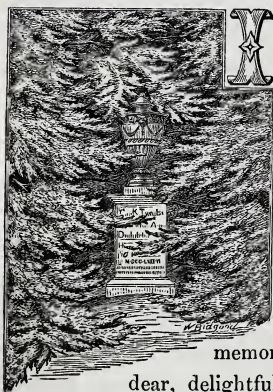


# Hestercombe.

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[*Read, in part, on the lawn at Hestercombe, on Wednesday,  
11th September, 1872.*]



**H** F there be a name which brings with its very sound all kinds of pleasurable thoughts to the minds of Tauntonians, that name is Hestercombe. Find such a man wherever you will,—“From Scots to Wight, from Mount to Dover Strand,”—and he shall respond to your enthusiastic praise, and agree with you in your happy memories, of dreamy, stately, solemn, dear, delightful, incomparable Hestercombe. Nature and art have, I will not say contended, but, agreed to act in unison, towards the perfection of its beauty. The house itself, where relics of the various fashions in which Englishmen have built their homes from the days of the third Edward to the middle of the last century can be noticed and contrasted ; the old hall with its minstrels’ gallery, where the double-handed sword which a gallant

knight brought to his neighbouring hearth in company, as the legend goes, with a royal captive still hangs in witness of his chivalry; the dark, deep, silent woods, where nevertheless when the shadows are lengthening at eventide the rooks make lordly music; the solemn avenues, and winding walks by ponds—of unknown and mysterious depth, which the most venturesome among us never dared to endeavour to explore—and dashing cascade, and shady arbours or memorial urn, where some classical quotation reveals alike the scholarship and the good taste of a former master; and, last though by no means least, the matchless views of the fair vale which open from many a point within the higher limits of the domain—all unite in producing a whole to which the western portion of England, and that the loveliest, affords no superior, and but most rarely an equal, attractiveness. He who can call Hestercombe his home may assert, and no man will contradict his word, that he occupies at least one of the fairest parts even of that “smiling summer field” which may hold its own against all rivals throughout the length and breadth of our English world.

The place is associated in the minds of many of us with still further charm—memories of holiday rambles in early days of boyhood, when it was a favourite haunt of those whom the varied avocations of after life have since dispersed far and wide, as well as of occasional visits when the wanderers have returned to the old scenes of enjoyment, and lived over again the hours which the well-remembered objects have vividly recalled. And Hestercombe is able to do this in a far greater degree than most other localities. It has ever had a strange fascination and singular influence on those who have known it best—an almost indescribable atmosphere peculiarly its own. It has been in the recol-

lection of most of us a shadowy thing of the past rather than a reality of the living and breathing present. For more than half a century little has been done even to preserve what was once so regularly ordered and so exactly arranged. The woods have about them a primeval aspect, the lawns are overgrown with varied vegetation, the paths where a hundred years ago the feet of fair ladies wandered amid a very paradise of delights are now in some places all but obliterated, while those which are tended the best have entirely lost the evidences of that courtly care which was once so lavishly and lovingly expended on them. The visitor has oftentimes to gaze on landscape beauties through an umbrageous screen which all but hides them from his view, and to investigate the works of its old possessors, the urn or the alcove, through a labyrinth of thicket, where his foot is impeded at every step, and the air is dense with sylvan odours and heavy with the atmosphere of the forest and its verdure. Many of its vistas and winding glades have indeed a weird aspect, and transport us to old regions of nursery romance where a spot which had not been visited for long generations was once more traversed by wayfaring feet and revealed to the gaze of living men. Such, in all its mystic, dreamy, proud, and stately beauty, is the Hestercombe of to-day.

But to us there is yet another point of interest to which, except by a hint of the antiquity of the house, I have not yet adverted. The place has a long and interesting history. It is, of course, the history but of a private estate. Happily it was the site neither of Abbey nor of Priory, whose alienation brought down the doom which the sin of sacrilege never fails to attract. The larger part of its annals necessarily consists but of a list of its successive possessors ; but there are various episodes in it,

never until now presented to the modern reader, which most agreeably savour of mediæval usage, and bring it within the circuit of the all-engrossing charm of which that portion of our national history is full. It is to these, of which too many of our modern historians have had little or no knowledge, for which I would specially bespeak my reader's attention.

The first notice that we possess of the place is that it was parcel of the lands of the Abbey of Glastonbury. So it was in the time of Edward the Confessor. Four tenants held it under the Abbey, with the ordinary services, as presently related. Norman William took it from the monks and gave it to the Bishop of Coutances, in whose hands it was at the period of the Domesday Survey. It is thus described in that venerable Record :—

“The same Bishop holds Hasecumbe, and William of him. Four Thanes held it in the time of King Edward, and gelded for two hides and three virgates of land. The arable is three carucates. There are two carucates in the demesne, with one bondman and four villeins and eight cottagers with two ploughs. There are there thirty-one acres of meadow, and ten acres of underwood. It was worth forty shillings, now fifty shillings.”\*

To this account, by which it would appear that the estate consisted of between five and six hundred acres of land of various denominations, the Exon Domesday gives the name of the sub-tenant as William de Moncells, and adds, after its manner, that at the time of the Survey there were on the property ten “beasts,” twenty swine, and one hundred and forty-three sheep.†

\* Domesday, fol. 87 b. Terra Epī Constant.

† Exon Domesday, fol. 137.

From this William de Moncel the place appears to have passed soon afterwards to the family of Fluri, a well-known member of which, in the early part of the twelfth century, Hugh de Fluri, gave twenty acres here to the infant Priory of Taunton.\*

How long the family of Fluri, which, I may add, was one of great importance, and gave its distinguishing affix to Combe-Flory, Ninehead-Flory, Leigh-Flory, and Withiel-Flory, retained possession of lands in this locality we have no certain means of determining. But on the octave of the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, in the 6th year of Henry III., or the 9th of February, 1222, Juliana la Pottere remitted and claim-quitted a virgate of land with appurtenances in Hester-cumbe to Geoffrey de Wudeford. For this remission Geoffrey gave Juliana four marcs of silver.† And, further, in the three weeks after the feast of S. John Baptist, in the 40th year of the same reign, or from the 24th of June to the 14th of July, 1256, certain land in the same neighbourhood was leased by William Fitz William to William de Camera for the term of his life, and to revert after his decease to the previous owner, with a caveat against the sale, mortgage, or any other way of alienation of the property.‡

These notices, fragmentary as they are and referring to out-lying portions only of the estate, must nevertheless suffice the reader, until we arrive at the period when we find the fair domain on which we are employed in regular possession of the knightly family of De Meryet, who held it of the Bishop of Winchester by knight service, as

\* Cart. 8 Edw. III. n. 12. mm. 5, 6. *per inspec.*

† Ped. Fin. Somers. 6 Hen. III. No. 52.

‡ Ped. Fin. Somers. 28-40 Hen. III. No. 123.

of his manor of Taunton. The family of De Meryet is a difficult one to trace, owing to the multiplicity of its branches and similarity of names ; but by the aid of inquiries, fines, and similar documents I will endeavour to throw what light I may on the Hestercombe line of it. I am acquainted with some curious episodes in the history of several of its earlier members, but to enter into these would take us too far from the limits to which I am restricted.

John de Meriet—son of John de Meriet, who died 13 Edward I., 1285, and an assignment of dower in favour of whose widow, amounting after all deductions to *xlviij<sup>li</sup> xiiij<sup>s</sup> iiij<sup>d</sup>* ob. q. (£48 14s. 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d.), made in the month of May ensuing, is annexed to the Claus Roll of that year,\*—the first of the family that I have found connected with Hestercombe, was a party with John de Hestercumbe to a final concord by which he obtained from the latter eight acres of arable land and five acres of meadow with appurtenances in Hestercumbe, together with one hundred shillings of yearly rent from the same vill, paid by Gregory de Welyngton and his heirs from all the tenements therein heretofore held by John de Hestercumb aforesaid. The instrument was dated at Westminster on the quindisme of Easter, 21 Edward I., or the 12th of April, 1293. It is added that John de Meriet gave to John of Hestercumbe for the aforesaid recognizance a sparrow-hawk, that the concord was passed in the presence and with the agreement of the aforesaid Gregory, and that he did fealty to the new owner in the same court.†

This John de Meryet must have died soon after the

\* Rot. Claus. 13 Edw. I. m. 8, *in ced.* There was more in connexion with this in the illegible Inq. p.m. 30 Edw. I. n. 147.

