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The Victoria History of the
Counties of England

EDITED BY WILLIAM PAGE, F.S.A.

A HISTORY OF
BERKSHIRE

VOLUME II



THE
VICTORIA HISTORY
OF THE COUNTIES
OF ENGLAND
BERKSHIRE



LONDON
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INSCRIBED
TO THE MEMORY OF
HER LATE MAJESTY
QUEEN VICTORIA
WHO GRACIOUSLY GAVE
THE TITLE TO AND
ACCEPTED THE
DEDICATION OF
THIS HISTORY

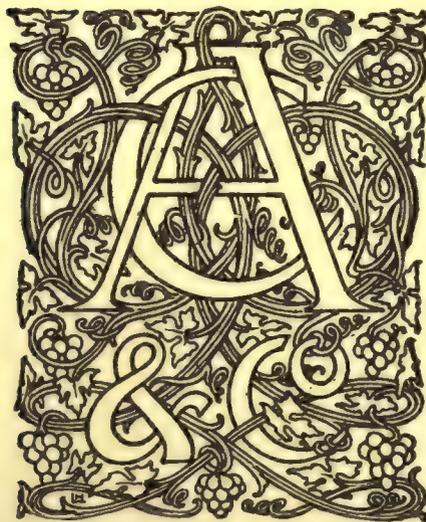


The Frames at Maitlandhead.

THE
VICTORIA HISTORY
OF
BERKSHIRE

EDITED BY THE REV. P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.S.A., AND
WILLIAM PAGE, F.S.A.

VOLUME TWO



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ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE
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EDITORIAL NOTE

THE Editors wish to express their thanks to Mr. P. Vinogradoff, D.C.L., Professor of Jurisprudence, Oxford, and to Mr. J. H. Round, M.A., LL.D., for assistance in the revision of articles, and to Mrs. A. H. Thursby of Culverlands, Mortimer, for a photograph of the South Berkshire Hounds.



A HISTORY OF
BERKSHIRE



ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

JUST across the border line that separates Berkshire from Hampshire, in days long anterior to the parcelling out of the country into shires or counties, stood the once important city of Silchester. Within its walls the foundations of a little fourth-century Christian church were uncovered in 1893. Even if this archaeological fact stood alone, unsupported by any records, it would suffice to prove that Christianity was at least well known in the district afterwards termed Berkshire during the time of the Roman occupation. Further speculation as to the extent of this early Christianity, or what hold it had upon the population immediately to the south of the Thames in Celtic days, would be but unprofitable guess-work, saving so far as it is illustrated by archaeological discoveries.

The Christian orientation of early interments at Frilford, near Abingdon, disclosed during the excavations of 1864-8 has already been discussed, as well as the Romano-British graves uncovered by Dr. Stevens at Reading in 1890.¹ Among the latter interments, two distinctive Christian relics of the pre-Saxon church came to light. One of these was a leaden plate with three simple crosses of the Greek form; the other was a pewter chalice denoting the body of a Christian priest.²

There is no necessity to repeat, even in outline, the story of the conversion or reconversion of Wessex by Bishop Birinus in the first half of the seventh century.³ It will be sufficient to recall that the bishop's stool for Wessex was first placed on the confines of the kingdom, immediately north of Berkshire, at Dorchester on the Oxfordshire side of the Thames. On the death of Birinus, the missionary bishop from Rome, in 650, the bishopric passed into the hands of Agilbert who had come to this country from Ireland. In 676 Bishop Haeddi transferred the centre of the great Wessex diocese from Dorchester to Winchester, and on his death in 705 the unwieldy see was divided through the influence of King Ina. Daniel, in the year of Haeddi's death, became bishop of Winchester, whilst Aldhelm was appointed first bishop of the new see of Sherborne.

But there was one incident in the ecclesiastical history of Berkshire that occurred in the seventh century, which was of supreme importance in connexion with the spread and establishment of Christianity throughout the shire prior to the subdivision of the diocese, and which cannot be here passed by, although it is more fully discussed in the subsequent account of the abbey of Abingdon. This incident was the foundation of that important religious

¹ *V.C.H. Berks*, i, 235-8.

² This should be compared with the chalice pertaining to a Romano-British set of altar vessels, found in 1897 at Appleshaw, near Andover. See plates 1-3 of Bell, *Old Pewter*.

³ *V.C.H. Hants*, ii, 1-3.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

house, which was arranged about 675, though it was not until the close of the century that the Benedictine monks were firmly established there, mainly through the influence of St. Aldhelm, when still abbot of Malmesbury, and before he had been called to the episcopacy.

It is no easy or straightforward matter to decide off-hand the question as to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction to which Berkshire pertained at the time of the subdivision of 705. The large Forest of Selwood seems to have served as a rough boundary between the two dioceses; but Bede contents himself with the bare statement that Wessex was divided into two dioceses, and his words are merely repeated by Florence of Worcester.¹ William of Malmesbury, on the other hand, states in one passage that only two provinces (*duos pagos*), Hampshire and Surrey, remained to form the newly constituted diocese of Winchester, whilst all the others, including Berkshire, were assigned to Sherborne.² Such sound authorities as Bishop Stubbs and Canon Bright have accepted Malmesbury's statement on this point as conclusive³: but it clearly demands further consideration. To begin with, Malmesbury is certainly wrong in stating that Devon and Cornwall were part of Wessex and included in the Sherborne diocese in 705; and yet this statement occurs in the same sentence that assigns Berkshire to Sherborne. Now the Saxon Chronicle (under the year 709) states that Aldhelm was bishop 'west of Selwood.' Henry of Huntingdon asserts that Daniel was bishop east of the woods, and Aldhelm west of the same⁴; moreover in Ethelwerd's Chronicle the see of Sherborne is expressly called Selwoodshire.⁵ It therefore follows that Sherborne diocese included the great woodland district of Selwood and all to the west of it as far as Wessex influence then extended, and that all the eastern side of this forest pertained to Winchester.

Whatever disputes or difficulties may arise as to what parts of Wiltshire were within Selwood Forest or lay to the east or west of it—and the extent of this woodland district at the beginning of the eighth century will always remain to some extent a problem⁶—there can be no doubt that the whole of Berkshire was to the east of Selwood. It seems, then, conclusive that the county of Berks at this period in its history, and hence for the next two centuries, owed its ecclesiastical allegiance to Winchester and not to Sherborne.⁷

During the two centuries that elapsed before the occurrence of another diocesan sub-division, Abingdon must have played a most important part in laying the foundations of the future Christian parishes of all that section of the north of the county which lay within her more immediate reach. Abingdon was the missionary centre and mother church of the whole of that district.

In the year 909 came a further division of the diocese of Wessex. As to the date and occurrence of the subdivision of Winchester, there can be no

¹ Bede, *Hist. Eccl.* v, 18; Florence of Worcester, *Chron.* i, 46, 235.

² William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontif.* (Rolls Ser.), 175.

³ Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, iii, 277; Bright, *Early Engl. Ch.* 423.

⁴ Hen. of Huntingdon, *Hist. Angl.* (Rolls Ser.), 110.

⁵ Ethelwerd, *Chron.* cap. xi; *Provincia quae vulgo Sealudscire dicitur.*

⁶ *Wilt. Arch. Mag.* i, 192.

⁷ Green accepts the statement of Henry of Huntingdon and the Angl.-Sax. Chron. as conclusively assigning Berks to Winchester diocese; see *Making of Engl.* 391; *Conquest of Engl.* 46. This, too, is the view taken in Jones, *Dioc. Hist. of Salisbury*, 37-8.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

doubt, as it is proved by contemporary charter evidence;¹ and probably the rest of Wessex was divided at the same time by King Edward. The two bishoprics became five, the sections being Winchester, Sherborne, Wells, Crediton, and Ramsbury. The succession of bishops of these last three sees begins in each case with the year 909.²

The diocese of Sherborne as then reconstructed, merely included Dorset; Wells included Somerset; and Crediton, the county of Devon. As to the exact confines of the third new see, which had its chief seat in the little town in the north-east of Wiltshire termed Hrefenesbyrig or Ravensbury, corrupted into Ramsbury, it is not easy to write with so much certainty. There is no doubt that by the time of Edward the Confessor, when Herman was bishop of Ramsbury, the see embraced Wiltshire and Berkshire. Probably, too, throughout the century and a half of the existence of the see of Ramsbury, its jurisdiction had been over these two shires or the major part of them. The position of Ramsbury was suitable for a see of that extent, for the bishop if there resident would find himself in about the middle of his diocese. There were, however, two other places in these counties that occasionally gave names to bishops in the tenth century, one being Wilton, the shire-town of Wiltshire, and the other Sonning near the centre of Berkshire.³ At both these places there is no doubt that there were early episcopal residences and estates.

So far it is easy to imagine one and the same bishop being sometimes termed generically of Ramsbury, and at other times after Wilton or Sonning; a state of things to some extent paralleled by the later instance of a bishop styled interchangeably from his three cities of Lichfield, Coventry, and Chester. But with regard to Berkshire, the matter is somewhat different. Ethelstan was the first bishop of Ramsbury (909), and he was followed by Odo; yet in their days there was a bishop named Cynsige who is expressly termed 'biscope of Barrocsire.'⁴ The only possible explanation of this is that Cynsige was a suffragan bishop of Ramsbury, and acted as shire-bishop for this county. 'The see of Ramsbury,' writes Dr. Stubbs, 'had no cathedral, and was moved about in Wiltshire and Berkshire, resting sometimes at Sonning, but finally joined to Sherborne just before the Conquest. It may have existed in the same way before the time of Alfred, and been a kind of suffragan see to Winchester.'⁵

Ramsbury was not at all a populous or important see, and but small in value; nevertheless, three out of its ten bishops, Odo, Sigeric, and Ælfric, all became archbishops of Canterbury. Herman,⁶ the last bishop of Ramsbury, who succeeded Brihtwold in 1045, was a Fleming by birth, and brought into England by Edward the Confessor. He endeavoured to annex the abbey

¹ Kemble, *Cod. Dipl.* Nos. 1090, 1092, 1094, 1095.

² Stubbs, *Reg. Sacr. Anglic.* (ed. 2), 227-9.

³ *Wiltoniensis episcopus*, or like terms occur several times in William of Malmesbury, whilst Florence of Worcester writes of *episcopus Sunninguensis*; indeed the latter term is applied collectively by Florence to those who are elsewhere termed bishops of Ramsbury.

⁴ Jones, *Diac. Hist. of Salisbury*, 55. Mr. Grant Allen, usually so accurate, makes the mistake of saying, 'There has never been a bishop of Berks.' *County and Town in Engl.* 26.

⁵ Stubbs, *Const. Hist.* i, 271. In another place, when writing of ninth-century matter, Stubbs says: 'We must therefore suppose that occasional shire-bishops were appointed in this kingdom (Wessex) perhaps without distinct sees, such as are found in the next century, as bishops of Berks, Cornwall, &c.' Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, iii, 596.

⁶ He is styled indifferently bishop of Ramsbury, of Wilts, and of Berks.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

of Malmesbury to the bishopric; but disappointed at his failure, he retired for a time from his diocese in 1055, entrusting his administration to Ealdred, bishop of Worcester, who obtained the assistance as suffragan of Ralph, a Norwegian bishop, who was at that time abbot of Abingdon. Three years later, in 1058, Elfwold, bishop of Sherborne, died, and Herman had sufficient influence with the Confessor to secure that bishopric and to hold it in union with the see of Ramsbury.

By this act of union Berkshire became linked with both Dorset and Wiltshire in episcopal rule. For seventeen years Herman ruled the three counties, residing chiefly at Sherborne, but moving the episcopal seat to Old Sarum, where he began to build a cathedral in 1075. He died in 1078, and was succeeded by St. Osmund, under whom the union of the three counties as forming the see of Sarum, or Salisbury, was continued, Berkshire remaining a component part of that diocese for nearly eight centuries.

The ecclesiastical and other incidents of Domesday are dealt with elsewhere, so that there is no need again to call attention to the considerable share that the church had at that time in the lands of the county. And it is hardly necessary to reiterate that the main purpose of the great Survey was a fiscal one, and that therefore the mention of churches is fitful, those only as a rule being named that had attached to them lands subject to geld.

The exact number of churches mentioned in the Domesday Survey of Berkshire is twenty-nine,¹ and we know at once that this is no approach to the complete list of the churches then extant; there is, for instance, record evidence of churches at Abingdon (St. Helen), Hurley, Reading, and Sonning.

In some counties the invocations of the old churches or chapels afford not a few clues to the faith of our forefathers in their local or national saints. There is but little evidence of that kind in Berkshire. Whatever there may have been of reverence for English saints was swept away in the days of Norman re-building and reconsecration, save in the case of St. Frideswide and St. Swithun. The former occurs at Frilsham, formerly Fridesham, said, according to one legend, to have once been the residence of the virgin saint. The churches of Compton Beauchamp and Combe, and the old chapels of Kennington and Twyford (Sonning) were all dedicated in honour of St. Swithun, and help to confirm the connexion of Berkshire with Winchester rather than Sherborne diocese in the eighth and ninth centuries.

The question of pre-Norman work in Berkshire churches will be dealt with elsewhere in the discussion of their fabrics, but the obvious cases of Wickham and Hurley may be named as instances of structural proof of Saxon Christianity.

Berkshire, though lying somewhat remote from Salisbury, was from the outset closely connected with the new diocese. The charter of the year 1101, by which the famed St. Osmund, the second bishop of Old Sarum, founded a chapter for his cathedral church, assigned to the canons in Berkshire the churches of Blewbury, Sonning, and Greenham, with all their appurtenances, and also ten hides of land at Ruscombe.² Bishop Jocelin, who ruled the

¹ Ashbury, Barton-at-Abingdon, Blewbury, Buckland, Brightwell, Compton Beauchamp, Childrey, Cholsey, Cumnor, Denchworth, East Lockinge, Faringdon, Fyfield, Great Coxwell, Hendred, Hinton Waldrist, Letcombe Regis, Long Wittenham, Longworth, Marcham, Moreton, Pusey, Shrivenham, Sparsholt, Steventon, Streatley, Wallingford, and Wantage.

² Pat. 5 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 27; Insp. Chart.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

diocese during much civil trouble from 1142 to 1184, made a more particular grant of the church and chapel of Blewbury to the common fund of the resident canons of Salisbury in the year 1148.¹ In his days certain specific provisions were made for particular members of the chapter, as for the precentor and treasurer, but no general system of separate prebends for the several canons had yet been adopted.

It was mainly owing to the efforts of Bishop Herbert le Poor (1194–1217), supported by his brother, Richard le Poor, who was first dean of Salisbury and afterwards succeeded to the bishopric, that progress was made in the development of the diocesan chapter. The prebend of Okeburne in the church of Salisbury, as constituted by Bishop le Poor in 1208, consisted of the churches of the two Ogbourne villages in Wiltshire, and of the churches of Wantage and Hungerford, with the chapel of Sandburn, in Berkshire. The prebend was to be held by the abbots of Bec. The abbot was to be exempt from residence, but was bound to provide a vicar in priest's orders to minister in the cathedral. The confirming charter of the dean and chapter of Salisbury of the same date expressly states that honourable provision was to be made for the sustenance of the vicars who were to administer in the four parish churches.²

This Berkshire prebend was assigned to the alien abbot of Bec in return for that abbey having made over various estates to the cathedral body. The whole organization of the cathedral chapter was accomplished by Bishop Richard le Poor (1217–29), prior to the removal of the cathedral church and residence from Old to New Sarum. On 28 April, 1220, the foundations of the new church were laid with much solemnity.

A statute had been passed when Richard le Poor was dean ordering the regular visitation by the dean and chapter of the prebendal estates. Accordingly, William de Wenda, who succeeded to the dignity of dean of Salisbury in the year of the new foundation, at once proceeded to make a visitation.³ He began his tour at Sonning on the vigil of St. Michael, 1220. The church of St. Andrew was well stocked with plate and vestments of all descriptions, including a new set provided by the executors of Dean Adam in the place of those in which he had been buried. Vitalis was the name of the perpetual vicar; he produced a charter of Dean Jordan's *circa* 1185, by which he had been granted the chantry of Sonning, and the chapel of Ruscombe with their appurtenances, for 40s. to be paid quarterly. It was explained that the *cantaria* of Sonning included altar dues, mortuaries, and the tithes of flax, wool, and cheese. The vicar also exhibited the confirmation charters of this vicarage granted by the chapter of Salisbury and by Bishops Jocelin and Hubert. Two of the chapels of Sonning were Erleigh (or Arley, modern, Earley) St. Bartholomew and Erleigh St. Nicholas; the chaplain of the former did homage to the dean, but the latter was without a minister. There was also a third chapel at Sindlesham, concerning which Vitalis produced a charter of Dean Jordan as to its rights and obligations. Robert de Sonning was allowed to have this chapel for the use of himself, his wife, his household and guests, but the rustics (*rustici*) or outdoor servants were not to hear mass save in the parish church; for this privilege Robert was to pay the vicar 4s. a year.

¹ *Vet. Reg. Sar.* (Rolls Ser.), i, 216.

² *Ibid.* 190.

³ Some particulars of this visitation are printed in Maskell, *Anc. Lit. of the Ch. of Engl.* 181.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

There was a fourth chapel (parochial) at Ruscombe, in honour of St. James, held by Vitalis with his vicarage, the vicar paying to the chapter 10s. for this chapel, and 30s. for the vicarage of Sonning. Baptismal rights pertained to Ruscombe, but it had no cemetery. The ornaments and vestments of this chapel are duly set forth. The church of Sonning was in course of rebuilding; it lacked its roof, the chancel was being rebuilt by Vitalis, but the windows had not been glazed; and it was noted that it would require consecration. The font was of wood. The vicarage adjoining the churchyard was in a ruinous condition. It was complained that the wife of John Paucot had given a stone for the altar of St. John (in Sonning church), but that Vitalis had taken the stone and used it for the altar of the chapel of Ruscombe.¹

Details are supplied in the same visitation of the chapel of All Saints, Wokingham; of the chapel of St. Nicholas, Hurst; of the chapel of Sandhurst, not dedicated but described as of St. Michael the Archangel; and of the old wooden chapel of Edburghfeld (now Arborfield), not dedicated, but called after St. Bartholomew. Although a good list of books and ornaments of Arborfield chapel is set forth, the building itself was in a disgracefully ruinous state and shamefully desecrated.² It is described as dependent on the church of Sonning, from whence it had oil and chrism. John, rector of Barkham, held the chapel by rendering half a mark to the dean; he had been instituted to it by Dean Jordan. Henry, the chaplain of Arborfield, lived with the rector of Barkham, and received a stipend of 20s.

A sad part of this visitation, which was clearly of a most searching character, was the ignorance thereby brought to light of some of the country clergy. There were many priests ministering in the chapels or dependent churches of Sonning, but none of them save the vicar appeared before the dean in 1220. The dean, therefore, ordered that all these clergy should appear before him to be examined as to their orders and learning. This was eventually done at Sonning on Martinmas Day, 1222. Vitalis presented one Simon, a chaplain of Sonning, whom the vicar was only retaining up to Michaelmas. He stated that he had been ordained sub-deacon at Oxford by a certain Irish bishop named Albinus, acting for the bishop of Lincoln; that he was ordained deacon by the same, and priest by Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, four years previously. The dean examined him in the gospel for the first Sunday in Advent, when it was found that he did not understand what he read. He was then tested in the opening of the canon of mass, *Te igitur clementissime Pater rogamus, &c.* He had no idea in what case *Te* was, nor by what it was governed. Requested by the dean to look more closely at the words, the chaplain gravely suggested that *Te* was governed by *Pater*, because the Father governed all things! Nor could he state the case or decline the word *clementissime*, or explain the meaning of *clemens*. Further he knew nothing as to antiphons or hymns, and could not recite either the mass or the psalter by heart. He could not remember by whom, or in what, he was examined before his priest's ordination, and contented himself with declaiming against

¹ *Vet. Reg. Sar.* i, 275-9. The whole of the interesting visitations of 1220 and 1222 are given in the *Vetus Registrum Sarisberiense* (Rolls Ser. 1883), i, 275-314. By far the greater part of the dean's peculiars were outside Berks.

² 'Atrium ecclesie bestiis pervium, porcis eversum.' The chapel was rebuilt in chalk and flint in 1256.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

examining a man who was already ordained. No wonder that the dean caused it to be entered on his minutes, *Sufficienter illiteratus est*.

Richard, chaplain of Hurst, a wholly ignorant young man, who eventually refused to answer, was suspended; Reginald, chaplain of Arborfield, at first refused to answer, but when he did submit to examination proved almost as ignorant as Simon; Jordan, chaplain of Ruscombe, could not explain *Te igitur*, and when the book was placed in his hands refused to sing; John de Scireburn, chaplain of Sandhurst, was equally ignorant; and the aged priest of Arborfield, who could not see to read, and did not know the canon of the mass nor the gospel by heart, was forbidden to officiate any more.

As to the chaplains of Sonning and Ruscombe for whom Vitalis was immediately responsible, the vicar was ordered at once to procure good chaplains or else the dean would take those benefices into his own hands.¹

The result of this special visitation of the ministers of Sonning and its dependencies was the practical suspension or dismissal of four chaplains for gross ignorance, and the prohibition of the ministrations of a fifth for incompetency arising from old age and infirmities. The vicar also received a severe rebuke and warning. To assume hastily from these incidents that the scandals of Sonning are to be taken as representing 'the normal condition of parish priests in those days,'² is simply an absurdity. The state of affairs at Sonning was clearly most exceptional, and it is on that very account entered in detail among the *acta* in the old register usually known by the name of St. Osmund. The stories that these men told of their successive ordinations, usually by some Irish bishop's suffragan, and always outside the diocese, are freely set forth; probably with the intention of having the truth of their tales tested. Before a man could be admitted to deacon's orders he was required to know the psalter by heart, and the idea of a priest not knowing and not understanding the canon of the mass is almost monstrous. There doubtless were occasionally slovenly ordinations, but it seems far more probable that these evil chaplains of Sonning were in reality only in first tonsure orders, and were instances of taking the priesthood upon themselves. Not one of them made any attempt to produce letters of orders. Vitalis, whose father was a farmer of Sonning rectory, was evidently a careless worldly vicar, and his aim seems to have been to get the cheapest assistant priests that he could find.

The dean found no such abuses to correct or note in the other peculiars, or we may be sure they would have been entered. In the other churches, such as Heytesbury, Mere, or Godalming, there was no endeavour on the part of chaplains to abstain from presenting themselves at the decanal visitations.³

In 1224 the dean visited the chapels of Erleigh St. Nicholas and Erleigh St. Bartholomew; no fault was found with the learning or life of either of the chaplains there, but both were rebuked for irregularities in ministering to ordinary parishioners of Sonning within their respective chapels. The dean when visiting the chapel of Erleigh St. Bartholomew, which stood in the court of Thomas Erleigh, in the octave of Martinmas, 1224, found that it was of wood, but that dressed stones were heaped up in preparation for building

¹ *Vet. Reg. Sar.* i, 304-6.

² *Dioc. Hist. of Sarum*, 103.

³ We cannot find anything in these visitations to justify the use in the *Dioc. Hist. of Sarum* (p. 103) of the words—'the dean was compelled in many instances to accept a very low standard of efficiency.'

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one of stone. Round both chapels there were preparations for inclosing them with pales, as though to form a graveyard.¹

The interests of the Chapter in Berkshire were slightly increased in 1223, when Hugh de Saneford gave a moiety of the church of Chilton to the church of Salisbury.²

In 1227, when Abbot Luke was the holder of the prebend of Blewbury, definite arrangements were made for securing perpetuity and stipend for the vicar. To Richard, described as (up to then) chaplain of Blewbury, were assigned all the obventions of the altar of Blewbury, and of its chapels of Upton and Aston, together with the tithes of wool, lambs, cheese, and all small tithes of animals, and also a house and garden. But Richard and his successors were themselves to find another chaplain to help the vicar to serve the cure, and the vicar was also to sustain all burdens, such as synodals and procurations.³

Before the middle of the thirteenth century, the Salisbury diocesan organization was completed. There were four archdeacons, namely those of Salisbury, Wiltshire, Dorset, and Berkshire. The archdeaconry of Berkshire was founded by Bishop Richard le Poor, in 1220, and was coterminous with the county boundaries, being divided into four deaneries, namely, those of Abingdon, Newbury, Reading, and Wallingford.

Berkshire played an important part in striving to resist papal extortion which was so rife during the papacy of Gregory IX. The demands made on the clergy culminated in 1240, when the papal legate sought to obtain a fifth of England's ecclesiastical revenues for his master.

When the bishops assembled at Northampton refused to answer the legate's demand until they had consulted their archdeacons, it was stated that the reason for asking for this delay was because the archdeacons were constantly in contact with the beneficed clergy and understood their position. After an adjournment, the bishops and archdeacons put forth their united reasons against the demanded contribution. Thereupon the disappointed legate resolved to deal directly with the beneficed clergy, and summoned the rectors of Berkshire to meet him. He treated them to long harangues, at one time adding threat to threat, and at another promise to promise. But his words were wasted, for the Berkshire rectors unanimously declined to contribute, and put forth an elaborate and well weighed rejoinder. Among the pertinent arguments that they used, these Berkshire clergy contended that each church had its own patrimony; that the pope could with no more justice claim a share in the revenues of their churches than they could claim a share in the revenues of the church of Rome; and further, that if the income of the clergy was more than sufficient for their support, they were bound to apply the remainder in the relief of the poor, and not in furthering the protracted bloody war between the pope and emperor.⁴

The taxation roll of Pope Nicholas taken in 1291 shows that there were then 189 churches in Berkshire, exclusive of many chapels. About a

¹ *Vet. Reg. Sar.* 1, 307-9.

² *Sarum Chart.* (Rolls Ser.), No. lxxxix.

³ *Vet. Reg. Sar.* ii, 31-3.

⁴ *Matth. Paris, Chron. Maj.* (Rolls Ser.), iv, 37-43. Much of the elaborate reply of the Berkshire rectors appears in the *Annals of Burton* (i, 205), under the title *Responsio cleri Angliae*, their arguments being adopted by the clergy at large.

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third of these churches were by this time appropriated to religious houses and served by vicars.¹

At that date there were also four churches that are entered as having their vicarages consolidated with the rectories; these were Bearwood, Lockinge, Stanford, and Sutton Courtenay.

It will be noticed that of these thirty-eight appropriations exactly half (nineteen) were to religious houses in the county, and almost the whole to houses in the diocese. The abbeys of Cirencester and Chertsey, though respectively in Gloucestershire and Surrey, were close at hand, so that it was only in two cases that the great tithes went to a distance, and in those instances they crossed the seas to the Normandy abbeys of Bec and Lyra.

A particular feature of this return, so far as Berkshire is concerned, is the altogether exceptional number of pensions or portions paid to monasteries from the unappropriated churches or rectories. It is of some interest to notice the distribution of these pensions among the various religious houses. The ancient seat of Christianity in Berkshire, the abbey of Abingdon, naturally had by far the largest number, especially in its own neighbourhood. It received various sums or pensions in kind from twenty-two churches of the county, as detailed in the story of that monastery. Reading Abbey received pensions from seven churches, namely Compton, Englefield, Pangbourne, Purley, Sulham, Sulhamstead Abbots, and Thatcham. Wallingford Priory had annual grants from six churches, namely Aston, Buckland, Shaw, South Moreton, and St. Leonard and St. Mary, Wallingford. Poughley Priory had a pension from West Hendred, and Hurley Priory from East Garston. Chilton paid a pension to one of the Abingdon hospitals. Of pensions paid to houses outside the county but within the diocese Sherborne Abbey had four, the nuns of Kingston two, and the abbey of Stanley one. The adjoining county of Oxford had six contributions to Osney Abbey, two to Eynsham Abbey, and two to the nuns of Goring. In Hampshire, the Wherwell nuns had two pensions, the Winchester nuns one, and the Cistercians of Beaulieu one. The Gloucestershire abbey of Cirencester received a pension from one of the Berkshire churches, and the alien cell of Newent, in the same county, from another. But although these sums from the churches of this county did not travel far afield, so far as England's monasteries were concerned, the result of so many early Norman landowners having claims from the country they had left shows itself in contributions from five churches to the great abbey of Bec. Cluny received 15*s.* a year direct from Letcombe Regis, and in seven other cases pensions were sent from Berkshire churches across the seas to other abbeys of Normandy.

¹ Abingdon, St. Helens (Abingdon, ab.); Aldermaston (Shirburn pr.); Basildon (Lyra (alien), ab.); Beenham (Reading, ab.); Binfield (Cirencester, ab.); Blewbury (Sarum, d. and c.); Bray (Cirencester, ab.); Buckland (Edington, pr.); Bucklebury (Reading, ab.); Compton Parva (Reading, ab.); Cookham (Cirencester, ab.); Cumnor (Abingdon, ab.); East Garston (Amesbury, ab.); Fawley (Amesbury, ab.); Hungerford (Sarum, chaplains and vicars); Hurley (Hurley, pr.); Kintbury (Amesbury, ab.); Letcombe Regis (Amesbury, ab.); Marcham (Abingdon, ab.); Reading, St. Mary (Reading, ab.); Reading, St. Giles (Reading, ab.); Reading, St. Lawrence (Reading, ab.); Shaw (Reading, ab.); Shrivenham (Cirencester, ab.); Sonning (Sarum, signitaries); Sparsholt (Abingdon, ab.); Steventon (Steventon Priory, alien cell of Bec); Stratfield Mortimer (Clatford, pr.); Streatley (Hurley, pr.); Sonning (Sarum, dean and chapter); Tilehurst (Reading, ab.); Wantage (Sarum, chaplains and vicars); Waltham Abbots (Chertsey, ab.); Waltham St. Lawrence (Hurley, pr.); Wallingford, Holy Trinity (Wallingford, pr.); Wargrave (Reading, ab.); West Hendred (Wallingford, pr.); Winkfield (Abingdon, ab.).

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Bishop Simon de Gandavo, or Ghent, made a parochial visitation of his diocese in 1298, the first year of his episcopate. When visiting the rural deanery of Reading, he found that William de Burton, rector of the church of Aldworth, was charged with various excesses. After inquiry, the bishop removed the rector from his benefice, and in September, 1298, he wrote to the prioress and convent of Bromhall, as patrons, telling them of his action, and requiring them to present another priest.¹ In January, 1301, the bishop took action in another case of clerical wrong-doing. Popular rumour (*clamor populi*) reached the bishop's ears as to the grave offences (*scandala gravissima*) of Walter, the perpetual vicar of Hungerford. The bishop issued a mandate to his official to summon the vicar to appear before him on the feast of the Purification.² In the same year the bishop had to intervene in a third instance of clerical scandal in Berkshire. In this case Lawrence, rector of Ufton, was charged with certain excesses; the time at which he had been summoned to appear had elapsed, and the bishop, in a letter to the rural dean of Reading, dated 5 July, 1301, ordered Lawrence to appear before him on the day before the feast of St. Margaret (19 July).³

The bishop undertook a second parochial visitation of his diocese in the autumn of 1302. On 8 October he issued his mandate to the archdeacon of Berkshire, stating his intention of visiting that county, beginning with the deanery of Abingdon, and continuing according to the days and places in the schedule. The archdeacon was ordered to see that all rectors, vicars, and chaplains were duly summoned, and also from four to six trustworthy men (*fide dignos viros*) from each parish or parochial chapelry.⁴

Bishop Simon was an energetic patron of the Austin Friars, and welcomed them in his diocese, although there was no house of that mendicant order in the counties under his rule. In June, 1304, the bishop instructed the archdeacon of Berkshire or his official to license the prior and brethren of the Austin Friars to preach and hear confessions in the county. At the same time he took the strong step of inhibiting the two chief orders of the friars—the Dominicans and the Franciscans—from exercising either of these offices, and this notwithstanding the fact that there was an important settlement of Franciscans at Reading, and friaries of both Dominicans and Franciscans at Salisbury, and of Dominicans at Wilton. At the same time the bishop sent out a like intimation to all the rectors, vicars, and chaplains of Berkshire, inhibiting the use of their churches or chapels by any friars save those of the Austin order, particularly excluding the Carmelites as well as the Black and Grey friars, although the Carmelites had a friary at Marlborough.⁵

Though his register proves Simon de Gandavo to have been an energetic bishop, he found it necessary to resort to the assistance of a suffragan, and empowered David Martin, bishop of St. Asaph, to act in his place. From the circumstance that his commission empowered him to ordain in any parish church in Reading, it has been supposed that he had for a time a delegated jurisdiction over Berkshire.⁶

A visitation of the dean of Salisbury's peculiars, made in the year 1300, brought to light various deficiencies in the church of Sonning and its chapels

¹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 2b.

² Ibid. fol. 24b.

³ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fols. 40, 40b.

⁴ Ibid. fol. 19.

⁵ Ibid. fol. 27b.

⁶ *Diac. Hist. of Sarum*, 119.

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or dependent churches. Hurst had a defective missal, a worn-out gradual, no processional nor ordinal, and no separate psalter, the chrismatory lacked a lock, and the chancel was uncovered; Ruscombe had no Lenten veil, the gradual was *non de usu*, the chancel door was out of order and hence much had been plundered, the roof of the chancel was defective and the glazing of the windows broken; Wokingham had an insufficient pyx, no holy-water stoup, no cruets, an insufficient censer, and the chancel roof defective; Sandhurst had no psalter, no Lenten veil, a manual that was not of Salisbury use, and two windows of the chancel unglazed. The only deficiencies at Sonning were tunicle, dalmatic, and quire cope.¹

The *Nomina villarum* roll of 1316, which was drawn up in consequence of a grant of the Parliament at Lincoln of one man-at-arms of each *villa*—not being a city, borough, or part of the royal demesne—affords remarkable proof of the hold and influence of the church in Berkshire as compared with neighbouring counties. Of the three boroughs, Wallingford, Windsor, and Reading, the last-named was under the lordship of the abbot of Reading. The rights over the hundred of Sonning, with the vills of Sonning, Burghfield, and Wokingham, pertained to the bishop of Salisbury; the hundred of Wargrave, with the vills of Wargrave, Waltham St. Lawrence, and Warfield, to the bishop of Winchester; the hundred of Reading, with the vills of Tilehurst, 'Burghildeburg,' Thatcham, Beenham, and Cholsey, to the abbot of Reading; the hundred of Theale, to the abbot of Reading; the hundred of Faringdon to the abbey of Beaulieu; the hundred of Compton to the bishop of Bath and Wells; and the hundred of Hormer to the abbot of Abingdon. In several of the other hundreds that were under the general jurisdiction of the king or of laity, a great number of the vills also pertained to the church. Thus in the hundred of Ock and Sutton, seven vills belonged to the abbot of Abingdon, and one to the abbot of Bec; in other hundreds collectively the same abbot had nine more vills; whilst in the hundred of Kintbury and Eagle, which the king held, the prior of Sandford, the prioress of Amesbury, the abbot of Titchfield, the prior of St. Frideswide, the prior of Sherborne, the prior of Montagu, the abbot of Cluny, and the bishop of Chester held certain vills.²

A full return that was drawn up towards the end of the reign of Edward I as to the property of the alien priories throughout England shows that Berkshire contributed not a little to the total of their English possessions. The priory of Préaux held lands at Aston; the abbey of Longueville at West Hanney; the abbey of Bec at Wantage, Hungerford, and Steventon; the abbey of Vallemont at Stratfield Saye; the abbey of Caux de Colets at Stratfield Mortimer; the abbey of St. Vigor, Cerisy, at Hinksey; the abbey of St. Stephen's, Caen, at West Hendred; the abbey of Noyon at East Hendred and East Hanney; and the abbey of Montebourg at Ufton and Woolley. The total annual value of the Berkshire lands pertaining to these houses amounted to £278 8s. 6d.; whilst their goods and stock were returned at £330 9s. 4d.³

¹ *Sarum Chart.* (Rolls Ser.), 378-9.

² *Feud. Aids*, i, 47-54.

³ Add. MS. 6164, fols. 11-21, 35-43. The returns for Steventon and Stratfield Saye are set out subsequently, in the accounts of those two small priories.

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During the episcopate of Roger Mortival (1315-30) there was a good deal of activity. Robert le Petit, bishop of Enaghduin, Ireland, who was commissioned in 1326 to act as suffragan for Salisbury, consecrated no fewer than fifty-three churches between that year and the death of Bishop Mortival in March, 1330.¹ But it must be remembered that these consecrations were certainly not in all cases new churches or new sites; most of these consecrations would be required when the position of the high altar was changed owing to the enlargement of the chancels, which was so common a feature of the architectural development of that period.

In the time of Mortival's successor, Bishop Wyville, who ruled from 1330 to 1375, the Nonal Inquisitions supply the numbers of the churches. These inquisitions were taken in 1341 to give the value of the churches' possessions, so that the ninth of corn, wool, and lambs might be taken by the king. This return, exactly fifty years later than the return of Pope Nicholas, shows that the churches of Berkshire (apart from the chapels) then numbered 119.²

Another proof of the spiritual earnestness of the fourteenth century is to be found in the remarkable frequency with which Bishop Wyville granted licences for private chapels or oratories where celebrations might be held.

As early as 1304 Sir Richard Fowkerham, knt., had obtained the episcopal licence to have daily divine service in his chapel in the east part of the town of Thatcham, at his own expense, with the consent of the abbot of Reading as patron, and of Master Anthony the rector. The rights of the rector were reserved, and no service was to be held on solemn days and festivals, when attendance at mass and at the canonical hours was to be made in the parish church.³ Although such grants may occasionally indicate a certain amount of spiritual pride and exclusiveness, it may on the other hand be fairly said that the granting of upwards of forty such licences in Berkshire between 1330 and 1348 is a proof of the prevalence of genuine faith and appreciation of the means of grace.⁴

¹ *Dioc. Hist. of Sarum*, 123.

² *Nonae Inquis. Berks.*

³ *Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo*, fol. 39b.

⁴ Among those granted on Berks manors are the following:—1332, Roger de Ryvers, lord of Blagrave, near Lambourn, in his oratory at Blagrave. 1333, Alexander de Medborn, rector of St. Aldate's, Oxford, in his manse at Lyford; William de Ufton in his manse at Ufton Robert. 1334, Sir Peter de Bau, on his manor in Lambourn parish; John de Holte, in his manor of Holte, in Lambourn parish; Lady Sarah de Ryvers, on her manor of Poughley. 1335, John de Coleshull, in his manse at Ashbury. 1338, Sir William de Wytefeld, in his manor of Kingston. 1339, John Ody, on his manor of Thorp, in Faringdon parish; Sir John Corbet, on his manor of Stubury, in Marcham parish. 1340, Robert Hoppegrass, in his oratory at Charlton, near Hungerford; Sir Peter de Bathon, on his manor of 'Ideweveston,' in Ashbury parish. 1341, Hugh de Morton, on his manor of Le Hoo, in Cookham parish; Emeric de Denchworth, in his manse in Hanney parish; John de Brom, in his manse at Sutton Courtenay; Thomas de Foxle and Katherine his wife on the manor of Ynhurste, in Bray parish; Margaret widow of John le Despenser, in her manse in Cookham parish; Robert de Haddele, in his manse at Lambourn; Joan de Lillebrook, in her manor at Cookham. 1343, Henry de Pusey, on his manor of Pusey; Robert Marie, on his manor of Wytham. 1344, Edmund de Polhampton, in his manse at Balaston, in Kingsbury parish; Sir Thomas de Courdray, on his manors of Padworth and Lyford; Sir John Barls, on his manor of Hampstead Ferrers. 1345, Sir Robert Achard, on his manors of Aldermaston and Sparsholt; Ralph de la Stane, on his manor of Wyke, in Shrivenham parish; Sir John Brocks, in his manse at Clewer; John de Schebenhangre, in his house at Bray; Alina de la Hesse, in her manse at Finchampstead; John de Stafford, in his chapel of East Shefford; Amicia de Farendon, in her chapel of Ekerdon, in Sutton parish; William de Shotesbrook, in the rectory of Basildon. 1346, Edmund de la Beche, archdeacon of Berks, in the rectory of Ramsbury; Geoffrey de Eye, in his manse at Bromhall; Alice Danvers, in her oratory at Winterbourne. 1347, William Trussel, on his manor of Shottesbrook; Thomas Fettiplace, on his manor of Denchworth, at the instance of Sir Gilbert Shottesbrook; Adam de Wambergh, in his rectory of Ashbury; John Fachel, in his house at Colle, in

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Wyville's registers contain no application for such oratory licences after the shock of the Great Pestilence; for some years there would have been the greatest difficulty in getting priests for such extra services.

No part of England escaped the terrible ravages of the Black Death of 1348-9. The archdeaconry of Berkshire suffered about equally with those of Dorset and Wiltshire. The dreadful death-rate among the beneficed clergy can be gathered in this diocese, as elsewhere, from the episcopal registers. The average number of episcopal institutions a year during the long rule of Bishop Wyville (1330-75) for the whole diocese of Salisbury was about fifty. In 1348 the institutions nearly quadrupled, and in 1349 they about trebled the average. The following are the exact numbers of the institutions¹ about this period:—1345, thirty; 1346, fifty-six; 1347, fifty-four; 1348, one hundred and ninety; 1349, one hundred and forty-five; 1350, ninety-three; 1351, sixty-six. As to the religious houses of the county, it will be noticed in the subsequent accounts that vacancies were filled up, in 1348-9, in the headships of the nunnery of Bromhall and the hospital of Newbury, and twice in the priory of Poughley. The monasteries throughout the kingdom found much difficulty in keeping up their numbers, and hardly any of the larger ones ever again attained the complement they had known in previous days. At both Abingdon and Reading, the numbers sank considerably below their previous standard; the abbot of the latter house petitioned the pope to allow thirty of his monks to be ordained priests in their twentieth year so that they might have a sufficiency to sustain divine worship in their house and its cells. Some years after this visitation, the priory of Bisham supported their petitions for the appropriation of several churches by stating that the great pestilence had much impoverished them by the reduction of rents. The marked advance in the price of labour must have also materially affected the profits of the many manors of the shire that were farmed by the monasteries.

An entry of a very remarkable character in Wyville's register must not be passed over, although it has more connexion with Dorset than with Berkshire. The bishop, in 1355, issued his mandate to the archdeacon of Berkshire,² directing him to instruct all his clergy, both regular and secular, to celebrate masses and to ask the prayers of the faithful for the success of the bishop's champion in a forthcoming trial by combat; more particularly on the morrow of the Purification and the subsequent octave when the duel was expected to take place. The case, put very briefly, was this. King Stephen seized the castle of Sherborne from Roger, bishop of Old Sarum, in

St. Mary's Parish, Reading. 1348, Hugh de Normanville, in his house at Eithokele, in Bray parish. Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, *passim*.

It will be noticed that three of these licences are for rectories. In two cases a chapel is mentioned, when doubtless there was a special and probably a detached building. The more usual case of the licence being for the manse would generally mean a particular chamber or oratory in the manor house, especially upstairs. A licence for the manor probably implied a building within the court or inclosure. A single house implies that the dwelling did not belong to anyone who was a manorial lord.

There are various licences for oratories in Bishop Mitford's register, though nothing like the number that are to be found in those of Bishop Wyville. Among the Berkshire parishes wherein licences were granted by this bishop for private oratories or chapels occur those of Thatcham, Cookham, Shellingford, Bradfield, Pangbourne, Sutton, South Moreton, East Hendred, Reading, and Abingdon. (Sar. Epis. Reg. Mitford, *passim*).

¹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, lib. ii, *passim*.

² Doubtless also to the other three archdeacons in like terms; but the one to the archdeacon of Berks. happens to be the one cited in the register.

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1142. From that time onwards it remained with the crown until 1337, when Edward III granted it to the earl of Salisbury. The claims, however, of the see of Sarum to their ancient possessions had never been relaxed, and Bishop Wyville seized the opportunity of the old residence of the bishops of Sherborne being transferred to lay hands, to bring a writ of right for its recovery. The case after much delay came before the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster, but the earl of Salisbury claimed to defend his right to the castle by single combat, and the question had therefore to be referred to a trial by battle. On the appointed day the earl and the bishop's champion were subjected to the usual preliminary examination for the detection of illegal weapons or unallowed armour. The latter was found to be wearing several 'rolls of prayers and charms,' and this caused the combat to be deferred. The adjournment gave time for the combatants to come to a compromise. The bishop paid 2,500 marks to the earl, and the latter allowed judgement to go by default.¹

Bishop Erghum (1375-88) was a prelate of vigorous mind and strenuous in action. It came to his ears in the summer of 1385, when sojourning at his Berkshire manor of Sonning, that 'idolatrous' proceedings were rife at Bisham, on the Buckinghamshire frontier of his diocese. On 20 June he sent a peremptory mandate on the subject to the rural dean. From the preamble to this mandate it appears that considerable multitudes, especially from Wycombe and Great Marlow across the river, were flocking to a certain newly found well at Bisham. With a too credulous trust in feigned tales and diabolical deceits the people were venerating this alleged holy well, after the manner of approved relics, and contrary to the catholic faith. The bishop recited two of the imaginary miracles in connexion with this well. Just over the spring was a certain bush, and in this bush a certain bird had made its nest; it was asserted that the bird, contrary to nature and affected by its nearness to the sacred spring, did not fly away when touched, but allowed itself to be freely handled by those visiting the well. It was also stated that a blear-eyed man (*lippus*) bathing his eyes in the water had received his sight, a natural result, remarks the bishop, of the wholesome application of cold water; but many people insisted on the miraculous quality of the well, and flocked there, placing offerings in the nest. The bishop ordered the rural dean to cause the well to be filled up with earth and stones, and to tear up the tree, nest and all, by the roots and see to its being burnt. Greater excommunication was to be pronounced against all who in the future should visit the site.²

There are a few cases in the episcopal registers of the amending, by way of increase, of the ordination of vicarages. An instance of this occurred when Bishop Ralph Erghum was visiting his Berkshire parishes in 1386. The archdeacon of Berkshire reported that the vicarage of St. Nicholas Abingdon had been wont to consist of all the oblations and obventions of the altar; of the tithes of lambs, wool, linen, flax (whether grown in garden or field), milk, cheese, honey, artificers' work (*negociacionis*), calves, geese, pigeons,

¹ Kite, *Wilts. Brasses*, 15-18; *Dioc. Hist.* 126-7. The recovery of Sherborne Castle for the diocese was considered so great an achievement that a representation of the contest for its recovery appears on the brass to Bishop Wyville in Salisbury Cathedral.

² Sar. Epis. Reg. Erghum, 2nd Nos. fol. 76.

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eggs, and apples ; of certain other small tithes ; and a corrody in Abingdon Abbey. The whole, however, barely amounted to £5 a year, for the area of the parish was small, and such an amount, in the archdeacon's opinion, was insufficient for a vicar. It was, therefore, covenanted between the proctors of the abbot and the vicar, and endorsed by the bishop, that for the future the vicar, John Gray, and his successors should have the great tithes of wheat and hay in the township of Sugworth ; also that the vicars should have, as they had been wont, for their dwelling a hall adjoining the church, with two adjacent rooms and a kitchen, which houses they were henceforth to keep in repair, the abbey bearing all charges for chancel repairs, the payment of the pension of 14s. to St. John's Hospital opposite the church, the payment of the royal tenth whenever granted, and all other such charges. The bishop reserved to himself and his successors the right to augment, diminish, or change the vicarage in the future. This re-ordination was confirmed by Pope Boniface in 1400, at the petition of John Russell, when he succeeded John Gray as vicar of St. Nicholas's.¹

Berkshire, as will shortly appear, had but few gilds in connexion with its churches. The returns made to the king (Richard II) in council, by order of Parliament in 1389, as to the ordinances, usages, and properties, are often of notable interest ; but they have been only fitfully preserved and are altogether lacking for some counties. So far as this county is concerned, only a single long narrow membrane has been preserved. It does not take the form of the usual certificate as to the founding and endowment of the gild, and is, we believe, unique among the bundles of certificates. The document belongs to the Confraternity of Our Lady of Brightwell, which was evidently well established and in a flourishing condition at this date ; it was probably sent up as a proof of the gild's working condition as a kind of appendix to the certificate ; or it may have slipped in accidentally, for it appears to be an original document, and its absence, unless a copy was taken, must have embarrassed the gild clerk. It consists of a long list of the names of the members of the Confraternity, eighty-six in all, each being followed by four columns of figures or payments. There are no headings to these columns, but as the date of the twelfth year of Richard II is inserted in small lettering at the top of the figure columns, it may be assumed that they represent the quarterly payments of the members. In the great majority of cases there is a fifth sum entered immediately to the left of the names, which may possibly represent an entrance fee. The payment in the first column after the name is usually the highest, and probably represents the sum given at the time of the annual feast or festival. The list opens with the name of Master Richard Tonworth, whose scale of payment was the highest, for the sum of 3s. 4d. is entered to the left of his name, and is repeated four times to the right. A good deal lower down appears the name of 'Dⁿ John Bentby,' with 6d. to the left, followed by 2s. and three more sixpences to the right. None of the other names are distinguished by any title or prefix. The majority were much lower than this, a usual payment being 4d., followed by three payments of a penny. There are several instances of women members ; Matilda Wyga paid an initial 2d., and only a penny on one other occasion. In a single instance a man and his wife were entered under a joint payment ;

¹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Erghum, 2nd Nos. fol. 80b ; *Cal. Pap. Let.* v, 275.

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John Prince and Joan his wife contributed 4*d.*, and subsequently a penny each time. The last on the list is the lowest of all; John le Frenssh paid 2*d.*, and a penny at the next two collections. This list brings out strongly, in its varying scale of contributions, the excellent social side of the mediaeval English religious gilds, wherein class distinctions to so large an extent disappeared.

The most interesting feature of Bishop Waltham's register (1388-95) is a fairly full account of the parochial visitations which were held throughout his diocese in 1393. The commissaries of the bishop made a systematic visitation of the archdeaconry of Berkshire in the month of April. On Wednesday, 14 April, the visitation was held in the church of Bradfield; at Thatcham on 15 April; at Welford on 17 April; at Lambourn on 19 April; at Chieveley on 20 April; at Brightwalton 21 April; at Cholsey for the deanery of Wallingford, on 22 April; at Brightwell on the feast of St. George (23 April); and at Sutton Courtenay for the deanery of Abingdon on 24 April.

The *acta et comperta* of this series of Berkshire visitations covers eleven folios of the bishop's register.¹ The following are a few of the more salient points:—

The clergy are expected to produce their letters of orders. At Bradfield Rector Robert produced these documents, but John Manhyng, parochial chaplain, stated that his letters of orders had been burnt, and he was given a short time in which to produce evidence confirmatory of his statement. At Kintbury the vicar produced not only his letters of orders, but also those of his institution and induction, which, although not mentioned elsewhere, were probably expected to be shown by the beneficed clergy.

The evidence with regard to rectories strongly confirms the idea that parishes which had vicars were, as a rule, in a happier state than those that retained the great tithes. At Woolhampton the rector was non-resident, and put in no appearance at the visitation; the same was the case with the rectory parishes of Sulham, Newbury, Shefford Parva, Avington, Wallingford St. Leonards and Sutton Courtenay. The complaints made as to the condition of both churches and parsonages were far worse in the rectory than in the vicarage parishes. The report of the church of Ufton Roberts was wholly bad; the tower was so defective that no bell could be hung in it. The chancel roof of Woolhampton was in bad condition, and the rectory ruinous, although the rector had recently received 18 marks for its repair. The rectories and chancels of Englefield, Sulham, Shefford Parva, Brightwell, Brightwalton, and Sutton Courtenay were in a like evil plight. An additional complaint against the absentee rector of Woolhampton was that he found neither surplice nor ferial vestment; nor could the rector of Englefield, though present at the visitation, show a ferial vestment. The rector of Sulham had alienated a portifer or breviary without leave of the parishioners, and the bishop in that case called upon the neighbouring rector of Tidmarsh to look after the parish. At Welford, which was a rectory, the bishop's commissaries when holding their visitation in the church remarked that it was affected by a very bad smell (*cum magno fetore*), and found that it was on account of the jackdaws (*monedule*) and other birds

¹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Waltham, fols. 57-68 *d.*

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that gained an entrance through the tower and made their way over the whole church ; the windows, too, were badly glazed both in nave and chancel, and the roof of the former was defective. The condition of the church of Hampstead Marshall (a rectory) was generally bad, and its repair was ordered by Michaelmas under pain of a 20s. fine. Complaint was made of the non-resident rector of Sutton Courtenay, that he assigned no alms to the poor, and that he caused the churchyard to be grazed by horses and cows to the destruction of the monuments of the dead. The church of Shaw lacked both portifer and chalice, which the parishioners said had been committed to the custody of the rector. The condition of things at St. Leonard's, Wallingford, was deplorable ; no wonder that John Bynne, the rector, did not appear ; not only was there a defective chalice and one of the service books lost, but he was charged with drunkenness and revealing of confessions. Moreover, at the chapel of Southwell, which was annexed to the rectory of St. Leonard's, and had an independent value of £50, the building was kept in such a scandalous state that pigs had not only entered but had actually violated the Eucharist out of the unlocked pyx.

In the case of vicarages, the appropriator or his proxy was expected to be present at the visitation. Thus, at Cholsey, the proxy of the abbot of Reading appeared ; at Chieveley the abbot was represented by William Bareford, one of his monks ; whilst at Thatcham he appeared in person.

All of the appropriated churches did not escape blame. It was reported that the nave and roof of the church of Cholsey were in bad repair ; the parishioners were ordered to make it good by the ensuing All Saints' Day under the heavy penalty of 100s. The roof of the church of Thatcham was also in bad repair. There were two sad cases of delinquent vicars. At Kintbury, appropriated to the Wiltshire house of Amesbury, the vicar was found to be incontinent ; he had to pay a fine of 40s., and to present a wax taper of 2 lb. weight to the cathedral church of Sarum. At Basildon, appropriated to the wealthy foreign abbey of Lyra, there had been no 'mattens,' vespers, or mass for a long time, no notice had been given of festivals, people had been married without banns and children baptized without unction ; one of the vicar's minor offences was the cutting down of large oaks and ashes (? on the glebe) and selling them ; eventually he was excommunicated for incontinence.

With regard to the less serious irregularities of the clergy and those in minor orders—Richard, a chaplain in Thatcham parish, had celebrated marriage contrary to the wish of the vicar ; at Chieveley, Richard, a chaplain, was presented for having celebrated mass twice in one day, to this he confessed and was fined 2s. ; both vicar and chaplains of Chieveley were celebrating in two chapels (Oare and Leckhampstead) which had neither been dedicated nor licensed. Although parish clerks in England about this period were now and then married, as can be proved from wills, &c., these visitations show that such marriage was considered an irregularity. At Woodhay, John Sandres, the clerk of the church, is stated to have been married. At Thatcham, William Scryvyn is entered as a clerk, 'but he is married' (*sed conjugat' est*) ; at Lambourn, Philip and John Pety, clerks of the church, were both presented for being married ; and at Chieveley, John Waker, the clerk, confessed to being married and was fined 12d. The like fine was also paid at Thatcham and probably in the other cases. From the particular mention of these four cases

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it may fairly be assumed that the very great majority of the Berkshire parish clerks of this period were unmarried.¹

The presentment of lay folk at these visitations, particularly for incontinence, was fairly frequent. At Thatcham, John Scone was charged with keeping a disorderly house (*lenocinium in domo suo*); at Kintbury, William Alisander was charged with alienating 300 pounds of church wax; at Shefford Parva a man was fined for felling trees in the churchyard. Richard Smyth charged with detaining wool due to the vicar of Lambourn was ordered, under a penalty of 100s., to go before the procession at the Feast of St. Peter with bare feet and head, carrying 3 lb. of wool and a wax taper of 1 lb. weight, and thus to stand in the church after the procession to the time of oblation, and then to offer the wool and taper. Henry Sutter, of Beedon, did not come to hear mass on Sundays or festivals, but in the midst of service-time sold shoes outside the church; he was fined 12*d.* John Thresher of Cholsey was presented for not having been that year to confession or the sacrament.

From these visitations some idea can be gathered of the number of unbeneficed clergy assisting in parochial work in the more populous parishes. At Newbury, in addition to the rector, who did not appear, and the regular parochial chaplain, John Moryn, six other chaplains were present at the visitation, namely Robert Taylor, Thomas Whyte, Nicholas Wymond, Richard Endesley, and John Milward, as well as John, chaplain of John Grygg. At Lambourn, the vicar and three chaplains (or, as we should now say, curates) appeared, in addition to a chantry chaplain; and at Chieveley, Cholsey, and Brightwell, the vicar and two chaplains.

As to church furniture, in addition to matters already noted, there are various references to the absence of locks or keys on three articles, all of which ought to be kept locked, viz. the pyx, the font, and the chrismatory. In the churches of Bradfield, Cholsey, Peasemore, Shefford Parva, Sutton, Welford, and Woolhampton, all three were unlocked. In some cases proper locks were ordered to be found before Michaelmas, under a penalty of 40s. At Newbury, the pyx and chrismatory lacked locks, and at Brightwalton only the pyx. The Lent veil at Cholsey was quite worn out; and Welford lacked its 'principal image,' that is the image of its patron saint, St. Gregory.

It only remains to offer a single but necessary comment on these visitations. Grievous as are some of the defects disclosed both in churches and their ministers by this record of 1393, the satisfactory side must not be omitted from notice. It is obvious that the parochial visitation entries in the episcopal registers, after the bishop's commissaries had completed their tours, are merely records of the cases in which there were *reformanda*, and the delinquencies are entered in order that they might be amended in future. The Berkshire parishes which satisfied in every way the searching inquiries of the visitors were at least six to one as compared with those where scandals or deficiencies came to light.

Several of the pre-Reformation registers of Salisbury lack their ordination lists, but in Bishop Mitford's register (1395-1407) they are given in full.

¹ See Wickham Legg, *Clerks Book* (Henry Bradshaw Soc.), p. xlii. Lyndwood says that the married clerk is not to sit or stand among the clerks, but among the lay folk; that when unmarried clerks are not to be had, married clerks may perform the duty, provided they have not been twice married, and retain the tonsure and clerical dress.

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The very large number of titles for orders given at this time by the religious houses is most remarkable. If it had not been for the monasteries, it is difficult to imagine whence the Church of England could have obtained the necessary supply of secular clergy during the half century that followed the Black Death. At the ordination held by Bishop Mitford in the church of the Black Friars, Salisbury, on 1 April, 1396, out of the thirteen secular sub-deacons ordained, twelve were on monastic titles, one being from the small priory of Poughley; out of the sixteen deacons, fourteen had monastic titles; and the same was true of six out of the nine priests. Again, at the ordination held in the church of St. Thomas, Salisbury, on 23 September of the same year, out of twenty sub-deacons eighteen had their titles from religious houses, one being from Wallingford Priory; the like was the case with eight out of the eleven deacons, and with seventeen out of the twenty priests, one of the latter being from Poughley. It must be clearly understood that these titles were in no way concerned with clergy attached to or members of the monasteries, for such, of course, would require no title. At this last-named ordination there were nine admitted to the sub-diaconate from religious houses, two of them being monks of Reading. On 23 December the bishop held his ordination in the great conventual church of Reading. Three were admitted to the first tonsure. The acolytes numbered nineteen, fifteen secular and four religious, three of the latter being monks of Abingdon. Twenty-three were admitted to the sub-diaconate, several by letters dimissory from other dioceses; eight of these were religious while five of the seculars, including three from Poughley, had monastic titles. The deacons numbered twenty-one in all: of these six were religious, two being monks of Reading and one of Abingdon; out of the fifteen secular deacons, thirteen had monastic titles. Fifteen priests were ordained, seven of whom were religious, three from Reading and one from Abingdon; five out of the eight secular priests were ordained on the strength of titles from religious houses.¹

In a collection of ecclesiastical formularies, from the reign of Edward III to that of Edward IV, there are various excerpts from the acts of Bishop Richard Mitford. These included a licence to the prior of Abingdon to hear confessions, injoin penance, and pronounce absolution for all members of that convent, and also for all others resident within the abbey precincts. A like licence was also issued by the same bishop to William Heneley, prior of Reading, to hear the confessions of that abbey.²

Several of Bishop Hallam's (1407-17) ordinations were held in Berkshire. At an ordination held by him in the church of St. Nicholas, Abingdon, on 14 April, 1408, five monks of Abingdon were admitted to the sub-diaconate. On 9 June, 1408, there was an ordination in the parish church of Sutton Courtenay. The bishop held ordinations in his episcopal chapel at Sonning in 1411 (2), 1412, 1413, and 1414. On 2 June, 1414, an acolyte and two deacons were ordained by Bishop Hallam in the chapel or oratory of the hospice at Abingdon.³

The episcopate of John Chandler (1417-27) seems to have been uneventful, but there is one exceptionally interesting entry relative to Berkshire in his register. It is a full account of the admission of Richard Ludlow

¹ Sarum Epis. Reg. Mitford, fols. 152-3 b.

² Harl. MS. 862, fols. 129, 129b.

³ Sarum Epis. Reg. Hallam, *passim*.

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to the hermitage of the bridge of Maidenhead on 29 October, 1423. The bishop commissioned John, warden of the collegiate church of Shottesbrook, to admit the applicant, provided he was satisfied, after diligent inquiry, as to his honest conversation and laudable life. On the appointed day, the bishop's commissary standing at the entrance of the rebuilt hermitage, in the presence of Andrew Sperling, senr., the mayor of Maidenhead, accompanied by his beadle, by Robert the chaplain, and by many of the principal men of the town and district, received the following solemn profession from the applicant, which is thus set forth in English in the episcopal register :—

In the name of God Amen. I, Richard Ludlow, byfore God and you commissary of my reverend lord and fader Johan by grace of God, Bissshop of Salisbury, and also in presence of all these worshipful men here beyng, I oppon by profession of heremite under this forme that I foresaid Richard make protestation and by note fro this day forward to be obedient to god and to holly churche havynge ye mynstres profession in worship and reverence ; Also to lede my lyf to my lyves ende in well continente and chastite, and to eschew all open spectacles, commone scotales, and tavernys which yt bey unlawful and forbodyn by holy churche and all other suspect placis of Synne, furthermore I graunte on my profession every day to here masse and to sey every day continually onyce oure lady Sauter, and on Sundays and other holidays to saye our lady Sauter, and also xv pater nosters and aves in ye worship and mynd of the woundys that oure lord suffered for me and all mankynde, Also to faste every Firday in ye yere and ye vigils of pentecost and alle Halweyn and ye fyve vigils of oure lady to bred and water, and this foresaid observance as of heryng masse, praying, and fastyng, I shal kepe treuly, but ef het be so that any gret sykness or travaile or any other resonable lette or impediment the which may not be eschewed by cause of my lettyng, and yt ye godes yt I may gete othir by some gift of cristen people or by quest or testament othir by eny othir resonable and trew wey Recevyng only necessarie to my Sustinaunce as in mete, drink, cloth, and fuell, I shal trewly wt owte deceyte uppon reparacion and amendyng of the brigg and of ye common weyes longyng to ye same town of Maydenhith.†

Thereupon the warden recited a brief Latin office, blessing the hermit's habit, and pointing out that these garments betokened in their wearer humility of heart and contempt of the world. He then admitted him to the hermitage and they thence passed into the chapel *juxta pontem*.¹

The appointment of Robert Neville to the bishopric of Salisbury, which he held from 1427 to 1438, is an apt instance of the ecclesiastical abuses of the times. Neville, a nephew of Henry IV, was both provost of Beverley and canon of York when only seventeen years of age. On the death of Bishop Chandler the chapter elected their dean as bishop ; but influence was brought to bear on the pope, who set the chapter's election on one side in favour of Neville, granting him a dispensation as he was not of canonical age for consecration. In 1438 Neville was translated to the far richer see of Durham. The work of the diocese of Salisbury, when Neville was supposed to be bishop, was chiefly done in Berkshire and elsewhere, by a suffragan termed Richard 'Katensis.'² In 1435 the two adjacent little parishes of Ufton Richard and Ufton Robert were united, with the assent of the bishop, the patron, Richard William Perkyns, and the prior of the Hospitallers. The reason alleged for this union was the poverty of the two endowments. Ufton Richard was made a chapelry dependent on Ufton Robert.³

¹ Sarum Epis. Reg. Chandler, fols. 40, 41. There is a good article on Hermits and Bridge Chapels by Rev. C. Kerry, in vol. xiv, *Derb. Arch. Journ.* wherein forms of admission are cited from the Ely Epis. Reg.

² Sarum Epis. Reg. Neville, *passim*.

³ *Ibid.* 2nd Nos. fols. 1, 2. These two parishes are better known as Ufton Nervet and Ufton Greys.

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The rule of Richard Beauchamp (1450-82) was marked in Berkshire by the rebuilding of the collegiate chapel of St. George's, Windsor, of which he was some time the dean.

During the brief uneventful episcopate of John Blyth (1494-9) a good deal of space is occupied by proceedings against heretics in various parts of the diocese, and particularly by the recital of their detailed recantations. A considerable number of these cases occur in this county.

In 1498 proceedings were taken against John Bisshop, tanner, and Alice his wife, John Roye, cooper of the parish of St. Lawrence, Reading, and against John Scotwyn, tailor, and John Stamwey, weaver, of St. Giles's, Reading, with the result that they acknowledged and confessed 'of free willes and unconstrayned' that they had received into their houses 'certayn mystering and evil techyng personnes against the veray faythe and true byleave of holy church.' The teaching was against transubstantiation, pilgrimages, images, confessions, pardons, &c., whilst the pope was termed 'Anticryste' and priests his disciples. Other heretics were brought before the ecclesiastical courts from Letcombe Regis, Hanney, Hungerford, Coxwell, and Wantage. They all eventually made formal recantation, much after the same fashion, of which the following opening phrase used in the case of a Wantage woman will serve as a pattern :—

In the name of God Amen. I, Joan Martyn, late Wife of Thomas Martyn, of Wantage, now deceased, of the diocese of Saresbury, noted defamed, and to you Revered Father in Christ, John by Goddys Grace, Bishopp of Saresbury, my judge and ordinary, denounced and detected for a mysbelieving woman acknowledge and confesse openly and with my freewill that before this tyme I have holden and believed divers openions and articles contrary to the veray fayth of Christ and to the determination of Holy Church. First that the Sacrament of the Aultar is not the veray body of our Saviour Christ but only natural bred.¹

In Blyth's register occurs one of the latest cases of appropriation of churches. The church of Sutton Courtenay was appropriated to Windsor College on 8 January, 1495.²

Berkshire or the diocese of Salisbury could have seen but little if anything of its last bishop before the Reformation. Lorenzo Campegio, an Italian cardinal, who had papal dispensation to hold at the same time an Italian diocese, was thrust on the Salisbury chapter, and held the bishopric from 1524 to 1535. In the latter year he was deprived by Act of Parliament, as a continual resident at the see of Rome.³

His successor, Nicholas Shaxton (1535-9), made a strenuous endeavour to curb the irregularities that came to a head during his rule, when the first convulsions of the Reformation were in progress. Shaxton's injunctions to his clergy in Berkshire and the rest of the diocese, issued in 1538, are set forth at length by Burnet.⁴ No French nor Irish priests, taking the place of non-resident incumbents, were to be permitted to officiate, unless they could perfectly speak the English tongue. At high mass the gospel and epistle were to be read in English. The clergy were to set forth the king's supremacy

¹ Sarum Epis. Reg. Blyth, fols. 70-79. The registers of Edmund Audley, who was bishop from 1502 to 1524 also contain many abjurations of heresy.

² Ibid. fols. 80-4.

³ Cardinal Campegio was still considered at Rome to be bishop of Sarum down to his death in 1558.

⁴ Burnet, *Hist. of Reformation*, iii, pt. 4.

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and the usurpations of the bishop of Rome. Sermons were to be preached purely and sincerely, in accordance with the Scriptures. No friar or person in a religious (conventual) habit was to perform any service in the churches. The clergy were directed to commit to memory the gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, together with other portions of the New Testament, in English. The people were to be taught the Our Father and the Creed in their own tongue. Lights before images were to be abolished. A Bible was to be supplied for each church. Complaints were made as to false relics, and Shaxton ordered that all relics, with the writings relative to them, were to be brought to him, promising to restore such relics as were genuine, with an instruction as to their use.

The penal Six Articles Act was passed in 1539 under strong pressure from the wayward convictions of Henry VIII, affirming the doctrine of transubstantiation, the sufficiency of Communion in one kind, the necessity of clerical celibacy and vows of chastity, and the desirability of private masses and private confession. Under this Act Bishop Shaxton was condemned and silenced, but his courage afterwards failed and he recanted. At the burning of Anne Askew and other heretics, Shaxton was the preacher, although so recently himself condemned as a Sacramentarian heretic.¹

This cruelly tyrannical Act of the Six Articles for the 'abolishing diversity of opinions concerning the Christian religion' became law on 28 June, 1539. All who disputed the accepted doctrine as to the Sacrament of the Altar were condemned to be burnt, whilst those who opposed the remaining five articles were to die the death by hanging of an ordinary felon. Under the first of these articles three men of Windsor, Anthony Peerson, Robert Testwood, and Henry Filmer were burnt at Windsor in 1543. Two others narrowly escaped the like fate, one of them being John Marbeck, the celebrated musician, who was pardoned through the good offices of Bishop Gardiner.²

Another execution took place at Windsor in the previous year, when a canon of the college was the victim of the king's tyranny. James Mallet, an aged man, who had held a Windsor canonry since 1516, and was also a canon of Lincoln and rector of Long Leadenham, Lincolnshire, was put to death for the sole cause of having spoken adversely at his own table of the king's policy in the dissolution of the monasteries. His remarks were repeated by a treacherous guest.³

It was in 1539, the year of Shaxton's retirement from the bishopric of Salisbury, that the abbot of Reading was executed as a traitor. This execution, as well as the various details relative to the suppression of the religious orders throughout Berkshire in 1535-9, are discussed in the subsequent accounts of the various religious houses of the county.

Miles Coverdale was busy in parts of Berkshire in 1539-40 under Cromwell's directions in the detection of popish books and 'the hindrance of superstition.' He made Newbury his head quarters. Writing from thence to Cromwell on 7 February, he complained that through overmuch suffer-

¹ Nicholas Shaxton resigned the Sarum bishopric in 1539; for some time he acted as a suffragan in the diocese of Ely; he died in 1556.

² Foxe, *Acts and Monsts.* v, 466, &c.

³ Ashmole, *Hist. of Berks*, iii, 256; *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xvii, 1251, (26, 27).

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ance there were in those countries an innumerable sort of popish books which kept the people in error ; he had required the curate of Newbury to call in all books that were either incorrect, or against the king's acts touching Thomas Becket and the bishop of Rome. A great many had reached him in the last two or three days. The next day he wrote again to his master to signify that a great number of priests had incurred the penalties of 'praemunire' for not having 'utterly extinct' from the service books all that was 'against his grace's most lawful supremacy and prerogative.' In the feast called *Cathedra S. Petri* 'great part of mattins was plainly a maintenance of the bishop of Rome's usurped power, as appeared by the great mattin books of Newbury and other churches. Again, on 5 March, Coverdale wrote a third time to Cromwell from Newbury, stating that he had just received information that in the stained glass of the Lady chapel of the church of Henley-on-Thames there yet remained the image of Thomas Becket' with the whole feigned story of his death; also that the beam, irons, and candlesticks whereon tapers and lights to images used to be set up, had not been taken down. At the same time he reported that he had taken a great number of primers and other most ungracious popish books within Newbury, and wished to know if he should burn them at the market cross. Coverdale charged the bishop of Lincoln with 'great and notable negligence' in not weeding out so great a fault as this Becket window.¹

Early in the episcopate of that unscrupulous time-server John Capon *alias* Salcot (1539-57), the wide responsibilities of the bishop of Salisbury over three counties, which had lasted since the see was founded, were materially lessened by the formation in 1542 of the diocese of Bristol; for the new diocese consisted of the whole county of Dorset with the deanery of Bristol. One of Henry VIII's paper schemes for new bishoprics had proposed to unite Berkshire with Oxfordshire to form a new diocese, with the abbeys of Oseney and Thame as cathedral centres; but this formed part of several projects for using the wealth of suppressed abbeys in a national direction, which were never, in all probability, intended to be fulfilled, and merely sent forth as stalking-horses to prevent undue alarm at the wholesale confiscations. For three more centuries after this date Berkshire, in conjunction with Wiltshire, continued to form the see of Salisbury.

The spoils that came to the crown through the overthrow of the religious houses were soon dissipated. Henry VIII had to apply to Parliament to discharge his debts in 1544. In the following year it was resolved to try to obtain further supplies by a renewed policy of confiscation. An Act was passed towards the close of 1545 for vesting in the crown all free chapels, chantries, and colleges, together with all hospitals, brotherhoods, and guilds of an ecclesiastical character. The Act was limited to the lifetime of the then monarch, and Henry's death occurred when hardly anything had been accomplished save the taking of an elaborate preliminary survey. But the evil of the Act did not perish with Henry VIII, for it suggested a further source of revenue to the council of his youthful successor, and a similar Act, though of still wider powers, became law in the first year of Edward VI.

The first commission to arrange the preliminaries for this confiscation in Berkshire and Hampshire was appointed in February, 1546, and consisted of

¹ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiv, pt. i, 245, 253, 444; Coverdale, *Remains* (Parker Soc.), 498-502.

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‘ Sir John Wellesborne, kt., Walter Hendley, Richard Worsley, George Powlett, Richard Powlet, esquyers, and John Hammond, gentrylman.’¹ Nothing was accomplished by this commission beyond putting on record a long and detailed report. Just two years later, under the authority of an Act passed in November 1547, a second commission was appointed for this county, consisting of Sir James Mason, knt., Thomas Denton, esq., and Roger Amyer, gentleman.² On this occasion not only were certificates as to the value of these properties issued, but their transference to the crown was speedily effected. The information given in these two detailed reports of the chantries, &c., of Berkshire for 1546 and 1548 is of much value in forming an estimate of the religious condition of the county on the eve of the Reformation changes; the particulars are fuller and more varied than those which are extant for several other shires.³

The commissioners of Henry VIII found that several Berkshire chantries had lapsed into lay hands or were vacant. They reported them as dissolved without licence since 4 February, 1536, the date on which the session of Parliament began, whereby sanction was given to the suppression of the lesser religious houses and under whose provisions about 400 monasteries were suppressed. It would seem that certain of the patrons of chantries and free chapels took advantage of this general confiscation, and affected to believe, a little in advance of the royal will, that the Act applied also to chantries. Bullock’s chantry at Newbury, worth over £10 a year, had been dissolved since 4 February, 1536, by the parson of Newbury without licence; he seems to have appropriated the property. The Englefield chantry, Reading, had been dissolved since a like date by Sir Francis Englefield, the patron; the commissioners of 1 Edward VI found that there had been no incumbent for the past five years. John Leigh, esq., had in like manner dissolved the chantry of Binfield, worth £6 13s. 4d. a year. The chantry of Our Lady at Clewer, founded by Bernard Brooke, in the parish church, worth £9 14s. a year, had had no incumbent for two years when the commissioners of Henry VIII were on circuit, and the commissioners of Edward VI entered *nemo* in the incumbent’s column. At North Moreton they found there was a chantry founded by Miles Stapleton for daily service; one Richard Nyelson held the benefice which was worth £3 6s. 8d. a year, but did no service for it, being also the vicar of a Bedfordshire parish.

Much the same had taken place, during this transition stage of religious observance, with regard to some of the free chapels. The free chapel of ‘ Filherd ’ in East Hendred parish, worth £5 a year, had been dissolved without licence by the patron, Alice Yate, widow. The free chapel of Woolleyfield, in Chaddleworth parish, two miles from the parish church, with a foundation of 60s. employed towards finding a minister there, had no incumbent *temp.* Henry VIII, and in the next reign it was reported that Mr. Tate, Esquier, keepith it in his owne handes.’ In Hungerford parish there were two of these independent chapels; one of them, dedicated to

¹ Coll. and Chantry Cert. No. 51.

² Ibid. No. 3. Cert. No. 7 gives an epitome of the more important points of No. 3, with certain variants and small additional particulars; it is termed ‘ a brief Declaration,’ &c.

³ The particulars herein given as to the colleges (Windsor, Shottesbrook, and Wallingford) and various hospitals or almshouses will be found under their respective heads in the accounts of the separate religious houses.

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St. John Baptist, worth £4 8s. a year, where there had wont to be daily service, and distant quarter of a mile from the parish church, was held by a layman incumbent, one John Thynne; the other one at North Standen, a mile from the parish church, was held by 'Edward Hungerford, gent. no prieste.' At the south end of the bridge over the Thames in the lordship of Sutton Courtenay, a mile and a half from the parish church, was a free chapel called 'the Mawdlyn chapel'; the endowment brought in only 30s. a year; but this had been dissolved without licence by Henry Hogge. It had been despoiled of church goods, and only a little bell worth 5s., remained.

In two cases free chapels had been suffered, apparently in quite recent years, to go to decay. The commissioners of 1546 reported that the parson of Monxton (Hampshire), had been wont to say mass once a year in the free chapel of Crookham, in the extreme south of Berkshire in the parish of Thatcham, but it could no longer be done, as the chapel was 'holy decayed and fallen downe'; nevertheless the parson still drew his fee of 6s. 8d. The commissioners of Edward VI on the contrary reckoned the income attached to this free chapel as 20s., and said that it was taken by John Barrel, clerk, aged seventy-one. The other case was that of a free chapel in the parish of East Garston, to which there was attached an endowment of 33s. 4d. for masses at certain times; but this could no longer be done, as the chapel was 'holly decayed and fallen downe to the grounde.'

There were several other free chapels and chapels of ease in this county in use when the commissioners reported which were swept away under Edward VI. The free chapel of Ockworth, half a mile away from the parish church of Wytham, and endowed with £3 15s. 2d. a year, was established to say divine service 'for the ease of the inhabitants.' Under Wallingford two free chapels were entered by the first commissioners. One of these was the chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, founded by the inhabitants of Wallingford, with an endowment of 30s. for a priest saying mass on St. Mary Magdalen's day; this sum was employed 'towards the findinge of Richard a Deane priest thereof'; but as the chapel stood on the Oxfordshire side of the river within the parish of Newnham, though only a quarter of a mile distant from Wallingford, the Berkshire commissioners of Edward VI took no notice of it. The other free chapel founded by the inhabitants of Wallingford was that of St. John Baptist; it is described as a furlong distant from the church of St. Leonard, and worth £6 a year; John a Deane, clerk, received this stipend towards his living. At Brimpton stood the free chapel of St. Leonard, only a furlong from the parish church and endowed with 40s. for mass on St. Leonard's Day; it had no ornaments of its own and was served from the parish church. A return was also made of the free chapel of Sandleford, near Newbury; it is stated that the dean and chapter of Windsor (to whom the suppressed priory of Sandleford had been appropriated) found a priest, but at will.

A free chapel called 'Arley Bartlemews,' in the parish of Sonning, had a foundation for a priest to say mass in the chapel on St. Bartholomew's Day. The chapel is described as situate within the manor of 'Arley Bartilmewes,' a mile distant from the parish church. The endowment was worth 33s. 4d., which was received by Queen's College, Oxford, on condition of their finding a priest to sing this annual mass. This entry seems to imply that, whilst

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there was only an endowment for this particular mass, the inhabitants (as was often the case elsewhere) provided for the stipend of a regular chaplain for regular services out of devotion. There had also been another free chapel in the same parish at 'Arley Whiteknights,' two miles distant from the parish church, of unknown origin, which had been dissolved without any licence in 1536, by Thomas Beke; its endowment only produced a yearly income of 26s. 8d., but the ornaments and plate at the time of its dissolution were worth 'according to credyble reporte' £6 6s. 8d. According to the return of Edward VI, this last-named free chapel was then served by Hugh Beke, aged thirty, and was worth 33s. 4d. a year.

The chapel of ease differed from the free chapel in being entirely under the control of the parish priest. In the parish of Basildon was the chapel of Ashampstead, which was spoken of by both commissions as a free chapel or chapel of ease, but as it was annexed to the vicarage, and as the vicar appointed the priest who served it, there can be no doubt that the latter title was the correct one. It was worth £6 a year; the chapel was three miles distant from the parish church, and therein were 'ministered sacraments and sacramentals and all divine service' to the inhabitants around it. At 'Isbury'¹ there was a chapel of ease annexed to the vicarage, for the purpose of affording opportunity for divine service for inhabitants who were more than a mile from the parish church; there was no separate endowment. In the widespread parish of Chieveley there were three chapels erected 'for ease of parishioners dwelling far from the parish church;' they were situated at Winterbourne, Leckhampstead, and Oare. In this case there were no funds to be seized, as they were served 'by sundry priests at charge of the vicar.' There was also a chapel on the bridge at Appleford, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, which is entered simply as a chapel; it had an endowment of 30s. The commissioners of 1548 paid particular attention to the towns, adding memoranda to the definite information that they were required to furnish.

Of Reading they reported that St. Giles's was a great parish with 500 houseling people, and the vicarage worth only £7, and that the vicar had no assistant though one was necessary; that St. Mary's had 500 houseling people,

priestes acystant unto the vicar in serving of the living none, but the great Cuer of the parishioners consideride and the small value of the vicarage which is but £10 by year requierithe some Assistent,

and that St. Lawrence had 1,000 houseling folk. No recommendation was made as to assistance for the parish of St. Lawrence, doubtless because they expected or implied the continuance of one of the extra priests that they named in other parts of their report. In this parish there was the Jesus chantry worth £14 7s. 1d. a year, out of which £8 10s. was paid as stipend to Sir Richard Deans, aged thirty-nine. There was also a stipendiary priest who was paid £7 a year at four times, by the Haberdashers' Guild in London, whilst 6s. 8d. was paid 'to the maior for his coste ryding to London for the same;' the priest who then held it was William Webbe, aged fifty-two, who was reported as not able to serve an independent cure.

¹ Possibly Ilsley.

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In the parish church of St. Mary there was a chantry founded by one Thomas Colney *temp.* Edward III ; it was worth £7 13s. 6d., but the incumbent, Richard Turner, a chaplain of the bishop of London, was vicar of Hillingdon, Middlesex, worth in the King's Books £16, and non-resident ; probably he paid the vicar of St. Mary's some portion of the chantry stipend to say masses for the founder.

At Windsor there were 900 houseling folk 'and above ;' the vicarage was worth only £8 a year, and there was no provision made for requisite assistance, save the priest supported by the gild members of the Holy Trinity for 'the general ease of the inhabitants.'

The Berkshire commissioners of Edward VI seemed to think it their business to report concerning the towns even where there was no chantry ; this was the case at Wallingford, of which place they said :—'There be iii parishe churches within the towne whereof ii wolde be sufficient to serve the inhabitants of the same if it may so stande with the kinges pleasure.' Their proposals as to the town of Wallingford are given under the account of that college.

The popular idea that the chantry priests, suppressed by the council of Edward VI, were but 'mass priests' with lazy leisure before them when mass was said, is as completely dispersed in the case of Berkshire as in every other shire where the question has been thoroughly investigated. In seven cases (Abingdon, Bray, Childrey, Fyfield, Lambourn, Newbury, and Reading) an almshouse was attached to the chantry and the priest acted as chaplain and distributor of alms to the bedesmen ; whilst in four other instances (Childrey, Lambourn, Newbury, and Wokingham) the chantry priest was also the schoolmaster. In several cases it is made quite clear that the chantry priest was an active general assistant of the parish priest, and that the commissioners themselves viewed with alarm the idea of his suppression.

The chantry of Our Lady at Bray was founded, according to the 1546 commission, 'to have a preste to celebrate the dyvyne servyce within ye parishe church of Braye, and sondry tymes in the yere to provyde certayn Almes whiche he dothe accordyngly.' It was worth £14 0s. 7d. of which 12s. 2d. came to the poor. A memorandum was added to the effect that 'ther ys in the same parishe above the nombre of vijc^o' (700) housling people and no preste (in addition to the vicar) but the sayd chauntre preste.' Again, at Wokingham, the chantry priest of Our Lady was to all intents and purposes an assistant parish priest or curate ; he was bound to say 'masse mattens and evensonge dayly with other suffrages' in the parish church. Robert Avis, M.A., was then incumbent of the chantry, and received an income of £12 2s. 6½d. ; he was a busy man, for he was also teacher of a grammar school in connexion with the chantry.

As a further proof of the identity of interests that often existed between the vicar and the chantry priest in several of these Berkshire parishes, it may be mentioned that the commissioners of 1546 found that at Newbury and Binfield, as well as at Bray and Wokingham, the chantries possessed no ornaments or goods of their own, but used those pertaining to the parish.

Fyfield is an interesting instance of the several examples of combined chantry and almshouse. It was founded not only to provide a chantry priest but also to relieve five poor men. In addition to house room, each bedesman

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received 8*d.* a week in ready money, an annual livery (at a total cost of £8 13*s.* 4*d.*), and a quarter of coals (at a total cost of 13*s.* 4*d.*). The total income was £20 15*s.* and the stipend of the chantry priest was £7 4*s.*, nearly two-thirds of the whole going to the poor.

The chantry of the Holy Trinity and St. Katherine at Childrey, founded by Sir William Fettiplace, not only supported a chantry priest and an almshouse for three poor men, but the incumbent of the chantry was bound 'to kepe and teche the gramer scole there.' The whole endowment of the chantry was £23 13*s.* 7*d.* The priest's stipend was £8 13*s.* 4*d.*, and the remainder, after paying for the support of the bedesmen, and 40*s.* to the poor scholars of Queen's College, Oxford, was used for various parochial purposes, such as the maintenance of lights in the church, and the clerk's fee for ringing the curfew every night.

There were eight chantries in the great collegiate church of St. George's, Windsor, but they are named under the account of that college. The chantry of St. John Baptist at East Hendred is described in the 1546 return as founded by 'Rauf Arden by licence of the Bishop of Rome about cc yere past.' Among the later chantry foundations were those at Hungerford and Faringdon, which were established respectively in the years 1456 and 1483.

The difference between a chantry priest and a stipendiary priest was that the latter did serve on a perpetual foundation; the stipendiary also differed from the unendowed gild or fraternity priest who was required only so long as the devotion of the people lasted. The stipendiary priest, strictly speaking, was one who served for a stipulated term of years in accordance with a definite bequest. Thus there was a stipendiary at Abingdon, appointed in 1534 to say certain masses for twenty years at a stipend of 40*s.* The commission of Edward VI found that this appointment was held by one John Crystall, aged 60, a late monk of Abingdon, who was also drawing a pension of £10. At Newbury there was a stipendiary who received £6 13*s.* 4*d.* a year, and whose chief duty was to sing for the soul of the late Lady Englefield; only four years of the twenty for which provision was made had expired at the time of the commissioners' visit. The Reading instance has been already given. Occasionally the term stipendiary priest was carelessly misapplied, as is the case of the Wormstall chantry, which was a foundation in perpetuity.

Only four fraternities or gilds are mentioned among these certificates; and of these the two Reading examples would bring no grist to the royal mill, for they were voluntary organizations. The fraternity of Jesus in St. Mary's Church, Reading, according to the 1546 return, was 'of devotion without any corporation or foundation under seale, To thentent to have a preste every holyday in the quyer to serve and every Fridaye to synge Jesus masse at thaulter of Jhesus,' for which he received from the fraternity a salary of £4 11*s.* 4*d.* It was stated in 1548 that the fraternity priest received more from the devotion of the people at large.

A fraternity of Jesus was also reported as founded in like manner, merely out of devotion, in the church of St. Giles, Reading, to find a priest to sing every Friday Jesus mass at the altar of Jesus, whose stipend was paid yearly by the parishioners. It was reported in 1548 that there was a small endowment of 12*s.*, but that £6 was gathered of the devotion of the people for

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the stipend of the chaplain. The fraternity or gild of the Holy Trinity, Windsor, is described by the commissioners of Henry VIII as founded by the consent of two wardens and certain brethren and sisters; they maintained a priest in the parish church of New Windsor 'for the ease of then-habitantes ther for ever.' Its annual value was £19 4s. 4d. of which £7 6s. 8d. went to the chaplain, and 41s. 8d. in alms to poor people.

A fraternity or gild of the Holy Cross was formed by John, duke of Suffolk, the bishop of Lincoln and the commonalty of the town of Abingdon, in 1 Richard III and confirmed in 28 Henry VIII. The latter king's commissioners reported that the gild consisted of twelve masters, and certain brethren and sisters. It was their duty to repair certain bridges and highways, and to maintain seven poor men and six poor women, giving to each of them a chamber, fuel, and 8d. a week. They had each also the gift of 12d. on Good Friday. The annual value was £83 4s. 8d. The two priests of the gild received £13 6s. 8d. There was also an additional distribution of alms to the amount of 26s. 8d. a year. The commissioners of 1548 described the thirteen inmates of the gild's almshouses as 'all decrepid and of greet and sondry ages.' Since the report of 1540 the gild wardens had sold sixteen silver spoons and a maser.

The Berkshire obits, or annual memorials of death-days, returned by the commissioners of Edward VI, were also swept into the needy coffers of the king and council as 'superstitions,' quite regardless of the fact that the poor were to a considerable extent sufferers by their suppression, as the obits which made no provision for the poor were quite the exception and small in amount.¹ The paltry excuse made for confiscating the poor's share in these obits, and the money for the support of many an almshouse bedesman, was that these benefactions were conditional on the recipient saying an Our Father for the soul of the founder.

In addition to all this the stocks held by the wardens of gilds, chantries, &c., were seized. These produced 147 kine £7 11s.; 2 oxen, 3s.; 1 mare, 1s.; 223 sheep, £1 14s.; 56 quarters of barley, £1 0s. 11d.;

¹ Parish	Full Value of Obit	Portion assigned to the Poor	Parish	Full Value of Obit	Portion assigned to the Poor
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Abingdon	3 14 8	0 13 4	Reading St. Mary . . .	0 7 4	0 3 4
"	0 2 0	—	Shalbourne	0 2 0	0 1 0
"	0 2 4	—	Sonning	0 3 6	—
Binfield	0 6 6	0 3 4	Sotwell	0 1 0	0 0 4
Bisham	0 5 0	—	Speen	0 16 4	0 8 2
Bray	1 1 4	0 9 0	Sunningwell	0 8 0	0 4 0
Brightwell	1 2 4	0 0 4	Sutton Courtenay . . .	0 10 4	0 3 4
Didcot	0 9 4	0 4 8	"	0 1 8	0 0 10
Easthampstead	0 2 0	—	Swallowfield	0 2 0	0 1 0
Faringdon	0 14 0	0 10 0	Waltham St. Lawrence	0 5 0	—
Fyfield	0 16 4	0 10 2	Windsor, New	2 19 10	1 16 5
Finchampstead	0 10 0	0 5 0	" Old	0 3 4	—
'Isbury'	0 4 0	0 2 0	Winkfield	0 1 4	0 0 10
Lambourn	0 10 0	0 6 8	Woolhampton	0 18 0	0 9 0
"	0 6 8	0 4 8	Wytham	0 6 0	0 3 0
Pangbourne	1 7 8	0 7 0			
Peasemore	1 0 8	0 4 4			
Reading St. Lawrence	1 0 0	0 10 0			
				£21 0 6	£8 1 9

From this it will be seen that a third of the income accruing from obit foundations went to the poor. In the case of Cookham there was an obit worth 10s. 8d. a year, but in this instance 8s. 2d. went to the repair of the bridge of Maidenhead.

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‘ Redy money,’ £36 14s. The general ornaments or goods of the suppressed chapels produced £52 9s. 5½d., in addition to 350 oz. of plate and eight bells.

Occasionally, throughout England, the corporations of boroughs were sufficiently powerful to recover from the crown certain funds connected with chantries that pertained to the poor and purely secular purposes; but no instance is known of a small town or village securing any redress. At a meeting of the Privy Council, held on 1 March, 1552, a letter was read from the chancellor of the Court of Augmentations signifying the king’s pleasure touching the restoration to the town of Abingdon of certain lands appointed for the maintenance of the two bridges and for the sustenance of certain poor men, ‘ lately taken to the kinges majesties behoof uppon coullour that the same was within the compasse of thact of Chauntries.’¹

The origin and gradual establishment of the chapel of Maidenhead, which can be traced with some fulness, is of value as setting forth the manner in which many another chapelry came into being; it also yields evidence of the extreme hardship and wrong done to religion by the suppression of such chapels in the time of Edward VI.

The site now occupied by the town of Maidenhead (a corruption of Maydenhythe) was known up to the latter part of the thirteenth century as South Elington or Aylington. The change came about when a new hythe or wharf was constructed at this place on the river, with the result of an influx of population greater than that which would suffice for the tilling of a small agricultural hamlet.

The population of Maidenhead was divided between the two parishes of Cookham and Bray; the boundary line, as the little town began to grow, passing exactly along the main street from east to west. This riverside wharf found itself in the awkward position of being at no small distance from its respective mother churches; for Cookham was three miles to the north, and Bray a mile and a half to the south. The piety of the times led the residents to desire a place for divine worship nearer to their own doors. Therefore, towards the close of the episcopate of Walter de la Wyle (1263–74), a chapel was irregularly erected without obtaining any sanction from the vicars of either of the parishes concerned. The bishop naturally refused his licence, and placed an interdict on the building with the threat of greater excommunication against any priest who should therein celebrate. On the bishop’s death the inhabitants attempted to get their own way, but his successor, Robert de Wickhampton, upheld the interdict, and on 30 January, 1277, formally confirmed it, and issued his mandate to the archdeacon of Berkshire for its publication in the churches of Cookham and Bray, and in other adjacent churches. The bishop further ordered that if any should contravene this interdict their names were at once to be forwarded to him.² During the episcopate of Simon de Ghent (1297–1315) the inhabitants made a further but fruitless attempt to make use of the building for the purposes for which it had been erected. It was not, however, until after the chapel

¹ *Acts of P. C.* 1552–4, p. 126–7.

² *Sarum Reg. Mortival*, ii, fols. 344b, 355. The Rev. G. C. Gorham printed privately in 1838 a scholarly account of *The Chapel, Chauntry, and Guild of Maidenhead*, wherein most of the documents referred to are set forth at length. This account was also printed in vol. vi of Nichol, *Col. Topog. et Geneal.*

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had been standing desolate for more than half a century that the ecclesiastical ban was removed.

In the year 1324 the Maidenhead residents at last prevailed upon the then vicars of Cookham and Bray to come to terms and withdraw their opposition. Application was made to Roger de Mortival, bishop of Salisbury, and he procured the necessary authority from the archbishop of Canterbury for the relaxation of the interdict. On 23 June, thirty-two inhabitants of Maidenhead, thirteen of whom were parishioners of Cookham and nineteen of Bray, met the bishop's commissaries, when they chose two of their number to be their proctors, to confer on two points, namely, the founding of a perpetual chantry in Maidenhead chapel, and the determining in what parish the building stood. The latter point was decided in favour of the chapel being entirely in Cookham, though an earlier inquisition had held that a portion of it was in Bray. On 25 June the proctors of the inhabitants, the proctors of the abbot and convent of Cirencester (the patrons and appropriators of the two mother churches), the vicar of Cookham, and the vicar of Bray by proxy, appeared before the bishop at Sonning, when the interdict and its revocation were recited. It was then decreed that the mass, to the exclusion of other sacramental offices, might be celebrated in Maidenhead chapel for the benefit of the inhabitants and travellers without prejudice to the mother churches; and that the minister or chantry priest was to be wholly maintained by the inhabitants.

In the following year, namely, on 20 June, 1325, the bishop addressed a letter to the two vicars as to the chapel 'in villa de Southelyngton quae Maydenhath vulgariter appellatur,' followed by his final order of 15 July, whereby it was enjoined that the vicar of Cookham was annually to nominate and present to the archdeacon a priest to serve the chapel, who was to be bound by oath as to the indemnity of the two mother churches; that baptism was not to be performed, but that women might be churched, their offerings being transferred to their respective vicars; that of all devotional oblations the vicar of Cookham was to receive two-thirds, and the vicar of Bray one-third, save on the fair-days of St. James and St. Mary Magdalene, when the vicar of Cookham was to receive the whole; that the priest's stipend and the maintenance of the fabric was to be wholly defrayed by the inhabitants; and that the townsmen were to resort to their respective parish churches at Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter, Whitsuntide, and All Saints' Day, as well as on the dedication feasts of Cookham (Trinity Sunday) and Bray (Michaelmas).¹

The inhabitants, with the bishop's sanction, agreed to provide their chaplain with a house and a stipend of £4.² The dedication of the chapel to the honour of St. Andrew probably took place at the time of the relaxing of the interdict, though the name does not appear until twenty-seven years after the use of the building. In 1352 John Hosebonde, citizen and corn-dealer of London, left by will £100 to purchase a rent-charge for the endowment of a chantry of St. Mary Magdalene in the Maidenhead chapel to pray for the souls of himself, his wife Margery, and Richard Bryde. His executors arranged with the priory of Hurley to find and maintain a secular priest to say a daily *placebo* and *dirige* and a *commendatio* (save at Christmas,

¹ Sarum Epis. Reg. Mortival, ii, fols. 189, 356.

² Maidenhead Corp. Muniments.

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Easter, and Whit Sunday), in addition to mass.¹ This chantry priest was to be nominated by the prior of Hurley, so that it is quite clear that there were to be two priests at the Maidenhead chapel, and not one as has been supposed by Mr. Gorham, who thought the endowment too slender for the support of two, and that the chantry endowment was merely added to the stipend provided by the inhabitants.² Other small endowments were soon added to the Hosebonde bequest. The Hurley chantry priest disappeared before the days of Edward VI.

The question of the sale or confiscation of the goods of the old parish churches and the abandonment of the ancient ecclesiastical monuments is, in some respects, fully illustrated in the case of Berkshire. In this county, as has been seen, there had been for a long period a considerable strain of Lollardism, which reappeared as Puritanism in later days. No sooner was the masterful Henry VIII dead and the protectorate established under his boy successor, than the Puritans asserted themselves, and in certain parishes the wardens began to discard ornaments and effect sales without waiting for any general signal or order. To check this action commissions were issued in 1548 to draw up inventories of church goods throughout England. The results of such commissions are only extant for a few counties, and Berkshire is not amongst the number.

It will be remembered that a great store of church or chapel plate had accumulated early in this reign from the spoiling of the chantries and free chapels, and most of the collegiate churches and hospitals, which included not only ornaments and goods, but also the lead and bells of such buildings as were not integral parts of parish churches. To this large sum Berkshire had contributed no inconsiderable share. Though the youthful sovereign inherited none of the extravagant and dissipating tastes of his father, the same could not be said of all the members of his council, and these church spoils were soon exhausted. Looking round for some exceptional means for refilling the coffers of the state, the council bethought themselves of the plate and vestments that yet remained in the parish churches. On 3 March, 1551, the following entry was made by the clerk to the Privy Council:—

This daie it was decreed that forasmuche as the Kinges Majistie had need presently of a masse of mooney, therefore Commissions shulde be addressed into all shires of Englande to take into the Kinges handes suche church plate as remaineth to be employed unto His Hignes use.³

It was not, however, until May, 1552, that a commission for this purpose was appointed for the county of Berks. The commissioners were William Parry, marquis of Northampton, Sir Philip Holey of Bisham, Sir Maurice Berkeley, Sir Humphrey Foster of Aldermaston, Thomas Weldon of Windsor, John Norris, gentleman usher, and Thomas Denton, M.P. for Berkshire in the Parliament of 1547. A quorum of these commissioners visited the county at the beginning of August to receive the sworn inventories from each parish. Of these inventories sixty-three are extant at the Public Record Office, pertaining to the hundreds of Beynhurst, Sonning, Theale, and part of the hundred of Moreton.⁴

¹ Close R. 26 Edw. III, m. 19 d.

² Gorham, *Maidenhead Chapel*, 22. A stipend of £4 and a house was quite up to the average of those days for a chaplain.

³ *Acts of P.C.* (New Ser.), iii, 228.

⁴ K.R. Ch. Goods, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, &c.

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The country churches showed much richness in their vestments. Thus at Burghfield there were vestments of blue damask embroidered with silver; at Sandhurst, of red-branched damask embroidered with gold; and at Aldermaston, of white satin of Bruges embroidered with gold. Moulsoford chapel had 'a coope of blew saten and tawdrey bawdkyn in payns,' and Great Shefford one of crimson velvet embroidered with divers colours of silk and gold, whilst at Leckhampstead there was a vestment of blue chamblet spangled with gold wire.¹

Another feature of these inventories was the abundance of banners and streamers possessed by many churches. Doubtless such would be used in the Whitsuntide parochial processions made to the abbeys of Reading and Abingdon from the churches in their respective neighbourhoods.²

It is somewhat remarkable to find that in only three of these sixty-three churches, viz. at Finchampstead, Ufton, and Boxford is there any mention made of the Bible, and in each case where it is mentioned it is associated with the Paraphrase of Erasmus. Coverdale's English version of the Bible (1535) had been ordered by Henry VIII to be placed in the quire of every church 'for every man that will to look therein and read,' and the Paraphrase was ordered to be placed in every church in 1547. Probably the wardens and others responsible for these inventories did not think it necessary, in many cases, to include these volumes in their lists.

The commissioners were instructed to leave a minimum of church goods, such as a chalice and bells, for parochial use.

A long narrow strip of paper at the Public Record Office gives a list of the goods left by the commissioners for the use of nine churches in the hundred of Wantage, eight in that of Ganfield, and fourteen in Ock hundred. As a rule only a chalice and bells were named, but at Sutton, Steventon, Marcham, and Long Wittenham there were two silver chalices; whilst there was a silver pyx both at Sutton and at Garford.

¹ As an example of these inventories that of the church of Bucklebury is set forth at length:—Thys Inventory indented made the iij of August in the vijth yere of our soveraigne lord King Edward the vijth betwene the Comysyoners of our said Sovereigne lorde for the vyewe of all goodes plate jewelles belles and ornamentes to everye Church and Chapell within the Countye of Berks belonging or in anywyse appertaynge of thone partye, and Willm Goddard and John Harbert Church Wardens of the paryshe Church of Bucklebury of the other partye, Wyttenessithe that the said Comysioners have delyvered by these presentes to the said Church Wardens all parcells hereafter particularly wryten, viz. : iij Great belles, the trebill waying by estymacion v^c weight, the seconde bell waying by estymacion vii^c weight, the third bell waying by estymacion ix^c weight, the greate bell waying by estymacion xi^c weight; two sanctus belles and one leche (corfu) bell; two payer of Candlestycks of latten; a holy water potte of lattyn; a basyn and a Ewer of lattyn; viij bolles of lead to sett Tapers before the Roode; a herse of Iron; one surplus, one rochett, one Alter-clothe, and one Towell of dyaper, two alter clothes of bockeram; a Red Saten coope wt. a bleue damask border; a Redde brothered coope wt a blue satten bordre; one redd sylke soope wt two teneacles of redd sylke and grene; a Redd satten vestymnt wt a redd satten crosse; a grene saten vestymnt wt a redd saye crosse; a redd sylke vestymnt wt a redd sylke crosse; v albes of bockeram wt amyces; a corporis clothe; an old fronte of sylke and vellvett paynd; two paynted clothes which were wount to cover the Sepulcre; a clothe of cancas paynted wt redd panes and yellowe. And all the said parcells safely to be kept and preserved, and the shure and every parcell thereof to be forthcomyng at all tymes hereafter when yt shalbe of them requyered; K.R. Ch. Goods, 111.

² The following are among the more exceptional and interesting items of these inventories:—'A payre of grete candylstyckes callyd Standers, A payer of small candylstyckes Standyng upon the heye Altare' (Sulham); 'a litell bell hangyng in the Chancell, iij old chestes to kepe the church geyre in, ij small belles to ring afore CorpSES' (Englefield); 'ij payer of orgayns' (Newbury); 'a case to bere the sacramente in vysytation' (Kintbury); 'a paxe of glass' (Mitcham); 'a canopy of unwatered chamblett wt the fringes aboute of redd and yelow cruell, a canopy clothe of stitched wourke wt a fring of redd and yelow sylke, a Stone of dyverse colours to pull the Canopy downe wt all' (Shalbourne); 'a box of Ivery with clapses of sylver and a payre of organes wt ten pypes' pertaining to a return of which the name has been torn off.

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Another parchment slip gives the same information with regard to twenty-two other churches and chapels of the county. In all these parishes only a chalice and bells were left, save at North Moreton, where there were two chalices and two silver cruets.¹

There was clearly no objection on the part of these commissioners to the continued use of the 'sanctus' or sacring bells at the Eucharist, for in the large majority of cases such bells were given back to the parishes, in addition to those that swung in the belfries. In several instances there were more than one of such bells retained. At Denchworth 'a sance bell' and 'a sacrynge belle' were left for the parish; at Stanford, both a saunce and a sacring bell; at Sutton, 'a sance belle, four sacrynge belles' (the latter probably a ring of four attached to a wheel); at Steventon, two sacring bells; and at Marcham and at Milton a saunce bell and two sacring bells. There are also several cases in which the commissioners left for parochial use the 'leche belle' or 'buryng belle,' which was carried at the head of the funeral procession.

A certificate was supplied to the Lord Protector and the Council of the total of the plate and bells found by the commissioners in the churches and chapels of Berkshire. From this return it appears that there were in the shire 262 churches and 544 bells. With regard to other parcels of plate (silver or silver-gilt) the inventories showed three crosses, thirteen pyxes, two candlesticks, four censers, a ship for incense, twelve cruets, a chrismatory, a little spoon, and 'ij clapses.' To this was added £80 in money for the sale of 'certayne stuf' since the previous inventory of 1548 had been taken.²

A return furnished of the broken plate, spoiled from the chapels and chantries of Berkshire, and forwarded to London by 'Thomas Weldon and Vachell, Esquieres,' the commissioners for the county, between 1 June, 1553, and 4 February, 1554, shows the considerable total of 1,479 ounces. Of this total 401 ounces were silver-gilt, 660 parcel-gilt, and 418 white plate or plain silver.³

During the grievous Marian persecution three victims suffered death in 1556 in the sandpits at Newbury for their adherence to reformed principles. The most eminent of these was Julius Palmer, who had been a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and master of Reading Grammar School. It is said that the sheriff offered him a yearly stipend and maintenance if he would recant, but he stood firm.⁴

Bishop Capon, who had professed to hold successively every variety of Protestant, Anglican, and Roman Catholic opinions during his tenure of the see of Salisbury, died in 1557. Nearly three years elapsed before his successor, John Jewell, was consecrated.

Bishop Jewell in early life, whilst still resident at Corpus Christi College, was 'a preacher and catechiser at Sunningwell, near Abindon,'⁵ and seems to have had a considerable knowledge of Berkshire before he became its bishop.

Elizabeth was no sooner seated on her sister's throne than Cecil and other advisers urged a general royal visitation of the dioceses of England and Wales to secure the signed acceptance by the clergy of the 1559 Acts of

¹ K.R. Ch. Goods, No. 111.

⁴ Foxe, *Acts and Mon.* iii, 218.

² Ibid. No. 118.

⁵ Wood, *Athen. Oxon.* i, 132.

³ Ibid. 111.

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Uniformity and Supremacy. It was not until 8 September, 1560, that the archbishop commissioned Bishop Jewell and other commissioners to make a visitation of his diocese for this purpose. The number of Berkshire incumbents that were deprived at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign was but small, namely those of Englefield, Hampstead Marshall, Inkpen, and Purley.¹

The original parochial return of this date is ruled into four columns, headed respectively for the name of the parish, whether served by parson or vicar, if provided with chapel-of-ease, and whether supplied with a curate. In the Berkshire archdeaconry seventy-one parishes were supplied with parson or rector, and fifty-nine with vicars. Eighteen parishes had one or more chapels-of-ease. No curates are entered except for the parishes that had chapels. At Stanford in the Vale (Goosey), West Hanney (Lyford), Faringdon (Little Coxwell), Sutton Courtenay (Appleford), Marcham (Garford), East Garston (Fawley), and Shinfield (Swallowfield), the entries certify that the chapels-of-ease each had a curate.

In the rest of the cases the bishop was content to certify, after a slovenly fashion, that there was 'a curate, or curates, or ought to have.' The instances of one curate, or ought to be, are—Basildon (Ashampstead), Cholsey (Moulshford), and Welford (Wickham.) In eight parishes, where there were more than one chapel-of-ease, 'curates or ought to have curates' is the entry. These are—Shrivenham (Longcot and Watchfield), Uffington (Barkham and Woolstone), Sparsholt (Fawley and Kingston Lisle), Letcombe Regis (East Challow and West Challow), Cumnor (North Hinksey, South Hinksey, and Wootton), Abingdon St. Helen (Shippon, Drayton, and Radley), Chieveley (Leckhampstead and Winterbourne), and Thatcham (Midgham and Greenham).²

The Acts of the Privy Council during the reign of Elizabeth have numerous references to religious and other troubles within Berkshire. Early in the reign a case of 'prophesying' or indulging in irregular rambling devotions, so generally suppressed in 1577, was severely treated. A letter was sent from the Privy Council on 9 December, 1564, to Sir Henry Nevill, signifying the sending of John Veal, Joan Stamford, and Edmund Cowper, parson of Burghfield, from the Tower to the mayor of Reading. Sir Henry was required to repair to that town and cause on some market day Veal and the woman to be put on the pillory with papers on their heads, bearing in great letters 'for forging of false prophecies,' and so to suffer them to stand all market day. If they showed themselves sorrowful for their offences they were to be set at liberty, otherwise to be detained in prison,

and because it is known by reporte of him and others that the priste, saving this falte, hathe ben alwaies well given, he is willed to appointe him to make sum declaration to the people to beware of suche vaine and fanatticall vanyties, and so to set him at libertye.

On 12 December a briefer letter of the same nature was sent to the mayor of Reading injoining his obedience to the orders of Sir Henry Nevill in the matter; in this letter it is stated that the three prisoners have been for some time in the Tower 'for vayne abusing the people with fond prophecies.'³

The Roman Catholic recusants of Berkshire, and more particularly the priests of the unreformed faith who ministered to them, experienced the usual

¹ Gee, *Elizabethan Clergy*, 159, 284, 292.

² Harl. MS. 595, fols. 193-203.

³ *Acts of P.C.* (New Ser.) viii, 171-8.

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harsh treatment that prevailed throughout Elizabeth's reign. A letter was sent from the Privy Council in October, 1578, to Lord Russell, Lord Norris and the other justices of Berkshire, thanking them for the energy they had shown in hunting for disguised mass priests in accordance with their order of the previous month. Thomas Blewet and William Allyn, priests, and 'one Phillipess backward in religion' whom they had arrested, were to be sent immediately to their lordships under sure guard.¹

In July, 1580, the council addressed a letter to the sheriff of Berkshire, urging immediate measures against 'sundrie obstinate Recusants who remain excommunicated' within the shire. He was directed to obtain the combined assistance of well-affected justices near recusants' residences, to secure their simultaneous apprehension, so that the rest might not escape away from the arrest of one or two. They were to be committed to the common gaol. In the following September the council wrote to Lord Norris and other magistrates, inclosing certain examinations sent by the bishop of Salisbury declaring that masses were being said in the houses of Mr. Norris of Coxwell and Mrs. Weekes, and showing to what places in Berkshire and Oxfordshire 'divers massing priestes use to resorte'; the justices were again required to be diligent in searching after such priests, and in the arrest of any that had been present at such masses. A month after the receipt of the second letter Lord Norris wrote to the council explaining the action that had been taken in certain houses and cases, but that the houses of Mr. Norris and Mr. Yate were closed against them, and they refused to open although they made them acquainted with their authority to search. The council in reply ordered entrance to be made by force if the justices were again refused. They also ordered that Richard Browne, a massing priest, arrested at 'Blacklands' be sent up to London, as it seemed that he was able to discover further matter than he had yet done. The Lord Chancellor was instructed to draw up a special commission to proceed against sundry persons lately detected hearing mass in Berkshire. The sheriff of Wiltshire was directed by the council in December, 1580, to send Henry Clarke, a priest, and a miller detected in hearing mass, as appeared by examinations taken before the bishop of Salisbury, under sure guard to the sheriff of Berkshire, to remain in Reading Gaol, to await the special proceedings about to be taken against the papists of that county.²

The sad story of that foolishly brave and gifted Jesuit, Edmund Campion, who 'is praised by all writers, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, not only for his talents and acquirements, but also for the amiability of his disposition,'³ is closely connected with Berkshire. Educated at Christ's Hospital and Oxford, where he became a fellow of St. John's, Campion was admitted to deacon's orders in the Church of England in 1567. Being led to reject the tenets of the Reformed Church, he left England for Douay, where he passed his novitiate as a Jesuit. In 1588 he was sent by Gregory XIII on a propagandist mission to England and at once challenged the universities and clergy to dispute with him.

On 20 July, 1581, the council issued a warrant for the payment to Sir Thomas Heneage of the considerable sum of £33 'for bringing uppe of one Edmund Campion, a jesuite, iij other Popishe priestes, and viij other persones

¹ *Acts of P.C.* (New Ser.), x, 348-9.

² *Ibid.* xii, 90, 211, 252, 256, 289.

³ *Encyclop. Brit.* iv, 762.

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taken in that shire, and by their Lordships' order committed to the Tower.' At the same time a letter was sent to the sheriff as to the women lately arrested in Mrs. Yate's house; Mrs. Yate was to be kept in the common gaol without bail, but bonds might be taken in good sums 'if they can put in anie' for the appearance at the next sessions of Gillian Harman, Katherine Kingsmill, and the wife of Edward Keynes.¹

Mr. Yate of Lyford was a prisoner for religion in London in 1580, but had written to Campion begging him to visit his family. He reached the moated grange of Lyford on 11 July, where Mrs. Yate had eight Brigittine nuns under her protection. He left on the morrow, but was persuaded by a number of adherents of the old religion to return for further services. On Sunday, 16 July, a congregation of sixty assembled to hear Campion say mass and preach. Elliot, a renegade spy, implored to hear mass and was admitted; leaving after service he returned with pursuivants and men-at-arms. Eventually on the morrow they found Campion's hiding-place and arrested not only the Jesuit and two priests, but seven gentlemen and two yeomen for the crime of hearing mass. Three days later the order of the council reached Lyford for conducting the prisoners to London. The company made two halts on the way, in Berkshire, namely at Abingdon, where divers Oxford scholars came to greet Campion, and at Henley, where William Filby, a priest, incautiously attempting to speak to the Jesuit, was arrested and added to the prisoners.² In December Edmund Campion was done to death at Tyburn after the revolting fashion reserved for traitors.

Thomas Ford, a former fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, acting as private chaplain at Lyford, was one of the priests arrested with Campion and condemned at the same time; but his execution was delayed until 28 May, 1582. William Filby, a young priest, only twenty-seven years of age, arrested at Henley, was also convicted at the same trial; his execution was deferred until 30 May, 1582.³

Although no lay person was done to death out of Berkshire under the penal Act of 1581, many from that county suffered long periods of imprisonment solely for their religion. Among those in the common gaol of Reading for refusing to come to church was one Mrs. Buckley, who petitioned the council in January, 1582, that she might have some liberty for the recovering of health, being visited with sickness. The council therefore instructed Sir Henry Nevill to send a messenger to Reading to ascertain the truth of this, and if her allegation was found to be true, he was empowered to set her at liberty

for vij or viij weeks, as the qualitie of her disease shall require, upon sufficient bondes to returne to prison after the expiration of the said time, unless by order from hence it shalbe prolonged, or that she shall reforme herself in Religion.⁴

Certain of the Berkshire justices in 1586 informed the council of their suspicions as to 'Franceys Parkins, esquire, and divers of his servants.' They were instructed to repair to his house, to arrest certain of the servants, and the one suspected to be a priest, examining them and committing them to

¹ *Acts of P.C. (New Ser.)*, xiii, 136.

² There is a full and interesting account of the betrayal and arrest at Lyford in Simpson's *Life of Campion* (1867), chap. xi.

³ Challoner, *Martyrs*, 52, 59.

⁴ *Acts of P.C. (New Ser.)*, xiii, 322.

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prison. They were also to take bonds for the appearance of Perkins before the council in a good sum of money, to search the place where mass is supposed to be said, and also his study and other places where his writings could be concealed, and to send up anything they might discover whereby he might be further charged.¹

In the summer of 1588 the mayor of Reading discovered certain popish books together with copes and vestments in a house in that town. The council ordered the arrest of two men (Oliver Coxhead and Combes), the tearing and burning of the books, and the defacing of the copes and vestments, which were afterwards to be bestowed 'uppon such poore men of the towne as tooke anie paines in the discoverie.'²

Executions and imprisonments were, however, only a small part of the continuous Elizabethan and early Stuart persecution of the recusants. A fine of 12*d.* was imposed in the first year of Elizabeth's reign on all absent from church on Sundays and holydays. In 1581 this penalty was enormously increased, for it was actually laid down that £20 a month was to be imposed on all absenting themselves from church, and such as did not pay to be imprisoned until they conformed. The crown had also the power by further legislation of seizing two-thirds of the offender's lands and all his goods in default of payment.

The Recusant Roll for 1592 gives about forty Berkshire names, ranging from gentlemen to labourers, about half being termed yeomen, who were actually entered as owing cumulative sums to the crown, varying from £280 to £300 each.³ To meet these defaults the crown frequently adopted the plan of farming out the recusants' lands at yearly rentals. This was done in 1592 with the Berkshire estates of Thomas Vachell, James Braybrook, Frances Perkins, Thomas Hulse, and Walter Hildesley.⁴ The roll for 1601 also enters such farmed estates, and where parties are dead the farms are assessed on the tenants, who are held responsible for arrears, which in some cases amounted to £500 or more. The list of that year includes seventy-two persons who were fined £140 each for seven months' recusancy; for the most part they are entered as gentlemen, but some were weavers, millers, joiners, and husbandmen.⁵

On the death of Bishop Jewell in 1571, the Salisbury diocese was ruled from that time until 1576 by Edmund Gheast, and from 1577 to 1589 by John Piers; neither of these prelates seems to have made any particular mark upon Berkshire or other parts of the diocese. Much the same may be said of the next bishop, John Coldwell, the first married prelate of the see of Salisbury, and of his successor Henry Cotton, who died in 1615, and who was celebrated for having '19 children by one woman, which is no ordinary blessing, and most of them sonnes.'⁶

There is preserved at the Bodleian an archidiaconal court-book of the latter part of the rule of Dr. Thomas White, who was archdeacon of Berkshire from 1557 to 1588. The entries bear witness in many cases to the somewhat unhappy and disastrous state of ecclesiastical affairs in country districts during the transition period of Elizabeth's reign. The story is much the same wherever archidiaconal records have survived.⁷

¹ *Acts of P.C.* (New Ser.) xiv, 215, 218.

² *Ibid.* xvi, 215, 218.

³ Recusant R. Berks, No. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.* No. 10.

⁶ Harrington, *Nugae Antiq.* i, 109.

⁷ *V. C. H. Essex*, ii.

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Nevertheless it should always be remembered that in such records there are no presentments of one kind or the other in the majority of parishes, and it is only charitable as well as reasonable to suppose that in these instances the church was doing her work with a fair amount of success.

As a striking instance of misrule and alleged scandals in a Berkshire parish, the following extracts of a presentment made as to Binfield in the year 1583 may be taken from this court-book:—

Certain articles concernynge the abuse of the Persone (parson) of Bynfylde in the Countie of Berkes.

Our Persone, being utterlie unlearned, sometymes taketh upon him to expound whenne he rather perswadeth the people to sedition than otherwise, as of late in his exposition he shewed the people that no man shoulde honor or reverence any ryche man or gentelman except he was a magistrate.

Our Persone doth not, neither ever have, called the youthe of the parishe to examine them of their faith, neither hath catechysed to anye of the youthe in the parishe, which ought to be lookedon, for we have much youthe and rudely brought upp and not in the knowledge of their duties towarde God.

Our Persone and his wyfe be people of evill dispositions, seditious, and full of brawles and unquiet with their neighbours, slanderers and evil speakers both openlie and publicklye, a matter to be carefully looked to, and himself doth minister the Communion when he hath given occasion of greate offence to his neighbours, and doth not seeke before he goeth to the administration of the Sacrament to be in love and charitie, but dothe persist in his lewde proceeding.

Our Persone neither hath studied the Holye Scripture, neyther yt doth but will rather leade an evyll life than take any paynes that way.

Our Persone hath been a Fryer in his younge tyme, and so in parte continueth still in that profession, for we have heard him saye yf ever we had masse agayne he would say it, for he must lyve.

Our Persone is a common haunter of ale-houses, a greate swearer, a carder, a table-player, and a brawler.¹

Bishop Henry Cotton (1598–1615) held a visitation of his whole diocese in 1614. The first of the printed² ‘Articles to be enquired of by the Churchwardens and Swornemen of every severall parish’ related to the Book of Canons—whether it has been purchased by the parish, and whether the minister read the same or some part thereof on Sundays and holydays in the afternoon before divine service. Other questions related to the use of a surplice with wide sleeves, the saying of the Litany every Wednesday and Friday, ‘the catechising of the youth for half an hour or more every Sunday before Evening Prayer. The churchwardens were also asked whether they had ‘suffered any Plaies, Feasts, Banquets, Churchales, Drinking, Temporall Courts or Leets, Juries, Musters, or any other prophane usages to bee kept in the Church, Chapel or Churchyard.’

Considerable difficulty was experienced with the clergy as well as the laity of Berkshire in the matter of the ship-money. In 1635 Henry Dolman, the sheriff of Berkshire, wrote to Secretary Windebank sending the names of the clergy who had paid their assessment. Several parishes had exempted their clergy, others had paid their clergy’s assessment, but would not have it appear in the return. But he had only received £200 out of the £400, and had to distrain for the remainder. The sheriff cordially disliked the work he had to do in gathering this assessment, and concluded his letter by praying Windebank to move for his discharge out of his office.³

¹ Dr. White, *Court-book*, cited in *Dioc. Hist. of Sarum*, 193–4.

² B.M. Press Mark 5155, c. 6.

³ S.P. Dom. Chas. I. ccvii, 49.

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Archbishop Laud was born at Reading on 7 October, 1573. He was the only son of William Laud, a clothier, and was educated at the free grammar school; in 1590 he obtained a scholarship at St. John's, Oxford, which was one of two that were reserved for boys from the Reading school. His great interest in Reading school must be the excuse for his interference with the corporation of Reading in 1636. Understanding that a vacancy in the mastership was likely to occur Laud induced the king to direct the corporation to make no new appointment without the consent and approbation of the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of the diocese. In November, on Dr. Byrd's death, the corporation wrote meekly to the archbishop for his directions, whereupon Laud suggested that they should apply to the president and senior fellows of St. John's to name a new master. The college recommended 'Mr. William Page, a master of arts and fellow of our house; a man able for his scholarship, conformable to the doctrine and discipline of the Church, and for his demeanour (for aught we could ever understand) unblameable.' Laud also wrote strongly approving the choice of the college; he expressed himself confident as to the learning and integrity of William Page, but added, 'I desire you to trye him (if you think fitt) by any or all of your three learned ministers that lyve with you in the towne, whom I doubt not but he will satisfye.' Page seems to have proved a good schoolmaster, but he was ejected by the Commissioners of Sequestration in 1644.

Reading stood next to Oxford in Laud's affection. He procured a royal charter for the town in 1638. In his diary for January, 1634, is the following entry:—

The way to do the town of Reading good for their poor; which may be compassed, by God's blessing upon me, though my wealth be small. Send I hope God will bless me in it because it was his own motion in me. For this way never came into my thoughts (though I had much beaten them about it) till this night, as I was at my prayers, Amen, Lord.

This was written a little before he became archbishop, and at that time he decided to set apart £3,000 to produce £100 a year for a hospital at Reading in the house where he was born. But his wealth increased after he became primate, and when the project was carried into execution six years later, the amount was made up to double that sum, and his intentions diverted to another channel. He conveyed to the corporation in 1640 lands at Bray to the value of £200 a year; £120 to be spent for two years in apprenticing twelve poor boys, and a like sum every third year in finding marriage portions for six poor maids; £50 per annum to the vicar of St. Lawrence; £20 to the Reading schoolmaster; and £10 to defray the expenses of a triennial visitation of the school by the chancellor of Oxford, the president of St. John's, and the warden of All Souls.

The arrangements for this generous gift to the town of his birth were drawn up at the end of March, 1640. Before the end of the year Laud was a prisoner in the Tower. It is somewhat touching to find how great was the anxiety of the imprisoned archbishop, in the midst of his own troubles, as to the success of his Reading scheme. He wrote to the corporation as to the rents from Bray, &c., and many details from the Tower on 28 October, 1641, and again on 23 December, signing himself on the second occasion 'Your verye lovyng but unfortunate friend.'

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Laud's will, that striking document drawn up in January, 1644, a year before his execution, so remarkably illustrative of his character and opinions, provided—so far as Berkshire was concerned—that £50 a year should be settled on each of the towns of Wokingham, Henley-on-Thames, Wallingford, and Windsor, and this in addition to the £200 already settled on Reading.¹

In February, 1637, Thomas Sheylor, curate of Swallowfield, petitioned Archbishop Laud to provide some timely remedy and relief out of his 'tender favour to the poore distressed clergie.' George Miller and Mary Phipps, wife of John Phipps, having for a long time lived scandalously together at Miller's house, Sheylor and the churchwardens presented them at the visitation of the archdeacon of Berkshire in October, 1636. Whereupon Miller and Mary Phipps were enjoined a purgation. They appealed to the Court of Audience, and made Sheylor and the wardens parties, where the cause still depends to their great cost and affliction. Moreover Miller abused the petitioner in violent assaults and vile language. Instances of both are set forth, including the following utterance:—'That a boy that goeth to plough and dounge cart every day his callinge is better and honester than myne of the Ministrie.' The petition is endorsed in Laud's hand, to be referred to Sir John Lambe, and to award an attachment for the party here mentioned to answer these misdemeanours in the High Commission Court.²

William Twisse, the learned Puritan divine, was intimately associated with Berkshire. He was born in the parish of Speen, near Newbury, about 1578. He was educated at Winchester and at New College, Oxford, and was instituted to the vicarage of Newbury in 1620. His convictions were strongly Puritan and he declined to read the Declaration of Sports. When the Lords and Commons determined on 12 June, 1643, to call together an assembly to consult with Parliament 'for settling the government and Liturgy of the Church of England'—an assembly forbidden by the king under the severest penalties—Dr. Twisse was appointed prolocutor, and on 1 July preached the opening sermon. This was the assembly that put forth the Directory for Public Worship, when the use of the Book of Common Prayer was forbidden, even privately, under severe penalties. Twisse, however, resigned the prolocutorship of the assembly in April, 1645, on the ground of ill-health, but apparently from distaste at its proceedings. He died in Holborn, July, 1646, and was buried, in the pomp of a public funeral, at Westminster Abbey, only to be disinterred by royal mandate in 1661, and flung into a common pit in St. Margaret's Churchyard.³

Among the parliamentary sequestrations of royalist clergy and the subsequent comminations of Puritan ministers, so far as they appear in the journals of Parliament, the following Berkshire examples occur:—William Durham to Burghfield, 24 June, 1647; John Commin to Cholsey, with the rectory of Moulsoford annexed, 13 December, 1667; Hugh Pugh to Shrivenham, 28 July, 1648; John Jemmett to St. Giles, Reading, and William Owen to Remenham, 23 September, 1648; Thomas Whitefield to East Hendred, 30 November, 1648; Thomas Dayriell to Milton, 12 December, 1648; and John Carrill to Boxford, 23 December, 1648.⁴

¹ *Orig. Let. &c. relative to Abp. Laud's Benefactions* (Berks. Ashmolean Soc. 1841).

² S.P. Dom. Chas. I, ccclxxxi, 62.

³ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 503, &c.; *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

⁴ Shaw, *Eng. Ch. Under the Commonwealth*, ii, App. 2 c.

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The Berkshire beneficed clergy ejected during the Commonwealth troubles were smaller in proportion to their number than those of Wiltshire in the other half of the Salisbury diocese. Walker (*Sufferings of Clergy*) gives seventeen in Berkshire and fifty-six in Wiltshire; but other estimates give the Berkshire number as twenty-three. To these, too, ought to be added the twenty-two ejected from the large collegiate establishment at Windsor, bringing the full Berkshire total up to forty-five.

One of the sad cases of ejection was that of Guy Carleton from the benefice of Bucklebury. As a sympathizer with the king and a determined churchman, he was imprisoned in Lambeth House and afterwards escaped beyond the seas. His wife and daughters were meanwhile maintained in London partly by charity and partly by their own labour. Happily he survived till the Restoration, when he became successively dean of Durham, bishop of Bristol, and bishop of Chichester.¹

Among the augmentations made to particular ministers during the latter part of the Commonwealth period, the following Berkshire instances occur:— In 1655, £33 2s. 7d. to the minister of West Woodhay; in 1656, £23 13s. 1d. to the minister of Wokingham, £15 to the minister of Buckland, and £20 to the minister of Wantage; and in 1657, £20 to the minister of Blewbury, and £40 to the minister of Ruscombe.²

Above £15,000 of the money realized from sales of dean and chapter lands during the Commonwealth was settled on sundry ministers and lecturers by way of augmentation and stipend. In 1649 John Piborne, minister of Woodhay, received £18 10s.; Thomas Gilbert, minister of St. Lawrence, Reading, £37 6s. 8d.; William Clarke, of Hurst, £18; Jeremiah Tarrant, of Wingfield, £50; Thomas Roebuck, of Ruscombe, £10 13s. 4d.; Mr. Woodbridge, of Newbury, £37 10s.; William Clarke, of Hungerford, £16 10s.; Nicholas Lockur and John Bacheler, ministers in the castle of Windsor, £18; Thomas Fitch, of Sutton Courtenay, £30; Robert Bacon, of New Windsor, £37 10s.; and John Bateman, of Wokingham, £13 6s. 8d.³ Out of the amount realized by the sale of bishop's lands, John Pendarnes, minister of St. Helen's, Abingdon, received the large sum of £127 10s.⁴

The parliamentary Survey of Livings undertaken in 1650 possesses several points of interest. The commissioners made various practical suggestions for the amalgamation of parishes. The following will serve as an example of these returns:—

Catmer is a parsonage situate about two miles from Farnborough conteyning but one family worth 45 li yearly the Incumbent whereof is Mr. John Hende, and the right of presentation in one Mr. Evans in right of his wife. We conceive in regard of the smalnes of the meanes belonging to the said Churches of Farnborough and Catmer and by reason that Catmer is but one family that the said parsonage of Catmer may be fitly united to that of Farnborough whereby the maintenance may be made a competence for a godly able preaching minister.⁵

At the Restoration in May, 1660, Brian Duppa returned to Salisbury as its bishop, but before the expiration of the year he was translated to Winchester.

The ejection of the nonconformist beneficed ministers who declined to accept the Prayer Book in 1662 resulted, according to Calamy, in the dis-

¹ *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

² Shaw, *Eng. Ch. Under the Commonwealth*, ii, App. 6.

³ *Ibid.* App. 7.

⁴ *Ibid.* App. 8.

⁵ *Commonwealth Surveys*, P.R.O. vol. i, m. 8.

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missal of twenty-nine from Berkshire livings, but a careful examination of his list reduces the number to twenty-three.¹

In Besse's *Sufferings of the Quakers*, published in 1753, twenty-eight folio pages are devoted to their treatment in Berkshire between 1655 and 1688.² It will be admitted on all hands that the treatment of the Quakers both during the Commonwealth and after the Restoration was bad. But in Berkshire, as elsewhere, the treatment they received was mainly caused by two kinds of action in which they persisted, the one the non-payment of tithes, and the other their insisting on interrupting the worship of others, whether Presbyterian or Episcopalian. It must always be remembered that the Quakers of the seventeenth century, with their fanatical interference with and abuse of others in their devotional exercises, were in absolute contrast to the gentle forbearance of Friends of later times.

The first 'suffering' recorded by Besse is that of one Leonard Cole, imprisoned for six weeks in 1655 for non-payment of tithes. The second case, in 1656, is the imprisonment at Reading of Joseph Cole and five others 'for offering to speak,' we use Besse's own words, 'by way of Christian exhortation to the priest and people when assembled in their place for public worship at Reading.'

In 1660 and the following years there was a good deal of rough treatment of the Quakers at Newbury, Reading, and Abingdon, chiefly for refusing to take the oath of allegiance, a refusal arising from their objection to any form of swearing, and not from any disloyalty to Charles II. Others were proceeded against as recusants for not attending church.

The most remarkable of the post-Restoration bishops of Salisbury was Seth Ward, who was translated from Exeter in 1667, and ruled until his death in 1689. He was a most gifted man, and remarkably generous, but incurred much odium from the thorough way in which he carried out the Act of Uniformity. To keep his diocese in conformity, he took great care to settle able ministers in the great market and borough towns, as Reading, Abingdon, Newbury, &c. ; and because they were for the most part vicarages of small value, as prebends in the (cathedral) church fell void he bestowed them on the ministers of these towns.³ He left behind a manuscript volume of *Notitia* of his diocese, wherein he enters 128 churches and 37 chapels in the archdeaconry of Berkshire.⁴

The ministers licensed for Berkshire under the short-lived royal indulgence of Charles II show a considerable preponderance of Presbyterians. They were thus divided: Presbyterians 20, Baptists 9, Congregationalists 2. With regard to the number of dissenting ministers in comparison with other counties, Berkshire was above the average when size and population are taken into account.

Apart from such qualifications Berkshire stood eleventh on the list of counties with Presbyterian ministers, only five from the bottom of Congregational ministers, and seventh from the top of Baptist ministers.⁵

¹ Marshall, *Dioc. Hist. of Oxf.* 147.

² Besse, *Sufferings of the Quakers*, i, 11-39.

³ Pope, *Life of Seth Ward* (1696), p. 67.

⁴ D. Jones, *Dioc. Hist. of Sarum*, 240.

⁵ The following places in the county had licences for buildings for Nonconformist worship, and the same indulgence:—

Presbyterian (19): Abingdon, Cholsey, East Ilsley, Frogmore, Hagbourne, Hungerford, Lambourn, Maidenhead, Newbury, Pusey, Reading, Sandhurst, Shalbourn, Shilton, Shippon, Tubney, Wantage, Windsor,

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On 16 April, 1672, Sir William Armour, one of the Berkshire justices, wrote a strong letter of protest to Lord Arlington, as to a particular licence granted under the royal indulgence. He had heard that the Nonconformists ought to be allowed to apply for a licence for Christopher Fowler, and thought it his duty to state what manner of man he was. Fowler had been put out of the Reading church by a parliamentary committee, and remained in it until he was put out by the Act of Uniformity. 'Till the Restoration he was the most violent man against the king, and the most malicious agent, but that were for him. Many instances of his behaviour could be given as one, which if needful could be deposed to by as honest and sufficient a man as any in this town, will suffice. His prayer in the pulpit for His Majesty's father was several times, and they believe constantly, in these words :

And as for the king let the blood of England, the blood of Scotland, and the blood of Ireland fly in his face and dog him night and day, and let him never have peace of conscience until he return to Jesus Christ and his Parliament.

I say not this [added Sir William], to make him incapable of His Majesty's pardon, of which he had, I think, as much need as anyone that lives by it, but to let you see the humour of this people and to preserve this town from such a man, who has been the author of most of the evil in it, and whose coming in this manner at this time would be the ready way to set us altogether by the ears.'¹

But this remonstrance was of no avail. On 19 May Colonel Blood applied for licence for Christopher Fowler, Presbyterian, at Griffith Bully's house, Reading, and on 25 May this crown licence was granted.²

In 1675 Dr. Thomas Pierce, dean of Salisbury, made his primary visitation of the churches within the peculiar jurisdiction of the deanery of Salisbury, which included, as we have seen, several of Berkshire. The articles of inquiry were printed in a small black-letter quarto of sixteen pages, and correspond in the main with other episcopal and archidiaconal visitations of that period. The queries were thorough and searching, and include questions as to 'a Font of stone with a Cover,' a 'fair communion cup and chalice with a cover of silver and one or more flaggons of silver or pewter,' &c. Under the same head as the question relative to the licensing of 'School Masters, Physician, Chyrurgeons and Midwives' are inquiries as to any hospital, almshouse, or free school, not of the king's foundation or patronage.³

The non-juring movement in opposition to the claims of William and Mary to the throne made no small stir at the centre of the diocese. Gilbert Burnet, 'chaplain in ordinary of the revolution,' was appointed to the vacant bishopric of Salisbury, with the effect of rather intensifying the feeling of those in that city who could not see their way to taking the oath of allegiance to the new dynasty. Robert Frampton, bishop of Gloucester, who held the Salisbury prebend of Torleton, was one who followed Archbishop Sancroft in his retirement. Robert Tutt, the sub-dean, and John Martin,

Wokingham. Congregational (4) : Hinton, South Moreton, Ufton, Wallingford. Baptist (7) : Abingdon, Appleton, Cookham, Longworth, Maidenhead, Reading, Wallingford. Presbyterian and Congregational : Reading. *Cal. S.P. Dom. Chas. II. 1672.* Preface, pp. xliv-xlvi.

In a single case the application for a licence for meeting was not for a private house, licences being granted on 9 April, 1672, for the use of the Town Hall, Newbury, for Presbyterian worship and for Benjamin Woodbridge to preach therein ; *Cal. S.P. Dom. 1671-2*, p. 298.

¹ *Cal. S.P. Dom. Chas. II. 1671-2*, p. 328.

² *Ibid.* 1672, p. 61.

³ B.M. Press Mark 5155, c. 73. The articles of the visitation follow for the most part those of Bishop Ward in his general visitation of the previous year. B.M. 5155, c. 72.

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prebendary of Preston, were also among the non-jurors, as well as that saintly scholar Nathaniel Spinckes, rector of St. Martin's, Salisbury, who was afterwards consecrated as one of the non-juring bishops. But there was little stir in Berkshire; no beneficed clergyman gave up his preferment, though William Sloper, schoolmaster at Wantage, after taking the oath, recanted and joined the non-jurors, and his example was followed by Mr. Vincent, curate of Sulhamstead. Shottesbrook, however, was famed as the meeting place of Ken, Nelson, and other non-juror leaders at the residence of Francis Cherry.

The Articles of Visitation and Inquiry for the churchwardens and sidesmen of the Berkshire parishes, for the visitation held by Archdeacon William Richards in 1695, were printed at Oxford, forming a quarto pamphlet of eight pages.¹ The questions are divided into seven heads or titles. Among the inquiries as to the ornaments and furniture of the church are those that ask as to 'a font of stone with a good cover thereunto, standing in a convenient place towards the lower end of the church'; 'two Books of Common Prayer (1662) well and substantially formed'; 'A comely large Surplice for the Minister to wear at all times of his publick Ministration in the Church'; 'A Bier with a black Hearse cloth for the burial of the Dead'; 'Any Funeral Monuments erected since 1640 without licence from the Ordinary.' The queries as to the minister ask *inter alia*—

Doth he observe the Holidays and Fasting days, as also the Ember week and the yearly perambulation in Rogation week as in the Common Prayer-Book or by the Ecclesiastical Canons is appointed, giving notice to the parishioners of every of the same in the Church in time of Divine Service, upon the Sunday next before? And doth he constantly read the Litany on Wednesdays and Fridays weekly?

The queries put to the ministers as to the due discharge of their duties by the churchwardens and sidesmen include 'Do they permit no dogs or Hawks to be brought or come into your Church, to the disturbance of the Congregation?' The last section is as to 'schools, Schoolmasters, Physicians, Chirurgeons, and Midwives' not duly licensed by the Ordinary.

Josiah Thompson, 'minister of the congregation at Clapham, Surrey,' drew up, in 1773, two manuscript lists of dissenting congregations arranged under counties for the respective years 1715 and 1772.² From these dates it would appear that there was a very considerable diminution of dissent in Berkshire during the half-century between the two dates.

In 1715 there were twenty-seven congregations, all save four having the distinguishing letters signifying Presbyterian, Baptist, or Independent, and in most cases the rough estimate of the number of their adherents:—Abingdon, P. 400, B. 400; Aston, 200; Beech Hill, 160; Buckland, P. 150; Bucklebury, 150; Cookham, B; Faringdon, B. 140; Hungerford, P. 100; Maidenhead, P. 100, B. 100; Newbury, P. 500, B. 120, I. 400; 'Ockingham, P. 200; Reading, P. 800, B. 300; Ruscombe; Sandhurst, B.; Sonning, B.; Twyford, B. 'not content'; Wallingford, P. 300; Wantage, P. 300, B.; White Waltham; Windsor and Wokingham, P. 100.

In 1772 only nine dissenting congregations are named, and the difference of sect is unmarked:—Abingdon, Aston, Faringdon, Maidenhead 'small,' Newbury, 'Ockingham,' Reading, Tadley, and Wantage.

¹ The press mark of the B.M. copy is 5155, cc. 13.

² B.M. Add. MS. 32057.

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John Wesley, the great itinerant evangelist of the eighteenth century, was a frequent visitor to the county, but he made no striking impression in Berkshire, and formed a poor opinion, for the most part, of the abilities of the inhabitants.

The first time that his *Journal* bears witness to his being in Berkshire is on 26 September, 1738, when he 'declared the Gospel of peace to a small company at Windsor.' During the next few years Wesley paid some fitful visits to Reading and Windsor, when passing to London from the west of England. In July, 1741, he was at Abingdon, where he formed a poor opinion of the inhabitants: 'Both the yard and house were full; but so stupid, senseless a people, both in a spiritual and natural sense, I scarce ever saw before.' This was his first and last visit to Abingdon. When he was passing through Reading in September, 1747, Mr. Richards, a tradesman, called at his inn and entreated him to preach in a room that he had built for the purpose; Wesley complied, and preached there the next morning at the early hour of 6 a.m. In this county, as elsewhere, the people were for the most part ready to hear Wesley whatever the hour might be. His next visit to Reading was on a Monday in June, 1748, when he preached at noon, and found 'a serious, well-behaved congregation.'

John Wesley had an unpleasant first experience of Newbury, where his horse fell with him in deep mire, in 1744, and afterwards he several times passed through the town. But having been much importuned to preach at Newbury in 1770, he arrived there on Monday, 5 March. But where was he to preach?

The Dissenters would not permit me to preach in their meeting-house. Some there were desirous to hire the old play-house; but the good mayor would not suffer it to be so profaned! So I made use of a workshop, a large commodious place. But it would by no means contain the congregation. All that could hear behaved well; and I was in hopes God would have a people in this place also.

After this Wesley frequently visited Newbury, generally about the same time of the year. In 1775 he writes:—

I returned to Newbury. Some of our friends informed me that there were many red-hot patriots here; so I took occasion to give a strong exhortation to 'Fear God and honour the King.'

In March, 1777, when on his way to Newbury, he preached on the Monday evening at Reading, when he wrote in his *Journal*: 'How many years were we beating the air at this town! Stretching out our hands to a people stupid as oxen! But it is not so at present. . . .' His last visit to Reading was in 1780. On Monday, 1 March, 1790, when in his eighty-seventh year, and just a year before his death, John Wesley paid his last visit to Newbury. The entry in his diary says: 'In the evening preached at Newbury; the congregation was large and most of them attentive, but a few were wild as colts untamed.'

After some eight centuries of union with the diocese of Sarum, the arch-deaconry and county of Berks was transferred to the small diocese of Oxford by legislation that came into operation in the year 1836. Berkshire thus came under the control of Bishop Bagot. In 1845, on the translation of Bishop Bagot, that remarkable organizer and assiduous worker, Samuel

**ECCLESIASTICAL MAP OF
BERKSHIRE**

SHOWING RURAL DEANERIES AND
RELIGIOUS HOUSES ACCORDING TO
THE VALOR ECCLESIASTICUS OF
1535.

RELIGIOUS HOUSES.

BENEDICTINE MONKS.

1. Abington Abbey.
2. Reading Priory.
3. Hurley Priory.
4. Wallingford, Holy Trinity Priory.

BENEDICTINE NUNS.

5. Bomhall Priory.
6. Faringdon Grange.

AUGUSTINIAN CANONS.

7. Bisham Priory.
8. Poughley, St. Margaret's Priory.
9. Sandford, St. John the Baptist's Priory.

KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS.

10. Greenham Preceptory.

FRIARIES

11. Reading, Grey Friars.
12. Donnington, Crutched Friars.

HOSPITALS.

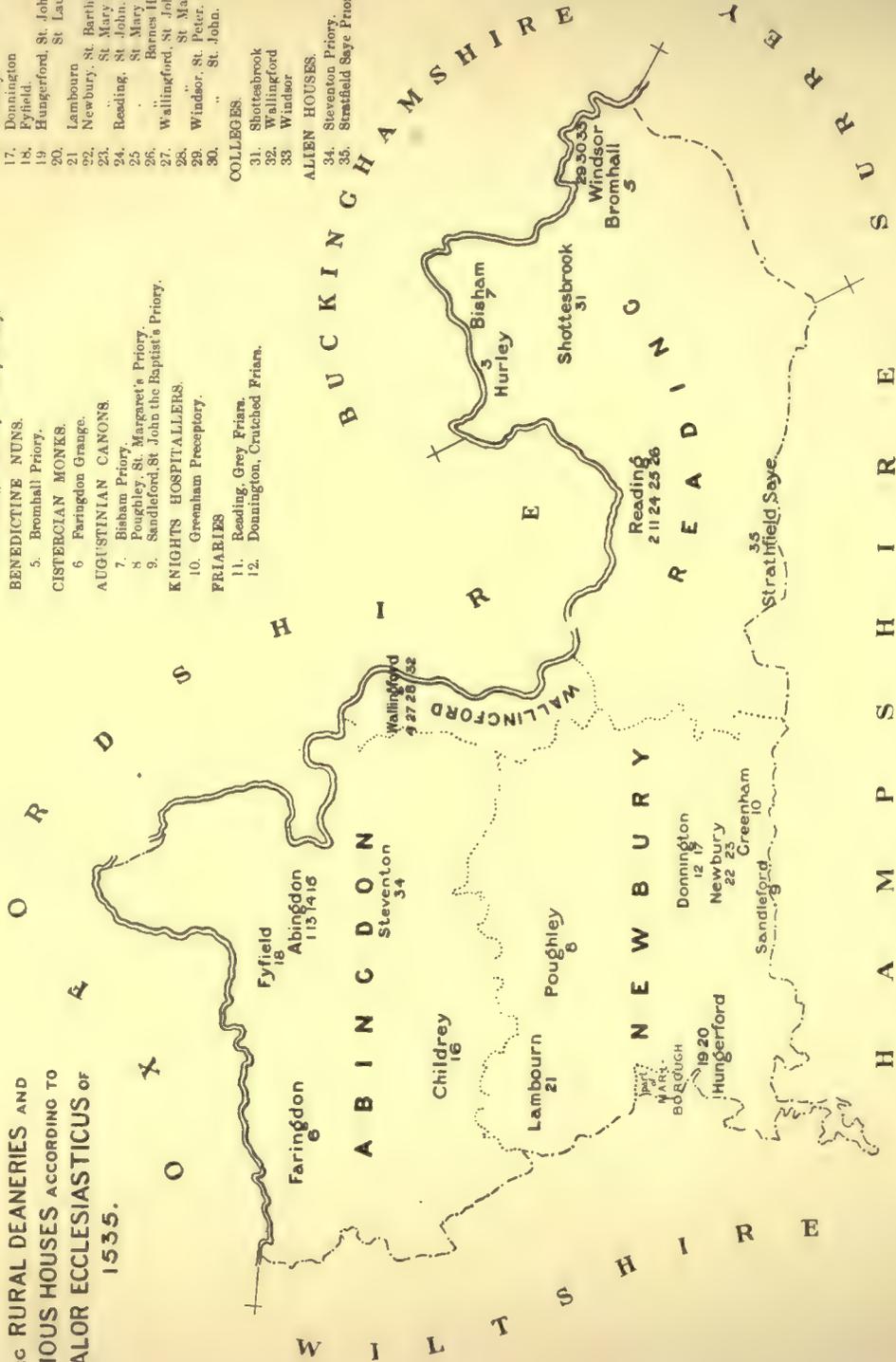
13. Abingdon, St. Helen
14. " St. John
15. " St. Mary Magdalen
16. Childrey
17. Donnington
18. Fyfield
19. Hungerford, St. John the Baptist.
20. " St. Laurence
21. Lambourn
22. Newbury, St. Bartholomew
23. " St. Mary Magdalen
24. " St. John.
25. " St. Mary Magdalen
26. " Barnes Hospital
27. Wallingford, St. John the Baptist
28. " St. Mary Magdalen
29. Windsor, St. Peter.
30. " St. John.

COLLEGES

31. Shottesbrook
32. Wallingford
33. Windsor

ALIEN HOUSES.

34. Stevenon Priory.
35. Stratfield Saye Priory.



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Wilberforce, was consecrated bishop of Oxford. Shortly before Bishop Wilberforce's translation to the see of Winchester, namely in 1869, an official statement was put forth as to the money which had been spent between 1845 and 1869 on churches, church restoration, houses of mercy, and parsonage houses; the result, divided into archdeaconries, showed that Berkshire had raised the considerable sum of £828,310 13s. 11d., an amount far in advance of that contributed by either of the two other archdeaconries of Oxford and Buckinghamshire.¹

Berkshire is distinguished for a remarkable spiritual advance made by the Church of England under the episcopate of Bishop Wilberforce, which has greatly developed of late years and spread throughout the church at large, both at home and abroad. The Rev. W. J. Butler, dean of Lincoln (1880-94), was vicar of Wantage in 1846 and has been well described as 'the model parish priest.' He founded the Sisterhood of St. Mary at Wantage in 1850 as a teaching community and to maintain a penitentiary home. A house of mercy was also established at Clewer in 1856, for the reception of penitents, under the control of religious sisters. Speaking to his clergy shortly before leaving the diocese, Bishop Wilberforce said of this most successful work: 'High Christian graces, firm faith, ardent love, and undaunted courage alone could have founded this; patience and sobriety alone could have maintained it.'²

4

APPENDIX

ECCLESIASTICAL DIVISIONS OF THE COUNTY

The early connexion of Berkshire with the old dioceses of Dorchester and Ramsbury and its inclusion in Norman days in the diocese of Salisbury has been already set forth.

The county was separated in 1836 from Salisbury diocese by the re-adjustment of the boundaries of various sees in accordance with the report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners presented in the previous year. The small Oxford diocese was at that time enlarged by the addition of the county and archdeaconry of Buckinghamshire from Lincolnshire diocese, and of the county and archdeaconry of Berkshire from Salisbury diocese.³ So soon as the union of Berkshire with Oxfordshire was accomplished the rural deaneries of the former county were placed by Bishop Bagot on the same footing as those of Oxfordshire. Bishop Bagot was one of the first prelates, in the revival of church life in the nineteenth century, to restore the office of rural dean to active administration.⁴

At the time of the taxation of Pope Nicholas IV, in 1291, the archdeaconry of Berkshire was divided into four deaneries, which derived their names from the four principal towns, namely Abingdon, Newbury, Reading, and Wallingford. At that date there were 113 parochial churches in the archdeaconry, in addition to several dependent and separately assessed chapelries. In the next ecclesiastical survey, which was undertaken in 1340 to ascertain the exact value of the ninth of corn, wool, and lambs which had been granted to Edward III, it was found that the archdeaconry then comprised 118 parish churches.

When the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII was compiled, it was found that the parish churches of Berkshire had increased to 152, in addition to a still larger proportional increase in the chapels. Nevertheless, the increase in the parishes did not lead to any increase in the number of the deaneries, which continued for many centuries to adhere to the adjustment adopted at the first foundation of the archdeaconry. The first change in the Berkshire deaneries was made in 1865 under Bishop Wilberforce, when the number was increased to eight, known by the following titles: Abingdon, Bradfield, Maidenhead, Newbury, Reading, Vale of the White

¹ Marshall, *Dioc. Hist. of Oxf.* 188.

² Wilberforce, *Charge, Oxf.* 1869, p. 19.

³ 6 & 7 Will. IV, cap. lxxvii. An Order of Council to this effect, so far as Berkshire was concerned, was made on 5 Oct. 1836, and it came into operation on 7 Oct. which was the date of its publication in the *Lond. Gaz.*

⁴ Marshall, *Dioc. Hist. of Oxford*, 180.

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Horse, Wallingford, and Wantage. A further change, increasing the number to nine, was made by Bishop Mackarness in 1874, when the deanery of Sonning was instituted, composed of parishes chiefly taken from the deaneries of Maidenhead and Reading.

The present archdeaconry of Berkshire is therefore divided into the following rural deaneries : Abingdon, Bradfield, Maidenhead, Newbury, Reading, Sonning, Vale of White Horse, Wallingford, and Wantage.

The deanery of Abingdon includes the following parishes : St. Helen with St. Nicholas and St. Michael Abingdon, Appleton, Bessels Leigh, Cumnor, Drayton, Fyfield, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize, Marcham with Garford, Milton, Radley, Sandford with Cothill, Shippon, Steventon, Sunningwell, Sutton Courtenay with Appleford and Sutton Wick, Tubney, Long Wittenham, and Wytham.

The deanery of Bradfield includes : Aldermaston, Ashampstead, Beenham Valence, Bradfield with Buckhold, Brimpton, Burghfield, Englefield, Frilsham, Padworth, Pangbourne, Purley, Stanford Dingley, Sulham, Sulhamstead Abbots with Sulhamstead Bannister, Theale with North Street, Tidmarsh, Tilehurst, St. George's Tilehurst, Ufton Nervet, Wasing, Woolhampton, and Yattendon.

The deanery of Maidenhead includes : Ascot Heath, All Souls Ascot South, Binfield, Bisham, Boyne Hill with St. Paul, Bracknell, Bray with Touchen End, Braywood, Clewer with All Saints Dedworth Green and St. Stephen, Cookham, Cookham Dean, St. Peter Cranbourne, Hurley, Knowl Hill, Littlewick, St. Luke, St. Andrew and St. Mary Maidenhead, Shottesbrook with White Waltham, Stubbings, Sunningdale, Sunninghill, Waltham St. Lawrence with All Saints, Warfield, Windsor with All Saints, Holy Trinity Windsor and Old Windsor, and Winkfield.

The deanery of Newbury includes : Avington, Beedon, Boxford, Brightwalton, Bucklebury with Marlston, Catmore, Chaddleworth, Chieveley with Winterbourne and Oare and Curridge, Cold Ash with St. Bartholomew Denford, Eastbury, East Garston, Enborne, Greenham, Hampstead Marshall, Hermitage, Hungerford, East Ilsley, West Ilsley, Inkpen, Kintbury, Lambourn with St. Luke Upper Lambourn, Leckhampton, Midgham, Newbury, St. John Newbury, Peasemore, Shalbourn, Shaw with Donnington, East Shefford, Great Shefford, Speen, Speenhamland, Stock Cross, Thatcham, Welford, West Woodhay, and St. Mary Woodlands.

The deanery of Reading includes : Barkham, Beech Hill, Easthampstead, Finchampstead, Grazeley, Mortimer West End, Christ Church Reading, Grey Friars Reading, St. Giles Reading, St. John the Evangelist with St. Stephen Reading, St. Lawrence Reading, St. Mary the Virgin with All Saints St. Saviour's and St. Mark's Reading, St. Mary's Chapel Reading, Holy Trinity Reading, Shinfield, Stratfield Mortimer, and Swallowfield.

The deanery of Sonning includes : Arborfield, Bearwood, Crowthorne, Dunsden, St. Peter Earley, St. Bartholomew Earley, Hurst, Remenham, Ruscombe, Sandhurst, Sonning, Twyford St. Mary, Wargrave, Wokingham, St. Sebastian Wokingham, St. Paul Wokingham, and Woodley.

The deanery of Vale of White Horse includes : Ashbury, Balking with Woolstone, Bourton, Buckland, Buscot, Coleshill, Compton Beauchamp, Great Coxwell, Eaton Hastings, Faringdon with Little Coxwell, Hatford, Hinton Waldrist, Littleworth, Longcot with Fernham, Longworth with Charney, Pusey, Shellingford, Shrivenham with Watchfield, Stanford in the Vale with Goosey, and Uffington.

The deanery of Wallingford includes : Aldworth, Aston Tirrold, Basildon, Blewbury, Brightwell with Sotwell, Cholsey, Compton, Didcot, Hagbourne, Hampstead Norris with Langley, North Moreton, South Moreton, Moulsoford, Streatley, Upton and Aston Upthorpe, St. Leonard Wallingford, St. Mary the More with All Hallows Wallingford, St. Peter Wallingford, and Little Wittenham.

The deanery of Wantage includes : Ardington, East and West Challow, Childrey, Chilton, Denchworth, Farnborough, Fawley, Grove, Hanney with West Hanney, Harwell, East Hendred, West Hendred, Letcombe Bassett, Letcombe Regis, East Lockinge, Lyford, Sparsholt with Kingston Lisle, and Wantage with Charlton.

THE RELIGIOUS HOUSES OF BERKSHIRE

INTRODUCTION

Berkshire occupies a distinguished position in the history of religious houses as almost the only shire that had within its limits two Benedictine abbeys of the first rank and of ancient foundation, namely, Abingdon and Reading.

The original founding of Abingdon goes back to the seventh century, for there seems no reason to doubt the main features of the early narrative of this house as set forth in two ancient manuscripts. The great influence of Abingdon as a centre for the diffusion of Christianity is apparent from the large number of tributary pensions of ancient origin from various mission stations throughout Berkshire, which gradually developed into parishes. It seems also clear that the abbey of Reading, though usually spoken of as founded by Henry I, was in reality refounded by that king on the site of a religious house that had been established there at least a century before the coming of the Normans. In giving sketches of the annals of these two noted abbeys, it has only been possible to select the more salient points of interest.

There were two other Benedictine houses of some importance in the county, namely, the priories of Hurley and of Wallingford, neither of which had, however, an independent existence. The priory of Hurley was founded in the reign of the Conqueror as a cell of Benedictine monks, subject from the first to the abbey of Westminster. There is a great store of charters and other evidences relative to the priory of Hurley among the muniments of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster; they were carried there at the time of the suppression of the cell in 1536. The priory of Wallingford, which seems also to have been founded in the days of the Conqueror, was a cell of St. Albans, and was first colonized by a company of Benedictine monks sent thither by Abbot Paul, who ruled over that abbey from 1077 to 1093. Wallingford was one of several small monasteries for whose extinction, in favour of his college at Oxford, Cardinal Wolsey obtained papal consent in 1524.

A priory of Benedictine nuns was founded at an early date at Bromhall, within the limits of Windsor Forest. This small house was suppressed in favour of St. John's College, Cambridge, as early as 1521-2.

There were no establishments of the reformed Benedictine order of Cîteaux within the bounds of Berkshire, but the Cistercian abbey of Beaulieu, Hampshire, had a cell or grange, and much property at Faringdon.

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The other reformed order, that of Cluny, had a temporary and most important connexion with the county, the great abbey of Reading being originally founded as a Cluniac house, and being the only abbey of that order in England. Although it remained affiliated to the order as late as 1207, it seems to have become absorbed into the unreformed Benedictine order soon after that date. The control exercised by the mother-house of Cluny appears never to have been more than nominal.

The earliest known foundation of Austin canons in the county dates from 1160, when the site of an old hermitage at Poughley with adjacent property was assigned to a company of canons regular of the order of St. Augustine. This house was another instance of those small establishments suppressed in 1524 in favour of Cardinal Wolsey's Oxford college. A small house for the same order was founded about 1200 at Sandleford, near Newbury. The foundation charter of the more important house of Bisham is dated 22 April, 1337. After a life of close upon two centuries Bisham was suppressed in July, 1536; but this Austin priory was re-established in December, 1537, by charter of that utterly fickle king, Henry VIII, as a Benedictine abbey to pray *inter alia* for the soul of Jane, his late queen. Hither were translated the ejected abbot of Chertsey, with his fourteen monks, but after enduring for just six months the new foundation was, in its turn, summarily suppressed.

The manor of Greenham, a little to the east of Newbury, was given to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John in the time of Henry II, and here this military order had a preceptory, whence annual collections were made from the whole county.

The mendicant orders were slenderly represented in Berkshire itself, but there were large convents of the four chief orders just over the county boundary at Oxford, whence, it is known, they regularly visited many of the Berkshire parishes. The Franciscans, or Grey Friars, were first established at Reading in 1233, obtaining the grudging grant of an often flooded site from the great abbey. Their position was somewhat improved in 1285 by the importunity of Archbishop Peckham, himself a Franciscan. There was also a small establishment of Crouched, or Trinitarian, friars at Donnington, of which comparatively little is known.

Berkshire was unusually well supplied with hospitals, which provided for the relief of the sick, the aged, and the wayfarers, and were for the most part, as elsewhere, under the control of vowed religious. They were eighteen in number, and at least five of these were originally founded as asylums for lepers. The Berkshire instances afford yet another proof that hospitals were the invariable accompaniment of the larger Benedictine houses; they were to be found in this county at Abingdon (3), Childrey, Donnington, Fyfield, Hungerford (2), Lambourn, Newbury (2), Reading (3), Wallingford (2), and Windsor (2). These hospitals were chiefly of quite early foundation, but three of the number were of late establishment and partook more of the almshouse character; these were Fyfield (1442), Lambourn (1485), and Childrey (1526).

The county had three collegiate churches, which differed much in numbers and administration, as well as in the emoluments provided for the clergy who served them. They were at Wallingford, where there was a college of very early foundation in connexion with the castle; at Windsor,

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whose far-famed college had its origin in the days of Henry I; and at Shottesbrook, where the parish church became one of collegiate rank in 1337.

The list of Berkshire religious houses is completed by the mention of two small alien priories or cells of foreign abbeys, which were respectively situated at Steventon and at Stratfield Saye.

HOUSES OF BENEDICTINE MONKS

I. THE ABBEY OF ABINGDON

Wonderful, but quite baseless, legends were once current with regard to the very early history of the abbey of Abingdon, as to its being founded by King Lucius and destroyed by the Emperor Diocletian; as to the Emperor Constantine receiving here his education as a youth; or as to the five hundred monks who lived by the labours of their hands in the surrounding wilds and woods, returning to the abbey on Sundays and festivals, whilst sixty quire monks continuously maintained a round of services.¹ Sweeping aside, however, all such fond inventions, the genuine history of the abbey is well established from an exceptionally early date. The story of the rise and growth of this ancient religious house is told, with much circumstance, in two valuable manuscripts of the Cotton Collection, which cover the period of its first five hundred years. These two copies of the *Historia Monasterii de Abingdon*, both of the thirteenth century, though one is about fifty years older than the other, were selected as one of the first subjects to be treated in the 'Chronicles and Memorials,' or Rolls Series, founded in 1857; they were ably transcribed and collated, with useful introductions by the late Mr. Stevenson.²

From these chronicles, the general authenticity of which Mr. Stevenson saw no reason to doubt, it would appear that the abbey was traditionally founded about 675 by Cissa, and the foundation furthered by Ceadwalla and Ina, all three successive kings of the West Saxons. It was established in honour of the Blessed Virgin, for the support of twelve monks. Cissa, a chieftain who ruled in Berkshire and Wiltshire under Centwin, had a nephew, Hean, who, with his sister Cilla, resolved to lead a life of poverty and humility. Obtaining a large grant of land to the south of Oxfordshire they added to it their patrimonial inheritance. Cilla speedily founded a nunnery, dedicated to St. Helen, on a site named Helenstow (part of

the future Abingdon), which was moved after her death higher up the Thames to Wytham. There the nuns continued for about a century, but in the war between Offa and Kinewolf they were dispersed and never reassembled.

When Cissa first granted the land round Abingdon to Hean, it was on the understanding that a monastery should be there founded; but delays arose. On Cissa being succeeded by Ceadwalla, the grant to them was confirmed and considerably augmented. In 688 Ceadwalla departed to Rome and was succeeded by Ina, who—possibly irritated at the delay in building the abbey—withdrew the conditional grants made by his two predecessors; but at a later period a reconciliation between Hean and King Ina took place, and at last the long-delayed foundation of Abingdon was accomplished, and its precinct walls were raised within view of the hostile kingdom of Mercia, on the verge of the remote limits of the reduced see of Winchester.

Hean became the first abbot and outlived Ina, dying in the reign of his successor Athelwulf. He was followed in the abbey by Cumma. Owing to its situation on the frontiers of Wessex and Mercia the early history of this abbey was one of conflict, for important battles were fought in its immediate neighbourhood. In 752 Cuthred, king of Wessex, gained a great victory over Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, at Durford in Oxfordshire; but twenty years later the reverse was the case, when Offa routed Cynewulf of Wessex at Bensington. One result of this was the disruption of the nunnery at Wytham. In the time of Offa a certain bishop of Leicester, by name Hrethun, renounced his bishopric, and becoming a monk at Abingdon was elected its third abbot. Hrethun obtained certain important privileges from the king and journeyed to Rome to obtain their confirmation.

After flourishing for about two hundred years the abbey was destroyed by the Danes. According to one of the early chronicles of Abingdon the original monastic church, as built by Hean, was 120 ft. long, and had both a western and an eastern apse.³ The high altar stood on the site afterwards occupied by the lavatory. There

³ Cott. MSS. Vit. A xiii: 'Erat rotundum tam in parte occidentali quam in parte orientali.'

¹ Stevens' Addit. to Dugdale's *Mon.*

² *Chron. Mon. de Abingdon*, 2 vols. 1858, ed. by Rev. Joseph Stevenson. The two Cottonian MSS. are Claud. B. vi and Claud. C. ix. Various original charters of Abingdon are to be found in Augustus ii, and there are other transcripts in C.C.C. Lib. Camb.; all these are printed in Mr. Stevenson's volumes.

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were twelve small chambers for the twelve monks, with an oratory attached to each. The whole was surrounded by a high wall. Both church and buildings had undergone much alteration and reconstruction ere they were swept away in the Danish incursion.

King Alfred for some reason did not see fit to restore this ancient monastery, but granted its estates away.

St. Ethelwold (who was afterwards bishop of Winchester, 963-84) was instructed by Edred to supervise the re-establishment of the monastery, though the work was not accomplished until the days of King Edgar. Ethelwold was appointed abbot during the reconstruction. He caused the new church to be rebuilt with a chancel apse; the nave also, which was twice the length of the chancel, had an apse and a round tower. With his own hands he made organs, and caused to be constructed a great wheel, or crown, of gold, from which hung twelve lamps and innumerable little bells. Among his other gifts were a tablet of pure gold and silver, sculptured with the Twelve Apostles, over the altar, worth £300, and three crosses of gold and silver 4 ft. high. With his own hands he also made two bells and various ecclesiastical vessels of brass. Among other works of Ethelwold were the mills on the river, and the aqueduct that brought water under the river.⁴

In 963, when Ethelwold left Abingdon to be bishop of Winchester, he was succeeded by Osgar. Ethelwold returned to Abingdon to be present with Dunstan and other bishops at the consecration of the completed monastery. Osgar died in 984, in the same year as his predecessor Ethelwold.

Wulfgar, the tenth abbot, obtained an important charter of privileges and confirmation from King Ethelred II in 993. Siward, the twelfth abbot, was consecrated bishop of Rochester in 1058. Sparhavoc, the fourteenth abbot, a monk of St. Edmund's, was a wonderful artificer in gold and silver. Of him the early chronicler of Abingdon tells the discreditable tale that he was entrusted with gold and gems to make a crown for Edward the Confessor, but decamped with the materials.⁵ Sparhavoc was not, however, abbot at that time, for he had then just been promoted to the bishopric of London and was succeeded in the abbacy in 1050 by Ralph, a Norwegian bishop, who was a relative of King Edward.⁶

Ealdred, the seventeenth abbot, was ruling at the time of the Norman Conquest. He made early submission to King William, but in 1071 he was deposed, committed for a time to prison in the castle of Wallingford, and then suffered to

end his days in the custody of Walkelin, bishop of Winchester.⁷

The two following abbots were both Norman monks from Jumièges. It was in the days of Rainald, the latter of these, that the Domesday Survey was taken; it has already been shown what a large and rich portion of Berkshire the abbey then held, as well as a considerable tract in Oxfordshire, and manors in Gloucestershire and Warwickshire.⁸

Motbert is entered as the twentieth abbot in Bishop Kennett's list, and in this he is followed in the enlarged Dugdale. But Motbert was only prior of Abingdon; he was appointed abbot of Milton Abbey in the year 1100, when Faricius became twentieth abbot of Abingdon.⁹ Faricius was a distinguished benefactor. He rebuilt the nave of the church, with two great towers, and almost the whole of the conventual buildings. The materials were brought from Wales, six wagons, each drawn by twelve oxen, being engaged in the work. The journey there and back took six or seven weeks. A fine list is given of the ornaments and vestments that he supplied for the church. A considerable catalogue of the books that he caused to be transcribed for the abbey library, in addition to the service books, begins with St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, and concludes with *multos libros de physica*.¹⁰ His own skill in medicine was considerable. In two instances the abbey benefited by his success as a physician. One Miles Crispin, in the year 1106, sent his steward and chaplain to place on the high altar at Abingdon the title-deeds of a hospice and adjacent lands at Colnbrook, Buckinghamshire, on account of the service rendered to him in his illness by the abbot. For a like cause Geoffrey de Vere conferred on the abbey the church of Kensington.¹¹

Vincent, the twenty-first abbot, another Jumièges monk, who ruled from 1121 to 1130, by his timely boldness obtained an important charter from Henry I. Understanding that the abbey had no legal right to certain of its privileges, the king instructed his officials to take the whole abbey into the crown's hands whilst its claims were being investigated. Vincent hastened to court, taking the charter of Edward the Confessor with him, which secured to the abbey the market of Abingdon, and their rights over the hundred of Hornmere. The king ordered it to be read aloud by the bishop of Salisbury, his chancellor, whereupon the abbot instantly asked for confirmation under the royal seal, offering 300 marks to secure it. The king closed with the offer, but the required sum could

⁷ Ibid. i, 486, 493; ii, 283.

⁸ *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 286, 296, 336.

⁹ *Chron.* ii, 286.

¹⁰ Ibid. 150-1, 286-9.

¹¹ Ibid. 57, 97.

⁴ Cott. MS. Vit. A. xiii, as transcribed in Stevenson's *Chron.* ii, 277-9; see also *Chron.* i, 343-4.

⁵ *Chron.* i, 463; ii, 281.

⁶ Ibid.

