



AS HISTORICAL
BY COLLECTION



Gc
929.2
C81c
v.2
1135539

THE FAMILY OF CORBET



ROLAND JAMES CORBET

Coldstream Guards

BARONET, OF MORETON CORBET, CO. SALOP

Aged 23.

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

ITS LIFE AND TIMES

By A. E. C.

VOL. II



LONDON
THE ST CATHERINE PRESS
STAMFORD STREET · S.E.

THIS SECOND VOLUME

written during the progress of the Great War
is dedicated to the memory of

SIR ROLAND JAMES CORBET, BART

Coldstream Guards

HEAD OF THE FAMILY OF CORBET

killed at Givenchy, France,

April 15th 1915

"England mourns for her dead across the sea."

"They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe."

"They sleep beyond England's foam."

From "FOR THE FALLEN,"

By kind permission of the Author, Laurence Binyon,
and the Proprietors of "The Times."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOL. II.

A.D. 1150—1800.

CHAPTER X. Relates the descents from the younger Members of the lapsed Barony of Caus ; and the subsequent formation of their descendants into the various Houses—House of Chaddesley-Corbet and Chetton (including Manors of Ymeney, Tiddeshall, etc., in Worcestershire ; and the inherited lands in Northumberland, Durham and Surrey) ; House of Hope, House of Leigh-juxta-Caus with its lands in Leicestershire ; House of Leighton and its lands in Cheshire. Absorption of all, by surviving House of Leigh-juxta-Caus. Rise of Lollards. Separation of the House of Longnor. Removal of House of Leigh to Albright Hussie and again later to Sundorne. Final loss of Male Heir and end of the Line page 163

A.D. 1450—1775.

CHAPTER XI. Short sketches of some well-known Corbets. Formation of the House of Longnor, with its history till the creation of the Baronetcy, with its lapse from the supposed failure of the Male Line. Longnor Estates devised to the female Line 192

A.D. 1150—1400.

CHAPTER XII. Description of the Crusades and Legend of the Ludlow Ring. Rise and formation of the knightly House of Corbets of Wattlesborough—the elder Branch—with Legend and Tradition. Subsequent inheritance of Morton Toret and lands in Yorkshire to the alienation of Wattlesborough through marriage 209

A.D. 1400—1668-70.

CHAPTER XIII. Continuation of the history of the elder branch of the Family, now settled at Morton Corbet, through the reigns of Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV, V, and VI, Edward IV, and Richard III. Description of the Battle of Shrewsbury ; marriage with the heiress, Elizabeth Hopton, Wars of the Roses, Caxton and introduction of Printing ; Battle of Bosworth Field, etc. ; short sketch of Corbets of Norfolk, who claim descent from Corbets of Moreton Corbet, but not proved ; creation of Baronetcy and its lapse from failure of Male Line 238

A.D. 1460—1579.

CHAPTER XIV. History of Corbets of Moreton Corbet continued through the reigns of Henry VII and VIII, Edward VI, Queens Mary and Elizabeth. Sketches of short sub-branches of Stanwardine and descendants of Jerome Corbet. Founding of important sub-branch of Corbets of Stoke and Adderley. Founding of Shrewsbury School. Adoption of new crest (the Elephant and Castle) ; temporary assumption of second "t" to the name. Change of the old Castle of Moreton Corbet to an Italian Mansion. Introduction of the name "Andrew" ; death of the first Sir Andrew. Extracts from the Town Papers and Parish Registers 262

1135539

A.D. 1580—1640.

CHAPTER XV. Continues history of the Family of Corbet through the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, James I, Charles I, to the beginning of the Civil War ; relates some ravages of the "Plague" ; death of Robert, Traveller and Diplomatist. Short sketch of his brother and successor, Richard, knight of the Bath. Changes in manners and customs ; ascendancy of Puritans. Succession of next heir, the first Sir Vincent, knight. Wills and Inq. P.M. Curse of the Puritan made to Sir Vincent, his benefactor. Humfreston settled on Sir Vincent's second son, Robert, founder of the sub-branch of Ynnysmaengwyn, in which descendants of the younger sons still retain the Male Descent ; Account of new Charter to Shrewsbury. Death of second Sir Andrew ; details connected with history of the younger sons and descendants of the sub-branch of Ynnysmaengwyn 292

Best. Corbets - 1250 (2 vol.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.D. 1620—1869.

CHAPTER XVI. Contains details of the Civil Wars connected with the Family of Corbet and Shropshire on the Royalist side. Life and death of Vincent the Royalist, knight and first Baronet of Moreton Corbet ; his marriage with Sarah, daughter of Robert Monson, knt., of Carleton, Lincolnshire. Episode of Sir Faithful Fortescue at Battle of Edgehill. Betrayal of Shrewsbury to the Parliament Forces. Betrayal and destruction of Moreton Corbet Castle. Siege and surrender of the Castles of Bridgenorth and Caus. Death of Sir Vincent, the Royalist ; his widow created Viscountess Corbet of Lincelade for life. Her remarriage to Sir Charles Lee, of Edmonton ; her death and burial at Edmonton in 1683. Succession of the second Baronet of Moreton Corbet. His death 1680. Succession and early death of his son, Sir Vincent, third and last Baronet. Epitaphs in the Church of Moreton Corbet. Succession of a younger brother of the first Bart., Richard Corbet, Esqr., of Shawbury Park, to all the entailed Estates. Short sketch of Arthur Corbet, his younger brother, whose descendants retain the Male descent, with some details concerning his great-great-grand-daughter, Lady Dundonald, the wife of the 10th Earl

321

A.D. 1620—1916.

CHAPTER XVII. History of the sub-branch of Corbets of Stoke and Adderley. History of the male line of the Family of Moreton Corbet continued. Re-creation of the Baronetcy. Succession of the second son of Sir Andrew, first Bart., to the Estates of Corbets of Stoke and Adderley. A few details of Sir Walter Orlando Corbet, fourth Baronet, of Moreton Corbet—present holder of the Baronetcy is Sir Gerald Corbet, sixth Baronet of Moreton Corbet. A few remarks concerning the Corbets of Avenbury, Sir Julian Corbett, knt., and others, their presumable descendants, and details of some of the Family of Corbet who have settled in Ireland

350

PEDIGREES ILLUSTRATING THE TEXT

CHAPTER X

Pedigree of the Houses of Chaddesley-Corbet, Hope, Leigh-juxta-Caus, Leighton, subsequently of Albright Hussie and Sundorne face page 191

CHAPTER XI

Two Pedigrees of House of Longnor (past and present) face page 208

CHAPTER XIII

Pedigree Corbets of Norfolk face page 261

CHAPTER XIV

Pedigree, Corbets of Stanwardine face page 271
Pedigree, Descendants of Jerome Corbet face page 274

CHAPTER XV

Pedigree of Corbets of Humfreston and Ynnysmaengwyn face page 320

CHAPTER XVI

Pedigree of Descendants of Arthur Corbet face page 349

CHAPTER XVII

Pedigree of Corbets of Stoke and Adderley face page 357
Pedigree of Head of the Family of Corbet—Corbets of Wattlesborough and Moreton Corbet face page 368

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Roland James Corbet (Coldstream Guards), Baronet, of Moreton Corbet, co. Salop	Frontispiece
South-west View of Shrewsbury	face page 164
Old Church of St. Alkmunds	166
West Door and Buildings of the Abbey of SS. Peter and Paul	166
Ruins of Newminster Abbey, near Morpeth	170
Leigh Manor House, near Worthen	190
Longner House, the Seat of Mr. Burton	190
Sir Edward Corbet, 1st Bart. of Longnor—His Wife, Lady Corbet, née Margaret Watties, of Burway and Leighton	203
Longnor Hall	203
Sir Uvedale Corbett, 3rd Bart. of Longnor—Mildred Lady Corbett, his Wife, dau. of Earl of Salisbury—Sir Richard Corbett, 4th Bart. of Longnor—Sir Richard Corbett, 2nd Bart. of Longnor—Miss Elizabeth Corbett	204
Caus Castle	on page 232
Shrewsbury Castle	face page 243
Shrewsbury Abbey and Monastery	245
Thomas Corbet, Knt., and Ancaret his wife (St. Alkmunds)	246
Elizabeth, wife of Sir Robert Corbet, Knt., dau. of Sir Henry Vernon, Knt., of Tong and Haddon Hall	263
Tomb of Richard, 2nd son of Sir Robert Corbet (wife Margaret, née Saville)	264
Tomb of Sir Robert Corbet, Knt., of Moreton Corbet, and wife Elizabeth, née Vernon	264
Reginald Corbet of Stoke and Adderley (Judge)	269
Jerome Corbet, Esqr., of Besloe	269
Shrewsbury Grammar School	269
Old Part and Entrance Tower, Castle of Moreton Corbet	277
Ornaments on the New Part, Moreton Corbet Castle	278
Southern and New Part of Ruins, Moreton Corbet Castle	280
First Sir Vincent Corbett, Knt., of Moreton Corbet	307
Second Sir Andrew Corbett, Knt., of Moreton Corbet	310
Lady Corbett, née Elizabeth Boothby, wife of second Sir Andrew Corbett, Knt., of Moreton Corbet	312
John Corbett, Esqr., of Impney and Ynnysymaengwyn	319
Major-General Sir Stuart Corbett, K.C.B.	319
Sir Vincent Corbett, Knt. and 1st Bart. of Moreton Corbet, son of Sir Andrew Corbett the Second	326
Sir Francis Ottley, Governor of Shrewsbury, Lucy, his Wife, Richard and Mary, their Children	337
Sir John Corbet, 2nd Bart. of Stoke and Adderley	343
Sir Vincent Corbett, 3rd and last Bart. of Moreton Corbet	343
Old Gate Tower of Castle and Church, Moreton Corbet	343
Andrew Corbet, Esqr., of Shawbury Park	361
Richard Prince Corbet, of High Hatton Hall	361
Moreton Corbet Church	361
Sir Andrew Corbet, 1st Bart. (re-creation), of Moreton Corbet; seat, Acton Reynold	364
Acton Reynold Hall	364
Sir Walter Orlando Corbet, 4th Bart. of Moreton Corbet	366

SKETCHES *from* THE LIFE AND TIMES *of the* FAMILY *of* CORBET

CHAPTER X

"SHREWSBURY"—so say her admirers—"has in all respects advantage and superiority over all other Towns in the County"—Bridgnorth and Oswestry, inter alia, say the same of themselves—hence certain good-natured rivalries. In one point, however, Shrewsbury bears the palm, if in no other, for she alone can boast of having been the rallying point for long of the Britons, as they receded from the relentless Saxon; and she guarded the Palace of their Chief King or Prince. The spot was admirably chosen for strength and beauty of situation, and the wholesomeness of the air; and inhabitants soon congregated on its little peninsula. The Britons gave the name of "Pengwern-Powis" to the Town: and Cynddyfan in the sixth century is said to have been its founder. The Palace or chief seat of authority as known in those times is thought to have been built on the hill where some centuries later the old Church of St. Chad stood.

Ant. Shrop.
Duke

Elakeway
Shrewsbury

The Saxon tribes, ever increasing in number, ever victorious over the Britons and ever pushing them back nearer and nearer to the great Western Sea, were nevertheless some time before they could entirely dispossess the Britons from Pengwern-Powis. The place was taken and retaken again and again, till at last arose a notable Prince called "Eliseg." So great were his victories over the Saxon invader, that a most curious pillar, recording the victory which restored Pengwern to the Britons, was erected near to what later became the site of the "Valle Crucis." The Bards of the day immortalised the heroic deeds of their hero Eliseg, and gave the history of his forbears and descendants and their struggles with the invaders; and this most unique monument was still standing till the middle of the seventeenth century, when Cromwell's ruthless soldiers in their brutality and fanaticism threw it down and it was broken in two pieces. It is almost the only authentic Memorial of the kings of old Powis. Mr. Robert Vaughan, a great Antiquary of that century, saw it in this state in the April of 1662 and took a copy of the inscription. It then consisted of thirty-one lines. A transcription was among the collections of Mr. William Mytton. In 1779 Mr. Lloyd, of Trevor Hall, erected the upper part of the column, consisting of sixteen lines, and set it on its ancient base, placing it on a ruder one of rough stones, on a rising ground near the turnpike road leading by "Valle Crucis" from Llangollen to Ruthin.

A greater general than Eliseg soon made history, and Pengwern was finally wrested from the Britons by Offa. This victory was so complete that the kings of the land of Powis abandoned Pengwern. Henceforth it became entirely Saxon. A Saxon name was given to it by its Saxon masters, and the Town was called Scrobbes-byrig, signifying that it was a bury or fenced eminence but overgrown with Scrubs or shrubs. Its unrivalled strength of position recommended itself to the Saxon conquerors; they built a good Palace on the old site, and as they became Christians placed an establishment or college of learned men and Priests close to the Palace. From that time till the Norman Conquest Scrobbesbyrig was ever a favourite resting-place of the Saxon king. It is said they built a fortification on the hill, where afterwards arose the celebrated Castle of the Norman Conqueror, which is still standing, and indeed is still inhabited. The Town can only be entered by its two stone bridges, or by the road through the isthmus which connects the peninsula to the main land. It was across this isthmus that Roger de Montgomery threw his protecting walls and placed his lower Gateway; thus the Town was perfectly defended. Leland says in his description of Shrewsbury:

"Built on a hill, fair Salop greets the eye,
While Severn forms a crescent gliding by,
Two stone bridges cross the navigable stream,
And British Alders gave the town a name."

The oldest foundation of Shrewsbury's beautiful Churches is, I believe, St. Alkmund; this and St. Mary are both of Saxon origin—indeed, so also is the Abbey, inasmuch as that a small wooden

Church is said to have stood on the site ; but this is of course outside the Town strictly speaking and across the river.

Shrewsbury and its inhabitants have always been staunch royalists. It will claim attention more frequently in this second part of the Corbet History, from the greater proximity to it of the Corbets whose history we are now about to gather together, than were the Barons of Caus. The Guilds of Shrewsbury were important and celebrated even in its very early days. I think they originally owed their existence to a desire for mutual support and defence, and this may readily be understood as we realise how near Shrewsbury lay to the Border : and in the early days of the Guilds, Gentlemen and their sons were among the members as often as craftsmen.

I am about to quote a most curious document concerning the craft of the " Mynstrells," which, though most likely largely legendary, is nevertheless extremely curious.

It is said to be a Charter granted to the Minstrels by the third Earl of Shrewsbury, Robert de Belesme, and confirmed by John Earl of Shrewsbury in the reign of Henry VI. The document was found in an old oak chest at Heythrop, then belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury.

" Bee hit knowne to all Cristen men, that this present writing seith or heareth, that I Robert de Belesme Erl of Shroesbury, sone after the Conquest of my Sov'ayne William Conqueror, was enfeet with sickness of leper, and as I in my sickness being, a vision appeareth to me, in myn chamber, and bade me goe into ' Araske ' for there was a candyll the which was with oure Ladye Christy's Mother in Bedeleme at the birth of oure blessed Lord her Son, and that time, the sayde candyll tende by hit selfe through myracle. And when the night was gone an anyll took the candyll and bare hit into the heir (ayer in the margin) in ' Araske ' and there't burnyth and never wastyth and so shall till the daye of Dome, and yif thou might gete a sighte of that candyll and a drop of that waxe, thou shouldst bee hoole of thye syknesse. And when the daye was comyn, I told my counsaile of that vision. And with their advise I took with me Xij men and myselfe was the Xij and went into ' Araske,' and there we prayed Xi dayes and every third daye we had a sight of the candyll, but it was ferr from us. And then we imaginyd that hit was not the will of oure Lorde Jesus that I shoulde be cured, by cause the candyll descended not to us, or else there were some visious man in oure fellyshipp. Then every of us was confessed and ij places was halowed for us to abide Xij dayes, Xij of us to pray in the one place, and the Xij in the other place till every man were tryed by himselfe, and thus wee shoulde praye V hours afore noon and iij hours before the night. And in the Xijj day my mynstrell went into that place and as he prayed the sayde candyll descended noo ferr from him, but the length of a launce. And as he heve uppe his hondes a drop of the waxe fell on his righte honde, and he put it into a bottell of sylver and broughte hit unto mee and then it was fulle of waxe, and therewithe he touched my face, and then the waxe vanished away and my odmost skenne fell from me and I fresh of couller and hoole of bodey and never after that ened till the p'orte of tyme that I shoulde change my lyffe, and then sone uppon that, through Gody's grace wee came to Shroesbury and that I had my mynstrell aske of mee what he woulde that I might yeve, and I would grant him, and hee saughte me that he might have a tapur of waxe in remembrance of the sayde myracle to brenne before an image of oure Ladye, there as I would ordaine and that every mynstrell within the Counte of Shropshire dwelling, yerely should come to Shroesbury upon Seinte Peter's daye, that is called Lammes daye, by IX of the bell to do worship to oure Ladye Christy's Mother, and there to cheese them Master, a man of goode governaunce by the eleccion of themselfe and that maister to swere by the Erle of Shroesbury or his assignees trewly to rewle his bretheren after the law of armes and the foresaid light afore oure Ladye, and to the said light every mynstrell within the said shier to pay iijd to the maistry bond, other to his assignees and hif any mynstrell of England or Wales come into that shyre aforesaid and get iijd with his instrument, to pay iijd to the said maister or his assignees, and if he wool not they to take his instrument by the power of your gracious lord Earle of Shroesbury and bringe hit before an image of oure Ladye and there to abide XI days, and yif he wool not pay his duties, his instrument to be ferfette to the use of oure Ladye, I Robert Belesme Erle of Shroesbury graunt to my mynstrell and to his bretheren all this said before, and the foresaid lyght to be bore through my towne of Shroesburye and my banner before hit, and in two places to rest, that is to saye in my said towne, in my Church of Sayn Alkmund, and in my Abbey of Shroesburye, in remembrance of the sayde myracle. And I truly to sustaine and maintayne and all my heires for evermore. To this said foundation we John Erle of Shroesbury and of Weyford, lord Talbot and Furnyvale, have sette to oure seale." " Written at Shroesbury on St Mathews day tha' postyll the yeare of the reign of King Harry the 6th after the Conquest XXij."

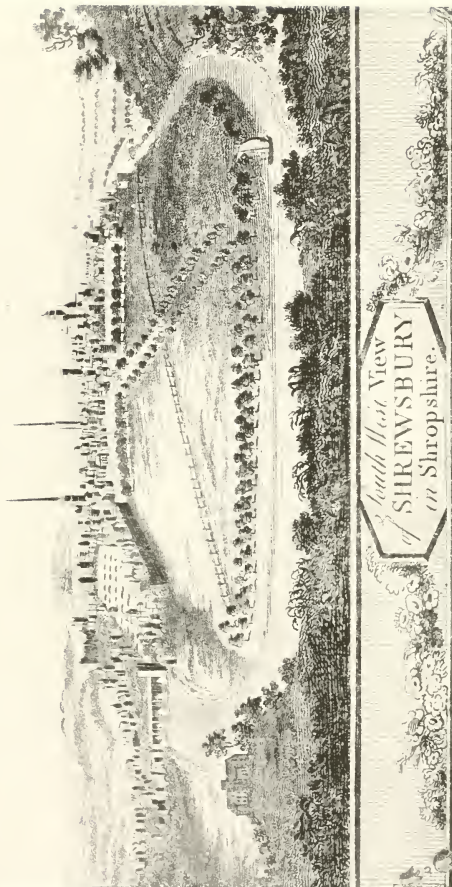


Plate B. 16

So ends this most curious document.

Fulchred was the first Abbot of the Abbey ; the chief early benefactors besides the Montgomery—the Founder—were : Warine the Bald, the Sheriff, husband to Almeria, the niece of Roger de Montgomery. This lady gave “ a burgame in the town for maintaining wax candles to burn all nights in the year, on the High Altar.” Girardus de Tournay was a benefactor, also Helgot, Rogerius Fitz-Corbet, and his brother Robert, Picot de Say, Hernaldus, Hamo Peverel, Hugh son of Guarinus, Maud the Empress, Ranulf Earl of Chester, Matilda Longespee, daughter and heir of Walter de Clifford, Richard Fitz-Alan, etc. The Abbot was one of the mitred Abbots who attended Parliament by right. The town has gone through several sieges. It was wrested from Robert de Belesme by Henry I ; next it withstood the enemies of the Empress Maud, but ultimately was forced to surrender to Stephen, and its gallant defender Fitz-Alan luckily escaped to Normandy. It fell into the hands of Llewellyn the Great, the son of Jerwerth, for a short time ;—and thence onwards—through the varying fortunes of their different kings, the citizens of the good City of Alders have many a time found it their duty and privilege to fight for King and liberty.

We close these remarks on Shrewsbury with a few words about the Monk to whose wonderful chronicle all lovers of history turn, Ordericus Vitalis. He was a native of Shrewsbury, born in the year 1075 and baptised at Atcham, a little village on the Severn only a few miles from the town. He was baptised by the earnest Priest who had long served its little Church, and was given the name of his benefactor “ Ordericus.” His father’s name was Odelerius, and when only five years old the little boy was given over to the good Monks of the Abbey. In quite early youth he was sent to Normandy, to the Abbey of Uticum, and there he wrote most of his chronicle at the instance of his Abbot, Roger, who was elected in 1091. Ordericus dedicated the work to his successor, Warin, who died in 1137, and then in 1141 he closes the book. “ Lo ! I,” says he, “ borne down by age, seek to close this my Book. Whereunto divers causes move me. For I now am passing the 67th year of my life in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ, and while I beheld the great men of this world affected by weighty misfortunes, by the grace of my Lord GOD I rejoice in my poverty and in the security of subjection. Lo ! Stephen king of England groaneth in the walls of a prison, while Lewis king of France leading his troops against the Goths and Gascons is oppressed by many cares . . . At the age of 11 did I cross the British sea ; unknowing and unknown I arrived in Normandy, like Joseph I heard a strange language, yet under thy protection I experienced all the gentle offices of humanity, at the hands of foreigners . . . and was admitted a Monk in the Monastery of Uticum in the eleventh year of my age, and on Sunday the 21st day of September received the Tonsure after the manner of Clerks. At the same time instead of my English name, which sounded harsh in their ears, they called me ‘ Vitalis ’ in allusion to one of St Maurice’s companions whose feast fell on that day. Six Abbots have I witnessed, thy Vicars, as my Fathers and Masters have I revered them, to wit, Mainer and Serlo, Roger and Warin, Richard and Ralph. . . .” Ordericus continues the history of his life, and ends his touching testimony thus : “ O Lord GOD Almighty Father, Creator, and Ruler of the Angels. Thou true Hope and eternal blessedness of the Righteous, may the glorious intercession of the Holy Virgin and Mother Mary, and All Saints, aid us in thy sight with the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ Redeemer of all men, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost world without end. Amen.”

Now Ordericus must have been perfectly well acquainted with the persons of both Roger Fitz-Corbet and his brother Robert. All his childhood was passed in the Abbey Foregate with the good Priest Sward, and he must have witnessed the ceremonies attending the founding of the Abbey and the bestowal of the early benefactions. The Corbets too on their part would have been quite familiar with the little boy’s personality,—hence the interest of these details of his life to us.

There is much to attract notice in the history of the fair city of Shrewsbury, and many an episode as the centuries pass will claim a page in this history of the Family of Corbet.

The birth of the sub-branches from the ruins of the line of the Barons of Caus now claims our serious attention, and though at first sight the descents appear somewhat confused, I hope to be able to make the formation of the various houses perfectly clear, and the subsequent descent of their sons equally so.

There is but one generation of the Barons of Caus subsequent to that of William of Wattleborough, which gives any possibility of a descent from younger sons—the generation of the sons of Robert Corbet, fourth Baron of Caus.—Two of his younger sons left heirs—Hugh and William. Hugh I take to be the Baron’s second son, from the position of his attesting signature in the Charter

granting the title of lead to Shrewsbury Abbey, from the lead mines at Shelve, date 1220-1. Hugh appears to have had two sons, Sir Robert and a Hugh who was a Priest, and presented to the Church of Wyke, in 1283. Neither of these sons left descendants, I believe. William, the Baron's other son who left heirs, was he who had taken part in the raiding of the papers from the Monk of Buildwas, no doubt at that time he was young and eager for the fray. We had best first speak of Hugh as the traces of his descendants are soon lost. Hugh seems to have been known chiefly by his soubriquet *Grysetaille*, a corruption I take it of *Grosse-taille*, witnessing to his commanding stature. He seems to have always passed by that name; the habit was quite after the Norman mind, which loved soubriquets. Indeed Eyton, from whom I take these few particulars of Hugh, quite fails to perceive that Corbet was his family name. The soubriquet may also have been encouraged, to distinguish this Hugh from his Uncle Hugh, the Baron's brother, who witnesses the Charter granting Wentnor Mill to the Abbey of Buildwas in 1198, and who was rector of Worthyn in 1245. Hugh *Grysetaille* is mentioned in connection with Pontesburie in the year 1236 when he is chosen by his cousin (one of the Fitz-Herberts) as her Attorney in a law suit between the latter family and the Baron of Caus, under whom they held land in that extensive Manor. It may be remembered that the Baron's father, Simon, held the large Manor of Pontesburie, so it falls not unnaturally that we should find his grandson established there. Hugh is next heard of at Winsley or Winslega, a Vill lying a few miles from Pontesburie and belonging to the Corbet Manor of Westbury: it had been given to Shrewsbury Abbey by Roger Fitz-Corbet. The Abbey still had rights there, and had evidently often placed various owners under them on the land. Eyton relates, "Roger son of Roger de Winslega concedes to the Abbey of Shrewsbury all his right in that noke in Winesley which Roger surnamed Noeth formerly had. Also in that noke which John Clerk formerly gave to Sibil de Westbury for her service; also in half a virgate which Hugh Grysetaye held there. Witnesses Nicholas Fitz-Hamon, Thomas surnamed le Botlyer and Richard de Mamerfend." This latter died in 1259. In 1251 Thomas de Estun and Sibil his wife have a Writ of disseizin against Hugh Grysetaye concerning a tenement in Winsleg. "The Abbot of Shrewsbury" (says the Ford Hundred Roll of 1255) "holds four virgates in Winsleye of the Fee of Cawres in perpetual almoyn."

We shall now find Hugh given his right name. In the Assize Roll of 1272 we find "William de Wynlegh and Agnes his wife recovered from Robert son of Hugh Corbet, a messuage and half a virgate in Wynslegh as the right of Agnes." Winslega or Winsley was parochially a Member of Westbury. This establishes the fact that Hugh *Grysetaye* and Hugh Corbet are one and the same person.

There is still one more little bit of evidence. One Richard Purcel perished in a fray with the men of Thomas Corbet the Baron about 1266. The story is told in Volume I. The widow Matilda or Muriella sued the victors, alleging the murder of her husband and the capture of about fifty head of cattle, etc. The attacking party are mentioned as Adam de Worthin, Alan Corbet, Madoc de Beechfield, Ralph Sturry, and about sixty others, and Richard Purcel lost his life. The King later pardoned them all at the instance of Thomas Corbet "as concerned the King's peace"; and the Sheriff was ordered to "let the Defendants have the King's peace." It is subsequently recorded that Peter Corbet, Robert Corbet, Hugh *Grysetaye* had got an acquittal as far as the King's peace was concerned; and for the robbery in the Assize Roll of 1292, it is shown that the cattle were taken while trespassing in a meadow and garden belonging to the Baron of Caus. Eyton remarks in a note that in the Document Robert Corbet is mentioned as "Filius," and he cannot reconcile that with the fact that neither Thomas nor Peter Corbet his son is known to have had a son "Robert." It does not occur to him that "*Grysetaye*" was but a soubriquet! This is all that I find connected with Hugh Corbet and his two sons, Robert and Hugh. I do not find that either of the sons left descendants.

William is the other son of Robert the fourth Baron of Caus, who left descendants. He and his brother Robert appear to have inherited Chaddesley from their uncle Roger, the Baron's brother who had married Hawisa Foliot, and so acquired the Manor of Chaddesley; hence, after some hundred years or so, to be known as Chaddesley-Corbet: indeed it still bears that name. Chaddesley, Ymeney, now Impney, Estwode, Wycheband, are all at various times mentioned as among the very earliest outlying possessions of the Corbet Family. Chaddesley appears to have been in possession of a Sir Roger Corbet before 1200.

It should be borne in mind that until much later every man of gentle birth became a knight, as soon as he was of age, as a necessity of his being, so to speak: this Roger Corbet was a knight, therefore Sir Roger Corbet, and as he appears in possession of Chaddesley as early as 1199 he

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. VII.,
p. 63

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton, Vol. XI.
pp. 83-4



From an Old Print

Old Church of St. Alkmunds



From an Old Print

Face p. 106

West Door and Buildings of the Abbey of SS. Peter and Paul

must have been one of Robert the Baron's younger brothers, bearing also the same relation to Thomas the Pilgrim : perforce therefore another son of Simon of Pontesburie.

Sir Roger evidently acquired the Manor of Chaddesley by his marriage with Hawisa, indeed the first records of him, record events in the Manor. The first notice is in the Michaelmas Term of 1190. "Roger Corbet and his wife retire without a day against the Abbot of Tiokesbury on a Plea of the Church of Chaddeslee." There is a more detailed account of this dispute with the Abbot of Tiokesbury in the "Curiae Regis." I do not know how the matter ended. The notice records that "the same Abbot has called the King therein to warranty and the lord the King forbids that he shall be placed in the Plea of any tenement, of which he has called him to warranty." Roger and his wife were soon summoned before the King himself to explain matters, and we soon learn that "Roger Corbet and Hawise his wife were summoned before the King to come with Charters and muniments which they have, concerning the Church of Chaddeslee whereby they vex the Abbot of Tewkesbury about the advowson of the same Church ; and they come and say that they have no Charter or muniment thereof except that of their ancient feoffment, and they say that by the ancestors of the same Hawise (namely) of her great grandfather and grandfather ; to wit Robert Fitz-Pagan, great grandfather of his wife, gave it to Sparri the Clerk, Richard Ffoliot her grandfather, gave it to Edwin the Clerk, Richard Ffoliot her Father gave it to Pagan the Clerk, they gave it so that when there was once a contention between Robert Fitz-Richard, first Husband of the same Hawise, and the Abbot Fromond, predecessor of this Abbot, the same Robert proved his right to the same Church, and presented Ralph Ffoliot to that Church. And the Abbot comes and defends his right, and says that Robert Fitz'Hamon gave that Church, together with other Churches, to the Church of St Mary of Tewkesbury in pure and perpetual alms, and confirmed by his Charter which they have produced, which testifies to this, and they also proffer a Charter of William Earl of Glos'ter who was heir to the same Robert as they say, who confirmed and granted that gift, and a Charter of King Henry, the grandfather of the present King, of confirmation, and a Charter of Simon the Bishop of confirmation, so that always after that gift, the Abbot and Convent presented parsons to that Church and also Ralph Ffoliot, who died lately parson of that Church. And after the death of Ralph Ffoliot the Abbot and Convent presented Master Richard J to the Bishop, who admitted him And Roger comes and says he offers 10 merks for having a Jury as to whether Ralph Ffoliot . . . or whether he was presented by the Abbot judgement shall be received for 10 merks, Hawise puts her Husband in her place." This is all the record I have of the matter, but the Abbot and Convent seem to have made out a good case.

In 1216 this Sir Roger appears active with the Barons and knights who were struggling to wrest Magna Charta from King John. Even Thomas Corbet, eldest son of the Baron of Caus, nephew to this Sir Roger, deviated from his loyalty for a short space and joined the party for liberty ; so also did Sir Richard Corbet of Wattlesborough, another nephew ; so also did this latter's influential friend Bartholomew Thoret of Morton Thoret. We are not, therefore, so surprised at finding Sir Roger Corbet of Chaddeslee a stout partisan of the cause, and indeed we find in the "Close Letters" 18 John Memb: 5 "the Sheriff of Gloucester is commanded to do no harm to the possessions of Roger Corbet " who is in the King's prison, or of any others of the knights who were taken at Worcester, and who were with Walter de Beauchamp. Witness ourself at Whitchurch 9th August."

It is not clear when Sir Roger died. In the Testa de Nevill, however, concerning the assessments for the marriage of Henry III.'s sister Isabella, we find William Corbet liable for one and a half knight's fee in Worcestershire.—Sir Roger died without leaving children, and Chaddesley we find was inherited at his death by two of his nephews, the sons of Robert the Baron, William and Robert. Robert had been granted the manor of Chetton by the King, and this latter he left to his nephew—William—son of his brother William the elder, who had probably predeceased Robert at Chaddesley. William was one of the heroes, in his early days, at the abstraction of the papers from the Monk of Buildwas. The following Charter bespeaks him also a Corbet with the true hunting proclivities of the Family. "Grant to William Corbet for life to course with his dogs, the hare and the fox in the great covert of Fekeham, except the little woods and the King's Park there, and the wood of Pepperod, grant also to the same of licence to course the fox in the forest of Kinfare, saving the hay of Chacepol, and the little woods ; grant also of licence to course the hare there ; saving in the King's demesnes, hayes, and the little woods ; and be it remembered that these metes and bounds were made by G. de Lancel Justice of the Forest." "And by a certain Inquisition which he made thereof,"

1 John,
Plac. Abbrev.
Roll 13, 1 John

Rot.
Curiae Regis,
Palgrave
pp. 77, 175
Worcester.

Robert, father
to William
Fitz-Hamon,
Earl of
Glos'ter.

36 Hen. III.
Charter Rolls,
Memb. 8.

William had also considerable lands elsewhere than in Worcestershire, and like his father and grandfather a considerable family, as I shall presently show. I find a Sir Laurence de Saundeorde, apparently his son-in-law—the husband of his daughter Hawisa—laying the terms of what would now be called his marriage settlement before the Barons of the Treasury in 1254. Should we infer from this that William the elder had passed away? Sir Laurence brings forward a Charter or settlement in which it is contained that William “gave granted and by the same Charter confirmed to the same Laurence in free marriage with Hawise his daughter, all the lands in homages and services, and rights of patronage of the Church without any retention, which he had in the County of Glamorgan in the Vill of St Nicholas and outside it, except three knights Fees.” Sir Laurence produced also another writing to the Barons “In which it was contained that the said William Corbet gave the same Laurence 200 merks sterling with the said Hawise his daughter, to be paid at the terms contained in the same writing.” It is refreshing to hear of some daughters, and I am glad to be able to record thus much of the Lady Hawisa.

Since Chetton formed for some considerable period an integral part of the inheritance of these Corbets of whom we are writing—the representatives of the extinct House of Caus—I think we had best relate the history of the Chetton Manor and how it came to the Corbet Family.

In Domesday Book, Chetton is mentioned as part of the Dower of the Lady Godiva, still a living personality in the annals of Fame and still living in the legends of our nurseries, as the emblem of purity and saintly charity! Godiva was sister to the great Saxon Earl, the Sheriff of Lincoln; and the widow of Leofric Earl of Mercia. She survived both her husband and her son many years. She became a widow in 1057. Early in the reign of Henry II. the whole of this important Fief passed by marriage into the hands of a very well known man of the time, Ranulf de Broc. His wife's name (the heiress) was “Damietta,” but that she was an heiress is all that is known of her father beyond that he had a grant from the Crown, of Great Berwick, and of Eudon from the Fitz-Alan. Ranulf de Broc, her husband, made himself both conspicuous and useful to the King and his side, in the disputes with Thomas à Becket. He only left daughters, of whom there were seven, and there being no male heir the great Fief was split up into seven separate interests and passed through endless litigations. In 1256 a post-mortem inquisition points out that the Lady of Chetton owes as service to the Crown: one man in the wars of North Wales, and Jury after Jury appear to give opinions as to who may be the rightful heirs to the Fief, and consequently on whom should devolve the duty of furnishing “the man.” At length the King decided matters and cut short the disputes; he gave one third to Augur de Tatlington as son of Clemence de Broc (one of the seven daughters), another third to Nicholas de Vancy and Robert de Hotoft as heirs of Felicia de Broc; and the heirs of Evelina de Broc not coming forward, the King retained the remaining third in his own hands, with the capital messuage and the advowson of the Church. This happened about 1255.

Six years after this, the King granted his share to Robert Corbet of Chaddesley in fee, but with only one-third of the advowson of the Church. Eyton tells us further that the King's Charter conveying the gift is dated at Kenilworth and expressly states the gift to be “the reward of faithful services.” So the Forest escapade of earlier days was atoned for and forgotten, for it is this Robert who, we may remember, fed away with the head and shoulders of the deer, in the early days of Henry II.'s reign, and took refuge with the Earl of Chester. He seems to have served in the wars on the Continent.

In 1255 he already owned land in the neighbouring Manor of Eudon George, as well as in Chetton. It appears that there were three lords of the Manor in Eudon George, as there were in Chetton; one of these was Robert Corbet, knight. He held two virgates of land for which he owed suit to the Hundred Court of fifteen days' ward at Wigmore Castle in time of war; and collectively the three lords of the Manor paid 8d. to the Sheriff for Stretward and 16d. for Motfee. It does not seem to have been always peaceful between these three lords! At this date, 1255, one of them, Richard de Boys or de Bosco, sued Robert Corbet for three carucates of land. Corbet, we are told, however, did not appear, being “beyond seas.” The Plaintiff came to terms, as we find later that de Bosco granted all land inherited by right to Robert Corbet, the latter giving yearly 1d. and doing all services due to the Court and the lords of the Fee. This mention of inheritance seems to imply some connection with the de Brocs, and it is not unlikely that Robert's wife, whose name was “Ida,” was one of the many heiresses in the Manor of Chetton. The de Bosco family were at this time intimately connected with the Corbets of Tasley, and had mutual interests in some of their lands in Suffolk.

In 1262 we find Robert was fined 3s. by the Justices of the Forest for assarting one and a half

38 Hen. III.

Dods. MSS.
Communia
Roll 7.

Stretward due
to the Crown
for upkeep of
roads.
Motfee
for the
Folkmote.

acres in Chetton which had been taken into the King's hands. He died four years after the grant made him by the King : and apparently had the whole of the Manor of Chetton in his own hands at the time of his death. Eyton tells us how he disposed of his possessions. As lord of Chetton " Robert Corbet grants Sir Robert Burnel one acre in his domaine of Chetyngton and the advowson of the Church as far as it belonged to him, and the homage of Hugh de Holycote." For this concession Robert Burnel was to pay yearly 1d. in the Church of Chetton. The witnesses were Sir Hugh de Mortimer, Ralph de Array, Thomas Bottrel, Adam de Montgomery, knights, Adam de Fayntree, and Ralph de Sprenchose. As Robert Corbet of Chaddesley he further granted to " his nephew William son of William, his lands and capital messuage in Chetyngton." William Corbet the father therefore must have been already dead. Sir Robert Corbet died before his eldest brother Thomas, the Baron, and William, Robert's nephew and heir, represented to the King that " whereas his Uncle had enfeofed him, one month before his decease not only in that third, granted him by the King, but also in the other two thirds which Robert his Uncle possessed, and all which William and his heirs were to hold of the King in Capite, and held for a month before Robert's death, but now the King's Escheator for Salop ejected said William and still retained the premises." The King issued a Writ to the Escheator *citra* Trent to enquire the particulars by Jury, and whether Robert Corbet were illegitimate, and whether the advowson belonged to the King. The Jury met at Chetton on the 28th January, 1270, and reported that Robert Corbet enfeofed his Nephew in one third of the Manor and did not die seized thereof ; that Robert was illegitimate, died without heir, and could well give feoffment ; and the advowson was Robert Burnell's, to whom Robert Corbet had sold it. The King's certificate was issued to the Escheator 22nd February, 1270, saying that he had taken the homage of William Corbet for one third of Chetton ; and in the following May and June the King confirmed the two grants made by Robert Corbet to his Nephew and Robert Burnell respectively. In 1274 the Stottesden Jurors reported that William Corbet held the Manor of Chetton in Capite of the King by service " of finding one footman with bow and arrow to go with the King when ever he shall decree to make war into Wales, and to stay there till he has shot away his arrows." This service was acknowledged by William at the muster at Worcester of 1277, and John de Hull was chosen to perform the service.

This muster at Worcester in 1277 concerned several Corbets ; and as they and their descendants are frequently mentioned in the public documents during the next two hundred years or so, I must here make rather a considerable digression in order to consider them, although they do not continue the main line of the Houses of which this chapter specially treats.

A Writ of Military Summons, we may remember, was sent to the Baron of Caus (Peter) summoning him also to the muster at Worcester, 1277 ; and we have just seen that William, the young lord of Chetton and Chaddesley, took the necessary measures as well to do his service. There were besides these no less than three Writs issued to a Corbet named Nicholas. We identify him through one of the Writs as Nicholas Corbet, the lord of Malkeriston ; summoned, of course, on his Northumberland and other English lands. This Nicholas was the younger son of the heiress Cristina Corbet who is buried in Melrose Abbey. She was her father's sole heiress, the last, one may say, of the Scotch Corbets whose history is given in Volume I. Cristina married William, the second son of the Earl of Dunbar, and being a great heiress her younger, if not both her sons, took the maternal name of Corbet. Her second son, this Nicholas, inherited all the Malkeriston estates. He married an heiress in his turn, Margery de Bolebec, one of the co-heiresses of Hugh de Bolebec, who in right of his mother inherited the vast Montfitchet estates in many counties, Essex among them. Cristina died in 1241. Nicholas her son died in 1282 without leaving any heir, and Margery, his young widow, remarried the Lord of Greystoke. Of course in consequence of this large inheritance of lands there is very frequent mention of both names (Nicholas's and his wife's) in the public records. There are very interesting notices also given of them both in the splendid County Histories of which Northumberland can boast ; in them he is at times spoken of as Nicholas of Stanton. Stanton appears to have been an important Manor in the North. It belonged to the family of the Cospatrics (Dunbar) in the twelfth century. Cospatric's daughter Juliana " was given in marriage by permission of Henry I. to Ranulph de Merlay," the founder of Newminster (1138), " when her father further granted and the King confirmed to her, the extensive Manors of Stanton, Horsey, Witton, and Ritton, etc."

Later Roger de Merlay gave common or pasture and other privileges at Stanton to Sir Walter Corbet and Joan his wife ; and as this must obviously have been some generations after Juliana's first inheritance of the Manor, it is clear that the Nicholas already alluded to and the Sir Walter

Placita Forest.
Memb. 6 recto.

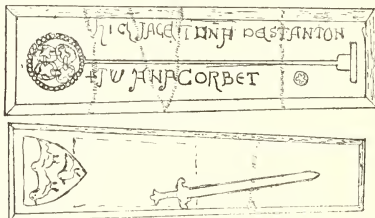
Inq. P.M.
54 Hen. III.
No. 53.

See Corbets of
Scotland,
Vol. I.

North. Cty.
Hist., Vol. VII.
p. 180, p. 181.

of the following paragraph were the sons of the Lady Cristina Corbet, wife of William, second son of the Cospatric of that day, and the great heiress of the Corbet lands in Scotland. These lands passed to her second son Nicholas, who took his mother's name "Corbet." Cristina died in 1241 about, and in 1247 it is stated that Stanton is held of the Earl Patric by Walter Corbet and Joan his wife. Sir Walter is also mentioned in Hodgson's History of the County as holding Leuerchild as well as Stanton of the Earl Patric; and as having granted pasturage and lands in the Parish of Colwell or Chollerlton to the Priory of St. Andrew in 1250. This was a favourite establishment of his mother's, the Lady Cristina Corbet or Cospatric. The most interesting discovery of the tombs of this or a Sir Walter Corbet and his wife Johanna has lately been made among the ruins of Newminster Abbey, the foundation of 1138 alluded to previously by Ranulph de Merlay, and from which Stanton is but about five miles distant. The tomb, beside that of the Lady of Stanton, has lost the inscription, but still bears the arms, three Ravens two by one.

I find no trace of any sons of this Sir Walter. Nevertheless the lands appear in the possession of Corbets from the Midland Counties of England through the twelfth century, and I meet with notices concerning them in the various Records. They would be, of course, cousins in the male line of the Scotch family. A Nicholas and a Walter are the first to find mention in these Records, and as Walter is shortly seen as lord of the Manor of Ymeney in Worcestershire (a very early possession of the Barons of Caus), and as he and Nicholas are found making together certain grants, I am emboldened to consider them as younger sons of the Sir William Corbet who first inherited Chaddesley from his uncle Sir Roger, who held it in right of his wife Hawisa Pfoliot. They would therefore be the younger brothers of that Sir William Corbet whom we have just seen making good his service at the muster of 1277. If this be so, and circumstances certainly



appear confirmatory, Sir William of the muster of 1277 must have had several brothers: Sir Roger, who succeeded him at Chetton, Chaddesley and the Gloucestershire Manors; Sir Walter, Sir Nicholas, Sir John, and a Sir Thomas. The knights Walter, Nicholas and John are continually appearing connected with Northumberland and Durham; Sir Thomas appears connected with a Manor in Surrey (Beddyngton), the gift of the King, but which did not long remain in Corbet hands.

Nash gives an account of a very interesting glass in the eastern window of the south aisle of the Abbey at Great Malvern, which I think confirms the identity of these Worcestershire and Northumberland Corbets. It represents a man surrounded by ten sons and ten daughters, and with this inscription: "Orate pro animabus Walteri Corbet et Johanna uxoris ejus." "Below," continues Nash, "against the wall lies a man armed, holding in his right hand an axe and in his left a round shield, supposed to represent John Corbet."

The present owner of Newminster, George Renwick, Esq., has most kindly allowed the sketches of the ruins and the tombs to be placed in this volume.

Nicholas was summoned in 1294 for service in person in Gascony. After that we do not hear of him for some years, not till the year 1324, when he has a variety of duties allotted him in the County of Worcester, between the months of August and December. We first find him with special powers as one of the Commissioners of array for that County. He was soon after empowered to raise a certain number of foot-soldiers, and the Bishop of Worcester was directed both to administer the fitting oath to him and also to assist in the execution of these duties. The following month he received more instructions to the same purport, and again in December; but we then



Ruins of Newminster Abbey, near Morpeth



Ruins of Newminster Abbey, near Morpeth

find him unable to execute his duties and he resigns his office, receiving certain marching orders connected with the levies for the County of Worcester. In the meantime Nicholas's brothers Walter and John had joined the rebellious Peers in the North, for we read that on November 1st, 1318, "Pardon is accorded with the assent of Parliament at York to Walter Corbet an adherent of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, the robbery of G. Cardinal Priest of SS. Marcellinus and Peter, and Luke, Cardinal deacon of St Mary in Via Lata, excepted." "By King and Council." The next year, 1319, we learn that John Corbet, evidently Walter's brother, had been relieved of the keeping of the Forest of Clyve granted him by the late King; and the trust given to Nicholas de "Sancto Marco." This also savours of rebellion. We do not hear further of Nicholas. Walter was granted free warren in Ymeney (now Impney) some years later, and still later we find him given letters of safe conduct into England for one year, with two persons to attend on him. His son Sir Roger recovered his lands in the course of time. In 1362 one of the Wardens of the Marches, Sir John de Coupland, who had captured the young King of Scotland, was murdered by Sir John de Clifford and others on Bolton Moor. The lands were confiscated and given to the widow; while Sir Roger Corbet, who evidently seems to have been nearly related to the Couplands, inherited the murdered man's property by will. The widow received permission to remove the body to Kirkham Priory, an establishment with which the Corbets were connected for generations. Sir Roger is described in an Inq. P.M. as son and heir of Walter Corbet, and as having paid twenty marks to have restored to him certain forfeited lands at Learchild, Abbewick, and other places, and received them as the King's gift.

John Corbet's lands were also restored to him, as also one John de Eure's who is very often mentioned with these Corbets. John Corbet had married Eleanor daughter of Sir Henry de Strother; he was not living in 1372. Sir Roger was also dead about that time and his son Walter was a minor. We have a record of Walter about 1383. "Grant for £10 paid by him into the Exchequer to Richard de Ruyhale the younger, of the custody during the minority of Walter together with his marriage, without redeeming aught beside of 4s 6d in Ymeneye by Wyche Co Worcester, in the King's hands by reason of the minority of Walter son and heir of Roger de Corbet of the said County, tenant of the heir of John Talbot of Ricardes castell knt: a minor and in the King's custody."

My records of these Corbets end here, with the exception of what befell one other of the brothers interested in the Northern Counties, by name Thomas. I must now refer to him. He appears to have served abroad with his brother Nicholas, doubtless in Gascony, and on his return in 1302 was rewarded by the gift from the King of a manor in Surrey. The manor was called Bedyngton and had belonged to a certain John Rogers who had died without heir. "The King has granted to Thomas Corbet his groom in fee, the Manor of Bedyngton Co Surrey by the service of one cross-bow of the price of 12/." He was not long left in peaceable possession, for we find that a relation of John Rogers quickly put in a claim for the property. Thomas defended himself, setting forth "that the King that now is, gave him the aforesaid Manor with appurtenances, for his good services and the Charter is recited." We find the receipt of annual payment for the cross-bow recorded in the Pipe Rolls. There is one in 1320, telling us that Thomas Corbet and heirs owe one cross-bow or 12s. a year at the Feast of Pentecost for farm of the Manor of Bedyngton with appurtenances in this County, to hold from 27th April in 13th year for ever. Thomas died shortly after this record, and his son Thomas had the Manor duly handed over to him as his Father's heir "By King's Writ." The possession of Bedyngton seems to have been frequently disputed and even its purchase. A Fine in 1336 stated that the King "committed to Nicholas de Dunstall the custody of two parts of the Manor of Bedyngton with appurtenances which belonged to Thomas Corbet deceased to hold until the lawful age of the heir." A year or two later we find a fresh claimant, Thomas de Morle; we find him paying a Fine of 5s. to be confirmed in his rights; "Thomas Corbet," he states, "having sold him the Manor, and this the King certifies." "Thomas de Morle may retain the Manor of Bedyngton with appurtenances in Surrey, which he purchased of Thomas Corbet of Bedyngton." This record is found among the Escheats.

Strangely enough it is in these records of the transactions concerning the purchase of the Manor of Bedyngton in Surrey, that we find the confirmation of my statement that Thomas, to whom the King originally granted that Manor, was a brother of the Corbets, descendants of the Barons of Caus, who inherited the lands in Northumberland, as we have narrated, and also the old Corbet Manors in Worcestershire. The confirmatory extract is as follows: "1338. The Jurors say that Roger de Somerville held the moiety of the Manor of Orreby of John, son and heir of Philip de Orreby deceased, under age and in the King's custody. . . . Also they say that Thomas

Pat. Rot.
12 Ed. II.
Memb. 16,
Prt. 1.

13 Ed. II.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 25.

Dods. MSS.
3 Ed. III.
Ancient
Charters,
No. 15,
37 Ed. III.

Inq. P.M.
11 Ed. III.
No. 57.

34 Ed. III.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 19.

7 Rich. II.
Pat. Rot.
Prt. 1.
Memb. 21.

30 Ed. I.
Pat. Rot.

33 Ed. I.
Mich. Term,
Rot. 332.

13 Ed. I.
Pipe Roll.

A.D. 1322.

1339
12 Ed. III.
Inq. ad quod
damp. No. 57

11 Ed. III.
Eschet No. 57.

Corbet holds a moiety of a knight's Fee in Stanton Co. Northumberland of the said Roger." Thomas Corbet it appears was not content with the sale of Bedyngton to Thomas de Morle and seems to have cancelled it. A Close Roll of a year or two earlier gives a Deed of his as follows : " Thomas son of Thomas greeting Know ye that I have released and quit claimed for me and my heirs to Richard de Wulughby knight senior, and Elizabeth his wife, all the right and claim I have had in the Manor of Bedyngton with appurtenances Co. Surrey with warrant." " Dated London in the Feast of St Thomas the Apostle 18 Ed. III." Finally, the last act of the Corbets with regard to the Manor is recorded, and Thomas son of Thomas states once more that " he has released to Richard de Wylughby, knight senior, and Elizabeth his wife, all right in the Manor of Bedyngton." This digression concerning these younger grandsons of the fourth Baron of Caus (sons of his son, William) has proved lengthy. Let us return to our sketch of the elder grandson, William. We last wrote of him on page 169 when we had established his claim to the Manors of Chetton and Chaddesley. His wife's name was Ada ; she outlived him many years, and we find her claims for Dower recorded. William her husband died without heir in 1283 and was succeeded in the Manors by his brother Sir Roger Corbet. In 1283 the usual inquest was held at Chettington " On the death of William Corbet." It was reported that " he held in Capite of the King a messuage, and garden in Chettyngton two thirds of two carucates of land in demesne, that Sir Roger Corbet was his heir and of full age, also that his serjeantry of service was by providing one footman in the King's Army when it shall happen that there be war between the King and the Prince of Wales, at the cost of the said William, till the same footman shall have consumed half a swine (baconem) in the expedition." This curious serjeantry is more fully explained in 1284 when Sir Roger is himself described as holding of the King in Capite. This Sir Roger died himself in 1289 or '90. The Inquest reported his interest in the Manor after the usual manner and declared that he left a son William, a minor, and in ward to Fulco de Lacy. Sir Roger's widow " Nesta " remarried Thomas de Roshal. The de Roshal Manor was also known by the name of the Fitz-Aebert Manor. The Inquisition taken on Sir Roger's death states that he died at La Berton, near Bristol, Co. Gloucester, and that he held this and lands in the Vill of Itchington of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, and he of the Bishop of Worcester, and he of the King. In the same County he held lands at Tydyngton or Tydryngton in the Manor of Torbyrie and Hundred of Thornbury, held of the Earl of Gloucester. The same record states that he held the Manor and Church of Chaddesley, full extent, in Worcestershire in chief of the King, also Bikemere Manor, and in Co. Salop he held Chetyngton Manor in chief of the King. Also that his heir was William of the age of eight years and a half old and in ward to Fulco de Lacy. The following year, 1291, an Inquisition represents the widow of William the elder brother, by name Ada, as holding in Chaddeslee and Ymeneye and Wychband Manor, Co. Worcester. There is a fuller description in the Dodsworth MSS. of the curious serjeantry which was the tenure of Chetton, Co. Salop. It says : " Roger Corbet holds the Manor of Chetton Co. Salop of the King in chief by the service of finding one foot soldier in the time of war for the King's Army in Wales, with one bow and three arrows and one rod, and he shall take with him one hog and when he shall reach the King's Army he shall deliver to the King's Marshall half the hog ; and thereof the Marshall shall deliver to him daily for his meal from the aforesaid half hog, while he shall remain with the aforesaid Army ; and he shall follow the Army as long as the aforesaid hog lasts."

William the heir held, as we have seen, the above-mentioned lands by inheritance ; he also held land at Siston or Syston, and again the other side of Bristol near Hendbury. In the Assessments for Feudal Aids these lands are mentioned and others in Pocklechurch and Brokesash ; there is a mention also of lands in Bysshley Hundred.

From all sides now, continued changes in the ownership of land begin to appear, and the first signs of a gradual disintegration of many of the vast Baronies of the Conquest show themselves. The necessities of younger sons should naturally count for much in this lopping off of various domains and Manors. Also the original mesne lords and tenants and their families came to an end, now and again, for lack of heirs, and a younger son of the Chief would settle himself in the lapsed Manor. Other occupations were also developing in which younger sons could take part ; there were the increasing duties of the Juries of the Hundreds and the Assize, duties of Parliament too. Thus ere long we shall find a development of many new families of Corbet, settled here and there in the Manors whose names have been hitherto so familiar to us, in connection with the Barony of Caus. We shall find them at Hope, at Leighton, and Bynweston, at Leigh, later at Hampton and Newton, and others. It will be seen, however, that the head of all these families who are about to emerge, and from whom they derive, was the owner of Chaddesley and Chetton—

18 Ed. III.
Rot. Cl. Prt. II.
Memb. 9.

11 Ed. I.
Inq. P.M.
No. 103.

GREAT-GRANDSONS OF 4TH BARON OF CAUS 173

William, the young heir of Sir Roger Corbet, lately deceased at La Berton, near Bristol, and his successors. The young heir was a minor, born just before 1280. He had several brothers, whose fortunes we propose to trace through this fourteenth century. In his early days William appears to have been a good deal drawn into the arena of the political agitations which were beginning to assume the alarming proportions of some years later. Perhaps his intimate relations with the de Bohuns and the Mortimers, and also his uncles' actions in the North, coupled with a strong dash of the fighting instincts of his forbears, brought this about. After the manner of their day the dissentients tried to express their special way of thinking to a differing neighbour, with no gentle hand. The following is a forcible example of this style of expressing their opinion. It happened in the year 1309. "A Commission of Oyer and Terminer was issued to John de Acton and William de Burne on complaint of Master Thomas de Gloucester, Parson of the Church of Yates" . . . "that William Corbet, Henry de Piperford, Roger Corbet parson of Chaddeslee, Robert de Leycestre, Roger Corbet of Erdecote, Co. Glos'ter and John Alot of Yderyngton with others broke his house at Erdecote Co Glos' and carried away his goods from there, and at Itchington in the same county." These two Rogers were, I suppose, cousins or uncle and nephew. Roger of Erdecote was probably William's own younger brother whom we hear of very shortly as in Shropshire.

Rot. Pat.
3 Ed. II.
Memb. 34
dorso.

As the years passed William drifted more towards the side of the Crown, and we find a pardon accorded him about the same date as that to his uncle Walter which has been already recorded. It runs:—"Pardon with the assent of Parliament at York to William Corbet of all felonies committed before August 7th last." In 1320 he was mending his ways, and appears as Conservator of the Peace for Worcestershire. The names of William's other brothers now begin to appear in the records of Shropshire and Worcestershire, Peter, Roger and John. These must all find mention as they occur in our History, though we must first confine ourselves more particularly to working out the details of William's life, since he was the head of this remnant of the House of Caus. In 1322 he became hostile again to the King, and again joined his uncle Walter in the North. The King addressed an Order in February, 1322, to "William de Campo Bello, William de Bradewell, and John de Beesford, Gloucester, keepers of the lands, goods and chattels of William Corbet, Richard Talebot, Aymar Pauncefot etc : in Co Worcester." "Order to cause all money to be levied that they can of the goods and chattels, underwood and other things of the aforesaid men, and to cause such money and the money now in hand from the issues of the said castles and lands or that they can shortly levy, to come into the King's chamber." The date of this Order is just one month before William appears to have made his submission, as we find that the above drastic and unpleasant order was revoked in March. "To William de Campo Bello, William de Bradewell, and Alexander de Besseford." "Order to restore to William Corbet his lands in Worcestershire the custody whereof the King lately committed to them, as he has served the King well in the present expedition" . . . "against certain magnates of the Realm, opposing the King, and has found surety for his good behaviour and to answer to the King for what he will say against him." "By order of the King on information of Robert de Welle." "At the same time like Order to the Sheriff of Salop, to restore to the aforesaid William Corbet his lands, goods and chattels, which the Sheriff took into the King's hands, believing that he adhered to the King's rebels." "By the King on the information of the said Robert de Welle."

Rot. Pat.
12 Ed. II.
Pt. I.
Memb. 17.

15 Ed. II.
Rot. Cl.
Memb. 17
dorso.

15 Ed. II.
Rot. Cl.
Memb. 15,
March 24,
1322.

The uncle Walter had also thought better of his ways, as we find him later granted "Free Warren" in his Worcestershire lands. The victory of Borough Bridge had brought a respite to the sorely tried King.

I have referred to the brothers of William of Chaddesleye. We find Peter mentioned in 1323 "Keeper of the Forest of Kinfare or to him who supplies his place." "Order to deliver to Lucy, late the wife of John de Somery tenant in chief, the bailiwick of the Hay of Asshewode in that Forest." We find him also mentioned as having married a lady, widow of a certain de Perers knight, and as having to become surety for his stepson James de Perers "when he should be cited to appear." Peter Corbet, knight, made his mark in life, and, as we shall see a little later, was his brother William's male heir, both at Chaddesleye and Chetton. He was considerably occupied with the administrative affairs of Shropshire throughout his whole life, and he also served in the glorious French wars. Peter and his brother Roger are both frequently among the summoned to Parliament, especially Roger, witness the Parliamentary Writs of the day, and the latter's expenses to and from Parliament were often paid as "knight of the shire." He and Peter are constantly mentioned as "of Caus," yet, as we know, some of their lands lay in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

The family, too, inherited many and rich Manors in the North. Chetton, of course, lay in Shropshire, and Caus was but a few miles off. The Master had passed away there, and a certain amount of delay and uncertainty would doubtless prevail for a time, for the young real Master had been rendered of a purpose powerless to assert his claims and place! These circumstances, and the effects of a Deed I am about to quote, evidently served to bring about the establishment of these two brothers, Peter and Roger, in certain lands and offices of the old Barony of Caus. Before Peter II. died he left a paper which evidences the affection and intimacy which existed between the cousins at Caus and the cousins at Chaddesley. The latter were, of course, the nearest cousins to the Corbets at Caus. The Deed is given by Blakeway in his MSS.: "Know all present and to come that I, Peter Corbet lord of Caus have given and granted and by this my present Charter confirmed to my beloved Nephew Roger Corbet all the chief custody of the whole bailiwick of my whole Forest etc. . . . of all our chaces, parks, and of all our foreign woods, of all our lordships of Caus, with all the fees and profits to it pertaining together with all the reversion of the custody of the forests chaces, parks, and all other woods which the Lady Alice Corbet holds in Dower of our inheritance when it shall befall." "Warranty to the said Roger and the heirs of his body lawfully begotten. These being witnesses, Sir Henry de Mortimer, Sir Hugh Pantolph, Sir William de Ludlowe, Hudol Pigot, Richard de Hop, Thomas Hager, William Pantolph, Elias de Overe, and many others, dated at Cawres on Sunday next after the Feast of the Annunciation of St Mary in the Fifth year of the reign of King Edward son of King Edward."

Blakeway
MSS.
Staff. Leiger,
f. 73.

We remark that Peter the Baron calls Roger his "beloved Nephew," yet we know by recorded facts that Peter the Baron cannot have had anyone standing to him in the relationship of a nephew. He was succeeded in the Barony (by name at least, though as we know not, alas! in reality) by his father's youngest child; and had there been male heirs on the death of that youngest brother, they would necessarily have succeeded to the honours and the lands of the Barony, and the distribution of the lands among diverse heirs—the descendants of Peter's aunts—would have been avoided. We must not, therefore, take the term "nephew" too literally; Eyton also observes that the term "nephew" has been found interchangeable now and again with that of "cousin" in these Latin documents. The manifest and undisputed facts of the position prove it so, in this instance, very clearly. This act brought some younger members of the Chaddesley family towards Caus and its wide extent and many Manors, and provided the opportunity for them to settle at leisure on any land that lapsed through death or marriage. Thus we find Peter, the brother next in age to William (the eldest), established at Hope not many years later.

In 1318 Roger Corbet was summoned to Parliament as Roger Corbet of Caus, knight of the Shire. He had been married for some years to Amice, daughter of Sir Thomas de Camavila, lord of the Manor of Sibbestone in Leicestershire. A rather notable marriage, for these lands remained in the hands of the Corbets of Leigh for generations. In 1324 Roger Corbet is summoned to Parliament as Roger Corbet of Leigh-juxta-Caus. This tells us that Roger had firmly established himself at Leigh at that date, and we may from this time consider the two Houses of Hope and Leigh as firmly established. Leigh-juxta-Caus had been a tenancy of the Hagers; possibly there was no male heir and the heiress had married; but the fact of importance to our history is that we find Roger Corbet, the brother of William of Chaddesley, become the founder of the well-known House of the Corbet Family, the Corbets of Leigh. There are several known Leighs, I believe, but this one is identified for us by its descriptive "juxta Caus."

Let us gather together all the details of this generation of William of Chaddesley and his brothers till we have clearly before us all the sub-branches of the House of Caus. Chaddesley, with Chetton and Ymeneye; Hope, Leigh and Longnor, and Leighton. In 1329 mention is made of Roger Corbet of Caus in company with Roger Carles as Conservators of the Peace. In the same year under Gloucester it is recorded that William Corbet had licence given him to impark and hold in fee simple his wood of Prodesore, County Worcester, on condition that "it is not within the metes of the Forest." "By Privy Seal." The records of the preceding year give us a notice of Peter. "Enrolment of Grant by William Corbet of Chaddesley to Sir Peter Corbet of Caus, of £200 of yearly rent from his Manor of Chaddesley. Witness Sir Adam de Herewynton, Sir Edmund de Hasult (or Hachit), Richard de Hawkeslowe, Richard de Bykeston, Thomas de Acton, dated at York on Wednesday the quinzaine of St Hilary 2 Edward III." "Memo that William came into Chancery at York on 20th Jan. and acknowledged the Deed." The next notice in the Close Rolls is the Enrolment of a Deed of the said Peter granting that William aforesaid shall be quit of the said rent for his life, and that the Manor of Chaddesley shall be discharged thereof during William's life, and that if William have an heir male, the rent shall remain to Peter and

Rot. Pat.
2 Ed. III.

Rot. Cl.
2 Ed. III.
Membr. 39
dorso.
1328.

HOUSES OF CHADDESLEY & CHETTON, HOPE, LEIGH 175

his heirs. Witness as above at York, the Saturday after the aforesaid quinzaine. "Memo that Peter came into Chancery at York on 30th Jan. and acknowledged the said Deed." I think it is clear from these Deeds that William regarded Peter as his male heir. In the collections from the Pipe Rolls given in the Dodsworth MSS. we find that a similar arrangement had already taken place between William and Peter with regard to Chetyngton. "Peter Corbet . . . roos for a Fine for having a licence that he and Elizabeth his wife, may receive from William Corbet of Chaddesleye the Manor of Chedyngton Co Salop. 18 Ed: II." We soon find Peter exercising his rights of ownership at Caus and granting privileges on his land. "Pardon to Robert del Clogh and Joan his wife for acquiring without licence, in fee tail, from Peter Corbet of Caus, tenant in chief, a messuage, one virgate and 20 acres of land in Munsterley, held in chief, the right to take housebote and haybote in his wood of Hockestone held in chief and to be exempt from pannage for swine in the same wood and from multure for all their corn at his mill of Munsterley; also held in chief, and licence for the said Robert and Joan to retain the premises in fee tail." "By fine of 20s Salop."

Dods. MSS.
(f. 123b) Pipe
Rolls, Staff.
New Obs.

Rot. Pat.
3 Ed. III.
Memb. 18,
Prt. II.

William Corbet made more Deeds of charges on his Manor of Chaddesleye in 1329; and surely these represent the settlements he made on his three daughters. The first of these recorded Deeds is in favour of Sir John de Clynton. "Enrolment of grant by William Corbet knight lord of Chaddesleye, to Sir John de Clynton of Mastok, and to Margery his wife, and to the heirs of their bodies, of £200 of yearly rent from his Manor of Chaddesleye. Witnesses Sir Robert de Morby, Sir William de Lucy, Sir John de Broughton, John Wynard, John de Leukemore, Hugh de Cokeseye, dated at Wodestok 20th Feb." "Memorandum, that William came into Chancery at London on Feb. 24th and acknowledged the said Deed." The next Deed is of the same year. "Enrolment of grant by William Corbet knight, lord of Chaddesleye, to John Wyard and Joan his wife and to the heirs of their bodies of £200 of yearly rent from his Manor of Chaddesleye. Witnesses Sir Robert de Stormy, Sir William de Lucy, Sir John Golafre, Sir Robert de Bracy, Sir Robert de Morby, Sir William Deveros, Nicholas Russel, John de Leukenore, Hugh Cokeseye, John de Croxford, the son, Peter de Dodecote clerk. Dated at Wodestok 20th Feb." (in French). "Memorandum that William came into Chancery at London on Feb. 24th and acknowledged the aforesaid Deed." And, again, we have the third Deed, and on the same day. "Enrolment of grant by the aforesaid William to Petronilla (Pueronele) his daughter of £200 yearly of rent from his Manor of Chaddeslee. Witnesses and date as above." "Memorandum that William came into Chancery at London on 24th Feb. and acknowledged the Deed." We have evidently here the portions or settlements made by William, knight of Chaddeslee, on his three daughters, Margery, Joan and Petronilla. The latter would seem to be unmarried. Was she going into a convent, and therefore needing the allotment of her portion? The male heir seems plainly acknowledged to be Sir William's brother, Sir Peter of Hope. In these Deeds lies the confirmation of my statement that these Corbets were brothers, sons of the Sir Roger Corbet of Chaddesley who died at La Berton in 1289. There was also another brother, John.

Rot. Cl.
3 Ed. III.,
Memb. 36,
dorso.

Rot. Cl.
3 Ed. III.
Memb. 33,
dorso.

William, Peter, Roger, and John also, are continually being mentioned on County affairs through many years yet to come. Sir Roger is mentioned more than once in the Records of the day as acting with John de Leyborne—we may remember that the latter became Beatrice's (the virtual owner of Caus for her life) second husband. In 1332 we find the following: "To William Fitz-Wariner Keeper of the Castle of Montgomery." "Order to cause the houses, walls, and other buildings of the Castle to be repaired by the view and testimony of John de Leyborne and Roger Corbet." "By Writ of Privy Seal." This investigation was not at all to the taste of William Fitz-Wariner apparently, who resented any interference within his jurisdiction; accordingly we find an appeal lodged very shortly, and a fresh order appears in the following year. "To William le Buttiler of Wemme, John le Strange, William de Ercalewe, John de Leyborne, Roger Corbet." "Whereas the King lately appointed them to hear and determine concerning divers felonies committed in Salop and now the King has learned that under colour of that commission, they intend to enquire concerning certain felonies committed within the Liberty and Lordship of Montgomery in Wales, without the said County, the cognisance of which belongs to William Fitz-Wariner, Keeper of the said Lordship . . . The King therefore orders them to ascertain if that Liberty is without the said County; and then to attempt nothing by virtue of the King's order, to the prejudice of the said Keeper or the men of that Liberty."

Rot. Cl.
6 Ed. III.
Memb. 37.

Rot. Cl.
7 Ed. III.
Memb. 24,
dorso.

In this same year William the elder brother was serving with the King in Scotland, and was in some trouble over the sheltering of some comrades. It is recorded May 15th, 1333: "To Geoffrey le Scrop and his fellows, justices, appointed to hold the Pleas before the King." "Whereas

7 Ed. III.
Rot. Cl.
Memb. 12,
dorso.

William Corbet knight, was indicted for receiving Roger Megre, Roger de Sondon and Nicholas de Sparham, indicted for certain felonies, and being summoned before the said justices he found there sufficient mainpernors who undertook to have him before those justices on an appointed day to stand to right thereupon, and William is at present accompanying the King on the expedition against Scotland and has found in the King's presence Ralph de Stafford (his cousin) and John Trussel, who undertook to have him to stand to right for the receiving at the King's suit, and that of others wishing to prosecute thereupon when the King shall have returned from the North, the King orders the justices not to molest William or the said mainpernors by reason of his absence on the same day."

The difficulties of levying the taxes necessitated by the divers wars into which the King was both forced and entered half voluntarily made themselves felt acutely. An order dated July 5th, 1338, Walton, appears :—

" To Roger Corbet of Caus and Henry de Bisshbury collectors of Salop, of the triennial, tenth, and fifteenth, last granted by the laity. Like order to pay £100 to the said Richard Talebot, Banneret, Keeper of the Town of Berwick-on-Tweed of the money of the first year of payment, vacated because it was surrendered, and he has an assignment therefore, at the Exchequer, as appears below." Another order follows in August on this same behest, dated Northampton. " To the Treasurer and Chamberlain." " Order to cause £100 to be paid to Richard Talebot Banneret, Keeper of the Town of Berwick-on-Tweed as the King lately ordered Roger Corbet of Caus and Henry de Bisshbury to pay this £100 and Richard has surrendered the Writ to Chancery to be cancelled because Roger and Henry assert that they have not so much money in their possession." " By Council." William was still on active service in the May of 1339 apparently. " Berkhamstead." " To the arrayers of men at arms or others in Co. Oxford. Order not to compel William Corbet to find any men at arms or others for the defence of the County against hostile invasion, or to stay there in person, by reason of his lands there, while he is staying in the company of Edmund de la Beche, Keeper of the Town of Southampton, upon the safe custody of that Town with all the men in his power." " By Council."

We have heard but little of late of Peter Corbet. This year, however, there is a record of him, and connected with quite a different sort of business. He had trouble, it seems, with some of his Clergy friends, involving an appeal to the law : the first notice is in July. " To the Sheriff of Glos'ter " " Order to supersede the taking of Thomas de Baselhave, late Parson of Pocklehueche Church, John de Keynsham clerk etc : by a mainprise, by reason of the King's Writ against Peter Corbet, a jury of 24 knights to convict the jurors, by whom an inquisition was lately summoned before the said justices and afterwards taken in Glos'ter before William de Sheresnull one of the justices of the Bench by Writ Nisi Prius, between Peter and Thomas and the others, because they pursued a Plea in the Court Christian concerning the advowson of Siston Church, and they besought the King to order the taking of them to be superseded by a mainprise, so that they might pursue the said attain, as the King ordered the Sheriff to take them by process made against them in the matter, and they have found the following mainpernors to wit Nicholas de Taunton, Thomas Prat, who have undertaken for Thomas and the others, that they will render themselves to the Flete Prison, and satisfy the King and Peter for what pertains to them in the premises and further do what the King's Court shall determine." The collection of the various taxes continued more and more difficult, yet the King's wars had to be carried on, and the means for doing so provided ; the collectors had no easy task, as we shall see.

July 15, 1340, dated Kensington. " To the Prior of Rochester Thomas de Cobham, William Moraunt, and Humphrey de Northwode." " Whereas the King appointed them to sell the subsidy of the ninth of sheaves, fleeces, and lambs, and the ninth and fifteenth granted in the Parliament held at Westminster on Wednesday after the Sunday in mid-Lent for the present year, in Co. Kent, and to levy the ninth and fifteenth, answering to the King for the money thereof . . . And now it is testified in the present Parliament at Westminster by magnates and other men worthy of trust that certain lords of towns and others in divers parts of England, strive to defraud the King of the greater part of the subsidy granted in his urgent need for the defence of the Realm and for his expeditions of war, so that the Prior and others cannot sell the subsidy, the King therefore . . . orders the Prior and others under pain of forfeiture to sell the said ninth with all possible speed . . . and if they are impeded from doing this by such men so that the subsidy cannot be sold up to the taxation of Churches, then the sheaves etc :—shall be committed to the lords and men of the towns for the taxes of the Churches at the least without delay, which lords if they are not sufficient . . . are bound to answer the King by the hands of the receivers of the subsidy.

12 Ed. III.
Rot. Cl.
Prt. II.
Memb. 25.

13 Ed. III.
Rot. Cl.
Prt. II.
Memb. 29.

14 Ed. III.
Rot. Cl.
Prt. I.
Memb. 3.

HOUSES OF CHADDESLEY & CHETTON, HOPE, LEIGH 177

All the vendors in England have like Writs, to wit Henry Huse, Andrew de Medsted, William de Seseyngham, and John de Mitford in Co. Sussex. The Prior of St Mary's Church Worcester, William Corbet of Chaddesleye, William de Blound, and John of the Lee Co. Worcester. The Abbot of Shrewsbury, The Abbot of Buildwas, Roger Corbet of Caus, Robert de Harley Co. Salop.'

A few years before this date, Peter whom we now call of Hope, and who was the recognised male heir of William of Chaddesleye, received an exemption from many of his public duties. We find accordingly: "Exemption for life of Peter Corbet from being put on Assizes, Juries, or recognisances, and from appointments as Mayor, Sheriff, Escheator or Coroner, or other Bailiff or minister of the King against his will." These exemptions I suppose point to Peter's having volunteered for the wars. We know that he served throughout the whole campaign of Crecy and Calais.

Roger Corbet of Caus had duties assigned him for "arraye." "On Commission pursuant to the statutes of Winchester and Southampton." "To Robert" (evidently Roger is meant) "of Caus and John de Leybourne, Robert de Harleye, and Adam de Swynesheved to array the men of the County of Salop for the defence of the Realm against the French, to keep the peace there, and to hear and determine trespasses. For the greater security of the Realm, they and the men arrayed by them are to be assistant and attentive herein to the overseers appointed in that County." "By King and Council." A few months after this, orders were issued to "John le Strange of Blackmere, John de Leyborne, Roger Corbet of Caus, Robert de Harleye, and Adam de Swynesheved" "To associate together to keep the Peace in the County of Salop, under Richard Earl of Arundel and Thomas de Berkele." All these services must have been tolerably arduous ones, from the amount of opposition they were sure to meet with in the fulfilling of them; the struggle over the collecting of the subsidies was still strong, and many of our friends in 1340 we find were concerned in securing them. "Appointment . . . of William de Beauchamp, William Corbet of Chaddesleye, William le Blount, and John of the Lee in Co. Worcester to find by inquisition or otherwise the value of the ninth fleece, the ninth lamb, and the ninth sheaf in each Parish and the ninth part of goods of cities and boroughs, granted to the King by the said statutes for two years then to come, to collect or sell the same so that the proceeds thereof may be answered at the Exchequer with all speed." "The King has appointed W. Bishop of Worcester and R. Hilary to supervise." "The like of the following County of Salop" "The Abbot of Shrewsbury, The Abbot of Haghmon, R. Bishop of Coventry, and Lichfield, Henry Earl of Derby, Roger Corbet of Caus, Robert de Harleye supervisors."

This same year Roger Corbet of Caus and his cousin Robert Corbet of Moreton-Corbet were both commissioned to see a concession fairly carried out that had been made to Richard Earl of Arundel. The concession was granted in fee to the Earl "In consideration of his labours in directing the business of the King's Realm, and his charges therein of the hay of the little Wrekin Co Salop. It appears by Inquisition taken by Roger Corbet of Caus and Robert Corbet of Moreton-Corbet that the hay . . . is of the yearly value of 20s." Later the two cousins were again commissioned to find "by inquisition whether it will be to the King's damage to grant in fee to Richard Earl of Arundel the hay of the little Wrekin Co Salop, how far the hay is from the covert of the Forest and the extent and yearly value thereof." The Kings were evidently still very tenacious of their Forest rights. In the September of this year the King was once again "beyond Seas," and by the March of the following year the duties of collecting the ninths and fiteenths became again most urgent, and the struggle as acute as ever. The Patent Rolls show us several friends occupied in collecting them.

William Corbet of Chaddesleye was appointed to act with the Abbot of Pershore, "William le Blount and John of the Lee in Co. Worcester," whilst Roger Corbet of Caus received orders to act in Salop in concert with the Abbots of Shrewsbury and Buildwas, and Robert de Harleye. Sundry complaints concerning these collections soon began to make themselves heard, and in June seem to have reached the ears of the official centres. Therefore "John le Strange and Roger de Chorbet" were sent a commission of Oyer and Terminer "touching complaints arising out of the collection of the contingent in the County of Salop of the 20,000 sacks of wool to be levied in the present year, of the 30,000 sacks of wool granted to the King in his last Parliament at Westminster."

Peter Corbet of Hope was at home in the autumn of 1341, for a Commission was sent him and Henry de Mortuo mari and Philip de Lutteleye to "survey the Castle of Bruggenorth Co Salop as it is reported that it is in very great need of repairs and that the Keepers thereof for the time being having received from the King great sums of money for its repair have converted them to their own use."

11 Ed. III.
Rot. Pat.
Membr. 35.

12 Ed. III.
Rot. Pat.
Membr. 16,
dorso.

13 Ed. III.
Rot. Pat.

13 Ed. III.
Rot. Pat.
Membr. 34.

1341.

Some few years back we may remember that William Corbet of Chaddesley's three daughters each received a yearly grant of £200 on the Manor of Chaddesley, and the grants seemed to indicate their marriages except in the case of Petronilla. Margaret became the wife of Sir John de Clytok of Maxstock, Joan married a Sir John Wyard, but concerning Petronilla no hint was given in the Deed of her prospects. A Patent Roll for this year 1341 dated Newcastle-on-Tyne gives some information. Licence was given "for Walter son of Walter de Gloucester to enfeof John de Ingleby, Chaplain, and Robert de Bruggford of two parts of the Manors of Alveston and Erdecote with the hundred of Langele, and view of frankpledge and the reversion of a third part of the Manors expectant on the demise of Eleanor late the wife of Fulk Fitz-Warine, tenant in dower, and for them to regrant the same, all held in chief as is said to him, and Petronilla his wife in tail, with remainder to Peter Corbet of Syston in Fee." Here then we learn that Petronilla married Walter the son of Walter de Gloucester; he was Escheator for Gloucestershire.

In 1344 another Commission was sent to "Roger Corbet of Caus together with William de Ercalewe knight, and John de Chetwind knight, to find by inquisition and certify the King by the Epiphany, of the names of all persons other than religious men, holding the Fee of the Church having 100s, £10, £25, 100 marks, yearly of rent, or land and upwards; deducting all necessary services and reprises, in the County of Salop." Notwithstanding all these strict investigations, the evasions went on apace. In 1345 a Commission was issued to William Corbet, John de Grafton, Peter de Grete, John le Bruyn and John Worthyn to make inquisition and certify the King as to the "whole truth touching an information that divers men of the town of Wycke have converted to their own use, sums levied by pretext of the pavage granted to the good men of the town at divers times, by the late and present King."

Among the Charters bearing date in these last few years is a Grant to "Peter Corbet of Free warren in Chettyngton and Hope, Co Salop, Siston in Glos'ter, and Lawremyr in Wales." A similar Grant was made to Walter Corbet at Ymeneye, in Worcestershire. He had probably left his Northern Manors in the hands of his son Roger and returned himself to the old country and the allegiance of its rightful sovereign.

During the last reign (Edward II.) William of Chaddesley, the elder brother, seems to have been given the custody of some part of Bristol Castle. We may remember that his father, Sir Roger, had some lands around Bristol and indeed died at one of these places ("La Berton"). Siston, which at this time appears to have been relegated to Peter of Hope, lay a little further off, but still quite close to La Berton and near Mangotsfield. Blakeway gives a Deed of grant by Peter Corbet knight, "I Peter Corbet knight of Hope grant to William Stodley, Constable of Cawres his heirs and assignees, all my lands in Thornbury in Walsheria, the cow pasture of Obergorther, which I had of feoffment of Sir Peter Corbet formerly lord of Cawres viz: Gavely Northe and Gavely Breche. These being witnesses Sir John Corbet of Cawres, Sir Roger Corbet of Cawres, Sir Nicholas de Winsbury, H'g of Paunton, . . . of Aston, and many others." "At Thornbury on Thursday after the Feast of the Ascension in the above year" (1353). We recognise among the witnesses two of Peter Corbet's brothers, "Roger and John of Cawres." Blakeway gives another interesting Deed of the same date and by the same Sir Peter. "I Peter Corbet lord of Hope grant to Roger Corbet of Legh and Elizabeth his wife and the heirs of their bodies, all my lands near Bromlow, remainder to my right heirs. These being witnesses Sir John Corbet of Cawres, Sir Henry de Mortimer, Sir John Corbet of Moreton." Again the witnesses are interesting, giving us a Sir John of Moreton.

We trace this Sir John of Moreton now and again, though his name is not down in the Pedigree, as one of the younger sons of the contemporary generation at Moreton-Corbet. Here again in these Deeds we have three amongst the brothers brought before us simultaneously. Peter, as stated elsewhere, became his elder brother's heir; he styles himself lord of Hope, William must have been therefore living. Roger is styled lord of Legh. John is still called "of Caus," but I think we shall very soon find him with feet planted firmly at Leighton and developing a House there. In the last Deed Roger's wife is mentioned; she was a daughter of the House of Camavilla, lords of the Manor of Sibbestone in Leicestershire. Her father was Sir Thomas de Camavilla, who seems to have had one son and one daughter. The daughter Amice married Sir Roger Corbet of Legh; the son William died without heir. We learn from Nicholls' History of Leicestershire and the extracts from Deeds which he quotes that in 1301, therefore very shortly after Roger married, the Manor of Sibbestone was in the hands of Sir Roger; and in 1328, by the following Fine, the Leicestershire lands were settled virtually on the Corbet family after the death of the son, Sir William de Camavilla. Sir Thomas de Camavilla, the father, drew up the Fine in 1328

15 Ed. III.
Rot. Pat.
Prt. III.
Memb. 2.

11 Ed. III.
Rot. Chart.
No. 74

26 Ed. III.
Staff.
Leiger 86 b.

See Chap. XIII.

by the contents of which Sibbestone and divers messuages and lands in that vill and in Snarkeston, Leicestershire, and in Arlegh in Warwickshire, were secured to Roger and his wife Amice for life, with remainder to William, son of Thomas de Camaville, in tail; remainder to Roger, son of Roger Corbet of Caus; Peter, brother of Roger, son of Roger Corbet of Caus; remainder to Roger's (son of Roger) three sisters, Joan, Cecilia and Matilda (sisters therefore alike to Peter); remainder to Robert, son of Roger le Strange; and finally to the right heirs of Amice. Sir William de Camavilla died some years after without issue, and thus the Manor became the Corbets' without let or hindrance. It remained in their hands till the seventeenth century, when it was sold. Sir Roger of Legh and his wife Amice built a south aisle to the church at Sibbesdon, and their arms are, I believe, seen in the east window: Or, two ravens in pale proper, within a border engrailed gules; impaling argent, on a cross gules five mullets or. Roger, son of Roger Corbet of Legh, did homage for his lands in Sibbesden, 1368, in the Shire Hall of Leicester. Thomas Corbet, his son, was lord of Sibbesden before 1405, and was buried at Sibbesden about 1424, leaving a son Thomas to succeed him both in Leicestershire and in Shropshire. I have carefully copied the information from Nicholls' "Leicestershire" because it gives the true descent from Sir Roger and Amice, which is not easily obtained elsewhere; and some other details.

About this date we find a John Corbet called a "burgher and wool merchant of Shrewsbury," and selling his sacks of wool. An honourable calling, for must not some of England's sons ever remain staunch to the needs of the land that bare them, or woe to England! The gallant Edward himself, the King of England, was dubbed "the great wool merchant" by his angry brother-in-arms the King of France; and we find one Corbet at least emptying his sacks of wool in the Shrewsbury market-place. This John Corbet was probably a younger brother of the Corbet of Wrettleborough and the Sir Roger who ultimately carried on the line of the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet.

The brothers of the House of Chaddesleye have now all clearly passed before us and their identity has been established. William, the head of Chaddesleye, etc., Peter as established at Hope, Roger at Legh. John is found at Leighton. William's line, as we have seen, is provided for; he had no male heir and he recognised his brother Peter as his successor. We had best, therefore, confine ourselves for the moment to tracing the subsequent fortunes of the House of the Corbets of Hope-juxta-Caus till the male line fails there also; and this it does very shortly. Sir Peter himself died apparently in 1362. An Inquisition taken on an outlying Manor in Buckinghamshire, where the deceased was a tenant in Capite, leads to this conclusion. He died leaving a son William, whose life was short; but this William left two sons, John and William. John died in 1374, and the Inquisition tells us that "his heir was his brother William under age and in ward to John Gamage by the King's order." There was also a sister Margaret, of whom we shall hear more presently. Very full Inquisitions were taken of the young William's inheritance, in 1377-78-79. I presume these years mark sundry legal stages connected with the attainment of his majority in the divers Manors. I will quote the Inquisition No. 15 and so verify much of the inherited property. It presents the young William as lord of Chaddeslee in Worcestershire, Bickmershe in Warwick, Alveston two parts, two parts of Herdecote, two parts of Langele, Hundred of Gloucester, Chetton, extent of Hope within the lordship of Caus, Co. Salop, 5s. rent in Bradon, two parts of Sewell Manor, Co. Northampton, Lauremy Manor and adwoson of Church, the fourth part of Walton Vill, rent and suit of Court in Remescastell, fourth part of Dale Vill, a knight's Fee in Defrantia, Regilby Manor and adwoson of Church, Co. Pembroke, Wales, lord also of Siston and Alveston, fourteen acres in Berton Regis, near Bristol, etc. From these details it is clear that the greater part of the Chaddesleye inheritance became the inheritance of the House of Hope, and for a short time the House of Hope was the most important as it was also the elder (surviving) of the descendants of the Barons of Caus. Its honours, however, were short-lived; for from a Patent Roll of 1382 we gather that the young William was already dead, leaving no male heir. The following deed shows us that his sister Margaret inherited some of the Gloucestershire lands and married Sir Gilbert Denys; on her death these Gloucestershire lands passed to the Denys family. "Licence for 10 pound, paid to the King by Gilbert Denys and Robert Daldene of a third part of the Manors of Alveston and Erdecote and Hundred of Langele, held in chief, and to grant to them the reversion in fee simple of the two thirds, held by William Canyng as his free tenement by demise of William Cheddre, the elder, and John Canyng, who held them with other lands by virtue of a recognisance for the sum of £320 made before Walter Frompton Mayor of the Staple of Bristol by William Corbet Brother of Margaret 'whose heir she is' until they should be paid the said £320 and their expences, and for the said William (Denys) and Robert to regrant the premises to the said Gilbert and Margaret in tail male,

In 1 P.M.
2 R. 6. 11.
No. 15.

with remainder to the right heirs of Gilbert." It is clear from this Deed that the Gloucestershire Manors belonging to Chaddesleye passed into the Denys family and out of Corbet hands, owing to the death of the last male heir and their last Corbet owner, William Corbet ! How Chaddesleye fared at his death with the other Shropshire properties appertaining we shall hear later ; for there was no lack of young heirs between the sons of Roger of Leigh-juxta-Caus to apportion them between, if needful ; sons also of John, who, either he himself or his son John, we find settled at Leighton.

About forty years after the date of the above Deed, Gilbert himself died. His will is recorded amongst the papers of the Dodsworth MSS.

1422.
Dods. MS.,
22, f. 13.

" On the Feast of St Michael 1422 I Gilbert Denys knight bequeath my body to be buried in the Parish Church of Syston, near the tomb of Margaret Corbet, my first wife. If my present wife Margaret make a vow of chastity, I bequeath to her all my goods etc. Joan daughter of the Testator and wife of Thomas Gamage to be executor, Henry Bishop of Winchester, Philip Bishop of Worcester to be supervisors." " Proved April 14th 1422."

How astonishing it is to note as we chronicle these sketches the swift manner in which lands are inherited and then pass to alien names ! Here is an example : William of Chaddesleye has left his lands to this brother Peter as his male heir, and the descendants of Peter of Hope-juxta-Caus have already left no heirs, and some of these inherited lands have passed to other owners !

The younger brother John was given a licence for giving the Manor of Bynweston to " John son of the same John and Joan his wife." A few years later, in 1398-9, a Feodary drawn up in 22 Rich. II gives the heirs of John Corbet as Tenants of a knight's Fee in Leighton and Bynweston, held under William, late Earl of Stafford. Another mention of this John is found among the Patent Rolls. " Grant for life with the assent of the Council, to John Corbet forester of Windsor Forest of 3d a day from the issues and profits of Windsor Castle on his surrender of Letters Patent dated 15th October 1375 granting him that sum during pleasure." " By privy Seal." The next notice also relating to this appointment is under date 1400, and implies the death of John. It speaks of the appointment of one Richard Fayremayden to the office of " ryding Forester within the Forest of Wyndesore with 3d daily as wage etc." " as John Corbet deceased had." The two Johns, father and son, were lords of the Manors of Binweston and Leighton under the Earls of Stafford. John, whom we will call the Forester, died leaving a son Peter, whom we find styled " of Leighton," and who married Alice d'Orreby.

1375.

The d'Orreby were a well-known Cheshire family. He was succeeded by his son John, and the male heirs of the d'Orreby's failing very shortly, the Corbet cousins at Leighton succeeded to all their Cheshire Manors, as the next heirs to the Alice d'Orreby who had married Peter Corbet of Leighton. The Cheshire estates thus inherited were more important than the old Shropshire home, and Richard Corbet of Leighton, the son of the last John, is soon found settled in Hatherton, the chief domicile of the d'Orreby's. The other Manors were Walgherton, Fulk Stapleford, and Church Coppenthull, " held of the lord Prince of Chester." This Richard was not destined to enjoy his position and inheritance, however, for he died under age, 9 Hen. IV. He had succeeded his cousin Mary, who had married John de Ros or Roos, of Hamlake. Richard died without heir, and his sister Alice inherited the various estates both in Cheshire and Shropshire. She married Sir William Brereton of Brereton, Cheshire.

The young Richard who thus died under age only just escaped the forfeiture of his estates in the Glendower insurrection. Was he present, we wonder, at the Battle of Shrewsbury and among the famous Cheshire Archers who so stoutly gave their aid and skill to Harry Hotspur on that day, fatal to so many ? The inference that he was on the field of battle, nay, even was possibly among the killed, is drawn from some papers issued after young Richard's death ; they will be alluded to and quoted a page or two further on when writing of his cousin of Leigh, who was on the King's side.

There are copies of documents relating to these Corbets and d'Orreby's to be found among the MSS. of both Dodsworth and Blakeway, and Rawlinson also. Among them is one bearing the seal of Alice Corbet, the sister who succeeded her brother, the young Richard Corbet, and who married Sir William Brereton. This is interesting, for she bears the two Ravens on it. We may observe that Corbets were still living at Hatherton some generations later, descendants, I suppose, and cousins in some way ; in the Visitation of Staffordshire by William Flower of 1583, a Thomas Corbet is mentioned as settled at Honford or Hanford in Staffordshire, and said to have removed from Hatherton in Cheshire. These Corbets intermarried with the families of Skinner of Newport, Andrews of Codsall, etc. ; they too have died out.

We have now recorded the termination of the original male lines of Chaddesleye, Hope and Leigh; and we must therefore turn back once again to the House of Leigh; we find it the representative of the extinct houses of Chaddesleye and Hope. Leigh seems to have been split in many and various ways: we find Lye, Legh, Lyghe-juxta-Caus, etc., and it is this distinctive which fortunately for us stamps the Leigh we have to deal with; for though I believe there are many places called Leigh, this one was Leigh-juxta-Caus. Dodsworth records "a Fine" in his MSS. which states that Roger Corbet of Lyghe and Beatrice his wife had died, date 1389. This Sir Roger was the son of the Sir Roger in whose favour the Baron of Caus, Peter II., made his Deed. Amice de Camavila was the lady he had married, and it may also be remembered that the Camavila estates were all settled by the lady's father on this same Roger, son of Amice and Roger Corbet; and failing heirs, on the younger son Peter. Roger the son died 1389, and we find him styled of Lyghe. The "Fine" records:

"Wales." "The King has granted to Thomas Geth junior the custody of the hamlet of Hemme in Wales, which Roger Corbet of Lyghe and Beatrice his wife both held, being in the King's hand by reason of the minor age of Thomas son and heir of the aforesaid, Thomas who at the feast of St Chad in the 12th year will be of the age of 16 years, also of the custody of the lands and tenements in the Counties of Warwick and Salop, which belonged to the same Roger Corbet 24th Feb." Sir Roger's lands are given in another Deed where he is styled "Roger Corbet knight of Leghe." In this list we find the names of the lands formerly belonging to the House of Hope, where, as we have already seen, the last male owner (the young William) had been dead some years.

The date of the Deed now to be quoted is 1396. It is evidently a recapitulation of the lands, on the heir (Thomas) attaining his majority. The Deed quotes the lands as being "one third part of Arley Manor Co. Warwick." This was part of the Leicestershire (Sibbestone) inheritance. "Half of Hemme hamlet, a message two carucates of land, 6 acres of meadow, 6 acres of wood and 10s. rent in Aston-Pygot, Wethspone, Bromlowe, Lokeleye, Asturleye, Munsterleye, Worthin, Modlecote, and Hampton, half a virgate of land in Wytton Co. Salop and the Marches of Wales." Thomas did homage in 1405 for his Leicestershire lands, Sibbestone with "all lands tenements, rents, services, of said Manor belonging to it in the townships of Radecliffe, Shaynton, and Snarke-

stone."

Thomas's first care on attaining his majority was to make sure his claim to the chief Forestership of the Forest of Caus. A copy of the Deed is among the Blakeway MSS. It is in old French (still, we note, the official and the polite language of the day). Translated, the Deed runs: "Thomas, son of the King of England, Duke of Gloucester and Earl of Essex and of Buckingham, Constable of England and lord of Holderness, to all who shall see or hear these letters, greeting. Whereas we have by the grant of our very redoubted King Richard the Second, the custody of the lordships and lands of our very dear Cousin Edmund Earl of Stafford, as well in England as in Wales, and whereas a certain Thomas Corbet of Legh has been before our Council and claimed, by virtue of a Deed, as heir of his ancestors to have in fee the office of chief Forester of the Forest of Caus, appertaining to the lordship of Caus, one of the aforesaid lordships in Wales, know ye, that we, having consideration for the claim of the aforesaid Thomas, have granted and do grant, as far as in us lies, licence to the said Thomas to have and to hold the said office with the fees and commodities accustomed, during the non-age of our said very dear Cousin the Earl. . . . Given under our Seal at our Castle of Plecy the fifth day of March in the 20th year of our very redoubted lord the King aforesaid."

This Deed is prefaced in the MSS. by the following interesting little paragraph:—"Copy of a Deed under seal of my ancestor, that Thomas Corbet shewed to me at Shroesbury at the quarter sessions there holden, the XVth day of June 1568."

The Corbets of Legh had long owned some land in the Manor of Longnor; and it was either during this Thomas's lifetime in 1568, or possibly during his father's, that the whole Manor seems to have been in their hands. The father had married Jane Burton of Longnorlee. Longnor Manor had had many owners for some centuries. The Le Stranges and Fulk Corbet of Wattlesborough and Moreton-Corbet, owned certain portions of the Manor, and the Corbet portions were long in the hands of the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet. I think it was through the Carless family that eventually the whole Manor became the property of the Corbet who married Jane Burton and gave the name to a separate House—the Corbets of Longnor—his will be treated of later; for the present we must continue the history of the House of Leigh and the life of the Thomas Corbet who has just made good his claim to the chief Forestership, in 1397.

12 Rich 44,
Membr. 109.

1396.

145.

Stafford Ledger
f. 188v. 1397.

Unlike his cousin Richard of Leighton and Hatherton, etc., Thomas Corbet appears on the King's side in the rebellion of Owen Glendower. He would be about 30 at this time, and from the following entry we learn, 1403, "that Thomas Corbet and John Ryder were granted forty marks due from Henry Savage of Eynsham to John Kynastone and forfeited to the King, on account of the insurrection of the latter." This John Kynastone incurred the King's displeasure and also in some way seems to have risked the welfare and loyalty of the young Richard Corbet, who was under age at the time. This is illustrated by the following quotation: "Cirencester" "Whereas John Kynastone and Albin de Enderby were siezed by Henry Percy" (Harry Hotspur) "chivalier and Ralph Percy chivalier, of certain Manors late of Mary, late the wife of John Ros of Hamlake viz: the Manors of Dalby and Wayflete Co. Lincoln, worth £40 yearly, and Walgherton and Hatherton, Cherchecorenhale and Fonkestapulford Co. Chester worth £30 yearly to the use of Maud Lestrangle late wife of Nicholas Hauberk chivalier, during the minority of one Richard Corbet, of Legherton Cawres, lately in his custody; so that after the said Richard came of full age they should enfeof him of his Manors; the King grants the Manors to the said Nicholas for his aid, and for the salvation of the said Richard, a minor and in his custody, notwithstanding any title of the King by the forfeiture of the said John Kynastone."

I will quote another short record relating to these occurrences, date 1404. "Grant to Thomas Corbet of 40 marks which Henry Savage of Eynsham, owes to John Kynastone, rebel, forfeited to the King." About four years later, 1408, we find a very interesting little record which gives us an insight to the sympathies of this Thomas Corbet of Legh with the burning questions and doubts beginning to make themselves heard, with the rise of Wycliffe. The entry is found among "Catalogue of Ancient Deeds Vol: III Hereford, 9 Hen: IV." 1408. "To Thomas Corbet of the Leghe Salop grant by John ap Parry and John atte Halle of Inystone for his good and gratuitous service rendered to John Oldecastell knight of an annuity of 10 merks, out of the Manor of Oldecastell Amally. Feast of St Gregory the Pope."

John Kynastone, the whilom rebel, soon thought better of his ways, made his peace with the King and sought to make himself useful. We find that in 1411 he was appointed with "Thomas Corbet of Lye" "to enquire what lands Edmund de Drayton lately outlawed for treason and felony held in the County of Salop." Every entry indeed in the Records will now be found redolent of the disturbed times; of the distrust of every man of his fellow, of the taking of oaths of fealty and loyalty, of the forfeitures of the lands of the suspected persons. We gain a sad picture of the state of the country and the feeling of the people as we look through them, a state which the name the struggle was soon to bear—"The Wars of the Roses"—sadly belies! In 1414 Thomas was requisitioned for service abroad. His service was called for on his lands in Essex. He had been granted the usual Letters of Protection with the clause "Volumus." But delays, whether voluntary or unavoidable, caused the revocation of these Letters. We find Thomas Corbet "going on the King's service in the company of the King's Brother, Thomas Duke of Clarence, Captain of the Castle of Guynes in Picardy"; and again—"these Letters are now revoked; on the safe keeping of the same because he delays in the City of London as the Sheriff has certified."

In 1416 Thomas Corbet, called the "King's Esquire," is "granted for life yearly £10 from the issues of the County of Salop, as Agnes sometime the wife of Benedict Sutton had of the grant of the King's Father and the King's confirmation."

Thomas died at the age of 51 about, and before 1424.

The Records relating to the Sibbestone property again give us facts which we do not find elsewhere. Thus we find that the Thomas who succeeded him was his son and heir. We have certain records of this Thomas's life also, which was a long one. A Commission was issued in February, 1423, to Humphrey Earl of Stafford, Richard Liston, and Thomas Corbet of Lye, with "Orders to arrest Hugh Bostock gentleman in the said County of Salop and bring him before the King and Council." The following year, in 1424, the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield and John "de Talbot knight" were commissioned to take the oaths of fealty of Thomas Corbet of Morton, and Thomas Corbet of Lye." Very shortly after this date Thomas of Lye appears on a Commission of the Peace for Salop: and in 1427 we find him Sheriff for the County of Salop. He was again Sheriff for Shropshire in 1434 and again in 1444, and his name is almost continuously on the Commission of the Peace up to 1461. He married Jane de Boerly. The Pedigrees assert this, and as Sir William de Boerly or Burley was a prominent person in the County and at Shrewsbury through most of Thomas Corbet of Lye's life—this seems more than probable—and that they were married about the time that he succeeded to his inheritance. In 1461 a Commission was sent "to the King's kinsman Richard Earl of Warwick, William Earl of Arundel, John Sutton of

4 Hen. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Prt. I.
Memb. 19.

5 Hen. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Prt. I.
Memb. 20.

Nicholls' Hist.
Leicestershire.

8 Hen. V.
Esch. No. 45,
Leic.

Duddeley knight, John Audeley of Audeley knight, Thomas Corbet of Lye and the Sheriff to urge the King's subjects to array a force at their own expence for defence of the County and the adjoining parts of Wales against the rebels, and to be at Hereford on the Nativity of the Virgin." "By King."

Some few years before these events happened, we learn that the old inheritance of Chaddesley had definitely passed away from the Family of Corbet through marriage and into the hands of the Bergavennys. Not, I fancy, that the House of Leigh had no male heirs, for we find the succession well established; indeed, for many generations onward the House of Leigh seems to have been blessed with an unusual abundance of sons and daughters; they spread themselves all over the West of Shropshire in the old possessions of the Barony of Caus. Chaddesley was therefore more likely given in dowry to some one of the many daughters. Subsequently the Chaddesley lands passed from the Bergavennys to the Beauchamps and later still to the Packington family.

The Church is a very interesting one, dedicated to St. Cassian. Among one of its interests is one of the finest Saxon Fonts known. In the north-east corner of the Church lie two stone figures—one is a cross-legged knight in chain armour said to represent "one of the redoubtable Corbets." As antiquaries judge that this figure cannot be of a later date than the middle of the thirteenth century, and that probably its date is earlier, this figure can be of no other man than the Sir Roger Corbet, the husband of Hawisa Ffoliot, through whom he inherited Chaddesley. If its date is determined as towards the end rather than the middle of the thirteenth century, it would represent Sir Roger's nephew, Sir William Corbet, who inherited Chaddesley on his uncle's death, and who was the third son, possibly fourth son, of Robert Corbet, the fourth Baron of Caus. May we not also consider the second stone figure, that of an ecclesiastic with the hands raised in attitude of prayer, as probably also that of a Corbet! We may remember that a brother or nephew was "Parson of Chaddesley" about that time. The Packingtons who were at Chaddesley in the sixteenth century were a Protestant family, but the last heir, a daughter who became Lady Mary Yate, was a very stout Roman Catholic, and the whole neighbourhood was then an active centre of religious intrigues. Many are the devices for concealing Priests and Recusants to be found in the old Manor houses of Harvington and Rushington and the district. There were other causes for differences of opinion amongst men, during the lives of Thomas and his father, besides the burning question of who should rule over them: the desire for freedom and reform in religion and Church was stirring in men's minds and would not be stayed; and more and more, as the numbers of the Lollards increased. It was by this name that the followers of Wycliffe were known. We can only gather how the Corbet forefathers viewed these subjects from their actions, as from time to time we may learn them from the public records. For instance, the short notice of the recognition of the sympathy existing between Sir John Oldcastle and the Thomas of Leghe buried at Sibbeston suggests a very probable sympathy between this Thomas (his son) and the people now fast rising into notoriety—the Lollards. They were about to suffer persecution, poor people, for their religious opinions. Wycliffe himself, their great teacher, lived in a little, simple, quiet Parish in Leicestershire, wholly absorbed in his teaching and the work of his lifetime—the Translation of the Holy Word of God into our mother tongue. He had sundry sympathisers at first in high places, and amongst them the good Queen Anne and her husband, the unfortunate Richard the Second. We may remember that the good Queen Anne was the Guardian of the little lady, Elizabeth Corbet, the heiress of Wattlesborough;—the last Corbet born within its walls. There can be no doubt but that most of the hostility shewn to Richard II. arose from this leaning to Wycliffe and his teachings, and it was industriously fanned into flame by the ecclesiastics of the time, who were against all reform. John of Gaunt, too, and his wife Blanche, were Wycliffe's staunch supporters and patrons, yet his son and grandson, the two Henrys—IVth and Vth—never dared declare themselves in favour of the new teaching. It is somewhat significant of the unstable feeling concerning their claim to the throne, and one that would obtrude itself, that it was during their reigns that the first open persecution of these poor people began. No two persons could have been more dissimilar than John of Gaunt and his teacher Wycliffe. The following extract from Professor Oman's life of Warwick perhaps explains the friendship. "Lancaster was feudal in his sympathies," he says; "he resented the official arrogance of the Prelates and the large share of temporal power which they had grasped. Wycliffe dreamt by restoring apostolical poverty to the clergy to restore the long lost purity, and felt that in John of Gaunt he had found one who not only had the will but also the power to reform the abuses of the day." In Henry VI.'s days Leicestershire forsook its old Lancastrian tendencies and fought openly for the House of York. An old Ballad of the Day, written before the Battle of Towton, expresses this.

Warwick the
King Maker,
C. W. Oman.

Warwick the
King Maker,
C. W. Oman.

"The wolf cam fro Worcester, ful sure he thoughte to byte
 The dragon cam fro Glo'ster, he bent his tayle to smyte
 The Griffin cam fro Leycestre, flying in so lyte,
 The George he cam fro Nottingham, wit spere for to fyte."

Thomas was, I suppose, on the side of the Government of the day. Up to 1461 his name is continuously found on the Commission of Peace for Salop. In 1461 came his summons to array men for the coming struggle. The Lancastrian party had taken heart again, and the great king-maker himself had joined them. But the end soon came. In 1471 Warwick was killed, resistance was no more, recriminations and punishments alone remained, and they were meted out with a sure hand. Thomas's name up to 1471 is still found on the Commissions of Peace. The last entry to his name in the Patent Rolls is dated 1477 "Commission to Thos: Littleton, Richard Corbet knight, Roger Kynastone knight, Thomas Corbet of Leigh, and the Sheriff in the County of Salop to enquire concerning certain farms for lands granted, and divers other sums of money and yearly profits etc: " and to certify thereon before the King and Council of Westminster in the quinzaine of Michaelmas next." "By King."

Thomas must have died between 1480 and 1483-4, as at that date Peter was arrested, and being styled of Lye was evidently the head of the House of Leigh or Lye and other variants. "Commission to Thomas Hoord esquire, Sheriff of Salop, and Thomas Mitton esquire, to arrest Peter Corbet of Lye, esquire, and bring him before the King and Council in the Octaves of Michaelmas next." Quite at the end of the previous year a Commission was issued to "Humphrey Stafford . . . Corbet, John Lyngon etc: to enquire what persons in the County of Hereford have committed treasons, insurrections, and rebellions, and of what castles, lordships etc: they were seized or possessed at the time of their forfeiture . . . and to take the same into the King's hands."

Let us hope that Peter's subsequent arrest was not of long duration; the Battle of Bosworth was near at hand and must have solved all difficulties concerning him. I have only one other record of him: it is found among the entries in the Catalogue of Ancient Charters date 1480, here he is witness to a certain Anne Debnam. According to the Pedigrees he married Elizabeth Brereton, probably a daughter or sister of Sir William Brereton.

I think it well here to state once more that I have based my History of the Family of Corbet on the notices given of its members in the Public Records, recurring to the Pedigrees only where no records have come under my notice. This has been especially necessary in this history of the Houses of Leigh and Longnor which we are now relating, for at times the Pedigrees and the statements of the Public Records do not tally. It will also be impossible in a general History of the Family of Corbet, such as this, to follow up and note the many sons and daughters of these Houses which we find mentioned in the Pedigrees of the Harleian Collections. This and the preceding and subsequent generations seem to abound with younger sons and daughters, and we find the sons entered as settled in many a place known and familiar as having formed part of the old Barony of Caus. We find Thomases, Johns, Rowlands, Edwards, and many another Corbet name entered as of Hampton, of Newton, of Worthen, of Pontesbury, of Westbury, etc. Many individuals of this abundant House of Leigh sought their fortunes in London. Some were Merchant Adventurers, some sailors; no doubt the thrilling accounts of Warwick's successes at sea attracted to him many an adventurous Corbet. One Gabriel Corbet describes himself as a gallant and adventurous seaman, and says he ever spent his life in defence of the kingdom, he therefore petitions Henry VIII. to grant him all an Englishman's privileges, though born in Venice. The petition was granted "in consideration of his many and long services." I must content myself with chronicling the lives and doings of the eldest sons or those who carried on the line and making clear the point of divergence of the House of Longnor from the House of Leigh, as I believe it to be proved. Both the Houses of Morton-Corbet and that of Leigh had lands in Leicestershire, and the latter especially spent a good deal of their lives there.

Let me detail the record of a contemporary, Thomas Corbet, who is buried at Nailstone, in Leicestershire, and whose tomb is described by Nicholls in his History of that County. This Thomas lived to the age of ninety-four, dying in 1586. He had nineteen children, and married twice. Fortune seems to have smiled again on the House of Leigh, for we find that this Thomas was serjeant of the Pantry to Henry VIII, Edward VI, and the Queens Mary and Elizabeth. He died in Leicestershire, and Nicholls gives us a description of his tomb. Thomas is shown on the tomb as an old man with a peaked beard and short hair. His doublet is slashed and faced with ermine.

1477

Pat. Rot.
 2 Rich. III.
 Prt. II.
 Memb. 8,
 dorso.

At the left-hand corner of the tomb is a shield with two ravens on it. A later record of it says the tomb has been much defaced ; only the top slab is said to remain, and this was laid flat on the floor with a stove standing on it ! One of the late Rectors of the parish rescued it from this undesirable plight and it now stands upright against the south wall of the north or Barton Aisle. In Nicholls' time the long inscription was intact, and fortunately Nicholls has preserved it :—

- " Heare lyes one Thomas Corbet by name
Whose virtues rare did shine
In alms to poore, good will to riche,
None could charge him with . . .
- " Kinge Henry the eight he servaunt sure
In pantry rule did beare
Kinge Henry, his wyves and children three
Hee servde full threescore yeare.
- " The eldest officer in the Court
In age nynetye-foure yeares
The seas he past, theire to fulfil
The Kinge his lorde's affaires.
- " At coronations foure he was
And chief in pantry there
To waite upon the princes bord
So comely was his chance.
- " Nineteen chyl dren one wyfe to him
Broughte forth in eighteen yeare
And two also another wyfe
To his great joye did beare.
- " And nowe his soule is gone to GOD
His bones lye in this grave
Hoping to rise when GOD'S will is
Bye Christe his meede to have.
- " The twenty three of August moone
In the yeare departed hee
A thousand and five hundred eke
With eightye and twise three."

Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire seem to have had great charms for the younger sons of these generations. We must, however, leave them and confine our attention to considering the main line of the House of Leigh. We last wrote of Peter and that he was arrested about the eve of the Battle of Bosworth. He married a Brereton, and I think him to have been brother, not son, to the Thomas whom he succeeded about 1480. The Pedigrees allot him two sons : Thomas, whom they represent as having married Jane Kynastone, and a Richard who died without issue. To Thomas they assign one son, John, who must have been born about 1460. In all probability both John's father Thomas and his grandfather Peter had really several sons each. John in a Deed quoted by Blakeway in his MSS. proves his descent from Peter, his grandfather. The Deed states " Henry Stafford and Ursula his wife claim against John Corbet of Lee four messuages etc. And he says that they should not have their action against him, because he says that a certain Peter Corbet grandfather of the same John, whose heir he is, was siezed thereof, after whose death the same lands descended to the same John, now holding them as Cousin and heir of the same Peter, viz. : as son of Richard son of the same Peter." Blakeway here remarks that Richard is a mistake for Thomas ; since in a later Deed this same John declares himself as son of Thomas son of Peter. The following year Henry of Stafford, " lord of Caus and Ursula hys wyf, to all maner etc. : gretynge. Know ye that we consyderynge the faythefull and long servyce that our welbelovyd John Corbet, sometyme our servaunt, hathe done to the

18 Hen. VIII.

18 Hen. VIII.
Staff. Leiber,
Mich. Term.

Right Honorable and our dere Mother the Ladye Margarete Counteis of Salusbery and for the like service unto us bestowyd, have given etc : to the said Corbet . . . the office of Constableness of our Castell of Cawres, and to occupye the demeans and Parks of the same during hys lye, so that the said Corbet abyde and dwel within our Castele ; paying rent for the said demeans and Parks. He is to have a fee of £4 per annum Jan : 19 Hen : VIII." " Entitled John Corbet of Newton patent."

19 Hen. VIII.
Staff. Leiger.

1528.

The Deed just quoted is of a later date than I should have quoted here ; it is 1528 (19 Hen. VIII). I have done so, and anticipated rather, because John explains his parentage in it so clearly. I believe this John also to be the dividing point of the Houses of Leigh and Longnor. We must continue also to bear in mind that generations were not simply confined to the eldest son or the son who carried on the descent ; but that the House of Leigh was a very prolific one, that there was quite an ample supply of Manors for these younger sons to spread themselves amongst, and that as they did so certain of these Manors would cease to be reckoned among the paternal possessions, though the succeeding heir would be designated by the name of the paternal Manor. It is necessary to bear this in mind chiefly from the discrepancies between the pedigrees of the Harleian MSS. and the Records of the various Corbets found among the Public Records. Where there is no record to throw doubt, I chronicle the statement of the Pedigrees. John of Leigh, it is stated in the Pedigrees, was the son of Thomas who married Jane Kynastone, daughter of Roger Kynastone, knight, of Middle. John is given as his only son ; he would have been born about 1450, and this is determined somewhat by a Paper recorded amongst the Blakeway MSS.

Blakeway
Salop 5,
fol. 176.

The Paper is headed "From a paper written by Sir Richard Corbet (Bt) in 1667 or 1668." It states John Corbet to have had a son Edward, who died 9 Hen. VIII, leaving a son Thomas of twenty-three years of age. Edward, states the Paper, married Matilda, daughter of Thomas Poyner of Beslow, Co. Salop. That son Thomas was the founder, in my opinion, of the House of Longnor by his marriage with Jane Burton, daughter of John Burton of Longnorlee, Co. Salop. The events chronicled by "the Paper" happened so near to the date at which the statements were made, that one feels their probable correctness. I propose to continue the history of Leigh down to the date of its loss of the male line, and then to trace the House of Longnor up to the same event in its history.

Duke, Ant.
Shrop.

The John mentioned at the head of the Paper of which I have just written I take to be John born, as stated before, about 1450 to 1455. There is a good deal said of him through his life in the "Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic" in the reigns of the Tudors ; he seems, indeed, to have been much about Court. He married three times. Firstly, Margaret, daughter to Sir Thomas Blount. Margaret died very early in life, leaving an only son William, who eventually carried on the descent of the House of Leigh. John Corbet next married Jocosa, a sister of Sir John Packington and widow of John Lee of Avenbury. The Packington family had lately acquired Chaddesley-Corbet. I believe Jocosa lived some years. The Pedigrees give her two sons, Edward called "of Glazely" in the Pedigrees, and "of Albrighton" in Sir Richard Corbet's Paper. We find from Duke's "Antiquities" that Sir John Packington gave the lands in Glazely to his grandson Edward Corbet ; all which must be again referred to in later pages. John Corbet's third wife was Agnes, daughter of William Booth, knight, of Dunham. The Pedigrees give her two sons : George, who was entered at the Middle Temple as fourth son of John Corbet of Lye (he married Catherine, daughter of Edward Barton or Burton), and Rowland, the fifth son, who died without heir. Three daughters are recorded : Anna, married to Thos. Morton ; Katherine, married Thos. Lewter ; and Maria, married Richard Stafford.

