

Cheddar = Fitzwaters.

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THE thousands of visitors who, through the summer months, throng the Cheddar Cliffs, as they approach them from the south, pass the entrance to the manorial residence of Cheddar Fitzwaters. It stands within spacious grounds at the very outskirts of the cliffs, where four roads converge. One is the ordinary route from the railway station; another leads more directly from Axbridge; a third descends from Garston or Lang-garston farm, and Tuttishill; and the fourth from the Lippet. At this centre there stood in an open space "the Tree"—the meeting place of the people. Close to the entrance there is a small well, yielding a never failing supply of water. In the immediate vicinity is Dolbridge, which formerly gave its name to the adjoining street, and which was, perhaps, so called from its crossing the Cheddar Water at the *bend* where it begins to flow towards the moor. The Hall (for this is the distinguishing name of the residence) stands back, and is not seen from the entrance. Collinson¹ describes it as "a good house with neat gardens, and a long shady canal formed by an outlet of Cheddar Water." But this is hardly a true description of it to-day. The long shady canal has disappeared, although traces of it remain. The feature of the

1. Collinson, III, p. 576.

place is its timber ; noble beech trees give a park-like appearance to the surrounding pastures.

It is stated¹ that this manor took its name from the lords Fitzwalter, or water, who were descended from Robert, the second son of Richard Fitz-Gilbert, who came into this country at the Conquest. Previous to 1066 there were at least three manors under the chief manor, which was held by the king : but it is difficult to identify them. The chief manor is that which, in subsequent times, was held by the family of "Chedder," of the bishoprick of Bath and Wells, and is now held by the Marquis of Bath. The "customs"² of all the manors are identical, which points to a common origin. The home of the de Chedders is believed to have stood at the entrance to the village from Wells, where there are remains of an ancient avenue. Cheddar-Hannam was another manor, and the home of the Hannams stands in Plâs street, a castellated wall separating it from the thoroughfare. There were other smaller manors, viz., Cheddar-Berkeley, and the Rectorial manor, which was held under the Dean and Chapter of Wells. Our present concern, however, is with the manor of Cheddar Fitzwaters only, and with the families which, during the last six hundred years, have made the manor house their home.

1302 The earliest notice of a Fitzwater of Cheddar which I have found is in the year 1302. This is in a Fine dated 31 Edward I,³ wherein Robert Fitzwater de Cheddre is stated to have held a messuage, a carucate, and a virgate of land, that is about from one hundred and fifty to two hundred acres, in Cheddre, Wynfred, and Strode. Wynfred is Winford ; Strode, or Stroude, is at no great distance from Winford ; in the fourteenth century it was described as "La Strode in the parish of Wynfryth." As late as 1619, the court and barton "atte

1. Collinson, III, p. 576.

2. See Appendix.

3. Feet of Fines, S.R.S., vol. VI, no. 98.

Stroud " was known as "Ffitzwater's Court": but the tenants both at Wynfred and Strode did homage to the lord at Cheddar. William Fitzwater, his sons, and his wife Basilia succeeded to the manor and lands named above, on the death of Robert.

This William was a witness to legal documents on many occasions between 1336 and 1347, and it is interesting to notice the names of the men who were his co-signatories when the deed was signed at Cheddar. In one¹ of 1336-37, "Given at Cheddar on Thursday next after the Feast of the Epiphany, there are, besides William Fitzwater, Hugh of Draycot, John of Garston, Robert atte Boxe, and William of the Hall." In another,² "Given at Cheddar, 2nd July, 1341," the signatures include those of Roger de Hanam, William Fitzwater, and Robert atte Boxe.³ In 1348-9, William's son, John, signs, together with his father, and a man who was named John Hereward. The same names occur as witnesses to a charter of 1344.⁴ It is not difficult to one who is familiar with Cheddar to picture these men and their dwelling-places in and about the village in those far-off days.

