

COLLECTIONS

FOR A

HISTORY

OF

STAFFORDSHIRE

EDITED BY

The William Salt Archaeological Society.

VOLUME VI. NEW SERIES.

PART II.

"And in this undertaking, the Reader may see what Furniture (though it lie dispers'd) our Publick Records will afford for History: and how plentifully our own may be supplied and improv'd, if pains were taken therein: for what is hitherto made publick, hath been collected, chiefly out of old Annals, and they filled with few things but such as were very obvious, nay the Annalists themselves (for the most part residing in Monasteries) too oftend byass'd with Interest, and Affection, to Times and Persons: But on the contrary, in our publick Records lye matter of Fact, in full Truth, and therewith the Chronological part, carried on, even to days of the Month. So that an industrious Searcher may thence collect considerable matter for new History, rectifie many mistakes in our old and in both gratifie the world with unshadowed verity."—(ASHMOLE'S *History of the Garter.*)

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1903.

A HISTORY

OF

THE FAMILY

OF

Wrotesley of Wrotesley,

CO. STAFFORD.

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL THE HON. GEO. WROTESLEY.

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PREFACE.

I feel I owe an apology to the Members of the Wm. Salt Society for introducing into their Proceedings a history of my own family; my excuse for doing so, is the destruction of the Wrottesley muniments by the fire of December 1897, and the fact that the history being a reprint from the pages of *The Genealogist*, will not throw an undue burden upon the finances of the Society. After the loss of the family papers in 1897, I proposed to my friend Mr. Harwood, the Editor of *The Genealogist*, that he should print the copies which I had taken of the Wrottesley deeds in that magazine. To this he replied that he would much prefer a history of the family, introducing the deeds into it, and the following pages are the result of this suggestion.

Up to the date of the fire, the deeds at Wrottesley had been unusually well preserved. When I first began to examine them in 1860, there was a complete series of family documents identifying the successive owners of the property from the reign of Henry II down to the above date. All the most important of these as far down as the Tudor era, have been incorporated into the history in their original form. For the encouragement, however, of archæologists who have to deal with the history of an ancient family which has lost its muniments, I may mention that every step of the pedigree from the reign of Henry II to the present time is proved by public documentary evidence which is accessible to all the world. This evidence will be found given in detail in the text of the history. It illustrates the value of the Public Records for the elucidation of local and family history, and the mine of wealth which lies under our feet, which has passed almost unnoticed before the rise of the modern school of archæology.

As the manor of Wrottesley was held under a religious house, the origin of the family can be clearly traced from

existing monastic records. Lanfranc was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by the Conqueror in 1070, and had for his chaplain one Walter, a monk of Cerisy, in the Diocese of Bayeux. This Walter appears, from subsequent evidence, to have been a member of the Norman family of de Verdon, which held a large fief in the same Diocese in the neighbourhood of Avranches. A Bishop's Chaplain is predestined to ecclesiastical preferment, and on the death of Agelwin, the last Saxon Abbot of Evesham in 1077, Walter was promoted to the vacant post. According to the chronicle of Evesham, being a young man at the date of his accession and not endowed with much worldly wisdom, he refused to accept the homage of many worthy tenants of the monastery, and bestowed their lands upon his own relations. Amongst these was a brother Ralph, who obtained in this way several manors in the Counties of Warwick, Worcester and Gloucester. This Ralph also obtained (probably by marriage), the manor of Cocton or Coughton in Warwickshire, and taking up his abode there, became known as Ralph de Cocton. In the next generation, *i.e.*, in the reign of Henry I, all the lands of Ralph, pursuant to a custom which was very common in the reign of that monarch, appear to have been equally divided between two sons. Early in the reign of Henry II, Adam the Abbot of Evesham enfeoffed Simon, a younger son of William de Cocton, in the manors of Wrottesley and Loynton, co. Stafford, and this Simon is the undoubted progenitor of the present family of Wrottesley.

As few men, even amongst genealogists, will care to read through the history of a family with which they have no connection, it may be as well to draw attention to one or two points of special interest in the present history. One has already been adverted to, and consists in the value of the Public Records for the proof of descent, and the illustration of family history. The family also produced two men of note. The first of these, Sir Hugh Wrottesley, was one of the original Knights of the Garter, and from the investigation of his career in the Public Records, much information may be obtained respecting the composition of the armies of Edward III. and the military methods of the period. The other, Sir Walter Wrottesley, played an important part in the counsels of Warwick, the King Maker, and his career throws light upon the tortuous policy of the great Earl during a very obscure period of English history. To come to more recent days, the difficulties and troubles of the first Baronet during the Great Rebellion, furnish a vivid picture of the state of the country, and the impossibility of a man of property maintaining a neutral attitude during a civil war.

A history of this kind will be no attraction to those who are immersed in the business or pleasure of the world, but there is an infinite variety in the minds of men, and in every community there will be some who find a charm in the past, and feel the softening influence of the records of the dead. Genealogy by itself is a barren study if divorced from its moral and historical uses, but an author, by researching amongst our Public Records, can lift a family history above a dry genealogical chronicle and throw some light upon the laws and customs of the past. Even the dry details of ancient lawsuits have their uses, for the judicial records contain the germ of our modern laws, and it is only through the public employments and public services of former days that we can rescue worthy actions from oblivion, or call back to the fancy the pomp and circumstance of days gone by.

G. W.

Staffordshire County Studies
Sample

History of the Family

Wrottesley, of Wrottesley,

Co. Stafford.

Staffordshire County Studies
Sample

History of the Family of Wrottesley, of Wrottesley, co. Stafford.

Wrottesley is an ancient manor and township of the Parish of Tettenhall, in the County of Stafford, and contains about 1600 acres of land. Its etymology is purely Saxon, the name signifying the territory of Wrote, the original Saxon proprietor. The same name occurs in the nomenclature of many other places such as Wrotham and Wroxeter, formerly written Wrotcestre, and is identical with the modern surnames, Wrote, Wrothe, Grote, and the low German or Dutch Groot and Wroot. The termination, ley, lea, or leag, latinized as *lega*, signifies a territory or domain, and is nearly equivalent to the Norman manor.¹

The earliest mention of Wrottesley occurs in the Harleian Charter, 83, A 2. This is an original Saxon document, the will of Wulfgate, by which he makes bequests to his wife and daughters and to St. Mary of Worcester. The testator, is, perhaps, the Wulfgate, son of Ufa, who gave Wicksford to the monks of Evesham in 973. The Chronicle of Evesham describes Ufa as "*potens homo et vicecomes super Warwykescira.*" From the bequests made to St. Mary of Worcester, it is probable that this curious document came originally from that monastery, for the Harleian Charters contain other deeds which evidently emanated from the same source. In this will, Wrottesley is written Wrotteslea.²

¹ *Ex infor.* Sir Frederick Madden, late Keeper of the MSS. at the British Museum.

² The will is dated from Dunnintune (Donnington) and contains bequests to the churches of Worcester, Hamton, Pencrich and Tong. The paragraph concerning Wrottesley is somewhat obscure, and runs as follows in the original will. After a bequest to Aelfilde his kinswoman of a hide of land in Tardebigg, the will proceeds, "And if I live longer than she, then I have the land at Wrotteslea, and all that belongs to my inheritance," but it makes no disposition of it.

After the Norman Conquest, Wrottesley formed one of the numerous lordships bestowed by the Conqueror on Robert de Stafford, the founder of the great house of Stafford, Dukes of Buckingham.

The Domesday Survey of A.D. 1085-86 gives the following account of it:—

“Terra Roberti de Stadford.”

In Saisdone Hundred. Ipse R. tenet in Wrotolei ij hidas et Glodoen de eo. Hunta tenuit et liber homo fuit. Terra est ij carucate, in dominico est una, et j villanus et j bordarius. Silva dimidiata, leuva longa et ij quarentena lata. Valet iiijs.

This value, 4s., for a manor of two hides is abnormally low, being equal in fact, only to the assessment for the Danegelt which was at the rate of 2s. a hide; but Staffordshire, at this date, had not recovered from the devastation wrought in it by the Conqueror after the insurrection of 1069. Many of the manors in Staffordshire are returned by the Commissioners of 1085 as entirely waste.

Fourteen years, however, before the Domesday Survey, Wrottesley had passed into the possession of the monks of Evesham by a grant of Robert de Stafford, of which the following is an old translation, which exists in the College of Arms and is supposed to have been made by Cooke, Clarence King of Arms, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The Latin original has been lost.¹

“+ In the yere from the incarnation of our lord MLXXXII in the seventh yere of the raigne of William King of the Englishmen, I Rodbert de Stadfort having a care over my soule and also for the soule of my foresaid lord King William and also for my wife and my parents, have given certen land Wrotleslea by name to the holy monastery of Eovesham by the yeens and consent of the same my lord William into the hand of the lord Agelwius Abbot, my faithful frend, also I have given the foresaid land with woods and medowes and pastures which to it of right belonge so that the church for ever shall it possess and that none my adversary shall presume to detract from it or take awaie anything, and if it so be that anie my enemy shall presume to violate these my almes which I have given to God for the remission of my sins, and the health of my soule, be he alienated from the inheritance of God, and damned amongst the infernal ghosts. Amen.

“This land Worteslea hath 2 hydes bounded with these meeres &c. in Saxon.

¹ MS. L. 17, College of Arms.

There probably never was a monarch less likely to be moved by the suggestions of pity than King John, or at the same time more licentious in his amours. The Chronicles inform us that no woman who sued in his courts and who took his fancy escaped without dishonour, and this propensity of the King has been reckoned amongst the principal causes of the detestation with which he was held by his people.¹ Whatever the King's motives may have been, his decision in this case produced an important rule of law, for a legal commentator has written in the margin of the roll, "*femina nupta habet assisam de hereditate sua, ubi vir suus non vult comparere.*"

The same Roll gives us the names of the knights selected to try the cause. It states that Hamo de Weston, Mansel de Pateshull, Nicholas de Burceston, Pagan de Parles, the four Knights summoned to elect twelve to form the Great Assize between Henry de Duneston, plaintiff, and Hawise de Waterfall, tenant of four bovates of land in Buterdon, appeared and elected these :

William de Chetelton	Nicholas de Meer (Maer)
Adam de Aldithelega (Audeley)	Thomas fitzRoger (of Haughton)
Ralph de Blore	William de Ipstanis (Ipstones)
John Sautcheverel	Hugh de Okovere
William Mauveisin	Robert de Fereres (of Loxley)
Robert de Thomeharn (Tumhorn)	Nicholas de Mutton (Mytton)
Walter de Witefeld	William de Hundesacre
Peter Giffard (of Chillington)	William fitzGuy (of Womburne) ²

A day was given to the parties at the next advent of the Justices, when the jury were to appear.

The Pipe Rolls of the second and third years of King John return Hawyse as owing 40s. for a Great Assize against Henry de Deneston. On the Pipe Roll of 4 John she is returned as having paid two marks, and owing one mark ; on the Pipe Roll of 5 John she is returned as quit, the remaining mark having been paid.

The trial had, in fact, come off at the Iter of the Justices, in by the famous Justiciary of Henry II, Ralph de Glauville, to supersede the barbarous wager of battle, which up to his time had been the only method of determining the right to a freehold. It is interesting from its containing the germ of our modern trial by jury, for the tradition that Alfred established this method of trial has no foundation in fact. The Knights of Great Assize were called recognitors, because they were selected for their knowledge of the matter in dispute, and it would appear from the form of the writ, that affinity or relationship to the parties formed no bar to their selection. They were in fact witnesses, as well as judges.

¹ Monarchs seldom sue in vain, but I am afraid Hawyse fell an easy victim, for in a suit of 7 Hen. III (1223), when one of her sons, Luke de Butterton, claimed land in Turleston from the Prior of Tuttebury, by a writ of mort d'ancestor, the Prior pleaded that Luke was a bastard. The cause was referred to the Bishop, who returned that he was legitimate, but this took place before the change was made in the mode of reference to the ecclesiastical courts, and the latter always returned a man as legitimate if the parents were subsequently married.

² The words in brackets are added by the writer.

Staffordshire of that year, the suit having been amalgamated with another brought against Ingrith, the sister of Hawise, by the same plaintiff. The entry on the Roll is as follows:—

William de Yppestane (Ipstones), John de Sautcheverel, Henry de Wotton, Nicholas de Mutton, the four knights summoned to elect twelve to form the Great Assize between Henry de Deneston, plaintiff, and Ingrid de Butterton, tenant, of four bovates of land in Buterdon, respecting which Ingrid had put herself on the Great Assize of the King, and prayed for a verdict as to which of them had the greater right to the land in question. And because the land is partible between her and her sisters, and she could not answer to the plea without them, they all appeared, and put themselves on the Assize together with Ingrid, and the said knights elected these, viz:—

Adam de Aditheley	Jordan de Kniteley (Knightley)
Hamon de Weston	William Bagot of Holedale
Thomas fitzRogge of Hocton (Haughton)	Robert de Ferrars
William de Greseley	William de Handesacre
William Mauveisin	Ralph de Hintes
Yvo de Walton	Ralph de Knotton (Cnutton)
Nicholas de Burgeston (Burston)	Philip FitzBishop (de Burgo)
Ralph de Blore	Henry de Roele (Rowley).

On the same Roll occurs another suit which gives some additional information respecting the coheirs of Robert de Waterfall. It states that William de Ippestanes, John de Sautcheverel, Nicholas de Mutton, and Henry de Wotton, the four knights summoned to elect twelve to return a verdict between Thomas fitzRalph and Yngrith de Buterdon, respecting two bovates of land in Anecot (Onecote), appeared, and Ralph fitzJordan came into Court, and stated that he had in his custody the son of Eda, the sister of Ingrid (*sic*), who was the eldest daughter of Robert fitzAdam, and ought to have his portion of the land, which similar to that in question (*sicut de illa*), was partible between them—that is to say, that Yngrid had three sisters, viz., Mary, the wife of Turgist, and Hawiz, and Marjory, the wife of Roger Putrel, and another named Eda, who was dead, but whose heir was living viz., William son of Robert; and because one sister could not lose nor win without the others, inasmuch as the inheritance was partible, and in the same way those would lose who might recover against one sister, it was considered that all should appear, and put themselves on the Great Assize together with the said Yngrid. A concord was made (*Concordia facta*), and Thomas gave to the King half a mark, for which Thomas de Kersewell was his surety.¹

¹ Assize Roll Stafford, 5 John, m. 4.

Willelmo domino de Perton, Johanne domino de Tresel, Willelmo domino de Overton, Willelmo de Caldewelle, Willelmo le fremon de Wortteslewe, Thoma del Wyregis¹ et pluribus aliis.²

Seal, a fleur-de-lys, with the legend, S. Hugonis de Wrotele.

