Richard Wightwick, B. D.

RECTOR OF EAST ILSLEY, VICAR OF HAMPSTEAD NORREYS,
AND
FOUNDER OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD,

A. D. MDCXXIV.

THE

HISTORY & ANTIQUITIES

OF THE

HUNDRED OF COMPTON, BERKS,

BEING A

Topographical, Statistical, and Archæological Description

OF THE PARISHES OF

ALDWORTH, COMPTON, EAST ILSLEY, WEST ILSLEY, CHILTON, CATMERE, AND FARNBOROUGH;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

DISSERTATIONS ON THE ROMAN STATION 'CALLEVA ATTREBATUM,' AND THE BATTLE OF ASHDOWN;

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF CUCKHAMSLEY, LOWBOROUGH, AND OTHER ANTIQUITIES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD;

BY

WILLIAM HEWETT, JUN.

"Quodcunque mihi ostendis sic, incredulus odi."—Hor.

Illustrated with sixteen Plates and two Maps.

READING:
PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY JOHN SNARE,
16, MINSTER STREET.

1844.

Printed by J. & H. COX, BROTHERS (LATE COX & SONS),
74 & 75, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

TO

THE REV. WILLIAM BUCKLAND, D.D.,

F.R.S., F.S.A., &c. &c. &c.

Canon of Christ Church, Oxford; Professor of Geology and Mineralogy in that University;

This little Volume

IS,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF ADMIRATION AND ESTEEM,

AND

IN GRATITUDE FOR UNMERITED FAVOURS,

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED

AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

It is the object of the present little volume, put forth without pretensions to literary merit, to supply in some measure that great lack of topographical literature relating to Berkshire. The Hundred of Compton, of which this publication more particularly treats, is, perhaps, to the antiquary, of all others, the most attractive; for, whether we take into consideration the important events that have transpired within its limits, the numerous objects of antiquity and *vertù* it contains, or the high celebrity of many of its localities in early times,—in whatever point of view we regard it,—we must, I say, ultimately arrive at one and the same conclusion. A topographer has two objects in view,—to describe the *present* state of a district, and to narrate the history of the *past:* the latter portion of my task will now, doubtless, prove the most attractive; it is, however, by posterity that these annals will be deemed more especially of interest and value.

I have endeavoured to narrate whatever might seem worthy of preservation, although, by so doing, much of the contents will, I fear, be considered somewhat frivolous and absurd: but, with so great a veneration is every, even the minutest, particular of the past regarded by the contemplative mind, that this fact will,

I trust, be deemed a sufficient apology for my introducing here, subjects which at this present appear unworthy our consideration. In every publication of this kind, much of the contents must necessarily be mere compilation, and thus far I have little to answer for; since, in the words of Montaigne, I may truly say, that "I have made a collection of the choicest flowers: my contribution is but the thread that binds them in unity." As regards, however, the other portion of the contents—the original matter—I must crave from the unbiassed reader that favour and consideration to which I conceive a first essay is most justly entitled. Faults in every human undertaking must be expected, and will be found; but I throw myself on the indulgence of a criticising, but, I trust, an impartial public. As to please all who may chance to peruse his production, and, on the other hand, to offend none, would indeed be a gratification no local historian ever yet experienced; I, for my part, cannot hope to prove an exception. Before concluding this address, I must offer some apology for the peremptory manner in which I have frequently called in question those great antiquaries whose writings have ever been regarded with deference and esteem; but I have neither attempted the confutation of any established doctrine, nor the subversion of any received opinion, without just and ample cause for so doing. With respect to the novel theories, now first promulgated, as to the sites of Calleva and Ashdown, as also those relating to Cuckhamsley and Nachededorne, with many others, too numerous to particularize, they are all of them exclusively my own; and

I seek a no less censure than such presumption deserves, if, after a careful perusal of the facts advanced, the impartial critic shall not deem these novel opinions worthy of attention and regard. "Utilitas viderit, ut res magis valeant, quam pereant."

In publishing the following pages, I have been influenced by no mercenary motives, actuated by no pecuniary views, but prompted alone by that fond regard I have ever cherished, and shall ever entertain, for that place, with its vicinity, which gave me birth: endeared as it is to my memory by many pleasing recollections, by early associations, and joyful reminiscences of bygone days.—*Scribere jussit amor.* "I would," says a celebrated author, "that every city, and town, and village, and hamlet, had its historian and biographer; what a source of amusement, nay, of instruction, would it not afford."

Every local publication of this kind, however limited its extent, however humble its pretensions, is decidedly an invaluable acquisition; these minor productions being, as it were, the very origin and foundation of the *County History:* such a desideratum, the labour of a life, may, perhaps, one day appear on the antiquities of Berks, when some great genius, competent for the task, shall sacrifice his time and talents for the public good: but how can we expect the majestic river, unless a host of tributary streams unite their waters in one mighty flood?

If no other compensation from his labours shall accrue, the author will, nevertheless, experience no little gratification from the reflection, that this volume will, at least, be the means of recording some few memorable facts, that

otherwise must have been irreparably lost, and eternally buried in oblivion: a spirit of inquiry, and a reviving taste for archæological pursuits have at length appeared, so that it is sincerely to be hoped, ere many years are flown, every village, nay, every hamlet, will produce its historian and biographer.

EAST ILSLEY, BERKS;
November, 1842.

DURING the twelvemonth that has elapsed since the date of the foregoing address, this volume has been essentially improved by the accession of much interesting matter from a variety of sources too numerous to mention. I cannot, however, refrain from acknowledging my obligations to Charles Eyston, Esq., of Hendred House, for the loan of some valuable MSS.; as also to C. E. Long, Esq. (formerly of Langley Hall), no less for his communication respecting the Stanmore barrow, than for the lithographic engraving illustrating his discovery. I am likewise extremely indebted to the Rev. C. Erck, of Compton, and many other clergymen who have assisted me in my inquiries. To my worthy antiquarian friends, Mr. Job Lousley and Mr. King, I beg to return my warmest thanks, for their co-operation and the access so kindly afforded me, no less to the valuable museum of the one, than to the extensive library of the other.

WILLIAM HEWETT.

READING,
February, 1844.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES.

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XIV.—Monument in East Ilsley Church.

XV. Fragment of a British sepulchral urn.

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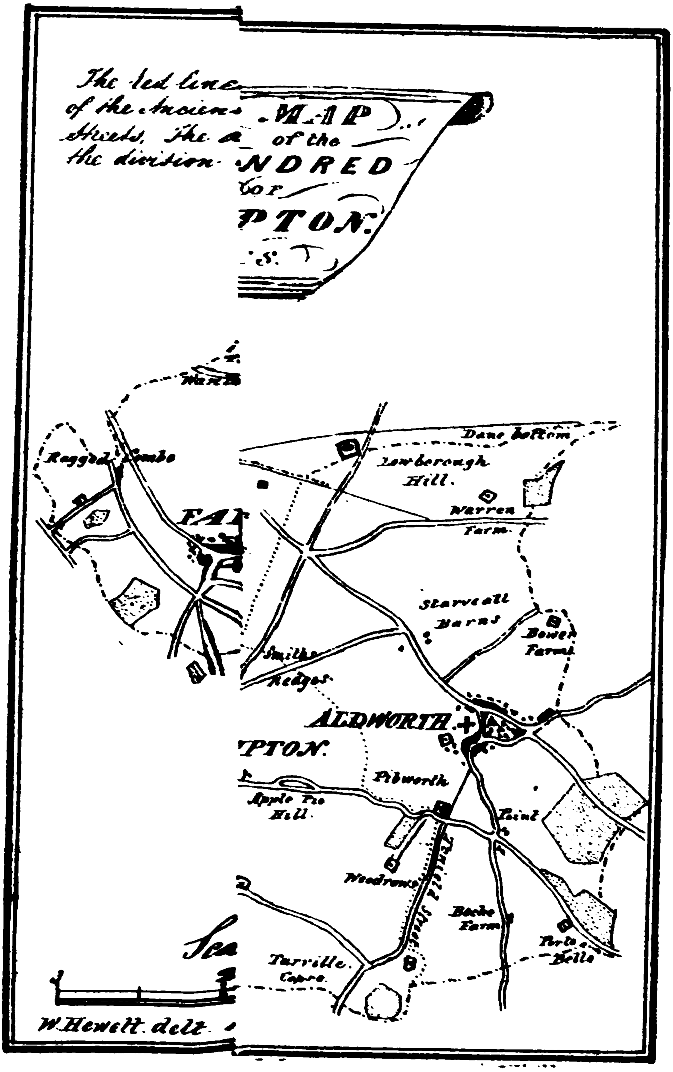

MAP
of the
NDRED
PTON.
Dane bottom
Lowborough
Hill.
Warren
Farm
Starveall
Barns
Ragged Combe
ALDWORTH
PTON.
Pibworth
Woodrows
W. Hewett delt

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

HUNDRED OF COMPTON.

The Hundred of Compton forms one of the twenty districts into which the county of Berks is divided, comprising the seven parishes of Aldworth, Compton, East Ilsley, West Ilsley, Chilton, Catmere, and Farnborough. It contains about 16,052 acres, and, according to the last census, 2,592 inhabitants. From the great proportion of inhospitable downs, the population of this district, compared with its extent, is exceedingly small; many of the youth seek their fortunes in London and other distant parts; and it is a remarkable fact, that there are annually in this neighbourhood twice as many births as deaths. During the ten years, from 1821 to 1831, there were in this hundred 865 births, and 163 marriages; whilst the number of deaths in the same period amounted to only 440. It is certain, from the accounts given in Domesday Book, that this district was as thickly populated at the time of the Conquest as at the commencement of the present century. According to the census of 1821, the seven parishes in Compton Hundred contained 2,307 inhabitants, in the following proportions: Aldworth 293,

Compton 482, East Ilsley 676, West Ilsley 328, Chilton 229, Catmere 89, and Farnborough 210. The inhabitants are almost exclusively engaged in agricultural pursuits, the farms being of considerable size, varying from 400 to 1,200 acres. This hundred comprises a great extent of that open champaign country which, in the shape of chalk downs, entirely intersects this island from Dorsetshire to Norfolk. Immediately below these downs lies a fertile plain, consisting of the "diluvium" from the chalk hills, with a large proportion of vegetable mould. To the south of the downs the country becomes gradually more wooded with oak, ash, and hazel; the eastern part of the hundred being clothed with the native beech, a continuation of the Chiltern woods of Oxfordshire and Bucks. The sheepwalks were formerly much more extensive, but since, by superior management, luxuriant corn crops are obtained, they have gradually yielded to the encroachments of the plough. These downs are however still of great extent, affording sustenance to immense flocks of sheep, which are fed on every farm. By a good system of husbandry, the adoption of modern machinery, and liberal expenditure in improving the soil, the land is in a high state of cultivation. Most of the agriculturists are wealthy and influential yeomen, holding their own estates, and together with the farmers in general, may be pronounced a noble, independent, and liberal race. A considerable trade in chalk, firewood, gravel, and other natural productions, is carried on with the vale; hurdles, cages, brooms, lime, bricks, and timber, also form articles of extensive traffic. Ilsley sends a large quantity of excellent whiting to the glovers of Banbury and Woodstock. From the great elevation of the chalk downs there is no river of any description, excepting the Pang, a small stream falling into the Thames, which in some

seasons has its origin near West Ilsley. It probably received its name—signifying in the Saxon, *unwholesome* —from the hard nature of its waters. It is only about once in six years that the springs burst forth from the chalk hills, and never till the Thames has been thrice flooded. Not unfrequently these springs become completely exhausted, and instances have been known at Ilsley of the same wells being perfectly dry and overflowing within the short space of six weeks. The churches in this hundred are generally but mean structures, built of rubble and flint, faced in some cases with freestone; but, notwithstanding, many of them are very ancient, and present numerous objects of antiquarian interest.

BRITONS AND ROMANS.

This district was very thickly inhabited by the aborigines of the country, who seem to have entrenched themselves in the forests bordering on the downs no less for protection than for the purpose of feeding their immense flocks and herds. We can still discover traces of their settlements at Perborough, Unhill, Catmere, and on Roden Downs, whilst the open hills are everywhere overspread with their barrows, dykes, and entrenchments. With their Roman conquerors, perhaps from necessity, this hundred was a favourite locality, as their remains, so often discovered by the plough, sufficiently demonstrate. The chief station of the Attrebates, called by the Romans "Calleva," was near Streatley, the great point from whence radiate the several military ways intersecting this

district. Lowborough, the site of some Roman villa, was evidently an outpost to this, after Londinum, the most important station in the island.

SAXONS AND DANES.

It is more especially these warlike people who have shed such an interest over the Hundred of Compton, the scene of more important events during the Heptarchal era than any other district in this country. The transactions of this warlike race have indeed rendered famous full many a well-known spot, and connected it with some noted action of bygone days. From the first settlement of the Saxons till the days of the Confessor, this district formed part of the royal demesne. Here was the Cross of Christ first planted in this kingdom, and we still behold, crowning the summit of our downs (where may it long remain), the monument of the first Christian king. These hills in the time of the Saxons, no less among that people themselves than their Danish invaders, have been the scene of many bloody engagements, for here crowns have been lost and kingdoms have been gained. These downs are rendered more especially famous by that most signal victory, the decisive battle of Ashdown, achieved by the immortal Alfred. At a later era, when no such patriot appeared to defend his bleeding land, this hundred fell a prey to the invading Danes, who, in 1006, laid waste the whole county with fire and sword.

DOMESDAY.

At the time of the Norman survey, there were in Compton Hundred fifteen distinct manors, most of which were held by William Fitz Ansculf and Henry de Ferrars. The Conqueror and the Abbot of Abingdon each held two manors in their own hands. In Domesday Book this district is called the Hundred of Nachededorne, from a famous town of that name, supposed to be the modern Ilsley. It then included, besides the present parishes, Stanworde or Stanmore, Etingdone or Yattendon, and Bristoldestone or Brightwaltham, the latter of which is also mentioned as part of Compton Hundred so late as the thirteenth century.

When the old Saxon name of Nachededorne became obsolete is uncertain, but the Hundred of Compton was so called in the reign of Henry III. This district was very extensively cultivated at the time of the Norman Conquest, no less than 4,910 acres of arable land being mentioned in the Survey.

LORDS PARAMOUNT.

In the year 1205 this hundred was held under King John by Ralph Gernu, and in the Hundred Rolls, the Prioress of Kington in Wiltshire is stated to have possessed the Hundred of Compton. Before the time of Edward II. it was granted to the Bishops of Bath and Wells, and in their hands it has continued to the present day, having been held for many years under that see by

the ancient family of Potenger. Before the alteration of the game laws, the Lord Paramount exercised the right of sporting over the whole hundred, and as early as the thirteenth century, the Prioress of Kington is stated to have "furcas et assias panis et cerevisiæ et *alias libertas regias*," within her hundred from time immemorial.

NATURAL HISTORY.

This hundred presents unusual attractions in every department of natural history. The geologist may discover in its hills many fossils of interest and value, as the bones of mammalia, corals, bivalves, nautili, ammonites, and other preadamic remains peculiar to the chalk formation. The champaign downs remote from the haunts of man naturally attract hither many of the migratory birds, to some of which these hills afford a permanent retreat, to others merely a temporary resting-place. Several of these birds of passage, as the dottrel, golden plover, ring ouzel, and wryneck, are of somewhat rare occurrence. The stone curlew, flycatcher, shrike, fern owl, brambling, wheatear, and Royston crow, together with the kite, moor-buzzard, and many rare species of hawk, are also commonly to be found in this locality. Few districts so limited in variety of soil, and having no water of any description, can vie with this neighbourhood in the number and rarity of its vegetable productions.

The following is a short list of the scarcer plants discovered in the vicinity of East Ilsley by myself, my father (who for thirty years practised as a surgeon at that town), and my worthy friend Mr. Job Lousley:—

Anemone pulsatilla	Unhill and Yew-tree Downs—W. H., J. L.
Aquilegia vulgaris	Ilsley Warren—W. H. Hampstead—J. L.
Atropa belladonna.....	Unhill and Hampstead Woods—W. H., J. L.
Bupleurum rotundifolium..	Blewbury—J. L. Compton—W. H.
Carduus eriophorus	Asheridge Lane—W. H. jun.
Cineraria campestris.....	East Ilsley Downs—W. H. jun.
Colchicum autumnale	Woolvers Ashridge, &c.—W. H.
Convallaria multiflora	Asheridge Woods, &c.—W. H., J. L.
Cynoglossum officinale....	Compton—W. H. jun. Hendred—W. H.
Daphne mezereum.....	Hampstead Wood—J. L.
Dipsacus pilosus	Stanmore—W. H.
Epipactis grandiflora.....	Unhill and Hampstead—J. L.
Epipactis latifolia	West Ilsley, Hampstead, &c.—W. H.
Erigeron acre.....	Chilton Field—W. H.
Frittilaria meleagris	Horsecroft, Blewbury—J. L.
Helleborus viridis	Beech Wood—J. L. Wood's Farm—W. H.
Hyoscyamus niger.....	Ilsley, Compton, &c. &c.
Hypericum androscemum..	Hampstead Wood—J. L.
Iberis amara	Compton, Ilsley, and Lowborough.
Lathyrus sylvestris	Asheridge Woods—W. H.
Linaria repens	Lowborough Hill, &c.—W. H.
Linaria spuria	Chilton—W. H. jun. Chesridge—W. H.
Marrubium vulgare	East Ilsley—W. H. jun.
Orchis viridis.....	Ilsley Downs—W. H. jun.
Orchis ustulata	Downs near Ilsley Warren—W. H. jun.
Ophrys apifera	East Ilsley Downs—W. H. jun.
Ornithogalum pyrenaicum .	Asheridge Woods, &c.
Papaver somniferum	Fields near Ilsley—W. H.
Paris quadrifolia	Compton Wood—W. H. jun.
Polygonum bistorta	Blewbury—J. L.
Saponaria officinalis	Streatley—W. H. Blewbury—J. L.
Scabiosa columbaria	Ilsley Cow-down.
Scrophularia vernalis.....	Hermitage—W. H.
Sedum telephium	Asheridge Woods, &c.—W. H. jun.
Tenacetum vulgare	Turville Lane—W. H.
Valeriana officinalis	Asheridge Woods, &c.
Verbascum blattaria	Chieveley—W. H.

PAROCHIAL TOPOGRAPHY.

CATMERE.

"*Henricus de Ferrers ten: Catmere et Henricus de eo; Ezui tenuit de rege E. Tunc p: v hid: modo p: iij hid: Terra e: vj car: In dñio: e: una et v villi et xij bord: cum iij car: Valuit vij lib: et post* XL *sol: modo* LXX *sol:*"—DOMESDAY.

Catmore, or more properly Catmere, is a very small parish, containing only 676 acres and 96 inhabitants. In the year 1801, the population amounted to 69 persons. Catmere lies three miles and a quarter west by south from Ilsley; it consists merely of a farmhouse and one cottage, the greater number of the inhabitants residing at Lilley (anciently called Lillingsley), where there are 14 houses. At the time of the Norman survey, this manor was held by Henry de Ferrars, and under him by a tenant also named Henry, the ancestor of the De Catmers. It was then valued at seventy shillings, but in King Edward's time, as high as seven pounds. The arable land, including the demesne, was 500 acres; and there were 5 villeins, 12 borderers, and 3 ploughs. Phillip de St. Helen and John de Turbeville held half a knight's fee in this parish, of Earl Ferrars, in the time of Henry III. It is somewhat singular, that Catmere is the only place in the county re-

taining the orthography of Domesday book. The population of this parish was certainly not less at the time of the Conquest than it is at the present day. The church, a very ancient edifice of the Norman style, dedicated to St. Margaret, was erected during the twelfth century. The present rector, Rev. T. Houblon, has liberally expended a considerable sum in improving this structure, with much good taste. There is no tower or porch of any description, and, as usual in the earlier churches, there exist two doorways opposite each other in the nave, the northern of which has been bricked up. The date 1622 is apparent on a beam in the chancel, and that of 1607 on the rafters of the nave. The living is a rectory in the gift of the Houblon family. Lyson states, that Catmere was formerly a chapel to Farnborough, but this was not till after the suppression of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem; the Knights Hospitallers having possessed the advowson from a very early period. In 1312, William de Gommvyle was presented to this living by Walter de Gascelyn, lord of the manor; but a lawsuit being commenced between him and the Knights Hospitallers, they established their right of presentation, and appointed Walter de Goshamwyk. In 1709, Ralph Shirley, clerk, was patron and incumbent; in 1740, Ralph Shirley, gent., presented, and in 1761, the living was in the gift of John Archer and John Loder, Esquires. In the king's books Catmere is rated at £5. 5*s*. 7½*d*.

There was formerly a weekly market at this place, granted as early as the year 1306, by King Edward I. to Roger Gascelyn. In the thirty-fourth of his reign, he also granted him the privilege of holding an annual fair on the festival of St. Margaret; but this feast, with the market, have long since been discontinued. From the time of the Conquest till about a century later, the manor

was held by the ancient family of De Catmere, who derived their name from this place. In the reign of Henry II., Adam de Catmer was sheriff of Berks, an office he seems to have fulfilled with much credit, since he continued to hold it for seven successive years, viz. from 1162 to 1169. Soon after this period, that is, in the year 1171, William de Crosbecy was lord of this manor, and in the time of Edwards I. and III., the Earls of Lancaster possessed the *hamlet* of Catmere, as appears by the Escheats. During the same period, it is certain that this manor belonged to the ancient family of Gascelyn; Edmund Gascelyn dying seised of it in 1328. Roger Gascelyn presented to the chapel in East Hendred, A.D. 1309. It appears to have been the joint property of this family and the Turbevilles, who seem to have married co-heiresses of the Crosbecys of this place and Hendred. The Turbevilles were afterwards in possession of the whole, which passed by marriage about the year 1300, with Amitia, daughter of Sir Richard de Turbeville, to William de Arches. Their heir was also named William, as appears by Amitia granting, by deed dated 1323, "to William de Arches, her son, all her mannor in the towne of East Henrith, with the advowson of the chappell there. This William was knight of the shire for Barkes, in the parliament that sate at Yorke in 1335." Jeffrey de Turbeville, grandfather of Amitia de Arches, gave certain lands in East Hendred to the priory of Poughley, A.D. 1248. Maud, heiress of John de Arches, who was lord of Catmere in 1375, brought it in marriage to John Stowe, whose only daughter, Isabel, became the wife of William Eyston; by which alliance, the Eystons acquired this and the manor of Arches in Hendred, both which have ever since remained in their hands. John de Arches was knight of the shire for Berks in 1403. William Eyston, Esq., the lineal descendant of Maude

Stowe, "was commonly called William of Catmer, because of his residing there, the manor-house of Hendred being then his mother's joynture house; he was borne in or aboute the yeare of Christ 1586." He married Mary, daughter of James Thatcher, Esq., of West Ham, in Sussex, by whom he had a family of fourteen children. "He dyed between Lady-day in Marche and September 1649, for his Lady-day's accounts for that yeare are written under his hande, and his will was proved 11 September, at Hildesley. Now, tho' this William parted with so much Lande, yet it was he that purchased the Abby Manor at Hendred, &c." George Eyston, his son, born 1636, "was a great sufferer on the score of Religion, was imprisoned and sequestered in the time of Oates' Plott, and paid 80 pound for Catmer alone, then valued at 120 pound per annum, as appears by his Discharge, bearing date April 13, 1682." John, his second son, was an officer in King Charles's army under Colonel Finch. Catmere is one of those very rare instances of property descending in an uninterrupted male line for the long period of 500 years. The present owner, Charles Eyston, Esq., of Hendred House, is lineally descended from the De Arches, and consequently the sole representative not only of that ancient family, but of the Gascelyns and Turbevilles of this place. Foundations of massive stone walls, evidently the remains of the old baronial castle, have been frequently discovered near the church. In a field eastward of the farm-house is a piece of meadow land of a square form, which at some distant period has been raised on one side and lowered on the other to render it extremely level; it was, perhaps, the site of the ancient castle, or else the scene of some athletic sports, practised at the fair in former days. Tradition points out the furze-ground as the place where this revel was origi-

nally held, whilst others contend for a spot about two furlongs distant, as the scene of these rural pastimes. In a field near Whitnam's copse, immense quantities of charcoal, ashes, and cinders, pointing out this spot as the site of an old British village, are frequently ploughed up: the common tradition is, that a populous town once flourished on this very spot. A small silver ring bearing this inscription, "William Eyston, Esquire, of Catmere, neare Wantage, in Barkeshire." was lately dug up near the churchyard.

FARNBOROUGH.

"*Ipsa Abbat: Abendon: tenet Fermeberge. T. R. E se def: p: x hid: modo p: iij hid: et dim: Tra: e x car: In dñio: sunt ij car: ibi j seruus et v accepti. Silua ad clausura. T. R. E valuab: ix lib: et post vj lib: modo viij lib:*"—DOMESDAY.

Farnborough, anciently Fernbergh, is an extensive parish comprising 2,210 acres. According to the last census, the population amounted to 204, being 17 less than were returned in the census of 1831. In the year 1801, there were 213 inhabitants. At the time of the Conquest, this manor belonged to the wealthy abbey of Abingdon, to which foundation it was given by King Athelstan, in 930. King Hardicanute confirmed this grant of his predecessor in 1042. From Domesday book we learn, that in the reign of the Confessor, it was assessed at ten hides, and valued at £9., and that at the time of the survey there were, including the demesne, 760 acres of arable land,

valued at £8, with one servile and five free tenants. Situated at an altitude of 800 feet above the level of the sea, there exists no spring of water throughout the whole parish, and even the wells, which are but few in number, are not unfrequently exhausted. One of these wells is of the enormous depth of 405 feet. The name of this village is a corruption of two Saxon words, signifying "the town of fern," a plant growing luxuriantly in this parish, though of rare occurrence in its vicinity. About the centre of the village stands the church, a decent-looking structure, dedicated to All Saints. Some portion of this edifice is evidently of ancient date, from a circular Norman archway, now closed up, apparent in the north wall of the nave. The greater part of this structure, however, was erected during the fifteenth century, or even at a somewhat later period. The tower, a superior piece of architecture, is of more modern date, constructed (if we may credit the popular tradition) with the old stones brought from the Austin Priory at Poughley, which was destroyed soon after the dissolution. There is a clock and peal of three bells, on one of which is this motto, "Ora pro nobis Sancta Anna;" on the second bell is a similar inscription, whilst the third bears this motto, "Edward Read, 1753." In the chancel is a fine marble monument to the memory of William Garnam, Esq., who died 1669. His epitaph, quoted by Ashmole, states that he served under three sovereigns, King Charles I. and his sons James II. and Charles II. He was serjeant of the counting-house to the latter monarch, as appears by his pedigree, in which his son is also styled "Yeoman of ye Counting-house to His Majesty." His sister Mary was wife of the Rev. Barnard Price, rector of this parish. In the church are several neat mural monuments to the Prices, an ancient family, who were settled here upwards of two centuries ago. The tower is

separated from the nave by a fine pointed arch, springing from two corbels, representing angels with expanded wings, beautifully executed in stone. On the exterior appears the date 1728 in stucco, with some initials. In the windows are a few remains of ancient painted glass, and in the churchyard stand the fragments of a small stone cross. Beedon and Catmere were formerly chapels to Farnborough. The living is a rectory, rated in the king's books at £12. 8*s*. 4*d*., in the gift of the Price family. The present incumbent is Rev. George Price. In Pope Nicholas's Valor it is taxed at twelve marks. Ralph Price, gent., was patron in 1732, and in 1739, Rev. Ralph Price was incumbent on his own presentation. The adwowson in ancient times belonged to the abbey of Abingdon. Robert de Brightwell was presented to this living by the abbot in 1298; his successor, William Acelyn, in 1321, received an order from the Bishop of Sarum, his diocesan, commanding him to repair his rectory house, then in a very dilapidated condition.