† Ped. Fin. Somers. 21-35 Edw. I. n. 1. Appendix, No. I.



date of the last transaction, for he left behind him a son,

John, who was a minor at the time of his father's decease, and succeeded to his estates in the year 1297. He was born at Meryet (an additional proof, it may be, that his father was the first of the family who owned Hestercombe, the old domain from which they took their cognomen), on the Thursday in Holy Week, in the fourth year of Edward I., which is coincident with the 2nd of April, 1276. I gain these facts from a most interesting "Proof of Age," which I have found on the Coram Rege Roll of Trinity Term in the 25th year of Edward I.\* As the information is so curious, and the mode of its transmission so little understood by modern readers, as well as affording a very graphic illustration of the period to which, as I have already said, I am desirous of directing special attention, I shall be doing a service to a student of the medieval history of Hestercombe by entering into some details.

This John, son of John de Meriet, was born at the time and place above stated. He lost his father while yet a minor, and his guardians were Felicia, the wife of William de Shorteford, and, first, Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and on his death the Bishop of Ely. In the year 1297 he became of age, and in order to enable him to obtain livery of his estates out of the hands of his guardians the following "Proof of Age" was returned. It was obtained by inquest, in answer to a writ issued by the King and addressed to the eschaetor, who proceeded to the investigation with all the care which the subject required.

The following witnesses and their depositions were abun-

\* Plac. Coram Rege, Trin. 25 Edw. I. No. 152. rot. iij.

dantly sufficient for the purpose, and it requires but a very slight exercise of the imagination to help us to a vivid picture of an old Somersetshire gathering.

Richard de Loveny, of the age of forty years and upwards, examined on oath, deposed that John, the son of John de Meriet, was of the age of twenty-one years at Easter last past, and further that he was born at Meriet, and baptised in the parish Church on Easter Even, in the fourth year of the present King. Being further asked how he could remember the fact after so long a time since that of its occurrence, the witness deposed that he was then in possession of certain land by the gift of his father in the vill of Lopene, distant not more than half a mile from Meriet; that the gift was made to him in the third year of the King; that he was then at Lopene, where immediately after the birth of the said John the rumour reached him; that the said John was born on the Thursday before Easter, and was afterwards baptised on Easter Even by Henry, the vicar of Suthpederton; that Sir Gilbert de Knouyll was one of his god-fathers, and Lady Albreda de Mohun his god-mother; and further that the land aforesaid was given him at Hockedey, in the third year aforesaid, and that he held it to the eighth year of the King's reign, &c.

Thomas de la More, of sixty years of age, deposed to the facts of the birth and baptism; and, further, that Hugh de la More his father died on the Tuesday next before the birth of the said John, at la More in the parish of Crukern, not distant more than half a mile from Meriet; that he was invited to the feast when the mother of the aforesaid John was Churched, but was not present at the same by reason of his being occupied by some business connected with his father's will.



John de Lambrok, of the age of forty years and upwards, deposed in like manner ; and in reply to further questions added that Ela, the mother of the said John, was Churched on the Thursday next after the month of Easter next after the birth of the aforesaid John [7 May, 1276]. Also that Nicholas his father was invited to the Churching feast, and was present thereat, and he himself with him.

Hugh de Lopeneford, of sixty years of age and upwards, deposed similarly ; and added that he was living at the time of the aforesaid birth and baptism with the father of John at Meriete, and for five years next ensuing ; that he bought certain land of Walter de Ffurneus, and that he is assured of the time by the date on the conveyance of the aforesaid land which is now in his possession.

Thomas de la Forde of Chynnok Aumarle, of the age of forty years, resident a mile from Meryete. Agreed with the previous witnesses, and further that he was present at the Churching feast, and that he has a son, John by name, yet living, who was born in the week next after Easter, in the fourth year of the King.

Henry de Leghe of Crukerne, of the age of forty years and upwards, resident a mile from Meryete. Agreed as to the age, birth, baptism, and other circumstances, with Richard de Loveny first sworn. Added that he was present on the Thursday next after the month of Easter in the third [sic] year of the King, at the Churching feast ; and that a little before the lady was Churched his own wife Alice died, about the feast of the Holy Cross [3 May] in the month of May, now twenty-one years past and upwards, by which he well knows of the age aforesaid.

Hugh de Brugg, of forty years of age, resident a mile from Meryet. Agreed with those already sworn as to

age, &c., and added that he was present at the Churching feast, and remembers the time because a little afterwards in the same year he espoused Avice his wife still surviving.

John de Esse of Henle, living a mile and a half from Meryet, of the age of thirty-seven years. Agreed with the rest, and added, as a reason for his recollection, that in the same year he was in attendance on one Nicholas Frye of Crukern, and with the wife of the said Nicholas, his mistress, went to the Churching feast, on the day and year deposed to by the first witness; and that he specially remembered the time because in the same year he espoused one Isolda his wife, who was afterwards separated from him by divorce, and who was still living.

Mathew de Esse of Cudeworth, two miles from Meriet, of the age of thirty-eight years and upwards. Agreed as to age, birth, baptism, &c., with those already sworn. When asked, &c., deposed that in the same year about fifteen days afterwards he espoused Joan his wife, daughter of Sir Alan de Ffurneaus, knt., whom for some time previously he tenderly loved. From this he well knew and was sure, &c.\*

Robert de Wayford of Crukern, a mile from Meryet, of fifty years of age and upwards. Agreed with the former as to age, &c. Added that he had a son by name Richard, still living, who was born in the same year, and in the same week, on the Tuesday before the Thursday on which the said John was born.

William de Wermewell of Neuton, five miles from Meriete, of fifty years of age. Agreed with the rest as to age, &c. Added that in the same year on the feast

\* I give the text of this deposition in Appendix, No. II., as a specimen of the mode in which they appear in the original Record.

of S. Barnabas, Ap. [11th June] he bought his land of Neueton, in the County of Somerset, which he yet holds.

Hamund Planaz of Cheselbergh, a mile from Meryet, of forty years of age and upwards, agreed with the rest as to age, &c. Added that his ancestors were of the County of Surrey, of the vill of Taleworth by Kyngeston, and that in the aforesaid year, the fourth of the present King, he left his home and came to Cheselbergh that he might there serve one John de Planaz, his uncle, then parson of the church of Chiselberwe, twenty-one years ago at the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin [2 Feb.], and that there by common report he heard and knew of the age of the aforesaid John.

All this was considered sufficient proof, and, as it appeared from his personal appearance that he was of full age, it was ordered that the said John should have seisin of his lands and tenements thus by heirship belonging to him.\*

This John, as we have seen, succeeded to his lands after the Proof above recited in the year 1297. He was soon to understand that property brings its responsibilities and duties. For in answer to a writ dated, witness the King, at Westminster, 14th January, 28 Edward I., 1299-1300, he is included in the list of the King's tenants summoned to do service against the Scots.† These troubles, however, were soon over, for it was doubtless the same John and Elizabeth his wife, between whom and Bartholomew Savage a final concord respecting the manors of Hester-cumbe and Legh Fflory was passed at Westminster in the octaves of S. John Baptist in the 34th year of

\* Plac. Coram Rege, 25 Edw. I. Term Trin. No. 152. rot. iij.

† MS. Harl. 1192. f. 5 b.

Edward I.\* or, in other words, between the 24th of June and the 1st of July, 1306. To the same John, in 1311, William de Ashtone, son of John de Ashtone, surrendered all right in lands, services, &c., in Ashton near Bristol, and in the manor and advowson of Est Capelonde.† A similar process issued between the same John de Meryet, who is expressly styled “of Hestercombe,” and William le Veil and Dionysia his wife, concerning one messuage, ten acres of bosc, and a moiety of one virgate of arable land, with appurtenances, in Asshton, near Bristol. By these instruments the lord of Hestercombe became the owner of lands with which the family was long associated. For this recognizance John gave William and Dionysia one hundred shillings of silver. The date of the last transaction was the morrow of S. Martin, in the sixth year of Edward II., or the 12th of November, 1312.‡

Sir John de Meriet lost his first wife, whose name, it it will be perceived, is omitted in the document just referred to, in or before the year 1312; and it was doubtless to him that the entry in Bishop Drogenesford’s register refers, which I have quoted in my History of Cannington Priory, to the effect that he had received absolution, dated the 28th March, 1314, from a sentence of excommunication which had been passed on him for having caused the heart of his deceased wife to be taken from her corpse, a practice to which, judging from the instances there referred to, the family was addicted, and had been ordered to inter it with the body from which it had been removed.¶ It was the Nun’s heart, “le quer dame

\* Ped. Fin. Somers. 21-35 Edw. I. n. 169.