To William Fitzwater succeeded his son John in or about the year 1350. Thirteen years before this, John was involved with Sir J. Acton and other leading men in illegal proceedings consequent on the bishop's demand to enclose some sixty acres of his waste in his wood at Cheddar. ⁵On September 24, 1337, the Crown issued a Commission of Oyer and Terminer to William de Shareshull, Richard Lovel, and Henry Power, on complaint by the bishop (Ralph of Shrewsbury) that Sir John de Acton, John, son of William Fitzwauter (*sic*), and others "broke his Close and houses at Cheddre, carried away

1. Augmentation Office Records, N. 73, no. 6.

2. A.O.R., N. 73, no. 16.

3. A.O.R., N. 75, no. 15.

4. A.O.R., N. 75, no. 10.

5. Patent Rolls, Ed. III, 1334-38.

his goods, and assaulted his men and servants." They were fined twenty shillings for their daring.¹

1351-2 John Fitz-water is a witness to two deeds of the 25th of Edward III, 1351-2. ²The first is a grant by Sir John de Clyvedon to Robert Seward, burgess of the town of Bristol, of the messuage and lands at Cheddar which Robert Atte Boxe formerly held of him.³ The second⁴ is a charter of Bishop Ralph, confirming to Robert Seward and Margaret his wife various lands in Cheddar, formerly held by Roger de Hanam, which had come into the bishop's hands by escheat. The first is dated on the Feast of All Saints, the second on the morrow of the Apostles Peter and Paul (June 30), but to both deeds there are the same witnesses, though the one was "Given at Cheddar" and the other "at Wokey." They were Sir Walter de Pavely, Sir Walter de Rodeneye, John de Langlond, John de Barton, and John Fitzwater.

On the same day and at the same place the bishop nominated as his attorney, to put Robert Seward and his wife in seisin of the messuage and lands, a certain Bertram de Dombleton, *or John Fitzwater* of Cheddre.

1360 In 1360 (33 Edw. III), the same John makes a gift and grant to the vicar of Chedder, and the parson of Lympsham, which is best described in the terms of the grant itself. It was signed at Chedder on Sunday the morrow of the Feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, August 25, 1360.

⁵"John Fitz-Walter (*sic*) of Cheddar has given and granted to the lords Walter Hadenham,⁶ vicar of the church of Cheddar, and Robert Trypp, parson of the church of Lymplesham, all his lands and tenements, mills, meadows, etc., which he had by

1. S.R.S., vol. ix. Life of Bishop Ralph, LIV-LVI, p. 514.

2. A.O.R., N. 74, no. 15.

3. Still known as "Box Court."

4. Register of Bp. Ralph, fol. 386.

5. Augmentation Office Records, N. 73, no. 26.

6. *alias* Walter de Ethenam, Reg. Ralph, fol. 374; and Weaver's "Somerset Incumbents," p. 52.

inheritance after the death of William Fitz-Walter his father, and also which he acquired of the heirs of William Atte Halle, in Cheddar, Draycote, and ¹la Hithe, and also in la Strode in the parish of Wynfryth. He gives also to the said Walter and Robert for ever the rents and services of William le Knygt, which the said William le Knygt was accustomed to render for the lands and tenements which he held of John Fitz-Walter for the term of his life in Bodecomb, and which, after the death of the said William, ought to revert to John Fitz-Walter. To have and to hold all the aforesaid lands, etc., to the said Walter and Robert of the chief lords of that fee by the service thereof due and customary.”

A point of some interest is suggested by the contents of this deed. Is this transaction connected with the enlargement and reconstruction of the parish church at this time? The greater part of the fabric dates from the middle of the fourteenth century, and six years before this deed was signed by John 1354 Fitzwater, a document of a similar nature² had been signed in favour of Walter de Hadenham by Robert Cheddre, the holder of the chief manor, and a munificent contributor to the work of the Church in many places. In his will he desired that his body might be laid to rest in the chapel of St. Mary in the parish church of Cheddar.³ This desire was carried out in 1384.