Hen. VIII.
Let. and
Papers. For.
and Dom.
ed. J. S.
Brewey. Pt. 1.
Vol. II. 1515-18
p. 871

The first record of John Corbet of Leigh in Salop and of Sibbesdon in Leicestershire gives rather an interesting little account of an entertainment given at the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, London, taken from the Cellarers' Accounts. On Trinity Sunday, 17th June, 1514, Mr. Westly, Mr. Deny, and Mr. Blagge of the Exchequer, Doctor Taylore, Mr. Corbett, Mr. Blondell, Mr. Eylmer, Mr. Chamley, Mr. Oliver Turner, etc., . . . were entertained. The first course consisted of "brues to pottage" chickens and bacon, green geese, roast capon, pike, pheasant, custard. The second course : "joly to pottage" pigeons, rabbits, "heronzew," "bream," "quinces," "bak tart."

The following year there is a notice of him among the Royal Household. "Names of the King's Officers and servants sworn to attend in his chamber." "Esquires for the Body extraordinary : Alex. Frogenall, Hen. Beamonde, Rich. Hulse, John Rogers, . . . John Corbet."

Vol. III. Pt. II.
p. 823.

We get a glimpse of the Scotch Corbets too from this collection of State Papers, date 1521. "The Borders." "Memorandum that Nycolas Tweddell, Alex. Corbet or his son, Rob. Carok

that led malley away under the rule of my lord Dacrez . . . came the next Saturday after St Luke's Day last past to the Reydburne in Wesdale, and stale kye and other noote to the number of sixteen and one horse and two mares of John Lonesdelles, Will Sympson, Henry Hudson, and Roland Lawe, and all the household stuff that the said John Lonesdelles and Will Sympson had." In the years 1521, 1522 and 1523 we find John of Lee associated with Th. Cardinal of York, G. Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, C. Bishop of Hereford, on Commissions of the Peace for Salop.

1376, 14th,
15th
Hen. VIII.

John of Legh was appointed receiver in the accounts of the late Duke of Buckingham's lands. Page 1531 in Vol. iii of the Letters and Papers alluded to before states: "Duke of Buckingham's lands. Account of the Officers of the late Duke of Buckingham's lands, made by the King's Commissioners in the months of July to November . . . South Wales . . . 'Cawres' with the members . . . Earl of Wiltshire, late steward, £6 13s 4d. Lieutenants, Humphrey Lloyd and Wm. Reynnold Lloyd, constable of Cawrs Castle 100s. John Corbet of Legh, receiver, 66s 8d. John Corbett forester of Haburley in Hogestowe Forest, Reginald ap John, forester of Minsterley Park etc. . . . 2d a day."

Henry VIII had already begun his career of mistrust of those of his subjects whom he thought looked askance on his ways. We come on the following entry, 12th December, 1522: "For George Nevell lord Burgavenny. Cancel of his recognisance dated 21st Feb. 13 Hen. VIII binding him in the sum of 10,000 mks, to allegiance, and not to enter into the Counties of Kent or Sussex, or come into the King's presence, without licence, and to find sureties for the payment of 10,000 mks, before the Ascension next, or yield his body to the Tower." On 16th, 19th and 20th May he found the following sureties: "Sir Th. Fynes of Claverham and Ric. Devenysshe of Helmyng-ham, Suss. in £100, Sir Edw. Nevell of the Household, £200, Ric. Corbet of Slagham, Suss. £100 etc. Monastery of St Albans, 12th Dec. 14 Hen. VIII."

P 1143

John Corbet is entered as contributing towards the loan for the war in France in 1524. "The loan for the war with France. Account of Sir Henry Wiat, Treasurer of the Chamber, of the money paid to him by the collections of divers Shires. 14 Hen. VIII—Shroph: Robt. Dudley, Ric. Forster, Thos. Blounte, Ric. Horde, John Corbet etc. £250 3s 4d."

Vol. IV., p. 84.

The next entry concerning John Corbet of Legh is one more of those curious pictures of the times where differences of opinion occur. John and his eldest son are both implicated. The occurrence took place in 1524. The William is, of course, the son of John's first wife, Margaret Blount.

"Sept 22 1524 Petition of Robert Leighton, gentleman Porter of the Tower of London, and yeoman of the Crown, to Wolsey, against John and William Corbett, of Worthen parish, Shroph. who have assaulted Wm. Baylye and Thos. Leighton, the petitioners Cousins, to whom he had granted the patronage of Worthen. On Sunday 21st Aug. 16 Hen. VIII they entered the church during divine service with 14 armed people, and would have killed Thos. Leighton and Margaret, Bayly's wife, who were in the Chancel, if the parishioners had not prevented it. After that John and Wm. Corbet and Joyce wife of the former, with 12 others, went to the Parsonage, pulled Margaret Bayly out of the house and beat her, being great with child, so that she is like to die, and boasted that they would slay her Husband, who was advised not to return home, and went to Sir Ric. Herberde steward, asking him to see the King's peace kept. Herberde sent for Corbet and their accomplices, but they would not appear before him. He then sent Baylye home with servants of his own, but he dared not stay in the house, but went to the Sessions at Shrewsbury, 22 Sept. 16 Henry VIII and presented bills before the Judges, which were thrown out by the Jury, as the foreman was Corbet's Cousin, and several jurymen said they could not live in the County if they did otherwise."

p. 322.

John Corbet of Legh was about to become Sheriff and was a notable person in the life of Shrewsbury at this time. He became an honorary member of the Drapers' Company, in whose Books his entry is thus recorded: "8th June 18th Hen. VIII John Corbet Squyer and Lord of Ly, ys become broder of the fraternyte, and hath graunted to pay the Company yerly a buk of season, and a gallon of wyn at his entre."

Owen and
Blakeway,
History
Shrewsbury,
Vol. I.

The following November John Corbet's name is on the Sheriff list, in company with those of Thomas Cornewalle and Thos. Newporte. The Letters and Papers from which I have already quoted give: 1525 Sheriff Roll, Salop, John Corbet of Lee, Thos. Newporte, Ric. Horde. "The King pricked the names of John Corbet and Thos. Cornewalle." The following year he was again on the Commission of the Peace in the goodly company of Bishops—viz.: Thos. Card. of York, J. Bishop of Exeter, Wm. Charleton.

Vol. IV.,
p. 798

In 1526 we have a record. "Grants in November 1526. Thomas Fareley and Margaret his

Vol. IV.
Part. II.
P. 1183.

wife. Memorandum that a Writ of re-dissiezin was delivered for execution to Ric: Welles, deputy Sheriff of Salop, to enquire whether Fareley was unjustly disseized of lands in Weo (sic) having previously recovered siezin against John Corbet and Joan (Joyce) his wife, John Acton and Thos: Nevet."

Vol. IV.
P. 1901.

Trouble seems to be touching John Corbet of Legh now in 1528; we find one of his sons getting into trouble over his religious opinions, and read: "Dr John Taylor, Master of the Rolls to Wolsey. On examination of the letters and verses in young Denham's keeping, there was found a letter by John Corbette, one of Taylor's servants," which is sent to Wolsey with others. My lord of Bath and Taylor examined the writer, and made him "take a pen and paper, and write his mind with his own hand, as far as he knoweth himself infect in Luther's opinions, and by whom he was moved, and what companions or favouraites he hath had or hath, adherents to the said Luther's heresies" "As he in his own writing confessed himself of Luther's sect. sends both his confession and his person; the which John Corbet, by his Father and other of his friends, was put to me the same day that I took my journey towards France, and at Sittingbourne overtook me. I was very glad of him for his virtue and good letters, and now I am right sorry that it hath be his misfortune so to disorder himself; for he is well learned, both Graece, and Latine, and can do no other thing but study. In worldly things he hath nother experience nor activity; in study of good letters miram ac capacitatem et insuperabilem diligenciam—Hopes Wolsey will therefore 'have compassion of age' and his humble submission and meek revocation of his errors." "Poissy 4 June 1528." The next day, June 5th, Tayler again writes to Wolsey and explains how John Corbette came into his service. The Bishop of Bath and himself had both found a letter implicating him in the suspicion of Lutheranism and have sent it to Wolsey, with Corbette's confession. He intended to have sent it on the 3rd, and Denham and Corbette to England, and had promised to write on Corbette's behalf, on condition that he would appear before Wolsey and detect his adherents. But at midnight Corbette rose with leave to retire . . . As he returned not, his fellows sought for him; but he could not be found. Corbette has been searched for both in Paris and Rouen. The writer ends by craving forgiveness "for his facile credence." "Poissy 5 June."

P. 1902.

On the 7th June both John Clark, Bishop of Bath, and Tayler write again to Wolsey saying that young Denham had been sent to Calais the day before and that young Corbette "is taken, and will be sent with the other." "Poissy 7 June." Their urgency in the matter is shown by another note that "The two young men attached for Lutheranism have this day been sent to Calais." June 14, 1528. The authorities at Calais evidently did not conceive the urgency of the matter so great as did the Bishop and the Master of the Rolls; and Sir Robert Wingfield writes on June 19 to Wolsey, "Yesternight a Chaplain of the Bishop accompanied with three or four others, and the Master of the Rolls' servants, brought here Denham and Corbet with a letter, stating that the three prisoners and their books should be transmitted to England." He goes on to say that "no ship will be ready to leave before Tuesday or Wednesday," and begs Wolsey will write a letter to the Commissary, Sir John Butler, to take charge of them, as "this is a spiritual matter." Sir Robert Wingfield writes also to the Treasurer of the Chamber, Sir Brian Tuke, to advertise him of the coming of Denham and Corbet and of two letters which he has enclosed in one of his own to Wolsey. Sir Robert Wingfield wrote again to the Treasurer, Sir Brian, on the following day, September 20th, wishing that Wolsey would order Sir John Butler to take charge of the Chaplain of the Staple and young Corbet, or that the Bishop of Bath may convey them hence now at his passing.—What reception, we wonder, awaited these two young men from Wolsey!—The Family—both the Houses of Morton-Corbet and of Leigh—appear to have had good influence at Court, and we must hope they were able to use it on their behalf!

Vol. II. p. 213.
Hen. VIII.
Letters and
Papers For.
and Dom. arr.
and cat.
J. Gairdner.

I find some references in Vol. II, page 213, to the Deed already referred to on page 185 of this chapter in which John of Legh gives his descent from his grandfather Peter, connected with lands held of their cousins the Staffords. It is an appeal by Henry lord Stafford to Thomas Cromwell. "Please to move the King for such evidences as concern my lands remaining at Thornbury. It is not unknown to you what wrong Corbet did me; for since by my lord Chancellor's award he was my farmer, he claims divers parcels of Hope, . . . and will not let me enter unless I show evidence." This matter is referred to in Cromwell's "Remembrances" "1534." A declaration of "escriptes and writings" in my Master's (Cromwell's) custody, which came into his possession from Mich. 21 to Mich. 23 Hen. VIII.

1533.
Vol. VII.
P. 352.

Vol. VIII.
p. 52.

XXXVIII. First, a bill of John Corbette's for a ferm in Hope had of the Duke of Buckingham. We have John Corbet's name recorded in January, 1535, under Grants in January. "Tenth

of Spiritualities Commissions for the following Counties and districts, to make enquiry in pursuance of articles and instructions annexed to the Commission." "Salop Sir Thos: Cornewayle, Sir Wm: Thomas, Rog: Corbet, Thos: Newport, Robt: Nedham . . . John Corbet of Lee." There are many notes concerning John Corbets for several years still among these Letters, etc., but I take the following Petition as the latest act in which the present John Corbet of Leigh participated, as he must have been already quite an old man.

Vol. VIII.
p. 91.

1536. The Marches of Wales. "Petition to the King's Commissioners in the Marches of Wales, by Sir Ric: Harbert, John Corbet, Humph: Lloyd, John Clon, Reynolds, William and Matthew Price, for themselves and other the inhabitants of the 'lordships Marches' lately appointed by (27 Hen: VIII) Statute to be the Shire of Montgomery, in the Marches of Wales"; for the abolition of inheritance by "gavaill kind," and for local government as in the shires of England. This is given more at length in some Harl. MSS.

"County of Montgomery. Articles and Petitions made by Sir Ric: Herbert, John Corbet, Humphrey Lloyd, John Clon, Reynolds, William and Matthew Price, in the name of the King's subjects and tenants, in the Counties and lordships Marches, lately appointed by statute to be the Shire of Montgomery, to the King's Commissioners in the Marches of Wales.

Harl. MSS.
368 f. 178.

"1. For divers reason desire land now divided by gavelkind to be fee-simple and inheritable by the common law of England,

"2. That the Sheriff may be removable yearly, and that they may do their suit royal at the Sheriff's turns, and also the reeves of townships, and that they may be discharged of the leets used in every lordship.

"3. That all Pleas may be held before the King's Justices, as in North Wales, and that the lordships Marches may only have the jurisdiction of a Court Baron. They desire to be immediate subjects of the King, as they have hitherto been under the oppression of their lords without certain laws, but only unwritten customs interpreted at the lords' will.

"4. They do not desire to be put to mayneprise, as in North Wales.

"5. They complain of the issue of Writs of subpoena, and desire that such suits may be heard by the King's Commissioners in the Marches. They desire to be acquitted of arrears to the King's excessive Fines, which can never be paid.

"6. They will give the King such sum as is possible.

"7. The disposition of the Lords and officers was to nourish thieves, &c: for the sake of fines and escheats. They beg the Commissioners to commend their Petition to the King."

After this date I think it is fairly to be inferred that John Corbet of Legh had passed away, and we must briefly review the lives of his eldest son William, and then again of his eldest son, or the son who carried on the line, in the coming generations. William Corbet of Leigh married Alice, daughter of Thomas Lacon of Willey. Their son Thomas married Elynor, daughter of Thomas Williams of Willaston. This Thomas Corbet is designated in the pedigree as Thomas Corbet of Asterley or Austerley. Their son William Corbet of Leigh, one of probably many sons, carried on the direct line and married Anne Pelham, daughter of Sir William Pelham. She was widow of Sir Thomas Packington. This William died in 1603, only one year after his father Thomas, who left no will, but letters of administration were granted to the son William in 1602. The administration was carried out after William's death, by his Trustee and next of kin, Roger Corbet. William died at an early age leaving his son Pelham a minor. A review of his lands as regards Shropshire is given amongst Blakeway's MSS, and as years have passed since we last wrote of the inherited lands, it will be interesting to take stock of them as they stand at this date. The Inquisition P.M. was taken at Bridgnorth in 1605.

The document is among the Blakeway MSS.

"The Valor or extent of ye Manors &c: of William Corbett of Leigh Co: Salop Esquire, who died 7th April 2 Jac: and which descended to Pelham Corbet his son and heir then a minor, who attained his full age 4th Sept: 22 Jac: and sued out livery 23rd Aug: 22 Jac:

Blakeway
MSS.,
Sal. 5, f. 178.

"A message and 60 acres in Asterly holden of Thomas E Suffolk as of ye honour of Oswestry.

"The Manors or lordships of Leigh, Aston-Piggot, Scription under Carnwood, and Modlicot. No I holden of the King by $\frac{1}{4}$ feodi militis as of ye castle of Cawse. No II holden of John Thynne, knt, and dame Jane his wife as of his Manor of Cawes in free socage. No. III holden of Manor or honour of Clonne in free socage. No IV holden of ye said Manor or honour of Clonne in free socage. (N.B. 134 are called Manors, 2 only a tenement.)

"Diverse messages &c: in Colsmore, Whitspune, Luckley Magna, Luckley Parva, Banck aer, and Grison ? in Co Sal: holden of the said Thynne and his wife.

"Thomas Corbett Esquire, Father of ye said William being siezed in fee of ye premises in Asterley, enfeoffed one Thomas Lloyd, to ye use of himself ye feoffor and Elinor his wife for life, remainder to Thomas Corbett their son, remainder to their own right heirs. Thomas and Elinor died in ye life of William."

"Messuages in Minsterley holden of Thynne and his wife as of Minsterley in free soc:

"Messuage and land in Fenyton alias Venyton holden of William Spencer, Esquire, as of Manor of Fenyton in free socage.

"A messuage and land in Wallop holden of Thynne and wife as of Manor of Cawse in free socage.

"A messuage in Hem Co Montg: in tenure of Thomas Corbett gentleman, . . . holden of ye King of ye Castle of Cawes by $\frac{1}{2}$ feodi militis."

"27 Nov: 7 Hen: VIII."

"A Bond for £40 from Thomas Lakyn, Esquire, of Willey to John Corbet of Lee Esquire." This Thomas Lacon or Lakyn will no doubt be recognised as the maternal grandfather of the Thomas Corbet of Asterley deceased in 1602 and whose son William of Lee died the following year, in 1603. The Bond also was of course made in favour of John Corbet of Lee, this William's great-grandfather. The Pedigree is hereby verified, as also by another fact mentioned in the Blakeway MSS., viz.: that at a Court held at Aston-Rogers 1505 John Corbet was presented as next heir of Sir Walter Blount (through his wife, Margaret Blount).

Blakeway

MSS.

Salop 5, f. 183.

18 Hen. VII.

We may add that William Corbet's maternal grandfather, William Williams, was a pronounced Yorkist, as was the town of Shrewsbury. He accompanied the Duke of York's armed men in their triumphal progress to London in 1452.

Anne Pelham was a widow when she married William Corbet of Lee and of Sibbestone; it was either he or his son Pelham who sold the Leicestershire inheritance. Anne was the widow of Sir Thomas or Sir John Packington, who left an only son Thomas. There are one or two legal documents regarding him and the responsibilities of the Guardians in whose care he was left. His young step-brother Pelham Corbet of Leigh, etc., attained his majority about 1622. He distinguished himself greatly in after years on the side of his King and country. Albright-Hussey was fortified; it had come into the possession of the family through his mother (Anne Pelham), whose mother was a Hussey. This move, however, was deemed inadvisable, and Pelham withdrew the garrison and removed his family from the old Hall of Leigh, which had sheltered the family of Leigh for so many generations, to the larger house of Albright-Hussey. The family never returned to the old home, and the ancient Hall of Leigh was dismantled. We may be able to add some details of these days and Pelham when writing of the head of the family at Moreton-Corbet at this date. Pelham had married a daughter of the House, and their eldest son Andrew was both christened and buried at Moreton-Corbet. He had many children. His grandson Andrew was bequeathed the magnificent property of Sundorne, Upton, and Uffington, by their kinsman, Corbet Kynastone. It is believed that Corbet Kynastone left this large property to the younger branch rather than to the elder on account of politics. Opinions on these subjects ran very high at that time. The elder family at Moreton-Corbet were Whigs and Hanoverians, and regarded Corbet Kynastone as somewhat inclined to be a Papist; the Corbets of Leigh, on the other hand, though the younger branch, were like himself Jacobites, and he made his will in their favour. Let us trace how these lands came into Corbet Kynastone's keeping.

Haughmond, now known as an estate, under the name of Sundorne, shared the fate of all other ecclesiastical institutions of a like nature, under "bluff King Harry." The monastery was dismantled and the fair lands, of how many historic memories, were sold to one of the King's friends. It was granted to Edward Lyttleton, of Pillington Hall, Co. Stafford. At that time the Manor of Haughmond contained, besides the Demesne of Haughmond, Upton Magna, Dorrington, Withington, Hunckington, Roddington, Walcot, and Duncott. These hereditaments he soon sold to the wealthy Rowland Hill, citizen and mercer of London and its first Protestant Lord Mayor. Sir Rowland Hill was knighted and his enormous estates descended to his nieces, the daughters of his two sisters. Elizabeth married John Barker, who thus became possessed of the Haughmond estates: he turned the Abbey into his dwelling-house and the family lived there during four generations. The then heiress, Amy Barker, married Edward Kynastone of Hordey. She was the daughter of Edward Barker and Dorothy Poyner of Besloe, daughter of Thomas Poyner; another daughter or grand-daughter (Matilda) married the Edward Corbet styled of Glazeley; and of whom a fuller account will be found in the next chapter. Dorothy herself married as her third husband Jerome Corbet, a younger son of the House of Moreton-Corbet. Thus we find the



Leigh Manor House, near Worthen

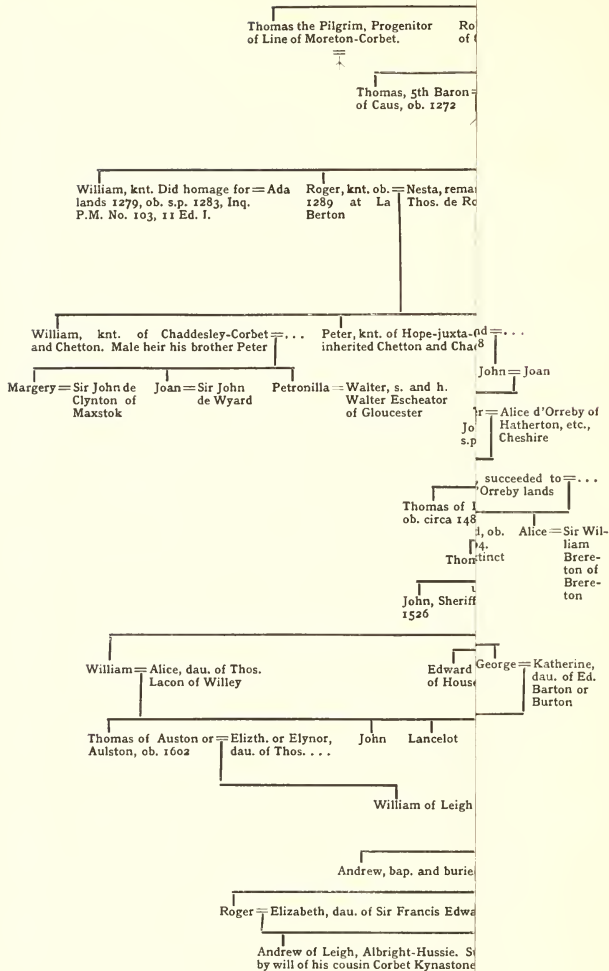
1135539



Longner House, the Seat of Mr. Burton

Face p. 190

OF CHADDESLEY-CORBET



heiress of Haughmond had many Corbet relations. The lands passed to the Kynastone family, and their son, marrying Beatrice Corbet, gave a fresh Corbet influence and relationship. John Kynastone and Beatrice Corbet left one son, Corbet Kynastone. He was a vehement Jacobite and in consequence was obliged to pass many years of his life in France. I believe he was a clever, ambitious man, determined to gather together a party prone to his way of thinking, and to get a footing in the councils of his County. Shrewsbury granted him an enthusiastic welcome on his return to his native land ; and it is said that the great bell of the Abbey was cracked with the vehemence of its welcoming peals. Corbet Kynastone, as before mentioned, left his property to his cousin Andrew Corbet of Leigh and Albright-Hussey, and, he leaving no heir, his brother John Corbet succeeded him ; he was a mighty hunter, we are told, and he sold old Leigh Hall in 1759. John married twice, firstly the daughter of Sir C. Leighton of Loton ; their son John died at the early age of 16. The second marriage was with Anne, daughter of the Rector of Edgmond, the Rev. Wm. Pigott. The eldest son of this marriage married in his turn but left no heir, and was successively succeeded by his three brothers, who left no male heirs. But the property had been resettled by Andrew on his mother's family, the Pigotts. Thus on the death of the last brother the Pigotts came into possession, taking the name of Corbet : and thus ended this ancient House of the Family of Corbet—the Corbets of Leigh. Haughmond was originally founded by the FitzAlan family, and one of their tombs is still to be seen among the ruins of the Church. p. 85.

CORBET
OF CHADDESLEY-CORBET, HOPE AND LEIGH-JUXTA-CAUS, LEIGHTON, AND SUBSEQUENTLY OF SUNDORNE.

Simon Corbet of Pontesbury

Thomas the Pilgrim, Progenitor of Line of Moreton-Corbet. Robert, 4th Baron of Caus, ob. 1222. Emma Pantolph Hugh, ob. s.p. Walter, ob. s.p. Priest. William, ob. s.p. Priest. Sir Roger of Chaddesley-Corbet, = Hawise Fuliot, ob. s.p.

Heirs: Nephews Robert and William.

Thomas, 5th Baron of Caus, ob. 1272. Isabel de Valletot Hugh or Grystaille, living 1292. Sir Robert of Chetton = Ida ob. s.p. 1283 circa. Sir William, Alan living 1251-4.

Sir Robert, ob. s.p. 1283. Hugh, Priest, Presented to Church of Wyck.

William, kn't. Did homage for Ada lands 1279, ob. s.p. 1283, Inq. P.M. No. 103, 11 Ed. I. Roger, kn't. ob. 1289 at La Berton Nesta, remarried Thos. de Rosbal ob. s.p. Nicholas, kn't. living 1324 ob. s.p. Hawise = Sir Laurence de Sandford, living 1544 Walter, kn't. living 1339 Johanna, dom's of Sir Henry de Corbet als. Co-Patrick John, kn't. = Eleanor, dau. of Sir Henry de Strother fore 1372 Thomas = Grant of Beddington, Surrey, 1392

Roger, kn't. = . . . Thomas. Sold it to Sir Richd. de Wylughby 18 Ed. III.

Walter of Ymney, co. Worcest. Minor 1385

William, kn't. of Chaddesley-Corbet and Chetton. Male heir his brother Peter. Peter, kn't. of Hope-juxta-Caus, ob. 1362 circa, inherited Chetton and Chaddesley-Corbet Ela, widow of Sir James de Perers Roger, kn't. of Leigh-juxta-Caus, inherited lands of brothers William and Peter, ob. circa 1368 Amice de Camsville of Sibbesson, etc., Leicestershire John of Bynweston and Leighton, living 1390-8

Margery = Sir John de Clynton of Maustok Joan = Sir John de Wyerd Petronilla = Walter, s. and h. of Walter Escheator of Gloucester William, kn't. = Roger, kn't. Succeeded in = Leicestershire, Oxfordshire, Shrop., Worcestershire, Wales, ob. 1389 Beatrix Peter Joan Cecil Mand

John, ob. s.p. 1374 William, ob. s.p. 1382 circa Mergaret = Sir Gilbert Desys, to whom passed all Gloucestershire lands, ob. s.p. 1422 Thomas of Leigh or Lye, etc. Buried at Sibbesson 1424

Peter = Alice d'Oreby of Hatherton, etc., Cheshire

Thomas of Lye, etc. Sheriff, etc. = Jane Boerly ob. circa 1482 s.p. Peter of Lye. Succeeded his brother = Elizabeth Brereton 1482 circa. Arrested 1483

John, succeeded to = the d'Oreby lands

Thomas = Jane Kynastone, dau. of Sir Roger Kynastone of Middle Richard, ob. s.p.

Richard, ob. s.p. 1404. Line extinct. Alice = Sir William Brereton of Brereton

John, Sheriff 1526 = Margaret, dau. of = Josco, sister to Sir John Parkington, widow of John Lee of Avenbury Agnes, dau. of Willm. Booth, kn't. of Dunham

William = Alice, dau. of Thos. Lacon of Willey

Edward of Glasely and Albrighton. Founder of House of Lengnor and Leighton Matilda Poyner Thomas ob. s.p.

Roland ob. s.p. Anna = Thos. Morton Katharine = Thos. Lewter Maria = R. Stafford George = Katherine, dau. of Ed. Barton or Burton

Thomas of Aulton or = Elath or Elynor, dau. of Thos. Aulton, ob. 1602

John Lancelot Reginald = Margery, dau. of Roger Lewter, Bailiffe of Salop 1514

John Thomas Katherine Anna

Anne, born 1583
William of Leigh and Sibbesson, etc. ob. 1603 = Anne, dau. of Sir William Pelham, widow of Sir Thos. Parkington
Pelham of Leigh, Albright-Hussie, etc. kn't., of age 1622 = Anne, dau. of Sir Andrew Corbet of Moreton-Corbet

Andrew, bap. and buried Moreton-Corbet 1623 Robert, bap. Moreton-Corbet 1629 = Elizabeth, dau. of Roger Kynastone of Hordley

Roger = Elizabeth, dau. of Sir Francis Edwardes Mary, bap. Hordley 1675 = Andrew, bap. 1677 Sinah, bap. 1682; buried at Forten 1795

Andrew of Leigh, Albright-Hussie. Suc. to Sundorne, etc. = by will of his cousin Corbet Kynastone, ob. s.p. 1741 John of Leigh, etc., buried = Barbara Letitia, dau. of John Myrton = Edward Williams of Eton of Hainston. Buried Battisfield 1769 Mascot (and husband)

Emma Elizabeth, dau. of Sir C. Leighton, bap. Shrews. 1751. Anne, dau. of Revd. William Pigott Andrew, bap. 1753 Mary Elizabeth = Sir John Kynastone James, ob. s.p. 1769 Robert, ob. s.p. 1780

John Kynastone, ob. at Eton School; buried Battisfield 1746 et. 16 Emma Elizabeth, = Sir Richard Puleston bap. at Uffington Louisa, bap. Uffington 1777; buried Battisfield 1779 Matilda, bap. Uffington 1779 and buried Andrew, bap. = Mary Em., dau. of Annabella, John Hill of Hardwicke bap. 1803 Dryden, bap. 1805, ob. s.p. Vincent, born 1806, ob. s.p. Kynastone, born 1808, ob. s.p.

Mr. Andrew Corbet settled his lands by his will on the family of Pigott (his mother's family), who assumed the name of Corbet.

HOUSE OF LEIGH-JUXTA-CAUS AND SUNDORNE 191

heiress of Haughmond had many Corbet relations. The lands passed to the Kynastone family, and their son, marrying Beatrice Corbet, gave a fresh Corbet influence and relationship. John Kynastone and Beatrice Corbet left one son, Corbet Kynastone. He was a vehement Jacobite and in consequence was obliged to pass many years of his life in France. I believe he was a clever, ambitious man, determined to gather together a party prone to his way of thinking, and to get a footing in the councils of his County. Shrewsbury granted him an enthusiastic welcome on his return to his native land ; and it is said that the great bell of the Abbey was cracked with the vehemence of its welcoming peals. Corbet Kynastone, as before mentioned, left his property to his cousin Andrew Corbet of Leigh and Albright-Hussey, and, he leaving no heir, his brother John Corbet succeeded him ; he was a mighty hunter, we are told, and he sold old Leigh Hall in 1759. John married twice, firstly the daughter of Sir C. Leighton of Loton ; their son John died at the early age of 16. The second marriage was with Anne, daughter of the Rector of Edgmond, the Rev. Wm. Pigott. The eldest son of this marriage married in his turn but left no heir, and was successively succeeded by his three brothers, who left no male heirs. But the property had been resettled by Andrew on his mother's family, the Pigotts. Thus on the death of the last brother the Pigotts came into possession, taking the name of Corbet : and thus ended this ancient House of the Family of Corbet—the Corbets of Leigh. Haughmond was originally founded by the FitzAlan family, and one of their tombs is still to be seen among the ruins of the Church. p. 85.

CHAPTER XI

THOUGH we have brought the Chronicles of the House of Leigh through the mazes and uncertainties of divers centuries, and thus down to the day when the line failed and an alien family assumed their name with the lands, we must pause ere passing to the main purport of this chapter to take note of one or two of the more remarkable of the scions of the younger sons of this Branch.

The most remarkable of these is Dr. Richard Corbet, Bishop of Oxford and later of Norwich, where he is buried. It seems strange that the descent of so remarkable a man of his day should not have been established and chronicled and known by the Family: but on this head all seems uncertainty. His father was of some repute among his friends, and much esteemed among literary friends such as Ben Jonson, John Selden, etc. Strangely enough, he seems to have been familiarly known as Vincent Poynter als Corbet. Whether this name of Poynter was a mere soubriquet or a screen from political enemies seems impossible to determine. Like Evelyn, he pursued the scientific culture of trees, a taste just then becoming popular. The name Poynter only affected the father, it would seem, for the Bishop always called himself Corbet.

The father's will was proved in May, 1619, and I will give it though it affords no clue. "Vincent Poynter alias Corbet of Twickenham Middlesex gen: 27th Jan. 1603, sicke in bodie, to be buried in Christian buriall in the Parische Church of Twickenham whereof I am a Parishioner, as my Executrix shall think fitt, and I give to the poore of Twickenham 40s. on the daie of my buriall and 4 loades of Charrecoles within 2 yeares, and to everie of my Maiden servants 40s. each and to Robert Crofton 20s. I give to Anne Samwell wief of George Samwell, notary Public a ringe of gold of 50s. I give to Richard Corbett alias Poynter my sonne £500 at 25 in full satisfaction of all goods and chattells he may claym for his childes part, either by the custom of the Realm of England, or City of London, and if he dies before, to Bennett Corbet als Poynter my well beloved wief, and to her assignees for ever, and I give to my said wief all residue of my goods and chattells whatsoever and appoint her my sole Executrix. George Samwell my very good Friend to be my overseer, and to have £5 for his paines. And as to my tenements and hereditaments being in the Parische of St. Augustine in Watling St. or elsewhere in London, I give them to Richard Corbett alias Poynter, my sonne, and to the heires of his bodie lawfullie to be begotten, and for want of such to my wief, and to her heires for ever, and my wief shall enjoy all coppiehold lands, tenements, and hereditaments in the Parische of Twickenham and Thistleworth for life paying only the lords' rent. Gabriel Carye, Theophilus Rithe (Witnesses). Proved in P.C.C. by Bennett Pointer alias Corbett the Relict."

The deceased had a Nursery at Twickenham, a luxury that men of refined and literary tastes were beginning to indulge in. I will quote part of the epitaph written on him by his friend John Selden; it speaks him a man worthy of friendship:—

"I have my piety too, which could
It vent itself but as it would,
Would say as much, as both have done,
Before me here, the friend and son:
For I both lost a friend and Father,
Of him whose bones this grave doth gather:
Dear Vincent Corbet, who so long
Had wrestled with diseases strong,
That though they did possess each limb,
Yet he broke them, e'er they could him:
With the just canon of his life,
A life that knew nor noise nor strife,
But was by sweetening so his will
All order and disposure, still
His mind as pure, and neatly kept,
As were his nourceries, and swept
So of uncleanness or offence,
That never came ill odour thence.
And add his actions unto these,

They are as specious as his trees.
 'Tis true, he could not reprehend
 His very manners, taught t' amend.
 They were so even, grave, and holy :
 No stubbornness so still, nor folly
 To license ever was so light
 As twice to trespass in his sight :
 His looks would so correct it, when
 It chid the vice, yet not the men.
 Much from him, I profess, I won,
 And more and more I should have done
 But that I understood him scant,
 Now I perceive him by my want :
 And pray who shall my sorrows read,
 That they for me their tears will shed."

His only son the Bishop ends his stanzas on his father's death with these lines :—

" His almes were such as Paul defines,
 Not causes to be sav'd, but signes ;
 Which aimes by Ffaith, Hope, Love, laid downe,
 Laid upp what now he wears, a Crowne."

Blakeway mentions that Bishop Corbet's arms were till lately to be seen on a window of Battle-field Church. This was in 1850. A local writer some ten years later states that he discovered the Bishop's arms in a window at the entrance to the Sundorne Chapel. Evidently the glass in question had been removed to Sundorne, at the time of the repairing of Battle-field Church. This Church was the Parish Church of the Corbets of Leigh after the removal of the family to the new home at Albright-Hussy.

The Bishop was born at Ewell, and as is well known his mother's Christian name was the unusual one of Benedetta ; her family name I know not. The Bishop married Alice Hutton. It is singular that with so refined and clever a father, no trace has hitherto been found of the connection with other members of the Family of Corbet. The lustre shed by father and son died with them, for the Bishop's only son Vincent died at an early age and left no children. His sister Alice married in 1647. The marriage allegation is thus given : " Dec. 18 Marmaduke Gresham of Limpfield Surrey Esquire—to marry Alice Corbet of Godstone Surrey, spinster, about 28, her Parents dead, and at her own dispose."

Vincent Corbet's marriage licence tells us that in 1646 he lived at Woodford, Essex, and married Thomasine Potkin, aged 18.

The Bishop was educated at Westminster School and Broadgates Hall, and was a student at Christ Church, Oxford. He was Chaplain to James I, Dean of Christ Church in 1629. His fine full-length portrait by Cornelius Jansen in the Hall of that College proclaims him a very handsome man. He was Bishop of Oxford in 1629, and transferred to Norwich in 1632. His book of poems is of course well known, and no doubt he must have had a kindly, generous nature. One of the many anecdotes that he has left behind him shows this, as also the versatility of his talents. He was enjoying an afternoon in the country with some friends, and he and they were resting at a wayside tavern near Abingdon when a strolling ballad singer came near, loudly lamenting the ill-fortune which had brought him no fees. The Bishop felt compassion for the man and determined to help ; so taking off his own gown and putting on the leathern jacket of the singer, he went out into the street, where he was soon surrounded by an admiring crowd, all eager to hear his ballads and buy his goods. He very soon collected quite a considerable sum and returned to the house, bringing joy and hope to the wearied ballad singer.

Before he attained to the dignity of a Bishop, it is said that Ben Jonson was upon a day at a certain tavern when young Corbet came in. Jonson was in an adjoining room, and called for a quart of raw wine, saying to the tapster, " Sirra, carry this to the gentleman in the next chamber, and tell him I sacrifice my service to him." The fellow did so. " Friend," said Richard Corbet, " I thank him for his love ; but tell him from me that he is mistaken, for sacrifices are burnt." The following lines written on the fly-leaf of a volume of Corbet's poems afford an idea of his character :—

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

" If flowing wit, if verses writ with ease,
 If learning void of pedantry can please,
 If much good humour, joined to solid sense
 And mirth accompanied with innocence
 Can give a poem a just right to fame,
 Then Corbet's should immortal honour claim."

I must content myself with chronicling only the first lines to his "Lines on Great Tom of Christ Church" :—

" Be dumb, ye infant chimes, thump not your metal
 That ne'er outring a tinker and his kettle :
 Cease, all your petty larums ; for to-day
 Is young Tom resurrected from the clay.
 And know, when Tom rings out his knells,
 The best of you will be but dinner bells."

Wood speaks of him as one of the "most celebrated wits in the University, as his poems, jests, romantic fancies, and exploits, which he made and performed extempore shew." In 1612 while proctor of the University and senior student of Christ Church, he pronounced the funeral Oration on Prince Henry ; also on Sir Thomas Bodley. James I made him one of the Royal Chaplains in consideration of "his fine fancy and preaching." The Bishop humorously describes his tour in France in an epistle to his friend Sir Thomas Aylesbury. He was installed Dean of Christ Church at the early age of thirty-seven, but did not hold it long as the deanery was required for Brian Duppa by the Earl of Dorset, and Corbet, who was very friendly at that time with the powerful Duke of Buckingham, was elected to the vacant See of Oxford. He was strongly opposed to the Puritan doctrines, much in vogue among some members of the Family. He preached before Charles I in 1633-4, and gave £400 towards the rebuilding of St. Paul's in 1634.

The Bishop died in 1638. I find that his Principal Official at Norwich was Clement Corbet ; a very clever lawyer, one of the Norfolk Corbets. The Bishop's son was not distinguished in any way. He married young and died young and left no heir ; a fortunate occurrence, possibly, as I believe he ran through all his money. The Bishop's poems were first collected and published in 1647.

Another well-known son of the Branch of Leigh was Edward Corbet, D.D. He was born at Pontesburie, where there was an offshoot established at the time. He was educated at the Shrewsbury School and went to Oxford, to Merton College. Here he made himself prominent by his resistance to the attempted innovations of Archbishop Laud, and indeed subsequently gave evidence against him at his trial. He was always puritanically affected, to which may be attributed that he was chosen one of the Assembly of Divines, and a Preacher before the Long Parliament. Some of these sermons he published, of which one on "God's Providence" was preached before the "Hon. House of Commons," "at their late solemn fast, 28 Dec. 1642." "For this discourse he received the thanks of the house, and by an ordinance dated May 1643 was instituted to the Rectory of Chatham Kent." In three years' time we find him returning to Oxford "as one of the seven ministers appointed by the Parliament to preach the loyal scholars into obedience" ! which office he "found little to his liking." In 1647 he was installed public orator and Canon of the second stall in Christ Church in room of Dr. Henry Hammond, who had been ejected by the visitors ; but being, as Wood observed, a person of convenience and honesty, he resigned both places. In 1649, on the death of Dr. Thomas Soame, he was presented to the valuable rectory of Great Hasely, near Oxford.

Edward Corbet married Margaret, daughter of Sir Nathaniel Brent. He left three children, a son and two daughters. His wife and he are both buried at Great Hasely. He left gifts of books both to Shrewsbury and Merton. I have alluded to the friction between Edward Corbet and Archbishop Laud, and will quote a letter, preserved in the Reference Library at Shrewsbury, which evidences it. The letter is dated from Merton College, 16 October, 1639, and addressed to Sir Francis Ottley.

" Sir,

" I have very lately received three letters from you, one whereof was dated a month since and more, by all which I reade your care and much trouble, for one, who yet hath not worth to deserve any favour at your hands. I told you in my last letter that the time of our College meetinge

was upon the 12 of October at Larnbeth, where to appeare most of our Company were summoned, that at this are, although my selfe and 2 or 3 are left in the Colledge, not out of favour you may be sure. And yet I must not say for want of Accusation for I know some men of great power wish me well. But I trust GOD will deliver me out of their hands, because I have done nothing as I know of to incur their displeasure but what reason and truth move me unto, and upon such grounds I have resolution enough to ventur fortune and life, and whatsoever this world can afford.

"I am to appeare notwithstanding before his Grace of Canterbury when I please, this terme with my brother's deed of feoffment and his will. And for that purpose I desire the Certificate, for which I doe acknowledge your lode, and will owe it to the rest w^he have subscribed. I did not desire it soe large, and I suppose not necessarie, because I must shew my Lord the original writings. Yet I believe Abundans Cantela non nocet. And although his prejudice be soe great against me, that all reason which comes from me will take noe effect, yet surly the testimony of soe many may alter him, especially Dr Gibbons whoe I know loves me well, and whoe will be easily heard by my Lord. However if all fayle, I have some friends which his Grace little thinks of whoe will not easily suffer me to be injured. However I beseech you and those my good friends whoe I know truly love me, not to feare any ill successe which may befal me with his Grace. For I know the grounds of all dislike, and knowe my selfe to have done nothing which may not become a reasonable man, and a Schollar, and one whoe loves in matters of religion to be guided, and swayed by argument and Scripture, not by the pleasure and private ends and wills of particular men.

"I wished Mathew Wilding to plow and sow the New Leason with his caution, if you had not otherwise disposed of it by annexing it for better advantage to one of the Houses and I beseech you order anything which concerns me, (for you have authority enough of yourselfe) in what manner and how your judgement thinks fit, Mathew I desire to gather the rents and bringe them unto you, out of which in ye first place I doe heartily desire you to satisfie your selfe for that much charge and many pettie Expences which in my businesses you have suffered. I doe profess I shall not thinke my affayres in Pontesbury will have succeeded well if you and those whoe expende Money in my employment be not fully repayed. The labour and care which you take is more then I shall be able to deserve, and therefore I pray you make me not guilty of beinge indebted for the Money you expend upon all occasions for me.

"Against our Ladyday I hope I shalle be able to pay my Cousin Wood £30, and till that time the use, and I make noe question, but all other creditors of my brother shall be satisfied to the last farthinge they can demaunde, if they will have a little patience. Some whereof may have a great deal of patience and yet loose nothing or doe any more then what justice requires, and may well become them.

"You suspect rightly the ill manageinge of the Bay mare which now I have in Oxford, where I hope to receive more for her then I could in the Countrey. In the detaying of which when T Appleby desired, you tooke the safest course. I am glad you have removed Moses from adheringe to any thinge of mine. He deserved so ill of my brother in his later time, that he hath noe reason to expect any countenance from me. When I left the Countrey I did fully dismiss him, yet gave him so much that those whoe loved him best must say I used him kindly.

"I thanke you for settlinge the lower House upon Gould whoe I hear is an honest sufficient man. I wish as good a Tenant might be provided for the upper, which I leave to your discretion, only I shall desire you (as heretofore I acquainted you) to except the chamber wherein I live, and stable room for 2 horses whensoever I leave into the Countrey, which I hope will be at Christmas or at Lent. I would willingly come now as you desire, but I cannot, and I hope my journey will not be very necessary whereas you have authority to doe at Pontesbury whatsoever your reason thinks best, and I can doe noe more. Whatsoever you think fit, I like, and soe I shall give my friends there to understand. If any haste of transportinge of letters unto me required; direct them unto Sr. Nathanaell Brent's house Vicar Generall, in Aldersgate Street, from whence they will be carefully conveyed unto

"Your troublesome and thankful friend

"Merton College the 16 of 8ber 1639.

"I beseech you deliver my humble service unto your bedfellow.

"To my honourable ffriend ffrancis Ottley, Esqr,
at ye Colledge in Shrewsbury."

The younger sons of the House of Leigh were very prolific in their generations in these reigns of the Tudor Kings and Queens. Thus there were many families, one might indeed almost say established families, in outlying Manors of the old Barony of Caus, such as Hampton, Pontesbury, Aulston, etc. ; and as well in Shropshire as in the Leicestershire lands, for quite a hundred years or so. Among these the Dictionary of National Biography records some John Corbets, whose Puritan opinions partook of the same tinge as those of the Dr. Edward Corbet of whom I have just written. These lived later than the days of the Tudor Kings, I will mention one only : John Corbet, the son of Roger Corbet, who settled in Gloucester. He was a contemporary of the Bishop's. After passing through the Grammar School in his native town of Gloucester, he became a Commoner of Magdalen College, Oxford, and having taken Holy Orders he was appointed Incumbent of St. Mary de Crypt, a City lecturer and one of the Ushers in the Free School of Gloucester. During the time that Gloucester was garrisoned for the Parliament, John Corbet was appointed Chaplain to Colonel Edward Massey, the Governor, preaching with great violence of language against the Royal cause. His official connection with Massey gave him opportunity for correctly learning the particulars of military events, and he wrote a history of the siege of Gloucester, which is quite free from invective, and consequently has proved of great value to historians. He was afterwards a Preacher at Bridgewater, then he was removed to Chichester, and was next presented to Bramshot, in Hampshire. From this he was ejected in 1662, and he then retired to London, and probably lived in the house of Sir John Micklethwaite, to whom he was Chaplain. He was devoted to Richard Baxter, with whom he and his second wife lived until his death in 1680. His second wife was a daughter of Dr. Twiss. Baxter preached his friend's funeral sermon. He was buried in St. Andrew's, Holborn.

Dict. Nat.
Biog.

Baxter was so notable a person of his century that it may interest to know that in 1631 he was living in Ludlow Castle as private attendant to the Rev. Thomas Wickstead, Chaplain to the Council of the Marches of Wales. A beautiful old timbered house in Bridgnorth is shown as having been his home in his early life.

With this record of John Corbet, the historian, we must bid farewell to the chronicles of the ancient House of Corbets of Leigh, and now of Sundorne :—the male line failed altogether with the son of John Corbet of Leigh and Sundorne, who was Sheriff for Shropshire in 1793. This latter married twice, firstly a daughter of Sir C. Leighton of Loton, and secondly Anne, daughter of the Rev. William Pigott, Rector of Edgmond. Their son Andrew William succeeded his father John Corbet in 1817. He married a daughter of John Hill of Hardwicke, and died without heir. He settled all his property on his mother's family, the Pigotts. Thus the whole of this old property has passed for ever into alien hands, though its owners have assumed the name of Corbet.

Let us now return to that point in the history of this old Branch of the Family of Corbet, at which I believe the House of Longnor to have diverged and established its separate life. I refer to the John Corbet of Leigh and Sibbestone who lived in the reigns of the two first Tudor Kings and who was Sheriff of Salop in 1526. Let me also refer to the written statement on the subject made in 1667 by Sir Richard Corbet, the second Baronet of Longnor. This statement has been preserved by Blakeway amongst his MSS. It appears to me to confirm what I have stated above :—that the cleaving point of the Houses of Leigh and Longnor is with this John Corbet of Leigh and, as we know, also of Sibbestone.—John Corbet's first marriage was with Margaret Blount. It ended swiftly, and her only son William carried on the line of Leigh, etc. His second wife was Jocosa, sister to Sir John Packington, and widow of John Lee of Avenbury. The eldest son of this second marriage was Edward, styled of "Glazely" in the Harleian Pedigree from which I have quoted at times. Duke corroborates this and says Glazely was settled on this eldest son by a Packington. In Sir Richard's statement this Edward is styled of "Albrighton," and one feels that the events being recorded in the statement at so near a date after that of their occurrence gives a very assured testimony. Duke also corroborates the possession of Albrighton, for he states : "Edward Corbet dec: 9 Hen: VIII was siezed of one half of the Manor of Longnor and of estates in Albrighton, Donnington, Leighton, Betton-Strange, Acheley."

Blakeway
MSS. Salop
fol. 176.

Duke's
Shropshire.

9 Hen. VIII.

Concerning this latter property I should remark that though in many of the MS. Pedigrees of the Houses of Leigh and Longnor some of the early ancestors are quoted as of Ackeley, variously spelt, yet this is the first documentary record I have found of such a property, even of the earliest date. Duke is quoting from the Inq. P.M. taken on Edward Corbet's death. Sir Richard's statement tells us that this Edward married Matilda Poyner the daughter of Thomas Poyner of Besloe and that his son Thomas was 23 years old at the time of his father's death in 1518. Edward

therefore must have been born about 1470 to '75. Several Corbets held posts about the Court of Henry VIII; several too of their relations—Blounts, Kynastones, Huseys, and so on. We have already noted John, the father of this Edward, as holding a post in the King's Household; the young John too with his leanings towards Reform and Luther. Again and in connection with a John Husee we hear of an Edward Corbet who fell into disgrace about 1540, was accused of conspiracy and treason, and imprisoned. We shall have occasion to quote what the extracts from the "Letters and Papers" say of him. I think there can be little doubt that this Edward is a younger brother of the Thomas who was 23 at the time of his father's death in 1518 (the Edward whom we will term for distinction "of Glazely").

A few remarks concerning the family of the Husees (so spelt then) may be interesting. We know that the Corbets of Leigh inherited Albright-Hussey in the course of a generation or two later, and the present connection there was evidently established with the marriage of Jocosa Packington, widow of John Lee of Avenbury, with John Corbet of Leigh. John and Jocosa will be recognised as Edward Corbet's father and mother, and the fact that Jocosa's mother was a Hussey shows the connection.

The Rev. D. S. H. Cranage, in his most interesting work on the Churches of Shropshire, speaks of this old family as the founders of the Church of Battlefield. He says that there was originally a Chapel at Albright-Hussey itself, and that as early as 1399 the Rector of Fitz, Ive de Soutlon of Leaton by name, arranged for a small foundation. This seems to have been carried out more definitely after the Battle of Shrewsbury in 1403. At that time Roger Ive was Rector of Albright-Hussey, the which he held till 1447. On October 28th, 1406, Richard Husee of Albright-Hussey obtained licence to grant two acres on the site of the Battle of Shrewsbury to celebrate Divine Service there in a certain Chapel to be there built. The first service was held in the month of March, 1408-9. The Tower was probably added in the early part of the sixteenth century. The Church became the Parish Church of the Corbets of Leigh in due time, and the old Chapel at Albright-Hussey fell into disuse. The date 1524 was for long on the Porch of the old Hall. It was probably the date of the old timber part of the mansion. Another date found with inscription on an oak panel in one of the rooms is "Made by me Edward Huse 1601." The stone portion of the house was most likely built in 1560. Some ruined gables of the old Chapel are, I believe, still standing.

The Christian name Edward is very constantly used in this Longnor Branch of the Corbet Family, indeed I might almost add and in no other branch. Surely it may be accounted for by the close connection which I have just described. A generation later the Sir Richard Husee of his day married a daughter of the then Head of the Family, Sir Richard Corbet of Moreton-Corbet, as second wife. At the date I am writing of, 1536, we find a John Husee or Husee established as "Butler of England," to Lady Lisle at Calais: and "Edward Corbet" installed in the same service. John Husee writes to tell Lady Lisle that he has "received her letter by Corbet, and with the £4 which he has delivered to Basset, who is now, lauded be GOD, merry and in good health at Lincoln's Inn."

J. Gairdner
Letters Papers
Hen. VIII.
Vol. X p. 3000.

We will continue to quote further from these papers as they may furnish us with details of our Edward Corbet. The next extract to quote is in July 1536. "Thomas Warley," "spear of Calais," writes to Lady Lisle "that he would be glad to see Lady Lisle in these parts for a season, because he thinks it would be profitable," adding that "Mr. Lovell, Palmer, (Edward) Corbet, himself, Cranwell, Snowden, Clifford, Pykering, London, and other spears, would come to Dover and wait on her to Court." Edward Corbet next writes himself to Lady Lisle. "I send enclosed Mrs Margery Horseman's letter. She desired me to inform your Ladyship that the King and Queen take their journey to Dover on the 10th inst. . . . She thinks it would please her Grace if your ladyship would come thither. I and Warley will be there to wait upon your ladyship in your livery." In the following October, the above letter having been despatched in July, John Husee writes to Lord Lisle, "Deputy of Calais, Vice Admiral of England":—"Corbet delivered the boar's head and Sturgeon to the King as my Lady desired."

July 1536.
Vol. XI. p. 12.

p. 13.

The next extract is a letter from a Merchant in London, and "Corbet's" good offices are again engaged. "Dec: 14 1536 London, William Lok, mercer, to Lord Lisle" "Sends by the Bearer Mr Corbet, a stomacher of cloth of gold for my Lady. I I pray Jesu, if it be his pleasure, it may cover a young Plantagenet, as I do understand by divers is very well forward, of which I am very glad."

p. 228.

In October of the following year Bishop Roland Lee writes to Cromwell "In favour of the bearer Mr. Corbet of Legh." Will this be the young John Corbet of earlier extracts? John

Vol. XII.
pp. 325, 317.

Husee, writing to Lord Lisle, says :—"The Prince was christened on Sunday last at 12 o'clock . . . Corbet was there, who will give you particulars at his return." He writes the same day to Lady Lisle telling her that "The Prince was christened on Sunday last . . . Corbet can inform you of the ceremonies at the christening, for he stood by and saw them." John Husee writes again on the 21st October to Lady Lisle to tell her "that her hawk was very well accepted," and "that Corbet will tell you all other news." Again, on December 1 of the same year, he says, when writing to Lady Lisle, "I met Mr Corbet at Gravesend who has bought a coffer for each of your ladyship's daughters, and a petticoat for Mrs Katherine. He says she must have a new chamlet gown, and will need no other all the winter."

1537.

P. 412.

Vol. XII.

P. 304.

Oct. 1537.

See Chap XIII.

p. 258. These

two John

Corbets are

members of the

Norfolk family.

1538.

The previous October we get a glimpse of the religious unrest prevailing, in a notice concerning some words of one called Nycolas. "The accusation of Nycolas Came by Robert Browne of Norwyche, jailer of the castle there, before Sir John Shelton, knight, and Robert Holdich." "That the said Came, being at St Faythes fair, on Sunday the 7th Oct: being asked when the melter of leede shuld come thyder to melte the leede of the Abby church, there, answered 'Noo the church shall stonde, Rome shall uppe ageyne, and purgatorie is founde.' For these words he was taken before the John Corbets, father and son, and by them remitted to Mr Hare or some other justice."

In January of the coming year, 1538, "Elynor Countesse of Rutland" writes to Lady Lisle telling her that Lord Rutland had spoken to Lady Lisle's servant Corbet about having the next vacant room in Calais for a servant of his.

The following March we find John Husee writing to Lord Lisle informing him that "I have received your sundry letters and made suit for your licence to come over, whereunto my lord Privy Seal (Cromwell) would give no ear. . . . I trust in a day or two to know the bottom of his mind and advertise you by Corbet." And again on the 6th, John Husee writes to Lady Lisle, "What woman Mrs Reynolds will bring with her I know not . . . you will learn further by Corbet." He also sends two tokens to Lady Lisle by Corbet, from Anne Basset, Lady Lisle's eldest daughter.

Vol. XIII,

P. 541.

In July 1538 Edward Corbet writes to Lord Lisle telling him that he has delivered his letter to "my Lord Privy Seal (Cromwell) at Oking." "He asked me where the Preacher was. I replied that I had left him with my lord of Canterbury at Lambeth, which he said was well. . . . My Lord says he hopes to see 'Lisle' at Dover when the King come there. . . . I saw my Lord had delight to hear me speak, and then showed how quietly you lived among a sort there."

P. 44.

In August of this same year there is a curious little entry from a letter to Lady Lisle from John Husee, curious since we find it among this collection of State papers. "I send your treacle by Mr Corbet." No days for "treacle," however, were at hand, only sore and anxious ones, to culminate in charges of treason and arrest. Lord Lisle foresees the coming storm and writes to Cromwell in the same year, "I am in such a case as I think none in my room have ever been. Some of my retinue, though they are under my governance as the King's deputy, set not by it."

p. 552.

Conspiracies, accusations, trials were rife, and before this year was out it is evident that the mists of suspicion were drawing very alarmingly near to the Lisles and all concerned and connected with them or supposed to be so. In the November of this year 1538 an inventory is recorded or alluded to in these Papers of "The Countess of Salisbury's goods and Servants." "The Inventory was made 15th Nov: 30 Hen: VIIIth by the lord Admiral, and Bishop of Ely." The names of her servants: "The Lady Margaret Stafford, Mrs Wenefred . . . Harry Corbet found of alms; and the fool. Total 72."

P. 347.

Lord Lisle was supposed to be implicated in a plot to deliver Calais into the Pope's hands through Cardinal de la Pole, and the accusations affected a wide circle, among them the trusty Edward Corbet. Poor Lord Lisle's fate was very sad, and his wife's also; the former, though declared innocent in 1542, died in the Tower from the agitation caused by his arrest; and his poor wife, who was Honor Greville, widow of Sir John Basset, became insane immediately after her husband's arrest. Edward did not shake himself free of suspicion, and suffered for his friendship with Lord Lisle's Chaplain, one Gregory Botolph. A bill of sale took place of the latter's effects to Edward Corbet and Clement Phylpot, servants of Lord Lisle, of the Chaplain's "raiment, bedding and books," and he writes to Edward Corbet to beg that he will have his gear sent to "Burborow" and to excuse his swift departure, etc.

Vol. XV.

P. 143.

On the 8th April 1540 we read of a "declaration of me, Clement Phylpot, of words spoken to me by Sir Gregory Botolph, priest, at Borboroughe 8 April. Met by the Nunnery Gate without Borboroughe and Sir Gregory expressed great joy at meeting him. . . . Sir Gregory said, 'I shall get the town of Calais into the hands of the Pope and Cardinal Pole: this was the matter that I

went to Rome for," etc. "At his leaving, the Pope gave him 200 Crowns. . . . He returned to Calais 8 days before Easter. . . . When I returned to Calais he was gone, but had left word with Wolker, Corbet, and Harberde, my lord's servants, for me to come and speak with him at Borbrouge. . . . As touching these 10 Crowns for the making of the three rings. . . . I asked Corbet of the same and he showed me that he had the Crowns. . . . I had three of those Crowns of Corbet, and as GOD knoweth I never thought to make ring of them. . . . And the same day that I came to Calais out of England, Corbet had been at Borbrouge or Graveling with Sir Gregory."

Further depositions: "Sir Gregory had left 10 Crowns with Corbet to make three rings, for Castyl, Corbet and myself, which we should wear and keep for his sake. . . . I asked Sir Gregory wherefore he would give Corbet and Castyl their rings. Because he said, he found them loving unto him." p. 201.

Further examination: "Item Sir Gregory told him he had left 10 Crowns with Corbet to make three rings, on which he would have the letters P for Philpot, C. for Corbet and B for Botolph." p. 202.

The Parish Priest, Sir Edmund Bryndeholme, priest of Our Lady Church in Calais, was also examined and asked whom he knew to be "of trusty familiarity with Sir Gregory." "Thinks Corbet and Philpot were most of his familiarity."

From the "Acts 31 Hen. VIII Cap. 49" we learn "The King's pardon.—Exception is made of heretical opinions touching the Sacrament, treason, murder, and some other crimes." "It is not to be extended to the following persons. Cromwell, Margaret Countess of Salisbury, Arthur Lord Lisle, and Honor his wife, Leonard Lord Gray . . . Edward Corbet now prisoner, John Browne his servant." Lord Lisle escaped the headsman, for I believe that his arrest so agitated him that he died from the agitation, and his wife Honor became insane.

Thomas—as I judge, elder brother of this Edward Corbet whose disastrous imprisonment has just been related in the previous page—succeeded his father in 1518. It may be remembered that his mother's maiden name was Poyner, a daughter of Thomas Poyner of Besloe, in the Parish of Wroxeter: there had been one or two other marriage connections between Corbets and Poyners. Thomas, the eldest son, took his father's place in 1518. He married Jane, a daughter of John Burton of Longnorlee, as it was then called. In Sir Richard Corbet's paper this Thomas is styled "of Longnor." Longnor as a Manor seems to have been divided between several owners in early times, and to have been bought and sold or given in dower by the respective owners as occasion served. Fulke Corbet of Wattlesboro' and Morton-Corbet owned a portion of the Manor in the time of the third Edward; the Le Stranges also, later the Comptons or Cromptons; but at last the greater part of the large Manor became Thomas Corbet's. Jane Burton of Longnorlee, whom he married, was his first cousin; for Elizabeth Poyner, Jane Burton's mother, and Matilda Poyner, the mother of her husband Thomas Corbet, were sisters.

I find a very curious custom alluded to by Owen and Blakeway in their history in connection with the Burton family. It is a strange illustration of the thoughts and feelings which governed the lives of the ancestors of these days. Blakeway refers to "Anchorets," and says, "It was the first name given to Monks because they lived in little cells alone," and continues, "It afterwards came to signify persons, generally females, who were enclosed or shut up in perpetual seclusion at their own request" and "caused themselves to be shut up near a Church, in a small cell, from which they could hear the Office, and in which they were furnished from without with every thing necessary to their subsistence." "In the Episcopal Registers of Lichfield is a Precept dated 6th Calends of February 1310, addressed by Walter de Langton, then Bishop, to his beloved daughter Emma Sprengnose, in which, understanding the pious purpose of her devotion; that she, inspired by the Divine Spirit, has always affected from her childhood and still affects, to serve GOD Almighty in the solitary life of an Anchoret, and having enquired into her life and conversation, and found them proper for the same, he admits her to be an Anchoret in the houses of the cemetery of St George's Chapel of Salop, and he commands the Archdeacon of Salop, or the Dean of St Chad, to enclose her." Blakeway then goes on to say, "One of the daughters of John Burton of Longnor who lived in the reign of Henry VIIIth, is called in the family pedigree Ankakoka Monialis juxta Salop." This name, it is presumed, is unknown to the female nomenclature of any country, and the probability is that Miss Burton was an Anchoret, or as they were so often called an Anker. If this be so, this young lady who thus condemned herself to so dreadful a life would be another sister of Jane Burton, the wife of Thomas Corbet.

Sir Richard's paper informs us that Thomas settled all his lands on his eldest son Edward and his wife Catherine Lea on their marriage, with the exception of Betton Strange, one half of which

Owen and
Blakeway
Hist. Shrews-
bury, Vol. I.
p. 315n.

Blakeway
MSS.
Salop 5, fo. 176.

he sold 36 Hen. VIII ; this date tallies with the misfortune to his brother Edward. The remainder was sold in 1551-4 by himself and Will. Acton of Aldenham to John Mackworth, Bailiff, in 1554, they being heirs-general of the Le Strange family who owned Betton Strange. Sir Richard's paper describes him as living in 1550, and in fact this would be about the date of the settlement of lands we have referred to.

Edward Corbet, the husband of Catherine Lea, succeeded his father as Edward of Longnor. His wife Catherine dying and leaving him childless, he married a second time, Maria daughter of Edward Banester. The same paper also informs us that he married a third time, in 1569, Anne, the daughter of Roger Browne of Pershore and widow respectively of Sir Richard Haughton and of William Talbot of Shiffnal. Edward Corbet himself died without heir in 1608, and is buried at Conover. He was succeeded by his younger brother Thomas. The two daughters of this generation married into well-known families. Maria married one of the Brookes, and Margaret married Roger Puleston of Emral, Co. Flint. Shropshire can boast many celebrities among her sons : one is connected with Conover—Purcel—the father of English music.

Duke states that the Thomas Corbet, who succeeded his brother Edward, appears to have been in possession of all the Cromptons' land in Longnor in 1610, when he had "Livery of his lands." He married another "Catherine" (I quote from Richard's paper). She was "Filia Lisle" or Lisle "de Mocksal et relicta Brown." Their eldest son, again an Edward, was living 3rd James. Again the eldest son died without heir and was succeeded by his younger brother Thomas.

The authority of the Paper tells us that this Thomas was born in 1565, and that in 1588 he married Jane Moreton, daughter and co-heir of Robert Moreton of Haughton near Shiffnal. With this statement the valuable Paper preserved by Blakeway ends.

The Moretons had considerable landed property near Shiffnal, notably at Haughton, a property which they had owned for many generations.

About six years after his marriage we find Thomas Corbet in the retinue of the famous Earl of Essex : and this is indeed most probable, for there being at that time but little prospect of his succeeding as head of the House of Longnor, he was wise to make use of the many friends at Court he might reasonably aspire to have. His wife too would probably have had influence with the Talbots of Shiffnal, her late husband's family. Leicester himself was very popular amongst the Burgesses of Shrewsbury. He was stepfather to the young Lord Essex, and we may well conjecture that the young Thomas Corbet, glad to make a name and, he would hope, fortune, would readily sail with Essex and cross the main. The expedition on this occasion was to take help to Henri Quatre of France, whose fortunes were then at a very low ebb. The Shrewsbury Burgesses took pride in receiving their visitors of fame in a rich and suitable manner. Thus at a cost of 3s. 8d. (money having then a very different value to our day) "Mr Thomas Corbet, the lord of Essex man," was regaled with "wyne and sugar" in company with some followers of Justice Shuttleworth's.

As all know, Lord Essex's power ended fatally in a few years. Blakeway thus relates how the news of the Earl's unfortunate conspiracy was received in Shrewsbury. "Just after (the beginning of February 1600-1) occurred the fatal rising of the Earl of Essex, the victim of his political rivals, and of his own indiscretion. . . . He had for some time been suspected of a design against the government, and though the ministers of Elizabeth could scarcely apprehend a popular commotion in his favour, yet it was their business to alarm, if they could, their hitherto undaunted mistress, who yet regarded her fallen favourite with more indulgence than was at all agreeable to them, Accordingly certificates were issued to all Sheriffs, Bayliffs, and other officers, all England over. They came to Shrewsbury on the 10th Feb." (Blakeway now quotes from the old Town Chronicle) "with great charge, in her Majesty's name, for diligent watch and ward, and to keep their Town and liberties in good order and peace, and to suppress all tumults, unlawful assemblies, and rebellions that might happen." "On the 8th of the month the Earl actually took up arms, and imprisoned the Lord Keeper and others of the Council ; the Proclamation concerning which reached Shrewsbury on the 15th." Our chronicler is very particular in noting every step of this extraordinary transaction down to his execution on the 25th, "when he took his death most patiently and died most faithfully and constantly, and very miracously to all people there" ; and, says Blakeway, "he mentions a fact of some interest, which none of our historians or annalists, not even the circumstantial Stow, has noticed : that on the 14th Feb., which was five days before the trial, the Earl's sonn and heire kneelyd before the Queen's Majestie, beinge his godmother, as concerning the Earle his Father : who gave hym comfortable words, and upon good hope thereof he departed." "Little," continues Blakeway, "could she anticipate that

Duke,
Antiquities
Shrop.

Owen and
Blakeway
Hist. Shrews-
bury, Vol. I.
p. 402.

within forty years this interesting child, now of eight years, was destined to overthrow, or at least contribute mainly to the subversion of that throne which she filled with so much ability."

Blakeway gives us a few words on the Queen's last illness. It was "intimated to her subjects by orders sent March 17th to the several cities and towns for a general watch to be warily kept both night and day, which is observyd in thys towne accordingly: GOD save the Queen's Majestie Amen." Seven days after this she expired. Our chronicler writes "whose sowle no doubt is received into Abraham's bosom. Amen." "On the 27th March, being Sunday, King James was proclaimed here in the afternoon, by the Bailiffs and Aldermen in their scarlet gowns, with the worshipful and the rest of the commons, with sownde of trompets and droomes, worthly, and joyfully, in castinge up their hands, and shakinge of hatts and capps, in sainge GOD save King James Amen: and the daye following the Sheriffe, whose name was Justice Kinastone with the Justices and gentylls of the Shire, came to Shrewsbury with their great horses, and proclaymyd there with sownde of troompet in like solemn manner." The chronicler closes his records very shortly after these announcements, the last incident being of the arrival of the Council of the Marches. "The seale," he says, "came four days before: and they continued the term and vacant tyme till the 7th October, and so departed to Ludlowe with seale and all." The Lord President of the time was Ralph the third lord Ever or Eure. Leland writes the name Yevers. Was not this perhaps the usual pronunciation? The Town makes a record of how he shall be received, and "agreed that my lord President of the Council of the Marches shall be entertayned in this sorte: viz Mr Bailiffs, the aldermen, and the common council, shall attende to meete him at his cominge, in their beste sutytes, next to their robes of scarlett; and the wardens of companies likewise in their best gownes: and that the Bailiffs and six men shall bestowe such charges as they thincke best for entertainment of my Lord President, his Lady, and the rest of the Council." They also "agreed that a gratuteye not exceeding twenty nobles, be bestowed on the Right Honourable the Lord President, if it please him to keepe Lent term next in this towne, or els not." Money accounts must have been fairly difficult to render in these days, for Blakeway informs us that the noble was a gold coin, which passed for 6s. 8d. when first minted, and always considered so in accounts, but that the coin itself was variously current at ten and twelve shillings! Shrewsbury suffered in the following year from that terrible scourge the plague, and Bridgnorth sent them help. Nevertheless it was judged well to make special provision against infection and for the sufferers, and an order from the Magistrates of the Shire, assembled at Battlefield, provided that there should "furthwith be leyved out of every allotment within five miles of the uttermost liberties of the towne of Shrewsbury the some of $\text{£}6$ out of an entire allotment, and soe p'ortionably out of every part of each allotment, as shall be within the distance aforesaid, for every moneth, till further order shal be herein taken, towards the present releife of the poore and infected persons within the towne and lib'ties of Shrewsbury." The signatories were Richard Herbert, John Corbet of Stoke (he had just been made a Baronet, and therefore signed before the head of the Family), Andrew Corbett, Tym. Turneur, Fran. Charleton, Walt. Barker, Tho. Ottley, Edw. Jones, Rich. Lyster, Tho. Corbett (of Longnor), Rich. Prince.

Owen and
Blakeway
Hist. Shrews-
bury, Vol. I.
p. 405.

The troubles of the Civil Wars were gathering with ominous speed and violence. They were felt at Bridgnorth as well as at Shrewsbury: and as would be expected of the Royal Borough, Bridgnorth warmly espoused the cause of their legitimate sovereign King Charles, and with all their hereditary loyalty. Preparations for hostilities were made everywhere in the kingdom. In 1642 the town had to be placed in a reasonable state of defence,—the Castle had before this been sold by the Crown to the Whitmore family.

There are some interesting records in the possession of the Corporation, one of which runs: "At a Common Hall in the said towne the XXVith day of August A. R. Caroli Angl. etc. XVIIIo Ao Dni. 1642. John Harryson and Robert Richard, Gents, being Bailiffs." "Concerning the makinge of a draw Bridge over Severn in Bridgenorth aforesaid, and other things for the defence of the saide towne, upon a warrant from John Weld Esqr: High Sheriff of this County of Salop in respect of the extreme danger which is now come neare unto us." "It is agreed . . . that for the present necessity, Posts and Chaines shall be made at the two ends of the Low Towne . . . and also that the Gates of the said town shall be repayed, and made stronge with chaines and otherwise, . . ."

Hist.
Bridgnorth,
Bellet.

Before this date and very early in the year the Bailiffs had initiated another means of defence. They had petitioned Thomas Corbett, Esqr., of Longnor, to exercise the young men of the town and the immediate neighbourhood in the practice of arms and military tactics, so that they might

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

be ready to repel any unexpected attack by the rebel forces. The following letter was sent on the occasion to the Governor of Shrewsbury by Thomas Corbet :—

" Noble Sir,

1642.

" The Bayliffs of Bridgnorth, in behalf of the town, having been importunate with me to take upon me the exercising of the young men in this town, and others in the country neare adjoining, for the defence of the towne upon any needfull design, I have been persuaded by them to take the same upon me ; and they having shewn me a letter which they intend to present unto the High Sheriff for a warrant unto me, in that behalf, I pray you be pleased to consider thereto, and impart your advice unto me, and further Mr. Sheriff's directions therein, as you in your wisdom shall think most convenient, and you will oblige

" Your respective kinsman

and friend who truly

Honoureth you

(Signed) THOS. CORBETT.

" Bridgnorth 5 Feb. 1642

" To my noble friend and kinsman Sir Francis Ottly knight at Shrewsbury House."

I have quoted the above details of Bridgnorth from Mr. Bellet's History of that town : and have also one or two rather quaint notes taken from the Bridgnorth town books themselves, which show the alarm of the day :—

" 1642 From the Common Hall Book, Bridgnorth." " Agreed that Mr. — Mr Richard Crosswell Mr. — Mr. Jno Gimson, Mr. Jas Sadler, Mr. Lancelot Billingsley, Mr. Wm Bayley, Mr. Geo Prince, Mr. Jno Chetwynd, Mr. Jno Lewis, Mr. Thos Milner, Mr. Rich. Cook, Mr. Thos. Talbot, Mr. Thos. Dudley, Mr. Rich. Southerne, Mr. Hen. Brown, Mr. Jno Synge, Mr. Francis Brown, Mr. Robt. — Mr. W Bradly, William Baker in care of the Company of the 24 Aldermen of this town, and John Bromley Esqre, Thos. Corbet Gent. John Edwards Gent, Wm. Gravenor Gent, John Smith Gent, John Walker Gent, Rich. Synge, Thos Atcherly, Jno Synge, Rowland Lee, Thomas Barne, Robert Levington, Thos. Glover, Robt. Reynolds, Gent, Rich. Broadfield, Symon Beauchamp, Geo. Bushopp, John Moreton, Royland Haynes shall ward in the day, and two of them ward in the night and they shall be called Captains and Commanders of the said watch to order and direct the said watch and ward of this town for ye safety thereof as they shall think, and that said watch has to be made and shall be from 6 o'clock in the evening till 6 o'clock in the morning, and from 6 o'clock of the morning till 6 of the clock in the evening—and then the said watch and ward shall not open a book until the next watch shall be changed and shall have come to relieve them and this ordering shall be soe disposed that the aged people be not oppressed by watching in the cold nights whose bodies are not able to endure the same, nor that any dissensions bestirreth any of the watch for any difference that may happen. But that the Bayliffs be made first acquainted through ; that they may verifie what they find, as they upon learning the differences shall find convenient, and it is appointed that 8 men shall watch in the night and 6 men in the day for the defence and looking too of the said Towne."

In the cover of the Common Hall Book of a hundred years later two rather quaint receipts for a coughing horse are to be found, and will no doubt be of interest to some sporting member of so noted sport-loving a family as the Family of Corbet :—

(1) " Take of anny seed, Liquorich Powder, Elicampane, Diaponte, and turmerick, of each one ounce and a half, Best sweet oyl two ounces, oyl of aniseed half an ounce, of honey sufficient quantity to make two Balls."

(2) " Horoc spice, liquorch powder, Flower of Brimstone, of each one Penny worth, oyl of aniseed two Penny worth to be given every other day in a Ball. The horse is to fast at night before it is given."

The town of Bridgnorth considered it necessary for their safety to introduce a few horse-soldiers into the town in the beginning of the year 1643-4. Towards the charge of the nine dragoons Mr. Thomas Corbet of Longnor contributed a horse and rider ; and we are further told that one Thomas Glover undertook to provide two horses, saddles and bridles, at 1s. a day for each horse. Several other persons, I believe, furnished a horse each, with sword and bandolier.

The following year, 1644, was very disastrous to the Royal cause, and we must leave a closer account of the siege of Bridgnorth Castle to a later chapter, it being more closely connected with another Branch of the Family. Before closing my copy of Mr. Bellet's history of Bridgnorth let me quote his remarks on the unfortunate King whom so many deeply loved and for whom so many fought and suffered deeply. He quartered for the night at Bridgnorth on October 12th,



Sir Edward Corbett, 1st Bart.
of Longnor



His Wife, Lady Corbett, née Margaret
Watties, of Burway and Leighton



Longnor Hall

and Clarendon observes "there was a rendezvous of the whole army." "Here the King stayed three days: and I am one of those who feel, that our town and Castle were never so honoured by a royal visit as on this occasion. Many of the Monarchs of England have entered the portals of our Castle and rested within its walls—Normans, Plantagenets, Lancastrians—but to none of them, in my mind, attaches the same deep interest, to none is due the same tribute of veneration, as to this unhappy monarch of the House of Stuart. Not only was he by far the most accomplished Prince that ever sat on the English throne, and endowed with considerable powers; . . . but he was distinguished in all the relations of private life by the highest moral principle: by a purity, fidelity, and love which are rarely seen in Kings' Courts; and these virtues in him were combined with a deep-seated reverence for religion. In public life he was not blameless, far from it. He was weak and unstable, which justly exposed him to the charge of inconstancy, and by his enemies, of insincerity. . . . He was refined in the furnace of affliction . . . so that, as even his enemies allow," he met his end with "a calm, heroic fortitude . . . a gentleness and forgiving love seldom surpassed." "No memorial, then, connected with our Castle, is to me of equal interest to that of its having been occasionally the residence of Charles I. It was on one of these visits that he termed our Castle Walk, . . . the finest in his dominions."

Hist. of
Bridgnorth,
Bellet.

We can easily picture him ". . . taking his walk along this terrace, . . . each step . . . bringing into view some new and striking object—the bold front of the High Rock—the wooded declivities of Apley,—the graceful winding of the Severn with its margin of green and the sloping uplands on either side of it."

The scene thus pleasantly described is instinct with Corbet memories, from the very earliest days of the Family, when the noble Castle was so ably defended by Roger Fitz-Corbet, and onward to the tragic days against which we now find the town striving to arm itself, and I must be pardoned for introducing so long a quotation. It is recorded of Thomas Corbet that he had contributed £25 towards the defence of the country during the Spanish menace. His younger brother Edward, who died without issue, did the same.

Thomas Corbet of Longnor's eldest son Edward was entered as Member of the Inner Temple in 1617. The entry styles him "of Longnor and Leighton," and records "that he was the eldest son and heir of Thos. of Longnor, Salop. He was created a Baronet 1642—Sheriff 1651—died 1653."

Thomas Corbet and his wife, Jane Moreton, had a large family; seven sons and three daughters is the tale. The other six sons were Thomas, Richard, Robert, George, Roger and Humphrey. Of these six only two appear to have married, Robert and Roger. Robert settled in London and was known as a goldsmith; a calling of high repute in those days, when even kings did not disdain to seek their services. He married Etheldreda Drury. The other son, Roger, was entered at Gray's Inn in 1620 as "Roger Corbett son of Thomas of Longnor." His wife was Catherine Barnesly; and he was founder of a Branch found at the Blacklands and Bobbington, and finally at the Bourne Place and Sittingbourne, Kent, during some generations. The daughters were: Anne, who married one of the Whitmore family of Claverly; they lived in a delightful Manor House called Ludstone. Sara was probably unmarried, and Ursula married a Sontley. Thomas the father lived to see his eldest son Edward created a Baronet. He died in 1645. His widow Jane Moreton survived both him and her eldest son, the Baronet. Duke states that she was jointured in the old Mansion House which in his day, he says, stood near to the present Chapel.

Sir Edward Corbett (but whether the family spelt their name at this time with one "t" or two "t's" I have no evidence; I may, however, remark that I have invariably spelt names as written in any paragraph I may be quoting) married Margaret Watties of Burway and Leighton. He was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1651. I believe he was like his father, ever a staunch and devoted Royalist. Sir Edward's father and mother-in-law are both buried at Ludlow in the Church of St. Lawrence. Sir Edward Corbett is buried at Conover; he died in 1653, outliving his eldest son by only a few months. Like his father, he had a very numerous family: six sons and three daughters; and again only two of these six sons left descendants, Edward the eldest and Watties the youngest. The names of the other sons are Thomas, Francis, Richard, and Charles. Edward the eldest, as already noted, predeceased his father. He married Anne, a daughter of Lord Newport. They were married at High Ercall in the August of 1635, and their eldest son was baptised there in September, 1640. Edward was entered at Gray's Inn in 1636, the year after his marriage, as son and heir of Edward of Longnor, Salop, Esqr.; and Thomas, his next brother, is entered at Gray's Inn in 1642, as "second son of Edward of Leighton, Co. Montgomery." The entry must

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

have been made before the creation of the Baronety. The Baronet's three daughters were Martha, Margaret, and Mary, who died young. Margaret became the wife of John Matthews of Trefnany.

The only other son who married, besides the eldest, was Watties, and as his descendants eventually inherited the Baronety, his marriage must be noted. He married Margaret Weaver, a Herefordshire lady; and is described as of Elton, Herefordshire. He left one son (recorded in the Pedigree), Thomas, of Fleet Street, London, who died in 1741, leaving a son Charles, a well-known bookseller in London. Watties died in 1689, and is buried at Leebootswood.

We must revert now to his elder brother Edward of Leighton. He became Sheriff of Montgomeryshire in 1652, just one year before his death. He predeceased his father by a few months, though his mother outlived him, and seems only to have left a son and heir, Richard, and who indeed succeeded him in the family honours as second Baronet. Anne Newport outlived her husband many years.

The second Baronet married Victoria Uvedale, the daughter of Sir William Uvedale of Wickham, Hampshire. They had a large family, four sons and six daughters; no doubt some died in their youth, and only his eldest son Uvedale married. Sir Richard, the second Baronet, died in 1682. His other sons were Richard, Thomas, and an Edward who died in youth. His daughters were Jane, Diana, Victoria, Margaret, Anne, and Lucy. Diana married Thomas Brooke, Victoria married Sir Charles Lloyd.

Let us note down the incidents of Sir Uvedale's life, the third Baronet. He was baptised at Frodesley in 1667. In 1693 he married Mildred, a daughter of the then Earl of Salisbury. They had four sons and one daughter: not one of whom I find married. The four sons were Sir Richard, the eldest, who succeeded his father as fourth Baronet; Edward, Thomas and Francis. Sir Uvedale is buried at Leebootswood, and died in 1701.

Sir Richard his son interested himself much in politics. He was born in 1696, and was frequently returned to Parliament by Shrewsbury as its representative. His brothers' names have been already given. I find Sir Richard represented Shrewsbury for as many as thirty years. His mother, the Lady Mildred, lived till 1727. She married secondly Sir William Hotham. Sir Richard died at Longnor, unmarried, in 1774. He had attained the age of seventy-eight.

We must speak of his only sister Elizabeth. She mixed a good deal in the literary world, and died in Paris; she is, however, buried in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, where there is a monument to her memory. Amongst her many literary friends was Pope, who wrote some touching lines commemorative of their friendship, and his esteem for it.

After Sir Richard Corbett's death, there being no direct heir, the Baronety devolved upon the living heir of the first Baronet Edward. This was Charles, a well-known bookseller of Fleet Street, great-grandson of Watties of Elton, the first Baronet's youngest son.

The Corbetts of Longnor had multiplied and grown both in fortune and power since the founding of their House at Longnor, that is to say as regards the descendants of the eldest and elder sons; but Watties and his descendants had not been so favoured. Watties himself, indeed, found life a struggle, and his descendants were not more fortunate. Then the unexpected happened, and the Baronety fell into the hands of Watties' great-grandson. What might then have been of good augury proved as gall, for the late Sir Richard was found to have made a lengthy codicil to his will, whereby he left everything possible to a descendant of Watties Corbet in the female line called Flint. John Flint took the name of Corbet with the Longnor estates. He left no male heir, and his sister Diana Flint, who had married Joseph Plymley, inherited the estates. Their son Joseph Plymley took the name and arms of Corbet, we are informed, in 1804. He was Archdeacon of Salop, and died in 1930, having married twice. I have given the fortunes of this new family called "Corbett of Longnor" in the Pedigree drawn up for it.

Sir Charles Corbet, the new Baronet, died in great poverty in 1808. A suitable funeral was accorded him by the Stationers' Company, to which he belonged; but even here misfortune appeared, and as the solemn rites were proceeding the eldest son Thomas, who was taking his share in them, died suddenly. The ceremonies were perforce interrupted, and it was thought best that father and son should lie in the same grave. This was accordingly arranged for, and they rest in the same grave in the churchyard of St. Anne's, Soho, under rather a handsome sort of altar-tomb.

Burke in his "Extinct Baronetcies" speaks of another son Richard. The Baronety naturally devolved on him, but he seems never to have claimed it, having no means. He seems to have served in the East India Company's service and to have died in 1812, possibly in India. The family home was in Old Compton Street.



Sir Uvedale Corbett, 3rd Bart. of Longnor



Mildred Lady Corbett, his Wife, dau. of Earl of Salisbury



Sir Richard Corbett, 4th Bart. of Longnor



Sir Richard Corbett, 2nd Bart. of Longnor

Miss Elizabeth Corbett

The present Mansion of Longnor was built by the first Sir Richard Corbett of Longnor.

Thus tragically ends our history of the great and powerful half of the Family of Corbet who were Barons of Caus till the male line failed, causing alienation of lands; then came the rise of the Houses of their younger descendants, to fall and become absorbed again and yet again as the male line failed, till only two distinct Houses remained—that of Leigh, to become the wealthier House of Sundorne, but to lose the male line; and subsequently that of Longnor. We must reluctantly close the page on both. For the male line is lost—and in both.

Change and innovation confront us through these times on all hands: even the title of Baronet was an innovation—a novelty. And what vast changes must we record in the reigns of the Tudor Sovereigns through the early years of the House of Longnor! The new Learning had come—and to stay—and with it its mighty handmaiden and secret agent—"Printing"—Caxton had brought the marvel and had found protection in high places and prospered. The Reformed Religion crept in also and gathered strength in spite of many fires kindled at Smithfield!

Let us see how the Town of Shrewsbury, with which the Family of Corbet have always been so closely connected, held itself amidst these divers changes.

Shrewsbury accepted not only the spirit of the new Learning but as well the spirit of the great Reform of Religion, and began in earnest to take heed for herself thereon, so soon as she received the news of the death of Henry VIII. Some Reforms had even taken place during his lifetime or been attempted. Shrewsbury was one of the towns ordained to receive a suffragan Bishop. One only, however, is noted in the History—Lewis Thomas, instituted by Cranmer. We should also note the Parliament of that year, 1534-5, for it was in this Parliament, assembled after Prorogation, that the power of the Pope was annihilated in England. The names of the Burgesses of Shrewsbury, or Members of Parliament as we should now call them, who contributed to so good an achievement deserve to be recorded. They were Robert Dudley and Adam Mitton. Another occurrence worthy of note too concerning Shrewsbury is that "great brass ordnance, such as canon and culverin, were this year first cast in England by John Owen."

Many efforts are now being made to endow Shrewsbury with a Bishop. We record with interest, therefore, that at one moment it was to have been endowed with the revenues of the Abbey, and arrangements were so nearly matured that the Bishop was chosen, and actually nominated—John Bouchier, Abbot of Leicester. No further advance, however, than this seems to have taken place.

The death of Henry was the signal for the commencement of the Reformation in Shrewsbury. "This year," says the MSS. chronicle, "in Adam Myttoon and Roger Pope's time, the picture of our ladye owt of St Mary's and the picture of Mary Mawdelen, and the picture of St Chadde's owt of St Chadd's church, were all three burnyd in the Market Place before the month of May," when the new government issued its instructions. Curates also were ordered to take down such images as were abused by pilgrimages or offerings made to them. Would that the casting down of images and the burning of pictures had sufficed in the coming years to appease the unrest of men's minds and the greed for power till all should be settled once more!

The Register of Much Wenlock contains the following most interesting statement:—"Note that upon ye 26 daye of June 1559 was service celebrated firste in ye English tongue anno primo Elizabethæ." This brought at least some measure of peace and tolerance, as it must have also done understanding.

Thomas Corbet, the father of the first Baronet of Longnor, gave £25 for the defence of the country at the time of the great Spanish menace. We learn, too, that on September 8th "The towne of Shroesberie was musteryd, and Mr. Leghton" (afterwards Sir Edward Leighton of Wattlesborough) "and 24 apoyntid: and they having charge to apere upon Thursday following at Atcham, weare all the rest of the souldiars of the shyre mett before their apoyntid captens; and there being, were chosen owt of the said 24, twelve able and sufficient persons and there prest" (enlisted) "money delyverid them, havinge in charge to be ready at an owres warning, and soo departed every man hoom." The Earl of Leicester had paid a visit to Shrewsbury just before this and had had a magnificent reception. This had no doubt given the citizens a renewed sense of their importance, and thus in future no foreigner it was ordered was to be admitted Burgess under a payment of £10.

We cannot fail to observe the power that learning and knowledge were bringing to every calling in life. The Corbet Family were very powerfully influenced. We note how their young men hastened to enrol themselves at the Inns of Court. The towns began to feel the importance of being

Owen and
Blakeway
Hist. Shrews-
bury, Vol. I.

represented in the great Council of the Nation by delegates commanding knowledge and speech, and many seem to have followed the law and rose into fame.

Let us take examples at random as connected with Shrewsbury. Thomas Owen, for instance. He founded the family who settled at Condover. He was made Queen's serjeant in 1593 and a judge the year following, and is commemorated by a monument in Westminster Abbey. Thomas Harries, again, was admitted to Shrewsbury School in 1565 and became a serjeant in 1589. These callings led to wealth, evidently, for he was made a Baronet in 1624 and purchased Tong Castle. We may mention our own Reginald Corbet of Moreton-Corbet. He was Recorder of Shrewsbury and greatly instrumental in the founding of the Grammar School. He was founder of the Branch of the Corbets of Adderley and Stoke. His relation, too, Richard Barker, may be mentioned. This latter was grandson of one of the sisters of Sir Rowland Hill, the first Protestant Lord Mayor of London. He too was entered at Gray's Inn, though he preferred confining his practice to his own neighbourhood. He was also Recorder of Shrewsbury, and I believe lived in the Monks Foregate. Owen, Barker, and Harris were the three candidates for the Parliament in this year 1584, and the manner of their election is amusing. We read "being three of them in choyse, and not lawfully to be judged whiche two of them shoulde bee, whose names were Master Thomas Owen, Mr Richard Barker, and Mr Harris, they" (the electing Burgesses) "were commanded to go through the door by pole, and their voyces wrytten: and so there was upon Owen's syde 366 voices, Upon Barker's syde 299 and upon Harries syde 176, so that Owen and Barker were made by most election, burgesis of the Parliament."

The town of Shrewsbury, and as typical of its County also, may certainly be said to have remained true to its acceptance of the spirit of the great reform of religion, as is testified by extracts from its MS. Chronicle. "This yeare 1573 and about the end of October, there cam to Shrewsbury the lord Presydent, with the Bysshopp of Coventrie and Lytchefeld, as speciall commysioners for to see an order and reformation in the Churches accordinge to the Queen's Majesties injunctions." "This yeare and about thys tyme, the exercyse began in St Chadd's Church. . . . This yeare the mynysters in the Churches of Shrewsberye against Chrystmas dyd all weare their crosse-capps and white syrpleys, exercising the Protestant religion; which longe tyme before dyd leave them of contrarie to the Queen's injunctions."

A few years later came the trial and condemnation of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. Shrewsbury, seeing in it a triumph for its reformed Faith, spent itself in a transport of joy. We read in our Chronicle:—"The 17th day of December, the Shereffe proclamyd in Salop, the Queene of Scots traitor beinge tried by examination to be in confederacy with the former conspirators, as Babington and his associates, for conspiringe hir Maiesties death, who weare executid; and the traitor the Scottishe queene hathe judgment to dye, and for ioye thereof the bayliffs and aldermen causid bonyfiars and bell ringins, with assembling themselves in their best arraye in banqueting and reioysing the same, praysinge God with triumphant sownde of trumpet." For these transports the expenses given are "Spend by Mr Bayliffs and others of the towne, and the under Sheriff with divers others at the proclamation made against the Queene of Scots 6s 11d." Churchyard, the Shropshire Poet, tells us the "Aldermen" were "in scarlet orderly in Shrewsburie, and the two bayliffs as richly set out as any mayor of some great cities."

In 1588 came the scare of the advent of the "Invincible Armada"! Upon hearing that news the gentry of the County subscribed largely to the defence of the kingdom. In Shrewsbury it was agreed that £100 should be raised for the purpose of levying soldiers and providing armour. The day chosen for the acknowledgment of victory was 19th September. It "was a solemn day, and all people in Shrouserie kept it holy unto the Lord, that had given her Majesty sutche victorie and blessed overthrowe of the Spanishe power and huge navy, to the greate reioysinge of all England. GOD be praysid. Amen."

In the past pages we have once or twice recorded the strange ways of our forefathers for emphasising their differing opinions on their neighbours: and unfortunately similar encounters were still recorded, though it must be admitted that they were far less frequent owing to Queen Elizabeth's wise enforcement of the laws. The old Chronicler tells the story of one such encounter which had "like to have been great hurt done through the blowing of a trumpet over against Master David Lloyd's house, in which one Master Owen Vaughan and his men, a stout gentill between whom and Master Newport was an old grudge: the which trumpeter being found fault withall, drew out his sword to strike at the party that so found fault, and thereupon the other fellows drew: and the bailiffs being in the hall, and coming amongst them to keep peace, were not regarded. Upon the same the common bell was rung: then the townsmen assisted the bailiffs; and then they (the

combatants) were forced to put up their weapons, with half-a-dozen broken pates. All this broil Mr. Owen Vaughan and his men kept the house, and by council stirred not: where if he and his men had come forth, there had been a bloody day. But GOD be thanked, it was for that time pacified." Mr. Newport's sister had married a Herbert, and his daughter very shortly married the heir of Longnor.

Camden testifies of Shrewsbury in his day that it was "a fine city, well inhabited, and of good commerce; and by the industry of the citizens and their cloth manufacture, and their trade with the Welsh, is very rich: for hither the Welsh commodities are brought as to the common mart of both nations." "Its inhabitants are partly English, partly Welsh: they use both languages, and this among other things must be mentioned in their praise, that they have erected the largest school in all England for the education of their youth; for which Thomas Aston the first school-master, a person of great worth and integrity, provided by his own industry a competent salary."

The next years brought reverses. The scourge of epidemic and frequent dearths brought food to a high price. This reached its highest in 1596, when wheat was 18s. the bushel, rye 15s.

The institution of a different kind of night watch was a novelty at this time, and in 1600 "a cryar for the night-tyme" was appointed. His duty was "to krye and call throughe the towne in the night, gyving all people knowledge of the clock, to take heed of doores and lockes, of fyre and candell light and so bydding all good night; which is a good order to avoyd the dangers that might followe."

It was not till King Charles's day that the two Bayliffs of ancient fame and renown were replaced by the single dignity of a Mayor. This took place in 1638. The old custom of closing the gates of the town at night was still carried on. The change from Bayliffs to Mayor did not take place at Bridgnorth till a good hundred and fifty years afterwards; there, one of the last of the Bayliffs was Richard Corbet. He was High Bayliff and, indeed, died during the term of his office. The first Mayor of Shrewsbury was Thomas Jones. He filled the office in 1638. We find many well-known Shropshire names among the list of Mayors. Thos. Wingfield in 1640, Charles Benyon in 1644 and again in 1651, Sir Richard Prince in 1662, Francis Burton in 1665, William Thynne 1674, John Severne 1675, Sir Fra. Edwards 1685, William Kinaston 1717, Sir Cha. Lloyd 1718, Michael Brickdale 1720, Sir Richard Corbet 1735, Edward Corbett 1738. Both these last were of Longnor. Joshua Blakeway in 1780, the Rev. Edw. Blakeway in 1793, Sir John Hill of Hawkestone in 1814.

Charles in granting a Mayor to Shrewsbury doubled the number of the Aldermen, making their number 24. The first under the new Charter were Thomas Jones Esqr., Robert Betton gent., Hugh Harris gent., Richard Hunt gent., Thomas Wingfield gent., Richard Gibbons gent., John Studley gent., Thomas Nicholls Esqr., Humphrey Mackworth Esqr., Timothy Turneur Esqr., Robert Betton Esqr., Thomas Knight Esqr., Charles Benyon gent., Richard Llewelin gent., William Rowley gent., George Hunt gent., Simon Weston gent., Owen George gent., Andrew Griffes gent., Thomas Hayes gent., John Proud gent., John Whitwick gent., Richard Jones gent., Roger Blakeway gent.

The Charter next directs that there shall be two Coroners. "And that the said town may shine and be increased, as well in honour and dignity as in privileges and authority, and that the wicked beholding the ensign of justice may be withholden from the lust of sinning" "the King grants that the Mayor, aldermen and burgesses may have a sword-bearer who shall from time to time be attendant upon the Mayor, and shall carry and bear before him one sheathed sword ordained and adorned as it shall please the Mayor for the time being, in all places where maces have in times past being accustomedly borne before the bailiffs (so as the said sword shall not be borne erect in any Chapel or Church consecrated to the honour and worship of God)." "Three sergeants at mace to bear maces of silver gilt, engraved and adorned with our Arms." "The Mayor for the time being, the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and his Commissary or Chancellor, the recorder, steward, three senior aldermen, and last preceding mayor, are appointed justices of the peace for the town and liberties." The Charter contains many other provisions.

I quote the provision for carrying the sword, for it was attributed to the influence of Archbishop Laud, who had many enemies in the County, and these increased as the prejudices of Puritanism developed, and had more sway in the County. A very few years after the date of this Charter Laud was put "on what was called his trial and accused, among innumerable other charges, for his conduct respecting the Charter to the town of Shrewsbury." From his answers to these charges we learn "only two witnesses appeared against him on this subject, Mr. Lee and Mr. Mackworth, aldermen of the town." "Of these," says the Archbishop in his defence, "they make up but one between them: for Mr. Lee could say nothing but what he heard from Mr.

Owen and
Blakeway
Hist. Shrews.

Mackworth." The first and second charges concerned the Schools and the town, and certainly show little honour to those who preferred them. The third charge was the "insertion of the Diocesan and his Chancellor among the town justices. The Archbishop replies, It is no crime that this should be so, . . . considering especially that then many clergymen bare that office in divers counties of England."

The fourth charge was probably the clause in the charter directing the sword of ceremony to be lowered on entrance into churches : and upon occasion of the York charter in which the same clause occurred, Mr. Nicolas, one of the managers for the prosecution, went the length of asserting that the Archbishop hereby intended to subject the temporal state to the Church. The Archbishop gave a noble answer that "neither to foreign nor home power, but only to GOD and that, in the place and at the performance of his holy worship : at which time and place Christian kings submit themselves, and therefore cannot stand upon the emblems of their power." "The fifth charge that one of the aldermen of Shrewsbury was induced to give a sum of money towards the repairing of St Paul's in London" ! "either by the menaces or solicitation of Laud. . . . The Archbishop answers, "Mr Mackworth adds that an old alderman gave £50 to St Paul : but out of what consideration I know not, nor doth he speak : and if every alderman in the town would have given as much to that use, I would have taken it, and thanked them for it." "Then he was accused of receiving a bribe of wine," which was much in the spirit of the charges of immodesty made against poor Joan of Arc when they abstracted her wearing apparel, leaving her naught to clothe herself withal but her soldier's dress.

State Trials
867.

The charge is too trivial even to record its most flimsy foundation, and the counsel for the impeachment abandoned the accusation and never vouchsafes so much as to name this false, base and unworthy charge. "There was no need to do it," says Blakeway, "it had performed its office" !

Laud was well known to various members of the Family of Corbet. I fear he can have had no cause to love those among them who saw the love of God and His service through the ways of Puritanism. One such was the Edward Corbet, D.D., of Pontesburie, already alluded to, beloved by the Puritan party, but between whom and the Archbishop there was but little sympathy. We shall refer again later on to this sad episode of the Reformation.

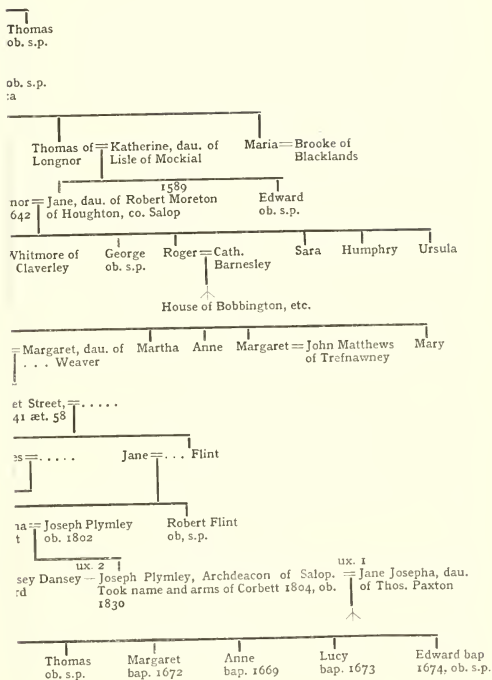
The last Parliament of King Charles's reign was the "Long Parliament" assembled just six months after the dissolution of the "Short" one so named. Francis Newport, eldest son of Sir Richard Newport and brother to Anne Newport, wife to Edward Corbett of Leighton and Longnor, was representative of Shrewsbury in the new Parliament as he had been in the old. The other was Thomas Owen, esqr. Francis Newport had the courage of his opinions—a rare gift!—and even voted for the acquittal of Lord Strafford. The Parliament soon expelled him as a "malignant," and he took arms against the Parliament. He was one of the prisoners taken at Oswestry, and, of course, was one of Cromwell's victims, being obliged to compound in the very large sum of £5,284, says Blakeway, "besides a sum of £3,287 and £170 a year extorted from his Father for the same crime of loyalty." He lived to the good age of eighty-nine and was made Earl of Bradford by King William. Sir Richard Newport, his father, married Margaret, the only daughter of Sir Thomas Bromley, the Lord Chief Justice, who died 1555. The "malignant's" second daughter appears to have married John Berker or Barker of Haughmond.

Wroxeter contains some monumental records of Newport connections. One plain slab has a long inscription to Sir Francis's brother Andrew, who died 1610. It says :—"He lived and died in the faith of Jesus Christ and true professor of the doctrine according to the best reformed Churches, in the tyme wherein he lived, ever hating and detesting the impostures and abominations of the Church of Rome as now it standeth."

The Puritans had suffered much persecution and many hardships in the late reigns, especially in that of James I., but the time of their revenge was at hand. They seized it with both hands, and their will was so ruthlessly imposed under the rule of the Commonwealth that it bade fair to crush the free spirit of England's people ; all joy was beaten out of life, and no doubt the restraint and irksomeness of their doctrines was mainly instrumental in paving the way for the restoration of the lawful King in 1660.

ON.

agnes Booth, dau. of Sir
William Booth of Dunham



Owen and
Blakeway
Hist. Shrews.

Mackworth." The first and second charges concerned the Schools and the town, and certainly show little honour to those who preferred them. The third charge was the "insertion of the Diocesan and his Chancellor among the town justices. The Archbishop replies, It is no crime that this should be so, . . . considering especially that then many clergymen bare that office in divers counties of England."

The fourth charge was probably the clause in the charter directing the sword of ceremony to be lowered on entrance into churches : and upon occasion of the York charter in which the same clause occurred, Mr. Nicolas, one of the managers for the prosecution, went the length of asserting that the Archbishop hereby intended to subject the temporal state to the Church. The Archbishop gave a noble answer that "neither to foreign nor home power, but only to GOD and that, in the place and at the performance of his holy worship : at which time and place Christian kings submit themselves, and therefore cannot stand upon the emblems of their power." "The fifth charge that one of the aldermen of Shrewsbury was induced to give a sum of money towards the repairing of St Paul's in London" ! "either by the menaces or solicitation of Laud. . . . The Archbishop answers, "Mr Mackworth adds that an old alderman gave £50 to St Paul : but out of what consideration I know not, nor doth he speak : and if every alderman in the town would have given as much to that use, I would have taken it, and thanked them for it." "Then he was accused of receiving a bribe of wine," which was much in the spirit of the charges of immodesty made against poor Joan of Arc when they abstracted her wearing apparel, leaving her naught to clothe herself withal but her soldier's dress.

State 1 Trials
867.

The charge is too trivial even to record its most flimsy foundation, and the counsel for the impeachment abandoned the accusation and never vouchsafes so much as to name this false, base and unworthy charge. "There was no need to do it," says Blakeway, "it had performed its office" !

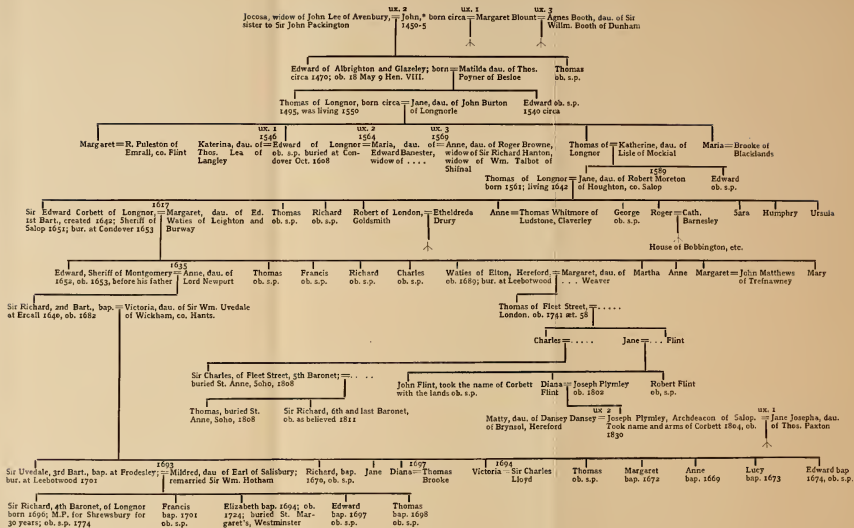
Laud was well known to various members of the Family of Corbet. I fear he can have had no cause to love those among them who saw the love of God and His service through the ways of Puritanism. One such was the Edward Corbet, D.D., of Pontesburie, already alluded to, beloved by the Puritan party, but between whom and the Archbishop there was but little sympathy. We shall refer again later on to this sad episode of the Reformation.

The last Parliament of King Charles's reign was the "Long Parliament" assembled just six months after the dissolution of the "Short" one so named. Francis Newport, eldest son of Sir Richard Newport and brother to Anne Newport, wife to Edward Corbett of Leighton and Longnor, was representative of Shrewsbury in the new Parliament as he had been in the old. The other was Thomas Owen, esqr. Francis Newport had the courage of his opinions—a rare gift !—and even voted for the acquittal of Lord Strafford. The Parliament soon expelled him as a "malignant," and he took arms against the Parliament. He was one of the prisoners taken at Oswestry, and, of course, was one of Cromwell's victims, being obliged to compound in the very large sum of £5,284, says Blakeway, "besides a sum of £3,287 and £170 a year extorted from his Father for the same crime of loyalty." He lived to the good age of eighty-nine and was made Earl of Bradford by King William. Sir Richard Newport, his father, married Margaret, the only daughter of Sir Thomas Bromley, the Lord Chief Justice, who died 1555. The "malignant's" second daughter appears to have married John Berker or Barker of Haughmond.

Wroxeter contains some monumental records of Newport connections. One plain slab has a long inscription to Sir Francis's brother Andrew, who died 1610. It says :—"He lived and died in the faith of Jesus Christ and true professor of the doctrine according to the best reformed Churches, in the tyme wherein he lived, ever hating and detesting the impostures and abominations of the Church of Rome as now it standeth."

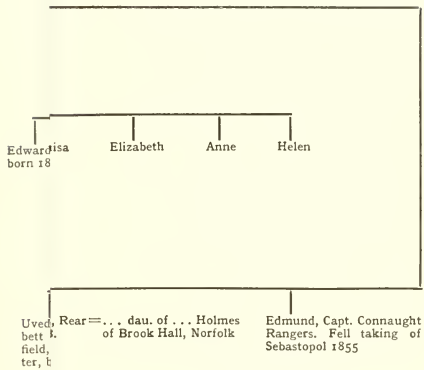
The Puritans had suffered much persecution and many hardships in the late reigns, especially in that of James I., but the time of their revenge was at hand. They seized it with both hands, and their will was so ruthlessly imposed under the rule of the Commonwealth that it bade fair to crush the free spirit of England's people ; all joy was beaten out of life, and no doubt the restraint and irksomeness of their doctrines was mainly instrumental in paving the way for the restoration of the lawful King in 1660.

CORBETS OF HOUSE OF LONGNOR AND LEIGHTON.



dau. of
n or Panton

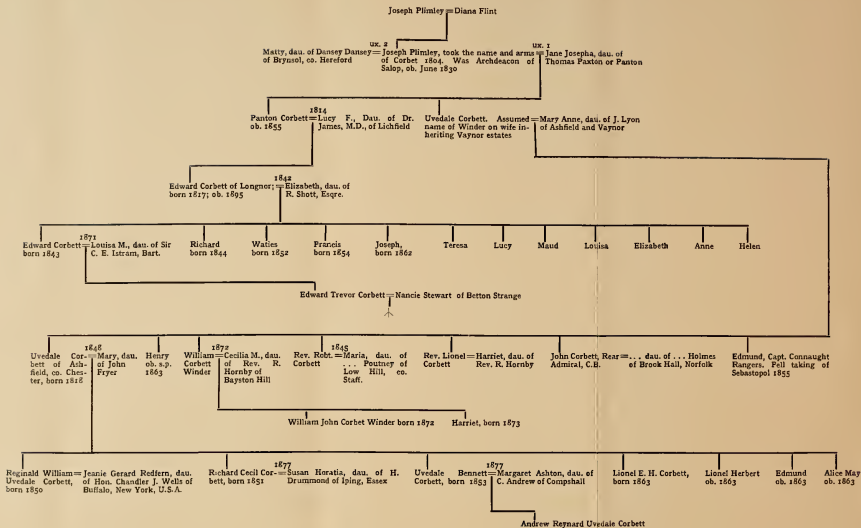
i. of J. Lyon
Vaynor



- Reginald W Uvedale C born 1850
- Lionel E. H. Corbett, born 1863
- Lionel Herbert ob. 1863
- Edmund ob. 1863
- Alice May ob. 1863

Uvedale Corbett

THE PRESENT FAMILY OF CORBETT OF LONGNOR.



CHAPTER XII

A VERY important part in our History of the "Family of Corbet" has now been reached. In the past pages of this History we have chronicled the records of that powerful half of the Family who were Barons of Caus: and, with great regret, related its untimely end with the failure of the male line. We have noted the rise of its sub-branches, tracing the records of each House, till one by one the extinction of the line, or the failure of Male heir, has compelled the record to close. There remains now only the History of the elder Branch of the Family with its sub-branches—the descendants of the Pilgrim—to gather together and to chronicle, and the pages to follow must be exclusively devoted to this task.

To do this we must retrace our steps and thoughts even to near to the great Norman Conquest of England, which was carried out with a rapidity truly marvellous—without parallel.—The continual, even intimate, interchange of ideas, fellowship and interests between the two races (the Saxon and the Norman) during the preceding years no doubt contributed to that end, and how greatly can scarcely be over-estimated.

Roger Fitz-Corbet and his brother Robert Fitz-Corbet seem to have taken possession of their new territories and powers without any undue burst of hostility from the conquered people; or at any rate none such is recorded; on the contrary, they seem to have held out the hand of friendship and protection to the Welsh Chiefs on the one hand, and to the few Saxon landowners on the other, who were both wise enough and also powerful enough to accept the inevitable and thus to retain their lands.

See Vol. I.

Scarcely had the drama of the Conquest closed ere the Crusades arose, and their spirit completely absorbed and overwhelmed the usual standard of judgment by which men ruled their lives, causing the strangest flood of people to forsake the daily tenor of their lives and their homes, some to wander, some to fight. Strange regulations on behalf of these uprooting actions had to become law. Special "Letters of Protection" from the highest ecclesiastical and civil authorities had to be drawn up and furnished to the "wanderers" to protect life and limb; and very stringent laws had to be made, and also enforced, to protect those who remained at home—those who, in short, bore the brunt of the toil and the care of the home and lands—lest any false claim for the restoration of such lands should be set up by a clever impersonation of the absent one. Those therefore who returned had to furnish undoubted proof of their identity ere they could claim their own. But no endurance, no consideration had power to daunt the hopes and the high thoughts either of Knight who laid his lance in rest and set forth for the unknown, or of the more peaceful Pilgrim who took his staff and wallet and followed him.

Roger Fitz-Corbet and his brother Robert were not touched by this wonderful wave of enthusiasm which overturned everything; they had their castles to build and their Baronies to organise, and an ever-watchful guard to keep lest a Welsh neighbour steal on them in the night, to their undoing. But their brothers and nephews across the seas were fully open to the influence of this compelling force, and yielded to it. They joined in more than one of the Crusades and sent forth sons and grandsons who fought in them; in fact, Le Carpentier records that the Comte de St. Pol of the day (a Corbet) sold his patrimony to provide more sufficient means to accompany St Louis his king in his campaign to Tunis against the Infidel.

With these examples amongst their own immediate kindred, and living in the midst of the stirring spirit of the age, can one wonder that some one of the near descendants of the Corbet Domesday Barons should throw in his lot with the "wanderers" and yield to the sensation of the day? Rather I think we should feel surprise were this not the case; for such acts could not be done in a corner, though they were individual, involving as they did renunciation for the time of home and home ties—all, in short, that made life for the man. The Border, too, and the Marches of Wales had for long been imbued with the spirit of the Pilgrim, and thus it came about that, whilst the elder Corbets were absorbed with the unceasing watchfulness demanded of them by the needs of their own vast domains and the necessity for the preserving of the King's peace, the younger ones sat at the feet of these wondrous travelled ones, listening to the tale of the marvels that befell them; and that one at least among them rose up determined to do likewise. A Guild for the protection of the Palmer and Pilgrim had a very early origin in Ludlow, and the following account taken from the Transactions of the Shropshire Archæological Society serves to illustrate my remarks.

"The origin of the Palmers' Guild," says the extract, "is carried back to the days of Edward the Confessor. Leland remarks that it was so accounted in his day. He says, 'There is but one

Parish Church in the Towne, but that is very fayre and large and richly adorned, and taken for the fairest in all these quarters. This Church hath been much enriched and advanced by a Brother-hood therein founded in the house of St John Evangelist. The original whereof was (as the people constantly affirmed) in the time of King Edward the Confessor, and who constantly affirmed that the Pilgrims who brought the King's Ring from beyonde the sea as a token from St John the Evangelist, were inhabitants of Ludlowe. This fraternity hath a guardian chosen yearly among the Burgesses, and to this Collidge belongs a maintenance of tenne Priests, partly formed by lands and partly by devotion of the people thereof.' ” This is Leland's record. The Transactions tell us further that “the written evidence of the existence of the Guild does not go back farther than King John's reign, but the legend of the Ring is represented in one of the windows of the Church. The following account of the legend is translated from the Norman-French of the time :

Trans. Arch.
Shrop.

“ The King was at service where was dedicated the Church of St John, who to GOD was deare
 And whom the King could so much love,
 No Saint had he so deare except St Peter.
 Lo ! a poor man who was there,
 A stranger and unknown,
 When he saw King Edward
 For love of St John prays him
 That of his possessions he would give him part.
 The King who heares his prayer
 Puts his hand to his alms chest,
 But neither gold nor silver does he there find.
 He bids his almoner be summoned
 But he was not found for the crowd.
 The poor man ceases not to beg,
 And the King is in distress,
 Because neither gold nor silver he finds at hand,
 And he reflects and remains silent,
 Looks at his hand, and remembers that on his hand he had a cherished ring, which was large,
 royal and beautiful.
 To the poor man he gives it, for the love of St John and his deare Lord.
 And he takes it with joy,
 And gently gives him thanks.
 And when he was possessed of it
 He departed and vanished,
 But to this paid no one heed.
 Soon after this it chanced, that
 Two Pilgrims of English birth
 Who go to seek the Holy Sepulchre
 By a path where no man guides them
 In the land of Syria,
 Go astray far out of the way,
 See neither man nor house,
 Now have they arrived in the wilderness,
 The night comes on, the sun sets.
 Nor do they know which way to turn.
 They fear robbers, they fear wild beasts,
 The dark night surprises them.
 Now behold a band of youths
 In a circle which was very large and beautiful
 By whom the whole road and air were brightened as if by lightning,
 And an old man, white and hoary
 Before whom were carried two tapers
 Which lighten the path.
 He, when he comes down to the Pilgrims,
 Salutes them, says, Deare Friends

Whence come ye ? of what creed are ye ? of what birth ?
Of what kingdom ? and what King ? and what seek ye here ?
And one of them answered him,
We are Christians, and desire
Have we to expiate our sins.
We are both from England,
We have come to seek the Holy Sepulchre
And the Holy Places of this Country,
Where Jesus died and lived.
And our King is named Edward
The good Prince, whom may GOD preserve,
He has not such a Saint from here to France.
But it has befallen us by mishap
We have to-day lost the company
Which comforts us and guides us,
Nor know we what has become of us.
And the old man answered them joyously like a clerk,
' Come after me, I go before ye
Where ye will find a good hostelry.
For love of King Edward
Ye shall have lodging and good care.
Your leader, I myself will be
And your host.' He leads them on.
They enter a city.
They have found a good hostelry,
The table prepared, and good treatment,
Linen and bed and other preparations.
The tired ones who had great need
Repose themselves after supper.
In the morning when they depart
They find their host and leader,
Who, when they had issued from the gate,
Gently thus comforts them,
' Be not troubled nor sad,
I am John the Evangelist.
For love of Edward your King
I neither will nor ought to fail ye.
For he is my very special
Friend and loyal King.
With me he has joined company
Since he has chosen to lead a chaste life.
We shall be peers in Paradise.
And I tell ye, deare Friends and good,
Ye shall arrive, be assured,
In your country safe and sound.
Ye shall go to King Edward
Salute him from me.
And that ye attempt not falsehood
To say, ye shall carry proofs
A Ring, which he shall know
Which he gave to me, John,
When he was at the services
When my Church was dedicated.
There I besought him for the love of John,
It was I in poor array.
And let King Edward know well,
To me shall he come, before six months are over,
In Paradise shall we be together.