† From an original deed in the Surrenden Collection.

‡ Ped. Fin. Somers. 1-6 Edw. II. n. 138.

¶ Reg. Drok. f. lxxij b.

Maud de Merriete Nonayne de Cannyntune,"—the reader will hardly fail to remember,—of the resting-place of which the beautiful memorial yet remains in the Church of Combe Flory.\*

A member of the family had founded a Chantry in a Chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin adjoining to this Church of Combe-Flory, and on the iij. Non. February, the 3rd of that month, 1313, a commission was issued by the Bishop to induct John de Ammyngford, chaplain, into corporal possession of the same.†

Between three and four months after the date of the absolution above-mentioned, the same John was witness, together with John de Mo[h]un, Andrew Loterel, Hugh de Poppeham, William de Wyggeber, Matthew de Forneux, Matthew de Clyvedon, Gilbert de Bere, Knts.; Walter le Lyf, Richard de Loveney, Ralph le Fitzurs, John atte Zurde, Matthew de Coker, "and others," to an agreement between John de Drokenesford, Bp. of Bath and Wells, and John de Membury, lord of the manor of West Bagborough, concerning the bounds of that and the manor of Bishop's Lydeard. It was made on the Tuesday next after the feast of the Translation of S. Thomas the Martyr, in the 8th year of Edward II., which is coincident with the 9th of July, 1314.‡

Legal proceedings connected with common of pasture in West Bagborough appear by this award to have been

\* Mediæval Nunneries of Somerset. Cannington Priory, p. 11.

† Reg. Drok. fol. cxlvij.

‡ Reg. Well. I. ff. 145 b, 146. I possess a very fine contemporary copy of this instrument, which I purchased at the sale of the celebrated Surrenden Collection in 1863, and which has enabled me to fix the exact date of the transaction. That in the Wells Register has been erased and another substituted, but proved to be inaccurate by the date of the confirmation of the Dean and Chapter with which the document concludes.



quashed, as at the assizes held at Taunton, on the Friday next after the feast of S. Giles, 8 Edward II., the 6th of September, 1314, the plaintiff did not appear, and the Bishop and his party left the court "*sine die*."\*

On the viii. of the Kalends of August, the 25th of July, 1316, an event is recorded to have happened which may have a livelier interest for the student of Hestercombe history than those which relate to the more distant possessions of the family of the owners. The lord of Hestercombe had built a chapel for his household on account of the distance between his manor-house and the parish church at Kingston, and Bishop John de Drokenesford granted at Wyvelescumb on the day above-named, and for the afore-said reason, his special licence for the celebration of mass and other Divine offices.†

This chapel stood at the west of the mansion, and appears to have consisted of a nave and chancel, with a south porch, and a bell turret on the west gable. As it will be seen, it was repaired and ornamented in the latter part of the following century, but was needlessly removed in a long subsequent age which appreciated little and understood less the precious remains which it presumed in some cases to mutilate and in others to destroy.

I have not yet arrived at the end of my notices of this old Hestercombe worthy. On the 9th of July, 1319, at York, King Edward II., at the instance of his beloved cousin, Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, granted to John de Meryet and his heirs for ever a charter of free warren in all their demesne lands of Hestercoumbe, Legheflory, Estcapelond, Coumbefflory, and Ashton by Bristoll, those

\* Plac. de Jur. et Assis. 8 Edw. I.  $\left. \begin{array}{c} N \\ 2 \\ 16 \end{array} \right\} 1. \text{ rot. } 7.$

† Reg. Drok. f. lxxxxvij. Appendix, No. III.



lands not being within the bounds of any of the royal forests. No man was to enter them in pursuit of game, without the licence of the aforesaid John or his heirs, on pain of forfeiture of ten pounds. The witnesses of the grant were the Abp. of York, the Bishop of Ely, the Earl of Richmond, Richard de Grey, Hugh de Audele, senr., and others.\*

On the xvii. Kal. Apr., the 6th of March, 1323, the Bishop of Bath and Wells granted letters dimissory to Thomas Alnard, of Hescecomb (qu. Hestercombe?), acolyte, for the order of subdeacon from any Catholic bishop.†

The next notice that I can furnish of Sir John de Meryet is a very curious and interesting one. He had married a second time, and on Wednesday after Mid-lent Sunday in the 19th year of Edward II., which is coincident with the 5th of March, 1326, Bishop John de Drokenesford addressed a certificate to the viscounts, bailiffs, ministers, &c., of Hugh de Dispensar, intimating by those presents, after the customary salutations, that, inasmuch as he believed it to be a pious and meritorious act to bear witness to truth, lest men should waver in doubt, and so through their error fall into danger, he was happy to certify that the Lady Elizabeth Paynel, wife of Sir John de Meryet, knight, was living and well with her husband on the day of his writing, the Wednesday next after the Sunday on which is sung *Lætare Jerusalem*, in the manor of the aforesaid John of Hestrecombe.‡ He writes from his neighbouring manor of Wyvelescumb, and the style of his communication naturally leads us to infer that there was much more than official courtesy between the good Bishop

\* Rot. Cart. 13 Edw. II. n. 35. Appendix, No. IV.

† Reg. Drok. f. ccxvij b.

‡ Reg. Drok. f. ccxlvij b. Appendix, No. V.

and the worshipful pair to whose life and health he thus pleasantly bears witness.

This agreeable scene is soon changed. The year afterwards, the 1st of Edward III., 1327, Sir John de Meryet was gathered to his fathers. After an inquisition then taken, a verdict was returned that he died possessed—among other properties, Assheton, Capelond, &c.—of certain lands and a certain tenement in Hestercombe, which he held by knight service of the Bishop of Winchester as of his manor of Taunton, and that it was worth *xli* per annum.\* He also left behind him a son under age,

John de Meryet, in the wardship, I presume, of Sir John de Acton, who by reason of his ward's minority presented a clerk named Geoffrey to the church of Capelonde, *xij* Kal. of July, the 20th June, 1328.†

Of the date of the death of this John de Meryet I am ignorant, but he was succeeded by

Walter de Meryet. This Walter was he who in the year 1341 attempted to found another Religious House in Taunton for a community of Carmelites, ordinarily called Whitefriars, all the known particulars of which are related in my History of Taunton Priory.‡ For some unexplained cause the endeavour was fruitless, and the lands with which he had intended to endow his foundation remained in his own hands to the time of his decease. He died on the 18th of May, 1345, without issue. By a writ dated at Westminster, the 6th of June, 19 Edward III., a jury was assembled which returned a verdict that at the time of his death he was seised of the manors of

\* MS. Harl. 4120. p. 103.

† Reg. Drok. f. cclxxj. MS. Harl. 4120. p. 122.

‡ Inq. ad q.d. 15 Edw. III. (2 ns.) n. 58. Pat. 15 Edw. III. p. 2. m. 44.

Combe Florey and Hestercombe, and of nineteen acres of meadow land in Taunton, called Coke's Mede, to which reference was just now made, &c.; and further that

Walter, the cousin of the deceased Walter, was his heir, and of the age of thirty years and upwards.\*

This Walter also died without issue, and was succeeded by his nephew,

Simon de Meryet, son of John, brother of Walter. At his presentation the Bishop admitted, viij. Id. Feb., the 6th of that month, 1348, John Stille, priest, to the chantry in the chapel of Blessed Mary by the church of Combe Flory;† at the presentation of the same Simon de Meryet, expressly styled in the Register "his beloved son," "dilecti sui filii"—a very unusual mode of recording such transactions—ix. Kal. Apr., 24th of March, 1350, Bartholomew de la Ryxyn, to the same chantry;‡ and also to the same, and at the presentation of the same, William Assheleigh, chaplain, on the iv. Kal. Sept., the 29th of August, 1351.||

To the same Sir Simon de Meryet Bishop Ralph de Salopia on the 17th of March, 1354-5, at Wyvelescumb, granted his licence for the celebration of masses and other Divine offices in his chapel of Hestercombe. The licence was to last from that date until the following Michaelmas.§

It may strike the reader as a thing unaccountable that, with the church of Cheddon Fitzpaine so close to Hestercombe, and to which access was so convenient at all times, and under all circumstances, there could be any necessity for a chapel at the manor house, or for the licences which we have seen to authorise its use. The simple explana-

\* Inq. p.m. 19 Edw. III. (1 ns.) n. 55.

† Reg. Rad. f. cccxxvj b.

‡ Ib. f. cccxxxj.

|| Ib. f. cccxxxvij.