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only be obtained by breaking off some of the beautiful gold and silver work wherewith St. Ethelwold had adorned the back of the high altar.¹²

Vincent's successor, Ingulf, who had been prior of Winchester, ruled the abbey for nearly twenty-nine years (1130-59). During his day and that of his successor, Walkelin, who died in 1164, there was much conflict as to the valuable market privileges of Abingdon granted to the abbey by the Confessor and confirmed by Henry I. On the accession of Henry II the inhabitants of Wallingford united with the townfolk of Oxford in an attack on this market privilege, disputed the charters, and obtained from the king, when on the eve of sailing for Normandy, an *ad interim* prohibition of the Abingdon market, saving for a few trifling commodities. Armed with this authority, the men of Wallingford, under the constable of the royal castle, marched to Abingdon, and in the king's name proceeded by force to clear the market, but the abbot's retainers were strong enough to put their enemies to the rout and drove them from the town. Thereupon the proctors of Wallingford crossed the seas, laid their side of the case before Henry II, and returned with a writ addressed to the Chief Justiciary. This writ summoned a county court from which thirty-two aged men were selected to testify as to the usage in the time of the king's grandfather. Their finding was that they had all distinct and personal knowledge of a full market for the sale of every kind of vendible product. Thereupon the men of Wallingford appealed on the ground that some of the jury were connected with the abbey. A new writ was accordingly issued addressed to the whole county of Berkshire, save those who were tenants of the abbey. The cause was heard at Oxford. The men of Wallingford swore that in the reign of Henry I the market was only for bread and beer. Other jurors supported the abbey in all save the important point of produce conveyed by boats other than those of the abbot. The earl of Leicester, who sat as Chief Justiciary, pronounced no sentence, but took the report to the king at Salisbury, adding his own testimony that he had seen the market in full operation in the time of Henry I and earlier, for his memory took him back to the time of the Conqueror, in whose reign he had been educated within the abbey walls. The aged earl's testimony turned the scale, and the king affirmed the former judgment.

The next step of the opponents of the abbey's rights was one of singular rashness. They appeared before the king at Reading and told him that if the market at Abingdon was continued they could no longer fulfil their feudal tenures. This aroused the indignation of the

¹² *Chron.* ii, 278, &c.

king, who drove them tumultuously from his presence and commanded that from that day forward a full weekly market was to be continued at Abingdon under the abbey's rule.¹³

After a succession of three superiors of no particular mark, Hugh, the twenty-ninth abbot, was elected in 1189, and ruled until his death in 1221. The annalist gives him an unstinted character for modesty, liberality, and kindness. He was a considerable benefactor to the monastery, and his obit was always observed by the convent.¹⁴

Another occasional annalist of this house now appears on the scene. The *Chronicle of the Monastery of Abingdon* (1218-1304), in the University Library, Cambridge, makes special mention of the death of Abbot Hugh in 1221. The annalist describes him as a noble and liberal man.

He did many good things, for the new building was commenced and finished in his time, and before his death he solemnized mass there; he lies buried in the northern part. To him succeeded Robert de Henreth then the chamberlain.¹⁵

Licence was granted by the crown in 1227 to the abbot to inclose with ditch and hedge, so that wild animals (deer) could either enter or depart, six acres of wood at Shaw, which the convent had cleared and cultivated.¹⁶ The abbot of Abingdon in 1229, at the request of the king, granted timber from his wood of Shaw for the making of piles in the work of walling the town of Oxford, and for the work then in progress at the castle of Oxford. In return for this the king granted the abbot full power to clear and cultivate the 26½ acres of wood whence this wood had been taken.¹⁷

In February, 1232, the abbot and convent of Abingdon obtained a faculty from Pope Alexander IV to wear caps suited to their order at divine offices, the cold of those parts being vehement.¹⁸

In 1258 King Henry came to visit Abingdon after the feast of the Holy Trinity, for the first time since his return from Gascony, and was received with a grand procession. About the same time the chapter gave the church of Sutton to Peter de Wylebi, which the pope had conferred on an Italian youth, Richard Hannibal. Matthew Hannibal, the youth's father, happened

¹³ *Chron.* ii, pp. lxxv-lxxix, 229.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 293, 316, 331.

¹⁵ *Abingdon Chron.* i, 35. This chronicle was printed and translated by Dr. J. O. Halliwell in 1844, for the short-lived Berks. Ashmolean Society. This brief chronicle, written at Abingdon, is for the most part a record of leading national events in Church and State, and concerns itself but little with the story of the abbey proper.

¹⁶ Pat. 11 Hen. III, m. 3.

¹⁷ Close, 14 Hen. III, m. 21.

¹⁸ *Cal. Papal Let.* i, 355.

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to be in England when he was nobly entertained by the king; he proceeded at once to Salisbury and demanded the institution of his son. But Peter, who was a brother of Abbot John of Abingdon, declined to resign; whereupon the bishop of Salisbury sent the archdeacon of Berkshire and the rural dean with the Italians to carry out Richard's institution. On their arrival, however, at Sutton the church was found to be full of armed men, who attacked the Italians, beating and wounding them. The Italians were furious with the abbey (*ira maxima inflammati*), but at this crisis John Mansel, keeper of the king's seal and about the most influential man in the kingdom, arrived on a visit to the abbey; he was able to allay the animosity and persuaded the monastery to give way to the pope.¹⁹

Immediately after Michaelmas, 1260, Henry III again visited the abbey and was honourably entertained; in 1261 he came once more to the house, arriving on the Sunday before the feast of St. Barnabas, and tarrying there for three days. At Martinmas, in the former of these years, this monastery was the scene of the inquiry into certain miracles stated to have been performed by Richard, bishop of Chichester, in consequence of a petition for his canonization; the inquiry was conducted by the bishop of Worcester and certain Dominican and Franciscan friars, and all the miracles were pronounced to be genuine.²⁰

Henry de Fryleford, the thirty-second abbot, died suddenly on Trinity Sunday, 1262, after dinner; he had celebrated high mass that morning. The baronial war was now being waged; on 2 November of this year Henry III, with his whole army, arrived at Abingdon with banners flying. The king himself was received within the abbey.²¹

On 17 May, 1265, a violent thunderstorm broke over Abingdon; the south-west tower of the abbey was struck with lightning and much damaged; the building caught fire and the flames were with difficulty extinguished.²²

In March, 1274, Abbot Richard de Henred obtained the king's licence to cross the seas to attend the council of Lyons, and appointed John de Cernay, his fellow monk, and William de Sparsholt to make attorneys in his place in all pleas until St. Peter ad Vincula, unless he should return to England by an earlier date.²³

Edward I sojourned for several days at Abingdon Abbey in December, 1276, and also for two nights in March, 1281.

A chapel of St. Edmund—not St. Edmund the king, but St. Edmund Rich of Abingdon, treasurer and prebendary of Salisbury, and archbishop of Canterbury from 1234 until 1240—was founded by Edmund, earl of

Cornwall, in the parish of St. Helen, in the year 1288, on a site where St. Edmund was known to have been born. The abbey, recognizing the earl of Cornwall as 'a kind of bounteous defender and protector,' covenanted always to maintain within this chapel two priests to celebrate for the souls of the earl and his ancestors.²⁴ The annals of Worcester state that many miracles took place in this chapel at Abingdon in 1289, the year after its foundation;²⁵ hence the chapel became famous, and the greater portion of its revenues were at one time derived from oblations on the altar. In 1404-5 these offerings amounted to £6 13s. 5d., and in 1405-6 to £5 10s. 5d.; but afterwards the amount fell off: it was 30s. in 1422-3, 58s. 10d. in 1466-7, 45s. 5d. in 1469-70, and only 12s. 8d. in 1478-9. As the offerings diminished, the receipts from tenements in Abingdon appropriated to the chapel fell off. Adjoining the chapel was a house containing hall, pantry, buttery, upper chamber, kitchen, and dormitory, where the two wardens lived.

The general chapter of the Benedictine monks of England was held in this abbey in July, 1290.²⁶

At the king's request, in 1292, the abbot and convent granted sustenance, by letters patent sealed under their chapter seal, in their house for life to Nicholas de Teweng, on account of his services to Margaret, sometime queen of Scotland, the king's sister; the king notified the abbot that he would not charge them with the maintenance of any other person during the life of Nicholas.²⁷

In January, 1296, Edward I sent his mandate to the abbot and convent requesting them to receive his servant Wobrodus, and to admit him with two horses and two grooms into their house until the ensuing Michaelmas, and to find them meanwhile all necessaries.²⁸

Edmund de la Beche, clerk, in 1315 obtained the king's letters to the abbot and convent to have the pension that they were bound to grant to one of the king's clerks by reason of the new creation of the abbot.²⁹

On the election of Garford, the crown nominated William de Elmham, clerk, to receive a pension at the hands of the convent until they could appoint him to a benefice, according to custom on the new creation of an abbot.³⁰

There were various appointments of old servants of the crown to receive life sustenance in Abingdon Abbey during the years 1329 and 1330. Sometimes such servants received the king's letters to this effect for more than one religious house,

²⁴ *Accts. of the Obedientiaries*, xxxix-xl.

²⁵ *Ann. Mon.* (Luard), iv, 499.

²⁶ *Ann. de Wigorn.* (Rolls Ser.), 502.

²⁷ *Pat.* 20 Edw. I, m. 12.

²⁸ *Close*, 24 Edw. I, m. 10 d.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 9 Edw. II, m. 24 d.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 2 Edw. III, m. 2 d.

¹⁹ *Abing. Chron.* (Halliwell), 10.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 12. ²¹ *Ibid.* 14.

²² *Ann. de Waverleia* (Rolls Ser.), 363.

²³ *Close*, 2 Edw. I, m. 11 d.

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showing that there must occasionally have been a money commutation for the food and clothing. Thus Henry de Dytton, late usher of the king's chamber, sent to Abingdon on 5 April, 1329, to take the place as pensioner of Vivian de Luke, deceased, had like letters to Waverley Abbey and to St. Andrew's, Northampton, whilst Vivian de Luke had been a pensioner of St. Albans as well as of Abingdon.³¹

A commission of inquiry was granted in December, 1295, on the complaint of the abbot of Abingdon. A grant of a yearly fair at their chapel of St. Edmund in the town of Abingdon, for the octave of the translation of that saint, had been heretofore allowed by the king; but Richard de Shupene, Thomas le Spicer, and nineteen others named, together with a multitude of malefactors, drove away men who were coming to the fair from the place of the chapel where it was appointed to be held. They also assaulted the three bailiffs appointed by the abbot as keepers of the fair, who were bearing wands according to custom, broke their wands, prevented the fair being held according to the king's grant, and caused it to be held in the hundred of Sutton, outside the town and the abbot's liberty.³²

In 1318 the abbey found itself in financial difficulties, and the king, at the request of the abbot and convent, took it into his protection. William de Monte Acuto was appointed keeper during pleasure on 14 August. This appointment also included protection for the town of Abingdon.³³ Two years later, in August, 1320, dissensions arose with respect to a composition entered into by the abbey and convent for the division of the goods of their house and the satisfying of their debts. Thereupon the king again took the administration of the temporalities into his hands, and appointed Master Robert de Aileston, king's clerk, to be keeper; and the bishop of Salisbury and Hugh le Despenser the elder were ordered to inquire into the state of the abbey.³⁴ In November of the same year the crown appointed the abbot of Reading and another to make a thorough investigation of the abbey's affairs, and to order what amount was to be set aside for the maintenance of the convent, for the relief of the poor, and the discharge of its debts. The composition made by the abbey without the king's authority or consent was set aside as illegal.³⁵

John de Sutton, the thirty-sixth abbot, was elected in 1315. In the sixth year of his rule the convent protested against his administration, and carried their remonstrances to Rome. After the matter had been successively examined by Nicholas cardinal of St. Eusebius, and Peter cardinal of St. Stephen's on the Coelian, Pope

John XXII, in February, 1322, on the strength of their report (which was based on the depositions of witnesses) suspended Abbot John de Sutton, on the charge made against him by the prior and convent of alienating property to the amount of £1,000, and abstracting the documents relative thereto. The abbey of Westminster was ordered to administer the monastery of Abingdon during the suspension; whilst the abbots of Eynsham and Oseney, and Master Henry de Goldingham, canon of Ossory, were to publish the sentence of suspension, and to cite Sutton to appear before the pope within three months.³⁶ Sutton, however, died whilst under suspension, and his successor, John de Cannynges, was elected in June, 1322.³⁷

In May, 1327, a commission of oyer and terminer was issued to Thomas le Blount and four others, on complaint that a large number of malefactors of the counties of Oxford and Berks. had lately, in confederation, attacked the town and abbey of Abingdon, entered and burnt houses, assaulted and beat the monks and abbey servants, killing some and detaining others in prison until they had paid fines for their release, and had also carried away chalices, vestments, and ornaments of the church with other goods.³⁸ In the following month protection was granted for one year to the monastery, the house having been so wasted by incursions of malefactors that the monks had for the most part withdrawn, and dared not for fear approach the place. The sheriff was ordered to cause proclamation to be made that the abbey was under his official protection.³⁹ Moreover, Gilbert de Ellesfeld and Thomas de Coudry were appointed by the crown, in August, 1327, to the custody of the abbey, which is described as having been devastated by the rioters, and consequently abandoned by the monks. The custodians had power assigned them to arrest malefactors who injured the abbey and hand them over to the sheriff.⁴⁰ In November the abbot was licensed to receive divers goods, such as chalices, books, vestments, ornaments, jewels, charters and muniments, of which the abbey had lately been despoiled, from certain of those who took them, and from others into whose hands they had come.⁴¹ A further commission was issued in the same year empowering Fulk Fitz Waryn and others to do justice to those arrested and imprisoned for their share in the Abingdon disorders.⁴² It is stated in the Close Rolls that the value of the spoiled goods of the abbey amounted to £10,000.⁴³

³⁶ *Cal. Papal Let.* ii, 218.

³⁷ *Sar. Epis. Reg. Mortival*, i, 183.

³⁸ *Pat. 1 Edw. III*, pt. ii, m. 21 *d.*; *Close*, 1 *Edw. III*, pt. ii, m. 23 *d.*, 22 *d.*

³⁹ *Ibid.* m. 12.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* pt. iii, m. 26.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* m. 9.

⁴² *Ibid.* m. 11 *d.*

⁴³ *Close*, 1 *Edw. III*, pt. ii, m. 14 *d.*

³¹ *Close*, 2 *Edw. III*, m. 10 *d.*; 3 *Edw. III*, m. 27 *d.*

³² *Pat.* 24 *Edw. I*, m. 24 *d.*

³³ *Ibid.* 12 *Edw. II*, pt. i, mm. 27, 35.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 14 *Edw. II*, pt. i, m. 21. ³⁵ *Ibid.* m. 7.

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The commission issued in January, 1328, on complaint of the abbot, gives many more particulars of the affray and those concerned in it. About eighty names are set forth, in addition to many unrecognized. Among these various tradesmen of Oxford are named, such as bakers, butchers, chandlers, fishmongers, skimmers, and taverners, in addition to Thomas de Legh, the town clerk, and Master Matthew de Alverchurch, notary public. The rioters also included various tradesmen and others of Abingdon. It is stated that the mob besieged the abbey in a warlike manner, burnt the gates and certain of the houses within the abbey precincts, destroyed other houses of the abbot at Barton and Northcote, broke the walls of the abbey and the stalls (*seldas*) of a house of the abbot in Abingdon called Newhouse, dragged the timber of the stalls to the ground, and entering the abbey carried off plate, vestments, and other church goods, together with divers charters, writings, and other muniments. Further, they carried off Robert de Halton, the prior, who was then sick within the abbey, to Bagley Wood in Radley, and there threatened him with the loss of his head unless he did their will; afterwards they carried him back to the abbey, broke open the coffer containing the common seal, and compelled him under fear of death to seal three writings obligatory, by one of which the convent became bound to them in £1,000, by another they were released and quitclaimed from all trespasses, whilst a third granted the men of Abingdon power annually to elect a provost and bailiffs for the custody of the town, together with power to make a profit of the wastes opposite their houses towards the king's highway through the town.

A separate complaint of the abbot, which brought about the issuing of another separate commission at the same date, referred to forcible interference with his Monday market, with his seven days' fair at the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, and with a court called 'portemot,' held fortnightly by his bailiffs.⁴⁴ These commissions were renewed in the following March.

The disturbances brought about the death of the abbot, and on 18 January, 1324, the temporalities were restored to Robert de Garford, one of the monks, whose election as abbot had been confirmed.⁴⁵

The trial of some of the rioters does not

⁴⁴ Close, 1 Edw. III, pt. ii, mm. 5 d. 4 d.

⁴⁵ Pat. 2 Edw. III, pt. ii, mm. 10, 3. These scandalous riots were a sequel to the attempts of the Wallingford folk to suppress the Abingdon market in the previous century. On this occasion the tradesmen of Oxford were the chief aggressors, being stirred up by their jealousy of the trade done at the markets and fair of Abingdon. They gained over to their side certain of the disaffected townsmen of Abingdon. Twelve of the offenders were hanged, and sixty others imprisoned.

appear to have been finished even as late as May, 1330. In that month a writ of aid was issued for Robert Marye and Richard Peper, in conveying to Windsor Castle John le Spicer and five others, all of Abingdon, indicted for divers felonies and trespasses at Abingdon Abbey, and for whom Robert and Richard had given bail.⁴⁶

In 1343 Pope Clement VI granted a faculty to the abbey of Abingdon to appropriate the church of Lewknor, Oxon.; in his instruction to the bishop of Lincoln the pope stated that the abbey had suffered losses amounting to £6,000.⁴⁷

As a sequel to this attack the monks decided to strengthen their house as a matter of precaution, and royal licence to crenellate the whole of their site, including the hospital of St. John and the church of St. Nicholas within the precinct, was obtained in July, 1330.⁴⁸

Edward III granted to the abbey in July, 1332, to have full administration of its temporalities during a vacancy, saving only the knights' fees and advowsons of churches, upon their rendering during such voidance at the rate of 100 marks per month.⁴⁹

When the archbishop of Canterbury visited the abbey in 1390, he granted faculty to the abbot and his successors to reconcile, if necessity arose, the conventual church, the chapel of St. Helen, and the chapel of St. Nicholas, and their cemeteries, the water having been blessed by some Catholic bishop.⁵⁰

In February, 1391, Boniface IX issued his mandate to license a cemetery for the parishioners of St. Helen's, Abingdon, in response to the petition of the vicar, Henry Bryt, and the parishioners. The petition set forth that they had no graveyard of their own, and that the funerals took place within the monastery precincts; that the abbot and convent were annoyed with the tumult made by those who followed the funerals, which interrupted their worship; that the monks did not allow the office for the dead to be said in the monastery; that lately, when the vicar celebrated the office of the dead in the parish, the monks closed the monastery gates and refused the body burial for three days and nights; that the gates being often carelessly kept, pigs had got into the cemetery and dug up corpses; and that the monks, without consent of friends or executors, removed, sold, and appropriated to their own use the costly tombstones. The proposed cemetery adjoined the parish church, and was inclosed by a stone wall.⁵¹ The papal mandate for licence was addressed to the prior of Llanthony, near Gloucester. Meanwhile the abbot and convent of Abingdon complained to Rome on the prior granting the licence, that they

⁴⁶ Ibid. 4 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 20.

⁴⁷ Cal. Papal Let. iii, 14.

⁴⁸ Pat. 4 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 6.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 6 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 15.

⁵⁰ Cal. Papal Let. v, 354.

⁵¹ Ibid. iv, 371.

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had not been cited by the prior, and that they had obtained the committal of the cause to Master Brander, papal chaplain and auditor, who had proceeded to a number of acts short of a conclusion. Therefore, Boniface, in February, 1392, called in the case to himself.⁵²

A mandate was issued by Pope Boniface IX in 1396 for the restoration of certain burial rights pertaining to the abbey. The petition of the abbot and convent stated that of ancient custom they had on the death of parishioners of the parish church (called a chapel) of St. Helen, and on their burial in the cemetery of the monastic church, the right of taking: (i) legacies and bequests made to them on account of burial there, (ii) for each body a candle and a farthing, and (iii) all oblations and other emoluments arising out of obits and anniversaries. When Henry Bryt, the perpetual vicar, and the parishioners tried to get a place adjoining the parish church for burials, and to take the said legacies and emoluments, they appealed to the apostolic see. Afterwards, when the vicar and parishioners, under protest that special licence had been granted by the said see, got the place dedicated, the abbot again appealed. The cause was committed by Boniface to Master Branda de Castilione, papal chaplain, before whom Master John Lane, the abbey's proctor, appeared, stating that since the new cemetery had been dedicated the bodies of sixty-seven persons had been buried therein.⁵³ For these persons there buried the vicar had celebrated mass and other divine offices, despoiling the abbey of its rights.

Proctor Lane produced public instruments and other muniments, and prayed for the revocation of such proceedings. Thereupon Proctor Scrivani, on behalf of the vicar and parishioners, took certain exceptions to the proofs of the other side. The commissioner cited Scrivani to hear sentence on a certain day, and on his not appearing, pronounced unlawful and annulled the said licence, dedication, consecration, burials and burial dues, and went so far as to order the exhumation of all the bodies and their reburial in the conventual cemetery. The burial rights of the abbey were fully restored, the vicar was ordered to make restitution, and the vicar and parishioners were to pay the costs of the suit.

The vicar and parishioners' appeal against this decision was committed to Andrew, late bishop of Llandaff, who was a papal chaplain; he confirmed Master Branda's decision as good, save in the matter of the exhumation of two of the bodies, namely, those of Edith the wife of Patrick

⁵² *Cal. Papal Let.* iv, 439.

⁵³ The list of the names is complete, beginning with William atte Grene, priest; in almost each instance the name of the father is given; this list is confirmatory of the view often taken that careful registers were kept by the monks long before the days (1538) when parish registers became obligatory.

Workman, and of John son of Richard Proute, who had been buried after the appeals. A further appeal of the vicar and parishioners was permitted, which was committed to Master Nicholas de Bovrellis, who was also a papal chaplain. The appeal failed, and Masters Branda and Nicholas condemned the vicar and parishioners in costs to the respective amounts of sixty and forty gold florins in regard to the causes heard by them. Thereupon the pope ordered the three chaplains to publish the sentences, restoring all rights to the abbey, making satisfaction to the abbot and convent in respect of candles, legacies, costs, &c., and ordering the exhumation of the bodies save of the two named in the bishop of Llandaff's judgement.⁵⁴

Innocent VII, in 1406, received a petition from Abbot Richard, to the effect that the then bishop of Salisbury, with the consent of Hugh, the late abbot, and the convent, made a statute, on the assertion that contentions and scandals arose as to the removal of claustral priors, that as in the election of priors the common consent of all was required, so in their removal for just cause the vote of all should be required; and that afterwards Alexander IV confirmed this statute, together with an ordinance as to the prior's groom, horse, stable, and a room to receive monks and visitors; but that the result of this statute had caused the priors to repute themselves perpetual and irrevocable, and brought about disturbance and disobedience to the abbot, and that therefore he pleaded for the recall of the statute and its confirmation. Thereupon the pope, considering the statute to be contrary to the canons and institutes of the order, annulled it, and decreed that the present prior and his successors were removable at the sole pleasure of the abbot.⁵⁵

An important privilege was granted to this abbey by Alexander V in 1409. The pope authorized the abbot and his successors for twenty years to choose six priests, secular or religious, who might, on the feasts of Christmas and the Annunciation, from first to second vespers, and also during the whole octaves of both feasts, hear confessions, and absolve all who visited the monastery church, save in cases reserved to the Apostolic see.⁵⁶

Richard de Boxore, who was abbot from 1422 to 1427, was licensed by the bishop on 30 September, 1423, to be absent at the schools of an English university for three years to gain further knowledge for the defence of the Catholic faith.⁵⁷

On the resignation of Abbot Ralph Hamme, an election was held to appoint his successor on 12 January, 1435-6. The account of the proceedings in the episcopal register is exceptionally full; William Ashendon and thirty-one monks were

⁵⁴ *Cal. Papal Let.* v, 5, 6.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* vi, 8.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* vi, 158.

⁵⁷ *Sar. Epis. Reg. Chandler* (2nd nos.), fol. 53.

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present in the chapter-house, and the election was by way of inspiration (*una voce et uno spiritu*), or general acclaiming, the choice falling on Ashendon.⁶⁸

On 2 January, 1442-3, Bishop Aiscough issued his mandate to the abbot as to an approaching visitation, but no record is extant of the actual visit.⁶⁹

Pardon was granted by the crown in June, 1481, to John Sante, abbot of Abingdon, John Dunster, prior of Bath, and others, for the acceptance and publication of certain apostolic bulls, with licence to accept and publish the same.⁶⁰ In October of the same year a general pardon to the abbot and convent was granted under the privy seal.⁶¹

Abbot Thomas (?) and the convent obtained licence in November, 1482, to acquire in mortmain lands, rents, and other possessions, to the annual value of £40, for the support of four scholars of the monastery to pray for the good estate of King Edward and Elizabeth his queen, and for their souls after death.⁶²

At the election of an abbot on 12 April, 1496, when John Kennington, the prior, presided over a chapter of twenty-eight monks, the proceedings were conducted by way of scrutiny, when ten voted for Kennington, and the rest for Thomas Rowland, S.T.B., who was then prior of Luffield.⁶³ The number of inmates was evidently on the decrease, as the chamberlain's roll for 1418 shows that there were then thirty-five monks.⁶⁴

Thomas Pentecost *alias* Rowland supplicated for his B.D. degree at Oxford on 17 May, 1514;

⁶⁸ Sar. Epis. Reg. Neville (2nd nos.), fol. 23-5.

⁶⁹ Ibid. Aiscough (2nd nos.), fol. 79.

⁶⁰ Pat. 21 Edw. IV, pt. ii, m. 10.

⁶¹ Ibid. m. 7.

⁶² Ibid. 22 Edw. IV, pt. ii, m. 31. At this date John Sante was abbot; he was, however, often absent at Rome as ambassador both for Edward IV and Henry VII. Thomas was probably prior or vice-abbot of Abingdon.

⁶³ Sar. Epis. Reg. Blyth, fol. 86.

⁶⁴ The Camden Society, in 1892, printed a most valuable series of monastic accounts of the officials of this abbey, extending from 1322 to 1479. These account rolls pertained to the offices of pittance, infirmarer, lignar (wood steward), gardener, treasurer, kitchener, sacristan, refectorer, and chamberlain, as well as to the common chest account, the Trinity warden's account, and the chapel warden's account. They throw much though not full light on the inner economy and administration of a large Benedictine house, and are prefaced by a valuable introduction by the editor (*Accounts of the Obedientiaries of Abingdon Abbey*, edited by R. E. G. Kirk). The originals are preserved in the collection of Sir Edmund H. Verney, bart., of Claydon House, Bucks. The duties and emoluments of the various obedientiaries, or officials drawn from the monastic ranks, of Abingdon Abbey, are set forth in detail from the Cott. MS. Claud. B. vi, in vol. ii of the *Chronicon*, 335-417.

he had been elected abbot of Abingdon in 1511-12, being the fifty-third and last who attained to that dignity.⁶⁵

The new year's gifts of Henry VIII in 1532 included £20, in a white leather purse with gold buttons, to the abbot of Abingdon.⁶⁶

A noteworthy letter was written by Abbot Thomas to Cromwell in May, 1533. Cromwell had requested him to present one Mr. Keytt to the church of Sunningwell. The abbot replied that he did not think he could get it out of his convent without much trouble. The convent had complained of his giving away other presentations without consulting them, and of the ingratitude of the parsons presented, several of whom had put the house to trouble by refusing to pay the due pension. He had refused this same benefice to my lady of Norfolk, promising her the next that should fall. He begged Cromwell to have patience with him.⁶⁷

Cromwell's next move was to endeavour to interfere with the internal administration of the house. He wrote to the abbot in June, 1534, asking that Richard Berall, one of the monks, might have the office of chamberlain for life. The abbot replied with some dignity that Cromwell was mistaken in thinking that 'the chamberer's office and the collector's of this house' was void; and it would be inconsistent with the rules to give any office to one of the monks for life under the convent seal. If any monk had such a grant it would be the abbot's duty to take it from him, and he therefore desired Cromwell to excuse him.⁶⁸

During Lent, 1535, Cromwell wrote to Abbot Thomas desiring him to appoint a day before Easter for the auditors to examine the matter of accounts between him and John Audelett, the steward of the abbey lands. The abbot replied, on 17 March, stating that in the following week he was bound by his religion to attend daily to the service of God, and asking that the question might be deferred until after Easter. On 4 June the abbot wrote to Cromwell saying that he was in readiness for the commissioners who were to sit between him and John Audelett, suggesting 14 June as the date, and hoping that the matter might be finally settled before the king and Cromwell left Abingdon. The dispute, however, between the abbot and the steward (who had been appointed for life by the crown) dragged on for a long time, the latter apparently putting every impediment in the way of a settlement. At last it was terminated by the death of John Audelett in November, 1536. His wife, Katherine, who from time to time sent 'poor tokens' to Cromwell whilst the matter was

⁶⁵ Foster, *Alumni Oxon.* iii, 1205; Woods, *Fasti*, i, 41.

⁶⁶ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, v, 686.

⁶⁷ Ibid. vi, 545.

⁶⁸ Ibid. vii, 850.

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sub judice, wrote one of these flattering letters with a token on 8 November, stating that her husband was sickly; it is endorsed, in Cromwell's hand, 'Katherine Audlett, widow, Nov. xxiii.'⁶⁹

Meanwhile, Dr. Leyton visited Abingdon as commissary of Cromwell, and issued the injunction, then generally set forth, of strictly confining the monks all the year to their precincts. On 27 September, 1535, the abbot wrote to Cromwell, naming this, and adding: 'So I and my brethren continue within, although we have been accustomed at Michaelmas to look over our farms, see what wastes have been done, and keep courts in the manors.' He desired liberty to do this at times.⁷⁰

In October of the same year the abbot wrote again to Cromwell, but on a very different matter. His officers had arrested at Abingdon a priest, a suspect person with a book of conjurations for finding hidden treasures, for consecrating rings with stones in them, and for consecrating a crystal in which a child may see many things. There were also many figures in it, one of a sword crossed over a sceptre. The book he sent to Cromwell, and desired his instructions whether he should send the priest to Oxford Castle, to Wallingford Castle, or elsewhere.⁷¹

The abbot and convent had been much embarrassed by the long-sustained lawsuit with their steward, and by the ever-growing exactions of Cromwell.⁷² The 'surrender' that was at last wrung from them was probably as genuine a one as any of the whole series, though the way for it was smoothed by a lavish expenditure of money, most of which would probably fall to the abbot's share.

On 7 February, 1538, the round sum of £600—equal to at least £6,000 of our money—was paid by royal warrant to Doctors Tregonwell and Petre 'to be spent by them to bring about the dissolution of the monastery of Abingdon.'⁷³

Two days later the surrender was signed by Thomas Rowland, abbot, Richard Eynsham, prior, and twenty-four other monks.⁷⁴ The abbot was rewarded for his complacency after a most unusually lavish scale. By letters patent of 23 February he had the great pension of £200 assigned him, and in addition to this was allowed to hold the manor-house of Cumnor as his residence for life. The prior obtained a pension

⁶⁹ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, viii, 401, 824, 971; ix, 45, 111, 156, 264, 663; x, 610, 996; xi, 143, 364, 397, 1020.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* ix, 455.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 551.

⁷² Cromwell was in receipt of a yearly fee of £20 from the abbey, according to his accounts for 1537-8. *Ibid.* xiv, pt. ii, 319-20.

⁷³ *Mins. Accts.* cited in Gasquet's *Eng. Mon.* ii, 299.

⁷⁴ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. i, 242.

of £22, and the sub-prior £20; four of the monks £8; seven £7; two £6 13s. 4d.; two £6; and five £5 6s. 8d.⁷⁵

The *Comperia* of visitors Legh and Layton made the most terrible accusations against Abbot Pentecost, and his memory has been specially defiled, as the charges were printed both by Bale and Speed. It is almost impossible to believe in their truth, and if true the assigning of this great pension to the criminal by those who well knew the charges is the greater sin. Bale, however, himself lays down the principle that 'where the religious had pensions, it was a proof of their innocence,' for the king and his visitors were only too willing on any pretext to discard them.⁷⁶

Henry VIII had some thoughts of turning this abbey into a royal residence. Sir Richard Rich forwarded his report on 22 February to Cromwell as to the condition of the deserted monastery. He stated that the buildings were in great decay; the abbot's lodgings were unfit for habitation, and would require a large expenditure to make them fit for the king, and there was no ground suitable for a park. He asked what part of the church, cloister, dorter, chapter-house, and frater should be defaced. 'I think,' he adds, 'a great part thereof may be defaced and sufficient left to the king's contentation.'⁷⁷

In 1548 the lead on the buildings at Abingdon pertaining to the late monastery was estimated to weigh 47 foddors, at 15 ft. square to the fodder; the lead had long before that date been stripped from the church and cloister.⁷⁸

The wealth and extensive influence of the abbey of Abingdon, together with the sway that it formerly exercised as a great mission centre, are plainly shown in the Pope Nicholas Taxation returns of 1291.

The Berkshire churches that were appropriated to the monastery have been already set forth in the Ecclesiastical History, and allusion has been made to the remarkable extent of the pensions or portions paid to it by other churches. So far as Berkshire is concerned these pensions are chiefly from the adjacent deaneries of Abingdon and Newbury, and there can be no doubt that they were survivals of the time when Abingdon was the mother church or minster of a great number of Christian settlements or chapelries, which gradually became parishes. The following is the list of the twenty-one Berkshire

⁷⁵ Aug. Off. Bks. ccxxxii, fol. 7-11.

⁷⁶ Bale, *Summarium*, iii, 170; Speed, *Hist. of Gr. Britaine*, 1027. See also Willis, *Mitred Abbeyes*, and Dugdale, *Mon.* The charge was that the abbot 'kept three whores, and had two children by his owne sister.'

⁷⁷ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. i, 332.

⁷⁸ K.R. Ch. Goods, 288.

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churches that paid tribute to Abingdon in 1291:—

	£	s.	d.
Lockinge	6	6	8
Boxford	6	0	0
Wantage (vicarage)	3	6	8
Chieveley	3	6	8
Hanney	3	6	8
Uffington	2	0	0
Longworth	2	0	0
Milton	1	6	8
Winterbourne (chapel)	1	6	8
Welford	0	16	4
Cumnor (vicarage)	0	15	0
Stanford	0	13	4
Sutton	0	13	4
Wittenham Abbots	0	13	4
Winkfield	0	13	4
Wytham	0	13	4
Beedon (chapel)	0	6	8
East Ilsley (to sacrist)	0	6	0
Appleton	0	3	9
Sewekesthworth [Seacourt]	0	3	0
Tubney	0	1	0
£34 18 5			

	£	s.	d.
Brought forward			
Bourton	75	0	0
Shellingford	13	0	0
Lambourn	1	16	8
Welford and Chieveley	54	15	0
Farnborough	13	10	0
Bray	0	13	4
Winkfield	2	16	0
£433 19 4			

From various lands and tenements in the county, which were chiefly within Abingdon itself, the following annual sums were allotted to particular obedientiaries:—The cook, £66 19s. 5d.; the chamberlain, £9 2s.; the cellarer, £2 6s. 10d.; the refectorian, £1 2s.; the infirmarian, 15s.; the sacrist, £2 14s. 8d.; the precentor, 8s.; the master of the works, £15 6s. 8d.; the gardener, 20s.; and the lignar, £10 13s. 8d. It follows then that the gross annual receipts of the abbey in 1291 amounted to £711 14s. 1½d., exclusive of the few appropriated churches.

There were also pensions from five Oxfordshire churches amounting to £9, and another £9 from the single church of Dumbleton, Gloucestershire. The temporalities from the Oxfordshire manors of Lewknor and Tadmerton, and from various other places in that county, were considerable, and produced an annual revenue of £89 2s. 9½d. The temporalities of Dumbleton, Gloucestershire, brought in the round annual sum of £20, whilst from Kensington, in London diocese, came a further revenue of £5 8s. 4d.

The temporalities in Berkshire are of particular interest, as they set forth the way in which at that date certain rentals and issues were assigned to particular administrators or officials of the great monastery, although by far the larger part is entered under 'abbas.' The abbot drew the following annual sums for his own or the common use:—

	£	s.	d.
Uffington	24	1	8
Withanesfield	10	10	0
Goosey	9	0	0
Wittenham Abbots	12	6	8
Appleford	13	0	0
Marcham and Garford	50	10	0
Longworth and Charney	30	0	0
Sonning	5	0	0
Cumnor and Wootton	70	0	0
Lockinge	16	0	0
Middleton	32	0	0

Carried forward £272 8 4

A papal confirmation made in 1401 of a grant of the archbishop of Canterbury when visiting Abingdon in 1390, upon proof before him of the abbey's right to the following appropriated churches within the archdeaconry of Berkshire, is of interest as showing with exactness the churches and chapels of the county then within the control of that ancient foundation. They were: Cumnor, with the chapels of North Hinksey, South Hinksey, and Wootton; St. Helen's, Abingdon, with the chapels of Drayton, Radley, Sandford, and Shippon; Marcham, with the chapel of Garford; Chieveley, with the chapels of Beedon, Leckhampstead, Winterbourne, and Oare; Uffington, with the chapels of Woolstone and Balking; and St. Nicholas, Abingdon. The advowson or presentation to eleven other rectories in the county were also in the abbey's gift. The abbot and convent at the same time made good their claim to a number of pensions or portions.⁷⁹

Pope Gregory IX, in 1231, permitted the appropriation to the abbey of the church of Cuddesdon, for the uses of hospitality, a vicar's portion being reserved, and a yearly pension to the rector. A somewhat later repetition of this papal licence states that the appropriation was to be devoted to the uses of the monks' infirmary.⁸⁰

In 1308 the abbey obtained the royal licence for the appropriation of the church of Chieveley, with the chapels of Beedon, Leckhampstead, Winterbourne, and Oare pertaining to that church.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Cal. Papal Let.* v, 351-4.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* i, 126, 129, 132.

⁸¹ *Pat.* 1 Edw. II, pt. ii, m. 11.

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The abbot obtained licence in 1380 to alienate a messuage and 3s. rent in Oxford to the warden and scholars of Canterbury Hall. At the same time licence was granted to John de Reynham and Thomas de Bolton to assign two Oxford messuages to the abbot and convent of Abingdon in aid of the fabric of their church.⁸² In December of the same year Abbot Peter, by payment of 30s., obtained an interesting licence from the crown, whereby he was permitted to acquire a toft or garden in Stokwellestreet, Oxford, adjoining houses of the abbot used for the lodging of his monks when studying in the university; the land to be used for the enlargement of their houses, and those of certain other black monks studying at the university.⁸³

Thomas de Hanney, rector of Longworth, brother of Abbot Peter de Hanney, obtained licence in 1381 to bestow on the abbey three messuages and other property in Abingdon and Marcham, for finding two wax candles to burn daily at mass in the Lady Chapel of their conventual church.⁸⁴

The abbot of Abingdon from early days had the right of appointment of the woodwards of both Cumnor Wood and Bagley Wood, as well as of the keeper of Radley Park by Abingdon. In 1387 the crown filled up these offices, but in the following year the letters patent of appointment were revoked on the petition of the abbot, as it was shown that the grants were based upon faulty inquisitions of surveyors of the county of Oxford, whereas the woods and park were all in the county of Berks.⁸⁵

In May, 1389, there was a large increase in the endowment of the abbey, the gift of Thomas de Hanney, rector of Longworth, in aid of the maintenance of the fabric of the conventual church.⁸⁶ The rector of Longworth was brother of Abbot Peter.

The original *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII for Berkshire is lost. The summary merely states that the clear or net annual value of the whole of the spiritualities and temporalities of this monastery was £1,876 10s. 9d. Speed gives the gross total as £2,042 2s. 8½d.

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Hean,⁸⁷ 675
Cumma
Hrethun
Aland
Cynath

⁸² Pat. 3 Ric. II, pt. iii, m. 17. ⁸³ Ibid. m. 5.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 4 Ric. II, pt. iii, m. 13.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 11 Ric. II, pt. ii, mm. 35, 6.

⁸⁶ Ibid. 12 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 8.

⁸⁷ The best record of the early abbots of Abingdon, from Hean to Hugh, is that which can be culled from *De Abbatibus Abendonie* (Vit. A. xiii), which is printed in the second appendix to vol. ii of Stevenson's *Chron.* This list and the dates are taken from

Godeseale, 830
Ethelwold, 954
Osgar, 963
Edwin, 985
Wulfgar, 989
Ethelwyne, 1017
Siward, 1030
Ethelstan, 1044
Sparhavoc, 1048
Ralph, 1050
Ordric, 1052
Ealdred, 1065
Ethelhelm, 1071
Rainald, 1084
Faricius, 1100
Vincent, 1117
Ingulf, 1130
Walkelin, 1158
Godfrey, 1164
Roger, 1176
Alfred, 1184
Hugh, 1189
Robert de Henreth,⁸⁸ 1221
Luke, 1234
John de Blossmevil, 1241
William de Newbury, 1256
Henry de Fryleford, 1260
Richard de Henred, 1262
Nicholas de Coleham,⁸⁹ 1289
Richard de Clive,⁹⁰ 1306
John de Sutton,⁹¹ 1315
John de Cannynge,⁹² 1322
Robert de Garford,⁹³ 1329
William de Cumnor,⁹⁴ 1332
Roger de Thame,⁹⁵ 1334
Peter de Hanney,⁹⁶ 1361
Richard de Salford,⁹⁷ 1401
John Dorset, 1415
Richard Boxore, 1421
Thomas Salford,⁹⁸ 1427
Ralph Hamme,⁹⁹ 1428
William Ashendon,¹⁰⁰ 1435

it, after collation with other original chronicles given in Mr. Stevenson's two volumes, and with the list up to 1266 given in Harl. MS. 209, fol. 1b. The succession of the first four abbots of Abingdon is undoubted, but the actual dates are matter of conjecture.

⁸⁸ Pat. 5 Hen. III, m. 3.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 17 Edw. I, mm. 9, 8, 6.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 34 Edw. I, m. 36; Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 49-51.

⁹¹ Pat. 9 Edw. II, pt. i, m. 22; Sar. Epis. Reg. Mortival, fol. 181.

⁹² Sar. Epis. Reg. Mortival, i, fol. 183.

⁹³ Pat. 2 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 3.

⁹⁴ Ibid. m. 13; Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, ii, fol. 17.

⁹⁵ Pat. 8 Edw. III, pt. ii, mm. 7, 5; Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, ii, fol. 35.

⁹⁶ Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, ii, pt. 2, fol. 11.

⁹⁷ Ibid. Mitford.

⁹⁸ Pat. 5 Hen. VI, pt. i, m. 15.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 6 Hen. VI, pt. ii, m. 7.

¹⁰⁰ Sar. Epis. Reg. Neville, pt. 2, fol. 23-25.

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John Sante, S.T.P.,¹⁰¹ 1468
Thomas Rowland, S.T.B.,¹⁰² 1496
Alexander Shottisbrook,¹⁰³ 1504
John Coventry,¹⁰⁴ 1508
Thomas Pentecost alias Rowland,¹⁰⁵ 1511-12

The pointed oval seal of the eleventh century bears the seated crowned Virgin, with sceptre in right hand and ring in the left, with the Holy Child on her knees. Legend:—

+SIGILL . . . SANC . . . DONIÆ.

There are casts of seals of Abbot Robert, 1231, and Abbot William, 1371, in the British Museum.

The pointed oval seal of John Sante, abbot and papal commissary, 1469-95, bears the Virgin and Child in a canopied niche between St. Peter and St. Paul in smaller niches. In the base are three shields of arms: (1) a fruit tree, eradicated; (2) a lion rampant; and (3) a cross pattée between four martlets (Abingdon Abbey). The legend is:—

SIGILLV̄ : DNĪ : JŌHIS : ABBATIS : ABENDONIE :
S : D : N : PAPE : COMMISSARIIL.

2. THE ABBEY OF READING

It is clear from the opening words of the foundation charter of Henry I, which states that the three old abbeys of Reading, Cholsey, and Leominster had been supposed to be destroyed for their sins and their lands alienated and possessed by laymen, that there was an earlier religious house at Reading known as an abbey. It is probable that the abbeys of Reading and Cholsey were destroyed in 1006, which was the year when the Danes overran this district and burnt Wallingford. Cholsey Abbey was founded about 986, by Ethelred, as an act of expiation for the death of his brother Edward the Martyr, and it has been conjectured that the first religious house at Reading was established at the same time by Elfrida in atonement for the like crime.

Henry I laid the foundation of the new abbey at Reading on 23 June, 1121.¹⁰⁶ By charter of the year 1125 he bestowed on this house lands at Reading, Cholsey, and Leominster (Hereford), with their churches, woods, mills, fisheries, &c., and with a mint and one moneyer at Reading. He also granted immunity to the monks and their tenants from all customs, tolls, and port-dues throughout the kingdom. Moreover he bestowed full privileges of the hundred court, and all manner of pleas, and every kind of

jurisdiction over the town of Reading and its precincts. On an abbot's death, the possessions of the monastery were to remain in the hands of the prior and convent, with full power to elect his successor. The abbot was not to possess any revenues of his own, but to hold in common with his brethren; he was not to use the alms of the house for his own relations, but solely for the relief of the poor and in the entertainment of strangers. No office was to be made hereditary, but to be filled at the discretion of the abbot and monks.¹⁰⁷

At the same time, or shortly afterwards, Henry gave the monks a second charter, which is solely concerned with their exemptions from all lay and ecclesiastical charges of every kind, and with their special privileges. An important addition is therein made to the statements of the foundation charter, namely, that no royal forest officials were to interfere in any way with the monastic woods; for the abbot and his tenants were to have the same power and liberty in their woods as the king had in his own.¹⁰⁸

By a third charter Henry granted to the abbey a fair on the festival of St. Laurence and the three following days.¹⁰⁹

The founder by other charters conferred on the monks the churches of Thatcham and Wargrave (Berkshire), and Handborough (Oxfordshire); and confirmed several donations of other benefactors, which included the church of 'Wychbury' (Wiltshire), the gift of the earl of Leicester.

Although the monks first introduced into this abbey were Cluniacs, and the first two abbots were members of the great Cluniac priory of Lewes, while Abbot Hugh II in 1199 became abbot of Cluny, the connexion between Reading and Cluny appears to have been slight and not to have lasted beyond the thirteenth century. In 1207 the abbey of Reading was still considered to be a Cluniac house,¹¹⁰ but soon after this date it seems to have become attached to the general Benedictine order.

The buildings of the abbey, with the exception of the church, were completed in five years.

The death of the royal founder occurred in Normandy in December, 1135, and his body having been embalmed was, agreeably to his own request, brought over to England, and interred

¹⁰⁷ Chart. of Reading Abbey, Cott. MSS. Vesp. E. v, fol. 17. This is a manuscript of the fourteenth century of 41 folios, but with later additions. There is a fuller chartulary, beautifully written in an early fifteenth-century hand, among the Harl. MSS. (No. 1708); it contains 123 folios. The foundation charter is on folio 14. A third chartulary (Vesp. E. xxv) is almost identical with the better written one of the Harley Collection.

¹⁰⁸ This charter is cited in the appendix to Coates's able *Hist. of Reading* (pp. 464-5), from the Wollascot MSS.

¹⁰⁹ Harl. MSS. 1708, fol. 15b.

¹¹⁰ *Cal. Papal Let.* i, 28.

¹⁰¹ Pat. 8 Edw. IV, pt. ii, m. 16; Sar. Epis. Reg. Beauchamp, i, fol. 150.

¹⁰² Sar. Epis. Reg. Blyth, fol. 86.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* Audley, fol. 7.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* fol. 41.

¹⁰⁵ Pat. 3 Hen. VIII, pt. ii, m. 18.

¹⁰⁶ *Ann. de Wav.* (Rolls Ser.), 218.



READING ABBEY (*Obverse*)



READING ABBEY (*Reverse*)



HUGH, ABBOT OF READING,
1180-99



ABINGDON ABBEY



JOHN SANTE, ABBOT OF ABINGDON, 1468-96

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before the high altar of Reading Abbey. Over the vault a splendid monument was subsequently erected to Henry I, and in 1398 Richard II consented to confirm the abbey in all its rights and privileges, only on condition that the abbot would, within a year, honourably repair the tomb and effigy of King Henry their founder over his place of burial.¹¹¹

Henry's queen Adeliza, who survived him and married William de Albin, earl of Arundel, gave to the abbey, on the first anniversary of the king's death, the manor of Aston, Berkshire, which had been settled on her as part of her royal dower, offering a pall upon the high altar as a testimony of confirmation. The queen dowager subsequently gave them the church land at Stanton Harcourt, to the intent that a lamp should be kept perpetually burning before the pyx and the tomb of the founder.¹¹² After the death of her second husband, Adeliza bestowed on the abbey the churches of Berkeley Harness (Gloucestershire), Cam, Arlingham, Wotton, Beverstone, and Almondsbury; and also 100s. to be paid every Christmas out of a wharf in London, for the expense of the founder's anniversary. Adeliza herself was eventually interred at the abbey.

The Empress Maud, the daughter of the founder, for the souls of Henry her father and Queen Maud her mother gave to the abbey the Berkshire manors of Blewbury and East Hendred, as well as lands at Marlborough,¹¹³ &c. The empress was at Reading during Rogationtide, 1141, when she was received at the abbey with great honour. King Stephen granted confirmation charters, but no bequests of his own.

Henry II was a firm friend to the monastery. In addition to various confirmation charters, he permitted the monks to inclose 'the park of Cumba' for the use of infirm monks and the guests of the house. By other charters he granted them a second fair at Reading on St. James's Day and the three following days, and also a weekly market at Thatcham. He also granted them a revenue of 40 marks out of the Exchequer, until he could secure them a landed revenue of like value, which he afterwards did out of the manor of Hoo; and the right of importing goods free of all seaport duties.¹¹⁴

Henry II having marched an army into Wales in 1163, Henry de Essex, his standard-bearer at the battle of Coleshill, supposing the king to have been slain, threw away the standard and fled. He was subsequently charged with treason by Robert de Montford, and trial by combat was sanctioned by the king. The site selected for the encounter was a small island of the Thames

close to Reading. The combat took place in the presence of the king and many of the nobility. Essex was defeated, but the king remitted the death penalty and is said to have compelled him to become a monk at Reading.¹¹⁵

In the following year the great church of the abbey was finished; it was consecrated by Archbishop Becket, in the presence of the king and the great magnates of the realm.¹¹⁶

William, the eldest son of the king, died in 1156, and was buried in the abbey, as was Reginald, earl of Cornwall, a natural son of Henry I, in 1175. The king kept his court at Reading at Whitsuntide 1175, and at Easter 1177.¹¹⁷ There was a great gathering of the suffragan bishops of the province of Canterbury and the monks of Christ Church, Canterbury, in this abbey, on 5 August, 1184, to elect an archbishop. Henry II was present, and the assembly was adjourned to Windsor.¹¹⁸

Kings Richard and John granted confirmation charters and small additional bequests; the latter granted yet a third fair to the abbey, to be held on the vigil, festival, and two following days of SS. Philip and James.¹¹⁹

Hugh II, the eighth abbot, who ruled from 1180 to 1199, was a great theologian; in the latter year he was made abbot of Cluny.¹²⁰ Several of the earlier abbots of Reading were promoted to important posts; Hugh, the first abbot, was consecrated archbishop of Rouen in 1130, and William, the sixth abbot, archbishop of Bordeaux in 1173.

Pope Innocent III in 1207 granted protection to Helias, abbot of Reading, and his brethren, present and future, in their possessions, viz., Reading, Chelsey, and Leominster, with their churches, chapels, cemeteries, tithes, and oblations, Thatcham, and the churches of Wargrave, Whitley, 'Wybury,' Blewbury, land in Hendred, Aston and its church, 'Ravinton' and its church, the churches of Stanton, Handborough, Englefield, and 'Dudelesfaude,' land in Houghton, lands in 'Lingeborche,' and that in Stratfield which belonged to Hugh de Mortimer, and in Sawbridgeworth, lands and rents in London and Berkhamstead, land acquired with the tenement of Hoo, and the priory of May and Lindegros in Scotland.¹²¹

On 28 March, 1228, when Henry III was at Reading, the abbot was successful in resisting the claim of the bailiff of Windsor to tolls on the vessels of the abbey descending and ascending the Thames to and from London with goods and merchandise. Claim was made for £52 of

¹¹⁵ *Chron. Stephen, &c.* (Rolls Ser.), i, 108.

¹¹⁶ *Ann. de Winton*, 57; *Ann. de Bermond.* (Rolls Ser.), 441.

¹¹⁷ Coates, *Reading*, 7.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 29-33.

¹²⁰ Coates, *Reading*, 283.

¹²¹ *Cal. Papal Let.* i, 28. The Scotch priories had been granted by King David, Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 17.

¹¹¹ Pat. 21 Ric. II, pt. iii, m. 16.

¹¹² Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 18, 18b.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* fol. 17, 18, 18b.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* fol. 21, 22.

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arrears of such tolls. But after inquisition and searching the rolls of the Exchequer, the abbot made good his claim to exemption by charters of the king's progenitors.¹²²

In May, 1231, the sheriff of Oxford received a mandate authorizing him to take with him upright and qualified men and to go in person to the chapel of St. Anne on the bridge of Reading (on the Oxford side of the Thames)—part of which is founded on the fee of the abbot of Reading, and part on the fee of William earl of Pembroke—and in the sight and testimony of the men to give to the abbot such seisin of the chapel as he had on the day when the earl died.¹²³

An interesting pittance grant was made to the monks in 1282. Ela Longespeye, countess of Warwick, granted to the abbey 20 marks annually out of Southwood manor, Doddington, Cambridgeshire, to provide spices to be distributed by the prior and sub-prior; with a further grant of her wardship of Shenstone, so that the whole convent might be provided each Sunday with a good pittance by the cook in honour of the Holy Trinity, and each Thursday in honour of the Ascension.¹²⁴

In 1310 licence was obtained by the abbot under the king's privy seal, for the appropriation of the church of Thatcham.¹²⁵

Licence was granted in 1327 to the abbot and convent for the alienation to them by Robert de Abingdon of four messuages and a stone quay in London, on condition of their finding two secular chaplains to celebrate divine service daily in the Lady chapel of the abbey church, for the souls of Master Richard Abingdon, his ancestors and heirs.¹²⁶

The abbey received a considerable endowment in 1331. In November of that year licence was obtained by Hugh de Redynges for the abbot and convent to acquire in mortmain three messuages, 240 acres of land, 10 of meadow, 3 of pasture, 40 of wood, and 16s. of rent in Leominster, Ivington, and other places in Herefordshire, to find two chaplains to celebrate daily in their convent church.¹²⁷

William Pakynton, king's clerk, and another, obtained licence in October, 1384, on payment of the exceptionally heavy fee of £20 in the hanaper, to alienate to the abbey of Reading three messuages, three shops, two tofts, and £13 12s. 10d. rent in Reading for finding a monk chaplain to celebrate daily in the conventual church for the souls of the king, of Thomas Spigurnel and Katharine his wife, of Adam Hartington, and others.¹²⁸

In 1232 John son of Richard of Cornwall was buried at the abbey, and two years later Isabel his sister was laid by his side.¹²⁹

On 15 June, 1235, Robert Grosteste was consecrated bishop of Lincoln and Hugh bishop of St. Asaph, in the great conventual church of Reading, by the archbishop of Canterbury.¹³⁰ It was through Grosteste's influence that the king changed the days of several of the abbey's markets from Sunday to an ordinary week day. Another consecration was held in the abbey church in 1244, when the bishop of Winchester consecrated Roger bishop of Bath and Wells.¹³¹

The debts of the house were considerable in 1275. An entry on the Patent Rolls in February of that year requests the knights free-men and other tenants of the abbey to aid the convent with a subsidy in consequence of its embarrassed condition. At a later date in the same month a mandate was issued to the abbot to remove from the abbey and from its cell of Leominster all serjeants and horses, with their keepers, either of the king or others, staying in either house, and to receive no more until the said abbey be relieved of its indebtedness.¹³² Edward I visited Reading and lodged at the abbey in January, 1273, and again in December, 1275. In December, 1275, Sir Roland de Herlegh was appointed by the crown to the custody of the house of Leominster, a cell of Reading. It had fallen into debt, and all that Sir Roland was able to save, after finding the dean and chaplains in food and clothing, and poor mendicants in alms, he was to apply to the discharge of its debts by view of the abbot and prior of Reading. Power was reserved to the abbot to remove Roland from this custody at will.¹³³

Licence was granted in August, 1289, by Pope Nicholas IV, to the abbot of Reading and his successors to use the mitre, ring, gloves, dalmatic, tunicle, and sandals, according to the indulgence of Clement III; and this both within the monastery on solemn days, and in processions and episcopal synods.¹³⁴

The seals of the abbot and convent of Reading were counterfeited in 1290 by Jonas de Newbury and Isaac de Pulet, two Jews, and attached to false writings involving large sums of money; for this offence, and for other felonies in divers parts of the realm, the delinquents were committed to the Tower.¹³⁵

Entry was made on the Close Rolls in July 1290 of the indebtedness of Abbot Robert to Lewis de Bello Monte, canon of Salisbury, of the large sum of 450 marks; but it was subse-

¹²² Close, 12 Hen. III, m. 11.

¹²³ Ibid. 15 Hen. III, m. 14.

¹²⁴ Anct. D. (P.R.O.), C. 3589.

¹²⁵ Pat. 3 Edw. II, m. 7.

¹²⁶ Ibid. 1 Edw. III, pt. iii, m. 13.

¹²⁷ Ibid. 5 Edw. III, pt. iii, m. 9.

¹²⁸ Ibid. 8 Ric. II, pt. i, m. 18.

¹²⁹ *Ann. de Theok.* (Rolls Ser.), 89, 93.

¹³⁰ Ibid. 97.

¹³¹ Coates, *Reading*, 9, 243.

¹³² Pat. 3 Edw. I, m. 32, 30.

¹³³ Ibid. 4 Edw. I, m. 34.

¹³⁴ *Cal. Papal Let.* i, 495.

¹³⁵ Pat. 18 Edw. I, m. 21 d.

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quently cancelled on payment being made.¹³⁶ Possibly, however, it was partly owing to financial entanglements that on 2 November, 1290, when the king was at Clipstone, news of the cession of Abbot Robert was brought by Richard de Wynton, Nicholas de Leominster, and William de Sutton, monks of Reading. One of the three messengers, William de Sutton, was elected abbot in the same month.¹³⁷ On the occasion of his election, the king, to spare the labour and expense of the abbot-elect, ordered, on 28 November, 1290, that Master William de Meschia, his treasurer, should proceed to Reading and take the elect's fealty, on the election being confirmed; he was to certify the king thereof by envoy, and instruct the prior and convent to cause the temporalities to be delivered to the abbot.¹³⁸

Among the interesting set of letters of the first (English) Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward II, at the Public Record Office, written in 1302-3, are two addressed to the abbot of Reading. The first of these, dated 10 June, referred to a proposal of the abbot to tallage the prince's good friend Adam the skinner and other burgesses of Reading, on account of the tallage on the king's demesnes, and as such an action was novel the prince begged the abbot, 'for love of us,' to stay his action for a month that counsel might be taken. The second letter, of 6 September, is of more interest. The prince sends his well-beloved John Lalemaner, keeper of one of his chargers, who had wounded his hand, to the abbey, as he understood they had a good surgeon at the house, promising his special gratitude to the abbot if they would keep him and sustain him at the abbey until the wound was healed.¹³⁹

On the death of Abbot Sutton in 1305 the monks elected Nicholas de Quappelade, the precentor, in his room; but on his name being submitted to the bishop of Salisbury certain defects in form were discovered and the election was quashed. The bishop, however, recognizing his good qualities, collated him to the abbacy on 8 September.¹⁴⁰ Soon after his installation Abbot Nicholas found that the debts of the abbey had reached the great total of £1,227 7s. 8d. He at once resolved to bring about considerable reductions in the household expenditure. A committee of eight monks was formed under the abbot, and they adopted, *inter alia*, the following resolutions: That a law clerk should be appointed with whom the abbot and treasurer could consult; that a steward should be elected yearly with a stipend of £6 13s. 4d., livery for himself and two servants, and two horses to be kept at

the charge of the house; that the town clerk was to be chamberlain in waiting in the abbot's hall; and that one of the two chaplains of the countess of Salisbury's chantry was to be the abbot's secretary. The reduced staff of servants and officials (though some of them were obedientiaries of the house and unsalaried) numbered thirty-seven. To lessen the expenditure, it was further resolved that the days when special pittance were provided by the obedientiaries were to be reduced to ten, pertaining to the treasurer and cellarer. All the obedientiaries were to give exact annual accounts of the money that passed through their hands, whilst one of the treasurers was to examine the accounts of grain and of the larder every month. The accounts of grain bought or sold, of malt and cheese from the different manors, of the cattle for labour and live stock, and of the fish or flesh purchased or brought were all to be entered up in writing week by week. It would seem that this scheme of improved accounts answered for the time, for Abbot Quappelade found money to build the Lady chapel in 1314, and when he died in 1327 left money put at his disposal by a Reading burgess to Balliol College. Had the abbey then been in a necessitous condition, he would scarcely have made this considerable bequest to Oxford.¹⁴¹

Just before the vacant abbacy was filled up in 1305, the bishop commissioned Master Walter Henny, canon of Sarum, to absolve certain suspended and excommunicated monks of Reading (we know not their offence) to enable them to take part in the election of a superior.¹⁴² When the election actually took place there were sixty-five monks present, but one was objected to as being still excommunicate, and another as being an idiot.

Edward II, in 1310, at the instance of Queen Isabella, ordered the abbot and convent to admit into their house Robert Pipard, who had long served the late Queen Eleanor and the king, and to provide him for life with food and clothing according to his estate, and to confirm this by letters patent under their chapter seal. At the same time the king revoked orders that he had recently made on them with regard to doing the like service for William Becok.¹⁴³

Thomas de la Naperye, who had served Edward II and his father, was sent to the abbey in October, 1316, to receive the allowance that Philip le Charetter had had in that house.¹⁴⁴ In March, 1318, Robert le Orfevre, who had long served the king, was sent to Reading Abbey, to be thence forwarded to their priory cell of Leominster, where he was to receive a monk's

¹³⁶ Close, 18 Edw. I, m. 6 d.

¹³⁷ Ibid. m. 3; 19 Edw. I, m. 25.

¹³⁸ Ibid. 19 Edw. I, m. 11.

¹³⁹ Misc. Exch. $\frac{5}{2}$; printed in *The Antiquary*, xxx, 190.

¹⁴⁰ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 42, 49.

¹⁴¹ Harl. MS. 82, fol. 1-2; a fragment of Quappelade's Register. See Coates, *Reading*, 286-7.

¹⁴² Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 46b; Coates, *Reading*, 245.

¹⁴³ Close, 3 Edw. II, m. 26 d.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. 10 Edw. II, m. 23 d.

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allowance, together with a robe and all necessaries of life.¹⁴⁵

Reading was one of those abbeys where the crown claimed to pension a clerk on the house until such time as they could find a benefice for him, on each new creation of an abbot. Abbot Quappelade, dying in 1327-8, was succeeded by Abbot John de Appleford. On 9 March, 1328, Henry de Carleton, one of the king's clerks, was sent to the new abbot, with pension-claiming letters from Edward III.¹⁴⁶

Whilst John de Appleford was abbot, in the year 1338, Edward III borrowed from the abbey certain valuables, estimated at £277 4s., including a chalice and paten of pure gold worth £22 15s., another pure gold chalice worth £54 9s., and a small reliquary of pure gold after the fashion of a feretory, garnished with sapphires, pearls, rubies, &c., and worth £200. The king pledged himself to restore them or their value. In consideration of this loan, the king renewed to the abbey the privilege of a mint, of which they had been deprived by Edward I.¹⁴⁷

Although this is not a place to give an account of the structure or remains of the old abbey, an incident that connects the structure with the world-famed beauty of the mother church of Salisbury can scarcely be omitted. There were evidently important works of reconstruction in progress at this abbey during the rule of Abbot John de Appleford. In June, 1334, Master Richard de Farlegh, the builder (*cementarius*) of the glorious spire of Salisbury, covenanted with the dean and chapter to give up all other work on which he was engaged—notably at the monastery of Reading and at the cathedral church of Bath—and labour solely and diligently for the Sarum chapter.¹⁴⁸

The abbot and convent of Reading petitioned the pope in 1354 for faculty to have thirty monks in their twentieth year ordained priests by any Catholic bishop, for the service of their monastery and places (that is cells or granges, not churches) subject to it, in consequence of so many of the monks having died during the recent epidemic. The prayer was granted.¹⁴⁹

In August, 1384, the bishop of Hereford insisted with much vigour on the monks of the cell of Leominster undertaking the burden of collecting a moiety of the tenth granted by the province of Canterbury to the king, in the deanery and archdeaconry of Hereford. The abbot of Reading brought the matter before the king in council, and was able to show that although the monks of Reading were deputed by grants of the king's progenitors to stay in the Leominster house and to celebrate there divine

service and pray for the king, they were removable at the will of the abbot alone, as appeared from the composition made between the then bishop and chapter of Hereford, and the then abbot and convent of Reading, and afterwards confirmed by Pope Honorius III (1216-27). Thereupon the king, after mature deliberation with his justices and council, declared under his signet that all the Reading monks so staying at Leominster should be for ever exempt from the collection of clerical tenths and subsidies in that diocese.¹⁵⁰

Thomas Pentecombe and two others were appointed by the crown in March, 1390, to arrest and deliver to the abbot of Reading, Thomas Abingdon, an apostate Benedictine monk of that house, who was a vagabond in the city of London and other parts of England.¹⁵¹

There is a curious instance of the interference of that energetic pope, Boniface IX, *circa* 1400, with the internal administration of this abbey. William Henley, claustral prior of the Reading monks, had held office for some time, and had yearly received from the common rents as much for food as two other monks; £6 for his clothing and other necessaries; for the food and clothing of the three servitors in his office (a yeoman, a groom, and a page), the usual allowance for monastic servants; and 26s. 8d. and sufficient hay for the keep of a horse. It had been the custom for the holder of the office of claustral prior to be removed at the pleasure of the abbot; but the pope ordered that William Henley was to hold the office for life, with the usual emoluments, and not to be removed against his will. If he resigned there was to be given him for life as much for his food and clothing as is allowed to two other monks.¹⁵²

On the Saturday before Palm Sunday, 1432, the Common Council of Reading, at a meeting at which seventy-four were present, elected twenty-four burgesses to represent them at an interview with Abbot Thomas Henley.¹⁵³ This was probably on account of the oft-recurring disputes between the abbey and the town as to the gild privileges. The town records, under 2 October, 1444, contain an entry of a composition between the burgesses and the lord abbot.¹⁵⁴ On 25 June, 1451, a bill was drawn up, to be shown to the abbot's counsel, containing the articles of the gild.¹⁵⁵

In the tyme of William Rede, Meyre (1456), and all y^e have be Meyrys, with all the Bourgeys of the Geld Halle, byndyth them selfe by ther feyth to abyde a rule as in expence for materys the wheche be betwyxt my lord of Redynge and the same Meyres and Bourgeys of the same Gyld.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁵ Close, 11 Edw. II, m. 9 d.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. 2 Edw. III, m. 34 d.

¹⁴⁷ Coates, *Reading*, 288 and App. viii.

¹⁴⁸ Sar. Chap. Act Bks. Hemingsley, fol. 103.

¹⁴⁹ *Cal. Papal Pet.* 282.

¹⁵⁰ Pat. 8 Ric. II, pt. i, m. 26.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 13 Ric. II, pt. iii, m. 29 d.

¹⁵² *Cal. Papal Let.* v, 550.

¹⁵³ *Rec. of Borough of Reading*, i, 1.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. i, 20. ¹⁵⁵ Ibid. i, 37.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. i, 43.

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The town records between 1456 and 1478 show that part of the entrance fees into the gild were paid throughout that period to the abbey. Thus, in 1456, Gilbert Sayer's entrance fee of 6*s.* 8*d.* was divided equally between the hall and the abbey, and the fee of William Swerdbreke, tailor, of 10*s.* was similarly divided; but in each of these cases the new member also paid 6*s.* 8*d.* for a luncheon (*jantaculum*) for the mayor and his brethren. In 1460 Robert Quedamton paid 13*s.* 4*d.* as entrance fee, 5*s.* of which went to the hall, and 5*s.* to the abbey, whilst 3*s.* 4*d.* was allotted to the lunch. William Cokkyng in 1462, as the son of a burges, was admitted on lower terms; his fine was 4*s.* for the abbot, and 20*d.* for the lunch. This seems to have been the usual scale for the son of a burges.¹⁵⁷

According to the tenor of an agreement of 1254,¹⁵⁸ the brethren of the gild were annually to present three persons to the abbot, out of whom he was to choose one to be master or warden, a title afterwards changed to mayor. This custom was maintained with but little variation up to the dissolution of the monastery. Several instances of this submission to the lord abbot occur in the first extant volume of the Corporation Annals. Thus, in 1458, William Hunt, William Rede, and William Pernecote were elected on 25 July to serve the office of mayor by their fellow burgesses, and on 29 September Abbot Thorne appointed the last of the three to be mayor for the ensuing year.¹⁵⁹ One of the later entries of this kind is of the year 1499, when, on 27 September, Abbot John Thorne II 'out of his special grace' chose Christian Nicholas, the first of the three names nominated by the burgesses to be mayor, and discharged Robert Benett and John Turnour from their office of constable, because they had been appointed thereto by the abbot, and not by the mayor and his brethren, nor by the burgesses of the gild.¹⁶⁰

In 1507, when Christian Nicholas was again mayor (on the abbot's appointment), certain variances as to the ordering of constables, warders, &c., between the town and abbot were set at rest by decree of the justices of Common Pleas. The old custom as to the selection by the abbot of one of three to be mayor was confirmed; the two constables and ten warders of the five wards were to be chosen by the gild-merchant, but sworn in before the abbot; the name of any person petitioning to be elected a burges was to be given to the abbot fourteen days before the election; a monk was to be present at the assessing of the fine which was to be divided between the abbot and the gild; an alien's fine was to be determined by six burgesses on oath, and if

they affirmed it to be reasonable it was to be accepted by the abbot; and

as towchyng Chepyngavell, which is a yerely fyne onely, of all and every Burges of the seide Gyld, whiche out of tyme of mynde hathe bene payed yerely to the predecessours of the seid Abbot by every Burges,

burgesses were to pay 6*d.* yearly, and their widows 2*d.*¹⁶¹

Reverting to the fifteenth century, we find that Abbot Thomas Henley died on 11 November, 1445. The election to fill the vacancy was conducted by Thomas Stainton, the prior, and thirty-four monks. It was decided to proceed by way of scrutiny, when thirty-three votes were cast for John Thorne, and one each for Robert Chittenham and John Henley.¹⁶²

Records remain of projected visitations by the bishop of Salisbury, and of the abbot's letter acknowledging receipt of the letters of monition to prepare for the same in 1501, 1505, 1511, 1514, 1519, 1520, and 1526.¹⁶³ But there is no entry

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.* i, 105-9. This customary payment of 'Chepyngavel' by the burgesses to the abbey was originally a permission to trade within the honour of Reading. The collection of it from individuals was so inconvenient to both sides and caused so many disputes that it was usually paid in the aggregate by the commonalty in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The amount of 'Chepyngavel' paid in 1487-8, for twenty-two burgesses, at 5*d.* each, was 9*s.* 2*d.*; and in 1490-1, 12*s.* 11*d.* for thirty-one burgesses; *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* xi, App. clxxv.

¹⁶² *Sar. Epis. Reg. Aiscough* (2nd nos.), fol. 15-17.

¹⁶³ *Reading Reg. (Sarum)*, fol. 61, 71, 79*b*, 80, 84, 85, 90*b*, 91. In the diocesan registry at Salisbury is preserved this valuable register of Reading Abbey, which has hitherto escaped attention. Our thanks are due to Mr. Malden, the registrar, for kindly drawing our attention to this register, of which he has made an excellent manuscript analysis. Many leaves have unfortunately been cut out at the beginning; it now consists of ninety-one parchment folios. It is not a chartulary, but a record of important acts of the Reading chapter, etc., of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and is of unusual interest, as there is so little extant of an authoritative character concerning the action and administration of English monasteries during their later life. Full records are given of the presentations made by the abbot and convent to their livings of Aston (1462-1533), Beenham (1462-1503), Bucklebury (1470-1537), Cholsey (1471-1537), Eye (1485-1517), Pangbourne (1464-1523), Leominster (1432-1533), 'Ravinton' (1477-1536), Stanton Harcourt (1471-1531), Sulhamstead Abbots (1479-1514), Tilehurst (1459-1538), Wargrave (1459-1517), St. Lawrence, Reading (1518-34), St. Mary, Reading (1485-1536), St. Giles, Reading (1449-1519), and four presentations to Handborough. In this same register of the abbey are seventeen late cases of manumission of the native or villein tenants of the monastery. In most instances this also involved the freedom of their family, and as a matter of course of any descendants they might have. The phrase to denote

¹⁵⁷ *Rec. of Borough of Reading*, i, 46-76.

¹⁵⁸ Printed in full, *Reading Rec.* i, 280-2.

¹⁵⁹ *Reading Rec.* i, 49.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* i, 49, 98.

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of the result of these visitations. It should always be remembered with regard to the Benedictines that they were subject to capitular visitations of their own order, as well as those undertaken by the diocesan.

At the general chapter of English Benedictines held at Northampton in 1480 the duty of visiting the monastery of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, was assigned to the abbot of Reading. The abbot was not able, however, to travel, in consequence of bodily infirmity, and nominated John Thorne, the prior, holding a bachelor's degree, and Richard Wokingham, another of the monks, who was bachelor of theology, to visit as his proctors.¹⁶⁴ Abbot John was appointed visitor of all the Black Monks in the diocese of Sarum when the general chapter of the order was held at Northampton in 1495.¹⁶⁵ Again, at the provincial general chapter held in 1521 at Westminster the Reading abbot was appointed visitor of Glastonbury Abbey.¹⁶⁶

On Sunday, 30 January, 1521, Henry VIII was at Reading, and made oblation of 3s. 4d. to 'the Child of Grace' at the monastery.¹⁶⁷ The king was the guest during this visit of Hugh Faringdon, a monk of Reading, whose election by his fellows as abbot had been confirmed by Henry VIII on 26 September of the previous year.

In a letter from the bishop of Lincoln to Wolsey, dated 3 March, 1528, as to further information he had received of the distribution at Oxford and elsewhere of 'books of heresy' by Thomas Garret, M.A., the bishop expresses a fear that he has corrupted the monastery of Reading; he had sold to the prior more than sixty such books, and it seemed necessary that attention should be paid to John Sherbourne, prior of Reading.¹⁶⁸ The result of this attention was the committal of the prior to the Tower; in October, 1532, we hear of the prior being removed to Beauchamp Tower, from some other part of the prison fortress, 'accompanied with the parson of Hony Lane and Christopher Coo, to be converted.'¹⁶⁹ Eventually the prior, whose office at the monastery had been filled up, was converted—that is, he agreed to recant his heresies.

this is usually *cum sequela*, or *cum tota sequela sua in posterum procreanda*. In ten instances these freed 'natives' were attached to the abbot's manor of Leominster, two were of Whitley, two of Cholsey, and one of Wychbury. The most interesting *carta manumissionis* is that of John Pole junior, clerk, son of John Pole of Ivington, who was at that time scholar and bachelor of arts at Oxford. Reading Reg. (Sarum), fol. 28, 29, 67, 68, 69.

¹⁶⁴ Reading Reg. (Sarum), fol. 92.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. fol. 75.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. fol. 76.

¹⁶⁷ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pt. i, p. 498.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. iv, pt. ii, 400d.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. v, 1467.

With regard to this ex-prior, John Sherbourne, Abbot Hugh wrote to Cromwell, in August, 1533, acknowledging a letter from the latter requiring his restoration; but the abbot inclosed a letter he had received from Sherbourne, showing that such a course was 'clean contrary to his mind.' The abbot had got him a benefice of 20 marks a year, but this, too, he had utterly refused.¹⁷⁰

Among the numerous new year's gifts made by Henry VIII in 1532 was £20 in a white leather purse, to the abbot of Reading, who was one of his royal chaplains.¹⁷¹ Abbot Hugh Faringdon *alias* Cook was at this time and for several years in good odour with the king. In 1530 Abbot Hugh had been one of those peers spiritual and temporal who signed a petition to the pope impressing on him the danger of delay in the divorce proceedings; he had also offered the king the use of the library of the Reading Abbey to find arguments in favour of the divorce. At a later period (1536) he accepted, in common with the majority of the 'religious' of England, the Act of Royal Supremacy. It has been argued by some that he was a thoroughly illiterate man; but this is only on the authority of an anonymous reviler, and of Chronicler Hall, who roundly states that the abbot was 'a stubborn monk and utterly without learning.' Brown Willis, however, points out that his letters to the University of Oxford (still extant in the register) and his zeal for education at Reading prove the absurdity of such a contention.¹⁷² In 1532, when the University begged for stone from the quarry belonging to the abbey for the rebuilding of their schools, Abbot Hugh wrote (or a letter was written for him) in the exaggerated humility of the times speaking of himself as an unlearned man; but the very letter itself is proof that such phrases were not to be taken literally.

He was probably born at Faringdon, and hence the name he often bore; but his true family name was Cook, and he bore the arms of Cook of Kent.

The abbot was a great friend of Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle. There are some pleasant letters of Abbot Hugh's, written in November, 1534, both to Lord and Lady Lisle, which give evidence of his kindly nature and ability in languages. He had been entrusted with the special charge of Lord Lisle's young stepson, James Basset, who was to be educated at the monastic grammar school of Reading. The abbot writes to each parent, saying how he had committed the boy to his under-steward, who had an honest wife who would see to his dressing, as he was too young to shift for himself. He considered him 'the most towardly child in learning' that he had known.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. vi, 943.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. v, 686.

¹⁷² *Mitred Abbeyes*, i, 161; Wood's *Athenae*, i, 252. See also *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

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Alexander Aylmer, Lord Lisle's agent, visited Reading, and wrote to the mother saying that Master James was in good health; the abbot made as much of him as if he was the king's son, and 'plythe hym to his learning, bothe to Latin and Frenche.'¹⁷³

Evidences of Cromwell's avaricious and illegal exactions from the religious houses come to light all over the country. A brief letter is extant from Abbot Hugh, dated 15 December, 1534, stating that the convent had sent him by the bearer an annuity of 20 marks, to be taken out of their manor of Aston, Herts.¹⁷⁴ Among Cromwell's papers, seized when the time came for his own execution, were a large number of private accounts never intended to see light. In February, 1557, he received 5 marks from the abbot of Reading, in April £10 in addition to 20 marks as steward of the monastery, and in November the like payments as in April. This was repeated in 1538. In January, 1539—the year when the monastery was blotted out and the abbot was gibbeted at his own door—Cromwell did not hesitate to take £10 from the abbot, and the great sum of £50 in the following March.¹⁷⁵

There was a good deal of trouble in 1535 between the abbot of Reading and the prior of the cell of Leominster, grave charges being alleged against the latter, which the bishop of Hereford repudiated, saying the prior was quite as good as the abbot; but the matter of the discipline maintained at Leominster pertains far more to Hereford than to Berkshire.

On the death of Queen Jane Seymour, the mother of Edward VI, on 24 October, 1537, the king ordered the most elaborate religious functions. The interment at Windsor did not take place until 12 November, but meanwhile there was daily solemn mass in the chapel of Hampton Court, where the body lay in state. On Sunday, 4 November (the most honourable of the days), the abbot of Reading celebrated mass, and solemnly sang the *dirige*. Abbot Hugh had also his place assigned him in the quire of Windsor at the time of the burial.¹⁷⁶

In March, 1538, Abbot Hugh was still in favour, and was placed on the commission of the peace for the county of Berks.¹⁷⁷

It was in this year that Cromwell's set of visitors were busy extorting surrenders from the larger houses and from the friaries, to whom the Act of 1536 for the suppression of the lesser monasteries did not apply. Early in 1538 Abingdon had been flagrantly bribed into surrender. But there were no signs of complacency or willingness to accept bribes or big pensions by Abbot Hugh, although he had been willing to

purchase favour from Cromwell. Henry VIII's vicar-general now, therefore, began to harass the abbot.

Abbot Hugh wrote to Cromwell in June, 1538, in reply to his letter complaining that the divinity lecture had not been properly given, and that the monks were thereby brought to corrupt judgement, and desiring him to receive one Richard Cobbes as lecturer, with stipend and common. The abbot replied that he had already in the house one of the brothers (Roger London) who was a bachelor of divinity, and who was esteemed by competent judges very well learned both in divinity and humanity, and that he profited the brethren both in the Latin tongue and in the Holy Scriptures. He offered him to be examined by any that Cromwell should appoint. He understood from the bishop of Salisbury that Cobbes, once a canon and a priest, was then married, and therefore degraded. Though learned, he could not but instil like persuasions of marriage, and that would be an occasion of slander, the laws standing as they do yet. Nevertheless, whatever seemed best to Cromwell should be done.¹⁷⁸

Subsequent letters from the bishop of Salisbury to Cromwell show that he was most anxious to obtain the lectureship for Cobbes, who was a servant of his; he assured the Lord Privy Seal that Roger London, their present reader, had been accused to him of heresy by three of the monks half a year ago, and he had therefore inhibited him. Cromwell, however, on this occasion took the part of the abbot rather than the bishop, and did not rebuke Abbot Hugh for disregarding the inhibition. Thereupon the bishop wrote a strangely petulant letter to Cromwell; feels sure that the Lord Privy Seal has a grudge against him, and consequently waters his letters with tears; loves not Cobbes the less because he was a priest and for marriage degraded, he is now at least an honest layman. The bishop's three chief charges of heretical opinions against the abbot's reader were rather strange, namely (1) that Holy Scripture is not sufficient of itself, (2) that ability to preach sincerely is not sufficient qualification for a cure, and (3) that faith does not justify without works.¹⁷⁹

When Dr. London, with Layton, Pollard, and Moyle as assistants, was securing the surrender of the Grey Friars, Reading, he also visited the abbey. At the end of a letter about Caversham, 18 September, 1558, he thus refers to the great monastery:—

I have sent upp the principal relik of idolatrie within this realm, an aungell w^t oon wyng that brought to Caversham the spere hedde that percyd o^r Saviours syde upon the crosse. It was conveyd home to Notley. butt I sent my Servant purposely

¹⁷³ *L. and P. Hen. VIII.*, vii, 451-3.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.* vii, 1544.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.* xiv, pt. ii, 782.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* xii (pt. 2), 1060.

¹⁷⁷ *Pat. 29 Hen. VIII.*, pt. iv, m. 4 d.

¹⁷⁸ *L. and P. Hen. VIII.*, xiii, pt. i, 147.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 264, 571.

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for ytt. I have sent also iij cots of the Images w^t such things as I fownde upon them, w^t the dagger that they slew King Henry the vj and the knyff that kylled saynt Edward, w^t many other lyk holy things. I have defacyd that chapell inward and have sent home the chanon to hys monastery to Notley. I have requyred of my Lord Abbott the relyks of his howse wich he shewed unto me w^t gudde will. I have taken an inventorie of them and have lokkyd them upp behynd the high awtter and have the key in my kepyng, and they be always ready at yo^r Lordeschippes commandment. They have a gudde lecture in Scripture daylie redde in their chapitor howse both in Inglyshe and Laten, to the wich is gudde resort and the Abbott is at yt himself. In any other thing I can do yo^r Lordeshippe service I am and always shalbe reddey, Godde willyng, w^t increase of moch honor long preserve yo^r gudde Lordeschippe.

At Reding xviii Septembris

Yo^r most bounden orator and servant

John London.¹⁸⁰

The Inventorye of the Relyques off the Howse off Redyng.

Imprimis twoo peces off the holye crosse. Item Saynt James hande. It. St Phelype scolle. It. a bone of Marye Magdalene w^t other moo. It. Saynt Anathasus is hande w^t other moo. It. a pece off saynte Pancrats arme. It. a bone off saynt Quyntyns arme. It. a bone off saynt Dayde is arme. It. a bone off Mary Salomes arme. It. a bone off saynt Edward ye Martyr is arme. It. a bone of saynt Hierome w^t other moo. It. bones off saynt Stephyn. It. a bone off saynt Blase. It. a bone off saynt Osmonde. It. a pece of Saynt Ursula scole. It. a jaw bone of saynt Ethelwold. It. bones off saynt Leodigarye and of S. Hereuei. It. bones off Saynt Margaret. It. bones off Saint Arnal. It. a bone of Saynt Agas with other moo. It. a bone of S. Andrewe and ij peces of his crosse. It. a bone off S. Fredyswyde. It. a bone off saynt Anne. With many others

There be a multitude of small bonys, large stonys and coyns which wold occupie iiii shets of paper to make particularly an inventory of any part thereof. They be all at yo^r Lordeschippes commandment.¹⁸¹

An exceptionally interesting covenant was entered into by the abbey, immediately before the suppression (31 Hen. VIII), with Leonard Cox concerning the school (*ludus literarius*) of the abbey, and a lobby (*venella*) attached to the same on the east side. By this it was agreed that Leonard should rule the school moderately and temperately, should teach the youth flocking there grammar and poesy with exactness, should conduct the school on pious and orthodox lines,

¹⁸⁰ Cott. MSS. Cleop. E. iv, fol. 144.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* 224. The hand of St. James was a special gift to the monastery by Henry I; his daughter the Empress Maud brought it with her from Germany; Harl. MSS, 1708, fol. 15b. 'The relic was inclosed in a case of gold; of which it was stript by Richard I; but in compensation, King John granted the abbey a mark of gold to be paid annually at the exchequer, which Henry III afterwards changed to ten marks of silver.' Coates, *Reading*, 247.

instructing the scholars in good morals and in the Catholic religion, and do his utmost to impart, if possible, an even higher culture (*cultioribus literis*) than they had yet received.¹⁸² Leonard Cox, about 1524, printed a small treatise on *The Arte or Crafte of Rhetoryke*, which is dedicated to 'The reverend father in god and hys singuler good lorde the lorde Hughe Faryngton Abbot of Redyng.' The opening sentence of the introduction runs:—

Consydering my specyall good lorde howe greatly and how many wayes I am bounden to your lordeshippe, And among all other that in so greate a nombre of cunnyng rules which ar nowe within this region, it hathe pleasèd your goodnes to accept me as worthy to have the charge of the instrucion and bryngyng uppe of suche youthe as resorteth to your gramer schole founded by your antecessours in thys your towne of Redyng.

About the last act of Abbot Hugh was this arrangement with Leonard Cox for the carrying on of the abbey's school, so long famed for the education of the children of the nobility and gentry. In April, 1539, a new Parliament met, which condoned the past illegal surrenders and practically vested all monastic property in the crown.

There is no surrender extant of Reading; it seems certain that nothing of the kind was executed, and that the abbot refused to be a party to the betrayal of his trust. The phraseology of the new suppression Act¹⁸³ did not state blankly that all monasteries were to be dissolved, but that those that were suppressed, renounced, relinquished, forfeited, or given up were to be the king's. There is also what Abbot Gasquet terms 'an ominous parenthesis,' including such others as 'shall happen to come to the king's highness by attainder or attainder of treason.' No surrender could be obtained from Reading, Glastonbury, or Colchester; hence by the attainder of their abbots for high treason their property was secured for the crown, 'against,' as Hallam says, 'every principle of received law.'¹⁸⁴

Apparently some kind of justification for the charge of high treason against Abbot Hugh was devised or forthcoming, but it is impossible now to find out what it was. The abbot was hurried off to the Tower, probably early in the summer, and whilst there Cromwell coolly decided, as we have seen, that he was to be tried and executed at Reading. Meanwhile it was assumed that the abbey was even then the king's, the superior was under lock and key, and on 8 September, Thomas Moyle, an agent employed on like work at Glastonbury, wrote from Reading that he, with Layton and 'Master Vachell of Reading,' had been through the inventory of the abbey plate

¹⁸² Reading Reg. (Sarum), fol. 32.

¹⁸³ 31 Hen. VIII, cap. 13.

¹⁸⁴ *Const. Hist.* i, 72.

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'at the residence,' that is at the abbot's chambers. There, too, they found a room hung with 'metely good tapestry, which do well for hanging some mean little chamber in his majesty's house.' There was another chamber 'hung with six pieces of verdure with fountains, but it is old and at the ends of some of them very foul and greasy.' They noted several beds with silk hangings (in the guest rooms where kings often tarried), and in the church eight pieces of tapestry 'very goodly' but small. In conclusion, Moyle reported that he and his fellows thought the sum of £200 a year would serve for the monks' pensions.¹⁸⁵

Soon after Cromwell turned a pair of his most trusted visitors, Pollard and Williams, into the abbey to ransack it. On 17 September, 1539, Pollard thus writes to Cromwell:—

Ser,

Pleasyth your Lordship to be advertysed that att my comyng to Readyng I did dyspatche Mr. Wrytheslys servant wyth every thyng accordyng to your comandment wyche amountythe to the some of cxxxii ix viij*d* as apperythe by the partyculars herein inclosyd, and part of the stuffe receyvvd for the kings majesties use, wyth the schole house and church undefasyd. I and my followers have lefte hytt by Indenture in the custody of Mr. Penyson. And as for the Plate, vestements, copys and hangyngs wyche we have left hytt in the custody of Mr. Vachell by Indenture wych shalbe conveyed to London agaynste my coming thither, and thanks be to God every thyng ys well fynyshed there and every man well contentyd and gyvyth humble thanks to the kings grace. I with my followers intend on Tuesday next, God wylling, to take ovr journey from Readyng as knowyth God who ever preserve youre good lordshyp

From Readyng the xv daye of
September. Yo' servant assuryd to comand
Rychard Pollard¹⁸⁶

In one of the miscellaneous books of the Public Record Office is a schedule of

such peaces of clothe of gold tyssue and bawdkyn as also remainiths (remnants) of the same of diverse colors taken out of the monastery of Readyng to the use of oure Sovereyne lord the kyng by Rychard Pollard and John Wylliams Esquyeres Comysioners assigned for the same.

The schedule opens with 'fyrst a peace of clothe of gold wyth pyrled ground Garnetts.' Pieces of white, green, crimson, and variegated cloth of tissue are next named, and these are followed by pieces of purple and of white baudekin. The remnants were of blue and crimson baudekin, and of red and white cloth of tissue.

The same schedule shows that in addition to the above, which seem to have been the abbey's

¹⁸⁵ Cited in Gasquet, *Hen. VIII and Eng. Monasteries*, ii, 372.

¹⁸⁶ Cott. MS. Cleop. E. iv, 224*d*. This letter is by mistake referred by Wright to the friary and the year 1538.

store for the making and repairing of vestments and hangings as required, these two commissioners seized and dispatched to the king, as specially valuable, ten copes of green cloth of tissue, ten copes of white cloth of tissue, six rich copes of diverse sorts, four copes of baudekin, two altar cloths, a complete suit of vestments of crimson tissue, and a vestment of red tissue.¹⁸⁷ At the same time they specially reserved for the king 41 oz. of gold plate, and 47 oz. of broken gold plate; gilt plate, 378 oz.; broken parcel gilt, 311 oz.; plate, parcel gilt, 423 oz.; white or plain silver plate, 32 oz. The total of the plate that thus went straight to the king from this one wealthy abbey amounted to the great weight of 2,645 oz.¹⁸⁸

On 19 September, 1539, whilst Abbot Hugh was in prison, and the abbey sacked for the king, the burgesses of Reading assembled in the Gild Hall under Thomas Mirth, the mayor, to nominate, according to custom, three names for the coming mayoralty, Richard Justice, Robert Watlyngton, and John Whyte. But the entry in the town minute book then proceeds to state that before that day the monastery had been suppressed and the abbot deprived of his abbacy; that after the suppression all things there remained in the king's hands; that on the king's precept they proceeded to make their own election of a mayor, and, with the assent and consent of Thomas Cromwell, high steward of the liberty of the town, appointed Richard Justice mayor, and presented him in the great hall of the late monastery before Thomas Vachell, who had entertained the commissioners the previous year. On 9 October Thomas Vachell, by the king's precept, as deputy of the high steward, administered the oath to the mayor.¹⁸⁹

Among Cromwell's notes or 'remembrances' of October, 1539, in his own handwriting, are memoranda that amply justify Froude in asserting that he acted as 'prosecutor, judge, and jury' in the case of the three Benedictine abbots of Reading, Glastonbury, and Colchester, who were executed in the following month.¹⁹⁰ So far as the aged abbot of Reading was concerned, it was nothing but a judicial murder; his death was decided upon ere he had been sent down from the Tower to Reading. Cromwell's notes read that the abbot was

to be sent down to be tried and executed at Redyng with his complices. Similarly the abbot of Glaston at Glaston. Counsellors to give evidence against the abbot of Redyng, Mr. Hynde and the King's Attorney. To see that the evidence be well assorted and the indictments well drawn.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Misc. Bks. (Exch.), cliv, 175.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. 179.

¹⁸⁹ *Reading Borough Rec.* i, 172.

¹⁹⁰ Froude, *Hist.* iii, 432.

¹⁹¹ Cott. MS. Titus, B. i, 433.

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According to all current law, Abbot Hugh, a mitred abbot, who had sat in many a Parliament, ought to have been arraigned for high treason before Parliament; but Cromwell set law completely at defiance, and Hugh, with two brother abbots, had been cut to pieces by the common executioner ere Parliament reassembled.

On 15 November, the same day that the abbot of Glastonbury was done to death at Glastonbury, the abbot of Reading, with two priests, suffered the butchery reserved for traitors on a platform outside the gateway of his own abbey, decked with the gallows for partially hanging, the knife for disgustingly mutilating the still living body, and the caldron of boiling pitch into which to fling the limbs when the quartering was accomplished. With him suffered John Eynon, a priest attached to St. Giles', Reading, and John Rugg, a former prebendary of Chichester, who had retired to the monastery of Reading.

At the Public Record Office are thirty-three pages of a closely-written mutilated manuscript concerning Abbot Hugh and the two priests executed with him. It is in an educated but unidentified handwriting. The occasion for which it was written and its author are both unknown. From its presence among these state papers it was probably the work of some tool of Cromwell's, and was perhaps intended to be printed and circulated to try to stem the odium excited by the execution of 'my lord of Reading.' It is impossible to exaggerate the ribaldry and low scurrility of this infamous production. Great play is made on the name 'Cook,' and the king is supposed to have raised a mere kitchen scullion to this exalted position. The king is represented as the bountiful benefactor of Abbot Hugh, who has repaid him with the most dastardly treachery — 'if he had lived when Christ was betrayed he would have put Judas out of his office,' and again he was 'able to teach even Judas the part of a traitor.' Such a sentence as 'a ragman's roll of old rotten monks, and rusty friars, and pockyd priests' is a fair sample of this literary reviler. No attention would have been paid to this stuff, only that its very virulent violence and total absence of any definite charge of treason against the king is a strong proof that no true treason, as ordinarily understood, existed. The worst that could be said of the abbot is that he is accused of stating that 'he wolde pray for the pope's holynes as long as he lived and wolde ons a weke saye masse for hym.' The writer also unconsciously bears witness to the integrity of the abbot, stating that he was ever a great student and setter forth of St. Benet's, St. Francis's, St. Dominic's, and St. Augustine's rules as being right holy and of great perfectness; adding that he never left mattins unsaid, spoke loud in the cloister, or ate even eggs on a Friday.¹⁹²

¹⁹² *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiv, pt. ii, 613.

Marillac, the French ambassador, writing to Francis I on 30 November, states that the remains of the abbot of Reading were hanged and left in chains outside the abbey gateway.¹⁹³

With the execution of Abbot Hugh, this great monastery, wherein for the four centuries of its existence kings and queens had been lodged and the poorest entertained, where great councils of the Church and Parliaments of the state had frequently been held, and which had been a great centre of almsgiving and of a liberal education, passed absolutely into the hands of Henry VIII, together with its property, declared to be of the clear annual value of £1,908 14s. It remained uninterruptedly in the immediate control of the crown down to the Commonwealth.

The vast conventual church, where the remains of royalty and other notables had been laid to rest, remained desolate, but undisturbed so far as its fabric was concerned, until 1548. The lead on the roof of the abbey church and buildings was then so considerable that the amount helps to form some idea of the extent of the premises. It was measured and estimated to weigh 417 foddors, at the rate of 15 ft. sq. to the fodder. Six great bells still swung in the monastery's belfry.¹⁹⁴

When the pension roll of Philip and Mary was drawn up there were thirteen ex-monks of Reading on the list; one in receipt of £6, eight of £5, one of £4 6s. 8d., one of £3 6s. 8d., and two of £2.¹⁹⁵

ABBOTS OF READING¹⁹⁶

Hugh, 1123-30
 Ausger, 1130-75
 Edward, 1175-54
 Reginald, 1154-58
 Roger, 1158-64
 William, 1164-73
 Joseph, 1173-80
 Hugh II, 1180-99
 Helias, 1199-1212
 Simon, 1213-26
 Adam de Lathbury, 1226¹⁹⁷-38
 Richard de Cycestre, 1238-61
 Richard de Rading *alias* Banaster, 1261-68

¹⁹³ *Ibid.* xiv, pt. ii, 607.

¹⁹⁴ Ch. Gds. $\frac{B}{38}$ (Exch. R. R.).

¹⁹⁵ Add. MSS. B.M. 5082.

¹⁹⁶ This list of abbots is taken from Browne Willis' appendix to Leland's *Collect.* (2nd ed.), vi, 183-7; save that Nicholas, mentioned as the twenty-third abbot, is omitted, as the reference cannot be substantiated and another abbot was then ruling. It has been tested by the chartularies, and various references to the Patent Rolls, &c., have been inserted. There are numerous references to the earlier abbots in Luard's *Ann. Mon.* (Rolls Ser.) down to Robert de Burghate.

¹⁹⁷ Pat. 10 Hen. III, m. 7.

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Robert de Burghate, 1268¹⁹⁸-90
 William de Sutton, 1290¹⁹⁹-1305
 Nicholas de Quappelade, 1305²⁰⁰-27
 John de Appleford, 1328²⁰¹-42
 Henry de Appleford, 1342²⁰²-60
 William de Dombleton, 1361²⁰³-68
 John de Sutton, 1368²⁰⁴-78
 Richard Yateley, 1378²⁰⁵-1409
 Thomas Erle, 1409²⁰⁶-30
 Thomas Henley, 1430²⁰⁷-45
 John Thorne, 1446²⁰⁸-86
 John Thorne II, 1486²⁰⁹-1519
 Thomas Worcester, 1519²¹⁰-20
 Hugh Cook *alias* Faringdon, 1520²¹¹-38

The twelfth-century seal of this abbey²¹² shows the crowned Virgin seated on a throne, in her right hand a dove-topped sceptre and in her left the model of a church; the holy Child seated on her knee has the right hand raised in benediction, and in the left an orb. The legend is wanting.

The second noteworthy and elaborate seal is remarkable for giving the exact date of its production, 1328. It is circular, and 3½ in. in diameter.

On it is the crowned seated Virgin with holy Child, between the figures of St. James the Great, with the usual pilgrim symbols, and of St. John standing on an eagle with a scroll inscribed *In principio* in the right hand and a palm branch in the left. Each figure is in a canopied niche. Legend:—

S . CŌE . ECĒE . COVĒTVAL' . RADYNG
 FŪDATE . Ī . HONORE . SCE . MARIE . ET
 APOSTL'OR' . IOH'IS . ET . IACOBI.

Inside the edge in smaller letters is the first line of the date verse, *Anno milleno tricēteno fabricat.*

On the reverse are three more figures under three similar canopies. The centre figure represents the seated founder Henry I, with sceptre in right hand and model of church in the left; to his right is St. Paul, with book and sword; to his left is St. Peter, with keys and book. Legend:—

DNS . REX . HENRICVS . SVMM . DEITAT
 AMICVS . SECVR' . DEGIT . ENTŪ . DOM
 ISTE . PEGIT.

¹⁹⁸ Pat. 53 Hen. III, m. 9.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. 19 Edw. I, m. 25.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. 33 Edw. I, pt. ii, m. 14; Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 49.

²⁰¹ Pat. 2 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 23.

²⁰² Ibid. 16 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 49, 29.

²⁰³ Ibid. 35 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 13.

²⁰⁴ Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, ii, pt. ii, fol. 11.

²⁰⁵ Pat. 1 Ric. II, pt. v, m. 17.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. 10 Hen. IV, pt. ii.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. 9 Hen. VI, pt. i.

²⁰⁸ Sar. Epis. Reg. Aiscough (2nd nos.), fol. 15-17.

²⁰⁹ Pat. 2 Hen. VII, pt. i.

²¹⁰ Ibid. 10 Hen. VIII, pt. i, m. 20.

²¹¹ Ibid. 12 Hen. VIII, pt. ii, m. 19; *Reading Borough Records*, i, 141. ²¹² Add. Chart. 19, 610.

Inside the edge, in smaller letters, is the second half of the date verse, '*Signū bis deno b' quarto consociat.*'²¹³

There are impressions extant of three of the abbots' seals. Of these the most striking is the early one of Abbot Hugh II (1180-99). The abbot is represented standing on a dwarf column, holding a pastoral staff in the right hand and a book in the left. Legend:—

+SIGILLVM . HVGONIS . RADINGENSIS . ABBATIS.

3. THE PRIORY OF HURLEY

Towards the end of the Conqueror's reign, Geoffrey de Mandeville, ancestor of the Mandevilles, earls of Essex, bestowed the church of St. Mary, Hurley, and certain lands to form a cell of Benedictine monks, subject to the abbey of Westminster.

The exceptionally interesting foundation charter²¹⁴ states that Geoffrey grants to God and to St. Peter the church of Westminster, as also to the church of St. Mary of Hurley—for the salvation of his own soul and that of his wife Leceline ('at whose counsel by the providence of divine grace I began this work'), and for the soul of Athalais his first wife and mother of his children, and for the souls of his heirs and successors—the church and town and surrounding wood of Hurley with all rights pertaining, the church of Waltham with a hide and a half of land belonging to it, and the soke of the chapel of Remenham. He also gave to the church of Hurley, on the day that he caused it to be dedicated by Osmund, bishop of Sarum, in the presence of many of great authority, the land of Edward of Watcombe (in Fawley parish). He further states that on the day of dedication the bishop confirmed all the grants made to that holy place, to wit, in all the manors then in his demesne, the third part of the tithe of corn, two-thirds of the tithe of all stock, the whole tithe of pannages both in hogs and payments, and the whole tithe of cheese, fowls, horses, calves, orchards, and vineyards. Moreover he granted in every manor of his demesne one churl who shall hold eight acres free of all custom, and in his park one hog-run with land for the swineherd. To these he added a fishery in the isle of Ely that supplied 1,500 dried eels

²¹³ Engraved in Coates's *Reading*, 247; and in Dugdale's *Mon.* iv, pl. xxi.

²¹⁴ There is no register or chartulary of Hurley extant, but there are many transcripts of Hurley evidences in the Walden Chartulary now in the Harleian collection. The foundation charter (Harl. MS. 3697, fol. 51b) is printed *in extenso* in Dugdale's *Mon.* iii, 433, and in Madox's *Form. Angl.* 239-40. The original charter is in the custody of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster; a literal translation from the original appeared in the *Quart. Journ. of Berks. Arch. Soc.* ii, 58-61.

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and 40 fat eels; and from the hamlet of Mose (Essex) a supply of 3,000 dried herrings.

At the same time, and named in the same charter, Thorald, Geoffrey's steward, with his right hand on the altar, granted two-thirds of the tithes of all his corn in Ockendon (Essex), and the whole tithes of all his stock, and the whole tithes of both corn and stock in Bordesden (Essex). Also Ædric, his bailiff, gave the whole tithes of his corn and stock.

To this charter there were many witnesses; the first were Osmund the bishop, and Gilbert, abbot of Westminster, and the last, it is interesting to note, was Ælfric, the builder of the new church of St. Mary, Hurley, and of the conventual buildings.

On a comparatively modern metal plate, fastened to the outer wall of the still standing refectory of Hurley monastery, to the north of the church is inscribed:—

Osmund the Good, Count of Seez in Normandy, afterwards earl of Dorset, and Lord High Chancellor of England, and at last Bishop of Sarum, consecrated this church of Hurley, A.D. 1086, and died December 4th, 1099, in the reign of William Rufus.

It has lately been stated with some confidence that 1086 cannot have been the exact year, because neither church nor monastery is entered in Domesday Survey;²¹⁵ but such an omission, as all Domesday students know, proves nothing. The date is at all events prior to the death of the Conqueror, on 9 September, 1087; whilst Gilbert, one of the witnesses, only became abbot of Westminster towards the end of 1085. The statement on the metal inscription, repeated in another place on stone, as to the year 1086, must therefore be approximately correct.

Soon after the foundation, Geoffrey issued a mandate to his bailiff Ædric, and to all his men of Waltham, forbidding them to intermeddle with the water of the priory at Hurley, or to take anything from their wood.²¹⁶

William Constable of Chester, c. 1140, gave lands at Pyrton and Clare to the priory. Geoffrey de Mandeville and Roesia his wife made a small increase to its endowments about the same time.²¹⁷ This Geoffrey was grandson of the founder and the first earl of Essex; he

²¹⁵ See papers of Rev. F. T. Wethered on Hurley parish and priory in Vols. ii and iii of *Berks. Arch. Journ.*

²¹⁶ West. Chart. ii. There is a great store of charters and deeds (562 in all) among the Westminster muniments, which were conveyed there from Hurley when that cell was suppressed. They have all been calendared by the Rev. F. T. Wethered, vicar of Hurley, in his book *Hurley and the Middle Ages* (1898). A considerable number of them have, however, no connexion whatever with the priory; and were probably stored at the monastery for safe keeping by neighbours. References to Westminster Charters are all taken from Mr. Wethered's useful work.

²¹⁷ Westm. Chart. v and vi.

specially confirmed his grandfather's Essex gifts. There were also early bequests of land at Kingham, Oxford.²¹⁸

Laurence, abbot of Westminster 1159-75, granted to the priory the church of Easthampstead.²¹⁹ William de Mandeville, third earl of Essex, brother of Geoffrey, the second earl, made various bequests and confirmations to Hurley, the more important being the whole of the woods on the manors of Hurley and Little Waltham.²²⁰

Ralph de Arundel, prior of Hurley, granted a pension of 4s. out of the church of Easthampstead for providing wax tapers at the mass of Our Lady.²²¹ The only one of the priors of this house to attain to the dignity of abbot of Westminster was this Ralph de Arundel, sometimes called Ralph Papillon. Ralph was a Westminster monk and for some time almoner of the abbey. He is said to have been a studious and a good preacher. He was a great favourite with Abbot Laurence, who appointed him prior of Hurley *circa* 1170. Ralph was elected abbot of Westminster on 20 November, 1200.²²²

Herbert, bishop of Salisbury 1194-1214, granted to the priory all tithes of corn at Waltham and the oblations on St. Laurence's Day, to be applied to the office of the sacrist. The residue of the income of Waltham church, both small tithes and other offerings, was to go to the support of the perpetual vicar presented by the priory.²²³

Nicholas, bishop of Tusculum, papal legate, issued a general exhortation to the faithful, dated at St. Albans, 17 December, c. 1220, to assist William Prior of Hurley and his monks in the work they had begun about their church, granting a ten days' indulgence to contributors.²²⁴ William, abbot of Westminster 1220-2, granted about the same time an indulgence to all contributors to new works at the abbey, and also participation in the spiritual benefits exercised by the abbey in their own church, and in the church (*inter alia*) of Hurley.²²⁵

Richard, abbot of Westminster 1222-36, granted Prior Richard and the monks of Hurley all the manor of Easthampstead on payment of 100s. a year.²²⁶

Prior Richard le Gras resigned in 1236, on being appointed abbot of Evesham.²²⁷ In the same year the priory obtained a confirmation charter from Henry III; it already possessed like charters from Henry I and Henry II.²²⁸

A surrender was executed about the close of

²¹⁸ Ibid. ix, x.

²¹⁹ Ibid. xvi.

²²⁰ Ibid. xix to xxiv.

²²¹ Ibid. xxvii.

²²² Leland, *De Script. Brit.* 246; *Decem Script.* 708; Widmore, *Westm.* 34.

²²³ Westm. Chart. xxx.

²²⁴ Ibid. xlv.

²²⁵ Ibid. xlvi.

²²⁶ Ibid. li.

²²⁷ *Annales de Theok.* 101; *Annales de Wigorn.* 428; *Annales de Dunst.* (Rolls Ser.), 145.

²²⁸ Westm. Chart. lvi.

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Henry III's reign, by William Marescall and Juliana his wife, of all their lands at Kingham, Oxfordshire, in return for a life grant daily from the prior, Theobald, and the convent of Hurley, of a loaf of first quality, two loaves of second quality, a gallon of convent beer, another gallon of second quality, and a dish of meat with pottage from the kitchen; also 5s. a year, two cartloads of wood, and suitable accommodation.²²⁹

A corrody was granted by Richard de Coleworth, prior, to Geoffrey de Hurle and Isabel his wife and Amice their daughter in 1320, much resembling that granted to William and Juliana Marescall about fifty years earlier; only in this case there seems to have been no residence in the priory.²³⁰ Other corrodies of white convent loaves weighing 2½ lb., and of black loaves called 'bastard loaf,' and of beer, were granted by this prior in 1336.²³¹

In 1307 a daily grant was made by Prior Gyppewych, at the instance of Henry earl of Derby (afterwards Henry IV), to Peter Peterwych, his servant, of a white conventual loaf, a gallon of conventual beer, and a dish from the kitchen, such as is the portion of a monk in the refectory, together with a chamber in the priory whenever he wished to lodge there.²³²

A late thirteenth-century grant by William Seger, prior, to Randulph the marshal, of half a virgate of land and a meadow in Hurley, covenants that Randulph, in addition to an annual rent of 3*d.*, is to serve as marshal in the prior's court, carrying his wand, to shoe the horses and oxen when necessary, and to keep clean the hall and grange, strewing straw and fresh rushes at the proper seasons, and having the old straw, &c., for his own use.²³³

The Taxation Roll of 1291 enters the churches of Streatley and Hurley, of the respective annual value of £10 13*s.* 4*d.* and £10, as appropriated to the priory, as well as a pension of £1 10*s.* from the church of East Garston. Outside the county the priory drew annually from the churches of High Easter £5, of Sawbridgeworth £3 6*s.* 8*d.*, from Chippenham £5, and from Northall 6*s.* 8*d.* Their temporalities in Hurley parish were declared of the annual value of £22 10*s.*, and in other parishes they reached a total of £4 14*s.* 8*d.*

Edward prince of Wales wrote to the prior of Hurley, from Windsor, on 9 September, 1302, reminding him that he previously asked him to present his

beloved clerk John de Bohun to the vacant benefice of Warfield, and had received the reply that his house was charged with a pension of £10 for a clerk whom he was bound to present to this vacancy. But the Prince was now informed that the Bishop of Salisbury refused institution as that clerk was not sufficient.

Therefore the prince again begged it for John de Bohun, and wished for a reply by his messenger, 'that we may know how you value us and our fathers.'²³⁴

An ordinance of Prior Henry and the convent of Hurley, in 1313, decided that the custom observed at Westminster Abbey, of continuing to a defunct brother for a year after his death the daily corrody in the refectory and his clothing allowance as though still alive, to provide for a year's masses for his soul being said by a secular priest, should henceforth be maintained at Hurley.²³⁵

Roger, vicar of Bray, and rural dean of Reading, pronounced, on 4 January, 1333, absolution of the prior and convent of Hurley from excommunication incurred by non-payment of procurations due to the papal nuncio in England; Yeherius de Concoreto, canon of Sarum, the said nuncio, had delegated his powers in this instance to Roger.²³⁶

A mandate was addressed by Edward III, in 1347, to the wardens of the sea-coast in Hants, and to the arrayers and sheriff of Berks, to refrain from demanding a man at arms for service on the coast from the prior of Hurley, who had departed across the seas on the king's business.²³⁷

Confirmation was made by Pope Boniface, in 1397, to William de Gyppewych, prior, and the convent of Hurley, of the appropriation of the church of Warfield, Berks., granted by the bishop of Salisbury in 1397, which by reason of the omission of certain legal formalities was said not to hold good. It was stated that Richard II, by word of mouth, prayed the bishop to appropriate the church to Hurley, with the condition of their celebrating his yearly obit, and also that of Anne his late queen, and that the crown licence was entered on the Patent Rolls under date of 29 March, 1397, wherein provision was made for a yearly distribution to the poor. The appropriation was to take effect on the resignation or death of Nicholas Brixton, the then rector. Yearly pensions were reserved to the bishop, the chapter, and the archdeacon of Berks. The priory was also bound to distribute at Warfield, every year at Easter, from the fruits of the church, 5*s.* to the poor, by view of the vicar and six of the parishioners.²³⁸

In June 1392 a petition to the king from the prior and convent of Hurley to approve of the appropriation to them of the church of Warfield brought out—in addition to the plea of poverty through Thames floods and modest endowments—the interesting fact that they claimed royal assistance 'out of reverence due to Lady Edith, sister of the holy king Edward, the Confessor, there (at Hurley) buried.'

Henry IV, whose queen, Mary de Bohun, was

²²⁹ Westm. Chart. lxxxvii.

²³¹ Ibid. cccc, cccxv.

²³³ Ibid. cxix.

²³⁰ Ibid. cccxxiv.

²³² Ibid. ccccclxxxix.

²³⁴ Misc. Exch. §.

²³⁶ Ibid. clxcix.

²³⁸ Cal. Papal Let. v, 246-7.

²³⁵ Westm. Chart. clxiv.

²³⁷ Ibid. ccccx.

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A full account, with four plates, is given by Mr. Wethered of the various seals pertaining to Hurley Priory among the store of deeds at Westminster Abbey.²⁷⁶ In addition to the seals of certain priors, there are impressions extant of three distinct common seals of the priory, the subject of each being the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.

The first of these occurs on several charters up to 1200, but there is not a good impression extant. The second occurs in the reigns of the first three Edwards; it is a handsome bold example of seal designing and engraving of the last quarter of the thirteenth century. The Blessed Virgin and the Archangel stand on each side of a conventional lily springing from a vase; below is the prior kneeling in profile holding his pastoral staff in both hands. Legend, in Lombardic capitals:—

+ SI COMMUNE CAPITULI PRIORAT' HURLEY.

The third common seal is evidently of fifteenth-century date, but only one mutilated example is known.

4. THE PRIORY OF WALLINGFORD

The foundation of the Benedictine priory of the Holy Trinity, Wallingford, is assigned by some to Robert D'Oyley, a Norman chief who came over with the Conqueror, and was the holder of Wallingford Castle.²⁷⁶

In the days of Paul, fourteenth abbot of St. Albans, who ruled from 1077 to 1093, the manor of Hendred, Berks., was conferred on the abbey, which the abbot's successor transferred to the monks of Wallingford.²⁷⁷ During Paul's rule, the church of the Holy Trinity, Wallingford, the moiety of the church of St. Mary, Wallingford, together with half a hide of land outside the town, were given to the abbey of St. Albans. Walsingham states that it was Abbot Paul who sent a few of his monks to the church of the Holy Trinity, and, constructing buildings for them, established it as a cell of the great abbey.²⁷⁸ This statement is so explicit that Paul may be regarded in one sense as the real founder, though the gifts to the abbey must have been made by Robert D'Oyley, as lord of Wallingford.²⁷⁹

Its history was bound up with that of the abbey of St. Albans up to its dissolution. Wallingford Priory had but little independent life, as the priors were appointed by the abbots

²⁷⁶ Wethered, *Hurley in the Middle Ages*, 69–81.

²⁷⁷ Clutterbuck, *Herts.* i, 38; Newcombe, *St. Albans*, 495.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 56.

²⁷⁹ Geoffrey the chamberlain (? chamberlain of Wallingford) is said by Matthew Paris to have been the donor of the church of the Holy Trinity to the abbey. If so it would be with the assent of D'Oyley as lord.

and could be recalled if the stress of circumstances demanded it.

Jocelin, bishop of Salisbury, in 1160 confirmed to his beloved and religious sons the monks of St. Albans, serving God in the church of the Holy Trinity at Wallingford, all their Berkshire possessions to wit the churches of Holy Trinity, St. John, St. Martin, and St. Mary in Wallingford, the church of Hendred, two parts of the tithes of Moulsof, and the whole tithes of the demesnes of 'Cherseville,' Donnington, Earley, Moreton, and Sotwell.²⁸⁰

In the days of Prior Thomas, *circa* 1275, the claims of the priory to the church of Chinnor, Oxfordshire, were successfully maintained.²⁸¹

In March, 1319, the muniments of the priory were inspected by visitation commissioners of the archbishop of Canterbury, concerning the appropriation of the church of Ashton, a pension of 100s. from the church of Garsington, 7s. from the church of Chinnor, a portion of the tithe of Mongewell estimated at a mark, and 10s. from Tonfield.²⁸² In the following year the archbishop confirmed to the priory the appropriation of the churches of 'Sholeyndon' and Aston Rowant with the chapel of Stokenchurch, together with the pensions mentioned above.²⁸³

The vicarage of Shephall was granted to the abbey of St. Albans in 1474, a pension of 13s. 4d. being reserved to this priory; but in 1480, when Anthony Zouche was presented to the priory for life, the presentation to this vicarage was transferred to the priory.²⁸⁴

Among the Bodleian muniments is a certificate from John de Wyly, rector of Semley, a commissary of the bishop of Salisbury, that he has audited the account of Richard Knight, sacrist of Wallingford Priory, who served the church of the Holy Trinity during a vacancy that extended from Michaelmas 1349 to All Saints 1355, and finds that a sum of 25s. 6½d. is due to him.²⁸⁵ This proves that part of the church of the Holy Trinity was considered parochial.

The oldest charter extant of this priory is one at the Bodleian, *temp.* Henry I (1100–35), whereby that king grants to the monks of Holy Trinity, Wallingford, the tithes of Moulsof and of the land of Henry the larderer, with small benefits as they had in the days of King William his brother, and as on the day when Geoffrey the chamberlain was seized of that land.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁰ Bodleian Chart. 3.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.* 456.

²⁸² Coxe and Turner, *Cal. Chart.* 17–18.

²⁸³ *Ibid.* 14.

²⁸⁴ Wallingford, *Register* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 121, 235–7.

²⁸⁵ Coxe and Turner, *Cal. Chart.* 19.

²⁸⁶ Coxe and Turner, *Cal. Chart.* pp. 4–23. At the Bodleian Library there is a great store of documents relative to the possessions of the monks of Wallingford, numbering 162. These are undoubtedly the evidences forwarded on 2 April 1538 by Cromwell to Oxford, as mentioned below.

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Master Christian de Wallingford granted certain lands in 1180, in consideration of the monks providing him and his servant with a daily corrody; moreover, after his death the priory was to have all his books of the Divine Scriptures for ever.²⁸⁷

An undated thirteenth-century charter of William Gurmond of Wallingford grants to the sacristan of the priory 31s. 2d. annual quit-rents in the villages of Wallingford and Clapcot, for providing lamps and candles to burn in honour of the Blessed Virgin; Hubert de Hethfield, in 1270, granted 5s. 6d. of annual rents for the sustentation of one wax candle of two pounds to burn before the image of the Virgin in the priory church.²⁸⁸

An early undated grant of William de Druval shows the care bestowed by the monks on the sick outside their own order. William, with the consent of his sons, gave a hide of land in Goring to the monks of Wallingford for their care of him when he was ill.²⁸⁹

Licence was obtained, by a fine of 100s., in January, 1332, for the alienation in mortmain by Richard de Louches to the priory of Wallingford of 13½ acres of land and an acre of meadow in Wallingford, to find a chaplain to celebrate daily in the priory for the soul of Richard and others.²⁹⁰

At the time when Nicholas de Wallingford was prior of Wallingford—he was made abbot of Malmesbury in 1182—a letter of complaint was addressed to the abbot and convent by Peter de Blois, archdeacon of Bath, as to the rough treatment and lack of hospitality shown by the prior of Wallingford. Peter, on returning from the visitation of his archdeaconry, sent on his servant to prepare for his entertainment at the priory for one night, and to ask the prior to assign him vacant rooms and all that was needful for himself and his men and horses; but

the prior replied to them with much pride and abusive language, and breaking out into insult, almost to the extent of blows, provoked them by the disgraceful baseness of his words.²⁹¹

A declaration was made on the vigil of the Conversion of St. Paul, 1246, by the archdeacon of Berks, that, a synod having been held in the priory church of Wallingford during the vacancy of the see of Salisbury, no claim was hereafter to be made nor the liberties or privileges of the priory be in consequence thereof disturbed.²⁹²

The most eminent of the early priors of Wallingford was John de Wallingford, sometimes termed John de Cella from having been

superior of this important cell of the great abbey. Though of humble origin he had studied in Paris, and came home

with such a reputation that in grammar he was considered a very Priscian, in poetry a perfect Ovid, and in physics esteemed equal to Galen.

After taking the Benedictine vows he was sent to Wallingford and became prior in 1191. Four years later he was elected abbot of St. Albans, where he presided with sanctity and success until his death in 1214.²⁹³

Owing to the disturbance made by the prior of Wymondham, one of the several important cells of St. Albans, Hugh the twenty-seventh abbot, in 1319, ordered that the priors and brethren of all the cells were to make oath of obedience to the abbot. The prior of Wallingford was present in chapter when this decree was ordained.²⁹⁴

In January, 1333, justices were appointed, on the complaint of the prior of Wallingford, to inquire into the charge made against Sir Roger Ruwand and many others, of breaking into the prior's close at Chalford, county Oxford, burning his house there, taking away five horses, twenty-three oxen, two cows, and fifty swine worth £50, carrying away his goods, and impounding his plough cattle without reasonable cause until he made a fine of 100s. with the said Roger for their delivery, and further for assaulting and imprisoning his servants.²⁹⁵

In 1396, when there was an election of an abbot of St. Albans, William Bynham, prior of Wallingford, was excused attendance on account of infirmity.²⁹⁶ Whilst John V was abbot (1396–1401) a contribution of twenty marks was forwarded by this priory to St. Albans on one occasion, and 40s. on another.²⁹⁷ On the election of William Heyworth as abbot, in 1401, Richard Hely was present as prior of Wallingford; but the new abbot speedily recalled him from his priory and made him sacrist of the abbey, appointing Robert Botheby in his place. This change caused some excitement in the monastery.²⁹⁸

Ordinances of the abbey *temp.* Richard II decided that the prior of Wallingford was to pay a pension of 31s. 9d. towards the support of the scholars at Oxford.²⁹⁹ In an inventory of the jewels and church goods of the church of St. Albans, drawn up in the reign of Henry IV, the list of *lapides pretiosi* is headed by a sapphire stone of an intense yellow colour, weighing six pennyweights, the gift of Thomas a former (thirteenth-century) prior of Wallingford; it had been mounted on a ring.³⁰⁰

²⁸⁷ Coxe and Turner, *Cal. Chart.* 15.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 15–17.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 11.

²⁹⁰ Pat. 6 Edw. III, pt. iii, m. 2.

²⁹¹ Hedges, *Wallingford*, ii, 359.

²⁹² *Ibid.* 16.

²⁹³ Walsingham, *Gesta* (Rolls Ser.), i, 217–20.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.* ii, 148. ²⁹⁵ Pat. 6 Edw. III, pt. iii, m. 1 d.

²⁹⁶ Walsingham, *Gesta* (Riley), iii, 426.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.* iii, 456, 468. ²⁹⁸ *Ibid.* iii, 493–4.

²⁹⁹ Cott. MSS. Claude. E. iv, fol. 34b.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.* fol. 351.

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Cardinal Wolsey, commendatory abbot of St. Albans, obtained a papal bull in 1524 for the dissolution of Wallingford and other small monasteries, to obtain funds for founding his college at Oxford. Accordingly the surrender of the priory was made by Prior Geoffrey, on 19 April, 1525, to John Allen, notary public, Thomas Cromwell being one of the witnesses.⁸⁰¹ But its actual dissolution was delayed for some time, whilst the college was building.

Thomas Cannar, the sub-dean of Wolsey's college, wrote in January, 1528, to Cromwell, saying that he had heard the cardinal intended, on the authority of the pope, to suppress the monastery of Wallingford. In that event, he begged Cromwell to let the people of Basingstoke, where he was brought up, have the bells. With the letter the sub-dean sent Cromwell a pair of Oxford gloves 'as a token.'⁸⁰²

In the following April, Cromwell wrote to Wolsey to the effect that he had visited the monastery of Wallingford, and found all the church and household implements had been conveyed away, save the evidences which he had forwarded to the dean of Cardinal College.⁸⁰³

It was not until 6 July, 1528, that the grant of the lands, site, &c. of the priory of Wallingford, suppressed on papal authority, was formally transferred by the crown to Wolsey for his Oxford college; and on 10 July Dean Higden appointed Nicholas Gifford and Hugh Whalley to take seisin of the monastery and its lands.⁸⁰⁴

PRIORS OF WALLINGFORD

- Hubert, occurs 1112⁸⁰⁵
- Nicholas, resigned 1182⁸⁰⁶
- John de Wallingford, 1191-95⁸⁰⁷
- Simon, appointed 1195⁸⁰⁸
- Rualend (thirteenth century)⁸⁰⁹
- Geoffrey, occurs c. 1250⁸¹⁰
- Ralph de Watlington, occurs 1254-74⁸¹¹

⁸⁰¹ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, iv, pt. i, 1137 (19).

⁸⁰² *Ibid.* 3806.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.* 4135.

⁸⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 4471, 4496.

⁸⁰⁵ *Chron. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 104.

⁸⁰⁶ Cole MSS. xxvi, fol. 172b.

⁸⁰⁷ Walsingham, *Gesta* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 127.

⁸⁰⁸ Willis and Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, ii, 361.

Hedges gives a descriptive list of priors based on Willis, Newcombe's *St. Albans*, and Clutterbuck's *Herts*. The list given above contains several new names and corrections.

⁸⁰⁹ Coxe and Turner, *Cal. Bodl. Chart.* 11.

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.* 16. ⁸¹¹ *Ibid.* 4, 14, &c.

- Thomas, *circa* 1275⁸¹²
- Gregory, *temp.* Edw. I⁸¹³
- William de Kirkeby⁸¹⁴
- Germanus⁸¹⁵
- Stephen de Wittenham, occurs 1314⁸¹⁶
- William de Huntingdon⁸¹⁷
- William de Huron, occurs 1335 and 1357⁸¹⁸
- William de Stevington, occurs 1359 and 1367⁸¹⁹
- William de Bynham, occurs 1379⁸²⁰
- Richard Hely, occurs 1401⁸²¹
- Robert Botheby, appointed 1401⁸²²
- John Stoke, 1402, resigned 1440⁸²³
- Robert Ormsby, *circa* 1442⁸²⁴
- Henry Halstede, appointed 1444⁸²⁵
- John Peyton, LL.D., occurs 1452⁸²⁶
- William Wells *alias* Wallis, occurs 1453⁸²⁷
- John de Banbough, occurs 1458⁸²⁸
- Thomas Wilton, occurs 1465⁸²⁹
- William Hardwick, D.D., 1465-72⁸³⁰
- William Risborough, appointed 1473⁸³¹
- Anthony Zouch, occurs 1480, 1485⁸³²
- John Thornton, occurs between 1497 and 1503⁸³³
- John Clare, occurs 1515⁸³⁴
- Geoffrey, surrendered 1525⁸³⁵

The original eleventh-century common seal⁸³⁶ of this priory, of which only an imperfect impression remains, shows Our Lord with cruciform nimbus, in drapery of an archaic style, seated on a rainbow; right hand raised in benediction, and open book in the left hand. The remaining letters of the legend are:—

SIG E TRINITAT EFORD.

⁸¹² Walsingham, *Gesta* (Riley), i, 456.

⁸¹³ *Cal. Chart.* 11, 12, 19, 21.

⁸¹⁴ Dugdale, *Mon.* ii, 196.

⁸¹⁵ Willis, *Mitred Abbeys*, ii, 7.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid.* ⁸¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.*; Coxe and Turner, *Cal. Chart.* 7, 8, 18.

⁸¹⁹ Willis, *op. cit.* ⁸²⁰ *Cal. Chart.* 4.

⁸²¹ Walsingham, *Gesta* (Rolls Ser.), iii, 480.

⁸²² *Ibid.* iii, 493. ⁸²³ Abbot of St. Albans.

⁸²⁴ Amundesham, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 370.

⁸²⁵ Pat. 23 Hen. VI. pt. ii, m. 7.

⁸²⁶ Whethamstede, *Reg.* (Rolls Ser.), i, 11, 15.

⁸²⁷ Kennett, *Par. Antiq.* ii, 392.

⁸²⁸ *Cal. Chart.* 12. ⁸²⁹ *Ibid.* i.

⁸³⁰ Albon, *Reg.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 108.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.* 123-4.

⁸³² Wallingforde, *Reg.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 235, 237.

⁸³³ Willis, *op. cit.* ii, 7; *Cal. Chart.* 22.

⁸³⁴ *Cal. Chart.* 23.

⁸³⁵ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, vi, pt. i, 1137 (19).

⁸³⁶ B.M. li, 10.

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HOUSE OF BENEDICTINE NUNS

5. THE PRIORY OF BROMHALL

Of the early foundation of the priory of Benedictine nuns at Bromhall within the limits of Windsor Forest, nothing is known. The first mention of it occurs in the year 1200, when King John bestowed on the priory of St. Margaret the church of Sunningwell with all its appurtenances.¹

The consent of Bishop Simon de Gandavo to the appropriation of the church of Aldworth to the priory was obtained in May 1308. A vicarage was at the same time ordained, whereby a messuage with place adjoining and certain crofts and virgates of land were assigned to the vicar, together with mortuaries and oblations, and tithes of mills, as well as various small tithes, including those on apples, gardens, flax, wool, milk and cheese.²

Licence was granted under privy seal, in 1391, to the prioress and nuns of Bromhall, to appropriate, in consideration of their poverty, the advowson of North Stoke, co. Oxford.³ The priory had to pay 3*s.* 4*d.* pension on Christmas day to the dean and chapter of Lincoln in recognition of their consent to this appropriation.⁴

In 1228 the king issued his mandate to Jordan, the forester of Windsor, to give full access to the prioress and nuns of Bromhall to the 100 acres of waste which the king had granted to the convent, in accordance with the bonds and divisions laid down by the king's courts.⁵ In 1231 the king pardoned the nuns the pannage fees due to the crown for 36 pigs, and ordered the agisters of Windsor Forest henceforth to permit the priory to have free pannage. Later in the same year Henry ordered the constable of Windsor to grant the prioress three beams of timber in Windsor Forest, to make shingles for the repair of their refectory, and also to give her an oak.⁶ The prioress and nuns of Bromhall obtained licence from the king in 1283 to inclose with a small dyke and a hedge sufficiently low for the entry and exit of the deer, the 100 acres of land which they had of the king's gift within the forest of Windsor, and which they had brought into cultivation.⁷

In July 1285, an inspection and confirmation of the charter of Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, and Margaret his wife to the nuns of Bromhall,

was granted by Edward I. By this charter the priory obtained 100 acres of the waste of 'Asserigge' which lay between 'Pillingbere' and the high road from Bracknell and Reading.⁸

On 8 April, 1310, Constance de Bluntesdon, Maud de Burghton, and Dionisia de Horshulle, three nuns of Bromhall, arrived at Windsor to acquaint the king with the resignation of Isabel de Sunning their prioress, and to obtain letters of licence to elect her successor.⁹

On 22 May Edward II issued his mandate to the escheator for the restitution of the temporalities of Bromhall to Claricia de Cotes, a nun of that place, in consideration of the poverty of the house, and being unwilling to cause loss to the nuns by a prolonged voidance. He accepted her preferment as prioress by the bishop of Salisbury in place of Maud de Broughton, whose election, though the king had assented thereto, was found by the bishop to be canonically void.¹⁰

Margery de Fouleston died in December, 1327, and on the 6th of that month the nuns obtained licence to elect. After a little delay Gunnilda de Bokham was elected prioress, and the king, compassionating the poverty of the house, empowered the constable of Windsor Castle to grant royal assent to the election, and upon canonical confirmation to receive the fealty of the new prioress.¹¹

Archbishop Arundel, on 6 November, 1404, issued a commission to the archdeacon of Berks., the dean of Windsor, and three others, to hold an inquiry concerning a complaint made by the nuns of Bromhall, who alleged that Juliana Bromhall, one of their number, had for twenty years led an evil life, having without their consent usurped the rule of the house, and had appropriated to her own nefarious uses chalices, books, jewels, and rents and property of the convent.¹² The exact result of the commission is not known, but Juliana resigned in 1405.

The early charters of this priory were burnt by mishap in 1462. Thereupon Alice, the prioress, and the nuns obtained inspection and confirmation of letters patent of 14 Edward II, whereby five charters of Henry III and letters patent of Edward I had been inspected and confirmed. The nuns were only charged the small fee of half a mark, doubtless in consideration of their misfortune.¹³

There is another reference to this disastrous fire. In this same year Walter de Cantilupe,

¹ Rot. Chart. 1 John, m. 11.

² Sar. Epia. Reg. Gandavo, fols. 88, 89; Pat. 2 Edw. II, pt. ii, m. 24.

³ Ibid. 15 Ric. II, pt. i, m. 27.

⁴ Dugdale, *Mon.* iv, 507.

⁵ Ct. R. 12 Hen. III, m. 13.

⁶ Ibid. 15 Hen. III, m. 14, 11, 2.

⁷ Pat. 11 Edw. I, m. 22.

⁸ Ibid. 13 Edw. I, m. 9.

⁹ Pat. 3 Edw. II, m. 8.

¹⁰ Ibid. m. 6.

¹¹ Ibid. 1 Edw. III, pt. iii, m. 8, 4, 1.

¹² Cant. Arch. Reg. Arundel, fol. 129*b*.

¹³ Pat. 2 Edw. IV, pt. iii, m. 16, 15.

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bishop of Worcester, issued his mandate to the abbots, priors, and archdeacons of his diocese, to collect alms for the nuns of St. Margaret of Bromhall, in Sarum diocese, as their house had recently been destroyed by fire.¹⁴

It seems impossible to ascertain the exact facts that led to the early suppression of this small nunnery. Henry VIII, writing to the bishop of Salisbury on 13 December, 1521, thanked him for the care he had taken in suppressing the nunnery of Bromhall 'for such enormities as was by them used.' He concludes by ordering the bishop to deliver to the bearer the evidences of the house then in his hands.¹⁵ In the following March, at an inquisition held at Windsor, it was found that a priory of Benedictine nuns, dedicated to St. Margaret, was founded by the king's progenitors at Bromhall, under the authority of the bishop of Salisbury; that Joan Rawlyns, the prioress, resigned on 12 September, 1521; that the two nuns who were there with the prioress left the priory as a profane place, and that it is consequently dissolved; that the convent was seised of the church of St. Margaret and of the churchyard, and of the site and grange of the nunnery, which last included the mansion, manor, water-mill, gate-house, and gardens; that the church and churchyard were of no value, being set apart for divine service, and that the rest was worth 4*s.* a year. They believed that the convent was also seised of the manors of Bromhall and Wingfield, and that it held all its possessions of the king, to whom they reverted.¹⁶

On 21 October, 1522, the various possessions of the priory of Bromhall were transferred by the crown to the master, fellows, and scholars of St. John's College, Cambridge.¹⁷

HOUSE OF CISTERCIAN MONKS

6. THE CELL OR GRANGE OF FARINGDON

There is no Cistercian abbey among the religious houses of Berkshire; but the valuable manors of Faringdon, and certain adjacent property in the county, were granted to the

¹⁴ C. C. C. Oxon. MSS. 154.

¹⁵ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, iii, 1863.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 2080.

¹⁷ Pat. 14 Hen. VIII, pt. ii, m. 5. In Baker, *Hist. of St. John's Coll. Camb.* references are given to various letters contained in the 'Red Book,' relative to the suppression of the priory, and the transference of the property, dating from Oct. 1521, up to the following Feb.; the letters are numbered consecutively from 168 to 173.

¹⁸ Cole MSS. xxviii, fol. 65*b*.

¹⁹ Willis, *Mitred Abbeyes*, ii, App. 3.

²¹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 42*b*.

²⁰ Pat. 3 Edw. II, m. 8, 6.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

PRIORESSES OF BROMHALL

Agnes de St. Edmund, occurs 1268¹⁸
 Margery de Wycombe, appointed 1281¹⁹
 Isabel, occurs 1295²⁰
 Matilda de Berghton, appointed 1302²¹
 Isabel de Sunning, resigned 1310²²
 Claricia de Cotes, appointed 1310²²
 Matilda de Bourton, appointed 1315²³
 Margery de Fouleston, appointed 1326,²⁴ died 1327²⁵
 Gunnilda de Bokham, elected 1327²⁶
 Isabel de Hautford, elected 1349²⁷
 Alice de Falle, occurs 1358, 1363²⁸
 Eleanor, occurs 1392²⁹
 Juliana Bromhall *alias* Dunne, occurs 1404, resigned 1405³⁰
 Thomasine Bodyngton, appointed 1405³¹
 Alice Burton, 1437, 1445³²
 Isabel Beale, resigned 1483³³
 Anne Thomas, resigned 1498³⁴
 Elizabeth Leukenor, appointed 1498³⁵
 Joan Rawlyns, 1511-1521

There is an impression of the seal of this priory attached to a deed of 16 Richard II, at Westminster Abbey, whereby Eleanor the prioress and the convent undertake to pay 3*s.* 4*d.* yearly to the dean and chapter of Lincoln for their consent to the appropriation of the church of North Stoke. The seal, which is *circa* 1200 in style, represents St. Margaret trampling on the dragon, and is exceptional in having two large faces in profile protruding from the inner side of the margin. Only a few letters of the legend remain.³⁶

house of St. Mary of Cîteaux by King John in 1203, on condition of a house being established there for Cistercian monks. But in the following year he founded in the New Forest the abbey known as Beaulieu for thirty monks of that reformed Benedictine order. By the Beaulieu foundation charter of 25 January, 1204-5, that

²³ Sar. Epis. Reg. Mortival, i, fol. 182.

²⁴ *Ibid.* fol. 186.

²⁵ Pat. 1 Edw. III, pt. iii, m. 8. ²⁶ *Ibid.* m. 1.

²⁷ Sar. Epis. Reg. Mortival.

²⁸ Willis, *Mitred Abbeyes*.

²⁹ Cart. Misc. Westm. (Dugdale, *Mon.* iv, 507).

³⁰ Cant. Arch. Reg. Arundel, fol. 129*b*.

³¹ B.M. Ducarel MSS. xiii, 184.

³² Willis, *Mitred Abbeyes*.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Sar. Epis. Reg. Blyth, fol. 100.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ This seal is drawn on pl. 25 of vol. iv of Dugdale, *Mon.*

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abbey was endowed, *inter alia*, with the manors of Great and Little Faringdon, Great and Little Coxwell, Shilton and Inglesham, and the churches of Shilton and Inglesham, and the chapel of Coxwell, and all that the king had in Langford. Beaulieu being thus founded, the monks who were already at Faringdon were transferred to the important abbey of which Faringdon was henceforth a cell.

The chartularies of Beaulieu have many

records of the manorial customs and the tenants, with the value of their Berkshire estates, but they contain nothing of interest with respect to the actual grange and chapel of the few monks who would from time to time reside at Faringdon to superintend the farming of the property they held in this county.¹

At the time of the dissolution of Beaulieu Abbey, the Berkshire property was valued at £102 7s. 2d. a year.

HOUSES OF AUSTIN CANONS

7. THE PRIORY OF BISHAM

The manor of Bisham (Bustlesham or Bistlesham) was given by Robert de Ferrers, in the time of Stephen, to the Knights Templars, and here they had a preceptory. On the suppression of that order, the estate did not pass to the Hospitallers, for it had previously been granted to Hugh le Despenser. It afterwards came to William Montacute earl of Salisbury, who in 1337 built here a priory for Austin canons.

On 15 April licence was granted for the earl of Salisbury to give in frankalmoin to the prior and canons of the house to be founded on his manor of Bisham, land, rent, and advowsons to the yearly value of £500. The monastery was to be founded in honour of Jesus Christ and St. Mary.² Special licences were also enrolled in the course of the next twelve months for the alienation in mortmain to the new foundation of the manor of Hurcott, in Somerset; of an assart of 104 acres inclosed on the heath of Berendenville in the parish of Cookham, Berkshire; of the advowson of the church of Kingsclere, Hampshire, with an acre of land; of the manor of Bisham, and of the manor of Bulstrode, Buckinghamshire.

The actual foundation charter, dated 22 April, 1337, is explicit in declaring this house of Austin canons to be dedicated 'in honour of Our Lord Jesus Christ and St. Mary the glorious Virgin His Mother,' yet in the time of Richard II and right down to its surrender the dedication is given as the Holy Trinity. We can only conclude that the dedication was changed when the time came for the actual consecration of the conventual church and buildings.

William Montacute, earl of Salisbury, for £100 paid in the Hanaper, obtained licence in 1386 to alienate the advowsons of Curry Rivel, Somerset, and Mold, Flintshire, to the prior and

convent of Bisham, and for the priory to hold the appropriation of both.³

The appropriation of the church of Curry Rivel, Somerset, to the priory of Bisham, of a value not exceeding 60 marks, was confirmed by Pope Boniface in August, 1398. This confirmation recites that the appropriation had been consented to by the bishop of Wells, by the chapter of Bath and Wells, by the archdeacon of Taunton, and by King Richard, in accordance with the custom of the realm. The bishop's letters, as recited in the Lateran registers, state that the priory was weighed down with debt, that its rents had diminished through pestilence, that its church was in a great measure unbuilt, that its situation by the highway (along which a great multitude of rich and poor pass to divers markets) rendered much hospitality necessary, that its arable lands, crops, and buildings suffered by the flooding of the Thames, so that the priory's resources were not sufficient for the support of the canons and that of their servants (usually numbering thirty), and for the due discharge of hospitality. Yearly pensions were to be paid of 3s. 4d. to the bishop, 20s. to his chapter, and 3s. 4d. to the archdeacon of Taunton.³

Two days later, Boniface confirmed the appropriation made by the bishop of Salisbury of the church of Hilmarton, Wiltshire, to the same priory, which had been granted in 1396-7. The reasons assigned by the bishop for sanctioning the appropriation are much the same as those put forth by the bishop of Bath and Wells; but there are additional statements as to the priory's loss through murrain among their cattle, sheep, and horses, and also that their nearness to Windsor Castle increased the claims on their hospitality.⁴

In May, 1401, Pope Boniface confirmed the priory in their rights to the appropriations of the churches of Kingsclere, Hampshire, and of

charter was witnessed, *inter alia*, by the archbishop of Canterbury, two bishops, and three earls. The charter is recited in Sar. Epis. Reg. Beauchamp, i, 46-8.

² Pat. 9 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 21.

³ Cal. Papal Let. v, 157.

⁴ Ibid. 162-3.

¹ V.C.H. Hants, ii, 140.

² Pat. 10 Edw. III, pt. i, mm. 30, 29. See also Chart. R. 11 Edw. III, 35, 37; by these charters every possible right and exemption was conferred upon this house and its tenants; the foundation

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Mold, Flintshire, as well as those of Curry Rivel and Hilmarton, and granted that in future visitations of archbishops, bishops, or others, the prior and convent should not be bound to exhibit other titles than the present papal letters, which were to have the force of the originals.⁵ From this it would appear that at least some of the originals were missing.

Pope Innocent VII directed his mandate, in 1404, to the bishop of St. Asaph to summon the prior and convent of Bisham, who were unduly detaining possession of the parish church of Mold, and to collate John ap Kadegan to its perpetual vicarage, if found fit in Latin; the church had been so long void, that by the Lateran statutes its collation lapsed to the apostolic see.⁶

In 1409 Pope Alexander sent his mandate to the bishop of Salisbury, at the petition of the prior and convent of Bisham, authorizing the conditional appropriation of the parish church of East Claydon, diocese of Lincoln. It is stated therein that Urban VI, on its being set forth to him that the late earl of Salisbury had been prevented by death from sufficiently endowing the priory, had assented, owing to its great poverty, to the appropriation of East Claydon when it became vacant. The priory afterwards took possession, notwithstanding the general revocation of appropriations of Boniface IX. If the facts were as stated the bishop was to see that the church was duly appropriated, a fitting portion, if that had not been done, being reserved for a perpetual vicar, who was to be a secular priest.⁷

The chief revenues of this priory came from appropriated rectories. Two more churches were appropriated to Bisham in the time of Henry V, namely Shalfleet, Isle of Wight, in 1413, and West Wycombe, Berkshire, in 1414.⁸ In 1461 the convent paid 20s. in the Hanaper for the inspection and confirmation of the charters granted by Edward III.⁹

Prior Richard, writing to Cromwell in August, 1533, asked him to receive 'the poor young man' the bearer, in his great necessity, as it had pleased him to show great love to Lord Montagu, the founder of their house. The young man had been good and religious in his conversation among them, and they would gladly have retained him longer, but their many charges and changes of priors had brought their house behindhand.¹⁰

Cromwell, in his scheming for his friends and tools, desired to secure the appointment of prior of Bisham for William Barlow, who was at that

time prior of Haverfordwest. He ordered the then prior to resign, and sent his instructions to Thomas Benet, LL.D., vicar-general of Sarum, to repair to the priory for the election, doubtless to see that his nominee was appointed. Benet, however, wrote to Cromwell on 16 April, 1535, stating that he would have executed his commands before, only the promised resignation of the incumbent had not been received; nevertheless he would proceed to Bisham on 23 April. A letter of Sir William Carew of 27 April stated that he had heard that the prior, by the persuasion of my Lady of Salisbury and other people, refused to resign, though these very people thought him very unmeet to continue, until they saw that Cromwell meant to prefer one contrary to their minds.¹¹

Cromwell succeeded in forcing Barlow on Bisham Priory, but it is doubtful if he ever visited his new preferment, for he was speedily dispatched on an embassy to Scotland. Whilst absent in Scotland in January, 1536, Barlow was appointed bishop of St. Asaph, the first of the many sees that he held; in April he was translated to St. David's, but was allowed as a court favourite to hold the priory of Bisham *in commendam*.

The summary of the Valor of 1536 gives the income of this priory as £185 11s. 0½d., which would have brought it within the suppression of the lesser houses; but the full Valor for Berkshire is missing, and the abstract among the first fruits documents is obviously incorrect in some particulars. The ministers' accounts of the Augmentation Office give the total income as £327 4s. 6d.

The obsequious Barlow was ready, however, at once to comply with the desire of Henry and Cromwell, and on 5 July, 1536, he surrendered Bisham to the king. But now came about a singular state of things. Bisham alone among all the monasteries of England was selected by the fickle Henry VIII to be re-established on a much more imposing and wealthy scale, the priory being converted into an abbey.

On 6 July, 1537, John Cordrey, abbot of Chertsey, Surrey, with William the prior and thirteen monks, surrendered, on condition of being re-established as an abbey about to be founded by the king at the late priory of Bisham. On 18 December, 1537, the king granted a charter of portentous length to the new foundation of the order of St. Benedict 'out of sincere devotion to God and the Blessed Virgin His Mother.' It was to consist of an abbot and thirteen monks, and was founded by Henry to secure prayers for his good estate during life, and for the soul of Jane his late queen, also for the souls of his posterity and progenitors, and for the souls of all the faithful departed. This new abbey of the Holy Trinity was to be endowed

⁵ *Cal. Papal Let.* v, 430.

⁶ *Ibid.* vi, 60.

⁷ *Ibid.* 157.

⁸ *Pat.* 1 Hen. V, pt. iii, m. 10; pt. v, m. 20;

² *Hen. V*, pt. i, m. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.* 1 Edw. IV, pt. v, m. 41, 3.

¹⁰ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, vi, 971.

¹¹ *Ibid.* viii, 553, 596.

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with the house, lands, and all the appurtenances of the late priory of Bisham, and also with the lands of the late abbey of Chertsey, and of the priories of Cardigan, Beddgelert, Ankerwyke, Little Marlow, Medmenham, &c., to the annual value of £661 14s. 9d. Moreover, to give greater dignity to this new abbey, Henry granted his beloved John Cordrey licence to wear an episcopal mitre.¹²

What John Cordrey and his monks thought of it all as they entered their new home, and whether they had any doubt as to the permanency of their re-establishment, it would perhaps be idle to inquire. But no sooner had they entered than Cromwell at once pressed his claims upon them. In less than ten days from the receipt of the king's charter, we find the abbot writing to Cromwell, acknowledging the receipt of his letter requesting the office of surveyor and receiver of the lands of the new monastery for his friend Mr. Stydolf, who would, according to precedent, have well requited Cromwell on obtaining the position. The abbot was bold enough to say that there were neighbouring gentlemen whom he would offend if he did not let them have such an office; and he also reminded Cromwell that he had granted Stydolf a charge of 40s. a year on the late abbey of Chertsey before its surrender, and that he was adding another 20s. a year of his own free will.¹³

This rebuff no doubt angered Cromwell, who would throw in his weight against the new foundation. Moreover, the king's sorrow over the death of Jane Seymour soon evaporated, and with it seems to have gone his short-lived desire for prayers either for the living or for the dead. The abbey of Bisham lasted for exactly six months, and then John the abbot, William the prior, and the convent of monks were called upon to execute a second farcical 'surrender' of all their possessions, which they duly executed on 19 June, 1538, in favour of Richard Layton and Edward Carne, doctors of law, the king's visitors.¹⁴

Three days later Layton wrote to Cromwell from Bisham, with a not unnatural air of contempt for these twice surrendering monks. 'We have taken,' he writes, 'the assurance for the king, the abbot a very simple man, the monks of small learning and less discretion.' The plate and household stuff was but little. Layton had to borrow a bed from the town for Dr. Carne and himself. Cattle none but a few milch kine, grain none, vestments few. The abbot, he thought, had sold everything in London, and, doubtless, within a year would have sold house and lands, for 'white wine, sugar, burrage leaves and sake, whereof he sips nightly in his chamber

till midnight.' For money to dispatch the household and monks they must sell the copes and bells, and if that sufficed not even the cows, plough oxen, and horses. The grain crop was the fairest he had ever seen, and there was much meadow and woodland. The carters and ploughmen were retained because of the hay harvest. That day (22 June) they dispatched the monks, who were desirous to be gone. On the previous day, when they were selling the vestments in the chapter-house, the monks cried a new mart in the cloister and sold their cowls.¹⁵

It may at first seem surprising that a house so well endowed should have been in so poor a plight, but it must be remembered that it had not lasted long enough for the revenues to come in. Moreover, the goods of Bisham had been sold at its first suppression as an Austin priory.

The most revolting charges were made against Cordrey and his monks by Dr. Legh when he visited them at Chertsey in 1536. Out of their small number, if Legh is to be believed, seven were incontinent, four guilty of unnatural offences, and two apostate. But this is in direct contradiction to the visitation report about the same time of the bishop of Winchester and Sir W. Fitzwilliam.¹⁶ The matter is of considerable importance as affecting the general credibility of the monstrous accusations made by Legh and Layton against monasteries up and down the country. Had the king and his advisers really given credit to the *Comperta* of these two visitors, is it possible to conceive that the abbot of Chertsey and his monks could have been transferred *en bloc* to the new foundation at Bisham? Moreover, John Cordrey was placed on the commission of the peace for Berkshire the year after these outrageous accusations had been presented.

PRIORS OF BISHAM

Thomas Wiltshire (first prior), 1337
 Richard de Marlborough¹⁷
 John Preston, appointed 1378¹⁸
 Adam Wargrave, elected 1398¹⁹
 Edmund Redyng, elected 1423²⁰
 Hugh Somerton, elected 1433²¹
 John Blissett, elected 1442²²
 Richard Sewy, occurs 1483²³
 Richard, occurs 1533²⁴
 William Barlow, appointed abbot 1536²⁵
 John Cordrey, 1537

¹⁵ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. i, 1239.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* ix, 472; *V.C.H. Surrey*, ii.

¹⁷ Dugdale, *Mon.* vi, 527.

¹⁸ *Pat. 8 Ric. II*, pt. ii, m. 4.

¹⁹ *Cal. Papal Let.* v, 357.

²⁰ *Sar. Epis. Reg. Chandler*, fol. 38b.

²¹ *Ibid.* Neville, fol. 13 b.

²² *Ibid.* Aiscough, fol. 20.

²³ Harl. MSS. 433.

²⁴ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, vi, 971.

²⁵ See above.

¹² *Pat. 29 Hen. VIII*, pt. iv. Cited at length in Dugdale, *Mon.* vi, 528-534.

¹³ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xii, pt. ii, 1267.

¹⁴ Rymer, *Foedera*, xiv, 607.

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The seal²⁶ of the first foundation is a pointed oval, bearing the Coronation of the Virgin under a double-arched canopy. Legend:—

C . . . I M I D . . . T L E S H . . .

The pointed oval seal of the re-foundation (1537) as a Benedictine abbey shows the Trinity in a renaissance niche, and bears in base the royal arms of Henry VIII. The lettering is:—

S : COE : NOVI : MONASTERII : REG : HENRICI :
OCTAVI : DE : BISH'

8. THE PRIORY OF POUGHLEY

A charter of inspection and confirmation of the year 1330 gives an authoritative account of the origin of Poughley Priory. It was founded by Ralph de Chaddlesworth, about the year 1160, who endowed it with the site of a hermitage called 'Clenfordemere' or 'Ellenfordemere,' with an adjacent wood, and with the church of Chaddlesworth, including the chapel of Wolney (Wolley) and all its appurtenances. At the same time or shortly afterwards the priory received, from Thomas de Mazuy, the land that he held at West Batterton, Wilts; from Roger de Curridge, his lands at Curridge; from Nicholas de Hedinton, his lands at Peasmore; from Lambert de Faringdon, his lands at Faringdon; and from Hugh de Bathonia, his lands at 'Werdeham,' and his meadow at Colthrop. The same confirmation charter also briefly recites a number of later small donations, chiefly of plots of land in Berkshire.²⁷

This priory, erected on the site of the old hermitage and dedicated to the honour of St. Margaret, was assigned to canons regular of the order of St. Augustine.

Pope Alexander in 1182 granted to the newly-founded house entire exemption from tithes, and further ordered by his apostolic authority both the bishop of Salisbury and the archdeacon of Berkshire and their officials not to impose any new charges of any kind on the priory. In this bull of papal protection the house is described as the priory of St. Margaret of 'Elenfordesmer.'²⁸

Pope Alexander IV granted two bulls to this house in September, 1256. By the first of these, dated 22 September, the privilege was conferred of celebrating the divine offices in a low tone (*voce supressa*), and with closed doors and without ringing of bells, during interdicts. By the second, dated five days later, the priory was taken, in general terms, under apostolic protection.²⁹

The taxation roll of Pope Nicholas in 1291

²⁶ Harl. Chart. 44, B. 40.

²⁷ Chart. R. 3 Edw. III, 26; cited in Dugdale, *Mon.* vi, 400.

²⁸ Rymer, *Foedera*, i, 59-60.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 607, 610.

names a pension of 2s. 6d. due to this priory from the church of West Hendred. Under the head of temporalities the annual sum of £14 19s. 4d. was due from lands in Belton, Lambourn, Peasmore, Speen, and Marcham, all in the archdeaconry of Berkshire, and also 9s. out of the Wiltshire deanery of Marlborough.

A forty days' indulgence was granted by the bishop on 12 April, 1313, to all who gave assistance to the convent of Poughley, for a grievous fire had destroyed their granaries and mills, and other buildings in which their goods were stored.³⁰

A commission was issued in February, 1428, to inquire into the complaint made by John Dyke, who stated that he had a crown grant, under a yearly rent, of a messuage, lands, meadows, and a moiety of the water of Lambourn in the lordship of Speen, and that the prior of Poughley had recently built a mill across the water, where-through the water could not keep its right course, but had flooded its banks and the king's lands and meadows.³¹

In January, 1469, the pope granted to Prior Thomas Sutton of Poughley, the annual income of whose priory was stated not to exceed £50, dispensation to hold with the priory, for the term of his natural life, some other ecclesiastical benefice, usually held by a secular priest, whether it should be a rectory or vicarage, provided he was duly presented and instituted.³²

Prior William Mordon died on 5 October, 1521; whereupon a *congè d'élire* was at once obtained from the prioress and convent of Amesbury, its patrons. William Gerves, sacrist and president, together with Nicholas Dyleys and Thomas Goodere, brethren, met on 7 October, appointed the morrow for the election, and sent letters to the absent brethren. On 8 October, mass of the Holy Ghost having been sung in the quire, Gerves, Dyleys, and Goodere entered the chapter-house. They appointed Master Richard Arche, LL.B., to be their counsellor, director, and scribe, whereof Master Thomas Dan and William Symson, rector of East Shefford, were witnesses. The licence of the prioress and other documents having been read, Arche expounded the constitution of the General Council touching an election. Then the president and chapter referred the nomination of the prior to Edmund, bishop of Salisbury, their ordinary, made out an instrument accordingly, and appointed Thomas Yonge, LL.B., and Thomas Dan, M.A., their proctors to notify this to the bishop. Thereupon the bishop collated John Devynyshe, canon of Bradstock, to the priorship. The appointment was notified to the chapter on 14 March by Master Arche, the *Te Deum* was sung, the elect led to the altar, and the election published to the clergy and people. After dinner, Yonge, at the request of the chapter, went to

³⁰ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 152b.

³¹ Pat. 6 Hen. VI, pt. i, m. 2 d.

³² Rymer, *Foedera*, xi, 639.

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the elect, who was in an upper chamber of the priory, and obtained his formal assent to the election, licence having been procured from the prior of Bradstock. He was pronounced to be a fit person, of good fame, a priest of the order of St. Augustine, of lawful age, legitimate, grave and learned.³³

This small priory was amongst the first group of religious houses for the incorporation of which Cardinal Wolsey obtained the pope's bull and the king's licence, in 1524, for the use of his college in Oxford. On 4 January, 1525, Wolsey's commission was issued to Sir William Gascoigne, William Burbank, LL.D., and Thomas Cromwell, gentlemen, to make survey of the monastery of Poughley and its possessions. The dissolution of the monastery was formally accomplished on 14 February in that year, John Somers being prior, the spiritualities being declared of the annual value of £10 and the temporalities £61 11s. 7d.³⁴

The inquisitions taken at the time of its suppression showed that the priory then held the churches of Chaddleworth and Kingston, the manors of West Batterton (Wilts.), Peasmore, Curridge, and Bagnor, and messuages, lands, and tenements in thirty-two Berkshire parishes.³⁵

In January, 1527, Edward Fetyplace, treasurer to the duke of Suffolk, wrote to Cromwell, upbraiding him with breaking his word as to granting him the site of Poughley, on the faith of which he had given Cromwell 40s. at the time of its dissolution, and yet the lease had been granted to another man. This letter is of particular interest, as showing that the house of the dissolved priory was for a time occupied by scholars of Wolsey's great college then in course of erection. Fetyplace complains that he had bought of Cromwell certain implements belonging to the house, of which he left there the well bucket and rope, and a brass pan set in the wall to brew with, which said implements the scholars of the Cardinal's College 'have perused and worn in the time of their lying there,' but the bursar refuses to pay for them.³⁶

In February, 1529, Fetyplace wrote again to Cromwell desiring his interest that he might be assured of more years in the farm of Poughley. From this letter it is evident that Cromwell had been recently visiting the dismantled priory, as Fetyplace records a visit to Poughley, on 'the Thursday after our departing,' of one John Edden who came with a cart to carry off such stuff as was appointed to go to Wolsey's College at Oxford; the bedding was in Fetyplace's chamber, which was locked, but Edden 'with great oaths and with levers brak up the doors.'³⁷

³³ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, iii, 1722.

³⁴ *Ibid.* iv, 650, 697, 989.

³⁵ *Inq.* p.m. 17 *Hen. VIII*, lxxvi (Cardinal's *Inq.*).

³⁶ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, iv, App. 103.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 5285.

Certain 'wages' or pensions were being paid in 1530 by Wolsey to the dispossessed canons and monks of the dissolved houses. An entry was made that year of 'wages of 3 canons at Poughley, 40s.' The same year goods were sold at Poughley that realized £29, and the bells were valued at £33 6s. 8d.³⁸

PRIORS OF POUGHLEY

Jerome, occurs 1182³⁹

William, occurs 1236⁴⁰

Robert, thirteenth century⁴¹

Yvo, resigned 1313⁴²

John de Lamborne, elected 1313⁴³

Ralph de Pesmere, 1348

Geoffrey, occurs 1350⁴⁴

William Marlborough, resigned 1442⁴⁵

John Helme, *alias* Hungerford, elected 1442⁴⁶

Thomas Sutton, occurs 1469⁴⁷-1474⁴⁸

Thomas Ware, resigned 1497⁴⁹

William Nordon, elected 1497,⁵⁰ died 1521⁵¹

John Devynyshe, appointed 1521⁵¹

John Somers, surrendered 1524⁵²

The common seal of this priory (1244) bears St. Margaret trampling on a dragon, with a triple-tongued scourge in the right hand, and a book in the left. Legend:—

SIGILL' : SĒE MARGAR . . . : CLENFORDE . . .

The reverse has the small counterseal of Prior William, representing the prior in his habit holding a book. Legend:—

SIGILL' : WILL'MI : PRIORIS : DE : POCHELEG

9. THE PRIORY OF SANDLEFORD

This small priory of Austin canons was founded by Geoffrey, the fourth count of Perch, and Matilda of Saxony, his wife, on a site about a mile south of Newbury, called Sandlefurd or Sandford, close to the banks of the Enborne, which forms the boundary between Berkshire and Hampshire. The date of the foundation lies between the years 1193 and 1202. It appears from the confirmation charter of Archbishop Stephen that the house was dedicated to the honour of St. John Baptist, and endowed with the

³⁸ *Ibid.* 6222.

³⁹ Rymer, *Foedera*, i, 59.

⁴⁰ Madox, *Form. Angl.* 374.

⁴¹ *Anct. D. (P.R.O.)*, C. 3038.

⁴² *Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo*, pt. ii, fol. 131b.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Anct. D. (P.R.O.)*, A. 4720.

⁴⁵ *Sar. Epis. Reg. Aiscough*, fol. 50b; *Anct. D. (P.R.O.)*, C. 2467.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Rymer, *Foedera*, xi, 639.

⁴⁸ *Sar. Epis. Reg. Beauchamp*, ii (2nd nos.), fol. 9.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* Blyth, fol. 99.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, iii, 1722.

⁵² *Ibid.* iv, 697.



HURLEY PRIORY



BISHAM PRIORY



WALLINGFORD PRIORY



POUGHLEY PRIORY



ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S HOSPITAL,
WALLINGFORD

RELIGIOUS HOUSES

church and all the lands of Sandleford. The boundaries of the lands are set forth in detail, and the whole was inclosed with hedges and ditches. The endowment also included the wood of Bradmore (still known as Broadmore), the right to construct a mill on the Enborne, and thirteen marks sterling to be paid the canons annually out of the mills of Newbury.⁵³

The information that can be gleaned of this house is meagre and fragmentary. In 1204 the rent of thirteen marks out of the mills of Newbury was confirmed by the crown,⁵⁴ and when Henry III was at Reading in June, 1231, he instructed the sheriff of Berkshire to see that the prior and canons of Sandleford had the 13 marks a year out of the mill of Newbury, granted to them by Earl Geoffrey de Perch; the mill having come into the hands of the crown on the death of the earl,⁵⁵ as Thomas, the son of the founder, and the last count of Perch, was killed at Lincoln in 1217.

The taxation roll of Pope Nicholas in 1291 names temporalities that the prior of Sandleford held, which were worth £2 8s. 8d. at Newbury, £1 15s. at Enborne, £1 6s. at West Ilsley, and 10s. at Aldworth.

Thomas de Sandleford obtained licence in 1312 for alienation in mortmain to this convent of a messuage, 20 acres of land, and 2 acres of meadow in 'Clere Wodelond,' by Kingsclere, Hampshire.⁵⁶ Confirmation of grant and release, which Agnes widow of Richard Neirnut and others made to the church of St. John Baptist, Sandleford, and the prior and canons of that place, of possessions in West Ilsley and the advowson of that church, was entered on the patent rolls in 1313.⁵⁷ The prior and convent obtained licence under the privy seal in March, 1320, to appropriate in mortmain the church of West Ilsley, which was of their advowson.⁵⁸ Nicholas de la Beche obtained licence in April, 1339, to alienate to this house the advowson of the manor chapel of Hacklestone, Wiltshire, and of a portion of the tithes of the manor, in exchange for a messuage and a carucate of land in Aldworth, Berkshire.⁵⁹

In 1340 the prior and convent obtained privy seal licence to acquire land and rent, not held in chief, to the annual value of £10. Two years later they acquired, under this licence, the sixth part of three mills at Newbury, of the gift of Hugh de Mortuo Mari, but this only produced an annual sum of 5s.⁶⁰ A considerable augmentation of endowment came to the priory in 1349,

when John de Estbury and three others assigned to this house 144 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, 12 acres of wood, and 10s. rent in Newbury.⁶¹

In 1310 a release was granted from Edmund de Wyntreshull to Walter de Wyntreshole, his brother, of his right in the manor of Eastleigh, Hampshire, with the advowson of the priory of Sandleford, Berkshire.⁶²

Notwithstanding the smallness of the house and its endowments, the priory was expected to receive royal pensioners, and on 28 February, 1317, William Spyny, who had served the king and his father, was sent to the prior and convent of Sandleford, to receive his maintenance for life.⁶³

In 1320 Edward II was visiting in this neighbourhood; on 31 August he was at Sandleford Priory, where he apparently tarried for the night.⁶⁴

In February, 1297, protection was granted by Edward I until All Saints' Day to the prior of Sandleford, his men, lands, goods, rents, and possessions, on fine being made before the chancellor.⁶⁵

Proceedings were begun to be taken in February, 1440, against Simon Dam, prior of Sandleford, on account of the dilapidation of the property and goods of the house during the time he had been superior, and more especially for personal incontinence. The charges were sufficiently grave and well-founded to secure his deprivation at the hands of the bishop; sentence was pronounced in the church of Newbury on 19 April.⁶⁶

A dispute that arose in the reign of James I, between the rector of Newbury and the lessee of Sandleford as to tithes, enables us to learn something more as to this priory and its later days. The case came before the King's Bench in 1615, and the details then set out show that among privileges granted the priory by papal bull no person was allowed to build a chapel or oratory within the limits of Sandleford parish without the convent's consent; that, therefore, Sandleford was not within the parish of Newbury, but was a parish to itself; that there never was any incumbent presented or instituted to the church or chapel of Sandleford, for the prior and canons were parson, without any endowment of vicar; that when the priory and its possessions were united to the collegiate church of Windsor, about 1478, the dean and canons placed a stipendiary priest to say divine service at Sandleford at a stipend of £8.⁶⁷

This appropriation of Sandleford Priory to Windsor was brought about by Bishop Beauchamp

⁵³ Dugdale, *Mon.* vi, 565.

⁵⁴ *Close R.* (ed. Hardy), i, 3.

⁵⁵ *Close*, 15 Hen. III, m. 12.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 6 Edw. II, m. 10.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 7 Edw. II, pt. i, m. 15.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 13 Edw. II, m. 9.

⁵⁹ *Pat.* 13 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 19.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 14 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 6; 16 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 38; *Inq. a.q.d.* 15 Edw. III, No. 39.

⁶¹ *Money, Newbury*, 149.

⁶² *Close*, 4 Edw. II, m. 22 d.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 10 Edw. II, m. 15 d.

⁶⁴ *Money, Newbury*, 160.

⁶⁵ *Pat.* 25 Edw. I, m. 15 d.

⁶⁶ *Sar. Epis. Reg. Aiscough* (2nd pt.), fol. 50.

⁶⁷ *Lysons, Mag. Brit.* i, 353; *Money, Newbury*,

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of Salisbury, during the time that he also held the deanery of Windsor (1478–81). It was then stated that the religious had wholly forsaken the monastery, but no particulars seem to be extant. The Valor of Henry III gives the annual value of the Sandford estates to Windsor College as £10, and at the same time the free chapel of Sandford was entered as £8. The Chantry Commissioners of 1548 returned Sandford as a free chapel of that value, but said that the dean and canons of Windsor claimed to appoint to it at will.⁶⁵

The lawsuit of 1615 also shows that at that date the chapel had been suffered to fall into decay by the farmers of the priory, and that the bells, seats, and other furniture had all been taken away. The chapel was converted into a dining-

room in the eighteenth century, when the property belonged to Elizabeth Montagu, the famous 'blue-stocking.'

PRIORS OF SANDLEFORD

Stephen, *c.* 1260⁶⁶
Robert de Wynton, elected 1301⁷⁰
Thomas de Sandford, occurs 1311,⁷¹ 1330⁷²
William de Wynton, resigned 1334⁷³
Robert Gilbert, elected 1334⁷³
John, elected 1383⁷⁴
Richard Stanford, elected 1403⁷⁵
Hugh Warham, elected 1406⁷⁶
Symon Dam, deposed 1440⁷⁷
William Costyn, elected 1448⁷⁸
William Westbury, occurs 1457⁷⁹

HOUSE OF KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS

10. THE PRECEPTORY OF GREENHAM

The Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem had a preceptory at Greenham, in the old parish of Thatcham, a little to the east of Newbury. The manor of Greenham was given to this order by Maud, countess of Clare, in the time of Henry II, and at the same time Gervase Paynell gave them the village.¹

The church of Brimpton in the adjoining parish was appropriated to the Hospitallers, and here, too, they had a house and lands called Scaldford, or Shalford, which, though returning separate accounts, was considered a member of Greenham in the fourteenth century. Greenham was confirmed to the Hospitallers by King John in 1199.²

In the *Testa de Nevill* (*temp.* Henry III) there is an entry to the effect that the prior of the Hospitallers held Greenham in demesne, which had been of the fee of Earl Ferrers, and granted in marriage to Ralph Paynell, and that his son Gervase gave it to the brethren of St. John. At the same time it is stated that the Hospitallers held three hides of land in Brimpton, the gift of Simon de Ovile.³

A note of Tanner's cites an entry in a Reading cartulary naming a quit-claim, dated 1254, between Brother Luke, master of the Hospitallers of Brimpton, and the abbey, as to a messuage in

Reading. He also mentions several undated deeds to which Nicholas, master of Brimpton, was a witness.⁴ From this it would appear that the more important house, or, at all events, an independent one, was at Brimpton (or Shalford) in the thirteenth century. Moreover, the Hospitallers of Shalford are mentioned in the Hundred Rolls of 1276.