And that of this he may be confidently assured
 Ye shall tell him all whatever I have told ye.
 They, who well understand his words,
 Give him thanks for all his benefit.
 And when they are possessed of the Ring,
 The Saint departed and vanished.
 And the Pilgrims depart
 Who now are on a certain path
 Without ill, and without troubles.
 The Saint leads them and conducts them.
 They hasten to go to King Edward.
 That they have not arrived seemed tardy to them,
 And they relate their adventure
 And show the Ring at once.
 Whatever they relate he believes true,
 When he sees the proofs,
 Of this bear witness the whole company, large and numerous."

No other reason for the name of the Guild is assigned than this tradition. The date of the earliest parchment record of the Guild is the reign of King John, and this contains allusions to the existence of one still earlier.

Some of the rules are quaint enough, and it seems to have acquired somewhat the functions of a universal beneficent society with the tale of years. These are some of the early rules: "When it happens that one of the Bretheren or Sisteren of the Guild shall have been brought to such want thro' fire, theft, shipwreck, fall of a house, or any other mishap, that they have not enough to live on, then once, twice, thrice, but not a fourth time, as much help shall be given them out of the goods of the Gild, as the Rector and Steward shall order. If it befall that any Brother or Sister be cast into prison within the kingdom of England, or that a man or his goods have any way been unrightly siezed (which GOD forbid) our Rector and Steward shall without delay use every means in their power to get him and his goods freed. If any of our poorer bretheren or Sisteren shall fall into grievous sickness they shall be helped."

In Henry VIII's time all persons of rank were enrolled as members by an official who made periodical circuits for that purpose. In the sixteenth century its registers included the Counties of Salop, Hereford, Denbigh, Chester, Lancaster, Carnarvon, Anglesea, Brecknock, Carmarthen, Warwick, Oxford, Leicester, Notts, Derby, Stafford, Radnor, Gloucester, Monmouth. The description of "Sengilmon" and "Sengilwoman" is very quaint, and occurs often in the late list of its members.

I find an interesting explanation of the various names given to these folks of religion who "wandered" given in a number of "Notes and Queries," and will quote the paragraph so as to throw as much light as is possible around the history of our Pilgrim.

"In a note to 'Marmion,' Canto I., Stanza XXVII., Scott asserts:—'A Palmer as opposed to a Pilgrim was one who made it his sole business to visit different holy shrines; travelling incessantly, and subsisting on charity; whereas the Pilgrim retired to his usual home and occupations when he had paid his devotions at the particular spot which was the object of his pilgrimage.' There is," says the writer of the paragraph, "a passage in Dante's *Vita Nuova* which throws some curious light on the question. 'It happened,' the great Florentine tells us, 'that a great number of persons undertook a pilgrimage to the end that they might behold that blessed portrait bequeathed unto us by our Lord Jesus Christ, as the image of His beautiful countenance (upon which countenance my dear Lady looketh continually). Then I beholding them said within myself; these Pilgrims seem to be come from very far; and I think they cannot have heard speak of this Lady, or know anything concerning her. . . . If I could speak with them a space, I am certain that I should make them weep before they went forth of this city; for those things that they would hear from me, must needs beget weeping in any. And when the last of them had gone by me, I bethought me to write a sonnet showing forth mine inward speech; and that it might seem the more pitiful I made it as though I had spoken it indeed unto them. And wrote this sonnet which beginneth 'Ye Pilgrim folk.'" I made use of the word pilgrim for its general signification, for pilgrim may be understood in two senses, one special and one general. General so far as any man may be called a pilgrim who leaveth the place of his birth; whereas,

more narrowly speaking, he only is a pilgrim who goeth towards or frowards the House of St. James, for there are three separate denominations proper unto those who undertake journeys to the glory of GOD. They are called Palmers who go beyond seas eastwards, whence often they bring palm branches. And Pilgrims, as I have said, are they who journey unto the Holy House of Galicia ; seeing that no other Apostle was buried so far from his birth-place as was the blessed St. James. And there is a third sort who are called "Romers" in that they go, whither these whom I have called Pilgrims went, which is to say unto Rome."

I have been trying in the foregoing pages to convey some impression of the complete domination the spirit of the Crusades held over the minds of men ; and in the coming ones I hope to show the perfectly natural effect of that spirit in the conduct of the two Corbet brothers, the Pilgrim and the Baron. After the return of the Crusade of "Clermont" there seems to have been a lull in the formation of another organised expedition until the middle or end of the twelfth century, when our Richard Cœur de Lion joined the Crusade and became the envy of the whole world from his chivalry and the wonders wrought by his feats of arms. With him, as we may remember, went Robert the Baron of Caus. He had welcomed the return of the long lost brother, Thomas the Pilgrim, had done what justice and brotherly affection demanded, given the position and the lands asked for, to the Pilgrim and his posterity ; and then, filled with the prevailing enthusiasm, had, as we related in Volume I., himself joined the glittering hosts of Cœur de Lion and set out for the East.

The English Army arrived in Palestine in time to take part in the glories of the siege of Acre. King Richard instilled new life into the cosmopolitan army of Crusaders that had for so long besieged the town. Marvellous were the generous and chivalrous actions of the King of the lion heart, and the feats of arms he and his comrades in arms are accredited with by the chroniclers. Alas, that envy and strife arose and wrecked all ! It is a digression rather, thus to linger over the picture of that brilliant army as it assembled for embarkation at Marseilles on that September morning : an outburst of Christianity, however mistaken, unique in history. Its leader, King Richard, was a born leader of men. He was not only first in every scene of danger and hardship, but he knew also how to organise and provide for the necessities of life, for the vast multitude that followed him so undauntedly to the fight. It was no mean task to bring such a host with supplies — arms, horses, engines, and other appliances for war — from far across the seas, in the frail ships of the period, and to land them — a host fit for the fray ! But he accomplished this, we are told.

Let us give the chronicler's description of the great leader arrayed for an occasion of ceremony and diplomacy. "He was mounted on a Spanish charger of high mettle. The King bounded into his saddle glittering with gold spangles interspersed with red, on the hinder part two small lions were turned towards each other, with their mouths open, and one pointed to the other with each of the fore legs, as if stretched out to devour. The King's feet were decorated with golden spurs, and he was clothed in a vest of rose-coloured stuff, ornamented with rows of crescents of solid silver-like orbs of the sun shining in thick profusion. The King thus apparelled rode forward girded with a sword of proved metal with a handle of gold and a woven belt, and the mouth of the scabbard was fastened with silver ; he wore a hat of scarlet on his head ornamented with the shapes of various birds and beasts worked with the hand, and sewn in with orfray-work by the needle."

Geof. de
Vinsauf Iter.
Rich. I.

The same chronicler describes the army later, as they advanced along the sea coast after the break-up of the host at Acre, and King Richard had decided to withdraw his men.

"Oh," says he, "what fine soldiers they were. You might there see a chosen company of virtuous and brave youths whose equals it would have been difficult to meet with, bright armour and pennons with their glittering emblazonry ; banners of various forms ; lances with gleaming points ; shining helmets and coats of mail ; an army well regulated in the Camp, and terrible to the foe !"

King Richard commanded the van, and kept the foremost guard. The Normans defended the Standard, which we will not consider it irrelevant to describe here. Our chronicler says :—"It was formed of a long beam, like the mast of a ship ; made of most solid ceiled work, on four wheels ; put together with joints bound with iron, and to all appearance no sword nor axe could cut, nor fire injure it. A chosen body of soldiers were usually appointed to guard it, especially in a combat on the plains ; lest, by any hostile attack, it should be broken or thrown down ; for if it fell by any accident, the army would be put into confusion. For they are dismayed when it does not appear, and think that their general must be overcome by faint-heartedness when they do not see his Standard flying ; for no people have strength to resist the enemy if their chief is in

alarm from the fall of his Standard, but whilst it remains erect they have a certain refuge. Near it the weak are strengthened; and the wounded soldiers even those of rank and celebrity who fall in the battle are carried to it, and it is called 'Standard' from its standing, a most compact signal to the Army.' . . . "It was surrounded by the Normans and the English."

Robert Corbet, the Baron of Caus, then, was in the very midst of such environment, a devoted follower of the lion-hearted King from whose hands he had just received the magnificent gift of the Forest of the Stiperstones! His younger brother, Sir Roger Corbet, the ultimate possessor of Chaddesleye, was very probably a knight in the Baron's retinue. The eldest brother, Thomas the long lost Pilgrim, had given rein to his yearning after the spirit of the age many a long year before, and had chosen the modest garb of the Pilgrim at a moment when it seemed impossible that the Family responsibilities could touch him.

We must return now to our task of identifying the long lost Pilgrim as Thomas Corbet the head of the Family—and of his descendants—the knightly Branch about to be established at Wattlesborough in the Barony of Caus.

Let us recapitulate somewhat, for we must verify the position by the facts of the case. Roger Fitz-Corbet, the first Baron of Caus, was succeeded by his son William, but not at the Castle of Caus itself; that, it appears, had been destroyed by fire by the Welsh, probably soon after the death of the old Baron, and in revenge for cruelties dealt out to them by a certain Pagan Fitz-John who usurped a wider range of authority than his Master intended, and who himself was shortly after killed by the Welsh near the scene of his tyranny. William Corbet (Roger Fitz-Corbet's eldest son), deprived of the Castle of Caus, entrenched himself in the lesser stronghold of Wattlesborough, not many miles distant from Caus along the Border. It was inferior to Caus in position and strength, but yet could serve as temporary Caput to the Barony. The troubles and Civil Wars which distracted England during Stephen's usurpation prevented the rebuilding of the Castle of Caus from being accomplished; and as the Family were firm adherents of the Empress Maud's it behoved William to rule quietly within his little kingdom, secure in his isolation, and avoiding any act likely to draw the attention of envious neighbours such as the rebuilding of so great a stronghold as Caus Castle must inevitably have done; so he waited—till a more congenial time might arise. He had absolute power in his Barony of Caus, for the King's Writ did not run in it; the Welsh were at peace with him, and Stephen was too occupied with repelling his foes to scheme plans of aggression.

See Vol. I.

Thus the Family lived at Wattlesboro'—in their Barony. I believe William to have had several sons; by his brothers' fortunes have already been dealt with at length in the earlier chapters of this History.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to decide at exactly what date William's death took place. Since no King's Writ ever entered the Barony, no event affecting it exclusively ever reached a record in the public Archives. The events of the day, however, which happened outside of it, give one a certain clue; for we know by the public records that at the time of the accession of the young King Henry II. the Baron of Caus was in attendance at his Court, and that his name was "Roger." Here then is evidence of William's death and that the name of his successor was Roger, presumably William's eldest son, and whom for the sake of distinction we will designate Roger II. This Roger rebuilt Caus; he was often in attendance on the King; he married Hawisa or Avicia d'Albini, but he died comparatively young and he left no heir. Roger II.'s death also is unrecorded, but it is probable that he was killed in one of the three fruitless expeditions against the Welsh which took place in the first decade of King Henry's reign.

We must here call to mind that both the Domesday Barons, Roger and Robert Fitz-Corbet, who held from the Earls of Montgomery, had on the forfeiture of that Earldom been allowed to retain their lands without prejudice, and to hold them thenceforth straight from the King (in Capite). Hence it arose that, Roger II. dying and leaving no heir, the Barony became "escheat" and fell under the King's control, who immediately asserted his right and chose an heir. There was always some delay in doing this, or in announcing it at any rate; and meantime Caus Castle was garrisoned with the King's soldiers. Thus much we learn, also from the public records; and ten years later or more, in A.D. 1175, we find that the Baron of Caus had been very heavily fined for a severe forest trespass in the North, in company with his uncle William, the de Brus, and many other notabilities.

See Vol. I.
Chap. VII.

From divers sources and also at divers dates, we learn that the name of the new Baron was Robert, that he was a son of the mesne lord of Pontesburie (in the Barony of Caus) whose name was Simon, a brother of the late Baron's (Roger II.) and apparently the only brother having sons,

FORMATION OF THE HOUSE OF WATTLESBORO' 215

Simon's elder son would seem to have been called Thomas ; he was absent at the time of the King's decision, and was passed over.

This fact, viz., the passing over of the elder brother (for we think it a fact and supported and proved by subsequent events), confronts us at once with the silence attending all internal affairs of the Barony of Caus—it is the silence of isolation, where all is self-contained, and no King's Writ can enter. Tradition and legend, however, are more merciful and ready of tongue, and have left us certain details supported by the facts of the events which followed ; and thus, though not recorded by Documents, they are undisputed and need no apology.

We have seen how wide an influence the entrancing legend of the " Palmers' Guild " and the marvels of Pilgrims' travels exercised over men's minds at this time ; it would be specially so in the countries near to Ludlow—the headquarters of these legends. We therefore are hardly surprised when assured by tradition that Thomas Corbet, Simon's elder son, had yielded to the spirit of the day, and left his home to wander. Details do not tell us whether his steps were bound, but they tell us that he was absent and lost to his friends for some time ; and it is noted in the Pedigrees that " He travelled into farre countries and left his lands in his Brother's keeping." This, indeed, was the usual procedure for the " wanderer " for religion ; he left his lands and his responsibilities to his next of kin. For the time being the " wanderer," were he Prince or Peasant, was legally non-existent. In his case Thomas the Pilgrim might well be supposed to feel that, son of a younger son, he was free to follow the ardent wish of his heart, to take the Pilgrim's staff and visit those far-off lands !—no probability of any responsible and commanding position falling to his lot would suggest itself to him. So he felt free—free to start for those distant shores whither his cousins of over-seas had already " wandered," and amongst whom was one of his own name—" Thomas "—the first on record among Corbets.

Both tradition and legend are silent concerning the time and period of Thomas the Pilgrim's expedition ; nevertheless we can form some very definite idea of the time of his return, from the events which both tradition and fact assign to it. Legend has wrapped her shining veil around his return ; and the tale is so graceful a one that it must find a place in our history. After all is told, we will sift the evidence so far as is possible, and judge how far facts permit us to accept tradition, and even justify it.

The legend relates that the brother, the Baron, despairing of the Pilgrim's return, resolved to marry. On a given day all things were prepared, the large Hall of Audience at the Castle of Caus would be full to overflowing. Tenants and their retainers, the neighbouring Barons, and their men-at-arms, and many a knight and many a minstrel would all be assembled within its walls to grace the occasion ; and with all the pomp and circumstance which attended every ceremonious function of the Norman Baron, the bride and bridegroom would take their places on the dais at the end of the vast hall.

The banquet is about to begin, when, lo ! yet one more guest seeks entrance. Again the great doors of the Hall are flung wide, and the newly arrived guest enters, in the guise of a humble pilgrim, weary and travel-stained ! And when, the banquet over, all pray him to relate whence he came and that which had befallen him, he revealed himself as the long lost brother.

The legend says further that the Baron would have resigned his honours and his lands to his brother, but this latter would have none of them, demanding only a small portion of that which was rightly his own, content with the more peaceful position of Feudatory rather than that of Chief.

All writers of Shropshire History, I believe, accept this tradition and legend as explanation of an otherwise unexplained circumstance (the settling of the knightly Family at Wattlesborough), and consider it to be supported by facts ; only one author—and he of great authority, Eyton—rejects both tradition and legend. He gives certain reasons for doing so, some of which are his own opinions merely, by which I mean unsupported by facts, and some are manifestly mistakes. We find them given at length in Vol. VII, page 101.

Eyton,
Ant. Shrop.,
Vol. VII.,
p. 101.

At the outset we note that Eyton makes a very great mistake, yet it is in great measure the foundation of his own argument. He is refuting Mr. Blakeway's acceptance of both tradition and legend, which he says he (Blakeway) supports by two things, " a Legend and an heraldic phenomenon." Eyton then at once recites the legend already given, and proceeds to denounce it. " Now," says he, " in removing this Legend from Morton-Corbet to Wattlesborough I conceive that an unwarrantable licence has been taken. A legend removed from the place of its tradition is at once an ineptity."

But is it so ? Is not this " ineptity " of which Eyton complains his own, rather than Blake-way's ? The former, in his hot haste to overthrow the argument of the latter, has forgotten

that the legend belongs to Wattlesborough, and to Wattlesborough only, and cannot possibly have anything to do with Moreton-Corbet : and for this unanswerable reason, that Moreton-Toret, as it was then called, did not belong to the Corbet Family for near on some eighty years after the events of the legend ; and that Wattlesboro' was the home of this knightly Family of Corbets for nearly two hundred years after these events connected with it.

Moreover the legend expressly takes in hand and describes the divergence of this knightly Family from the Baronial, with its attendant instalment and settlement at Wattlesboro'. There can surely be no question, therefore, of a removal of the legend from Moreton-Corbet to Wattlesborough, since it never left Wattlesborough !

The next point Eyton contests is the armorial bearing of the single Raven, borne by the knightly Family of Wattlesboro' and later of Moreton-Corbet, as contrasted with the two Ravens borne by the Barons of Caus subsequent to the division of the Family. Blakeway considers the single Raven to be expressive of primogeniture. On this point I confess myself incompetent to argue either way, and think the facts of the position too corroborated to make the point of importance ; suffice it merely to repeat the point as a fact—illustrated by the Seals of very early date—that whereas the Corbets of Wattlesboro' and Moreton-Corbet have always borne the single Raven, the Barons of Caus (since Robert—the Pilgrim's brother) have always borne the two Ravens, as do their descendants. I will emphasise these two facts also with another—that the descendants of Renaud Corbet (Hugo le Corbet's third son, he who remained behind in Normandy) bore three Ravens, as shown on their sepulchral monuments of the early part of the twelfth century. As a contra to Eyton's remark concerning the Conqueror's two lions passant, I would observe that the Conqueror's father was not the eldest son, he succeeded a brother ; and that Henry II also represented as heir, through his mother the Empress Maud, the Conqueror's third son, Henry Beauclerk.

It appears to me that one great reason for Eyton's occasional confusion is that he cannot free himself from his preconceived opinion that William of Wattlesborough, the grandfather of this Baron Robert of whom we have been writing, died without children. I have clearly proved in the earlier chapters of Vol. I that such cannot have been the case, and that not only had he one, but several sons. A good deal of confusion also exists both with Blakeway and Eyton and the Pedigrees, over the first early generations or two ; and curiously enough in different ways : the one considers that William of Wattlesborough left issue ; the other, Eyton, is equally of opinion that he did not.

Probably a great deal of this uncertainty arises from the confusion and inaccuracies of the Pedigrees themselves as concerns these two or three early generations. The Pedigrees, it is true, assign descendants to William of Wattlesborough, and which I maintain to be correct and proved facts. But they entirely miss out the next generation—that of his successor, Roger II, William's eldest son—and consequently the younger sons are also equally passed over. It is a recognised fact that Roger II was in attendance at Court in the first days of Henry II : and yet this Roger is altogether left out, in the Pedigrees ! The consequence is a vast amount of confusion and error, and as a result of this the Pedigrees are unable to assign the true ancestor either to Robert the Baron (Roger II's successor) or to Thomas the Pilgrim, Robert's elder brother.

In this dilemma those who drew up the Pedigrees have been obliged to assist themselves by poaching in the preserves of the Corbets of Tasley ; and have even permitted themselves to mark the heiress, Cecilia de Hadley, who married the young Roger Corbet of Tasley in 1190, as being wife to a descendant of Thomas Corbet the Pilgrim !

The Pedigrees continue straight and accurate when once they have passed through these inevitably troubled waters. Nevertheless these early descents of both the brothers are clear enough really, if one is content to trace them from Charter and public Record.

Let us try now to verify the reliability of tradition. Thomas was evidently absent at the time of the King's choice of Robert to fill the place of his uncle Roger as Baron of Caus ; or if not absent, he was, for some unexplained reason, passed over. All is silence concerning it ; but tradition speaks and says that this Thomas was away in far countries. This being so very probably the case, why should it not be accepted as explanation ?

The events after the return show an equal degree of mystery, as though something were sought to be concealed ; notwithstanding that Legend with her gracious mantle has softened and covered the crude fact that some claim was made, and also recognised. A claim was most certainly made and granted, and that in a manner so completely different from any other procedure of the sort, that one feels irresistibly that there was a power behind it and a cause ; hidden it may be, and covered by the mantle of Legend, but none the less there, felt and recognised.

The claim or demand was for Wattleborough. Tradition says that the Barony of Caus with all its honours, all its privileges, and also with its responsibilities, was renounced, and Wattleboro' was asked for; and not only asked for, it was granted. Now Wattleborough was held in demesne. It was the chief subordinate stronghold of the Barony—a sufficiently strong and important one to have served even as the Caput of the Barony during the years that the Castle of Caus remained unrestored.

Eyton does a good deal of cavilling over the theory of the renouncing of the Barony: nevertheless he makes no attempt to offer any solution to the fact of the situation; and tradition remains uncontradicted; nay, even we may say it is supported by fact—the fact that a Richard Corbet of Wattleboro' is entered on the Pipe Roll for Shropshire 26 Hen. II as one of those Vassals of the Barony who had been amerced for a false judgment pronounced against Fulke Fitz-Warine.

I said before that in this case of mystery tradition has been corroborated by fact. Here is one of the facts—"Richard"! He was Richard Corbet; and fact No. 2—he was Richard Corbet of Wattleborough. We will now ask who is this Richard Corbet of Wattleborough? Tradition assures us that he was Thomas the Pilgrim's son; and no other explanation of the fact of his existence or of that of his brother Roger's is forthcoming. Let us take the evidence. A.D. 1179.

We have gone minutely into the whole descent of the House of Caus, and have found that Simon of Pontesburie, in the generation under discussion, was the only member of it who left descendants; consequently both Richard Corbet and his brother Roger must perforce be amongst those descendants. Simon had several sons, and of these, as I have already mentioned, only Thomas the Pilgrim and Robert the Baron left sons. Of these two, Thomas is the only possibility as father to the brothers Richard and Roger Corbet of Wattleborough; age and date alike forbid any other conclusion.

Again, as we note the relative ages of Richard of Wattleborough and Robert the Baron we see of necessity that Thomas the Pilgrim was older than Robert the Baron. Thus again fact supports our legend. We may note in passing that Robert the Baron's eldest son was not born till 1182-3.

The other half of the question—the possession of Wattleborough—must now be answered and accounted for. The King, of course, held the Barony in charge during Robert's minority; but such an unusual and important act as the weakening of the powerful Barony of Caus by taking from it one of its most necessary and, after Caus Castle itself, strongest of its strongholds must, had it been done, have entailed a correspondingly emphatic record in the public archives. None such, however, is to be found, and I think we may dismiss the possibility that the granting of Wattleboro' was the King's act without further comment, and conclude that Robert the Baron, and he alone, was in the position to confer Wattleborough on Thomas the Pilgrim and his descendants.

Now it is inconceivable that any Baron of Caus would have parted with Wattleborough, a fortified and, one might almost say, rival castle within his own Barony, and for "ever and aye," save for some very powerful reason—a reason so powerful that it could only be satisfied in that way. Tradition offers a reason, and tells us that the elder brother was content, nay, preferred to receive Wattleborough; and fact tells us that a Richard Corbet (clearly Thomas the Pilgrim's son) was in possession of it as early as 1179, but four years or so, in short, after the first notice of Robert himself as Baron of Caus.

Richard Corbet's descendants lived and flourished at Wattleborough for some two hundred years subsequent to the events which we have been relating; until, indeed, it passed to an alien name through the marriage of its Corbet heiress. Occasionally we shall find that these Wattleborough Corbets demanded of the then Baron of Caus an extra Manor—an enlargement of their borders—and the request would be granted at once, the existing tenants being arranged for elsewhere. This was the case with Cardiston; but no attempt was ever recorded to have been made, or attempted to have been made, for any more extended claim. This strict adherence to what may be termed the conditions of the bargain, and on both sides, strikes me as a most remarkable feature of the history; for we must remember that this was not an arrangement for a lifetime, but for all time.

Thus the Pilgrim's descendants flourished and multiplied content with Wattleborough, till the marriage with the great Saxon heiress Joanna Toret or Thoret brought them a larger and more important sphere of influence. The change of domicile from Wattleborough to the safer and more peaceful one at Moreton-Toret did not take place for many years, not until after the subjugation

tion of Wales, and then the old name of Moreton-Toret soon became lost in the new one of Moreton-Corbet.

The Legend of the Pilgrim's return cannot fail to recall to our minds Sir Walter Scott's fascinating description of the Pilgrim's return in "Ivanhoe"—one can scarcely doubt but that he knew of the legend and adapted it to the needs of his delightful story. He often, I believe, visited friends in the County.

We find no further details of Thomas himself; one of his sisters became the wife of Jowerth, the father of the Great Llewellyn ap Jowerth.

It will be conceded that while tradition and legend both offer a very probable motive for the passing over of the elder brother; and fact supports it, yet that a great mystery does surround the whole history, and which tradition, legend and fact seem rather to hide and conceal than to penetrate. We note the name "Richard." It is the first time the name appears in the Family in England! There was a great intimacy between the Court and so loyal a Family as were the Corbets, and Richard was probably named after the King's son who was born about the same time. We note also that Robert the Baron did not fail to give his brother's name "Thomas" to his own first-born son, who was born 1182-3.

It is true that the tragedy of Becket's fate brought the name Thomas into prominence for a time, but this would have had no influence at Caus, whose lord was solely and wholly on the side of the King.

Let us sum up the evidence. Tradition and legend present us with a perfectly clear and intelligible, nay, probable, history of the separation of Wattlesborough, and the divergence and rise of the knightly family from the Baronial. And fact supports their evidence in three ways:—

By the fact of "Richard."

By the fact of his position and domicile at Wattlesboro'.

By the fact of his date and the subsequent history of his family.

Thomas the Pilgrim does not cross the page of our History again; but before taking up another subject, I should like to be allowed to record the history and the Pilgrim's motives as they present themselves to me. Their explanation appears to me simple, and one of by no means unusual occurrence at that date.

The spiritual phase of life must have been highly developed in the Pilgrim's home in Pontesburie; one of his brothers—"Walter"—was the recluse of Ratlinghope, working so much good that he even softened the heart of his stern nephew Llewellyn ap Jowerth towards him and his work; another, "William," was a Priest, and Thomas, the elder brother, as we may assume him, had also a like leaning towards the spiritualities of life, and determined to satisfy the craving for them by paying the vows he deemed desirable at the shrine of some Patron Saint. I deem it probable that the shrine may have been the shrine of St. Iago de Compostella, for about that date many Pilgrims crowded to it to pay their vows at its holy altars. This probability is also enhanced by the fact that later a descendant of the Pilgrim's chose this same shrine for his pilgrimage. Misfortunes very probably overtook our Pilgrim on the way, and for deliverance from them he would without doubt make renewed and fresh vows; and when at last he regained his own country and liberty, lo! it was to find the unexpected—the chief family honours and responsibilities fallen into the hands of his father's son and his younger brother Robert chosen Baron by the King; his own two sons also, Richard and Roger, were grown to man's estate; and thus urged by the necessity and justice of getting them recognised and certain lands and a position assigned them; he would determine to reveal himself and obtain these for them. These being accomplished and the need for action passed, he would relapse into the forgetfulness of the recluse, and be heard of no more. Even tradition tells us no more, and since these saintly persons really legally renounced all things in this world and became legally dead, it should not surprise us that the records have no further trace of the Pilgrim, nor that we find his son Richard taking his place as chief among the Vassals and Feudatories of the Barony of Caus and suffering with them the amercement spoken of before.

Richard's fine was for 20s., half of which was paid at once and the remainder in 1181. Some ten years later we find Richard of Wattlesborough and other chief men in the County attesting a very important document—a convention drawn up between Hugh the Abbot of Shrewsbury and John le Strange. Richard's younger brother Roger also signs this document and being designated therein "frater ejus" we are assured of his identity: though there were several Sir Roger Corbets living at this same time in Shropshire. The name is oddly spelt by the scribes in this Deed, they have written it "Corebette"—too many letters by half, one is tempted to exclaim.

A few years later again, 1195-6, we find both brothers (Richard and Roger) attesting a Charter of

CORBETS OF WATTLESBORO', RICHARD I. AND II. 219

William Fitz-Alan's. This Charter was executed in the reign of Richard I. It was a grant by William Fitz-Alan the lord Paramount to Fulk Fitz-Warin his under tenant, to sell Anderton to one Reyner de Lee. This Lee was close to Lilleshall Abbey. Eytton considers this Charter of such importance that he gives it in extenso. I will give the names of the witnesses, as these early generations of the Pilgrim's need all the corroborative evidences that can be quoted; and also because among the witnesses is another name of the greatest importance to the Corbets of Wattlesboro' and Moreton-Corbet, viz., the name of Bartholomew Toret. The witnesses are "Johanne Extraneo, Magistro Roberto de Salop, Reginaldo de Heding, Philippo filio Willielmi, Helia de Say, Waltero de Huggefeld, Henrico fratre ejus, Willielmo de Hedleg, Bartolomeo de Morton, Ricardo Corbet, Rogero fratre ejus, Widone de Sauberi, . . . Adam de Cherleton, et multis aliis."

Eytton considers that Richard's younger brother Roger died without heir about 1204. On King John's accession to the throne the dislike and loathing which he aroused amongst so many of his subjects soon took expression, and powerful bands of the discontented Barons were formed to enforce their demands and wring concessions from the unwilling King; as we know, this culminated in their crowning attainment, the signing of the Magna Charta of undying fame.

Richard of Wattlesborough and his close friend Bartolomew Toret, with many another Shropshire neighbour, the Dunstanvilles and Odo de Hodnet among them, and even Thomas, Richard's first cousin, the eldest son of the Baron of Caus, were drawn into the whirl of the public excitement and openly took cause against the King: so much so that the Sheriff of Shropshire writes to the King to inform him "that Bartolomew Toret and Richard Corbet of Wattlesboro' are among the seven Barons who still remain hostile to the King in Shropshire." Upon this the King renewed his urgent orders that active measures should be put in force for seizing their lands, which no doubt was effected; but a Close Roll of 1217 records that both Bartolomew Toret and Richard Corbet had returned to their allegiance in that year, and that orders had accordingly been sent to the Sheriff of Shropshire "to restore their lands and possessions." The end had been attained and Magna Charta signed!

And now we must call to mind the romance of the stealing of the papers from the Monks of Buildwas in the Abbey Foregate in Shrewsbury. Richard Corbet of Wattlesboro' was one of the assisting parties in that exploit, and was one of the sureties when the law stepped in and had to be reckoned with; the Lady Corbet who lived in the Abbey Foregate would be his aunt as well as his cousin's (Thomas the son of Robert the Baron of Caus). We find Richard Corbet of Wattlesboro' stood first witness to a Deed executed by his uncle and suzerain; it was probably arranged during the last years of Robert the Baron's life. It is the Deed in which Robert, for himself and his heirs, quit claims to the Abbey of Shrewsbury, the advowson of the Church of Wentnor, which "Roger" the Baron's uncle and predecessor had given to the Abbey of Shrewsbury. This Deed is ratified later by Thomas, after his accession to the Barony, and is again witnessed by Richard, though whether by this same Richard or his son is not proved.

The Abbey of Shrewsbury, speaking of it as an institution, was not nearly so extensive in area as were some of the sister institutions "round the Wrekin," though it occupied so central and important a position. For example, the walls of the Abbey of Shrewsbury enclosed a space of ten miles in circumference, while those of Haughmond boasted a circumference of twenty miles. The walls were high and embattled, with its principal and fine Gateway, placed in a line before the West Door of the grand old Abbey with its splendid window and tower, so that all might see it and its open door, inviting the faithful to enter and worship. This gateway I believe stood almost close to the entrance of the English Bridge, leaving only space sufficient for the intervening high road to right and left. The Infirmary was near at hand on the right on entering, and the mill further on again, near the stream. Every Abbey contained a great Hall for the Monks to dine in, the Oriel for the infirm, the Locutory or Parlour where they met for conversation, the Dormitory or sleeping-place, the Laundry and the Library, a Scriptorium or large room where the Monks performed those marvels of illuminating and transcription which are our admiration at this day: and here they transcribed books of all subjects for the enrichment and use of their library. The Sanctuarium was a place of refuge for debtors and criminals to fly to in case of need. A Gaol was also included in the necessary buildings for the discipline of incorrigible Monks. Lastly the Abbey contained an Oratory or place of Prayer. There were many other buildings within the walls connected with the housing of their labourers, farm requirements, gardens, fisheries, etc., which need not be enumerated.

Sir Richard the first of the Wattlesborough Corbets died shortly after the signing of the Deed last mentioned, and his son Richard, whom we will style Richard II., succeeded him. He it was who married Joanna Toret. One of this Richard's first acts was to execute a Deed of considerable

Harl. MSS.
1396 fo. 253.

Vol. I.
Chap. VII.
p. 38.

concession to Buildwas Abbey. I should take it safe to place the date of this Deed between 1223 and 1225. Richard states that he makes the concession "with the council and assent of his friends" (it is the concession of all Kynwerton to Buildwas Abbey) "as his six feoffees had already given it, only reserving to himself his chief rent." The witnesses are "Bartholomew de Morton, Vivian de Rossal, Baldwin de Hodnet, Gerard de Yvelithe, Geoffrey de Foleville, William Corbet, (Parson), and William de Baschirge." This concession, following as it did so soon after the large grant from Robert the Baron to the same Abbey in 1222, seems to tell its own tale and appears like another effort to appease those wily Monks of Buildwas, for the discomfiture of their plans in the Abbey Foregate.

King John, in placing himself in the Pope's power as he did, dealt a blow at his country and his country's religion which it took years to recover from. It forged the weapon which in after years found so firm a hand to grasp it in Simon de Montfort's, by loosening the tie of reverence and love which held all people to the Clergy and Religious Orders. These had been their friends; they now saw in them an extortionate greed and a rapacity which revolted them. And the ecclesiastics were not slow to follow the example of the Pope, and like him to spoil and extort.

Some verses of the day fully show how aware the people were of the avarice which had grown up. They reveal also how hotly the people resented the favour shown to the foreign clergy. "Once," says the song, "was the clergy

"Looked up to and free
Cherished and loved
None more could be.

"Now all enslaved
Trampled debased
They lie full low
I dare not name
Who gave them shame
Though help they owe.

"Neither Pontiff nor King
Think of other thing
Than how best to grasp and hold
The clergy's silver and gold."

Barons' War,
Blauwur.

Harl. MSS.
978.

The Pontiff, while exacting visits to the Holy See, knew also how to extract toll for the privilege. In a political song of the thirteenth century we have the following:—

"Rich givers may hope to speed with the Pope,
Of this be sure, 'tis no place for the poor
'Pay, pay's' the word, if you wish him yes to say
The Pope and his Brief and his Bull cry 'Pay,'
Cardinal, porter, and lacquey cry 'Pay.'
All echo 'Pay, pay,' and if one's left unfeed
All your right becomes wrong, your suit goes to seed.
Give these, give those, empty store after store:
Give freely to all, they beg a little more,
Come quick, ye fat unwieldy purses come,
Your costive bulk get physicked thin at Rome."

Henry III. found himself obliged to take hostages from the more openly discontented of his Barons as early as 1233, and being at Worcester he exacted one from Richard Corbet II. of Wattlesborough. The leanings of his father-in-law Bartholomew Toret and his suzerains the Dunstanvilles towards the liberal movement were too well known to permit of Richard's being passed over. A hostage was demanded, therefore, and his young son Roger, whom Eyton speaks of as a mere boy, was delivered over and given by the King to the charge of Walter de Lacy. We do not hear again of the little lad. Richard II. and his wife Joanna both appear to have died before Bartholomew Toret, as on the latter's death and the consequent division of the lands Joanna's heir appears

Rot. Cl.
17 Hen. III.
Memb. 8 dorso.

as her son Richard, Bartholomew's grandson. We must style him Richard III. to avoid confusion. The division of lands seems to have taken place about 1239.

As the Toret lands and inheritance hold such a very important place in the history of the Corbets of Wattlesborough and Moreton-Corbet, I think we should devote some lines to noting what we know of the family. The Toretts were Saxons. In the Domesday Survey they are represented by two brothers, Hunniet and Ulriet, and here and there a Toret seems to have held with them. This Saxon family appear to have held six large Manors. Some they appear to have retained after the Conquest; in others they were displaced, but seem to have received equivalents elsewhere. This considerate treatment shows them to have possessed a large amount of interest, power and influence. They were always, I believe, known to the Normans under the name Toret or Thoret. The name is continually in evidence attesting Deeds of importance. Peter Fitz-Toret (Bartholomew's father) lived certainly up to 1194. He had several sons, whose names we find with their father's on various Deeds, but only one (Bartholomew) who left issue. Philip and a younger son Walter predeceased their father. Peter Fitz-Toret had large interests in Yorkshire, where he had married an heiress, Lucia Haget, the daughter of Bertram Haget of Helagh in Yorkshire. This latter had several sons, one was Abbot of Fountains Abbey 1170 to 1190; but none left issue. Lucia, therefore, and her sister, who had married a Frisons, divided the inheritance between them and their heirs on the death of their father Bertram.

Eyton considers it probable that Peter Fitz-Toret died before his wife, and that she herself died in 1205. Her son Bartholomew's name is found on one of the Haget Charters in 1219; there the name is spelt Thuret. As evidence of the importance of the Yorkshire inheritance, Eyton mentions that in 1205 Bartholomew paid King John 20 merks as compounding for the sixth scutage, and adds that since he had no lands in Shropshire which would subject him to such a liability, it is evident that he then stood as his mother's heir. There were lands in other counties too besides Shropshire and Yorkshire. The Corbets inherited Houghton in Leicestershire from the Toretts, who held it from Ernald de Bois or de Bosco, and he from the Earl of Ferrars.

Richard Corbet III of Wattlesboro' became surety for Fulk Fitz-Warine, his neighbour at Alberbury, about 1239. A memorable year this for England, as her future king, Edward I, was born that year, and all England rejoiced. We have a few cursory notices of this Richard III. In 1241 he was appointed justiciar on a special Assize in the county in company with John le Strange. In 1243 we find he is fined two merks for licence to accord a suit which he had with the Abbot of St Peter-super-Dyvan concerning the advowson of Howcton in Leicestershire; and the same year Sir Richard Corbet is entered on the Shropshire Pipe Roll as paying two merks "pro licentia concordandi." I find no further entries concerning him.

He died 1255, but of his marriage we learn somewhat. He married an heiress, "Petronilla," who brought her husband land in Edgebolton or Edgebaldenham and Booley. I do not find any hint of her father's name. She survived her husband for some years. In the Pedigrees she is mentioned as Petronilla, Lady of Booley and Edgebaldenham. Booley was a member of the Manor of Lee Brockhurst, and was held at the Domesday Survey by Normannus Venor, brother to that Ulger Venor who was with our Roger Fitz-Corbet at the first siege of Bridgnorth Castle, when this latter defended it for his over-lord, Earl Robert de Belesme, against Henry I. This is interesting to remember, especially as the possessions of both brothers can be eventually traced to the Pichfords. Booley then was a member of the Manor of Lee Brockhurst, and Norman Venor gave it to the Abbey of Shrewsbury between the years 1226 and 1255. The Abbot of Shrewsbury settled the tithes of Booley on Hugh, Parson of Stanton for life; and this gives a little clue to the connection of interests between Booley and Edgebolton. This latter was a member of Great Wythford, which Eyton describes as a threefold Manor having certain joint lords, and these joint owners had, he considers, some connection with Stanton-on-Hine-Heath. These joint owners, the Fitz-Aers and the Rossalls, played their part in the threefold Manor, and among the rather confused accounts of their doings and of their tenants we find Petronilla's name as owning land. She, as Lady of Booley and Edgebaldenham, conveyed her estates in these places to her husband, Richard Corbet—the third of his name—of Wattlesborough. There are several Deeds in the Muniment Records at Acton-Reynold relating to these times and places and the people who lived in them. Sir Richard Corbet, Petronilla's husband, is himself a witness to one of them, in company with the familiar names of L'Estrange, Vivian de Rossall, de Say, etc.

In the Tenure Roll of Shrewsbury Abbey for 1255 it is stated that "Robert Corbet" (the son of Richard Corbet and Petronilla) "holds the Vill of Booley under the Abbot of Salop and he of

A.D. 1239.

Placita
Trin. Tm.
27 Hen. III.
Memb. 2 dorso,
1243.

Eyton,
Ant. Shrop.
Vol. IX.,
p. 365.

the King in Capite, and as within the liberties of Eyton " ; and in the Inquest held on his death in 1300 this tenure is stated to have been held by service of 5s. rent.

Petronilla's husband, Richard of Wattlesborough, died in 1255, and Robert, their eldest son, then of full age, succeeded him. Petronilla and Richard appear to have had three children : Robert, whom we have already mentioned ; another son, Richard styled of " Mailhurst " ; and a daughter, called Petronilla after her mother. She married Sir Thomas de la Lee. Many are the Deeds in the Muniment Room at Acton-Reynold relating to the doings of this Sir Thomas de la Lee and his wife Petronilla. Duke in his History of the County mentions that they had a son named Sir Reginald, who is said to have founded a Chantry to the Church of St. Leonard at Brugge (Bridgnorth). The younger son of Richard and Petronilla (Richard) lived apparently at Mailhurst, a member of the large Manor of Pontesburie, and which he would hold under the Fitz-Herberts and their suzerains, the Barons of Caus. He is not often referred to, and it would seem he died at a comparatively early age, for his widow " Amelia " is cited as having a suit of " nouvel dissieze " in the Assize of 1267, thus we know of her husband's death. His son Richard appears in the Records once or twice ; he signs the return of the estates to the demands of the Hundred Courts when they were valuing his uncle Robert's estates, and was a Juror in 1286 on a Pontesburie Inquest. He seems to have taken sides with the rebellious de Montfort, and later to have become a Knight Templar ; for I think it must be he who lies buried in the Priory Church at Great Malvern. Amelia, his mother, died in 1296, and her son evidently not long after. His tomb is described as having its sides and ends covered with tiles of yellow and red on which the arms are blazoned. It bears no date, but as it is described as the tomb of a Knight Templar we know that its date must be before 1312.

We have a few more words to write of Petronilla, the Lady of Booley and Edgebaldenham. She had a suit in 1272 in the Coram Rege against " Loretta," widow of Hunald, and Matilda, widow of Richard Purcel, for cutting down the trees of " Petronilla Corbet in the bosc of Weston." This Matilda is the lady whose husband Richard was killed in the fray with the men of Thomas the Baron of Caus. The story is told elsewhere. Eyton considers this Weston to be Binweston, and that Petronilla's son Robert surrendered Binweston in 1278 to Peter, the then Baron of Caus, for some equivalent. We remember that Peter settled Binweston on his daughter-in-law in 1295.

The male line of Booley soon became extinct ; in 1436, indeed, on the death of William de Boerly, who was for some time Speaker of the House of Commons, and Knight of the Shire for Salop, 1399 and 1410. The name seems spelt at times Booley, Boerley, and often Burley. It is an interest to the History to note the connection of individuals and families, and I will therefore remark that this William de Boerly's daughter Jane was wife to one of the Corbets of Leigh. (See Chapter X.)

Chap. X.

Now let us turn back some years to chronicle Robert Corbet's life, the son, as before said, of Richard III of Wattlesboro' and Petronilla. Robert was of full age, so says the Inquest, on the death of his father in 1255 ; yet for some unexplained reason he was not then a knight, nor indeed was he for several years afterwards, for which exemption he had to pay certain fines. He died in 1300, and we shall then find that he left his patrimony very considerably enlarged, the result both of inheritance and judicious purchase. We find him paying one merk in gold in 1258 for permission to defer making himself a knight. Soon after he appears to have given the hunting proclivities of the Corbet Family rather too loose a rein, which landed him in 1260 in the Sheriff's custody. It appeared that Robert Corbet, Thomas Hord his Senechal and Robert his huntsman had taken a hind (bissam) and, as it was said, in the King's forest ; and that Dawe de Morton and Robert de Stanton were present. His cousin Thomas the Baron came to the rescue in the Curia Regis and was able to procure his release, undertaking to produce him in Coram Regis to take his trial in case " any one had aught to urge against him." So Robert was released, and the case came on in the Forest Assize of 1262. The parties appeared. Roger Sprengnose and Richard de Petton stood sureties for Robert Corbet, who was fined 40s. ; this was, however, still due in 1267.

1258.

I think Robert was already married to his first wife, who was Catherine le Strange, daughter to John le Strange of Knocking. Very little is noted of her : she evidently died after a short married life and left no children. The Pedigree records her name, but Eyton takes no note of her. In May 1263 Thomas the Baron and Robert of Wattlesboro' were acting together in the Border warfare ; and considering the dangers of life on the Border, it does seem strange that Robert was allowed to postpone taking his knighthood for so long.

A Patent of June 1263 gives protection from all suits to Thomas Corbet, the Baron of Caus, and his retainers. These were Peter Corbet (Thomas's eldest son), Robert Corbet of Wattlesboro',

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. VII., p. 27.

Robert Blunde, Roger de Mersse, Stephen de Boulers, Will. Hager, William de Horton, John de Hanwode, Roger Gudmunde, Robert Pycot, William Pygot, Robert de Wytton, Robert Burnel, Hugh Hacher (probably Hager), Richard de Hop, Adam de Brerlawe, Roger Fitz-Baldwin, Alan Corbet, John de Cotes. This protection was accorded till the following November, or longer should the war last so long.

We may remember that our old friend the heroic Thomas the Baron was at this date just eighty ! Robert seems to have joined de Montfort's party of rebels on his return from this expedition, in company with some of his companions, also the Baron's retainers. His name is on a Charter evidently executed by one of these. It is a grant to the Priory of Alberbury by Robert Pygot son of William Pygot. Its date is Feb. 1264, and it gives a curious little detail of Border history. It is attested by Robert Corbet "as yet not a knight," "Roger de Mersse, Roger Fitz-Matthew, clerk, Thomas Hord." "Henry son of King John reigning, and Llewellyn son of Griffin, then with Griffin son of Wennunwen with no small army to devastate the Marches ; and especially to destroy Roger de Mortimer."

Griffin son of Wennunwen was Llewellyn's father, and nephew of Thomas Corbet the Baron of Caus. It is clear that Robert Corbet of Wattlesborough was not proof against the enticing words of his cousins the chiefs of the Welsh party. His disaffection, however, could not have been of very long duration ; the Battle of Evesham doubtless cleared the way for a return to his allegiance, and he was pardoned by the King. A Patent dated at Kenilworth in Sept. 1266 certifies that "Our faithful and beloved Thomas Corbet at our instance has restored to our faithful and beloved Robert Corbet certain lands in Adestone, and which he" (Thomas) "had seized on the ground of the late disturbances, and has remitted his rancour against the said Robert." Robert had unfortunately joined in a disorderly and rather serious raid on his suzerain's property, in company with sundry of the retainers who had joined the Welsh and de Montfort ; this was evidently before Robert's pardon, and it was a way of the times thus to retaliate on those who differed from them. Thomas was determined to read them a lesson, and among the Pleas classified as "Coram Rege," February 1267, is the following :—"Thomas Corbet presents himself against Odo de Hodnet, Robert Corbet, Robert Pycot, Roger de Mersse, Thomas Hord, John de Arundel, and Richard Pech, as to why under occasion of the disturbance of the Realm, they seized his (Thomas's) goods at Caus, Jokehull, Munsterleye, Worthen, Schelwe, and Aston." The Defendants did not appear ; indeed, we find that they had already made several such defaults. The Sheriffs sent word to say that they were now at St. Edmondsbury Coram Rege, with horses and arms. This was discovered to be quite false, they were again summoned for a day in three weeks of Easter.

Eyton does not find the result of this suit, only many adjournments, and in Hilary Term the King sent word to the Justices then sitting, that at the instance of Hamo le Strange "he had pardoned the Defendants for all their trespasses and would preserve them harmless against any person whatsoever."

Robert Corbet attested his cousin's grant for the Chapel of "St Margaret in the Vill of Caus" called "The free Chapel of Caus." This was one of the very last acts of Thomas the Baron's long life. Robert attested the Deed in company with Sir Brian de Brampton, the old Baron's son-in-law, and Sir Roger Corbett, whom I take to be the Baron's nephew, son of his brother William, the lord of Chaddeslee and Chetton : the remaining signature, as I said above, is Sir Robert's of Wattlesboro'.

From this date Robert's actions may be said to fall on the peaceful side of life, though it must be confessed that for the first years following the pardon of Kenilworth his actions and loyalty seemed so little trustworthy that the Baron thought it wise to keep him under his own surveillance at "Chaors," which Robert resented. In 1272 he is still represented by the Hundred of Ford "as not a knight." The Pedigrees give him a first and second wife. The first wife was Catherine le Strange, daughter of John le Strange of Knocking. She is not, however, further mentioned ; and his second wife was Matilda de Arundel called in the Pedigrees "de Tiddeshall," meaning Tettenshall.

As a good deal of property came into the family through her, we must give a little history of her and her property. Matilda was the daughter of John de Arundel. We find him witnessing a Charter to Buildwas Abbey in the year 1288, and he died in 1292. Later John de Arundel, who was Matilda's brother, entailed, subject to his own life, two parts of the Manor of Tettenshall and the Manor of Habberley on Robert Corbet and his wife Matilda, and the heirs of Robert ; in return they agreed to hold the property of John de Arundel at a rose rent. The lord of the Fee was then Peter Corbet Baron of Caus. A Feodary dated 1308 mentions only the mesne tenure of Peter

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. IV.,
PP. 353-4-

the Baron, viz., that he held the Manor of Tettenshull and Marebrok under the lords of Burford for half a knight's Fee. The Inquisition on Matilda's death in 1309 found her to have held the Manors of Tettenshull and Marebrok and Habberleye under Sir Peter Corbet for half a knight's Fee. The language of the Fine between John de Arundel, and Robert and Matilda, acknowledges the right of Robert to the premises, except three messuages and two virgates in Tettenshull and Habberleye, and for this concession they agree to pay the rent of a rose and to leave them to John for his life.

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. VIII.,
p. 100.

Robert seems to have been lucky in increasing his possessions. In 1284-5 Walter the son of Radulf de Stanton enfeoffed "Robert Corbet of Wattlesboro'" "and Matilda his wife of tenements in Lauleye" held under Peter de Eyton. Lawleye or Lauelel was a holding of the Saxon Hunniet's, and passed to his descendants the Toret's. Bartholomew Toret gave a virgate of land in Lawley to the White Ladies of Brewood. The gift was made with his sister's (Gundreda's) consent; she was evidently one of the Sisterhood. The Feodary of Kirby's Quest of 1284 says that Robert Corbet held half the Vill of Lawleye under William de Hodnet. The Inquest held on Robert's death shows him to hold both the inherited share, and the one purchased from Walter de Stanton. Robert of Wattlesborough also acquired land in Shawbury. A Giles de Erdington had played rather a noted part in Shropshire; he had died in 1269, after leaving a considerable benefaction to Shawbury Church, which was then in the hands of the Canons of Haughmond, and who had greatly impoverished it. Thus this gift of Giles de Erdington was much esteemed. He gave "to God and St Mary" for the sustenance of the Chaplain, who should be celebrating Divine Service in the Church of St Mary in Shawbury, in pure almoign and for the soul's health of himself and his ancestors and successors, a message and curtilages with a meadow and virgate of land of which seven acres lay upon Crokeforlonge, towards Tout, and nine acres lay between the lands of the Abbot of Lilleshall and the lands of Cherleton and Cresse-wel-broke. The witnesses were Sir John de Ercalewe, Sir John Fitz-Aer, and Sir Robert Corbet of Morton, knights. Sir Giles' son, Henry de Erdington, died in 1288; he married Matilda d'Albini. She held her Dower in Shawbury, half of little Wythylord and the Vill of Eesford. One Roger Pride held the Vill of Bessford of this Matilda; and he also seems to have had interests in Shawbury. These he appears to have made over to Robert Corbet and his wife Matilda. The original Deed of this transaction is at Acton-Reynold; this, together with its ancient date and the proximity of the places dealt with to Acton-Reynold, makes its interest too great to pass it over. The date of the Deed is about 1286. Roger Pride was apparently a prosperous burgher of Shrewsbury owning a good deal of town property, indeed one of the principal thoroughfares in Shrewsbury is to this day called Pride Hill.

Translation.

The Deed is as follows:—

"Know all present and to come that I Roger Pride of the borough of Shrewsbury have given and granted and by this present Charter confirmed to Sir Robert Corbet and Matilda his wife, for their service and for £200 sterling which they have given me before hand, all the Vill of Bessford and all my tenements in the same Vill, with all their appurtenances as in villenages, rents, natives with their chattels and their suit, and with all the wood, with fishponds and mills, and with all other things to the said Vill of Bessford pertaining, together with a certain message and a virgate of land, with all their appurtenances, which Roger de Bessford formerly held and Ivo de Solton now holds for the term of his life. To have and to hold of me and my heirs or my assigns, to the aforesaid Sir Robert Corbet and Matilda his wife, and their heirs or assigns therein or to whomsoever they wish to give bequeath or sell them, as well in sickness as in health, and to their heirs in fee and inheritance, by hereditary right, for ever, freely, quietly, well, and in peace, with all appurtenances, liberties, and easement's, far and near, to the aforesaid Vill of Bessford and the tenement pertaining as in homages, services, rents, wards, reliefs, escheats, suits of Court as well of free men as of rustics, and with free common pasture through all the Manor of Schawebury, and with all the stream of water of Roden belonging to the aforesaid Vill of Bessford and the tenement. Rendering therefor annually to me and my heirs, or my assigns one halpenny of silver at the Feast of St Michael in the Vill of Bessford, for all secular service, exaction, demand, custom, heriots, wards, reliefs, escheats, and for all foreign service, and for all other things which in any manner or right can be exacted or made of the aforesaid Vill of Bessford or the tenement, for ever. And if the said Matilda outlive Robert her Husband, she shall have and hold all the aforesaid Vill of Bessford, and the tenement aforesaid, with all their appurtenances, for the whole of her life, well and in good peace, doing therefor the aforesaid yearly service for all things. So that after her death all the aforesaid Vill and the tenement, with all their appurtenances, without any alienation or diminution, contradiction, or impediment fully and freely shall revert to the heirs of the said Robert or their

assigns. And I will warrant, acquit and for ever defend against all men and women, all the aforesaid Vill of Bessford and the tenement aforesaid, with wood, fishponds and mills, and with all other appurtenances, liberties, and easements aforesaid, as is aforesaid, to the aforesaid Sir Robert and Matilda, his wife, and their heirs, or their assigns therein, and their heirs. And that this my donation, grant and confirmation by the present Charter, may obtain firmness of endurance for ever, I have strengthened this present Charter with the impression of my seal. These being witnesses, Sir Walter de Hopton, Sir John Fitz-Aer, Sir William de Titueleg, Sir John de Lee, Sir Thomas Boteler, Sir Roger de Acton, Sir Peter de Eyton, Ivo de Saulton, Robert de Minekeshul, William Banastre and many others."

A second smaller Deed follows which is Roger Pride's notice of his sale, to his free men and Villains.

"Date 1286." The seal of this Deed is almost perfect, small, and round; on the shield is the letter "R" and four fleurs de lis. The Inscription is nearly perfect and runs . . . "GILL ROGERI PRIDE."

"Roger Pride Burgess of Salop to all free men holding of him and Villains and all others holding of him in his Vill of Besford and Schasseburie perpetual salutation in the Lord. . . . I give and concede in the Vill of Besford all that belongs to it, and rents, liberties, villanage, in the Vill of Schasseburie as well as Besford and all its gardens etc: to the aforesaid Robert Corbet de Morton and Maulde his wife, and their heirs in perpetuity etc."

14 Ed. I.

Robert Corbet of Wattleborough and Morton was already therefore married to his second wife Matilda de Tideshall; and also we find that he had at last become a knight, and that for some ten years past. His full military service was undertaken and performed in the train of his cousin Peter Corbet the Baron of Caus in the wars against Llewellyn of 1277. It is stated, I think by Duke in his History of Shropshire, that Peter the Baron gave his cousin, Sir Robert, Brough or Browe Castle near Newton as a reward for his valour and valuable services in that campaign.

Years were creeping on, and after that war we find him leading as busy a life in caring for the interests of his County and Country connected with civil matters as did his cousins. He received his Charter for a weekly market and an annual Fair for Wattleborough in 56 Hen. III. The market was held every Tuesday. The Fair was of three days' duration and held yearly on the Vigil, Day, and Morrow of St. James the Apostle. Similar grants followed for his other estates later. At Morton Toret, now beginning to be called Moreton-Corbet, the grant was made in 12 Edward I. Grants of Free Warren and wayf, etc., were also granted him at Besford.

A.D. 1284.

The Rev. D. S. H. Cranage, in his splendid volumes on the Churches of Shropshire, gives some interesting details of the Church of Alberbury, to which I must refer, as it was of course the Parish Church of Wattleborough, though at the time we write of Wattleborough had also a Private Chapel of its own, I believe. Alberbury, besides giving the name to the Parish, had been and was a good deal connected with Corbet life and history. The chief family, the Fitz-Warines, were the mesne tenants of the Barons of Caus, in which Barony Alberbury lay; and Thomas the Baron had had largely to do with the establishment there of the Grandmontine Priory and the granting of its Charters. Thus Corbet interest and sentiment would naturally turn a good deal towards Alberbury. Mr. Cranage gives a detailed account of this Chapel in Alberbury Church, which he believes to have been built either by the Robert Corbet of Wattleborough, of whom I am now writing, or by his grandson Robert of Edward III's reign. His reasons for thus considering either grandfather or grandson as the builder are the date as set forth by the architecture, and also that in the little church of St. Bartholomew at Moreton-Corbet—the later home of the Corbet Family—in there exists an almost exact replica of this Chapel at Alberbury. All the circumstances and surroundings of the case point, to my mind, to the elder Robert as the builder, rather than the younger. Robert the elder's interests and affections would centre more exclusively round Wattleboro', the actual home of his forefathers, and would lie in the country around on that side of Shrewsbury; his wife, Matilda de Arundel, with her interest in Habberley, would share his feelings. Moreton-Toret had evidently not yet become recognised as the Family's home, though we know that Sir Robert had considerably added to his lands there by the purchase of Bessford and the lands in Shawbury.

Let me now refer to Mr. Cranage's account of the Chapel in Alberbury Church. It was virtually the South Aisle, and is now known as the Loton Chapel, and several monuments to the Leighton family of Wattleboro' and Loton Park are to be found in it. Its buttresses are flat like those of Wattleboro', and when compared with the corresponding Chapel at Moreton-Corbet it will be found identical in size, situation, stone, every particular in short, save some variations in decora-

tion, and that the Chapel at Moreton-Corbet must be of some thirty years at least later date. Mr. Cranage is inclined to think, indeed, at one moment that both Chapels had the same builder, so remarkable is the similarity, and adds, "Robert Corbet was a very important man of his day and may well have built both Chapels," and gives the date of the Chapel at Alberbury as probably 1290, when it appears there is an official record of Church consecration at Alberbury by Bishop Swinford of Hereford. The Church itself must have been consecrated long before, being of much older date; this ceremony, therefore, must have concerned some considerable addition, which would well be the Chapel of the South Aisle. Both this Chapel and the one at Moreton-Corbet seem to have had for chief aim the providing of an additional Altar to the Church. There is a tomb recess in the main wall of the now Loton Chapel which Cranage considers coeval with the building, though the slab which covers it does not seem to have been made for the recess, into which it fits rather clumsily. Mr. Cranage considers this slab to have been the top of an altar tomb, and from its beauty and architectural characteristics he thinks it probably commemorates the burial-place of this elder Robert Corbet, who died in 1300.

In the list of "new oblations" for Warwick and Leicester entered for 1287 Robert Corbet is marked as having paid half a mark for having a Writ, and the following years he renders account as Sheriff of Staffordshire.

The Patent Rolls contain records of many Commissions of Oyer and Terminer in previous years: one in company with Walter de Hopton, another in the same year with R. Sprengelus; from this it appears Sir Robert had to withdraw, and a Master Thomas de Sudinton replaced him. Many others followed. In 1294 we find one was issued from Fareham to Bogo de Knowil, Robert Corbet and William de Tyttleye "touching the persons who broke the parks of Peter Corbet at Worthyn, and Minsterleye Co Salop, hunted in his free chase at Hochstowe and carried away Deer." We may remember that Sir Robert was declared of full age by the Jurors at the time of his father's death in 1255; his death occurred in 1300. The Jurors of the Hundred Court in which lay Houton, the Leicestershire property inherited from the Thorets, gave their evidence that "Robert Corbet held the Manor by service of $\frac{1}{2}$ a knight's Fee and that Thomas son of the same Robert is his son and heir and of the age of 19 years; also they say that the same Robert and Matilda his wife held the Manors of Bessford, Schawbury, Bleetheley, Halughton, Burleton, and lands in Habberleye, Tetneshull, and Marebrok."

Let us give one more entry from the Patent Roll. It is in 1295, and notes the "appointment of Robert Corbet knight and Master Adam Gest (Clerk) to assess and collect in the County of Salop the eleventh and seventh on moveables except on such as were exempted from the last tenth, and recently graciously granted in aid of the present war."

He received many Parliamentary Writs: one in 1295 summoned him to the Parliament which was to meet at Westminster on the Sunday after the Feast of St. Martin, but prorogued to the Sunday next before the Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle. The following year, 1296, he was returned to Parliament as knight of the Shire for Salop, the Parliament to meet at Westminster in three weeks of St. John the Baptist. In 1297 he was returned from the County of Salop as holding lands or rents to the amount of £20 yearly value and upwards "either in Capite or otherwise and as such summoned under the General Writ to perform military service in person, with horses and arms etc. in parts beyond seas. The muster to be in London on Sunday next after the Octaves of St John the Baptist."

As we stated before, Sir Robert's second wife was Matilda de Tiddeshall, etc., the heiress of the Arundel family of those parts. She and her husband had three sons, possibly too some daughters; but it is very difficult in these early days to discover anything about the ladies of the family. The eldest son was Thomas, born December 25th, 1281. The second, we may conclude from a second Inquisition, was born May 25th, 1284. The younger, John, was born later. We must refer to him and his descendants in a later page, as eventually he seems to have been given interests in his mother's lands and Dower of Bessford, Tetenhull, Marbrok, etc.; suffice here to record his birth merely. Thomas succeeded to his father, and in the Inquest is given as of the age of nineteen in 1300, the year of Sir Robert's death. The grant of Free Warren in Wattlesborough and Moreton was granted to Sir Robert by a Charter of Edward I's, dated from Rhuddlan 1284, "provided the demesnes were not within the boundary of the Forest."

We must record an agreement between Peter the Baron and Robert of Wattlesborough and Moreton, though it takes us back a little in date—to the year 1278. The Deed was executed in that year, and refers to Cardiston and Loton. They (Cardiston and Loton) were at that date already attached to Wattlesborough, but a Fine was levied at Westminster in the November of

1278; it was probably intended as a recognition or delimitation of Robert of Wattleborough's largely increased interest in the Barony of Caus. The Fine purports to be between Robert Corbet, Plaintiff, and Peter Corbet, Tenant of the Manors of Caus, Yokethull, Munsterleye, and Wordyn, whereof Robert acknowledged the whole to be the right of Peter, who conceded to Robert the tenement called The Haye of Loton and the tenement which Robert held in Braggynton in Wales, on the day of this concord; to hold to Robert and his heirs for ever, doing for the same and for all other tenements which he held under Peter on the aforesaid day the service of one knight's Fee. Peter reserved to himself and his heirs free liberty of hunting in the Haye, "so that no damage be done to corn"; and Robert was to have power to assart in the same district. It is most interesting to record this agreement; it is an illustration of how carefully the old compact between the brothers, Thomas the Pilgrim and Robert the Baron, was kept and carried out by their descendants as the years rolled on.

Robert of Wattleboro' seems to have had a special talent for accumulating land and enlarging his borders on all sides; he had interests in Lacon and Soutlon. The two Manors lay close together, and the latter, Soutlon, belonged to the Chapel of St. Michael in the Castle of Shrewsbury at Domesday. In October, 1271, "Richard de Sarre," Parson of the Church of St. Michael in Shrewsbury Castle, "impleaded Robert Corbet at Westminster, for the purpose of obliging him to render right and customary service for the free tenement which he held under the said Parson in Suleton and Lach; to wit the Parson complained that whereas his predecessor William had been siezed, in the present reign" (Henry III's) "of 5s rent receivable from Robert Corbet, for the aforesaid tenement, Corbet now detained 2s thereof." The suit had been adjourned to October, 1272. Meanwhile Robert Corbet had appealed to a trial of "Grand Assize" as to whether he held by 3s. rent or 5s. rent. At the "Iter" then in progress Robert Corbet repeatedly offered himself as Defendant in the Cause; but as often Richard de Sarr' failed to appear. So judgment went at last for Robert Corbet by default—i.e., he was henceforth to hold by a rent of 3s., not 5s. The Feodary of Bradford Hundred for 1284 says, "William de Laken holds the Vill of Laken of Robert Corbet, and Robert Corbet holds it of the King's Chapel in Salop Castle."

I am about to notice a Deed executed in 1290 by one Walter de Alyburie in which he alienated whatever lands he held in Eaton and Ambaldeston to the Burnells. The interest of this lies in the names of the witnesses, who all seem to have been rather important people. They were Sir John le Strange, Sir Peter Corbet, Sir Robert Corbet, Sir Peter Pauncefot, Sir Roger Sprengnose, Sir William de Stapleton, knights; and others.

Robert Corbet witnessed many Deeds for his friends in these late years. One was for Philip, lord of Penynton, who gave two meadows to Hagmon Abbey (overmedewe and nethermedewe) and five seyllons in Penynton. John de Ercalewe, John Fitz-Aer, and Robert Corbet, knights, are the witnesses to this. Just before the year 1300 William de Ercalewe reiterated the grant of tithes to Brewood Nunnery which had been made by his grandfather. Sir Robert Corbet of Wattleboro' and Morton is the witness. On the 6th June, 1300, Robert sat as knight and Juror on the Great Forest Perambulation of the County, and this was probably his last public service.

Before recording his death and the account rendered of him at the "Inquisitionis Post Mortem" let me refer again to some of his lands, and give some few details gathered from the cuttings of an old Shropshire newspaper of some forty years ago, written by one signing himself "Historicus." Moreton-Toret, we there learn, began to be recognised for the first time as Moreton-Corbet. Some places, however, still kept up the old affix of Toret: such was Preston-Toret. Robert had some questions here with the Hundred Jurors, who, as they were so often wont to do, questioned his rights and privileges, chiefly as to Free Warren; and our old acquaintance Hugh de Louthur was sent down to Shropshire to watch the King's interests. This was in Plimhill Hundred. Robert showed his evidence and the Jurors confessed themselves mistaken; but he was not so fortunate with his Manor of Evelith, near Shifnal, where he was among the Birmestree Jurors. Here Robert produced the King's Charter granting him Free Warren in Wattleboro' and Morton, and asserting that Evelith had always been attached to Morton. Unfortunately Evelith was not mentioned by name, and Hugh de Louthur insisted that Evelith being distant ten leagues from Morton, it was manifest that it could not have been included. The Jurors' decision went with the Lawyer's. It may be remarked that Evelith lay close to the border of the Royal Forest of the Wrekin, or Mount Gilbert, as it was then called, and in close neighbourhood to a deer park and a deer leap. "Historicus" points out that this latter was a sort of cul-de-sac adjoining the edge of the park, with a fence supposed to be deer-proof, but with an inlet lowly fenced and a drop down by which stray animals could be captured. The old name of the Wyk is suggestive of this.

Eyton.
Ant. Shrop.
Vol. IX.
PP. 352-3.

Evelith was on the river Worfe, and so game of all sorts and fish abounded there. Sir Robert held Evelith under John de Chetwynd, and the hamlets of Hemme and Hynyton (Hinnington) under the lords of Ideshall ; these lands were, of course, part of the Toret inheritance, and Evelith in those days was a very much more important place and possession than it is now. There was a Manor House and a Chapel ; near to where stood the house is a place still called " Chapel yard." Still more curious is a wall carved out of the sandstone rock to support the roof of one of the buildings, and a series of caves scooped out of the rocks, in every way worthy of the attention of the antiquaries. Sir Robert Corbet appears to have kept these places as his storehouses, and a case occurs in the County Assizes of September, 1272, wherein the Brimstree Jurors say " that John Yvelith had broken open the Grange of Robert Corbet." The accused was found guilty and outlawed.

Sir Robert left three sons by his second wife Matilda, who outlived him. Thomas the elder succeeded his father and Fulk became a Priest ; we hear of him at Cardiston, and later also at Culmington, Ightfield and Lichfield.

The Inquisition Post Mortem records Robert's death thus :—" 1301 Robert of Morton, extent of Wattlesborough Manor, with Members, place of land in Brodeshill, 56s of rent in Cardiston, 24s rent in Leghton, 4 10s rent in Le Haye juxta Wattlesborough, divers rents of assize of tenements in Bragginton, extent of Morton Manor, rent in Kymerton, extent of Preston Manor, extent of Boleye, rent in Laueleye, extent of Evelith, extent of Hemme, extent of Hyneton, extent of Besford Manor, 2 marks of land in Shawbury, 2 virgates of land in Edgebaldenham, Vill of Blechele, extent of Halnaghton Manor, half a virgate of land and meadow assart in Burleton, tenements in Laueleye, Habberleye, Tetnesball, Marbrok, 4 bovates of land in Loughton, a messuage and virgate of land in Marston, tenements in Castel foregate in the suburb of Salop, 11 acres of land with meadow in Breddeshill, a messuage and three acres of land in Petton, a messuage and six acres of land in Morton Mill, Co Salop, extent of Hogton Manor Co Leicester."

At the settlement in 1301, after Robert's death, it was found that he and his wife Matilda had been enfeoffed in two virgates of land in Edgebaldenham by John de Upton, which two virgates Robert had held in capite under Hugh Fitz-Aer at a rent of one pair of white gloves yearly.

The estates have become so largely extended in this Sir Robert's lifetime that we shall do well to chronicle what the Hundred Courts record of them. The first notice is on Robert's succession in 1255 and concerns the Toret inheritance alone.

" SULETON. one hide geldable the lord of the Vill Yvo de Suleton holds it on chief of Robert Corbet and does suit to the Hundred at the Sheriff's tourn twice a year and gives 4d to stewartard.

" MORTON. geldable one hide half a knight's Fee of the Fee of John de Chetwind, gives to stewartard 4d and also does suit to the Hundred every three weeks ; lord of the Vill Robert Corbet.

" SCIRLEG. The Abbot of Buildwas bought a motiety of Scirleg : of Osbert de Scirleg : to wit half a hide and was accustomed to do suit to the Hundred every three weeks, and he took away that suit 12 years ago to the King's damage yearly of 2s. Randolph de Coleman holds a virgate of land in the same Vill of the same Abbot of Buildwas, and the Prior of Wenlock holds in the same a nook of land of the same Abbot and afterwards the said Abbot bought of the said Osbert the lordship of the whole Vill except the land and service of the said Randolph de Coleman and the said Vill owes 4d for stewartard ; the said lands which Ranulf de Coleman and others hold, contain in themselves another half hide of land. The suit of the said Abbot being taken away, it is worth yearly 2s and he holds it in chief of Adam de Brinton who holds it in chief of the King and of Robert Corbet."

" LAUELEG. with appurtenances ; one and a half hides Robert Corbet holds a motiety of the Fee of John de Chetwind. Ralph de Stanton holds two virgates of land in the same Manor of the Fee of Wemme, The white Nuns of Brewood hold in the same a virgate of land of Robert Corbet of the gift of Bertram Turret with Gundre his Sister ; and does suit to the Hundred at the Sheriff's tourn twice a year and gives to stewartard 4d."

" BLECHELEG. Robert de Blecheleg' holds Blecheleg' of Robert Corbet of Morton, paying yearly 12s and it is one and a half hides, of stewartard 6d of Motfee 6d ; and Robert lord of Blecheleg' sues to the County and Hundred for the whole Vill."

" The verdict of the Hundred of Forde by these underwritten Robert Pigot, William de Horton, Richard Corbet junior " (of Mailhurst).

" Also Robert Corbet holds three hides in Cardel (Cardiston)."

" WETTLESBURGH and LOGHTON, geldable, of the Barony of Caus and does suit to the County and Hundred."

Inq. P.M.
29 Ed. I.
No. 45.

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. IX.,
p. 322.

Bradford
Hund.

Ford Hund.

THOMAS CORBET, KT., & SON ROBERT II., KT. 229

"Also Richard Corbet of MATHELHURSTE holds half a hide in Mathelhurst within the two hides which Reginald Fitz-Peter (Herbert) holds of the same Barony and does suit to the County and Hundred."

"MAREBROKE. John de Arundel holds a hide of land in Marebrok of Sir Thomas Corbet for half a knight's Fee and sues to the Hundred." We may remember that this was settled on John de Arundel's brother-in-law, Robert Corbet, and held for John's life only.

"PRESTON TORET." "Also they say that Robert Corbet holds in Preston Toret one and a half hides geldable and it is of the Fee of John de Chetwynde by doing service of half a knight's Fee for forty days with his other lands in Salop at Whitchurch, and he owes suit to the County and Hundred and owes of Motfee and Stretward 6d."

"They say that the Abbot of Hawemon holds half a hide in LA SCUTTLE of Thomas Corbet for the service yearly of 4d and does suit to the Hundred of Posselawe and it is geldable. They also say that the Abbot of Buildwas holds one and a half hides in Kin'iton of Roger"—surely here Robert is meant—"Corbet of Wattlesboro' by the service of 20s yearly and does a third part of a knight's Fee in time of war at Kaos."

Hund. of
Posselawe.

Matilda Corbet died in the year 1309. The Inquisition on her death states her to have held at her death Bessford Manor, Tetneshull, Marbrok, Habberleye Manor, Blecheleg' Vill, Balisley Vill, this latter in the Marches of Wales. So then Bausley or Balisley, which at one time had caused so much dispute with the Fitz-Warines, had now finally returned in its entirety to the Corbet Family.

We have mentioned before that Robert and Matilda had three sons. Thomas was born Dec. 25th 1281, and Fulco born in May 1284. This latter became a Priest. He was instituted to the Church of Cardiston June 20th 1304, at the Presentation of the Abbot and Convent of Wigmore. In 1311 we find him Rector of Cullmington. Another notice of him mentions that he resigned the Rectorship of Ightfield in 1323. This is explained by an entry in "Papal Letters."

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. VII.,
p. 112.

"Calendar of Papal Registers."

"To Fulk Corbet. Provision of a canonry of Lichfield, with reservation of a Prebend, notwithstanding that he is Rector of Ightfield, in the said Diocese.

1323.
Avignon
(f. 218d).

"Concurrent mandate to the Abbot of Haumon, in the said Diocese, the Archdeacon of Nottingham, and Master Benedict de Paston, a Papal Chaplain, canon of Exeter."

Thomas the elder son carried on the succession; his life was but a short one, for he died the year after his mother, in 1310, at the early age of 29. He left one child, a son named Robert, born Dec. 25th 1304. Habberleye came to Thomas from his mother, Matilda de Arundel, who was clearly the recognised heir of the Arundels of Tetneshull, Marbrok, Habberleye, etc. On her death, evidently, Thomas settled Habberleye on his son Robert; as we find it stated by Inquest that he (Thomas) and his son Robert had acquired from Sir John le Strange of Ercalewe, the Manor of Habberleye to hold to Thomas and Robert and the heirs of Robert, under Sir Peter of Caus, by service of one knight's Fee. "This," says Eyton, "was obviously a settlement made through the medium of a Trust of John le Strange as Feoffee-in-Trust." We find also from Eyton that on the self-same day Thomas made an exactly similar settlement of Wattlesboro'. Young Robert had a very long minority, and thus it is that in the "Nomina Villarum" of 1316 the seignorial lord of Habberleye, Peter Corbet Baron of Caus, is enrolled as lord of the Vill. He was Guardian of the young heir Robert and had the custody of his Ward and his lands.

Not much is known of Amice, Thomas's wife. Dodsworth gives a reference of her connected with her Dower in the lands of Leicestershire. "Amice late the wife of Thomas Corbet seeks against William de Bosco guardian of the land and heir of Thomas Corbet of Moreton, a third part of the Manor of Hoghton as her Dower, with appurtenances also as Dower."

3 Ed. II.

The young Robert probably spent the whole of his early life at Caus with his Guardian. He received a Writ dated from Kenilworth 1326 from the unfortunate Edward II. permitting him as a special favour to defer the taking of his knighthood till the following Michaelmas, and as in the following year, 3rd Feb. 1327, we read that "the King has taken the homage of Robert Corbet son of Thomas Corbet deceased" we may infer that the ceremony had meanwhile been gone through.

The principal insignia of a knight were a horse, a gold ring, a shield, a lance, a belt and sword, gilt spurs, and a gold chain or collar. This taking of knighthood was so prominent and special an event to the young man of the day that it is of real interest to try and realise what it meant. Selden and Grose both give details of the ceremony in their books on Heraldry, and there is a charming account of the ceremony amongst the Cotton MSS. Let us note here what of good the position of knight had to offer to its votaries, beyond the possession of so goodly a panoply. The compelling force of chivalry may be said to have attained its zenith with the Crusades and with the

religious fervour which then environed her knights ; this lasted some couple of hundred years, though it began perceptibly to fade by the fourteenth century. Thus we read of those who should have become knights becoming slack here and there in taking up this distinction, till gradually, though still very gradually, to do so became more a question of payment of fees, than fruitful of any personal honour. But at first it was not so ; and the admitting ceremonies, though they grew to be curtailed and to consist of two " offices " for the admittance, the shortened and the more elaborate observance, still always included, both of them, more or less of religious ceremonial. Chivalry was a social institution, and knighthood a necessary part of it.

Knights, apart from those belonging to some particular Order, were of two kinds—knights Bachelors, and knights Banneret. All knights whether Bachelor or Banneret were escorted by their Squires, and every knight bore his Pennon on his lance : this was forked or pointed at the end, and had his arms blasoned on it. The Squire bore a smaller edition of his knight's, but ending in a tail or streamer. The knight Banneret carried a Banner instead of the Pennon, blasoned with his arms like the knight bachelor's but square, and it was probably larger. The Banner denoted a knight of greater importance and authority than the knight Bachelor. Since the young Robert Corbet, whose life we are about to chronicle, lived through the reign of our Edward III., certainly one of the greatest of our fighting monarchs, and whom Robert served as one of his trusty knights Banneret, we feel sure all martial matters held an intense interest for him throughout his life ; and we will glance at what was considered an Army of fighting men in those days.

The Constable of England and the Marshal or Marshals held the chief commands under the Sovereign. Attendant on them were the Heralds who formed the officers of the Military Court wherein offences committed in Camp or Field were tried and judged. Their duties were also to carry orders and messages, deliver challenges, call truces, and identify the number of wounded and slain on the field of battle. The chief divisions of the army were distributed under the Royal and other principal Standards. The smaller divisions again were placed under the Banners of the Barons and the knights Banneret, and again smaller divisions under the Pennons of the knights Bachelor : thus the knight Bachelor and the knight Banneret were both equally knights, but the latter was of greater distinction and authority : and where more than one Pennon was seen floating in the breeze in a company it denoted the leader of that company as perforce a knight Banneret. The Squire was also a combatant, which the Page was not, yet many Squires passed their whole lives as Squires, from want of means to support the costs and charges of knighthood. In the ordinary course of education the successive conditions of Page and Squire were passed through in boyhood and youth. Every feudal Court and Castle was in fact a school of chivalry, in which the sons of sovereign or vassal or feudatory and vassal, and frequently also the sons of allies and friends, took their places and followed its training and its moral and physical discipline.

The young Robert Corbet of Wattlesboro' and Morton will have spent his days of training under his guardian's eye in the stately halls of Caus Castle ; alas, that its days of influence were so soon to be past ! We will consider our little Robert's life whilst he is still under the shadow of the familiar walls, and whilst he fills up his tale of days there as Page, and then later as Squire.

As Page or Damoiseau he began his service and instruction when between seven and eight years old, and this initial phase was not over for another seven or eight years maybe. During this period he acted as the constant personal attendant of the lord of the Castle and his lady. He would wait on them in their Hall, he accompanied them in the chase, served the lady in her bower, and followed his lord to camp. He was taught the rudiments of religion and rectitude and love by the Chaplain, and from his Lady and her damsels. He learnt the elements of military exercises from his Guardian and his Squires : how, in short, to cast the spear or dart, how to sustain a shield and to march with the measured tread of the soldier ; he learnt too the mysteries of the woods and rivers from the huntsmen and the falconers ; and then, when between fifteen and sixteen, he became a Squire.

At first his life was not so much changed in its daily routine, save that he served and carved the dishes, proffered the first or chief cup of wine to his Guardian and the guests, carried them the basin and ewer and the napkin when they washed their hands before and after meat. It was for him to help in clearing the Hall for the dance or for the Minstrels ; for him to lay the tables for chess or draughts ; for him to bring his lord the " vin de couche " at night, and prepare the early morning refectation at dawn of day. He had to accustom himself to ride the great horse, to tilt at the quintain, wield the sword and battleaxe, train himself to bear the weight and embarrassments of armour. Squires would often inure themselves voluntarily to extremes of heat and cold, to stretches of hunger and thirst. And then the Squire chose his lady-love, whom he was

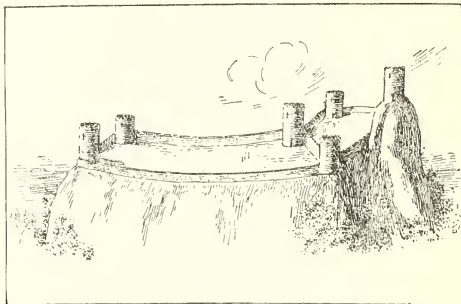
expected to regard with an adoration at once earnest and respectful ; and when at last the Squire was sufficiently advanced in all these varied accomplishments and learning, he took his sword to the Priest, who laid it on the Altar and blest it before returning it to him. Then truly—oh ! joyful day ! for we may be sure it was such to young Robert—did the Squire become a squire of the body, an armiger or scutifer, who might bear his lord's shield and armour to the field. To him would then fall the task, of no small difficulty, to encase and secure his knight in his panoply of war, and assist him to mount his charger. To him fell the duty to display in battle and guard the Banner of the knight banneret or Baron, or the Pennon of the knight bachelor ; it was his to raise him from the ground if unhorsed, to supply his own or a fresh mount when needed, to fight by his side when over-matched, to receive the prisoners, to rescue him and bear him to a place of safety when wounded, and if killed to bury his lord honourably. Then when these dangers and vicissitudes had been lived through with honour, as they presented themselves during these six or seven years, then came the moment of all others—the moment for the real entrance into manhood, and for the Squire to become a knight.

In the spring of the year 1326, when our young Robert was just twenty-two, he received a Writ from his Royal Master Edward II, dated at Kenilworth, advising him that as a special favour he would be permitted to defer the ceremony of knighthood till the autumn. Since we have followed his days of Page and Squirehood in the courtly halls of Caus Castle, let us assume that his knighthood was achieved there also, and with the same courtly ceremonies to which he would be accustomed, and let us describe them. The inauguration was begun the previous evening by placing the candidate under the care of "two esquires of honour, grave and well seen in courtship and nurture and also in feats of chivalry," "who were to be his governors in all things relating to him." Under their direction a barber first shaved him and cut his hair. His governors then conducted him to his appointed chamber, where a bath was prepared, hung within and without with linen, and covered with rich cloth, into which, after being undressed, he entered. Two ancient and grave knights here attended him "to inform, instruct and counsel touching the order and feats of chivalry" ; which done, they poured some of the water over his shoulders, signing the left shoulder with the sign of the Cross, and retired. He was then taken from the bath by the governors and put into a plain bed without hangings, in which he remained till his body was dry, when the two governors put on him a white shirt and over that a robe of russet with long sleeves, having a hood thereto like unto a hermit. The two ancient and grave knights then returned and led him to the Chapel, the squires going before them "sporting and dancing and with the minstrels making melody." And when they had been served with wines and spices they went away, leaving only the candidate for knighthood in his russet garb, the esquires, the Priest, the chandler, and the watch, who kept vigil of arms until sunrise, the candidate passing the time "bestowing himself in orisons prayers etc." At daybreak he confessed to the Priest, heard matins and communicated in the Mass, offering a taper and a piece of money, stuck in it as near the lighted end as possible ; the first (the taper) was to honour GOD, the second (the money) to the honour of the person that maketh him a knight. Afterwards he was conducted back to his chamber, and remained in bed until the knights, esquires and minstrels came to arouse him. The knights then dressed him in distinctive garments, and they then mounted their horses and rode to the Hall where the knighthood was to be conferred. His future Squire rode before him bareheaded, bearing his sword by the point in its scabbard, with the spurs dangling from the hilt. When all was prepared, the Prince or subject who was to knight him came into the Hall, and the candidate's sword and spurs being presented to him, he delivered the right spur to "the most noble and gentle knight" present, and directed him to fasten it on the candidate's right heel ; which he, kneeling on his knee, accordingly did, signing the candidate's knee with the Cross ; and in like manner by "another noble and gentle knight" the left spur was fastened to his left heel ; and then he who was to create the knight took the sword and girded him with it, and then, embracing him, he lifted his right hand and smote him on the neck or shoulder, saying, "Be thou a good knight," and kissed him. When this was done, the company all went to the Chapel with much music, and the new knight, laying his right hand on the altar, promised to support and defend the Church, and ungirding his sword offered it on the altar. And as he came out from the Chapel there awaited him the master-cook at the door, and claiming his spurs as his fee, and said, "If thou dost aught contrary to the order of chivalry (which GOD forbid) I shall hack thy spurs from thy heels." These lengthy ceremonies became much shortened and superseded as time passed, and gradually little remained of the original observances but the accolade, save for the inauguration of the knights of the special Orders. Gilt spurs were part of the knight's insignia, as were silver

or white metal spurs for the Squires. The knights Banneret were supposed to command at least from fifty to one hundred horsemen.

Let us picture Sir Robert now leaving the Castle after the finish of all ceremonies. The home of his long minority—the Barony of Caus—had just come to an end and aliens in name ruled in the ancient Halls. He left it for the shade of his own beloved Halls of Wattlesborough—the scene of many an exploit and of such romantic memories!

His own father, whom he would but dimly remember, bore the Pilgrim's name, and he, like the Pilgrim's other descendants, must in all probability have been born at Wattlesborough. We can readily picture him listening eagerly in the long winter evenings to the recitations of the Family's romance and legend, and no doubt the echoes of these memories determined him in after years to follow in his Ancestor's (the Pilgrim's) footsteps and choose the shrine of St. Iago di Compostella as the aim of his own pilgrimage. Already somewhat of the influence of Caus, where the Barony had ceased to exist, had begun to gather round Wattlesborough and Morton; and we find Robert, scarcely of age, in sole command of his position and singularly alone, when his public life opened to him. He received various Writs during the years 1324-5 empowering him "to select and array knights in the County of Salop," "required to perform military service in Gascony." The Commission was issued to him by the ill-fated Edward II. In December of that year he received "certain marching orders" relating to the various detachments. Fresh



CAUS CASTLE

instructions again awaited him early in 1325 concerning "the prorogations of the general muster previously ordered for Portsmouth"; this was in February of the new year. Such conflicting orders may well have been embarrassing. Again he received orders in May "to suspend the marching orders of the detachments"; and in September again we find him ordered to "inspect the levies of the County of Salop so that they continue fit for service." This is the last of this batch of records, and the extremities to which the unhappy King was reduced are indeed sadly reflected in them. The next year our young Robert had the leisure for the taking up of his knight-hood; then followed the terrible tragedy of Berkeley Castle, and Robert was very soon after sent abroad.

I will first quote a Deed which was most probably executed some time during these last years. It is mentioned in the Catalogue of Ancient Deeds. It is a release by Robert Corbet of Morton to John Ulborn of Tottenburie of his right in John, son of Roger Herbert of Houton, formerly his bondman, for the consideration of two merks. The witnesses were local people, Robert de Stanton, Roger de Preston, and Robert de Coventre (Pistore).

Sir Robert's homage was soon given and taken. "The King," we read, "has taken the homage of Robert Corbet, son of Thomas deceased, dated 3rd Feb. 1327."

The King had very speedily need of his new knight, for we find him sent for service "beyond seas" on the Commission intrusted to William Earl of Northampton in the following October.

ROBERT II. OF WATTLESBORO' & MORETON CORBET 233

The Commission was to Philip, King of France, to treat with him touching King Edward's right to that Crown; and letters of Protection were granted to our young Sir Robert. I presume that he was absent about a couple of years, and that immediately on his return he set on foot the necessary arrangements for carrying out the Pilgrimage already spoken of. The first arrangement to be made was to choose and appoint fitting persons to represent him in his absence. Accordingly we find, "Robert Corbet of Morton knight going on pilgrimage to Santiago, has Letters nominating John de Watenhull, clerk, and William de Acton, his Attorneys in England, until the Feast of St Peter ad Vincula." Richard Hord, who also accompanied him, was his Squire, and received Letters. The next stage in the arrangements brings us to April, when we find the record, "To William de Clynton, Constable of Dover Castle and Warden of the Cinque Ports, or to him who supplies his place in the Port of Dover." "Order to allow Robert Corbet of Morton who is going on pilgrimage to Santiago by the King's licence, to cross from that port with his men, horses and equipments." "By the King." Morton, we note, had become equal in dignity with Wattlesborough, and Robert is officially designated by that name. When alluding to local matters we had perhaps better distinguish him as Robert II. We find that he held Routon and Ambaston under Nicholas Burnel by service of £9 per annum. This was verified at the Inquest on his death in 1375. But to return to the Pilgrimage about to start.

There were very urgent reasons for undertaking this Pilgrimage without delay, quite apart from the desire to visit the scene of his forefather's (the Pilgrim's) devotion, with which we have credited Robert, though there can be no doubt that it determined the shrine at whose Altars his vows were to be paid. A reference to the Calendar of Papal Registers gives us the clue to the haste of the proceedings. It was no other than the question of the validity of his marriage, which I think must even then have taken place, and to the dismay of the young knight and his Bride they were discovered to be within the prohibited degrees of affinity. Here was indeed a case of most urgent necessity for the finding of some means wherewith to appease the ecclesiastical wrath, for inclining the ear of the Holy See to listen favourably to their entreaties, and to soften the rigour of its judgment towards them. Robert's uncle Fulk had just received the distinction of the Lichfield Canonry and Prebend, and no doubt he brought to bear what influence he could on his nephew's behalf.

The Pilgrimage was entered upon with all speed, the special shrine of St. Iago di Compostella, hallowed by the memory of the Pilgrim Forefather, was chosen, the necessary heavy and abundant fees would be duly paid, and we find that the sacrifice was duly accepted. The Holy Father was pleased to withdraw his prohibition, and Robert and his young wife Elizabeth received the following dispensation from the Pope:—"To Robert Corbet lord of the town of Morton in the diocese of Lichfield and Elizabeth daughter of Fulk Le Strange, seneschal of the Duchy of Aquitaine." "Dispensation to remain in the marriage which they contracted in ignorance that they were related in the fourth degree and declaring their past and future offspring legitimate." Papal Letters, Vol. II, 1305-1342.

When Robert returned from his Pilgrimage, he seems to have passed some time at Wattlesborough, and it is during this stay at Wattlesborough that I think he was maturing his plans for building a Chapel at Moreton-Corbet in every way identical with the Chapel or South Aisle of the Parish Church of Alberbury, built, as I conceive, by his grandfather Sir Robert Corbet, and where indeed it is also probable that this latter was buried. The then Abbot of Haughmond appears to have been rather fond of disputes, and the projected building of this new Chapel at Moreton-Corbet may have been the real cause for the activity of his wrath against Robert II. just at this time. This latter, however, seems to have taken no notice of the angry Abbot and remained quietly on at Wattlesborough, thus preventing the questions at issue from being formally presented as a complaint. Meanwhile the delay brought calmness to the Abbot, and Robert was able in the end to settle things amicably. We find therefore that on July 18 1336 Robert instructed his Valet (Squire) John Hord, to give over the disputed land to the Abbot.

Let us consider here what "Cranage" says of the Chapel at Moreton-Corbet. It is in every way, he says, similar to the one already described at Alberbury, save that the details are later in character and rather poorer in execution. Its date is between 1330 and 1340: and like the Chapel at Alberbury it forms the South Aisle, with the manifest aim of providing an extra Altar. The tracery of spherical triangle is the same in both, the projection of the buttresses corresponds. The arcades are moulded with the same characteristic sunk chamfer, etc. The East window remains at Moreton-Corbet, whereas at Alberbury it has been blocked up since 1710 at least. Cranage continues:—"Only three windows were made in the Aisle, but each is beautiful and interesting; the West window is a large spherical triangle filled with good tracery, the graceful window arch

1327-2000

6 Ed. III.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 7,
Prt. I.

6 Ed. III.
Rot. Cl.
Memb. 28
dorso.

Calendar of
Papal Registers
1 Mar.
Avignon.

in the south wall has been cleverly adapted as late as the end of the seventeenth century to form the entrance to the big family pew built over the new mortuary chamber of that date.

A little later Sir Robert took out a Patent to admit of an exchange of land between the Abbot of Lilleshall and himself; three acres of land in Moreton were exchanged for three acres of land in Cheriton.

11 Ed. III.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 35,
Prt. III.

Pat. Rot.
Memb. 11,
Prt. I,
Ap. 27, 1338.

Pat. Rot.
Memb. 29,
Prt. II. dorso,
13 Ed. III.

Sir Robert was again serving beyond seas in the following year, 1337, and required Letters of Protection with the "Clause Volumus until Easter for Robert Corbet knight, going beyond seas on the King's service." He probably returned as arranged at Easter; for in that year he and his wife Elizabeth made a settlement of Bessford. "Licence for Robert Corbet of Morton to enfeoff Master Richard de Longenoire parson of the Church of Nesse, and Thomas parson of the Church of Cardeston, of the Manor of Bessford and three messuages and three bovates of land in Shawebury said to be held in Chief, and for them to regrant these to him and Elizabeth his wife in tail, with remainder to his right heirs." "By privy Seal."

The affairs "beyond seas" were far from tranquil, and in July 1339 a Commission was sent to Walter de Hopton, Robert Corbet of Morton, Fulke Glas the elder (Fitz-Warin) and Walter Drake to array 60 archers in the County of Salop, towards the 200 archers and 20 armed horsemen to lead them, which the King has ordained to be raised in the Counties of Hereford, Salop, and Gloucester, to stay in Ireland under Thomas Bishop of Hereford, keeper of that land, at the King's wages, for defence of that land against an unexpected invasion. "By the K: and C:."

In this year 1339 Thomas de Lee of Staunton agreed with the Abbot of Haughmond to make a new ditch in the Abbey lands at Edgebold as boundary between Edgebold and Sowbatch. The ditch was to extend from the King's highway to the river Roden. Thomas agreed to pay 4d. to the Abbey, and if it were not duly paid the Cannons might distract on Sowbatch. To this Sir Robert Corbet assented and with Sir William de Ercalwe and John de Witheford attested the Deed. Compensation land was given by Hugh de Cheney to the Abbot, in Hadnall, for the land to be traversed by a ditch. The Abbot started a dispute in 1340-1 with Robert II. about this fosse, and with his tenant Thomas Upton, but Eytton thinks the Abbot was finally appeased.

There are many records in the Patent Rolls of commissions to Sir Robert during the years 1340-1. One concerns a grant of hay from the King to Richard Earl of Arundel. He and his compeers had to decide the loss in value of the hay from the King's Forests on the Wrekin. He served, too, on various commissions of the Peace during the following four or five years.

Then comes a curious record in a Patent Roll in 1346-7 which would lead one to suppose that he had somewhat fallen into disgrace; but it is a little difficult to understand because during those two glorious years, glorious both to King Edward himself and for all disciples of chivalry, our Sir Robert and his son were both never far from the person of the King himself; they were both with him in France. We will quote the extract. I think it shows that, though Honour and Glory were abundant in camp, Confusion, and that with a big C, was very redundant at home. The Roll is dated Reading, in August. "Whereas of late the King by divers Writs commanded the Sheriff of Salop to arrest Robert Corbet of Morton, and John de Chetwynd knights, collectors of the tenth and fifteenth lately granted to him in the County, whom he had commanded by several Writs of the Exchequer before days now past, but who, disregarding such Writs, detained the same and made their profit thereof, and to seize their goods into his hands; and whereas the Sheriff has not cared to execute this, to the delay of matters affecting the safety and defence of the Realm, he has appointed Walter de Harewell his serjeant at arms to arrest as well the collectors as the Sheriff, and bring them without delay to the Tower of London." "By Council."

Par. Rot.
Memb. 8 dorso,
Aug. 1347.

Since four knights of the Family of Corbet took part in the glories of this campaign in France of 1346-7, I must enlarge on it a little, so as to realise it somewhat in its details, for surely these years will be remembered for all time wherever the English tongue is spoken, and an English heart beats warm and true. Two of our knights were of the House of Tasley and King's Bromley, Sir Roger and Sir John. One was of the family of Chaddeslee, Chetton and Hope, Sir Peter. One was our Sir Robert of Morton. His eldest son was also serving with him (Thomas), but scarcely as knight, he would not have been old enough.

The years have rolled by since that campaign so glorious to Fame—the campaign of Crecy and Calais—and as we try to recall the scenes, we realise how many of the well known families whose sons played their appointed parts in them have been swallowed up in that long roll of years. Major-General Wrottesley has written a very interesting account of the campaign. He tells us that of all the Earls and Barons who displayed their Banners at Crecy, only three have still descendants in the male line, and of the thousand knights and Squires who fought for England's King

that day, only fifteen out of the whole number actually at this present day hold the lands for which their fathers then did military service; these are West, Clavering, Bagot, Burdet, Corbet, Farnham, Howard, Lingen, Baskerville, Selbey, Sandford, Wrottesley, Berney, Hesketh, and de Houghton. The levies were arranged for as follows by Parliament in 1346. All who held lands of the value of 100s. were obliged to find one archer; those rated at £10 were responsible for a Hobelar or light armed horseman, those of £20 two hobelars, those of £25 a man-at-arms, and so on in proportion. The war was popular with the Nation, and, in the King's words, was undertaken "at the prayer of the Commons with the consent of the Lords."

Now let us consider what the fighting men of the day called an Army, so long before Regiments were dreamt of. The men-at-arms were the mainstay of the force. They consisted of the Earls, Barons, Knights, Esquires, and they fought clad in armour from head to foot; they were mounted on powerful horses, covered with clothing thick enough to give some protection against arrows, and upon their housings, as well as upon the "Jupons" or surcoats of their riders (worn over the armour), were depicted the heraldic cognizances of the knights. Secondly came the Hobelars or demi-lances, mounted on lighter horses without housings; these wore steel caps and coats of mail and carried lance and sword, often, too, bows and arrows in place of lance; often too they are spoken of as "mounted archers." Every man-at-arms brought a mounted archer into the field, and a Banneret's retinue was usually described as so many spears and so many bows. A knight's retinue would include Esquires and archers. A Banneret would bring more than one knight, possibly several, as well as Esquires and mounted archers into the field. Where then we find a knight to have knights in his train, we may always assume him to have been a knight Banneret, entitled to display his own Banner. Earls had Bannerets, knights, and Esquires, in their retinue, and all hereditary Barons served as Bannerets by prescription.

The Infantry consisted of the Paunceners, men of great size and strength and chosen for this, who could march with armour. Edward had only 308 of these; they wore the Chapeaux de fer and "gesternes" which were tunics without sleeves with oblong pieces of steel sewn upon them: their weight must have been something enormous! One calls to mind the gerynged byrnie of the Norman knight! Next in order came the archers, who wore the Chapeau de fer and a padded tunic, and carried bows and arrows and a short sword. The Welsh and Irish foot were little more than a mob, and were armed, one half with spears and the other half with bows and arrows. The demoralising effect on the enemy of the justly renowned and feared English archer lay in the rapidity of his discharge; but as a contra to this came the necessarily rapid expenditure of his ammunition. Thus it happened that in a battle there always came a moment of lull when the supply of arrows was exhausted and the archers sought to replenish their empty quivers. It was a feat of no small difficulty to serve out, and quickly, a fresh supply of arrows during an engagement; and then came the moment for the rush of the men-at-arms. Unluckily for the French men-at-arms at the Battle of Crecy their advance at the right moment became almost impossible owing to the confusion and disorder at their first untimely advance. Stern and short was King Edward's order given before the commencement of the battle—that not a man should leave the ranks. Stern and wise, too, was the reception accorded the order by that mere handful of brave men, arrayed against so vast a host. Each man knew that his days in this world were numbered unless—unless indeed he could hold his own—and that therefore to yield an inch of his vantage ground would be fatal. So they welcomed the order and each man obeyed it with ardour, save, alas! for the undisciplined Welsh and Irish foot-soldiers. These latter, unable to restrain the desire to make prisoners, and seeing the numbers of unhorsed men-at-arms lying helpless, and increasing in number every moment, owing to the confusion of their advance, rushed down on them robbing and wounding on all sides. They could not be checked for a while; and they drew the only shadow across an otherwise dazzling page of glorious victory.

Sir Robert of Morton, Sir Roger Corbet of Tasley and King's Bromley, etc., and Sir Peter Corbet of Chaddesley, Chetton and Hope all fought this day in the Division of the Black Prince, serving in the retinue of Thomas Earl of Warwick. Sir John Corbet, also of King's Bromley, served in the King's Division. The young son of Robert of Morton, who was evidently his eldest son Thomas, served as Esquire under the Earl of Arundel. The tale of the famous siege of Calais, which followed so soon after this glorious victory at Crecy, is too well known to warrant much comment on it here. Our Corbet knights passed on to Calais with the victorious Army, and no doubt fought brilliantly. Their names are found on the various Rolls relating to the divers affairs of the Army in this Campaign; in them we note that they are always mentioned as having served in the Campaign from beginning to end.

Calais was, as we know, surrendered unconditionally after a long and gallant defence. According to the law and practice of war at that period, the lives of the garrison were forfeit; "and this," says Sir G. Wrottesley in his able account of the campaign, "is only logical; for if a beleaguered garrison can resist to the last, causing enormous loss to the besiegers, and then escape with their lives, they play the game Heads I win, tails you lose. Thus really they would risk nothing at all by their resistance." "John de Vienne probably urged in his favour that he could not surrender with honour so long as there was a chance of the place being relieved, and that he had surrendered immediately the French King decamped." "Edward III, in whose honour be it said that he was never guilty of a harsh and cruel action knowingly, therefore admitted all the garrison and townspeople to mercy; save the six burgesses." Sir G. Wrottesley considers that the well-known sequel was probably prearranged and was a foregone conclusion.

The date of the surrender was the 4th August. A dispute of Arms took place during this siege of Calais between Nicholas de Burnel and Robert de Morley. This latter, a newly made knight and Esquire, pretended to the same arms as those borne by Nicholas lord Burnel; Sir Nicholas was the lord of Acton-Burnell—we have often heard of the family in former pages. Robert de Morley was an exceeding able and active soldier and had rendered good service in the campaign. Sir Peter Corbet of Hope, etc., offered to fight Sir Robert de Morley and decide the dispute by combat. The King, however, was too sensible of the merits of the disputants to care to risk the loss of either one of them. He therefore prevailed upon Sir Nicholas to permit Sir Robert de Morley to bear the arms during his lifetime. Thus the dispute, though so burning a one, was happily terminated.

The King returned to England in the following October with his Army, and a truce was concluded.

A worse and even more implacable enemy than war made its appearance in Europe about this time; it reached England very quickly and spread desolation and misery on all sides. This, the terrible "Black Death," is said to have destroyed at least one-third of the population in every State that it passed through. In London alone 50,000 people are said to have perished. It stayed the arm of war for a time, and the truce was prolonged.

During this interval Sir Robert had leisure to think of his own affairs, and at his urgent request he was granted "View of Frank-pledge" in Moreton-Corbet, and an inquiry was granted to discover what loss would be "sustained by the King in granting this." The King's loss has been recorded as averaging about 3s. a year, that sum being averaged by the amount of amercements "incurred by Corbet's men at the Sheriff's two Tourns for breaches of the assize of bread and beer, and for blood shed, homsoken and forestall."

Shortly after we find Sir Robert purchased Shawbury from the Erdington family. He unluckily omitted the usual formalities of licence; it was therefore not till 1359 that the purchase was complete, after petitioning the Crown to overlook the omission. He then obtained leave to enfeof Hugh, Vicar of Shawbury and William, Parson of Upton, in the same, who being seized were to settle the Manor on Robert Corbet, Elizabeth his wife and their heirs.

In 1359 the war was again renewed and with fresh vigour. Sir Robert was again on active service. This time the King commanded a far more powerful army, and they advanced even to the gates of Paris. Sir Robert served, I believe, in this campaign under the Banner of Richard Earl of Stafford. The Black Prince had again made the English name glorious and earned unfading laurels at the battle of Poitiers, fought and won three years previously. I think Sir Thomas, Sir Robert's eldest son, must have died ere now, or very shortly after, for it was about this time that his one little child, a daughter named Elizabeth, was born. The second son, Fulk, was with the Prince in this campaign, and the following one also probably. He served as Esquire, and a grant made to him some years later seems to point to his having served the Prince himself.

I must now draw largely on Eyton's information for sundry settlements of Manors which were arranged in these and following years; they are somewhat dry statistics, but necessary to notice. They evidently were the outcome of family events, such as the death of the eldest son, leaving only a daughter; and had for aim the desire to keep the lands in the male line if possible. The effect of these settlements may be noted during many years. One result, however, was unexpected—the alienation of Wattlesborough—when the little Elizabeth (Fulk's daughter) came of age. Thomas must have died very shortly after his return home. The little Elizabeth, his only child, must have lost her mother "Amice" or Elizabeth about the same time. We know nothing of her beyond the name "Amice" or Elizabeth. The little maiden was left to the care of her grandparents. She married Sir John de Ipstones when barely of age. On the death of Thomas, Fulk became the eldest son, and the estates which would also have passed with Elizabeth, daughter

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. X.,
pp. 188-9.
"Homsoken"
Penalties for
entering house
to steal, quarrel
or annoy.
"Forestal"
offences to
obstruct pas-
sage of cattle,
deer, and cause
to stray.

ROBERT II. OF WATTLESBORO' & MORETON CORBET 237

of the deceased Thomas, to her husband Sir John de Ipstone were by the precautions above alluded to secured to the male line of the Corbet Family.

Another attempt to settle the lands on the male heirs was made in 1363. A Fine was levied at that date by which Hugh le Yonge (clerk), Thomas de Lee, and Hugh Parrok Vicar of Shawbury (Trustees) settled the Manor of Moreton-Corbet on Sir Robert Corbet and his wife Elizabeth for their lives with remainder to their son Fulk and the male heirs of his body, with ultimate remainder to the right heirs of Robert. The inevitable enquiry took place, by which it was found that Shawbury was held in Capite for one-sixth of a knight's Fee and was worth 100s. a year, and that it would be no damage to the Crown to allow Sir Robert and his wife to make the settlement. In 1369 Morton-Corbet was made over to Thomas Gery, Vicar of Moreton, and Thomas de Lee of Soubatch, for the entailment. The enquiry therefore found and recorded that Moreton-Toret and Boeyley would remain to Robert Corbet; that Morton was held of John de Chetwynd's heir by service of one knight and was worth £10 a year; Boeyley was held in soccage of the Abbot of Salop and was worth 40s. a year.

Another fine was levied in 1371 giving Thomas Gery, the Vicar of Morton-Corbet, and Thomas de Lee of Soubatch power to settle Shawbury on Sir Robert Corbet and Elizabeth his wife for the longest of their two lives, with remainder to Roger Corbet, Sir Robert's youngest son, with remainder to the right heirs of Robert Corbet. This Fine was levied "By Precept of the King."

These various settlements seem to me to mark the events of the births, deaths, marriages, etc., as they took place in Robert's and Elizabeth's family. For instance, this is the first time that the youngest son Roger has been mentioned; and it suggests that the settlement was made on his marriage; which explains too the purchase of Shawbury. The death of the eldest son Thomas leaving no male heir would give Roger a more important position in the Family.

I will quote a record from the Calendar of Papal Registers, as it concerns the marriage of one of Robert's daughters, though it is dated some years back and concerns a daughter whose name does not appear in the Pedigree. Sir Robert petitioned the Pope to allow the marriage, and the petition was preferred by the Earl of Lancaster.

"Henry Earl of Lancaster" "Signification that his knight Robert Corbet, who was rich and powerful, by reason of his great liberality when marrying his sons and daughters, is now come to want, has still left unmarried an elegant and fair daughter Amice, whom he now, labouring under perpetual infirmity, purposes to marry to the noble and powerful Edward Le Strange of Myrdel, donsel, who is related to her in the fourth degree of kindred." "The Earl therefore prays for a dispensation that Edward and Amice may intermarry." "To be granted by the Diocesan, if the facts are as stated" "Avignon 21 July 1348."

"To the Bishop of Lichfield. Mandate to dispense Edward Le Strange of Muddle donsel, and Amice daughter of Robert Corbet, knight, so as to intermarry, they being related in the fourth degree of kindred." "Avignon 21 July 1348."

We have mentioned that Thomas, the eldest son, who had lately died, left no male heir. His only child, born, Eytton thinks, about 1357, was a daughter called Elizabeth. She married Sir John de Ipstone in 1375, when she was scarcely of age. Her mother's name is simply recorded as "Amice." The second son, Fulk, married; his wife's name also is only recorded as Elizabeth; and he too had one only child, a daughter, who bore her mother's and grandmother's name, Elizabeth. Roger was evidently the youngest son. He married Margaret de Erdington of Shawbury, and eventually carried on the succession. We have note of three of Robert's daughters: Joan and Eleanor married two brothers—the former married Robert de Harley, and Eleanor Brian de Harley, ancestor of the Earls of Oxford. Amice, as explained in the Papal Registers, married Edward Le Strange of Muddle.

I find one more incident to record in Robert II's life. The Abbot of Haughmond, who had so often been at variance with him in past years, assumed a more peaceful attitude as years crept on, and leased "to Robert Corbet of Wattlesboro' knight, for his life, all his demesnes of Meddicott in lands, meadows, services, rents, with two messuages which the Abbot had of the demesne of Llewellyn de Meddicott and a meadow which Roger the said Llewellyn's Brother now had to farm at a rent of 4s a year." Rents of 14s. were reserved to the Abbey, and a rent of 4s. to Sir Hugh de Mortimer of Chelmarsh. The Corbets of Wattlesborough held Kin'teu, another member of Wentnor under Caus, and we remember that Richard Corbet II of Wattlesborough had granted it to Buildwas Abbey under conditions.

Robert Corbet died in 1375. The Inquest held on his death is a very lengthy one, and many lands having been either acquired by marriage or purchase, we will consider the details of this Inquest in the following Chapter.

Ant. Shrop.
Eytton,
Soccage Free
Tenure.
Rent relieved
from obliga-
tions.

Cal. Papal Reg.
Petitions.

Avignon,
July 21, 1348,
f. 53.

f. 53.

CHAPTER XIII

LET us begin our new chapter with the details of the deceased Robert Corbet's lands as furnished by the Inquest.

SHAWBURY Manor stands first in the list, held as in the Inquest or Inquiry of 1369 and entailed in 1371.

BRAGYNGTON, Hamlet, held of the Earl of Stafford of Caus, settled in like manner.

HEMME, Manor, held of Adam de Peshale as lord of Idshall, settled in like manner.

WATTLESBORO, **HEYE**, and **BREDESHULL**, Manors, held of the Earl, settled in like manner.

KYNWARTON 20s Rent, held of the lord of Wattlesborough, i.e., himself, settled in like manner.

STIRCHLEY, 20s Rent and 3dwts of gold, held of the Earl of Arundel, settled in like manner.

MORETON-CORBET, Manor, held of Richard de Peshale as lord of Chetwynde, no entail stated.

HARPCOTE, held of Robert de Ferrers as lord of Wem by service of 8s Rent, no entail stated.

HABBERLEY, held by knight's service of the Earl of Stafford of Caus, no entail stated.

ROWTON and **AMASTON** held of Nicholas Burnel by service of $\text{£}9$ rent, no entail stated.

BLETCHLY, Manor, held of the lord of Stoke upon Tern by service of 12s Rent, settled on Robert Corbet deceased and Elizabeth his wife conjointly, with remainder after death of the survivor to Roger son of Robert and the heirs of his body, with remainder to Fulk brother of Roger and his heirs, and ultimate remainder to the right heirs of Robert Corbet.

LAWLEY, Manor, held of Peter de Eyton by service of 5s Rent, settled in similar manner.

SHREWSBURY, 8 messuages, 20 acres of plough land and 6 acres meadow land held in burgage, settled to the same uses.

BESFORD, Manor, held in Capite by knight's service, settled by Fine with Master Richard de Longenre Parson of Nesse, and Thomas Morton, Parson of Cardiston, on Robert Corbet deceased and Elizabeth his wife conjointly and on survivor, remainder to their joint heirs and ultimate remainder to the heirs of Robert Corbet.

SHAWBURY, 3 messuages and 8 bovates of land held also in Capite, settled in like manner.

BAUSLEY, Manor, held of Fulke Fitz-Warin of Whittington by knight's service, settled in like manner.

The number of Elizabeths in these two generations is quite bewildering ; we have first Elizabeth, wife to the deceased Robert ; then Elizabeth wife to her son Fulk ; then Elizabeth the daughter of the deceased's eldest son, Thomas ; again we have Elizabeth, Fulk's daughter !

Fulk himself died some few years after his father ; but there are one or two records of him. His wife survived him ; he was made a commissioner of array for Salop in 1377 ; we infer that he had been serving in the French wars, so judging from the following Patent Roll, and that, with the Black Prince during his campaign in the South of France.

" Inseximus and confirmation in favour of Fulk Corbet esquire of the King, and of his father the Black Prince, of letters Patent of the King when Prince, dated Kennington Manor, 18 Feb. 51 Edward III " inspecting and confirming " letters patent of Edward Prince of Wales, dated Kennington Manor, Trinity 1374, being a grant to him for life of $\text{£}20$ yearly from the Prince's revenues of Cornwall." " By the great Council."

The following year Fulk is a complainant, and Commission of Oyer and Terminer is granted to " Roger le Strange of Knocking and David Hamenere, on complaint by the King's Esquire Fulk Corbet, that John de la More and others, have entered his free chace at Gateden and Gravenore in the Forest of Caus Co Salop, hunted therein and carried away deer for 20s paid in the hanaper."

In 1381 we find a " Grant for life to Fulk Corbet the King's knight, late his Esquire, of view of Frank-pledge, wayf, stray, infangenethe, outfangenethe, ameracements of tenants, and fines for the breach of the assize of bread and ale, in his Manors of Yoculton, and Haburleye, Co Salop as it appears by requisition of William de Walshale, escheator that it will not be to the King's damage above 12d yearly." " By privy Council."

In the division of the lands of the Barony of Caus, the Manor of Wentnor was one of those apportioned to the de Harleys.—Robert de Harley became the husband of Joanna Corbet, one of Sir Fulk's sisters ; and Fulk and his sister and brother-in-law made several deeds of agreement concerning their lands. Sir Fulk, it is evident, hoped in this way to regain as much of the old lands

¹ Rich. II.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 35.
Prt. VI.,
Mar. 22, 1378.

(French)

² Rich. II.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 13
dorso,
Prt. II.,
Mays, 1379.

³ Rich II.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 32,
Prt. I.,
July, 1381.

SIR FULK'S DAUGHTER HEIRESS OF WATTLESBORO' 239

as he could prevail on his sister and her husband to accord him ; and some curious Deeds on the subject are preserved. In 1363-4 Robert and Joanna levied two Fines settling Yockleton, Shelve, and Wentnor, and a fourth part of the Forest of Caus on themselves for their lives, with remainder to Fulk and his heirs ; and further remainder to the right heirs of Joanna. Afterwards, however, the said Joanna and Robert ceded their life interest to Fulk for a rent of £60 a year ; with the provisor that if Fulk should die before them the survivors should claim the premises for life. Another settlement took place again, by which Roger Corbet, Fulk's younger brother, was to profit. This was done for a consideration of 300 marks.