There is an interval of one hundred years before we obtain documentary evidence as to the ownership of the manor. How it passed from the family of Fitzwater to the family of Roo has not been discovered. In 1468 (7 Edward IV) it was 1468 in the possession of Henry Roo, who resided at the manor-house,⁴ and it remained with this family in direct line for the next one hundred and thirty years, until the death of the last

1. Hithe Bow still exists.

2. A.O.R., N. 74, no. 16.

3. Wadley's "Bristol Wills," p. 10.

4. Collinson, III, 176.

male representative in 1595. It seems probable that Henry Roo was of a Bristol family of some standing, for¹ in 1461 (1 Edward IV) three prominent citizens of Bristol, of whom Edmund Roo was one, received a royal commission "to take masters and mariners for ships called 'le Cristofre Damme,' 'le Cristofer Howell,' and 'la Julian,' of Bristol, for the king's fleet."

One hundred years previously,² in 1352, 26 Edward III, a William le Roo comes before us as a burgess of Bristol, and³ as early as 1327 (1 Edward III) Johannes le Ro is assessed in the Exchequer Lay Subsidies under Wynfryd and Feltone, which seems to point to a connection with the Fitzwaters.⁴ In the very beginning of the fifteenth century (1407), we hear of a John Roo as vicar of Twerton, and a chantry chaplain in the cathedral church of Wells. Edmund Roo had cousins living at Glastonbury and at Walton, Nicholas Roo, churchwarden of St. John Baptist, 1652-4,⁵ and his son, Thomas, churchwarden, 1584; at Walton, John Roo and his son, Thomas. A Christopher Roo held land at Wedmore.⁶ In 37 Elizabeth (1595), there is evidence that Edmund Roo, the last of the line, died, and was buried in Cheddar Church. They, therefore, held the manor during the reigns of the three Yorkist kings and the five Tudor sovereigns.

Edmund Roo made his will in 1589 (proved 1595), and in it he leaves his gold signet with a roebuck engraven on it to his son-in-law, John Hungerford. We refer to this to account for an ancient hostelry in Cheddar being designated "The Roebuck," or, as its usual title was, "The Buck." And as long as it survived there was one recognition of the former

1. Cal. Patent Roll, September, 1461.

2. S.R.S., vol. xvii, p. 23.

3. Ibid., vol. iii, p. 95.

4. Reg. Bowett, fol. 44.

5. Churchwardens' Accounts, Preb. Daniel.

6. S.R.S., vol. ii, p. 250.

occupation of the manor by the Roo family. But that is gone; and we have to ask, Is there nothing left to remind us of it? Yes; besides Edmund Roo's will, which has been printed,¹ there is the memorial of him, and, perhaps, of other members of the line of Roos, which is now placed beneath the east window of the chantry of the Holy Trinity in the parish church, to the south of the chancel; and there is stained glass with their coat-of-arms in the south window of the Fitzwater chapel: "azure a roebuck lodged argent." As to the memorial, Collinson says that there was this inscription upon it, "Here lyeth the body of Edmund Rooe, Esqre., who departed this life the 27th of March, A.D. 1595"; but it is not there now. It has been thought that the stonework belongs to the previous century, and that originally it may have been the memorial of Henry Roo. In the year 1599, there is allusion to Edmund Roo in the accounts of the Cheddar churchwardens, as follows: "A.D. 1599. There remaineth at this accompt of owld debt ungathered for the buriall of Mr. Roo in the churche, vis. viiid."

In addition to the manors of Cheddar Fitzwater, and Winford, Edmund Roo held lands in several other parishes, as well as in the extra-parochial village of Batcombe. This is not Batcombe near Bruton, but Batcombe juxta Draycot, adjoining Cheddar. Batcombe-cum-Nyland is situated in Glastonbury twelve hides, and had belonged to the abbey ²from the time of abbot Henry de Blois in the twelfth century until the dissolution of the monastery. This took place in November, 1539. Six months afterwards, on 20 May, 1540, Sir Raynald Selatter, curate of Cheddar, was a witness with others ³to the will of Walter Stacie "of the village of Batcombe longinge to the parishe of Cheddar." He leaves a legacy to the parishe church of Cheddar, and calls Sir Raynald his "gostly father"; but

1. "Somerset Wills," vol. III, 48-50.

