429. A continuation of the descent of Brook, will be given.

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## Cobham,

OF COBHAM, KENT, AND OF SOMERSET AND DEVON.

OUR little annals have shewn that Sir Thomas Brook, the younger, of Olditch and Weycroft, made the distinguished match of taking to wife, Joan Braybroke, the only daughter and sole heiress of Joan de la Pole-Braybroke, Lady of Cobham, in Kent: thereupon, or soon after, he appears to have forsaken the olden associations of his birth-place, and the inheritances derived from his ancestors in Somerset and Devon, migrating to the grander attractions of baronial Cobham, where his name and posterity, ennobled and otherwise greatly honoured, flourished for several generations. A notice of this succession now demands attention.

The very antient family of Cobham, in Kent, although so far removed from the west-country, had very early associations with the counties of Somerset and Devon.

The first so related, and pertaining to this account, were two brothers, Henry and John de Cobham, the sons of John de Cobham, fourth in the Kent descent.

JOHN DE COBHAM was Sheriff of Kent, 1259-61; Justice Itinerant of the Common Pleas, 1267-71; King's Sergeant and Justice of the King's Bench, 1275; Baron of the Ex-

chequer,\* and Constable of the Castle and City of Rochester, 1279-80. Both were his sons by his first wife, JOAN, daughter of Sir Robert de Septrans; she died before 1298, and he deceased in March, 1300. They were both buried in the parish church of St. Mary Magdalen, Cobham, where his gravestone remains, denuded of its brasses: but his wife's effigy still exists clad in wimple, cover-chief and long robe, under a fine canopy, said to be the earliest known example of a canopy to a monumental brass. Boutell (1848) says, "the Longobardic letters and narrow fillets of latten have been removed from the verge of the slab, to which this fine brass is attached," and that the inscription ran thus:

*Dame : Jone : de : Koberham : gist : isi : devs : de : sa : alme :  
veit : merci : kike : pur : le : alme : priera : quaravate : jours :  
de : pardoun : avera.*

which may be rendered:

*"Dame Jone de Koberham lies here—God have mercy on her soul.  
Each one who shall pray for her soul, shall have forty days  
pardon."*

This brass has been erroneously assigned to represent the wife of her grandson, Joan de Beauchamp, who died subsequent to 1343, a period much too late for the costume.

HENRY DE COBHAM, his eldest son, was appointed Constable of the Castle and City of Rochester, 1304, and Constable of the Castle of Dover, and Warden of the Cinque Ports, 34 Edw. I, 1305-6. He was the first Baron of Cobham, being summoned to Parliament as such, from 8th January, 1313, to 22nd January, 1336; and is described by Mr. Waller, as "a stirring and active man in the public administration and military enterprises of the nation." He married MAUD, the daughter of Eudo de Moreville, and widow of Matthew de Columbers.

\* Pole mentions a John Cobham, "who sate in Devon, ye 33 yeere K. Henry III," 1249—probably father of this John, who was Justice Itinerant and of the Common Pleas at this time—and another John de Cobham, "who sate at Exon.," in 1286.

In pursuing our narrative we have now to make a diversion into Somerset, and follow him there.

At Stoke-sub-Hamdon was one of the mansions or castellated residences of the antient and distinguished family of the Beauchamps—Barons Beauchamp, also styled, “of Hacche,” (Hatch-Beauchamp), in the county of Somerset. It was of considerable size as befitted their rank and station, license to fortify it being granted, 7 Edw. III (1334), and attached to it was a chantry or free chapel, apparently of large size, dedicated to St. Nicholas; but of all these extensive buildings, a few insignificant portions only, now remain.

Its occupant at this era was John de Beauchamp, the first of the family summoned to Parliament as a Baron, 27 Edw. I (1299)—he was frequently engaged in military service under that monarch, by whom he was Knighted in 1306, in company with the king’s eldest son, Prince Edward, in the expedition to Scotland, in that year; he also signed the celebrated letter to the Pope, 29 Edw. I (1299). He was also constituted Governor of Bridgwater Castle. In 1304 he founded in the chapel at Stoke-Beauchamp, a Collegiate Chantry, consisting of a Provost and four other Chaplains, and suitably endowed it, together with a house in the village for their common residence, which still exists. The Beauchamps were munificently inclined toward the Church, some earlier members of the family are assigned to be the founders of the Augustine Priory of St. Gregory, at Frithelstock, in north Devon, and benefactors to the Cistercian Abbey of Ford, where their arms *Vairé*, appear on the sinister side of the Conventual seal. He died 10 Edw. III (1337), and by his wife, Joan, left two surviving children, John his heir, and a daughter Joan.

In the year 1316, the aforesaid Henry de Cobham was apparently on a visit to this John de Beauchamp, at his mansion at Stoke-sub-Hamdon. About 1314, John de Cobham, his son, had married the above Joan, only daughter of his host, John de Beauchamp, and her father gave her a marriage

portion of four hundred pounds. Henry de Cobham died at Stoke during his visit, 9 Edw. II (1316), aged 76, and was buried in the Collegiate Chapel adjoining the mansion, his son John being present, the details of whose journey and expenses, which were defrayed by the Cobhams, were extant in 1574.

The interesting old itinerant Leland, who visited Somerset about 1541-2, was evidently greatly impressed with the important castle of the Beauchamps at Stoke-sub-Hamdon, and its attendant chapel, and so put on record a singularly detailed account of what he witnessed there, at that time apparently in the earlier stages of decay. For the easier realization of its then remaining glory, his description has been rendered in modern spelling :

"I saw at Stoke in a bottom hard by the village very notable ruins of a great Manor Place or Castle, and in this Manor Place remaineth a very ancient Chapel, wherein be divers tombs of noble men and women.

In the south west side of the Chapel be five images on tombs, one hard joined to another, three of men harnessed and shielded, and two of women. There hath been inscriptions on each of them, but now so sore defaced, they cannot be read. I saw a shield or two all *Vairé*, of blue and white. There be in this part of the Chapel also, two tombs without images.

There is in the north side of the body of the Chapel, a tomb in the wall without image or writing, and a tomb with a goodly image of a man of arms in the north side of the quire with shield as I remember all *Vairé*; and even afore the quire door but without it, lieth a very great flat marble stone, with an image in brass flatly graven, and this writing in French about it.

"*Ici gist le noble & vaillant Chivaler Maheu de Gurney iadys seneschal de Landes & capitain du Chastel Daques pro nostre seignor le roy en la duché de Guyene, que en sa vie fu a la batail de Beaumarin, & ala apres a la siege Dalgezire sur le Sarazines, & auzi a les batailles de Lescluse, de Crussy, de Yngenesse, de Peyteres, de Nazara, Dozrey, & a plusieurs autres batailles & aserges en les quez il gaina noblement graund los & honour per le space de xxiiij & xvj ans, & morust le xxvj jour de Septembre lan nostre seignor Jesu Christ MCCCCVJ que de salme dieux eit mercy. Amen.*"

There was beside this grave another, in the west-end of the body of the Chapel, having a great flat stone without inscription.

I marked in the windows three sorts of arms, one all *Vairé*, blue and white, another with three stripes gules down-right in a field of gold. The third was cresslets of gold many intemist in one in a field, as I remember, gold.

There is a Provost belonging to this Collegiate Chapel now in decay, where sometime was good service, and now but a mass said three times in the week."

Of the fine mansion only the barest traces of the foundations are now visible, and of the evidently large chapel, filled with an array of the most interesting tombs—eleven in number—to the Beauchamps, the antient lords of the place, knights and ladies reclining around, "in their habits as they lived," doubt-

less among them their visitor and relative Henry de Cobham, who was there buried, the brazen effigies of the aged warrior, Sir Matthew Gournay, in his harness, stretched upon the floor\* at the entrance door of the choir, and the windows above them sparkling with the armories of their families and descent, must have formed an unique sight.

Of this once almost fairy scene of mediæval interest, now, not a vestige remains, and when the writer visited the place a few years since, a potato garden occupied its site, in the centre of which an interment or two had been discovered, the remains indicating their having been male and female, and from time to time a few pieces of encaustic tiles and fragments of sculpture are occasionally exhumed. Its desecration and effacement is complete.

JOHN DE COBHAM, second Baron, was Knight of the Shire for Kent at intervals between 1312 and 1334-5, in which latter year he was constituted Admiral of the Fleet from the mouth of the Thames westward, a Justice of Oyer and Terminer, and Constable of Rochester Castle. He was summoned to Parliament as a Baron, from 24th November, 1350, to 15th March, 1354-5, and for his military services was created a Knight-Banneret by Edward III, with an annuity of a hundred marks. His first wife JOAN BEAUCHAMP, was alive in 1343, and he married secondly AGNES, daughter of *Richard Stone*, of Dartford. He died 25th February, 1354-5, and was buried in the chancel at Cobham, where his brass still exists, the armour and appointments being very similar to those of his son, the Founder of the College. The inscription is remarkable and no other exactly like it is known :

*" Vous qe passez ici entour Priez pur lalme le cortays viandour*

\* This redoubtable old knight was the last possessor of Stoke, by his marriage with Alice, ob. 1383, widow of John, fourth and last Baron Beauchamp, ob. 1361, and at his death it reverted to the Crown and was included in the possessions of the Duchy of Cornwall. He died in 1406, aged ninety-six, and had for his companion-in-arms, another venerable west-country knight, Sir John Sully, K.G., of Iddesleigh, in Devon, whose tomb and effigies are in Crediton church, and who died in 1387, aged one hundred and seven. They fought together at Cressy and Najara, serving in the French wars of that era.

*Qe Johan de Cobham auoit a noun Dieux luy face uerray pardoun Qe trepassa lendemayn de Seint Mathei Le puis-aunt otrie ademorer oue ly En lan de grace Mil CCCL qatre Ces enemis fist abatre."*

which tells us

*"Ye who pass by here, pray for the soul of the gentle host, who was named Johan de Cobham. God to him give very pardon; who passed away the day after St. Matthew's day. The Almighty grant (him) to dwell with Him. In the year of grace, 1354. Those enemies he hath made to be abased."*

The date would be the 25th February, 1354-5.

A second digression awaits us here, concerning John de Cobham, the younger brother of Henry de Cobham (the first baron of that name who died at Stoke-sub-Hamdon) and who came into Devon and settled there.

## Cobham,

OF BLACKBOROUGH, DEVON.

BLACKBOROUGH, a parish in east Devon, lying under the Blackdown hills, a few miles east of Collumpton, was held by the Bolhays, of Blackburgh-Bolhay. Hamelin de Bolhay died 54 Henry III (1270), and Dame Philippa de Bolhay presented to the living of Blackborough, 8th January, 1274-5. Here a branch of the Cobhams was located in Devon.

JOHN DE COBHAM, described by Pole as a "younger son of Cobham in Kent," was the younger son of John de Cobham and Joan de Septvans, and brother to Henry de Cobham, the first Baron, who died at Stoke-sub-Hamdon, in 1339. He married AMICIA or AMY, daughter of *James de Bolhay*, of Blackburgh-Bolhay, and inherited the manor. There were four children, *James*, his heir; *Isabel*, who married John Bamfield, of Poltimore; *Elizabeth*, to Sir Hugh Peverell, from whom the Hungerfords; and *Philippa*, to Nicholas Ingpen, from whom successively Fitchett, Hill of Spaxton, Cheney of



Pinhoe, and Walgrave, of Suffolk. James de Cobham was succeeded by *John*, named as eighth in the entail settled by John de Cobham, third Baron, who married Margaret Courtenay, son of John, second Baron, who married Joan Beauchamp, of Stoke-sub-Hamdon. He was succeeded by *Sir John Cobham*, 7 Rich. II (1394), who married *Katherine*, eldest daughter of *Sir William Bonville*, of Shute, ob. 1407-8, by his first wife Margaret de Aumarle. They would thus be contemporary with Sir Thomas and Dame Johanna Brook, whose son married the heiress of the main descent of Cobham in Kent. It was of this lady the domestic incident is related that occurred at the baptism of her nephew, the unfortunate Lord William Bonville, of Chewton, K.G., when he made proof as to his coming of age, before the king's escheator, in the first year of King Henry V, 1413-14. John Cokesdene and others deposed that on the day of his baptism, the last day of August, 1393—

"They were together elected at Honiton on a certain 'love-day,' to make peace between two of their neighbours, and on that very day, there came there a certain Lady Katherine, widow of Sir John Cobham, Knt., and then wife of John Wyke, of Nynhyde, an aunt of the said William, proposing to drive to Shute, thinking she should be god-mother to the said infant, and met there a certain Edward Dygher, servant to the said Sir William Boneville. who was reputed to be half-witted in consequence of his being loquacious and jocular. and who asked her whither she was going. Who answering quickly, said, 'Fool, to Shute, to see my nephew made a Christian,' to which the said Edward replied, with a grin, in his mother tongue, 'Kate, Kate, ther to by myn pate comystow to late,' meaning thereby that the baptism of the child was already over; whereupon she mounted upon her horse in a passion, and rode home in deep anger, vowing that she would not see her sister, to wit the said child's mother, for the next six months, albeit she should be *in extremis*, and die."

By Sir John Cobham she had one daughter, *Elizabeth*, married to *Walter Charleton*, but there was no issue, "after whose death," says Pole, "by virtue of a remainder in an entail, the Lord Bonville enjoyed this (Blackburgh) and other lands, notwithstanding the claim of Hungerford, Hill, and Bamfield, the right heirs. The issue male (of Cobham) failed in the time of Rich. II, 1377-99."

Secondly, Dame Katherine married John Wyke, of Nynhead-Flory, Somerset—he presented to the rectory of Blackborough, in June, 1405, and died 12 Henry IV, 1411. Thirdly,

she married Humphrey Stafford, of Grafton, Worcestershire, and died 1st August, 1416.

They differenced the Cobham arms with *eaglets* for *lions*, and bore, *Gules, on a chevron or, three eaglets displayed sable*.

## Cobham,

OF KENT, ETC.—CONTINUED.

JOHN DE COBHAM, third Baron, was the eldest son of John de Cobham, second Baron, by Joan Beauchamp, of Stoke-sub-Hamdon, his first wife. He married about 1332-3, MARGARET, eldest daughter of *Hugh Courtenay, second Earl of Devon*, ob. 1377, by his wife Margaret, ob. 1392, daughter of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, by his wife the Princess Elizabeth, seventh daughter of King Edward I; and who were then residing at Colcombe, in Colyton, Devon.

At their marriage the Earl appears to have settled sundry lands on them, and on the 8th April, 1355, John de Cobham gave a certain sum of money to his father-in-law, the Earl at Colcombe, for the maintenance of his wife there, and the Earl's receipt for the same is still in existence, which runs thus :

*"Conue chose soit a totes gentz que nous hughe de Cortenay counte de Deuneschire auons receu de Johaun de Cobehaum chivalier filz monneur Johaun de Cobehaum de Kent chivalier quynze lyures svs southe & oyct deniers pur le aniourn et aultres necessities Margarete de Cobehaum nostre fylla sa compaigne del' terme de Pasche darroynne parue come pleynement aperct par endentures entre nous feates. Des queaux quynze lyures svs south & oyct deniers nous nous tenoms pleynement entre paietz et lauauncet dict Johaun quytes par icestes noz presentes lectres daquytance du nostre seal enseales. Done a Colecomb le viij<sup>me</sup> jour de April Laan due regne nostre rognour le Roi Edward troys puis le conqueste vinct & neofyame."*

which may be thus rendered :

"Be it known to all people that we, Hugh de Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire, have received of John de Cobham, Knight, son of Sire John de Cobham, of Kent, Knight, fifteen pounds, six shillings, and eightpence, for the lodging and other necessities of Margaret de Cobham, our daughter, his companion, from the term of Easter last past, as fully appears from the indentures made between us. Of which fifteen pounds, six shillings, and eightpence, we hold ourselves to be fully paid, and the aforesaid John released by these our present letters of acquaintance with our seal attached. Given at Colcombe the 8th day of April, the 29th year of the reign of our Lord King Edward the third after the Conquest."