When this parish was inclosed in the year 1777, a portion of land was allotted to the rector in lieu of tithes. The registers only commence with the year 1739, the more ancient records having been destroyed. The manor of Farnborough, now the property of Bartholomew Wroughton, Esq., of Woolley Park, was purchased by his father, Rev. William Wroughton, of Fulwar Craven, Esq. His father, Rev. John Craven, vicar of Kintbury, acquired it in marriage with Elizabeth, heiress of Sir Jemmett Raymond, knight, who inherited it from the Jemmetts of Barton Court.

The Prince of Orange passed through this village with his whole army, on December 11th, 1688, on his way to Abingdon. Along the east side of the parish runs a Roman road, called the Old Street, which may still be dis-

tinctly traced through Knapps Copse and High Robins Wood, situated in a detached part of Farnborough, where it is still in admirable preservation. Roman coins have been ploughed up near the furze-ground.

CHILTON.

"*Walterus Fitz Other tenet Ciltone Wenesi tenuit de rege Ed: Tunc et modo se defendit p v hid: Terræ est in dñio sunt ij car: et vij villi et* IX *bord: cu: car: et dim: Ibi iiij serui et vj hagæ in Warengeford de ij solid:*"

"*Wenric tenet de Abb: Abendon: Cilletone Blacheman tenuit de Heraldo in alod: et potuit ire quo voluit. Tunc et modo p: v hid: Terra est vj car: In dñio: est car: et dim: et iij villi et xiij bord: cum ij car: et dim: Silua de* X *porc:*"—DOMESDAY.

The parish of Chilton, forming the northern extremity of Compton Hundred, comprises about 1,432 acres, and contains, according to the last census, 297 inhabitants. In 1801, the population amounted to 224. In the time of William the Conqueror, there were two distinct manors in Chilton, as appears by Domesday book, from which we learn that one of these estates, assessed at 600 acres, was held by Walter Fitz Other: there were attached to this estate seven villeins, four servile tenants, and nine borderers, with one plough-team and a half. The other manor had been held, we are informed, by one Blackeman, allodially under King Harold, and that he had the privilege of selling it to whom he pleased. At the time of the survey, it belonged to the abbot of Abingdon, under whom it was

occupied by Wenric: the arable land was 360 acres, besides a carucate and a half in demesne; to cultivate which there were three villeins and twelve borderers, with a plough-team and a half. The most singular part of the account is, that there was a wood large enough to feed ten pigs, containing at least 500 of our modern acres. As there is no wood land at the present day, one of two conclusions must be deduced, either that this copse has long since been destroyed, or else that this manor comprised some of the wood land now in West Ilsley; of which, otherwise, no mention in Domesday has been made. The name of this village is derived from the Saxon words "cilt," chalk, and "tune," a dwelling place, having reference to its situation on the downs. Chilton is situated near the turnpike-road to Oxford, three miles due north of Ilsley. Between the hills and the village, extends a wide expanse of open down, commonly called "Chilton Plain," a great part of which has been brought into cultivation since the late enclosure.

The living is a rectory, rated in the king's books at £13. 8*s*. 4*d*., in the patronage of George Heneage, Esq., of Compton, Wilts. In 1694 Sir George Button, Bart. was patron; in 1714 the living was in the gift of Mrs. Mary Read, and in 1736 John Walker, Esq., presented to this rectory. The advowson belonged in ancient times to the Abbey of Abingdon, but on one occasion Sir Philip Paganel presented to this living. He gave it, in 1298, to Hugh Paganel, who afterwards exchanged with Robert de Offington, rector of Longworth. In Pope Nicholas's Valor Chilton is rated at ten marks; the poor hospital at Abingdon had a portion of tithes in 1291, valued at £1 per annum.

There was anciently a chantry attached to this church, to which, in 1381, Roger atte Peunde was presented by

Peter Fanelore, then rector, and in 1384 Richard Barber held both this chapel and the church. Thomas Lawrence, rector of this parish, who died in 1693, was sequestered by the Puritans. Walker says "he was ejected for being '*non compos mentis*,' but whether he were so or not I cannot learn; it seems plain enough that he had at least recovered his senses when the nation did theirs, in 1660, because I find he was then restored to this living." The registers are very imperfect, the baptisms commencing in 1584, the burials in 1667. In the former is this entry—"and here take notice, that all those who were borne betweene March 11th 1589 and ye 10 August 1599 there names weare loste out of the old Regester Booke, and there for cannot be inserted heare." The second book of burials, entitled, "the buerl of ye deed," contains this entry: "1770, the minester of this parish received ten shillens and the Clarke fower for Buring of Mrs. Plott." The church accounts go back 200 years; amongst other items is this: "1697, paide for Clothe and ye making of ye Leters on ye Poor's sleeves, 1s." Amongst the benefactors to the poor may be noticed, Adam Head and George Knapp, Esqrs. Mrs. Mary Allen left £10, but this charity is lost, as is that of Anne Latton, who bequeathed "to the poor and needy inhabitants of Chilton ten pounds, to those of East Illyslye twenty shillings, and a like sum to those of West Illyslye." The church dedicated to All Saints is a plain, unornamented structure of the fifteenth century, although the chancel with lancet windows is as ancient as the time of Henry III. There is a north aisle, with spacious windows in the later English style; the tower has been partially destroyed, the remaining portion being now surmounted by a mean wooden structure containing four bells. The tower, which was doubtless destroyed during the civil

wars, appears in its fall to have demolished the greater part of the roof. On two of the bells are these quaint mottoes :—

" Fere God honovr the Kinge, 1665."

" Let Yovar hope bee in the Lorde, 1623."

The pulpit is handsomely carved, but the font is remarkably rude. Above the pulpit, extending across the nave, are the remains of an ancient rood loft, painted with stars and crosses in various gaudy colours. There are several ancient monuments, of which the following is the most interesting :—" Vivus hoc sibi conjugeri et liberis exigit monumentum Adamus Head Generosus. Assiduus Dei, cultor et Ecclesiæ amator, longum felixq : produxit ævum; natus anno 1649, Denatus 1729. Nec tanta viro indigna fuit Uxor Martha, nata A.D. 1663, et denata 1735, fœmina prole beata quinq : scilicet liberis unico filio quatuorq : natis duæ autem in numero viventium solum modo existant."—" Near this monument lieth interred in a vault the body of Head Plott, Esq., late of Upton, grandson of the above-mentioned Adam Head, Gent., who departed this life Nov. 7th, 1765, aged 44 years." In the chancel are several memorials of the Knapps, and amongst others there is one commemorating Richard Knapp, Esq., a bencher of the Inner Temple, who died A.D. 1716. The manor-house, called " Latton's Place," a very ancient structure, has been much modernized; there still remains, however, a large wainscotted room, adorned with coats of arms and other designs in carved wood. Over the fireplace appear the armorial bearings of the Lattons, who once resided here, quartering Isbury of Chilton, Percy, and Chewecher. In the windows are three circular panes of ancient painted glass, representing the Crucifixion, with the Virgin and child, from

which subjects it is evident that this window is older than the Reformation. The ancient family of Knapp, of Saxon origin, have been so long connected with this place that some slight notice of them is imperative. They are mentioned in Domesday Book as holding lands in Somersetshire, and John Knapp, mayor of Bristol in 1380, and thrice afterwards, founded two chantries in that city. In the time of Henry VII. branches of this family were settled in Suffolk, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire, the latter being now represented by the Duke of Buckingham, whose ancestor married Mary, heiress of Henry Knapp, Esq., from which match are descended numerous peers, including the late Right Hon. William Pitt. Thomas Knapp, who flourished before 1539, was a tenant of Reading Abbey, of lands and tithes at Sulhampstead. His son Nycholas, of Tylehurst, died in 1565, leaving Thomas his heir, who resided at Chilton. He and Amy, his wife, dying in 1593 and 1605, were buried in Chilton Church. Their son Richard, in 1603, purchased the estates of the Lattons at this place and West Ilsley, and died A.D. 1614. He left three sons, all owners of land in Chilton, of whom George, the eldest, was father of John, born 1623, who by his marriage with Alice, co-heiress of Adam Cox, acquired the manor of Symeons in this parish, and dying in 1693, was buried at Chaddleworth. His son George having married Mary, daughter of Jerome Clutterbuck, removed to London, but Jerome, his son, resided at Chieveley, where he was buried A.D. 1740. About the year 1630, John, the brother of Richard Stampe, of Hodcott, married Joane Knapp, of this place, and from the subjoined legacy in the will of Anne Latton, who died in 1585, they were probably connected with that ancient family:—" Item, I bequeath to Richard Knapp one great broad chest in the parlor at Henred, and one great brass

pott standing at Smithe's in Chiltone." Anthony Wood thus mentions another of this family: "Francis Knapp, son of George Knapp, of Chilton in Berkshire, Gent., aged 16 years, was matriculated A.D. 1688, of St. John's College, and the next year chosen Demy of Magdalen College. He is author of 'An Epistle to Mr. B. in verse,' printed in 'Miscellaneous Poems,' 1694." This gentleman lies buried at Chilton, as appears by this entry in the Register:—"1717. Francis Knapp, A.M. and Deane of Killala, in the Kingdom of Irelande, was burred June ye 1st." The Lattons, a very ancient family, now extinct, were settled at Upton as early as the year 1325, whence, in the time of Henry VII., they removed to Chilton, where, however, they had occupied land as early as the reign of Edward II. From Chilton they removed to Kingston Bagpuis, which they had purchased in 1542; and about sixty years later, having sold all their property in Berkshire, went to reside at Esher, in Surrey. There is a fine brass monument in Blewbury Church to the memory of "John Latton of Chilton, Esquyre, and Anne his wyf," whose daughter, Margaret, married Thomas Tipping, Esq., of Draycott. In a window at Lord Orford's villa at Strawbury Hill were several armorial bearings of the Lattons, with various quarterings, which was probably the same glass as that mentioned by Ashmole as once existing at Kingston.

There were anciently two manors in this parish, one of which belonged, at the time of the Conquest, to Walter Fitz-Other, who being made governor of Windsor Castle, assumed the cognomen of De Windsor. In the hands of this family Chilton continued till the reign of Henry VI. Brian de Windsor died seised of it in 1399, and Milo, his son, in 1422. John Yorke, of Hagbourn, acquired an interest in this manor by his marriage with Alicia, relict

of Richard de Windsor, and on the death of her son, in 1439, became possessed of the estate. The Yorkes held it till the reign of Henry VIII., when it passed by a female heir to the Hungerfords, from which circumstance this village acquired the name of "Chilton Hungerford," which has however long since become obsolete. In this family it continued till the year 1700, when Sir George Hungerford sold it to Mr. Knapp. His grand-daughter brought it in marriage to the family of Peers, of Chiselhamton, of whom, about the beginning of the present century, it was purchased by T. T. Metcalfe, Esq. This gentleman, when created a baronet in 1802, was described as of Chilton, but he never resided at this place.

The other manor described in Domesday Book belonged to the Abbey of Abingdon long prior to the Conquest. In the time of Henry III. it was held by Alicia de Samford. This estate, comprising 600 acres, was given to that monastery in 1015, by King Ethelred. The priory of Wallingford had a considerable estate here as early as the time of Henry III., as also the Abbey of Oseney, near Oxford: the latter possessed one carucate and a third, or 100 acres, valued at 2*s.* 8*d.* per annum. The Abbey manor, subsequently to the dissolution, belonged to the Goddards, who, after possessing it for many generations, sold it to the Morlands of Abingdon. Sir T. T. Metcalfe sold his manor to Mr. Aldworth. The estate of the Lattons is still in the possession of the Knapps, whilst the Rev. Benjamin Morland and his brother, T. T. Morland, Esq., of Sheepstead, are now proprietors of the Abbey manor. The reputed manor of Symeons belonged, in 1275, to Galfred de Bono; it came afterwards to the family of Cox, who were settled here as early as 1316; and from them it descended to the Knapps, in whose hands it has continued to the present day. In the "No-

mina Villarum," compiled A.D. 1316, Edward Danvers, Walter de la Poille, Germora Symeon, and Robert Puritone, are described as possessing property in Chilton. Robert Danvers died seised of his lands 34 Edward III. In 1407, Catherine, widow of Sir Thomas de la Poyle, died seised of property in this parish; and 2 Henry VI. John de la Poyle, Esq., was possessed of the same estate. In 1382, Almaric, Lord St. Amand, held part of a manor in Chilton, of which his descendant of the same name died seised in 1403. John Estbury, or Isbury, Drugo Barentine, and Sir Thomas de Berklee, were also possessed of land in this parish during the fifteenth century. The estate held by the latter was parcel of the honour of Wallingford. Several regiments of Cromwell's troops were quartered at Chilton during the turbulent period of the civil wars, in 1644. About six days after the second battle of Newbury, on November 2nd, a large body of Parliamentarians marched from that town to Blewbury, in their route to Oxford, but on reaching Harwell, they heard that the whole vale below was totally impassable, from excessive floods, for even ordinary travellers, and a council of war having been held, it was determined they should march back to Newbury. In consequence of this alteration of their plan, some of the troops were quartered at Chilton, where they remained four days. On Tuesday, 5th November, the whole body of cavalry was drawn up on the plain, where they lay encamped that night, and next morning, being joined by the infantry, the whole army hastened back to Newbury. But what renders this spot still more remarkable, is the fact that it was well-nigh the scene of a bloody conflict between the contending factions; for no sooner had Cromwell's army quitted the plain than the Royalists, consisting of 6,000 foot and 5,000 horse, took up their quarters on the very

same spot where their enemies had encamped the preceding day. Walker thus mentions this remarkable event: —" That night, November 6th, the royal army quartered in the villages adjacent to Oxford, and the next day his Majesty marched with them to Wallingford, and the day following, being Friday, 8th November, to the two Ilsleys, five miles short of Newbery." Rushworth, who is more explicit, states that the King, having augmented his army at Oxford by the addition of Prince Rupert's and the other brigades, set out for Newbury; but Abingdon being garrisoned by the enemy, he made a circuitous route through Wallingford, whence he advanced to Chilton Plain, intending to stay there that night, and proceed the next day towards Donnington Castle. His Majesty slept at Bishop Goodman's, then rector of West Ilsley.

The Parliamentarians, ignorant of the King's approach, reached Newbury on the 7th November; but discrediting the reports that the Royalists were advancing towards that town, they made no preparations for opposing their designs till a late hour on Friday night. But these endeavours, however active, were then too late, for the next morning saw the whole royal army drawn up in battle array under the walls of Donnington Castle.

On a conspicuous eminence, called Hagbourn Hill, numerous Roman antiquities have at various times been discovered. A few years ago a beautiful bronze spear-head was ploughed up in these fields, having on either side a small circular hole for the insertion of a string, so that the weapon might be withdrawn after being hurled at the enemy; from this peculiarity and the mixed metal of which it was composed, we may pronounce this relic to be of British formation. A Roman road, called by the common people the Ickleton Way, can be distinctly traced over the summit of this hill, close to which is a large cir-

cular barrow. This military road, known in Oxfordshire as the "Lower Hackney Way," commences, according to my opinion, in Berkshire, near Little Stoke Ferry, whence, passing by Lollingdon Copse and through Blewbury, it falls into the modern high road in the village of Upton. As some labourers were digging near this road about half a mile distant from Chilton, in the spring of 1803, they discovered several deep pits of an oblong form, cut to the depth of four feet in the solid chalk. At the bottom of one of these cists was a small circular hole, containing, amongst other relics, some gold and silver coins, a metal celt, an arrow-head, several large brass rings, and some fragments of horse furniture. They also discovered during their excavations a remarkable chain of brass, having in its centre and at either end an immense ring of the same metal, with sundry bosses or studs to prevent their turning completely round; other curious relics, such as some rude nails and the balance of a pair of scales, were also found. A full account of this discovery, with a plate from which mine is copied, may be seen in the "Archæologia."

WEST ILSLEY.

"*Henric: de Ferieres ten: Hislelei et Roger de eo. Algar tenuit de rege E: Tunc et modo p: iij hid: et dim: Terra e: ij car: In dñio e: dim: car: cum ij bord: et un: seruus. Valuit* LX *sol: modo* XL *sol:*"

"*Willielmus filius Ansculfi ten: Hisleleu et Stefan: de eo. Balduin tenuit de rege E: Tc̄ et modo se dēfit p: vj*

hid : et dim : Trã e iij car : In dñio e : j car : et iiij villi et ij bord : cu : ij car : Ibi vij serui Valuit vij lib : et post et modo iiij lib :"—DOMESDAY.

The parish of West Ilsley, including Hodcott, contains 3,187 acres of land, and according to the last census, 404 inhabitants. In 1801, the population amounted to 340. At the time of the Norman survey, there were two distinct manors in this parish, one held by Henry de Ferrers, the other by William Fitz Ansculf. The arable land of the former, including that in demesne, was two carucates and a half, with one servile tenant and two borderers. It was then valued at forty shillings, but in the time of King Edward at sixty shillings. The other manor was of far greater extent, being assessed at 780 acres. The arable land was three carucates, besides one in demesne, and there were four villeins, two borderers, and seven servile tenants. It was valued at the time of the Conquest at £4, but in the reign of Edward the Confessor, as high as £7. This estate belonged in the time of Edwards I. and II. to the family of Peuly. Sir Ralph de Peuly died seised of it in 1363, he having held the manor under the dean and ministers of the college of Edington, in Wiltshire. In the reign of Edward III., the earls of Lancaster held the other estate in this parish; subsequently, it was in the noble family of Ferrars de Groby, to whom it belonged in the time of Richard II. In 1422, Matilda, widow of Sir John Lovek, died seised of the same estate. As early as the reign of Henry III., John Mansel and Agnes de Pont Audomar each held 240 acres of land in West Ilsley. In the time of Edward II., Matilda, the daughter of Alianor de Thornton, possessed ten and a half virgates, or 210 acres, in this parish. The priory of Canons Regular, of the Order of St. Augustine, at Sandleford, had an estate

here at a very remote period. Richard Fukeram, the prior, and Milo de Bello Campo, are mentioned in the "Nomina Villarum," compiled A.D. 1316, as owners of land in this parish. In the Hundred Rolls temp. Henry III., the prior of Sandleford is described as having "assias panis et cerevisiæ, &c.," at West Ilsley. The prioress of Kington, in Wiltshire, had also an estate here at a very early period, which in the time of Edward III., was valued at "xiij*s.* iiij*d.*" per annum. According to a passage in the "Nonæ Rolls," compiled in that reign, the third part of the arable land in this parish was barren and uncultivated, the tenants being, through poverty, obliged to give up their farms. It is stated in the Hundred Rolls, that West Ilsley was originally a part of, and chargeable to, the Hundred of Compton, but that it was made an independent district by Simon de Montford. This was the estate belonging to the hospital of Sandleford, then held by Richard de Colrugge and John le Gery. The living of West Ilsley is a rectory, rated in the king's books at £22 7*s.* 1*d.*, in the gift of the dean and chapter of Windsor. In the year 1751, the bishop of Sarum presented to this living. It is assessed in Pope Nicholas's Valor at £10, the portion of the priory of Kington being stated at 13*s.* 4*d.* In ancient times, the advowson belonged to the priory of Austin Canons at Sandleford, in whose hands it continued till the dissolution of that monastery in the fifteenth century. This priory, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, was founded before the year 1205, by Geoffrey, earl of Perche. In the time of Edward IV., a dispute having arisen in consequence of which the priory was wholly forsaken by the monks, he gave it to the collegiate church of Windsor, and thus the living of West Ilsley came into the hands of that body. There was anciently a vicar as well as rector, both of whom were appointed by the prior. In 1320, Sir Milo

de Bello Campo gave the church of West Ilsley to Henry atte Townes-ende de Peasemore, when a law-suit was instituted, and the prior having established his right, presented Galfred Halom. In 1347, Robert de Sothewell exchanged this living with Thomas Berne, rector of Catmere, on condition of receiving an annuity of £10. His predecessor was Stephen de Farnbergh, who resigned in 1340, to Henry, the son of John le Pistor. The following note, written by Dr. Goodman, is extracted from the register: "This parish had antiently bothe a parson and a vicar, the parsonage was appropriated to the priorie of Sandelford, and the vicar had the impropriat parsonage in farme, and paid yearly for it ye som of ten pounds. The priorie by mischance was left by ye monks, and ultimately forsaken, whereuppon it fell into ye gift of ye Bysshop of Sarum, theire Diocesan, who was then Deane of Windsor; he gave ye whole to a kinsman, who conferred it upon ye churche of Windesor, at which time ye Vicaridge falling voyd, the churche of Windesor presented a parson to the Rectorie, and ever since it hath beene a Rectorie, and in lieu of ye Ten pounds which was paide, ther is reserved to the Colledge the gleabe lands now in the possession of Mr. Francis Keate, and the howse is commonly called 'the Parsonage,' next adjoyninge to the West ende of the Churche." From another entry it appears that a dispute relative to the glebe had arisen between the college and Mr. Webb, the rector, but he died whilst the lawsuit was pending in 1613. The present incumbent is Hon. and Rev. Edward Moore, canon of Windsor. The registers are tolerably perfect from the year 1558 to the present time, excepting during the troublesome period of the commonwealth and civil war, being deficient from 1641 to 1663. Amongst other curious entries is the following: "Least in future time there might be strife and contention amongst

neighbours, I, Godfrey Goodman, Parson and Rector of West Ildesley, do heare certifie that I never heard that any Parishioner did clayme a propretie in the seates within our Churche. Those of Hodcotte sate in ye uppermost seate for ye Lordes of ye Mannor. There was staunding in the Churche an old frame, whereon the Roodlofte had auntiently stoode, and under it a little wainscoat seate, &c." This church, in common with most others during the civil wars, appears to have suffered sad havoc and neglect, from this entry in the register, made in 1664, when peace and order were restored: "Nowe wanting in the Churche, a Font, a Beare, a Greate Cheste with 3 locks, a faire pewter Plate for ye Communion Bread, a paper book in Folio to write down ye churche accounts, a Cushion, and Pulpit cloth, a service book in 4to. for ye Clerke, all which ye next Churchwardens are to provide." The church is a plain uninteresting structure, dedicated to All Saints, chiefly in the Tudor style of architecture, with square labelled windows. The chancel has been rebuilt of brick, in comparatively modern times; in the interior, on a large beam, appears the date 1662. There are several handsome marble monuments to the family of Head, of Hodcott. The fine marble slab on the communion-table was presented by the last of this family, John Head, Esq., who (as appears by his epitaph) died in 1803. Many of the rectors having been men of no little celebrity, a short biographical account of the most distinguished will be here necessary.

William Clypton, D.D., dean of Windsor, was presented to this living in the reign of Henry VIII., to which monarch he was domestic chaplain. He died in 1541, when Henry Williams, canon of Windsor, succeeded to this rectory. He continued to hold it till 1554, when he was sequestered for his adherence to the Protestant religion.

Erasmus Webb, fellow of All Souls, Oxford, and archdeacon of Berks, who next succeeded, was rector of Ham, in Wiltshire, and dying in 1613, was buried at Windsor. He gave ten acres of woodland to his successors in the living, called to this day "Parson's Copse." He also bequeathed another wood to the poor of this parish for ever, ordering a sufficient quantity for five indigent families to be annually felled and distributed. Next succeeded Anthony Maxey, dean of Windsor, who dying in 1616, the famous Marc Antonio de Dominis, an Italian, was presented by King James I. He was born at Arba, in 1561, and educated at Padua, where he displayed uncommon learning and great natural abilities. He was afterwards entered among the Jesuits, and soon presented to the bishopric of Segiens, from which he was shortly advanced to the archbishopric of Spalatro. At length, renouncing the errors of the church of Rome, he came over to this country in 1615, where he was graciously received by King James I., who presented him to the Savoy. His book, "De Republica Ecclesiastica," aimed a capital blow at the papal power, and he lost no opportunity of openly preaching and writing against the church of Rome, hoping to effect a second reformation by conciliating Papists and Protestants. Although his book was a crime never to be forgiven, yet on receiving a letter from Gondamor, promising him pardon, he was weak enough to rejoin the Romish church. He had been made dean of Windsor, but being disappointed of higher preferment, accepted an invitation from Pope Gregory XV., and set out for Rome hoping to get a cardinal's hat. In this, however, he was sadly mistaken, for on arriving at Rome, he was imprisoned in the castle of St. Angelo by the Inquisition, where, in the year 1625, and 64th of his age, he died of a broken heart. "After his death," says Chalmers, "it being discovered that his

opinions were not agreeable to the church of Rome, his corpse was dug up and burnt with his writings, by a decree of the Inquisition." He wrote many learned works in Latin, French, and Italian, and was the first, in his book "De Radiis et Lucis," who explained the phenomena of the rainbow. Anthony de Dominis held this rectory during three years, and was succeeded, in 1619, by Dr. Godfrey Goodman. This celebrated divine was the son of a gentleman of the same name at Ruthyn, in Denbighshire, where he was born, about the year 1577. He was educated at Westminster school; in 1607 made rector of Stapleford Abbots; in 1620, Dean of Rochester, and in 1624, created Bishop of Gloucester. Besides this preferment, he also held the livings of Hartlebury, Llandysit, and Upton on Severn, besides being a prebendary of Hereford and Exeter,—a tolerable income for one individual! Fuller, who says he was no contemptible historian, after reviewing his character, proceeds, "but I must remember the ring bequeathed to me in his will with the motto thereof, 'Requiem Defunctis,' and therefore I will be no longer troublesome to his memory." In 1639, he refused to sign the seventeen canons of doctrine and discipline drawn up by Archbishop Laud, who, after admonishing him three times, caused him to be suspended. "In 1626," says Walker, "he ventured some popish heterodoxies in a sermon at court, and in 1640, Archbishop Laud told him he must be either a Papist, a Socinian, or a Puritan. When the rebellion broke out, he was plundered, spoiled, robbed, and utterly undone." He afterwards lived obscurely at Westminster, employing much of his time in researches at the Cottonian Library. He died in January, 1655, openly professing the Romish faith, being attended on his deathbed by the famous Jesuit, Father A. St. Clara. He lies buried in St. Margaret's church, Westminster. "He was,"

says Wood, " a harmless man, hurtful to none but himself, pitiful to the poor, and hospitable to his neighbours." Fuller states, that he was the single bishop of 200, who had lived since the Reformation, " whom the Vile and Detestable practices of those who engross to themselves the name of Protestants had scandalized into popery." " And the party," adds Walker, " do but proclaim their own shame, when they think to vilify the church of England by this instance." Of Bishop Goodman's numerous learned works may be mentioned, " A Discourse on the Trinity," which, strangely enough, he dedicated to Oliver Cromwell. During his retirement, he also wrote an account of his imprisonment, sufferings, and privations. He retained this living "in commendam" with the bishopric of Gloucester, as appears by this entry in the register, signed by five justices. " Whereas Dr. Goodman, late Bysshopp of Glocesster, hath held in commendam this Rectorie of ye Churche of West Ildesly, and is a notorious delinquent of the Parliament, it is therefore ordered by this Committee, that the saide Rectorie bee taken from the saide Dr. Goodman, and that Humphrey Newbery, Mast. Artes, a godly and orthodox divine, bee forthwith called to officiate in ye saide Churche as ye Minister and Rector thereoff, and to enjoy the Parsonage house, glebe lands, and al and singular ye tythes, rents, lands, duties, and fees, thereto belonginge.

by the Committee sitting att Reading,
13 Aprilis A.D. 1646."