2. S.R.S., vol. v, xix, (11).

3. From Rev. F. W. Weaver.

when his will was proved in 1541, it was not proved at Wells, but in the church of St. John Baptist at Glastonbury. Batcombe was still in the jurisdiction of Glastonbury, although men spoke of it as “longinge to Chedder.” How this was, the following very interesting memorandum fully explains, and we insert it *in extenso* as an historical document, shewing the care which abbot Beere¹ displayed for the scattered tenants of abbey lands in spiritual things.

For the
vicare of
Cheddre

“Termino Sanct^o Hilla^r A^o r r H viij xxxv^{to} M^d that foras-
muche as yt doth appere unto the Gen^{all} Surveio^rs and coun-
seill of the Court of Surveio^rs that the King's ten^ants and
inhabytaunts of Batco^m and Nylande otherwise called Andre-
sey in the Countie of Somers^h pcell of the possessions of the
late Monasterie of Glastoⁿ in the countie of Som^rset nowe
being in the King's maiesties hands by the reason of th'atteyndre
of Richard Whiting late Abbot there of high Treason at-
teynted have allwayes heretofore used to pay all their Tythes
and other Dueties ecchiasticall unto the saide late Monasterie
And that the governours of the saide late Monasterie have
found A priest to saye Dyvyne s^{vice} in the chapell of Nyland
and to mynystre Sacraments and Sacramentalls unto the
Ten^ants and Inhabytaunts of Batcom and Nyland aforesaide
untill by Richard Beere sometyme Abbot of Glastoⁿ the said
Ten^ants and Inhabyt^aunts were Deputed and assigned unto
the parochie of Cheddre being but half a myle in Dystaunce
from Batcom and Nyland And the same late Abbot and his
successours dyd bere and paye unto the vicare of Cheddre for
the tyme being yerely xiijs^s iiij^d and two Lodes of Wode for
the mynyst^racon of Sacraments and sacramentalls to be mynys-
tred unto the saide tenants and inhabyt^aunts as to other of his
parochioners of Cheddre over and besides thobla^{co}ns and
offerings of the said Ten^ants and Inhabyt^aunts of thre offering
Daies in the yere for all maⁿ^r duties of holye Church to the

1. Abbot Beere, 1492-1524.

said vicare of the saide Ten^{ants} and inhabyt^{ants} Belonging whiche xiijs^s iiij^d and two Lodes of woode hath been yerely paide and borne unto the said vicares by the governours of the saide late Monasterie untill the Dissolu^{con} of the same Wherfor yt is ordered and Decreed by the said Court that Thomas Whyte nowe vicare of Cheddre and his successours shall from henceforth have and perceive yerely of the ten^{ants} of Nyland and Batcom thobla^{cons} and offerings of thre Offering Daies That is to saie in the ffeasts of saint Mighell tharchangell, the Natyvitie of our lorde, and the ffeaste of Easter. And allso yerely xiiij shillings iiij^d in money and ijs^s viij^d yerely in money in recompense for the saide two loodes of wode admountig all xvjs^s whiche xvjs^s yerely to be paide unto the saide vicare and to his successours at two termes of the yere that is to saie thanuncia^{con} of our Ladie and saint Michael tharchangell by evynⁿ por^{cons} to be paide yerely by the hands of the gen^{all} Receyvours of the King's lands of the saide late Monasterie for the time being. And that the saide now vicare shall have tharreragies of the premisses for three yeres ended at the ffeast of saint Michael tharchangell laste past. And the said Ten^{ants} and Inhabyt^{ants} there dwelling to be taken as parochyoners of the said parisshe of Cheddre saving to the King's maiestie all other Tythes and Duties Ecclesiasticall of the said Ten^{ants} and Inhabyt^{ants} to his maiestie belonging. And that this Decree shalbe sufficient war^{ant} unto the saide Gen^{all} Receyvours for the time being for the yerely payment of the saide xvjs^s as allso for the saide Arreragies."¹

It is a pleasant link with the days of the good abbot that, although Batcombe and Nyland are now supplied with spiritual ministrations by the vicar of Draycot, to whose clerical income the vicar of Cheddar makes a yearly contribution, this ancient charge is still maintained, forty shillings being paid annually to the vicar of Cheddar in respect of it. The former

1. Augmentation Office, Miscellaneous Books, vol. cvi, fol. 51.

connection between the abbey and the parish church of Cheddar is marked by the heraldic arms of the abbey finding a place in the south window of the Fitzwater chapel. The glass was probably inserted in the time of abbot Selwood (1457-1493), as a shield with the monogram *IS* accompanies the arms.