This John de Cobham was the last, as he was also the most remarkable and influential representative of this the main descent. Mr. J. G. Waller in his comprehensive and admirable account of the family of Cobham, in the *Kent Archaeological Transactions*,\* gives this interesting sketch of his life, and infers that at the time he gave the curious receipt :

He was then probably about to serve with the army in France, where Edw. III. exasperated at the double dealing of Philip, had begun an active campaign. At his father's death, in 1355, he became Lord of Cobham, was first summoned to Parliament 20th September, the same year. In 1359, he was in the great expedition to France, under Edw. III. In 1362, he founded and endowed Cobham College, for five priests, one to be the Warden, to say masses for the repose of the souls of the founder's ancestors, for the good estate of himself and family while living and all Christian souls. In 1366-7, he was again in France, engaged in the war. In 1367, he was sent ambassador to Rome, to obtain from Pope Urban V. the appointment of William of Wykeham to the See of Winchester. In 1370 he was made a Banneret by the King in person. In 1337 he served on several commissions in the public service. In 1390-1, he had licence to crenellate and fortify his mansion of Cowling, the reconstruction of which he had commenced, and was in progress. In 1383, he was sent to treat with the Count of Flanders, long at war with his subjects; and subsequently with the Duke of Lancaster and others, to conclude a peace or truce with France. In 1396, he was appointed with others by Parliament to examine into the state of the King's (Richard's) court, revenues, grants, etc.; and made one of the King's great and continual Council for one year. This Council, which restrained the King's power was afterward to feel his full resentment.

The outcry against the King's rule made itself heard early in 1388, in the memorable impeachment by the Commons of Michael de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, the Chancellor, and others. Among the names of the Lords Appellant, we find that of John de Cobham. On the day fixed for the meeting of these Commissioners, an armed ambuscade was placed at the Mews under the command of Sir Nicholas Brembre, the Lord Mayor, to way-lay them on their route to Westminster. Being duly warned they avoided the snare, and then demanded a safe conduct under the King's own hand. On the day appointed the Barons came well attended, and the records of Parliament contain no more exciting scene. The Lords Appellant brought a long list of charges against the accused, none of whom appeared, and in the presence of the King, flung down their gages on the floor of the house, ready to make them good by battle. In the meantime Sir Robert Tresillian, the Judge, one of the accused, was taken in disguise within the precincts of the Abbey, and produced before the Lords. With great spirit he offered to defend himself by wager of battle, but this was disallowed. Judgment was recorded against him, and he was subsequently drawn on a hurdle to Tyburn, and there executed. Subsequently the same fate befel Sir Nicholas Brembre.

In 1389, he sat as a member of the Court of Chivalry, in the celebrated case between Scrope and Grosvenor,† and on another in 1392, in the dispute between Morley and Lovel, and engaged in sundry other public official acts, and useful services near his home. He then lost his wife, Margaret Courtenay, and probably anticipating his dying without a direct heir, executed an elaborate deed of entail, which included several members of the family.

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\* From which we largely quote both here and elsewhere in this *Paper*, and desire to render all acknowledgments and thanks.

† The venerable old Sir John Sully, K.G., before alluded to, gave evidence in this case, on 2nd July, 1386, the Commissioner, John Kentwode, proceeded to Iddeleigh, in Devon, and in the church there took the old knight's, and his esquire, Richard Baker's evidence on oath. He must have been then 106 years old.



JOHN DE COBHAM, FOUNDER OF COBHAM COLLEGE.



MARGARET COURTENAY, WIFE OF JOHN DE COBHAM.

It was only just in time. A Parliament had been assembled in which the King had, by special writs to the Sheriffs, tampered directly with the elections, and thus gained a party directly in his interest. Immediate steps were taken against those who had acted upon the Commission of 1387-8, and Lord Cobham fleeing to the Monastery of the Carthusians in London, renounced the world. That did not protect him, for he was drawn from this seclusion, and with Sir John Cheney, committed to the Tower. He was then brought before the Parliament, which had already condemned the Earls of Warwick and Arundel, the former having been banished and the latter executed, even in contempt of accorded pardon.

The proceedings, as recorded in the Rolls of Parliament, are interesting, as they certainly justify what the historians of the time had said, respecting Cobham's simplicity and good faith. When called in question by the King, concerning the Commission of 1388, he replied 'that touching the making of the Commission he was not culpable, and touching the use and exercise of the same Commission, he would not have used it, nor meddled with it, but with the command of the King.' To which the King replied, 'that he was under such governance at that time, that he could not otherwise say by reason of those that were around him.'

Lord Cobham was adjudged guilty and condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. All his estates were confiscated. But, for mere shame, an historian has said, the King commuted this sentence on the venerable noble into banishment for life to Jersey, with the proviso, that if he escaped, the sentence should have full effect. In this sentence there was a saving of entail, which is worthy of note, as showing the jealousy of Parliament over estates that might otherwise pass into the hands of the nobles. Not long afterwards, this sentence was made an article of accusation against the King himself.

Two Lords Cobham were in exile at the same time, for Sir Reginald, second Baron Cobham of Sterborough, was included in the condemnation. The numerous and powerful families connected with them, the Arundels, Staffords, Beauchamps, and others, each had their special wrongs against the King. Henry, of Bolingbroke, was urged by the Archbishop of Canterbury, himself an exile, to return. Starting from Vannes, in Brittany, and coasting along the shores of England, he eventually landed at Ravenspur, and among the few knights in his train was Sir Reginald Cobham. The event is known as one of great moment in our history. The exiled nobles returned, and Parliament called King Richard to account for the sentences passed on Lord Cobham, and others the Lords Appellant. A solemn surrender of the Crown took place in Parliament, which decreed that the deposed monarch should be placed in safe keeping, and on the record appears the name of Lord Cobham. A few years later, he signed the entail of the Crown upon the four sons of Henry IV, and this was the last of his public acts.

His whole life was an unbroken succession of services rendered the State, at one of the most critical periods of English history, when the power of Parliament was rapidly developing, and the Commons shewed themselves to be growing in strength. There was no matter of public importance either at home or abroad, in which his advice as a councillor or as a diplomatist, was not sought or given. It is evident, even from the scanty information contained in our records, that John de Cobham, the 'Founder,' must be placed among the most eminent statesmen of his time.

He died 10th January, 1407-8, and must have reached a very advanced age, for at least seventy-four years had elapsed since his marriage contract, allowing for extreme youth at that time, he could scarcely have been less than ninety-two."

Lady Margaret Cobham died on the 2nd of August, 1385, and was buried in the chancel of Cobham church, where there is a fine brass to her memory, with this inscription :

"*Sy gist dame Margarete de Cobham jady's fille a noble Sr le Counte de Deuenschir feme le sire de Cobham foundour de ceste pluce qe morust le secounde jor dil moys Dagust lan de grace M<sup>i</sup> CCCLXXXV lalme de qy deux eyt mercy. Amen.*"

The arms are Cobham, and Cobham impaling Courtenay.

Although so far removed from Devon, she was destined to have her distinguished brother, William Courtenay, located comparatively near her a few years before her death, he being successively translated to the See of London in 1375, and elevated to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, in 1381. Nor were her virtues and fine character forgotten in Devon after her decease, for ten years later, Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter (he had been consecrated by her brother), on the 10th of August, 1395 :

"Ordered public prayers throughout the diocese for the deceased ladies, Margaret Cobham and Elizabeth Luttrell, sisters of the Primate, William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, and describes them—

"*Velut arbor in domo Domini, fructificans in vitæ sanctitate et puritate ac morum et actuum virtuosorum honestate Domino studuerunt pro viribus complacere.*"

Which may be rendered :

"*Like a tree in the house of the Lord, bearing fruit in holiness and purity of life, and in dignity of conduct, and virtuous deeds, they studied to please the Lord with (all) their might.*"

And the Bishop :

"Further to encourage the faithful who should assist at the solemn observances of the exequies of these distinguished ladies, and pray for their departed souls, he grants an indulgence of forty days."—*Oliver.*

Elizabeth, Lady Luttrell, was the wife of Sir Andrew Luttrell, of Chilton, and relict of Sir John de Vere—she died 1395.

The fine brass to John de Cobham's memory lies beside that of his wife in Cobham church, he supports a church in his hands, referable to his being the founder of the College. The armour is interesting from its diverse character being composed of banded chain-mail and plate, the covering of the thighs and gauntlets being of *cuir bouilli*. But it is doubtful if he was buried here, the brass being probably laid down

during his life-time, and the inscription exhibits nothing definite to confirm his interment beneath it :

*“ De terre fu fait et fourme, et en Terre et a Terre suy retourne,  
Johan de Cobham fondeur de ceste place qi fu iadis nomine  
Mercy de malme eit la seinte Trinite.”*

That is—

*“ Of earth was I made and formed, and into earth and to the  
earth am I returned, who was formerly named Johan de  
Cobham, Founder of this place. May the Holy Trinity  
have mercy on my soul.”*

There is the record of a monument once existing in the Church of the Grey Friars, in London, to a John de Cobham, Baron of Kent, “in a tomb raised up at the end of that altar by the door under the cross (transept) lies John de Cobham, Baron of the County of Kent,” and it is difficult to see to whom this can refer if not to this John de Cobham. Stow, in his account of this magnificent structure, gives a graphic description of the array of tombs then within it, and a long list of the influential persons buried beneath them. Among them he mentions “John Cobham, Baron of Kent,” as being interred “between the choir and the altar,” and notes that “in the choir,” lay the Tyburn-executed Cornishman, “Sir Robert Tresilian, Knight-Justice,” and his unfortunate companion, “Sir Nicholas Brembre, Mayor of London, buried 1386”—previously referred to—of whom he adds, “he was Mayor in 1384 and 1385, was Knighted with Sir William Walworth in 1384 ; and in 1387, as late Mayor of London, was this year beheaded.”

In addition to his being the founder of the College, he also erected the original seat of the Cobhams, Cowling Castle, near Rochester, early in the reign of Richard II. By his wife, Margaret Courtenay, he left one daughter only, *Johanna*, married to John de la Pole, of Chrishall, in Essex. He was named as one of the Surveyors of his wife's mother, the Countess of Devon's will.



**De la Pole = Cobham,**

OF CHRISHALL, ESSEX.

JOHN de la Pole, who married Joan Cobham, only daughter of John de Cobham and Margaret Courtenay, was the son of William de la Pole, who was the son of Richard de la Pole, to whom Edward III, in 1338, gave "for his extraordinary merits," a thousand pounds ~~issuing~~ <sup>issuing</sup> out of the Exchequer. He was the second son of the noted Sir William de la Pole, the great merchant of Kingston-upon-Hull, whose descendants occupy a distinguished place in English history, a gallant and highly gifted race, who, after attaining by merit and alliance, the highest position and honours, were—similar to the Cobhams—summarily extinguished by Henry VIII, by the decapitation of Edmund de la Pole, the second duke of Suffolk, on Tower Hill, 30th April, 1513—the offence being his descent from the House of York, his mother having been, unfortunately for him, the Lady Elizabeth Plantagenet, sister to Edward IV and Richard III.

William de la Pole, the father of John, married Margaret Peverel. She was the sister and heiress of John Peverel, of Castle-Ashby, in Northamptonshire, after whose death he held Castle-Ashby and Milton, in right of his wife. She was living in 1358, and he in 1362.

John Peverel, who was aged nineteen, at Easter, 1349, died without issue, in November of the same year. He had married Isabella Basset, and was the first of this lady's six husbands. The birth and career of this lady was a remarkable one. According to Burke, she was the daughter of Ralph, the third Lord Basset, of Drayton, ob. 1343—but "it is doubtful if this lady was legitimate or not." At the death of her presumed brother, Ralph, fourth and last Lord Basset, in 1390, s.p.—

"He devised his estates according to some authorities, to Sir Hugh Shirley, his nephew, son of his sister, Isabel, upon condition he should assume the surname and arms of Bassett, in failure of which, those estates were to pass to



JOHN DE LA POLE AND JOAN DE COBHAM, HIS WIFE.



JOHANNA DE LA POLE, LADY OF COBHAM.

Edmund Lord Stafford. It is certain, however, great disputes arose after his decease, but it does not appear the Shirleys were engaged in it, nor did they take the name of Bassett."

Her second husband was Robert de Bradeston, who was living 1350-1. The third, Robert Rigge, living 1357-8. The fourth, Sir Thomas Shirley, who died before 1362. By him she appears to be ancestress to Shirley, Earl Ferrers. The fifth, Sir John de Wodhull, who died 1367-8.

Her sixth and last match is an interesting one as connected with our little history. She married, as his second wife, Sir Gerard Braybroke (fourth of that name, ob. 1403), the father of Sir Reginald Braybroke, the second husband of Joan de la Pole, who was the grand-daughter of her first husband's sister, Margaret Peverel.\*

John de la Pole and his wife, Joan Cobham, were buried in the church of Chrishall, a parish in north-west Essex; and of their relationship there we learn:

"The manor of Chrishall was held under Lord Stafford by William and Margaret de la Pole in 1351-58, and in 1399 by the heirs of John de la Pole, from whom it passed to his descendants the Brookes. The exact year of Sir John's death has not been ascertained; his lady died before her father, Lord Cobham, and that barony descended to their only daughter, Joan, and they were both dead in 1389, as Lord Cobham had East Tilbury appropriated to his College at Cobham in that year, to maintain two chaplains to sing for their souls. The time of their deaths, however, would probably not affect the date of the brass, as there is good reason to suppose that it was put down in their lifetime, and perhaps soon after their marriage. Their daughter Joan was born in 1377, and the costume of the figures, and the style of the brass is such as to make it almost a certainty that it was executed about the year 1375, at which time it is probable they also rebuilt the church, as their arms remain on the south door, and many parts of the building are of late Decorated or Transition character."—*Archæological Journal*, vol. iv, p. 338, by Mr. C. J. MANNING.

At this time, 1847, the brass lay in the nave, partly hidden by the seats; the canopy mutilated, and the supporting shafts gone. Of the marginal inscription, only the words "*sa femme priez*" (*his wife, pray ye*) remained, and but one shield, that between the heads of the figures, Pole impaling Cobham, is noted.

The brass now lies in the pavement of the west end of the south aisle. It has been almost completely restored, inclusive of two shields bearing respectively Pole and Cobham over the

\* *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, vol. ii, New Series, 1874, p. 61, by Mr. E. W. BRABROOK.

canopy. Nothing has been added to the three words remaining of the original inscription.

The costume of the figures is very similar to that of the lady's father and mother at Cobham—the knight shews the gradual change to plate armour—and the close-buttoned bodice and long dependant lappets of the lady's sleeves are noteworthy. The joined hands is not an unusual attitude found on brasses of that era.

If they did not wholly rebuild the church, as has been surmised, it is probable they added the south aisle, which was apparently a chantry chapel. At its east end in the south wall, under the first window, and in the usual situation of founders' tombs near the altar, is a recessed tomb, with low canopied arch, having sculptured leaf-ornament running round its edge. Within it is the recumbent figure of a lady, in costume almost exactly similar to the lady in the brass. There is no inscription, nor is it known who it commemorates. If a surmise may be hazarded, it may represent Margaret de la Pole (Peverel), the mother of John of the brass; as herself and husband held the manor of Chrishall before their son John. On each side of the doorway of the porch leading into this aisle is a shield, with sculptured bearings—that on the dexter side, although considerably denuded, was evidently charged with the parent coat of De la Pole—(*Argent*) *a fess between three leopards' heads (or)*. The other, in better preservation, De la Pole of Chrishall (*Azure*) *two bars nebulée (or)*.

According to Morant, the manor of Chrisall-Bury was held by Ralph, Lord Stafford, ob. 1372, and his heirs; Thomas, Lord Stafford held it in 1392, as three parts of a fee, and the heirs of John de la Pole under him, and afterward Sir John Harpenden (fifth husband of Joan de la Pole) held it.

Joan de Cobham was married to John de la Pole in 1362, and both were dead before 1389; thus predeceasing her father who died in 1407-8, and leaving one daughter Joan, who at her grandfather's death became Lady of Cobham.

## Joan de la Pole,

LADY OF COBHAM, IN KENT.

JOAN de la Pole became Lady of Cobham at her grandfather's death, on 10th January, 1407-8 ; at the date of which event she had been widow to two husbands, and was married to a third.

Doubtless as a great heiress in prospective, as also of the barony of Cobham, her hand was eagerly sought for, and she was of youthful age when married to her first husband, Sir Robert Hemendale, and after his death in 1391, she was successively wedded to Sir Reginald Braybroke, Sir Nicholas Hawberk, Sir John Oldcastle, and Sir John Harpenden, notices of whom will follow.

As shewn on her brass she appears to have had ten children by her several husbands, six sons and four daughters, but a portion of them, six only, have been assigned to their fathers. A son, *William*, to Sir Robert Hemendale ; two sons, *Reginald* and *Robert*, and a daughter, *Joan*, to Sir Reginald Braybroke ; a son, *John*, to Sir Nicholas Hawberk ; and a daughter, *Joan*, to Sir John Oldcastle.