On the promotion of Dr. Goodman to the see of Gloucester, Edward Fulham, D.D., was presented to this living. He was a canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and proctor of that University in 1639; besides which he was chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford, Dean of Chichester, Rector of Hampton Poyle, Vicar of Bray, and a canon of Windsor,

to which last he was installed in 1660. From this living he was certainly sequestered, but the registers being lost, it is doubtful in what year. A low, uneducated fellow, named Humphrey Newbery, was then made rector of West Ilsley, by the puritanical party, he being "a godly and orthodox divine." He seems to have died soon after his induction to the living, as in 1651, John Jeames is described as "Minister" of this parish. After the Restoration, Dr. Fulham was reinducted to this rectory in 1662, which he continued to hold for some years, and dying in 1688, was buried at West Ilsley. Calybute Downing, another celebrated divine, was also rector of this parish during the seventeenth century, but not, as Lyson states, in the reign of Charles II. He was born in 1606, and entered as a commoner of Oriel College, Oxford, where he took one degree in arts, but his master's degree he took elsewhere, most probably in some continental university. He was presented to the livings of Hackney, near London, and Ickford, in Bucks; "but these," says Chalmers, "not being sufficient for his ambition, he stood in competition with Dr. Gilbert Sheldon, for the wardenship of All Souls, and losing that, was suitor to be chaplain to the Earl of Strafford, thinking that would lead to a bishopric, but failing there also, he joined the parliamentary party, and became a great promoter of their designs." In a sermon preached in 1640, he said, "that for the defence of religion, it was lawful to take up arms against the king," after which he became chaplain to Lord Roberts' regiment, and in 1643 was chosen one of the assembly of divines. He was father to Sir George Downing, secretary to the Treasury under Charles II. Wood says that he exchanged this living for that of Hackney, in Middlesex, but does not state in what year. The same author informs us, that he resigned the latter preferment before his death,

and adds, "he had a very hot rambling head, and gave up the ghost at Hackney, about the beginning of the year 1644."

The old rectory-house, lately taken down, a very ancient structure in the Elizabethan style, was rendered particularly interesting, from that ill-fated monarch Charles I. having slept there the night in 1644. This event is thus recorded in a scarce tract, entitled "Iter Carolinum," written by one of His Majesty's attendants: "Friday, 8th of November, 1644, King Charles marched from Wallingford to West Ilsley (the Bishop of Gloucester's 'in commendam'), at which place he slept that night, and on Saturday the 9th, he went to Donnington Castle, and lay at the castle all night." The present rector has lately erected a new parsonage-house on a larger scale.

The manor of West Ilsley is now the property of William Baker, Esq., late M.P. for Essex, in whose family it has been for many generations. In 1538 William Barton died seised of this estate. The manor of Harcourts, so called from having for many years belonged to that noble family, is now the property of his Grace the Archbishop of York. A small estate, formerly belonging to the Kidgells, came afterwards to Mr. Taylor, of Didcott, of whom it was purchased by the father of the present proprietor, John Southby, Esq. The Lattons of Chilton had an estate here during the sixteenth century, which was purchased, in 1603, by the Knapps of that place. There is a wood still called Knapp's Copse.

The manor of Hodcott in this parish, comprising 1,200 acres, is thus mentioned in Domesday Book:—

"*Willielmus fil: Ansculfi tenet Hodicote et Stefan: de eo, Balduin ten: de rege* E: *Tc et modo p: v hid:*

"*Terra est iij car: In dñio e: una cum iij bord: Valuit vj lib: post* XXX *sol: modo* LX *solid:*

" Ranulfus de Mortemer ten: Hodicote et Oidelard de eo Aluin ten de rege Ed: Tc̄ et mo: p: v hid: Trā e in dñio sunt ij car: et v bord: cu: dimid: car: Valuit vij lib: modo iiij lib:"

At the time of the Conquest, Hodcott consisted of two distinct manors, one belonging to William Fitz Ansculf, the other to Ralph de Mortemer. These farms unitedly were assessed at ten hides, and valued at 140 shillings, the arable-land, consisting of 456 acres, employing eight borderers. In the time of King Edward, these estates (one of which was held by Alwin, the other by Baldwin) were valued as high as £13.

Fitz Ansculf's manor descended from him to the Paganels, from whom it came to their representatives, the Somerys, in the reign of King John. "John de Somerie," says Dugdale, "took to wife, Hawyse, sister and heir to Gervase Paganel," and in the hands of this noble family it continued for many generations. Roger de Somery died seised of it in 1291, and his son in 1323.

The other manor continued in the descendants of Ralph de Mortemer for upwards of three centuries, Edward de Mortemer dying seised of it in 1304, and Roger, Earl of March, in 1361. The latter held a knight's fee in "Hodecotes" in the time of King Richard II. In 1538, William Barton died seised of this manor; soon after which period it came to the Stampes, a very ancient Berkshire family, long settled at Cholsey. Richard Stampe, Esq., died seised of it 1559; his son John sold it in 1571 to William Forster, of Aldermaston. Before the end of the sixteenth century, Hodcott belonged to the Keates, of Hagbourn. Hugh Keate, Esq., of this place was brother to Edward, who acquired Lockinge with the heiress of John Doe, Gent. They were also connected with the Stampes, as appears by this extract from the register, "Steeven Stampe

and Elizabeth Keate marryed." Edmund, their son, in 1607, married Jane, daughter of John Smyth, of Compton, to which family the Stampes were further related by a former alliance. John Keate is mentioned in the list of Berkshire gentry, made in the reign of Henry VI. Besides Hodcott, Lockinge, and Hagbourn, this family also held the manor of Newenton, in Buckland.

In Hagbourn church is a large brass plate, with effigies, in memory of Hugh Keate, Esq., of Hodcott, with this epitaph:—" He dyed 1613, and lyes buryed in the parish chauncell of West Ildesley, in the Countie of Barkes. Shee departed this life ye 14th daie of August, Anno Dom^{i}. 1627, for whose pious memorie William Keate, theire youngest sone, erected this memoriall, &c." The family of eight children are represented in a kneeling posture behind the figures of their parents. Before the middle of the seventeenth century, Hodcott belonged to the Southbys, of whom it was purchased, in 1662, by John Head, Esq., of Langley, who died in 1701. His daughter Anne was married at West Ilsley in 1694, to Charles Collins, Gent., of Lockinge. Richard Head, his son, was sheriff of Berkshire in 1728, which office had been previously borne by the father in 1699. The manor of Hodcott descended to the grandson of the original purchaser, John Head, Esq., who, dying in 1803, bequeathed it to his nephew, Robert Southby, Esq., and it is now the property of Richard Southby, Esq., to whom it was given by his uncle, who died without issue. The family of Southby have possessed property in Berkshire for nearly three centuries, having been settled at Appleton, their present seat, upwards of 200 years. Before that time they were of Carswell, which they purchased in 1577. Richard Southby, Esq., was knight of the shire for Berkshire in the time of James II., and sheriff of the same in

1702. Robert Southby, Esq., was sheriff of Berkshire A.D. 1696. Their armorial bearings were granted as early as 1631, and confirmed in 1664 to John, son of Richard, the son of John Southby, Esq., of Carswell. The Heads were a very ancient Kentish family, who settled at Langley Hall in the time of Henry VIII. They derived their patronymic from the cinque-port town of Hythe, formerly called Hede. Hugo de Hede was confessor to Edward II., and Bishop of Rochester in that reign. Sir Thomas Head was knighted when serving the office of sheriff of Berks in 1744. The present representative of this family is Sir W. C. James, Bart. M.P., whose great-grandfather assumed the name and arms of James, on inheriting certain estates belonging to that family near Hungerford. John James, Esq., of Denford, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Head, Esq., bequeathed his property to William and Walter, the sons of Sir Thomas Head, Knt. The former dying in 1778, the younger brother came into the possession of the estates, and was created a baronet in 1791. His son John, dying before his father, left one child, the present baronet, who was born in 1816. Hodcott House, a fine old mansion, built, it is said, by Inigo Jones, was pulled down about twenty years ago; it was pleasantly seated at the extremity of a small but picturesque park, overlooking the open downs, and approached from the village by a noble avenue of majestic elms, nearly 200 in number. This delightful vista has long since been destroyed, and the park brought into cultivation. The splendid iron gates were removed to the lodge at the entrance to Langley Hall. On an eminence south of the farm-house are several large barrows, gradually diminishing beneath the plough. A Roman road, called The Old Street, bounds the parish on the west; it is now overgrown with wood,

but otherwise it is in admirable preservation. Traces of the Romans may be observed in its vicinity, on a hill near Parson's Copse, where several human skeletons have been exhumed. Close to the wood is a very deep pond, never known to have failed, which is said to be completely paved with ancient brickwork. Roman coins have been frequently ploughed up in these fields, and other interesting remains. Near one of the skeletons were observed several hundreds of curious iron nails, all of which had been clenched. On the summit of the downs runs the British Ridgway, by the side of which is a continuous chain of barrows. The Devil's Ditch and a similar work of British formation run parallel with the Ridgeway, on either side, for many successive miles.

EAST ILSLEY.

" Goisfrid : de Manneville ten : Hildeslei et Sasuvalo de eo. Ordolf : ten : p : m : in alod : de rege E : Tunc et modo p : una hida Terra e : ij car : In dñio e una car : et j vill : et vij bord : cum j car : Ibi iij serui et vij acc̄pti. Silua ad clausura Val : et valuit xx sol : Isd : Goisfrid : ten : Hildeslei et Sasuvalo de eo. Ordolf ten : in alod : de rege E : Tunc et modo p : x hid : Terra est vj car : In dñio sunt ij car : et vij villi et xij bord : cum iij car : Ibi iiij serui Valuit viij lib : et post v lib : Modo vj lib."

" De append : m : de Soninges ten : de Albicis de Coci xx hid : in Hildeslei quæ juste pertin : sup̄dict : M : Epis : Sarisburiensis."—DOMESDAY.

The parish of East Ilsley comprises 3,253 acres, and, according to the last census, a population of 733 persons.

In 1801 there were 135 families, and 512 inhabitants. At the time of the Norman survey, in 1080, there were four distinct manors in this parish—the two Hildesleis, Nachededorne, and Assedone; of the former of which only I shall here make mention. According to Domesday Book, Goisfrid de Manneville held both these estates, which contained conjointly eleven carucates of arable land, valued at £7. There were 8 villeins, 19 borderers, 7 servile, and 7 free tenants, with 4 ploughs; the whole being assessed at 1,320 acres. Besides Assedone, or Ashridge, there were at a later period two distinct manors in Ilsley, one of which was held by the baronial family of Somery, and, under them, by the De la Poyles, or Polhamptons: Richard de Polhampton was sheriff of Berks, A.D. 1311, and also the succeeding year. Roger de Somery died seised of this manor in 1272, and his son of the same name in 1291. John de Somery, who died in 1322, is stated to have held *a manor and a-half* in East Ilsley. The other estate belonged, at a very early period, to the noble family of St. Amand; Almar de St. Amand, who possessed it in the time of Henry III., was father of Ralph, who died 30th of that reign. Almaric de St. Amand succeeded him, on whose decease, in 1286, it came to his son of the same name, who dying in 1311 without issue, John, his brother, became possessed of this estate; he was summoned to Parliament as a baron 6th Edw. II., and died 1326, leaving Almaric his son and heir; Isabella, his only daughter, married Robert de Ildesle, in whose descendants, if any, the barony of St. Amand is now vested. Almaric, dying in 1382, left a son of the same name, who married two wives, Ida and Alianore. He was created a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of Henry IV., and died A.D. 1403: Alianor, his second wife, died seised of the manor of Ilsley (then held

of the honour of Leicester) in 1382, when the property became divided between coheirs. It eventually settled, however, on Gerard de Braybroke, whose eldest daughter, Maud, in the reign of Henry VI., brought it in marriage to John Babington, in whose descendants it continued many years; when Urias Babington died seised of it in 1603. During the reigns of the Edwards and Richard II., the St. Amands were very frequently summoned to Parliament as barons. The Earls of Lancaster possessed an estate here during the fourteenth century. The Earls of Arundel also held considerable property here as early as the time of Henry III., which came afterwards, by marriage, to the Bohuns, Earls of Hereford, who possessed it in the reign of Edward III. In the "Nomina Villarum," compiled A.D. 1316, Sir Gilbert de Elsefeld, John de St. Amand, and John Chaunsey, are mentioned as Lords of East Ilsley. John Erlè, of Earley, possessed a messuage here in the time of Henry VI. Sawallus de Oseville occupied 960 acres of land under the Earls of Hereford, in the time of Henry III. The Elsfelds of Elsfeld, and the St. Helen family, held property here under the Somerys at even a more remote period. Sir John de Elsfeld had a confirmation from Edward I. of the charter granted to Gilbert, his brother, respecting certain property "in villa de Estildisle." One of the two manors in this parish was subsequently in the family of Ildesle, who derived their name from this place; and in their possession it continued till the seventeenth century. It then belonged to the Moores, who held it many years, and afterwards to the Allens of Compton: "Lord Allen," as he was commonly called, from possessing this manor, sold it above eighty years ago to the Heads of Hodcott, who, having previously acquired the other manor, and Ashridge, were owners (with the exception of a minor

estate) of the entire parish. This small estate, now the property of Mr. Clark of Streatley, and others, belonged, during the seventeenth century, to the Huets, or Hewetts, of this place, who sold it about a hundred years ago. John Head, Esq., who died in 1803, bequeathed the manor farm to his nephew, Robert Southby, Esq., who died without issue. The other manorial estate was given to another nephew of the same family, who sold it to the brother of the present proprietor, Captain Deare. Two other estates were bequeathed by Mr. Head to his nephews, Richard and Charles Southby, Esqrs.; that of the latter was sold many years since to Mr. W. J. Williams, whose family are still in possession; the other estate having been left by Mr. R. Southby to his widow, to whom it now belongs. The manor of Ashridge is thus described in Domesday Book:—

"*Henric: de Ferieres ten: Assedone et Radulf: de eo. Bundi ten: de rege E: Tc̄ p: x: hid: et una. v: modo p: ix hid: Terra est x car: In dn̄io sunt iiij car: et viij bord: ibi ix serui et vj ac̄pti Silua de v porc: Tot T: R: E: ualb: xij lib: et post vj lib: et modo x lib:*"

"Henry de Ferrers holds Assedone, and Ralph under him; Bundi held it of King Edward. Then it was rated at ten hides and one virgate, now at nine hides. The arable land is 760 acres. In demesne there are 4 carucates, 8 borderers, 9 servile, and 6 free tenants; the whole being valued, in King Edward's time, at £12, afterwards at £6, and now at £10. The wood will support 5 pigs." At the time of the survey this manor was of great extent, comprising upwards of 1,100 acres, including, probably, Ashclose, Ashdown, and other adjacent localities now distinct. It continued in the noble family of Ferrars till the reign of Henry III., when it was held by William de Bakepuis. This estate may be traced

down through the families of De la Beche and Langford, from the time of Edward II. to the reign of Henry VIII.; soon after which period it came to the Heads. It is described in ancient charters under the following names: Ayschedene, Ashdoune, Ashdene, Asheden, Asschedon, and Assdeyne; all of which are merely corruptions of the original Saxon "Æscesdune," signifying the *hill of ash trees*. The modern termination "ridge" is synonymous with the Saxon "dune," both implying an eminence. This estate, comprising about 330 acres, a third of which is wood-land, was bequeathed by John Head, Esq., to the father of the present proprietor, J. T. Wasey, Esq., of Prior's Court. A small estate, called Woolvers, the least manor of the survey, is now the property of Richard Southby, Esq. In ancient times, the manor of Ashridge was held of the honour of Tutbury.

The town of East Ilsley is pleasantly situated in an agreeable valley, about the centre of the parish, and contains 122 houses. Although Ilsley cannot boast of an existence long antecedent to the Norman Conquest, it nevertheless sprung, phœnix-like, from the ashes of a town, the origin of which transcends the annals of history, and may be referred to the remotest ages of antiquity. This, the famous Nachededorne, stood near the site of the modern Ilsley; having derived its name from a remarkable thorn-tree which crowned the summit of a neighbouring hill, around which the Druidical priesthood of the Britons were accustomed to assemble, as well for the purpose of civil government as their religious observances. The thorn was universally held in esteem by the Druids, who seem to have regarded it with superstitious veneration; but this identical tree, standing alone on a conspicuous hill, was apparently the object of peculiar regard. The Saxons also refrained from desecrating an

object venerable no less from its uses than antiquity; and in their time the adjacent town derived its name from this appropriate vegetating companion, being called Nachededorne, or "the solitary thorn," a title soon applied to the whole hundred. This hill, however famous during the sway of Druidism, derived far greater interest from having been the spot where the glorious victory of Æscesdune was achieved over the Danes in 871, by the immortal Alfred; for it was, according to Asser, around this identical thorn that the enemy so carelessly assembled. This decisive engagement was long remembered with gratitude by the Saxon nation, who, from regard, applied to these downs the name of "Hilde-læg," or the *battle-field*. The whole of this district, in the Heptarchal era, was called by the Saxons Æscesdune, and from the days of Cerdic to the reign of the Confessor, it formed part of the royal demesne. It is impossible to fix the exact limits of this district, but it certainly included the whole of this parish, with part of West Ilsley and Compton. In the year 1006 the Danes, having landed in Hampshire, marched through that county into Berkshire, where they plundered and burnt the town of Reading. "Thence," as the Saxon Chronicle states, "they went to Wallingford, which they utterly destroyed, and passed one night at Cholsey. Thence they turned along Æscesdune to Cwicchelmeshlæwe, and there awaited better cheer." This account is confirmed by many of our old chroniclers, and, amongst others, by Robert of Gloucester, in these lines:—

> "Most sorow they deede in Berkshire aboute Aschedoune,
> And aboute Quicholmes they stroyed mony a toune."

In common with the country at large, the old town of Nachededorne fell a prey to the invading Danes, by whom it was utterly destroyed, with many other places in its

vicinity. Canute having at length acquired the whole island, peace was generally restored; when, from the ruins of these demolished towns, new foundations rapidly arose. This was the case with the place in question, but the old site of Nachededorne being found objectionable, the new town of Ilsley was founded on the adjoining hill, where Canute (as in many other parts where victories had been won) had previously erected a church; thus Robert of Gloucester says,

> "As up Assesdone and ther aboute mest chyrchen he let rere
> As vor her soulen that yslawe were there."

Notwithstanding this new town was founded on the very hill whereon the single thorn still grew, the old name of Nachededorne, being found inconveniently long, was shortly abolished for that of Hildesley; so that in a very few years, as the older inhabitants disappeared, the original appellation became wholly obsolete: this, however, was a gradual change, the original name being retained in Domesday Book. As previously stated, one of the four manors in this parish was anciently called, as the town, Nachededorne, comprising the central portion of the modern Ilsley. It is thus mentioned in the Survey:—

TRANSLATION.

"The King himself holds Nachededorne in his own hands. Edric held it allodially under King Edward. It was then rated at 20 hides, now at 9 hides, save one virgate. In King Edward's time the arable land was 912 acres. In demesne there are 2 carucates, 8 villeins, and 4 cottagers, with 2 ploughs. Ralph the Rector holds the church of this manor, with one hide and half a virgate of land; and Rainald holds 2 hides and half a virgate. There is now one plough and a villein. The whole in King

Edward's time was valued at 15 pounds, and then at 12 pounds. It is now worth 10 pounds what the King has, what Ralph holds is worth 40 shillings, and what Rainald holds 30 shillings."

At the time of the Conquest, this parish had a large population, no less than seventy-eight males being mentioned in the survey. Now supposing that these were the *only* adult inhabitants, which was far from being the case, and allowing to each man a wife and five children, we get a population equal to that of Ilsley at the commencement of the present century. During the Saxon era, portions of this district were successively granted by monarchs to favourite individuals; thus king Ethelwulf, in 840, gives to Dundan "*decem Cassatos in loco qui dicitur Aysshedoune,*" and in 947, King Edred grants to Edrig, "*Viginti mansas libenter largiendo concedens perdonabo, illic ubi vulgus prisca relatione vocitat Aysshedoune.*" From the latter account it would seem that the old name of Æscesdune was then become more restricted; and we know that during the succeeding century it was solely applied to the present manor of Ashridge. Subsequently to the Conquest, we find no mention made of Nachededorne, but to this day a neighbouring hill bears the name of Thorndown, the valley between which and Ilsley, popular tradition points out as the site of an extensive town long since destroyed. This account is confirmed by the immense quantity of ancient bricks, tiles, and other building materials, that have been ploughed up in these fields. It is further reported that there were anciently three churches in and around Ilsley; one of which stood in Broad Street, the other on the summit of the hill overlooking the site of Nachededorne. There were growing on this spot, not many years since, two aged yew trees, said to have once flourished in the church-yard.

The town of East or Market Ilsley is partly situated in a pleasing valley, and partly on the northern declivity of a neighbouring hill, fifty-six miles due west of London. The turnpike-road from Newbury to Oxford, made in 1776, passing through the town, forms its chief thoroughfare, from which various other streets diverge. The principal is Broad Street, which was formerly the Market-place. The general appearance of the town has much improved of late, though there are now but very few good houses. Ilsley Hall, formerly the residence of Stephen Hemsted, Esq., M.D., was sold by him to the Tanners, who resold it to the present proprietor, Mrs. Williams. Ilsley House, now a seminary, was built by Dr. Kennett, rector of this parish. The manor farm-house, near the church, was anciently the seat of the Ildesles. Tradition reports that there once existed a nunnery on this very spot, but no mention in history is to be found of this monastic establishment. The character of the town is admirably described in the following lines, written many years ago:—

> "Ilsley remote amidst the Berkshire downs,
> Claims these distinctions o'er her sister towns;
> Far famed for sheep and wool, though not for spinners,
> For sportsmen, doctors, publicans, and sinners."

The name of this place is, as before stated, a corruption of the two Saxon words "hilde," battle or carnage, and "læy," a field. The orthography of the name was far from being settled in early times, as the following list of variations will testify.

Hildeslei,	Yldesleghe,	Ildesle,
Ildesleye,	Hildeslye,	Hildsly,
Uldesle,	Hyldesly,	Ilderly,
Hildesle,	Ildisle,	Eldisle,
Huldeslye,	Hildersley,	Illyslye,
Yldesle,	Hyldeslee,	Ilseley.

This town was formerly called Market Ilsley, but, with its once extensive trade, this appellation has almost become obsolete. Ilsley had anciently a very large corn-market, held weekly on Wednesday, which was, perhaps, in its prime about a century ago; and that the traffic was then very great, the immense number of old waggon-tracks across the neighbouring downs sufficiently indicate. The great bulk of the wheat was conveyed to Streatley, and thence by water to London. The market, however, gradually declined, and soon after the cutting of the Avon and Kennett Canal, in 1795, was virtually at an end. East Ilsley has been celebrated from time immemorial as a large market for sheep, a reputation it still maintains; being, with the exception of Smithfield, the greatest sheep mart in England. This extensive trade, which from a very remote period has been the support and glory of Ilsley, increased, rather than originated, with a royal charter, granted in 1620, by King James I. to Sir Francis Moore, allowing him the privilege of holding a weekly market "within his manor of East Illysley." Before this time, there was a very extensive trade carried on at Cuckhamsley-hill, "whither a great number of people were accustomed to resort almost daily, to buy, sell, barter, and exchange, corn, victuals, and other merchandize and goods." But since there appeared little hope of the new market at Ilsley continuing to flourish, so long as this powerful rival was suffered to remain, His Majesty prohibited "all persons from assembling at the aforesaid place, called Cutchinloe, to buy, sell, exchange, or deliver, corn, &c.," ordering that they should transact their business "at no other place but the town of East Illyslye aforesaid," upon pain of the royal displeasure. This had the desired effect, and the market at East Ilsley from that time continued gradually to increase. Sheep, doubtless from the nature of the dis-

trict, formed a prominent feature in this market, at an early period of its establishment. That a market had existed at Ilsley long previously to the time of James I. is evident from a passage in the Hundred Rolls of the reign of Henry III., stating that since the *new market* had been established here by Emeric de St. Amand, the king's market at Wallingford had been most seriously injured. This passage proves that even so early as 1240, there was a very large trade in corn carried on at this town. The sheep-markets have greatly increased within the last half-century, no less than 80,000 sheep having been penned here in one day, of which number 55,000 have been sold; the annual average is 400,000. The trade consists in lambs, teggs, wethers, and ewes, of the Hampshire, Cotswold, and Leicester breeds; many of which are bought by the Hertfordshire graziers, who fat them for the London market. The fairs are on the Wednesdays in Easter and Whitsun weeks, August 6th, August 26th, and the Wednesdays next after September 29th, October 17th, and November 12th. Markets are held every alternate Wednesday, from March to July, so that there are annually about fourteen fairs. A large wool-fair is held here in July, and a statute-fair on October 13th.

The living of East Ilsley is a rectory, rated in the king's books at £22 13*s.* 4*d.*, in the gift of Magdalene College, Oxford. In Pope Nicholas's Valor, it is rated at fifteen marks, and the pension of the Priest of Abingdon at six shillings. This church was given by a royal charter of King John, in the year 1199, to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, who presented to this living till the suppression of their order. In 1315, Lord St. Amand gave it to Robert de Clifton. The advowson belonged for many years to the family of Barnes, three of whom were incumbents. They sold it in 1771 to Brackley Kennett, Esq.,

an alderman of London, whose family resold it in 1829, to Magdalene College. The present incumbent is Rev. T. Loveday, B.D. Brackley Kennett, D.D., and his son of the same name, both held this living; the latter published a tract on the Abolition of Tithes, in which he suggested that each time an advowson changed hands, one-fourth of the purchase-money should be paid into a general fund; by which he calculated that, in the course of about a century, the whole of the tithes in this country would be redeemed! In 1351, John Campden, vicar of the Holy Trinity Church at Wallingford, changed livings with Walter Rynebell, Rector of Ilsley. Near the summit of the eminence on which the town is situated, stands the church, an ancient structure, dedicated to Saint Mary; consisting of a nave, chancel, and south aisle. The chancel exhibits a good specimen of the early English style, being lighted by five lancet windows of a chaste and elegant design: over that at the east end is a lozenge or circular light. On the apex of the roof is a handsome stone cross, representing two bones at right angles encircled with a band. It is evidently of Anglo-Norman design, and coeval with the church, which seems to have been erected between the reign of King John and the year 1240. The nave and south aisle contains specimens of three different styles of architecture, the windows of the latter being narrow lancet-shaped. The nave and south aisle are separated by three massive arches, which, though slightly pointed, approach very near to the Anglo-Norman style; the pillars also are circular, with square capitals and pediments, ornamented with the chevron and other corresponding designs. This edifice was evidently erected at a period when the circular arch was gradually giving way to the pointed style; the whole character of the nave, heavy, massive, and rude, indicates the lingering remains

of Anglo-Norman architecture; the walls incline considerably outwards on the interior, a proof of their great antiquity. Near the pulpit is a window of peculiar design, having a 'label,' terminating in the figures of two human heads, representing a monk and a nun, which is evidently a work of the fifteenth century. The north door is remarkable, being surrounded by a deep hollow moulding, ornamented with globular 'beads.' The tower, a low battlemented structure of far more modern date, seems to have been engrafted on a Norman base, as the time-worn steps, reaching only to the first floor, with a fine circular archway, seem to indicate. On a stone in the belfry appears the date 1625, with the initials W. A. S. In the loft above is a very ancient clock, said to have been made by a blacksmith of Ilsley. There is a peal of five melodious bells, the largest of which, weighing nineteen hundredweight, bears this inscription, "Richard Wightick gave this Bell, 1625." This donation seems to have been given on the completion of the new tower in that year. The second bell has this motto in old English characters, "Prayse ye the Lorde, 1589." On the third are these words, "This Bell was made 1012." These letters being Roman and not the old English character, this date was either intended for the year 1612, or else we are to understand that this was re-cast from a more ancient bell made in the eleventh century. The font, evidently coeval with the church, is octagonal, with a series of circular arches. In the nave are three ancient oak stalls, having the arms of Ildesle carved in relievo, which are doubtless older than the Reformation. The pulpit is a beautiful specimen of carved wood, concealed by a tawdry red-cloth, bearing this inscription, "The gift of Brackley Kennett, Esq., Lord-Mayor of London, 1780." The royal arms are of the time of Charles II. In the chancel is a marble monument to

the memory of Rev. Joseph Barnes, A.M., rector of this parish, who died in 1753, aged seventy-nine. In the aisle, near the pulpit, is an ancient brass plate with the effigy of a female, and at her feet this inscription in Latin, which has been deservedly admired for its pathos and simplicity.