The full return of all lands, tenements, &c., pertaining to the English language or province of the Hospitallers made to the Grand Master in 1338, by Prior Philip Thame, of St. John's, Clerkenwell, gives full particulars with regard to the Berkshire preceptory of Greenham.

The garden was valued at 10*s.* a year; dove-cote, 5*s.*; 360 acres of arable land, £7 8*s.*; and 100 acres of pasture, 62*s.* 6*d.* The rents from free tenants ought to have brought in £11 11*s.*, but that year, on account of the poverty of the community and the tenants, and lack of money, they had with difficulty raised £10 5*s.* The labour of the customary tenants, in such matters as reaping the corn and mowing the meadows, was considered to be worth 22*s.*; but that year it was valued at 6*s.* 8*d.* There was also four marks from outside rents; 2*s.* 3*d.* in crop rents; 2*s.* in hen rents; and 4*d.* in egg rents, the eggs numbering eighty, and thus worth a penny a score. Manor court fees averaged 6*s.* 8*d.* Pensions from the churches of Speen, Ilsley, Woolhampton, Upton, Wasing, and Catmore produced £4 5*s.* 8*d.*

⁶⁵ College and Chantry Cert. No. 7.

⁶⁶ Witness to a deed. Money, *Newbury*, 131.

⁷⁰ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 26.

⁷¹ Witness to a deed. Money, *Newbury*, 161.

⁷² Close, 4 Edw. III, m. 30*d.*

⁷³ Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, ii (2nd pt.), fol. 35.

⁷⁴ Ibid. Erghum, fol. 716.

⁷⁵ Ibid. Mitford, fol. 76.

⁷⁶ Ibid. fol. 103.

⁷⁷ Ibid. Aiscough (2nd pt.), fol. 50.

⁷⁸ Ibid. (1st pt.) fol. 71.

⁷⁹ Madox, *Form. Angl.* 126.

¹ Dugdale, *Mon.* ii, 510, 547.

² Chart. 1 John, m. 17.

³ *Testa de Nevill* (Rec. Com.), 125.

⁴ Tanner, *Notitia*, Berks. 3.

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In addition to these regular items of income, each preceptory had its *Confraria* or voluntary collections made throughout the churches of the county or district where it was situated; so that the collectors for the needs of the central work visited every parish in the kingdom. The preceptor of Greenham reported that the average value of the collections made in the churches of Berkshire was 27 marks; but that that year, on account of the general poverty of the commonwealth of the kingdom, caused by the various recent exactions made by the king for the upholding of the navy etc., they had only been able to raise the sum of £10, and that with difficulty.

The receipts of Shalford, a member of Greenham, were entered separately. The house, which was out of repair, with the garden, was worth annually 16s.; 25 acres of meadow, 25s.; 360 acres of arable land, £18; rents of free tenants, £10 2s. 8d.; a water mill 30s.; the appropriated church of Brimpton, 60s.; 40 acres of pasture, 25s.; hen rents, 2s. 6d.; a dovecote, 6s. 8d.; and the autumn labour of 48 customary tenants, 8s. The woods had produced nothing save that which was necessary for the sustenance of the house.

A memorandum is attached to the Shalford return, that nothing was entered under the head of stock, as it had been sold in the time of brother Thomas Lardner; but they were able to support 20 cows and 500 sheep.

At the head of the outgoings of the preceptory of Greenham are entered three pensions. A life payment of 20s. a year was made to one Master William Auschelin, according to the ordering of brother Thomas Lardner, lately prior of England;⁵ William de Latton received a like life

payment as ordered by brother Leonard when prior,⁶ for saving to the order the advowson of Blewbury; and William Le Port of Greenham had a corrody at their table, by order of Prior Lardner, worth 6s. 8d. The chaplain of the house also received 20s. a year.

The following were the expenses of the house, for the preceptor, his confrère, the chaplain, the servants, and in the cause of hospitality: Thirty quarters of wheat at 3s. 4d. a quarter, and ten quarters of oats at 3s., £6 10s.; kitchen expenses in addition to stock, 2s. 6d. a week, £6 10s.; for the two days of the prior's visitation, 40s.; for the archdeacon's visitation visiting yearly the appropriated church, 9s. 4½d.; robes, mantles, and other necessaries for the preceptor and his confrere, 69s. 4d.; garments for the squire, steward, bailiff, woodward, cook, baker, 50s.; stipend for the chaplain of Shalford Chapel, celebrating three times a week, and not boarded, 26s. 8d.; wages of the women, 6s. 8d.; wages of the squire and three servants, 20s.; wages of cook, baker, and carter, 15s.

All the expenses amounted to £34 8s. 8d., leaving the handsome balance of £41 4s. 10½d. to be transmitted to the prior of England.

Brother Roger de Draycote is entered as preceptor of Greenham in 1338, with Brother Robert Brayboef, knight, as his confrère.⁷

In a catalogue of Berkshire gentry, *temp.* Henry VI, John Prendergast is mentioned as preceptor of Greenham.⁸

The order of the Hospitallers was suppressed in England in 1540. During its temporary restoration under Queen Mary the preceptory at Greenham was revived, with additional endowments,⁹ but Queen Elizabeth speedily and finally extinguished it.

FRIARIES

II. THE GREY FRIARS OF READING

The Franciscans or Grey Friars were first established at Reading in the year 1233. By a deed dated 14 July, Abbot Adam de Lathbury and the convent granted to these friars a piece of waste ground by the king's highway leading to Caversham Bridge, 33 perches in length and 23 in breadth, with permission to build and dwell there so long as they should be content to be truly mendicant and hold no property of their own, and abstained from interfering with the rights of the abbey. The friars also bound themselves never to seek any other land or extension of site at the hands of the abbey.¹

⁵ Prior Lardner died in 1329.

⁶ Leonard de Tybertis was prior between Lardner and Thame; it was in his days that most of the Templar possessions were transferred to the Hospitallers.

In 1282 Archbishop Peckham, himself a Franciscan friar, addressed a letter to the abbot and convent of Reading, on behalf of the friars of that town, asking that they might be permitted to enlarge the site of their house, although they had unadvisedly covenanted never to make such a request, as their buildings were so often inundated with flood water in the winter season.²

It was a long time before the prayer of the archbishop was granted; but in 1285 he wrote to Brother Allot, the minister general of the Friars Minor, asking him to confirm the change of site of the dwelling of that order at Reading. He therein told the head of the order that the simplicity of the friars in the province of England

⁷ Kemble, *Estates of the Hospitallers* (Camd. Soc.), 3-6.

⁸ Lysons, *Berks.* 387.

⁹ Pat. 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, pt. ii, m. 14.

¹ B.M. Cott. MS. Vesp. E. xxv, fol. 217.

² *Reg. Epist. Peckham* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 414-16.

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had caused them to show more ignorance than prudence in the choice of situation, and in the erection of buildings, to the inconvenience of posterity. That at Reading, compelled by the monks who owned the town, they had accepted a marshy site so subject to floods that at times of inundation they had to leave or be subject to much danger; also that their distance outside the town made it inconvenient to procure necessaries. Being solicited by many persons of consequence, the monks had at last given permission to the friars to place their buildings on higher ground within the town, but that their consent had been surrounded with many restrictions. The archbishop had consented thereto in the hopes they might be remedied in process of time by royal benevolence, or possibly by the authority of his own office, the protection of which the Benedictines of Reading were sometimes under the necessity of imploring. The archbishop therefore hoped that the superior of the order would confirm the agreement thus made, and now forwarded to him with the seal of his office.³

The new covenant whereby the somewhat niggardly monks granted the friars a new though smaller site was fortified by even stronger safeguards than those of the grant of 1233. In this deed the abbot and convent of Reading stated that they had unanimously received as guests the Franciscan friars in the town of Reading, upon a piece of ground between the house of the rector of Sulham on the east and the sandy ditch on the west, and extending from the common way called New Street, the use whereof the friars should continue to have, of the grace of the abbey and convent, saving the following conditions: It should be lawful for the friars to build and dwell upon this additional plot of land (16½ perches by 16 perches) so long as they remained without property and, in accordance with their profession, observers of the deepest poverty. The friars promised, for themselves and their successors, that they would never seek any other dwelling on the land of the abbey, or extend their boundaries, and that they would never ask alms from the abbey as a due, but only out of mercy and by special grace. Further the friars promised that, whatever liberty of sepulture they enjoyed or hereafter should enjoy, they would never receive for burial the bodies of deceased parishioners of the monastery or of the churches appropriated to the abbey in Reading, or outside, without the special licence of the abbot and convent; and that they would never receive tithes or offerings or legacies due of certain knowledge or by custom to the abbey. The friars granted that if they failed in any of these particulars the abbot was to have power to expel them of his own authority, all appeal or obstacle being waived. In case the abbot and convent desired to expel the friars from their dwelling on this land for any other

causes, the king and his heirs had free power to house them there, all appeal being waived, so that they should have of royal grace what they had previously had of the convent's grace. To this deed the seals of the abbey on the one part, and of the minister general and provincial on the other, were appended, together for corroboration with the seal of the king and of the archbishop of Canterbury.⁴

The only property these mendicant friars were allowed to hold was the site of their friary and its extensions, and in 1288 Robert Fulco bequeathed to them certain other void plots of ground in New Street, adjoining the land granted to the abbey.⁵

Edward I, when the Franciscans were on their old flooded site, had granted them from the forest of Pamber, in 1280, three oak trunks for fuel⁶; and he now came to their help, just at the end of his reign, with the handsome donation of fifty-six oaks out of the forest of Windsor for their new buildings then in progress.⁷

Certain works were still in progress in 1311, for in that year Alan de Banbury bequeathed 5*s.* *operi fratrum minorum* in this town.⁸

In 1320 Bishop Mortival licensed Warner, warden of the Franciscans of Reading, to hear confessions in the diocese.⁹

Margaret Twynho, a Reading widow, by will proved in 1501 left her body to be buried in the chapel of St. Francis in the Grey Friars of Reading, near the tomb of her father and mother.¹⁰

Dr. London, writing to Cromwell from Oxford on 31 August, 1538, as to 'capacities' or licences to give up their vows for the friars, says:—

A friend of mine, the warden of the Grey Friars in Reading, also wishes license for them to change their garments; most of them are very old men.¹¹

The surrender of the house was made on 13 September, 1538. There is a comparatively modern copy of this surrender at Lambeth. It is signed 'Per me Petrum Schefford guardianum, ac S.T.B.; per me Egidium Coventre, S.T.B.,' and by ten others.¹²

On the following day London wrote to Cromwell telling him of the surrender, and that that day they should change their coats; he

⁴ Close, 14 Edw. I, m. 2 d.

⁵ B.M. Cott. MS. Vesp. E. xxv, fol. 55.

⁶ Close, 8 Edw. I, m. 5.

⁷ Ibid. 33 Edw. I, m. 17.

⁸ B.M. Cott. MS. Vesp. E. xxv, fol. 189.

⁹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Mortival, ii, fol. 186.

¹⁰ Hutchins, *Hist. of Dorset*, ii, 171.

¹¹ B.M. Cott. MS. Cleop. E. iv, fol. 227.

¹² Lamb. MSS. 594, fol. 129. The actual phrasing of the surrender is given in Coates's *Reading*, 303-4; it follows a common pattern used by Cromwell's agents.

³ *Reg. Epist. Pe kham* (Rolls Ser.), iii, 211-12.

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adds, 'of friars they be noted here honest men.' He further reported that

in the house there were three pretty lodgings, one kept by the warden, another by Mr. Ogle the King's servant, and the third by an old lady called my Lady Saynt Jane. There is a goodly walk in their back side, with trees, pond, and an orchard, in all 20 acres. Household stuff coarse; what little plate and jewels there is I will send up this week. There is a great trough of lead at their well, and another in their kitchen, and the bell turret is covered with lead. Church ornaments slender. The inside of the church and windows decked with grey friars I have defaced, and yet made some money out of these things. On Monday I will pay their debts to victuallers and rid the house of them all.¹³

A few days later London wrote to Cromwell:—

As soon as I hadde taken the Fryers surrender the multytude of the Poverty of the town resorted thedyr and all thing that myght be hadde they stole away, insomuyche that they had conveyed the very clapers of the bellys. And saving that Mr. Fachell (Vachell) wich made me great chere at hys house and the Mayor dydde assist me, they wold havd made no litell spoyl. In thys I have done as moche as I cowde to save everything to the King's Graces use, as shall appear to your Lordeschippe at the begynnyng of the terme, Godde willing, who wt increase of moche honor long preserve yor gudde Lordeschippe.

At Redinge, xvii Septembris.

I besyt your gudde Lordeschippe to admytt me a pour sutar for theis honest men of Redinge. They have a fayre town and many gudde occupiers in ytt; but they lacke that house necessary of the wiche for the mynstration of Justice they have the most nede of. Ther Town Hall ys a very small Hous and stonddith upon the ryver, wher ys the commyn wasching place of the most part of the Town, and in the cession days and other court dayes ther ys such betyng with batildores as noe man can nott here another, nor the guest here the chardg givynge. The body of the Church of the Grey Fryers wiche is selyd with laths and lyme wold be very commodoise rowme for them. And now I have rydde all the fasschen of that Church in pardons, ymages and awtters it wolde make a gudly Town Hall. The Mayor of that Town, Mr. Richard Turner a very honest gentill person with many other honest men hath expressyd unto me ther gref in thys behalf and have desyred me to be an humble sutar unto your Lordeschippe for the same if it shoulde be solde. The wallys, besyd the coyne stonys, be but chalk and flynt and the coverynge butt tile. And if it please the King's grace to bestow that house upon any of hys servants, he may spare the body of the church, wich standith next the strete very well; and yet have roume sufficient for a great man.

Your most bounden orator and servant,

John London.¹⁴

¹³ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. ii, 346.

¹⁴ B.M. Cott. MS. Cleop. E. iv, fol. 225.

Being friars, the inmates were of course ejected after their surrender without a farthing of pension; but in the troubles of the next year the king found accommodation for two of their number. In a list of prisoners in the Tower on 20 November, 1539, appear the names of Peter Lawrence (*alias* Schefford), late warden of the Reading Friars, and Gyles Coventry, a friar of the same house.¹⁵

The house and site were granted to a groom of the king's chamber; but the body and side aisles of the church¹⁶ were granted by Henry VIII, at last mindful of London's entreaty, in April, 1544, to the mayor and burgesses of Reading, to serve as a new gild hall, the town paying for the same a yearly rent of one halfpenny.

12. THE CROUCHED FRIARS OF DONNINGTON¹⁷

The first mention of the house of Crouched Friars at this place that we have been able to find occurs in the year 1404, when William Graunfelde, prior of the priory of Crouched Friars at Donnington, in the diocese of Salisbury, obtained from Boniface IX an indult of plenary remission (being penitent) from the confessor of his choice at the hour of death.¹⁸

It does not seem possible to ascertain the date of the foundation of this house, or the name of its original founder.

Sir Richard Abberbury in 1393, the year after he had refounded Donnington Hospital, directs that the inmates should 'every day go to masse to a chappel of Fryers neer adjoining, and should say sixty Pater-Nosters and as many Ave-Maries.'¹⁹

Lysons cites the will of Robert Harre, minister of Donnington Hospital, dated 1500, wherein he directs his body to be buried in the new chapel of Jesus, on the south side of the church of the Friars of the Holy Cross in Donnington; his two great standards of laten and four candlesticks of laten were to stand before the altar of Jesus in the said chapel.²⁰

¹⁵ *Ibid.* Titus B. i, fol. 133.

¹⁶ *Records of Bor. of Reading*, i. 195-8, 207; 'Lez body et lez side iles Ecclesie Domus Dudum Fratrum Minorum.'

¹⁷ Messrs. Lysons, in their account of Donnington in the *Magna Britannia*, made the mistake of denying the existence of a priory apart from the hospital of Donnington; but in their 'Additions and Corrections' they retract that statement, though making several other blunders (repeated in Dugdale) both as to hospital and priory which the improved marshalling of the public records enables us to some extent to correct.

¹⁸ *Cal. Pap. Let.* v, 562; Grunfelde is wrongly described in the calendar as 'brother of the house of St. Cross,' but this is corrected in the *corrigenda* and the index.

¹⁹ Dugdale, *Mon.* vi, 1562.

²⁰ Lysons, *Berks.* 716.

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Further information as to this small house is very meagre. Among the grants of suppressed houses, &c., made to Cardinal Wolsey in July, 1528, occurs 14s. annual rent for a portion of tithes in Donnington, paid by the prior and convent of Donnington.²¹

The prior of Donnington was among those summoned to convocation in 1529.²²

The friars of Donnington surrendered to John London on 30 November, 1538. The surrender is signed by Henry Whete and Richard Ungull,²³ and the house is here stated to be of the Trinitarian order.²⁴

Williams and London, writing to Sir Richard Riche, chancellor of the Augmentations, from Newbury in December, stated that on taking the surrender of the 'Crossed Friars of Donnington' they assigned the minister (or prior), Henry Whete, an extreme aged man, a pension of £6 13s. 4d., and to Richard Ungull, priest and brother there, £4. They begged him to

ratify this (which was duly done) and stated that the house was worth £20 a year, and was out of debt.²⁵

At the end of the same month London wrote from Oxford to Cromwell (inclosing 'a poor token' for the new year, with a half-year's fee from him and his house) saying that he had doubtless heard from Williams as to what they had done at the 'Crowche Friars at Newbery.' In another letter of the same date, probably to Thomas Thacker, London stated that at the 'Crutched Friars, Newbery,' there was nothing but a poor chalice. The lands, he added, were worth £22 a year, but all the goods not £6.²⁶

There is a cast of an imperfect impression of a fifteenth-century seal of this priory in the British Museum. There is a full-length saint, but the emblems are indistinct. Below is a friar kneeling in prayer. Legend:—

S PRIORIS : DOM : DE : DONYNGTON

HOSPITALS

13. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. HELEN, ABINGDON

From an early date there was an important gild or fraternity at Abingdon (of which some account has already been given) dedicated to the Holy Cross, and associated with the church of St. Helen. In the reign of Henry V a hospital or almshouse was established in connexion with this gild, and dedicated to the honour of St. Helen, and mainly founded through the munificence of Geoffrey Barbour and Sir John de St. Helen.¹

In 1442 this gild was incorporated by royal charter, and empowered to possess lands of the annual value of £40, to the intent they might maintain and repair the two bridges and the highway between Abingdon and Culham, and also provide for the relief of thirteen poor persons of both sexes (seven men and six women), and for the support of two chaplains. In 1446 the members of the fraternity rebuilt the almshouse, providing it with thirteen separate chambers. No one was to be admitted to the almshouses save by consent of the gild in their place of meeting over the north porch of the church of St. Helen. The money allowance for each inmate at that time was but a penny a week, but in 1456 the amount was raised to 4s. a quarter. They attended daily service in St. Helen's church.

¹ Pat. 20 Hen. VIII, pt. i, m. 20.

² *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, iv, pt. iii, 6047.

³ Rymer, *Foedera*, xiv, 613.

⁴ The various names here assigned to this house and its inmates confirm the opinion as to the identity of the Crossed or Crouched Friars with those termed Trinitarian or Maturine.

⁵ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. ii, 1025.

The gild was incorporated afresh by Richard III in 1483, when 'the continual maintenance of thirteen impotent weak men and women' was again put forward as one of their chief objects.

Leland, writing in the time of Henry VIII, says—'There is now an Hospital of 6 men and 6 women at S. Helenes, mainteind by a Fraternite ther.'^{1a}

The gild, with all its good works, including the hospital, was suppressed and stripped of its endowments in 1548, under the plea of superstition, by the council of Edward VI. But Sir John Mason, a native of the town and chancellor of Oxford, had sufficient influence at court to bring about the restoration of much of the gild property, wherewith he refounded the gild hospital, in May, 1553, on lines very similar to the old foundation, under the name of Christ's Hospital. Each inmate was to receive 8d. a week, with an extra shilling on Easter Day, and 5s. yearly for livery.²

14. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN, ABINGDON

The hospital of St. John, Abingdon, stood without the gate of the great Benedictine abbey, over against the church of St. Nicholas. It was founded by one of the earlier abbots, for the

^{3a} *Ibid.* 1153, 1154.

¹ Leland, *Itin.* ii, vii, 161. ^{1a} *Ibid.* ii, 16.

² For these and other particulars of the gild and hospital, see *A Monument of Christian Munificence*, written in 1627 by Francis Little, master of the hospital. The MS. is in the possession of the governors of Christ's Hospital, Abingdon; it was printed in 1871.

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maintenance of six poor persons. The master or prior who governed the house was appointed by the abbot, and it is probable that the inmates were at first directly sustained by the abbey.

The house was well established at the time of the taxation roll of 1291, when mention is made of 3s. annual rents at Oxford, and a pension of 20s. from the church of Chilton, Berkshire, as pertaining to the hospital.

Licence was granted to the master and brethren of the hospital of St. John, Abingdon, on 29 May, 1318, to acquire in mortmain lands, tenements, and rents, to the value of 100s. a year.³ On 15 March, 1320, six messuages in Abingdon, together with arable land, meadow, and wood, of the value of 17s. 4½d. a year, held of the abbey of Abingdon, were acquired in mortmain by the hospital, in part satisfaction of the licence of 1318.⁴

The ratification of the estate of Simon Calyng, as master or prior of the hospital of St. John, Abingdon, was enrolled on 10 June, 1387.⁵

There is a cast of the seal of this hospital at the British Museum,⁶ showing St. John Baptist with nimbus, holding the Agnus Dei, between two trees. Legend:—

s' : DOM' : SCI : IOHIS : ABYDŌIE.

15. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN, ABINGDON

There was a third hospital at Abingdon of early foundation, dedicated in honour of St. Mary Magdalen; very little can be gleaned respecting its history.

A year's protection was granted by Edward III in 1336 for the keeper and brethren of the hospital of St. Mary Magdalen on the bridge over the Ock without Abingdon.⁷

This is probably the foundation referred to in a manuscript account of the possessions of the Benedictines in Abingdon, shortly after the suppression of the abbey:—

There is also another poore house, called the Olde Almehouse, standinge upon the ryver of Thames, wherein been xx poore creatures, relieved at this present onelie by the charitable allowance of the good devout christian people of the towne of Abingtone.⁸

16. THE HOSPITAL OF CHILDREY

A chantry with almshouse annexed for three poor men was founded on the eve of the Re-

formation (1526) by William Fetyplace, in honour of the Blessed Trinity and St. Katherine. The founder assigned certain lands to Queen's College, Oxford, for its maintenance. They were to pay £8 yearly to a priest of good conversation to serve as chantry priest in the south transept of the parish church; the priest was to have a habitation adjoining that of the three poor men, and to pay them their dole. Each bedesman was to receive 9d. weekly and 9s. 4d. yearly for livery, with 2s. 8d. for wood and coals.

Notwithstanding the close connexion of the almshouses with the chantry, and the obligation that rested upon the three bedesmen of attending daily mass and praying for the founder and his friends, the Chantry Commissioners of 1548, finding that the lands were assigned to the provost and scholars of Queen's College, decided, after conference with the judges, that it was 'not within the compass of the statute.'⁹

17. THE HOSPITAL OF DONNINGTON

Up to the present time it has always been assumed that the hospital of Donnington was first founded in the reign of Richard II;¹⁰ but its origin is of far earlier date, for it was evidently well established in the reign of Edward II, as confirmation was granted by Edward III in 1327 of the grant by the late king to John de Wodesford, king's clerk, of the custody of the hospital of St. John, Donnington, for life.¹¹

John de Wodesford resigned in 1333, and the custody of the hospital was granted to Master John de Saesbers. At the same time a mandate was addressed to the constable of the castle of Donnington to induct him, and a writ *de intendendo* was directed to the brethren and sisters of the hospital.¹²

Sir Richard Abberbury, a leading man in the county, who was justice not only of Berkshire, but also of Oxford and Wiltshire, assigned considerable lands in 1365 to two chaplains to celebrate divine service in a certain chapel at Donnington which he was newly constructing, but it is by no means certain that this chapel had any connexion with either the priory or the hospital.¹³ However, the same knight, who had been one of the guardians of Richard II during his minority, founded in 1393 a hospital at Donnington, which was almost certainly a re-organization and enrichment of the former hospital of St. John. He assigned to the poor of this hospital two acres of land of his manor of Donnington and the manor of Iffley, near Oxford. One of these poor brethren was to preside

³ Pat. 11 Edw. II, pt. ii, m. 13.

⁴ Ibid. 13 Edw. II, m. 11.

⁵ Ibid. 10 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 1.

⁶ B.M. Iviii, 50.

⁷ Pat. 10 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 11.

⁸ Univ. Lib. Camb. Gz. iv, 21; cited in Tanner, *Notitia*, Berks. i.

⁹ Chant. and Coll. Cert. Nos. 3, 51.

¹⁰ Dugdale, Tanner, Lysons, and Money.

¹¹ Pat. 1 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 14.

¹² Ibid. 7 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 5.

¹³ Inq. a.q.d. 39 Edw. III, No. 29.

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over the rest, and to be called the minister of God of the poor house of Donnington. The inmates were to pray daily for the good estate (and after death for the souls) of King Richard and Sir Richard Abberbury, and to attend mass at the adjacent chapel of friars.¹⁴

Confusion as to the actual founders of the smaller and less-known houses often arises from forgetfulness or ignorance of the fact that the term *fundator* was frequently used in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in returns, as the equivalent of patron, and merely implied a descendant of the original founder, or even one who had purchased or inherited through marriage the first benefactor's estates. Thus Leland says that Donnington Hospital was founded by Thomas Chaucer, who died in 1434, whilst Dugdale describes it as founded by William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, who had married Chaucer's heir.¹⁵

Thomas Barrie, one of the almsmen of this hospital, was concerned in spreading a rumour (apparently well accredited) in 1538 of the death of Henry VIII; he was most barbarously punished, having his ears nailed to the pillory in Newbury throughout a market day, and at its close released by having his ears cut off.¹⁶

The commissioners of Henry VIII (1548) reported that the hospital of Walter Abberbury was founded for the maintenance of thirteen poor men,

every of them to have towards theyr lvyng 1*d.* by the day, one chamber, and xijs.vjd. in themone(th) of corne money whyche they have accordyngly. The patron or donor thereof nowe ys the Kynges Majestie.

The hospital is described as adjoining the castle and half a mile distant from the parish church. The annual value was returned at £28 16*s.* 8*d.*, whereof £19 5*s.* 5*d.* went as stipend to the thirteen poor men, and £8 2*s.* 6*d.* in corn money. The balance was used in repairing the tenements. There were then no ornaments or goods in the chapel, as it was served from the parish church.

The hospital revenues were among those confiscated to the crown, and so remained until 1570, when they were restored to their original purpose, on the petition of Charles Howard, earl of Nottingham, lord admiral. On its re-establishment it was termed

the Hospital of Queen Elizabeth at Donnington, in time past begun to be founded by Sir Richard Abberbury, Knight, and by Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, perfected and consummated.

The elaborate statutes and ordinances for the hospital drawn up by Charles Howard were

¹⁴ Pat. 16 Ric. II, pt. iii, m. 13.

¹⁵ Leland, *Itin.* ii, 33; Dugdale, *Baronage*, ii, 189.

¹⁶ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. i, 7. See the previous account of Hugh, abbot of Reading.

confirmed in 15 James I by the archbishop of Canterbury, when Richard James, gent., was master. One of the rules provides that the almsmen were to attend service at the parish church, not only on Sundays and festivals, but also on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, and there to give God thanks for their founders and benefactors.¹⁷

18. THE HOSPITAL OF FYFIELD

A hospital or almshouse was founded at Fyfield in 1442, in conjunction with a chantry at the altar of St. John Baptist in the parish church, and pursuant to the will of Sir John Golafre, who is styled in the foundation ordinance servant to kings Henry V and Henry VI. The chaplain was to have charge of the almshouse, and to be called the Master of the House of St. John Baptist, Fyfield. The endowments were Fyfield Grove, and the manors of Baldwin's Court and Wyke, in Charlton.¹⁸

The Chantry Commissioners of 1 Edward VI reported that its value, including the almshouse to which about two-thirds of the income were assigned, was £20 15*s.* a year. The hospital was swept away, together with the actual chantry, into the royal coffers.¹⁹ On the pension roll of 1554 appears the name of Thomas Clenson, 'Bedesman chantry of Fyfield,' who was in receipt of 40*s.* a year.²⁰

19. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST, HUNGERFORD

A hospital was founded at Hungerford in the twelfth century in honour of St. John Baptist; it was situated just outside the town on the north side. On 14 May, 1232, Henry III, when at Wallingford Castle, granted his protection to the brethren of this house, giving them permission to seek for alms, and commending them to the faithful. Later in the same year these letters were renewed *sine termino*; they were addressed to the prior—that is, to the master of the hospital.²¹

On 20 May, 1281, an inspection and confirmation was obtained from Edward I of a charter of Edmund his brother (dated the same day), which was a ratification of the grant made by Simon de Montfort, late earl of Leicester, to the hospital and fraternity of St. John Baptist, Hungerford, for lodging poor, sick, and infirm persons. The grant conveyed to the hospital half a virgate

¹⁷ Tanner MSS. bdle. 304, fol. 99.

¹⁸ Pat. 20 Hen. VI, pt. ii, m. 27; 22 Hen. VI, pt. i, m. 24.

¹⁹ Coll. and Chant. Nos. 3, 51.

²⁰ B.M. Add. MS. 5082.

²¹ Pat. 16 Hen. III, m. 6, 3.

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of land and meadow on the north side of Hungerford.²²

In October, 1399, Henry IV appointed John Frank, king's clerk, master or warden of this hospital, and at the same time appointed him parson or warden of the free chapel of Standen-by-Hungerford.²³

It is stated by Tanner that the full endowments of this house in 1405 were 1 carucate of land, 2 acres of meadow, six cottages producing a yearly rental of 40s., and the oblations offered on the feast of St. John Baptist. The prior or warden had to celebrate in the chapel three times a week, and to relieve the poor inhabitants of the town in times of scarcity.

John Orum, archdeacon of Barnstaple, obtained dispensation from Pope John XXIII in 1411 to hold the archdeaconry together with a canonry of Wells, the free chapel of Standen, and the wardenship of the hospital of St. John Baptist, Hungerford.²⁴ It was, alas, at this period the rule rather than the exception for the major part of the funds of England's hospitals, both small and great, to be absorbed by non-resident masters.

20. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. LAURENCE, HUNGERFORD

There was a leper hospital for women at Hungerford. Two references to it have been found of the thirteenth century, but it was probably of earlier foundation. This leper house is first mentioned in a recital of the bounds of the forest of Savernake, in a perambulation of the year 1228.²⁵

The leper sisters of St. Laurence, Hungerford, had royal protection granted them in 1232, with commendatory permission to seek alms for their house *sine termino*.²⁶

21. THE HOSPITAL OF LAMBOURN

John Isbury, who died in 1485, desired by his will to found a chantry in the parish church, in conjunction with a hospital or almshouse. His son of the same name carried out his father's intentions. A hospital was built on the north side of the church for ten poor men, six to be nominated by the Warden of New College, Oxford, and four by the founder's heirs. These bedesmen were to use the chapel of the Holy Trinity, on the south side of the parish church, for their devotions, kneeling round the tomb (in the centre) of John Isbury, their founder. The original pension was 8*d.* a week, with

²² Pat. 9 Edw. I, m. 19.

²³ Ibid. 1 Hen. IV, pt. i, m. 34.

²⁴ Tanner, *Not. Mon.* Berks. xii.

²⁵ Close, 12 Hen. III, m. 9 *d.*

²⁶ Pat. 16 Hen. III, m. 1.

clothes, and allowance of fuel and corn. The chantry priest was to govern the almshouse and pay the inmates their stipend. The annual value of the almshouse, as separate from the stipend of the chantry priest, was declared at £17 13*s.* 4*d.* This hospital was technically dissolved in 1 Edward VI as 'superstitious'; but sufficient influence was brought to bear to cause its re-establishment by Act of Parliament in 31 Elizabeth.²⁷

There is a cast of the seal of this hospital at the British Museum.²⁸ The Holy Trinity is represented under a heavy canopy, with a kneeling figure of the founder and his arms (bendy, wavy of six) in base. Legend:—

SIGILLŪ : COMŪNE : DOMS : ELEMOSINAR : IOHIS :
ESTBIR '

22. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW, NEWBURY

It is not known at what date the hospital of St. Bartholomew, Newbury, was founded. It was extant in the reign of John, when it was a recipient of the royal favour. On 7 July, 1215, John instructed the sheriff of Berkshire to give all facilities to the hospital of St. Bartholomew at Newbury, and to the brethren serving God there, to have a two days' annual fair at Newbury on the day and on the morrow of St. Bartholomew.²⁹

William Otnel, rector of Shaw, granted *circa* 1260 to this hospital, and its brethren and sisters, and to the poor folk resorting there, all the holding with 16 acres of arable land in Newbury which he had bought of Simon White, 2½ acres bought of Simon le Cur, and 1 acre bought of John Showe, for the health of his soul and the souls of his ancestors.³⁰

Protection, that is authority for the collecting of alms, was granted in October, 1285, for three years for the brethren of the hospital of St. Bartholomew, Newbury.³¹

About 1295 John le Frankelayn granted to Henry, warden of the house of St. Bartholomew, 1½ acres of land and the third of a croft. In 1311 there was a further grant of lands in Eastfield, Newbury, by Edmund de la Bulhuse.³²

On 27 August, 1301, Bishop Simon de Gandavo instituted William de Byschopeston, priest, to the custody or wardenship of the hospital, with its brethren and sisters.³³ From that date onwards, down to 1510, the episcopal registers of Sarum give the succession of the hospital wardens.

²⁷ Ashmole, *Antiq. of Berks.* ii, 244; Lysons, *Berks.* 309-10; Coll. and Chant. Cert. Nos. 8, 51.

²⁸ B.M. lviii, 52.

²⁹ Close, 17 John, m. 28.

³⁰ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 131.

³¹ Pat. 13 Edw. I, m. 4.

³² Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 161-2.

³³ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 16*b.*

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These institutions were made on the presentation of the commonalty of the town of Newbury.

The warden or *custos* of this house is sometimes termed the prior, and, judging from analogy, the brethren and sisters followed to some extent the Austin rule and were under vows. The warden was of course always in priest's orders, and the buildings included a chapel and fit accommodation for the entertainment of the aged and infirm to whom the hospital ministered.

The commissioners of Henry VIII, in 1546, reported that the origin of the hospital was unknown, but that it was founded to maintain a priest to sing in the hospital, and two poor men to pray there continually. The annual value was returned as £23 1s. 8½*d.*, from which sum £4 was paid to the priest, and 26*s.* 8*d.* to the two bedesmen. The large balance, save what was required for repairs and tithes, went to 'Sir Roger Bermer, clerke, Mr. of the same hospytall.'³⁴

From this it is manifest that this hospital, like so many others, had by this time fallen into bad hands; the master absorbed more than three-fourths of the income, the sisters had disappeared, the brethren were reduced to two, and the poor and infirm had lost all share of the endowment.

It appears from proceedings in the Court of Exchequer that in 1554 the master and two brethren of this hospital demised all their lands and rents to one Philip Kistill and three others for the term of sixty-one years, and that in 1576 an information was laid by the Attorney-General against Philip for intruding upon chantry or priory lands that were escheated to the crown by the Chantry Act of 1548. The defendants denied that they were priory or chantry lands, and after the examination of divers witnesses by interrogations, it was decided that it was a hospital for poor men and was outside the Acts. The oldest of the six witnesses was Robert Flagget, cloth-worker of Newbury, aged 94.

All the witnesses deposed to having known two priors who were masters of governors, 'Sir Maggott' and 'Mr. Bromall'; they were always called priors, and boarded in the house adjoining the church or chapel of St. Bartholomew. One Philip, a monk, hired by Mr. Bromall, also boarded there. The prior was always a religious person (that is under vows); he used to say mass in the church and there was burying of the dead in the churchyard. Flagget did not know, nor had he ever heard, of any poor people kept or maintained by either of these priors, of alms or charity within or near the house; but William Blandye, aged 72, remembered four people in the house at one time, and afterwards two, who received 20*s.* a year. The witness deposed to a curious custom that used to prevail of the wives of the town of Newbury, on the morrow after they were churched, visiting the chapel of St. Bartholomew with their midwives, and there

making offerings of wax, candles, money, &c., and these oblations were converted to the use of the prior for the time being, and for no other purpose. Sir Bromall was the last prior; he left the house and town about 1547. After his departure the inhabitants of Newbury took upon them the management of the house and received the rents, Philip Kistill being one of them; the statements of the witnesses on this point were conflicting, but apparently the old house was pulled down, four small tenements erected, and four almsmen maintained therein by the town. Blandye stated that the town presented 'one Mr. Pyckeringe to be master of the same hospital, before Bushopp Jewell,' and the inhabitants chose two proctors to gather up the rents and to pay the master and the poor people their stipend.

The steeple of the church, with two bells, was pulled down by the inhabitants. They deposed that the house was then governed 'by certain of the chefest of the inhabytantes, as Mr. Kistill, Mr. Chamberlayne, &c.' The chapel was converted into a schoolhouse in the time of Edward VI.³⁵

We are not now concerned with the future history and development of this foundation, particulars of which can be found in Money's *Newbury*.

WARDENS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL, NEWBURY

Henry, *circa* 1295³⁶
 William de Byschopeston, 1301³⁷
 John de Gloucester, 1313³⁸
 Richard Orsett, 1333³⁹
 John le Sone, 1338⁴⁰
 Henry dic' le Vicary de Aldermaston, 1341⁴¹
 Michael Lawles, 1362⁴²
 Stephen, resigned 1381
 Henry Pake, 1381⁴³
 Thomas Whyston, 1381⁴⁴
 Henry Hales, 1383⁴⁵
 Roger Russel, 1391⁴⁶
 Thomas Pall, 1402⁴⁷
 William Baker, 1438⁴⁸
 William Hutchyns, 1441⁴⁹
 John Bradstone, 1443⁵⁰

³⁵ Excheq. Depos. 407, 413, 416, 439; cited in Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 215-24.

³⁶ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 161.

³⁷ Sar. Epis. Reg. Gandavo, fol. 16*b*. The dates are those of appointment.

³⁸ *Ibid.* fol. 134.

³⁹ *Ibid.* Wyville (pt. 2), fol. 22.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* fol. 58*b*.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* fol. 184.

⁴² *Ibid.* fol. 296.

⁴³ *Ibid.* Erghum, fol. 42*b*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* fol. 71*b*.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* Waltham, fol. 45.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* Mitford, fol. 76.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* Aiscough, fol. 10.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* fol. 39.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* fol. 61.

³⁴ Coll. and Chant. Cert. 51, No. 49.

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William Mahew, 1451⁵¹
William Lee, 1463
Robert Bryteyn, resigned 1463⁵²
William Belyngham, 1463⁵³
William Bray, 1469⁵⁴
Edmund Worthington, 1508⁵⁵
Robert Strete, 1510⁵⁶
John Magott, 1522⁵⁷
Roger Bridmold *alias* Bromall, 1540⁵⁸

23. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN, NEWBURY

There was a leper hospital for women at Newbury; but we have only succeeded in finding a single reference to it. On 26 July, 1232, the hospital of St. Mary Magdalen, Newbury, for leprous women obtained the crown protection.⁵⁹

24. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN, READING

Abbot Hugh II, the eighth abbot of Reading, founded a hospital, dedicated in honour of St. John Baptist about the year 1190. Tanner, followed by the extended Dugdale's *Monasticon*, and others, has made the mistake of naming a hospital dedicated to St. Laurence, as though there were three and not merely two hospitals at Reading dependent on the abbey. The mistake obviously arose through the headings in the different chartularies naming the church or chapel of St. Laurence in conjunction with the founding of the hospital.

The charter of Hugh II, the eighth abbot of Reading, recites that the foundation of the abbey by Henry I was not merely for the sustenance of the monks, but also for the reception of poor guests and wayfarers, and then proceeds to state that he (the abbot) had founded a hospital outside their gates for the double purpose of relieving the distress of the (local) poor, and for the help of needy wayfarers. With the consent of Bishop Hubert Walter (1189-93) he had assigned the church of St. Laurence⁶⁰ to this hospital, for the support

⁵¹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Beauchamp, fol. 2b.

⁵² Ibid. fol. 73b.

⁵³ Ibid. fol. 73b.

⁵⁴ Ibid. fol. 154b.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Audley, fol. 33.

⁵⁶ Ibid. fol. 38b.

⁵⁷ Ibid. fol. 93.

⁵⁸ Ibid. Capon, fol. 5.

⁵⁹ Pat. 16 Hen. III, m. 3.

⁶⁰ It is stated by Coates and repeated in the revised *Monasticon* and elsewhere, that the church of Thatcham and other properties were settled on the hospital of St. John Baptist and confirmed to it by Bishop Hubert. But reference to the chartularies shows that this is an error. For instance, the church of Thatcham was merely appropriated to the general hospitality of the monks (*ad hospitalitatis onera supportanda*), its revenues being administered by the almoner of the abbey and forming part of the large funds appropriated to that office. Vesp. E. v, fols. 20, 20b; Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 179.

of thirteen poor persons (resident) in food and clothing and all necessaries, and for the supply of the daily wants in food and customary alms of thirteen other poor persons.⁶¹

The bishop, in confirming this grant of the church of St. Laurence to the hospital, provided for the establishment of a perpetual vicar for the church, who was to receive yearly 20s. for his clothes; bread and beer the same as a monk; 7d. weekly for meat; suitable lodging, and legacies not above 6d. The vicar was not only to serve the parish church, but to act as chaplain to the infirm and poor of the hospital, giving daily and assiduous attention to their souls. The monks were to find the vicar a horse when he had to journey on the affairs of the church.⁶²

On one of the last folios of the chartulary there is the entry of the appointment of Philip as chaplain of the hospital and vicar of St. Laurence's, in accordance with the ordination of Bishop Hubert. This occurs towards the end of long entries as to the rentals and property administered by the almoner. Towards the bottom of the same page is an estimate as to the clothing required by the almoner for the poor, apparently for the year. The amounts are large, namely, 300 ells of woollen cloth, 124 ells of linen, 100 ells of canvas, and 24, or at least 15, yards of serge. This estimate has been assigned by Coates and Dugdale to a hospital of thirteen inmates, not realizing the extraordinarily extensive wardrobe that this amount would provide for so small a number. The fact is that the amount was that which the almoner of the monastery required for the whole of his important department.⁶³

This hospital stood close to the church of St. Laurence, and the north chancel aisle served as the chapel for the inmates, and is still known as St. John's or St. John Baptist's chapel.

The sex of the poor inmates is not mentioned in the foundation charter, but probably from the beginning (as in some other houses of thirteen) the accommodation was divided between seven men and six women, the senior brother having certain authority under the chaplain as subwarden. They were all under celibate vows, the sisters being often widows of those who had held some office in the town and had fallen into poverty. The senior sister was termed the prioress. Both brothers and sisters were admitted by a religious formulary in the chapel. The one to be admitted said certain prayers and the *Veni Creator* kneeling before the altar, was anointed with holy water and given the habit, with a veil in the case of the sisters.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v, fol. 19b.

⁶² Ibid. fol. 20; Vesp. E. xxv, fol. 3; Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 178.

⁶³ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v, fol. 79; Coates, *Reading*, 279; Dugdale, *Mon.* iv, 31.

⁶⁴ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v, fols. 8b, 11a.

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The allowance for the brethren and sisters differed somewhat from time to time according to the terms arranged with the almoner of the abbey. A brother who had been a shoemaker in the Sartuary (afterwards Cobbler's Row) of Reading, and who was admitted in 1337, received weekly seven loaves of white flour, called *de chopyn de abbatis*, and three of black wheat (*blakwythe*, probably rye); he had also half a mess of meat daily from the kitchen. He was allowed $3\frac{1}{2}$ ells of russet cloth for his habit in the year, and 12*d.* for his shoes. In the same year there were six sisters at the house; they received amongst them twenty-four white loaves and nineteen *chopin* weekly, and a farthing each daily for meat. At each of the festivals of Easter, Pentecost, All Saints, and Christmas, and also on Shrove Tuesday, the sisters received a whole dish of meat or a penny. The oldest sister was termed the prioress; at Easter and Christmas she received a penny for an oblation, whilst the other five only received a halfpenny each. At the feast of the Purification she received a good candle. Two shillings and sixpence was the yearly allowance for their habit. The sisters had a maid servant, who was provided with seven *miches*⁶⁶ weekly. The almoner was responsible for keeping the building and chapel in repair, and he provided oil for the lamp in the hall. Any brother or sister guilty of incontinence was to be expelled.⁶⁶

Joan Grome, who was admitted to the hospital in 1376, was to receive daily a loaf called 'prikkedlof,' and a pottle (two quarts) of beer, but in other respects to be provided like the rest of the sisters. Matilda, who became a sister in 1380, had a weekly allowance of four founders' loaves and three *chopynes*.⁶⁷

In the fifteenth century, laxity of administration suffered this interesting foundation to lapse into the general fund of the almoner, and the buildings were let at an annual rent. An instance occurs in 1368 of Joan Derby, a widow, covenanting to pay to Robert Uffington the almoner an annual rent for her life, together with a fine on taking possession, for a chamber in St. John's Hospital.⁶⁸

When Edward IV was at Reading in 1479 he gave ear to the various complaints as to neglects on the part of the abbey, and caused an inquiry to be made. In a report that was consequently drawn up it is stated that:—

Also there was without thabbey-gate a place called Seynt Johnys Howse wher in were founde and kepte certeyne relygyous women wydowes in chast lvyng in Goddes servyce praying nyght and day for the Kyng's estate, and for the sowles of their founders and benefactors, wherin was a feyr chapell of Seynt John Baptyst, for the seyde women to sey their prayers in

certain seasons of the day and nyght, and wher also massys were seyde many tymes in the yere, and other devyne servyce also; whyche women went to have out of thabbey every weke certeyn of bred and ale and also money; and as yt ys seyde oons in the yere, a certeyne clothyng; and thys was ordeyred for such women as had been onest mennys wyvys that had borne offyce in the towne before, and in age were fall in poverti, or that purposed no more to marye. And now ther ys nother Goddservyce nor prayour, nor creature alyve to kepe hyt. But thabbot takethe the profyts ther of and dothe no suche almes nor good deds ther wyth.⁶⁹

This was in the days of Abbot Thorne I, who was succeeded in 1486 by Abbot Thorne II. King Henry VII, as Leland tells us, visited Reading in the year of the new abbot's appointment. The king desired the abbot to convert the hospital, which had been suppressed several years previously, to some pious uses; and the abbot desiring that it might be made a grammar school, the king assented to his wishes.⁷⁰ Leland adds:—

One William Dene, a riche man and servant in the abbey of Reading, gave 200 marks in mony toward the advancement of this Schole; as it apperith by the Epitaphie on his Grave in the Abbey Chirch of Reading.⁷¹

There is a cast of a seal of this hospital at the British Museum,⁷² wrongly assigned to the imaginary hospital of St. Laurence in the *Catalogue of Seals*. It is pointed oval, bearing a mitred abbot. In the place of a legend is a wavy scroll.

25. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN, READING

A hospital was founded for twelve lepers and a chaplain at Reading by the second abbot, Ausger, who ruled from 1130 to 1175. It was dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen. The abbot provided that each inmate of the hospital was to receive as a daily supply half a loaf of bread and half a gallon of middling beer (*cervisie mediocris*); also 5*d.* a month for buying meat. In Lent the bread was to be of barley. The scale of clothing was generous; each one was

⁶⁶ B.M. Add. MS. 6214, fol. 14.

⁷⁰ Leland, *Itin.* ii, 4, 5; *Collectanea*, iv, 185.

⁷¹ It must not be imagined that this was the beginning of the connexion of the abbey with scholastic work at Reading. It was of far earlier origin. Bishop Hubert (1190–93) granted and confirmed to the abbey the school of Reading in express terms: Vesp. E. xxv, fol. 110*b*; B.M. Harl. MS. 1708, fols. 99*b*, 91. Bishop Roger (1315–30) issued his mandate to the archdeacon of Berks, to the rural deans and all the clergy of the county prohibiting anyone from governing the schools at Reading save with the consent and at the appointment of the abbot and convent. B.M. Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 190.

⁷² B.M. lviii, 53.

⁶⁵ *Mica* or *micha* (cf. *manchet*) was a small loaf.

⁶⁶ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v, fol. 80*b*.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* fol. 6*a*.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* fol. 62.

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supplied with hood, tunic and cloak, and with two woollen vests and under-linen. The hood or cape was to contain three ells of cloth, the tunic three, and the cloak two and a quarter; these were supplied as often as required. Each inmate also received ten yards of linen yearly, and one yard of serge for shoes. Fifteen yards of linen were supplied every second year for covering the tables. On giving out new table linen the old was to be returned. The chaplain was supplied with six ells of russet and ten yards of linen every Michaelmas; he also received all oblations made by the brethren of the house, but other offerings he divided with the brethren. The almoner of the monastery was to undertake any new building or repairs that might be required. The clothes-mender (*sartuarius*) of the monastery was to supply them with leather girdles at Michaelmas and with shoes at Easter. Their carter was to receive bread daily from the granarian and 3*d.* a year from the almoner. The woman servant was to be supplied with bread and 2*s.* a year in like fashion. The chamberlain was to supply the hospital with provender for a horse, with four loads of hay, and with the milk of four cows.

The rules of the house were strict. For incontinence or striking a brother the punishment was expulsion; for defamation or disobedience to the master, fasting on bread and water in the midst of the hall, the culprit's portion of meat and drink being placed on the table and distributed by the master. No one was allowed to leave the house or stand at the gate without a companion. Anyone desirous of leave of absence for one, two, or three nights had to obtain permission of the master and of the whole convent, but if for longer the master's consent was necessary, and then only with a companion. The brothers were to prepare to rise at the first ringing of the bell, and when it rang for the third time to enter the church. If anyone found anything on the premises it was not to be concealed, but shown to the brethren and placed in the common fund; but if it was found outside it might be considered the finder's if he so willed. Alms given by anyone to an inmate on the roadside for infirmity were to go to the common purse. No one was to enter the wash-house without a companion, nor was anyone to send the servant of the house any long distance without leave.⁷⁵

The administration of this leper-house was so intimately connected with the general administration of the abbey by the founder that it required no separate endowment. In later and laxer times, however, the house had endowments of its own. Coates cites the Wollascot MSS. to the effect of the hospital owning a house at Arley White-

knights, of which they received the rents and a heriot when due and also two acres of land in Spittlefields, the gift of one of the abbots.⁷⁴

In 1413 an inquisition was held showing that 200 acres had been assigned to this hospital, but that the abbot was not supporting it. Henry V in the following year assigned the wardenship of it to John Beck by letters patent; this trust was apparently hereditary, for the free chapel of Arley Whiteknights was in the hands of the Beck family in 1547, according to the chantry certificates return.⁷⁶

The history of this leper-house seems to be similar to the majority of such foundations, namely that as time went on and leprosy became unusual the house was neglected and the master or warden usually absorbed the funds.

An inquiry set on foot by Edward IV when he was at Reading in 1479 as to alleged neglects by the abbey produced the following memorandum respecting this hospital:—

Moreover an other chapell ther was in the est syde of the towne callyd Mary Magdelyn Chapell, and lyvelod therto for to releve therin syke folks, as lazarrs, and an house for them to dwell in besyde wt feyr londs perteynyng therto; wherof thabbot take the profytts, and hathe taken downe the seyd chapell and all the howsys therto apperteynyng. And so ther be no poor people relevyd therby as now, nother were not many days.⁷⁶

26. BARNES HOSPITAL, READING

There was a third hospital at Reading of late but pre-Reformation foundation. It is thus described by the College and Chantry Commissioners at the end of the reign of Henry VIII:—

One hospitalle or Almeshouse there founded by William Barnes to thentent to have certayne pore people there lodged, and for that purpose he dyde endowe the same house with certen londes and tenementes, howbeit they have not showed any foundacion or graunte.

The hospital is reported as being in the parish of St. Mary, and having an income of £7 6*s.* 4*d.*, employed in lodging poor folk and maintaining the building.⁷⁷

27. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST, WALLINGFORD

Without the south gate of Wallingford, in what is now called the Lower Green, stood a hospital of early foundation dedicated to St. John Baptist. There are various references to it in the thirteenth century, when it supported a master or warden and certain brothers and sisters.

⁷⁴ Coates, Reading, 278.

⁷⁵ Ibid. Tanner, *Notitia*, xvii, 4.

⁷⁶ B.M. Add. MS. 6214, fol. 14.

⁷⁷ *Coll. and Chant. Cert.* 51, No. 73.

⁷⁵ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v, fols. 38, 38*b*. Details of the ordination of this leper hospital are also set forth in Sar. Epis. Reg. Beauchamp (2nd Nos.), fol. 70*b*.

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On 21 March, 1224, the king, when at Reading, granted letters of protection for a year to the master and brethren of the hospital of St. John, Wallingford. This grant was renewed by Henry III on 6 September, 1225, when he was stopping at the castle of Wallingford.⁷⁸ On 25 August, 1227, when the king was again at this castle, simple letters of protection, *sine termino*, were granted to the master, brethren, and sisters of St. John.⁷⁹

Stephen de Stalles, of Wallingford, granted to the brethren and sisters of this hospital, about 1240, a messuage in the parish of St. Leonard, within the south gate of Wallingford.⁸⁰

Among the muniments of the corporation of Wallingford are many deeds relative to this hospital, including several of the reign of Henry III, which are undated.⁸¹

One of these, executed by the famous Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, records his grant to the brethren and sisters of St. John Baptist of 8*d.* rent of assize which he had been wont to receive of them for an acre of land held of him in Chalmore; the first witness is Master Peter de Benham, mayor. Another deed witnessed by the same mayor records the grant by a widow of her dower right in the moiety of a messuage to the hospital for the sum of 40*s.* A third deed, when Alexander de Stalles was mayor, is a grant by Richard Robechild of a piece of land in Wallingford opposite his own house, for the sum of 12*s.* paid beforehand; the hospital paying to Eustace Clement and his heirs a yearly rental of 6*d.*, and to himself one clove yearly at Easter.

There are various other deeds of grants to and from the hospital when Sir Ralph the chaplain was warden. By one of these they obtained from Stephen de Stalles for 5 marks of silver 2½ acres of land in Newnham, 1 acre near the land of Master Peter de Banham, and 1½ acres elsewhere in Wallingford. By another one Ralph, the master, and the brethren and sisters grant to Stephen the carpenter for 4*s.* 6*d.* paid, and for a rental of 4*s.* 6*d.*, a house with a tiled solar and a small tiled chamber, where Stephen was wont to abide; the said Stephen was to keep the tenement in proper repair and well tiled.

The corporation muniments also include various undated documents relative to the hospital of the reign of Edward I, Sir Ralph the chaplain still being master.⁸² The most remarkable of these is one whereby Christine Joes testifies, making oath and touching the Holy Gospels, that she has bound herself to Sir Ralph and the brethren and sisters to give the fullest security for the

peaceful holding by them of 3 acres of land which they had from William her husband—

so namely, that I may be excommunicated from day to day, and denounced as excommunicate through the whole deanery of Henley, if I shall in any way presume to contravene the said gift. . . . And if of this I shall be convicted I will give to the archdeacon of Oxford for the time being for the breaking of my vow and for my perjury 20*s.*, and to the said Ralph and brethren and sisters 20*s.* for such unjust vexation, renouncing the royal prohibition and all right of remedy, civil or canonical.

On 12 October, 1276, Edward I sanctioned the seeking of alms by the master, brethren, and sisters of St. John Baptist, Wallingford, for the period of seven years.

In July, 1305, licence was granted, after inquisition, for the alienation in mortmain by Robert de Turneston, chaplain and master, of 13 acres of land in Wallingford, Clapcot, and Newnham to this hospital.⁸³

In 1313 John de Persore, warden, granted a tenement in the parish of Great St. Mary to Richard Az, Cecilia his wife, and Agnes his daughter, for their lives, at a yearly rent of 5*s.*; after the death of the survivor the tenement was to return to the warden; the mayor and bailiffs of the town were among the witnesses. In the following year John Roulond, warden of the hospital, and the brethren and sisters there, granted to Henry de Wyncestre, Alota his wife, and Alice their daughter, a tenement in the parish of 'St. Mary the More,' for the term of their lives, at a yearly rental of 7*s.*; the mayor and bailiffs for that year are again witnesses.⁸⁴

Licence was granted in March, 1334, to the master and brethren of the hospital of St. John Baptist, Wallingford, to acquire in mortmain land and rent to the annual value of 100*s.*⁸⁵

In June, 1391, Thomas Athelyngton, king's clerk, obtained the grant for life from the crown of the wardenship of this hospital.⁸⁶ It is quite clear, however, that the appointment of the warden had rested with the commonalty or corporation of Wallingford throughout the thirteenth and earlier part of the fourteenth century. This crown nomination was something exceptional. So much was the hospital considered as pertaining to the town that the various deeds recited, and others not here named, were not only usually witnessed by the mayor and bailiffs, but in some cases it is stated that they were testified to 'by the whole Burgmote' or 'by the whole Portmote.' This is but natural, for the

⁷⁸ Pat. 33 Edw. I, pt. ii, m. 16. Robert de Turneston, warden of the hospital, witnesses one of the corporation deeds of the year 1298, and grants were made to him as master in 1301 and 1306.

⁷⁹ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, App. 593.

⁸⁰ Pat. 6 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 26.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* 1 Hen. IV, pt. ii, m. 29.

⁷⁸ Pat. 8 Hen. III, m. 9; 9 Hen. III, m. 2.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 11 Hen. III, m. 3.

⁸⁰ Cox and Turner, *Cal. of Bodl. Chart.* 15.

⁸¹ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, App. 586, 587.

⁸² *Ibid.* 587-8, 590.

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hospital was first founded by the inhabitants at large.

Every old hospital had its chapel annexed, and not a few—like the chapel of the hospital of St. John Baptist and St. John Evangelist in Northampton⁸⁷—had a good-sized chapel used by other than the inmates. This was the case at Wallingford. The hospital chapel of St. John Baptist was in the parish of St. Leonard, but having no parochial obligations it was technically termed a free chapel.

In the corporation ledger, under the date 25 November, 1542, appears the following entry:—

Richard Adene appeared before the mayor and produced the advowson of the hospital of St. John and that of St. Mary Magdalen, under the seals of the guild and the mayoralty, and was inducted into possession, and the mayor received his oaths faithfully to perform all the constitutions of the hospital.⁸⁸

The return of the Chantry and College Commissioners of Henry VIII states that the free chapel of St. John Baptist was founded by the inhabitants of the town, and was situated in the parish of St. Leonard, a furlong distant from that church. The annual income for the chaplain, then John Adeane, was £6.⁸⁹ The return of the commissioners of Edward VI two years later gives the annual value of the lands and tenements as £9 15s. 8d.

The fine fifteenth-century seal of this hospital represents St. John Baptist, under a canopy, holding in the left hand an Agnus Dei on a plaque, with a scroll inscribed *Ecce Agnu' Dei*. Legend:—

s' : FRM̄ : ET : SOROR' : OSPIT : . . . CI : IOHIS :
BAPTIST' : WALINGF'

28. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN, WALLINGFORD

There was a second hospital, also of early foundation, at Wallingford (not mentioned by Dugdale or Tanner) dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen.

This hospital was for lepers, and though it was technically in Oxfordshire, being placed at the Newnham end of the old bridge over the Thames, it is rightly named under Berkshire, as it was under the immediate control of the town of Wallingford. The references to it are scanty, but begin in the reign of Henry III.

The master and brethren of the hospital of St. Mary Magdalen extra Wallingford obtained letters of protection from the king in December, 1226, when he was visiting the castle, to last until Christmas in the following year. On

24 August, 1227, when the king was again at Wallingford, he granted full protection to the tenants, and to property of every kind of this hospital, and directed his subjects when the messengers of the hospital came seeking alms to receive them kindly and bestow on them of their substance.⁹⁰

To this hospital 'a free chapel' was attached; in the time of Henry VII and Henry VIII the same chaplain served the hospital as well as that of St. John Baptist. The admission of Richard Adeane to the advowson of both by the mayor in 1542 has been already recorded. The Chantry Commissioners of 1546 reported that the free chapel of 'Marye Maudlyn' was founded by the inhabitants of Wallingford, and that it was situated within the parish of Newnham, a quarter of a mile from the parish church.⁹¹

29. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. PETER, WINDSOR

There was a hospital for lepers in the park of Windsor of early foundation, usually known as the hospital of St. Peter-without-Windsor. The first references that have hitherto been found to this hospital are of the reign of Henry III.

On 24 February, 1232, the brethren of the hospital of St. Peter of Windsor obtained the protection of the crown *sine termino*.⁹² The Testa de Nevill states that 7s. a year was paid to the lepers of Windsor out of the fee-farm of Windsor, the gift of King Henry.⁹³

This hospital was for both leprous maidens and brethren, as we learn from a charter of 1251, whereby Henry III, for the souls of King John, Queen Isabel, Queen Eleanor, and for his children, granted them 120 acres, part of a purpresture in the forest of Windsor; to be held free of all secular service, by finding a chaplain to say mass daily in the hospital chapel for the souls before mentioned.⁹⁴

The leper hospital of Windsor is mentioned in the special inquisition of 1273 (Hundred Rolls) as entitled to 2½ marks out of the inclosed lands of Geoffrey de Denne, and the hospital without Windsor is mentioned as a boundary in a grant of land in Windsor Forest dated 23 October, 1289.⁹⁵

On 24 August, 1290, Robert de Cancell, chaplain, was granted the custody of the hospital of St. Peter-without-Windsor, by the king during pleasure.⁹⁶

In February, 1327, Edward III granted the

⁹⁰ Pat. 11 Hen. III, m. 9, 3.

⁹¹ Chant. Cert. Berks. 51.

⁹² Pat. 16 Hen. III, m. 8.

⁹³ Testa de Nevill (Rec. Com.), 129

⁹⁴ Chart. 35 Hen. III, m. 8, 6.

⁹⁵ Pat. 17 Edw. I, m. 5.

⁹⁶ Ibid. 18 Edw. I, m. 13.

⁸⁷ Northants Borough Rec. ii.

⁸⁸ Hedges, Wallingford, ii, 371.

⁸⁹ Chant. Cert. Berks. 51, No. 56.

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custody of this hospital to John le Chapelur for life.⁹⁷

John Hardin, chaplain, was granted on 29 April, 1382, custody for life of the chapel of St. Peter in the parish of Windsor, called 'le Spital,' void by the resignation of Simon de Merstone. A few days later, namely on 9 May, revocation was made of this collation, as it appeared that Simon de Merstone had resigned unwillingly through fear. However, on 2 August Simon de Merstone executed a second resignation of 'le Spital juxta Windsor,' and William de Briggeford was appointed in his place by the crown.⁹⁸

In 1390 Richard II granted to his servant Laurence Hunt the wardenship of Windsor Hospital, provided the hospital might be held by a layman.⁹⁹

Among large grants made by Edward IV to the provosts and college of Eton in 1462, chiefly of the possessions of the forfeited alien priories, that they might pray for the good estate of the king, and for the souls of his progenitors, &c., the

hospital of St. Peter of Windsor is first named.¹⁰ The practical extinction of leprosy by this time in England formed a genuine excuse for the transference of this property.

The site and land of this hospital still bear the name of Spital, about half a mile south of Windsor proper.

30. THE HOSPITAL OF ST. JOHN, WINDSOR

Grant during pleasure was made by Edward II in September, 1316, to Walter de Redynges, king's yeoman, of the place which is called the hospital of St. John, Windsor, to hold with all lands, rents, and other things pertaining, provided that he found a chaplain to celebrate divine service in the chapel there daily, for the souls of the king's ancestors, so long as he should hold the place.¹⁰¹ Nothing more, however, appears to be known of this hospital, which would seem, from the wording of the grant, to have already ceased from active existence at this date.

COLLEGIATE CHURCHES

31. THE COLLEGE OF SHOTTESBROOK

Sir William Trussell, of Kibblestone, Staffordshire, founded a college consisting of a warden and five other chaplains and two clerks at Shottesbrook in the year 1337, and endowed it with the church of Shottesbrook, and a rental of 40s. on the manor of the same parish, held in chief, as of the castle of Windsor, by rendering 20s. yearly at the castle. The letters patent granting licence for this foundation also authorized the founder to alienate to the college a further yearly payment of 100s. of land or rent not held in chief.¹ In the following year licence was granted to the warden of the college to acquire in mortmain further lands or rents up to £10 yearly.²

There had been a parish church at Shottesbrook—a parish formed out of the older one of White Waltham—for some time before Sir William Trussell's days. Both the church and the college, subsequently attached to it, were dedicated in honour of St. John Baptist. The foundation ordinance laid down that the warden and the five chaplains were to keep the canonical hours, beginning at daybreak (*in aurora diei*); they were to follow in all things the use of Sarum and to sing from the heart with distinct and suitable

voice (*corde et voce distincte et apte psallere*); they were to wear surplices and black copes, after the manner of the vicars of the church of Salisbury; and the mass of Our Lady was to be celebrated daily with the utmost devotion. Full provision was also made for high mass and for particular collects for the king and founder, with many other details both of a liturgical and household character.³

On 24 May, 1337, the founder presented John de Lodyngton to the bishop, as the first warden of the perpetual chantry of Shottesbrook.⁴

From that date onwards there are frequent entries of presentations to the wardenship or to the different chaplaincies in the episcopal registers. Thus, on 12 June, 1346, Thomas de Wokyngge was instituted to the fifth place or grade among the chaplains, on the nomination of the founder; and John Fakenham to the second grade, on 16 November, 1351.⁵

Edward III in 1338 granted to Sir William Trussell, 'out of our special grace and on account of the affection we have for so beloved and faithful a servant,' the advowson of the Berkshire church of Basildon, with licence to transfer and appropriate it to his chantry or college of Shottesbrook.⁶ In the same year Sir William, described as the king's yeoman, obtained a grant for him-

⁹⁷ Pat. 1 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 32.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 5 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 21, 14; 9 Ric. II, pt. i, m. 23.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 13 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 1 Edw. IV, pt. iii, m. 24.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 10 Edw. II, pt. i, m. 21.

¹ Ibid. 12 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 24.

² Ibid. 11 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 11. The foundation was not carried out till this date, but the first licence had been obtained in April, 1336; Pat. 10 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 22.

³ Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, i, 35-40.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid. i, fol. 171, 296.

⁶ Pat. 12 Edw. III, pt. iv, m. 9.

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self and his heirs and all their tenants of the manor of Shottesbrook to be quit of expedition of their dogs within the forest; ⁷ a grant of real value, as the officers of the forest exacted a fee for each case of mutilation. The whole manor was within the bounds of the forest of Windsor. On 8 June, 1341, Sir William Trussell added to the endowments to the extent of £7 yearly value (out of the £10 for which licence was obtained in 1338), by the gift of a messuage in Cookham, with lands, meadow, weir, and rent.⁸

Some difficulty (probably with the ecclesiastical authorities) must have arisen with regard to the appropriation of the church of Basildon; for the licence was repeated in 1340,⁹ and again in 1344.¹⁰ But it was not accomplished until many years later. Towards the end of the reign of Edward III the church and college were almost destroyed by fire, and all the priests and clerks left, save John Bradford, the warden. Thereupon the king once more, in 1371, repeated his licence for the appropriation of the church of Basildon,¹¹ but even now there was some further delay before papal and episcopal sanction was obtained. By letters patent of 1384, John Bradwell, the warden, and the chaplains obtained ratification from Richard II of the appropriation of Basildon, as sanctioned by the pope, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of Salisbury, when William Sharp was warden.¹² The episcopal registers show that the rectory was formally appropriated and the vicarage endowed in the year 1382.¹³

In 1386 a chantry was ordained in this collegiate church for the soul of William Frithe, a London merchant.¹⁴ In 1392 the college endowments were slightly increased by some further messuages in Shottesbrook and White Waltham.¹⁵

The last warden but one of this college was Dr. William Throc Morton, who died in 1535. His alabaster effigy is still in the chancel. An account of this monument and inscription with many other particulars as to the manor and college of Shottesbrook was written by Mr. Hearne in 1711, and inserted in the second edition of Leland's *Itinerary*.¹⁶

The College and Chantry Commissioners of Henry VIII of 1546 reported that the college of St. John Baptist, Shottesbrook, was founded by the ancestors of the earl of Oxford to have a warden and two (*sic*) priests to say the divine office. They found that the warden at that time was a layman, Robert Vere, brother to the earl of Oxford; 'he recyvethe the prophetts and

comyth nott there.' They also reported that the college was a parish church situated between two other parish churches, each of which was but half a mile distant. The annual value was £62 14s. Out of this the two priests received £12 1s. 4d. and the clerk or sexton 33s. 4d.; £4 went to the vicar of Basildon, and 6s. for bread, wine, wax, and oil. The considerable balance was received by Robert Vere 'to his owne use and profytte.'¹⁷

The commissioners of 1 Edward VI, in which year the college was suppressed, gave the annual value as £59 5s. 8d., of which 'Robert Verre Esquire Mr. or Warden' received £31 3s. 11d. The two chaplains or 'co-brethren,' William Hall, aged 51, and Thomas Bersly, aged 50, each received £6 8s., whilst William Standysh the clerk had 33s. 4d.¹⁸

WARDENS OF SHOTTESBROOK

John de Lodyngton, appointed 1337¹⁹
 William Sharp
 John Bradford, occurs 1371²⁰
 John Bradwell, occurs 1384²¹
 Richard Sprotburgh²²
 Thomas Rawlyns²³
 William Throc Morton, died 1535²⁴
 Robert Vere, last master²⁴

32. THE COLLEGE OF WALLINGFORD

The college and church or chapel of St. Nicholas was situated in the south-east corner of the outer bailey of the castle of Wallingford. Leland, in the time of Henry VIII, wrote:—

There were a dean and prebendaries in the King's free chapel within the third dyke of the Castle here in the beginning of King John's reign—and probably before—which Edmund Earl of Cornwall (11 Edward I) endowed with lands and rents for the maintenance of six chaplains, six clerks, and four choristers etc.²⁵

The charters of King John show that there were then two royal prebendal chapels at Wallingford; one of which is described as 'our chapel of Wallingford to wit the church of All Saints';²⁶ whilst there are several later references to prebends in 'our chapel within the castle.' The last of these is of the year 1214, when William de London received the king's

⁷ Rymer, *Foedera* v, 86.

⁸ Pat. 15 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 43.

⁹ Ibid. 14 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 10.

¹⁰ Ibid. 18 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 1.

¹¹ Ibid. 45 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 35.

¹² Ibid. 8 Ric. II, pt. i, m. 7.

¹³ Sar. Epis. Reg. Erghum (2nd Nos.), fol. 63.

¹⁴ Ibid. fol. 93b.

¹⁵ Pat. 16 Ric. II, pt. i, m. 22.

¹⁶ Leland, *Itin.* (1744), ii, 119-35.

¹⁷ Coll. and Chant. Cert. 51.

¹⁸ Ibid. Nos. 3, 7.

¹⁹ Sar. Epis. Reg. Wyville, i, 40.

²⁰ Pat. 45 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 35.

²¹ Ibid. 8 Ric. II, pt. i, m. 7.

²² Early Chan. Proc. bde. 56, No. 113.

²³ Leland, *Itin.* (ed. 1744), ii, 119.

²⁴ Coll. and Chant. Cert. 51.

²⁵ Leland, *Itin.* ii, 40.

²⁶ Chart. R. 2 John, m. 24.

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letters of presentation to the prebend which had been held by Master William de Pottern, 'in the chapel of the Lord the King in the castle of Wallingford.' Letters were at the same time sent to the canons of the chapel, and likewise to the bishop of Salisbury, 'if perchance that prebend may lie in his diocese.'²⁷

Kennett records an inquisition of the year 1183, from which it appears that Miles Crispin was the founder of the Wallingford prebends.²⁸ Miles Crispin came in with the Conqueror, and died in 1107.

On 19 March, 1227, the king presented Hugh de Bathon to the rectory of Stokes-Basset, Oxfordshire, which was at that time a prebend of the chapel of St. Nicholas in Wallingford Castle, on the resignation of John de Wighenholt.²⁹

In November, 1229, the king committed the custody of Wallingford Castle to his brother Richard, earl of Cornwall, together with the honour of Wallingford and its appurtenances; but it is expressly stated that the king reserved in his own hands the gift of the prebends of the castle chapel.³⁰

This collegiate church of St. Nicholas was further endowed and re-established in 1278, on so important a scale, by Edmund, earl of Cornwall, that he was usually regarded as the founder. Edmund's foundation charter, together with another of the year 1280 extending the endowment, received royal confirmation at Michaelmas, 1283.³¹ By this charter a college was founded in the chapel of St. Nicholas, consisting of a dean (Roger Drayton was the first appointment), six chaplains, six clerks, and four taper-bearers³² (*ceropherarii*), with an endowment of £61 12s. yearly rental in Warborough and Shellingford. It is stated in the charter that Edmund founded the college for the salvation of his own soul, and of the souls of Richard, king of the Romans, his father, of Sanchia his mother, of the king of England, and of the souls of all the faithful who had died in the Lord.

In 1356 Edward III gave his licence for the appropriation of the church of Harwell, Berkshire, to the dean of the free chapel of St. Nicholas within Wallingford Castle, the gift of his son, Edward the Black Prince, for the sustenance of the six chaplains, six clerks, and four taper-bearers.³³ Five years later the college received the additional gift of the manor of Harwell.³⁴

²⁷ Pat. 16 John, m. 15.

²⁸ Kennett, *Par. Antiq.* i, 130.

²⁹ Pat. 11 Hen. III, m. 8 *bis*.

³⁰ Close, 14 Hen. III, m. 23.

³¹ Chart. R. 11 Edw. I, m. 2.

³² The four boys are termed choristers in the earlier charter, at the Bodleian, of 1278; the dean is therein termed master.

³³ Pat. 30 Edw. III, m. 15.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 35 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 15.

The dean and college or the king's chapel within the castle of Wallingford obtained licence in January, 1389, to appropriate towards their maintenance the church of All Saints, Wallingford, which did not exceed the value of 100s. a year.³⁵ The church of All Saints stood within 300 yards of the college; there was no special provision made for vicarage, but the church and parish were served by the clergy of St. Nicholas.

The deanery, as in so many similar cases, appears to have been often bestowed upon prominent pluralists who treated it as a sinecure. Richard Feld, who was appointed by the crown dean of the free chapel of Wallingford in November 1399, probably never saw the college of priests over whom he was supposed to preside; for at the time of his appointment he held the rectories of Ringwood and Cleeve, Worcester diocese; and was also prebendary of Alveley in the free chapel of Bridgnorth, prebendary of Cotton in the collegiate church of Tamworth, and warden of the free chapel of Tickhill, Yorks.³⁶

Henry VI, in 1444, at the petition of Stephen Morpeth, the dean, granted to the college ten marks yearly out of the fee-farm of the town and honour of Wallingford. The letters patent of this grant mention that the stipends originally assigned were 40 marks to the dean and his substitute, 10 marks to each of the six priest chaplains, 7 marks to each of the six clerks, and 40s. to each of the four choristers, and that there were other considerable and heavy charges; but that the true annual value of the rents and possessions of the college had so materially diminished that the income, after paying for repairs and necessary burdens, barely left a balance of ten marks, so that either the number of ministers must be materially lessened, or the foundation ordinance set at naught. The king thereupon, in addition to the grant of ten marks, ordained that the dean and chaplains on festival days might procure extra boys from elsewhere, and only be obliged to support two choristers throughout the year.³⁷ The choristers were, however, ere long increased to the original number.

Dr. Underhill, who was dean of the college from 1510 to 1536, built a new west tower for the collegiate church.³⁸

Leland, writing about 1538, states:—

The Deane afore Dr. London that now is built a fair steeple of stone at the west end of the collegiate chapel, in making whereof he defaced, without license, a piece of the king's lodging joining to the eastward end of the chapel. The Deane hath a fair lodging of tymbre within the Castle, and to it is joined a place for the ministers of the chapel.³⁹

³⁵ *Ibid.* 12 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 29.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 1 Hen. IV, pt. ii, m. 29.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 23 Hen. VI, pt. i, m. 17.

³⁸ Hedges, *Wallingford*, ii, 296.

³⁹ Leland, *Itin.* ii, 40.

RELIGIOUS HOUSES

The notorious Dr. London, of evil fame, one of Cromwell's monastic visitors, was dean of this college from 1536 until his final disgrace. On 23 February, 1538, John London wrote to Cromwell detailing the condition of the establishment over which he presided. After every man's portion (a dean, six priests, six clerks, a deacon, and four choristers) had been paid, there was very little left for other charges, 'wherbye such ornamentes as the noble founders gave unto that chapell do oonly remayne, very olde and dyvers of them past mending.' 'The Kinges Grace of hys most tendre benyvolens dydde within the viii yeres past bylde newly the hole Colledge, in maner all, as well the Deans as the Prests and Clerks lodgyngs.' London then proceeds to beg for the ornaments of the conventual church of Abingdon about to be dissolved, stating that they had 'very few copys, few vestments, and butt oon awliter clothe of sylk, and all thees very olde.' He proceeded to state that if the king granted them these Abingdon goods, he would be glad at his own charge to repair them, and to 'sett in every of them hys Grace is armys, with a scripture of memory that hys Grace conferyd such ornaments to that hys Grace is Colledg.'⁴⁰

John London, one of Cromwell's favourite tools in the work of suppression, was richly rewarded. He was not only made dean of Wallingford, but was also dean of Oseney, warden of New College, Oxford, canon of York, Lincoln, Sarum, and Windsor, and rector of several parishes. With his wealth and promotion came the display of his dissolute nature. Archbishop Cranmer styled him 'that filthy prebendary of Windsor'; he was convicted of perjury and of the foulest form of adultery. His life and death were both evil. After riding through the public streets of Oxford, Wallingford, Windsor, and Wokingham with his face to the tail, and spending some hours in each town 'in a pillory where every voice might revile and every hand might hurl filth at him, he was thrust away into the Fleet Prison, where he miserably died' in 1540.⁴¹

The College and Chantry Commissioners of Henry VIII, of 1546, reported that the college of St. Nicholas in the castle of Wallingford was founded by the Black Prince for one dean, six priests, six clerks, and four choristers for daily divine service, 'whyche they do observe accordyngly.' The annual value was £155 4s. 1½d. The stipends of the six priests amounted to £40; of the six clerks, £28; of the four choristers, £8; and of the sexton, 26s. 8d. The wages of 'certayn manialls and servantes' amounted to £4 13s. 4d.; bread, wine, wax, and oil cost £5; £6 6s. 7d. was paid for certain obits, and 40s. as a pension to the church of All Saints,

Wallingford. The remainder, after certain dues had been discharged, went 'towards the lyvyng of John Dune deane,' and for the repair of the houses and tenements.⁴²

The commissioners of Edward VI, of 1548, stated that John Donne, the dean, bachelor of divinity, and subdean of the king's chapels, had £31 2s. 1¾d. as his annual stipend from this college, and that he had besides this £60 towards his living in other benefices. Of the four priests of the college, one, Richard Crane, aged 74, was bedridden; Richard Fotherby, aged 52, was unable to serve cure; William Donkeley, aged 38, and John de Ayshedale, 52, were also pronounced 'unable to serve cure,' which seems to mean that in the opinion of the commissioners they could not with success discharge the duties of an ordinary parish priest. Each of the four were drawing stipend of £6 19s. 10d., 'which is their only lyvyng.' The names of the six clerks and the four choristers are also set forth. One of the former was organist and teacher of the choristers.

The commissioners added to their report that:—

A vicar is to be endowed, or a preste must be allowed to serve the cure of Allhallowes without the Castell Gate, forasmoche as by impropriation the deane was both parson and vicar, unles it shall stande with the Kings Majisties pleasure to unite and annex the same unto Saunte Maries or some other parishe within the Towne. Within whiche parish of Allhallowes be of howslyng people lx.⁴³

The Church Goods Commissioners of the same year estimated that the lead on the chapel, tower and cloister amounted to ten foddors, at 15 ft. sq. to the fodder; and there were four bells.⁴⁴ The college was suppressed in 1548, and the site granted to Michael Stanhope and John Bellew. From them it was purchased in the same year by the dean and canons of Christ Church, Oxford, as a place of retirement in times of sickness. In 1552 the clerk's lodgings and other premises were leased to Thomas Parry, but on condition of his quitting the entire premises, save one chamber, at eight days' notice, in the event of the plague or other serious visitation occurring at Oxford.⁴⁵

The pension roll of Philip and Mary, 1554, shows that the members of the dissolved community were treated liberally. Two of the chaplains who then survived were receiving £6 a year, being only 19s. 10d. less than their former salary, whilst all the clerks were in receipt of the income they had previously drawn less a single shilling, viz. £4 16s. 8d.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Coll. and Chant. Cert. Berks. 51.

⁴¹ Ibid. iii.

⁴² K.R. Ch. Gds. $\frac{8}{3}$.

⁴³ Hedges, *Wallingford*, ii, 315-16.

⁴⁴ B.M. Add. MS. 5806.

⁴⁰ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. i, 341.
que. 2^e ronde, *Hist.* iv, 296.

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DEANS OF WALLINGFORD

Ralph de Norwich, presented 1216⁴⁷
Roger Drayton, presented 1283⁴³
Richard Feld, presented 1399⁴⁹
Stephen Morpeth, occurs 1444⁵⁰
Dr. Berworth, 'late dean' in 1534⁵¹
John Underhill, 1510-1536⁵²
John London, presented 1536⁵³
John Donne, occurs 1546⁵⁴

33. THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF WINDSOR

There was an old free or royal chapel of some importance within the castle of Windsor, dedicated to St. Edward the Confessor, wherein Henry I established a college of eight secular priests.⁵⁵ It is supposed that these priests had no regular endowments and were not prebendaries, but were merely stipendiaries of the king.

In the year 1313 Edward II granted to the thirteen chaplains celebrating daily for the king's soul and the souls of his ancestors and heirs in the chapel in his park of Windsor, and to the four clerks serving those chaplains, £156 13s. 4d. a year, namely to each chaplain £10, and to each clerk 10 marks a year for their sustenance, to be paid out of the Buckinghamshire manors of Langley Marsh and Cippenham, until such time as the king should make an assignment to those chaplains and clerks of benefices to the like value.⁵⁶

Soon after his accession, Edward III removed these chaplains and clerks out of the park into the castle. On 3 March, 1331, the king granted to John de Melton, Andrew de Bodekesham, Peter de Wyde, and Edmund de London, his chaplains, lately celebrating in the chapel in Windsor Park by appointment of the late king, and now staying in Windsor Castle, to be attendant with his other chaplains on the divine offices of his soul, &c., a yearly allowance of ten marks each for their sustenance.⁵⁷

An interesting matter relative to these thirteen royal chaplains and four clerks of the park in the time of Edward II occurs in letters patent of 1346, wherein it is recited that Edward II had

granted to all those ecclesiastics privileges of meals at the table of the royal hall (or their liveries of meat and drink) whenever the king or queen should be at Windsor; but now that the king had removed the chantry to the castle Edward III granted to the eight chaplains and their two clerks that every time that the king or queen or his heirs stayed at the castle they and their successors were to be admitted to the table in hall or have their liveries; and further, that they were to receive all oblations offered in the castle chapel in like manner as they used to receive them in the park chapel.⁵⁸

On 6 August, 1348, the king signed a charter of foundation, whereby he established and definitely endowed a chapel within the castle, wherein (as he recites) he had himself been baptized, and which had been begun by his progenitors in honour of Edward the Confessor. It was to be rebuilt on a more magnificent scale, to be served by a much enlarged establishment, and to be dedicated in honour of the omnipotent God, the glorious Virgin His Mother, St. George the Martyr, and St. Edward the Confessor. In the first instance the king bestowed on this royal chapel—soon afterwards known only by the dedication to St. George—the advowsons and appropriations of the churches of Wyardisbury, Buckinghamshire; South Tawton, Devon; and Uttoxeter, Staffordshire. To the eight existing chaplains he added fifteen other canons, a warden and twenty-four poor or infirm knights.⁵⁹

Between 1348 and 1350 the king largely increased the endowments of his first charter, adding thereto the appropriated churches of Datchet, Eure, Rhiston, Whaddon, Caxton, Simonsburn, and Saltash, with the manors of Eure and Caswell, &c.⁶⁰

In 1350 Pope Clement VI, after confirming the statutes of this royal college, granted to the warden and his successors that whilst residing there they might enjoy the fruits of other benefices. He also granted exemption from ordinary jurisdiction to the whole college; but for this privilege they were to pay a mark annually to the papal camera on St. George's Day.⁶¹

In 1351 there was some alteration and extension of the arrangements of the college, according to the direction of the bishop of Winchester, acting as papal commissary. The establishment, as then ordered, was to consist of a warden, twelve canons, thirteen priest-vicars, four clerks, six choristers, and twenty-six poor or alms knights.

A miscellaneous register of affairs of the

⁴⁷ Pat. 1 Hen. III, m. 13.
⁴⁸ Chart. 11 Edw. III, m. 2.
⁴⁹ Pat. 1 Hen. IV, pt. ii, m. 29.
⁵⁰ Ibid. 23 Hen. VI, pt. i, m. 17.
⁵¹ Tanner, *Not. Mon.* xxxviii.
⁵² Ibid. Hedges, *Wallingford*, ii, 296.
⁵³ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, xiii, pt. i, 341.
⁵⁴ Coll. and Chant. Cert. 3 and 51.
⁵⁵ Tanner, *Notitia*, Berks. xxiv. In Lysons' *Berks*, 423, the curious mistake is made of turning eight into eighty! Leland (*Coll.* i, 89) says that Hen. I established five chantries at Windsor Castle.

⁵⁶ Pat. 7 Edw. II, pt. i, m. 16.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 5 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 29.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 20 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 23.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 22 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 6.

⁶⁰ Ibid. *passim*.

⁶¹ *Cal. Papal Let.* iii, 383, 399.

RELIGIOUS HOUSES

college at the Public Record Office thus opens :—⁶²

Here ffolowithe sertayne Actes and statutes made by the noble Kyng Edwarde the thirde, to the Colledge in the Castell of Wyndesere, and firste founder to the highe and honorable ordre of the garter.

Item for the amplification of his heavenly merytes and noble memory, of his knyghtley fame, devised or desyned and establishede in his chappell and Colledge of Seynte George off Wyndesore, A custos or Deane, and xij secular preestes chanones, xij preestes vicares, vj queresters, and xxvi pore contemplatyne knyghtes under one corporation, And as one joynte bodye, ffor whose perpetuall sustentation he fowndede full blessedly and approved certayne landes, lordeshippes, benefices and possessions To the yerely value of a Mli or more, as hereafter shalbe Rehersed by the particular parcellis of the same.

At the head of the details of the property the composition of the establishment of the college is repeated. It is in the same words as the previous statement, save that 'iij Clerkes' are inserted between the vicars and the choristers.

The list begins with the particulars of the first foundation, i.e. of the whole reign of Edward III. It included the three manors of Eure, Caswell, and Castle Donington, the quit rent of 100 marks of the town of Northampton, 'one last of Rede heryng' of the town of Yarmouth, eighteen rectories, and thirty pensions or portions from other churches.

The sum total of the annual value of the original foundation and of all subsequent gifts, 'the blessedde dysposicions of other dyvers kyngs and prynces' &c. is put down as £2,193 13s. 4d. for the year 1516.

The yearly charges were: the dean £100; twelve canons £243; fifteen vicars £100; one gospeller £8; one epistoler and organist 53s. 4d.; thirteen clerks £130; thirteen choristers £52; two 'sacristorys' £8; two bell-ringers £6 13s. 4d.; two chantry priests for the duchess of Exeter £16; one verger £10; four chantry priests for the king £42 13s. 4d.; for bread, wine, wax and oil £20; for 'there officer outwarde and innewarde £20'; for the clerk of accounts £10; for 'there Rydyng officers and for other that goythe upon Errandes necessarye yerely' £28; and to 'there learned Councelles for their ffees' £20.

The expenses amounted to £825 13s. 4d.

and so the remainethe in surplusage yerely above all the ordynary Charges, besides the greate oblations unto Or Lady, The holly Crosse, and blessed Kyng Henry, the sum of £1,368.

An indulgence, or a relaxation of enjoined penance, for two years and eighty days was

⁶² Misc. Bks. (Treas. Receipt), cxiii, wrongly labelled 'Order of Garter.' No notice is here taken of the details pertaining to the Poor Knights or to the subsequent establishment of the Order of the Garter.

granted by Innocent VI in 1354, to penitents visiting on the principal feasts, and on those of St. George, the Exaltation of the Cross, and St. Stephen and St. Edward, the royal chapel in Windsor Castle, in which there is a cross of great length of the wood of the true cross brought by St. Helen.⁶³

Notwithstanding the papal exemption from jurisdiction, Richard II in 1378 directed Adam, bishop of St. Asaph, chancellor of the kingdom, to hold a visitation of the college, lest there should be anything unseemly (*indecens vel inbonestum*) requiring correction. The visitation was held in the chapter-house on 17 September, when every member of the establishment was examined.⁶⁴

The following were the *reformanda* :—(a) The dean, Walter Almaly, was no longer to appropriate the fines of the poor knights for absence from office, but they were to be divided among the knights; (b) the dean was to divide all donations of lords and magnates among the knights as well as the canons; (c) two knights guilty of incontinence were reprimanded; if they or others were in the future guilty of such offences, they were to be corrected by the dean, if repeated to be gravely corrected, and for a third occurrence expelled; (d) one of these two knights was given to insolence, attended chapel but rarely, and when he did come immediately went to sleep; his case was referred to the king and council; (e) one of the canons was jocular with the laity and frequently absent from mass and hours; the dean was to deal severely with all such cases without delay; (f) the church of Uttoxeter, appropriated to the college, was farmed by one Thomas Tapley, who lived in the rectory house, with wife and children and servants, contrary to the canons; the king was desired to find a remedy; (g) one of the canons of the college did not celebrate as he ought, but was a huntsman and a hawker; he was therefore to be admonished by the dean to take his due share of masses, and to give up his illicit life, and if he proved incorrigible to be removed from his office by the chancellor, without any hope of restoration; (h) the dean was too remiss, simple and negligent in the correction of the vicars, so that they did not show the reverence they ought to the canons; (i) the charters and other muniments of the college were to be placed without delay in a chest with two or three locks in the treasury of the chapel, the dean to keep one key and the king to appoint the custodian of the others; (j) the dean to pay the vicars' salaries regularly; (k) a vicar's stall money during vacancy not to be retained by the dean, but to

⁶³ *Cal. Papal Let.* iii, 523.

⁶⁴ Rymer, *Foedera*, vii, 203-6. It is generally stated that the title of Dean was not used at Windsor till 1412, but Walter Almaly is styled Dean throughout this visitation.

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be given to those other vicars who take his place ; (l) the order of celebration by the canons to be better observed ; (m) a vicar charged with incontinence was left to the correction of the dean ; (n) the swans and cygnets lately given to the college by Oliver de Bordeaux were to be divided between the dean, canons, and knights ; (o) the gift of the late William Edendon, bishop of Winchester, of £200 to the college that he might become an associate (*confrater*) could not be traced, so the dean, into whose hands it was paid, was to be obliged to produce an account of it ; (p) the dean was strictly enjoined, under pain, to keep the cloister in a decent condition worthy of a royal chapel, and to have it at once cleansed of nettles and noxious weeds.

The college seems to have been peculiarly unfortunate in its second warden or dean, as appears from this visitation. Further difficulties arose in July, 1384, when nine of the canons lodged a complaint against their warden, who was usurping the chancellor's power of visitation, expecting them to appear before him ; both parties were summoned to appear before the chancellor's commissary at Westminster.⁶⁵

A grant for life was made by Richard II in 1387 to John Cray, a king's esquire, of the office of usher of the king's chapel at Windsor, to carry a rod before the king in processions on festivals when the king is there, with 12*d.* a day wages and lodgings in the castle.⁶⁶

In 1399 Henry IV confirmed letters patent of 17 Richard II granting all the chapel offerings to the warden and canons, and ordering that certain lasts of herrings should be divided between the warden and canons resident.⁶⁷ An addition was made to the endowment in 1422, when the spiritualities of the suppressed alien priory of Ogbourne were granted to the college by John, duke of Bedford.⁶⁸

Large grants of property, both spiritual and temporal, were made to the college by Edward IV, especially of the lands &c. of alien priories.

In 1494 Pope Alexander consented to the suppression of the small priory of Luffield, Northamptonshire, in favour of Windsor College.⁶⁹

Thomas Butler, warden of the chapel, was permitted by Pope Boniface IX, at the king's request, to farm, without obtaining licence of the ordinary, the fruits of his wardenship, and to be absent therefrom, providing it be served by a fit vicar.⁷⁰

Letters patent of 1429 recite that when the wardenship with a prebend became vacant

through the death of Thomas Butler, Henry IV, disregarding the terms of the foundation, granted the prebend and wardenship to his clerk Richard Kingston, by name of the deanery. Richard was admitted and had possession all his life ; but on his death, Henry V, not being aware of the foundation, when with his army before Rouen, granted letters patent of wardenship and prebend, by name of deanery, to John Arundell, who was duly admitted as dean in 1417. The said John had become troubled lest he might be disturbed, as the foundation charter specifies warden and not dean, therefore Henry VI confirmed him in possession as dean.⁷¹

From this date the head of the college was always called dean ; but, as we have seen, John Arundell was unnecessarily troubled and misled the king, for the second warden (*custos*) was repeatedly and officially styled dean by the chancellor.

On 6 December, 1479, letters patent were granted by Edward IV in confirmation of a parliamentary grant in 8 Henry VI for the incorporation of the warden or dean and the canons as one corporate body, with perpetual succession and a common seal. The same letter authorized the grant to them by the duke of Suffolk of the manor of Leighton Buzzard, and licence to acquire in mortmain lands, rents, or advowsons to the value of £500 without any fines or fees.⁷²

Edward IV, who was the great rebuilder of Windsor Castle, finding the foundations of the noble collegiate chapel of Edward III in an unsafe condition, began its reconstruction on a more magnificent scale in 1474. The fabric itself was completed in five years, but it was not until 1481 that the stalls and tabernacle work in the choir were set up.

On the appointment of Bishop Beauchamp to the Windsor deanery he obtained papal sanction for the translation of the remains of John Shorne from North Marston to a shrine in the new chapel of St. George. The church of North Marston, Buckinghamshire, had before this been appropriated to the chapter. Of this church John Shorne, who died about 1290, was the pious rector. Miracles were reported of him in his lifetime, which were afterwards continued in connexion with his remains, and with a well that he had blessed. The most popular of his achievements, actually represented on church glass, painting, and carvings, was the conjuring of the devil into a boot. Round his holy well, so late as the eighteenth century, these words were legible :—

Sir John Schorne,
Gentleman borne,
Conjured the Devil into a Boot.

The visits and offerings to his shrine at Windsor were so numerous that they were actually said

⁷¹ Pat. 7 Hen. VI, pt. i, m. 13.

⁷² Ibid. 19 Edw. IV, m. 5.

⁶⁵ Pat. 8 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 35 *d.*

⁶⁶ Ibid. 10 Ric. II, pt. ii, m. 12.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 1 Henry IV, pt. v, m. 9.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 10 Hen. V, confd. 11 Hen. VI, pt. v, m. 14.

⁶⁹ Rymer, *Foedera*, xii, 563-4.

⁷⁰ *Cal. Papal Let.* iv, 395. Butler was archdeacon of Canterbury, and also held five prebends and a rectory.

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to have averaged £500 a year at the time of the Reformation.⁷³

Edward IV died in 1483. By his will, dated 1475, he desired to be buried 'in the church of the Collage of Saint George within owre Castell of Wyndesour, by us begoune of newe to bee buylded.' He was to be buried in a vault with a chapel or closet over it with space for an altar, and tomb with his figure of silver and gilt; or at least of copper and gilt. The will further provided for a chantry of two priests, and for a company of thirteen poor bedesmen to live within the college.⁷⁴

Edward IV was duly buried in St. George's chapel in 1483, and in the following year the body of Henry VI was removed from Chertsey abbey and here re-interred. Edward the Fourth's queen, Elizabeth Wydville, was buried by her husband in 1492, according to the terms of her will,

I bequeathe my body to be buried with the bodie of my Lord at Windesoure, according to the will of my saide Lorde and myne, without pompes entreing or costlie expensis doune thereabouts.⁷⁵

The original intention of Henry VII was to be buried at St. George's, Windsor; he drew up elaborate plans for a stately chapel and special almshouse for bedesmen. For this project he procured no fewer than four papal bulls of indulgence between 1494 and 1499.⁷⁶

The work of the new chapel, begun by Edward IV in 1474, was not fully completed till the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII, when the beautiful roof of the choir was erected.

This royal collegiate chapel was marvellously equipped with rich ornaments, jewels, vestments, books, and relics, many of which were no doubt transferred from the earlier chapel of Henry III, otherwise we could scarcely expect so varied and wealthy a display in the days of Walter Almaly, the second dean, 1380-1403. A full inventory compiled in the reign of Richard II (with a few additions), names, among a large number of service books, an ordinal which had belonged to Edward III, another ordinal bound by William Mugge, the first dean of the college, a new text of the Gospel, bound in silver on each side, and a book of legends and of masses of Our Lady, the gift of John Grandison, bishop of Exeter (1327-70). In addition to the service books, there were thirty-four books on different subjects (*diversarum scientiarum*) chained in the church; among them was a Bible and a concordance, and two books of French romance, one of which was the *Liber de Rose*.

⁷³ Ashm. MSS. mcxxv, 107; Ashmole's *Order of the Garter*, 172; Lipscombe, *Bucks.* i, 339; Lysons, *Berks.* 603.

⁷⁴ *Excerpta Historica*, 366-76.

⁷⁵ Nichol, *Royal Wills*.

⁷⁶ Rymer, *Foedera*, xii, 565, 591, 644, 672.

The list of vestments is an amazingly rich one, beginning with a set of ruby velvet, woven with figures powdered with jewels, and comprising a chasuble, two tunicles, three albs, three amices, a good cope, and two other copes without jewels, an altar frontal, and riddels or side curtains. There were seventeen other complete suits of varying colours and texture, as well as many single chasubles, &c. Some of the sets were appropriated for particular uses, as for use at the Lady Mass, at a private altar behind the high altar, for the two altars in the nave, and for the altar on the rood-loft.

In addition to the copes belonging to the sets of vestments, there were twenty special copes; one of red velvet embroidered in gold, the gift of Henry, duke of Lancaster; another of black velvet with ragged staffs of silver, the gift of the earl of Warwick; and two of deep red cloth of gold, with dragons and lions fighting, the gift of the duke of Gloucester. There were also two large sets of red copes, one of eighteen, and the other of twenty-two, evidently intended for the processional use of the whole staff of ecclesiastics on special occasions.

Fourteen costly cloths or hangings are enumerated; two large linen cloths, 6½ ells long, are also mentioned, which were unfolded in the quire to place the copes on at the principal feasts.

There is a wonderful catalogue of the jewels and relics *infra tabulam summi altaris*. The list opens with the richly jewelled noble cross, *vocat. Greth*.⁷⁷ The second is the still more richly ornamented cross, formed from the true cross, set in gold and blazing with sapphires and enamel, which must have been the gift of Edward I.

This display included silver gilt images, and jewelled tabernacles, reliquaries borne by angels, cups, vessels, crystal phials, &c., and there was another shorter list of jewels and reliquaries standing *super summam altare*. The actual relics were very numerous, and included bones of St. Bartholomew, St. Thomas the Apostle, St. George, St. Thomas of Canterbury, St. Thomas of Hereford, St. David, St. William of York, a girdle given by St. John to the Blessed Virgin, and part of the jaw-bone of St. Mark containing fourteen teeth.

The inventory of plate, all elaborate of its kind, included five jewelled morsers; a golden chalice and seven of silver gilt; two paxes; nine candlesticks; four censers and two ships; a

⁷⁷ Edward I offered 5s. to the cross of Greth on 2 Feb. 1300, at the altar of his chapel at Windsor. It was highly esteemed as containing wood of the true cross, and was given to Edward I by certain Welshmen at Aberconway in 1273. This cross had formerly been in the possession of Prince Llewellyn, and is supposed to have derived its name from Greyt, a native of Wales, who brought it from the Holy Land. Tighe and Davis, *Annals of Windsor*, i, 114-15.

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cross and four processional crosses; four beautiful pyxes; six super-altars, one being of jasper encircled with silver gilt; two mitres and a pastoral staff; as well as paxes, cruets, staves, &c. The swords of King Edward, the earl of Suffolk, Lord Thomas Banaster, King Richard, the earl of Derby, the duke of Lancaster, and the earl of Salisbury are enumerated, as well as six helmets and six mantles.

In addition to all this, there is a long supplementary list of jewels and relics in the treasury. Among them were a silver gilt cup which had belonged to St. Thomas of Hereford; a pyx of beryl, enamelled with the arms of St. Edward and St. Edmund; a pyx of red jasper with foot and cover of silver gilt, containing a bone of St. Louis; three jewelled crowns for the images of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and St. Edward; and a banner for Rogationtide bearing a dragon and a lion.⁷⁸

There is another inventory, 8 Henry VIII, at the Public Record Office, which, whilst still very extensive, shows certain losses since the list, *temp.* Richard II, was compiled.⁷⁹

The abstract of the Valor of 1535—the full return for Berkshire is missing—gives the clear annual value of the college as £1,396 17s. 1½d., but in 1547, when the College and Chantry Commissioners of Henry VIII made their reports, the full annual value was declared as £1,530 10s. 6½d., out of which £138 1s. 8½d. went to the king for tithe. The stipend and commons of the dean were valued at £66 13s. 4d. a year; of thirteen prebendaries, £26 each; of eight petty canons, collectively, £106 13s. 4d.; of eight vicars, £80; of thirteen clerks, £130; of thirteen choristers, £52; whilst a certain priest received 40s. for ‘ordinary sermons.’ Bread, wine, wax, and oil cost £36; £120 was spent on obits and lights, £8 4s. 7d. for masses and suffrages, and £6 19s. 8d. in perpetual (obligatory) alms. Out of the balance of upwards of £650, eight chantry priests received £78 6s. 8d. for their salaries, whilst £237 5s. was spent in the ‘cotydyan dystribucion’ to the thirteen priest-vicars.⁸⁰

The chantries enumerated in this return, within the collegiate chapel of St. George, were those of Edward IV (two priests); the duchess of Exeter, sister to Edward IV (two priests); William Lord Hastings; Canon Thomas Passche; Verger John Plumer; and John Oxenbridge.⁸¹

Although this college was specially exempted from suppression, it was visited by the commissioners of Edward VI of 1548. The names and ages and incomes of the clerical staff are set

down; the two chantry priests of Edward IV were ‘continuall preachers according to the foundation.’⁸²

In consequence of numerous extensive peculations with respect to the goods and property of the royal chapel of Saint George, in 1552 a commission was appointed, consisting of the marquis of Northampton, Sir Philip Hoby, Sir Maurice Berkeley, and two esquires, to hold a visitation of the college. They were instructed to inquire, *inter alia*, as to the vestments and jewels, going through the old inventories, and including ‘the palles of herses, namely of King Henry the vii and King Edward iiiith beside the palle of Henry theyght, whether thei kepe length and breadth, the organes and pipes, the plates of copper upon the graves, the spoile of the Chappell plucked donne in the Colledge, King Edwardes cappe of maintenance, the sworde and girdle of perle and stone, the Duke of Suffolkes sword.’⁸³

The Commissioners had an inventory prepared in July, 1552, showing that there were then three chalices with patens, six great candlesticks, two little candlesticks, two great basins, two censers, a monstrance, a cross, and two pairs of cruets, all of silver gilt; as well as a square agate stone furnished with silver (a pax), and seven rector’s staves tipped with silver.

There were twenty-six copes; seven chasubles, each with two tunicles; various altar frontals, including one ‘of needle woork containing the lief and martirdom of St. George’; numerous hangings and cushions; three hearse cloths; ‘a palle or canopie to bear over the Kinge,’ and ‘the coate Armour and banner of King Henry theight.’

In addition to these goods, which were in the two vestries, there were the following ‘Jewelles in the Erarie’ (treasury): a pyx of gold, two paxes of gold, a tablet of gold with the image of the Trinity, a tablet of gold set with diamonds, cruets of ‘bryraals,’ and ‘St. George’s head with a helmet.’⁸⁴

Valuable as these ornaments were, it was but a sorry remainder of the magnificent and glorious array that the college possessed a few years earlier. At the same time that this inventory was drawn up, the dean and chapter put in a long document giving as their reason for selling certain plate and jewels, that excessive charges had been enforced upon them. Their estimate was

⁷⁸ Chant. Cert. Berks. 7.

⁷⁹ Add. MS. 5498, fol. 42. All the documents relative to this elaborate visitation are in this MS. A paper on them was read by Mr. Townsend to Soc. of Antiq. in 1869.

⁸¹ This was probably part of the ‘grete ymage of St. George of gold, cclx unses, garnished with rubies perles and saphires and diamonds’ left to the college by Henry VII, by his will, to be set on the high altar on solemn feast days ‘for a perpetual memorie ther to remaigne while the world shall endure.’

⁷⁸ Ashm. MSS. 16, 22; printed at length in Dugdale, *Mon.* viii, 1362–7.

⁷⁹ Misc. Bks. cxiii, 108–11.

⁸⁰ Chant. Cert. Berks. 51.

⁸¹ For particulars as to the Windsor Coll. Chantries, Tighe and Davis, *Annals of Windsor*, i, 398, 460–1.

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that these charges amounted to the sum of £1,965 3s. 1½d. The details included the cost of building parts of the castle wall, and the conveying of water in lead pipes, the furnishing of ten demi-lances when the late king went to Boulogne, and 'the taking doune the Alters, leveling and paving the ground and for peinting of the East end where the high alter was.'⁸⁵

A threefold excuse was made by the dean and chapter for making partition of certain copes and ornaments, leaving the best (as they said) still in the college—'We thought it lafull for us to do, both bicause the goodes are owres, and also bicause the use of such thinges were abolished by the Kinge's Majestie godlie proceedinges, and finallie because the thinges did dailie decay for lack of occupying' . . . 'Concerning the Sapphires and a Balist that were in certain capsis of golde, thei were divided by common assent of them that were ther present, everie man having one.'

Certificates were obtained from various goldsmiths, showing that they had paid the great sum of £1,489 8s. to the dean and chapter for various parcels of plate and jewels sold at different times during the reign of Edward VI.

On 8 August Sir Philip Hoby and one other commissioner examined the dean and each of the canons both singly and collectively. They were able to plead that the chapel of St. George had been expressly exempted from the late statute as to church goods. The various separate confessions and statements of the members of the chapter are somewhat paltry and sordid, and for the most part endeavour to show that each got but little, but that his fellows profited more. Their explanations and excuses availed them not, and they were ordered to surrender to the king all their remaining treasures whether held individually or collectively. These were dispatched to the jewel house in the Tower, where they were weighed on 25 October; the gold and precious stones weighing 685¾ oz. On 9 November the silver and silver gilt was ordered to be 'put to coyne with convenient spede'; the gold plate to be preserved for further consideration.⁸⁶

Notwithstanding the vast changes in the wealth and beauty of this great collegiate church by the Reformation, Queen Elizabeth was by no means content that the fame of its music should cease. On 8 March, 1560, a royal proclamation was issued prohibiting the removing of singing men and boys from St. George's and expressing the opinion that it should 'not be of less reputation in our days, but rather augmented and increased.'⁸⁷

⁸⁵ A peremptory letter had been sent to the dean and chapter of Windsor by the Privy Council, in 1550, 'to deface the aulters out of hande.' *Acts of P.C.* iii (New Ser.), 92.

⁸⁶ Add. MS. 5751, fol. 328.

⁸⁷ Nichol, *Progr. of Q. Eliz.* i, 81.

The Virgin Queen had ever a difficulty in recognizing the marriage of her clergy, and on 20 September, 1561, sent a commandment unto the college of Windsor, that the priests belonging thereunto that had wives should put them out of the College; and for time to come to lie no more within that place.⁸⁸

DEANS OF WINDSOR⁸⁹

William Mugge, 1348
 Walter Almaly, 1380
 Thomas Butler, 1403
 Richard Kingston, 1412
 John Arundel, 1417
 Thomas Manning, 1452
 John Faux, 1462
 William Morland, 1470
 William Dudley, 1473⁹⁰
 Peter Courtney, 1476
 Richard Beauchamp, 1478⁹¹
 Thomas Danett, 1481
 William Bealey, 1483
 John Morgan, 1484⁹²
 Christopher Urswick, 1495
 Chris. Bainbridge, 1505⁹³
 Thomas Hobbes, 1507
 Nicholas West, 1510⁹⁴
 John Voysey *alias* Harman, 1515⁹⁵
 John Clerk, 1519⁹⁶
 Richard Sampson, 1523⁹⁷
 William Franklin, 1536
 Owen Oglethorpe, 1553⁹⁸
 Hugh Weston, 1556⁹⁹
 John Baxall, 1557¹⁰⁰
 George Carew, 1559
 William Day, 1572¹⁰¹
 Robert Bennett, 1595¹⁰²
 Giles Thompson, 1602¹⁰³
 Anthony Maxley, 1612
 Marcus Antonius de Dominic, 1618¹⁰⁴

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ The following list of fifty-five deans of Windsor is taken, from 1 to 32, from Ashmole's descriptive catalogue (*Antiquities of Berks.* (1719-23), iii, 219-240) corrected by the Patent Rolls; twenty-two of the number have been promoted to the episcopal bench. The dates are those of appointment.

⁹⁰ Bishop of Durham, 1476.

⁹¹ First Chancellor of the Order of the Garter; bishop of Salisbury, 1478.

⁹² Bishop of St. David's, 1496.

⁹³ Dean of York, bishop of Durham, 1507.

⁹⁴ Bishop of Ely, 1515.

⁹⁵ Bishop of Exeter, 1519.

⁹⁶ Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1523.

⁹⁷ Bishop of Chichester, 1536.

⁹⁸ Bishop of Carlisle, 1557.

⁹⁹ Deprived 1557, for incontinence.

¹⁰⁰ Deprived 1559.

¹⁰¹ Bishop of Winchester, 1595.

¹⁰² Bishop of Hereford, 1603.

¹⁰³ Bishop of Gloucester, 1611.

¹⁰⁴ Archbishop of Spalato.

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Henry Beaumont, 1622¹⁰⁵
Matthew Wren, 1628¹⁰⁸
Christopher Wren, 1635
Edward Hyde, 1658¹⁰⁷
Bruno Ryves, 1660¹⁰⁸
John Durell, 1677
Francis Turner, 1683¹⁰⁹
Gregory Hascard, 1684
Thomas Manningham, 1708¹¹⁰
John Robinson, 1709¹¹¹
George Verney, 1713
Peniston Booth, 1729

Frederick Keppel, 1765
John Harley, 1778¹¹²
John Douglas, 1788¹¹³
James Cornwallis, 1791
Charles Manners Sutton, 1794¹¹⁴
Edward Legge, 1805¹¹⁶
Henry Lewis Hobart, 1816
George Neville Grenville, 1846
Gerald Wellesley, 1854
George Henry Connor, 1882
Randall Thomas Davidson, 1884¹¹⁸
Philip Frank Eliot, 1891

ALIEN PRIORIES

34. THE ALIEN PRIORY OF STEVENTON

A small alien priory was established at Steventon in the time of Henry I, when the manor was granted by that king to the great abbey of Bec, Normandy.¹

In 1294 the king caused a complete survey to be made of the lands and goods throughout England owned by abbeys subject to French government. According to that return the priory manor of Steventon had a garden and two dovecotes within the precincts, worth yearly 12s. 8d. Also 1,500 acres of arable land, worth £21 10s. a year, at 6d. an acre; 220 acres of meadow, £6, at 12d. an acre; twenty acres of pasture for sheep and oxen, worth 17s. 8d. at 10d. an acre; two water-mills, worth 57s. 2d. a year; total, £31 17s. 6d. There were sixty-three customary tenants, whose labour was worth £25 7s. 5d. a year, in addition to rents of £18 17s. 9d., and cocks and hens worth 67s. 1d.; total, £47 12s. 3d. The income from the appropriated church was £20, so that the full annual income amounted to £99 11s. 9d.

The goods of the priory of Steventon, according to the same return, included a silver cup on a foot, worth 16s.; another silver cup, 5s.; three masers, 5s.; ten silver spoons, 8s.; also a palfrey, 60s.; another horse, 40s.; four cart-horses, 36s.; a colt, 20s.; eight oxen (a team), 53s.; eight oxen, 50s.; a third team, 53s.; two teams, 86s.; a sixth team, 60s.; six cows, 27s.; eight cows, 38s. 8d.; five heifers, 15s.; twelve calves, 9s.; two boars, 3s. 4d.; nine sows, 9s.; thirty-nine

yearling pigs, 39s.; four little pigs, 12d.; a hundred sheep, 66s. 8d.; three wethers, 3s.; a hundred lambs, 91s. 8d.; two peacocks, 2s.; and eight geese, 16d.; total, £37 8s. 8d. Other household utensils were estimated at 20s. 7d.

A hundred and sixty acres of sown corn were valued at £29, at 3s. 6d. an acre; forty acres of winter wheat at 46s. 8d., or 14d. an acre; fifty-eight acres of drage at £7 5s.; thirty acres of oats, 60s.; thirty acres of beans, 60s.; thirty-four acres of pease, 56s. 8d.; and hay, 40s. The full total amounted to £87 17s. 7d. besides tithes (in kind) which averaged £20 a year.²

The Patent Rolls afford certain other particulars relative to this priory in the reign of Edward I. In 1302 a commission was issued to John de Batesford and Roger de Suthcote, touching the persons who had reopened a way in Steventon which the prior had stopped for the enlargement of his court by the king's licence, after inquisition had been made by the sheriff of Berkshire that such closing of the way would damage no one.³

Although the advowson of the vicarage of Steventon was in the hands of the prior on behalf of the abbey of Bec, Edward I, in consequence of the wars with France, took the advowson into his own hands, and presented both in 1303 and 1304.⁴

Pardon was granted to the prior of Steventon on 8 May, 1305, in consideration of a fine made by him in Chancery, for acquiring without leave, in mortmain to himself and his house, a messuage in Steventon from John Braundiz, and a moiety of an acre of land there from John de Sale, and

¹⁰⁵ Dean of Peterborough.

¹⁰⁶ Bishop of Hereford, 1634.

¹⁰⁷ Appointed by Charles II when in exile. Died just before the Restoration; never installed.

¹⁰⁸ Dean of Chichester.

¹⁰⁹ Bishop of Rochester, 1683.

¹¹⁰ Bishop of Chichester, 1709.

¹¹¹ Bishop of Bristol, 1710; bishop of London, 1713.

¹¹² Bishop of Hereford, 1787.

¹¹³ Bishop of Carlisle, 1788; bishop of Salisbury, 1791.

¹¹⁴ Bishop of Norwich, 1794; archbishop of Canterbury, 1805.

¹¹⁵ Bishop of Oxford, 1815.

¹¹⁶ Bishop of Rochester, 1891; bishop of Winchester, 1895; archbishop of Canterbury, 1903.

¹ Henry II, in a confirmation charter in Bec, refers to Steventon as the gift to that abbey by King Henry his grandfather. Dugdale, *Mon.* ii, 954.

² Add. MS. 6164, fol. 37.

³ Pat. 30 Edw. I, m. 17.

⁴ *Ibid.* 31 Edw. I, m. 43; 32 Edw. I, m. 22.

RELIGIOUS HOUSES

others, which for that reason had been taken into the king's hands, but were at that date restored to him.⁵

When the difficulties as to alien priories were renewed in the latter part of the reign of Edward III, the abbey of Bec was allowed to sell the valuable manor and impropriated rectory of Steventon, with the advowson of the vicarage, to Sir Hugh Calveley.⁶ After Sir Hugh Calveley's death his trustees conveyed it to John, bishop of Salisbury, and Roger Walden, and they in their turn granted it to Richard II, who bestowed it on the abbot and convent of Westminster. This gift was confirmed by Henry IV in 1400.⁷

35. THE ALIEN PRIORY OF STRATFIELD SAYE

Although the church and greater part of the parish of Stratfield Saye are in Hampshire, the site of the small alien priory was just over the county border in Berkshire.

Nicholas de Stoteville gave the church of Stratfield Saye, with a small hermitage dedicated to St. Leonard within the parish, to his newly-founded abbey of Vallemont, in Normandy, about the year 1170.⁸ Two or more monks of the abbey lived here to look after their property, and established a small priory.

In 1294, when difficulties arose as to the alien priories owing to the wars with France, Edward I had the whole of their property and goods valued throughout England. The prior of Stratfield Saye at that time held a messuage with dovecote within the precincts of the priory manor, worth 6*s.* 8*d.* a year; he held also one hundred acres of arable land, worth 25*s.* a year, at 3*d.* an acre; seven acres of meadow worth 8*s.* 9*d.* an acre, at 15*d.* an acre; and six acres of underwood, worth 18*d.*; total, 41*s.* 11*d.* There were seven free tenants holding two virgates at a rent of 35*s.* 9*d.* The prior also drew a pension from the church of Stratfield Saye of 71*s.* 8*d.*, making the total annual value £7 9*s.* 4*d.*⁹

At the same time the stock of the priory was thus valued: three plough horses and six foals, 33*s.* 6*d.*; a team of eight plough oxen, 48*s.*; another inferior team, 40*s.*; five cows in poor

condition, 20*s.*; nine calves, 4*s.* 6*a.*; a bull, 4*s.*; four bullocks, 12*s.*; three heifers, 9*s.*; twenty-six two-year-old sheep, 18*s.* 4*d.*; nine lambs, 3*s.*; two boars, 3*s.*; three sows, 4*s.*; fifteen pigs, 15*s.*; and eight little pigs, 2*s.*; total, £11 11*s.* 4*d.* The kitchen utensils were valued at 23*s.* 5*d.*, and the value of the sown crops at 54*s.*, giving a full total of £15 8*s.* 9*d.*¹⁰

We find from the Patent Rolls of Edward III that the priory evidently occupied the site, and perhaps used the actual buildings of the old hermitage. In March, 1332, William Valaran, who is styled 'prior of the hermitage of Stratfield Say' and proctor-general in England for the Abbey of St. Mary's, Vallemont, had licence to sell wood to the value of £10 out of the wood belonging to the abbey at Wydemore, in Pamber Forest, to find funds for the repair of the hermitage.¹¹

On 25 April, 1341, the king granted the hermitage of St. Leonard, Stratfield Saye, to John le Fevre, of Connellan, of the order of St. Benedict, the priorship being in his gift owing to the king's assumption of the lands of all alien religious persons throughout England.¹²

In June, 1342, restitution was made to Brother Ralph, monk of Vallemont, warden of the hermitage of Stratfield Saye, of the hermitage and its lands lately taken into the king's hands, owing to the war with France; because it had been found by inquisitions taken by the sheriffs of Berkshire and Hampshire that the same was charged with a chantry of two monks, and with divers other alms and works of piety, for which it had an endowment of £5 8*s.* 5*d.*, and if the priory was retained in the king's hands these could not be maintained.¹³

On 3 March, 1345, the mayor and bailiffs of Dover were directed to permit Brother Ralph, prior of Stratfield Saye and monk of the abbey of Vallemont, who was about to set out to parts beyond the sea by the king's licence, to cross from that port, and to allow him reasonable expenses so far as a gold noble; but he was to make no apport or tribute to a foreign abbey contrary to the statute.¹⁴

Edward III in 1399 permitted the abbot and convent of Vallemont to grant the hermitage of Stratfield Saye and its lands, valued at £30 a year, to Thomas Colle and his heirs.¹⁵

In 1461 Edward IV granted the old priory estates of Stratfield Saye to Eton College.¹⁶

⁵ Pat. 33 Edw. I, pt. i, m. 3.

⁶ Ibid. 35 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 14; Lysons, *Berks.* 375.

⁷ An endeavour was made by David and John Calveley, heirs of Sir Hugh, to claim the property. The repeated transfers are somewhat complicated. See Pat. 17 Ric. II, m. 7; 23 Ric. 2, m. 7; 1 Hen. IV, pt. vi, m. 5; pt. viii, m. 37.

⁸ Dugdale, *Mon.* vi, 1044.

⁹ Add. MS. 6164, fol. 21.

¹⁰ Ibid. fols. 41-3.

¹¹ Pat. 6 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 14.

¹² Ibid. 15 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 23.

¹³ Ibid. 16 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 40.

¹⁴ Close, 19 Edw. III, pt. i, m. 27*d.*

¹⁵ Pat. 22 Edw. III, pt. iii, m. 19.

¹⁶ Ibid. 1 Edw. IV, pt. iii, m. 24.

POLITICAL HISTORY

IN political development, as in geographical situation, Berkshire has ever been the first of the 'lands south of Thames.' Lying in a long line east and west along the south bank of the river, which itself constitutes its northern boundary, and forms the line of demarcation between the midlands and the south, the county has been, from the days of its earliest settlement, in traditions, in institutions, and even in speech, essentially part of southern and West-Saxon England.¹

There is little history of the district before the coming of the Saxons. During the Roman period it was traversed rather than colonized, and the few signs of settlement that are found are connected with the Thames valley, or with the roads which crossed the Kennet in the south.²

The stormy period of English settlement and Danish invasion saw the first organized existence of the shire. Its early formation, and the lines of its later development, were both decided, in no small measure, by the river barrier of the Thames, and the gaps which its fords provided for the passage of an enemy. Round the river towns and fortresses of Abingdon, Reading, Windsor, and Wallingford, which sprang out of settlements made in this early period, the later life of the county has centred, whether in the feudal development of the Middle Ages, the military activity of the civil wars, or the political and economic growth of modern times.

There is no account of the division of the shire into its component hundreds, nor of the fixing of its boundaries, previous to the Domesday Survey. Probably the course of the Thames had long been taken as the northern boundary, but the boundaries of the south and west, on the Hampshire and Wiltshire borders, were, for geographical reasons, difficult of delimitation.³ Of the twenty-two hundreds of Berkshire entered in Domesday, twelve exist under the same names at the present day (Bray, Beynhurst, Charlton, Eagle, Ganfield, Hormer, Kintbury, Lambourn, Reading, Ripplesmere, Shrivenham, Wantage), while of the remaining nine modern names, eight (Compton, Cookham, Faringdon, Moreton, Ock, Sonning, Theale, Wargrave) are found in the re-arrangement of hundreds given in the *Nomina Villarum*.⁴ The entirely modern hundred of Faircross has absorbed parts of the Domesday hundreds of Thatcham and Blewbury, and the mediaeval hundred of Cottsetlesford.

Faint and vague amid the shadowy outlines of the early history of Wessex is the account of the conquest and settlement of its northern borderland. For sixty years, as the Chronicle records it,⁵ the war-bands of Cerdic

¹ As early as the time of the Tribal Hidage, which is thought to have been the tribute roll of the Bretwalda Edwin in the seventh century, Berkshire seems to have been included in Wessex (Corbett, in *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.* xiv, 203 ff.).

² See 'Romano-British Berkshire,' *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 198.

³ See 'Domesday Survey,' *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 319.

⁴ *Feudal Aids*, i, 47 ff.

⁵ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 15-17.

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and Cynric had been forcing their way inland and northwards, up the river valleys of Hampshire and Wiltshire, and along the great Roman road of the west. One by one the Roman fortresses of the south-west—Winchester, Sarum, Marlborough—had given way before their persistent progress; one by one the British armies of West Wales had been driven back behind their eastern border;⁶ until at last, in 556, on the field of 'Beranbyrg' in mid-Wilts⁷ the West-Saxon host found themselves, after a great and critical fight, masters of the southern uplands, with the unconquered reaches of the Thames and Severn valleys at their feet.

In their advance northwards the invaders had perforce turned aside before the impenetrable barrier of upland and forest which protected southern Berkshire. Their deflection to the west and the conquest of the Wiltshire downs secured for them a ready descent, by the ancient Ridgway, into the fertile district by the Thames.⁸ There is no record of the conquest by Cynric's army of the district of rolling upland and rich woodland between the Kennet and the Thames. It is probable that it preceded the victory of the West Saxons at Wimbledon in 568;⁹ it is no less probable that the southern bank of the Thames was more or less definitely occupied and colonized before the tide of war rolled north across the river into Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.¹⁰ Loath as the West Saxons were at this time to see in the Thames a barrier against their further progress north, they were driven to adopt a more moderate policy of consolidation and defence by the rapid southward advance of Mercia early in the seventh century.¹¹

For the next 200 years the importance of Berkshire lies in the fact that the upland district south of the Thames provided what was practically a buffer state between the two kingdoms, a strip of disputed territory over which the rivals wrangled with varying success. At first the fortune of war was in favour of Mercia, for in 645 Penda its king fell upon Kenwealh son of Cynegils, and for a breach of faith drove him from his kingdom.¹² Whilst Kenwealh sought to retrieve his fortunes by a timely conversion to Christianity,¹³ he probably carried on an active intrigue amongst the West-Saxon princes whom his own exile, and perhaps Mercian policy, had invested with a royal authority. For his return three years later was certainly accomplished by the aid of one of them, Cuthred, son of Cwichehm, to whom the Chronicle ascribes a royal title. The service was rewarded by the enormous grant of '3,000 lands by Ashdown.'¹⁴ Beneath the immediate purpose of this gift there may have lain a deeper policy, for it practically involved the setting up

⁶ Green, *Making of Engl.* i, 98 ff.

⁷ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 17. 'Beranbyrg' has been identified with Barbury camp, between Swindon and Marlborough; Plummer, *op. cit.* ii, 15.

⁸ Cf. Green, *op. cit.* 108-9.

⁹ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 19.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* The capture of the 'iiii tunas,' Lenbury, Aylesbury, Bensington, and Eynsham (the 'quatuor regias villas' of Florence of Worcester), is recorded in 571; Plummer, *loc. cit.* ii, 16.

¹¹ Penda and Ceawlin met in a great battle at Cirencester in 628; *ibid.* i, 24. The cession of his Oxfordshire lands, with the exception of Dorchester, may have followed Ceawlin's defeat; Plummer, *loc. cit.* ii, 20.

¹² *Ibid.* i, 26.

¹³ *Ibid.*; cf. Bede, *Hist. Eccl.* (ed. Plummer), i, 140.

¹⁴ Plummer, *op. cit.* i, 28. 'Her Cenwath gesalde Cu] rede his maege iii þusendo londes be Æscesdune.' So in E form of the Chronicle. B and C insert the word *bida*, making the grant the enormous one of 3,000 hides (Plummer, ii, 23). But there were not 3,000 hides in the whole of Berkshire, even at the time of the Survey (Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, 505, gives 2,493); Mr. Stevenson therefore thinks (*Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 154) that the numbering is according to a different and early scheme of denomination which had fallen out of use in the tenth century.

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of a little independent state on the Berkshire downs.¹⁶ The idea which underlay it was, in fact, that of the later counties palatine. Ashdown commanded the Ridgway and the Roman road that ran by Wanborough to Silchester: an independent district here, organized for purposes of defence, would be equally well calculated to guard the escarpment of the downs or to bar the progress of an invader along their crest. Against the barrier thus set up the Mercian invaders threw themselves in vain in the struggle which followed. In 661 the Chronicle records the ravaging of Wulfhere, Penda's son, as far south as Ashdown; the entry for the year closes with the significant words: 'and Cuthred son of Cwichelm died.'¹⁶ The conclusion is suggested that the Mercian foray was checked by a force drawn from the district ruled by Cuthred; possibly Cuthred himself was killed in the encounter. Three years after Kenwealh's death in 672, his distracted realm was again invaded by Wulfhere, who inflicted a crushing defeat on the weak King Æscwine at Biedanheafod.¹⁷ Whether this battle took place at Bedwin in Wiltshire,¹⁸ or at Beedon on the East Berkshire downs,¹⁹ there can be little doubt that Mercia was at this time rapidly encroaching on the West-Saxon position.²⁰ A temporary usurpation of the West-Saxon see of Dorchester took place under Ethelred of Mercia between the years 679 and 686,²¹ and although Cadwalla seems to have recovered this Oxfordshire outpost in the latter year, neither he nor his able successors Ine and Cuthred were able, in the half century that followed, to keep the Mercians entirely out of the lands south of the Thames.

Full of interest in their relation to the strange vicissitudes of the time are the annals of the young monastic house at Abingdon struggling into existence in the very heart of the disputed country.²² Endowed 'by the costes of King Cissa,'²³ a West-Saxon sub-regulus,²⁴ at about the date of the battle of Biedanheafod, the young house seems to have been projected under the fostering care of King Cadwalla, who gave it its first charter and a grant of lands.²⁵ King Ine, Cadwalla's successor, appears to have revoked the grant for a time,²⁶ although he is found in 699, by a change typical of the time, re-endowing the house in association with Ethelred of Mercia. By 737 Ethelbald of Mercia was assuming sufficient power over the lands of Berkshire to make a confirmation to the monastery of all the lands granted previously by West-Saxon and Mercian kings. He even went so far as to grant lands at Cookham out of the county, to St. Saviour's at Canterbury.²⁷ Ethelbald's power was indeed broken by the West-Saxon revival under Cuthred, and the triumph of West-Saxon arms at Burford in Oxfordshire in

¹⁶ It has been suggested, too, that Kenwealh may have desired to buy out any claims of Cuthred to the throne. *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), ii, 23.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* i, 33.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 35.

¹⁸ Editor of *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 31.

¹⁹ Suggested by Col. Cooper King, *Hist. of Berks.*

²⁰ See 'Angl.-Sax. Remains,' *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 242.

²¹ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), ii, 245-6.

²² A description of the site of Abingdon is given by its chronicler: *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 3; 'Est autem locus ille in planitie montis, visu desiderabilis, . . . inter duos rivulos amaenissimos qui locum ipsum quasi quemdam sinum inter se concludentes, gratum cernentibus præbeant spectaculum et opportunum habitantibus subsidium.'

²³ Leland, *Itin.* (ed. Hearne), i, 17. Leland says that Cissa was buried at Abingdon, but, he adds, 'the very Place and Tumbe of his Burial was never knowen syns the Danes defacid Abbingdon.'

²⁴ *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 10.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 8, 9.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 10. 'Sed Ini rex eandem terram postea dum regno potiretur diripiens ac reipublicæ restituit.'

²⁷ Birch, *Cart. Sax.* i, 405.

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752;²⁸ but Wessex was as yet too weak to maintain any long resistance, and during the zenith of Mercia's supremacy under Offa, Berkshire suffered a second period of invasion. In 777 Offa, driving Cynewulf of Wessex in rout from Bensington²⁹ back behind his old frontier of Ashdown, proceeded to lay violent hands on all the lands westwards from Wallingford by the Icknield Way to Ashbury, and northwards from Ashdown to the Thames.³⁰ To strengthen his line along the river he seized for his own use the lands of St. Saviour at Cookham,³¹ which Cynewulf had held since the battle of Burford, and put to flight the timid nuns of Cilla's foundation at 'Helnestoue' by his fort at Wytham.³² The completeness of the Mercian conquest is shown by the utter subserviency of the monks at Abingdon, who humbly received the patronage which the king was pleased to bestow upon them, and accepted without a protest the Mercian bishop whom he put at their head.³³

With the death of Offa and the rise of Wessex to supremacy under Egbert, a time of comparative peace and security settled down upon these border lands. During Egbert's reign the Mercians appear to have been finally driven out of the lands south of Thames, and now, probably for the first time, Berkshire became an integral part of the West-Saxon kingdom. As late as 821, indeed, the Mercian king Cenwulf is found confirming to the abbey of Abingdon all the lands held by the house in Berkshire,³⁴ many of them, such as Sunningwell, Eaton, Sandford, grants made by himself in 811, 'non solum pro anima mea sed pro totius gentis Merciorum salute';³⁵ but it is probable that, by the later date at any rate, his confirmation was nothing but an act of conventional patronage, showing little real lordship over the places mentioned. All vestiges of Mercian power in Berkshire must at any rate have disappeared after Egbert's great victory over Beornwulf of Mercia at 'Ellandun' in 823,³⁶ or at latest after that sweeping advance over 'all that was south of the Humber' which led to his triumphant assumption of the Bretwaldaship in 827.³⁷

It is probable that the definite organization of Berkshire as a shire dates from the later years of Egbert, though there is no mention of it as such till the reign of Ethelbert his grandson.³⁸ In the division of the kingdom which seems to have been found necessary after the great expansion under Egbert, Berkshire remained, with Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Somerset, in the hands of the king himself, while the conquered districts—Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex—were given to a son or brother of the king. Such a division took place as early as 836, when, on the death of Egbert, Ethelwulf, his eldest son, became king of the consolidated west, while his brother Athelstan ruled over the eastern provinces.³⁹ There seems to have been a considerable concentration of royal domain in Berkshire at this time, probably around the

²⁸ *Angl. Sax. Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), i, 46.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 50.

³⁰ *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 14: 'Omnia quae jurisdictioni suae subdita fuerant ab oppido Walingefordiae in australi parte ab Ichenildesstrete usque ad Esseburiam, et in aquilonali parte usque ad Tamisiam rex Offa sibi usurpavit.'

³¹ Birch, *Cart. Sax.* i, 405-6.

³² *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 8.

³³ *Ibid.* 14.

³⁴ *Ibid.* i, 25.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 24.

³⁶ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 60.

³⁷ *Ibid.* As late as 844 Bertulf of Mercia is found granting land at Pangbourne to Abingdon Monastery (*Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 31). This may have been a graceful way of resigning a possession which it was difficult to hold. The land had, moreover, been a gift from Bishop Ceolred to the Mercian king (*ibid.*), and was not a conquest.

³⁸ In 860. *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 68.

³⁹ *Ibid.* i, 62. Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 10. The chronicler declares: 'Occidentalis pars Saxoniae semper orientali principalior est.'

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nucleus of the famous grant to Cuthred in the seventh century. In this district at any rate, in the heart of Berkshire, and just to the south of Ashdown, Ethelwulf's youngest son, Alfred, was born in 849 at the *villa regia* of Wantage.⁴⁰ This same 'cyninges tun' figures later in Alfred's Laws,⁴¹ and in the testaments of several of his line.⁴² In this accumulation of private estates belonging to the crown are perhaps already to be seen the germs of the later royal county.

External pressure was, however, to achieve more than internal organization in the consolidation both of Wessex as a whole and of those outlying districts upon which the brunt of invasion fell most heavily. In the Danish wars, as in the struggle with Mercia, Berkshire provided a buffer state, a battle-field on which the opposing armies met, and on which the various lines of invasion converged, from the Trent valley, from East Anglia, from Southampton Water, up stream from London, to diverge again by the many fords of the Thames. Necessary as was the defence of such an important district, it is on the wider issue of national defence, in a danger which seems at once to have been recognized as national, that the 'men of Berkshire' first step upon the page of history. In the first great land attack of the formidable Danish host in 860 the Berkshire fyrd, under its ealdorman Ethelwulf, is found fighting side by side with the men of Hampshire in defence of Winchester.⁴³

Ten years later Berkshire was itself the scene of the beginning of the struggle which made the last year of Ethelred's reign momentous, and which lasted, almost without intermission, through Alfred's life. The great 'year of battles' was ushered in by the capture of Reading, a 'villa regia' on the south bank of the Thames, in mid-winter, 871, by the heathen army 'of hateful memory' in a raiding expedition from East Anglia.⁴⁴ Availing themselves promptly of the natural advantages of the place, and recognizing the importance to themselves of such a strong outpost within the border of Wessex, the Danish host proceeded to make their position strong by throwing up works in the narrow strip of land between the Thames and the Kennet on the east side of the town.⁴⁵ Here Ethelwulf the ealdorman met them with his men,⁴⁶ and on the marshy ground of the Englefield, defeated them with much slaughter, driving them back within the burh.⁴⁷ Four nights after Ethelred the king and Alfred his brother led a 'mickle fierd' against Reading,⁴⁸ and forced their way up to the gate of the burh, slaying as they went; but they could not stand before the fierce sally of the heathen men, who rushed upon them like wolves, (*lupino more*),⁴⁹ and fled away to 'Wiscelet,' and over the Loddon at Twyford,⁵⁰ leaving the ealdorman Ethelwulf dead upon the field.⁵¹ Berkshire now lay open and undefended before the invaders, who

⁴⁰ Asser, *Life of Alfred* (ed. Stevenson), I. 'Anno Dominicae Incarnationis DCCCXLIX natus est Ælfred, Angul-Saxonum rex, in villa regia, quae dicitur Wanating, in illa paga quae nominatur Berrocscire.'

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 154 n.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), I, 68, 'wip pone here ge fuhton Osric aldorman mid Hamtuncscire and Æthelwulf aldorman mid Bærruc Scire and pone here ge fliemdon.'

⁴⁴ Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 27; cf. *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), I, 70.

⁴⁵ Stevenson, *op. cit.*: 'vallum inter duo flumina Tamesen et Cynetan a dextrali parte eiusdem regiae villae facientibus.' For their position see Simcox, 'Alfred's Year of Battles,' *Engl. Hist. Rev.* April, 1886.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 'Æthelwulf, Bærrucensis pagae comes cum suis sodalibus.'

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), I, 70.

⁴⁹ Stevenson, *op. cit.*, 28.

⁵⁰ Gaimar, *Lestorie des Engles* (Rolls Ser.), I, 123.

⁵¹ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), loc. cit.

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instead of making a dash for Winchester by way of the Loddon, moved out from Reading and the bogs of Pangbourne on to the higher ground of the Ridgway which commanded the whole of the shire. Here, 'on Æscesdune,' Ethelred and Alfred with the remnant of their fyrd came up with them and gave battle,⁵² though the odds against them, in men and in the place, were not small. Both armies fell into two bands for the fight, King Ethelred went to meet the Kings Bagsecg and Halfdene, while Alfred, his 'second-man' (*secundarius*), moved out to meet the jarls. But just as battle was about to be given, so the story runs, Ethelred tarried in his tent, unwilling to begin the fray until the mass were finished, until at last Alfred, 'unable longer to withstand the enemy's lines without either retiring or giving battle,' and 'filled with divine counsel and help,' dashed forward against the foe with all the fury of a wild boar (*aprimo more*), bearing the royal standard with him.⁵³ His prayers ended, Ethelred came up to join the fight, and together they gradually drove the Danes from their position.⁵⁴ The chronicler of King Alfred had the story from an eye-witness how all day long the battle raged, now up and down around a solitary thorn-bush, which stood on the slope between the forces, now hither and thither (*hinc inde ubique*) over the rolling down, until at length, at night-fall, the heathen army, bereft of one of its kings and five of its jarls, broke and fled in 'shameful flight' before those who were there fighting for 'life and loved ones and the home-land.' Leaving many thousands dead upon the field, the Danes fled away all that night and part of the next day until they came to the 'burh' whence they had set out.⁵⁵ The weary English host made little pretence at pursuit and left the heathen men secure in their stronghold at Reading.⁵⁶ A raid thence, up stream along the Loddon, fourteen days after Ashdown fight, led them to Basing on the Hampshire downs, well on the road to Winchester.⁵⁷ The fyrd came up with them here, and though beaten in the fight that followed, gave them check enough to make them turn their steps north again to Reading.⁵⁸ Here for two months in the early spring of 871 they lay quiet hatching their plans.⁵⁹ At the end of this time they made a second bold dash, now along the Kennet valley, skirting the Berkshire downs on the south, to gain the Wiltshire uplands and the great road south to Winchester. But the victory of 'Meretun,'⁶⁰ like that of Basing, could not be followed up, and though a great 'summer force'⁶¹ came up the Thames to Reading and swelled the Danish host in four other battles against Ethelred and Alfred, 'in the southside of Temese,' and though king and thanes rode countless raids of which they kept no reckoning, save in the number of kings and jarls they slew,⁶² the campaign had no decided issue, and the year of battles ended with little gain to either side, and a promise of a stormy reign to Alfred. Peace was, however, made for a time; and the Danish host went down stream from Reading into their winter quarters at London.⁶³

At the lowest ebb of his fortunes in 878, Alfred, driven deep into the fastnesses of the west, seems to have lost his hold on Berkshire altogether.

⁵² *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer); cf. Stevenson, op. cit. 28.

⁵³ Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 29, 30.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* ⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 30-1. ⁵⁶ Simcox, 'Alfred's Year of Battles,' *Engl. Hist. Rev.* April, 1886. p. 8.

⁵⁷ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 70.

⁵⁸ Simcox, op. cit.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 70.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*; cf. Simcox, op. cit.; Plummer, *Life of Alfred*, 98.

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He is said in that year to have had 'bote thre ssiren in is hond, Hamtessire and Wiltessire and Somersete of al is lond,'⁶⁴ and there is no sign of Berkshire men among the 'fasselli' who rallied round the king at Egbert's Stone and Ethandun in the same year.⁶⁵ Nor is there any mention of them in the band raised by the ealdormen of Mercia, Wiltshire, and Somerset in 894,⁶⁶ to meet the raiding Danes who had come up the Thames from Shoebury, burning on both banks as they came; though they were probably there with the rest 'from every town east of the Parret as well as west and east of Selwood,'⁶⁷ only now without an ealdorman of their own to lead them.⁶⁸ It is probable too, in spite of this disintegration, or perhaps as a consequence of it, that Berkshire received a certain amount of rigorous military reorganization at Alfred's hands later in the reign. It is not unlikely that the local peculiarities of military service in Berkshire, conspicuous later in the Custumal of the Survey, had their rise in the defence measures of these years of stress.

How greatly this border district suffered in both the earlier and later Danish wars is evident from the record of destruction in the annals of Abingdon Abbey. The abbey itself was destroyed, and the monks scattered at the first coming of the Danes into Berkshire. The very allegation of the monks against King Alfred that he violently seized the town of Abingdon and all the lands of the monastery after Ashdown,⁶⁹ shows how necessary it was at this time to hold the district in a state of defence. The monastery does not appear to have recovered from its degradation, even by the close of the tenth century, and the reason is still given as devastation by the Danes.⁷⁰

In the second Danish invasion, that of Swegen, early in the eleventh century, and in the conquest which followed, Abingdon escaped lightly,⁷¹ though the county as a whole suffered considerably. As of old the strongholds by the Thames and the upland reaches of the downs attracted the invaders. In 1006 the Danish host, which had been ravaging off the south coast, marched north through Hampshire, 'as itself would,' lighting its war-beacons as it went, and came at length to Reading, by the old route of the Loddon valley.⁷² From Reading the invaders turned off up stream to Wallingford, which they burned to the ground, ere marching in proud vaunt along Ashdown to 'Cwichelmeshlaewe.'⁷³ When they had thus braved the shire at its very heart, the home of its shire moot, they retraced their steps, and in despite of the proverb which said that 'if they came to Cwichelmeshlaewe they would never go to the sea,'⁷⁴ were back at Winchester before the unwieldy fyrd could march up from Cynetan.⁷⁵ Again, in 1009, the Danish host burned its way north from Wight; while in 1010 and 1011 raiders fell upon Berkshire from north and east.⁷⁶ From the north too came Swegen in 1013 on his triumphant march to Winchester, passing back

⁶⁴ Robert of Gloucester, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), i, 388.

⁶⁵ Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 44.

⁶⁶ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 87; ii, 107-8.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Plummer, *Life of Alfred*, 98.

⁶⁹ *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 50: 'Hic vero mala malis accumulans, quasi Judas inter xii, villam in qua coenobium situm est, quae vulgari idiomate Abbendoniam appellatur, cum omnibus suis appenditiis a praedicto coenobio violenter abstraxit, victori Domino, pro victoria qua functus est de Danis super Essedune victis, imparens reddens talionem.'

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* i, 357.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* i, 432: 'coenobium Abbendonense a Danorum devastatione permansit immune.'

⁷² *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 137.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 'gif hi Cwichelmeshlaewe ge sohton pet hi naefre to sae gan ne sceoldan wendon pa odres waeges hamweard.' Cf. ii, 184.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 139-41.

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again thence in the same year, through Wallingford to Bath.⁷⁷ Berkshire seems, however, to have remained faithful to the West Saxon king to the bitter end, and it was only on the death of Edmund Ironside in 1016 that it passed with the rest of England to the Danish Cnut.

Thence to the Conquest the political history of the county is scanty. During Edward the Confessor's reign it passed, with most of the ancient Wessex, into the hands of Godwine and his sons⁷⁸; among the lands held by his house being much of the ancient demesne of the crown. Under Edward, too, Old Windsor first rises into prominence as a royal residence. One chronicler has it that it was at 'Windelsore,' at the 'fair veast' of Christmas in 1053, that Earl Godwine met what he relates to have been a sudden and tragic death.⁷⁹

In the political and social upheaval which followed the Conquest of 1066 Berkshire played a considerable part. The prominence of many of the great tenants-in-chief of the shire, among whom were Harold and several members of his family,⁸⁰ and the activity of the thanes of the shire in the defence at Hastings,⁸¹ brought upon it peculiarly sweeping changes in the territorial reorganization which followed.

In the actual steps of the Conquest Berkshire was also involved. The manors and towns and fields of Berkshire, with those of Kent, Surrey, Hampshire, and Hertfordshire, received the first deep impress of the footprints of the Conqueror as he passed in his wide sweeping raid from the field of Hastings to the castle of Berkhamstead.⁸² It is probable that the conquering army swept up through Berkshire in two wings, ravaging as it went, and converging at Streatley and Wallingford for the passage of the Thames.⁸³ William himself crossed at Wallingford, and encamped his troops for a time on the north side of the river.⁸⁴ Godric, sheriff of Berkshire, had been killed at Hastings,⁸⁵ and probably the district, disorganized and leaderless, was able to offer but little resistance to the conquering army. Wigod of Wallingford, the Oxfordshire sheriff and magnate, who appears in Domesday as the 'antecessor' of the Norman Robert of Oilly in several manors of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Hertfordshire, is said to have met William at Wallingford at this time, and made his peace with him.⁸⁶ Here, too, came Archbishop Stigand,⁸⁷ swearing fealty, and anticipating by his renunciation of the Atheling Edgar the general submission which the magnates were to make a few weeks later at London.

In the early confiscations of the reign the monastery of Abingdon, as one of the largest landowners of the shire, suffered considerably; its abbot Alured incurred William's hatred, and was imprisoned at Wallingford, while the new

⁷⁷ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 143-4.

⁷⁸ Cf. Dom. Book, fol. 57b, ff.

⁷⁹ Robert of Gloucester, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 507.

⁸⁰ Freeman, *Norm. Cong.* iv, 34; cf. Round, 'Domesday Survey,' *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 306.

⁸¹ Freeman, *op. cit.* 33; *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 3.

⁸² Baring, 'Footprints of the Conqueror in Domesday,' *Engl. Hist. Rev.* xvii, 19.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ William of Jumièges, *Histoire des Normands*, bk. vii, c. xxxvii; William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi Ducis Normannorum et Regis Anglorum*, a. 1066; *Ord. Vit. Hist. Eccl.* Florence of Worcester does not mention Wallingford. Mr. Round thinks that the settlement of Frenchmen in the town at the time of Domesday may be connected with this first march, *ut supra*, 310.

⁸⁵ *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 484, 490.

⁸⁶ Ellis, *Intro. to Dom.* ii, 267; cf. Freeman, *Norm. Cong.* iv, 721. William of Poitiers, *op. cit.*, says merely, 'At cum in eandem regionem Dux Normannorum adventaret, obviam ei clementiam deprecando, processerunt civitates et municipia.'

⁸⁷ Wm. of Poitiers, *op. cit.* 1066.

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sheriff Froger in his absence despoiled the house.⁸⁸ William soon reversed his policy, however, and confirmed by mandate all the lands and customs of the monks, and in particular the hundred of Hornmere, with all the rights and privileges pertaining to it.⁸⁹ This hundred the abbey continued to hold as a liberty, side by side with the great lay fiefs now rising in the county. Of these the two of greatest importance, fated to influence the history of the county throughout its course, were the royal honour and castle of Windsor and the great fief of Wallingford.

From the earliest days of the Norman period Windsor was used as a royal residence,⁹⁰ and, its necessary corollary, a royal prison. Here the Norman kings held their courts, and called their Witan to meet them at many of the great festivals of the year. At Pentecost in 1095 William Rufus met his Witan there,⁹¹ and later in the year had as his guest in the dungeons of the castle, Robert Mowbray, the arch rebel and pirate of the north.⁹² It was at Windsor in the winter of 1127, at the king's Christmas court, that David, king of Scotland, with the magnates of the realm, whether archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, or thanes, swore an oath of fealty and allegiance to Matilda the widowed empress, as her father's heir.⁹³

Prominent among those who remained loyal to this oath and to Matilda in the dynastic struggle that followed Henry's death, was Brien of Wallingford, lord of the second great Berkshire honour, and heir through his wife of the Saxon Wigod.⁹⁴ The zealous partisanship of its great magnate, coupled with the geographical and strategic importance of a district which lay between the great rival centres of London and Bristol, and commanded the water-way of the Thames, drew Berkshire prominently into the war of Stephen's reign. At the outbreak of hostilities in the autumn of 1139 the shire was as a whole favourable to Stephen; ⁹⁵ the castles of Windsor and Reading were held for the king, while the royal fortress of Oxford, just outside the shire boundary, dominated northern Berkshire and held in check the isolated outpost of the enemy at Wallingford.⁹⁶ But Wallingford Castle had been fortified and strengthened in the early days of the anarchy,⁹⁷ and was practically impregnable.⁹⁸ In spite of its threatening neighbours at Reading and Oxford, and a blockade carried on intermittently throughout the war, it remained to the end a very effective thorn in the flesh to the king's party.

Pledged like the other nobles of the county to support the succession of Matilda, Earl Brien seems to have taken a temporary oath of allegiance to Stephen in 1135, while as yet the empress delayed in Normandy.⁹⁹ In the period of universal castle building which followed he proceeded to fortify his castles of Oxford and Wallingford, but it was not till the autumn of 1139, and the arrival of Matilda and Robert of Gloucester in England, that he

⁸⁸ *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), i, 486.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* ii, 1.

⁹⁰ 'Domesday Survey,' *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 306. Castles were built at Wallingford, Windsor, and Oxford at this time; *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 3.

⁹¹ *Two Sax. Chron.* (ed. Plummer), i, 230.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.* 256.

⁹⁴ She married first Miles Crispin, spoken of by *Hist. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 12 as 'Milo de Walingaford cognomento Crispin,' and Brien, in 1113 (cf. Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, 228). Brien accompanied Matilda to Normandy in 1127 after the scene at Windsor (*Two Sax. Chron.* op. cit. 256), and is spoken of as the son of Alan Fergant, hence his title Fitz-Count.

⁹⁵ Davis, 'The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign,' *Engl. Hist. Rev.* Oct. 1903.

⁹⁶ Round, *Geof. de Mand.* 10.

⁹⁷ *Ann. Mon.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 51.

⁹⁸ *Gesta Stephani* (in *Chron. of Steph. Hen. II and Ric. I.*, Rolls Ser.), iii, 57.

⁹⁹ Round, *Geof. de Mand.* 10.

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broke out into open rebellion.¹⁰⁰ Thenceforth to the close of the war he was unswerving in his fealty to the empress, and provides an instance of disinterested loyalty to a cause in a time of self-seeking and political inconstancy. The gates of Wallingford Castle were thrown open to Robert of Gloucester on his march from Arundel to Bristol in 1139,¹⁰¹ and Brien Fitz-Count seems at once to have joined the empress's forces. In the rout at Winchester, and the consequent flight of Matilda in September, 1141, it was to the care of Brien of Wallingford that John the Marshal committed the defeated lady,¹⁰² while it was to Brien again that Matilda turned on her escape from Oxford in the winter of 1142.¹⁰³

Meanwhile Stephen had testified to the importance of Wallingford by marching against it at the beginning of hostilities in 1139, and by laying siege to it with a large army.¹⁰⁴ In view, however, of the excellent equipment of the garrison to withstand a siege, and its refusal to offer any more definite attack than by occasional sallies, Stephen was advised by his barons to draw off for the time.¹⁰⁵ As soon as he had turned off west, in the direction of Malmesbury and Trowbridge, Miles of Gloucester 'ad magna invadenda impiger et perpromptus,' marched up to the relief of Wallingford and destroyed the counter-castles which Stephen had thrown up.¹⁰⁶ Six years later, in 1145, the siege was a second time attempted, with the like unsatisfactory results¹⁰⁷; though the king had in the meanwhile considerably improved his position in the county by his successful siege of Oxford and the reduction of the enemy's castle at Faringdon.¹⁰⁸ The latter event, achieved with the aid of a 'terrible and innumerable' army of Londoners, had been a double triumph: it effectually stopped the threatened advance of Robert of Gloucester on Oxford, and seems to have brought over to the king's side the turn-coat earl of Chester. With him there came, too, Philip of Cricklade, Robert's son, and successor in the upper Thames valley of the freebooter and military adventurer, William of Dover.¹⁰⁹ Accompanied by these two new allies and by 300 other knights ('virilis pectoris equites comitatus'), Stephen had undertaken the blockade of Wallingford a second time, throwing up fortifications at Crowmarsh across the river, but again without success.¹¹⁰ These forts were renewed in the last desperate attack on the town in 1152, when the garrison found themselves so hard pressed that they sent to Henry of Anjou for aid, declaring that without it they must submit to the king.¹¹¹ In this same year Stephen was occupied for two or three months in the siege of Newbury, an important outpost held for the empress in the south of the county by John the Marshal.¹¹²

¹⁰⁰ *Gesta Stephani*, loc. cit. 'Fuit ea tempestate Brienus filius comitis vir genere clarus et dignitate magnificus, qui de Morum adventu eximie lactificatus, firmato in expugnabili, quod penes Walengefordiam habuerat, Castello, cum militum urgentissima copia adversus regem vive et constantissime rebellavit.'

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* (Soc. de l'histoire de France), i, 9.

¹⁰³ *Will. of Malmes. Gesta Reg. Angl.*; cf. *Gesta Stephani*, 53 (sub Hist. Novella), ii, 593; *Gesta Stephani*, 91; *Ann. Mon.* ii, 53, 229; Henry joined Matilda at Wallingford, Round, *Geof. de Mand.* 198.

¹⁰⁴ *Gesta Stephani*, loc. cit. 58.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 59.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 115.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 114.

¹⁰⁹ *Gesta Stephani*, loc. cit. 114-17; cf. Davis, 'Anarchy of Stephen's Reign,' *Engl. Hist. Rev.* April, 1903.

¹¹⁰ *Gesta Stephani*, loc. cit. 117; *Ann. Mon.* ii, 231; Hen. of Hunt. *Hist. Angl.* (Rolls Ser.), 284.

¹¹¹ *Matt. Paris, Chron. Maj.* (Rolls Ser.), i, 191.

¹¹² *Hen. of Hunt. op. cit.* 284. A long account of the siege is given in *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, op. cit. v, 399-680; it is said to have lasted for more than two months. The story centres in William, the young son of the Marshal, whom Stephen held as a hostage.

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The misery of the country at this time was extreme: men were weary of the cruel war, and called for peace.¹¹³ Old animosities had lost their bitterness with the passing away of the older combatants. The time was at hand for a compromise. After a period of half-hearted hostilities before Wallingford, where the two armies lay at a distance of three miles from each other, a parley was at last arranged by the earl of Arundel, one of Stephen's advisers. Out of it came the treaty of Wallingford, and the assurance of the succession to the Angevin Henry.¹¹⁴ It was fitting that such a conclusion to the war should have been brought about before the walls of Wallingford, the garrison which had remained true throughout to the Angevin cause, and whose resistance had perhaps more than anything else determined the nature of the compromise. Henry was not unmindful of his debt of gratitude, and rewarded the faithful town with a charter and privileges, 'pro servicio et labore magno quem pro me sustinuerunt in acquisitione hereditaris juris mei in Anglia.'¹¹⁵ At the Parliament which met at Wallingford early in the reign the honour of Wallingford was declared, after legal inquisition made, to have escheated to the crown.¹¹⁶ Henry II kept it in his own hands, and it thereafter remained as an appanage of the crown in the hands of some prominent member of the royal family.¹¹⁷ Under the Angevin kings Berkshire became essentially a royal county.

During the reign of Henry II Berkshire played little part in political affairs of any importance; the link of the county with the national life as a whole lay mainly in its personal connexion with the king's household, through the royal centres of administration at Windsor, Reading, and Wallingford. A few vivid scenes are recorded by the chroniclers in connexion with one or other of these towns, which afford incidental but picturesque glimpses of the great drama which was being enacted outside. In 1163 King Henry and Archbishop Thomas met in amicable co-operation, for one of the last times, at the dedication of the foundation of Henry I at Reading.¹¹⁸ Following hard on the notice in the annals is the ominous entry for the next year, 'Hoc anno facta est dissensio inter regem et archipraesulem Thomam,'¹¹⁹ a terse reference to one of the greatest struggles between Church and State in England. A scene of a different kind, though intimately connected with the same struggle, took place at Windsor in 1170, where, at an Easter court similar in composition to that which had accepted Matilda in 1127, king, prelates and magnates, with the king of Scots, decided on the rash and ill-considered step of crowning the younger Henry, in despite of Becket's refusal to perform the ceremony.¹²⁰ This *faux pas* placed the king at a decided disadvantage for the rest of the contest. It led directly, moreover, through Becket's pertinacity in persecuting the bishops who assisted at the ceremony, to the archbishop's murder in 1170, a conclusion fraught with disastrous issues to the king himself.

¹¹³ *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, v, 660-2. As a result of the war the writer declared 'tote joie esteit fondue E toz gaainz tornez a perte, E tote richesse a poverte.' For misery in Berks. cf. Davis, *Engl. Hist. Rev.* April, 1903.

¹¹⁴ Gervase of Cant. *Opera* (Rolls Ser.), i, 151; Matt. Paris, op. cit. i, 191; *Ralph de Diceto*, 527.

¹¹⁵ Round, *Geof. de Mand.* 198.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, 265-6; cf. *Trivet Annales* (ed. Hall), 29.

¹¹⁷ A diligent inquisition was made with regard to this honour after Henry's death, by the constables, with the aid of the sheriff and knights. The history of its passage, from Wigod of Wallingford to Henry II, was fully given (*Testa de Nevill*, 115, a, b).

¹¹⁸ *Ann. Mon.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 57.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Benedictus Abbas, *Gesta Hen. II et Ric. I* (Rolls Ser.), i, 6.

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From the position of shame and obloquy in which he found himself Henry turned with zeal to the conquest of Ireland, a project which, in the eyes of the pope at any rate, in some measure condoned the previous offence. Typical of the policy of mistrust and suspicion with which the king treated the English adventurers in Ireland at this time is the treaty which he concluded with the envoys of Ruadhri, high king of Connaught, at Windsor in 1175.¹²¹ In disregard of the half-completed plans of the Clares and the Geraldines for the subjugation of western Ireland, Henry by this treaty turned round and confirmed to the Irish king all his lands in Connaught, in return for his fealty and a small tribute, both precarious; thereby effectively paralyzing the English pioneers in their advance.

In the feudal rebellion of Henry's later years the centres of disturbance lay far removed from Berkshire, in the north and east, and across the sea in Normandy. The last scene in which the shire appears in the reign is one which has nothing to do with the dark events of this domestic struggle; it is a glimpse of the wider relationship in which the Angevin king stood to European politics in general, and to the greater Christendom which had spread into the Mohammedan East. It was natural that the kingdom of the Angevin Fulk at Jerusalem should look for aid in its hour of extremity to the Angevin king of the west. It was with a special message to Henry therefore that the Patriarch Heraclius set out on his mission to Europe in 1184. He came up with the king at Reading in the February of 1185, and laying the royal standard of Jerusalem and the keys of the holy places at his feet besought him to carry them back at the head of a crusading army.¹²² Henry was moved to go, but the great council summoned at Clerkenwell in March for consultation bade him fulfil his coronation oath rather than his crusading vow. Heraclius was bitterly disappointed, and begged that John might go in his father's stead. John was not averse to the proposal, but Henry hastily had him knighted at Windsor, and dismissed him on a mission to Ireland.¹²³ It is grotesque to think of John as the hero of the third crusade, though no doubt as king of Jerusalem he might have outwitted Saladin in craft and subtlety. His absence would at any rate have freed England as a whole and Berkshire in particular from a source of much turbulence and unrest in the years that followed.

Previous to his departure for the east in 1190 Richard I bestowed Windsor Castle upon Hugh bishop of Durham. Upon this fortress William Longchamp at once laid violent hands.¹²⁴ At the same time, as one of many inducements to loyalty, Richard gave to John the honour of Wallingford.¹²⁵ With her centres thus held by the rival authorities Berkshire was dragged into the plots and faction fights which lasted throughout the time of Richard's absence. Disturbances began with John's attack on Longchamp for the summary treatment of Archbishop Geoffrey of York in the autumn of 1191. Seizing the opportunity given him by popular indignation John summoned a council of prelates and barons to Reading to demand from the Chancellor a justification of his conduct.¹²⁶ Longchamp was summoned to meet the prince and the justiciars on 5 October at Loddon Bridge, on the road between London and

¹²¹ Benedictus Abbas, *Gesta Hen. II et Ric. I* (Rolls Ser.), i, 101-3.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid. 78.

¹²² Ibid. 335-7.

¹²⁴ Bened. Abbas, *Gesta Ricardi* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 109.

¹²⁵ Ibid. 212.

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Reading, there to stand his trial.¹²⁷ With many protests the Chancellor marched up as far as Windsor, but afraid to leave the protection of the royal castle, and pleading ill-health, he delayed there, sending the earls of Arundel, Warren, and Norfolk in his stead to the rendezvous. John and the barons had taken up their position in the fields west of the Loddon, and on the failure of Longchamp to appear proceeded to discuss the grievances against him, and the probable exercise of the commission given to the archbishop of Rouen, by Richard, to supplant him. On the following day, Sunday, 6 October, in spite of Longchamp's bribes, all the participators in the outrage on Archbishop Geoffrey were excommunicated at a mass solemnized with lighted candles in Reading Church. Cowed by this extreme measure Longchamp submitted and swore to stand his trial at the bridge on Monday morning. He accordingly set out from Windsor; but hearing on the way that John's forces had crossed to the London side of the stream, and part of them gone on thither, he would not wait for the party of barons who were riding to meet him, with John at their head, but fled back to Windsor and thence down stream to London. In the neighbourhood of Staines he fell in with John's men-at-arms, and in the sharp skirmish which followed, John's justiciar, Roger de Planes, was mortally wounded. While the Chancellor made his way to the Tower John prevailed upon a council called immediately at St. Paul's to depose him and demand the surrender of the royal castles.¹²⁸

On the strength of the recognition of himself as Richard's heir which he wrung from the council soon after, John persuaded the constables of Windsor and Wallingford to surrender their castles to him,¹²⁹ and refused for a year, in spite of persuasions and threats, to give them up. Circumstances were in his favour, for in the council which met to discuss his misdoings, though it was 'the united will of all that Earl John should come up to answer for his seizure of the castles,'¹³⁰ each was distrustful of his neighbour, and preferred that another rather than himself should voice the complaint. Meanwhile a complication arose from the fact that John was known to be treating with the fallen Chancellor, and the barons, seeing in the latter their greater enemy, promptly let the question of the castles drop,¹³¹ and set themselves to buy John out with bribes.¹³² He jeered at them from his stronghold at Wallingford, but swallowed the bribe none the less, rejoicing to keep his castles unmolested.

These became the centre of his treacherous conduct against Richard in the spring of 1193. Failing to obtain recognition as king on the false rumour of Richard's death in December, 1192, John went off in anger with his army of Scotch and Welsh mercenaries to fortify the castles of Windsor and Wallingford,¹³³ into which he threw supplies by a series of raids in the counties round.¹³⁴ The Archbishop of Rouen and Queen Eleanor with many of the barons—among them William the Marshal—marched at once

¹²⁷ Giraldus Cambrensis, *Vita Galfridi Arch. Ebor.* (Rolls Ser.), iv, 397.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.* 405.

¹²⁹ Richard of Devizes, *De Rebus gestis Ricardi Primi* (in *Chronicles of Steph., Hen. II, and Ric. I.*, Rolls Ser.), iii, 433.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* 'Omnium erat una voluntas convenire comitem Johannem de praesumptione castellorum.'

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 434. 'De castris nulla fit mentio; de cancellario tota fuit querela et consultatio.'

¹³² *Ibid.* 'Ad comitem itaque tunc morantem apud Walingeford et ridentem illorum conventicula, mittuntur multi ex magnatibus, . . . Creduntur comiti de fisco per fiscarios quingentae librae sterlingorum. . . . Nec dilatio.'

¹³³ Roger of Hoveden, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), iii, 204.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* 205.

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to Windsor and laid siege to the castle,¹³⁵ swearing that nothing should move them thence till it fell.¹³⁶ Matters were not, however, pushed to extremes. John gave in, and a truce was made by which the castles of Windsor and Wallingford were surrendered to Queen Eleanor for custody until Richard's return.¹³⁷

In the ecclesiastical and constitutional struggles of John's reign the county took little direct part. At the close of the long struggle between the king and the pope certain details in the king's submission, left unsettled in the general pacification of May, 1213, came up for discussion in a council summoned at Reading in November.¹³⁸ John did not appear at this meeting, but three days later, at Wallingford, he promised full satisfaction to the Church.¹³⁹ At a later council at Reading, on 8 December, the business of the interdict came up again, and a document with a full list of losses and compensations was produced. The king had now, however, obtained the favour of the legate, and was allowed some delay with regard to the 15,000 marks due to the clergy.¹⁴⁰

Timely submission to the papal legate had removed the immediate danger of a French invasion, but John's short-sighted and headstrong policy in appealing to the pope against the obligations of the Charter called it down upon the country in the closing year of the reign. From December, 1215, to September, 1217, England suffered the humiliation of having a foreign army lodged in her southern counties. During this time Berkshire, with the royal fortresses on the Thames, formed the southern line of John's position. Early in the war he retired from London, and made Windsor and Reading the centres of the savage raids by which he attempted to satisfy the clamours of his mercenaries.¹⁴¹ A great store of arms and food was thrown into Wallingford,¹⁴² while Windsor was entrusted to the king's doughty constable, Ingelard de Attie (*vir in opere martio probatissimus*), with a garrison of sixty men.¹⁴³ He maintained a gallant defence here against the attack of the count of Nevers, one of the leaders of Louis's army, until such time as John, with the argument of fire and sword in the eastern counties, and with the added one perhaps of English gold, succeeded in distracting the invaders from the siege.¹⁴⁴ Ingelard seems to have kept his custody of Windsor Castle through the early years of the minority of Henry III, for in the disturbances of 1221 which accompanied the resumption of the royal castles he incurred the suspicion of Hubert de Burgh, and was for a time imprisoned, though promises of good conduct seem to have restored him to a position of trust.¹⁴⁵

Through the first difficult years of the minority England was piloted by the great regent, William the Marshal. It is in connexion with his death in 1219 that a memorable council meeting at Reading is recorded. The

¹³⁵ Roger of Hoveden, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), iii, 206.

¹³⁶ 'Cest siege avom juré por veir, Si ne larons por nul avoir, De si que li chasteals seit pris, Ou rendus Si l'avom enpris'—*Histoire de Guil. le Maréchal*, op. cit. vi, 9893-9960. William the Marshal was sent for from Wales to take part in the siege. He would not bind himself by oath to stay before the castle, saying that if Count John knew it he would ravage the country round. Cf. *Ann. Mon.* (Rolls Ser.), iv, 47.

¹³⁷ Roger of Hoveden, op. cit. iii, 206.

¹³⁸ Roger of Wendover, *Flores Hist.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 95.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Roger of Wendover, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 163.

¹⁴² Ibid. 183.

¹⁴³ Ibid. 192.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. 193. Roger of Wendover suggests that the count of Nevers was bribed by John, 'per consilium comitis Niverniae, qui, ut dicebatur, donariis regis Angliae corruptus fuerat, de nocte ab obsidione recedentes relicti tentoriis versus Cantebregge cum festinatione iter arripiunt.' Cf. *Ann. Mon.* (Rolls Ser.), iii, 47.

¹⁴⁵ *Ann. Mon.* (Rolls Ser.), iii, 68.

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story runs that as the Marshal lay dying at Caversham, in Oxfordshire, he sent for the young king, who had come up to Reading, with the papal legate and Peter des Roches, in order to be near him (*por la maladie le conte*). In the impressive interview that followed the regent gave an account of his regency, and formally surrendered up his charge, recommending the papal legate to the council as his successor.¹⁴⁶ The policy which prompted this recommendation, i.e. that of drawing England into closer connexion with the papal curia, though no doubt wise and even necessary at the time, led to disastrous consequences later in the reign.¹⁴⁷

In the Barons' War, with which the constitutional struggle of the reign closed, the castles of Windsor and Wallingford were, as in previous struggles, centres of activity for the county. Throughout the reign the shire had been in close touch with the crown through these castles. Henry himself took his popular title from the royal castle of Windsor,¹⁴⁸ while his brother Richard, earl of Cornwall and 'king of Almain,' had been invested with the fief of Wallingford in the fifteenth year of the reign.¹⁴⁹ It was at his Christmas court at Windsor in 1261 that Henry, armed with a dispensation from the pope, determined to shake himself free from the irksome compact to which he had been bound by the Provisions of Oxford and Westminster, and summoned a Parliament to meet him at Windsor in rivalry to that called by the barons to St. Albans.¹⁵⁰ Open hostilities broke out almost at once over the disputed questions of the introduction of mercenaries, and the charge of the royal castles. In open defiance of both the barons and the Provisions, Prince Edward had fortified Windsor Castle, throwing into it a garrison of mercenaries whom he had brought with him from Flanders.^{150a}

As a result of a secret conclave at Oxford and the denunciation of all infringers of the Provisions, Simon de Montfort put himself at the head of an army in the spring of 1263, and fell upon the castles of the Thames valley. Windsor surrendered after a difficult siege, whereupon the alien garrison were suffered to depart in possession of their arms and horses, on the condition that they would not return.¹⁵¹ At about this time Richard of Cornwall deserted de Montfort and joined the king, and it is probable that the earl secured his castle of Wallingford before marching down the Thames on London.¹⁵² He was at any rate in possession of it after the battle of Lewes in the following year, and dispatched thither into strong ward his prisoners, Richard of

¹⁴⁶ *Histoire de Guil. le Maréchal*, vv. 18041 ff.