Omnibus Chrispi fidelibus presens scriptum visuris vel auditoris, Alicia relicta Henrici le Phremon de Wrottesley salutem in domino. Noveritis universitas vestra me omnino relaxasse et pro me et heredibus meis in perpetuum quietelamasse Hugoni de Wrottesleg domino meo et heredibus suis et suis assignatis quibuscunque pro una marca argenti que mihi dedit per manibus totam illam terram cum pertinentiis mihi vel heredibus meis aliquo modo contingentem in Enchstonesfelde una cum jure et clamio quod habui vel aliquo modo in processu temporis habere potui sine aliquo retenemento Ita quod, etc. Hiis testibus Willelmo de Perton, Radulpho de Bissoburi, Johanne de Tresel, Roberto Buffari, Willelmo Warino, Johanne de Bileston et aliis.³

Seal, an effigy of a man on foot with a sword, and the legend, Sigillum secretum.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Hugo de Wrotteslegh filius Willelmi de Wrotteslegh dedi, etc. Willelmo de Waterfall palmario, totam partem meam terre quam habeo in campo quod vocatur Bothum juxta Crablow quam Ingrith mater mea in liberum maritagium aliquando tenuit, etc. His testibus Willelmo de Chetilton milite, Thoma Meverel de Thruleg, Roberto Shirard de Forda, Willelmo Powtrel et aliis.⁴

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Ricardus filius Willelmi domini quondam de Wrotusleye dedi, etc., Hugoni fratri meo, domino de Wrotusleye totum jus quod habui vel habere potui in quadam placea terre que vocatur Bettebruge, que se extendit in longitudine ab assarto Willelmi filii Odi usque ad ripam que meta est inter Wrotusleye et Tetenhale, in latitudine a regali via inter Wrotusleye et Wulwenehampton usque ad viam ecclesiasticam inter Wrotusleye et Tetenhale, Habendum, etc., sibi et heredibus suis, etc. Hiis testibus Rogero Rectore ecclesie de Bissoburi, Thoma de Creye, Willelmo filio domini de Wrotusleye, Hugone fratre suo et multis aliis.⁵

Seal destroyed.

¹ The Wergs in Tettenhall.

² Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860.

³ Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860. The first four witnesses were the lords respectively of Perton, Bushbury, Trysull, and Nether Penn. The deed, however, refers to land on the moorlands, near Elkstone, part of the fee of Waterfall, and must have been overlooked when the other deeds were handed over to the purchasers of Butterton and Waterfall.

⁴ Vincent MSS., College of Arms. If Ingrith de Butterton held land in frank marriage, she must have been married in her father's lifetime, and therefore at the date of the suit of 1203 must have been either a wife or a widow. The first witness was the Lord of Cheddleton, and the second, Thomas Meverel, was Lord of Throwley. Both these places are in the neighbourhood of Waterfall.

⁵ Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Henricus filius Willelmi de Wrotesley dedi, etc., domino Willelmo Bagot domino de Patushul et heredibus suis vel assignatis, molendinum meum quod habui de dono Willelmi quondam domini de Wrotesley patris mei situm super rivum de Haukeswel in bosco de Brewode. Tenendum et habendum, etc. Reddendo inde annuatim ipse et heredes sui unum obolum in festo Nativitatis beate Marie ad lumen beate Marie apud Pattushul. Et ego, etc. (clause of warranty). Hiis testibus Domino Radulpho Basset, Hugone de Bolinghale, Philippo de Pres, Philippo de Beckebury, Rabo (*sic*) de Bispeston, Henrico de eadem et multis aliis.¹

Seal destroyed.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Margeria filia Henrici de Wrottesle, in pura virginitate mea relaxavi et quietclamavi pro me et heredibus meis in perpetuum Willelmo filio Hugonis domini de Wrottesle totum jus et clamum (*sic*) quod habui vel habere potui ad quoddam assartum in villa de Wrottesle, quod pater meus quondam tenuit, et ad totam terram et redditum cum bosco et vasto et partem cujusdam molendini in villa de Waterfal quod Ricardus de Wrottesle aliquando tenuit. Ita videlicet quod nec ego nec heredes mei aliquid jus vel clamum de cetero infra feudum de Waterfal exigere vel vindicare poterimus; ut hec mea relaxatio et quieta clamatio rata et stabilis in perpetuum permaneat huic presenti carte sigillum meum apposui. Hiis testibus Radulpho domino de Bissouri, Roberto de Levinton, Rogero de Baganholt, Benedicto de Boterdon, Philippo clerico de Hildesdale et multis aliis.²

Seal, a fleur-de-lys, with the legend, S. Margerie fil: Henrici.

Sciant presentes et futuri, quod Agnes filia Henrici de Wrottesleye, in pura virginitate mea relaxavi, et quietclamavi pro me et heredibus meis in perpetuum Willelmo filio Hugonis de Wrottesley et heredibus suis vel assignatis totum jus et clameum quod habui vel habere potui in quatuor bovatis terre cum messuagiis dicte terre pertinentibus in villa de Waterfall et in tribus cotagiis et in quadam placia terre que vocatur Leyis et in sexta parte molendini de Waterfall quas quatuor bovatas terre cum messuagiis predictis, Ricardus et Bertremius filii Willelmi quondam domini de Wrottesleye de dono ejusdem Willelmi patris eorum habuerunt, et totum jus et clameum quod habui vel habere potui in quodam assarto in Wrottesleye quod Henricus pater meus quondam tenuit. Ita videlicet, etc. Hiis testibus Henrico de Codeshale, Rogero fratre de Henrico, Adamo filio Nicholai de Halken (Oaken), Willelmo Gilberd de Codeshale, Paulino de Bilbrobra (Billbrook) et multis aliis.³

¹ Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860. The first witness, Ralph Basset of Drayton, was killed at the battle of Evesham in 1265. He was Lord of Pattingham, near Patshul, and the other witnesses were all near neighbours of Sir William Bagot, in Shropshire. The deed shows that Hawkwell formed part of the old Forest of Brewode, which had been disafforested by King John, and was originally no part of the fee of Patshul.

² Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860.

³ From copies of Butterdon deeds at Wrottesley—the witnesses are all freeholders in Codsall, Oaken or Billbrook.

other coparceners, and his grandson Hugh de Wrottesley dealt with the property under the designation of the manor of Boterdon.¹

In order to complete the story of the manor of Butterton-on-the-moors, it has been necessary to outstrip some of the events of William de Wrottesley's life. In 28 Edward I, *i.e.*, in the year 1300, he was appointed by Letters Patent one of three Justices of County Stafford for the due observance of Magna Charta and the Charter of the Forests. In this way his name becomes associated with one of the great constitutional landmarks of English history.

The general discontent produced by the arbitrary conduct of the King, and the heavy burdens thrown upon all classes for the support of the King's warlike policy, culminated at length into open resistance to the Royal authority, at the period of the proposed expedition to Flanders in 1297. A large body of the Barons refused to accompany the King, on the ground that they were not bound to serve him beyond the seas, and they shortly afterwards delivered to him a formal remonstrance complaining of the violation of Magna Charta and of the Charter of the Forests, and demanding a confirmation of the two charters, and a renunciation of the King's claim to impose aids and tallages without the consent of Parliament. The dissensions between the King and his subjects continued for nearly three years, but the firm attitude assumed by the Barons, and the necessities of the King's position at length prevailed, and in the twenty-eighth year of his reign, he affixed the Great Seal of England to an absolute confirmation of the Great and Lesser Charters without any reservation of the Royal prerogative.²

The historian Hume goes very fully into these transactions, following closely the text of Walter Hemingford's chronicle, but the first writer who showed a full appreciation of their importance was Hallam, who in his Constitutional History styles the Confirmation of the Charters by Edward I, one of the pillars of the English Constitution.

The first Statute, being issued in the form of a charter, was sealed with the Great Seal at Ghent in Flanders on 25 November in the twenty-fifth year of his reign. Complaints, however, having been made that the Charter was not observed, an additional Act known as the "Articuli super chartas" was passed in 28 Edward I. In these additional articles the King remits all his anger against Humphrey de Bohun, the Constable, Roger Bigod, the Marshal, and all the other Earls, Barons, Knights, and tenants of land to the yearly value of £20, who

¹ Rot. Pat., 29 Edward I, m. 12 dorso.

² See on this subject Lingard, Hume, Hallam and Stubbs.

At Whitsuntide 1306 (22 May) his eldest son William was knighted with great solemnity before the High Altar of Westminster, with Edward Prince of Wales, and 267 others. Ashmole in his introduction to the History of the Garter, says that "King Edward I to adorn the splendour of his Court and augment the glory of his intended expedition into Scotland, at Whitsuntide, in the thirty-fourth year of his reign, begirt Edward of Carnarvon, his eldest son, with the military belt, and this young prince, immediately afterwards at the High Altar in Westminster Abbey, conferred the same honour upon near 300 gentlemen, the sons of Earls, Barons, and Knights. The habits, equipage and ceremonies of which grand solemnity being already transcribed at large out of Matthew of Westminster, both by Mr. Spelman and Mr. Camden, we shall thereunto refer our reader." He then proceeds, "out of memory of these noble persons, with such as are descended from them," to give a catalogue of their names taken from the Wardrobe Accounts of that year. From this list, it appears that the following members of Staffordshire families were knighted upon this occasion:—

William de Birmingham	Thomas de Brompton
John de Weston	Ralph Basset
Ralph Bagot	John de Somery
Peter de Gresley	William de Wrottesley
Roger de Somerville	John de Harcourt, and
William Trussell	William de Handsacre. ¹

A writ on the Close Roll of 34 Edward I, dated 6 April, commands the Sheriffs of Counties to proclaim throughout their Bailiwicks that all who wish to be made Knights are to repair to London before Whitsuntide to receive the vestments required in such case, which will be delivered to them of the King's gift in order that they may take the degree of knighthood on that day.²

It may, perhaps, interest the lady readers who may glance at these pages if I give a description of the dress of William de Wrottesley on this occasion. The wardrobe account says:—*"Willelmo de Wrottesle, facto milite, ad coyntesium suum ii pannos de arista, eidem ad culcitram suam, iii pannos purpres."*³

¹ Many others who afterwards played an important part in the transactions of the following reign were knighted on the same occasion, amongst these were Piers de Gavaston, Roger de Mortimer, Hugh le Despencer the younger, William de Montagu, Peter de Manley, and John de Warenne.

² Rot. Claus, 34 Edward I, m. 16, dorso.

³ Exchequer Accounts, Wardrobe $\frac{3}{25}$. Ralph Bagot and Peter de Gresley are the ancestors of the present Lord Bagot and of Sir Robert Gresley of Drakelowe. As the ceremonial included the Bath, as well as the Vigil, and a distinctive Badge was given to each Knight, many antiquaries, including Camden, Dugdale and others, designate the Knights made on this occasion as the original Knights of the Bath.

suis termino incipiente ad festum Purificationis Beate Marie anno domini M^oCC^oLXX septimo usque ad finem viginti unius annorum plenarie completorum, libere, quiete, etc., reddendo inde annuatim mihi et heredibus meis, ipse et heredes sui, quatuor solidos et sex denarios argenti, etc. Hiis testibus, Hugone de Boterdone, Rogero de Baginalt, Willelmo de Hudlesdale, Ricardo filio Ade de Boterdone, Willelmo filio Willelmi de eadem, Willelmo Clerico et aliis.¹

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Willelmus Wither miles, dedi, concessi, relaxavi, et quietclamavi pro me et heredibus meis Willelmo filio Hugonis domini de Wrottesleye totam terram et redditum cum bosco et wasto in villa de Waterfall quod emi de Ricardo de Wrottesleye, una cum tota parte mea cujusdam molendini in eadem villa. Tenendum de me et heredibus meis, etc. Pro hac autem donatione, etc. dedit mihi predictus Willelmus viginti marcas argenti per manibus. Hiis testibus Benedicto de Boterdone, Willelmo Powtrell, Rogero de Baganholt, Thoma Powtrell, Willelmo de Troweley et aliis.²

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Alicia filia quondam Willelmi domini de Wrottesleye in ligia potestate et pura viduitate mea dedi concessi, et hac presenti carta mea confirmavi pro me et heredibus meis Willelmo domino de Wrottesle et heredibus suis vel suis assignatis totam illam terram quam pater meus mihi dedit in liberum maritagium in villa de Wrotteslee. Tenendum et habendum de me vel assignatis meis sibi vel suis assignatis, totam predictam terram cum omnibus pertinentiis ad dictam terram pertinentibus jure hereditario in perpetuum. Reddendo inde annuatim mihi vel meis assignatis ipse et heredes sui vel sui assignati ad terrinam vite mee decem bussellos duri bladi et unum bussal (sic) faborum et pisarum et tres quarterias avene, London, ad tres anni terminos, videlicet ad festum Sancti Martini quinque estric: frumenti et quinque siligini et unam quarteriam avene, ad Pascam quinque estrac: (sic) frumenti et quinque siligini et unum quartum (sic) avene, et ad assencionem domini unum bussal faborum et pisarum et unum quartum avene pro omni exactione vel demanda ad me vel ad assignatos meos pertinentem. Et si contingat quod dictus Willelmus in solutione predicta ad aliquem terminum sessavit (sic) quod absit, dabit ad opus ecclesie de Tetehal dimidium marcham, et ad majorem securitatem observandam huic scripto sigilla sua alternatim apposuerunt. Hiis testibus Willelmo domino de Witindon, Willelmo domino de Evenefeld, Roberto Buffari, Roberto de Hageleye, Henrico filio Rogeri Clerico et aliis.

Seal, a circular seal with a fret on it similar to seal on deed of 1298, inscription illegible.³

¹ From copies of Butterson deeds formerly at Wrottesley.

² From copies of Butterson deeds at Wrottesley. The grantor, Sir William Wyther, was a Derbyshire knight of some distinction, who had married Orabella, the widow of Sir Robert de Bec, the Lord of Hopton, Tean and Checkley, co. Stafford. In 11 Edward I he was one of the Commissioners of Array for the Welsh war in cos. Derby and Notts, and in 26 Edward I he had letters of protection whilst serving with the King in Flanders, on which occasion letters of respite from all debts were issued in his favour for the cos. of Derby, York, Hereford, and Stafford.

³ Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860. The deed is an indenture, and the seal is probably that of William de Wrottesley. The nominative in the last clause was omitted in the original deed.

cesserunt et statuerunt bundas et metas subscriptas, tenendas et observandas pro se et heredibus suis in perpetuum sine aliqua reclamacione in futurum, videlicet a quadam quercu que vocatur le Tyndede Mere Ok que est bunda inter Radulphum Basset et predictos Willelmum et Johannem, descendendo usque le Mere Wey et sic descendendo le Mere Wey usque ad proximam corneram assarti Galfridi le Crouthour versus villatam de Wrottesle et de dicta cornera descendendo per quoddam fossatum usque ad quandam quercum, et de dicta quercu descendendo per quoddam novum fossatum sicut perambulatum usque ad corneram de Wodewalle Medue, et de dicta cornera per idem fossatum usque ex opposito (*sic*) cornere assarti Hugonis de Wrottesleye quod vocatur Cronemor, et de dicta cornera ascendendo per fossatum dicti assarti usque ad assartum Willelmi de Wrottesle, et de dicto assarto ascendendo per fossatum ejusdem usque ad corneram assarti Willelmi de le Hale quod vocatur Grenehul. Et est sciendum, etc. In quorum omnium testimonium et memoriam sempiternam utraque pars alterius scripto ad modum cirograffi confecto et partito suum apposuit sigillum. Hiis testibus, Radulpho de Byssebury, Johanne de Tresel, Philippe de Lutteleye, Willelmo del Horewode, Thoma de Lutteleye, Roberto Buffary, Warino de Penna, Galfrido de Bilston Hugone de Wrottesle, Johanne de Lappele, Clerico et aliis.¹



Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Willelmus de Wrottesleye miles dedi, concessi, et hac presenti carta mea confirmavi Willelmo filio meo et heredi meo et Johanne filie Rogeri Basset uxori sue omnes terras meas et tenementa super moras, videlicet in Boterdone, Waterfall,

¹ Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860. Of the witnesses, the first three were lords respectively of Busbury, Trysull and Lutley. Ralph de Byssebury and John de Tresel occur as Knights of Great Assize on the Quo Warranto Pleas of 21 Edward I (printed). Robert Buffary was lord of Nether Penn, and Warine de Penn was tenant under him at the same place.

et assignatis suis comunam pasture totius terre quam dictus dominus Radulphus tenuit in defenso die confectionis presentum in Patyngham, et quod predictus Radulphus Basset pro se et heredibus suis et assignatis possint se appropiare in vasto suo de Patyngham in bosco vel extra absque contradictione vel impedimento dicti domini Willelmi vel heredum suorum in tantum longitudine et latitudine quantum extendit se tota terra quam tenuit dictus dominus Willelmus in defenso die confectionis presentum in Wrottesleye. Ita quod decetero neutra partium in comuna pasture in locis predictis nihil vendicare possint ut in forma predicta continetur. In cujus rei testimonium partes predictae presenti scripto indentato sigilla sua alternatim apposuerunt. Hiis testibus Dominis Johanne Somery, Willelmo Bagot, Willelmo de Stafford, Willelmo de Mere militibus Johanne de Perton et aliis. Datum apud Drayton die et anno supradictis.¹

Seal, three piles in point, and a quarter on which the charge is obliterated. Legend, S. Radulphi Basset.

Besides the above deeds there was formerly at Wrottesley an original account of the Wrottesley Bailiff for half of the year 22 Edward I (A.D. 1294), contained on a small narrow parchment roll, about two feet long and five inches wide. As this account contains the prices actually received or paid for the commodities mentioned in it, it may be useful to print it. It also throws light on the administration of an estate in the thirteenth century. It is headed:

Mem^a de compoto Thome Propositi domini de Wrottesle apud Wrottesle a festo (*blank*) anno regni Regis E. xxij usque ad (*blank*) anno dicto incluso.²

Rents of Mills.

12s. 6d. from the mill of Wythwyk, of St. John's term, and 10s. from the mill of Trille for the same term, and 12s. 6d. from the mill of Wythwyk for Michaelmas term, and 10s. for the mill of Trille for the same term.

Issues from the Manors.

4d. rent from Richard le Baxtere, 4s. 8d. from the herbage of the orchard and the cemetery (cymiterii), 9s. from the herbage of meadows and fields sold for "rewenage" by the view of Thomas, and 6d. for firewood, and 2s. 3d. for 108 pigeons

¹ Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860. The first witness, John de Somery, was the Baron of Dudley; William Bagot was Lord of Patshull and of the Hyde, near Stafford; William de Stafford was Lord of Sandon; and William de Mere was Lord of Maer, co. Stafford.

² The accounts are in Latin, but the Provost is often at a loss for a Latin word, and then takes refuge in his native English. These words are distinguished by inverted commas.

(columbellis) sold, viz., 1*d.* for 4 pigeons, and 2*d.* for the "escact" of one dead ox, and 19*d.* for the skin of one dead ox, and 7*s.* 3*d.* for hay sold by the view of Thomas Cok.

Sale of Stock (venditio instauri).

30*s.* for four oxen sold, viz., for each 7*s.* 6*d.*

Pleas and Perquisites of the Court.

16*s.* 2*d.* for issues of the Court held on the Saturday after the Feast of the Assumption, and 8*s.* 11*d.* for issues of the Court held on the Tuesday the Feast of St. Martin.

Summa £12 15*s.* 7*d.*

Cost of Carts (carucarum).

In iron bought for carts 2*s.* 3*d.*, and for three carts newly made of the lord's own timber 2*s.* 6*d.*, and for two ox yokes made 1*d.*, and for two "buddibus" bought 4*d.*, and for the pay of the smith 8*d.*, and for two carts newly made of the lord's own timber 20*d.*, and for one "thille" for corn newly made 4*d.*, and for the mending of one tumbrel 1*d.*, and for "stroc nails" bought for old wheels 2*d.*, and for "cart loutes" bought 6½*d.*, and for 100 "clout nails" bought 1*d.*, and in grease and "vutto" bought for carts 5*d.*, and for a cord for tying the carts 2½*d.*, and for one "colore" (collar) bought 4*d.*, and for headstalls (*capistris*) made 1*d.*, and for one "cartsadel" (cart-saddle) bought 2*d.*, and for two pounds of "floukus" ½*d.*, and for one "[. . .] corde" bought ¼*d.*, and in "vippecorde" 1*d.*

Shoeing of Horses.

For the shoes of cart horses 17*d.*, and for the shoes of one colt coming from the moors, 2*d.*

Cost of Houses.

For the making of two cottages de novo 40*d.*, and for the roofing of them (copertorium) 10*d.*, and for a "thatcher" for the above for two days and for the thatching, (copertorium) of the beerhouse, and the house of Alice de Gatecode 3*d.*, and for a carpenter repairing the house of Alice de Gatecode for two days 3*s.* ¼*d.*, and for 1,100 "lathe nayles" bought 6½*d.*, and for a man making lathes out of the lord's own timber, 1*d.*

Purchase of Corn.

13*s.* for 4 quarters of wheat (frumenti) bought at Stafford, price of each quarter 3*s.* 4*d.*, and 21*d.* for seven strikes of oats (avene), price of a strike 3*d.*, and for two strikes of peas bought for the pigs 7*d.*, and for one strike of barley (ordei) bought 5*d.*

The other Knights, in addition to the King and the Prince of Wales, were :—

Henry, Earl of Lancaster,	Sir Hugh de Courtenay,
Piers de Grailly, Captal de Buch,	Sir Miles de Stapleton,
John, Lord de Lisle,	Sir Sanchio Dabrigecourt,
John, Lord Beauchamp,	Sir Niel Loryng, and
Ralph, Lord Stafford,	Sir Henry Eam of Brabant. ¹

In the following year, viz., about May 1349, a pestilence, known as the Black Death, and which was more deadly in its effects than any other recorded in history, broke out in England and lasted till the following September. There is reason to believe, from an inspection of the Clergy Rolls, that it must have carried off more than half the population of the kingdom. Thus of the incumbents of parishes in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 96 died out of 141. In the East Riding, 60 died out of 95. In Nottinghamshire, 65 died out of 126. In the Norwich Diocese, 527 died out of 799. Three Archbishops of Canterbury died one after the other within the above period, and at the Abbey of Croyton, in Lincolnshire, the whole community died except the Abbot and Prior.

¹ As many conflicting views are held respecting the date of the institution of the Order, it may be as well if I state my reasons for selecting the year 1348. The preamble to the Statutes of the Garter gives the date as 23 Edward III, or A.D. 1349, but these Statutes are not cotemporary with the foundation of the Order, they name, for instance, the Duke of Lancaster and the Earl of Stafford amongst the original Knights, and these dignities were not conferred till 1351. Froissart names the year 1344 as the date of the foundation of the Order, but he describes the number of the original Knights as forty, and is supposed to have confounded the creation of the Order with the institution of King Arthur's Round Table, which had been revived by Edward III about that date. Froissart could only speak from hearsay, for he was not born till 1337.

A strong argument against this early date is the fact that the Prince of Wales was only fourteen years of age, and was not knighted till the landing at La Hogue, when he conferred the same honour on Sir Roger Mortimer and Sir William de Montague, both of whom were original Companions of the Order.

The Chronicle of Thomas de la More, a cotemporary writer, fixes the date of the First Chapter in 1350, and this date has been accepted by Selden, Lilv, Speed and Segar.

On the other hand, Anstis and Beltz have written in favour of the older date, 1344. Ashmole admits the date given in the Statutes, which is 1349.

In the face of this divergency of dates and of opinions based on them, it is best to refer to the Public Records, and it will be found that the first mention of the Garter and motto occurs on a Roll containing the Wardrobe Accounts from Mich. 21 Edward III to 31 Jan. 23 Edward III, where the following entry is to be found, about half way down the Roll :—

"Ad faciendum XII garteria de blue brondata de auro et serico, quotibet habente dictamen Hony soyt q' mal y pense, et ad faciendum alios apparatus pro hastiludie Regis apud Eltham anno Regis predicti."

The previous date mentioned in these accounts is, without doubt, 21 Edward III, or 1347, and this has misled both Anstis and Beltz, who have overlooked the fact that Edward was at Calais nearly the whole of this year, and did not arrive in England till the middle of October. The great bulk of the army did not return before November, and it is inconceivable that any tournaments could have taken place in that year. The entries on the Roll are not in chronological order, and many

Whilst the pestilence was at its height, viz., on the 16 August 1349, Sir Hugh executed a deed conveying to trustees his manor of Wrottesley and the mills of Wightwyke and Tryllemulne, and by another of the same date he conveyed to the same trustees all his goods and chattels, moveable and immoveable in the same places. On the 23rd of the same month, these trustees reconveyed the same manor and mills to "Sir Hugh, and to *her whom he had first married*,¹ and to the heirs of the body of the said Hugh," and failing such to John, son of John de Tettebury (his half brother), and to his male issue, and failing such to Walter, Thomas and Leo, his other half brothers, in succession in tail male, and failing such to his own right heirs. It would appear by this deed that his first wife Elizabeth had died, but had left issue by him. The seal attached to the first deed shows that he had relinquished at this date the Verdon fret, and had assumed in place of it the arms of his mother, Joan Basset. The shield bears the three piles and a quarter Ermine, but the crest is the same as on the deed of 1337, viz., a boar's head issuing from a ducal coronet.²

Amongst other victims, the pestilence had carried off the whole family of Sir Hugh's cousin, William de Pillatonhale. This William had left two nephews and a niece, who were

previous entries relate to the year 22 Edward III. For instance, the first entry relates to the Feast of All Saints, 21 Edward III, and the ninth entry relates to the Feast of Easter, 22 Edward III, then follow more entries relating to the year 21 Edward III, and the entry above given follows after a long interval lower down the Record. Amongst the entries ostensibly for the year 21 Edward III are issues for the King's tournaments at Reading and Bury, they follow more issues *pro corpore Regis* at Windsor *anno predicto*, and then issues for the tournament at Lichfield, *anno predicto*, viz., 21 Edward III, and then from another part of the Roll we find that the tournament at Lichfield took place on the 9 April, 22 Edward III. It is quite clear, therefore, that the year xxi has been written on the Roll by mistake for xxii.

The first mention of the *Society of St. George* is to be found in the Wardrobe Accounts of the Prince of Wales. These show that the Prince presented twenty-four Garters to the Knights of the Society in 22 Edward III, viz. in 1348.

The College of St. George at Windsor was founded by Letters Patent, dated 6 August in the same year, viz., 22 Edward III, and the only other contemporary evidence which we possess is the account of Thomas de la More, which gives the year 1350 as the date of the first Chapter of the Order. The Feast of the Round Table was held at Whitsuntide, and putting all the evidence together, it seems all but certain that the Order of the Garter was created at the Whitsuntide Festival of 1348. The first Festival of St. George after this date would not occur till April 1349, and this accounts, perhaps, for the latter date having been named in the Statutes of the Order. It should be noted, however, that the latter year is the year of the Great Pestilence, and it is quite possible that a further adjournment took place, and that Thomas de la More is right when he names 1350 as the date of the first Chapter of the Order. It is a minor circumstance, but still of some significance, that this latter date coincides with the year in which Sir Hugh Wrottesley was placed in the King's household with a pension of £40 a year.

¹ *illi que prius duxit in uxorem*. It is difficult to understand this clause of the deed.

² Original deeds at Wrottesley, copied 1860, 1862. These deeds will be given in full at the end of this chapter

coheirs to the lands and Bailiwick of Teddesley, and were wards of the Crown. On the 7 September 1349 the King granted to Sir Hugh, for his good service, the Bailiwick and the lands, and the wardship and marriages of the heirs of William de Pilatonehale, deceased, which were in his hands by reason of the minority of John, son of John de Kenilworth, and of Margaret, sister of John, son of John, and of William, son of Richard de Engleton, the nearest of kin of the said William de Pilatonehale. The heirs were the issue of two sisters of William, all the male heirs and intermediate generation having been swept away by the plague. The coheirs could have been only a few weeks old, for William de Engleton proved his age in 44 Edward III, and John's relief for his moiety of the Bailiwick is entered on the Pipe Roll of 45 Edward III. A writ of 28 Edward III shews that the third child Margaret had died before that date.²

William de Pilatonehale was one of the Hereditary Foresters of Cannoek, holding the Bailiwick of the Hay of Teddesley and Huntingdon, and on obtaining livery of the Bailiwick, Sir Hugh appears to have taken up his abode entirely at Pilatonehale, for his name occurs as a witness to several deeds of this date referring to that neighbourhood, and the house at Wrottesley was allowed to fall out of repair. He likewise appointed one of his tenants at Huntingdon to act as his Bailiff at Wrottesley, for four years after this date he was suing William, son of Alice atte Wode of Huntingdon, to render to him an account for the time he had acted as his Bailiff at Wrottesley.³

In the following year, 1350, we have the earliest cotemporary account of a Chapter of the Order of the Garter. The author of the Chronicle, Thomas de la More, writes apparently under the impression that the ceremony he describes was the first of its kind, and this is not unlikely to have been the case, for the plague had become general in England before St. George's Day 1349.

¹ Patent Roll, 23 Edward III. part iii, m. 33. The following pedigree will shew the mortality caused by the plague in this family:—

William de Pylatonehale.—Rosea, d. of Sir William de Wrottesley,
living 1296.

William de Pilatonehale,
living 21 Edward III,
dead 23 Edward III,
ob. s.p.

James, living 21
Edward III,
dead 23 Edward
III, ob. s.p.