§ Ib. f. ccccxxij.

tion of this difficulty lies in the fact that Hestercombe is not in the parish of Cheddon, but of Kingston, and it was the strict rule of mediæval times that everyone should resort for the Sacraments to his Parish Church. The nearer neighbourhood, and consequently greater ease of access, was not allowed to avail those who, in despite of their parish priest, should presume to betake themselves to other churches for the Divine offices. This state of things is hardly intelligible to ourselves, who, without molestation if not without remark, attend what church we will, or, if we will have it so, no church at all. As much as any, perhaps, is the writer himself an instance of the change, in whose congregation may be found persons from half a dozen parishes, and a score or more of ecclesiastical districts. This, of course, is even now far more the case with urban or suburban than with country parishes of small populations. But in ancient times the rule was as I have stated, and was rigidly enforced. I will offer in proof an example or two from the contemporary records of this very diocese. On the xj. Kal. Oct., the 21st of September, 1351, not four years before the date of this second licence in behalf of the chapel of Hestercombe, the same Bishop Ralph addressed a missive from Banewell to William atte Stone, the vicar of Taunton, reminding him that, according to the canonical statutes, people belonging to one parish are not to be admitted to the Sacraments in the churches of other parishes, especially on Sundays and Festivals; and drawing his attention to the fact that certain of the parishioners of Monketon, in contempt of their own parish church, were in the habit of frequenting that of Taunton on such days, whereof complaint had been made to him by John of Bath, the rector of Monketon. We who know the country have no difficulty in understanding the

cause of this breach of duty on the part of the Monkton parishioners. The distance was long, and the roads were bad—sometimes impassable from the inundations. All this, however, availed nothing with the administrator of the law. He, therefore, positively orders and enjoins the vicar that on all such days, before he, or any one by his authority, proceed to the celebration of mass, he enquire if any one from another parish, in contempt of his own priest, presume to be present, and, if he shall find any such, that he drive them out and compel them to return on pain of canonical censures, to be launched against them by his authority. And, further, that he should carefully furnish him or his commissary with an exact account of what he should do in the matter, together with the names and surnames of any who should resist this order, in a formal letter under his authentic seal.\* Even-handed justice was the rule of those times, and the same authority which had vindicated the prerogative of the Monkton rector soon asserted against him the equal rights of a neighbouring incumbent. On the ix. Kal. Sept., the 24th of August, 1362, the same bishop wrote from Wyvelescumb to the rector of Monkton, inhibiting him, under pain of the greater excommunication, from meddling with the tithes, great or small, or oblations pertaining to the Church of Crich; and, also, forbidding under the same penalty all chaplains from presuming to administer the sacraments or sacramentals to the parishioners of Crich, and the said parishioners from receiving the sacraments from such without his special licence. If he found any of the parties rebellious, he was to inform him of their names and surnames.†

\* Reg. Rad. f. ccelxxxj b. Appendix, No. VI.

† Reg. Rad. in Drok. f. cclxxxiiij.



Hence the necessity for the chapel of Hestercombe, and for the episcopal licence for its due employment.

Simon de Meryet, in favour of whom the licence was granted which has been the subject of this digression, married Margery, whose name I find associated with his in a fine passed at Westminster, in the octaves of S. Hilary, 30 Edward III., from the 13th to the 20th January, 1356-7, between them and John Ruspyn, parson of the church of Wydecombe, in respect of the manors of Combe flory and Heystercombe, with appurtenances, except two acres of arable land in Heystercombe, and of the advowson of the chantry at the altar of the Blessed Virgin in the church of Combe flory. It was agreed that the manors and advowson aforesaid should be held by Simon and Margery and their heirs male, and that in default of such they should go to the heirs male of Simon, and in default to Thomas, son of Sir John Tryvet, Knt., and Alice his wife.\*

John de Meryet succeeded Simon soon after the last-named date. Between him and Sir Edmund de Arondell, Knt., John Benyn, John Stokes, and others, a final concord was passed at Westminster, in the octaves of S. Michael, 34 Edward III., 30 Sept.—6 Oct. 1360, concerning the manors of Dondene, Brodemershton, Meriet, Great Lopene, Great Stratton, Hestercombe, Wyke, and Combeflory.† He died in 1369. His son, another

John de Meryet, the last of the name who owned Hestercombe, was a party with Henry Molyns, John Benyn, and John Stokes to a final concord respecting the same manors and other property in the 47th year of Edward III., 1374.‡ He leased a messuage, a mill, and a carucate of land at

\* Ped. Fin. Somers. 29-38 Edw. III. n. 11.

† Ped. Fin. Somers. 39-51 Edw. III. n. 88.

‡ MS. Lansd. 306, p. 152.



Meriet to John Canon, of Leghe (?—a great part of the MS. is illegible,) and Isolda, his wife, at Croukern, on Saturday next after the feast of the Purification (?) of the Blessed Virgin, 47 Edw. III., the 4th of February, (?) 1374, terminable at the death of the lessee.\* The same John excepted Combefflory and Hestercombe from a deed of feoffment of his estate, dated 48 Edward III., 1374.† He was summoned to parliament in 1379, and died in 1391,‡ leaving an only child

Elizabeth. This lady married John la Warre, son, I believe, of the hero of Poitiers, who in her right became the possessor of Hestercombe, and from whom for a very long period descended the successive owners of this interesting place. It would appear, however, from the final concords, that the family of Warre was mixed up with various transactions connected with the estate of Hestercombe some time before the death of the last de Meryet. In the years 1375 and 1390, for example, a William, son of John Warre, was a party in legal proceedings affecting the ownership of the manors of Hestercombe and Combefflory.||

Of most of the Warres I have but little to add beside the mention of their names, the families into which they married, and the dates of their several successions to the estate. This can hardly be called the History of Hestercombe in the sense in which I have endeavoured to present it to the reader, though here and there some particulars are narrated which are strictly in order as minutely illustrative of the place and neighbourhood.

\* Inq. p.m. 47 Edw. III. (2 nos.) n. 84.

† Collinson, from Sir W. Pole's MS. p. 545.

‡ Add. MS. B.M. 5937, f. 50 b.

|| Ped. Fin. Somers. 1-11 Ric. II. n. 27. 12-20 Ric. II. n. 14.

It hardly admits of conjecture, in the first place, that the stately tomb, which is so great an ornament of the church of Kingston, and where so many of the race lie buried, was erected in the time of the John la Warre, husband of Elizabeth de Meryet, the first of his family who was master of Hestercombe. He was here during the last ten years of the fourteenth century, the period to which the tomb must be referred.

Richard la Warre, their son, married Joan, daughter and heir of John Atwood. Some of the windows of the house appear to be of this period.

John Warre, son of this Richard Warre, married Joan, daughter of John Combe, of Dalwood, in the county of Dorset. He was High Sheriff of Somerset and Dorset, 2 Henry V., 1414, and 8 Henry VI., 1429.

His son, Robert Warre, married Christina, sister of Sir Richard Hankford, of Annery, in the county of Devon. He was sheriff of Somerset and Dorset, 36 Henry VI., 1457. He made his will on the 7th of July, 1465, 5 Edward IV., the day before his death, wherein he describes himself as resident in the parish of Kyngeston, of sane mind and good memory, but weak and at the point of death. He bequeaths his soul to Almighty God, and his body to be buried in the conventual Church of the Monastery of Athelney. He leaves to Cristina his wife a silver ewer and basin ; to his son Richard a silver ewer and basin ; to Richard Saleway, vicar of Kyngeston, *vj<sup>s</sup> viij<sup>d</sup>* for tithes forgotten ; to Giles, clerk there, *xx<sup>d</sup>* ; to Andrew Godde his gown of "Cremesyn" furred with sable ; to Margaret, wife of the said Andrew, a gown of sky-colour ; to Robert Stevyns a gown of "Musterdevilys ;"\*

\* A kind of grey woollen cloth, more frequently spelt "Mustrede-villars," or "Mustard-villars."

to John Clauyshay a gown of green colour ; to Robert, then Abbot of Athelney, and his convent a piece of cloth of gold to make a vestment, to pray for his soul and for the souls of all the faithful departed. The rest of his property he leaves to his widow and son aforesaid, whom he makes and appoints his executors, and orders, after his debts are paid, distribution to be made for the good of his soul at their discretion and judgment. The witnesses were Richard Glene, Prior of Taunton ; John Bysshop, Esq.,\* and Richard Saleway, chaplain. The will was proved and administration granted at Lambeth, on the 5th of the following August.†

In answer to a writ directed to the king's eschaetor, at Westminster, the 26th of July, 1465, the jurors returned a verdict at Briggewater, on the 30th of the following October, which communicates a more than ordinary amount of information on the subject of their examination. The original which will well repay perusal will be found in the Appendix. They say that the aforesaid Robert Warre held no lands nor tenements of the king, but that Sir John Stourton, Knt., Robert Squybbe, Gilbert Wyke, Robert Colyngborn, Thomas Mocheldever, John Bysshup, and Thomas Warreyn were seised in his demesne as of fee of the manors of Hestercombe and Crafte Warre, with appurtenances, in the county of Somerset, and that thus seised they demised the aforesaid manors to John Warre, Esq., to be held by him for the term of his life, and after his decease to Robert Warre his son, then to Richard Warre his son, and his wife Joan, daughter of Sir John

\* He was, I believe, the founder of the Chantry of S. Nicholas, sometimes called Bishop's Chantry, in the Church of Taunton S. Mary Magdalene.