¹⁴⁷ The reason given by the Marshal for his action is interesting :—

‘ Car n’a tel gent en nule terre,
Comme il a dedenz Engleterre,
De divers corages chascuns,
Se la terre n’est defendue,
Por l’apostoire en icest point
Dont ne sai je qui la defende.’ (Ibid. vv. 18041–6.)

¹⁴⁸ A popular song written after the battle of Lewes connects the king and his brother with their castles of Windsor and Wallingford respectively ; e.g. :—

‘ Richard of Alemaigne, whil that he was kyng,
He spende al his tresour opon swyvyng ;
Haveth he nout of Walingford o ferlyng :—
Let him habbe, ase he brew, bale to dryng,

‘ Maugre Wyndesore.’—*Political Songs* (Camden Soc.), 69.

¹⁴⁹ Exemplification of charter of 1230–1 to Richard is given in *Cal. of Pat.* 1281–92, p. 150.

¹⁵⁰ Rishanger, *Chron. et Ann.* (Rolls Ser.), 7.

^{150a} Ibid. 18.

¹⁵¹ *Ann. Mon.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 100 ; iii, 223.

¹⁵² Ibid. ii, 247.

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Cornwall himself, with his son and Prince Edward.¹⁵³ The queen, hearing that the defences at Wallingford were weak, sent an urgent message to Sir John de Musgrove and three other loyal knights at Bristol to attempt a rescue. They rode up to Wallingford with 300 horsemen, 'in a fryday riȝt as the sonne aros,' and succeeded in forcing a way up to the inner wall of the fortress. Here they were stopped by the slings and gins of the defenders, who threatened moreover to send out Prince Edward to them from a mangonel if they did not speedily retreat. Edward himself came out to them upon the wall beseeching them to go, 'oper he was ded.'¹⁵⁴ In fear of a second attack, Earl Simon sent his prisoners on to 'betere warde' at Kenilworth,¹⁵⁵ and with strange inconsistency strengthened the garrisons of Wallingford and Windsor with French troops.¹⁵⁶ His high-handed policy in the treatment of the royal castles alienated many of the barons from him, and helped to bring about his defeat at Evesham.¹⁵⁷

The king celebrated his triumph at Windsor in October, 1265, when he received the humble submission of the rebel Londoners who had fought against him at Lewes, and threw their leaders into 'strong prison.'¹⁵⁸ At the same time he rewarded the fidelity of his brother Richard by restoring to him the fiefs which he had lost in the recent disturbances,¹⁵⁹ among them the honour of Wallingford, which Richard is found transmitting to his son Edmund at his death in 1272.¹⁶⁰

During the reign of Edward I, Edmund of Cornwall, the king's kinsman (*son ame et feal et tres-chier cosyn*),¹⁶¹ and regent of the kingdom in his absence, held the honours of Wallingford and St. Valery, which extended over the greater part of Berkshire, as outlying appendages to the earldom of Cornwall. His fiefs were of the nature of a great regality or royal appanage rather than of a mere baronial estate, and having been lately confirmed to his house by the crown were not among those whose curtailment was aimed at by the investigations of the reign. In the petty legal encroachments which the baronial courts made everywhere upon the jurisdiction of the king's courts, the earl of Cornwall was not, however, behind his smaller neighbours. At Wallingford he held the plea *de namio vetito* with the jurisdiction over thefts and the right to hold assizes of bread and beer, by what warrant the commissioners knew not.¹⁶² A similar encroachment on market tolls due formerly from neighbouring villages to the liberty of Windsor, and certain dues in Windsor itself, had been started by William Pasket, Earl Richard's bailiff, in the previous reign, and were kept up by Earl Edmund.¹⁶³ In spite of the

¹⁵³ Robert of Glouc. *Chron.* ii, 750 ;—

' & þe king of Alemaine & sir edward also
In þe castel of Walingford in warde he let do.'

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 751.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 752.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 752 :—' As in the castel of walingford, of douere, of windsorsore.

Wardeins he made of frensse men þat of þoȝte þut lond sore.'

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Robert of Glouc. *Chron.* fol. 752 ; Rishanger, *Chron.* 32.

¹⁵⁸ Robert of Glouc. *op. cit.* ii, 767. Their goods and chattels he confiscated to Prince Edward. *Pat.*

49 Hen. III, m. 36a.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* m. 36b.

¹⁶⁰ *Inq. p.m.* (Rec. Com.), 56 Hen. III. The memory of Richard of Cornwall's connexion with Wallingford seems to have been still green in the sixteenth century. Cf. Leland, *Itin.* ii, note : 'The Toun and the Castelle was sore defacid by the Danes warres. Yet they meatly refflorischid in the Tyme of Richard king of Romaines and Erle of Cornewaulle, Brother to King Henry the 3. This Richard did much cost on the Castelle.'

¹⁶¹ So spoken of in a writ of 1299 (*Parl. Writs*, i, 320).

¹⁶² *Rot. Hund.* (Rec. Com.), i, 9, 9b.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.* 18.

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investigations Edmund remained in full possession of his fiefs and their privileges till his death in 1296, when his earldom of Cornwall, with all its appendent holdings, escheated to the crown. The importance to the crown of the falling-in of these great fiefs (together with a similar occurrence in Norfolk at the same time) is shown by the statement of a contemporary writer that as an event it ranked with the conquest of Wales and Scotland.¹⁶⁴ The Liberty of the Castle and Forest of Windsor was never at any time alienated from the crown, but was administered by royal bailiffs, together with the 'seven hundreds of Cookham and Bray.'¹⁶⁵ Their administration was not of the best apparently, and the forest became the refuge of robbers and outlaws. In the reign of Edward II there was still a complaint that as the coroner of the liberty of the forest was not 'sworn in the county in geldable,' thieves were 'much strengthened' in those parts.¹⁶⁶ The Patent Rolls testify to continual disturbances in the district during these reigns.

On Berkshire as on all the shires of England fell the burden of providing levies, both feudal and stipendiary, for Edward's numerous campaigns in Wales, Scotland, and 'parts beyond the seas.' During the Welsh war, which lasted intermittently from 1277 to 1294, and was mainly concerned with the reduction of Llewelyn and other recalcitrant chieftains in Gwynedd and the 'four cantreds' of northern Wales, the demand for a levy from the shires was almost a yearly occurrence. In June, 1277, Edmund of Cornwall and the other magnates of Berkshire received a direct summons to appear at Worcester with their due equipment of knights, while the tenants in chief of Oxfordshire and Berkshire received a general summons through the joint sheriff of these counties.¹⁶⁷ This was the normal feudal levy, the burden of which fell on all military tenants of the crown holding lands of the value of £20 and upwards. A similar force was called up to Rhuddlan in March, 1282, to carry the war into the Snowdon country;¹⁶⁸ and in 1287 Earl Edmund himself, in the absence of the king, led a large feudal host out from Gloucester against Rhys ap Iorwerth.¹⁶⁹ The last campaign of the war (September, 1294) was fought by levies called out from the shires to Portsmouth for service in Gascony, but sent off across the Severn to Chester, and finally to Conway, on the sudden outburst of Madog's rebellion.¹⁷⁰

Foreign service brought before the king the advantage of supplementing his feudal levies, who were apt to drop away at the expiration of the customary period of forty days, with stipendiaries raised throughout the counties. The first levy of the kind from Berkshire was raised for an expedition to the Low Countries in October, 1295, when two commissioners, John de Lenham and William de Bliburg, were sent into Oxfordshire and Berkshire to select 2,000 men, as the quota to be contributed by these two shires. This levy was not one of inexperienced peasants, but of experts, 'slingers and bowmen capable of offensive and defensive action, and well equipped with adequate arms.'¹⁷¹ An equal, if not a greater, difficulty was experienced in the Scotch campaigns with regard to levies from the southern shires. The Berkshire levies were called upon to assemble at such distant rendezvous as

¹⁶⁴ *Chron. Edw. I and Edw. II* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 8.

¹⁶⁵ *Parl. Writs*, i, 150.

¹⁶⁶ *Cal. Pat.* 1313-17, p. 329.

¹⁶⁷ *Parl. Writs*, i, 193, 196.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 224-8.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 253.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 259.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.* 270: 'Hominum tam sagitariorum quam balistariorum potencium ad insultandum et se defendendum, et armis sibi competentibus bene munitorum.'

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Newcastle (March, 1296),¹⁷² York (May, 1298),¹⁷³ Carlisle (June, 1299, June, 1300),¹⁷⁴ Berwick-on-Tweed (June, 1301, May, 1303).¹⁷⁵ It was only with very great labour that the troops could be got as far north as Falkirk and Stirling. The footmen who followed Edmund of Cornwall and the other magnates from Berkshire to Newcastle, and on to Dunbar in the spring of 1296, had to be dismissed after two months' service, while at Falkirk Edward was forced to supplement his levies with 1,300 paid men-at-arms.

The reign of Edward I saw the definite inauguration of a representative parliamentary system for England. As early as 1265 representatives of the cities and boroughs had been called up to Parliament, side by side with the knights of the shire; it was not, however, till 1295 that the system was finally organized on the lines which it has maintained with little variation till the present day. To the Parliament of 1295 thirty-seven counties, of which Berkshire was one, were called upon to return two knights.¹⁷⁶ This remained the regular shire representation until 1832. Of the boroughs, Reading and Wallingford alone sent the required two burgesses to the Parliament of 1295,¹⁷⁷ and they alone of the Berkshire towns continued to be thus regularly represented until the time of the Reform Bill. Windsor and Newbury were each represented, for the first time, by two members, in 1302;¹⁷⁸ Windsor, however, had no regular representation until the late fifteenth century,¹⁷⁹ while Newbury dropped out altogether after the abnormal Parliament of 1337.¹⁸⁰ Abingdon returned one member to this same Parliament, but was not again represented till the Tudor revival of borough representation in 1558;¹⁸¹ from 1558 to 1832 it returned one member.¹⁸² Both shire and borough representation remained on the old footing till the Reform Act of 1832.

In the civil outbreaks of the reign of Edward II the honour and castle of Wallingford were involved through their connexion with the fortunes of several of the prominent men of the time. In the first year of the reign the fief of Wallingford was granted with the earldom of Cornwall to the favourite Piers Gaveston.¹⁸³ In honour of Gaveston's marriage to Margaret of Gloucester, the king's niece, in 1307, a great tournament was held at Wallingford,¹⁸⁴ to which the neighbouring earls, Thomas of Lancaster, Humphrey of Hereford, Aymer of Pembroke, and John de Warenne, were invited. The discourteous action of the upstart earl in charging on his guests with 200 armed knights, and his overthrow of the Earl of Warenne in the jousts, 'for which he had gret indignacion,'¹⁸⁵ increased considerably the odium in which he was held by the earls, and hastened his fall. On his death his fiefs escheated

¹⁷² *Parl. Writs*, i, 270.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* 311.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 317, 330.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 347.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 40. Richard of Windsor, one of the knights returned in this year, seems to have represented the county frequently up to 1320; cf. *ibid.* 149 (1304); 173 (1306), etc. He appears, too, in the shire levies among the knights holding land of over £20 value; *ibid.* 290, 330, etc. He is a typical instance of the 'most substantial knights and serjeants' required for parliamentary representation at the time.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 125-6.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Prothero, *Parliamentary Representation of England and Wales down to 1832*. (Lane-Poole, *Hist. Atlas*, xxiii) Windsor returns seem to have been very much at the mercy of the bailiffs of the hundreds of Cookham and Bray. A typical entry is one in 1304, when the Windsor burgesses do not seem to have been returned; 'brevem retornatum fuit Ballivis libertatis septem hundredorum de Cokam et Braye qui habent returnum omnium brevium et executionem eorundem, et iidem ballivi nullam michi dederunt responcionem.' *Parl. Writs*, i, 149, 150. Cf. also 1309, 1314, 1318, 1323.

¹⁸⁰ Prothero, *op. cit.*

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Chron. Edward I and Edward II* (Rolls Ser.), i, 258.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 259; cf. Capgrave, *Chron. of Engl.* (Rolls Ser.), 175.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

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to the crown, and in 1317 Queen Isabella received the grant for life of the honours of Wallingford and St. Valery.¹⁸⁶

During the period of estrangement between king and barons which followed the execution of Gaveston in 1310, Edward kept himself from destitution by appropriating to his own uses the confiscated lands of the Knights Templars. In the sordid story of the crusade against the order Berkshire shared with the other counties in which the Master of the Temple held lands. A writ of December, 1307, ordering the sheriff to lay hands on all the 'lands and tenements, goods and chattels' of the knights, together with all charters, muniments, and deeds of title,¹⁸⁷ drove them out from their Berkshire houses at Bisham and Templeton. Gentler in its injustice than the measures taken in France, the writ provided that the knights were not to be ill-treated, but were to be 'decently maintained out of the property of the order.'¹⁸⁸ Edward does not seem to have profited much by the Berkshire confiscations, for his kinsman Thomas of Lancaster, already a considerable landholder in the county, laid greedy hands upon them and annexed them to his fief.¹⁸⁹

It was the opposition of this Thomas of Lancaster, and the main part of the baronial body, to the king and his favourites, the Despensers, in 1321, that brought about the second civil disorder of the reign. Recovering quickly from the first attack, in which he had suffered the banishment of the Despensers (at the Parliament of July, 1321), Edward raised an army by asking for loyalist forces in the counties. In November two commissioners were sent into Berkshire and Wiltshire with a writ of aid, empowering them to raise if necessary all the horse and foot of the counties 'against the king's insurgents.'¹⁹⁰ This was followed early in December by a second writ of aid 'to seize into the king's hands' all the lands and goods of insurgents.¹⁹¹ The king followed the commissioners, and passed through Berkshire, demanding the oath of fealty from all, on his way to Cirencester and Boroughbridge.¹⁹² After the fall of Thomas of Lancaster at Boroughbridge in March, 1322, his lands and those of all other insurgents in the shire were forfeited to the crown.¹⁹³ His supporters Hugh of Audley and Maurice of Berkeley were imprisoned by the king in Wallingford Castle,¹⁹⁴ and are found early in the following year in conspiracy with Roger Mortimer, then a prisoner in the Tower, to seize the royal castles of Wallingford and Windsor and the Tower itself. The conspiracy was, however, promptly quashed by Richard Damery, steward of the king's household, who was sent into Berkshire with a writ of aid, 'to besiege the castle of Wallyngford and to arrest all rebels who have entered therein.'¹⁹⁵ Though thus successful for a time Edward's patronage of the Despensers cost him dear in the end, and led to his deposition in 1327 at the hands of the estranged queen and barons. The reign of Edward III practically begins with the great court at Wallingford at the close of 1326, at which Queen Isabella and Roger of Mortimer, with the

¹⁸⁶ *Cal. of Pat.* 1313-17, p. 668.

¹⁸⁷ *Parl. Writs*, ii, 10.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Bustlesham (Bisham) and Templeton are held by the 'Magister Milicie Templi' in *Testa de Nevill* (1244, 1252); by the earl of Lancaster in 1316 (*Feud. Aids*, i, 50).

¹⁹⁰ *Cal. of Pat.* 1321-4, p. 39.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.* 40.

¹⁹² *Chron. Edw. I and Edw. II* (Rolls Ser.), i, 300, 301. ¹⁹³ *Cal. of Pat.* 1321-4, p. 161; *ibid.* p. 211.

¹⁹⁴ Capgrave, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), 189; Thomas of Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* (Rolls Ser.), i, 170.

¹⁹⁵ *Cal. of Pat.* 1321-4, p. 234; cf. *ibid.* 257. Cf. Thomas of Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* i, 170.

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prince and the prelates and barons of the realm, kept their 'real Christ-masse' after the capture of the king and the execution of the younger Despenser.¹⁹⁶

In the Scotch wars of the reign of Edward II Berkshire levies played an intermittent part, the burden of the almost yearly campaigns falling mainly on the northern counties. The southern counties are found, however, responding on more than one occasion to the demand now arising for large levies of paid foot soldiers, a demand which followed the change in military tactics brought about by the defeat at Bannockburn. In 1316 three commissioners were sent into Berkshire to levy a well-equipped foot-soldier (*un homme de pe forcible et defensable*), armed with the necessary implements, 'aketon et bacinet . . . espeies, arks et seetes, arbalistes, lances, ou autres armures convenables por genz de pee' from every township in the shire. The rate of pay is given as 4*d.* per day.¹⁹⁷ A similar demand was made in 1322, when a special mandate was sent to the two Berkshire commissioners 'to induce and if necessary to compel' the borough of Wallingford to supply its due quota, i.e., four armed footmen, to the host at Newcastle.¹⁹⁸ This was followed, in the same year, by a more general levy of 500 foot, arranged in twenties, hundreds, and constabularies, called out from Oxfordshire and Berkshire, 'excepting the towns of Oxford, Abindon and Reading,' for service in the Scotch expedition.¹⁹⁹

Berkshire does not seem to have supplied any levies either to the Scotch or the French wars of Edward III, and apart from the continuous and regular use of Windsor Castle as a royal residence the shire took little part in the activities of the reign. The castle itself was closely connected with the renewal of chivalry in England during the wars with France. Here the king set up his famous Order of the Garter, and here in 1344 he renewed the Round Table 'first mad be Arthure,' a step which drove the king of France to jealous imitation, 'to drawe the knytehod of Almayn fro the Kyng of Ynglond.'²⁰⁰ The rebuilding of the castle was energetically pursued in 1359, 'divers faire and sumptuous workes'²⁰¹ being erected by 'Mayster William Wikham,'²⁰² the king's chaplain, with supplies and services drawn from all parts of the county.²⁰³ An event of much future significance took place at Reading in 1359, when John of Gaunt, the king's third son, was wedded by special papal dispensation to his kinswoman Blanche of Lancaster.²⁰⁴

The same monotony of record for the shire is found in the reign of Richard II, a period of political and economic activity for the country as a whole. Berkshire stood but on the outer edge of the district in which the great social upheaval of 1381, limited to no locality either in its causes or its ultimate results, found its local vent, and was agitated by no more than the inevitable ground-swell radiating from the centre of disturbance in the east. In the immediate political consequences of the great rising Berkshire has therefore practically no concern, a few detached cases coming up for punishment or pardon being the only traces of participation.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁶ Capgrave, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), 197; cf. Thomas of Walsingham, op. cit. i, 185; *Chron. Edw. I and Edw. II* (Rolls Ser.), i, 319.

¹⁹⁷ *Parl. Writs*, ii, 464-5.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 581-2.

¹⁹⁹ *Cal. of Pat.* 1321-4, p. 96.

²⁰⁰ Capgrave, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), 211.

²⁰¹ Holinshed, *Chron.*

²⁰² Capgrave, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), 219.

²⁰³ *Pat.* 33 Edw. III, *passim*.

²⁰⁴ Capgrave, *De Illustribus Henricis* (Rolls Ser.), 164.

²⁰⁵ *Cal. of Pat.* 1381-5, *passim*.

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Similarly in the constitutional struggle of the reign, with the alternate triumph and humiliation of the king, Berkshire provided neither scene nor prominent figures. It is probable that the county was agitated by the conflict which took place at Radcot Bridge, in Oxfordshire, between the lords and the king's favourites, Michael de la Pole and Robert de Ver, earl of Oxford and duke of Ireland, in 1387. It is said that de Ver, seeing defeat to be imminent, forded the Thames on horseback ('being made of an horseman a swimmer') and fled away, no doubt through Berkshire, to one of the ports of the south-east coast, and thence to Flanders, out of harm's way.^{206a} It is not, however, till the close of the tragedy of Richard II, when the usurper is already on the throne, that there is a flicker of action in the royal county on behalf of the king.

What local activity there is for the reign is of a military nature, and is connected with the panic-stricken and ineffectual policy of home defence into which the schemes of Edward III for the conquest of France had fallen. In the last years of Edward's reign a privateering naval war had broken out in the Channel, and a series of raids by the enemy on the ill-guarded southern coast, in the first year of Richard's reign, seems to have thrown the country into a panic. Now, as later in the reign of Elizabeth, the maritime counties could not be relied upon to bear the whole burden of defence, but had to be supplemented by levies from 'assistant' shires. Accordingly in 1377, 1378, and 1380 Berkshire received commissions 'to array and equip all the men of that county, and to keep ever arrayed the men-at-arms and archers to resist foreign invasion;' to keep them moreover at the sea-coast, 'those peculiarly appointed thereto having been so negligent and remiss that the French have landed, and by arsons and homicides done immense mischief.'²⁰⁶ The commission of array for 1380, made by nine commissioners and the sheriff, required that the whole efficient male population of the county between the ages of sixteen and sixty should be arrayed and equipped as 'men-at-arms, hobelers and archers,' and kept in readiness to resist foreign invasion.²⁰⁷ In the second panic of the reign, in 1385, the shire levies were again called out 'in view of imminent invasion by the French.'²⁰⁸ The rumour of a meditated invasion by Charles VI in September, 1386, led to the immediate demand from Berkshire of 200 archers, to join the army which the king, in the fear of the moment, was assembling at London.²⁰⁹

Although Richard II had weakened his hold on the affections of his subjects by the unconstitutional tyranny of the last two years of his reign, his deposition and the establishment of the House of Lancaster were not effected without a considerable amount of opposition. The insurrections of the early years of the reign of Henry IV were, indeed, more the outcome of resentment, on the part of the barons, against a strong central government, than any whole-hearted harking back to the rule of the last Plantagenet. The spirit of faction and of aristocratic discontent which was to set all England on fire in the Wars of the Roses, and finally to overthrow Henry's

^{206a} Thomas of Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 167-8; cf. Stow, *Annale*.

²⁰⁶ *Cal. of Pat.* 1377-81, p. 306.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 471, 473.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 1381-5, pp. 588, 590.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 1385-97, p. 217. Stow (10 Ric. II) describes the panic in London in this year. The Londoners he said were 'trembling like leverets, fearefull as mice, not one Frenchman having set foot on ship-bord.'

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house in the third generation, is already apparent in the short-lived rebellion of 1400, which burned itself out almost completely within the boundaries of Berkshire. It was the plan of the conspirators, led by the malcontent earls of Kent, Salisbury, and Huntingdon, 'to falle on the kyng sodennly at Wyndesore under the coloure of mummeris in Cristmasse tyme,' to kill him and his sons with him, and 'restore Richard ageyn onto the crowne.'²¹⁰ The uneasy conscience of one of the plotters let the secret out, and the king was warned in time to save himself. Feigning, however, not to believe the tale, he would not leave Windsor, until the arrival of the Mayor of London post-haste at the castle showed him how real the danger was. He and his sons then fled away to London on 4 January, and the same day, at night-fall, the conspirators, in a band 400 strong, with the earl of Kent at their head, rode up to Windsor. Disappointed in their quest, they turned aside to Sonning 'fast by Radyngis,' where King Richard's queen lay.

And there before the qwenes household, he blessed him this erl of Kent, 'O Benedicite,' he seide, 'who may this bee that Henri of Lancaster fled fro my presens, he that is so worthi man of armes. . . . Therefor frendis, know this, that Henri of Lancaster hath take the Toure at London, and oure very Kyng Richard hath broken prison, and hath gadered a hundred thousand fytynge men.' . . . So gladed he the qween with lyes.²¹¹

After a rapid march west through Wallingford and Abingdon and on through the vale of White Horse, the conspirators came the same day to Faringdon, 'warnyng alle men be the weye that thei should make hem redy to help Kyng Richard,'²¹² and offering to the view of the credulous country side Richard's double, the priest Maudelen.²¹³ They were fated to get little further than this; for the loyalty of the citizens of Cirencester, whither they marched from Faringdon, speedily quashed the ill-planned rebellion. The history of Berkshire, lighted up for a moment by this meteoric flash, falls back again, for this reign at least, into comparative obscurity.

Throughout this uneventful period in the county annals the leaven of Lollardy was no doubt doing its secret work in Berkshire, as in the midlands north of the Thames. Hamlets and townships, as well as the larger industrial centres throughout the district, became permeated with the doctrines of Wycliffe, as expounded and disseminated by his indefatigable priests, and Reading, the industrial centre of Berkshire at the time, seems to have been specially infected. In the troubles of 1417, in which a conspiracy against the king was discovered, and of a share in which Sir John Oldcastle and the Lollards were much suspected, 'billes of gret malyce ageyn God and the kyng' were said to have been scattered by the latter through all the large houses and hostels of Reading.²¹⁴ The Lollards were very generally suspected of mixing themselves up with politics throughout the reign; the tale was told in the next reign before the Privy Council, by a clerk of the crown (pleading for the renewal of an allowance), how, during the absence of Henry V abroad, a Welshman, who was also a Lollard, had been caught, after an

²¹⁰ Capgrave, *Chron.* (Rolls Ser.), 275; cf. Stow, *Annales*; Thomas of Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* (Rolls Ser.), 389.

²¹¹ Capgrave, loc. cit.

²¹² Ibid. 275.

²¹³ Stow, *Annales*.

²¹⁴ Capgrave, *Chron. of Engl.* (Rolls Ser.), 317. Stow speaks of 'poisoned bilis,' and Thomas of Walsingham (*Hist. Angl.* 472) of 'scedulae Lollardorum venenosae impringentes contra cunetos status Ecclesiae.' The author seems to have been unknown—'auctorem nullo sciente.'

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exciting chase, in the very act of attempting the rescue of the king of Scotland from his prison at Windsor.²¹⁵

Berkshire levies do not seem to have been called upon to any great extent for the French wars of Henry V. A somewhat indirect connexion with the war was the visit which the Emperor Sigismund, actuated by peace-making motives, paid to the king at Windsor in April, 1416. He was entertained with every mark of honour during the festival of St. George, and Parliament and all business of State were postponed so long as he remained in the country; but in spite of his efforts, he 'could make no peace between England and France.'²¹⁶ A disastrous war with France was part of the heritage which Henry left to the heir born to him at Windsor in 1422.²¹⁷ With the last stage of the great Hundred Years' War Berkshire was more intimately connected, through the person of William duke of Suffolk, husband of the Oxfordshire and Berkshire heiress, Alice, daughter of Thomas Chaucer²¹⁸; 'the which for Love of her and the Commodite of her landes fell much to dwelle yn Oxfordshire and Berkeshire wher his wifes Landes lay.'²¹⁹ Suffolk took a prominent part in the closing scenes of the war, though his notoriety brought neither credit to himself nor satisfaction to the nation. As the 'abhorred tode and common noysaunce of the realme,' he was made to bear the blame for that 'want of provydent wisdom in the governance,' by which, it was declared, 'all things went to wracke as well within the realm as without.'²²⁰ The charge which filled up to the brim the cup of condemnation against him was that he had fortified the castle of Wallingford with a view to assisting the French king to invade England.²²¹

In the civil wars of the reign of Henry VI, the last feudal outburst in England, Berkshire was saved from the evils of divided local partizanship by the fact that as a royal county, with its great honours long since absorbed by the crown, it lay almost entirely in the hands of the ruling house of Lancaster. The castles of Windsor and Wallingford were the centres of the royal appanage; while the only part of the county held for the Yorkists was certain lands north of Wantage belonging to the Nevill fee of Warwick. The county had always been remarkably free from small feudal centres and turbulent feudal lords; none of the Domesday holders had given rise to permanent county families, while the lands of the county had gained the reputation of being 'skittish, and apt to cast their owners.'²²² It is the lament of a seventeenth-century writer that the 'ancient gentry in this county sown thick in former, come up thin in our own age,'²²³ and Camden closes his article on the antiquities of Berkshire with the sentence: 'Haec de Barkshire, quae hactenus Comitibus honore insignivit neminem.'²²⁴

²¹⁵ *Proc. of the P.C.* (Rec. Com.), 1438, p. 105, a schedule with a list of all the lodgings between Windsor and Edinburgh was found in the traitor's purse.

²¹⁶ Stow, *Annales*, 1416.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.* 1422.

²¹⁸ Thomas Chaucer had married the heiress Matilda of Ewelme. He was high sheriff of Berkshire, knight for the shire in Parliament, Speaker of the House, and ultimately a member of the Regency Council in 1423. He was moreover made constable of Wallingford Castle and steward of the Honours of Wallingford and St. Valery in 1400 (*Cal. Pat.* 1399-1401, p. 34). These offices were bestowed in turn on William duke of Suffolk, and his son John. (Doyle, *Official Baronage of England*, iii, 436, 438.)

²¹⁹ Leland, *Itin.* (ed. Hearne), ii, 6.

²²⁰ Holinshed, *Chron.* ii, 1269.

²²¹ *Paston Letters*, Introd. 60.

²²² Fuller, *Worthies* (ed. Nichols), 113.

²²³ *Ibid.* 97.

²²⁴ Camden, *Brit.* (ed. Gough), 146.

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In the actual hostilities of the Wars of the Roses the county took little part. At the close of the first period of the war, in 1460, Newbury, held then by the duke of York, was the object of a merciless attack by the earl of Wiltshire, who took the town, and hanged, drew, and quartered such of the inhabitants as persisted in their loyalty to the White Rose.²²⁵ In other parts of the county local order broke down during the protracted warfare, and a certain amount of lawlessness became general. In 1461 it was found necessary to send commissioners down into the shire to seize and imprison certain persons who are described as wandering about, 'Killing, spoiling, and oppressing the King's subjects.'²²⁶ With the accession of Edward IV in this same year the royal castles passed into Yorkist hands. Ten years later, during the last Lancastrian rally in the West, Berkshire was the scene of a reassertion by Edward of his claims to the throne. In the spring of this year, 1471, Queen Margaret and her son gathered the remnant of their troops together at Glastonbury and Bath, with the object of marching eastwards through Berkshire on London. The queen accordingly sent out scouts in this direction, 'to make men understand that they would have drawn towards Reading, and by Berkshire and Oxfordshire have drawn towards London, or else fallen upon the king at some great advantage.'²²⁷ Edward answered by a counter rally at Windsor, a rapid march to Abingdon, whence he issued a proclamation reasserting his three-fold title to the crown, and denouncing the leaders of the enemy as traitors. It was his object to cut the queen's army off from London as far west as possible. The battle of Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire achieved his purpose, and secured the final humiliation of his rival.²²⁸

The death of Edward IV in 1483, the seizing of the crown by Richard of Gloucester, and the brutal murder of the princes in the Tower drove England rapidly into the closing struggle of the Wars of the Roses. The house of York was divided against itself; a series of crimes alienated its warmest supporters, and the country, weary of faction and bloodshed, gave a ready welcome to the Lancastrian claimant, Henry of Richmond. To his claims Berkshire showed itself a supporter in the early days of Richard's reign. In October, 1483, after the murder of the princes, the duke of Buckingham, hitherto Gloucester's warmest friend, had turned in disgust from him; in alliance with the Woodville faction he threw himself at once into the schemes which had been set on foot to marry the Yorkist heiress Elizabeth to the Lancastrian Henry. He rapidly attracted many of the prominent men of the southern counties to his party, and 'perswaded all his complices and partakers of his intent with all possible expedition, some in one place and some in another, to sturre against Kyng Richarde.'²²⁹ Several of the Berkshire gentry joined him; in the list of his supporters are to be found such county names as Norris, Hungerford, Harcourt of Stanton, while Sir Thomas Bouchier, constable of Windsor Castle, was also among the disaffected.²³⁰

²²⁵ Stow, *Annales*.

²²⁷ *Chron. of the White Rose* (ed. Giles), 74.

²²⁸ *Ibid.* Edward IV, like the majority of his predecessors, made Windsor his royal residence. A glimpse into the domestic life of the palace is afforded by the account of the complimentary visit of the lord of Granthuse, governor of Holland, to Edward after his restoration in 1472; *Chron. of the White Rose*, 146.

²²⁹ More, *Hist. of Ric. III* (Pitt Press Ser.), 95.

²³⁰ *Cal. of Pat.* 1476-85, p. 371.

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Newbury was chosen as the secret gathering place of the conspirators of the shire. Richard's discovery of the plot, his prompt action in dealing with local disaffection, and the summary execution of Buckingham himself, soon quashed the rebellion. Richmond sailed back to France to await his time, and a proclamation was sent down to the sheriff of Berkshire offering a reward for the capture of all who had 'assembled the people by the comfort of the great rebel the late Duke of Buckingham.'²³¹ The grant of the castle and honour of Wallingford with the honour of St. Valery and the Chiltern Hundreds to Lovell, the 'dogge,' in August, 1483,²³² kept this part of the country quiet until the close of the reign.

With the success of Richmond's second attempt on the crown two years later, the country began a long period of peace and prosperity. Throughout the reign of Henry VII Berkshire was little more than the home county of the royal household. Windsor Castle became the most popular residence of the Tudor monarchs, the frequency of whose visits is attested by the number of proceedings and ordinances issued thence.²³³

While rejoicing with the rest of the country in the benefits of the strong central government, Berkshire was destined to feel at times the heavy hand of a somewhat tyrannical bureaucracy. The picturesque figure of Henry VIII might overshadow his royal county from the castle and forest of Windsor,²³⁴ but his great ministers Wolsey and Cromwell were to come to still closer quarters, and in a more sordid quest. In 1525, the order went out from the great cardinal-minister that all the kingdom should be taxed; the demand was for a sixth, a forced loan for the French War, to be collected by commissioners in every shire.²³⁵

When this matter was opened through Englande howe the greate men toke it was marvell, the poore curssed, ye riche repugned, the light wittes railed, but in conclusion all people curssed the Cardinal and his coadherentes as subversor of the Lawes and libertie of Englande. For thei saied if men should geve their goodes by a Commission, then wer it worse then the taxes of Fraunce and so England should be bond and not free.

And Berkshire was not behind the country as a whole in resenting such a violation of liberty. The matter came to a head at the session of the commissioners under Lord Lisle at Reading. For the people utterly refused the sixth; though, 'of their owne mere mynde,' and for the love of the king, they would concede a twelfth. The commissioners, at a loss in the face of such opposition, sent off Sir Richard Weston to bear the offer to Wolsey; 'which therewith was sore greved,' and had it not been that the matter was 'but communed of and not concluded,' it had cost the Lord Lisle his head. 'His landes should be solde to paie the kyng the values that by him and you folishe commissioners he had lost, and all your lives at the kynges will,' quoth the wrathful minister, which words 'sore astonied' Sir Richard Weston, but he said little. However, he went back to Reading, with directions to the commissioners, 'in no wise to swarve one iote upon pain of their lives.' But neither would the stubborn Berkshire men swerve from their position, and 'for all that could be perswaded, saied, lied, and

²³¹ *Cal. of Pat.* 1476-85, p. 371.

²³² *Ibid.* 365.

²³³ *Proc. of the P.C.* (Rec. Com.), 1558-70, pp. 5-7, 68-72, &c.

²³⁴ A typical tale of Henry's feats in Windsor Forest is the 'pleasant history of King Henry VIII and the abbot of Reading.'

²³⁵ Hall, *Chron.*

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flattered, the demande could not be assented to.' Bills of protest were posted up in all the prominent places, and the land was filled with cursings and weepings, that 'pitie it was to beholde.' A second commission in the following year only increased the resistance, 'the commons in every place were so moved that it was like to have growen to a rebellion.' Whereupon the matter came to the ears of the king, who professed nothing further from his mind than such a demand, declared his desire merely for what 'his lovyng subiectes would graunt to hym of their good mindes toward the maintenaunce of his warres,' and a general pardon to all. The peace-making commissioners turned to the populace, at the conclusion of the matter, for a prayer for the cardinal, to whom they declared the reconciliation was due, 'but the people toke all this for a mocke, and saied God save the Kyng, for the Cardinall is knowen well enough—the Commons would heare no praise spoken of the Cardinall, they hated hym so muche.'

They were not like to love much better his successor in office, Thomas Cromwell, though there is no recorded rising of the county as a whole against his commissions to suppress the monasteries. In 1536 Wallingford and ten other small houses in the shire, with a total income of a paltry £500, were swept away.²³⁶ At the close of the same year, by an irony of fate, the abbots of Reading and Abingdon were called upon to provide 120 of the 660 men called out from the shire 'against the northern rebels';²³⁷ of the rest Sir Humphrey Foster, Sir William Essex, Sir Anthony Hungerford, and Sir John Norres each sent 100 men.²³⁸ To them, with four or five other gentlemen of the shire, was entrusted the work of guarding against sedition in those parts, while the king himself was engaged in the more serious business of the north. The great abbeys of Abingdon and Reading fell in 1539, and their lands were at once either appropriated to the crown or granted to colleges at Oxford; their usefulness and their popularity had passed away, and no rising followed their suppression.

The shire levies do not appear to have been called out to any great extent during this reign; money rather than troops was demanded for the French war, and the danger from Scotland had been removed once for all, early in the reign, on Flodden Field. To the army which destroyed the military power of Scotland in 1513, Berkshire appears to have supplied a contingent. The local hero, Jack of Newbury, is traditionally said to have raised, 'at his own charges,' a sturdy band of 150 men, whom he equipped with 'white Coats, red Caps and yellow Feathers,' and at whose head he himself marched. 'Fifty of them were valiant Horsemen, fifty Pikes, and fifty Musquetiers; all brave Steeds, good Arms, and valiant men.' The gallant little troop won the special commendation of Queen Catherine.²³⁹

In the religious as in the economic disturbances of the reign of Edward VI, Berkshire no doubt shared in a moderate degree; though the discontent did not voice itself in a political demonstration here, as in the east and west. The county is more closely connected with the Protestant Reformation, and with the reconstruction of the national church liturgy, through the Windsor Commission, which met here under Cranmer in 1549,

²³⁶ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, x, 597 (43), 1238.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ *Ibid.* xi, 580.

²³⁹ *Hist. of Jack of Newbury* (Wood).

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and which gave to the English Book of Common Prayer the form that it still maintains.

Windsor was, in this same year, the scene of the disgrace and fall of the Protestant Protector Somerset. Anticipating the attack which the council were about to make upon him, Somerset retired to Windsor Castle in October, taking the king with him.²⁴⁰ The council at once addressed the king as to the expediency of getting rid of the Protector.²⁴¹ Edward promptly answered that Somerset meant no harm to his royal person ; but on the insistence of the council, and the advice of Cranmer and Paget, then also at Windsor, he gave way and assented to his arrest.²⁴²

In the Roman Catholic revival which ushered in the reign of Mary Tudor, four years later, Berkshire troops are found taking a prominent part in the support of the queen. Marching up to London with the men of Buckinghamshire and Middlesex, in a band ten thousand strong, they came on 16 July, 1553, to the palace of Westminster, and there took to themselves such 'armure and munytyone' as they could find, 'in the defence of the Queen's Majestes person and her tyle.'²⁴³ It is not, however, till the reign of Mary's successor that the strenuous period of shire musters begins.

In the history of military development in England the Tudor period is one of transition. The old system of feudal levies had passed away with the Wars of the Roses ; armies of disciplined regiments were not to be known in England until the great wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ; meanwhile haphazard shire levies, under the unsatisfactory 'Coat-and-Conduct-Money' system, fought in the minor French and Scotch and Irish wars of the period, and served for the defence of the realm. A long series of muster rolls, for service by land and sea, is practically the only record of Elizabeth's reign for many of the shires. Each little quota, insignificant in itself, has its part in the international drama of the reign, at the close of which England was to stand out as a nation among the nations of Europe, and mistress of the seas.

The military activities of the reign fall into two main periods, separated from each other by the momentous Armada year. They were associated, in both the earlier and the later period, with the great war of religion which was filling Europe at the time ; the struggle, fought out in small expeditions of shire levies to Scotland, Ireland, the Netherlands, or on the high seas, was part of the struggle of the new Protestantism, in politics as in religion, against the despotic Catholicism of the Middle Ages. In this conflict the policy of England, and of Elizabeth herself, was one of opportunism rather than of ardent partizanship ; its results, which are mainly political, are seen in a narrow scheme of home defence and small expeditions, rather than in any sweeping aggressive movement.

The Berkshire levies were first called out in the Scotch expedition of 1560,²⁴⁴ the plans for which are typical in many ways of the methods used throughout the reign. A fleet, for which the queen disclaimed responsibility, in the Forth, and a small army before Leith, were enough to show favour to the Protestant lords of the Congregation, to secure the treaty of Edinburgh, and the dismissal of the French from Scotland, without implicating England

²⁴⁰ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1547-80, p. 24.

²⁴³ *Acts of the P.C.* 1553-4, p. 293.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.* 25.

²⁴² *Ibid.* 25, 26.

²⁴⁴ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1547-80, p. 152.

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in war with France. The raising of the troops seems to have been a matter of considerable trouble to the counties. In May, 1560, the Berkshire lieutenants, Sir Thomas Parry and Sir Harry Nevill, received orders to see that the forces of the shire were assembled 'with weapons, furniture, and horses necessary for military service.'²⁴⁵ One thousand men were got together at Windsor, Reading provided another 1,000 'goodmen,' 'besides other rascall,' and Newbury turned out a levy of 1,500. The county was willing to serve, but 'furniture' was scarce, and armour had to be provided from London.²⁴⁶ Out of the midst of the stress of preparations Sir Harry Nevill is found wishing for 'a quiet day to go a-wooing in.' The county does not seem to have been called upon for levies for Scotland again. In the northern Catholic rebellion of 1569, which followed the imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots, the shire musters were merely put into training for defence, the usual step in any disturbance.²⁴⁷

Semi political, semi-religious, and but half-authorized, too, was the expedition to France in 1562. Hankering after the bait offered by the Huguenot leader Condé in the towns of Havre and Calais, Elizabeth allowed some of the shire levies to pass over into these ports, though without official conduct. A Berkshire levy was due at Portsmouth in October, 1562, for transport,²⁴⁸ and in 1563 the lieutenants were again raising a levy in the county, to be armed with corslets at the least charge.²⁴⁹ The war came to a close in the next year, however, and no doubt the Berkshire free-lances found further occupation for themselves among the English privateers and adventurers who infested the coasts of northern France and the Netherlands at the time. A Protestant demonstration, accompanied by the usual calling out of shire musters, followed the news of the massacre of St. Bartholemew in 1572. In Berkshire a certificate was drawn up of the demi-lances, light horse, and other troops which the various hundreds sent up to the rendezvous at Abingdon.²⁵⁰

The need for greater efficiency and better equipment was now becoming very greatly felt, and nowhere more than in the numerous Irish expeditions. The English government in Ireland had long been in a very rotten condition, and not least among its curses had been a disorganized soldiery, always on the verge of mutiny for arrears of pay, and driven to pillage in self-support. An army sent out under Walter Devereux, earl of Essex, in 1574, was expected to do much towards reforming matters. Towards this army Berkshire supplied its quota, raised under the direction of the justices in January.²⁵¹ Seven years of guerilla warfare followed. In 1581, however, a second large force was sent out. For this the sheriff and justices of Berkshire received orders to levy their men, and to provide them with coats 'of some darke and sadd colour as russett or such like,' and not of so light a colour as the 'blewe and redd' which had previously been commonly used.²⁵² It was more than mere uniform, however, that was unserviceable, and the English levies with a badly managed commissariat were again driven to ravage the country for their supplies.

Meanwhile delicate three-cornered negotiations had been going on between Elizabeth, Philip of Spain, and Alençon, and to back up her

²⁴⁵ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1547-80, p. 152.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 208.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 225.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 153, 154.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 466.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.* 474.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 350.

²⁵² *Ibid.* 1581-90, p. 16.

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temporizing policy the queen had sent out a 'general memorandum' to Berkshire, and six or seven of the other 'upland counties,' 'for the putting in a readines of such numbers of men to repaire to the marityme Counties next adjoininge for the better defence of the same if nede shall require.'²⁵³ Elizabeth did not break openly with either Spain or France, and though she was offered the sovereignty of the United Netherlands in 1576, her help to them continued to be only pecuniary, and that of the slightest. In 1585, however, Elizabeth found herself driven to take active steps against Philip in view of his attack on English ships off the coast of the Netherlands. In July and August of this year Berkshire levies were called out towards the army of 5,000 men with which Elizabeth's general, the earl of Leicester, was to hold the towns of Ostend, Sluys, Brille, and Flushing for her.²⁵⁴ Early in 1586 a further levy of '150 voluntarie footemen' was asked for, and the men put into the care of one Hambden Poulet for conduct to the Low Countries.²⁵⁵ Later in the same year a commission and letters were addressed to Sir Henry Nevill, Sir Thomas Parry, and others 'for the number of 300 voluntarie men'²⁵⁶—a form of levy found much preferable to the 'pressed' men. But these raw English troops could do little in the face of Parma's organized armies, and the campaign ended disastrously at Zutphen in September.

Encouraged by this success Philip prepared for a combined attack of Spain and the Netherlands on England. In the autumn of 1587 England began her preparations to resist him, and the levies of every shire were mustered for service. In November, 1587, Berkshire sent up a certificate of '400 able and selected soldiers, with their several kinds of armour and weapon,' in the five Vale hundreds of Wantage, Lambourn, Shrivenham, Faringdon, and Ganfield.²⁵⁷ In December, 1587, and January, 1588, Sir Francis Knollys, lieutenant of the shire, received letters for 'the furnishinge of such Souldiours with Coates which were appointed to be levied . . . to be employed under the conducte of Sir John Norrys and Sir Frauncis Drake.'²⁵⁸ As the summer drew on the threatened Spanish invasion loomed ever larger on the horizon, and during the months of May, June, and July the shires were pressed to the utmost for men and money, and for timber for the ships. In April letters were sent down into the shire 'for the reviewinge, training and newe musteringe of souldiers,' with an account of the defects of previous levies²⁵⁹; while in June the justices of the peace in Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and other well-wooded counties were busied with the cutting down of timber 'for the use of her Majestie's navye.'²⁶⁰ On 12 July the Armada left Corunna. An order was at once sent out for troops of every kind—footmen, lances, and light horse—to repair to the court 'into Stratford of the Bow.' To this royal guard Berkshire sent first the substantial contribution of '1000 Foote,' and later in the month, on 28 July, while the fate of England hung undecided at Gravelines, another levy of 500 trained men 'to attend uppon her Majesty's person.'²⁶¹ With the victory at Gravelines the danger passed, and on 2 August, the day on which the English ships gave up their pursuit of the flying Armada, letters were issued 'for the sendinge backe of the footemen'

²⁵³ *Acts of the P.C.* 1578–80, p. 381.

²⁵⁵ *Acts of the P.C.* 1586–7, p. 56.

²⁵⁷ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1581–90, p. 438.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 1588, p. 17.

²⁵⁴ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1581–90, p. 253.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ *Acts of the P.C.* 1588–9, p. 25.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.* 195.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 117.

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(500 for Berkshire) 'with lyke letters for the staie of the horsemen.'²⁶² Only a couple of months later, however, levies of 'voluntarie souldiours' were again called out for the Low Countries, and Berkshire sent a quota towards the required 1,500.²⁶³ In December of the same year the county is found offering to raise and furnish 1,000 men armed; while in view of the continued strained relations in January and February, 1590, the queen asked for fifty additional men. 'To ease the country of an over-great new charge,' it was suggested that half the men should be drawn from the 'trained or furnished bandes' of the shire, 'burdening the countie the les for the armour, furniture and weapons of the rest.' Men who had seen previous service were specially asked for, 'able men to serve as soldiers under the leadinge of fitt officers.'²⁶⁴ For the distribution of the arms it was thought good to have in every hundred men '40 pickemen with corsletes and pikes, and 5 halberdiers wel armed, and 20 muskieters, and 25 Callivers,' the other ten being discounted as 'dead pay.' At the end of March the lieutenants were required to send 200 men for shipment to Flushing.²⁶⁵

In the June of the following year Elizabeth made a further move against Philip by joining with Henry IV of France against his rival to the throne, Philip's daughter, the Infanta Isabella. Of the 1,200 men who sailed from London under Essex, Berkshire and Oxfordshire each provided 100.²⁶⁶ These troops probably served before Rouen, but their stay abroad was short, as Her Majesty was 'not mynded that they should continueue out of the realme above two monethes'; having with forethought, moreover, arranged that they should 'retorne home to the places from whence they were chosen, there to lyve in that condicion wherein they were with their parentes, masters, or otherwise in some particular estate of themselves.'²⁶⁷ In August of the following year Berkshire provided 50 of the 200 men led to Brittany by Sir John Norrys, and sent later 30 extra men at the queen's request. She changed her mind about these last, 'fyndinge . . . some cause not to use so greate number as was purposed,' but they had got away before the order was revoked, and Her Majesty was pleased to allow their use 'consideringe in what forwardnes they were for their journey (attending nothing but the wynde).'²⁶⁸ A new expedition was proposed for the summer of 1593, but a 'newe advertizement out of Fraunce of the state there' (i.e. Henry's acceptance of the mass in July) led to its abandonment.²⁶⁹

The year 1595 saw the revival of the war with Spain. In November and December Berkshire was providing not only loads of timber for the Navy 'out of Bearwood and Sonning Parkes,'²⁷⁰ but stores of every kind, 300 quarters of wheat, 300 quarters of malt, 40 oxen, 100 pigs, 400 fitches of bacon.²⁷¹ Three thousand men were asked for from the maritime counties 'to withstand the descent or landing of the ennemy,' and Lord Norrys was ordered to muster, train, and diligently instruct his men to use their several weapons.²⁷² Many of them were soon after shipped on the expedition to Cadiz, but 3,000 were kept behind in expectation of a retaliatory movement on Philip's part, and ten in every 100 of the 3,000 were to be pioneers

²⁶² *Acts of the P.C.* 1588, p. 215.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 1592, p. 267.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 109.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 297.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 1590-1, p. 220.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 1592-3, p. 416.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 1595-6, p. 164.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 1590, p. 363.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 1591, p. 353.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 1595, p. 54.

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‘with instruments to entrench and fortify.’²⁷³ While the panic lasted strict orders were sent down to the county that none of the ‘principall gentlemen and others of good hability’ were to leave it; they were expected to be on the spot, ‘ready for the service of the country and for the releyfe of their neighbours,’ with arms and necessary furniture. Free permission was also given to lay hands on the arms belonging to recusants. The Spanish invasion continued to hang fire throughout 1597–8. In the ‘Island Voyage’ of May, 1597, led by Raleigh, Howard, and Essex against the Azores, 100 ‘choice men . . . as well out of the trayned bandes as otherwise,’ went out from Berkshire under Captain Conway, one-half of them armed with pikes, the other half with muskets.²⁷⁴ The Berkshire horse and foot were kept on tenterhooks throughout the autumn of 1597 and the spring of 1598. A levy of 3,000 men had just been ordered to march south to the defence of Devonshire in February, 1598,²⁷⁵ when Philip’s death put an end to the immediate danger. A force of ‘voluntary horse’ was called up to Westminster in August, 1599, nominally for defence against the threatened Armada²⁷⁶ of Philip III, but probably as an intentional check on Essex’s soaring ambitions.

Throughout this second period of hostilities Ireland had been a most consistent ally to Philip, who had found an able lieutenant in the rebel Tyrone. It had been felt necessary in consequence to send out English levies almost every year to grapple with the disaffection. A regular stream of them, drafted from all the counties, had been pouring out through the ports of Chester and Bristol. In November, 1595, Berkshire was called upon for forty-four men,

one half of the whole to be shott, whereof one fourthe part to be muskettes, the other half of the whole to be armed with corslettes and pikes, savinge some fewe halbertes, . . . with coates of blue clothe welle lyned and of blewcullor.²⁷⁷

Coat and conduct-money was allowed to all the levies at the rate of 4*s.* per coat, and 8*d.* a day conduct-money to the coast.²⁷⁸ In the autumn of 1596 forty-seven ‘hable and likely men, knowen to be of good behaviour,’ were asked for on the same conditions as before. In the levy of mounted troops made in July, 1598, Berkshire was called upon for three horses, but it was thought good, ‘consydering in former tymes how the horses that have been raysted by the severall shires have been badly chosen,’ to allow the shire to pay a sum of £30 for the charge of each horse, ‘so as none do contrybute to this charge under the valeu of 10*li.* in landes and 20*li.* in goodes.’²⁷⁹ Complaints were incessant, too, about the raw foot levies, who seem to have deserted their colours before coming to the port. The trustees were asked to use careful oversight in the choice of the 300 men asked for from Berkshire (in separate bands of 100 and 200), in August and November, 1598, and were advised not to leave the work of selection to the constables, who were apt to take ‘such refues of men as the villages desire to be rydd of for their lewd behavyyour.’²⁸⁰ In spite of this insistence on efficiency, particularly urged

²⁷³ *Acts of the P.C.* 1596–7, p. 289.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 1597, p. 162. The arms returned to the county after the expedition were ‘35 Armour, 35 Pikes, 32 Musketeers, 32 Banelceers’; *ibid.* 1597–8, p. 250.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.* p. 307.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 1598–9, p. 741.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 1595–6, p. 262.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 1596–7, p. 164.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 1597–8, p. 587.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 1598–9, p. 94.

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with regard to the big November levy, the troops turned out to be very badly armed, 'and so nakedly apparelled as they daylie fell into sicknes and infirmitye.'²⁸¹ A new arrangement was made by which the shire paid £3 for each man to be apparelled at the port, while the Treasury paid out four-score pounds towards the coat and conduct-money. This was so successful that the levies met with special approbation, and the 'gratuous acceptacion of Her Majesty.'²⁸²

Towards the 2,000 new levies Berkshire sent 50 men in June, 1600,²⁸³ 20 more in November and December,²⁸⁴ and a third band, of 25, 'furnished with no other armes than good swordes with baskett hiltes and Turky blades' in April, 1601.²⁸⁵

Elizabeth, like all her predecessors, lived a good deal at Windsor, though less in her later years. In the last year of her reign she made a progress into Berkshire, to Windsor and Reading, and was received by the lieutenant, Sir Edward Norrys, and the sheriff of Berkshire, the latter, 'almost out of heart at the Queen's coming, being unacquainted with courting.' He seems, however, to have risen to the occasion, and acquitted himself very creditably.²⁸⁶

The reign of James I was uneventful for Berkshire save for the raising of an occasional levy, and the regular demand for timber for the Navy.²⁸⁷ In the early years of Charles I the shire levies were called out for foreign service in the war with Spain and in the Thirty Years' War. In May, 1625, the third month of the new reign, 200 Berkshire soldiers were ordered to Plymouth to take part in an expedition to Spain,²⁸⁸ while in the spring of 1627, 100 'pressed' men were sent down to Southampton to be shipped for the king of Denmark's service.²⁸⁹ Later in the same year fifty more men were ordered to Plymouth for Buckingham's expedition to Rochelle.²⁹⁰ A general muster of the shire had been made the previous year to see if the county could, in case of emergency, send out 3,000 armed men, but it was found that 'they have not 1,000 armed men in the whole county, and these are the Trained Bands.' Arms could not be obtained, 'and if they could they have no money.'²⁹¹ A certificate of the military forces of the shire made in July, 1629, declared them to be 1,000 foot and 80 horse, with ammunition in the magazines of Reading and Abingdon.²⁹² Meanwhile the county had had to bear its share in the burden of providing for the 6,000 men billeted on the south of England under the hateful system then in use.²⁹³

The great financial struggle of the reign began in 1626 over the question of a 'voluntary gift,' and Berkshire was not behind other counties in the vigour of her protest against the unconstitutional methods of the crown. In response to the justices' attempts at persuasion, the people 'all with one voice cried out that their bodies and goods were ready to do His Majesty's service, but that they (the commissioners) would depart with no money, except it was granted in a Parliamentary way.'²⁹⁴ The commissioners were more successful in their attempts to raise money at Reading and Abingdon towards the 'forced loan' which took the place of the 'voluntary gift.'²⁹⁵ They went so far, in-

²⁸¹ *Acts of the P.C.* 1598-9, p. 328.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.* p. 790.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 1611-18, p. 86.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 380.

²⁹³ *Ibid.* 1627-8, p. 451.

²⁸² *Ibid.* p. 398.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 1600-1, p. 318.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 1625-6, p. 31.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.* 1625-6, p. 399.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 1625-6, p. 397.

²⁸³ *Ibid.* 1599-1600, p. 416.

²⁸⁶ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1601-3, p. 98.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 1627-8, p. 110.

²⁹² *Ibid.* 1629-31, p. 8.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 1627-8, p. 25.

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deed, as to take Berkshire soldiers to speed the business in Oxfordshire.²⁹⁶ Meanwhile, in the absence of Parliament (1627-8), Charles was forced to cast about for new methods of raising supplies. On the pretext of the raising of a fleet to aid the king of Denmark, preparations for which could not safely stay for a Parliament, as he declared, the counties were asked for their first levy of ship-money in February, 1628.²⁹⁷ The sum laid upon Berkshire in this year was £2,445.²⁹⁸ During the years 1635-6-7, negotiations were on foot for even greater sums. In January, 1636, the sheriff, Sir Humphrey Dolman, paid in £4,000 to the Treasury, and received thanks 'for his diligence.'²⁹⁹ A ship of war was demanded in October of the same year,³⁰⁰ and a couple of months later Sir Francis Norris was called upon to raise a further sum of £4,000.³⁰¹ This was paid in by the new sheriff, Sir Richard Harrison, in 1637, and a further sum of £1,450 in 1638. The county could not long bear this intolerable strain, coupled as it was in 1639-40 with repeated demands for men and money for the Scotch war. 'I wish the office of sheriff had fallen this year upon some more able and experienced man,' the harassed sheriff wrote to Nicholas in March, 1640,

Truly, sir, I meet with such obstacles I know not which way to turn myself, . . . to deal plainly with you I conceive the main ground of the slackness at this present more than heretofore is the expectation they have of the Parliament that it will be represented to the king as a grievance whereby they hope to obtain a remission thereof.³⁰²

Even the bailiffs set to collect the money showed themselves 'better furnished with protestations of diligence than any testimony thereof by the sums delivered.'³⁰³

The same half-heartedness met the demand for levies in 1639. In February 400 men of the trained bands of the shire had been called out for service in Scotland. At the same time about twenty of the 'best well-affected men' were asked for contributions for the king's journey north. The troops set out, but deserted when they got as far as Daventry.³⁰⁴ The same thing happened the next year when 600 Berkshire men were on their way to Newcastle. The men became insubordinate, and refused to obey their leader, Captain Andrews, whom they declared to be a recusant. They broke away from Sir Jacob Astley's regiment, into which they had been drafted with the Oxfordshire men, at Daventry, and mutinied, 'some alleging they would not fight against the Gospel, and others that they were to be shipped and commanded by Papists.'³⁰⁵ A hue and cry was made after the deserters, and it was decided to enforce martial law and execute those who were caught. Sir Edmund Sawyer, who was in the county at the time, wrote up to Secretary Windebank that it would be wise, before any new 'press' were made, to vindicate His Majesty's power in pressing, 'now so much in disgrace.' This was publicly done by Justice Jones, who made a declaration at Abingdon that it was the power and prerogative of the king 'to cause any person whatso-

²⁹⁶ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1627-8, p. 25. 'If it succeed not so where they are going, Berkshire soldiers will be well content to eat Banbury cakes.'

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 555.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 1635-6, p. 184.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 1636-7, p. 160.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.* 1636-7, p. 251. Partial details of this assessment are given. Windsor paid £100, Reading £220, Wokingham £50, Newbury £120, Abingdon £100, Wallingford £20, the Dean and Canons of Windsor £30, while the clergy were taxed separately.

³⁰² *Ibid.* 1639-40, p. 588.

³⁰³ *Ibid.* 1640, p. 599.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 1639, pp. 99, 100.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 1640, p. 476.

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ever to serve him in the wars.' In view, however, of the general discontent, Earl Holland thought it wise to go down into the shire with a 'proclamation of grace.' The loss of character involved ensured the submission of the men in a short time, however; 'since it is known how they ran away nobody will set them to work,' a news-letter of August, 1640, declares, and they were said to desire 'with all their hearts' to return to their officers.³⁰⁶ None the less when 240 men were asked for in September, not half the number turned up, and those 'very ill persons, poor and ragged, and no coats ready for them.' Captain Belloes was sent to Reading to hasten the levies, but found only 100 men, and a vague promise of more at a rendezvous at Abingdon.³⁰⁷

Meanwhile the discontent aroused by the arbitrary demands of the crown had been coming to a head in Berkshire as elsewhere in the kingdom. In July the grand jury empanelled to serve at the assizes for the county turned aside from the ordinary course of business to draw up a list of grievances on behalf of themselves and the rest of the county. Among the matters of complaint in the petition were the speedy dissolution of the Short Parliament in the spring of the year, the royal disregard of the Petition of Right, the irksome monopolies of necessaries of life, the hated forest regulations; but the greatest stress of all was laid on the 'illegal and insupportable' charge of ship-money, and the 'new' tax of coat and conduct-money.³⁰⁸ So odious was this last that Charles, even before the Long Parliament met, 'to sweeten his proceedings therein,' abolished the charge, and released those who had been imprisoned for resisting it.

In the first months of the Civil War Berkshire was predominantly Royalist. All the county save the 'barren district' near Windsor was favourable to the king, who had also in his hands the garrisons of Abingdon, Wallingford, and Reading, on the road between Oxford and London. In the strategical plan drawn up by Prince Rupert after Edgehill in the autumn of 1642, the Thames valley and the Berkshire towns provided one of the three converging Royalist lines to London, and the one at the time most important, as it checked Essex's advance on the capital. Everything depended at the time on the local organization of the counties, and the counties held by the king soon became amongst the most disintegrated. As early as November, 1642, it had been necessary to issue a proclamation at Reading 'for the better government of his Majesty's Army, and for the preventing the Plundering, Spoiling and Robbing of His Majesties subjects.'³⁰⁹ Rupert had none the less full power to levy contributions, and to seize forage and provisions, and the king seems early to have begun his demand of £3,000 per week from the shire.³¹⁰

At Reading Charles entered into negotiations with the Parliament. He refused however to accede to their request that he should return to London, and at the close of November established himself with a rival Parliament at Oxford. Meanwhile Essex was getting together at Windsor an army of 'honest disjointed fellows,' with whom he proposed to undertake the siege of Reading.³¹¹ The king had left the town in a strongly fortified condition,

³⁰⁶ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1640, p. 555.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 125.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 466.

³⁰⁹ *Misc. Broad-sides and Proclamations.*

³¹⁰ Cf. Rushworth, *Hist. Coll.* vi, 67; Gardiner, *Hist. of Great Civil War*, i, 9.

³¹¹ Gardiner, *op. cit.* i, 155.

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with a garrison of 3,000 men under Sir Arthur Aston ; it accordingly refused to surrender when Essex, who had marched up from Windsor through Wargrave, summoned it from his position outside the Newbury gate, on 15 April. The Parliamentary army, consisting of 15,000 foot and 3,000 horse,³¹² split up at once into two parts ; the main part remained with Essex on the south of the town, while the others proceeded, under Skippon, Barclay, and Roberts, to hold Caversham Bridge and the Oxford road, by which the garrison was expecting help from the king.³¹³ A battery also commanded the town from Caversham Hill. Meanwhile Charles had sent for Rupert and Maurice, and had marched up through Wallingford to relieve the town ; before the succour could arrive, however, the garrison, 'full of wants, both of Provision and Ammunition,' had hung out the flag of truce.³¹⁴ The besieging army was not in much happier state, 'Wee want provision much, and money,' writes 'T. C.' on 20 April, with the postscript, 'Pay is Scarce.'³¹⁵ In spite of the king's approach with forty-five troops of horse and nine regiments of foot,³¹⁶ and the success of an attempt to throw powder into the town from a barge at night,³¹⁷ Colonel Fielding, who had succeeded Aston as governor early in the siege, thought himself in honour bound to capitulate. The town accordingly surrendered on 27 April, on the honourable terms that the troops should march out with flying colours, and that the lives of the inhabitants should be spared.³¹⁸ Essex showed his moderation in the hour of victory by giving 12s. to each soldier in lieu of plunder.³¹⁹ The garrison marched out meanwhile and joined the king in his retreat through Wallingford, leaving behind them ten pieces of cannon, and a goodly store of 'Western cloaths.' The king waited for a while at Wallingford to call up new levies and arms from the county, but a sudden panic seems to have come upon the royal troops, which 'confounded the consultations of the Councill of Warre then sitting,' and precipitated the retreat to Oxford.³²⁰ Essex was meanwhile refortifying Reading, but sickness had broken out among his troops, and discontent followed the long arrears of pay, 'for the Parliament at that time was put to it for want of money, upon which discontents great numbers daily deserted their colours.'³²¹

The king had failed in his first attempt to secure the road to London, but he still possessed a superiority of military organization which might have enabled him to outwit Essex. With the summer of 1643, too, came the break-down of the Parliamentary plan of defence in north and west, at Adwalton Moor, Lansdowne, and Roundway Down. If the king had pressed down Thames in August it is doubtful whether Essex could have held either Reading or London against him. He chose, however, to turn aside to Gloucester, in the hope of securing a base in the west. This move

³¹² Rushworth, *Hist. Coll.* vi, 265.

³¹³ 'A more Full and Exact Relation from Reading of their Proceedings there. As it was writ in a letter sent from a sergeant-major there to a Lieutenant-Colonel in London. April 20.' Signed 'T. C.'

³¹⁴ 'The Second Intelligence from Reading.' 24 April.

³¹⁵ 'A more Full and Exact Relation.' The spirit which marked Cromwell's Ironsides later is already in the army. 'T. C.' writes (*ibid.*) 'I thanke my God I find as much comfort and health lying under a hedge and suffering Hunger, Thirst and Cold as when I lay in a Feather Bed and fared well.'

³¹⁶ 'An Exact Relation of the delivering up of Reading' (Gough) ; this is a letter from Sir Philip Stapleton, John Hampden, and Arthur Goodwin, to the Speaker.

³¹⁷ 'Victory Proclaimed in an Exact Relation of the Valiant proceedings of The Parliament forces in the siege before Reading,' 15-27 April (Gough).

³¹⁸ Rushworth, *op. cit.* vi, 288 ; *Mercurius Bellicus*, 26 April.

³²⁰ 'Fourth Intelligence from Reading,' 30 April.

³¹⁹ 'An Exact Relation,'

³²¹ Rushworth, *op. cit.* vi, 290.

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drew Essex and the London trained bands out in pursuit. Their attempt to regain London by the South Berkshire route, out of striking distance of Oxford, and the king's resolution to cut them off before they could reach Reading, brought the armies face to face at Newbury.³²² The king marched south from Gloucestershire through Faringdon and Wantage, regulating his movements according to the instructions which he received from Rupert and Hurry, who had been deputed to harass the enemy on their march through Wiltshire.³²³ These two, with a body of 5,000 horse,³²⁴ came up with Essex's army at Aldbourn Chace on the Berkshire border, and claimed to have done considerable damage, 'taking two Coronets and killing Forty or Fifty men.'³²⁵ They were however driven back by a rally of the Parliamentary troops under Sir Philip Stapleton, with whom Digby and Jermyn and the Marquis de Vieuville got into unpleasantly close quarters. The marquis was killed, but Rupert rescued the troops and withdrew to Newbury in anticipation of a battle. The same night the Parliamentary army 'much distressed from want of sleep, as also for other sustenance,' wet to the skin, for it was 'a night of much rain,' and unable to forage through the smallness of their cavalry, marched with what speed they could to Hungerford, and thence, through Shelton to Newbury, only to find, however, that the king had already taken up his quarters in the town.³²⁶ On the evening of 19 September Essex came up to Enborne, and 'invited to it by the extraordinary advantages of the Place or engaged to it by the despaire of escaping,' took up a strong position in a line north and south between the Kennet and Enborne stream, with the baggage and principal reserve on a wooded hillside near Hampstead, 'fenced by hedges and ditches inaccessible but by such and such passes,' and the rest of the army in a line between Hampstead and Enborne.³²⁷ Meanwhile the king's army, ignorant of the enemy's disposition, and half expecting that they would retreat during the night, 'which upon all their former proceedings we had reason to expect,' says the Royalist writer,³²⁸ had taken up its position on Newbury Wash, directly barring the London road. The two armies became aware of each other at daybreak on the 20th. It was clear from the positions assumed on what lines the day's action must go. Essex, with his nearest base at Gloucester, a famishing army, and no means of renewing his supplies, found himself compelled to take the offensive, in the hope of sweeping away the barrier across his road to London. For such action he had on the whole the advantages of position, as the enemy recognized.³²⁹ His right wing,

³²² Newbury seems to have been well affected to the Parliament throughout the war, and suffered much through its proximity to the Royalist centres at Oxford, Faringdon, Donnington, Wallingford, and Basing. When held by the Parliament it menaced the roads from Oxford to London and from Oxford west; as a Royalist outpost, it could, together with Donnington Castle to the north of it, intercept any passage, and was an invaluable settlement inland from the Thames (cf. Money, *Battles of Newbury*, 29).

³²³ 'A True and Impartiall Relation of the Battaile betwixt His Majesty's Army and that of the Rebels neare Newbury in Berkshire,' 20 September, 1643 (Gough).

³²⁴ Heath, *Chron.* 50.

³²⁵ 'A True and Impartiall Relation.'

³²⁶ 'A True and Impartiall Relation'; cf. 'A True Relation of the late Battell neare Newbery' (by a Parliamentary soldier); and 'A True and Exact Relation,' Foster (Wood). Essex had expected to be well provisioned at Newbury, for certain clothiers going up to London from Wilts. had informed the Parliament 'That the Town of Newbery, having intelligence of his Excellencie the Parliaments Lieutenant General his advancions that way had provided great store of provisions and other necessaries for horse and man for the entertainment of his army.' *True Informer*, 21 Sept. 1643; cf. Money, *Battles of Newbury*.

³²⁷ 'A True and Exact Relation'; 'A True and Impartiall Relation.' ³²⁸ 'A True and Impartiall Relation.'

³²⁹ 'A True and Impartiall Relation.' 'They being so advantageously placed for fight (and so disadvantageously for Subsistence).'

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consisting of 'three bodies of Foot (the Blue and Red Regiments of the Trained Bands) both lined and flanked with strong bodies of Horse and under favour of Cannon,' held the 'little Heath' on the south side of Enborne, which was such a formidable feature in the day's action, and the 'round hill' from which the Parliamentary cannon commanded the whole Royalist position.³³⁰ Over against this wing, on the Wash, and 'far lesse than twice musket shot distance from them,' the main body of Royalist horse was massed under Rupert. In the centre, at Enborne Lodge, the troops of Stapleton, Ramsey, Harvey, and Goodwin faced the main body of the king's horse and foot, while the Grand Reserve and Roberts's troops held the hillside near Hampstead.³³¹ A dash made by Roberts's horse on the strong position held by the King's Life-Guards near the Kennet, began the action at about seven o'clock in the morning. It was repulsed by the brilliant defence of Byron and Falkland, the latter of whom, however, was shot down in the skirmish while attempting 'more gallantly than advisedly' to spur his horse through a gap in the musket-lined hedgerows.³³²

The main battle then passed to the 'open campania' around Enborne. Here, on the extreme right, after three desperate charges, Rupert's horse, reinforced by Culpepper's brigade and Byron's Blacks, succeeded in routing the two regiments of Parliamentary cavalry, and compelling the Blue and Red regiments to retire after a sturdy resistance, and still unbroken, 'into the adjoining Fastnesses.'³³³ Rupert secured the hill, 'the place of most concernment,' and kept it until the Royalist retreat at night. The resolute bearing of the trained bands throughout this action, in which they suffered considerably, won for them the praise of the enemy.³³⁴ Meanwhile the Parliamentary centre had been trying to force back the king's main position and to gain a footing on the Wash. They were not able, however, to stand the onrush of the Royalist horse, and were carried right back into the intricacies of Skinner's Lane, out of which they only disengaged themselves with considerable loss.³³⁵ At four in the afternoon the Blue and Red regiments were called up to support the artillery in the centre, and after several hours' hard fighting all along the line, the Parliamentary army seems, by nightfall, to have secured a footing on the Wash. For the king, who had been all day long, either on the field, or on a hill near, riding in and out among the troops in a grey coat, drew off as night came on, to the 'farther side of the Green,'³³⁶ and thence after midnight back into Newbury, leaving the London road open. The anonymous Royalist writer of the 'True and Impartial Relation' gives the reasons for the retreat as, in part, the need to rest the troops for the next day's pursuit, 'but in part,' he adds, '(for I will conceale nothing) to make a Bridge to a flying Enemy, lest indeed too great a despaire of retreat might have made them opiniate a second fight in that disadvantageous place.' Powder too had run out, four-score barrels had been used, and there was not enough left 'for halfe such another day.'³³⁷ The Parliamentary army had been

³³⁰ 'A True and Impartial Relation.' 'This hill and that heath were the two eminent scenes of all that dayes action.'

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Byron's Narrative.

³³³ 'A True and Impartial Relation.'

³³⁴ Ibid. 'Give them their due they showed themselves like men.' Cf. Heath, *Chron.* 51: Both armies fought 'with great valour and obstinacy,' especially the trained bands and auxiliaries 'against whom the Royalists had the greatest spleen, and therefore tasted of their Resolution.'

³³⁵ 'A True Relation.'

³³⁶ Rushworth, op. cit. vi, 293-4.

³³⁷ A True and Impartial Relation.'

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expecting a second day's fight, but were in no way averse to the change of plan, as they had 'endured much hardship both for want of rest and diet.'³³⁸ They waited till twelve o'clock the next day, but seeing no signs of renewed hostilities they marched quietly away over the field, their business being only 'to break thorow their Army home.'³³⁹ Both sides claimed the victory. The Royalist writer speaks of it as a 'happy successe,' with all the 'confest ensignes of a battaile gained.' But he surmises that the enemy will also call it a victory :

I am confident . . . that our having gained the field will not have kindled higher bonfires with us in joy and thanksgiving than with the remaining Rebels, in hopes yet further to abuse the people by passing still upon their deliverancies for victories.³⁴⁰

The author of the 'True Relation' is more philosophical: 'Let the impartial Reader judge on which side the occasion of triumphing is, . . . there is no victory in Civil warre that can bring the Conqueror a perfect triumph.'

On leaving Newbury Wash, the Parliamentary army had marched, on the 21st, through Greenham Heath on the way to Reading. Before they reached Aldermaston, however, Rupert and Hurry, with a Royalist troop, fell upon the cavalry in their rear. These, with 'base cowardice,' turned in a panic, and rode right through the foot in the narrow lane. The latter recovered themselves promptly and formed into lines behind the hedges, whence they shot the enemy down 'like Dogs, . . . making them quickly retreat and take time to repent their hasty bargain.'³⁴¹

At the close of the 1643 campaign the king seemed to be regaining his position in Berkshire. Soon after the retreat from Newbury, Essex abandoned Reading, and the town was immediately reoccupied by a Royalist garrison under Sir Jacob Astley.³⁴² Meanwhile the king had been making a humble appeal, through the high sheriff and the justices of Oxfordshire and Berkshire, to the 'Gentlemen of Abilitie and Yeomen' of these counties for further contributions of money, plate, and horses, for his 'perspicuous and obvious wants,'³⁴³ while on 13 October a definite agreement was drawn up at a council of war at Oxford, by which the high sheriff, gentlemen, and freeholders of the county of Berkshire bound themselves to provide

by way of Loane, during the space of a Moneth, a weekly contribution of £1000 by the week towards the maintenance of the King's army, . . . to be proportionably laid upon all the parts of the County, . . . to be leyed and rated upon the Lands, Rents, Annuities, Parsonages, or Tythes and Personall estates of the inhabitants of the whole County.

Half the levy was to be paid in money, half in provisions, the latter to be delivered at Abingdon every Friday.³⁴⁴ In the original Royalist scheme for

³³⁸ Heath, *Chron.* 51.

³³⁹ 'A True Relation.' The numbers of the killed seem to have been 5,000 or 6,000 men, 'the greatest loss whereof, if any material difference, fell on the Parliament's side.' The author of this account writes as an eye-witness, 'Some talk of thousands slain on the King's side. I viewed the field and cannot guess above 500, but this the Townsmen informed us that they carried 60 Cart-load of dead and wounded men into the Towne before I came to view the place, and such crying there was for surgeons as never was the like heard.'

³⁴⁰ 'A True and Impartial Relation.' For the other side see Foster, in 'A True and Exact Relation.'

³⁴¹ 'A True Relation.'

³⁴² Gardiner, *Hist. of Great Civil War*, i, 285.

³⁴³ *State Tracts*, 1642-4.

³⁴⁴ 'Agreement between His Majesty and the county of Berks, 1643.' Most of the supplies seem to have been appropriated by Rupert's horse at Abingdon; cf. Clarendon, *Hist. of Rebellion*, vi, 166: 'Prince Rupert considered only the subsistence and advance of the horse as his province, . . . and therefore would by no means endure that the great contributions which the counties within command willingly submitted to should be assigned to any other use than the support of the horse, to be immediately collected and received by the officers.'

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the campaign of 1644 the king was again to attempt to hold the Thames valley with its garrisons of Oxford, Banbury, Abingdon, Wallingford, and Reading, in order to leave the main fighting army free for the north and west. Considerable numbers of troops were also thrown into such outposts of the district as Faringdon and Newbury.³⁴⁵ Divided counsels, however, soon brought the plan to nothing. In May, Firth insisted on slighting the works at Reading, and abandoned the town before Essex's advance, sending his provisions and ammunition to Donnington Castle, Wallingford, and Oxford.³⁴⁶ Ten days later Abingdon was similarly abandoned by the royal troops.³⁴⁷ The Parliament was not slow in laying hands upon these important centres. In July, Major-General Browne was sent to fortify Reading, and he at once took steps, in conjunction with the committee of Berkshire which had its head quarters in the town, to block up the various 'inlets and avenues' that made the place untenable.³⁴⁸ He found this no light task, and calculated that he would require 1,000 or 1,500 men to keep the enemy out. The local committee were none too ready to provide funds. After sending £1,000 to meet the greater needs at Abingdon in August, Browne complained that he had only a week's pay in hand. He wrote up despondently to the Committee of Both Kingdoms :

The work will not be carried on with honour and safety, the committee of these counties being neither able to raise a competent number of men to do the work nor money to pay them if raised ; so that I pray God the King possess not again, in despite of us, his winter quarters.

Meanwhile Sir William Waller had been engaged in fortifying Abingdon, a matter of much consequence, 'both in respect of the present straitening and future taking in of Oxford.'³⁴⁹ Reinforcements of horse were ordered into the town from Essex, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, and Kent, and in August, Browne was sent down to supersede Waller with additional levies from Manchester's army and from the City horse. He found even greater difficulties here than at Reading, and soon wrote for a recall, 'not being able to command men without constant pay.' He was harassed by the desertion of his men, and the complaints of the county against the 'unruly soldiers.' The garrison was always on the verge of starvation and misery. 'I expected the county would have supplied me horses, men, and money,' he wrote on 21 August. 'But as I never was, since my coming hither, so I see no probability of being in a posture to offend the enemy or defend ourselves.'³⁵⁰ The inefficiency of his troops became apparent, when, early in September, a relieving force from Oxford not only got away across the county to Basing unknown to the garrison, but returned unmolested, while the force sent out to cut them off lay still at Newbury, 'for want of good intelligence'—their stupidity providing 'as great a riddle as a trouble' to their commander.³⁵¹ The misery in the garrison and the consequent mutiny of the troops drove him to write to the Committee of Both Kingdoms again for money :

My Lords, it troubles me much to complain, and did I not see so many pressing necessities in the soldiers, as well those of the County as all the others from London, whose bare feet and hollow cheeks plead aloud, I should for ever be silent.³⁵²

³⁴⁵ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644, p. 54 : in March, 500 horse at Faringdon ; p. 135, April, 1,000 musketeers asked for at Newbury.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 163.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 176.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 364.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 419.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 443.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.* 506, 507.

³⁵² *Ibid.* 527.

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His declaration of weakness was endorsed by Manchester, who declared to the committee, on his arrival at Reading, that, if the king chose to march into those parts, Abingdon could not resist him, but must fall a prey.³⁵³ The danger of the king's approach from the west brought out a promise of money for the garrison, and an order for revictualling from all the country round.³⁵⁴ Its continued weakness in spite of this, combined with its proximity to the centre of action, reduced it to a state of continual alarm throughout the autumn campaign.

In order to frustrate the Royalist plans for holding the towns of this central district, the Committee of Both Kingdoms proposed the junction of the Parliamentary leaders Essex, Manchester, Waller, and Cromwell, at some comparatively western rendezvous such as Newbury, from which it would be easy to intercept the king's passage, and to isolate the garrisons which he proposed to hold.³⁵⁵ The apparent hesitation and half-heartedness of the earl of Manchester,³⁵⁶ together with the difficulties of combined action under the orders of a distant committee, led to the bungling of the scheme, and the postponement of any decided issue. Manchester wasted time at the outset by marching in a roundabout way through Basingstoke, Aldermaston, and Swallowfield; thus giving the king time to come up through Hampshire and to throw his troops into Newbury. He at once got into communication with Donnington Castle and Shaw House, which were held for him by Colonel Boys; and when the Parliamentary troops came up from Bucklebury and Thatcham, on the evening of the 26th, already 'lessened and disabled for the service' by their long march, instead of finding the town 'open and naked,' and a valuable base for attack on the castle, they found it fortified against them, and supported by all the king's forces drawn up to the best advantage in Speen Field. Manchester at once took up a position on Clay Hill, about a mile to the east of Shaw House, at 'about an hower before night' on the 26th, and for two hours the armies fired purposelessly on each other across Lambourn Stream.³⁵⁷ Meanwhile the Parliamentary leaders had been drawing up a scheme for a double attack, on the rear and front of the king's army, to secure their own line of provision on the one hand towards Reading, and to cut the king's communication with Rupert on the other. Accordingly, early the next morning (Sunday, 27 October) a flanking column under Skippon and Balfour, with Waller, and Cromwell, and the majority of Essex's troops,³⁵⁸ made a rapid march to the north of the king's position, through North Heath and Wickham Heath to the woody uplands of Speen, where Prince Maurice and the artillery guarded the king's rear. They began their attack on the enemy's breastworks at between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. The position,

³⁵³ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644, p. 542.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 1644-5, pp. 35, 36.

³⁵⁵ Cromwell wrote afterwards: 'if his Lordship (Manchester) had advanced thither accordingly the king would not (in probability) have passed Salisbury river or the plaines, for this winter, and soe the sieges of Dennington, Basing and Banbury Castles had been secured and those places ours ere now,' in *Quarrel of Manchester and Cromwell* (Camden Soc.), 84.

³⁵⁶ Cromwell speaks of it as 'some principle of unwillingness in his Lordshipp to have this war prosecuted unto a full victory and a designe & desire to have it ended by accommodation . . . on some such termes to which it might be disadvantageous to bring the king too lowe.' (*Ibid.* 79.)

³⁵⁷ Symonds, *Diary* (Camden Soc.), 144.

³⁵⁸ Rushworth (*op. cit.* vi, 724) gives the numbers of this flanking force as '4,000 of Rebels Horse and Dragoons and 500 Pykes.'

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which had been strengthened by nine pieces of cannon (among them some captured from Essex at Lostwithiel), was stormed by the Forlorn Hopes, Skippon and Balfour leading the charge on the right, Waller and Cromwell on the left. The whole line swept up over the entrenchments and drove Maurice's troops back on to the Guards; it was repulsed, however, on Speen Field by a rally of Royalist troops under Sir Humphrey Bennet.³⁵⁹ Meanwhile, early in the day, Manchester, to mislead the Royalists, had made a false charge across the Kennet; but the 400 musketeers whom he sent over had been driven back with great loss. It had been part of the original scheme of the divided attack that Manchester, who had remained in front of Shaw House with 1,500 horse, should fall on the weak points of the king's front as soon as he saw that the flanking column had given battle. Cromwell declared that he did not keep to his engagement, and delayed his attack 'till almost halfe an hour after sunsett,' then attacking only an inaccessible side of the house which was particularly well guarded by Astley, Lisle, Page, and Thelwall;

whereas had he fallen on by daylight and according to agreement he might on the open side have taken that house with the men and ordnance in it, and if so we had betwixt our two hedges in probability ruined the enemy who had then had noe free passe over that river to gett away.³⁶⁰

His action seems, however, to have met with the approval of the commissioners, who declared that he fell on 'in a seasonable tyme,' and profited the other forces much by keeping so many of the king's soldiers engaged.³⁶¹ The battle lasted only three hours, the last 'by moonshine,' but the two parts of the army knew nothing of each other's fortune till the next morning.³⁶² Then, too, they discovered, with many mutual recriminations, that the Royalist army, storing its carriages and ammunition in, or near, Donnington Castle, had gone off soon after midnight, the main body to Oxford by way of Wallingford, and a small troop, with the king at its head, to Faringdon, on its way to Bath.³⁶³ A council of war was called at once at Speen, and all the horse and dragoons, with the exception of 1,000 men left with Manchester,³⁶⁴ went off under Waller, Hazelrigg, and Cromwell, to Blewbury, in pursuit of the Royalist army. Fearing, however, to adventure their weary troops in the bad roads and woodland country about Abingdon, without the support of the foot,³⁶⁵ they returned to Newbury, requesting that either the whole army should march across the Thames to cut Rupert off from Oxford, or that they should be allowed 2,000 or 3,000 foot to assist in the pursuit. Both requests were refused, until, on 1 November, the king returned to Oxford from the west determined to raise the siege of Donnington Castle.³⁶⁶ Then, too late, Manchester allowed himself to be persuaded to march north. He got as far as Blewbury, on the 2nd; but changing his mind, on the pretext of bad roads, and in spite of the opinion of a council of war, he returned to Newbury; in his haste to get back anticipating the orders of the committee, and leaving

³⁵⁹ Rushworth, *op. cit.* vi. Cromwell does not seem to have taken any prominent part in the day's work; he was commended by the Commissioners Johnstone and Crowe for 'very good service' (*Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644-5, p. 76), but Major-General Crawford declared that 'if Cromwell had played the part that became him the enemy had been totally routed.' (*Quarrel of Manchester and Cromwell* (Camden Soc.), 63.)

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 86.

³⁶¹ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644-5, p. 77.

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ *Quarrel of Manchester and Cromwell* (Camden Soc.), 87.

³⁶⁴ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644-5, p. 77.

³⁶⁵ *Quarrel of Manchester and Cromwell* (Camden Soc.), 87-8.

³⁶⁶ Symonds, *Diary*, 144.

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the supplies which had come up stream for the army, to go on to Abingdon.³⁶⁷ The brilliant and successful march of the king on Donnington followed. On 6 November, Manchester had but 'uncertaine intelligence' of his whereabouts, though he knew that it was his intention to fetch his artillery and ammunition from the castle. The following day scouts brought the news to Newbury garrison that the king's whole army, reinforced by Rupert and Northampton, and consisting of 15,000 troops in all, had crossed the river at Wallingford, 'which advice it seems they did not believe.'³⁶⁸ The news of the king's arrival at Ilsley, six miles off, on the 8th, led the over-cautious council to decide that it was 'infeisible to drawe out time enough to interpose.'³⁶⁹ The Parliament horse was massed on Newbury Wash, south of the Kennet, but was not brought across the river until the evening of the 9th when the need for it had passed. On the morning of that day, the king had made a rapid march on Donnington, braved the enemy at the works, and had then withdrawn with the carriage and ammunition, 'leisurely and souldier-like,' on Winterbourne.³⁷⁰ On the following morning the Parliamentary army drew out, hoping to attack the king in the rear, but again retired with many excuses of ground and weather and unfitness of troops, and, not least, the assurance 'that upon quitting Newbury the enemy would occupy it.'³⁷¹ They finally retired into the town to watch the king's movements and await further orders.

For all this bungling of plans the allied commanders were severely taken to task both by Essex³⁷² and by the Committee of Both Kingdoms. The latter wrote coldly on the 12th, 'We have received your letters concerning the relief of Donnington Castle by the enemy, and are very sorry that they met not with that opposition that was expected from an army which God had blessed lately with so happy a victory against them.'³⁷³ In spite of reiterated commands to try to regain the lost advantage, a task quite impossible to troops worn out by a long campaign,³⁷⁴ the army hung on idly at Newbury for a time, making little attempt either to check the king's advance on Basing or to assist in the defence which Abingdon was still gallantly making against the royal outposts at Faringdon and Wantage.³⁷⁵ It finally left Newbury on the 19th, with the professed intention of blocking the king's road to Basing at either Mortimer or Aldermaston. Once, however, in the open, and within reach of provisions, the troops encouraged by Manchester in view of their 'weakened and wasted' condition, withdrew wholesale into Reading.³⁷⁶

The mistakes and mismanagements of the second Newbury campaign taught the Parliament the need of thorough military reorganization. As a result of the quarrel between Manchester and Cromwell came the Self-Denying Ordinance, the New Model, and ultimately the fall of the monarchy. By an irony of fate royal Windsor was the scene of the making of the new army.

³⁶⁷ *Quarrel of Manchester and Cromwell* (Camden Soc.), 90.

³⁶⁸ Rushworth, op. cit. vi, 729.

³⁶⁹ *Quarrel of Manchester and Cromwell* (Camden Soc.), 90.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 92; Rushworth, op. cit. 730. There was no general action, for the horse had hardly got over the river by nightfall. Crawford declared that the officers of horse were 'matelie against drawing the horsse through the towne from Newbury Wasche, saying that the horsse could not stand without great danger and great losse.' *Quarrel of Manchester and Cromwell* (Camden Soc.)

³⁷¹ Rushworth, op. cit. vi, 730.

³⁷² *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644-5, p. 110.

³⁷³ *Ibid.* 125. Waller declared that his men had been out since the first battle of Newbury.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 142, 176, &c.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 139.

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Day after day in Windsor Great Park, Skippon, veteran commander of foot and chief-of-the-staff, held his parade, and here the royal colours were first worn, at the head of a rebel army, by the senior corps of foot.³⁷⁷ From Windsor at length there marched out in 1645 those twenty-one regiments of horse and foot which were to turn the tide of war at Taunton and Oxford, and finally to bring it to a glorious close at Naseby.

Meanwhile the duel between Oxford and Abingdon had been going on intermittently. Early in January, 1645, a royal force of 800 horse and 1,000 foot, commanded by Rupert, Maurice, and Sir Henry Gage, made a sudden swoop upon the garrison, and had come within half a mile before they were discovered, having by then 'gotten half way along the causeway towards Abingdon great bridge.'³⁷⁸ As rapidly as possible forces were thrown out into the meadows at the side of the town, and a skirmish followed in which Gage was killed, and the enemy retreated. Rupert's horse was pursued within a mile of Faringdon, and the Royalists withdrew again from Culham.

Faringdon and Wallingford, with the castle at Donnington, were now the only Royalist centres in the county. The first was of particular importance as it guarded the western road by which Charles looked for aid from Goring. Support sent by the garrison there to the Royalist troops at Woodstock in April called down upon it a sharp attack by Cromwell. After a two days' siege, on the first of which Cromwell was repulsed with some loss, the garrison gave in on the terms of submitting to mercy, the Parliamentary army securing as spoil 200 muskets, with some barrels of powder, and 200 prisoners, of whom 20 were officers.³⁷⁹ After the defeat of the Royalist army at Naseby in May, the reduction of Wallingford and Donnington was merely a matter of time. In May and June the garrisons of Reading and Abingdon were reinforced in preparation for the attack.³⁸⁰ Part of Fairfax's army lay before Donnington in September, while in the following month reinforcements were called up from Reading and Windsor, and many of the southern counties, for the siege.³⁸¹ Wallingford held out for some time against Colonel Dalbier, but surrendered with the remaining Royalist garrisons after the king's submission to the Scotch army.³⁸²

The loyalty of the county does not seem to have been able to bear the strain of the long war, and in November, 1648, the general impatience with the king's vacillations found voice in a 'humble petition' sent up to the Parliament by 'divers of the Committee, Gentry, Ministry, and other well-affected of the county of Berks'; backed by a representation to his Excellency and the 'prayer meeting' at Windsor. The petitioners suggest, in no veiled terms, the 'Desir'd Execution of Justice upon all great offenders, . . . vigorous Courses for timely inflicting Condigne Punishment at least upon the Heads of them, and Accompt of all that Innocent Blood which hath been spilt as Water upon the Ground in both the primer and later Wars,' bold language at a time when the fate of the king was as yet undecided by the central tribunal. They go on to declare that until such summary measures have been taken there can be 'no exercise of Religion, no

³⁷⁷ Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, 213.

³⁷⁹ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 56b, the prisoners are given as 'nine score besides officers.'

³⁸⁰ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644-5, p. 556.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.* 1645-7, pp. 204, 220.

³⁷⁸ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1644-5, p. 246.

³⁸² *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 134b.

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use of Lawes, no Assurance of Libertie or Protection,' and, with no unsound sense of future possibilities, urge a decided course of action upon the council, that 'all the world shall see it was in your Hearts only to serve the necessity of the Nation, not yourselves of it only to seeke yourselves in it, not set yourselves above it, not to become a new oppression to us, but (under God) our Redemption for all our Oppressions for the present, and our Bullwarke and Preservation against them or their like for time to come.'³⁸³ This language was part of the inevitable logic of war; as was the execution of the king in the spring of the following year.

Into the activities of the various revolutionary governments of the Interregnum, Berkshire was only drawn by its participation in the military expeditions of the period. During Cromwell's attempted settlement of Ireland between August, 1649, and May, 1650, £20,000 per month was asked from Berkshire as a contribution for the war,³⁸⁴ and in December, 1649, a county levy was sent over to take part in the brutal guerrilla warfare.³⁸⁵ During the Scotch war of the next year militia commissioners were empowered to raise a troop of 100 horse for the defence of the county,³⁸⁶ while in the panic of the invasion of 1651 there was a demand for all the forces that could by any means be got ready³⁸⁷ for the rendezvous at Daventry. A preference was shown for voluntary soldiers, 'rather than men compelled,' and the Berkshire mounted troops seem to have met with special commendation.³⁸⁸ During the peace years at the close of the Commonwealth the defence force was reduced to 80.³⁸⁹

With the Restoration (1660) the old customary order of the Monarchy and the Established Church settled down once more upon the country, 'heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.' But not unopposed. In 1664, disturbances broke out at Newbury in which the mayor and churchwardens were set upon in an Easter vestry meeting by a 'rude and confus'd multitude of all sorts of Phanaticks,' the special venom of the mob being directed against a certain Pocock, odious on account of his known loyalty to the king. Sir Thomas Doleman, true to the traditions of his house, and a staunch Royalist, called up the deputy lieutenants of the county and proceeded to fine the brawlers heavily.³⁹⁰

Berkshire levies do not appear to have taken any prominent part in the wars of the reign of Charles II. In August, 1666, several companies from the shire were ordered down to the Isle of Wight to assist in the defence against the Dutch. Three companies of foot and one of horse were in quarters there when peace was declared in June, 1667. Throughout this period of naval expansion the demand for timber for the navy was incessant.³⁹¹

The reign of James II did little more than prove to England that of the two institutions restored in 1660, the Church of England and the Stuart dynasty, the former was the stronger and more permanent. Little more than a year after the public entry of the papal nuncio, at Windsor, on Sunday, 3 July, 1687,³⁹² William of Orange landed at Torbay and effected the Protestant Revolution.

³⁸³ *A true Copie of the Berkshire Petition.*

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 449, 537.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 428.

³⁹⁰ Heath, *Chron.* 525.

³⁹² Misc. Broad-sides and Proclamations—there was great excitement and expectation throughout the town, 'by reason there has not been any Publick Minister of State from the Pope for above 140 years.'

³⁸⁴ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1649-50, p. 537.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 1651, p. 340.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 1655-6, p. 200.

³⁹¹ *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1668-9, p. 316, et seq.

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Berkshire lay in the direct line of William's march from Torbay to London. Marching through Exeter, Sherborne, and Salisbury, he came to Hungerford, just over the Berkshire border, on 17 November. Here he waited some weeks hoping that his advance on London might be simplified by the flight of James; and meanwhile sent out reconnoitring forces to try the temper of the king's army. One force of 150 foot and 500 dragoons marched against Reading under the Count of Nassau.³⁹³ They found the place in a state of defence, with three companies of Irish dragoons and a regiment of Scotch horse holding the bridge. In the skirmish that followed the king's troops were driven back from the bridge in complete rout, 'pelle et melle,' with a loss of 20 killed and 40 prisoners.³⁹⁴ Hearing that there were three battalions of the royal infantry coming up, Nassau retreated to William at Newbury, but the news soon followed him that this force, leaderless save for a serjeant and two corporals, was anxious to desert to William's standard. With the serjeant raised to a captain and the corporals made lieutenants, the army was sent back to hold Reading for William. The feeble defence made by the king's troops surprised the invaders. Bentinck wrote from Hungerford on 9 December,³⁹⁵ 'les troupes du Roy ce sont toujours retirées a mesme que nostre armée c'est avancée, ils ont mesme abandonné . . . la reviere de la Tamise dont nous avons toujours creus qu'ils defendoit le passage, ce qui estoit la chose la plus apparente à pouvoir faire, mais ils ont quitté Reading une petite ville (*sic*) sur le passage avec assez de confusion.' While still at Newbury William received a pressing invitation from the University of Oxford to go north. He marched as far as Abingdon (which he reached on 21 December); but hearing there of James's flight, he turned down stream through Wallingford and Henley to Windsor, receiving the submission of the king's troops as he passed.³⁹⁶

With the great continental wars of the eighteenth century a new period of military organization began for England. For two centuries the country had been content to base her defence, both at home and abroad, on such support as shire levies and local militias could give. In the Scotch invasions of 1715 and 1745 the militia of the Home Counties had been called out to defend the capital. As a non-continental nation England had found such defence possible though not altogether adequate. The part which she was forced to play in the Seven Years' War, both on the continent and in the American colonies, first impressed upon her definitely the need of an organized military system. So inadequate was the home defence at the outbreak of hostilities in 1756 that George II had called in Hanoverian troops to form large defensive camps in various parts of the country. This step was thoroughly odious to the nation, and a reorganisation of national forces was at once instituted. The Berkshire bands were among the first of the militia forces to be embodied under the new regulations. The Army List of 1762 gives the date of the embodiment

³⁹³ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vii, 226.

³⁹⁴ The action at the bridge was commemorated by a poem called 'The Reading Skirmish' (to the tune of 'Lilli borlero'), which begins, 'Five hundred Papistes came there to make a final end, Of all the Town, in time of Prayer, but God did them defend.'

³⁹⁵ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vii, 228a.

³⁹⁶ A definite action at Windsor, in which the Prince of Orange 'got an absolute conquest,' is described in 'A Short Account of a Second Engagement . . . between the King and Prince of Orange's Army near Windsor' (Misc. Papers, Ashmole).

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as 25 July, 1757. The officers of the regiment are given as colonel (then Sir Willoughby Aston), lieutenant-colonel, major, six captains, captain-lieutenant, nine lieutenants, seven ensigns, adjutant, quartermaster, surgeon.³⁹⁷ The duke of St. Albans, lord-lieutenant of the county, was called upon to provide 560 of the 32,000 men required from the whole country. A return of the arms, accoutrements, and ammunition of the force in 1759 gives its composition as thirty serjeants, twenty drummers, and 560 rank and file formed into eight companies. The full force, with the complement of officers, was reported as out on duty at Hungerford, Marlborough, and Devizes during the panic of French invasion in July, 1759.³⁹⁸ The Militia Acts, under which the first embodiments were made, were not, however, satisfactory, and with the close of the war in 1762 the troops were disbanded.

Meanwhile, side by side with the militia reform had gone a reorganization of the various line regiments which had been formed at the close of the Stuart period, or in the early years of the eighteenth century. In 1758 the 2nd Battalion of the old 19th Regiment, formed in 1730, was re-enrolled as the 66th of the line, and connected with Berkshire,³⁹⁹ though it was not till the territorial arrangement of 1881 that it received its definite title of the Berkshire Regiment.⁴⁰⁰ The regiment saw its first active service in 1775, in the American War of Independence, and distinguished itself by the gallantry of its light companies in the actions at Bunker's Hill and Brandywine.⁴⁰¹ In 1796 and the following years the regiment was again out west, this time for the defence of the British outposts in the West Indies and Nova Scotia, which were threatened by the French in the first period of the great war. In 1796 the 66th took part in the action at Port-au-Prince and in the occupation of San Domingo.⁴⁰² In the summer of 1798, the pay-list is signed at Halifax; in February, 1799, at Kingston. At the close of the March pay-list, in Jamaica, the entry is made: 'The Regiment embarked on Board the *Cecilia* Transport on the 27th March, 1799, and are charged with sea rations.' In the autumn of the same year and the spring of 1800 they were back in Nova Scotia, at Halifax and Annapolis.⁴⁰³ In the same year part of the regiment, reinforced by a considerable number of the disbanded militiamen, took part in the action at Egmont-op-Zee in Holland, and were allowed to commemorate the victory by placing the name on their colours.⁴⁰⁴ For the next ten years, the period of greatest excitement for the militiamen and volunteers, the regiment saw no active service.

As early as December, 1792, two-thirds of the Berkshire militia had been called out for home defence; in 1794-5, when the panic of French invasion was at its height, the Berkshire bands helped to strengthen the cordon of 30,000 men, militia, fencibles, and new corps along the southern coast.⁴⁰⁵ The amateur warlike ardour of the county broke out meanwhile in such local volunteer associations as the Windsor Foresters, the Loyal Berkshire Volunteers, the Reading Volunteers, the Wantage Volunteers, the Abingdon

³⁹⁷ Thoyts, *Royal Berkshire Militia*, 87.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 79.

³⁹⁹ The earliest pay-list of the regiment, under the name of the 66th, is that of July, 1760, with John la Fauselle, colonel. Sworn at Beccles. War Office Muster Rolls, general series, 7458.

⁴⁰⁰ Rudolf, *Short Hist. of the Territorial Regiments of the British Army*, 489.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*

⁴⁰³ Muster Rolls, *op. cit.*

⁴⁰⁴ Rudolf, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰⁵ Thoyts, *Royal Berkshire Militia*, 131.

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Independent Cavalry.⁴⁰⁶ The system of vigilant home defence continued in full force until the peace of Amiens in 1802 brought the first period of the war to a close and made large numbers of supplementary troops unnecessary. By December, 1803, however, early in the second period of the war, 400,000 men had again been called out in the various shires, and a regular defence by volunteers and militia-men was kept up until the general disbanding of the years 1813-14. A considerable number of the supplementary troops thus set free passed over into the line regiment for the Waterloo campaign.⁴⁰⁷

In the great wars of the nineteenth century the Berkshire Regiment has played a prominent part. Drafted from Calcutta in 1840 to take part in the China war, the 66th were present in May, 1841, at the storming and capture of the heights above Canton, and took part in the various successes of the campaign at Chinhoe, Lingpo, Saignan, Chefoo, Woofun, and Chinghanfoo. They were allowed at the end of the war to add 'China,' and the Dragon device, to their colours.⁴⁰⁸ On the outbreak of the Crimean war in 1854 the regiment was again ordered to the front. Landing in the Crimea on 14 September, they took part on the 20th in the battle of Alma. Six days later they were at Balaklava, and on 5 November at Inkerman. They won special commendation for their heroic action in the trenches before Sebastopol in the terrible winter campaign.⁴⁰⁹ The long peace time which followed was broken in 1879 by the Afghan war, in which the Berkshire Regiment covered itself with glory. After a whole day's battle before Kandahar on 27 July the British general had been forced to retreat into the town before the 25,000 men of Ayoub Khan. The retreat was covered by the 66th Foot in a defence which filled the enemy with fear and cost the regiment the lives of 10 officers and 275 men. The official dispatch runs: 'History records no finer instance of devotion to Queen and country than that displayed by the Berkshire Regiment at the battle of Maiwand.'⁴¹⁰ Three years later the troops were serving on outpost duty in Egypt under Wolseley, and in January, 1885, were landed at Suakin for action in the Soudan. On 20 March they took part in the victory at Hasheen, and two days later, by their resolute bearing in a sudden attack by the Arabs on General McNeill's forces, they turned what might have been a terrible catastrophe into a glorious victory. For their valiant action the queen restored to the regiment their title of Royal.⁴¹¹

The territorialization of the army had meanwhile taken place in 1881, and the 66th Regiment was given a definite geographical connexion with the county of Berkshire, for purposes of recruiting. With the two battalions of the regiment there were associated in the new scheme, two militia battalions, and the volunteers of the locality, the whole resting on a brigade centre or dépôt at Reading. The auxiliary forces thus became an essential part of the territorial army, a step which had been strongly advocated by Wellington in 1852. In the South African War of 1899-1902 the Berkshire militia, known

⁴⁰⁶ The Volunteer movement had received a certain amount of official recognition as early as 1779. The Militia Act of that year (19 Geo. III, cap. 76) declared that 'if any person or persons properly qualified according to the law, should offer to his Majesty's Lieutenant of any County to raise one or more company or companies to be added to the Regiment or Battalion of any County or Riding it should be lawful for His Majesty's Lieutenant to accept such services and appoint such officers accordingly.' Cf. Berry, *Hist. Volunteer Infantry*, 51.

⁴⁰⁵ Rudolf, op. cit. 490.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Thoyts, op. cit. 157.

⁴¹¹ Ibid. 491.

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as the 3rd Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment, with the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the regiment, served side by side with the two regular battalions of the regiment under Generals Gatacre, French, and Clements, and performed useful service in skirmishes and reconnaissances, though they were not called upon to take part in any of the serious engagements.⁴¹³

Of even greater importance than the military organization of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has been the growth during the same period of the system of party government; and side by side with it the working out of the long struggle for reform in popular representation. Into the various activities connected with these two movements the county and boroughs of Berkshire have perforce been drawn.

Although ultimately a matter of party politics, the agitation for reform had begun even previously to the formation of parties. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a parliamentary election had meant little but the peaceful choice of a respectable and well-known local representative by the freeholders of the county and the franchise holders of the borough.⁴¹³ A disputed election was therefore practically a thing unknown until Tudor times, when through the demand by the crown for popular, or so-called popular, support in Parliament, a seat became a matter of great value and importance. At this time many small and insignificant boroughs were endowed with the franchise, to secure extra votes for the crown, some to vanish again immediately from political life, others, however, to maintain a more sturdy and continuous existence. Of the latter was Abingdon, renewed after a lapse since the eventful Parliament of 1337, to which it had first been called, and whose name is preserved as a parliamentary division to the present day.⁴¹⁴

With the increase in the value of a parliamentary seat elections began to be attended not only with the excitement due to contest, but with a good deal of bribery and intimidation. This was more markedly so in the case of borough elections, where the distinct elements of landed or official interest and commercial independence found themselves in closer juxtaposition, and where the uncertain and varying bases of the franchise gave scope for a good deal of discord. Unlike the county electors, those of the boroughs had not as a body the basis of 40s. freehold for the franchise; in some few cases the possession of such property was the qualification, in others it was constituted by general burgage tenure, or the tenure of certain houses and sites, in others by the personal qualification of membership of a gild or the payment of scot and lot; it was even found occasionally within the narrow bounds of the corporation itself. There was an election contest raging at Windsor in 1679 around the question as to whether the 'ancient right way' of electing had been by the 'Common Burgesses in general, to wit, the Inhabitants, Householders of the Burrough (being neither Inmates, Lodgers, Sojourners, nor Alms-takers'), or by the more exclusive body of the corporation, in number

⁴¹³ Rudolf, *op. cit.* 492.

⁴¹³ By Acts of Hen. IV, Hen. V, and Hen. VI, residence had been made a condition of candidature for both shires and boroughs. Stubbs, *Const. Hist.* iii, 412.

⁴¹⁴ Prynne, *Parl. Reg.* Apart from this addition and the abnormal scheme of the Commonwealth Parliament of 1654 to which Berkshire sent seven members, five for the county and one for each of the boroughs of Abingdon and Reading (vide *The Government of the Commonwealth*. Published by His Highness the Lord Protector's Special Commandment), the county continued its ancient representation fairly regularly, returning two knights for the shire, and two for each of the towns of Reading, Wallingford, and Windsor.

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not exceeding thirty, 'called by the name of Mayor, Bailiffs, and Burgesses.'⁴¹⁵ The dispute was one of old standing, and the elections had been contested for some time past by candidates of the rival parties. As long before as 1640, for instance, the poll had been carried by the general inhabitants; in 1661 their rivals had been successful, while just before 1679 again the burgesses as a whole seem to have got the power into their hands. John Carey and John Powney, the special burgesses for the year, were therefore very much put to it to increase their poll against their more popular rivals, Richard Winwood and Samuel Stankey. In their attempt to secure a majority they beat up to the poll

not only Inhabitants, but likewise the Inhabitants of the adjacent villages round about, Inmates, Lodgers, Sojourners, Almesmen, Bargemen, living 30 miles from thence, citizens of London, and in short, every person that could give an account of his name.

Not content with this, they boarded Windsor Castle, 'a place wholly exempt from the Burrough,' and taking advantage of the residence of the king and queen, they took the poll through all the offices

from the Board of Green Cloth down to the Grooms, Water-men, Letter-men, helpers in Stables and Turnspits, pleading that by residence of 40 days they were all free burgesses. They polled likewise Yeomen of the Guard, Gentlemen of the Horse-guard; and no doubt would have proceeded both to Horse and Foot; but that the other party cried Quarter, and yielded them the majority of those votes.

So disguised was the poll-book at the close of this sweeping campaign 'that it was hard to distinguish whether it were a Poll-book of the General Burgesses of the Burrough, a Roll of the King and Queen's Servants, or a Muster of the Soldiers.' The mayor proceeded to declare the poll for Carey and Powney; their indignant opponents chronicled their protest and appealed for a trial of the case by the Commons, declaring the election a 'General assault upon all the Laws made for the preservation of the Freedom of Elections.' There is, however, no record of a remedy. It seems indeed to have been practically impossible to dispute a decision of the mayor, however arbitrary. In the same year at Abingdon a certain Mr. Dunch, of Pusey-Town, is found standing for popular interests against Sir John Stonehouse, the candidate supported by the mayor and the Catholic interest.⁴¹⁶ The election was delayed by the mayor for three weeks, during which time 'three considerable Persons in the Corporation' made a thorough canvass of the borough to secure votes for Stonehouse either by persuasion or threats. They made a list of all the tenants of the town, and promised immunities to all who would vote for Stonehouse—

withal threatening them severely if they would not. And told them, That they should be raised in their Fines, and taxed at greater Rates than they were before, and to some said, They should never renew their Leases any more.

They proceeded to arrest and imprison many on the charge of debt, though it was noticed that 'not one of the many Debtors that promised to vote for Sir John, though more in number, and for more considerable summes due from them, were in the least molested.' In spite of all this Dunch was returned at the top of the poll with 297 votes as against Stonehouse's 171.

⁴¹⁵ *The Case of the Burrough of New Windsor, 1679.*

⁴¹⁶ *A letter from a friend in Abingdon to a Gentleman in London, Sept. 1679.*

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To Dunch's demand for a return according to law the mayor at first refused an answer, but finally declared to his brethren in the privacy of the Council Chamber 'That he had Examined the Poll and found that the number 171 was greater than 297.' He therefore declared Sir John the elected burgess. Hissed to his house by the crowd crying 'A cheat! a cheat!' the craven mayor, moved by 'Guilt and Panick Fear,' fled away, first to the town clerk's house, and thence 'over a High Wall where he Secreted himself amongst the nettles, and kept himself incognito all that day, and the next, until Mr. Dunch and his Council were gone out of Town.' Dunch had meanwhile been parading the town, accompanied by a hundred horse, and near two hundred foot of his electors, 'in a very handsome and decent order,' crying 'A Dunch, a Dunch.' In the end, however, he seems to have retired in despair. The 'short and true account of the election' given by an Abendonian declares that the result was the doing of the Papists, one 'of very great estate' having been heard to declare, 'He would not for £1,000 but that Sir John should be our Burgess.'

Matters do not seem to have improved much in the next hundred years. At a disputed election, again at Abingdon, in March, 1768, a demand for a scrutiny of votes followed the declaration of a majority of two in favour of one of the candidates, but was not allowed by the mayor. Whereupon a supporter of the defeated candidate made a lengthy protest against the methods of his opponents, which he declared to be 'infamous in themselves, and subversive of the Freedom, Privileges, and Independence of the Legal Electors.'⁴¹⁷

This cry of freedom and independence was now coming strongly to the fore as the watchword of the Whigs in the great party contest of the reign of George III. Ever since the first triumph of their principles in the carrying through of the Protestant Revolution, and the foundation of a limited monarchy under William and Mary, the Whigs had had a more or less free hand in English politics. The Tories had moreover lost credit in the nation by implicating themselves in Jacobite schemes. With the reign of George III the position was reversed. Led by their principles to hold the popular tenets of resistance to the crown, to over-much privilege of Parliament, to parliamentary corruption, the Whigs found themselves driven, in 1775, to the bold policy of opposition to the unconstitutional taxation of the North American Colonies, a step which destroyed their prestige with the crown, and led finally to the temporary secession of the party from Parliament in 1776. Meanwhile, in November, 1775, the Whig freeholders of the county of Berkshire, supported by the earl of Abingdon and Lord Craven,⁴¹⁸ met in the town hall of Abingdon to draw up a 'humble Address and Petition to the king.'⁴¹⁹ In this, while declaring their 'boundless confidence' in His Majesty's goodness, and in the wisdom of his Parliament, they felt themselves bound, in view of 'dangerous and seditious' attempts to embarrass His Majesty's Council, to express with all humility and deference their own sentiments on the nature and origin of the trouble,

⁴¹⁷ *A True Copy of the Poll, Wednesday, 16 March, 1768.* To this pamphlet is affixed a declaration made in the House of Commons in 1708 that 'The Right of electing a Burgess to serve in Parliament for the Borough of Abingdon is in the Inhabitants paying Scot and Lot, and not receiving alms or any charity.'

⁴¹⁸ These two seem to have been exceptions to Camden's statement that 'the landed interest is almost altogether anti-American' (Camden to Chatham, in *Chatham Corresp.* iv, 401).

⁴¹⁹ *Berks. Chron.* i Dec. 1775.

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and its probable results. This they did in very forcible language. Acknowledging the need for maintaining the authority of the Parliament over all the British Empire, they went on to make the following declaration :

As English freeholders who value ourselves on our own inestimable right of granting our own property, either by ourselves or representatives of our own choosing only, we cannot, without divesting ourselves of every principle of equity, justice, and even of common decency, consider the complaints of millions of our fellow subjects separated from us by an immense ocean, on being taxed, without any voice, directly or indirectly, in the grant, to be entirely groundless, and the result of nothing but a factious spirit, aiming at the dismemberment of the Empire. The substantial and not nominal assent of the subject in the grant of their own money we can never hold to be a frivolous concern to English freeholders, it can never be exterminated in one part of the Empire without being endangered in all.

In the decisive struggle for legislation on Parliamentary reform, in the early part of the nineteenth century, the Whigs were fated to be more successful. It would appear, however, from the records of elections at this time that in their zeal for power in the House, to achieve their end, even the Whigs were not above using the methods of corruption which they deplored. In the county elections of 1812 and 1818 in Berkshire, a certain Mr. Hallett, an extreme reformer, demanded a poll of the freeholders, as against the two previous representatives, Mr. Dundas and Mr. Neville, putting forward as his platform the abolition of aristocratic influence and 'purse consequence' in elections, the establishment of 'Independent Representation,' unbiased by party. His aristocratic rival, Mr. Neville, was the special object of his attack. In a letter addressed to the freeholders of the county on the last day of the poll⁴²⁰ in the 1812 election, Hallett wrote :

Is not Mr. Neville the son of a great Pensioner, and the nephew of three great Pensioners? . . . Can a person so circumstanced; So linked and tied to Pensioners disclaim all connection with their Pensions? With what face,

he goes on,

can persons miscalled Noblemen and Gentlemen, eat day by day the public bread and do nothing for it, at a time too when so many starving manufacturers, when a raging and extended war, when so many mutilated and disabled heroes, when so many widows and orphans of the fallen, make demands on our charity, our gratitude, our justice, generosity and patriotism, greater than well can be supplied?

His declamations were of little avail; the county was as yet lukewarm enough about reform to accept Mr. Neville's declaration that

he could not bring his mind to endanger the tree to get rid of a cankered branch; he never had yet seen a plan of Reform he could approve, nor would he listen to those disgusting theories Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments.⁴²¹

Hallett, however, showed all the insistence of a reformer, declaring that the resolution of men of integrity at contested elections, to spend not a farthing 'beyond what the law allows and necessity may demand,' would in time train public opinion to feel that the seat itself was of minor importance, and, when obtained by dishonourable means, a 'false acquirement,' the outcome of a system which was 'a stain on the character of the nation.' His successor in the reform crusade in Berkshire was a Dr. Dodson, contester of the Wallingford poll in 1826. The borough of Wallingford seems to have fallen in course of time into a state of absolute political degradation and corruption. It was

⁴²⁰ *Reading Mercury and Oxf. Gaz.* 26 Oct. 1812.

⁴²¹ *The Trial and Conviction of Wallingford Whiggism*, Berks. Pamph.

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a notorious fact that from time immemorial the majority of the constituents of the borough had received after every election a sum of £20 each for their votes, delivered some time after the election by a mysterious person with the sobriquet of 'the miller.' The power of returning members thus lay in the hands of a corrupt faction, who were content to barter away their franchise for personal gain. The Whigs were not ashamed to make use of this system of venality, pleading that they were, still, better than their neighbours, and that while other towns had 'solid lumps of pudding,' the voters of Wallingford had but 'small slices.' The Reform party in the town, called the 'True Blues,' lent their support to Dr. Dodson. He lost the poll, but seems to have won over a good deal of public opinion in his attack on what he called an 'anomaly in law and in reason,' the 'popular' representative who represented nothing but his own pocket.⁴²²

A greater purity in the political life of the boroughs began with the reforms of 1832. The previous diversities of franchise gave place to a uniform system, and old anomalies were done away with. As far as the redistribution of seats was concerned, no sweeping changes took place. Of the boroughs, Reading and New Windsor continued to return two members, while Wallingford joined Abingdon in the ranks of one-member boroughs. Three county members, one from each of the districts of Abingdon, Newbury, and Windsor, took the place of the two knights of the shire.⁴²³

Through the peaceful course of the nineteenth century the county has entered into an ever-widening political life, until with the extension of political rights, given by the Acts of 1867 and 1894, it has attained to that 'representation of the taxed' which was the cry of its early reformers.

⁴²² *The Trial and Conviction of Wallingford Whiggism.*

⁴²³ Act to Amend the Representation of the People, 2 Will. IV, cap. 45

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY

BERKSHIRE in the Middle Ages fell, as it does now, into four natural divisions according to the physical features of the country. The vale of the White Horse on the north, fertile and full of rich corn-growing land and meadow ; the hill country of the Downs, with its poor and stony soil, chiefly fitted for the pasture of large flocks of sheep ; on the south the vale of the Kennet, again suitable for arable cultivation, although wilder, more woody, and more sandy than the north ; while to the east the forest district, stretching from the vale of the Kennet to the Thames, must in early days have comprised an almost unbroken extent of woodland from Finchampstead to Windsor, or even to Bray and Maidenhead. White Waltham and Cookham, now some miles distant from Windsor Forest, were surrounded by extensive woods in William the Conqueror's time, and Winkfield had ' 4 hides in the King's own Forest.'¹

Outside the actual forest district the most extensive woods were those of Bagley and Cumnor,² one containing more than ' 60 jugera ' in the neighbourhood of Pangbourne,³ and others near Basildon, Wargrave, Sonning,⁴ and Hurley,⁵ all in the valley of the Thames, which was apparently wooded along the greater part of its course ; and also at Swallowfield, Bucklebury, and Aldermaston.⁶

Besides the greater extent of forest in the Middle Ages the county had a larger amount of water and was more subject to inundations than it is at the present day. In the vale of the White Horse the termination ' ey ' to many of the village names, such as Goosey, Hanney, Charney, &c., points to the time when they stood out as islands, and were dependent on their causeways for communication with the surrounding country ; floods were constant and most destructive to property along the river banks, and frequently rendered intercourse between neighbouring places dangerous, if not impossible ;⁷ and a good deal of land, now in the most fertile parts, was scarcely worth the trouble of cultivation until new methods of improving the soil became known.⁸

¹ See article on the Domesday Survey, *V. C. H. Berks.* i.

² *Ibid.* ii, 183.

³ *Abbreviatio Placitorum* (Rec. Com.), 246b.

⁴ Assize R. 37, Floods at W. Compton. (All documents are in the Record Office, unless otherwise stated.) Tighe and Davies, *Annals of Windsor*, i, 126, Floods at Windsor. Clarke MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), 20. Floods at Faringdon.

⁵ *Inq. Nonarum* (Rec. Com.). At Reading in the 14th century a good deal of the land was too watery to make satisfactory pasture ; at Milton, near Abingdon, much was left uncultivated on account of the poverty of the soil ; at Abingdon itself the land was described as of little value ; and at Lambourn, Brightwalton, and other places in the neighbourhood of the Downs, the ' stony and mountainous land ' was put at a low valuation. Cf. *Inq.* p.m. 1336, quoted by Footman, *Hist. of Lambourn Church*, 80.

⁶ *Chrti. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 113..

⁷ *De la.* Bk.

⁸ *Tom.* Bk.

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On the whole, however, Berkshire was in advance of much of England in its agriculture and general well-being, for although its wealth was chiefly dependent on rural industries alone, it took a high place in comparison with other counties. According to an estimate based on taxation returns, Berkshire was the sixth richest county in 1341, and in 1450 and 1563 only Norfolk, Oxfordshire, and Middlesex seem to have surpassed it.⁹

Besides arable land vineyards actually existed in several places. Domesday Book speaks of 15 arpents of vine at Bisham,¹⁰ and we find them mentioned later at Windsor,¹¹ Wallingford,¹² Burghfield,¹³ and Abingdon.¹⁴ It is not likely that the produce of these vineyards was of very good quality; in the fourteenth century, indeed, the grapes appear to have been chiefly employed for the making of verjuice, but a 'Master of the Vines' existed at Windsor as late as the reign of Richard III,¹⁵ although by that time the office had probably become something of a sinecure.

Throughout the Middle Ages Berkshire was cultivated, as was the rest of England, on the manorial system, a system which, despite considerable local varieties, may be said to have been firmly established from the Norman Conquest onwards.

Under Edward the Confessor much of the land was in the hands of free-men and alodial owners, but the manorial arrangement had already taken root, many of the tenants being said to hold *pro manerio*. With the Conquest the *terra regis*, already very considerable, was still further augmented, the division into manors became universal, and five *alodiarum* at Solafell were all to whom the title was still given.¹⁶

The majority of manorial lords held their land now by military service, and were bound to supply a fixed number of knights, although the nature and extent of their obligation was frequently left extremely vague.¹⁷

There is plenty of evidence in Berkshire that there was great variety in the size of knights' fees; in the eleventh century whole manors were often held for the service of one knight alone.¹⁸ The practice of frequent sub-infeudation, leading to the breaking up of single holdings, until one man might have as little as the fifth, tenth, or even the twentieth part of a knight's fee, had appeared in Berkshire by this same century, and the solution had already been found by the lords, to whom such tenants paid in money instead of in service.¹⁹ Occasionally some very odd tenures came to be called military. At Englefield, for example, in 1350, 3 virgates of land were held by knight service, 11s. of rent, the annual gift of a goose worth 2½d., suit of court every three weeks, and also the payment, on death,

⁹ Thorold Rogers, *Hist. of Agriculture and Prices*, i, 100; iv, 89; Close R. 10 Edw. III, m. 22; 11 Edw. III, m. 36.

¹⁰ Dom. Bk.

¹² Assize R. 42, m. 12 (53 H. n. III).

¹⁴ Kirk, *Obedientiars of Abingdon Abbey* (Camden Soc.), 54.

¹⁶ For the social condition of Berkshire at this time see the article on the Domesday Survey.

¹⁷ *Cal. Inq. p.m. Hen. III*, 488. At Shottesbrook knight service consisted of the payment of 20s. to the keeper of Windsor Castle, or 40 days' service in the army. *Chron. de Abingdon*, ii, 135. The abbot of Abingdon let out four hides for half a knight, stipulating for three weeks in the year castle guard, or expeditions on either side of the sea, and 'any other services such as Knights of Churches owe.'

¹⁸ *Chron. de Abingdon*, ii, 3. Leckhamstead and Buckland, each with 10 hides, Lyford with 7, and 5 scattered hides all alike owed the service of one knight (12th cent.). 1213, Wm. de St. John had to provide ten knights, to equip them for service in Poitou or elsewhere, and to keep them for a whole year. Cf. Round, *Feudal England*, 225 sq. Pollock and Maitland, *Hist. of Eng. Law*, 235. These variations may have depended to a certain extent upon locality.

¹⁹ *Testa de Nevill*, 532.

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of the best beast as a heriot, a due owed, as a rule, by the villeins. Several other small holdings, some as little as $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres, were also held by military tenure and rent, one being obliged in addition to find four men for harvest work.²⁰

By the fifteenth century, however, military service had ceased to be the almost universal duty of the manorial lord, and even tenants in chief frequently held large manors by socage tenure, strictly non-military and rent-paying.²¹

Besides actual duty in war, knights might hold their lands by the performance of some definitely personal service. Berkshire was particularly rich in holdings of this kind, so many manors being in the hands of tenants in chief, amongst whom 'Grand Serjeanty' was very frequent. Some of these services were quite important, and represented real offices. For instance, Finchampstead Marshall, for example, received its name because the holder of it held the king as marshal, or, as it was expressed, 'held of the king by the service of the marshal's wand.'²² In other instances the service required was arduous, if not distinguished, although frequently the noble only held the office in name, while a subordinate performed it in deed. Thus Nicholas Cook, in Clapcot, held land 'per servicium coquine domini regis'; Henry Balistarius 'per servicium faciendi balistas'; another Nicholas by carrying messages in the neighbourhood of Wallingford;²³ the lord of Bockhampton kept a pack of harriers, and carried the king's horn when he hunted in those parts;²⁴ and many held by the serjeanty of keeping a royal gerfalcon.²⁵ Other services again were extremely nominal. A virgate of land in Pusey was held from the king in return for saying five paternosters for him daily;²⁶ the manor of Padworth provided a servant to hold a rope in the queen's ship whenever she crossed over to Normandy;²⁷ at Shrivenham the tenant had to come before the king with two white capons whenever he passed over the bridge, and say: 'Behold, my lord, these two capons, which you shall have another time but not now!'²⁸

The tenure by which the manor was held, however, did not affect the method of its cultivation. The old system of husbandry existing in the Anglo-Saxon villas continued, to a great extent, in the Norman manors, and changes were only gradually introduced as knowledge of cultivation increased, and the need for money led the landholders to pay more heed to the management of the soil. As a rule a manor was worked on one of two plans, either on a two-field or a three-field system; in the former case half, in the latter one-third being left to lie fallow each year in order to recover for the next year's crop. Berkshire furnishes examples of both kinds of estates. Amongst the 'members' of the manor of Great Faringdon, Great Coxwell had three fields, of which two were sown each year with wheat, oats, rye, barley, and beans; Little Faringdon had two, the east field of over 200 acres,

²⁰ Rentals and Surv. R. 57 (23 Edw. III).

²¹ *Cal. Inq. p.m. Hen. III.* 822. Lollendon Manor held by free socage of 1d. Add. Ch. B.M. 38561. Manor of Finchampstead granted for 20 marks a year, 1452. *Feudal Aids*, i. List of tenants in chief, 1401-2; manor of Shottesbrook 10 marks socage; manor of Moulsoford £10 socage.

²² *Cal. Inq. p.m. Hen. III.* 744.

²³ *Testa de Nevill* (Rec. Com.), 556 (Hen. III and Edw. I).

²⁴ *Cal. of Close*, 1323-7, p. 58.

²⁵ *Testa de Nevill*, 556. Land in Kintbury Hundred; *Testa de Nevill* (Rec. Com.), 559. Land in Faringdon Hundred, &c.

²⁶ Assize R. 37 (25 Hen. III).

²⁷ *Cal. Inq. p.m. Hen. III.* 230.

²⁸ Blount, *Ancient Tenures*, 280.

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the west field with a little more than 150; and Inglesham³⁹ apparently only one, a possible though rather primitive system, in which some of the strips would have to be left untilled in turn.³⁰ Woolstone, an estate lying at the foot of the White Horse Hill, was again a two-field manor, and each year the rotation was made with fair regularity.³¹ Fuller information would be required to judge whether this form prevailed in one part of the county more than in another; probably the nature of the soil was chiefly responsible for the arrangement. Harwell, another manor on the edge of the Downs, where sheep-farming would supplement the arable cultivation, had likewise only two fields;³² Beenham, in the more fertile Kennet valley, had three.³³

These open fields in Berkshire were divided into the usual scattered strips, the number of strips which went to make up the holding of a tenant being subject to endless variety, although for the villein a virgate or half virgate was about the typical amount. These virgates did not all contain the normal 30 acres, but varied in different localities. In Harwell a virgate constantly contained 20, occasionally 21 acres.³⁴ Much vagueness often resulted from this custom of scattered possessions; a tenant sometimes found that he had, by mistake, sown the strip of his neighbour, or had even lost one of his bits altogether.³⁵

Besides the large open fields, each manor possessed meadow land which was particularly valuable, and constantly reckoned at double the worth of the arable.³⁶ This would be held in severalty during part of the year, the division being often effected by lot;³⁷ but after the hay had been carried it was usually thrown open to the beasts of the villagers.

Of pasture there was no lack in Berkshire. Every tenant could send out his plough beasts to feed, according to the extent of his arable acres;³⁸ but if he had more than the stipulated number he had to pay extra, and for other animals slight payments were very generally exacted. Pannage for pigs was universal; herbage, lesselver, horspenny, sheepsilver are all found in various parts.³⁹

Throughout the vale of the White Horse, corn was so profitable that little was done in the way of extensive sheep-farming. At Great Faringdon one man and one woman were able to shear the lord's sheep between them; neither at Inglesham nor at Little Faringdon was a shepherd numbered amongst the regular manorial servants, though both the Coxwells provided some sheep each year to the abbot of Beaulieu.⁴⁰ On all the Magdalen manors it is only at Harwell that sheep are specially mentioned.⁴¹ It was chiefly in the neighbourhood of the Downs that really large flocks were to

³⁹ Inglesham is now in Wiltshire.

³⁰ Cartul. of Beaulieu Abbey, Cott. MSS. B.M. Nero, A. xii.

³¹ Mins. Accts. bdle. 756, No. 3; bdle. 756, No. 22 (Woolstone, 1308-9, 1367), &c.

³² Berks. Deeds, Magdalen College, Oxford; Harwell, 4 A.

³³ Ibid. Beenham.

³⁴ Ibid. Harwell, 26b, 51b, 64a.

³⁵ Court. R. ptfo. 1, 5, 7, No. 64 (Bray, 6 Hen. VI).

³⁶ Rentals and Surv. R. 5 (33 Edw. III). At Windsor, when arable was from 1s. to 1s. 3d. an acre, meadow was 2s. Bodl. Lib. Berks. Rolls, i (41 Edw. III). At Shaw, arable was 8d. to 1s. 3d., meadow, 2s.

³⁷ Reading Cartul. B.M. Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 68; 'pratum predictum solet singulis annis, partiri per perticas et distribui per sortes.' Berks. Deeds, Beenham, 60, Harwell, 64a.

³⁸ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 67 (Brightwalton, 24 Edw. I). Every holder of a virgate might send out two horses and four oxen; of a cotagium one horse and two oxen.

³⁹ Scargill-Bird, *Customs of Battle Abbey*, 58-71 (Brightwalton, 1283), lesselver of 1d. yearly for every animal two years old. Mins. Accts. bdle. 72, No. 14 (Bray, 25, 26 Edw. I); Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 12 (Cookham and Bray, 5 Hen. IV), &c.

⁴⁰ Cartul. of Beaulieu Abbey.

⁴¹ Berks. Deeds, Magdalen College.

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be found. Woolstone was particularly important as a sheep farm, and its sheep-fold expenses were often extremely heavy ;⁴⁵ Hendred, Blewbury,⁴⁵ and Ashbury,⁴⁴ on the north, Brightwalton⁴⁶ on the south of the line of hills, all had considerable flocks of sheep, and in the two latter, washing and shearing were the most constantly exacted labour services.

In the east of the county the stretches of forest were a great check on cultivation, since nothing might be cut down, not even a man's private wood, without special licence ;⁴⁶ but improvements were made in this respect as time went on. Mills were very plentiful and very valuable in all parts, chiefly water-mills, since there was so much water-power to work them.

Of the crops grown, wheat as a rule was the largest, all desiring wheaten bread if they could afford it ; barley followed closely, a great deal being used for brewing ; oats, drage, and pulse were also grown ;⁴⁷ vineyards existed here and there (see *ante*), and there were orchards for the production of cider and perry.⁴⁸ As for the usual stock of animals, we find oxen, cows, sheep, pigs, and occasionally horses ; goats were almost non-existent, geese and ducks are mentioned occasionally ; cocks and hens were universal and extremely cheap.

The cultivating class on the Berkshire manors contained both free and unfree, as it did elsewhere, but there was no hard-and-fast line of division between them, and the lists of tenants kept in the manorial registers were, as a rule, more concerned with the nature and extent of the holdings than with the actual status of the occupant. Some tenants, however, are generally enumerated as freeholders, their distinguishing feature being rent, usually accompanied by occasional labour services.

The rental of Brightwalton heads its list with 'These hold freely,' and rent and services follow. Wm. Fulco, who held $14\frac{1}{2}$ acres, paid *5s. 10d.* a year, and came for the autumn boon-days ; for the first with one man, for the second with two, and for the third with his whole family ; besides which he was liable to be required for three days' ploughing during the year. The 'virgarii' who came after are not expressly called unfree, but their work was much heavier and also uncertain. There seem to have been very few distinctly free tenants on this manor ; only six are mentioned in the list we are quoting, and in the records of the court it is almost always the villeins who take a prominent part : in 1296 when the chaplain is 'in mercy,' his pledges are all villeins but one.⁴⁹

Some small estates apparently existed without freeholders at all. The tenants in Great Coxwell all seem to be burdened by servile conditions, and the cartulary speaks of the meadow land as belonging to the lord and the villeins ;⁵⁰ but, as a rule, there were at least some free tenants, and free land increased as more *assarts* were brought under cultivation, and were let out for money rent.

The number of sokemen in Berkshire was very considerable, so many manors being ancient demesne of the crown, on which sokemen existed in great

⁴⁵ Mins. Accts. bdl. 756, No. 3 ; bdl. 758, No. 24 (Woolstone, 1308-1477).

⁴⁶ Reading Cartul. Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 168b.

⁴⁴ Ashmole, *Antiq. of Berks.* (London, 1722), i.

⁴⁵ Scargill-Bird, *Customs of Battle Abbey*. Mins. Accts. bdl. 742, No. 17 (Brightwalton, 25-26 Edw. III). Three shepherds kept, and a boy to help.

⁴⁶ *Cal. of Close*, 1205 ; Hund. R. No. 2, m. 18.

⁴⁷ Mins. Accts. For this and for stock of animals.

⁴⁸ *Pipe R.* (Pipe R. Soc.), xiii, 135 ; Madox, *Hist. of the Exchequer*, 251.

⁴⁹ Maitland, *Select Pleas in Manorial Courts* (Selden Soc.), 172.

⁵⁰ Cartul. of Beaulieu.

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numbers.⁵¹ These sokemen were not necessarily free; they might form a class of privileged villeins, privileged in that they had services rather more certain in character,⁵² and the use of the little writ of right close;⁵³ but occasionally they are expressly designated as 'liberi' and distinguished from villeins however privileged. In Colecote there were at one time eight free sokemen owing suit to the hundred court of Kintbury,⁵⁴ or as it is elsewhere called 'sectas octo libere tenencium,' emphasizing the idea of sokemen as freeholders. At Cookham in 1323 the free sokemen give an auxilium of 10*s.* 7½*d.* while the customarii only owe 12*s.* 9*d.*⁵⁵ At Bray, in Henry III's reign, the sokemen are included in the list of free tenants, and they owe rent and boon-work,⁵⁶ and in 1323 they are called free sokemen, although there are other freeholders in a more secure position since they hold by charter.⁵⁷

A large number of tenants, however, were betwixt and between the two classes, and had characteristics of both.⁵⁸ The ancient demesne tenants of Blewbury, after complaining against the services demanded from them by the abbot of Reading, were judged in the end to be bound to very elaborate services with a distinct tinge of servitude about them; they are not called sokemen however, and were probably privileged villeins, whose privileges had become a little uncertain and out of date.⁵⁹ It was decided that the holder of each virgate, besides paying 7*s.* a year, was to cut corn in autumn for three days, on the first day with four men, afterwards with three, and they were to have two meals a day provided by the abbot. Three days carting corn were to follow, also with food and a sheaf of corn each in the evening. They were also to cart hay until all was carried, receiving a sheep, cheese, vessel of salt, and 6*d.* *ad potationem*. Each was to do manual work with one man on the day after Michaelmas Day from sunrise to 3 o'clock; cutting corn at harvest time was to continue as long as was needful, and they were to receive for each half-acre cut a sheaf of English measure; two plough boon-days, called 'benerthes,' were also owed, and two men were to be provided for each plough; they owed suit of court every three weeks and paid the usual pannage for their pigs. Besides these services they were bound to other rather typical villein payments: licence for brewing, redemption of their land *ad voluntatem* so long as the abbot was not too severe, and also reasonable merchet. A widow had to give the best beast as a heriot on the death of her husband, and could keep the whole land if she did not marry again. Churchset of three hens a week was owed by all, and tallage might be collected by the abbot whenever the king levied it on his demesne; it was not, however, to be arbitrary, but strictly in proportion to their land and chattels. They were allowed their own sheepfolds on their own lands, and if they were amerced for any fault it was to be in full court and by four laymen of the court. Other conditions follow for those with smaller holdings

⁵¹ Cf. Vinogradoff, *Villainage in England*, Essay 1, c. 3, &c. Berkshire is a particularly important county for the study of the very interesting question of Ancient Demesne.

⁵² Reading Cartul. fol. 227.

⁵³ Assize R. 38 (Reading, 32 Hen. III).

⁵⁴ Hund. R. No. 2, m. 20.

⁵⁵ Ct. R. ptfo. 742, No. 6 (Cookham, 16-17 Edw. II).

⁵⁶ Rentals and Surv. R. 51 (Bray, Hen. III).

⁵⁷ Mins. Accts. bdle. 742, No. 6 (Bray, 16-17 Edw. II).

⁵⁸ A very interesting discussion about a tenant at Winkfield illustrates this. *Abbrev. Plac.* (Rec. Com.), 84. Cf. Vinogradoff, *Villainage in England*, 89 sq. 201. Pollock and Maitland, *Hist. of Eng. Law*, i, 366 sq.

⁵⁹ Reading Cartul. fol. 228*b* (12 Edw. I).

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—all a curious mixture of servile and privileged. The work, when reckoned up, comes to very few days a year, and cannot have been of much value to the lord, when he had provided all the necessary food.

The Berkshire villeins, from the time of Domesday Book onwards the most numerous of the manorial cultivators, do not seem to have differed in any marked particular from those in other parts. They often paid some rent for their land, but chiefly held it in return for labour services, generally so many days in the week—for the week-work was one of the distinguishing features of servile tenure—but in many cases leaving the lord to decide in what way those days should be employed; ⁶⁰ as time went on, however, it was usually found more convenient to specify what ploughing, weeding, or reaping should be done. Legally, too, their tenure was uncertain; they held 'at the will of the lord.' As a matter of fact the 'custom of the manor' was fully as important, and unless they were turned out for some fault, their tenure was practically permanent, and land was constantly handed down from father to son in regular succession.⁶¹ Certain conditions were especially typical of unfree tenure. A villein was bound to the soil, he was not only given with it, but could not leave it without licence; ⁶² he might not have his son ordained without leave, for by taking orders he became free; ⁶³ he might not sell his ox or horse without the lord's permission; ⁶⁴ and above all he might not marry his daughter within or without the demesne unless he paid a merchet to his lord.⁶⁵ All these characteristics could be illustrated again and again from Berkshire records; constantly, in early times especially, a grant would be made of a man and all his brood (*sequela sua*), a term particularly expressive of the family of a serf; ⁶⁶ a runaway villein could be dragged back, unless he had been fortunate enough to reach the demesne of the king himself; ⁶⁷ but he was not a slave, he was not given merely as a chattel apart from the land, and he would not necessarily desire to escape from the manor where his means of livelihood were to be found.

Perhaps, of all these, the most certain test of villeinage was the payment of merchet, and it often appeared as such in the courts.⁶⁸ There was no fixed sum taken for this marriage licence, but the lord probably got what he could; ⁶⁹ indeed, arbitrary payments were another rather typical condition of villeinage. To be tallaged 'high and low' was a recognized disability, and on the Woolstone manor the 'tallagium bondorum' differed from year to year, and in bad times was once let off altogether.⁷⁰ Heriot on death had

⁶⁰ Scargill-Bird, *op. cit.* (Brightwalton, 1283). Virgatarii owing week-work are to work from 24 June to 1 August at whatever is required.

⁶¹ Maitland, *Select Pleas in Manorial Courts*, 173.

⁶² Harl. Cart. (B.M.) 45 E. 48., Release of nativus at Balking, 1286; 'ut eat quo voluerit et redeat ut liber homo quiete in pace.'

⁶³ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 69 (Brightwalton, 6 Edw. III).

⁶⁴ Assize R. 36 (Winkfield, 9 Hen. III).

⁶⁵ Cartul. of Beaulieu. 'Pro filia maritanda infra et extra libertatem.'

⁶⁶ Hunter, *Feet of F.* i, 98; (9 Rich. I). Grant of 'Hugonem porcarium suum de Cliveware cum tota sequela sua et cum quinque acris terre . . . quas ipse Hugo tenet.'

⁶⁷ *Chronic. de Abingdon*, 235 (1154-89). Abbot to have 'omnes nativos . . . nisi sunt in dominio meo, qui fugerunt de terra sua.'

⁶⁸ Assize R. 36 (Winkfield, 9 Hen. III). Certain tenants, trying to prove their freedom, asserted that divers sums which they had paid were assized rents and not merchet.

⁶⁹ Cartul. of Beaulieu. 'Pro filio coronando, et pro licencia recedendi de terra domini et pro filia maritanda . . . faciet finem secundum qualitatem personarum et quantitatem substancie et terre.'

⁷⁰ Mins. Accts. bdl. 756, No. 3 (1308-9), tallage was 26s. 8d.; 1325, 10s.; 1334, 30s.; Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 77 (1351), tallage 6s. 8d. relaxed.

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become a common villein payment, but never typically so, since the small freeholders constantly owed the same. The best beast was the usual form which the heriot took, and this might vary from a cow worth 10s. to a little pig worth 1s., and in cases of poverty had to be excused altogether;⁷¹ but, as a rule, the villein possessed animals of some sort, and the creature or its value was strictly exacted.

The usual names are employed in the Berkshire rentals and cartularies to describe the unfree tenants. *Virgatarii*, *semi-virgatarii*, and *operarii* according to the extent of their holdings or the principal characteristic of their tenure; plenty of instances also occur of the more definite term *nativi*. On the manor of Bray some of the customary tenants were called 'hurmanni,' their rents being entered separately from the rest, although the exact difference in their position is obscure.⁷²

The labour services comprised all the usual work necessary for the cultivation of the estate, and were sometimes extremely elaborate: a good illustration of these occurs in a description of the tenants of Great Coxwell.⁷³ The holder of half a hide—apparently a villein, since he needs licence to sell his beasts, to ordain his son, or to depart from the manor, besides being liable to fill the office of reeve—has his work rather curiously entered, according to the number of animals which he wishes to send to the common pasture. He pays 10s. 7½*d.* a year and fifteen sheep at Easter; if he has an ox or cow he ploughs for each virgate 1 acre in return for pasture on the lord's meadow; for pasture in 'inlonde,' to which his horses, cows, and other animals, with the exception of sheep, may go from Michaelmas to the Purification, he ploughs for each beast a quarter of an acre, or in the case of bullocks half an acre for every three of them; he must also plough 1 acre 'ad grasurthe' for pasturing them on the heath, or more in proportion to their number; he also has to thrash and winnow sufficient seed to sow these acres, which seed he carries to the field on his own beast; he weeds with one companion, either for part of the day without food, or for the whole day with a meal of bread and cheese and water; and he cuts hay similarly for one day, when he receives wheaten bread, beer, and either fish or meat, but he must not carry away any fragments; he works at making hay for three days, carts the hay and also three loads of stubble without receiving any provisions; he comes with one man for a day's reaping in August, at which they are fed, and for another day when required to help thatch houses. He owes suit to the lord's mill, and loses corn if he grinds elsewhere without licence; and he may not brew without paying toll for the same. A special note is added to the effect that he must forfeit his land if the rent and services are not paid; but it must have been almost as burdensome to see that these exact conditions were carried out as to do them; and commutation probably came, in the end, as a relief to both parties.

The *operarii*, on the same manor, owed similar services but more of them, also elaborately enumerated; but in many cartularies services are simply reckoned at so many days in the week according to the season, and

⁷¹ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 77 (Woolstone, 1340). No heriot because no beast.

⁷² Mins. Accts. bdle. 742, No. 6 (Bray, 16-17 Edw. II); Rentals and Surv. R. 51 (Bray, Hen. III). A tenant is 'hurmannus,' and works in autumn on Mondays and Fridays, but does not plough or thrash.

⁷³ Beaulieu Cartul.

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the labourer did whatever was required. At Cookham in 1323 there were 1,161 winter works from 21 virgarii; 988 from 13 customarii, who worked every Monday and Wednesday, except at certain seasons; 4 operarii, driving and holding the plough, did 142 among them; sowing 101 acres with spring seed was reckoned as 101 works; 126 were occupied in carting manure and 17 in spreading it; 131 were required for weeding, 170 for harrowing, while several odd days were spent in carrying straw, fencing, thatching, and repairing.⁷⁴ It must, however, be noted that the present example occurs in the fourteenth century, by which time this method of enumeration tends to become more general.

Below the villeins, on account of their smaller holdings, came the cottarii or cotsetli; subject to similar disabilities and doing similar work. So numerous in 1086 (if the bordarii are also included), they do not appear to have been a very large class in later days, although most manors had a few of them, but they did not fill so important a place as the regular strip-holders. They were important, however, in a different sense, since they were the class to which recourse was most frequently had when extra labour was required. They were often employed by the lord as shepherds or swineherds at regular pay, or they came to his assistance when he needed additional labourers at harvest-time to ensure the gathering up of his crops.⁷⁵

Examples of cottarii with small holdings and light work occur frequently. At Coxwell there were cottarii who only paid a farthing, 'terra non habentes';⁷⁶ at Brightwalton a few had cottages alone, and owed nothing but rent.⁷⁷ There were, however, other cottarii in the same place extremely like the ordinary villeins, holding as much as half a virgate each, and doing an amount of work 'at whatever required,' every day but Saturday during harvest, and three days a week for the rest of the year. They differed from the virgarii by neither ploughing, carrying, mowing, nor harrowing; evidently they had no beasts of their own and only did manual labour, unless sent for by the lord to work his own plough.⁷⁸

At no time was it possible for a manor to be wholly worked by the labour services of the customary tenants; some duties required more permanent workers, and so from quite early times a few regular labourers are found, who were kept in food and clothing by the lord, and perhaps paid something in money also.

The earliest plan was to choose these from amongst the regular strip-holders, who were then let off their ordinary rent and labour services for the time. At Bray, in Henry III's reign, there were ploughmen, shepherds, and swineherds, each of whom held half a virgate, and were found herbage and pasture for their own beasts, while at shearing-time they were given the 'wombesloks' (edges of the fleece).⁷⁹ By Edward I's reign these servants received yearly wages; the shepherd and carter each had 5s. a year; the dairyman 4s. 6d.; the driver of the plough (minator or fugator) 5s.; while

⁷⁴ Mins. Accts. bdl. 742, No. 5 (Bray, 13-14 Edw. II); *ibid.* No. 6 (Cookham, 16-17 Edw. II).

⁷⁵ Scargill-Bird, *Customals of Battle Abbey*. If the lord wants any cottar as his 'carucarius' he is let off 2s. of rent.

⁷⁶ Cartul. of Beaulieu Abbey.

⁷⁷ Scargill-Bird, *Customals*; cf. Introduction.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* For smaller tenants at Blewbury, holding $\frac{1}{2}$ virgates and doing manual labour, see Harl. MSS. (B.M.), 1708, fol. 228b seq.

⁷⁹ Rentals and Surv. (Bray, Hen. III).

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the ploughman who held it was paid as much as 12*s.* 9*d.* This does not represent their whole salary, a great part of the corn grown on the estate being yearly bestowed upon them.⁸⁰ In some cases clothes were provided for these labourers, more particularly, however, in the case of actual servants belonging to a monastery or an individual. At Abingdon boots were bought for the carters and a tunic for the gardener,⁸¹ and everywhere workers frequently had gloves provided for them; probably some rough kind when they were employed in hedging, ditching, or similar work.⁸²

Very often at harvest-time extra work had to be procured and paid for. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries all the inhabitants being expected to work at this time there was not much need of hiring, unless the season required unusual haste in collecting the crops; occasionally the accounts contain so much for extra labour 'because it was rainy this year'; but as time went on the practice grew increasingly common. Such extra workers might be paid by the day or by the job. At Bray, towards the close of the thirteenth century, thrashing and winnowing were almost always paid for at so much a quarter;⁸³ and in 1274 the cost of hired work in one year amounted to 22*s.* 6½*d.*⁸⁴

The manorial system comprised not only the cultivation of the soil but the general control of justice and supervision of the morals of the tenants. The court rolls are invaluable for the picture they give of the working of the manorial constitution; and it was the fact of being able to appeal to an entry in a court roll, which did so much to fix the old customary rents and labour services; until villeins, holding precariously by the custom of the manor, developed by degrees into customary tenants holding by copy of court roll.

There was a great deal of private jurisdiction of an important nature in Berkshire, owing to the existence of large religious houses, the heads of which almost always received grants of liberties and franchises, conferring greater judicial powers than were exercised in the ordinary manorial courts. Very full rights were granted to the abbots of Abingdon,⁸⁵ Reading,⁸⁶ and Hurley Priory;⁸⁷ but such grants represent but partially the privileged courts which existed by the time of Edward I. At that date it was rare to find any large manor which did not have a gallows, or where fines were not inflicted for breach of the assize of bread and beer, for failure to be in frankpledge or similar offences; though few churches or nobles could show the written title or warrant by which they held these rights.⁸⁸

Much of the judicial system of the county has, however, to be studied in the courts of the itinerant justices, before whom were tried the pleas of the crown.

From Henry II's reign onwards, the assizes for the settlement of land cases were actively employed in Berkshire; especially that of novel disseisin,

⁸⁰ Mins. Accts. bdlc. 742, No. 4 (Bray, 25-26 Edw. I). For similar workers on other manors, see Scargill Bird, *op. cit.*; Cartul. of Beaulieu; *Chron. de Abingdon*, App. 3, &c.

⁸¹ Kirk, *Obedientiars of Abingdon Abbey*, 8, 88.

⁸² Mins. Accts. bdlc. 742, No. 19 (Brightwalton, 33-34 Edw. III)

⁸³ *Ibid.* No. 4 (Bray, 25-26 Edw. I); *ibid.* No. 5 (13-15 Edw. II).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* No. 1 (Barkham, 2 Edw. I).

⁸⁵ Reading Cartul. Harl. MSS. 1708, fol. 12.

⁸⁶ Dugdale, *Mon.* iii, 434 (chart. v).

⁸⁷ *Chron. de Abingdon*, ii, 173.

⁸⁸ Hundred R. *passim*.

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which was used, amongst other things, for settling disputes as to pasture rights, an endless source of litigation.

In criminal cases the usual procedure was for the neighbouring hundreds to present their pleas of the crown before the justices settled at some central place, the accused man, as a rule, putting himself '*super patriam*' for good or ill, after which the decision as to his guilt was made by jurors, assisted in the majority of cases by the four neighbouring vills. Out of five rolls for Henry III's reign, only one instance of wager of battle appears,⁹⁰ so that the advantages of the jury system seem to have been at that time fully realized.

Theft was the most common of all crimes, but murders were frequent, and often committed by strangers, who were wandering about the country and not in any tithing.⁹⁰ These murders were punished by hanging or by outlawry; if you caught your man you hanged him,⁹¹ but as often as not you could not catch him, so that he was then put out of all protection, and was liable to be killed by anyone.⁹² Flight from justice led to outlawry, whether the fugitives were guilty or not; and over and over again suspected men did fly instead of trying to clear themselves; in most cases presumably it was judged rightly to be a real confession of guilt.

Theft was punished as severely as murder, by death and outlawry. If the thief was caught 'red-handed,' with the stolen property upon him, he was almost certain to be hanged.⁹³ The exact value of the property stolen, which raised a theft into a plea of the crown worthy of outlawry and forfeiture of chattels, was uncertain; but one coroner did get into trouble for making a man abjure the kingdom when he had only stolen coin to the value of 6*d.*⁹⁴

William, of Cookham, who had been captured with four stolen hens, was only imprisoned at Reading, and later the whole hundred sentenced him to lose an ear;⁹⁵ but this is a very unusual entry. Prisons were not often used by way of long-continued punishment, but merely for temporary detention, and this for obvious reasons. The chief characteristic of mediaeval prisons seems to have been the ease with which they could be quitted; over and over again the tithing, or vill, or lord of the criminal was fined because he had escaped before his trial;⁹⁶ besides to keep a prisoner cost money,⁹⁷ whereas to let him go with a fine was to fulfil the chief aim of justice in those days, namely to fill the exchequer. If a man were hanged or outlawed his chattels could be taken, for anything short of that it was most profitable to fine him; and the number of fines which could be exacted was extraordinary. When a man was found dead and the hundred was unable to prove his Englishry, it became responsible for the *murdrum*.⁹⁸ The vill again, within whose borders a corpse was found, thinking to save the 'murder' fine, might throw the dead

⁹⁰ Assize R. 36 (Hundred of Ock, 9 Hen. III.)

⁹¹ Ibid. 27 (Reading, 25-6 Hen. III). Cf. Pollock and Maitland, *Hist. of Eng. Law*, i, 554. On the whole subject of crime and its punishment, cf. *ibid.*, ii, caps. 8, 9.

⁹² Assize R. 27 (Wallingford).

⁹³ Ibid. Question about a man who having confessed and abjured the kingdom, was captured and hanged after all.

⁹⁴ Assize R. 38 (32 Hen. III). A man hanged for theft '*eo quod captus fuit cum manuopere.*'

⁹⁵ Ibid. 37 (25 Hen. III), Hundred of Ganfield.

⁹⁶ Ibid. 40 (45 Hen. III), Hundred of Theale.

⁹⁷ Ibid. 38, Hundred of Blewbury.

⁹⁸ *Cal. of Close R.* 1226, p. 139; 1*d.* a day for a prisoner at Windsor.

⁹⁹ Assize R. 37 (Hen. III), Hundred of Sutton, &c.

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body into the river or quickly bury it ; but such clandestine action without view of the coroner entailed another fine.⁹⁹ The hue and cry had not been raised to capture a malefactor, or it had been raised unsuccessfully and the wrong-doer had escaped ; or it had been raised unjustly without due cause— all such offences were atoned for by a money payment.¹⁰⁰ The fines were not heavy, but they were certainly numerous.

Two other crimes, besides murder and robbery, had been added to the pleas of the crown by the reign of Henry III : any sort of tampering with the coinage involved forfeiture to the king¹⁰¹ ; and arson was punished with outlawry and loss of the felon's goods.¹⁰²

As the courts of the itinerant justices became increasingly active the lords' courts sank to an inferior place, and were chiefly reserved for the investigation of rural crimes, for the making of manorial by-laws, and for punishing bad work on the estate. In the courts the old oath system 'waging law' long continued ; the offenders constantly put themselves '*ad legem.*' When their own word was to be supported by oath-helpers they put themselves on the law to the sixth, seventh, or eighth hand : examples of this occur as late as the reign of Henry IV.¹⁰³

By far the most constant matters brought before the lord's court, and almost always punished by amercements, were all sorts of rural offences, such as allowing beasts to trespass on the lands of others¹⁰⁴ ; overcharging the common by sending out too many beasts, or those of a wrong sort¹⁰⁵ ; neglecting to come to work when required by the lord, or performing it badly when actually present.¹⁰⁶ Such offences were very general and committed by all sorts of people. The vicar of Bourton was fined for letting his sheep go on forbidden ground¹⁰⁷ ; the chaplain at Brightwalton was convicted of having broken the lord's hedges and stolen his fowls.¹⁰⁸ All these cases are of particular interest as illustrating the working of the by-laws ; that 'body of rural customary law' based on manorial regulations and immemorial or ancient usage which imposed various restrictions and conditions on the conduct and cultivation of the villagers.¹⁰⁹

A few crimes of violence come before the lords' courts from time to time, quarrels between the villeins as a general rule, but if serious they appear most frequently in the assize rolls ; and in the town courts more is heard of frays and assaults than in the hallmoots. The Burghmoot roll of Wallingford is full of curious cases.¹¹⁰ One man had his house broken into, his horse carried off, and his wife injured ; the damage to the horse was reckoned at half a mark, that to the wife only at 2s. (1233.)

Agnes Pain beat a maidservant so severely that she had to lie in bed for fifteen days, besides tearing her clothes to such an extent that she 'would not

⁹⁹ Ibid. 38 (Hen. III), Hundred of Sutton and Blewbury.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. Hundred of Kintbury, &c.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 44 (12 Edw. I), Hundred of Kintbury.

¹⁰² Ct. R. ptfo. 54, No. 7 (Colthrop, 5 Hen. IV).

¹⁰³ Add. Ch. (B.M.), 26814 (Shilton, 20 Edw. III), &c.

¹⁰⁴ Maitland, *Select Pleas in Manorial Courts*, 169 (Brightwalton, 1296).

¹⁰⁵ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 69 (Brightwalton, 14 Edw. III and 29 Edw. III).

¹⁰⁶ Add. Ch. (B.M.), 26814 (Shilton, 20 Edw. III).

¹⁰⁷ Maitland, *Select Pleas in Manorial Courts*, 173 ; cf. Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 56 (Beenham, 4 Hen. VI, &c.)

¹⁰⁸ Vinogradoff, *Growth of the Manor*, 185-9.

¹⁰⁹ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 572-94 (chiefly 13th century), Documents of Wallingford Corporation.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. Vill of Reading.

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have had the damage and disgrace of it for 5*s.*' Injury done is generally reckoned in this way. One man was accused of stealing cloth, 'the loss and disgrace of which he would not have had for one besant.'

Slander was early a punishable offence in the manorial courts. At Brightwalton a tenant begged the lord's aid regarding slander and injury done to him by a woman; but he finally forgave everything 'for the sake of peace,' on being paid 1*s.* Cursing was much dreaded: Walter Hureur received 6*d.* compensation because a certain Isabel cursed him (1233), and this is not at all an unusual entry, women generally being the chief offenders in this respect; and it was women also who were presented as 'scandal-mongers' and 'common scolds.'

In all these cases fines were the most common solution. At Wallingford the tumbrel and the cucking stool existed as early as Henry III's reign¹¹¹; and failure of service in the manors sometimes involved forfeiture to the lord; but, as a rule, the offender was 'in mercy': a phrase which implied an arbitrary amercement, not a fixed and settled fine. It is difficult to find any general rule as to the amount of these amercements. They were always much heavier before the itinerant justices than in the manor courts. In the former the fine for transgressions varied from half a mark to a whole mark or more: the villeins of Steventon had to pay as much as five marks for a false claim, and individuals owed for the same from half a mark to 10*s.*¹¹²: whereas, in the Hallmoot of Inglesham, 6*d.* alone was imposed for this same offence.¹¹³ It was, however, largely a question of what could be got, and often those who appeared before the itinerant justices were unable to pay what was required. This was chiefly the case in disputes as to villeinage: the tenants who failed to prove their freedom, and were consequently in mercy for the false claim, had often to be pardoned on account of their poverty.¹¹⁴

In the manorial courts from 2*d.* to 6*d.* is the most usual rate, for default of attendance, abuse of pasture rights, drawing of blood and so forth.

Sometimes an amercement sinks as low as 1*d.*¹¹⁵; occasionally 8*d.* is exacted for an offence usually charged much lower, such as breaking the assize of beer.¹¹⁶ The rate was doubtless fixed in part by local custom, but also largely by the capacity of those who paid the fine; there was, however, some rough idea of estimating the amount of damage done, and the importance of the person injured. To assault any ordinary man was 2*d.*, but to assault a bailiff was 6*d.*¹¹⁷; to beat a man and to break his teeth was amerced at the comparatively large sum of 2*s.*¹¹⁸

Certainly, the judicial system was not ideal. The manor courts were capricious, uncertain and extremely leisurely. Again and again the same person was summoned, failed to appear, and was given a day at the next court, or the case was put off for lack of suitors.¹¹⁹ It was not only in the lords' courts that suits were postponed. Even in pleas to be tried 'coram rege' delay was caused 'pro defectu juratorum quia nullus venit,'¹²⁰ or else because one of the parties to the suit failed to put in an appearance.¹²¹

¹¹¹ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 580.

¹¹² Assize R. 36 (9 Hen. III).

¹¹³ Add. Ch. (B.M.) 26814 (Inglesham, 1346).

¹¹⁴ Assize R. 36 (9 Hen. III), Villeins of the Abbot of Glastonbury.

¹¹⁵ Add. Ch. (B.M.), 24443 (Woolley, 1378). For cutting down 2 elms.

¹¹⁶ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 12 (Cookham, 17-18 Rich. II).

¹¹⁷ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 583 (Wallingford, 23 Edw. I).

¹¹⁸ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 67 (Brightwalton, 14 Edw. I).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* ptfo. 153, No. 64 (Bray, 5 Hen. VI).

¹²⁰ *Placita coram rege*, 1297 (Index Library), 156.

¹²¹ *R. de Finibus*, i, 16, 27, 56, &c.

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Writs were expensive things too, and only those who were fairly well off could, at first, afford to put their cases on assizes, and money was often needed to smooth the way with various officials. When Edward I inspected the judicial system, he found sheriffs freeing prisoners in return for money,¹²² coroners refusing to do their work until they were bribed,¹²³ and even jurors receiving presents from the accused in return for swearing in his favour.¹²⁴

There were weak points also in the method of punishment. Outlaws were a great danger to the country, until they had 'abjured the kingdom.' Prisons were not only ineffectual, but disgracefully kept. In 1314 the burgesses of Windsor petitioned that their gaol might be removed, because they were too poor to keep it properly, so that the accused constantly died before justice was done, innocent as well as guilty.¹²⁵ Even in Reading Gaol, in the opening years of Richard II's reign, men were found dead for lack of food, because no one knew who ought to make provision for the prisoners.¹²⁶

Berkshire, however, does not appear to have been at all backward as far as justice was concerned. On the contrary, the frequent presence of the king, and his close connexion with many of the manors, introduced rather more supervision than usual; and on the church estates the courts, as a rule, tended to be fairly well managed.

To sum up, the manorial system of Berkshire does not offer, either in agriculture or in justice, any very peculiar or abnormal features; but it is an excellent district for the study of a manor in its typical form. The county was early feudalized, early in close touch with the king, early furnished with courts and officials; the tithing system was universal and well organized; the great monastic estates were in good condition, and the whole land prosperous and fertile according to the ideas of the time. There were no widespread disturbances to throw the ordinary working of the country out of gear. The gradual advance which led eventually to the substitution of the modern farming and industrial system for the manorial estates and mediaeval methods, can be traced developing, as the growth of knowledge and care for better cultivation and for greater enterprise both in town and country increased. But there were also events which helped on, or at least influenced, this gradual advance; and these events and the process of this change must now be considered.

The decay of the old manorial system in Berkshire was very slow and gradual; it was long before the free rent-paying tenant and the wage-paid labourer took the place of the dependent cultivator of early days. There were the ordinary ways open for the villein to obtain freedom, but these were not within the reach of all. Some were fortunate enough to have their freedom given them. In 1286 Robert le Galeys' *nativus* was granted liberty to go as a freeman where he would, quietly and in peace, without claim or impediment henceforth.¹²⁷ Some purchased their enfranchisement; a *nativus* at Brightwalton in 1296 gave 2 marks of silver that he might

¹²² Hundred R. No. 2, m. 17.

¹²³ Ibid. Coroner refused to examine a body until he was given 1,000 herrings, although his boy already had the dead man's tunic (Borough of Abingdon).

¹²⁴ Ibid. No. 2, m. 17.

¹²⁵ Tighe and Davies, *Annals of Windsor*, i, 126. From *Parl. R.* i, 300.

¹²⁶ Coroners' Rolls, 9 (1-8 Rich. II).

¹²⁷ Cart. Harl. (B.M.), 45 E. 48, Release of *nativus* at Balking.

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depart freely from his lord's franchise without any claim of *naifty* being made against his body hereafter.¹²⁸ On the whole, however, the records of such enfranchisements which survive for Berkshire are extremely few; and this was certainly not the normal line of advance for the serf.

The first step for improving the condition of the servile tenants was the fixing of their services, which although uncertain in theory were in practice, even in early days, elaborately mapped out and written down. In most cases they knew at least the number of days they were expected to work, and the court rolls show that they were ready to make objections if more was required of them than custom enjoined.

Once fixed these services were often commuted for money. It was generally the boon days which went first, since they were of very little profit to the lord, who usually provided food and supervision. The freeholders it is true are the tenants most constantly found 'buying their services,' but the villeins early began the same system. In the cartularies and rent-rolls services are often entered according to their money value, and although this did not always mean that money was paid for them, it facilitated commutation when required. The usual practice at first was not to commute for good and all, but to sell a certain number of works from year to year, probably as it suited the convenience of the lord. Thus the money received for relaxation of work varies in different years, but it became a very regular custom from Edward I's reign onwards. At Barkham in 1274 commuted labour services and dues were entered at £1 5s. 9½d., in 1276 they amounted to £1 19s. 8d.¹²⁹ The Ministers' Accounts for the manor of Bray give a good example of this growing practice of selling work, and of the fluctuations to which it was subject. Bray was a large manor and quantities of labour services continued to be rendered at the same time, both by villeins and free sokemen. In 1297 for labour services relaxed the receipts were £3 3s. 4d.¹³⁰; in Edward II's reign these amounted to £3 15s. 1d. in one year, to £3 5s. 9d. in another.¹³¹ At Cookham, in the same reign 157 works were sold for 6s. 6½d.—only ½d. each.¹³² Certainly a day's work under the conditions it involved was not looked upon as very valuable.

The other line of advance which could be followed, whether services were translated into money or not, turned upon the habit of writing down upon the rolls of the manor the conditions of tenure, concerning which any dispute had arisen, or at the time when a new tenant was taking up the holding. This was a useful plan for the settlement of future difficulties, and when a tenant appealed to the court rolls for a decision as to his tenurial obligations an important step was taken in the formation of a new copyhold tenure.

No very early instances of this appear in the Berkshire records, but by the fourteenth century it was becoming common. In 1338 at Brightwalton a case was settled without inquest because the services were written down. A woman who had claimed to owe no work for four years after her husband's

¹²⁸ Maitland, *Select Pleas in Manorial Cts.* 175 (Brightwalton, 1296). Cf. Mins. Accts. bdle. 787, No. 12 (Woolstone, 1387-8). A woman gave 30s. to be quit of all 'jugo servitutis.'

¹²⁹ Mins. Accts. bdle. 742, No. 1 (Barkham, 1274-6).

¹³⁰ Ibid. bdle. 742, No. 4 (Bray, 25-26 Edw. I)

¹³¹ Ibid. bdle. 742, No. 5 (Bray, 13-15 Edw. II).

¹³² Ibid. bdle. 742, No. 6 (Cookham, 16-17 Edw. II). Cf. Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 69 (Brightwalton 14 Edw. III). Labour services sold for 9s. 6d.

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death, lost the claim because no such custom appeared on the rolls.¹³³ By this date such entry of services was evidently becoming a recognized plan, since in 1346 a tenant at Shilton newly entering a tenement to be held 'according to the custom of the manor,' paid 2s. to the lord *pro irrotulamento isto*.¹³⁴ By 1378 to hold 'by copy of the court' had become a definite tenure, and appears by the side of free tenure by charter.¹³⁵ It was of course quite possible to hold different kinds of land; and J. Rose at Woolley held one croft by charter, another by copy¹³⁶; and the copyhold might be held by rent alone as well as by fixed service. On all sorts of estates copyhold tenure grew apace, until by the close of the fifteenth century the greater number of the customary tenants held 'by copy of court roll,' and a minority *ad voluntatem sine copia*. By this time also the tenure was recognized by the regular tribunals, and the copyholder could maintain an action of trespass against his lord.

Though both the commutation of services and growth of copyhold tenure marked an improvement in the villein's position, neither made any direct break in the system of manorial cultivation. Indirectly, however, the commutation of services led to a very great change, since the lord needed to supply the labour which he had relaxed from some other quarter; and the villeins, on their side, needed to earn money wherewith to buy their independence. The increase in the number of hired labourers had made considerable progress before the Black Death devastated the county, and the amount paid for extra work was becoming an important item on some estates. At Barkham when labour services were relaxed to the value of £1 5s. 9½d., the expenditure for ploughing, weeding, and carrying the produce, together with some haymaking work, came to £1 2s. 6½d.; and the next year when rather more labour services had been sold, £1 7s. 10d. of extra labour was needed.¹³⁷ At Bray, where as we have seen a good many labour services were still performed, and quite a large staff of permanent servants—ploughmen, shepherds, carters, &c., were kept, some work was commuted each year, and a very considerable amount was hired from 1307 onwards. For some reason or other, the thrashing on this manor was always done in return for money, otherwise the hiring was chiefly to obtain extra work at harvest-time. The uncertainty of this sort of work, and the idea still that it was only an expedient, not an established system, is shown by the fact that after continuous entries as to extra money expended, in 1313 only thrashing was paid for, the rest of the work having been apparently completed for once by the customary tenants.¹³⁸ Coleshill, to take an example from a different part of the county, exhibits similar features. In 1337 thrashing and winnowing were paid for at so much a quarter, some meadows were mown at 8d. an acre, and the cost of extra labour amounted altogether to as much as £5 13s. 3¼d.¹³⁹ Unfortunately the accounts throw little light on the character of these hired labourers, as to whether or not they were simply tenants doing extra work, or landless men from other counties. In most cases they were probably cottars, or villeins with few labour days imposed; but at harvest-time

¹³³ Ct. R. ptfo. 152, No. 69 (Brightwalton, 12 Edw. III).

¹³⁴ Add. Chart. (B.M.), 26814 (Shilton, 1346).

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid. (Bray, 16-17 Edw. II).

¹³⁷ Add. R. (B.M.), 24444 (Wolveleye, 1378).

¹³⁸ Mins. Accts. bdle. 742, No. 1 (Barkham, 1274-6).