Margaret.—
John de
Kenilworth,
dead 23
Edward III.

Joan.—
Richard de
Engleton, dead
23 Edward III.

John.

Margaret.

William.

² Patent Roll, 23 Edward III, part i, m. 12.

³ De Banco, Trinity, 27 Edward III, m. 174 dorso.

He writes, "In this year the King celebrated a great Feast at Windsor Castle, where there were present, besides the King and his eldest son, the Earls of Northampton, Warwick, Suffolk and Salisbury, and other Barons as well as simple Knights, '*simpli-cesque milites*,' viz., Roger de Mortimer, now Earl of March, Sir Walter de Magny (Mauny), Sir William fitz Warin, Sir John de Lisle, Sir John de Mohun, Sir John de Beauchamp, Sir Walter de Paveley, Sir Thomas Wale and Sir Hugh de Wrottesley, all of whom, together with the King, were clothed in tunics of russet, powdered with Garters of a green (*sic*) color, and wearing likewise Garters on the right leg, and mantles of blue with shields of the arms of St. George. In this dress, with their heads bare, they devoutly heard mass sung by the Bishops of Canterbury, Winchester and Exeter, and afterwards sat at table to celebrate a festival in honor of the Holy Martyr and the noble Brotherhood, which had been specially instituted for this purpose and was called the Society of St. George of the Garter "*Comitū Sancti Georgii de la Gartière (sic)*."¹

The Black Death of the previous year had left many vacancies in the Royal Household, and Sir Hugh was appointed to fill one of them in October of this year. By Letters Patent, dated 18 October 24 Edward III, the King granted to him for his good service, and for his fee, and for his attendance upon his person (*et pro feodo suo, et pro morā suā nobiscum*) a yearly sum of £40, to be received at the Exchequer by equal portions at Easter and Michaelmas, until such time, as rents or lands to the same value could be assigned for the payment of it to him for his life.² On the renewal of these Letters Patent in the following May, the words "*pro feodo suo*" were omitted, and the Household accounts shew that he received pay as a Knight in the Royal Household in addition to his annuity of £40.

At Easter 25 Edward III, Sir Hugh appeared in person at the Exchequer, and received £20 for the previous term of St. Michael.³ On the following 20 May, however, he obtained fresh

¹ Chronicle of Thomas de la More, Lansdowne MS., No. 229, fol. 156, verso. The Earls of Northampton and Suffolk and Sir Walter de Mauny, are not included amongst the original Knights in the official list, but that list is not cotemporary, and de la More is more likely to be correct. The three Knights above named were among the most distinguished men of the period, and the King could hardly have left them out of the fraternity. It is noteworthy, too, that the first authentic list of the Knights in the year 1361 includes both Suffolk and de Mauny. The Earl of Northampton had died in 1360. There is reason to believe that there are many omissions in the early lists of the Knights of the Garter, thus Roger de Cotesford, a Knight of the Household of the Black Prince, and who was selected by the Prince to bring home the news of the battle of Poitiers, does not occur among them, although his seal in the Bodleian Library has the Garter and motto round his shield of arms.

² Patent Roll, 24 Edward III, part iii, m. 17.

³ Pell Issues, Easter, 25 Edward III. This grant apparently took effect from the previous 25 March, and it is curious to note that this is the rule at the present time in the case of the Civil List Pensions.

Letters Patent, which assigned the following fermes in Staffordshire to him for the payment of the annuity :—

	£	s.	d.
From the vills of Mere and Clent - - -	16	5	6
From Kings Swinford - - - -	11	10	6
From Kynfare and Tettenhale - - -	11	9	0
From the Foresters Fee at Teddesley - - -	1	6	8

Making a total of £40 1s. 8d., and Sir Hugh was to account to the Exchequer for the difference of 20d. annually.

Mandates were likewise issued to John de Botetourt, the tenant of the vills of Mere and Clent, and to John de Sutton of Dudley, the tenant of the vill of Swinford, and to the Custos of Kynfare, and to the men of Tettenhale to pay the above sums to Sir Hugh in person.

For many years up to this date, Sir Hugh had been charged on the Pipe Rolls with various outstanding debts due to the Exchequer. The earliest of these was a sum of 100s. for a year's ferm of the King's manor of Tettenhall, the custody of which had been granted to him in 11 Edward III, and a further sum of £27 13s. 2d., arrears of the ferm of the same manor, charged against him, apparently owing to an error of the Exchequer authorities.

The next in date was a sum of £55 charged against him for the subsidy of wool in 13 Edward III, in which year he had exported from Ipswich several sacks of wool without license.

A fourth charge entered against him was one of 10 marks for a man-at-arms assessed upon his lands for the expedition of 1346.

The aggregate of these sums would amount to a very heavy debt owing to the Crown, representing certainly not less than £2,000 at the present date, and the Sheriff of the County, if pressed to collect arrears by the Exchequer, would distrain upon his lands and chattels for it.

Sir Hugh took advantage of the favour with which he was regarded at this time by the King, to obtain an exoneration from all these charges.

A writ was issued to the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer on the 17 February 1350, in these terms :—

Edward par la grace de dieu Roi dengleterre et de Fraunce et Seigneur d'Irlande, as Tresorer et Barouns de notre Eschequier salutz, Come de notre grace especiale eions perdonnez a notre cher et feial Hugh de Wrottesley cinqquant et cink livres qe courent sur lui en demande per sumouns du dit Eschequier pur la custume de vint et sept sacs de leine et demy cariez outre meere, vos mandons q de la dite somme lui faciez estre quites et deschargez devers nous, et si nulle (*sic*) destresse lui seit fait pur la dite cause loi faccz outrement

relesse, donne souz notre prive seal al Westmonastere le xvii jour de Fevrier lan de notre regne dengleterre vintisme quart et de France vicisme.¹

A later writ of the same year, dated 20 October 24 Edward III, and addressed to the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer, states that whereas the King had granted on the 18 March 11 Edward III, to his faithful and beloved Hugh de Wrottesle, the custody of the manor of Tattenhale, in co. Stafford, to be held at his pleasure, and rendering for it 100s. annually, and afterwards on the 8 July 12 Edward III, the King had granted the same manor to Henry de Ferrers, and the heirs male of his body, and it had been shewn by the said Hugh, that although he had delivered the manor to Henry de Ferrers, and had derived no profit from it after the said 8th July, that nevertheless he had been summoned to appear at the Exchequer every year to render 100s. from the 18 March 11 Edward III, and had been put to great expense and trouble in consequence, for which he prayed a remedy. The King therefore commanded them to make enquiry by Inquisition or other legal methods, so that if Sir Hugh's complaint was well founded, he might be exonerated from the said yearly payment of 100s.

The Inquisition was apparently in favour of Sir Hugh, for eighteen months after this date the King sent the following writ to the Barons of the Exchequer:—

Edward par la grace de dieu, etc. as Tresorer et Barons de notre Eschequier, salut. Come de notre grace especiale, eions pardonez a notre cher et feial Hugh de Wrottesle vint et sept livres, douze souz et deux deniers qui sont demandez de lui per sumouns du dit Eschequier des arrerages de la ferme du manoir de Tatenhale, les queux arrerages sont de partie del an de notre regne de Gleterre douzisme et desans tresisme, quatorsisme, quinsisme, sezisme et partie del an dis et septisme por queux temps Henry de Ferrers avoit le dit manoir et eut pris les issues de notre don, vos mandons que de meisme la somme de vynt et sept livres, douze souz et deux deniers facez descharger le dit Hugh, et de tut estre quites a notre dit Eschequier issint qil ne seit mes empeschez ne grevez par reson de la somme avantdite. Don souz notre prive seal, a Westmonastere le 27 jour davril lan de notre regne dengleterre vint et sisme, et de France tresisme.²

Another writ, nearly in the same terms, dated 22 June 26 Edward III [1352] exonerated him from the charge of 100s. for a year's ferm of the same manor.³

A third writ, dated 2 October 26 Edward III, relieved him from the assessment on his lands for Hobelars and Archers in

¹ Memoranda Roll, Queen's Remembrancer, 25 Edward III, Michaelmas Writs.

² Memoranda Roll, Queen's Remembrancer, 26 Edward III, Writs of Michaelmas.

³ *Ibid.*

1346. This has already been given in full. Through some error of the Exchequer authorities, it was not enrolled till the following year, when it appears amongst the Michaelmas writs of 27 Edward III.¹

Sir Hugh was now at the height of his prosperity. All his debts to the Crown had been remitted, his income had been more than doubled by the Royal grants made to him. He had been created a Knight of the Garter, had been placed in the King's household, and would have probably risen to higher and more responsible positions, if he could have restrained a certain vindictiveness of temper and spirit of lawlessness which appears to have been inherent in his nature. Up to this time he had risen steadily in the King's favour, but within little more than a year from the date of the King's last grant to him he was a fugitive from justice and deprived of all his possessions. At this distance of time it is impossible to state in positive terms the causes of this catastrophe, but we have certain facts and indications from which a very fair inference can be drawn.

The Sheriffs of Staffordshire at this date were appointed by the Duke of Lancaster, to whom the King had granted the Shrievalty of the Midland Counties for his life, and in 1352 the Duke had appointed to this office Philip de Lutteley, of Lutley, in co. Stafford, a near neighbour of Sir Hugh, and who had married Katherine, the sister of the same John de Perton who had been killed in the affray with Sir Hugh in 1338.

It appears to have been the custom of the Exchequer to saddle a new Sheriff with the Crown debts owing during the tenure of office of his predecessor. Thus a writ on the Memoranda Roll of 26 Edward III (1352) states that whereas John le Blount, late Sheriff of co. Stafford, had been charged with a sum of 100s. said to be owing by Sir Hugh de Wrottesleye for the arrears of the ferm of Tettenhale, he was to be allowed in lieu of it, 100s. from the lands and tenements of Walter de Rydeware, late a Collector of the Aid in co. Stafford, and which were in the King's hands.²

Philip de Lutteley would thus find himself personally liable for the debts of Sir Hugh to the Crown. It is true these had all, with one exception, been remitted before Michaelmas 1352, when Philip was invested with the Shrievalty, but it is very doubtful whether, owing to the dilatory action of the Exchequer, notifications of these remissions would have reached the Sheriff

¹ Ibid., 27 Edward III, Writs of Michaelmas term.

² They had been taken into the King's hands as security for the balance of the Subsidy which had not been paid into the Exchequer by the Collectors. There is evidence on the Rolls of great pressure exercised by the Exchequer at this period on the Sheriffs of Counties and Collectors of the Subsidies in order to relieve the Crown of its heavy indebtedness on account of the French war.

before he assumed office, and in the case of the charge for supplying hobelars and archers in 1346, the notification of its remittance could not possibly have arrived, because it was not granted till the 2nd October 1352, and was not enrolled till the following year.

New brooms proverbially sweep clean, and if Philip signalised his accession to office by an energetic attempt to collect outstanding Crown debts, not aware that they had been remitted, whilst Sir Hugh, knowing his relationship to the Pertons, suspected that his action arose from personal motives, we have all the elements of a tragedy in the fourteenth century.

Sir Hugh appears to have received some intimation of a descent upon him by the Sheriff, for he had collected a considerable body of men to resist it. Like the Irish distrainments of 1880—1881, it was effected by stealth during the night, and the Sheriff attended in person. At daybreak on the 29 November the two parties met on Dunstone Heath, between Stafford and Pillatonhale, and in a conflict which ensued, the Sheriff and his clerk were both killed, whilst a third man of the Sheriff's party, Thomas de Stretton, died of his wounds a short time afterwards.

At the present day, Sir Hugh and his accomplices would have been arrested within a few days under the Coroner's warrant, but in the reign of Edward III it was not easy to enforce the ordinary criminal process against a man of property, a knight of repute, and a member of the King's household. No proceeding appears to have been taken against him in the county, but at the Easter sittings of the Court of King's Bench, Agnes, late wife of Philip de Whitemere, appeared in person and appealed Hugh de Wrotteslegh, Chivaler, John de Tettebury, the younger, William, brother of John, and Walter, brother of William, John de Derinton, and Thomas de Gatacre, and Alice, his wife, for the death of her husband. None of the defendants appeared, and the Sheriff returned that they could not be found, and held nothing within his Bailiwick by which they could be attached. He was, therefore, ordered to put them into *exigend*, and if they did not appear, to outlaw them, and if they appeared, to arrest and produce them on the following Quindene of Michaelmas.¹ Katrine, the late wife of Philip de Luttelecy, likewise appeared in person and appealed the same defendants for the death of her husband. The process was the same as in the previous case.

¹ Coram Rege Roll, Easter, 27 Edward III, m. 10. To be put into *exigend* was to be summoned at five successive County Courts, and if they did not surrender, they were proclaimed outlaws. The County Courts were held at intervals of three weeks, and were presided over by the Sheriffs.

These proceedings were probably taken on the advice of the Chief Justice, Sir William de Shareshull. As the owner of Patshull, he was a near neighbour of Philip de Lutteley, and was connected with him by the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth with Sir John de Perton. The latter was the nephew of Katrine, the widow of Philip.

The addition of the names of Thomas de Gatacre, and Alice his wife to the indictment, exemplifies the iniquity of the Criminal Courts at this date, for there is no reason to suppose they were implicated in the attack upon the Sheriff and his suite. About four years before this date Philip de Whitemore had laid claim to a large portion of the Gatacre demesne lands, and had obtained a verdict in his favour before a local jury at Shrewsbury in 1350. It would have been easy for him in his capacity of clerk to the Sheriff to have packed a jury in this case, and Thomas de Gatacre and Alice had appealed against the verdict, and this appeal was pending at this date in the Court of King's Bench.¹ On such slight grounds as these apparently, the names of Thomas and Alice had been added to the indictment as instigators of the attack upon the Sheriff, but the Chief Justices of this era were notoriously corrupt, and made large fortunes at the expense of men of property against whom indictments were laid in their Courts. Both Wroottesley and Gatacre adjoined the lands of the Chief Justice at Patshull, and the temptation of adding two or three thousand additional acres to the large estates he was accumulating in Staffordshire and Shropshire would have been irresistible to a Judge of the fourteenth century.²

Sir Hugh must have received some warning of the issue of these writs, for the subsequent proceedings shew that he had divested himself of all his moveable property, but he delayed too long his departure from the country, and before the date named for the return of the writs into Court, all the defendants were in custody, with the exception of John de Tettebury, Walter de Tettebury³ and John de Derington.

The entries on the Roll of the following Michaelmas term are as follows:—

¹ For these proceedings, see Staffordshire Collections, vol. xiv, p. 78.

² Sir John Thorpe, the predecessor of William de Shareshull, had been deprived of his office and heavily fined for malpractices of this nature, and Sir William de Shareshull was eventually dismissed for malversation of office, and retired into a monastery. The story of the acquisition of Littlecote, by Chief Justice Popham, after a murder committed by the owner, Wild Dayrell, is well known.