† Reg. Godyn, Off. Prerog. ff. 73 b, 74. Appendix, No. VII.

Stourton, and their heirs. They quote various documents in illustration and support of their verdict, and add that the aforesaid manor of Hestercombe, with appurtenances, is held of William, Bishop of Winchester, but by what service the jurors are ignorant; that the manor is worth in all issues beyond reprises ten marcs a year; that the manor of Crafte Warre is held of Sir William Poulet, Knt., and is of the yearly value of four marcs; that the said Robert died on the 8th of July last past, 1465, and that Richard Warre, Esq., is his son and heir, and of the age of forty years and upwards.\*

Richard, married as we have seen to the daughter of Sir J. Stourton, succeeded. Collinson says that he repaired the chapel of Hestercombe, and gives a very interesting description of the armorial bearings and inscription which ornamented the windows of that edifice.† The latter, “Orate pro anima Roberti Warre, armigeri, Domini de Hestercombe,” was on the east window, and was doubtless placed there soon after his father’s death. The armorial bearings were as late as the seventeenth century. For this account, I repeat, I am indebted to Collinson, and I cannot help adding that although the Historian of Somerset has been of little or no assistance to me hitherto, he is, as usual, admirable in his genealogical sketch of the subsequent possessors.‡ Somersetshire antiquaries, particularly those of them who select the history of the olden families for their special study, are under the greatest obligations to this painstaking, careful, and generally accurate writer. His chief defect is his small

\* Inq. p.m. 5 Edw. IV. n. 17. MS. Harl. 4120. p. 378. Appendix, No. VIII. MS. Harl. 1385, fol. 9. MS. Harl. 1559, fol. 54 b. Add. MS. B.M. 14,315. p. 134.

† Hist. of Somerset, vol. III. pp. 260, 261.

‡ Hist. of Somerset, vol. III. pp. 259-263.

acquaintance with ecclesiastical records and antiquities in general, and the meagre details which he consequently furnishes of the Religious Houses and early parochial annals. But his industrious researches in family history, and the intelligent use which he made of the materials in his possession are worthy of all praise. His information in the present case was no doubt derived either from the then owner of Hestercombe, Mr. Coplestone Warre Bampfylde, or from the papers of a gentleman of the neighbourhood, the learned Mr. Palmer, of Fairfield, who took great interest in the antiquities of his county, to whose most valuable MSS. he enjoyed, by the kindness of Hugh Acland and John Acland, Esqrs., the permission of unlimited access—a favour of which he could well appreciate the value and utilize it to the best advantage.

Richard Warre died on the 25th of November, 22 Edward IV., 1482, without issue. From an inquest held at Heggbrugge, on Wednesday next before the feast of S. Luke the Evangelist, in the first year of Richard III., or the 15th of October, 1483, a verdict was returned that the Manor of Hestercombe, held of the Bishop of Winchester, was of the value beyond reprises of ix<sup>li</sup> a year, that Richard Warre had deceased on the day aforesaid, that his cousin Richard Warre of Chippelegh, of fifteen years of age and upwards, was his heir, and that this Richard Warre was son of John Warre of Chippelegh, who was son of Robert Warre of Chippelegh, who was brother of John Warre of Hestercombe, who was father of Robert Warre, the father of the deceased Richard Warre.\*

This Richard Warre of Chippelegh, and now of Hestercombe, was a prominent actor in the public events of his

\* Inq. p.m. 22 Edw. IV. n. 37. MS. Harl. 4120. p. 403.

county. On the marriage of Prince Arthur, in 1501, he was created Knight of the Bath. On that occasion he occurs in a List of the residents of the county of Somerset, with the "valewes of their yearely Reuenews, & of y<sup>e</sup> Certificate of all them, that shall bee made Knights of y<sup>e</sup> Bathe." His income is there stated as "*Cl.*"\* In 1530 he was a member of a commission, including Sir William Poulet, Sir Nicholas Wadham, and William Portman, Esq., appointed to examine into the lands of Cardinal Wolsey. Most of the older portions of the present mansion, of the time of Henry VII.,—the buttresses, especially, which supported the walls of the old hall, visible on either side of the entrance, with some square-headed windows in various parts of the house, are attributable to him. He married, first, Margaret, daughter of John Brookman, of Witham, in the county of Essex, and, secondly, Joan, daughter of Sir John Hody, chief baron of the exchequer.† He was sheriff of the county and knight of the shire in 1539, and died two years afterwards.

Thomas Warre, his son, married Joan, daughter of William Malet, of Corypole,‡ by whom he had issue six sons and three daughters, and died 34 Henry VIII., 1542, a year after the death of his father.

Richard Warre, his son, married Katharine, daughter of Sir Roger Blewit, of Holcombe Rogus.¶ Some of the windows of the house are of his period. He died 44 Elizabeth, 1602.

Roger Warre, his son, married Eleanor, daughter of Sir John Popham, chief justice of the Queen's Bench,

\* MS. Harl. 6166, fol. 101.

† MS. Harl. 1385, fol. 9. 1559, fol. 54 *b*. Add. MS. B. M. 14, 315, p. 134.

‡ Ibid.

¶ Ibid.



and died 14 James I., 1616. He had issue twelve sons and two daughters.

Richard, his son, married a daughter of Thomas Saint Barbe, of White Parish, co. Wilts. He left two sons, Roger and Thomas.

Roger, the eldest, married Anne, daughter of Sir Thomas Wyndham, of Kentsford. By her he had one son and one daughter.

John, his son, married Unton, daughter of Sir Francis Hawley, bart., of Buckland Sororum, widow of John Malet, Esq., of Enmore, and mother of Elizabeth, Countess of Rochester. He received the honour of Knighthood from Charles II., represented the county in parliament in 1665, and died in 1669.

Francis, his only son, named after his maternal grandfather, was created a baronet on the 2nd of June, 1673. He married, first, Anne, daughter and heir of Robert Cuffe, of Creech St. Michael, and, secondly, Margaret, daughter of John Harbin, of the city of London, merchant. By his first wife he had a son who died before him, and by his second a son William, who died an infant, and a daughter Margaret, his heir. "He was colonel of the Taunton regiment, vice-admiral of Somersetshire and the port of Bristol, deputy lieutenant, and justice of the peace."\* The greater portion of the present house is attributed to him. The point at which he may be supposed to have left it is that which is represented in the interesting view, dated 1700, which has hung for many generations in the Great Hall, and is the only authority extant for the house as it appeared at any time prior to the eighteenth century. Some modern critics have considered it open to suspicion on the ground that what is shown as a part of

\* Collinson, Hist. of Somerset. vol. III. p. 262.

the front of the house is very similar to one of the present sides. There can be no doubt, however, that the general appearance of the mansion, with its chapel and numerous out-buildings, is given with strict fidelity. Of these latter, indeed, it is, I repeat, our only existing authority. The Chapel, which we here see in its green enclosure, had, as I have already stated, a nave, chancel, south porch, and bell turret on the west gable. The out-buildings, among which an orangery and a dove cot are conspicuous, are large and handsome. And the whole group, with its successive additions of various periods, gives us an admirable idea of a fine old country house, where plenty, if not peace, and abundance, if not quiet, were the invariable atmosphere.