Sir Fulk died August 4th 1388, "sized," says Eyton, "of the estate in Wentnor such as these and other incongruous Fines may be taken to have indicated. Many lawsuits also resulted ; but finally Wentnor remained to the little Elizabeth, Fulk's only child and heir." She was but a little damsel of seven years old at the time of her grandfather's death in 1381. Subsequently Wentnor descended through her to her grandson John de Burgh. When this, the youngest of the Elizabeths, came of age, she married John de la Pole, the lord of Mowddy, and was ancestress through the de Burghs of the families of Newport, Leighton, Lingen, and Mytton.

The little Elizabeth was a ward of the Queen's, Anne of Bohemia : a wise and good Lady and much beloved. We find her called "The good Queen Anne," and by a Patent Roll that a grant was made to her "Of the custody of the lands of Fulk Corbet knight, tenant in chief, deceased, during the minority of his daughter and heir Elizabeth together with her marriage." "By privy Council." Another grant was shortly after recorded which further assured the Queen "of the custody and marriage of the heir of the lands of Fulke Corbet knight, tenant in chief, together with the mesne profits" "By signet letter."

9 Rich. II.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 39.

This "good Queen Anne," as we find her called, and her husband Richard II. were both open and steadfast protectors of Wycliffe and his followers. Chaucer also received the same protection and encouragement.

Sir John de Ipstone, the husband of the elder grand-daughter Elizabeth, died in 1394, and in right of his wife (who outlived him) he was sized of the Manor of Bessford, and of the three messuages and three bovates of land in Shawbury already mentioned and which were held in Capite ; as also of Bausley Manor held under Fulk Fitz-Warine, then a minor. These lands all eventually came back to Roger Corbet, Elizabeth's uncle, who was now become the head of the Family. Wattlesborough, alas ! never returned. The little Elizabeth was born there in 1375, and baptised in the Parish Church of Alberbury. It went with her as the young Bride and heiress when she married John de la Pole, the lord of Mowddy. Her son Fulk was also born at Wattlesborough in 1390. He died without issue, and his sister, also born at Wattlesborough, inherited it. She married Hugh de Burgh ; their son Sir John de Burgh was also born at Wattlesborough in 1414. Sir John's heir was again a daughter ; and she marrying a Leighton, Wattlesborough has remained in possession of that family ever since. The Leightons lived there till as late as 1717, but they then removed to Loton Park, and Wattlesborough was turned into a farmhouse.

We must record a Deed executed by Elizabeth of Wattlesborough and her husband Sir John de la Pole lord of Mowddy : it gives us a clue to the history of the younger son of the past generation and his descendants, and although the descendants soon merge into a female descent in this case, is is always interesting to trace the fate of the younger sons and the passage of the lands that fall to them—till this happens. The younger son in question must have been the younger son of Robert I. and Matilda de Arundel of Tettenhall, Marbrok and Habberleye ; and we may remember that Bessford was also left to Matilda in Dower. This younger son John is not mentioned in the Pedigree, but his possession of her lands helps to identify him as Matilda's son : who was grandmother to Robert II. The absence of his name on the Pedigree is easily accounted for, as another instance of the omission of names of younger sons where they do not either found a distinct branch, or carry on the succession. The Deed in question is taken from a collection in the Reference Library in Shrewsbury, and relates that "John Corbet of Stanford, of the Corbets of Wattlesborough, granted to John Corbet of Bessford (who was evidently his son) "a lease of lands in Habberleye, for 40 years from the Feast of Epiphany: 41 Edward III at a rent of 2 6 and to build a new house." In "44 Edward III Sir Robert of Moreton granted him a rent of 6s issuing from a mill at Habberleye." The reference goes on to state that this John appears to be the same as the witness to a Deed of Sir Fulke Corbet's then lord of Moreton dated 1382 : he is there styled John Corbet of Habberleye, that being the land in question in the Deed. A later Deed states that Elizabeth "the only child of Sir Fulke Corbet married John lord of Mowddy, 1st Cousin to Hawise

1368.

5 Rich. II.

Gadarn and they by the names of John Mouthe and Elizabeth his wife, appoint John Corbet of Haburley to receive 'le tenance' the attornment of their tenants of Yockelton, Shetton, Schelve, and Wentnor, and also in their behalf full siezin of their purparty of Caus."

The seal to this Deed is a lion rampant within a border engrailed and the inscription round it bears "SIGILL: Johan Mouthe."

Chap. X.

We have mentioned this Sir John Corbet, or indeed possibly his father, in a previous chapter as witnessing a Deed for Sir Peter Corbet of Hope in 1353. And as at this early date the Manor of Longnor, which later was to give its name to a distinguished sub-branch of the Family of Corbet, was even then in the possession of the Family, let me quote what Duke says thereon, since it is he who gives us the information, and it concerns also the fortunes of this short branch of Habberley, etc. He says that in 1375 Margaret, one of the daughters and co-heiresses of Fulk l'Estrange (probably niece or sister of Elizabeth l'Estrange, the wife of Sir Robert Corbet II.), released the Manor of Longnor to John Carless and Ed: de Acton. John was the son and heir of Sir William and Emma Carless. This John married a daughter of Fulk l'Estrange, and in 1375 Ed: de Acton and his wife Eleanor gave a rent of the Manor to Fulk Corbet, Roger Corbet (who was his brother), and other feeffees. In 1387 John Carless of Adbriht married Joan, who had with her a moiety of Longnor, which so remained from the end of Ed. III. till Hen. IV., when John Corbet of Habburley married the daughter and heiress of the Carless family and the property came into Corbet hands. This John must have been the father of the Thomas who figures in the Indenture I am about to give, and which also tells us the end of this short sub-branch. Thomas himself married a Joan, the daughter of Thomas Pygot of Wylleston.

Duke,
Hist. Shrop.
p. 295.

Blakeway,
Salop,
6f. 166b,
1448.

The Indenture alluded to was drawn up in the reign of Henry VI. "This Indenture made the Wednesday next after the Feast of St Barnabas Apostle, the yeare of the reigninge of K Henry 6 after the conquest XXVlth, between Thomas Corbet of Standford, squyre" (we remember that Standford was one of the Manors belonging to this younger branch), "upon the one parte, and John Blount of Sodington in Wysetershire, squyre, on the other parte, witnesses that the said John Blount shall wed and taken to his wife Katherine, the younger daughter of the said Thomas between this and the Feast of Michaelmas next . . . and over that the said Thomas and Joan, his wife, of all the lands and tenements, rent and services which descended to the said Thomas after the death of John Corbet, his Fader, in Tetisall, Marbroke, Godewad, with appurtenances in Shropshire, by a Deed sufficient in law, shall eneffe thereof Thomas Conyngsbye, Roger Bury, and John Bury in fee, upon condicion etc: (viz: yt' they shall re-enfeoff Corbet for life without impeachment of waste, remainder to Blount and Katherine in tail, remainder to ye right heirs of Corbet."

Hist. Worc.
Nash.

The tomb of this John Blount is in the Church of Sodington, with the inscription, "Pray for the souls of John Blount squyre and Katherine his wife and their eldest son Sir Ed. Blount, knight to the body of our most dread sovereign lord Hen. VII, on whose soul GOD have mercy." In the East window of the Blount Chapel are the arms of Katherine: Or a Raven proper with a crescent for difference, denoting Corbet of Standford, Co. Salop.

John de la Pole died about 1404; and whilst Corbet memories linger still fresh and green around Wattlesborough, and Elizabeth Corbet is still the chataleine of its halls and mother of its young heir Fulk de la Pole, we will set down some few descriptive details of the ancient stronghold before passing further in our History. It is remarkable amongst Shropshire properties because it has never been bought nor sold, though it has owned masters of different names and kin.

Ant. Shrop.
Eyton,
Vol. VII.
pp. 17-8.

In the days of its power it was of no mean importance, both as a stronghold against the Welsh, and from its position as the stronghold whence the knightly and senior branch of the Family of Corbet took root and flourished for some three hundred years. Let us quote some words of Eyton's concerning it. "As regards scale, and when compared with Caus, Wattlesborough must be placed in the second class of Feudal residences. In respect, however, of hereditary associations, the stronghold of the Vassal surpasses the Castle of the Baron; for Wattlesborough is one of the few Shropshire estates which have never been bartered for gold since they were first built and occupied by their Norman masters. Its strategical position was only inferior to Caus itself: this latter commanded and overlooked the Valley of the Rhea; Wattlesborough commanded the Pass from Wales formed by the 'Long Mountain' and the 'Breidon.' Its Manor and township still comprise portions of the Parishes of Alberbury and Cardeston and contains about 2,500 acres."

"The remains of Wattlesboro' Castle, though confined to a single tower, exhibit several features of great interest. Tradition tells us of the existence of four such towers, and of large

WATTLESBORO' PASSED TO THE DE LA POLES 241

quantities of stone having been removed from Wattlesboro' and used in the construction of part of Alberbury Church. That the remaining Tower was originally designed as part of a system, and not as an isolated feature, is evident from the greater security against external attack which two of the sides exhibit as compared with the third and fourth sides. In all directions, too, bricks and fragments of wrought stone are discoverable by a few strokes of the pick." One feature of the existing Tower which bespeaks its high antiquity is the flat buttress of the Normans. The Tower in its original condition probably bore one if not two additional stories, as tradition says it did. A roof which with two or three courses of stone was removed early in the nineteenth century most likely contained fuller indications of the original plan of the Tower than can be conjectured from the present roof, though as compared with the rest of the Tower that older roof would be itself comparatively modern. Traces, perhaps even more than mere traces, of the moat remain, though they are not sufficient to determine its sweep or the area it enclosed. One or two of the windows are probably the adaptations for more light made by Sir Fulk Corbet, the last male owner of Wattlesborough, and date about 1360. Many of the other windows are obviously of much later date.

Wattlesboro' Castle descended from the little lady Elizabeth Corbet, the ward of the "good Queen Anne," to the de la Poles of Mawddy, from them to the de Burghs, and from them to the Leightons, who lived there through successive generations till 1712, when they removed to Loton Park and Wattlesborough became a farmhouse as it is now.

Several and almost contradictory Deeds passed between Robert de Harley and his wife Joan and Joan's brothers, Fulke and Roger Corbet of Moreton-Corbet; and as ultimately by virtue of these Deeds some of the old Corbet lands came back again into the Family I will quote them.

"Commission to Robert Bealknap and Robert de Charleton to enquire into the following circumstances. By inquisition taken by Robert de Swynfen late escheator in the County of Salop, it was found that by the Fine levied in the year 37 Edward iii, Hugh le Yonge clerk, and Hugh Parrok, late Vicar of Shawbury, granted the Manors of Yokleton, Shelve, and Wentenore and a fourth part of the Forest of Caus to Robert de Harleye and Joan his wife, for their lives with remainder in fee tail, to Fulk son of Robert Corbet of Morton, and ultimate remainder to the heirs of the said Joan; that the said Joan and Robert by another Fine levied the year following 38 Ed. III reciting the first Fine, demised the premises to Fulk for the term of their lives, and rendered the same to him in Court, at the yearly rent of £60; that the premises were held of the King in Chief by knight service, and that Fulk died on Monday after St Peter ad Vincula, 6 Rich. II; leaving his daughter Eliz: his heir, seven years old. By a later inquisition, taken as above, it was found that the said Robert and Joan by a third Fine levied 41 Ed. III, granted, for themselves and the heirs of Joan, that the premises which Fulk held for life by their demise should after his death remain to Roger son of Robert Corbet and his heirs in tail male, with ultimate remainder to them (the said Robert Harleye and Joan his wife and the heirs of Joan). The said Roger has appeared in Chancery and sued livery of the premises in accordance with the form of the third Fine, viz: for the term of the life of the said Joan, and in case the said Elizabeth, daughter of Fulk, die without issue in the lifetime of Joan to hold the premises in tail male. William de Hornby attorney of the King asserts that by the levying of the third Fine, the said Joan's estate is entirely forfeited, and in accordance with the form of the first Fine the estate is in the person of the said Fulk and his heirs, and pleads that the premises should remain in the King's hands until the full age of Elizabeth his daughter. Moreover Elizabeth his late wife, supposing the estate of Fulk could be adjudged, prays her dower on the premises. The King desiring to do justice to all parties, and to be informed what estate Fulk claimed in the premises after the levying of the third Fine, appoints the said Robert Bealknap and Robert de Charlecot to enquire whether the said Fulk upon or after levying the third Fine, attorned to the said Roger, and in what way, or whether at the levying thereof, he consented or afterwards approved the Fine and agreed that if Joan survived him (the said Fulk), then, the said Roger should, during her life, have the premises; and whether he claimed to hold for her life or in fee tail by reason of the grant of the said Joan."

These deeds must have given rise to many a dispute between divers members of the Family, whose interests were so little in harmony with each other. A Commission is recorded date 1390, June 23, which unfortunately confirms this view of matters:—

"June 23 1390 West." "Commission to Robert Cherlton and John Hull, justices in the County of Salop reciting that whereas by divers Writs the King has ordered John Darras and Joan his wife, Roger Corbet, Richard Lodelowe, Hugh Cheyne, and Hamo Vaghan, knights, Thomas Yong,

7 Rich. II.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 28
dorso.
Feb. 5, 1384.

14 Rich. II.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 37,
Prt. I. dorso.

Malcolm del Mare, and John Weston of Shrewsbury, to appear in person before the King and Council in Chancery, it has been ordained by the King and Council that as soon as the aforesaid commissioners come to hold their sessions they take security from the said parties for their good behaviour, and inform themselves touching the disputes between John Mouthe" (John de la Pole) "and Elizabeth his wife, daughter and heir of Fulk Corbet knight, on the one side, and the aforesaid John Darras and the rest above-named on the other. All parties to be examined and certify." "By Council."

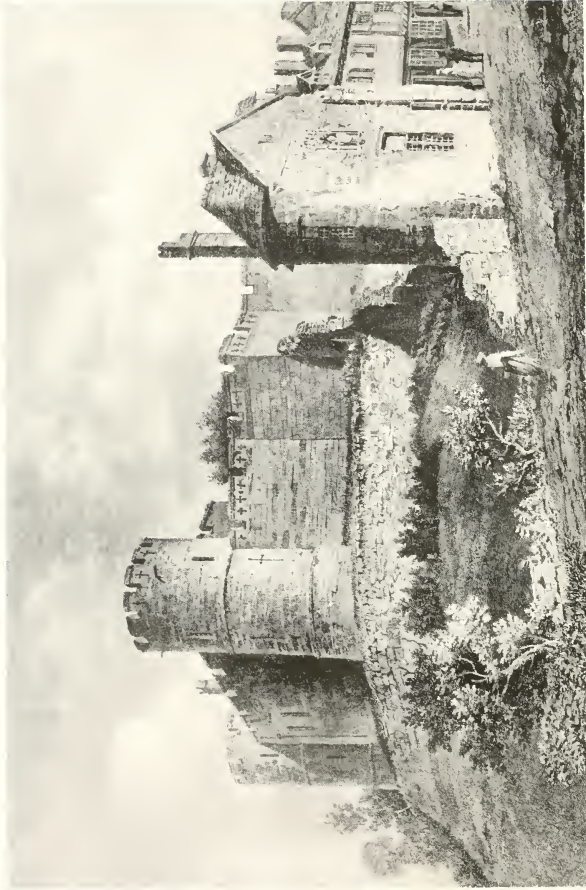
Robert de Harleye, we here learn, had died, and Joan had remarried and become the wife of this John Darras of Willey: hence fresh difficulties and discords were introduced; nevertheless we are assured that ultimately the greater part of the lands came back to the heirs of Moreton-Corbet.

We may remember that the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet had inherited lands in Leicestershire from their Thoret ancestors; so also had their cousins the Corbets of Leigh and Hope, though from quite a different source. It was in a little, quiet Leicestershire village that was arising during these years a marvellous new wave of thought. It had been gaining force, though perhaps imperceptibly, for the last thirty years; and Fulk and his brother Roger, let us remember, were its contemporaries. The force of this new wave of thought was speedily to make itself felt far beyond the bounds of the little Rectory where it had first seen light. In England it soon found a certain favour and protection in high places. Both Richard II and the good Queen Anne, his wife, listened to the new teaching and loved and fostered it. John of Gaunt, too, the King's uncle, listened eagerly, and no doubt it was greatly due to his powerful protection that the wonderful Master of Lutterworth Rectory, Wycliffe, owed the necessary tranquillity and leisure to accomplish that great task of his life—the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English tongue. The revolt against superstition spread far and wide, and the teaching of the "poor Preachers" was carried from the great Universities themselves to the kindred seats of learning across the seas; till, in the end, the Reformation, in the Faith of the greater part of Europe, spread like a flood that no man could stay.

Richard II protected the "Lollards," as they began to be called, as long as he was able, and during his reign the Church was not allowed to imprison so-called heretics without the King's consent. Henry IV, however, though John of Gaunt's son, passed a law in 1401 by which persons of heretical opinions might "be tried by the Bishop and burned by the Sheriff." Then began indeed the sufferings of the much-tried worshippers of the new doctrines; and, as might have been foreseen by all but the fanatically blind, Lollardism increased mightily.

Henry of Lancaster was placed on the throne two days after the deposition of the unfortunate Richard II. The noble Order of the Bath, which from time to time has so often been bestowed on members of the Family of Corbet, was instituted at his Coronation. His public Proclamation was ingeniously worded, and so as to turn aside any desire to examine questions of descent too closely. It runs: "In the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I Henry of Lancaster, challenge this rewme of Ynglande, and the crown, with all the membres, and the appurtenances, as I that am descendit by right line of the blode, cominge from the gude Kinge Henry therde, and throte that right that GOD of his grace, hath sent me, with helpe of kyn, and of my frendes to recover it; the which rewme was in poynt to be undone, by default of governance, and ondoying of the gude laws," etc. So Henry became King, and tarnished his good name by harsh measures taken against the Lollards; but they pleased the clergy, who never forgave the unfortunate Richard II for his favour to them.

Our History has reached the beginning of the fifteenth century; already many changes appear in the daily life as well as changes in thought. Note the change in life for the ordinary routine of meals! Instead of the older Norman regime of taking but two regular meals per day, it had now become the habit to add thereto a lunch and a supper of cakes and wine. The days of Whittington had come, and with them our forefathers found the need of many things not hitherto desired. Chimneys and even glass for the windows were, however, still but rare comforts. It is said that Richard II lived in a far more opulent manner than any of his predecessors, and that his household numbered 10,000 persons; this seems an astonishing number. Hume remarks also on the change visible in the ties connecting class with class. He says, "When the great Feudal Baronies were first erected the lord lived in opulence in the midst of his vassals and he was in a position at once to protect, cherish and defend them. . . . But when by the various divisions and mixtures of property, a man's superior came to live at a distance from him, and could no longer give him shelter or countenance, the tie gradually became more fictitious than



From an Old Engraving!

Shrewsbury Castle

SIR ROGER CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 243

real ; new connections from vicinity or other causes were formed ; and protection sought by voluntary services and attachment. . . . The dependant was from these causes often more exposed to the exactions of those above him than ever he was during the full working of the Feudal system." One great novelty to the existing regime was introduced in this reign of Richard II, namely the creation of Peers by Patent, and Hume tells us that the first so created was Lord Beauchamp of Holt.

I find few if any records of Roger, Sir Fulk Corbet's younger brother and successor at Moreton-Corbet. This would be fully accounted for, if either of the brothers had leanings towards the new doctrines : for such were neither popular nor favourable to advancement in life. The necessary comings and goings into Leicestershire, for the care of the property there, and Fulk's frequent life at Court might make one consider such tendencies possible. I find no notice either of Roger's death ; but the Inquest on his wife's death seems to point to her husband's death as having previously occurred. Margaret de Erdington, Roger Corbet's wife, died about 1394 and left one son Robert.

There are Records of the estates, both in the Escheats and in the Post Mortem Inquisitions ; and we must assume that they record the deaths of both husband and wife as being facts at the time of the record. The date of the record from the Escheats is 6 Hen. IV. and mentions Margaret as "late the wife of Roger Corbet of Morton knight," and cites the lands, the Manor of Shawbury, and six messuages with appurtenances in the Town of Shrewsbury and its suburbs, two messuages in the Vill of Withyford, and states that her son Robert is the next heir, also that she died in 1394, 17 Rich. II.

The Inquisition, date 1396, states "Margaret wife of Roger Corbet of Morton, Sawburi Manor, lands and tenements in Withiford, Morton Manor, Upton Waters Manor, as of the Barony of Tirleye, a messuage and half a virgate of land in Ivelithe near Shiffenhale, Laweleye Manor, Moor-ton Manor, suit of Court in Eyton, Blecheleye Vill, Culseye Manor as of the Barony of Tirleye, Bouleye on Hynethethe Vill, Routon and Ambaston Vills, tenements in Salop Vill, messuage with lands adjoining Soubache, two mills, a tenement and two acres of land in Sawburie, two cottages in Withiford Vill, Co Salop."

I think Sir Roger Corbet must still have been living at the date of this Inquisition, because Margaret is styled his wife in it, though he probably died very soon afterwards. There would be doubtless great confusion in public documents of a like description, at this critical moment of the removing of one King, to be replaced by another.

In October of 1397 we find a notice "Grant to Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester of the wardship of the lands and tenements late of Margaret late the wife of Roger Corbet of Moreton knight, tenant in chief, during the minority of Robert, her son and heir, together with the marriage, without rendering aught therfor, which was lately granted to him on condition that he should render at the Exchequer yearly such sum as should be agreed upon between the Council and him." "By P.S." The Earl of Worcester will have had but a short guardianship, for Robert Corbet must have been nearly of age at the time of losing both parents. But dates seem a good deal confused at this time, for we find a notice of 6 Henry IV. (Stafford) that "The King took the homage of Robert Corbet knight etc: saving the dower of Matilda who was the wife of the aforesaid Roger the Father etc: 10th Jan:":

There is still another Inquisition, and of this same year 1406, which says : "Margaret wife of Roger Corbet of Moreton knight." She died in the time of Richard II. "Shawbury Manor, Moreton Corbet Manor, Chatewyn Manor, Upton Waters Manor, Tیرهleye Manor, Messuages and lands in Ivelith near Shiffenhale Lauleye Manor, as of the Manor of Hynstok, Blecheleye Vill, Stoke Manor, Culsey Manor, as of the Manor of Tirleye, Bouleye super Hynetheth Vill, Routon Vill Ambaston Vill, six messuages in Withiford Co Salop and the Marches of Wales."

Grave events had come and passed since Robert had been left under the Guardianship of the Earl of Worcester. The Battle of Shrewsbury had been fought and won, and the Guardian had paid the penalty of his rebellion with his life and been executed. The Battle was fought so absolutely on the confines of the Corbet lands, and moreover is so intimately connected with Shrewsbury and her history, that we cannot forbear trying to form some picture of a day in which Corbets were thus deeply interested. For the Corbets of Moreton there was the Earl of Worcester and the perilous part he took in the day, to attract them ; there was the young Richard of Leighton and Hatherton also, who, as we think, lost his life among the Archers of Cheshire fighting for Hotspur, and lastly there was Thomas Corbet of Legh, who, if not in the fight itself, must have been actively interested on the side of the King and his cousin the Earl of Stafford. There is no evidence that

19 Rich. II.
Inq. P.M.
No. 12.

21 Rich. II.
Pat. Rot.
Pt. I.
Memb. V.
Oct.

6 Hen. IV.
Inquis. P.M.
No. 39.

the young Sir Robert of Moreton took any active part on the side of Hotspur, though he may have been drawn thereto by the influence of his Guardian ; but, however that may have been, we know that he was soon received into favour and that his homage was given and taken the year after the battle, 1405-6.

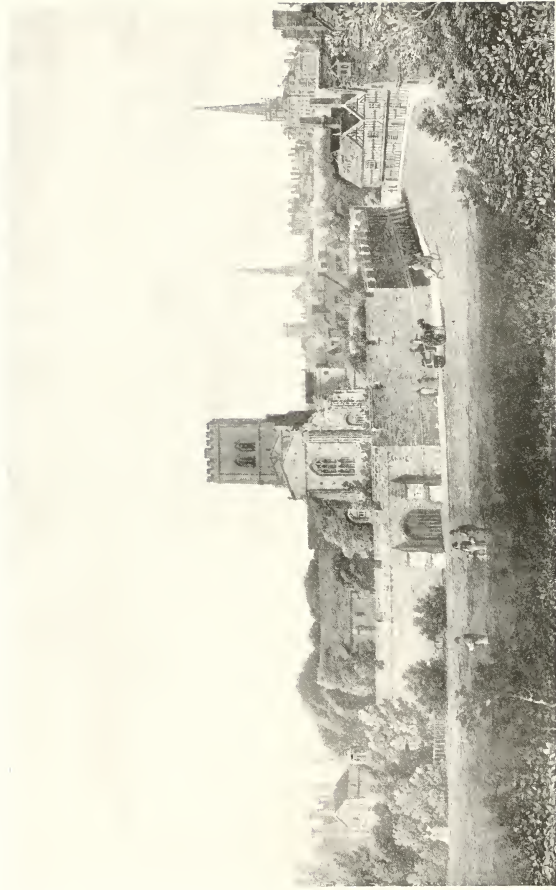
Shrewsbury was the goal for which both combatants strove. With Hotspur—thus to gain and hold the passage of the Severn and so keep open his communication with the help he trusted was near at hand ; with the King—so to stop his rebellious subject's advance, and to hope that once in possession of the stronghold an appeal to common sense instead of to arms might prevail.

The King won the race. He entered Shrewsbury by the Watling Street, passing down near the Abbey of Shrewsbury and over the stone bridge now called the English Bridge. His Standard was unfurled with all speed from the Castle Tower, and the race was won ; but only just in time, for Hotspur and his impatient followers were almost upon him, coming from the north-west. Hotspur, with his first glimpse of Shrewsbury, perceived the Royal Standard floating in the breeze, and wisely withdrew his men on Berwick, a village a few miles from Shrewsbury, not choosing to risk an encounter with the King after his toilsome march.

Hotspur's men, we are told, numbered nearly 14,000 chosen followers, many of whom were men of Cheshire renowned for their great skill as Archers. The King's army must have been more than double that number ; nevertheless as the dawn broke over the Castle and showed him the yonder plain glistening in the morning sun as it touched the accoutrements of the hostile forces, the King must have passed some anxious moments of reflection. He must have realised how slender really was the title by which he had seized the throne, and how little disposed were many of the leading men of the kingdom to maintain him on it. He was inclined to temporise, yet saw the necessity for forcing an engagement ere Hotspur could receive the expected reinforcements from Glendower. Early in the day, therefore, the King despatched a strong force under the nominal command of his young son Henry, then about fourteen, with orders to come up with Hotspur at Berwick if possible. He himself marched out by the Hadnall road, ready to proceed, either to the north of Cross Hill, or further on where the road branches off to the right to Shawbury, as occasion should require. Hotspur marching by Harlescote and Albright-Hussey soon found himself in danger of finding the enemy both before and behind him. He drew up his men with their backs to the rising ground and addressed them with much vehemence while he sent a haughty and ill-advised challenge to arms to the King, by his cousin the Earl of Worcester, who had just joined him.

Worcester's defiance gave even a stronger tone to the challenge ; and all chance of a peaceable ending seemed lost. The forces each took up their positions and faced each other, waiting for the signal for battle—the sound of the trumpet—when the ranks of the royal lines were seen to open, the Abbot of Shrewsbury and the Clerk of the Privy Seal were seen to leave them and advance quickly towards the hostile ranks. They carried a message of peace and an assurance of pardon from the King to Hotspur, with an appeal to spare the blood of his fellow countrymen, to withdraw his men, coupled with a promise to redress the grievances complained of. Hotspur was touched by this unexpected tender of the olive branch, and bade his uncle of Worcester hasten to the King and again state the reasons which compelled him to take up arms. The Earl had so recently filled, and well filled, the post of Governor to the young Prince of Wales, that on his side too the King was softened by this remembrance. Worcester's remonstrances and explanations, however, still continued fierce and acrimonious ; and yet once more, according to a contemporary writer, the King counselled him to "put himself on his grace" ; but on hearing the Earl's answer, "I trust not in your grace," the King thus spoke, "I pray God that thou mayest have to answer for the blood here shed this day, and not I." Then turning to his Standard Bearer he gave the order, "March on, Standard Bearer," and the battle was set.—The King saw that persuasion was useless. The King's division of his army was commanded by the young Earl of Stafford, the Corbet kinsman and the inheritor of Caus.

The King had that morning made him Constable of England and, as was the custom of chivalry, he also knighted certain of his most trusted squires before the final onset. Of the Standard Bearer we may note that he was Sir Walter Blount, and that a hundred years later John Corbet of Leigh and Sibbesdon proved his claim to be his heir through Margaret Blount his wife. Hotspur, perceiving the engagement unavoidable, called for his favourite sword and learned to his consternation that by some strange fatality it had been left behind at Berwick ! It appears that till then Hotspur had not even learned the name of the village that had sheltered him during the night. On hearing it, however, he turned pale and said, "I perceive that my plough is drawing to its last furrow, for a wizard in Northumberland told me I should perish at Berwick." Rallying



From an Old Engraving]

Shrewsbury Abbey and Monastery

ROBERT CORBET III., KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 245

his courage, for never was a Percy daunted, he arranged his men with his usual care and ability. Fighting with him were his uncle of Worcester, the Scottish Earl Douglas, who had so recently been his prisoner in the battle of Homildon Hill, and indeed where he had lost an eye. He was the unlucky Archibald Douglas known as the "Tineman." With these were Sir Richard Venables, the Baron of Kinderton, Hugh Brow, Sir Richard Vernon and others. The air was soon rent with the cries St. George and Esperance Percy.

At the outset the repeated volleys from Hotspur's famous Cheshire Archers did terrible execution on the Royal army, which the King's bow-men, however, were not slow to return. The battle on both sides raged with great violence. Hotspur and Douglas, with a chosen band of thirty comrades, burst through the midst of the hostile volleys intent on reaching the King's person; indeed, so hot was the fight round the King at one moment that he was in great danger; the young Earl of Stafford was killed, the Standard Bearer, Sir Walter Blount, and many other knights fell fighting round the King, resisting the same furious charge. The King was three times unhorsed by the Douglas, and the day might have been lost had not the Scottish Earl of March withdrawn him from his perilous position. At that critical moment, Hotspur fell! alone and surrounded and by an unknown hand, and the battle was won. The King, straining his voice to the uttermost, cried aloud, "Henry Percy is dead." Strangely enough the words were distinctly heard by both armies and the rebels fled in all directions.

As might be expected, the losses were heavy on both sides; the Earl of Stafford and Sir Walter Blount had both fallen defending the King; the young Prince, too, in rushing to his father's aid, was wounded by an arrow in the face. Douglas broke through the ranks and escaped in the direction of Haughmond Hill. He was hurt in leaping from a crag and taken prisoner. The King, in admiration of his skill and courage, most generously gave him his liberty. An ancient manuscript states the loss on both sides to have been 2,291 knights and gentlemen besides Commons. The conflict was so desultory that the dead lay scattered over an area of three miles. The present Church of Battlefield was built over the spot where the greater part of the slain found burial.

Shrewsbury saw a sad sight on the following Monday morning. The Baron of Kinderton, Sir Richard Vernon and the Earl of Worcester were all executed.

And what befell Glendower? We are told that he never crossed the Severn! He reached some high ground called Shelton, about a couple of miles from Frankwell, the Welsh suburb, and thence watched the progress of the battle raging on the further side of the river; he then prudently retired into Wales.

Robert Corbet III soon passed into the King's service. He became one of the King's Chamberlains, and at the time of the marriage of the King's daughter Philippa to Eric, the King of Denmark, was chosen one of the proxies for the wedding ceremonies, and passed beyond seas. He married Margaret Mallory as quite a young man, for his eldest son was of age to be knighted about 1422 or so. The Mallorys were a family of Norman, or rather Breton extraction, and took their name from Malesoures or Malour, near St. Brieux in Brittany. They acquired land and standing, mostly in the midland counties, though a distinguished branch took root also in the North and were connected with Fontaines. A Sir William Mallory is found returned as one of the gentry in Rutland and Cambridgeshire in the early half of the fifteenth century, and this must surely refer to Margaret Mallory's father.

We find that Robert III, as we may designate him for distinction, was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1419. His eldest son Thomas predeceased him in 1436. Thomas and his namesake, Thomas Corbet of Legh and Sibbesdon, took their oaths of allegiance at the same time, 1422-3. He married Anchareta, daughter of Thomas Barre, knight. Blakeway tells us that in 1433 Commissioners were appointed to summon "all persons of quality before them and tender to them an oath for the keeping of the Peace. Thomas Corbet de Morton is eighth upon the list," and an esquire. Blakeway also gives the following description of the slab and brass to his memory and to his wife Anchareta. This was in the old Church of St Alkmund, but has long since disappeared, as has been the case with other brasses unfortunately on the repairing of a Church. We are told of "A large slab 10 feet 7 inches long by 4 feet 9 inches, in the South Aisle thereon brasses of a warrior and a Lady: he is helmeted and in plate armour, his face disclosed, his hands joined in prayer, by his side a sword and dagger, his feet resting on a lion. The Lady in a flat but highly adorned head-dress, her veil thrown back: robed in a long open mantle: at her feet two small dogs. Four shields decorated this tomb: three of which had disappeared in Mr Mytton's time: but when Dugdale visited the church, that over the man's head bore the single Raven of Corbet, and the fourth under the Lady's feet bore the same coat impaling three pallets

Blakeway,
Hist. of
Shrewsbury,
Vol. II.

surmounted of Barry of seven intended no doubt for the arms of Barre. There was no inscription remaining, but Mr. Mytton describes the stone as remaining in the Talbots chancel and said to be of that family: and he afterwards found in a book of William Salusbury's of Rug, the great genealogist, the following inscription, which proves the correctness of the tradition: "Hic jacent Thomas Corbet de Morton armiger et Anchoreta uxor ejus filia Thomae Barre militis junior & dñae Aliciae uxoris ej' soror' Jonis dñi Talbot qui quidem Thomas obiit mccccXXXVI & poca Ankareta obiit die . . . anno . . ."

Blakeway further says, "Records agree with the epitaph in the date of his death: for the King received the homage of his brother Roger Corbet Dec. 16 1439."

Ankareta, it appears, remarried in course of time Jankin Hanmer, Esquire, of Hanmer. We are told that she derived her rather unusual Christian name from her maternal grandmother Ancaret Le Strange. There is record of an act of hers as a lady of dower, before her second marriage presumably. It is from a collection of Shropshire Charters. "No 80 Evelith." "Indenture witnessing that Ankureta Corbet has demised to farm to John Forster her manor of Evelith in the Co of Shropshire, for 40 years, at an annual rent of 40s dated 24th August 26 Hen. VI." A certain interest may attach to this, because I believe these Forsters remained Corbet tenants near Evelith (which may be remembered as a part of the old Toret or Thoret inheritance) for many generations, and that one of them, a noted Puritan, was the prototype of the well-known character in Sir Walter Scott's "Kenilworth."

There are singularly few notices of either Sir Robert Corbet the father or of his son Thomas; they were probably fully occupied with the interests and the wars going on in France. Thomas, the eldest son, died about 1436, leaving no heir. His father, Sir Robert, died we think about 1438-9, as at those dates and 1440 we have the acknowledgment of the homage of his heir, Sir Roger Corbet, and the record of the death of his mother, Margaret Mallory.

There are one or two very curious documents of Petitions in Parliaments which I will quote; the wording is very strange and the interchange of the names Robert and Roger puzzling; but they can only refer to this Sir Robert and his second son, Sir Roger, who carried on the succession on the death of the elder brother Thomas.

Petitions in Parliament, A.D. 1415, 3 Hen. V.

"As très sages seigneurs et Comunes de cest present Parlement assésblés. Supplie très humblement Robert de Swynerton, de Peynton Esquier et Countee de Salop; qe come il nadgairs estaoit ordeigne et assigne . . . un des Collectours del Dysme et XVe . . . en le Countee suis dit; et indementiers qe le dit suppliant fuist a Shrovesbury en faisant son office avant dit, la vient un Thomas Munde, servant de Robert Corbet Esquier, le Samady devant Shrove Sunday l'an suis dit (I Hen. V) ove iiiii homes ovsqe le dit Thomas Monde, c'est assavoir William Crowe de Wydyford (etc) servantz du dit Robert; et par souz comaunderment et excitation, et a cause q'il avoit pris un distresse à Preston-Brockhurst, c'est assavoir dieux Vaches, ils luy apresmesme le distresse prise, come il proclyma a Shrovesbury suis dit les briefs del Collection a luy direct en luy frent assaut, et luy horriblement de son mayn dextre mayhema, et pristrent ove force et armes les Vaches à Preston suis dit. Et en outre, purtaunt qe le dit suppliant pursuist à notre dit Seigneur le Roy, à son Parlement tenuz à Leycestre, envers les malfeisons sus dit, ils luy manassent de jour en autre pur tuer, et ore le dit suppliant n'ose demeurer en son Hostiel (etc.)."

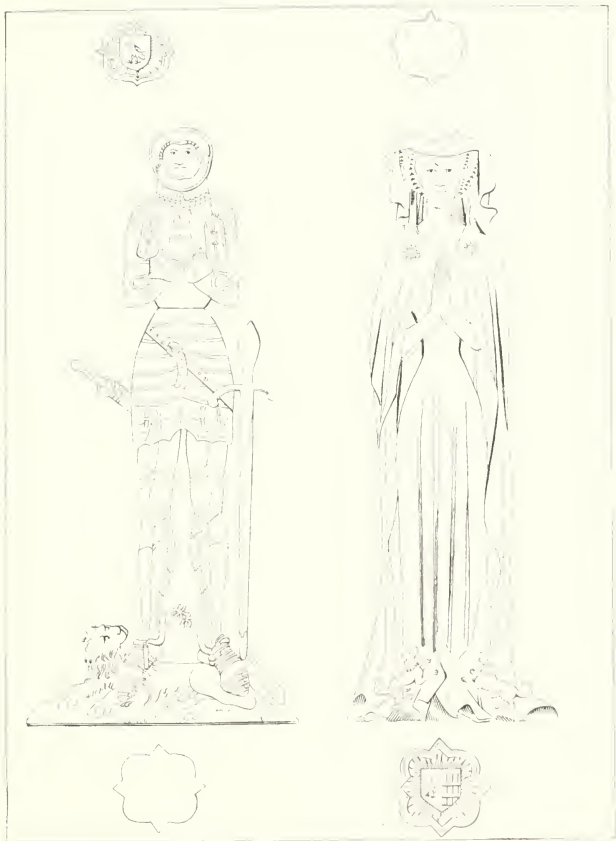
"Soit c'este Peticion maunde en le Bank le Roy, et qe les Justices de meme le Bank . . . eient et terminent toute la matere (etc.)."

Responsio

No. 2. "As très sages Seigneurs" etc. "Supplie tres humblement Thomas Marchall del Hurst et Countee de Salopp qe come . . . le dit suppliant fuist à Shrovesbury al point illeogues appelle Abbeeybrygg' le IXme jour de Novembre l'an de son très graciosus reigne suis dit, en faisant son office avant dit, la vient un Richard Leche, servaunt de Roger Corbet Esquier, par comaunderment et excitation de dit Roger, à cause qe le dit suppliant fuist un distresse du dit Roger pur le dit XVe en mesme le dist suppliant assaut fist, et luy batust, naufra, et horriblement de son mayn dextre mayhema: lequele distresse le dit Roger prist du dist suppliant, et ore detient," etc.

Responsio.

No. 3. "Soit cestre Peticion maunde en le Bank le Roy." "As très sages Seigneurs," etc. "Supplie très humblement Roger Lyneye de Newport et Countee de Salopp, qe come' . . . le dit suppliant fuist a Hyverstoke deins le dit Countee, le XXVIime jour de Marcz, l'an de son très graciosus reigne suis dit I Hen. V en faisant son office avant dit la vient un Roger Corbet Esquier de dit Countee, ovseque iiiii de ses servauntz et de les tenauntz à Robert Corbet friere ovseque luy armes et arraies à faire de guerre, et en mesme le suppliant assaut fist, et luy batust, naufra, et horriblement de ses



Thomas Corbet, Knt., and Ancaret his wife—St. Alkmunds. *Page p. 246*

jambes et mayns mayhema et illeoques pur mort luy lessa . . . Et en outre, pur taunt qe le dit suppliant persuisit a notre dit Seigneur le Roy à son Parlement tenuz à Leycestre, envers les malfeiseurs suis ditz, vient un Thomas Munde servaunt a dit Robert, par assaut et volente de dit Roger, a le dit Ville de Newport, et la, un Richard Pastour, Chapleyn et tenat a dit suppliant felenouement occyst : et outre ceo, un Richard Upton, servaunt de dit Robert, en le Ville de Newport, naufra, et mahema un Richard Brasyer tenant a dit suppliant : par ount les tenauntz du dit suppliant esteint voides, et ses fermers et tenauntz n'osent attendre sur les tenauntz et tenures tenuz de dit suppliant, pur doute d'estre occys et mahemes par les ditz Roger et Robert et leur servauntz, a perpetuel arrement et destruction de dit suppliant," etc.

" Soit cestre Peticion maunde en le Bank le Roy."

" Soit baille au Roi.

" As très nobles et tres sages Comunes notre S^eign Roy de cestre present Parlement suppliant humblement les povrez lieges notre Sieureign le Roy John Bryn, Roger Leney, Robert Swymarton," etc., " que come al Parlement tenez l'an primes notre Sieureign le Roy q'or est, Robert Corbet et Richard Lacun, furont retourner Chivalers en mesm le Parlement du Countee de Salop, lesqueles pur certains debates et dissencions queux esteiatz movez par entre les ditz Chivalers et les dits pliauntz, mesmez les Chivalers nomineront les ditz Suppliauntz d'estre Coillours de les Dyme et Quinzime a notre Sieureign le Roy a dit Parlement de la loys gentz grauntez, a l'entent et effect come combatre ovesque eaux, et puis en accomplissement de lous malice viendront ove force et armez as diverses lieux dein le dit Countee, et encountreront les ditz Coillours en faisout pour office, eux naufreront, maiheimeront et lour chivalx tueront . . . Dount les ditz Suppliauntz priount a votre très sages discrecion que vous pleise supplier a notre Sieureign le Roy que luy pleise fair due remede en ceste partie, en oevre de charitée."

Responsio " hujus Peticionis patet in magna cedula huic consuata."

" Soit baille au Roi.

. . . "Ceux sont les grevances et damages torcenouement faitz as Coillours des Dimes et Quinziesme grantez a notre tres souverain Sieureign le Roy en son Parlement darrein tenuz à Westm. en la Countee de Salop en faisant pour collecte par les persons ensuyte."

" Enprimes par l'on Thomas Marchall un des ditz Coillours par vertue et auctoritee de la commission notre dit Sieureign le Roy voudra av' pris distresse a Salop de Roger Corbett Escuer du dit Countee pur nonpaiement de la taxe du Ville de Eton en l'avant dit Countee, la vient un Richard Leche servaunt a dit Roger avec force et armes et en l'avant dit Thomas illeoques grevouse assaut fist et luy maheima avec un espee, à luy grand arriement et encoultre la peas notre Sieureign le Roi avant dit."

" Item, par l'on Robert Swynarton un autre Coillour, par vertue et auctoritee de mesme la Commission voudra av' pris une autre distresse a Moreton Corbet, pour non-paiement de la taxe de mesme la Ville, la vient un Thomas Palmer et autres servauntz du Robert Corbet un autre escuer du dit Countee et en l'avant dit Robert Swynarton illeoques grevouse assaut firent, et s'il n'avoit eschape et lesse l'avant dite distresse dere luy voudroient av' tuez, en longe tariance du Collecte de la taxe avant dite et encoultre la peas mesme notre Sieureign le Roi."

" Item, par l'on l'avant dit Robert Swynarton ja tarde fuist a Salop pur y faire proclamacion de la Marche, qe toutz hommes du dit Countee deussent faire prest lour taxe a un certain jour illeoques assigne par l'avant dit Robert Swynarton en hastive exploit du paiement d'icelle a notre Sieureign le Roi, la vient diverses servantz du dit Robert Corbet al nombre de vii persones avec force et armez et en l'avant dit Robert Swynarton illeoques grevouse assaut firent et luy et son homme illeoques mahement, bateront, naufreront et maheimeront as eux grande anientisement come il est bien conuz a tout le pais, en grande affraie et commocion de le people illeoques, et encoultre la peas notre Sieureign le Roi avant dit."

" Item, par l'on toutz les Coillours avant ditz furent accordez par un assent qe l'avant dit Thomas Marchall et un Roger Leyney un autre Coillour, deussent chivacher a Loudres en nom de lour toutz pur y faire paiement en l'Exchequer de la taxe avant dite pur le terme du Saint Martyr darrien passe, et outre de persuyer à notre dit Sieureign le Roi pur av' remede des toutz les mesprisions avant ditz soloc la ley, des queux mesprisions ils bailleront à mesme notre Sieureign le Roi une bille à sa darrien esteance a Dunstaple, la vient l'avant dit Roger Corbet avec cynk persones et avec force et armes sodaynement sur l'avant dit Roger Leyney apres son venue al Hostiell' en faisant sa Collecte luy arsonant es tielz paroles 'Who made the so hardy to putte any bille to the Kyng to undoe me with all?' ' Au qi l'avant dit Roger Lyney pur pouoir de sa mortensi respogna 'jeo le ne feson, meas si j'ay vous offendu en aucune manere jeo vous ferra

Responsio.

Vol. IV.
No. 10.
Collect of
Tenth and
Fifteenth John
Bryn and
others.

No. 11.

suffisantz amendes avec mes biens et chateux à votre volonté.' Lequell il refusa et luy malicieusement illeques bata, naufra, et ses chambres coupa, luy endonant plusieurs autres horribles playes a son final anientissement et grauntz maheime, eusi q'il estoit en point de mort, en male ensamble as toutz mailfaisoures et grauntz pavoir as ceux q'i serront Officers a notre dit Sieureign le Roi en temps a venir, s'il ne soit duement redressé et punisez."

The "Risponso" is a very long document in which complainant and defendant are desired to put all complaints in writing and to appear to answer all charges.

Sir Robert Corbet the father died about 1438-40. His widow Margaret Mallory survived him. The eldest son Thomas had died some years previously, as before stated. We read of three daughters. Elizabeth married George or John Sandford, of Sandford, Co. Salop; Dorothea married Philip Kynastone, of Walford; and Mary or Maria married Robert Cherlton, of Apley, Co. Salop.

No doubt the absence of detail to be found concerning the lives of both Sir Robert and his son Thomas arose from the chief events of the day passing in France, in which they took their share probably; and also from the increasing disorder developing in the country. We get a curious insight into the state of the country, from the Petitions to Parliament which I have just quoted: they make one think that Sir Roger the youngest son passed his life in defending himself and his property from taxation and tax collectors, whether just or unjust. The Family were staunch Lancastrians, and by his marriage with Elizabeth Hopton will have been increasingly drawn into the troubles and strifes of the Wars of the Roses.

The Parliament to which I presume the Petitions were to be forwarded was called the Parliament of "Bats" (bludgeons) from the continual party fights that took place in London and in the country at that time.

Professor Oman, in his most interesting life of Richard Neville the Earl of Warwick, gives us a vivid description of life and feeling in England during Henry VI.'s reign. We seem well to understand that it was impossible for Sir Roger Corbet to play a neutral part amid the very vigorous actions and pronouncements of all around him, and indeed perhaps he did not wish to do so. The Family were, I believe, staunch Lancastrians, but politics in this war of the Roses scarcely recognised the word staunch; sides and badges were changed on all hands as easily as the knight and his followers put on and off their armour. Professor Oman considers the fifteenth century the period of the greatest deterioration of the English people. It began almost immediately after the death of Henry V. Breaches of the law went unpunished and multiplied in consequence; the nation became accustomed to private strifes and riots, the armed resistance to law which prevailed had been unknown since the troubled days of Edward II., one might indeed almost say since the days of the usurper Stephen. The Crown lay in the hands of a helpless babe, but the fault was not there, rather it lay in the fault of the people themselves, they had slipt their old cables of an unquestioning and superstitious faith, and as yet the new moorings were not fixed nor found: so each cried lustily against the evil of the hour which chanced to irritate him the most. The outlets afforded by the French wars and their attendant glories were mostly over, and their unrest found vent in these bursts of cruelty and outrage. The first cry to upset the reigning dynasty was the cry of anger at the failures in France. The flame of dissatisfaction was kindled, though the real aim, "revolt," was as yet hidden under the issue of "reform."

The Nation soon split into factions: the towns mostly supported the interests of the Yorkist usurper, thinking to find redress of all grievances with him; but the country at first, certainly, was chiefly Lancastrian. Our Family had to pass through troublesome times like their neighbours, for peace had fled from the land as early as 1428. Two hideous vices seemed to declare themselves: a taste for cruelty and bloodshed such as we find in Tiptoft, and the admissibility of swift political treachery. Witness the conduct of Lord Grey de Ruthyn at the battle of Northampton. We might quote also the action of Lord Stanley at the battle of Bosworth Field; and yet his action was surely more than explained by the covert threats of Richard III. to himself, and the peril of his son Lord Strange. The Church was inert, save where its actions were written in characters of blood and flame. The "gracious Warwick," we are told, was tutor and governor of the young King Henry VI. and taught him well. He made him upright, learned, painstaking, etc., and Henry VI. might well be termed the most unselfish and well-intentioned of monarchs. Mr. Oman further tells us that the year 1449 was the turning point in the ruin or success of the House of Lancaster, and it was settled by the final collapse of the English domination in France.

The homage of Sir Roger Corbet, knt., was taken as before mentioned 16 Dec. 1440, "son and heir of Robert Corbet of Moreton and Margaret his wife." Sir Roger appears to have been married

Oman, Life of
Neville, Earl of
Warwick.

18 Hen. VI.
Memb. 23.

ROGER CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 249

long before this act of rendering homage. He married Elizabeth Hopton, and we find her given as his wife as early as 1422, in which year we have the following record :

"Walter Hopton held on the day he died as of fee a moiety of the Manor of Ellerly which is held of the King as of his Duchy of Launceston, parcel of his Duchy of Cornwall by fealty and the rent and service of one greyhound yearly for all services to be paid at the Feast of St Michael the Archangel, and a moiety of four messuages, 100 acres, with appurtenances in Trevigo, in soccage, and that Elizabeth wife of Roger Corbet, is Sister and heir of the same Walter aged 30 years. The same Walter held in his demesne as of fee on the day he died, a moiety of an acre of land and of a rood of land lying in the field of Kinges-Thorpe, Co Northants, of the King in soccage by the service of paying £6 a year for all service, and a moiety of two acres of land lying outside the North Gate in the town of Northampton, and a moiety of two castles two acres, three butts of land, lying in the town of Northampton, of the King in free burgage of the Borough of Northampton and that as above."

1 Hen. VI.
Cornwall,
Northants.

Thus we see that Sir Roger was married already in 1422 and heir to his brother-in-law Sir Walter Hopton through his wife. The above Deed is among the collection of Escheats in Dodsworth's MSS.

Large estates came into the possession of the Corbet Family through this marriage with Elizabeth, and at a moment too when so much had been reft from its side by the alienation of Wattleborough and attendant Manors. At the time of the marriage, however, few could have foreseen this enrichment of the Family as its result. Sir Roger was himself then the younger son, and with an elder and married brother ; Elizabeth also had a brother, Sir Walter Hopton, whose death we have chronicled in recording the Escheat from the Dodsworth MSS. Elizabeth was the daughter of Thomas Hopton and Eleanor, daughter and co-heir of Sir Walter Lucy. Thus it will readily be perceived that many and noble family interests, as well as large estates and many a quartering to the shield, became merged in the Family of Corbet by this marriage. Among the quarterings we may instance those of Guros or Girros, the Hoptons, Lucy, and the Archdekan, etc. The Hopton family are of noted antiquity in South Shropshire ; they are said to have held their lands from the Conqueror by virtue of a curious rhymed Grant to the "Heyres mayle of the Hoptons." The following are a few of the lines, but the wording has evidently been much modernised :—

Duke, Ant.
Shropshire,
Appendix,
p. 24.

"Frome myne to thee and to thyne
While the water runs and the sun dothe shine
For lacke of heyres to the Kinge agayne
I William Kinge the thirde of mye reigne
Give to the Norman Hunter
To mee that art bothe luine and Deare
The Hoppe, and the Hoptoune
And all the boundes uppe and doune,
Under the Earthe to Helle,
Above the Earthe to Heaven.
Frome mee and frome myne,
To thee and to thyne
As goode and as fayre
As they ever myne were
To witnesse that this is sooth
I bite the white waxe with mye toothe.
Before Jugg, Miriode and Margery
And mye thirde sonne Henry
For one bow and one broad arrow
When I come to hunt upon Yarrow."

A Roger de Hopton was Sheriff for the Counties of Shropshire and Stafford in the reign of Henry III. Of their Castle "Hopton juxta Clon" but little remains now save the walls. It is placed, I believe, at the head of a narrow and secluded valley without much strategical value of position ; still it played its part in the Civil wars of the seventeenth century, and was gallantly defended for a fortnight before surrendering to the Parliamentary Forces under Colonel Woodhouse. Some hundred years ere that happened, many of the Hopton Manors inherited by the Family of Corbet had passed by marriage into the families of Wallop and St. John. Sir Roger

Corbet died long before his wife Elizabeth Hopton, leaving several daughters, and according to the Pedigree two sons. The son who succeeded him was Richard, and as he was not born till 1450-1 the daughters were probably a good deal older. The other son was Robert, mentioned as dying unmarried, but I think this must be an error in the record, and that we shall find him progenitor of the sub-branch in Norfolk in a few years. In this time of constant fighting and skirmish, many an untimely and unrecorded death must have occurred. The daughters were Anna, married to Thomas Sturry; Maria, married to Thomas Thornes, of Shelvock; Jane, married to Thomas Cresset, of Upton, Co. Salop. Elizabeth married Richard Cholmley knt. of Cheshire.

There is little to point out to us on which side Sir Roger Corbet's hopes and inclinations lay. We feel sure, however, that he must have taken a very active part in all the surrounding strife according to his means and influence, and indeed he would have found it impossible to keep aloof. The Battle of Blore Heath, for instance, was fought on the very borders of the Staffordshire Manor of Tirley in which he had interests; he probably joined some bigger man's Standard; and though there is no direct evidence to show on which side he fought, yet it is clear that he was a King's man—i.e., a Lancastrian—from the two or three Deeds that I am about to quote. A Patent Roll of 1455 tells of the "Appointment of Roger Corbet of Morton, William Boerly, Thomas Hord etc: as justices to deliver the gaol of Shrewsbury of David ap Thomas late of Oswestry in the Marches of Wales. Another of date Dec. 29, 1459, tells us: "Coventry" "Commission of Array to Humphrey Duke of Buckingham, William Earl of Arundel . . . Robert" (which we feel must be Roger) "Corbet knight, Thomas Corbet of Lye etc: to resist the rebellion of Richard Duke of York, Edward Earl of March, Richard Earl of Warwick attainted of high treason." "Salop." A similar Commission and of the same date was sent to Robert Corbet of King's Bromley, and Suffolk: also to John Earl of Shrewsbury, and the Abbot of Shrewsbury to provide 192 Archers. The Corbets of Suffolk and King's Bromley, again, with the Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds, were ordered to provide 429 Archers, and the Abbot of Evesham and John Throkemerton and Thomas Corbet of Lye were ordered to supply 149 Archers from the Worcestershire lands etc: It is clear therefore that the Family of Corbet were Lancastrian so long as there was a Lancastrian King to serve. We know, alas! that all efforts were unavailing, for the coming King was unscrupulous and a usurper, though brave enough. He took over the reins of government in 1460, and it is evident that, though a merciless butchery was but too frequently dealt out to the adherents of the Red Rose, Edward IV. was conciliatory in his dealings with the Family of Corbet. Possibly in this we find the secret of the speedy marriage of Elizabeth, Sir Roger's widow, to the hated "Butcher" as he was called, John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester.

In 1461 the Corbet Family were helping the Government. "Commission to the King's kinsman Richard Earl of Warwick, William Earl of Arundel, John de Audley of Audley" (we may remember that the late Lord Audley had been one of the foremost Lancastrian leaders at the Battle of Blore Heath, and had lost his life on the field) "Roger Corbet knt, John Sutton of Dudley knight, Thomas Corbet of Lye etc: and the Sheriff to urge the King's subjects of the County of Salop to array a force at their own expense for the defence of the County and adjoining parts of Wales against the rebels, to be at Hereford on the Nativity of the Virgin."

The following year we hear of another conciliatory measure. Sir Roger is remitted the forfeiture of a sum of money for which he became surety for some friends. "Pardon to Robert Corbet (surely Roger) of the forfeiture of £120 in which he was bound to the King. On 27th April 2 Ed: IVth he came before Sir William Stanley knight, the King's Chamberlain of Chester in the Exchequer there, and acknowledged himself bound to the King in the said sum payable at Whitsunday then following, viz: £40 for Richard Brown, £40 for Robert Brown, and £40 for Henry Brown as surety for their good behaviour towards John de Pull of Webenbury and Henry Grene of Waltherton and other the King's lieges until the next County Court to be held at Chester after Easter then following, and for their appearance before the King's Council at the said Court; and the Court was held on Tuesday after the close of Easter, 3 Ed: IVth within the King's Castle of Chester, but they did not appear and accordingly the said £120 was forfeited." The following year, 5 Ed. IV. we have "Commission to Roger Corbet knight and the justices of the Peace and the Sheriff of the County of Salop to arrest Fulk Spryngeaux esquire and Margaret late the wife of William Burley and bring them before the King in Council."

The following year again Sir Roger's peace with the King would seem still more assured, and we read, "Licence for Roger Corbet of Morton, knight, and Elizabeth, his wife, kinswoman and one of the heirs of William Lucy knight, viz: daughter of Eleanor one of his Sisters and heirs, to enter freely into a moiety of all the lordships, Manors, lands, and other possessions, which

33 Hen. VI.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 13
dorso, Prt. II.

38 Hen. VI.
Memb. 15
dorso.

1 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 27
dorso, Prt. III.

6 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 2,
Prt. II.

Margaret, late the wife of said William held on the day of his death for life or in tail, or in dower or otherwise, and a moiety of all the lordships Manors, lands, and other possessions, which the said William held on the day of his death, in fee tail within England and the Marches of Wales, and which on their death came into the King's hands and ought to descend to her, to hold from 4 November last, although the other moieties of the same belong to the King by the forfeiture of William Vaux knight, attainted of high treason by an Act of Parliament at Westminster, 4. November 1. Ed. IVth who was the other heir of the said William Lucy, viz : son of Matilda, late his other Sister." "By Privy Seal."

Two years after this permission Sir Roger Corbet died : the Inquest bears date 7 Ed. IV., and the Dodsworth record of it states, "Roger Corbet knight, held on the day he died in his demesne, as of Fee, the Manor of Shawbury of the King in Chief by the service of the 15th part of a knight's Fee and that Richard Corbet is his son and next heir aged 19 years." In 1468 Elizabeth, Sir Roger's widow, remarried, as is shown by the following Record, of date May 9th, 1468 :—

"Pardon to the King's kinsman, John Earl of Worcester, and Elizabeth, late the wife of Roger Corbet of Moreton, knight, tenant in chief, of their trespass in intermarrying without license." "By King and for 10 marks paid in the hanaper."

Richard Corbet, the heir, was still a minor, and we find the King appointing his Guardian : "May 30th 1468 West:" "Grant to the King's knight, Walter Devereux lord Ferrers, of all the Castles, lordships, Manors, lands, rents and possessions with knights' Fees, advowsons, Courts Leet, Views of Frankpledge, Fairs, Markets, privileges and franchise, late of Roger Corbet knight, and in the King's hands by reason of the minority of Richard Corbet, his son and heir without disparagement during minority, and so from heir to heir." "By Privy Seal." The minority was a short one, for Richard was already nineteen at the time of his father's death.

The years slipped by, and Edward the usurper still held the reins of government, when Warwick's sudden defection to the cause of the imprisoned King, Henry VI, kindled all the Lancastrian hopes anew. He (Warwick) acted with his usual courage, promptness and vigour, and within eleven days of his landing in England Warwick was master of all England, had released the captive King, and given the office of Constable of England into the hands of the trusty Earl of Oxford. The attainders of the Lancastrians were all repealed, and it must be chronicled that but few reprisals sullied this short paragraph of their triumph—all too short to be recorded as a page.

One notable exception to that policy affects this History. One of the first acts of the new Constable was to secure Tiptoft Earl of Worcester ; he was one of the few adherents of Edward IV whom no one could pardon ! Oxford had to avenge on him the executions of his father and his brother. Warwick remembered the merciless cruelties perpetrated on his own adherents, impaled and tortured, when the King's countenance had turned against him. The "Butcher" of England got no mercy, as might be expected, and was executed on October 18th. What was the mystery of Elizabeth's hasty marriage ? How passed the days of its short duration ? What the agony of her fear during Tiptoft's attempted concealment and flight ? There is naught to show us ; but we know that he fled, and that he was caught hiding in a tree in the Forest of Weybridge, and the end soon followed.

The triumph of the Lancastrian party was indeed but short-lived. Warwick himself was killed at the Battle of Barnet, and we read his fear for success in the urgent lines he addressed to his old comrade Sir Henry Vernon :—

"Right trusty and Well beloved—We grete you well and desire and heartily pray you that, inasmuch as yonder man Edward, the King our sovereign lord's great enemy, rebel and traitor, is now arrived in the north parts of this land, and coming fast on South, accompanied with Flemings, Easterlings, and Danes, not exceeding the number of two thousand persons, nor the country as he cometh not falling to him, ye will therefore, incontinent and forthwith after the sight hereof, dispose you to make toward me to Coventry with as many people defensibly arranged as ye can readily make, and that ye be with me in all haste possible, as my veray singular heart is in you, and as I may do thing to your weal or worship hereafter. And may GOD keep you—Written at Warwick on March 25th." Then a postscript was added in Warwick's own handwriting appealing to his personal friendship : "Henry, I pray you fayle me not now, as ever I may do for you." Oman tells us that this is almost the only autograph of the great Earl that exists. Sir Henry preferred to watch, however, and had made no preparation to take arms for either side as late as April 2nd. The wheel of fortune once more swung swiftly round, scattering the tragedies so ably recorded by our many historians. In 1471 we find a "Commission of array sent to George

8 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 17,
Prt. II.

8 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 3,
Prt. I.

Oman, Hist. of
Warwick the
King Maker.

Oman, Hist. of
Warwick the
King Maker.

11 Ed. IV.
Pat. Rot.
Memb. 25
dorso, Prt. I.

Duke of Clarence, Richard Duke of Gloucester . . . Roger Eyton, Richard Corbet and the Sheriff in the County of Salop."

13 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 7
dorso, Prt. II.

By 1473 we find our Richard Corbet already knighted. Aug. 18, 1473, Lichfield. "Commission to Thomas Littleton, Richard Corbet knight, Roger Kynastone knight, . . . Thomas Corbet of Legh etc. and the Sheriff in the County of Salop, to enquire concerning certain farms for lands granted, and divers other sums of money and yearly profits etc. and to certify thereon before the King and Council at Westminster, in the quinzaine of Michaelmas next." "By King."

Again the following year, 1474, comes the reference:—

13 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 10
dorso, Prt. II.

Feb. 26, 1474. "Commission to the King's kinsman, Anthony Earl Rivers, William Berkeley knight, Richard Corbet knight, etc. to array the King's lieges of the County of Hereford against William Herbert clerk, John Herbert bastard, etc. who did not appear before the King and Council when summoned to answer for divers offences committed by them in Wales and the Marches but withdrew to Wales and there stirred up insurrection, and to arrest them and their aiders and abettors and put them in safe custody and give assistance against them to the King's first-born son Edward Prince of Wales, when required by him or his Council."

Mercifully England was not all one long cry for treason, perjury and bloodshed. There was another voice that would be heard in spite of all—the love of learning, the persistent desire to know more than simply the life of the man as it swept past him. It grew stronger day by day, and happily for England the great ones of the land encouraged it and fostered it, and Caxton, the great distributor of learning, working for it, prospered in his workshop under the shadow of the Abbey of Westminster. The King himself countenanced the efforts of the new desire to learn, and the Duke of Gloster was among the early patrons; but Tiptoft, the ugly side of whose character is the more frequently written of, was one of the first of the nobles to uphold the love of learning and to spread it by exhortation and example among his countrymen. In earlier days he had been much in Italy, drinking at that fountain-head of the Renaissance, teaching in the University of Padua; and on his return to England, when Edward IV seized the throne, he was distinguished by the zeal with which he sought to spread the love of learning among his fellow-countrymen. In this he was naturally brought much in contact with Caxton, and this latter could scarce find words warm enough to express his admiration of John Tiptoft. When he learnt of his death, "One," he writes, "which in his time flowered in virtue and cunning, to whom I know none like among the lords of the temporality in science and moral virtue." Green in his History adds: "But the ruthlessness of the Renaissance appeared in Tiptoft side by side with its intellectual vigour, and the fall of one whose cruelty had earned him the name of the 'Butcher' even amidst the horrors of civil war was greeted with sorrow by none but the faithful printer. 'What great loss was it,' he says in a preface printed long after his fall, 'of that noble, virtuous, and well disposed lord; when I remember and advertise his life, his science, and his virtue, methinketh (GOD not displeased) over great the loss of such a man considering his estate and cunning.'"

Now let us say a few words of this wonderful printer himself. The printing press was the treasure he brought back to England in 1476, after an absence of thirty-five years. He established himself and his printing press in the Almonry of Westminster, a little enclosure which contained a chapel and almshouses, near the west front of the Church, as we are told by Green. Manuscripts were offered him by eager hands both to print and to translate; and here he found great difficulties from the rapid changes in the spoken tongue which he encountered. He found himself between the two schools of translation—French affectation and English pedantry—and draws a most amusing picture of his difficulties. "Some honest and great clerks," says he, "have been with me and desired me to write the most curious terms that I could find; and some gentlemen of late blamed me, saying that in my translations I had over many curious terms which could not be understood of common people." His own good sense happily saved him from the temptations of both parties. "I took an old book and read therein," he says, "and certainly the English was so rude and broad I could not well understand it"; and the old English Charters lent him by the good Abbot of Westminster seemed "more like to Dutch than English." "Our language," says he, "now used varieth far from that which was used and spoken when I was born." "Common English that is spoken in one shire varieth from another so much, that in my days happened that certain merchants were in a ship in Thames for to have sailed over the sea into Zealand, and for lack of wind they tarried at Foreland and went on shore for to refresh them. And one of them, named Sheffield, a mercer, came into a house and asked for meat, and especially he asked them after eggs. And the good wife answered that she could speak no French. And the merchant was angry, for he also could speak no French, but would have eggs, but she understood

RICHARD CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 253

him not. And then at last another said he would have eyren, then the good wife said she understood him well. Lo ! what should a man in these days now write," says poor Caxton, "eggs or eyren ? Certain it is hard to please every man by cause of diversity and change of language."

In the midst of all the changes and the searchings of heart of these troubled times, it appears that certain papers of Trust concerning the young Richard Corbet's estate were lost by his Guardian, Sir Walter Devereux. An entry of the year 1474 records "Exemplification, at the request of Walter Devereux, lord Ferrers, of the tenour of the enrolment of letters patent dated May 30 8 Ed. IV granting him the custody of the possessions of Roger Corbet knight, and the custody and marriage of Richard Corbet his son and heir. These letters have been lost by accident, as Richard Moton has taken oath in Chancery, and will be surrendered, if found." This looking-up of business matters was probably occasioned by the projected absence of Richard Corbet from England, as in May 1475 he was given "Licence, for Richard Corbet knight, who is going to cross the sea with the King on his voyage and service, to enfeof Thomas Monyngton, Thomas Thornys, Hugh Stepulton, John Plowden, and Thomas Cowley, of the Manor of Morton, Sawbury, a third part of the Manor of Sipton, the Manor or reversion of Hopton, Fythys, Eton Constantine, Co Salop, a moiety or reversion of a moiety of the Manor of Rycardiscastell, the Manor or reversion of Staunton, the Manor of Beverley and Hurtesley Co Hereford, a moiety or reversion of the Manor of Godgerych, and Homecastell Co Worcester, a moiety or reversion of a moiety of the Manor of Dalynton, Wapnam and Slapton Co Northampton, a moiety or reversion of a moiety of Gledley and Pottysgrave, Co Bedford, a moiety or reversion of a moiety of the Manor of Lenchelade and Southcote, Cublynton Stutley and Chlmyscote Co Buckingham, a moiety or reversion of a moiety of Wodam Mortymer and Howbregge Co Essex, and a moiety or reversion of a moiety of Newton Co Kent, with knights' Fees, advowsons, Leets Courts, views of Frank-pledges, faurs, markets, warrens, fisheries, free customs, rights, waifs, strays, chattels of felons and fugitives, escheats, liberties, franchises, profits and commodities, held in chief by knight service, without fine or fee according to the form of an Act in the Parliament at West. 6. Oct. 12 Ed. IV."

Commissions of the Peace were issued from time to time to Sir Richard Corbet up to this year of his going over seas with the King. The Pedigree gives the name of a younger brother, viz. a younger son to Sir Roger Corbet and Elizabeth Hopton, and he was probably their youngest child. I have an entry to his name in 1477 :—"General pardon to Robert Corbet late of Hopton by Clonne Co: Salop, gentelman of all offences committed by him before 18 Nov:" "By King."

Sir Richard Corbet was married to Elizabeth Ferrers, daughter to Sir Walter Devereux, Sir Richard's Guardian. Her mother being the only child of the then Lord Ferrars of Chartley, Sir Walter Devereux whom she married assumed the title in her right, and their daughter Elizabeth Ferrars of Chartley married the young Sir Richard Corbet ; but I find no date given. The Pedigree gives them several children, two sons, Sir Robert the eldest, Sheriff for Salop in 1501, who succeeded his father, and a son George, of whom no further mention is made. The daughters were Maria, who married Thomas Lacon, of Willey ; Anna or Juliana, married Sir Thomas Cornewall, of Burford ; Elizabeth, married Thomas Trentham of Shrewsbury.

There are still one or two more events to record in Sir Richard's life. We last wrote of him as he was about to cross the seas. The King passed over to Calais with an army of 1,500 men-at-arms and 15,000 archers, and the chief nobility of England who thought to emulate the past glories and successes of the English arms in France. In this they were doomed to disappointment ; no English successes awaited them, no friends and allies made common cause with them, and after a while the Army returned to England.

In the beginning of 1481 Sir Walter Devereux Lord Ferrars of Chartley and John Devereux knight, James Baskerville knight, Richard Corbet knight, John Lingen knt, Thomas Cornewayle knt, John ap Richard clerk, Thomas Mornyngton esquire, and William Wykes, gentelman feoffees of the said Walter, of and in the lordships or Manor of Sutton Courtenay Co Berks : and the advowson of the Parish Church of Sutton Courtenay, obtained Licence to grant the said advowson to the Dean and Canons of the King's free Chapel of St. George within the Castle of Wyndesore in frank almoin, and for the Dean and Canons to appropriate the said Church in mortmain "By King." This act was confirmed the following month of February by another similar deed.

The King died in the April of the following year, 1482, leaving the Prince of Wales a stripling of 13.—George Duke of Clarence had already met his untimely fate in the Butt of Malmesey wine ; thus power seemed almost to fall unsought into the hands of the unscrupulous and cruel, however brave and clever, Richard Duke of Gloucester, and he, after clearing his way to the throne by a few cold-blooded murders, was proclaimed King.

14 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 18,
Prt. I.

15 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 4,
Prt. I.

20 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 19,
Prt. II.

22 Ed. IV.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 22,
Prt. II.

I find no record of Elizabeth Hopton's third marriage, but a Deed of Nov. 1482 shows that it had already taken place. "Licence for William Stanley, knight, and Elizabeth his wife, late the wife of Roger Corbet of Morton, late the wife of John Earl of Worcester, kinswoman and one of the heirs of William Lucy knight, deceased, tenant in chief, viz: daughter and heir of Eleanor his Sister, and heir of Walter Hopton esquire, son of the said Eleanor, to enter freely into all possessions in England and Wales and the Marches, late of the said William Lucy, Eleanor and Walter, which should descend to her." "By P.S."

1 Rich. III.
Rot. Pat.
Memb. 22
dorso, Prt. II.

A Commission was issued this year 1483 to Richard Corbet knight, Roger Kynastone knt, and Richard Ludlowe (all closely connected together by marriage) to assess certain subsidies and appoint collectors of the same, so that the sums should be answered for at Michaelmas. In the following year two Commissions of Array were issued, one in May and the other in December, to John Gray of Powis knight, William Stanley knt, Richard Corbet knt, Richard Lacon knt, and Roger Kynastone knt. It was in this year too that Peter Corbet of Lye was arrested. Enquiries were set on foot by a Commission to Humphrey Stafford and Richard Corbet etc. to learn what persons in the County of Hereford "have committed treasons, insurrections and rebellions, and of what castles, lordships etc: they were seized or possessed at the time of their forfeiture . . . and to take the same into the King's hand."

These records do not convey the thought of peace, which surely the country needed; the clouds were gathering afresh, and Richard the King, with his hands already so deeply dyed in blood and treachery, turned with the savagery and courage of the wolf to pursue and crush his enemies. The leader of them was the young Earl of Richmond; he landed August 1st, 1485, at Milford Haven, in Pembrokeshire, and he determined to march straight to Shrewsbury, which would give him the command of the Severn and where he also hoped to find adherents. The indignation of the good townspeople had been greatly stirred by the murders of the young Princes, the elder of whom they looked upon as their fellow townsman, as he was born in Shrewsbury.

Blakeway in his History describes the Earl's route; he kept to the sea coast, for caution's sake, to be in touch with his shipping. On his way from Cardigan he met Sir Rice ap Thomas, who joined him, though he had been sent out to oppose his landing. They agreed to meet at Shrewsbury, Sir Rice going eastward through Carmarthen and Brecon collecting his tenantry on the way and making partizans, among whom were the numerous vassals of the late Duke of Buckingham. The Earl is said to have lodged one night at Mathafarn, near Machynlleth, with his adherent David Llwyd. This latter had the character of being a Seer, and the Earl asked what would be the issue of his enterprise. This so perplexed David that he passed a sleepless night; his wife, learning the cause, bade him good cheer, for, said she, "Tell him the event will be both successful and glorious. If your prediction be verified you will receive honours and rewards: if it fails he will never return to reproach you." The truth of this tale is attested by a Welsh Proverb which is said to be founded upon it.

The Earl's forces united at the Long Mountain. There is an extensive plain on the summit of this mountain which would form a most convenient rendezvous for the assemblage of a force, and none of the expected forces were found to be missing. The issue of the coming struggle showed how completely the reigning King had forfeited the faith and affections of his subjects. The Earl led a force of little over four thousand men: a mere handful wherewith to support his pretensions. He delayed his march to Shrewsbury till he was master of Forton and Montford bridges; two points, as Blakeway points out, which would assuredly have been obstructed had the people of Shrewsbury been averse to welcoming the Earl of Richmond within their gates. The Army encamped on Forton Heath, and messengers were despatched to Shrewsbury to demand a peaceful entrance. Their surprise was great to find the gates shut, the portcullis down, and the Bailiffs within, ready to give their answer. I continue to quote from Blakeway's History. The senior of these Magistrates for that year was Thomas Mytton, he who so lately as Sheriff of the County had been concerned in the arrest of the Duke of Buckingham. The old Chronicle describes him as "a stout wise gentleman." He made answer that he "knew the Earl for no King," but "only Kyng Richard whose lyffetenants he and hys fellowe weare: and before he shoulde entre there, he shoulde goe over hys belly, meaning thereby, that he would be slayne to the ground and so to be roon over by him before he entyrd; and that he protested vehemently upon the othe he had taken." The Earl "retornyd wyth hys compagne backe agayne to Forton," and here passed the night in the house of one Hugh Forton; and though Henry was not influenced by superstition, the hopes of his followers were raised by reflecting that the name of the village was "Fortun."

The next day Mr. Mytton's scruples began to weaken, and it was finally arranged that the oath

would be fulfilled by the Earl riding over the body of the prostrate Bailiff as he entered the town. The portcullis was accordingly drawn up and the Earl and his retinue entered to the general joy of the inhabitants, who received him with an "Ave chaire and God spede the wel," "the streets being strowed with hearbes and flowers, and their doores adorned with greene boughs, in testimony of a true hartie reception." He received here, however, more than the acclamations of the citizens. The house in which he lodged that night is still pointed out, and Sir William Dugdale, who visited the town in 1663, "has preserved a notice of certain armorial bearings which were then remaining on stained glass in its windows."

Blakeway continues: "Sir Richard Corbet of Morton Corbet, who had been a stout Lancastrian and evinced his attachment to the Earl on a former occasion by rescuing him from imminent danger at the Battle of Banbury, joined the Earl immediately on his entry into Shrewsbury. He even went the hazardous length of taking the oath of allegiance . . . and collected a band of 800 gentlemen, who accompanied the Earl to the field of Redmore, or Bosworth." Blakeway then quotes a letter from Sir Richard Corbet advancing the claims of his services after Henry had been duly invested with the regal dignity. Sir Richard's mother Elizabeth Hopton was already married to Sir William Stanley, and thus we realise somewhat of the strength of the party waiting for Henry to set foot in England and declare himself.

Nicholls in his History of Leicestershire gives the following quaint record of the struggle from an MS. in the British Museum:—"When Henrie Erle of Richmond cam in at Mytford Haven he sayde these words Yngland I am enteryd, here to clayme myne heritage. Jhesu that dyed on Good Friday and Mary his Mother send me the love of the Lord, Stanley he hath married my Mother; it is longe sittle she saw me; I trust to Jhesu we shall mete, and our Brother Syr William Stanley. Let us leve Henry and speke of Richard in his dignitie and the mysfortune that hym befell: a wicked counsell drew hym.

"The lord Stanley sterne and stowte, he may be callyd flowre in his countrys, and that was well sene at Barwick when all the lords of England let it be . . . then of Kyng Richard took he leve; but wicked counsell drew Richard This was the wordes thry sayde to hym. We thinke yow werke unwitly in England if ye wold contynew Kyng: for both lord Stanley and lord Strange and the Chamberlayne thes three bringe agaynst yow on a day XXXX. Then Kyng Richard made owt messengers far into the West contrie to the lord Stanley, to repayre to hym with spede. Then the lord Stanley bowed hym toward Kyng Richard: but he fell sycke at Manchester by the way as was the wylle of GOD. To the lord Strange then callyd he and sayde thes wordes to hym! In goodly haste bowne must ye to wyt the will of Richard owre Kyng. The lord Strange bowndy hym to ryde to Kyng Richard. When he cam before hym and knelyd downe Kyng Richard sayde Welcome lord Strange and kinsman neare: Wher is any lord in England of annsityr shuld be so trow to hys Kyng? Ther was no more of thes to saye, but to ward commandyd was he; and messengers wer made into the West contrie to the lord Stanley. Thes wer the wordes sayde to hym. Yow must rayse up under yowr banner to mayntayne Rycharde owre Kyng, for yonder comythe Richmond over the flode with many an alyannt owt of far contrie, to chalenge the Crowne of England; yow must reyse that under yowre banner be with the noble powere that yow may brynge, or els the lord Strange yow most never se, that is in danger of owre Kyng.

"In a studye still then that lord did stond, and saye Jhesu how maye thes be? I take witness of Hym who shop both se and sand, I never delt with traytorie; Richard is the man that hathe no mercye; he wold me and myne bondage brynge therefor agaynst hym will I be. Another messengar came to William Stanley that noble knyght, and sayde, Kyng Rycharde wareth ye to bring thy royal tent, hys hope is holy therein. Then answeyrd the noble knyght. I marwayl of owr Kyng, he hath me my neyew, my Brother's heire, a trewer knyght is not in Christentie: he shall repent byenythynge, that I can se well, Kyng Rycharde this for all the power that he can brynge, he shall eyther fight or fle or lose hys lyfe. I make a vow; I shall give hym suche a brekfast on a day as never knyght gave Kyng, then the messengar rydes to the Kyng and saythe, In the contrye wher I have be, men so greyed I never se for the lord Strange's sake that . . . they saye they will cause yow to fight or flye or els lose yowre lyfe. Kyng Rycharde smyled and swore by . . . when they be sembled all, I wold the great Turke wer agaynst me, with Prester John and the Sowdan of Turre with all theyre powers . . . I wold be Kyng. He swore by Jhesu and hys Mother that from the town of Lancaster to Shrewsberye, knyght ne squire he wold leve none alyve. Then he sent messengers bothe far and nyghe to Deuke, Erl, Baron, knyght, and othar in the degree. Part of theyr names shall yow here that came to Kyng Rycharde. Duke of Norfolkke, the Erle of Surrey hys heyre, the Erle of Kent, the Erle of Shrewsberye, the Erle of Northumberland, the Erle

of Westmerland, Robert Rydyssh, Sir Robert Owtrege, Sir John Huntyngton, Sir John Willinn, Sir John Smalby, Sir Bryan of Stepleton, Sir William hys Cozen, the lord Barkley, the heirs of Barkley, the lord Lovell, Chamberlayne of England, the lord Hugh hys Cozen, the lord Scrope of Yposall, lord Scrope of Bolton, lord Dakers rayseed the north contrye, the lord Owgle, the lord Bower, the lord Graystoke, he broughte a myghty many, Sir John Blekynton, Sir Raffe Harebotuy, Sir Willm Warde, Syr Archibald with the good Rydley, Sqr Nycholas Nabogay was not awaye, Sir Oliver of Chaston, Sir Henry de hynd Horsay, Sir John de Gray, Sir Thomas de Mingumbre, Sir Roger Standfort, Sir Robert Bracenerbye, Sir Harry Sandringam, Sir Richard Chornton, Sir Raffe Rolle, Sir Thomas Marcombyld, Sir Roger Sandyll, Sir Christopher Warden, Will Beckfort, . . . all thesware Kyngye Rychard shulde were the Crowne . . .

"The lord Stanley from Lathom castle upon a day bownyd he with knyghts and squiers in hys company, with theyre banners, fearse to fyght, to mayntayne Henry to be theyr Kyngye. To the Neu Castell under Lyne thes lord toke the way . . . Sir William Stanley that noble knyght from the castell of the Holt to the North-wycke he rode and told hys men way is all the Northe Wayns the most part and the flower of Chester which he did bringe earlye on a Sunday at morne . . . Lord Stanley lay in a dale with trompets and a goodly company upon Sunday they had masse and to ward lord Stanley, had hys Brother Sir William Stanley in the rereward; hys sonne Edward in a wyngye . . . Then removed to a hyghe mountayne . . .

"Kyngye Rychard looked into a mountayne hie and saw the banner of the lord Stanley and sayde Feich the lord Strange to me, or els he shall dye thes day. They brought the lord Strange unto hys syghte and he sayde For the death make the redy. Then answered that noble knyght and sayde I crye GOD and the world mercy Jhesu I take witness that I was never traytor to my Kyngye. Upon a gentleman then called he, Lathom was hys name. And ever ye come into my contrie grete well my gentlemen and yomen; they had a master, now have they none! Then he drew a ryngye of hys finger and sayde Give thes to my Ladye, if the field be lost on our partye, take my sonne that is myne heir, and fly into a far contrye. Then came a knyght to Kyngye Richard and sayde It is high tyme to loke about, loke how your vaward begynneth to fyght. When ye have the Father and some of the yeman, loke yow what death they shall dye, ye may head all at your own will. Then to Kyngye Rychard ther cam a knyght and sayde I hold it tyme for ye to flye, yondar Stanley hys dyghts he so sore agaynst them may no man stand. Her is thy hors for to ryde, another daye ye may worshipe, to ym he sayde, Bring me my Battayle axe in my hand and set the Crowne of gold on my hed so hie, for by hym that shope bothe se and sand Kyngye of England thes daye will I dye, one foote away I will not fle while brethe wyll byde my brest within. as he sayde so dyed he. he lost hys lyffe.

"They hewyd the Crowne of gold from hys hed with dowtfull dents. . . ."

When the pursuit was over, Bray delivered the battered crown to Lord Stanley, who placed it on Henry's head, hailing him King. Henry was wise and his throne was soon assured him; but History does not describe him to us as generous or rewarding those who risked so much to place him there, with a great alacrity. I think the Petition sent him by Sir Richard Corbet has a savour of this.

"The Petition of Sir Richard Corbet to King H. 7."

"In most humble wise sheweth unto your most noble highness . . . your true and faithful subject and liegeman, Ric. Corbett knight for your bodie, to consider the true faithful service that he hath doun and hereafter entendeth for to doe to the uttermost of his power . . .

"First. Pleaseth your Grace to call to your remembrance the first service, that after the death of the Lord Herbert after the Field of Banbury, hee was one of them that brought your grace out of danger of your enemyes, and conveyed your grace unto your towne of Hereford, and there delivered you in safety to your greate Uncle now Duke of Bedford:—and then at your comynge into England, hee was one of the first came unto your Grace at the towne of Shrewesbury, and there was sworn your liegeman, and went from thence unto the Field of Boseworth, and there jeopardd with your Grace his life, lands, and goods, and the gentlemen and others his friends that came with him in company, takinge your parte and rightwise quarrell to the number of 800 men; and at every field and jorney since hee hath byne redde to do your Grace service to his great costs and charges, and hee, ne non of his that were with him at your first field, or at any other insurreccions or tumults were never noe cravers for noe rewardes nor offices as yet. The which GOD knoweth best, and your Highness."

Sir Richard's example was followed by Humphrey Cotes of Woodcote, who lost his life at Bosworth. Sir Gilbert Talbot also joined the Earl with "two thousand tall men," vassals or

dependants of the Earl of Shrewsbury; and many another. What answer the King returned to Sir Richard's petition I do not know, but it could scarcely have been an unfavourable one. The King showed his appreciation of the services rendered him by Shrewsbury, and visited the town often. In 1488 he stayed several days, and the following year brought with him his Queen and his son Prince Arthur, and kept the Feast of St. George, April 23rd, in the Collegiate Church of St. Chad.

In 1491 Sir Richard was retained with George Earl of Kent to serve one whole year in the wars of France: and I think his death took place a year or two later.

Before going further let me quote a Deed among the Rolls of Parliament of the first year of Henry VII, as it mentions two Corbets. One of these must be Sir Richard's younger brother Robert, mentioned in the Pedigree as unmarried. The other will be Thomas Corbet of Lye or Leigh, the Constable of Caus.

"To the Kyng owre Sovereign Lord, prayen the Commons in the present Parliament assembled. That where the most noble and blessed Prynce of most holy memory, Kyng Henry Sixt, your Uncle . . . and other noble Progenitiurs have kept Worshipfull, noble, and Honourable Estate of theire Household in this Land, of the Revenues thereof, as hath doont any Kyng or Prynce in England Christened . . . That it would please your Highness, by the advyse and assent of the Lords Spirituell and Temporall in this present Parliament assembled . . . to take seize, have, retayne and resume into your hands and possession, from the XXI day of August last past, all such Castelles, lordshippes, Honours, Manors, Landes etc. . . in England, Wales, etc. . . as . . . Kyng Henry the Sixt, your Uncle, had of Estate of Inheritance, or any other to his use had, the second day of October the XXXiiii yere of his Reigne . . . Provided alway, that this said Acte of Resumption, ne any other Acte made or to be made in the present Parliament, be not in any wise hurtfull, prejudiciall, ne touchyng to Robert Corbet Squier, ne to the avoyding of any Letters Patent or Graunts to hym made by oure Sovereigne Lord of the Offices of Constable and Porter of the Castells of Radnor and Wigemore, the Office of Stewardship and Manour of Comot Towder, of the Lordship and Manour of Preston, and Prestons Lands, and of the Lordship and Manour of Kynghton, and of the Office of the Forster of the Forest of Cornedon and Radnor, of the Office of the Parker of the Parke of Wigemore, in the Marches of Wales, ne of any of theym; but that the same Graunte and Letters Patents, be of like force and effecte in the Lawe, as they shulde or myghte have been, if the said Acte of Resumption had never been made ne had. . . .

Rot. Parl.
Vol. VI.
p. 336.

p. 353a
Memb. 11.

"Provided alway that this Acte of Resumption or any other Acte or Actes made or to be made in this present Parliament, extend not nor in any wise be hurtfull ne prejudiciall to a Graunte made, and yeven by oure Letters Patents unto oure well beloved Subget Thomas Corbet Esquier, of the Office of Constable of the Castell of Cawse, in our Countie of Salop; but that the same Graunte be good and effectuall unto the said Thomas according to the effect of the said Letter Patent; this Acte or any other Acte made or to be made, notwithstanding."

p. 354b.

The King came again to Shrewsbury with his Queen and his children some few years later; and this time he took up his residence in the precincts of the Abbey.

Sir Richard must either have died in France or very shortly after his return, and I should judge about 1493. There was a Writ announcing his death dated 7 Feb. Hen. VII, and the Inq. P.M. followed on the 28th Oct. 10 Hen. VII. He is said to have died 6th Dec. 8 Hen. VII, and was seized of the undermentioned Manors in Fee. Robert Corbet is mentioned as his son and heir, and aged sixteen years and more. Manor of Condoover, worth £29 14s., held of the King by knight service; Manor of Moreton-Corbet, worth £5 13s. 4d., held of Roger Whetelane by knight service; Manor of Preston Brockhurst, worth £10, held of Roger Whetelane, service unknown; Manor of Peynton, worth £8 13s. 4d., held of Nicholas Segrave by knight service; twenty messuages, 200 acres land, 40 acres pastures, 50 acres meadow, and 10 acres wood in Lawley, Bowley, Eggebald, "The Heth Howse," Harecote Parke, Harecote Myll, and Bromfield, with the Park of Shawbury, worth £30, held of the said Roger Whetelane, service unknown.

Sir Richard's wife, Elizabeth Ferrars, outlived him for many years and remarried. Her second husband was Sir Thomas Leighton of Stretton-le-dale. She died in 1541, and was buried in the beautiful Church of Burford, in Shropshire. Her tomb is on the floor in the north-east corner of the chancel. It bears her effigy in metal, and the inscription, which is rather elaborate, records that she was the daughter of Sir Walter Deverok of Weobley, lord Ferrars of Chartley—that she married first Sir Richard Corbet of Morton-Corbet, and secondly Sir Thomas Leighton. One of her daughters, Anna or Juliana, lies buried in the same Church. She was the wife of Sir Thomas Cornwall, and was mother of the Sir Richard Cornwall who is the central figure on the beautiful

Elizabethan triptych in that Church: the triptych forms one of the remarkable and interesting Cornwall monuments found in Burford Church. The central figure commemorates Anna's son, Sir Richard Cornwall, who died in 1568. On his right is his wife and on his left his son Edmund, who died in 1585 and who was known as the strong Baron. On the eastern wing of the lower panel is the record of Anna: "Dame Anne Cornwall lies here, the daughter of Sir Richard Corbet and the wife of Sir Thomas Cornwall." She died in 1548. On the other wing is a small figure of her husband, Sir Thomas. He died in 1537, and was buried, it appears, at Acton, near London.

The Pedigree gives Sir Richard and Elizabeth Ferrars two more daughters than those I have previously mentioned. Let me give their names here, and refer also to my surmise that the first sub-branch of the Main Line was formed in this generation. The names of the two younger daughters are Katherine and Margaret; the former married Thos. Onneslow, of Rodington; the latter, Sir Richard Clyve of Walford, Co. Salop.

The founder of the sub-branch of Corbets which settled in Norfolk must be Sir Richard Corbet's younger brother "Robert"; he is given in the Pedigree as dying unmarried, but this does not seem to be an insuperable difficulty, for Pedigrees are not always infallible in the matter of younger sons. Sir Richard's mother outlived him; we have the record of her death, and that also of her third husband, Sir William Stanley.

The following extract is taken from General Plantagenet Harrison's Indexes. It tells us that the "Inq. P.M. was taken at Stratford Langthorn, Co. Essex, 29th Oct. 14 Hen. VII on Elizabeth, late wife of Sir William Stanley knight who was siezed of half of the Manor of Wodehouse Mortymer and Wobrihall, by gift of Sir James Baskerville, knight, John Devereux, knight, to hold to the said Elizabeth for life, remainder to Sir Richard Corbet, knight, dec. son of Roger Corbet knight, also dec., and the said Elizabeth and their heirs, and in default to Robert Corbet son of said Richard. Said Elizabeth died 22nd June last, and Robert Corbet is kinsman and heir, viz: son and heir of Richard, son and heir of Elizabeth."

Elizabeth's third husband, Sir William Stanley, died in 1495. His stepson, Sir Richard Corbet, died a couple of years previously in 1493; Elizabeth herself, as stated above, died in 1499. Our sketch of her grandson, Sir Robert Corbet, and of his wife and family will be found in the following chapter (Chapter XIV).

Let me close this chapter with a brief account of the Corbets of Norfolk, who, if tradition speaks fair, founded their sub-branch of the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet in this generation. The Pedigree, as before mentioned, notes a younger son of Sir Roger's and Elizabeth Hopton's called "Robert," and I assume him to be the father of the first John we find in Norfolk. Were we to reject this origin we should be obliged to look back for more than one generation before the possibility of an eligible younger son for this position could be found; and surely this would carry us back to too early a date. The Corbets in Norfolk seem to have settled themselves at Spikesworth and Bradson, probably through marriage. John Corbet is the first noticed about the time of Henry VII, and we are told that he married Margaret Dixon, and that he was supposed to be the son of "Corbet of Moreton Corbet," so pointing to this Robert, the younger son of Sir Roger and Elizabeth Hopton, and already referred to. Burke in his "Extinct Baronetage" gives this John and his marriage with Margaret Dixon, mentioning the supposed connection with the Main Line at Morton-Corbet. Blakeway also mentions this same John and his marriage, and styles him of Spikesworth, Norfolk, adding that his will bears date 1540 and that it was proved in May 1542. He also adds that he was said to be the third son of "Corbet of Moreton." The connection therefore seems clearly claimed, but whether his father were the Robert whom we have assumed, or another son still younger whose name is not found at all in the Pedigree, must remain an uncertainty. Blakeway in the above reference gives this John Corbet and Margaret his wife three children, two sons and a daughter. The daughter's name was Cicely, and she married Allen of Earham; the two sons were John, who succeeded his father, and Thomas, said to have been a Priest.

The two Johns, father and son, are mentioned in an extract from the Collection of Henry VIII.'s Papers—the date 1538, and the occasion, the "Accusation of Nycolas Came by Robert Browne of Norwyche, jailor of the Castle there, before Sir John Shelton, knight, and Robert Holdich, 9th Oct: 29 Hen: VIII." "The Accused was finally," says the extract, "taken before the John Corbets, Father and Son, and by them committed to Mr Hare or some other Justice." This establishes the fact that two Johns, father and son, were living in Norfolk in the reign of Henry VIII and corroborates both Blakeway's and Burke's statements. John Corbet Esqr. the son married Jane the daughter of Ralph Berney of Gunton, Esqr.; they left four children, Miles the son, who succeeded his father and was knighted, and three daughters. Bridget married Bryan Darcy of

Inq. P.M.
Harrison
Indexes,
Vol. XVIII.
pp. 654-5.

Blakeway,
MSS. Salop 5,
f. 163b.

Gairdner,
Letters and
Papers,
Hen. VIII.
Vol. 12,
Pt. ii, p. 304

Essex, Mary married Sir Roger Wodehouse of Kimberley, and Elizabeth was the wife of James Noon, gent. of Norfolk. Blakeway gives the date of their father John Corbet's will as Dec. 1558 and adds that it was proved in the following month of January. Sir Miles, who then succeeded, is styled of Sprowston; he was twice married, first to Catherine daughter of Sir Christopher Heydon of Baconsthorpe; and the mother of his large family. After her death he married another Catherine, the daughter of William Sanders of Ewell, Co. Surrey, and widow of John Spilman of Nerburgh. Sir Miles was knighted at the sacking of Cadiz by the Earl of Essex in 1596. He had eight sons, he died in 1609 and was succeeded by his eldest son Sir Thomas, knight of Sprowston, who married Anne daughter of Edward Barret Esqr. of Belhouse, in Essex. Sir Thomas was Sheriff in 1622. I only know the name of one of the remaining seven sons—"Clement"—a contemporary of Bishop Richard Corbet. The daughters' names are not given either. Sir Thomas's wife Anne appears to have been her mother's heir; she was Elizabeth's daughter and co-heir of Sir Robert Litton of Shrubland Hall, Suffolk. Sir Thomas died in 19 Charles I. He also left a fairly large family of two sons and six daughters. His eldest son succeeded him and was the first Baronet, a creation of 1623; the second son was the notorious Miles Corbet of Lincoln's Inn, who has left so unenviable a reputation behind him as one of the Regicides of the unhappy and ill-fated Charles I. We must refer the details of his life to a later page. Sir John the first Baronet married Anne daughter of Sir Arthur Capel knt, of Hadham, Herts. Burke gives us names of six sisters of the first Baronet: Catherine wife of Sir J. Meead, Anne wife of . . . Foxon, Amy married Brewster of Wrentham of Suffolk, Ellen married a Herrick, Cicely was wife to Thomas Sotherton of Taversham, Dorothy married a Slany. Sir John left four children, two sons and two daughters. Elizabeth married Robert Houghton of Ranworth, Anne married Francis Corey of Bramerton. Neither of the two sons married and the Baronetcy became extinct. John the elder brother died at an early age, and was succeeded by his brother Thomas, who was a devoted Royalist in the Civil Wars of the century and suffered much in consequence; he spent his patrimony in his efforts to help the cause of his unfortunate King, and in this he was greatly aided by Sir Thomas Adams, a wealthy Citizen of London, also devoted to the Royal cause. Sprowston was eventually sold to him and the Adamses both died there, and Sir Thomas and Lady Adams are buried in Sprowston Church, where also are several handsome monuments to the Corbet family of Norfolk.

Without doubt many Corbets may have been left in Norfolk when one reflects that in one generation there were eight sons, of whom I have only traced the eldest and main line. Rawlinson in his MSS. quotes a rather detailed extract from an early Visitation of Norfolk of 1563, which I will quote. It may throw a little more light on our Norfolk kinsmen. That given, I will close this chapter with details of the life and end of the Regicide and of one of his great-uncles, by name Clement.

"The Visitation of Norfolk made by William Harvey Clarenieux King of Armes began the XXVth of July 1563 in the first yere of the raigne of our Sovereigne Lady Queen Elizabeth.

"Tavorham Hundred. Crest a Squirrel, or, Coat of arms Or, a raven sable.

"Jhon Corbet of Bradishe in Norfolk Esqre, married Margaret Dixon, and by her had issue John Corbet, sonne and heir, second son John Corbet, Richard Corbet third sonne, Thomas Corbet a Priest, fourth sonne. Cecily married to Edmond Alen, of Aolame, gent.

"John Corbet of Sprowston in Norfolk Esqr: married Jane daughter of Robert Barney of Gouton in Norfolk Esqr.; and by her hath issu Myles Corbet, sonne and heir, William second sonne, Henry third sonne, Mary married to Roger Woodhouse of Kymberley in Norfolk, Esqr: Elizabeth married to James Nowne of Lifton in Norfolk gent. Bridget married to Bryan Darcy of Tolson Darcy in Esez, Esquire.

"Miles Corbet sonne and heir to John of Sprowston, married Katherin daughter of Sir Christopher Heydon, kt, and by her hath issu Christofer Corbet, sonne and heir, Thomas Corbet, second sonne.

"Hensted Hundred.

"John Corbet of Bradishe in Norfolk Esqr. married Margaret Dixon and by her hath issu John Corbet sonne and heir and John Corbet second heir, Richard, Thomas and Cicely.

"John Corbet of Framingham Erl, in Norfolk gent., second sonne to John Corbet aforesaid married Elizabeth, daughter of John Thetford in Nortolk gent. and by her hath issu Georg sonne and heir and Margaret."

Miles Corbet the Regicide was the second son of Sir Thomas Corbet of Sprowston, the Sheriff for Norfolk in 1622. He seems to have been a young man of promise, became a barrister and was entered at Lincoln's Inn; soon after, he was appointed Recorder of Great Yarmouth. He represented Great Yarmouth in two Parliaments, that for 1628 and again in 1640. He was a hot Parlia-

Whitelock,
Memorials,
p. 75.

mentarian and later a subservient and devoted follower of Oliver Cromwell's; thus from the first beginnings of difficulties he showed his Parliamentary bias. He soon became a member of the Committee for the county of Norfolk. According to "Whitelock" he was Chairman of the Committee for managing the evidence against Archbishop Laud. Whether chosen designedly or not by Whitelock, I think no other word could be found in our English tongue to so fittingly describe the tenor of that evidence as the word "managing"; it was "managed," and Miles Corbet, as we are further told by Whitelock, was very zealous in the prosecution of the Archbishop. We shall have occasion to refer to this in a later chapter, as one of the chief indictments preferred against the Archbishop concerned his judgment in connection with Sir John Corbet of Adderley and the Church of which this latter was chief patron. I hope to refer to it when writing the history of the sub-branch of the Corbets of Adderley.

Miles Corbet meanwhile pursued his course in life in dealing harsh measures to all who differed from him. He was appointed chairman of the committee of examinations, which gave him full scope for his powers, and the arbitrary and inquisitorial procedures of this committee gained him, and justly, great unpopularity. In this capacity Miles Corbet examined the papers of James Howell and John Lilburne, also those of Clement Walker, and these gentlemen have left detailed accounts of their controversies with him. "The committee of examinations where Mr Miles Corbet kept his justice seat," writes Holles, "was a worth something to his clerk if not to him, what a continual horse-fair it was, even like doomsday itself, to judge persons of all sorts and sexes!"

Dict. Nat.
Biog.
Vol. XII.
p. 202.

He was appointed by Parliament in 1644 to be clerk of the Court of wards and a few years later was made one of the registrars of the Court of Chancery, in the place of Colonel Long, one of the impeached members. In the following December Miles Corbet acted as one of the King's judges, he also signed the death warrant. Some years after this tragedy we find him appointed by Parliament one of the four commissioners for settling the affairs of Ireland, and again chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland. In this capacity we learn that "he manifested such integrity in his different employments in Ireland that he improved his own estate for the public service whilst he was the greatest husband of the treasure of the Commonwealth. Notwithstanding these self-sacrifices we find that in 1659, in December, Dublin was surprised by a party of officers, and Miles Corbet was arrested as he was coming from Church by Major Warren, and he returned to England. The following year a charge of high treason was preferred against him by Sir Charles Coote and others; Ludlow, who was involved in the same charge, persuaded Miles Corbet to appear in spite of it in the House of Commons. The House fixed a day for the two accused to answer their charges; but the hearing we are told was adjourned. A few days later, however, Miles was called before a Council of State and had to enter into an engagement not to disturb the existing government. In spite of these events Miles succeeded in getting returned member for Yarmouth in the Convention Parliament, but there was a double return and the election was annulled. Events seemed untoward and Miles thought it best to fly from England, which he accomplished safely in company with Barkstead and Okey, fellow Regicides. They were seized, however, by Sir George Downing, sent back to England, and the end soon came; they were tried and executed in April 1662.

I have one or two contemporary observations concerning him, from which one would gather that he was not a very popular person with the public of his day.

Walford,
Antiquar.
Mag. II.
p. 225 and III.
p. 51.

"Miles Corbet and two other Regicides, John Barkstead and John Okey, were discovered at Delft by the King's Resident in Holland, and were hurried to England, where they were executed." From the cutting from an old newspaper I have a not very flattering account; it says, "We have an odd account of his" (Miles Corbet's) "carriage in the House of Commons where he was Inquisitor General to the Committee of Examinations, having found an expedient to purge both Houses of such members as the Army or Independents disliked, without letting them know either their charges or accusers, which the 'History of Independence' terms a kind of Hangman's office, and that he looked more like a Hangman than the Hangman himself. 'Tis true likewise he was constantly called Corbet the Jew, much resembling that Nation in countenance and actions." Miles Corbet's life was forfeit, but Charles II. behaved with an unexpected equanimity towards his widow; for I have a copy of the Proclamation restoring certain lands to the widow. It is to be regretted that her name is not known beyond the Christian name, which was Mary. The unfortunate Miles left no son, only one daughter who is said to have married one of the Arthurs of Clapham. The King's Proclamation is as follows:—

Carte Papers,
Vol. XLI,
1660-1,
King's Letters
(f. 331).

"CHARLES R"

"Right Trusty and Wellbeloved Councillor, and Right Trusty and Wellbeloved Cousins and Counsellors, Wee Greet you well. Whereas Wee have received good information concerning Mary

Sir Richard Corbet, knt. = Elizabeth, dau. of Sir Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrars of Chartley
 born 1451, ob. 1493

Anne = Thos. S of Ross



John Corbet of S

2nd Son

John of Framlingham Erl = Elizabeth, dau. of John Thetford

George Margaret

2nd wife
 Catherine, dau. of Will. Sanders of Ewell, widow of John Spilman, of Nerburgh = Miles of Sprowston. Knight taking of Cadiz 1596; High Sheriff (Norfolk) 1591

Sir Thomas knt. = Anne, dau. of Ed. Barret, Esq., of Belhouse, Essex
 ob. 19 Ch. I.; Sheriff 1622

Sir John, 1st Bart., cr. 1623 = Anne, dau. of Sir Arthur Capel of Hadham, Herts.

Miles the Regicide = Mary ...

Sir John, 2nd Bart., ob. s.p. Tho whe

Corbet wife of Miles Corbet, that she brought him a portion of two thousands five hundred pounds, and that during the late distractions and usurpacions she constantly improved all her interest under the countenance of her said Husband's power for the security and support of Our Loyall and faithful Subjects; and forasmuch as the said Mary Corbet being now reduced to great want and necessity by reason of her said Husband's felonies and treasons and the forfeiture of his estate thereupon ensuing, hath made humble suit unto Vs, that Wee would be graciously pleased to grant unto her the late personall estate of her said Husband in Ireland; Wee are graciously pleased in consideration of the premises, and it is Our will and command, That the personall Estate of the said Miles Corbet, where-ever the same or any part thereof shall be found in Our Kingdome of Ireland be forthwith restored and delivered unto the said Mary, or her assignes without any abuse or embezzlement; and Wee do hereby will and require you to give such effectual orders therein to all Our Officers in Our said Kingdome whom it may concern, that the said Mary Corbet may receive the full and speedy benefit of our Grant, and that all things requisite to the effecting thereof be done and performed by every person and Officer respectively as if Wee had express the same particularly. For which this shall be to you and every one concerned a sufficient warrant and discharge. Given at our Court at Whitehall the 15th day of February 1660 in the thirteenth yeare of our Reigne.'

"By his Majesties Command"

"Will. Morice."

"To Our Right Trusty and Wellbeloved Counsellor, Sir Maurice Eustace knight, Chancellor of our Kingdome of Ireland, and to Our Right Trusty and Wellbeloved Cousins and Counsellors Roger Earle of Orrery and Charles Earle of Mountrath, Justices of Our Kingdome, and to all others whom it may concerne."

"Entered at the Signett Office 19th Martii 1660

"Phil: Warwick."

(Endorsement) Miles Corbet his personall Estate granted to his wife by His Majesties Letters dated 15th Feb: 1660.

The Dict. Nat. Biog. gives the sketch of another of the Norfolk Corbets whom I take to be a great-uncle of Miles Corbet the Regicide. This was Clement, the sixth son of Sir Miles Corbet, the High Sheriff for Norfolk in 1591. Clement's mother was Catherine daughter of Sir Christopher Heydon of Baconsthorpe. Clement was a scholar of Trinity, Camb., and in May 1607 was chosen Professor of Law at Gresham College, London; this chair he retained till 1613. Later he was elected Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge; he was also Chancellor of the Diocese of Chichester. In 1625 he was appointed Vicar General to the Bishop Richard Corbet who at that time held the See of Norwich. Clement Corbet lived till 1652; he is buried in the Chancel of Belaugh Church, where there is a monument to his memory. The sketch of his life further tells us that he married Elizabeth Kemp and that he left a son Samuel and five daughters.

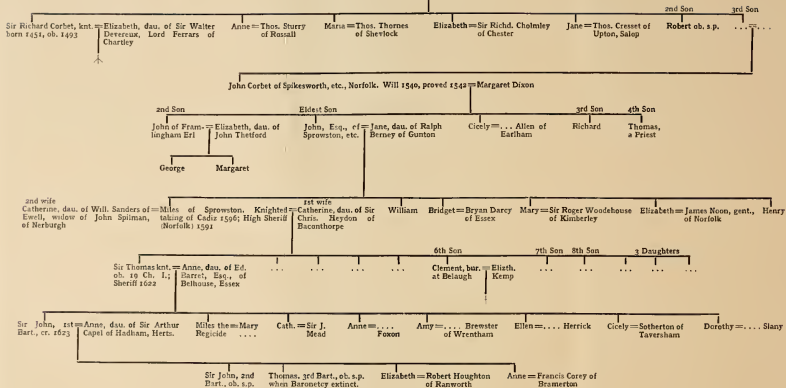
Without doubt there will still be found traces in Norfolk of Corbet offshoots from this the first sub-branch from the main line of the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet which I have to record, and their descent from the Main Line may yet be proved. But it is impossible to track them in this History, after the extinction of the Baronetcy. They probably as a family dispersed when that came about, and the doings of the Regicide would have made the name unpopular. Is it not probable that some settled in Ireland? I hope that some other future and more leisured hand may renew the search into these possible descendants.

Meantime I must return to the History of the Mother Line—the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet—and begin the fresh Chapter with the details of Sir Robert Corbet of Moreton Corbet, the successor to his father Sir Richard in the reign of Henry VII.

PEDIGREE OF CORBET OF NORFOLK.

SAID TO BE DESCENDED FROM THE THIRD SON OF

Sir Roger Corbet knt. of Moreton—Elizabeth Hopton
Corbet, Salop, ob. 1468



Corbet wife of Miles Corbet, that she brought him a portion of two thousands five hundred pounds, and that during the late distractions and usurpacions she constantly improved all her interest under the countenance of her said Husband's power for the security and support of Our Loyall and faithful Subjects ; and forasmuch as the said Mary Corbet being now reduced to great want and necessity by reason of her said Husband's felonies and treasons and the forfeiture of his estate thereupon ensuing, hath made humble suit unto Vs, that Wee would be graciously pleased to grant unto her the late personall estate of her said Husband in Ireland ; Wee are graciously pleased in consideration of the premises, and it is Our will and command, That the personall Estate of the said Miles Corbet, where-ever the same or any part thereof shall be found in Our Kingdome of Ireland be forthwith restored and delivered unto the said Mary, or her assignes without any abuse or embezzlement ; and Wee do hereby will and require you to give such effectual orders therein to all Our Officers in Our said Kingdome whom it may concern, that the said Mary Corbet may receive the full and speedy benefit of our Grant, and that all things requisite to the effecting thereof be done and performed by every person and Officer respectively as if Wee had exprest the same particularly. For which this shall be to you and every one concerned a sufficient warrant and discharge. Given at our Court at Whitehall the 15th day of February 1660 in the thirteenth yeare of our Reigne."

" By his Majesties Command "

" Will. Morice."

" To Our Right Trusty and Wellbeloved Counsellor, Sir Maurice Eustace knight, Chancellor of our Kingdome of Ireland, and to Our Right Trusty and Wellbeloved Cousins and Counsellors Roger Earle of Orrery and Charles Earle of Mountrath, Justices of Our Kingdome, and to all others whom it may concerne."

" Entered at the Signett Office 19th Martii 1660

" Phil: Warwick."

(Endorsement) Miles Corbet his personall Estate granted to his wife by His Majesties Letters dated 15th Feb: 1660.

The Dict. Nat. Biog. gives the sketch of another of the Norfolk Corbets whom I take to be a great-uncle of Miles Corbet the Regicide. This was Clement, the sixth son of Sir Miles Corbet, the High Sheriff for Norfolk in 1591. Clement's mother was Catherine daughter of Sir Christopher Heydon of Baconsthorpe. Clement was a scholar of Trinity, Camb., and in May 1607 was chosen Professor of Law at Gresham College, London : this chair he retained till 1613. Later he was elected Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge ; he was also Chancellor of the Diocese of Chichester. In 1625 he was appointed Vicar General to the Bishop Richard Corbet who at that time held the See of Norwich. Clement Corbet lived till 1652 ; he is buried in the Chancel of Belaugh Church, where there is a monument to his memory. The sketch of his life further tells us that he married Elizabeth Kemp and that he left a son Samuel and five daughters.

Without doubt there will still be found traces in Norfolk of Corbet offshoots from this the first sub-branch from the main line of the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet which I have to record, and their descent from the Main Line may yet be proved. But it is impossible to track them in this History, after the extinction of the Baronetcy. They probably as a family dispersed when that came about, and the doings of the Regicide would have made the name unpopular. Is it not probable that some settled in Ireland ? I hope that some other future and more leisured hand may renew the search into these possible descendants.

Meantime I must return to the History of the Mother Line—the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet—and begin the fresh Chapter with the details of Sir Robert Corbet of Moreton Corbet, the successor to his father Sir Richard in the reign of Henry VII.

CHAPTER XIV

A.D. 1493.

THE last record of the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet—the Main Line and the Head of the Family—given in the previous chapter, was the death of Sir Richard Corbet in 1493. The years of his allegiance to Henry VII. must have been very full of incident, if only from the fact that his stepfather was the all-powerful and very wealthy Sir William Stanley. No doubt, too, the King continued his favours to Sir Richard himself—the gallant knight whose timely rescue saved his life in the fight at Banbury. After the King's coronation the Throne gained each year in stability; the generous repeal of all the attainders made by the Yorkists in the days of their ascendancy was wise and politic and must have materially aided this.

Unfortunately these good impulses of Henry's were not allowed their full scope; they were often counteracted and foiled by the unworthy counsellors whom Henry gathered round him; and the results were disastrous at times to the Family of Corbet itself, or touched them very nearly. The Queen was of the hated family of York, and many an honour to her was but grudgingly accorded or delayed in a very unseemly manner. Even her coronation was postponed; it took place at last, and we read in the old chronicles that "On Friday before the Coronation fourteen knights of the Bath were created." On the Saturday the Queen went in procession from the Tower to Westminster. She was dressed according to Leland "in white cloth of gold of damask with a mantle of the same furred with ermine, her faire yelow haire hung downe pleyne byhynd her bak, with a calle of pipes over it." Her head was ornamented with a circle of gold enriched with precious stones.

"In this dress," we read, "she was borne through the City reclining in a litter, with a canopy of cloth of gold carried over her by four knights of the body. Several carriages, and four Baronesses on grey palfreys followed. She was crowned on the Sunday, and afterwards dined in the Hall. The Lady Catherine Grey and Mistress Ditton went under the table, and sat at her feet, while the Countesses of Oxford and Rivers knelt on each side, and at certeyne tymys helde a kerchief byfor her Grace." "The King viewed both the Coronation and the dinner from behind a lattice."

All went well for our Family till after 1493, the year of Sir Richard Corbet's death. Many conspiracies had cropped up, and many Pretenders to the Throne had marred the peace of the coming years, notably the persistent claim made by Perkin Warbeck cost many a noble life. Sir Robert Clifford became the King's secret agent. He was granted full pardon, but was told that to prove his repentance he must give the names of all whom he considered to be among the plotters: and he began his unseemly task by denouncing the Lord Chamberlain, Sir William Stanley! And a chance remark was interpreted so as to incriminate him! It is said that at first the King refused to remember aught but Sir William's great services and his faithful devotion; but unworthy thoughts and suspicions got the upper hand, and finally Sir William was beheaded in 1495, just two years after the death of his stepson, Sir Richard Corbet. The King's detractors accentuate the deed by noting the fact that by Sir William's death no less than forty thousand pounds' worth of plate and money devolved to the Crown! A reward of five hundred pounds was given to Clifford for his treachery, but History has the grace to record that the King never trusted him again.

Once more, then, our unfortunate Ancestress, Elizabeth Hopton, had to drink of the bitter cup of sorrow and disgrace. We are told that uneasy lies the head that wears a crown; may we not add (at least of those days) uneasy lies the head that is favoured by a Crown? Elizabeth Hopton lived till 1499, and at her death her estates were duly inherited by her grandson Robert Corbet, the account of whose life we are just about to piece together. I take him to have been nearly 22 years of age at the time of his grandmother's death, and his inheritance of all her lands and dowers.

Sir Robert married Elizabeth Vernon, daughter of Sir Henry Vernon. A very interesting portrait of her painted on a panel exists at Acton-Reynold—the present inhabited seat of the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet.—It is remarkable, too, as being the oldest in date of the many portraits of our Ancestors and Ancestresses which line the walls there. Sir Robert, her husband, filled the position of head of the Family for just ten years. We find his name is seventh in a list of fifty-seven knights of the Bath who were knighted at the marriage of Prince Arthur. Blakeway in his *Sheriffs of Shropshire* states that Sir Robert was Sheriff in 1507; the Pedigree gives the date as 1501.

There are one or two references to his name in the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign. Thus we read: 14 Feb. 1510 P.S. "For Thomas Kynastone of Lee, late Sheriff of Salop, Pardon



Elizabeth, wife of Sir Robert Corbet, Knt., dau. of Sir Henry Vernon, Knt.,
of Tong and Haddon Hall

SIR ROBERT CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 263

and release ; also release to Sir Robert Corbet of Morton, Salop, and Roger Thornes of Shrewsbury, of their recognition of £40 made 30th Oct: 23, Hen: VII. 14 Feb: Pat: 1 Hen: VIII etc:."