³ Walter de Tettebury was in the Household of Queen Philippa, and was pardoned by the King, and his outlawry annulled in 34 Edward III (1360). John de Derington was an outlaw from County Chester, and was probably in Sir Hugh's service, for it was alleged against the latter on a later occasion that he kept a number of outlaws from Lancashire and Chester in his service. None of the defendants named after the word "together," were in custody.

this event annulled all the writs, Sir Hugh was forced to begin his suit *de novo*.

It will be seen from the above narrative that seven years had elapsed since the agreement had been made, and it was not until four years had passed that Sir Hugh had commenced an action in Banco for specific performance of it. During the last three years Adam had successfully evaded service to the writ, and Sir Hugh after having been put to considerable expense in law costs had now to begin his suit again. It is not surprising therefore to find him taking the law into his own hands. In the first year of Richard II Sir Adam de Peshall petitioned the King and Council, that having been up in London for the Coronation of the King, on repairing home to his own country, Monsieur Hugh de Wrottesley, designing his death, had made various ambushes of men armed and harnessed on the high roads between London and the country, and he had himself laid in wait with many armed men at a place called Foxhunte Ledegate, in the county of Worcester, with a view of killing and murdering the said Adam and his people, as was well known throughout all the country, and he had afterwards so threatened him and his servants and tradespeople of the town of Shuffenhale (Shifnal), that his servants and tradespeople did not dare to attend the market or fair for the purpose of their business, and he had taken from one William Barker, one of his tenants, twenty-four oxen on the high road at Wrottesley, and kept them until he had made a fine of 24s. for their release, and the said Sir Hugh had formed a retinue of outlaws and malefactors from the counties of Chester and Lancaster, in consequence of which things the said Adam prayed a remedy for himself and his tenants.

The petition is endorsed "Let a writ be issued under the Great Seal commanding Monsieur Hugh de Wrottesle to appear before the Council on the morrow of St. Martin next ensuing under a penalty of £300, to answer to this bill." After which follows a copy of the writ to Sir Hugh in Latin, which is dated 30 October, 1 Richard II.¹

The King, although only ten years of age, had been crowned at Westminster on the 16 July, and Parliament met on the following 13 October. All petitions addressed in this way to the King and Council were laid before Parliament, and the above writ of the 30 October is endorsed "*Istud breve retornatum fuit in Parliamentum die Jovis in Crastino Sancti Martini et idem Hugo ibidem compertus eodem die Jovis.*"

¹ Petitions to King and Council, Public Record Office. The petition is in French, and bears no date.

There are two answers of Sir Hugh to the complaint. In the first of them, which is addressed to the King of Castile and Leon, the Duke of Lancaster, and other lords of Parliament, he merely says that "as Adam de Peshale had laid his petition before Parliament, he prayed that the said Adam might sustain his bill, or if he would not do so, that they would give judgement upon it as reason demands." This was evidently no answer to Sir Adam's petition, and the tone of it justifies the suspicion that Sir Hugh trusted to the ascendancy of the old Court party in his favour. If this was the case he must soon have been disabused, for the new Parliament evinced an unaccustomed spirit of independence, impeached the King's late mistress, Alice Perers, and excluded all the King's uncles from the administration. It also presented a petition requesting the King to check the prevailing custom of the Barons, as well as men of inferior rank, of forming illegal confederacies and supporting one another in violations of the law.

Sir Hugh had therefore to frame another answer. His counter petition to the Council, like Sir Adam's, is in French, and is addressed, "A tres sage et noble conseil notre seigneur le Roi." It states that an accord had formerly been made between Adam de Peshale and him respecting the Manor of Talgarth, by which the said Adam and Elizabeth, his wife, ought long ago to have levied a Fine, and this the said Adam had sworn to perform in the presence of Sir Ralph Ferrers, Sir Peter de Caverswalle, Sir Nicholas de Stafford, Sir Thomas de Harcourt, and others, and this oath he had violated, as well as his deed under his seal, and by this violation the said Hugh had been put to great expense and loss, as the manor being held of the King *in capite*, he had been forced to obtain the King's license, for which he had paid a large sum, and since that time, by reason of the enmity between them, the men of the said Adam had beaten his men and tenants at the Fair of Albrighton on the last day of St. Thomas (21 December). Notwithstanding which, they had sent to the said Adam at Ideshale complaining of the men of Sir Hugh, whom they had beaten, in consequence of which Hamenet, the brother of Adam, armed and arrayed as for war, with others of his household and tenants to the number of sixty, arrayed and armed, went to Albrighton and drove the men of Sir Hugh out of the county of Salop as far as Wrottesley, in the county of Stafford, and had beaten, maimed, and ill-treated them so badly that they were in fear of their lives, and they had plundered them, shouting out "Tuez les larons de Wrottesleye," and calling out and praying to God that the said Hugh had been with them, so that they might have killed him, to the dread of the whole county, and

him. The Abbot did not appear, and the Sheriff was ordered to attach him for the Quindene of Holy Trinity. A post-script states that on that date the Sheriff made no return to the writ, and he was ordered to attach the Abbot for the Quindene of St. Michael (13 October 1405).¹ Before this latter date John had died, and we thus lose the record of what probably would have been a very interesting suit.

The latest act of John of which there is any record is a deed of manumission of a female villein or native of his manor. How this deed came to be preserved amongst the Wrottesley muniments is difficult to explain, but it may be assumed perhaps that Dionisia or Denise, as she would be called, was the nurse of John, and had died in the service of the family. As deeds of manumission are very rare, I give it here in full.

Noverint omnes Christiani fideles quod ego Johannes dominus de Wrottesley, manumisi et liberam feci Dionisiam filiam Johannis Hugynes de Wrottesley cum tota sequela sua procreata seu procreanda et cum omnibus bonis et catallis suis. Ita vero quod nec ego dictus Johannes nec eredes (sic) mei aliquam proprietatem seu calumniam in corpore ipsius Dionisie nec in tota sequela sua procreata seu procreanda, nec in omnibus bonis et catallis suis decetero exigere poterimus in futuro vel vindicare set ipsam Dionisiam cum supradictis sequela et bonis ab omni ordine servitutis et wayvituris penitus acquietis et relaxo in perpetuum per presentes. In cujus rei testimonium presentibus sigillum meum apposui. Datum apud Wrottesley die lune proximo ante festum Sancti Laurentii anno regni regis Henrici quarti post conquestum tertio. [7 August 1402.]²

In this year, viz., 1402, Owen Glendower ravaged the marches with a large force of Welshmen, and defeated and took prisoner Sir Edmund Mortimer on the 22nd June. The Scots also invaded England on the north, but were defeated by Sir Henry Percy at Homildon Hill, on the 14th September.

In the autumn of the year the King, with the view of crushing the rebellion of Owen Glendower, raised a large force from the Midland Counties and invaded Wales from three different points. On the 31st July writs were issued to the Sheriffs of the Midland Counties to summon all men-at-arms and archers within their Bailiwicks to meet the King at Shrewsbury, all the Knights and Esquires, archers, and other *homines defensabiles* to furnish themselves with horses and arms according to their status, and to be at Shrewsbury on the 27th August to proceed with the King

¹ De Banco Easter, 3 Henry IV, m. 142, dorso.

² Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860-62.

into Wales. By other writs the array of counties Nottingham, Leicester, Northampton, Bucks, Lincoln, Cambridge, Hunts, and the Palatinate of Lancaster were to assemble at Shrewsbury. The array of counties Gloucester, Hereford, Worcester, Warwick, Stafford, Somerset and Bristol was to be mustered at Hereford under the Earls of Stafford and Arundel and the Lords Grey, Audley, Bergavenny and Berkeley on the 29th August. The array of counties Derby and Salop to be mustered at Chester under Henry, Prince of Wales, on the same date.

The King's project was defeated by the inclemency of the weather; torrents of rain fell, the Welsh valleys were flooded, the streams became impassable, and even the King's tent was carried away in a storm of rain and wind. It was the year when, in the words of Shakespear, Merlin "called spirits from the vasty deep," and made the elements subservient to the cause of his countrymen.

Assuming that John de Wrottesley could not have avoided the general summons, the hardships of the campaign appear to have proved fatal to him, for he died on the 7th of September. At this date he was little over twenty-two years of age.¹

The writ of "*diem clausit extremum*" was issued by Henry, Prince of Wales, on the 13th October 4 Henry IV (1402), and the Inquisition took place at Kelsale on the 26th October. The jury stated that John, son of Hugh de Wrottesley, Kt., who was named in the writ, died seised in demesne as of fee of two parts of a messuage and thirty acres of land in Buddeworth in le Fryth, which were held of the lord of Chester by military service, and were worth annually 17s. 10d. He was also seised in the same way when he died of a toft and five acres of land in Tyresford, which were held of St. John of Jerusalem by a service of 12d. and were worth 6s. annually, and of two parts of a messuage and ten acres of land in Kelsale, which were held of John de Kyngesley by a service of 7d. and worth 5s. 4d.

And that the said John died on the Sunday the Vigil of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary last past (7th September 1402), and that Hugh, his son, was his nearest heir, and was two years of age on the Friday the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the same year (14th September 1402).²

¹ I have assumed that he was in the expedition, for there was a general levy of men-at-arms from Staffordshire, and he could hardly have been absent on such an occasion, when the King took the field in person.

² Inquisitions p.m., Cheshire. There is some error in these dates, for the Vigil of the Nativity of the Virgin would have fallen on a Friday in 1402. The second date is the day on which the battle of Homildon was fought, and it

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Johannes de Wrottesley dedi, concessi, et hac presenti carta mea confirmavi Waltero Wyse de Bilderbrok et Willelmo Rugge manerium de Boterdone cum omnibus pertinentiis suis. Habendum et tenendum predictum manerium cum omnibus pertinentiis suis predictis Waltero et Willelmo, hereditibus et assignatis suis libere, quiete, bene, et in pace in perpetuum de capitalibus dominis feodorum illorum per servicia inde debita et de jure consueta. Et ego vero, etc. (*clause of warranty*). In cujus rei testimonium huic presenti carte sigillum meum apposui. Hiis testibus, Johanne Cogan milite, Thoma Marchinton, Thoma Okore, Johanne Pole, Thoma Schene, et aliis. Datum apud Boterdone die Lune proximo ante festum Purificationis beate Marie virginis anno regni Regis Henrici quarti post conquestum tertio.¹ [30 January 1402.]

Sciant presentes et futuri quod nos Walterus Wyse de Bilderbrok et Willelmus Rugge concessimus et hac presenti carta nostra confirmavimus Johanni de Wrottesleye et Elizabeth uxori ejus et heredibus de corpore predicti Johannis legitime procreatis manerium de Boterdone cum omnibus pertinentiis suis quod nuper tenuimus ex dono et feoffamento predicti Johannis. Habendum et tenendum predictum manerium cum omnibus pertinentiis suis predicto Johanni et Elizabeth uxori ejus et heredibus de corpore predicti Johannis legitime procreatis de capitalibus dominis feodi illius per servicia inde debita et de jure consueta. Et si contingat quod predictus Johannes obierit sine heredibus de corpore suo legitime procreatis, tunc volumus et concedimus quod predictum manerium cum omnibus pertinentiis suis remaneat rectis heredibus predicti Johannis in perpetuum. Tenendum de predictis capitalibus dominis per servicia predicta. In cujus rei testimonium huic presenti carte sigilla nostra apposuimus. Hiis testibus Johanne Cogan milite, Thoma Marchinton, Thoma Okore, Johanne Pole, Thoma Schene et aliis. Datum apud Boterdone die Sabati proximo post festum Purificationis Beate Marie anno regni regis Henrici quarti post conquestum Anglie tertio. [4 February 1402.]²

ARMS OF JOHN DE WROTTESLEY.

On the dexter side—Or, three piles Sable, a quarter Ermine, for Wrottesley.

On the sinister side—Sable, three standishes Argent, for Standish.

Giles del Huide was a relict of the reign of Edward III, who had served as an Esquire in the wars in France. He was tenant of the Hyde, near Chillington. In 43 Edward III he was serving in Gascony in the suite of John de Cherleton, the lord of Powis. In 4 Richard II he was serving in France in the retinue of the Earl of Stafford (Staffordshire Collections, vols. viii and xiv).

John de Swynnerton was lord of Hilton, co. Stafford, and Chief Forester of Cannock.

John Hampton was lord of Stourton Castle and Chief Forester of Kinver. Edmund del Lowe was lord of Whittington.

¹ From transcripts of Butterton deeds formerly at Wrottesley, copied 1860-62.

² From copies of Butterton deeds at Wrottesley, 1860-62. The last two deeds,

would be the 27th June 1403.¹ Elizabeth had, therefore, married a second husband as soon as nine months had elapsed after her first husband's death. Sir William le Boteler had succeeded his father John in 1400,² and at the date of his marriage with Elizabeth, was a widower with an infant son, a few weeks old.³ That a widower should re-marry three months after his wife's death, and a widow do the same nine months after her late husband's death is quite in accordance with the manners and customs of the day.

Five years after this date, and when Hugh Wrottesley was nine years of age, an event occurred which materially affected his interests. Sir John Arderne, of Aldford, died in 9 Henry IV, leaving an only daughter, and under the settlement made of the Arderne estates in 21 Edward III, these should now have devolved on the issue of Robert de Legh and Hugh de Wrottesley as right heirs of Sir John Arderne and Elena, who had died in 1349.

The Inquisition on the death of Sir John Arderne was taken at Chester on the 18 June, 9 Henry IV (1408), on the oath of three Knights and nine Esquires of co. Chester, who stated that a certain Robert de Hampton, late Parson of the church of Alderley, and John, son of Roger de Motlowe, were formerly seised in demesne as of fee of the manors of Aldeford, Alderley, and Echeles, and of the advowsons of the churches of Aldeford and Alderley, and of an annual rent of £10 from the manor of Upton in Wyrehale, and had granted the same to John de Ardene and Elena, his wife, for their lives, with remainder to one Thomas, the son of Elena, and the heirs male of his body, and failing such, to Walkeline, the brother of Thomas and the heirs male of his body, and failing such, to the right heirs of John de Ardene and Elena, and failing such, to the right heirs of John de Ardene for ever. And John de Ardene and Elena had issue lawfully begotten Matilda and Isabella, and John and Elena had died without leaving any male issue lawfully begotten, and after the death of John de Ardene and Elena, the abovenamed Thomas had entered into the said manors, advowsons and rent in virtue of the remainder, and he had issue John de Ardene, Knight; and Thomas died, seised in demesne as of fee tail of the said manors, advowsons and rent, and after his death, they descended to the said John, son of Thomas, who had entered, and had died seised of them, as of fee tail, and had left no male heir; and they stated that Robert de Legh,

¹ Court Rolls at Wrottesley.