Little further is known of her. She died in 1433, and was buried in the chancel of the church of St. Mary Magdalen, Cobham, with her ancestors and two of her husbands, and where there is her brass effigy. She is habited in gown with robe over and long dependant coverchief to the shoulders. A little dog with collar and bells sits at her feet. At her right are six sons, and at her left four daughters. Over her head a scroll, "*Jh'u m'cy, Lady help,*" and two other scrolls, one on each side, "*Jhu'-mercy.*" Below this inscription—

"*Hic jacet Johanna d'na de Cobh'm quonda' ux' d'ni Reginaldi Braybrook militis que obiit in die Sancti Hillary Ep'i Anno d'ni Millm'o CCCC XXXIIJO Cuius a'ie p'piciet' deus. Amen.*"

Arms—six shields—1, Cobham ; 2, Cobham impaling Cour-

tenay ; 3, *A fess between six cross-crosslets* (PEVEREL, of Castle-Ashby), and De la Pole, quarterly, impaling Cobham ; 4, Quarterly, Cobham and De la Pole ; 5, Braybroke, impaling Cobham ; 6, Brook, impaling Cobham.

Her death would have occurred on the 13th January, 1433-4. Her only surviving child, *Joan*, by Sir Reginald Braybroke, it was who became Lady of Cobham, and married Sir Thomas Brook, the younger, of Olditch and Weycroft.

### **Hemendale = De la Pole.**

THE first of the five husbands of Joan de la Pole, Lady of Cobham, was Sir Robert Hemendale, or Hemenhale, of a knightly family in Norfolk, both at the time being very young at the time of the marriage. She had one son by him named *William*, who died in infancy. His death occurred in 1391, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Morant says "Sir Ralph Hemenhale held the manor of Radwinter Hall, in Essex, and advowson of the church, afterward by Sir Robert, and subsequently by the family of Cobham."

The arms of Hemenhale, of Norfolk, are given as *Argent, on a fess between two chevrons gules, three escallops or*.

### **Braybroke = De la Pole.**

THE second husband of Joan de la Pole, Lady of Cobham, was Sir Reginald Braybroke, the second son of Sir Gerard Braybroke, knt., third of that name, ob. 1403, by his first wife, Margaret, daughter and heiress of John de Lungeville, and widow of Sir Peter Saltmershe. Secondly his father married Isabella Bassett, being the last of her six husbands, already referred to. She died in 1393.

Sir Reginald died 20th September, 1405, at Middleburg, on the Scheldt, in Flanders. He appears to have had three



SIR REGINALD BRAYBROKE.





children by his wife, the Lady Joan: *Reginald* and *Robert*, sons, who predeceased him, and a daughter, *Johanna*, who, of all her mother's five unions and ten children, was finally the only surviving child, and who married Sir Thomas Brook.

Sir Reginald is commemorated by one of the splendid brasses in the chancel of Cobham church. He wears the chain and plate armour of the period, and his two deceased sons stand on pedestals, one on each side.

The inscription reads—

*"Hic iacet d'n's Reginaldus Braybrok Miles filius Gerardi Braybrok Militis ac maritus d'ne Johanne d'ne de Cobh'm heredis dn'i de Cobh'm fundatoris: Collegii, qui quidem Reginaldus obiit apud Myddelburg in Flandrea vicesimo die mensis Septembris Anno domini Mil'mo Quadringentesimo Quinto Cuius anime propicietur deus: Amen AMEN."*

The inscriptions on his sons' pedestals record—

*Hic iacet Reginald' fil' eor'*

*Hic iacet Robert' fil' eor'*

The arms are, 1, *Seven mascles voided, three, three, and one* (BRAYBROKE) and Braybroke impaling Cobham.



MIDDELBURG, ON THE SCHELDT, HOLLAND.

The Braybrokes were ecclesiastically connected with Devon. Nicholas Braybroke, presumably uncle to Sir Reginald, was Vicar of Bideford, and he exchanged with his brother Robert for the Archdeaconry of Cornwall, in 1381. He was Canon and Prebendary of Exeter, Bosham, and Crantock ; also Canon of St. Paul's, London. He died about 1399-1400. He was also librarian to Bishop Bitton, 1291-1307, mentioned as such at the beginning of Bishop Bronscombe's *Register*.

Robert Braybroke was instituted Vicar of Bideford, 26th July, 1381. The patron was John Grenville (son and heir of Sir Theobald Grenville, deceased), who was married to Margaret, daughter of Ismania Hanham (elder sister of Dame Johanna Brook), by her second husband, Sir John Burghersh.

These brothers, says Dr. Oliver, "were of a noble family in the county of Northampton, founders of our Lady's Chantry, in the episcopal palace of London, adjoining the nave of St. Paul's Cathedral. He (Robert) became Bishop of London, 5th January, 1382, died 27th August, 1404." They were named as executors and administrators to the will of Bishop Grandison, of Exeter.

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### Hawberk = De la Pole.

THE third husband of Joan de la Pole, Lady of Cobham, was Sir Nicholas Hawberk. His marriage life was of short duration—about two years—as Sir Reginald Braybroke died 20th September, 1405, and Sir Nicholas on 9th October, 1407. One son, John, appears to have been born and predeceased him. Sir Nicholas died at Cowling Castle, the other and older residence of the Cobhams, a few miles distant, near Rochester.

On 19th December, 1396, in succession to Sir John Golofre, deceased, he was appointed Constable of Flint Castle, Sheriff and Raglor, or Steward of Flintshire, and Mayor of Flint borough: offices he held until his death, having been re-appointed by Henry IV, on his accession to the throne ; and

was holding them when that monarch made Richard II a prisoner in Flint Castle. Sir Nicholas maintained four men-at-arms and twelve archers within the fortress, at the then considerable annual expense of £146. Subsequently he was one of the six knights forming the train of Queen Isabella, widow of Richard II, on her return to France in 1401. He was also in the escort of Henry IV when he visited Cologne in 1402, to attend Blanche his eldest daughter's marriage with Louis, Count Palatine of the Rhine, Duke of Bavaria.

In the jousting at Smithfield in 1393, Stow records that—

“Sir William Darell, knt., the King's banner-bearer of Scotland, challenged Sir Pierce (Peter) Courtenay, the King's banner-bearer of England, and when they had run certain courses, gave over without conclusion of victory. Then Cookebourne, esquire, of Scotland, challenged Sir Nicholas Hawberke, knt., and rode five courses, but Cookebourne was borne over, horse and man.”

He was twice married: his first wife's name was Matilda, and she was living 1 Henry IV (1399-1400), but nothing is known of her parentage. By deed dated three days before his death, he left all his goods and chattels (except one hundred shillings in silver, which he reserved to Sir Hugh Luttrell and others) in trust for his wife, which was duly confirmed the same year. Nothing is known of his parentage: there is no family of the name, and he was probably “a soldier of fortune.”

His memorial in Cobham Church is considered one of the finest military brasses in existence. The inscription records—

“*Hic jacet d'n's Nicholaus Hawberk miles quondam maritus d'ne Joh'ne d'ne de Cobh'm heredis d'ni Joh'is de Cobh'm fundatoris istius Collegii qui quidem Nicholaus obiit Castru' de Cowling nuno die Octobris, Anno domini Mil'mo quadringentesimo septimo. Cuius anime propicietur deus. Amen.*”

Under his son—

“*Hic jacet John's fili' eor'.*”

The arms are of an unusual and remarkable blazon—*Checky, argent and gules, a chief champourné gules and or.* His arms in both shields in the brass had been wilfully defaced as if by heralds in the officious exercise of their craft. Hawberk by them was evidently not considered entitled to bear arms.

### Oldcastle = De la Pole.

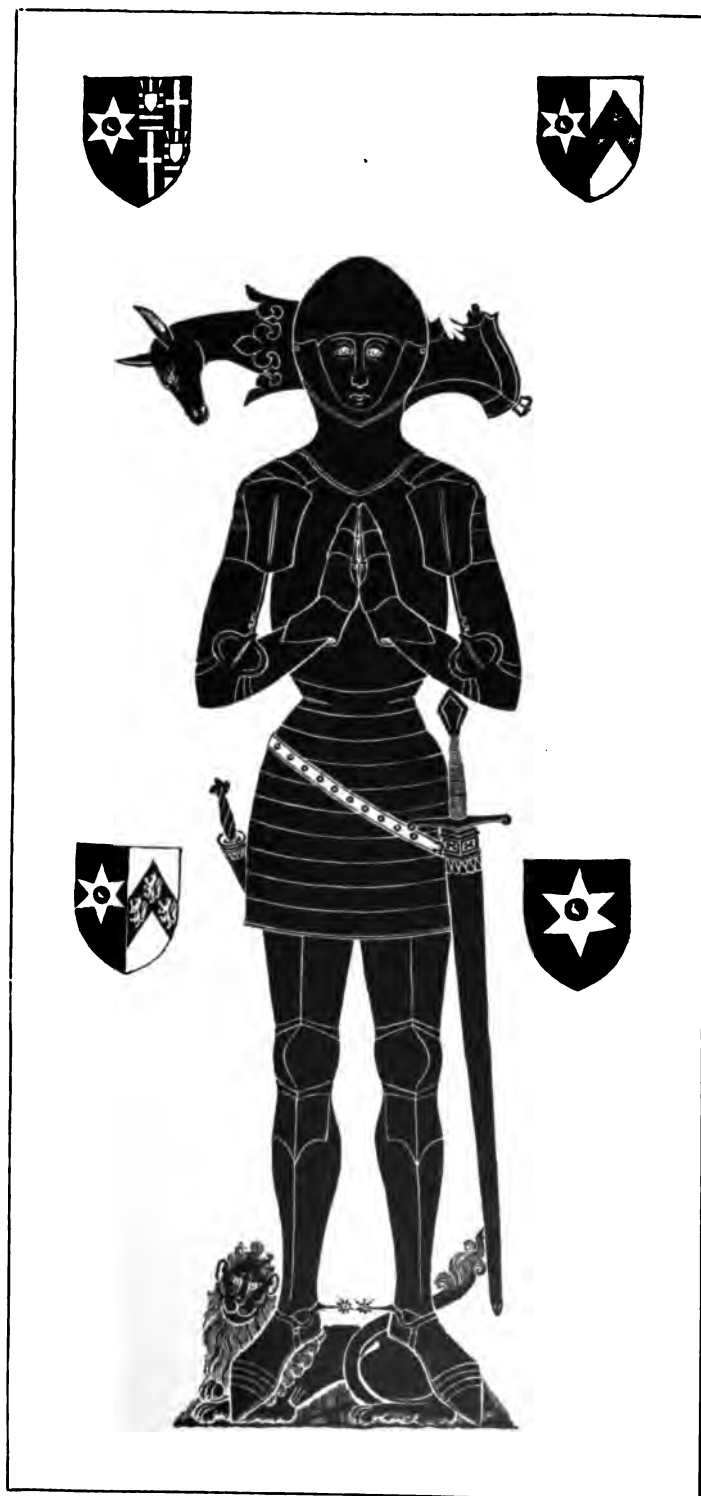
THE fourth husband of Joan de la Pole, Lady of Cobham, was Sir John Oldcastle. He was the son of Sir Richard Oldcastle, a family in Herefordshire, where there is a village so named, but it is presumed that Almeby Castle in that county which belonged to the Oldcastles gave the surname. The name of his mother is not known, but he was born about 1360, and Sheriff of Herefordshire, 7 Henry IV (1405-6). He was thrice married: his first wife was named Katherine, but of what family is not known, of his second nothing at all, except that she bore him four children, a son, Henry, who is alluded to in *Pat.*, 7 Henry VI (1429), wherein he is styled "*Henry Oldcastle, son and heir of John Lord Cobham,*" and three daughters, Katherine, Joan, and Maid.

His marriage with the Lady of Cobham must have taken place before 26th October, 1409, when he was summoned as a Baron to Parliament as Lord Oldcastell, by writ directed to "*Johanni Oldcastell Ch'lr,*" to 22nd March, 1413-4.

The life of Sir John Oldcastle, so well known as "the Lollard Martyr," and "the good Lord Cobham," his conscientious conviction, dauntless courage, bitter persecution and cruel death, is one of the best known and strongly contested episodes of English history, and it would be altogether beyond the province or limit of this paper, to give anything like an outline of it, even of ascertained facts. Suffice it to say, after great vicissitudes, he was brought for trial before his clerical accusers, before whom he made what has been termed a clear, manly, courageous, enlightened defence, but as a matter of course was condemned by the Church as a heretic, leaving him to the civil power for judgment. Committed to the Tower, he from thence contrived to escape into Wales, where he hid himself, and for four years remained in comparative safety. Unfortunately a rising of the Lollards took place in London, under Sir Roger Acton, in St. Giles' Fields, which was sup-



.... CLITHEROW, DAUGHTER OF SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE.



pressed by the King's forces. Naturally—although there was no proof of such—Sir John Oldcastle's name and influence was associated with it: a proclamation and reward of a thousand marks was offered for his capture, dead or alive, and shortly after at Bromiarth, in Montgomeryshire, four tenants of Edward Charletoun, Earl of Powis, discovered and arrested him, after some resistance in which he was grievously wounded, and, continues Mr. Waller—

"He was brought to London, and produced before the Lords of Parliament, the Duke of Bedford presiding, when the former judgment for heresy was recorded against him. On his endeavouring to defend himself, the Chief Justice told him he could not be allowed to waste the time of the Lords, and he was adjudged 'traitor to God and heretic,' also 'traitor to the King and Kingdom,' and sentenced to be drawn through the city of London, as far as the '*novelles furches*,' in the parish of St. Giles, beyond the Bar of the Old Temple of London, and then be hung and burnt hanging. On Christmas day, 1417, this terrible sentence was carried out. There was an immense concourse of spectators, at the newly appointed place of execution, recently moved from the Elms in Smithfield, to the front gate of St. Giles' Hospital, at that time surrounded by fields, and distant from London. Near the unfortunate Oldcastle stood old Sir Thomas Erpingham, whom he is said to have asked to seek peace for his sect, if he arose from the dead in three days. We must distrust the monkish chronicler, who has words of insult for the unfortunate man in this supreme hour, and there is nothing in the authentic accounts of Sir John Oldcastle to suggest that he was a victim of fanatical delusion."

Apparently the infliction of this dreadful sentence was intended to have a double significance; he was first hanged as a traitor for his offence against the civil power, and afterward burnt as a heretic in accordance with his condemnation by the ecclesiastical.

The married life of the Lady of Cobham with Sir John Oldcastle was not to be envied, and she could have seen but little of him during its term of about five years, for in 1413 he became a fugitive in hiding, and it is probable she never saw him afterward in the interval before his death in 1417. She apparently had one daughter by him named *Joan*, who died young.

A daughter of Sir John Oldcastle, presumably by his second wife, married Richard Clitherow, Esq., of Ash, near Sandwich, Sheriff of the county of Kent, 4 and 5 Henry IV (1403-4), Admiral of the Seas from the Thames westward. They were buried in Ash Church, where is their memorial, a large flat



stone under the tower, which originally covered a tomb in the chancel. On it is the indent of a fine brass of a man and his wife under a double canopy with pinnacles, four shields at the top, and of six children at the bottom, the border inscription is also gone. Of this once very handsome brass, only the upper half of the lady and part of the canopy over her, remains.

She appears on the right-hand side of her husband, as a widow clad in gown with mantle or cloak over, barbe under the chin, and cover-chief falling to the shoulders. Weever gives this portion of the inscription as remaining in his time : "*Hic jacet . . . . Clitherow Ar: & . . . . uxor ejus, filia Johannis Oldcastell, qui obiit . . .*"

The shields from recorded evidence appear to have been charged, 1, *Within a bordure engrailed, three covered cups (CLITHEROW) impaling, a Castle triple-towered (OLDCASTLE)*; 2, Clitherow alone; 3, Oldcastle, *quartering, party per pale, a double-headed eagle displayed*. And this appears to be the only surviving memorial relating to Sir John Oldcastle or his family.

With regard to the arms of Sir John Oldcastle, in an indenture made between him and his wife Johanna of the one part, and Sir Thomas Brook on the other (query of the marriage of Johanna Braybroke and Thomas Brook, elsewhere referred to) the seal exhibits *Quarterly, one and four a Castle, two and three Cobham, and was circumscribed with "Sigillum Johannis Oldcastle, D'ni de Cobham."*

His arms are also found in the roof of the cloisters of Canterbury Cathedral, and their blazon is given both as *Argent, a Castle triple-towered and embattled sable*, and *Argent, a tower triple-towered sable, chained, transversed, the port, or*.

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### Harpenden = De la Pole.

THE fifth and last husband of Joan de la Pole, Lady of Cobham, was Sir John Harpenden. The circumstance of the

dreadful fate of her preceding husband does not appear to have deterred her from again entering the matrimonial state.

He was "of a good knightly family in Hertfordshire," and a Sir John Harpenden—probably his father—is mentioned by Froissart as being of good service in the wars with France, and Seneschal of Bordeaux.