"Anno 1606, January 7th.

"Oh Hildsley! wife of a departed husband, thou here liest dead; this marble encloses the remains of the widow and the spouse. Thou survivedst thy William 30 years, and exceeding him, sixteen lustres being accomplished thou also fallest! Of a single family of eleven children born to this parent, three sons and four daughters still remain; of whom, shining with a virgin's diadem, Catherine, the mother's youngest child, hath to her, by this monument, shewn herself grateful."

Ashmole gives the Latin epitaph at length, with a loose translation.

Between the church-porch and the gate, stood formerly two venerable yew trees of considerable size, but they have long since been destroyed. The parochial registers are wanting for the first hundred years, the earliest beginning in 1653, from which time they are perfect. On the first page is this entry respecting a registrar, appointed by the parishioners in the days of confusion: "Martin Westall was swome Registrer of East Ilseley, the 19th day of November, 1653; by mee Humfrey Dolman." The entries of marriages for the first few years are singular, as shewing the bigotry of those fanatical times. "1654, the first of March, ——— and ——— bothe of East Illyslye, weare marryed, haveing beene three severall market days published, no man contradictinge; by mee Humfrey Dolman. Published by mee Martin Westall, in the presence of us ———, ———."

It is commonly reported that the great plague reached

Ilsley, and cut off half the inhabitants, who were buried in a pit at the west end of the churchyard. We cannot expect to find all the deaths recorded during such an awful visitation, but the following entry corroborates the tradition: "1666, William Huet buryed January 15th, att night." The charities left to the poor of this parish are but few, and these have been shamefully neglected. Many years ago, some person unknown gave £50 to necessitous paupers; but this charity, if not wholly lost, is shamefully misapplied; the last account stated that it was reduced to £25, and R. Adnam was then trustee. John Head, Esq., bequeathed a large tract of furze-ground to the poor for fuel. It will now be necessary to take a short review of the few distinguished natives and residents connected with the annals of East Ilsley.

The ancient family of Ildesle, or Hildesley, as deriving their name from this parish, where they long possessed an estate, claims pre-eminence. In a list of the Berkshire gentry, holding land worth a hundred shillings per annum, in the time of Edward I., occurs the name of John de Ildesle; and in a similar catalogue, compiled A.D. 1434, three of this family, Thomas, Henry, and John de Ildesle, are mentioned. In the year 1318, Edmund de Ildesle was presented to the church of Peasemore, by Sir Robert de Ildesle, lord of that manor. Isabel, wife of this Robert, who was the widow of Sir Richard Handlo, possessed lands at Shotover and Headington, near Oxford. John de Ildesle was made one of the Barons of the Exchequer in 1332, and another of the same name was chaplain, or confessor, to Edward III.; the latter was presented, in 1307, to the church of Pusey, by the king in council at Westminster. Richard de Ildesle, "clicus in minoribus ordinibus," was made rector of Catmere in 1302. One of this family, Cristian de Hildesley, who was sub-prioress of the

nunnery at Ambresbury, had a pension of £6 13*s.* 4*d.* allotted her at the dissolution. A branch of this family quitted Ilsley for Beenham, as early as 1376, and at a later period there were Hildesleys of Oakingham, Brimpton, &c.

"On two brass plates," says Ashmole, "fixed on a gravestone at East Hendred, in the chancel, are engraved the figures of two monks in their usual habits, and under their feet this inscription: "Hic jacent Henricus Eldysley et Rogerus Eldysley frater ejus, quondam mercatores istius ville. Qui quidem Rogerus obiit 27 die Aug: Anno Dom: MCCCCXXXIX. Quorum anima propicietur Deus, Amen." One of these figures still remains, but the hair and habit at once prove that the interred were no monks, but merely merchants of East Ilsley. Anthony Wood thus mentions one of this family: "A.D. 1527, Bachelor of Divinity, 15 supplicated and only 9 admitted; among whom John Hylsey, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, was one." This prelate succeeded the unfortunate Fisher, beheaded in 1535, and continued bishop of that diocese till his death in 1540. The same biographer thus notices another of this family: "A.D. 1532, Father Richard Hylsey, a Dominican, supplicated to be Doctor of Divinity, and he was afterwards admitted."

The Hildesleys (for so they at length spelt their name) continued to occupy a manor in this parish till about the middle of the seventeenth century, when they removed to Little Stoke, Oxon; before which time, however, some of the family were settled at Crowmarsh, in that county. William Hildesley, Esq., whose monument is in the church, died A.D. 1576; his wife Margaret, the daughter of John Stonor, Esq., of North Stoke, surviving him thirty years: they had a large family of eleven children, the eldest of whom, Walter, married Dorothy, daughter of Humphrey Burdett, Esq., of Sonning. There were also

Mary, Margaret, Cicely, and Catherine, the former of whom was the wife of R. Williamson, of Queen's College, Oxford, Gent.; the latter, according to Guillim, died unmarried: in fact, from the expression in the epitaph of the Hildesleys, "virginaria radians Katharina corolla," she seems to have taken the veil and led a monastic life. John Hildesley was in the commission of the peace, A.D. 1601. Francis Hildesley, Esq., born in 1617, married Mary, daughter of Henry Winchcombe, of Bucklebury, by whom he had a son named William, born 1653. William Moore, of Ilsley, grandfather to the celebrated lawyer of that name, married Isabella de Ildesle: Mary, coheiress of William Hildesley, of Little Stoke, was the wife of Robert Eyston, Esq., and they had a son, named George Hildesley Eyston. The Hildesleys, as well as the Moores and other families, with whom they intermarried, adhered to the Catholic religion long after the Reformation: Francis Hildesley, son of William, was a Jesuit. In an ancient MS. kindly lent me by Charles Eyston, Esq., of Hendred House, is the following passage:—"1687, The Company who were here at the opening of the Chappell (at Hendred) were Sir Henry More of Fawley and his family, Mr. John Massey, actually then Deane of Christ Church, in Oxon, Mr. Hildesly of Little Stoake and his brother Martin, with some other Catholic Gentlemen." I cannot do better than quote here another passage from the same old document, respecting the Prince of Orange passing through these parts, on his route towards London, in 1688: "From the time of the Chappell being opened till the Prince of Orange came in, and invaded the nation; it was open to all comers and goers; the Blessed Sacrament constantly kept with a Lamp burning, and Mass dayly celebrated in it. But when he and his army passed over the Golden myle, some loose fellows (whether by orders or

not, I cannot tell) came hyther, went into the Chappell, pretended to mock the priest by supping out of the Chalice; which they would have taken away had it been silver, as they themselves afterwards gave out: however haveing torne down the *Jesus Maria* from the Altar, they retired takeing an old suite of Churche Stuffe with them to Oxford; where they drest up a Mawkin with it, and set it up there on the Topp of a Bon fyre. This happened on Monday December 11th 1688 and this is alle the mischiefe they did besides breaking the Lampe, and carrying away the Sanctus bell." A tradition is still preserved at West Ilsley, that the Prince passed through this village in going from Farnborough to Hendred: the Golden Mile is a straight green road, leading from that place towards West Ilsley downs. But to return to the Hildesley family, who, after the middle of the seventeenth century, had little or no connection, otherwise than by name, with East Ilsley. Mark Hildesley, a member of this family, was an alderman of London, and representative of that city during the civil war: this gentleman had two sons, one of whom, Mark, a bencher of Lincoln's Inn, was grandfather of Mark Hildesley, Bishop of Sodor and Man, who died in 1772. The Mores, or Moores, of Ilsley and Fawley, were originally of Burghfield, where they had been settled from a very early period. William More is mentioned in the list of gentry made in the time of Henry VI. Edward Moore, of this place, only son of William and Isabell, married Elizabeth, coheiress of J. Hull, Esq., of Tylehurst, by whom he had only one son, the celebrated lawyer, Sir Francis Moore, who was born at East Ilsley in 1558. Of this distinguished man, Wood gives the following account:—"He was born at East Hildersly, or Ilderly, near Wantage, educated in grammar learning at Reading, entered a commoner of St. John's College,

Oxford, in 1574, continued there till near batchelor's standing, when he retired to the Middle Temple, where, after severe encounters had with the crabbed parts of the municipal law, he became a barrister; and noted for his great proficiency in his profession, and integrity in his dealings. In the latter end of Queen Elizabeth and beginning of King James, he was several times elected a burgess to sit in Parliament (for the borough of Reading, &c.). At length, paying the last debt to nature on 20th November, 1621, aged 63, he was buried in a vault under the church of Great Fawley, in which his posterity, who are baronets residing in that parish, have been since and are hitherto interred; as I have been instructed by his grandson, Sir Henry Moore, Bart." In 1613 he was, according to Wood, actually created M.A. in the House of Convocation at Oxford. In Parliament he was a frequent speaker, having distinguished himself no less by his oratory than his writings. He was standing counsel and under steward to the University of Oxford, and in 1614 made one of his Majesty's serjeants-at-law. In March, 1616, he received the honour of knighthood from King James I., at Theobalds; and in 1620 he obtained a charter from that monarch, granting him the privilege of holding a weekly market at East Ilsley. After his decease several of his law works were published, of which the "Reports" are most appreciated. The armorial bearings of this family were confirmed, in 1569, to Nicholas Moore, of the Inner Temple, Esq. Besides Ilsley and Fawley, the Moores also possessed the manors of Balsdon, Maidencourt, and Weston. Sir Francis married Anne, heiress of William Twidy, Esq., of Boreham in Essex, by whom he had five sons and five daughters. Henry, the eldest, born 1596, was created a baronet in 1627: he died in 1635, when his son, of the same name,

succeeded to the title and estates. His grandson, Sir Richard Moore, was the third baronet, who dying unmarried, his brother, Sir John Moore, succeeded. He sold Fawley in 1765 to the Vansittarts, Ilsley having long previously passed into other hands. Sir John dying childless in 1790, another brother, Sir Thomas Moore, became the fifth baronet; but he dying in 1807, without issue, the title and family became extinct. The daughter of the first baronet was the wife of Sir Matthew Hale, Lord Chief Justice. The mansion of this family at Ilsley stood on the site of the present Hall.

Amongst the very few eminent rectors of this parish, Richard Wightwicke, B.D., claims pre-eminence. He was descended from a very ancient Staffordshire family, branches of which left their native county about the beginning of the seventeenth century, and settled at Ilsley, and Marlston, in Berkshire. "Wightwick," says an old writer, "hath given name to a family who have long been owners of it. The first that I have met with is William de Wictewyke, who had a daughter named Julian. She had a son called Osbertus, A.D. 1302, which Osbert had issue Simon; from whom is descended Francis Wightwick, Esq., the present owner of the place; from this family are descended the Wightwicks of Berkshire." Their original armorial bearings were altered to their later coat, and confirmed, in 1613. Richard Wightwick, who also held the living of Hampstead Norreys, has immortalized his name by his munificent bequest to Pembroke College, Oxford, of which he is justly esteemed the co-founder. Thomas Teesdale, a tanner by trade, who had amassed a large fortune by farming at Stanford Dingley, dying in 1610, left £8,000 to Abingdon School, for establishing certain scholarships in Oxford. The trustees offered this bequest to Baliol, but that college having declined, the

charity lay neglected some years. At length Richard Wightwick having offered to make over certain of his estates, it was determined to raise a very ancient hall, called Broadgate, to the rank and condition of a college. It was founded in 1624, James I. ordering it to be called the foundation of the King, at the cost and charges of R. Wightwick and T. Teesdale; styling himself the father, the Earl of Pembroke, godfather, and the real founders the foster parents! Wightwick's foundation was for three fellows and four scholars, two of each to be chosen from his own kindred; the others from Abingdon school.

Fuller, in his "Worthies," thus mentions the co-founder of Pembroke: "Richard Wightwick, B.D., was rector of East Ilsley; what was the yearly value of his living I know not, and have cause to think it not very great; however, one would conjecture his benefice a bishopric, by his bounty to Pembroke College, to which he gave one hundred pounds per Annum. When he departed this life is to me unknown." He died before 1630, having, among other benefactions, given the great bell in Ilsley tower. In the College hall is a fine ancient portrait of the Co-founder, habited in a ruff, scull-cap, and gown, with a long flowing beard. Lyson states, that "being possessed of the manor of Marlstone, he left the fee of it to the college; he, or one of his successors in the estate, charging it with an annuity of £70 per Annum." Rev. Joseph Barnes, his successor in this living, was sequestered during the Commonwealth, when he suffered great hardships and privations, of which Walker gives the following account: "He had been bred at Magdelene Hall, in Oxford; articles were preferred against him by some of his parishioners, to the commissioners who sat at Abingdon, in May 1654, the contents of which were deposed on oath at another session of those commissioners at Speenham-

land, the 30th of the following month; at which time he was sequestered, and his non-appearance alleged as the reason of it, although several of the principal inhabitants went there at his request, and certified that he was disabled from coming thither by having his leg broken; which to observe, was done by one Edmund Allen, a merciless Zealot of those times, who came out of the Lamb Inn at Ilsly, and threatened to do the parson's business, and immediately with a kick broke his leg. Besides these depositions which they made, they carried with them a certificate, signed by more than a third part of the parishioners, acquitting him of these allegations brought against him. He had, at the time of his sequestration, a wife and 7 children, to whom the commissioners did, on a petition at their next meeting, grant an order of fifths, but on no other condition than that Mr. Barnes should depart with his whole family out of the parish, which he chose to do rather than starve. But alas! this would not help him, for his godly successor, Mr. John Francis, utterly refused to pay the fifths. Necessity obliged Mr. Barnes not to desist upon one denial, and to make sure of succeeding in his next application, he sent one of his little daughters to him, hoping such an innocent object of charity might move the wretch to compassion. But neither did this method succeed, for when this poor little creature to inform her request, and if possible move his pity, told him that without it they must all starve, the relentless wretch, from his heart of adamant, returned her this barbarous answer, 'That starving was as near as any way to Heaven,' and surely murder and oppression are as near as any way to another place. Mr. Barnes, however, did not go to Heaven in that manner before the year 1660, because soon after that time the relentless Usurper of his bread was forced to leave the country, for fear of being compelled to pay for some of it."

Richard Huet, or Hewett, an ancestor of mine, succeeded Joseph Barnes in this living, to which he had been restored in 1661; he continued rector of Ilsley till 1678, and was succeeded by another Joseph Barnes, who died in 1753, when Robert Barnes became incumbent on his own presentation. The peasantry relate a remarkable tradition respecting an army of soldiers, quartered on the downs between Ilsley and Compton, which is confirmed by the following passage in Walker's 'Historical Discourses.' "Upon Sunday, 18th May, 1644, our army marched from Reading, and had their rendezvous on the downs near Compton; and quartered about that place and towards Wantage, His Majesty that night returning to Oxford." The following quotation from a scarce tract, called "Iter Carolinum," written by one of the king's attendants, also corroborates this well-preserved tradition. "1644, May 17th, Charles I. having slept that and the preceeding night at Coley, near Reading, marched 13 miles to a place called Compton, and there dined; and then marched to Oxford to Supper and Bed." At the bottom of that well-known eminence, Gore-hill, stood in former times a fine old mansion, occupied for many years by H.R.H. William Duke of Cumberland, brother to King George II. This magnificent house, called Kates, or Keats Gore, from having been built by that family, was taken down about sixty years ago. The site of these extensive premises can still be discerned, and when these vestiges shall be no more, a deep well will point out this spot to the remotest posterity. Some of the old pales were standing so late as 1812, and this down is still called "the park." Here was a range of commodious stables, built by the duke for his running horses, which were kept here for training on the neighbouring downs. Close to the site of the old mansion, is a large enclosed ground, called "the Gore," from an old

British word, signifying an " emparked field," where it is said that famous race-horse Eclipse, the glory of the English course, first drew his breath, on April 1st., 1764. All that can be said in confirmation of this report is, that Eclipse was bred by the duke; who dying in 1765, his entire stud, including this wonderful horse, Herod, Marske, Milksop, Childers, and other famous steeds, was brought to the hammer. The Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., when a young man, much wished to purchase these stables, but so exceedingly had the proprietor, Mr. Head, been annoyed by the servants of the duke, that he shortly levelled the entire premises with the ground. The race-course formed by the duke was, till lately, apparent on Prestall Down, but it is now destroyed by the plough. There is a spot still called the Rubbing-house. Race-horses still are, and have been for many years, kept at East Ilsley for training; the turf of the adjacent downs being considered quite equal to Newmarket. Annual races, discontinued about forty years ago, were formerly held here. The northern part of the town forms a distinct tything called *Norborough*, which is an extra-manorial district belonging to West Compton. There are still, as in early times, just ten households in this tything; each of which pays an annual quit-rent to the lord paramount of the hundred. This is evidently a relic of the old feudal system. About two hundred acres of down belong to the inhabitants at large, as a cow common. The cows feed on this down from Easter till September, when they have the right of grazing for one month in the common-fields. A large horse common, called Banager Scrubs, belonging to the town, has been ploughed up for some years: this name, from the Saxon *ban*, " slaughter," and *aker*, " a field," seems to intimate that some bloody battle has been fought on this spot, an idea confirmed by a very ancient

sword discovered here a short time since. The handle of this weapon, which, though broken, measured sixteen inches in length, was entwined with a quantity of gold-wire; its whole appearance was unique, the hilt turning upwards towards the blade. Ilsley and its vicinity have ever been noted as a fine country for sporting, a reputation by no means diminished at the present day, every kind of field-sport, but more especially hare-hunting, for which the open downs are admirably adapted, being prosecuted with unusual ardour. Coursing meetings, supported by the leading gentry of the county, were held here for many years. This club was established in 1802, but the first cup was not given till the year 1806; the annexed being a list of the winning dogs.

1806. Lord Rivers' 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 Gelart
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 Pidgeon
1822. Ensworth's Eliza
1823. Long's Lufra
1824. Simmonds's Speedy
1825. Graham's Guelph
1826. Slipper's Snail
1827. Ensworth's W. B.

COMPTON.

" Rex ten : Contone in dñio : Rex E : ten : Ibi iij hid : una virg : min : Terra est viij car : In dñio ij sunt car : et vij villi et xij bord : cum vj car : Ibi iij serui et iiij acc̄pti. Silua de iij porc : Hanc silua ten : Henric : de Ferreres. T. R. E. et post valuit vj lib : modo viij lib :"

" *Epis : Constant : Goisfrid : ten : Contone. Oda ten : de rege E. Tc defend : se p : v. hid : modo p : ij hid : et dimid : Terra e in dñio sunt ij car et IX villi et iiij bord : cum v. car : Ibi v serui. Silua de x porc : T. R. E. et post val : iiij lib : modo c sol :*"—DOMESDAY.

One of the two manors in this parish, at the time of the survey, comprising 3 hides, and valued at 8 pounds, was in the Conqueror's own hands. The arable land, including the demesne, was 608 acres, and there were 7 villeins, and 12 borderers, with 6 ploughs; besides 3 servile, and 4 free tenants. Henry de Ferrers held the woodland, which would feed 3 pigs. The other manor, comprising 5 hides, was held under Bishop Constance by Goisfred, and valued at 100 shillings; in demesne there were 152 acres, 9 villeins, 4 borderers, and 5 servile tenants, with 5 ploughs: the woodland would feed ten pigs. The village, situated in a secluded valley, from whence it derives its name, is divided into two hamlets, called as the manors, East and West Compton: the latter, now the largest, was formerly written with the adjunct *Parva;* being in ancient times also called " Compton Juxta Ildesle," to distinguish it from another place of that name in Berkshire. West Compton, the paramount manor of the hundred, was held as early as 1205 by Ralph Gernu, who paid for it a relief of 25 shillings to King John. During the thirteenth century it belonged to the Somerys, and at a remoter period, to the noble family of Ferrars de Chartley, under whom, in the time of Henry III., it was held by William de Bello Campo. The Priory of Kington, in Wiltshire, had an estate here during the same period. Before the fourteenth century, the Bishops of Bath and Wells had also an estate in West Compton, valued in the Valor at £4 5*s.* 0*d.* After the Dissolution,

the *manor* was granted by the Crown to that see, and in their hands it still remains, having been held on lease for many years by the ancient family of Potenger. This manor belonged, as early as 1316, to Philip de la Beche, whose brother Thomas died seised of it in 1332. After being in the possession of several other members of that family, it came to the Langfords, of Aldworth: Edward Langford, Esq., died seised of it in 1475. The present lord paramount is the Rev. R. Potenger. The Priory of Poghley had a large estate here, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which was given to that monastery by Thomas, the son of Richard de Bocland, before A.D. 1249. The southern part of West Compton, now called Cheseridge, is described in ancient records as the manor of "Cuserugg." This estate was given, in 1311, by the Abbot of Waverley, to that monastery, for the support of a chantry in the conventual church, wherein daily prayers for his and the King's souls were to be said. The termination "rugg," as in Colerugg, Hartrugg, &c., is synonymous with our modern "ridge."

The manor of East Compton, so early as the twelfth century, belonged to Gilbert de Tileres, to whose father it was granted by King Henry II., being then valued at £12. Joanna, daughter of this Gilbert, brought it in marriage to Thomas Mallmains, who died in 1219. The Benedictine Nunnery at Wherwell, in Hampshire, had a very large estate here as early as 1291, valued in Pope Nicholas's Taxation in that year at £13 15*s*. In 1270, the abbot is stated to have appropriated to himself "furcas et assias panis," without the King's licence, and contrary to the royal dignity. The manor at a very early period belonged to the Somerys, but it does not appear that the Musgros ever possessed it, though they certainly had a large estate here as early as the time of Edward I.

John de Musgros died seised of certain lands, but not the *manor*, in 1275. Hawise, daughter of Robert, his son, brought this estate in marriage to the noble family of Ferrars de Chartley, in whose hands it continued till the fifteenth century. The manor belonged before 1316 to Philip de la Beche, in whose descendants it continued many years. Edmund, Arch-deacon of Berks, dying in 1371, left it to his nephews, the Langfords, and in their hands it continued till the sixteenth century. Some lands in this manor were given as part of the dowry of Alice, daughter of John de la Beche, to Robert Danvers, who died seised of this estate in 1363. The manor having reverted to the crown, was granted by Queen Elizabeth to the Heads of Langley, in whose descendants it continued for nearly two centuries, when Sir Walter James sold it to the present proprietor, J. T. Wasey, Esq. The reputed manor of Stokes, which in Queen Elizabeth's time belonged to Sir John Norris, of Yattingdon, came then to the Heads, and afterwards to their relative, Mrs. Heywood. It is now the property of John Brown, Esq., of Chiseldon, Wilts, who acquired it with the heiress of Edward Lee, Esq.; he purchased it of Rev. Head Pottinger, vicar of Compton, whose father married Mrs. Heywood's niece. It is now called Roden farm, the old name of Stokes having become obsolete, excepting as regards a large meadow and barn, so called to this day. There is a fine old mansion on this estate, called Roden House. The great tithes, which pertained formerly to the abbey of Reading, and afterwards to the Heads, now belong to Mrs. Pottinger, and by marriage to the families of Best and Palmer.

Close to the village are some fields, called "Bishops," which form part of the original estate belonging to the see of Bath and Wells. A very ancient building, called "Bishop's barn," which was doubtless five hundred years

old, was blown down by a tempest during the past year. It is said to have been formerly a Catholic chapel, and to have stood in Stock's meadow, a tradition confirmed by an immense quantity of human skeletons found near this spot a few years since. The only ancient families connected with Compton from a distant period are the Pottingers and Smiths : the former of whom were settled here before the sixteenth century. A branch of this family, residing at Midgham, were returned as gentlemen bearing arms in the Berkshire visitation of 1664. The following extract from the register refers to the tax imposed in the time of William III.: " 1695. Richard Pottinger, son of John and Anne, baptized; the first who was taxed at his entrance into the world in this parish." The Smiths, during the sixteenth century, were very numerous at Compton, no less than eight Richard Smiths being mentioned as contemporary, who were styled for distinction, of ' Byss-hops,' ' ye Ewetree,' ' Moneyes,' ' the Parsonage,' ' Wallingford Street,' of ' Stoakes,' and ' at the Weyer.' There exists no *weir* at the present day, but a cottage so called still points out the locality. John Smith, who died in 1569, is described as of Turfield, or Turberfield. In 1618, Thomas Huat, or Hewett, is stated in the register to have married " Ellin, daughter of Richard of the Weare," whose sister was the wife of Edmund Stampe, Esq., of Hodcott, as appears by this entry : " 1607, Edmond Stampe, son of Stephen, of West Ilsley, and Jane Smyth, daughter of John of the Weyar, marryed." In 1633 is recorded a marriage between William Smith and Ursula Fettiplace, and in the Herald's visitation of 1566, Richard Stampe, of Hodcott, Gent., is stated to have married the daughter of Thomas Smith, of Compton. These alliances with two of the best Berkshire families prove that the Smiths were at that period of no little importance. As early as 1316,

they held more land in this hundred than any other family, Richard Smyte being described as of Compton, and John Smyte as of West Ilsley. In the register, frequent mention is made of "Richard Smith, the parson," who died at a very advanced age in 1645. One of two conclusions must be deduced, either that he was merely curate, or else that he succeeded Richard Gatskell in this living A.D. 1568, and was ejected in Queen Elizabeth's time for nonconformity. His son, also styled *the parson*, died the next year after his father.

The living of Compton is a vicarage, in the gift of J. T. Wasey, Esq., rated in the king's books at £11 14*s.* 4½*d.*, and in Pope Nicholas's Valor at 20 marks. In ancient times the advowson belonged to the abbey of Wherwell, being annexed to the prebendal church of Goodsworth. In 1333, Robert de Borbach was presented by King Edward III. to this living. There was anciently a chantrey, or chapel, annexed to this church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, to which Henry le Gayte was presented by the abbot of Wherwell in 1309. In 1683, the king presented Nehemiah Davis, A.M., to this living. John Head, Esq., was patron in 1703, and in 1779, Sir Thomas Head, Kt. None of the clergy have been men of any celebrity. Joseph Nixon, B.D., Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, was inducted in 1608, and in 1767, Henry Peach resigned to Morgan Graves, M.A. The registers have been well preserved, the earliest beginning in 1553; from which time till the year 1609, all the entries were transcribed by Rev. Joseph Nixon, then rector, as appears by the title-page, beautifully written on parchment. On the same leaf is added this epigram on a register by Rev. — Chenell, who was curate in 1621.

"Nos iunxit Christo Christi Baptisma, Sepulchra;
Nostra anima est Virgo, suppetit illa viru;"

which may be thus translated into English verse:—

> "Our Christian Baptism, and terrestrious Bed,
> Join us with Christ, whom Death hath captive led;
> Man's soul a Virgin is, most meet to be
> His spouse through life, to all eternity."