² Duchy of Lancaster Records printed, Rolls Series, 1872.

³ Ibid. His son John proved his age in March 1424.

the son of Robert de Legh, married the said Matilda, and they had issue Robert de Legh, Kt., which Robert de Legh, Kt., had issue Robert de Legh, who was now surviving; and Matilda had died, and Robert de Legh, son of the said Robert and Matilda, had died *in de seisitus*.¹ And they stated also that one Hugh de Wrotteslegh, Knight, had married the above named Isabella, and they had issue one John de Wrotteslegh, and John had issue Hugh de Wrotteslegh, who was now surviving. And Hugh the elder and his wife, Isabella, had died, and John, their son, had likewise died, and therefore the right to the said manors, advowsons and rent, after the death of the said John, son of Thomas (de Ardene) should remain to the said Robert, son of Robert de Legh, Kt., as son and heir of the said Robert de Legh, Kt., son and heir of the said Matilda, daughter and one of the heirs of John de Ardene and Elena, and to the said Hugh, son and heir of the said John, son and heir of Hugh, the son and heir of the said Isabella, the other daughter and heir of John de Ardene and Elena.

And they stated that the manor of Echells was held of the Lord Lestraunge, as of his manor of Dunham Massy, by military service, and was worth £50 a year, and that the manor of Aldeford was held of the Prince, as Earl of Chester, in capite by military service, and was worth £40 a year, and the manor of Aldelegh was held of the Prince, as Earl of Chester, in capite by military service and was worth £10 a year, and that the manor of Upton, from which the rent proceeded, was held of the Prince, as Earl of Chester, in capite by military service; and that the said John de Ardene, Kt., had died on the Monday before the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul last past, and that the said Robert de Legh was forty years of age and upwards, and the said Hugh was eight years of age.²

On the return of this Inquisition into the Chancery at Chester, the usual course would have been to issue a writ to the Escheator, to make a partition of the lands, and to give seisin of a moiety of them to Robert de Legh, whilst the other moiety would have been taken into the hands of the Prince, as Earl of Chester and superior lord, saving in both cases the dower of the widow of Sir John; but Margaret, the widow of Sir John Arderne, now came forward

¹ Sir Robert de Legh survived Sir John de Arderne, and had taken possession of the manors. The Inquisition taken on his death in 9 Henry IV states he died seised of the manors of Alderley, Upton and Adlington held in capite of the Earl, and of the manor of Echells held of Lord Strange as of his manor of Dunham Masey.

² Chester Inquisitions. A portion of the Inquisition has been destroyed by damp, and has been supplied from the Plea of 10 Henry IV which follows.

triumphant entry into Paris. In the following year Hugh Wrottesley completed his twenty-first year.

No deeds were preserved at Wrottesley of the period of this interregnum, excepting one mentioned at p. 195. Amongst the Court Rolls, however, there is the record of a "Magna Curia" of Wrottesley, which was held on the Friday before the Feast of Pentecost, 4 Henry IV (November 1402). The jury consisted of:—

William Carte	John Lye
John Oxemon	Thomas Addeson
Thomas Jackesson (1)	Thomas Jackesson (2), and
John Huggyns	William Grene.

As was usual on the occasion of a minority, the tenants had allowed their cattle to roam over all the lord's land, and on the complaint of the Bailiff, the following were fined for permitting their cattle and pigs to stray:—

Henry Fleemyng	John Hamond
Adam Smyth	Richard in le Hale
Alice Grene	Henry Scheldon
John Scheldon	Adam Northwode
John Grene	William Northwode
John Lye	John Brochole
John Fraunceys	Richard Maggesson
John Moye	John Angels
Richard Whyte	Thomas Addeson
Henry atte Yate	William Grene
Richard Hendesson	Idonea de Wrottesleye
John Huggyns	Joan Huggyns
William Carte	William Grene, and
Richard Croucwall	John Clerk.

The fines varied from 1d. to 4d. John Huggyns was elected Provost, John Oxemon was elected Constable, and John Grene and John Huggyns *tastatores*, and they were all sworn in.

The entry respecting Idonea is interesting, as she must have been the Idonia, sister of Sir Hugh de Wrottesley, K.G., who is named in the deed of 1334. At this date she would be about eighty-four years of age. She had passed unscathed through the three great Pestilences of the fourteenth century, and it is curious to reflect what vicissitudes of England's fortune she must have witnessed between the date of the Battle of Halidon Hill of 1333 and that of Shrewsbury, fought in 1403. The original entry is as follows:—*Idonea de Wrottesley attachiata fuit cum averiis in le Fowrlong in frumento domini*. The name of the Furlong still exists, but the land is now a pasture.

On the marriage of Elizabeth with Sir William le Boteler, a Court Baron was held in the name of the new lord. The parchment roll is headed—

WROTTESELEY Curia Willelmi le Boteler militis tenta ibidem die mercurii proximo post festum Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptiste anno regni regis Henrici quarti post conquestum quarto. (27 June 1403.)

The jury consisted of:—

John Huggyns	John Oxemon
Thomas Jackesson	John Fraunceys
Thomas Adesson	William Grene
Adam Smyth	William Carte, and
John Grene	John Hamond,
John Lyegh	

who made the following presentments:—

Richard Fletcher of Norton, had broken into the lord's park and carried away a cartload of "tremul." His fine was 40d.

John Moy had carried off five cartloads of timber from the park. Fined 10d.

Hugh Clemson had done the same. Fined 10d.

William Whyte had carried away timber called "Birches" and "Post de Gates" (*sic*). Fined 12d.

Richard Whyte had carried away timber as above. Fined 12d.

Richard Clemson had done the same, and was fined 12d.

They also presented that Walter de Wrottesley had enclosed two pieces of land near Kingeswode, called le Blakelyefeldes, which should be common every third year. Also William Gunston, a monk, had enclosed two pieces of land which should be common every third year, to the grievous injury of the tenants. The penalty imposed upon them, ("*ex a sensu omnium tenentium*,"") was "*quod includent sepes suos circa communes campos yemales (sic) citra festum Sancti Martini Episcopi et circa campos estimales citra festum Annunciationis Beate Marie sub pena cujuslibet Gap (sic) vid.*"

Roger Waryn was fined 2d. for allowing six cattle to stray in le Wodecroft *in herbagio domini*.

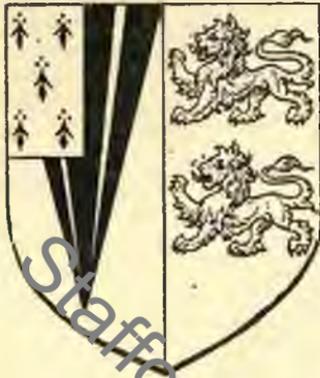
William Cartwright was fined 4d. for six oxen in le Stockyng on the lord's pasture.

William Okene was fined 2d. for a mare in le Wodecroft in the lord's wheat.

Richard Whyte 2d. for four oxen in le Stockyng on the lord's pasture.

John Moy was fined 2d. for the same.

RICHARD WROTTESELEY, A.D. 1478—1521.



According to the Inquisition taken on the death of Sir Walter Wrottesley, his eldest son Richard was aged sixteen in 1473. He would, therefore, come of age in 1478. As his father was a tenant in capite, the wardship and marriage of the heir would fall to the Crown; but as regards the latter, it was usual at this period to forestall the rights of the Crown or other superior lord, by marrying the heir during the lifetime of the owner of the fee, and Richard appears to have been married

whilst under age to Dorothy, the daughter of Sir Edmund Sutton. Sir Edmund was the eldest son of John, Lord Dudley, who had been one of the staunchest supporters of the Yorkist cause, and it is not unlikely that this alliance had some influence in saving the life of Sir Walter Wrottesley in 1471. He was a man of some note in his day, and in 1470 was acting as Lieutenant of Ireland for George, Duke of Clarence. On the Close Roll of 10 Edward IV there is a writ, dated 23 March, addressed to him stating that John, Earl of Worcester, had been substituted for George, Duke of Clarence, as Lieutenant of Ireland, the said Duke having been deprived of the office owing to his "grete and haynous offences lately committed." Sir Edmund predeceased his father, but was alive as late as 1483, for he was present at the coronation of Richard III, which took place in July of that year.¹

Richard is shewn to be the son of Sir Walter Wrottesley, by the deeds formerly at Wrottesley, by the Inquisition on his father's death, by another Inquisition on the death of his grandmother Thomasine, and the suits of 1 Richard III and 16 Henry VII respecting the Arderne estates.² He doubtless derived his baptismal name from Richard, Earl of Warwick, the King Maker.

He seems to have been brought up in the Priory of St. Mary of Mount Carmel, in Coventry, for there was formerly at Wrottesley a parchment certificate by Thomas, the Prior, granting to Richard Wrattysle "*propter devotionem sinceram quam ad nostram habetis ordinem,*" the blessing of the Fraternity, and that the same prayers shall be said after his

¹ Grazebrook's "History of the Dudley Family," vol. ix of Staffordshire Collections, p. 78.

² Chester Pleas, 22 Edward IV, m. 36; 16 Henry VII, m. 19.

death as after the death of any of the Brethren of the Convent. This grant was dated in 1477, when Richard was twenty years of age, and was apparently handed to him on leaving the monastery.

As his grandmother Thomasine had been jointly enfeoffed with her husband Hugh Wrottesley in the manors of Wrottesley and Butterton, Richard could not enter into possession of his Staffordshire estates till after the death of Thomasine, which occurred on Christmas Day 1480; and on this event taking place his mother Jane, who had in the meantime remarried Sir Richard Darrell, of Littlecote, claimed possession of the manors under the deed of 1463.

Richard Wrottesley's claim would be probably based upon the first settlement of 1441, and the dispute would have led to a long and disastrous law suit, if it had not been terminated by arbitration. At this date Richard had amongst his near neighbours Sir Thomas Littleton, one of the Justices of the King's Bench, and the famous author of the "Tenures," who had married the widow of Sir Philip Chetwynd, of Ingestre, and both parties consented to abide by the decision of Sir Thomas, and one of his colleagues, Sir Richard Chokke.¹ The award of the arbitrators is dated the 31st May, 21 Edward IV (1481), and was the earliest English deed amongst those formerly at Wrottesley. By the terms of it Sir Richard Darell and Jane were to release by deed to Richard Wrottesley all their right in the manors of Wrottesley and Butterton, and all other lands and tenements in Wrottesley, Butterton, Tettenhall and Codsall, which were sometime in the possession of Walter Wrottesley or Hugh Wrottesley, father of the said Walter, for which the said Richard Wrottesley should grant to Sir Richard Darell and Dame Jane, his wife, an annual rent of £5 to be paid at two terms of the year, "that is to say the one half on St. Martyn's day after all halownesse at the Rode of the North dore in Paules in London bitwene one of the Clok at afternonnes and four of the clok of the same day than next ensuying, and the other half in the same place the Saturday next after the Assencion day bitwene one of the clok at afternone and five of the clok of the same day than next following," such payment to endure pending the life of the said Dame Jane, and with power to levy a distress for the same, if it should be in arrear. For further surety Richard Wrottesley was to enfeoff in the manor of Wrottesley the said Thomas Lyttelton, Richard Lyttelton, John Brown, William Wrottesley,

¹ Richard Chokke, Kt., one of the Justices of the Bench, and Margaret, his wife, late wife of William Giffard, Armiger, executrix of the will of William Giffard, obtained a pardon for all offences and claims on the part of the Crown. Dated 20th January, 9 Edward IV (Pardon Roll).

of our houstholde, to be our lieutenant general, and have authorised him to have the leding of all and singular our subyetts in those contries for resisting of the said invasion. Willinge therefor and desiring, and nevertheless comaunding you forthwith upon the sight of these our letters not only to prepaure yourself with suche a nombre of hable men horsed and harnesssed as many as ye can prepaure making certificat unto our said lieutenant of your said nombre with all diligence possible, but also kepe yourself in further redyness that upon a houres warnyng after requisition to be made unte you by our said lieutenants letters ye may set furthe and joyne with him without delay for resisting of the said invasion. Faile ye not this to do, as ye tendour hoursef and the defense of this our Realme. Goven under our signet at our manour of Newhall the xiiii day of August.

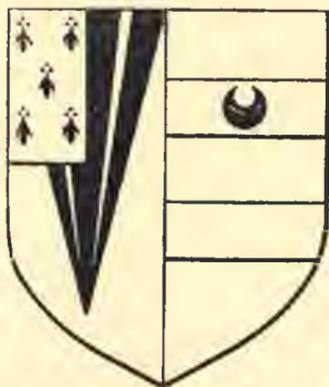
Endorsed. To our trusty and well beloved servaunte Richarde Wrottesley.¹

ARMS OF RICHARD WROTTESLEY.

On the dexter side—Or, three piles Sable, a quarter Ermine, for Wrottesley.

On the sinister side—Or, two lions passant Azure, for Sutton of Dudley.

WALTER WROTTESLEY, 1521—1563.



Walter Wrottesley must have succeeded Richard before the 6th December 1521, for on that day he paid a mark to the Abbot of Evesham for half a year's quit rent due at the previous Michaelmas.²

He is shewn to be son of Richard by the deeds at Wrottesley, the will of his uncle William, which was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and by the Heralds' Visitations which are trustworthy evidence for the Tudor period, although they are not always

to be relied upon for earlier descents.³

¹ Original writ of military summons at Wrottesley, copied 1860-62. The abbreviations have been extended, but the original orthography has been retained, and it will be seen that it differs little from our modern spelling.

² Original Receipt at Wrottesley.

³ They are trustworthy for this period, because it may be assumed that every man would know the names of his grandfather, father, and of his children, also of grandchildren if any existed. They are, therefore, excellent evidence for five generations of a family, and are certified in many cases by the head of the family.

Apparently the death of Richard Wrottesley had not been notified to the Exchequer, for a writ of military summons, addressed to him by name, directs him to be prepared to join the Earl of Shrewsbury, who had been appointed to lead an army against the Scots. This took place in July 1522. The writ is under the King's sign manual, and is one of the writs sent by the King himself to the Barons and principal tenants in chief of the Crown.¹ It shews that notwithstanding the loss of the manors granted by Edward IV to Sir Walter Wrottesley, Richard was still considered by the Exchequer authorities as liable to military service as a tenant in capite, for ordinary tenants would be summoned by the Sheriffs of counties.

One of the first acts performed by Walter in his capacity as head of his family, was a conveyance in trust for the Reading Alms-houses. In this he is described as "cosyn and heire of William Baron late of Redyng, son of Johanna, daughter and heire to the said William Baron." This conveyance is dated the 3rd June 16 Henry VIII (1524).²

On the Saturday before the Feast of St. Valentine, 16 Henry VIII (11th February 1525) the Kinver Manor Roll states that he appeared in person in full Court and claimed to hold of the lord all the lands and tenements in Kyngeley which descended to him by hereditary right, after the death of Richard Wrottesley, Armiger, his father." Kingeley was an outlying portion of Kinver manor, lying within the parish of Tettenhall.