According to Boutell (*Brasses and Slabs*, p. 66) "he married three wives, one of whom was a daughter of Sir John Oldcastle"—evidently a mistake for "the widow." The date of his marriage with the Lady Joan is not recorded, but as she was born about 1377, and Sir John Oldcastle was executed in 1417, she would have been still comparatively young, and lived sixteen years afterward, dying in 1433, and Sir John Harpenden survived her twenty-four years, and died in 1458. There was no issue of this marriage.

Morant, in his *History of Essex*, speaks of Sir John Harpenden holding the manor of Chrishall-Bury in that county, the inheritance that descended to his wife as the only daughter of John de la Pole, and by fine passed it to Thomas Brook (the younger, husband of his step-daughter Joan Braybroke) and that his descendant, George Brook, Lord Cobham, and Ann (Bray), his wife, alienated it by license, 21st October, 1544, to Thomas Crawley, the manor consisting of near a thousand acres of land, twenty messuages, and twenty cottages.

Sir John Harpenden was never summoned to Parliament, and does not appear to have been recognised as Lord of Cobham.

Similar to her first husband Sir Robert Hemendale, Sir John Harpenden was buried in Westminster Abbey. His monument is in the north choir aisle, and consists of a grey marble stone on a low tomb whereon is inlaid his brass effigy, habited in complete plate armour: his feet rest on a lion, his head on a helmet with crest—*out of a ducal coronet, a hind's head, couped at the shoulders*. There are four shields—1, *on a mullet, or estoile of six points, a roundel, thereon a martlet*

(HARPENDEN), impaling, *quarterly*, one and four, Mortimer, two and three, *a plain cross* (ST. GEORGE); 2, Harpenden, impaling, *on a chevron, three mullets or estoiles wavy*; 3, Harpenden impaling Cobham; 4, Harpenden alone. The ledger inscription has disappeared.

The tinctures of the Harpenden arms are given as *Argent, on a mullet of six points gules, a bezant, charged with a martlet sable*; other branches of the family in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire, bore *the mullet sable*.

The armour and appointments of the knight are almost identical with those found on the brass of Thomas Cheddar, ob. 1442-3, in Cheddar Church.

## Cheddar,

### OF BRISTOL AND CHEDDAR, AND THEIR DESCENDANTS.

THE antient Somersetshire family of Cheddre, or de Cheddre, it may be fairly surmised, acquired their name from the parish so-called in the centre of that county, although the earliest recorded mention of them comes from the city of Bristol, where it may be inferred they migrated, and after fortune had favoured them to become opulent and influential citizens, again returned to the original home of their race.

The first of these was *John de Cheddre*, who was Steward of Bristol, 1288-9, and 1291-2, and subsequently M.P. for that city in 1298, being the second parliamentary representative of Bristol, whose name has been preserved. To him succeeded a *John de Cheddre*, who, in 1334, conveyed some property in Redcliffe Street, and was probably M.P. for Bristol in 1369.

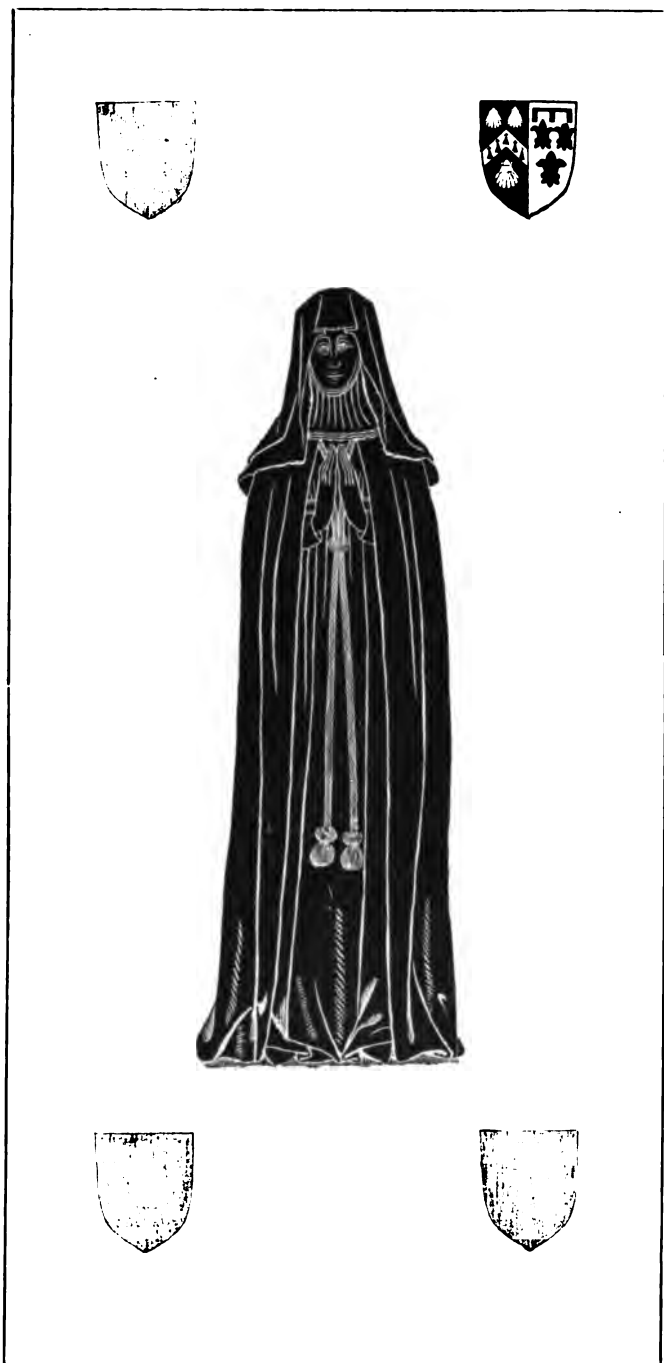
To these followed two brothers, *Robert* and *William Cheddar*.

*William Cheddar*, the younger brother, died without issue. His will is dated 21st November, 1382, and was proved 27th February, 1382-3, wherein he desires to be buried in the Chapel of the Blessed Mary, in Cheddar Church, leaves



THOMAS CHEDDER.

CHEDDAR CHURCH, SOMMERSET.



ISABEL SCOBAHULL, WIFE OF THOMAS CHEDDER.

CHEDDAR CHURCH.

sundry legacies to that fabric and religious houses, and donations to the needy poor of Cheddar and Axbridge. The residue of his goods he leaves to *Agnes*, his wife, and appoints his brother Robert one of his executors.

*Robert Chedder* was Bailiff of Bristol in 1351-2, Mayor in 1360-1, and is the first of the family recorded in existing documents as holding possessions in Cheddar. In 1362, therein described as of Bristol, and executor of William Hussee, he gave a bond to Ralph (de Salopia), Bishop of Bath and Wells, for "two hundred pounds left to the church by the said William." Soon after this a chantry was established in Cheddar Church, of the annual value of ten marks, on behalf of our present King Edward, and the benefit of his soul after death. This was the "Chauntrie of Oure Lady," and situate on the north side of the chancel, the descendants of Chedder retaining the patronage of the advowson.

Robert Chedder married *Johanna*, younger daughter of *Simon Hannap*, or *Hanham*, of Gloucestershire, and by her had four sons who all appear to have been born in Bristol—*Richard*, on 9th September, 1379, one of the knights of the Shire for the county, 1407, 1413, 1417, 1421, and 1426: *Robert*, 28th October, 1380, and living in 1425: *William*, 14th December, 1381: and *Thomas*, their only surviving son and heir: the other brothers appear to have died without issue.

He survived his brother William one year only, his will is dated 21st March, 1382-3, and proved 30th June, 1384. He desires his body to be buried in the Chapel of St. Mary, *de novo fundata*, gives sundry religious legacies, and to his son Richard "*vj Ciphos vocat' Bolles de argento*," and other plate, to William Draper, clerk, a third best cup, which was then at Cheddar, and the residue of his goods to Joan his wife, who, with William Draper, and William Bierden, were to be his executors.

Robert Chedder and Joan his wife, appear to have been the possessors of considerable property, including the manors of

Iddesleigh and Ashreigny, in Devon, together with the advowson of Ashreigny, in 1383-8, then held by the venerable Sir John de Sully, K.G., whose heir, the said Robert probably was. Sir Thomas Broke presented to Iddesleigh, in 1425-6, and Isabel, relict of Thomas Chedder, Esq., in 1474.

Johanna Chedder, widow of Robert Chedder, married secondly as we have seen, Sir Thomas Brook, of Olditch, and died 10th April, 1437.

*Thomas Chedder*, heir to his father Robert Chedder, married *Isabel Scobahull*. She was of an antient and important family, who owned and had their residence on a manor so-named in South-Pool, a parish abutting on the mouth of the Kingsbridge estuary, immediately opposite Salcombe, in South Devon. It is now a farm known as Scoble, and tradition states the present farm-house occupies the site of the former manor-house. The Scobahulls held it for about two centuries, from temp. Henry III to Henry V.

Thomas de Scobahull was Sheriff of Devon, 19, 20, and 21 Edward I (1291-2-3). Thomas Scobahull married Margery, sister and coheir of Robert Coffin, of Coffinswell. Thomas had issue Sir Robert, of Coffinswell (19 Edw. II, 1324), who had issue Sir Thomas (7 Edw. III, 1334), who married Edith, daughter of Sir Roger Prideaux, of Orcherton, Knt. (55 Henry III, 1273), by his wife Joan, daughter of Sir William Bigbury (4 Edw. II, 1311). Thomas had issue Robert, which, by Elinor . . . . ., left four daughters, coheireses—Joan, wife of William Holbeame; Isabel, wife of Thomas Chedder; Elizabeth, wife of Robert Kirkham; and a daughter—the second—married to Nicholas Speccot, who inherited the manor of Scobahull.

Of the residences of the Chedders, in Cheddar, Rutter (edition 1829) thus notices their remains :

“ At the entrance of the village from Axbridge is a farm house which formed part of the manor house of John de Cheddar. The surrounding wall has been castellated, but the only part of the building remaining tolerably entire is the Hall, now used as a stable and granary, the ornamented chimney-turret, together with fragments of arches and mullions of windows, are lying about in a contiguous garden.

In a field a little on the north-east of the road leading to Wells, about a quarter of a mile from Cheddar, stood the mansion of Thomas Cheddar, where the foundations may be easily traced."

Thomas Cheddar died 1442-3 (*Inq. p. mortem*, 21 Henry VI), holding eighty-four messuages in Bristol, the manor of Cheddar, and several others in Somerset. Also estates in Gloucestershire, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall. He left two daughters, his coheirresses, *Joan* and *Isabel*—his widow, Isabel, survived him more than thirty years.\*

On the table of a high tomb, under an elegant floriated canopy, on the north side of the chancel of Cheddar Church, is the presumed brass effigy of Thomas Cheddar, ob. 1442-3. He is in the complete plate armour of the period, whose appointments exactly correspond with those of Sir John Harpenden, ob. 1458 (the fifth husband of Joan de la Pole, Lady of Cobham), in Westminster Abbey. His feet rest on a lion, the four shields and border inscription are gone.

The brass effigy of Isabel Scobahull, his wife, is in the pavement immediately in front of her presumed husband's tomb. She is attired as a widow, with barbe (*under the chin*, shewing she was not of noble parentage or position), large cover-chief that depends to the shoulders, gown with cloak over, fastened across the breast with cordon and tassels. No inscription remains, and three of the four shields are gone, but the remaining one is, fortunately, preserved in its proper position at the sinister corner of the stone, and identifies the lady. It is charged with Cheddar, impaling, *Argent, three fleurs-de-lys gules, in chief a label of three azure* (SCOBAHULL). The arms of Scobahull are also found among the old painted glass collected in the south transept window, both with and without the *label*. She was alive in 1474.

The history of the descent from the two daughters of Thomas Cheddar is interesting, as connected with the county of Somerset.

\* For many of these particulars the compiler is indebted to the paper on the Family of Cheddar, by Mr. W. George, in the Som. Arch. and Nat. Hist. Society's *Proceedings*, vol. xxxiv, p. 114.



## Talbot = Chedder.

## VISCOUNTS L'ISLE.

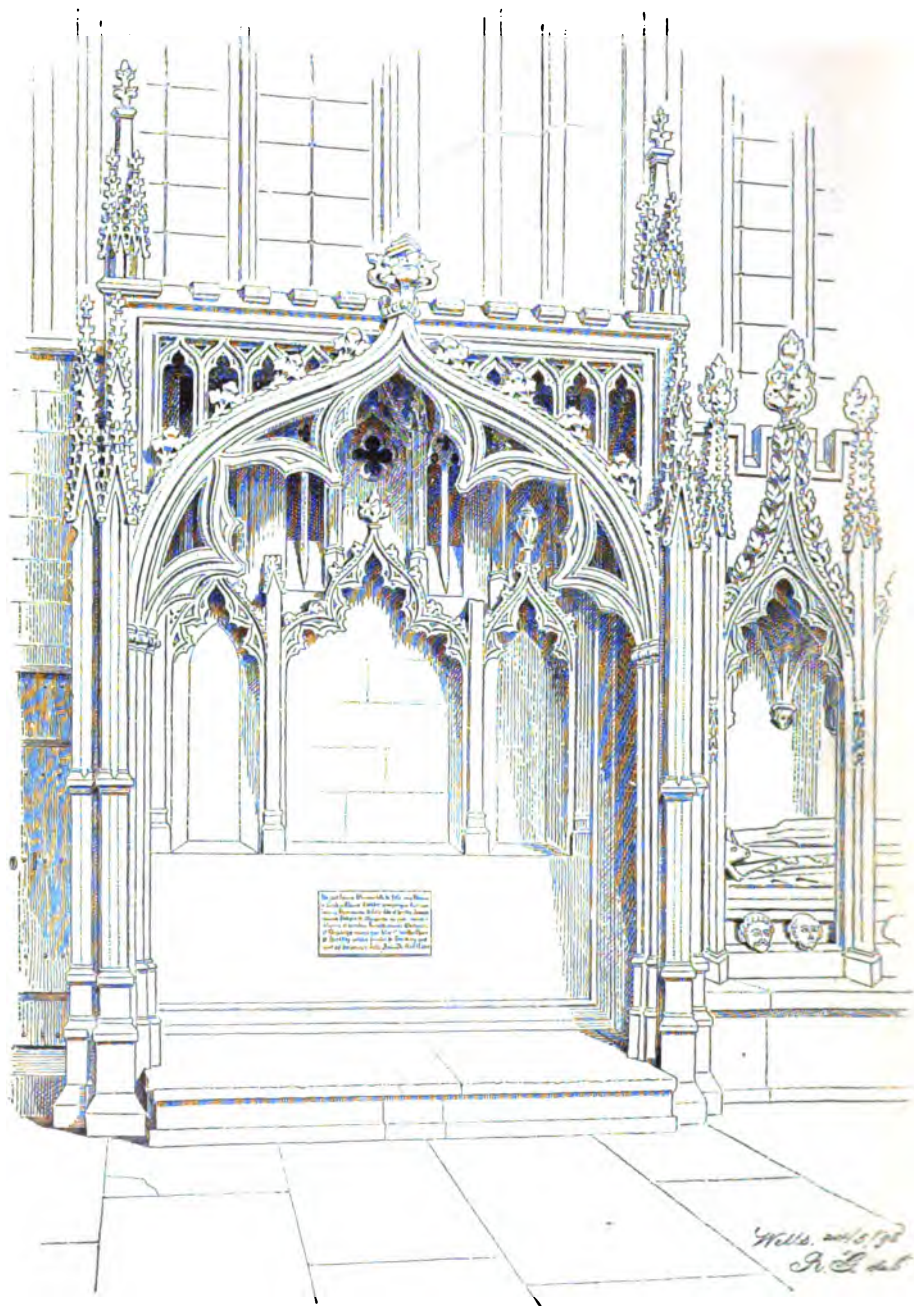
JOAN Chedder, the eldest—called after her grandmother, Lady Brook—was a widow at the date of her father's death, having married as her first husband, Richard Stafford. She secondly made a distinguished match with John Talbot, the eldest son of John Talbot, the "great" Earl of Shrewsbury, by his second wife, Margaret Beauchamp. It will be necessary to trace the descent of this Countess, to account for the disastrous circumstances that resulted in the premature death of her grandson.

Thomas, fifth Lord Berkley, married Margaret, daughter and heiress of Gerard Warren, second Lord L'Isle—ob. 1381—by Alice his wife, daughter and heir of Henry Lord Tyes, "the marriage being solemnized at Wengrave, in Bucks, the said Lord L'Isle's house." She died at Wotton-under-Edge, 20th March, 1392, "and lieth buried in the church there, under a fair tomb." He made his will in 1415, and died 13th July, 1416, and was buried beside his wife.