The church, a very ancient structure, dedicated to St. Mary, stands considerably to the north of the due east point, and to the south of the west; a singularity which may thus be explained. On the foundation of a church in ancient times, the vigil of the dedication feast was observed with great solemnity, and towards that point in the horizon where the sun arose the next morning, the chancel was invariably directed. This edifice being dedicated to St. Mary, whose feast-day was July 22nd, the sun would that morning, of course, rise considerably northwards of the due east point; which accounts for the irregularity in the situation of this church. The chancel is of the reign of Henry II., having at the east end two lancet windows with rounded heads; the nave is also of the early English style, but several large windows have been inserted at a later period. The tower, on which appears the date 1614, is a substantial structure, in the Tudor style of the sixteenth century. There is a peal of six bells, on which are the following rhymes:—

> "I mean to make it understood,
> That though I'm little, I am good."

> "Good people all who hear us ring,
> Be faithful to your God, and King."

> "Such wondrous power to Music 's given,
> It elevates the Soul to Heaven."

> "Ye ringers all that prize your health, and happiness,
> Be sober, merry, wise, and you will them possess."

On the fifth is the maker's name, with the date, 1775; when the whole peal was recast. In the masonry, on the

north side of the nave, appear three pointed arches, which, being now filled up, form the wall of the church. These arches seem to have once connected the nave with the chantrey before mentioned, which has long since been destroyed. On the south side of the chancel is a beautiful piscina, and under an arch against the opposite wall, an ancient altar tomb, richly carved, used in the days of Popery for exhibiting the Paschall during Lent, and other ceremonies. The painting of the royal arms, bearing date 1698, is much defaced. In the aisle is a brass plate, with effigies of a man and his wife, with this epitaph: "Of your charite pray for the soules of Richard Pygott and Alys his wyf; on whose soules, and all Christen soules, Jesu have mercy." The man, habited in a long loose gown trimmed with fur, seems to have been a brother of some guild; the female is dressed in her usual attire, with the immense angular head-dress of the fifteenth century. There are several neat monuments to the Pottingers, Palmers, and Allens: within the communion rails is a small stone, with this epitaph: "Johannes Pococke A.M. Vir pius, probus, benevolus, imitare," who died vicar of Compton, A.D. 1767. In the churchyard are the remains of a small stone cross. Several human skeletons, perhaps of heretics, have been found in gardens adjoining the churchyard; and in digging graves, others have been observed lying due north and south, the remains probably of Quakers, or some such fanatics, who formerly abounded in these parts. Between the church and West Compton is a level field, called the *Butts*, from archery having been practised here in former days. On the north side of the village is a large tract of low arable land, called "The Slad," from the Saxon *Slæd*, signifying a valley between two hills. During agricultural operations in these fields, innumerable quantities of Roman coins, of Gratian, Valens, Probus, Valentinian,

Constantine, and other emperors, have been brought to light. When the old mere banks were levelled at the time of the enclosure of this manor, about thirty years ago, an immense number of Roman antiquities were discovered; and yet there are no indications of any earthworks, or buildings, such as we usually observe at these spots. Most of the coins, which are called by the villagers "slad farthings," are of copper, and small size, but generally in admirable preservation. Many of the larger brass, some silver coins, and others plated with that metal, have also been found. Popular tradition points out this spot as the site of an extensive town; a statement confirmed by the immense number of bricks, tiles, human bones, fragments of antique pottery, and other relics, which have been discovered here. This town was undoubtedly occupied, if not by the Roman legions, at least by the native Britons, who, from their more polished conquerors, had acquired the arts and luxuries of civilized life. As some labourers were making a ditch a few years ago, they discovered, about three feet below the surface, a square floor of chalk, having in one corner a large heap of cinders and charcoal: they also found a quern, or millstone, some tesseræ, a bronze penate, a stilus, and other relics of undoubted Roman formation. Stone celts, earthen vessels, and various utensils, have also been exhumed; all conspiring to prove that some settlement of the Romanized Britons once existed in this valley. Sir Richard Colt Hoare gives the following account of his visit to this spot: "From Ilsley we continued our journey over the Ridgeway, and passed through the village of Compton, where, in a field called Slade, several Roman coins have been found. It was now covered with corn, which prevented my personal investigation; but I fortunately encountered the owner of it, who told me that he

had frequently dug up coins; and that several wells (as he called them) had fallen in at different times in this field." Roman coins have also been discovered in the fields between Compton and Cheseridge. In the woods adjacent to the Cow-down, a great quantity of curious iron horse-shoes have been picked up, which the peasantry state belonged to the cavalry of the French when they invaded England! These shoes are remarkably small, and of peculiar shape, having on each side only three holes for the insertion of the nails. When grubbing a large wood called Vaullen Grove, situated between the Cow-down and Cheseridge Copse, an immense number of these singular shoes were discovered. The Normans first introduced the art of shoeing, the Romans using thongs instead of nails, which, confirmed by the tradition, seems to prove that these shoes belonged to the horses of that warlike people. During the civil war Compton was frequently visited by the royal and parliamentary troops: King Charles I. dined here on Sunday, 18th May, 1644. The Parliamentarians were quartered here on November 2nd, in the same year, having slept at Compton that night, and marched the next morning to Blewbury.

In the night succeeding the second battle of Newbury, on October 27th, the whole royal army, headed by Prince Maurice, and accompanied by the artillery and baggage, passed through this village, in their route to Wallingford; Sir Humphrey Bennett, with his brigade of horse, bringing up the rear. On a conspicuous eminence, called the Cow-down, is an ancient British entrenchment of a circular form, enclosing within the area upwards of eight acres; it is called Perborough Castle, a name evidently derived from the two Saxon words *per*, a "rampart or agger," and *burgh*, a "fortified place." The fosse has been destroyed on the south and east sides, but at the

north-east corner, where seems to have been the entrance, it is uncommonly perfect. Within the area are several deep circular pits, made either for containing water (there being no spring in the vicinity), or else, as seems more probable, as granaries for stowing away the unthrashed corn. This ancient earth-work corresponds precisely with the accounts given by classic historians of the fortifications of the ancient Britons; thus, Cæsar says, "When they have enclosed a spot in their impenetrable woods by means of a fosse and rampart, they call it a town, whither, on the approach of enemies, they are accustomed, for the sake of avoiding a regular battle, to assemble." Strabo confirms this account, adding, that within the circular entrenchment they also built stables for their cattle. Elevated ridges and depressions of the turf point out the sites of the original habitations, not only within the area of the camp, but also over the whole down. Ashes, cinders, and a fused substance resembling clinkers, are also everywhere discoverable by digging; so that it seems evident this extensive place was once consumed by fire: probably this conflagration may have been the work of the inhabitants, who, on the approach of enemies, not unfrequently set fire to their towns. So abundant are these clinkers and other fused substances, that in some places the soil is rendered quite red, as though beacons had been lighted on this conspicuous spot. Remains of buildings have been discovered on the east side, constructed entirely of immense flint stones, without any mortar. The badgers, and foxes also, in making their burrows, frequently scratch out fragments of bricks and tiles; in fact, by thrusting down an iron bar, stone foundations are everywhere discoverable. On the south side of the camp is a spot which, on being struck with some heavy implement, sounds hollow below; this the peasantry believe is

a subterranean passage, which they suppose extends hence to Banterwick!

Fragments of a peculiar mixed metal, and rude unbaked pottery, moulded by the hand, are also everywhere to be found: these vessels are evidently of British formation; but I have also discovered pieces of fine Roman pottery in the fields on the north side of the camp. As a labourer was ploughing on this spot some years since, he discovered an earthen vessel full of ancient coins, which he secretly disposed of; but there can be little doubt that these coins were Roman. This, and the fact, that remains of that mighty people are frequently ploughed up in the fields on the south side of the Cowdown, must convince us that this entrenchment was occupied by the Romans, as well as the aborigines of the island. The regular elevations of the turf extending over the greater part of this hill indicate that the town, once existing on this delightful spot, was a very considerable and well-populated place. The chief entrance to the town was from the north-east, where a wide street may still be discerned. On the summit of the hill, where are several more circular pits, runs the old British road, called by the common people Grim's-ditch, which may be traced by a circuitous route through West wood, and near Turville, to Beche Farm, whence it proceeds towards the Thames. It seems probable that the original town stood wholly within the area of the camp, in the manner described by Cæsar; but on the subjugation of this district by the Romans, the inhabitants at length began to build without the entrenchment, upon the open downs. In early times this must have been an impregnable stronghold, for not only is the situation advantageous, and the vallum of great strength, but all around the entrenchment, ramparts and other outworks are still discernible.

Sir R. C. Hoare gives the following graphical account of this remarkable spot:—"East or Market Ilsley was destined for our nightly quarters, and in my way thither I again passed through the village of Compton, having heard of some antiquities in its neighbourhood. These are situated about a mile and a-half to the south-west of the village, on an eminence adjoining to a wood. On ascending the hill I immediately recognized British ground, and an ancient settlement of the Britons was decidedly marked by excavations, banks of enclosures, and the extraordinary verdure with which the whole of the hill was covered: on the highest part of it is an earthwork of a circular form, following in a great measure the shape of the hill; the ramparts are single and of moderate height; the entrance, which seems to point towards the north-east, is not very decided, but it is natural that it should have been opposite to the place of residence. This hill commands a most pleasing prospect of the adjacent country, and merits a visit even from those who do not consider our national antiquities as objects worthy of research."

Several names of adjoining localities have reference to this ancient entrenchment, and its occupation by the Britons and Romans; thus, *Vaullen* (the name of a large wood now destroyed) signifies a fortified town; and *Callocots* (Caerlow), a town where beacons were lit. Sir R. C. Hoare says he always found the term *Cold Harbour* in the vicinity of a Roman road; this name, derived from the British words 'col,' a hill, and 'arbhar,' an army, also designates a *statio militaris*. There is a farm so called near Perborough Castle, and also at West Ilsley; the latter being in the vicinity of the Roman settlement mentioned in my account of that parish. On an eminence north of the church stands an ancient windmill, brought hence

from Little Hungerford, about eighty years ago; over the door is the date 1742, with the initials N. B., Esq. The following anecdote of George III., related by an octogenarian villager who remembers the event, is no less remarkable than interesting. The royal stag-hounds having thrown off in the vicinity of Windsor, were led by the gallant deer a tedious chase of thirty miles, as far as this village, where the poor animal was at length taken, and that too in a no less remarkable place than the hall of Roden House. The owner of the mansion, Mr. Pottinger, delighted no less than his Majesty, who chanced to be up, begged that the King would allow the hounds and deer to remain in his custody till a future time, and permission being granted, on the appointed day, his Majesty, the Prince of Wales, and other distinguished personages, having duly arrived to witness the turn-out at Compton, a very numerous field assembled, no less to join in the chace than to pay their respects to the King. The sheriff of Berks, Colonel Hartley, had the honour of affixing his Majesty's cap, and upwards of three hundred gentlemen being present, the whole formed a very animated scene. The stag being at length turned out, bent his course homewards, and was eventually taken in Hurley Bottom. The King was so delighted with this adventure, that he gave the deer free liberty for life, and called him "Compton" ever after. This event happened about sixty-five years ago.

On Roden Down are several deep pits, irregular dykes, and other indications of the occupation of this spot by the Britons. All across this down may be traced an ancient street, extending directly from Lowborough Hill to the Slad, both which places were occupied by the Romans. On the summit of the hill are the remains of a British cursus, or hippodrome, extending for about three hun-

dred yards, when it abruptly terminates close to two singular mounds of a square form, both environed by a deep vallum, which seem to have been the spot whereat the umpires were stationed who adjudicated the prize. On Yew-tree Down, and also near the Scrubs, are evident traces of British occupation, consisting of small enclosures, with banks and elevated ridges. "A strong index," says Sir R. C. Hoare, "of British settlements are numerous slight banks intersecting a down; these portions of land are the marks of cultivation, and are frequently very small."

The parish of Compton contains at the present time 550 inhabitants, and, according to Rocque's Survey, 3,490 acres of land.

ALDWORTH.

"*Theodoric aurifab: ten: rege Elleorde Eduardus ten: de rege* E *: in alod: Tunc p: v. hid: modo p: ij hid: terra est v. car: In dñio sunt ij car: et vj villi et iiij bord: cum iij car: ibi iiij serui Silua de porc: x Valuit et val: c. solid:*"—DOMESDAY.

The parish of Aldworth, vulgarly *Alder*, forming the extreme eastern portion of Compton hundred, comprises 1804 acres, and according to the last census, 314 inhabitants.

This village, anciently called Alderworthe, and Aldwicke, is a place of extreme antiquity, as its name, signifying "the old town," sufficiently indicates. In Domesday Book it is spelt "Elleorde," a corruption of the two Saxon words, *eald*, ancient, and *worth*, a place of habitation. It

is evident, from the Saxons having bestowed such an appellation on this village, that even on their settlement here, it was of very high antiquity. Indeed Hearne and others supposed it to have been a Roman station, but on the vaguest authority, unsupported by fact; no remains of that mighty people having, to my knowledge, ever been discovered in the parish.

The living is a vicarage, rated in the king's books at £8 16*s.* 0½*d.*, in the gift of the master and fellows of St. John's College, Cambridge; who are also impropriators of the rectory. The vicar enjoys a beneficial lease of the great tithes under the college. The advowson belonged as early as the thirteenth century to the Benedictine nunnery, at Bromehall, near Sunninghill. In Pope Nicholas's Valor it is assessed at ten marks. This convent having been abandoned in 1522, and reverted as an escheat to the crown, was granted, with all its appurtenances, to Saint John's College, Cambridge. In 1336, John atte the Crouche was presented by the prioress to this living, and in 1299, John de Wynkelegh was inducted. His predecessor, William de Burton, was deprived of this living in 1298, "ob varias causas," by the bishop of Sarum. The first vicar mentioned is *Sir* John Blakestone, who died A.D. 1556. Thomas Langland, inducted in 1658, as appears by the register, "gave up his living the next year, in those troublesome times." Jonathan Davison, B.D., who was inducted A.D. 1687, was ejected in 1691, for refusing to take the oaths to King William III. Throughout the whole diocese of Sarum there were only four Nonjurors who thus sacrificed their temporal interests for conscience sake. Richard Bouchier, his successor, who was appointed by the bishop, the living having elapsed into his hands, gave, in 1692, a new pulpit-cloth and cushion of purple velvet; but for these, others have long since been

substituted. The present incumbent is Rev. J. T. Austen, B.D. By Pope Nicholas's Valor it appears, that so early as 1291, the priory of Goring had an estate here of the annual value of £1 3*s*. The priory of Sandleford had also some land in Aldworth, valued at ten shillings per annum. There were anciently two manors in this parish, Aldworth and Beche, but in the survey it is described as one estate. It then belonged to Theodoric, the king's goldsmith, and was valued at 100 shillings. The arable land was 532 acres, and there were three villeins, four cottagers, and four servile tenants, with three ploughs. The woodland would support ten pigs. During the twelfth century, Aldworth belonged to the Cifrewasts. In 1217, William de Siffrewast paid to the king a relief of 100 shillings for his manors of Audeworthe and Hamstede. In 1269, Nicholas Sifrewast conveyed both these estates to Thomas, son of Richard de Clare, the king's secretary, who in 1276 resold them to Robert de Musgros, to whom, and his heirs, these, with estates at Compton and Alnescote, were confirmed by a royal charter of Edward I. granted the same year. Hawise, daughter of this Robert, brought all these manors to the noble family of Ferrars de Chartley, in whose possession Aldworth remained till the reign of Richard II. On the death of John de Ferrars, the son of Robert and Hawise, the king committed the custody of his estates to Hugo, Count of Stafford, to hold till the next heir should come of age, on payment of £44, and certain annual fees. This manor and Hampstead were confirmed by a charter of Edward III. to this John, who died seised of them in 1368. His wife Elizabeth, who afterwards married Sir Reginald de Cobham, also held these estates. In the year 1316, Hawisia de Ferrers and Joanna de Wytham were possessed of Aldworth and Colryg.

Robert de Ferrars died seised of lands in this parish, but not the *manor*, in 1413, and in 1450, William, Lord Ferrars, died possessed of the same estate. In the reign of Edward III., John de Bures held this manor and Hampstead, under the Lords Ferrars de Chartley. In the time of Richard II. Aldworth belonged to the Langfords. Thomas de Langford died seised of this manor and forty acres of land in Aldworth, called "Faldeyslond," in 1391: Joanna, his widow, also held the latter estate, but the manor went to the heir, in whose descendants, the Langfords, it continued till the sixteenth century; soon after which period Aldworth belonged to the family of Norris, ancestors of the Berties, earls of Abingdon. Sir John Norris, who died in 1591, held it during Queen Elizabeth's time; in this noble family it continued till 1756, when it was purchased of the Earl of Abingdon by R. Palmer, Esq., of Sonning; Richard Palmer, Esq., of Holme Park, his son, sold it to B. Monk, Esq., of Coley, to whose heir it now belongs.

The manor of Beche, which successively belonged to the ancient families of De la Beche and Langford, during the seventeenth century, was the property of Lord Lovelace, of Hurley. It afterwards belonged, for many generations, to the Sellwoods, of this place and Peasemore. During the middle of the last century it was the property of Colonel Sellwood, whose only daughter and heiress brought it in marriage to Mr. John Stevens, a yeoman; on whose decease, about thirty years ago, there being no issue, it was sold to the present proprietor, the Rev. J. Connop, of Bradfield Hall. Another estate in this parish, called Pibworth, formerly belonged to the Whistlers, who sold it about a century ago to Mr. Rowland, whose daughter brought it in marriage to Henry Sellwood, Esq., by whose family (after possessing it nearly fifty years) it was

sold to a tradesman in London, to whose son it now belongs.

Aldworth church, although so plain and unornamented, is perhaps the most interesting ecclesiastical structure in the county, consisting of a nave, chancel, and south aisle; the tower, "in form a parallelogram, extremely plain, is said by the inhabitants to have been much higher;" a tradition confirmed by the mean wooden turret with which its summit is now covered. The tower, from its loop-hole windows and general character, is certainly of very ancient date, and, with a portion of the nave (of the lancet style of the time of Henry III.), is decidedly the oldest part of this structure: the south aisle, built entirely of flint, is a very superior piece of architecture, in the later English style, and, with the chancel, was doubtless erected (as tradition reports) by the De la Beches, at the beginning of the fourteenth century. What confirms this supposition is, an entry in the register of the Bishop of Sarum, dated 1315, granting a commission to the Bishop of St. David's for consecrating the high altar in the church of "Aldeworthe," at the instance of Philip de la Beche and other parishioners, on the Sunday after the feast of St. Peter. The east end of the chancel has been rebuilt of brick, as appears by the date, MDCCXL., on a stone in the wall. The tower was probably demolished by the Parliamentarians during the civil war, who are said to have used the sacred edifice as a stable for their horses. At the base of a window on the south side of the chancel are two stone stalls, of different elevations; adjoining to which is a beautiful piscina, of remarkable design. The pulpit, a very handsome specimen of carved oak, stood originally in St. Laurence's Church, Reading, whence it was removed hither in 1740. On entering this venerable pile, the mind of the stranger, struck with

reverential awe, instantly reverts to those chivalrous times and customs that have long since passed away. Here around him he beholds, arrayed in martial panoply, the mutilated though still beautiful effigies of dauntless knights and warriors bold; men powerful, distinguished, and famous in their day, but of whom, alas! scarce a vestige now remains. In the gallery is a curious candelabrum, bearing date 1669, and in the chancel are four oak stalls of very ancient date, beautifully carved with birds and other animals. Above the capitals of the pillars in the nave are two grotesque figures of a wolf and a hound. The painting of the royal arms bears date 1660. In the stonework on either side of the arch, between the nave and chancel, appears a small hole for the insertion of the iron rod whereon, in Catholic times, the curtain was suspended during Lent. The font, which is extremely plain, on an ascent of steps, has on its upper margin a number of small holes drilled into the stone; here perhaps the lock and hinges of the lid have been affixed, or, it is probable, that the ritual containing the baptismal service may have been anciently attached to the font with chains. The most attractive feature of this interesting church must now be more particularly described, its monumental effigies, which have been so universally admired and esteemed. These statues (nine in the interior and one on the outside of the church, in all ten) are generally supposed to represent various members of the ancient family of De la Beche, an idea scarcely to be doubted by any one at all conversant with the annals of this celebrated place. Three of these figures are situated under the north, and three under the south wall; the remaining three being placed on detached altar tombs in the body of the church. Those figures situated under the walls are all placed beneath large ornamental ogee arches,

lavishly decorated with trefoils, crockets, pinnacles, roses, quatrefoils, and other elegant designs. Those on the north side are the most perfect, but the whole have a very light and imposing effect, having escaped that defacement which has too generally befallen the effigies they enclose. I will now proceed to give a more detailed account of these statues, beginning with that the most westward of the three under the north wall. This figure is a good deal mutilated, both the feet and the right arm being totally destroyed; the plated armour is covered with a loose surcoat, descending in lapels to the feet; the right hand is laid placidly on the breast, the legs being crossed by the left passing over the right about the knee. The next is the effigy of another cross-legged knight, measuring six feet four inches in length, being formed of Totternhoe stone: the feet, armed with two immense spikes or spurs, recline on a small lion of good execution; the surcoat fits tightly round the body, descending in lapels to the knees. The third effigy, for elegance of design, is perhaps the most beautiful in the church; " no Roman or Grecian performance can surpass it, either in point of excellence of design or execution." It measures seven feet two inches in length, but is now much defaced, both arms and both legs being partially destroyed; the plate armour, covered with a loose surcoat, is tastefully ornamented, as also the helmet, which may be pronounced perfectly *unique*. The feet, now disjointed from the legs, rest in the lap of a small female figure, which though much injured, presents sufficient proofs of its original beauty: altogether this statue would do much credit to modern times. On a large detached tomb, near the pulpit, recline the effigies of a knight and his lady, the latter, as was customary in early times, being placed on the right-hand side. The male statue, in

plated armour and a surcoat, is much defaced, both the feet and the arms, with the head, being partially destroyed. The legs recline on the figures of two hounds, with a lion at the feet, the head resting on a large jousting helmet: the surcoat, descending only to the thighs, is confined by a broad belt, from which is suspended the sword. The head and right arm of the female figure, which is habited in the ordinary graceful costume of the fourteenth century, are wholly destroyed: at the feet is a figure of a sleeping hound. The first effigy under the south wall is that of a cross-legged knight, much defaced, both the legs and the left arm being completely gone; the surcoat is short, and confined by two belts over the shoulders; the right hand is grasping the hilt of an enormous sword. The legs of this effigy are disposed in a different manner to those of the other crusaders, in this case the right crossing over the left above the knee. The next statue is that of a female, elegantly attired in a long flowing robe, descending in graceful folds below the feet. The head, covered with a singular but elegant hood, reclines on a pillow supported by two angels, now much mutilated; which has given rise to the popular story that this effigy is the monument of a lady who died in childbirth with twins! The next figure of a knight habited in a long loose surcoat is so exceedingly defaced, that it presents little more than a block, both the arms, the head, and the legs being wholly destroyed. The hands appear to have been clasped on the breast, but the legs were not originally crossed. The ninth and last effigy, situated under the arch, between the nave and south aisle, is habited in a surcoat representing leather, having on either side a seam of coarse stitches; the hands, clothed in gauntlets, are clasped in a supplicatory manner on the breast. The legs, which do not seem to have been crossed,

are nearly destroyed: the head, covered with a helmet, reclines on a large convex shield, and from the left side is suspended an enormous sword. As previously stated, there exists a tenth statue, on the outside of the church, which, from the arch having been bricked up, is now concealed from view: from the subjoined accounts, however, we learn that this is the figure of a cross-legged knight. Sheldon, who wrote his Church Notes, now at Oxford, in 1678, says, "On the outside of the Churche, under an arch of very antient worke against the south wall, lies ye statue of a man in armour, cross-legged, at this present almost even with the grounde." But of all the accounts transmitted to our day, that of Captain Symonds is by far the most explicit. He was an officer in King Charles's army during the civil wars, who employed his leisure hours in visiting old churches, and other interesting sites; the following account of Aldworth is extracted from his note-book, now in the British Museum: "May 2nd, 1644, Aldworth, vulgo Alder; this is 5 myles from Wallingford, one myle and a halfe from Streatly, and 9 from Reding. In ye East ende of ye South yle did hang a Table fairly written in Parchment of all ye names of ys family of De la Beche; but ye Earle of Leicesster coming with ye Queen Elizabeth in progresse, tooke it down to shew it her, and it was never brought againe." Her Majesty is said to have ridden on a pillion behind her favourite, from Ewelme Park, Oxfordshire, to inspect these celebrated tombs. Symonds has given a rough sketch of the effigies on the tomb near the pulpit, from which it is evident that they have been much defaced since his visitation, the arms of the knight and head of the lady being then perfect. The following is his description of these statues: "Against ye upper ende, betweene ye middle of ye Churche, and North yle, upon a playne

altar tomb lye these; Sir Nicholas de la Beach as Mr. Grace the Incumbent told me." He continues, "Betweene ye two Pillars that divide the Churche and South yle, upon an altar tomb lyes ye like statue of a man in complete armoure, not cross-legged; at each foot a hounde, sitting on his tayle, whereon a foot lyes, and ye dog's head looking towards ye West end: no indications of any inscription. The south side of ye Churche is adorned with 3 tall and spacious arches of wrought stone; and in ye wall lye 3 portraites of knights as follows; The people call this statue John Strong." Here he gives a rough sketch of the three effigies under the north wall, and then proceeds with his quaint description: "The middlemost lyes with hys left leg acrost the right, at his foot a lyon. Upon hys left arme hangs a shield, hys hande holding the top of his sword; under his head are pillowes. The thyrd and largest towards the West, lyes with hys right hande holding ye hylt of his sworde, his left hande holdinge a shield. At his heade are cushions: his left leg over hys right. In ye Southe wall of ye yle is also 3 arches answerable to ye Northe, werein are 3 severall statues lying alonge wythin ye wall, 4 foot or thereabouts from ye floor. Next to the East ende lyes ye statue of a knigght in armour wyth a loose coat, drawing his sword with hys right hande; on his lefte arme hangs a shield, a lyon at hys foote, under hys heade are Pillowes. The middle is ye Statue of a woman; the laste is of a man wythout armes, only a large loose coate, hys handes in ye praying posture are broken off, and alf hys left arme; hys head without any other ornament or covering lyes uppon a pillow. This is a small Churche but looks very old, 4 or 5 myles from Pangebourne in ye rode to Wantage. Nothing in ye windowes, neither on any of these olde tombs any thing to discover for whom they weare erected.

There lyes a very old flat stone in ye Southe yle, which had brass adorned with ye portraiture of a man, and ye inscription circumscribed with a coate of arms, but all gone. The glasse of ye windows is playne, and very olde; and yet not adorned with any coates." From the armour and military accoutrements of the knights, no less than the attire of the females, it is evident that these effigies were executed many years subsequent to the death of the Crusaders they commemorate. The plate armour and female costume, is not that of the era of the Crusades, but such as were in use at the commencement of the fourteenth century. The five cross-legged effigies were doubtless all executed at the same period; the sculptor habiting the deceased not in the costume of their own day, but in that adopted at the time when these monuments were erected. It would seem that on the completion of the church, about the year 1315, the founder of the edifice placed therein the cross-legged effigies as memorials of five distinguished ancestors, who had probably fallen in the Holy Land, or at least had died many years previously. As regards the three other male statues, they bear none of the insignia characteristic of knights Crusaders, from which we may conclude that the individuals represented flourished at a period when the Holy Wars were virtually at an end. We have therefore the effigies of five individuals who flourished before the close of the thirteenth century, and of three male personages who lived at a later period. An attempt to identify these statues with certain members of the De la Beche family will be made when the genealogy of those illustrious men is more particularly considered. Savage says that cross-legged effigies were not in vogue after the year 1313, the exact time, I presume, when these monuments were executed. Ashmole and Rowe Mores have given engravings of these

effigies, and a view of Aldworth Church may be seen in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1798, with a plan of the interior in that for 1799. As is generally the case with any object of antiquity, the most extravagant stories respecting these "giants," as they are called, are current among the common people, who have exaggerated the size of these statues and the heroes they commemorate to a most unconscionable degree; for, after all, only three of these figures exceed the dimensions of an ordinary man. "The common people," says Symonds, "call ye statue under the outside of the Churche, John Everafraid, and say further that he gave his soule to the Divil, if ever he was buried either in Churche, or Churchyard; so he was buryed under the Churche wall, under an arche." The same story is still current amongst the villagers, who call three of the other statues, John Long, John Strong, and John Neverafraid.