Walter Wrottesley was appointed King's Eschaetor for the county of Stafford by letters patent of 19 Henry VIII and 24 Henry VIII. His accounts for these two years remain in the Public Record Office. He also served the office of Sheriff of the county in 23 Henry VIII.

There is an entry amongst the State papers of 18 Henry VIII (A.D. 1526) which, unless explained, is likely to lead to some misapprehension. This is a licence for Thomas, Lord de la Warr, Sir John Copley and others to alienate lands in Iplepen, Torbryan and other places named in co. Devon to Sir Anthony de St. Amand and Anne, his wife, to the use of Anne for her life and with remainders over (as in the deed of 9 Henry VIII, p. 264), and with remainder in default of any issue of Anthony and Anne to *Richard Wrattesley* and *William, his brother*.³ It would be supposed from the tenor of these letters patent that Richard Wrottesley and William were still alive, whereas we know

¹ See p. 265 ante.

² Original deed at Wrottesley, copied 1860-62.

³ State Papers, temp. Henry VIII (domestic), printed in Rolls Series.

cause.¹ The Roman Catholics all fought for the King, but in their case it may be said that they were fighting in self-defence, for not only their interests, but even their very safety, depended on the success of the King's arms.

The feeling, in fact, of the landed gentry may be best expressed in the language of Mercutio, "A plague o' both the houses." Many believed the war to be undertaken for the sake of Episcopacy, an institution for which few men would care to hazard their lives and properties. Even Sir Edmund Verney, the King's standard bearer, told Clarendon that "he only followed the King because honour obliged him, that the object of the war was against his conscience, for he had no reverence for the Bishops, whose quarrel it was."² In the same sense Lord Spencer writes to his wife from the King's quarters, "If there could be an expedient found to salve the punctilio of honour, I would not continue here an hour."³ Again, most people must have read the story of the King's pathetic speech and his allusion to happier days, when passing with his army through Warwickshire, he suddenly encountered the squire of Shuckburgh at the head of his pack of hounds.⁴ Bearing all these facts in mind, the reader will be better able to appreciate the position taken up by the landed proprietors during the war. Their attitude towards the King may be best expressed in the language of diplomacy, as one of "benevolent neutrality," and this was perfectly well understood by the opposite party. After the success of Parliament, the ordinances for the sequestration of the estates of the Loyalists swept into the net every man of property who could not shew that he had been actively engaged on the side of the Parliament.

In the spring of 1644, however, Sir Walter appears to have had some intention of taking the field, for the following armorers account was formerly at Wrottesley:—

31 March 1644. Received by me Peter Johnson, Armorer, of Sir Walter Wrottesley, Knight and Baronet, the sum of £5 5s. 0., viz., for one cap 10s., for a head piece 15s., for back and breast plates £3 10s. 0d., and for altering and coloring and loyning (lining) the old arms, 10s.

¹ The sons of the Protestant landed proprietors in many cases were serving for the King whilst their fathers remained neutral, the most conspicuous instances being those of Colonel Bagot, Colonel Lane, and Lord Ward.

² Clarendon's History. Sir Edmund was a member of the King's Household at the outbreak of the war. After his death at Edgehill, Ralph Verney, his son, lived in retirement at Claydon, and took no part whatever in the war. (Verney Papers).

³ Lingard's History, quoting the Sydney Papers.

⁴ Dugdale's Warwickshire, and Evelyn Shirley's "Noble and Gentle Men of England."

On the 22nd May of this year Colonel Frazer, who was in command of Lord Denbigh's Regiment of Horse, reports from Penkridge that he had taken Lady Wrottesley prisoner. The cause of this arrest does not transpire, but as Lord Denbigh was in the service of the Parliament, it must have been considered that she had come from the quarters of the enemy.¹

In 1645, after the battle of Naseby, the cause of the King was hopeless, and Sir Walter handed over the custody of Wrottesley to the Parliamentarians. His object, no doubt, in taking this step, was to save his estate from sequestration, but in this he failed, and his old enemy Colonel Leveson, who commanded for the King at Dudley Castle, on hearing of it, sent a detachment of his garrison, which burnt all the stables, barns, and granaries which were outside the defences of the house.² The fact that he had been left undisturbed up to this date by Leveson and the other Royalist garrisons which surrounded him, is strong evidence that he was looked upon as a Royalist.³

A letter in the Welbeck MSS. from Colonel Leigh to Lenthall the Speaker, dated 10th November 1645, mentions a garrison at Wrottesley House "which we have lately erected," and describes a skirmish near Bridgenorth, in which two troops under Captain Stones and Captain Blackburne from Wrottesley had defeated a body of Royalist troops under Sir Thomas Aston, and taken the latter prisoner.⁴

Walter Wrottesley's estates were now sequestered, and the rents assigned to the Parliamentary Committee at Stafford for the payment of their troops. In the latter part of this year, the Committee write to Walter that for neglect of payment, they had fetched two persons named (two of his tenants) into Stafford and detained them for £41 19s. 9d. of arrears, and asking him to pay that sum for the enlargement of his tenants.

Walter, however, had gone to London, and had petitioned to compound for his estates.

¹ Denbigh Papers, Historical MSS. Commission. It is clear she had no pass from the Parliamentarians, or she would not have been detained.

² See Galliardello's affidavit at p. 325.

³ In an affidavit made in favour of Sir Walter Wrottesley by Thomas Southall, minister of Shorne, near Gravesend, at the time when the former compounded for his estates, Southall stated that the Royalists had garrisons at Chillington, Brewood Church, Lapley Hall, Lichfield, Rushall Hall, at Wolverhampton, sometimes at the Church and Crosse, and sometimes at Leveson's Hall, Dudley Castle, Patesley (Patshull) Hall, Linsill (?) Manor and Tong Castle.

⁴ Welbeck MSS., vol. i, p. 306; Historical MSS. Commission. Sir Arthur Aston was killed in this skirmish.

had purchased in 1644, and which had been sequestered with the rest of their father's estate.

Other interesting cases were those of Dugdale and Ashmole. William Dugdale, who is styled Chester Herald, of Shustoke, co. Warwick, had his estate sequestered because he went to Oxford and was there at the date of the surrender. He paid £168 in 1646, on a composition of one-tenth. In 1650, an information was laid against Elias Ashmole, Gentleman. It states that he was a Gentleman of the Ordnance for the King in 1647, and was a very dangerous person, speaking against the Parliament. He had married the widow of Sir Thomas Mainwaring, by whom he had £600 a year or more. No proceedings appear to have been taken in this instance.

Summarising the contents of the Composition Papers, it appears that the Protestant landowners who actually fought for the King were twelve in number, these were:—

Sir Edward Littleton	Lord Ward of Dudley
Henry Grey of Enville	John Lane of Hide ¹
Thomas Broughton	Sir Thomas Wolrich, Bart.
Walter Noel of Hilcot	Sir Henry Griffiths of Wichnor
William Brereton	Randolph Egerton, and
Thomas Pershouse	Richard Cresswell, of Perton. ²

The Roman Catholic landowners who took up arms for the King were:—

Walter Astley of Patshull and two sons	Sir William Peshall of Canwell and two sons
Francis Biddulph ³	Over FitzWilliam of Ipstones
Thomas Coyney of Weston Coyney	Thomas Leveson of Wolverhampton
Philip Draycote of Painsley	Thomas Whitgreave of Moseley
Walter Fowler of St. Thomas	Lord Aston of Tixall and two brothers
Ralph Sneyd of Keele	Sir Richard Fleetwood of Calwich
Peter Giffard of Chillington, his eldest son Walter Giffard of Marston, and three younger sons	William FitzHerbert of Swynerton, and
Sir Richard Weston ⁴ and his son	Francis Harcourt of Lanton.

The landowners who attempted to maintain a neutral attitude and whose estates were sequestrated upon various pretences, were:—

¹ This is the Colonel Lane who assisted so materially in the escape of Charles II. The part his sister Jane Lane took in the King's escape is well known. Their father, Thomas Lane of Bentley, was still alive.

² In addition to these, Mr. Sleight in his "History of Leek," mentions William Trafford of Switbamley as one of those who took up arms for the King.

³ His father, John Biddulph of Biddulph, died in November 1642, after the commencement of the war.

⁴ Sir Richard Weston was one of the Barons of the Exchequer, and was sixty-five years of age in 1642.

a new house upon the same site¹ None of the accounts or correspondence respecting the new house were preserved at Wrottesley, but from intrinsic evidence there can be no doubt of its having been designed by Sir Christopher Wren. It was built of red brick with stone dressings, and the details of the stone work correspond in all respects to those of Chelsea Hospital, which had just been completed by the same architect. The double architrave to the windows, the stone quoins, and the block cornice were the same as those of the Hospital. In the case of some of the windows and doors there was a change in the design of the architrave, a torus moulding having been introduced into it, and the same variation is to be found at Chelsea Hospital.

As originally designed the house must have been a handsome building. The great banquetting hall or saloon was 43 feet in length, 28 feet in width, and the same in height, running through two stories, and with two tiers of windows. At the west end there was a minstrel gallery, to which access was obtained from the main staircase. The latter was a very fine feature in the house, occupying a space of 26 feet by 20 feet, with a massive oak balustrading and dado. At the back of the house were open cloisters formed by arches springing from columns. These extended the whole length of the house between the wings, and were 88 feet in length and 16 feet 6 inches in width. Above the cloisters there was a gallery of the same dimensions, lighted by seven windows, divided by mullions and transoms, in which were some ancient coats of arms in colored glass, which had been taken out of the old house. Dr. Wilkes, the antiquary, writing about the year 1740, says, "At Wrottesley is a most magnificent house with stables, outhouses, gardens, etc., begun by the young gentleman's grandfather² and tis a great pity they are not finished according to the original design." In a note, added about fifty years later, Dr. Wilkes says, "The house was built about 100 years ago in the style of King William, of brick with white stone cornices in the form of an H, large and commodious but not handsome." Between these two dates the aspect of the house had been completely changed, all the characteristic features of it having been obliterated by the eighth Baronet. The dormer windows had been removed from the roof, the cloisters bricked up,

¹ There is an old Tudor window with stone mullions and transoms covered by the stone work of the new house, on the east side.

² "The young gentleman" was Sir Richard Wrottesley, who was under age at the time Dr. Wilkes wrote.



Wrottesley Hall. Built 1696.
Destroyed by Fire, 16th December, 1897.

According to Wotton "Sir John was a gentleman of strict honor and justice, and highly valued by the county for which he was chosen a representative in 1708."¹ The same authority informs us that he married Frances, daughter of the Honble. John Grey, of Enville, Esquire, the third son of Henry, Earl of Stamford, by Catherine, his second wife, the daughter of Edward, Lord Dudley and Ward, by whom he had five sons, John, who died in November 1723;² Charles, who died in 1724,³ both in their minority; Sir Hugh, Sir Walter, and Sir Richard, who were successively Baronets, and five daughters. Of these:—

Hugh, the third son, succeeded as fifth Baronet, but died in his minority in 1729, when letters of administration of his effects were granted to Dame Frances Wrottesley, his mother.⁴ He was succeeded by his next brother

Walter, the sixth Baronet, who died a minor two years afterwards. He was buried at Tettenhall on the 28th of February 1731-2.⁵

Richard, who succeeded as seventh Baronet.

Frances, the eldest daughter, was born on the 16th of October 1711,⁶ and married, first, Heigham Bendish, Esq., of East Ham, Essex,¹ and secondly, in 1756, Dr. Wilkes of Willenhall, the well known antiquary.⁶

Elizabeth, the second daughter, was born on the 5th of November 1713,⁷ and married her cousin Thomas Wrottesley,⁸ the son of Sir Walter the third Baronet, by his second wife. After his death she married Francis Stuart of Wolverhampton, by whom she left issue.⁴

¹ Wotton's Baronetage, 1741, *ex inf.* Sir Richard Wrottesley.

² John was born 21st September 1708, and baptised 1st October (Codsall Register).

³ There is an error here for Charles Wrottesley was buried at Tettenhall on the 18th of March 1722-3. The Codsall Register states he was born and baptised at Wrottesley on the 14th March 1718.

⁴ Wrottesley Muniments.

⁵ Tettenhall Register.

⁶ Harwood's Erdeswick. Dr. Wilkes was the representative of a very old family of gentle blood, which had been seated at Willenhall for many generations. According to the author of "Staffordshire and Warwickshire, Past and Present," he was born 16th March 1690-91, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and married Rebecca Manlove, of Lees Hill, Abbots Bromley. "In 1756, being a widower, he married Mrs. Frances Bendish, sister of Sir Richard Wrottesley, Bart. He died in 1760, aged seventy, and his widow died at a very advanced age in 1798. He was an eminent physician and a diligent and inquisitive lover of antiquities." His collections are now in the William Salt Library at Stafford.

⁷ Codsall Register.

⁸ Wotton's Baronetage, 1741.

Henrietta, the third daughter, was born on the 25th of November 1715,¹ and married Theodore William Inge, Esq., of Thorpe Constantine, co. Stafford.²

Dorothy or Dora, as she is named in the Codsall Register, was born and baptised at Wrottesley 8th May 1723.³ The Tettenhall Register records her burial on the 12th of August 1742. She is described in it as "Dorothy, the daughter of Lady Wrottesley, of Purton." Probate of her will was granted to her mother in 1743.

Mary was born and baptised the 12th of October 1725.³ She was living in 1762, at the date of her mother's will, and apparently died unmarried.⁴

Sir John Wrottesley was buried at Tettenhall on the 1st of November 1726.⁵ His will was dated 1725, and probate was granted of it in February 1726-7. He names in it "my uncle Harry Wrottesley," "my wife Frances," "Anthony Collins, Esqr., and my sister Elizabeth, his wife."

After the marriage of Sir Richard Wrottesley, his mother Frances, Lady Wrottesley, took up her abode at the old Manor House at Perton, and must have lived to a very advanced age, for the Parish Register of Tettenhall records her burial on the 1st April 1769, four months only before the

¹ Codsall Register.

² She has raised a monument to herself by the memorial she put up in Lichfield Cathedral to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Mrs. Jameson, in her "Romance of Biography," writing of this monument, says:—

"In Lichfield Cathedral stands the only memorial ever raised to Lady Mary. It is a cenotaph, with Beauty weeping over the loss of her preserver, and an inscription of which the following words form the conclusion, 'To perpetuate the memory of such benevolence, and to express her gratitude for the benefit she herself received from this alleviating art, this monument is erected by Henrietta Inge, relict of Theodoro William Inge, and daughter of Sir John Wrottesley, Bart., in 1789.' One would like to have known the woman who raised this monument."