Sir Francis Warre sat in the several Parliaments down to the year 1716 for Bridgwater and Taunton, and died 1st December, 1718, and was buried at Kingston. He left, as aforesaid, a daughter, Margaret, who married John Bampfylde, Esq., of the well-known Devonshire family of that name, and transferred the estate to her husband,

John Bampfylde. He was brother of Sir Coplestone Warwick Bampfylde, of Poltimore, in the county of Devon, bart., and represented in parliament the city of Exeter, and afterwards the county of Devon. He died 17 September, 1750, in the 60th year of his age, and was buried at Kingston.\* He left a son,

Coplestone Warre Bampfylde. This gentleman, who can never be forgotten at Hestercombe, married Mary, daughter of Edward Knight, Esq., of Wolverly, in the county of Worcester. It is to him, as I am informed, that

\* Collinson, *Hist. of Somerset*, vol. III. p. 263.

we are indebted for the last additions to the present mansion, and for the last endeavours to ornament the lovely domain by which it is surrounded. He was an elegant scholar, a true critic, and a man of most refined taste, and everything about this beautiful place breathes of each of these happy characteristics. You cannot ramble for an hour at Hestercombe without an exquisite sense that you are in the home of a thorough gentleman. While the lapse of years through which, as I said at the beginning of my Memoir, the hand of neglect has done nothing to arrest the progress of decay, has rather elicited its real beauties than, as the same treatment would have effected for most other localities, reduced or annihilated them. And he used nobly what he ornamented elegantly. For many years he made his charming abode as fair a picture as any that the county could exhibit of hospitality, liberality, and those open-handed virtues which constitute the *beau ideal* of an English country gentleman. Colonel Bampfylde, for among his other honours he was colonel of the Somerset Militia, a post especially at that time of considerable importance, had a true eye for the picturesque, was an admirable landscape gardener—a qualification to which we owe not a few of the peculiarities which here, and, it is said, in several other localities in the western counties, so captivate and delight us—and an artist of no small ability. I possess a drawing in water colours by him, a scene in the woods of his beloved Hestercombe, in the style of the draughtsmen of his age, and which might take rank and place with the works of most of them. The walls of the house bear many specimens of his proficiency in oil-painting, representations for the most part of old mythological subjects, among lovely landscapes, with most natural effects of light and shade, fine fore-

grounds and skilful perspective.\* Besides all this he was well known in the literary world of the day. Collinson expresses his many obligations to him. It was to him that Christopher Anstey, of "New Bath Guide" celebrity, addressed in 1776 his clever satire on an English poem, "An Election Ball," illustrated by five etchings of his Hestercombe friend's execution, representing the characters in that veritable opus, and alludes to his beautiful home in the lines—

"Seu gelidum nemus, aut liquidi prope flumina Thoni,  
"Arcadii invitant, quos incolis ipse, recessus."†

It was, also, in reference to the figure of a Witch, painted on one of the walls of a hermitage in the grounds, that Dr. Langhorne, then vicar of Blagdon, wrote—and not unhappily—

"O'er Bampfylde's woods, by various nature graced,  
"A Witch presides; but then that Witch is Taste."‡

And it was in affectionate regard of other friends, Sir Charles K. Tynte, and Henry Hoare, of whom he says—

"Animæ quales neque candidiores  
Terra tulit, neque queis me sit devinctior alter,"

\* Since this was written all the contents of the house were dispersed by public auction, on the 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th of October, 1872. On the first day, when the hall was full of the gentry of the county, so great was the interest excited, I secured several of Col. Bampfylde's productions, including "The Owl" and two fine landscapes in the Great Hall, together with some of the family portraits and two other pictures which visitors for many past years could hardly fail to notice and remember—a marvellous "Dead Game and Small Birds," by Van Elst, signed by the painter, in the "Column Room," and the View of "Hestercombe, 1700," in the Great Hall, to which reference has already been made. I have thus been enabled to give my reader an exact copy of this interesting relic, after a photograph from the original picture. The size of the original is six feet six inches, by three feet two and a half inches.

† Epist. Poet. Familiar. 4to. Bath. 1776. p. 33. Anstey's Works, 4to. Lond. 1808. pp. 383-417.

‡ Britton's Hist. and Antiq. of Bath Abbey Church, 4to. Lond. 1825. p. 112.

that in 1786 the scholarly owner of this lovely place erected the urn, now all but concealed by sombre foliage on every side, which forms the subject of the initial letter of this Memoir, and

DIU SPECTATÆ MEMOR AMICITIÆ  
HANC URNAM SACRAM ESSE VOLUIT.

It might, indeed, be said of him that, whether in great things or small, on occasions or in pursuits where he could exhibit his rare and fascinating gifts, or among the multitude of common affairs which on every side called for his active oversight, "*nihil tetigit quod non ornavit*,"—so comprehensive was his knowledge, so full of charm his genius, and so refined and exquisite his taste. The only thing that I feel inclined to blame in his performances—so far as I am cognisant of them, and even about this I may be in error—is the destruction of the venerable Chapel, which for so many generations had been the sacred scene of the worship of his race. According to the old view already referred to it stood to the westward of the mansion, and I fear was thought to be in the way. The statement that it was ruinous can hardly be accurate. It was built at a period when English architecture was at its best, and, as we have also seen, had been restored and re-decorated in the latter part of the fifteenth century. But its real excellence, its Gothic peculiarities, opposed to the taste of his day, was the cause, I am sorry to think, of its unhappy removal.

Copelstone Warre Bampfylde died 21 Aug. 1791, and was buried in the family vault at Kingston on the 30th of the same month.\* The property passed to his nephew,

John Tyndale, who took the surname of Warre, the son of his sister Margaretta, who married George Tyndale, of

\* I am indebted for a knowledge of these facts to the kindness of the Rev. I. Sadler Gale, vicar of Kingston.

Bathford. He died in 1819, and was buried in the vault at Kingston, 27 May, in that year.\* He was succeeded by his daughter,

Miss Elizabeth Maria Tyndale Warre, with whose personal appearance and eccentric habits many of my readers must have been familiar. She died 27 March, and was buried in the vault at Kingston, 3 April, 1872.\*

There is no reason that I should, and some that I should not, enter into further details. Nor need I endeavour to draw a more minute picture of the household, as Somersetshire gave it age after age of the worthiest of her worthy men and fairest of her fair women. My reader must be less thoughtful than I take him to be, if the very names which have figured before us throughout the pages of this Memoir do not vividly suggest to him the drama of old English life, both in joy and in sorrow, of which these grey walls and shady avenues have been the scene, when events were distinguished by far more picturesque impressiveness, and men and women by far more individual and special characteristics, than are usual in our own days, and when society was accordingly more genuine, and reflective of the reality of its component parts to a far greater extent than it is now. I have but to add that of the last act in the history of the place I was myself with but few others a witness, and it was of a complexion strictly accordant with this all but universal change. Not in its wainscoted and gilded chambers, its overgrown and pathless gardens, or its silent and sombre woods—though these were acutely reflected in my mind's eye at the moment—but in the prosaic atmosphere of a London auction-room, I saw it pass† from the old race which had so long

\* Also from the Rev. I. Sadler Gale.

† At the Mart, Tokenhouse Yard, on Tuesday, the 6th of August, 1872.



possessed and valued it to other hands—hands that I most earnestly trust will reverently and lovingly remember and respect it for what it has been as well as for what it is. As I take a last look on a place so dear to me, and think of those who for eight centuries held rule within its boundaries, I can but express the hope, which I do most fervently—and would give utterance to a better if I knew it—that the present and future lords of Hestercombe may unite in their own persons the combined excellencies of their predecessors, the magnificent lustre of the Fluris, the religion, philanthropy, and piety of the de Meryets, and the devotion, courage, prudence, and good taste of the Warres, with a not unhappier fortune on the one hand and as long a tenure on the other as was the lot of either.

THOMAS HUGO.

## APPENDIX.

## No. I.

[Ped. Fin. Somers. 21-35 Edw. I. No. 1.]

Hec est finalis concordia f'ca in Curia d'ni Regis apud Westm' a die Pasche in quindecim dies Anno Regni Regis Edwardi filij Regis Henr' vicesimo p'mo Coram Joh'ne de Metyngham, Rob'to de Hertford, Elia de Bekyngham & Petro Malore Justic' & alijs d'ni Regis fidelibus tunc ibi p'sentibus Int' Joh'nem de Meriet quer' & Joh'nem de Hestercumbe deforc'. de octo acris terre & quinqz acris p'ti cum p'tin' in Hestercumbe Et eciam de Centu' solidat' redditus cum p'tin' in eadem villa p'cipiendis p' annu' p' manus Gregor' de Welyngton & her' suor' de totis ten' que de p'd'co Joh'ne de Hestercumb prius tenuit in eadem villa. vnde pl'itum conuencōnis sum' fuit int' eos in eadem Curia. Scil't q'd p'd'cus Joh'nes de Hestercumb recogn' p'd'ca ten' cum p'tin' esse Jus ip'ius Joh'is de Meriet Habend' & Tenend' eide' Joh'i de Meriet & her' suis de Capit' d'nis feodi illius p' seruicia que ad illa ten' p'tinent imp'p'm. Et p't'ea idem Joh'nes de Hestercumb concessit p' se & her' suis q'd ip'i warant' eidem Joh'i de Meriet & her' suis p'd'ca ten' cum p'tin' cont' om's ho'ies imp'p'm. Et p' hac recognicōne warant' fine & concordia, idem Joh'nes de Meriet dedit p'd'co Joh'i de Hestercumbe vnum sp'uar' sor' Et hec concordia f'ca fuit p'sente p'd'co Gregor' & eam concedente & fecit eidem Joh'i de Meriet fidelitatem in eadem Curia.