In the churchyard is an immense yew tree, celebrated far and near for its gigantic dimensions and extreme old age. The trunk of this magnificent yew, which is said in its prime to have shaded an acre of ground, measures, at four feet from the turf, no less than nine yards in circumference. It is now going fast to decay, but its branches still ascend to a considerable height, and spread around many yards on every side. Its dimensions, and venerable decay, fully corroborate the report that it is coeval with the sacred pile. It does not appear to have increased of late, for, according to Rowe Mores, it measured just 27 feet in the year 1760.

The ancient family of De la Beche derived their surname from a small manor in this parish, called in ancient record "La Beche," probably from that tree having flourished there. Although we can find in history no mention of the family in connection with this estate before

the time of Edward II., it is very evident, from the existence of the name of De la Beche a century antecedent to that reign, that this family were settled here at a much earlier period than is generally supposed. The first whom I have met with is Sir Robert de la Beche, who lived in the time of Henry III., and possessed, besides this estate, certain lands in Cambridgeshire, as early as the year 1230; he was called to receive knighthood from King Edward I. in 1278. He had two sons, William and John, who flourished in the thirteenth century, the former of whom, by his wife Isabel, having one daughter married to Sir Roger de Botingham. Sir John de la Beche by his wife Alice had a family of three sons, William, Thomas, and Philip; the former of whom died seised of estates in Suffolk, A.D. 1331. Philip was sheriff of Berkshire and Oxfordshire in 1313, and also the succeeding year. He was possessed of East and West Compton, and Beche, and died A.D. 1329. Thomas, his brother, appears on his decease to have succeeded to the former estates, of which, and the manors of Asshdene and La Haghe, he died seised in 1332. Philip de la Beche had by his wife named Jane six sons and one daughter; Sir John, the eldest, died seised of the manors of Bradfield, West Compton, Ashdoune, and Yattingdon (the three last being held of the honour of Tutbury), as well as of Wandsworth and Battersea, in Surrey, in 1329, leaving a widow named Isabel: in the years 1316 and 1318 he had charters from Edward II. granting him a right of free warren over his demesne lands at Yattingdon, Everington, Hampstead, Woden Hampstead, Bothampstead, Ashampstead, Compton, Aldworth, and Basildon: his name appears as one of the thirteen knights in Berkshire in the time of Edward I. Philip de la Beche, his brother, was sheriff of Berkshire in 1331; and in 9th Edward III. he and Nicholas had a

royal charter granted them, with license to impark their forest lands at De la Beche and Yattingdon. In the year 1336 he had a right of free warren granted him of all his demesne lands, including not only those before mentioned as belonging to his father, but also over Beche, Colridge, and Beaumys in Shinfield; he died without issue before the year 1339. Edmund, a younger son of Philip, and brother to John de la Beche, was Archdeacon of Berks, and died in 1371, seised of lands in this parish, Compton, "Colridge," &c. He was implicated in the attempt to liberate Lord Berkley and Lord Audley from Wallingford Castle in 1323, where they had been imprisoned for appearing in arms against the King. Sir John Goldington, Edmund de la Beche, and some others, actually gained an entrance into the Castle by a postern near the Thames; but being discovered, the latter was arrested and sent a prisoner to Pomfret. He was, however, soon liberated, being in 1347 presented to the rectory of North Moreton. Robert, another son of Philip de la Beche, seems to have died when young without issue. Edward de la Beche, brother to the Archdeacon and the last-mentioned Robert, was also a man of no little importance in the time of Edward III., to whom, in 1335, he was appointed "custos magnæ garderobæ," or Master of the Robes. In the year 1339 he had orders to arrest all the Lombard and other foreign merchants in the kingdom, and to commit them to the Tower of London. In 1363 the manor of Beaumys, with thirty acres of meadow land in Burghfield and Tylehurst, were confirmed to him by a royal charter of Edward III. He died in 1365, seised of Beche, Compton, Colridge, Southcot, Whitley, Hagbourn, and other manors in Berkshire.

But of all the children of Philip de la Beche, Sir Nicholas was by far the most illustrious, being in 1344 sum-

moned to Parliament as a Baron, with the title of Lord Nicholas de la Beche of Aldworth. Before the death of his elder brothers he resided in Sussex, where he possessed the manors of Oldcourt, Meresham, and Erlington, with seven other estates in that county. In the year 1318 he obtained a charter of free warren over the above-mentioned manors from King Edward III. After coming into the possession of the Berkshire estates on the death of his nephew John, Sir Nicholas held an immense territory in this neighbourhood; for besides the manors before mentioned as belonging to his father Philip, he also possessed Cookham, Binfield, Stratfield, Swallowfield, Basildon, Padworth, Burghfield, Harwell, Beaumys, Peasemore, Leckhampstead, and Farley, in Wiltshire. Sir John, his brother, had only two sons; Thomas, who died in 1332, and John, who died in 1340 without issue, when his immense possessions reverted to his uncle, Sir Nicholas. There were also three daughters, Isabel, wife of William Fitz Ellis, and Joan, the wife of Sir Andrew Sackville, ancestor of the Duke of Dorset. Alice, the third daughter, married Robert Danvers, who had only one son, named Edward, born 1343. But to return to Sir Nicholas, now the sole heir of the family, who in 9th Edward III. was made Constable of the Tower of London, before which time he had been appointed tutor or superintendent of the valiant Black Prince. He appears to have been in the highest esteem at court, and an especial favourite with his sovereign, who bestowed upon him repeated marks of his affection. The King (Edward III.) having returned from the Continent highly incensed against his ministers for not having made him timely remittances to carry on his wars against France, reached the Tower of London about midnight, where he found Sir Nicholas, the Constable, absent, and his family left to the care of only three

attendants. Highly enraged at this neglect, the King committed Sir Nicholas, with the Mayor of London, and other state officers, to the Tower, where they remained in close custody for some time. Holingshed gives the following account of this affair: "A.D. 1340. The Judges, to wit John de Stonor, &c., and also Nicholas de la Bech, who was afore guardian of his sonne and Lieutenant of the Towre; and many other, were committed to diverse prisons, but yet because they were committed but onelie upon commandement they were within a while after delivered." The King's rage being at length abated, he granted a free pardon to Sir Nicholas de la Beche, William de Montacute, and the other state officers; the first being instantly restored to his former favour. From this neglect of duty Sir Nicholas had been deprived of his high office of Constable of the Tower, but to this post he was in less than two years afterwards restored. In 1338 he obtained the King's license to fortify his mansion houses at Beche, Beaumys, and Watlington, in those chivalrous times a privilege of the highest degree. In the year 1342, he accompanied Edward III. in his expedition against France, and fought under his banner in the wars of Bretagne the next year, being created Seneschal of Gascoigne. In 1345 he was appointed one of the commissioners to treat with Alphonso, King of Castile, respecting the marriage between his eldest son and Joan, Edward's daughter, and in the 15th of the same reign made Governor of Montgomery Castle in the Marches of Wales, and that of Plecy in Essex. In 1326 he obtained a grant from the Crown of the manors of Watlington, Harwell, Whitchurch, and Pidington: in the year 1339, Leckhampstead was confirmed to him by royal charter. Sir Nicholas died without issue in 1346, in him expiring the direct male line of this family of De la Beche.

On the death of Sir Nicholas, the Aldworth and other estates in Berkshire passed to his sister Joan, the widow of Sir John Langford, who had a family of four sons. The eldest, Sir Thomas, died seised, in 1391, of Beche, Bothampstead, Peasemore, Compton, Ashampstead, Basildon, Tubney, Aldworth, Binfield, Ashridge, and Bilbardeslond, besides forty acres of land in Aldworth, called Faldeysland; all of which descended to his posterity, the Langfords of this place and Bradfield. Sir Thomas was Knight of the Shire for Berks, the 51st of Edward III. and 4th Richard II. His son, Sir William Langford, who was sheriff in 1405, and knight of the shire the preceding year, died in 1412, and was buried in the chapel of St. Andrew, at Bradfield. He had five children, one of whom, Robert, married Elizabeth, daughter of John Cheney. His son Edward was sheriff of Berks in 1447, and knight of the shire in the time of Henry VI. He died in 1475, seised of "Beche, Ashampstede, Compton, Assdyn, and Aldeworthe." Thomas, his son, born 1445, was father of Sir John Langford, who married the daughter of Sir William Norris, of Yattendon. He was sheriff in 1508, and died the next year, leaving one child named Anne, who became the sole heiress of the family. She seems to have died when young, in her expiring the ancient family of Langford.

Notwithstanding the failure of male heirs, there existed a collateral branch of the De la Beche family long after the fourteenth century. Robert Beche occurs in the list of Berkshire gentry made in the reign of Henry VI.; whose heiress, Agnes, married John Whitelocke, Esq., ancestor of the famous Sir Bulstrode Whitelocke, who possessed the manor of Beches, near Wokingham, so called from having belonged to the De la Beche family. "Nicholas de la Beche," says Kennett, "left surviving his widow,

Margaret, who became the wife of Sir Thomas Arderne. Dugdale by mistake calls her Margery, daughter and heir of Edmond Bacoun, when she was indeed the relict of this said Edmond, by whom she had two daughters, Margaret and Magery." This lady, on the death of Sir Nicholas, left Beche Castle and went to reside at Beaumys, another seat of the family, near Shinfield, in company with her husband, Sir T. Arderne. In the year 1348 this castle was the scene of a most violent and outrageous assault, perpetrated by John de Dalton and a band of ruffians, who, breaking into the fortress, frightened Roger Hunt, the domestic chaplain, to death, and carried away the Lady Margaret in triumph. During the affray, goods and chattels to the value of a thousand pounds were stolen; Michael le Poynings, Thomas le Clerke of Shipton, and others, being murdered. In consequence of this riot, a writ was directed to the sheriff of Lancashire to arrest John de Dalton and all his accomplices, and to commit them to the Tower of London; but the King granted a free pardon to Thomas de Litherland, prior of Buscogh, who was present, as regarded the murders and the abduction of Lady Margaret Arderne. This lady, who died in 1350, was successively the wife of four individuals, John de Dalton having forcibly married her in 1348. John de la Beche, perhaps nephew to Sir Nicholas, was Rector of Hagbourn in 1354. The advowson of Bradfield belonged anciently to this distinguished family. The principal seat of the De la Beches was in this parish, on a pleasant and commanding eminence, about half a mile south of the village. A modern house standing on the site of the old baronial castle is called to this day Beche farm. In the grounds adjoining, traces of the ancient moat may still be discerned; but of the castle scarce a vestige now remains. Captain Symonds, who visited this

spot in 1644, says: "King Edward 3rd gave ye Castle in this parish, about a quarter of a myle from the Churche southwards, to Sir Nicholas de la Beach, for his servis done at ye battail of Poitiers in Fraunce; who lived in this Castle, and called it by the name of Beach Castle; a farme now adjoyning to ye ruines is called Beach Farme, belonging to ye Lord Lovelace now." As regards the battle of Poictiers, our author is greatly in error, as it was not fought till 1356, ten years after the death of Sir Nicholas, who certainly had a license from the King to fortify or castellate this mansion in 1338. Sheldon, who wrote in 1678, speaking of this family, says, "they had a great Castle in this parish about halfe a mile from ye Churche as 'tis said, but no manner of ruines now remain." When digging pits near the farm, foundations of the old castle have frequently been found, constructed of large flint stones, in a very neat and superior manner: a beautiful specimen of a wall, six feet in depth, may now be seen forming the side of a saw-pit. During some excavations a short time since, two very ancient iron hinges of peculiar construction were discovered, which evidently once belonged to the old castle gates. To the largest of these hinges was attached a remarkable staple, having two immense hooks diverging in opposite directions.

It will now be necessary to identify, as far as possible, the ten monumental effigies with certain members of the De la Beche family. As before stated, the five cross-legged statues commemorate *Crusaders*, who must have flourished before the end of the 13th century; and these I presume were Sir Robert de la Beche, Sir John and William his sons, and Thomas and William his grandsons; all of whom died before the year 1310, and consequently may have been personally engaged in the Holy Wars. Sir Robert was probably the founder of the church, and

consequently his statue would be that under the south wall, now concealed from view. Philip de la Beche, grandson of Sir Robert, was certainly the founder of the chancel and south aisle, and he it was doubtless who erected the five *cross-legged* effigies to the memory of his illustrious ancestors. Two of the tombs on the south side would consequently be vacant at his decease, whence we may conclude that the male and female statues now occupying these spots are in memory of Philip, and Jane his wife. On the death of Sir John, his son, it is natural to suppose that he would be buried near his father, but all the original tombs being then occupied, he doubtless erected for himself the effigy in the body of the church. As regards the other male and female effigies *on the same tomb*, they doubtless commemorate Sir Nicholas and Margaret his wife, who were the last of this illustrious family.

Aldworth, as I have before said, can lay no claim to having been a Roman station; some fragments of a tessellated pavement were certainly discovered in the church, but this kind of floor was not unfrequent before the altar in our earlier ecclesiastical structures. A writer in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1760 supposes this military station to have been at Beche Farm, but the earthen-works on this spot are decidedly not of Roman origin. The same writer also mentions two Roman milestones near here; but notwithstanding this statement is confirmed by Hearne, Rowe Mores, and other authors, these relics at the present day are nowhere to be found. "These milliariæ are *now* to be seen," says he, "between Stretely and Alder, one of which lies a mile from Stretely, and by the country people is supposed to be placed by the giants (as they call them) in Aldworth Church." This parish is intersected by three ancient roads; the Ridgeway on the North, and by the Icnield Street; a Roman way connect-

ing the Station *Calleva* at Streatley, with *Spinæ* or Speen. Of the latter no traces are now visible, but the straightness of the modern road from this place to Turville indicates its original course; from Pibworth-lane it ran by the same route as the present foot-path to the church, and thence on by Westridge-green to Streatley. The third ancient road is that commonly called "Grimsditch," which may be traced hither from Holies on the Thames. Sir R. C. Hoare thus makes mention of this ancient British street: "On returning to my head-quarters at Ilsley, I made a digression towards the West, in order to examine some remains of antiquity by desire of my friend Mr. Leman. With some difficulty I made my way through a well wooded, and enclosed country, to a tenement called Beche farm; where I found the principal object of my research in a very strong bank and ditch which passes close to a farm-house, and through the fields adjoining to it. Mr. Leman had told me that in its course from the Thames it formed the boundary between Aldworth and Basildon; and then proceeded to Porto Bello, Beche Farm, Woodrows, &c. A very perfect specimen may be seen in an arable ground, on the west side of Beech Farm; where it is planted with trees. It shortly afterwards makes one of those singular and unaccountable turns at right angles, passes to the south in front of a farm belonging to Mr. Pottinger, and descends towards the vale in which the village of Compton is situated; pointing first to a farm belonging to Sir Walter James in the bottom, and then towards the British works on the Cow-down. The vallum is strong, the fosse wide, and placed towards the north. Like many similar works, it bears the name of Grymsdyke." As some labourers, a few years ago, were grubbing an old beech tree standing in this ditch, they discovered two very curious iron axe-

heads of peculiar formation, and evidently of very ancient date; at either end of the blade there being a remarkable kind of hook. One of these curious battle-axes was presented by Mr. Sellwood to Mr. King of Appleford, in whose valuable collection it still remains.

The Rev. Richard Graves, a celebrated literary character, was curate of Aldworth about a century ago, as is proved by his autograph in the register. The parsonage house being out of repair, he resided with a gentleman farmer, Mr. Bartholomew, of Dumworth, with whose amiable daughter he became so deeply enamoured, that he resigned his fellowship at All Souls' College, Oxford, and married her. The principal characters in his admirable novel, "The Spiritual Quixote," are sketches of individuals then residing in this neighbourhood. Mr. Wilmot was intended for the Rev. — Walker, of Whitchurch, Oxon; Jerry Tugwell for old Bacon, a noted cobbler of Aldworth; and Mr. Woodville, for Mr. Bartholomew. The story of Mrs. Rivers is partly founded on fact, being a narrative of the romantic courtship of the author and his lady. Many of the incidents related actually occurred during Mr. Graves's residence in this parish.

CUCKHAMSLEY.

This far-famed barrow, the boast and glory of our downs, crowns the summit of a bold and conspicuous hill, rising upwards of 800 feet above the level of the sea. This isolated tumulus is situated near the Ridgeway in the parish of East Hendred, four miles N.W. of Ilsley. At the present day it rises to the height of twenty-one feet

above the neighbouring soil, and measures in circumference 140 yards. Its dimensions were formerly much greater, but by successive mutilations this interesting mound has of late years been shamefully defaced. Crowning the highest pinnacle of the downs, this tumulus forms a landmark visible for many miles around; whilst the view from its summit is extensive and varied in the extreme, the eye stretching into no less than seven surrounding counties. The ancient name of "Cwicchelmeshlawe," applied to this tumulus, has justly led antiquaries to suppose that it is the burial-place of King Cwichelm, or Quichelm, one of the most redoubtable of the West Saxon monarchs. This individual possessed extensive property in these parts; which estate, from the barrow eastward to Gore-hill, was called after his name. The modern titles of this tumulus are obviously only corruptions of the old Saxon name, "hleaw," signifying in that language an elevated country, or a large estate. Camden considers the addition of the word "hill" to be a tautology, added from ignorance; but in this sense I can scarcely regard it, since the term Cuckhamsley refers to the *estate*, and that of Cuckhamsley Hill to the *barrow* only. "Till lately," says Mr. Wise, who wrote in 1739, "there stood here a post for a beacon, for which reason it is more known to travellers by the name of Beacon Hill. Possibly it might have been raised by King Cwichelm, who was in possession of these parts; or it may be the hill under which he lies buried." As regards the relationship of this Cwichelm to Kynegils, King of Wessex, our ancient historians widely differ; Bede and others calling him the son, whilst William of Malmesbury and other writers state that he was his brother. However this may be, certain it is, that these two princes reigned conjointly over the West Saxons for very many years, in a manner

highly creditable to themselves and advantageous to their subjects. William of Malmesbury says, "they were kings who strove to outdo each other in acts of real piety, and their mutual concord was the wonder of that age, and ought to be an example to all succeeding." As warriors, their names were highly distinguished, but they are more especially famous as being the first West Saxon kings who embraced the Christian faith. In the year 635, Pope Honorius sent over from Rome one Saint Birinus to convert the heathen Saxons, in which he ultimately succeeded, being appointed Bishop of Dorchester, near Oxford, and made Diocesan over the whole kingdom of Wessex. Robert of Gloucester thus notices this event:

"To turne King of Westsex Kynegyls to Christendom,
And that land of Westsex, into this land he cǫm."

In the year 635, Kynegils was baptized by Birinus at Dorchester, Oswald, King of Northumbria, acting as sponsor. This monarch was then visiting at the West Saxon court, on a treaty of marriage between his only son and Kineburga, Cwichelm's sister. King Oswald was also converted, but Cwichelm was not so easily convinced of the error of his way; till being taken ill of a complaint of which he ultimately died, he, together with Cuthred his son, was at length baptized at Dorchester, A.D. 636. The Saxon Chronicle states that he died the same year. In 628, Cwichelm and Kynegils fought with Penda, King of Mercia, at Cirencester, and afterwards entered into a treaty there. In the year 614 they gained another decisive victory over the Welsh at "Beamdune," in which no less than 2,045 of the enemy were slain. Kynegils, who was directly descended from Cerdic, the founder of the kingdom, ascended the throne of Wessex A.D. 611; he died in 643, and was succeeded by his son Cenwalch. In 626, Cwichelm sent an ambassador, named

Eamer, to assassinate Edwin, King of Northumbria; but in this he was unsuccessful, having killed two of his attendants, but only wounded the King. The previous year Paulinus, a Christian missionary, had arrived in Northumbria for the purpose of converting its heathen inhabitants, but with King Edwin his preaching was of little avail till this attempted assassination by Eamer; when he promised, that if Paulinus would grant him the victory over Cwichelm, he would on his return become a convert. This being promised, Edwin set out for Wessex highly incensed at the treachery of his enemy. A bloody battle was fought on these downs between Edwin and Cwichelm, in which some historians relate that the latter monarch was slain, and afterwards buried with great solemnity. Thus Matthew of Westminster says: "Quichelinum vero in loco qui lingua Anglorum Quichlineshaune usque hodie dicitur interemit; et in testimonium victoriæ loco nomen dedit, et sic cum triumpho patriam remeavit." In this account he is confirmed by Harding, who says:

> "And in the yere six hundredh and twenty so,
> And syxe thereto, Kyng Edwyn as is writen
> To Westsex went, where batayle sore was smyten
> Betweene him and Bysshop Quychelyne,
> For cause he had compassed his death afore
> By pryvy wise as he coulde ymagine."

This chronicler has bewildered himself with a Bishop Quichelm, who was presented to the see of Rochester in 676, half a century after the above event.

Excavations have lately been carried on at Cuckhamsley barrow, but although this section was extended beyond the centre of the mound, little or nothing has been brought to light. A large stone bead, some horses' teeth, a small iron buckle, and fragments of charred wood; have been discovered, scattered promiscuously throughout

the mound. Some large bones have also been found; and in the exact centre of the mound, the workmen encountered an immense oaken stake, bound with twigs of willow and hazel. This stake, as also the bones, presented evident traces of the action of fire. The section of the barrow fully developes its mode of construction, the centre being entirely composed of immense layers of turf laid in horizontal strata, the underside of one sod being generally laid on the grassy surface of the next; though in some cases they are placed in apposition. The roots of various plants may yet be observed ramifying in every direction. Over the turfy base is a stratum of stiff ochreous clay of a ferruginous nature, which must have been procured at some distant spot, around the outside there being a layer of chalk thrown up from the environing fosse. Two questions naturally arise: whether this tumulus is a mere cenotaph, or whether the remains of the heptarchal King actually constitute its nucleus? The latter idea is the more plausible, but I am much inclined to doubt whether this is really the tomb of the converted chief. I am disposed to think there were *two* individuals named Cwichelm, one being the son, the other the brother of Kynegils; and that it was the former who was baptized, the latter being slain in battle on these downs before the arrival of Birinus. A Christian king would scarcely be buried in a heathen tomb, on a spot so desolate as Cuckhamsley; besides which cremation, animal sacrifice and other Pagan ceremonies were certainly practised here at the burial of the interred. On the conversion of the Saxons, the custom of burning the dead was instantly abandoned. I am therefore disposed to consider that King Cwichelm, the brother of Kynegils, who was slain on the downs in battle with King Edwin, A.D. 626, was actually buried in this identical mound with all due honours and solemnity. About

400 years after this event, Cuckhamsley became a Danish station, those piratical invaders supposing that if they once arrived at this celebrated spot, they should never return to the sea; a prediction which actually came to pass. In the year 1006, we are told by the Chronicle, Florence of Worcester, and other authorities, that the Danes, having burnt Reading, Cholsey, and many other places about Ilsley, marched from Wallingford over Ascesdune to "Cwichelmeshlæwe, where they awaited better cheer." Robert of Gloucester, speaking of this invasion, says:—

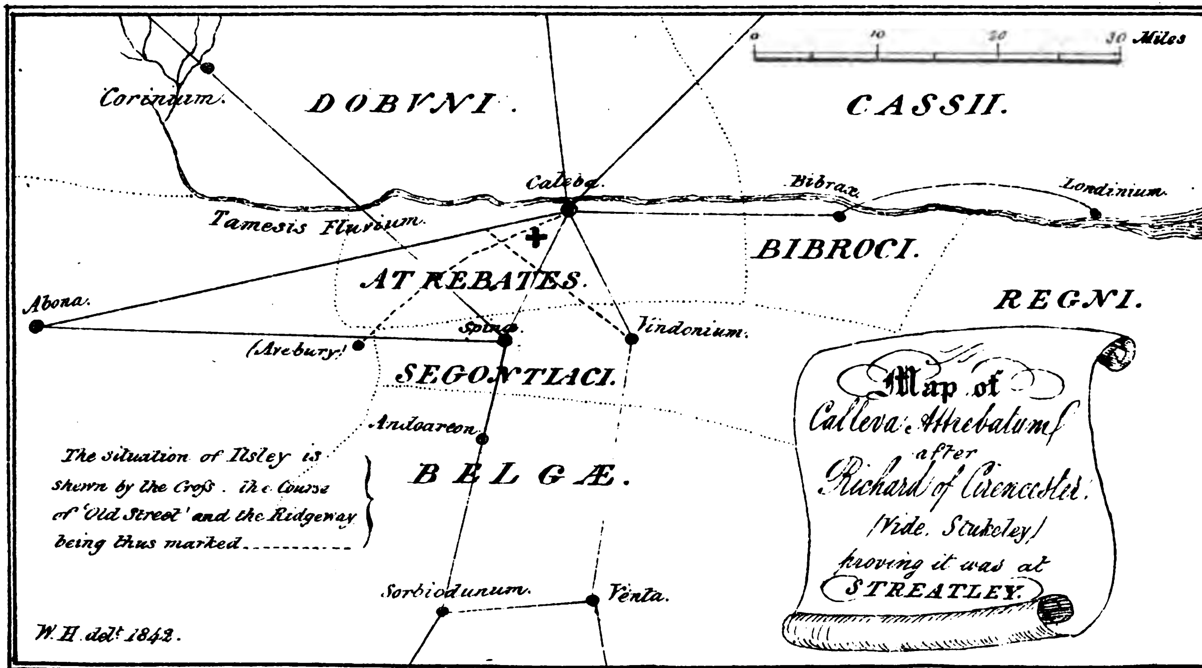
> "Mest wo hii dude in Borressyre, and up Assesdoune,
> And so about Quychelmsley and so in many toune."

At a much later period Cuckhamsley was again rendered a place of great celebrity by the immense concourse of people who met here almost daily to buy, sell, and exchange corn, victuals, goods, and merchandize. This market, however, was abolished by King James I. in 1620. In the reign of King Ethelred, and probably at a much earlier period, the County Court was held at Cuckhamsley Hill. Dr. Hickes quotes a record of the ninth century respecting a dispute about some lands at Wulvamere (Woolvers), Hacceburn, &c., determined in the Shiremote or Court at Cuckhamsley: "No place," says Mr. Wise, "could be better adapted for this purpose; if there was no town, perhaps tents, booths, and other temporary expedients were used for shelter against the weather during the time of court." It is to be hoped that the proprietor of this famous barrow, connected with so many important events in the annals of our country, will conform to the public wish, by withholding any further operations conducive to its destruction.

The Saxon Chronicle relates that Cenwalch, the son of Kynegils, was expelled from his dominions by Penda,

King of Mercia, but that by the help of Cuthred, his nephew (the son of King Cwichelm), he recovered his kingdom in 648: for this service he gave to Cuthred, the same year, a part of his demesne lands, situated near Æscesdune, which estate has been a frequent topic of antiquarian dispute. As to the extent of this territory all our historians, both ancient and modern, are much at variance, there being two readings in the Chronicle, one of which makes it 3,000 hides; the other (from the omission of the line over the digits) only three hides: the idea that this estate comprised upwards of 360,000 acres, almost as large as the whole county of Berks, is quite preposterous, and therefore I am inclined to consider the latter account as the most plausible. I have already shewn that the Saxon Æscesdune was a vast tract of country, including the two Ilsleys, with part of Compton; and near here it is that we must therefore look for the estate in question.