¹³⁹ Ibid. (Coleshill, 10-11 Edw. III).

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there were generally bands of men wandering about to seek extra work, and the crimes committed by vagrants, and men who belonged to no tithing, show that there was a certain amount of circulation despite the strictness of the vagrancy laws and the dislike of strangers.¹⁴⁰ The attempts to check the practice of hiring men from outside, to the disadvantage of the residents, is shown by a by-law passed by all the tenants of Brightwalton in 1330, to the effect that no stranger should be received in autumn for corn harvest, and that no one belonging to the liberty should work outside without licence.¹⁴¹

The advance in this direction, however, was less marked in this county than was the growth of the class of rent-paying tenants. There was a good deal of rent-land from the first, chiefly amongst the freeholders, but not exclusively so, and though much of this rent was rendered in food,¹⁴² it is usual to find also money payments on every manor. On the Abingdon estates, as early as the twelfth century, more cottarii held *ad geldum* than *ad opus*, and the villeins with half hides paid quite large sums, some as much as 7*s.*, in addition to their work ; and in one manor—Easton—there appears to have been no private demesne at all, and therefore no demand for labour.¹⁴³ At Brightwalton in 1253 quite a number of cottarii held at rent alone.¹⁴⁴

The chief way in which the number of rent-paying tenants increased was by the letting out by the lords of assarts, pieces of waste or clearances in the forest, invariably granted for money, and forming separate holdings detached from the open fields. The villeins constantly augmented their possessions, since the rents of these assarts were usually very low, and they came to hold tofts and crofts as well as their scattered strips.¹⁴⁵ That this new property lay outside the ordinary manorial scheme is shown by the fact that no assart rent was relaxed, as were the payments from ordinary strips, if the owner had to take up the office of reeve or other similar employment ;¹⁴⁶ the assize rents being the result of new arrangement, not subject to the same rules as customary dues and services. This *terra assiza*, distinguished at first from free land by not being held by charter, and not being protected by the king's courts, came in practice, as time went on, to be regarded as free, though held, of course, by either free or villein.¹⁴⁷

Partly owing to these assarts, partly owing to the development of cultivation, the custom of inclosing began to spread more and more on manorial estates, not only for the short period when meadow-land was held in severalty,¹⁴⁸ but as a permanent arrangement. As early as the reign of Henry III signs of small inclosed holdings appear from time to time. In Beenham a plot of land, inclosed, ditched, and hedged, paid an annual quit-rent of two capons,¹⁴⁹ and in West Compton a dispute arose about a hedge which the defendant had put upon his own separate land, where no one could pasture against his leave ; judgement, however, went against him and it was destroyed.¹⁵⁰ As a

¹⁴⁰ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 69 (Brightwalton, 14 Edw. III) ; 3*d.* amercement for receiving a Londoner even in autumn.

¹⁴¹ *Chron. de Abingdon*, ii, 149.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.* App. 3 ; *Consuetudines Abbendoniac.*

¹⁴³ Scargill-Bird, *Customals*, 58-71 (Brightwalton, 1283).

¹⁴⁴ County Placita, Berks. bdle. 48, No. 2 (Windsor Forest, 9 Edw. II). 80 acres at $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* an acre to be brought under cultivation. 300 acres of heath likewise at $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* an acre.

¹⁴⁶ Scargill-Bird, *Customals*.

¹⁴⁷ Mins. Accts. bdle. 742, No. 5 (Bray, 13-15 Edw. II). 'De toto redditus assisi tam liberorum quam customariorum.'

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* Tenants had to make hurdles as one of their customary services.

¹⁴⁹ Berks Deeds, Magd. Coll. Beenham, 60 (1240-60).

¹⁵⁰ Assize R. 37 (Reading, 25 Hen. III).

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rule it was the lords who first ventured to begin this practice of inclosing, sometimes on their own demesne ;¹⁶¹ more frequently when they appropriated some of the waste land,¹⁶² either to form a private park,¹⁶³ or to rent it out in small pieces to their tenants.¹⁶⁴

Simultaneously with these new developments, a class of leasehold tenants began to be formed. Not only were the manors themselves occasionally let out at farm for a certain number of years, but within the manor, tenants often had small holdings granted to them for life or a term of years as the case might be. These leasehold tenements increased more rapidly later, but the practice was already becoming usual before the Black Death.¹⁶⁵

From all this a general idea can be obtained of the stage in economic advance which the county had reached by 1348, and before the great shock sustained by the whole country from the sudden loss of almost half the population, an event bound to have some effect on rural conditions, although the extent of its influence has frequently been exaggerated.

Whatever else it did, the Black Death did not introduce the system of rent or wages, or leasehold farms ; although it must be clearly understood that all these changes were only in process at the time of the plague, not yet fully worked out. In 1347-8 serfs were still being given away with all their following and chattels ;¹⁶⁶ they were still known as *nativi domini*,¹⁶⁷ but growing discontent with old disabilities was very wide-spread. Over and over again we find villeins in trouble for not doing their work properly,¹⁶⁸ for sending insufficient substitutes instead of coming themselves,¹⁶⁹ for trying to shake off their duties altogether.¹⁶⁰ There was a marked reluctance to undertake the burden of villein services. In Brightwalton fines were often paid for permission not to take land in villeinage from the lord ; in one case a man was finally elected and forced to take it, being let off the entry money in consideration of his reluctance.¹⁶¹

The old state of things was evidently bound to be swept away, but there was no reason to think that its destruction would be rapid.

Even before the outbreak of plague, Berkshire does not appear to have been in a very prosperous condition, to judge from an 'inquest' taken in 1342 to estimate the value of the ninth of corn, wool, and lambs.¹⁶² One reason of this was only temporary, namely, that there had just been a great deal of disease amongst the sheep owing to a particularly hard winter, and the Lent corn had failed, possibly from the same reason. All along the Thames valley complaints were made of this—Tilehurst, Basildon, Streatley, Cholsey, and Wallingford had all equally suffered, besides the higher lying lands near Brightwalton and Ashbury. There seems to have been pretty wide-spread poverty in other parts also ; in Wargrave the parishioners were too poor to cultivate, at Henley

¹⁶¹ Mins. Accts. bdle. 742, No. 1 (Barkham, 4-5 Edw. I).

¹⁶² Hund. R. No. 2 m. 18 (Bray, 4 Edw. I) ; Ibid. m. 19.

¹⁶³ Ash. MS. Bodl. Lib. 860, fol. 130 (9 Edw. III). Leave given to two men 'imparcare boscos suos de la Beche et Yatingden.'

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. 833, fol. 336, 337 (27-33 Edw. I), &c.

¹⁶⁵ Berks D. Harwell, 51b (1301) ; Ibid. Beenham, 84 (1349), Harwell, 132, 170, &c.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. Tubney, 66 (1347) ; Tubney, 68 (1348).

¹⁶⁷ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 69 (Brightwalton, 13 Edw. III), &c.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. 154, No. 43 (South Moreton, 10 Edw. III).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. J. Faber in mercy for sending a boy to plough in his place.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. ptfo. 153, No. 69 (Brightwalton, 12 Edw. III). A great many works 'subtracted.'

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² *Inq. Nonarum* (Rec. Com.).

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there was great lack of tenants, Lambourn, Boxford, Ilsley all complained of poverty and the departure of the cultivators, while some gave as the reason for their distress the heavy extortion and great aids they had paid to the king. Hay, however, was apparently more successful, and several places give as the reason of the smallness of their returns the fact that so much of the land 'stands in hay.'

The belief, however, that 1342 was an exceptionally bad year, and that things were looking up again before 1348, is supported by a consideration of the profits made upon the manor of Woolstone, for which a most excellent series of Ministers' Accounts fortunately exists.

In 1336 the receipts from the estate amounted to £79 2s. 5d.¹⁶³ (already a decline, for in 1332 they had risen as high as £114 4s. 7d.); in 1342 they sank to £58 13s. 8½d., being 2s. less than the expenses; but by 1345 (the last year before the plague of which an account is given) they had gone up again and were reckoned at £76 12s. 1d.,¹⁶⁴ leaving in hand a balance of £4 6s. 5d., a modest sum certainly, but much on the level of preceding years. The mediaeval manor was not generally expected to return great profits, but simply to provide requisite food and clothing.

Berkshire, immediately before the years of plague, was probably in a condition neither of great prosperity nor of unusual distress, but more or less normal, and therefore any signs of great misery which thereafter appear may fairly be put down as resulting from that great disaster.

There are few means of judging the extent of the calamity in Berkshire, or the actual number of deaths. There are gaps in the Court Rolls and Ministers' Accounts just during those years when the disease was probably at its worst. At Woolstone the records of the court cease apparently between 1348 and 1352, and we have no Ministers' Accounts preserved for a still longer period, namely between 1345 and 1352; at Brightwalton similarly there is a break in the Court Rolls between 1344 and 1350. This may be merely a coincidence, but it is at least an interesting one.

Here and there a few hints can be gathered from the records to show that there must have been pretty wide-spread mortality. In Newbury a tanning mill was so busy before the pestilence that even a twelfth part of it was worth 26s. 8d., but afterwards nothing 'on account of it.'¹⁶⁵ At Woolstone tallage of the villeins, as high as 60s. in 1347, sank to 23s. 4d. in 1348, and in 1351 the whole homage only owed 6s. 8d. and this the lord relaxed.¹⁶⁶ Tallage being an uncertain quantity in any case is not a really satisfactory test, but there must have been some very good reason for so great a drop as that. It was at Woolstone again in 1352 that 13½ virgates were in the lord's hands '*causa pestilationis nuper accedentis.*'¹⁶⁷

Some idea of the effects of this great mortality may be gathered from a more detailed comparison of the state of this one manor of Woolstone before and after the event, taking the two years 1345 and 1352.¹⁶⁸

The assize rents remained exactly the same; whatever changes there may have been in their holders, there had been no difficulty in letting out this

¹⁶³ Mins. Accts. bdl. 756, No. 10.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. No. 11.

¹⁶⁵ Inq. p.m. 23 Edw. III, pt. ii, m. 37. Quoted in Money's *Hist. of Newbury*, 148.

¹⁶⁶ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 77, ptfo. 154, No. 78.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. No. 11.

¹⁶⁷ Mins. Accts. bdl. 756, No. 12 (Woolstone, 1352).

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kind of land. The defects of work had increased enormously, however, from 16s. 4d. to 55s. 10d., probably on account of deaths; and there are repeated entries in 1352 as to tenements once belonging to such and such a man now let out to a new tenant, often with freedom from work for a year, as though the land had fallen into bad condition and would need time and trouble before it recovered. Some of these new occupiers held 'at the will of the lord,' but others at firm or for a term of years, showing the tendency of leasehold property to increase. A certain villein toft also, for which herbage was due, had now fallen into the lord's hands and been sold—again pointing to the disappearance of those who before had need of it. Then follows a long list of relaxed works, which do not appear at all in the former account, these now amounting to the considerable sum of £6 9s. 9½d.

The sale of corn in 1352 only fetched £8 17s. 1d. as against £33 13s. 2d. in the earlier year. Beasts did rather better, stock-raising would not require so many labourers as tillage, but even the profit from the sale of stock is very much less than in 1345; £39 5s. 1d. then, later only £28 6s. 11d. The regular labourers still earned as much as 5s. for the year, but two women had to be hired at 2d. a week for milking the ewes 'in defect of the customary tenants who are dead and their lands in the lord's hands.' Washing and shearing the sheep had also to be paid in money for the same reason.

Then come the expenses for extra labour: weeding and mowing, which before was all done by the tenants, except that the place of one who did not work had to be supplied, was now wholly hired; 15s. 4d. was paid for hay-making 'in defect of the customarii.' Thrashing and winnowing were paid for as before at 2d. a quarter for thrashing and ½d. for winnowing. Autumn expenses in the purchase of food were very similar; possibly the boon days still continued, or in any case the hired labourers needed food during their work, but there is an addition as to reaping *ad tascham*, 3d. an acre being paid for pulse and barley, 4d. for wheat.

The amount of corn from the two open fields was exactly three times as much in 1345 as in 1351, and the stock of beasts was just slightly diminished in the latter year except in the case of lambs, of which there were thirteen more. The total number of sheep in 1345 was 523, in 1252, 401, although the live stock of the farm was more important here than the arable crops.

Despite all this evidence of decline the total receipts had not sunk so much as might have been expected, being £61 19s. 9½d. with a margin after the expenses were paid of about £3 2s., while in 1345 the receipts were only £76 12s. 11d. and the expenses £72 6s. 4d. They were to sink a few shillings lower yet in 1354,¹⁶⁹ and then from 1355 to pick up again very gradually, though with a few fluctuations, until in 1375-6 a very bad year threw things back to almost the condition of 1352, since from a total of £82 13s. 1½d. in the preceding year, the receipts had now fallen to £63 9s. 7d.

In 1354, despite the low receipts, things were evidently beginning to improve. Tallage was again paid, though it was only 10s., and the 13½ virgates which had lapsed to the lord on account of the pestilence, once more found tenants; but it is significant that they were now let out at rent, and also that even more works were relaxed than in 1352, the sum paid in commutation amounting to £8 2s. 7d.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Mins. Accts. bdle. 756, No. 13.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. No. 13.

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The effects of the plague were, therefore, very marked, and there is no reason to think that Woolstone was an exception to other manors; indeed, lying as it does on the edge of the Downs, and having so large a stock of sheep and other animals, it probably suffered less than some of the more purely arable estates.

The Ministers' Accounts for Brightwalton in 1352 present similar features,¹⁷¹ although, unfortunately, there are none existing just before the plague to offer a chance of comparison. There were many tenements which paid no rent; extra labour had to be obtained *praeter opus et consuetudines*; fifteen cottage holdings which had always owed three days' work a week at harvest time did nothing this year 'because all were in the lord's hands.'

Thus the first impression obtained from a study of these estates is that the Black Death did a great deal to accelerate the process of emancipation, that there was a large increase in consequence both of wage-paid labourers and rent-paying tenants, while the lords had to yield to a great extent to the wishes of their tenants, who were all anxious to overthrow the old condition of things. But here great care is needed to guard against error. All these results were visible immediately after the visitation, but it is a very different matter to say that such results were permanent, and that the Black Death effected a really great revolution in the villeins' position.

To return to Woolstone. Even by 1361 the manor seems to have fallen back very much into its old condition. The receipts were not high, but the expenses had been reduced in proportion, and the balance to the good amounted to between £9 and £10. The dairy-women who had been hired extra since 1352 were this year given up, because their work was once more done by the customary tenants. There were no expenses for weeding, and only a few for mowing; even some of the thrashing and winnowing was done 'per opera custumaria'; and only 18s. 6d. was expended upon hirelings, most of the labour being performed by the regular workers, for whom supplies of food were bought in large proportions. A typical example of the temporary character of much that appeared like real change is given by two payments made this year. One man for 5s. has leave to work outside the demesne for *a year*; another was allowed for 1s. to hold a piece of land at rent, only until some one was ready to take it up again for labour services.¹⁷² By 1370 relaxed works, which had once risen to £13 6s. 8d., now fell to £8 4s.; and in 1372 the *tallagium bondorum* had risen to 32s. Then there were plenty of real servile dues exacted: 6s. 8d. for merchet; 13s. 4d. for sending a son to school and having him ordained;¹⁷³ in 1374 a *nativus* was given leave to live outside the demesne in return for 13s. 4d., but he was to give a horse-shoe a year to his lord as a recognition of his suzerainty. Woolstone evidently had not advanced to any very great extent when all is told; the pendulum had swung a little far, but now it was settling down again.

Brightwalton was the same. Indeed the changes there were perhaps rather less marked, and the reaction consequently came sooner. In 1355 ten *virgatarii* had to work every other day during the summer; a new cottar

¹⁷¹ Mins. Accts. bdlc. 742, No. 17 (Brightwalton, 25-26 Edw. III).

¹⁷² Ibid. bdlc. 756, No. 17 (Woolstone, 35 Edw. III).

¹⁷³ Ibid. No. 23.

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tenant agreed for thirteen days' labour at the same period ; from 1 August to Michaelmas as many as five days a week were due from virgaters and cottars alike ; 351 acres were sown this year, and none ' pro denariis.'

One place does show a real and permanent change about this time, and that is Windsor. In 1369 a special ' arrentation ' was made there by William of Wykeham and others, and all the old villein services were commuted for money.¹⁷⁴ Perhaps this would have come in any case ; royal tenants were always privileged, and the practice had long prevailed to a smaller extent, but the date tempts one to consider that the upset of the Black Death and the growing dislike of the villeins to labour services led to this special arrangement. In any case a really sweeping alteration was made, and lands were now leased out for life or years or held at fee-farm for money rent, and all the dues and services ' tam nativorum quam liberorum ' were extended ' in denarios.' It is only in Old Windsor that a definite description is given of the various services from this time abandoned. Most of the works had been devoted to reaping—of these there were 158 ; hay-making of all kinds, including the carting, came to 52½ ; there were 14 hoeing labours, and 18 of carting manure and spreading it on the land. Their value when commuted was £2 9s. 6½d., almost 4½d. each, which was a good deal for those days.

In New Windsor the new rents came to as much as £7 13s. 7½d., which represented a good deal of work owed before. All land in these manors was now held at so much an acre, meadow for 2s., arable land varying from 1s. to 1s. 8d.

Windsor, however, was an exceptional place ; elsewhere there are abundant signs that villeinage was still a very living tenure ; the labourers had not been able to enforce their will for more than a very short period, while the diminution of their numbers really gave their services a monopoly value.

Similarly, the effect of the Black Death on prices appears to have been of a transitory character. Temporarily they went up, all the ordinary commodities of life being much augmented in value ; but by the beginning of Richard II's reign they had returned to the old rate or less.

At Woolstone prices were low in 1345 compared with what they had been in 1308, but in 1352 things were a great deal dearer than in either of these former years, judging from those articles which appear in the accounts. Wheat, instead of being from 3s. 4d. to 3s. 8d. a quarter, was from 9s. to 10s. ; barley had gone up from 2s. 8d. or 2s. 10d. to 6s. ; vetch, which was 2s. 4d. a quarter in 1345, was only sold by the bushel in 1352, and the bushel fetched as much as 8d. (5s. 4d. the quarter). By 1379, however, wheat had sunk to 4s. 8d. or 6s. ; barley to 2s. 6d. or 2s. 8d. ; other grains unfortunately are not given. Sheep are the only animals of which the price appears in all the years. They were 1s. after shearing in 1345, 1s. 4d. in 1352, and 1s. 2d. in 1379—not a very great difference ; hens had risen to 2d., but went back to the more common price of 1d. in 1379.

The Woolstone accounts do not give sufficient data to judge whether the rate of wages was much enhanced by the diminution in the number of labourers ; certainly the two figures which are given, namely 3d. an acre for reaping barley and 4d. for wheat, were higher than the lawful amount according to the Statute of Labourers of 1300,¹⁷⁵ which tried to

¹⁷⁴ Rentals and Surv. R. 5. (33 Edw. III.)

¹⁷⁵ Statutes of the Realm (Rec. Com.).

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enforce the rule that all corn should be reaped at 2*d.* during the first weeks of August, and 3*d.* afterwards, without any food being supplied in addition. Wages, however, always varied considerably from place to place, and will need more complete consideration later.

On the whole, then, the effects of the Black Death in Berkshire were severe rather than lasting. The villeins who had already shaken off their services profited by the amount of work which was procurable, and the high rate of pay which, for a time at least, they could command: on the other hand those who were still tied down to their old customary services were liable to be treated with increased strictness, since the lord wanted all the work done for him that was possible on the old terms, and when population began to recover again the old terms would be pretty generally enforced.

One thing, however, is certain: the discontent which already existed was distinctly enhanced. Those who had once worked for wages did not want to return to labour services; those who were still bound to work envied their more fortunate neighbours, and strove to imitate their position.

It was one constant struggle between lord and tenant. If the lord did not relax their work, his villeins escaped to some other manor where they were sure of finding employment, and it was not always so easy to get them back. The constant injunction in the court rolls for the tithing to produce such and such a villein who had left the demesne, repeated from year to year apparently without any result, gives the impression that his fellows sympathized with the defaulter.

The close of the reign of Edward III and the opening years of that of Richard II are full of examples which show this increasing independence on the part of servile tenants, and point to the coming storm.

The court rolls of Coleshill in 1377 are extremely interesting from this point of view.¹⁷⁶ Henry Jordan was in mercy, because not only did he refuse to do his work for the lord, but he reaped his own corn at the time of the great 'bedrip.' Thomas Jordan—possibly a brother—went and disturbed those who were performing their proper boon work. Robert Symmings, a *nativus*, had left the demesne, and the whole homage was in mercy for not producing him. The hay on six acres of meadow was all spoilt because the villein whose business it was to cart it never put in an appearance. All the tenants who used to work in autumn did nothing this year on account of the great grumbling (*magnum rumorem*) amongst the other serfs: only one solitary carter carried the lord's corn as well as his own. The lord here, at least, is trying to maintain his authority; he cannot always retain his villein, but he can at least seize his property. The land naturally came into the lord's hand: the villein was content to become a landless labourer rather than stay on the estate, but goods and chattels also were forfeited to the lord on failure to fulfil the conditions of tenure. At Coleshill the peasants were obviously ready for revolt. Other manors, on the contrary, were continuing a very even and uneventful course. At Woolstone the lord sold a good deal of work just before the revolt (1378-9 relaxations amounted to £40 5*s.*),¹⁷⁷ and the villeins appear to have kept fairly quiet, despite the fact that tallage and

¹⁷⁶ Ct. R. ptf. 154, No. 1 (Coleshill, 1 Ric. II).

¹⁷⁷ Mins. Accts. bdle. 757, No. 6 (Woolstone, 1378-9).

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merchet were still being exacted. There is no doubt, however, that any shock so great as the Black Death must have tended to throw things out of gear, and if once that happens agitation is very likely to follow. The Peasants' Revolt came for many reasons, political as well as social; but in Berkshire there are a good many signs that villein services, whether never relaxed or freshly imposed, were galling the cultivating classes beyond endurance, and that they sought to accelerate the changes which were coming slowly but surely in the natural course of events. Another point to notice is that the period of revolt was not one of special distress; manors were distinctly more flourishing than in the previous reign, wages were tending to go up and prices to go down; the rising would probably not have taken place had the labouring classes been in very great poverty, and it was the improvement in their material condition which made them all the more hostile to control of any sort, whether it took the form of statutes of labourers, exorbitant taxation, or seigniorial oppression.

Berkshire was not one of the counties which took a really leading share in the Peasants' Rising of 1381. Richard Wallingford, constable of the castle, acted as Wat Tyler's lieutenant; but within the county itself, though there was evidently some support given, it was nothing like that from Essex, Kent, Cambridge, and other parts. In 1381, when commissioners were empowered in all the disturbed counties to arrest rebels, those in Berkshire were only specially told to lay hands on seven men in Abingdon, insurgents against the king.¹⁷⁸ In December of the same year there was a fresh commission to preserve peace, to arrest those who congregate in unlawful assemblies or make insurrections, and to put down rebels with armed force if necessary.¹⁷⁹ All was not quiet even after that, for in March, 1382, this order for the suppression of meetings was repeated, and the *posse comitatus* was to be employed in case of need.¹⁸⁰ All this shows that Berkshire was stirred to some extent at least, and the court rolls have already proved that the villeins were tinged with the new ideas and were galled by the old restrictions. What results may be ascribed to this effort at emancipation by force? The promises which lulled the insurgents to quiet were of course revoked; but did the agitation help on in any way the movement towards freedom and the decay of the old system, or did the lords enforce with more vigour than ever the obnoxious services?

Certainly there was no immediate and marked change. The Ministers' Accounts, on some manors at least, show no trace whatever of the event. At Woolstone the estate continues to be worked exactly on the same lines and with similar results.¹⁸¹ The defects of rent in 1381-2 were exactly the same as in 1379-80. The exits of the manor, mostly relaxed work, only differ by a few shillings; the tallage of the villeins is 20s. instead of 23s. 4d. There are rather more acres mowed by hired labourers at harvest than in the previous year, 91 as against 68, but they are paid at a lower rate, roughly 4d. an acre instead of 5½d., in any case higher than the very low allowance of the Statute of Labourers; one thing looks as though times were rather bad, and that is the very small number of acres sowed in the open fields. (For some reason or other, this particular manor was distinctly going down in value, and the receipts steadily sank all through the fourteenth century.

¹⁷⁸ *Cal. of Pat.* 1381-5, p. 72.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.* p. 86.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.* p. 141.

¹⁸¹ *Mins. Accts. bdle.* 757, No. 7 (Woolstone, 1379-80); *ibid.* bdle. 757, No. 8 (Woolstone, 1381-2).

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The year 1381-2 was not a particularly bad one, but 1383-4 shows a distinct drop, and this was never recovered. The receipts, which in 1308 were £101 5s. 2½d., were only £49 os. 5½d. in 1400; but the profits were never large at any time, and the receipts barely covered the expenses.)

The year 1382 shows the lord of the manor at Coleshill still endeavouring to enforce old services;¹⁸³ even new land was let out for villein rent and services—‘to do all as the other customary holdings’; in 1389 we still read of *nativi sanguinis*; in 1422 merchet was still being exacted;¹⁸³ in 1438 land was not only held by the custom of the manor, but at the will of the lord.¹⁸⁴

In Brightwalton after the revolt there are plenty of instances of servile fealty, of new grants at old service, of merchet and heriot and villeinage by blood (6 Henry IV).¹⁸⁵ Proofs that villeinage was far from dead can be collected from all over the country, right on through the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI. A man and his wife at North Moreton were claimed to have been villeins of the manor time out of mind;¹⁸⁶ in 1410 at Inglesham an inquiry was made into all the *nativi domini*; in 1470 at Shilton a man was fined for taking two trees which grew on his servile tenement;¹⁸⁷ in 1463 a grant was made of ‘all the lands and tenements, serfs and their chattels and following,’ which the grantor possessed in Tubney, Frilford, Abingdon, Uffington, and Denchworth;¹⁸⁸ and such examples could be multiplied to any extent. But although the peasants failed—although they did not gain their freedom, nor shake off their services, nor acquire land at 4d. an acre, they did succeed in teaching the lords a lesson. The rising showed that the villeins were no longer chattels who could be treated without consideration, and above all that unwilling work was most uneconomical and far more trouble than it was worth. It was this really which brought about the change; the villein was freed only by a gradual economic revolution, and it was the desire to improve cultivation which made the lords drop the old services and resort to paid labour instead. Still, the Peasants’ Revolt did help on this revolution, and although no very visible change came immediately, every year afterwards showed signs of development. The same documents which give evidence of old survivals illustrate also the slow process towards new methods; and it is from 1381 onwards that this process is most conspicuous.

To return to Woolstone, which seemed so little affected at the time of the revolt. In 1383-4 only 56 acres out of 132 were reaped by hired labourers, and they were given 6d. an acre;¹⁸⁹ in 1392-3, at the same rate of pay, 114 were reaped out of 164;¹⁹⁰ in 1407 and 1408 the rate of reaping wages sank to 4d. an acre for some reason or other, about the same proportionate amount was hired, and the sixteen *custumarii* who had been hitherto working were now reduced to twelve.¹⁹¹ This sort of proportion continues more or less till 1457, when the manor was leased for seven years.¹⁹² There was still some customary work at that date, but less food was bought

¹⁸³ Ct. R. ptf. 154, No. 1 (Coleshill, 5 Rich. II).

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. bde. 154, No. 2.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. bde. 154, No. 3.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. 153, No. 70 (Brightwalton, 2 Rich. II-10 Hen. IV).

¹⁸⁶ County Placita, No. 19 (12 Hen. IV).

¹⁸⁷ Add. Chart. (B.M.), 26814.

¹⁸⁸ Berks Deeds, Magd. Coll. (Tubney 11).

¹⁸⁹ Mins. Accts. bde. 757, No. 9. The number of acres they reaped is less than in the year immediately after the revolt, when the lord had to pay for the reaping of 91 acres; evidently the landowners were still keeping up the customary work while they could.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. bde. 757, No. 15.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. bde. 757, No. 21.

¹⁹² Ibid. bde. 758, No. 11.

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for the boon days than before, only 100 herrings, whereas it had generally been as many as 300; all but 20 acres were reaped by hirelings at 6*d.* the acre; and tallage was only 4*s.*, a rate which was still continued in 1463. All this shows that nothing very sudden happened on this estate, but that labour dues were tending by degrees to become of less account.

No other manor has quite so good a series of accounts as this, but there are indications that in Coleshill from about 1392 onwards wage-paid labour and rent-paying land were coming to the fore. At that date, though there were still twenty-seven *custumarii* and seven *cottarii* doing harvest work, a very great number of workers had to be hired, besides seventy-four men and women for washing sheep at 2*d.* each:¹⁹³ in 1405 there were only nineteen *custumarii*, and in 1422 *all* meadow work was done for wages.

In Brightwalton many of the tenants managed to avoid some of their work, though not all. In 1401 a man dropped his week's work, but was still bound for the boon days; he sent a good many men to work for him, whom he would naturally have to pay.¹⁹⁴

Bray is one of the few places where a marked advance followed the Peasant Revolt at once.¹⁹⁵ In 1382 a great many labour services were relaxed; 408 winter works from the 21½ *virgatarii*, 419 from the 13 *operarii*, and the brewing done by the *hurmanni*. These, however, do not represent anything like the whole amount of work owed, judging from earlier accounts, and nothing is said about the *sokmanni* who existed on the manor; but, unfortunately, we have no records of the year immediately preceding the revolt to see how far the tenants had already advanced. 416 acres of demesne were let out this same year at money rent of 6*d.* an acre; the woods also were farmed out to different tenants, and the tenants seem to have succeeded in making real progress in a very short time; but this is an exceptional case.

Villeinage, therefore, decayed in Berkshire by very slow degrees. The Black Death came at a time when things were improving, and after a momentary acceleration of this improvement brought about an attempt to check and delay it, resulting in an outburst of discontent, general and alarming enough to cause the lords to see the uselessness of insisting on the maintenance of a decaying system; and to lead bit by bit to further advance and emancipation—an advance which was, however, very far from complete at the opening of the Tudor Period. The manorial system was dying, but it was far from dead, and above all it was kept up on the monastic estates, more conservative in character than the lay lands, which latter changed owners pretty frequently, and were also cultivated rather more with an eye to profit. The advance towards freedom also had in England its own particular character. Freeholders were tending to consolidate their strips, to purchase their holdings, or to take up leases of land at money rent; but the villeins as a rule, except those who had developed into copyhold tenants, tended to drop their land altogether and to earn their living by working for a money wage, so that a large class was forming of landless labourers hiring themselves out on the best terms they could.

¹⁹³ Mins. Accts. bdlc. 743, No. 7.

¹⁹⁴ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 70 (Brightwalton, 2 Hen. IV).

¹⁹⁵ Mins. Accts. bdlc. 742, No. 12 (Bray, 5 Rich. II).

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It is possible that the increase of leases and farming out of manors during the fifteenth century was also an indirect result of the Peasant Revolt, since the lords were only too thankful to throw off the trouble of looking after their tiresome tenants. Woolstone goes through some rather amusing vicissitudes in this respect. Having been leased for seven years in 1458, just before his time was up the farmer made off, carrying with him a good deal of the stock of the manor, viz. 87 sheep, 5 cows, 4 oxen, 10 quarters of wheat, 13 of barley, 7 of beans, and various utensils. History does not relate whether he was captured, although he should have been easy to trace with all his encumbrances. Undeterred apparently, the lord let it out again in 1463 to Richard Westthrop for eight years, and after his term was up he continued for a time to hold it from year to year; 'tradita hoc anno Ricardo Westthrop' heading the roll of accounts; but in 1477 a regular stock and land lease for twenty years is made of the manor and 200 sheep, and we lose sight of the little estate, now evidently considerably reduced both in size and importance, and paying only £14 a year.¹⁹⁶ It is curious that the tiny hamlet it has now become, chiefly known because of its proximity to the White Horse, should have preserved so much of its story.

Advancing side by side with the decay of villein services and the growth of regular farms was the increase in the practice of inclosures which has already been noticed in its early stages. In the fifteenth century these became far more numerous, so much so that hedging and ditching is entered as a regular item of expenditure year by year. This is found as a separate section in the Coleshill Accounts, from the beginning of Henry VI's reign onwards;¹⁹⁷ and in 1470 the homage of Great Coxwell presents that the whole tribute have well and sufficiently repaired the divisions between the separate fields of Longcot and Coleshill, and the common field of Coxwell;¹⁹⁸ the Beenham Valence Court Rolls also have a good deal about keeping up the inclosures.¹⁹⁹ It is very evident that the idea of inclosures was extremely unpopular, and a new crime of destroying hedges repeatedly appears on the Court Rolls; so troublesome had this nuisance become at Coleshill, that in 1451 it was ordered by the consent of the lord and his tenants that all breakers of hedges should be find 3s. 4d. each time without any mercy.²⁰⁰

Before leaving the subject of the manor, something might be said as to wages. First, to take the regular servants paid by the year. A few points appear from a comparison of these wages at different periods; they all steadily rise, being in almost every case at a higher rate in the fifteenth century than in the fourteenth. This was general throughout the country, as is proved by the Statutes of Labourers. In 1388 yearly wages were first definitely fixed, and then again in 1445, when a very great increase had to be allowed, so that Berkshire is no exception. The next obvious feature is that some places gave a steadily higher wage all round than others. This was noticeably the case at Coleshill, which sometimes gives as much at the close of the fourteenth century as other places are paying in the fifteenth, leading one to suppose that the rate depended on the size and prosperity of the estate, and also showing

¹⁹⁶ Mins. Accts. bdle. 750, Nos. 11, 14, 22, 24.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. bdle. 743, No. 17 (Coleshill, 1 Hen. VI).

¹⁹⁸ Add. Chart. (B.M.) 26514 (Coxwell Magna, 10 Edw. IV).

¹⁹⁹ Ct. R. ptf. 153, No. 56 (Beenham Valence, 15-20 Hen. VI).

²⁰⁰ Ibid. ptf. 154, Nos. 3, 4 (Coleshill, 16 Hen. VI-20 Edw. IV).

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that residents were employed for these offices, and that they had not to suffer the competition of other places. Thirdly, wages in this county were not to all appearances excessively high—seldom rose much above the statutable rate, and occasionally fell below it.²⁰¹

To give a few examples and illustrations of these statements.

The carter, whose wages were fixed by statute in 1388 at 10s., in Berkshire received in different manors in the fourteenth century from 4s. 1d. to 10s.; in the fifteenth from 10s. to 14s., but in 1445 he was allowed by law to have as much as 20s.

The driver of the plough, according to the Statute of Labourers, was to receive 7s.; he did have as much as 10s. at Coleshill in the fourteenth century, and the same at Brightwalton in the fifteenth century, but the rate was fixed by the later statute at 15s.

The shepherd was supposed to receive 10s.; his wages varied from 5s. (Cookham) to 13s. 4d. (Coleshill); and in the fifteenth century from 8s. (Abingdon) to 13s. 4d. (Brightwalton); but did not reach the 20s. of the statute of 1445.²⁰²

[It must be remembered that the pay of these servants was sure to be augmented by gifts of corn, and probably by food and clothing. These additions are not calculated in the rate named by the statute of 1355; in 1445, besides the prices mentioned, a regular sum was also allotted for clothes in every case, bringing the actual wages to more than the amount stated here.]

Casual labour was paid, as a rule, by the acre, which was reckoned as a day's work. These wages were fixed by the second Statute of Labourers in 1350 at 5d. an acre or day for mowing meadows, 2d. to 3d. for reaping, and 1d. for weeding or haymaking. Mowing at Woolstone and Carswell in 1354 was paid at the legal rate; at Coleshill it was 8d. in 1337 and 1393, and had risen to 8d. in Woolstone by 1370; by the fifteenth century it had sunk to 5½d., and at Brightwalton in 1450 was 6½d.; the statute of 1445 fixing it at 6d.

Reaping 2d. to 3d. in 1350 and 5d. in 1445, was in 1354, even at Coleshill, paid at the 3d. rate; the highest to which it rose in the fourteenth century was 8d. at the same place. (Harvest work is often calculated together, not specially distinguishing reaping, so that there may be a little uncertainty about these payments.) In the fifteenth century, to take examples again from the same place, it varies from 4d. in 1407, to 7d. in 1411.

Weeding does not often appear in the accounts of extra labour, but in 1355 at Brightwalton less than the statutable rate is paid, only ¾d. an acre being given; but at Coleshill in 1392 it had risen to 1½d. This item is not repeated in 1445.

Thrashing was fixed by statute at 2½d. for the quarter of wheat, and 1½d. for oats, barley, and pulse; reckoned together at Woolstone in 1352 it was paid at 2d. the quarter, exactly the legal amount.

These figures are too insufficient for much generalization, but they seem to imply that the statute was obeyed for the first few years after its promulgation, but that legislation was unable to check the rise of wages,²⁰³ which reached

²⁰¹ Cf. Statutes of Labourers. *Statutes of the Realm* (Rec. Com.).

²⁰² All these examples are taken from the various Ministers' Accounts of the different dates.

²⁰³ Attempts were made to enforce this legislation from time to time. At Wallingford in 1370 four thatchers were fined for charging in excess against the statute (*Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 581); and in 1385 tilers were fined for charging labour too dear, and tailors for demanding too high prices (*Hedges, Hist. of Wallingford*).

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their highest towards the close of the fourteenth century, whilst in the fifteenth century they tended to fall slightly, and approximate to the average rate. The rates fixed by the statute here given, however, are reckoned *without* food, and the accounts do not specify whether or no the labourers were fed; if they were, which is very probable, the pay during the fifteenth century would still be a good deal higher than the statute tried to enforce; wages *with* food were fixed in 1445 at 4*d.* for the mowers, and 3*d.* for the reapers; 2½*d.* for women and other labourers.

The following tables will give some idea of wages on different manors, but they are very incomplete, so little information being obtainable for the fifteenth century, and the examples only being taken from a few estates.

COMPARISON OF WAGES BY THE YEAR

	STATUTE OF 1388	FOURTEENTH CENTURY		FIFTEENTH CENTURY		STATUTE OF 1445
		Lowest Rate	Highest Rate	Lowest Rate	Highest Rate	
Carter . . .	10 0	Sutton . 4 1	Coleshill } Abingdon } 10 0	B. Walton 10 0	Woolstone 14 0	20 <i>s.</i> & clothes 4 <i>s.</i>
Cowherd . . .	6 8	Wick . . 3 10	Coleshill . 8 0	B. Walton 6 0	Woolstone 14 0	15 <i>s.</i> & clothes 3 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>
Daye . . .	6 0	Woolstone 3 0	B. Walton 7 0	Bray . . . 7 0	—	—
Messor . . .	—	Wick . . 4 10	B. Walton 18 0	Woolstone 15 0	Woolstone 16 0	—
Ploughman (driver)	7 0	Shilton . 4 4	Coleshill . 10 0	B. Walton 10 0	—	15 <i>s.</i> & clothes 3 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>
Ploughman (holder)	—	Shilton . 4 10	Coleshill . 8 0	Abingdon 7 0	B. Walton 13 4	—
Shepherd . .	10 0	Cookham 5 0	Coleshill . 13 4	Abingdon 8 0	B. Walton 13 4	20 <i>s.</i> & clothes 4 <i>s.</i>
Swineherd .	6 0	Wick . . 3 6	Coleshill . 10 0	—	—	—
Oxherd . . .	6 8	—	—	—	—	—
Woman labourer	6 0	—	—	—	—	10 <i>s.</i> & clothes 4 <i>s.</i>
	STATUTE OF 1350					
Reaping, &c. .	2 <i>d.</i> & 3 <i>d.</i>	Coleshill 1354 = 3 <i>d.</i>	Coleshill 1370 } 1393 } 8 <i>d.</i>	Woolstone 1407 = 4 <i>d.</i>	Woolstone 1411 = 7 <i>d.</i>	5 <i>d.</i>
Other examples	1352	Woolstone . .	3 <i>d.</i> and 4 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1354	” . . .	3 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1370	Coleshill . .	8 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1381	Woolstone . .	4 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1387	” . . .	5 <i>d.</i> and 6 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1392	” . . .	5½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1392	Coleshill . .	4 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1393	” . . .	8 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1394	Woolstone . .	5½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1397	” . . .	4½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1405	” . . .	4 <i>d.</i> and 5 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1407	” . . .	4 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1409	” . . .	5 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1411	” . . .	7 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1413	” . . .	5½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1416	” . . .	5 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1432	” . . .	3½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1434	” . . .	6 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—

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WAGES BY THE ACRE OR THE DAY (STATUTE RATE *WITHOUT* FOOD)

	STATUTE 1350	FOURTEENTH CENTURY		FIFTEENTH CENTURY		STATUTE 1445
		Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest	
Mowing . .	5 <i>d.</i>	Woolstone 1354 = 5 <i>d.</i>	Coleshill, 1370 and 1393 = 8 <i>d.</i>	Coleshill 1407 = 4 <i>d.</i>	Coleshill 1411 = 7 <i>d.</i>	6 <i>d.</i>
Other examples	1337	Coleshill . .	8 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1354	Woolstone . .	5 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1356	Carswell . .	5 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1364	Woolstone . .	6 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1370	Woolstone . .	8 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1379	Woolstone . .	8 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1380	Woolstone . .	5½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1384	Abingdon . .	6 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1389	Woolstone . .	6 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1393	Coleshill . .	8 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1432	Woolstone . .	5½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
—	1450	BeenhamValence	6½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
Weeding . .	1 <i>d.</i>	Brightwalton .	Coleshill 1355 = ¾ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—
Carpenter . .	2 <i>d.</i> & 3 <i>d.</i>	Brightwalton .	Windsor 6 <i>d.</i> 1392 = 1½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	3½ <i>d.</i> & 5½ <i>d.</i>
Mason . . .	3 <i>d.</i> & 4 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—	—	3½ <i>d.</i> & 5½ <i>d.</i>
Tiler . . .	3 <i>d.</i>	Brightwalton .	—	—	—	4½ <i>d.</i>
Thatcher . .	3 <i>d.</i>	1352 = 2 <i>d.</i> & 3 <i>d.</i>	—	—	—	—
Knaves . . .	1½ <i>d.</i>	—	—	—	—	3½ <i>d.</i>

If wages were high in Berkshire, the prices of farm produce generally seem to have been good, tending to rise slightly above the average. The value of grain was extremely fluctuating from year to year, and it is interesting to compare it with the average for the corresponding years given in Rogers' *History of Agriculture and Prices*.²⁰⁴

The price of grain on the manor of Bray was distinctly high in 1297. Wheat was sold for 7*s.* the quarter, whereas the average was only 5*s.* 2½*d.*; barley 5*s.* 6*d.* as against 4*s.* 2¾*d.*; drage on the other hand was low for some reason or other—3*s.* instead of 3*s.* 3¾*d.* Throughout the fourteenth century Woolstone furnishes the greatest number of examples, but Brightwalton provides a few figures which show that there also corn prices tended to follow a similar course. Their tendency, as we have already seen at Woolstone, in considering the effects of the Black Death, was to sink during the first half of the century, to rise suddenly about 1352, and then to fall gradually during the latter half. Average prices vary in the same way, but in every case, both at Brightwalton and Woolstone, the prices in 1352 are considerably above the average, and have almost always fallen slightly below it by 1379–80. Thus wheat in 1352 had risen to from 9*s.* to 10*s.* at Woolstone, and 10*s.* to 11*s.* 4*d.* at Brightwalton, the average being only 7*s.* 2¾*d.*; in 1360 at Brightwalton it was from 4*s.* 8*d.* to 6*s.*, where the average was 5*s.* 9¾*d.*; in 1379 at Woolstone, 4*s.* 8*d.* to 6*s.*; a slightly lower average than the 5*s.* 9¾*d.* given by Rogers. Barley and oats have exactly the same history; pulse exceeds the average in 1352, but is still a little above it in 1379. The supply of corn

²⁰⁴ Rogers, *Hist. of Agric. and Prices*, i, 226 sq., 342 sq.; iv, 282 sq., 346 sq.

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in Berkshire was certainly extremely reduced after the Black Death, so many of the arable acres being left unsown: perhaps the mortality in this county had been rather less than elsewhere, and the demand in consequence not so much reduced; while on these great sheep-farming estates, arable cultivation was easy to drop when there was profit to be made out of the live stock.

The prices of beasts vary very much less, they rise slowly just as they were doing all over the country, but appear on the whole to be slightly below the average. The Berkshire sheep is not so valuable as one would have expected, when the Berkshire wool stood so high. 'Muttons' varied from 1s. to 1s. 10d. after shearing; ewes were generally about 1s. Lambs were almost invariably 6d., although in 1419 they could fetch, taking the average throughout the country, as much as 11d.

Horses are of so many kinds that it is very difficult to compare in any way; a horse mentioned amongst the deodands as worth 100s.²⁰⁵ was doubtless a good riding horse; the accounts would mostly concern cart-horses, which ran from 15s. to 23s. (Abingdon, 1355); *affri* and *stotts* were much cheaper.

Oxen varied from 10s. to 15s. 6d., but according to the average price they should have fetched from 12s. to nearly 20s.; cows on the other hand were of good average value, from 7s. to 14s.; the only bull mentioned was sold for 12s. in 1404; the average given for such animals at the opening of the century being 8s. 5d.

Pigs were all sorts of prices, from 1s. 3d. to 5s. 6d.; according to Rogers the highest price ever fetched during the fifteenth century was 6s. 8d.

Capons, hens, and ducks were all very much as the average: capons going up from 3d. to 4d.; hens from 1d. to 3d.; ducks, of which there were not many, being valued in the fourteenth century at 3d. and 4d.

Wool, despite the fact that it was much sought after, scarcely ever appears in the accounts. This may be for the reason which Rogers suggests, that the owner very often sold it directly himself to the wool-stapler, and therefore the reeve or bailiff would have nothing to do with the transaction. Woolstone furnishes us with a few prices of this commodity, and in each case they are invariably above the average.

The usual measures for wool were the clove of 7 lb. in the fourteenth century, and the todd of 28 lb. in the fifteenth. In 1379 the accounts estimate the price by the sack—a measure which according to law was to contain 364 lb. or 52 cloves.²⁰⁶

To compare Woolstone prices with the average: In 1345 the average was 1s. 11½d., at Woolstone 2s. 0½d.; in 1352 there was more difference, the average being 1s. 4½d. and the Berkshire price 1s. 7d.; in 1379 it was 3s. instead of 2s. 8½d.; and in 1457 the todd varied from 5s. to 6s. 8d., whereas the average for that decade was only 4s. 3½d.²⁰⁷

Of course prices like this from a single manor give no safe idea of the whole county, but certainly Berkshire wool and Berkshire corn were both in considerable demand, all the more from the fact that the Thames opened a way for sending supplies to the London market. In any case, partial and insufficient though these figures are, it would seem that rural occupations in

²⁰⁵ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 583 (Wallingford, 23 Edw. I).

²⁰⁶ Statute of 1357 (*Statutes of the Realm*).

²⁰⁷ Rogers, *op. cit.* iv, 328.

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Berkshire were, on the whole, flourishing and profitable, and becoming increasingly so as time went on. Thus, when the old manorial system was dropped, there was every inducement for new and energetic men to take up farming in the county, and turn it to excellent account.

It was not only in agricultural pursuits that Berkshire was making progress throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Its towns were increasing in population and importance, industries were growing, and above all the production of cloth was being actively carried on, and bade fair to become the leading occupation of the non-agricultural population. Reading and Abingdon were the leading towns, partly on account of their large religious houses, partly on account of their excellent facilities for trade. Windsor, as the seat of a royal residence, and Wallingford, at the time of the Conquest the largest of the Berkshire boroughs, were also important, but not such centres of industry as the other two. Wallingford had a Merchant Guild which existed from Henry II's reign if not earlier,²⁰⁸ but it never made very great advance, and by the fifteenth century was a quiet town, consisting chiefly of a number of small retail traders. The Reading Guild granted in 1253,²⁰⁹ and closely connected with the abbey, was made up of all sorts of members, carpenters, bakers, drapers, butchers, dyers, weavers, fishmongers, brewers, innkeepers, and many others.²¹⁰ Abingdon, though it had no guild, early developed the clothing industry, and increased in importance with the construction of its bridge in 1416.²¹¹

Besides these four principal Berkshire towns, others were fast developing and aspiring to become centres of trade and industry. Of these Newbury was the most important, since it was there that the clothing industry was particularly prominent, and that its chief industrial hero Jack of Newbury flourished in the sixteenth century.²¹²

Clothing was not confined to the towns alone. Fulling mills were scattered about all over the country, wherever the generous supply of streams and rivers, with which Berkshire is favoured, offered a suitable opportunity for carrying on the work. Thus there was a fulling mill at Little Far-
ingdon,²¹³ at Beenham Valence,²¹⁴ at Thatcham,²¹⁵ and probably in other villages also. Certainly the industry had taken firm root quite early in the thirteenth century if not before; the mention of nine fullers and weavers of Wallingford in 1227 is, however, the earliest indication I have yet been able to find.²¹⁶

Similarly brewing was carried on very universally, as is proved by the constant mention of *tolcestre* payment for the privilege of making beer for sale, a due which was very common at Brightwalton,²¹⁷ Coleshill,²¹⁸ and Beenham Lovell,²¹⁹ to say nothing of the constant fines for breach of the Assize of Ale.

²⁰⁸ Gross, *Gild-Merchant*, i, 15.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.* and also ii, 202; Reading Cartul. Harl. MSS. 1708, fol. 163.

²¹⁰ Guilding, *Reading Records: Diary of the Corporation*, i, *passim*.

²¹¹ Madox, *Hist. of Exchequer*, 382 (13th c.); Devon, *Issues of the Exchequer* (Rec. Com.), 132 (9 Edw. II).

²¹² Money, *Hist. of Newbury*.

²¹³ Cartul. of Beaulieu.

²¹⁴ Berks Deeds. Magd. Coll. Beenham, 115 (1251-59).

²¹⁵ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 8 (Colthrop, 10 Hen. VI).

²¹⁶ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, pt. i, 576.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.* 153, No. 7 (Brightwalton, 2 Rich. II).

²¹⁸ *Ibid.* 154, No. 2 (Coleshill, 10 Hen. V).

²¹⁹ *Ibid.* 153, No. 56 (Beenham Lovell, 28 Hen. VI).

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This increase of trade and industry meant the rising wealth and importance of Berkshire; but the county still remained essentially rural. Even the chief towns were largely agricultural, the burgesses holding and cultivating land outside the walls; whilst almost all the buying and selling done in the numerous fairs and markets was concerned with the produce of the land, either live-stock, grain, or wool. The two notable exceptions and only important industries were malting and clothing, for these Berkshire was becoming increasingly famous; a fame, however, which was not to last. Still it was Berkshire corn and Berkshire wool which constituted the real wealth of the county, and these were in great demand both at home and abroad.²²⁰

Berkshire possessed in the River Thames a priceless asset available for the increase of her wealth and the spread of her trade.²²¹ The roads also were numerous, and Berkshire still abounds in traces of the old Roman highways.²²² The direction of the roads depended chiefly on the passages over the Thames, the best known of which in old days were at Wallingford, Moulsoford, Shillingford, and Appleford, besides the bridge at Staines on the Great Western road. At Streatley also there was a ferry, at the junction of various Roman 'streets'; and a ferry at Pulham was in use until superseded by the Abingdon Bridge. Bridges, however, were gradually built as the need for communication became more urgent. Windsor Bridge was begun as soon as the royal castle was erected there; Reading Bridge is mentioned in the reign of Henry III; ²²³ Maidenhead Bridge dates from the fourteenth century; ²²⁴ Abingdon Bridge was built in the fifteenth.²²⁵ At Newbury there was a bridge over the Kennet,²²⁶ at Coleshill over the Cole,²²⁷ from Faringdon the main road crossed the Thames at Radcot Bridge, said to date from about the year 1200.²²⁸

The roads and bridges were at first made and repaired by forced labour, wood for such work being allowed from the royal forest land, of which there was no lack in Berkshire. Where stone bridges were constructed it was a more expensive matter; the requisite material was provided at Abingdon by the lord of Bessels Leigh, and a guild of the Holy Cross was formed for looking after it. From this time onwards the giving or bequeathing of money for repair of bridges and highways became a favourite form of charitable expenditure.

There were naturally sundry reasons for some parts of the county advancing more rapidly than others. All along the Thames waterway, towns were developing their resources by trade, villages their supply of food by fishing. Wherever there were bridges centres of population were formed, and wherever there were good roads fairs and markets became of greater importance, while the most flourishing manors were those which were so situated as to enjoy the benefits both of good pasture and rich arable soil.

²²⁰ *Pipe R.* (*Pipe R. Soc.*), xvi, 88; xviii, 13. Cheese and corn sent to army in Ireland (16 and 18 Hen. II). *Ibid.* xix, 63; cheese and corn for Windsor (19 Hen. II). *Hundred R. No. 2, m. 18 verso* (4 Edw. I), wool sent abroad from Newbury and Wallingford.

²²¹ See article on 'Industries.'

²²² *Cal. of Close R.* 1227-31, p. 499.

²²³ See Verses on Bridge preserved in Abingdon Almshouses.

²²⁴ *Cal. of Close R.* 1307-13, p. 557, repair of bridge.

²²⁵ *Ct. R.* p. 154, No. 2 (10 Hen. VI), remaking of Coleshill Bridge.

²²⁶ *Inq. a.q.d.* 2 Hen. V, No. 8.

²²⁷ See article on Roman Period.

²²⁸ Murray, *Guide to Berkshire.*

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Such places lay chiefly at the foot of the downs, and more particularly on the northern slopes. Places actually on the hills, such as Lambourn and Letcombe Bassett were, as a rule, poor; but Coleshill, Brightwalton, and Blewbury could carry on sheep-farming and the cultivation of grain with equal chance of success.

There were, of course, accidental causes of distress from time to time—pest, famine, cold winters, heavy taxation, and so forth; ²²⁹ but on the whole Berkshire flourished, and the Middle Ages were not a time of very great individual poverty and distress, owing to supervision and mutual dependence. From time to time in manorial accounts instances occur of land lapsing to the lord because the tenant was too poor to cultivate it; but very generally if the man were poor his rent and dues were relaxed. Money payments were constantly in arrears, and year after year the bailiff continued to enter on his roll bad debts which apparently he had little chance of recovering; occasionally there was distraint for rent, but very often it was dropped. At Woolstone, in the fifteenth century, when the estate was declining, there are a good many instances of poverty, and the tenants were frequently unable to pay their churchset and other dues. The chief cases of destitution, however, were amongst the vagrants. Wandering criminals had scarcely ever any goods to forfeit, and entries are fairly frequent of ‘unknown beggars’ found dead on the roads; ²³⁰ but so long as a man chose to stay on the estate where he was born, and work under the protection of his lord, he was unlikely to fall into absolute misery. In any case the monasteries were always ready to support the poor and the pilgrims, and none need starve if they could find their way to one of the religious houses.

Besides casual gifts to beggars, the monasteries had hospices for travellers and infirmaries for the sick, in which outsiders were often received, as well as members of their own body. Abingdon, ²³¹ Reading, ²³² Wallingford, ²³³ and Donnington, ²³⁴ all possessed establishments of this sort, and frequent gifts were made to them for the support of the poor. ²³⁵ Lepers were always a very universal object of charity. In Edward I’s reign money was granted to the lepers of Windsor, as though a special establishment existed for them; ²³⁶ and at Reading regulations were drawn up as to the exact allowance which was to be made to them in food and clothing. ²³⁷

Nothing more organized was, therefore, as yet required in the way of poor relief. The rich who wished to be charitable gave lands and goods to the monasteries, founded churches, and endowed chantries; the poor often gave their land to a religious house, and either held it from them during their lifetime, or else received whilst they lived a supply of food and clothing. ²³⁸

When the Statute of Mortmain put a check upon the free granting of lands to corporations, the Berkshire monasteries had already acquired very

²²⁹ *Inq. Nonarum* for Berkshire, 1342.

²³⁰ Assize R. 40 (45 Hen. III). ‘Ignotus mendicans’ found dead, no wounds, *ibid.* 44 (12 Edw. I).

²³¹ ‘Consuetudines Abbendoniae’; *Chron. de Abingdon*, ii, App. 3.

²³² Reading Cart. Harl. MSS. 1708, fol. 24 (Charter Hen. II).

²³³ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vi, 580 (1287).

²³⁴ *Cal. of Close*, 1330–3, p. 104.

²³⁵ Cott. MSS. (B.M.) Vesp. E. 5, fol. 19 v° (Extracts from Reading Cartul.), Church of St. Lawrence given to sustain thirteen poor men in food and clothing.

²³⁶ *Testa de Nevill*, 560.

²³⁷ Cott. MSS. Vesp. E. 5, fol. 38.

²³⁸ Harl. MSS. 1708, fol. 66; *Newbury Field Club*, ii, 53.

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vast estates, and there were still ways in which the law could be evaded. The religious houses played a prominent part in the social life of the Middle Ages; and the time when poor relief and education were looked upon as incumbent on laymen as well as clergy was yet to come.

The Wars of the Roses and the changes of dynasty seem to have little affected the even tenor of life in the Berkshire villages; the economic advance continued, but gradually as before. There are plenty of indications that the old manorial system, both as regards cultivation and social status, long prevailed in this county; open fields and scattered strips were still the normal state of things, and some manors had not even advanced beyond the stage of the old two-field system.

A terrier of land belonging to Fyfield manor in the reign of Henry VII²³⁹ describes the arable strips existing in the different 'shots,' and the more separate pieces of meadow ground. The abbot of Battle held various scattered acres. 'Item: an half acre chotyng Est and West in the South side, a half of the Abbot of Battle on the North. Item: in the same furlong another half acre lying in the South side and a half of the Abbot in the North side: another yard of land lying Est and West, a half lying in the flodde land,' and so on.

Ashmole has printed, from a manuscript in the library of Thomas Rawlinson, a most interesting description of the manor of Ashbury in 1520, which shows the condition of one of the large sheep-farming estates of Berkshire before the dissolution of the monasteries.²⁴⁰ Ashbury was at that time in the possession of the abbot of Glastonbury, who had full judicial powers in the court held every three weeks, which the tithings of Ashbury and Edwynestone (Idstone) were bound to attend. Ashbury was a two-field manor, but its importance was certainly due far more to its sheep than to its corn; situated on the northern slopes of the Downs, it had plentiful facilities for pasture and apparently made good use of them. The demesne land, farmed out to Clement North, was extensive, and contained beside arable and meadow, a wood called Aysher Park, out of which the lord was allowed every third year to sell 36 acres (price of an acre with trees upon it was 18s.), and 112 acres of mountain pasture sufficient for 500 of the lord's sheep, besides which certain commoners had the right to send beasts there to feed; viz. the king, 200 sheep, 12 oxen, and 4 cart-horses; John Harding, 101 sheep and 6 oxen; the parson of Ashbury, 8 oxen; and the farmer of an Oxford college, 120 sheep—'although old custom only allowed him 18 oxen.' On this land also all the tenants, free or villein, were allowed to send their plough beasts; for every virgate two oxen—the old normal rate. Besides the demesne pasture, there was more on the hills, which belonged to the tenants, 'tam liberi quam custumarii,' and also some meadow land which they used during the open season, but for which they had to pay. Of the tenants on this estate there were seven free tenants, whose holdings were still reckoned as knights' fees, or parts of knights' fees; they all paid rent and did homage and suit, some to the half-yearly court, some to that held every three weeks, and a few to both. After the free, the customary tenants are entered by name. Of these, twenty-five paid rents amounting to £22 18s. 1½d., owed

²³⁹ Harl. R. (B.M.), No. 28.

²⁴⁰ Ashmole, *Antiq. of Berks.* (London, 1723), i, 65-103.

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heriot, and were all bound to labour services in the shape of washing and shearing sheep. Four of these customary tenants were still unfree, but apparently they did no more for their land than the others; one had been recently enfranchised. One man alone, John Frensh, instead of attending to the sheep, owed the duty of ploughing and carting, which must therefore have been almost wholly done by hired labourers. A good many of these tenants had some of their land in separate holdings—tofts, crofts, or closes; but they all had arable acres in the open fields as well. The lack of inclosure for pasture is evident by the discords which arose between the men of Ashbury on the Berkshire side of the Downs, and the men of Bishopstone on the Wiltshire slope, as to the limits of their respective pasture rights; arbitration finally settled the matter, and hedges and ditches were ordered to be established between the respective lands, and kept in good condition, so that beasts might not stray on to the wrong estate. Ashbury was a good instance of a manor midway between the old and the new. Labour services still continued, but lighter than they had been; the villeins were becoming copyholders, and the practice of inclosing was increasing.

Evidence points to old customs, tenures, labour services, and villeinage continuing to a much later date than this, however. Chelsey, for example, was being cultivated on a four-field system in the reign of Edward VI²⁴¹; in the manor of Windsor Underowre in 1561 arrangements were made between lord and tenants touching the throwing open of common fields after harvest and the stint of common²⁴²; in 1594 a commission sent out to report to the Exchequer described the three-field system of Beenham Valence, the land left fallow every third year, and the common of pasture in the open fields after the corn was carried.²⁴³ This report is particularly interesting from the description it gives of two manors lying intermingled. Beenham Valence and Beenham Lovell lay and commoned together; the lord of Beenham Valence chose the hayward for both, and the tenants of Beenham Lovell owed suit and service to the lawday and court baron of the larger manor. It was the common fields which were the chief subject of inquiry. The two manors had 'plots intermingled there'; and though most of the tenants knew their own strips and to which manor they belonged, two men who held from both had very naturally got confused, and could not 'sever the said lands.'

Military service still remained in the sixteenth century the principal tenure for manorial lords; even the confiscated lands, given away by Henry VIII after the dissolution, were granted out anew for this old knight service. The fact that this meant little more now than the continuation of certain dues and incidents peculiar to the tenure, is shown by the fact that whole manors were held for such extremely small fractions of knights' fees, when the amount is specified at all. The manors of Hungerford and Church Speen were each held for the fortieth part of a knight's fee; South Moor was only reckoned as one-fiftieth.²⁴⁴ This survival is found also amongst sub-tenants, though not so frequently as for tenants-in-chief. In the manor of Chelsey in 1451 several men held messuages and arable strips by military service, but

²⁴¹ Rentals and Surv. $\frac{1}{2}$ (Chelsey, 4 Edw. VI).

²⁴² *Annals of Windsor*, i, 591.

²⁴³ Exch. Dep. 36-7 Eliz. Mich. 39.

²⁴⁴ Top. Berks, (Bodl. Lib.) D. 10, fols. 5, 6 (Tenants-in-chief from Inq. p.m. 4 Edw. VI, 10 Eliz.).

there was
in which

always a money payment attached ; a few held freely by socage, as the rent was rather higher.²⁴⁵
The Inquest, however, especially grand serjeanty, was beginning to die out. The Inquest Post Mortem state over and over again that the service of some other is unknown, this service having often been grand serjeanty of some kind.²⁴⁶ A few roses and flagons of wine were still tendered,²⁴⁷ but rarely with rent in addition ; in the case of Beenham Lovell the process of duress is shown, since though it was known that a pound of pepper was early, it had not been exacted for fourteen years.²⁴⁸

Amongst the cultivating classes in Berkshire, customary tenants were still the most numerous during the sixteenth century ; the accounts of Church Speen,²⁴⁹ Shippon, Cumnor,²⁵⁰ and Cholsey²⁵¹ all show the same thing. In the country, however, was not the case in towns. There free tenants were distinctly in the majority. At Abingdon and Reading, according to the reckonings made after the dissolution of the monasteries, there were only free tenants and those holding 'at will' ;²⁵² in the town of Newbury in James I's reign there was some copyhold of which the rents amounted to £1 7s. 8d. ; but the rents were higher, coming to £3 6s. 8d.²⁵³ In any case the county was full of a large number of customary tenants ; and this, in some instances, meant the performance of the old customary services. In the king's manor of Conyngton in 1539 the old method of conveyance 'ad opus et usum' was continually employed ; and the new tenant held 'by the will of the lord and the custom of the manor,' and owed besides rent 'other services as accustomed.'²⁵⁴

In 1547, on the lands appropriated after the dissolution of Abingdon Abbey, much was held 'under old conditions'²⁵⁵ ; at Clewer in Elizabeth's reign (a royal manor), the tenants conveyed their lands only through surrender to her, and owed suit of court and services.²⁵⁶ All these examples, however, were taken from crown lands, where changes seem to have come more slowly than on other estates.

It remains to be seen how much real serfdom survived amongst these customary tenants. To hold by copy of Court Roll naturally tended to permanence ; but it is another thing to find actual villeinage continuing on throughout the sixteenth century.

Certainly villeinage did survive here and there, and not only the tenure of villeinage, but the actual status of the villein, the 'nativus' of the lord. In the reign of Henry VII at Coleshill the very legal term of 'villein regardant' was used, and the man was said to be worth in goods and

²⁴⁵ Rentals and Surv. $\frac{2}{3}$ (Cholsey, 4 Edw. VI).
²⁴⁶ *Cal. of Inq. p.m. Hen. VII*, 460. Manor of Becote, service unknown. (It had been to meet the king with two white capons.) Manors of Clewer, White Knights, Tidmarsh, Ilsley, Bockhampton ; all entered as 'service unknown.'
²⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 928. Idstone and White Waltham gave roses, Sutton Wick and Draycott gave a flagon of wine ; Rentals and Surv. R. 45 (2 Edw. VI).
²⁴⁸ *Depos. by Com.* (37 Eliz. Hil. 4).
²⁴⁹ *Harl. R.* (B.M.), T. 14 (Church Speen), assize rents, 6d. ; customary rents, £8 6s.
²⁵⁰ Dugdale, *Mon.* i, Lands of Abingdon ; *Mins. Accts. bde.* 77 (29-30 Hen. VIII) ; Shippon, assize rents, 9d. ; customary, £4 18s. 6d. ; Cumnor, assize rents, 13s. 2½d. ; copyhold, £23 2s. 6d.
²⁵¹ Rentals and Surv. $\frac{2}{3}$ (Cholsey, 4 Edw. VI).
²⁵² *Ibid.* (1-2 Jas. I).
²⁵³ *Ibid.* (1-2 Jas. I).
²⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 154, No. 38 (38 Hen. VIII-3 Edw. VI).
²⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 153, No. 83 (11 Eliz. 2 Jas. I).
²⁵⁶ *Mins. Accts.* (1-2 Eliz. No. 2).
²⁵⁷ *Ct. R. ptfo.* 154, No. 18 (Conyngton, 30 Hen. VIII).

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chattels 100 marks, although he was still called 'nativus domini de guine'; he was dwelling outside the demesne, and needed to be recal.²⁵⁷ In Henry VIII's reign there is a good example of the lingering reb^{of} villeinage at Sotwell; especially interesting because neither on the land, of the church nor of the king. Ambrosius Pope, 'nativus domini,' was wise enough to make some use of his position, for although elected several times, the office of constable, he managed skilfully to evade it, on the plea that he had not sufficient goods and chattels for such an office, since 'all his goods belonged to his lord.' He was, however, a member of the court and shared in presenting a freeman for default; but finally he got into trouble for cutting trees on his land, which were distinctly the lord's, and wished for £4 to purchase freedom for himself and his 'sequela.'²⁵⁸ Unfortunately the end of the story does not appear.

Queen Elizabeth again, in acquiring the land of Stratfield Mortimer, once in possession of Queen Katherine, was said to have 'nativos et nativas ac villanos cum eorum sequelibus,' and she released her tenants at Clapcot—whether free or villein does not appear, from the service of carting hay on the demesne lands.²⁵⁹

The fact that these examples are so isolated shows that serfdom was becoming the exception, and that customary tenants were as a rule free, even though bound to do the old services; villeinage died hard, but it was dying and one is surprised to find in the charter of James I to New Windsor, that in granting the manor of Windsor Underowre he gave it with 'villaynes male and female with their issues.'²⁶⁰ Perhaps by now this had become rather a form of words than an actual reality; in any case such offensive conditions as merchet and leave for the sale of an ox are conspicuous by their absence.

The due still surviving, which seems more than any other to recall the old condition of dependence, was 'hedsilver,' paid in East Hendred in Mary's reign,²⁶¹ and in Beenham Valence in Elizabeth's; but there the tenants were beginning to deny the obligation, and the payment was being dropped.²⁶² Heriots showed no sign of ceasing, but though beasts were occasionally taken still they were generally reckoned at money value, and sometimes money alone was mentioned.²⁶³ Other dues which were paid throughout the sixteenth century were chiefly in return for rights of herbage;²⁶⁴ or were commutations for some of the vanishing services or old church payments.²⁶⁵

Old social classes and old conditions, already on the wane, may be said to have practically disappeared in Berkshire by the close of the sixteenth century; the Tudor period marking, therefore, an important epoch in its economic history.

The great inclosing movement, especially active at the close of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, had also important effects upon the county. The only really full account existing upon this subject is an inquest which Wolsey ordered to be made in 1517, for the purpose of

²⁵⁷ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 4 (Coleshill, 21 Hen. VII).

²⁵⁸ Ibid. No. 65 (Sotwell, 24, 25 Hen. VIII).

²⁵⁹ Mins. Accts. 1-2 Eliz. bdle. 1, No. 2.

²⁶⁰ Ibid. 1 Mary—1 & 2 Philip and Mary.

²⁶¹ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 4 (Coleshill, Hen. VII).

²⁶² Ashmole MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), 1126, fol. 124; 'Lostfeld' or 'losefield silver' paid round Reading in the seventeenth century.

²⁶³ Mins. Accts. 20-21 Eliz. bdle. 1, No. 2, m. 18 (Sonning). Wardsilver, waxsilver, sharesilver, salt rent, &c.

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discovering what land had already been inclosed, and what damage had been inflicted thereby, with the hope of checking the loss of occupation and the actual depopulation of the country, which was taking place through the adoption of large sheep-farms and through the pulling down of houses on ingrossed lands. Unfortunately the report leaves much to be desired in the way of exact definition as to the nature of these inclosures.

Inclosing might be of several descriptions. It might be merely the consolidating together of scattered strips, and the forming or 'ingrossing' of them into separate fields for purposes of private and more systematic cultivation; it might be the taking up of old waste land or woods, in which the tenants had grazing rights, and fencing it in either for separate pasture or in order to bring it under arable cultivation; or it might be the conversion of the common arable fields into large grazing tracts for flocks of sheep, thereby depriving the tenants of land and occupation. It is obvious that these different forms were not all equally objectionable; and it is therefore of great importance in judging the effects of the movement in Berkshire to discover, if possible, whether much arable land was converted into pasture, whether commons were much absorbed; and, if so, whether it meant infringements of old rights, and if the tenants were compensated for the same; or whether, on the contrary, inclosing was largely done for the sake of improving the soil, and that tillage tended to increase rather than diminish.

Leadam, in elaborate tables and notes to his publication of the 1517 Domesday Book²⁶⁶ has proved that inclosures in Berkshire were more frequently for arable cultivation than for pasture, that the country still remained essentially important for corn growing, and that the arable acres were worth considerably more than the pasture lands. Dr. Gay, on the other hand, has very severely criticized these conclusions,²⁶⁷ considering that the amount of data is really insufficient for making any general and certain statements. He reminds us, truly enough, that the whole point of the inquiry was to find out about the decay of tillage; that certainly it was that aspect which the Commissioners expected to find; and that therefore when, as is frequently the case, they do not specify the nature of the inclosure, it was most probably for pastoral purposes.

These criticisms may be true to a great extent, and although Berkshire long remained a great corn-growing county, as is shown by the description of Leland in 1542,²⁶⁸ yet this does not prove that the corn lands of which he speaks were not still lying open and unhedged; nevertheless there is something to be said in favour of the view that up to 1517, at least, many of the inclosures involved a continuation of arable cultivation instead of a conversion to pasture. It is difficult to believe, when an exact statement of this change is given in so many instances, that its omission in others is of no importance; also, it is significant that amongst the 24½ ploughs put down, all occur on the land in which the dropping of arable cultivation is specially mentioned. There are plenty of evictions and displacements in the other cases, but they seem to be rather an accompaniment of the destruction

²⁶⁶ Leadam, *Domesday of Inclosures*.

²⁶⁷ *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.* xiv.

²⁶⁸ Leland, *Itin.* (Oxford, 1711), ii.

²⁶⁹ Dr. Gay quotes from Pearce, *General View of the Agric. of Berks.* to show that in 1794, when the great closing movement was in progress, half still lay in open fields.

of messuages than of any special frequently pulled down when farms labourers on a more economical foot Another argument, though not a very always a tendency to dislike including, so that this in itself is not surprising. occurred in Berkshire early in the very strong one, is that though there was done no special damage at first.

The county did not apparently show any open movement against them the Pilgrimage of Grace; the religious abuses, which implies that they had economic discontent, but by the reign of Edward the disturbances at the time of brought fresh land into the market, and possibly were not sufficient without movement, there was greater tendency to rise.

In any case, abandoning as hopeless and only increased the sheep-farming conclusions, we can learn some things at Edward VI, when the dissolution had

Commissioners in 1517. First, as to the nature exact statistics and definite almost every instance it was an inclosure of already common the report of the The few pieces of common and waste were taken as additional inclosed lands. In Hampstead Marshall as much as 100 acres were inclosed cultivated arable land. at Wilde 50 acres, and there were four evictions; at Lions to parks. At Yattendon 20 acres of common land, and 4 acres at Bradfield for this purpose, there were also two small bits of arable land imparked at Hanast 60 acres, and Bisham, but that was all. The park inclosures were not very common, even in

In the thirteen places which inclosed both arable and pasture, the extent of the arable was just slightly the greater, 898 acres as contrasted with 828; another indication of the fact that arable land inclosures were popular. Twenty-five places are clearly mentioned as inclosing arable and converting it to pasture, the land so converted amounting to some 1,555 acres; Woolley, Barkham, Milton, and Southcot are instances of this. Woolley, although throwing 120 acres out of cultivation, is not recorded as having put down any plough or dispersed any labour; possibly, as Mr. Leadam suggests, it was the demesne land which was so used. The connexion between ploughs and acreage is not, however, very distinct, for Southcot with 100 acres inclosed, and Lyford with 40 acres, each put down two ploughs; while Barkham, with 100 acres turned into pasture, put down none, although eight people were evicted and a messuage pulled down.

The largest number of displacements of population occur at Milton, where eighteen lost employment (two ploughs were put down), and twelve at Marcham and at Langford respectively; amongst the doubtful cases tabulated by Mr. Leadam as arable, there is only once a mention of over twelve being displaced, and that was at Fulscot, where twenty-nine persons altogether were turned out after three inclosures and the pulling down of three messuages, though nothing is said as to the destruction of ploughs.

Taking it altogether, between 1485 and 1517, 6,615 acres had been inclosed in one way or the other, out of a total area of 430,210 acres; the most active period, and the one in which pasture appears to have made most progress, taking the certain cases alone, being the first ten years of the sixteenth century. It meant a good deal of change in any case, for it involved the eviction or displacement of 639 persons, and the destruction of 111 messuages and eight manor-houses. This must have been a considerable

shock to such a very rural population, and although in the end the inclosures improved the arable cultivation and rendered sheep-farming more secure and profitable, there was bound to be a period of distress while the change was going forward. The large sheep farms on the Downs continued open as ever, the inclosures were chiefly in the middle, north-west, and east. They were the work apparently of all classes, though rather more numerous on lay than on church land; besides the lords of manors themselves, freeholders, leaseholders, copyholders, and tenant farmers, all inclosed; the leaseholders were, however, particularly active, and these existed principally on lay lands; whilst copyhold tenants were always especially prominent on church estates.

The movement undoubtedly continued after 1517, though possibly not quite so rapidly as before until accelerated by the dissolution. At Beenham, Enborne, and Southborne the tenants had to keep up various hedges.²⁷⁰ In Pangbourne, in the second year of the reign of Edward VI, the scattered bits of which one estate was composed were almost wholly closes of several acres instead of strips.²⁷¹ In the next year mention was made of an inclosed park at Radley, whose hedges were not to be destroyed by the tenants;²⁷² and there were signs of considerable discontent amongst the peasantry of Berkshire at this time. In 1549 a rising, partly political, partly religious, partly social, swept over the country; and, although the heart and centre of it all was in Norfolk, other parts were not untouched. In July, 1549, a royal order to repress uproars 'if any such shall happen in the counties of Oxforde, Berkes, and Bucks,'²⁷³ looks as though no actual rising had taken place, but that it was threatening and probable; while in the same month Sir W. Paget, writing to the Protector Somerset, advised him to go into Berkshire.²⁷⁴ A little later the movement did spread to several of these midland counties, and in July, 1550, Somerset had to go to Reading 'to keep the peace';²⁷⁵ while Berkshire was one of the counties which the commissioners were especially ordered to inspect in 1549.

On the royal manor of Shippon, in Elizabeth's reign, a form of inclosure took place which was free from most of the objectionable features. It was an inclosure of common land, but every tenant was to separate his own piece with a ditch, so that their rights remained intact, and the value of the whole was increased.²⁷⁶ At Cookham, on the other hand, common land was inclosed 'to the great undoeing of the poorer soarte,' as one witness declared.²⁷⁷ This was the fencing and leasing of a good portion of fir-wood formerly open to all tenants for pasture, and from which they might take a 'tithe braunde' for their Christmas fire. Much discontent was felt at this encroachment on their rights.

In Beenham in 1604 a leaseholder who had ventured to inclose a heath, where others 'from time immemorial' had possessed rights of pasture and *estovers*, had an Exchequer decree passed against him;²⁷⁸ and in 1700 those who petitioned against injury caused by common land being added to the little park of Windsor received compensation for their consequent loss of

²⁷⁰ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 5, 30-37 Hen. VIII.

²⁷² Ibid. No. 38 (Radley, 3 Edw. VI.).

²⁷⁴ Strype, *Eccles. Mem.* ii, pt. i, 344.

²⁷⁶ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 56 (Shippon, 11 Eliz.).

²⁷⁷ Depositions by Commission (Cookham, 31-32 Eliz. Mich. No. 26).

²⁷⁸ Berks Deeds, Magd. Coll. (Benham, 157).

²⁷¹ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 51 (Reading, 2 Edw. VI.).

²⁷³ *Cal. of State Papers* (Rec. Com.), 1547-80.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

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lammas land, herbage, and loads of gravel.²⁷⁹ Partly as a result of legislation, partly by reason of political events, the inclosing movement did not make great advances during the seventeenth century, and Berkshire was still very largely a county of open fields till the great development of inclosures at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries.

As Dr. Cunningham says, it was these evictions and inclosures which marked the real end of serfdom; the few services still found here and there even in the seventeenth century having generally cropped up anew as matters of agreement.²⁸⁰

It is not easy to estimate the part played in these economic changes by the dissolution of the monasteries. Of the confiscated estates in Berkshire much land came into the hands of quite new men, rich members of the now growing middle class, who either bought or rented them, most frequently for a term of years in the latter case.²⁸¹ Land also began to change hands pretty rapidly,²⁸² all of which tended to the weakening of old ties and to the introduction of new methods. Leaseholders, now much increased in number, were generally active inclosers, and some of the numerous copyholders were changed into yearly tenants, or at any rate had their rents increased. In any case the extension to the rather backward church lands of the developments fast going forward on lay estates, meant a good deal of change throughout the whole of Berkshire, where up to this time religious houses had been such extensive landlords.²⁸³

Amongst the new classes now coming into prominence the yeomen take a leading place in both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In Berkshire the word was used by contemporaries in a very general sense, not only for a peasant proprietor, but for any small farmer, whether leaseholder, copyholder, or even tenant at will, occupying a place rather lower than that of the 'gentleman,' and not having land of above a more or less recognized value. An instance of a yeoman owning land, and also being contrasted with a 'gentleman,' occurs in reference to the manor of Finchampstead, where in 1572 a tenement was declared to belong to Thomas Holloway, yeoman,²⁸⁴ who sold it in the following year to Henry Hinde, gent.²⁸⁵ There are more examples of out-and-out purchase and sale by yeomen, in other words, therefore, proprietors, than there are of yeomen taking up land for a term of years; but in 1695 a lease of ninety-nine years was made to Simon Ball, yeoman, of White Waltham, for the sum of £20, one peppercorn to be paid annually.²⁸⁶ Copyholders are often entered as yeomen. For example, land was sold in 1591 which had been held by 'Edward Grove, yeoman, by copy of court roll in the manor of East Court in Finchampstead.'²⁸⁷

Some of these Berkshire yeomen seem to have had considerable farms and to have been very comfortably off; in 1558 one left by will to his son a portion of his land worth £10 a year, 'for his keepinge and learninge in

²⁷⁹ Tighe and Davies, *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 467 (Chamberlain's Accounts).

²⁸⁰ Cunningham, *Growth of Engl. Ind. and Commerce*, i (new ed. 1905).

²⁸¹ Dugdale, *Mon.* iii; *Mins. Accts.* 2-3 Edw. VI, &c.

²⁸² *Berks. Arch. Soc.* 1889, p. 3. Common given to Abbot Rowland, 1538; ceded to king, 1539; granted to Owen and Bridges in 1546; leased to A. Forster 1560, to Dudley, 1572; sold to Henry Norris, 1575, &c.

²⁸³ See article on 'Religious Houses.'

²⁸⁴ Add. Chart. (B.M.), 38589; Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, App. (London, 1895).

²⁸⁵ Add. Chart. (B.M.), 38590.

²⁸⁶ Rawl. D. (Bod. Lib.), 148, fol. 29.

²⁸⁷ Deed of Sale, 1591; Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, App.

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Oxford for 5 years nexte';²⁸⁸ and in James I's reign 'Andrew White, yeoman,' describing the sum paid by his father for certain lands, said 'that it was a great heape to the quantitie of half a bushel or thereabouts, but hath herd that it did break a horse's back with carriage of the said money.'²⁸⁹

Leaseholders were a thriving part of the community, and often the chief capitalists at this time; besides the ordinary leases, however, in which the tenant provided the capital and reaped all the benefit from improvements, stock and land leases also lingered on in Berkshire as late as the sixteenth century, a very good example being that of Cholsey Farm in Edward VI's reign.²⁹⁰ Some curious entries occur in the accounts of property belonging to the deanery of Abingdon in 1548, where the stock appears to be leased apart from the land, and in very small amounts,²⁹¹ possibly to add to the already existing stock leased earlier.

Not only beasts and seed were rented, but also ready money, e.g. Denchworth, R. Smith, for rent of a cow valued at 7*s.*, per annum 1*s.*; Fyfield, for 15 kyne, price 'the piece' 7*s.*, per annum 15*s.*; for 1 quarter of barley, price 2*s.* 8*d.*, per annum 1*s.*; for rent of a stock of '20*s.* ready money per year,' 1*s.* 8*d.*, and so on. Similar entries also occur in Sunningwell, Long Wittenham, North Moreton, Shippon, Faringdon, Peasemore, Brightwalton, and East Garston. In ordinary leases the length of time was very various: 3, 20, 21, 30, 99 years are all found. The practice became increasingly popular, and copyholders frequently obtained leave to sublet their holdings for periods of varying lengths.²⁹²

Copyhold tenure was still extremely common. Mr. Leadam calculates that about one-third of the land on church estates at the beginning of the century was held in this manner;²⁹³ and the number of copyholders was certainly very considerable on the confiscated estates of Abingdon and Reading.²⁹⁴ On the whole, such tenants seem to have held their own, as far as numbers were concerned, right into the seventeenth century. A rent roll of Sonning in 1607 gives a good opportunity for comparing the different tenures then existing on a manor.²⁹⁵ Here the rents of the freeholders amounted to £33 17*s.* 11*d.*; those of the copyholders roughly to £91; the leaseholders, of whom there were only twelve, paid £32 17*s.* 2*d.* At Finchampstead sixteen years later six 'free sutors' with various scattered bits of land, a good many of which were sublet, owed £4 3*s.* 1*d.*: the customary tenants, under which heading six leaseholders and ten copyholders are comprised, together £12 10*s.* 2*d.*²⁹⁶

The great number of customary tenants implies that rent was very largely settled by old arrangement, and but little affected by competition. The freeholders also paid according to the original assessment; and even in the case of leasehold property rents were more often fixed according to the capacity of the lessee than by anything else. Thus there is very little change

²⁸⁸ Berks. Wills, *Berks. Bucks. and Oxon. Arch. Soc.* iv, 116.

²⁸⁹ Excheq. Dep. (Sutton Courtenay, 17 Jas. I, Easter, 1).

²⁹⁰ Rentals and Surv. $\frac{5}{8}$ (Cholsey, 4 Edw. VI).

²⁹¹ Mins. Accts. Deanery of Abingdon; Rentals and Surv. R. 45 (2 Edw. VI).

²⁹² Ct. R. ptfo. 154, Nos. 56, 57 (Shippon, 1 Eliz. 12 Eliz. 1 Jas. I).

²⁹³ Leadam, *Domesday of Inclosures*.

²⁹⁴ Mins. Accts. 27, 28 Hen. VIII, No. 77; 29, 30 Hen. VIII, No. 77; 30, 31 Hen. VIII, No. 85.

²⁹⁵ Rentals and Surv. $\frac{5}{8}$ (Sonning, 1607).

²⁹⁶ Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, App. 79 (West Court Manor, 1623).

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from year to year in the entries on the rent rolls, and differences in total receipts can often be explained by arrears on the part of the tenants, by the vacancy of some holdings, or by actual reversions allowed by the lord. Thus on the confiscated estates of the abbey of Abingdon, although Abingdon Vill gave less rents on account of decline, the various farms let out, such as Layces Court, Caldecot, Fitzhary Farm, &c., paid exactly the same in 1540, in 1545, and in 1550; the rents of Appleford only varied from £42 15s. 6d. to £41 12s. 9d.; those of Drayton from £71 6s. 4½d. to £72 7s. 3d. in 1545 (it had been leased at the later date); Wootton and Boars Hill, South Hinksey, Sandford, Ginge, are all exactly the same in 1545, and do not appear later. Some others vary, but up or down indifferently, and more because of arrears being counted, or perquisites of courts changing, than for any definite movement in one direction or the other.²⁹⁷ A comparison of the Ministers' Accounts for 1-2 and 20-21 Elizabeth produces similar results; the assize and copyhold rents of the town of Newbury had not changed at all by the opening of the reign of James I. In the seventeenth century it was still the same, to judge from a series of rent rolls for Finchampstead East Court Manor, where many small holdings continued at exactly the same rent from 1602 to 1727.²⁹⁸

There are one or two things to be remembered concerning the question of rent. One is that a good deal was still paid in kind—corn and malt, both of which tended to vary and be uncertain in value; and another that often rents appear to be remaining exactly the same, at a time when one would expect them to rise, but that in reality the landlords had made up for not increasing the yearly payment, by enforcing a very heavy entry fine, which equalled or more than equalled the small addition which might otherwise have been made; the heriots also by the close of the sixteenth century were almost invariably paid in money, and could be altered in value by the manorial court. Thus, on the manor of Clewer in 1603, a tenant who only paid 6s. 8d. rent had to render a fine of 30s., and a heriot of 10s. was due on his death; another with 23s. 4d. paid the large fine of £3 10s., and his heriot was valued at 40s.²⁹⁹ Thus, often when rents appear to be stationary, the landlord is getting more from his land in some other way, and the comparison of rents alone may be a little misleading. But, in some cases, rents, even of the copyholders, were increased. In 1600 an inquiry was instituted to examine the possibility of 'improving' the rent of copyholders on various manors;³⁰⁰ and in 1603 on the Clewer estate cases of surrender and regrant constantly occur, with the statement that the same is 'worth more at an improved rent,' although 'the usual rent time out of mind has been less.'³⁰¹

To gather knowledge of the value per acre by any but leasehold rents is impossible, freehold rents were so often merely nominal. Thus on the manor of Finchampstead, Thomas Laward owed only 3d. for 40 acres; Sir Richard Harrison paid 1s. for 16; 20 acres in one place were worth 3s., in another 5s.³⁰² Copyhold rents constantly represented part payment for the holding, which might be extended by labour services also, and value per acre

²⁹⁷ Mins. Accts. for the different dates.

²⁹⁹ Excheq. Spec. Com. 159 (Clewer, 45 Eliz.).

³⁰¹ Ibid. 159 (Clewer, 45 Eliz.).

³⁰² Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, App. (Rent Roll, West Court Manor, 1603).

²⁹⁸ Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, App.

³⁰⁰ Ibid. 414 (Clewer, 42 Eliz.).

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is but very occasionally mentioned. In 1517 an acre of pasture land, calculating only from the entries which expressly state the nature of the inclosure, was worth roughly 7½*d.* a year; but at Cholsey in 1557 wood for pasture was let out at as little as 4*d.* an acre.³⁰³ Arable land in 1548 alternated between 8*d.* and 1*s.* per acre on various different estates,³⁰⁴ and on the whole appears to have been worth rather more than pasture, especially if it were inclosed.

Wage-paid labour was becoming increasingly the rule; even before the almost total disappearance of labour services Berkshire farmers had already required a good many extra workers. Unfortunately no record seems to exist of the wages received for the different operations of husbandry. There were 'common labourers' employed at different times for digging and levelling. At Windsor in 1533 and 1534, work of that kind was paid at the rate of 4*d.* to 5*d.* a day,³⁰⁵ which if it means, as is probable, without food, would more or less correspond to the statutable 4*d.* fixed for ordinary day labourers in the summer.³⁰⁶ At Reading, however, in 1605, labourers working 'about the buttes' earned as much as 8*d.* each.

In the case of ordinary unskilled labour, 4*d.* is certainly the usual rate for some time; it occurs far more frequently than any other rate. In the accounts of St. George's College, Windsor, in 12 Henry VII, labourers working about nine hours a day always received 4*d.* These hours are short compared with what was expected during the summer, according to the statute of 1514. There it was laid down that from mid-March to mid-September the labourer was to work from 5 a.m. to 7 or 8 p.m., with only two hours off for meals and mid-day sleep. It is certainly to be hoped that this statute was not very strictly enforced. In the same account, masons, carpenters, plumbers, and tilers all received 6*d.* a day.

Later in the century these rates seem to have very much increased, despite legislation. For working at Windsor Castle in 1532, carpenters earned 8*d.* as a rule, although one had as much as 9*d.*, and the remuneration for some 'timber work,' probably quite unskilled labour, sank as low as 4*d.* a day.

Masons also received 8*d.*, plumbers from 6*d.* to 8*d.*, plasterers from 7*d.* to 9*d.* (but 7*d.* was the most common), bricklayers 7*d.* to 8*d.*, and sawyers 1*s.* to 1*s.* 2*d.* the couple.³⁰⁷ In 1568, during the preparations for Queen Elizabeth's visits to Wallingford, Donnington, and Reading, wages were still higher:³⁰⁸ but this may have been exceptional. The fact, however, that artificers making the conduit at Windsor in 1555³⁰⁹ were paid at a high rate (carpenters 9*d.* to 10*d.*, masons 8*d.* to 1*s.*, bricklayers, 10*d.* to 1*s.* 2*d.*), and that labourers employed by the churchwardens at Reading received as much as 8*d.* a day,³¹⁰ points to the conclusion that wages were good in any case, did not fall below the statute rate, and were often considerably above it.

³⁰³ Harl. MSS. (B.M.), 607, fol. 142*b* (Cholsey, 1517).

³⁰⁴ Rentals and Surv. R. 45 (Deanery of Abingdon, 2 Edw. VI); cf. also Roll $\frac{1}{11}$. Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, App.; Rent Rolls, 22.

³⁰⁵ Rawl. D. (Bod. Lib.) 775; Pay-books of Windsor Castle.

³⁰⁶ Berks Rolls, (Bodl. Lib.) 4 (St. George's College, Windsor, 12 Hen. VII).

³⁰⁷ Rawl., D. 775; Pay-books of Windsor Castle.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.* A. 195 C.; Progress Book of Elizabeth, 1568.

³⁰⁹ Ashmole MSS. 1125; Printed in *Annals of Windsor*, i, 599.

³¹⁰ Churchwardens' Accounts; Coates, *Hist. and Antiq. of Reading*, i, 377.

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Prices at the same time were going up fairly steadily, although food seems cheap enough compared with modern standards. Leland gives an account of a dinner in 1561, when a leg of mutton cost 1s., partridges 3d. each, rabbits 2½d., and eggs 2d. the dozen.³¹¹ Beef at this date was generally ½d. the lb.; in the next century, in 1637, beef and mutton were bought at Windsor for 2s. 3d. the stone,³¹² a price below the average as estimated by Rogers, which came to about 3s. for that amount. Prices of ale and beer seem often to have been settled locally. At Wallingford in 1538, ale was to be sold at ½d. the quart, when malt was not more than 8s. the quarter; ³¹³ beer (ale with the addition of hops) was sold in 1637 at 1d. a quart for the best, and a 'dussen of ale' in that year was 14d.³¹⁴ Sugar, 4½d. the lb. in 1561³¹⁵ (Barbary sugar, perhaps cheaper than usual), was very expensive in the seventeenth century, and constantly given as presents to people of importance; it cost in 1637 from 1s. 8d. to 2s. the lb.³¹⁶ Claret 1s. the gallon in 1561 was 2s. 8d. in 1637; a salmon cost 2s. at the early date, 1s. at the later (respective weights not given), and so on. Prices of more important commodities, such as wheat and malt, have been calculated in the *Annals of Windsor*, as standing at a high figure in the seventeenth century, and getting gradually cheaper till the middle of the eighteenth.³¹⁷ Such scattered examples can, unfortunately, allow of no general estimate for prices throughout the county.

Leland describing his journey through Berkshire in 1542 certainly gives the impression of general well-being. He is impressed by the 'fruitful ground of corn' round Wallingford; by the 'plentiful wheat and barley' of the Wittenham Clumps; by the 'fertile vale of the White Horse.' From Oxford to Faringdon he passed through 'some corn, but most pasture'; and only at Faringdon itself does he speak of stony ground. The land was apparently doing well, not noticeably converted from arable to pasture, and with plenty of natural wealth in its own fertility; even in the east, where less capable of good cultivation, it was rich on account of its valuable timber.³¹⁸

The Berkshire towns shared to some extent in the general industrial growth which characterized the Tudor reigns, but what they gained in the sixteenth century was largely lost in the seventeenth. Reading easily took the first place amongst them, and various new industries began to develop³¹⁹; but as these grew the old cloth trade declined, despite attempts to encourage it artificially.³²⁰

Plague and civil war came in the seventeenth century to put a finishing touch to this decline. Reading suffered exceedingly from both, and as a centre of military operations was so impoverished that it refused to pay any more money to the soldiers in 1644, and the mayor had to be content with half his ordinary salary.³²¹ Although the town recovered from these misfortunes later, the clothing industry never did, its real importance being over with the close of the seventeenth century.

³¹¹ Leland, *Itin.* vi (3rd ed.).

³¹² Corp. Accounts, 1637-8; *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 599.

³¹³ Wallingford Corp. Ledger, 29 Hen. VIII, in Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*.

³¹⁴ Reading Corp. Diary, 1637; Guilding, *Reading Rec.* iii, 396.

³¹⁵ Leland, *Itin.* vi.

³¹⁶ Corp. Accounts; *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 131.

³¹⁷ *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 292.

³¹⁸ Leland's *Itin.* (Oxf. 1711), ii, 1 sq.

³¹⁹ Reading Corp. Diary; *passim*. Guilding, *Reading Rec.* iii.

³²⁰ *Ibid.* ii, 153, &c.

³²¹ *Ibid.* iii, 50, 61, 111; iv, 12.

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Wallingford had declined earlier ; Abingdon suffered from the loss of its abbey, though still a flourishing little town 'standing on clothing' ³²² ; but it was Newbury which really made the most marked progress. Here Jack of Newbury flourished, entertained King Henry and Queen Katherine in 1518, and himself led one hundred men to fight at Flodden, clothed with the produce of his own looms ; Shaw House was built by the Dolmans, a family of rich clothiers, and in 1601 the Company of Clothworkers or Weavers was incorporated by Royal Charter.³²³ Windsor also did a little in the way of manufacturing cloth, but not to any very great extent.³²⁴

A few industries were also carried on outside the towns. Fulling mills were built at Colthrop in 1541 ³²⁵ ; others were in use at East Hendred in 1571 ³²⁶ ; and at Brimpton in 1619 ³²⁷ ; malting continued here and there,³²⁸ and trencher-making was practised at Finchampstead.³²⁹ The county had nothing in the way of mines, but there were chalk pits in Windsor Park and elsewhere ; sand, gravel, clay, and fuller's earth were all obtained.³³⁰

On the whole it may be said that, with the exception of cloth and malt, Berkshire had no really important industries, and was still through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mainly an agricultural county ; and with the decline of its two chief trades its rural character was all the more emphasized. That its agricultural prosperity survived the changes of the sixteenth century is proved by Rogers's calculation from the taxation returns of 1636, according to which Berkshire appears as the sixth richest county in England.³³¹ The beginning of the seventeenth century was, however, a time of great agricultural welfare and advance everywhere ; but the civil wars came as a great check on this forward movement. Besides the actual devastation in Berkshire, owing to the military operations which took place, there was a general sense of insecurity and misery fatal to any efforts at progress ; and even after the Restoration agriculture languished for some time ; as a Berkshire proverb said :

He that havocs may sit ;
He that improves must flit.³³²

These effects of the struggle are shown by an estimate from taxation. In 1649 Berkshire sank to the position of twenty-first only amongst the counties, and then slowly recovered, having by 1693 regained the rank she had occupied in 1636.

The prosperity of the county depended not only on local well-being, but on means of communication. Roads as a rule suffered with the fall of the monasteries, which had often kept them in repair ; they now came to be the charge of the different localities, were kept up—or not kept up as the case might be—by forced labour ; and throughout the seventeenth century fines

³²² Leland, *Itin.* ii, 14.

³²³ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 200-2 ; Ashmole, *Antiq. of Berks.* ii, 288 ; Depos. by Com. (11 Chas. I, Easter, 24), Rules for weighing and selling of wool, &c.

³²⁴ *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 143 ; Ash. MSS. Bod. Lib. 1123, fol. 51.

³²⁵ Harl. MSS. (B. M.) 606 ; Value of crown lands.

³²⁶ MSS. Top. (Bod. Lib.) Berks. D. 10, fol. 11.

³²⁷ Excheq. Spec. Com. 3565 (Brimpton, 16 Jas. I).

³²⁸ Rawl. (Bod. Lib.) D. 399 ; Regulations for 'maulters' in county of Berks.

³²⁹ Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, 212 (1518) ; Oak tables with scooped-out places to hold trenchers.

³³⁰ *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 253 ; Depos. by Com. (36-37 Eliz. Mich. 39) ; Beenham Valence.

³³¹ Rogers, *Hist. of Agric. and Prices*, v, 104.

³³² *Social Engl.* iv, 441.

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were constantly inflicted for failure to perform these repairs satisfactorily.³³³ Sometimes this important work was dependent on individual charity, or money left by chance benefactors³³⁴; although by the end of the sixteenth century surveyors or justices of the peace were generally made responsible for the condition of the highways.³³⁵

A good deal of the traffic of the country went by what were known as 'pack and pen ways,' with only room for packhorses and foot-passengers. One of these, a short cut from Newbury to Abingdon over Milton Hill, was described in the reign of William III as a very rough track indeed, covered with flints washed down by constant streams of water.³³⁶ Roads were certainly not good, and travelling was dangerous, although Berkshire was not exceptional in this respect. In 1664 a charitable person left money to pay for the daily ringing of a bell at Wokingham at 4 a.m. and 8 p.m. to guide strangers to the town; and at Maidenhead the parson was paid an extra salary because of his constant danger in passing a thicket noted as a highwayman's resort. Towards the close of the seventeenth century travelling began to be encouraged. In 1673 the first stage-coach was started between Windsor and London, to the great detriment of the watermen, according to a contemporary pamphlet³³⁷; and when the king was at the Castle, post was conveyed between the two. In 1687 Windsor also established a stand of hackney carriages for hire.³³⁸

The Thames, however, still remained the best means of communication, and the cost of water carriage was far lower than that of transport by land.³³⁹ Naturally, like everything else it was a very uncertain quantity. In 1532 plaster had been conveyed from London to Windsor at 1*s.* 10*d.* the ton; in 1636 the king commanded that 5*s.* the ton should be the established rate between London and Oxford; but the bargemen were charging 15*s.* when they could, only as far as Wallingford.³⁴⁰ Roads were evidently not used when water was available. In 1686 extra had to be paid for the conveyance of timber by land between London and Windsor, because the river was too low to allow barges to pass³⁴¹; and when Coates wrote his history of Reading (1800) he estimated that carriage by canal was one-third as expensive as that by land, although by that time the roads must have been in much better condition than in these earlier centuries.³⁴²

As to the good order and justice kept in the county, on which the security of property and the welfare of society must so much depend, information is unfortunately very scanty. With the sixteenth century matters of importance were coming more and more into the hands of the justices of the peace, and the records of their quarter sessions, where theft, murder, and other crimes were now tried, have not been preserved earlier than 1724 onwards.

The old local courts were fast falling into complete insignificance; manorial courts still met here and there; they continued to pass rural

³³³ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 60 (Beenham Valence, 22 Hen. VIII), Hampstead Bridge to be repaired by all the tenants. Ibid. ptfo. 153, No. 66 (Bray, 22 Chas. II), fines for not sending men to work on the king's highway.

³³⁴ Petty Bag Inq. (Berks.), iii, 13 (1648).

³³⁵ Ibid. v, 4 (1625).

³³⁶ Depos. by Com. (3 Will. and Mary, Trinity, 8).

³³⁷ *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 366.

³³⁸ Ibid. 421.

³³⁹ Rawl. MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), D. 775, Pay-books of Windsor Castle; ibid. A. 195, C.

³⁴⁰ Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, iii, 129; Petition, 1636.

³⁴¹ *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 420.

³⁴² Coates, *Hist. and Antiq. of Reading*.

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regulations and to punish rural crimes; courts of piepowder still fined for offences committed in fairs and markets, and some cases of interest still appeared before the old portmoots; but little new information can be gathered from their now very scanty rolls.

In the manorial rolls, amongst much that is old, such as fines for default, collection of heriots, rules as to ringing of pigs, encroachments, overcharging of pasture, &c., there is an increasing number of entries about the duty of keeping up hedges and of working on the highways; and a few new offences make their appearance. Tenants at East Enborne in the sixteenth century got into trouble for making pig-sties on demesne land; ³⁴³ several fines were inflicted for not shooting with bow and arrows on feast-days, as was by statute enjoined; ³⁴⁴ and in the seventeenth century repairing of stocks, whipping-post, and pillory appears to have been the work of the tenants, though the lord had to provide the timber. ³⁴⁵

These manorial courts were fast being superseded, and did not meet so regularly as heretofore. In Charles I's reign, the courts of Cookham and Bray, formerly held every three weeks, now only met four or five times a year as occasion required. ³⁴⁶

A regular forest court was still being held at Windsor in the seventeenth century, chiefly for the punishment of poaching, and to supervise the good condition of the wood. ³⁴⁷

Fines for old offences, such as default, encroachments on the waste, and so forth, were generally paid on the old scale of 2*d.* to 6*d.*; but on the whole the amount of the fines was distinctly going up. At Sotwell, in Henry VIII's reign, selling with unfair measures was amerced at from 1*s.* to 3*s.*, ³⁴⁸ failure to keep up boundaries in the manor of Beenham Valence at 3*s.* 4*d.*, and failure to repair the bridge at 6*s.* 8*d.*; ³⁴⁹ whilst in 1657 a tenant of Thatcham was ordered to dismiss 'strangers' from his house on pain of £5. ³⁵⁰

In the seventeenth century fines were often levied by the churchwardens for all sorts of offences, such as swearing, drunkenness, absence from church; ³⁵¹ and for various misdeeds in the ale-houses, such as being there on a Sunday, or above all for gambling; ³⁵² but there was also an increase, especially in the towns, of actual punishments by means of the cage, ³⁵³ the stocks, the pillory, and the cucking stool. ³⁵⁴

One man got three hours in the stocks for swearing; ³⁵⁵ but a very hardened offender might even be sent to the assizes, which apparently was

³⁴³ Ct. R. ptfo. 153, No. 58 (E. Enborne, 18 Hen. VIII).

³⁴⁴ Ibid. 154, No. 18 (Enborne, 37 Hen. VIII); Ibid. 155, No. 56 (Shippon, 24 Eliz.).

³⁴⁵ *Newbury Field Club*, iii, 154 (Extracts from Thatcham Ct. R. 1657); Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 16 (Cookham, Chas. II).

³⁴⁶ Dep. by Com. 14-15 Chas. I, Hil. 10.

³⁴⁷ Rawl. MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), D. 399, fol. 90, Justices in Eyre Seat, Windsor, 1632.

³⁴⁸ Ct. R. ptfo. 154, No. 69 (Sotwell, 28 Hen. VIII).

³⁴⁹ Ibid. 153, No. 58 (Beenham Valence, 15-18 Hen. VIII).

³⁵⁰ *Newbury Field Club*, iii, 154 (Thatcham, Ct. R.).

³⁵¹ *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 78; Churchwardens' Accts. 1618; three men for drunkenness, each 5*s.*; for absence from church, each 1*s.*; Widow Thinkittle for swearing (1624), 2*s.* 8*cc.*, &c.

³⁵² Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* ii, 379.

³⁵³ Ashmole MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), 1126; Chamberlain's Accts. Edw. VI and Mary.

³⁵⁴ Money, *Hist. of Hungerford*, 45 sq.; Constable's Accts. from 1658.

³⁵⁵ Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* iii, 199 (1633).

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done with one who 'did swear in the market-place not so little as 40 oathes, per Deum et alia &c—fearfull oathes.'³⁶⁶

Whipping was a very common punishment for small offences. In Reading there was a house of correction largely employed for this purpose. In 1626, 34s. was laid out in whipping rogues; this was the duty of the bellman, who was paid 4s. 6d. the quarter for his agreeable task!³⁶⁷ Boys were often punished in this way, as in the case of three apprentices who threw turnips at a man and hurt him.³⁶⁸ At Hungerford there were constant whippings of poor men and women, presumably vagrants, who were generally given 2d. or 4d. at the same time (this may have been to enable them to get back to their place of settlement); and the whipping-post was a common object in most towns and villages.

Offences of greater importance were treated in either quarter sessions or assizes, and the punishments inflicted would differ but little from county to county. Theft, now and for long after, was frequently punished by death;³⁶⁹ and in 1631 a boy was hanged for having set fire to some houses in Windsor.³⁶⁰ Little evidence of these matters is to be found for Berkshire during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the eighteenth provides plentiful examples of similar penalties for similar crimes, and it was long before milder measures were introduced.

Perhaps the most interesting of all the developments of the Tudor period was the attempt at meeting the growing problem of pauperism, rendered more acute by the extension of sheep-farming and the loss of monastic support. There are no signs of excessive poverty in Berkshire, except perhaps when the plague was working havoc, as it so frequently did in some parts of the county throughout the seventeenth century; but a pauper class existed there as elsewhere, and there are many illustrations of the working out of the various statutes on the subject. All through the sixteenth century men were giving land and money for the use of the poor. Almshouses were the most favourite form of relief. Some were established at New Windsor as early as 1503, the corporation being given the power of electing the inmates;³⁶¹ some at Abingdon already existed and received constant donations;³⁶² in the reign of Henry VIII more almshouses were founded at Windsor;³⁶³ in 1549 land was given at Speen (near Newbury) that the proceeds of it might be annually distributed amongst the poor;³⁶⁴ under Edward VI a charity school and a hospital were opened at Newbury;³⁶⁵ and above all there were constant gifts of money to be expended on the regular distribution of bread. Charity was extremely unsystematic. Sometimes the churchwardens were to distribute, sometimes the mayor and aldermen, sometimes the 'most substantial men' of the place; often a bequest failed to be fulfilled by the executors and might in the end be lost altogether.³⁶⁶ As a rule, however, supervision was put in the hands of the justices of the peace who were con-

³⁶⁶ Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* iii, 82 (1631).

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.* ii, 301.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 352 (1637).

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 124 (1623). Saunders, a rogue, was suspected of the theft of a riding-coat and two or three cheeses. He was hanged at the assizes.

³⁶⁰ Ashmole MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), 1126, fol. 21b.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.* fol. 63b.

³⁶² Berks. Wills, *Berks. Bucks. and Oxon. Arch. Soc.* i, 90.

³⁶³ Ashmole MSS. (Bodl. Lib.) 1126; Acct. Bk. A. (24 Hen. VIII).

³⁶⁴ Money, *Hist. of Speen.*

³⁶⁵ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 212.

³⁶⁶ Petty Bag Inq. *passim.*

scientious and effective ; and with the opening of the seventeenth century, and the passing of Elizabeth's poor law, overseers were regularly appointed and together with the churchwardens are found distributing the different sums.

The early years of the reign of James I were marked by a great outburst of charitable zeal in Berkshire. Besides money left to be distributed at the discretion of the overseers new hospitals and almshouses were established,³⁶⁷ money was given 'to set the poor on work';³⁶⁸ poor boys were to be apprenticed to learn a trade ;³⁶⁹ and education was encouraged by the provision of schoolmasters to teach the poor boys of the place.³⁷⁰ The House of Correction at Reading, established in accordance with 7 James I 'to set rogues on work,' was in constant use for this, as well as for the whipping of these same rogues,³⁷¹ and in 1632 a girl was sent to a hospital that she might be taught to spin and earn her living ;³⁷² whilst one of the most famous benefactors of Berkshire in this century was Archbishop Laud, who left money to be used for apprenticing boys from several different villages. There was still, however, plenty of absolutely indiscriminate almsgiving, and very hap-hazard distribution. A favourite plan of bestowing money for marrying the two poorest couples,³⁷³ was not exactly calculated to encourage prudence ; the prisoners in Reading Gaol to whom money was left³⁷⁴ seem rather an unusual object of charity (though doubtless they needed it badly to judge from the reports of how prisons were kept), but perhaps the most curious illustration of the casual character of relief was the money left for maidservants, the recipient to be selected by lot.³⁷⁵ It is true that the lot was only drawn amongst those who fulfilled certain conditions in the way of length of service ; but, nevertheless, the plan was rather characteristic of the methods of the day. Real efforts were being made, however, to meet the growing difficulty, and charity was extremely active if not always very wise.³⁷⁶

Morals were being looked after with some care during the seventeenth century. Under the Commonwealth only twelve inns were licensed at Wallingford instead of thirty-two, and a religious discourse was to be preached every market-day.³⁷⁷ At Reading an innkeeper was threatened with losing his licence because he allowed bowling, playing at nine-pins, 'and other disorderly courses.'³⁷⁸ A good many amusements of this sort had been started during the sixteenth century. They had bowling-alleys in the Tudor reigns,³⁷⁹ besides cards, dice, and gambling games. Local authorities always considered such amusements to be under their supervision, and at

³⁶⁷ Kerry, *Hist. of Hundred of Bray*, 1609 (Jesus Hospital, Bray) ; Petty Bag Inq. iv, 19, 1613 (Almshouses, Blewbury) ; *ibid.* v, 4, 1615 (Almshouses, Lyford) ; Clark MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), 20, 1659 (Almshouses, Maidenhead).

³⁶⁸ Petty Bag Inq. iv, 11, 1607, £40 left at Wantage to buy wool to be spun into yarn. Ashmole MSS. 1123, 1671 ; £200 for making cloth at Windsor.

³⁶⁹ Ashmole MSS. (Bodl. Lib.) 204, 1654 ; thirty poor children apprenticed ; *Char. Com. Rep.* xxxii, 65, 1691, money to apprentice children at White Waltham.

³⁷⁰ Kerry, *Hist. of Hundred of Bray* (17th c.), schoolmaster at Bray to have £20 a year to teach 20 boys gratis.

³⁷¹ Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* ii, 226, 262-8.

³⁷² *Ibid.* 294.

³⁷³ Petty Bag Char. 3-17, Inq. at Wokingham, 1608.

³⁷⁴ Petty Bag Char. 4-19 ; Inq. of 1613.

³⁷⁵ Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* iii, 7.

³⁷⁶ For the assistance of education by charitable donations, see article on 'Schools.'

³⁷⁷ Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, Ledger Book, 1600.

³⁷⁸ Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* iv, 365 (1600).

³⁷⁹ Money, *Hist. of Speen* ; Bowling-green mentioned in Speen Registers.

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Wallingford servants were forbidden to play any games of the sort in ale-houses on a working day.³⁸⁰ There were festivities and dancing also on May Day, and at other times. The churchwardens of St. Mary's at Reading paid 3*s.* to the minstrels and hobby-horse on May Day, and 3*s.* 4*d.* for meat and drink to give to the 'Morrysdauncers' at Whitsuntide, besides five pairs of shoes for them, which cost the large sum of 4*s.*³⁸¹ Even before the Commonwealth, Reading was, however, becoming very Puritan and averse to these 'godless amusements.' In 1631 cudgel-playing was moved from the market-place, and properly licensed players were forbidden to act in the town; some were actually paid 20*s.* to depart without giving their performance; one ale-house was suppressed for being the scene of a disturbance at 11 p.m.; and the constables reproved another where 'shovegroate' was played.³⁸² One amusement, of a far more reprehensible character, was continued at Wokingham right up to 1832, the horrible custom of bull-baiting. This was considered to be good for the quality of the meat, as well as an enjoyable spectacle, and the rates provided one bull a year, a charitable bequest another, with the stipulation that the proceeds from the sale of the flesh should be expended on shoes and stockings for the poor children of the town.³⁸³

As is only natural, Berkshire maintained many superstitions through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: witchcraft was still a punishable crime, and indeed serious enough to be brought before the assizes;³⁸⁴ to make an image stuck with pins, or even to pierce with a rusty pin the name of an enemy written on a piece of paper, was a deed of a most suspicious character, and could bring its perpetrator before the justices.³⁸⁵ Women were constant victims of these charges, and it was generally women also who bore the punishment of the cucking-stool, whether for slandering, scolding, or eavesdropping.

One great fear of the seventeenth century, where so much wood was used in buildings, was that of fire. Regulations were constantly passed to guard against this: such as the infliction of fines on those who neglected to sweep their chimneys,³⁸⁶ or who went into stables and outhouses with lighted matches, or who failed to keep water apparatus.³⁸⁷ Damage, however, was constantly done notwithstanding these efforts.³⁸⁸

Despite dangers of this sort towns were beginning to be much better kept in the seventeenth century. The cleaning of the streets and the services of a scavenger were making them both more respectable and more healthy, though there was room left for later improvement. It was the duty of each householder to look after the street in front of his own door,³⁸⁹ and it was the duty of the town crier to warn him when this needed to be done.³⁹⁰ The

³⁸⁰ Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, Corp. Ledger, 1508.

³⁸¹ Garry, *Churchwardens' Accts.* 1556-7.

³⁸² Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* iii, 74, 76, 79, 96, 144.

³⁸³ *Berks. Bucks. and Oxon. Arch. Soc.* July, 1890; Ditchfield, *Hist. of Wokingham*.

³⁸⁴ Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* ii, 3; iii, 243; £3 5*s.* expended at assizes in prosecution of witches.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.* ii, 395.

³⁸⁶ Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, Corp. Ledger, 1628.

³⁸⁷ Reading Corp. Diary, *Reading Rec.* ii, 51; Every burgess to have three leather buckets ready in his house.

³⁸⁸ *Hist. MSS. Com. Rep.* vii, 50*b*; Petition from Faringdon, 1646, stating losses by fire.

³⁸⁹ Hedges, *Hist. of Wallingford*, Ledger Book, 1650; Fines for not pitching and gravelling street before house; 1*s.* for not cleaning streets.

³⁹⁰ *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 391, Chamberlain's Accts. 1682.

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town crier was quite an important personage, as he had to make known all subjects of general interest to the inhabitants. Most places also had watchmen, who performed to some extent the duty of police, keeping guard during the night that the town might rest in peace.³⁹¹ Other officials were the sexton and the clerk. The latter at St. Mary's, Reading, was paid quite a good salary in the seventeenth century, since from 33*s.* 4*d.* in 1577 it had risen in 1620 to £3 10*s.* a year.³⁹² Towns chiefly showed their loyalty by constant bell-ringing—on Gunpowder Plot day, on the occasion of royal visits, or any other time of special rejoicing; the ringers on great occasions generally received presents of tobacco as well as their pay.

To sum up shortly the general condition of the county at the close of the seventeenth century: Town and country alike had suffered from the expenses and troubles of the civil wars, had passed through a period of material recovery, if of moral repression, during the Commonwealth, and after the Restoration there was a further enjoyment of substantial prosperity unhampered by Puritan ascendancy. The best days, however, of the clothing and malting industries were now over, and Berkshire was more and more to develop on agricultural lines.

For Berkshire the 'Industrial Revolution' of the eighteenth century meant improvement in means of communication and greater development of scientific cultivation. Abandoning any pretensions to figure as an important manufacturing centre, the county was occupied with the introduction of new crops, of better manures, of more elaborate rotation, and with the completion of the inclosing movement.

Common fields died hard, for the chief period of inclosures was not until the latter part of the eighteenth and early half of the nineteenth centuries. In 1717 when a register was taken of the Papists' estates throughout the country, their lands were largely lying scattered in the open fields.³⁹³ Anne Parker had besides four closes '25 acres lying dispersedly in the Common fields of Padworth and Benham.' In the manor of Buckland a good many separate holdings had been consolidated, but there were also 4 yardlands '103 acres more or less dispersed in the Eastside Common fields,' and '23 acres dispersed in Westside Commonmead,' and examples could be multiplied.

Describing the county in 1794, Pearce estimated the common fields and downs at 220,000 acres, the inclosed lands as only 170,000³⁹⁴; and in 1809 Mavor wrote at length on the many disadvantages of common land, which he considered to be one of the greatest hindrances to improvement.³⁹⁵

Some land, in the eighteenth century, continued to be held by old services, and boon days were not uncommon. In 1717 Charles Eyton of East Hendred leased out land for rent, a couple of turkeys, and carriage of six loads of fuel from any place ten miles distant; he himself allowing 'cart boot, plow boot, and stick boot,' quite in the old form.³⁹⁶ Brimpton Farm was let on lease, together with 'lands, services, works, days and services which are and ought to be done by the customary tenants'; one tenant of a

³⁹¹ Money, *Hist. of Hungerford*, Constable's Accts. 1688.

³⁹² Garry, *Churchwardens' Accts.* 1577, 1620, 1621.

³⁹³ Document in the office of the Clerk of the Peace at Reading.

³⁹⁴ Pearce, *Agriculture of Berks* (1794, Agricultural Soc.).

³⁹⁵ Mavor, *Agriculture of Berks* (1809).

³⁹⁶ Register of Papist Estates (1717), 14.

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message had to keep a dog and a hound ; another did four days' work with a team and cart, and so on.³⁹⁷

There were great difficulties to be got over before improvements could be introduced. Nothing much could be done till the land was held in severalty ; the proper rotation of crops was hindered by the old custom of laying the land open for pasture at certain times, and, unless common agreement could be arrived at on this point, there was no remedy, as the tenants would say ' they had their rights ' ;³⁹⁸ and the inclosures themselves involved considerable expenditure.³⁹⁹ The work, however, did go forward. There had always been instances here and there, such as East Hagbourne in 1719 ;⁴⁰⁰ Speen in 1737 ;⁴⁰¹ and then from 1760 onwards a regular series began.⁴⁰²

The greater part of these inclosures were now for arable purposes, and meant the partitioning and dividing of the old open fields ; some of the pasture land and downs were also fenced for the better safe-guarding of the flocks, and some of the waste and commonable lands were brought under cultivation, although this, according to Mavor, was not a very profitable undertaking, and they were of more use when planted ;⁴⁰³ there is much open country still left in the sheep walks on the central ridge of the downs.

Aston Upthorpe, Bockhampton, Bourton, Bray, Great Faringdon, Hampstead Norris, Longcot, and Speen were all inclosed before the nineteenth century ; in the case of actual commons such as Earley (1761) and Ealing (1778) an agreement was made between the commoners and the lord of the manor, before the bill for inclosing was procured. The rest followed in the nineteenth century. Steventon remained open until 1885 ; and the last award is that of Chilton, dated 1890. Although there was bound to be some difficulty in settling the different claims, the general benefit of inclosures seems to have been no longer disputed, and Mavor states that the demand for labour was very little altered by them.⁴⁰⁴ At Upton after the Inclosure Act of 1804, the produce almost doubled, and 2,000 sheep were kept instead of 200 ; doubtless this must have been a common experience.⁴⁰⁵

The introduction of turnips and artificial grasses was another great step in agricultural advance. The former were grown quite early in the century ; in 1717 a certain Mistress Keate was said to have a whole acre of them in Hagbourne field ;⁴⁰⁶ and by 1794 their value as a substitute for leaving the land fallow was fully recognized. The usual rotation of crops on the rich soils was (1) wheat, (2) beans, (3) barley, (4) oats, (5) clover, (6) vetches and turnips, and on the downs a six-course was also practised, only that two years of grass generally took the place of beans and clover ; but on the open fields turnips were not yet commonly introduced.⁴⁰⁷ Jethro Tull, a farmer of Shalbourn, did more than anyone to further the improvement of tillage ; his chief contributions were an extension of hoeing, and the use of the drill for sowing, which diminished considerably the amount of seed

³⁹⁷ Register of Papist Estates (1717), 60, 65.

³⁹⁹ Mavor, op. cit.

⁴⁰¹ Money, *Hist. of Speen*.

⁴⁰² Inclosure Awards, office of the Clerk of the Peace at Reading.

⁴⁰³ Mavor, *Agriculture of Berks*, 498.

⁴⁰⁵ Mary Sharpe, *Hist. of Upton Ct.* (Lond. 1892), 172 (Notes from Oriel Coll.).

⁴⁰⁶ Deposns. by Com. 3 Geo. I, Mich. 4.

³⁹⁸ Pearce, op. cit. 26.

⁴⁰⁰ Deposns. by Com. 3 Geo. I, Mich. 4.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Pearce, *Agric. of Berks* (1794), 25.

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required.⁴⁰⁸ The drainage system was also improving, the king himself setting a good example in his Norfolk farm in Windsor Park, where 200 acres had originally stood under water, and where he introduced all the modern improvements with conspicuous success.⁴⁰⁹ The Vale of the White Horse remained by far the most productive part of the county, was famed for its wheat and beans, and did much, too, in the keeping and fattening of cattle. Wheat, barley, and oats were grown everywhere, and were particularly good; ⁴¹⁰ rye, beans, and peas were cultivated in smaller quantities. The Berkshire meadows have always been valuable; along the Kennet between Hungerford and Reading they were perhaps at their best, and besides hay produced excellent peat, for the sale of which as much as £300 was gained from one acre in 1794, for not only was it in demand for fuel, but the ash had just begun to be used for the dressing of crops.⁴¹¹ Hops were grown in a few places (mentioned at Ufton in 1762,⁴¹² Bisham 1783)⁴¹³, and osiers all along the Thames and Kennet, the latter being in great demand for the London basket-makers.⁴¹⁴ Market gardening and fruit farms were being tried towards the close of the eighteenth century, but not to any very great extent; there were apple and pear orchards in the Vale of the White Horse, cherries round Wantage and Hagbourne, and a good many vegetables near Reading and Newbury by 1809;⁴¹⁵ but large arable and sheep farms were the general rule. The forest division of the county, though less cultivated, could make considerable profit by its timber, the value varying, however, according to its distance from or proximity to the river. It was largely required for hurdles, faggots, and coach-building in London.⁴¹⁶

The Berkshire sheep farms have been large and well stocked from 1794 onwards. Pearce speaks of the sheep as 'useful and handsome,' and the fleece of each weighed on an average as much as 4 lb.⁴¹⁷ 'The neat cattle' were kept in all parts, but the chief dairy farms were in the vale, round Faringdon and Shrivenham, where a great deal of butter- and cheese-making went on. At the beginning of the nineteenth century 2,000 to 3,000 tons of the latter were annually sent to London.⁴¹⁸

The Berkshire farmers were particularly proud of their horses, according to Pearce, and kept more of them than were really required; they were also sold a good deal for London drays, being 'in legs pretty short, in bodies thick, and their whole figure being framed for strength rather than for activity.'⁴¹⁹

Pigs were chiefly numerous in the dairy parts of the county, and Faringdon was famous for them; they were made into bacon for the use of London and Oxford.⁴²⁰ Fowls also were in request for London, and poultry farms flourished in the eastern county in the eighteenth century.⁴²¹ These were, however, diminished by the growing consolidation of farms, and have been of less importance in late years.

⁴⁰⁸ Jethro Tull, *Hand-boeing Husbandry* (1822 ed.), 69, 70.

⁴¹⁰ Roque's *Surv.* (Bodl. Lib.) 1771; barley mentioned as especially fine.

⁴¹² Mary Sharpe, *Hist. of Ufton Ct.*

⁴¹³ MSS. Top. Berks. (Bodl. Lib.), D. 11.

⁴¹⁴ Depos. by Com. 7 Geo. I, Hil. 11; Mavor, op. cit. 3.

⁴¹⁵ Mavor, op. cit. 299.

⁴¹⁶ Pearce, op. cit. 54; Mavor, op. cit. 307. For nineteenth-century advance see article on 'Agriculture,' and *Agric. Returns*; Reports to Board of Agriculture, 1900 to 1905.

⁴¹⁷ Pearce, op. cit. 44.

⁴¹⁸ Mavor, op. cit. 374.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.* 396.

⁴²⁰ Pearce, op. cit. 44; Mavor, op. cit. 403.

⁴²¹ Mavor, op. cit. 407.

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As to the size of farms in Berkshire. The general tendency was for them to be large; Pearce, indeed, speaks of them as too large in 1794.⁴²² This was especially the case in the sheep farms, Cholsey farm being amongst the biggest in England; it was let out, in 1771, at £1,000.⁴²³ Small farms certainly existed in 1717⁴²⁴ and on the Finchampstead estate in 1786,⁴²⁵ but the yeoman farmers were gradually dying out, partly because unable to afford the more expensive methods of machinery now being introduced.⁴²⁶

By 1794, also, Pearce is complaining of the scarcity of leasehold property, which had been much superseded by tenancy from year to year.⁴²⁷ This change is shown to be coming in 1717, although much property was still leased at that date; but on the estates of the earl of Shrewsbury the phrase constantly appears: 'Leased by the late Duke, now let by me from year to year.'⁴²⁸ Mavor says that at least one-third of the land was occupied by the proprietors themselves, and that leases were few and, as a rule, not long; they were mostly for seven years, but these were not very successful owing to the severity of the fine demanded.

Copyhold tenure continued to be fairly frequent, but generally for cottages or small holdings. In 1717 five farms on the estate of William Wallascot were let out by copy of Court Roll, and this generally meant lowish rents and the gifts of capons and pullets; but though their rent was usually small, the copyholders suffered very much from the levy of extremely heavy 'fines': a man paying a rent of 1*d.* or 6*d.* had to supply as entry money £18 and £50.⁴²⁹

The labouring class was extremely numerous. According to the population returns of 1831, out of 31,081 families 14,047 were engaged in agriculture, only 9,884 in trade: the agricultural labourers numbered 14,802, factory hands 321, and retail traders 10,758.⁴³⁰ The manufacturing class only appear in Reading, Abingdon, Wantage, Newbury, Bisham, Speenhamland, Thatcham, and Wallingford; and in Abingdon alone did they exceed in numbers the agricultural class, which therefore constituted a very important section of the population.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century 1*s.* was a very ordinary payment for a day's work of all sorts. In some accounts kept at Donnington for Mr. Robert Parker, 1706-9,⁴³¹ a good many labourers were paid at that rate, though their actual employment is not specified; occasionally they were given as little as 10*d.*; an old woman for mending was only allowed 4*d.* a day; and in 1721 1*s.* was the amount paid to the labourers who looked after the osier beds. Towards the close of the century the usual plan was to keep a certain number of permanent farm hands paid by the year, and other labourers given so much a week with the chance of making more at harvest time.

This extra harvest work was occasionally done at so much a day: it was possible to gain as much as 3*s.*, Sir Meredith Eden tells us, in 1797.⁴³² The most popular plan, however, and that which both Pearce and Mavor

⁴²² Pearce, op. cit. 19.

⁴²³ Rocque's *Survey*, 1771.

⁴²⁴ Register of Papist Estates.

⁴²⁵ Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*; Deed of Settlement, 1786.

⁴²⁶ Article on 'Agriculture.' For riots against machinery see *Poor Law Rep.* 1834.

⁴²⁷ Pearce, op. cit. 17.

⁴²⁸ Register of Papist Estates, 71.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.* 9.

⁴³⁰ *Population Returns*, 1831.

⁴³¹ Rawl. (Bodl. Lib.), D. 1480; Donnington Accounts, 1706-9.

⁴³² Sir F. M. Eden, *State of the Poor* (1797), ii, 15.

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recommend, was to let it out 'by the great,' as it was called : which meant that a certain sum was offered per acre, and then that the labourer could come with wife and family and do as much and as quickly as he could. When this method was adopted, Pearce says that the poor were always more industrious and more comfortable.⁴³³

The pay by the year did not change to any very great extent between 1794 and 1809, but rose slightly. A carter in the first instance might get from £5 to £10. In 1809 an under-carter would be given 4 guineas, whilst a head man could get up to 12 guineas. A shepherd at both dates generally received £10 10s., but he had also the right of pasturing a few sheep. At the earlier date a 'stout' ploughboy earned £2, a small one £1 10s.; in 1809 a 'boy' would get from 2 to 3 guineas.

The weekly wages varied from place to place, and were rather higher in the eastern part of the county and in the neighbourhood of towns; they are difficult to compare, because in some cases allowances were made with them, such as supplying cheap provisions, as at Wallingford, where the labourer was only paid from 7s. to 8s. a week; or giving him beer, as at New Windsor, or milk or a potato ground; or enabling him in some way to eke out his very meagre earnings; but in any case the wages appear to have been lamentably low, though tending to rise slightly.⁴³⁴ In 1794 the general average for a day labourer was 6s. 6d. a week in winter, 8s. in summer.⁴³⁵ In 1795 at New Windsor 9s. a week and beer was given; at Wallingford 7s. and the chance of buying cheap food:⁴³⁶ in 1809 Mavor estimates the average per week to be from 9s. to 12s., which seems rather higher than is usually stated elsewhere.

The work by the piece was paid fairly well, and by working early and late the labourer might earn as much as 4s. 6d. or 5s. a day. The rate of pay for this also went up slightly in the first few years of the nineteenth century. In 1794 cutting beans or wheat varied from 5s. to 9s. an acre, according to the richness of the soil; on the down land where crops would be light, never more than 6s. In 1809 beans were cut from 7s. to 5s. the acre; wheat on poor soil from 6s. to 10s.; and on good soil from 9s. to 12s. Similarly in the case of barley: for cutting this in 1794, 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d. an acre was paid: at the later date 2s. to 3s.

For the other piecework Mavor does not inform us; but Pearce says that mowing hay was paid at 1s. 6d. an acre and small beer; peas at 1s. 4d.; hoeing turnips at as much as 6s. to 9s.

Even with this addition, however, a farm labourer at the close of the century was often very badly off. Sir F. M. Eden gives a description of a labourer at Streatley in 1795.⁴³⁷ A man with a wife and seven children, the two eldest of whom were ploughboys, and three out at service, earned in winter 8s. a week, and during July 12s., whilst in wheat harvest for about ten days he was able to make as much as 3s. a day; to this his wife contributed 1s. 6d. a week by her work; and the total annual earnings of the whole family amounted to £46. Then follows an estimate of his yearly expenditure, which, only allowing bacon and cheese, no meat and no beer, amounted to £63 18s. 8d. the year!

⁴³³ Pearce, op. cit. 35.

⁴³⁴ Mavor, op. cit. 412.

⁴³⁵ Eden, *State of the Poor*, ii, 17 sq.

⁴³⁶ Pearce, op. cit. 40.

⁴³⁷ Eden, *State of the Poor*, ii, 15.

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The lowness of wages was, in part at least, caused by the mistaken system of poor relief which prevailed. According to what was known as the Berkshire Bread Scale, or Speenhamland Act of 1795, which continued in force until the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, every poor industrious man was to be allowed 3*s.* a week from the poor rates, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for his wife and any children not working, as soon as the gallon loaf of bread cost 1*s.* : and for every 1*d.* rise in price a proportionate extension of this relief of 3*d.* for himself and 1*d.* for each of his family.⁴³⁸ In the foregoing instance of the Streatley labourer the parish paid the house rent (the usual plan in that place), and allowed him 1*s.* 6*d.* a week for the two children not working, whilst charitable people also provided clothes for the family. It is not surprising to find that the poor rate in Streatley, formerly 3*s.* in the pound, had risen in 1795 to as much as 6*s.* or 7*s.*

Prices of food were rising all through the war period, but they varied somewhat from place to place. Streatley, Wantage, and Wallingford were amongst the cheapest places; Reading often 1*d.* a lb. dearer for meat and cheese, &c.; Windsor and the eastern county more expensive still. In 1795⁴³⁹ beef at Wallingford was from 5½*d.* to 7*d.* a lb.; at Reading from 4*d.* to 7*d.*; at New Windsor, 6*d.* to 8*d.*; mutton from 6*d.* to 7*d.*; veal, 5*d.* to 7*d.*; bacon, as a rule the labourer's only meat, 3*d.* (this was the price paid by the Streatley labourer, but it is so unusually cheap that it may have been specially allowed by the farmer) to 10*d.*; butter, 9*d.* to 1*s.* 2*d.*; new milk, 2*d.* and 3*d.* the quart, and the gallon loaf of bread from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 9½*d.* In 1809 beef and mutton at their lowest were 7*d.*; bacon and cheese, 6*d.* to 8*d.*; butter, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*⁴⁴⁰ Wheat, which in 1740 and 1756 had been at £4 and £4 16*s.* the quarter, was sold at Newbury market in 1812 for £6 16*s.* and £7 18*s.*; bread went up to 2*s.* 11½*d.* the gallon.⁴⁴¹ Tea was still fairly dear, that bought by the Streatley labourer being 3*s.* the lb., although this is a great improvement on the 2*s.* a lb. which was given by the Donnington family in 1706.⁴⁴² Coals, which had to be brought by water, were beyond the reach of the poor at £1 10*s.* a ton (1809), and labourers mostly burnt peat near the Kennet, turf occasionally in the forest districts, furze and bean stubbles on the chalk hills and in the vale.⁴⁴³

Even after the Peace of 1815 had reduced prices, and when the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 had removed one check on the rise of wages, the labourer's position was not at once ameliorated, but his remuneration tended to improve by degrees. Wages are still low in Berkshire compared with other counties—inevitable in arable districts where the absence of large towns and chances of other occupation keeps down the rate; but to judge from the outside, the cleanness and brightness of the village and the well-kept cottage to be met with throughout the county, the Berkshire peasantry must be thrifty and careful and turn their money to good account.⁴⁴⁴

The Berkshire towns made no special advance during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the clothing industry finally disappeared, and a few new

⁴³⁸ Nicholls, *Hist. of the Poor Law*, ii, 131.

⁴⁴⁰ Mavor, *op. cit.* 460.

⁴⁴² Rawl. MSS. (Bodl. Lib.), D. 1480.

⁴⁴⁴ For wages, &c., throughout nineteenth century, see article on 'Agriculture'; also *Rep. of Agric. Com. on Agric. Depression*, 1896; Wilson Fox, *Rep. to Board of Agric.* 1900.

⁴³⁹ Eden, *State of the Poor*, ii, 11-24.

⁴⁴¹ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*.

⁴⁴³ Mavor, *op. cit.* 420.

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occupations were developed;⁴⁴⁶ but with the exception of Huntley & Palmer's biscuits, no product of a Berkshire factory is much known outside the county itself; markets and fairs are wholly for the sale of agricultural commodities; and the wealth of the county consists in the fertility of its soil and the facilities which it possesses for the conveyance of rural produce. Great improvements have been made in these means of communication since the early years of the eighteenth century, and some account of the development of the waterways of the county will be found elsewhere.⁴⁴⁶

Berkshire roads are now extremely good as a general rule; but this was not always the case in former times. In the eighteenth century the statute work that could be demanded for them from the different places was six days for every £50 per annum of rent; but this was very often neglected, or even if done was not always sufficient. The justices of the peace were constantly inflicting fines for lack of repair or for individual defaults from the work;⁴⁴⁷ in 1809 Mavor says that despite the plentiful supplies procurable of flint and gravel, roads were not so well kept as they might be, and required more raising in the middle; occasionally they were let in contract by the mile, a very bad plan, since the contractors wanted to save as much profit as they could for their own pockets;⁴⁴⁸ and the cross roads were often extremely bad, except in the forest. In 1813 Lysons considered the main highways to be well kept, but some of the smaller roads were poor, especially in the vale, where they were totally impassable in the winter.⁴⁴⁹

When statute labour was insufficient highway rates had to be raised; in 1771 these amounted to about 6*d.* in the pound,⁴⁵⁰ but they varied according to need, and a great deal was procured during all this period from the turnpike tolls. A good many new roads were opened during the eighteenth century, and with the period of inclosures these became all the more numerous, the making of a village road almost always following an inclosure award.⁴⁵¹

The oldest and most important roads⁴⁵² were the great Bath road; the London Road, through Reading; the highway between Oxford and Faringdon; and from Oxford through Newbury to Winchester. In the eighteenth century the road running through Bessels Leigh, Wantage, and Hungerford was widened and improved;⁴⁵³ new ways were opened from Wallingford to Oxford and Wantage; and in the early nineteenth century from Uffington to Faringdon,⁴⁵⁴ and from the villages of Letcombe Regis, Basildon, Warfield, the towns of Wantage and Wokingham, and many others;⁴⁵⁵ besides which a good many bridges were constructed, and those already existing were rebuilt with stone whenever necessary.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁴⁶ See article on 'Industries.' On the towns in 1722 see Defoe, *Tour through Great Britain* (2nd edit. 1738), ii, 117 seq.

⁴⁴⁸ *V. C. H. Berks.* i, 375 et seq.

⁴⁴⁷ Quarter Session Books, 1713, Buckland; 1717, Reading; 1802, Beenham, Boxford, and Westbrook; 1813, &c. &c.

⁴⁴⁸ Mavor, *op. cit.* 422.

⁴⁴⁹ Lysons, *Magna Brit.* 'Berkshire.'

⁴⁵⁰ Quarter Sessions Order Books.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.* (especially 1806-12).

⁴⁵² See also *V. C. H. Berks.* i, 376.

⁴⁵³ Quarter Session Books, Easter Sessions, 1772.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.* Oct. 1802.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 1806-12; see Lyon, *Chron. of Finchampstead*, 217. The village was almost inaccessible until 1854 and 1861, when two new roads were opened.

⁴⁵⁶ Lysons, *Magna Brit.* gives a list of roads and bridges in 1813.

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Travelling was becoming more common with the eighteenth century, and attempts were made to facilitate this to some extent. In 1704 an enterprising individual started a stage coach between Wallingford and London, and Henley and London. This does not appear, however, to have been by any means a profitable undertaking, and not much in request; owing to 'lack of passengers and dearness of corn,' and also in consequence of the horses being old and worn out, and one dying on the journey, he lost about £200 in three years, and was glad to abandon the undertaking.⁴⁵⁷

In 1752 the Newbury 'Flying Coach' was started, which gained its name by accomplishing the distance to London in twelve hours, at the great pace, that is, of 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles an hour! The cost was 10s. per passenger, and there was only room for four of them.⁴⁵⁸ In 1826 a coach ran between London and Blewbury three days in the week,⁴⁵⁹ and in 1832 a steam coach passed through Newbury on its way from Southampton to London, and this was able to go at the rate of about 12 miles an hour.⁴⁶⁰ Since then the county has been well provided with railways, and is now fairly accessible; the last line to be opened being one which connects Lambourn with Newbury.

The real problem of the nineteenth century was that of poverty and relief of the poor. All through the eighteenth century money and land continued to be left for charitable uses, the building of almshouses, the distribution of food and clothing, the apprenticing of poor boys, the marrying of poor girls, and so forth.⁴⁶¹ There was besides, however, the regular poor rate established ever since Elizabeth's great Poor Law, the distribution of which was in the hands of churchwardens, overseers, and under the supervision of justices of the peace. The question of how best to distribute this money was one very difficult to solve, and yet on it depended to a very great extent the whole well-being of the county. The consideration of this subject falls into two divisions: the period before the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, and that which follows, in which the results of the measure can be traced.

Before 1834 attempts had been made to meet the difficulty of distinguishing between deserving and undeserving, to set the able-bodied to work, and to force relatives who were able to do so to provide for the indigent members of their family. By Gilbert's Act in 1782, visitors and guardians were appointed to all Poor Law unions; no one was to be relieved at home except the old, sick, or infirm, and work was to be provided for the strong;⁴⁶² also in 1795 an Act was passed which attempted to diminish the evils of the 1662 Settlement Act, by saying that poor persons were not to be removed until they became actually chargeable;⁴⁶³ but Gilbert's Act was extremely difficult to carry out; the reform of 1795 came too late to be much good, and the Speenhamland Act of 1795, already mentioned, which laid down the giving of relief according to the price of bread and the number of the family, introduced a system which rendered all efforts in the opposite direction unavailing. There are various traces of attempts made in Berkshire to carry out these good intentions. In 1709 a son was forced to contribute 2s. a week to support his

⁴⁵⁷ Dep. by Com. 2 Anne, Mich. 22.

⁴⁵⁸ Richardson, *Notes on Blewbury*.

⁴⁶¹ *Char. Com. Rep.*

⁴⁶² *Ibid.* iii, 109.

⁴⁵⁹ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 337.

⁴⁶⁰ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 338.

⁴⁶³ Nicholls, *Hist. of the Poor Law*, ii, 83.

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father who was on the parish ;⁴⁶⁴ in 1726 the overseers exacted 6*d.* a week from a man towards his mother's support ;⁴⁶⁵ in 1740 a man was sent to the House of Correction at Reading for twice removing away from his family ;⁴⁶⁶ in 1771 a heavy fine was imposed for the same,⁴⁶⁷ and in 1801 three months' imprisonment and a public whipping.⁴⁶⁸

The question of providing work for vagrants was occasionally met by sending them to hard labour in the House of Correction if they could not give a good account of themselves,⁴⁶⁹ otherwise they were sent to work on the roads, or in public gravel pits,⁴⁷⁰ or if lodged in the workhouses hemp-spinning, hair and wool picking, and even linen and stocking manufacture for the use of the inmates were enforced, and a few were sometimes sent out to work on farms.⁴⁷¹ In 1809 Mavor speaks of a well-conducted house of industry at Faringdon, a good workhouse at Abingdon, a sacking manufacture in the Bray Poor House,⁴⁷² and in 1819 there was a vagrant depôt at Maidenhead, which obliged tramps to work for the neighbouring farmers.⁴⁷³ These attempts did not, however, meet with universal success. The Maidenhead depôt was ordered to cease after two years, because it encouraged vagrants, and as a justice of the peace said, 'real hard labour in gaol and a few commitments would probably do more good.'⁴⁷⁴

The provision of work for the able-bodied which was artificial and not really required tended to diminish the industry of the worker, and very often the men refused to do the unnecessary labour ; Mr. Hall (Assistant Commissioner for Berkshire, 1834) asked a party of labourers at Brightwell why they were not doing anything to the road, to which they replied, that 'it does no good ; overseer only puts us here to punish us.'⁴⁷⁵ The workhouses also were badly managed and open to much abuse ; one in Wallingford formed a pleasant home for several young married couples, and there was an absolute scramble for rooms whenever a vacancy occurred.⁴⁷⁶ Finally, the Act of 1795 diminished the duty of parents towards their children ; as Mr. Hall said, in Berkshire the maxim was : 'We pay so much for the third, fourth, and fifth child' ; nowhere did he hear, 'We require the parent to maintain children by his own industry.'⁴⁷⁷

In 1831 a very careful investigation of the conditions of labour and poor-relief throughout the county supplied plentiful evidence of the evil result of the old system.⁴⁷⁸ In almost every village all families with more than three children were receiving regular help from the parish, the scale of relief being generally determined by the price of bread, according to the Speenhamland Act ; in Reading help was given after the second child ; in nearly every instance where this policy had been adopted the report also stated that the industry of labourers was diminishing, and also that they changed their service more frequently than in old days. This was, however, often due to the farmers themselves, who would not offer long engagements for fear of giving the labourer a 'settlement' in that place. At Milton and Uffington relief to

⁴⁶⁴ Quarter Sess. Order Book, 1709, St. Thos. Sess.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid. Abingdon, 15 July, 1740.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid. 15 July, 1801.

⁴⁷⁰ Mackay, *Hist. of the Poor Law*, 194.

⁴⁷² Mavor, *Agric. of Berks.* 100.

⁴⁷⁵ *Poor Law Com. Rep.* 1835, 206 sq.

⁴⁷⁶ Mackay, *Hist. of the Poor Law*, 197.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid. 1726, Epiphany Sess.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid. Easter, 1771.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid. Reading 10 Jan. 1741-2.

⁴⁷¹ Eden, *State of the Poor*, ii, 11-24.

⁴⁷³ Quarter Sess. 19 Oct. 1819.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid. 1 May, 1821.

Also quoted in Mackay's *Hist. of the Poor Law*.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid. 194.

⁴⁷⁸ *Poor Law Rep.* 1834.

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the able-bodied took the form of compulsory work on the roads ; and in a few places the bread-scale system had been already given up. At Bray no able-bodied were receiving relief, which was given 'according to merit,' and only a few large families were helped in the winter. At Burghfield also the plan of allowance for large families had just been discontinued, but the industry of the labourers was said to be diminishing on account of the gravel-pit system. Cookham had likewise thrown over the practice of relief of this sort, and, except in case of illness, gave no help save through the workhouse ; here it was stated that the labourers were improving, although there had been some disturbances on account of the maladministration of the Poor Law. Great Faringdon had abandoned giving any allowance after the third child during the previous year, when the parish was farmed, since which the industry of the labourers had begun to improve. At Milton the capacity of the workmen was said to be as good as in former years, but their inclination was less, as long as they had piece-work to do they were not idle ; and the same was said at Speen. The general impression gathered from the report is that labourers at that time were badly paid, hired as a rule from week to week, the farmers hoping to keep down the rates by avoiding the labourers' settlement ; that all but quite small families were kept at most places by the parish instead of the father trying to earn more by his labour ; that considerable discontent existed throughout the county, and much bad feeling between masters and men ; and that some actual riots and machine breaking had taken place. Some amusing instances of the general slackness of the time and the dependence on the rates appear in the reports of the assistant commissioners.⁴⁷⁹ At Wantage, Mr. Gibson writes, eight or ten young men played marbles under the market-house during a shower of rain and did not attempt to go to their work until it had stopped, while five or six more strolled up under umbrellas ! At Ashbury a pauper who was lame bought a horse in order that he might ride daily to the stone-pit, whilst a pauper wedding at Compton was quite a grand affair, costing the parish £6 15s. 4½d. At Yattendon the parish accounts contain such entries as :— To Elizabeth for kindness to her father 5s. ; to Lucy for looking after her ill mother 3s. 6d. ; to Mary for sitting up at night with her father 2s. ; and at Caversham 5s. was paid to William Dormer, ill (through drink) ! One overseer at East Ilsley did endeavour to reduce some of the expenditure by suggesting that a bell need not be tolled at the death of every pauper, but apparently gave up the effort on the clerk threatening to fight him on the subject. Altogether it is not surprising that the poor rate rose to prodigious proportions. At Sutton Wick it amounted in 1831 to £1 14s. 6d. per head of the inhabitants ;⁴⁸⁰ in East Hendred to £1 8s. 3d. and was frequently over £1 ; whereas at Bray and Cookham, where the allowance system had been dropped, the poor rate had also dropped to 7s. 11d. and 5s. per head ; and at White Waltham, where help was only given to the sick, to 5s. 9d.

As to the evils caused by the Settlement Act, which empowered two justices of the peace to remove any person coming to settle in a tenement under the yearly value of £10, on complaint being made by the warden and overseers, one has already been noticed in the hesitation of the farmers to

⁴⁷⁹ *Poor Law Rep.* 1835 ; *Mr. Gulson's Rep.* 182-206 ; *Mr. Hall's Rep.* 206-16.

⁴⁸⁰ *Quarter Sess. Order Book (passim).*

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give security of permanent occupation to their labourers ; it diminished the chance of labour reaching the market where it might be most profitable, the actual removals caused constant troubles and expense, and in 1832 a report to Quarter Sessions showed how many vagrants made a regular trade of being conveyed from place to place, and advocated providing them with food, and not with money as heretofore.⁴⁸¹

In 1834 a great step was taken: the Speenhamland Act was annulled, the 'workhouse test' was established, a central board of control was formed, and no removal was to be legal until twenty-one days' notice had been sent to the parish to which the removal was directed, to give the chance of appealing against it.⁴⁸²

The good effect of this measure was immediately apparent. In the Faringdon Union eighty-seven labourers with families, who had been on the poor rate for years, almost all provided for themselves when out-door relief was refused; only two stayed in the workhouse for more than a couple of days, and the relief sank from £759 16s. 2d. in 1834 to £367 2s. 4d. in the following year.⁴⁸³

A table in Mr. Gulson's report for his district offers similar evidence; some places being reduced in the year by more than half.⁴⁸⁴ Other things improved besides the saving of expense. Mr. Stevens reports that in Streatley the labourers were more civil and more provident, and there was no longer an inducement to marry too early; at Bradfield and Pangbourne no able-bodied men were out of work; at Abingdon never more than six able-bodied were in the workhouse, and better discipline was enforced there.

Since 1834 the chief advance has been in the better management and inspection of workhouses, in the boarding-out of pauper children and their better education, and in the further reduction of money expended in poor relief. In 1845 the total expenditure for poor relief in the county of Berkshire was £92,615, and the total number of paupers 21,840;⁴⁸⁵ in 1900-1, including lunatics in asylums, the total number relieved was 6,460,⁴⁸⁶ and the money expended on them altogether £41,715.⁴⁸⁷

Not only is such a reduction extremely satisfactory, but Berkshire in 1900 stood well in comparison with other counties, only nine unions had fewer paupers in proportion to their population, and thirty-five had more.

In 1794 an Agricultural Society was started for the purpose of exciting farming enterprises, and premiums were offered for the best ploughman, the best sheep shearer, the servant who had stayed longest in the same place, the father of the largest family who had never required parish help, and so forth.⁴⁸⁸ Also through the nineteenth century there was a great development of

⁴⁸¹ Quarter Sess. Order Book (*passim*), 3 July, 1832.

⁴⁸² Mackay, *Hist. of the Poor Law*, 146; Nicholls, *Hist. of the Poor Law*, iii, 365. In 1876 three years' continuous residence was necessary to effect a 'settlement,' and no removal could be made unless there was 'permanent chargeability.'

⁴⁸³ Mackay, *op. cit.* 191.

	1834			1835			1834			1835			
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
⁴⁸⁴ Ashbury	25	14	6	22	0	7	Uffington	37	13	3	16	19	7
Buckland	106	16	0	41	15	9	Woolstone	14	1	8	8	5	3
Coleshill	19	1	4	10	2	4	Abingdon	648	9	5	380	12	0
Compton	14	7	2	6	6	0							

⁴⁸⁵ *Poor Law Rep.* 1846, 8275 d. 28.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.* lxxvii.

⁴⁸⁶ *Rep. to Loc. Gov. Bd.* 1901, 347.

⁴⁸⁸ Mavor, *Agric. of Berks*, 498.

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Friendly Societies, which must have helped to encourage thrift and saving, and to be a support to their members. In 1809 these were established at Bisham, New Windsor, Wantage, and Sunninghill; in 1814 at Old Windsor; in 1815 at Hungerford and Clewer; in 1819 at Kingston Bagpuize; in 1820 at Abingdon, Wokingham, Wargrave, Beenham, and Woolhampton; and many others followed.⁴⁸⁹

Bequests for charitable uses were still numerous, more particularly so during the eighteenth century, and many old charities were continuing and receiving additions, though in some instances changes were made, as for example, in the case of money left for the encouragement of the clothing industry, which had been used otherwise when this manufacture so completely died out. This had to be done with some of John Kendrick's generous gift to Reading, and the 'Arcade,' when no longer occupied by clothworkers, was used for the making of sail-cloth and sacking.

There was some change in the character of eighteenth-century bequests; rather less money was to be invested in the purchase of bread, in setting the poor on work, in apprenticing poor boys, although all these occur from time to time; ⁴⁹⁰ there were still gifts for poor maidservants chosen by lot (Wargrave, 1793), and almshouses were always in great request; ⁴⁹¹ but more money was now bestowed on workhouses, ⁴⁹² dispensaries, ⁴⁹³ and above all on education. ⁴⁹⁴ In the nineteenth century more bequests appear to have been for schools than for anything else.

It still remains to consider the advance made in the county during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in regard to crime and its punishment. The ordinary administration of the criminal law was then largely in the hands of the justices of the peace, who tried important felonies and misdemeanours in their quarter sessions, although sentence of death was only inflicted at the assizes. In 1761 a woman was hanged for setting fire to a barn, ⁴⁹⁵ and until well on in the nineteenth century it was still possible to suffer capital punishment for burglary. ⁴⁹⁶

The most severe penalty inflicted by the justices of the peace was transportation. This was constantly imposed for petty larceny, and even quite small thefts were often punished by a seven years' sentence. Thus in 1771 Moses Mason, convicted of stealing a pair of gray worsted stockings, a sack, a pair of leather shoes, and a blue and white linen handkerchief, was to be sent for that period to 'one of His Majesties Colonies and Plantations in America'; ⁴⁹⁷ in 1774 the same penalty was inflicted for the theft of 'one brown-coloured male ass,' and in 1800 for four net cheeses. In this latter case the severity of the sentence is explained by the statement that it was the third conviction, and this was probably the reason on other occasions, when it is hard to

⁴⁸⁹ Quarter Sess. Order Book.

⁴⁹⁰ *Char. Com. Rep.* xxxii, 117, 317.

⁴⁹¹ New almshouses were built at Newbury (1609, 1754, 1790); at Harwell (1743), Lambourn, and many other places.

⁴⁹² 1730, New Windsor; 1777, Cookham, &c.

⁴⁹³ 1778, at Newbury. See Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 359.

⁴⁹⁴ See article on 'Schools'; and *Char. Com. Rep.*

⁴⁹⁵ Money, *Hist. of Speen*; Ann Giles of Speenhamland.

⁴⁹⁶ Quarter Sess. Order Book, 15 July, 1818; *ibid.* 1833. Highway robbery was sent to assizes; Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 405. One man was executed for his share in machine riots.

⁴⁹⁷ All that follows, except where otherwise stated, is from the Quarter Sess. Order Books—Office of Clerk of the Peace, Reading.

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discover why one man should be transported while another is only being imprisoned.

In 1830 several machine rioters suffered transportation at Newbury,⁴⁹⁸ and in 1833 a man threatening to burn barns and stacks was punished by fourteen years, and transportation for life was decreed against two thieves, one for stealing a mare and filly, the other a coat and shoes. Such punishments seem terribly severe, but apparently transportation was not really dreaded; hardened offenders were delighted to be sent where they said they could get good food and lightish work, and were bitterly disappointed if their crime was only bad enough to involve hard labour at home.⁴⁹⁹

Imprisonment, as a means of punishment, not only for custody before conviction, was becoming increasingly common. In Reading Gaol were many who could not find sureties, and so were obliged to await their trial in prison; and also debtors, thieves, and forgers of counterfeit coin. The House of Correction had still more inmates—vagrants and beggars unable to give a good account of themselves were sent there; boys also who had got into trouble, and many who had been guilty of small thefts and misdemeanours—breaking of windows, and so forth.

Imprisonment in gaol was rendered more severe when necessary by the addition of hard labour, or what was still more dreaded, confinement in a solitary cell. In 1800 a man convicted of stealing a sack worth 2*d.*, and some beans, oats, and barley worth 8*d.*, was sentenced to six months' hard labour, every other fortnight in a solitary cell; another had twelve months' hard labour, two of them in solitude, for a theft of seven pennies and ten halfpennies! Receivers of stolen goods were also liable to similar severity; at Hungerford in 1822 a misdemeanour of 'fraudulently obtaining two umbrellas' was punished by hard labour for three months.

In 1822 Reading Gaol set up a treadmill for the use of the prisoners, and at first men were sent up from other prisons to do their hard labour upon it. This, however, was so expensive and inconvenient, that Abingdon, in 1827, set up a handmill of its own, not being able to go so far as to afford a treadmill.

The variations in the length and severity of the punishments inflicted seem to have very little to explain them, but the record does not say anything of the age and character of the offender, which must have accounted for some of the differences. Thus, until 1827 and 1830, we find three months' hard labour inflicted for a variety of offences—stealing velvet cloth breeches worth 10*s.*, a quart of milk, a tame rabbit, for leaving the workhouse without leave, and for cruelty to a horse; one month for ill-treatment of a cow; three weeks for neglect of work; one week for stealing leather, a chain, and a pair of scissors; three days in the solitary cell for a theft of steps, chair, and a rug; and private whipping for a cotton shift. In 1831 those who had broken machines were most frequently committed to hard labour for a year or eighteen months.

Whipping was much in fashion all through this period, perhaps in the case of thefts for the younger offenders; this was generally inflicted in public, often on a market day. In 1771 S. Johnson, who had stolen 'a foul-

⁴⁹⁸ Money, *Hist. of Newbury*, 405.

⁴⁹⁹ Chaplain's Rep. on Reading Gaol, 1845; Quarter Sessions Order Book, 525.

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weather great coat,' was to be whipped in the market between twelve and one. In 1774 public whippings were inflicted on thieves, one of whom had carried off a holland sheet, another a pair of fustian breeches, another two bushels of wheat, and in 1814 for stealing a smock frock worth 6*d.* In 1804 a theft of two bits of wood was to be punished by 'whipping moderately.' During the war period an alternative for imprisonment was occasionally offered in the shape of service at sea. In 1805 a poacher who was committed to the House of Correction for six months might at any time before that period be sent into the sea service, and this stipulation was fairly often added about that time to any sentence of long imprisonment. In 1814 a rogue and vagabond found playing an unlawful game called 'Pricking in the garter,' was sent at once to the depôt in the Isle of Wight as a seaman.

Although prisons were now so much more used, they were for a long time in a very bad condition—expensive, badly kept, and most demoralizing for the inmates.

In the eighteenth century prisoners were still expected to keep themselves, and when unable to do so had to be assisted from the poor rates. In 1720 the prisoners at Reading complained that the keeper compelled them to pay extravagant prices for their lodgings and provisions and treated them cruelly; and although he was cleared from the charge of ill-usage, he was found to have charged them more than would have been done in the shops. Great abuses resulted from the lack of space, which obliged those suffering under suspicion, and possibly innocent, to be herded with condemned criminals; and in 1736 there were still chains and neck-yokes and thumb-screws belonging to Reading Gaol, although there are no traces of the use of such articles being commanded at so late a date.

People were, however, becoming alive to the need of prison reform, and a good many steps were taken to improve the condition of Reading Gaol. In 1731 it was inspected and ordered to be enlarged, and a table of rules and fees was framed, which were ordered to be hung up so that there might be no infringement of them. They were as follows:—

1. Prisoners are to send for beer, ale, and victuals from what place they please.
2. They are free to use bedding, linen, and other necessaries as they think fit without having them purloined.
3. Two prisoners in one bed to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; for a single bed 2*s.* 6*d.* a week chamber rent.
4. Those who provide own bedding to pay 1*s.*
5. Keeper to sell beer in sealed pots.
6. No felon to share bed with a debtor without the latter's consent.
7. Prisoners for debt only to use 'Mumping Room,' charity there collected to be distributed amongst those actually begging there.
8. No dogs nor pigeons to be kept in gaol.
9. 1*s.* to be paid to gaoler on delivery of declaration against any prisoner.
10. Every debtor and felon to pay on his discharge 13*s.* 4*d.* to the keeper and 2*s.* 6*d.* to the turnkey.

In 1800 special regulations were laid down as to the food of the prisoners. They were only to be allowed one quartern loaf a week,

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deficiencies to be made up by as many potatoes as they can eat on Sundays (together with meat and broth), and also on three week-days with salt or herrings; the other three days they were to have rice instead of potatoes, with salt, herrings, or treacle.

In 1804 a further inspection was made to see if the rules were properly observed, to make sure that felons and debtors were kept separate, and that acquitted persons were discharged without paying a fee. The walls were to be whitewashed every year, warm and cold baths were provided, as also two rooms for the sick, and a surgeon and a clergyman were appointed for the care of the prisoners. (All these things were reported as being properly done.)

The security of prisons was greater than it had been in past days; only one escape is reported at the quarter sessions. In 1827 some 'capital convicts' reached the windows by using the seats of the wards as ladders, and then let themselves down by broom-handles tied together with handkerchiefs; they were however all retaken.

As time goes on we hear less of the solitary cell and more of hard labour; punishments were getting fairer and more equable by degrees, but morality in the middle of the nineteenth century was still at a pretty low ebb. In 1841 the chaplain of Reading Gaol presented a most interesting report on the state of the prison. According to him the decrease in commitments was in consequence of the conclusion of the railroad, which had brought a good many bad characters into the county, but he considered the neighbourhood still to be both immoral and ignorant. Bargemen especially were bad in both these respects, chiefly through having no Sunday off as a rule. Out of eleven of them he had found that only three could read, none could write, and only two could say the Lord's Prayer. Amongst 443 other prisoners only 127 could both read and write, 159 could do neither, and 157 could only read. He also stated that there was a very great increase in juvenile offenders, that much evil resulted from misdemeanants being often in the same cell as felons; and that the treadmill was rightly hated as being both unhealthy and unequal, since the severity of labour upon it depended so much on the weight of the worker. Since that date much has been done by improvements in education and general well-being to diminish some at least of the evils which are here described.

Beside transportation, whipping, and imprisonment, fines were imposed at the quarter sessions for a good many offences, especially those of poaching, of riot and assault, of smuggling, and the use of unfair weights and measures.

All through the early nineteenth century breaches of the game laws were extremely common; the ordinary fine for killing game was about £5, but for a deer in Windsor Forest as much as £30; however, towards the middle of the century these offences were becoming distinctly less frequent.

The date at which the prison and House of Correction were fullest was in 1839, when, counting both together, 205 persons were committed either as convicted or under suspicion. From that year the numbers began to decline, and in 1843 there were as few as seventy in the two establishments, but that was an unusually low figure.

Comparing Berkshire of the present day with the county at the opening of the nineteenth century, the state of the poor, the remuneration of labour, the administration of justice, and the welfare of the towns have all shown a

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very marked improvement ; although as an arable county Berkshire has suffered from the general decline of agricultural profits. The population, however, has more than doubled between 1801 and 1901. Some few of the villages are smaller now than a century ago, the two Ilsleys, Blewbury, Brightwalton, Woolstone, and many others have actually declined in population. The most marked increase has been in the towns, or in such places as Windsor, Cookham, Streatley, and Pangbourne, where residents have been attracted by the scenery and the river.

On the whole, however, the county can still be described in the words of Pearce, writing in 1794: 'Berkshire may be considered a county highly favoured by nature for the management and extension of its agricultural produce. Its ready communication with the metropolis and the midland parts of England ; its excellent roads, dry soil, and salubrious air, all contribute to make it a county alike beneficial to the cultivator, the manufacturer, and the mechanic.'⁶⁰⁰

TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801 TO 1901

Introductory Notes

AREA

The county taken in this table is that existing subsequently to 7 & 8 Vict., chap. 61 (1844). By this Act detached parts of counties, which had already for parliamentary purposes been amalgamated with the county by which they were surrounded or with which the detached part had the longest common boundary (2 & 3 Wm. IV, chap. 64—1832), were annexed to the same county for all purposes ; some exceptions were, however, permitted.

By the same Act (7 & 8 Vict., chap. 61) the detached parts of counties, transferred to other counties, were also annexed to the hundred, ward, wapentake, &c. by which they were wholly or mostly surrounded, or to which they next adjoin, in the counties to which they were transferred. The hundreds, &c. in this table are also given as existing subsequently to this Act.

As is well known, the famous statute of Queen Elizabeth for the relief of the poor took the then-existing ecclesiastical parish as the unit for Poor Law relief. This continued for some centuries with but few modifications ; notably by an Act passed in the thirteenth year of Charles II's reign which permitted townships and villages to maintain their own poor. This permission was necessary owing to the large size of some of the parishes, especially in the north of England.

In 1801 the parish for rating purposes (now known as the civil parish, i.e. 'an area for which a separate poor rate is or can be made, or for which a separate overseer is or can be appointed') was in most cases co-extensive with the ecclesiastical parish of the same name ; but already there were numerous townships and villages rated separately for the relief of the poor, and also there were many places scattered up and down the country, known as extra-parochial places, which paid no rates at all. Further, many parishes had detached parts entirely surrounded by another parish or parishes.

Parliament first turned its attention to extra-parochial places, and by an Act (20 Vict., chap. 19—1857) it was laid down (a) that all extra-parochial places entered separately in the 1851 census returns are to be deemed civil parishes, (b) that in any other place being, or being reputed to be, extra-parochial overseers of the poor may be appointed, and (c) that where, however, owners and occupiers of two-thirds in value of the land of any such place desire its annexation to an adjoining civil parish, it may be so added with the consent of the said parish. This Act was not found entirely to fulfil its object, so by a further Act (31 & 32 Vict., chap. 122—1868) it was enacted that every such place remaining on 25 December, 1868, should be added to the parish with which it had the longest common boundary.

The next thing to be dealt with was the question of detached parts of civil parishes, which was done by the Divided Parishes Acts of 1876, 1879, and 1882. The last, which amended the one of 1876, provides that every detached part of an entirely extra-metropolitan parish which is entirely surrounded by another parish becomes transferred to this latter for civil purposes, or if the population exceeds 300 persons it may be made a separate parish. These Acts also gave power to add detached

⁶⁰⁰ Pearce, *Agriculture of Berks*, 1.

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parts surrounded by more than one parish to one or more of the surrounding parishes, and also to amalgamate entire parishes with one or more parishes. Under the 1879 Act it was not necessary for the area dealt with to be entirely detached. These Acts also declared that every part added to a parish in another county becomes part of that county.

Then came the Local Government Act, 1888, which permits the alteration of civil parish boundaries and the amalgamation of civil parishes by Local Government Board orders. It also created the administrative counties. The Local Government Act of 1894 enacts that where a civil parish is partly in a rural district and partly in an urban district each part shall become a separate civil parish; and also that where a civil parish is situated in more than one urban district each part shall become a separate civil parish, unless the county council otherwise direct. Meanwhile, the ecclesiastical parishes had been altered and new ones created under entirely different Acts, which cannot be entered into here, as the table treats of the ancient parishes in their civil aspect.

POPULATION

The first census of England was taken in 1801, and was very little more than a counting of the population in each parish (or place), excluding all persons, such as soldiers, sailors, &c., who formed no part of its ordinary population. It was the *de facto* population (i.e. the population actually resident at a particular time) and not the *de jure* (i.e. the population really belonging to any particular place at a particular time). This principle has been sustained throughout the censuses.

The Army at home (including militia), the men of the Royal Navy ashore, and the registered seamen ashore were not included in the population of the places where they happened to be, at the time of the census, until 1841. The men of the Royal Navy and other persons on board vessels (naval or mercantile) in home ports were first included in the population of those places in 1851. Others temporarily present, such as gipsies, persons in barges, &c. were included in 1841 and perhaps earlier.

GENERAL

Up to and including 1831 the returns were mainly made by the overseers of the poor, and more than one day was allowed for the enumeration, but in 1841-1901 returns were made under the superintendence of the registration officers and the enumeration was to be completed in one day. The Householder's Schedule was first used in 1841. The exact dates of the censuses are as follows:—

10 March, 1801	30 May, 1831	8 April, 1861	6 April, 1891
27 May, 1811	7 June, 1841	3 April, 1871	1 April, 1901
28 May, 1821	31 March, 1851	4 April, 1881	

NOTES EXPLANATORY OF THE TABLE

This table gives the population of the ancient county and arranges the parishes, &c. under the hundred or other sub-division to which they belong, but there is no doubt that the constitution of hundreds, &c. was in some cases doubtful.

In the main the table follows the arrangement in the 1841 census volume.

The table gives the population and area of each parish, &c. as it existed in 1801, as far as possible.

The areas are those supplied by the Ordnance Survey Department, except in the case of those marked 'e,' which are only estimates. The area includes inland water (if any), but not tidal water or foreshore.

† after the name of a civil parish indicates that the parish was affected by the operation of the Divided Parishes Acts, but the Registrar-General failed to obtain particulars of every such change. The changes which escaped notification were, however, probably small in area and with little, if any, population. Considerable difficulty was experienced both in 1891 and 1901 in tracing the results of changes effected in civil parishes under the provisions of these Acts; by the Registrar-General's courtesy, however, reference has been permitted to certain records of formerly detached parts of parishes, which has made it possible approximately to ascertain the population in 1901 of parishes as constituted prior to such alterations, though the figures in many instances must be regarded as partly estimates.

* after the name of a parish (or place) indicates that such parish (or place) contains a union workhouse which was in use in (or before) 1851 and was still in use in 1901.

‡ after the name of a parish (or place) indicates that the ecclesiastical parish of the same name at the 1901 census is co-extensive with such parish (or place).

o in the table indicates that there is no population on the area in question.

— in the table indicates that no population can be ascertained.

The word 'chapelry' seems often to have been used as an equivalent for 'township' in 1841, which census volume has been adopted as the standard for names and descriptions of areas.