A branch of a Somerset family of some distinction was residing at Batcombe in the middle of the seventeenth century. In "*Collections for a Parochial History of Wraxall*," by the late Rev. G. S. Master, M.A., we learn that Robert Gorges, the second son of Sir William Gorges, vice-admiral of the fleet, 1580, was of Batcombe, "an extra parochial place between Cheddar and Rodney Stoke," and was grandfather of Thomas, John, Robert, and Ferdinando, all men of eminence in various spheres. The names of the men who resided at Batcombe between 1630 and 1665 were William, and his sons Henry and Thomas. William and his wife were buried in the church at Cheddar. Frequent notices of Henry and Thomas occur in the churchwardens' accounts.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century and the early years of the eighteenth, Batcombe was the home of a family named Tottenham. There was a John Tottenham who died in 1683, who was the father of Edward, and grandfather of John, who was the vicar of Cheddar 1729-1740. He matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford, in 1711, at the age of fourteen; took his M.A. degree from Lincoln College in 1717, was presented by the dean and chapter of Wells to the prebend of Holcombe in 1725, and to the vicarage of Cheddar and rectory of Allerton, in 1730. He died and was buried at Cheddar in 1740, aged forty-four years.

NOTE.—For the original grant of Batcombe by King Edmund in A.D. 940, to his faithful thegn, Elswith, and for the boundaries, see Kemble's *Codex Dip.*, CCCLXXXIII, vol. VI, 229.

Edmund Roo, whose will has led us into this digression, left

two daughters, Frances and Margaret. Frances, the elder, was the wife of Edward Lancaster of Milverton; Margaret was the wife of John Hungerford. In the year 1597 (39 Elizabeth), Edward¹ Lancaster was appointed to the bailiwick and office of Constable of Taunton Castle; the appointment was to him and his assigns for three lives. Edmund Roo bequeathed a moiety of his estates, including the Cheddar manor, to Frances Lancaster and her son, John. For the next one hundred years the Lancasters held the property in the direct line. The above-named John was succeeded by a son, Edward; he dying without issue, the estate went to the two daughters of his brother John, and Mary Lancaster became lady of the manor in 1692. William Lancaster, father of the first Edward, has left on record, in his will, a grievous account of his son's impiety towards him. "My son Edward Lancaster owes me money. My son Edward Lancaster has most monstrously slandered me, has attempted to take away my living, disdained me in the presence of a great number of people, taken part with my enemies against me, and by all sinister means procured my trouble and disquietude in this myne old age, for which offences I desire God's forgiveness, and for my part will pray for him." He died in 1640, having lived to an old age, but apparently not at Cheddar. His son, John, who had become lord of the manor, died at an early age (36) in 1623. His wife, to whom he had been married in the parish church of Street (), was Dorothy Whittington, by whom he had at least two sons, Edward and John. Edward became the owner of the manor in due course, but at his father's death he was a boy of the age of ten. He held it through the troublous times of the Commonwealth, and for twenty-two years after the Restoration. ²He married, at the age of fifty-one, a certain Mary Clark, and died without issue, aged seventy, in 1663, and was buried in Cheddar Church.

1. Collinson, vol. III, p. 228.

2. April 18, 1644, at Cheddar.

His widow survived him nine years.¹ Her body was laid to rest March 29, 1692. At Edward Lancaster's burial, an incident took place which made a stir in Cheddar. Mrs. Lancaster refused to comply with the Act of Parliament of 1678, which required that the bodies of the dead should be wrapped in woollen, and not in linen, for burial; accordingly the officers of the parish, on the next day after the burial, "levyed a distresse of five pounds on his goods and chattels, by virtue of a warrant from the Worshipful Dr. Bayly." One half of this sum was paid to the informant, the other was distributed to twenty poor persons.