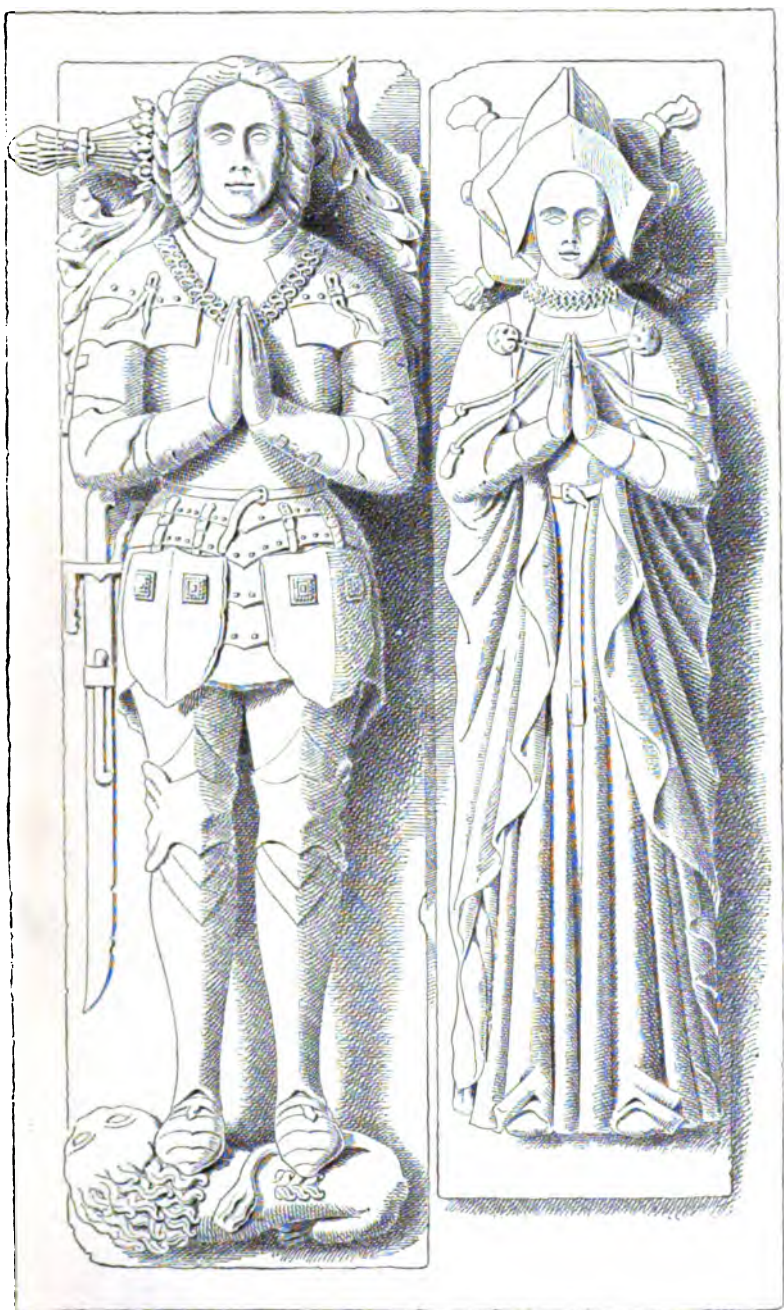
They left one daughter, Elizabeth, then about thirty years of age, married to Richard Beauchamp, fifth Earl of Warwick, who died at Rouen, 5th April, 1439 (whose fine effigy is in St. Mary's Church, Warwick) leaving with other issue, his eldest daughter Margaret, who became the second wife of John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and mother of John Talbot, Viscount L'Isle, who married Johanna Chedder. The Countess died 14th June, 1468, and was buried in the Jesus Chapel in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, "where was this inscription to her memory upon a pillar within it."

*"Here before the image of Jesus, lyeth the right worshipful and noble Lady Margaret, Countess of Shrewsbury, late wife of the true and victorious Knight, John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury. Which worshipful man died at Guien for the right of this land.*

*She was the first daughter and one of the heirs of the right famous and renowned Knight, Richard Beauchamp, late Earl of Warwick (which died at Roan) and of Dame Elizabeth his wife, the which Elizabeth was daughter and heir to Thomas, late Lord Berkley, on his side; and on her mother's side Lady L'Isle and Tyes.*



MONUMENT OF JOAN CHEDDER, VISCOUNTESS L'ISLE.



*Roscoe Gibbs del.*

SIR JOHN NEWTON AND ISABEL CHEDDER, HIS WIFE.

YATTON CHURCH, SOMERSET.

*Which Countess passed from this world the fourteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord, 1468. On whose soul, Jesus have mercy. Amen."*

John Talbot, her eldest son, second husband of Johanna Chedder, was created Baron L'Isle, of Kingston L'Isle, a manor and hamlet in the parish of Sparsholt, Berks, an antient inheritance of the L'Isles, then possessed by him, 26th July, 1443, *sibi hæredibus et assignatis*, and afterward, 30th October, 1452, Viscount L'Isle, *sibi et hæredibus masculis de corpore suo*.

He was engaged with his father in the war with France, and we learn that—

"The year next ensuing, his father being then constituted Lieutenant of the Duchy of Aquitaine, and he one of the Captains there under him, he was by indenture retained to serve the King there for one quarter of a year, with two Bannerets, four Knights, seventy-three Men-at-Arms, on horseback, and eight hundred Archers on foot, receiving for himself six shillings *per diem*, for his two Bannerets four shillings apiece, for his seven Knights two shillings, for the Men-at-Arms twelve pence, and for the Archers sixpence apiece."

And there with his father, the Earl, he was destined to die, under circumstances similar to the unfortunate Bonvilles, although not engaged in internecine strife (that fate was reserved for his son), but sustaining the fame of English valour in a neighbour's territory, for he was slain with his father at Chastillon, July, 1453. "The Earl of Shrewsbury," Dugdale narrates—

"Hearing that the French had besieged Chastillon he advanced thither and gave them battle, but the event of that day's work (though for a while it stood doubtful) at length proved fatal to the English, for this renowned General being smitten from his horse by a cannon bullet there ended his life, whereupon his whole army became presently routed."

And as to his son John Talbot's death, Rapin thus notices it—

"The English overpowered by numbers began to give ground. The Earl of Shrewsbury was wounded in the thigh by a musket ball, and had his horse killed under him. In this condition not being able by reason of his wound to remount, he bid Sir John Talbot, his son, to retire, and save himself for another occasion, where he might be still serviceable to his country. But Talbot rather than basely fly, chose to die by the Earl, his father, who also presently after resigned his breath."

Dugdale thus gives the Earl's epitaph as occurring at Whitchurch, in Salop, to which church his body was conveyed and buried, and where his effigy is still found, but with no inscription remaining—

*"Orate pro anima prænobilis domini, domini Johannis Talbot, quondam Comitis Salopæ, domini Furnivall, domini Verdon, domini Strange de Blackmere, et Mareschalli Franciæ, qui obiit in bello apud Burdews, vij Julii, MCCCCLIII."*

It is not recorded whether the body of his son was also brought to England for burial.

Johanna Chedder, the Viscount's widow, survived him just eleven years, dying 15th July, 1464, and was buried in Wells Cathedral.

The monument assigned to her is in the south transept. It is very handsome, and consists of a low tomb, under a high ogee canopy, originally richly painted and gilded, but is now greatly tarnished and injured, and was almost concealed from view, until early in the present century, by being plastered up, which obstruction was then removed. The inscription is on a square brass plate at the back of the canopy, and has the appearance of being of later date than the monument, although Leland saw and copied it within a century of the date of her death. It contains the following :

*"Hic jacet Joanna Vicecomitissa de Lisle una filiarum et hæredum Thomæ Chedder armiger quæ fuit uxor Joannis Vicecomitis de Lisle filii et hæredis Joannis Comitis Salopiæ et Margaretæ ux' ejus unius filiarum et hæredum Ricardi Comitis Warwici et Elizabethæ uxoris ejus filiæ et hæredis Thomæ de Berkeley militis domini de Berkeley, quæ obiit XVmo die mensis Julii Ann' D'i MCCCCCLXIII."*

Apparently there was a high tomb beneath the canopy of this monument, which has been removed. This is evidenced by the niches at the back, now devoid of sculpture, which terminate at about the height where the table of the tomb would meet them. The lettering on the brass plate is of comparatively modern form, and the inscription preserved from Leland's description, who copied it from the original tomb, then in existence, and which was afterward probably destroyed when the monument was mutilated and plastered up.

There were three children, *Thomas*, son and heir, and two daughters, *Elizabeth* and *Margaret*.

Thomas Talbot, son of John Talbot and Johanna Chedder, second Viscount, at his father's death was committed to the tuition of his grandmother, Margaret, Countess of Shrewsbury, twenty marks *per annum* being allowed for his maintenance during his minority. At her death she left him the manors of Wotton and Simondsall, with the borough of Wotton, and much other property. He was then nineteen years of age and married. His wife was Margaret, daughter of William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke, the unfortunate commander of the Yorkists, executed at Northampton by the Lancastrians after the battle of Danesmore, in 1469, where he was defeated owing to the defection of Humphrey Stafford (of Suthwyke), Earl of Devon, who deserted him immediately before the engagement with his contingent of archers, and for which act of treachery, Stafford was beheaded at Bridgwater soon after, and his body buried in Glastonbury Abbey Church, under the central tower.

This unfortunate young man, like his father and grandfather before him, was fated to meet his death in sanguinary conflict—not fighting the adversaries of his native country abroad, but in a deadly family broil at home.

The origin of the feud appears to have arisen over the question (which has been diligently investigated by historians of the peerage, and apparently never satisfactorily settled) as to whether the Barony of Berkley, created by writ of summons 23 Edw. I (1295), descended as such, or otherwise whether the tenure of the Castle of Berkley conferred the Barony, on which, William Lord Berkley, then in possession of it, founded his claim and assumed the title.

The young Viscount L'Isle was the lineal descendant of his great great-grandmother, Elizabeth, only daughter of Thomas, fifth Lord Berkley, and the controversy was, whether it devolved on the said Elizabeth, instead of the heir male, an intricate question: but James Berkley, nephew of the above Thomas, "inherited by special entail and fine the Castle of



Berkley, etc., and was summoned to Parliament from 1421 to 1461," while the last of his three wives was Joan Talbot, daughter of John, Earl of Shrewsbury, by his second wife, and so aunt to the young Viscount, still further complicating matters. William Lord Berkley was the eldest son and heir of James by his second marriage.

Dugdale gives this description of the conflict—

"But it was not long after (the death of his grandmother) ere this young Viscount L'Iale arrived at his full age, and thirsting after the Castle of Berkley, practised with one Thomas Holt, the Keeper of Whitby Park, and one Maurice King, Porter of the (Berkley) Castle, to betray it into his hands; one Robert Veel (the Viscount's Engineer) being likewise an active person in that design, giving bond to Maurice King in the sum of an hundred pounds that so soon as the work should be accomplished he should be made Keeper of Wotton Park, with the fee of five marks per annum during his life."

Then appeared the inevitable traitor—

"But this plot being discovered by Maurice King, so much perplexed the Viscount L'Iale, that he forthwith sent this Lord Berkley a challenge requiring him of "*Knighthood and manhood to appoint a day, and meet him half-way, to try their quarrel and title, to eschew the shedding of Christian blood, or to bring the same day the utmost of his power.*" This letter of challenge under the hand of that Viscount was sent 19th March, 10 Edw. IV (1471), he being then not fully twenty-two years of age, having sued out his livery upon the fourteenth of June before, and his wife then with child of her first-born. Unto which Lord Berkley returned this answer in writing: '*that he would not bring the tenth man he could make, and bid him to meet on the morrow at Nybley Green, by eight or nine of the clock, which standeth on the borders of the Livelode that thou keepst untruly from me.*'

Whereupon they accordingly met and the Viscount's vizor being up, he was slain by an arrow shot through his head."

A striking picture of the barbarity and lawlessness of the age, this wager of battle, literally fighting it out to the death, rather than having recourse to the peaceful, if more prosaic, process of law, and followed by the usual seizure and confiscation of the personal property and landed possessions of the vanquished.

"After which (the very same day) the Lord Berkley advanced to Wotton, and rifling the house, took thence many writings and evidences of the said Viscount's own lands, with a suit of arras hangings, wherein his arms, and the arms of Lady Joan, his mother (daughter and coheir of Thomas Chedder), were wrought, and brought them to Berkley Castle.

To this skirmish came divers from Bristol, Thornbury, the Forest of Deane, and other places, to the number of about a thousand, which exceeded what the Viscount brought.

But the business did not so end, for the widow of the Viscount L'Iale brought her appeal against this William Lord Berkley, and against Maurice and Thomas his two brethren, for thus killing her husband, with an arrow through his head, and a dagger in his left side."

The exact cause of the Viscount's death is said to have been by an arrow shot through his mouth. The appeal of his widow appears to have been unsuccessful, for the recovery of the property, it being decided that Lord Berkley should enjoy the manor of Wotton-under-Edge, etc., paying to the said Viscountess Margaret, a hundred pounds a year out of the same.

This William Lord Berkley was a great favourite of Edward IV, who created him successively, Viscount Berkley, Earl of Nottingham, Earl Marshall of England, and Marquis of Berkley. He died in 1491-2, leaving no surviving issue, and disinherited his brother Maurice for marrying lowly, leaving the Castle of Berkley to King Henry VII, and it remained with the Crown until the decease of Edward VI, the last male descendant of Henry VII, when it returned to the Berkleys.

The controversy over the disputed property was again revived by Sir Edward Grey, who married Elizabeth, the unfortunate Viscount's sister, but the Berkleys finally retained possession of it, on payment of a comparatively small annuity.

The widowed Viscountess is said by Burke to have afterward married Sir Henry Bodrugan, of Bodrugan (Castle), in St. Gorran, Cornwall. If so, it must have been the Sir Henry Bodrugan (otherwise Trenowth) "an opulent knight," and large landed proprietor in Cornwall, a zealous Yorkist, of whom Lysons relates that—

"He was attainted on 1485, on the accession of Henry VII, fled to Ireland, and his larger estates, including the Manor and Barton, were siezed by the Crown. Tradition relates, that he was in arms in Cornwall, against the Earl of Richmond, that he was defeated on a moor not far from his own castle by Sir Richard Edgcumbe and Trevanion, and that he made his escape by a desperate leap from the cliff into the sea, where a boat was ready to receive him."

The victors of course received the usual spoil, the defeated man's possessions, which cost the generous monarch for whom they fought, nothing.

"Most of Bodrugan's estates, including this manor, were granted to Sir Richard Edgcumbe. Borlase describes the remains of the castle as very ex-



tensive, that there was nothing in Cornwall equal to it for magnificence. There was chapel converted into a barn, the large hall, and an antient kitchen with timber roof, the architecture about the time of Edward I. All these buildings were pulled down about 1786. A great barn still remains."

Elizabeth, second daughter of John Talbot, Viscount L'Isle and Joan Chedder, married Sir Edward Grey, brother to Sir John Grey, second Lord Grey of Groby. By this alliance she became sister-in-law to Elizabeth Widville, afterward Queen to King Edward IV, and aunt to Cicely Bonville, the great heiress of Shute, a few miles distant from Olditch.

On the death of her brother Thomas, Viscount L'Isle, without issue, she became with her sister Margaret his co-heiresses, and in them also the barony of L'Isle remained in abeyance.

Margaret married Sir George Vere, knt., and died without issue, in 1471. After her death the title was revived in Sir Edward Grey, the husband of Elizabeth, and he was created by Edward IV, in 1475, Baron L'Isle, and 28th June, 1483, Viscount L'Isle.

There were four children: John, Ann married to John Willoughby, Muriel, and Elizabeth.

Muriel married first Edward Stafford, second Earl of Wiltshire, grandson of Humphrey, first Duke of Buckingham. He died without issue, 24th March, 1499, when the earldom became extinct. His fine tomb and effigy are in Lowick Church, Northamptonshire. Secondly, she married his first cousin, Henry Stafford, younger son of Henry, second Duke of Buckingham, and in him Henry VIII, in 1509, revived the title of Earl of Wiltshire. There was no issue by this marriage, her husband survived her, and married secondly as her second husband, Cicely Bonville of Shute, widow of the Marquis of Dorset. He died in 1523.

John Grey, her son, second Viscount L'Isle of that creation, married Margaret, daughter of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk.