The figures in italics in the table relate to the area and population of such sub-divisions of ancient parishes as chapelries, townships, and hamlets.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

TABLE OF POPULATION

1801—1901

—	Acre- age	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Ancient or Geographical County ¹	461,901	110,752	119,087	132,802	146,702	162,265	170,243	176,403	196,443	218,329	239,104	256,480

PARISH	Acre- age	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Beynhurst Hundred</i>												
Bisham	2,478	596	619	707	771	659	743	665	652	703	751	745
Hurley	4,159	915	909	1,065	1,150	1,119	1,269	1,184	1,193	1,132	1,080	1,067
Remenham †	1,573	299	283	380	463	485	486	493	533	617	546	604
Shottesbrook † . . .	1,316 ⁶	94	96	135	138	137	123	148	134	143	152	161
Waltham, White†.	2,576 ⁶	552	1,035	795	902	1,021	983	917	985	840	891	882
<i>Bray Hundred</i>												
Bray:—	9,065	2,827	2,604	3,159	3,480	3,722	3,952	4,801	5,755	6,423	7,991	8,337
Bray	7,820	—	—	—	—	2,245	2,250	2,936	2,717	2,805	3,171	2,978
Maidenhead	1,245	—	—	—	—	1,477	1,702	1,865	3,038	3,618	4,820	5,359
Town (part of) ³												
<i>Charlton Hundred</i>												
Barkham †	1,388	185	211	215	247	248	274	280	240	217	284	218
Finchampstead † . .	3,943	463	513	552	575	530	613	637	630	665	680	666
Hurst Par. Chap. (part of) ³ :—	3,683	1,022	1,046	1,336	1,386	1,516	1,572	1,719	1,743	1,906	2,339	2,112
Whistley Hurst Liberty †	1,933	616	656	847	867	992	1,139	1,178	1,100	1,249	1,617	1,391
Broad Hinton Liberty † ⁴	1,750	406	390	489	519	524	433	541	643	657	722	721
Shinfield (part of) ⁵	4,567	617	697	742	719	766	756	850	916	1,277	1,534	1,608
Sonning (part of) ⁶ :—												
Earley Liberty	2,252	436	440	447	441	471	487	566	1,534	4,463	6,658	10,196
Swallowfield (part of) ⁷	—	—	365	347	390	412	397	—	—	—	—	—

¹ *Ancient County.*—The County as defined by the Act 7 & 8 Vict. c. 61, which affected Berkshire to the following extent:—(A) *Added* parts of the Ancient Parishes of Shinfield, Swallowfield, and Wokingham, and the entire Liberty of Broad Hinton (in the Parochial Chapelry of Hurst St. Nicholas). All these areas were severed from Wiltshire. (B) *Deducted* part of Inglesham Ancient Parish added to Wiltshire, the entire Ancient Parish of Shilton and part of the Ancient Parish of Langford, consisting of Little Faringdon Tything and the main part of Langford Parish, (i.e. Langford Civil Parish) added to Oxfordshire. In addition to the above changes a small detached portion of Great Barrington Ancient Parish in Berkshire, which however had always been treated as belonging to Gloucestershire, was added to that County.

The area is exclusive of the part of Whitchurch Parish in Berkshire, the whole of which Parish is included, for convenience, in Oxfordshire.

As an interesting fact, it may be noticed that in 1851 the Census Commissioners were of opinion that a part of Shinfield Parish still remained in Wiltshire, and even as late as 1871 a part of the land attached to Old Warren Farm, in the Liberty of Broad Hinton, was stated to be in Wiltshire. This was a mistake in both cases.

The population in 1811 *excludes* 726 militia in training. (See also notes to Greenham, North Hinksey, Abingdon St. Helen, Oxford St. Aldate, Chilton Foliat, and Shalbourne).

³ *Maidenhead Town* is situated in Bray Parish (Bray Hundred) and in Cookham Parish (Cookham Hundred).

⁴ *Hurst Parochial Chapelry* is really a Parish. It is situated in Charlton and Sonning Hundreds.

⁵ *Broad Hinton* includes Old Warren Farm, which seems to have been at one time Extra Parochial. It was rated with Broad Hinton in 1871 and onwards.

⁶ *Shinfield* is situated in Theale and Charlton Hundreds. The entire area and population, 1881–1901, are shown in Charlton Hundred.

⁷ *Sonning Ancient Parish* is situated (1) partly in Charlton Hundred; (2) partly in Sonning Hundred; and (3) the remainder in Binfield Hundred (Oxfordshire).

⁸ *Swallowfield* is situated in Reading and Charlton Hundreds. The entire area and population in 1801 and 1861–1901 are shown in Reading Hundred.

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TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801—1901 (*continued*)

PARISH	Acre- age	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Compton Hundred</i>												
Aldworth † . . .	1,806	273	279	293	288	314	317	275	304	275	266	211
Catmore ⁸ † . . .	710	—	—	89	88	96	123	121	102	86	94	70
Chilton † . . .	1,448	244	241	229	274	309	282	315	300	276	268	216
Compton † . . .	3,863	488	432	482	554	544	569	590	598	632	629	623
Farnborough ⁸ † .	1,886	213	264	210	229	204	224	232	244	187	203	133
Ilsey, East, or Market Ilsey †	3,017	512	669	676	738	733	750	746	608	577	519	482
Ilsey, West † . .	3,037	341	327	328	425	404	406	432	424	377	316	276
<i>Cookham Hundred</i>												
Binfield † . . .	3,489	808	860	1,057	1,145	1,242	1,280	1,371	1,625	1,684	1,740	1,892
Cookham :—	6,546	2,764	2,411	2,734	3,337	3,676	3,914	4,468	5,293	6,851	8,752	11,495
Cookham . . .	5,666	—	—	—	—	1,838	2,013	2,438	2,158	2,249	2,965	3,874
Maidenhead Town (part of) ^{8a}	880	—	—	—	—	1,838	1,901	2,030	3,135	4,602	5,787	7,621
Sunninghill ⁹ † .	3,173 ⁹	700	913	1,125	1,520	2,062	1,350	1,596	2,236	3,042	3,933	4,724
<i>Faircross Hundred</i>												
Beedon † . . .	2,012	303	295	313	306	334	332	317	360	323	272	232
Boxford † ¹⁰ . . .	2,819	416	487	563	628	612	582	636	615	568	549	461
Brightwalton, or Brightwalham †	2,054	420	365	450	442	441	465	450	453	428	365	299
Brimpton † . . .	1,705	330	390	464	443	412	531	462	431	427	392	389
Chieveley :—	9,217	1,422	1,715	1,842	1,857	1,936	2,029	1,923	1,920	1,815	1,592	1,471
Chieveley . . .	5,328	735	1,033	1,163	1,129	1,227	1,235	1,161	1,169	1,164	1,020	946
Leckhampstead Chap. †	1,777	330	325	358	402	372	399	385	371	311	302	267
Winterbourne Chap.	2,112	357	357	321	326	337	395	377	380	340	270	258
Frilsham † . . .	978	187	168	171	192	182	184	183	183	209	159	210
Hampstead Norris	6,046	855	875	1,111	1,179	1,280	1,325	1,358	1,240	1,378	1,204	1,144
Peasmore † . . .	2,049	266	311	284	298	309	369	332	344	302	263	231
Shaw - cum - Don- nington †	1,996	424	480	531	620	642	653	680	747	703	694	632
Speen ¹¹	3,862	1,747	2,006	2,392	3,044	3,069	3,298	3,311	3,443	3,592	3,540	3,334
Sandleford Priory, Extra Par.	520	18	17	17	18	32	36	45	39	34	30	48
Stanford Dingley †	927	133	126	135	139	151	178	145	169	138	144	130
Thatcham (part of) ¹² :—	4,000	973	1,068	1,276	1,410	1,573	1,432	1,400	1,432	1,884	2,602	2,755
Greenham Chap. ¹³	2,564	633	747	947	1,061	1,228	1,182	1,167	1,170	1,586	2,315	2,462
Midgham Chap. †	1,436	340	321	329	349	345	250	233	262	298	287	293
Wasing †	690	102	77	68	79	87	88	76	77	80	87	55
Welford †	5,228	866	906	1,058	1,061	1,099	1,115	1,030	1,009	943	855	791
Yattendon † . . .	1,400	253	210	230	241	246	263	263	279	309	326	274
<i>Faringdon Hundred</i>												
Coxwell, Great † .	1,435	241	278	306	337	351	365	371	370	289	317	264
Faringdon, Great ¹⁴ :—	6,784	2,153	2,343	2,784	3,033	3,593	3,676	3,702	3,525	3,391	3,384	3,120
Faringdon, Great*	5,897	1,928	2,103	2,513	2,729	3,278	3,390	3,400	3,252	3,141	3,133	2,900
Coxwell, Little Township	887	225	240	271	304	315	286	302	273	250	251	220

⁸ *Catmors* included with *Farnborough* in 1801 and 1811.

^{8a} See note 2, *ante*.

⁹ *Sunninghill*.—The population in 1841 included 536 visitors at Ascot Heath Races.

¹⁰ *Boxford* is partly in *Kintbury Eagle Hundred*, viz. the Tithing of *Westbrook*, but the whole is shown in *Faircross Hundred*.

¹¹ *Speen* is said to be partly in *Kintbury Eagle Hundred*; none shown there.

¹² *Thatcham* is situated in *Reading* and *Faircross Hundreds*.

¹³ *Greenham*.—The population for 1811 is estimated.

¹⁴ *Faringdon, Great*, is partly in *Shrivenham Hundred*, but the whole is shown in *Faringdon Hundred*.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801—1901 (*continued*)

PARISH	Acres	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Ganfield Hundred</i>												
Buckland † . . .	4,505	727	763	893	946	946	987	912	818	723	747	665
Hatford † . . .	993	114	110	132	123	123	115	122	116	132	110	93
Hinton Waldridge, or Waldrist †	2,016	275	297	315	348	353	389	329	319	287	301	301
Longworth (part of) ¹⁵ —	3,500	617	662	780	810	825	847	870	918	818	756	642
Longworth . . .	2,291	401	441	537	540	550	588	629	660	596	554	479
Charney Chap. . .	1,209	216	221	243	270	275	259	241	258	222	202	163
Pusey †	1,040	65	117	122	125	108	152	134	153	117	127	120
Shellingford † . .	1,761	253	268	271	246	280	293	308	276	258	241	204
Stanford-in-the- Vale (part of) ¹⁵	2,927	607	677	772	813	970	1,032	1,075	989	929	894	728
<i>Hormer Hundred</i>												
Oxford, St. Aldate (part of) ¹⁶ —												
Grandpond (or Grampound)	293	172	260	—	337	374	410	487	463	596	1,691	2,329
Tithing †												
Bagley Wood	639	5	6	4	21	9	10	8	12	14	4	3
Extra Par.												
Bessels Leigh † . .	906	99	119	130	124	106	93	92	82	105	101	88
Chandlings Farm	76	—	—	—	—	11	7	5	6	3	4	0
Extra Par.												
Cumnor ¹⁷	5,962	702	806	993	1,024	1,058	1,048	1,021	968	1,011	919	870
Hinksey, North ¹⁷ † †	876	111	170	182	187	295	488	438	430	527	532	595
Hinksey, South † †	651	162	156	142	157	153	300	636	874	956	1,181	1,430
Radley ¹⁸ †	2,990	479	565	617	520	484	556	484	521	531	664	530
St. Helen, Abingdon (part of) ¹⁹	—	327	372	329	368	574	597	641	605	—	—	—
Seacourt	814	30	25	29	25	29	28	39	24	20	23	30
Extra Par. ²⁰												
Sunningwell ¹⁸ † . .	1,454	197	229	277	339	332	357	364	370	327	310	352
Wootton † †	1,564	236	275	310	340	344	370	384	366	369	420	388
Wytham	1,179	246	262	241	218	189	195	176	210	198	225	200
<i>Kintbury Eagle Hundred</i>												
Avington †	1,185	57	64	77	94	93	97	104	98	109	129	97
Chaddleworth † . .	3,400	385	408	448	494	481	513	539	468	412	441	405
Chilton Foliat (part of) ²¹	1,292	—	—	—	—	100	135	145	143	122	99	136
Enborne †	2,501	275	333	349	420	384	407	412	404	413	442	441
Fawley †	2,190	186	191	212	194	225	270	243	232	228	170	155
Hampstead	1,852	271	292	304	313	325	345	299	295	249	219	244
Marshall †												
Hungerford (part of) ²² * †	3,346	1,987	1,693	2,025	2,283	2,323	2,696	2,551	2,699	2,560	2,513	2,364
Inkpen †	2,886	590	569	617	729	743	763	748	743	692	667	658
Kintbury	7,778	1,430	1,409	1,763	1,781	1,881	1,899	1,802	1,847	1,683	1,655	1,648
Letcombe	1,662	230	236	280	288	293	292	283	262	221	191	211
Bassett † †												

¹⁵ Longworth and Stanford-in-the-Vale are situated in Ock and Ganfield Hundreds.

¹⁶ Oxford St. Aldate.—The remainder is in Oxfordshire, where the entire population is shown in 1821.

¹⁷ Cumnor and North Hinksey Parishes.—Botley Tithing is partly in each. The whole, however, appears to have been included in Cumnor Parish, 1811–1831. The part in North Hinksey Parish does not seem to have been enumerated in 1801.

¹⁸ Radley and Sunningwell Parishes.—Kennington Township is partly in each. The Township includes 'the Island,' which was deemed Extra Parochial. The Township was apparently entirely included in Radley Parish in 1811 and 1821.

¹⁹ Abingdon St. Helen is situated in Hormer Hundred and in Abingdon Borough. The entire area and the population for 1881–1901 is shown in Abingdon Borough. Barton Farm was wrongly enumerated in the part in the Borough in 1861 and 1871. The population for 1801 of Sandford Township (part of the area outside the Borough) is assumed to have been the same as in 1811, there having been no return made in the former year for that part of St. Helen's Parish.

²⁰ Seacourt.—There seems some doubt as to whether it ever was Extra Parochial. It is shown as a Civil Parish in 1861.

²¹ Chilton Foliat.—The remainder is in Wiltshire (Kinwardstone Hundred), where the entire population is shown, 1801–1831.

²² Hungerford.—The remainder is in Wiltshire (Kinwardstone Hundred).

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY

TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801—1901 (*continued*)

PARISH	Ac- re- age	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Kintbury Eagle Hundred (cont.)</i>												
Letcombe Regis —	4,551	808	831	800	895	1,030	968	1,014	1,074	1,022	1,082	1,090
Challow, East Chap. †	1,353	229	264	256	303	336	321	391	409	397	428	431
Challow, West Chap. †	739	185	181	156	148	248	231	192	206	172	171	143
Letcombe Regis Township † ‡	2,459	394	386	388	444	446	416	431	459	453	483	516
Shalbourne (part of) ‡ †	3,675	502	807	531	512	992	965	682	649	605	533	496
Shefford, East †	1,069	70	44	59	67	59	58	79	72	115	91	72
Shefford, West †	2,243	422	421	490	559	562	523	538	524	485	499	422
Woodhay, West †	1,432	109	120	144	127	131	115	130	104	116	124	139
<i>Lambourn Hundred</i>												
Garston, East † ²⁴	4,409	609	538	637	699	662	623	589	517	459	436	360
Lambourn † ²⁵	14,873	2,045	2,136	2,299	2,386	2,595	2,577	2,529	2,379	2,165	2,238	2,071
<i>Moreton Hundred</i>												
All Hallows, Wallingford (part of) † ²⁶ :—												
Clapcot Liberty.	—	55	42	38	34	43	41	53	91	85	87	87
Ashampstead †	2,082	314	355	337	346	404	439	385	331	345	328	313
Aston Tirrold † ‡	1,752	294	324	355	343	343	363	395	366	310	300	289
Basildon † . . .	3,139	623	621	686	780	812	798	712	698	651	675	583
Blewbury (part of) † ²⁷ :—	2,737	413	374	369	426	443	517	475	454	583	401	338
Aston Upton Chap. †	1,324	196	169	154	172	159	180	169	169	168	156	125
Upton Chap. † ²⁸	1,413	217	205	215	254	284	337	306	285	415	245	213
Brightwell . . .	2,064	491	473	546	578	611	678	703	703	618	613	632
Didcot † . . .	1,120	181	207	197	181	203	241	349	369	373	337	420
Hagbourne † :—	2,815	695	660	708	782	824	905	795	979	1,270	1,454	1,360
Hagbourne, East Liberty	1,758	499	460	524	562	585	696	631	798	1,108	1,297	1,231
Hagbourne, West Liberty	1,057	196	200	184	220	239	209	164	181	162	157	129
Harwell † . . .	2,521	671	661	701	780	857	884	876	889	810	729	648
Moreton, North †	1,102	282	305	348	362	397	322	352	357	325	276	251
Moreton, South †	1,350	320	330	364	410	417	420	371	372	328	356	283
Moulsford † . . .	1,441	152	174	176	169	144	168	180	168	170	150	124
Sotwell . . .	708	68	164	145	157	148	133	149	180	196	192	200
Streatley † . . .	3,655	556	596	590	582	597	584	552	637	648	607	562
<i>Ock Hundred</i>												
Appleton † . . .	2,077	341	369	389	441	496	540	549	613	573	532	466
Drayton † . . .	1,851	484	454	498	506	521	505	605	643	622	585	529
Fyfield † . . .	1,604	315	350	407	403	382	428	439	396	337	303	297
Hanney, West (part of) :— ²⁹												
Lyford Chap. †	773	124	108	133	131	147	140	149	134	133	147	113

²² *Shalbourne*.—The remainder is in Wiltshire (Kinwardstone Hundred). The population of the entire Parish is shown in Berkshire in 1811. It seems probable that Bagshot and Oxenwood Hamlets (Berkshire) were included with the part in Wiltshire in 1801, 1821, and 1831. The 1861–1901 figures are not for the same area as the 1841 and 1851; perhaps because a part in Wiltshire had been included with the Berkshire portion in 1841 and 1851, as the 1851 figures are comparable with the 1861 for the entire Parish.

²⁴ *East Garston* is really in three Hundreds, viz.: Lambourn, Moreton, and Wantage. It is shown under Lambourn, the greatest part being in that Hundred.

²⁵ *Lambourn* included the Hungerford Union Workhouse in 1841. Inmates removed before 1851.

²⁶ *Wallingford All Hallows* is situated in Moreton Hundred and in Wallingford Borough. The entire area is shown in Wallingford Borough.

²⁷ *Blewbury* is situated in Moreton and Reading Hundreds.

²⁸ *Upton*.—The increase of population in 1881 is due to the presence of labourers engaged in constructing a railway.

²⁹ *West Hanney* is situated in Ock and Wantage Hundreds.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801—1901 (*continued*)

PARISH	Acres	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Ock Hundred</i> (cont.)												
Kingston Bag-puize †	1,109	280	279	327	306	290	367	283	264	250	208	186
Longworth (part of) :— ^{29a}												
Draycott Moor Hamlet	1,054	141	187	194	224	238	272	261	229	225	201	168
Marcham :—	4,717	938	1,030	1,173	1,170	1,109	1,197	1,111	1,118	1,128	1,024	947
Marcham †	2,422	607	706	829	832	805	845	778	804	786	707	687
Frilford Township †	1,240	148	150	152	129	141	160	160	148	178	150	115
Garford Chap. †	1,055	183	174	192	209	163	192	173	166	164	167	145
Milton †	1,466	310	338	421	413	466	449	429	423	410	420	341
Stanford-in-the-Vale (part of) :— ^{29a}												
Goosey Chap.	968	139	146	159	203	179	176	202	163	161	160	125
Steventon † ³⁰	2,401	537	584	652	691	948	978	886	829	924	878	797
Sutton Courtenay †	4,456	1,272	1,117	1,147	1,284	1,378	1,600	1,581	1,638	1,600	1,503	1,295
Sutton Courtenay †	2,292	874	757	769	834	909	1,019	974	1,015	903	857	739
Appleford Chap.	862	200	160	161	179	187	272	288	299	346	301	251
Sutton Wick Township †	1,302	198	200	217	271	282	309	319	324	351	345	305
Tubney † †	1,156	79	122	138	167	190	233	180	191	165	175	156
Wittenham, Little †	888	134	97	107	113	125	128	134	139	112	135	116
Wittenham, Long †	2,275	451	404	496	547	580	608	583	629	562	477	470
<i>Reading Hundred</i>												
Beenham Valence † †	1,793	381	372	437	360	421	517	505	556	517	517	508
Blewbury (part of) ^{30a}	4,246	553	538	572	630	653	623	639	659	746	628	545
Bucklebury † †	6,168	1,122	1,117	1,143	1,300	1,277	1,219	1,178	1,154	1,142	1,151	1,066
Cholsey † †	4,438	814	807	975	983	1,191	1,224	1,127	1,362	1,735	2,014	1,826
Pangbourne †	1,940	593	620	703	692	804	800	753	757	737	885	1,235
Reading St. Giles (part of) :— ³¹												
Whitley Hamlet	—	28	260	276	363	518	639	744	952	1,324	—	—
Reading St. Mary (part of) :— ³²												
Southcot Tithing	—	—	45	121	84	66	80	87	64	116	—	—
Stratfield Saye (part of) :— ³⁴												
Beech Hill Tithing †	949	184	225	274	249	261	253	260	272	277	292	265
Swallowfield (part of) ^{34a}	3,745	890	537	636	716	722	816	1,265	1,258	1,352	1,505	1,375
Sulhamstead Abbots :—	1,936	392	418	364	423	425	382	357	330	319	322	320
Sulhamstead Abbots	1,417	305	319	279	357	350	318	285	296	302	290	278
Grazeley Tithing	519	87	99	85	66	75	64	72	34	17	32	42
Thatcham (part of) ^{34b}	7,866	1,995	2,104	2,401	2,502	2,677	2,861	2,729	2,845	2,882	2,900	2,981
Tilehurst ³⁵	5,259	1,353	1,521	1,760	1,878	2,147	2,188	2,330	2,418	4,408	5,341	6,899

^{29a} See note 15, *ante*.

³⁰ *Steventon* includes, in 1841, 209 temporary residents—labourers on the Great Western Railway with their families.

^{30a} See note 27, *ante*.

³¹ *Cholsey*.—The County Lunatic Asylum was erected in this Parish between 1861 and 1871.

³² *Reading St. Giles* is situated in Reading Hundred and in Reading Borough. The entire area and population in 1891 and 1901 are shown in Reading Borough. A great part of the population of Whitley Hamlet was included with the part of the Parish in Reading Borough in 1801.

³³ *Reading St. Mary* is situated in Reading Hundred and in Reading Borough. The entire area and population in 1801, 1891, and 1901 are shown in Reading Borough.

³⁴ *Stratfield Saye*.—The remainder is in Hampshire (Holdshott Hundred).

^{34a} See note 7, *ante*.

^{34b} See note 12, *ante*.

³⁵ *Tilehurst* contained 1,058 persons in February, 1783. The Brigade Dépôt Barracks for Berkshire was erected in this Parish between 1871 and 1881.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY

TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801—1901 (*continued*)

PARISH	Acre- age	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Ripplesmere Hundred</i>												
Clewer † ⁸⁶ . . .	1,666 ^a	1,695	2,096	2,115	3,011	3,975	4,344	5,418	8,078	9,048	9,494	10,298
Easthampstead * †	5,295	566	578	615	647	627	698	789	884	1,172	1,538	1,708
Winkfield . . .	10,278	1,465	1,439	1,676	2,009	2,178	2,185	2,508	3,291	3,622	4,005	4,243
Windsor, New (part of) :— ⁸⁷												
Dedworth Ham- let †	347 ^a	75	—	—	137	101	139	195	230	248	272	412
Windsor, Old * † .	5,457	669	932	1,050	1,453	1,600	1,785	1,835	2,112	2,521	2,976	3,379
<i>Shrivenham Hundred</i>												
Ashbury † . . .	5,609	654	643	683	698	819	786	742	731	684	706	589
Buscot † . . .	2,887	409	355	421	416	405	428	467	498	371	423	403
Coleshill (part of) ⁸⁸	2,014	261	262	324	351	386	391	453	345	309	373	342
Compton Beau- champ †	1,466	119	108	103	156	157	138	128	121	120	110	104
Eaton Hastings .	1,570	137	124	178	167	161	140	185	190	133	157	158
Shrivenham :—	8,382	1,699	1,753	1,879	2,113	2,353	2,165	2,258	2,235	1,965	1,727	1,613
Shrivenham } Beckett Tithing }	2,695	611	639	696	779	{ 814 42	{ 757 34	{ 784 23	{ 719 60	{ 721 721	{ 635 635	{ 633 633
Bourton Tith- ing ⁸⁹ †	1,260	257	271	275	302	396	315	328	302	284	260	243
Fernham Hamlet	1,016	158	182	183	239	222	228	246	227	205	146	163
Longcot Hamlet	1,894	368	377	419	452	504	468	446	494	393	310	256
Watchfield	1,517	305	284	306	341	375	363	431	433	362	376	318
Township												
Sparsholt (part of): ⁴⁰ viz. Kingston Lisle & Faw- ler †	2,147	261	306	357	376	397	385	370	315	338	279	280
Uffington :—	6,690	813	871	925	1,019	1,170	1,170	1,081	1,089	936	902	821
Uffington † . .	3,205	432	462	523	564	640	674	644	618	566	567	526
Balking Chap. †	1,473	173	160	155	185	193	208	181	203	169	159	152
Woolstone Chap †	2,012	208	249	247	270	337	288	256	268	201	176	143
<i>Sonning Hundred</i>												
Arborfield † . . .	1,469	171	216	245	268	300	316	286	270	270	248	249
Hurst Par. Chap. (part of) :— ^{40a}	3,215	587	667	755	783	823	893	921	1,071	962	1,002	951
Newland Liberty †	1,170	258	262	264	252	276	306	339	382	277	301	278
Winnersh Liberty	2,045	329	405	491	531	547	587	582	689	685	701	673
Ruscombe † . . .	1,294	170	160	208	160	202	239	264	281	375	349	323
Sandhurst ⁴¹ . . .	4,536	222	289	771	672	562	815	1,271	3,211	4,195	4,148	5,571
Sonning (part of) :— ^{41a}	4,856	1,233	1,534	1,201	1,260	1,373	1,379	1,382	1,433	1,606	1,610	1,429
Sonning Town Liberty	1,247	—	—	442	464	550	483	465	465	494	515	442
Woodley & Sand- ford Liberty	3,609	—	—	759	796	823	896	917	968	1,112	1,095	987
Wokingham * † .	8,545	2,281	2,365	2,810	3,139	3,342	3,752	4,144	4,652	5,043	5,314	6,002
<i>Theale Hundred</i>												
Aldermaston † . .	3,742	672	678	653	636	662	783	585	583	528	655	482

⁸⁶ Clewer.—A temporary increase of 60 persons in 1841 owing to Ascot Races.

⁸⁷ New Windsor is situated in Ripplesmere Hundred and in New Windsor Borough. The entire population is shown in 1811 and 1821 in New Windsor Borough.

⁸⁸ Coleshill.—The remainder is in Wiltshire.

⁸⁹ Bourton.—A temporary increase of 73 persons (railway labourers and their families) in 1841.

⁴⁰ Sparsholt is situated in Shrivenham and Wantage Hundreds.

^{40a} See note 3, *ante*.

⁴¹ Sandhurst.—The increase of population in 1821 was due to the establishment of a military college and to an inclosure. In 1841 the students were absent. The 1871 increase was partly due to Wellington College and Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum being opened between 1861 and 1871.

^{41a} See note 6, *ante*.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801—1901 (*continued*)

PARISH	Acres	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Theale Hundred</i> (cont.)												
Bradfield* † . . .	4,360	678	817	946	956	1,042	1,216	1,167	1,182	1,161	1,458	1,526
Burghfield † . . .	4,311	738	791	881	965	1,115	1,193	1,139	1,197	1,296	1,327	1,352
Englefield † . . .	1,437	336	291	343	411	373	371	392	356	389	341	315
Padworth † † . . .	1,211	218	278	271	234	272	284	298	273	268	277	235
Purley † † . . .	874	153	197	196	172	198	220	193	194	188	180	180
Shinfield (part of) :— ⁴³												
Hartley Dummer Liberty	--	252	251	323	381	359	401	345	382	—	—	—
Stratfield Mortimer (part of) :— ⁴³	3,697	694	672	752	860	835	961	977	941	1,185	1,362	1,405
Stratfield Mortimer	3,031	—	—	647	700	723	803	844	798	1,048	1,236	1,270
Wokefield Tithing	666	—	—	105	160	112	158	133	143	137	126	135
Sulham † † . . .	699	118	153	152	72	124	132	118	139	145	149	123
Sulhamstead Bannister :—	1,131	259	255	315	289	302	302	261	278	256	312	252
Lower End . . .	576	—	—	150	128	145	133	114	716	102	110	102
Upper End . . .	555	—	—	165	161	157	169	147	162	154	202	150
Tidmarsh † . . .	785	134	127	139	143	146	165	179	183	190	196	146
Ufton, or Ufton Nervet †	2,189	334	320	350	357	391	421	367	364	315	304	272
Woolhampton † .	719	322	301	387	364	491	602	559	525	493	452	472
<i>Wantage Hundred</i>												
Ardington † . . .	1,820	344	351	403	404	405	375	354	414	383	432	427
Childrey † † . . .	2,861	402	413	478	561	546	553	504	502	516	454	483
Denchworth ⁴⁴ † .	1,041	229	230	254	213	246	278	257	232	229	209	172
Hanney, West (part of) :— ⁴⁵	3,593	865	925	974	1,030	1,006	1,044	947	934	862	910	772
Hanney, West Township †	1,383	330	348	387	399	391	432	384	382	369	361	313
Hanney, East Township †	2,120	535	577	587	631	615	612	563	552	493	549	459
Hendred, East or Great † †	3,117	683	723	863	865	858	949	889	883	815	788	740
Hendred, West or Little † †	2,007	309	293	319	335	320	335	351	367	351	344	298
Lockinge, East † ⁴⁶	2,878	305	333	342	373	325	297	318	357	330	325	307
Sparsholt (part of) † ⁴⁷	3,698	410	422	460	498	506	517	493	462	440	465	366
Wantage :—	7,042	2,983	3,036	3,256	3,282	3,650	3,860	3,925	4,200	4,378	4,563	4,726
Charlton Hamlet	1,884	247	224	215	255	252	214	255	278	253	260	302
Grove Chapelry †	1,791	397	426	481	520	485	530	540	547	557	559	580
Lockinge, West Hamlet † ⁴⁶	864	—	—	—	—	63	60	66	80	80	75	78
Wantage Township* †	2,503	2,339	2,386	2,560	2,507	2,850	3,056	3,064	3,295	3,488	3,669	3,766
<i>Wargrave Hundred</i>												
Waltham St. Lawrence †	3,640	572	593	638	739	724	783	848	861	853	851	867
Warfield	3,435	820	1,016	1,155	1,207	1,317	1,374	1,497	1,621	1,986	2,273	2,343
Wargrave	4,461	1,134	1,198	1,409	1,423	1,739	1,773	1,806	1,785	1,882	2,027	1,983

⁴³ See note 5, *ante*.

⁴³ *Stratfield Mortimer*.—The remainder is in Hampshire (Holdshott Hundred).

⁴⁴ *Denchworth* is partly in Ock Hundred, but the whole is shown in Wantage Hundred.

⁴⁵ See note 29, *ante*.

⁴⁶ *West Lockinge* included with *East Lockings*, 1801—1831.

⁴⁷ See note 40, *ante*.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY

TABLE OF POPULATION, 1801—1901 (*continued*)

PARISH	Acre- age	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
<i>Abingdon Borough</i>												
St. Helen (part of) † ⁴⁸	3,275	3,836	4,360	4,568	4,693	4,947	5,555	5,317	5,732	6,410	6,180	6,128
St. Nicholas † . .	211	520	441	569	566	638	696	742	606	609	593	561
<i>Town of Newbury</i>												
Newbury*	1,242	4,275	4,898	5,347	5,959	6,379	6,574	6,161	6,602	7,017	7,102	6,983
<i>Reading Borough</i>												
St. Giles (part of) ⁴⁹	2,760	3,416	3,660	4,014	4,749	6,287	7,817	9,456	13,288	20,234	25,437	28,335
St. Lawrence . . .	328	3,170	3,627	4,091	4,048	4,285	4,571	4,736	4,718	4,674	4,534	4,857
St. Mary (part of) ⁵⁰	1,867	3,156	3,501	4,762	6,798	8,365	9,068	10,853	14,318	17,146	21,723	25,826
<i>Wallingford Borough</i>												
Allhallows (part of) ⁵¹	859	80	77	99	130	129	81	86	97	82	63	88
St. Leonard	236	533	531	632	834	883	929	1,030	1,045	1,019	1,154	1,091
St. Mary-le-More *	97	721	865	873	1,127	1,241	1,304	1,198	1,276	1,236	1,276	1,168
St. Peter †	34	396	413	471	454	476	499	472	542	459	490	457
Castle Precincts Extra Par.	31	14	15	18	18	51	51	30	38	23	26	25
<i>Windsor, New Borough</i>												
Windsor, New (part of) ⁵²	2,582	3,361	4,340	4,648	5,513	7,786	6,734	6,841	7,584	7,831	8,251	9,591

GENERAL NOTE AS TO BERKSHIRE

The following Municipal Borough is co-extensive at the Census of 1901 with one or more places mentioned in the Table:—

Municipal Borough	Place
Maidenhead M.B.	The two parts of Maidenhead Town shown respectively in Cookham Parish (and Hundred) and Bray Parish (and Hundred)

⁴⁸ See note 19, *ante*.

⁵⁰ See note 33, *ante*.

⁵² *New Windsor* (the part in the Borough).—Windsor Castle is included, a part of which is still stated to be Extra Parochial. See note 37, *ante*.

⁴⁹ See note 32, *ante*.

⁵¹ See note 26, *ante*.

SCHOOLS

BERKSHIRE was well supplied with public schools in pre-Reformation days. Besides those which still survive (Reading dating from before 1139, Abingdon of equal or greater antiquity, the first extant mention of which occurs in 1375, Newbury, 2 March, 1467, Wokingham, *c.* 1390), there were schools at Lambourn endowed in 1502, and Childrey in 1526, and it can hardly be doubted, though in the absence of documents it cannot be proved that the old capital of the county, with its ancient collegiate church, Wallingford, kept a grammar school. All these, except Wokingham, were continued at the Reformation, and Abingdon was newly endowed in 1563. The endowment of Wokingham disappeared in the exchequer. Lambourn, though the warden of New College, Oxford, had the appointment of the master, was allowed to cease in the reign of Elizabeth, and Childrey, though the appointment of its master lay with Queen's College, Oxford, either never was anything more than, or was allowed to sink into, an elementary school. Only one school, Wantage, dates from the days of Queen Elizabeth. Nor was any addition made to the secondary schools of the county before the days of the Commonwealth, during which those of Hungerford and Wallingford were founded or re-endowed. Then there was again a cessation of school foundations, till the old foundations having all sunk nearly into nothingness, with endowments which lapse of time had rendered wholly inadequate, and buildings which were worse, in the middle of the nineteenth century there sprang up the three great public schools of the county—Bradfield, Radley, and Wellington Colleges; the first two created by modern imitators of William of Wykeham, and the last under royal patronage by the subscriptions of the army and the public for a memorial to the great Duke of Wellington. The general levelling-up of the old foundations which modern competition has produced has now re-equipped them with adequate site and buildings, though scarcely with sufficient income from endowment, and Reading and Abingdon are once more doing their educational duty, and fulfilling the functions which they were intended to fulfil, and did fulfil from their first foundation, in the dim and distant days before the Norman Conquest, to which their origin may no doubt be attributed.

READING GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Reading School, instead of being as commonly reputed the child of Reading Abbey, or the creature of one of the latest of its abbots, existed before the abbey, and the monastic records themselves furnish the evidence that the school was not monastic.

Reading Abbey was founded by King Henry I in 1125,¹ after 24 May of that year. At some time between that date and 4 December, 1139, is the first recorded mention of Reading School in a document which certainly implies its previous existence. It occurs in the chartulary of the almoner of Reading Abbey:—²

Charter of Roger Bishop of Salisbury of the School of Reading (*de scolis de Rading*)

Roger bishop of Salisbury to the archdeacons of Berks and to all the deans and the whole clergy of Berks, greeting. I prohibit everyone from teaching school at Reading except with the consent and good will of the Abbot and convent. Witness A.Th. at Winchester.

The date of the deed depends on the interpretation of 'A.Th.' It might mean an Archdeacon Thomas, Thurstan, or Theobald. It may be Archbishop Thurstan of York, or Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, who became archbishop on 8 January, 1139. If so, as Bishop Roger died on 4 October, 1139, this date is between these two days. But it is more likely to be earlier in Bishop Roger's episcopacy.

The fact that this charter is addressed not to the abbot and convent but to the secular clergy, shows that one of them had been teaching school or had appointed the master against the abbot. The bishop himself was the natural guardian of the schools of his diocese as ordinary; and under

¹ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v. fol. 12. The foundation-stone is said to have been laid in 1121.

² *Ibid.* 90b.

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

him in his own district the archdeacon. It is probable that here as at Durham the archdeacon resisted the claims of the abbot, and that he or some cleric holding the school on his appointment is aimed at. The foundation charter of Reading Abbey did not, as was the case, for example, with the foundation charter of Llanthony Abbey, Gloucester, and the refoundation charter of St. Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick, at about the same date, specifically mention the school and its governance, but it transferred to the abbot and convent 'Reading itself, in which their monastery is built, with the churches and chapels of the same town, viz. St. Mary's parish church, with the chapel of All Saints and all its other rights, and St. Giles' church in its integrity.' The temporal lordship of the borough and the ecclesiastical patronage of the two principal churches may have been construed as carrying with them the jurisdiction over the school. But the school is not mentioned in terms in any of the charters until we come to two confirmation charters of Hubert, first as bishop of Salisbury and then as archbishop of Canterbury. The first runs:—

Charter³ of Hubert, bishop of Salisbury, concerning Reading School and all the churches in Salisbury diocese

To all the sons of holy mother church Hubert by the grace of God bishop of Salisbury greeting. It is the duty of a bishop to pay special attention to the petitions of the religious . . . hence we grant and confirm to the venerable and dearest in Christ the abbot and monks of Reading the school of Reading; 4s. from the church of Sulham. . . . We grant also and confirm to them the church of Cholsey (Chauseia) . . . and the church of St. Mary of Reading and the church of St. Giles . . . to hold with all their rights and appurtenances, with all that integrity and liberty with which they held them in the time of Roger and Jocelin of good memory bishops of Salisbury.

As Hubert became bishop of Salisbury in October, 1189, and archbishop of Canterbury in 1193, this deed is between those dates. At some date between 1193 and his death in 1205, and probably early in his archiepiscopate, he granted the abbey a charter of general confirmation,⁴ and after, as in Henry's charter, specifying the churches in Reading, and the churches of Pangbourne, &c., the bishop proceeds:—'We confirm also the school of Reading (*scolas de Radingia*) and 4s. from the church of Sulham,' and so on.

As the churches specified existed before the abbey, so no doubt did the school which is mentioned with and among them. Whether the original grant comprised the school, or whether the grant of the school was considered to date from the writ of the bishop forbidding anyone to teach school without the licence of the abbot and convent is perhaps doubtful. The writ certainly looks like the enforcement of an existing right which was being disputed, not the conferring of a new one. It is almost contemporary with the similar writ of Bishop Henry of Blois, acting as bishop of London in 1137, enforcing the similar right of the schoolmaster of St. Paul's to prevent persons teaching school in London without his licence.

While there is thus reason to believe that there was a school at Reading before the foundation of the abbey, the date and circumstances of its origin cannot be ascertained. In the foundation charter of Henry I it is asserted that there had been an abbey at Reading in early times which was destroyed (presumably by the Danes); according to William of Malmesbury this was a nunnery. Domesday shows that there was in Reading a church endowed with 8 hides of land, an endowment which is much too large for a single priest and points to a college of secular canons; which would have had a school in connexion with it. In 1066 the church and its lands were in the hands of 'Leveva the abess' (i.e. Leofgifu, abess of Shaftesbury). After the Conquest it was bestowed upon the abbey of Battle, the chronicle of which house makes no reference to any collegiate establishment here, though it duly records the five prebends attached to its church of Cullompton in Devon. Henry I, on founding Reading Abbey, gave Battle other endowments in exchange for Reading church and lands.

St. John's Hospital, in which in later times the school was placed, and the annexation of which has hitherto been regarded as its foundation, was not at the date of Bishop Roger's writ and Bishop Hubert's confirmation charter yet founded. Its foundation was clearly due to Bishop Hubert as much as to Abböt Hugh, who has hitherto had the credit of it.

For the original charter⁵ of Bishop Hubert is preserved, by which the bishop directs that 'the fruits and donations of the chapel of St. Lawrence,' then not a church, 'shall be converted to the use of 13 poor to pray there for my soul . . . and the souls of Sir Ranulph of Glanville and Lady Bertha his wife who brought me up (*qui nos educaverunt*),' so that it might almost be claimed that it was a partly educational foundation from the beginning. The hospital thus founded stood outside the great outer gate of the abbey, north of St. Lawrence's church, which except for a narrow path it adjoined. It is now swallowed up in the site of the town hall. The chaplain of St. Lawrence, a secular chaplain, was constituted vicar of the church of St. Lawrence and master of the hospital.

³ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v, fol. 90b; Vesp. E. xxv, fol. 115.

⁴ Vesp. E. v, fol. 188b; Vesp. E. xxv, fol. 109.

⁵ B.M. Add. Chart. 19611.

SCHOOLS

In 1345-6⁶ John of Chippenham was almoner, and had an income amounting to £117 9s. 4½d. Some of this was spent on various pittances and 'expenses on the brethren in the new chamber' or common room. The rest went in educational and charitable payments. The hospital and apparently an almshouse school are included under 'Costs of Clerks and Sisters.'

The following appear to be educational payments:—

	£	s.	d.
Garments of 10 clerks	0	36	3
Additional food (<i>compernagio</i>) (<i>sic</i>) for the boys and others being at table [i.e. in the almshouse]	0	4	3
The schoolmaster yearly	0	3	4
For a bishop's mitre for the [boy] bishop on St. Nicholas' Day	0	5	0
Three pounds of candles	0	0	7½
Total	£2	9	5½

The 10 clerks are apparently 10 boys in the almshouse school. For here, as in other monasteries in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, the abbey seems to have established a sort of charity school in the almshouse, lodging, clothing and feeding a certain number of poor boys, who, as we learnt from the Durham accounts, were treated as menials and fed on the broken meats that came from the monks' table. This must have been the case here also, as only their luxuries in the way of food are paid for, not their bread and beer and other necessaries. The purchase of a boy-bishop's mitre was for the performance of the boy-bishop's mummery on 6 December, the day of St. Nicholas of Myra, the patron saint of schoolboys, when the abbot and obedientiaries in a monastery, the dean and canons in a cathedral or collegiate church, gave place to the boy-bishop and his fellows who masqueraded in their seats and offices. The payment of 3s. 4d. to the schoolmaster (*magistro scholarum*) was no doubt a payment to the grammar schoolmaster for teaching these almshouse boys. At Westminster,⁷ where there was no public school, the master, like the boys, was wholly maintained in the almshouse; while at York, where there was a public school, the cathedral grammar school, the 50 almshouse boys maintained by St. Mary's Abbey are specially noted⁸ as going to it for their lessons. There was one other educational payment, but it was not a charity for outsiders but for monks themselves. That was 8s. 11½d. 'to the students of the monastery' and '4s. 4½d. more to them by grace.' The students of the monastery were, of course, as appears from the next almoner's account, not students in the monastery, but 'students at Oxford,' all Benedictine⁹ monasteries being bound by the General Benedictine Statutes of 1337 to maintain at the universities one young monk for every ten inmates that they possessed. Reading maintained as a rule two students, but sometimes only one, at Gloucester, now Worcester College, Oxford. On what basis the payments to the students were made there are not extant accounts enough to show; nor why half as much again was paid by way of increment 'as a present.' Thus the infirmarer, whose total income was £6, paid only 2s. in 1400 to the students at Oxford, with 1s. 4d. more *ex gracia*; and the sacrist, whose income was £52, paid in 1442-3 4s. 8½d. with another 1s. by grace to one student at Oxford; the 'sartivarius' or clothes mender, who received £130 a year, paid 5s. in 1476-7 to a single (*unico*) student at Oxford. The cellarer, whose income was £150 a year, paid in 1512-13 no less than 36s. to one student at Oxford. The last account extant is that of the keeper of the Lady Chapel for the year 1536-7. His income was £11 13s. 4d. only, which went chiefly in wax, oil and torches for the chapel, and he paid to the students at Oxford 2s. These payments to the student monks are the only educational payments made by any other officer than the almoner; unless the payment of 2s. 6d. 'given to the singing men and boys at divers times, and 11s. 6d. for making an Epistolar and other Song-books (*librorum cantilenarum*)' by the keeper of the Lady Chapel can be so called.

In 1383-4 the schoolmaster was paid 9s. 9d. for three-quarters of the year. In 1389-90 there were 11 clerks instead of 10, and their clothing cost 35s. 8d., and food for the boys and others serving while the abbot was staying at Bere, an abbey manor outside Reading, cost 3s. 6d. instead of 2s. The schoolmaster received 13s. 4d. for the whole year. In 1391-2 the same payments were made. The next and last extant almoner's account is that of Brother John Bristowe for 1468-9. There were then in the hospital only 5 sisters. We find that the 'clerks (*clerici*)' are now definitely called boys (*pueri*), that 24 yds. of cloth bought for them at 20d. a yard cost 34s. 4d., and bread for them 6s. 8d.; 'and their expenses and those of other servants at Advent, Shrove Tuesday, and St. Nicholas' feast 3s. 4d.,' while new cups and plates bought for them cost 7d., a new table-cloth

⁶ B.M. Add. Chart. 19641.

⁷ *Journ. of Education* (Jan. 1905), 'The Origin of Westminster School.'

⁸ A. F. Leach, *Early Yorks. Schools*, i.

⁹ Reading, though Cluniac by foundation, was by the thirteenth century reckoned with the Benedictines, and subject to the government of the General Chapters of the Order in England.

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20*d.*, a new table for the almonry hall 3*s.* 4*d.*, candles for the boys in winter 8*d.*, and 'the expenses of two boys living wholly on the alms of the monastery 13*s.* 4*d.*' This last is an important entry, as it appears to show that the other 8 or 10 boys (the number is not stated) were only lodged and clothed and partly fed at the monastery's expense, and had to pay something for their board and schooling. The usual 13*s.* 4*d.* was paid to the schoolmaster, who is now called by the same title as the head master of Winchester and Eton '*Informator puerorum.*' Another new item is 'the wages of a singer 26*s.* 8*d.*' It would appear therefore that the almonry school was tending to become more and more of a regular boarding school.

We now come to the oft-quoted tale, told by Leland :—¹⁰

St. Lawrence [church] stondith by west hard by cumming yn at the principal gate of th' abbey church was an Almose House of Poor Sisters by al likelihood of the Foundation of sum abbate of Reading, and remaynid ontyl such tyme one Thorne, Abbate of Reading, suppressid it in King Henry the vij dayes, and gave the landes of it onto the use of the Almoner of his abbey. But Henry the vij cumming to Reading, and asking what old house that was, the abbate told hym, and then the king wyllid hym to convert the house self and the landes *in pios usus*; whereupon the abbate desirid that it might be made a grammar schole, and so it was. One William Dene, a riche man and servant in thabbay of Reading, gave 200 markes in mony toward the avaincement of this schole, as it apperth by the epitaphie on his grave in the abbay chirch of Reading.

This tale has been embellished with statements which have no authority at all, such as that of Coates that Henry VII charged £10 a year for the school on the Crown rents. It is obvious from the documents already quoted that Leland or his informant was ignorant of the true history of the hospital and of the school, while the story conflicts with contemporary written documents. For there is preserved a document written between 1499 and 1505 which tells in detail what is clearly the true story.¹¹ It is one of a series of documents connected with the struggle between the town and the abbey at the end of the fifteenth century. It begins with an incident which is said to have happened in 1479.

On a tyme as Kyng Edward IV came thorough Redyng towards Woodstocke, in the 19th yere of his regne, complaynts were made unto hym by the towne and the countrey upon th'abbot and the covent of Redyng of certeyne weys, bridgys, chapells, and howsys of almes not kepte nor meyntheyned accordyng to ryght and conscience and as they have been wonte of old tyme, to the whych as hyt ys sayd, they have both londs and lyvelods [livelihoods, endowments] suffycient.

The complaint then mentions the chapel of the Holy Ghost on the great bridge over the Thames, Caversham Bridge; and another chapel of St. Edmund in the west end of the town 'now made a barn.' Another complaint was that Mary Maudelyn chapel for sick folk 'as lazarrs,' i.e. lepers, and a house for them to dwell in had been taken down by the abbot 'and so no poor people releved.' Leprosy being extinct, a great many leper hospitals all over the country were in a similar condition.

Also there was without th'abbay gate a place called Seynt Johnys Howse, wherin were founde and kepte certeyn religious women to say their prayers in certain seasons of the day and night, and wher also masses were sayd many tymes in the yere, and other devyne service also; whyche women wont to have out of th'abbey every weeke certeyne of bred and ale and also money; and as yt ys seyed oons [once] in the yere a certeyne clothyng. And this was ordeyned for suche women as had been onest mennys' wyvys that had borne offyce in the towne before, and in age were fall in poverte, or that purposed no more to marye etc. And now there ys nother Godds servyce nor prayer, nor creature alyve to kepe hyt. But th'abbot takethe the profytt thereof and dothe no suche almes nor good deds therwyth.

Now it is certain that this paper states facts. For though it (apparently) came from the town documents,¹² it is in part supported by a document in the almoner's register¹³ itself, entitled 'A Falce sugestion ymad to be take to owr kyng of the spitul.' This latter document refers only to the lepers' hospital, and the chapels of St. Edmund and 'Holigost'; and was perhaps a translation of the English paper quoted; but it shows that at this time complaint was made to Edward IV as to the cesser of service of one chaplain who had done duty for the lepers' 'spital' and the two chapels; three days a week in the hospital and other three days in the two chapels.

Whyche complaynt made as ys above rehersed, the sayd King Edward iiiijth commanded my lord Rychard Beauchampe, then beyng bysshop of Salysburye, in ryght streyt wise to see the reformacion of all thes thyng shortly to be had, and that every thyng were dysposed accordyn to the foundacion and fyrst ordenance etc.

¹⁰ Leland, *Itin.* (ed. Hearne, 1744), ii, 4.

¹¹ B. M. Add. MS. 6214, fol. 14.

¹² What is either another version of this paper or a very incorrect copy of the same is printed in Charles Coates, *Hist. of Reading*, App. ix.

¹³ Cott. MS. Vesp. E. v, fol. 48. It begins 'Inquiratur pro rege' and is in a hand of the date of Edward IV.

SCHOOLS

The bishop came to the place in his ordinary visitation and intending to take 'due examination and utter knowledge' he continued his visitation (i.e. adjourned it) till a certain day and

departed from the place full ylle content, not only for this, but, as yt ys sayd, for many other thyngs mysordered within the place in lykewyse by wylfulness of the sayd abbot and his accessories. And within a few days after he dyssecyd by God's vysytacion. And so al thes matters stondyth styll hyderto unreformed.

What date the 'still' was we shall see in a moment. The paper goes on to say that 'the lord of Salisbury who last deceased' i.e. Bishop John Blyth, 23 February, 1494 to 23 August 1499, said that the bishop is *ex officio* 'one of the founders of the house of St. John's as he had evidence to show, and intended if God had lent him life it should have been returned again to the use of the sisters as it was of old according to the first foundation.'

Whych place as now th' abbot hath transposed to the forme of a Fre Scole, seying unto hys neighbores that he hath so provyded that a Scole master shuld have of hym yerly 10 marke and an Usher 5 marke, to teche ther Gramar free etc., seying moreover that Master Robert Shorborne, now Dene of Pollys (St. Paul's), had gevyn hym to the same entent £40. Nevertheless ther ys as yet nother scole nor man woman ne chyld relevyd ther, but the place hath the prophytts thereof thys 35 yere.

Now Robert Sherborn, a scholar of Winchester College and fellow of New College, who himself when bishop of Chichester founded a grammar school at his native place Rolleston, in Staffordshire, was dean of St. Paul's from 1499 to 1505. His connexion with Berkshire was that among his numerous preferments, he was rector of Childrey and archdeacon of the neighbouring county of Bucks. So that if this account is correct as it pretty certainly is—for it would be in the highest degree improbable that the writer would have made assertions which, if untrue, must have been obviously so to any inhabitant of Reading—the Grammar School, so far from being founded in or endowed with St. John's Hospital in 1486, as commonly stated, was not yet so endowed in 1499, and Henry VII had nothing to do with it. For if Leland's story about Henry VII told to him a whole generation or more after this paper, was true, it must surely have been mentioned by the writer of this paper, as it would have been evidence that the abbot had flouted not one king only, but two. It is to be remarked also that the paper lends no authority to the statement that the hospital had been suppressed by Abbot Thorn in 1445. This date seems to have been derived from a careless reading of the document, the thirty-five years during which nobody was 'relieved' there, being taken from 1479 the year of the visit of Edward IV, and not from some year between 1499 and 1505 when the paper was written.

It seems to be supposed that a panel picture of Henry VII which hung in the old school with the inscription—

Virginibus sedes fuit haec monialibus aedes ;
Hospitium Henricus Musis donavit amicus

is evidence of the foundation of the school by him. But the picture was in all probability a seventeenth or eighteenth century 'fake,' as the inscription shows. No one who knew the facts about St. John's Hospital could have described its female inmates as 'virgin' nuns; for they were merely widows vowed to chastity. Besides, the gift to the muses is a wholly modern conceit.¹⁴

It must not however be supposed that there was no grammar school, because there was not the Free Grammar School in St. John's Hospital. The old Grammar School no doubt continued. 'John Long, master of the Grammar School,' buried in St. Lawrence's church in 1502-3,¹⁵ must have been appointed before the date of the paper quoted. The difference between the school before the appropriation of a stipend to the master, whenever it was done, and after, seems to have been the difference between a free grammar school in which no tuition fees were charged and a grammar school in which tuition fees were charged.

A wholly unfounded statement was made in Archbishop Parker's *De Antiquitate Britannicae Ecclesiae* that Cardinal Wolsey

when fellow of Magdalen College, being expelled for depredations on the college chest, retired to Reading, where he opened a Grammar School and after a small interval sufficient to wipe off the memory of the infamy of his peculation insinuated himself into the family of Henry Dene, archbishop of Canterbury.

Coates has pointed out that the book is the work of 'so many hands that Archbishop Parker does not seem accountable for this assertion.' The statement itself is absurd, as no one was allowed to

¹⁴ At St. Albans there is a similar inscription not earlier than 1700.

¹⁵ Rev. C. Kerry, *St. Lawrence, Reading* (1883), 186.

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'open a Grammar School' except the authorized and licensed grammar school master. Wolsey could not have been the authorized master, who was John Long. There is absolutely no room in Wolsey's life for the incident. He was bursar of Magdalen in 1498-9 and 1500.

The next master we hear of is Leonard Cox. He was of great fame in his generation, and has left behind him a book which is of great interest to us as showing that the schools of that time were not wholly devoted to grinding Latin gerundives. Leonard Cox, or Cokes or Cokkys, with many other ways of spelling, was the second son of Lawrence Cox, son of John Cox of Monmouth. We can hardly help connecting him with two even more famous schoolmasters of his day and name, Richard Cox, scholar at Eton, fellow of King's, 1527, later the king's almoner and one of the three commissioners who made statutes for the cathedrals of the new foundation, and eventually bishop of Ely; and William Cokkys of Steventon, Berkshire, scholar of Winchester, fellow of New College, and second master of Winchester College, 1498-9.

Leonard Cox was a B.A. of Cambridge when on 19 February, 1529-30, he was incorporated M.A. at Oxford. At Cambridge he is apparently the 'inceptor Cokkys' [i.e. B.A.] who paid for his commons 20*d.* on 7 March, 1520-1,¹⁶ and gave as a 'caution' a chalice.¹⁷ In 1524 he published the first book in English on Rhetoric, then principally a school and not a university subject. The dedication is in the turgid and adulatory language of the period.

To the reverend father in God and his singular good lorde, the lord Hugh Faryngton, abbot of Redyng, his pore client and perpetuall servaunt, Leonard Cokes, desyreth longe and prosperous lyfe with encrease of honour

Consydering my speciall good lorde how greatly and how many ways I am bounden to your lordshyppe, and among all other that in so great a nombre of connyng men, which are now within this region, it hath pleased your goodness to accept me as worthy for to have the charge of the instruccion and bringing up of such youth as resorteth to your gramer schole, founded by your antecessours in this your towne of Redyng, I studied a long space what thyng I might do, next the busy and diligent occupieng of myself in your said servyce, to the whiche bothe conscience and your stipende doth straitly binde me, that myght be a significacion of my faithfull and servysable hart, which I owe to your lordeshyp, and agayne a long memory both of your singuler and beneficiall favour toward me; and of myne industry and diligence employed in your servyce, to some profitt or at the least way, to some delectation of the inhabitants of this noble realme now flourishyng under the most excellent and virtuous Prynce and soverain Lorde Kyng Henry the VIII

after long consideration

non offered itself more conveyent to the profyte of yonge studentes (which your good lordshyp hath alwayes tenderly favoured) and also meter to my profession, than to make some proper werke of the right pleasaunt and profitable arte of Rhetorique

50

I have partely translated out a worke of Rhetorique wrytten in the Latin tongue and partely compyled of myn owne; and so made a lytle treatise in maner of an Introduction into this aforesayd Science, and that in our Englyshe tongue; Rememberynge that every good thyng (after the saying of the philosopher) the more common it is the more better it is. And furthermore trustynge thereby to do some pleasure and ease to such as have by negligence or else fals persuacions be put to the lernyng of other sciences; or ever they have attayned any meane knowledge of the Latin tongue.

This he accordingly offered to the abbot as 'the cheyfe maintainer and nourisher of my study . . . as the first assay of my pure and simple wyt.'

The book, as might be expected, is a great deal more of a translation than a compilation of his own. That a grammar schoolmaster should at that time write a school-book in English, and that he should think a good thing better because it was in English, is a great testimony to his enlightenment. Further evidence of his advanced way of thinking may be found in his appreciation of French as well. He wrote some neat congratulatory verses in the preface to *l'Éclaircissement de la Langue Française* by John Palsgrave, published in 1530; which, he says, will make a man talk like a born Parisian

Sic te miretur, laudetque urbs docta loquentem,
Lutetia indigenam juret ut esse suum.

In 1540 he published *Commentaries on Lilly's Grammar*. That he was a Greek scholar was shown by his translating from Greek into Latin 'Mark the Hermit, or Law and Spirit.' He was a friend of Erasmus whose *Paraphrase of the Epistle to Titus* he translated into English.

After the dissolution of the abbey in 1539, the patronage of the school came to the crown, so that the school became in a sense a royal school, just as the town became once more after 400 years a royal borough.

¹⁶ Camb. Grace Bk. B. ii, 88.

¹⁷ If, as I suspect, Doctor Cokes (Ibid. 97) is a mistake for *dominus*.

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It is extraordinary that this school, for most of its life one of the great and famous public schools of England, never received any formal refoundation or endowment, but owes its continued existence merely to letters patent granting to Cox himself the school and mastership for life. As this document seems to be quite unknown, and is almost unique in school history, it is worth setting out at some length. On 10 February, 1540-41,¹⁸ the king says

for the special care and zeal which we have long before this time had and still have for the erudition and education of boys of this our realm of England in the art and science of grammar and good letters (*in arte et sciencia gramaticali et honestis litteris*) wishing that such erudition and education may in some measure be founded and increased; and for that our beloved subject Leonard Coxe, who is sufficiently skilled and learned in the art of grammar, as we have certain knowledge, as yet neither holds nor has received any office or stipend from us for such education of boys, as we certainly know, we give and grant to the same Leonard the office of Master or Preceptor of the Grammar School or School of letters of our town of Reading in our county of Berks and constitute him master or preceptor of the aforesaid school by these presents.

The king further granted to him

that messuage in Reading with its appurtenances in which the said Leonard now dwells with a small lane or piece of land on the south side of the same, and also a certain other messuage or house in Reading aforesaid now in the tenure of the same Leonard called 'a Schole house,' in which boys are now instructed and taught (*erudiuntur et docentur*) in the art and science aforesaid to have hold enjoy and exercise as well the office aforesaid to the aforesaid Leonard by himself or his sufficient deputy or deputies, as well as the said messuage house lane and other the premises to the same Leonard and his assigns during the life of the same Leonard, without rendering paying or making any account or anything else to us our heirs and successors.

For the exercise and occupation of the office aforesaid and for his diligence, labours, and expenses about the same office

the king further granted

an annuity or annual rent of £10 to the said Leonard Coxe during his life out of the issues profits farms and revenues of our manor of Chelsey.

The king also gave him as much cash as the same annuity would attain to from Michaelmas 1539, showing that since the attainder of the abbot the unfortunate master had remained unpaid.

Cox continued in office till 1547, when he seems to have sold his patent and gone abroad visiting foreign universities.

In 1548-9 we find¹⁹ Leonard Bylson receiving from the crown revenues for Berkshire for his 'fee' as 'instructor of boys in the art of grammar in the grammar school in the town of Reading, at £10 a year.' He was of Merton College, Oxford, B.A. in 1540-1. In 1548 he became rector of Havant and a canon of Salisbury and Winchester; and was the father of Thomas Bilson, a famous head master and warden of Winchester, who became bishop of Worcester, and then of Winchester.

In 1551²⁰ Bilson was succeeded by Thomas Thaccham or Thackham. He is to be identified with one of two persons of the same name, one of whom was a fellow of All Souls, B.A. in 1543, and the other a fellow of Corpus Christi College, who came from Gloucester and took his B.A. degree in the same year. Of his first mastership nothing is known. In 1551 he became vicar of St. Lawrence's,²¹ Reading, and, as will be seen, returned to the school in no very reputable way. John More, vicar of St. Giles, became master in 1553.²² He held office only to 1555. During his time Sir Thomas White founded St. John's College, Oxford, in the buildings and on the site of St. Bernard's College, and annexed two scholarships in it to Reading School; a testimony to its high standing at the time.

Julinus or Joceline Palmer, of Magdalen College, Oxford, then came in. He is famous as one of the Protestant martyrs in the Marian persecution. He was of Coventry, educated in Magdalen College School, a dean there 1546, B.A. 1547, supplicated for M.A. March, 1552-3.

Dr. Macray²³ has shown that the College Register disproves the statement that he was expelled from his fellowship, as stated by Foxe, for libels and satires against the Protestant President, Walter Haddon. He merely had leave of absence 'to teach a gentleman's sons' (*instituere filios generosi cujusdam*). The gentleman is said to have been Sir Francis Knollys, the lessee of Reading Abbey. It was no doubt through Knollys's influence that Palmer became master of

¹⁸ Pat. 32 Hen. VIII, pt. 5, m. 7. ¹⁹ Land Rev. Rec. Acct. (Ser. 1), bdle. 96. 2-3 Edw. VI, m. 25.

²⁰ Ibid. 5 Edw. VI, m. 25; 3-4 Edw. VI, m. 25.

²¹ Coates, *Hist. of Reading*, 334, but his name is omitted from the list of vicars printed on p. 194 and Thomas Greenway covers the time.

²² Land Rev. Rec. Acct. 6 Edw. VI—1 Mary, pt. 2, m. 6.

²³ *Reg. Magd. Col.* (New Ser.), ii, 120.

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Reading School. He wrote a paper violently attacking the Council for burning Hooper. This and other incriminating papers were found in his study, and he was threatened with persecution unless he would leave Reading and resign the school to Thackham. This he did. After some delay he obtained letters from the president of Magdalen recommending him for the mastership of a school in Gloucestershire, but as his stipend had meanwhile been received by Thackham he returned to Reading to get it and to dispose of his goods. He slept at the 'Cardinal's Hat.' Here Hampton, who is said to have been 'sometyme their scholemaster,' but if so must have been usher, not head master, met him, and he and Thackham betrayed him to the mayor. He was put in prison, and after two examinations before the mayor, brought before the chancellor of the diocese at a visitation held at Newbury on 16 July; next day he was found guilty of heresy, and at five o'clock the same day burnt. Thackham was a vicar at Northampton, when Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was published in 1562, and under pressure from the Recorder, wrote a letter to Foxe, challenging his account.

Palmer had the schole when he came to Readyng of one Syr John More, vycar of Saynte Giles in Quene Marie's tyme. which he taught diligently, behaved himself honestly, came to the church many Sundaies and holidayes with his schollars and sat in St. John's Chappel, lyved so quietly among them that he had not one enemy in that towne.

Yet, according to Thackham, he gave up the school because of a quarrel with John Rydgies, 'the quene's servant and one of the stable.' Then

Palmer came to me and said that he would give up the schole, yf he might have reasonably for the patent, which hung but upon the liffe of one olde man called Cox. . . . I told Palmer that since Quene Marie came to the crowne I was put from my vicaridge there and was constrayned to labour for my lyvyng. For as it is known I went every weke four score miles save four (76) on foot to buy yearne and sell it agayne at Reading of which I waxed werye. . . . So that I could gette the goodwyll of the towne to have it agayne I would geve him with reason for the patent.

So Thackham agreed to give Palmer £2 down and £4 more 'at two conveynent tymes.' He alleged that Palmer came back, not to get his stipend but to visit the cook's wife, at whose house he had boarded when at Reading, and that her husband being jealous betrayed him. But why this is introduced except by way of prejudice is not very clear, as Thackham goes on to assert that it was a letter from Palmer to Mr. Edmunds, the mayor, who had charge of the school patent, which caused his arrest. Witnesses were, however, examined, who corroborated the story as told in Foxe, especially that Palmer was staying at the 'Cardinal's Hat' when arrested. There seems to be a very strong case against Mr. Thackham. Anyhow, Thackham returned to the school and held it through Queen Mary's time and up to 1560, when he went to Northampton. Oddly enough, the Crown Receiver's accounts show the stipend as paid to Palmer; from which it is to be presumed that the patent was still standing in his name, and that Thackham must all the time have been receiving the stipend in the name of the man he had sent to his death.

Queen Elizabeth granted a charter 23 February, 1562, to the town,

and in consideration that the mayor and burgesses shall acquit the Crown of £10 to be paid yearly to the master of the free school within the borough and likewise of £3 paid to the collector of the Crown rents of the said borough

the queen granted to the said mayor and burgesses 'the fee farm rent payable to the town to the amount of £26 19s. 0½d.,' with certain lands and the fairs held in the Forbury,²⁴ then leased to Sir Francis Englefield by Queen Mary; 'and the gate house late the Compter prison and a tenement adjoining near the monastery: the schoolhouse then or lately in the possession of Thomas Thackham,' and various chantry lands, which amounted in all to the clear yearly value of £41 9s. 7d., out of which a rent of £22 was reserved to the crown.

And whereas a school or grammar school founded and erected by our predecessors is in the borough for educating the boys of the said borough and others in literature, we will and grant to the aforesaid mayor and capital burgesses of the borough of Reading aforesaid that they and their successors for the time being shall from time to time when they please nominate, elect and appoint one fit person to be and continue master, teacher or instructor in the same school or grammar school

with power to remove or expel him for fit cause and appoint another in his place.

It is plain that Queen Elizabeth gave no additional endowment to the school. All that she did was to release a proportionate part of the rent which Reading town paid to the crown, and make the town, instead of the crown officials, pay it to the school, and to transfer to the town council the appointment of the master. From the records of St. John's College, Oxford, Coates informs

²⁴ This word seems to mean the land in front of or before the bury or borough.

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us that John Smith, who was an old Reading boy, having been one of the scholars of St. John's elected from the school, became a fellow and M.A. in 1569, and was appointed master that year, and in 1574 vicar of St. Lawrence's, Reading, in which church he was buried in 1596. Archbishop Laud, born in Reading in 1573, was a boy under him, and characterized him as 'an ill schoolmaster,' though he is reported to have said to Laud, 'when you are a little great man, remember Reading school.' Laud obtained a Reading scholarship at St. John's in 1589. On 1 March, 1588,²⁵ the first town council minute-book records that Thomas Braddock, B.A., was elected schoolmaster of this borough (*in officium ludimagistri istius burgi*). He was a fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and incorporated at Oxford in 1584. He barely stayed a year. The record of the next and all future elections is in English. 'Memorandum that the 4th daye of April the yeare abovesaide, 31 Eliz., 1589, Mr. Thomas Charlton, Master of Artes, is chosen Schoolmaster of the Free Schoole.' He had taken his B.A. degree at Oxford in February, 1577-8, M.A. 1 July, 1580, and was vicar of Faringdon in 1582. He was therefore in orders, but it should be noted that the title reverend is never used in the town or school documents of parsons until about the middle of the eighteenth century. Charlton inhabited a house, formerly the Mitre Tavern, 'at the west church doore' of St. Lawrence in 1596.

The old gild hall had been abandoned after the Dissolution for the Grey Friars' church, the body and side aisles of which Henry VIII in 1541 had granted to the corporation to be converted into a gild hall with power to alienate or convert the same. In 1578 it was converted into a hospital or workhouse, and the town hall was then apparently erected as the upper storey of the school.

The first nomination of scholars to St. John's preserved is in 1594, so that we miss that of William Laud.

At the meeting²⁶ in the Guildhall the 28th June 1594 about the nomination of a scholler of this Grammer Schole to be preferred to St. John's College in Oxeforde, in the place of William Finnemore Bachelour in the Civill Lawe, Richard Lydell son of Mr Thomas Lydell was nominated and commended by the maior and the more part of the Hed burgesses of the said borroughe.

The nine head or capital burgesses were the real governing body of the borough, as they elected not only the mayor but the twelve secondary burgesses.

When Charlton left does not appear. His successor, John Rawlinson, is only known from being mentioned as on a commission²⁷ in 1600 to inquire into the church lands of St. Lawrence. He was at Merchant Taylors' School in 1585, matriculated at St. John's College 15 October, 1591, aged 15, B.A. 5 July, 1595, M.A. 1599, fellow 1602. He left to become rector of Taplow in 1606, was made D.D. 1 June, 1608, principal of St. Edmund's Hall in 1610, a canon of Salisbury and chaplain to the king.

Andrew Bird, whom Coates assigns to 1610, apparently succeeded in 1606, as on 15 December of that year 'the cofferer paid Mr. Bird the Schoolmaster's fee of £10,' while on 12 December, 1608, he 'paid Mr. Blgrave £4, the rent for the schoolmaster's house, which was the Mitre Tavern.' Bird was of Merton College, matriculated 15 October, 1591, aged 18; became B.A. 27 February, 1594-5, and M.A. 23 June, 1599. He combined his school with practice as a physician, becoming B. Med. 10 July, 1615, licensed to practise 11 July 1615, and Doctor of Medicine 25 June, 1618. Though somewhat startling to our ideas, this conjunction is by no means unprecedented. At Winchester the famous Christopher Johnson in Elizabeth's reign did the same thing, at Gloucester and in Essex similar cases occur about this date. Coates in his history assumed that Bird gave up the mastership on becoming a doctor of medicine, and interpolated John Denison, student of Balliol, as master in 1618. But Denison, as vicar of St. Lawrence's in 1610, assisted with 'Mr. Andrewe Bird, scoolemaster and others intelligent and judicious,' when Thomas Turnour, 'sonne of Mr. Thomas Turnour of Reading,' was elected scholar of St. John's. Anthony Wood speaks of Denison as 'chief moderator of the school at Reading,' but if this does not mean head usher it is merely a mistake. On 18 December, 1612, upon letters from the Lord Hollis 'in behalf of Mr Byrd, schoolemaster in the Free Schoole,' his stipend was increased £6 per annum, 'besides the favour of his dwelling house to holde at the plesure of this companie.' On 19 September, 1623, 'a letter from Lord Wallingford in the behaulf of the Schoolemaster concerning the abating of £6 fee, formerly allowed him, to be restored and paid quarterly as before tyme.' Perhaps the corporation resented his double profession. A little later, on 9 June, 1630, we come across one of the latest instances of the successful exercise of the episcopal authority for the

²⁵ Guilding, *Rec. of the Borough of Reading*. From this book all quotations from the records down to 1655 are taken.

²⁶ Guilding, *Rec. of the Borough of Reading*, i, 423.

²⁷ Preserved in St. Lawrence Church chest.

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He therefore recommended them to recover the house for the master and also to 'make some addicion to increase his meanes,' and meanwhile to write to St. John's, where 'some of your sonnes,'—meaning himself—'have thriven extraordinarily well.' The college wrote back to say they had 'submitted one to My Lord's grace his approbation. His name is Mr. William Page, a master of arts and fellow of our house, a man able for his schollershippe, conformable to the doctrine and discipline of the church and for his demeanour (for ought we could ever understand) unblameable.' They thanked, somewhat sarcastically perhaps, the corporation 'for the free promise of an improvement of your ancient stipend . . . with an unasked liberality.' On 15 December the archbishop wrote to the corporation recommending Page, who, like his predecessor, was a Merchant Taylors' boy, admitted in 1628. On 20 December, on receipt of the letter, Page was 'instantly admitted.' He does not seem to have been a great success, as on 11 February next, 1636-7, Mr. Page complained he had been threatened with a pikestaff by one John Milsoppe junior, 'that he would see his hart-bloode,' and

informacion given that Charles Nethercok, Robert Milsoppe and Francis Hobby with some others, did abuse and laugh at the schollers corrected for their neglect in the schoole by their master, and knowinge that some of the Free Schoole scholars did play truant and their fellow scholars being sent to find them the sd. Nethercok etc. combyned themselves to defend the treuantes and threatened the schollers to bete or misuse them if etc. It was ordered the said offenders should be whipt in the Towne Hall with rodde per bidell.'

As might have been expected, this did not conduce to enhance Mr. Page's authority or popularity. On 12 January, 1641, he again came with a doleful tale to the town council and 'complayned of abuses, done to him on Monday last as he was goinge home from his school by divers idle boys (naming five) examined. All of them to be whipped, some in the Free Schoole and some of them by their fathers in their own houses.'

Meanwhile the school received a munificent augmentation from Laud. By a deed of 26 March, 1640, he gave the manor and lands at Strowd alias Shiplake in Bray in Berkshire, bought of Sir John Blagrove, to the mayor, aldermen and burgesses (as they were now called by an enlarged charter procured by him for the town on 17 December, 1638), 'for the good uses hereafter declared':

including a payment of £20 yearly to the Free Schoole of Reading and to his successors schoolemasters there; provided always that if the Schoolemaster . . . be not able and diligent (of which I make my visitors hereafter mentioned, judges) . . . the paiement . . . shall cease and be bestowed upon the bindinge out of more youths apprentices. . . .

And to the end this werke maie the better proceed and contynue I appoint the vice chancellor of the Universitie of Oxford, the President of Sainct John Baptists College and the Warden of All Soules Colledge in the said University for visitors of this work of charity . . . whiche shall be kept everie third year beginninge from the seaventh of October which shalbe next after my decease . . . in the Guildhall.

The visitation was only to last one day and £30 was allowed, £10 every year 'to entertain the visitors and find them convenient man's meat and horsemeat.'

Though the gift was only to take effect on Laud's death, it was put into operation at once by his finding £200 a year for the purpose, the first instalment being sent 25 June, 1640. Even when he was in the Tower after the Long Parliament met, he nevertheless sent the money regularly up to October, 1642.

On 14 August, 1644, Page had fled to the Royalists, and had been sequestered, and 'Mr. Thomas Pocock upon his humble suit is permitted for the time present to teach schollers in the Free Schoole.' He was probably Thomas Pocock who was demy of Magdalen 1625-9, and took his B.A. degree 26 January, 1627-8, a son of Edward Pocock, vicar of Chieveley in 1603. He was evidently mistrusted by the corporation, and apparently with good reason, having probably not been in the scholastic line for many years.

On 12 June, 1645, he was paid £5 for half a year, and he continued to be paid at this rate 'out of the Archbishop's moneys,' the town quietly dropping its own payment, till 31 August, 1646, when there 'was some debate about the settling of a godly schoolemaster in the towne. Mr. Pocock to be examined by Ministers touching his sufficiency.' On 4 November, Mr. Fowler and Mr. Wylde were desired 'to repaire to the Free Schoole to prove Mr. Pocock whether he be a sufficient and able schoolmaster to teach schollers and fitt them for the Universitie.' On 6 January, 1646-7 Pocock told the corporation that 'he attended yesterday for his tryall and noe other man attended. The company moved that another day should be appointed . . . but Mr. Pocock refused to attend again.' On 14 July, 1647, he asked for his statutable arrears, and was told to bring in copies of the orders and certificates of the committee for his admittance.

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On 10 October, 1648, the first visitation under Laud's deed was held by Edward Reynolds, the vice-chancellor, Francis Cheynell, president of St. John's, and John Palmer, M.D., warden of All Souls.

Upon several complaints against Mr. Pocock . . . and examination of the proficiency of his schollars in his presence (he himself refusing to be examined and declining all other ingenious waies of tryal by the visitors) we doe conceive the said Mr. Pocock to be altogether unable to govern the schoole and therefore we doe not approve of [him] as having any right . . . to receive the £20 . . . by the will and graunte of the late archbishop.

At the same time the visitors laid down rules for the guidance of the visitations in general.

It was likewise thought fitt, that, for the time to come, the masters of the free Schoole in Readinge be examined as followith :—

ARTICLES OF ENQUIRY FOR THE VISITATION OF THE SCHOOLE OF READING

- 1 What authors are your schollers able to give an account of, in their severall forms ?
- 2 How many schollers have you in the Schoole ripe for the universitie ?
- 3 What method do you use in teachinge ?
- 4 What exercises do your Schollers daily or weekly perform ?
- 5 Do you train up your Schollers in the knowledge of religion : and what course do you take for that purpose ?
- 6 Do you pray with your schollers morning and evening ?
- 7 By what testimony doth it appeare that you have been approved to be able, and that you are diligent in discharge of your dutie ?
- 8 What times of remission are usually granted your Schollers by way of recreation ?
- 9 Doe you diligently attend upon the public ordinances of God ? doe you cause your Schollers to frequent the place of publick worshipp and see that they behave themselves reverently there during the time of all exercises of religion ?

On 29 May, 1649, Mr. William Wise was recommended by Mr. Daniell Blagrove

and thought well of by the Companie to be a fitting and able schoolmaster to traine up the schollers in the Free Schoole ; and after some discussion had with him Mr. Wise desired further time to consider thereof.

As no more is heard of Mr. Wise he probably thought better of accepting a post not yet vacant. Mr. Pocock at the same meeting made known his proposals on leaving at Michaelmas next, viz. 'to receive £15 collected of the inhabitants and £20 of the bishop's, i.e. Laud's gift, and half a year's stipend due at his first coming.' On 17 October he received Laud's £20 and £10 from the town, and promised to deliver up the school.

William Waddon was then appointed. On 21 June, 1650 the town refused to revive what they called 'the auntient gratuitie' of £10, though it was one of the conditions on which they held their charter, because 'the Hall is indebted.' Complaint was made that Pocock kept a Grammar School in the town, whereupon he was sent for 'and wished either to forbear kepinge of such a schoole or to repay the money that was collected for him in the towne.' At the next meeting, 26 June, he answered that he 'was resolved to keepe a Grammar Schoole in this towne, for he knewe noe lawe to contradict it.' No doubt he was right, for the law of licensing schoolmasters was purely ecclesiastical—part of the canon law, and the ecclesiastical courts having been swept away with the bishops and archdeacons there was no law to prevent anyone teaching without licence.

Waddon stayed no long time, as on 8 December, 1652, 'Mr. Reeve the schoolmaster' was permitted to hold part of the dwelling-house of Mr. John Kendrick's gift till he could otherwise accommodate himself ; an entry which shows that no attention had been paid to Laud's recommendation to the Corporation to recover the schoolmaster's house. Gabriel Reeve seems to have been a Winchester and New College man who had taken his M.A. degree 21 January, 1618-19, and had been second master of Winchester College, and afterwards head master of Dorchester School, from which he had been ejected by the Royalists. He had then been made a fellow of St. John's by the Parliamentary Visitors. He was old for a schoolmaster at that date, being fifty-seven years old. His stay also was short. On 30 July, 1655, an ejected fellow of St. John's was elected, Robert Jennings, but he was disallowed, and ejected by the Parliamentary Committee for Scandalous Ministers and Schoolmasters, apparently as a malignant who had been in arms against the Parliament.

On 2 January, 1655-6

Mr. Thomas Gerrard, M.A., one of the fellows of St. John's College in Oxford, produced an order from his highness the Lord Protector, which was openly read, constituting the said Mr. Gerrard schoolmaster of the free schoole in this borough, during the life of Mr. Page from whom the same was

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sequestered. Whereupon in obedience to the said order it is now ordered and agreed that Mr. Robert Jennings, late schoolmaster there, be immediately removed from thence, and that the possession of the said school be delivered to the said Mr. Gerrard accordingly.

The election of scholars to St. John's College, like the school, went regularly on during the Commonwealth, though Richard King, elected 17 June, and John Gripp, 19 August, 1659, had to be re-elected after the Restoration. This event was casting its shadow before, when on 19 September, 1659, Mr. Thomas Gerrard was 'summoned to show by what title he holds the school.' On 23 September he 'desires he might not be interrogated, no man being bound to accuse himself.' So on 3 October he was 'disowned' as schoolmaster. On 12 October, 1659,

Resolved that the order of Oliver late Lord Protector and all proceedings thereon are groundless, illegal and null, that Thomas Gerrard be removed, and Mr. Robert Jennings, M.A., who was formerly legally placed in the said school as schoolmaster thereof, be forthwith restored thereunto.

On 31 October Mr. Edwards, being nominated as schoolmaster, is desired to come and exercise the scholars. But Mr. Gerrard, as became a Parliamentary true blue, showed fight. Mr. Edwards on 5 November was desired again to enter on the 7th, Monday, and Mr. Jennings was requested to resign his interest. On the 29th Mr. Gerrard was told that if he kept possession he would have no more pay. On 2 January, 1659-60 and 13 April, 1660, Edwards again desired to come. But on 13 February Gerrard was still there and ordered to be paid up to Michaelmas last. On 24 September, 1660, it was resolved that Mr. Gerrard being evicted by law Mr. Edwards be again desired to come.

In the end the much-desired Mr. Edwards never came at all. Thomas Singleton, M.A., was appointed master, 29 October, 1660. He was an assistant master at Eton. Mr. Coates²⁸ says that he 'officiated by deputy till next spring.' In point of fact, he could not obtain possession. Mr. Gerrard still held out, and was eventually ordered to be paid up to 1 April, 1661, deducting law costs. Meanwhile, on 3 December, 1660, Dr. William Page, the pre-Civil War master, put in his claim by a writ of restitution, and only on 6 March following, no doubt for some payment, resigned his right to the school. It was not until 7 October, 1661, that Singleton's appointment was sealed.

Singleton, when he did arrive, stayed barely a year. He was, perhaps, too Presbyterian for the Restoration, for he afterwards had a flourishing private school of 300 boys in Clerkenwell, many of them Dissenters. On 14 October, 1662, Thomas Thackham, M.A., was appointed master, and was probably the grandson of the previous Thackham. He was a scholar of Winchester and New College, where he became fellow in 1650, and then master of Newport School in the Isle of Wight. He was vicar of Writtle in Essex, a New College living. This may account for his offering in August, 1668, 'for the service of the Corporation to keep the Mastership or leave it, at the pleasure of the mayor and aldermen.'

Thomas Ireland²⁹ seems to be the Westminster scholar of that name who matriculated at Christ Church in 1651, but was ejected, and then went to the bar, being student of Gray's Inn, 1657, and B.C.L. from St. Mary's Hall, 4 July, 1659. He is described as being of Wallingford when elected master, probably being master of Wallingford School. He only stayed a short time. Then, by an odd coincidence, Thomas Thackham, like his ancestor, enjoyed a second term of office, for on 30 July, 1670,

Articles were exhibited against Mr. Samuel House, one of the aldermen of this borough: First, that the said Saml-House falsely pretending an order from the mayor and aldermen came to Mr. Thos. Thackham, master of the free school in Reading, and told him that if he did deny to receive Mr. Singleton, a nonconformist, as his assistant to teach his scholars, that then the mayor and aldermen would remove Mr. Thackham from the said school; with other threatening language.

This Singleton was perhaps the ex-master or his son. The explanation of Thackham's return appears in an order, 13 January, 1672-3, removing Thomas Ireland as being a lunatic.

Mr. William Gostwicke was the same day appointed master, 'on the recommendation of the bishop of Bath and Wells.' He was a Devonian, and of Exeter College, 'batteler,' April, 1661. He held the mastership for thirteen years, resigning for the rectory of Purley.

Another Merchant Taylors' and St. John's man, Thomas May, assistant master at Tonbridge School, came 26 March, 1686-7. With him the era of long masterships, characteristic of the

²⁸ Coates seems to have got hold of the wrong man, making him be son of a member of the Reading Corporation, born in 1619; a practically impossible date.

²⁹ Here again Coates had got hold of the wrong man, making him a preacher soon after the Reformation, with a daughter married to Bishop Manningham, who only went to Winchester College in 1661, and was bishop of Chichester sometime in the eighteenth century.

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eighteenth century and in the end destructive of the schools, began. May remained till 1716, twenty years. His successor, Haviland John Hiley, of Balliol College, held office for thirty-four years; John Spicer, a Reading boy of St. John's, for twenty-one years, 1750-71; William Wise, of Coventry School and St. John's, eleven years; and, finally, Richard Valpy, of Jersey and Pembroke College, ruled for no less than fifty-five years, probably a record head-mastership, from 1781 to 1836.

Of these, Hiley is called by Coates 'the Busby of Reading.' He built a new master's house by Vastern Lane with accommodation for boarders. This house was in the time of Spicer, a pupil of Hiley, bought from Dr. Coddington, Hiley's son-in-law, in 1771 by public subscription. Under him Mr. Wells, in *Famous Men of Reading School*, claims Henry Addington, the prime minister, as a Reading scholar, but Addington only used Reading as a preparatory school, having been, like his father before him, at Winchester for some four years, where, characteristically, he never attained to 'Sixth Book.' The most famous Readingian was John Lemprière, the author of Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*. Dr. Lemprière was head of the school in 1783, and assistant master under Dr. Valpy, before going to the head-mastership of Abingdon. Dr. Valpy, who from 1787 also held a rectory at Stradishall, Suffolk, was also a name in all the schools from his Greek Delectus. He is said to have been a mighty flogger, and to have refused two bishoprics. In 1786 the town hall was rebuilt, which caused on 4 March, 1789, a complaint by Dr. Valpy, that the noises in the hall prevented his teaching the children in the room under it, while the parents complained that the boys were sent home neglected because they could not be taught. A committee was appointed to confer with Dr. Valpy. In the result he built a new school 52 ft. long by the master's house, at his own expense. He also added to the master's house a hall and library. Unfortunately the land on which the new school was built was leasehold for three lives, and the lease was allowed to run out. The schoolhouse was on a similar lease. Its garden was sold by Dr. Valpy's son.

The school by this time had become practically entirely self-supporting, the whole endowment consisting of £10 from the corporation, and Archbishop Laud's gift, then about £30 a year. The fees charged for day boys were £7 7s. a year for classics, and £4 4s. for mathematics and writing. There were a good many boarders, several of the assistant masters having them as well as the head master. Under Dr. Valpy the school was at first exceedingly flourishing, with over 120 boys.

Dr. Valpy paid great attention to the school plays which were performed at the triennial visitations. He edited for them acting and bowdlerized editions of four of Shakespeare's plays and four of those of Plautus. Imitating Winchester under Queen Elizabeth, and anticipating Bradfield under Queen Victoria, Valpy produced also Greek plays of Sophocles and Euripides in Greek costume.

But Dr. Valpy stayed too long. He had quarrelled, rightly no doubt, with the corporation, who scandalously neglected the school. His son Francis, an eminent Greek scholar, succeeded, but the school went down under him. He resigned in 1839. On 6 September the town council appointed as his successor Robert Appleton, M.A., of Pembroke College, Oxford. The school, with its old and cramped buildings and no playground, was becoming quite out of date. The numbers rose from 30 in 1840 to 40 in 1848. From that point they fell ceaselessly, till on 28 March, 1866, when Mr. Fearon visited the school for the Endowed Schools Commission he found 3 boys, 2 day scholars, and a boarder who had arrived from France a few weeks before. His report condemned the school buildings. There was no playground, no class-rooms, the offices were exceedingly bad, the accommodation for boarders very inferior, the rooms low, ill-furnished, damp, and dirty. At Michaelmas, 1866, Mr. Appleton resigned and the school was closed.

It remained closed for four years, while the Reading School Act, 1867, confirming a scheme of the Court of Chancery, was procured and a new school built. This scheme was the first known body of regulations ever made for the school in the whole course of its (at least) 750 years of existence. It created a governing body of thirteen trustees, the mayor, six aldermen, three councillors, and the vicars of the three churches. They were empowered to acquire a new site and erect new buildings with the sum of £1,000 which the Charity Commissioners extracted from the corporation in 1863 as the price of the old school, and £800 for which the life of the last life in the lease of the master's house had been insured, and the funds of the then unused and useless Kendrick's Loan Charity. The present site of about 10 acres was bought in 1869 for £4,115, and another 3 acres added in 1873 at a cost of £2,025. Some £34,000 was spent on buildings; the main school and class-rooms and entrance-lodge in 1869, and a master's house with room for 50 boarders, chapel, and sanatorium, in 1873. About £10,000 was found by subscription, and £20,000 by borrowing on mortgage from the Economic Assurance Society. The remainder of this mortgage was paid off by the corporation under the Reading Corporation Act, 1882.

The school was reopened in 1871 under Dr. Stokoe, who was extremely successful, and raised the school to 207. But because a large number of these were boarders, without whose assistance a school with next to no endowment could not possibly be successful, or provide a first-grade education for Reading day-boys at £10 a year fee, the usual local jealousy broke out. The

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head master was accused of neglecting the day boys for the boarders, of making the education too high, and so forth. In 1882 he resigned to go to King's College School, London.

He was succeeded by Dr. Walker, under whom 78 boarders in 1882 sank to 16 in 1887, and the whole school from 142 to 74.

In 1888 Mr. Francis P. Barnard, of Pembroke College, Oxford, was appointed head master. He found no boarders and 34 day boys. In 1890 he had raised the numbers to 104 day boys, but only 14 boarders. These numbers, with tuition fees at an average of £12 5s. a year, spelt insolvency if the mortgage debt to the corporation was enforced. In 1894 the Rev. William Charles Eppstein became head master. He was educated at Thame Grammar School and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he was a junior optime in 1885. He was assistant master at Hinckley Grammar School, the South-Eastern College, Ramsgate, and for a year at Bradfield College. Since he has been at Reading he has been incorporated at, and become a D.D. of, Oxford. Prosperity has once more returned to the school under him. It now numbers 145 boys of whom 60 are boarders, with a staff of 10 assistant masters. The boarders are divided between the school house under the head master, Mr. H. Diemer, in the west wing, and the Rev. A. D. H. Atkin in the right-wing house. The boarding fees are £75 a year for boys under 14, and £85 a year over that age. But as long as the debt to the corporation is retained as a sword of Damocles over the head of the school it can never reach assured prosperity. An attempt was made in 1905 by some members of the corporation to assert a claim to repayment, and so to close the school in the interests of the lower grade Kendrick's School. A weighty memorial promoted by 'old boys' made wiser counsels prevail. It would be a reflection, indeed, on the County Borough of Reading, just at the time that the town council has once more become responsible for the education of the town, if they destroyed an institution which has illuminated Reading for more than 800 years; and is now more efficient, and, in these days of competitive brains, more necessary to a growing town than it has been throughout the whole of its long life.

ABINGDON SCHOOL

It has been constantly repeated that in Abingdon Abbey 'Henry I received under Grimbald that education which in after years won him the title of "Beauclerc"'; but there is not the smallest particle of evidence for the story. William of Malmesbury, who, as we have seen, knew Reading Abbey well and therefore knew Abingdon, a house of his own order, and knew Henry I, is the chief authority for Henry's education, and he says that Henry

received his first instruction in the rudiments in a grammar school (*tyrocinium rudimentorum in scolis egit litteralibus*) and so eagerly did he imbibe the honey of learning (*litterarum mella*) into his very marrow that afterwards no confusions of war, no political shocks, could shake it out of his noble mind.

Now the mention of the grammar school shows that Henry was not educated in a monastery at all. If he had been, the monk, Malmesbury, who lost no opportunity of depreciating the secular clergy and lauding the monks, would undoubtedly not have lost the opportunity of saying so. The Abingdon chronicle itself gives evidence against Abingdon, for it records¹ that in 1084 Henry, when he was 15 years old (*jam adolescens*, as the chronicler expresses it), 'while his brothers were away in Normandy, by his father's orders spent Easter at Abingdon with Osmund, bishop of Salisbury, and Miles Crispin, of Wallingford, provisions being supplied by Robert d'Oily, constable of Oxford Castle, not only for the royal party but for the monastery.' The fact that this particular Easter holiday is recorded as having been spent at Abingdon, not, be it observed, under the tutelage of the abbot or monks, but under a bishop and a knight, is proof that Henry certainly was not there at other times, and had not received his education there.

In the great towns, where the cathedrals were held by monks or where there were great monasteries, there were three types of schools. Of these only one can be called a school in any effective sense—a public grammar school; which was in the town, not the monastery, was staffed by secular clerks, laymen, or priests, and was for the benefit of the general public, cleric or lay. The other two were the novices' school and the almonry school. The novices' school was held in the cloister under a monk for the young monks or novices, in numbers small, not exceeding in the greatest monasteries a dozen at any one time, generally less and not infrequently none; and the instruction given was rather in the Benedictine rule than in the subjects of a classical or liberal education. The almonry schools, beginning in the first quarter of the fourteenth century onwards, were charity schools for a few poor boys, not exceeding generally 13 in number, who were clothed, lodged, and boarded in the almonry, under the control of the almoner, a monk, but taught by a secular clerk, and theoretically always, and, at first, practically, treated as paupers and fed on the broken meats of the monks. At Abingdon it is questionable to which of these three schools the

¹ *Hist. Mon. Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 12.

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scanty indications of schooling connected with the monastery which we find in the sparse records remaining refer. Unfortunately none of the extant obediensaries' accounts are those of the almoner, so we do not know for certain whether there was at Abingdon an almonry school such as we saw at Reading.

In an appendix to the earliest chartulary is a statement of the duties of the obediensaries, drawn up for the purpose of convincing the court of Exchequer that on a vacancy in the abbacy the king ought not to enjoy the whole revenues of the abbey, as if he did the whole institution would come to a standstill. The statement therefore showed the necessary outgoings from each officer's estates as a reason for his enjoying them during the vacancy. Anything therefore not causing expense would not be mentioned. The almoner was, as his name implies, the monk assigned to distribute the alms of the convent. Like other officers he had his separate estate. The statement in question includes, among his duties, these :² 'He shall find mats under the feet of the monks in the choir on the vigil of All Saints ; and the same under the feet of the boys and youths. In chapter, in chapel, in the boys' school (*in scola puerorum*) he shall provide scourges (*disciplinas*, whips, birches, or whatever flogging instruments were in use) ; in the refectory, spoons, trenchers, scrubbing brushes, baskets.'

What is the boys' school mentioned, and who are the boys? The same boys seem to be mentioned again in connexion with the precentor's (*cantor*) duties.

The Precentor for the fault of a lie and carelessness in choir office shall pull the boys' ears and hair and strike them with his hand. . . . He shall find new cupboards (*almaria*) for the boys and youths, and other cupboards for the convent books and repair them when broken. . . . When the Precentor begins the anthem at the Magnificat and Benedictus the boys ought to bow both before and after.

So the sacrist, or 'secretarius' as he is called,

Every Saturday shall find a candle for the Refectorer, the same for the Subchamberlain, the same for the boys and youths in pairs (*binis et binis*), and an ell long. . . . He shall find the boys' forms, and a bier for the dead.

The sub-chamberlain is to distribute all the clothing. 'Stockings shall be given first to the boys, youths, novices, last to the Priors.' The chamberlain 'shall find a lantern for the boys, youths, or servants (*subditis*).'

If 'the boys' means in each place the same thing, they must be the choir or almonry boys, and the 'boys' school' means the school of the charity boys in the almonry. Probably the 'youths' means the novices. On the other hand, it is possible that the novices are included under both boys and youths, though the exclusive usage of the term 'youths' for the novices in the Winchester obediensaries' accounts certainly points to there being a distinction between them.

When we come to the Abingdon obediensaries' accounts^{2a} we find no educational payments till 1375-6. In the earlier accounts the novices are mentioned, but not in connexion with teaching. Thus the lignar or wood-provider paid 6*d.* for the deacons and novices for their special Christmas sports on St. Stephen's Day, and so on. When we come to the treasurer there are among his 'necessary expenses' certain charitable payments, outside the monastery, which throw some light on our subject :—

To the poor of Cuddesdon (Codesdon), £3 6*s.* 8*d.* ; to poor scholars, 5*s.* ; to the poor of St. John's [Hospital], 3*s.* ; to two students at Oxford from Midsummer Day to St. Thomas's Day (23 December), £3 15*s.* 2*d.* ; to Robert Wantage (Wantyng), from St. Thomas's Day to Midsummer (St. John Baptist, 24 June), £1 12*s.* 7*d.* ; to the same Roger and Robert for copes and wine, £1. Unforeseen expenses :—To the students at Oxford for St. Edmund's Day, 1*s.* 8*d.* Among the debtors are :—'Ten. Scol mayster 5*s.* 8*d.*' Among the creditors are :—'Poor scholars, for past years and this year, £2 15*s.* ; students at Oxford, 1*s.* ; St. John's poor, 3*s.*'

Of the various payments for schools and scholars mentioned we must distinguish between the payments to poor Oxford or Cambridge scholars, which were mere charitable gifts to wandering scholars, licensed beggars 'who sang *Salve Regina* at rich men's doors,' and the payments to students at Oxford. The 'two students at Oxford' on the other hand were the young monks whom, according to the Benedictine rules of 1337, each monastery was bound to send to study theology and other higher faculties. The next treasurer's account, that for 1383-4, makes this clear: 'To two students at Oxford in full payment of the fixed sum (*pensionis*) due to them by the Benedictine constitutions, £11 2*s.* 8*d.* ; and the rest they shall receive from the Chamberlain, the Cellarer, the Refectorar and customary offerings.' What 'the rest' was does not appear. But in 1428 the chamberlain paid 'to the students at Oxford for St. Edmund's feast 3*s.* 4*d.*' the refectorar in 1422-3

¹ Cott. MS. Claud. B. vi, fol. 203, b. 1.

^{2a} Printed *Camd. Soc.* 1892. The original rolls are in the possession of Sir Edmund Verney.

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'12*d.* for St. Edmund's feast.' No cellarer's account is extant. But the treasurer himself paid in 1440-1 'to the students at Oxford for gaudies³ on St. Edmund's feast, by courtesy (*pro gaudiis, in curialitate*, i.e. not because he was bound to do so), 6*s.* 8*d.* If, therefore, the sums thus paid by the other officers were all that they paid, it may be inferred that the full scholarship or exhibition of a student monk at the university was £6 a year. This would be a very ample one, nearly thrice that of an ordinary secular clerk there, which was very commonly £2 13*s.* 4*d.*

In 1383-4 the treasurer also paid 'to Thomas Sherchedene student for his cope (*pro capa sua*) 13*s.* 4*d.*,' and to 'brother Thomas Shercheden, by the convent's grace, because he has not yet received from the chamber and from oblations, as his fellows, priests, have done, 20*s.*' The last two payments were apparently made to Shercheden at Oxford, on his becoming a priest, unless *capa* means his master's hood or cap, in which case it must be a payment on taking his degree. These students were at Gloucester College, the common college of the southern Benedictines at Oxford, now Worcester College, where the arms of Abingdon Abbey may still be seen on some of the old rooms in the garden. Abingdon ought to have contributed a good many more than 2 students to Oxford, as the proper proportion was ten per cent. of the monks, and Abingdon was supposed to keep 60 to 100 monks. It may be observed, however, that in 1417-18 there were only an abbot and 34 monks, and Mr. Hacker's 'travelling expenses to divers places to get youths to shave' (i.e. to become monks) came to 10*s.* None of the monasteries, except Durham and Canterbury, which had separate colleges of their own, seem to have contributed more than 2 students at a time.

In the treasurer's account in 1383-4, however, a further educational payment appears 'To the teacher of the youths (*Instructori juvenum*), £2 10*s.*' This is probably for the monks, as it seems to be a payment for some one to teach the novices. We know that William of Wykeham at about this time ordered the monks at Winchester to provide such a master, to prevent their making false quantities in reading the lessons in cathedral. Presumably the instructor was not a monk but an outsider, who came to teach not the Benedictine rule but grammar. For at the end of this account among the 'creditors' is 'John Brules, instructor of the youths, £7 10*s.*' We may, therefore, infer that Brules was a secular clerk, and that his salary was £10 a year, the same as that of the head master of Winchester College, founded by the way the very year before this, 1382. In the treasurer's account for 1440-1, we find to 'Mr. John Maltby, instructor of the scholars (*scolarium*) this year, £2.' The title of *magister* is positive proof, as is also the absence of any title in the case of John Brules that he was not a monk but a secular clerk, while Maltby was clearly an M.A., a secular and probably the Abingdon Grammar schoolmaster, hired to teach the novices. Special provision was made in the Benedictine statutes of 1337 that the grammar master in the monastery might be a secular. No doubt few monks were capable of teaching the classics.

There was, therefore, probably the ordinary novices' school, and perhaps an almonry school for choir boys treated as charity boys. The novices' school must have given a good enough education to some of the novices at least, to enable them, at the rate of two at a time, to go to Oxford, and take their M.A. and higher degrees. But as the course for an M.A. degree was then 7 years, and for a D.D. degree 14, it is obvious that nothing like one monk in ten received this higher education. Further, towards the end of the fourteenth century it seems to have been found that the internal teaching was not good enough, and ordinary grammar schoolmasters were imported for the instruction of the novices and young monks. A century later further provision was made by new endowment for the Oxford students of the monastery. At least this seems to be the explanation of a licence in mortmain granted to the monastery by letters patent on 6 November, 1481,⁴ to acquire lands to the value of £40 a year 'for the maintenance of 4 scholars of the same monastery to pray for the king and queen Elizabeth while alive and their souls when dead.'

Beyond this the monks did nothing themselves for the general education, and apparently nothing by way even of endowment, for the school of Abingdon. On the contrary, the entry quoted from the first treasurer's account in 1375-6 'Debtors . . . Ten Scol mayster 5*s.* 8*d.*' shows that the abbey reaped a profit from the public grammar school of the town. For there can be no doubt that the 'schoolmaster's tenement,' or the 'schoolmaster tenant,' which or who owed 5*s.* 8*d.* for rent was outside the abbey.

In 1414-15 we definitely encounter the grammar schoolmaster in this entry in the Trinity Warden's account under 'Receipt of rent.'

Rent for Lady Day term, as it appears in Michaelmas term above specified, viz. £9 10*s.* 8*d.* less 21*d.* of the rent of William Chambour, and 3*d.* of the rent of Mr. Thomas Weston, Schoolmaster of Abendon, payable only at Michaelmas term above, £9 8*s.* 8½*d.*

The words as printed are *magistri scolarium Abendon*. But through the kindness of Lady Verney, who sent up the original rolls for verification, it is ascertained that *scolarium* is the usual error of the

³ This is the word still in use at Oxford for the solemn feasts of colleges. It is often, but erroneously, written 'gaudes.'

⁴ Pat. 22 Edw. IV, pt. 2, m. 31.

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transcriber for *scolarum*: owing to ignorance in mediaeval Latin, the word school is almost invariably in the plural for a single school, as in the phrase 'Divinity schools' at Oxford. The Charity Commission, in concert with the Berkshire County Council, are at present (1907) engaged in reporting on the charities of Berkshire, in the person of an Assistant Commissioner, Mr. G. W. Wallace. He examined the records of Christ's Hospital at Abingdon, formerly the gild of the Holy Cross, founded, or rather incorporated in the reign of Richard II, which maintains the picturesque old almshouses by St. Helen's Church and the river. In its fifteenth-century chartulary he found the following striking testimony to the existence of the public grammar school. On Wednesday after the feast of St. Barnabas (11 June), 1388, John Sumpter granted to John Gray, vicar of St. Nicholas, Abingdon, and Thomas Weston, schoolmaster, of the same (*magistro scholarum de eadem*) two tenements on the water of Stert, each with a tenement of the almoner of the monastery on the south side. On Friday, the morrow of Lady Day, i.e. 26 March, 1400, John Gray, late vicar, quitclaimed his interest in the same houses to Weston, and on Thursday the morrow of St. Peter and St. Paul, i.e. 30 June, 1407, Thomas Weston granted his interest to Alice Marshall otherwise Chamberlain,⁵ by whose daughter it was sold to trustees for the gild, 14 December, 1438.

There can be no doubt of the identity of Thomas Weston, schoolmaster of Abingdon in the gild book with Thomas Weston, schoolmaster of Abingdon in the abbey account. It certainly looks also as if the house he held on the Stert was that for which he paid what was probably a quitrent to the abbey in 1414-15.

Anyhow Thomas Weston is thus shown to have been schoolmaster of Abingdon Grammar School from at least 1388 to 1415. Nor is there any reason to suppose that he was the first any more than the last of his race. It may be fairly conjectured that John Brules, instructor of the youths in 1375, was a predecessor of Weston's, and that 'Master John Maltby, schoolmaster,' mentioned in the abbey treasurer's accounts 1440-1 was a successor of Weston's as master of Abingdon Grammar School.

In the present state of the records and our knowledge of them, no more names of the masters on the old foundation are forthcoming until we come to the first year of Queen Elizabeth. Then in the churchwardens' accounts⁶ of St. Helen's, Abingdon, we find, after Easter, 1559, 'At the burial of Richard Croose, skolemaster, for 6 tapers 6*d*. At the monthes mynde of maister Croose, for 4 tapers, 4*d*.'

Richard Croose, whose name has probably been misread, by the omission of a final twiddle for 'r,' may be identified with the Crosiar or Croysier who 'determined,' i.e. took his B.A. degree at Cambridge^{6a} in 1534-5, and his M.A. in 1537-8, and entered in music there in 1533-4. He was no doubt the last master on the old foundation.

The next mention of a school is in the ledger accounts of Christ's Hospital, a re-incorporation in 1553 of the Holy Cross Gild, for the years 1561-2. 'In money paid for the dynner of Justice Southeicot and his retinewe comyng to Abingdon for the survey of the Schole there founded by Mr. Roysse of London, 33*s*. 1*d*.' But there is no further mention of a master yet discovered before the borough chamberlain's accounts⁷ (the earliest of which is that for 1562-3) for 1569-70. 'Scolemaster, Item payd to Mr. Argall at the commandement of Mr. Mayor, 10*s*.' There is no doubt that this represents a leaving present, as in the next year's accounts is the 'Item, To Mr. Braunche for the scolemaster towards his wages, within the tyme of this account, 13*s*. For the skolemaster chamber which this accountant standyth charged 5*s*.' In 1572-3 we find 'One quarter between Michaelmas and St. Thomas' Day before Christmas for the scolemaister's wages 13*s*. More to Master Orpwood the scolemaister dew to him at our Ladye Day 13*s*.'

These payments are due partly to the patriotism, but it is to be feared partly to the spleen, of John Roysse, presumably a native of Abingdon, who had made a fortune in London, and gave much of it for the refoundation and endowment of the school. The first, or foundation, deed was dated 31 Jan. 1562-3,^{7a} and made between Roysse himself, described as citizen

⁵ The wife of Thomas Marshall, who is sometimes in the abbey accounts called the abbot's marshal, sometimes his chamberlain.

⁶ *Arch.* i, 13. The accounts 1 Phil. and Mary to 34 Eliz. are said by J. Ward, who transcribed and published them, to be then (24 Nov., 1743) in possession of the Rev. G. Benson. ^{6a} *Camb. Grace Bk. B.* ii, 89.

⁷ For this and all the other following extracts from the town accounts and minutes the reader is indebted to Mr. W. H. Richardson, M.A., F.S.A., an old Abingdonian, who has accumulated much information about the history of the school. Some results published by him will be noticed in their proper place.

^{7a} *Report of the Commissioners to Enquire into the Charities for the Education of the Poor*, 1818, i, 16. This commission was shortly afterwards merged in a general commission to inquire into charities and the reports are known and hereinafter cited as *Char. Com. Rep.* The idea that grammar schools were founded for the education of the poor, as poor were understood in 1819, shows the complete misconception then prevailing of the objects of these foundations and the intentions of the founders.

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and mercer of London, and the mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses of Abingdon. It begins with a recital :

Whereas the said John Roysse intendeth by God's sufferance to have a free grammar Schole, to be erected within the same boroughe of Abingdon to have continuance for ever : And whereas the same John Roysse hath delivered to the same maior bailiffs and burgesses the some of fiftie pounds of lawfull money of England, to the intente that the said maior bailiffs and burgesses shall build or provide therewith one conveniente house within the said borough to be a schole house able to receive threescore and three schollers, which schole house the said maior bailiffs and burgesses have faithfully promised to get and provide accordinglye : And whereas towards the maintenance of the livinge of such person as shall be schoolmaster of the said schole, and for the performance of other godlie acts mentioned and declared in a schedule hereunto annexed, the said John Roysse hath faithfully promised to assure unto the said maior, bailiffs and burgesses, or to such person or persons, bodies politike or corporate, as they shall nominate and appoint, at their costes and charges landes tenements or hereditaments to the clere yerelie value of thirtene pounds sixe shillings eightpence, over and above all yerelie chardges and reprints : And whereas the said John Roysse intendeth that the said free schole so to be erected shall be called 'The Free Schole of the Blessed Trinitie, ffounded by John Roysse, citizen and mercer of London, within the borough of Abingdon'; and that the said maior bailiffs and burgesses for the tyme being shall be the patrons and surveyors thereof, and shall have from tyme to tyme full power and auctoritie to chuse the scholemaster of the said free schole ; and also three score and three children, poore widowes and other poore men's sonnes, to be schollers in the said schole for the tyme beinge.

Then follows a covenant by the corporation in consideration of £50 paid by Roysse 'whereof they knowledge themselves fully satisfied and pleased' before Lady-Day next that they will not only

build or provide one mete and convenient schole house within the said borough of Abingdon, able to receive threescore and three schollers ; but also shall before the said feaste cause the said scholehouse to be assured to some bodie politike to have continuance for ever, for th' use of a free schole within the saide boroughe ; and that the said maior bailiffs and burgesses and their successors, shall from tyme to tyme, at their proper costes and charges as often as neade shall require, mainteine and keep the said scholehouse, and other houses and romes with th' appurtenances to be appointed by them for the scholemaster ther, in good and sufficiente reparacions.

Annexed to the deed is the schedule containing 'the ordynances' for the school, of which anon.

A second or endowment deed was dated four days after the foundation deed, 3 February, 1562, recognised before Sir Martin Bowes, knight and alderman, and Randolph Cholmley, sergeant-at-law and recorder, on 26 March, and enrolled in the Hustings Court, 19 May, 1563 ; a course which according to the custom of London obviated the necessity of any licence in mortmain. This deed which is in Latin and is expressed to be 'in fulfilment and performance of the deed' of 31 January, granted to the Abingdon corporation

two messuages called the sign of the Bell and the sign of the Unicorn in Birching Lane in the parish of St. Edmund in the ward of Langbourne in the city of London, let at rents of £13 6s. 8d., that is £6 13s. 4d. each, to the benefit and use of the free grammar school recently erected in the borough aforesaid.

These inns were burnt down in 1752, and the site then became part of the London Assurance Corporation offices, at a rent of £30 a year, for sixty-one years. Some forty years later a new lease was granted at £100 a year. By a most improvident bargain £20 of this rent was released in consideration of £350 down towards rebuilding the master's house in 1810. The whole premises were sold in 1866 for £9,350, to provide funds for the new school site and buildings.

In Roysse's will proved 31 July, 1571, he lets out one cause of his benefactions to the school and town by 'discharging' his son Thomas of any share of his lands or goods and chattels for that he

hath married against my will another man's wife as doth appear in the Spiritual Court of Record here in London ; and . . . hath associated and accompanied with thieves and pyrates, so that for my sake he hath been borne withall as well in the West country as also in Kent, or otherwise he had had the law of the realm.

The year before the foundation, i.e. in 1562, Roysse obtained a grant of arms and crest with a 'difference' for the same from the Heralds' College, under the hand and seal of 'Gilbert Dethick, knight, garter principall kinge of armes.' The arms^a assigned as those of an 'auncient house of longe tyme bearing armes,' from which Roysse was 'dessended,' were 'gules, a griffin rampant and volant, silver'; the 'difference' was to be 'on the shoulder a rose of the field seeded gold, barbed

^a *The Abingdonian*, ii, 105.

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vert.' The grant itself was bequeathed by Roysse in his will to the corporation of Abingdon, so that he clearly intended it as a record for the school arms, but, says Mr. W. H. Richardson, the grant is not now to be found. The record, with exemplification in trick, remains in the college books.⁹

The corporation lost no time in carrying out part of their bargain with Roysse, by providing a schoolhouse, for it seems to be clear that they did not build one anew, but only adapted or repaired an old building. The chamberlain's accounts for 1562-3 show a receipt of 3*s.* 4*d.* from Thomas Godfrey for only half-a-year's rent of a house 'for that yt was apoynted for a scole master.' This same account shows 'for the carrig of Mr. Roysse's hogshead of wyne from London to Culneham in the barge 4*s.* 8*d.* and from Culneham to Abingdon 8*s.*' This hogshead was no doubt to celebrate the foundation or re-foundation of the school. In 1564-5 we find 'drynck for the men that brout the stonne from the pillorye into the skole howse yard 7*d.*'; 'to Bancks for gatheryn of cheppes in the skolehouse courte by the space of 3 wekes 1*s.* 4*d.*'; 'more for 2 days work to remove the tymbre and makeyng cleane the scole howse courte 10*d.*' This was the cleaning up after the builders' work was finished. In 1566-7 appears 'the skole howse dore; to Thomas Smythe carpenter for wode and for the workmanship of the same doore 11*s.*'; and the entry next year 'Repairs of the skolle howse £2 17*s.* 2*d.*' and glazing the windows 8*s.* 8*d.* The completion of the work was celebrated by 'a gefte gevine' by the corporation to 'Master Roysse at New Yeres tyde' 1569, of 'a fatt synett (cygnet) 4*s.*; 3 partridges at 6*d.* apiece, and 8 more at 8*d.*; a cople of fatt capons 15*d.*; 7 snytts (snipe) at 2½*d.*; 6 dossyn of larcks at 7*d.* a dozen, 3*s.* 6*d.*'

The school itself was by an odd coincidence established, as at Reading, in a disused St. John's Hospital. This Leland had described, 'Against [i.e. over against] this (St. Nicholas church) on the other side without the abbey gate is a church dedicated to St. John and there is an Hospital having 6 almose menne.¹⁰ The kinges be counted for founders of this hospitale.' The Town Hall occupied the chapel, nearest the street, and the school and master's house the further part of the precinct or quadrangle which apparently still retains the original shape and proportions. This building, though practically rebuilt in the eighteenth century, did duty for the school for 300 years; in fact, until the modern demand for cloistral quiet in separate class rooms superseded the old demand for a great hall in which all worked together. It still stands practically intact by the side of the Town Hall, though now Mars has occupied what was devoted to Minerva, and it is used for a drill hall for Volunteers. The corporation never carried out the other part of their bargain to convey the school house to some corporate body, by which, probably, Christ's Hospital or a separate body of governors was intended.

The Ordynaunces touching as well the Freeschole of John Roysse Citizen and Mercer of London founded within the Boroughe of Abyngdon in the Countie of Bark As also other Godly Acts to be don in the saide Boroughe to contynue for ever,

are the more gracious in that they are in English.

First, the said John Roysse dothe ordeyne that the saide Free Schole shal be called the Freeschole of the Holy Trynytye founded within the Boroughe of Abyngdon by John Roysse Citizen and Mercer of London.

This taken in connexion with the payment made by the Trinity Warden before the dissolution of the monastery to the schoolmaster, certainly suggests that the schools had been connected with the Trinity chantry and partly endowed by it, and that Roysse had himself been educated there and wished to restore and perpetuate the ancient name. He was apparently a very conservative person, as in his will he directed the B.D. or D.D. who was 'for ever to preach' on the Sunday after his death, to say 'For John Roysse soule . . . the Blessed Trinity, have mercy,' and then the mayor, &c., to repair to some convenient place 'where they shall bestow upon a potacion or drinkinge, 20*s.* and 6*s.* 8*d.*' to be given in bread, drink and chease among the poor people of the saide boroughe, and the said poore shal saye 'For John Roysse,' &c.

Item, he dothe ordeyne that their shalbe perpetually threscore and three Children taught within the saide Schole And that the saide threscore and thre Children shalbe of the Boroughe of Abyngdon yf so many may there be hadd And that there shalbe but one Child of a House And for lacke of that nombre in the Towne to take out of the Contrey adjoininge for fyllynge of the saide nombre provided alwayes that the Fatherless Wydows and poore Children such as be apt for learnynge be first preferred according to the discretion of the Maior and his Bretherne as they answer before God.

This second item is characteristic of the age with its love for conceits and mystic numbers. As Wykeham founded his school of the number of the 70 disciples, and Colet refounded St. Paul's of the

⁹ Grants, i, 212.

¹⁰ In another passage he says there were twelve almsmen.

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number of the miraculous draught of fishes, so Royse being 63 years old and founding his school in the year 1563 provided for a school of 63 boys. It was to be a free grammar school and therefore it was provided that 'no Childe or Scholler of the saide Schole shal paie any more for his learninge in the saide Schole during his abode there then one pene which shalbe at his first entry unless the Friends of the said Childe of their owne free will, will give more without any demandinge of the same.' The entrance fee here was exceedingly low, as Colet half a century before had provided for an entrance fee of 4*d.* in his 'Free Scole of Poules'; and at St. Saviour's Grammar School at Southwark being founded at this time the entrance fee was 6*d.* Yet it is remarkable that the Christ's Hospital accounts for 1566 contain an item of 5*s.* paid 'to the schoole master in regarde for teaching poore mens' children,' while in 1567 40*s.* was paid 'towards the augmentation of his wages,' or as it is expressed in a rental of 1577 'to the Scoolemaster of the Free Scole to teache poore mens children of the towne freele withoute takyng anye stypend of theym, 40*s.*' The payment was continued till 1601, when it was increased to £5. An entrance fee did not prevent the school's being a free school, which meant free from tuition fees.

The school was not absolutely limited to 63, for there was a proviso that

if there be any greater nombre of schollers then is before mencioned, that the said nombre shall kepe the rules prescribed to be kept by the threescore and three in all thinges and by all thinges, as well of the tenne schollers that I doe allowe the said schollmaister shal take his advantage of as of all other appointed by the saide maior.

This number of ten paying boys to whom there is no further reference seems to have been taken from the ten commoners 'sons of noblemens or special friends of the college' whom Wykeham and Henry VI allowed in their colleges of Winchester and Eton so long as they paid enough. Moreover, Royse's last ordinance was that the corporation

shal not at any tyme hereafter refuse any honest Man Gentleman or Richeman's Sonne or others in the saide Towne or elsewhere that be willinge to have any of them taught in the saide Schole, and the saide Children observinge the good Rules before mentioned The Master and the Usher being able to teache the nombre, and the Schole beinge able to hold them to receive them; and not to take above 6*s.* 8*d.* a yere of any of them for their Learnynge, the orderinge thereof to be by the saide Maior and chief Burgefes at their discrecions.

As to their teaching, there is a twice repeated direction as to the school prayers to be said three times a day and each time to say 'The blessed Trinitye have mercy upon our Founder John Royse and all christian people.' The prayers were oddly enough to include the *Ave Maria* in the morning, a *Deus in nomine tuo salvum me fac* 'at 11 of the clocke when they shall goe to their dinner,' 'and at night upon their knees *De Profundis*, etc. with the suffrages etc.'; all which savours very much of pre-Reformation days. For the rest the only direction is, 'item, the saide Scholemaster shal teach his Schollers as well nurtere and good manners as Lyterature and verteous lvyngye and Christian Auctors for their erudicion.'

The school hours were normal, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. in summer and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in winter. There were the usual fulminations against casual holidays: 'The Scholemaster shall not lycens his schollers to playe above 4 dayes in the yere, and that at the request and desire of the maior and his bretherne, otherwise to forfeit 3*s.* 4*d.* of his wages . . . provided alwaies that Sondaies and Holydaies shall not be accompted any of the saide Playedaies.' The master himself was only allowed a fortnight's leave during the year. No special qualifications were required of him, except that he was to be

an honest sadde and discreete Man vertuous in lvyngye, honest in his behaviour and charitable in his doynge, as nere as they may a learned man, a Priest or a Wedded Man, such as to them shal seme most meete to be the Scholemaster of the saide Free Schole, and that he hath no cure or Benefice.

The corporation were regularly to visit the school:

Item, he dothe further order that the saide Maior and principall Burgesses or certaine of them with the Maior shal every halfe yere surveye the saide Schole Scholemaster and Schollers to see whether that the Articles and Rules of the saide Schole be observed and kepte in every behalf or not; and for the first tyme warnyng to be given, the second tyme to expulse or put him out, speciallie for any things of the prayers prescribed.

The first known head master under the foundation, Argall, is probably the John Argall, third son of John Argall of London, who took his B.A. degree at Oxford, 22 October, 1562,¹¹ M.A.

¹¹ These and other statements of the same sort are due to Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses*, an invaluable work to the historian of schools in tracing the early schoolmasters.

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13 February, 1565-6, and was a student of Christ Church. This sufficiently shows that from the first the school was, as no doubt it had always been from the fourteenth century and earlier, what would now be called a 'Public School'; the school of the upper classes of the town and neighbourhood, and such clever boys of the lower classes as chance or charity might send there. Argall's departure in 1570 was no doubt owing to his receiving clerical preferment, as he was instituted vicar of Chalgrove, in Oxfordshire, in 1571.

Orpwood his successor, who sometimes appears as Hopwood, was a fellow of Trinity College, Oxford; B.A. 13 May, 1563; M.A. 21 April, 1567. He is last mentioned as master in the town accounts 1573 under 'Arrearages. For Mr. Opwood's chambre, the scole master, for one yere, 5s.' In the following year there are two entries which point to a change of master. 'Of the skolemasters chambre late in the tenure of John Parker 5s.' 'To the Skolmaster for 1 quarter's wages 13s. For a dynnar for Maior and dyvers other accompanyenge him at Oxford at such tyme as they had conference with Mr. Squiar abowght the skoll, 27s.' This suggests that the governing body sent a deputation to Oxford to find a new master. The item next year 1574-5, 'Reparations done uppon the skole howse, glazing £1 5s. 1½d.,' may portend the usual doing up incident to the coming of a new man. The chamberlain's accounts break off in 1580, up to which time the schoolmaster is only mentioned by his title.

The next mention by name of a master is 16 July, 1597:¹⁹

Whereas at this present Richard Humphrey late schoolmaster of the Free Schoole of this borough is willing and contented to leave and hath resigned his place in the said schoole as by his letter appeareth. Therefore the Maior and principall burgesses of the said borough accepting the said resignation . . . and having received good testymonye of the sufficiencye of one Anthony Appletree B.A., both for his learning and virtue, for the teachinge and government of the said Free Schoole, have elected and appointed the said Anthony Appletree to be schoolemaster of the said Free Schoole during the pleasure of the said mayor and principal burgesses.

Per me Anth. Appletree.

The autograph signature of the master follows.

Richard Humphrey had been of Corpus Christi College and Trinity. It is improbable that he had been Orpwood's immediate successor. His own successor, Appletree, matriculated at Trinity, Oxford, 22 May, 1590, and took his B.A. degree 8 February, 1593-4. He was therefore not yet M.A. when appointed, and took that degree 6 July, 1598. This was common. Down to the Restoration in all schools the head masters were on appointment young men fresh from the universities, and it was rarely they stayed more than ten years, generally passing on to clerical preferment. It was no doubt this that kept the schools fresh and progressive, and prevented that stagnation from masters staying on till they dropped, which proved destructive to many schools in the eighteenth century. Appletree was buried 21 October, 1599.

The next master was John Byrd or Bird. He was entered in Magdalen College books on his matriculation, 25 October, 1589, as of Berkshire and the son of a gentleman (*generosi*), which at that time was a real indication of rank, as the majority were entered as plebeians or by the occupations of their fathers. One conjectures that he was a relation of Andrew Bird who became head master of Reading in 1586. He was only thirteen when he matriculated. As he became a chorister next year and remained one till 1595, it would seem that he was when he matriculated rather a boy attending Magdalen College School than really an undergraduate. He took his B.A. degree 6 November, 1595, and was only twenty-three when he came to the mastership. He seems to have been a success, for on 19 December, 1600, it was agreed to 'pay yerely out of the Chamber unto Mr. John Byrd, nowe Schoolemaster of this Borough, for the augmentation of his wages and for maynteyning of an usher for the better keeping of the said schoole, the some of £6 of lawful English money quarterly.' This is the first mention of an usher. The master was hitherto expected seemingly to cope single-handed with 63 boys. We may infer from this addition that the number had risen beyond that. Bird's autograph may be seen appended to an 'Inventorie of all such goodes and implements now remainyng in the schole and scholehouse to be left and yelded up . . . at his death resignacion of the said schole or other departure.' It is odd to find that the first item is 'Imprimis, All the glasse in the windows and casements . . . all the wyndows being now wholly glazed.' 'Item, one backe of wenscott, a bench with turned pillars in the best chamber and the paynted clothes there, the whole chamber being therewith hanged.' Even the doors were included: 'In the hall one great wenscott portal with brood dores;' and the pump: 'One pompe in the schole house court.' Its sounds quaint to contemplate a schoolmaster walking off on his departure with the windows and doors and the school pump. Bird was of no long continuance, since he resigned

¹⁹ Corporation Minute Book, beginning 1 June, 1591.

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24 September, 1604. On 10 December, 1604, the corporation with Mr. Robert Kisbey, minister—

did repair unto the Fre Schoole and called before them the schoolemaster and schollers . . . and did cause the orders made . . . by Mr. John Roice . . . to be publiclie read And did examyne the schollers how they did profitt in there learning. And did also admonish the schoolemaster to be carefull and diligent.

Was it *post hoc* merely, or *propter hoc*, that the next page of the Minute Book records that 'Mr. Byrde hath absolutelie and willinglie resigned and yeelded upp his place'?

The successor was 'Degorie Wheare, master of Artes' and fellow of Exeter College, whose name we only learn on his resignation, 2 July, 1606. He was afterwards (1622) first Camden Professor of Ancient History and Principal of Gloucester Hall. Two days later 'Edward Groome of S. Johns College in Oxford' and previously of Merchant Taylors' School, was elected, only to give place 23 September, 1608, to Thomas Godwyn, B.A., of Magdalen College.

Godwyn must have been a very successful master, as it was in his time that the mayor and corporation of Abingdon conceived and executed the bold and magnificent project of founding a college at Oxford to provide for the after careers of the scholars, and to be to Abingdon boys what New College was to Winchester. This unique development in the history of schools and municipalities had its beginning in a private benefactor, who was, we are told, the first scholar admitted to the school on Roysse's foundation, Thomas Tesdale. His father had come to Abingdon from Stanford Dingley, and was buried in St. Helen's Church when Thomas was nine years old. In his will, 31 October, 1556, he directed that his brother and William Hopkins should 'have the custody and kepeing of my said son Thomas and bringe hym up in lerning, and when he shall sufficientlye be lerned and of age to be a prentice then they shall cause him to be bound prentice' in London; the rents of the rectory of All Hallows, Wallingford, which he devised to him, being used for his maintenance there. He must have been fifteen years old when admitted on Roysse's foundation, but no doubt was already a scholar in the school under Croyse and his successor. When Tesdale left school does not appear. He was not seemingly apprenticed in London, as Francis Little says¹³ that he was kept by his uncle's side and traded in malt, 'a very gainful course there.' In 1569 he became a member of the Common Council, in 1571 bailiff, in 1580 a principal burgess, in 1581 mayor. But he had then already left the town and gone to Glympton in Oxfordshire, where he grew woad, and lived at Ludwell Manor in Kidlington. So he paid a fine to be excused. Fuller says that he supplied the army with cloth, and attended court. His wife was Mawde Stone of Henley, who when married was widow of Edward Little. They had no children, and lie buried under a splendid monument in Glympton Church.

By will 28 February, 1609, Tesdale gave to trustees for Christ's Hospital in Abingdon his glebe lands and tithes in Upton, part of the rectory of Rutley in Warwickshire, 'that the revenues and profits thereof may be employed to and for the maintenance of an usher to and for the Free School of Abingdon.' This bequest is of itself testimony to the prosperity of the school at the time.

It had very shortly before been preceded by another bequest for the school. William Bennett of Marlborough, by his will of December, 1608, gave to his uncle, Thomas Tesdale of Glympton, lands in Blunsdon, Wiltshire—

to the releife and benefit of 6 of the poorest children born in Abingdon, and to be brought upp in that schole by the space of 6 yeres, . . . and then to be nominated by the main part of the hospital then being; but for the particularities thereof . . . I refer it to his Christian care and conscience, having manye tymes had speech myself with hym about this matter.

Accordingly, by deed 30 November, 7 James I, Tesdale and Ralph Bennett, William's heir, settled the trusts. The 6 boys were 'to be called Mr. William Bennetts poor schollers,' and to wear 'gowns of cloth of one coller and fashion.' They were to be elected by the master and governors of Christ's Hospital, but 'three of them shall be alwaies chosen of the poor kindred of the said William Bennett of his mother's side born in Abingdon.' The scholars were each to have £3 a year (the rent of the property then was £16 a year) during the first four years reserved from their 'stocke or porcions of money towards their placing and preferment when they shall leave their said places,' and the rest to be 'bestowed upon aspecell books and other necessaries,' but in the last two years the whole to be bestowed upon these purposes. In the reign of Charles I the hospital presented 3 poor boys of Abingdon in preference to some who were of founder's kin; their parents filed a bill in the Court of Chancery. It was decided that Bennett's kin must be poor, and that the claimants being children of 'men of good estate able to mayntayn and educate their children

¹³ *A Monument of Christian Munificence, the History of Christ's Hospital in Abingdon*, by Francis Little, 1627; edited by C. D. Cobham, 1872.

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without the assistance of the said charitable use, they having been principall burgeses in the towne,' were not eligible. In later years this endowment was greatly abused. Bennett's poor scholars were kept to a dress like that of Christ's Hospital in London, the head master was not consulted in their appointment, they were taught only by the usher—the Tesdale usher as he was called—as a class apart instead of, as was clearly intended, being merely exhibitioners in the school on the same footing as other boys.

Besides the direct benefaction for the school in the person of the usher, Tesdale by his will gave to George Abbott, then bishop of London, late master of University College, Oxford; Sir John Bennett, knt., his nephew, a great canon lawyer, dean of Arches; and Henry Ayray, provost of Queen's, the magnificent sum of £5,000 (equal certainly to £50,000 now, and probably a great deal more) for the purchase of lands of the yearly value of £250—

as they easily may get at 20 yeares purchase or under . . . to and for the maintenance and sustentation of 13 schollers in Balliol College, if there they may be conveniently placed and entertained according to the purpose of this my will; and if not there in University College, if there they may be so placed and entertained, and if not, then in some such other college within the University, as my said devisees and trusty friends shall think and finde fit for the purpose; . . . sixe of the saide schollers shall perpetually be of my kindred and of the poorer sort of them, and the other seven of the poorer sort of suche as are or shall be borne in Abingdon and are poor schollers of William Bennett my kinsman deceased; also of others of the said schoole and there brought up, being capable apt and likely in some good measure to prove schollers, if such can there be found.

Two of Tesdale's next of kin, brought up in Abingdon School, were to have £15 a year; 4 £12 a year; and the other 7 £27 a year, the 4 next of kin being taken preferably from Abingdon School, 'if not, out of other schools in England.' The 6 'poore schollers or Abingdonians' were to be scholars, and the 7 fellows. The electors were to be the master and 2 senior fellows of the college, the master and governors of Christ's Hospital, the schoolmaster of Abingdon. They were to become M.A.s as soon as possible, 'and enter the ministry within 3 yeares or sooner after their being M.A.s.' If new chambers were needed for their reception the 6 scholars were only to be 'placed,' and the fellows' money applied to the building. Balliol College actually bought 'Caesar's Lodgings,' so-called from Henry Caesar, afterwards dean of Ely, c. 1560, opposite St. Mary Magdalen Church, at the west end of Balliol, for the accommodation of the Tesdale fellows and scholars. Agreements were made between the college and corporation about them. But for some unknown reason a complete change of front then took place. Little says that Balliol refused the conditions of Tesdale's will, which can hardly be true, as they had accepted the scholars. Blundell, in his *Brief Memorial of Abingdon School*, says that Balliol, having had its necessities relieved by advances made to it by Blundell's School at Tiverton, declined proposals which would have divided the whole college between Abingdon and Tiverton. But Fuller's *Worthies* gives probably the true account, that when Richard Wightwick, rector of East Ilsley, near Abingdon, an old Balliol man, offered to augment Tesdale's foundation, 'it fell under consideration that it was a pity so great a bounty, substantial enough to stand of itself, should be adjected to a former foundation.' So the corporation, through the chancellor of Oxford, the Earl of Pembroke, petitioned the king to convert Broadgates Hall into a college. Broadgates Hall¹⁴ is a hall of ancient, though by no means of the absurdly early, date credited to it by Anthony Wood, whose father was a member of it; and with no recorded principal earlier than one who died in 1422. It had an ancient connexion with Abingdon, as it was close to St. Aldate's Church,¹⁵ the patronage of which belonged partly to Abingdon Abbey, partly to St. Frideswide's, Oxford, and in St. Aldate's aisle the hall had its chapel. Abingdon Chambers,¹⁶ a house next to Broadgates Hall, was annexed to it before 1485.

The Abingdon negotiations were successful. A charter, or letters patent, was granted 29 June, 1624, incorporating the hall as a college under the name of 'The Master Fellows and Scholars of Pembroke College of the foundation of King James at the cost and charges of Thomas Tesdale and Richard Wightwick.' The college was opened 5 August, 1624, with an oration by Thomas Browne, the famous author of *Religio Medici*, who had been a scholar of Winchester College, and was 'undergraduate student commoner (*commensalis*) of the college;' and another from John Lee, B.A., one of the Tesdale scholars from Abingdon. The last master of Broadgates Hall, Dr. Clayton, doctor of physic and of music, became the first master of Pembroke College. The first fellow named in the charter was Thomas Godwyn, who, it may be observed, had married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Tesdale's cousin Christopher Tesdale, so that he was founder's kin, as were Robert Payne, afterwards canon of Christchurch, and Christopher Tesdale, a Winchester scholar and fellow of New College, afterwards canon of Chichester and a sound Puritan, the two

¹⁴ Douglas Maclean, *Hist. of Pembroke College, Oxford* (Oxf. Hist. Soc. 1897), 6-22.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 25.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 35.

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next fellows named; while the fourth, Nicholas Coxeter, was one of the first of William Bennett's 'poor scholars of Abingdon school,' named as such in the original deed of that foundation. The first scholar was John Lee, an Abingdonian who had entered Balliol as a Tesdale scholar 11 October, 1622, aged 19, and had already taken his B.A. degree. William Reade and Francis Dringe, also one of the first 'Bennett's' poor scholars, Richard Allen, and John Bowles were also all of them Abingdonians and Tesdale scholars transferred from Balliol. So Abingdon School stamped its mark on Pembroke College, and for long supplied it with many of its most eminent members. It contributed no less than 7 masters to the college, there being an unbroken record of Abingdonians as masters from Henry Wightwick (1647-64) to William George Hall (1796-1843), including even the master intruded during the Commonwealth, Henry Langley, appointed on a petition to Parliament from Abingdon. Abingdonians at Pembroke include also William Newcome, vice-principal of Hertford and archbishop of Armagh in 1795; John Clerk, provost of Oriel 1768-81; T. D. Fosbroke, the antiquary; the third and fourth Barons Chedworth; Philip Morant, historian of Essex; Thomas Wintle, Bampton Lecturer; and William Hawkins, professor of poetry, 1751-6. Amply, therefore, were the efforts of the corporation of Abingdon repaid in getting the college founded.

The year after the foundation of the college the school received another benefaction in the shape of a gift by will of John Blacknall, 'bred in his youth in the Free School,' afterwards at Queen's College, Oxford, and a barrister of the Middle Temple, of 40s. a year to the schoolmaster and his successors.

It is questionable whether Thomas Godwyn's rule as schoolmaster ended with his nomination as a fellow of Pembroke. He had published in 1613 or 1614 a *Florilegium Phrasicon* or Posy of Phrases 'for the use of Abingdon Schoole,' and a *Romanae Historiae Anthologia* or Nosegay of Roman History, also for the use of Abingdon School. In 1616 he became B.D. and chaplain to Bishop Montague, to whom he dedicated a *Synopsis of Hebrew Antiquities* in 3 books; in 1625 *Moses and Aaron*. In 1626 he became vicar of Brightwell, where he died 20 March, 1642-3.

Anthony Wood says that Anthony Huish succeeded Godwyn. But no new master is mentioned in Abingdon records till 29 January, 1637-8, when 'Mr. Huishe, scholmaster,' was allowed £20 'towards the charges he hath disbursed about the reparation of the school house;' which looks like a complete renovation on first entering on office. Anthony Huish was of Wadham College. On 26 October, 1653, 'for as much as it appeared that Anthony Hewish (*sic*) clerk, now scholemaster of the Free School, hath been remisse and negligent in attending the same school it is ordered that [he] upon or before 25 March next amove himself.' It would appear that the negligence was political, or due to political causes, since after the Restoration, on 1 September, 1662, he was paid £13 6s. 8d., one half being part of the £20 ordered to be paid in 1637 for repairs, and the other half the salary due at his 'amovall.'

On 4 October, 1654, Mr. Slye was offered £30 a year 'if he please to undertake to be Schoolemaster here.' It appears that he refused it, as 8 December, 1655, 'Mr. Kerridge now schoolemaster shall have the stipend made up £30 by the year.' John Kerridge was of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. On 5 July, 1656, the Common Council ordered 'one Leccicon, one Cooper's Dictionary and one Rider's Dictionary be paid for by the Chamber and chayned in the schole where is most convenient.' Mr. Kerridge was probably turned out soon after the Restoration.

On 11 March, 1663, we find 'Jennens' master, a pump being provided for him on condition of repairing it as long as he continue schoolmaster, and the old pump sold and the money applied to the use of the corporation. Robert Jennings, a fellow of St. John's, had, as we have seen, been master at Reading School and expelled as a royalist. He had been offered the mastership again but refused it apparently for Abingdon. He or the corporation of the Restoration, or both, must have been very violent political churchmen. On 6 September, 1671, after a solemn recital of their powers as visitors, the corporation

doe finde that Samuel Herne, John Hull, John Lockton, William Tirrold, Josiah Hall, Benjamin Greene, Joshua Garbrand, Richard Tesdale—[blank in MS.] Tesdale and Jasper Tesdale, now scholers in the said Free Schoole, have absented themselves from their parish church, and have refused to come thither there to heare divine service and sermon although admonished soe to do; It is ordered that the said Samuel [etc.] be from henceforth ejected and expelled, and they and every of them are hereby from henceforth evicted and expelled the said Free School.

It was this narrow spirit that ruined so many of the smaller grammar schools, and gave rise to the great growth of rival private schools which begins to be noticeable in the later years of the seventeenth century. Yet unlike most of the masters, 'Jennens' was not in orders, appearing in a contemporary record as 'Robert Jennings, gent., master' while his usher Robert Payne is called 'clerke.' 'The number of boys,' it is said, 'exceedeth 63'; the first record we have of numbers. He must have had a fashionable set of boarders, as he made a fortune and bought the Plowdens' estate at Shiplake, and set up as a country gentleman, and his son James afterwards was high sheriff

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of Oxfordshire and M.P. for Abingdon.¹⁷ Jennings himself was practically turned out of office, either for neglecting his school for his estate or perhaps on a Whig reaction. On 24 April, 1683, £11 13s. 4d. previously allowed him was ordered to be no more paid to him. He died 3 February, 1705, aged eighty-three, and was buried at Shiplake Church, but the inscription¹⁸ to his memory there in 1733, had, by 1802, been erased to make room for other members of his own family.

On 3 June, 1684, Mr. Richard Pleydell, M.A., of St. Mary Hall, Oxford, was chosen school-master and sworn in the place of Robert Jennings. On 30 August, 1688, the salary of £11 13s. 4d. given him 22 September, 1685, was discharged and the chamberlain ordered not to pay it. This refers to the augmentation of the salary which Jennings also had enjoyed. But Pleydell did not, like Jennings, take the hint and retire, but remained master till 14 September, 1716, when he 'surrendered his place.'

Thomas Wood or Woods of Pembroke College, who had been approved of as usher 12 January, 1711, was then elected, apparently the first usher to pass on to the higher seat. He added to his house by lease from the corporation the granary or loft over the old Town Hall.

A school list of 1732 during his time has been preserved. It shows 90 boys, and includes a peer of the realm, 2 peers' sons, a baronet, Sir Henry Atkins, and a large number of country gentlemen's sons; also Clement Saxton, son of a mayor of Abingdon, and high sheriff of Berkshire in 1777; Thomas Head, afterwards knighted, Richard Graves, later the author of *The Spiritual Quixote*, and others. Throughout Wood's time and his successor's the school ranked as a public school of repute well haunted by the scions of the aristocracy and local gentry. In 1743 the wooden eagle which now adorns the school chapel, originally made for Brasenose College in 1694, was presented to the school by the college.

The next master mentioned, Humphrey Humphreys, appears only on his resignation, 12 September, 1753, having been elected 15 August, on which day the Rev. John Abbot, D.D., a Westminster boy, of Balliol College, Oxford, was elected in his place. Dr. Abbot, who was father of the first Lord Colchester, resigned 7 July, 1758, and became a rector at Colchester.

On 27 July, 1758, the Rev. Henry Bright, B.A., curate of Waldron, Sussex, began his long and prosperous career as master. Henry Bright was a Winchester boy, a commoner in 1737-8 and scholar 1739-44, scholar and fellow of New College. He was a friend of Dr. Johnson, a facsimile of a letter from whom, 9 January, 1770, was reproduced in *The Abingdonian*.¹⁹ It asks if he could take another pupil 'in the same manner as Mr. Strahan'; and suggests that as he would 'have more trouble with him, he therefore ought to have a higher price'—thus showing what a matter of individual bargaining the payment for boarders of the day was.

Bright was head master when the bicentenary of the school was celebrated in 1763. He gave to the school the replica of the portrait of the founder in the council chamber, and a painting on panel of the founder's arms impaling those of his wife, which still adorn the school.²⁰ Under the latter he placed what is now the school motto 'Misericordias domini in eternum cantabo' which may be traced to Bright's Wykehematical reminiscences, as it is the motto on the label issuing from the mouth of John Kent,²¹ 'formerly scholar of the New College, Winchester, and son of Simon Kent of Reading'; it is portrayed on his brass of 1434 in Headbourne Worthy church near Winchester, the only pre-Reformation brass of a schoolboy known.

In 1783 Bright published *The Praxis*, a book reminiscent probably of Abingdon School, but printed at the request of other schoolmasters 'expressly for the special use of the lesser schools among us, as either overlook or do not enough insist upon composition.' It is a collection of hints and models for composition in Latin and English. One branch of composition on which he insists at some length is that of letters to the head master asking for play-days. At Hertford School the practice prevailed of elaborate compositions for this purpose, while at Eton on holidays the school pillars were hung with reams of them. One specimen, 'Form of a Verse Epistle to the Master for a Play-day' is specially interesting as showing how untrue was the accusation then brought against schools that they were mere gerund-grinding establishments.

'Twixt writing verses and translations,
'Twixt making themes and declamations,
And speaking long-winded orations,
For six long week-days we're perplexed,
Confounded, harassed, puzzled, vex'd;
Nay, when the coach and carman keep
The Sabbath in inactive sleep . . .
We wretched prisoners, born to woe
'Twixt different days no difference know;

But when the Sabbath day arrives
We then lead still more wretched lives,
With Gospels, Greek and Latin loaded
With catechisms incommoded;
Grotius or Jewell to explain
And tell the sermon o'er again.
Then Sir for pity's sake redress us
A HOLIDAY will amply bless us.

¹⁷ Climenson, *Hist. of Shiplake* (1894), 296-7.

¹⁸ Given in Coates, *Reading*, 340. It referred to him as 'non ita pridem Scholae Abendonensis Ludimagister.'

¹⁹ Vol. ii, 161, by Mr. W. H. Richardson.

²⁰ Mr. W. H. Richardson in *The Abingdonian*, ii, 104.

²¹ See the illustration in *V.C.H. Hants*, ii, 275.

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In 1766 during Bright's time the school reached a total of 103, of whom 40 were boarders. In 1770 the school began to dwindle owing, it is said, to a contested municipal election²² when factions ran high. Bright resigned in 1774 on being appointed by the warden of New College to the mastership of New College School. On 15 July the Rev. Andrew Portal, vicar of St. Helen's, who had been usher from 7 February, 1750, to 7 February, 1758, was elected head master. But he died the next year.

On 23 August, 1775, the Rev. William Kennedy, of Sedbergh School and of Queen's College, Oxford, who had previously kept a private school at Ludgershall, Buckinghamshire, was elected. He leased from the corporation the dining-hall, staircase and room over it for twenty-one years at 1s. a year, and also had the use of the brew-house.

On 6 August, 1792, came John Lemprière, of Jersey,²³ who had been usher at Reading. His is perhaps the best-known name of all Abingdon masters from the famous *Classical Dictionary*, which every public schoolboy possessed, until it was superseded about 1870 by the prosaic Smith. But what other schoolboys gained, there were few boys at Abingdon to enjoy. Lemprière had two livings, St. Helen's and another. There were never more than 3 boys on the foundation in his time, and under 10 others. Nor did things improve under the Rev. Edward Nicholson appointed in 1810. He had two curacies, and left the school to itself from Saturday to Monday. When Lord Brougham's commission²⁴ held its inquiry in 1818 there were 3 boys on the foundation and 6 boarders. The Bennett boys were the usher's sole charge, and he only taught them Greek and Latin, they being sent to a writing-master for elementary subjects. The schoolhouse had just been rebuilt, but there was nobody to inhabit it. It was the custom to sell the presentation to Pembroke scholarships, boys from other and greater public schools, such as Merchant Taylors', St. Paul's and Winchester, being nominally made scholars of Abingdon when an election was imminent, and paying twenty guineas to the master for the chance. It is much to Nicholson's credit that he was apparently the first head master to resist this unfair and objectionable practice.

Under the Rev. J. T. J. Hewlett in 1829 there was a revival, the numbers rising to 52 consisting of 33 foundationers, 13 boarders, and 6 Bennett boys; but they soon declined again to 32. Mr. Joshua Brookes of Chicago, U.S.A, who came to the school in 1830, tells²⁵ how he first made the acquaintance of Joseph Hewlett. He was playing as a boy at marbles in the schoolyard, when a stranger asked if he was 'a dabster at tau?' and being told he was not, said 'well at any rate I will help you at tau (the Greek τ).'

In 1840 the Rev. William Alder Strange became head master. He was a native of Abingdon, and a scholar of Christ's Hospital, London, and one of those colourably admitted to Abingdon School for a few months to qualify for a Tesdale scholarship at Pembroke College, which he obtained. He was second master at the Liverpool Institute. His long tenure of 28 years was a period of prosperity; the school averaging under him a little over 60 boys. In 1863, when the tercentenary of the school was celebrated on 22 October, it had the precise number of 63 directed by Royse, composed of 32 foundationers, 6 Bennett boys and 25 boarders. The celebration was preluded by a *Brief Memorial of Abingdon Free Grammar School*, by Bezer Blundell, F.S.A., an inhabitant of the borough, which is noteworthy as the first attempt at a history of the school. But it contains some strange romances and errors. Dr. Strange was of the *plagosus Orbilius* type, and the cane was in frequent requisition for errors in school-work, and for serious offences a public birching before the whole school was not unknown. On 19 February, 1857, the Oxford University Commissioners made statutes for Pembroke College abolishing the Tesdale fellowships and converting the Tesdale and Wightwick scholarships into 5 £50 scholarships with preference for boys from Abingdon School. There are now 4 scholarships of £75 per annum, for boys who have been in the school at least two years. In 1865 the head boy of the school was rejected at Pembroke on examination for a Tesdale scholarship, but was subsequently elected. In 1868 two boys sent up for examination in the same way were both rejected, upon which they immediately sat for vacancies then pending at other colleges, with the result that one obtained an open exhibition, and the other an open mathematical scholarship.

When the school was inspected for the Schools Inquiry Commission²⁶ 30 April, 1866, there were 69 boys on the books, 25 of whom were boarders. The head master received a total income from endowment of £161 18s. 8d., of which £143 came from Royse's gift; the usher, from Tesdale's endowment, £120. The mathematical, English, and French masters were paid by the head master from his own resources. As regards the instruction the assistant commissioner Mr. Fearon stated that the teaching of classics was 'only required by a very few scholars . . . though fairly

²² *Char. Com. Rep.* i, App. 8.

²³ He is often said to have been a scholar of Winchester and fellow of New College. But though many Jersey boys were there, Le Bretons, Le Marchants, Le Mesuriers, Lemprière is not to be found entered in the *Scholars' Register* nor as a commoner in *Long Rolls*.

²⁴ *Char. Com. Rep.* i, App. 17.

²⁵ *The Abingdonian*.

²⁶ *Sch. Inq. Rep.* xi, 393.

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sound, is not really good.' The four upper forms had only 15 boys in them. The sixth and fifth translated fairly from Sophocles; their Latin scholarship was moderate; in mathematics the examination, including trigonometry, showed that though not far advanced they were fairly grounded. In the lower and 'commercial forms'—there were 8 forms altogether—the boys averaged 4 mistakes each in dictation, their arithmetic was unsatisfactory; their reading very much so; while English 'is badly taught by an inferior, untrained teacher.' French was well taught. The schoolroom and premises were 'not well adapted to their purpose.'

That year the town council resolved to purchase the school buildings, a resolution carried out six years later by deed of 8 February, 1872, when £900 was paid for them to Christ's Hospital, Abingdon. This, with the money derived from the sale of Roysse's original endowment in London, was spent on a new site and buildings.

In 1868 Dr. Strange resigned. While new buildings were in course of erection the school was carried on for 2 years by the Tesdale usher, the Rev. E. T. H. Harper.

The new buildings were opened 26 April, 1870, under the Rev. Edgar Summers, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, with 45 boys. These are situate adjoining the Albert Park, and now, with extensions and additions, form a somewhat imposing pile in the domestic Gothic style. When opened they consisted of a big school, with six class-rooms, a dining-hall, master's rooms, head master's house, and dormitories. In 1880 there were added on the east, 5 class-rooms, a sixth form room and studies, masters' common room, and an infirmary. The cricket field is partially surrounded by trees as it adjoins the public recreation ground of 15 acres. The Thames itself affords another and even ampler recreation ground, and the school four is able to give a good account of itself. Rifle-shooting is taught under careful supervision, and has become extremely popular.

By a scheme made under the Endowed Schools Acts, approved by Queen Victoria in council, 29 June, 1878, a partly representative governing body was established. It is 12 in number, including the mayor and recorder of Abingdon, 2 representatives of the Abingdon Town Council, 2 of Christ's Hospital Abingdon governors, and 2 nominated by the master of Pembroke, the Camden professor of ancient history, and the Savilian professor of geometry; while Lord Wantage, Archdeacon Pott, and two others were named as the first of 4 co-optative governors. To these have since, by a scheme of the Board of Education, 26 February, 1904, been added two more representatives of the Town Council. Twelve scholarships, 5 Roysse for boys from elementary schools, 6 Bennet and 1 Blacknall's were provided for, which have been increased by the scheme of 1904 to 9 Roysse and 3 Abingdon municipal scholarships, in consideration of the town council contributing £750 to new school buildings, and not less than £98 a year to the school income.

The school under Mr. Summers rapidly grew to nearly 100. In 1883 he retired to the vicarage of Brading, Isle of Wight. The Rev. William Herbert Cam followed. He was a (non-Wykehamist) scholar of New College, Oxford, who had taken first classes in classics, in moderations and final school, and was an assistant master at Wellington College. On paper, his success was assured. But at midsummer, 1893, there were only 34 boys in the school. To his time, however, the school owes its magazine, *The Abingdonian*, which made its first appearance on 12 December, 1890, under the auspices of Mr. C. E. Simpson, then of Brasenose College, Oxford. Then came the Rev. Thomas Layng of Oundle School, and scholar of Jesus College, Cambridge, where he obtained a second class in classics in 1883, and in theology in 1885. He was second master of Cranleigh School, Surrey, for 7 years. Under him the school has continuously progressed. By deed 14 February, 1895, the Rev. E. Summers and Herbert Young, B.C.L., established 2 'Young and Summers Scholarships' for boarders, to be awarded for mathematics or science. In 1897 a school lodge for the accommodation of three masters was erected.

Tesdale House, a second boarding house, was opened under the Rev. C. F. A. Wimberley, M.A., in 1900. In 1902 a new wing comprising a chapel, gymnasium, physics and chemical laboratories, science lecture room, art room, and 3 class-rooms were added, at a cost of £5,888, towards which the Berkshire County Council, as the local education authority, contributed £450.

The school now numbers 8 assistant masters and over 100 boys, about half of whom are boarders. It has developed all the clubs and societies which temper the acerbity of classics or mathematics or science, as the case may be, to the youthful mind, and probably do as much for educational development as lessons themselves. Three Abingdonians now, 1907, hold Abingdon scholarships at Pembroke College, and many other university successes have been won from the school. Music is much cultivated, and a choral scholarship at Cambridge and an organ scholarship at Oxford are held by Abingdon boys.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL, NEWBURY

Newbury Grammar School seems originally to have been the object of two chantries in Newbury, the priests of which were either bound to, or did, in fact, keep a grammar school. A certifi-

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cate under the Chantries Act of 1 Edward VI,¹ describes Wormestall's Chantry as founded by will, 2 March, 1466-7, of Henry Wormestall. The lands were worth yearly £13 9s. 8d., from which after deducting outgoings, 'Remayneth unto one Thomas Evans scole master, techyng a gramer scole ther, whereof that towne hath grete nede, £12 2s. 4½d.' It also describes the Chantry of Our Lady as founded for a stipendiary priest to celebrate in an aisle called our Lady Chapel, and endowed with lands of the yearly value of £13 1s. 8d., out of which after 66s. 8d. for alms to 12 poor men relieved in an almshouse there and outgoings 'remayneth to Thomas Forscote, incumbent, of the age of 60 yeres, teacher of the Gramer Scole ther, with 3s. 4d. for wine and waxe, having nothing elles towards his lyving, nor is able to teache cure, £8 3s. 4d.'² The precise relations between these two schoolmasters do not appear. But as the Lady Chantry disappeared altogether, while its almshouse was transferred to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, the priest of it probably was only acting optionally as usher of the grammar school; and, as he was not efficient, was pensioned off. The continuance of Wormestall's school is strong presumptive evidence that it was the main object of the original foundation of the chantry. The Crown Receivers' Accounts³ for 1550, 1551, and 1552 show a payment of £12 'in the stipend of Thomas Evans, *alias* Flint, schoolmaster of the grammar school (*ludimagistri ludi literarii*) of Newbury.' In the Account⁴ for 1552-3, allowance is claimed 'for the stipend of Thomas Evans *alias* Flynt, pedagogue of the school of letters in the aforesaid town of Newbury at £12 a year, paid to him annually by the cantarist of the late chantry in Newbury called Wormestalle Chauntre,' and in the margin is written, 'Allowed as it has been paid annually for the use within written.' Evans *alias* Flint went on receiving this stipend until the second year of Queen Mary's reign, 1534,⁴ when he was displaced, probably on religious grounds, for John Goldwyer, who received the crown stipend till Michaelmas 1556. Then in 1558 Thomas Evans, *alias* Flint, reappears and goes on receiving his pay till 1562.⁵ In 1559, William Ford, B.C.L., was appointed rector of Newbury and is referred to as 'teaching the Grammar Schole there.'⁶ A Winchester and New College man, he was the usher of Winchester College of whom a tale is told in Foxe's *Martyrs*, of his pulling down the 'golden images' in the rood loft there and being nearly killed for it, while John White, who as bishop of Lincoln presided at the condemnation of Cranmer, and was afterwards bishop of Winchester, was head master.⁷ In Queen Mary's 'dismole days' he was tempted to despair, but

at laste . . . was made person of Newbury by the meanes of Mr. Forteskew, some tyme his scholer in humanitee rather then follower in religion, and with continuall paynes in teaching the grammer schole ther and prechyng, he chawnged this lyff for a better in greate feablenes of body more than of sowle and mynde.

It is extremely doubtful, however, whether the statement that Ford taught the grammar school is any more correct than the implied statement that he died rector of Newbury. He was in fact dispossessed for defect of title. The account was not written till thirty-five years later, and is full of difficulties. At all events, if he taught the school at all, it must have been as a voluntary assistant to Thomas Evans.

The accounts of the Receivers General of crown rents for Berkshire⁸ show the following masters of the grammar school: from 1563 to 1566 Edmund Crofts; from 1568 to 1573 John Herdman; from 1574 to 1581 Alexander Tuchin; then for a year John More; followed by Robert Wrighte to 1596; from 1597 to 1619 John Cotman.

From the deposition of a witness, William Blandye, one of the leading clothiers of Newbury, in an information brought by the Attorney-General against Philip Kistall and others, who claimed as lessees of the chantry lands, 1575-6, it appears that 'The chappell ys converted into a schole house in King Edward's time, and so hath contynewed sythence, and the town of Newburie doth take yerely an accmpt of the ij prockters of the revenues thereof.' By a decree dated 1599, made under the Statute of Charitable Uses, the property and management of the hospital was vested in the corporation.⁹

In an old churchwardens' book there are some entries relating to the school. 1622. 'Three formes for free schoole scholers.' 1662. 'Paid for six daies work for mending the free schoole gallery seats, 10s.'¹⁰ There was a rapid flow of masters—Jerome Newman, of Magdalen Hall, about 1622, then William Walder, next Mr. Lane.

¹ A. F. Leach, *Engl. Schools at the Reformation*, pt. ii, 12.

² Land Rev. Rec. Accts. m. 28.

³ Mins. Accts. 6 Edw. VI to 1 Mary, portf. i, No. 2. m. 5.

⁴ Land Rev. Rec. Accts. (Ser. 1), bdle. 80; 1 & 2 Phil. and Mary, m. 18; 2 & 3 to 4 & 5 Phil. and

Mary, m. 12.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1 Eliz. to 4 Eliz.

⁶ Nichols, *Narratives of the Reformation* (Camd. Soc. 1859), 29.

⁷ Leach, *Winch. Coll.*; Nichols, *Narratives of the Reformation* (Camd. Soc. 1859), 29.

⁸ P.R.O. Land. Rev. Rec. (Ser. 1), bdles. 80, 96, and 83.

⁹ 'A sketch of the history of Newbury Grammar School,' by Walter Money, F.S.A. in *The Newburian*, vol. i.

¹⁰ *Char. Com. Rep.* i, 43.

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Before 1634, the Rev. Thomas Parker, in whose honour the town of Newbury, in Massachusetts, was so called, was an 'assistant' in the school. With him as co-assistant was the Rev. James Noyes, his cousin, who left England in the same ship, and settled at Newbury in America. Mr. Thomas Dorney of St. Alban Hall, Mr. John Jessop of Christ Church, 1640, followed by Mr. John Harrison of Trinity College, Oxford. The Rev. John Woodbridge, brother of Benjamin, rector of Newbury, and the first graduate at Harvard University, U.S.A., was master of the school, but ejected under the Act of Uniformity in 1662. The Rev. Samuel Sprint, of Trinity College, Cambridge, succeeded Woodbridge.¹¹ Thomas Ireland who went on to Wallingford, and then to Reading, William Bawe, Laurence Pocock, and William Gostwicke, first of Exeter, Oxford, and then of Sidney Sussex, Cambridge, and in 1673 head master of Reading, followed. Richard Simeon, who had matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, 14 March, 1662-3, and became B.A. 1666, came in 1673. He resigned the school on being appointed to the vicarage of Bucklebury, 23 October, 1686. On Simeon's surrender Daniel Bevan, clerk, was elected and chosen by the corporation to be master of the school. He executed an agreement 'to teach gratis six poor children of the borough of Newbury, to be sent to him by the churchwardens and others, the overseers of the poor of Newbury for the time being, such as shall be first approved by the said mayor, aldermen and chief burgesses of the said borough, or the major part of them.'¹² In Daniel Bevan the corporation were trying a very young man, as he had only matriculated at New Inn Hall, 1 March, 1690-1, at the age of sixteen.¹³

In 1692, on the resignation of Mr. Bevan, Benjamin Tassell, M.A., was elected schoolmaster of the free school, and entered into a similar agreement.¹⁴ He matriculated at Balliol, 14 July, 1666, aged fifteen, took his B.A. degree 1670, and M.A. 1673.¹⁵ Though Tassell was not appointed till he was forty-one, he remained thirty years, and on 10 June, 1723, claimed £4 per annum for reading prayers at the school, which the corporation refused to pay, it not having been before demanded. On 21 September, 1724, the Rev. Philip Morgan, who had been master for two years, agreed with the corporation that he should receive the yearly sum of £4 for teaching the free school. The Rev. John Daniel Cotton, scholar of Winchester 1744, was an assistant master in 1754. He was the author of *Poems on Several Occasions, English and Latin*.

On 30 March, 1764, the Rev. Thomas Penrose, rector of Newbury, was chosen master of the free grammar school, in the room of Mr. Morgan, who had resigned. Penrose was a Cornishman, who matriculated at Christ Church 30 April, 1734, became B.A. 1737-8, M.A. 1740, and had been rector of Newbury from 1747.¹⁶ It was ordered 'that the town clerk do acquaint the said Mr. Morgan therewith, and likewise do send an account thereof to the proper officer of the Exchequer, from whence such salary is payable.' On 23 March, 1768, it was ordered 'That the money then due from the Exchequer to the Corporation, should be equally divided between the Rev. Mr. Morgan and the Corporation.' On 15 April, 1766, the Rev. Thomas Best, of Christ Church, who matriculated 20 June, 1755, and became B.A. 1759, M.A. 1762, was chosen master on Penrose's resignation. He agreed with the corporation to resign if at any time he should have less than two boarders.

Best was paid £4 a year for reading prayers in the free grammar school of this borough, to the almspeople of St. Bartholomew's almshouses. On his death in 1814 the school was closed and remained in abeyance for 35 years till 1849. Meanwhile, in 1829, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Newbury, got into Chancery, where it stayed for 11 years. Under the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, the corporation ceased to be the trustees of the hospital or the school, the management of which was transferred to seventeen municipal charity trustees appointed by the Lord Chancellor, 12 January, 1837. On 14 July, 1841, a scheme promoted by them for St. Bartholomew's Hospital was confirmed by the Master of the Rolls. It directed that 'a school to be called "Saint Bartholomew's Free Grammar School" shall be maintained, and a school and master's house provided out of the funds of the Hospital,' in which '20 free boys, sons of inhabitant householders of at least one year's residence in Newbury, should be educated clear of all charges whatever in all the learning taught therein,' and 40 paying boys might be nominated. In 1848 the new buildings for the school on the site of the ancient hospital were begun. The school was re-opened in August, 1849, with 20 free boys and 40 paying boys, under the mastership of Henry Newport, M.A., of Pembroke College, Cambridge, appointed 14 May, 1849. He only stayed three years, the Rev. W. Cole, M.A., succeeding him 15 September, 1852. Mr. Cole received £100 as master, £26 as chaplain, from the charity funds, and the Exchequer payment of £12 yearly, besides all fees. An undermaster had £40 a year from the charity. In 1856, besides the 20 foundation boys, there were 15 others, of whom 12 were boarders. The school was unfavourably reported¹⁷

¹¹ Money 'Sketch of Newbury Grammar School.'

¹² Foster, *Alumni Oxon.*

¹³ Foster, *Alumni Oxon.*

¹⁴ *Sch. Inq. Rep.* xi, 416.

¹⁵ *Char. Com. Rep.* i, 43.

¹⁶ *Char. Com. Rep.* i, 43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

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on by an assistant-commissioner to the Schools Inquiry Commission in 1866, both as to the attainments of the 27 boys, of whom 15 were foundationers and 7 boarders, and adequacy of the buildings, which last was not surprising since the court had allowed only £1,075 for a school and master's house. Both head and under masters, as a consequence, resigned the next year. The Rev. Alfred Strane was appointed master 31 August, 1867. He resigned in 1876, and was succeeded 1 September, 1876, by the Rev. J. Atkins, M.A., L.L.B., who very soon raised the number to 62. With a view to further accommodation, by a scheme under the Endowed Schools Acts, 1883, St. Bartholomew's Hospital and two Kendrick charities were amalgamated under the name of 'St. Bartholomew's Hospital and Grammar School Foundation.' John Kendrick, by will 29 December, 1624, had bequeathed to the mayor and burgesses £500 for loans to industrious poor clothiers, and had also established a charity school which had been closed in 1859, and the boys absorbed in the national school. A site belonging to Kendrick's school charity in Enborne Road was appropriated for new grammar school buildings for 80 day boys and 20 boarders. A further scheme, 1899, provided for foundation scholarships in the school at the rate of one for every ten boys in the school, and eight 'Kendrick scholarships' for boys from public elementary schools. At the same time five Kendrick exhibitions for girls from elementary schools to secondary schools were established.

In 1896 the grammar school numbered 66 boys, of whom 17 were boarders. The Rev. J. Atkins retired in 1902. Mr. E. Sharwood Smith, the present head master, was then elected. He was a scholar of King Edward's School, Birmingham, and Jesus College, Cambridge (2nd class classics 1886), and had been assistant master at Hymers College, Hull, and for three years head master of Whitchurch School. He has started a school magazine, *The Newburian*, of which the first number appeared in April, 1903. The same year a new science wing was opened. Natural history and debating societies have been established, and a school cadet corps was started in 1904. The school now numbers 100 boys, of whom 20 are boarders, with a staff of 8 assistant masters.

CHILDREY SCHOOL

Childrey School is a most interesting foundation, not alone because it has preserved a very full example of the foundation deed of a pre-Reformation elementary school, and perhaps the earliest in which instruction is specifically directed to be given in English, and the children are to learn their elements in English; but also because it is perhaps the earliest instance known of the attempt to combine in one an elementary and a secondary school. It is almost a revelation to find a founder in 1526 providing for an elementary school, and adding that which was almost common form in foundations in the eighteenth century, and in Chancery schemes for decayed grammar school foundations in the early nineteenth century, 'Latin if required.' It is also a useful example of the meaning of the term free school, which is shown to mean a school free from tuition fees, though the freedom was in this case limited to (a) all poor; and (b) all inhabitants of Childrey, however rich.

William Fettiplace, by will 20 July, 1526, founded a perpetual chantry of one chaplain in the parish church of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Childrey,¹ with John Rudde as first chaplain.

Every such chaplain in future to be chosen should be a man sufficiently learned in the science of grammar, and should always keep a free school in the house which with that intention he had ordained, that is to say, by diligently instructing all boys and persons coming thither for the sake of learning, in manner thereunder written, or in other better ways. In the first place he should teach the boys the alphabet, the Lord's Prayer, the Salutation of the Angel, and the Apostles' Creed, and all other things necessary for serving the priest at mass, together with the psalm *De Profundis* and the collects together with the prayers customary for the dead, also he should teach them to say grace as well at dinner as at supper. Then he should teach the aforesaid boys in English the 14 articles of faith, the 10 Commandments of God, the 7 mortal sins, the 7 sacraments of the church, the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit, the 7 works of mercy, as well corporal as spiritual, the 5 bodily senses, and the manner of confession, all which he judged and considered necessary not only for the boys themselves but for all other families and persons where they resided, in order that they might instruct those who were ignorant in the premises. Also he should teach them good manners, and before everything to fear God and keep his commandments, and especially not to lie, and to honour their parents, and in church to serve God devoutly. Moreover if any were apt and disposed to learn grammar, he should instruct them in grammar in the best manner he could, and especially teach them what was most useful to them, and what was most expedient according to his true estimation and the sound counsel of learned men. Also the aforesaid chaplain should exact or require nothing from the poor and from those who dwelt within the parish of Chilrey for the instruction and information of the same; nevertheless if anything should be offered to him freely and gratuitously for his diligence, he did not wish to prohibit him from taking it. And every such chaplain for the time being should make his scholars on every week day

¹ G. W. Wallace, *Endowed Charities in Berkshire*.

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(*quolibet die feriali*), when last in the afternoon they departed from the school, say before their departure the psalm *De Profundis clamavi* with the collects and prayers for the dead customary and usual with the same psalm, specially and by name praying for the founder's soul and the other souls aforesaid with this clause at the end, 'May the soul of William Fetiplace and the souls of all the faithful departed by the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

His salary or stipend was to be £8 a year. The chaplain-schoolmaster was to be appointed by Queen's College, Oxford, or in default by the rector of Childrey.

And he willed that, if the Chaplain were promoted or beneficed, or if he were found notoriously forsworn in his observation of the ordinance, or if he were openly immoral, or kept or bred hunting birds, or hunted regularly, or were unbearably quarrelsome with the people either of the vill of Chilrey or of other adjoining vills, or were branded notoriously with any notable crime which might cause or bring infamy upon the said Chantry, and upon such branding did not lawfully purge himself,

then Queen's College were empowered to remove him, or in the alternative to reform him by suspending his salary.

By deed 31 July, 1526, annexed to the will were conveyed to feoffees lands worth net £25 9s. 8d. Fetiplace died in 1529 in Letcombe Bassett, which Queen's College still holds.

The certificate² under the Chantries Act of Henry VIII gives the payment to the priest as £7 4s. 'payed by the Warden of the Queen's College in Oxford,' but according to the chantry certificate of Edward VI there was paid

to Ambrose Lancaster, clerke, incumbant, teaching a gramer scole ther, and praying for the founder, of the age of 36 yeres, able to serve cure, not having besides this any other lyving, £8 13s. 4d. de dono Thome Fetiplace defuncti.

A memorandum is appended that

uppon sighte of the evidence of the saide Colledge shiewyd by the provoste of the same unto Sir Walter Mildemay, Knighte, and Roberte Kelway Esquier, and uppon conference by them had with the Jugges concerning the same: It semyth that this chauntry is not within the compas of the statute; And therefore it is ordered—that the provoste and Fellowes of the same Colledge shall Receive the Revenewes of the same Chauntry, until better matter may be shewed for the Kings maiestie.

The *ratio decidendi* was, no doubt, that this chantry was part of the foundation of Queen's College and as such was exempted from the Act.

There is no evidence of a school building till 1732, when Sir George Fetiplace built a school-room on the roadside waste. He by his will, proved in 1743, gave an endowment of £6 10s. per annum to a dame or master to teach girls in Childrey. This was appropriated to the Fetiplace School, where the girls were taught with the boys till 1844, when a separate school for them was built by the then rector, and the mistress of it received the £6 10s.