About half a mile east of Ashridge, or Ashdown, are two small woods, called Cheseridge, a name, as I conceive, corrupted from that of its Saxon possessor. This estate was formerly spelt Cuserugg, and to this day is called by the common people Chusridge, or Cushridge. The original name of Cuthred's-ridge would easily be contracted into Cuthridge, and that term corrupted into Cushridge and Chesridge. By another statement in the Chronicle, it appears, that in 661, "at Easter, Kenwalch fought at Pontesbury, and Wulphere, the son of Penda, pursued him as far as Æscesdune."



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CALLEVA ATTREBATUM.

There is perhaps no Roman station in this island respecting the situation of which antiquaries have been so divided in opinion as that of Calleva Attrebatum, no less than six different places having been fixed on as the site of this important settlement; among which may be noticed Wallingford, Silchester, Coley, Henley, and Farnham. Before endeavouring to establish a novel opinion, it will be necessary to shew, that none of these places could possibly have been Calleva: this done, we shall be better enabled to judge of the merits of my present hypothesis. Calleva was a large British town long prior to the Roman invasion, being, in fact, the capital of the Attrebates, a tribe inhabiting that part of Berkshire, bounded on the south by the river Kennet, and northward by the Thames. South of the former stream, on the borders of Hants, dwelt the Segontiaci. This important capital was called by the Romans Calleva Attrebatum, the former being a Latinization of the old British name, signifying a fort upon the water, from the situation of the place near the river Thames. "Apud ripam Thamesis," says Richard, "habitabant Attrebates, quorum urbs primaria Calleba." Although the situation of this celebrated station is so much disputed, there is perhaps no place so frequently mentioned in the Itinerary as Calleva; in fact, four of the chief Iters commence at this town, proving it was a much-frequented thoroughfare. The VII. and XV. Iters of Antonine, and XII. of Richard, will sufficiently indicate the relative position of Calleva and the surrounding stations.

VII. Antonine. A Regno Londinium.	XII. Richard. Ad Londinium.	XV. Antonine. A Calleva Iscadum.
M.P.	M.P.	M.P.
Venta Belgarum .. X. (Winchester.)	Aqua Solis .... — (Bath.)	Calleva ..... — (Streatley.)
Calleva.. (X.) XXII. (Streatley.)	Verlucione .... XV. (Heddington.)	Vindonium .... XV. (Silchester.)
Pontes ..... XXII. (St. Leonard's Hill.)	Cunetione .... XX. (Kennet.)	Venta ..... XXI. (Winchester.)
Londinium .. XXII. (London.)	Spinis ..... XV. (Speen.)	Brige ..... XI. (Broughton.)
	Calleva ..... XV.	

With respect to Wallingford, it cannot possibly be less than forty-seven miles from London, and eighteen from Speen; facts convincing enough to shew that we must look elsewhere for this important station. Silchester, which has generally been supposed by our best antiquaries to be Calleva, can present no better claims, being but twelve miles from Speen, and less than the stated distance from St. Leonard's Hill. But besides these, other proofs are not wanting, to shew that Silchester was rather Vindomis than Calleva Attrebatum. Prior to the Roman invasion, Silchester was a British town, called "Caer Segont," as being the metropolis of the Segontiaci. Calleva, on the other hand, was the capital of the Attrebates, and must therefore have been situated north of the river Kennet; so that Silchester, which lies to the south of that river, cannot possibly lay claim to this appellation. With regard to the three other places fixed on as Calleva, their claims are so slight as not even to merit our consideration. In my opinion, Streatley on the Thames has the best and fairest claim to having been the station Calleva; an opinion, I think, no one, after an impartial perusal of the

facts advanced, will presume to call in question. First, then, Silchester, seated on a barren hill, could scarcely have deserved the name of "the town upon the water;" but Streatley, situated on the chief of British rivers, might well have received an appellation so appropriate. In fact, its name, position, and antiquity, with the relics discovered on this spot, all conspire strongly to prove that Streatley is the site of Calleva Attrebatum. Its situation precisely agrees with the distances given in the Itinerary, and we can still discriminate the course of the several Roman roads connecting this with the surrounding stations. First, as regards St. Leonard's Hill, Streatley is situated exactly twenty-two miles west of that locality: from Speen Hill, measuring by way of Aldworth and Shaw, we also find this place to be just fifteen miles distant. Streatley and Silchester, measuring by way of Pangbourn, whence the Roman road diverged, are also exactly fifteen miles apart. The ancient map of Richard is also confirmatory of the opinions here expressed; indeed, the facts already advanced must convince even the most sceptical of the truth of my novel hypothesis. The Roman station was about half a mile north of the village adjoining Streatley farm.

In forming the Great Western Railway, a great quantity of Roman remains were discovered near this spot; as spear-heads, pottery, coins, &c. In Basildon Field the remains of a Roman villa were brought to light, having a beautiful tessellated pavement, in excellent preservation. Sir Richard Colt Hoare gives the following account of his visit to this place in 1810: "At the turnpike I turned off to Streatley Farm, which is tenanted by Mr. Child. North of the farm-house is a large enclosure, called Fifield, in which many foundations of old buildings have been encountered by the plough; earthen vessels have also been discovered, and numerous Roman coins,

chiefly of the Constantines, are continually thrown up, not only in this field, but in another, on the left side of the turnpike road. In a ground adjoining to Fifield, on Southbury Farm, in which there is a gravel-pit, several skeletons have been found not far beneath the surface of the soil, extended at full length, with their heads towards the east. This ground is called Littlefield, and here was probably the place of interment. These united circumstances seem to prove that a *Roman station* existed formerly on this spot." Since this account was written, fresh discoveries have been frequently, and still are, made in these fields; hundreds of Roman coins, of gold, silver, and brass, similar to the Slad farthings, having been ploughed up: these are chiefly of Valens, Constans, Valentinian, Carausius, Probus, Gratian, and Constantine the Great; silver coins of the triumvirate of Antonius Lepidus, &c., have also been found. Sir Richard C. Hoare considered this to be the site of Thamesis, a station mentioned in the XVIII. Iter of Richard, as being six miles south of Dorchester; but this I imagine to have been at Little Stoke Ferry, being nothing more than a posthouse at the ford, where the Ickleton Way crossed the Thames. With respect to the numerous Roman roads diverging from Streatley, the course of several may be accurately determined. The Icnield Street, from *Spinæ*, proceeded direct from Westridge to Streatley Mill, where, at low water, a raised bank may still be distinctly observed; at which spot, and here only, persons have crossed the Thames on foot. The road from Winchester, passing over Greenham and Coldash commons, seems to have united with the above street near Hermitage. The Roman road from Dorchester, as also that from Silchester and Pangbourn, followed the same course as the modern turnpike, which is very direct. Two ancient British roads, Grimsditch and Ridgeway (the latter being used by the Romans), passed the Thames

near Streatley. On the downs, above the site of the Roman station, are traces of two ancient earthworks. The beautiful situation of Streatley, its position on a noble stream, surrounded by a range of verdant hills clothed with majestic woods, might well induce a classic people to fix on this spot as the site of a station (Londinum excepted) the most important in this, to the Romans, an acquired but unconquered isle.

ÆSCESDUNE.

THE BATTLE OF ASHDOWN.

Of all the celebrated engagements between the Saxons (under the illustrious Alfred) and the Danes, the page of ancient history records none more critical in its decision, or important in its issue, than the famous battle of Æscesdune, fought in the year 871. Although this locality is so frequently mentioned by all our early historians, the name of Æscesdune, or Ashdown, at the present day, seems to be almost, if not utterly, lost; and, consequently, the site of this celebrated action has ever been a subject of antiquarian dispute: some contending for Ashdown in Bucks, some for Ashdown in Sussex, and other localities bearing a similar name. The *Æscesdune* of the Saxons was, however, in Berkshire, and to this county I shall therefore confine my remarks. Mr. Wise, whose opinion is most credited, fixes Æscesdune at Ashdown Park, near Lambourn; Lyson, at Ashampstead; and Bishop Gibson, at Aston: but these erroneous theories will not stand the test of impartial inquiry.

The original Saxon name of Æscesdune, implying the *hill of ash-trees*, has been variously written by ancient

historians; thus we find it spelt Eschedune, Æascesdune, Esschendune, Assesdoune, Aschedone, &c. Lyson observes, that the *Assedone* of Domesday Book is the same as the Saxon Æscesdune, which formed "part of the Hundred of Nachededorne, corresponding to the modern Hundred of Compton; and this place sufficiently agrees," says he, "both as to its name and situation, with the little that is to be gathered from our historians respecting the site of this action." At a subsequent period, as Lyson further observes, the Assedone of the Survey was commonly called Ashdown, but no mention of any such place is to be found in records of a later date than the time of Henry VIII.; "the name seems to have been lost," says he, "but it is evident that its site must be in the Hundred of Compton; and here the scene of the battle of Ashdown must be looked for." All this is perfectly true, but it is surprising that Lyson, with these correct ideas of its situation, should have fixed Æscesdune in the Hundred of Moreton! There can be no doubt that the old name of Æscesdune, as applied to any district, has been lost, or rather, I should say, *translated*, for such is actually the case, the present name of Ashridge signifying precisely a similar meaning; that is, "the hill of ash trees;" the termination *dune* being synonymous with our modern *ridge*.

This explanation of so remarkable a change of appellation at once dispels the cloud of obscurity in which the Saxon Æscesdune has so long been shrouded; this ambiguity expounded, how exactly the circumstances of the case correspond with the locality! During the Saxon era, this district of Æscesdune was of vast extent; but at the time of the conquest, the name had become more restricted, being then only applied to the present manor of Ashridge. We are not, therefore, to suppose that Ash-

ridge must be the site of this action, but rather the open hills in the vicinity of East Ilsley. Many of our old chroniclers mention this battle; but the account of Asser Menevensis, who wrote at the time, being most explicit, I shall here follow, giving a translation as exact as may be intelligible.

After telling us, that in the year 871 the Danes advanced as far as Reading, which they burnt and ransacked, and that there they entrenched themselves, he narrates an encounter at Englefield, between the invaders and Ethelwolf, Earl of Berkshire, in which the former were totally defeated; two of their counts or generals being slain. Alfred and his brother, King Ethelred, hearing of this invasion, hastened to Reading, where, in a desperate sally from their earthworks, the Danes achieved a decisive victory; the brave Ethelwolf, with some hundreds of the Saxons, being slain. "At this defeat, the Christians being enraged," says Asser, "the army was ordered to retreat to a place called 'Æssessdune,' which, in Latin, may be interpreted *mons fraxini;* so with their whole force and a willing heart they go forth to battle. Now, the Pagans dividing their army into two equal bodies, formed semilunar ranks, and, as they had there two kings and several counts, they entrusted one half to the former and the other to their generals; which the Christians observing, they also did the like, and fell into semilunar ranks. Alfred came speedily with his forces to the fight, but King Ethelred, his brother, was knelt in his tent at prayer, declaring that he would not quit that place until the priest had finished the ceremony of mass, being unwilling to leave divine for human service; which faith prevailed much with the Lord, as in the sequel will plainly appear.

"Now, the Christians had determined that the king

with his troops should oppose the two Danish kings, so that Alfred well knew that he had to contend against the whole of the Pagan generals. Matters being thus settled, when the king had now delayed a long time at his devotions, and the enemy had arrived almost at the spot selected for the contest, Alfred (although only second in command), when now he was no longer able to stand against the opposing troops, unless indeed he had retreated; nevertheless, although the king had not yet come up, Alfred, leading on his troops and relying upon divine assistance (his testudo being formed into a square), forthwith he moved on his band against the enemy: it must, however, be intimated that he knew not the nature of the ground, which was a spot very unequal for the contending of hostile troops; the Pagans having taken up their post on the higher ground, whilst the Saxons directed their line of march from below.

"Now there was on this hill a single thorn-tree (which I with my own eyes afterwards saw), about which the enemy foolishly assembled themselves in much disorder, with a great noise and shouting from all quarters; but the Christians, about to fight for their lives, disposed themselves in a far more hostile manner. And when now a long time fiercely and bloodily here and there they had fought, by the divinely directed judgment of the Saxons; the Pagans being no longer able to sustain the attack (the greater part of them being cut to pieces), betook themselves to a disorderly flight. Now on the scene of action lay extended two Pagan kings and five counts, with many thousands of the common men; moreover, over the whole downs, far and wide, they were everywhere dispersed; and in every direction fell down slaughtered. Now there fell in this battle Beagsecg, their king, Count Sidroc, and Sidroc, his son; with Counts Osbearn, Freano, and Harold; the

whole Pagan army being pursued in flight even until dark, nay even till the following dawn, as far as their camp, where those who escaped ultimately arrived; the Christians pursuing them during the night, and cutting them to pieces in every direction."

Some historians relate that Alfred must have been overcome had not Ethelred opportunely arrived, which turned the fortune of the day. Writers differ much as to the names of the two kings slain in this battle, some calling them Hingar and Hubba. Brompton says that one of them was named Oseg, the other Bacseg. The same chronicler further states that Ethelred himself slew one of the Danish counts and also Oseg, their king; the former with the sword suspended from his own body: "Lancea quam manu sua gestabat regem Oseg viriliter interfecit; et alterum regem gladio quo cinctus fuit, vita privavit." He also relates that the night before the battle both armies encamped on the downs within sight of each other. Two other engagements in the same year were also fought between the Saxons and Danes on this spot, in which, according to Robert of Gloucester, the latter were victorious :—

"The syxte yer of ye crounement of Athelred the king,
Anywe oft com into hys lond gret horn alle hyng,
And anon to Reding robbed and slowe;
The kyng and Alfred hys brother nome men ynowe
Mette hem, and a batayle smyte up Assesdoune;
Her was mony mother's chyld that sone lay ther done:
Ye batayle ylaste vortenyht, and her was aslawe
Vyf dukes of Denmarck ar hii wolde wythdrawe,
And mony thosand oder men and tho gone hii to fle;
Ac hii adde alle ybe assend gyf ye nygt nadde y bee.
Tweye batayle her after in ye sulf yere
Hii smyte, and bothe he hethen maysters were."

With regard to the scene of action, I am disposed to consider the hill whereon Ilsley now stands to be that

where the Danes were so advantageously posted, and where the single thorn-tree grew, whence the present name of this place, signifying *the field of battle*, was derived. The retreat across the downs was doubtless from Ilsley by way of Lowborough to King's Standing, where popular tradition states Alfred pitched his tent for the night. In the direct line between this spot and Ilsley, military weapons and human skeletons have been turned up by the plough; there are also many tumuli on the adjacent downs. The existing names of localities on this route, as Dane-bottom, Denispare, &c., also corroborate the idea that this was the course pursued by the Danes in their retreat from Ashdown: the latter name, a corruption of *Danes'-spare*, seems to intimate that at this place the carnage or regular fight was ended. Southward of Ilsley is a valley called "Banager Bottom," where it is probable one of the other engagements at Ashdown took place, as the name, signifying the *field of slaughter*, seems to imply. The only locality retaining the original Saxon name is a valley called to this day Ashdown Bottom. The names of other places in this district, however, as The Ash, Ash-ridge Bottom, Ashclose, &c., bear further evidence in proof of my novel hypothesis; for to these downs it is, and not to White Horse Hill, that the poet's lines apply:—

> "Here England rear'd her long dejected head,
> Here Alfred triumph'd, and Invasion bled."

Sufficient evidence has, I think, been advanced to convince the impartial reader that Ilsley has the best and fairest claim to having been the scene of this, perhaps the most glorious victory, achieved by the skill of the immortal Alfred. Its situation, its name, its appearance, the titles of adjoining localities, and its popular traditions, all conspire to prove the truth of my novel opinion. Nor is it only as the site of this decisive engagement that these

downs are rendered so particularly famous; for here crowns have been lost and kingdoms have been gained. In the year 758, Kinewulf having been defeated by Offa, King of Mercia, the latter seized on all that territory between the Thames and *Æscesdune*. In 1006, the Danes having burnt Wallingford and many places about Ilsley, marched from the former town over Ashdown to Cuckhamsley. In 655, a most bloody battle was fought at Ashdown, between Oswi, King of Northumbria, and Kenwalch, King of Wessex, in which the latter was defeated and slain. Other bloody engagements on these hills have also been mentioned in former parts of this history. It is remarkable that so great a similarity should exist between this country, the site of the most celebrated battles recorded in the page of Saxon history, and Waterloo, the scene of the most glorious victory of modern times. On the conclusion of the war in 1816, several regiments of soldiers marched through Ilsley from Portsmouth, when on reaching Ashridge Hill, the foremost men simultaneously exclaimed, "Waterloo!" "Waterloo!" In fact the similarity of the two countries was universally acknowledged.

LOWBOROUGH.

Lowborough Hill, situated about four miles east of Ilsley, is a conspicuous eminence forming a prominent feature in that extensive range of downs which entirely intersect Berkshire, being the highest spot of ground in this county. Its name appears to be a corruption of the two Saxon words *hleaw*, a hill, and *bergh*, a fortress; which appellation it acquired from a strong Roman out-

post that in ancient times crowned its exalted summit, of which some slight traces are still discernible. At the present day all that remains of this once impregnable fortress are the slight undulations and embankments pointing out the site of the original wall: of which, with the exception of a few Roman tiles, and pieces of coarse mortar, no vestiges whatsoever now remain. It is very evident, from the course of this embankment, that the old fortress was of a rectangular form, with the corners of the square rounded off in the usual manner of the Romans. In the centre of this quadrangular area, some slight vestiges of the *prætorium*, or general's abode, are discernible; and on this spot the greater part of the antiquities found hereabouts have been discovered, consisting of fragments of large earthen vessels, silver and copper coins, *tesseræ*, and other relics of Roman formation. These tesseræ are small square pieces of baked clay, of a blue, red, or other colour, which were used for paving the floor of the general's tent. Suetonius says the Romans always carried them in their expeditions: "In expeditionibus tesselatæ et sectilia pavimenta, circumtulisse." At one angle of the area appears an immense quantity of oyster shells, imbedded in the soil to the depth of several feet, where they were doubtless deposited by the Roman soldiers occupying this dreary spot nearly eighteen centuries ago. These shells, which are of very large size, must have been brought hence from some distant spot, the sea at the nearest point being upwards of forty miles. The British oysters were so esteemed by the Romans, who preferred the largest, that they were even exported to Rome as a luxury for the emperor's table. Besides these shells, the teeth and bones of oxen, goats, boars, sheep, calves, and horses, are also every where discoverable by digging. The quantity of Roman pottery found on this hill has been immense: the

execution of these vessels, many of which measured in circumference twenty or twenty-five inches, is remarkably fine. I myself possess fragments of more than a hundred different vessels, no two of which exactly correspond. These are finely moulded by the lathe, and are mostly of a slate, or reddish brown colour; a few of these pieces are ornamented with simple lines and mouldings. Close to the camp is a small hollow, or well, containing water for the supply of the garrison; which, during the hottest season, has never been known to fail. There is also a large circular barrow erected, perhaps more for observation than as a place of interment. The panoramic view from this bleak but delightful spot, which rises 830 feet above the level of the sea, is extensive and highly diversified; the view being bounded on the east by the Chilterns of Oxfordshire and Bucks, and on the south by the Hampshire Hills. Among other objects too numerous to particularize, Farringdon Clump, White Horse Hill, and Oxford with its venerable spires, may be distinctly seen. This camp, commanding a view of no less than twelve military entrenchments, most of which were occupied by the Romans, was well calculated to keep the conquered Britons in awe for many miles around, and must therefore have been a *castrum œstivum* of the utmost importance. The Ridgeway passes within a few hundred yards of this hill, and at the corner of Unhill Wood is a fine circular barrow surrounded by a fosse.

DEVIL'S DITCH.

This remarkable earthwork, which is evidently of very high antiquity, extends along the northern declivity of the

downs for many successive miles, entirely intersecting Compton Hundred, from Cuckhamsley on the west to Lowborough on the east. Many opinions have been advanced respecting the origin and uses of this remarkable fosse, some supposing it to have been a highway of the ancient Britons, and others that it is merely a line of demarcation between two neighbouring states. Its width, scarcely five feet, and irregular course over hills and down declivities inaccessible for wheel carriages, (which we know the aborigines to have possessed), seem sufficient proofs of the absurdity of the former opinion. The difference between dykes of communication, or roads, and those only for protection or demarcation, is thus described by Sir R. Colt Hoare: "The *valla* of the former were thrown up with a great deal of symmetry, and equal on both sides, with a wide and flat surface left between them at the bottom; the latter having an elevated *vallum* on one side only, with a deep and narrow ditch on the other." These explicit remarks show the distinction between the Devil's Ditch in question and Grim's Dyke before mentioned; the former was merely a vallum for defence, the latter a public road of the ancient Britons. Mr. Wise, speaking of this ditch, says: "I observed a much larger boundary beginning near Sagbury, running for several miles on the brow of the hills eastward; and I also observed it in my road to Blubery." Sir R. Colt Hoare thus makes mention of the Devil's Ditch: "On the north of Cuckhamsley barrow and of the Ridgeway runs a large bank, having its ditch towards the south and vallum towards the north, which I followed as far as Blewbury down in an eastern direction, where I lost all traces of it; but it seemed to direct its course through some corn fields towards a large range of wood upon a hill (Unhill). At this spot I quitted my researches, and reserved the re-

maining portion of the Ridgeway for the ensuing day, East or Market Ilsley being destined for our nightly quarters." I may here mention, that the talented and indefatigable antiquary just quoted, visited these parts in the summer of 1810, for the purpose of inspecting its numerous antiquities, with which he was highly delighted. Sir R. Colt Hoare inserted an advertisement in the Berkshire papers, inviting gentlemen fond of antiquarian pursuits to accompany him on his tour and point out the most interesting sites; but alas! no such person was to be found; and we must ever regret that Sir Richard overlooked so many of the antiquities with which Ilsley and its vicinity abound. There is a remarkable tradition amongst the peasantry, who state that this fosse, from one end to the other, was dug by the Devil in a single night, and that retiring to the summit of the downs he there scraped his spade, the mould from which formed the well-known barrow, Cuckhamsley Hill! Others narrate that it is a furrow made by the Devil, who traversed these downs with his plough! It is probable there may be some foundation for the former tradition, at least it is certain that a great number of barrows are situated immediately upon this singular dyke. It is not improbable that this may have been originally a British work, subsequently adopted by the Saxons as a boundary between the Heptarchal kingdoms. I am inclined to think it may have once formed the boundary between two neighbouring British tribes; or else, that it was made by the illustrious Offa, King of Mercia, who conquering Kinewulph, King of Wessex, in 758, seized on all that territory which lay between the Thames on the north, and the Ridgeway on the south. In various places branches diverge to the right or left from the main ditch, and again, after a circuitous route, reunite. The most remarkable is a ditch extending from Gore-hill to Hog-

trough-bottom; and there is another diverging to the south, near Ilsley warren. These irregular dykes seem to prove that it is a British work, improved for the most part by the Saxons during the Heptarchal period.

BRITISH AND ROMAN ROADS.

There is perhaps no district throughout this island so abounding in the remains of ancient military streets as the vicinity of East Ilsley, that town being situated about the centre of a triangle formed by three undoubted Roman roads, neither of which is more than three miles distant. The Hundred of Compton is intersected by two Roman *viæ*, the Icnield Street and Old Street; and by two ancient British tracks, called respectively the Ridgeway, and Grimsdyke. A fifth Roman road traverses the Vale of Berks, passing within half a mile northward of Chilton. The Old Street, as it is termed to this day by the common people, presents a most beautiful and very perfect specimen of the vicinal ways constructed by those mighty conquerors of the universe, the Romans, in this island; having in certain parts of its course never yet been disturbed by that bar to the researches of the antiquary, the plough. It is surprising that the Old Street, perhaps the most distinctly marked Roman road existing in this country, should have escaped, with the bare exception of Dr. Beke, the observation of all our great antiquaries. In ancient charters relating to these parts, as the Chronicle of Abingdon, &c., this Roman street (as was customary with our Saxon ancestors) is termed *the military way*. It extended in a direct line from Wantage to Silchester,

the Roman station, *Vindonum*, being at the present day observable throughout the greater part of its course, which is invariably along the summit of the highest ground. Diverging from the Ridgeway near Clark's Looes, it proceeds in a straight line to Farnborough furze ground, where it forms the boundary between that parish and West Ilsley; from this spot it proceeds towards Stanmore, intersecting Park Wood and Knapp's Copse, where, and in a hedge-road dividing the parishes of Peasemore and Beedon, it exists in perfect preservation. The poor people claim the underwood for fuel, as a right enjoyed from time immemorial; but the timber they consider to be the property of the lord of the manor. Proceeding over Beedon Common by the New Inn, and down Sandy Lane, it continues on to Grimsbury Castle, (an earthwork of British origin adopted by the Romans,) between which and Hermitage, as also in Oarborough, this ancient street is still discernible.

The Icnield Street, connecting Streatley (Calleva) with Speen (Spinæ) is not very distinct; but nevertheless its course, by the direction of modern lanes and other well-known circumstances, may be pretty accurately determined. Leaving Aldworth Church, it pursued the same course as the present footpath and road to Turville Copse; where, in the shape of a high embankment in a hedge-road, it may still be traced. Hence passing by Beech Wood and Hampstead Norreys, over Wayley Hill, it continued on to Hermitage and Shaw.

The Ridgeway, so called from its elevated and devious course along the hills, was of British origin, subsequently used and improved by the Romans; as their remains, still existing, sufficiently testify. By some authors it is described as the Icnield Street, but this term is inapplicable, and apt to create ambiguity. At Streatley, says the

Bishop of Cloyne, the Icnield Street "divides into two great branches, one of which under the name of the *Ridgeway* continues on the edge of the high ground by Cuckhamsley, Letcombe, and White Horse Hill, into Wiltshire; and this," says he, "I conceive to be the proper Ickening Street." It undoubtedly led from the metropolis of the Attrebatii, at Streatley, to the two great national temples of Avebury and Stonehenge. "The British trackways," says a modern author, "adopted by the Romans, as the Icnield Street, seem rather to have been for civil and commercial purposes; new Roman roads often run parallel with these trackways," as the Ickleton and Ridge ways in question. Sir R. C. Hoare thus notices the latter in its course through Compton Hundred: "On returning to the high ground, the Ridgway loses its former character and differs not from a common road between hedges; till on reaching the summit of the hill it opens in front of a beautiful line of downy country, having above it on the left as a boundary, a long range of fine wood: it continues winding along the declivity of this hill until approaching towards Streatley, when it once more loses its original character of a trackway. Throughout this valley I observed some lynches on each declivity of the hill, and I think it very probable that on the high ground to the left some British settlement might be discovered, especially as the bank and ditch before mentioned (the Devil's Ditch) most evidently pointed towards this eminence."

The Ickleton way, as it is called by the peasantry, may be traced with tolerable precision throughout the entire vale, but writers differ much as to the exact spot where it crossed the Thames. Mr. Wise supposes it to have ran from Blewbury to Streatley; Dr. Beke, that it went to Moulsford; whilst Lyson states, that "from Upton to

Streatley it forms part of the new turnpike road." No great testimony is required to show that the whole of these surmises are far from being correct. The Roman road in question from Upton, through Blewbury, appears to have followed the same course as the modern high road as far as the thirteenth mile-stone, when, instead of diverging to the right, it continues straight on by Lollingdon Copse, and so under the adjoining hill towards Little Stoke ferry; to which spot, when last seen in Oxfordshire, it seems to point. Within the memory of man this road near the former place was called the Ickleton, or Hackney way; but it is now disused, though formerly traversed by the Vale carriers in their way to London. "From Blewbury," says Mr. Wise, "it undoubtedly went to Wantage, but whether it took the same course as the modern great road to Harwell, being called the Portway, or whether its true course went to Chilton more under the hills, and is now lost in the ploughed fields, I have not had leisure to satisfy myself thoroughly, as I ought." From Upton it passes over Hagbourn hill, by Harville barn and Goldbury. The two latter names evidently imply that some military station once existed near this spot.