1693 In 1693, the churchwardens were apparently without information as to the heir to the manor, for at a visitation held at Cheddar in that year they "presented" the Fitzwater chapel as being out of repair in these words: "We present the Ile belonging to the heirs of M^r Lancaster to be repaired by Michælmass next on y^e payn of 40^s." It was not long, however, that they were left in ignorance; for Mary, one of the two daughters of John Lancaster of Milverton, as already stated, became the lady of the manor, and in 1694 was married to William Rose of Rempstone, Dorset. Rempstone, or Rempstone Hall, is a good house pleasantly situated in the Isle of Purbeck, in a sheltered position two miles from Corfe Castle. You pass it as you drive from Corfe Castle to Studland Bay, or to the northern point of Swanage Bay. At this time Rempstone was the property of the Roses, having previously belonged to the Framptons of Buckland. During the few short years of their married life, William and Mary Rose lived at Cheddar; an only child, Mary, being born to them in 1695. William Rose, harassed with heavy debts, died at the early age of thirty-one, in 1700, and was buried in the family vault at Swanwick, Dorset. The child, Mary, grew up in Cheddar under the care of her mother, who lived at the hall, a

1. "1692. Mrs. Mary Lankester, widdo, on the 29 day of March."—Cheddar Register of Burials.

widow for seven years. During this interval legal steps were taken to settle the manor on the child. In the first year of the reign of Queen Anne (1702), an Act of Parliament was passed which confirmed the title of Thomas Rose, gentleman, to lands called Rempstone, and for the sale of lands called Carrants' Court, in the county of Dorset, for payment of the debts of William Rose, gentleman, deceased, and settling the manor of Cheddar Fitzwaters with the overplus on the said sale on Mary Rose, an infant daughter of the said William, in lieu of £3,000 portion for the said infant. 1702

It was a bad day for little Mary when she became the heiress of the manor, as the sequel will show. Five years after this her mother made a second marriage. The man who wooed and won her was John Tillam, LL.B., of St. John's College, Cambridge, just appointed to the vicarage of Wedmore. The vicar found a home at "The Hall," and left his flock at Wedmore to the care of a curate. A daughter was born to them, but, apparently, lived only for a week. She was baptized October 26, and her body was buried November 3, 1713. In July, 1715, Mary Tillam herself died. But before her death, her daughter Mary Rose had become the wife of Thomas Tillam—the son, it is supposed, of John Tillam by a former marriage. 1707 1715

This event took place in 1713, or early in 1714, for in the autumn of 1714 a daughter was born, whom they baptized by the name of Rose, and two years later a son, who was named Lancaster. Subsequently eight other children were born, but the greater number of them died in infancy, or in early life. In 1734, Thomas Tillam died, and Mary was left a widow to struggle with misfortunes, and to see the estate of Cheddar Fitzwaters slipping out of her hands, and leaving her and her surviving children paupers on the parish. It is the old story, of debts and obligations which could not be discharged; of heavy mortgages and reckless borrowing; the mischief began a hundred years and more before, in A.D. 1619, when Edward 1734

Lancaster, the elder, leased for ninety-nine years to a man of Chewstoke, "all that Barne, stall and courte with the Barton att Stroude, called Ffitzwaters Court." In 1726, Thomas Tillam made over the whole of the manor to Benjamin Randolph of Shipham, at which date "the lands belonging to it lay in Cheddar, Rodney Stoke, Winford, Weare, Chapel Allerton, and Wedmore." The inevitable end was approaching. In 1740, an assignment of a term of five hundred years was made by the various mortgagees "to James Birch, barrister-at-law of the Middle Temple, by direction of Madam Tillam, for securing a sum of £1700 and interest." In 1742, the manor of Cheddar Fitzwaters, "with all and singular, Messuages, Mills, Houses, Edifices, Barns, Stables, Stalls, Yards, Orchards, Gardens, Lands, Tenements, Feedings, Meadows, Pastures, Commons, Demesne Lands, Waste Waters, Watercourses, Banks, Rivers, Ponds, Pools, Rents, Reversions, Remainders, Services, Profits, Commodities, Advantages, Hereditaments, and Appurtenances whatsoever, were conveyed to James Birch."