Somers'.

## No. II.

[Plac. Coram Rege, 25 Edw. I. Term. Trin. rot. iij. No. 152.]

Matheus de Esse de Cudeworth distans a Meriet p' duas leuc'. etat'. xxxviij. annor' & ampl'. Jur' &c. De etat'. Nat'. Bapt'. & aliis c'cumstanc'. concordat cu' p'iur'. Requis' qual'r hoc scit & de lapsu dicti te'p'is. dicit q'd p' hoc, q'd eod'm anno, circit'. xv. dies postea disposnauit Joh'am vx' suam fil' q'ndam d'ni Alani de ffurneus militis, quam antea p' tempus aliquod adamauit et p' hoc scit & bñ c'tus est de etate, &c. De aliis circumstanc' &c.

## No. III.

[E Reg. Drok. f. lxxxxvij.]

M<sup>d</sup> q' d'ns conc' licenc' sp'alem d'no J. de M'iet Militi vt possit h'ere cantar' ī capella Man'ii sui de Hestrecūb p'pt' distanc' loci int' d'cm man'iu' & mat'ce' eccl'iam, s'b dat' apud Wyuelescūb. viij<sup>o</sup>. Kal'n Aug'ti. Anno d'ni. Milli'o. ccc<sup>mo</sup>. xvj<sup>o</sup>. Cons' d'ni septio.

## No. IV.

[Rot. Cart. 13 Edw. II. n. 35.]

P' Joh'e de R Archiep'is &c. salt'm. Sciatis nos ad instanciam dil'ci consanguinei & fidelis n'ri Thome comitis Lancastr' concessisse & hac carta n'ra confirmasse dil'co & fideli n'ro Joh'i de Meryet q'd ip'e & heredes sui imp'petuum h'eant lib'am warennam in om'ibz d'nicis t'ris suis de Hestercoumbe Legheflory Estcape-lond Coumbefflory & Ashton iuxta Bristoll'

in Com' Sum's'. Dum tamen t're ille non  
 s̄int infra metas foreste n're. Ita q'd nullus  
 intret t'ras illas ad fugandum in eis vel ad  
 aliquid capiend' quod ad warennam p'tineat,  
 sine licencia & voluntate ip'ius Joh'is vel  
 heredum suor', sup' forisf'curam n'ram decem  
 libr'. Quare volumus & firmit' p'cipim' p'  
 nobis & heredibz n'ris, q'd p'd'cus Joh'es &  
 heredes sui imp'petuu' habeant lib'am warena-  
 nam in om'ibz dn'icis t'ris suis p'd'cis. Dum  
 tamen &c. Ita &c. sicut p'd'em est. Hiis  
 testibz ven' p'ribz W. Arche'po Ebor' Angl'  
 Primate J. Elie'n' E'po Canc' n'ro. Joh'e de  
 Britann' comite Richemund Ric'o de Grey,  
 Hugone de Audele seniore & aliis. Dat'  
 p' manu' n'ram apud Ebor'. ix die Julij. p'  
 ip'm R.

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No. V.

[E Reg. Drok. f. ccxlviii b.]

L'ra d'ni Ep'i testimōial'  
 de vita Elizabeh de M'iet.

Vniu'sis vice-  
 comitibz. ball'is  
 minist'is & al'

hōibz q'buscūqz Nobil' viri d'ni Hugonis de Dispensar' ad  
 q's p'sentes l're p'uen'int. J. p'miss' di'a Bathon' & Well'  
 Ep'us, salt' cū bn'. & grā rede'ptoris. Q'a piu' e'e credim'  
 & m'toriu' v'itati testimoniu' p'hib'e. ne in dubiis fluctuātes  
 p' errorem labant' i p'cc'm, Hinc est q'd vob' om'ibz & cuil'  
 vr'm notū facim' p' p'sentes, q'd d'na Elizabeth Paynel v̄x  
 d'ni Joh' de M'iet Milit' die Mercur' p'x<sup>a</sup> post d'nicā qua  
 cātat'. offiū. letar' ierl'm. i Maner' d'ci d'ni Joh' de Hestre-

combe p'pe maner' n'rm de Wyuelesc' cū d'no suo morā t'hēs, i plena vita & bona corp'is sanitate & sospitate vigebat, Et hoc vob' ac o'ibz quor' it'est itimam' p' p'sentes. Scpt' ap<sup>d</sup> Wyuelesc' d'co die Mercur'. anno R. R. E. fil'. R. E. decionono.

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## No. VI.

[E Reg. Rad. f. cccxxxxj b.]

Rad'lus p'missione di'a Bathon' & Wellen' Ep'us. dil'co in x'po filio p'petuo vicar' de Tauntton n're dioc' salt'm gr' & b'n Cum alieni p'och' non sunt in alienis ecc'ijs p'hibentibz statut' canōicis p'sertim diebz d'nicis & festiuis ad d'ia officia admitte'di sunt qz nonnulli p'och' ecc'ie p'och' de Monketon' d'ce n're dioc'. qui dimissa seu cōtempta p'p'ia ecc'ia p'och' d'ia in ecc'ia p'och' de Tanton' diebz d'nicis & festiuis audire presumūt cont<sup>a</sup> canōica statuta p'ut ex p'te dil'ci filij Joh'is de Bathon' R'etoris eccl'ie de Monketon' p'd'ca nob' extitit querelatū Quare t' cōmittim' & mādam' firmit' iniūgentes. quat' diebz d'nicis & festiuis anteq<sup>m</sup> missam celebras v'l p' aliu' facias celebrari in ecc'ia tua inuestiges si alt'ius p'och' in eccl'ia tua sit qui p'p'o contempto p'sb'ro ibid'm missam audire p'sumat Et si aliquos tales inuen'is ip'os a d'ca eccl'ia tua abiicias & cōpellas reced'e p' ce'suras eccl'iasticas in eosd'm au<sup>a</sup>cte n'ra canōice ful'iand' Et q'd in p'miss' fec'is nos v'l n'ros Cōmissar' vna cū no'ibz & cogno'ibz ip'or' quos rebelles inuen'is in hac p'te cū p' p'tem d'ci Rectoris fu'is requisit' distincte & ap'te cures redd'e c'ciores L'ris tuis patentibz h'ntibz har' formam auctentico sub sigillo Dat' ap<sup>d</sup> Banewell' xj k'ln Octobr' anno d'ni sup<sup>a</sup>d'co [1351] Et n're Cons'. vicesimo t'cio

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## No. VII.

[E Reg. Godyn, Off. Prerog. ff. 73 b, 74.]

Test'm' Roberti      In dei nomi'e Amen. Septimo die  
 Warre                mensis Julij Anno d'ni Mill'imo  
                              cccc<sup>mo</sup> lxx<sup>to</sup> Ego Robertus Warre  
 armiger in p'och' de Kyngeston' Bathonien' & Wellen'  
 dioc' sane ment' & bone memorie languens in extremis  
 condo test'm' meu' in hunc modu' In primis lego a'i'am  
 mea' deo om'ipotent' corpusq' meu' sepeliendu' in eccl'ia  
 Conuentuali Monasterij de Athelney It'm lego Cristine  
 vx'i mee vna' pelue' cu' lauacro argent' It'm lego Ric'o  
 filio meo vna' pelue' cum lauacro argenti It'm lego d'no  
 Ric'o Saleway vicario de Kyngeston' vjs viij<sup>d</sup> p' decimis  
 oblit' It'm lego Egidio cl'ico ib'm xx<sup>d</sup> It'm lego Andree  
 Godde vna' toga' mea' de Cremesyn penulat' cum mart'  
 It'm lego Margarete vx'i Andree Godde vna' togam blodij  
 coloris It'm lego Roberto Stevyns vna' toga' de Musterde-  
 vilys It'm lego Johanni Clauyshay vna' toga' virid'  
 coloris It'm lego Roberto Abbati nūc de Athelney &  
 eiusdem loci Conuentui vnu' pallum de auro ad faciend'  
 vestimentu' ad ora'd' pro aīa mea & pro aīabz om'i' fidel'iu'  
 defunctor' Residuu' vero om'i' bonor' meor' sup'ius non  
 legator' do & lego Cristine vx'i mee & Ric'o filio meo &  
 heredi quos quid'm Cristinam & Ric'm ordino fac'o &  
 constituo meos executores vt ip'i debit' meis primitus  
 p'solut' disponant & distribuant bona mea p' salute aīe  
 mee meliori modo iuxta eor' sana discrecōes & consilia  
 Hijs testibz Mag'ro Ric'o Glene Prior' Prioratus Tanton'  
 Joh'ne Bysshop armig'o d'no Ric'o Saleway cap<sup>no</sup> ad  
 p'missa vocat' sp'ialit' & rogat' in fidem & testi'o'm  
 eorunde'