He died in 1512, leaving an only daughter Elizabeth. She

was contracted in marriage with Charles Brandon, afterward Duke of Suffolk, and he was in consequence on 5th March, 5 Henry VIII (1514), created Viscount L'Isle, but when she became of age, she refused to have him, and the patent was cancelled. She soon afterwards married Henry Courtenay, the unfortunate Marquis of Exeter (of Colcombe), as his first wife, but died without issue before 1526, leaving her aunt, Elizabeth Grey, her father's surviving sister as her heir. The Marquis married secondly Gertrude, daughter of William Blount, fourth Lord Montjoy, ob. 1535, to whose grandson Charles Blount, eighth Lord Montjoy, K.G., created Earl of Devon, James I subsequently gave Olditch and Weycroft, after the attainder of Henry, the last ill-fated Lord Cobham.

The wardship of Elizabeth, the surviving daughter of the before-named Sir Edward Grey, had been obtained by Edmund Dudley, the rapacious minister of Henry VIII, and he subsequently married her, but was attainted and beheaded by Henry VIII on Tower Hill, 28th August, 1511. There were four children, John, Andrew, and Jerome, and a daughter Elizabeth, married to William, sixth Lord Stourton.

John, their eldest son, only eight years old at his father's death, was restored "in name, blood, and degree," and inherited all his father's property; but his life was a troublesome one, notwithstanding his honours and ambition, and ended at last like his father's, on the scaffold. In him the Viscounty of L'Isle was again revived, the antient dignity of his mother's family, on 12th March, 1542, the year following the death without male issue of his step-father, Arthur Plantagenet, who had been so created. He became the well-known Duke of Northumberland, who together with his son, Lord Guilford, and his wife, the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, all perished successively at the headsman's block.

A further and distinguished alliance awaited Elizabeth Grey, the widow of Edmund Dudley, and grand-daughter of Johanna Chedder. She married secondly Arthur Plantagenet, natural

son of King Edward IV, by the Lady Elizabeth Lucy. He was installed Knight of the Garter, and created on 26th April, 1533, on surrender of that dignity by Charles Brandon, Viscount L'Isle.

In Risdon's *Note Book*, it is stated that "he was knighted at Turney," and is included among the Devonshire peers as "Arthur Plantaginet, Viscont Lisley, of Uंबरley," in Devon, with the arms—Quarterly, first and fourth, England quartering France, second and third ; *or, a cross gules, over all a bendlet sinister sable.*

His death, although happening in an indirect manner, must include him among the victims that perished in the blood-stained reign of Henry VIII.

"In 1533, he was Lieutenant of Calais, and sometime after incurring suspicion of being privy to a plot to deliver the garrison to the French, he was recalled and committed to the Tower ; but his innocence appearing manifest upon investigation, the King not only gave immediate orders for his release, but sent him a diamond ring, and a most gracious message, which made such an impression on the sensitive nobleman that he died the night following, 3rd March, 1541, of excessive joy."

Three daughters and co-heirs only, were the issue of this marriage, Bridget, Frances, and Elizabeth. Bridget married Sir William Carden ; Elizabeth, Sir Thomas Jobson ; Frances, the second daughter, by both her marriages found her home in Devon.

Her first husband was John Basset, of Uंबरleigh, in North Devon. He was the eldest son and heir of Sir John Basset, Knt., of Uंबरleigh, Sheriff of Devon, 1524-5, died 31st January, 1539, by his first wife Honor, daughter of Sir Thomas Grenville, Knt., ob. 17th March, 1513, whose tomb and effigy are in Bideford Church. The brass of himself, his wives, and their twelve children is in Atherington Church ; he is bare-headed, but otherwise in full armour ; his wives, Honor Grenville, and Ann, daughter of John Dennys, of Orleigh, in pedimental head-dresses, gowns with full sleeves guarded with fur, and girdles with dependant chains and



JOHN BASSETT AND HIS WIVES.

ATHERINGTON CHURCH, DEVON.

pomander balls. The arms are Basset quartering Willington and Beaumont, impaling Grenville and Dennys.\*

John Basset, the first husband of Frances Plantagenet, was Sheriff of Cornwall, 1518 and 1523, and died 20th April, 1541. There were two children, a son described on an adjoining tomb as "*the Worshipful and Worthy Sir Arthur*," perished of gaol fever after the Black Assizes at Exeter, in 1586, and a daughter married to William Whiddon.

Secondly, she married Thomas Monke, of Potheridge in Merton, North Devon (as his first wife), ob. 1583, by whom she had three sons and three daughters. By her eldest son she was great-grandmother of George Monke, the "Restoration" Duke of Albemarle.

Thus through this long and intricate genealogy are interesting local associations constantly interwoven, and the strain of Chedder perpetuated.

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### **Newton = Chedder = Brook,**

OF YATTON AND EAST HARPTREE.

THE descent from Isabel, second daughter of Thomas Chedder and Isabel Scobahull, and grand-daughter of Lady Johanna Brook, of Olditch, by her first husband Robert Chedder, although not so distinguished as her elder sister, is nevertheless most interesting in connection with our little history.

Presumably—for there is some obscurity in the early published pedigrees of Newton—it was Frances Newton, a descendant of Thomas Newton, brother to Sir John Newton, the husband of Isabel Chedder, who was destined to become the second wife of William Brook, K.G., fifth Baron of

\* It may be noted here that the series of brasses illustrating this account have all been engraved from rubbings specially taken and completed by the author and are fac-similes; as also the views of Olditch and Weycroft from photographs taken by him; and for three of the other illustrations that bear his initials, to the kindness of Mr. Roscoe Gibbs, from his original drawings.

Cobham, and mother with seven other children of Henry Brook, K.G., the sixth and last unfortunate Baron of that descent, so cruelly used by James I, as also of his brother, George Brook, who perished on the scaffold at Winchester, 5th December, 1603, for alleged participation in what was termed "Raleigh's conspiracy."

Isabel Chedder married Sir John Newton, who was the eldest son of Sir Richard Newton, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, by Emma, daughter of Sir John Perrot, of Islington.

The Judge and his wife are buried in the Court-de-Wyck Chapel, or north transept of Yatton Church, under a high tomb, whereon are their effigies in alabaster, originally painted and gilded, and displaying fine examples of the legal and social costume of the age. The Judge wears a long red robe with tippet and hood, collar of S.S., a narrow jewelled belt from which depends a short sword, and scrip or purse, on his head a coif, pulled down over the ears and tied under the chin, a fringe of hair shewing over the forehead. There is great expression in the features indicating a powerful mind, and is probably a portrait. His head rests on a helmet with crest of Newton (or Cradoc), *a wheat sheaf issuant from a ducal coronet*, both gilded. Several rings are on his fingers, and one on the thumb of the right hand. At his feet two dogs. The lady in rich robes and a profusion of massive jewellery, with rosary, at her feet a dog with collar and bells.

There is no inscription, underneath are angels bearing shields, the bearings denuded, but they appear to have been Newton, *Or, on a chevron azure, three garbs of the first*, and Newton quartering Perrot, *Gules, three pears pendant or*, and those of his ancestor, Nicholas Sherborne, *Ermine, four fusils in fess sable*. He was admitted Sergeant-at-law, 1424; Judge on Circuit, 1426; Recorder of Bristol, 1430; Justice of the Common Pleas, 8th November, 1438, and died soon after. He appears to have left two sons, John and Thomas.

Sir John Newton, the eldest, in right of his wife, appears to have been of Court-de-Wyck, in Yatton, a manor originally belonging to the de Wycks, or Wykes, from them to the de Gyenes, and from them to the Chedders, and to have built or rebuilt the mansion there, on which were his arms, with those of his wife, and also of Norris. From the similarity of the details of the portions preserved of Court-de-Wyck, now at Clevedon Court, which are given as the frontispiece of Rutter's *Somerset*, and those found on Yatton Church, together with apparently the arms of Sherborne impaling Chedder on the fine south porch, it is probable they were considerably interested in the rebuilding of that edifice, in addition to the construction of the "New Chapel" of St. John, east of the north transept in which they were interred.

According to the *Visitations*, 1531-73, they appear to have had one son *Richard*, ob. 1501, who married Elizabeth St. John, and they had issue two daughters, *Isabel*, who married Sir Giles Capel (buried at Abbots-Roothing in Essex, 1613), and *Joan* to Sir Thomas Griffin, of Braybrook, to whom Court-de-Wyck ultimately descended.

"His will was proved 20th April, 1487; for his burial in Yatton Church, £6 8s. 8d., this good man also directed twenty shillings to be paid to his tailor in Bristol, and the document ends thus—'*In witness of this my effectual and last will, I have hereto put my seale in this church of our Lady of Yatton.*'"

His widow, Isabel, died in 1498, she made her will, 14th March, 1498-9, and ordered her executors. '*to find a well disposed priest to sing for my soul within the Church of Yatton, and the new Chapel of St. John, during the space of five years.*' She also bequeathed six shillings and eight pence in money, '*for the poor prisoners of Newgate in the town of Bristowe.*'" (Som. Arch. and Nat. History Society's *Proceedings*, vol. xxvii).

They were both buried under a splendid tomb in this new Chapel or Chantry of St. John the Evangelist, which is situate in the angle between the north transept and the chancel. It is on the north side, or Founders place, of the Chantry altar, and consists of a fine canopy flanked by buttresses richly pinnaced, and with niches. Across the top a string-course studded with square four-leaved ornament, and above a trefoil pierced cresting. Below are ten large niches with rich canopies, in one the lower portion of the figure

remains. These are succeeded by another string-course with four-leaved ornament, below which a pierced and cusped canopy of open work enriched with leaf-work and bosses.

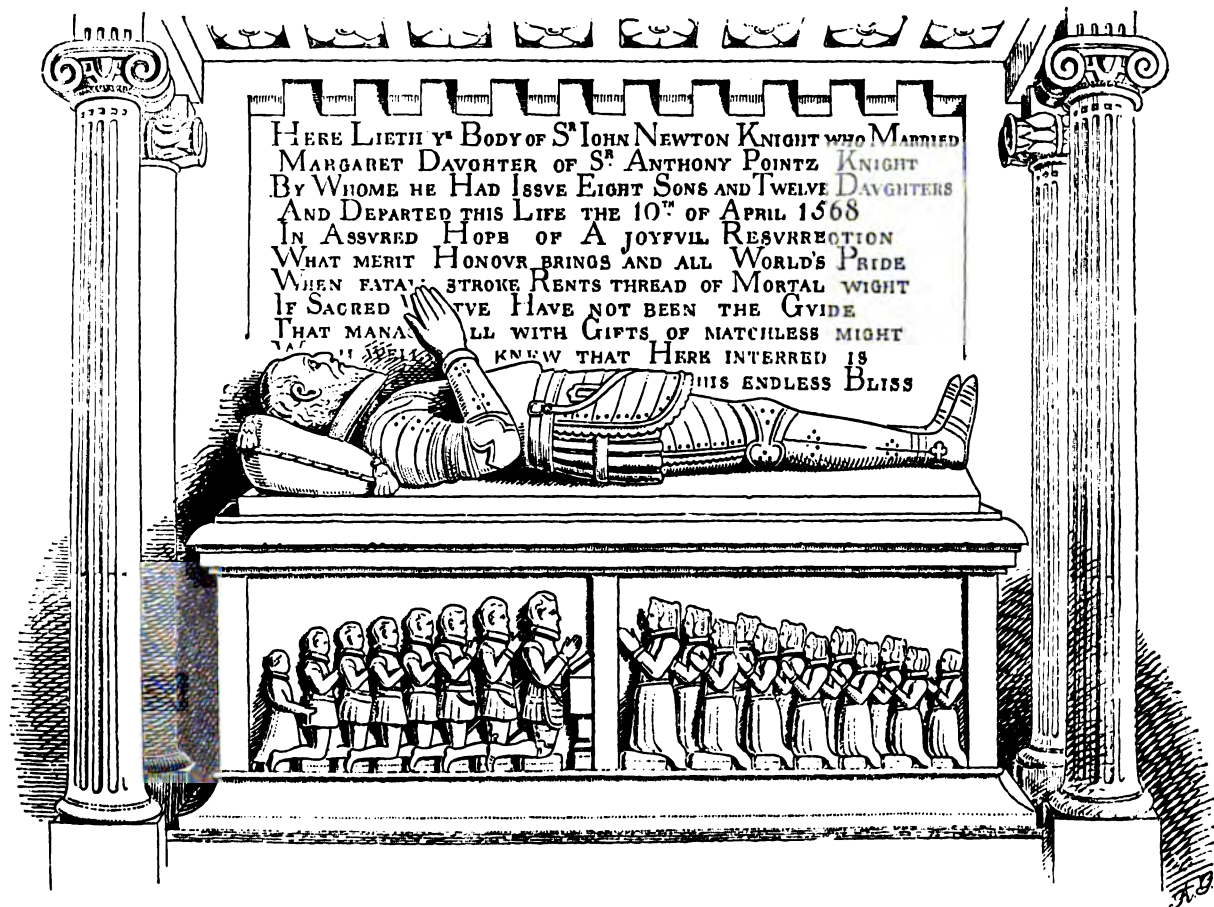
At the back of the canopy over the effigies is a remarkable sculpture of the Annunciation. The Virgin crowned, sits on a cushion before a lily, rising from a vessel with a handle, and above the lily flowers, from clouds, issues a beam of light ending in a dove streaming toward the Virgin, and behind her is a book-stand with a book on it. She has her hands raised and extended, as if surprised at her devotions by the angel on the other side of the lily, who, advancing towards her, holds a long scroll (emblematic of the angelic salutation) which surrounds the stem of the lily, and floats back over the head of the angel, who wears a cap with a band round the brow studded with roses, and in front rises a Maltese cross.

The knight is bare-headed, but otherwise in complete plate armour, he wears the collar of S.S., and his head rests on a helmet with the crest of Newton. The lady wears a pyramidal head-dress with flowing front lappets, and has a band or collar of rich jewellery round the neck.

Thomas Newton, second son of the Judge was of East Harptree. The manor of East Harptree belonged to a family of that name, the last of whom William Harptree had a daughter and heiress Ellen, who married Robert Gourney, the son of Sir Anselm Gourney, whose descendants "lived at the noble Richmonte Castle at Harptree, now in ruins." His great-grandson, Sir Thomas Gourney, was the father of the redoubtable Sir Matthew (of Stoke-sub-Hamdon) and three other sons, who all died without issue, and a daughter Joan, married to Philip Caldicott, whose daughter Alice, married Philip, the son of Richard Hampton and Elizabeth Bitton. Their grand-daughter Lucy, ob. 1504, married Thomas Newton, who thus succeeded to the manor.

Thomas Newton and Lucy Hampton had a son Thomas, who married Joan, daughter and heiress of Sir John Barr, of





MONUMENT OF SIR JOHN NEWTON, EAST HARPTREE CHURCH.

Barr's Court, Bitton, Gloucester, temp. Edw. IV. Their son Thomas married Margaret, daughter of Sir Edmond Gorges, of Wraxall, and their son Sir John married Margaret, daughter of Sir Anthony Pointz, of Iron-Acton, Gloucester, by whom he had twenty children, eight sons, and twelve daughters, one of whom was Elizabeth, who became the second wife of William Brook, fifth Lord Cobham.

Sir John Newton, who died in 1568, is buried in East Harptree Church, where there is a fine monument, on which is his effigy in the costume of the period, and below him kneel his twenty children ; at the back of the canopy is this inscription :—

*Here Lieth ye Body of Sr John Newton, who Married Margaret, Daughter of Sr Anthony Pointz, Knight, By Whome he Had Issue Eight Sons, and Twelve Daughters, and Departed this Life the 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1568.*

*In Assured Hope of a Joyfull Resurrection.  
What merit Honour brings and all World's Pride,  
When fatall stroke Rents thread of Mortal wight ;  
If Sacred Vertue Have not been the Guide  
That manag'd all with Gifts of matchless might ?  
Which well hee knew that Here interred is,  
Whose Vertues rare Proclaime his endless Bliss.*

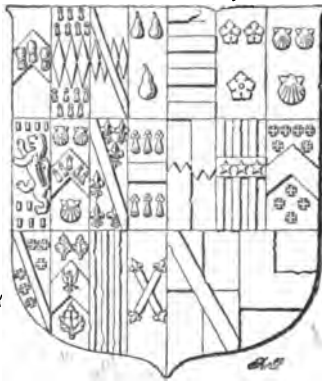
And on the end of the tomb :—

*Katharina Newton, Nuper Vxor Henrici Newton Extruit Hoc Tumulum An' Do', 1605.*

This was Katherine Paston, daughter of Sir Thomas Paston of Norfolk, and wife of Sir Henry Newton, ob. 1599, eldest son and heir of Sir John.