There is no evidence that the education given in the school was ever other than elementary.

In 1867 Queen's College rebuilt the master's house and increased his salary to £40, but since then the college has paid to the school managers the sum necessary to balance the expenditure on the school, after reckoning school fees and Government grants.

WANTAGE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

By letters patent of Queen Elizabeth in 1597, houses and lands, given in the reigns of Henry VI and Henry VII for charitable purposes, and long afterwards applied to highways and the support of a schoolmaster were vested in twelve persons, incorporated as governors of the town lands of Wantage, for relief of the poor, amendment of highways and maintaining a schoolmaster to teach grammar within the town. A school was built in the churchyard, where it was kept till 1849, when, on the occasion of the 'millenary' of the birth of King Alfred, the school was moved to its present site. An old arch removed from the old school now forms the entrance of the boarders' common room. In 1872 the school hall was built, a new wing added in 1875 and science buildings in 1898.

Joseph Butler, bishop of Durham, received his early education at this school. He was born at Wantage, 18 May, 1692, the youngest of eight children of a retired draper. The Rev. Philip Barton was master. Young Butler cannot have stayed very long, as he went on to a dissenting school at Gloucester, and afterwards to Tewkesbury before going up to Oriel College, Oxford.

² A. F. Leach, *Engl. Schools at the Reformation*, pt. ii, 8.

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However he must have received a good impression of the master, as one of his first acts after becoming Dean of St. Paul's was to give the rectory of Hutton in Essex to Barton.¹

In 1818 Carlisle² says: 'It is gratifying to add, that no Charity can be better managed, or the profits disposed more to the Donor's intentions, than the present.'

In 1866 under the Rev. C. H. Crooke there were 27 boys in the school, consisting of 3 foundationers, 3 day boys, and 21 boarders. In 1868 Mr. Henry Cook became head master. He found 17 boys and raised the number to 120, of whom 80 were boarders. After his resignation through illness in 1884, the school went down to 22 boys. It was re-organized by a scheme of the Charity Commissioners under the Endowed Schools Acts, 23 November, 1893, and has been largely helped by Lord Wantage. In 1903 the present head master, the Rev. Marchant Pearson, was appointed. He has 4 assistant masters under him and there are 85 boys, about half of whom are boarders.

HUNGERFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Thomas Sheaff, D.D., gave a house for a free grammar school by deed 29 September, 1653. In 1729, John Hamblin gave, by will 28 April, a plot of five acres known as Chantry Mead, from the rent of which £4 was to be paid to a master for teaching 4 poor boys and £4 for supplying them with coats, hats and neck-cloths. Elizabeth Cummins increased the endowment by will 18 January, 1735, with £400 for educating an equal number of boys and girls; the boys to be taught Latin, otherwise half the bequest to go to Newbury Grammar School. In 1782 a school-room was built with a legacy left by Mr. Capps for the purpose.

In 1866 the Endowed Schools Commission found no girls, but occasionally a small surplus of income was devoted to apprenticing girls. There were then 9 foundation scholars, 4 on Hamblin's foundation, 3 on Mrs. Cummins', and 2 on Capps', with 6 other day-boys and 31 boarders. The staff consisted of two masters, neither of whom had a degree or was certificated.

WALLINGFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The endowment of this school consisted of an annuity of £10 received by the mayor of Wallingford from the Merchant Taylors' Company for the use of the schoolmaster of the free grammar school, from the gift of Walter Bigg, 6 June, 1659.³ The school must have been established in 1672, as 18 May of that year there is an entry in a corporation minute book of the receipt of £50 from the fraternity of St. John the Baptist in London, i.e. the Merchant Taylors' Company. Of this £32 was for erecting a free school, £2 10s. for the schoolmaster and the rest for the poor. The £10 was paid regularly by the mayor to the schoolmaster, and in return for it he taught 6 poor boys reading, writing, cyphering, and English grammar.

For some years the schoolmaster taught in rooms over the town hall, but in 1717 the corporation bought the remainder of the lease of a house out of Walter Bigg's money. After the expiration of the lease the schoolmaster taught in his own house.⁴

The school was closed on the resignation of the master in 1863.

It was revived by a scheme under the Endowed Schools Acts of 9 August, 1872. Mr. George Herbert Wade of St. Peter's School, York, and exhibitor of Balliol, was appointed head master in 1904. The school is now a mixed school for boys and girls, 76 altogether, of whom 50 are boys and 26 girls.

RADLEY COLLEGE

St. Peter's College, Radley, was opened on 9 June, 1847, by the founder, the Rev. William Sewell, D.D., of Exeter College, Oxford.¹ Son of Thomas Sewell, solicitor, of Newport, in the Isle of Wight, and brother of James Edwardes Sewell, warden of New College, Oxford, for upwards of thirty years, he was educated at Winchester and Merton College, Oxford, and was elected fellow of Exeter in 1827. He became tutor and sub-rector of the college, and was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy in 1836. In 1843 he helped to found the college of St. Columba in Ireland, the aim being 'to secure a full exhibition of the principles of the English church.' Three years later, he severed his connexion with it, and turned his attention to the establishment of a similar place of education in England.

¹ *Dict. Nat. Biog.*

² *Sch. Inq. Rep.* xi, 427.

³ This account is mainly derived from *Fifty Years of Radley College*, by Rev. T. D. Raikes, 1897.

⁴ Carlisle, *Endowed Grammar Sch.* i, 43.

⁵ *Char. Com. Rep.* i, 65.

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On 5 March, 1847, he summoned three friends to a meeting to discuss his plans ; three days afterwards they drove from Oxford to inspect Radley Hall, the family seat of Sir George Bowyer, which was to let, and took it on a lease for twenty-one years. From the day the lease was signed, Dr. Sewell began to buy treasures for his foundation, magnificent old chairs, pictures, curtains from the queen of Portugal's private chapel at Belem at a guinea a yard, a Thibet carpet bought for £30 which was valued subsequently at £700 ; and before the chapel was built or even designed, a magnificent organ was ordered for it. The college was called St. Peter's, after the patron saint of Exeter College. The school motto 'Sicut columbae !' is due to the original intention having been to call it St. Columbus, the Rev. Robert Corbet Singleton, who had been warden of St. Columba's in Ireland, having been appointed warden. Capt. Haskoll and Dr. Monk were the first fellows of the new college.

The school began in August 1847, with 3 boys, increased by 10 after Christmas, and further increases each term brought the numbers up to 84 in 1850. Dissensions, however, arose between warden and founder and in October, 1851, the first warden head master resigned. The Rev. W. Beden Heathcote, fellow of New College, who then became warden, only remained for a year. The numbers continued to fall till at the end of 1852 there were only 45 boys, and the debts of the college amounted to £19,000. In this crisis Dr. Sewell took control himself and became the third warden. Under him many improvements were made. The severities of discipline formerly existing were abated, the food improved, and a school shop was opened. There were 95 boys at the end of 1854, and 133 two years later. In 1855 the school started its first eight on the river. But the rise in numbers did not represent a proportionate increase of income. By way of raising money to spend, chiefly in building, a system of nominations was adopted, by which a sum of £500 paid on entrance enabled a boy to stay for ten years, or for a shorter period, less in proportion. Dr. Sewell did not realize that the college was being carried on at an increasing loss till in 1860, when creditors began to press for payment, the liabilities were found to be over £40,000. Mr. J. G. Hubbard, afterwards Lord Addington, came to the rescue. He took upon himself the whole debt, and an assignment of the college and all its property was made to him. He made the school an endowed school by a trust deed of 1863, which vested the property in seven trustees of whom he was one, and they became the governing body of the school, as a place of 'education of youth in the doctrines and principles of the Church of England.'² In the end Mr. Hubbard recovered the whole of the money advanced, some £30,000. On Dr. Sewell's resignation in March, 1861, the Rev. R. W. Norman, a fellow, i.e. assistant master, became warden. The warden now became an ordinary head master, and the fellows assistant masters, appointed by him and liable to dismissal by him. During the five years of Mr. Norman's wardenship a considerable amount of the debt was paid off, and there was a surplus of income over expenditure. Three scholarships were founded in 1862, each tenable for one year, the first by Sir Walter James, afterwards Lord Northbourne, the next by Mr. William Gibbs, and one in memory of the Rev. W. B. Heathcote, the second warden, who died that year. *The Radleian*, the school magazine, was started in 1865, and has continued to the present day. The next year Mr. Norman was obliged to retire owing to ill-health. He was succeeded by the Rev. William Wood, fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, who had been sub-warden for a time under Dr. Sewell. His period of office was not particularly satisfactory, the numbers falling below 80. In 1870, the Rev. Charles Martin became warden. He had been at Winchester and New College, a senior student of Christ Church and assistant master at Harrow. This third Wykehamist warden was very successful. Among buildings, a new infirmary and studies were added, and two covered five courts. The founder died on 14 November, 1874, and was commemorated by a Sewell scholarship of £55 a year, the capital for which was subscribed chiefly by old Radleians. The numbers were steadily increasing till there were over 140 when Mr. Martin accepted a college living in 1879. The dual control of a warden and a bursar, which caused a good deal of friction, was abolished on the appointment of the next warden, the Rev. Robert James Wilson, as he undertook supreme control, financial as well as scholastic. He was an old Cheltonian and post-master of Merton College, Oxford, had been assistant master at Radley for three years, then assistant master at Marlborough, which he left to become fellow, tutor, and bursar at Merton ; and even when he became warden held the living of Wolverscote, a village two miles from Oxford. One of his earliest changes was to shorten the daily service in chapel, which had up till then been the full service twice a day. He also introduced more history, and the systematic teaching of science, and gradually a regular modern side was organized. A Latin play was established in 1881, the same four plays being presented in turn as at Westminster, viz., *The Phormio*, *The Adelphi*, and the *Andria* of Terence, and the *Trinummus* of Plautus, but the epilogue is in English, and generally consists not of an original burlesque but of some scenes from Shakespeare.

² It would therefore appear that it was wrongly included in the *Schools Inquiry Commission Report*, xi, 487, as a proprietary school. Though the first trust went to pay off Mr. Hubbard's £30,000 the surplus was endowment.

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A great change from the Sewell system was introduced in 1882 when the ground-floor windows were barred, and iron gates affixed to all points of egress, hitherto left open, Sewell's theory being that 'the watch and guard against sin must be in the hearts'³ of the boys. In 1885 a still greater revolution took place in the building of a boarding-house, in which, however, boys were only lodged, not boarded. The next year saw the final extinction of the debt which had burdened the college for twenty-six years. In 1888 Mr. Wilson was appointed warden of Keble College, Oxford, and is commemorated at Radley by the Wilson Library. The Rev. H. L. Thompson, of Westminster and Christ Church, some years tutor and censor till he took the college living of Iron Acton in Gloucestershire in 1877, became the eighth warden. Six months after his appointment, 2 July, 1889, the college purchased the freehold of their site and buildings for £13,000.

Lord Addington, the chairman of the trustees, died soon after, in his eighty-fifth year. The governing body was reconstituted as 'the Council,' a corporation capable of holding property, and increased its numbers, and the next year the college was incorporated by royal charter.

In June 1895 a new chapel, of which T. Graham Jackson, R.A., was architect, was opened. Another boarding-house for 40 boys was built the next year, and others have been added later. The warden accepted the vicarage of St. Mary's, Oxford, in October 1896. In January 1897 the present warden, the Rev. T. Field, D.D., assumed office. He was head master of the King's School, Canterbury, at which he had been educated; and was afterwards a scholar of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he took first classes in mathematical and classical moderations and in classical final schools, was a fellow of Magdalen College, and assistant master at Harrow.

Radley, being on the Thames, is a rowing school. In 1861 both Radley and Eton made their first entry for the Ladies' Plate at Henley, for which, with few exceptions, it has always entered since, and in 1882, for the first time, it won a trial heat, and was in for the final. In cricket, since 1863, a match against Bradfield has been the great annual event, with the balance in favour of Bradfield.

Football began at Radley with a game of its own, evolved out of the Harrow football rules, which was gradually modified into the modern Association game. Matches are played every year against Bradfield and Malvern. The school is divided for games into 'Socials.' Every boy on arriving is assigned to a certain tutor, whose 'social pupil' he becomes, and who stands to a boy in the same position as a house master at most schools.

There is now a staff of about 20 masters, and the school numbers 226 boys.

BRADFIELD COLLEGE

Bradfield was among the earliest of the school foundations of the Victorian age, and the first in Berkshire to become a permanent endowed school.

Perhaps none of the great public schools has owed its origin to more singular chances than Bradfield. It was founded because Thomas Stevens, 'squarson' of Bradfield from 1842 to 1881, wanted to establish a kind of small cathedral there, and having spent £30,000 upon rebuilding the church wished to have a choir of gentlemen's sons after the fashion of Magdalen College, Oxford, and the New College choral scholars. In the fifteenth century he would have obtained papal bulls and royal licences to collegiate Bradfield church and establish a college of secular canons or fellows with a grammar and a song school attached. Living in the nineteenth century he got a few friends together as a council and issued a prospectus on St. Andrew's Day, 1848, for a college to be called St. Andrew's College for the education of a limited number of boys at moderate terms, in true church principles, learning reading, writing, arithmetic and music, passing on to classics, mathematics, and history.

The first boy, Blackall Simonds, was admitted 4 February, 1850, living with a temporary tutor in the Tan House, now called the Bridge House. With six boys the college started in August 1850, in the old manor-house on the north side of the church. Round this the whole school¹ has 'grown with a regular irregularity, which is very English and very effective. Its eighteenth century red brick and flintwork has given the style and tone to the whole mass for which up to 1881 the founder was himself the designer and chief architect.' The founder made himself warden, the Rev. F. Barlow Guy of Lincoln College, Oxford, the first head master. By the end of 1851 thirteen boys had arrived. Guy then married and joined his father-in-law at the Forest School, Walthamstow. Robert Edward Sanderson, curate of St. Mary's, Oxford, now canon of Chichester, then came. At the end of 1852 32 boys went home for the holidays, and there were 47 when they came back in January, 1853. In 1855 a school roll in Latin fashioned on the

³ Speech of Dr. Sewell at the Radley dinner, 1872.

¹ A. F. Leach, *Hist. of Bradfield Coll.* (1900).

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Winchester 'Long Rolls' recorded 70 boys. In 1857 'a college ballad' in English by Mr. W. H. Tinney was translated into Latin by Mr. G. B. Morley, and in its Latin and superior form has remained the school song :—

From smallest seed we know
A mighty tree does grow.
So may St. Andrew's College.

If night shall gloom awhile
Morn soon again shall smile
Upon St. Andrew's College.

Parvula radice crescit
Arbor ingens ; tale surgat
Parva linquens, magna quercus,
Andreae Collegium.

Paullulum si nox obumbret
Crede pleno sol renascens
Orbe mox illuminabit
Andreae Collegium.

From 1858 Shakespeare's plays, beginning with *The Taming of the Shrew*, were acted on St. Andrew's Day, the commemoration day of the college. When the number of the school passed 100 the founder by deed of 16 May, 1859, vested the buildings and site of 13 acres 1 rood in trustees for a college of a warden, head master, organist, 153 paying commoners and 10 free boys called Founders' boys. By 13 July, 1859, the school had risen to 120. A subscription was started to celebrate the event, and resulted in £900, with which a Stevens scholarship, tenable at the University, was founded by deed 16 May, 1860. In that year Mr. Sanderson married, and went off to Lancing.

The Rev. Stephen Poyntz Denning, a Shrewsbury boy and fellow of Durham University, was appointed head master in 1860. The numbers continuing to rise, on 10 December, 1862, 'The Warden and Council of St. Andrew's College, Bradfield,' were incorporated by royal charter with a licence in mortmain to hold lands up to £5,000 a year.

Denning died suddenly in 1868. Under Henry Hayman, who came from the head-mastership of Cheltenham Grammar School, where he had been a great success, and went on to Rugby after only a year, the school fell to about 90. Recovery took place under Dr. Hodson, 1869-72, and under Mr. J. B. Souper, who had himself been a Bradfield boy, the numbers in 1874 reaching 130. But the dual control which prevailed owing to the continual interference of the rector-warden, prevented permanent success. In 1874 decline began. Souper retired in 1878. The Rev. C. T. Cruttwell, fellow of Merton, now Canon Cruttwell and rector of Ewelme, Oxfordshire, came in 1878. In his time *The Bradfield College Chronicle* was founded. The masters could not get paid, the warden-rector, now 70 years of age, was querulous and interfering. In 1880 Mr. Cruttwell and half the staff left. At this crisis the school was fortunate in attracting the present head master and warden, Herbert Branston Gray, now D.D., a Winchester 'commoner' and scholar of Queen's College, Oxford ; he had come from an assistant mastership at Westminster to be head master of Louth School, Lincolnshire, which in two years he had doubled. He accepted Bradfield in total ignorance of the financial difficulties. He began with 8 masters and a school of 75 boys in the summer of 1880. At Easter 1881 no salaries were received by the staff. During the holidays while the rector was away, a tradesman unable to get his bill paid put an executorial notice on the rectory and a bankruptcy on the part of Mr. Stevens for £160,000 ensued. Dr. Gray and the second master, Andrew Low, determined to take the burden of the school on themselves. They demanded, after some demur received, the resignation of the wardenship by the founder on 4 July, 1881, and the appointment of Dr. Gray as warden, which carried with it by statute the chairmanship of the council. At this time the school consisted of 55 boys in a single house. It now numbers 325 boys in four houses. One single fact shows to what the college had sunk before the bankruptcy. 'Rat-hunts were popular amusements, the chase being pelted with fives balls. I still remember,' says an old boy, himself a successful head master, 'the shock caused by treading on a fat rat as I went upstairs on a dark winter's morning.' Now the houses have all the benefits of sanitary science. All boys over 15 have separate bedrooms, they are called 'singles.'

The struggle, however, was very severe at first, as the founder's creditors had seized the water supply, the gas supply, the laundry, and the school bathing-place on the Kennet.

Yet in spite of all, in October 1881 Dr. Gray started a new experiment in preparing for the performance of *Alceste* in the original Greek. The performance attracted great attention in the scholastic world, and the turning point of the school's fortune may be dated from this happy thought, due largely to the fact that Mr. F. R. Benson, the now well-known actor, who as an undergraduate had made a sensation in *The Agamemnon* at Oxford in 1880, was an old Winchester friend. In 1883 the school established its claim to good teaching, 3 members of the sixth out of 8 winning scholarships at Oxford, 4 out of 6 doing the same in 1884, and in 1886 4 out of 5. The numbers had then risen to a little over 100. Since then they have never ceased to rise. In 1888 the Greek play gained further celebrity by being performed in the open air in a disused chalk pit, fashioned into the shape and with all the accessories of dress (except masks and buskins) and

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music of the Athenian drama. A regular cycle has now been established of three plays, *The Alcestis* of Euripides, *The Antigone* of Sophocles, and *The Agamemnon* of Æschylus. As a rule the play only takes place once in every three years, but the date was altered in 1900 in order to give a performance in the jubilee year of the school.

Another thing which tended to the fame of Bradfield at this time was its wonderful series of successes in the Public Schools Shooting, then at Wimbledon. In 1886 it first competed. In 1887 it was second only to Eton with its 1,000 boys: in 1888 it tied for second place with Eton, one point behind the winners; in 1891 it was again second; and in 1893 and 1897 it brought home the Ashburton Shield as winner.

In 1887 the Junior School went to 'Hillside'; in 1889 the Army House, presided over by Mr. Low, the second master, was built; in 1899 the Modern House was opened under Mr. Steele. Engineering class-rooms adjoin it. In 1892 the church, the cause of the school, which had cost the founder his fortune, had to be cast off as an out-grown garment, and a new chapel opened, which in 1903 was completed by the addition of a tower and the enlargement of the chancel from the design of Mr. J. Oldrid Scott, the son of Sir Gilbert Scott, the architect of the church. The 13 acres of land which formed the original site of 1860 have now grown to 39.

The school now consists of 28 masters and 325 boys, all it can hold.

WELLINGTON COLLEGE

Wellington College owed its foundation to a national and royal movement. It sprang into existence from a subscription from the army, including several Indian regiments, and the public, amounting to £145,000, for a memorial to the Duke of Wellington. Its primary object was the education of the sons of deceased officers in the army, of whom 70 are on the foundation, for £10 a year. The sons of all officers are taken at reduced fees. The college was incorporated by royal charter, 13 December, 1853, with a large and distinguished governing body, including the Prince of Wales, now King Edward VII. The Duke of Connaught is president. The school buildings cost £50,000, and were opened by Queen Victoria in January 1859. The school has always remained largely an army school, and the mathematical wholly overshadows the classical side.

The governors made a happy selection for their first head master in Edward White Benson of Birmingham School, then assistant master at Rugby, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Under him the school rapidly filled; not only foundationers but non-foundationers crowded in to the utmost capacity of the college. In 1865 when he gave evidence before the Schools Inquiry Commission there were 250 boys, all in the college except 6 in a boarding-house. Since then under Edward Wickham, of Winchester and New College, now Dean of Lincoln, other boarding-houses have been built, and now there are 5, each containing about 30 boys. The present head master, the Rev. Bertram Pollock, a Charterhouse boy, of Trinity College, Cambridge, was an assistant master at Marlborough when appointed in 1893. The school now numbers about 470.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—FOUNDED BEFORE 1750

APPLETON.—Sir Richard Fettiplace, kt., and Bessels Fettiplace, esq., gave a parcel of land and a close to trustees by deed in 1604, that the profits should be used to teach the children of Appleton and Bessels Leigh in good manners and learning. In 1818 the parcel of land was said to be lost to the charity, but the rent of the close was paid to the schoolmaster on Lane's foundation, who did not teach any children on account of it.

Thomas Lane, by will in 1709, gave premises and some commons to bestow the yearly income on some learned scholar to teach 6 boys in learning and good manners. The schoolmaster was appointed by the trustees and taught 6 boys the three R's.

UFFINGTON.—The foundation of this school is obscure. An inscription on a tablet in Woolstone Chapel seems to show it was founded by will of Thomas Saunders, and an inscription of 1636 in the schoolroom to show the date of building. The will of Thomas Saunders of Uffington, proved at Oxford in 1644, contains no mention of a school, but he might have founded it in his life-time. Some land and cottages in Uffington were applied to the support of the school and the schoolmaster received the rents, for which he taught the three R's to 12 boys from Uffington and 6 from Woolstone.

By scheme of the Charity Commissioners of 7 August, 1896, the income was to be spent in prizes, but a scheme of the Board of Education of 17 May, 1906, authorized the borrowing of money on mortgage for the improvement of the National School, and ordered the accumulation of income pending a further order.

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HARWELL.—Robert Loder, by will in 1644, gave to trustees a messuage and yard land in Garsington, to provide a schoolmaster to teach 12 children born in Harwell. Under the Garsington Inclosure Act an allotment was made of 22 acres in lieu of the yard land. A schoolmaster, appointed by the trustees, received the rent.

The Rev. Matthew Eaton, by will in 1722, devised to trustees all his estates, the residue of which was to be used for the industrious poor as the trustees thought proper. Under this will, a messuage, orchard, and garden were applied to the use of the schoolmaster, and in return for all the emoluments, he taught 25 boys to read and write and say the catechism.

READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL.—This school was founded by Richard Aldworth, who gave £4,000 by will, 21 December, 1646, to the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses to purchase lands of the yearly value of £215 6s. 4d., and he also gave a house in Reading in trust to pay for the education and bringing up of 20 male children, and for their food and clothing, at the rate of £6 13s. 4d. for each child; and to pay to the schoolmaster £30 a year for teaching the 20 boys, and 30 more to be taught to read, write, and cypher, but not to be clothed or maintained. The children were to be educated in the schoolmaster's house, and fed and clothed as the children in Christ's Hospital, London, were. In 1657 £2,000, and in 1660 the rest of the £4,000, was laid out in lands, among them the site of the school house, which was built in 1723.

Sir Thomas Rich, by will of 16 May, 1666, gave £1,000 to the borough of Reading to be laid out in lands to maintain 6 poor boys in Aldworth's Hospital, on condition that the mayor and burgesses should admit 3 boys from the parish of Sonning.

William Malthus, by will 16 November, 1700, after certain bequests, directed that the residue of his estate should be sold, and the money be laid out in lands, the rents of which were to go in the first place in the maintenance and education of 10 poor boys in the Blue Coat School at Reading, the boys to wear green coats instead of blue, marked W.M. This distinction has not been adhered to, and the full number of boys was not kept up for many years.

John Pottenger, by will 6 June, 1711, gave a rent-charge of £15 a year for the maintenance of 2 boys in the school.

John West, by will 9 January, 1719, gave £1,200 Orphan Debtors' stock to be sold and lands to be purchased for maintaining 6 boys, born at Reading, at the school.

John Leggatt, by will 24 March, 1786, bequeathed £50, and Edward Simeon, by will 13 December, 1810, £100 to the school.

John Hall, by will 31 December, 1696, gave to the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses a rent-charge of £25 a year, and also several messuages in Reading and elsewhere in Berkshire, one of which was to be used for a schoolmaster to teach 3 poor boys to read, write, and cast accounts, for a salary of £5 a year, and a cloak, value 40s., once in two years. The tenement named was converted into a schoolhouse, and used as such till 1796, when the trustees of the charity and the corporation agreed to add it to, and incorporate it with, the Blue Coat School. The boys were therefore removed there.

Mrs. Ann Norwood, by will 22 July, 1794, gave the residue of her estate to the trustees of Hall's charity. It amounted to nearly £1,800 3 per cent. stock.

The total number of boys from all these gifts, 47, was rarely kept up. In 1818 there were only 22.

BINFIELD.—Richard How, by deed 5 April, 1652, gave lands at Finchampstead, the fourth part of the rent of which was to be used in maintaining at school one or more poor children of Binfield.

The Rev. John Birch, by deed 15 January, 1770, conveyed a close and cottage and orchard to trustees for securing the payment of a charge for bread to the poor, and directed that the remainder of the rents should be appropriated to teaching poor children to read.

William Wynch, by will in 1647, charged a piece of land with the payment of 10s. to 10 poor people at Binfield.

William Symondson, by will in 1648, left 100 marks for raising an annual income to be distributed on his birthday. In 1652 the executors purchased lands, and both Wynch's and Symondson's gifts were applied as directed till 1786, when the principal inhabitants agreed to use them for the Sunday schools. On the establishment of a National School in 1814 they were applied in support of it. The school was built in 1813, and about 40 boys and 26 girls were educated on the Madras system for a small payment.

WOKINGHAM: BOYS' SCHOOL.—The first endowment of this school was by Richard How, by deed 5 April, 1652. He conveyed land at Finchampstead to trustees, one-fourth part of the rents of which was to be employed in maintaining at school one or more poor children of the parish.

Thomas Martin, by will 4 September, 1673, gave a yearly rent-charge of £6 for keeping 5 boys at school. The lands charged were conveyed to the town in 1674 in consideration of £50. £5 was paid to the schoolmaster for teaching 10 boys, and with the residue as many were clothed as funds permitted.

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Charles Palmer, M.D., by will 3 March, 1711, gave a yearly rent-charge of £20 towards maintaining 20 poor boys at the school.

Ann Tickner and Mary Cotterell, by deed 29 September, 1714, charged a close with the payment of £5 a year to the churchwardens, 20s. to the schoolmaster for teaching 2 boys, 20s. in buying coats for them, and £3 in other charitable purposes.

Thirty-four boys, in all, on these foundations were taught on the Madras system, with other scholars whom the master was allowed to take. A school was built about 1816, partly by subscriptions and partly from surplus funds of the charity.

The income has of late years been expended in prizes for good attendance at elementary schools, under a scheme of the Charity Commissioners of 19 May, 1893.

ABINGDON: MAYOTT'S SCHOOL.—Robert Mayott, by will in 1676, gave to the Corporation of Abingdon a meadow, with the tithes belonging to it, for keeping at school, and buying books for, poor children in the town, the girls to be taught to read English and to knit and do plain work, and the boys to read, write, and cast accounts. Ten boys and 10 girls were taught by a schoolmaster and mistress, but were not supplied with books.

MAIDENHEAD: SPOORE'S SCHOOL.—The first gift to education in Maidenhead was £5 per annum charged on her house by Elizabeth Merry by will 1 August, 1686, for putting poor children to school. From this five boys were taught.

Abraham Spooe, by indenture 16 December, 1696, assigned the lease of the bridge tolls, which secured the payment of £40 a year, to a trustee to pay £15 a year for teaching four boys in Maidenhead the three R's and to buy them books and stationery. By lease and release, 20 and 21 July, 1724, tenements were conveyed to the mayor and burgesses to hold in trust for the uses stated by Abraham Spooe.

SHINFIELD.—Mrs. Mary Spicer, by will 8 October, 1697, gave a messuage and lands in Shinfield in trust that the rents should be applied in teaching 'ten poor children of the parish to learn to read the Bible, and to learn the Catechism called the Assembly's Catechism.' The rent was paid to a schoolmistress who taught fifteen boys and girls, who generally went on to another school in the parish, founded by Richard Pigott, who by will 29 April, 1709, appointed the bishop of Sarum and the vicar of Shinfield to be governors of the trustees of his charity.

BLEWBURY.—William Malthus, by will 16 November, 1700, directed that the residue of his estate should be sold, and after the rent had been applied to the maintenance of children at the Blue Coat School at Reading, he desired the bishop of the diocese to arrange for the remainder to be distributed among the poor of Blewbury. Dr. Gilbert Burnett, then bishop of Salisbury, on 13 May, 1702, made orders for the disposal of the property: £60 a year for clothing poor boys and girls, £30 for a master and £10 for a mistress. Various alterations were made from time to time, in 1818 the master was receiving £50 and the mistress £20 a year, and they had each a house. There were thirty boys and thirty girls taught on the Madras system, and they were all partly clothed.

A scheme of the Charity Commissioners of 1898 provided that the income should be applied in apprenticeships or scholarships at a place of education higher than elementary or of technical, professional, or industrial instruction, but the only expenditure has been on outfits.

ABINGDON: PROVOST'S SCHOOL.—John Provost, by his will in 1703, gave certain premises and the residue of his real and personal estate to the use of teaching poor children of Abingdon to read and write. Eleven boys were taught reading and writing, and arithmetic also. They were also clothed, and apprenticed at fourteen if they wished to be.

NEW WINDSOR: MRS. BARKER'S CHARITY.—Mary Barker, by will 21 December, 1704, gave £360 to be laid out in the purchase of lands in trust for the maintenance of a schoolmaster or schoolmistress in the three parishes of New Windsor, Egham, and Yateley. The trustee for Windsor received a third of the rent, which he paid to a schoolmistress for teaching twelve poor children to read, and the girls to sew.

NEW WINDSOR: CHARITY SCHOOL.—This school was established by subscription in 1705 for forty boys and thirty girls to be taught to read, write, and cast accounts. The earliest endowment was a rent-charge of 20s. given by John Porter by will in 1701. Numerous other legacies were left, from one of which, £500 from Theodore Randue in 1724, a schoolhouse was built. There were about thirty-three boys and twenty-two girls in the school, who were taught the three R's and the girls knitting and sewing. All were completely clothed.

BRAY.—William Cherry, of Shottesbrook, gave £500 by will in 1705 for a free school for a master and twenty boys. Townley Ward gave later £100 3 per cent. stock to the school. The net income was applied to the free teaching of twenty boys in the Parish School.

READING: NEALE'S SCHOOL.—Joseph Neale, by will 8 October, 1705, devised to trustees the residue of his personal estate to dispose of to such charity as they should think fit. By a decree in Chancery, 20 June, 1714, a proposal to establish a school at Potterne in Wiltshire was approved.

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with the condition that the trust property might be transferred to any other charity school in the diocese of Sarum. The surviving trustee, the Rev. Francis Fox, vicar of St. Mary's, Reading, had established two charity schools for boys and girls in that parish, 22 May, 1714, and transferred the trust funds thereto. The income of £11 a year was paid to a schoolmistress who taught 25 very young boys and girls to read in a schoolroom held rent-free from the corporation.

THATCHAM.—Lady Frances Winchcomb, by deed 30 June, 1707, gave to trustees a piece of ground in Thatcham with a disused chapel, which she directed to be repaired for the use of a schoolmaster to teach gratis thirty poor boys of Bucklebury, Thatcham, and Little Shefford. She also gave a rent-charge of £53 to pay £20 a year to the schoolmaster, £20 in apprenticing three poor boys, £10 in books and the rest in repairs. The school was opened in 1713, but on the attainder of Lord Bolingbroke, who was owner of the estate charged and sole trustee of the charity, the affairs came into the Court of Chancery. By a decree 26 July, 1793, the school was re-established, and was re-opened 24 June, 1794. Forty boys were clothed and educated on the Madras system.

WINKFIELD.—Richard, earl of Ranelagh, by indentures of lease and release, 5 and 6 December, 1709, conveyed to trustees a mansion house in Dublin, and the manor of Killeagh in Wicklow, to apply the rents for maintaining and repairing two free schools—one for twenty poor boys and the other for twenty poor girls—then lately erected by him near Cranborne; to pay the schoolmaster a salary of £30, and the schoolmistress £20 and to clothe the children. They were to be from the parish of Winkfield, and were to receive an elementary education. The schoolmaster was to be in holy orders.

The endowment has been increased by two bequests of £500 each, by Thomas Maule, 10 November, 1714, and by Thomas Hatch about 1783.

The schoolmaster and mistress each had houses, and there were twenty-one boys and twenty-one girls on the foundation, who were all clothed. Supernumerary children were allowed to be taken, £1 10s. being paid to the master for each boy, and £1 to the mistress for each girl by the trustees.

ABINGDON: BELCHER'S SCHOOL.—Richard Belcher, by will in 1713, gave the residue of his real and personal estate upon trust, among other things, to raise £14 a year for teaching poor children of Abingdon to read English. The sum was paid to a schoolmaster who taught 15 poor boys.

WOKINGHAM: GIRLS' SCHOOL.—The girls' school was founded by Martha Palmer, who by will 13 June, 1713, gave £400 to trustees to buy lands, from the rents of which £5 was to be paid to a schoolmistress for teaching 12 poor girls of Wokingham to read English, sew, knit, and spin, till the age of twelve. £1 7s. was to be spent on other charities, and the residue to be employed for the school. From the sale of timber in 1795 on the lands bought, a house and garden were purchased, in which the schoolmistress lived and taught 15 girls free, and was allowed to take other scholars. In 1842 this school was amalgamated with the National School. By a scheme of the Endowed Schools Commissioners of 7 July, 1874, the governors were empowered to erect new school buildings sufficient for 120 infants and 160 other boys and girls. The school was enlarged in 1883, 1892, 1897, and again in 1899 and 1904. The income of the endowment was to be applied in prizes and exhibitions, but this was never done till 1897.

CHADDLEWORTH.—William Saunders, by will 23 January, 1719, directed lands to be purchased to pay £15 to a schoolmaster to teach eight boys the three R's, and he gave 40s. for the yearly rent of a house for the schoolmaster. The vicar of Chaddleworth was to have the option of being schoolmaster. In 1818 the curate was master, and received £20 salary, as well as a rent-charge of £10 given by Mrs. Susannah Wynne by will 1 June, 1710, for the instruction of ten poor children of the parish, whom he taught with the eight boys under Saunders's charity.

TWYFORD.—Edward Polehampton, in his will dated 27 July, 1721, stated that he was erecting a chapel and schoolhouse in Twyford, which he proposed to endow and he appointed trustees. He directed that ten poor boys should be taught to read and write from eight to fifteen, and he gave £10 a year out of his estates for clothing them. He gave £40 a year for a minister of the Church of England to officiate in the chapel and teach the boys. If he should refuse, a schoolmaster was to be appointed, to be paid £10, deducted from the £40. The affairs of the estate were in Chancery for nearly one hundred years, but the school seems to have been carried on, though the boys were not clothed, and in 1818 there were only five on the foundation.

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THE ROYAL BUCKHOUNDS

THE mastership of the Buckhounds was at first an hereditary office attached in grand serjeanty to Hunter's Manor in Little Weldon in Northamptonshire. From the time of Henry II till 1316 the Lovels held the manor; and Thomas de Borhunte obtained the mastership by marrying Margaret Lovel, the daughter and heir of John Lovel. On Borhunte's death she was married to William Danvers, who thus became master, and when they died the manor, together with the mastership, passed to Mary de Borhunte, the widow of Sir John de Borhunte, Margaret Lovel's son. The widowed lady of Little Weldon became the wife of Sir Bernard de Brocas of Beaurepaire, a Gascon favourite of Edward II, and the property and mastership continued in the hands of their descendants for nearly three hundred years. The chief residence of the Brocas family was Beaurepaire, near Basingstoke, bought from one John Pecche in 1353 by Sir Bernard de Brocas; and they also held lands in Clewer, Windsor, Eton, Cookham, and Bray. The royal pack consisted of twenty-four running dogs and six greyhounds.

In course of time the office became merely nominal, and was virtually extinguished in the person of the profligate Sir Pexall Brocas, who was compelled to do penance at St. Paul's Cross garbed in a white sheet for certain breaches of social amenities. The shadow of right to the mastership was sold in 1633 to Sir Lewis Watson, afterwards Lord Rockingham, but by that time it had practically ceased to exist.¹

¹ List of hereditary masters of the Royal Buckhounds:—1. Osborne Lovel, chamberlain to Hen. II; 2. William Lovel; 3. Hamon le Venour, by grant from Hen. III in 1216; 4. William Lovel; 5. John Lovel, *ob.* 1316; 6. Thomas de Borhunte, *ob.* 1340, *jure* Margaret Lovel; 7. William Danvers, *ob.* 1361,

Henry VIII had, however, inaugurated a privy pack of buckhounds, quite distinct from that kept by the hereditary masters. The mastership was held by the king's pleasure, and these hounds were the forerunners of the pack so long known as the Royal Buckhounds. Queen Mary did away with her father's² innovation, but the privy pack was revived by Queen Elizabeth and flourished in the days of James I. For years the old and the new systems contended against each other; but the new supplanted the old, which became obsolete and finally disappeared.

The first master of the privy pack was George Boleyn, brother of Anne, second wife of Henry VIII. He shared his sister's fate. Sir Richard Long and Lord Darcy of Chiche followed. After them came John Dudley, earl of Warwick, who was quickly followed by Sir Robert Dudley, the favourite of Queen Elizabeth, whom she created earl of Leicester and made master of her hounds (1572–88).³

jure Margaret Lovel; 8. Sir Bernard Brocas (1363), *ob.* 1395, *jure* Mary de Borhunte; 9. Sir Bernard Brocas, second of the name, executed 1400; 10. William Brocas 1, *ob.* 1456; 11. William Brocas 2, *ob.* 1484; 12. John Brocas, *ob.* 1492; 13. William Brocas, *ob.* 1506; 14. John Brocas (1508–12); 15. George Warham and Ralph Pexall, joint masters (1512–4), *jure* Anne and Edith Brocas; 16. Ralph Pexall (1514), *ob.* c. 1540, *jure* Edith Brocas; 17. Sir Ralph Pexall, *ob.* 1571, son of Edith Brocas; 18. Sir John Savage (till 1584), second husband of Lady Pexall, widow of Sir Richard; 19. Sir Pexall Brocas, *ob.* 1630; 20. Thomas Brocas, who in 1663 sold the office to Sir Lewis Watson, afterwards Lord Rockingham.

² Mr. Hole in his *History of the Royal Buckhounds* gives the accounts of salaries and allowances paid to the hunt servants from the privy purse of Henry VIII.

³ The eighth master was Sir Thomas Tyringham (1604–25), and the next was Sir Timothy Tyrell (1625–33). Tyringham was master again (1633–7), and his successors were Robert Tyrwhitt (1637–51); John Cary (1661–85); Col. James Graham (1685–8); James de Gastigny (1689–98); Rheinhard Vincent,

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The hereditary and privy packs were amalgamated in the time of Queen Anne, and the united packs placed under the establishment of the Prince Consort.

Queen Anne was devoted to hunting, and built the kennels on the site of those in use until the pack was abolished in 1901. She increased the number of deer, and in 1712 her keeper, William Lowen, brought up a hundred red deer from Houghton Park to Windsor. Before her accession she hunted on horseback, and when no longer able to mount the saddle she drove in an open calash along the long rides which she made in the forest. From the Soldiers' Pillar at Ascot nine of these radiate; and George III completed these roads, as he too in his later years was unable to follow the chase except in his carriage.

The first two Georges were indifferent sportsmen; and the buckhounds languished in their days. Sir Francis Negus, who was appointed master by George II, had a variety of duties to perform. He had to feed wild turkeys in Bushey Park, and to manage the royal menagerie in Hyde Park, as well as attend to his hunting. The duke of Cumberland, uncle of George III, infused new life into the pack, assisted by the masters, Lord Jersey and Lord Hinchinbroke. George III was a keen sportsman in spite of his nineteen stone, and constantly attended the baron von Hompesch (1698-1702); Sir Charles Shuckburgh (1703-5); Walter Chetwynd (1705-11); Sir William Wyndham (1711-12); George, third earl of Cardigan (1712-15); Colonel Sir Francis Negus (1727-32); Charles, second earl of Tankerville (1733-6); Ralph Jenison (1736-44); George, third earl of Halifax (1744-46); John, Viscount Bateman (1757-82); George Bussy, fourth earl of Jersey (1782); John Montagu, styled Viscount Hinchinbroke (1783-1806); William Charles, fourth earl of Albemarle (1806-7); Charles, second marquess Cornwallis (1807-23); William, Lord Maryborough (1823-30); Thomas William, second Viscount Anson (1830-4); George, sixth earl of Chesterfield (1834-5); William George, eighteenth earl of Erroll (1835-9); George William Fox, ninth Lord Kinnaird (1839-41); James Alexander, third earl of Rosslyn (1841-6); Granville George, second Earl Granville (1846-8); John George Brabazon, sixth earl of Bessborough (1848-52); the third earl of Rosslyn again (1853); the sixth earl of Bessborough again (1854-8); John William, seventh earl of Sandwich (1858-9); the sixth earl of Bessborough for the third time (1859-66); Richard Edmund St. Lawrance, ninth earl of Cork and Orrery (1866); Charles John, first Lord Colville of Culross (1866-8); the ninth earl of Cork again (1868-74); Charles Philip, fifth earl of Hardwicke (1874-80); the ninth earl of Cork for the third time (1880-5); John Henry de la Poer, fifth marquess of Waterford (1885-6); Charles, fifth Lord Suffield (1886); George William, ninth earl of Coventry (1886-92); Thomas, fourth Lord Ribblesdale (1892-5); the ninth earl of Coventry again (1895 till the dissolution of the pack).

meets. In his time the Inclosure Acts in Berks 'hastened the dawn of civilization in the shape of the deer-cart.' The practice of turning out the deer instead of 'harbouring' it was then adopted.

An octogenarian villager of Compton in 1846 recorded a remarkable run of the Royal Buckhounds which took place about 1780. A gallant deer led the hunt, in spite of deep snow lying on the ground, from Windsor to Compton, a distance of thirty miles, and was taken in the hall of Roden Place. As the royal hunting party rode to the house, the village choristers struck up 'God save the King.' Mr. Pottinger, the owner of the house, begged to be allowed to keep the hounds and deer until a future time. On the appointed day there was a large meet of about 300, including the king and the Prince of Wales. Colonel Hartley, the sheriff of Berks, had the honour of affixing his majesty's cap. The stag had a good course homewards, and was taken at Hurley. The king was so delighted with his chase that he gave the deer free liberty for life and called him 'Compton.' The king's long illness was a great discouragement to hunting, and for a time put an end to it. The hounds were dying for want of work. In 1812 it was announced that 'the king's staghounds are gone to the coast of Sussex for the benefit of bathing.' A writer in the *Sporting Magazine* of 1814 stated that

Men, horses, and hounds had dwindled by rapid degrees from splendour to decency, from decency to poverty, from poverty to inability. Those which don't eat are going mad, and those which are not going mad can only eat.

With George IV came new men and new manners. Much obsolete ceremonial was abandoned. The old slow hounds were exchanged for a fast fox-hunting pack of Goodwood lineage. In 1824 Charles Davis, the prince of huntsmen, was installed in the Ascot kennels, and served until his death in 1866. Harry King entered the royal service in 1836, and by steady and persevering efforts worked his way up until he succeeded Davis as the queen's huntsman, having practically held that office for ten years previously, owing to the increasing age and growing infirmities of his predecessor. As huntsman he only held the post for a short time, and was followed by Frank Goodall in 1872. Harvey was huntsman in 1888, and was succeeded by Comins, who had been first whip for some years. To him succeeded Frank Goodall, nephew of the former huntsman, who had made a great reputation in the Meath and Kildare countries. He held the appointment till the abandonment of the pack.

Until the reign of George II the office of Master of the Buckhounds was held for life; but afterwards it became a political appointment and changed with every ministry.

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The paddocks at Swinley are now empty, and tell their own sad tale of the slaughter of the famous red deer. Usually the herd numbered about twenty-five. Of these many were never hunted, only those who could and would run well being utilized for the chase. Among the most famous deer were Guy Fawkes, Lord Clanwilliam, Runaway, Blackback, and Bartlett. The last ran six times in one season, and never had a scratch. Guy Fawkes was a great favourite and possessed quite as much guile as his namesake. Lord Clanwilliam on one occasion ran his pursuers out of daylight. Runaway earned his name by a remarkable exploit. Half an hour after his first arrival at Swinley, startled by a crack of a whip, he jumped out of a paddock, clearing 8 ft. of oak paling. He enjoyed his liberty for some weeks and was at length taken after a hard run. Blackback was another brave and gallant deer who led many a long chase, and never showed any signs of terror or even anxiety.

The abandonment in 1901 of the Royal Buckhounds, which for 700 years had been associated with the sovereignty of England, was regarded with much regret by many. Others who never considered the hunting of the carted deer as real and legitimate sport regarded with equanimity the abandonment. But there are many lovers of ancient customs who view the death of the royal pack with some feelings of regret, especially on the ground that it has been so long associated with the monarchy of England.

BERKS AND BUCKS FARMERS' STAGHOUNDS

When the Royal Buckhounds were abolished in 1901 the Berks and Bucks Harriers were converted into staghounds. Sir Robert Wilmot, baronet, of Binfield Grove, is the popular master. The kennels and paddocks have been established at the residence of the master, who has a pack of twenty couples and twenty-five deer. Frank Goodall is the huntsman.

LORD BARRYMORE'S STAGHOUNDS

At the close of the eighteenth century a pack of staghounds was kept by that eccentric character Lord Barrymore, whose exploits at Wargrave and remarkable turf career, his private theatre and strange jests, won for him an extraordinary notoriety. About the year 1788 he bought from Henry Constantine Jennings, the celebrated virtuoso of Shiplake Court, Oxon, a pack of hounds. The deer presented difficulties, but after many troubles he procured four which were none of the finest. One was lean and old; the second was a baldfaced hind, almost blind; the third, an all but tame stag brought up by a gentleman at Warfield; while the fourth, a hand-

some young deer, was killed during the first run. The tame deer nearly shared the same fate, for when it was turned out it sidled up to the horses, having formerly been pastured with steeds.⁴ Hounds and horses, together with his carriages, were kept at Twyford. Four negroes in liveries of scarlet and silver, proficient on the French horn, accompanied the pack. His strings of horses and splendid equipages rivalled the stable establishment of Chantilly, and he imitated the style of the *chasse* of Louis XIV at Fontainebleau. His short and brilliant career came to an end in 1793 when he was accidentally shot in his twenty-fourth year. What became of his hounds and deer and the negroes history relateth not.

MR. SEYMOUR DUBOURG'S HARRIERS

From the year 1880 to 1894 by the leave of Prince Christian, ranger of Windsor Forest, Mr. Dubourg, now the master of the South Berkshire Hunt, brought his harriers in the spring to hunt the wild roe-deer in the neighbourhood of Swinley, Easthampstead, and the Staff College. These fixtures were much appreciated by a large field; Mr. Garth and Lord Coventry were generally out with the pack, and Prince Henry of Battenberg, Colonel Peel, and Dr. Croft were often in the field. On one occasion when the ground was very hard and dry, and it had not been possible to harbour a roe-deer, Lord Coventry offered to turn out one of the royal deer from the Swinley Paddock, so that a blank day might be avoided. It is believed that no other master of hounds has had the honour of having a royal deer turned out for his hounds to hunt.

FOX-HUNTING.

Before the dawn of the nineteenth century there were no boundaries to hunting countries. The Old Berkeley pack used to hunt in Berkshire in 1799.⁵ They had kennels at Marlow in Buckinghamshire, whence they hunted the Billingbear and Binfield country, their other kennels being at Gerrards Cross. They visited the Berkshire district one week in each month, and hunted four days in that week.

The hunt was supported by subscription, Lord Sefton, Lord Donegal, and Mr. Williams, M.P. for Marlow, the master, being some of its chief supporters. We have some records of famous runs, and of one that was not very famous or sportsmanlike. Hunting round Billingbear one day the hounds were beaten by the fox, which unfortunately jumped into a lane just in front of a butcher's lad and his dog. The latter caught the fox and held it by the leg, and

⁴ J. R. Robinson, *Last Earls of Barrymore*, 17.

⁵ *Sporting Magazine*.

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the butcher carried off his prize to Maidenhead. Two scarlet-coated emissaries of the hunt then came up and claimed poor Reynard, who was taken to the spot from whence he came, turned out in cold blood, and soon killed. Such a death, says the *Sporting Magazine*, 'would have been more honoured in the breach than the observance.' Bad scent 'laying exceedingly ill on the dead leaves of the beechen coverts' and the eccentricities of foxes puzzled the hunters of those times as of these. We read of bad days and disappointing runs, especially on one occasion when they drew near Hare Hatch and a fox broke covert on the side where the riders were stationed; but the hounds instead of following it made off after another fox towards Ruscombe and were three or four miles ahead before the expectant riders discovered that they were thrown out. Another time, in the midst of a good run from Shottesbrook, a fog came on and the scent declined, but the hounds most perseveringly continued to pick their way along till passing through Colonel Vansittart's shrubberies the chase was at an end; but not without blood, for so immense was the number of hares amidst the hounds that no less than nine or ten brace became victims to their disappointment. Two days afterwards, starting from Bisham, they had a fine run of two hours and twenty minutes, one of the most severe ever known in that country. One run is very like another, and in reading these records of hunting exploits of more than a century ago we seem to be following the doings of modern packs over the same familiar fields and coverts. It is more interesting to study the men who in those early days followed the hounds before the days of hunting boundaries and more highly organized sport.

One of the earliest promoters of Berkshire fox-hunting was that strange character John Elwes, the miser. The keeping of foxhounds was the only instance in his whole life of his ever sacrificing money to pleasure. Fabulously wealthy, he lived most parsimoniously, and his love of sport was one of the few redeeming features of his strange character. He was one of the best riders in the kingdom, and his horses were magnificent, and were bred by himself. No hounds were more killing than his. The wits used to say 'it must be so, or they would get nothing to eat.' His method of treating his horses was singular. They were not broken until they were six years old. After hunting he always turned them out for two or three hours, however cold the weather was. His theory was that they walked off the stiffness occasioned by fatigue and preserved their feet. His huntsman was a wonderful person. Getting up at four o'clock he milked the cows, then prepared his master's breakfast, then slipping on a green coat he saddled the horses, got the hounds out of the kennel, and hunted all day. Returning from the chase he

refreshed himself by rubbing down two or three horses, then laid the cloth for his master's dinner and waited during the meal; then fed the horses, milked the cows, fed the pack, and littered down eight hunters. In spite of these Herculean labours his penurious master used to call him 'an idle dog,' and say 'he wanted to be paid for doing nothing.' His economical methods of stable management enabled Mr. Elwes to keep his whole fox-hunting establishment, huntsman, hounds, and horses, at a cost of three hundred pounds a year. When he became member of Parliament for Berkshire he resided permanently at Marcham, but finding his time much employed he relinquished his hounds in 1774 and gave them away to some farmers in the neighbourhood.

Among other famous fox-hunters of these early days was Mr. William John Chute, the originator of the Vine in 1790, who hunted an immense country in North Hampshire and South Berkshire. Sulhamstead, the residence of Mr. William Thoyts, was a great hunting centre, and its owner a warm supporter of the Vine. Contemporary with him was Mr. Stephen Poyntz, of Midgham House, near Thatcham, Berkshire, who hunted a pack in the country adjoining that of the Vine. Mr. Austen-Leigh in his *Recollections of the early days of the Vine Hunt*, says that

Mr. Poyntz was no respecter of boundaries, but as water will find its way into every vacant place, so his hounds were sure to appear wherever they were not carefully stopped out; but I suspect that this laxity of proceeding was a characteristic of the times rather than of the man.

He had a large property and good ancestry, but was a very eccentric master, whose pleasure it was to do nothing as other people did. He was a friend of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV. For some years before his death in 1809 his hunt was strangely conducted. The master left the men, and the men left the hounds, very much to themselves. The huntsman was seldom sober; and by the end of the day the hounds were scattered along the line of country which they had drawn, and left to find their way home as they pleased.

Another good sportsman of the old school was the Reverend Henry Ellis St. John, rector of Finchampstead and Barkham and owner of West Court Manor, whose house was the centre of a great hunting country. At this period there were numerous packs of harriers belonging to individual proprietors, and it was not unusual to hunt both hare and fox with the same hounds, sometimes aided by a steady old foxhound.⁶ Mr. St. John and his friend Mr. William J. Chute had both done this, and thus laid the foundation of two permanent fox-hunting coun-

⁶ Austen-Leigh, *Recollections of the early days of the Vine Hunt*.

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tries. In 1810 Mr. St. John purchased the duke of Bridgewater's pack and took regularly to fox-hunting in the district west of the Loddon. The historian of the Vine tells us that in the year 1812 he saw Mr. St. John find a fox at Waltham Wood and after a long run lose it behind Quidhampton. Thirty years afterwards as he was sitting with Mr. St. John at the Board of Guardians in the Old Town Hall, at Wokingham, he asked him if he recollected the circumstance. His answer was characteristic. 'Recollect it? Of course I do. Now, do you know, I never could make out to this day where the fox could have got to,' as if he had been thinking of it ever since. In 1816 he sold his hounds to Sir John Cope of Bramshill, and with them went the hunt-servants—Thomas Toccock the huntsman, Joseph Paice the first whip, and John Major the second whip. Sir John Cope was the younger brother of Sir Denzil Cope who died in 1812. He was a solicitor in the Temple in partnership with Mr. Gerard Wharton. On receiving news of his brother's death he said 'Hang the law; now for fox-hunting.' It is interesting to note that his first list of hounds is written in a legal ledger. For some years Mr. Blackall Simonds, of Reading, was associated with Sir John in the mastership, although his name did not appear.

Sir John Cope had kennels at his noble mansion, Bramshill, and also at World's End on the Bath road near Reading, until lately occupied by the South Berks. Sir John Cope's reign lasted until 1850. His huntsman was Shirley. He hunted a vast tract of country in Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, and part of Surrey. It extended from Windsor to Basingstoke, and comprised nearly all that the South Berkshire and Garth Hunts at present work together. The country was too large to be hunted properly. The big woods were not sufficiently routed, so that foxes did not fly, but too frequently ran round and round. Mr. Thomas Smith, master of the Craven, testifies to the merits of Sir John's hounds and terms it 'one of the most dashing packs in the kingdom.'¹ The hounds that he bought from Mr. St. John were somewhat light, airy-looking animals, but very wiry and muscular and never tired. They were noted for their independent action and earned the character of 'skirters.' But they were very effective and clever, forcing the fox well from the covert, and running well, though in an irregular manner. This method of running did not please the more fastidious followers of the hunt; and about the year 1822 Sir John began breeding largely from the Craven kennel, and this laid the foundation of the powerful breed of hound which was so well maintained by Mr. Garth. A noted hound named Sampson once distinguished himself by de-

serting his own pack and joining the H. H. in a run, racing away from the other hounds and killing a fox by himself. On one occasion at the Pigeon House Coppice a keeper produced a sack containing a fox and demanded a certain sum of money which if he did not receive he said he would shoot the fox before their eyes. The followers of the hunt were furious and refused to give the keeper anything; whereupon he fulfilled his threat and shot the fox. It was suggested that the keeper should be tied in his own sack and thrown into a pond; but he did not escape a horsewhipping and the loss of his place. One of the most daring riders with Sir John was Colonel Blagrave of Calcot, for whom no timber was ever too big. The chroniclers narrate that he jumped a spiked gate near Stratfield Saye which was nearly 7 ft. high. Sir John Cope was a fine specimen of an old country gentleman and was deservedly popular with the members of his hunt. He rode hard, but was very short-sighted, and his friends used to wonder that he did not break his neck. He was perhaps too partial to big hounds. Mr. Chute, who had the motto *Multum in parvo* over his kennel door, thought so, at least, and tried hard to dissuade him from breeding hounds so large. 'Nose is everything,' he used to say, 'and you look only to big legs and feet.' A picture at Bramshill represents a meet of Sir John's hounds, and shows portraits of the master and his hunting friends, T. Peers Williams, G. B. Wharton, and John Ward of Squerries, together with hunt servants and hounds.

SOUTH BERKS HUNT

In 1843 Sir John Cope gave up that portion of his country west of the River Loddon to Mr. Mortimer George Thoyts of Sulhamstead, who in a very short time produced a clever pack of hounds and showed good sport. This was the origin of the South Berks Hunt. Part of the country between the Loddon and the Kennet belongs to the Old Vine, as it was hunted by Mr. Chute. Major Thoyts of Sulhamstead states that as long as he can recollect the Vine has never hunted this district except during one season, when Captain Mainwaring came during the cub-hunting and on a few other occasions in order to keep up their claim to it. Mr. Thoyts in 1847 resigned the mastership to Mr. George Montagu, who reigned until 1850, hunting the north side of the London road as far as Maidenhead. The kennels at this period were moved from Sulhamstead to Tilehurst. In 1850 there were many changes. Sir John Cope, who was then advanced in years, gave his hounds to Mr. J. J. Wheble of Bulmershe Court, near Reading; and with them went Robert Toccock, the huntsman. Mr. Montagu also resigned his country to Mr. Wheble, who thus took over the whole country formerly hunted by Sir John Cope.

¹ Th. Smith, *Life of a Fox*, 1843.

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This arrangement continued for two seasons, until in 1852 the country was divided. Mr. T. C. Garth, one of the best of masters, bought Mr. Wheble's dog pack, and began his long career of fox-hunting in the hunt which bears his name. Mr. Wheble continued to hunt the South Berks until 1855, when Mr. Montagu again assumed the mastership, and sometimes by arrangement hunted part of the Craven and Vine countries. In 1860 Major Fletcher became master. On one occasion in 1860, during his mastership, the fox swam across the Thames near Reading, followed by the hounds. Major Fletcher, without any hesitation, swam on horseback across the river, and on arriving at the other side found that he was the sole member of the hunt who had faced the water, and continued the run alone. Mr. Pitman was master from 1862 till in 1865 Mr. John Hargreaves began a notable mastership which lasted twenty-two years. His seat, Maiden Erleigh, was a great centre of hunting; the kennels continued to be at World's End, and the master was noted for his keen sportsmanship and hospitality. Richard Roake came as huntsman in 1872, after thirteen seasons with the Pytchley, bringing with him a silver tankard and 300 sovereigns. He remained for twenty years the much respected servant of the hunt. On the resignation of Mr. Hargreaves in 1887 Major Allfrey ruled for four years, and Mr. Bligh succeeded him. Mr. Seymour Dubourg has held the mastership since 1894, and under his rule the South Berks Hunt has prospered. The master hunts the pack himself. He has 45½ couple of hounds. The kennels are situated at Purley near Pangbourne, to which place they were removed in 1904 in consequence of the land at World's End being required for building purposes. The new kennels have all the newest improvements, and are very healthy and desirable in every way.

The South Berks Hunt meets four days a week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The area hunted is about 17 miles square, and covers parts of Berkshire and Oxfordshire. It is bounded on the north by the Old Berks and South Oxfordshire; on the west by the Craven, on the south by the Vine, and on the east by the Garth Hunt. On account of the increasing use of wire a portion of the Oxfordshire country around Shiplake and that district has not been hunted for the last few years. The country is very diversified, consisting of a nice vale country between Reading and Sherfield, a good deal of heather and fir woods from Wasing to Mortimer, similar in character to many portions of the New Forest, while north of the Kennet are woodlands and the open Berkshire downs and the beech woods of the Oxfordshire hills.

South Berkshire is a difficult country for a huntsman; except on the Downs the country is none too good for scent, and this is often caused

by the frequent change from one soil to another. This does not, however, seem to prevent the South Berks Hunt from enjoying many good runs.

The boundaries have varied slightly at different times. In 1847 the South Berks hunted a part of Sir John Cope's country between the London road and the Thames. In 1855 they drew Pamber and Bramley, and in the early part of 1859, after the retirement of Mr. Marsh, hunted a considerable portion of the Vine country. In 1856 they hunted by arrangement a small portion of the Craven country round Donnington, and during Mr. Hargreaves's mastership the Vine gave up to them the Pamber and Bramley covers. These were, however, reclaimed when Mr. Hargreaves retired; and the boundary between the two hunts was then definitely fixed along the edge of Tadley and Silchester commons to the church, and thence to the railway down to the brook running from Beaupaire past Bull's Down. Bull's Down belongs to the Garth Hunt, and Ladylands and Tubbs Gully to the South Berks; but at present an arrangement exists between the two masters, by which these three covers are all neutral.

William Sammons, who was first whipper-in for some years to Mr. Hargreaves and Major Allfrey, is still with the pack as kennel huntsman.

THE GARTH HUNT

The Garth Hunt is lineally descended from the pack established in 1810 by the Reverend Henry Ellis St. John of West Court. Before he bought the duke of Bridgewater's pack of fox-hounds he kept a pack of harriers, and with the help of his brother, the Reverend Edward St. John of Ashe Park, a prominent member of the Vine, hunted both hare and fox. In 1816, as described above, Mr. St. John sold his hounds to Sir John Cope of Bramshill, who in 1850, at the end of a long and successful mastership lasting thirty-three years, gave his hounds to Mr. Wheble. Mr. Wheble, who had also taken over the South Berks pack, hunted both countries for two seasons, and then the large unwieldy district was divided on the advent of Mr. T. C. Garth, who took over the Hampshire portion and the southern part of Berkshire east of the Loddon. Robert Toccock, the huntsman, migrated to Mr. Garth, and the whips were Thomas Sweetman and Henry Toccock. George Bartlett, from Sir Watkin Wynn's hounds, succeeded the last-named in 1859.

Thus began the actual career of the Garth Hunt, which has provided for many years good sport for the master's many friends. The division of the country was not accomplished without many heart-burnings and disputings. The opening meet of the newly constituted pack took place at Haines Hill, the residence of the master on 8 November 1852, when there was a large field including Sir Charles Russell of Swallowfield, Mr. G. Vansittart, M.P., Mr. Leveson-Gower,



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Mr. Standish, and Mr. John Simonds, senior, the father of the much-esteemed secretary of the hunt at the present time. Mr. Garth by his courtesy and kindness soon won the esteem of all and proved himself an able master. A silver hunting horn was presented to him at a dinner held at Odiham in 1855, and in 1871 a large equestrian portrait was given to him. At the close of his mastership in 1902 the hunt presented him with a silver statuette representing him on his famous hunter Harlequin, with three hounds at the foot. For many years Mr. Garth hunted the country entirely at his own expense. Among his huntsmen have been George Bartlett, Maurice Sweetman, who died suddenly from paralysis of the brain, and Charles Brackley, who held the office until his master's resignation. After hunting his hounds for exactly half a century Mr. Garth relinquished the mastership, and Mr. R. H. Gosling, a keen sportsman, was elected to fill his place.

The district is not an easy one, and covers a portion of the three counties of Berks, Hants, and Surrey, extending from the Thames on the north to Aldershot on the south, a distance of 20 miles, and some 20 miles from east to west. It is bounded by the countries of the South Berks, the Vine, Hampshire Hunt, the Chiddingfold, the Surrey Union, the Old Berkeley, and the South Oxford. It covers large tracts of wild heather land in the Weybridge and Aldershot neighbourhood, and plenty of forest hunting in the Wellington College district. 'Nimrod' wrote slightly of it: 'It partakes of a sort of Cimmerian darkness in November,' he declared, and proceeded to warn the hunting aristocracy against its clays and sands, bogs and heath, its immense field hedges, deep blind ditches, and bad foxes. The forest is not very popular, and the heather country is not very safe riding. 'It is those plaguey holes in the heath which throw a horse down,' said Mr. Garth one day when he was riding in this district. But two-thirds of the country are plough, grass, and woodland, and there is plenty of good hunting, especially in the New Lodge and Hurst neighbourhood. Banks and ditches are the special features. But the character of the country has changed considerably during the last fifty years. Villas and mansions are gradually absorbing the land in 'residential' neighbourhoods, and its ultimate fate is to become a mere suburb of London. Mr. Cordery, one of the oldest followers of the hunt, and a fine specimen of the old yeoman farmer, remembers the time when Aldershot Common was all open, and in the heather district Wellington College and Broadmoor were the only two buildings. On each of these commons you could see the hounds a mile away, and he declares that he had hunted all day and only seen one man, who was snipe-shooting. In Archbishop Benson's *Life* it is recorded that a cowman was so astonished to see

some men surveying the site of Wellington College, that he was frightened and took his cows home. But in spite of buildings and other impediments the foxes multiply; there are twenty foxes now in this country where two decades ago there was only one, and there is plenty of good sport left in the Garth country.

When Mr. Gosling undertook the mastership the kennels were removed from Haines Hill to Beenham's Farm, Waltham St. Lawrence. There are fifty-seven couples of hounds, the property of the master, and they hunt four days a week; on Monday in the northern division, on Wednesday in the central portion near Wokingham, on Friday in Hampshire, and on Saturday in Surrey. Canon Kingsley, rector of Eversley, was an occasional follower of Mr. Garth, whose hounds he immortalized in his lay to 'The Brave North-Easter.'

THE CRAVEN HUNT

This famous hunt has a distinguished ancestry, and several notable sportsmen have occupied the position of master, but unfortunately the records of the hunt are singularly meagre and its history hard to elucidate. It derives its title from Fulwar, fourth Lord Craven, who hunted a vast district in western Berkshire and Wiltshire as early as 1739; and he and his successors, the fifth and sixth Lords Craven, were masters until 1804. There are, however, no documents either at Ashdown Park or in the possession of the hunt which throw light upon this long period of hereditary mastership. The Cravens were keen sportsmen, and coursing as well as hunting found a congenial home in the neighbourhood of their noble residence at Ashdown. Their family influence and large possessions enabled them to draw together the extensive country which they bequeathed to the Craven Hunt. The kennels were at Ashdown Park, the seat of the family, and at Dummer. The hounds seem to have loved their home, for when on one occasion Lord Craven sent two or three draft hounds to Blair Atholl, in Scotland, they found their way back to the Craven kennels, though they had been taken north partly by sea. William, Lord Craven, hunted the country in very magnificent style, but he had a formidable rival in one Dick Smith, the squire of Crux Easton. A story is told of his lordship's inquiring of a rustic whether he had seen the fox. The man replied that he had, and that the fox had asked him whose hounds were after him. On learning that his lordship was hunting him, the fox said 'That's all right, and I can stop and have a bit of a chat with you; when the squire is after me, I never have no time to spare.' Lord Craven, however, killed the fox, and was able to tell the yokel that his friend had chatted with him a little too long. When William, first earl of Craven, resigned the mastership, Lord Amesbury hunted the pack

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from 1804 to 1813. He was succeeded by Mr. Anthony Bacon and Colonel Stead, who shared the mastership for one season, and were followed by Mr. John Warde, late master of the Pytchley. Mr. Warde had an old-time courtesy of manner, and ruled his field with good humour, checking unruly sportsmen by caustic wit rather than by abuse or strong language. He had kept hounds so long, in so many countries, and with so high a reputation, that he was sometimes called the 'father of fox-hunting.' The Craven was the last country that he held, and though in his hard-riding days it could scarcely have satisfied him, when age and weight had increased he did not object to its large woods, uncertain scent, and short-running foxes. The kennels and stables were at Hungerford, and were rather rough. His horses stood all together in an old barn; they had little hay, but as much of oats and beans as they could eat. His maxim was: 'The goodness of a hunter goes in at his mouth.' He hunted four days a week with an occasional fifth day, and had fifty couples of hounds. These were fine animals, and Sir John Cope's pack, the Vine, and others, were greatly improved by drafts from Mr. Warde's kennels. They were of great size, but beautifully formed. One huge animal named Maniac was upwards of twenty-seven inches high, and could carry the huntsman's son, a boy about eleven years old, round the kennel on his back. Mr. Warde's hounds were remarkable for entire steadiness from riot of every kind. Hare and deer were plentiful in the country, but the hounds took not the slightest notice of them. Two dogs, Voucher and Dragon, produced a famous progeny, and one descendant named Villager was pronounced to be the handsomest hound of his age. The whippers-in wore green coats with black velvet caps, and rode large-sized steeds. Will Hilden, the first whip, an uncouth-looking fellow with an awkward figure and a cracked voice, rode an immense creature above seventeen hands, appropriately called 'Hill-top.' The huntsman was called Neverd, a name which became a prolific source of jest. 'Never-right' and 'Never-ride' were the names suggested for him by Berkshire wits. But he was a fair rider and knew his work, and was never very far from his hounds.

Mr. Horlock and Mr. William Wyndham held rule for short periods, and were followed by the famous Tom Smith, who occupies a distinguished place in the annals of the chase. He was subsequently master of the Pytchley, and was one of the best huntsmen of his age. His *Extracts from the Diary of a Huntsman* contains more wisdom on the art of fox-hunting than can be gleaned from any other books of his time. We regret that he did not record more fully the annals of the Craven Hunt, for what Tom Smith did not know about hunting was certainly not knowledge. He was an excellent and clever

draughtsman, and gives in his diary some characteristic sketches of foxes and hounds, a picture of the finish of a good run in 1828, and his plans for stables and kennel made for Lord Suffield at Billesdon, Leicestershire, and adopted by that nobleman. The master had some trouble with respect to deer soon after he took over the Craven Hunt. During his absence, when the hounds were being exercised, they chased deer in Tottenham Park, owned by the marquess of Aylesbury. The master returned and took strong measures with his pack, chaining the hounds to the railings of the park, and while the deer were being driven past thrashing them severely. At the opening meet of the season the members of the hunt spoke satirically to Mr. Smith of the haunch of venison which they hoped he would send them as a trophy of the day's sport. He offered them a haunch of fox, and declared that they must eat it.

Mr. Smith was a bold and fearless rider, and once leaped the wall of Elcot Park in the Craven country, 6 ft. 2 in. in height, which he cleared at the second venture by a desperate leap. His horse's fore legs gave way on reaching the ground, and the master was discovered in an unconscious condition. In three weeks' time, however, he was in the saddle again, chasing foxes with his accustomed zeal. His Royal Highness the duke of Gloucester once asked him how many falls he had in a season. 'About twenty,' he answered. 'Thank God I'm not a fox-hunter,' replied the duke. Mr. Austen-Leigh declared that of all the huntsmen he ever saw, Mr. Smith had the greatest natural capacity for the work. Some detractors used to say that he was too much inclined to hunt the fox himself, instead of letting his hounds do it. No doubt with his remarkable talent for hunting, the rapidity of his decision, and the kind of natural instinct by which he seemed to divine where the fox was gone, he must have been sometimes tempted to take matters into his own hands earlier than others would have done; but so long as the hounds were able to work, he would generally wait very patiently upon them. He often hunted and killed his fox on days when scent was bad and the hounds could do nothing of themselves, and when an ordinary huntsman would have accomplished nothing. Mr. Austen-Leigh tells of a remarkable instance of his cleverness when on a bleak windy day in March, without scent enough to carry hounds across a single field, he kept the line of his fox for ten miles, lifting the hounds across every field and marking the fox only at the fences, and killed him near Englefield House. Mr. Smith apologized for the feat, saying,

I do not pretend, gentlemen, that this is the best style of killing a fox; I can only say that if it had not been done in this way, it could not have been done at all on such a day as this.

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Mr. Codrington used to say of him, 'Were I a fox I would rather have a pack of hounds behind me than Tom Smith with a stick in his hand.' 'Nimrod' in his *Reminiscences* declares that he had few equals, and possessed an intuitive knowledge as regards the run of a hunted fox. Whilst hunting the Craven he killed ninety foxes in ninety-one days, and half this number were killed by the hounds and half by his own skill.

When he took over the hounds he claimed some of the coverts which the neighbouring hunts, the Vine, Sir John Cope's hounds, and the packs hunted by Mr. Assheton Smith and Mr. Moreton, had begun to hunt. For some time his claims were opposed, and his neighbours were angry; but he carried his point and established his claim. He exercised great tact and judgement in dealing with men as with foxes, and was always, as 'Nimrod' tells us, 'firm without being offensive.'

When Mr. Smith migrated to the Pytchley Mr. Frederick Villebois became master. He got together a very clever and powerful pack from some of the best blood in England. His brother, Mr. Truman Villebois, was master of the H. H. and owned the pack, and when he died the hounds became the property of the master of the Craven. The gentlemen of the H. H. being left without hounds purchased the Craven pack; thus the two packs were transferred each into the other's country. The old Craven hounds had wonderful sport in Hampshire; but the old H. H. pack was not equally successful in the Craven country, which is more difficult, with a varying scent, and, according to 'Nimrod,' 'cheerless for hounds and distressing for horses.' However, after a season or two they became accustomed to the peculiarities of the country, and became as good in Berkshire as they had been in Hampshire. The foxes were not all that could be desired, as they were apt to be short runners. Mr. Fulwar Fowle of Kintbury used to say of them:—

There are only two things that a true-bred Berkshire fox thinks of from the moment he is found to the moment he is killed, and those are how he can get behind you, and where he can go to ground.

The abundance of earths, the number of woods, and the large amount of game preserved in the country, were perhaps the causes which contributed to this undesirable peculiarity of foxes.

Mr. Villebois was succeeded by Mr. Head Pottinge Best, whose son is still a member of the hunt. The country was then divided. Lord Portsmouth hunted the south side, Mr. George Montagu the east side; Mr. James Morrell held rule in the north, and Major George Willes and Mr. Henry Seymour jointly hunted the west side. This division of the country only lasted one year (1856-7), and it was again

united under Mr. J. Cook. The mastership was held for short periods by Mr. Theobald, Mr. J. T. Coxe, Mr. George S. Willes, Mr. Francklin, and Mr. Harcourt Capper; and then Mr. Willes took the mastership in conjunction with Mr. W. H. Dunn, a keen supporter of the hunt, who sixteen years later ruled alone. Mr. Wemyss held the office for one year (1879-80), and was followed by the late Sir R. F. Sutton. The kennels were built by subscription on his land, and he brought there the bulk of the establishment with which Lord Spencer had been hunting the Pytchley, including the huntsman, feed, twenty-five couple of hounds, and five horses. In 1887 Major (now Colonel) Gerald Craven Ricardo became master, and is now the secretary of the hunt. Mr. E. R. Portal followed him in 1892. Then Mr. W. H. Dunn began his second period of mastership, and he was followed by Mr. Lionel Barlow, whose sudden and lamented death in 1902 was sincerely mourned by the members of the hunt. The pack was for a season hunted by the committee, and then Mr. Dunn was persuaded to accept the mastership again. In 1903 Mr. de F. Pennefather, formerly master of the North Herefordshire Hunt, was appointed master of the Craven; but he only reigned for one season, and was succeeded by Captain Ormerod of Wyresdale Park, Lancashire, a well-known sportsman, who had hunted his own hounds in Devon and in his native county. After one season he resigned the mastership, and has been succeeded by Mr. W. J. Yorke Scarlett, who resigned the Tedworth country after hunting it for many years. The Craven has not been popular with aspiring masters of late years. Perhaps the heavy claims for damages and the destruction of poultry may have something to do with the quick succession of masters. The accounts of the fund were published some time ago, and afforded amusing reading. A claim for 'one bull calf' appeared as one of the items.

The kennels are at Walcot, Kintbury, and there are three meets each week. Owing to the very large shooting interests in the country hunted by the Craven, and the objections raised by game preservers to their coverts being disturbed before Christmas, it has frequently been found necessary to hunt only two days a week in the early part of the season. The country embraces portions of the counties of Berkshire, Hants, and Wilts. The Old Berkshire bounds it on the north; on the west is the district of the Vale of White Horse (Cricklade) and the Badminton; on the south lies the Tedworth country, and on the east the South Berkshire and the Vine. It is a somewhat cold-scenting country, and requires a good huntsman. In the northern part there are rolling downs with few fences, and in the south and central portions hedges and banks are numerous. Wire, the

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terror of riders, exists in some parts, and there are few marks or indications of its presence. There are fifty couples of hounds, and George Roake is the huntsman. It is a fine pack, the result of careful scientific breeding during the past twenty-two years by Colonel Ricardo and Mr. W. H. Dunn.

THE OLD BERKSHIRE HUNT

In this county the Old Berkshire is, and has always been, recognized as one of the hunts which provide the best sport in the neighbourhood, and is well supported throughout its length and breadth by landowners, farmers, and residents generally.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the hounds were kept and hunted by Squire Loder of Hinton Manor, and at that time the country included a great part of that which now belongs to the South Oxfordshire, the Heythrop, and the Craven. A very interesting run with Mr. Loder's hounds, which took place in 1766 and lasted five hours and twenty minutes, was recorded in verse by the fourth earl of Abingdon.

In 1800 Mr. Loder, owing to advancing years, retired, and was succeeded by his son-in-law, Mr. Robert Symonds. In his day the hunt extended from Stokenchurch by Henley-on-Thames almost as far as Bath. In 1807 Mr. Heysham appears to have bought the hounds and to have hunted the country for two or three seasons, but he eventually migrated to Hampshire and sold the hounds again to Mr. R. Symonds, who took them in conjunction with the late Mr. Thomas Duffield of Marcham. This seems to be the first appearance in our sporting annals of the name of Duffield, so long and so honourably connected with the Old Berkshire. Messrs. Symonds and Duffield had the hounds together for only one season, the latter retiring on his marriage. Mr. Symonds continued alone until 1813, when he was succeeded by Mr. William Codrington, who also hunted a great part of what is now the Oxfordshire country round Thame and Tetworth.

In 1824 Mr. Harvey Combe took the hounds for three seasons, and was succeeded in the year 1826 by Lord Kintore. The latter was a well-known hard rider, and it is recorded of him that when he came to an impracticable fence he would shout to any one in the next field to catch his horse, and would then tumble neck and crop over the obstacle. It was during Lord Kintore's mastership that the historic run from Whittenham Wood took place. After changing from fox to fox for two hours, the huntsman, John Walker, got his hounds settled to one, and they went away over the downs by Blewbury, through Isley and Compton to Fenswood near Newbury, where the huntsman,

who had changed his horse three times, was the only man with the hounds.

Following Lord Kintore the country was taken in 1830 by the Honourable Henry Moreton, who lived in Faringdon, the kennels of the hounds being then a short distance from the town. The hounds were conveyed to their distant meets in a van drawn by four post-horses, and were hunted by Mr. Moreton himself, though he was subsequently assisted by Jim Hills, afterwards so well known with the Heythrop hounds.

Mr. Moreton continued as master for two seasons, but, finding the country at his disposal too large to be hunted according to the conditions then existing, he had it divided between the Vale of White Horse and the Old Berks, the boundaries being much the same as they are at the present time. He himself went to the former district, while the old hunt was taken by Mr. John Parker, a Worcestershire gentleman. He was succeeded in 1833 by William, third earl of Radnor. In his time there was a famous run from Bagley Wood near Oxford, through Wytham Great Wood, over the Thames, and ending with a kill on Blanden Heath adjoining Blenheim Park. In 1835 Lord Radnor gave up the hounds, and, as no master was forthcoming, a committee was appointed with Mr. John Phillips of Culham at the head of affairs; but in the following year he seems to have taken them over, and the pack was known as Mr. Phillips's hounds. To him succeeded Mr. Thomas Morland, who transferred hounds and kennel to his residence at Sheepstead House near Abingdon. During his mastership he had several huntsmen, Richard Hills, Charles Fox, Will Hawtin, and John Jones all carrying the horn in turn.

The reign of Mr. James Morrell from 1847 to 1858 was highly successful. The pack reached a high degree of excellence, sport was very good, and universal satisfaction was given. On the hounds being sold at Tubney in 1858 the average price was £32 12s. a couple. With Mr. Morrell, John Jones continued as huntsman, and was succeeded by James Stacy, Tom Clark, and Jack West.

After the sale at Tubney Mr. Charles Duffield came into office as master and removed the hounds to Oakley House, where he built new kennels. His huntsman was John Dale, who died only recently at the age of more than eighty years. In 1863 Mr. Henley Greaves brought his hounds from the Vale of White Horse, Mr. Wilson of that hunt buying the Old Berkshire pack.

Mr. Greaves's huntsman was the well-known John Tredwell, who established for himself a great reputation in the country. He had previously served in Monmouthshire with the Hambledon hounds, where he had been equally successful as whipper-in. Before that he had been with Mr. Greaves,

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when that gentleman had the Cottesmore and Southwold countries, and had left him to go to the Quorn. In 1866 Mr. Greaves resigned and the hounds were sold. A committee followed, but in 1869 the earl of Craven and Mr. Thomas Duffield became joint masters with John Tredwell as huntsman. Foxes were then very plentiful and sport was good; barbed wire had not been invented, and shooting tenants were almost unknown.

After Lord Craven's death the country was taken over by Colonel Van de Weyer and Mr. Charles Duffield, new kennels having been built through the liberality of the former at Kingston Bagpuize. During their joint mastership excellent sport was shown, Will Povey being huntsman; but in 1889 after five seasons Colonel Van de Weyer, owing to the lamented death of Mr. Charles Duffield and other circumstances, resigned the mastership. He was succeeded by Mr. E. C. Brown, who had been master of hounds in Suffolk and North Cornwall. He held office for two seasons, and then Captain Orr Ewing became master, retaining the services of Mr. Brown as huntsman.

This arrangement also lasted for only two seasons, when Captain Forester took the hounds for one season, carrying the horn himself. He was succeeded by Mr. F. C. Swindell from the Puckeridge, who also hunted the hounds himself and was extremely popular with the farmers. On his retirement he was presented by them with a massive silver fox as a token of the esteem and regard in which he was held. He was also the recipient of a silver horn, the gift of the keepers and earth-stoppers of the district.

The hounds were then taken by Mr. E. W. Dunn of Childrey, a well-known and popular member of the hunt. Wonderful sport was shown by him for three seasons, when, to the regret of all, he gave up the mastership in 1901. His huntsman was Jack Press, who was well known in Warwickshire, Meath, and Galway.

No resident being then forthcoming to succeed him, the hounds were taken by Mr. C. B. E. Wright, who had for many seasons been hunting the Fitzwilliam country, and had previously been master of the Badsworth in Yorkshire. He is still in office and has shown good sport, having a thorough knowledge of the art of hunting and of the breeding of hounds.

It should be mentioned that the present pack, consisting of about fifty couples, is the property of Evelyn, countess of Craven, by whom (since the death of her husband) it has been lent to the hunt. The country is an extremely popular one, and at the present time much frequented by strangers, so that fields are a good deal larger than they were ten or fifteen years ago. Much information has been kindly supplied to the writer by Mr. E. P. Crowdy, secretary of the hunt, and author of the history of the Old Berks hounds.

HARRIERS

As early as the beginning of the eighteenth century there was hare-hunting at Park Place; a picture exists representing Mr. William and Mr. Richard Fisher engaged in that pastime. One of the squires has a buff-coloured coat and the other a blue one; both have scarlet waistcoats and cocked hats. A parson has come to grief and is seen lying on the ground, and there are huntsmen and hounds. The date of the picture is 1709. On one occasion they had a drag drawn through Henley, and the hounds were set on at midnight, the whole hunt with horns blowing rushing through the streets in the moonlight. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were numerous packs of harriers in Berkshire, and foremost among them was the pack of the famous sporting parson, the Reverend Henry Ellis St. John, rector of Finchampstead. He resided at his manor house of West Court, and though the kennels have been pulled down the site of them still bears their name. As we have already stated, Mr. St. John's harriers used to hunt both hare and fox; and this was not uncommon at that period. It is difficult to collect information with regard to these packs. There are no records, and the memories of men are not very certain.

The late Prince Consort had a famous pack of harriers, and on his death the Prince of Wales, now King Edward VII, hunted the hounds and enjoyed good sport. After some years the Prince gave up the hounds and presented them to the farmers of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. Sir Robert Harvey hunted them, and on his death that famous all-round sportsman, Mr. W. H. Grenfell, M.P., now Lord Desborough, took over the pack. He used to hunt one day in each week in Berkshire and one in Buckinghamshire. He adopted the plan of dividing the pack into two parts, keeping one for hunting hares and the other for deer. The usual meets in Berkshire were Shottesbrook, White Waltham, Maidenhead Thicket, Hawthorn Hill, and New Lodge. The deer used to show very good sport, the best coming from Savernake Forest. One hind ran a remarkable distance from Maidenhead to near Stratfield Saye.

In 1901, when the Royal Buckhounds were abolished, this pack was given up, and the Berks and Bucks Farmers' Staghounds, under the mastership of Sir Robert Wilmot, baronet, now occupy the place of the Royal Buckhounds and the harriers.

BERKSHIRE VALE HARRIERS

This pack was first started by Mr. James Morrell, of Headington Hill, Oxfordshire, about 1840, whose kennels were at Bradley Farm, near Cumnor. He gave them up in 1847

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when he took the mastership of the Old Berkshire Foxhounds. A small pack was then started by the Reverend C. D. Everett of Bessels Leigh, who was a keen sportsman and a very successful breeder of hounds. He soon increased his pack and kept twenty couples, with which he hunted the Wallingford country, the Ilsley Downs, and the country round Abingdon for nearly thirty years. He was a fine judge of a hound and had some of the best harrier blood in his kennels with an occasional cross of foxhound. Mr. Everett died from a fall from his horse in 1881, and the pack was then bought by Mr. Charles Murrell, who removed the kennels to Burcot and hunted the same country for three seasons. In 1884, upon taking the mastership of the South Oxfordshire Foxhounds on the retirement of Lord Macclesfield, Mr. Morrell sold the harriers to Mr. Gibbons of Boddington Manor near Cheltenham, and the Berkshire Vale Harriers, after an existence of about forty-four years, came to an end.

DRAGHOUNDS

The Staff College Draghounds are a popular institution in the Wokingham and Bracknell district of East Berkshire. This pack was established about thirty years ago, and is maintained by the officers of the Staff College. The hunts afford brisk hunting and hard riding to

its members, who are prevented by their military duties from enjoying many full days with our regular packs; and many others are glad to avail themselves of the privilege of joining in the runs. Sometimes as many as seventy riders take part in the sport. Four or five miles is the usual length of the run, with a check half-way. Finchampstead, Barkham, Wokingham, Bracknell, and Hawthorn Hill are the places most frequently visited, the Barkham Brook affording a fine water-jump, especially when it has been effectually dammed by a sport-loving farmer. On one occasion about a dozen riders and their horses were floundering in the water, and there was some danger of an accident; when it was suggested to the farmer that the obstacle was too difficult, and that some of the riders might be injured, he replied: 'Makes 'em brave, sir.' The kennel-huntsman, H. Gater, has for many years laid the line of scent. Until recently it had been customary to run a straight steeplechase course; the late master, Captain Cecil Wilson, D.S.O., wisely adopted a hunting course, so that the conditions approximate more closely to the 'real thing.'

BASSET HOUNDS

Arthur, sixth marquess of Downshire, has recently started a good pack of bassets, which have shown good sport in the neighbourhood of Easthampstead and Wokingham.

BULL-BAITING

Berkshire has the honour, or the discredit, of being one of the last counties in England where bull-baiting was practised.

Most of the forest towns in Berkshire provided this form of entertainment for the rustics; Bracknell was famous for it; and every considerable village had its common where the greensward was reddened at least once a year with the blood of bulls and dogs. The favourite day for the great bait of the year in most places was Good Friday. At Wokingham, pre-eminently the seat of this 'noble pastime' which was regularly practised there until about 1840, St. Thomas's day was set apart for this festivity, and the sport was endowed. George Staverton, a lover of bull-baiting who lived in the reign of Charles II, having been gored by a bull, charged his estate with £6 a year to provide a bull for baiting, the meat of which was to be given to the poor for food, and its hide for shoes. The bequest increased in value, and soon was sufficient to buy two bulls. Bull-dogs were kept by most of the townfolk, and were the objects of much care and interest. Silver collars around the necks of some of the animals be-

tokened past victories. The scene of the baiting was animated, spectators filled every window, and some sat on the roofs of the houses. Carriages filled with occupants were drawn up in front of the shops and houses. The corporation of Wokingham, consisting of aldermen and burgesses, town clerk, two sergeants of the mace, the mace-bearer, and ale-tasters, occupied seats in the large window of the Old Red Lion Inn, and the alderman gave the signal for the sport to begin. Fights and rough horse-play followed, as the parish registers bear witness. 'Martha May, aged 55 (who was hurt by fighters after bull-baiting), was buried December 31st, 1808.'

Public opinion was at length aroused against the evils and brutality of bull-baiting, and in 1835 a bill was passed prohibiting the sport, and thus after several centuries of popularity it ceased to be a public amusement. Two bulls are still slaughtered yearly in a more merciful manner, and the flesh given to the poor in accordance with the terms of the bequest of George Staverton.

Wantage used to have frequent bull-baitings.

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It was a town much frequented by bad characters, and when the 'Bow Street runners' let one of their prisoners escape it was said that Wantage was always one of the first places in which they searched for him. It was the head quarters of pedlars and hawkers, and throngs of gipsies encamped in the suburbs. Hence savage

sports found a congenial home. The baiting used to take place in the precincts of an inn known as 'The Camel,' which became the resort of such rough characters that its licence was taken away. Wallingford still has its bull-ring in the market-place, a relic of the baiting that ceased many years ago.

COCK-FIGHTING

'Cocking' was formerly a favourite sport in Berkshire, and annual 'mains' were fought at Wantage and other towns. Royal Windsor itself was not a stranger to the sport. *The London Gazette* records in 1684 that—

on Tuesday the second of July begins a great match of cock-fighting at Windsor between two persons of quality, and continues for the whole week.

Shrove Tuesday was the usual day for this pastime. Bromley, the celebrated cock-feeder, 'with whose name the vaulted arches of the Cock-pit Royal have frequently and exultingly resounded,'¹ was born at Watlington in Oxfordshire. He was originally a shoe-maker, and on the death of his wife took up the career of cock-feeder, and in a few years attained great success. He was engaged in most of the principal matches arranged by gentlemen of fortune, and fought on his own account at Guildford, Oxford, Wantage, and elsewhere. Although surrounded on such occasions by the whole proximity of 'blacklegged sharks,' we are told that his honesty never sustained a shock, nor was his integrity ever suspected. His success was however too great for his mental balance. His celebrity, being hardly inferior to any in the kingdom, gave him such a sense of 'superiority and disgusting consequence' that his patrons gradually withdrew their favours. Captain Bertie, brother of the earl of Abingdon, was his first and best friend. Even when a main was in progress Bromley would not listen to the opinions or receive instructions from his patrons, and regarded these as insults. 'Yet no one man has passed through the fiery ordeal of a cock-pit, surrounded with its concomitant villainies, with a greater sense of unsullied purity.'²

Ascot races were great occasions for cock-fighting. The day's pleasure usually ended with a prize-fight on the heath, or a cocking match at some neighbouring inn. In 1798 the *Reading Mercury* announced that—

during Ascot Races will be fought the great main of cocks at the Crown Inn, Egham, between the gentlemen of Surrey and Middlesex against the gentlemen of Kent and Sussex, for 5 guineas a battle and fifty the odd.

In the garden of one of the houses, formerly an

inn, in the Market Place at Wokingham, can still be seen the terraces surrounding the cock-pit where mains used to be fought. The word 'main' seems to be derived from the French *à la main*. The heels of the birds were often armed with steel spurs. The Court in the time of Charles II indulged in the sport sometimes twice a day, his brother James, the duchess of York, and their daughter being often present. The *Complete Gamester* regards it as a 'pleasing art' as well as 'a sport or pastime so full of delight and pleasure that no game in that respect is to be preferred before it.'

An annual cock-fighting match took place at Keat's Gore, near Market Ilsley, between the gentlemen of Ilsley Harwell and that side of the county, and the gentlemen of Wallingford and other towns in the Vale, in Whitsun week. An advertisement in the *Reading Mercury* of 1747 states that the competitors were—

to shew 25 cocks in the main and those that falls match within an ounce fights for 2 guineas each Battle and 5 guineas the odd battle. N.B.—The Cocks will be weighed Tuesday morning, and six or seven fought in the afternoon the same day, and Wednesday will be a full day's sport, and the Cocks will be fed at the Gore. Likewise a Horn to be bowld of three guineas Price on Tuesday.

Cock-fighting and badger-baiting were the favourite amusements of the people of Wantage until somewhat recent times, and were much practised by the rough characters who frequented that town.

The inhuman sport of throwing at cocks was once practised in the streets at Newbury. The cock was tied to a stake by a short cord, and the 'sportsmen' threw broomsticks at it from a distance of about twenty yards. This form of amusement was happily suppressed. In 1750 at the annual sessions the court made the following presentment:—

'We present as a nuisance the throwing at cocks in the public streets.'

Shrovetide was the special season for such barbarities, which gave rise to the remark of a foreign visitor to our shores that on that day the English grow mad with eating pancakes and kill their poor cocks. The old Bear Inn, now a brewery, in the same town, was renowned for its cock-pit.

¹ *Sporting Magazine*, 1800, p. 170.

² *Ibid.* p. 262.

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COURSING

This very ancient sport has flourished in Berkshire for a long period. King John accepted in 1208 as a fine payable on the renewal of a certain crown tenure five hundred marks, ten horses, and ten leash of greyhounds, and many other instances might be quoted of the prevalence of the sport at Windsor. Viscount Rochester (George Boleyn) won from King Henry VIII £50 on a coursing match in Moat Park. Cardinal Wolsey, just before his disgrace, was invited by Sir Thomas Heneage to bring his greyhounds to Easthampstead. Queen Elizabeth's interest in the sport is evidenced by her order to the duke of Norfolk to draw out certain *Laws of Leash or Coursing*. James I mentions 'greyhound hunting' as a princely exercise, though not so martial a game as the sport of kings. The greyhound of the Tudor period, used for coursing deer, was a fine and effective animal, somewhat similar in build to the bony wire-haired Highland greyhound depicted in the pictures of Landseer, and lacking the fine glossy coat and symmetry which mark a high-bred kennel of modern times. During the early part of the seventeenth century judicious crosses were made, partly from the beautiful Italian greyhounds and the stouter breed of dogs represented in Flemish hunting-pieces, until at length the hounds approached in form and coat to the present breed.

Before the establishment of coursing clubs the sport consisted of matches between greyhounds, and it was not until about 1750 that it was revolutionized and the era of modern coursing set in. In this revolution this county took a foremost place, and Ashdown holds the first position in the annals of Berkshire coursing, if not in those of England. The Ashdown Coursing Club, founded in 1780, is only surpassed in antiquity by the Swaffham Club, which was founded by Lord Orford, and began its career in Norfolk four years previously. For some years these two clubs divided the honours of the coursing world. The Ashdown Club owes its existence and its prosperity to the patronage of the earls of Craven, whose seat is at Ashdown Park. They were enthusiastic lovers of the sport; their country is one of the best in England, being entirely open and consisting chiefly of down land; and the hares there were always famous for their strength and agility.

Amongst the earliest names of members were Lord Sefton, Lord Ashbrook, Mr. B. Stead, Mr. Swinfed, Captain Holt, and Mr. Pickering, and amongst others who have achieved fame were Chief Justice Mansfield, Dr. Harrington, Mr. Thornhill, Dr. Vilet, and Mr. Corcellis. A notable member of the club was Lord Rivers, whose dogs, when they were sold at Tattersall's on his retirement in 1825, realized £1,076. He

used to course at Windsor, and from the Terrace Queen Charlotte sometimes watched the successful running of his best dogs. The old game-keeper, Sam Parker, was a noted character, who never failed to show abundance of hares, and with admirable skill slipped all the dogs himself on horseback. His name is preserved in an old coursing song which was sung after the dinner at each meeting:—

No! let me see the well-train'd dogs
From Sam's unerring hand,
Loos'd in an instant from the slips
And skimming o'er the land.
And a coursing we will go, &c.

Silver collars were the earliest prizes offered at Ashdown Park, but after Lord Craven's death, about 1792, a cup of fifty guineas' value was subscribed for, and won by Mr. Thornhill's Tiney: annual cups were established a little later. From 1799 to 1804 the February meetings were held at Marlborough, and the club coursed on Barton and Rockley Manors. Some dispute seems to have arisen between Lord Craven and the club at the beginning of the last century. The *Sporting Magazine* of 1804 reports that 'a most dreadful warfare was lately waged in Ashdown Park, where in a few days Lord Craven killed no less than sixteen hundred hares.' No hares being left at Ashdown the club held both of its regular meetings at Marlborough. The quarrel was, however, healed in 1814. Lord Craven again began to preserve hares, and the regular meetings were again held at Ashdown, Compton Bolton and Lambourn Field being the favourite spots. The former was considered one of the best in the country for trying the speed and staying power of greyhounds. Coarse matted grass supplied abundance of roughet for the hares to sit in, and the extensive carpet-like down, rising gradually for a mile towards the Rubbing House, provided a magnificent course. Crowds of carriages were stationed there, whence the spectators could see every rick and turn. Compton was famous for the coursing skill of a Berkshire lady, Miss Richards, who owned a large estate, and was renowned for a knowledge of the merits, form, symmetry, and training of greyhounds, which was surpassed by none. She used to drive to the downs in her coach and six, and then course all day on foot, sometimes walking twenty-five miles. Her epitaph, written by herself, bears witness to her devotion to the sport. A Berkshire authoress, Miss Mitford, shows in her poems much knowledge of the pastime in her poem on 'Greyhounds playing in the Snow,' and in her 'Watlington Hill,' wherein she sings

And durst I sing in vent'rous guise
Of ricks and turns and falls and byes,
And all the courser's mysteries?

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Another famous haunt of the Ashdown Club was Letcombe Bowers, the home of the secretary and distinguished historian of the sport, Mr. Thomas Goodlake. The club originally consisted of thirty members and many honorary members, but this number was afterwards reduced to twenty, and the honorary membership was confined to those who belonged to the Swaffham, Newmarket, and Malton meetings. Mr. Goodlake's dogs often competed for the cups, and won in 1815 and 1821, and amongst other winners were Sir H. Vivian, Lord Molyneux, Mr. E. Cripps, Mr. S. Heathcote, and other sportsmen whose names are mentioned above.

A great match took place at Ashdown between Lord Eglinton's Waterloo, the hero of its day, its owner challenging all England, and Mr. Goodlake's Gracchus, when Waterloo won an easy victory. Frequently matches were run between the North and the South of England. The records tell us of a great match which was run here in March, 1860, when the famous Altcar Club of Lancashire issued a challenge to match sixteen greyhounds in the Craven Challenge Cup against sixteen to be drawn by members of the Ashdown Club from any source. Great interest was aroused by the contest. At the close of the first round 'the world' stood with ten winners against six, and the challengers' hope seemed forlorn; but this unfortunate start was retrieved as the struggle progressed, and when Rosy Morn beat Little Wonder, and Lord Sefton's Sweetbriar overthrew Veronica, the club was left with first and second, Mr. Randell being the ultimate winner with Rosy Morn. There were many other matches in which the North was pitted against the South, and much wrangling ensued on the point of guarding. The stewards were Lords Sefton and Uffington and Messrs. T. D. Hornby and Randell. Mr. J. H. George was the judge, and Mr. Springall slipper. The best dogs were Rosy Morn (by Black Cloud—Riot), Sweetbriar and her sister Bapta (by Skyrocket—Shame), Little Wonder (by David—Lewanna), and Veronica (by Vauban—Valinda). The third earl of Craven, though not an ardent courser, took care that the Ashdown traditions should not fade, and showed good sport, preserving hares solely for coursing. There is a celebrated picture of 'Coursing at Ashdown Park,' by Pearce, which shows Lord Craven riding his chestnut mare.

The club ceased to exist many years ago, but the sport continued for some time, and many famous gatherings have been held at Ashdown, the open meetings usually lasting a week. These have now ceased to exist, and no coursing has taken place at Ashdown for the last ten years. The inclosing of the Downs with barbed wire has rendered the sport almost impossible, and other

causes have led to the degeneration of the pastime, and to its final extinction.

Ilsley and its neighbourhood have ever been noted as a fine country for sporting. Hare-hunting used to be much in vogue on the far-extending down land. Coursing meetings were held here for many years, and were liberally supported by the leading gentry in the county. The Coursing Club was established in 1802. It owed its origin to Mr. Goodlake, and was a fox-hunting and coursing society. Craven Park provided the hunting on the Monday and Wednesday, and on the Tuesday the coursing took place, the ground being in Blewbury Bottom, one of the finest in England, and later on in West Ilsley Field. The first cup was given in 1806, when Lord Rivers became a member.¹

A coursing club was founded at Newbury in 1812 under the patronage of Lord Carnarvon. There was a famous annual coursing match at Streatley, where the downs are admirably suited for the sport. The prize was a silver cup, and many celebrated dogs competed. The club met several times during the season at the 'Bull.' After the annual match Mr. W. Stone, a leading member of the club, used to entertain the company to dinner at his house. The club was flourishing in 1843, when Mr. Robertson published the *Environs of Reading*, and we have been unable to discover when it ceased to exist.

Mr. Goodlake also founded a club at Letcombe Bowers in 1814, on his own estate, where the hares were abundant and the sport excellent. It consisted of twenty-four members, and met on the last Thursday in November, when a cup and two other prizes were competed for. The members feasted at the Bear Inn, Wantage, and Mr. Shippery seems to have been the most frequent winner. Mr. Goodlake's *Coursing Manual or Stud Book* (1827) was the chief authority on the history of the sport. In recent times there was a club at Maidenhead, but no coursing has taken place in that neighbourhood for some years. There are a few farmers' and tenants' meetings on some of the great estates, and a coursing club has been recently started at Wantage. So the sport is not quite dead in our county which once rivalled Lancashire and Norfolk in the annals of English coursing.

¹ The following were the winners :—1806, Lord Rivers's Rosemary; 1807, Thornhill's Toy; 1808, Mitford's Maria; 1809, Thornhill's Ticket; 1810, Bunce's Blossom; 1811, Thornhill's Toilet; 1812, Colonel Stead's Darling; 1813, Ramsbotham's Ruthless; 1814, Davenport's Dottrell; 1815, Goodlake's Gelert; 1816, Long's Leviathan; 1817, Meyrick's Minstrel; 1818, Colonel Stead's Sir Cut-me; 1819, Goodlake's Granby; 1820, Goodlake's Granby; 1821, Pardoe's Pigeon; 1822, Ensworth's Eliza; 1823, Long's Lufra; 1824, Simon's Speedy; 1825, Graham's Guelph; 1826, Slipper's Snail; 1827, Ensworth's W. B.

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SHOOTING

Berkshire is remarkable rather for the natural advantages which the county possesses for carrying a large head of game than for the use made of them. In many parts of the shire there is very little preservation of game. The valley of the Kennet is an exception; so are the areas round Windsor Forest, and certain properties near Bracknell and Wokingham, notably Lord Ormathwaite's and Mr. Walter's at Bearwood. This is a pine and heather district, formerly the haunt of the blackcock, and well suited for pheasant preserves. The duke of Wellington's Stratfield Saye estate also comprises a very fair game country, well suited for pheasants and ground game, though in parts rather too heavy for partridges. There is, however, very little bad partridge-land in the county, which in nearly every part is well suited for carrying a heavy stock. Perhaps the nearest approach to an ideal soil and condition is on the slopes of the high ground leading from the Downs to the Lambourn Valley, and above the left bank of the Kennet between Hungerford and Newbury; but though the soil is admirable the quantity of game that this tract carries is only moderate. Above East and West Woodhay lies a hilly district of light soil, much of which has gone out of cultivation, and has become an admirable game preserve. A great part of this, however, lies over the Hampshire border.

The summit of the great table-land between the Ridgeway on the north and the Lambourn and Lower Kennet valleys on the south and east is admirable shooting ground where the wooded portions remain. This includes the large estate of Woolley Park, with parts of Lady Wantage's property. It is a region of large woods and covers, very large fields, and a fairly light soil, though there is a good deal of red clay on which oak and hazel grow well. One of the largest of these properties, well preserved by the shooting tenant for some years, produced in the season of 1896-7 about eleven thousand head of partridges, hares, pheasants, and rabbits, or about one head per acre. Much of the ground was open partridge-land under cultivation.

The large Lockinge estate lies mainly at the north side of the downs. It is a type of all the ground reaching from Didcot to the Hampshire border beyond the White Horse, and is at the time of writing almost the only property on which game remains in any quantity along the cold and woodless side of that extensive range of the chalk hills. Even at Lockinge there are no woods of any size below the Ridgeway. The ground is what is known as 'white land,' heavy and sticky; and though in dry seasons and where well cultivated it is not unfavourable to

partridges, their numbers have fallen very low. On the other hand the whole of this northern slope, as well as the ground on the plateau above, is singularly favourable land for hares. Sixteen years ago there was very fair September partridge shooting in all the smaller properties on the north slope of the down, including ordinary farms where the shooting was in the occupier's hands. The birds were numerous on the slopes, and also on the hill-top. But on much of this important area partridges have almost become extinct of recent years. Thousands of acres above the Ridgeway have passed from arable to pasture, and though the Middlesex partridge has taken to green land, the Berkshire bird has absolutely deserted the now green-covered hill-tops. On farms where a few years ago two guns could easily shoot twenty brace in a few hours not a bird is now to be seen. The increase of sainfoin has also greatly depleted the stock on the north slope, for the birds loved to nest in the sainfoin, and eggs were destroyed by hundreds when this was mown. The frosts of 1902 and the deluge of 1903 completed the ruin. It would be difficult to find a farm from Didcot to Shrivenham on which even a fair day's shooting was enjoyed a season or two later, and there was no stock left.

Though it sometimes suffers much from wet and cold breeding seasons the Vale country between Stanford and Faringdon is fairly favourable ground for partridges; and all the gentle ridge of light land which borders the Vale and forms the watershed between it and the Thames is naturally good soil for both partridges and rabbits, and potentially excellent shooting ground. But with the exception of Sir William Throckmorton's at Buckland, the estates are neither large nor very carefully preserved. Both the covers and partridge-ground at Buckland are excellent, indeed it would be difficult to find a property of moderate size with more attractions for game. Bags of a hundred brace of partridges in a day's driving are not unfrequently made, and there is no doubt that this could be much exceeded if it were desired. Thence outwards towards Abingdon and Oxford lies an area much of which is very attractive shooting ground. Round Marcham and on to Culham is light land, mixed with covers, the arable all in a high state of cultivation, and all of it good natural ground for game. Towards Frilford and Bessels Leigh is still lighter soil with rabbit warrens, while round Tubney are charming bits of heather and rough ground mingled with the cultivation. Here is some excellent sporting property owned by Magdalen College. But in all this part of Berkshire, with the exception of Buckland, there is no large estate, and the owners

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or occupiers of the smaller covers are without cohesion or any common understanding about the preservation of game.

From the Thames at Culham across the great flat inclosed in the enclave of the Thames at Long Wittenham, and back almost to Didcot, is a light gravel soil, well farmed, running right down to the river opposite Dorchester. Part of this belongs to St. John's College, and part to Colonel Cherry-Garrard. The whole of this, previous to the recent disastrous seasons, was noted both for the uniform head of partridges upon it, and the number of hares preserved by the goodwill of the tenants. Doubtless in time it will recover its stock, but at the time of writing it has suffered both from rains and floods.

In this corner of the county, on Sinodun Hill, lies Wittenham Wood, one of the largest of Berkshire woodlands. Formerly when rabbits were allowed to flourish Wittenham was a very good example of the old-fashioned lightly preserved wood with no artificial rearing, but with a good natural head of game. In one season, when the present writer was shooting tenant, some five hundred head of game were killed on its hundred acres, the items being wild pheasants, woodcock, pigeons, hares, partridges, waterhens, and rabbits. Completing the circuit of the county it should be mentioned that much of the ground on the Newbury and Didcot Railway, on the half of the line nearest the former town, is good natural game country, though most of it is poorly stocked; while towards the Thames about Ashampstead Common both covers and partridge-ground are excellent. On the downs near Streatley is also the well-known Unwell Wood, below which are tracks of light downland extending to above Aston Tirrold, where the land is lighter than on most of this northern slope, and capable of carrying a very large head if preserved in sufficiently large areas.

Wild fowl are almost non-existent in the county, except up the Kennet Valley in certain marshes and water meadows, and in a certain meadow near the Thames north of Buckland where snipe are sometimes numerous. On the other hand the roe-deer is reappearing in a county where it had been extinct for centuries. For many years roe have been running wild in Windsor Great Park and in the woods near Virginia Water. A few have now appeared and breed regularly in the wild country round Sunningdale, and especially in the woods of the Countess Morella.

In conclusion, it may be said that Berkshire is naturally a good game county, and that on the large estates, such as the crown lands at Windsor, those up the Kennet Valley, parts of the Lockinge property, Woolley and Buckland, the results show what preservation can effect. But as a rule the properties are too small, and the efforts at preserving too scattered and

too intermittent, for any satisfactory results. Undoubtedly the most remarkable feature is the number of hares which still survive on parts of the downs. But owing to many causes the head both of these and of partridges is steadily decreasing, while the absence of woods and large properties over much of the area accounts for the scarcity of the otherwise almost ubiquitous pheasant.

One of the favourite sports of King Edward VII is shooting, and in the park which surrounds the home of his ancestors, where from ancient times the monarchs of England have enjoyed all kinds of hunting and killing game, shooting is still carried on. George I practised pheasant shooting in August 1724, killing two and a half brace of these birds, and one and a half brace of partridges. Shooting pheasants in August sounds strange to modern ears, and young pheasants must have been somewhat diminutive. A few years earlier after hunting 'he walked about three miles with fowling-piece in hand, killing several brace of partridges flying.' This must then have been regarded as a notable feat, when the stalking of 'sitters' was not uncommon. There is a great contrast between the methods then adopted and those now in use. King Edward takes a keen interest in the shooting at Windsor, and considers and decides every question relating to the sport. Partridges are scarce on the royal domain, in spite of the great efforts which have been made to increase the stock. The birds are often disturbed by riders and pedestrians and by dogs, and never seem to settle in the park. Pheasants and rabbits constitute the principal game, with an occasional woodcock. Hares are almost extinct in the park. Pheasants thrive excellently, and a new pheasantry has lately been started under the management of Captain Walter Campbell, deputy ranger, in the old deer paddocks at Swinley Woods. It is carefully wired, so that foxes can do no mischief; 250 hens are placed there, and the cocks can of course fly in.

The shooting is almost exclusively confined to the royal party, and five guns, or at the most six, are usually engaged. In the morning pheasants are shot, and in the afternoon rabbits. Rabbits are especially plentiful at Bear's Rails, an inclosure where formerly bears were kept. In 1902 (18-21 November) 1,952 pheasants were killed, and 1,498 rabbits; in 1904, 879 pheasants and 1,505 rabbits. H.R.H. Prince Christian, ranger of the forest, takes a keen interest in the sport, and usually accompanies the king on the occasion of the royal shootings. The writer is indebted to Mr. Alfred E. T. Watson for much information contained in this record, to whom His Majesty granted his gracious and special permission to write a chapter on Windsor Castle for the series 'Royal Homes of Sport,' published in the *Badminton Magazine*.

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ANGLING

There is no county in England, excepting perhaps Hampshire, which yields such excellent trout-fishing as Berkshire. The migratory trout are, it must be admitted, wanting; but the ordinary brown trout of the Berkshire waters are unsurpassed for size, excellence of condition, and for the sport they afford the angler. If we leave the Thames and pass up its tributaries, we find the coarse fish decreasing and the trout becoming more numerous, until in the higher reaches of the Kennet, and in its tributary the Lambourn, we find little else than trout, which rise well to the fly and run a good average size. They have, too, the very admirable peculiarity of being far freer risers than the trout generally found in south-country streams. While the dry-fly fisherman of the Itchen or Test thinks he has done well if he finds a couple of brace in his creel at the end of a spring day, on the Upper Kennet he may capture twice or thrice that number of fish; and on the pretty little Lambourn, which joins the Kennet at Newbury, his bag will be still larger although the fish will run smaller. Trout, it is evident, must be considered the most important sportsman's fish in the county; and it will be most convenient to deal with this species first in the Thames, and then to work up the tributaries and notice the characteristics of the various portions of these streams.

Before referring to what may be termed the principal trout-fishing stations on the Thames in Berkshire, it may be convenient to sketch briefly the methods by which the fine trout of our premier river are captured. Undoubtedly the most sportsmanlike method is by means of spinning tackle cast from the shore or from a punt. Some years ago it was permissible to trail a bait behind a boat, a practice largely prevailing among summer pike-fishers. By this means a good many trout were caught from time to time. This method is now illegal, and it is believed that pike have increased in consequence. In spinning, the bait used at the commencement of the season is usually a bleak or a gudgeon mounted on a flight of three or even more triangles, attached to a trace of light salmon gut lightly leaded. A flight which is now favoured on the Thames is the Chapman Spinner, but the original Thames flight consisted of the three or four triangles and a lip hook. The bait is cast out for a considerable distance either off the reel in the Trent fashion, or from loose coils of line resting on the till of the punt or held in the hand; the line is then either reeled or drawn in rapidly as the case may be. In the more quiet reaches, rapid spinning and travelling of the bait is exceedingly important.

Trout-fishing commences on 1 April, and for the first few weeks of the season large baits are used, and the deeper reaches of the river are fished. As the fish recover their vigour and the summer traffic increases, they work up into the weir pools and shallows. They are often caught in wild whirling water in which the tyro would hardly think the fish could live, still less see a bait. In such rough waters rather large baits are still used, but in quieter streams as the season wears on the size of the lure is reduced, and a good many fish are caught in June and July on a large minnow.

Live-baiting is carried on with similar baits and in like places according to the season. The usual tackle for bleak, gudgeon, or small dace is a single triangle and lip hook. No lead is required, and the best of floats is a cork out of a chemist's 8 oz. bottle, a slit being cut in it to hold the line. With minnows, a single hook is commonly used; but many anglers prefer to use two hooks each baited with a minnow, thinking that they are more likely to attract the attention of the trout. One of the secrets of success in live-baiting is to keep the bait moving, the fish more frequently taking it when it is being slowly reeled in towards the angler than at any other time. Very fine running tackle is used, and it is an excellent plan to grease this to ensure its floating on the surface.

The larger Thames trout so rarely rise to the fly that the fly-fisher has, as a rule, to content himself with fish running up to two or three pounds. Trout much above that weight do not rise well to the fly except in rivers where there is a considerable hatch of may-fly; where that is the case some monsters may be caught during may-fly week with this lure. In the Thames a salmon fly worked in the pools and on the shallows below them will now and again account for a fish or two. Trout have also been caught on sea-trout flies, and with ordinary brook-trout flies, such as the coch-y-bondhu, alder, red palmer, and other standard patterns. They are also taken from time to time accidentally, as for instance by the barbel fisher who, baiting up the weir pools with worms, is very likely to make a miscellaneous bag of fish. Probably the heaviest bag of Thames trout ever made in one day was that in the mill-pool at Marsh Mills above Henley. The barbel swim there had been heavily baited with worms, and the result was an astounding bag of trout. The affair must, however, be regarded as a 'regrettable incident,' for the fish caught on that occasion were some of those placed in the Thames by the Henley Fishery Association for the benefit of the trout-fisher proper.

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Here let it be noted that, though the Thames, so far as we know, has always contained a limited number of large trout, it has probably never held so many of these fish as it does at the present day, owing to the restocking operations of the Thames Angling Preservation Society and the associations at Windsor, Maidenhead, Marlow, Henley, Reading, and Oxford. It is not generally understood that it is the habit of the trout inhabiting large rivers, such as the Thames, which contain numbers of coarse fish, to ascend small tributaries in order to deposit their eggs where the fry are not likely to be eaten by perch, pike, chub, &c., or to be destroyed by floods. The few tributaries which might serve as breeding grounds in the Thames valley are nearly all obstructed by mill dams, and where the fish have in consequence to spawn in the main river, the eggs in all probability come to nothing, owing to the heavy winter floods which wash away the redds, and also to the vast number of coarse fish which feed on such of the young fry as hatch.

The only parts of the Thames where trout are found naturally in any quantities are in the neighbourhood of some small tributary stream. Where the Pang, for instance, flows into the Thames at Pangbourne, the weir pools have always been well stocked. In other parts of the Thames where no such tributary streams exist, the trout are scarce except where they have been introduced by the angling preservation societies. These societies have spent in Berkshire alone something over £10,000 in preserving the fisheries and keeping up the stock of trout and other fish.

The weir pools near Windsor and Eton may be described as affording the first trout-fishing station of any importance in the Berkshire reaches of the Thames. Here the stock of fish has been greatly increased of late years by the efforts of the Windsor Angling Association. A few miles higher, at Maidenhead, we find the trout-fishing well cared for by the Maidenhead, Cookham, and Bray Thames Angling Association. Both Taplow and Cookham are very favourite places for anglers.

At Great Marlow a fishery preservation society—which unfortunately no longer exists, but has been replaced by a trout restocking association—was in the habit for many years of placing quite large fish in the Thames, and as a consequence the sport enjoyed in the Marlow weir pools and at Hurley has long been of the best. At Hurley we come into the district of the Henley Fishery Preservation Association, an active body which introduced Loch Leven trout into the Thames, and large quantities of Wycombe and other trout. Hambledon or Mill End, with its weir pools, has long been a first-rate trout-fishing station, while a few big fish are caught every year in the famous regatta reach below Henley.

We here give a list of the finest fish taken during

the last ten years or so by Mr. A. E. Hobbs, the honorary secretary of the Henley Society. It gives a very fair idea of the fish which are to be caught by clever and painstaking anglers, and are worthy of record in the history of the county. Of trout Mr. Hobbs has preserved in glass cases four, weighing respectively 9 lb., 9 lb., 9 lb., and 7 lb., while he has caught other large fish of 8½ lb., 8 lb., 7¾ lb., and 6½ lb. On the fly he has taken trout of 5 lb., 4½ lb., 3¾ lb., and 3¼ lb. Of barbel he has had three fish of 9 lb. each, and three others between 8 lb. and 9 lb. His largest pike weighed 19 lb., 18 lb., with a brace of 16 lb., and his two largest perch 2 lb. and 1 lb. 14 oz. His three largest chub weighed 4 lb. 14 oz., 4 lb. 12 oz., and 4 lb. 11 oz. Mr. Hobbs has had his bad days like most other Thames anglers, but the contents of his glass cases afford clear evidence of the splendid fish the Thames yields from time to time.

Trout are fairly numerous at Marsh Weir, above Henley, but there is no further trout-fishing of any account until Sonning is reached, where there are some famous trout pools. The weir pools in the neighbourhood of Reading contain a large number of fish, principally those placed there by the local association; and a few hundred yards up the mouth of the Kennet is a favourite haunt of large Thames trout.

Above Reading the first trout-fishing of any importance is in the private water at Mapledurham. At Pangbourne is one of the best trout fisheries on the Thames. The Pang, which here joins the Thames, now contains a considerable number of grayling; and though possibly fewer trout are found in it than of yore, it is a splendid feeder for the Pangbourne and Whitchurch pools. In the weir pools at Streatley and Goring there are few if any trout, for none have been turned in, and there is no stream to feed the pools. Indeed, above Pangbourne, except in the weir pool at Benson, trout are scarce, and there are very few weirs worth fishing.

The Berkshire portion of the Thames ceases near Upper Inglesham, about 150 miles from London Bridge, not far from the point where the Thames and Severn Canal runs into the river.

Retracing our steps to the mouth of the Kennet, and working our way along this important Berkshire river, we find, up to the town of Newbury, a river of somewhat the same character as the Thames but smaller. Coarse fish are plentiful, and there is a sprinkling of fine trout. In the Kennet, however, there is this difference, that in June there comes a splendid hatch of may-fly, which causes the big trout to rise and the may-fly season to be quite a feature of Berkshire fishing. At other seasons these big fish are to be caught with spinning baits, live baits, and the usual methods of the Thames, but few fishery owners allow any lure other than the fly to be used. In the neighbourhood of Newbury are a

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good many grayling, but these do not rise well to the fly until we approach Hungerford, where coarse fish become scarcer, and trout and grayling much more numerous. A little above that town coarse fish almost entirely cease, and the trout fishing becomes excellent; but we no longer find fish of 4 lb., 5 lb., and 6 lb., though, of course, an occasional monster is caught. From the pretty village of Littlecote upwards, the Kennet may be described as purely a trout stream, and ranks among the best in the United Kingdom. Before Marlborough is reached we find ourselves in another county.

About the middle of May a few may-flies are seen on the Thames. Towards the end of the month the fly begins to appear on the lower reaches of the Kennet, its appearance becoming later and more frequent as we ascend this river and its tributary, the Lambourn. On the last-mentioned stream it is not usually seen until about June 8th. The probable explanation of this phenomenon would seem to be as follows. It appears to be established that the warmer, relatively, the water is, the earlier is the hatch of may-fly. Now, the rivers at this time of year are mainly spring fed; the colder water of the tributaries and higher reaches gradually rises in temperature as it flows away from its source, and thus the warmer water which will be found in the Thames earlier than in its tributaries favours an earlier appearance of the fly in the lower parts of the stream. Quantities of may-fly are found on parts of the Kennet, Lambourn, and Pang, and at such times fishermen take very heavy toll of the trout. The fly would probably soon become plentiful on the Thames if there were no coarse fish; but the bleak, small chub, and dace destroy the flies almost as soon as they appear, and leave a very small remnant to reproduce their species. For some years now this fly has been decreasing.

Besides the trout streams already mentioned, there are trout in the upper reaches of the Loddon, in the Cole, a small tributary flowing into the Thames above Lower Inglesham, and in the Enborne, a stream which is little more than a brook, and runs into the Kennet near Brimpton.

As regards coarse fish, there is certainly no county in England that, for the advantages it offers the angler, is superior to Berkshire. In the land of the Broads we may make great hauls of roach and bream, and these two members of the carp family are perhaps more plentiful in such rivers as the Ouse than in the Thames; but for all-round coarse fishing the Thames and Kennet are unsurpassed. The fish may be shy and often difficult of capture, but nevertheless they exist in considerable quantities; and the scenery among which the angler wanders in pursuit of his sport is so beautiful that it compensates somewhat for the occasional light bag which is made.

It is a lamentable fact that the race of Thames professional fishermen is gradually dying out. There are still, however, in Berkshire a few men of the old stamp, than whom there are probably no cleverer fishermen in the world. It may be said, indeed, that an expert Thames fisherman can hold his own anywhere, even on a salmon river, for he who has been accustomed to catch Thames trout on fine tackle will have no difficulty in playing the king of fish. Casting the salmon-fly is an art soon acquired by those who have had experience in catching Thames chub and dace with the fly and in casting out paternosters or others of the various tackles used on the river. The accuracy and precision with which the Thames fisherman can cast a bait of any kind is marvellous, while his knowledge of the habits of fish seems almost instinctive. We refer, of course, not to the occasional angler who visits the Thames, but to men who fish there constantly, and are well practised in Thames methods. Of late years casting from the reel according to the Trent method has come somewhat into vogue, and the peculiar method of fishing for chub by means of a float made of a long quill feather and a very light silk line, which enables the float to be let down stream 20 yards or even further, is very commonly practised by chub fishers, and occasionally by those who angle for perch and roach.

The modern system of drainage, and the new and very ugly weirs which pass the water off quickly, have had their effect on Thames fishing. The river is now quickly scoured out when a flood occurs, and the fish are deprived of those opportunities of feeding on the meadows which they enjoyed for weeks together in the winter in the old days when the land was badly drained and the weirs passed the water slowly. There is, too, very much less sewage passing into the Thames than formerly, and this, combined with the absence of long-protracted floods, has led to a decrease in the average size of fish. In the Kennet, which is not—or at any rate was not up till quite recently—so pure a river as the Thames, the average size of fish, if we except trout, barbel, and pike, is greater than in the main river.

Pike-fishing in the Berkshire portion of the Thames is probably the best to be obtained anywhere near London by the general public; and it is when the weeds are dying down in the autumn, or when, just after a winter flood, the water is clearing, that the best bags are made. The chub-fishing is still very good, though not comparable with that enjoyed twenty years ago, and fly-fishing for chub is not much practised now owing to the traffic. He who would catch chub in this manner should rise very early in the morning before the boats have passed either up or down the river. He may then find fish basking near the surface, and may make a basket, provided he keeps out of sight.

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Roach-fishing is carried on in almost every part of the Thames, and in swims of very different characters. At the commencement of the season the roach are found mainly in the swifter-running water, while in wintry weather they get into the deeps, a remark which applies generally to perch and pike. The pike, it need hardly be said, is a fish-eating creature; and wherever roach are, there, too, their enemy is generally to be found lying in wait for them among the weeds. The best perch-fishing in the river is certainly in the winter, when the paternoster, baited with minnows, is much used in the eddies and the quieter waters close to the bank. Nowhere is the use of the paternoster better understood than on the Thames, and this statement applies to pike-fishing as well as to perch-fishing. Dace are not very plentiful in the Berkshire portions of the river; but the nearer we get to London the more likely we are to meet with shoals of these fish. Minnows, which used to be exceedingly common in the river, have been getting comparatively scarce of late years.

It cannot be said that Berkshire affords either good bream or carp-fishing. Both these species are found in the Thames, but no one would think of devoting his exclusive attention to either; while rudd, which were found in the river within living memory, seem to have entirely disappeared, owing perhaps to the ease with which they were

captured by the angler. Roach, on the other hand, which when of any size are shy and difficult of capture, continue plentiful, and some fine tench are caught occasionally.

A unique feature of angling in Berkshire is the summer gudgeon-fishing. Vast quantities of these fish are still caught from punts moored across the stream, the swim in front of the characteristic Thames craft being raked from time to time with a huge three or four-pronged long-handled rake, weighing a good many pounds; in fact, the heavier it is the better. Gudgeon are, however, on the decrease, the takes nowadays being not more than half what they were twenty years ago. Not only have anglers caught hundred of thousands of these fish, but large quantities used to be netted for the breakfast of visitors at Thames-side hotels. The gudgeon are also taken in this way, and sold to the purveyors of live bait in London and elsewhere.

Of the angling afforded by many large lakes in Berkshire little need be said. It is of exactly the same character as that found in similar pieces of water in our southern and midland counties. Carp, tench, roach, rudd, pike, perch, eels, and where they have been introduced, trout, are all found in the many spreading lakes which add greatly to the charm of not a few domains which are found among the well-timbered hills and vales of this beautiful county.

RACING

FLAT-RACING

ROYAL ASCOT

The county of Berks can claim an exalted position in the world of racing, inasmuch as within its borders takes place that most illustrious of meetings, Ascot Races. The county has also many celebrated training establishments in the down country of Lambourn and Wantage, which contribute many noted aspirants to the honours of the turf; and most of the chief towns in Berkshire have possessed race-courses which figure largely in the annals of the sport.

Of early racing in Berkshire we have few records.

In the time of James I a code of racing laws was drawn up, and a list kept of the principal winners, but no pedigrees were attached. King James endeavoured to improve the breed of running horses, and imported the first Arabian stallion. Charles II often frequented the course, and for his own amusement, when he resided at Windsor, appointed races to be held. Datchet Mead was the usual scene of the sport.

Horses intended for racing were at this time always kept girt, in order to render them more swift, that their bellies might not drop. They were fed with great care when the race drew

near, and very sparingly, soaked bread and fresh eggs being part of the recognized diet. Jockeys were dressed in full suits of taffeta, and drums and trumpets greeted the winner.

William III patronized the pastime and established an academy for riding: cups and plate, often given by the Sovereign, had already superseded the bells which were formerly the prizes.

It is due to Queen Anne that Berkshire stands out so prominently in the history of racing. She ran horses under her own name at Windsor and elsewhere, Pepper, Mustard, and Star being her favourite and most successful steeds.

In 1705 Luttrell says:—

The royal couple seemed mightily given to racing. The Queen has appointed horse-races to be at Datchet after her return from Winchester to Windsor. 1709, 25 August—Yesterday was a great horse-race at Datchet. Colonel Moreton won the Queen's Plate and the Earl of Bridgewater that of the town of Windsor.

It is usually supposed that William Augustus, duke of Cumberland, was the founder of Ascot Races, and that the first meeting took place in 1757. But we read that as early as 1713 a gold plate was run for on Ascot Heath on 12 August,¹ and undoubtedly Queen Anne was the originator

¹ Ashton, *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 305.

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of Royal Ascot in 1711. A letter from Swift to Stella fixes the actual date of the first race at Ascot. He wrote under date of 11 August 1711:—

While at Windsor Dr. Arbuthnot, the Queen's Physician and favourite, went out with me to show me the places; we overtook Miss Forester, a maid of honour, on her palfrey, taking the air; we saw a place they have made for a famous horse-race to-morrow when the Queen will come.

He goes on to say that he had ridden a dozen miles, which is exactly the distance to and from Ascot. On the 13th there was racing there, for he wrote: 'I missed the race to-day by coming too late when everybody's coach was gone.' So we may conclude that Ascot Races sprang into being during the summer of 1711, and that the first race was run on 11 August. The *London Gazette* establishes this fact. It states:—

On the 12th July, 1711, it was advertised that Her Majesty's Plate of 100 guineas will be run for round the new heat on Ascot Common near Windsor, on Tuesday the 7th of August next, by any horse, mare, or gelding being no more than six years old the grass before, as must be certified under the hand of the Breeder, carrying 12 stone, three Heats; to be entered the last day of July at Mr. Hancock's at Fernhill, near the Starting Post.

Another plate of 50 guineas was to be run for round the same 'Heat' on Monday, 6 August. It seems that these events, for some reason, were postponed from 6 and 7 to 11 and 13 August. The accounts of Charles, duke of Somerset, Master of the Horse, show that £558 19s. 5d. was paid to 'sundry workmen employed in making and perfecting the round heat on Ascot Common in the months of July and August 1711.'

From that day Ascot Races have continued to draw together for one week in the year not only the patrons of the turf, but the *élite* of fashionable society. That day also witnessed a revolution in ladies' dress, for Swift tells us that his friend, Miss Forester, the reigning beauty of her day, 'was dressed like a man' in a long white riding coat, full-flapped waistcoat, and three-cornered cocked hat.

For some years there were two meetings in each year, one in May or June, and the other in August or September; and this continued until 1753.

The duke of Cumberland, although, as we have seen, he cannot be credited with the honour of being the founder of Ascot, infused new life into Ascot racing, which had languished during the reigns of George I and George II. He bred some of the most remarkable of our stud-book celebrities. At Cranbourne Lodge was foaled in April 1764 the famous Eclipse, so named because an eclipse of the sun occurred on the day of its birth. It was a rough, white-footed

colt, but of surpassing speed, and won a plate at Ascot in 1769. Another noted horse of his was Herod.

The old grand stand was erected under two lofty beeches near the site of the present one, and was a somewhat primitive structure. The present stand was first opened in 1839, but it has been considerably altered and enlarged since that time. Prince George joined the turf in 1785. In 1788 the *Reading Mercury* announced that the presence of their Majesties and the patronage of the Prince of Wales promised to make the Ascot of that year superior to anything since the time of the late duke of Cumberland. Three years later the prince won the Oatland Stakes at Ascot with Baronet. The king rode up to his son and said:—

Your Baronets are more productive than mine. I made fourteen last week, but I got nothing by them. Your single Baronet is worth all mine put together.

The ceremony of the royal visit was an imposing feature of these meetings. Thus, in 1797, we read:—

Their Majesties honoured the races here to-day, and again on Thursday and Saturday. After the first heat the Royal Family rode in procession up and down the course. His Majesty was on horseback and the Queen and Princesses in sociables.

In 1807 the Gold Cup was first offered. From 1845 to 1853 it was known as the Emperor's Plate, as it was during that period given by the Emperor of Russia. The Russian war prevented the continuance of this international courtesy, and the original title of the Ascot Gold Cup was restored. The Queen's Vase was given in 1838, and the Royal Hunt Cup in 1843. In 1865 was added the Alexandra Plate.

The historians of Court life often refer to Ascot. Thus Mr. Greville tells of William IV and the royal family coming to the course

with a great cortège, eight coaches and four and other carriages. The reception was strikingly cold and indifferent. William was bored to death with the races, and his own horse broke down.

In 1832 a ruffian threw a stone at the king and hit his head. As regards the morality of the turf, we may notice that 'pulling' was by no means unknown. A very flagrant case occurred in 1769, when a horse was 'pulled' as he was winning the 'Give-and-take race.' Pickpockets and cheats abounded then as now. Rough and ready justice caused them to be unmercifully thrashed off the course, and then dragged down to Englemere Pond and well ducked. Some say that a small piece of the culprit's ear was cut off, that he might be known again.

In 1813 the Inclosure Act was passed, and Ascot race-course was especially assigned as part of His Majesty's share of the allotments, subject to the provision that it 'should be kept and continued

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as a race-course for the public use at all times as it has usually been.'

There was a grand meeting at Ascot in 1814, when the allied sovereigns came to England after the first downfall of Napoleon. An old resident of Reading thus describes what he saw :—

When the royal party arrived the scene was wonderful. The Queen and Prince Regent were the first, and in quick succession all the royal visitors and generals who had taken part in the war. Platow and Blucher arrived soon after royalty, and the people gave them an enthusiastic reception, and tried to catch Blucher by the hand. When he and Platow left the royal stand they tried to get away on horseback, but the people ran after them cheering and wanting to shake hands, but their horses were alarmed, or the generals tickled them with their spurs and so got away.

In 1838 Mr. Greville tells of the first visit of Queen Victoria to Ascot, when there was a great concourse of people: 'All the world went on to the royal stand, and Her Majesty was very gracious and civil, speaking to everybody.'

Ascot is a truly royal meeting. Its popularity seems to increase every year, and 'the Cup Day' is one of the chief social functions of the season.

Several of the towns in Berkshire were formerly noted for their race meetings, which can claim considerable antiquity.

Abingdon Races.—As early as 1733 we find the Abingdon Corporation ordering that ten guineas be given for a Galloway Plate, to be run for at the next races, and in 1767 and subsequent years the corporation subscribed £30 towards a Purse or Plate of £50 to be run for by racehorses at such place near Abingdon as shall be appointed by the majority of the subscribers. Culham Heath seems to have been the site of the course. In 1800 the burgesses did not approve of this municipal encouragement of sport, and passed a resolution that no further subscription be given by the corporation towards the support of Abingdon races. However, in the next year they relented, rescinded their resolution, and voted ten guineas. The grand stand was the property of the corporation, and was let to the clerk of the course for the race-week at a rent of £2 per annum. The *Racing Calendars* contain records of these meetings. Thus, in 1800 the races were held on 10 and 11 September. There were six events :—

1. The Members' purse of £50, for any horse, 4 mile heats. Won by Lord Egremont's colt by Precipitate out of Bobtail.
2. Sweepstakes of 10 guineas each for three year olds, won by Mr. Harris's V.C. Jemmy by Volunteer.
3. Sweepstakes of 10 guineas each for all ages, won by Mr. Lade's Grey Pilot by Pilot.
4. £50 for three and four year olds—2 mile heats, won by Lord Oxford's Lady Jane.
5. Silver cup, & sweepstakes of 5 guineas for hunters, won by Mr. Warrington's Midnight.
6. Sweepstakes of 50 guineas each.

Mr. Lade, whose horse Truss ran second in

the first race, while his Grey Pilot won the third event, was a noted racing character, with few redeeming qualities. The *Sporting Magazine* of 1800 tells us that he trained his racehorses at his seat Cannon Park, between Kingsdon and Overton in Hampshire. He starved his studs, was 'cynically rigid, innately parsimonious, and selfishly mean.' One day he drove his curriole fifty-seven miles without even taking his greys out of harness, and only giving them a few handfuls of hay. He liked to compete for country plates at such meetings as Epsom, Ascot, Egham, Reading, Oxford, Abingdon, and Lambourn. Pilot, Grey Pilot, Truss, and Oatlands were his most successful steeds.

The card of the races in 1855, when Mr. R. Etwall was the only steward, C. L. Cox clerk of the course, and W. Flanagan secretary, shows that there were four races on the first day :—

- The Old Berkshire Hunt Stakes, 5 sovereigns with 25 added, 2 miles, 4 entries.
- The Berkshire Stakes, 20 sovereigns each with 100 added, 2 miles, 7 entries.
- The Abingdon Stakes, 5 sovereigns each, with 25 added, run in heats, 3 entries.
- The Ladies' Plate, 20 sovereigns added to Sweepstakes of 30, did not fill.

In 1863 the races seem to have assumed a more important character. There were six races on each of the two days of the meeting, and the owners of horses running were: Lord Portsmouth, Lord Bateman, Lord Coventry, Lord Stamford, the Marquess of Hastings, and Messrs. T. Parr, E. Brayley, Merry, Day, Payne, and Stevens. In 1864 over one hundred horses ran in the races. The last meeting was held in 1875, and the races were then abandoned on account of the death of the energetic clerk of the course and secretary, Mr. Charles Cox, as no one could be found willing to take up the duties. A reduced subscription list also contributed to the abandonment of the races. The grand stand existed until about 1890, when it was pulled down by order of the Town Council.

Reading Races were formerly very fashionable assemblies. A century ago, when locomotion was not so easy, and when all the world did not flock to London, the country towns had their season, and the ladies and gentlemen from the neighbourhood used to attend the social functions in their county metropolis with much regularity. This was the case at Reading, where the races always attracted a crowd of the local gentry and their ladies. The earliest meeting of which record has been discovered was on 23 July 1747, when on the first day a purse of 50 sovereigns was won by a black horse belonging to Lord William Manners; on the following day by Mr. Sewell's bay gelding; and on the next by the duke of Beaufort's Punch. Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powys wrote in her diary: 'August 29th, 1786. Went

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to my mother's for the races at Reading.' In the following year we are told 'the last ball was a very brilliant one.' In 1788 the lady records

the races not good, the balls tolerably full considering how many families at this season leave their seats in the country for the different watering-places now in vogue. The middle day went to the play, Thornton's company being then in the town. In 1789 we all went to Reading for the race-time. Lord Barrymore was steward; of course the sport was good, and assemblies brilliant.

Lord Barrymore gave a 50-guinea cup to be run for. In the following year his stable is credited with winning three events. This eccentric nobleman, whose career was so short and brilliant, was a great patron of the turf, and usually rode his own horses. Newmarket was the scene of most of his triumphs. At Ascot his horse Tongs won a 60-guinea cup. Comte de Milfort's Magog came in first, but Lord Barrymore claimed and won the race on the ground that the Comte had crossed him.

The Reading Races have had their poet. In 1777 appeared a poem entitled *Reading Races, or the Berkshire Beauties*, 'the hasty production of a juvenile pen,' which revelled in describing the fair belles of the balls, and in proving that 'Reading is the court of love,' rather than in narrating equestrian exploits.

The *Reading Mercury* contains many records of the races. Of those that took place on 25 August 1801, we read:—

The races afforded great sport, every heat being strongly contested. The balls were honoured with a most brilliant display of all the fashion and beauty of the neighbourhood.

The stewards were Colonel Leveson-Gower of Bill Hill, and Mr. William Mount of Wasing. The race-course was situated on Bulmersh Heath, and the place of the grand stand can still be seen. Alderman Darter, writing in 1885, stated that Mr. Wheble inclosed the common and planted it about seventy-two years ago, i.e. in 1813. The race-course was then removed to the King's Mead, near the Thames, where the recreation-ground now is. The annual fixture gradually ceased to be an important event, and was finally suppressed about 1873.

Maidenhead Races were also fashionable gatherings. Mrs. Lybbe Powys records that on 'Sept. 27th, 1787, we went to Maidenhead races the middle day. The whole of the Royal family there.' The race-course was on Maidenhead Thicket. The *Reading Mercury* tells of these gatherings, and of the racing for a cup of the value of £50. Lord Donegal, Messrs. Godfrey Smith and Spencer, were stewards, and the two last gentlemen seemed to have had it all their own way in the racing, and divided the prizes between them.

Windsor Races, in their present form, are a

modern institution, though no races in Berkshire are more ancient than the famous contests at Datchet Mead, referred to above, when royalty patronized the sport. The present course is on Ray's Island, above Clewer, on a flat with a straight run-in of six furlongs. There are flat-races in August and September, and steeplechases in January and March.

Newbury Races.—As early as 1749 races were held on the Wash. At the beginning of the nineteenth century they took place on Enborne Heath, which is now inclosed. Among the stewards and patrons of the sport were the Margrave and Margravine of Anspach, Lord Craven, Lord Carnarvon, the Hon. George Herbert, Mr. Dundas (afterwards Lord Amesbury), Lord Arthur Somerset, General Popham of Littlecote, Mr. Poyntz of Midgham, Bartholomew Wroughton, and many other gentlemen. The corporation of Newbury gave annually a cup of the value of £50. In 1815 a gold cup was run for, value 100 guineas, and the other events were a sweepstake of 20 guineas, a sweepstake of 15 guineas each, and a handicap plate value £50. Mr. R. W. Hiscock of Stroud Green acted for many years as clerk of the stewards, and was succeeded by Mr. Major Bull. During the race week 'ordinaries' were provided at the 'Pelican,' 'Globe,' and other hotels, a grand ball was given at the Mansion House, and the theatre was opened nightly with a special cast from the London stage. This race meeting has long since been discontinued.

Ilsley Races.—Annual races were held until the beginning of the last century at East Ilsley. The race-course was on Prestall Down; but all traces of it have now been destroyed by the plough. There is a spot still called the Rubbing House. At the bottom of Gore Hill formerly stood an old house occupied for many years by the duke of Cumberland, to whose sporting career allusion has already been made. Some fine stables were built for the duke's racehorses, which were kept here for training on the neighbouring downs. Tradition asserts that Eclipse, the glory of the English Turf, was born here 1 April 1764. But there is a tablet near Holly Grove in Windsor Park which definitely overthrows this legend. It states: 'The celebrated racehorse Eclipse, by Marske—Spilletta, was foaled in this paddock 1764. He was bred by H.R.H. William, duke of Cumberland.' On the death of the duke in 1765, his entire stud, including this wonderful horse, Herod, Marske, Milkspop, Childers, and other famous steeds, was brought to the hammer. The Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, when a young man, wished to purchase the stables; but the owner, Mr. Head, having been exceedingly annoyed by the servants of the duke, levelled the entire premises with the ground.

A new race-course was established at Newbury in 1905, and was inaugurated with every prospect

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of success. The veteran trainer, Mr. John Porter, was the managing director of the company, and Mr. W. Bushby clerk of the course. There is a fine stand, a large paddock and weighing-room, and the course compares favourably with any in the kingdom. On 26 September the race-course was opened, the meeting lasting two days. The stewards were Lord Carnarvon, Lord Coventry, Lord Durham, Lord Crewe, Lord Arthur Grosvenor, and Mr. O. W. Rayner. Six races were run on each day, the Inaugural Handicap of 1,600 sovereigns being won by Lord Carnarvon's *Missovaja*. There were ninety-nine entries for the six events of the opening day, although few Newmarket horses were present, and this fact shows how great are the local resources on which Newbury can depend for its supply, an enormous number of horses being trained within a radius of fifty miles.

No account of Berkshire racing would be complete without reference to the important training stables which most fittingly cluster round 'the White Horse Hill.' The springy and elastic turf of the Berkshire Downs lends itself admirably for training purposes, and Letcombe, Childrey, Lambourn, Ilsley, Compton, and Whitcombe have all sent out to the great race-meetings in this country and abroad horses whose names will long be remembered in the annals of the Turf.

STEEPLECHASING

Hawthorn Hill Steeplechases.—In the year 1887 these now famous meetings were established. They owe their inception to the energy of the late Mr. F. Headington, who acted for several years as secretary, treasurer, stake-holder, and clerk of the course. It was at his suggestion that the earl of Coventry and the followers of the Royal Buckhounds instituted steeplechases for the benefit of the farmers over whose land they rode. The course was arranged at Redstone Farm, and among the stewards were Lord Charles Beresford, Sir Reginald Cathcart, Mr. Paravicini, Mr. W. H. Grenfell, Mr. Hercy, Mr. Howard Vyse, and Dr. Croft. There were six events, and the prizes were mainly for *bona fide* hunters, the property of farmers over whose land the Queen's Hounds ran. At this meeting there was no grand stand, and wagons were brought to the field and used for that purpose. In 1888 Mr. Garth and his followers in the field joined with Lord Coventry and his associates, and the success of 'young Ascot' was assured. The meeting was conducted under the Grand National Hunt Rules, and among the stewards were Sir Robert Wilmot, Mr. Magniac, Mr. C. T. Murdoch, M.P., Lord F. Godolphin Osborne, Mr. W. Simonds, and that erratic luminary who earned the title of the

'Jubilee Plunger.' Five hundred farmers were entertained to a champagne luncheon. There were numerous drags and carriages, an immense gathering of beauty and fashion, and some excellent racing, though the ground was 'sticky,' owing to heavy rain. The programme comprised six events. A grand stand brought from Egham had been erected, and Hawthorn Hill became recognized as a regular fixture and a magnificent success. There was some good racing in 1889, and some strong cross-country horses ran, amongst which were Mr. Headington's *Orrone* and *Billy Pepper*, Mr. Apthorp's *Binfield*, Mr. Bernard's *Saint*, Captain Crawley's *Water Wagtail*, and Mr. Morten's *Jesuit*. In 1890 the Household Brigade held their Regimental Steeplechases at Hawthorn Hill, and both the 12th Lancers and the Royal Horse Guards had successful meetings. A remarkable win took place in the 12th Lancers Challenge Cup Race. Mr. Crawley on *Sir Rowland* at the second fence from home came a cropper. He was soon on his legs and in the saddle again. There was no time to regain his stirrups or reins. Starting the horse, he rode with his hands, kept the saddle while the horse cleared the last fence, overtook his opponents, and passed the judge a winner by two lengths. The cheering which followed was both hearty and well deserved.

In this year Mr. W. H. Grenfell, master of a famous pack of harriers, joined with the earl of Coventry and Mr. Garth in supporting the annual fixture.

Much of the credit of the success of Hawthorn Hill is due to Sir Robert Wilmot, who has spared no pains to make the Redstone Farm course at once popular and fashionable. At first owners fought shy of this 'track among the fields,' but Sir Robert continued to improve his course, and endeavoured by all means to make the meeting popular. There are now eight meetings in each year. In March the First Spring Meeting of two days takes place; the Household Brigade occupy two days in April; the Hunt and Spring Meetings are held on two days in May; and the autumn gatherings take two days in October.

Maiden Erleigh Steeplechases.—The late popular master of the South Berks Hunt, Mr. John Hargreaves, inaugurated some most successful meetings at Maiden Erleigh, near Reading. These were originally started as Hunt and Yeomanry races, and consisted of two or three events for each, with an open race for all comers. This, however, as both Hunt and Yeomanry entries become somewhat few, soon resolved itself into a regular meeting with several open events. An excellent course was prepared upon Mr. Hargreaves's estate, and some formidable jumps were devised. The success of the meeting and the hospitality of the founder attracted a large

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concourse of Berkshire gentry. The races are still held by the permission of Mr. Joel, the present owner of Maiden Erleigh, and attract large gatherings.

Point-to-Point Races are run annually at the

close of the hunting season by the Berks and Bucks Farmers' Staghounds, the Craven Hunt, the Old Berkshire (combined with the Vale of White Horse Hunt), the South Berks, and the Staff College Drag Hunt.

ROWING

We have one public school which has produced some famous oarsmen, and there are several minor clubs and regattas which claim the attention of the historian of Berkshire sport.

RADLEY

Since as early as 1850 there had been boating at Radley. The authorities seem to have then contemplated the pastime as a permanency; for they built a small boat-house on the creek, on Radley shore, which debouches opposite to Nuneham boat-house. One of the 'Fellows,' the Rev. Mr. Savory, used to take charge of the few boys who then went afloat, and Dr. E. G. Monk, the organist, wrote a boating song for the school, which was published in Novello's *Part Song Book*. But in the following year Dr. Singleton stopped the boating. There were no great bathing facilities, very few boys could swim, and he feared calamities.

In 1851, under Dr. Heathcote, a site for a bathing place was acquired at Sandford, and boating recommenced, open only to those who could 'pass' a first standard in swimming. The growth of oarsmanship was slow in the school. There were no masters to teach style until Mr. (afterwards Bishop) W. K. Macrorie became a master. In the autumn of 1853 Radley manned a school four.

In 1855 the first eight was manned, and there were two minor fours in addition. In 1856 a second eight was instituted.

In 1858 an eight-oar match was promoted between Eton and Radley. It came off at Henley, on the Saturday following the regatta. Eton won by a short three-quarters of a length.

The eight used annually to get some friendly spins against college and scratch crews, but otherwise they had no public racing, beyond the 1858 match, until 1861, when they made their début for the Ladies' Plate simultaneously with Eton, who were in that year allowed for the first time to compete at Henley regatta. Since that date each school has been a regular competitor for the prize, Eton with a more than average share of actual wins of the cup. Radley has won trial heats on many occasions, and has got into the final heat once or twice, but has never had the good fortune to win the plate outright. In 1865 they, in the trial heat, rowed Third Trinity to

a length, when there were six 'Blues' in the Cambridge crew. In the final heat on the following day, Third Trinity beat Eton by two and a half lengths. In 1868, in a friendly trial, the School beat Corpus College by two feet, over a Nuneham course. Corpus subsequently went head of the river at Oxford.

Radley has contributed a score of 'Blues' to the University Boat Race at Putney; but unfortunately for the merits and exertions of their coach, Mr. H. M. Evans, a large proportion of his best aquatic pupils have gone from the school direct to the army. In 1891, for instance, a Radley crew rowed Eton to half a length in the final heat for the Ladies' Plate, from the north station, to leeward in a strong wind. Of that Eton crew no less than five subsequently rowed for Oxford or Cambridge at Putney, and another rowed four of a Leander eight that won the Grand Challenge, whereas of the Radley crew the four best oars went straight into the army, without any university career.

There are divers school races on the river, which have gradually been founded or have developed. These all tend to encourage aquatic ambition among the boys and to promote style in oarsmanship.

There are senior pairs, the oldest foundation, dating from about 1857; and after them senior fours, founded in 1859. Since those days there were some senior trial eights, whence the Henley crew is selected; sliding-seat and fixed-seat trial eights, sculls, sliding-seat pairs, and last, but by no means least, 'Social Fours,' in which the various crews row bumping-races with a challenge cup for the head-ship, much after the system of college bumping races at the Universities.

The head quarters of the racing are at Sandford, whither the boats moved in 1855; but the river between Sandford and Nuneham is rather tortuous and not so deep nor so free from weeds as the Nuneham course. The latter is used for all level racing, and for the training practice of the Henley crew; the racing boats being daily taken down there from the Sandford boat-house by the watermen in charge. This entails much labour, but bears its fruits in improvement of style.

Amongst the distinguished oarsmen produced by Radley, the name of Mr. Walter B. Woodgate stands out prominently. He rowed for Oxford

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in 1862 and 1863, won the Wingfield Sculls in 1862, the Diamond Sculls in 1864, and has often officiated as umpire in the great aquatic races. The following are the names of other Radley 'Blues':—P. Gurdon (Oxford, 1856 and 1857), R. W. Risely (Oxford, 1857, 1858, 1859, and 1860), W. G. G. Austin (Oxford, 1858), M. Brown (Oxford, 1864, 1865, and 1866), R. T. Raikes (1865 and 1866), R. S. Ross of Bladensburg (Oxford, 1868), R. Lesley (Oxford, 1871 and 1872), C. S. Read (Cambridge, 1872 and 1873), W. C. Lecky-Browne (Cambridge, 1873 and 1874), P. W. Brancker (Cambridge, 1876), T. E. Hockin (Cambridge, 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1879), L. Hannen (Cambridge, 1888 and 1889), T. A. Cook (Oxford, 1889), T. H. E. Stretch (1894 and 1895), F. O. Huntley (Oxford, 1901 and 1902), and C. H. S. Wasbrough (Cambridge cox., 1902).

THAMES REGATTAS

A pleasant summer regatta takes place at Wargrave. It was first started in 1887, and was held intermittently for some years. Since 1895 it has been held annually.

Abingdon possessed at one time a regatta of some standing, but it is now defunct. The last occasion on which it was held was in 1882, and the rowing club has never been revived. Abingdon School, however, turns out a four which competes with St. Mark's School, Windsor. The Berkshire village of Streatley unites with its Oxfordshire neighbour Goring, and supports a flourishing regatta known as the Goring and Streatley Regatta. Lower down the Thames we come to Reading, which possesses a good rowing club and a prosperous regatta. Amongst other distinguished oarsmen who hail from Reading is Mr. W. C. Blandy, who rowed for Oxford in 1884.

The date of the first Reading Regatta is uncertain, all records previous to 1848 having been lost.

One can gather, however, from the minutes relating to the regatta of 1848 that regattas were held in the years 1842-3-4. Between the years 1844 and 1848 no meeting was held; but in 1848 it was revived under the name of the Reading and Caversham Regatta, and Mr. J. Okey Taylor, who is still alive, was chairman of the first meeting of the committee. The races then held were known as the District Plate, the Reading Cup, the Ladies' Cup, the Town Plate, and there was also a punt race. Among entries for the various races in 1849 appear such well-known local names as John Wheeler, Charles Batho, John Waugh, G. F. Wellman, Alfred Hurley, John Cocks, and G. T. Prince. With the exception of one or two years the regatta appears to have been held regularly down to the present time. The programme has naturally undergone many radical changes, the pair-oar races of early days having disappeared in favour of four- and eight-oar races. In 1848 the races were confined to Reading and Caversham and the surrounding district, no one appearing to have entered from farther afield than Henley. At the present time entries are received from all the great metropolitan clubs and from centres as far away as Worcester and Bristol. The present challenge cups are worth something like £300. For eights are the Reading Grand Challenge Cup given by Capt. Carleton V. Blyth, and the Sandeman Challenge Cup presented by Mr. A. G. Sandeman. For fours are the Reading Challenge Vase which was offered by the late Mr. George Palmer; the Maiden Erleigh Challenge Cup presented by the late Mr. John Hargreaves; and the Reading Challenge Bowl, the gift of the present president, Mr. Arthur Hill; while the Vulcan Challenge Shield given by the members of the Old Reading Volunteer Fire Brigade is for local scullers. The regatta is now held annually on August bank holiday, and the programme generally fills a full day's racing. The races are still rowed on the original course in Caversham Reach between the Scours and Caversham Bridge.

ARCHERY

Archery meetings were held in the time of Queen Elizabeth in a meadow called Oldfield at Bray, when the stalwart volunteers of Bray and the neighbourhood met to exhibit their skill. One of these matches is commemorated by a brass plate in Clewer Church, thus inscribed:—

He that lieth under this stone
Shott with a hundred men, himselfe alone;
This is trew that I do saye,
The match was shott in Ould Felde at Bray.
I will tell you before you go hence,
That his name was Martine Expençe.

Amongst the early archery clubs the West

Berks holds a distinguished place. It was considered to be the principal provincial society in England. It was founded in 1831 in two lodges, one at Beenham Place and the other at Sparsholt House near Wantage, and instituted the well-known York Round consisting of seventy-two arrows at 100 yards, forty-eight at 80, and twenty-four at 60. Lord Craven was president and the Countess Barrington patroness. The constitution of the club is peculiar to itself, as it is limited to twelve members, who meet at each other's houses in various parts of England to shoot this York Round. They have an autumn handicap consisting of 216 arrows at

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100 yards, which contest takes place on the ground of the Royal Toxophilite Society. John Hughes of Donnington Priory, father of Tom Hughes, was a prominent member of this club, and presented a cup to the annual competition. He wrote the famous ballad called the 'Pindar of Wakefield's Legend,' beginning—

The Pindar of Wakefield is my style,
And what I list I write ;
Whilom a clerk of Oxenford,
But now a wandering wight.

The lines from this ballad—

Stout arm, strong bow, and steady eye,
Union, true heart, and courtesy,

have been adopted as the motto of the Grand National Archery Meeting. Another prominent member of this club was Mr. Henry Hippisley of Sparsholt, who indited the quaint wording of the Freedom of the West Berks Archers conferred on the Royal Toxophilite Society, which is printed below. In 1833 a subscription plate was shot for at Beenham, when a large number of Toxophilites competed, but the Rev. E. Merriman of the Berks Archers won. On this occasion the West Berks Archers were elected freemen of the Royal Toxophilite Society. In 1834 a great match took place between eleven of the latter society and the West Berks, when the provincial club won. In 1840 the ladies deserted the archers, and drew away many of the male members. There were, however, 300 remaining, and they possessed a club button inscribed 'W.B.A.,' with a white horse and a bugle. An important handicap plate was contended for at Beenham Park on 6 October 1835, consisting of seventy-two ends of three arrows each at a distance of 100 yards. Messrs. Moore, E. Merrick, Atwood, Hughes, H. Nelson, A. Slowcock, T. Hogan Smith, and W. Wylde were the prominent members of the club; and Captain Norton, Sir Henry Martin, and Mr. Peters were the members of the Royal Toxophilite Society who contended. There were nineteen entries, but the shooting was not very excellent, no archer put half his arrows into the target, and only one put in more than one-third. We will charitably suppose that the wind was high. At that time there was an East Berks Club, and also a Windsor; and Miss Mitford describes with her pleasant fancy the archery club of 'Belford Regis,' which was her name for the county town of Reading; from all of which it will appear that archery was very popular in the county. Twenty years ago there were two South Berks Societies, one in the neighbourhood of Newbury and the

other near Reading. The Royal Toxophilite Society met at Windsor in 1884, when there was some good shooting. At this meeting the Ladies' County Challenge prize was instituted, the prizes being six gold brooches. The following members of the West Berks have won the championship :—

Major C. Hawkins Fisher	1871, '72, '74, '87
Mr. G. F. Fryer	1875, '92, '95, '96, '97
Mr. H. Hamilton Palairret	1876, '78 '80, '81 '82
Mr. C. D. Longman	1883
Mr. C. E. Neshan	1884, '85, '86, '88 '90
Mr. F. C. Govett	1891
Mr. Eyre W. Hussey	1894, '99, 1901

The North Berks was in existence in 1883, and the head quarters were at Abingdon. The Hill and Valley, now extinct, was founded in 1874, with head quarters at Wallingford, and Mr. H. W. Wells was secretary. The club round consisted of the national for ladies, and for gentlemen forty-eight arrows at 80 yards and twenty-four at 60.

With the exception of the West Berks Archers the pastime in the county has ceased to be practised, and awaits another wave of fashion to resuscitate it.

The following is a document conferring the Freedom of the West Berkshire Archers on the members of the Royal Toxophilite Society :—

FREEDOM OF THE WEST BERKS ARCHERS TO THE R.T.S.

To the most honourable the Toxophilite Society.
The Members of the Vale District of the West Berks
United Archers, Greeting.

Right dutiful respect for your more Antient and Most Honourable Society, high admiration of your well-approved skill in Archery and gentle Courtesy withal us thereunto moving, we do proffer unto you, most noble Bowmen, with all our humility, the *Freedom of our Society*, together with all such rights and privileges thereunto appertaining, as you in your kind courtesy have conferred on us, and duly appreciating the right brotherly feeling of your honourable Members towards us, we do entreat that you will be pleased to accept at our hands this token of high consideration and esteem.

By these presents therefore under the hand of our trusty and well-beloved Secretary, Sealed with our Common Seal, we do hereby give and grant unto you and to every one of you the above-mentioned *Freedom of our Society*, that ye may enjoy the same unto your hearts' content, and so we wish you farewell.

Given at our Hall at Sparsholte this 19th day of June, in the year of our Lord 1834.

(Signed) HENRY HIPPISELEY.

SPORT ANCIENT AND MODERN

PUGILISM

Owing to its nearness to London, Berkshire has been a favourite battle-ground for the champions of the ring, and several noted contests have taken place within its borders. The earliest on record occurred in 1759, when an aspiring cowman named Moreton at Reading fought the renowned John Slack, but was easily beaten by the champion of that day. Henry Sellers was champion for four years (1777-81), defeating Joe Hood at Ascot Heath during the race week in 1777, and Bill Stevens the ex-champion in 1778.

A great fight for £200 a side took place at Wokingham, 18 June 1787, between a west countryman named Bill Warr and Tom Johnson, the rising pugilist of his day. Thousands flocked to see the match. Warr perceiving himself out-classed adopted the cowardly tactics of falling down in order to escape the blows of his antagonist. At last Johnson managed to get a blow home and was declared champion of England.

Under the patronage of the earl of Barrymore Wargrave was a great centre of the 'noble art' at the end of the eighteenth century. He engaged some of the most noted members of the ring, who were lodged at 'The George.' Here at one time were Johnson, Big Ben, the Brothers Ward and Jackson, all celebrated bruisers. The earl amused his guests by asking them to take a 'bout' with these worthies, who soon 'knocked them out of time.' Tom Hooper was engaged permanently as pugilistic tutor, though his lordship was no mean professor of the art. 'Bully' Hooper, a tinman by trade, and a native of Bristol, was a 'lion-hearted' pugilist, a most scientific boxer, and won fame by scoring an easy victory against Clarke. He fought more battles than any other pugilist of his time, and with success in most cases. Lord Barrymore once took him to Vauxhall Gardens in the guise of a clergyman, where Hooper mightily distinguished himself by the use of his fists. An important match between him and a bargee, which caused a large amount of money to change hands, was regarded as one of the greatest triumphs of skill *versus* strength that had ever been witnessed in the 'ring.' Hooper scarcely scaled eleven stone, while his antagonist weighed sixteen. He fought another great match with Watson, alias 'Will o' the Wisp,' and won after a severe contest. Watson adopted the tactics of repeatedly falling to the ground in order to gain time in recovering from a blow, but had in the end to be borne off the stage, from which, in ring parlance, the Tinman 'stalked off full strong.' The earl won £25,000 by the match.

The *Reading Mercury* of 7 December 1789 states that

On Monday a battle was fought at Wargrave between Hooper, the noted tinman, and Wright, the noted carpenter of Binfield Heath, which lasted about twenty-five minutes, when the carpenter was so much beaten, particularly about the head and face, as to be obliged to give the victory to the tinman. Lord Falkland, Lord Barrymore, and many other gentlemen were present.

In 1790 Lord Barrymore's 'pet' encountered 'Tom Tight,' alias Howard, a Reading bargee. Lord Falkland backed the latter against Hooper for 50 guineas. Most of the *elite* of the profession, such as Johnson, Ward, and Ryan, came to witness the match. 'Ropes' were pitched on a ten-foot stage, erected in a field near the earl's residence. 'Tom Tight, when 'buffed,' appeared a most muscular person, several inches taller than his rival. But ten minutes sufficed to settle the match, as Hooper got his opponent into a corner, and won an easy victory. The winner was then matched against 'Big Ben,' a champion bruiser, the fight taking place at Chapel Row Revel near Newbury, on 30 August 1790. It was a strange combat. The opponents were equal in skill, but 'Big Ben' was much heavier and stronger. No less than 180 rounds were fought, and the fight, having lasted three and a half hours, was declared a draw. Neither foe was much hurt. Hooper said to his patron, 'My lord, when you bets on I, if you dusn't win, I'll take care 'ow you shouldn't lose.' The Tinman lost his reputation by this fight, and was ignored by all his former supporters with the exception of his chief patron.

Amongst the principal supporters of these encounters and patrons of the ring, besides Lord Barrymore, were the Prince of Wales, the dukes of York and Clarence, the duke of Hamilton, General Fitzpatrick, and Mr. Wyndham. Hooper finally took to drink, was found insensible on a door-step in 'the Dials,' and died in a workhouse. 'Big Ben,' alias Brain, won the championship in 1791, beating Johnson in a famous match. On 25 November 1801 a mighty battle took place between the champion Jem Belcher and Joe Berks at Hurley. The combatants left London in closed carriages and drove to Maidenhead, Belcher putting up at the 'Sun,' and Berks at the 'Bear.' Hurley Bottom, being on the borders of four counties, was selected as a convenient place in order to prevent the capture of the fighters. Berks had been trained by Mendoza and was in the pink of condition; he stood 6 ft. in height and weighed 13 stone; his opponent being rather shorter. It was a terrible contest, lasting about half an hour, in

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which the science and skill of Belcher enabled him to overcome the brute force and pluck of Berks, and retain the championship. As a result of the battle the earl of Radnor issued warrants for the apprehension of the fighters and their seconds 'for unlawfully assembling and publicly fighting at Hurley in the county of Berkshire.' They were taken into custody, but were all bailed out except the unfortunate Berks, whose friends deserted him and allowed him to be sent to Reading Gaol. They all appeared at the Newbury Quarter Sessions, and after a farcical trial were released.

After the racing at Ascot a prize-fight usually took place. The late Mr. Alderman Darter of Reading in his *Recollections* describes one that he witnessed opposite the grand stand. The gentlemen who remained on the stand subscribed a handsome sum which induced two men to fight. This occurred on the last day of the races, and was a recognized custom.

A great fight took place in 1825 at Ruscombe, between 'White-headed Bob' and Jem Burns. Several celebrated pugilists of the day were present, including Peter Crawley and the light-weight Dick Curtis, and an aristocratic gathering of patrons of the ring. The details of the combat are not pleasant to read. The struggle was severe and lasted about an hour and a half. White-headed Bob was the victor, but he was terribly battered, and Burns was carried off the ground insensible. A purse of 200 guineas was given to the winner. Burns was living fifty years later in an inn in Air Street, Regent Street, kept by his niece.

The great Mendoza, a Jew, the first of his race who became a prize-fighter, visited Windsor for the purpose of taking the air, and was there received by 'His M——y' on the terrace. One of the princes was granted permission to strike the great man in order that he might be able to boast that he 'had struck a professed pugilist on Windsor terrace.'

Crookham Common was the scene of a mighty encounter between Ben Caunt and Nick Ward in 1841. The Hants police prevented the fight taking place at Andover; so the combatants and a very large company of Hampshire sportsmen, among them the earl of Portsmouth and Mr. J. Portal Brydger, drove to Crookham. The fight was fierce and long and Ward won, claiming a 'foul' from Caunt. The position of the referee was not enviable, as Ward's friends threatened to lynch him if he did not award the fight to their man. Ten thousand spectators assembled often to see these matches.

CUDGEL PLAY AND THE REVELS

Cudgel-playing was a native Berkshire sport until recent times, and was practised at all the village revels. The combatants fenced with cudgels which had basket handles, and the object

was to inflict a blow which would draw blood from the head of the opponent. When this was achieved the crowd shouted 'a head,' and the striker was declared victor. Bulmershe Heath and the 'Chequers,' Woodley, were favourite places for the sport at Whitsuntide, and back-sword playing for pieces of plate, beginning at 8 a.m., was an accessory to Ascot Races. But the most famous occasions for this and kindred sports were the festivities attending the scouring of the White Horse, so graphically described by the late Judge Hughes. The first scouring about which there is any authentic information was held in 1755. The chief prize for back-sword or cudgel play was won by a stranger dressed in the garb of a gentleman, who held his own against all the old 'gamesters,' as those who had won a first prize at any revel were called. As soon as he had won the prize, he jumped on his horse and rode away. There was some speculation as to who he might be, and it was presently whispered that he was Tim Gibbons of Lambourn, who had not been seen for many years, and about whom some strange stories were afloat. A descendant of his stated that Tim took to highway robbery, and was nearly caught, but cut his way with his 'cutlash' through lines of ropes spread by the constables and galloped clean away. His affairs prospered and he built the Magpies Inn, on Hounslow Heath; but he was eventually betrayed and came to a highwayman's end in Newgate Gaol.

In 1776 the following programme of sports appeared:—

WHITE HORSE HILL, BERKS, 1776.

The scouring and cleaning of the White Horse is fixed for Monday, the 27th day of May; on which day a Silver Cup will be run for near White Horse Hill by any horse, &c. that never ran for anything, carrying 11 stone, the best of 3 two-mile heats, to start at 10 o'clock.

Between the heats will be run for by ponies a Saddle, Bridle and Whip; the best of 3 two-mile heats, the winner of 2 heats will be entitled to the Saddle, the second best the Bridle, and the third the Whip.

At the same time a Third Race will be run for by cart horses, &c. in their harness and bells, the carters to ride in smock frocks without saddles, crossing and jostling, but no whipping allowed.

A Flitch of Bacon to be run for by asses. A Good Hat to be run for by men in sacks, every man to bring his own sack. A waistcoat 10s. 6d. value to be given to the person who shall take a bullet out of a tub of flour with his mouth in the shortest time.

A cheese to be run for down the White Horse Manger. Smocks to be run for by ladies, the second best of each prize to be entitled to a silk hat.

Cudgel-playing for a gold-laced Hat and a pair of buckskin Breeches, and Wrestling for a pair of silver Buckles and a pair of Pumps. The horses to be on White Horse Hill by nine o'clock. No less than four horses or asses to start for any of the above prizes.

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In 1780 upwards of 30,000 persons were present, and in addition to the sports recorded above there was 'a jingling match by eleven blind-folded men, and one unmasked and hung with bells, for a pair of buckskin breeches.' The running for the cheese was curious. The fore-wheel of a waggon was set rolling down the steep slope of the hill called 'the Manger' and the racers ran after it. An old man records that

eleven on 'em started, and amongst 'em a sweep chimley and a millurd; and the millurd tripped up the sweep chimley and made the soot flee a good 'un; and how the wheel ran pretty nigh to the springs that time.

In 1785 there was a great scouring; and, in the language of the rustics,

the pastime then were a good 'un, a wonderful sight o' folk of all sorts, rich and poor. John Morse of Uffington, a queerish sort of man, grinned agin another chap droo' hos collar, but John got beeat—a fine bit o' spwoort to be sure, and meead the volks laugh.