Probat' fuit sup<sup>a</sup>script' test'm' apud lamehith quinto die  
 Augusti Anno d'ni sup<sup>a</sup>dict' ac approbat' &c. Et comissa

fuit admi'stracō bonor' dict' defuncti executor' in d'co test'o nomi'atis in p'sona Mag'ri Ric'i layty procur'is &c. De b'n' admi'strand' &c ac de pleno Inuentario bonor' &c citra f'm s'ci Martini in hieme prox' futur' &c ac de pleno compoto &c in p'son' p'cur'is &c iurat' &c

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### No. VIII.

[Inq. p.m. 5 Edw. IV. n. 17.]

Inquisitio capt' apud Briggewater in Com' Som's tricesimo die Octobris anno regni Regis Edwardi quarti post conq'm quinto coram Joh'e Peke Esc' d'ci d'ni Regis in com' p'd'co virtute br'is [&c] p' sac'r'm Will'i Montagu Thome lyte Ph'i Pym Joh'is Kighley Will'i Bourn Ric'i Jaykerd Thome Goolde Joh'is Irlande Will'i Godwyn Thome Warren Joh'is Ch\*\*y & Ric'i Crips Qui dicunt sup' sac'r'm suu' q'd Rob'tus Warre in d'co br'i no'iat' nulla tenuit t'ras neqz ten' de d'co d'no Rege in d'nico nec in s'uicio die quo obiit set dicunt q'd Joh'es Stourton miles Rob'tus Squybbe Gilb'tus Wyke Rob'tus Colyngborn Thomas Mocheldever Joh'es Bysshup & Thomas Warreyn fuerunt seisiti in d'nico suo vt de feodo de man'ijs de Hestercombe & Crafte voc' Crafte Warre cu' p'tin' in Com' p'd'co & sic inde seisiti man'ia p'd'ca cu' p'tin' dimiserunt & concesserunt Joh'i Warre armig'o h'end' sibi ad t'minu' vite sue Ita q'd post mortem eiusdem Joh'is man'ia p'd'ca cu' p'tin' reman' p'fato Rob'to Warre filio p'd'ci Joh'is Warre ad t'm' vite sue Ita q'd post mortem eiusdem Rob'ti Warre man'ia p'd'ca cu' p'tin' reman' Ric'o Warre filio p'd'ci Rob'ti Warre & Johanne vx'i eius filie p'fati Joh'is Stourton & hered' de corp'ibz eor'dem Rici' & Johanne legitime p'creat' Et p' def'tu' hui' exitus remanere inde rectis hered' p'd'ci Joh'is Warre imp'p'm p'ut p' quandam cartam Jur' hui' Inquis' in evidens' ostens' plene

liquet virtute cuius idem Joh'es Warre fuit modo seisisus in d'nico suo vt de lib'o ten' & inde obijt seisisus post cuius mortem d'cus Rob'tus Warre in d'ca br'i no'iat' in man'ia p'd'ca cu' p'tin' intrauit & inde fuit seisisus in d'nico suo vt de lib'o ten' et inde obijt seisisus Et q'd p'd'cus Ric'us & Johanna adhuc sup'stites existunt et \*\*\* dicunt q'd quidam finis leuauit in Curia d'ni H. sexti nup' de f'co & non de iure Regis Angl' apud Westm' in Octab' S'ci Martini anno regni sui sc'do coram Will'o Babyngton' & socijs suis tunc Justiciarijs eiusdem nup' vt p'mittit' Regis de Banco int' Ric'm Hankeford armig'um Joh'em Bluet Joh'em Dabernoun Thomam Kyngeston & Joh'em Muskham quer' & Joh'em Warre & Johannam vx'em eius deforc' de man'io de Wellefford & medietat' man'ij de Bradford iuxta Wellyngton' cu' p'tin' in Com' Som's' p' quem finem ijdem Joh'es Warre & Johanna int' al' recogn' p'dict' man'iu' & medietat' cum p'tin' esse ius ip'ius Joh'is Muskham vt illa que ijdem Joh'es Ri'cus Joh'es Bluet Joh'es Dabernoun & Thomas h'ent \*\*\* p'd'cor' Joh'is Warre & Johanne Et p' hac recogn' fine & concordia ijdem Joh'es Muskham Ri'cus Joh'es Bluet Joh'es Dabernoun & Thomas Kyngeston concesserunt p'd'cis Joh'i Warre & Johanne p'd'ca man'iu' & medietat' cu' p'tin' & illa eis reddiderunt in eadem Curia h'end' & tenend' eisdem Joh'i Warre & Johanne tota vita ip'or' Joh'is & Johanne & post decessu' ip'or'\*\*\* Johanne eadem man'iu' & medietas cu' p'tin' integre remanebunt p'fat' Rob'to Warre in d'co br'i no'iat' filio eor'dem Joh'is Warre & Johanne & Cristine vx'i eiusdem Rob'ti Warre \*\*\* ip'ius Rob'ti de corpore suo p'creat' Et p' def'tu' hui' exit' remaner' inde rect' hered' p'd'ci Joh'is Warre virtute cui' finis ijdem Joh'es Warre & Johanna fuer' inde seisisi in d'nico suo vt de lib'o ten' & inde obierunt se'iti post quor'

mortem iidem Rob'tus & Cristina in man'iu' & med' p'di'et cu' p'tin' int'uerunt & modo fuerunt se'iti videl't p'd'cus Rob'tus in d'nico suo vt de feodo talliato Et p'd'ca Cristina in d'nico suo vt de lib'o ten' Et postea p'd'cus Rob'tus de tali statu inde obijt se'itus Et p'd'ca Cristina ip'm sup' uixit & se tenuit intus p' ius accrescend' & adhuc sup'stes existit Et q'd p'd'cus Rob'tus Warre nulla alia seu plura t'ras neqz ten' tenuit de d'co d'no Rege nec de aliquo alio in d'nico nec in s'uicio in Com' p'd'co die quo obijt Et vlt'ius dic' q'd p'd'cm man'iu' de Hestercombe cu' p'tin' tenet' de Will'o ep'o Wynton' set p' quod s'uiciu' Jur' p'd'ci ignorant Et q'd idem man'iu' cu' p'tin' valet p' annu' in om'ibz exit' vltra rep's' x m<sup>arc</sup>' Et q'd p'd'cm man'iu' de Crafte Warre cu' p'tin' tenet' de Will'o Poulet milite set p' quod s'uiciu' iidem Jur' ignorant Et q'd idem man'iu' cu' p'tin' valet p' annu' in om'ibz exit' vltra rep's' iiij m<sup>arc</sup>' Et q'd p'd'cm man'iu' de Wellyford cu' p'tin' tenet' de Will'o Courtenay milite set p' quod s'uiciu' p'd'ci Jur' ignorant & q'd idem man'iu' cu' p'tin' valet p' annu' in om'ibz exit' vltra rep's' iiij m<sup>arc</sup>' Et q'd p'd'ca medietas man'ij de Bradford cu' p'tin' tenet' de Will'o ep'o Wynton' set p' quod s'uiciu' iidem Jur' ignorant Et q'd eadem medietas valet per annu' in om'ibz exit' suis vltra rep's' v. m<sup>arc</sup>' Et q'd p'd'cus Rob'tus Warre obijt octauo die Julij vlt' p't'ito Et q'd Ric'us Warre armig' est filius & heres eiusdem Rob'ti p'pinquior & est etatis xl annor' & amplius. In cui' rei testi'om' tam p'sent' cart' q'am Jur' p'd'ci huic Inquis' sigilla sua apposuerunt. Dat' die loco & anno sup<sup>a</sup>dict'.

T. H.

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