

Notes.

Wells Palace: a Correction.

BY EDMUND BUCKLE.

In a previous volume (xxxiv, pt. ii, p. 89) the two large bay windows overlooking the moat on the north side of Wells Palace are erroneously ascribed to Bishop Clark. On the vault of each of these bays is a carved boss, bearing a coat of arms: *A saltier impaling On a chevron three escallops*. This coat belongs to Bishop Oliver King. Clark's arms were, *Two bars and in chief three escallops*.

Bishop Hobhouse has searched King's register with a view to discovering his places of abode, and has kindly allowed me the use of his notes. The register runs from August, 1496, to King's death, in August, 1503. Until August, 1499, King (who was Secretary to Henry VII) appears to have delegated his episcopal duties to Vicar-General Gilbert and Thomas Cornish, Bishop of Tenos. In August, 1499, however, he was at Bath, but next month the Vicar-General was sitting in the chapel of Wells Palace. In September, 1500, the Bishop was living at Chew, but in the following February the Vicar-General was acting again. In October and November, 1501, the Bishop was at Dogmersfield, Hants; from March till May, 1502, he seems to have been at Bath, and during the summer of this year to have made Banwell his head-quarters. On June 10th, for the first time, he dates from Wells Palace; but this entry occurs between two others, dated from Banwell on the same day—evidence, apparently, that the Bishop paid a visit from Banwell to Wells and returned the same day. On July 2nd he was again at Wells; but on July 1st and

August 9th, at Banwell. During August he visited Athelney, Cleeve Abbey, and Bridgwater, and was again at Wells on September 3rd. On September 15th he was back at Banwell, but on the same day he dates from Wells, where he seems to have passed the night, for next day he dates first from Wells and afterwards from Banwell. On September 20th he was again at Wells, on October 10th at Bath, and subsequently he left Vicar-General Pykman in active office. From January to July, 1503, King was living at Bath. On July 28th and 29th he dates from Wells Palace; during the whole of August, from the 3rd, he was at Banwell, and there he died, upon the 29th of that month.

From this summary it is clear that the register affords no evidence of King's having resided at Wells; on the contrary, it seems probable that he was never there for more than a day or two together. Moreover, when Henry VII stayed at Wells from September 30th to October 2nd, 1497, Bishop Oliver King came in his train as Secretary of State; and yet (tradition says) Henry stayed at the Deanery. If this was the case, we must assume that the Palace was then unfit to receive him. Serel writes, "This was the first time he [Bishop King] came to Wells, though he succeeded in 1495." (See vol. xii, pt. ii, p. 37; vol. xxv, pt. ii, p. 65.)

The natural conclusion seems to be that Bishop King was repairing and improving the Palace shortly before his death, and that he then had an intention—which he was unable to carry out—of residing at Wells.