For. Dom.
Hen. VIII.
J. S. Brewer,
Vol. I. p. 133.

Sir Robert held Commissions of the Peace both in this year 1511 and in the following year, and in 1512 his name is among the "Appointments for War." "Names of lords and others with the number of men which they have granted, to serve the King's grace by land, viz. : The Duke of Buckingham, Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Fitz-Warren, Sir Thomas Lovel, Sir Robert Corbet etc. . . ." The Commissions of Peace for Feb. 1513 contain Sir Robert's name, but an entry of 10th Jan. and again of 30th Jan. tells of his decease. The entry runs : "For Chas: Brandon Viscount Lisle. Wardship of Roger son and heir of Sir Robert Corbet." "Richmond 5 Hen. VIII." Dodsworth also records from the Escheat for the Essex lands on Sir Robert's death, 5, Hen. VIII. No. 87, that "Robert Corbet held the Manor of Woodham Mortimer and the Manor of Welbriggell, and died on the 11th April 4, Hen. VIII. and Roger Corbet is his son and heir and of the age of 12 years." A Reference also among the Harrison Indexes gives "Inq: P.M. of Sir Robert Corbet knt, taken at Salop 16, June 5, Hen. VIII. Sir Robert Corbet died 11th April 5, Hen: VIII, leaving a widow Elizabeth, and children Roger (aged 11) Anna, Dorothy, Joanna, and Maria." A Deed which is almost in the form of a will is also recorded in Dods. MSS. It bears no date but "was proved in Nov: 1513." "Whereas I Sir Robert Corbet, knight, have made by Deed unto Sir Henry Vernon, knight, Thomas Inglefield, knight, Thomas Cornewale, knight, Thomas Laken Esqr., Roger Corbet my son and heir apparent Esquire, Richard Vernon Esquire, etc: all my lordships and lands in Hopton, Fitz, Eton, Constantine, Lawley, Water Upton, Dalvington, Lynchlade, Sothcote, Howbrighill, and Wyggynon, in the Counties of Salop, Northampton, Bucks, Essex, and Hertford, to hold for the use of me the said Sir Robert Corbet and my heires. Item I bequeth my bodye to be buried in the Church of St Bartilmew att Moreton-Corbet, Elizabeth, the Testator's wief, Roger Testator's son and heire, Anne, Dorotte, and Jane the Testator's daughters, each C marks. Proved 15 Nov: 1513."

Dodsworth
MSS.

Dods. MSS.
22 f. 125b.

The date shows us how steadily the years are creeping onwards, and, with them, life with its changing habits is rapidly assuming the mould out of which springs our complex life of to-day, to be fashioned according to the exigencies of the passing moment. Very shortly too we shall have reached the time when the Parish Registers will open their pages to the seeker who would learn from these treasured and faded characters, of the love, the joy, the tragedy of many a past and forgotten life ; hitherto so jealously guarded from the public gaze. Wills also begin to be more often made, and are more easily available. I have mentioned the Deed which Sir Robert executed for the disposing of his property ; and I will add here some extracts from the Will itself which confirm the wishes expressed in the Deed. Indeed, all relating to Sir Robert's personality is peculiarly interesting, if only from the fact of his fine tomb, which is in the Church at Moreton-Corbet and which, so to speak, fixes him irrevocably in our memory.

"In the name of GOD . . . I Sir Robert Corbett knyght have made a feoffement by dede unto Sir Henry Vernon, knyght, Thomas Englefelde, knyght, Thomas Cornewaile, knyght, Thomas Laken, Esquier, Roger Corbet, my sonne and heire apparaunt, Esquier, Richard Vernon Esquier, Roger Thornes, Esquier, and George Onneslowe of all my lordshippes, maners, mess; landes, and tenements, and all other hereditaments with thapptunces in Hopton, Ffytts, Gwn Constantine, Lawley, Waterupton, Dalvington, Lynchelade, Sothcote, Howbrighill, and Wyggynon, within the Counties of Salop, Northampton, Bukynghm, Essex, and Hertford, to have and to hold to them their heires and assignes to the vse of me the foresaid Robt. and of myn heires to fulfil my last will . . .

P.P.C. 27
Fetiplace.

"To be buried in the Church of Seynte Barthilmewe at Morton Corbet.

"My Executors to provide ij honest prests to syng and saye masses and other devoute prayers by the space of ij hole yeres . . . and evdy " (every) "of the said prests to have viij marcks for their hire.

"To Roger, my sonne and heir, my best salt, my best pece of sylvr, my best goblet and half my spones. And all the Residue of my said plate to Elizabeth my wyff, duryng her lyff and afere her decease to remayne to Roger my said sonne.

"To evdy of my Daughters, that is to say, Anne, Dorothe, and Jane the some of C mks for their mariage.

"My Executors to paye for the mariage of Margaret my suster the some of XI marks.

"My said feoffes to make an estate of all the said lordshippes, maners, mess: lands etc: vnto Roger Corbet my sonne and heire And to the heires of his body lawfully begotten. And for lake of suche Issue to my Right heires.

"Executors Thomas Cornewaile knyght, Thomas Laken Esquier Elizabeth my wyff, George Bromley and George Onneslowe. Overseers. Henry Vernon knyght and Richard Vernon his sonne and heire.

"Dated XXiiij April 1509.

"No witnesses.

"Proved xvi Nov: 1513 by Elizabeth the relict."

The "Suster Margaret" for whose marriage he leaves directions married Sir Richard Clyve of Walford; and we may note that he leaves his affairs entirely in the hands of near relations—father-in-law and brothers-in-law, etc. His daughters all married subsequently, Jane became the wife of Thomas Lee, of Langley, Co. Salop; Johanna or Anna married Thomas Newport; Maria was the wife of Thos. Powell, of Oswaldestre; and Dorothea married Richard Mainwaring, of Ightfield. At this time the wealth and influence of the Family must have been very considerable, and indeed continued, as we may say, at its zenith till once again the Family were impoverished by the surrendering of Manors by the hands-full, so as to satisfy the claims of certain heiresses; and this again to be shortly followed by the confiscations of those who called themselves the liberal rulers of their country!

Sir Robert Corbet was buried in the Church of St. Bartholomew at Moreton-Corbet, and among his ancestors, as he desired. A striking altar tomb was erected to his memory and to his wife's, Elizabeth Vernon. It attracts the eye immediately as one enters the interesting little Church and is worth describing. The tomb is in the Corbet aisle, or Chapel, which, as we recorded in an earlier chapter, was built in the reign of Edward III. by the Sir Robert Corbet of that day. The description of the tomb is to be found in the Transactions of the County Archeological Society. The inscription, which is in Latin, states that Sir Robert is here buried and Elizabeth his wife; the which Robert died 11th April, 1513, and Elizabeth on the 29th March 1563. Below the ledge bearing the inscription, on either side and at the ends, is a lozenge sable, with a squirrel sejant or. At the west end is a civilian as a weeper, bearing a shield of arms emblazoned: and on his right and left hands are figures of winged angels. The same arrangement of weepers bearing shields with coats of arms, supported by winged angels, is repeated on the south side. At the east end appears a monk in brown dress and a winged angel on either side, in the right hand of one of these is a black cross. The whole is very highly coloured and ornamented. Figures of children stand round the sides of the tomb. The two effigies, life size, which lie on the top are of Sir Robert and his Lady. The former is in plate armour with an apron of mail, the head lies supported on his helmet with its crest—(in place, and rather unusually large) of the Raven—a dagger is on his right side and a sword on his left. The feet rest on a lion. The Lady's head rests on a cushion borne by angels, and a dog lies at her feet: she wears a wreathed head-dress and her dress is the rather stiff costume of Queen Mary's reign. She outlived her husband many years. I find her death is recorded as occurring in 1563. Her father was Sir Henry Vernon, a man of note and esteem. We read of him as at one time Governor to the young Prince Arthur. He it was who rebuilt the Church at Tong and endowed it with the big Bell leaving a special rent charge on his Manor at Norton "for the tolling of it, when any Vernon comes to town." All this, however, came to an end in time, for Cromwell ordered the bell to be destroyed, as was to be expected of him.

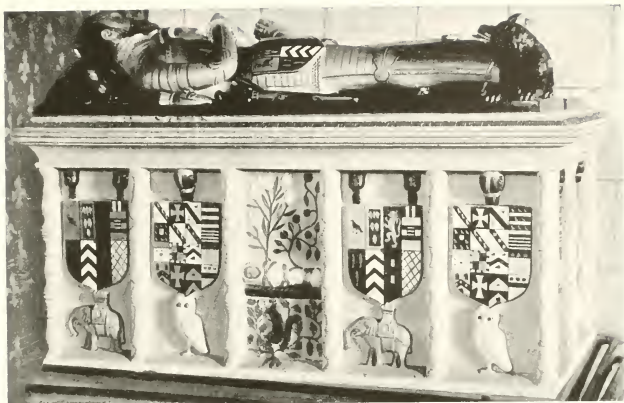
There is a beautiful monument in Tong Church to Sir Henry Vernon and his wife, who was Anne Talbot, a daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury. Sir Henry's son Richard, who succeeded him, is also mentioned in the Will from which we have quoted. I think it will be interesting too to record that it was this son Richard's grand-daughter (Dorothy) who was the heroine of the romantic elopement with Sir John Manners in after years. Dorothy was therefore great-niece to our Elizabeth Vernon. The scene of the elopement was Haddon Hall, where Sir Richard, Dorothy's father, had mostly resided.

Sir Robert Corbet had three sons. Roger the eldest we have already heard of in his Will. He was about twelve years of age at his father's death, and was placed under the Guardianship of Sir Charles Brandon, later the Duke of Suffolk. Richard was the name of the second son; Reginald, or, as more often spelt, Reignold and Reynold, the name of the third. The latter distinguished himself at the Bar, and founded also the important sub-branch of Stoke and Adderley. To accord this important sub-branch the lengthened history it demands here would, I feel, cause too great an interruption in the main current of my story; I will therefore defer doing so till the space and leisure afforded by the last chapter, or, maybe, one of the last in this Volume.

The record of Richard, the second son, is, however, more swiftly given and ended, though he played no mean part in life. Let me, then, give his record here, and then consider the fortunes of

Trans. Arch.
Soc. Vol. VII.
Pt. 111,
p. 316.

Ch. Brandon,
created Duke of
Suffolk after
the Battle of
Flodden Field.



Tomb of Richard, 2nd son of Sir Robert Corbet (wife Margaret, née Saville)



Tomb of Sir Robert Corbet, Knt., of Moreton Corbet, and wife Elizabeth, née Vernon

the elder brother Roger. The inscription on the altar tomb which is also in the little Church of Moreton-Corbet styles this second son "armiger"; there seem, nevertheless, to exist certain indications that he may have been knighted at some period or other of his life, sufficient to warrant our looking into them. A Sir Richard Corbet is mentioned among those knighted on an occasion in France which I will presently describe, and I note that the ceremony was performed by Sir Charles Brandon, afterwards the Duke of Suffolk; he was then Viscount Lisle and had been Guardian to the elder brother Roger Corbet, who had recently attained his majority. The doubt is whether the knight referred to be our Richard, the second son of Sir Robert of Moreton-Corbet, or another Sir Richard who was also undoubtedly knighted, and before 1525, at which date this latter died. The date of the ceremony in France is 1523. Let us see to the probabilities. I think they appear stronger in favour of the other Sir Richard, who dates his will 1525 and styles himself therein, "Sir Richard Corbet knight." He was of Assington, Suffolk; almost the last member of the ancient Branch of the Corbets of Tasley, etc., whom I can identify. On the other hand, both Roger and his brother Richard appear to have sympathised with the Reformed Religion, and at the Coronation of Anne Boleyn a Corbet, whose name is not found, appears to have been knighted.

See Vol. I,
Chap. VI.

Richard Corbet's adhesion to the fortunes of the Reformed Faith is manifest from his position in the Household of the young King Edward; but on Queen Mary's accession these very opinions, coupled with his supporting the claim of the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey to the Throne, landed him as a prisoner in the Tower; and pardon was refused him. It was during this imprisonment that the strongest bit of evidence occurs in favour of his having been knighted. It is in the shape of a letter to the Lieutenant of the Tower (1st Mary) from the Privy Council giving certain instructions concerning his prisoner "Sir Richard Corbet."

It is no great matter which way the truth lies. A few words, however, concerning the other Sir Richard, he who died in 1525, will be of interest. This Sir Richard was one of the last of a long line of ancestors who had held their lands in Shropshire, Staffordshire, and Suffolk, for almost as many centuries as the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet themselves. He was then the representative (but illegitimate) of the Corbets of Tasley, King's-Bromley, etc. Their history is given at length in Volume I. Their chief residence had been for some time at Assington in Suffolk, for King's Bromley was sold and Tasley had been parted with much earlier. This long line ended in illegitimacy through an illegal marriage—the grandmother of the Sir Richard of whom we write—she remarried after her Corbet husband's death, and, having a very powerful ecclesiastical influence in the person of her second husband, she was allowed possession of the Corbet properties in Suffolk, Norfolk and Shropshire, though she had no shadow of title to them, and the real legal heir, her brother-in-law Roger Corbet, after suffering imprisonment, died soon after his release therefrom, and without heir. This Sir Richard left an infant son (Richard) at his death of only a few months old, who was given to the Guardianship of Sir Humphrey Wingfield, of a well known family in Shropshire and Suffolk, and whose family in later years had many dealings with our Corbets; indeed, his ward's lands lay close on the borders of Moreton-Corbet, and I believe that in after years High Hatton did become annexed to the Moreton-Corbet estates, though now sold. However that may be, it appears that on attaining his majority the young Richard sold Assington, etc., to one named Gundon, and we do not hear further of him.

Vol. I,
Chap. VI.

The account of the knighting in France is as follows: "Nov: 7. 1523 The Army in France." "In the 15th yere of the reigne of our soveravne lorde Kyng Henry the Eight, the actes done in France under the honorable the duke of Suffolk."

Add. MS.
10110 f. 236
B.M.

"31 Oct: camped on the south side of Roie. 1 Nov: my Lord removed to the north side of Roie, and there made 14 knights, lord Powes, lord Harberd, Sir Arter Pole, . . . Sir Richard Corbett," etc.

This extract is from the Collections of the Letters and Papers foreign and domestic of the reign of Henry VIII. More knights they tell us were created at the Coronation of Queen Anne Boleyn, and these papers give the name Corbet amongst those chosen, but no distinctive name. Here then again is an occasion either for the knighting of Richard, the second son (if he were ever knighted), or of the elder brother Roger. They must have been near of an age.

The Add. MS. is quoted again: "Coronation of Anne Boleyn. The appointment of what number of officers and servitors attend upon the Queen's grace, the Bishop and the ladies sitting at the Queen's board in the Great Hall at Westminster, the day of the Coronation, as followeth." Knights of the Bath. "Marquis of Dorset, Earl of Derby, lords Clifford, Fitzwater, Hastings, Montegle, and Vaux, . . . Mr. Corbet, Mr. Wyndham." In another extract from the Letters we have: Coronation of Anne Boleyn . . . Friday, 29th May, "the following gentlemen, who were

Add. MS. 21,
116 f. 48 B.M.

Harl. MS. 41,
f. 2, B.M.

appointed to be knights of the Bath, served the King at dinner, and were bathed and shaven according to custom; the next day they were dubbed."

1533.

Aug. Bk. 210
f. 10.

Richard Corbet married Margaret daughter of Sir John Saville knight, and widow of Thomas Wortley Esqr. of Wortley. In 1538 he is mentioned in the Books of the Court of Augmentation as being granted a Lease, 20 Hen. VIII. "Richard Corbett of the Household. Stone Rectory Staff." The next entry in the "Letters and Papers" of this reign is in 1539, at which date his brother Roger had died and the heir ("Andrew") became his ward. The entry says: "Grants in July 1539" "Richard Corbet. Annuity of £40 out of the issues of the Manors of Morton-Corbet, Shawbury, and Hopton, Salop, which belonged to Rog: Corbet deceased, during the minority of And: Corbet, son and heir of the said Roger, with the wardship and marriage of the said Andrew."

Pat. Rot.
Memb. 25, p. 7.

Richard Corbet was Sheriff for Shropshire in 1561. He lived till 1566 and his death is quaintly recorded in the old Shrewsbury Chronicle. "This year" (1566) "died Mr. Rychard Corbett, sonn to Sir Robert Corbett, of Morton-Corbet, knight, He was karver to Prynce Edwarde, standarter to his bannde at Bullen, and one of the quenes majesties counsell in the Marches of Wales; and lyeth buryed in the weast syde of Shaberis Church, 5 myles from Shrewsbury, and dyed w'out yssue."

The entry from the Books of the Privy Council referring to his imprisonment in the Tower is as follows: "Sept: 10th primo Mariae" "A letter to the Lieutenant of the Towre whereby he is willed to permit these ladies followinge to have access to their husbands." Four are named, and the letter proceeds, "and Sir Richard Corbet's wife." As we know, she was the daughter of Sir John Saville, and widow of Thomas Wortley of Wortley. "Carte," who gives the record in his papers, adds, "But I see no proof that he" (Richard Corbet) "ever received the honour of knight-hood, and I cannot satisfy myself who Sir Richard was." There is no indication of the length of his imprisonment; we find him, however, in favour with Queen Elizabeth and he was made Sheriff for Shropshire in 1561. His nephew and ward Sir Andrew was first made Sheriff in Edward VI.'s reign in 1551.

It seems perhaps strange that Richard the uncle should have imperilled his position by furthering the claims of the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, since it is evident that his nephew Sir Andrew was no partaker in the intrigue; possibly the uncle found himself drawn into it through the old intimacy with the Duke of Suffolk and his known leanings to the reformed religion. He lived till 1566.

The following Deed is from the "Evidences of Sir Francis Wortley 13 March 1637," and given by Dodsworth in his MSS. "I Richard Corbet of Wortley esquire, second son of Robert Corbet of Moreton-Corbett Co. Salop, knight, have given to Richard Clyve of Huxley, Co Chester, esquire, and Ralph Clyve of Walford, C, Salop, esquire, all those my two manors of Carleton and Swinton, with appurtenances in the County of York, and all my messuages, lands, etc: in Adwyk-super-Deorne, Barnburgh, Bernolthorp, Harlington, Cadeby, Canonthorp, Tynneslow, Ruston, Monk-bretton, or elsewhere in the County of York. To hold to the said Richard and Ralp, to the use of me, the aforesaid Richard Corbet and Margaret my wife, and the heirs of the body of me, the aforesaid Richard, to remain to the behoof and use of Francis Wortley, and the heirs male of his body etc: Dated 4 February, 8 Elizabeth." Also "Precipe to Anne Fairfax, wife of Thomas Fairfax, esquire, that she justly hold to Richard Corbet, esquire, the convention etc: concerning the Manor and lordship of Swinton, with 6 tofts, 30 acres of arable land, 3 acres of meadow, 8 acres of wood, and 100 acres of common, with appurtenances, in Swinton. And the agreement is such that the said Anne acknowledged the aforesaid Manor, with appurtenances, to be the right of the said Richard and his heirs."

Richard Corbet was in Shropshire, I believe, at the time of his death. He held some property in a hamlet called Paynton, or Poynton, and was buried in Shawbury Church, where was the tomb now to be seen in the Church at Moreton-Corbet. It was removed thither at the time of some alterations in the Church at Shawbury and placed in its present position in that of Moreton-Corbet. The tomb is thus described in the Archaeological Transactions to which we have already alluded. "At the West End," says the quotation, "is another altar tomb with effigies of a man and woman. The man has a peaked beard, the head rests on a helmet with the sable Raven as crest. He is in plate armour with an apron of mail; the neck frilled—the feet rest on a lion and are spurred. He has gauntlets and dagger on his left side, no sword, and his wrists are frilled. The figure of the wife has a wreathed head-dress with long top peak bent back under the head, which rests on two cushions, she wears a frilled black embroidered gown with pomander in front and has

Cousins to the
Testator.

SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 267

a ruff. Below the shields are an Elephant and Castle, and an owl. The inscription round the verge is in Latin and states that Richard Corbet, armiger, was the second son of Sir Robert Corbet, knight,—that he died in July 1566—that he married Margaret the daughter of Sir John Saville of Thornhill, Co. York; and that she was the widow of Thomas Wortley, armiger, of Wortley, Co. York."

With this ends my record of Richard Corbet, the second son of Sir Robert Corbet, knight, of Moreton-Corbet.

Of the eldest son, Roger, who succeeded his father, we have yet to write. The terms Esquire and Armiger were becoming so generally accepted as the sign-manual of gentle birth, that we shall find many fewer knights among the sons of the Family than heretofore. There seem but few records to note of this eldest son Roger; he had the livery of his lands, in other words he came of age, about 1522. We find his name on some of the Commissions of the Peace and his name is on the Sheriff Roll for Shropshire as early as 1529 and pricked by the King. In the year 1535-6 his name appears in the list of Commissioners for Shropshire appointed to verify a Grant of "Tenths of Spiritualities"; his fellow Commissioners were Sir Thos. Cornewayle, Sir Wm. Thomas, Roger Corbett, Thos. Newport, Robt. Needham,—John Corbet of Lee. The Lincolnshire rebellion was brought to a close in the October of this same year: seventy-seven "Letters Missive" under the privy signet were sent out to the under-mentioned persons, countermanding a late Order already addressed to each of them by similar "Letters," and which latter had ordered them to be at Amphill by "Monday next, so as to attend the King in his expedition, to put down the rebels in Lincolnshire, as these have been already overthrown by the King's loyal subjects in those parts." The persons addressed were, "The Abbot of Abyngdon, Sir Gyles Alyngton, John Amidas, Thos: Chichely, Rog: Corbet, Sir Thos: Cornewayle." Roger Corbet married Anne, a daughter of Andrew Lord Windsor. He had many children and died at his estate at Lyncheslade in Buckinghamshire, in 1538-9.

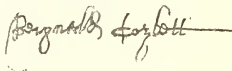
Among the many changes of this date, we may note the introduction of new names in the Family. Roger Corbet's eldest son was christened "Andrew," evidently so called after his maternal grandfather, Andrew Lord Windsor! The reign of Henry VIII. was truly a most unenviable and dangerous time in which to have lived, even though the daily strifes of the Wars of the Roses were ended! It must have been a time of such unrest, and diversity of opinions and beliefs, that men can scarce have realised what it was they truly did believe, or were ordered to believe; and I think our Ancestors of that time must have daily given thanks to the Almighty, as morning broke, and they found their heads still resting firmly on their shoulders, while they perceived now this neighbour, now that, imprisoned and even executed for one scarce knew what. Increasing violence was the tenor of these last days of King Henry's reign. Superstition under these conditions of uncertainty both temporal and spiritual would assuredly flourish. It was but a few years after Roger Corbet's year of Shrievalty that the following entry occurs in one of the Town Corporation Books of Shrewsbury. It commemorates no doubt an unusually heavy and destructive storm of thunder and lightning, but by the townfolk of that day it was interpreted as follows:—"This yere 1533 upon twelfth daye in Shrousberie, the dyvyl appeared in St Alkmund's Church, there when the Priest was at highe Masse with grate tempeste and darknesse, that as he passed through the Church he mounted uppe the steeple in the sayde Church teringe the wyer of the sayde Church, and putte the prynte of his claws upon the 11th bell and toocke one of the pynacles away with hym and for the tyme stayed all the bells in the churches, so that in the sayde Towne they coude neyther tolle nor ryng."

The smaller Religious Houses were all suppressed a year or so later, and by the year after Roger Corbet's death in 1539 all the more important ones also had shared the same fate. Many penalties were exacted from those who still persevered in their exhibitions of sacred relics, so called, and their frauds were relentlessly exposed. The Reformed Religion gained strength, though of a truth it suffered much opposition and hindrance both from friend and foe. London hailed her first Protestant Lord Mayor in 1540. This was the first Sir Rowland Hill, and his memory is so closely connected with the founding of the sub-branch of the Corbets of Stoke and Adderley, that we must make good note of his personality as well as of Roger Corbet's youngest brother Reginald, with whom the famous Lord Mayor was so nearly connected. Sir Rowland Hill, we may note in passing, made the road between London and Kilburn: a boon we do not doubt to all travellers. Drayton owes her Free School to him, and in 1549 he rebuilt and restored nearly the whole of the interesting Church at Stoke-on-Tern. His nephew-in-law was Reginald Corbet, the third son of the late Sir Robert Corbet of Moreton-Corbet. This younger son chose the Law as his career. His

wife was Alice Gratewood, the daughter of one of the heiresses of the wealthy Lord Mayor to whose beneficent works we have just alluded. They were married at Hodnet in the August of 1546. Thus was founded the important sub-branch of the Corbet Family at Stoke and Adderley. Reginald made his own mark in his County, of which we have one or two traces. The Corporation of Shrewsbury has preserved a letter from him and very shortly after its date we find him Recorder of the Town. The letter is as follows:—"Emanuel, Right Worshipfull Master Bayliffs after moste hartist commendacons to you this is to asserthen you that I have sent you downe here enclosed yor demurrars in law sent unto me, having two which I stey as yet in the discusse thereof. Also yor' Wrytte of Corpus cum causa, which I could not returne in yor' names except I had the record whereby they were arrested with you, which you sent me not. I have declared my mynde what I thyncke not the law in the demurrars. In the rest of yor' matters I intend GOD blessing to talke with you thereof this lent tyme, and thus I committe you to GOD.

" Ffrom Camb: xix daye of February 1548 by yor' assured."

" signed "



A few years previously, at the time of the suppression of the Monasteries, he and some like-minded friends tried to gain the Royal assent to a scheme for appropriating some of the lands and monies of the ancient Abbey and Monastery of Shrewsbury towards the foundation of a Free School. The scheme did not find favour, unluckily, though indeed what could have been a more fitting destiny for an Institution which through so many centuries had served as a power for good in the land; or a more happy achievement for the descendant of one of the first of that Institution's Founders and Benefactors! Henry VIII., however, would listen to no such proposition; notwithstanding, the plan for the founding of a Free School found supporters later and the scheme for one was finally realised. An entry in the Town accounts for 1548 records "Paid Reginald Corbet, the Recorder for a supplication exhibited to the Lord Chancellor to obtain a free school ros" "Given to a servant of the Lord Chancellor for his favour in the same zod." The Chancellor was Lord Rich.

3 Edw. VI.

Our Recorder soon rose in importance, and in 1559 he was a Judge of the Queen's Bench. At that date he had already been married many years; his wife was Alice Gratewood, the marriage took place at Hodnet in the August of 1546. Alice Gratewood was the niece of the famous Sir Rowland Hill, the first Protestant Lord Mayor of London. As this latter had no children nor brothers, his two sisters and their descendants finally inherited the greater part of the Lord Mayor's vast wealth and estates. These two sisters, Elizabeth and Margaret, married, the former John Barker, and the latter (Margaret) John Gratewood of Wollerton, Co. Salop. Our interest for the moment lies with the Gratewoods, as eventually Alice inherited all her mother's share of the property. As we have stated, she married Reginald Corbet and thus brought a large property and influence into the Corbet Family at Stoke and Adderley.

The fortunes of the much desired school were not neglected, though some years elapsed before the real steps for its establishment could be taken. A short entry in the accounts of the Corporation of Shrewsbury alludes to the accomplishment of the project and records: "Paid for the purchasing of a free school to be had within the Town £20." The foundation was established by Royal Grant, and Blakeway considers that this last sum of money was probably a part of the consideration paid for the estates settled upon the School by Edward VI.

Reginald the Judge lived, latterly at any rate, at Stoke-upon-Tern, where what is now a farmhouse is still spoken of as his residence. It bears evidences of the moat which once surrounded it and of sundry buildings which are now pulled down. A bridge over the little stream of the Roden is also said to have been built by him.

He and his wife Alice are both buried in the Corbet Chapel of the Church at Stoke; a very fine altar tomb covers the spot: it is in alabaster and said to be one of the finest specimens of its kind. Sir Reginald's effigy shews him dressed in the Judge's robes of the day, the support for the head has disappeared but the attendant Raven is still there. His wife Alice, who survived him some years, is clothed in very handsome garments: they had a large family and these, after the manner of the day, are commemorated on the tomb, the boys ranged on one side of its walls, the daughters on the other. Their eldest son "Rowland" died as a boy and was buried at Drayton, where he was one



Reginald Corbet of Stoke and
Adderley (Judge)



Jerome Corbet, Esqr.,
of Besloe



Shrewsbury Grammar School

JUDGE REGINALD CORBET OF STOKE-UPON-TERN 269

of the first scholars in the fine school provided by the munificence of his grand-uncle the Lord Mayor. Reginald Corbet is recorded in the entry of burial for his son, in the Parish Register, as of Cotton in the Parish of "Stook." He put up a brass to his son's memory in the Parish Church of Drayton which bears a rather quaint inscription and may be translated thus: "Rowland, the heir of his Father Judge Corbet, passing the time pleasantly in study at Drayton, was seized with a sudden illness, and left life in spite of the prayers of his dear Father. Kindly nature provided him with various endowments; Death who spares no one, enviously bore him away. Now he enjoys Christ, being restored into heavenly habitations. He has gone before, but we shall shortly follow." The last chapter or chapters in this volume will contain the subsequent history of this sub-branch. Sir Reginald Corbet died in 1569, and on his wife's death his estates are quoted as containing the Manors of Drayton, Adderley, Stoke, Hales, Almington, Blore, the village of Child's Ercall, and granges at Cliffe, Ternhill, Burnhill, and Cheethill.

The Judge describes himself in his will as "I Reginald Corbett one of the Queenes her Justices of her ples, before her highnes to be holden, and the 3rd Sonne of Sir Robert Corbett of Moreton-Corbet within the Countie of Salop, make my Testament concerning my goods in manner and forme following First In charitie I forgive all men that have offended me. and second I ask all them forgiveness whom I have offended. and third and chieflie with all my mighte with all my harte and with all my soull I aske the Almighty GOD forgiveness of all my offences and the punishment that I have deserved for the same, faithfully believinge that by the death and passion and by this present I have remission of my synnes and shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven." He then makes various bequests and mentions many friends and relations, all of which are of interest to note. "Sir Andrew Corbett kt: and to all his Brethren and Sisters that be the children of my olde Mr. my Brother Roger Corbett 100 marks to be delivered as to Sir Andrew shall seme meate by his discreon and to Sir Andrew Corbett after he hath taken his two heriotts forffits I give my best gelding remaying. and unto Robert Corbett my Cozen, his eldest Sonne I give the best gelding he can chose, his Father being served of myne remaying my cross-bow and a cuppe of sylver being peall gilt with the cover. and I desire Sir Andrew Corbett his Bretherne and my said Cosen Robert to be good to my Wief. I forgive my Brother Gratewood £40 he borrowed of me and the best gelding he can chose for a legacy."

P.P.C.
I. Stonarde.

After various legacies to servants the next bequest is to "My Brother Powell and my Sister his wief, a Goblet called Fownteyne Doble gilt with a cover to yt and to My Nephew Lee a jug of stone garnished with silver gilt, the best of them he can chose with Letters in the Toppe of the Cover. Among my poore Tennants in Stoke and Drayton 20 markes with such other Dolle preparations and order of my buriall as my Executors shall think most convenient, and I wold wishe it might please GOD I mighte be buried in Stoke Churche The Residewe of all goods, Plate, money Cattells Juells not given whollie I give to Alice Corbett my singular good Wief whom I ordaine and make my sole Executrix; and Overseers Sir Andrew Corbett and my Brother Thomas Powell provided neverthesse, that if hereafter my said Wief fortune to marry my Daughter Elizabeth, then lyving unmarried, then I give to the said Elizabeth my Daughter in preferment of her marriage £400 soe that she be married by the advice of my said Wief, Sir Andrew Corbett, my Brother Thomas Powell, and my Brother Gratewood, or the most parte of them. And concerning my Devise to be made of my Lands I can make none, for my Wief is part purchaser withe mee, and soe therefore I remitte whollie to her, provision for our children aforesaid, suche Plate and devise as I have drawn and remaying in my Cofer, and thus O Lord have mercie on my Soull. Writt at Stoke withe my owne hande. Proved 22nd Jan: 1566."

I must quote a quaint little account of the arrangement of the coat of arms of the Lord Mayor's family, given by the County Archæological Society. "In an old emblazoned Pedigree of the family of Hill of Saulton and Hawkstree these arms are thus introduced. Ermine on a fesse sable, a castle triple towered. Whereas Sir Rowland Hill knight, late Mayor of London, is descended a gentleman of antiquitie and his ancestorie bearinge armes, notwithstanding being ignorant of the same; toke armes to himself and his posteritie and so dyed without issue of his body procreate and leaving behind him a good porcion of land which he hath given and determined and divided among his Sister's children and hereupon, being required by divers of them and es'pec'ally of Reginald Corbet one of the justices of the Queen's Bench, and Alice his wife, one of the daughters of John Gratewood and of Jane his wife, Sister to Sir Rowland Hill, to permit and auctorise ye said Alice to bear the sd' armes and ye clerk in com'on of the premises for a perpetual remembrance of his willingness and worshipping behaviour in his life time soe much apparent to the world, not only of his grate government, governing in London, founding free scoles, making Highways, and

stone bridges ; grant to said Alice Corbet, daughter of John Gratewood and Jane Hill, now married to Reignold Corbet, and to Wm: Gratewood gent son of John Gratewood and Jane Hill ; and to James Barker gent, son of John Barker and Elizabeth, Sister to Sir Rowland Hill, and to Rowland Barker, son and heir to Ed' Barker to join the said armes with their own. Wm: Henry Clarencieux, King of Armes, 1562."

Before saying farewell to this generation and then passing on to the next (Sir Andrew's and his brothers and sisters), let me give some details of Roger Corbet's will, the then head of the Family, as well as of his wife's, Anne Windsor, with a few remarks on the Windsor family.

Roger Corbet made his will as follows :—

P.P.C.
24 Dyngceley.

" I Roger Corbett sike of body and hole in mynde . . . My body to be buried in the next Parish Church where GOD shall doo his will by me, except it be within tenne Myles of the Parish Church where my dwelling is . . . And xxiiij masses to be said for my soule.

" To my suster Mary one hundred marks towards hir mariage.

" To Xiiij pour men xiiij blak gownes.

" To xiiij pour women xiiij smocks.

" I bequeath thirty Rynges of golde to the fyve shillings a Ryng, which Ryng shalbe marked wt a R. and a C. and they to be divided to speciall and trusty frends.

" I will that the housholde stuffe and plate lefte vnto me by the will of my Father do remayn and contynue in the Castle of Morton Corbett to the vse of him or hir whom shall inherite the possessions and landes of their foresaid fathers.

" I require and beseke (beseech) my Supervisors and Executors to consulte together howe to Redeme my heire owt of the thraldom and bondage of wardship, for whose mariage I was ofered one thousand marks. . . . If they Redeme the wardship of my sonne and heire. Then I will that owt of the money that they may have for his mariage and owt of the Revenues and profits of his landes be taken three hundreth marks to the mariage of my daughter Margaret and thre hundreth marks to the mariage of my daughter Elizabeth. My serunts every man and woman to have a twelumonthis wages, and my gelding and horses to be distributed amonge theym. To Water, Robert, brethern, every one a pece when they come to full age, £6 13s 4d. for terme of their lyfe.

" To Anne my wife all my goods unbequeathed that longth to my house in Lynceley.

" To the Vicar of Morton and to the Parish Clerk and to the poor of the said parishe Vls VIIjd. And likewise to the parishe of Chabery and to the parishe of Stawnton to be distributed by my lady

" I will my fflagon 'Cheyne' to be devided betwixte my thre yonger sonnes." " Sole Executrix Anne my wife

" Supervisors my lady-moder, my Uncle John Vernon Esqr Thomas Newporte my brother-in-law Esquier.

" Proved FFeb: 1538-9 by Anne relic and sole Executrix named."

We shall like to note whether the young heir were " freed from the thraldom of wardship," and his mother Anne Windsor refers to the subject in her will :—

P.P.C.
F. 31 Bucks.

" In the name of GOD. . . .

" I Anne Corbet of Lynchelade in the Countie of Buckingham wydowe.

" To be buried at Lynchelade.

" Whereas my late husbnde Roger Corbet dyd give by his will three hundreth marks towards the mariage of his daughter Elizabeth to be levye and paide of the money to be received for the mariage of his sonne and heyre yf I his Executrix together wt the supervisors might bye and redeeme hym, but as it came not so to passe, I give vnto my said daughter Elizabeth the aforesaid some of three hundreth marks . . . the said some to be levye and paide of my goods to be valued. And of the residue remaying over and above the aforesaide three hundreth marks, I give vnto my sonne Hierom Corbet . . . but yf it shall fortune my daughter Elizabeth to dye, then the said some to be divided amonge my three sonnes Walter, Robert, and Hierom. And in case one, or two of thes three departe oute of this lyfe that then his or their partes shalbe given to the other surviving. And yf they all three departe then 100 pounds of the said iijC marks to be divided amonge my two daughters" (Margaret and Elizabeth) " And yf the one of them departe then I will to remayne to the survivor. And the other hundreth pounds remaying to my sonne Sr Andrew Corbet his three yongest sonnes, Richarde, Raynolde, and Ffrances to be lykwise evenly devyded amonge them.

" To my sonne Palmes a little rounde ryng of golde and to my daughter his wyf one ryng wt a diamond.

" To Raynold Corbet, my sonne Sir Andrew Corbet, his sonne, one hope of golde.

Sir
of Me

Margaret = Francis
Kynaston

Thomas Corbet of
Stanwardine; bur.
at Baschurch
March 18 1615

= Margaret or Elizth
dau. of Sir Vincs.p.
Corbet of Moreto
Corbet

Robert
wardin

Thomas Corbet of St
Lived at Worcester.
wardine to Sir Watki

Robert; bur. at Baschurch ob.
s.p. Entered at Gray's Inn 1686;
Died soon after

Elizabeth

Anne =

SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 271

" To Dorothe my mayden all myne apparells and her hole yeres wages.

" To John Rogers, my servaunt, the bed he now lyeth on wth that belongeth vnto yt.

" To George Ivet XXs, a quarter of wheate and two quarters of barley.

" To Sir Jefferye my Prest Xls.

" Executors my Brother Edmund Wyndesore esquier and John Somer clerk P'sone of Stoke Hamonde.

" Overseer my nephew Sir Thomas Wyndesore knight."

Dated XXVI Sept: 1550.

Witnesses, Jeffery David, Dorothe Woodness, John Hartwell, Richard Markham.

Proved 8 Nov. 1551 by the Executors named.

A few words concerning the Wyndesores may be acceptable, the more so since the name of Andrew came from that family. Sir Andrew's will was proved the last day of July 1543 and says, " I Andrew Wyndesore of Stanwell, in Co. Midd: knight, lord Wyndesore, bequeth my body to be buried in the quere of the Church of Holy Trinity of Hunslowe, in the said County, wher my wief Elizabeth, lady Wyndesore, lyeth buried. . . . And I will that my daughters, Dame Isabell Vavasor, wief of Sir Peter Vavasor of Spalding in the County of Yorke, knight, and Anne Corbett, wief of Sir Roger Corbett of Morton-Corbett, in com. Salop Esq.: and Edythe Ludlow, wief of George Ludlowe of Hildeverell in Co. Wyltes Esq: which I have marryed in my life, be content with suche sommes as I have bestowed on them at ther mariage . . . Item I will that Anne Corbet my daughter, late wief of Sir Roger Corbet, or Andrew Corbet, son of the said Roger, have £40 per annum . . ."

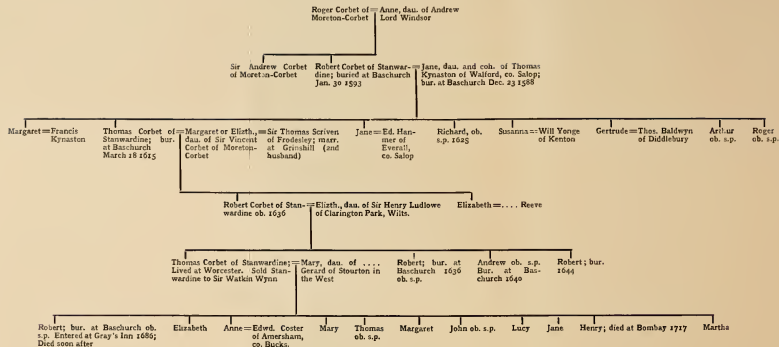
A shield with his arms is on the wall of the Hounslow Chapel, and the inscription is " Monsyr Andrew Wayndesor." The Windsor family's chief seat seems to have been Stamwell in Middlesex; they were lords also of Hirtsmere up to 1655: the Manor was then sold to Simon Bennet of Beachampton, Bucks. Sir Andrew appears to have resigned Stamwell to the King in exchange for the Manor of Hedleigh, and Sir Andrew's grandson held both the Manors of Herksmere and Hedleigh, sometimes also called Wyks. Their descendant of to-day is the Earl of Plymouth.

Andrew—the first of his name in the Family of Corbet—succeeded his father, Roger Corbet, of Moreton-Corbet, as eldest son and heir. He seems to have been about sixteen at the time of his father's death and passed under the Guardianship of his uncle Richard. The Pedigree gives the names of several daughters, sisters to Sir Andrew, but as their mother, Anne (Windsor), mentions only two daughters in her Will and these in some detail, I will only refer to the two she names. These were Margaret and Elizabeth. The former became the wife of Francis Palmes knt., of Lyndelay, Co. York; a very welcome son-in-law, as we are led to gather from the Will. He died in 1567, and after ordering his burial to take place in the Church of Oteleye, etc., he devises his Manors of Whitton in Lincolnshire, and Lyndelay and Hassell in Yorkshire, in trust for seven years to his Executors; to raise a certain sum for his daughter Isabel " soe that she be ordered in her marriage by Sir Andrew Corbet, knt, Sir William Fairfax, knt, her Mother, and my Brother Thomas Palmes." The consideration and esteem between the families was thus, we see, mutual. The marriage of the other daughter (Elizabeth) must also be noticed as it provides the occasion for the adoption of yet another new name in the Family Records; and one which has continued to find favour in the coming generations. Elizabeth married Sir Vincent Curzon, knight, of Waterperry, Co. Oxford; and the first to bear the name of Vincent in the Family we find to be Sir Andrew's youngest son, and he it was who eventually carried on the succession. This circumstance probably gave the name an emphasis it might not otherwise have secured.

Sir Andrew's younger brothers were Robert, Walter, and Jerome, or, after the spelling of the day, Hierome. They all three outlived their elder brother. Walter died without issue, and of that terrible scourge—the Plague—in 1583. He seems to have been a wealthy London merchant. The other two brothers, Robert and Jerome, both married heiresses, and both founded sub-branches, though both were short-lived ones. I will sketch in their histories at once.

Robert married Jane, the second daughter and co-heir of Thomas Kynastone of Walford, and inherited through his wife Stanwardine-in-the-Wood, also several other lands in Hampton Wood, Sugdon, Burleton, Wikey, Marton, and Newton of the Hill. Following the fashion of the day, Robert began to build a new and larger Hall at Stanwardine, which his son Thomas completed. It is a fine and commodious oak-panelled building, now used as a farmhouse. I am told that in the topmost story, to which the fine oak staircase gave access, there is still to be seen the large cock-pit with its oak seats for the spectators ranged around the walls. A good deal of the oak panelling to which, if I mistake not, Robert refers in his Will with some pride, has been removed elsewhere by the present owners of the property. The Hall formerly stood not far distant from the

CORBETS OF STANWARDINE.



SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 271

" To Dorothe my mayden all myne apparells and her hole yeres wages.

" To John Rogers, my servaunt, the bed he now lyeth on wth that belongeth vnto yt.

" To George Ivet XXs, a quarter of wheate and two quarters of barley.

" To Sir Jefferye my Prest Xls.

" Executors my Brother Edmund Wyndsore esquier and John Somer clerk P'sone of Stoke Hamonde.

" Overseer my nephew Sir Thomas Wyndsore knight."

Dated XXVI Sept: 1550.

Witnesses, Jeffery David, Dorothe Woodness, John Hartwell, Richard Markham.

Proved 8 Nov. 1551 by the Executors named.

A few words concerning the Wyndsores may be acceptable, the more so since the name of Andrew came from that family. Sir Andrew's will was proved the last day of July 1543 and says, " I Andrew Wyndsore of Stanwell, in Co. Midd: knight, lord Wyndsore, bequeth my body to be buried in the quere of the Church of Holy Trinity of Hunslowe, in the said County, wher my wief Elizabeth, lady Wyndsore, lyeth buried. . . . And I will that my daughters, Dame Isabell Vavasor, wief of Sir Peter Vavasor of Spaldington in the County of Yorke, knight, and Anne Corbett, wief of Sir Roger Corbett of Morton-Corbett, in com. Salop Esq.: and Edythe Ludlow, wief of George Ludlowe of Hildeverell in Co. Wyltes Esq: which I have married in my life, be content with suche sommes as I have bestowed on them at ther mariage . . . Item I will that Anne Corbet my daughter, late wief of Sir Roger Corbet, or Andrew Corbet, son of the said Roger, have $\text{£}40$ per annum . . ."

A shield with his arms is on the wall of the Hounslow Chapel, and the inscription is " Monsyr Andrew Wayndesor." The Windsor family's chief seat seems to have been Stanwell in Middlesex; they were lords also of Hirtsmere up to 1655: the Manor was then sold to Simon Bennet of Beauchampton, Bucks. Sir Andrew appears to have resigned Stanwell to the King in exchange for the Manor of Hedleigh, and Sir Andrew's grandson held both the Manors of Herksmere and Hedleigh, sometimes also called Wyks. Their descendant of to-day is the Earl of Plymouth.

Andrew—the first of his name in the Family of Corbet—succeeded his father, Roger Corbet, of Moreton-Corbet, as eldest son and heir. He seems to have been about sixteen at the time of his father's death and passed under the Guardianship of his uncle Richard. The Pedigree gives the names of several daughters, sisters to Sir Andrew, but as their mother, Anne (Windsor), mentions only two daughters in her Will and these in some detail, I will only refer to the two she names. These were Margaret and Elizabeth. The former became the wife of Francis Palmes knt., of Lyndelay, Co. York; a very welcome son-in-law, as we are led to gather from the Will. He died in 1567, and after ordering his burial to take place in the Church of Oteleye, etc., he devises his Manors of Whitton in Lincolnshire, and Lyndelay and Hassell in Yorkshire, in trust for seven years to his Executors; to raise a certain sum for his daughter Isabel " soe that she be ordered in her marriage by Sir Andrew Corbet, knt, Sir William Fairfax, knt, her Mother, and my Brother Thomas Palmes." The consideration and esteem between the families was thus, we see, mutual. The marriage of the other daughter (Elizabeth) must also be noticed as it provides the occasion for the adoption of yet another new name in the Family Records; and one which has continued to find favour in the coming generations. Elizabeth married Sir Vincent Curzon, knight, of Waterperry, Co. Oxford; and the first to bear the name of Vincent in the Family we find to be Sir Andrew's youngest son, and he it was who eventually carried on the succession. This circumstance probably gave the name an emphasis it might not otherwise have secured.

Sir Andrew's younger brothers were Robert, Walter, and Jerome, or, after the spelling of the day, Hierome. They all three outlived their elder brother. Walter died without issue, and of that terrible scourge—the Plague—in 1583. He seems to have been a wealthy London merchant. The other two brothers, Robert and Jerome, both married heiresses, and both founded sub-branches, though both were short-lived ones. I will sketch in their histories at once.

Robert married Jane, the second daughter and co-heir of Thomas Kynastone of Walford, and inherited through his wife Stanwardine-in-the-Wood, also several other lands in Hampton Wood, Sugdon, Burreton, Wilkey, Marton, and Newton of the Hill. Following the fashion of the day, Robert began to build a new and larger Hall at Stanwardine, which his son Thomas completed. It is a fine and commodious oak-panelled building, now used as a farmhouse. I am told that in the topmost story, to which the fine oak staircase gave access, there is still to be seen the large cock-pit with its oak seats for the spectators ranged around the walls. A good deal of the oak panelling to which, if I mistake not, Robert refers in his Will with some pride, has been removed elsewhere by the present owners of the property. The Hall formerly stood not far distant from the

present house, and was surrounded by a moat. Gough in his "Antiquities and Memoirs of Myddle" tells us that the "Old Hall" was turned into a "gardine." Robert's two sons were Thomas and Richard, the latter died without heir and was Steward to the Earl of Arundell; he chose the Bar as his profession. Thomas the eldest son married his cousin Moreton-Corbet. The Pedigree calls her Margaret, but Gough in his annals of the Corbets of Stanwardine calls her Elizabeth. She was the daughter of the first Sir Vincent. Thomas left only two children, a son, Robert, and a daughter, Mary, and died at an early age; his widow remarried Sir Thomas Scriven. Robert, the only son of Thomas of Stanwardine, became a Master in Chancery, Justice of the Peace, etc., in his own County; his wife was Elizabeth the daughter of Sir Henry Ludlow of Clarington Parke in Wiltshire. His only son was called Thomas, and with him the good fortunes of Stanwardine came to an untimely ending. His grandfather not only enlarged the new Hall and Park at Stanwardine, but bought lands also at Wicherly and Bagley, thus increasing the importance of the house; but, as stated above, all shortly came to an end. Stanwardine was sold to Sir Watkin Wynn of Wynstay; indeed it is said that Stanwardine was lost for a game of cards! Thomas, who gambled away Stanwardine, was the last who left descendants; he married Mary Gerard; and the remaining years of their lives were spent, I believe, at Stourton in Worcestershire. Gough, the writer I referred to some lines back, was intimately connected with these Corbets of Stanwardine; he was clerk, and, as we should now say, private secretary, to Robert the Master of Chancery, and has left many most interesting little records of the family and of Shropshire. The Corbets of Stanwardine left many daughters in the two or three generations of their reign at Stanwardine. The daughter of the first Robert married Philip Yonge of Keinton, another married a Baldwin; their rather fine tomb is at Diddlebury. Robert the Master in Chancery died in 1636.

Thomas, though he lost Stanwardine, was rich in children; he seems to have left seven daughters and four sons. Robert his eldest son was entered at Gray's Inn in 1686, but died very soon afterwards, Thomas and John died before that date, and Henry the youngest is said to have died in Bombay in 1717. His daughters made no notable marriages, and thus swiftly ends the records of the Corbets of Stanwardine. They were chiefly buried at Baschurch and Cockshott.

Jerome stands the next for our consideration. He was Sir Andrew's youngest brother, the fourth son of Roger Corbet of Moreton-Corbet and his wife Anne, daughter of Lord Windsor.—He was one of the Counsellors of the Courts of the Marches, therefore probably took a more active part in the affairs of his County than did his brother of Stanwardine. His wife, who outlived him, was Dorothy daughter and coheir of Thomas Poyner of Beslow, Co. Salop. The Poyner family had other marriage connections with the Family of Corbet; they had intermarried with the Corbets of Leigh and of Longnor. Dorothy had married twice before becoming Dorothy Corbet. Her first marriage was with Richard Barker, and it was her daughter or grand-daughter who was the eventual heiress of Haughton, the grandmother of the Corbet Kynastone who inherited so much Corbet property. Dorothy's next husband was Thomas Wolryche of Dudmaston, and then came the Corbet marriage with Jerome. They appear to have lived chiefly at Beslow, and there Dorothy was buried; and I believe there is a memorial of some sort on the walls of Wroxeter Church, in which Parish Beslow is situated. Jerome himself is buried at Moreton-Corbet, and died in 1598. An interesting picture of him is among the family portraits at Acton-Reynold, taken when he was 59 and bearing date 1579. It has a very curious inscription or phrase written on one side of it; on the other is the Raven with one of the Family mottoes or badges, "Dum spiro spero," underneath it. Dorothy herself died in 1604, and I give a sketch of her Will. She and Jerome had two sons, Roger and Robert, and a daughter, Anne, who married William Gatacre of Gatacre, Co. Salop. The Will tells us: "I, Dorothe Corbett of Beslow in the Parish of Wroxeter, Salop, Widowe, 30 July 2 Jac 1 (late wief of Hierome Corbett of Beslow aforesaid Esqr: dec:) somewhat visited with sickness, and for that I am willing to sett in order suche worldlye possessions and goodes as GOD hath lente and blest me withall, to th'end that after my departure oute of this transitorye lief, there be noe discussion aboute the same among such as nature bindethe, and as I trust willingly wish to be lyncked together with . . . and continuall society and friendship, I declare and as followethe that is to say, first I give mye sowle to Almightye GOD mye Maker, and desire that mye bodie be buried in the Parish Church of Wroxeter, where I now inhabit and dwell. I leave mye Funerall to the discrecion of mye Executors, and as touching all lands tenements and hereditaments whereof I stand nowe siezed, or hereafter shall be siezed whereof I have power and liberty to devise, beinge not formerlye conveyed by me, I give all such to Roger Corbett mye sonne and his heires male, lawfully begotten, or to be begotten, and for default of suche, to Robert Corbett mye sonne and his heires male etc: etc: and for default of suche

See Chapters
X. and XI.

P.P.C.
Hayes 15.

JEROME CORBET, COUNSELLOR, COURT OF MARCHES 273

to the heires general of Roger Corbett mye sonne etc: etc: and for default to the heires general of Robert Corbett mye sonne, etc: etc: and for default to the heires general of mee Droithy Corbet for ever: and as touching the residue of all lands, tenements, hereditaments etc: formerlye conveyed either by mee or mye ancestors to mye said sonnes Roger Corbett and Robert Corbett, they shall soe remaine and be for ever; according to the conveyances made and therein appointed. I give to Roger mye sonne mye best chaine of golde and signet ryng of gold with all Plate that was bought for him with gould or moneye whiche was given him in his infancy by mye Aunt Corbett of Paynton, and whereon the name of him ' Roger Corbett ' is, or shall be graven in mye life tyme. I give to Robert Corbett mye sonne mye other chaine of gould and mye bracelett of gould with all Plate whereon the name of the saide ' Robert Corbett ' is, or shall be graven in mye life tyme, and all the sheepe I shall have att mye decease. And whereas Anne Gatacre mye Daughter was marryed withoute her Father's privite or mine, and that alsoe sithence the marryage William Gatacre her Husband, commenced a suit against mee in the Chancerye without just cause, to mye great charges, in which suit it was by mye Lord Chancellor that nowe is, ordered with our consent that I should make upp the summe which was paid William Gatacre before the said suit was begunne, £600. in consideration whereof he should make mye daughter a joynture answerable to the said porcion, which was after agreed upon to be £60 a yeare, all whiche saide £600 save £63 I have satisfied, but hee hath made noe Joynture to her as yett. Nowe yf William Gatacre shall make to mye Executors or to suche persons as they like well of a Joynture according to the saide Order, then mye Executoes shall paie to William Gatacre the saide summe of £63 for the whole porcion, but yf he refuses, they shall retaine the same, and by lawe cause him either to make the Joynture or returne the money he hath already received to th'end it may be sett forthe for the whole benefit of mye Daughter, yf not done in mye life tyme, and whereas mete is, an Indenture made between Thomas Poyner mye Father and myselfe of th'one parte, and Rowland Berker then of Haughmond, Esqr: nowe dec: of th'other parte, dated 15 Dec: 13 Eliz: wherein it was among other things covenanted that Rowland Berker and his Executors should paie to the use of Richard Berker mye sonne, for his better advancement £40 at a daie long past as by the said Indenture may appere, which saide £40 was never paide, soe that for obteyning the same, I procured Lycence of the most parte of the Justices of the Common Pleas to sue the saide Executors. Notwithstanding the charges that I and my Husband Hierome Corbett have bin at, in bringing mye saide sonne up in learning, as otherwise for him by our best endeavours aithence, for his owne goode. I doe give to mye saide sonne Richard Berker 40 marks which make up the saide summe of £40. a hundred marks to be paide him so soon as convenient, my funeral being first discharged and yf not paide in mye life tyme. I give to Richard Corbett of Stannerton Esqr: of the Wood, Sonne of Robert Corbett late of Stannerton Esqr: dec: (my Brother-in-law) my best gelding or mare I have at the tyme when it shall please GOD to call for me, and I give all residue of mye estate betweene Roger Corbett and Robert Corbett my two sonnes equally, saving my apparell or things of noe great value. My Executors shall please to bestowe on my servants and others, as they shall find best to merit it, and I appoint my saide sonnes and Richard Corbett of Stannerton all of this County of Salop gentlemen, to be my Executors Richard Woolley, clerk, John Shaw, Thomas Benet, George Cowper, (Witnesses). Proved 9th Feb: 1604 by Roger Corbett the son. Power reserved to Robert Corbett and Richard Corbett."

The Pedigree gains certain confirmations of its statements in this Will — the Gatacre and Berker or Barker marriages, etc., and the relationship to the Stanwardine Corbetts: of which family the Richard Corbett one of the Executors would be, and the Testator's nephew by marriage. The " Aunt Corbett of Paynton " is obviously Margaret Saville the widow of Jerome's uncle Richard, who must, I suppose, have outlived her husband and would be great-aunt to the young Roger, to whom she seems to have left certain bequests in his youth.

It is exceedingly interesting to note how completely the Family appears to keep together in intimacy and interests in all its branches. And the more so, that we are swiftly nearing the time when all became changed; the various families scattered and their interests severed, here by politics, there by the over-ruling exigencies of the moment.

Another curious change for which we can trace no reason, other than the fashion of the day, is the spelling of the name Corbet with two " t's." It seems to have been used by the first Sir Andrew and his brothers, and it will be most interesting to note, as we proceed with our tale, for how long a period this spelling of the name continued to be used by the Head of the Family.

Jerome Corbett died in 1598, and was buried at Moreton-Corbet; he seems to have left no Will, which is probable, but I find an Inventory of his goods and chattels drawn up at Beslow and valued

by Will. Awlcocke, Thomas Beard and Robert Poyner. Some tracks of Roger and Robert, his two sons, are to be found. They are given by Nicholls in his History of Leicestershire, where it may be remembered the Corbet Family had inherited lands from very early days, through the Thoyre marriage. The original inheritance or the principal Manor was Hooton, variously spelt, and from time to time we have a reference to it, sufficient to show that it remained in the Family for many a century. The actual descent of the Manor, however, has yet to be traced out : no very difficult matter, I should imagine, to those specially interested in the descent of lands ; since both this and the neighbouring inheritance of Sibbesdon, etc., belonging to the Corbets of Leigh, were in Corbet hands for so long a time.

See Chap. X.

To this County, then, of Leicestershire, young Roger Corbet, the elder of the two sons of Jerome, appears to have wandered and settled : on an estate known as The Barton or Barton-in-the-Beans. The estate lay in three Parishes—Snailstone, Beawood, and Shankton. Sibbesdon lay also in Snailstone, and the adjoining Parishes of Radcliffe and Shankton. Roger Corbet of Barton married Jane the daughter of Thomas Banister of Upton in the same County. His son was named Thomas after his maternal grandfather, and he in his turn married a Jane who was the daughter of one Joseph Carver.

There are three blue stones or slates on the floor of the Church at Snailstone bearing the names of the Corbets of Barton ; and from them we learn that Roger had four children, Thomas, Henry, and two daughters. Henry died without heir in 1700, Thomas in 1697. The dates and names are somewhat confused ; but it would seem that the short line died out in the middle of the eighteenth century with two brothers, Joseph and Sylvester.

What of Robert, the other son (Jerome's) ! He did not go so far afield, and lived and died at Beslow : and he probably did not live so long as his brother Roger. His Will tells us that he was styled Robert Corbet of Beslow, that he was the son of Jerome, that he desired to be buried in Wroxeter Church, and that he left his property to his half-brother Francis Wolryche of Dudmaston. The Will is dated 1612. The witnesses are Thos. Alcocke (servant), Isabell Bennett and Rich. Oldberrie ; it is attested by the Curate of Quatt.

This ends all I have to tell of the descendants left by Jerome and Dorothy Corbet. Let us take up the history, then, of Jerome's eldest brother and the Head of the House, the first Sir Andrew Corbett, and spelt with two "t's," as he himself wrote the name. He lived in stirring times, and seems to have passed a fairly busy public life. We have several entries concerning him in the "Letters and Papers" of Mary's and Queen Elizabeth's reigns. He was Vice-President of the Courts of the Marches, and I find that three of his sons, if not indeed the eldest also, were at the Shrewsbury School with Sir Philip Sydney ; let us hope that they were what nowadays boys call "Chums," and profited by so close an intercourse.

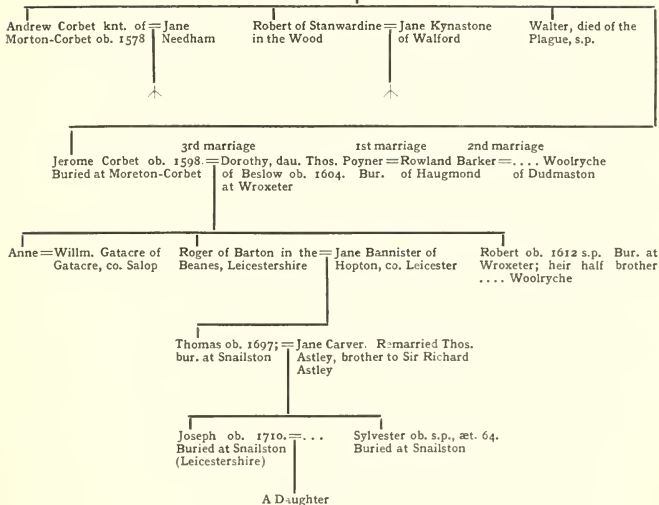
Sir Andrew had a very fairly busy public life, beginning with the wars in Scotland. He was three times High Sheriff for Shropshire and in three reigns—in 1551, again in Queen Mary's reign, and again in 1570 in that of her sister Queen Elizabeth. He must have married as quite a young man ; his wife was Jane Needham, or as sometimes spelt Nedham. She was the daughter of Sir Robert Needham of Shenton or Shavington in Shropshire. A large family of sons and daughters was born to them ; the sons were Robert, Richard, who both in turn succeeded their father, as did also the youngest son Vincent. The other sons were Reignold or Reynold, mentioned in his grandmother's will, Francis, and Arthur. Francis is referred to by his grandmother, and was evidently called after his uncle Francis Palmes ; he is also mentioned by Queen Elizabeth, who in granting the tithes of the Church of Cheswardine to Sir Andrew mentions his two sons Richard and Francis as the subsequent recipients in their turn. This is all we learn of Francis save that his burial at Moreton-Corbet is recorded in the old Book of Church Registers, belonging to that Church ; his death took place in 1592. Arthur I think died in youth, and of Vincent, the youngest son, who eventually succeeded, we must write later on. Only two of Sir Andrew's daughters married, Margaret married Thomas Harley of Brampton-Brian, and Anna became the wife of Sir Walter Leveson of Trentham and Lilleshall. The lives of the sons who succeeded in turn must, of course, pass before us in their due course ; but first we must put together what we find related of their father's (Sir Andrew's) life.

Duke.
Ant. Shrop.

The times he lived in were increasingly those of luxury and opulence ; and the magnificence of the Court was copied, we may be sure, in a greater or lesser degree in all "The Stately Homes of England" according to the means and tastes of their owners. The Corbet Family was at the zenith, so to speak, of its wealth and power, and the passion for new things, for new ways, etc., which was passing like a wave over the land, showed itself equally among the Corbets—in the

DESCENDANTS OF JEROME CORBET.

Roger Corbet Esqr. of Moreton-
Corbet Salop, etc. etc. ob. 1538. = Anne Windsor, dau.
of Lord Windsor



SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 275

new names they gave their children ;—in the additional " t " they added to the old name of Corbet when they signed their name ;—in the new crest, badge or cognisance with its motto, which Sir Andrew added to the two heretofore in use. I say the two heretofore in use, but I should also add that I cannot show proof of how the Squirrel came into use, nor by whom it was adopted. The Raven as we all know was used on shield and helmet from the very earliest times ; it is seen on the helmets of the figures on the two tombs in the Church at Moreton-Corbet (those of father and son), and the Raven from time immemorial has always been the symbol or cognisance of the Corbets. In Drayton's lines when describing the marshalling of the knights and Barons, he notes the arrival of the Corbet thus, " The Raven sate on Corbet's helmed head," etc. The Squirrel may possibly have been the cognisance of the Thorets ! but this is simply the hazard of an opinion.

The sub-branch of Norfolk seem to have used the Squirrel, and they claim to be descended from the Family of Moreton-Corbet ; of this again I have no proof but their claim to be descended from John the third son of Corbet of Moreton-Corbet. Now the date of the earliest Will to be found of the Norfolk Corbets is 1542 about, consequently the only possible " third son " must be found in the generation of Sir Roger Corbet and his wife Elizabeth Hopton. We find a younger son there, but his name is Robert, still his existence is undoubtedly proved by his mention in the Post Mortem enquiry, necessary on the death of his mother (she was then Elizabeth Stanley). He is there mentioned as her heir in the event of failure of the male line of her eldest son Sir Richard Corbet. Sir Richard, as related previously, was succeeded by his own son Sir Robert Corbet and who inherited his grandmother's estates on her death in 1499. It is this Sir Robert's tomb which we have lately described in the little Church at Moreton-Corbet, and whereon we find the Raven as crest resting conspicuously on the helmet of the recumbent figure.

The new crest or cognisance seems very clearly to have been first introduced and adopted by Sir Andrew, the above Sir Robert's grandson, the first of his name, and of whom we are now writing. The tradition in the Family is that the crest memorialises the capture of one of the Lords Oliphant, in which incident our Sir Andrew, we assume, was either a principal or a subordinate actor. The cognisance as previously stated appears for the first time during Sir Andrew's lifetime, and it is given a very decided prominence on the new buildings of the home of his Fathers, among the Family emblems and symbols to be seen graven on their stones. We note that a Lord Oliphant was taken prisoner at the rout of Solway Frith in 1542 or so ; this was very shortly after Sir Andrew had come of age, and from his uncle's and Guardian's long connection with the Scottish Border, the young Sir Andrew may very probably indeed have served in the retinue of one of the Border Chiefs and have thus been a subordinate and even an active participator in the capture. Of this there is no direct proof ! but the new cognisance, a tolerably significant one in itself, was formed and adopted.

The Lord Oliphant, after passing a short time in London and Westminster, was allotted to the care of Sir Thomas Lee, whom I take to be Sir Andrew's uncle by marriage. These Lees were of the old family of Pebehull, now Pimhill, which they had possessed since the days of Edward I. They were afterwards seated at Langley. Sir Thomas Lee's descendant, Sir Richard Lee of Langley, left no male heir, and his daughter and co-heiress carried the property to her husband, Sir Edward Smythe, a member of an ancient Durham family. The present Sir Walter Smythe of Acton-Burnell is his descendant. To return to the fortunes of Lord Oliphant, he was given over to the guardianship of Sir Thomas Lee ; thus we find a good deal confirmatory of the family tradition, but still no direct proof. We will note presently some details of the capture of the prisoners at Solway Frith.

Sir Andrew himself was in most of the Scottish wars of the day ; serving at this early date as a young man, probably in the retinue of some one of the Border nobles with many of whose families his uncle Richard's long residence and interest in the North borderland would make both the uncle and nephew friendly and familiar. I take it as significant that the new emblem appears as an emblem on the tomb of this uncle and Guardian—Richard Corbet. The tomb is now in the Church at Moreton-Corbet. I use the word emblem because the cognisance used as crest on Richard Corbet's helmet on the tomb, is the old one—the Raven.

We may remember that Richard Corbet died in the year 1566 ; he had apparently been in Shropshire for some few years previously, and had held the office of Sheriff for the County only a few years before his death. He was then living at Peyton or Poynton, a hamlet in the Moreton-Corbet property, where he died and was buried in Shawbury Church. It would have been just about this time that the desire to change the old home from Castle to spacious mansion took such

root in Corbet minds, and Richard Corbet would from old associations with the scene of his childhood take the keenest interest in a subject so absorbing to his nephew and late ward; thus to my mind, that the new emblem should appear for the first time, as it does, on the tomb, while the old crest—the Raven—retains its place on the helmet, is a strong corroboration of my opinion that it was Sir Andrew who first adopted this new emblem or cognisance, and that evidently its adoption was commemorative of some honourable achievement connected with the Oliphants of Scotland.

Let me give some details of the capture of these noble Lords at Solway Firth and of their arrival in London. The details are taken from the Letters and Papers, etc., of Hen. VIII., the Dict. of National Biography, the Hamilton and Anderson Papers, etc.

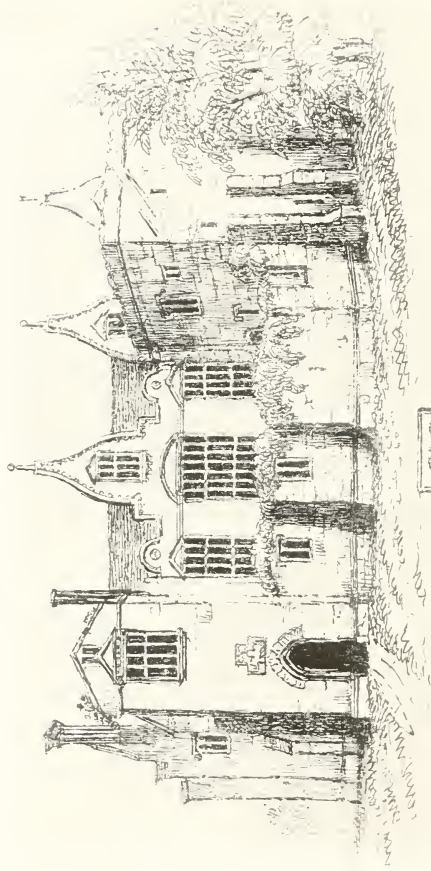
The first notice is a letter from Sir Thomas Wharton enclosing a schedule headed "The order of bringing in of the Scottish men prisoners into the Town of Newcastle," and giving the name of each prisoner bracketed with that of an Englishman. "The Lord Gray—Walter Strickland. The Lord Oliphant—Sir John Louthier. The Lord Somerwell—Sir Thomas Curwen." In the same month of December Sir Thomas Dacre writes to the Council:—"Men from London report that the writer and other Borderers did not serve well at the last journey, and begs licence to come up to declare what true service they did, and also credence for Bearer who has always served the King well, and in this last journey was both at the beginning and ending, and took the Lord Oliphant prisoner, and delivered him to Mr. Warden to send up." A few days later Sir Henry Savell, who was Richard Corbet's father-in-law, and Sir Thos. Wentworth wrote to the Council from Newark-on-Trent that "The Earl of Glencarne Lord Olyvant and divers others are crazed so that it will be late on Tuesday night before they reach London . . . enclosed a schedule of the names of servants attending the lords aforesaid." Amongst these names is "Geo: Pott servant to Thos: Dacres, appointed to wait on Lord Olyvant." The National Biography says this Lawrence Oliphant was third Earl, succeeding his grandfather John the second Earl. He was taken prisoner at the rout of Solway Firth and states that his capturer "being Dacre's servant. He reached Newark on 15th Dec.:. He and other prisoners being then so crazed by the hardships of their march that their subsequent journey to London was a little delayed."

Hall's quaint narrative says:—"So GOD ordered it to be that the Scots at the first bront fled, and the Englishmen followed; and there were taken prisoners the Erles of Casseles and Glencarne, the Lorde Maxwell, the lorde Flemyng, the lorde Somerwell, the lorde Oliphant . . . and two hundred gentlemen more, and above eight hundred common people, in so muche that some one man, yea and woman, had three of four prisoners."

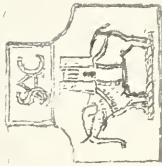
The nobles, says Stowe, "were brought to London and lodged in the Tower. Thence they were brought to Westminster" "Sir John Gage Constable of the Tower riding behind them. They rode two and two together, and eight of them being Earls and Lordes had new gownes of black damask, furred with black conies, coates of black velvet, and doublets of sattene, all newe, of the King's charge." Lord Oliphant "remained in England in the custody of Sir Thomas Lee, knight," "but," says the Biography, "he was allowed to be ransomed on July 1 1543 for eight hundred merks sterling," "on condition that, along with other captive Scottish nobles, he should acknowledge Henry VIII as lord superior, should co-operate in procuring him the government of Scotland, and should exert his influence to get the infant Queen Mary delivered to Henry, to be brought up in England." On obtaining his liberty, however, he made no attempt to fulfil these pledges, and declined to enter himself a prisoner in England in August for making of his Bond and promise for the payment of the ransom. . . . He died in 1566.

It is very evident from this narrative that the capture of these Scottish lords made an episode of no mean importance in the life of the Border; and that Sir Andrew Corbet's uncle and late Guardian Richard Corbet was closely connected with at least one of the actors in it, Sir Henry Savell; and being also himself a Member of the Council of the North, he must have known them all intimately; his late Ward, too, Sir Andrew Corbet, must equally have been well known throughout the Border. Still, I can discover no more definite statement of Sir Andrew's connection with the episode of the capture than the incident just related, with its surrounding circumstances, and its seeming result!—the adoption of the new crest or cognisance of the Elephant and Castle.—The Corbets of Moreton-Corbet and their sub-branches have, I believe, borne this crest continuously ever since.

The next note I have of Sir Andrew is that we find recorded in the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign, 1543, that his "Livery of lands as son and heir of Roger Corbett" was granted "signed by Wm. Lord St. John and J. Hynde and John Lewster." Three years after—



SAC IIRC



GILL RAY IS ANNES
1711

Old Part and Entrance Tower, Castle of Moreton Corbet

SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 277

wards we learn from the same source that "Andrew Corbett of Moreton-Corbett Salop" was granted the Manor of Red Castle "in Fee (for £553. 6s. 8d. and in consideration that he with others is bound in statute staple for payment of the whole value of the woods upon the lands hereunto specified), of the Manor of Redcastell, a meadow in tenure of Wm. Cotton beside Passagelane in Losseforde, Salop, a messuage and lands formerly in tenure of Ric. Pole and now of Ric. Pette in Weston and in the Parish of Hodnett, Salop, and a messuage in tenure of Anne Dodde, widow, in Losseforde and all appurtenances of Redcastell Manor in Redcastell, Weston, March-ombeley, Losseford, Hawkeston, Kenson, Grene-hunger, Wykehill, and Le Brokehurst and in the Parish of Hodnett, Salop, and elsewhere, and all other possessions in these places which the King purchased of Sir John Tuchett, Lord Audeley." . . . "Del: Westm: 12 Feb: 37 Hen: VIII."

Pat. Prol.
Memb. 11.

The next public notice of Sir Andrew brings us to 1551, at which date he was made High Sheriff; from that onwards through the reign of Queen Mary he seems to have wisely interested himself with the concerns of his County only; and since, shortly after that Queen's accession, we find Richard Corbet, Sir Andrew's uncle, committed to the Tower, one feels his resolve to live quietly at home and in his County was indeed a wise one. Meantime we find him fêted by the Corporation of Shrewsbury, probably during his Shrievalty, and in company with Sir Thomas Bromley, knight, George Blount, knight, of Kinlet, and Master Herbert. This expense "for the honour of the Town" is entered at 6s. 1d.—Sir Andrew was a Councillor of the Court of the Marches, and afterwards was its Vice-President. His friend Sir Henry Sydney was the President. Jerome Corbet, one of Sir Andrew's younger brothers, also held office in the Courts.

It was during this decade that Sir Andrew's three elder sons were being polished by learning at the Shrewsbury School, where both scholars and Master were justly famous, and Shrewsbury was then as now proud of them. We find that 3s. 9d. was spent on some occasion "apon Mr Corbet's sones" and Mr. Aston. It was to the unremitting fostering care and his (Mr. Aston's) renown for learning that the School in great measure owed its first years of prosperity.

Shrewsbury burst into a tumult of joy when the reign of Queen Mary came to an end. The joy-bells answered from steeple to steeple, bonfires blazed; in every house and street, and throughout the land, were rejoicing and festivities as England welcomed her young Queen, the Princess Elizabeth. Sir Andrew, too, once more put on his armour ready to take his part in the work that had to be done.

Extracts from the State Papers give us the first glimpse of him at a banquet between besiegers and besieged (I presume at the siege of Leith). Sir Thomas Randolph gives the account in a letter he writes to Sir Henry Killigrew, date June 20-22, 1560.

State Papers,
For. and Dom.
ed. Stevens.

"In this time of abstinence divers of the English talk with divers of them with gentle words, and they have eaten and drunken together. Yesterday there met upon the sands the Captains of Mount Pelham with divers of theirs, and each brought such victuals as he had in store; the English brought beef, bacon, capon, chickens etc. . . . The French (to signify what difference there was between assiegers and assiegeds) brought with them a cold capon roast, a pasty of a baked horse, and six rats well roasted. . . . Should himself have been at the banquet; but there was at it, Vaughan, General of Mount Pelham, Sir Andrew Corbet and Sir Edward Felton. They departed kindly whatsoever their meeting shall be." In November of the same year the Queen ordered her Lord Treasurer to send a Warrant "to pay to Sir Andrew Corbet, coat and conduct money for 200 men (less thirty seven who are dead) to Berwick."

It was during Sir Andrew's absence in the North that the Town of Shrewsbury entertained his sons as just related. They entertained Sir Henry Sydney too about the same time. "Paid for wine," we read, "an ox, feeding of horses, and other necessities, given to Sir Henry Sydney knight, President in the Marches of Wales, while he was here in the Town in the month of August on account of his favour to the Town, £12. 10s. 8d." The Corbet's cousin also, Sir Walter Devereux, came in for his share of the town's hospitality, which is duly recorded. "Wine and other necessities given to the Viscount of Hereford, Lord Ferrers, 36s. 9d."

Between the years 1560 and 1565 there are several statements made of the names of the Members of the Council of the North, showing that there was need for vigilance. Richard Corbett and his father-in-law Sir Henry Savell are always amongst the list, and Instructions would appear to be sent to them from time to time. Francis Earl of Shrewsbury, the lord President of the Council, Nicholas Archbishop of York, Thomas Earl of Northumberland, Henry Earl of Westmoreland, Henry Earl of Cumberland, Thomas Eynnes or Kymes, John Eglesfeild, of Sutton, Richard Corbett, Henry Savell, are the names quoted. In 1561 is a similar list for Instructions, though the

Sir Thos.
Randolph,
Eng. Amb.,
Edinburgh.

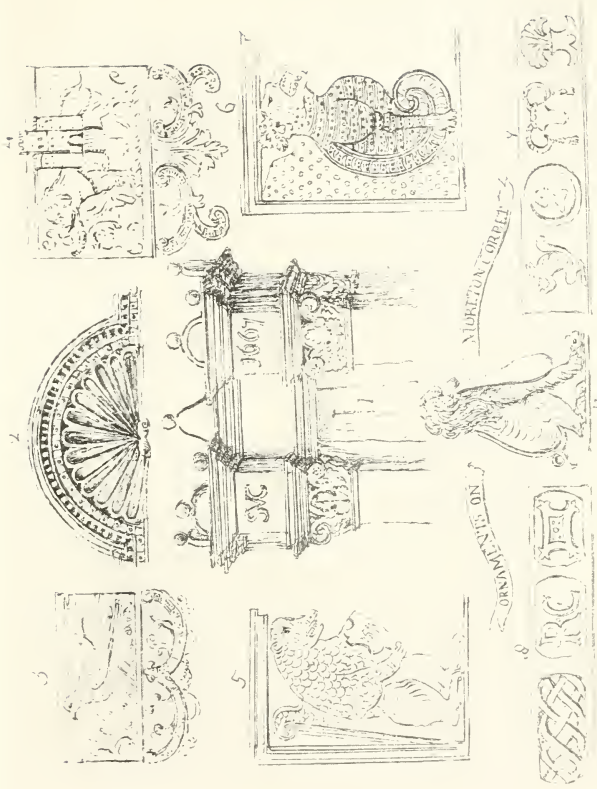
President of the Council is here given as being the Earl of Rutland. There are one or two fragmentary notes among the State Papers which show how closely the affairs of Scotland were followed and dealt with at the English Court. In September 1561 Sir Thomas Randolph writes from Berwick to Thomas Hedley, that "Mr Butride would fain have relief, and has travailed unfortunately to Sir Ralph Bagnall for his redemption." He sends Butride's letter again, adding, "His bows shall be sent by Corbet when he next comes." Sir Thomas Randolph is informed in April 1565 that the Lord Chancellor arrived at the Court at Edinburgh "last Saturday, also Lords Lennox, Athol and Cassilis, Glencairn, Ruthven, the Justice Clerks, the Lords Advocate, and now the Controller with the rest, as Corbet can declare at more length . . . Bothwell takes shipping to France, for he has been here at More and at Creighton ; so the bruit is that he is to part." . . .

The following July Sir Thomas Randolph, in writing to Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford, Governor of Berwick, tells him that "Near 9 p.m. Darnley was proclaimed King of Scotland by consent of all the Lords present in the Town." He adds that he had "received his letter by Corbet this night, requiring his advice touching the Laird of Riccarton."

About this time I take it, 1565 and upwards, Sir Andrew was once more in Shropshire. Wars and rumours of wars came from a distance and remained at a distance, and English folk began at last to feel that they lived in their island home at peace with their fellow countrymen, and that with fighting relegated to beyond seas, instead of lurking at their doors, they might not unreasonably essay to give their strongholds a more smiling aspect. Thus it happened with Sir Andrew ; he saw many a friend and neighbour intent on changing the narrow and gloomy passages of his castle into the wide and spacious corridors more befitting the life of ease and splendour, and the pageants and entertainments in which our forefathers of the time of the good Queen Bess delighted. His eldest son, endowed with learning and a spirit of roving, had wandered among the olive groves and vineyards of sunny Italy, and amongst the arcades of her marble palaces ; and with the enthusiasm of youth sought out ideas and the means for carrying his dreams of art to the Northern home of his Fathers. He went to the famous John of Padua, and fortified with the most elaborate and artistic plans drawn up by that celebrated architect he returned home and the decree went forth that the ancient Castle of Moreton Corbet was to be changed into one of the "stately homes of England," and after the Italian style.

Can one forbear the escape of the word "Alas !" as one looks on the silence and desolation of these beautiful ruins as they stand to-day—so pathetically eloquent of the care and thought once bestowed on them by those sleepers in the quiet vaults which they almost overshadow—so mournfully resisting—in spite of the fearful havoc and battering of the storms of some three to four hundred years, and once again the word "Alas !" escapes as one thinks of the associations of centuries of the family life, which passed with this change and the destruction of the old Castle, carrying back the memory indeed to the days of the Saxon Ancestress Joanna Thoret and her Saxon forbears. No longer would the walls and their towers foster the young Corbets, nor their shelter protect them as they played and gambolled and held their mock tournaments within their shadows. All was to be changed, and Moreton-Corbet was to arise transformed into a stately mansion after the Italian model. Skilled workmen came specially from Italy to carve the marvellous figures and symbols on its stones, and the work began. In our day to contemplate such a work, and after to carry out the building of such a new home, would occupy many years, or perhaps a lifetime, even with all our modern facilities for good and swift workmanship at our command ; but in the days we write of it must have required several lifetimes to accomplish—the which indeed it did, and each succeeding heir has left his initials, with sometimes a date, as he put his hand to the accomplishment of the work. We may, then, well gather that the years of interregnum and chaos, from the commencement of the destruction of the fine old Castle, to the maturing of the designs and plans for the new edifice, to be followed even then by the time for carrying them out, must have been long years indeed.

Let us hear what Camden thought of the matter ; he probably saw the undertaking a few years after Sir Andrew Corbet's death, when the desolation of the destruction would be more apparent than the beauty of reconstruction. He thus describes the scene :—"After Red Castle, and upon the same river Roden, appeareth Moreton-Corbet, anciently a house of the Saxon family of Thorets, and afterwards a Castle of the Corbets ; where within our remembrance Robert Corbet, carried away with the affectionate delight of architecture, began to build in a barraigne place a most gorgeously and stately house after the Italian model ; but death prevented him, so that he left the new worke unfinished, and the old Castle defaced."



Ornaments on the New Part, Moreton Corbet Castle

SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 279

As I have noted, there are several dates on the buildings in various positions, testifying to the portions changed or completed during the lives of the Corbets who were severally the masters during the years of the work. Some of these still exist on the ruins, but some unfortunately have disappeared. The old moat of the Castle may still be traced in the gardens of the interesting little Rectory ; this is placed on the far side of the Church from the Castle, from which we gather that the Church lay within the girdle and defence of the moat. The inhabitants of the Castle had their own, and by no means unimportant, entrance to the Church by a door giving them direct entry into their own Chapel, or Aisle. This door lay within a few paces and immediately opposite to the principal entrance to the old Castle, and it is on this Gateway, which Sir Andrew had evidently changed and transformed to his own liking before his death, that we find the earliest date inscribed, with his initials and the new crest of the Elephant and Castle.

This is the first time that the new crest appears, if we except the fact that it is seen on the tomb of Richard Corbet, Sir Andrew's uncle, and which is in the little Church. I have already alluded to this in an earlier page, as very corroborative evidence of the adoption of the new crest. Richard Corbet died, we may remember, in 1566, a moment when Corbet thoughts would be quite absorbed with so important a family topic as the transformation of their historic old home : and to none scarcely could the interest prove keener than to Richard Corbet : let us then again repeat that the new crest being placed on his tomb as a cognisance or emblem is a highly significant circumstance, both that he considered it fitting, and that he acquiesced in its adoption.

Time and its attendant storms carry on the work of disintegration among the ruins, relentlessly and ruthlessly, and much of the beautiful carving and many of the commemorative tablets bearing various initials and dates have quite vanished. The accompanying engravings show some which were left intact in the last century, though certain of these even are no longer to be found. One inscription has been found on a part of the Frieze, but as it seems incapable of any interpretation, one must perforce surmise that it is only a fragment of what once was, and whose meaning is therefore hidden. The inscription as it is at this day is given below. The letters are incised on the frieze, but the bars and stars project from it.



Meantime it is difficult to determine where the Family lived during this period of change, since they could not have continued to inhabit the Castle itself ! I would hazard the suggestion that they removed temporarily to Shawbury Park ; certain entries in the old book of the Parish Registers of Moreton-Corbet would seem to suggest this. Acton Reynold, the present principal Seat of the Family of Moreton-Corbet, was then but a few cottages which had grown up around the small ruined Chapel which then existed there.

Sir Andrew was once more up and doing in 1569. His eldest son Robert was much at the Court of the Emperor at that time, and frequently engaged on the Queen's various diplomatic embassies ; Sir Andrew himself in 1569, in company with Sir Richard Newport, was one of the Commissioners " of musters for Shropshire to the Council " and ordered " to certify their doings in the musters."

The following year, in May 1570, we read from the same source, " Certificate of the musters of the County of Salop, as well of horsemen as footmen, with account of assessments and disbursements for their equipment, etc; by Sir Andrew Corbett and others; and for the Town of Shrewsbury." The following year, 1571, we have a reference to him on another subject. " Charlecote " Thomas Assheton to Lord Burghley speaks of the dissatisfaction " among the people with regard to Norfolk's affair. The Papists find too much favour at Court," and he " recommends Sir Andrew Corbett, who is the only fit and trustworthy man to have charge in those parts."

The Norfolk folk were given to express their opinions rather too openly in those days ; it may be remembered that in the little rebellion of 1549 they tried " to revenge themselves on divers lords and gentlemen who they averred had possessed themselves of commons and waste lands formerly belonging," said they, " to the Abbeyes." They came to " Master Corbet's house at Sprowston which they intended to have burned ; but being persuaded from it, they spoiled his goods."

Letters and
Papers, Dom.
July, 1569.

There are sundry notices in these records of the doings of the Pirates as they were then styled, who roamed the seas on their own account, and enriched themselves with the booty from captured craft belonging to hostile nations. All went well apparently with these enterprises when they were not caught, which, however, seems occasionally to have happened. Extracts from the State Letters and Papers allude to a capture in the Channel Islands :—" Francis Chamberlain Captain of Guernsey, John Aster, Dean, and two others on the Council. Aug: 31, 1566 St Peter's Port Guernsey." " On receipt of the Queen's commission we have examined the Pirates, the principal, Capt. Heidon, Richd Deigle, Corbet and others are fled, those in Alderney remaining in custody have submitted themselves to the Queen's mercy confessing their faults." The confession gives some details. It was made before the said Francis Chamberlain Captain and Governor of Guernsey, and the other Commissioners " Richd Hitchins was born at Shackford Co. Devon aged 50. Phil. Redhead born at Blackmore Co. Dorset. aged 24 . . . they went to Ireland where their Captain joined them ; divers robberies were committed on the Coast of Spain." They then captured a wine vessel and repaired to " Beerhaven " " and compounded with Lord Sullivan for his help, by which means Heidon's and two other vessels under their Captains Corbet and Lusingham, who agreed to go with him, were to be freed from the Queen's ships sent to take them as rovers. A trumpeter was sent ashore from the Queen's ship, but they know not what he said. Lusingham, Captain of one of the rovers, waving his cap towards the Queen's ships was slain by a piece of ordnance. Heidon and Corbet agreed to go jointly in the John of Sandwich, giving her all the ordnance in hope of taking some good ship to furnish Corbet." During this venture they were " forced by storm into Alderney, where the vessel perished, and Heidon, Corbet and Deigle and fourteen others fled in a small pinnace." Who was this Captain Corbet ? May he not have been a son of the Gabriel Corbet of Southampton, who was granted full citizenship, though born in Venice, as recompense for faithful services rendered to the State in the time of Henry VIII. ? Who can say ?

Many such raids by sea were happening continually, now condoned by the State, now again dealt with rather summarily and the leaders called " Pirates." The larger and more costly expeditions were given a more dignified name : the best beloved and the most cultured among the young men of the countryside strove to serve in them, and many a heavy purse of gold would be laid at the feet of the adventurer to help fit out his ship. Everywhere the people smiled, as they encouraged their sons and brothers to join these daring adventurers : had they not now the seas of the whole vast round world in which to navigate and seek more and fresh marvels ? We may be sure many a younger Corbet was among the rovers. And when on a calm summer's eve, on their return, the seafarers would steer their frail ships into the familiar port, mere cockle-shells as they would appear to us in our day, what shouts of welcome would greet them, what triumphal rejoicings would they not be accorded ! and what names to conjure with rise to our minds as one tries to picture these times of eager joy—Raleigh, Frobisher, Drake, the glorious Sir Richard Grenville, etc. ! All this before the stern and forbidding Puritan came amongst us to temper the enthusiasm, to change our " Merry England " and make her put on a more sombre hue, to stifle the boisterous laugh even though hearty and true, hush the glee and the song, where each neighbour and friend took his part spontaneously as to the manner born. All this the Puritan held was of the devil, and psalm-singing, sung well through the nose, must take its place ; they were stern masters. Let us haste while yet there is time to quote a song of welcome to the brave captains of those days, whose deeds still stir our hearts to enthusiasm.

" Awake, each Muse, awake !
 Not one I need, but all
 To sing of Francis Drake
 And his companions tall.
 One Muse may chance do well
 Where little is to tell :
 But nine are all too few
 To tell what he did do,
 His friends and soldiers all.

" Drake was made General
 By sea and eke by land,



Southern and New Part of Ruins, Moreton Corbet Castle

And Christopher Carlisle
 Did next unto him stand,
 Brave Winter too was there,
 And Captain Foubisher,
 And Knowles, and many mo',
 Did all together go
 To lend a helping hand.

“ Three thousand Volunteers
 Were numbered with the rest,
 And Sailors, as appears,
 To guide them to the West.
 To quell the Spaniard's pride
 Which could not be denied
 But which could not be seene
 By our most noble Queene
 And stomach'ed with the best.

“ In more than twenty ships
 They sailed from the port,
 In speed they did eclipse
 And took St. Jago's fort.
 It was a glorious daye,
 Before they came away.
 The day of our Queen's birth
 They kept with joy, and mirth,
 In well beseeming sort.

“ Santo Domingo next
 They took, and also spoiled,
 The Spaniard, he was vex't
 To be so easy foiled,
 No force could them resist,
 They did just as they list ;
 The Spaniards bought the Town,
 And paid the ducats down,
 For which they long had toiled.

“ From thence to Carthage
 They carried victory,
 Upon the Spanish Maine
 The city rich doth lye
 They took it by assault,
 The Spaniards were in fault
 But they could not oppose
 The valour of such foes
 And yielded presently.

“ To Terra Florida
 They did direct their course
 And ever by the way
 They proved their will and force.
 With fear the Spaniards shook
 While all the townes they tooke,
 For barrels of bright gold
 The townes our English sold
 And shewed therefore remorse.

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

“ And now they have returned
 To Plymouth back once more
 And glory they have earned
 Enough to put in store.
 Our Queene with great delight
 Beheld the joyous sight
 And thanked them every one
 For what they thus had done
 By sea and on the shore.

“ Now welcome all and some,
 Now welcome to our Isle,
 For Francis Drake has come
 To London with Carlisle.
 And many more with him
 That ventured life and limb,
 And fighting side by side
 Did quell the Spaniard's pride,
 To cause our Queene to smile.”

The gallant little vessels manned by these daring mariners did not, alas ! always return with success nailed to the mast ! And yet perhaps the song which embodies the deeds of their lost hero seems to come even straighter from the heart than the song of triumph. Sir Richard Grenville in his ship *The Revenge*, with five other vessels, was met by a Spanish fleet of fifty-three. He was captured and died, but the tale of the heroic defence of that day will live.

“ The sun went down and the stars came out, far over the summer sea,
 But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame,
 For some were sunk, and many were shattered, and so could fight us no more.
 GOD of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before ? ”

At length he was captured with his crippled ship—

“ But he rose from the decks and he cried,
 ‘ I have fought for Queene and Faith like a valiant man and true,
 I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do.
 With a joyful spirit I, Sir Richard Grenville, die,
 And he fell upon their decks—and he died.’ ”

Another aspect of life came with the flood of refugees who, when the terrors of Queen Mary's reign were over-past, returned from their exile abroad. Many of these had taken refuge round and about Geneva, where they became imbued with the doctrines of Calvin ; and as, to such, to believe in silence seems impossible, so they arrived in their native land bringing dissension and intolerance with them, as they strove to impose their ideas and ways on their neighbours.

Bishop Jewel, in a letter of the period, complains that : “ We have now to strive, not only against our enemies, but also against our friends ; who have of late years receded from us, and, conspiring with our foes, resist us with even greater bitterness and contumacy than they do.” The people who held these opinions soon came to be called “ Puritans ” from their extremely severe and austere ways, especially where their neighbours were concerned. There were some of the calling in Shrewsbury. Let us see what happened.

Blakeway tells us that certain so-called Puritans objected much to the clergy and the habits they wore, and made themselves notorious by their continued accusations that the Papists were allowed too much freedom. Sir Andrew Corbet's last term of office as Sheriff for the County was in 1571. There is a short letter from him preserved among the Borough Records dated 1570 which I will quote here.

SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 283

"Right w^rshepful, I have received the Queen's hir Grace's letters for ellectinge off knyghts and burgeses of this County. So as for the accomplishment theoffro I wyll be w^th you att Salop on Moundaye nexte wheyne hitt may paise you to cayle some off yo'r W^rrsheps and Aldermen to confere for ordere off hie Grace's sayde letters to the accomplishment off hie highness playsyer thereyn, thus the higesthe p' syrve y'r daytyd thys iide off Marche ao 1570.

To the W^rshepful Mr. Humffraye Onslow
Hewghe baynes Esqr.

Bayliffs off the towne off Salop.

(Signed)



His eldest son Robert, who had been serving abroad in Queen Elizabeth's diplomatic service, returned home a few years later; we find him welcomed by the Bayliffs in 1574. "Spente and given to Mr. Rob: Corbete, Sir Andrew's son, as well sente to him at Murton-Corbete, at his return home fro beyonde seas, as also geven unto him in this towne £1. 13s. 4d.'" The towne were becoming more lavish in their hospitality! Only the year previous to the welcome to Sir Andrew's eldest son, he himself with Mr. Geo: Bromley (he was the near neighbour at Hawkestone at that time) was entertained at a cost of £2. 1s. 6d. "when resortinge to this towne." The great event, however, of the following year was the expected visit of her gracious Majesty herself. "Even," we read, "to the Queen's herbinge, in gold, and spente upon her grace's s^vvaunts resortinge to this towne sondrye tymes this yeare concerninge her grace's cominge to this towne £. 7s. 10d.'" This expected visit gave the Puritans the long desired opportunity to mend the ways of the world, and to seriously recommend such to their gracious Sovereign. They soon found the occasion, and two noted Puritans of the town, one Brown a draper, and one named Torperley, preferred an accusation against a well-known citizen, one Edward Sherar, accusing him of remissness in the prosecution of Papists and wilful connivance at affairs dangerous to the State. The charges were contained in two letters addressed to the Queen herself. They are so insufferably prolix that Mr. Blakeway has thought fit to curtail them considerably, and even so they are of a very tolerable length. I will nevertheless quote some of these documents since they are supposed to set forth the true state of public opinion.

"My true naturall and gracious Queene; my GOD whom I serve I take to wytnes, that among others my humble and hartie praiers to him, I ame not unmyndfull of yo: Ma:tie accordinge to my dewtye, that he will gyve you a longe and prosperus reigne ov' this realme and domynions to his glorie, yo'Ma:ties gret comforte and to the comforte of all yo' true and faythfull subieckts. Amen. And for as mocheas the worde of GOD commaundithe the subieckts to obeye their Pryncis and governors though theye be wycked, how moche more then when theye be goode and godlye . . . I beinge yo' Ma:ties trewe subieckte I cane no lesse but humble to present these mye letters to yo' grace . . . and although thes myrude letteres be ower longe and tedious to yo' pryncely estate, yette . . . yo' grace shall fynde . . . that theye tende no lesse than to the removinge of yo'Majestie . . . and to the settinge up of a forene, unefull, and ungodlye governor: suche hathe byne, is, and willbe the fruts of the wycked generation of Papists.

"I was made privie by this berer George Torperley" (George Torperley, we are told, was a stone mason, or the owner possibly of a stone quarry) "dwelling in Shrowesbury, that one Richard Jones, sarvand to Mr. Richard Owen, on of the aldermen of the towne of Shrowesbury (inholder) uttryed wordes of gret importauce to a frenche man which came to Shrowesbury synce mighelmas lest, pretending to seke worke, wyche frenche man uttryed the wordes to a sarvant of this Torperley wyche cane speake the frenche tonge; and I by my letteres dyd certifie Mr. William Garred thereof the 2nd daye of Nov: lest, he beinge then in Shrowesbury, and one of yo'Ma'ties honorable Council in the Marches of Wales: and the 7th daye of Nov: Mr Garred sent for me and Torperley this berer to his chamber, when Mr Garred sente for the frenche man and Jones befor him, and . . . demanded of the frenche man what dealinges and wordes Jones had with hym; and the frenche man confessyd that Jones wold have heryd hym to bringe hym to Parys and so to Loven; and that Jones sayd thr shoulde be wars shortlie in England, and that befor Mighelmas next this lande shoulde be conquered by strangers and Englishe men, and that the owlde religion shoulde be upe agayne. These wordes were spoken the 7ty daye of Nov: lest, befor Mr Gerred in the presence of Mr. Thomas Sherer Mr. Gerred his brother-in-law; who I suppose will not speak so fulye to the matter by his goode will, and in the presence of me Thomas Brown and this berer Torperley.

"Also ther was two pedlars about this tyme in Shroewsbury which had acquayntaunce with the frenche man and Jones: I take them all to be messengers from place to place, servinge the wyckyd devices of yo' Ma'ties unnatural subieckts and enmyses. . . . These two pedlars as I had secret intelygence that they made promise to be agayne in Shroewsbury, as they retorned owte of Wales, and for their comyng I had secret watche, thynkinge to speeke with them befor they shold be broughte befor Mr. Gerred, for I had no goode lykynge to Mr. Gerred's former dealinges with the Jones and the frenche man." . . . On the return of the pedlars they learned "that the frenche man was in ward, and spoke with hym, befor I knew of their arrival."

Brown goes on to say that the name of one pedlar was William Parker dwelling in Bristowe, and able to speak fluently the Spanish, French, Latin, Welsh and English tongues. He travels beyond the seas in Ireland and Spain. The other pedlar was Oswell Parker, who became acquainted with the frenche man at Gloucester, "at the time of yo' Ma'tie's beinge there." Mr. Gerred "sent the porter for them, and used sharpe speeche to them, and commanded the porter to take them," but immediately permitted one Thomas Elks, a resident in Shrewsbury, and belonging to Mr. Sherer aforesaid, to bail them: "and so they were released of their commitment at the porter's lodge." The next day Elks brought them before Mr Gerred, and "was discharged of his sheurtishipe, and they set at liberty." All which no doubt was most distasteful to these two zealous Puritans, so the dutifull letter to the Queen continues: "Understandinge the dealinges to pase in this order, by the special labour of some of gret countenance, as I do conceive it, more lykce to have the truthe conaide than to bringe it to lighte, for Jones, he was at libertie withe owte a keper from Tewisdaye, beinge the firste day of his apprehendinge, until Sundaye then next followinge beinge the 7th day of the same, and then the frencheman confessing what Jones as befor declary'd, then Mr Gerred said that was more than he knew befor, and then commanded Jones to the porter's lodge and to put irons one hym, but yet at suche libertye that Mr. Owen, Jones his master, came to hym and three of his sons, sundry tymes as well to Jones as to the frenche man; and the two pedlars sente awaye in suche order as is sayd, a very straunge kinde of dealinge in my simple judgement to cum to the knowledge of a truthe. These things considry'd, yo' Ma'ties most hon'ble privye Councell had knowledge hereof by this berer Tarpley: and their honors sent letters to Sir Andrew Corbet knight and George Bromley esqr: to call befor them Jones the frenche man the two pedlars, Elks, Owens and others: whereon their worshipes sent their letters to yo' Ma'ties councell in the Marches of Wales, beinge then at Bewdley, to have the frenche man sent to them withe the books and the examynacions touching the same; wiche frenche man was not sente, nor yet the books so that their worshipes Sir Andrew Corbet and Mr. Bromley they prosedyd with Jones at Shrewsbury whom they have caused to be indyted." Elks said that he bailed the pedlars at the desire of their host, and being further examined admitted that his son was (a congerer) in France.

The "oste" denied all that was said by Elks, and Sir Andrew and Mr. Bromley "perceivinge thes matters to towche Mr Garred, and belicke havinge no warrant therein to deal withe Mr Garred, they went no further withe Elks. So that Sir Andrew sayde in playne wordes, they were cum to the lykynge of disshes and Mr Bromley sayde no thinge wold be had of them but by tortur" "for they had their lesson taughte them befor."

The porter's lodge was probably the house in the Council house court at the entrance: the gable is still terminated by a key, and it was the usual place of confinement for the ill-doers sentenced by the Council of the Marches. Torture was not, I believe, countenanced legally except under the Tudors. Brown, still dissatisfied, gives the Queen a long discourse on the dangers of these proceedings, and then notifies her of other matters in Shrewsbury not to his liking: which he calls "of vehement suspencion of wycked dealinges," and proceeds: "And as chefe I note Mr Owen forsayd, master to Jones, a great and ignorante papist." The frenche man went back to France, and Jones confessed that he should shortly go after him and that he only stayed for letters to take to Oxford in his way to Loven, and that his master was privie to it, and states again that the two pedlars "were discharged by the help of some of gret countenance in Shroewsbury." Brown then proceeds to note more ill-doers. He continues: "I note that Mr Owen is an inhorder, and that manye gret and notable papists under the couller of geste-weise doo resorte thither, but gretly to be fearyd to ill purpose; and nowe lately by credible reporte, Sir Thomas Stanley is cum to dwell in this cuntrye, and manye papist gentilmen resorte unto hym. Mr Ferm' and others in Shropshire as others. Mr George Bromley cane signife unto yo' Ma'tie of the state of the cuntrye therein: and alsoe there is one Mr Ashotone head scolmaster in Shrewsbury but nowe cauldy away (I trust by GOD) for the love he bearith to the right honoable therle of Essex, aboute his matters;

SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 285

he cane make the state of Shropshire so well knowne to yo' Ma'tie as any man that I knowe This berer cane till wher he is. He " (Mr. Asheton) " is a man, GOD be blessyd for hym, that hathe donne moche good in Shropshier."

Brown ends this wonderful letter with a lengthy and minute description of the character of his friend and colleague Torporley. This latter, it seems, took the letters to London, and was admitted to the Queen's presence, who " encouraged him by comfortable wordes " and referred the letter to her Privy Council, who delegated the investigation to Sir Henry Sydney and his associates. Brown, so encouraged, wrote again to her Majesty, rather to complain how they " pore men have been delte withe who dyd nothings but theire dutye." Sir Andrew Corbet commanded them to take the letters to the president of the Marches and to assist them by his authority for the examination of the dealing of Mr. Gerred. He says, " We cam accordinglie into the garden place or gellary of Mr Gerred, he nowe dwelling in Shruvesbury, wher we were demanded by my lorde what we had to lay to Mr Gerred's charge : Brown produced eight articles in writing to shew the manner of his dealings and four interrogatories ; and delivered the interrogatories to Mr Gerred to answer." " After some speche my lorde delivered them to Sir Andrew Corbett and Mr Bromley," and his honour " left them with Mr Gerred in the gallery and went into his lodging." Brown, it seems, then prayed that Mr Gerred might answer in writing ; which Sir Andrew ordered and Mr Gerred put in his writing presently : and then Brown offered another writing, requesting it to be answered ; but Sir Andrew Corbett and Mr. Bromley both answered to this second request that they would first know my lord's pleasure and so went into his chamber. Brown continues : " My lord required if I had any more ? I answered, I had ; saying that he was ryding away, and could not stay to take them in such manner, one this daie and one the next daie : I answered his honour, if Mr Gerred would answer them all presentlie, hys honour should not be hyndered of hys journey through me . . . and I showed hys honour that I was reported to go aboute to seke to wyn credit by lies, and that I was a busy fellowe." In the end the President insisted that all the articles should be delivered at once, and Brown was obliged to deliver the eight articles to Sir Andrew Corbett.

The third of these eight articles draws a member of the Sandford family into the controversy, therefore I will quote it :—" Item that Jones confessed to Mr Gerred that Mr. Sandford and one Padlane promised him exhibicon ; which Sandford is brother-in-law to Mr. Ploden lerned in the lawes, and tenante upon Sir Francis Inglefields landes, and hathe two sonnes withe him " (i.e. Sir Francis) " beiond seas : viz. his sonne and heire and a younger. One of them is a trustie messenger, serving to wicked purposes for the carriage of letters and other libells : which Sandford the father and Padlane were never cauled to any examination by Mr. Gerred touching the exhibicon to be geven to Jones, and in what consideracon the saide exhibicon sholde be gyven, the saide Jones being then but a tapster in a comon inne, and utterlie unlearned to suche a purpose."

The fifth article runs, " And of the other pretended pedler, Mr. Bromley, he beinge to visit his Mother, having in his companie there Sir Raphe Egerton, knighte, had understanding by him that one Parker, a pedler, went aboute with fyne Flaunders wares and sold for vs that which worth viiis. Wherefore Mr. Bromley saide that that fellow did not minde to make his gaine by his packe : and the rather for that he frequented diver houses of worship adicted to papestrie. Notwithstanding he thought the other pedler more dangerous having sontrye langwages. . . . and yet this two dangerous pretended pedlers were let go by Mr Gerred without either punishment or dwe examinacon."

Brown the Draper got his way as regards Jones, who we learn was indicted at Bridgnorth, where, says Brown, " He confessed his words no jury went for him he was judged to be put in the stocks which punishment was executed at Bridgenorth with one of his legs in the Stocks aboute an hower. Very favourable punishment for so greivous words, and that to be executed in a strange place." The final result of this affair does not appear, but Mr. Blakeway considers that probably, notwithstanding the persistence and insistence of Brown the Draper's charges, the accusations were dismissed as frivolous.

A very real terror and misfortune now threatened Shrewsbury and the County, a visitation of the Plague, and the Queen gave up her projected visit to the town. On the 6th October, George Leigh and George Higgons having been the last bailiffs, we learn that the Corporation made an order " that no person that ys infectyd, or that hathe bene infectyd, shall resort to the yeld hall at the makynge of offycers ne any person that hathe or dothe frequent there companye," also that " all persons that entend to goe unto St Luke's fayre in Bridge northe, shall goe thether excepte they have a testimoniall from the bayliffes of the towne of Shrewsbury that they and their familie

stand sound and not infectyd." This order was issued at the request of William Sparry and Rondall Heynes, Bailiffs of Bridgnorth.

This dreadful scourge continued, it appears, for more than a year. I will quote some paragraphs from a letter from Mr. Prynce, the builder of the house all know so well in Shrewsbury called The White Hall. The letter brings vividly before us the straits and difficulties of the sufferers from this terrible visitation. It is addressed to the Bailiffs of "Shroesbury." First he offers such corn as he has at hand "to serve their necessities that want the same," "and because my poore barne is but a lyttle handful to so many, yf it please your worshipps with your assystans to make som mocon to right worshipful Mr Vyce President, and such other of the wurship of this shire as to you shall seeme convenient, that som provysyon may be made in other marketts for corne, malte, and other victuall, to be brought to som convenyent place, nere to your towne for ready money, I wilbe oon that will presently defray for that provysyon xx or xl pounds (as necessitie requyrith) And in the mean time you shall have my little porcon of grayne at your pleasures as before. . . . Moreover understandinge that it hath pleasyd GOD by thys hys vsytacon to take out of thys mortall lyfe a poore kynsman of myne, Anne Mannyng, wyfe of Richard Mannyng (he being presently at London, and no body in the howse but a lyttle gyrlr their daughter and a mayde servaunt) I am bold for GOD's cause to praye you to cause some of the dyscrete and honest neighbors or such other as yor W. shall thincke good, to see the poore man's goods (in hys absence) preservyd from spoyle and those two poore maydens releyvid with meate and drynck. And yf they have not wherewith to maynteyne them selfs of Mannyng's money and goods, nor of the comon chartye for that purpose collectid, yf it please your W. to defray their charges, I will repay in money or corne at your pleasure."

" signed R. Prynce."

The Baylyffs, it appears, consulted with the Vice-President, Sir Andrew Corbet, touching this awful visitation, and a letter from him on this matter, which I subjoin, is among the Corporation papers. The punctuation is peculiar; also on this occasion at any rate he signs his name with the additional "t."

It is addressed:—

"To the worshipfull and my loving ffrinds Mrs Davij Lloyd and John Okelij baylleffs off the Towne off Salop."

"Mye hartly salutations (with mye daylij prayer) thatt Godde off hys mercifulle goodenes wylle looke downe with hys hevenlij eies/ to have compassion upon hys peaple and chylderne off your towne// whiche I truste theyr ys a greyte hoope/off hys mercifull Staye off theij playge theyre// ffor att the change (nowe) off thys moowne// hytt was to be Juggedd thatt a gretter infection was to be hadd in your towne/ than hasse been/ as bye yor letters I perceve/ ys. Soe I hoope Trulij god hath seysyd" (i.e. ceased) "hys wraythe. and for your marketts yff anye wantt bee lett me under staund/ and thatt which the countres doo yelde in vycelles or other// I wyll send to your towne daylij as you shall warne or send mee woorde// and as to petyshen thatt your Offycers broughtt mee/ the on for takinge off horses// which I understand off theij are nott payde fiorre/ which I cannott answere perfectelij tyll I have spooken withe or under stand from the stoward whoe ye nowe preantlij att Conwayne// and ffor the other petyshen/ which ys ffor the areste off on Richard ap : Loyde whoo ys in the porterr's lodge/ or under shewrety// and upon the certentye/ I wylle with thatt speyde I canne delyver the sayde Richard/ to your offcyer/ to answere to thatt acsheun as heij was arestedd ffor// And thus theij hoolij trinyte preserve you and yowrs with all the people off yowr towne// in longe lyffe/ increyse off hellthe and straingthe in hys grace// daytjyd thys xxviith off Auguste An : 1576.

Yowrs to hys powarre "

(Signed)



The date of the letter is 1576: the terrible infliction of the Plague continued for some time longer. Early in the following year Sir Andrew had the sorrow of the death of his wife. The signature of this last letter is so different to that of the letter written in 1571-2, that one fears his own ill health or his wife's may have caused it. His wife, Lady Jane, died in 1577, and is thus entered in the Corporation Books: "This yeare aboute the vijth daye of Jan:ry

SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 287

dep'tyd this p'sent lyffe the Ladye Jane Corbet wyffe to the righte Honourable Sir Andrew Corbet, daughter of Sir Robert Needham of Shavington."

In the summer of the year following that of his wife's death, Sir Andrew himself died; his burial is thus spoken of in the Books of the town of Shrewsbury:—"This yeare dep'tyd this lyffe the right Honourable Sir Andrew Corbet of Morton-Corbet in the Countie of Salop, beinge lorde Marshall of the Marches of Wales, sutche a juell to all Shropshire and especially to the towne of Shrowsberrie, that the lycke was not of many yeares befor, for the loose of whom there was many a sirrowful hart especially in the towne of Salop. who was worthilie buried the 22nd September in the Chappell of Morton-Corbet at whose burial the Byshopp of Coventry and Lichfield preached in the sayde Chappell, and Mr. Prese Curate of St. Chad's in Salop prechyd to the cuntrye and all the people w'thoute."

Thus once again the reins of heritage pass on to the next heir. He is Robert the traveller, and probably at this date between twenty-five and thirty years of age. The livery of lands to Sir Andrew, the father, took place about 1542; we assume, therefore, that he (Sir Andrew) was then of age; and he must have married his wife Jane Needham very nearly about the same date. A little attention to these dates gives a sufficiently accurate idea of the dates of birth of his sons; and they seem to tally with the evidence afforded us by the will of Sir Andrew's mother, Anne Windsor. She died in 1551, and at that date it appears Sir Andrew had four sons—Robert, the heir now succeeding, Richard, the second son, Francis and Reignold. Vincent, who eventually succeeded, was evidently not yet born, and indeed we find Sir Andrew in a statement of bequests alluded to him as his youngest son. Sir Andrew probably saw his two elder sons married at the time of his death. Francis does not appear to have married: he died in the nineties; and Reignold's name appears once among the Parish Registers of Shawbury as a sponsor.

Sir Andrew's brothers all outlived him for many years, with the exception of Walter, who died in middle age and unmarried. His last moments must have been tragic, for he died of the plague in London, where he lived. I believe he was a goldsmith, a calling of much honour and influence in those days, from their power of lending money, a benefit of which even Kings did not disdain to take advantage. I will give some quotations from his Will.

"Walter Corbett Esquire, 24th May 1583, sicke in bodie but of perfecte mynde and memorie (thanks bee almightie GOD) knowinge and consideringe the instabilitie of this transitorie lyffe, and when and where, the same shall approche, I doe therefore to the pleasure of almightie GOD, and the quiet of my conscience, make ordayne and establishe this my presente laste will and testament in fourme followinge. I desire to be buried in honeste and decente manner at the good discretione of my Executors, Mr. Robert Corbett and Mr. Jerome Corbett mye lovinge Brothers. I give two Bybles of Tremelians translation unto Mawdelynn College in Oxford, and the other unto Saincte John's Colledge in Cambridge. I give to everie of my yeomen viz, Anthonye Buckeley and John Barrett ʒ5 a peece. I give to Mr. Robert Corbett and Mr. Richard Corbett, my nephews, ʒ100 in moneye, to either of them ʒ50, and to Jane Corbett my saide Brother Robert's daughter ʒ100 in moneye, and to Suzan Corbett (one other of the daughters of my saide Brother Robert) ʒ400. Thomas Corbet eldest sonne of mye saide Brother Robert, ʒ100 in moneye onely towards his mayntenance at the studyc of the Common Lawes. Robert Corbett my saide nephew, my cheyne and my buttons of goulde. Mr. Hardinge 40s. The poore of St Clements 20 nobles. Mr. Robert Corbett and Mr Jerome Corbett my Brothers to be my Executors, and I give them all rest of my ready moneye, apparell and other goods, and chattells, moveable and unmoveable to be disposed of bye their good descretions."

P.P.C. Butts 1.

"Witnesses John Dalton
Jerome Corbett, Bruther
Randall Morley. (or North).

"Proved 24th Sept: 1583 by Edward Willett not: Pub: Procurator of Robert Corbett and Jerome Corbett the Executors."

Sir Andrew's remaining brothers were Robert of Stanwardine-in-the-Wood, of whose fortunes we have already taken note, and Jerome. Both these brothers died in the same decade, 1590-1600.