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who introduced inoculation into England, as a remedy for smallpox, was the aunt and probably the godmother of Lady Mary Wrottesley, the wife of Sir Richard Wrottesley, and was therefore connected with Henrietta Inge. It is not unlikely that the numerous deaths in the Wrottesley family of this date proceeded from smallpox, for the ravages of the disease at this period were quite terrific.

Mrs. Jameson says, in the work above mentioned, that "when Lord Petre, who is consecrated to fame in the Rape of the Lock, as the ravisher of Arabella Fermour's hair, died of the smallpox at the age of three and twenty, just after his marriage with a young and beautiful heiress, his death caused a general sympathy, and added to the dread and horror inspired by this terrible disease, eighteen persons of his family having died of it within twenty-seven years." This took place in 1711.

³ Codsall Register.

⁴ Wrottesley Muniments.

⁵ Tettenhall Register.

The General Election which followed was a momentous one for the Tories, who spared no pains or money to obtain a majority in Parliament. In this they were unsuccessful, but in February 1835 Sir Francis Goodricke was created a Baronet, and there is no doubt he subscribed very largely to the Tory funds upon this occasion.

On a vacancy occurring in South Staffordshire, by the promotion of Mr. Littleton to the Peerage in May 1835, Sir Francis obtained the vacant seat after a severe contest. Up to this time it had been considered a safe seat for the Liberals, and the election of a Tory due in a great measure to a very large expenditure upon the constituency, was the cause of a very serious riot in Wolverhampton, the mob assailing the Old Swan Tavern, where the Committee of Sir Francis sat, and breaking all the windows. The magistrates, fearing further mischief, sent for the assistance of the military, and a troop of the First Dragoon Guards, under the command of Captain Manning, arrived from Birmingham. They were drawn up in the Old Market Place (now Queen Square), and on being ordered to clear the streets a man in the crowd stabbed one of the troop horses in the ribs. The Dragoons, on perceiving the horse fall dead in a pool of blood, became exasperated, broke loose from their officers and attacked the mob with the flat sides of their sabres, inflicting a very severe beating upon them, during which some of their swords were broken. The troops even followed the retreating crowds into the adjoining streets, and a few shots were fired from their carbines. Fortunately nobody was killed, but there was a large number of wounded, and a loud outcry was raised against the military, which under the influence of party feeling, was no doubt greatly exaggerated.¹

With a view of calming the excitement, Sir John Wrottesley pressed upon Lord John Russell, who was then Home Secretary, the advisability of a public enquiry on the spot, by a Commission sent down for the purpose. This was refused by the Government in the first instance, but after a debate in Parliament, and a strong speech delivered in favour of it by Sir John, they gave way and conceded the enquiry. During the speech which he made on this occasion, he made one of those slips of the tongue which are the delight of the House of Commons. He stated "he had been a magistrate for the County of Stafford for forty years, and had been concerned in the greater part of the

¹ Hansard's Debates. The Liberal party for instance declared the horse had been killed by the sword of one of the Dragoons, but this is not at all probable.

riots which had taken place in that district." When the laughter had subsided he corrected himself by saying, "he should have said he was engaged in suppressing those riots;" but the idea of the respectable and sedate member for South Staffordshire (he was then sixty-four years of age) having been concerned in all the riots of that district, must have been a source of unbounded delight to the House.

At the opening of Parliament in February 1836, Sir John was asked by Lord Melbourne to move the Address. His speech will be found in Hansard, but it was a quiet time, and it contains nothing of interest. In his preamble he said, "he could not plead the inexperience usually urged as a claim on the indulgence of the House." It is curious to reflect that he had moved the Address thirty-six years before, on the request of Mr. Pitt, when the latter was in the plenitude of his power, and at the date he was then addressing the House the memory of the great Minister had become but the shadow of a name.

It will be seen from the above sketch that his career in Parliament was not an undistinguished one. At the General Election of 1837 he lost his seat for South Staffordshire,² and shortly before the Coronation of the Queen in the following year, Lord Melbourne wrote and offered him a Peerage. His patent is dated 11th July 1838.

He took his seat in the House of Lords, and in the Session of 1839 spoke against Lord Brougham's Bill for the regulation of Beer Houses, and voted amongst the non-Contents with Lord Melbourne and the Lord Chancellor Cottenham, but the Liberal Ministry had not a majority in the House of Lords, and the bill was passed. He likewise spoke on the Tythe Commutation Act of the same Session.¹

From this point there is nothing further to record respecting him. He died on the 16th of March 1841, and was buried at Tettenhall, on the 23rd March, a great concourse of people following his remains to the grave. After his burial, the ancient family vault was finally closed. At the time it was sealed up it held twenty generations of the family.³

His first wife, Lady Caroline Wrottesley, died in London,

¹ Hansard's Debates.

² Sir Francis Goodricke also lost his seat. The two new members were Viscount Ingestre and the Hon. George Anson. Sir John Wrottesley had no intention of standing, and had issued no address, but stood at the last moment to obviate some advantage which the Tories would have obtained by the absence of a second Whig candidate.

³ It may be worth relating, as showing the morbid curiosity of the multitude, that the incumbent of the parish was besieged with applications from persons in the neighbourhood to inspect the vault before its final closing.

Nicholas Woodroffe, formerly Mayor of London. Sir George Wrottesley must have been married to her before 1625, for in that year he was a Commissioner regarding the validity of a grant of property in Farnham for charitable uses,¹ and in the same year an information was laid against him and Katherine his wife for the ravishment of Thomas White, the King's ward, who had been married to Elizabeth Woodroffe, daughter of the said Katherine.

The hearing took place on the 12th of February 22 James I in the Court of Wards and Liveries on an information laid by Sir John Hall, Kt., and Dame Dorothy his wife, the Committees of Thomas White, His Majesty's late ward, when it was ordered that Sir George Wrottesley should pay the sum of £1,083 6s. 8d., viz., £541 13s. 4d. on the February next ensuing and £541 13s. 4d. on the 2nd November, Sir Thomas Jervoise² to be his surety for the performance of the decree, and the money to be applied for the benefit of the younger brother of the ward.

Apparently there was some difficulty in extracting the money from Sir George, for a final decree was made at Trinity Term, 8 Charles I (1632), i.e., nine years after the date of the first information, that the said Sir George Wrottesley shall, in performance of the said decree, pay unto Henry White, on the first day of Michaelmas term next at the Font Stone in the Temple Church, the sum of £1,083 6s. 8d. of lawful English money in full performance of the decree aforesaid.

After his marriage with Katherine Woodroffe Sir George appears to have been a person of considerable local importance and is mentioned frequently in the State Papers of the reign of James I. Administration of his goods was granted to Dame Katherine, his relict, on the 25th of March 1636.³ In these

The Genealogist for July 1902, gives the following description of the Woodroffes: "Now touching the Daughters of this Alderman (Stephen Kirton) by Margrett, his wife, one of the Daughters of old Wm. Offley; the eldest of them was married to Sr Nicholas Woodroffe sometime Maior of London, who after leaving the City and giving up his Cloake (as the tearme is) had a goodly house and estate in Hampshire about thirty miles from London, where hee and his Lady the Daughter of Mrs. Kerton dyed and left behind them sons and Daughters. His eldest sone Sir David Woodroffe, Kt. who married one of the Daughters of Sir John White, Kt. sister to Mrs. Offley who was wife to Henry Offley, esq^r and mother to Sir John Offley; this David Woodroffe, Kt. dyed, whose widow was married to Sir George Wrottesley, Kt."

¹ State Papers, printed, Rolls Series.

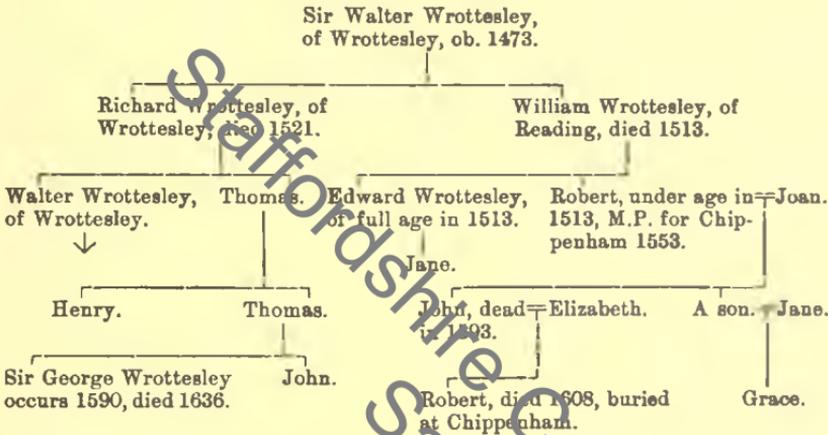
² Sir Thomas Jervoise, the ward of Sir George Wrottesley, was a man of note during the Civil War. He was M.P. for Whitchurch (Hants) during the reign of James I and Charles I, and Colonel of a Regiment of Dragoons on the side of the Parliament. For an account of him see the "Ancestor" for October, 1902, page 3, which contains also his portrait, and the portrait of Lucy Poulett.

³ Administration Act Book, fol. 65, P.C.C.

letters he is described as Sir George Wrottesley, Knight, late of Guildford, Surrey.

"The History of Surrey," by Manning and Bray, states he left a son by Katherine White, who died young, and the deeds at Herriard appear to shew that Elizabeth, wife of Richard Orchard, was the right heir of Sir George Wrottesley.¹

The pedigree of these younger branches would therefore appear to be as follows:—



The Visitation of co. Wilts of 1623 states that Thomas Barrett, of Titherton Lucas, co. Wilts, married Jane, the daughter of Edward Wrottesley, of Rowde, co. Wilts, but as usual with Visitations, gives no date.

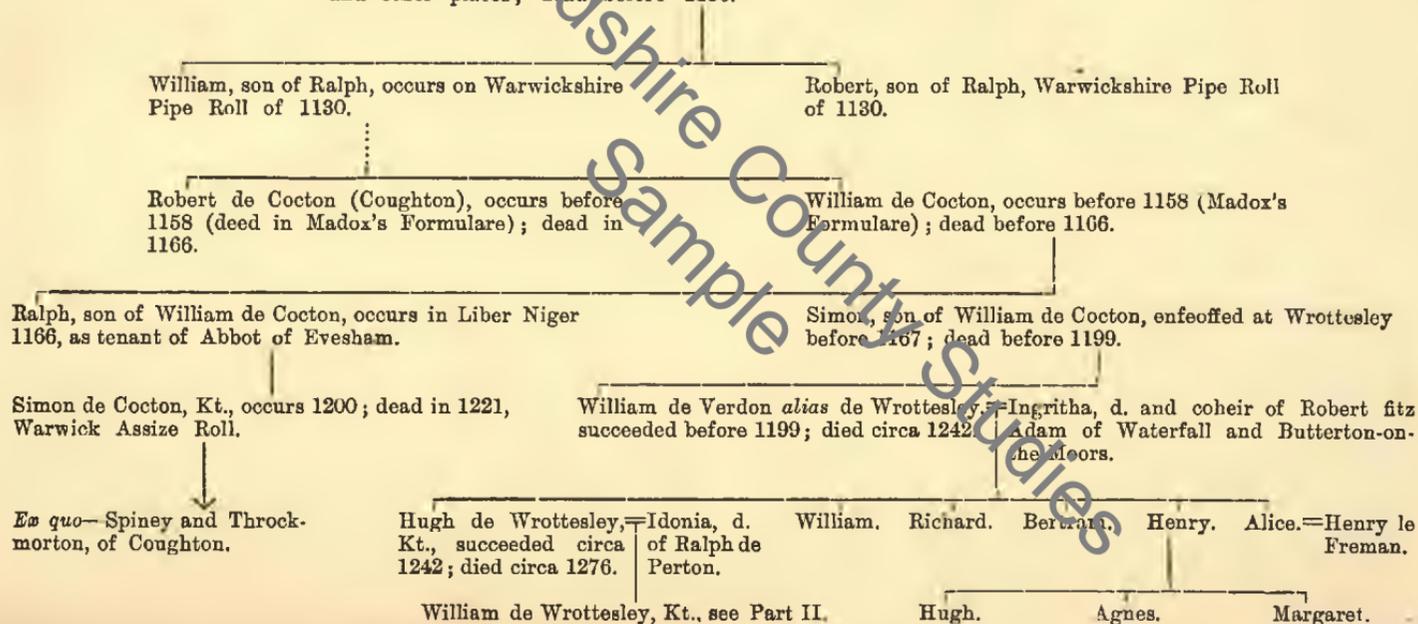
Mistress Elizabeth Wrottesley was buried at Chippenham 29th May 1614 (Chippenham Register).

¹ *See inf.* F. H. T. Jervoise, Esq., Herriard Park, Basingstoke.

Pedigree of Wrottesley, of Wrottesley, Co. Stafford.

PART I.

Ralph, the brother of Walter, Abbot of Evesham, occurs 1085, also in Domesday Book as tenant of the Abbot at Kinewarton, Morton, Stoke and other places; dead before 1130.



Petronilla, d. of Sir John de Wrotesley, Kt.,=Sir William de Wrotesley, Kt.,=Katrine, d. of John Lestrangle, Baron of Knockin and Audley, of Blore. succeeded before 1279; died 1313. widow of Sir Alan de Glaseley.
(First wife.) (Second wife.)

Sir William de Wrotesley, Kt., succeeded 1313; died 1320. =Joan, d. of Sir Roger Basset.
Hugh, living 1291 and 1307. =Juliana.
John, occurs 1320 and 1337. =Rosea.=William de Elmedon.

William, living 1337.

Elizabeth, d. of Sir John de Hampton, of Oldstoke, co. Hants, first wife; died in 1349. =Mabel, d. of Sir Philip ap Rees, of Talgarth, second wife; died 1370. =Sir Hugh de Wrotesley, K.G., succeeded 1333; died 1381.
=Mabel, d. of Sir John Arderne, of Airdford co. Chester, third wife; died 1381.
Roger, occurs 1334 and 1338.
Idonia, occurs 1334 and 1403.
Elianora, occurs 1334.

Hugh, died in infancy 1370.

Hugh, born 1371; died in infancy before 1385.

John de Wrotesley, born 1370; succeeded 1400; died 1405.

Elizabeth, d. of Sir Robert de Standish, remarried 1, Sir William le Boteler, Baron of Warrington, 2, William de Ferrers, Baron of Groby.

Hugh Wrotesley, born 1400; succeeded 1421; died 1464. =Thomasine, d. of Sir John Gresley, of Drake Lowe; died 1480.

Sir Walter Wrotesley, Kt., succeeded 1464; died 1473.
See Part III.

Henry, Sheriff of co. Worcester 1460; proclaimed a traitor 1470; dead the same year.

Elizabeth.=Sir William Stafford.

Isabella.=Sir William Airmyn, of Osgodby, co. Lincoln.

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