Over the monument is a shield with twenty quarterings, interesting as illustrating the descent of Newton (including Chedder, although presumably not descending from them) and alliance with Pointz : 1, Newton ; 2, Sherborne ; 3, Pennington ; 4, Perrot ; 5, Norris ; 6, Chedder ; 7, Hampton ;

8, Bitton ; 9, Furneaux ; 10, *Between three leaves, on a chevron an eaglet displayed* ; 11, Gourney ; 12, Harptree, impaling 1, Pointz ; 2, Bardolf ; 3, *Three escallops* ; 4, Acton ; 5, Clambow ; 6, Berkeley ; 7, Fitz-Nicholl ; 8, *Per fess, and a canton sinister*. Above is the crest of Newton, a *King of the Moors, clad in mail, and crowned or, kneeling and delivering up his sword*, allusive to an exploit of their maternal ancestor, Sir Anselm Gourney, at the "winning of Acçom," temp. Rich. I.



ON THE MONUMENT AT EAST HARPTREE.

Succeeding Sir Henry was Sir Theodore, ob. 1608, who married Penelope, daughter of Sir John Rodney, of Rodney-Stoke, who was succeeded by his son, Sir John, the last of the Newtons of Barr's Court, who married Grace Stone, was created a Baronet, 16th August, 1660, died *sine prole*, and was buried in Bristol Cathedral.

## Brook = Newton,

BARON OF COBHAM.

FRANCES Newton was married to William Lord Brook, 29th February, 1559-60, and died 17th October, 1592; her husband, 6th March, 1596-7. "She was constituted one of Queen Elizabeth's ladies of the Bedchamber, with great and quaint ceremony at Westminster in the presence of the Queen herself. Her Majesty also stood sponsor for her first-born, a son called Maximilian, who however died at Naples in 1583." (*Waller*).

He erected in 1561, in Cobham Church, the splendid tomb with alabaster effigies, to his father George Brook, K.G., fourth Baron, ob. 1558, and mother Anne, daughter of Edmund, Lord Bray; their fourteen tabarded children kneel below, and among them is William Brook.\* An escutcheon at the west end has twenty-seven quarterings, the impalement of twelve thereof being for his second wife Frances Newton, among them the sixth quarter is Chedder; the crest, *a Saracen's head*, the ancient crest of Cobham. At the east end is his father's escutcheon, quartering Bray—crest, *a lion passant, crowned*, with the motto JE · ME · FIE · EN · DIEV.

George Brook, third son of George Lord Cobham, ob. 1558, and brother to Frances Newton's husband, came into Devonshire for a wife. "He appears," says Mr. Waller,

"In his parent's magnificent tomb, kneeling on one knee, and his tabard shews Cobham impaling Duke (of Otterton, Devon), parted per pale argent and azure, three wreaths counterchanged. He was born 27th January, 1532-3, was sent abroad with a tutor, and studied Greek, Latin, and Italian with him at Venice, 1545-6. Returning to England, he was apprenticed to his father (his father was Deputy of Calais), 31st December, 1552, as Merchant of the Staple of Calais in the usual form, (Sir) George Barnes (Haberdasher), Lord Mayor of London, (William Gerard and John Maynard) the Sheriffs being witnesses. And this is all that can be said of him, except that in 1561, he took refuge at Antwerp, from his German creditors. He married Christina, daughter and heir of Richard Duke of Poerhayes, Otterton, Sheriff of Devon 1565, died 8th September, 1572, by his first wife, Elizabeth Franke, of York. She appears to have been previously married, for as joint administratrix to her father she is described as Christian Sprente *alias* Duke."

This match is recorded in the *Visitations* for Devon.

\* The tomb was terribly mutilated, and the brasses injured, restorations of both were made at the cost of F. C. Brooke, Esq., of Ufford, carried out under distinguished authorities and documentary evidence, and completed 1865-6."—*Waller*.

**Brook,**

OF ILCHESTER, OLDITCH AND WEYCROFT ;

BARONS OF COBHAM.

A SHORT notice in continuation of their descent, may be included.

I. SIR THOMAS BROOK, KNT., the younger, who married JOAN DE LA POLE-BRAYBROKE, Lady of Cobham, and previously noticed, was succeeded by his son *Edward*.

II. SIR EDWARD BROOK, KNT., summoned to Parliament as a BARON, from 1445 to 1462, was a firm adherent to the House of York ; at the battle of St. Alban's, 1445, and Northampton, 1460. He married ELIZABETH, daughter of James Tuchet, Lord Audley, died 1464, leaving a son *John*.

III. SIR JOHN BROOK, KNT., summoned as a BARON, 1472 to 1511. Was at the coronation of Richard III ; employed by Henry VII in an expedition to Flanders ; and helped to defeat the Cornish insurrection on Blackheath, in 1497, where his cousin Lord Audley was taken prisoner and afterward executed. He married first ELEANOR, daughter of . . . . . *Austell*, of Suffolk, and secondly ELIZABETH, daughter of *Edward Nevill, Lord Abergavenny* ; she died 30th September, 1506 ; he died 9th March, 1511-2. Both buried at Cobham, where there is a fine brass to his memory. Weever gives this inscription :—

*" Hic jacet Johannes Broke miles ac Baro Baronie de Cobham ac domina Margareta uxor sua quondam filia nobilis viri Edouardi Nevil nuper Domini de Burgavenny, qui quidem Johannes obiit . . . . . die mens' Septemb' Ann' Dom' 1506, quorum animabus . . . . . Amen."*

He was succeeded by his son *Thomas*.

IV. SIR THOMAS BROOK, KNT., summoned as a BARON, 1515 to 1523. Was at the siege of Tournay ; the "battle of Spurs," in 1513 ; made a Knight Banneret by the King, 1514 ; and at the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," 1520. He married, first, DOROTHY, daughter of Sir Henry Heydon, by whom he

had thirteen children ; secondly, DOROTHY SOUTHWELL, a widow, and thirdly, ELIZABETH HART, who both died without issue. He died 19th July, 1529, buried at Cobham where is his brass, the last of the remarkable series of these memorials there. Weever gives the following inscription :—

*"Orate pro anima Tho' Broke militis Domini de Cobham consanguinei et heredis Richardi Beauchampe militis, qui quidem Thomas cepit in uxorem Dorotheam, filiam Henrici Heydon militis ; et habuerunt exitum inter eos, septem filios, et sex filias, et predicta Dorothea obiit . . . et predictus Thomas cepit in uxorem Dorotheam Southwel viduam, que obiit sine exitu ; et postea cepit in uxorem Elizabetham Harte et habuerunt nullum exitum inter eos ; qui quidem Thomas obiit 19 Julii, 1529."*

He was succeeded by his son *George*.

V. SIR GEORGE BROOK, KNT., summoned as a BARON, 1529 to 1557. Attended with his father at the marriage of the Princess Mary with Louis XII, in France, 1514 ; knighted in the French war by Earl of Surrey, 1522 ; one of the Peers at the trial of Anne Boleyn, 1536 ; in the expedition against the Scots under the Earl of Hertford, 1546 ; Deputy of Calais, and K.G., 1549. Obtained large grants of ecclesiastical lands, including the manor of Chattingdon, and the college of Cobham. One of the four laylords at the trial of the Protector Somerset, and constituted in 1551, Lieutenant-General of the forces sent to the north. Although he acquiesced in Queen Mary's Proclamation, he was considered implicated in Sir Thomas Wyatt's treason (which his younger son Thomas had joined), and was with his son William committed to the Tower, but whose pardon with others "was extorted from the Queen by the Council." He entertained Cardinal Pole on his progress at Cowling Castle, in 1555, and the year following was on the Commission to "enquire about heretics." He married ANNE, daughter of *Edmund Lord Braye*, by whom he had ten sons and four daughters. She died 1st November, 1558, and he deceased 29th September, 1558 : were both buried at Cobham, where his son and successor *William*, in 1561, erected the magnificent tomb to his memory, whereon are the effigies of

himself and wife, and below them their fourteen children kneel around.

VI. SIR WILLIAM BROOK, KNT., summoned as a BARON, 1558 to 1593. Lord-Warden and Chancellor of the Cinque Ports, Constable of Dover, and Lord-Lieutenant of Kent, 1558 to 1596. In November, 1558, was sent to Brussels to announce to King Philip of Spain, the death of his Consort, Queen Mary; and again in 1578 and 1588, was on an embassy to the Spanish Governor of the Netherlands. Entertained Queen Elizabeth at Cobham Hall during her progresses in 1559 and 1573. Privy Councillor and K.G., 1585; Custos of Eltham Palace, 1592; and Lord Chamberlain a short time before his decease, which took place 6th March, 1596-7. He added greatly to Cobham Hall, refounded Cobham College for the good of the poor, and was a great patron of literature. In 1572, was one of those committed to the Tower for participating in the designs of the Duke of Norfolk, regarding his marriage with Mary, Queen of Scots, and made a discovery of the whole affair, in the hope of attaining his own pardon.

He married first, DOROTHY, daughter of *George Lord Abergavenny*, who died 22nd September, 1559, and by whom he had an only daughter, Frances; and secondly to FRANCES, daughter of *Sir John Newton*, of East Harptree, who died 17th October, 1592, and by whom he had (1) *Maximilian*, (2) *Henry*, his successor, (3) *George*, executed at Winchester for alleged participation in Raleigh's conspiracy, (4) *William*, (5) *Elizabeth*, (6) *Frances*, (7) *Margaret*. He died in 1596, and was succeeded by his second son, *Henry*.

VII. SIR HENRY BROOK, KNT., summoned as a BARON, 1597, and K.G., 1599; died in 1619. A notice of this unfortunate man, the last of the Brooks, and also of the Barons of Cobham, in Kent, of the original creation which was by writ in 1313, will be subsequently given.

## Brook,

OF HECKINGTON, BARON OF COBHAM.

SIR JOHN BROOK, KNT., styled "of Heckington, in the county of Lincoln," was the son of *Sir Henry Brook*, ob. 1591, of Sutton-at-Hone, Kent (who was the fifth son of George Brook, fourth Baron of Cobham, ob. 1558), by his wife Anne, ob. 1612, daughter of *Sir Henry Sutton*, of Notts. He was raised to the peerage as a BARON by Charles I, 3rd January, 1645, "to enjoy that title in as ample a manner as any of his ancestors, and to have the same place and precedency," save that the remaindership was limited to heirs male. He married first, ANNE . . . buried 23rd February, 1625, at Kensington; secondly, FRANCES, daughter of *Sir William Bamfield*, by whom he had a son, *George*, who died in infancy; she was buried in 1676, at Surfleet, co. Lincoln. He appears to have been a weak-minded man, similar to his cousin Henry, and described as a worthless spendthrift, who dispersed the family estates. He died *sine prole*, and was buried 20th May, 1660, at Wakerley, in Northamptonshire.

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## Temple,

OF STOWE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,

VISCOUNTS AND BARONS OF COBHAM.

DESCENDING through a succession of distaffs from *Margaret* (daughter of William Brook, fifth Baron of Cobham, ob. 1597), wife of *Sir Thomas Sondes*, ob. 1592, of Throwley, Kent; SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, BART., of Stowe, Buckinghamshire, ob. 1749; was on the 19th October, 1714, created BARON COBHAM,



of Cobham, in Kent; and on 23rd May, 1718, was re-created a BARON with the same title, and also VISCOUNT COBHAM, with remainder to his sisters, *Hester Grenville* and *Christian Lyttelton*. The titles subsequently, through *Hester Grenville*, merged in the Earldom of Temple, and Dukedom of Buckingham.

### **Cowling Castle,**

IN KENT.

THIS was the original seat of the Cobhams in Kent, and situate in the parish of Cowling, near Rochester. The manor was acquired by them temp. Henry III, 1216-72, and the manor house was erected by John de Cobham, the founder, temp. Richard II, and he obtained that King's license to crenellate it, 2nd February, 1380-1.

"It was of large size, and the two wards or courts, cover nearly eight acres of ground, and considerable remains still exist. The outer gate towers are forty feet high, and the gateway altogether fifty feet wide, and other large portions of the buildings, and flanking towers, attest the original strength and size of the structure, which was enclosed by a moat fed from the Thames."

It seems to have been the principal residence of the Cobhams, Joan de la Pole, the grand-daughter of its builder, appears to have lived here, for her third husband, Sir Nicholas Hawberk, died here in 1407, and her fourth husband, the unfortunate Sir John Oldcastle, took refuge here, until arrested by order of King Henry IV, with an armed force, in 1413.

But the most remarkable event in its history was—

"Its assault and capture by Sir Thos. Wyatt, 30th January, 1554, who had married the sister of its then possessor, George Brook, Lord of Cobham and Cowling. Wyatt had a large force with him with artillery, and the attack lasted from eleven in the morning until five in the afternoon, when Brook capitulated, as he had only a few men of whom four or five were killed and others wounded. Although he had been made promise to join Wyatt the next



THE QUADRANGLE, COBHAM COLLEGE.



day, as soon as Wyatt's back was turned, Brook despatched a messenger to Queen Mary giving her an account of the whole affair, superscribed with '*hast, hast, post hast, with all dyligence possible, for the lyfe, for the lyfe,*' for well he knew the jeopardy of his relationship to Wyatt, and what was likely to be made out of it. It did not avert the Queen's displeasure, for he and his sons were sent to the Tower, where the name of his younger son, Thomas, still appears carved on the wall of the Beauchamp Tower—'*Thomas Cobham, 1553*'—but they did not remain long, intercession was made for them and they were released in March, 1553-4. It is probable Cowling Castle was seldom afterward occupied as a residence, and suffered to fall to decay." (*Waller*).

It is now a ruin of considerable size.

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### **Cobham Hall,**

AT COBHAM, IN KENT.

It is not known when this fine structure was begun, nor the style or size of the original building. Of what at present appears, it is probable the two last Brooks, Barons of Cobham, erected the north and south wings between 1584 and 1603, but Henry, Lord Cobham apparently never completed the original house, previous to his attainder. The date on the north porch, shewn in the engraving, is 1594.

On 13th August, 1613, James I granted to his relative, Ludovic Stuart, second Duke of Lenox and Richmond, ob. 1624, Cobham Hall, and some of the forfeited estates. James Stuart, fourth Duke of Lenox, employed Inigo Jones to complete the main portion of the structure between the wings, and was probably the first of his race that resided within it.

Subsequently it descended to the Earls of Darnley, who made important additions and alterations to the edifice, finishing it as it now appears. Built of red brick with white stone dressings, the array of large windows, flanking turrets, and its great size, forms a splendid and picturesque structure, surrounded by an extensive park.

## Henry Brook,

### THE LAST LORD OF COBHAM.

ALTHOUGH the story of his misfortunes, or rather tragedy of fate, that waited on Henry Brook, tenth and last of the Barons of Cobham, and hereditary possessor of Cobham Hall, is now correctly known through the able investigations and research of Mr. Waller, from whom the following account is derived, a short reference to them here, as the closing scene of the Brooks, and connected with their west-country associations may not be out of place.

"He was the second son of Sir William Brook, ninth Lord Cobham (by Frances Newton, of Harptree), and Maximilian the eldest having died young, he succeeded to the barony on the death of his father, in 1596-7, being then thirty-two years old. No one could have entered life with more brilliant prospects. In his blood were represented many noble and historic names. The vast estates of the family had been constantly on the increase, and an addition had been made to them by Queen Elizabeth in 1564 of St. Augustine's Abbey, at Canterbury. At her Court, indeed, the lords of Cobham were in high favour, and she had honoured his father, Sir William, on two occasions with a visit to Cobham Hall, where she was entertained with much magnificence. Without any great ability, and still less personal character, he nevertheless fell in naturally, as it were, to those honours which his ancestors had engaged. In 1597 he was made Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, an office of much importance in those days. He was installed on St. Bartholomew's day (1598) at Canterbury, "at which ceremonious solemnities were assembled almost 4000 horse, and he kept the feast very magnificently, and spent 26 oxen with all provision suitable." The following year he was installed Knight of the Garter, as his father and grandfather before him, and here his honours and good luck, seem to have culminated."

Then came his marriage, and with it arose the first little cloud in the golden horizon of distinction that surrounded him.

"So great a favourite of fortune, and yet in his prime of youthful manhood, it will not be a matter of wonder, that the ladies of the Court considered him as a matrimonial prize. The prize fell to Frances, daughter of Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, and widow of Henry, Earl of Kildare. She was a warm-hearted woman, but of strong passions, and a violent temper, yet there is no doubt she had conceived for Lord Cobham a powerful affection. It did not take place until 1601, and does not appear to have been one of good omen, for it is thus alluded to in a letter of the time—'The Lord Cobham hath married the Lady of Kildare, but I hear of no great agreement.' It was not a happy marriage, but the union was destined to be soon abruptly dissolved."