I have already adverted to the priceless records contained in the Parish Registers, and which in this generation of which we write began to be carefully kept. The Registers of both Moreton-Corbet and Shawbury are marvels of antiquity and most interesting, and I must here record that through the great courtesy of both the Reverend Frederik Vernon, Rector of Shawbury, and the

Reverend Edward Pigot, Rector of Moreton-Corbet, I have been permitted to make use of these unique records where additional interest to the History of the Family could be furthered by doing so. The Registers of Shawbury are, I believe, unique in their abundance of detail; they also begin at an earlier date than those of Moreton-Corbet. On the other hand, it is, of course, in these latter that we must seek for the chief events of our Family's life, the baptisms and burials, etc., when once their records commence. Their earliest record is in the year 1580, therefore we shall not find in them the record of the burial of the first Sir Andrew Corbet, 1576, described on a previous page from the MSS. of the Corporation of Shrewsbury. The Registers of Shawbury, however, which begin in 1561, will give us most interesting little details of Family History during those twenty years. We shall learn from them often, where various members of the Family were living at a given date, for it is manifest that so long as the Castle remained under the hammer and chisel of the workman, its owners were obliged to find a roof to shelter them elsewhere. We shall learn too of the friendly intimacy which drew the various members of the Family together from time to time. They often stood as Sponsors to the same infant; and this we learn from the Registers at Shawbury in which the Sponsors are generally recorded. Often, too, a quaint little personal remark is added in the Shawbury Registers, such as in the year 1576:—"Anne Hylle of lytull Wythyford ye good and vertuous widowe buried," or again in 1585:—"John withe the redde head, of Shabury" we read was godfather, and in 1586 "The xvth daye of Maii Margaret Watkys of Moculton was buried. She was comonlye called the wyse woman of Moculton." The earliest date in these Registers is 1561.

We may remember that Elizabeth Vernon, whose portrait is at Acton Reynold, had a very long widowhood as her husband Sir Robert Corbet died in 1514. She appears to have lived almost exclusively at Moreton-Corbet, and it is very interesting to find her standing godmother in these last years of her long life. One of the very earliest entries, however, refers to her grandsons Sir Andrew and his younger brother Walter the goldsmith. It is as follows:—"The viiith daye of Marche Andrew Wodwort the sonne of Wyllyam Wodwort deceased was cristoned.

Syr Andrew Corbet	godfathers
Mr. Walter Corbet	
Maysteres Caturne Nuport	godmother."

Maysteres Caturne Nuport seems to have been a very near neighbour, for her name occurs frequently as fulfilling the same kindly office, and finally we find she is married at Shawbury to one of the Leighton family.

The next entry of interest is on "The viiith daye of April Rychard Jenyns ye sonne of Cristopher Jenyns of lytull Wythyford was cristoned.

Mr. Rychard Corbet	godfathers
Syr John Dychar	
Maysteres Caturne Nuport	godmother."

A little later we have the very interesting record that Dame Elizabeth Corbet lived to be godmother to her great-great-grandson. The record is in the same year, 1561. "The viiith daye of June, Roger Corbet the sonne of Mr Robert Corbet of Sobyche was cristonyd

Mr Thomas Asheton	godfathers
Mr. John Barker	
and Dame Elizabeth Corbet	godmother."

Mr. Thomas Asheton was the famous Head Master of the Shrewsbury School, and Mr. John Barker was a near connection and of Haughmond Abbey. The following year Maysteres Caturne was married.

Jesu. Anno Domini 1562. "The firste daye of June Mr John Leighton of the pyshe of Leighton was married unto Maysteres Caturne Nuport of thys pyshe."

In this same year "The xvth daye of September Ales Bayle the daughter of John Bayle of grate Wythyforde was cristonyd.

Syr Robert Watson	godfather
Maysteres Ales Corbet of Cotton	
and Maysteres Jane Steinton	godmothers."

The Ales Corbet here is the wife of Reginald Corbet, Recorder of Shrewsbury and Judge, and of course the founder of the important sub-branch of the Corbet Family at Stoke and Adderley. In 1563 we have the christening of Maysteres Leighton's little daughter recorded as follows:—

"The xxvth daye of Februarie Elizabeth Leighton ye daughter of Mr John Leighton was cristened

Mr. Rondulph Lyston (or Leighton ?)	godfather
Dame Elizabeth Corbet ladie	
Dame Jane Corbet ladie	godmothers."

Dame Elizabeth (Vernon) died a few months after this little ceremony of the christening. The Dame Jane was, of course, her grandson's (Sir Andrew's) wife. In November of the same year we have a reference to Sir Andrew's uncle Reginald. "The xxviithe daye of November Renold Jenyns the sonne of Crystopher Jenyns of Lytull Wytyforde was christenyd.

Mr. Renold Corbet	Justice
Robard Dycher	godfathers
Anne Brayne, widowe	godmother."

In the following December there is an interesting entry. "The xxiiiithe daye of December Robart Farthyng the sonne of John Farthyng of Shabury was christened.

Mr. Robert Corbet	
Mr. John Barker	godfathers
Dame Jane ladie Corbet	godmother."

Robert the eldest son and heir evidently spent the Christmastide of this year, 1563, in the home of his fathers : one of the few last festive gatherings probably held in the old Castle. An entry in "Jesu Anno Domini 1564" gives us as Sponsors William Gratewood brother-in-law or nephew-in-law of Reginald the Justice, and Dorothy Barker the lady of Besloe near Wroxeter, who afterwards married Jerome Corbet, a younger brother of Sir Andrew's. We have "The ixth daye of Februarii Wyllyam Bayle the sonne of John Bayle of Great Wytyforde was cristened.

Mr. Wyllyam Gratewood	
Rychard Capper	godfathers
Maisteres Doritie Barker	godmother."

Again, in June of 1564 we have :—"The viiithe daye of June Robert Huxsle the sonne of George Huxsle of Acton reynolde was cristenyd.

Mr Robert Corbet	
Mr. Phelip Banaster	godfathers
Masteres Marget Corbet	godmother."

Here we have the brother and sister, Robert and his young sister Margaret Corbet, who we are told married subsequently Thomas Harley of Brampton Brian in Herefordshire. There is one record of Richard Corbet, Sir Andrew's uncle. He passed quite the last years of his life in Shropshire at the hamlet of Peynton or Poynton in the parish of Shawbury ; there is a slight confusion in the entries as to date in this year 1565 and the following one 1566. The entry recording Richard Corbet's sponsorship is presumably of 1565, and he and his young great-nephew Richard are recorded as being sponsors together. "The xxviiiith daye of Maii Rychard Dutton the sonne of Hughe Dutton of Acton Reynolde was cristened

Mr. Ryc' Corbet Sr.	
Mr. Ryc' Corbet	godfathers
Mrs Elnor Poole	godmother."

The following year of 1566 Richard Corbet the uncle was himself buried in Shawbury Church.

It is rather surprising to learn from these Shawbury registers how many well-to-do families lived in the hamlets of the Moreton-Corbet and Shawbury parishes, families who would have needed larger and more important homes than the cottages of the working men : yet no traces of these are to be found at this date. The entries tell us of Bayle of grate Wythyforde, of Jenyns of Lytull Wytyforde, of Farthyng of Shawbury, of Huxsle of Acton reynolde, Brown of Sobyche and one or two names are of Peynton. Surely these names represent some of the yeomen and their families such as Walter Corbet alludes to in his Will !

A few more of these names may be cited :—Morgayne of Moculton, Cook of Shawbury, Sevell of Edgebalton, and others. In 1566 Sir Andrew himself is godfather to one of the Cooks. "The iiith daye of Februarii Ambrose Cook the sonne of Thomas Cook of Shaburye was cristened

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

Syr Andrewe Corbet, knyght,
and Mr Walter Corbet godfathers
Materes Marget Chourlton godmother."

In 1568 Maisteres Marget Corbet was still unmarried. She is sponsor as follows :—" The viiith daye of December Marget Gennynges the daughter of Chrystopher Gennynges was cristened

Mr Rychard Wortley godfather.
Maisteres Marget Corbet
Elizabeth Dycher godmothers."

The following year, 1569, we find Marget's sister Anne had married; she became the wife of Walter Leveson of Lilleshall. " The xxiii daye of Marche Anne Morgayne ye daughter of John Morgayne of Mocolun was cristened

Hughe Besford godfather
Mrs Anne Leveson
Elizabeth Dycher godmothers."

In August of this year we find fresh names. Marye Corbet, a younger daughter of Sir Andrew's, stands as sponsor for the first time. " The iii daye of August Marget Cruxson ye daughter of Rychard Cruxson of Shawburye was cristened

George Lee godfather
Maisteres Marget Corbet
Maisteres Marye Corbet godmothers."

The Peekes of Edgebalton were evidently esteemed by our Family, as we have :—" The vth daye of September Vespatus 1573 Peeke the sonne of Ryc' Peeke of Egebalton was cristened

Mr Walter Leveson
Mr George Vernon godfathers
Mrs Marget Corbet godmother."

Dame Jane was again a sponsor in 1571, with her son Rychard and the cousin George Lee. The Vth daye of September 1574 we have " Marget Peoplowe ye daughter of Houmfray Peoplowe was cristened

Mr Walter Corbet godfather
Mrs Marget Corbet of Peinton and Mrs
Marget Corbet of Morton godmothers."

Here we have the name of Margaret Corbet, the widow of Richard Corbet, the uncle whose tomb is now in the Church at Moreton-Corbet; the other Marget is of course her great-niece.

1575. " The xxixth daye of Maii Andrewe Barkar the sonne of Rowland Barker of Haghmond Esquier was cristened " and

" Sr Andrewe Corbet, knyght,
godfather and Wyllyam
Gratewood, godfather
Mrs Ales Corbet of Stoke godmother."

Mrs. Marie Corbet and Mrs. Francis Homfreson were godmothers together in 1577, and I record it on account of after events; she became the wife of Vincent Corbet, whom Sir Andrew speaks of as his youngest son.

The year following, 1578, Sir Andrew died. There is, of course, no record of the event in the Shawbury Registers. He, as we know, was buried at Moreton-Corbet. The Registers do not begin there till 1580, but the Corporation papers of Shrewsbury record the event. With the record of his death we may consider the generation as finished, though two or three members of it were still living, and for many years; and their deaths will be noticed in the order of their dates.

We must pass on quickly to the history of the next generation (his sons), and, as this chapter is so nearly closed, let us fill the last lines with a few miscellaneous quotations from the Transactions of the Salop Archæological Society. John Leland, we there read, set forth on his adventurous tour about 1538. We scarcely realise in these days of constant and rapid touring what an undertaking in the complete style he contemplated meant. His name and his record live and deservedly, and his riding, his talking and his observations endured to the end with unabated energy. His idea of distances, which he is always at great pains to give, seems now and again

somewhat untrustworthy. "From Shrewsbiri," he tells us, "Haghmon Abbay of Blak Chanons is ii Miles : Within iii Quarters of a Mile leving Severn on the right hond, I entered into a Woodde, and sone after over a Broke that issuethe thorough Penslemere, and sone after goithe into Severne. Thens ridinge partely thorough Morisch Grounde and Pasture, I cam to Moreton Corbet Village, wher I saw a fair Castel of Mr. Corbettes and a ii Miles beyond that I passid over Roden Riveret." He also alludes to the Buckinghamshire Manors. He says of "Redde Castel by Whitchurch (a late the Lorde Audelés) viii Miles plaine" (North) "from Shrewsbiri, now al ruinus. It hathe been strong and hathe decayed many a day."

Leland speaks of the "Corbet of Lee ii Miles from Cause Castel, of a younger Brother of Moreton. It cam," says he, "partely by mariage Cmark lande. Sum saye That of late dayes Corbettes were Owners of Cause Castel." Leland's verdict that the old Castel at Moreton was "fair" is pleasant to record, the more that we have no picture of it, before what Camden, some fifty years later, termed its defacement.

These Volumes of Transactions are full of so much that is deeply interesting concerning Shropshire. Let us record what is written in another Volume of the Registers of the Palmer's Guild, Vol VII. a sort of extensive Insurance Brotherhood with head quarters at Ludlow. It is more fully described in Chapter XII. of this History. The quotations in the Transactions relate to the reign of Henry VIII. "Domina Elizabete Corbet," we find, was a member, at Moreton-Corbet, and we find among the Moreton Corbet members names which we have already noted in the Shawbury Church Registers, such as Cartwright de Shabury, Browne, Bromall of Peynton juxta Moreton, Jannyngs of Shabury, Lawle Hotchekyns, etc. The Brotherhood extended all over England apparently. There are names of members from the Forest of Dean and other parts of Gloucestershire, Colforthe (now Coleford), St. Breavels, Newland.

We must pass quickly on now to our next chapter and the records of the next generation, the sons of Sir Andrew the first of his name.

CHAPTER XV

THIS chapter begins with the records of the new generation—a generation full of a changeful history. Moreton-Corbet itself was in no state to shelter its owners; they had therefore to seek a roof wherever their other Manors might afford them houses large enough to accommodate the lord of the Manor's establishment. It is difficult to state definitely where this new, though temporary, home was set up: still the Registers of the Parishes in which the Family estates chiefly lay give us an occasional clue. Thus the late Sir Andrew's Uncle, Richard Corbet, had a dwelling we know and some land in Peynton or Poynton, and his widow lived and died there. It is a small hamlet, with then a ruined and disused chapel in it, and lay in the Parish of Shawbury, in an outlying corner. Sir Andrew himself, judging from the frequency with which his name occurs as Sponsor in the Registers of Shawbury, lived very probably in that parish. There is still a large house in the Parish, now a farmhouse, in which members of the Family lived during generations; and it seems reasonable to conjecture that Sir Andrew made this his headquarters. His eldest son Robert, who married as quite a young man, evidently lived at Sobiche, or Sowbatch, in the neighbouring Parish of Staunton-on-Hine-Heath; and though these dwelling-houses have long since passed away and left no trace, the Registers have preserved the clues for us. Robert Corbet styles himself of "Sobyche" in the baptismal register of his little son. The Sponsors in this entry deserve notice.

The little lad was christened at Shawbury; the first godfather was Mr. Ashton, the eminent Headmaster of "The Schools" at Shrewsbury, in which Robert and his friend Sir Philip Sydney took such pride and delight. The second godfather was John Barker, of Haughtmond, and the godmother was no other than Robert's own great-grandmother, Elizabeth (née Vernon). She passed the long years of her widowhood at Moreton-Corbet, where we feel sure she must have been looked on as a sort of presiding genius, and now one of the last acts of her life was thus to preside at the christening of her great-great-grandson—the presumable heir. The entry in the Shawbury Registers is as follows: "The viiith daye of June Roger Corbett, the sonne of Mr Robart Corbett of Sobyche was cristened.

Mr Thomas Asheton	godfathers
Mr. John Barker	
and Dame Elizabeth Corbet.	godmother."

Thus we learn that Robert's pied-à-terre in Shropshire was at Sobyche. He had married Anne, a daughter of Oliver Lord St. John of Bletsoe, and seems to have travelled a good deal and for long periods at a time. His diplomatic services would also account for some of these long absences. The Buckinghamshire home at Lincheslade suggests itself as having been the probable one for his wife and family during these absences, for I find no trace of them at that time in Shropshire and his wife Anne would be more at home in that part of England. Robert Corbet had been much at the Court of the Emperor during the earlier years of his travels, and his knowledge of foreign tongues and peoples caused him to be drawn more and more into the troubled waters of Queen Elizabeth's diplomatic service. He is frequently referred to in the Letters and Papers of her reign. We find "Certain Instructions" for Mr. Corbet noted in the Calendars of these Papers about the year 1575. First comes the draft of the latter part of the "Instructions" sent to Mr. Corbet, "sent to the Commendator Requesens," in Lord Burghley's handwriting. Again, under date Oct. 29, 1575, we find "Instructions for Mr. Corbet sent by the Queen to the Commendator."

"(1) First he shall be informed before his departure of the message which Sir Henry Cobham had in charge to deliver to the King of Spain, the sum whereof was to give him to understand the likelihood that the Prince of Orange and the States of Holland would yield themselves to the Crown of France, and to require him to consider the peril that would grow to himself and to the Queen, in order that the Prince and the States might have his favour with reasonable conditions whereby they might return to their ancient obedience."

"(2) After his repair to the Low Countries to the Governor, he is to tell him that he is sent to impart her manner of action in the cause between the King and his subjects, so as he shall manifestly perceive her neighbourly care and regard for the preservation of the King's estate in the Low Countries and the recovering and better settling of the ancient intercourse between her subjects and those of the Low Countries. . . ."

"(3) Having thus prepared his mind to give good hearing, he shall declare that last summer upon some probable doubt that the French King should gain some entry to possess the countries of Holland and Zealand she sent Sir Henry Cobham towards the King of Spain to inform him thereof and confer how the same danger might be remedied. But by chance he fell sick by the way so that she cannot have answer as soon as she looked for, and now very lately she is made certain by good means, that the practice is far past, and without some speedy stay be made the countries shall receive aid of the France not only to withstand the King of Spain's forces, but to become subjects to the Crown of France. She is therefore compelled to enter into a more speedy consideration of the matter. . . . He is to use all means to understand the numbers and forces of the King of Spain, and where they are placed, and to let the Governor know the good usage that the last ships coming out of Spain had in her ports."

Then follow some "Instructions for John Hastings sent by the Queen to the Prince of Orange After he shall be well informed of her messages sent to the King by Sir Henry Cobham, and to the Governor of the Low Countries by Robert Corbet . . . he shall repair with the Queen's letters of credit to the Prince and the Estates"

On November 20th James Harvie, writing from Antwerp to Lord Burghley, . . . reports : "The Estates are called together to grant some money to the Commendator. Mr. Corbet has had audience and very fair words"

On November 21st John Hastings reports to Lord Burghley : "Some say that Corbett was well entertained by the Commendator ; and some say, that after he had done his message he was commanded to keep his lodging, and afterwards commanded thence."

The first notice of a report to Lord Burghley from Robert Corbet is given in the Calendars of the "Letters" as dated November 16th, 1575. He says he "has written to the Council of such conference as has been betwixt the Governor and himself, and desires order for his further dealing in these parts, and encloses advertisements. He can hear nothing from Mr. Hastings." "The King's forces," he writes, "in these parts were never weaker, nor the hearts of the country more alienated, and the Governor much dismayed" Antwerp. Another notice of a letter from Robert Corbett to Lord Burghley is dated Dec. 4th, 1575 : "The Commendator seems to be somewhat more inclined to the Queen's good motion than before. There is great fear which way the Reiters will march, that come to the service of the Prince of Condé who are already at Mezières. There is a noise amongst the Spaniards in the Court that the Queen levies certain thousands of men for Holland." On Dec. 11th Robert Corbett writes to Lord Burghley that "at his last talk with the Commendator he entered into such a heat and choler that he thought they should rather have dealt with blows than words." "The Commendator will condescend to any reasonable condition of peace." On the same day—Dec. 11th—Robert Corbet sent a report to the Privy Council in which he says : "Upon receipt of Mr. Walsingham's letter commanding him to return, he repaired to the Commendator to know his pleasure if he would command him anything to her Majesty, whose answer was that he had told him before, all he had to say or could say, and that he was very sorry that he had not authority to deal with her Majesty touching a peace."

The same month there is a notice of a letter to Lord Burghley from a Thos. Copley which alludes to our Robert Corbett. Mr. Copley writes : "I am comforted by your courtesy to Mr. Doyle, touching my matters. I shall ever be your servant, and condemn my oversight in forgetting to sign my letter to the Queen, but haste makes waste. I returned it signed, by my Lord Ambassador Corbet, a rare man for his years. Pray help to appease her dislike of me, my loyalty would appear if she would command my service." . . . Robert Corbet writes again to Lord Burghley, both on Dec. 19th and Dec. 26th. In the former he says he sees no reason "why he may justly stay, and encloses the news of the week. In the latter he writes, still from Antwerp, and says he "has taken leave of the Commendator and had great talk with him, the relation of which," he omits, "till his return and encloses advices for the week and certain Italian letters."

The calendar gives a rather interesting extract, dated April, 1580, giving the names of sundry Englishmen "abiding in Parish." "Gentlemen of Yorkshire and the North. Three of the Fairfaxes, 3 Maneryes, 3 Wentworths, 2 Stapletons—then follow the names of English doctors, Licentiates in Civil Law, etc." The English Protestants' names are also given. Mr. Bacon, 2 Hoptons, Mansfield, Varneham, Gawdy, Doyell, Smythe, Willoughby, Corbett.

It is evident that Robert Corbett returned home and for a time must have remained at home : for the next year or two brought the losses to him of both father and mother. We remember the welcome which Shrewsbury accorded him on his return. The Queen's championship of the Protestant cause in foreign countries brought her and her representatives very really home to the

people of Shrewsbury : they admired her daring and courage, and shewed it, in the display of an unusually cordial welcome to her representative, the President of the Courts of the Marches, Sir Henry Sydney. The advent of the President was always attended with fitting pomp and circumstance, but in this early year of the seventies we read of an unusually cordial greeting. "At the comming in of Sir Harry Sydney from London lorde President of Wales, there was shott of (off) in a ryaltie 18 chamber peeces at a voyde place under the Wyld Copp, and adjoining unto Master Sherar's howse ; and also a lytell from the same at the foot of the Wyld Copp wher ther was an excellent oracion made unto him by one of the scollars of the Free Scoole." Some amusing details of a still more ceremonious entertainment of the representative of her gracious Majesty come to us from the same source, i.e., the old MSS. chronicle, concerning Sir Henry's visit in 1581. He was sent that year as a sort of special commissioner of the Queen's to inquire concerning certain religious questions : and was accompanied by the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. As Sir Henry was a knight of the Garter, St. George's Day was chosen for the impressive service to be held on the opening of the visit : and "Sir Henry marched," we are told, "in a solemn procession from the Council House to St Chad's Church." The stalls of the choir were on this occasion decorated with the arms of the knights "in imitation of St George's Chapel at Windsor, and here Sir Henry sat in his proper stall near that set apart for the Queen, in passing which he made the same reverence as if her Majesty had actually been present. Divine service was then sung by tone." In the evening "began the Feast and Sir Henry kept open house." "In a week's time the four Masters of the Free Scoole entertained Sir Henry with a costly banquet after supper in the Scoole garden." This brings home to us the somewhat important position the school and all pertaining to it held in the estimation of the town : and also the real respect and affection with which the father of their brilliant pupil, Sir Philip Sydney, was regarded by the "Free Scoole." On the day following the scholars, to the number of 360, mustered in the Gay with their masters ; and the head boy, or "general," with the captains, addressed Sir Henry in speeches, importing how valiantly they would defend their country, even in this juvenile spectacle we note the political bearing. The entertainment came to an end with Sir Henry's departure to Ludlow on the 8th May. He went by water, and the irrepressible "scollars" determined to have their "last word." They repaired to the island, about a quarter of a mile down the river, where they stationed a band, then, attiring themselves in flowing green garments to imitate water-nymphs and with their heads dressed with green willows, they delivered their songs of lament on the President's departure. Their townsman, Master Churchyard, probably wrote the inspired (!) lines, of which I only transcribe a few, among many :

" And wyll yor honor needs depart,
 And most it needs be soe ?
 Wold GOD we could lykce fyshes swyme,
 That we might with the goe ! "

" Or ells wold GOD this lytill ile
 Were stretched owt so lardge,
 That we one foote might follow ye
 And wayte upon thy bardge."

" But seeinge we cannot swyme
 And ileland's at an end
 Saffe passage with a short returne
 The myghtie GOD thee sende ! "

In this present day of grace I think it may safely be assumed that the "scollars of the Free Scoole" can "swyme lykce fyshes," and thereon we offer them our congratulations. The following year Shrewsbury was to become familiar with the new mode of travelling—per wagon—(coaches, it seems, though imported from Italy some time since by the last lord Fitz-Alan, who was Lord Arundel, were not yet seen in the Midlands). Lady Sydney, however, used her wagon, the nearest approach to the more sumptuous coach, and arrived in it at Shrewsbury on the occasion of her husband's residence in the town. The Archaeological Society of Shropshire, in their "Transactions," have given an interesting description of her ladyship's arrival in her wagon, and, as we may be very sure that our ancestresses at Moreton-Corbet made full use of their wagons when they

ROBERT CORBET, DIPLOMAT, OF MORETON CORBET 295

needed to go abroad, I will describe the Lady Sydney's. The old chronicle quoted in the "Transactions" says: "This yeare, and xith daye of Marche beinge Moondaye at nyghte the right Honourable Ladye Mary Sydneys came to this towne of Salop in hyr wagon." It was covered and lined with fine coloured cloth fringed with silk, lined with buckram and had hammer clothes with armorial bearings and badges and "toocke hyre lodgings at my lord's place, and then the sixth daye ensuinge, the most valiant knight Sir Henry Sydney hyr Husband beinge President of the Marches came alsoe from Ludlowe in honourable manner," "with his troompeter blowinge very joyfully to behold and see."

At this time the Vicar of Shawbury was John Dychar, a son of Robert Dychar the elder, of Moculton. It is to his careful records that we owe the interesting and unique Registers of Shawbury from which I have already quoted in the preceding chapter. Owen and Blakeway, in their History of Shrewsbury, give some details of him. He was generally known as Syr John Dichar, the ordinary style indeed for the clergy of those times. He so styles himself in the Registers. He was instituted in the second year of Queen Mary's reign in 1555. He was sixty years Incumbent of Shawbury; and, though instituted under a Popish Queen, there is no reason to suppose that he found any difficulty in conforming in all things to the Rule of her successor, the foundress of our Protestant Church. Syr John was buried at Shawbury in 1620, and thenceforward there is a great change in the style of entry of the Registers. We must record of him that in 1606 he gave an ancient Latin Bible to the Free School; it is a very fine and beautiful manuscript and may well have belonged to the ancient Church of Shawbury; it is on vellum and is now in the School Library.

Robert Corbett returned home and was accorded an honourable welcome by his fellow Salopians and a substantial offering as evidence of their esteem and respect for him, as already narrated. The peaceful negotiations had failed, and the Queen decided to try what encouragement the lance and sword would effect in support of her policy. The troops did not leave for the Netherlands for a year or two. We will therefore describe their passage through Shrewsbury later. Meantime many changes and much grief and sorrow were overshadowing Moreton-Corbet. Sir Andrew died in 1578, and his eldest son, then in England, succeeded him. This latter was master but for a few short years; for in 1583 he himself was carried off by the same deadly disease—the plague—which caused the death of his Uncle Walter. The record of his burial is among the earliest of the entries in the Registers of Moreton-Corbet—the little church, as we may call to mind, is dedicated to St. Bartholomew.

The old MSS. Chronicle, to which we have been so often indebted for other quaint little records, notices Robert Corbet's death as follows:

"This yeare aboute the ende of Maye, one Mr. Robarte Corbet a Shropshire gentill, soone and heyre to Syr Andrew Corbet of Murton Corbet, goinge upp to Loondoon to vysyt hys Uncle Wat'er Corbet of Loondoon who anon after hys commynge dyed of the plage and ye sayde Robarte bye reason of the infect'on dyed there alsoe, who was of grate estima'on w'the the Queen's majestie and the nobyllytie because he could speake perfectly soondrye forraigne langag's bye reason of hys longe absence in hys youthe owt of Englande in forraigne countreys and especiallye trayned up as it were in the Emperor's Court, who was lycke to have come to grate worshipp yf hee had lyved and especiallye to the whole countie of Salop, whose death was gretly lamented whose dead bodye was broughte from Loondoon downe to hys sayde place in the countrie where hee was the xxiiijth daye of Julye, buryed by hys Father and hys ancientrie very w'shipfullye."

The Inquisition P.M. taken on Robert Corbet's death is interesting both on account of its statements with regard to the entailed property and also in its statements connected with the succession. This latter sustained an interruption at his death, for Robert Corbet's little son Roger, whose christening we related in a former page, had obviously died, and no other son being living the succession to the Moreton-Corbet position, as head of the family and to the entailed estates, devolved on his next brother, Sir Andrew's second son—Richard. Thus here, as in the case of Fulk Corbet, in the reign of Edward III., the male line, though interrupted, was still maintained; the want, however, of male heir to the predecessor entailed then, as now, the loss of much unentailed land to the family. In Fulk's case it was Wattlesborough which was lost, and never to be recovered. In the present case Robert Corbet's two little daughters took with them many a rich Corbet manor, when they married.

"Inquisition taken at Shrewsbury, 3rd August, 25 Eliz., to inquire after the death of Robert Corbett late of Morton-Corbet Co. Shropshire Esqr."

"The Jurors say that Richard Long, clerk, vicar of Cardinton, Thomas Graye, vicar of Morton

and Thomas Lalee of Southcote were siezed in their demesne, as of fee, of and in the lordships and manors of Morton-Corbet, Harpcott als Harcott in the Parishes of Morton-Corbet"—(illegible)—“and of the vills or hamlets of Preston Brockhurst, Soutlbache, Boley, Heath House and Bromfield, in said Parishes and in a messuage and 20 acres of land in Shawbury, and in a park called Shawbury Park in Shawbury and in 8 messuages, 40 acres of land 40 acres of meadow, and 300 acres of pasture, 300 acres of heath in”—(illegible)—“in Shawbury and in the lordship and manor of Bletchley in the Parish of Bletchley and in the lordship and manor of Lawley in Lawley parish, and in 8 messuages—meadow, 5 acres of pasture in Shrewsbury and 2 messuages, 40 acres of land 10 acres of meadow, 20 pasture and 100 acres heath in Stretton, Cardiston”—or Cardinton—“and Hoo and so being siezed on Monday after Christmas 20 Ed: III granted the same to a certain Sir Robert Corbet, knt, and Elizabeth his wife, for their lives, with contingent remainder, after their deaths to their son Fulk Corbet in tail male to —” (here the document is torn) “Roger Corbet. And Elizabeth died and Robert held the same and on his death Fulk and then Roger held the same, Roger died and Sir Andrew Corbett, knt, held the same being son and heir of Roger, son and heir of Sir Robert, son and heir of Sir Richard, son and heir of Sir Roger, son and heir of Robert, son and heir of said Roger brother of Fulk.

“In Trinity Term 17 Henry VIII Thomas Lee Esqr. Edmond Windsor Esq: recovered by writ of ingress against Roger Corbett Esq; father of Sir Andrew, the manors of Cobbington and Chelmscote and 16 messuages, 600 acres of land, 200 acres of meadow, 500 acres of pasture, 4 acres of wood, and 40s rent in — Grest, Little Hollinden, and Solbery with free warren in the Manor of Chelmscote and the advowson of Cobbington Church, Co Bucks : and on 4 November 17 Henry VIII the same were settled on said Roger and Anne his wife, in tail male and in default to his issue and right heirs. Roger died and Anne survived him, and after, Sir Andrew succeeded as son and heir male.

“The said Andrew was also siezed, of and in, the Manors of Lynslade and Southcote alias Surcoote Co. Bucks, and in 20 messuages — land, 100 acres of meadow, 500 acres of pasture and 20 acres of wood in Lynslade and Southcote and of the rectory of Lyndslade ; and of and in 3 messuages, 137 acres of land, 10 acres meadow, 40 acres pasture in Leighton-Buzzard, Co Beds ; and by his Deed dated 28th April 20 Eliz: enfeoffed Henry Earl of Kent, Robert Earl of Essex, and others ” (named) “ of and in the Manors of Lynslade Southcote, and Chelmscote, Co Bucks ; and lands there and in Leighton-Buzzard and Solbury and — ” (illegible) “ and pasture in Hollinden, Co Bucks with all rights, etc: to the use of the said Robert Corbett son and heir apparent of said Andrew, and as appears by Indenture dated 17 March 20 Eliz: to the use of said Robert and Anne, one of the daughters of Oliver Lord St John and the heirs male of said Robert and Anne, with contingent remainders to the heirs male of Robert, son of said Andrew, right heirs of Robert.”

“The Jurors say that said Sir Andrew was siezed of and in the Manors of Stanton, Buerley, Hurtsley, Letton and Erton Co. Hereford, and of and in — Co. Salop, and lands in Hopton, Hugley, Sholderton, Broward, Abcote, Clangonyas, Sybden, Swifstanstowe, Whittingstowe, Nynton, Burwarden, Co. Salop ; and in the Manor of Harborowe Magna, and 40 acres of land, 20 acres of pasture in Gt. Harborowe, and thus being siezed by Deed dated 2nd Jan: 16 Eliz: made his last Will and Testament, He bequeathed to Walter Leveson, Robert Needham, Thomas Powell, Richard Corbett, and Hierome Corbett Esqrs, the Manors of Stanton, Bureley, Hurstley, Letton and Erton, and the lands in Overstanton, Netherstanton, Bureley, Hurstley, Letton, Yeton, Hopton, Hagley, Shelderton, Broward Abcote, Clangonyas, Sybden, Whiēstanstowe, Mynton, and Burwarden, to collect and levy the sum of £800 to be paid to Margaret and Mary Corbett, the two youngest daughters of said Sir Andrew and to his third son Francis Corbett an annuity of 20 marks a year and to his youngest son Vincent Corbett a like annuity. Sir Andrew died and his son Robert succeeded him.

“They say the Manors of Moreton Corbett and Harpcote and the other premises are held of the heirs of Richard Peshall as of his Manor of Chetwyn by knight service and are worth 12s 4d a year.”

“The Manor of Shawbury and premises is held of the Queen by the service of one fifteenth of a knight's fee and is worth —

“The tenement called Charlton Grange is worth £6, 13, 4d a year.”

“The messuage and lands in Preston Brockhurst are worth yearly 13s 4d.”

“The Manor of Paynton or Penyton is held of the heirs of Nicholas de Segrave by knight's service.”

" — " (illegible) " held by Anne Corbett widow, as of her Manor of Stooke on Tierne Co. Salop, by fealty and 12s rent."

" The tenement in Shrewsbury held of the Bailiffs of Shrewsbury " (much here is illegible). " Robert Corbett died 30th May, 25th Eliz: without male issue, and Elizabeth Corbett his daughter was at Robert's death aged three years eleven months and four days, and Anne was then 10 months five days. Richard Corbett is brother and heir male, of Robert, aged 39." Robert Corbett held " 8 messuages," several " acres of meadow, and 20 acres of pasture in Shrewsbury, held of the Bailiffs and Burghers of Shrewsbury by knight's service only and are worth 53s 4d yearly." It is, I suppose, impossible to trace the situation of these lands and messuages in Shrewsbury at this present time; but how interesting it would be, could this be done.

Robert Corbett's widow remarried. Her second husband was Sir Rowland Lytton, of Knebworth, Co. Hertford; also a notable man of his time. He commanded the Hertfordshire forces in the fort at Tilbury and represented his county in Parliament during the reigns of both Elizabeth and her successor, James; but that which distinguished him most appears to have been that he was captain of the celebrated band of men known as the " Queen's Gentlemen Pensioners." This band of " Gentlemen Pensioners " were the boast and ornament of the Queen's Court. It was entirely composed of the nobility and gentry, and to be admitted to serve in its ranks was regarded as a distinction worthy of the highest ambition. Sir Rowland's step-daughters, Elizabeth and Anne Corbett, married in due course of time, the one Sir Henry Wallop, the other Sir Adolphus Carey. They both passed to their new homes with their hands filled with many a desirable Corbet Manor.

Robert Corbett's successor, we are informed by the Inquisition held on his death, was Richard Corbet—his brother. He was at that time 39 years of age; therefore born somewhere about 1544. It is evident from the age of their father, the first Sir Andrew, that Robert and Richard were the elder ones of the subsequent numerous family. Unlike his brother, Richard Corbet was not a wanderer. He seems to have led a quiet home life, and, till called upon to fill the position of head of the family, lived chiefly at Meriden, where he had inherited his first wife's property in Warwickshire. He had married Mary, the daughter of Morgan Wolfe, of Meriden. At the time of his marriage Mary was the widow of Sir Thomas Lee, knight, of Clatercote, in Oxfordshire. On her death Richard Corbet remarried a lady who had been married twice previously and who outlived him. She was Judith, the daughter of Thomas Austin, of Oxley, in Staffordshire. Her first husband was Sir William Bassett, of Bloore, or Blore, in Staffordshire; her next was William Boothby, a successful London merchant, ancestor of Sir Brooke Boothby; and then, finally, she became Lady Corbet when her last husband, Richard Corbet, was made knight of " The Bath." I find very few records of Richard Corbet. He superintended the works at the (old or new?) Castle of Moreton Corbet and has left a memorial of his additions, in his initials, which are to be seen carved on certain portions of the ruins, and naturally, when called upon to be Sheriff in King James's reign, he occupied himself more closely with the affairs of his native county. I give some details of his exceedingly long will, interesting because it refers by name to so many family friends and relations; the legal inquiry instituted on his death will also be interesting. Richard Corbet left no children. He was buried in 1606 in the little Church of St. Bartholomew, at Moreton-Corbet. The Registers bear record that on " 29th September 1606 Syr Rychard Corbett knight of the honorable ordr of the Bathe was buried." An occasional entry in these Registers reminds one that with the flow of time comes also increase in the family membership, and their identity cannot always be ascertained. For example, I find among the entries for the following year, 1607, in these same Moreton-Corbet Registers, as follows: " 1607 Sept: 20 Margaret d: of Rychard Corbett and Ales, baptised." I will hazard the opinion that the entry refers to a daughter of one of the Stanwardine Corbets; and more so that " Thomas," the heir of Stanwardine, had married one of Vincent Corbett's daughters at Moreton-Corbet just two years previously.

Change in every thing was worming its way steadily, seemingly unopposed and hand in hand with luxury. It was not confined to the architectural changes in the dwelling-house. Nevertheless, one habit took very long to modify, and that even with such increase of learning as prevailed: this was the superstitious judgment on any occurrence out of the regular routine. Here is a quotation from an early chronicle of Shrewsbury, date 1586: " This yeare about the 4th daye of December came strange newes to Shrewsbury, from Calabria upon the light of a starre there, seen for the yeare followinge to saye for the yeare 1587. Then when the moone ys in the waterye line, the worlde ys lycke to bee in grate danger and therebye this yeare of many accidents as for brevities sacke I myte onley pictureys. This yeare and the 17th daye of DCCember 1586 the Sheriff of Salop p'clymed in Salop the queene of Scots traitor, beinge tryed bye examnac'on to be in con-

federacy with the former conspirators, as Babington and his associates for conspiring yr Mae'stie's death who were executed and the sayde traitor the Scottish queene hath judgment to dye, and for the joye thereof the bayliffs and aldermen caused fies and bell ringings with assembling themselves in their best arraye in banquetings and rejoycings, the same prayinge GOD with triumphe and sounde of trompette." The Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society detail a very interesting picture of the daily life in this time of our good Queen Bess, just the times we are dealing with, and if we mentally place in it, as actors, the knights and their ladies at Moreton-Corbet—our ancestors and ancestresses—the picture becomes at once instinct with life. Let me therefore give it. The details come from the pen of a Shropshire Squire of the day, one Mr. Talbot, of Longford, who thus took note of his daily life. Clarette, white Rhenish, Sacke, and muscatel were the wines drunk at table and the very ample fare included even the smallest fish in the brook and the birds in the hedgerows. Huge chimney pieces, such as we have seen in the illustrations of Moreton-Corbet, were in vogue and are the admiration of our own modern day; the walls were panelled with wainscot from the Eastern Counties and the Baltic, or, as Robert Corbet, of Stanwardine, tells us in his will, with oak specially cut and prepared from the woods on his estates. The walls also were often hung with tapestry and painted cloths. Glass was brought from Normandy, Flanders and Burgundy, and even from some parts of England. Wooden trenchers, we find, had given place to those of pewter, and instead of wooden spoons silver ones, and even tin, were used. The cupboard was laden with plate. Their table was spread with a carpet or fine napery. Green rushes were still greatly used for their floors, as in the neighbouring church, and in their bedrooms they indulged in "joynd beds" with tapestry and silk hangings. . . . "One goodly room for feasts and triumphs," we are told, "served as the principal chamber of presence." The staircase became more and more a feature of importance in proportion as the house grew more stately. The library was but small; it was ordinary only to think of books in the morning, the bow and sport was the legitimate occupation after dinner: these libraries were often also used as an oratory, for there was but little difficulty in obtaining the necessary licence for absence from church, on plea of sickness or because the roads were dirty. Vegetables seem to have been fairly abundant; we hear of carrots, onions, cabbages, radishes, cucumber, parsnips, salad gourds (by which is meant perhaps pumpkins?). All these were in the gardens, and surely explains the number of gardens we have been reading of in the wills and inquisitions of the day. In their orchards they had apples, plums, figs, cerise trees, almonds, peaches, walnuts; they often used a proverb that salad was for the Italians, pot for the Germans, porridge for the English. Now let us glance at the preparation for table. "The greate chamber has been early swept and neatlie kept: with fire made at the season of the yeare," the chimney at other times was garnished with "greene boucs and flowers." "The breade," the carving knife, the clensynge knife and forke have been placed upon the table in dewe order at the Salt, and the breade covered with a "fynne square cloutte of cambricke" called a coverpaine. The table cloth, towells, napkins, and cupboard cloths were of damask diaper, canvas or holland, according to the service required, and now the scene becomes more active, the carving towells for the carver and server are ready as are all others required. The carver comes to the table from the ewerie with the lord's and lady's napkin laid on his left shoulder; the server attends at the dresser and surveying place to carry the meate, and at the ewerie to receive napkins and trenchers. "The greate table is dewley laid," the host seated in the midst of the table a little above the salte, facing the carver and the mistress of the house, the principal chairs have cushions, the ordinary company sit on stools. Those below the salte have their meate served from a side table; there were always a number of gentlemen attendants in the houses of any standing, sons of neighbours and friends. The cup-bearer attends with wine and beer. In the greate Chamber the gentlemen will attend from 9 till Prayers are said in the Chapel, and again from one hour after dinner till 3, and again at supper till 5 p.m. The broken meate (meaning food) was always put into the almshouse and from thence bestowed on the poor by the porter. Mr. Talbot makes a note of the food in his kitchen department necessary for the Christmas week in which he makes his entry. "On the Sunday Chetebreade 40, household bread 20. Beef cut into 17 pieces shoulders 2, Surloynes 2, Cloddes 4, breasts 2, fillets 2. chest 1, ribs 2, iselbones 2," the mutton had tenn services, and so on; and on Monday 14 pieces of beef were stored and one steere cut into 26 pieces in all. Mutton 40 pieces. 1 goose, 1 pig, 9 conveys, 4 mallards, 8 teal, 39 woodcock, 15 snipe, 1 heron, 1 crane, 2 birds, 2 hette henne, 13 plovers.

On Christmas Eve, which was the Tuesday, he records: "fish cut into 3 pieces, haberdryie cut into 3 pieces. rodd fishe, thorneback. codd 2. plaice 3. tench 2. perch 2." On Christmas Day the (Wednesday) the details are: "1 Veal cut into 10 pieces. 2 caprons. ffesants taken 5 curlew etc On

Thursday 1 Swan " is noted, " 1 Turkey, 2 chickens and fish cut in 16 pieces." Eggs at the time cost 5 for a penny, etc. An inventory taken of furniture, etc., taken in 1580 of Sir J. Lyttleton's effects at Frankley, gives us an idea of the furniture which was probably in use at Moreton-Corbet. " In the Hall, One large table standing on a fframe, 2 joyned formes standing to the same, a table standing in the rounde window called the rounde table. 1 lyttell joyned square table, short formes serving the same, 1 joyned cupboard standing in the nether end of the hall 1 greete chest standing against the screene used with evidences. 1 large coffer without any locke, 4 staves for light horsemen. 1 dynys lance, staff, 1 payre awndryrons, 1 fyre forke, 1 payre tonges, and fyre shovell 2 plates to sett lights in.

" In the entry between the parlour and butterie 1 folding table standing upon a close cupboard spanysche werke, 4 joyned leafes, and panes for parlour windows, 1 greate map of the world set in a fayre joyned fframe. 6 iron casements for windows. 1 iron bowl for a wayne coppe (wagon cover), a plate for a gudgeon, 2 iron hookes for a door, 6 old horse shoes. 1 stone mortar with wooden pastell.

" In the Butterie. 1 silver bason with the ewer wanting, the cover and 2 bolles $\frac{1}{2}$ a tunne, silver, with 6 small cups, and a lyttell salte, 2 bolle glasses (cups), and 6 other drinking glasses. 4 butter dyshes and 4 lesser for fruite, 4 bottles with covers of glasses.

" In the parlour 1 large carpet for the joyned long table. 3 greene carpets. 2 buffet stools. 1 joyned chayre. 1 stoole with arms covered with cloth of tysane. 1 close cupboard (safe) to put in evidences, 1 lyttell mappe set in a joyned fframe. 1 picture set in a fframe. 4 cuyshions. of neydle worke. and 1 grene quyshion. 1 large prayer booke. 17 bookes more or less, 2 payre of playing tables. 1 chest board with the men. 2 emptye glasses, 8 glasses with stylled waters. 10 galleye pottes with conserves. 1 sugar coffre. 1 payre bellows. 4 vice pynnes with a wrest for a field bedde. keyes more or less 8, 1 payre snuffers, 1 drinking glass with a cover. 1 large glass with a cover," and so on. The designations of the various apartments sound strange to us. The inventory speaks of " The gallery beneath the hall called the wall chamber. The styllatorye (still room) at the stayres foote, 1 wry-nall." . . . We hear of " the Canapie Chamber. Greene Chamber. Tower Chamber Grete Chamber over the entry.—beneath the hall the Guest Room, Chamber over the kychen dresser! Chamber over the kychen."—The Greene Chamber appears to have been furnished as follows: " 1 standing joyned bedstead. 1 texture of rewed striped silke, fringed redde and grene silke, 3 curtains of redde and grene silke, 2 whyte blankets. the chamber hanged with greene saye, with a storeye in the border. 1 grene curtain of saye before the window. 1 large arras " (tapestry made at Arras)," etc.—The homilies of the day contain grave strictures on the extravagance in dress. It followed suit, I presume, with the prevailing spirit of ease and luxury. " So gorgeous," says the homilist, " that no person can stay its proud curiosoty." " The gentlemen ruffled in his sables, in his fine furred gown, corked slippers, trim buskins, and warm mittens, one gown for day, one for night, one long, one short for winter, another for summer, one through furred, another faced, one of cloth, one of silken damask, as their change of apparel, one afore dinner, and another one of Spanish fashion, another of Turkey. The vain women with tuft and tussock and verdingales out rivalled the men, in painting of faces etc.:" which the ungallant writer of homilies calls the " devil's tire." I feel sure the fervency of the rebuker must have cost him full many a sleepless night!

An account of the proceedings at the funeral of a certain Thomas Corbet, as preserved in the British Museum, gives us an idea of how such ceremonies were conducted at this date. The Thomas Corbet I take to be a member of the Norfolk family, judging so from the crest of the Squirell and from the names of some of the friends attending the ceremony, date 1610. " Memorandum. —I served this funeral for Mr. Norroy whose turne it was."

" The Proceeding at the fun'all of the worp'll Mr. Corbett dwelling at the golden Key in Chepe-side, but the proceeding came from marchant Taylor's hall on — the — of 1610 unto Saynt Antholine Church where he was buried."

The children of the Hospitall

Twoo conductors.

poore men in gownes 2 and 2.

gent's servants in clokes

viz :

William Parker and Mr. Wright's-man

Master Corbett's man and mistress Corbett's man

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

Mr. Noone's man and doctor Felton's man
 Mr. Wymark's man and 2 of Sr Tho: Foster's men.
 gent: in cloakes

viz :

Mr. Christopher Hornby and Mr. Connett
 Mr. Marshall and Mr. Hurdes
 Mr. Wm: Stacey and Mr. George Adams.
 Mr Thurman junior and Mr Thurman senior.
 Mr. John Hunt and Mr Thos: Hunt.
 Mr Francis Butler and Mr Butler th'elder.
 Mr. Robert Boothby and Mr. Thos: Boothby.
 Mr. Roger Corbett and Mr. Nead.
 Mr. Henry Poole and Mr. John Poole.
 Mr. Noones' two sonnes.
 Mr. Richard Heath and Humfry Orme
 Mr. Robert Cullam and Humfry Corbett
 Mr. Rowland Wetherall and Mr. Thos: Wetherall.
 Mr Richard Ive and Mr Anthony Ive.
 Mr Delle and Mr Noone.
 Mr Cuddon and Mr. Poole.
 Mr. Wymark and Mr. Thos Foster.

Gentlemen in gownes viz:

The minister of St Antholine's and the minister of Newington.
 Mr. Langley.
 Mr. Beadle and Mr. Greenwell.
 Mr. Rowe and Mr Lane.
 Mr Woodall and Mr Wright.
 Mr. Heath and Mr. Orme.
 Sir William Craven and Sir Tho: Foster.
 Mr Doctor Felton, Preacher for the Defunct
 Mr Arthur Corbett with the Penon in his hands
 Lancaster Herald bearing the helm and crest
 Clarencieux King of Armes bearing the coate

The Body

Mr Corbett executor and chief mourner
 Mr. Boothby and Mr Noon assistants.
 Gentlewomen having blacke
 The livery of his company viz: marchantaylore
 The masters of the Hospital.—
 Gentlemen having no blacke
 The Parish and other company.

“ The offertory at the said funerall of Mr Corbett,

“ First the chief mourner attended by the two assistants offereth a piece of gould for the defunct only, led up by Mr Clarencieux.

“ Then come they all four downe agayne and after a little pause Mr Clarencieux leadeth up the chief mourner alone, to offer for himself and both stay up at the Communion table to receive the hatchment.

“ First Lancaster tooke the coate of Armes and put it into the hands of the 2 assistants who betwixt them offered it up, he going before them.

“ Then the helm and crest in like manner,

“ Then the Penon, by him that bore it in like manner,

“ Then cometh downe the chief mourner agayne.

“ Then Lancaster led up the two assistants to offer.

“ Then Mr Clarencieux w'th Sir Tho Foster and Sir Willm Craven

" Then Mr Clarencieux w'th 2 of the overseers.

" Then Lancaster with the other 2 overseers.

" Then Lancaster w'th the Gentlemen in gownes.

" Then Lancaster w'th the Gentlemen in Cloakes."

The description ends with " This composition was but 35."

In 1584, the year after the death of the late head of Moreton Corbet—the unfortunate Robert Corbett who died of the Plague—the troops which had been destined for the Netherlands by Queen Elizabeth passed through Shrewsbury: they were chiefly recruited from amongst Lord Leicester's tenantry, and he himself heading them was accorded quite a regal welcome by the town; we may remember that Thomas Corbett of Longnor was one of Lord Essex's following, and that this latter was also in his step-father's train, with " divers knights and gentlemen of worshipful calling." Lord Leicester was met at the entrance of the town by " the worshipful of the Shire, the Bailiffs, the aldermen, and others to the number of twenty four scarlet gowns, the scholars of the Free School, and companies of the occupations in comely and seemly orders." The procession was halted near the conduit at the upper end of the Wyle Cop, for the delivery of certain orations both in prose and verse. Three young gentlemen of the Free School were the orators, of whom one was Thomas Sydney, a younger brother of the famous Sir Philip. Thence the procession passed on to the Council House, where, " being quiet," we are told, the Bailiffs presented the Earl with " a standing cup of silver gilt containing £20 in money, an hogshead of wine, and banketyng dyshes " to the value of £40. The next morning Lord Leicester paid a visit to the Free School and thence to St. Mary's Church to listen to a sermon by the " publick preacher of GOD'S Word " there, one John Tomkys. The discourse is of the lengthy order prevalent, but I give a few extracts. " Our memory," says the preacher, " cannot commit to oblivion, how courteously you accepted that meane, and yet well meant intertainment which the towne of Shrewesburie in dutie gave unto youre lordship. And the posteritie, no doubt, shall heare of your thankfull accepting of many welcomes, your cheerful hearing of many orations, your circumspecte view of the situation and buildings of the towne; your grave conference with the magistrates in the government thereof: your comfortable going into the free Grammar Schoole to experience the towardliness of the youth there: your Christian presence in the Church at the sermon, your painfull travell in arbitrating controversies, your large giftes unto maister Bayliffes officers, your liberrall rewardes unto the scholemaisters, your charitable almes unto the poore, all the whiche vertues did then shine in you, as in a most cleare mirrour of true nobilitie," etc. The year 1588 will ever be memorable to Englishmen for the defeat of the " Invincible Armada." The gentry of Shropshire subscribed largely and liberally to the defence of the kingdom: and several Corbet names swell the list of the contributors, amongst them Jerome, who was still living. The fate of the " Invincible Armada " we are well acquainted with; and the disappointments and chagrin it brought to the promoters of the ill-thought-out enterprise occasioned a wide circle of unrest and conspiracies amongst the Queen's chief enemies, the Spaniards and the Papists. In 1591 an entry in the Calendar of State Papers gives " Information that when the King of Spain's fleet was overthrown, Cardinal Allen wished Parsons, then in Rome, to go and interest the King of Spain not to leave off so; and by his means a seminary was founded in Spain where persons destined for England were first sent, and thence came to England, pretending to have been soldiers or slaves in Spain." It also notes " that Corbett went last summer to Sir John Peters, at Ingerstone, his lady having sent a man and horse for him, and mass was said in presence of Sir John and Lady Peters, Mr. Southcote and his wife, and two servants "; again, we have " a note of Priests, given by good advice " and endorsed " Corbett's notes."

I have no reason for thinking that the Corbets of the midlands were much connected with the developments and discoveries of these continual plots; but the Norfolk Corbets appear to have profited largely in lands and goods through the actions of John Corbet, the heir and successor of Sir Miles Corbet, of Sprowston, and eventually the first Baronet of the Norfolk family. This John seems to have interested himself in public affairs; he was clerk of the Council and made a clerk of the Privy Council for life. In return for these favours, he seems to have busied himself with searching out the recusant families as the Roman Catholics were then called, and was rewarded by large sums of money from their forfeited estates throughout the reign of King James; the final reward was the Baronetcy conferred in 1623. The State Papers record many of these unpleasant transactions, and give us the names of some who suffered in this way; amongst them we find the names of Ric: Cotton, of Wartlington, Hants; John Carol, of Chichester; John Threele; Eleanor

Kemp, of Pentley, Essex; Sir Henry James, of Smarden, Kent; John Shelley, of Mechel Grove, Sussex; Sir Henry and Lady Constable; but this latter conformed after a while. Clement Corbett, whom we have already written of in Chapter XI. of this volume, followed the same course and was granted benefits from the recusancy of Edward Gage, of Herefordshire; Wm: Pordage, of Kent; George Gryme, of Norfolk; Bartholomew Fromond, of Surrey; Sir Thos: Carol, of Shipley; and Sir John Carol, of Aguey, in Sussex; Sir John Whitbrook, of Bridgenorth, Salop; John Pascal, Essex. The gift of the baronetcy had one or two dissentient voices. The certificate by the Earl Marshal Arundel is recorded in the State Papers; and it states that "John Corbet of Sprowston Norfolk is a gentleman of three descents and therefore in that respect capable of the degree of Baronet." The Papers then record a protest from the Attorney General to Sec: Conway, saying he has drawn up the Bill as ordered, creating Mr. Corbet a Baronet, but has reminded the King that he not only limited the number of Baronets to two hundred, but promised that vacancies by death without heirs male should not be filled up by fresh creations. The note adds: "The Bearer says that the King will pay the money on this creation, but has not drawn up a discharge, having no warrant for it." To promise and not pay was, I fear, a not unknown occurrence with King Jamie. The history of his reign is so filled with the accounts of punishments dealt out now to the Roman Catholics, now to the Puritans, that it is with a feeling somewhat akin to relief that we find that neither Richard Corbett, nor his successor, his brother Vincent, took the active part in public concerns which we are accustomed to look on as the usual life of our ancestors. Richard lived for the greater part of his life on the Warwickshire property which had accrued to him on the death of his first wife. He did indeed come to Shropshire in the early years of the last decade of the century, and he was High Sheriff for the County in 1593-4, but beyond that there are few records of him to comment on. His first wife was Mary, the daughter of Morgan Wolfe, of Meriden, Co. Warwick, and it was there that Richard Corbett made his chief home. Mary Wolfe was the widow of Sir Thos: Lee, of Clattercote, Oxon, when she married Richard Corbett. He seems to have had more than a life interest in his first wife's property, for he appears to have sold either the whole or a portion of it to Sir Humphrey Lee, of Clattercote. Richard Corbett's second wife was Judith Austen. She had married first Sir William Basset, of Blore, Co. Stafford; secondly, William Boothby; and, lastly, Richard Corbett. There were no Corbett children, but her daughter, Elizabeth Boothby, subsequently married the second Sir Andrew Corbet, and we shall hear more of her later. Soon after the year of Richard Corbett's shrievalty, Shrewsbury passed into rather troubled times with another visitation from the dreaded scourge of "the Plague." The Corporation Books contain a record of the town's instant adoption of some means to stop its spread, and record an Order "that in respect of the danger of the plague the wolle market shall be dissolved untile after the 10th of August next: no hempe, flaxe, hushold stuffe or apparell, or wolle, to be brought to this towne from London, or any infected place, upon payne of disgracement. Alsoe there shall be appointed warders at every gate of the towne, for the oversight of them shall come to the towne." Shrewsbury suffered much distress from this visitation, and the old MSS. chronicler to whom Messrs. Owen and Blakeway refer so constantly in their history tells us "that there was appointed by the clergy, with the consent of the Bayliffs and Assistants, a general fast to be usid, to say the 11th day of August, being Soondaye: at which daye most of the inhabitants repayrid to Sainct Maris Churche, there to pray and call upon GOD to send seasonable weather to bringe in theyre corne, for the comfort of the people: who, lamentynge their synns and calling to GOD, with sutch godly sermons made of the prechars to the comfort of all the hearars, the whiche contynewyd all that Soondaye, from eight of the clocke in the morning untill four of the clocke at night, and never came owt of churche untill then." Nevertheless, we read the prices of food continued to rise and were at the highest by the middle of the following May, when wheat cost 18s. a bushel, rye cost 15s., beans 13s., and cheese, we are told, was 4d. a pound. Sir Richard Corbett, knight of the Bath, died in the first years of King James's reign, and, as he left no children, his next male heir was his youngest brother, Vincent, and a very searching Inquisition P.M. was made, of which I will give the details. We are thus able to trace the course of the disintegration in lands which began with the lapse of Manors to the daughters of Robert Corbett (Richard's elder brother), on their respective marriages: and so onward, past the unscrupulous crippling of the Family by Cromwell.

"Inquisition taken at Shrewsbury, 5th October, 6th James I to enquire after the death of Sir Richard Corbett, of Moreton Corbet knight.

"The jurors (among whom were Thomas Corbett Esqr and Edward Corbett gent) say that before his death Sir Richard was siezed of the Manors of Moreton Corbet, Harcott als Harpcott,

Shawbury, Besford, Lawley, Hatton Hyneheath als High Hatton, Hopton and Hopley, and of 60 messuages, 10 tofts, 10 mills, 60 gardens, 60 orchards, 2000 acres of land, 1000 acres of meadow, 2000 acres of pasture, 3000 acres of wood, 400 acres of heath and furze, 200 acres mool, and £10 rent in Moreton Corbet, Preston Brockhurst, Booley, Besford, Harcott, Edgebalden als Edgebaldenham, Little Withiford, Hatton Hyneheath, Peplowe, Hopley, Kenston, Hodnett, Hopton, Espley, Losforde, Lawley, Wixhill, and Shrewsbury and of three court leets or views of frankpledge in Moreton Corbett, Shawbury, and Besford and of the advowsons of the church of Moreton-Corbet, and the rectory of Staunton, and the tithes in Staunton, Harcott, Booley, Morton, Soultbache, Heath House, Hatton Hyneheath, Greenfields, Lye, Brockhurst, Withiford magna, and Besford, and of the advowson of the vicarage church of Stanton, and of the manors of Lynslade als Lynchlade, Southcott and Chelmscott, Co. Bucks. and of and in, 20 messuages, 10 tofts, 2 mills, 2 dovecoats, 20 gardens, 20 orchards, 1000 acres of land, 700 acres of meadow, 1600 acres of pasture, 400 acres of wood, 300 acres of heath, and 1000 rent in Lynslade, Southcott, Chelmscott, Soulburie, Hallingdon, Gleadley, and Braggenham, Co. Bucks. and of two courts leet and views of frankpledge in Lynslade and Chelmscott and of the rectory of Lynslade, and the tithes there and in Southcott; and of one message, and 3 acres of land in Leighton Buzzard Co. Beds. and of the manor of Dallington Co. Northants, and of 30 messuages, one mill, 30 gardens, 500 acres of land, 200 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, 300 acres of furze and heath, and 200 rent in Dallington, Barton, and Northampton, and of the view of frankpledge in Dallington, and the rectory and tithes there, and the advowson of the vicarage of the Church; and of the manor of Cropredy Co. Oxon, and of 20 messuages, 2 mills, 20 gardens, 20 orchards, 600 acres of land, 200 acres of meadow, 1000 acres of pasture, 100 acres of wood, 40 acres of heath, and 200 rent in Cropredy, Clatercott and Clendon Co. Oxon."

Then follow the accounts of some legal transactions, which interest from the names they contain.

"So being siezed, a fine was levied in the Common Pleas in hilyar term 3 James I, between George Corbett and Thomas Bamford plaintiffs and said Sir Richard and Dame Judith his wife, deforciant, whereby the said were conveyed to said George and Thomas and the heirs of George and thus siezed as free tenants Henry Corbett and George Wightwicke made a recovery thereof." The contents of an Indenture is then given "dated 15th Jan: 3 James I between the said Sir Richard and Dame Judith his wife of the first part, George Corbett and Thomas Bamford and others of the 2nd, and Henry Corbett and George Wightwicke of the 3rd. the premises in Co. Bucks were settled on said Dame Judith as dower (she still survives), and the remainder as Sir Richard should appoint in his Will." . . .

The Jurors then declare Sir Richard's "male heir" to be "his brother Vincent Corbett then aged 50 and upwards."

An unusual point of interest attaches to this Inquisition on the death of Sir Richard Corbet, apart from the verification it gives of the family's lands at this date, for we find from its details that the old Corbet property of Hatton-on-Hine Heath, one of the original Shropshire possessions of the Corbets of Tasley, inherited by them from the immemorial times, had now passed by purchase into the hands of the head of the Family—the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet. Sir Richard speaks of this property in his Will as among his "purchased lands." Richard Corbet, the last of his line, appears to have parted with the whole of his patrimony, for Assington, in Suffolk, was also sold by him to a man named Gurdon. It is pleasant to find so old a Corbet property as Hatton again in the Family's keeping, especially as it lies so close to Moreton-Corbet. Hadley, too, was probably sold about the same time, and again it fell to the care of the Family, for it was bought by a Richard Corbet, the heir at Stoke and Adderley. Hadley is near to Shifnal and Wellington. Hatton-on-Hine Heath, I believe, now belongs to the Stanier family, to whom it was sold in times near our own, by Sir Andrew Corbet, the grandfather of the present Baronet (Sir Gerald Corbet).

As I have already stated, I cannot discover the connection claimed by the extinct family of Norfolk with the head branch of the Family in Shropshire, nor does there seem to have been any link with the long-established Corbet family in Suffolk and this newly-formed one in Norfolk: the former, so far as lands are concerned, had ceased to have any standing and had sold its Shropshire lands to the Corbets of Moreton-Corbet, as we have just seen; and the latter, though flourishing and increasing for about a hundred years, then also ceased to exist. It appears to have been reckoned at the time the Baronety was conferred as of only three descents.

Sir Richard Corbett, of Moreton-Corbet, mentions the names of more than one Corbet both in his Will and in the Indenture quoted. There were several Thomas Corbets in Shropshire at this date,

one at Adderley, and at Stanwardine, etc. I think it, however, as the most probable that the Corbets named were sons, or of younger sons, of the very numerous House of Leigh. They were found seated at the various places around Leigh, such as Newton, Hampton, Pontesbury, Worthen and others. The mutual links with the families of Lee, of Langley, and Albright-Hussie rather strengthen this opinion. Thomas, George, and Henry are the Corbets named by Sir Richard. Henry was probably the cousin from Leicestershire, a grandson of Jerome, of Beslow.

The Will is rather a lengthy one, but interesting from the mention of so many friends and relations. It is dated 10th Julie 1606.

" Sir Richard Corbet of Moreton-Corbet Sallop "

" Considering the uncertentie of deathe, that alle men are commanded constantlye to be a redynes for the same, and knowinge that to others and to myselfe, by experience greate troubles have arisen by earth commodities which men careles of their redynes or preparation of death have caused for the morespeedy payinge and satisfyenge of my debts that I nowe owe or shall owe att my decease and for the better performyng and fullyllinge of my true intente and meaninge declared in an Indenture triparte dated the 15th Jan: last betweene, me the said Sir Richard Corbet and Dame Judith my welbelovyd wife of the 1st parte, William Seybright of London Esqr : Anthony Fitzherbert of Norbury Esqr : George Corbet and Thomas Bamford of the 2nd parte, and Henry Corbet and George Wightwick of the 3rd parte doe make and ordaine my last Will and Testament in manner followinge. I desire to be buried within my Chapple at Moreton-Corbet, if my Executors conveniently soe may cause it, and for the disposition of my Manors Lands Tenements and hereditaments for such estates as are hereafter by me in these presents limited for payment of my debts and Legacies and such other purposes as are hereinafter declared. I doe devise as followeth, Whereas in and by the said recited Indenture and other good and sufficient assurances executed thereupon, my Manors Lands Tenements and hereditaments in Bucks or Beds or either of them are conveyed to the use of Dame Judith Corbet my said wife and her assigns for life, in full recompense and satisfaction of her Joynture and Dower and after her decease the said Manors in Bucks or Beds, and all other my Manors situate lyinge and beinge in Oxon, Northampton, and Sallop are thereby conveyed to the use of myselfe for life and after the decease of the survivor of myselfe and my wife for the premises in Bucks and Beds. and after my decease whether my wife be livinge or not for all other the premises to the use of such persons as I shall by my last Will appoint to be Executors of my last Will, and for default of my last Will to my Administrators for 40 years, to be accomplished for the premises in Bucks and Beds from the decease of the survivor of myselfe and my wife, and for the other premises from my decease from the rents to leavy sufficient to pay my Legacies and to performe all such bargaynes covenants and agrements as I shall make or have alreadye entered into with any person whatsoever, and to beare and satisfye all losses and after the determination of all the said termes to the use of the heires male of the bodie of Roger Corbet Esqr : my Grandfather lawfullie begotten and for default to the use of me Sir Richard Corbet, and my heires and assigns for ever, with divers condicions lymitations and liberties in the said Indenture tripartite more at large expreste as thereby may more plainly appeare. Nowe my full meaninge is and I doe here by nominate and constitute my lovinge wife Dame Judith Corbet Henry Corbet Gent. George Wrightwick Gent. George Kilvert Yeoman to be my Executors prayinge them as my Truste is in them that they will take upon them execution thereof. and I doe bequeathe to them the premises in Bucks and Beds wherein my wife has her Jointure, and all other the premises for 40 years . . . and I desire my Executors to ratify and confirm all Leases, charges, grants, and woodsales I have made or hereafter shall make touchinge the premises accordinge to the true meaninge of the Indenture : and to pay all my debts and Legacies and to performe all bargaines covenants and agrements . . . and where the terme shall bee performed I give the said premises to such person as for the time beinge shall be next heire male of the bodie of Roger Corbet aforesaid my Grandfather, and I doe hereby ratify and confirme all and everie the uses estates limitations, condicions, liberties conteyned, confirmed and declared in the said Indenture tripartite.

" The Lord chief Justice of England, my Honorable Friend £40

" Sir Randolph Brereton kt : my lovinge kinsman, and very good Friend £20, desiring their assistance for the performinge of my Will. Dame Judith Corbet my lovinge wife all Plate Lynens, bedding and other goods and chattells in or aboute the house of Langley, or in any pastures or grounds thereto belonginge of what sorte soever.

" And whereas I have estated the Manor of Besford with other Lands and Tenements in the Countie of Sallop to Marie Corbet my sister for the payment of £800 within 2 years after my decease

and whereas alsoe the Executors of Sir Richard Leveson are to pay her £840 more beinge due unto her by Sir Richard Leveson in his life time, my Will is that in case the said Executors doe not pay her the said £840, then I doe give and bequeathe to her £1000 to be paide as speedilie as may be which I doe desire may be performed.

"I give to my lovinge wife £300 for that she assented unto my Tenants Leases at Circot being p'cell of her Joynture, which £300 I desire (yf she soe please) to be bestowed upon her Daughter Elizabeth Boothby, and I doe further give to my said Daughter Boothby £300 at her time of marriage if she match with the consent of her Mother.

"Vincent Corbet my Brother my silver sworde, my bay trottinge horse, and my best coult

"Andrew Corbet my Nephew, my best geldinge.

"Frances Corbet my Brother's wife, my lovinge Sister-by-Law £20.

"Robert Corbet my Nephew, my Brother's Sonne £300 excepte it please GOD he be the next heire male of my Grandfather and then my will is he shall have but £20.

"Marie Corbet my Niece my Brother's Daughter, £400 at marriage if with the consent of her Parents or at 21.

"Margaret Lee my Cosen (wife of Humphrey Lee my Cosen) £50.

"Sir Roger Owen knt, my lovinge Friend, my bay Amblinge horse.

"Thomas Harley Esqr: my lovinge Brother, a piece of Plate worth 20 marks.

"My Ladye Hussey a piece of Plate worth £5.

"Mary Robertson my Cosen, in remembrance of my love to her a piece of Plate worth £5.

"Richard Woode shall enjoy the Lease I gave him of my Farme in Hopley and alsoe I give him £40.

"Henry Mathewe £40.

"My godsonne the sonne of Clement Culcup £30 at 21 and his Daughter that was my late wife's goddaughter £10 at 21 and to Clement Culcup himselfe £10.

"Thomas Corbett of Longnor my Cosen which served me £10.

"Richard Corbett my Cosen (Sonne of Robert Corbett my late Uncle dec:) £6 13s 4d.

"Roger Corbett and Robert Corbett (Sonnnes of Hierome Corbett, my late Uncle dec:) £6 to the elder Brother, £4 to the younger.

"Mr. Dod my lovinge Friend late Preacher of Hanwell £10

"Mr. George Wightwicke my lovinge Friend £50.

"Mr Abraham Hardinge my lovinge Friend £10.

"Thomas Evans in Shrewsburie my servant £6.

"Thomas Trigge my servant £6.

"John Drakeford my servant £30.

"Roger Hall my servant £20.

"John Peate my servant £30.

"John Horsman my servant my Keep in Shawburie Parke £20.

"John Grundye my servant £10.

"Vallentine Hucksley my servant £4.

"William Bamford my servant of Langley £6."

William Yate and Richard Warner were also left small bequests. The will proceeds :

"Mr William Humfreston my lovinge Friend £5.

"John Jennyns a Lease for 21 years to begin presently after my decease of the Tenement wherein he nowe dwelleth, payinge the ould and accustomed rente.

"To the Towns of Copredy £13 there to remaine by good security nott to be wasted, the increase thereof to relieve the poore continually in that Town.

"To the Towne of Clendon adjoininge neare to my house at Clattercote £7 to remaine there,"
etc. . . .

"My Brother Fitzherbert and his wief £6. 13s. 4d.

"My Brother and Sister Cartwright £6. 13s. 4d.

"Henry Corbet my lovinge kinsman £200.

"Dame Judith my lovinge wife my household goods and cattalls and chattells at Clattercote of what kind soever, and all my Plate not bequeathed and all my Leases goods cattalls and chattells in all other places alsoe to my lovinge wife

"George Holland £10

"Younge George Kylverte, Mr. Morrell's man £10

"Richard Broughton my servant £30.

" George Kylverte my servant freely the living he dwelleth in Moreton-Corbet for life.

" George Corbett my servant a Lease of Brownes livinge in Shawbury.

" My Executors shall enjoy all Manors Lordships Parks Woods Warrens conney lands teneme its and hereditaments and iron works untill out of the rents and they shall settle all debts and Legacies whatsoever, and they shall retayne in their hands all sums of money for their expenses in travelling etc etc or for Suites etc. for the preservation of my inheritance or performance of my Will rendering in writinge to my Supervisors a just accompt.

" Sir Robert Needham knt.

" Sir Francis Newporte knt my lovinge kinsman

" Humphrey Lee Esqr. my Cosen to be my Supervisors

" and I give to the knights 20 marks equally divided and to my Cosen Lee £50 within one yeare.

" If my Executors can they shall pay my Legacies within 2 yeares especially to servants.

" Witnesses " Thomas Rawlin
" Fowke Hancox
" Thomas Bamford.
" Alexander Younge.
" Thomas Longdon

" Debts by me owinge

" Mistres Standen £1000

" Sir Michael Hix £2000

" Mr Thomas Spencer £400

" Mr Morrall £400

" Richard Way £500

" Mistres Roads £400

" Mr Thornes £200

" Humfrey Lee my Cosen £150

" Mistres Jane Bostok £140

" J Culcupe £50

" Mr Pilkington £50

" Mr Cole £100

" Mr Trist £100

" Marye Corbet my Sister £200

" Mr Sidley £100

" Mr Tutchborne £100

" Memo 12 July 1606. . . . My Will is further concerninge the Manors Messuages Lands Tenements tythes hereditaments in Clattercote and Cleydon in the County of Oxon, I doe limit and appointe the same to the Lady Judith Corbet my good and welbeloved wife from immediately after the said premises nowe by me leased to Sir Michael Hix knt for sending of some money by me to him due shall be thereof cleared and all other just debts and Legacies paid, for her life and my Will is that if the child wherewith it hath pleased GOD to grant that my wife hath nowe conceived shall happen to be a Daughter I doe appointe £4000 to be paid her at 16 from all the rentes and of all my Manors and alsoe my Will is that if the heire male of the bodie of Roger Corbet shall by any means whatsoever lett hinder or interrupt my Executors in any way concerninge the holdinge of the Lands and then and from thenceforth I doe limitt all my Manors Lands and Tenements in Clatercote and Cleydon Oxon and all Manors in Hatton Hyneheath als High Hatton and all other purchased lands and Tythes in Sallop with all appurtenances to the Lady Judith my wife for 2 yeares and after the 2 yeares to my said Daughter and the heires of my Daughter lawfullie begotten and for defaulte to my Executors and their heires and assignees for ever.

" Thomas Rawlins

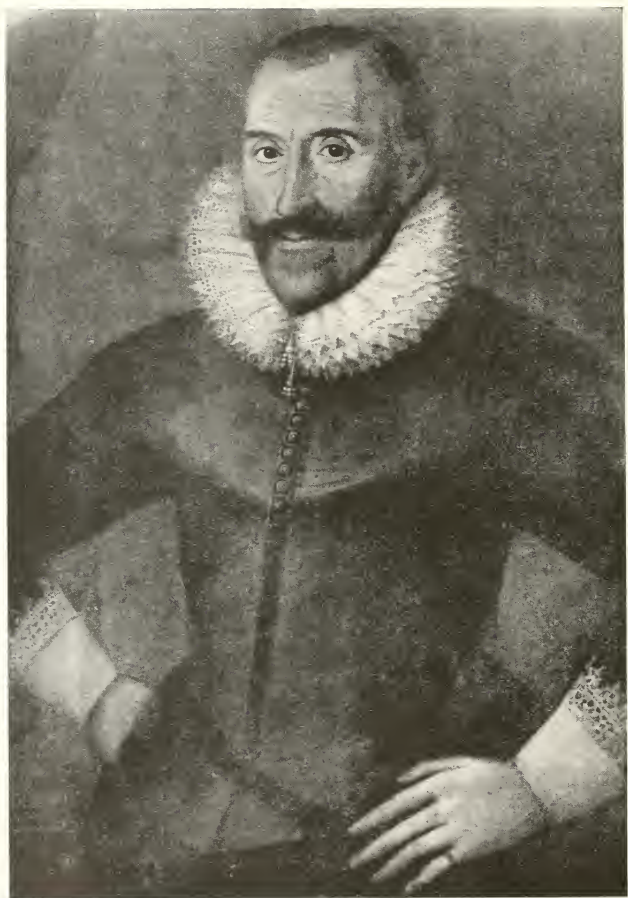
" Thomas Langdon

" Witnesses " Thomas Bamford

" Fowke Hancox

" Alexander Younge

" 16th Jan: 1606 Commission to Vincent Corbett, Brother of deceased, Dame Judith Corbett the Relict, George Whitwick and George Kilvert surviving Executors for good causes expressly renouncing."



First Sir Vincent Corbet, Knt., of Moreton Corbet

SIR VINCENT CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 307

The names of Kilvert and Culcup occur frequently in both the Shawbury and the Moreton-Corbet Registers. We may note that Sir Richard died aged about 62.

There are very few details to record through many a year after the deaths of Sir Andrew, the first of his name, and that of his eldest son Robert; indeed, I think the Parish Registers supply us with most of our information till we reach the first quarter of the seventeenth century. For instance, we find the birth, or rather the baptism, of Sir Vincent's eldest son "Andrew" registered at Moreton Corbet (in fact it is the second entry).

"Ano. D'ni 1580 Willm Axton, Pastor."

"Andrew, the sonne of Vincent Corbet esquier baptizede

"August 28"

Vincent Corbett must have married very shortly after his father Sir Andrew's death, and, as we know, he married Francesca Humphreston of Humphreston. She eventually inherited Humphreston on the death of her only brother William, and it then passed to Sir Vincent's and her second son, Robert, till forfeited to one of Cromwell's favourites. This Robert's uncle (Robert the traveller, who died of the Plague in 1583) is said to have brought some of John of Padua's plans from Italy for the reconstruction of Humphreston. These changes were, however, never carried out.—The Moreton Registers tell us of the death of Francis Corbet and of his burial in the family vaults in 1592; then of the burial of "Hierome Corbett esquier," which took place in July, 1598; and that same year Vincent Corbett and his wife Frances lost their daughter "Anne." We then pass on to Sept., 1605, and find "Thomas Corbett of Stan'erdine esquier and Margarett Corbett daughter of Vincent Corbett esquier were married together."

The following year—1606, Sept. 29—records the burial of "Syr Rychard Corbett, knight of the honorable order of the Bath." The next year there is record of a baptism of "Margarett d. of Rychard Corbett and Ales." but I cannot identify either parents or child, unless it possibly alludes to a Richard of Stanwardine, where there was a son of that name. With the death of Sir Richard knight of the Bath, Vincent, who was knighted later, became the head of the Family and the master at Moreton-Corbet. Like his father, Sir Andrew, he was the first of his name—"Vincent"—and the youngest son of a numerous family of brothers and sisters.

The late Sir Richard's Will can scarcely have been a welcome one to his successor: it must have been a great embarrassment to find his patrimony laid under such an encumbrance and for so long a time. Vincent Corbett was an Esquier at the time of his succession; he was knighted later on, but not for some ten years or so. He entered very little into public life; he carried on the works of the magnificent new home he and his hoped so soon to reinhabit, and, indeed, they were completed or nearly so by him. This and his determined protection of the poor Puritans from the persecution ordered by James I. appears to be all we learn of his life. The portrait of him on panel at Acton-Reynold, with its look of stern determination, does not convey to one the idea of a man leading an uneventful life. The stern expression may have resulted from his efforts to protect the persecuted. However this may be, it is certain that one most untoward circumstance arose from this line of conduct; and the curse of the Puritan is still remembered and spoken of by his descendants with bated breath.—The unfortunate and harsh measures meted out to the Puritans by the fears of James I., who only saw in their fanaticism danger to his own person and plots against himself and his throne, touched Corbet sympathies very closely, for they were directed at times against those belonging to their own immediate surroundings. Sir Vincent Corbett determined to shield and protect such, to the utmost of his ability. I gather that some of the families living in the Corbet villages had for many years leaned more towards reform than to the old methods of teaching religion, and this even from its commencement, in the time of the persecutions of the Lollards, for we remember the arrests of some members of the Bostock family at divers times. It is reasonable to suppose that the leaven of those opinions, especially when salted by persecution, did not die out, and the more so that the name of Bostock still occurs in the Parish Registers of these years; the remembrance, too, of past difficulties of a like nature would, one feels, only serve to strengthen Sir Vincent's resolution to protect his tenants where it was possible to do so. One Paul Holmyard lived in a small cottage near to the old Castle. He had drawn the attention of the authorities to himself by his fanatical and persistent preaching, and at last orders were sent to arrest him, by force, if necessary. Paul Holmyard appears to have been a man advanced in years. His cold, grey eye and his harsh features pronounced him the fanatic, though probably a harmless one, and the soldiers sent to arrest him no doubt thought their prey an easy conquest, as the old man lived alone. One winter's night, so runs the tale, the old man heard a loud knocking at the door of his cottage and found one of his devoted disciples, breathless in his excitement, come to tell

him to flee at once, for that the soldiers were at hand to drag him to prison. At first he refused to act, for there seemed but one means of escape and that by hiding amongst the ruins of a place known locally by the name of the old chapel. It was a place of evil repute, where none would venture after dark on account of the weird noises heard there, and the strange forms said to haunt the place, and whence indeed few who had ventured into the cave were known to have come forth alive. Paul Holmyard's fears of the supernatural were as strong as those of his neighbours, but there was no time for delay, and, calling to mind the numberless and winding underground passages there where he might lie hid, for none would venture to follow him, he determined to take the risk and flee there for refuge. He armed himself with his Bible, a candle, and his flint and steel, and arrived safely at the ruined chapel. Here, hearing the soldiers hard on his footsteps, he plunged recklessly into the gloom and was soon lost in the winding passages. He stumbled on, his light went out, and a blow on the head from some unseen object felled him to the ground. There he seems to have lain unconscious for some length of time. When he recovered he found himself lying on the brink of what seemed to him a bottomless pit, and he heard the murmurs of waters. The blow on his head he found had been caused by the fall of a piece of rock. When at length he emerged from his gloomy refuge he found himself some way from home and was able to escape detection till the heat of pursuit was passed and he was believed indeed to have perished in the labyrinth in which he took refuge. All might thus have been well with the man could he have been content to remain quiet, but where would one find a fanatic able to keep silent? Paul Holmyard soon began to preach as loudly as ever; and soon again he drew on him the attention of the authorities and measures for his arrest were again quickly set on foot and carried out. His befriender, Sir Vincent Corbett, found himself unable to continue to shield him, and as the prisoner was being led away to gaol in Shrewsbury he begged so earnestly to be allowed to speak with him once more that the leave was granted. He was brought into the presence of his benefactor, whom, to the surprise of all, he addressed with words full of bitter hatred and abuse. "Woe to thee, hard-hearted man," he cried, with menacing gesture, "the Lord has hardened thy heart as he hardened the heart of Pharaoh to his ruin and thine. Rejoice not in thy riches, nor in the monuments of thy pride, man; for neither thou nor thy children nor thy children's children shall inhabit these halls; they shall be given up to desolation; snakes, vipers and unclean beasts shall make it their refuge, and thy house shall be full of doleful creatures." The superstitious tendency of the day no doubt clothed these words with a more sinister meaning than they should possess, and the after events, of disaster, to the beautiful buildings which so closely followed, ending with their destruction by fire, all served to keep the dread and the fear of the "curse" alive in the Family. Thus it has come about that no effort seems to have been made to reconstruct the old home. But the pity of it! Stately indeed are the ruins even to-day; but to-morrow, what will be? And when many a to-morrow has brought down a stone here, and a stone there, what will be? Memories? Memories of the old historic associations, and the romance shrouding the life of an old and long enduring family! Yes, let us hope that these will never die.—Sir Vincent and his wife, Francesca Humfreston, had several children, four of whom are named in the Pedigree, others probably died in youth. Their eldest son was named Andrew, and he was christened at Moreton-Corbet in the year 1580. The second son was Robert, the founder in after years of the well-known sub-branch of Ynysymaengwyn in Merioneth. This second son was evidently christened at Humphreston, where, if I mistake not, Vincent Corbett and his wife, Francesca, lived until the death of Sir Richard brought the interests of life back once more to the old roof-tree and hearth. There are no entries in the Parish Registers, either at Moreton-Corbet or Shawbury, of the baptisms of any of the younger children. The marriages of the two daughters are entered in the Moreton-Corbet Register as they occurred—in 1605 and 1612. "1605 Sept: 13 Thom's Corbett, of Stanerdine esquier, and Margaret Corbett daughter of Vincent Corbett esquier, were married together," and in 1612 we read: "Aug: 27 Syr Rycharde Hussey, knight, and Mrs Marie Corbett daughter of Sir Vincent Corbett, knight, were married together." Mrs. Marie was Sir Richard Hussey's second wife, I believe. Let us note also in this entry that Sir Vincent was knighted at this date. The detail indeed is found in "Shaw's Knights of England." "1607 July 10 Vincent Corbet, of Salop (at Greenwich) knt: Bach:" His elder brother, Richard, was made a knight of the Bath at the Coronation of James I., July 25. There was a sort of general summons to all persons owning land of £40 value to come and receive the honours of knighthood, or compound.

Sir Vincent does not appear to have been much at Court, though he was knighted at Greenwich. Very little indeed is noted of his life save the very unpleasant incident of the Puritan's curse. He

SIR VINCENT CORBET, KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 309

was entered as a member of the Middle Temple in May, 1575. His eldest brother, Robert, was admitted at same Inn of Court (the Middle Temple) in Oct. 1562. Sir Vincent's wife, the Lady Frances Corbett, was buried at Moreton-Corbet in February, 1615. Her eldest son, Andrew, was knighted two years afterwards, in 1617. Sir Vincent himself lived till 1622. His burial is duly recorded as taking place at Moreton-Corbet. "Sr Vincent Corbett, knight, was buried the ninth day of March 1622."

The Inquisition taken on his death was held at Shrewsbury 21 Jan. 21 James I. Among the jurors we observe the name of Reginald Corbett, probably of the house of Worthen and Pontesbury, an offshoot of the House of Leigh. Sir Vincent was declared "siezed of the Manors of Moreton-Corbet, Shawbury, Besford, and Hatton-on-Hyne-Heath Co. Salop; and of lands, tenements, etc.: in Moreton-Corbet, Preston-Brockhurst, Booley, Edgebaldon, Shawbury, Wythyford Parva, Besford, and Hatton-on-Hyne-Heath, Co. Salop. and three Court leets in Moreton-Corbet, Shawbury, and Besford, the Rectory of Staunton, the tithes in Staunton, Harpcott, Moston, Sowbathe, Heath House, Hatton-on-Hyne-Heath and Greenfields and the advowson of Staunton, and by Fine levied in Easter Term 5 James I. between Sir Robert Needham knt, and others" (named) "and the said Vincent Corbett (then esquier) and Frances his wife and Andrew Corbett his son and heir apparent, the said premises were settled on said Vincent for life, with remainder to said Frances, if she survives him and after their deaths to said Andrew (now knight) and his male issue by Elizabeth his wife, in default contingent remainders to the male issue of Andrew, Vincent, and Roger the grandfather of Vincent Corbett and right heirs of Andrew.

"(Frances died in February 13 James I.)

"He was siezed in tail male of the Manors of Lawley, Harcott, Hopton and Hopley, Co. Salop. and in divers premises there and in Kenston, Espley, Loxford, Peplow, Whixhill and Shrewsbury and of the advowson of Moreton-Corbet and the tithes in Wythyford Magna and Besford and of the Manors of Acton Reyner and Grynshill and divers premises there, and in Clyve," . . .

"Astley, Oakhurst, Rowlton, Ellardyne, Charleton Grange, Moston, Pymley, and Berrington and tithes in Oakhurst Co. Salop and died siezed thereof."

He was also siezed of the reversion of certain Manors and premises in Co. Bucks, etc. (see Vol. CCCII., No. 141), "after the death of Judith Corbett widow of Sir Richard deceased, and by Fine levied in Easter Term 5 James I. the same were settled after Judith's death on said Vincent for life, with contingent remainder to said Andrew, and his male issue by his wife Elizabeth, male issue of Vincent, of Roger Corbett Esqr: grandfather of Vincent, and right heirs of Vincent."

"Judith still survives."

"Vincent died at Moreton-Corbet 9th March last past and Sir Andrew Corbett knt, is his son and next heir and is aged 40 years and more."

Then follow the tenures of the different Manors.

Sir Vincent's Will, from which I give some extracts, is dated 18th Feb: 1622. Sir Vincent lived to be over 70.

"Sir Vincent Corbett"—we note the continuance of the two t's—"of Moreton Corbett Salop knt, somewhat diseased in bodie, but in perfecte and good remembrance (Thanks be given Almighty GOD) to be buried within the Chappell in Moreton Corbett at the discretion of my Executor. And whereas by my Indenture of Lease dated the 17th of this instant month of February I have granted demised and sett over to William Younge and Edward Owen Esquiers my loving Kinsmen, all that my Manor or Lordshipp of Acton Reynes als Acton Reynold and Grinshill als Grinshull in the said County of Salop with all rights members and appurtenances, and all my Ferme or Grange called Charlecote Grange situated lying and beinge within the Parishes of Shawbury and Moreton-Corbett or in either of them in the said County, and alsoe all and singular my messages lands and tenements Tythes, rents, reversions, services, and hereditaments whatsoever, within the severall Manors, Townships Lordships, parishes, Hamlets, or Fields of Acton Reynes als Acton Reynolds, Grinshill, als Grinshull, Clyve, als Cliffe, Sandsowe, Astley, Shawbury litle Wythyford, Moreton-Corbett, Harcott als Harpcott, Moston, Besford, Okehurst, Rowlton, Ellerdyne, and Shrewsbury in the said Countie for 41 years, and have likewise granted to them all those my Water Corne Mylles in Shawbury for 21 yeares—in Trust—that my Executor may receive all rents and towards the more speedy payment of my debts and of all my Legacies, gifts, and bequests herein contained as by the said Indenture more at large appeareth—nowe therefore I doe hereby nominate and appointe my loving Sonne and Heire Sir Andrew Corbett, knt, to be my sole Executor, and charge him to be careful to see my Will performed, my debts duly paid, and my Legacies and bequests justly and truly satisfied, as my confidence and trust reposed in him, and as his dutie and love

towards me, requireth the same: as followeth—I give to William Leversage my Servant for his good service don unto mee, a Lease of one Tenement and all lands to the same belonginge in Clyve als Cliffe, nowe in the tenure or occupation of Thomas Spendlove, and Thomas Felton, or either of them, and alsoe one Copy or Close called Russells Copy als the Wast Copy in Grinshill als Grinshull, nowe in the holding of William Allen, for the life of the said William Leversage at the yearlie rent of 20s.

“ John Trigge and Alice his wief for her faithfull Service don unto me, a Lease of one Tenement with the Gardeyne thereto belonginge situate lyeing and beinge in the Churchyard of St Maries in the Towne of Salop, nexte adjoininge to the Drapers hall there, and nowe in the tenure of Richard Barnes, for 21 yeares at the yearlie rent of 10s.

“ The Ladye Hussey my Daughter 40s to make her a ringe

“ The Ladye Corbett my Daughter-in-lawe 40s to make her a ringe.

“ My Daughter Scryven 40s to make her a ringe

“ Bridgett Corbett my Daughter-in-lawe 40s. to make her a ringe.

“ Pelham Corbett my Cosen, and Anne his wife, my Bedd whereon I usuallye lye as it is nowe furnished, and alsoe my Gray Mare, called Coventree.

“ Vincent Corbett my grandchild and godsonne, Sonne of Robert Corbett my Sonne £3.

“ Vincent Hussey, my grandchild and godsonne, Sonne of Sir Richard Hussey knt. £3

“ Elizabeth Corbett my grandchild, Daughter of Thomas Corbett dec: £6. 13s. 4d Whereas I owe unto James Corbett my grandchild 27s, I will that the same be dulie paid to him, and I give more unto him 33s to make it up £3, and whereas I owe to the children of my Sonne Sir Andrew Corbett about £9 I will that the same be dulie paid, and I give more unto them £11 to make it up to £20 and to be sett forth and employed for their benefites and uses.

“ The Poore of the Parische of St Maryes in the Towne of Salop, £20 to be sett forth and employed at the oversight of the Baylieffs of the said Towne for the tyme beinge and the Wardens of the Churche for the Raisinge of an yearlie penc'on or annuity towards the better reliefe and maintenance of the said poore to be paid by my Executor within 1 yeare.

“ Richard Bradney my servant £3 over and above his wages.

“ Rebecca Butler my servant £4 over and above her wages.

“ William Wolrich, Richard Dychar, William the Tasker, John App'owell, Roland Yardley, my servants each 20s.

“ Rees — Edward Kilvert, little Tom and Frank Wood my servants each 10s.

“ Thomas Wood and Thomas Longdon my servants each 10s.

“ Sir Richard Hussey knight, my lovinge Sonne-in-Lawe my great gilt bolle to remaine as an heire loome.

“ Robert Corbett my Sonne, my gray horse in the stable.

“ Thomas Scryven my loveinge Sonne-in-Lawe, my Scemyter with a gilt hilt.

“ Richard Smith my servant 40s.

“ Jane Dychar my servant 20s.

“ Johane Woodward my loving Sister-in-Lawe £5.

“ Pelham Corbett my Cozen my best damask suite of apparell laced with gold.

“ William Corbett his Brother my suite of apparell of silke grogran cutt.

“ My Funeral expenses and all debts which I owe to any one, and all bonds and specialities which I have entered into and all Legacies and bequests hereinbefore mentioned shalbe dulie satisfied paid and performed out of my said Manor Grange, lands, Tenements, Mylles and other hereditaments by me demised for the payment as aforesaid, and after my Funeral expenses are performed and my debts and Legacies dulie satisfied I give the residue of my goods catells and chattells whatsoever to my said Sonne Sir Andrew Corbett, my sole Executor as aforesaide. And lastly as touching the inheritance reversion and remaynder of all that the said Manor of Acton Reynes als Acton Reynold, and Grinshill als Grinshull and the Farme of Charletons Grange and all other lands Tenements etc: by me leased for payment of my debts as aforesaid I give them all to Sir Andrew Corbett, knt, my Sonne, and to the heires males of his bodie lawfully begotten, and for default to the heires males of the bodie of me Sir Vincent Corbett lawfully begotten, and for default to the heires males of Roger Corbett Esq: dec: my Grandfather, and of his bodie lawfully begotten and for default to the right heirs of me Sir Vincent Corbett for ever.

“ Witnesses: “ Sa: Wood

“ V. Downes.

“ Richard Beachott.

“ Proved 14th June 1623 by Sir Andrew Corbett kt, the Sonne.”



Second Sir Andrew Corbett, Knt., of Moreton Corbet *Face p. 310*

SIR ANDREW II., KNT., OF MORETON CORBET 311

On the 8th July, 1664, "Commission was granted to Arthur Corbett, grandson, by Sonne, and next of kin of Sir Vincent Corbett kt, dec: late of Moreton-Corbet, to administer the effects not fully administered by Sir Andrew Corbett, Kt, Sonne and Executor of Sir Vincent Corbett, now also dec:."—The late Sir Vincent Corbett's eldest son, to whose life we must now turn our attention, had reached middle life ere he came to his inheritance and took up his position as the head of the Family of Corbet. He was over 40 years of age, we are told, at his father's death. He was educated at Shrewsbury School and entered at Lincoln's Inn in 1602 as son and heir of Sir Vincent Corbett, knt., of Moreton-Corbet, and the notice adds: "on the humble petition of Laurence Stephens second Butler." Sir Andrew was knighted in 1617, but some years before that took place he had married his young connection by marriage, Elizabeth Boothby, his Uncle Richard's step-daughter. Their full-length portraits are at Acton-Reynold, remarkable paintings and full of the vigour and life of early youth. The pictures are in the fine dining-room there and seem to welcome the guests as they enter: this would seem as it should be, for to this young Sir Andrew is assigned the first beginnings of the new Corbet homestead at Acton-Reynold. Very little is really known as to where the family chiefly lived during the transition stages of the Castle at Moreton-Corbet. If I might offer an opinion, I should suggest that after the death of his wife the late Sir Vincent went to live in the splendid home of Moreton-Corbet, which at that date must have once more been fit to receive its masters, and he probably died there, amongst his old friends and surroundings, and near too to the little church which held so much that was dear and sacred in his eyes. When Sir Andrew came to inherit we may again conjecture that the ties and interests of many long years of married life would deter both him and his wife and children from any wish to change their then home, the more so that they still lived in the midst of the acres of their forefathers, albeit at Acton-Reynold instead of at Moreton-Corbet. The curse also of the Puritan would instinctively make itself feared when considering the welfare of their numerous children. They had a very large family—seven sons and nine daughters. Anna, the eldest, was born in 1608: her marriage to her cousin, Pelham Corbet, of Leigh and Albright-Hussie, is recorded in the Moreton-Corbet Registers, but not her baptism. The next daughter, Bettriche, was baptised at Moreton-Corbet in 1610. She married Francis Thornes, of whom we shall hear again in the coming years. Frances, born in 1613, cast in her lot with the Parliamentarians, and married Captain Edmund Taylor, of Wigmore. The next in age, Margaret, became the wife of Thomas Berkeley. Mary married Mr. John Pearce.—The son and heir—the future Royalist who sacrificed so much for his King and country—was not born till 1617. The second son, Andrew, was born and christened at Worthen, or Westbury, where the Family still held lands: he was buried at Moreton-Corbet in 1666. Walter and William both died as infants, and Henry, whether older or younger than the two brothers, Richard and Arthur, I cannot say, died in 1698. Of Richard we read that he was known later as of Shawbury Park, and was born in 1624; his next brother, Arthur, in 1625. I note these two names specially, because, though only two among many sons, they alone have descendants who represent them at the present day, and I must refer to them again. The remaining children were: Alice, born in 1629; she married William Onslowe, and was buried at Moreton-Corbet in 1666. Jane was born in 1633 and married a member of the Tibbatt's family. Judith was born in 1634; and the youngest of this large family, Elizabeth, though born in 1636, scarcely drew breath, for baptism and burial are recorded together. Sir Andrew was educated at Shrewsbury, and soon made his name in the county. He was entered at Queen's College at 19. He did not marry till shortly after his Uncle Richard's death at the age of 27, and he then married Elizabeth Boothby, his uncle's step-daughter. He seems to have been an eloquent Latin scholar, for as quite a young man we read of him delivering a Latin oration over the tomb of Mr. Burton at Longner. This gentleman, being in advance of his age in his respect and love for learning and the reformed religion, was denied burial in consecrated ground by the officiating clergy of the day, and was buried in his own grounds, where the tomb is still a notable object. On the occasion we write of, the tomb was obliged to be opened on account of some disturbance to it caused by the roots of neighbouring trees. Sir Andrew was among the friends present at the ceremony, and showed his sympathy by delivering the Latin oration in question. He was then Lord Lieutenant for his county. The cousin at Adderley, Sir John Corbet, of Stoke and Adderley, was given a Baronetcy in 1627 and became High Sheriff for the county soon after. He had many disputes with the Government of the day, some successful, some again in which he suffered for his opposition. I hope to give the history of these various actions in greater detail than is possible here, when writing the history of this branch of the Corbet Family. There were at this date five—nay, six—distinct branches, or families, of the Family of Corbet in Shropshire—namely, the head of the

Family at Moreton-Corbet and Acton-Reynold, the Corbets of Adderley and Stoke, the Corbets of Stanwardine, the Corbets of Humfreston and Ynysyemaengwyn (of whom I must also write later), and the fifth and sixth, the Corbets of Leigh, with their recently separated sub-branch at Longnor. These were all in Shropshire, and all took an active and zealous part in promoting the welfare of their county according to the dictates of their opinions. The county, and Shrewsbury as its centre, had much need of such services, for once more the terrible menace of the "Plague" threatened the county with disaster. A petition from the Reverend Thomas Lloyde, Vicar of St. Alkmond's, to the Corporation shows how great a dread filled all hearts. Its date is March 30, 1632. He writes: "that hee hath bin minister within this town 31 years laste paste, and hath all the sayde tyme endeavoured himself in his ministry to give the beste contente hee coulede, and abided continually both the laste and this plague within the towne, and nowe and ever sithence the plague began hath and doth reade morning prayer dayly within the said parishe of St Alkmond's, where the people of the saide towne dayly resort in a greater number than formerly they did, to your petitioner's greate danger, the infecc'on breakinge as it doth some tymes in places which are never suspected."

In two years' time this great scourge prevailed in still greater force and produced an order from the magistrates of the shire who assembled at Battlefield.

It was ordered that there should "furthwith be levied out of every allotment within five miles of the uttermost liberties of the towne of Shrewsbury, the some of £6 out of an entire allotment, and soe p'portionably out of every part of each allotment as shall be within the distance aforesaid, for every month, till further order shal be herein taken, towards the present reliefe of the poore and infected persons within the towne and lib'ties of Shrewsbury," signed by

Richard Herbert (he was the son and heir of famous Baron of Chirbury)
 John Corbet (Sir John Bart: of Stoke and Adderley : being a Baronet, he signs before the head of the Family)
 Andr Corbett (of Moreton-Corbet. etc.)
 Tym Turneur (an eminent lawyer, afterwards Recorder of Shrewsbury)
 Fran. Charleton (of Appley Castle)
 Walt. Barker (of Haghmond Abbey)
 Tho Otley (of Pitchford, father of the future Governor)
 Edw. Jones (of Sandford, Steward of Corporation, father of the Lord Chief Justice)
 Rich. Lyster (of Rowton)
 Tho Corbett (of Longnor, father of the first Baronet)
 Rich. Prince (of the Abbey Foregate).

In the latter end of 1634 a writ for the taxation of ship-money was issued to all the maritime counties ; but it was soon felt that all should share in the taxation, and Shropshire was commanded to furnish the King with a ship of 450 tons, manned with 180 sailors and double equipage, with munition, wages, and victuals, to be delivered at Portsmouth. Shrewsbury was, of course, included in the requisition. Loud, long and persistent were the imprecations let loose against this tax by many, who only saw in it an unjustifiable attack upon their liberties. The malcontents found a ready leader in Sir John Corbet, of Adderley, and in recognition of his stout opposition to it he was dubbed "The Patriot" by those who held his views. We must refer to this in the history of his house in a later chapter. Shrewsbury, however, notwithstanding these dissentient voices, continued to stand high in its Sovereign's favour, and King Charles decided to confer some new privileges on it in 1638. The new privileges took the shape of an enhancement of the civic dignities, which greatly pleased and gratified the burgesses of the day, and the new arrangement was conveyed and confirmed by Royal Charter. By this it was enacted that in future the two bayliffs of ancient custom should be reduced to one, but that one was to bear the noble title of Mayor. The Aldermen also were to be doubled in number and were to be twenty-four, with forty-eight assistant Councillors. Tym Turneur was appointed Recorder, but all subsequent appointments were vested in the Corporation at large. Edward Jones was appointed Seneschal, or Steward ; Thomas Owen, the Town Clerk. The Charter next directs that there shall be two Coroners and four Auditors, and continues: "And that the said town may shine and be increased, as well in honour and dignity as in privileges and authority, and that the wicked beholding the ensign of justice may be withholden from the lust of sinning, the King grants that the Mayor, aldermen, and



Lady Corbett, née Elizabeth Boothby, wife of second Sir Andrew Corbett,
Knt., of Moreton Corbet

burgesses may have a sword-bearer, who shall from time to time be attendant upon the Mayor, and shall carry and bear before him one sheathed sword, ordained and adorned as it shall please the Mayor for the time being; in all places where maces have in times past being accustomedly borne before the bailiffs (so as the said sword shall not be borne erect in any church or chapel consecrated to the honour and worship of GOD) "

" Three sergeants at mace to bear maces of silver gilt, engraved and adorned with our arms."

The Mayor for the time being, the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield and his Commissary or Chancellor, the Recorder, Steward, three senior Aldermen, and the last preceding Mayor are appointed Justices of the Peace for the town and liberties. The Charter contains also numerous other provisions, but the orders for the sword and maces I have thought well to bring forward, for from it was chiefly concocted (I know no other word so explanatory) the extraordinary charges against the Archbishop Laud, and which indeed, coupled with his dealings concerning the Corbet Chapel at Adderley, proved the only accusations, if such they could be termed, which held any appearance even of undue assumption of power, and he was largely condemned on them, and his head was forfeit.

Before leaving Shrewsbury, the fair city of alders, to the contemplation of her exalted civic dignities, I think many Shropshire readers may like the writer to add a list of those who shared this increase of dignities with his Worship the Mayor. The Mayor was Thomas Jones.

The twenty-four Aldermen who supported him were : Robert Betton, gent. Hugh Harris, gent. Richard Hunt, gent. Thomas Wingfield, gent. Richard Gibbons, gent. John Studley, gent. Thomas Nicholls, esqr. Humphrey Mackworth esqr. Timothy Turneur, Robert Betton esqr. (of Betton Strange). Thomas Knight, gent. Charles Benyon, gent. Richard Llewelin, gent. William Rowley, gent. George Hunt, gent. Simon Weston, gent. Owen George, gent. Andrew Griffies, gent. Thomas Hayes gent. John Proud, gent. John Whitwick, gent. Richard Jones gent. Roger Blakeway, gent.

The forty-eight Assistants' names must also be given.

Adam Webb, Richard Berington, Thomas Betton, Robert Forster, John Lloyd, Nicholas Clarke, John Lowe, John Betton, Henry Smith, Thomas Clarke, Thomas Ridder, Thomas Allen, Roger Donne, Roger Browne, Michael Lewis, Basil Waring, William Waring, William Buttry, Humphry Davies, John Pritchard, William Dyos, Thomas Llewelin, John Lee, Ralph Shurly, Thomas Passand, John Cooke, Richard Nettles, Lewis Davies, John Gardner, Thomas Jencks, John Walthall, John Jeffereyes, Nathaniel Lee, Richard Cheshire, James Davies (senior) Thomas Newell, Edward Brickdale, Evan Davies, George Williams, Thomas Betton, William Betton, John Otmere, John Harding, Geoffrey Beddoe, Thomas Merick, Philip Wilding, Joseph Baines, and Benjamin Evans.

Several fresh families had in these late years testified their wish to bear arms and notified the same to the Heralds in their Visitations. There was a Visitation in 1623, and in it appear the names, with their pedigrees, as of Shrewsbury, of the following families :—Bardsey, Berrington, Berkeley, Cole, Clarke, Evans, Edwards, Knight, Gibbons, Gardner, Higgons, Hatton, Walter, Ireland, Jones, Leigh, Langley, five Owens, Poyner, Philpot, Phillips, Purcell, Pope, Prince, Rowley, Rocke, Studley, Turner, Waring, Weale, etc. A striking result this of the wealth and importance accruing to our fellow countrymen from the increased resources of knowledge with a world for its enterprise. Yet the spirit of dissent from what is, and the spirit of discord was abroad and must have caused many forebodings to thinking men even during the last years of Sir Andrew's life. Discord had shown itself almost fiercely over the controversies of the tax for "ship-money," and every few months would something occur to strengthen the unrest and send the nation more swiftly on its mad course towards the Civil Wars and the overthrow of the Monarchy. It would seem impossible but that Sir Andrew must have feared the coming storm and looked ahead with a foreboding anxiety ere he passed away to the peace of the next world, the more so that his own cousin, Sir John Corbet, of Stoke and Adderley, was the leader in Shropshire of the malcontents over the tax of the ship-money; but I think it also impossible that he can have foreseen the great lengths to which this stone of discontent, once set rolling, would lead men, still less the ultimate and crowning tragedy of the murder of the King, from which even most of the stoutest of the partisans in the struggle for a so-called liberty recoiled. Sir Andrew died in 1637-8, about 56 years of age, just as the horizon was growing thick with clouds. His wife, the Lady Elizabeth, lived on through all the years of trouble near Shrewsbury. She died only a year or two before the Restoration, and one thinks of her with pride, as ever ready for good, now presenting

her offerings of Plate and Jewells to the King when at Shrewsbury, now encouraging her son in his efforts to keep the right, and again later, helping the down-trodden sufferers, of whom there were a vast number, when the victorious Cromwell grasped the reins of government. I have already given the names of Sir Andrew's sisters; there were three. Anne, who died when young; Margaret married her cousin, Thomas Corbett, of Stanwardine; and Marie became the second wife of Sir Richard Hussey. Robert Corbett, who inherited his mother's property of Humfreston, was Sir Andrew's only brother; he married Bridget Price, of Ynysmaengwyn, a daughter of Sir James Price, and ultimately she was his heir, and Ynysmaengwyn passed to the Corbets, and this well-known sub-branch of the Family of Corbet was founded; indeed, it is at this present time vigorous, though very scattered, and not of Ynysmaengwyn, which very soon lost the male succession of the eldest son, and the estate being entailed on daughters passed to another name, notwithstanding, descendants of a younger son of this sub-branch can still be easily traced and they still have the male succession.

Sir Andrew, I believe, left no will, but the Inquisition taken at Shrewsbury at his death explains pretty fully how the estate was provided for. This I will give now, or extracts from it, and will then chronicle a short account of the Ynysmaengwyn sub-branch before passing on to the troubled days of Sir Andrew's heir—his eldest son, Sir Vincent, knight and Baronet.

Inquisition held at Shrewsbury 19th Sept: 13 Charles I. (Writ dated Westminster 26th May 13 Charles I.)

" Before the death of Sir Andrew Corbett, his Father, Vincent Corbett, knight, deceased, was siezed in the demesne as of fee, of and in, the Manors of Moreton-Corbett, Shawbury, Besford, and Hatton Hynheath alias High Hatton Co. Salop: divers messuages, tofts, mills, etc: parcels of the said Manors in the several towns, fields, hamlets, of Moreton-Corbett, Preston-Brockhurst, Booley, Edgbaldon, Shawbury, Besford, Withiford Parva and Hatton Hynheath otherwise High Hatton, in Co. Salop. three several Court Leets or views of frankpledge with their appurtenances belonging to the same Manors; the Rectory of Staunton and the tithes of sheaves and grain in Staunton, Harpcott, Booley, Moston, Sowbatch, Heath House, Hatton Hynheath otherwise High Hatton, and Greenefeld and the advowson of the Vicarage and of the Church in Staunton: And being so possessed levied a Fine, Easter Term 5 James I at Westminster, between Robert Needham, knight, Francis Newport, knight, Humfrey Lee Esq.; Anthony Fitzherbert Esq.; William Sebright Esq.; and Thomas Boothby Plaintiffs and himself by name of Vincent Corbett Esquire and Frances then his wife, and Andrew his son and heir apparent, deforciant, amongst other things of the premises by name the Manors of Moreton-Corbett, Shawbury, Besford and Hatton Hynheath alias High Hatton and forty messuages 10 tofts 3 Mills 40 gardens, 40 orchards, 1500 acres land 400 acres meadow, 500 acres pasture 500 acres wood, 400 acres of gorse and heather, 200 acres of moor 80s. rent and view of frankpledge with appurtenances in Moreton-Corbett, Preston-Brockhurst etc. (as above) the rectory of Staunton, tithes etc: (as above) and vicarage of the Church of Staunton. Also Sir Vincent Corbett long before the death of his son Sir Andrew was siezed as of fee tail viz: to himself and the heirs male of the body of Roger Corbett esquier deceased (Sir Vincent's grandfather) of the reversion after the death of Judith Corbett widow of Richard Corbett knight, of the Manors of Linslade alias Lynchlade or Lyndeslade, Southcott alias Surocott and Chelmescott with their appurtenances in Co. Bucks; divers messuages in Lynslade, Southcott, Chelmescott, Soulbury, Hallingdon, Gledley and Bragenham Co. Bucks and the Rectory of Lynslade and tithes of grain and hay and all other tithes belonging, and being thus siezed of said reversion, levied a Fine in Easter Term 5th James I. between the said Robert Needham etc: (as above) Plaintiffs and himself etc: (as above) deforciant of the reversion of the said Manors Co. Bucks. and 20 messuages 10 tofts 2 Mills, 2 dovecots, 20 gardens, 20 orchards, 1000 acres of land, 700 acres of meadow, 1500 acres of pasture, 400 acres wood, 300 acres gorse and heather, 100s rent and view of frankpledge in Lynslade, Southcott, etc: (as above) and of the rectory of Lynslade with appurtenances Co. Bucks. Which several Fines were to the uses mentioned in an Indenture tripartite date 6 Jan: 4 James I. between said Dame Judith widow of Sir Richard Corbett of Moreton-Corbett knight, deceased, and formerly wife of William Boothby deceased, and Elizabeth Boothby daughter of said William, and afterwards wife of said Andrew Corbett of the first part, and Sir Vincent Corbett, by name of Vincent Corbett Esquire and Frances his wife, and the said Andrew, his son and heir, of the second part: and the said Robert Needham etc: (as above) of the third part viz: to the uses of Vincent Corbett for life, and after his decease, as regards the property in Shropshire to the use of his wife Frances for life and her jointure and after her death, as to all the property in Shropshire and the reversion in Co. Bucks,

HOUSE OF HUMFRESTON AND YNN-Y-SI-MAENGWYNN 315

to the use of said Andrew Corbett for life, and after his death to his first-born son begotten of said Elizabeth and his heirs male, and in default of issue of the heirs to his second son etc: in tail male; and default of such issue, to the heirs male of Vincent Corbett, and for default of issue to the heirs male of Roger Corbett grandfather of Vincent, and for default to right heirs of Andrew and Vincent for ever."

It then continues after a good deal of repetition: "And Andrew Corbett married Elizabeth Boothby and had issue male, Vincent, Andrew, Robert, Richard, Arthur and Henry, all surviving now. Also Andrew Corbett was seized in fee tail to himself and the heirs male of Roger Corbett grandfather of said Vincent with remainder to the right heirs of said Vincent of and in the Manors of Lawley, Harcote, alias Harpcote, Hopton, Hopley, Co. Salop. and of divers messuages and property (as above) in Co. Salop and levied a Fine at Westminster (in Easter Term 4 Charles I.) between Robert Vernon and John Fitz-herbert knights Plaintiffs and himself Andrew Corbett, deforciant, of the Manor of Besford, the Manor of Acton Reyner alias Acton Reynold, Harcote alias Harpcote, Besford and Lawley, and 30 messuages and 8 cottages 10 tofts 4 Mills, a dovecot 38 gardens, 38 orchards, 1000 acres land, 800 acres meadow, 1000 acres pasture, 1000 acres wood 700 acres of gorse and heather, 100 acres of moor 10s rent in Acton Reyner, Harcote Besford, Lawley, Grinshill alias Grinshall, Moreton-Corbett, Shawbury, Withiford Parva, Preston Brockhurst, Charleton's Grange, Hopton, Hopley, Rowton, Peplowe, Lofford, Wixhill alias Wykeshall, Morton, Clive, Berrington, and the town of Shrewsbury and tithes of sheaves grain and hay in Acton Reyner and Besford. which Fine was levied" (as above) . . . and continues: "and a close pasture, meadow and woodland, in a wood called Brocklehurst in Preston Brockhurst and a pasture and woodland, called Moreton Lea in Preston Lea, Moreton-Corbett, and Preston Brockhurst (except 3 water mills called Harcote mills, to the use of said Andrew Corbett knight for life, then to the use of Dame Elizabeth the late wife of Sir Andrew Corbett for her jointure and after death to the heirs male of Sir Andrew Corbett and for default to the heirs male of Sir Vincent his father deceased, and for default to the right heirs of Andrew Corbett for ever. And for the premises in Harcote and the other premises in Moreton-Corbett, Shawbury, and Withiford Parva, late the heritage of Sir Henry Wallop knight, and Dame Elizabeth his wife, to the use of Sir Andrew and his heirs male and for default to the heirs male of Sir Vincent Corbett, and for default to the right heirs of Sir Andrew for ever. And as to the Manor of Lawley and a Grange called Charleton's Grange and the other messuages mentioned in the Fine, to the use of Sir Andrew Corbett and his heirs for ever. Afterwards by a Deed of 9th March 12 Charles I. Sir Andrew Corbett appointed that Dame Elizabeth for her life should have for her jointure all the Manor of Hatton Hyneheath with the rights, members, and appurtenances, with houses etc: belonging to the said Manor and the tithes of sheaves of grain and vegetables issuing from the fields and hamlet of Staunton upon Hyneheath, Hatton, Hyneheath, and High Hatton, Booley, Morton, Heath House, Sowbache, and Greenfields.

"Sir Andrew Corbett died 6th May last before the Inquisition, and Vincent Corbett is his eldest son by said Dame Elizabeth late his wife, and is 19 years 10 months and 23 days of age. And Dame Judith Corbett, wife of foresaid Sir Richard Corbett, and Dame Elizabeth, wife of Sir Andrew survive and are living at Moreton-Corbett. The Manor of Moreton-Corbett and the premises in Moreton-Corbett, Preston Brockhurst, Booley, and Edgebalden are held of the heirs of Richard Peshale as of the Manor of Chetwyn Co Salop by knight-service, and are worth yearly £30. The Manor of Shawbury and premises in Shawbury and Withiford Parva are held of the King in chief by the service of a 40th part of a knight's Fee and are worth yearly £2. The Manor and premises in Besford are similarly held and are worth 33s 4d yearly. The Manor of Hatton Hyneheath is held of Walter Acton Esqr: as of his Manor of Round Acton in free and common socage viz: by fealty and is worth yearly £4: the rectory and advowson of the Vicarage of Staunton and the tithes in Staunton etc: are held of the King as of his Manor Est Greenwich in free socage by fealty and are worth yearly £4. The Manors of Lynslade, Southcott with the appurtenances are held of Thomas Earl of Arundel and Surrey and are worth nothing during the life of Dame Judith but will be worth after her death £20. The Manor of Chelmscott and the other premises in Chelmscott, Soulbury, Hallingdon, Gleddeley, and Bragenham are held of the King as of the Honor of Gloucester in common socage and after the death of Dame Judith will be worth yearly 19lb. and the Rectory of Lynslade and tithes and sheaves etc: are held of the King by the 60th part of a knight's Fee and will be worth after the death of Dame Judith £4. 13s. 4d. The Manor and premises of Lawley are held of Thomas Eyton Esqr: as of his Manor of Eyton Co. Salop in common socage by fealty and

yearly rent of 5s and are worth yearly £5. The Manor of Harcott and other premises there are held of Thomas Earl of Arundel and Surrey as of his Manor of Wem Co. Salop in common socage and are worth yearly £4. The Manor of Hopton and Hopley and premises in Hopton and Hopley Kenston, Espley, Loffor, and Pelowe are held of the King by the 100th part of a knight's Fee and are worth yearly 20s.; and the messuages in Wixhill are held of Sir Henry Wallop as of his Manor of Red Castle Co. Salop in common socage by fealty and are worth yearly 10s. the premises in Moston are held of the heirs of Philip Marmion in free or common socage and are worth yearly in all issues 2s. and the premises in Shrewsbury are held of the Bailiffs and Burgesses of the town in free burgage, by fealty, and are worth yearly 12d. The advowson of the Church of Moreton-Corbet and tithes of grain, etc: in Besford are held of the King as of his Manor of East Greenwich in common socage by fealty and are worth 20s. And the Manor of Acton Reyner and Greenshill are held of the King as of his Manor of East Greenwich in free socage by fealty and are worth 40s. The premises in Clive are held of the King as of the Deaner of St Mary in Shrewsbury in common socage by fealty and are worth yearly 3s. 4d. Charleton's Grange is held of the King in chief by the 60th part of a knight's Fee and is worth yearly 46s. 8d. And the tithes in Acton Reyner, are held of the King in chief by the 20th part of a knight's Fee and are worth yearly 10s. And the premises in Berrington are held of Sir Richard Lee Bart: as of his Manor of Berrington Co. Salop in common socage by fealty and are worth 3s. 4d. yearly.'