This time a cheese was rolled down the Manger, and was given as a prize to the first who could catch it. It was tough, and held together well in spite of its rolling. There was also running after a pig, and he who caught it and held it up by the tail, kept it. A man from the 'low countries' (Somerset) won the prize for back-swording. Harry Stanley, the landlord of the 'Blowing Stone,' proved himself a champion of the cudgel, and frightened away all the low-country men. Farmer Smallbones of Sparsholt beat all comers at wrestling, and no one could stand against him; so the Berkshire humourists dubbed him 'Varmer Great-bones.' The records of the scourings are somewhat similar. In 1808 two men 'with very shiny top-boots, quite gentlemen from London,' won the prize for back-sword play, one of whom was Shaw the Lifeguardsman who was killed at Waterloo. On this occasion a prize of a gallon of gin or half a guinea was given to the woman who should smoke most tobacco in an hour. Two gipsy-women entered, and the contest was not very seemly. In 1843 the Berkshire and Wiltshire men under Joe Giles of Shrivenham beat the Somerset men led by Simon Stone at back-sword play; and two men who came down from London won the wrestling prize away from the countrymen. There seems to have been some difficulty in getting the elephant's caravan up the hill when Wombwell's Menagerie came down for the scouring, and though four-and-twenty horses were put to, it stuck fast four or five times. It does not seem to have occurred to the Berkshire folk that it would have been simpler to turn the elephant out and make him pull his own caravan.

Amongst the champions of the back-sword

were George Stacey, equally noted with 'the sticks' and as a wrestler, Harry Seeley, Thomas Black, and Michael Preston. Of Harry Seeley, Judge Hughes writes in his *Scouring of the White Horse* :—

But nothing puts out old Harry Seeley; no upper cut can reach his face, for his head is thrown well back and his guard is like a rock; and though the old blue shirt is cut through and through, he makes no more of the welts of the heavy stick than if it were a cat's tail. Between the bouts his face is cheery and confident, and he tells his friends to 'hold their noise and let him alone to tackle the chap,' as he hands round his basket for the abounding coppers.

The 'basket' was the guard to the hand on the hilt of the stick. The combatants fought on a wooden stage about 3 ft. from the ground and fenced with ropes. They were bare-headed and the left arm was fastened to the waist, so that they might not use it to ward off blows. An old man named James, who lived at Sandhurst, was known to the writer as a famous hero of back-sword play. He died about 1890, and another old friend, gipsy Draper of Shinfield, took pleasure in recording old battles.

The advent of railways and the spread of education have killed the old village festivals. The last scouring took place in 1892 and was undertaken at the sole expense of Lady Craven of Ashdown Park. It was unaccompanied by any festivities or pastimes.

CUT-LEGS AND KICK-SHINS

A favourite game among the rustics is, as far as we know, peculiar to Berkshire. Every race has its peculiarity, and where the negro is tenderest, the Berkshire man is toughest—in his shins. As a backstop at cricket he prefers to stop the fastest balls with his shins, rather than with his hands, and will keep on all day without apparent inconvenience. Fifty years ago it was a regular custom, when two carters stopped at a wayside public-house, for the men to shake hands first, in token of friendship, and then indulge in the pastime of either *cut-legs* or *kick-shins*. The former consisted of the men standing apart and lashing each other's legs with their long whips till one cried 'Hold'; while in *kick-shins* each man took firm grip of his opponent by twisting both hands in the overlapping collar of his smock frock, and then kicking with his hob-nailed boots at the other's shins. The vanquished had to pay for pots of ale. There was living in the Lambourn Valley about forty years ago a man who was considered the champion of the country-side, and his shins were knotted and bent and twisted in the most remarkable manner, as the result of his numerous encounters. But shins are tenderer than they used to be, and this game has died out.

GOLF

The oldest golf club in Berkshire is the Crookham Golf Club, which has the respectable antiquity of close on thirty years. It was founded in 1878, when a good inland course was laid out on Crookham Common near Newbury. The course of 18 holes, which is nearly three miles in length, is on a high table-land with a gravel soil, where heather and whins flourish to the confusion of the player who does not drive far and sure. The hazards are all natural, and consist of roads, gravel pits, formidable stretches of heath and gorse, and a pond that has spoilt many a promising medal round. Straight driving is essential to success, for the course is narrow and bordered with rough grass and whins. The greens are large, and afford interesting putting, and the lies are almost uniformly good on the short crisp turf of that breezy upland. The par score for the 18 holes is 80. Play is possible all the year round, though the best time for the game is in the winter, spring, and early summer. Accommodation for golfers is to be found at the Volunteer Inn on Crookham Common, where are the club-room and head quarters of the club. Meetings are held twice a year—in the spring and autumn, when the principal prize for competition is a valuable challenge cup.

The Royal Ascot Golf Club, whose links are on the sandy Ascot Heath, was founded in 1887 by various golfers of the neighbourhood. The 18 holes, which vary in length between 480 and 100 yards, give a course whose total length is about three miles. The hazards are bushes, roads, banks, the rails of the race-course, and some artificial bunkers; and the greens are so well guarded that very careful approaching is needed. Ascot Races cause a total cessation of play during June and July, and of the remaining ten months of the year October, April, and May are considered to be the best for play. The par score is 78; but this has been considerably lowered by Jack White, who has done a 71, and by H. Savage, whose record for the course is 69. The principal club prize is a challenge cup for match play competed for annually at the spring meeting.

There are two other golf clubs at Ascot: the Ladies' Club, instituted in 1888, and the St. George's Club, whose course is at the Farm. The members of the latter have the privilege of playing over the links of the Royal Ascot on one day in each week.

A small private club, to which strangers are only admitted under very special circumstances, is the Lockinge Golf Club, founded in 1890 by the late Lord Wantage, on whose private

grounds nine holes were planned. The course is on pasture-land, and play is not, therefore, possible in summer.

In 1895 the Goring and Streatley Golf Club was founded by several inhabitants of those places; and a course of 9 holes was laid out by Tom Dunn on the downs at Streatley, 500 ft. above sea level, over broad stretches of sheep pasture. The hazards are all natural, and consist of gorse, hedges, and a road. Play is possible all the year round, but spring, autumn, and winter are preferred. The bogey score is 38 for the nine holes; and the professional record for the links was made in 1904 by A. Forrest with 75 for the double round. Mr. W. S. Morris holds the amateur record, coming in the middle of the summer of 1905 within one stroke of the professional's score.

The Maidenhead Golf Club was instituted in 1896. Its 18-hole course is on gravelly pasture-land lying on high ground. The hazards are mostly artificial. The par score is a somewhat liberal 78, a score which has been beaten on more than one occasion, notably by Mr. Robert Harris, a visitor, with a fine round of 72; and A. Simpson, the club professional, who has beaten this record by one stroke. The club is rich in prizes and challenge cups, owning, as it does, the Grenfell cup, the Bulkeley-Biddulph Shield, the Holland cup, a club cup, and a gold medal.

The Reading Golf Club is three years younger than the last-mentioned, having been founded in 1899. Its 9-hole course of 2,500 yards, with artificial sand bunkers, is on heavy pasture on the Groveland Road, just outside the town; but play is carried on all through the year, although in spring and autumn, when the grass is short and the ground fairly dry, these links are better adapted for play. Bogey for the double round is 77, and the amateur and professional records are 76 and 75 respectively. Ladies are admitted as members, and the club prizes include the Palmer and the Sutton challenge cups for men, and the Berkeley Monck challenge cup for ladies.

Golf appears to have been first played at Abingdon in 1901, when Mr. W. J. Clayton of Wembley Golf Club laid out a small course in the grounds of The Abbey, of which he was tenant. A club was established in the same year which played at first over the Abbey links, and then for a while on land on the Wotton Road. In November, 1902, having been formally initiated at the North Berks Golf Club, it moved to Shippon, a little more than a mile from the town, where a 9-hole course of 2,500 yards,

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with its longest hole of 515 and its shortest of 115 yards, was laid out by Mr. A. C. M. Croome of Radley, and J. Sherlock, the Oxford University professional. The course is on pasture of shallow soil over rock, with stone walls and hedges for hazards. As is usual on such land, winter, spring, and autumn are the best seasons of the year for play. The club possesses two gold challenge medals, the 'Abbey Gardens' for the best monthly medal score of the year, and the 'Badminton' for the best in the monthly bogey competitions.

The powerful and important Sunningdale Golf Club was founded in 1901 through the energy and influence of Mr. T. A. Roberts of Sunningdale. Its fine course of 18 holes is on a heath of the Bagshot sand formation, which has been ploughed up and sown down. The hazards are natural sand bunkers; and the large and carefully tended putting-greens, the excellent lies through the green, and the admirably arranged holes combine to make the Sunningdale course one of the most important of those lying within

easy reach of London. Jack White, the open champion of 1904, is the professional, and he holds the record for the green with a 69, five strokes below the par score. The best amateur scores are Mr. A. Castle's 73, and the 74 of Mr. R. Harris.

A golf club was founded in 1903 at Hungerford, where a 9-hole course was laid out by James Braid on the downs above the town. The links are on down and common land of flinty and gravel soil, and the hazards are whins and chalk and gravel pits.

The game is played at Eton on twelve holes by the river; and by the Sandhurst cadets and members of the Staff College at Camberley; but the play is necessarily private, and we are informed that there are no golf clubs at either place in the usual sense of the term.

The Editor desires to make cordial acknowledgements to the secretaries of the various Berkshire golf clubs who have kindly supplied him with much of the information incorporated in these notes.

CRICKET

The present position of Berkshire county cricket in the list of the minor counties of England does not correspond to its ancient reputation. For more than a century Berkshire has been the home of good amateur cricket. It possesses within its borders three Public Schools, Wellington College, Bradfield, and Radley, and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, all famous nurseries and abodes of good cricketers, and several notable clubs which have produced excellent players and can boast of good records.

The earliest mention of Berkshire cricket occurs in the advertisement in the *Daily Chronicle* of 22 June 1793, of a cricket match to be played by the Maidenhead Club at Lord's cricket ground on 24 June of that year. The following is the announcement:—

CRICKET

A grand match will be played next Monday in Lord's Cricket Ground, Marybone, between nine Gentlemen of the Marybone Club and two of Middlesex against eleven of the Maidenhead Club for 500 guineas a-side. The wickets to be pitched at Eleven o'clock and the match played out.

PLAYERS

Marybone Club

E. of Winchelsea	G. Dehany, esq.
Capt. Cumberland	— Tufton, esq.
S. Louch, esq.	H. Fitzroy, esq.
R. Wyatt, esq.	Bedster
— Newnham, esq.	Lord
— Nicoll, esq.	

Maidenhead Club

G. East, esq.	Carter
— Quarm, esq.	Thompson
W. Sale	Finch
Monk	Ray
Gill	Lawrence.
Shackell	

Admission 6d. An Ordinary at Two o'clock.¹

This match ended in a victory for Maidenhead by 119 runs, the scores being:—Maidenhead 140 and 185, M.C.C. 75 and 131. A return match was played on 25 and 26 July in the same year, when Maidenhead again won by 85 runs. The score has been preserved. For M.C.C. Lord Winchilsea, G. Smith, G. Louch, Hon. H. Tufton, G. Dehany, Captain Cumberland, who was the chief bowler, T. Lord, Graham, W. Bedster, and Turner were the representatives; and for Maidenhead, G. East, Quarm, Monk, Finch, T. Shackell, Timber, Carter, Lawrence, Ray, Gill, and Thompson competed, Lawrence and Finch being the chief scorers with 57 and 52 respectively. A grand centenary match was played in commemoration of this event 100 years later, to which we shall refer in the account of the Maidenhead Club.

¹ The copy of the *Daily Chronicle* is in the possession of Mr. W. Nicholson of Maidenhead, the last of the old Bray cricketers, and for many years the mainstay of the Maidenhead Club, who is now 86 years of age. It has been kindly lent to the present writer by his grandson.

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Bray, near Maidenhead, was a great centre of early Berkshire cricket. There are in existence two old bills of matches played in 1794 and 1796, for £500 and £25 respectively. The matches were played on the Old Field, which has witnessed many a sharply contested game between the M.C.C. and Bray village. On one of those occasions the Londoners retired in high dudgeon on hearing the church bells sound their defeat, and refused to partake of an excellent dinner provided for them. The match was for £100. Still higher stakes were played for in 1794, as the following extract from the *Sporting Magazine* testifies :—

Last month a grand match of cricket was played at Old Field near Maidenhead between two select elevens of England for 1,000 guineas. This match was between R. Leigh and E. Morant, esqrs. Result in favour of Old Field Club, 89 runs.

The chronicles remain silent for about half a century, during which period much cricket must have been played, although no records seem to have been preserved. Sir John Cope and the St. Johns of West Court were cricketers, and Mr. William Keep remembers seeing a match played at Bramshill in 1851, when all the players wore tall hats. In the fifties All England elevens used to tour the country and play local teams. In 1853 (1 and 2 July) Lillywhite and Wisden's, or rather Dean and Wisden's, United All England Eleven played against the Maidenhead Eighteen and were defeated by 11 runs. This match was played in the present Kidwells Park. Owing to the ground being narrow a man was stationed in the adjoining field to 'mark' the ball when it was knocked over; but the bowling was so straight that the services of the 'extra fieldsmen' were not required. Wisden's bowling was said to be first rate, and the fielding of the Maidenhead team excellent. Chatterton kept wicket. Dean must have been a patient bat, for he remained at the wicket five hours, and only scored 19 runs. The smallness of the ground and the presence of 18 men in the field, and the straightness of the underhand bowling, somewhat hampered the eleven and prevented large scores. The full score is preserved among the records of the Maidenhead Club. Amongst the heroes of the home side were: Charles, Cholmely, and Spencer Leigh, W. Nicholson, who still survives, A. J. and C. E. Coleridge, E. Morris, Colonel Vansittart, W. Lunnion, Rev. G. Boudier. The bowlers were Burrin and Wansell. The All England Eleven was composed of T. Adams, T. Lockyer, A. R. Ward, John Lillywhite, G. Chatterton, H. Sampson, W. Martingell, H. Wright, J. Wisden, G. Picknell, and J. Dean. The highest score was made by Wisden, who compiled 44 (not out) in the second innings, but could not save his side from defeat. It must have been an exciting match.

About the same time a Berkshire team of twenty-two players competed against an All England Eleven at Reading, and among the players for the county were two men known to the writer, Mr. Beale and G. Bye, whose sons keep up the credit of their sire in the Swallowfield neighbourhood. Local veterans in the Newbury district still record with pride how they defeated at Hungerford Park old Clarke's All England Eleven, in which match Burrin, an Oxford professional, bowled all the English side out for 10 runs. Amongst the All England players were George Parr, Box, the two Clarkes, and Guy.

The first foundation of county cricket was laid in 1858, when Mr. Spencer Austen-Leigh, who had played in the Harrow Eleven, got up a side which he called the Gentlemen of Berkshire, and challenged the Gentlemen of Sussex, at that time considered the strongest team of gentlemen in the country. Two matches a year were played for three years. Two of the home matches were played at Reading, one in the old ground behind the Duke of Edinburgh inn in the Caversham road, where the cattle market now stands, and the other at Maidenhead. In 1860 the Berkshire Gentlemen beat the Sussex Eleven very handsomely by an innings and 115 runs. The return matches were all at Brighton. Of the home matches two were won and one drawn; but on their own ground Sussex won during all the three years, chiefly owing to the Berks side being always one or two men short. On a few occasions Mr. George Montagu of Caversham, who hunted the South Berks hounds, and had been a good cricketer, played as eleventh man, having journeyed to Brighton to back up the side. These matches produced some tall scores. Spencer Austen-Leigh got over a century all three years, and Edward C. Austen-Leigh made 161 not out at Maidenhead, besides as a bowler keeping up one end through nearly all the matches. Matches were also played with the Gentlemen of Kent, Wilts, and Hampshire, against whom the county held its own well. In 1857 the county played against Bucks, and the match ended in a draw decidedly in favour of the former, Bucks having 115 runs to win with five wickets to fall. The Leigh family scored well, Charles and Arthur obtained 42 and 32 respectively, but were surpassed by H. Paine (the landlord of the 'Black Boy' at Shinfield), who made 57 in the second innings. Maidenhead Club also competed against the Gentlemen of Berkshire in this same year, and beat them by 75 on the first innings by the help of the redoubtable Leighs, Charles obtaining 62 not out. The Austen-Leighs were the sons of the vicar of Bray, and were a family of sterling cricketers, five or six of whom played in the above matches. Among the other players were F. Stephens, Captain C. Slocock, J. Barker, Redmond Morres, Hucks Gibbs, W. and F. Price, R. A. Fitz-

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gerald, the Secretary of M.C.C., G. Answorthy, and Reade, the Oxford cricketer. Redmond Morres, subsequently vicar of St. Sebastian's, Wokingham, was a fine cricketer, quite indefatigable, whose sons maintain their father's reputation and still play for Berkshire. Mr. Alexander Beale remembers those pleasant games in which he took part, and recalls the names of Frederick Everitt and Rev. Thomas Morres, brother of Redmond, who competed for their county. When the promoters of the game, the Austen-Leighs, left their old home at Bray, no further matches were played.

It was not until 1894 that the present Berkshire County Cricket Club was formed, the leading spirit being the late Mr. C. T. Murdoch, M.P. for Reading, who was assisted by Captain Wheble, W. O. Nares, its first secretary, J. Crowhurst, and others. Prince Christian—who took a keen interest in the undertaking, and was much devoted to cricket on account of the prowess of his son, the late Prince Christian Victor, who played for Wellington College and at Oxford—became its president, and W. O. Nares secretary. Land at Elm Park, Reading, was leased for a ground. It was excellently laid by King of Oxford, and well cared for by Ralf, who came from Wellington College to be the ground-man. He is a valuable servant, and has a thorough knowledge of the game. The ground has improved under his keeping, and is extremely fast. The new club was started under favourable auspices, and it was hoped that Berkshire would soon take a leading place among the minor counties, and even attain to first-class rank. It has not yet succeeded in realizing its expectations, chiefly on account of the absence of good professional bowling, and occupies, we must confess, a somewhat low position amongst the minor counties. The fact that in one season there was no bowling average less than 23 runs per wicket proves the weakness of the attack. There is plenty of good batting in the team. The chief players who have fought for Berkshire are A. C. M. Croome (a Radley master), L. G. A. Collins and L. P. Collins, F. E. Rowe, the Essex cricketer, J. A. Gibb, R. A. Williams, the Oxonian, H. F. and E. R. Morres, sons of Redmond Morres, to whom we have already referred, Sir C. Y. Nepean, Captain Blundell, G. G. M. Bennett, H. W. Hutson, F. Chapman, S. V. Shea (the old Bradfieldian), and the professionals Watts, Cave, and Barker. On the retirement of Mr. Nares, Captain Wheble undertook the honorary secretaryship, and he was followed in 1904 by Major Charles Turner. Prince Christian continues to be president, and Viscount Barrington is chairman of the committee. Berkshire competes with several of the minor counties, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Glamorganshire, and Monmouthshire, and in 1906 played against Devon, Dorset, and

Cornwall, in addition to Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. The strength of the batting is shown by the averages for 1905, A. C. M. Croome, 56.75; G. G. M. Bennett, 42; F. E. Rowe, 40; S. V. Shea, 33; Watts, 27; and H. Brougham, of Wellington College, 26.

In spite of the financial support of several of the leading gentlemen in the county the club has usually been in monetary difficulties, and the matches have never succeeded in attracting a large 'gate.' It is unfortunate, but the Reading people would not flock to see the games, and each succeeding year only added to the heavy indebtedness of the club. It is a great pity that the attendance at minor county matches is not better; but it is the same everywhere, and it seems impossible to find a remedy. Mr. Howard Palmer in 1903, with the object of preserving the ground, purchased the land, the debts were paid off, and an amateur sports club was inaugurated, which leased the ground and let it to the County, Reading, and other clubs, for cricket and other sports. The arrangement has proved satisfactory, and freed from the burden of debt, and with the prospect of gaining additional professional assistance, the County Club may look forward to greater success in the future than it has achieved in the past.

In 1899 a good pavilion was erected in memory of Mr. C. T. Murdoch, and opened on Whit Monday by Prince Christian, when a match was played between East and West Berkshire, the latter team being captained by Mr. A. C. M. Croome, and the former by the present writer. The County Club for several years organized a team of Berkshire Gentlemen who during each season played a series of matches against the R.M.C., Staff College, public schools in the county, Mr. Kemp-Welch's team, &c. The Gentlemen were sometimes able to play a strong side, including A. C. M. Croome, Captain Wheble, W. Finch, P. J. Paravicini, W. O. Nares, L. P. Collins, H. W. Hutson, and other good cricketers.

In our record of the annals of Berkshire cricket we have often referred to Maidenhead. Happily the score books of this club have been preserved and have been lent to us by Mr. W. R. Nicholson, the grandson of Mr. W. Nicholson, whose name frequently appears therein in the matches of the 'fifties. He is still alive and vigorous in spite of his great age. It is seldom that such an interesting collection has been preserved. The club was established in 1849, and the records begin with 1850, when eight matches were played against the Oxonians, Wargrave, Henley, and Beaconsfield. The Leighs were the mainstay of the team, and Captain Vansittart, the Barkers of Stanlake, the Morres brothers, sons of the rector of Wokingham, the Coleridges of Great Haseley, usually did good service. During the 'fifties matches took place with several Oxford

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colleges, the Windsor Home Park Club, the Zingari, and several regimental clubs, the Windsor Garrison, Old Harrovians, Reading, Newbury, and other clubs. Some heavy scoring took place in 1863 against the Ramblers, when Maidenhead made 248, with the help of W. M. Fenn's grand not-out innings of 67 and C. Austen-Leigh's 44, against their opponents' 240. In the 'seventies, besides the Leighs, who continued to score with their accustomed vigour, the following well-known names appear in the records: E. P. Bailey, P. H. Crutchley, H. R. Hewett, W. Nicholson, R. W. Nicholson, the present squire of Bearwood, A. F. Walter, and his brother H. M. Walter, now rector of St. Paul's, Wokingham, R. A. H. Mitchell, A. J. and H. R. Webbe, W. H. Grenfell, who bowled well, Edward Lyttelton, the present head master of Eton, Rev. F. W. Wright, F. H. Buckland, Rev. G. Dupuis, and F. le Marchant.

In 1894 was played at Maidenhead a match between the club and M.C.C. in commemoration of the match played by these clubs a century before. The scene of the contest was the Orkney Cottage Ground, lent by Mr. H. W. Lawson, M.P. The M.C.C. succeeded in avenging the defeat experienced in the earlier match by 26 runs on the first innings. The home team was composed of local men assisted by Brockwell and Watts, the Surrey professionals, and unfortunately was without the expected support of A. J. Webbe and A. Lyttelton. The ground was sodden with rain, and the play was not eventful, the highest score being only 23 runs. A centenary match of this description is probably unique in the annals of cricket. The club continues to flourish, and holds its own amongst other Berkshire teams.

The Aldermaston Park Club was started in 1853 under the presidency of Mr. Higford Burr, the owner of Aldermaston Court, in whose park the ground was situated. It was well supported by the county families, and had about eighty members. Mr. W. Keep, whose recollections of early Berkshire days are invaluable, possesses a list of members of the club in 1853. The club played some notable matches, I Zingari always bringing a team. Business with pleasure was happily combined on the 'Ladies' Days,' when after the match a dance took place in the cricket-house. The club did not last long. It was revived by Mr. Arthur Burr. In recent years the estate was bought by Mr. Charles E. Keyser, a keen supporter of the game, who has greatly improved the cricket ground and made it the scene of many good games.

There was a flourishing club at Reading in the 'fifties when the ground was at first on the site of the present cattle market, and a little later at Whitley. The leading men of the time were H. J. Simonds, Alexander Beale, Blackall Simonds,

Mellish Simonds, the Austen-Leighs, with the professionals Harry Payne and Sampson. Matches were less numerous in those days than they are now, and involved long journeys by coach. The teams used to be away from home two or three days, and journeyed to Winchester, Guildford, Henley, Oxford, and Salisbury. Subsequently part of the old Reading race-course was chosen as the club ground; and there the Reading Club remained for many years, until the formation of the county club in 1894.

The county town occupies a leading position in the annals of Berkshire cricket. From 1862 to 1882 Reading Cricket Club had as secretary Mr. Henry Collins, who managed its affairs excellently. He was a fine bat and an excellent field at cover-point. In 1873 the club presented him with a silver cup in recognition of his services as hon. secretary and treasurer. His brother, Mr. Charles Collins, was a useful bowler and played for his county, and his sons are fine cricketers, one of whom, L. P. Collins, played in the Oxford Eleven in 1900. Amongst the leading players in the 'sixties were H. C. Jollie, the old Bradfield boy, who ought to have got his 'blue' for Oxford, and was one of the founders of Association football; the Rev. F. Tobin, a Cambridge 'blue'; J. W. Haygarth, the Oxford wicket-keeper, and his brother E. B. Haygarth, a fine bat; A. Beale, a good bowler, whose recollections of Berkshire cricket we have already recorded; Charles Stephens, the Reading banker, who distinguished himself in the now obsolete position of long-stop; Rev. E. A. Gillett, a good bat, the brother of H. Gillett, the Oxford 'blue'; Hugh Hawkins, who succeeded Mr. Collins as secretary; James Simonds; F. Crowder, who rowed in the Oxford boat and shone equally as a cricketer; Major H. L. Hunter, a useful left-hand bowler; Harry and H. G. Lee; and H. H. Palairt, the father of the two great Somerset players who earned their 'blues' at Oxford. The club competed in those days with several Oxford college teams, Wellington College, Bradfield, Staff College, Radley, The Vine, captained by the Chutes, Aldershot Division, Wilts Wanderers, and the Incogniti. The Austen-Leighs used to play for Reading. Arthur Austen-Leigh, now vicar of Wargrave, was a good field and bat, and one of the brothers played for Sussex. Those were the palmy days of Reading cricket.

For some years the Reading Club suffered from the multiplication of cricket clubs in the town and neighbourhood, which had the result of drawing away good players from the parent club, and making it difficult to collect a team of more than average ability. The writer remembers playing against Reading in 1878 for Oriel College, when the whole town-side was dismissed for 8 runs. W. H. Evans, the Oxford bowler, was in one of his deadliest moods. The

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Biscuit Factory team, always a good side, Christ Church, the 49th Regimental District, Garfield, Sutton's, Felix, are only some of many clubs in the town; and whereas in former days Reading was able to strengthen its eleven by drawing upon the rest of the county, in recent times each town and village has its own club and list of numerous matches, which occupy the attention of local cricketers and tend to sap the supply of the old central club. However, under the secretaryship of Mr. A. C. Bartholomew, the club prospered, and later on under that of W. O. Nares and S. Hayward the club flourished and was supported by some fine cricketers. Amongst these were the sons of Mr. H. Collins, the former secretary, five of whom played in their public school elevens, the eldest at Sherborne, and four at Marlborough. The youngest, L. P. Collins, played for Oxford *v.* Cambridge, and would have captained the university team if he had not left the university for the army. He has performed some wonderful feats for the Ghurka Brigade, scoring four double centuries in one season. He made 121 for Berks. *v.* Herts. in 1897. His brother, L. G. A. Collins, has also scored largely for Berks. and at Eastbourne. The Rev. E. L. Colebrook, the Oxford 'blue,' a very fine bat, H. G. Tate, a hard and sure hitter, H. J. Mordaunt, of Cambridge Eleven fame, R. S. Wilson, a good bowler, P. Christopherson, the Kent county player, S. Maurice, F. Chapman and his brother, H. C. Chapman, S. S. Wollaston, J. Crowhurst, S. Hayward, C. W. Crowdy, G. Sillence, have been among the principal players, together with the professionals Trueman, Henwood, and Champion. It is now a very prosperous club, and as strong as ever it was.

In 1897 the Reading and District Challenge Cup Association League was formed, under the secretaryship of Mr. J. Crowhurst. It produced some good and exciting cricket, and existed until the formation of the County Club. The writer remembers well playing in the final contest between the Factory and Swallowfield, which lasted two days, and was then unfinished. Party feeling ran high. The authorities ordered the teams to play again on the following Saturday. This Swallowfield could not do, and claimed that they had won on the first innings. But the cup was awarded to their opponents amid much excitement.

The Reading Barracks (49th Regimental District) have for many years been a home of cricketers, and have played a strong side. Captain Edwards, Captain Holden, Sir T. Pasley, Sir C. Y. Nepean, Lieutenant F. Barker, Sergeants Bedding and Gee, and Corporal Wake, have been some of the most prominent players. Bedding was, in his best days, a very strong cricketer, a free and vigorous hitter, and a fast and deadly bowler.

Amongst leading cricketers who are Berkshire men may be mentioned Mold, the Lancashire bowler, who was born and bred in Berkshire at Steventon.

Cricket has flourished for many years in the Newbury district. Just over the county boundary is Highclere Park, the residence of the earl of Carnarvon, and the club there was at one time very strong, when Mr. A. W. Ridley and his brothers, who resided in the neighbourhood, played for it. The Newbury Club was in existence in 1858, when it played a match with Maidenhead and did well, having the best of a drawn game. The best players at that time were C. and F. Everett, and Captain Sloccock of Donnington. H. Ford was the secretary of the club. More recently it has had the assistance of A. H. Evans, the great Oxford bowler, and it still can put a strong side in the field. Some years ago the Newbury Club played very good matches. The most flourishing days were when Mr. E. J. Eyre, of Shaw House, was captain. He and his brother were excellent players, and took a keen interest in the game. The Sloccock family have been keen cricketers and strong supporters of the club. A successful cricket week has for many years been arranged by this club. A few years ago at Arlington, the residence of the late Lord St. Helier, some excellent cricket was seen, and matches were played in which Spofforth, G. Bean, Albert Trott, and other noted cricketers took part.

At Wokingham a cricket club was founded as long ago as 4 May 1825. The early minute books have been kindly lent to us by the secretary of the present club, Mr. E. S. Barry. The earliest record states that 'at a meeting holden at the Rose Inn, Wokingham, the following gentlemen constituted themselves into a club for playing this game of cricket'; then follows a list of eighteen names, including members of the old Wokingham families, Roberts, Simonds, Lanes, Shackles, Wheeler, and others. The president was Mr. Hayward, and Mr. Poole secretary. A list of rules is given. According to these, the club met every Monday in the season for the purpose of practising, and on the first Monday in every month at 12 o'clock 'to play the game,' a fine of 1s. being levied for non-attendance. The game was played 'according to the rules laid down in Lambert's Treatise.' The records show the existence of a club at Finchampstead, which village united with Eversley, Hampshire, in maintaining a club. The account books show certain sporting items, 'bets 10s. 6d., &c.,' and the annual dinner was a grand function costing £5 19s.

This club existed until about 1850. Soon after its extinction the present flourishing club was founded, of which Mr. E. S. Barry has been the hon. secretary since 1886. In the

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'sixties it was fairly strong, having the support of Douglas Soames, the fast bowler, and Abraham Willatts, the well-known local wicket-keeper, who died a few years ago. Afterwards the club was in low water, but revived under the popular captaincy of Captain Reed. Mr. H. G. Heasman, the Sussex batsman, was for several years captain, and amongst the many noted cricketers who have played for Wokingham are A. J. Webbe, E. A. Nepean, F. H. B. Champaign (Gloucestershire), A. C. Maclaren (Lancashire), C. J. M. Godfrey (Sussex), F. H. Gresson (Sussex and Oxford), Rev. H. Gray and E. B. Shine (Cambridge), F. E. Rowe (Essex and Berks.), A. H. Delmé-Radcliffe (Berkshire), J. C. Heathcote, the old Oriel wicket-keeper, and James May, who had done much to maintain the standard of cricket, and for thirty years has been the stock bowler. The club ground was formerly in Luckley Park, but for many years has been in the pleasant field near the railway station. F. W. Finch is now captain.

Buckhurst, the residence of the late Mr. Charles T. Murdoch, M.P. for Reading, was for many years a home of cricket. He was himself quite the keenest cricketer possible, an Eton Rambler, and an old member of M.C.C., and was never so happy as when receiving his eleven at Buckhurst on his own ground, or leading his merry men to victory on distant fields. He always kept his own score books, which have been kindly lent to us by Mrs. Murdoch. Such a record of matches has seldom been preserved. They begin in 1874, are continued until 1892, the year of Mr. Murdoch's death, and contain about 2,000 names of the gentlemen who have played for him. About twenty-two matches were played each season against such teams as Eton College, Staff College, R.M.C., Cumberland Lodge, the 17th Lancers, the Guards Regiments (Life Guards, Coldstream, and Scots Guards), Aldershot Division, Oxford City, and numerous local clubs; and such strong teams did Mr. Murdoch gather together that he was usually victorious. In 1891 out of twenty-three matches played he won sixteen, lost four, and drew three, and this was not an unusual proportion of victories. In looking through the score books we find the names of R. D. Walker, P. Norman, W. W. Rashleigh, J. Baldwin, C. M. Kemp, P. Crutchley, A. J. Webbe, R. H. Dyke, A. P. Barlow, A. F. Walter (who played for Eton and Oxford), the Longmans, J. E. K. Studd, A. H. and G. Studd, E. Lubbock, Redmond Morres, A. C. and R. J. Lucas, H. J. Hollings, R. A. H. Mitchell, E. Murdoch (a fine bat whose early death was a cause of much sorrow to his many friends), W. D. and A. G. Bovill, C. I. Thornton, H. and P. J. de Paravicini, Hon. E. Lyttelton, H. St. J. Mildmay, H. W. Bainbridge, A. C. Richards, C. Ponsonby, E. M. Sturges, A. Bouchier (who

has since distinguished himself upon another stage), Prince Christian Victor, J. D. Leslie, C. E. Farmer, D. Nicolson, P. Christopherson, Captain Wynward, E. A. Nepean, F. E. Chapman, A. F. Somerset, W. G. Raphael, Major Spens, the Whebles, Finches, and other Berkshire cricketers. These are only a tithe of the names of the good players who used to appear in Mr. Murdoch's Elevens. Many of us will long retain pleasant recollections of the Buckhurst cricket, and a tender memory of the kind and gracious host and true friend, Charles Townsend Murdoch. To him, as we have said, Berkshire cricket owes much, for without his aid and energy a county club would probably never have existed.

Mr. Howard Palmer has made a good ground at his residence, Heathlands, near Wokingham, and established a cricket week, on which occasions he collects a powerful side composed of the principal players in the county.

A pleasant annual fixture is the match between the Garth and South Berks. Hunts, when the hounds visit the ground and scarcely recognize their pink-coated followers in the flannelled performers on the green sward.

It was not until the year 1870 that Abingdon began to play serious cricket. The first president of the club was the late Mr. Edward Morland, who gave the club the use of his fields at Rye Farm. Matches were played with Wantage, Faringdon, and Wittenham, and the club also used to visit Sir W. Throckmorton's eleven at Buckland, Marcham, and several Oxford colleges; but the chief fixture of the year was the Hill and Vale match played on Ilsley Downs. After a few years the club was given the use of a field adjoining Caldecott House, through the kindness of the late Mr. T. Hyde, who became president of the club. The club played their matches on this ground until the year 1880, when Mr. E. J. C. Studd came to reside at Caldecott House, and then the club for some years seemed to be on the wane, for nothing much was done until the year 1888.

In the meantime several of the players had formed the then famous Wittenham Cricket Club, which was at its best during these years.

In 1888 a revival came about. Mr. J. M. Wright, a north-country man and a great cricket enthusiast, came to reside in the town, and he, with Mr. William Boughton, Mr. H. Vasey, and others, determined to make a special effort to restart the Abingdon Town Club. So great was their success that the revived Abingdon Club ranks to-day as one of the best cricket clubs in Berkshire. The late Mr. F. Dandridge, a well-known cricketer, kindly gave the club the use of one of his fields known as Rush Common, and among those who worked hard for the club at this period were Dr. H. S. Challenor,

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Mr. Harry Short, Mr. Frank Dandridge (junior), and Mr. A. Trinder.

At this time the Abingdon Club also received great assistance from Radley College. Messrs. Barmby, Croome, and Simpkinson used to play for the club, and Mr. F. D. Curtis of Sutton Courtenay (now of Tonbridge) was a tower of strength, and did much to encourage cricket in Abingdon.

They continued to play at Rush Common until the year 1891, when Mr. Dandridge gave up Northcourt Farm, and the club was once more without a ground. The late Mr. J. H. Clarke, who was at that time mayor of Abingdon, and president of the club, and Mr. E. M. Challenor came to the rescue. Mr. Albert Hays was kind enough to give up one of his meadows in the Culham Road in favour of the club, and Messrs. Clarke and Challenor rented the meadow on a lease in trust for the club. Here the club had a very hard uphill fight to get the field into order, and about forty square yards had to be relaid at considerable expense. Perseverance, however, won the day, and it is a well-known fact that the Abingdon cricket field is now second to none in the county.

Since 1892 up to the present time the Morland family have been the best supporters of the club.

In 1895 Mr. Boughton resigned his position as secretary. Mr. E. J. Hemming succeeded him, and was in office for four years. Upon his retirement the present secretary, Mr. E. J. Jones, took office.

The club have now for a number of years had a cricket week during the week following Whit Sunday, when they play the Assyrians and several Oxford colleges. Mr. J. M. Wright also brings down a team from Reading during this week. Mr. Sam Bullock, who is one of the best umpires in the county, must not be forgotten. He is a very keen sportsman, and has been a regular subscriber to the Abingdon Club for nearly thirty years. He was a brilliant cricketer in his day.

The Windsor Home Park Cricket Club was in existence in 1850, and is composed mainly of Eton masters, though the ground is in Berkshire. Among the best-known players during the last twenty years have been R. H. Montmorency, W. J. Scott, E. S. Norris, Edward Lyttelton, Lionel Ford, E. H. Allcock, F. M. Hargreaves, E. K. Willett, C. M. Wells, W. E. Gilliat, E. H. Parry, R. F. C. de Winton, S. Rivett-Carnac, and A. L. Watson. The club owes much to the Rev. Gilbert Edwards, who was secretary for many years, and to the Rev. F. M. Hargreaves and Mr. G. S. Davies. A unique incident occurred on the ground, a somewhat diminutive and elderly member being given out 'leg before' in consequence of the ball hitting him on the head. Prince Christian has

been for many years president. Matches are usually played against M.C.C., Eton Ramblers, Free Foresters, Scots Guards, Beaumont College, Henley, Reading, Slough, and other clubs. Formerly there was an Albert Cricket Club in Windsor; and the Alexandra Cricket Club, founded in 1867, still exists.

There is a charming ground at Cumberland Lodge, the residence of H.R.H. Prince Christian, and many first-class cricketers have played there. The late Prince Christian Victor, whose early death all England deplored, was a keen and able cricketer. He played the game in such a charming spirit that he was beloved by everyone. His brother, Prince Albert Victor, also used to play in these matches. A famous game was played there against the Parsees, when C. I. Thornton contended for Cumberland Lodge. Going in first with Prince Albert, he said: 'I have been in first with a peer and a peasant, but never before with a prince.' As the Parsees had heard so much of his wonderful hitting; they were naturally disappointed at his early dismissal, and when the second innings began they expressed the hope that he would make some big hits. Thornton replied: 'Well, you must put on a slow underhand bowler.' This was done, and the wicket-keeper naturally was standing up close to the wickets. But the veteran said: 'Oh, no, you must stand back'; this was promptly done, with the result that C.I.T. made some enormous hits, one nearly causing destruction in the royal tent. On one occasion the Cumberland Lodge team was disappointed of one of its players, and Prince Christian asked C. I. Thornton to find a substitute. Thornton telegraphed 'Have got you Stanley Scott, a very good player, *unberufen*.' The telegraph-girl wanted to know what the last word meant. Thornton replied that it was usual to put that word when telegraphing to royalty, as it meant 'God save the Queen.'

Ascot Cricket Club was started about 1885. The ground is on the heath, and was costly and difficult to make, as the heather had to be dug up and turf laid. The club flourished for about ten years, chiefly through the interest shown by a few residents, but during the last decade it has declined. The wicket was never very good, but quite good enough, present wickets being perhaps almost too good for one-day matches.

Hurst is one of the real country grounds, and a good cricketer of the old school was Mr. Bullock, a baker of that place. Being tall and of burly build, he was a most difficult man to get rid of, and was quite a good slow bowler. Gater, who has been ground-man at the Staff College, and still lays the scent for the Draghounds, used to play for Hurst. He was a very good slow bowler, and on a sticky wicket most difficult. The Finch family were great supporters of the club.

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Bracknell has a nice ground, and used to play very keenly. S. W. Lawrence, a good left-hand bowler, and E. Lawrence, a good fast right-hand and vigorous hitter, were the mainstay of the team. S. W. Lawrence was also a good bat. He did not relish being in with the writer of these notes at Maiden Erleigh on one occasion, as he had to run a 6 and a 7 consecutively, and seemed to take it quite as an insult.

At Maiden Erleigh Mr. Hargreaves used to have cricket weeks in August, and many enjoyable matches were played there. One of the most notable cricket enthusiasts is Lord George Pratt. He has not played for many years, but is always ready to assist as scorer. He has for a long time been the mainstay of cricket in the Winkfield district.

CRICKET AT WELLINGTON COLLEGE

The cricket at Wellington was a plant of slower growth than the football, for it took many years to turn the heath into suitable turf. The boys had to contend against bad practice wickets, and there were not enough even of these to go round. Those who remember the pleasant matches at Buckhurst, or the games on the Crowthorne ground, where the Tennis Club now plays, at Wellington College Station, or the Staff College ground in the 'seventies, will have some idea of what the college ground was. Since that time a great deal of care has been lavished on the ground, and Leicester clay of late years has done much to strengthen the soil and preserve the wicket from breaking up.

Opportunities for practice at the nets are increased ten-fold, and the wickets for dormitory matches are often quite good and carefully rolled, and one sees less 'running away' from the ball than in earlier days.

Dormitory matches played on the League system are the great interest of the cricket season. They are played two afternoons every week, and are decided on the first innings unless both innings can be played to a finish.

The principal matches are those against the Free Foresters, I Z., M.C.C., and the Charterhouse—all one-day matches—and Haileybury, a two-days contest. The schools play home-and-home matches in alternate years, and these are, of course, the most interesting of all the games.

In spite of the many drawbacks from which Wellington suffered in the earlier days from want of suitable grounds, she has turned out a good many successful cricketers. A. F. Smith played for Cambridge in 1875, H. A. Douglass-Hamilton from 1873 till 1875, and J. G. Weigall in later years. Since that time M. W. Payne

has distinguished himself as a wicket-keeper for his university and for England, and has proved himself a first-class bat. He captained the eleven at Wellington in 1902 and 1903, and played for the Gentlemen of England and for Cambridge in 1904 and 1906, and we have not yet heard the end of him. In the Oxford Eleven we have had T. R. Hine-Haycock and G. J. Mordaunt (captain, 1895), whose fielding was a delight to the eyes; George F. H. Berkeley, perhaps the best bowler Wellington has yet produced; A. C. M. Croome, whose name is well known in this county as a good performer and sound critic of the game; and R. W. Fox, who stumped for Oxford some years ago; and, of course, a host of excellent cricketers who did not quite attain their 'blue.'

Amongst these must be mentioned H.R.H. the late Prince Christian Victor, one of the best of fellows and keenest of cricketers—a real lover of the game. He was an excellent stumper and a very pretty bat, and would in many years have played for his university. In his days the Wellington eleven used to spend many pleasant days at cricket at Cumberland Lodge, and his interest in the school cricket never ceased. A bowling prize commemorates his name.

The army has carried off many of our most promising cricketers, men who would have been pretty sure of their 'blue' if they had been able to go to Oxford or Cambridge. R. O'H. Livesay has shone and still shines on the cricket field as well as on the football ground, and is now an instructor in the Royal Military College, with several letters attached to his name. Colonel W. F. H. Stafford for years played with distinction for the Royal Engineers, and so did Colonel the Hon. Milo Talbot. There have been very few years in which Wellington has not had men in the Woolwich and Sandhurst elevens.

There is every reason to hope that the cricket at Wellington will still continue to improve. H. Brougham, one of the team, was chosen to represent his native county, Berkshire, in 1905 and 1906, and made 108 against Oxfordshire. A. Henderson may be heard of again, and is a good wicket-keeper.

It may be invidious to select names from a host of sound cricketers, but W. M. Turner (Essex), E. W. Elliott (Durham), H. M. Braybrooke (Kent), K. O. Goldie (Sussex) are names that must not be forgotten in a roll of Wellington College cricketers.

CRICKET AT RADLEY

The beginnings of Radley cricket may well be left in the obscurity caused by the absence of all records dealing with the game during the first twenty years or so of the school's existence. From 1848 to 1864 the boys devoted all their

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energies to rowing. Cricket was the pastime of a few who were unfit for exercise on the river, or unable to walk the long mile which separates the school buildings from Sandford Lock. So little were the interests of these weaklings considered, that the top of the hill on which the school stands was not levelled. About 1864, or a year or two earlier, there came to Radley a master, Mr. E. M. Reynolds, possessed of boundless energy, a singular talent for organization, and an enthusiastic love for the game of cricket. He so improved the play of the despised remnant who took their recreation on dry land that he forced the authorities to improve the conditions under which cricket was played, by making a ground. He supervised the work himself, and it was thoroughly well done. He was spared the experience which is the common lot of most originators of great movements: he had not to wait long for his results. By a happy coincidence there were in the school several boys with a genius for the game. There was first and foremost W. E. W. Collins, one of the best of amateur fast bowlers, who, though he never took part in Gentlemen *v.* Players at Lord's, played for Lord Londesborough's England eleven against the Australians at Scarborough, a match which before the days of five test matches was reckoned a representative fixture. In that match he took several wickets and hit up 50-odd runs in short time. Then there were the two Akroyds, S. H. and B. N., afterwards well known in Surrey cricket. There was also H. C. Maul, a conspicuous figure in Warwickshire elevens for several years, and one of the makers of cricket history, since he was almost the first batsman to exploit the now common hook-stroke. During the years 1864-7, while these boys were at the school and Mr. Reynolds was coaching the teams, Clifton College were beaten in the only two matches played, though they had the assistance of such men as the Tylecotes and J. A. Bush. Two matches with Wellington were won and one lost; and against Bradfield the score was two all. After the departure of these great men cricket fell on evil times at Radley. The matches with Wellington were dropped as the rapid growth of numbers at the latter school made the contest too one-sided. The Bradfield match continued as it does to this day, but victories were very few and far between. During these lean years Mr. C. R. Moore worked hard for the school cricket, and must have found it very difficult to produce a team of any capacity at all, when less than 20 per cent. of the boys, who all told hardly numbered a hundred, attempted to play the game. During the wardenship of the late Dr. Wilson and his successor, the late Mr. Thompson, the numbers increased considerably, and in consequence the standard of cricket improved greatly. From 1880 to 1896 only two matches with Bradfield were lost, as against twelve won.

There was a tie in 1894, the game was drawn in 1896, and in 1892 an epidemic caused the fixture to fall through. During these years the most distinguished players were L. C. V. Bathurst and R. H. Moss, who both bowled for Oxford after leaving school, while the former earned the further distinction of a place in the Gentlemen's team at Lord's; W. H. Andrews, whose hitting was most useful to Sussex, while his presence in the field added incalculably to the efficiency of Humphrey's lobs; C. J. B. Webb, who has appeared for Middlesex; M. M. Barker, one of the most brilliant cover-points of his day. During the last ten years the school match has developed a habit of going wrong, yet the standard of cricket played by Radley elevens has been far from bad. There have been few years in which the defeats have largely outnumbered the victories, and the proximity of Oxford ensures that the sides met are not without capacity and a larger measure of activity in the field than is displayed by many sides which visit public schools. Moreover the Radley Rangers, largely recruited from the teams of these years, have had no cause to complain of want of success. The best individual players have been the two Worsleys, H. M. and H. H. K., themselves sons of a distinguished Radleian cricketer, the Rev. E. Worsley; F. J. Portman, who made some fugitive appearances for Somerset; and G. L. Crossman, who played for Gloucestershire. The proximity of the river is on the whole a handicap to Radley cricket. It is true that it relieves the cricket club of the presence of those who have no taste and no capacity for the game; but the chance of getting into the eight and figuring at Henley attracts many who might be useful with bat or ball, and when once a boy has forsaken cricket for rowing, his fate is settled. He develops the wrong muscles, speaking from the cricketer's, not the sculptor's, point of view; he seems to lose quickness, both of initiative and motion, when dealing with a fast-moving object, and in these days of specialization he finds himself too severely handicapped, if he decides, which he rarely does, to give the game a turn. Finally, of course, the boat club rightly claims a considerable portion of the sum available for athletics. That such good results have been obtained under the circumstances is largely due to the efforts of the masters to supplement professional with amateur coaching, a form of pleasant self-denial which is practised by many schoolmasters at many schools. It saves them from paying afternoon calls.

BRADFIELD CRICKET

When the college started its existence with three boys in 1850, it could scarcely boast of an eleven; but times have changed since those early

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days, and the college can look back on a satisfactory record of its cricketing achievements. It has not succeeded in turning out many 'blues,' and only one, F. H. Hill, captain of the school team in 1866, attained to that proud distinction. It has had its periods of depression, and certain crises in its history which have militated against its success; but Bradfield has trained some excellent cricketers, and fought bravely against its chief rival, Radley, and other public school teams.

Its earliest recorded match took place in 1853, against Magdalen College School, and in the same year the first of the many exciting struggles against Radley was fought, ending in a complete victory. A. H. G. Morris made 20; Spooner took five wickets, and Radley bowlers gave 25 wides, the extras being the largest scores on both sides. Cricket has improved since those days. From the year 1869 to 1880 there were some good performances. The school defeated Wellington College twice out of three matches played in 1870, 1876, and 1878; in 1876 J. E. Watson made 91 not out, a very fine innings. The eleven during this period was strong in bowlers, and amongst the best were H. P. Smith, R. H. Boles, A. M. Streatfield, W. F. Cunliffe, and E. S. P. Mack. F. A. Govett was a good lob bowler, and took seven wickets against Wellington in 1876, and twelve against Radley. In 1882 and 1883 the school suffered from diminished numbers, and cricket fell off in consequence of this. In the latter year they played Malvern and suffered defeat, which they avenged in 1884, through the good bowling of H. N. Paine, and a useful umpire who at a critical stage in the game refused to recognize a palpable catch at the wicket. A free fight between the rival schools nearly resulted. Amongst the good batsmen produced in these and subsequent years were V. S. Menzies, S. V. Shea, who has since played for the county, C. C. Barnes, and G. M. T. Smyth. The bowling and fielding during recent years have greatly improved, especially the fielding, which is mainly due to the exertions of Mr. Ingram, one of the masters; the fielding at Sherborne in 1899 being 'the talk of the town.' Amongst the best bats in recent years have been G. H. Hewetson, C. de M. La Trobe, L. F. Goldsmid, W. Chambers, and C. H. Packer. The college has not distinguished itself so much at cricket as at football and shooting (the school won the Ashburton Shield in 1893 and 1897), and this may be partly accounted for by indifferent practice wickets and defective professional coaching. The yearly struggle against Radley usually produces some good and exciting cricket, and the record of victories and defeats is nearly equal. In addition the school has played against Shrewsbury, Malvern, Sherborne, Wellington College, the M.C.C. and other teams.

SANDHURST ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE

Berkshire contains within its borders the R.M.C., the nursery of good cricketers as well as of military heroes. The Staff College lies just beyond the borders of Berkshire, in the county of Surrey, and cannot therefore be included in this survey. The R.M.C. migrated from Great Marlow to Sandhurst in 1812, but the first match on record against Woolwich did not take place until 1865, when the latter won by an innings and 174 runs. In the chronicle of the matches played for the last forty-three years, Sandhurst has been victorious eighteen times, and only lost on eight occasions. Centuries have been scored by the following cadets in this battle of Trojans:—

1878	S. D. Maul, 219 (not out)
1882	W. P. Ward, 233
1882	W. C. Oates, 131
1883	A. M. Streatfield, 118 (not out)
1884	R. H. Dewing, 111
1886	A. Wolfe-Murray, 169
1892	J. G. Greig, 123
1893	E. P. Thomson, 106
1893	A. J. Paine, 107
1894	C. S. Rome, 139
1895	R. O'H. Livesay, 169
1896	R. O'H. Livesay, 128
1903	M. M. Carlisle, 142, when A. E. J. Collins scored 119 for Woolwich

The college failed miserably in 1868, when the cadets could only scrape together 53 runs against 228 scored by their opponents, and presented them with 64 extras, which exceeded the whole of the Sandhurst innings. In 1870 there was a great display of good cricket; 620 runs were scored in the match, yet the struggle was so close that the cadets only won by 4 runs. A. London bowled splendidly, taking seven wickets in the critical second innings of Woolwich, while R. S. F. Walker (62), H. Cummings (57), and E. Pogson (43), were the best scorers. The excitement was even surpassed in 1886 when, after heavy scoring on both sides, the cadets won by 1 run. The figures were—for Sandhurst, 340 and 156, and for Woolwich, 297 and 198. That was the year when Wolfe-Murray scored his useful 169 and 31 in the second innings, being well supported by W. Johnston, who also bowled well.

Matches against M.C.C. commenced in 1874, and have been continued ever since. The annual match against the Staff College is always a pleasant game, and the matches against Mr. C. T. Murdoch's team, the Hampshire Hogs, Incogniti, Old Wykehamists, and Silwood Park usually resulted in a good contest. The eleven of 1895 was a powerful side, and scored 437 for five wickets against Woolwich, when Livesay

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scored his 169, and Byng 87 not out, besides taking nine wickets. In 1898 and 1901 the R.M.C. won by seven wickets, and in 1904 by eight wickets, G. Toynbee making the useful score of 81 runs in the first innings and 90 in the second without once losing his wicket. Major

Spens, the Hampshire cricketer, was secretary of the R.M.C. cricket from 1888 to 1893, and Captain Quinton from 1896 to 1900. The cadets can usually place in the field a powerful side, and Sandhurst is a fine school for cricketers as well as of military genius.

FOOTBALL

The oldest record of the existence of the game in Berkshire is contained in the church registers of an obscure parish—that of North Moreton, near Didcot. In 1598 it appears that Richard and John Gregorie were buried, and the register states :—

These two men were killed by ould Gunter ; Gunteres sonnes and the Gregories fell together by ye years. At Football ould Gunter drewe his dagger and broke booth there heades and they died booth within a fortnight after.

The football of that day must have been of a somewhat savage nature. 'Ould Gunter,' sad to relate, was the parson of the parish. Possibly he was witnessing the game, which was rough and fast and furious. His sons and the Gregories were playing fiercely in a 'scrum.' He saw his boys overthrown by their opponents, and fearing for their lives, and carried away by excitement, he drew his dagger in order to defend them, struck fatal blows, and so ended the game. It does not appear that the parson was hanged, or deprived of his living, or even that he was ever tried for manslaughter. This curious entry in the North Moreton registers shows that the game was practised in Berkshire at an early date, but there are no chronicles of football. The 'oldest inhabitants' say that there was no football in their youth, and old newspapers contain no records of matches or games.

The three public schools in the county provide the most interesting accounts of Berkshire football, and the R.M.C. is also famous for the game. Wellington College plays Rugby football, Bradfield and Radley use the Association rules, and the R.M.C. has both an Association and a Rugby team. The Berkshire Wanderers uphold the Rugby game in the county, and can muster a powerful side. County Association matches have been played, when Berkshire competed with Buckinghamshire, the earliest game of which we have any record being played at Slough in 1874. Berkshire was beaten in 1877 in a good game, chiefly by the excellent play of the Oxonian E. H. Parry, who played for Buckinghamshire. The Berkshire team was composed of the three Bambridges (E. W. S., E. C., and A.), E. Lechline, R. Cowper, P. Chamberlain, Hawtrey, E. Page, A. Vardy, and Henderson. In the same year Berkshire competed with Essex at the Oval, when the county team was mainly composed of Maidenhead men.

WELLINGTON FOOTBALL

In the year 1859 'the Wellington College,' as it was called, opened its gates to the first generation of boys. It was a large brick building standing in the middle of a wild tract of heather with one spongy yellow road leading up to it. No preparations had been made for amusements, and the first thing that the upper boys did, with the assistance of Professor Arthur Sidgwick, who had just left Rugby and was on a visit to his brother-in-law Mr. Benson, the first master, was to clear enough heather for a game of hockey. This is worth recording, for it explains why during the first decades of its existence Wellington was more distinguished at football than at cricket. Even now, after the expenditure of much toil and money, it is found hard to keep a good cricket pitch.

In the days when 'Richmond' was the chief of the few existing Rugby football clubs, it was largely recruited from Wellington, any member of the school team being invited to become a member of it, while for years H. P. Gardner was secretary. That in early years football was well played at Wellington may be concluded from the fact that H. A. Lawrence, F. R. Adams, and Murray Marshall succeeded each other as captains of the All England team—a good record, when one remembers how many Wellingtonians go into the army, and consequently both at cricket and football do not appear much in England. That they played in their youth may be gathered from the fact that in old days the R.M.A. team often contained eight, while quite lately at the R.M.C. there were five playing beside the captain : of those actually in the army the most conspicuous are R. F. Hobbs who played forward for England and Captain R. O'H. Livesay, who is still a vigorous half.

In the 'seventies Wellingtonians contributed largely to the teams at the universities, the best-known players perhaps being A. F. Law, W. G. Michell (the Rugby master), and Rev. J. T. Steele. This continued in the 'eighties, R. P. Simpson, C. P. Simpson, E. C. Langton, H. W. T. Patterson, and J. W. Cave all being prominent, and the last playing forward for England in 1888. In Durham too there has been a contingent supplied by the Laing family, and H. R. Elliott who has lately played three-quarter for England.

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Wellington and Marlborough were the first public schools to meet at Rugby football, the world at large saying that such an event would be impossible without a free fight. It has proved absolutely untrue; the matches have always been conducted with excellent temper, with the result that out of twenty matches Wellington has won twelve.

RADLEY FOOTBALL

The game of football as originally played at Radley was peculiar. It seems to have had considerable affinity to the Harrow game, and to have reproduced one at least of the features of Rugby; for under certain conditions a 'pudding,' which must have been a local name for a scrummage, was formed. Unfortunately no copy of the rules observed, or broken, in the Middle Ages has been preserved. There are who say that they were never printed, and, being known only to the umpire, were a formidable obstacle to the success of visiting teams. In 1881 the Association rules were adopted mainly because Bradfield intimated that they could no longer continue to attempt a game which they neither understood nor admired. The influence of the old code lasted for some time and caused the school teams to fail from lack of combination. Latterly a very fair measure of success has been obtained, particularly since Mr. F. J. Barmby and Mr. H. A. Lowe of Corinthian fame have joined the teaching staff, and devoted themselves to instructing the football elevens in their leisure.

There have been years of disaster, as is natural when it is considered that the school is not large, and that more than half of the boys row. The wet-bobs are wanted at the river during the first month or more of the Michaelmas term, and for the greater part of the Lent term, and they are the very boys who want most practice. It is seldom that one who rows much shows ability as a forward. Wet-bob backs are common; they may be ponderous, but they almost invariably go straight even if they are not quick to discern opportunities. There have also been years when good results have been obtained, notably 1885, 1889, 1894, 1898, and 1906. For a long time the list of matches with Bradfield showed that neither school could claim much advantage, but of late years Bradfield has had the best of it, though hollow victories have been rare.

Radley has also played Malvern since 1884. Having regard to the larger numbers of Malvern, and the extraordinarily high tradition of football skill which has been developed there, it is only natural that defeats should be frequent and occasionally severe; and therefore the three victories gained in 1889, 1898, and 1905, are remembered with keen delight.

BRADFIELD FOOTBALL

When the college was first started Winchester 'notions' were in full force, and the rules of the Winchester game of football were adopted, and continued until 1873. Yearly matches were played against New College, Oxford, and the weird peculiarities of the game rigidly enforced. But by degrees Bradfield developed its own traditions. Everyone knows that according to Wykehamist rules a screen of netting encloses the field of play. This screen was absent in the old Bradfield game, and as the ground slopes considerably it was very difficult to keep the ball in play, and a good kick often sent it into the river. Dribbling, abhorred at Winchester, was allowed and encouraged here. The ground was much wider than at Winchester; and the players were differently arranged. The game was not a very scientific one, but was excellent for exercise. An old Bradfield boy, Mr. H. C. Jollye, took a leading part in the founding of Association football. He was the chairman of the meeting held at Oxford, at Wadham College, in 1864, when the rough draft of the first rules of this game was drawn up. Other old boys took part in the movement. Another old boy, P. J. M. Rogers, was president of the O.U.A.F. in 1879-80. The Bradfield Waifs' Club was founded by Armstrong about 1870, and often turned out a strong side, competing with the Hampstead Heathers, Old Wykehamists, and Charterhouse. At the same time the school had a very fair side, amongst the players being W. H. P. Hayman, E. A. Ward, and W. J. Mangles. It is unnecessary to follow the fortunes of the subsequent years. The historian of Bradfield states 'we have had many a very good football team, never a very bad one, and a good football team has almost been the rule.' Seven old Bradfield boys have gained their football 'blues' during the last twenty-five years.

Radley at football as well as cricket has ever been the natural rival of Bradfield, and every year witnesses the struggle for pre-eminence. The team of 1891 was excellent; in Anderson, Reynolds, and Tyndall it contained three of the best players who have ever been at Bradfield. Lancing was competed with for the first time during that season. Perhaps the season of 1895-6 was the best Bradfield ever had. The team beat Lancing by 5-1, and their old rivals Radley by no less than 10-0. The record was almost equalled by that of 1897-8 when the school had a splendid team. Lancing was beaten by 5-1 and Radley by 7-0. The forwards were pronounced to be as good a combination as any set that could be remembered; L. F. Goldsmith was a splendid goal-keeper, and C. D. M. Latrobe an admirable captain.

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SANDHURST FOOTBALL

Both Rugby and Association football flourish at the Royal Military College. The earliest records of the game date from the year 1874, when the Rugby game was the only one played; and not till 1878 was a regular Association team formed. In the season 1874-5 the cadets played twelve matches and did not lose a game, winning four and drawing eight. They competed against Coopers Hill, the Royal Naval College, Wimbledon Hornets, Blackheath, Harlequins, and a few other well-known clubs. For some reason in the next season only one match was played, or at least only one recorded, and in 1876-7 only two, one being an Association game against Eton which ended in a draw, neither side scoring. In 1878-9 the Association team was formed, and a uniform for the eleven chosen, viz. red and blue quartered shirt and cap, white knickerbockers, one red and one blue stocking. The fashion soon changed, red and white were substituted for red and blue, the stockings being striped, and then a distinguishing badge was added to the cap. The eleven was captained by W. Trevelyan and later on by F. Geldart. They succeeded in beating Charterhouse twice, and Westminster, but were defeated by Reading; while the Rugby team beat Blackheath and Wellington by exactly the same score, 2 goals and 3 tries to 0.

In 1879 the first matches fought under the Rugby rules were arranged against Woolwich and ended in a draw. The records of twenty-six years show that the cadets have won sixteen times and lost only six times in their combats against their old rivals. Ten years elapsed before the Association teams met, and the records of the games show that during the next fifteen years they each won the same number of matches, some of the contests being drawn. The cadets can therefore claim a decided superiority over their formidable rivals in the Rugby game, while they just hold their own under the Association rules.

Amongst the opponents of the Rugby team in recent years are some of the London hospital teams, St. Bartholomew's, St. Mary's, St. George's, London Scottish, Berks Wanderers, Lennox, Royal Engineers; while the Association team play against Old Carthusians, Old Wykehamists, Eton, Charterhouse, Old Reptonians, Reading Amateurs, and Old Westminsters.

In 1883-4 the Association club joined the Surrey County Football Association, and was beaten in the cup match by Barnes. In 1890-1 the Rugby colours were changed from red and blue to red and white. Amongst the many famous footballers who have distinguished themselves at Sandhurst it is difficult to select the names of those who were remarkable for special skill. In the Rugby game T. W. Hale (1884-5)

was an excellent captain, who kept his side well together, and was a vigorous forward, H. C. MacTier, a very fast three-quarter, R. O'H. Livesay (1895-6), afterwards an English international, F. B. S. Taylor, M. L. MacEwen, A. S. Wingate, C. R. Bradshaw, W. B. Bailey, and many others. In the Association team, R. G. Palmer, G. C. Hodgson, H. E. Green, J. G. Leckey, F. T. Parker, G. H. Thesiger, and Hon. A. D. Murray, an able captain and excellent goal-keeper, may be mentioned amongst a host of good players who have done good service for the R.M.C.

TOWN AND VILLAGE CLUBS

During recent years there has been a great expansion of the game, and almost every town and fair-sized village can boast of its football team. The Association rules are universally played. There is little of interest to record with regard to these clubs with the exception of Reading and Maidenhead, the professional team of the former place having won for itself a great reputation. In 1871 there was a Windsor Home Park Club. Bray and Cookham played matches at Maidenhead, and The Philberds School at Bray. Reading School and a few other teams were noted for their performances. The Windsor team had some fine players who frequently played for the Swifts, then one of the leading clubs in England. Amongst them were W. S. and E. Bambridge, A. Joll, and H. and F. Heron, P. Chamberlain, W. Nicholls, and H. S. Talbot.

The Reading Football Club was formed in 1871 under Association rules, their ground being in the King's Meadows Recreation Ground; later on they moved to the Reading Cricket Club ground, where some of their most notable matches were played.

The first captain of the club was H. Miller, who was succeeded by E. B. Haygarth, one of the finest backs Reading has seen. Reading early made for itself a name in the football world, and in the season 1878-9 their record was: Matches played 23, won 17, lost 5, drawn 1; goals—won 57, lost 9.

The club won the Berks and Bucks Challenge Cup in the same season (being the first year the cup was played for), beating Marlow by 1 goal to 0.

In the English Cup competition the Old Etonians, who had defeated the holders, the Wanderers, by 7 goals to 2, only managed to score 1 goal against Reading after playing extra time in the second tie, but afterwards succeeded in winning the cup.

Two other clubs then came into existence, viz. Reading Minster and Reading Abbey, and both showed up well in the cup competitions.

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Afterwards South Reading made a name for itself; but these three clubs only existed a few years, and Reading Football Club was left alone to maintain the prestige of the biscuit town.

The club then had to change its ground and remove to Coley Park, and many fine games were played there. Again their ground was changed and the club moved across the river to Caversham, the teams being passed over from East's boathouse. It was during this time that professionalism crept in, and ultimately the club went over bodily and became a professional team.

A section, however, of the club remained true to amateurism, and formed a new club, the Reading Amateur Football Club, which continues to give healthy recreation to the young men of the town, and holds its own among the amateur clubs of the county. At the present time the club holds the Berks and Bucks Cup, and plays its matches on the ground of the Reading and District Amateur Sports Club in Kensington Road.

The Reading Football Club was largely responsible for forming the Berks and Bucks Football Association in 1878, which organization has continued to exert a good influence in football matters. Among those who have been most prominent during the life of the R.F.C. we recall H. F. Rogers, W. L. Franklin, Edgar Field, A. C. Bartholomew, T. H. Turner, Stanley Hayward, one of the best of amateur goal-keepers, O. O. Hayward, Frank Dean, T. Skurray, Charles Field, and J. W. Martin, the first honorary secretary. The most formidable rival to Reading in the past was Marlow, the matches between these clubs always evoking the greatest interest.

The professional Reading Football Club has won for itself a distinguished position in the football world. It has twice reached second place in the Southern League, and about six times has been fourth and fifth on the list. In the competition for the Football Association Cup Reading has found a place in the five leading clubs. The team has beaten the famous Bolton Wanderers and Notts County on their own grounds, and invariably played each year in the competition proper. In 1904-5 Reading attained to the honourable position of second place in the Southern League, and were joint holders with Tottenham Hotspurs of the Southern Charity Cup. Reading is fortunate in having a famous international player as amateur captain of

the team, Mr. Herbert Smith. He is a powerful left back, and in 1904-5 played for England against both Scotland and Wales. He is an excellent captain, and keeps his team in splendid form. Reading has produced no less than six other internationals, viz. :—Edgar Field, J. Holt, D. Plant, P. Bach, B. O. Corbett, and A. Leonard.

The Maidenhead Club was founded about 1870 under the presidency of Mr. J. H. Clark, a great supporter of the game, who frequently acted as umpire, and in 1874 served in that capacity in the final contest for the Association Cup at Lillie Bridge. The club began its career well. In 1871-2 it played seventeen matches and only lost once, and that was against the Crystal Palace team in the second ties for the Association Cup. The players of those days included J. A. and W. Wild, C. A. Vardy, W. Goulden, G. H. Hebbes, Rev. A. Austen-Leigh, F. W. and W. R. Nicholson, C. and E. Parry.

Mr. Austen-Leigh was as good at football as at cricket, and was very fast. F. Nicholson was a fine goal-keeper. The club competed with the Pilgrims, Uxbridge, 1st Surrey Rifles, Swifts, Crystal Palace, and the neighbouring teams of Wycombe, Windsor, and Marlow. In 1873 they played against Oxford in the semi-final tie for the Association Cup, but were defeated. Head play seems to have been a new feature of the game in 1874. In his account of the match Maidenhead *v.* Marlow, the reporter states—

One veteran in the field introduced quite a new feature by using his head in meeting the ball, and propelling it with such velocity as if the feet were used, much to the amusement of the bystanders.

In this year the club won seventeen matches out of twenty-four and only lost three. It held its own against Cambridge University in the second tie for the cup, the result at call of time being two goals all. However, another quarter of an hour was allowed, which proved fatal, and enabled the Cantabs to score again twice. F. D. and A. Price distinguished themselves, and W. Goulden was always to the fore. Such are the early annals of the Maidenhead Club which we have been able to trace from a collection of newspaper cuttings kindly lent by Mr. W. R. Nicholson. The subsequent achievements of the club have not been so carefully recorded, but it still continues to have a good team which maintains its old reputation in the Berkshire playing fields.

AGRICULTURE

THE historian of Berkshire agriculture is greatly assisted by the numerous reports, treatises, and pamphlets which appeared in the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The county was fortunate in its early cultivators, and the fame of Jethro Tull, the Berkshire farmer who at the beginning of the eighteenth century invented the first drill that was ever used, and by his writings revolutionized agriculture, has extended far and wide. He had a farm called 'Prosperous' at Shalbourne, near Inkpen, an open and somewhat bleak spot, near the borders of Hampshire and Wiltshire. There he practised his husbandry, and, as Cobbett states, 'wrote that book which does so much honour to his memory, and to which the cultivators of England owe so much.'¹ The main principle of the system first taught by Tull was that the root of the plant should be fed by deep tillage while it grows.² In his book he sets forth the principle that the food of plants consists of minute particles of earth taken up by their rootlets, and that, therefore, the more thoroughly the soil in which they grow is disintegrated, the more abundant would be the 'pasture' to which their fibres would have access. He then shows the results of his own carefully thought-out practice and experience, and his system of sowing his crops in rows or drills, so wide apart as to admit of tillage of the intervals, both by ploughing and hoeing, being continued until they had well nigh arrived at maturity. Hoeing he divides into deep, 'which is our horse-hoeing,' and shallow, which is the English hand-hoeing, and also the shallow horse-hoeing, of which Tull writes scornfully and styles 'scratch-hoeing.' Farmers had been accustomed to grow their roots somewhat close together, but Tull placed a much greater distance between his rows. He laid the land into narrow ridges of five or six feet, and upon the middle of these drilling one, two, or three rows, distant from one another about seven inches when there were three, and ten when there were only two.³ The distance of the plants on one ridge from those on the contiguous one he called an *interval*; the distance between the rows on the same ridge, a *space* or *partition*; the former was stirred repeatedly by the horse-hoe, the latter by the hand-hoe. He had many difficulties to contend with, and showed extraordinary perseverance in overcoming them. The following passage shows his attention and ingenuity:—

I formerly was at some pains and some charge in improving my drills for planting the rows at very near distances, and had brought them to such perfection, that one horse would draw a drill with eleven shares, making the rows at three inches and a half distance from one another; and at the same time sow in them three very different sorts of seeds, which did not mix, and these too at different depths; as the barley rows were seven inches asunder, the barley lay four inches deep; a little more than three inches above that, in the same channels, were clover; betwixt every two of these rows was a row of St. Foin, covered half an inch deep.

I had a good crop of barley the first year; the next year two crops of broad clover, where that was sown; and where hop clover was sown a mixed crop of that and St. Foin, and every year afterwards a crop of St. Foin; but I am since, by experience, so fully convinced of the folly of these or any other such mixed crops, and more especially of narrow spaces, that I have demolished these instruments (in their full perfection) as a vain curiosity, the drift and use of them being contrary to the true principles and practice of horse-hoeing.⁴

Again, he describes his method of growing wheat, and shows the same close observation and originality. He states as follows:—

My field whereon is now the thirteenth crop of wheat has shown that the rows may successfully stand upon any part of the ground. The ridges of the field were for the twelfth crop changed from six feet to four feet six inches. In order for this alteration the ridges were ploughed down, and then the next ridges were laid out the same way as the former, but one foot six inches narrower, and the double rows drilled on their tops; whereby, of consequence, there must be some rows standing on every part of the ground, both on the former partitions and on every part of the intervals. Notwithstanding this, there was no manner of difference in the produce of the rows, and the whole field was in every part of it equal and the best, I believe, that ever grew on it. It is now the thirteenth crop, likely to be good, though the land was not ploughed crossways.

¹ Cobbett, *Rural Rides* (1821-32) (ed. 1886), i, 45.

² *Ibid.* i, 32.

³ *Encycl. Brit.* i, 299.

⁴ Jethro Tull, *Horse-hoeing Husbandry* (ed. W. Cobbett, 1829), p. 104.

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The whole book, which is scarcely known to modern agriculturists, is well worthy of attention. His ideas were far in advance of his times, and, like all inventors, he suffered from the opposition of his contemporaries, who opposed his theories and ridiculed his conclusions. His greatest trials resulted from the action of his own labourers, and he complains bitterly against them because they thought that these new inventions would undermine labour; these men deliberately broke his machines and refused to obey his orders. Though his book received little recognition in England, it was eagerly sought after in France, and thrice translated within a few years of its publication, and Tull's husbandry was the basis of a work by M. du Hamel du Monceau, of the Royal Academy of Science at Paris. Tull's method of cultivating turnips was adopted by the Scottish farmers in 1760, and finally made its way back to Berkshire from that northern land.

Daniel Defoe, in his description of Berkshire in 1724, records little of the agriculture:—

If the soil is not everywhere naturally fertile yet cultivation supplies all its defects, and produces a large increase. The most fruitful tracks lie on the banks of the rivers Thames and Kennet and in the Vale of the White Horse. Wheat and every other species of corn are the staple commodities of the inhabitants, of which by the conveyance of the river Thames they send amazing quantities to the London market weekly; and the barley and malt are excellent.⁵

He states that Reading market is the most considerable for corn in the United Kingdom,⁶ that the East Ilsley market is the greatest for sheep in the kingdom,⁷ and that the peat ashes burnt in the neighbourhood of Woolhampton have such a fertilizing quality that the farmers twenty miles round send for them to manure their lands.⁸

William Pearce in 1794 compiled a valuable *General View of the Agriculture in Berkshire with Observations on the Means of its Improvement*, for the consideration of the Board of Agriculture then recently established. In 1809 Dr. Mavor published a far more elaborate and exhaustive report, also styled *General View of the Agriculture of Berkshire*, for the consideration of the same board. From these reports it is possible to obtain a fairly accurate view of the condition of the farming industry at that period. The soils of the various districts are minutely described. The Vale of White Horse, beginning at Buscot and terminating at Streatley, is generally a rich, strong calcareous loam, producing luxuriant crops of corn and other varieties of wheat, beans, and the different kinds of grain and pulse. In the western part of the vale the land is chiefly devoted to pasturage, and dairying is carried on with considerable success. The middle and eastern parts of the vale are generally arable, and may be reckoned among the most productive wheat lands in the kingdom. Artificial grasses supply the place of natural in several parishes. For the deeper soils turnips are little cultivated, but about the Letcombes and immediately under the brow of the hills turnips, both Swedish and common, are raised and used for fattening cattle.

The chalky hills are covered with flocks of sheep, and towards the south and east have a soil well adapted for turnips, barley, and by means of folding and other modes of manuring for Lammas wheat and artificial grasses. In the vale of the Kennet the soil varies considerably, but principally consists of a gravel and light loam excellently adapted for Lammas wheat, barley, turnips, beans and other crops. On the south there is, however, a tract of poor gravelly land, in many places extremely sterile and producing little but heath. The forest division which commences east of the Loddon has in many places a gravelly soil, in others strong clay, and in some tracks a blackish ferruginous sand, covered with heath. The royal farm in Windsor Park earned great praise from both the writers of these reports, and it appears that at the beginning of the nineteenth century the county had many enlightened agriculturists, and that farming was its staple industry. The farms were large, very few being rented under £100 a year; there were some smaller dairy and grazing farms in the Vale of White Horse, but the rent of the average farms ranged from £200 to £500 per annum. The farm-houses were substantially built, the barns thatched and floored with oak, except the barley and pulse barns, which had clay floors. The stabling was always good, because no farmers prided themselves on their horses more than those of Berkshire.⁹

The implements of husbandry deserve special notice, as some of them were peculiar to the county. The Berkshire wagon was much admired for its lightness and elegance, and though it varied a little in its construction in different parts of the county, it combined the three great requisites, easy draught, strength, and a facility of being loaded and unloaded from its low build.¹⁰

The common Berkshire plough is strongly censured by Mr. Pearce, who describes it as 'a heavy clumsy instrument with a massy beam, share and mould-board, much better adapted for trenching than for the uses required of it.'¹¹ He also condemns the extravagance of employing four horses and two men in ploughing, and even sometimes six horses. His strictures were resented by many farmers, who maintained that such heavy ploughs were necessary on strong clay land or stony

⁵ Defoe, *Berks.* 48.

⁶ *Ibid.* 53.

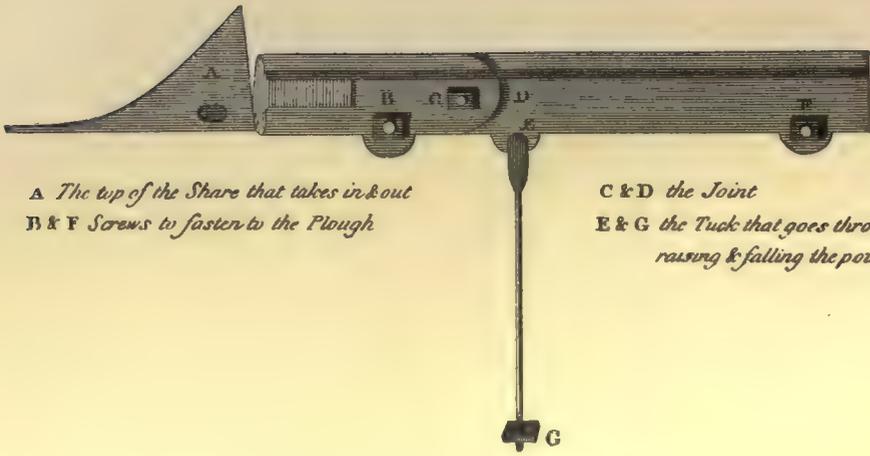
⁷ *Ibid.* 92.

⁸ *Ibid.* 63.

⁹ Pearce, *Agric. of Berks.* 20.

¹⁰ Mavor, *Agric. of Berks.* 116; Pearce, *Agric. of Berks.* 22.

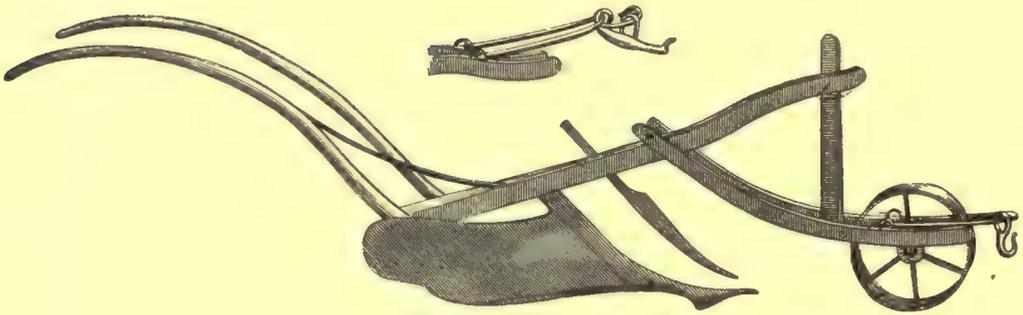
¹¹ Pearce, *op. cit.* 22.



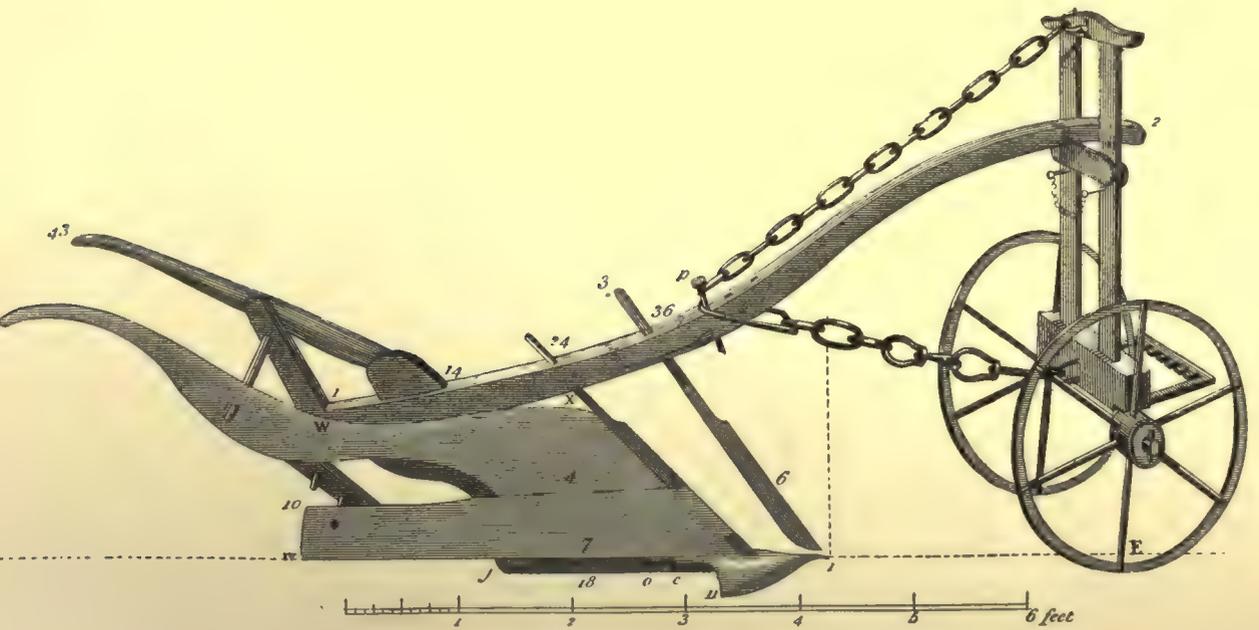
A The tip of the Share that takes in & out
B & F Screws to fasten to the Plough

C & D the Joint
E & G the Tusk that goes thro the Beam for
 raising & falling the point of the Share

MR. W. MORELAND'S IMPROVED PLOUGH-SHARE



THE HINTON PLOUGH



THE COMMON BERKSHIRE PLOUGH

(From Mavor's *Agriculture of Berks*)

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soils. The battle of the ploughs was fought for many years, the ploughmen being prejudiced in favour of the older implement. Another Berkshire plough, called the Hinton or Hurley plough, was invented by Mr. Nicholls, of Hinton House, Hurst, and largely used at Hurley, Aldworth, and other parts of the county. It was much lighter than the old Berkshire plough, and did its work well, only requiring three horses.¹³ Another inventor was Mr. W. Morland of West Ilsley, who made an improved iron ploughshare, of which an illustration is given. Mr. Berriman, a mechanic of Speen, invented a pressing plough which was much used and approved by the farmers of his day. Mr. Loveden, of Buscot Park, was a distinguished agriculturist who used on his estate numerous and varied implements, and improved and perfected a mole plough for forming temporary drains. Mr. Hinton's scuffer or scarifier was also of Berkshire manufacture and invention. Drills, though invented by Tull eighty years before Dr. Mavor's report, were not in common use, save on the estates of some of the leading squires, Sir John Throckmorton, Mr. O. Williams, and others. Farmer Crease of Arborfield had invented a drilling machine and used it with success. Threshing machines were just coming into use, the principal one being that on Mr. Harbottle's farm at Remenham, who introduced to Berkshire the Northumberland and Scotch modes of agriculture with much energy and considerable success.

Hand-threshing machines were not uncommon, which were worked by women or boys, but they do not seem to have been very satisfactory except that the straw was better for thatching as it was not so much broken as it was by flails.

At the beginning of the last century there were 255,000 acres of arable land in Berkshire. Owing to the high price of grain at that period, a strange contrast to that which now prevails, much land was continually brought under cultivation, especially on the downs.¹³ Some wise farmers were of the opinion that a smaller area more carefully tilled would have been more advantageous. A somewhat pernicious custom still prevailed of allowing the land to lie fallow, in violence to the principle 'that the ground, like man, was never intended to be idle; if it does not produce something useful it will be overrun with weeds.'¹⁴ Most farmers were, however, learning the fact that meliorating green crops were more serviceable to the land than the older method of letting land lie idle, choked and exhausted with weeds.¹⁵

In the different parts of the county there was a great variety in the rotation of crops. In the Faringdon district the order was (1) wheat; (2) beans; (3) barley and a fallow, or turnips and clover. At East Hendred (1) wheat; (2) beans or peas; (3) barley or oats with grass seeds; (4) seeds, vetches or fallow; (5) wheat; (6) turnips; (7) barley or oats; (8) fallow, peas, vetches, &c.

The cultivation of turnips, which became general in the early years of the nineteenth century, wrought a great improvement in Berkshire agriculture, and did away with the expensive system of fallowing. The various kinds of the common turnip were grown, and the Swedish turnip had just attained to favour. It resisted the severest frosts, and was more effectual than the common variety for fattening cattle. Among the rarer crops then cultivated were cabbages, especially on the royal Flemish farm; carrots; hops at Faringdon and Bradfield; woad at Wantage; and lavender at Park Place. The cultivation of lavender and its distillation was introduced about 1773 by Field-Marshal Conway, who erected a large still-house for the purpose of the distillation of lavender and other aromatic plants, and for making spirit from potatoes. When the earl of Malmesbury bought Park Place he continued to grow lavender and distil it, though he abandoned the other processes.

The county at the beginning of the nineteenth century was well provided with live stock, and possessed two native breeds—sheep and pigs. The Berkshire sheep, called the Berkshire Nott, was of great size, it stood high and weighed heavily when fattened. The pure breed was somewhat rare when Mavor wrote, but the characteristic features of the Berkshire Notts were not easily obliterated, and in spite of much crossing were still observable. They had black faces, Roman noses, black or mottled legs, and long tails. Their wool was fine and commanded a high price. They were a hardy breed, fattened soon, and flourished in folds on the low and cold lands where other sheep were weakly. The breed is now believed to be quite extinct. Flocks of pure Leicesters, Southdown, Cotteswolds, and Wiltshires were also common in the county. His Majesty George III, who was a zealous farmer, introduced in 1792 the first flock of Spanish or merino sheep, which excited much attention and raised great expectation. But as it proved unfit for fattening, and as supplies of fine wool from abroad were plentiful, the breed was not encouraged. A small breed of forest sheep, vulgarly known as heath croppers, abounded in the Windsor Forest district.

Berkshire hogs were famous and maintain their reputation to the present day. Black and comely, compact, good feeders, they can scarcely be surpassed by any other breed. An attempt was indeed made later, about 1860, to improve the Berkshire pigs by crossing them with Suffolk, Sussex, and other breeds, and the projectors named or misnamed them the improved Berkshire. But the

¹³ Mavor, *op. cit.* 122.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 160.

¹³ *Ibid.* 155.

¹⁵ Pearce, *op. cit.* 24.

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experiments failed, as the breed proved deficient in constitution and in natural flesh, and it was found that the pure bred Berkshire pig was the best.

The native Berkshire horses are of the common black race, very strong and powerful, with legs somewhat short, bodies thick, and remarkable for strength rather than activity.¹⁶ The farmers, however, at the beginning of the last century imported more than they bred. Berkshire farmers have always been devoted to horses, and at the period which we are considering 12,000 horses were kept for the purposes of agriculture only. Four or six horses were used in ploughing, a practice which Pearce condemned. He states that oxen were little used for ploughing, the soil of the greater part of the county being inimical to their feet.¹⁷ But on many farms oxen were used, and the difficulty with regard to the nature of the soil was obviated by shoeing. Until a few years ago a curious erection stood outside the village smithy of Barkham which was used for shoeing oxen. On the king's farms at Windsor every kind of work was performed by oxen; 200 were kept and 120 were always in work. Collars were found better suited for them than yokes. Upon the Norfolk farm, which is a light soil, Devonshire oxen were used, on the Flemish farm, a strong and heavy soil, Herefords were found suitable, and Glamorgans did the carting, harrowing, and rolling in the park.

Sir John Throckmorton of Buckland kept three teams; there were several at West Ilsley, one at Radley, several on Mr. Stacey's farm at Abingdon, also at Shilton, and spayed heifers were used at Crookham.

Berkshire can boast of no special breed of cattle, and very numerous kinds of cows were kept, including Herefords, and breeds from Warwickshire, Yorkshire, Glamorgan, Northumberland, Scotland, and Alderney. Good butter was made in most parts of the county, the best about Wytham and Radley. Large quantities of cheese were made in the hundreds of Shrivenham and Faringdon, Ganfield and Wantage. In the principal dairying parishes of Shrivenham, Coleshill, Buscot, Eaton Hastings, Faringdon, Shellingford, Uffington, Compton, and Kingston Lisle, no fewer than 3,000 cows were kept. The little wharf at Buscot, now almost deserted, was then a busy place, with warehouses built by Mr. Lovedon for the reception of cheese, and rented by the cheesemongers of London, and not less than between two and three thousand tons of cheese was annually sent down the Thames, of which at least one thousand tons came from Berkshire. The cheese was similar to what is known as single Gloucester. Snowswick Farm at Buscot produced some remarkable cheeses in the shape of pineapples. Stanford in the Vale produced cheeses in the shape of a hare sitting in its form.

There were sundry inconveniences attending Berkshire farming at the beginning of the last century. Pearce pointed out that in 1794 there were 40,000 acres of waste land in the county and vigorously sounded the cry of his time—the advantages of inclosures. For a full discussion of the Inclosure Acts the reader is referred to the section dealing with social and economic subjects. The common field system which prevailed in many parishes was a great hindrance to the introduction of improved methods of farming. There was a large class of yeomen farmers in the county, a number of county squires who took an intelligent interest in agriculture, and a sturdy class of peasants who were for the most part badly paid at a time when provisions were exceptionally dear. The section already referred to contains a description of the peasants' condition, and proves how hard it was for them to provide a living. In the last year of the eighteenth century, when there was an almost total failure of the crops throughout the kingdom, wheat was sold in the Reading market at 180s. per quarter, a price which increased gradually till the middle of March, 1800, when it was sold at an average of 195s. per quarter; but owing to the prospects of peace and of an abundant crop the price then declined and reached its usual level in 1802.¹⁸

In 1800 wheat sold for 60s., barley 34s., oats 26s., beans 37s., peas 47s. per quarter. Again in 1812 the price was abnormally high. Wheat sold in the Newbury market at 100s. to 136s. per quarter, and subsequently at 112s. to 148s. During January, 1833, the prices were, wheat 44s. to 66s., barley 25s. to 34s., oats 16s. to 23s., beans 36s. to 42s. 6d., peas 38s., the price of flour being 40s. to 45s. per sack.¹⁹

The Reading Corn Market was a very busy one. At Michaelmas, 1835, more than 200 farmers' wagons brought produce into the town and 20,000 sacks of flour were annually sent to London.

Owing to the high prices of produce agriculture increased enormously. Farmers set to work to improve their arable land, and bring under cultivation waste and pastures. The great increase in the population also tended greatly to create a vast demand for agricultural produce. Improved methods of farming were adopted, and a great increase took place in the use of machinery.

¹⁶ Mavor, *op. cit.* 396.

¹⁵ Doran, *Hist. of Reading*, 240.

¹⁷ Pearce, *op. cit.* 24.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 241.

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The increase in the use of agricultural implements began to alarm the labourers and serious machine riots broke out in 1830. Violent depredations were committed; machines were broken, and barns, stacks of corn, and dwelling houses were set on fire. The yeomanry and other troops were called out, and fights took place at Kintbury, Inkpen, and West Woodhay. The ringleaders were apprehended to the number of 100. One man was executed, many transported, and others imprisoned.

The repeal of the Corn Laws, the Tithes Commutation Act of 1836, the Poor Law Act of 1834, exercised a considerable effect on agriculture. In order to combat the designs of the Anti-Corn Law League the squires and farmers of the county formed in 1843 the Berkshire Association for the protection of British Agriculture and other branches of native industry. Mr. W. Mount was president, and Mr. G. Shackel secretary. The association was deemed to be non-political, and had for its object the maintenance of the protection system, which was stated to be indispensable to British agriculture, owing to heavy taxation, the competition of foreign countries, and the heavy cost of labour, which was declared to be 40 per cent. higher than in other countries. The association does not seem to have enjoyed a very long life, nor exercised any vast influence in encouraging protection; but its existence and objects are worthy of record.

A report on Berkshire agriculture by Mr. J. B. Spearing in 1860 shows the progress that had been made. Much heath-land in the forest district had been reclaimed, and the experiments of Mr. R. Gibson, of Sandhurst Lodge, are quoted as an example of such improvements, whereby soils which formerly only produced firewood were valued at at least £1 per acre.²⁰ Much important draining work had been carried out, stimulated by the Acts under which the government had been empowered to advance money for that purpose. Before 1860 the greater part of the county that required it had been drained on the most approved system, and some further improvements were contemplated in the remaining portion.²¹

In Windsor Park and the districts of Wokingham, Winkfield, Warfield, and Binfield drains had been laid parallel to the incline, 4 ft. deep and 24 ft. apart with two-inch pipes. In the Vale of White Horse much draining on the same system had been done, though a small portion, chiefly pasture, remained undrained. The Buscot estate, which at the beginning of the century had been in the hands of Mr. Loveden, a model farm, had fallen into entire neglect. It was about 1860 purchased by Mr. Campbell, who commenced draining upon a large scale upon the deep system.²²

All the lands in Windsor forest inclosed in 1812 had been well drained, the sands much cultivated, and in many instances made to produce luxuriant crops of roots and corn.

A great improvement had taken place in the implements used on the Berkshire farms.²³ The iron plough by Howard, Barrett, Hart, Plenty (a Newbury manufacturer), Haslam, Ball, and others had entirely superseded the old wooden ploughs, and iron and link harrows, scarifiers, and rollers were all of modern make. Drills were used everywhere, and were owned by the farmers and not hired as before. Chaff cutters were more general than formerly. The introduction of steam power was a notable feature of the general progress. Steam threshing machines had nearly silenced the sound of the flail, though the use of the latter was not abandoned, and many large farms had a seven or eight horse-power engine which was used for threshing and also for grinding corn, cutting chaff, &c. The steam plough had made but little progress, as there were only four in the county, two made by Smith, and two by Fowler. Mowing and reaping machines introduced into England at the Great Exhibition of 1851 were extensively used in Berkshire in the summers of 1858 and 1859 with satisfactory results, though in many farms the Berkshire rustics, who like not innovations, showed a readiness to make them unsuccessful. The average wage of a labourer was estimated at 15s. 6½d. per week.

The following systems of cropping were in vogue in 1860: to the south and south-east of Reading a 5-course: (1) roots; (2) barley or oats; (3) grass; (4) wheat; (5) barley or oats; in the centre of the county the common 4-course: (1) roots; (2) barley or oats; (3) part grass, part rape and turnips, fed off for wheat; (4) wheat; in the northern district: (1) roots; (2) barley or oats; (3) half clover, half beans; (4) wheat. Two courses are favoured in the Vale: (1) wheat; (2) barley; (3) beans, a small portion roots; or (1) wheat; (2) beans; (3) barley or oats; (4) beans.

The cultivation of mangold had much increased in all root-growing districts. Berkshire farmers had begun to realize the value of artificial fertilizers, and several bone-mills and manure manufactories had sprung up in different parts of the county. There was a notable one just over the Thames at Goring, which supplied many farms with superphosphate of lime. The potent guano, introduced to this country in 1841, soon found its way to Berkshire farms, and the liquid-manure drill was found most effective. The down lands were specially favoured by a great supply of manure from the training stables which had been established at East Ilsley, Compton, Chilton,

²⁰ Spearing, *Agric. of Berks*, 9.

²¹ *Ibid.* 25.

²² *Ibid.* 26.

²³ *Ibid.* 42.

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Letcombe, and Lambourn, and which benefited the farmers of the district by requiring large supplies of corn.

The Great Western Horse-Manure Company, which collected the stable manure of London, was much patronized by the Berkshire farmers, and no less than 10,000 tons were sent annually to the farms between Slough and Reading at a cost of 8s. per ton.

Trifolium and Italian rye-grass were grown in small quantities for early feed, and sainfoin was a valuable crop. The favourite kinds of white wheat were Chittam, Swan, Talavere, Trump, and Rough-chaff Essex; and of the red wheats, Burrell, Red Straw, Lammas, and Nursery were found most productive.

The grass-land of Berkshire was estimated by Mr. Spearing at 75,000 acres, and he states that the pastures are far from good and condemns the management of them.

MODERN CONDITIONS.—The agricultural conditions which prevail in Berkshire to-day as compared with those which obtained thirty years ago are best exemplified by the following comparative table of cropping in the county:—

	Acres of in 1870	Acres of in 1900
Wheat	61,312 acres	36,034 acres
Barley	40,303 "	27,270 "
Oats	26,541 "	22,943 "
Annual Grasses	43,555 "	41,953 "
Permanent Grasses	108,618 "	169,304 "

from which it will be gathered that a very large proportion of the land which formerly was employed to produce wheat has been laid down to pasture,²⁴ in order to cope with the enormously increased demand for milk; indeed, there are few counties which afford such a striking example as Berkshire of the abandonment of wheat-growing in favour of milk-production. It was not until the latter end of the seventies that the effect of the repeal of the corn laws upon wheat-growing in England began to be severely felt; the terribly wet season of 1879 unfortunately coincided with a heavy fall in the price of wheat, brought about by the cultivation of virgin soil in Canada, South America, India, and Russia, and the consequently decreased freight charges which had hitherto provided a protection for English wheat growers. Cobden little dreamed that the cost of conveying a quarter of wheat from Chicago to Liverpool would fall from 12s. 9d. to 3s. 7d. A period of general depression and enormous loss of capital followed the disastrous '79, and nowhere was the turn of events more heavily experienced than in the western end of Berkshire, which until then had been a great wheat-producing centre; farms between Newbury and Wantage and in the Vale of White Horse suffered especially, and thousands of acres hitherto occupied by prosperous yeomen became practically unlettable, and thrown upon the owners' hands. Rents fell from 30s. to 10s. per acre, and the farms, abandoned by their former occupiers, came into the hands of the landlords out of condition and far from clean. The Wantage district was particularly affected, and estates like Mr. Wroughton's at Woolley and Lord Wantage's at Ardington lost most of their old tenants, men whose families had been in possession of the farms for generations. Lord Wantage (then Colonel Sir Robert Lloyd Lindsay), like many of the richer landlords, took into his own hands most of his estate, and by a judicious investment of capital and intelligent attention to the signs of the times, did much to lead the way in the direction of overcoming difficulties; he will be always particularly remembered in Berkshire for his untiring efforts to improve the breed of shire horses; many farmers thought at the time he purchased the well-known stallion, Prince William, for £1,500 (which was then considered an astounding figure) that he had made a foolish bargain, but from an agricultural point of view he never made a better one, both for himself and the county, as from Prince William sprang a race of champion shire horses which have ever since carried all before them, and improved enormously the standard of farm and town horses throughout the district. The county has been fortunate, too, in possessing men like Sir Alexander Henderson of Buscot, bart., and Mr. R. W. Hudson of Hurley, to carry on the work which Lord Wantage commenced, for, like him, they have spared neither money nor trouble in breeding and buying the best shire horses, and have always offered special facilities to tenant farmers to avail themselves of the use of the best sires. Between the years 1885 and 1900 a very large area of land in the county was laid down to permanent pasture,

²⁴ To take one example in the parish of Hurley, as late as 1875, there were only 613 acres of grass. In 1903 the total area of grass was 1,528 acres, an increase of 915 acres. The great bulk of this was laid down in 1884 and 1885, when it became clear that corn-growing could not again be made profitable. The last year of high rent in this parish was 1844. The first general reduction came in 1845, the second in 1858, and the third in 1882. The total reduction amounts to 70 per cent. The largest farm in the parish, with an area of 988 acres, is now let at 62½ per cent. reduction on the rents of 1881 and 1882. The land is excellent for corn-growing, but is not really suitable for grass. Labour, too, has become scarce and dear, and deteriorated in quality (*ex informatione* Sir Gilbert East, bart.).

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and milk-production began to increase rapidly, so much so, that the Great Western Railway, which runs through the county, became nicknamed 'The Milky Way.' At practically every station between Maidenhead and Faringdon milk churns are conspicuous twice a day, and particularly is this the case in the latter district, where Mr. George Adams, who farms over 5,000 acres, owns a beautiful herd of Shorthorn cows and has paid special attention to this class of farming. Other notable large dairy herds in the county are those owned by the corporation of Reading, Mr. W. Wren of Whitley, Messrs. Cottrell of Ruscombe, Mr. Gard of Twyford, Mr. George Auckland of Winkfield, and Mr. F. W. Headington of Wargrave. Apart from the London demand for milk, the requirements of Reading afford a considerable market for Berkshire milk. Huntley and Palmer's great biscuit factory takes a very large quantity from local dairymen, and there is always a keen competition to become a consignor to that great firm. There has been during the last twenty years an influx to the county of Devonshire and West country farmers who now occupy as tenants a large proportion of the farms which for a time were necessarily farmed by the owners, and these men have not been slow to realize the advantages of milk-production in a county so closely in touch with good markets. Many of the large landowners, having become interested in farming, at first from necessity, have preferred to continue cultivating their farms rather than let them, and the county owes a great deal to landowners like Mr. Benyon, Colonel Van de Weyer, Lady Wantage, Sir Alexander Henderson, bart., the Honourable W. F. D. Smith, Sir William Throckmorton, bart., the late Mr. John Walter, and Mr. A. F. Walter, who all through the period of depression and difficulty have been found in the van, setting an example of patience and perseverance, and leaving no stone unturned in the direction of improving the breeds of live stock, and the thorough and economical tilling of the soil which opened up any prospect of more profitable occupation of land. The county can also claim several large tenant farmers who have held their own all through the bad times, and done much to encourage a return to the land. Mr. George Baylis of Wyfield Manor, who now occupies 7,000 acres, has made a special study of barley-growing on light soils which he was able to secure at low rents, chiefly in the district between Newbury and Wantage. Mr. George Adams, on his extensive holdings around Faringdon, is a model up-to-date farmer, and in the east end of the county the Headington family farm a large area, on which milk-producing, winter oat-growing, and sheep-farming have produced good results.

The number of sheep bred and fed in the county has decreased considerably since the prosperous seventies. The Wallingford district is famous for its fat lambs, which command the highest market prices. Ilsley still maintains its position as the largest sheep fair in the south of England, and no healthier district for sheep-breeding can be found than the eastern end of the county between Reading and Wantage. The Hampshire Down is the favourite breed still, but there are signs of an inclination to try crosses between that strain and smaller breeds, such as Exmoors, and Dartmoors, and South Downs. Sir William Throckmorton for a long time owned practically the only South Down flock in the county, but he has had in recent years powerful rivals in the Honourable W. F. D. Smith at Remenham, and Mr. Walter at Bearwood, who now possess very high-class flocks of this favourite breed.

The Berkshire pig has gone ahead rapidly in recent years, and the best specimens now command very high prices both at home and for exportation abroad. Great numbers are sent to America and South Africa. The British Berkshire Society published its first volume in 1885, giving numerous pedigrees of the Berkshire breed. It may be noted that there is an American Berkshire Association which has published several volumes of Berkshire pig records. The British Society's volume shows that many of the pedigrees have been kept carefully and minutely for numerous generations. The breed has found favour in every country in the civilized world, and this book shows 540 pedigrees. The principal breeder was Mr. H. Humfrey of Shippon, secretary of the society; and other names of noted breeders recorded are Mr. John Walter, R. Swanwick, H. Ruck, J. P. King, Lord Middleton, A. Hammond, T. S. Hewer, G. H. Vincent, and A. E. W. Darby. Prince Christian has done a great deal to bring the Berkshire pig to such prominence and perfection, and his herd at Frogmore produces prize winners all over the country. He has recently endeavoured to improve the litters of the sows in the Wokingham district by presenting to the farmers in that neighbourhood a pure-bred boar, which is now stationed at the farm of Mr. Sturges, Barkham. Lord Carnarvon has also given special attention to this branch of farming, and the Highclere herd is one of the best in England. The Corporation of Reading has recently paid particular attention to breeding Berkshire pigs and has exported a considerable number; the prices realized by pedigree pigs have induced several tenant farmers to turn their serious attention to this branch of agricultural live stock.

Far more attention is now paid to poultry-farming, and care is taken to improve and keep pure the several varieties. The most popular strains in Berkshire are the Dorking, the Buff Orpingtons, and the Wyandottes. Much of the light soil in west Berkshire is particularly well adapted for poultry-breeding.

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The four-field course of husbandry for arable land is now rarely followed in Berkshire, and almost throughout the county the five-field rotation of cropping prevails.

Hay and straw, which thirty years ago was compulsorily fed upon the land, is now freely sold off the farms in large quantities, and many of the local auctioneers hold large periodical sales of both, a thing unknown twenty years ago. Generally speaking farmers covenant to return to the land an equivalent in manure or feeding stuff, but doubtless this condition is often evaded, and large quantities of London manure are used in the east end of the county.

Labour-saving machinery has been extensively invented and improved upon since 1880. Probably the up-to-date reaper and binder is the most valuable implement to farmers; in fact but for it thousands of acres of corn would never be harvested, for present-day education has thinned the ranks of farm labourers even in the remote villages of Berkshire. The swath turner is another important recent invention, and light up-to-date American machinery, such as the Massey Harris cultivator, the Tiger horse rake, light hoes, two-horse drills, &c., all add materially to the economical and expeditious working of the lighter soils. The old Berkshire plough is almost entirely superseded by light iron ploughs, of which the favourite probably is Howard's well-known Bedford plough, though around Reading and Wallingford Wilder's ploughs are extensively used.

The weekly wage of the farm labourer varies considerably throughout the county, varying for ordinary day labourers from 15s. per week in the Maidenhead district, to 10s. around Wantage. Carters, shepherds, and stock men are of course paid on a higher scale. The improvement effected in recent years in oil and gas engines has caused them to be used extensively for grinding, chaff-cutting, and such work. Many parts of the county, particularly around Reading, Wokingham, Ascot, and Maidenhead, have developed considerably during the last twenty-five years as residential property, and several hundreds of acres now so used were formerly occupied as agricultural land. Shootings throughout the county, where in touch with the Great Western Railway, are much sought after and command high prices, the land west of Reading being particularly healthy for all kinds of game.

The new Reading College devotes its particular attention to agricultural education, and should prove of immense value to farmers' sons who are desirous of receiving a really practical scientific education. The course of instruction is most thorough, especially in chemistry, botany, geology, veterinary science, and poultry-farming, while the farm at Shinfield belonging to the college enables the students to obtain a practical knowledge of every kind of husbandry and stock-keeping. The college should have a distinct bearing upon the future agriculture of the county, and the gratitude of all interested in land is due to Lord Wantage, the Rt. Hon. G. W. Palmer, Mr. Benyon, Mr. Alfred Palmer, Mr. Martin John Sutton, and others whose munificent donations have placed the advantage of such an advanced education within the reach of all Berkshire men. The college not only gives organized courses for diplomas, but also conducts various field trials and experiments and makes arrangements for lectures to farmers and others, and gives advice to applicants as to manures and other agricultural matters, as well as carrying out analyses of milk, feeding stuffs, &c. The British Dairy Institute provides instruction in dairying and kindred subjects. A horticultural department is also attached to the college which gives theoretical and practical instruction.

The Berkshire County Council has also contributed greatly to the improvement of the agriculture of the county. Prior to 1903 the Technical Education Committee of the council awarded a certain number of agricultural exhibitions and scholarships in horticulture, and from time to time gave instruction in dairying, farriery, poultry-keeping, and horticulture, by means of staff instructors. They also made grants in aid of local classes in the processes of agriculture, and gave a grant to the Berkshire Bee-keepers' Association. From time to time the committee offered for competition prizes for butter-making, farriery, &c.

Since 1903 the work of agricultural education has been done through University College, Reading, which receives a considerable annual grant from the committee. In consideration of this grant to the college, students of one year's residence in the administrative county of Berks are entitled to receive a reduction of 25 per cent. on the sessional fees.

The committee are arranging for an examination of shoeing-smiths who desire to qualify for the R.S.S. certificate.

In various parts of the county school gardens are attached to elementary day-schools and gardening may be taken as a subject at any evening school maintained by the committee.

No account of Berkshire agriculture would be complete without some reference to the interest which the Royal Family have taken in its encouragement and progress. Mr. Spearing, in 1860, described in glowing terms the condition of the Norfolk and Flemish farms in Windsor Park, which owed their prosperity to the care of the late Prince Consort. During the Regency and in the reign of George IV the farms were let to tenants, but upon the accession of William IV they were resumed and were cultivated and managed on behalf of His Majesty by a bailiff, who was accountable to the king's privy purse for all outgoing and produce in respect of these farms.

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Upon the death of William IV the Commissioners of Woods and Forests paid to his executors the sum of £10,478 10s. for the farm implements, stock, and crops upon these farms and the dairy-farm in the Little Park. It was the intention of the late Queen Victoria to lay down into permanent grass the Norfolk and Flemish farms, with a view that they should again form part of the park out of which they were taken, but soon after his marriage the Prince Consort, Ranger of Windsor Great Park, expressed the desire to become the occupier of the farms, and, an arrangement having been made with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, he soon entered into the occupation of the farms and cultivated them with much success. He made a design for the royal dairy which was built in 1858 on the site of Queen Adelaide's lodge, adjoining the dairy-farm, near which is the queen's aviary, containing a rare and valuable collection of fowls. Shaw farm, the Prince Consort constructed as a model farm. His present Majesty continues to carry on the farms and has been most successful in rearing valuable stock, which have gained many prizes at agricultural shows.

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BERKSHIRE in early days, taken as a whole, was, according to the account preserved in the Domesday Book, one of the least thickly wooded of the English counties. The pannage of the woodlands, so all-important for the maintaining of the swine, is entered by the commissioners for Berkshire according to the number of pigs received by the lord as an acknowledgement of permission to turn them out to feed on the acorns and beech mast. The woods were obviously thick and abundant in that angle of the county which had Windsor on the east and Reading on the west, and which was bounded by the Thames on the north and the confines of Surrey on the south. For instance, there was sufficient woodland at Windsor for the lord to claim 55 swine, at Clewer 70, at Warfield and Wargrave 100 each, at White Waltham 150, and at Finchampstead 200; and so in lesser numbers on every manor of these hundreds.

Turning to the king's lands in other parts of the county, we find no mention of any woodland in the centre of the shire, at Wantage, Sparsholt, Charlton, and Betterton; whilst at Faringdon in the north-west of the county and at Little Coxwell, it is stated that there was only a sufficiency of wood, obviously mere brushwood, to serve for fencing purposes.

Berkshire is one of the few counties in Domesday wherein there is express mention of a forest (Windsor). Among the customs of this county mentioned herein is the imposing of the heavy fine of 50s. on anyone neglecting, when summoned, to drive deer for the king's hunting.¹

At the time of the Great Survey the extent of the royal forest in Berkshire was probably confined to the Windsor district, though even at this early period the limits of the hunting preserves of the Saxon kings had already been enlarged. In the latter part however of the twelfth and the earlier years of the thirteenth centuries almost the whole remaining area of the county is found subject to the harassing forest laws. There is indeed some reason for believing that this enormous extension had been begun, if not completed, as early as the reign of Henry I, and probably for financial reasons, since the Pipe Roll for 1130 shows us that great landowners were then paying heavy fines for assarts, while in one case a composition of 40s. was made to the king instead of a charger due for a 'forest plea.' The position of these entries on the roll may suggest that the offences were possibly committed beyond the limits of the forest of Windsor, which is separately accounted for. Extensions made under Henry I may have lapsed during the civil strife of Stephen's reign and only have been revived by Henry Plantagenet in order to fill his empty treasury.²

In 1219, two years after the granting of the Forest Charter by the child-king Henry III, whereby the disafforesting of all that had been afforested since the accession of Henry II was supposed to be secured, the foresters and verderers of the forest of Berkshire were ordered to meet at Reading, where a special inquisition was to be held as to all assarts or inclosures made since the time of the king's coronation. For this purpose, Henry de Scaccario, the sheriff, Jordan the forester of fee, and four others, together with John de Wigenholt as clerk, were appointed inquisitors.³

In 1221 the king granted custody of the forest of Berkshire to the knights and free tenants resident within its bounds, up to the date of his coming of age, on condition of their appointing two knights, who were to answer in all things pertaining to the forest to the chief justice of the forests, according to the customary assize, both in vert and venison, as well as other attachments, and in verderers' presentments. They were also to see to a regard being taken every third year.⁴

The bounds of the forest of Berkshire were at this time set forth. They began at Reading, at the place where the Kennet falls into the Thames; thence, almost due west, along the run of the Kennet for some six miles to a place above Padworth, where the Enborne or Auburn (there spelt 'Aleburn') falls into the Kennet; thence, following the Enborne about five miles in a south-westerly direction until Hyde End, as it is now called, is gained; thence the Enborne, which there becomes the county boundary between Berkshire and Hampshire, is followed due west (12 miles as the

¹ This custom has already been discussed, *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 309, 327.

² Cf. the parallel instances of Stafford (Close, 12 Hen. III, m. 9*d*) and of Essex; Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, App. 'The Forest of Essex'; and *V.C.H. Essex*, ii.

³ Pat. 3 Hen. III, mm. 3, 4 *d*.

⁴ *Ibid.* 5 Hen. III, m. 5.

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crow flies) to its rise at Woodhay, and thence on two miles farther west to Inkpen; from Inkpen, by a green road northwards to Chilton Foliat by Hungerford, the greater part of which parish is in Wiltshire; from Chilton Foliat along the boundary line northwards between Berkshire and Wiltshire, for a considerable distance, to the River Lenta⁵; thence by the banks of the Lenta to the place where that stream falls into the Thames; and thence by the Thames round the Oxfordshire borders of Berkshire, on the north and east, until the inflow of the Kennet at Reading is again reached.⁶ By following this perambulation on the map, it will be at once seen that four-fifths of Berkshire pertained to the area known as the forest of Berkshire, whilst the remaining fifth, forming the south-east corner, to the east of Reading and the Kennet, came within the forest district of Windsor, or, as it was then occasionally called, the forest of Oakingham or Wokingham.

The great storm of the close of the year 1222 played such havoc with the trees in almost every part of England that royal orders were issued to the forest officials throughout the kingdom not to interfere with the prostrate trees or fallen branches—which were usually the perquisites of the foresters—but at once to proceed to draw up valuation lists of their worth. On 30 January, 1223, the king instructed the sheriffs of all the counties containing forests to place the money accruing from the sale of the windfall in some religious house within their jurisdiction, there to await further orders, and to leave with it a roll giving full particulars of the sales drawn up by a specially appointed clerk named in the letters patent.⁷ In the forest of Berkshire, *extra forestam de Windlesor*, Henry de Suningewell and Robert de Coleshull were appointed sales commissioners, with John de Wigeholt as clerk.⁸

In February, 1225, the forest justices of the kingdom were ordered to see that the perambulations were made in a large group of counties, of which Berkshire was one, in order to decide (in accordance with the Forest Charter) what parts were to be disafforested and what parts were to remain forest. The commissioners nominated for Berkshire were Roger de Cuserug, Jordan the hereditary forester, and Robert Achard.⁹ In the result, all Berkshire was disafforested save the Windsor district.¹⁰

The Conqueror considerably extended the bounds of Windsor Forest, as is manifest from a variety of entries in Domesday which have been already cited.¹¹ The writer of the chronicle of Abingdon Abbey became the trustee of the king's portion on the property of the abbey at Winkfield, and tells how William turned the abodes of men into the habitation of beasts. But the power of the constable at Windsor was too great to be resisted by the monks.¹² Under the early Norman kings this forest was of vast extent. It included not only the south-east of Berkshire as far as Hungerford, but also a small part of Buckinghamshire on the other side of the Thames opposite the town of Windsor, as well as a still smaller portion of Middlesex, and at one time of Oxfordshire. The Surrey division of the forest was about as large as that of Berkshire, for it included Cobham and Chertsey, and extended along the side of the Wey as far as Guildford. Not only was this the case, but Windsor Forest stretched out into yet another county. In the thirteenth century part of the definite bounds of Windsor Forest extended into Hampshire. At the time of the great storm of 1222, to which reference has already been made, separate orders were issued by the crown, as to the windfall, to the verderers and foresters of the bailiwick of Windsor within the county of Hampshire, in addition to those of the Berkshire bailiwick;¹³ and the like was done in January, 1223, when different sale commissioners were appointed for the parts of Windsor Forest in the three counties of Berks., Surrey, and Hants.¹⁴

The earliest known reference to a park at Windsor occurs on the Pipe Roll of 31 Henry I, when a payment of 30s. 5d. was entered to the park-keeper, and 5s. for feeding the birds in the park. At the same time William FitzWalter rendered accounts for the old and new forests of Windsor.¹⁵ The account for Windsor Forest, £13 per annum, occurs on several Pipe Rolls of Henry II. The like amount is entered on the Pipe Roll of 1 Richard I, and also a vaccary or dairy-farm in the forest at 25s.¹⁶

In 1202 King John made a noble gift to Richard de Muntfechet, directing that a hundred live bucks and does should be given him out of this forest to stock Richard's park at Langley Marish in Buckinghamshire.¹⁷

⁵ The Lenta, named in the perambulation of 1221, seems to be identical with the stream long known as the Cole, which forms for several miles the boundary between Berks and Wilts, and falls into the Thames near Frilsham at the extreme north-west of the county.

⁶ Pat. 5 Hen. III, m. 5.

⁷ Cox, *Royal Forests*, 6, 7.

⁸ Pat. 7 Hen. III, m. 5 d.

⁹ *Ibid.* 9 Hen. III, m. 7 d.

¹⁰ This seems a legitimate inference from the official records.

¹¹ *V.C.H. Berks.* i, 309.

¹² *Chron. Mon. de Abingdon* (Rolls Ser.), ii, 7.

¹³ Pat. 7 Hen. III, m. 6.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* m. 5 d.

¹⁵ Hunter, *Magn. Rot. Scacc.* 127-8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* *Pipe R.* (1189-90), 187.

¹⁷ Hardy, *Rot. Lib.* 33.

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The chancellor's roll of the following year enters 25*s.* for the dairy in Windsor Forest, and £11 of pannage fees for the two preceding years.¹⁸

In May, 1202, John appointed Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury, to the joint office of constable of Windsor Castle and warden of the forest;¹⁹ and the appointment was renewed in the following year. On the archbishop's death Engelard de Cygony became constable and warden, in 1206;²⁰ he retained these offices for several years of the next reign.

There is a noteworthy reference in the Close Rolls at the end of John's reign to the deer of this great forest. On 9 January, 1215, the king gave orders for no fewer than sixty-four deer to be supplied out of Windsor Forest for the great feast at the consecration of the bishop-elect of Coventry. This feast took place at Reading, for William Cornhill was consecrated bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and Richard le Poor, bishop of Chichester, by the archbishop of Canterbury, 25 January, in the infirmary chapel of the Benedictine abbey of that town.²¹

The Close Rolls of the earlier part of the reign of Henry III contained frequent entry of royal gifts from this forest. The following are some of the more important instances. In 1217 the king granted thirty bucks and does out of Windsor Forest to the bishop of Salisbury; in 1220 seven bucks to the bishop of Winchester for merchants coming to the markets of Winchester; in 1223, three bucks to the wife of Hubert de Burgo, justice of England, and ten live does to William earl of Pembroke, to put in his park at Caversham; in 1230, three live bucks and fifteen live does to the archbishop of Canterbury, and ten live does to Henry de Capella; in 1231, seven does to the bishop of Carlisle, six live bucks and twenty does to Ranulph Brito, to place in his park of Mora; three bucks to the master of the Temple and two bucks to the abbot of Reading; in 1232, two harts and three bucks to Geoffrey de Lucy, and four bucks to the bishop of Carlisle; and in 1233, eighteen does to the earl of Cornwall for his park at Marlow, and two bucks and ten does to Hugh de Gurney for his park at Mapledurham.²²

In 1221 the constable of Windsor was reprimanded for taking in pledge the running dogs of Jordan, the forester of fee, who had an ancestral right to hunt the fox and the hare in the forest; if he had any charge against Jordan it was to be made before the justices of the forest at the next eyre.²³

Engelard de Cygony had occasion in 1220 to take and imprison certain men for cutting and selling wood within the bailiwick of John FitzHugh. Claim was made for their release, but the crown supported the constable and ordered the sheriff of Berkshire to proclaim that no one should cut or sell wood in the bailiwick until further counsel had been taken.²⁴ In the following year the king instructed Engelard to permit the removal, without any cheminage fee, of the numerous oaks granted by the abbot of Chertsey, the prior of Hurley, and the abbot of Waltham (within the forest bounds), to Pandulph the papal legate, on his election as bishop of Norwich, for the construction of a quay on the Thames in London.²⁵ There was a like permission granted to the bishop of Salisbury, in 1222, to draw timber for a similar purpose, which had been granted him by the abbots of Chertsey and Waltham.²⁶

The Close Rolls of this reign also contain entries of various timber gifts out of this forest; they were not, however, so frequent or extensive as from several other forests to which the king but rarely resorted. Grants of one or more oaks were usually made for building purposes, but those early in the reign include gifts of beech wood for making boats, of timber for the sustenance of the bridge of Staines, and of firewood for the infirm of the hospital of St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield. Later in the reign various gifts of timber were made to religious houses, such as the friars of Oxford, Reading, and London, the abbeys of Chertsey and Westminster, the priories of Ankerwyke and Merton, and more especially to the nuns of Bromhall, within the forest.²⁷

Henry III in 1229 appointed John of Monmouth to be justice for the royal forest of Berkshire, Surrey, Oxfordshire, and other counties, and about the same time issued his mandate to the sheriff, foresters, and regarders of Berkshire to hold a regard preparatory to the session of Forest Pleas.²⁸

An interesting and considerable charter grant of Windsor venison was made by the king in 1235 to the abbey of Westminster. It was thereby enacted that the constable of Windsor was yearly, on the vigil of the feast of St. Peter ad Vincula, to deliver to the abbot of Westminster eight bucks, and that the messengers bringing the venison should give two *meneyas* before the high altar.²⁹

¹⁸ *Rot. Canc.* 254-60.

¹⁹ Close, 16 John, m. 12.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 4 Hen. III, m. 11.

²¹ *Ibid. passim.*

²² Dugdale, *Mon.* i, 310; Chart. R. 19 Hen. III, m. 5. [‘Faciunt duas meneyas’ before the high altar.

¹⁹ Pat. 2 John, m. 2.

²⁰ *Ibid. passim.*

²¹ *Ibid.* 5 Hen. III, m. 6.

²² Pat. 13 Hen. III, mm. 2, 9*d.*

²³ *Ibid.* 7 John, m. 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 6 Hen. III, m. 17, 14.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 6 Hen. III, m. 4.

‘Meneyas’ seems to be connected with ‘menetum’ and to mean a hunting call, i.e. ‘they should blow two blasts of the horn.’ L.F.S.]

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In 1244 the nuns of Ankerwyke obtained the important concession of being permitted to turn out sixty swine in the forest, either within or without the park, without paying any pannage fee.³⁰

In July, 1236, the king sent his steward and another to take counsel with Engelard de Cygony, as forest warden, for the preservation of the peace, and more particularly for the taking and repressing of evildoers wandering in the forest of Windsor and the parts adjoining; he was to command the then sheriff of Berkshire to come to his aid with horses and arms whenever needful.³¹

In January, 1247, John de Frehern obtained licence to hunt and take hares in the forest of Windsor as a compensation for the keeping of the king's hawks, which were in his custody; he was also entitled to bear a bow and a blunted arrow (*boxonum*) through the forest until the next feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary.³²

In the time of Edward I the keeper or chief forester of Windsor Forest was an official under the constable of the castle. In March, 1275, the king ordered Geoffrey de Picheford, the constable, to pay to Robert de Say, whom the king had appointed chief forester and minister of Windsor Forest during good behaviour (in place of John Ingelard, deceased), the considerable sum of 12*d.* daily for his expenses. During the same month the constable was ordered to cause oaks and beeches to be taken in the forest, by the view and testimony of the foresters and verderers, for the inclosure of the king's park at Windsor.³³ An entry on the Close Rolls twenty years later shows that Robert de Say was still in receipt, as chief forester, of his shilling a day, whilst the parker of the king's park received 1½*d.* a day.³⁴

Thirty oaks were assigned to the constable of the Tower of London from this forest, in January, 1276, wherewith to burn lime for the works of the Tower.³⁵ In June of the same year a royal present of six oaks was made to Cicely de Cleware, nurse of Margaret, the king's daughter.³⁶

In the following year the king's gifts of Windsor Forest trees included six oaks for fuel to Master Simon de Benveys, the king's surgeon; two good oaks to Richard de Berchamsted, of Windsor, to be selected by him; and the trunk of an ash not bearing leaf to Master Fulk, the king's gardener at Windsor.³⁷

An interesting entry on the Close Rolls of 1277 shows that there was at that time a herd of wild (*silvestres*) cattle in Windsor Park; the constable was ordered to effect their capture and sale, and to use the money towards the expenses of the king's children then lodging at the castle.³⁸

In the following year the impaling of the new park at Windsor was completed; the keeper of Chute Forest, Wiltshire, was informed by the king that he was sending one of his yeomen to take in that forest live fallow deer wherewith to stock his park at Windsor, and that he was to permit as many to be taken as could be without damage to Chute Forest.³⁹

Geoffrey de Pycheford, the constable, was ordered in July, 1280, to sell old oaks not bearing leaves in Windsor Forest, both in the king's park and without it, and also the alders and birches of the parks, by view of the verderers and foresters, to the king's best advantage.⁴⁰

The keeper of Windsor Forest received orders from Edward I on 29 May, 1286, when on the eve of crossing the seas, to admit Edward earl of Cornwall, his kinsman, to chase in that forest at his pleasure, to admit him to take the deer, and to aid and counsel him in his sport. A record was to be kept of the number of deer thus taken.⁴¹

It is very rarely that the actual regard or results of the thorough inspection of a forest by twelve knights, as drawn up by the regarders, is extant among forest proceedings; but there is a full and detailed report of this description for the Berkshire division of Windsor Forest in the year 1333. By far the greater part of the report is taken up with specifying the name and amount of inclosures that had been made within the different divisions of the forest, 'contrary to the assize.' The extent of these assarts or illegal inclosures was in all cases inconsiderable; they varied from twenty to a single perch. Probably in the great majority of cases, the close (*baia*, equivalent to the Domesday *haga*) was a fenced-in portion round the house or cottage of the forest tenant, which the regarders were bound by their oaths to enter on the report, but was not considered any grave offence.

In the Winkfield division, which was under the abbey of Abingdon, twenty of these small encroachments were duly entered; whilst in the Bray division, which was of the fee of the king, there were thirty-two cases. In this report mention is made of a few specific woods; it is generally stated that they were oakwoods, but in the case of Inwood, the trees were all beeches. In another case, oak, beech and ash were blended together.⁴²

³⁰ Pat. 26 Hen. III, m. 5.

³³ Close, 3 Edw. I, m. 20, 19.

³⁶ Ibid. m. 8.

³⁹ Pat. 6 Edw. I, m. 20.

⁴² Forest Proc. Exch. Tr. of Rec. No. 1.

³¹ Ibid. 21 Hen. III, m. 4*d.*

³⁴ Ibid. 24 Edw. I, m. 1.

³⁷ Pat. 5 Edw. I, mm. 11, 6, 5.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 8 Edw. I, m. 8.

³² Ibid. 31 Hen. III, m. 7.

³⁵ Ibid. 4 Edw. I, m. 16.

³⁸ Close R. 5 Edw. I, m. 5.

⁴¹ Close, 14 Edw. I, m. 4.

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Licences to hunt in the forest were sometimes granted. Thus Thomas Pagnell was allowed to hunt with his own dogs the fox, hare, cat, and badger, except during the fence month.⁴³ The State Papers contain many instances of royal clemency; e.g. 'Pardon to John de Hartrygg for taking a deer,'⁴⁴ or pardon for a fine of 100 marks to Peter de Huntingfield of all trespasses of venison in the forest of Windsor.⁴⁵

When inclosures were made in the forest it was stipulated that the inclosure should be made 'with a small dike and low hedge so that the king's deer may get in and out.'⁴⁶

By a statute of the year 1306, termed *Ordinatio Foreste*,⁴⁷ the special forest inquisitions, which in many ways took the place of the oft-deferred and cumbersome Pleas of the Forest, obtained formal sanction and assumed a definite shape. The justice of the forest (or his deputy) presided, and the inquisitions were made before him by the various forest officials, such as the warden or chief forester, the foresters, verderers, regards, and by a number of free tenants. There is a considerable store of such inquisitions of the last fifteen years of the reign of Edward III at the Public Record Office. A large number are extant of the forest of Windsor between 1363 and 1375.⁴⁸

It was usual for the justice to hold two inquisitions on the same day, the one for the Windsor or Berkshire part of the forest, and the other for the Guildford or Surrey portion. Both sets of ministers or officials had therefore to appear, whether the inquisition was held at Windsor or Wokingham in Berkshire, or at Guildford, Bagshot, or Wanborough in Surrey. Occasionally two of these courts of inquisition were held in the same year, as in 1368, when the court met at Bagshot on 1 August, and at Windsor on 17 September, separate presentments being made from both counties at each court.

The amount of business transacted when these inquisitions were held varied much. They usually took cognisance of serious venison offences, and also occasionally of the graver forms of vert or woodland trespass. At an inquisition held at Wokingham, on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1371, before John de Foxle the warden of the forest and others, William Benefeld, of Winkfield, was presented for having killed a hind-calf with greyhounds on the feast of St. Lawrence; this and one other offence constituted the whole business of the court.

Many cases came before the inquisition held at Windsor in the previous year. Four men were brought up for having taken a doe with a noose; three others for hunting with greyhounds in the undergrowth of Altwood, where there were 400 beeches; others were proceeded against for taking eighteen pheasants with falcons, nets, and other engines; and there were also two separate cases of taking partridges in nets. The inquest held in 1372 makes mention of the two agisters; they had granted during the year feeding permits for animals in the forest in forty-four cases, and the fees amounted to £3 9s. 1d. The pannage of pigs, for the same year, brought in the sum of 12s. 9d.

It is somewhat singular to note that three or four of this group of inquisitions are stated to have been held to inquire into the state of the forest of 'Colyngruges.' This name, which is spelt in a variety of fashions, is in three or four cases stated to be in the Berkshire division of Windsor Forest, but in one case it is entered as in Surrey. The identity of this name, which was clearly an *alias* for a considerable portion of Windsor Forest, is a puzzle. It must have been on the confines of the two counties, and was possibly equivalent to Collingwood, in Frimley parish, Surrey, to the south-west of Windsor.

Thomas Bustelesham, Simon Wymbildon, and Robert Fraunceys were appointed in April, 1380, to take and arrest as many masons, as well those called 'fremasons' as stonelayers, carpenters, labourers, and other workmen, as were necessary for the erection of a lodge of stone for the king's foresters in Windsor Forest at 'Blakedoune on Colyngrygge,' Berkshire; the charges to be paid by Simon de Burley, constable of the castle and keeper of the forest.⁴⁹

In 1365 Thomas Cheyne, at the time of his appointment as constable of the castle, was also made parker of the Great Park. In the same year mention is made of the palings and other inclosures round the New Park of Windsor, called Wythemere, and also of the parks of East-hampstead and 'Coldkenynton.'⁵⁰

⁴³ Pat. 25 Edw. I, pt. 2, m. 14.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 33 Edw. I, pt. 2, m. 11.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 34 Edw. I, m. 27.

⁴⁶ Licence to the nuns of Bromhall, Pat. 11 Edw. I, m. 22.

⁴⁷ *Stat. of the Realm*, i, 148.

⁴⁸ Forest Proc. Exch. Tr. of Rec. No. 270, 271, 272, 274, 286, 287, 288, 290, 291, 317. See Turner, *Pleas of the Forest*, xlvi, where a table of these Windsor inquisitions, with dates and places where they were held, is given.

⁴⁹ *Cal. Pat.* 1377-81, p. 455.

⁵⁰ Pat. 39 Edw. III, pt. 2, m. 29; Rot. Orig. 39 Edw. III, 20.

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Edward IV, in 1467, inclosed two hundred acres close to New Windsor as an additional park, for which he made ample compensation to the mayor, bailiffs, and burgesses.⁵¹ This was the origin of what is now called the Home Park and which was described in 1505 as the 'Lytle Park.' It was the scene on 3 February of that year of the hunting of Henry VII and Philip king of Castile, where after dinner 'eche of the kyngs kylled certene deare, to theire owne hands, with theire crosbowes.'⁵²

Other old parks within the Berkshire division of Windsor Forest were the Moat Park, which lay between the Great Park and Clewer; Sunninghill Park, beyond Cranborne Chase and near to Virginia Water; and Follie-John Park, about two miles south of Bray, inclosed by Oliver de Bordeaux in 1317, under royal licence, but regained by the crown in 1360. Within Easthampstead Park was a royal residence, frequented by Richard II, and eventually granted away by Charles I.⁵³

Henry IV was devoted to hunting and made several tours for the purpose of following the chase. The royal tents accompanied the expedition, and he hunted with hart-hounds, 'hayters,' and otter-hounds. On 9 May, 1409, he was at Bird's Nest Lodge, in the forest, and then passed to Easthampstead, Swallowfield, Henley-on-the-Heath, and Chertsey, returning to Windsor on 1 June.⁵⁴

Among the Duchy of Lancaster records are the rolls of the Pleas of Windsor Forest held in 1488, both for Berkshire and Surrey, together with a file of over forty documents as to the proceedings of swainmote courts and other matters then laid before the justices, the majority of which relate to the former county.⁵⁵

These pleas for the Berkshire division of the great forest were held at New Windsor on 4 August, 1488, before Sir John Ratcliffe, Lord Fitzwalter and Sir Reynold Bray as justices of the forest. In addition to juries from the hundreds concerned, five bailiffs were in attendance, namely, two who represented the town of Windsor; one on behalf of Elizabeth, the queen, for the hundreds and liberties of Cookham and Bray; and one each for the liberties of the hundreds of Sonning and Ripplesmere.

The forest ministers in attendance were Sir Thomas Bouchier, warden or chief forester; Sir William Norres, his lieutenant; the two foresters and their deputies for the bailiwicks of 'Fenysbailly' and 'Fynchampstedbaylly'; Henry Jewet, the riding forester; the two present verderers, as well as the two who had lately held that office; and the twelve regarders, six of whom were knights.

The claimants to liberties within the forest were Elizabeth, the queen; the bishops of Winchester and Salisbury; the abbots of Reading, Abingdon, Waltham, Westminster, Stratford Langhorn, Cirencester, and Chertsey; the priors of Hurley, Bisham, and Merton; the prioresses of Bromhall and Ankerwyke; the chapters of Windsor and Salisbury; the provost and college of Eton; the mayor and commonalty of New Windsor; the duchess of Norfolk, and two others.

The pleas of venison brought before the court included a charge against several husbandmen of setting snares and other engines for catching deer at a place called Le Crodeles, and thus killing a doe; another case of snaring a doe and fawn; the killing a hart with bow and arrows, and a stag with greyhounds; and the presenting of four labourers as common poachers and destroyers of deer. A more interesting charge was that made against certain men of driving deer out of the bailiwick of Finchampstead into the chase belonging to the prior of Winchester.

There were one or two charges against men of position. Thus John Battell, of Winkfield, gentleman, was presented for coursing and killing two bucks with greyhounds; whilst Oliver, rector of the church of Ruscombe, was charged with shooting a stag with bow and arrows.

The vert presentments at this eyre were far in excess of those of venison. There were sixty-two separate cases, and many of these charges included two or three or more defendants. Fines were exacted in almost every case, varying in amount from a few pence up to 6s. 8d. Thus, the cutting down of four oaks and an elm, without licence, incurred a penalty of 4s., and the taking of green wood or boughs or a cartload of dry wood, fines varying from 12d. to 4d. Every kind of forest offence apart from venison was included under vert. The heaviest fine at this eyre was 6s. 8d. for pasturing sheep in the forest; the penalty of 4d. was imposed for owning three unlicensed mastiffs; whilst the abbot of Waltham was fined 20d. for permitting the bridge called 'Swannes-bridg' to be in a state of dilapidation.

The most singular presentment made on this occasion before the justices was one that involved a breach of custom. John Pomfret, the tenant of a mill-race (*gurges*) at a place called 'Hornedroare,' was fined 12d. for not supplying drink to the parishioners when making their

⁵¹ Pat. 6 Edw. IV, pt. 2, m. 1.

⁵² Tighe and Davis, *Annals of Windsor*, i, 440.

⁵³ Shirley, *Deer and Deer Parks* (1867), 130-4. Mr. Shirley names other old established private parks in different parts of the county.

⁵⁴ Wylie, *Hist. of Engl. under Hen. IV*, iii, 245.

⁵⁵ Duchy of Lanc. Forest Proc. bde. 2, Nos. 15, 16, 17.

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Rogation-tide perambulation, according to custom. We suppose that this incident came within the cognisance of the court through the parish and forest boundaries being in this case coterminous.

The proceedings at this eyre at New Windsor could not have been very protracted, as the same justices sat at Guildford on 8 August to hold the pleas for the Surrey half of Windsor Forest.⁵⁶

Most of the venison offenders at this eyre were committed to appear before the justices at Westminster within fifteen days, a form of procedure wholly unknown in the Forest Pleas of earlier days.

With regard to perquisites, the justices assigned, according to old custom, to the verderers one buck and two oaks at every eyre that was held for the forest; to the regarders, a buck, a sore (a buck of the fourth year), and twelve oaks; to the forester of Windsor, a buck and a small oak, and to his deputy an oak trunk; to the parker of Easthampstead, an oak and a log of timber; to the forester of Finchampstead bailly, an oak trunk, and the same to the forester of Fenie; to Abraham Sibilde, clerk of the swainmotes of Windsor, an oak; to the clerk of that eyre, for his labour and expenses, two oaks and two trunks; and to the forester of the bailly of Basilles, an oak and a buck.

The record of a swainmote at Spital on 7 June, preceding the sitting of this eyre, shows that this local court, held before the verderers, was attended by four woodwards, two agisters, and two regarders, as well as by the reeves and four men of New Windsor, Old Windsor, Clewer, Sunninghill, Upton, Warfield, and Winkfield with Ascot, in addition to a jury of fifteen, and the presenting foresters. These sixty-five men had but two or three paltry cases before them, the whole fines of which only amounted to 6s.

Some idea of the extent and number of the actual woods within the Berkshire division of Windsor Forest can be formed from the list of woodwards that occurs in some papers of the year 1498-9.⁵⁷ A forest woodward was an important official. Though primarily responsible, as the term implies, for the actual timber and undergrowth of the district in his charge, he was also to some extent a technical forester, that is, he was at the same time responsible for the venison. To understand their position it is necessary to remember that there was never a single royal forest all the lands of which were demesne. In each forest, and this was emphatically the case with that of Windsor, there were various woods that were private property, nevertheless these woods were subject to general forest jurisdiction, such as the free ingress and egress of the king's game. Moreover the owners could not, without the king's licence, do anything therein such as felling timber, clearing undergrowth, building houses or sheds, establishing forges, or burning charcoal, that might be held to alarm or damage the deer. To look jointly after their own rights and those of the crown, owners of woods within a royal forest were not only permitted, but required, to appoint woodwards, who took oath before a forest justice to serve the king in the matter of venison, and who had the power to attach and present offenders.

In the time of Henry VII, as shown by the following return, there were nineteen of these woodwards in the Berkshire Forest district of Windsor, four of whom were responsible for woods that formed part of the queen's dower. John Halfacre, woodward of Reginald Bray, of his wood called Clewer wood; Robert Bysshop, woodward of the queen, of her wood called Bray Wood; John Lovejoye, woodward of the abbot of Abingdon, of his wood called Wynkefield and Harlewyk Wood; Thomas Hodde, woodward of William Nores, knight, of his wood called Burley Busshe; Andrew Wynch, woodward of the queen, of her wood called Altewood; John Ewste, woodward of the queen, of her wood called Bray Wood; Robert Nores, woodward of the prior of Hurley, of his wood called Hurley Wood; Thomas Clers, woodward of the prior of Bisham, of his wood called Bisham Woods; William Skynner, woodward of the king, of his wood called Ashruge; John Fulks, woodward of the abbot of Abingdon, of his wood called Hirstenhalderst; Nicholas Redych, woodward of the queen of her wood called Benfield; William Mattynglee, woodward of the abbot of Chertsey, of his wood called Lytell Wykewood; Thomas Strode, woodward of Edward Trussell, of his wood called Shortesbroke; Arthur Kemys, woodward of the king, of his wood called Rempneham Wood; John Penvey, woodward of the abbot of Waltham Holy Cross, of his wood called Heywode; Thomas Fennyng, woodward of William Nores, knight, of his wood called Thyket and Knyghtlo; Richard Warner, woodward of the queen, of her wood called Inwood and Bigfrith; John Shephard, woodward of the bishop of Winchester, of his wood called Wargrave and Waltham; Nicholas Morewode, woodward of John Parkyns, of his wood called Fynchamsted Wood; and Simon Turnor, woodward of William Capell, knight, of his wood called Farleymore.

Henry VIII was devoted to the chase and to every form of sport, so that it is not surprising to find various references to his experiences in Windsor Forest among the letters and papers of his reign. One of his chief sporting companions was Sir William Fitzwilliam, and on him he conferred the keepership of the Surrey side of the forest. Richard Weston, another of the king's boon

⁵⁶ Cox, *Royal Forests*, 282-5.

⁵⁷ Duchy of Lanc. Forest Proc. bdl. 3, No. 23.

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companions, was appointed, in 1511, to the lieutenancy of the castle and forest of Windsor, together with the office of bow-bearer. Another sporting comrade was made bailiff of Finchampstead, a part of the forest which was at that time specially well supplied with red deer.⁵⁸

Henry VIII was sometimes ready to sacrifice business to pleasure. In July, 1526, Fitzwilliam wrote from Guildford:—‘I received a packet of letters addressed to the king, which I took to His Majesty immediately; but as he was going out to have a shot at a stag, he asked me to keep them until evening.’⁵⁹ In August, 1528, Sir Thomas Heneage, in a letter to Wolsey from Easthampstead, said that the king on the previous day had taken great pains with his hunting, from nine in the morning until seven in the evening, but only obtained one deer, the greatest red deer killed by him or by any of his huntsmen that year, which he sent as a present to the cardinal.⁶⁰ Fitzwilliam, writing to Cromwell in August, 1534, having arrived that night at the Great Park, mentioned that he was in much comfort, as the keepers promised that the king should have great sport, and asked Cromwell to bring his greyhounds with him, when he came to either Chertsey or Guildford.⁶¹ In January of the following year, Lord Sandys wrote to Cromwell, in sore dread of the king’s wrath, for young Trapnell had killed twenty of the king’s deer on the borders of Windsor Forest.⁶²

In the Windsor Castle accounts of 1535–6, when Henry, marquis of Exeter, was constable and warden of the forests, we find that the marquis received £30 a year; Sir William Sandes, who was keeper of Easthampstead Park, 3*d.* a day; Thomas Ward, as controller of the castle works and all parks and places within the forest, 6*d.* a day; Sir William Fitzwilliam and Sir Anthony Browne, keeper of Windsor Park, 8*d.* a day; Sir Richard Weston, keeper of Sunninghill Park and riding forester of Windsor Forest, 7*d.* a day, and 1*d.* a day as keeper of Cranbourne Chase (in this forest), and 4*d.* a day as keeper of the new lodge at Cranbourne Chase; Henry Norres, keeper of Windsor Little Park, 4*d.* a day; Robert Turwhytt, keeper of Ditton Park, 3*d.* a day; and Edmund Pladen, Thomas Marten, and John Potterton, occupying the office called ‘Knockpeynnes de palac’ parcorum’ (repairers of the park pales), 1*d.* a day among them. Among the necessary expenses were £6 for meat and drink and other expenses in taking bucks and does for the abbot and convent of Westminster about the eve of St. Peter ad Vincula; 11*s.* 8*d.* to Thomas Avelyn for ten cartloads of thorns and their carriage to the meadow under the castle to shut out the deer in summer time, that hay might be made for the winter support of the deer; and 14*s.* for the like for a similar purpose in a meadow in Ditton Park.⁶³

A return was made at Michaelmas, 1543, of all woods and coppices sold during the year by Thomas Vachell and his four colleagues, by virtue of a commission deputed to them by Mr. Robert Henneage, throughout Berkshire. Twelve acres of underwood were sold at Inwood at 30*s.* an acre, the purchasers being bound to make up the fences round the coppices. Seven acres of beech and underwood at Hawkridge realized £15 10*s.* Underwood drawn out of 5 acres in Southwood, lately the property of the abbot of Reading, only realized 6*s.* 8*d.* an acre; whilst timber from the same wood fetched 64*s.* 2*d.* Twelve trees from Nomans land, which had belonged to the same abbey, sold for 10*s.*

The total of the Berkshire royal wood sales for this year came to £42. From this total, however, considerable deductions had to be made for fencing the coppices and providing gates after the sales, and ‘for metyng’ or measuring out the acres preparatory to the sale. The deputy commissioners also charged 66*s.* 8*d.* for their pains, and for levying the money and taking it to London. In this way the total was reduced to £34 19*s.* 9½*d.*

The memories of Mary Tudor are but little associated with hunting, yet it is recorded that on the Tuesday after her marriage, when she was at Windsor, a novel method of wholesale sport was introduced. Toils were raised in the forest four miles in length, when a great number of deer, driven therein by the hounds and huntsmen, were slaughtered.⁶⁴

Elizabeth, who was much more of a sportswoman than her sister, often hunted at Windsor, under the guidance of her favourite, Sir Henry Neville. The duke of Biron saw her hunting in the forest attended by more than fifty ladies all mounted on hackneys. To the end of her days the queen was keenly attached to this royal sport. In 1599 Elizabeth wrote to Neville instructing him to give orders for the restraint of killing game and deer in Moat and Sunninghill Parks in Windsor Forest during his absence as resident ambassador in France. As late as 1602 Elizabeth shot ‘a great and fat stag’ at Windsor with her own hand, which was sent as a present to Archbishop Parker.⁶⁵

Saxton’s map of Berkshire, issued in 1574, shows certain parks which have altogether disappeared. At Yattendon a park is marked eight miles north of Newbury. Sir John Norris, in

⁵⁸ *L. and P. Hen. VIII*, i, 1705.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* iv (2), 4676.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* viii, 86.

⁶¹ *Annals of Windsor*, i, 595–6.

⁶² *Ibid.* iv (1), 2349.

⁶³ *Ibid.* vii, 1063.

⁶⁴ Cox, *Royal Forests*.

⁶⁵ Cox, *Royal Forests*, 297.

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1447, obtained a licence from Henry VI to embattle his manor house of Yattendon, and to impark 600 acres of land.⁶⁶ At Speen, near Newbury, Saxton shows a park, which was given by Sir William Essex to Henry VIII in 1542.⁶⁷ Another park, then marked, which no longer exists, was that of Whitley, in the suburbs of Reading; it used to belong to the abbot of Reading, but was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Francis Knollys.⁶⁸

Norden's survey, of the year 1607, shows that at that period the Little or Home Park of Windsor had an area of about 280 acres, and was stocked with a herd of '240 fallow deer, of antler 68, bucks 30 by supposition.' The pale fence was $3\frac{3}{8}$ miles in circuit. The area of the Great Park was then set down as 3,650 acres; it was stocked with about 1,800 fallow deer. The red deer roamed about in the uninclosed parts of the forest.

The circuit of the whole forest of Windsor, according to this celebrated topographer, was then $77\frac{1}{2}$ miles, exclusive of certain liberties that extended into Buckinghamshire. It is stated by Norden that Wiltshire extended into the forest; certain outlying parts of that county were, strange to say, within the Berkshire parishes of Swallowfield and Hurst. The forest (in the two counties of Berkshire and Surrey) at that time was divided into sixteen walks: 'Egham, Cranbourne, New Lodge, Swinley, Windlesham, Chertsey, Brookwoode, Purbrihte, Linchford and Ashe, Frimley, Easthamsted, Sandhurst, Bigshot, Bearwood, Warefeilde, and Binfield.' But the walks were not actually separated from one another, and the boundaries were so ill-defined that controversies were constantly arising between their respective keepers. Bagshot Park, on the verge of Surrey, contained in Norden's time 'about 17 Rowe Deere as was informed, they lie covertlie and are hardlie discovered.'

The walks in Berkshire were Egham (partly in Surrey), Cranbourne, and New Lodge, comprising the parts lying nearest to Windsor Castle; Swinley, Warfield, Easthampstead, Sandhurst, Bearwood, and Bigshot, lying to the south-west of Windsor; and the large district extending northwards from Wokingham to the Thames, called Binfield Walk, otherwise Fines Bayliwick.⁶⁹

Throughout his reign James I made a practice of hunting in the forest and parks of Windsor, more particularly during the summer and early autumn hunting of harts bucks.⁷⁰ He also wished to revive wild-boar hunting, and turned out six wild pigs at Egham. Nichols records that he was at Bagshot in 1617 'hunting the wild boar.' He was as tyrannical as any Tudor in preserving his game against poachers, and in consequence incurred no little animosity.

Charles I hunted at Windsor with some frequency at the beginning of his reign. In 1632 Noy, the king's attorney-general, styled by Carlyle 'that invincible heap of learned rubbish,' revived the Forest Pleas, and justice-seats were held both at Bagshot and Windsor. Every old formality was strictly followed; at the opening each forester had to present his horn on bended knee to the chief justice in eyre, and each woodward his hatchet; and these insignia of office were not returned until a fine of half a mark had been rendered. This revival of Forest Pleas with the accompanying fines met with bitter resentment both in Berkshire and Surrey.⁷¹

It is, says Mr. Menzies, in Windsor Park that 'the oldest authenticated regular plantation in England can be shown.' Richard Daye, in 1623, wrote to Secretary Conway urging a proposal that had previously been made for 'sowing convenient places in Windsor Forest with acorns, which had been favourably received by the late king.' To this letter was attached a statement that in 1580, by order of Lord Burleigh, thirteen acres within Cranbourne Walk had been felled and sown with acorns which had by that time, after forty-five years' growth, become 'a wood of some thousands of tall young oaks, bearing acorns, and giving shelter to cattle, and likely to prove as good timber as any in the kingdom.' The plantation here referred to is the large group of oaks at the back of the park bailiff's house in the direction of Cranbourne.

In 1640 the grand jury of Berkshire made a formal presentment as to the 'numerable red deer in the forest, which if they go on so for a few years more, will neither leave food nor room for any other creature in the forest.' They also protested against the inordinate fees exacted by some of the forest ministers.

In August of the same year the obsequious corporation of Windsor made handsome gifts to the king's sons, Prince Charles and the duke of York, which are thus described by one who had himself been mayor of the royal borough:—

The present that was given was at the Townes charge and was as folloith, two hunter's hornes, tipte and adorned with silver and gilt of gowldsmithes worke, and two faire greene Taffaty scarfes to hang them at, richly embroderid with gould; and edged with a very great gowld and silver bone leace at the ends of them: also a faire Tassell of silke and gould to each of the hornes, fastned to the hornes with gret brod riben.⁷²

⁶⁶ Lysons, *Berks.* 445.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 373.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 341.

⁶⁹ Norden's original survey of the Honour of Windsor, consisting of a folio volume of coloured plans and descriptions, as drawn up for James I, is at the British Museum, Harl. MS. 3749. The two plans of the Forest at large and of the Little Park are reproduced in Tighe and Davis, *Annals of Windsor*, ii.

⁷⁰ Nichols, *Progresses of Jas. I.*, *passim*.

⁷¹ Cox, *Royal Forests*, 297-8.

⁷² Matthew Day's Book, Ashm. MS. 1126, cited in *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 146.

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In the troublous times that preceded the outbreak of the Civil War riotous proceedings broke out, during the latter part of 1641, in the Surrey portion of the forest. The House of Commons intervened, addressing letters to the sheriffs and justices adjacent to the forest, requiring them to take care that the deer in His Majesty's forests were not destroyed, and undertaking on their part to attend to the rights of the subject in reference to the matter at issue.⁷³ The disturbances, however, continued, and early in 1642 spread into Berkshire. The earl of Holland informed the Lords, in February, 1642, of the great destruction of the deer that was in progress, after a tumultuous fashion, in the New Lodge walk, where a hundred fallow deer, in addition to red deer, had been killed, and threats made of pulling down the pales. Thereupon the sheriff of Berkshire was ordered to take into custody and bring before the House Aminadab Harrison, Thomas Patey and other ringleaders. The two named were secured and sent to the Berkshire house of correction there 'to be kept to work until the pleasure of this House be further known.'⁷⁴ The riotous proceedings, however, grew in strength. The pales of the Great Park were largely destroyed in April and May, and in July the sheriff of Berkshire was ordered by the Lords to raise the power of the county to apprehend such persons as should be named by Lord Holland, constable of the castle and forest, as taking part in the destroying of the king's woods in Windsor Forest. Several persons were subsequently committed to Newgate for deer stealing.⁷⁵

Sir Bulstrode Whitelock, constable of the castle and keeper of the forest under the Commonwealth, was himself a sportsman, but he found himself unable to prevent the poaching of the deer in the Great Park. Eventually all the fallow deer disappeared from the parks, and only a few red deer remained in the open forest. During this time, too, much of the finest timber was felled, but chiefly for the use of the Navy.

At the Restoration Charles II took some trouble to restock the royal parks and forests. Several noblemen and gentlemen united in presenting the king with 300 deer; they were divided between the forests of Windsor and Waltham, and the chase of Enfield.⁷⁶ £1,000 was paid on account to Sir William St. Ravy for the expense of transporting red and fallow deer from Germany and elsewhere.

The Princess Anne, afterwards queen of England, had a great passion for hunting, and her taste was shared by her husband Prince George of Denmark. She constructed numerous rides through the forest, and when no longer able to mount a horse she hunted on wheels, and sometimes drove 40 miles in a day.

Some information as to the deer of Windsor Park occurs in the celebrated defence of the duchess of Marlborough printed in 1742. It is therein stated that it was necessary to keep up four or five thousand head of deer in the Great Park, to be ready to answer the crown warrants for venison, and the allowance for their maintenance was but £500 a year. The ranger was also obliged to be at the expense of making and sometimes buying hay for their winter sustenance; and the keepers' wages were all payable out of the allowance.⁷⁷

Returns made in 1731 show that the red deer in the forest of Windsor, outside the parks, were estimated at upwards of 1,300; but the Forest Book of Windsor states that in 1740 the numbers were greatly reduced, and from a return of 1806 it appears that there were then only 318. The total open forest land, apart from the inclosed property of the crown (5,400 acres) and of private individuals (29,000 acres), was about 25,000 acres at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1806 an Act of Parliament appointed commissioners for inquiring into the state of this forest; they made four several reports in 1807, 1808, 1809, and 1810, strongly recommending inclosure, but they estimated the crown rights at so high a rate that it was found impossible to secure the passage of their scheme through Parliament. Eventually a compromise was made and an Inclosure Act was passed in 1817, whereby the crown secured 6,665 acres in compensation for a variety of rights, a considerable proportion of which (1,454 acres) was added to the Great Park. To meet the heavy expenses of the Act and of compensations to various officials, 1,900 acres of the portion allotted to the crown was sold for over £25,000. About a like sum was realized for the timber cut down on the parts sold. The remainder of the crown allotment was planted with fir and larch, in proportion as the young trees raised in the nurseries were fit to be planted out.⁷⁸

Before the inclosures began a troop of the Horse Guards and a detachment of the 5th of the line were employed for two days in a great game drive through the wild heaths and dells, with the intent of sweeping the deer into the parks; but in this rough process many were slaughtered.

The 1817 Act provided for the reservation to the public of the race-course at Ascot Heath, and the proper approaches thereto. Queen Anne selected this beautiful heath as her royal race-course,⁷⁹ and thus established the Ascot Races.⁸⁰

⁷³ *Commons' Journ.* ii, 282.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* v, 25, 33, 35, 199.

⁷⁷ Hooke, *Account of Conduct of Duchess of Marlborough*, 292.

⁷⁸ Tighe and Davis, *Annals of Windsor*, ii, 582-7.

⁸⁰ *Vide* 'Sport Ancient and Modern,' *supra*.

⁷⁴ *Lords' Journ.* iv, 595, 602, 653.

⁷⁶ Cox, *Royal Forests*, 79.

⁷⁹ Hughes, *Windsor Forest*, 315.

FORESTRY

A General View of the Agriculture of Berkshire was issued by Dr. William Mavor in 1808, under the auspices of the Board of Agriculture. His estimate of the woodlands and coppices is given as 30,000 acres. In the tenth chapter⁸¹ which deals with woods and plantations, the considerable diminution of timber during the past half-century is lamented; oak, elm, and ash had nearly doubled in value, but that had not sufficed to induce new planting. Dr. Mavor desired that the law should restrain any person from cutting down trees not arrived at perfection, and oblige him to plant two in a suitable position in the room of each one felled. High praise is given to the condition of the woods of the inclosed crown lands of Windsor, but he considered the state of the 25,000 acres of open land in Windsor Forest deplorable, the major part of the timber being old and decayed.

The best wooded tracts of the county, exclusive of the forest, were (1) to the south of the Kennet, (2) several parishes in the north of the county, (3) at intervals on the banks of the Thames, (4) the beechwoods from Streatley to Cookham, and (5) Bagley Wood near Oxford. The 50,000 acres of woodland were considered to be worth as many guineas per annum.

As to oaks there were no native woods or plantations of this estimable tree. There were good oaks in the forest and south of the Kennet, but the remarkably fine oaks mentioned by Evelyn in his *Sylva* in Donnington Park, near Newbury, had died out. Most of the oaks were included in coppices. The elm was chiefly confined to hedgerows and was generally shredded or lopped, 'a vile custom,' but in some parks they attained a great size. There were a few young plantations of ash, the poles of which were cut about every seven years. The beech, next to the coppice hazel, was the most plentiful tree of the county. The banks of the Thames, as far as the chalk extended, were largely fringed with beautiful beechwoods. The woods of beech near the river were frequently thinned, the timber cut into planks, and sent by water to London, where they were made into chairs, bedsteads, coach fellies, &c. The fine beechwoods at Bisham Abbey were thinned every ten years; these trees attained a very respectable size in thirty-five or forty years. The alder about Newbury was much valued, and served to plant boggy land where nothing else would grow; it furnished handles to rakes, prongs, mops, besoms, &c., many hundreds of dozens of such handles being sent from Newbury into the west of England.

Dr. Mavor urged the planting of the Spanish chestnut as the wood was so durable; he noticed some fine trees at Kingston Lisle.

The coppices of the county were chiefly of hazel; at Wytham they were cut every ten years, and yielded about £10 an acre; at Cookham and neighbouring parishes they were cut every seven years for hoops, hop-poles, and hurdles.

The planting of willows and osiers largely prevailed on boggy grounds, and brought speedy returns. Dr. Mavor considered the almost forgotten proverb that 'a willow will purchase a horse before an oak will find him a saddle,' to be not only trite, but true.

Although more wood was certainly being cut down than planted throughout Berkshire, the report of 1813 testified that some gentlemen were raising young plantations of trees on their estates; particular mention is made of the planting of oak and elm by Mr. St. John and Mr. Palmer in the neighbourhood of Wokingham, and of firs at Stratfield Mortimer and Lambourn.

The Home Park of Windsor, adjoining the castle, now contains some 400 acres and is about four miles in circumference. There are no deer, and it is divided up in parts into gardens and other inclosures, but much of the timber, particularly the avenues of great elms, is magnificent. Here, too, are a number of fine old forest oaks. The celebrated Herne's Oak, immortalized by Shakespeare, fell on 31 August, 1863. This venerable tree is believed to have attained to the great age of 650 years; the site is now marked by a youthful successor, which was planted by Queen Victoria on 12 September, 1863.

The famous Long Walk, a noble avenue of four rows of great elm trees, stretches from the grand entrance of the castle in an absolutely straight line, to a distance of nearly three miles; it was first planted in 1680. Queen Anne's Ride is another avenue of about the same length, which extends from the King's Road to the boundary of the Great Park, near Ascot Heath.

The Great Park contains about 1,800 acres and is nearly fourteen miles in circumference. It is stocked with about 1,000 head of fallow and 100 head of red deer. Cranbourne Park, within the area of the Great Park, has a pale of its own, and incloses a small herd of about 25 white red deer. Near the Cranbourne inclosure stands the monarch of the forest known as the King's Oak; it has a girth of 26 ft. three feet from the ground and is quite hollow. In that part of the Great Park that lies between the highway of Winkfield and the entrance to St. Leonard's property are four fine Queen Trees, selected respectively by Queens Anne, Charlotte, Adelaide, and Victoria.

In addition to Windsor there are nine other parks in the county which are stocked with deer, namely, Englefield, Hampstead, Aldermaston, Hall Place, Woolley, Silwood, Calcot, Welford, and Buckland.⁸²

⁸¹ pp. 307-30.

⁸² Whitaker, *Deer Parks* (1892).

A HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE

Englefield Park (Mr. James Herbert Benyon, Lord-Lieutenant of Berkshire) has the largest herd of any private park in the county. This beautifully wooded ancient park of 450 acres has upwards of 300 fallow deer. It is figured on Saxton's map. When this park and estate were forfeited to the crown in 1564 Elizabeth granted the manor to Sir Francis Walsingham. The queen subsequently visited her secretary at Englefield and hunted in the park.

Hampstead Marshall Park (Earl of Craven) is also shown on Saxton's map of 1574. In Elizabeth's reign the manor and park belonged to Sir Thomas Parry, treasurer of the royal household; but in 1620 it passed by purchase to the Craven family. The park, which was enlarged in 1665, now extends to 446 acres and is stocked with an average of 200 fallow deer. This undulating park grows splendid specimens of oak, and on the south side of the house is a very fine avenue of lime and chestnut. Hawthorns abound, and in the spring-time much of the park is singularly beautiful in its almost dazzling dress of snowy white. There has been much planting on this estate of late years, both of conifers and of deciduous trees.⁸³

At Hall Place, on the Thames, Sir Gilbert A. Clayton East, bart., has a comparatively modern park of 160 acres in which there is a herd of fallow deer, ranging from 100 to 120 head. It contains some very large oaks, and there are three magnificent avenues of limes, considered to be 400 years old. Limes grow to great perfection in the immediate district; there is a fine avenue of them at Linden Hill, Hare Hatch.

Aldermaston Court (Mr. Charles Edward Keyser) stands in a large park of 758 acres; the deer park, stocked with a herd of from 100 to 120 fallow deer, has an area of 125 acres. The park, which was once included within the outlying parts of Windsor Forest contains some glorious specimens of gnarled oaks of great antiquity, one of which is known as the Conqueror's Oak. There is a splendid avenue of old limes and in the pleasure are some wonderful old yews and some very fine cedars. An oak avenue, about a mile in length, was planted about 1800. A good many specimen trees have been planted of late years, chiefly conifers, and about fifteen acres of larch.⁸⁴

Woolley Park (Mr. Philip Wroughton), which was inclosed towards the end of the eighteenth century, is well wooded with beech, elm, and oak; the deer park has an area of 120 acres, and is well stocked with about 200 head of fallow deer.

Calcot Park (Mr. Henry Barry Blgrave) has an area of 240 acres, and is stocked with a herd of fallow deer which varies from 150 to 200 head. The Blgrave estate at Calcot comprises some 1,800 acres, of which about 250 are timbered. There are some very fine old oaks in the park, and along the drives. There has been but little planting of late years, except of young oaks for landscape purposes.⁸⁵

Buckland House (Sir Nicholas W. G. Throckmorton, bart.) stands in a park of about 60 acres stocked with a herd of 90 fallow deer. The park contains some exceptionally fine oak, elm, and chestnut trees. In addition to ornamental trees a large number of acres on this estate have been planted with larch for timber purposes.⁸⁶

At Silwood (Mrs. Cordes) the beautiful park of hill and dale, well wooded with oak, beech, and elm, has an area of 100 acres, and is stocked with an average of 120 fallow deer.

Welford House (Colonel G. B. Archer-Houblon) stands in a park of about 200 acres, stocked with from 80 to 100 deer.

Sunninghill Park, the seat of Mr. Percy Edward Crutchley, stands in a finely wooded deer park of some 250 acres. It was formerly part of the forest of Windsor, and was granted by Charles I to the family of Carey.⁸⁷ It is stated in Neale's *Views of Seats* (1818) that 'this park possesses the privilege of being tithe free as long as 16 head of deer are kept in it.'

Berkshire is still rich in parks which are not deer-stocked, but all of which are more or less well timbered. In the old outer district of Windsor Forest they are numerous. Such are the parks of Foliejon (550 acres), Buckhurst (127), Warfield (160), Easthampstead (800), Shottesbrook (300), Remenham (900), Bearwood (490), Titness Park, St. Leonard's Hill Park, Ravenswood (200, fir and oaks, and a long avenue of Wellingtonias), South Hill Park (800), West Court (200), Swallowfield Park, Wokefield Park (210), Billingbear Park, Waltham Place (105), Binfield Park (100), Binfield Court (100), Haines Hill (130), Bulmershe Park, Whiteknights' Park, Maiden Erleigh, Culham Court, Park Place (900), Bisham Abbey, Temple House. Of these Bearwood is very finely timbered and has some noble beech trees. Under the bark of certain of these which were cut down was found the stamp of the royal arms impressed when the land belonged to the crown. Hollies and junipers flourish here and several varieties of firs, including *Cedrum deodara*.

⁸³ From information kindly supplied by Lord Craven's agent.

⁸⁴ From information kindly supplied by Mr. Cambridge, the estate agent.

⁸⁵ From information kindly supplied by Messrs. Matthews, Matthews and Goodman, agents of the Blgrave estates.

⁸⁶ From information kindly supplied by Mr. G. F. Williams, the estate agent.

⁸⁷ Lysons, *Berks*, 382.

FORESTRY

West Court has some fine oaks, one of which is the largest in the neighbourhood, having a girth of 19 ft. Mr. Harris St. John, the owner, has this year (1907) planted 1,700 Japanese larch trees imported from Germany. Billingsbear Park is approached by an avenue of oaks a quarter of a mile long. Whiteknights' Park, formerly the property of the dukes of Marlborough, is described in a large folio volume by Hofland. After the bankruptcy of the duke at the beginning of the last century it was divided into several properties. Some rare trees collected by the duke still exist in portions of this park. At Park Place is a fine cedar planted by King George III.

In the valley of the Kennet are some fine parks, notably, Coley Park, Prospect Park, Sulhamstead Park, Padworth, Wasing Place, Woolhampton House (150), Beenham House (150), and Midgham House. In the Newbury district are Sandlesford Priory, Donnington Grove, Benham Park (200), Hungerford Park, and the park of Arlington Manor. In the Thames valley are Purley Hall, Purley Park, and Basildon Park (400). In the Wantage district are Lockinge Park, Kingston Lisle Park (120), while to Downs House was attached, when it was held by the family of Allen, a small deer park. In the north-west of the county are Ashdown Park (103), Beckett House (150), Coleshill House (250), Buscot Park. In the north of the county Marsham House has a park of about 40 acres, while Wytham Wood, adjoining the abbey, extends to 700 acres.

Sir Gilbert A. Clayton East, of Hall Place, has kindly contributed the following valuable note as to the beeches of East Berkshire :

My neighbourhood forms the outside of the southern limit of the large area of beechwood that supplies High Wycombe with timber for chair-making. Up to thirty years ago much of the beech close to the Thames used to go by water to Bristol for furniture making, but since then water carriage has ceased to exist and the only buyers now are the chair makers. Being on the extreme limit, the beech is much inferior to that grown in Buckinghamshire, and for many years past has shown signs of deterioration. It is now threatened with extinction by the felted beech coccus (*Crytococcus fagi*), almost all the trees in some of the woods being attacked.

Beechwoods are found on the hills on each side of the Thames up to Goring, but not lower than Maidenhead. There are no beechwoods in East Berkshire south of the Bath Road. The woods there are composed of oak trees and underwood, with elms as hedgerow timber, till you come to a line drawn through Ascot, Easthampstead, and Swallowfield : to the south of this come the pine trees and heather.

After 1825 there was much planting of mixed underwood in East Berkshire ; it commanded high prices till 1876, but is now almost worthless.

About twenty-two years ago I planted 37 acres with larch and Scotch fir. The larch have done fairly well, but the whole of the Scotch were killed by the pine beetle. The planting was a waste of money, as none of the thinnings have yet paid for the cutting. Purchasers of small larch are very difficult to find, in fact timber of all sorts is difficult to sell. The whole country up to the pine district grows very fine oak and elm trees.

The general attention paid to arboriculture during the last quarter or a century has had the effect of bringing about a slow but steady progress in the woodlands of England, particularly during the last decade. In this happy development Berkshire has had a full share. The total of the woodlands of the county in 1888 amounted to 31,024 acres ; in 1891 this total had grown to 35,829 and in 1905 it has further increased to 39,388. Of this last total, 12,943 acres are coppice, that is woods cut over periodically which reproduce themselves naturally by stool shoots ; 1,105 are plantations, that is land planted or replanted within the last ten years ; and the remaining 25,340 acres are entered as 'other woods.' It will be an interesting and surprising reflection to many to realize that there are now approximately 10,000 more wood-covered acres in Berkshire than there were at the beginning of the nineteenth century.





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