The cloud gradually, but at last surely and rapidly spread, and the remainder of his history simply becomes one of misfortune and misery.

"In this age of Court intrigue and political plotting, Lord Cobham and Sir Walter Raleigh (who had been his father's friend) took the same side. They were both the enemies of the unfortunate Earl of Essex. At the attack upon Essex House in 1601, Lord Cobham took part, and afterwards sat as one of his peers at the trial, little thinking then how soon his own turn was to come. It is extremely probable that this enmity to Essex was the shadow cast before, a warning to the event fatal to himself. Between Essex and James of Scotland a warm friendship subsisted, and when the latter ascended the throne of England, the enemies of that nobleman soon felt his displeasure."

The last and great misfortune was now at hand.

"James was no sooner upon the throne than there arose those plots against him which to comprehend or unravel is one of the most difficult tasks in English history. In the phraseology of the time, they were known as the Treasons of the Bye and the Main, the Priests' Treason (or the Surprising Treason) and the Spanish Treason. It was the Treason of the Main, or Spanish Treason, in which Lord Cobham and Sir Walter Raleigh are said to have plotted, and if we are to believe his accusers, the latter was the soul of the conspiracy.

The Priests' Treason, so called from two Catholic priests, Watson and Clarke, said to have been its promoters, was to surprise the person of the King. In this George Brook, Lord Cobham's brother, Sir Griffin Markham, and Lord Grey of Wilton, were joint actors, and Lord Cobham was said to be privy to it. As before mentioned, Cobham and Raleigh were the actors in the Main or Spanish Treason. These unfortunate men were tried and found guilty, and Raleigh's trial, from the eminence of his character, and also from the able defence which he made, has excited mostly the attention of historians. We cannot rise from its perusal without a sentiment of disgust, and a feeling that it remains a blot upon our history."

Then came the punishment awarded these unfortunate men.

"The two priests suffered the extremity of the law with all its attendant barbarities, and George Brook, his brother, was beheaded at Winchester."

But one of the most extraordinary punishments on record, for its studied cruelty, was that practised on Lord Cobham and his two companions.

"The Lords Cobham and Grey, and Sir Griffin Markham, were, one cold morning in November, 1603, brought upon the scaffold at Winchester Castle, Sir Walter Raleigh looking on from the window of his prison; and after being severally played with, as the pike when hooked by the angler, with the bitterness of death before their eyes, they received the commutation of their sentence. Those who have read James's letter to the Council, wherein he glorifies himself on his royal mercy, and have also read the narrative of an eye witness of the scene enacted on the scaffold, will understand and appreciate his character.

We have now to state their fate. Sir Griffin Markham was banished the realm, and died abroad. The young Lord Grey died after eleven years confinement in the Tower, his high spirit utterly crushed. Sir Walter Raleigh's fate is well known. Posterity will ever regard his execution as a crime.

Henry Brook and Sir Walter Raleigh were conducted back to the Tower, 16th December, 1603, and henceforth Lord Cobham, like most unfortunate men condemned to imprisonment for life, became as one dead to the outer world."

But what became of the immense Cobham possessions, of

which Olditch and Weycroft formed a comparatively small portion? These of course were all confiscated, although there was a difficulty in the way, and a legal one, for they were entailed—this however was soon surmounted and over-ridden by cruel subterfuge and other despicable means, and the estates seized and distributed by the magnanimous James to his favourites in various ways. A strong contrast this which befel the fate of the possessions of the *last* Baron of Cobham, to that which attended, under similar circumstances, the possessions of the *first* Baron, John de Cobham, when attainted in the reign of Richard II, sentenced to death as a traitor, and his estates confiscated. Then, as previously described, in the sentence “there was a saving of entail, showing the jealousy of Parliament over estates that might otherwise pass into the hands of the Crown.” No such patriotic caution appears to have animated the government of James, the sycophants of whose Court were evidently only too ready to further the illegal proceeding, in the hope afterward to share the spoil.

In addition to this confiscation, all his honours were forfeited, and to complete the contumely and ruin heaped on him he was “degraded” from being a Knight of the Garter, and his achievement as such taken down and cast out from his stall in St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, 16th February, 1603-4.

Henry Cobham—for he was a baron no longer—endured his imprisonment fifteen years; it was of varying degrees of severity, and toward the end of the time, on account of ill health, he was allowed—

“For the bettering of his healthe his Majestie’s leave to go to Bathe attended by his keeper. In his returne being as he conceived thoroughly cured of his maladie, was at Hungerford surprized with a dead palsey; from thence with difficulty he was carried alyve unto Odiam, Sir Edward Moore’s house (who had married his sister, Frances), he is yett livinge but nott like to continew many dayes.”

This was in September, 1617, but—

“From this attack he sufficiently recovered to be enabled to return to the Tower. Soon after we lose all trace of him as a living man. He died 24th January, 1619.”



DOORWAY, COBHAM HALL.



Where was he buried ?

"At Cobham the *Registers* do not carry us back so far. Those in the Tower have not his name. He was therefore not buried there. Search has been made at Odiham without success, and at Aldgate also, as well as at Trinity Minories by the Tower, but no entry has been found."

And what of the wife of this unhappy prisoner ?

"Of the Lady Kildare, his widow, nothing is said at this time of his death. She was living at Cobham Hall, and it seems as if she took no notice whatever of the unfortunate man who was her husband, and in whose house she lived."

Burke gives the further following description of him.

"Lord Cobham appears to have been not many degrees removed from a fool, but enjoying the favour of the Queen, he was a fitting tool in the hands of his more wily associates. Upon his trial he was dastardly to the most abject meanness.

The mode of bringing the prisoners on the scaffold, and aggravating their sufferings with momentary expectation of their catastrophe, before the pre-intended pardon was produced, was a piece of management and contrivance for which King James was by the sycophants of the Court very highly extolled, but such a course was universally esteemed the pitiful policy of a weak, contemptible mind.

'On this occasion,' says Sir Dudley Carleton, 'Cobham who was now to play his part did much cozen the world, for he came to the scaffold with good assurance, and contempt of death.' And in the short prayers he made, so out-prayed the company which helped to pray with him, that a stander-by observed 'that he had a good mouth in a cry, but nothing single.'

After they were remanded (Sir Dudley says) and brought back on the scaffold, 'they looked strange on one another, like men beheaded and met again in another world.'

A pitiable exhibition, the rightly-constituted humane mind shrinks from contemplating ; no matter what kind of fool-knave this unfortunate man may have been. It has been stated that he died in a state of filth for lack of apparel and linen, and in such abject poverty, wanting the common necessities of life. This has been proved not to have been the case, he was afforded a moderate sum, payable monthly, during his imprisonment, enough to keep him fairly comfortable, and he had medical attendance during his illness. It is probable his death occurred outside "the verge of the Tower," as he had petitioned for more liberty to take the air for his health in the July previous to his decease, the King's surgeon to certify to his weak state. It was also stated his poor paralyzed frame remained unburied some days for want of means. But this is scarcely probable either, for his assignee, Lady Burgh, widow

of his brother, George Brook, had an order from the Treasury for a considerable sum due to him, the day after his decease. Where was his rich wife at this final scene? Of her we hear nothing, she had clearly disowned and entirely disassociated herself from him; and where the noble outcast died, and found his last resting-place is not known.

It would be difficult amid the whole current of English history to find a more mournful narrative; and of surpassing interest as connected with the last possessorship by the Brooks of the crumbling fragment of ruin at Olditch, the original seat of his ancestors, and text of our story. Both have become a sad memory only glimmering in the gloom of the Past.

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## Blount,

LAST POSSESSOR OF OLDITCH AND WEYCROFT,  
EARL OF DEVON.

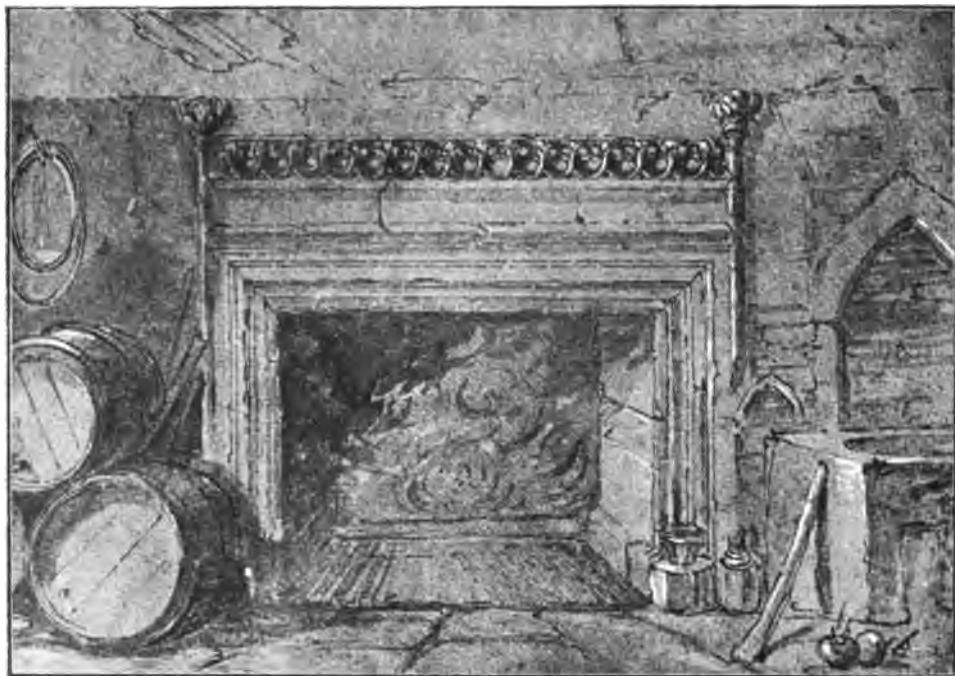
THE cruel attainder of Henry Brook, the last unfortunate Baron of Cobham, and consequent confiscation of his estates, took place in 1603, and that "high and mychtie prince" James I, in 1604, gave the manors of Olditch and Weycroft to one of his favourites, Charles Blount, eighth Baron Mountjoy of Thurveston, in Derbyshire, who in the year previous, 21st July, 1603, he had created Earl of Devon and K.G.

Lord Mountjoy was the *second* of the "interpolated" Earls of Devon—the hereditary honour of the Courtenays—but an ill fate hung over their creations, for Blount held it barely three years, and leaving no legitimate issue, the title became extinct at his death, 3rd April, 1606. The *first* was Humphrey Stafford, of Suthwyke, so created by Edward IV, 7th May, 1469, after that monarch had given him "the bulk of the estates" forfeited by the attainder of the three unfortunate



**A GLIMPSE OF WEYCROFT.**

*From a Drawing by W. Newbery.*



**FIRE-PLACE AT WEYCROFT.**

*From a Drawing by W. Newbery.*

brothers, Thomas, Henry, and John Courtenay, successively Earls of Devon, who, within nine years, lost their lives on the scaffold and battle field, fighting for the house of Lancaster, and whose deaths ended the first descent of that noble family. But for Stafford's treachery at the battle of Banbury, only three months afterward, "by diligent enquiry by King Edward's order, he was found at Brent, near the river Axe in Somersetshire, and carried to Bridgwater, and there beheaded," the monks of Glastonbury giving him sepulture beneath the central tower of the Abbey Church.

Why Charles Blount chose the title of Earl of Devon, was probably also in part connected with the fate of the above unfortunate Earls, for his ancestor, ~~Walter Blount~~, first Lord Mountjoy, Lord Treasurer of England, and K.G., ob. 1474, a staunch adherent of Edward IV, "~~shared largely in the confiscated possessions of the leading Lancastrians,~~" and among others, "particularly those of Thomas Courtenay, Earl of Devon, obtaining thereby extensive territorial possessions in Devon."

But another ancestor of his was further, and in more pleasant, relationship connected, similar to the Cobhams, with the Courtenays by intermarriage.

William Blount, fourth Baron Mountjoy, ob. 1535, grandfather of Charles Blount, married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Say, and by her had one daughter Gertrude, who was the second wife of Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, beheaded by Henry VIII, in 1539, she narrowly escaped the same fate, and afterward resided at Great Canford, near Poole, died in 1558, and is buried within the presbytery of Wimborne Minster, in a tomb of Purbeck marble, with traceried panels, and this fragment of inscription now remaining—

*"Conjux quondam Henrici Courteney, Marchionis Exon, & Mater Edwardi Courteney nuper Co . . . . ."*

Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, her unfortunate son, a prisoner almost all his life, died at Padua, in 1566, "not

without suspicion of poison," and at his death without issue, the then elder descent of the Courtenays became extinct, and the title of Earl of Devon passed into abeyance, until claimed and allowed to William, third Viscount Courtenay of the Powderham descent, 15th March, 1831.

Charles Blount was a person of high military reputation, and had a command in the fleet that dispersed the Spanish Armada, was constituted Governor of Portsmouth, and subsequently in 1597, Lieutenant of Ireland, and in 1599 repulsed the Spaniards with great gallantry at Kinsale. Camden describes him as being "so eminent for valour and learning, that in those respects he had no superior, and few equals," and Moryson, his secretary, writes, "that he was beautiful in person as well as valiant, and learned as well as wise." But his high public character, and all these accomplishments, were tarnished by his unfortunate intrigue with Penelope, daughter of Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex, and wife of Robert, third Lord Rich, and first Earl of Warwick, ob. 1618, by whom he had several illegitimate children, and who on her divorce he subsequently married at Wanstead, in Essex, 26th December, 1605. William Laud, afterward Archbishop of Canterbury, performing the ceremony.

The portrait is from an old etching, probably of contemporary date. The crest encircled by the Garter is that of Blount: *Within the Sun in splendour, an eye, proper.* Below is inscribed: *Are to be sold by Henry Balam in Lombard Street.*

Another is found in Lodge's *Portraits*, sitting in a chair, the face in profile, from a picture in the possession of the Duke of Hamilton, by Juan Pantoxana.

Pole says, "he conveyed the same (Olditch) unto Mountjoy, his base supposed son, who nowe enjoyeth the same"—this was Mountjoy Blount (one of his children by Penelope Rich) who was afterward created, in 1627, Baron Mountjoy by James I, and in the year following Earl of Newport by Charles I, who died in 1665, and either himself or one of his

descendants, sold it to Mr. John Bowditch, from whom it was acquired in 1714, by an ancestor of Mr. Bragge, of SADBOROUGH, in Thorncombe, its present possessor. Arms of Blount, *Barry nebulée of six, or and sable.*

Weycroft was sold by Charles Blount, Earl of Devon, according to Pole "unto John Bennet, Sherif of London, whose son Mr. Bennet nowe enjoyeth it." He disposed of the manor in parcels, and it is now divided among various owners.

In a social, if not in a political aspect, Charles Blount was as great a transgressor as the hapless man, a large portion of whose confiscated possessions he did not hesitate to accept. And it proved to be no bar in that unscrupulous age, to the bestowal of an Earldom both on the father and his unhappily begotten son, nor hinder at their deaths, the burial of the elder in Westminster Abbey, and the younger in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. But Nemesis appeared at their graves-side, where their "honours" perished with them.

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So concludes our little history of the knightly Brooks, and their possessions in these western parts. The wayfarer, who, carrying within his memory its three centuries of incident, regards the departed importance of Weycroft, and views on the site of their first home, the solitary ivy-clad tower at Olditch—sole relic of its former dignity—standing amid the grass-grown foundations, over which

"Stern ruin's ploughshare drives elate,"

and joins with it the mournful climax that extinguished their honours and fame, in the sad fate that befel their last hereditary possessor, in the grander surroundings of Cobham: sees in them a striking instance of the instability and transitory character of the belongings to human life, which no station can shield, nor wealth avert, or rescue from the sentence of doom which Time pronounces on all earthly things.

From the banks of the Axe our steps first led us to Olditch, and having completed the circuit of our little investigation, terminate in this particular at Weycroft, close overlooking that delightful stream—home of the speckled trout, haunt of the stately heron, the flashing kingfisher, the bounding swallow—and by whose ripe we return to the place from whence they first set out. The air is radiant with summer sunshine, the red kine are dozing and dreaming in the grateful shadow of the tall elms, the bee and butterfly are bustling and flickering among the reeds, the golden iris, the purple flags, that fringe its margin, and all is contentment and peace. Musingly we ask, who, privileged to dwell amid these pure enjoyments, which Nature with perennial hand spreads so bountifully, that bring no care or alloy, would, listening to the syren voice of ambition, be tempted to forsake them for the glamour of Courts, the smiles and suspicions of Princes, with, as we have seen, the attendant dangers of the confiscator's hand, the prison door, the headsman's axe, the exile's fate, an unknown grave?



LET ME, INGLORIOUS, LOVE THE STREAMS AND WOODS.