Sir Andrew left no will, I believe, and before setting forth the affairs of his children—the next generation—let me give some details of the sub-branch known as "The Corbets of Ynysymaengwyn" and of the male descendants of the younger son and grandsons of the male line. The founder of this sub-branch was Robert Corbett, Sir Andrew's only brother. He had inherited his mother's property of Humfreston and had married Bridget Pryse, the heiress or co-heiress of Sir James Pryse. Robert and his wife appear to have lived at Humfreston chiefly, for it is there that the entries of his children's baptisms are mostly to be found, I believe. Robert Corbett's eldest son, Vincent, was, however, christened at Moreton-Corbet in 1615, and for a couple of years indeed he was Sir Andrew's heir-apparent, since this latter's own eldest son, also baptised Vincent, was not born till the year 1617. Robert Corbett had four other sons besides the eldest, who, as I have said, was christened at Moreton-Corbet: these were Francis, Thomas, Andrew, and James. I do not know the order of their birth; but as James is mentioned in his Will by his grandfather, the first Sir Vincent, I should have judged him to be the second son, and have placed his name in the place of Francis rather than as above in the order given by the Pedigree. It is, however, a question of no real moment, for Vincent and Thomas are the only two sons who left descendants. Robert's daughters were three in number: Elizabeth, who was also baptised at Moreton-Corbet, Bridget and Jane. Sir James Pryse became possessed of Ynysymaengwyn through his wife, he having married the last of the branch of the Wynns settled there, and whose long line came to an end, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, with two daughters, Elizabeth and Catherine; Elizabeth married Sir James Pryse, and their only child, Bridget, married Robert Corbett, of Humfreston. Sir James was High Sheriff of Merionethshire in 1607, and again in 1620, and at his death Ynysymaengwyn passed into Corbet hands. It is, I believe, a beautifully situated property in the Parish of Towyn, with quite a local celebrity; it lies at the mouth of a little estuary and owns its own harbour and a stretch of sea-board.

Like every Welsh name, Ynysymaengwyn should be spelt, I suppose, with a double consonant wherever it is found practicable to insert one, but for convenience sake I indulge the liberty of only using its letters singly. I believe the name means in Welsh "The island of the white stone," and indeed it is on record that a large white stone of quartz used to be in the gardens in the days of the first Corbet owner. This stone is also said to have been the seat whence the ancient Lords of the Manor dispensed justice. The old house has quite disappeared. Robert Corbet, like his nephew in Shropshire, was a pronounced Royalist, but unluckily the county was far more inclined to take part with the rebels. The Civil Wars soon declared themselves, and in 1643 Sir Marmaduke Langdale began to fortify Ynysymaengwyn for the King, but he was almost immediately afterwards obliged to burn the house down as the only means to render it useless to the rebels. Robert Corbet was there at that time, as is shown by a letter of his I am about to quote. We may suppose that his family were in the more secure home at Humfreston at the time. The letter shows the reluctance of the recipients to declare themselves for the King. The Montgomeryshire forces had invaded Merionethshire in August and lay for some time at Dolgelle. Robert Corbet's letter is dated March, 1643, and he signs his name with one t, though I must also add that I have not seen the original.

HOUSE OF HUMFRESTON AND YNN-Y-SI-MAENGWYNN 317

" Robert Corbet of Ynysmaengwyn Esqre, to William Wynne of Glyn, Griffith Lloyd of Maes-y-Nenadd Esquieres

" Ynis-y-Maengwyn 23 Marcii 1643 "

" Gentlemen

" The imminent danger which daily threatens us and our Counties hath sensibly moved us, to crave the Ayde and Power of the County against the invasion of these bloody enemies, who seeke our ruine.

" The Sheriffe upon our lettere to him and the Commissioners of Array, did appoint a meeting on Tuesday last, when both your appearances was expected for your furtherance and advise for our Publike Safetie.

" He hath afforded us good encouragement by fore-giving and parting with those Armes that were in present readiness (Those which were in Mr. Nanney's custody) Those which reste in both your hands were expected, which being conjoynd would, with other Fowling Pieces and Stragling Pieces wee pitch upon make a considerable force and strength.

" By your not meeting, wee could not complete and finish the Designe in hand.

" Notwithstanding wee cannot nevertheless ymagine a distrust of your affections and willingness to promote so good a worke ; which puts on this our message and requeste unto you, that you will deliver and parte with those Armes of the County which you have received from the Magazine and store house of the County.

" Wee expecte the Sheriffe here aboute Monday nexte with these Armes from Mr. Nanney as hee hath promised.

" Those Fire armes which you received wee heare to bee 24 in number, yf you have more I hope you will not Deny them us upon this occasion.

" Assure yourselves upon my credit, that you sende shal be faithfully kepte and restored unto you backe, yf GOD preserve us with our Lives and Liberty to maintayne them and shal bee ready upon your call to contribute one wholl Assistaunce unto you yf any Danger or Assault shall attempte you.

" Wee desire your paynes to convey the Armes to Barmouth where the Country certainly with your Solicitation will assiste you.

" From thence wee shall take care for their further carriage.

" Consider Gentlemen, that though this Requeste is ours, yett it is the Businesse of his Sacred Majestie whose expectation to assiste him in this present Rebellion doth as much oblige this oure prosecution as the care of oure own Safetie," . . . " Thus with my hearty respectes to you both, doe take leave and reste

" Youre lovinge Friend and Servant

" (signed)

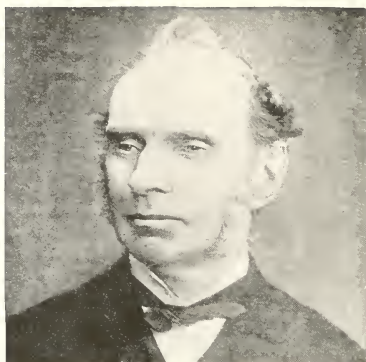
" Robert Corbet "

He signs himself with one t in the copy of the letter from which I take this. Robert Corbet died the following year, 1644, and his widow, Bridget, married Sir Walter Lloyd, of Llanfair, Clewedogan, Co. Cardiff, at no very distant date after her first husband's death. Vincent Corbet, Robert's eldest son, was entered at the Inner Temple in 1639 ; he married Jane Acton before his father's death, in 1642. The marriage License describes young Vincent as a bachelor aged 26 and gives the age of Jane Acton as 21 ; it also says that she was daughter of John Acton citizen and goldsmith dec: of Friday Str: married with consent of her mother Blandina " now the Lady Skipwith: " the marriage to take place at St. Dunstan's in the West. Humfreston remained but a very short time in the family, for by some mysterious process, disguised as much as possible into the semblance of half gift, half sale, it became at Vincent Corbet's death the property of a well-known and active Cromwellite, by name of Waring. The beautiful pedigree at Ynysmaengwyn gives him two sons, Vincent and James, and for daughters Bridget, Blandina and Jane. I have no further details of him, but his son, the Vincent who succeeded him, lived at Ynysmaengwyn, which therefore must have been rebuilt and again enlarged later. This last Vincent married first Anne Lloyd, and on her death married a second time another Anne, the mother of his four daughters. She was the daughter of William Vaughan, of Corvogemall, Esqr., Co. Cardigan.

This was the last generation of Corbets at Ynys-y-Maengwyn, for this latter Vincent Corbet and his wife Anne left only four daughters, no son. The lands were settled on the daughters, who took the name of Corbet on their father's death. The eldest daughter therefore succeeded to Ynys-y-Maengwyn. Her father died in 1723, at the age of 72. This eldest daughter, Anne, married Athelstane Owen. The property finally passed to the name of Maurice and was sold early

in the nineteenth century. Curiously enough, it was bought by another member of the family of Corbet, whose descendants are still living there. The purchaser was a Mr. John Corbett, popularly known as the "Salt King." He had also purchased another old Corbet property, Impney, near Droitwich, so often referred to in these pages as "Ymmeney." The beautiful pedigree, already alluded to, passed into this Mr. John Corbett's hands with the purchase of Ynys-y-Maengwyn. (The name is thus spelt locally.) It is an exact copy of the pedigree at Acton Reynold up to the marriage of Robert Corbett with Bridget Pryse, after that it naturally follows the fortunes of the owners of Ynys-y-Maengwyn. From it I take the names of the last Vincent's four daughters and those whom they married. Anne was the eldest daughter and sole heiress and married Athelstane Owen. The others were Jane, married to Thomas Pryce, of Eryrweddan; Elizabeth, married Evan Glyune, of Glyune, Montgomeryshire; and Rachel married Love-Parry, of Wernfawr. Thus the descendants of Robert Corbett's eldest son (Vincent) soon became only a female line, but the descendants of his younger son (Thomas) can still be traced and they still retain the male descent.

And since this History treats especially of the male descendants of the family in its several branches and sub-branches, I will give an outline of this Thomas Corbet's descendants, remembering that he was a grandson of the first Sir Vincent, of Moreton-Corbet, and the only younger son leaving male representatives of the first Corbet, owner of Ynys-y-Maengwyn. Thomas married Dorothy, the daughter of William Laugharne, of Llwyngwaravn, widow and heiress of Alban Phillips, of Nash, Co. Pembroke. They had a very large family, but only their fifth son left male descendants. Robert died as a child, Erasmus was entered at one of the Inns of Court and married a Lloyd, but left no children. Thomas and Andrew also left no male descendants, and it is only with the fifth son William that we can continue our history. He was entered at the Middle Temple soon after 1680, as William, the fifth son of Thomas Corbett, of Great Nash, Co. Pembroke, a very valuable identification this, and a great help to straightening out certain differences of statement in the family records and pedigree, and the public records concerning these Corbets of Wales. I have been at some pains to set the discrepancies right, and find they have arisen from generations of rather large families bearing very much the same Christian names, and often overlapping in date. By the help of the information conveyed in wills and the public records, the identification now appears to me correct, as I will narrate. William Corbet (the fifth son) married Eleanor, daughter of Colonel Jones, of Nanteos, in 1684. He died in 1699 and left four young children, two sons and two daughters, under the guardianship of his brother Thomas and their mother, Eleanor. Thomas and William, the two sons, grew up and their records are found in those of the Admiralty and the Navy. The uncle, Thomas, died early in the eighteenth century. The two daughters married—Alice a Mr. Owen, Dorothy a Mr. Holcombe. The "Dictionary of National Biography" speaks at some length of Thomas, the elder brother of the two sons. We find that he married Mary Lloyd, of Duke Street, in 1740, and that in the same year he was given the Secretaryship to the Court of Assistants for the Rating of poor widows of sea officers, a place of £200 a year. He was already Member of Parliament for Saltash. He died in 1751, and is then spoken of in the Navy list, as joint Secretary to the Admiralty; his pay was then £500 a year, and he was still Member for Saltash. There are many of his letters among the Naval Papers at the Record Office; they all show his intimacy with the heads of the Admiralty, and he was evidently an influential friend of Viscount Torrington. He left no male heir. His younger brother, William, appears to have made money and was interested in the South Sea speculations. We learn somewhat of his career from the "Gentleman's Magazine" and official records, and his Will supplies the remainder of what we know of him. From the "London Gazette" of 1743 we learn that he was a Commissioner of the Navy, and that on 30th May, 1749, the King was pleased to "constitute and appoint William Corbett and . . . to be principal Officers and Commissioners of His Majesty's Navy." He died in 1753. In 1751 he was Controller of the Treasurer's Accounts and was also Secretary to the Royal Hospital, Greenwich. William Corbett's will tells us of his two marriages, of his purchase of Darnhall Hall, in Cheshire, from a Mr. Lee, and gives the names of his children, who all seem to have survived except John, called, I suppose, after his grandfather, Colonel John Jones, of Nanteos. This son, John, is mentioned as having been employed as "extra Clerk at the Admiralty at a salary of £50 a year." The name of William Corbett's first wife was Mary Stanyford, by whose side he directed to be buried in the Mercer's Chapel, Cheapside, if he died in London; should he die at Greenwich he desired to be laid by the side of his second wife, Sarah Dighton, and were he to die at Darnhall he wished to be laid in the new vault in the Parish Church of Over, Co. Chester. By his first marriage William Corbett left three children—Thomas, who was his heir;



John Corbett, Esqre., of Impney and
Ynnysmaengwyn



Major-General Sir Stuart Corbett, K.C.B.

Mary, to whose care and guardianship he left all the half brothers and sister ; and John, who predeceased him. Thomas inherited Darnhall and married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Humphrey Edwin, of St. Albans, Co. Herts. She eventually became the heir of her maternal uncle, Robert Thompson, of Elsham, in Lincolnshire. Elsham was settled on their eldest son, who took the arms and name of Thompson, adding them to the name of Corbett, and Darnhall was sold. He married in 1794 Jane Eleanor, a daughter of General Ainslie. His son Thomas George married a daughter of the Duke of St. Albans and carried on the line well into the last century. Thomas of Elsham's second brother, Edwin, also left male descendants ; he married Anne, daughter of John Blackburn, of Orford Hall ; their son Edwin married first a daughter of H. E. Morrill, well known by his friendship with Sir Walter Scott. Edwin Corbett was in the diplomatic service and was H.B.M. Minister at Athens for some years. After his wife's death he married a second time Eleanor, daughter of the then Lord Sherborne. He left a large family, whose names will be found on the annexed Pedigree. Edwin himself was born in 1819. We must chronicle the details of Sarah Dighton's family. She, we may remember, predeceased her husband, William Corbett, of Darnhall. They were numerous, but only one son, Andrew, need be reverted to. He married Augusta, fourth daughter of John, Earl of Bute, and left one son, Stuart, who was Archdeacon of York, and was born in 1773. He was also the incumbent of Wortley, then a chapel of ease to Tankersley, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The Archdeacon married Anne, the daughter of Thos: King, of Cossington, Leicester. He died in 1845, leaving a large family of thirteen children, who all lived to old age. The eldest son, Stuart, K.C.B., distinguished himself in the Indian Service. He was rapidly promoted and commanded his regiment at Chillianwallah in the action with the Sikh forces in 1849. For this he was thanked for his services, and Lord Gough, in his despatch of 16th Jan., 1849, mentions that "Brigadier General Campbell speaks in terms of admiration of the good and steady advance of the 25th and 45th N.I., under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Corbett and Major Williams." Brigadier Campbell mentions him again in his despatches of Feb. 2nd and 19th April of the same year. Writing of the battle of Gujerat, the Brigadier continues : "I must beg also to recommend to the favourable notice of the Commander in Chief the conduct of the several officers commanding regiments who set an example of the greatest gallantry to their respective Corps viz: . . . Lieutenant Colonel Corbett 25th N.I. etc: They are all truly deserving of his Lordship's favourable notice." Colonel Corbett was created a Companion of the Bath for services in the Punjab, 5th June, 1849. He was given the command of the Lahore Brigade with the rank of Brigadier in Sept., 1856, headquarters at Mean Meer. Of course, this brought him to the troubled times of the great and sad Indian Mutiny. An extract from one of the military despatches from the Government of India, dated June, 1859, gives us a glimpse of how his services were then esteemed. "His Lordship embraces the opportunity of bringing particularly to notice the eminent services of Major General Corbett himself as Brigadier commanding at Lahore, stating that in his Lordship's opinion as well as that of the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, the conduct of this Officer throughout the past two years has been deserving of the highest commendation." "He was the first Officer," the Commander in Chief remarks, "to disarm Native Troops after the occurrences at Meerut and Delhi, and the manner in which this critical operation was effected with a comparatively small force of British soldiers, must command the admiration of all who are acquainted with the circumstances." . . . "Lord Clyde considers that the good effects arising from this proceeding can hardly be overestimated, and his Lordship recommends the advancement of Major General Corbett to the 2nd Class of the Order of the Bath." He was made K.C.B. in 1862, and placed in command of the Benares Division in 1864. A distinguished career, however, was cut short by illness, and he died at Naini Thal in August, 1865.

Major General Sir Stuart Corbett married Charlotte, the daughter of Thomas Britten. His second son, Vincent Charles Stuart Wortley Corbett, born in 1835, is now Lord Londonderry's chief Agent for his Northern estates. The eldest son went to New Zealand, and died there in 1889. The eldest daughter, Charlotte, married Frederick Ormsley, of the 2nd Dragoon Guards. Some of the younger of the Archdeacon's many sons have settled in South Wales, near Cardiff. We have thus followed closely the history of a sub-branch of the family in which the male line still continues vigorous and unbroken, up to quite modern times. Before returning, however, to the main History with the life of Sir Vincent, the Royalist, I should like to chronicle some details of a very remarkable member of the Family of Corbet, the purchaser of Ynys-y-Maengwyn, and to whom I have before briefly alluded—Mr. John Corbett, known as the Salt King. I have unfortunately not sufficient information to enable me to state to what branch his father belonged ; but

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

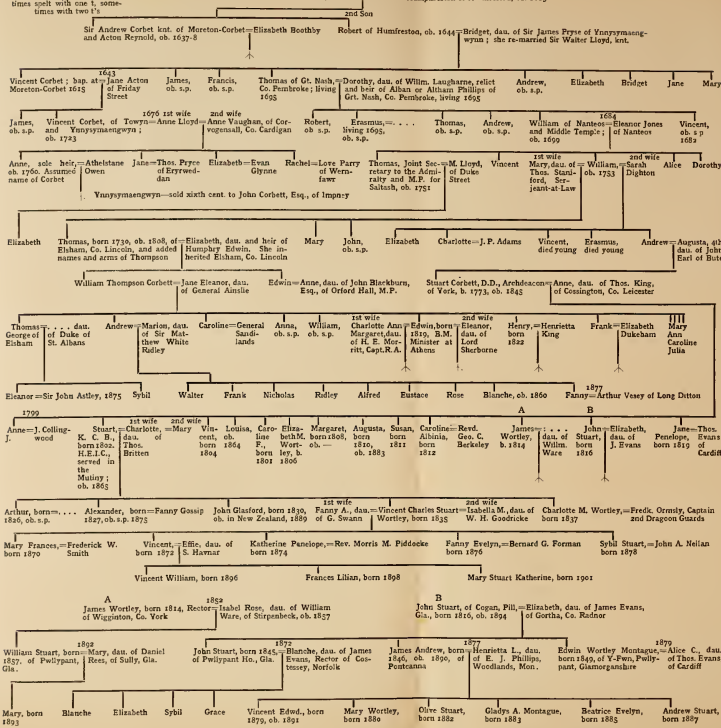
it seems probable that he was closely allied to some one of the younger families of the House of Leigh, of whom there were so many in these latter generations scattered about near the haunts of the Corbet homesteads of the past. Mr. Corbett's immediate forbears appear to have come from the Worcestershire side of Shropshire, since in a sketch of his life, drawn up in Mr. Corbett's lifetime, it appears that his grandfather owned land near Ludlow, which he farmed. Mr. Joseph Corbett, his son, lived at the Delph, Brierly Hill. John Corbett was one of Joseph Corbett's five sons. Father and sons engaged in the canal and inland navigation trade, before the days of railway transport, and owned a fleet of boats running between the Staffordshire district and London, Liverpool, Manchester and other large centres of commercial activity. Mr. John Corbett, however, will chiefly be known by his success in developing the salt trade. The canal boats were sold about 1845, and he devoted himself and his great engineering skill and knowledge to the development of the great salt works at Stoke Prior, in Worcestershire. The undertaking was entirely successful, and from the rather gigantic failure it had hitherto been, ruining all who had till now undertaken the development of the industry, its marvellous success brought wealth and not ruin to John Corbett. He used his yearly increasing wealth well. His landed estates ran into thousands of acres in Worcestershire, on which from time to time appeared works and buildings for the use and comfort of the very large number of workpeople, both men and women, whom he employed and whose well-being he had always at heart. Among other interests he was an Associate of the Institute of Civil Engineers and a member of the Salters Co. Droitwich owes everything to his benevolence and foresight—the Salters Hall, hotels, baths, the Park, etc. The hospital at Brierly Hill is also a lasting testimony to Mr. Corbett's unselfish care for his fellow men. He died full of years and undiminished capability. Mr. Corbett will be remembered as the last M.P. for the old borough of Droitwich and the first for the mid-Worcestershire Division. Much of his property and wonderful collections of art at Impney have been sold, but Ynys-y-Maengwyn is still the home of some of Mr. Corbett's descendants.

it seems probable that he was closely allied to some one of the younger families of the House of Leigh, of whom there were so many in these latter generations scattered about near the haunts of the Corbet homesteads of the past. Mr. Corbett's immediate forbears appear to have come from the Worcestershire side of Shropshire, since in a sketch of his life, drawn up in Mr. Corbett's lifetime, it appears that his grandfather owned land near Ludlow, which he farmed. Mr. Joseph Corbett, his son, lived at the Delph, Brierly Hill. John Corbett was one of Joseph Corbett's five sons. Father and sons engaged in the canal and inland navigation trade, before the days of railway transport, and owned a fleet of boats running between the Staffordshire district and London, Liverpool, Manchester and other large centres of commercial activity. Mr. John Corbett, however, will chiefly be known by his success in developing the salt trade. The canal boats were sold about 1845, and he devoted himself and his great engineering skill and knowledge to the development of the great salt works at Stoke Prior, in Worcestershire. The undertaking was entirely successful, and from the rather gigantic failure it had hitherto been, ruining all who had till now undertaken the development of the industry, its marvellous success brought wealth and not ruin to John Corbett. He used his yearly increasing wealth well. His landed estates ran into thousands of acres in Worcestershire, on which from time to time appeared works and buildings for the use and comfort of the very large number of workpeople, both men and women, whom he employed and whose well-being he had always at heart. Among other interests he was an Associate of the Institute of Civil Engineers and a member of the Salters Co. Droitwich owes everything to his benevolence and foresight—the Salters Hall, hotels, baths, the Park, etc. The hospital at Brierly Hill is also a lasting testimony to Mr. Corbett's unselfish care for his fellow men. He died full of years and undiminished capability. Mr. Corbett will be remembered as the last M.P. for the old borough of Droitwich and the first for the mid-Worcestershire Division. Much of his property and wonderful collections of art at Impney have been sold, but Ynys-y-Maengwyn is still the home of some of Mr. Corbett's descendants.

PEDIGREE OF THE CORBETS OF HUMFRESTON, YNNYSMAENGWYN, DARNHALL, AND ELSHAM, &c.

The name is hereafter some-
times spelt with one t, some-
times with two t's

Sir Vincent Corbet kn. of Moreton-Corbet, ob. 1622—Francesca Humphreston of Humfreston, ob. 1615



CHAPTER XVI

THE story of this sixteenth chapter of our Family History opens at a moment of confusion and discord; when the kingdom was divided against itself, when some men strove for one way of thought and action and some for another; but all were agreed in determining that force alone could bring about union. For a time, indeed, argument and talk held; but such weapons soon became useless and the sword was unsheathed as alone capable to decide where victory should lie.

Thus it was, and about 1640 when our chapter opens, that Shrewsbury found herself already arming for the defence of her rights and privileges, let who will be their assailant.

Naturally such a state of things could not fail to affect our Family profoundly, if only from the fact that half the County at least claimed a more or less close connection of relationship or friendship with the Corbets; either with the Corbets of Moreton Corbet themselves or with the other Corbet families at that time living in or about Shropshire. The Long Parliament, as it was termed, assembled in this year 1640; the Members chosen for Shrewsbury were Francis Newport and W. Spurstowe, the latter a successful merchant. Francis Newport, always true to his opinions, had the courage to vote for the acquittal of the unfortunate Lord Strafford, and was very soon expelled from the Parliament in consequence, and styled a malignant. The House of Commons rapidly became more violent and more exacting and filled the nation with apprehensions. Shrewsbury thought it high time to look again to her own safety and in October 1641 it was agreed that the three Gates and the Water-loade Head in St. Mary's Water Lane should be repaired and a cage built at the Welshe Bridge. The authorities also ordered watch and ward to be set at the Gates and all the inhabitants were ordered to provide themselves with arms. Four new cast iron ordinances were also bought, and £20 spent on so doing. It was about this time that the King left London. He arrived in York in the March of 1642, and by the 20th May (so swiftly were men being drawn to violent measures) all Shrewsbury agreed that "at this tyme of eminent danger there should be sett at every of the three Gates every night, 12 able men armed with musketts, halbeardes, etc: and four able men in afore saide to watche in every of the suburbs of the towne: also six able men at every of the three Gates towarde every daye and two men in the suburbs." The authorities also agreed to take up £50 for "repayres" of the walls. By August the guards were increased from 12 to 48 for night duty and 24 for day. These measures were taken simply for defence, the town was neutral and had declared as yet neither for King nor Parliament. Of course the Puritans were openly opposed to the King in all things, and there was ever a good leaven of them in Shrewsbury.

The then Minister of St. Chad's has left us a record of his opinion of the Puritans: "Know good reader that this towne of Shrewsbury, the place of my birth and residence is greatly troubled, with a sect of men and women, with whom I have had much intercourse of conversement, not by way of intimate familiarity, approving their ways; but of vexation and trouble of minde that I could not in thirteene yeares painefull Ministry among them, reclame them from their wandringe fancies and reduce them to obedience of his supreme Majestie." The gentry of the County were almost unanimous in their loyal allegiance, and at the Assizes held on the 8th August the Grand Jury declared their "unanimous and thankfull acknowledgments of the good laws, which through the King's goodness had been enacted in Parliament: their readiness to obey his Majesty in all lawful ways for putting the country in a posture of arms for his defence, and their resolution to adventure their lives and fortunes in defence of his royal person." This declaration was subscribed by the High Sheriff, Sir John Weld (the father-in-law of the Corbet heir at Adderley), then follow the names of Sir Will. Whitmore, Sir Thos. Wolryche, Sir Vincent Corbet, Sir Will. Owen, Thos. Eytton, Ed. Cresset, Walter Piggott, Fr. Ottley, Roger Kynastone, R. Lloyd, Ed. Baldwin, Humph. Billingsley, Ed. Lawley, Fr. Thomas, Scriven; above thirty more county gentlemen very quickly added their signatures to the declaration, and a little later the list was again swelled by the addition of still more names. Parliament, as can be imagined, expressed itself greatly outraged by this declaration of opinion, nevertheless—it stood. Before the King left Nottingham he sent a Commission to Mr Ottley to raise 200 foot and with all possible expedition to convey them into the town of Shrewsbury. The minority who, though a minority, were nevertheless influential members, had hitherto been successful in keeping the town neutral. Notwithstanding, at this moment, as we learn from Clarendon, the King was appraised at Derby, that the town of Shrewsbury was placed at "his disposal." By this date most of the Manor houses of any size were put into what state of defence was possible, as protection against the small armed

The looking
glasse of
Schisme by
Peter Studley,
M.A.

forces as well of royalists as of rebels who wandered over the country. The tale of the Lady Brilliana Harley's defence of her home against the royalists is still fresh in our minds.

Both sides had their poets and chroniclers who were equally fierce and prolix with their invectives : both sides had their newspapers, which may also be taken as equal models of scurrility : and all testified to the increasing intensity of men's feelings. Needham had his "Mercurius Britannicus," in which he lauded the Parliament and all its ways without stint ; Birkenhead did his best to uphold the King with his "Mercurius Aulicus," and of verse there was a good store of makers. We may note the names Carew, Suckling, Denham, Herrick, etc., among such.

It was in this England that Sir Vincent Corbet had to play his part. He was 19 at the death of his father, Sir Andrew, and events, as we have seen, had quickly developed. The King displayed his Royal Standard at Nottingham, and there Prince Rupert joined him. Every Manor house was placed in a state of defence by its occupiers. The earliest of these Manor houses to be attacked was Caldecot, in the north of Warwickshire. Mrs Purfoy defended her home bravely against Prince Rupert and 400 of his cavaliers. The defenders counted only herself and two daughters, her son-in-law, eight menservants and a few women servants, and they had but twelve muskets between them which the women loaded for the men as fast as they were discharged. At last the lady, realising the impossibility of success, herself went forth and claimed Prince Rupert's protection, and he so respected her courage that he would not permit her property to be plundered. Many a similar tale is told, as the rage and distress of these terrible Civil Wars spread from county to county. Moreton-Corbet, the beautiful, was already garrisoned for the King, and we shall learn its fate later. Albright Hussie, Leigh, Caus, were all on the same side. Albright Hussie, however, was very shortly dismantled, for it was found to be too near to Wem, which was a hot-bed of rebellion, and against which Albright Hussie was not large enough to defend itself ; Sir Pelham Corbet therefore dismantled it.

The King's stay at Shrewsbury lasted till October, and large gifts of all kinds, anything, in short, capable of being turned into money, were offered him without stint by the loyal folk of Shropshire. Sir Richard Newport gave £6,000 and was rewarded by a Patent of Nobility. We may remember that his daughter Anne had married Edward Corbett, the heir to the Baronetcy at Longnor. His Majesty's stay in Shrewsbury caused a threatened dearth of provisions owing to the great influx of soldiers consequent thereon. Lord Herbert of Chirk, in a letter to his brother Sir Henry, speaks of this. He writes : "We are here almost in as great straits as though war was among us ; Shrewsbury, which is our ordinary magazine, being exhausted of all wine, vinegar, hops, paper, etc. : and pepper 4s a lb, all intercourse betwene us and London being prohibited." On the 22nd September, Essex moved his army to Worcester. An encounter took place between Prince Rupert's cavalry and the Parliamentary Cuirassiers. Ludlow, who was in the skirmish, gives an amusing description of the want of discipline and something worse of the raw troops in these first days. "The Lieutenant," he says, "commanded us to wheel about ; but our gentlemen, not yet well understanding the difference between wheeling about and shifting for themselves, their backs being now towards the enemy whom they thought to be close in the rear, retired to the army in a very dishonourable manner ; and the next morning rallied at headquarters ; where we received but cold welcome from our General, as we well deserved." The King's troops were very poorly armed, and he had no money wherewith to supply their needs, his foot soldiers were mostly armed with muskets ; but had merely a cudgel for striking weapon. Very few of the musqueteers had swords and the pike men were without corselets ; Sir Vincent Corbet was a successful Commissioner of array for the King from the commencement of difficulties and we shall find him individually referred to from time to time, but necessarily as he would be serving under some commander of greater importance it can only be an occasional glimpse that we shall obtain personally of him through the struggle. Sir William Vaughan had raised a Regiment for the King in Ireland and Sir Edward Stradling brought 1,000 men from South Wales to join the King's army at Shrewsbury. The King reviewed and addressed his troops on what men now call the race course, a large open space outside the town and above the river on the way to Monkmoor, and the ferry at Uffington. A vivid description of the scene of the final muster before the departure of King and soldiers for Bridgenorth is given in a paper among the Harleian collections. "When the King," says the writer, "mustered his forces in the Park at Shrewsbury, they presented a heterogeneous appearance as to equipment. Arms were the great deficiency, and the men stood up in the same garments in which they had left their fields, and with scythes, pitchforks and even sickles in their hands they cheerfully took the field. . . . Contrasted with them rode in front the brilliant troops of Guards commanded by

SIR VINCENT, KNT., 1ST BART. OF MORETON CORBET 323

Lord Barnard Steuart, composed of noble Cavaliers, whose united incomes Clarendon computes to have equalled that of all the Lords and Commons on the other side. The sash and plume of the old Barons were still worn, with the glittering cuirass, with a broad and ornamented sword belt across the shoulder. The tassels or garde-a-reine protected the body; steel rolfrans, vambraces, mailed gauntlets and cuirasses; and over the cuirass was sometimes worn the cergel; a richly embroidered collar fell on the cuirass in every respect like the Knights of Agincourt, except the boots, which were of leather, large and square-toed, and capable of covering half the thigh, though ordinarily doubled down below the knee; a straight basket-hilted sword, a pair of pistols, and a battle axe at their saddle bow. Such was the equipment of the King's body guard." The writer continues: "The heterogeneous army that left Shrewsbury had a still more strange following." . . . "First,—wives of the generals and principal commanders, who were chiefly in coaches, driven according to the quality of their husbands. Secondly,—those who ride on horseback, with the baggage of the regiment to which they belong. I have seen them ride," continues the writer, "keep rank and file, very well after the captain, and a banner was carried by one of the women. Thirdly—came those who walk on foot, they must abide by the baggage of the regiment to which they belong; and over them the several regimental marshalls command." This motley cortege arrived at Bridgenorth in the evening of the 12th October. The King found suitable precautions had been loyally taken for the safety of the town and took up his quarters in the Castle; this now belonged to Sir Thomas Whitmore, of Apley. He stayed but a few days, being anxious to push on to Oxford, and the battle of Edgehill was fought on the way thither. Lord Lindsay, by his Commission, was General of the whole army; Sir Jacob Astley was his Major General. Warwick relates of this latter that before the charge of the battle of Edgehill Sir Jacob Astley "made a most excellent, pious, short and soldierly prayer: for he lifted up his eyes and hands to Heaven, saying 'O Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be this day; if I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me.' And with that rose up crying 'March on, Boys.'" Many a royalist was killed, brave old Lindsay was mortally wounded and taken prisoner, Sir Edmund Varney, the Standard Bearer, was killed; and though the left wing of the Parliamentarians was completely routed, the rebel army remained in position beneath the hill after the battle. It is said that the disaster to the left wing was caused by the sudden desertion of Sir Faithful Fortescue, who with all his men went over to the Royalists at a critical moment. By the beginning of 1643 nearly the whole of Shropshire had declared itself for King and Country, and had taken measures to carry out their decision; and the following document had been drawn up and signed: 'The Engagement and Resolution of the principal Gentlemen of the County of Salop for raising and maintaining of forces at their own charge for defence of his Majesty, their Country, and more particularly the Fortunes, Persons, and Estates of the Subscribers undernamed'

"We whose names are hereunder written, do hereby engage ourselves, each to the other, and promise upon the faith and word of a Gentleman, that we will do our utmost endeavours, both by ourselves and friends, to raise as well for the defence of our King and country as our own particular safeties, one entire Regiment of dragoons, and with our lives to defend those men's fortunes and families, who shall be contributors herein to their abilities. And for the most speedy expedition of the said service, we have thought fit to entreat Sir Vincent Corbet, formerly Captain of the Horse for this County, to be our chief commander over the aforesaid Regiment. And likewise we have appointed the day of our appearance for bringing in of every man's proportion of his horse and money, according to the subscription of his undertaking, to be the twentieth day of December, all in the battle-field."

subscribed.	Henry Bromfield High Sheriff
Sir Rich: Lee, knt, & Bart:	Sir Jno Welde knt
Sir Paul Harris, knt and Bart.	Sir Fr: Oteley knt
Sir Vincent Corbet knt & Bart.	Thos: Scriven
Sir W Owen	Thos Eytton
Sir Robert Eytton.	Thos Lyster
	Ed: Kynastone Esqr.
Robert Corbet of Homfrest	
(Humfreston) Esqr	Ed: Bawdwin Esqr
Pelham Corbet Esqr	Thos Edwards Esqr
(of Leigh & Alb: Hussie	Ch: Bawdwin Esqr.
Roger Kynastone Esqr.	Walter Waring Esqr.

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

Ed: Acton Esqr.
 Wm Fowles Esqr.
 Ed Cresset Esqr.
 Walter Pigott Esqr.
 Francis Thorne Esqr.
 Arthur Sandford Esqr.
 Thomas Corbet Esqr
 of Longnor

Rich: Okeley Esqr
 Henry Billingsley Esqr.
 Rich: Church Esqr.
 Thos: Phillips Esqr.
 Ed: Stanley Esqr.
 Lawrence Benthall Esqr.
 Geo: Ludlowe Esqr.

Cheshire, unlike Shropshire, was largely for the Parliament; on the other hand, Chester itself was chiefly royalist; in consequence there was many a skirmish and battle on the outskirts of Chester in which our Brethren of Shropshire and Staffordshire took part and necessarily the newly raised forces of whose formation we have just written. I have some notes of the battles around Namptwich, close to Chester, around which place, whether from choice or hazard, the encounters seem always to have happened: and, I am loath to record, the royalists seem always to have had the worst of it. This I think was partly due to the fact that the Parliamentary party there fought before their own doors, so to speak; they were also composed chiefly of Puritan fanatics, and led by a zealous Puritan, Sir Wm. Brereton. As these Namptwich battles recurred at intervals up to the end of the war, I will first describe the situation in which Sir Faithful Fortescue found himself and the cause of the defection of him and his men to the King's party at the battle of Edgehill. Corbets and Fortescues had been in relation with one another from time to time—for centuries, indeed. Ebrington, which gives the second title to Earl Fortescue, came to the Fortescues through the marriage with a Corbet of the family of Tasley, the Branch known later as Corbets of Kings Bromley, High Hatton, Hadley and Assington in Suffolk. Sir Faithful was the second son of John Fortescue of Buckland Filleigh (Devon) by his second wife Susanna Chichester, daughter of Sir John Chichester of Raleigh near Barnstaple. He went to Ireland almost as a youth with his Uncle Lord Chichester who commanded a regiment there. Subsequently we find him appointed joint Constable of Carrickfergus Castle, his colleague was Sir Roger Langford and their pay 3s. 4d. a day. He seems soon to have been given the sole charge of this post with a salary of 6s. 8d. a day and he married well and continued to prosper. In 1624 he went to the Low Countries to command the troops being raised there to fight against Spain and Austria under Count Mansfeld. In 1637 he was returned to Parliament as member for Armagh, and in 1640 joined the expedition to Scotland in support of the King's cause, and made the very liberal offer to advance the necessary money for the payment of the King's troops in Armagh. The breach between King and Parliament was hourly becoming more acute, and the interference of the latter more pronounced, especially as regards the Army. Those who sought advancement in the Army could only obtain it through the support of some of the leaders in the House of Commons: in short, even then the King was no longer master in his own house. Thus in the Journals of the House of Commons we read of a petition of Sir Faithful Fortescue's—and—"West: 27th Jan: 1641 16 Car: I." "The humble petition of Sir Faithful Fortescue knt, was this day read. And it is ordered that the said Sir Faithful Fortescue be earnestly recommended to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for a Colonel's place in his service, this House here, being well satisfied that he is a man of honour and experience and worthy of such employment." The keeping of the Castle of Carrickfergus had been given him for life by Patent, but it soon became known that the place was made over to the Scotts; an arrangement with which the King had been compelled to comply owing to the numbers of the rebel Irish, and the consequent necessity for troops to oppose them. It was this need of troops in Ireland which caused Sir Faithful to raise a regiment of horse for this special service (the 3rd) and of which he was Colonel, as also of a company of foot soldiers. After the raising of the Royal Standard at Nottingham these men and their officers were all draughted into the Parliamentary forces without any regard whatsoever to the inclinations of either officers or men.

The little force had assembled at Bristol, to embark for their destination—Ireland—when, to their great surprise and chagrin, they were ordered and compelled to march to the midland counties to join the army of the Earl of Essex. King Charles himself we find complained of this breach of covenant, stating that many soldiers raised under pretence of being sent to Ireland were contrary to their expectations and engagement forced to serve under the Earl of Essex against the King; and he names, with others, Sir Faithful Fortescue and his men. It was under these circumstances that Sir Faithful and his men found themselves at the opening of the battle of Edgehill; opposed

"Hist. of
 Fortescue
 Family,"
 Lord
 Clermont.

to the King and to all their own principles and sympathies, officers and men decided to go over to their own side on the very first opportunity that presented itself. Lord Clarendon thus describes the incident:—"As the right wing of the King's horse advanced to charge the left wing, which was the gross of the enemy's horse, Sir Faithfull Fortescue, who having his fortune and interest in Ireland was come out of that country to hasten supplies thither and had a troop of horse raised for him for that service, but as many other of those forces were, so his troop was likewise disposed into that army and he was now under Major Sir William Waller, he, with his whole troop advanced from the gross of their horse and discharging all their pistols on the ground within a little more than carbine shot of his own body, presented himself and his troop to Prince Rupert and immediately with his Highness charged the enemy." We read that Sir Faithful "detesting the force put upon him resolved to recover his freedom by quitting that army on the first opportunity that offered and at the beginning of the fight he had contrived to send his cornet to inform the Prince of his intention; in the excitement of the moment, however, some of his troopers had unluckily forgotten to throw away the tawny orange scarves which they had been compelled to wear as troopers under the Earl of Essex, and they were shot in the charge unfortunately, being mistaken for the enemy. Apart, however, from this disaster the little force gained their end successfully and served with the royal troops to the last. Sir Faithful was given the command of the 10th Regiment and was with the King till he gave himself up to his treacherous but victorious enemies.

To return to events in Shropshire and its neighbours. Shrewsbury and its Castle were put in as complete a state of defence, thanks to the efforts of the Cavaliers, as circumstances permitted. The Cavaliers sent the King another manifesto signed by the Lord Lieutenant, the Deputy Lieutenants and all other Officers of the Militia of the County of Salop.

"May it please your Maj'tie "

"The approaching ceremony of your most solemn inauguration gives occasion of Testifying the sincerity of our joy, which is not perfected in that last, and highest acknowledgement of your most just title to the supreme sovereignty of these your Maj'ties three kingdoms. The due asserting of which and the preservation of your most sacred person and interest, we here appear with our swords in our hands to endeavour and so far as we from accounting it a piece of Roman Magnanimity to be zealous in putting down a Prerogative that we profess to think our own Rights and Liberties to be wholly concerned in upholding that just power and authority with which the fundamental constitution of this Nation have invested your Royal Progenitors, much less do we partake in the sins of those truly superstitious Persons who make it part of their religion to be disobedient and to separate from a Truly Apostolical Church in those indifferent things, which decency order and the necessary rules of Holy Polity have forced her to enjoin in both which capacities either of Civil or Christian subjects as we do own your Maj'tie for our sole supreme head; so we look upon your laws of both kinds, as the rule of which we are bound to conform. In defence of both we come hither to profess the sacrificing our lives and fortunes. And when your Maj'tie shall please to require it we hope not to be defective in making good our Protestation or in our duty of being,

Royal Sir

Your Maj'ties most Faithful and

most obedient Subjects."

Williams MSS.

Here follow the signatures and those of Vincent Corbett Capt:

Thomas Corbet (serjeant)

Ric: Corbett ("Cornet").

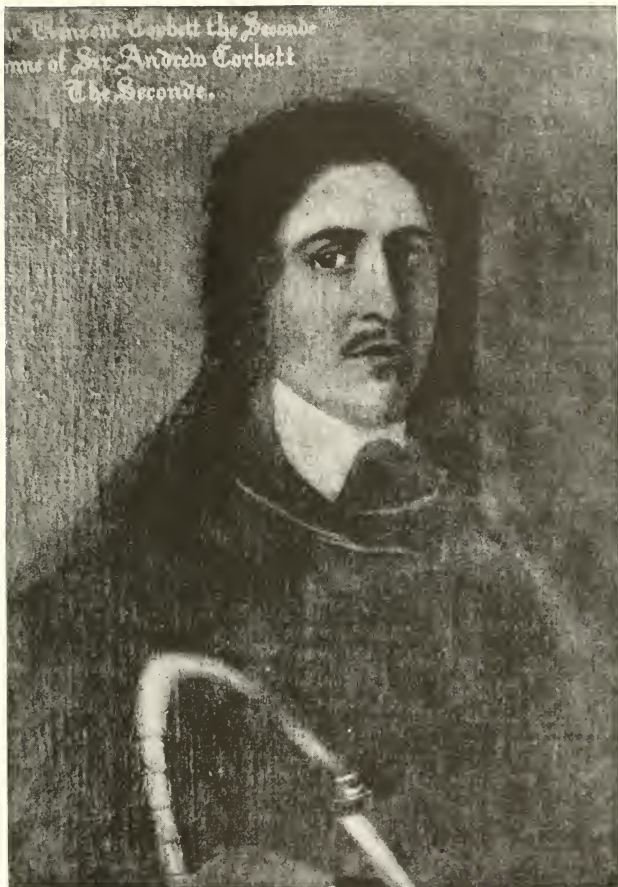
Sir Francis Otteley was in command of the Castle of Shrewsbury. The castles of Shrawardine, Caus, Chirk, Oswestry, and Apley, Moreton Corbet also, had all been fortified and garrisoned for the King, and for a time made a formidable array; Atcham Bridge also, Wroxeter, Buildwas, Benthall House—in short, all that lay near the river, were placed in as good a state of defence as was possible, and as quickly as possible, for in the control of the river lay the chief hopes of victory for the royalist party. In the early months of 1643 the first of the fights round Chester and Nantwich took place. The Cavaliers knew that Sir Wm. Brereton was returning from London with troops, arms and supplies, and it was judged advisable that the royalists in conjunction with their allies in Chester should try to intercept him before he could join the Parliamentarians in Cheshire. Sir Wm. Brereton, however, heard of the project and resolved on pushing on to the help of his comrades. He soon determined the fortunes of the day by the use of his drakes and quarter cannon, for the royalists had nothing to oppose to these and were, besides, greatly outnumbered. The fight took place at Torporley, between Chester and Nantwich; and as it

was the policy of the Parliamentarians to take as many prisoners as possible, especially among the leaders, it was with considerable difficulty that some of these latter were able to escape. Amongst these were Sir Thomas Acton and Sir Vincent Corbet; Sir Vincent, indeed, accomplished his flight with great difficulty, hiding in every thicket and often obliged to crawl on hands and knees. It was a very crestfallen and weary Sir Thomas also who at last gained Whitchurch, and there he hoped to find troops wherewith to avenge his defeat. Whitchurch, however, was itself in need, only a few dragoons had been left in charge, and these were themselves hourly in fear of an attack and surprise from the many wandering companies of Parliamentarians who were seeking an easy prey. These wandering companies may, indeed, be really said to have brought about the reduction of Shropshire; combined with the unremitting intrigues of the little town of Wem. A small country town, not many miles distant from Moreton Corbet, and which from the first days of the war had ranged itself with a certain ferocity of purpose on the side of the rebels. To Wem and its intrigues must be laid the final betrayal of Shrewsbury, and the destruction of Moreton Corbet. The royalists had placed every house and castle in as good a state of defence as was possible throughout the county, thanks to the unremitting zeal of the Cavaliers. Shrewsbury itself was also well cared for in that respect, and it was on the river. The Parliamentarians on their side were quite as alive as their opponents to the importance of the control of what was then the great highway, and they set themselves to reduce first the isolated garrisons which lay near it. These numerous centres of defence in effect proved the great source of weakness to the cause of the royalists. The necessary garrisons remained isolated sometimes for weeks at a time, and they were thus compelled to be idle when their services were often urgently needed elsewhere: besides, they required to be fed; and the river no longer offered the highway. The requisitioning of the country people hence became more and more constant and severe. The successes of the Parliamentarians also made them more bold and their enforced claims for supplies heavier, and many a king's man lost heart and professed for the rebels as the only means they saw to save their persons and homes from utter ruin.

Apley Castle soon fell and with its fall the control of the river passed effectively from the royalists' hands and the way to Shrewsbury was opened to the rebels. In March 1642-3 Sir Vincent Corbett was in command at Whitchurch, and shortly afterwards we find him at Malpas, whence he wrote "that his regiment was in continual service and some of them hurt daily." The royalists shut up in Chester were still by no means downhearted, though their foes in the county and even in the town were on the increase. They continued to strive to free themselves and to gain the open country whence they could the more readily render aid to their beleaguered friends in Shropshire. These fights seem always to have been disastrous. Sir William Brereton writes of another of these attempts to take Namptwich as follows:—

"Sir,

"Theis lines may convey unto you the relation of oure late encounter with Sir Thos. Aston's forces upon Saturday. aboute 6 of the Clocke at nighte, at whiche time Sir Thomas who had observed our motions since the cominge out of Reading as did appeare by letters founde with some of his Troopers (our prisoners) who did alsoe acknowledge that hee did waite and observe until hee mighte assaulte us, whiche it seemes was reserved for my welcome into Cheshire and to Namptwich, whither I sent my seriant marisor [sergeant major] Lothian and Capt. Bromhall withe aboute fiftie dragonners upon Friday nighte, who possessed themselves of the towne aboute seavon of the Clocke on Saturday morninge and we were assaulted by 300 horse of Sir Thomas Aston's aboute five of the Clocke in the eveninge at three or four passages at one and the same time, where they were bravely resisted; some of theyre men and horse were slayne. They did retreat aboute a myle and did then make a stand and layde an ambushment, theire horse beinge lined with theire newe rayseed Shropshire dragoones whose light matches were oure onely guides and directions howe to take our armies at the enemies of whom we received intelligence by many countrymen that theye did lurke for us in a place of advantage; notwithstandinge whiche we were constrained by force to make way thorow them to the relief of the towne whiche (as was conceived) could not make defence one houre longer; the towne so much asserting newtrality, and to maintaine the late accomodation and owre men beinge deeply engaged, and as wee feared beinge in danger to bee opposed by multitudes of the enemye, whome we first charged and that soe fiercelie and successfully (the Lord assistinge) that theire dragoners which were under Sir Vincent Corbet were presentlie disordered and many of them ran away withoute ever givinge fire." . . . The most eminent commanders amongst them were not much more fortunate. "Sir Thos. Aston as it is sayde was a prisoner, his horse beinge slayne and himself constrained to



Sir Vincent Corbett, Knt. and 1st Bart. of Moreton Corbet, son of
Sir Andrew Corbett the Second Knt.

SIR VINCENT, KNT., 1ST BART. OF MORETON CORBET 327

fly many miles on foote, and some saye hee hath a bullet in his backe and was not attended with more than eight or ten men when he came to Whitchurch. Sir Vincent Corbet who they saye was alsoe a prisoner (but both unknowne to us in the darke) did make an escape on foote to Ov : [Over] which is full five miles both of them conceaving their arms a burthen which they threwe awaye. After our dragoons had given the first charge and that wee had seconded them their beinge no other horse, but myne owne troope (Capt. Edward's troope beinge in the reare guarding our wagons, where they performed goode service) and wee beinge in a lane, compassed with hedges on both sides, and theye in a field within a fewe yardes of us, wee were upon a sudden soe intermingled in suche confusednesse, as, if the Lord had not struck with terror and amazement, it had fared muche worse with us ; owre forces beinge divided, some in the towne before, and others guarding our wagons, but theyre courage had departed from them and the Lord delivered them into owre hands." . . . "This success beinge far beyonde what could be expected of us, who were at that time muche disproportionate in numbers and muche tired by two or three long and foule and dangerous marches from Derby to Leeke thence to Congleton and not any one of the country (Cheshire) troopes of horse beinge joyned with us who came from Derby so soon as I received the instructions from Parliament, and hearinge at Leeke of their intention to surpris this towne wee were constrained to hasten thither and marche alone with the forces I broughte from London. Oure Cheshire troopers not beinge in readiness to accompany or assist us ; whose absence the Lord was pleased to supply by his immediate assistance, for whilst wee were in this confusion intermingled in the darke, theye havinge possessed themselves of oure worde which was 'Christ' it was with muche difficulty that wee could distinguish their men from owres, but that the Lord was pleased therein to directe wonderfully. Wee tooke them prisoners and still possesse the Lord Cho'lmondeley, his sonne (who some saye was to bee Sir Thos: Aston's lievietent Colonel) Capt: Bridgeman and divers others of their Officers and Commanders. Wee have very neare 100 prisoners and the greateste parte of Sir A's owne troope who are well armed and well furnished and handsome men ; almost all owre men got good pillage, not onely very good and riche garments, but some of them £40 in gold ; some 50 and others muche more. Loste fewe of my troope and Alderman Edward's troope withoute prisoners. some of them beinge possesede of one, some of two, some of three or more prisoners and horses but many of their armes were throwne awaye and lost, which the country people founde and gathered up nexte morninge. The horse and so many of their armes as coulde bee founde I did cause to bee seized upon for the public service but by reason of Capt: — company of dragoons havinge their horses at large ; beinge constrained out of these horses to recruit that troope, many of whiche horses were recovered but divers of them were carried awaye with the stream of their horses when theye fled in muche disorder and destruction ; some of them callinge oute ' Awaye awaye wee shall bee alle slayne ' many of them beinge slayne, and many others miserably shlasht and wounded and some as we heare deade by the waye. Indeede when wee came into towne wee wanted the lievietent Colonel Capt: Goldegaye and all my servants and one of the quartermasters the most whereof it pleased GOD to restore unto us the nexte daye. There was slayne on oure side upon the ground Capt: Goldegaye his lievietent, and Corporale Brent one of my Corporalls and some others wounded, since dead, Capt: Goldegaye and Capt: Lea are wounded but not mortally I hope, and so are divers of oure souldiers, another of my Corporalls, Appletree, is sore wounded all my servants and those were scattered the firste nighte and came not here till the nexte daye morninge ; I alone have sustayned the greateste losse ; all my Corporalls are slayne or dangerously wounded, and all of my beste horses which were led are taken and detain'd. The towne begins to comyle with us, though theye were exceedinge starke and backward and wee are fortifyinge the towne and preparinge to put the instructions in execution. The Commissioner of — fortifie us as to Chester and drawe in the inhabitants of Salop and Welshmen. But I do not doubt by GOD's assistance but this countrie will approve themselves well affected and it shall bee the dutie of my care to improve my utmost endeavours to do you service the Parliament and in particular to approve myself

"Your most faithful servant

"(Signed) Willm Brereton.

"Feb: 4th 1642-3."

We also learn from another source that "after a sharp turn both retreated ; the one partie to Chester, the other to Namptwich where they continued that weeke, until theye had fortified all the towne round aboute with strange trenches and made walls of clodds and earth." Another skirmish took place at Drayton, a little town at no great distance. Malbon dignifies this by the

Malbon.

name of "Drayton Battalle" and says, "On Thursdaye atte nighte in Maye 1643 some horse and foote aboute midnighte marched further of the towne towards Drayton where Sir Vincent Corbet and aboute three hundred Cavaliers horse and foote laye, begynnye to make some workes (for their safetie) about the towne. But a little after some Risinge Nampwich forces comynge thither on the sudden (before theye were further of their Beddes) entered the towne theye havinge neither garde nor scouts abroad (but secure as theye thoughte). And killed nyne of them, tooke many p'soners, horses and armes. Soe that also a most of Nampwich foote soldyers were horsed home and many of them had two and three or four musketts and karbines a piece. Besides app'all (apparel) and other goods of theirs. And alsoe three ensignes, four drums and other weapons. But Sir Vincent fled in his shirte and wascot, leaving his app'all behind him which Capt: Whitney had with his money and many letters in his pockett."

Sir Willm. Brereton is said to have reported in detailing one of the fights of these days that "the Shropshire horse and Dragoons came on with great resolution and boldness, and in very good order." In July 1643 Sir Vincent Corbet received a Commission from the King, who was then at Oxford, to raise a regiment of 1,000 foot volunteers. Sir Vincent must have found good material in his new regiment, for we find them assisting the besieged garrisons where needed and heading many a gallant sally where they drove away the beleaguering Parliamentarians with great loss. "The Shrewsbury Foot" were present also two years later at the battle of Naseby. A Devonshire ditty of the day describes the effects of the constant requisitioning from both sides:—

"I had six oxen t'other day,
And them the Roundheads got away
A mischief to their speed.

"I had six horses in a hale
And they the Cavaliers stale
I think in this they be agreed."

A letter from Sir Lewis Kirke, the Governor of the Castle of Bridgenorth, written to Prince Rupert, helps one to realise the difficulties which beset the obtaining of these necessary supplies from the reluctant owners. He writes "That according to an order from his Highness for levying contributions, I sent a party to Tong Castle and Shiffnal on Sunday to demand the arrears of the last three months. The Lieutenant in command, hearing of it, escaped from them, he then tooke the Constables and was carrying him off, when Sir Morton Brigges encouraged the Parishioners to resist and a scuffle ensued, in which most of the soldiers were wounded, and disarmed, and killed Popish Dogs. They were kept Prisoners for five or six hours; I wish to know his Highnesses pleasure."

"For his Excellency Prince Rupert his Highness, haste, haste, post haste."

The Parliamentary party in Shropshire was fast gathering force. It became strong enough to form itself into an active and aggressive "Parliamentary Committee," whose chief aim was the reduction one by one of the royalist centres in the County and chief of all to get possession of Shrewsbury. At the head of this Committee and one may say its chief originator was Sir John Corbet of Stoke and Adderley—the Patriot—and its man of chief action was John Mytton of Halston. It may well be realised that as nearly all the Corbet families in Shropshire stood heartily for the King, and followed the head of their race, Sir Vincent, this attitude of Sir John's must have been most galling to them. He married a Mainwaring of Ightfield, who were also of his opinions; nevertheless his very numerous sons appear to have steadily taken the side of the King; indeed, his eldest son threw himself heart and soul into the cause of the Cavaliers, and we shall hear of him from time to time sharing their fortunes and finally as one of the leaders at Bridgenorth at the surrender of that Castle to Cromwell.

Phillips' "History of the Civil Wars in Wales and the Marches" and "The Garrisons of Shropshire," written by Mrs. Scott Acton, have furnished me many of the details I have put together of these days. Chirk Castle was in the hands of Sir Thos. Middleton as early as January 1643 and proved such an annoyance to the neighbouring royalists that in that month a force under Col. Ellis of Gwesnewydd, near Wrexham, effected its recapture. Several skirmishes took place through the Summer, amongst them the fight at Hopton Castle, which, though really a place of no great importance and of no important result, so roused the anger of the Roundheads as to make them adorn the tale of their little defeat with some of their telling invectives. This fate of Hopton

Castle, a small Manor House really, on the borders of Herefordshire, interests us, for it was Corbet property for a couple of hundred years till it passed to the Wallops as one of the many dower Manors at the marriage of the Corbet heiress, one of the daughters of Robert Corbet the Traveller and politician in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Hopton Castle now belonged to Mr. Henry Wallop, one of the fiercest of the Parliamentary faction, when the war broke out. He gave the command of the Castle to a Mr. Samuel More, and some quotations from his Journal will describe what happened. "I went to Hopton Castle," he says, "as my memory serves me on the 18th February which was the Sabbath-Day at night. The sennight the enemy came before it, who facing us with a body of horse first, within an hour sent on a body of foot, who approached the outer walls (we not being able to hinder them, because the wall did not flank, being an old wall made round). . . . They brought ladders to scale the walls, but upon our killing three of them, they sent Mr. Sutton to say the Prince desired the delivery of the Castle of Hopton. I sent word that I understand no message that comes not with drum and trumpet, and on the Friday following they retreated and went out of the towne, but kept Court of Guard near to us with horse and foot; at this time we were but 26 men in all, and we set to making some works, in which we were as industrious as men could be, Major Phillips advised to send for more men to Brompton Castle, and they lovingly sent us twelve, who meeting with the enemy, six of them at that time, went back, but afterwards we had about eight men, in all thirty-one men. The Friday fortnight after the first assault, they marched as we guessed about 500 horse and foot, and entered the towne; thereupon they sent a summons by a drum, subscribed by Sir Michael Woodhouse, who demanded the castle in the name of Prince Rupert; my answer was that I kept it by authority of Parliament, and by the consent of the owner Mr Wallop for King and Parliament; and that night they approached part of the wall about two hours before day, and made a breach, which our sentinels discovering gave the alarm, and there we fought with the enemy at push of pike, throwing stones and shooting; and some of them, reported being 200 got into the breach, where we killed many, among the rest Captain Vaughan" (Ancestor of Mr. Vaughan of Burleton Hall) "then we repulsed them, and took six muskets, ten pikes and clubs, which they call roundheads, and after the repulse they marched away. About a week after they returned again; next day came in carriage of cannon baskets and such things, and in the night three pieces of ordnance, by Monday eight of the clock, there came a drum, and summoned the delivery of the Castle, which if we did not yield before shooting one piece of ordnance we must not expect quarter, we returned the same answer as before, and as soon as it came, they shot at us, and continued shooting with culverine, and doing culverine from nine till five. They shot 96 shots at our outer wall, and made a breach, which we defended for the space of two hours at least, so we gave them a repulse with the loss of one man that was killed and three or four that were hurt, but they lost, as they said afterwards 150 of theirs. On Tuesday night they came again and set Gregory's house on fire; our men weary of working all night, and not out of their cloathes for a fortnight's time, it was moved we should desire a parley, which being done, they bade us send our conditions, which Mr. Phillips and I contrived to this effect, that we should march away with our arms and ammunition, which they denied, we should have no conditions, but yield to the Colonel's mercy. Mr. Phillips and myself, and six men did plainly hear them working under us, and as the enemy told us when I was in prison, they had blown us up in two hours. We agreed to propose to the enemy, we would yield the Castle upon quarter for our lives, answer was brought no other conditions could be yielded to, but to be referred to the Colonel's mercy, and being brought into this condition, it was thought better to yield than to be blown up. . . ." Colonel Woodhouse immediately dismantled the place, rendering it thus of no use to either party in the contest.

Through the next two years, 1644 and 1645, the chief interests so far as they concerned our Family lay around Lilleshall and High Ercall, the taking of Shrewsbury, and culminating in the tragedy of the betrayal and burning of Moreton Corbet. The adherents of the Parliament in the County had formed themselves into a strong "Parliamentary Committee," the head of which was Sir John Corbet of Stoke and Adderley. Its life and soul, however, was Thomas or John Mytton of Halston, and to the untiring activity of this "Committee" must be attributed the ultimate loss of Shrewsbury and the County to the Royalists. So determined a friend to the Parliament, indeed, was Sir John Corbet that we find him with 220 other members of Parliament taking the oath to "The solemn League and Covenant" in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, the ratification of which was the condition for Scotch assistance. Sir Thomas Middleton of Chirk, Sir Wm. Lewis, and Philip Lord Herbert were also among the signatories. For the moment let us take some extracts from the Williams MSS., etc., in the Reference Library in Shrewsbury, which will tell us of some of the exploits around Lilleshall. The present owner had garrisoned

Williams MSS.

it on behalf of the King quite in the early days of the war. He was Sir Richard Leveson, son of the Vice-Admiral Sir Richard Leveson and grandson of the Sir Walter Leveson who had married Anna Corbet, daughter of the first Sir Andrew Corbet. It is uncertain whether the garrison was placed in the Abbey itself or in Sir Richard's own residence, called Lilleshal Lodge. Symons, in his "History of Shropshire Garrisons," says: "Lindsell Abbey, a howse of Sir Richard Levisons. Sir Richard made it a Garrison himself about the same time that High Archall was (Hallowtide 1644) and still remaines for the King He lives in the Lodge, Bastwick, Governour." Sir Richard married Catherine, a daughter of Lord Robert Dudley. "Thursday March 29 1644 Sir Richard Leveson at his own charge hath for a long time and doth still maintayne a Garrison at Lynsel House and hither ye rebels from Wemme were resolved to come, either to surpris or storm ye house for wch purpose on Monday last (March 25th) Mitton drew out all ye forces he could get out of Wemme, Stafford, Northwich, Longford and Tonge, amounting to 500 foot and 9 troopes of horse. Intelligence whereof being broughte to Sr. T. Mennes at Shrewsbury, Sr. Wm. Vaughan and Col. Ellis with 400 horse and foot drew out of Wellington (Capt. Bostock bringing ym a troop and four score foot from Lynsel house) with these they advanced to Longford faced the rebels there awhile (who not daring face his Majties forces) retreated somewhat carefully in disorder through Brocton into Lynsel field, wch ye rebels perceiving, drew out and pursued in high career, yet were not so nimble but yt Sir Wm. Vaughan and Col. Ellis had got thr. men rallied, who ym faced about and charged ye rebels with such courage yt they killed about 200 in ye place and took 1 Capt. of horse 4 Lieuts. of foot and 40 Troopers (beside foot) with Judge Turners eldest son, very much hurt. In all this week's action both here and at Apley his Maj. forces have only lost a Lieutenant and 11 common soldiers. Among others young Capt. T. C. Corbet is commended by all for his gallant courage, killed with his own hand 3 of the commanders. They of Wemme are much broken both in strength and courage wch coused 14 of ym to desert ye rebels on Tuesday last and desire to be admitted into Morton-Corbet."

The possession of Oswestry was fought for several times. The "Certain Information" of July 10th, 1643, gives us the Parliamentary views of the situation at Oswestry and the Royalists' efforts to retain it. It states: "The Lord Capell went lately to Oswestry with 1,000 horse and dragoons to fortifie the Towne and told the inhabitants that it must be intrenched and strengthened because he heard that some Rebels were coming from London into that County, meaning thereby the Earl of Denbigh, Sir Thomas Middleton, Colonel Mitton, and other lovers of their religion and countrie, who are consigned by his Excellencie the Parliament's Lord Generell, with men, armes, ammunition and ordnance to go down thither, and to free all the Marches of Wales, from their great oppressors and protectors of Papists, who are rebels and traitors by the laws of the land; but now observe his Lordship's kindness and curtesie to that towne, where instead of procuring their love and compliance, he hath gotten their perpetual hatred, for he putt all his horses into their meadows, which hath eaten and spoiled all their grass, and thereby he hath bereft them of all sustenance for their cattle the next winter; soe silly are the Cavalier party in committing such acts, as make themselves odious wheresoever they come." Colonel Mitton, from his connexion with the neighbourhood, was well acquainted with the resources of the town, and in March 1644 with Sir Thomas Fairfax made an attempt to take it, which was gallantly repulsed by Prince Rupert in person, who was in the Castle at the time. In July of that year, however, the fortunes of war turned the other way and the "Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer" tells us: "The noble and valiant Earl of Denbigh advanced towards Oswestrie, and with the folorne hope consisting of 200 foot, and two troops of horse faced the towne on the 23rd June, at two of the Clock in the afternoon, and within an hour's space made his approaches so neare, and plaid so fiercely upon the enemy with small and great shot, that a breach was made in the wall of the towne, and with the loss of one man, and three wounded, entered the town; the enemy fled into the Church, and then to the Castle, who were soe closely pursued, and the poyneers soe nimble in undermining (wherein Colonel Mitton showed much dexterity) that they condescended to surrender the Castle, to have quarter for their lives, which accordingly was done. My Lord at night called a council of warre, and ordered a strong guard, and designed a party of troops to fire the Castle gates with pitch; but our men wearied out, slept the opportunity. My Lord by break of day waking, came to Captain Keme in the same house with him, and desired him to go forward the designe, which immediately he did with great cheerfulness and valour; but on his way there met him a party of women of all sorts, downe on their knees, confounding him with their Welsh howlings, that he faine to get an interpreter, which was to beseech him to interest my Lord before he blew up the Castle, they might go up and speak to their husbands, children and

the officers ; which he moved, and my Lord condescended to, soe Captain Keme might go with them, and two trumpets which he did courageously and carried this message. Then my Lord to avoid the effusion of blood yet offered them mercy, if they would accept of it ; they threw down this paper, viz ' To the Right Hon. the Earl of Denbigh. Propositions propounded by us, for the delivering up the Castle of Oswestrie. 1st To march away with our armes, bag and baggage, officers and all other persons whatsoever being in the Castle. 2nd That we the said officers, and all other persons within the Castle may have guard through your quarters to Montford Bridge, or quietly to abide in our own habitations. 3rd That we march out of said Castle, over the bridge, with our musketts charged, light matches and balls in our mouths. These propositions being granted, the Castle shall be delivered by the officers subscribed.

" John Birdwer, Lieutenant Colonel John Warrin,
Captains Niche, Hooks and Davenport,
Lieutenant Hugh Lloyd and Lewis Morgan (Ancients.)"

" Captain Keme," continues the narrative, " returned, leaving the women ; my Lord refused to condescend, at last the women prevailed, and cried to me to come up ; then the two brave champions, Colonel Mitton, and Captain Keme went up, and they said they repose themselves on such quarter as my Lord would sign to, which was their lives onely, so they marched out, and we found 100 musketts besides other stewaway, eight halberts, and officers to them, one barrel of powder and suitable matches, many swords, and some few pistols. Twenty Gentlemen of Shropshire and Wales, divers officers, and 200 prisoners, besides what were lost. Immediately (it being the Lords Day) my Lord called all away to Church, to praise God, which was done and our dead buried. In all this service we had but two soldiers slaine, and but one horse, and but four wounded, blessed be God. The towne is of great concernment." The Parliamentary forces were not, however, left peaceably at Oswestry for any length of time, the possession of the town gave the key to Wales in the estimation of both parties, and in July, the town having in the meantime been recaptured by the Royalists, Lord Denbigh agreed to send Sir Thomas Middleton with a strong force to undertake the siege once more. Sir Thomas's Brother, Sir William Middleton, gives the following account of this second siege in a letter which he writes to the Hon. William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons. " The town of Oswestrie," says the writer, " late taken by the forces of the Parliament under my Brother and Col. Mitton's command, was upon Saturday last began to be begirt, and since strictly besieged by the King's forces consisting of about 1,500 horse, and 3,500 foot, under the command of Colonel Marrow ; and that thereupon in pursuance of a Council of War's determination, occasioned by an earnest and importunate letter from my brother Colonel Mitton, directed to me for speedy relief, and raising the siege of the said town, I did upon the Lord's Day past with such forces of horse and foot as I then had advanced to the said town of Oswestrie, where the enemy endeavoured to storm the town by battering and storming of the same, violently to have carried it. About two of the Clock in the afternoon we came in sight of the town, where the enemy having intelligence of our approach was prepared to receive us, the forces of our enemy consisting of the most valiant commander and soldiers drawn out of the Garrisons of Chester, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Denbighshire, Flintshire, and other places. The enemy had taken the passage of the water neer to Whittington, and very furiously assaulted and charged us, but were repulsed, and forced to return. There several times the skirmish was doubtful, either side being forced so often to retreat, but in the end our foot forces coming up relieved the horse, beat back the enemy, and pursued them with such force that they put the enemy to an absolute flight, in which we pursued them five miles towards Shrewsbury, to a place called Felton Heath. In this skirmish, and the pursuit, we lost several of our horse, some of our troopers, but never a footman that I am yet informed of ; many of the troopers are hurt, but I hope will recover: as for the enemy, they lost many stout men, had many of them taken prisoners, some of them being of great quality, as the Lord Newport's eldest son," (a Corbet Cousin) " Captain Swynnerton, and besides in their flight, such was their haste, that we found in the way of pursuit of them, the highway was strewn with store of bread, cheese, bacon, and other good provisions, clothes, and also such necessary appurtenances to an army, besides some whole veals and muttens newly killed. The enemy before the relief came had taken the Church, being the strongest hold about the town. In the way also was taken seven carts and waggons laden with provisions, as beer, bread, and other necessaries. The town of Oswestrie I find to be a very strong town, and if once fortified of great concernment, and the key that lets us into Wales." Longner House, the seat of the Burton family who for so many years had been closely connected with Corbets, was too

small to be garrisoned, but lying close to the river it was nevertheless able to play its part as the following letter from Sir Francis Otley shows. The letter was written evidently before the taking of Shrewsbury, as it is signed by the two Governors.

"To our loving friend Francis Burton Esq, of Longner, haste these.

"We desire you to deliver so much hay as comes to 50 loads, or as much more as you can possibly spare, it being for his Majestie's use, and we will see you paid out of the contributions or otherwise to your heart's content. We rest your affectionate friends,

"(signed) Francis Otley
Michael Earnley."

It is clear, I think, that though not often mentioned by name, Sir Vincent Corbet and the force under his command rendered help in all these fights and skirmishes wherever help was called for, and they must have been continually on the move. There are two letters of his preserved amongst the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum. I cannot quite fix the occasion of their being written, still it is evident they must have been written about the date we have arrived at, and I therefore give them now, before touching on the sad days which compelled Shrewsbury to acknowledge her Parliamentary victors. This is perhaps, too, the more fitting, as I do not think that Sir Vincent was near Shrewsbury at the time of its betrayal. The letters are as follow :—

"Feb: ye last from Morton Corbett.

"Noble Sr.

"In respect it were late before I could get in the amunition in regard we had a false alarm by the way, I have presumed to keepe ye partie yt came with me this night fr just now came a man yt I had imployed from Wem and told mee yt Colonell Mitton went upon Wednesday night with forty horse to ye Nantwich and yt there is oneley a hundred horse in Wem, and ye foote is fearefull speaking from one to ye other yt they are not able to man their workes and ye rest of their horse being three broken troopes videlicet Colonell Mittons, Captin Floydys and Captin Mackwoods, quarter in Eitefeald towne and have barocadeed ye avenues with carts oneley ; in Eitefeald hall, which is a brick howse and moted there is fourscore Dragooners there is a report yt five of Sr. Thomas Farfax troopes are to quarter this night in Drayton there is warrants sent out to Preese and ye countrey theare aboute to com in to Wem tomorrow and theie yt doe not, are to leave their livings: so I shall desire you to acquaint his hines with this scribled paper, and to know his pleasure wheather hee will bee pleased to give mee leave to exchange som disaffected neibors heare for six good musquiteares yt I had taken when ye Howse was stormed this being all I rest your affectionate kinsman

V. Corbett."

Endorsed

Morton Corbet

"For my much Honored and respected kinsman Sr. Thomas Dallison.

at his quarters . this with sepeede.

Vin Corbett."

The second of the two letters is as follows :—

"This morning I heard from Wem and there strength is not above five hundred foote and foure troopes of Horse their largest peece is two thousand weight, ye other two are small ones they make noe preparation for removing yet, but as soone as they doe I hope to have intelligence they brag much and threaten hard yt they will swallow us all up with yt greate gun, but in this place we feare them not, depending upon your releefe. They say Colonell Marrow is slayne yt Lord Birom is taken and our force at Leverpoole beaten but I heare fromwards ye Wich, ye contrary and yt theare hath many teares falne from ye woemen and widdowes theare aboute fr ye sertenty of ouer best newes I desire you will send so in haste I rest
your affectionate frend to serve you

V Corbett

"Weston August ye 23. 9 O'clock in ye morning."

Endorsed

"For my much Honoured frend.

Colonell Broughton this in Salop.

Shropshire Aug: 23 1644."

Wem was, of course, hotly fought for by the Royalist party, but entirely unsuccessfully, and from the first it remained the pivot and rallying point of the Parliamentary Committee who were by its help to get the long coveted mastery over Shrewsbury. The descriptions of the Royalists and

Add. MSS.
18,981, f. 69.

Add. MSS.
24,023, f. 21.

BETRAYAL & CAPTURE OF SHREWSBURY & CASTLE 333

their leaders at the hands of the Parliamentarians seem peculiarly scathing. Here is one of Lord Capel, who saw a good deal of the fighting in Shropshire and Wales. Vicars, in his "God in the Mount," thus speaks of him. "The Lord Capel," he says, "that court summer flea, who hath so leapt and skipt up and down to no purpose (God be praised) sent a messenger to assure those in Warrington who were besieged that if they could hold out another day, he would come to their relief," etc., etc. The messenger, we learn, was intercepted. Shrewsbury at this time was reduced to very great straits. A representation of the situation was made to the Governor, Sir Francis Ottley, which shows that "the town is so weak and poor it is not able to maintain a troop of horse, that the whole revenue of the town will not pay the coals and candles for the sentry; that the horse quartered have eaten the greatest part of the pasture ground, and that the town is without pay, also that the trade especially with Wales in cotton, cheese, butter and cattle is stopped." A Council was called to consider this position composed of Sir Francis Ottley and Sir Vincent Corbet, and Messrs. Owen, Lacon, Smith, Sandford, and Treves, who sanctioned the revenues of the Shropshire Bridgewater estates being used for the relief of the pressure. There were many spies and traitors in the town. One of these was a certain Mr. Huson, an Irishman and a minister. He managed to escape to Wem, where he laid the straits of the town before that enterprising garrison, and they determined to set forth at once to the capture, having learnt, through their friend Huson, of a vulnerable point. They chose the night of the 14th and 15th February, but the night was so dark and the roads so wet that the dawn surprised them, and they returned unobserved to their quarters. A more serious attack, however, was being arranged. The Committee determined to surprise Shrewsbury, the moment appearing favourable, for Prince Maurice had just left it with troops, going to the relief of Chester, and the condition of the town was known to them. They quickly informed Sir William Brereton of their plans, requesting him to assist and co-operate with Col. Mitton. Brereton consented, and next day detached 400 horse of Cheshire and Staffordshire, 300 foot of the latter county, and a company of his own Regiment, with petards and other ammunition necessary to storm the town and burst open the gates. These "forces under the command of Colonel Bowyer, arrived at Wem the same night:" and here they were joined by Colonel Mytton, who hastened from Oswestry with as many soldiers as he could collect from various garrisons, altogether a force of 1,200 men. I return to the narrative given by Owen and Blakeway, and have no doubt my Shropshire readers will be interested in the details. "The command of the Infantry was assigned, by the direction of the Committee, to Lieutenant-Colonel Reinking; that of the horse to Mytton himself. It was evening before they left Wem: and it is obvious to remark on the superior secrecy of the Parliamentarians, since not a syllable transpired in all this time, to the authorities in Shrewsbury either civil or military." . . . "The force thus commanded, marched under the cover of night, and halted at the end of the Castle Foregate about 4 o'clock on the Saturday morning where the horse remained, till the foot should effect an entrance themselves and obtain one for their companions. The infantry turned off on the left to the river." . . . "Before he quitted the horse, Colonel Reinking marshalled his own men. The Van was led by the minister Huson and a countryman of his, Captain Wyllier, led on the party of firelocks, as Lieutenant Benbow, a Shrewsbury man and consequently well acquainted with the ground, did another of dismounted troopers. They advanced from the end of the Castle Foregate, through the fields, to the Castle Ditch, which ran down from the N.E. end of the Castle to the Severn, and was defended on the town side by a stout palisade of wood, and a breast work of earth. While this was going on, Colonel Reinking who had embarked in a boat with eight carpenters and other persons fit for that employment, had arrived on the town side of this palisade and began to saw down the pales." The sentinels immediately near to the spot appear to have been privy to the plot, and a breach was made before the sentries who remained faithful and who were higher up could fire on the assailants. "The Parliamentary soldiers eagerly helped one another over the Ditch, and climbing the palisade, got over the breast work. Having thus far succeeded, they appear to have divided into two parties. One, headed by Benbow, ran up the bank, now that part of the Council House Garden, which lies nearest to the Castle, and scaling the wall which crowns the summit by light ladders which they had brought with them hastened to the North or Castle Gates. The other party rapidly filed along on the narrow path by the river side under the Council House, then the residence of Sir William Owen, followed by the main body of 350 foot under the command of Reinking, and soon reached the bottom of the Water Lane. This bold step led them to a spot, then commanded, as appears, by two forts, one at the bottom of the Council House Garden which lies nearest to the Water Lane and the other on the very spot where a warehouse is now and where consequently they might have been cut to pieces by a far inferior force. No military commander

Hist. Shrewsbury, Owen & Blakeway.

of the least conduct would have placed his men in such a position, had he not been assured of finding gates (for there were two, defended by a tower in St Mary's Water Lane) left open for admission. This was the case; and up this lane Colonel Reinking led his men and entered the town in good order, being, as is made plain, mainly indebted to treachery for his success." "The Court of Guard, as the place where the guard musters was then called, was held in the Market Place. Thither the assailants marched with all expedition:—exchanging very few shots for they met with little resistance,—on to the Market Place to attack the main guard. Here they were twice beaten back: and as Colonel Mytton" (I note that Blakeway spells Mytton with a "y") "seems to intimate they would here probably have been mastered. But the gates had by this time been burst open by the first party that mounted the Council House bank, the draw-bridge was let down, and the horse, with Colonel Mytton at their head, galloped down to the Court of Guard, where they found their comrades engaged with the Royalists. The contest there which had been doubtful was now soon decided by the superior numbers, but not till Captain John Needham, who was then on guard, with five of his men had been killed. Together with the Cavalry, the gentlemen of the Committee entered the town, and immediately proceeded to the exercise of their authority. For while this skirmish was going on at the Court of Guard, small parties of the military directed by such as knew the way, in all probability Huson, Benbow and some of the Parliamentary townspeople, proceeded to the houses of the Mayor and other leading inhabitants of the place, and secured their persons. The two Sir John Welds, father and son, are mentioned as being surprised in their beds." It is difficult to realise the tragedy of the awakening for a city so utterly surprised as was Shrewsbury in the dead of night. The same treachery that admitted the Parliamentarians into the town put them in possession of the Castle, but not without a struggle, for the Castle was not fully theirs till noon. The fort in Frankwell called Cadogan's also gave some resistance to the invaders. "This important conquest," says Blakeway, "was achieved with a very inconsiderable loss. On the side of the Parliament only two men fell; one of them was Richard Wycherly, a native of Clive. On the King's side there was the loss of Captain Needham and his five men. The number of prisoners consequently was great, and their rank more so. For Shrewsbury had been esteemed a secure retreat, to which many of the neighbouring gentry had fled for refuge from the insecurity of their country seats. Eight knights and Baronets, forty Colonels, Majors and Captains, and 200 private soldiers were among the captured." A list of the prisoners, such as have been specified by name, is subjoined. "Sir Michael Earnley and his Brother. Sir Richd. Lee of Acton Burnell, Sir Thos. Harris, Sir Henry Fred. Thinn of Caus Castle, Sir Wm. Owen, Sir John Welde, sen. and junior. Sir Thos Lyster. Francis Thornes of Shelvock. Herbert Vaughan. Thos Owen. Edwd. Kynaston of Oteley. Rob. Ireland, Richd. Trevis. Thos Morris, Arthur Sandford of Sandford and Rob. Sandford (probably his son). Pelham Corbet of Leigh and Adbright Hussey, Thos Jones. Lt Colonel Ed Owen and Lt. Colonel Thomas Owen. Major Francis Ranger, Drs. Lewyn and Arnewey. Captains T Raynsford, Wm, Lucas. John Cressy. Thos Collins. Wm, Long, Pontesbury Owen. Henry Harrison. Ensigns Cassey Benthall. Ed. Talbot. Richd. Lee. Ed. Stanley. Francis Mainwaring. John Jones. John Bradshaw. Ed, Littleton. Peter Dorrington, Thos Barker. John Whitacars. Jos, Taylor. Fran, Sandford. Rich, Gibbons. Geo, Mainwaring. Cha, Smith. (Gentlemen) and many others." Prince Maurice had but recently moved on Chester and taken with him as many of the garrison as could be spared. This accounts for the comparatively small capture; but if the prisoners were comparatively few the plunder was plentiful. "The King lost what he ill could spare, 14 pieces of ordnance, several barrels of gun powder, several hundred stand of arms, and the magazine of Prince Maurice: who was indeed very nearly being seized himself so shortly had he left before the surprise of the town and Castle. Several tradesmen were ruined by the plunder of their goods; and the plate and other property of gentlemen and strangers which had been lodged for safety in the Castle, enriched the soldiers with a plentiful booty." The two following letters written to Francis Oteley whilst he was Governor of the Castle are interesting. The first is from Mr. Newport, afterwards Earl of Bradford; the second from his maternal uncle, Sir Richard Leveson, the defender of Lilleshall.

"Sir

"I am informed that some Troopers have brought a Billet from you for 3 horses in my Uncle Sir Ri, Leveson's stable: now Sir, I am to let you know that my Father hath procured a Protection from my Ld, Capell, both for his own houses and stables and alsoe for my Uncle Leveson's and there is likewise a particular ticked [ticket] procured from Captain Jennings for the securing of this stable for my Uncle's use, which I can assure to bee very true, though the man that had it delivered to him was soe foolish not to leave it there. My desire to you is, Sir,

BETRAYAL & BURNING OF MORETON CORBET CASTLE 335

in my Uncle's behalfe (who you well know deserves not to bee prejudic'd by any of the King's servants) that you would give your assistance for the securing of the Stable and the Haye, and to withdraw the Billett now granted, and you will much favour my Uncle and mee.

"Yr, humble Servant

"(signed) Fr, Newport.

"High Ercall March 30

"To my much honoured Kinsman

"Sir Francis Oatley Lt

"Governour of Shrewsbury. these."

Sir Richard Leveson's letter is as follows :—

"Sir.

"Since the unhappy surprize of Stafford by the rebells the place where I am is not safe either for my selfe or my goodes, and therefore I have sent 2 wagons loaded with some househoulde stuffe, which I desire, with your dispensac'on may bee received into your towne of Shrewsbury into a roome which I have longe reserved in myne owne handes for this purpose against a tyme of neede, and that to this effecte you will please to give order unto your watche for free passage to and fro, whereby you will oblige mee more and more to remayne

"Yr ever affectionate frende

"(signed) R. Leveson.

"Lilleshall Lodge

"16 May 1643.

"To my muche respected frende,

"Sr. Francis Oteley Knt.

"Governour of Shrewsbury, hast these."

Prince Maurice had now succeeded his brother, Prince Rupert, in the command of this part of the country. Sir Francis Otley, who was then Sheriff of Shropshire, was taken prisoner with other commissioners of the Prince about this time and somewhere in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury. The Parliamentary Committee of Shropshire lost no time in securing the prey they had seized : they feared a rising of the Royalists and at once appointed six "comaunders" who were to enlist all such well-affected persons "as are willing to beare armes for the defence of the towne : and that the mayor for the tyme beinge, Rowland Hunt Esqr. John Lowe, and Capt. John Betton aldermen, have twentye barrrells of powder forthwith delivered them out of the Castle, with match and bullett proporc'onable, and that fower hundred muskettes and pikes bee alsoe delivered to the said Mayor, R. H. J. L. Capt. J. B. out of the Castle for the use of such persons as shall bee enlisted accordinge to this order.

"(signed) Richd. Mason. Cire to the Com'tee."

The Committee were also very active in sending out strong parties to wrest certain strongholds from the Royalists. High Ercall, Tong Castle, Bridgenorth, Longford, Ludlow, probably these as well as other disputed places had changed masters more than once in the fortunes of war ; but after the battle of Naseby the royal garrisons in Shropshire fell one by one and sometimes in quick succession to the Parliament forces. In September, 1644, "The Shrewsbury Committee sent out under the command of Lieutenant Rinkling (a very good soldier) a party of foot and horse to surprize Moreton Corbet Castle, and sent unto the Lord Calvin to meet them with a party from Stoke, and upon a Saturday night aboute one or two of the clocke they came before the Castle, every man being assigned the place where he should fall on. Now they being come thither, and finding the people in greate security, ordered the business thus. First, the commander gave the word, which was Will and Tom, with order that if any asked who they were, to answer, Will, and if the other answered not, Tom, they should give fire ; this being done, they sent drums at a field's distance from the house, with orders to beat a march as soon as ever the assault began, which they did accordingly, and thereby made the enemy think that there had been a greate strength, whereas indeed it was no such matter ; then presently the Lieutenant Colonel calling aloud to bring up such a regiment to such a place, and such a regiment to another place, (this much daunted the hearts of the enemy at the hearing thereof,) and then hee sent some to discover the centery, with an order to tell the centery they were friends, and to hold him in discourse untill they had notice, which service was so well performed on all parts, that before the centinell knew who wee were, our ladders were mounted, and wee in possession of one of their works,

Garrisons,
Shropshire.

and then the enemy took the alarm, and our men plyed the work most bravely. The Lieutenant Colonel endeavoured with but ten men to have forced a little door, where not prevailing, he marched along over the tops of the works with but four more, and with these fell upon them that were in another work, and forced them with one volley to betake themselves to the house, where out of the windows and holes they shot fiercely at us, till wee by throwing in among them some hand grenades, they quitted these places, which gave way to our men to break a stone pillar of a window, where the Lieutenant Colonel, and his four men entered, and after them came many more ; but before these came in, the enemy being at least 80 foot and 30 horse, and fearfully supposing therefore, that a greater force than ours followed these five that entered into the Castle, they all instantly called out for quarter, which these five granted them, and by that time the rest of our forces were come up, and had entered the Castle, and so possessed themselves firmly of it, and in it Major Bridgeman, Captain Maurice, one Lieutenant, one Sergeant, one Quarter-master, one Ensigne, two horse colours, at least eighty Souldiers, thirty good horses, six barrells of powder, with much provisions The house was so strongly fortified that my Lord Calvin, and the Lieutenant Colonel, who behaved themselves most bravely in this action, said it might have been maintained against a greate strength ; for had it been day work, they should not have attempted it. In all this so resolute and desperate service, wee lost but one man, and very few wounded." Such is the account of the catastrophe preserved by the Parliamentarians. The Family annals merely record that it was "taken by stratagem at the time that the Parliamentarian forces occupied Shrewsbury. The forces obtained possession of the Castle under pretence of being allies and friends." Tradition adds that it was burnt down by the rebel soldiers by means of the quantities of broom which they carried into the Hall or banquetting Chamber. High Ercall was still unreduced but its fall came in time ; indeed, after the battle of Naseby its days were soon numbered. Evidently the Parliamentarians found High Ercall a hard nut to crack, for their newsmongers give long and very abusive accounts of the skirmishes and sieges which it had successfully withstood.

"The Burning Bush Not Consumed," of March 8th, gives an account of a notable device for annoying the inhabitants made by the Committee of Shrewsbury. It says : "By letters from the same source we received further intelligence that by the vigilant care of the Shrewsbury Committee there was raised a very strong worke within less than muskett shot of High Archall, by means whereof the enemy could not stir, in or out, but with apparent danger. And at the erecting of this fort, they tooke the opportunity of the Governor's absence, and before his returne they had made themselves stronge, that although Sir Jacob Astley came along, with him with aboute 1,000 horse and foot, they were enforced to retreat, and go back againe, not daring to adventure on a place so gallantly manned, and made so inaccessible both by nature and art as that was." In the following month of April a "Letter from Shrewsbury" says : "Rinkeling besieging High Archall, Lord Newport's house, had let down the drawbridge, and made a breach in the Church—200 men in it." It was still holding out on the 8th, as the "Weekly Account" has it "that this day there were letters out of Shropshire which certified that Lieutenant Colonel Rinkline with a partie of the Shropshire forces, being sent out by the Committee of Shrewsbury, came before the enemy's Garrison of High Arkall, the Lord Newport's house, which our forces have stormed and followed the business with very great valour ; they have shot away 20 barrells of powder, with which they have done good execution ; they have slaine and wounded many ; beate down the drawbridge, and made a greate breach into the Church, and hope in a short time to give a good account thereof." Notwithstanding all the 20 barrells of powder expended, the place held out. We read that in July "Sir William Vaughan with a party of horse having received some more supplies from his Majestie's Garrisons in these parts, marched to High Archall, then a second time besieged by the rebels, and behaved himself so gallantly, that he totally routed the besiegers, killed 100 on the place, and tooke 400 prisoners with all their baggage, without any considerable loss." But the end came, though not till May 1646. We read : "Upon a summons sent in by the besiegers of High Archall, in the County of Sallop, we understood this day the defendants sent an answer, desiring a parley aboute a surrender, which was hearkened and likely to take effect : it hath done much mischief to the Country : in it are 200 men, horse and foote ; they offer to march away, which ere we conclude we hope to give you an account of, for as we are confident by the next to hear it has surrendered, soe wee have cause to believe that they shall carry neither arms or ammunition with them." "The Burning Bush Not Consumed" gives its triumphant account of what happened. "Aboute the 30th of this instant March," the paper informs us, "we received intelligence by letters from the active Committee

"Mercurius
Belgicus."

"Weekly
Account."



Sir Francis Ottley, Governor of Shrewsbury, Lucy, his Wife, Richard and Mary, their Children

SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF BRIDGENORTH AND CASTLE 337

of Shrewsbury, of their greate and good success in the taking of that very strong and considerable Garrison of High Archall, after a short siege ; and having by granadoes and other great shott battered them by the space of nine hours together without intermission ; it being I say a strong place and well fortified, and having a deep moat aboute it, and in regard of the situation of it, not thought feasible to be taken by storm ; but by the blessing of GOD and our continual playing of our great shott and granadoes, which had done great execution among them, in short space we cause them to come to a parley, and whereat it was concluded, that the horse all but 40 should march away without armes ; that the foot should leave all their armes behind, and they should leave all their ammunition and provisions (of which there was great plenty) behind them, and that they may have a convoy to Worcester, the place they had made choice of to go to. There marched 212 soldiers and officers out of this Garrison ; and thus by GOD's mercie, and the indefatigable industrie, care, and valour of the Committee, Shropshire is now well cleared of all their enemies." "The Moderate Intelligencer" is so delighted with the activities of the Committee we find it writing : "it were good if there were more of them that they could go forth by turns into the field in arms. A fighting Committee that good, they have almost cleared their Country, and began last, and will have done first, they have taken Linsell Howse, the howse of Richard Lusey, and are now before High Archall Lord Newport's howse, as good a friend to the Parliament as the former, the clean contrary way. That taken, all is done but Bridgenorth and Ludlow," and, we may add, Caus Castle, which was really the very last to give up arms. Bridgenorth had many hard fights with the adverse party but both town and Castle held firmly for the King till these last sad days after the battle of Naseby. After many attempts and much resistance the town at last fell into the hands of the Parliamentarians though the Castle held out, and only surrendered when their case became hopeless. Sir Vincent Corbett with his troops were in the Castle ; they probably went there after the fall of High Archall. Captain John Corbet, the eldest son of the "Patriot," was also in the Castle. For three weeks the Parliamentary army continued to bombard the Castle, from a battery they had erected on a small hill opposite it, but without effecting a breach. Colonel Lavingstone, the Parliamentary commander, at length determined on another plan of assault—to sap the Castle—and ordered a party to make a large opening on the South side of the hill, intending thence to lay a mine under St Mary's Church (then within the precincts of the Castle) and close to the powder magazine. They commenced their operations and the place still called Lavingston's Hole may be seen as the visitor ascends the hill to the upper town. Colonel Howard, the Governor of the Castle, soon obtained information of this intention of the enemy, and resolved to surrender rather than risk the certain destruction of both inhabitants and Castle. This was effected, and the terms given and accepted were more liberal in this instance than can be recorded in many another. It must have been with the saddest hearts, nevertheless, that Garrison and people left the Castle walls. Sir Robert Howard, Sir Vincent Corbet, Sir Edward Acton, and Sir Francis Otley acted as Commissioners for the King : Colonel Andrew Lloyd, Colonel Robert Clive, and Robert Charlton, Esquire, were Commissioners for the Parliament. The King's Commissioners were allowed to march out of the Castle with the honours of war, to take their horses, arms, wearing apparel, and two men apiece with their swords and horses to a distance of forty miles, to reside within that area for a period of two months, during which time they received the option of deciding whether they would make their peace with the Parliament, or go beyond seas. Lady Otley, with her children and maidservants and personal effects, was permitted to return either to Pitchford or to The Hay. All the sick and wounded were allowed to recruit in the Low Town till their recovery and all strangers, officers and soldiers were offered the same conditions as the country gentlemen and were given passes or letters to the Committees of their several Counties.

The days of the heretofore impregnable Castle of Bridgenorth, which had stood such memorable sieges but had never been taken, were now numbered. In a few short months Cromwell ordered the Castle to be blown up and its ruins removed. All that now remains is the fragment of a tower or keep. It still stands, though quite out of the perpendicular ; its foundations seem in some way to have resisted the uprooting, leaving us a monument of the formidable walls behind which our forefathers defied the enemy, and its torn walls are witness back to the strength of what once was—Bridgenorth ! The name brings many a memorable scene back to the imagination from the days of the first siege of the Castle in the days of Henry Beauclerk, with its commander, Roger Corbet, the first Baron of Caus ; and again, when the grandsons, both of the King and of the Baron, in the days of the second Henry were assembled with the hosts of England to claim the lawful allegiance of the Royal Castle ! and now yet again, a Corbet, a

“ Scottish
Dove.”
“ Mercurius
Veredicus.”

descendant of Roger Fitz Corbet, is the defender of the Castle, and for his King ; but now the Castle is doomed, and the brave defender leaves the Castle with the honours of war, it is true, but with a sad mien and a yet sadder heart, for the fight is over—the enemies of his King have conquered. Little remains to be told of the struggle for authority. Caus Castle was the last stronghold. Colonel Hunt set out with a brigade from “ Shrewsbury towards Cause Castle, a stronghold of the enemies from whence they annoyed Shrewsbury ; the Castle was delivered in which was good store of men, horses, and ammunition, there were no Irishmen in the Castle, but 300 men. The Governor refusing to deliver it upon summons,” “ our forces began to storm it for a while ; at length the enemy put forth a white flag and desired a parley ; hereupon hostages were delivered on both sides, and articles agreed, That the Castle with all arms ammunition, matches, powder etc: should be delivered into the hands of the Parliament forces, except such as are allowed as follows. All officers of the Garrison should march away with their colours and swords only. That they should have safe convoy to the King’s next Garrison, if any such is found.” The “ Weekly Intelligencer ” tells us that Caus Castle was “ a place of great strength and little inferior to Basing ; it standeth on a rock not mineable, which was surrendered after seven days siege. By this the country is cleared on that side Severn to Ludlow, and so quite up to Montgomery.” The owner of Caus Castle was Sir Henry Fred. Thynne, knt. and Bart. ; he was away with his family at the time of the siege, staying a few days at Ludlow. We hear of him in the August of this year, 1645–6, as being a prisoner in Shrewsbury, his subsequent Fine was settled at £1,760 and £200 to be settled on a Church. He became a prisoner in the Fleet and so late as 1652 could not raise sufficient money to clear his payments and his family were suffering great distress. Lord Newport, the defender of High Archall, was fined £3,287 and his son £5,284, besides an annual sum of £170 for the support of Puritan clergymen. He was driven to seek voluntary exile, and died at Moulín in the Bourdonnais just one year after the murder of his royal Master.

Garrisons,
Shropshire.

In 1646 King Charles gave himself up into the hands of his victorious foes and issued the following order to the Governors of all the Garrisons still holding out for him :—

“ Charles Rex.

“ Having resolved to comply with the designs of the Parliament in every thing that may be for the good of the subjects and leave no means unassayed for removing the differences between us ; thereby we have thought fit, the more to evidence the reality of our intentions of establishing a happier and lasting peace, to require you, upon honourable considerations to quit those Towns, Castles, and Forts, entrusted by me to you, and to disband all the forces under your several commands.”—Thus ended the miserable days of the Civil War. The Victors held the King captive, a hostage for the good faith of their opponents ; but none save a few of the most irreconcilable fanatics foresaw the lengths of oppression and tyranny which overtook the conquered party. The murder of the King was the culminating act, and Cromwell held all in an unrelenting and iron grasp. Let us see what one of the noted Parliamentary leaders, Sir William Waller, thought of the new system which he and his way of thinking and acting had evolved and had fought for. He writes : “ After the expence of so much blood and treasure, all the difference between our former and present state is: that before time under the complaints of a slavery, we lived like Freemen ; now under the notions of a freedom, we live like slaves, enforced by continual fears, and oppositions, to maintain and feed on our misery.” Such is the testimony of one of the Parliament’s own and much esteemed Leaders ; what, then, can have been the fate and the suffering of those who opposed the Parliament ? Mr. Bellet, in his “ Antiquities of Bridgenorth,” the once Royal Borough, gives us that side of the picture. He tells us that “ under the Government of Cromwell, not only laymen who drew the sword in defence of the Crown, but clergymen also who maintained and taught the principles of loyalty, and who were too honest to abandon them because they were unpopular, were deprived of their revenues. It is computed that the number of ministers in the Church, who were ejected from their livings on this account, were above 9,000: the sufferings which many of them underwent in consequence form materials for the most deeply affecting narratives.” Our ancestor Sir Vincent Corbet was, of course, one of those who suffered and that deeply. He seems at the outset of strife to have placed all his property and all his affairs in the hands of three Trustees. We may suppose him thus, free to devote himself wholly to the task imposed on him by his King and the County. These Trustees were his younger brother Arthur, his brother-in-law Francis Thorne of Shelvock, who had married his eldest sister Beatrice, and Richard Baddeley, a friend. All seems to have gone well between the Trustees at first, but later, when events brought triumph to the opposers of loyalty, I surmise that Francis Thorne played so

much into the hands of the foe that Arthur Corbet and Richard Baddeley felt compelled to resign their trusteeship and thus record their strong disapproval. They made several appeals to the law, but without avail, and finally they resigned. Sir Vincent married about 1640. He married Sarah Monson, the daughter of Sir Robert Monson of Carleton, Lincolnshire. She too when a widow was obliged to appeal to the law against the actions of Francis Thorne. She makes a most pathetic appeal, stating that not only was she never permitted to see her son Vincent, but that also the younger children's portions were being much impoverished by Francis Thorne's handling of the estate (for his own ends, as she expresses it). Sir Vincent Corbet's eldest son Vincent must have been born about 1642. At this time the Church Registers were irregularly kept, and I do not know where he was baptised. Sir Vincent, his father, compounded for his estates and lived, I judge for the remainder of his life, in the Parish of Clerkenwell. Most of his younger children appear to have been baptised at St. Clement Danes. He died in December, 1656, in London, at Exeter House, and was interred in the little Church of Moreton Corbet on 21st January following. He was mulcted by Cromwell for the large sum of £1,588 and a yearly payment of £80. A good many lands were sold to raise this money, amongst them Harcourt Park Estate, under the Burg walls of Hawkestone, Preston Brockhurst also, but this latter was bought back again in 1838 from Col. Wingfield of Onslow, and from Mr. Lloyd Bailey's Executors. Had Sir Vincent but lived a few short years more with what exultation he would have hailed the return of the Monarchy. A letter from the son of one of his most active coadjutors during the anxious days of the Civil Wars testifies to the latent spirit of the Royalists, who bided their time and did not lose heart, though they lay low. The letter is given by Blakeway in the "History of Shrewsbury," and is from the son of Sir Francis Otley. Times had gone hardly in Shrewsbury: the malignants, as the Royalists were called, had been, most of them, ruthlessly expelled from the town. Better times were, however, at hand, the spirits of the party revived, and, as Blakeway tells us, "On the 11th Feb: Monk declared for the King. Upon that joyful event all ranks hastened to return to their allegiance: the Parliament broke up (March 16) the King returned May 29th and the following letter, written on that very day, by Richard Otley Esqr: of Pitchford, (son of the former Governor, now deceased) who hastened in the direction of Dover, to meet and congratulate his Sovereign depicts the universal joy which prevailed, in a manner more lively, because more natural, than the most studied periods of the historian." The letter runs thus:—

"My most deare and evere honored Mother.

"I praye God we are safe come to towne, and his Ma'tie, with his two brotheres, the Duke of Yorke and the Duke of Glouster, are now at White hall. I met them at Canterbury, and had the happnesse to be of the life guard, since Fryday last: wherein my content over ballanced the paynes I underwent. I most humbly thanke yor La'p for your py which I shall enquire after. I beg pardon that I am soe short in wrighting, being weary at p'sent: I humbly crave yo'r blessing: w' th my duty and thanks for y'r goodnesse to mine, for whom my hearty prayers to God are: I rest

Yo'r La'ps most dutifull sonne and servant

(signed)

Ric: Otley

May 29th

60

"These

"For my most deare Mother,
the Lady Lucy Otley at Pitchford in Shropshire "

"Leave this at Mr. Bannister, the King's Head in Shrewsbury."

Sir Vincent's last years were greatly embittered by debt and the great difficulties of raising money for his many daughters' marriage portions. His younger son was a minor at the time of his father's death. He died in 1678 and was buried at Moreton Corbet. There still remain some details to be chronicled of Sir Vincent Corbet's generation (the 1st Bart.) before we pass to the generation of his children. His Mother, Lady Elizabeth (née Boothby), only survived her son a few months. She died in the March of the same year, 1657, and was buried at Moreton Corbet. I think she must have passed the days of the Wars at High Hutton, which, we may remember, her husband Sir Andrew left her especially. She outlived many of her sons and many of her daughters. Her great support seems to have been her son Arthur, who apparently lived mostly at home looking after things. We can well realise that she needed a protector in those perilous times. According to Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy" she often risked her own safety in protecting and helping the persecuted. Her other able son was Richard, one year older than Arthur, but he lived at Shawbury Park and was married, but Arthur did not marry till after his

mother's death and probably lived with her. We shall have much to say of both in a later page. For the moment I will give some details of Dame Elizabeth Corbet's Will.

P.P.C.
Wotton, 324.

" Elizabeth Corbett of Morton Corbett Widdowe, 18th March sicke and weake in bodie, to be buried in the Parish Church of Moreton at the direction of my two sonnes Richard and Arthur Corbett.

Henrie Corbett and Andrew Corbett my two sonnes all my interest and estate in a mortgage which I have taken at Newton in the said County there being £320 disburste being certaine lands in the tenure and possession of Henrie Corbett of Newton and his Grandmother, as more att large may appeare by certaine Deeds and goode assurances in Lawe made over to mee which I will to be made to £400, and equally divided. My sonnes Richard and Arthur to take the management of my sonne Andrew's parte for his only use and maintenance for life and after his decease I give the £200 to Richard Corbett, my sonne and his heirs, and the moiety to my sonne Henrie, being att the disposal of my said sonnes Richard and Arthur to pay him the interest for life, and to be equally divided between them att his decease.

Arthur Corbett my sonne £242 s17 d6 owing to mee from my two Daughters

Jane Corbett and

Judith Corbett and

Richard Corbett my said sonne £10 to

Grace Corbett my Daughter £5 to by her a Gowne and to Richard Corbett their sonne, my grand-child 20s. I give to Ales Onslowe my Daughter P17 6s 8d which I lent her and desire it shall be made up to £100

Mrs Elinor Corbett nowe livinge with mee £2.

My three servant maides Martha, Anna and Dorathie 20s a-piece

Mrs Beatrice Thornes and

Mrs Mary Peers my two Daughters 20s a piece for ringes

Dorathie Buttowes 10s for a ringe

Mr Richard Alport my loving Friend 40s

Richard Addams 10s for a ringe.

Jane Corbett my Daughter a little baye mare wich I latelie had of Mr William Barkeley

Judith Corbett my Daughter £5 to buye her a nagge, and

I give to the said Jane and Judith my trunkes of fine linnen

Frances Houlbrooke my Daughter 5s.

Arthur Corbett my Sonne all other goods cattells or chattells and to be my sole Executor.

Richard Corbett

Judith Corbett

Jane Corbett

Richard Addams. Witnesses.

Proved 20th Maye 1658 by Arthur Corbett sole Executor and Sonne."

Jane Corbett married one of the Tybbatt family. I think Judith remained unmarried. They were two of quite the younger daughters in that very large family. Frances Houlbrooke was one of the elder ones. She had first married Captain Edmund Taylor of Wigmore. Jane Tybatts was soon left a widow and was assigned the Guardian of her three children—Vincent, Elizabeth and Jane. Both Jane and Judith had been left £1,000 between them by their grandmother Judith of Langley, Derby, their mother's mother, and the widow of their great uncle Sir Richard Corbet.

Very shortly before Sir Vincent Corbet died he made a very long Indenture handing over all his rather considerable property in Buckinghamshire and adjoining Counties to his old Trustees, Arthur Corbet, Francis Thornes and Richard Baddeley, in trust to raise portions for his several daughters. The Indenture contains very long accounts of the different lands and the names of the tenants holding them. I give the last clauses only, as they give directions for the various marriage portions and refer to the jointure of Dame Sarah his wife.

" Francis Thornes, Arthur Corbett and Richard Baddeley, and their Executors to permit and suffer Sir Vincent Corbett to receive the rents for life, and after his death in Trust with the rents of the messuages Farms, lands and premises in Solbury, and the rents of the Manors and lands in Salop or by Leases or Estates thereof in the first place to pay all debts as Sir Vincent shall owe

SIR VINCENT, KNT., 1ST BART. OF MORETON CORBET 341

on mortgage of the lands in Bucks and after that all other debts as he shall stand bound for as principall and by speciality, in such order as the Trustees think meet—and as to the messuages lands and tenements in Southcote als Surcott aforesaid in Trust to raise portions for Elizabeth Corbett, Mary Corbett, Rachel Corbett, Sarah Corbett, and Diana Corbett Daughters of Sir Vincent Corbett ; for Elizabeth £2,000 and for Mary Rachel Sarah and Diana 1,000 pounds a piece and if any die before 24 or marriage the portions equally among the others so that those be not lesse than three. but if lesse to such children of Sir Vincent Corbett, as the Trustees shall think fit—and after payment of debts and raising of portions and the Trustees remunerating themselves, for the execution of the Trust, and any Suits-at-Law and to convey the remainder of the said Manors—and to such persons and for such uses as Sir Vincent Corbett by any writing or by his last Will shall appoint, and for want of such appointment to the person who shall be heire of Sir Vincent—and to his heires and their heires and assignees for ever—provided that these presents are on the express condition that the Trustees shall in the first place with the rents of all the said Manors Lands, and premises in Bucks, which are in jointure to Dame Sarah Corbett, raise the cleere yearly sum of £600 to be paid her half yearly for life, to commence from the death of Sir Vincent Corbett, any thing in these presents to the contrary notwithstanding, and these presents are on the condic'on that if Sir Vincent Corbett be minded to make voide the same, and in the presence of three credible witnesses shall tender to the Trustees 10s, then these presents shall cease and be voide."

Witnesses	William Saunders John Markham marke of Elizabeth Dubble."
-----------	---

Sir Vincent Corbett must have died within a few days of the signing of this Indenture. All his daughters married save one, "Rachel." Elizabeth became Lady Bolles of Scampton, Lincolnshire ; Mary married Sir Thomas Estcourt ; Sarah married Phineas Fowke, M.D. ; and Diana became Mrs. Roche. Lady Elizabeth Bolles died in 1676, and the following year Mary became Lady Estcourt. The family seem then to have been living in Queen Street, Covent Garden, and she was married in Lincoln's Inn Chapel. Robert, the younger son, entered the Law as a profession. He was a Barrister and a student of Lincoln's Inn, but died quite as a young man, for he was almost the youngest of the family. His death is recorded in the Parish Register of Moreton Corbet as being buried there but dying in London 1678.

Family dissensions very soon made themselves felt and heard after Sir Vincent's death. The provisions of the Indenture appear to have been carried out in a manner most unsatisfactory to all concerned save to the one Trustee, Francis Thornes ! The other two Trustees resigned, in consequence, and in 1659 the poor widow, the Lady Sarah, and her Daughters, appealed in Chancery against the manner of their treatment. The appeal ends thus :—" And after his " (Sir Vincent's) " death the said Trustees were willing or seemed to be to performe the Trust, but Arthur Corbett and Richard Baddeley afterwards pretending that in regard Francis Thornes inveigled and enticed Vincent Corbett the eldest son from yo'r Oratrix his Mother, and that Francis Thornes as concerning the Trusts persistently drove at his own ends whereby the Estate was in danger to be ruined and y'r Oratrix the Mother and Daughters and all the children undone forebore to prosecute the Trust and doe forbore to intermeddle therewith.—yett Francis Thornes doth receive the profits of the said Estate, and the better to color the same, doth continually incense Vincent Corbett against his Mother not suffering yo'r Oratrix to have the comfort to see him, her said child, nor doth suffer any person whose affection tends to the good and prosperity of the yssue of Sir Vincent Corbett and his Estate to have any speech or communing with the said Vincent Corbett the Sonne, but he Francis Thornes by the meanes aforesaid converts to his own use all the rents and profits etc. . . ."

Richard Baddeley's Answer is that he has renounced the Trust. Francis Thornes says that Vincent Corbett never expressed any wish to see his mother. He was but a boy. Born in 1642, he can only have been fourteen about, at his father's death. He was married as soon as practicable to Francis Thornes' daughter "Elizabeth," for we find that their daughter Beatrice was baptised at Moreton Corbet in December, 1668. Their son Vincent was baptised in August 1670. Another son, Andrew, whose baptism is not mentioned, was buried at Moreton Corbet in February, 1671, and another son, Francis, was baptised in June, 1672, and died the following year. Sir Vincent Corbett himself, the second Baronet, died in London of small pox in 1680 and was interred at Moreton Corbet in the February of that year. Thus of the second Baronet's children only two were living

at his death—a daughter Beatrice and the young Vincent, his heir. A certain mystery seems to surround the last years of Dame Sarah, the widow of the first Baronet and mother of the second, whose death we have just recorded. I believe she was in very straitened circumstances and must have found herself both lonely and friendless after the marriage of her daughters and the death of her youngest son, Robert. A Sir Charles Lee, seemingly a person of influence living at Edmonton, appears to have befriended her. Probably he vindicated her claim at Court to notice and advancement and even care at the hands of the King, for whose father she and her husband had suffered and risked so much. One can only conjecture.

Had her husband's life been prolonged but a few short years, how greatly would he have rejoiced in the triumph of 1660, and the shadow of such reflections must have dimmed the satisfaction with which she received the honour of the Viscountess-ship when conferred on her, for her life, by the restored monarch, Charles II. She would also accept it with gratitude as recognition, though a very tardy one, of the great services and sacrifices which her late husband had so freely made in the cause of his Country and his Sovereign. Dame Sarah was created Viscountess Corbet of Lynchlade, Co. Bucks. This honour, it is recorded, was bestowed on the widow of Sir Vincent Corbet, on account of his services on behalf of the late King; and she was created a Peeress for life on 23rd October, 1679, with the title of Viscountess Corbet, of Lynchlade, co. Buckingham. She was at least 59 when the honour was conferred on her, and at that time would have found herself singularly friendless and alone. Her daughters were married, and several had died. Elizabeth, who had married Sir Thomas Bolles of Scampton, Lincolnshire, died in 1686. Mary had married Sir Thomas Estcourt. Rachel lived and died at Shrewsbury. Sarah married Dr. Phineas Fowke and died in 1686. Robert, the youngest son, had also died. He was entered at Lincoln's Inn about 1668. We find he was interred at Moreton Corbet in 1678, just one year before the recognition of his father's services and the honour conferred on his mother. One can but feel how lonely and friendless the Viscountess's position appears, and we fear that poverty made her situation still harder. This may explain the cause of her second marriage. She married, two months after she was created Viscountess, Sir Charles Lee of Edmonton. The marriage Allegation gives a few details :—

Complete
Baronetage.

“ 1679 Dec: 10th
Sir Charles Lee = The Rt, Honble, Sarah
knt, of Edmonton Viscountess Corbett
widower about 58. of Lynchlade Bucks widow
alleged by John Standish B.D.
Fellow of St Peter's Cambridge
At Newington Green Middlesex.”

The Viscountess died a very few years after her second marriage in 1682 and was buried at Edmonton. Sir Charles was accorded Letters of Administration, there being no will. I cannot discover many details of Sir Charles Lee's life. He is mentioned in Shaw's "Knights Bachelors," as having been knighted at Oxford in 1645. He was of Billingsley, Warwickshire, where he succeeded his brother, Sir Robert, and I think shortly afterwards the lands were sold to the Whalley family. He is also buried at Edmonton, where he died in 1700. Sir Charles Lee appears to have had but one child, a daughter Elizabeth, married to a Sergeant-at-Law, one James Mundy, of the Inner Temple. By 1711 all seemed to have died; as at that date we find the then only surviving daughter, Catherine Mundy, sold her Grandfather Sir Charles Lee's property in Edmonton, and we lose all trace. Sir Vincent Corbet, the second Baronet, died before his mother, the Viscountess. He died in London of small pox in 1680 and was interred at Moreton Corbet. He was not more than 38. Two children survived him, a daughter Beatrice and his son and heir, Vincent, christened at Moreton Corbet in 1670. We may remember that his mother was Elizabeth, a daughter of the Francis Thornes, of Shevlock, the Trustee who had caused so many family dissensions.

Elizabeth and her husband, Sir Vincent the second, were first cousins. Elizabeth's mother was Beatrice, the eldest of Sir Andrew Corbett's and Elizabeth Boothby's large family. All went well with the young heir, but nine years of age at his father's death; he made himself universally beloved and respected, and in due course he went to Christ Church, Oxford. There he died at the early age of 19, and with him passed many hopes. A very elaborate epitaph on its handsome



Sir John Corbet, 2nd Bart. of
Stoke and Adderley



Sir Vincent Corbett, 3rd and last
Bart. of Moreton Corbet



Old Gate Tower of Castle, and Church, Moreton Corbet *Face p. 343*

EPITAPH TO THE YOUNG SIR VINCENT & LAST BART. 343

monument records his death. It is said to have been composed by his tutor at Christ Church, with whom the young man was a favourite. It is, of course, in Latin, but I have a rough translation :—

“ CORBETTORUM MANIBUS.