Notices of ejectments were issued by him against Mary Tillam, and all her tenants, and the manor passed out of her hands for ever. Her life for the next twenty-five years was one of abject poverty and degradation. In the accounts of the overseers of the parish of Cheddar, such disbursements as the following occur continually :

"Mrs. Tillam : a month's pay for the child	4	0
"Paid for a pair of shoes for Sarah Tillam	2	8
"P ^d Richard Durban Mrs. Tillam's house rent 1	0	0
"Paid for a small iron crock for Mrs. Tillam	1	6
"P ^d for a Bedstead for Mrs. Tillam	2	6
"Paid for mending Mrs. Tillam's shoes	0	3
"P ^d Mrs. Tillam relief	0	6
"Mrs. Tillam to buy things to putt to her Arme	1	0"

1767 and so forth, until the year 1767, when she passed out of this world, the last representative of the line of Roos and Lancas-

ters who had known the manor house of Cheddar Fitzwaters as their home.

For the next one hundred and forty years members of the family of Birch succeeded one another at "The Hall." James Birch died in 1779. By his will he left his uterine sister, 1779
Susannah Stagg, of the parish of SS. Philip and Jacob, Bristol, his sole executrix and residuary legatee. To her succeeded Samuel Birch, and to him his daughter Eliza Birch, spinster, whose death occurred in 1883, and to whose memory a window was inserted in the Trinity chapel of the parish church. It bears this inscription: "To the glory of God, and in loving remembrance of Eliza Birch, who departed this 1883
life August 9th, 1883, in the 80th year of her age." On her death, her power to bequeath the property was disputed; ultimately some distant relatives were benefited; the manor house and adjacent grounds were purchased by Charles Pike, from whom they passed to the present owner and occupier, Reginald Whiteside Statham.

A NOTE of the Customs of the Mannor of Chedder, taken from the handwriting of Thomas Hill of Chedder, Anno Dom., 1663.

Imprimis. The Lord may grant a Coppy for three lives to a man and his wife and a son; the Father being Tenant in possession, the son may be admitted Tenant in reversion to the same part of it, and both hold a right in the Common at one time, but the middle (Life or) State have no benefitt at all untill it fall to him, for the Custom do rest only upon the third life in the Coppy, and it being granted and published in Court, there is nothing to be altered by the Lord or Tenants untill all the lives be of full age, and make a lawful surrender in the Court of their right which is upon the Coppy.

Likewise, if a man buy three lives, and the last State upon the Coppy be a woman bought in her virginity, then as soon as she is married, her husband is head tenant, and if he die, there

is a Heriott due to the Lord ; but if she die a married wife there is none. Yet her husband shall have it according to the Custom, that is, for his life, and his last wife shall have her widowhood in it : for if the Custom cometh in by a woman it goeth out by a woman ; if by a man, it goeth out by a man.

The Lord may grant a Coppy to a man, and to two of his Children joyntly, and both to be tenants at one time, then the Custom do belong to the last life that do enjoy of.

If a man or woman do hold any estate from more than one Lord, then where the man or woman is dwelling and dieth, the custom is the Lord shall have the first choice of his goods for a heriott.

If a man have a Coppyhold Estate in Chedder, and be living out of the parish, and there die, the tenants of the Mannor may be required to go to the man's last place of dwelling and take his best goods for a heriott wheresoever it be.

And also, if a man or woman die that is to pay their best beast for a heriott, the tenants have no liberty to choice any goods within doors, if there is any living goods without, and beasts or horses, sheep or piggs.

And if a widow woman in the custom marry, and her husband die, there is no heriott to be paid at his death, for he do hold the Estate but in right of his wife ; but if he bury his wife, there is a heriott due to the Lord, and another heriott due at his death, for after he do enjoy the Coppyhold Estate in his own right.

If a man buy a Coppyhold Estate to three children, and not admit the last State to a Tree and ten foot of ground (as the usual custom is to do), then if the last State do marry and happen to die before the Coppyhold Estate do come into possession, his or her marrier have no right to enjoy the custom ; but if once in the possession his or her right is as good as if the admission had been at first.

PEDIGREE OF ROO.