Especially to those of the most illustrious and delightful Youth
VINCENT CORBET Baronet

who died July 28th 1688 in his 19th year

Greeting

Here, all around, beneath the sheltering roof
Of this rude fane, the race of Corbets rests ;
A race of braves, mighty in deeds of war,
Nor ignorant of triumphs—here their shields
And spears, blunted and bruised in battle, lie ;
Here too their helmets, idle now, and arms
No longer needed. Andrew here reclines
Under this hallowed dust—there Roger sleeps,
Life's battle o'er, beneath yon marble pile—
One urn, the Father's, one the Grandson's holds.
And Vincent, though thou mightest have repaired
This ruin of thy race, had fate so willed,
Though thine the spirit once again to claim
The victor's palm, and thine ancestral fame
To extend yet further, thee a kindly fate
A strong protection to thine own presents,
And thee alone a fallen house demands.
O youth celestial ! Thee of gentle mould
Foreseeing nature formed, that, versed in all
The graceful arts, thou mightest join the camp
Of tuneful Phœbus, and assay to try
The rage of Mars, and thy forefather's own.
But born 'neath evil star, with gods adverse,
The sable goddess grudged thee to the earth,
And on life's very threshold, in the first
Approach of years, thy Father's race and name,
Assaying to blot out, with hastening step
Unpitying sent thee to the shades below.
But now amongst thine ancestors enthroned
Thou sittest—around thee throng thy sire
And great grandsires, the Briton's native gods—
Above the lofty stars, in distant heights
Thou shinest resplendent, and the moon and sun
Own thee superior. Here meanwhile in peace
Near to the borders of the Fathers' home,
Thy body rests within the honoured shrine,
And of thy household gods the sum and worth
By thy blest ashes is the greater made,
The Crow thy triumph shares, and here too stands
The elephant of Scotland—badges these
Of Corbets' race for many ages past—
And faithful e'en in death, thy tomb protect.”

“ To the best of sons this monument was placed by a most affectionate mother, Elizabeth, daughter of Francis Thornes knight, who herself also traced her descent, on the Mother's side, from the Corbets, being forsooth of Vincent Corbet grandfather, Father, and son, the granddaughter, wife and mother.”

The old knights would perhaps have smiled at this flow of words recording their youthful descendant's death, while they were satisfied with their shield and sword memorialised in stone, yet the mother's grief appeals to us, and though a little extravagance of words may perchance induce us to smile as we read, we also feel that they were a consolation to the mother to possess and to know that she had them, lasting, in marble. The Parish Registers show that for several generations many of the married daughters were brought to Moreton Corbet to be interred in the Family Vault. The walls of the Corbet aisle in the little Church bear many a name and epitaph. One strikes me as curiously elaborate and I will quote it. Long epitaphs were fast becoming a mode to express the sorrow and loss of the survivor. The epitaph in question records the virtues and death of Sarah, one of the younger daughters of Sir Vincent the Royalist. She married Dr. Phineas Fowke, who thus commemorates his grief. The following is a rough translation :—

“ To Almighty GOD, the Saviour of the World

And to the lasting memory of a peerless woman, of one such as is rarely met with, most sweet, most deeply regretted

Now among the Saints

Near the Altar of the Lord is placed all that was earthly of Sarah, the fourth daughter of Mr Vincent Corbet, of Moreton Corbet, in the County of Salop, knight and Baronet and of Sarah his wife, the daughter and Co-heiress of Mr. Robert Munson, from Lincolnshire, knight ; the most dearly beloved wife of Phineas Fowke M.D. who was sprung from an ancient family in Staffordshire.

Which best and holiest of women indeed was most worthy, not only to flourish after death in the undying memory and hearts of her own relations, but also to be handed to posterity as one to be regarded even beyond the trustworthiness of an inscription on marble (and that indeed no false one) ; of piety towards GOD unvarying, not counterfeit, of charity towards her neighbour genuine, not affected ; of modest speech ; of open brow ; of a liberal and courteous disposition ; of hands free from guilt ; of a generous and open heart ; on all occasions adorned with most easy and pleasant manners ; for every intercourse of life (among her intimate friends) free, courteous, agreeable, anger she knew not, nor quarrels ; she was humble without pride ; frugal without luxury ; modest without ostentation ; she desired nothing, except in every way courteously to oblige all ; so that you would judge her to have been formed not by art but by nature always to gain the goodwill of men of whatever rank. Moreover in loyalty and conjugal affection she so excelled, every where most lovable, above all others beloved, that those flames of most ardent affection with which she had inspired her Husband, neither had any limit nor shall have any end. To whom she was no less dear while living than a source of grief in her death.—To whom she never caused any pain, save in her death, nor will he experience any true joy, till, he shall have ended this mortal life, and be together with her, clothed with immortality—which is his highest wish

Yea, Lord Jesus, come quickly

She died in childbirth, with her first child, in the greatest sufferings, with consummate patience—having given birth to a little son, who had but just been dipped in the Holy Bath of Baptism (and marked by the name of Thomas) when he died ; who, the innocent cause of his Mother's death, resigns the earth which he had received, and mingles his ashes with those of his Mother ; so that his Father is made unhappy, the blow being doubled by a bitter lot, at the same time childless and widowed—Blessed be the name of the Lord. Meanwhile to the better half of his own Soul (and the more excellent) to his most deserving wife, her Husband, sorrowing and mindful of his wedded life (L. M. P.) erects this small monument of his boundless love and devotes his love to GOD.

The last but one of his race.

As she had lived piously and calmly, so she resigned her soul to the Father of Spirits, on Dec: 3rd in the year of the Christian Era, 1686, aged 32 years and 6 months ; looking for a blessed resurrection of the flesh from Jesus Christ, in the day of the Lord.

Happy, modest, pious, of illustrious birth and renowned for beauty, both the ornament and grief of your Husband,

Best of women, farewell.”

The remaining tablets and monuments relate almost entirely to members of the family of Richard Corbet of Shawbury Park and his descendants. This Richard was one of the only two younger brothers of Sir Vincent the Royalist who left descendants; and to him and his heirs the headship of the Corbet Family reverted on the untimely death of the third and last Baronet, his great nephew. The title also lapsed. In a former page I alluded to this Richard Corbet of Shawbury Park, and to his younger brother Arthur, as being the only two of Sir Andrew's large family, besides the eldest son, who left descendants. I will leave the chronicle of Richard Corbet and his descendants to the pages of the next and last chapter of this History. It is his descendants who now hold lands and title at Moreton Corbet, for the title was re-created early in the nineteenth century. Arthur, younger than Richard of Shawbury Park by a year, also left descendants, and they must be mentioned as they still retain the male descent direct from the Main Line. We remember that their mother, Dame Elizabeth (Boothby), left her affairs in the hands of these two brothers, Richard and Arthur, particularly the younger, Arthur. Richard, the elder one, was married and lived at Shawbury Park; Arthur, who, as a pleasant conjecture, I assume lived with his mother at High Hatton, was not married. He married, however, after his mother's death, Mrs. Sarah Lyttleton. The marriage took place at Moreton Corbet in 1659, and the title of Mrs. is attached to her name, the indication of the day for gentle birth. She was the daughter of Sir Edward Lyttleton of Pillaton, of Royalist fame, and though reference books omit her name among Sir Edward's children we know her to have been one of the younger ones, as Arthur Corbet alludes in his Will to the help given him by his sister-in-law Anne Cole. Anne Lyttleton had married many years previously one of the well-known Cole family of Shrewsbury. The first child born to Arthur and Sarah was Robert, christened in the little Church of his forefathers at Moreton Corbet in 1660, where the Parish Registers also record the baptisms and deaths at intervals of the whole family. Arthur's third daughter was called Anne after her maternal aunt; she became Mrs. Heath, but lived but a short married life, for the young mother and her first-born child both pass their long sleep in the quiet vaults of Moreton Corbet Church. Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, married a Bennion. Catherine appears to have been somewhat of an invalid and never married, but Sarah, the youngest of Arthur's children, was married in Shawbury in 1701-2. Arthur Corbet himself died in 1690, his wife Sarah a few years later; they are both buried in the Vault at Moreton Corbet. After the deaths of father and mother and the marriage of his young sister Sarah, Robert, Arthur's only son, seems to have left Shropshire and settled in Birmingham. He married there in 1702—Elizabeth Jones. The Registers of St. Martin's, where the wedding took place, do not state whether Elizabeth were widow or spinster. She may have been one of the well-known family of Jones of Shrewsbury or she may have been a Barker, the name given to their second son. The first-born son must have died soon after birth; only his burial is entered in the Parish Registers of St. Martin's, Birmingham. His name was Arthur, but in the entry it is almost a complete hieroglyphic and impossible to decipher beyond the first letter or two, being written over an erasure. These Registers during the following years up to 1719 contain the record of the baptisms of nine of Robert's children and of eight of their burials, an appalling list, only one daughter, Elizabeth, surviving at that date. In 1719 the youngest son, the fifth, was born and was called James. He was the youngest but one of this large family. A little daughter was born the following year called Catherine, and these three, Elizabeth, James and Catherine, were the three children who lived to inherit their father's property at his death. Robert was a pronounced Jacobite, and, like many of the same leanings, he bought one or two well-known coaching inns in Birmingham, one of which was the "Hen and Chickens," long since pulled down. The Jacobites of the day appear to have frequently become owners of the coaching inns in large centres of traffic as a means of keeping in touch with their scattered comrades. He bought a good deal of land and houses in Birmingham. Amongst them was the important Bowling Green, which figures in the old maps of Birmingham, with its handsome entrance and gateway, as Corbet's Bowling Green. The year previous to this purchase he was called upon to sign the oath of allegiance to the House of Hanover, an assurance called for from all known to have Jacobite leanings. This Roll is now preserved in the Reference Library at Birmingham, and Robert's name is found there amongst a host of other Shropshire neighbours. I believe Birmingham was the first town, or quite one of the first, to establish a public library in its midst, and the site chosen for it when the scheme took form was a part of Robert Corbet's property in or near New Street. He lived till 1736-7. In the meantime St. Philip's Church had been built and the new Parish separated from St. Martin's, and as much of Robert Corbet's property lay within the precincts of the new Parish

the Corbets were accounted among its parishioners, and henceforth it is to the Registers of St. Philip's that we must look for Corbet information. It was at St. Philip's that Robert Corbet was buried, and where, at the end of about ten years, Elizabeth his widow was also buried. The principal citizens of Birmingham made their homes in this new quarter which grew up round the Church of St. Philip. The situation of the new Church is fine: it stands on rising ground, but in architecture it is far inferior to the Mother Church of St. Martin's, which has the association of history and also possesses some very fine monuments to the de Bermingham Family who were the old lords of the Manor. The Corbet dwelling-house, in Temple Street, was evidently one such as those described in old accounts of Birmingham, large and commodious, with beautiful gardens and orchards sloping down to the stream flowing at the foot of the hill. One peculiar feature is given of these houses in Temple Street: they had each a substantially built summer house placed at the remotest end of the garden, sufficiently large to sleep in if desired and with cellars underneath them. It would be difficult to reconcile this description of the houses in Temple Row or Street with its present aspect. Elizabeth, the eldest surviving daughter, married Joseph Packwood. He was one of the Commissioners of the Hampden Charity and of a staunch Royalist family. He predeceased his wife, leaving her all his property and after her death to the little sister Catherine. This latter married the Rev. John Garlick, who died a few months after their marriage, and she then left Birmingham, and we hear of her with her brother James, who had left Birmingham on his mother's death and settled once more in the old County at Bridgenorth, where he married (I suppose) a cousin, Sarah Corbet. They also had quite a numerous family, of whom the greater number died before maturity. One daughter and two sons only survived—Catherine, a son James Andrew, and a son born just before his mother's death called Richard. James, the father, very soon married again Mary Whitehouse, the daughter of the Rector of one of the Bridgenorth Parishes. She survived her husband, who died in 1774-5 and who was buried at St. Leonard's, Bridgenorth, leaving two young daughters by his last marriage, Sarah, who eventually married Thomas Cooper, and Frances, who married Joseph Barnes. The marriage is entered in the Registers of St. George's, Hanover Square. The three children of the marriage, between James Corbet and Sarah, namely, Catherine, James Andrew, and Richard, inherited the Birmingham property, which was all sold very shortly after the death of the father, James, and divided equally between the three. Catherine married later, one William Jackson, a marriage which appears to have been disapproved of by her brother, James Andrew, and was a great cause of separation between them. James Andrew himself sought his fortunes in London, where he became a very successful and wealthy merchant. He married Anne Rodick, only daughter of Archibald Rodick, of Wellingboro', Northants, and Hoddam, near Dumfries. Richard, the younger brother, occupied himself with the service of his birthplace and was High Bayliff for the High Town more than once; indeed, he died during the latter term of his office. He had married Mary Field and held land in the parish of Claverly, which on his wife's death was left to the children of his two half-sisters, Sarah Cooper and Frances Barnes. I have no trace of the young ones of either of these young families, though there were four in each. Probably they shared the fate of so many of our youth of that date. I except one, however, Catherine Frances Corbet Barnes, whose career was so remarkable that it is of interest to detail it. She married, as quite a girl, Thomas, Lord Cochrane, afterwards tenth Earl of Dundonald, G.C.B., Admiral of the Red, Rear Admiral of the Fleet. She passed most of her married life abroad, closely associated with her husband's stirring life of heroic deeds and adventure. The details I give are taken from a MS. relating some remarkable episodes of her life. "Many who will recollect her as one of the brightest stars in the gay saloons of London and Paris, would scarcely credit the adventurous career through which she passed, the dangers to which she has been exposed, or the alternations of severe hardship and the most brilliant fortune which have been her lot." She was married while very young, and at nineteen was already following her gallant Husband to the lands of the far West, taking with her the two young children. It was in support of the Republics of South America that Lord Cochrane, as he was then, achieved an undying fame and gained new laurels. In November, 1818, Lady Cochrane arrived in the beautiful bay of Valparaiso and landed amidst enthusiastic greetings from the assembled Chilians who were eager to greet their brave Admiral and his devoted wife. For some time our fascinating young heroine, spoken of by General Miller in his History as a "flattering specimen of the beauty of England," remained at Santiago, entering with all the vivacity of youth into the gaieties of the place. At length the Chilian Fleet was ready for sea, and Lady Cochrane returned to Valparaiso with her children to take leave of her husband. "The last gun had fired. Her Ladyship had

returned from the Admiral's ship, and the Aide-de-Camp had landed to report to her the latest intelligence from the Admiral ; when suddenly the sound of a loud and long hurrah broke on Lady Cochrane's ear. She flew to the window and saw her eldest boy, not yet four years old, had insisted to the not unwilling officer that he should be taken to his Father ; and he was wildly waving his cap from the arms of the Flag Lieut: by the time that he was conveyed on board, the vessel was under weigh, and the child could not be sent back. Without clothes, except what were made for him by the sailors and with no other attendance than that which their rough but kindly natures could bestow, the brave little fellow remained many months in the ship enduring hardships, and at times exposed to the fire of the enemy in several actions." Meanwhile Lady Cochrane resided chiefly at Valparaiso, giving splendid hospitality to the Spanish, English and American residents, enjoying the respect and esteem of all, and promoting the success of the cause in every possible way. She moved to a very beautiful spot in 1819, "Quillote," known as the Garden of Chili. Here she suffered much annoyance from the hostility of the party opposed to the National Cause. Indeed, on one occasion an attempt was made on her life by a man who, unperceived, had gained admittance to her apartment. He threatened her with instant death unless she would divulge the secret orders under which her husband acted. A struggle took place, and before she could obtain help she had received a severe wound from the man's stiletto. The assassin was captured and condemned by the Supreme Government. In the autumn of 1820 Lady Cochrane volunteered to take some very important despatches from Valparaiso to Mendoza, involving the passage of the Cordillera itself, a no mean peril at that late season of the year. It was thought that a lady would incur less suspicion from the opposing party. Her ladyship reached the highest pass of the Cumbre on the 12th October, a feat almost unprecedented at that season, by reason of the intense cold and the depth of the snow ; the despatches reached their destination in safety. Many, indeed, were the escapes and adventures of this wonderful lady. One more, however, must be related. It forms the subject of a picture of her in the possession of the present Lord Dundonald. Lady Cochrane had been obliged to undertake a journey into the interior of Peru, and was enjoying the hospitality of the Marchioness de la Pracer. She remained with her friend during five weeks, often meeting friends of different political opinions, and considering herself safe from the attacks of the Royalists, whilst under the protection of her friend. A large Ball was given on the eve of Lady Cochrane's departure, and whilst the festivities were at their height Lady Cochrane received the intelligence that the Royalists intended to retain her as their hostage. With that coolness and decision which so remarkably characterised her, Lady Cochrane ordered a relay of her best horses to be got ready, despatched her trusty nurse with her infant daughter under an escort, and she herself escaped unperceived from the Ball-room about midnight with the help of a cloak hastily thrown over her. It is this moment which forms the subject of the picture. The kindness of the Marquis de Toare Tagley was of essential service to her in this peril. He was Governor of Truxillo and sent a palanquin with horses and mules to convey the party across the Sierra of Pasco. In this palanquin her sick child was conveyed, and her Ladyship following rapidly on horseback overtook them at 3 o'clock in the morning at the Inca bridge. It was impossible to reach their destination without crossing this fearful bridge, where only one could pass at a time, and owing to the proximity of the hostile army it was imperative that the whole party should be across before sunrise.

The palanquin was still on the same side of the river, with its precious burden, when the bugles of the advancing Royalists broke on the ears of the distracted mother. She quickly took the little one in her arms and tried to cross the bridge, but on reaching the centre the vibration was so strong that she felt quite unable to proceed ; the rushing torrent below rocking the bridge and literally dashing over her. In this moment of extreme peril her faithful soldier servant, Pedro, seeing her danger, crept towards her on his hands and knees, and imploring his mistress to remain perfectly still, he succeeded in disengaging the child from her arms, and crawled to the opposite shore. Lady Cochrane, with great exertion, also got safely across and before the pursuing Royalists reached the bridge. In a few years more Lord Cochrane's command in Chili was ended and he and his wife were once more in England, prior to their departure for Greece, where Lord Cochrane was about to strike a blow for liberty in that distracted country. He and his wife were both present at a performance in the theatre in Edinburgh, when some allusion to the Greek cause was made and her Ladyship's presence was recognised. The whole audience stood up and showed their admiration in shouts of applause. Lady Cochrane was evidently much affected and Sir Walter Scott, who happened to be present, sent the following verses to the Edinburgh newspapers of 1826 to commemorate the occasion :—

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

LINES TO LADY COCHRANE

By Sir Walter Scott.

" I knew thee and albeit myself unknown
 I called on Heaven to bless thee for the love
 The strength, the constancy thou long hast shown
 Each selfish aim and womanish fear above
 And, Lady, Heaven is with thee, thou art blest
 Blest in whate'er thy inmost soul loves best—
 Thy name—ask Brazil—for she knows it well
 It is the name a hero gave to thee
 In every letter lurks there not a spell,
 The mighty spell of Immortality?
 Ye sail together down Time's glittering stream
 Around your heads two kindred halos gleam.

Even now as through the air the plaudits ring
 I marked the smiles that o'er her features came
 She caught the word that fell from every tongue
 And her eyes brightened at her Husband's name
 And brighter yet became the bright eyes' blaze
 It was his country and she felt the praise !

* * * * *

May the Gods guard thee Lady ! wheresoe'er
 Thou wanderest in thy love and loveliness
 For thee may every sky and Sun be fair
 Each hour instinct with more than happiness
 May all thou valuest be good and great
 And may my wishes be thy own future fate."

Lady Dundonald, as she became later, lived to a great age ; she died at Boulogne, where the last years of her life were passed in complete retirement.

Many of the children of Lady Dundonald's uncle, James Andrew Corbet, and his wife Anne Rodick, did not live to grow up. The family passed their winters in their comfortable dwelling in Friday Street, after the manner of the rich merchants of the day ; and for the summer they had a delightful country house at Walthamstow, where as years grew on them, they came to live entirely, and died there ; their monument is in the Parish Church. Only two of their children left descendants, the eldest son, named Archibald after the Rodick grandfather, and Elizabeth, the only daughter, who married a Tozer of Alphortons and has left many descendants. Elizabeth's eldest brother, Archibald, married a member of a well known Royalist family, Toovey of Oxfordshire ; his wife's name was Hannah Conquest Toovey, her grandmother was one of the Conquests of Hoghton Conquest, Beds, her mother was a Miss Surrey, her father Thomas Toovey of Hemel Hempstead and King's Langley. Archibald Corbet died at the age of 57 ; his widow outlived him many years and is buried at Betchworth, then the home of her second son James, who lived there for nearly sixty years. He also was one of a large family, but many of whom did not live to grow up. There were three sons and many daughters, five of whom married, severally, members of the families of Greaves, Berger, Wilson, Rasch, Twentyman.

This latter name is an unusual one and had a most romantic origin. The family came from Cumberland and Westmoreland, where Border frays and raids abounded and where Castles and homesteads were the objects of constant assaults and surprises ; the family then bore the name of Liddell, of which family Lord Ravensworth is the head. In one of these typical fights, a younger son so stoutly defended and routed a knot of these assailants of his father's home and lands, and in so brilliant a manner, that he was knighted and given a special name and crest to commemorate the deed. The name was changed to Twentyman and has been borne by his descendants ever since. The motto to the crest describes the action somewhat. In English it runs : " I vanquished twenty—through honour I change my name." Some members of the family in these days use the English, some the Latin equivalent. Twentymans were found at Newark in the time of King James I. and his journey through England, to see his new Capital and bespeak

Catherine, bap. at Moreton Corbet 1661 | Anne Corbet, bap. 1666; = Thomas Heath buried at Moreton Corbet 1686 | Elizabeth Cook, widow

Gough

Arthur, bur. at St. Martin's, Birmingham, 1703 | Sarah, bur. at St. Martin's, Birmingham, April, 1715 | Anne, bur. at St. Martin's, Birmingham, 1713 | Barker Corbet, or Bennion, possibly bap. and bur. at St. Martin's, 1706 | Dorothy Corbet, bap. and bur. at St. Martin's, 1707-8 | 1st William Packard, bap. wood, s.p. 1723

Robert, buried 173ances
Corbet

James C. Barnes, ob. s.p.

Richard Corbet Barnes, ob. s.p.

Robert Corbet, bap. at St. Leonard's, Bridgenorth, 1748; buried 1752

John Garlick Corbet, bap. at St. Leonard's, Bridgenorth, 1749; buried 1750

Catherine Corbet, bap. at St. Leonard's, north, Bridgenorth, 1751

Archibald Corbet, bap. at St. Matthew, Friday St., 1785; buried at Walthamstow, 1843; married 1813, at King's Langley

Hannah Conquest, dau. of Thomas Toovey, of Hemel Hempstead and King's Langley; buried at Betchworth, Surrey

Janet Corbet, Mat; ob. 1799

Anne Sophia Corbet, buried King's Langley 1819, æt. 2 years

Conquest Corbet

Sarah = Lewis Corbet Berger

Sophia = Rev. Richd Corbet Greaves

Julia Grace Corbet

Captain Richard John Corbet, born September 20, 1830; married

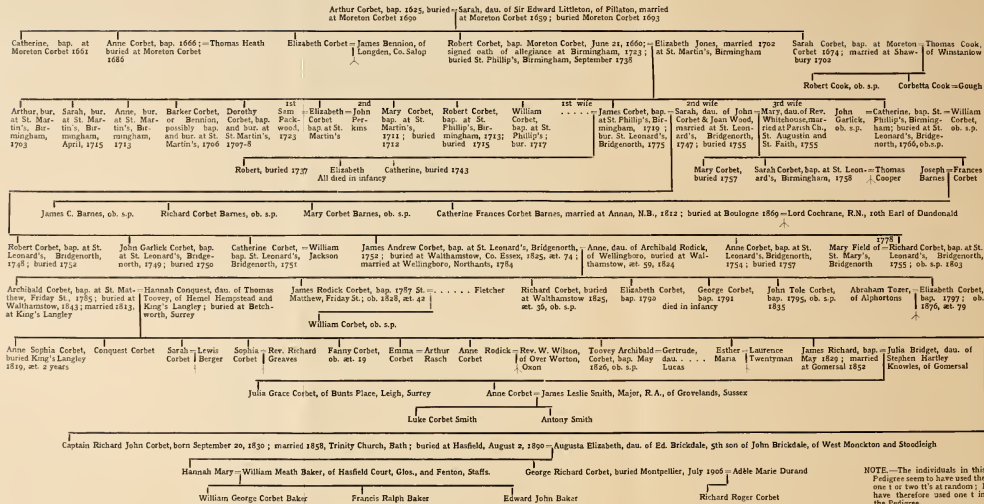
Hannah Mary = William Meath En this
sed the
om; I

William George Corbet Baker t in

the fealty of his new subjects. It is chronicled that he halted at Newark, where a Twentyman was one of the Aldermen and owner of the "Saracen's Head," where the monarch was to pass the night, and where the Alderman's son, a student fresh from Cambridge, entertained King Jamie with a learned and eloquent Latin Oration ; which greatly gratified that monarch, we are told. Archibald Corbet's three sons, already mentioned, were Toovey Archibald the eldest. His service life was passed in India, where he had a successful career, partly military, partly civilian ; he served through the great Indian Mutiny with honour and distinction and ended his Indian life as Lieutenant Colonel, and Deputy Commissioner and Sessions Judge of Jaloun, an important and at that date a very disturbed district. Later he married, but left no children. The second son, James, married one of the Knowles family of Gomersal, Yorkshire. He was wealthy and at one time his herd of Jersey cows and bulls had a great name. He left lands in both Surrey and Sussex, where his two daughters now reside. The eldest is unmarried, the younger is married to Captain James Leslie Smith, of the Royal Artillery. They have two sons ; the eldest has done brave service with our soldiers at the Front, the younger is still at Rugby. The third son—the younger brother of the above-mentioned James—Richard John Corbet, was also a soldier and in the Indian service ; but he retired before middle life. He married the only surviving child of Edward Brickdale, the fifth and youngest son of the Brickdales of Somerset and Devon. A son and daughter survived him : the latter married a Gloucestershire Squire, William Meath Baker, of Hasfield Court, Gloucester, who has three sons. The late years of Captain Corbet's life (he died at 59) were chiefly spent in France, where he had some property, and where his only son, who outlived him, married and became British Vice-Consul. This latter died before middle age, leaving an only son, Richard Roger Corbet. It is he who at this date is the only living male representative of Arthur Corbet, the fifth son of the second Sir Andrew Corbet and his wife Elizabeth Boothby, of Moreton Corbet and Acton Reynold.—It is also a coincidence that this same Richard Roger Corbet is the only male representative of Edward, the fifth son of the Brickdales of West Monkton (Somerset) and Stoodleigh (Devon), and therefore bears the arms of both Corbets and Brickdales.

The following chapter must be devoted to, first, a sketch of the important sub-branch of the Corbets of Adderley, and then finally to the details of the history of the Corbets of Moreton Corbet to the present time.

**DESCENDANTS IN THE MALE LINE OF ARTHUR CORBET,
FIFTH SON OF SIR ANDREW CORBET, KNT., AND ELIZABETH BOOTHBY.**



NOTE.—The individuals in this Pedigree seem to have used the one t or two t's at random; I have therefore used one t in the Pedigree.

the fealty of his new subjects. It is chronicled that he halted at Newark, where a Twentyman was one of the Aldermen and owner of the "Saracen's Head," where the monarch was to pass the night, and where the Alderman's son, a student fresh from Cambridge, entertained King Jamie with a learned and eloquent Latin Oration ; which greatly gratified that monarch, we are told. Archibald Corbet's three sons, already mentioned, were Toovey Archibald the eldest. His service life was passed in India, where he had a successful career, partly military, partly civilian ; he served through the great Indian Mutiny with honour and distinction and ended his Indian life as Lieutenant Colonel, and Deputy Commissioner and Sessions Judge of Jaloun, an important and at that date a very disturbed district. Later he married, but left no children. The second son, James, married one of the Knowles family of Gomersal, Yorkshire. He was wealthy and at one time his herd of Jersey cows and bulls had a great name. He left lands in both Surrey and Sussex, where his two daughters now reside. The eldest is unmarried, the younger is married to Captain James Leslie Smith, of the Royal Artillery. They have two sons ; the eldest has done brave service with our soldiers at the Front, the younger is still at Rugby. The third son—the younger brother of the above-mentioned James—Richard John Corbet, was also a soldier and in the Indian service ; but he retired before middle life. He married the only surviving child of Edward Brickdale, the fifth and youngest son of the Brickdales of Somerset and Devon. A son and daughter survived him : the latter married a Gloucestershire Squire, William Meath Baker, of Hasfield Court, Gloucester, who has three sons. The late years of Captain Corbet's life (he died at 59) were chiefly spent in France, where he had some property, and where his only son, who outlived him, married and became British Vice-Consul. This latter died before middle age, leaving an only son, Richard Roger Corbet. It is he who at this date is the only living male representative of Arthur Corbet, the fifth son of the second Sir Andrew Corbet and his wife Elizabeth Boothby, of Moreton Corbet and Acton Reynold.—It is also a coincidence that this same Richard Roger Corbet is the only male representative of Edward, the fifth son of the Brickdales of West Monkton (Somerset) and Stoodleigh (Devon), and therefore bears the arms of both Corbets and Brickdales.

The following chapter must be devoted to, first, a sketch of the important sub-branch of the Corbets of Adderley, and then finally to the details of the history of the Corbets of Moreton Corbet to the present time.

CHAPTER XVII

I MUST redeem the promise made in a former page that the account of the important sub-branch of Adderley and Stoke should be given in this, the last, chapter. Let me, therefore, call to my reader's remembrance that the founder of this branch was Reginald Corbet, the third son of Sir Robert Corbet, of Moreton Corbet, and of Elizabeth Vernon, his wife. A short sketch of Reginald Corbet's life is chronicled in Chapter XIV. of this volume. He made the law his career and married the niece (Alice Gratewood) of the very wealthy and distinguished Lord Mayor of London, Sir Rowland Hill. She inherited a large share of her uncle's vast estates, and thus this important and wealthy sub-branch of the Corbet Family became settled at Adderley and Stoke-on-Tern. Reginald and his wife lived chiefly at Stoke, and their very handsome altar tomb of alabaster, said to be an exceptionally fine specimen of such work, is still in good preservation in the Parish Church of Stoke. The effigies of their children are ranged round the side walls of the tomb after the custom of the day, and we can trace the histories of several of them. Reginald's widow outlived her husband for thirty-seven years. We gather that they had six sons and five daughters. Of the sons, Andrew and Robert died young; Roland and Francis, if we may judge from the dresses of their figures round the tomb, were clergymen or judges; Richard and Peter, the two youngest, were soldiers and wear swords; but none of the sons, save these two youngest, left heirs. Only one daughter died unmarried, Jane; Elizabeth married Robert Arden, of Parkhall, Warwickshire; Maria married Francis Newton, of Heighley; Anne became the wife of Edward Mytton, of Halston, and, secondly, of William Leighton; Margaret married Sir Humphrey Lee, of Langley. The father, Reginald Corbet, died in 1566, but his widow, Alice, lived till the beginning of the next century. Her youngest son but one, Richard, was born in 1564, and by 1583 we find him standing in the position of the eldest son and heir and about to marry Anne Bromley, a daughter of Sir Thomas Bromley, the Lord Chancellor of England. The marriage licence is dated 1583. Alice, his mother, made the suitable and necessary provision for him on his marriage, and he seems to have lived on the part of the property called Chesthill Grange. He was not long lived, for we find Letters of Administration granted to his widow, Anne (Bromley), in 1601. He left three sons: Richard, who succeeded him as eldest son, John, and Thomas. This last, Richard, died also as a young man in 1615. The Inquisition P.M. taken at Bridgenorth on his death gives some interesting details, and his will explains certain circumstances of succession which seem strange. This last named Richard is styled of Stoke; he married Anne Weld, a daughter of Sir Humphrey Weld, and left two sons, Richard, a boy of seven or eight years of age at the time of his father's death, and a younger son, Humphrey. The Inquisition tells us that if Richard, his heir, leaves no heir, the inheritance is to go to his brother, John, and his heirs; on this failing it is to go to the brother Thomas and his heirs. His widow, Anne (Weld), remarried very shortly. She was her son Richard's guardian, and as no mention is made of Humphrey in the Inquisition it is probable that he died as an infant. Sir James Stonehouse was Anne's second husband.

Richard, the young son of seven years old at the time of his father's death, lived to 1649. He married in 1640 Sarah James, of Malendyne, Essex, but left no children. In the marriage licence he is described as of Debden, Essex, a bachelor, and about 34. Sarah lived to 1666, but she did not remarry. The succession to the Stoke and Adderley line thus passed to John, the second son of Richard, of Chesthill Grange, and his wife, Anne Bromley. From these details it would appear that John was not the head of his House and the inheritor of the Stoke and Adderley estates and position till after 1649! Nevertheless, he, John, had long ere that made himself a person of note. He was created a Baronet in 1627, and was a marked character in many other ways, taking his place as head and chief as though born to it, and in every way conducting himself and acting with the masterfulness so typical of himself and of an assured position, and yet all this was many years before the death of the real inheritor! His elder brother Richard's will explains that such proceeding was in accordance with his will and wishes, though no motive is given. Was it that John's imperious temperament and strong will prevailed with his brother Richard and induced him so to provide that his little son should not have the responsibility of the estates and position! Who can know? No reason is given; the child may have been delicate. The fact remains, however, that on Richard's death John, his younger brother, appears to have taken his place. The clauses in the will relating to this are as follows. The will is dated "14th April 10 Jas: "

"I Richard Corbet Esqr. of Stoke in the County of Salop etc: "

"Whereas by an Indenture dated 12 Jan: 1610, I have conveyed and settled an Estate of

Inheritance in Reversion immediatlie after my decease, of my Manors, Messuages, Landes, tenements and hereditaments unto my friends Sir Edward Bromley, Sir Robert Brooke, knights, and John Weld Esqr: to such purposes as mentioned in the said Indenture. My will is that the same shall stand and be effectual. And forasmuch as in the same Indenture I did reserve power in myself to alter, Lease, limit or dispose, all or any part of my said Manors etc. . . . Know ye yt I for diverse good causes gave to my Mother Anne Corbet and to my Uncles Peter Corbet and Humphrey Lee, esquires, all these my said Manors etc: to take the rents and issues of the same, after the Day of my decease, for seven years, upon speciall trust, that they shall pay all my Debts etc: and at the end of the seven years, give an Accompt unto such person or persons as shall stand and be rightfullie seized of my Estate.

" To my brother Thomas Corbett, an Annuitye of £20, during his life, issuing out of my Rectorie of Drayton, Co Salop.

" Residuary Legatee and Executor such person or persons as shall stand and be rightfullie seized of, and in, the immediate estate of Inheritance from and after my decease.

" Overseers my Mother Anne Corbett, and my Uncles Peter Corbett and Humphrey Lee.

" Witnesses Francis Jencks. John Jerves.

" Forasmuch as I Richard Corbett of Stoke, co Salop have by an Indenture dated 12 Jan: 1610 conveyed and settled an estate in Reversion of all my Landes etc: Wherein I reserved express power to dispose and give any Legacies etc: over and besides all such as were formerly bequeathed and mentioned in my Will etc: Now therefore I bequeath to my wife Anne Corbett during her life in consideration of her Joynture or Dower, 200 marks a year.

" To my Sonn Richard Corbett, an annuity of £50, provided that he surrender all his Claime to the lands and hereditaments aforesaid.

" To my sonn Humphrey Corbett, an annual payment of 40 marks, to be taken out of the demesnes of Chesthull commonly called Chestall grange.

" Also whereas there is a Childes parte or portion of the goods of Sir Humphrey Welde, deceased, lawfully belonging unto me in the Righte of my wife as one of the Daughters of the said Sir Humphrey, whoe by devise of Will and other practices in the tyme of his life, did deprive me of the said benefit yet forasmuch as the somme of £1,000 is made payable unto my wife ; my desire is that the said somme and whatsoever over and above the same, may be employed upon Land to the use of the said Anne Corbett.

" Dated 2 May 1612.

" Sole Executor My Brother John Corbett

" Proved 23 May 1615 by the sole Executor named."

Of this sole Executor there will be somewhat to record later, and at length. The real heir grew up, made no claim, and died, as I before mentioned, in 1649.

I must first chronicle the little there is to be gathered of the life of Peter, the youngest son of Reginald Corbet, and his wife, Alice Gratewood. They have a place in the Pedigree, as Corbets of Edgmond, and it is, therefore, well briefly to allude to them, though in a couple of generations or so they lost the male line, and the property passed to the Pigots. Peter is styled " of Newport " about the time of his marriage, which took place in 1593-4, when he married Elizabeth Pigot, of Chetwynd. His mother, Alice, gave him an interest in the Manor of Child's Ercall on his marriage, and very soon we find him purchasing the Manor of Edgmond and other lands near by from Robert Barnefield. Peter also had an interest in the Manor of Brampton, in Shropshire, an interest he shared with his sister Margaret and her husband, Sir Humphrey Lee, of Langley. The next two generations, that is to say, of Peter's sons and grandsons, contain the same names, Andrew, Peter, Robert, Reginald, etc., and as whoever was the owner of Edgmond for the time being raised money on it from various people and finally sold it to " Carletons " late in the seventeenth century, when the male line came to an end, there would seem but little more to be said concerning this short sub-branch beyond adding the names of some of the lands adjoining to Edgmond, purchased from Robert Barnefield by Peter, the son of Reginald Corbet, and Alice (née Gratewood).

We learn of them in the " Indenture " made between Robert Barnefield, Esq., of Edgmond, and Milburga, his wife, and Peter Corbet, of Newport, Esq. It witnesseth that " in consideration of £6,000 Robert Barnefield and Milburga his wife grant bargaine and sell to Peter Corbett," etc., " Manor and Lordship etc. of Edgmond or Edgmondon Salop and all that messuage tenement and ferme or Grange called Hynestocke Grange within the Parishe of Hynestocke . . . and all that the Advowson, right of patronage and presentation of the Church and Rectory of Hynestocke,

and all other Tenements, Granges, Farms, Messuages, and lands etc: in the Townes and hamlets of Edgemond Hinstocke, Pikstoke, Greate Alton, Little Alton, Chetwynd, Chetwynd End, and Pilston or Pulston in the said County." Richard Felton, of Newport, and Edward Myddleton, of Buerton, Cheshire, were the Attorneys. This seemed a fair heritage, but it did not remain in Corbet possession for many generations. The names of its owners will be noted in the Pedigree, with the dates of the many legal documents subsequently relating to the property. John, of Stoke and Adderley, the first Corbet Baronet in Shropshire, now claims our attention. We know him to have been the second son of Richard Corbet, styled of Chesthill Grange, and Anne Bromley, daughter of Sir Thomas Bromley, the Lord Chancellor of England. He married Anne Mainwaring, of Ightfield, and is credited with the enormous family of ten sons and ten daughters, most of whom appear to have become men and women. John entered the public life of his county with great zeal, and very soon developed a taste for reform and differing from his neighbours. Thus we find him leading and encouraging the dissentient spirits in Shropshire to oppose the tax called Ship-money. He had been created a Baronet about 1627, but this did not quench his ardent spirit for opposition. The malcontents in Shropshire soon looked to him as their leader, and thus becoming rather a marked character, with the honour of being styled "The Patriot," he found himself one day landed in prison in London; seemingly it was not for long. His mother's influence no doubt gave him powerful friends and that on the side already fast forcing its way to the domination of England. She was intimately related, too, to the Cromwell family; hence I do not think his imprisonment can have been of long duration. We may remember that the chief counts upon which Archbishop Laud's conviction and sentence of death were carried were connected with Shrewsbury and its new Charter; and another equally unjust and trivial count, for carrying so serious a decision, was connected with Sir John Corbett, the Parish Church of Adderley, and the Needham family, as they were then styled. An amusing account is given in a life of the unfortunate Archbishop of an incident which took place between the Corbets and their Pastor, the Rector of Adderley, and the Needhams or Kilmoreys, during a prolonged dispute between the two families and which is in every way typical of the resolution and energy with which not only indeed Sir John, but with which his wife also, acquitted herself in her husband's absence, when neighbours expressed their way of thinking too openly. The account is quaint, and is best given in the writer's own words. He writes:—"In a northern corner of Shropshire lived two families—great families! as all Shropshire families always are, and always were.—The Corbets and the Needhams.—They were very near neighbours and fiercely jealous of each other. At last they came to an open rupture about a little piece of land of the annual value of 12s. 6d. Now the Parish Church (Adderley Church) was in the patronage of the Corbets, and the Needhams could not endure to pray in the Nave, whilst their bitter enemy, the Patron, was praying in the Chancel. On one side of the Chancel was a pew for the patron, on the other side was one for the Rector. Perceiving how strained were the relations between the two great men of the Parish, the well meaning Rector made the excuse of being a bachelor and thus requiring no pew, to place his own pew in the Chancel at the disposal of the Needhams; so for a time there was an armed neutrality. On the accession of Charles I. Sir Robert Needham was made a Peer as Viscount Kilmorey, which increased the jealousy of Sir John Corbet;—worse was to come—for the Rector married, and although his wife allowed the Kilmoreys to continue to sit in her pew, they disliked being there,—simply as guests. Lord Kilmorey then went to his Bishop and asked permission to rebuild his own private and domestic Chapel, which had fallen into ruin. This was close to his own house, and he desired to be allowed to have service there instead of the Parish Church. The Bishop was advised by Counsel that the leave of the patron and the incumbent of the Parish would be necessary to this. Failing the granting of such leave, the Bishop suggested that a Proclamation should be made in the Church to the effect that the Chapel would be rebuilt, promising to grant a licence unless an objection was lodged. The licence was granted, the private Chapel was built, and in 1629 it was consecrated by the Bishop.

"Eight months later, Sir John Corbet instituted a suit in the Court of Arches, on the ground that the rights of the Parish Church had been infringed, and a year later the Dean of Arches annulled the consecration 'in its plenary sense,' but declared 'the Chapel to have been duly and validly consecrated for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for Divine Prayer, for preaching the Word of GOD therein purely and sincerely,' and in that limited sense he pronounced it 'valid.' To all intents and purposes, this was a victory for Lord Kilmorey; nevertheless, he deeply resented the decision, and at once gave notice of appeal. Shortly afterwards he died; but the quarrel was carried on quite as fiercely by his son, the new Lord Kilmorey. In due time a Commission

was appointed to hear the appeal. The Commissioners met in a neighbouring Church (Drayton) and reversed the decision of the Court of Arches, declaring the Consecration valid 'in all respects.'

'The Viscount therefore triumphed: but Sir John Corbet had another card to play. One of his footmen died (an Irish footman), and he persuaded the Rector to let him bury him in the chancel, 'in a shroud and not coffined' about four feet above the place where the body of the late Lord Kilmorey lay.

'The living Lord Kilmorey was furious. He took counsel's opinion, asking what remedy he could have: whether he should apply to this Court or that. The Counsel consulted sent a long reply, ending with this very remarkable P.S.: 'Sir John Lambe is yesterday made Judge of the Arches, so if you have any interest in him, he may do your honour better rights.'

'Lord Kilmorey, however, appealed to the Earl Marshal, with whom apparently he also had some 'interest,' as he signs himself 'Your Lordship's very affectionate friend.' The Earl Marshal ordered Sir John Corbet to dig up and remove the bones of his footman, and he also wrote to the Bishop about Lord Kilmorey and Sir John Corbet exhorting him 'to endeavour to reconcile them in Love and Friendship.'

'Lord Kilmorey had now got everything his own way: yet he sighed for fresh victories, and, not content with the private Chapel, wanted to build an aisle or transept for himself in the Parish Church. Once again he asked Counsel's opinion, writing to Noy, the Attorney General, who replied, 'No man of the Parish of what condition so ever may build an Isle or demolysh part of ye Church for ye purpose without consent of the Byshop and the Patron and the incumbent, and also of the parishioners.'

'Not long afterwards fortune favoured Lord Kilmorey. Sir John Corbet, it was said at Laud's instigation, was imprisoned in the Fleet for joining in the famous Petition of Rights which he had read at the Sessions in his own County.

'Lord Kilmorey took this opportunity of appealing direct to the King, diplomatically ending his letter with the words 'if the Lord's Grace of Canterbury your worthy metropolitain (upon reference to him) shall think fit.'

'In 1635 Laud gave Lord Kilmorey the licence he desired for the erection of the aisle.

'Sir John Corbet was safe in prison, and could not, therefore, appear to object to the building of the transept, as Patron of the living. The transept or Chapel, which is a striking feature of Adderley Church, was duly erected and was ready for use in 1637, when Lord Kilmorey wrote to the Archbishop's Secretary that he had taken 'a little more in breadth and a great deale less in length than' was allowed him, and asking Laud's leave to have it consecrated.

'In reply came a still longer Document from Laud and the transept was consecrated, and it was occupied by Lord Kilmorey for four or five years in peace.

'Sir John Corbet became a member of Parliament, and during his absence in London his wife, who had never forgotten the quarrel, nor forgiven the enemy who had got the best of her husband, took the law into her own hands. The Parliamentary party were getting into power, and Royalists like Lord Kilmorey were considered fair game. On the 6th March 1642 she had the courage to enter Lord Kilmorey's transept, with her family (she had ten sons and ten daughters), and with her servants she occupied his seat throughout the service. Fortunately, the Kilmoreys had a service that morning in their own private Chapel at home, so no harm came of it.

'On the 30th of the same month, however, there was a day of General Humiliation, and Lord Kilmorey, after the service in his own private Chapel, went to the afternoon service at his Parish Church. On going to his transept he found four of Sir John Corbet's servants sitting in his pew. The service was proceeding and a Psalm was being sung, so Lord Kilmorey entered the Chapel and quietly told the men to leave. They made no reply, nor would they move from their position, and Lord Kilmorey, who no doubt thought it wise to be well attended, sent in some of his people with orders to remove the men as quietly as possible. As they were armed and made a desperate resistance, this was impossible, and a terrible mêlée ensued, but eventually the men were, though with great difficulty, dislodged and the Kilmoreys occupied the pew to the close of the service. Nor was this the only battle. On the 8th of May, being Sunday, about 20 men, armed with swords and staves, took possession of the Chapel and approaches, and kept out the servants sent by Lord Kilmorey to take possession. They remained there until Lady Corbet came, who with her family seated herself in the Chapel. The residue of the servants placed themselves in the passage between the Church and the Chapel, and kept out Lord Kilmorey's servants. In the afternoon Lady Corbet came again, with at least 40 men, all armed and kept out Lord Kilmorey's servants from the Chapel and from their seats in the body of the Church. Lord Kilmorey then

drew up a petition and sent it to Laud begging him to assist him in recovering possession of his Chapel. Laud, however, was then in the Tower, Sir John Corbet, as member of Parliament, was a privileged person, and some four years later the estates of Lord Kilmorey, who was an ardent Royalist, were sequestered."—Thus ends this pitiable little story, and with small honour either to the pugnacious Sir John or his masterful wife, Lady Anne Corbet, of Adderley. Sir John was untiring in furthering the defeat of the Royalist party in Shropshire, as we have already seen in the last chapter. His great power arose from his personality and his inherited wealth, and he used that power unrelentingly for the furtherance of his aims. He was created a Baronet in 1627, and two years afterwards he was the Sheriff for the county. Discord was already beginning to show itself, and Sir John Corbet, of Stoke and Adderley, fostered it with unremitting zeal. He was an untiring partisan of the Parliamentary party, was the promoter and head of the Shropshire Committee, foremost in the conniving for the betrayal of Shrewsbury, and in the arrest of the two John Welds, father and son. I do not quite know their exact relationship, but we may assume them to have been uncle and first cousin to Sir John's sister-in-law, Anne Weld, the widow of Sir John's elder brother, Richard, of Stoke. Sir John's maternal relations, no doubt, brought him into close touch with the Parliamentary party, and his mother was also nearly related to the Cromwell family. I do not think his many sons can have been very striking personalities. I have, however, only notes of three of them, and these were all ardent Royalists. Sir John, "The Patriot," died in 1662, and was buried in the Church at Market Drayton. His widow, Anne Mainwaring, called "The good Lady Corbet," lived for many years after him, masterful to the end, if we may judge from the commands left in her will. I do not know whether Vincent or John was the elder; they were the two eldest of the ten sons. Vincent predeceased his father. He died in 1654. The State Papers of the day just mention him, stating that he was Captain of a Troop of Horse in the 5th West India Regiment under the command of General Venables and Colonel Anthony Buller. He married Elizabeth Church in 1640, but left no children, and died before his father, "The Patriot." It is clear from his will that he did not feel quite sure of his father's intentions towards him. He appoints his wife his Executrix, and desired that his wife at her death should leave anything she may have inherited from his father to be equally divided between his brothers and sisters, Henry and Arthur, and Frances and Susanna. Of these last two brothers, Henry alone married; his wife was Catherine, the sister of Lord Cholmondeley. Frances was a year or two older than Susanna and married in 1655 David Maurice, of Penebont, Co. Denbigh. Susanna became the wife of George Spurstow, of Chester. The remaining six sons—for John succeeded his father in the Baronetcy—were Richard, George, Reynold, Humphrey, Rowland, and Robert; and the daughters married as follows: Anne was the wife of Nathaniel Desborough; Margaret married Wm. Stafford, of Blatherwick, Northants; Magdalen was the wife of Sir Humphrey Briggs; Grace was the wife of Sir Wm. Pulteney; Alice was the wife of Thos. Cotton, of Pulley, Salop, and, secondly, of Bishop Wood, the Divine; Dorothy married John Shelbury, and her twin sister, Meriel, Sir Henry Henne, of Tolley, Berks.; and another Anne married Robert Anstruther, of Wheatley, Yorks. Thus all the children of this amazingly numerous family are accounted for; and we will merely add a few remarks on the Dame Anne ("The good Lady Corbet's") will and then turn to the life of the new Baronet, her son, Sir John. Lady Corbet died in 1682. She outlived many of her children, and left her kinsman, Charles Maynwaringe, Dame Magdalen Briggs, and her son Arthur her Executors.

Lady Corbet gave directions in her will that she should be buried in the Church at Drayton, near to the tomb of her husband, and that not more than £100 should be expended on her funeral, which she considered ought to suffice to ensure that all should be performed "in a decent manner, and yet to have regard to my degree and quality, and being desirous to avoide all vaine ostentation, and I desire my Executors within two years to expend £50 in setting up in some convenient place in the Chancell of the Church of Drayton neare the place where my bodie shall be interred, a monument with such inscription thereon as may denote the family from which I am descended, and my match to my deceased Husband, to be soe expressed as by my Executors shall be thought most proper." She also bequeaths £50 to her kinsman, Charles Maynwaring, to buy him a piece of plate to be kept "in remembrance of mee." The will was proved by the three Executors in Jan., 1682.

The monument at Market Drayton was duly erected, and on it is recorded: "Nigh unto this place lyeth the body of Dame Anne Corbet of an ancient family, who lived a virtuous and pious life, managed her affairs with discretion and educated youth and virtue.

"She died about 80 years of her age 29th Oct: 1682, was the youngest daughter of Sir George

SIR JOHN, THE 2ND BARONET OF STOKE ADDERLEY 355

Mainwaring of Eightfield in ye County of Salop knt, and wife of Sir John Corbet of Adderley of the same County, Bart : he dyed in July 1662, in the 68th year of his age. They had XX children ten sons and ten daughters ; 17 of whom lived to be men and women, three dyed young, and they both lye here, interred near each other. This monument was erected to her memory by her daughter ye wife of Sir Humphrey Briggs of Haughton in the same County, knt, and Bart: one of the executors of her last Will and Testament by which she appointed and left a sum of money for ye setting up hereof which was accordingly done ye 14th daye of August 1684."

Sir John, the second Baronet, succeeded his father, but outlived him only by two years. I fear there could have been but little sympathy between parents and son, they being such uncompromising Parliamentarians, and their son, Sir John, as well as some of his brothers, being equally staunch Royalists. The brother Vincent died before the Restoration, but Sir John was then living, and must indeed have rejoiced in the general triumph. He is buried in Westminster Abbey. During the troubled years his wife and family appear to have lived at Child's Ercall, whence she wrote one or two letters, which are still preserved ; they are written to Sir Francis Ottley before the betrayal of Shrewsbury took place. This second Sir John was admitted to Alban Hall, Oxford, when sixteen, in 1636. Not much is known of his military services ; no doubt he was always near his cousin, Sir Vincent, of Moreton Corbet, and he was with him at the siege and surrender of Bridgenorth. He married Lettice, the daughter of Sir Robert Knowles, of Grayes' Court, Co. Oxford. She outlived her husband some years, and was so great a contrast to the first Lady Corbet of Adderley that I think her letters will interest many. The following letter is from her husband, Sir John, dated 1643, to Sir Francis Ottley.

" Worthy Sir

" I am certainly informed that there is a soldier of mine, one Sylvanus Floyd, who ran away from me about three weeks since, with its Horse and Arms, now in Shrewsbury, if you will do me the favour to make enquiries after the man and clopp him up till such time as I can take further order with him, you shall add to the engagement of

" yr Frend and Servant

" (signed)

JOHN CORBETT."

" From my quarters at

" Durnington

" March the 25th anno 1643

" Sr Francis Oteley in

" Shrewsbury

" these present."

The first letter from his wife is dated the previous year.

" Noble Sir

" I have formerly sent two trunks to Shrewsbury for security but now my Mother is going homewards, and I do desire to have them back before the Lrd Brooke's forces stop her things from her, so desiring that you will do mee the favour to let me have yrs speedily I rest

" Your Frend and servant

" (signed)

LETTICE CORBETT "

" Child's Ercall

" ye 3rd March 1642

" For Sir Francis Oatley

" at Shrewsbury."

The next letter is dated June 1643.

" Sir

" My Mother hath some business to sende Robert Schofield to London, and I have adventured to sende for some grocery and provisions and some other things to be directed as to her. Wherefore I do intreat you to send me a pass for him and what carriage for (my Mother) the Lady Knowles, he brings with him by any carrier from London hitherto, not that I care who sircethe them but that I would not have them taken away from me who am

" Sir

yr Servant

" Child's Arcall

" the 16th June 1643.

" (signed)

LETTICE CORBETT."

" My Mother's and my service to yr Lady. I doe desire yt may not be known yt I doe expect any vallowable carriage from London, least ye Parliament force fetch it too near home."

" For Sir Francis Oatley

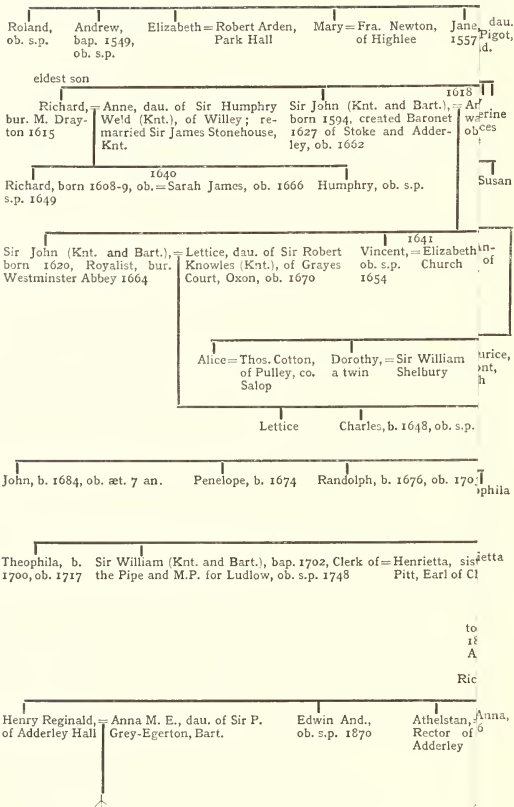
" Governor of Shrewsbury."

Sir John did not leave a large family. He died, as before mentioned, soon after his father, and is buried in Westminster Abbey. Lettice Corbet, his wife, survived him, and she mentions her son John, the third Baronet, in her will. The will is dated 1669, and is a striking contrast to that of her mother-in-law's in 1682. With regard to her burial she directs that it "be performed without any costly ceremony beyond the decent necessities of a good coffin and a winding sheete, observing the Statute for the use of Flanel instead of Lynnen in mye buriall; alsoe paying fitt hire and fees for but only decent carrying and interring of my Corps. And whereas my Sonne's wife's Mother the Honble Theophila Cambell gave mee a Bible in very large folio, to be left unto my Sonne Sir John Corbett Bart: and his wife when I dye, I doe order it to be delivered unto them, and I give to my said Sonne one ring sett with one fair Diamond therein which I received of my owne Mother to keepe it duryng mye life, and then to be delivered to my Sonne as her Legacy, and to his said good wife Dame Theophila Corbett my deare Daughter, the largest of mye lookinge glasses in testimony of mye acknowledging love to her meritt, and nowe giving to my deare Sonne and Daughter all the blessinge which my unworthy prayers can obtain from the Throne of Grace for them and Theirs, I doe also give to him mye largest common prayer booke which I shall have myne at mye death, as a Jewell most valuable next the Holy Bible, of all that I can buy with gold, Though all thanks be to the Infinite Goodnesse a little silver can nowe purchase both to use, That wee by them and their due use may find eternall life. and I give to mye saide Sonne and Daughter all mye bookes except as otherwise given." The testator makes many legacies and gifts including a book "containing sermons of Bishop Andrews sett forth by the Bishop —" This is left to "my very obliged friend Jane, wife to Dr. Newlin, now President of Corpus Christe College Oxford." She leaves all her "Surgeons' Instruments and all bookes of Receipts" to her niece and god-daughter Katherine Knowles. She mentions the names of numerous friends and of her Uncle Baker, her sister Keightly, and names as her Executor Sir Thomas Wolstenholme, Bart., her uncle, who proved the will in July, 1670. Her son, Sir John, the third Baronet, married twice. His first wife, Theophila, of whom Dame Lettice speaks with such affection, died in 1672 at Woodford, Essex, where she had been married in 1658. She had four children, of whom John, Francis, and Theophila died before their mother; the youngest son, Robert, survived, and eventually inherited the Baronety. His father, Sir John, married again very soon after his first wife's death. The marriage licence describes him as widower and about 27, and the new wife to be Frances Egerton, about seventeen, of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, daughter of Randall Egerton, Esq. They were married at St. Mary le Savoy. Frances outlived her husband, and married, secondly, Sir James Poole, Bart., Co. Cheshire. Sir Robert Corbet of Adderley, who succeeded, took some part in public life with the course of time. We find him holding the office of Clerk of the Board of Green Cloth to George I. and he was knight of the Shire and Commissioner of Customs. Mr. Sheppard, in his "Memorials of St. James' Palace" states that "the Court over which the Lord Steward was accustomed to preside was called the 'Board of Green Cloth' because the table at which his Lordship presided was covered with green cloth. Dr. Johnson describes the Board as a board or court of justice, held in the Counting House of the King's household. It took cognisance of all matters of government and justice within the King's Court Royal, and attended to the correction of all servants that shall offend. The Board is said to be one of the most ancient and to have existed in the reign of Henry I. and probably much earlier. The offices originally were at St. James' Palace, in a house adjoining the Clock Tower but were removed to Buckingham Palace in 1850."

Sir Robert married Jane, daughter of William, afterwards Sir William, Hooker, a Lord Mayor of London. He was Sheriff for Shropshire in 1701 and lived till 1740, and his widow till some few years later. The Parish Registers again record a numerous family. Many died in infancy. The three sons all succeeded to the Baronety in turn; of the five daughters only one married. It appears that the living proprietor of Adderley was entitled to claim a heriot on the death of an Earl of Kilmorey, and this privilege was claimed by Sir Robert Corbet. He was entitled to take the best horse in the stable or the best piece of furniture at Shavington. He chose a chesnut hunter worth seventy guineas. The case was disputed by the Earl, and tried at Shrewsbury, and Sir Robert gained the day. The Manor and tithes of Market Drayton, with a large proportion of the lands belonging to the Abbey of Combermere, had been granted by Henry VIII. to Sir Thomas Gresham at the dissolution of the abbeys and monasteries, who sold them to Sir Rowland Hill, uncle of Alice Gratewood. Thus eventually they passed to her heirs, the Corbets of Adderley.

The Church at Adderley was altogether rebuilt in 1803 on the old site. Most unluckily a fire

(third
Reco



SIR ROBERT, 7TH BART. OF STOKE AND ADDERLEY 357

broke out in the shed where the monuments and relics from the old church had been placed for safety during the rebuilding, and most of them were lost. The tower is part of the old church, so also is the Kilmorey pew. Some of the bells, which may have been brought from the Abbey of St. Mary at the Reformation, bear very interesting inscriptions; one, partly in old monkish Latin, partly in Roman characters, has engraved on it, "Holy Mary intercede for the whole World." Another of later date bears in old English:

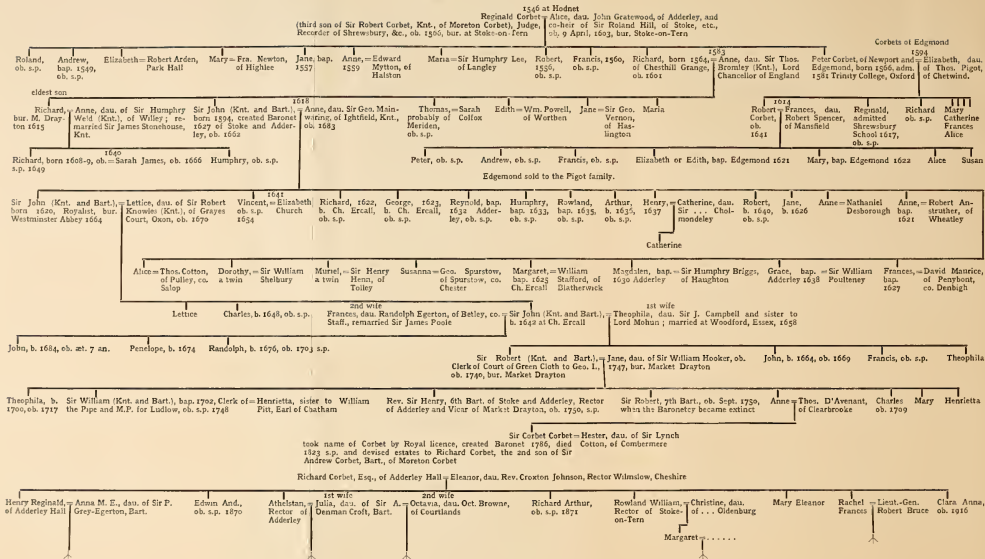
"I sweetly tolling men do call
to taste on meate that feedes the sowl."

This latter bears the date A.D. 1604.

Sir Robert and his wife, Jane Hooker, are both buried at Market Drayton. Sir William Corbet, the eldest of their three sons, succeeded to the title and estates as 5th Baronet of Stoke and Adderley. This Sir William was Clerk of the Pipe, and M.P. for Ludlow. He married Henrietta, daughter of the Earl of Chatham. As he left no children, his brother, Sir Henry, who was in Holy Orders and Rector of Adderley, succeeded him in 1748 as 6th Baronet of Stoke and Adderley. He survived his elder brother only by two years, and then died unmarried, and was succeeded by his youngest brother, Sir Robert, as 7th Baronet. This latter also died unmarried and only held the title for a few months. Both he and Sir Henry died in the same year, 1750.

One only of the five sisters married, Anne Corbet. Her husband was Thomas d'Avenant, of Clearbrooke, Co. Hereford. She evidently succeeded to the great wealth of the Corbets of Adderley, and which their only son inherited. He took the name of Corbet Corbet by Royal Licence, and was also created a Baronet in 1786. The newly-made Baronet travelled a good deal. He had a great appreciation for art and collected many beautiful works; these he placed in the present Adderley Hall, which he rebuilt in 1792. Sir Corbet Corbet married Hester, the daughter of Sir Lynch Cotton. They had no children, and devoted themselves to their literary and artistic friends, to whom their house and welcome were ever open. On Sir Corbet Corbet's death, in 1823, the title became extinct. He had, however, devised the whole of his estates to the second son of his Corbet cousin at Moreton Corbet—Sir Andrew Corbet, Bart.—This second son was Richard, whose descendants now form the family of the Corbets of Stoke and Adderley. They will be briefly referred to later on; for the moment we must turn our attention to the fortunes attending the Head of the Family, where misfortune had fallen with a heavy hand. Not only had their wealth and substance suffered greatly under Cromwell's exactions, but the title also had become extinct, with the death, so early and premature, of the young Baronet, the first Baronet's grandson. This last Sir Vincent, the third and last Baronet, had an only sister, and to her all the untailed property of the Moreton Corbet estate passed at his death. The entailed property fortunately went to the male heir, the younger brother and representative of the first Baronet—Sir Vincent the Royalist.—This male heir was Richard Corbet, of Shawbury Park or Lodge. He also had served his King well in the days of strife, and was Captain among his fighting men. Now he was content to be quiet, although once more England was convulsed by the overthrow and abdication of James II. and the welcome of Queen Mary and her husband, William of Orange.—Not so the young Corbet Kynastone, however, the only child of Beatrice Corbet, the heiress in the female line of the untailed properties, who had married John Kynastone.—On the death of his wife Beatrice, Corbet Kynastone, their only son, found himself, at the close of the seventeenth century and opening years of the following, in possession of these untailed Corbet estates, and having an unbounded ambition and all the enthusiasm of youth, he flung himself into the arena of discord which then prevailed, and for many years he was a noted figure in Shropshire politics. He was a very determined Jacobite, and at that time Shrewsbury was also much of the same mind, and Corbet Kynastone strove to be the leading voice in the county. He took an active part in arranging the triumphal progress of Dr. Sacheverell through the Midlands after his release from what was termed the "Whig persecution." He was a great admirer, too, of Bishop Atterbury, the prelate who defended the learned doctor on his trial, and when he too was brought to the Bar of the House of Lords Corbet Kynastone was one of the witnesses. He entered Parliament and went through several election contests. Now Shrewsbury was a most expensive seat to contest. He and Edward Cresset, of Cound, with Thomas Jones were candidates for the election of 1713. The two latter were declared elected; but subsequently the decision was said to be void, Thomas Jones' name was withdrawn and Corbet Kynastone was returned as duly elected. He was returned at the head of the poll again in 1722 with Richard Lyster, Esq., of Shrewsbury, and

CORBET OF STOKE AND ADDERLEY.



SIR ROBERT, 7TH BART. OF STOKE AND ADDERLEY 357

broke out in the shed where the monuments and relics from the old church had been placed for safety during the rebuilding, and most of them were lost. The tower is part of the old church, so also is the Kilmorey pew. Some of the bells, which may have been brought from the Abbey of St. Mary at the Reformation, bear very interesting inscriptions; one, partly in old monkish Latin, partly in Roman characters, has engraved on it, "Holy Mary intercede for the whole World." Another of later date bears in old English:

"I sweetly tolling men do call
to taste on meate that feedes the sowl."

This latter bears the date A.D. 1604.

Sir Robert and his wife, Jane Hooker, are both buried at Market Drayton. Sir William Corbet, the eldest of their three sons, succeeded to the title and estates as 5th Baronet of Stoke and Adderley. This Sir William was Clerk of the Pipe, and M.P. for Ludlow. He married Henrietta, daughter of the Earl of Chatham. As he left no children, his brother, Sir Henry, who was in Holy Orders and Rector of Adderley, succeeded him in 1748 as 6th Baronet of Stoke and Adderley. He survived his elder brother only by two years, and then died unmarried, and was succeeded by his youngest brother, Sir Robert, as 7th Baronet. This latter also died unmarried and only held the title for a few months. Both he and Sir Henry died in the same year, 1750.

One only of the five sisters married, Anne Corbet. Her husband was Thomas d'Avenant, of Clearbrooke, Co. Hereford. She evidently succeeded to the great wealth of the Corbets of Adderley, and which their only son inherited. He took the name of Corbet Corbet by Royal Licence, and was also created a Baronet in 1786. The newly-made Baronet travelled a good deal. He had a great appreciation for art and collected many beautiful works; these he placed in the present Adderley Hall, which he rebuilt in 1792. Sir Corbet Corbet married Hester, the daughter of Sir Lynch Cotton. They had no children, and devoted themselves to their literary and artistic friends, to whom their house and welcome were ever open. On Sir Corbet Corbet's death, in 1823, the title became extinct. He had, however, devised the whole of his estates to the second son of his Corbet cousin at Moreton Corbet—Sir Andrew Corbet, Bart.—This second son was Richard, whose descendants now form the family of the Corbets of Stoke and Adderley. They will be briefly referred to later on; for the moment we must turn our attention to the fortunes attending the Head of the Family, where misfortune had fallen with a heavy hand. Not only had their wealth and substance suffered greatly under Cromwell's exactions, but the title also had become extinct, with the death, so early and premature, of the young Baronet, the first Baronet's grandson. This last Sir Vincent, the third and last Baronet, had an only sister, and to her all the unentailed property of the Moreton Corbet estate passed at his death. The entailed property fortunately went to the male heir, the younger brother and representative of the first Baronet—Sir Vincent the Royalist.—This male heir was Richard Corbet, of Shawbury Park or Lodge. He also had served his King well in the days of strife, and was Captain among his fighting men. Now he was content to be quiet, although once more England was convulsed by the overthrow and abdication of James II. and the welcome of Queen Mary and her husband, William of Orange.—Not so the young Corbet Kynastone, however, the only child of Beatrice Corbet, the heiress in the female line of the unentailed properties, who had married John Kynastone.—On the death of his wife Beatrice, Corbet Kynastone, their only son, found himself, at the close of the seventeenth century and opening years of the following, in possession of these unentailed Corbet estates, and having an unbounded ambition and all the enthusiasm of youth, he flung himself into the arena of discord which then prevailed, and for many years he was a noted figure in Shropshire politics. He was a very determined Jacobite, and at that time Shrewsbury was also much of the same mind, and Corbet Kynastone strove to be the leading voice in the county. He took an active part in arranging the triumphal progress of Dr. Sacheverell through the Midlands after his release from what was termed the "Whig persecution." He was a great admirer, too, of Bishop Atterbury, the prelate who defended the learned doctor on his trial, and when he too was brought to the Bar of the House of Lords Corbet Kynastone was one of the witnesses. He entered Parliament and went through several election contests. Now Shrewsbury was a most expensive seat to contest. He and Edward Cresset, of Cound, with Thomas Jones were candidates for the election of 1713. The two latter were declared elected; but subsequently the decision was said to be void, Thomas Jones' name was withdrawn and Corbet Kynastone was returned as duly elected. He was returned at the head of the poll again in 1722 with Richard Lyster, Esq., of Shrewsbury, and

stood again and was again elected in 1734 with Sir John Astley. This was upset "by Order of the House" the following year, and Sir Richard Corbet, of Longnor, and Orlando Bridgeman, Esq., were returned as elected in their place.

The struggle proved a most expensive and a very protracted one. The election took place finally on 14th March, and when the Mayor, who was Michael Brickdale, closed the poll the numbers stood thus: Corbet Kynastone, 722; Richard Lyster, 695; Sir Richard Corbet, Bart., 644; Orlando Bridgeman, 643. Petitions were launched. Again the cry of undue influence was raised, and the discussions lasted over two Sessions. The House finally declared that the Abbey Foregate formed no part of the town; the sitting Members were unseated, and—what was worse—John Kynastone, the father, who was still living, refused to pay his son's expenses. Corbet Kynastone therefore retired to Boulogne, where he had a large house, to avoid his creditors; and was untiring in his hospitality to the many Jacobites who at that time thronged those shores. At length a decree was issued in Chancery for the sale of certain of his estates, and the then Head of the Corbet Family of Moreton Corbet bought back the unentailed Corbet property, or as much as was left of it. Corbet Kynastone lived to return to Shrewsbury, in the course of time and circumstance, after his father's death, and enjoyed a triumph of much ringing of bells, which shall be alluded to later, when we have brought the history of the Head of the Family up to that date. I must briefly refer again, to do this, to Richard Corbet of Shawbury Park, since he became the Head of the Family and inherited the entailed lands on the death of the young Sir Vincent in 1688.—Richard Corbet had married Grace Noel, the youngest daughter of Sir William Noel, of Kirkby Mallory, Co. Leicester. She is buried at Moreton Corbet. Her husband, too, died in 1691, just one year after the death of his younger brother, Arthur Corbet, who is also buried at Moreton Corbet. On the death of the former, in 1691, his eldest son, Richard Corbet, of Shawbury Park, succeeded him; the other two sons, Robert and Henry, died young. One daughter, Elizabeth, married Thomas Hill, of Souldon, another, Grace, John Taylor, of Roddington, Co. Salop, Esq. The son, Richard Corbet, who succeeded him, was born in 1649. He too was in the Army like his father, and was an officer in the Guards and Captain of Militia in Shropshire. He married Judith, the daughter of Sir John Bridgeman, Bart. The Corbet Aisle or Chapel in the little Church of Moreton Corbet, which has been described in a former chapter as identical in its architecture to a chapel built at Alberbury by a former Sir Robert Corbet, was added to by this Richard Corbet of Shawbury Park of whom we now write. He obtained permission to construct a new vault for the family, and over this he built a large annexe, used as the family pew, which were so spacious in those days. It is very cleverly devised: by making the entrance to it through one of the existing archways of the chapel or aisle, and using the window of that archway for the window of the annexe, which thus becomes like a small transept. In this new annex he placed a handsome monument to his father, recording his virtues after the manner of the day, and the translation tells us "That here was buried Richard Corbet, knight, sprung from the most ancient race of the Corbets; a man without guile, honest and wise; an active soldier; among Englishmen the most upright, among Corbets most brave; who with the greatest loyalty, and no less glory served boldly and consistently under three successive kings, Charles the Martyr and his two sons. At length in a ripe old age when he had lived long enough for his country, not without honour, he willingly retired from service; nor was he without glory even outside the sphere of arms. He died February 21 in his 67th year A.D. 1691." Such is the translation. The inscription also adds: "This monument to a most deserving Father was put up by Richard Corbet."

Richard Corbet himself died in 1718. He had difficulties, I fear, at times with the Kynastone family, whom he sued for withholding certain family documents and titles to lands, but obtained no redress or satisfaction. His will is dated April 1718. I refer to it on account of its reference to friends and relations, and also for its reference to the lands. At that time the unentailed lands had not been brought back.

"Richard Corbet of Moreton Corbet Esqr. 1st April 1718 sicke and weake in body. My Will is that Judith Corbet my daughter, shall upon the daye of her marriage be paid £2,000 if she marry with the consent, liking and approbation, of Sir John Bridgeman, Bart, and Orlando Bridgeman Esqr, her Uncles and of Mrs Mary Eyton, widow her Aunt, or the survivor, she shall have £1,000 more at the end of 2 yeares after, if one or any issue be then living, but if she marries without their consent or dies without issue, I give the £1,000 to my heir at law, to whom I give alsoe the £2,000 if Judith dies before marriage. And I give my said daughter Judith £80 p an, till

her marriage, the bookcase in the Chamber over the Parlour at the Parke, and all the books therein. I give to Vincent Corbet my seconde sonn, towards maintaining him at the University, £45 p an till 24, if he resides and is a student, and only soe long, and I give him £200 within two yeares, which together with the £45 p an and the Presentation, given or secured to him for life, of the Parish Church of Moreton Corbet, and Stanton upon Hine heath, Salop, shall bee in full of his portion. . . . And whereas at a Court held for the Manor of Wem Salop, on the 20th March Geo : I, I have surrendered my copyhold message or tenement in the township of Tilley, within the said Manor, called the One house, which I purchased of Richard Massey, and which is now in possession of Eleanor Downes widow—with all barnes, buildings etc: and all those several copyhold pieces of land, enjoyed with the tenement ; called the Saviour's Hay, and the Saviour's hay mead, in Tilley,—2 parcells of land called the little Pooles in Aston, within the said Manor. and one parcell of land called the Coppice in Aston, purchased by me of Richard Manlove. and one parcell of land in Tilley called the High Britch, purchased by me of Roger Acherley, Esqr. to the use of me and my assigns for life, and after my death as I shall appoint—now in pursuance of my power, I give to George Corbet my Sonn, and to his assigns for life the said message and lands, and all free hold lands and tenements, now occupied with the said message, lying within the township of Aston, and Preston Brockhurst, and called the Palmes. Hill Ground., now divided into 5 pieces., halfe the little Pooles, Brockhurst Leasow, and the lower Brockhurst Leasow, all now in occupation of Eleanor Downes, and all that message or tenement, in Hatton Hineheath, als High Hatton, Salop. now in the tenure of Henry Gregory, and . . . Summerfield widow. and all lands leasows etc: whatsoever., and if my Sonn George be a student in any of the Inns of Court in that part of Great Britain called England and shall continue soe att 24, I desire Andrew Corbet my eldest Sonn to contribute a yearly sum to his maintenance there . . . I give to Sir John Bridgeman of Blodwell, Salop, Bart, my Brother-in-law aforesaid, and to Sir Robert Corbet of Adderley, Bart, and to their Heirs for ever, all those my two Manors of Linslade and Chelmescott Bucks. and all messages and lands thereto belonging, and all that my Manor of Redcastle, Salop, and all messages and lands belonging., and all that the Manor or reputed Manor of Souldon, Salop, and my Manor or reputed Manor House and Capital message or tenement called Souldon Hall in Souldon aforesaid, with all lands etc: belonging, and the message or tenement called Souldon Dairy House, in Souldon aforesaid. and all lands etc: belonging, and all that my message or tenement at Prees Salop, now in the tenure of William France, with all lands and belongings. and all those my Water Corne Mills in Souldon called Souldon Mills, with all lands belonging, and all those my 2 Water paper Mills in Great Bolas, Salop, now in the tenure of Rowland Smith, with all and each belongings. and all my copyhold Messages and Lands in Aston, within the Manor of Wem, purchased by me of Richard Manlove. and formerly surrendered to the uses of my Will. and all those my freehold lands purchased of Benjamin Wright in Aston. and all those several messages or tenements in Edgebolton, als Edgebaston, Salop, now in the tenures of Thomas Vaughan, Abraham Puller, Samuel Gough, and William Bishop, with all lands and belongings and all those several Messages or tenements in Hatton Hineheath als High Hatton, now in the possession of John Edwards, John Peate, with all lands belonging, and all those Messages or tenements in Acton Reynold als Acton Reyner, Salop, now in the occupation of George Steventon, Richard Lewis., William Heath, Thomas Higginson, John Trevor, John Onslow, Thomas Lewis, and all that Message or Tenement lately purchased of Thomas Ryder, with all lands, belonging, and all those Messages or Tenements in Grinse! Salop, now in the holdings of Samuel Cureton, and William Maddox, with all lands belonging, and all those two Messages or Tenements, in Booley, Salop, now or late in the possession of Allen Pidgeon, gen: Jone Hathen, widow, with all lands belonging, and all those 4 Messages or Tenements in Besford, Salop, now in the occupation of William Pidgeon, William Dickin, Thomas Davies, and Rowland Lee, with all lands belonging, and all that Message or Tenement or Farme, called Hopley Farme in Hodnett, Salop, now in the possession of Samuel Morris, with all lands and belongings, and all the Messages and Tenements in Preston Brockhurst, Salop, now in possession of Thomas Lockett, with all lands, and belongings, and all that spell of Wood ground in the township of Preston Brockhurst called the Lea, or Preston Lea, and Spring thereto adjoining, which hath been lately fallen, both lately in the holding of Andrew Downes, and the other p'cell of Wood ground in the township of Preston Brockhurst called Preston Spring, which hath alsoe been lately fallen., and was before the falling thereof in the holding of Robert Phillips, and all that Message or Tenement called the Dakings, within the township of Tilley, now in the possession of Edward Phillips, with all lands and belongings, and all that Message or Dwelling House in the towne of Shrewsbury, near the High Crosse, there, now in the possession of Samuel Cooke, with

all houses, outhouses, stables, barnes, shops etc: and all other Manors or Lands in Salop or Bucks which I have purchased, or which I have a power by my Marriage Settlement, or by any Fine I have levied, or in any other way to charge, and all Reversions or Remainders, and alsoe the Reversion and Remainder of the 2 Tenements and lands devised to my Sonn George for life, . . . in Trust, to sell, alien, in fee simple, all the said Manors in Salop as will suffice to raise money to my debts and the portions . . . to convey all residue to Andrew Corbet my eldest Sonn and his heirs for ever. I give to my said Sonn, my guiltt Cuppe and Salver, two large silver Salvors, my silver bason and the Rimm belonging to it, my double sett of (sic) Twilight Plate, two doz : silver Plates, my silver Tankard, and all other silver Plate whatsoever, my best saddle horse, and best furniture for an horse, my gold nett shoulder scarfe, and my scarlett Cloak, and all my Gunns and swords, and three of my best cases of Pistolls. . . . I give to Richard Corbet my Sonn two cases of my Pistolls, and to George Corbet, my Sonn, one case of Pistolls. I give to Grace Taylor, my Sister £10 for mourning, and to Andrew Downes of Preston Brockhurst, and to Richard Colley, my Agent, each £5 for mourning, and I desire them to be assistant to my Trustees. . . . I appoint Sir John Bridgeman and Sir Robert Corbet my said Trustees, to be alsoe my Executors, and give them all residue of my personal estate to pay my funeral charges, and the probate of my Will and if Andrew my Sonn will pay my debts, he shall have the residue. and I desire to be interred with my Ancestors at Moreton Corbet, in the Dormitory I have there lately made for that purpose."

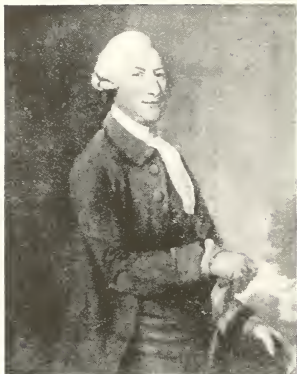
" Witnesses

" Christian Hill
 " Thomas Montgomery
 " Rice Wynn."

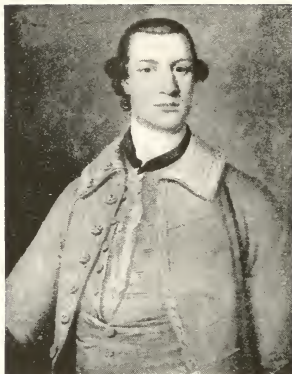
" Proved 13th April 1719 by Sir John Bridgeman
 " Sir John Corbet."

" The Dormitory " is that I have already described : it was used by successive generations until the middle of the last century, when the late Sir Walter Corbet had it hermetically closed and cemented.

The Testator has given us the names of his children. He was duly interred at Moreton Corbet in 1718. His wife was buried there in 1700. Andrew the eldest son, we find, was baptised at Shawbury in 1694 and his brother Vincent also in the following year 1695. This latter duly became Rector of Moreton Corbet and Stanton-on-hine-heath ; he died unmarried in 1759. Of Andrew the eldest son we must write later on. George became a Barrister and is styled of Great Wytheford, where he died in 1763. Judith the only daughter lived to a great age, and latterly lived and died at Grinshill in 1776 aged 83. Her brother Richard was an officer in the Army, and was a remarkably fine and handsome man. Judith also the Sister, though she did not marry, was noted for her great beauty. The Record of the whole family, father, mother and the five children, is inscribed thus in the Corbet Aisle: " Within this Church Iye interred the four sons of Richard Corbet Esqr: of Shawbury Park, by Judith his wife, daughter of Sir John Bridgeman, Bart, of Castle Bromwich Warwickshire. Andrew, the eldest, whose descendants perpetuate the family. Vincent, the second son, was Rector of Stanton and of this Church. Richard, the third son, was Major in the 1st Regiment of Horse on the Irish Establishment. George, the youngest, was called to the Bar. Their just notions of honour, sweetness of disposition, and distinguished affability procured them an universal esteem ; and from the sincerest affection Judith Corbet, their only Sister, erects this monument to their memories. 1770. Happy in transmitting to posterity this true and grateful reflection that their love for each other never knew an interruption—a blessing shared by the sorrowful survivor." " Judith Corbet died December 2nd 1770 aged 83. Having imitated in all imitable virtues, she cheerfully departed with a holy trust, committing her soul unto GOD as unto a faithful Creator." Richard Corbet of Moreton Corbet and Shawbury Park, interested himself in public life. He sat with Robert Lloyd of Aston in the Parliament which met Dec. 30th 1701. On the accession of George I. he again contested the seat with Henry Lord Newport, and John Kynastone. The two former were returned. His eldest son Andrew of Shawbury Park, represented Shrewsbury from 1715 to 1721, and married Frances the only daughter of Captain William Prince of Adcot. Their children were Andrew, Richard Prince, Elizabeth, Judith, Catherine, Charlotte, and Frances. Some of the daughters died as children. Elizabeth married, as second wife, Washington Cotes, LL.D., Dean of Lismore. She died in 1790. It is interesting to record of her that she was appointed Guardian



Andrew Corbet, Esqre., of
Shawbury Park



Richard Prince Corbet, of
High Hatton Hall



Moreton Corbet Church

to Addison's only daughter ! This latter never married and bequeathed all her property to Andrew Corbet, of Shawbury Park, known in the neighbourhood as "the old Squire." The other Sister, Catherine, had married the Rev. William Clarke, Rector of Moreton Corbet, and Vicar of Stanton, and had died many years before her eldest brother, the bachelor, who lived to the age of 75. His father it was, the husband of Frances Prince, who bought back the remainder of the unentailed property which had been inherited by Corbet Kynastone. We have previously noted that, in consequence of Corbet Kynastone's reckless expenditure, his affairs became very involved, and when some of his estates were ordered to be sold the Corbet properties were repurchased. It is said that Corbet Kynastone had always assured his Cousin of Shawbury Park that his younger brother, Richard Prince Corbet, of High Hatton, who had sons, should be his heir ; but politics ran very high in those days. The head of the family at Shawbury Park was a staunch Hanoverian, Corbet Kynastone a pronounced Jacobite. During one of the hotly contested elections Andrew Corbet was heard to say that "he would as soon vote for a Papist as for Corbet Kynastone." It is said that on this being repeated to Corbet Kynastone he changed his will, leaving his vast wealth and estates to his more distant kinsman, another Andrew Corbet, the representative of the ancient house, of the Corbets of Leigh. This Andrew was a solicitor practising in Shrewsbury, and of quite a small income. The estates were the Haughmond and Sundorne properties which Corbet Kynastone had inherited from his father, whose mother, Amy Barker, was the heiress of the Barkers ; and with this marriage the Barker estates passed to the Kynastone family. When Andrew Corbet (the Bachelor), of Moreton Corbet and Shawbury Park, and the head of the family, died in 1796, it was his nephew, the eldest son of Richard Prince Corbet, the Bachelor's younger brother, who then became the head of the family, for Richard Prince Corbet had died some years before his elder brother ; and as quite a young man, at the age of 44. We remember that he is styled of High Hatton, and he evidently lived there ; his elder brother, Andrew the Bachelor living at Shawbury Park. We may recall some of the associations with High Hatton. It had belonged from the very early days to the Corbets of Tasley, and remained in that branch of the family till it was sold about 1601 by the last male heir and bought by Sir Richard Corbet, Knt., the son and one of the successors of the first Sir Andrew Corbet, Knt., of Moreton Corbet. We may remember also that Richard Prince Corbet's great-great-grandmother, Elizabeth Boothby, had lived at High Hatton during her widowhood, so the place had its associations. Richard Prince Corbet died in 1779, aged 44. His wife was Mary, the only child and heir of John Wicksteed, of Wem. They had four children, two sons and two daughters. Mary, one of the daughters, married Moreton Aglionby Slaney, of Shiffnal. Andrew Corbet, the elder of the two sons, became the head of the Family on the death of his uncle, "the old Squire." Richard, the younger son, died young.

See Corbets of
Tasley, Vol. I.

At this time many changes were creeping over the life of Shrewsbury and Salopians, greatly affecting thereby the habits and thoughts of our Corbets. The raising of the Militia was one of them. The Bill for it received the Royal assent in 1757, but for some reason or other it did not take effect till 1763, and must have formed one of the great questions of discussion and interest during the lives both of the "Old Squire" and his younger brother, Richard Prince Corbet. A rather comic incident occurred on the first day of the assembling of the Militia, which Tate Wilkin-son, the actor, mentions in his life, as he was playing that day in Shrewsbury with his company. The first day of the assembling of the Militia was the day of the annual fair for cattle, and he describes with amusement, and we may be sure with a touch of exaggeration the rout to which the recruits were put by the oxen and sheep. He also relates the offence he unwittingly gave the Officers, by the performance on the succeeding evening of Major Sturgeon, in Foote's farce of "The Mayor of Garrat," then just out, and which contained a ridiculous account of a similar occurrence. He was relieved from a position of real dilemma by the exertions of a Mr. Littlehale, a much-respected draper upon Mardol-head, and the good humour of Colonel Chase Price, who invited him to dinner at the mess, and got him to recite the part after dinner to the whole company. The assembling of the Militia and the comedy of its reception gave rise to the following popular song :—

" Since the Shropshire militia is now to be rais'd
The Shropshire militia by me shall be prais'd :
While others but trot, my muse rides full gallop,
To sing to some tune the militia of Salop.

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

" The great Earl of Bath, the County's Lieutenant,
Has gathered together the very best men on't.
All ready, with swords in their hands, to advance
'Gainst Popish invasion from Spain and from France.

" Lord Pulteney, the Col'nel, so bold and so brave,
To Portugal's gone, his country to save.
Like a lion he fought at Valentia, they say,
For true glory all, without profit or pay.

" The Lieutenant Col'nel, the great squire Lawley,
In courage as great as a Huske, or a Hawley,
From Staffordshire comes, with pleasure, we hear,
To head the militia of merry Shropshire.

" Equipt with a Major you'll be in a trice,
And who is so proper as Major Chase Price ?
In the Parliament-house he has got great renown ;
And he beat squire Gorges at fair Lem'ster town.

" Captain Hall is a soldier we all must applaud ;
Captain Hill has got knowledge by going abroad ;
And the brave captain Morhall ther's no one can doubt on,
For he's cousin to good squire Lyster of Rowton.

" When captain Wat Williams recruiting appears,
They ballot no men, but all list volunteers :
Captain Maurice and he the brave Welshmen will bring,
To join the Salopians, to fight for the king.

" The lieutenants and ensigns to name in my song
Most folks would allow will make it too long ;
In short, they are all such brave gentle-men,
That the like in all England you'll not meet again.

" I think in my heart 'twould beat Shrewsbury show
To see these brave officers all in a row ;
When so gallant a sight upon the parade is,
Take care of your hearts, ye fair Shropshire ladies.

" But my bold country lads, let none fear to go,
With such noble commanders to face the proud foe :
Who boldly will venture their fortunes and lives,
To fight for your property, sweet-hearts and wives.

" Then join in this reg'ment, all lads of true spirit,
Where preferment will always attend upon merit,
And by Act of Parliament, as you well know,
Ther's no one can forse you from England to go.

" And now of my ballad pray don't make a jest,
To honour the country I have done my best.
Then fill up a glass of Joe Laurence's beer,
And drink to the lads of merry Shropshire."

In 1787 the young heir, Andrew Corbet, nephew to the " Bachelor " uncle at Shawbury Park, came of age. Many and loud were the rejoicings on this occasion. The local " Chronicle " gives an amusing account of the day, which I quote. " This ancient family are of Norman descent

for it is recorded that Earl Corbet with his two sons accompanied Duke William from Caen in Normandy, in his great expedition against King Harold, and distinguished themselves in so conspicuous a manner at the head of their legions in that ever memorable battle which was fought at Hastings in Sussex, on the 14th October 1066 that the Conqueror to reward them for their great valor and eminent services gave them and their posterity certain lands upon the frontiers of Montgomeryshire, when Robert settled at Cause, and Roger at Wattlesborough Castles from whence the descendants of this illustrious family have spread themselves over different parts of the kingdom.

“ ‘Ye Gods who gave the Norman’s birth
Upon the Albion Shore
Give honor to the Corbet’s name
Till time shall be no more.’

“ The morning was ushered in with ringing of bells, for many miles round about, and Acteon with his hounds at the first of the day, like a compleat huntsman, sounded his horn to rouse each brave sportsman to the chase ! About fifty horsemen took the field and drew towards Cold Hatton, where they unkenneled bold Reynard. The burst was exceeding great, reverberating thro’ the woods like a clap of thunder and the horsemen beautifully described in Somerville’s

“ ‘POEM TO THE CHASE

“ ‘Now my brave youths
Stripped for the chase give all your souls to joy—
See the proud coursers strain to lead the field
Top the barr’d gate and o’er the deep ditch
Exulting bound, brushing the thorny hedge
The riders bend
On their arched necks, with steady hands
By turns and urge their speed, or moderate their rage ;
Where are your sorrows, disappointments, wrongs,
Vexations, sickness, cares ? All, all are gone.’

“ They ran him about 10 miles, Mr Corbett and several of his companions were in at the death ; whilst some had the mortification to soil their fingers by helping the steeds out of the ditches.

“ The company then went to dinner when every kind of festivity and true English hospitality was provided. A number of respectable gentlemen attended upon this occasion and several loyal toasts were drank in twenty-one years old Stingo. . . . People in general showed a remarkable attachment and respect to the family.—The farmers at High Hatton generously gave an Ox which was roasted whole, the townships of Moreton Corbet, Booley, Preston, Stanton and Besford each gave a sheep and an immense quantity of strong beer. A circumstance happened at two of the villages worth relating, the people of one village had procured a tolerable large bell and hung it on a tree, but the night preceding the festival the men in the neighbouring hamlet stole the bell away and began to ring it in triumph the next morning, to the great mortification of the other party. The Shrewsbury band attended and the night was illuminated with bonfires etc: and every demonstration of joy. No material accident happened during the time, tho’ an incredible number of People were there, which does great credit to the managers.”—“Shrewsbury Chronicle,” Dec. 22nd, 1737.

The young heir thus hailed with so many joyful acclamations became very active in the public life and politics of his county. He was Sheriff for the County in 1793 and was created a Baronet in 1803. Sir Andrew Corbet married Mary Taylor in the April of 1800. She was the eldest daughter of Thomas Taylor, of Lyme Hall, Chester. They had three sons, Andrew Vincent, who eventually became the second Baronet ; Richard, to whom the cousin at Adderley devised his estates ; and Vincent Roger, born in 1808 and who married in his Mother’s County, Maria, the daughter of Philip Humberstone of Chester, in 1838. Sir Corbet Corbet’s heir at Adderley, Richard, married Eleanor, daughter of the Rev. Croxton Johnson, Rector of Wilmslow, in Cheshire. Their grandson is now the Squire of Adderley. Sir Andrew Corbet, the first Baronet of the new creation, and whom we may term of Moreton Corbet and Acton Reynold,—for it was either he or his son Andrew Vincent,—who conceived the idea of removing the family Seat from Shawbury Park to the more spacious and befitting one to be created at Acton Reynold.—The old Elizabethan house

THE FAMILY OF CORBET

there had fallen into decay, and indeed for long had been used as a farm house. It had been originally the charming home of Andrew Corbet, Knt., and Elizabeth née Boothby, his wife, but was wholly out of repair. Now all once more was to be changed, and a noble home and a noble park were to become the centre of the Family's life. A singular geological fact was brought to light during the necessary excavations for the new and more extensive foundations. It was discovered that the original house had been built on masses of hard dark rock which passed like walls through the surrounding sandstone. Sir Roderick Murchison on being informed came to visit the spot, and described the phænomenon as one of those volcanic trap dykes, which on leaving the Breidon hills cut through the sandstone in various directions. This volcanic fissure runs in an east-north-easterly direction for many miles beyond Acton Reynold even as far as into Staffordshire. Acton Reynold commands beautiful views of this interesting County on all sides ; it stands high and was probably considered a more healthy situation than Shawbury Park, which is now in its turn lapsed into a farm house and its necessary outbuildings.

Linchlade, the Corbet seat in Buckinghamshire, was still in the hands of the family, and Sir Andrew appears to have visited and interested himself in the welfare of the Manors. He put up a tablet in the chancel of the old Parish Church, which bears the following record, a copy of which has been most courteously sent me by the Rector. It is sad to think that the old church is now only very occasionally used for Divine Service. The parish, it would appear, has extended very considerably on the opposite side to that where is the old church, owing to circumstances of work and trade, and this, together with the fact that the old church, besides being distant from the centre of the parish, had also become far too small for the population, decided the authorities on building a wholly new church in a new and more populous centre. The tablet or monument is, of course, in the old church, and the inscription is as follows, surmounted by the coat of arms :

" Sacred
 to the Memory
 of
 Sir Andrew Corbet
 of Moreton Corbet in the Co. of Salop
 and of Linchlade in Co. of Buckinghamshire, knt.
 Ob: Anno 1637.
 and of the following viz:
 Sir Vincent Corbet Bart:
 Ob: Anno 1656
 Viscountess Corbet
 Ob: Anno 1679.
 Sir Vincent Corbet Bart:
 Ob: Anno 1680.
 Sir Vincent Corbet Bart:
 Ob: Anno 1688.
 oetat 19.
 Richard Corbet Esqr.
 Ob: Anno 1691
 Richard Corbet Esqr.
 Ob: Anno 1718.
 Andrew Corbet Esqr.
 Ob: 1757
 Richard Prince Corbet Esqr.
 Ob: Anno 1779.
 Andrew Corbet Esqr:
 Ob: unmarried
 April 21st 1796.

Erected by Sir Andrew Corbet Bart.
1810."

Sir Andrew Corbet lived to 1835 and was succeeded by his eldest son as 2nd Baronet of Moreton Corbet, with the family seat at Acton Reynold.—Sir Andrew Vincent was born in 1800 and died



Sir Andrew Corbet, 1st Bart. (re-creation),
of Moreton Corbet; seat, Acton Reynold



From an Old Engraving

Acton Reynold Hall

SIR ANDREW VINCENT, 2ND BT. OF MORETON CORBET 365

in 1855. He married Rachel Steavens, daughter of Colonel John Hill, of Hardwick, in 1820. Their youngest son, Captain Walter Robert Corbet, of H.M. 49th Regt., "deeply beloved and lamented" (as says the Memorial tablet to him), was born in 1832. He was on his way home on sick leave after the fatigues and hardships of the Crimean War, but died at Marseilles from a fever caught there.

Sir Andrew Vincent Corbet survived the death of his youngest son by a few months only; he died suddenly while on a visit at Brancepeth Castle, Co. Durham. Lady Corbet, his widow, née Rachel Steavens Hill, lived till 1875. It is the grandson of their third son, John Reginald, who, as time rolls on, will, in all human probability, fill the position of seventh Baronet of Moreton Corbet. He bears the names of John Hugh, as will be seen in the accompanying pedigree, and, like many of his Corbet cousins, has been fighting for GOD and country on the devastated plains of France and Belgium. Two of his first cousins have already given their lives in the same cause: one was killed in Gallipoli, another died from wounds; and yet more of her sons does the family of Corbet mourn.

Another change in the fortunes of Shrewsbury took place in the early years of the nineteenth century. This was the abandonment of the Welsh wool market, which had brought prosperity to the town for over three hundred years. It had been carried on for the last two hundred years in the great room over the market house, where the chief sales were held every Thursday. On that day the central parts of the town were, weekly, all life and bustle. Troops of hardy ponies, each with its halter of twisted straw and laden with two bales of cloth, might be seen pouring into the market place in the morning, driven by stout Welshmen in their country coats of blue cloth and striped linsey waistcoats. Dyer's description of them is more accurate than is a poet's usually. He writes:—

"The northern Cambrians, an industrious tribe,
Carry their labours on pygmaean steeds
Yet strong and sprightly; over hill and dale
They travel unfatigued, and lay their bales
In Salop's streets, beneath whose lofty walls
Pearly Sabrina waits them with her barks,
And spreads the swelling sheet."

Alas! pearly Sabrina no longer, since many a year, has wafted sons or travellers with her barks and spreading sails. Swifter means of locomotion are in vogue in these days, and the river, which is not carefully dredged as of yore, is now given over to the votaries of rowing, and the river sports of the scholars of the Shrewsbury "schools" which crest its banks. The proceedings of the wool market were very ceremonious. After dinner, which was at two o'clock, the drapers, with their clerks and shearmen, assembled under the market house, and proceeded upstairs in seniority, having by ancient usage the right of pre-emption in that order. The market being over, drays were seen in all directions conveying the cloth to the several warehouses, and more than six hundred pieces of web have been sold in a day. It was a ready-money business, and as the Welshmen left the greater part of their sale money behind them, as payment for supplies of malt, groceries, etc., it will readily appear how great a loss the cessation of the sales of wool was to the town. The greater speed and facility for locomotion was the real cause of the change. The stage coaches and the stage wagons which began to appear, and with ever-changing improvements in speed and comfort, and with such startling names—"The Gee-Ho," "The Machine," "The Flying Machine," "The High Flier," and so on—soon taught the Welsh farmers a speedier way to the sale of their wool than the old jog-trot of their gallant little steeds, up hill and down dale, and opened to them as extended a mart as they might choose, for distance was no longer the impediment to wealth. The arrival of the mail coach was henceforth the event of the day—to the villagers—a pleasurable excitement not easily to be foregone, with its noisy heralding of horns, its rattling of wheels and champing of horses' bits, and even the dust which it raised, as the youngsters on the watch would shout, "Here they come!" And then the handling of the ribbons! Many a one envied the coachman that task. The prospect stirred many sporting ambitions. Colonel Edward Corbett, a scion of the House of Longnor, drove a mail coach from Shrewsbury into Wales for many a long and pleasant year, and has left the account of his adventures and recollections in a delightful volume called "The Chatter of an Old Coachman." Sir Andrew Vincent Corbet's eldest son, Vincent Rowland, succeeded his father as third Baronet of Moreton Corbet. He was

born just at the time that the romance of the road was strong. The high roads were marvels of width and charm, and the bustle and life of the old coaching inns and stables were at the height of their renown. The desire for travel, too, was fast developing, paving the way for the prosiness of the steam engine and the railroads. The third Baronet, Sir Vincent Rowland, became High Sheriff for Shropshire in 1866. He married Caroline Agnes, daughter of Vice-Admiral the Honble. C. O. Bridgeman, of Knocking Hall, Co. Salop. They left two sons and eight daughters. The eldest son, Walter Orlando, succeeded his father as fourth Baronet of Moreton Corbet. He was born in 1856. His younger brother, Gerald Vincent, not till 1868. Sir Walter was Captain in the Coldstream Guards and serving in the Egyptian campaign of 1882. He was at the taking of Tel-el-Kebir. Sir Walter was also Captain in the Fife Light Horse from 1882 to 1896, Major and Lieut.-Colonel of Shropshire Yeomanry from 1897 to the time of his death in 1910, High Sheriff for Shropshire in 1898. In 1888 he married Caroline Douglas, the only child of Captain James Stewart, of 11th Hussars. Sir Walter and his eldest son both lie in the beautiful and peaceful little churchyard of Moreton Corbet, for he was succeeded in 1910 by his younger son, Roland James, as fifth Baronet. Sir Roland's life was short. He fell at Civenchy, in France, in 1915, fighting in this most terrible and cruel of wars. The Baronetcy and estates have passed into the keeping of the late Sir Walter Corbet's younger brother, Sir Gerald Vincent Corbet. He married Ella, daughter of General Sir — Prendergast. The heir is, in all probability, the young soldier, John Hugh, who is even now upholding his country and the "Right" on the plains of France.

Thus the history of the Family of Corbet is ended—till Time writes more.—I can but earnestly hope that this first attempt to gather together and record the tale of so many Corbet interests and so many generations may be followed by other efforts, and so help to fill in many a gap and unexplored lane in the history which the present writer has found it impossible to undertake. For example, the true connection between Bishop Corbet and the family has never yet been discovered! The Bishop's father was best known as Vincent Poynter. Details of him will be found in Chapter XI. of this volume, but they give no clue to the connection. Vincent Poynter's father, again, was a member of the Mercers' Company. He lived in London, but had friends and interests in Shrewsbury, to which town he leaves a sum of money to provide a new water conduit. It is in his will that I find the only trace of a Corbet connection. He mentions as kinsman and kinswoman Sir Richard Cholmeley and his wife Elizabeth. This Elizabeth was the daughter of Sir Roger Corbet and Elizabeth Hopton, sister to the Sir Richard Corbet who was so staunch a supporter of Henry of Richmond. So far as dates are concerned, this mention of Elizabeth Cholmeley, if searched into, may well provide the connecting link which has hitherto been sought for in vain.

A good deal has still to be discovered also among the generations of younger sons in the Houses of Leigh and Longnor before their loss of the male line. The same may also be pointed out with regard to the descendants of younger sons in the Norfolk branch, with the clearing up of the vexed question of their descent. They claim to be descended from the Shropshire Corbets, as from one "John," the younger son of "Corbet of Moreton Corbet." No such "John" can, however, be traced. I think myself that it is quite possible that the Norfolk Corbets descend, as they claim, from Corbets of Shropshire, and even from a "John," as they state, but not from the head of the family. The descent can only be from the Corbets of Tasley, who held land at High Hatton and Hadley up to the beginning of the seventeenth century. At that time the Suffolk estates of the Corbets of Tasley, at Assington, were sold, and shortly after the Shropshire lands also.

There would also be a possible field for inquiry in an attempt to trace if there be a living heir to the lapsed Baronetcy of Corbet of Longnor.

Again, a fertile field for research may be found in Ireland, where many a Corbet family settled in the troubled days of Cromwell and following years. The name is constantly found both in the North and the South of Ireland.

Miles Corbet the Regicide, we know, had estates in Ireland, and all his property was restored to his widow by Charles II. But he had no son; therefore there can be no male descent through him. There is quite a thrilling account of an Irish Corbet settled in Dublin given in the "National Biography." It is as follows:—

"William Corbet was born in 1779 at Bally Thomas. His father was a schoolmaster in County Cork and he brought up his son as a Protestant and sent him to Trinity College, Dublin. There he developed great interest in politics, more so than in his work. He became a member of the Society of United Irishmen, and a friend of T. A. Emmett and Hamilton Rowan. He was also a leading debater in the College Historical Society. In 1798 Lord Clare, the Chancellor of the



Sir Walter Orlando Corbet, 4th Bart.
of Moreton Corbet

Face p 366

University, and Dr. Duigenan made some enquiry into the conduct of the undergraduates, and it was alleged that a treasonable song had been sung in Corbet's rooms. This put the torch to the smouldering flame. Lord Clare asserted the existence of an assassination committee, and Corbet was solemnly expelled with 18 others, including T. A. Emmett. William Corbet instantly started to seek his fortune in France, where he received a commission as Captain and accompanied the staff on the expedition of Humbert. He was on the same ship as Napper Tandy, which did not land in Ireland, and so he got safely back to France. There he was made Adjutant General, and whilst at Hamburg, planning another descent upon Ireland, he was arrested by Sir James Crawford, the English Resident, with Tandy Blackwell and Morres; after being kept at Hamburg for some months they were sent off to England in an English frigate in 1799. Lord Grenville did not quite know what to do with these prisoners, and Bonaparte loudly protested he would execute certain English at Lille, who were in his hands, should any harm happen to them. They were therefore placed in Kilmainham prison, Dublin, to await trial. Corbet and Blackwell escaped from Kilmainham in 1803, and after many risks and adventures Corbet safely reached France, where his Commission of earlier years was recognised, and he entered the Irish Legion and served with the French Army in Massena's expedition to Portugal, and greatly distinguished himself in the retreat from Torres Vedras and at the battle of Sabrigal. Corbet was placed on the staff by Marmont, who afterwards summoned him to Germany. He was at Lutzen, Bautzen, Dresden, Leipzig, etc., and was made a Commander of the Legion of Honour. He was placed on half pay and looked on with disfavour by the Bourbons because of his friendship with General Foy, the leader of the Opposition, whose acquaintance he had made in past years in Spain. His services in Greece were very considerable: he was Governor of Navarino, Messina, and Nauphia, and relieved Argos from the attack by Colocotroni, who was then acting in the interests of Russia, and Count Capo d'Istria; he utterly defeated him, and this victory proved the final overthrow of the Russian party, upset the plans of Capo d'Istria and practically placed King Otho on the throne. He was rewarded with the Order of St. Louis and the Redeemer of Greece, and succeeded General Schneider as Commander-in-Chief of the French forces in Greece in 1831 and returned with them to France in 1832. Soon after he was made General of Division and commanded at Caen and Tulle. His adventurous life ended at Saint Denis in August 1842." A Mrs. Lyons of Cork is recorded as William Corbet's only sister, and in Madden's third series of the life and times of the "United Irishmen" the details of his escape from Kilmainham are given. Mrs. Edgeworth has embodied them in her novel of "Ormonde."

The Houses of Leigh and Longnor, as already observed, left many a generation of younger sons, before they lost the male descent; among them I note the generation of the younger sons of John Corbet, of Leigh, in Shropshire, and Sibbesden, in Leicestershire. He was High Sheriff for Shropshire in 1526 and married three times. The only son of the first marriage, William, carried on the line of Leigh; while the House of Longnor according to the pedigree is descended from this John through his second wife, Jocosa Packington. She was sister or niece of the Packington who bought the old Corbet Manor of Chaddesley Corbet, and was widow of a John Lee, of Avenbury, Herefordshire. Her eldest Corbet son inherited a property at Glazeley, in Shropshire, settled on him by his Packington relations, and was the ancestor of the Corbet House of Longnor. Her second son, Thomas, is said to have died without issue, but pedigrees are not always infallible in the matter of a younger son; and it is certain that by the beginning of the seventeenth century a family of Corbets were in possession of lands reckoned as inherited, in Avenbury, which is a Parish and not a Manor, and owning the Church patronage and the tithes: they also held lands in the adjoining parish of Bromyard; these lands continued in the possession of the family till they were sold near the end of the eighteenth century. The presumable representative of these Corbets of Avenbury and Birchenfield at this present day would appear to be our great naval authority, Sir Julian Corbett, and his near relations. The suggestion that the Corbets of Avenbury received their lands through Jocosa, the second wife of John Corbet of Leigh, is somewhat corroborated by the fact that this family have kept so much to the use of certain names for their sons, Peter, Thomas, Richard and John, for instance; these names are found chiefly in the Houses of Leigh and Longnor, and the arms they bore are also those borne by the two Houses in question, i.e., two Ravens sable on the field of gold.

Further investigation would doubtless soon make the question quite clear, but it must be left to others.—Again, a search in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would surely bring to light the connection with one of the main lines of the Family, of the present Corbet owners of Ynnsyngaengwyn, and also of the well-known Corbett firm of "Makers and Inventors of Agri-

cultural Machinery," whose large works have been established in Shrewsbury and Wellington for some generations, and are probably known all over the world.

Let me add a few closing remarks concerning the Christian names used by the Family of Corbet and the arms and crests borne by them. In a Family so persistently conservative in the use of both, this becomes a matter of no mean importance, and one can clearly define the date of the appearance of a new name and even the branch in which that name is found and maybe lingers. Roger, Robert, Thomas, Richard, and more rarely Hugo or Hugh, are names found from the very earliest days of the Family's life in England. John and Peter we find almost exclusively in the House of Leigh; Edward almost as exclusively in the House of Longnor. Andrew made its appearance in the House of Moreton Corbet with the birth of the eldest son of Sir Roger Corbet, whose wife was Anne, daughter to Andrew Lord Windsor, in the reign of Henry VIII. Vincent came a generation later. The first bearer of the name which has since remained so popular with the Corbets of Moreton Corbet was Sir Vincent Corbet, who died in 1622. He appears to have been named after one of the sons-in-law, Sir Vincent Curzon, *knt.*, of Waterperry, Oxon. Walter, of course, though of late rarely used, is nevertheless one of the very oldest names of the Family.

Three crests or cognizances with their mottoes have been used at various times and periods.

The oldest of these crests—the Raven—was used by the whole Family of Corbet up to the reigns of Edward VI and Queen Mary. At that time Sir Andrew, the first of his name, adopted a new crest or cognizance, the Elephant and Castle, with its motto, "Virtutis laus actio," and this has been used exclusively ever since by his descendants and by their sub-branches. The Squirrel has also been used by them at various times, with its motto, "Dum spiro spero." I can say but little, however, for its origin. Is it possible that it may have been the cognizance of the Toretts! The Corbets of Moreton Corbet and those connected with them alone appear to have used it. The descendants of the Houses of Leigh and Longnor have always remained faithful to the oldest of the crests—the Raven—and I believe still use it, bearing a holly branch in its mouth. For the arms, the Raven has held undisputed possession of the shield of the whole Family of Corbet from the very earliest times, and still holds it, the only difference among them being that the senior House—the Corbets of Moreton Corbet and their sub-branches—place one Raven on the field of gold, while the Houses descended from the Barony of Caus place two Ravens on the field of gold, after the manner of the old Barons of Caus. To this almost exclusive rule we find one exception, in the House of the Corbets of Tasley, etc. These Corbets, while using the Raven for their crest, more often bore the arms of their maternal ancestress, Cecilia de Hadley. The legitimate male line here had ended before the sale of Assington in Suffolk. I may remark that the Corbets of Moreton Corbet still retain the unbroken male descent of father to son, as do also certain of their sub-branches, notably the branch of the descendants of Robert, founder of the Ynysymaengwyn branch, though I should add that the property itself is now owned by another Corbet family.

The descendants of Arthur, 5th son of the 2nd Sir Andrew of Moreton Corbet, also retain it, as do also the Corbets of Adderley. Let me now end my long story by quoting the oldest of the Corbet mottoes, used from the earliest days of Corbet life, and still used—

"Deus pascit Corvos."

December, 1917.

of Longden and Alcester = see Vol. I



ert Corbet, founder of Branch =
Corbets in Scotland

See Vol. I



st), ob. s.p. Simon of Pontesbury =

Tho

Wor-

Roger (Knt.) of Chad- = Hawisa Ffoliot, heiress of
desley, ob. s.p. Chaddesley, ob. s.p.

1204

as hostage
s.p.

living 1272

Thomas de la Lee (Knt.) = Petronilla

Sir Regnold de la Lee, benefactor of St. Leonard's, Bridgenorth

Domville Orlando Cecil Charlotte Maria

Sir Vincent R
of Moreton Co
of Shropshire

Rachel Elizabeth M. = Baldock Georgina F. = Blackett

red. Francis, Officer H.M. Constance Ella
ied of wounds 1916

Sir Walter Orla
D.L., late Capt. C
Campaign 1882)
High Sheriff of
Col. Shropshire Y

H. Constance = Sir Richard Judith = Rev. H. V. Heber Gertrude
Edith Sutton Eliza- Percy Ursula
beth

Lesbia

cultural Machinery," whose large works have been established in Shrewsbury and Wellington for some generations, and are probably known all over the world.

Let me add a few closing remarks concerning the Christian names used by the Family of Corbet and the arms and crests borne by them. In a Family so persistently conservative in the use of both, this becomes a matter of no mean importance, and one can clearly define the date of the appearance of a new name and even the branch in which that name is found and maybe lingers. Roger, Robert, Thomas, Richard, and more rarely Hugo or Hugh, are names found from the very earliest days of the Family's life in England. John and Peter we find almost exclusively in the House of Leigh; Edward almost as exclusively in the House of Longnor. Andrew made its appearance in the House of Moreton Corbet with the birth of the eldest son of Sir Roger Corbet, whose wife was Anne, daughter to Andrew Lord Windsor, in the reign of Henry VIII. Vincent came a generation later. The first bearer of the name which has since remained so popular with the Corbets of Moreton Corbet was Sir Vincent Corbet, who died in 1622. He appears to have been named after one of the sons-in-law, Sir Vincent Curzon, *knt.*, of Waterperry, Oxon. Walter, of course, though of late rarely used, is nevertheless one of the very oldest names of the Family.

Three crests or cognizances with their mottoes have been used at various times and periods.

The oldest of these crests—the Raven—was used by the whole Family of Corbet up to the reigns of Edward VI and Queen Mary. At that time Sir Andrew, the first of his name, adopted a new crest or cognizance, the Elephant and Castle, with its motto, "Virtutis laus actio," and this has been used exclusively ever since by his descendants and by their sub-branches. The Squirrel has also been used by them at various times, with its motto, "Dum spiro spero." I can say but little, however, for its origin. Is it possible that it may have been the cognizance of the Toretts! The Corbets of Moreton Corbet and those connected with them alone appear to have used it. The descendants of the Houses of Leigh and Longnor have always remained faithful to the oldest of the crests—the Raven—and I believe still use it, bearing a holly branch in its mouth. For the arms, the Raven has held undisputed possession of the shield of the whole Family of Corbet from the very earliest times, and still holds it, the only difference among them being that the senior House—the Corbets of Moreton Corbet and their sub-branches—place one Raven on the field of gold, while the Houses descended from the Barony of Caus place two Ravens on the field of gold, after the manner of the old Barons of Caus. To this almost exclusive rule we find one exception, in the House of the Corbets of Tasley, etc. These Corbets, while using the Raven for their crest, more often bore the arms of their maternal ancestress, Cecilia de Hadley. The legitimate male line here had ended before the sale of Assington in Suffolk. I may remark that the Corbets of Moreton Corbet still retain the unbroken male descent of father to son, as do also certain of their sub-branches, notably the branch of the descendants of Robert, founder of the Ynysymaengwyn branch, though I should add that the property itself is now owned by another Corbet family.

The descendants of Arthur, 5th son of the 2nd Sir Andrew of Moreton Corbet, also retain it, as do also the Corbets of Adderley. Let me now end my long story by quoting the oldest of the Corbet mottoes, used from the earliest days of Corbet life, and still used—

"Deus pascit Corvos."

December, 1917.



THE
ARDEN PRESS

W. H. SMITH & SON
STAMFORD ST.
LONDON
S.E.

HECKMAN
LAUNDRY INC.



MAY 87

N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962