This Roman road and the Icnield Street, entering Oxfordshire within two miles of each other, run parallel through that county and Cambridgeshire into Norfolk; being called "the upper" and "lower Hackney," or Ickleton ways. On entering Berkshire, however, they diverge, one traversing the Vale, the other proceeding by Newbury to Old Sarum. The term Ickleton is supposed by Mr. Wise to be a corruption of Agricola's way; but others derive it from the Iceni, a people who inhabited Norfolk; the term Icnield he conjectures signified the *Old Iceni's Street*, from the Saxon word "eald." The other ancient British street intersecting this district is very applicably termed

"Grim's-dyke," for at the present day it presents little more than a mere vallum and fosse. This remarkable ditch, traced by Dr. Plott as far as Grove barn, within two miles of the Thames, commences in Berkshire at a spot called Holies, whence it proceeds to Wood's Farm; thence intersecting Porto Bello and Foxborough woods, it passes by Beche, Turville, and Cold Harbour farms, to Compton Cow-down. In many places it has been destroyed by the plough, but through the Beech woods still appears in beautiful preservation. From the Cow-down it has not yet been traced, but from detached *valla* and dykes in Ashridge and Cheseridge woods, seems to have proceeded towards Stanmore. As regards the so-called Roman station, *Ad Thamesi*, I fix it at Little Stoke ferry; because that place is just six miles from *Dorocina:* it appears to have been merely an inn, with accomodations for the conveyance of travellers across the river Thames.

BARROWS.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE BRITISH BARROWS IN THE VICINITY OF EAST ILSLEY, MORE PARTICULARLY OF THOSE WHICH HAVE BEEN EXAMINED.

As is usually the case in similar champaign districts, as Salisbury Plain, &c., the vast and trackless downs, constituting so large a portion of this hundred, are everywhere overspread with those singular funereal mounds, commonly called barrows, which the early inhabitants of this island were accustomed to raise over the honoured remains of their fallen chieftains. These tumuli, of which

perhaps no less than sixty might be enumerated within the limits of Compton Hundred, are everywhere scattered over the face of our inhospitable hills; frequently in small groups, or in pairs, but generally isolated and alone. The mound is commonly surrounded by a fosse, but this character is variable; indeed, as regards the shape, dimensions, formation, and situation of these tumuli, scarcely any two are to be found precisely similar. I am inclined to consider the greater number of these barrows to have been formed long antecedent to the Christian era, and that they are not altogether the burial places of warriors slain on these downs in some intestine conflict, but the sepulchres of heroines, potentates, priests, and other distinguished personages, who died a more peaceable death. It seems probable also that many of these tumuli were family burial places, or *mausolea*, in use perhaps during many generations, which would carry back their origin to the remotest antiquity. It has been generally supposed that the size of the mound is indicative of the rank and dignity of the interred, and where only a single interment exists, such may possibly be the case; but I imagine the larger barrows are merely the original mounds, increased by the accession of successive deposits; if this idea therefore be correct, the larger the tumulus the more ancient its date. The construction and appearance of these tombs are so dissimilar, that perhaps every species of barrow described by Sir R. C. Hoare, as existing on the Wiltshire Downs, is also to be discovered here. Those of most common occurrence are the kinds denominated by that learned antiquary, the *bowl* and the *bell* barrow: the former being round and simple in its formation, the latter finely moulded and encompassed by a fosse. Twin barrows, that is, two mounds enclosed by a single ditch, or where the two dykes coalesce, are also to be found,

though not of frequent occurrence. The *long*, the *pond*, and the *Druid* barrow, are also observable here; nor are their contents less variable than their size and configuration. The usual remains discovered in excavated tumuli on these downs, have been the skeletons of human beings, dogs, horses, and hares; with the bones of ducks, geese, and other domesticated fowls: also, military weapons and accoutrements, such as umbos, arrow-heads, pincers, spear-heads, knives, &c.; amber, stone, and ochre beads, incense cups, sepulchral urns, metallic ornaments, and other similar relics of undoubted Celtic formation. The most ancient barrows, according to Sir R. C. Hoare, are those in which the body is found entire, with the legs drawn up towards the chin: skeletons in this position have been observed in tumuli opened in these parts. Then followed prostration of the body at full length, disposed in various directions, and accompanied with instruments of iron. Of this kind were two of the cross-barrows opened by myself about a twelvemonth ago; these operations, which will be more minutely described hereafter, formed the subject of a paper communicated by me to the Society of Antiquaries, and read February 16th, 1843.

Cremation was contemporary with the second mode of sepulture, and of this practice two varieties were adopted, the earliest being that where the calcined remains were deposited in a cist, or scattered throughout the mound.

At a later period, the bones rescued from the consuming element were enclosed in the funereal urn, which was the refinement of a succeeding age. In two large tumuli, opened some years since by Mr. Job Lousley and Mr. King, of Appleford, an immense number of these funereal vessels were observed, arranged in two concentric circles around the circumference of the mound: these urns were of the rudest kind, and so numerous that from no less

than forty having been exhumed from the small section that was made, it is evident these *mausolea* enclose the remains of many hundred persons. A fine iron arrow-head, having two acute barbs and a small hole for the insertion of the shaft, together with the bones of horses, hares, and fowls, were also discovered. It is probable these *tumuli* were used as burial places for many successive generations; on the decease of each member of the family, an excavation having been made in the original mound for the insertion of the urn. Sir R. C. Hoare remarks that he was generally unsuccessful in his operations on the larger barrows, a statement fully verified by the paucity of relics discovered in those examined in these parts. These open downs (more especially Blewbury Bottom) appear, indeed, to have been the cemetery not only for the neighbourhood, but for this whole district for many miles around. Barrows were only raised to the memory of exalted personages, and it seems probable, that on the death of any king or other illustrious individual, his corpse was conveyed to these consecrated hills, and here buried near his ancestors with all due honour and solemnity. From no Roman remains having ever been discovered in tumuli in these parts, we may conclude that the British custom of barrow burial was for the most part abolished after the arrival of that all-conquering race. The pottery is always of the rudest kind, merely moulded by the hand, and baked, or rather dried, by the sun.

There is a large tumulus in Stanmore Field of the kind termed by Sir R. C. Hoare, bell barrows, called Burrow Hill by the common people; who have a tradition that a man of that name was interred there in a gold or silver coffin. This barrow, originally surrounded by a ditch, and of much larger size than at present, was opened during the month of April, 1815, under the directions of Charles

E. Long, Esq., son of Charles Beckford Long, Esq., then residing at Langley Hall, who has kindly favoured me with some *memoranda* made on the occasion. At the depth of about ten feet from the summit of the mound, the excavators discovered a small interment of burnt bones, with some fragments of a funereal urn, in which they had doubtless been deposited. This vessel, of the kind termed "incense cups," was evidently of British formation, being rudely ornamented with zigzag mouldings, and other similar designs; it was deposited on the south side of the barrow, which was composed of a stiff reddish clay, veined throughout with *strata* of flints and charcoal. After a week's operations, during which nothing, with the exception of a few pieces of bone near the apex, was observed, the labourers came to what appeared to be the floor or foundation of the barrow; where, disposed in a circle, they discovered seven perpendicular holes, about a foot in depth, cut in the solid chalk, all of which contained a deposit of charred wood. The common people state that an attempt to open this barrow was made about fifty years ago, but the design was frustrated by a dreadful hail-storm, with lightning, which compelled the labourers to desist. Thunder being also heard during the second attempt in question, the excavators were universally considered as the disturbers of the atmosphere; those who remembered the previous event, remarking, that "the undertaking seemed not altogether pleasing to the Lord!" A terrific thunder-storm happening on the following day, the labourers were obliged to desist and take refuge in a neighbouring cottage; which had such an effect on the mind of one of the workmen employed, that he actually refused to come again. The recurrence of a thunder storm during this, the second attempt, was generally considered as remarkable; but such was its melancholy influ-

ence on this poor fellow that he became completely deranged, and never did a day's work afterwards; being confined in St. Luke's and other lunatic asylums for the remainder of his life. It is but justice to state, that Mr. Long had never heard of this melancholy result of his labours until the present year. Among other ridiculous stories and puerile superstitions respecting this tumulus, the peasantry relate that it is inhabited by fairies; and that a certain ploughman having broken his share, and gone home to procure some tools, found on his return that the plough had already been mended. Popular traditions connected with the remains of a people and of times that have long since passed away, however absurd, are not unworthy our attention. Among other stories, the common people report, that one of the early preachers of the Gospel was accustomed to hold forth on Churn Knob, where he was listened to by crowded audiences. This tradition may, perhaps, refer to the conversion of our Saxon ancestors, or even to St. Birinus himself, who certainly, under the auspices of the ruling princes, preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of these downs. The singular iron relic resembling a cocoa-nut, discovered in one of the cross-barrows, was the boss or umbo of a British shield. The ancient Britons were accustomed, holding the shield at arm's length, to make a tremendous clatter, by striking their swords on this umbo, for the purpose of disordering the enemy's horse.

ADDENDA.

Page 1. According to the census of 1801, there were in Compton Hundred 420 houses, in the following proportion to each parish: Aldworth, 54; Catmere, 13; Chilton, 50; Compton, 99; Farnborough, 42; East Ilsley, 114; West Ilsley, 48.

Page 2. Materials being easily procurable, the roads about Ilsley are, for the most part, in good repair. Eighty years ago there was scarcely a road leading to Ilsley in any direction; that from West Ilsley to Compton having been made long since the commencement of the present century.

Page 2. The barley and red wheat raised in this district are particularly fine. Malting was formerly carried on here to a great extent, but this branch of trade has of late years declined. Before the enclosure, Compton was divided into 14 farms; at present there are only 6. One of these small farms consisted of 102 fields, scattered throughout the parish, the average size of which was less than 1 acre. The wheat straw raised in these parts is much sought after by the platers of Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire.

Page 5. Lyson supposes the *Stanworde* of "Domesday Book" to be Stanford, but the fact that it formed part of Nachededorne Hundred argues strongly in favour of Stanmore.

Page 7. The candytuft, a plant of such rare occurrence as only to be found in this neighbourhood and near Henley, is so abundant on the chalk hills, as to prove to the careless farmer a very injurious weed. Henbane is so abundant here as to be sought after by the London herb gatherers, and meadow saffron, so called from its generally growing in wet pastures, covers many acres of *woodland* in this district.

Page 8. Philip de Fishid (Fivehide) held lands in Catmere temp. Henry III.

Page 9. Thomas de Aldremanstone, Rector of Catmere, resigned, A.D. 1302, to Richard de Hyldeslee. During the fourteenth century there were no less than twelve incumbents.

Page 9. On the north side of the chancel, from which it is separated by a door, is a very small chamber, perhaps built for an *excubitorium*.

Page 10. Roger Gascelyn appears to have acquired his moiety of Catmere, in right of his wife, Amitia, who is styled "vera domina villæ de Catmer."

Page 11. "William Eyston who made his Will ye 17th yeare of Edward IV., which was ye yeare of Christ 1477, was possest of Catmer, and the manors of Arches, and Symeons in Hanney; and of Burford in Oxfordshyre" his son Thomas had also an estate at Grove near Wantage; William Eyston Esqre of Catmere sold the three former manors and Coppice Leaze after they had been in the family upwards of 170 years. "William Eyston (son of the above William of Catmere) was a greate Sufferer during the time of the Civill Wars of Englande, and was forced to skulck upp and downe by reason of his Religion, and Loyalty: he dyed April ye 11th 1670." Extracted from documents in the possession of Charles Eyston, Esq., of Hendred House.

Page 12. Near Catmere farm is a field called the Hop-garden.

Page 12. Farnborough parish measures 2½ miles in length, the same in breadth, and 8½ in circumference.

Page 13. On the second bell is this inscription: "Ora Sancte Clementus;" proving that it is older than the Reformation. There are some neat memorials in the church, to the Prices' of Charlton House, and the Ham, near Wantage.

Page 14. "It appears by the Act of Enclosure, that the Lord of the Manor was entitled to two-thirds of 18 yard lands." Lyson.

Page 16. In 1336 *Magister* William Walemede was presented to the church of Chilton. Thomas Hall succeeded Thomas Lawrence in 1693; his successor was George Read. The present incumbent is the Rev. Charles Gaisford. No Rector has resided here within the memory of man.

Page 17. It was formerly the custom to affix the letter P on the coat of those receiving parochial relief, for the sole purpose of wounding their feelings.

Page 18. The roof of the church is partly covered with tiles, lead, and slate. One of the four bells is now useless, having fallen from the beam which once supported it; and in this state it is suffered to remain!

Page 18. On a diamond-shaped stone in the aisle is this laconic epitaph: "The Sepulchre of Adam Head, I pray through the Almighty and Omnipotent God that these bones be not removed."

Page 19. Ann Latton, who died in 1585, styles herself in her will, one of the daughters of one John Latton, Esq., of Chilton. Her sister was the wife of Sir John Daunce, Surveyor-General to King Henry VIII., who lies buried in Blewbury church. In the "Herald's Visitation" for 1566,

under a pedigree of Latton, appears this note: "Milo de Morton dedit omnia terra &c. in Chilton, Ricardo filio Bartholomi de Hakeborne, et Johanno filio Willielmi de Latton; 18 Eliz: Reginæ." William Latton is mentioned in the list of Berkshire gentry, compiled A.D. 1434.

Page 20. The name of John Yorke also occurs in the same catalogue.

Page 21. Richard de Windsor, who died A.D. 1367, was Sheriff of Berks in 1310, and Knight of the Shire 14th Edw. III.

Page 22. The name of Edmund de Polhampton or De la Poille, occurs in the list of Berks gentry possessing estates worth 100 shillings per annum temp. Edw. I. John Estbury, who died in 1485, was one of the 22 individuals in this county, styled in the catalogue *Esquires.* He lies buried in the chantrey, founded by himself, at Lambourn.

Page 22. The armorial bearings of the Knapps were confirmed, in 1669, by Sir Ed. Byshe Clarencieux, to Henry Knapp, Esq., of Woodcot Oxon; whose only daughter and heiress, Mary, was the wife of Sir Richard Temple, of Stowe.

Page 23. A gentleman near Chilton possesses an original passport granted to one of the Plotts' of Upton, which is signed by several of the Parliamentary generals, who were then quartered here.

Page 24. The parish of West Ilsley measures ten miles in circumference, being nearly three miles from north to south. It is singular that no mention of any wood is made in the account of this parish, in Domesday Book.

Page 27. "Prestall," the name of a large meadow forming part of the glebe land, is probably a corruption of "priests' hill."

Page 27. *Dominus* Thomas Champeneys, Rector of

West Ilsley, was suspended by the Bishop on account of infirmity, A.D. 1306.

Page 28. In the churchyard is the epitaph of a shepherd, who was struck dead by lightning on the open downs; the electric fluid having been so powerful as to fuse the metal buttons on his coat.

Page 30. Bishop Goodman published, among other theological works, "The power of God displayed in the government of the world," and "The Fall of Man." That he died a convert to Popery is evident from the tenour of his will, wherein he says: "And here I profess that as I have lived so I die, most constant in all the Articles of the Christian Faith, and all the Doctrines of God's Holy Catholick and Apostolic Church; whereof I do acknowledge the Church of Rome to be the Mother; and I do verily believe that no other Church hath any salvation in it, but only so far as it concurs with the Faith of the Church of Rome." By an entry in the West Ilsley register it appears, that he was ejected from this living "for six severall crimes and misdemeanours against the Parliament."

Page 32. Walker says that "the Right Rev. Bishop of Worcester in some MS. notes on Mr. Calamy's "Abridgement" saith, that he thinks Dr. Fulham was restored to the Living of West Ilsley, and if so, 'tis plain he must have been sequestered from it; and then either Dr. Goodman did not hold this living 'in commendam' long enough to suffer in it, as he did in his Bishoprick; or else Dr. Fulham must have obtained after Dr. Goodman's sequestration, or at least after his death in 1655. If the former of these conjectures was the case, then the living cannot be reckoned to Dr. Fulham's account till after the year 1655, because the equitable title was in Dr. Goodman; nor could Fulham have had any other than that of the times, as neither could he if he both succeeded, and was

sequestered, after 1655; and was really a second sufferer in this living."

Page 33. There were formerly two very large breweries at West Ilsley, the beer of which acquired a high degree of celebrity; large quantities having been sent to London and Oxford: one of these breweries still exists.

Page 34. Fulke, the son of Ralph Paganel, succeeded to the immense estates of William Fitz Ansculf, who held West Ilsley, and 10 other manors in Berkshire. In 1298 Hugh Paganel was presented to the church of Chilton by Sir Philip Paganel.

Page 34. Walter de la Ryvere, and Galfred Ridell, each held a manor in Hodcott, under the baronial family of Mortemer, Earls of March: the other manor, belonging to the Somerys, was held under Roger de Somery by Philip de Berwyk and John de Cormailes.

Page 35. In the Herald's Visitation for Berks, A.D. 1664, under the pedigree of Southby is this note, in Latin; confirming a previous grant of arms: "The arms and Crest of John Southby, of Carswell, in the county of Berks, Esquire; to all and singular his heirs and successors are confirmed, for ever; by me William Segar, Garter King of Arms: given under my hand, and the seal of my office, this, the 10th day of February, in the 7th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles, A.D. 1631. Je port d'or un Sheberon, entre tres pommes de Geules; et par une Tymbre, sur Haulme, une demy Lyon rampant, d'or; tenant en pattes une pomme de Geules." These arms are still borne by the family.

Page 36. The Rev. Richard Head, Vicar of Chieveley, was only brother of Sir Thomas Head, Knt.

Page 37. The old mansion at Hodcott was built on arches, on account of its damp situation when the springs were high. The spiral staircase was universally and justly admired. When digging up the foundation the labourers

discovered a human skull, with the teeth all perfect, a circumstance (no corresponding bones being found) considered somewhat singular. The case was, however, deemed far more remarkable, when on opening an old vault in West Ilsley church the succeeding year, a skeleton was seen in a decayed coffin, without any head! No inscription was legible. Such a coincidence could not fail to give rise to various conjectures among the credulous villagers.

Page 36. The armorial bearings of the James', assumed by the family of Head, as their heirs and successors, were Gules, a dolphin imbowed, or.

Page 37. The parish of East Ilsley measures four miles from north to south, and about eleven miles in circumference.

Page 38. In the time of Henry III., Oliver de Eyncourt held lands in East Ildesle under the baronial family of Ferrars. Almaric de St. Amand had a warren at East Ilsley, for which he obtained a charter from King John. There is a spot called "the Warren" to this day. "John de St. Amand," says Dugdale, "was a Professor of the Civil or Canon Law, as I guess, being called *Magister*." He died 19th Edw. II.

Page 39. Sir Gilbert de Elsfeld was Knight of the Shire for Berks, 4th Edward III. The De la Poyles were originally a Surrey family, having derived their cognomen from a place of this name in that county. About the middle of the thirteenth century they settled at East Ilsley, where, and at Chilton, they long held extensive possessions. Walter, one of this family, married Alice, sole heiress of the manor of Hampton in Oxfordshire, after which period the De la Poyles assumed the name of Polhampton. The wardship of this Alice was first given to Nicholas de Yattingdene. Sir Thomas Polhampton was Sheriff of Oxfordshire A.D. 1397.

Page 43. The mention of a Presbyter, or Rector, in the account of Nachededorne, in Domesday Book, shews that there was a church at Ilsley at the time of the Conquest, and that it was then a very considerable place. Only five Presbyters are mentioned in the Norman Survey in the whole county of Berks.

Page 45. "East Hyldesley," says Ashmole, "lyes in the road from Oxford to Newbery, and had Lords of the Manor formerly of the same name." An attempt was made to enclose the parish of East Ilsley about 30 years ago, but on account of a strenuous opposition, proved abortive.

Page 45. "The Hall" is said to have been built by Sir Francis Moore, after a design of Inigo Jones; but this statement admits of no little doubt. It is certain, however, that it was erected by the Moores.

Page 45. The allusion in the lines on Ilsley to its *Spinners*, refers to an attempt made by S. Hemsted, Esq., when overseer of the parish, to introduce the spinning-wheel amongst the poor: the attempt, however, proved a failure, for the old women, pleading ignorance of the art, positively refused to learn, notwithstanding a score of machines had been bought, with materials in proportion. Many of these wheels are still at the manor farm-house.

Page 46. The sheep sold at Ilsley are chiefly purchased in Hampshire, and bought by the dealers of Hertfordshire and Bucks. Graziers and farmers from Kent, Surrey, and other distant counties, also constantly attend the Ilsley fairs. Agricultural meetings for the exhibition of stock, supported by many of the leading gentry of the county, were formerly held at East Ilsley. At one of these meetings, some fleeces, which had been shorn from the sheep early in the morning, were sent to Newbury, and there manufactured into cloth sufficient to form a coat, which

coat was actually returned to Ilsley the same day, and worn by the Chairman at the dinner. This curious garment is still preserved as a relic by the family of the original owner.

Page 47. The wool fair at Ilsley, established many years since, has continued gradually to advance in importance up to the present time. Its flourishing state must be ascribed to the liberality of the Marquis of Downshire, and other landed proprietors in this county, who have annually presented two silver cups to be competed for by the wool staplers and farmers.

Page 48. The following is a list of the Rectors of East Ilsley during the 14th century:—

A.D. 1315. Nicholas de Reyhale; presented by William de Tothale, Prior.

1318. Godfrey de Boxore (Boxford); by Ricd. de Pavely.

1319. William de Wyteby; by ditto.

1338. Richard de Wetherbi (exchanged with John Campdene); by ditto.

1339. John Campdene (Rector of Ketteswell); by ditto.

1351. Walter Rynebell; by Philip de Chimer.

1355. John de Stockton; by ditto.

1361. Philip Roger; by John de Pavely.

The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem had a hospital at Greenham. The living of Ilsley was in the gift of their Prior, or Preceptor, for nearly three centuries.

Page 48. The history of Alderman Kennett, who was Lord Mayor of London during the Gordon riots of 1780, is almost as remarkable, if true, as that of his renowned predecessor, the famous Whittington. It is said that he was a foundling, picked up on some bridge over the river Kennet, whence he derived his name: but this story is

somewhat apochryphal, although there exists no doubt that this Lord Mayor, like many others, rose by parsimony to that exalted station, from a very humble origin.

Page 49. By Domesday Book it appears that a church existed at East Ilsley prior to the Norman conquest; and it seems highly probable that the present bell, bearing date 1012, may have originally belonged to this ancient structure. In the reign of Edward VI. an order was issued to the churchwardens throughout the kingdom, to destroy all their bells, excepting one, which was deemed indispensible: an injunction that seems to have been explicitly obeyed in this parish. The ancient bell in question, bearing date 1012, seems to have been disused at this period, and subsequently recast in its present form.

Page 50. In the chancel are several memorials to the family of Barnes. On a mural monument surmounted by their armorial bearings, Azure, two lions passant, argent, is this epitaph, in Latin: "Sacred to the memory of the Revd. Joseph Barnes, M.A. Rector of this parish, and of Martha his wife; by love first joined, and lastly by death: he died Augt. 21, 1753, aged 79, she died Septr. 16th, 1721, aged 41."

Page 50. Affixed to a very old oak seat in the Nave, is a small brass plate on which appear the armorial bearings of the Hildesleys; Or, two bars gemelles; in chief three pellets, sable. The following is Ashmole's translation of the epitaph on the brass monument in the aisle: "Here liest thou, Hildsley, the departed wife of thy deceased husband: the marble contains the bodies of the Husband and Widow. Ten times three years thou dids't exceed the life of William. Twice forty years being past, thou fallest; to whom, one of her offspring at her eleventh year was born; three sons four daughters thence remain, of whom Katherine, with a virgin's crown, her mother's

youngest daughter, lies beautiful in death." A lustre being the space of four years, the lady commemorated was aged 64 at her decease, and not 80, as stated by Ashmole.

Page 52. William Hildesley, of Ilsley, son of the above William and Margaret, married Ann, daughter of Sir Thomas Hawkins, of Nash, in the county of Kent; by whom he had a family of two sons, Francis and William; and four daughters, named Ann, Katherine, Susanna, and Mary. Margaret, sister of William Hildesley, married Thomas Freeman, of Ewelme, Oxon; and Cicely, another sister, was the wife of Walter Bigge, of Crowmarsh Gifford, in that county. I much doubt the correctness of Lyson's statement that this ancient family is now extinct, there being, at the present time, Hildesleys, or Ilsleys, of Little Stoke, Chieveley, and other places in this county. Ashmole mentions a monument in Beenham Church, to the memory of Richard Hildesley, Gent., who died A.D. 1641.

Page 54. Mark Hildesley, the Barrister of Lincoln's Inn, who died A.D. 1695, aged 65, was a remarkable character. In the British Museum is a volume of MS. poems, composed by this gentleman, who "seems to have been a singular humourist, very fond of scribbling." It is entitled "Essayes and Contemplations; Divine, and Morall, in Prose and Meter: by M. H. &c." and contains 136 leaves. The following doggerel, being an epitaph written on himself, may serve as a specimen of his poetical talents:—

"Ye relicts of M. H. Esqre, late a Fellow of ye Royall Society of Lincolne's Inn.

Here lieth in this place interred,
M. H. his Corpse wyth this life, tired,
An Alderman (Mark) was *'tis said*
His father: mother Doll both dead,
And, brother (Stephen) buryed.

Thro' Cambridge, and Oxford he fled;
Then Lyncolne's Inn farr better sped.
And though he was twice marryed,
One wife wyth four boys brought to bed,
Yet but in two of ym blessed.
Born sixteen hundred and thirtie,
Unborn again when he does dye;
Death must be to him a gain,
Who's happy when he's freed from payne."

"After Sir Francis Moore's death, several of his works were published, of which that bearing this title: 'Cases collected and published from the original in French, then (1663) remaining in the hands of Sir Jeffrey Palmer, Attorney General to King Charles II.' is the same, as I take it, written fairly with the Author's own hand in folio, that was lately in the library of Arthur Earl of Anglesey." This volume contained a report of various interesting law cases during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth.

Page 56. The late Rev. Dr. Hall, Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, informed me, that it was unknown to the collegiate body in what year their co-founder, Richard Wightwick, died; and also whether he was a bachelor; their only reason for supposing him so being the fact that he bequeathed all his property to the college. However this may have been, certain it is that some part of the family continued at East Ilsley for nearly a century after the time of his decease. This ancient family are now extinct by the death of the late F. Wightwick, Esq., of Chertsey, who was the tenth generation from Henry Wightwick and Thomasina, his wife, grandmother of the co-founder; who traced his descent through fourteen generations from William de Wictewyke, who flourished in the time of King John. During the sixteenth century the Huets, or Hewetts, of East Ilsley, intermarried with the Wightwicks of that place, and it seems probable that

Richard Huet, Rector of this parish, was educated at Pembroke College on the Wightwick foundation.

Page 58. The Lamb Inn, which was taken down by Dr. Kennett about seventy years ago, stood near the site of the present race-horse stables at the corner of Broad Street. During the period when the corn market at Ilsley was in its most flourishing state,—at a time when it could vie with any market in this county,—there were ordinaries every Wednesday at the three principal inns, the Lamb, the Swan, and the Star; the chairman at each being some neighbouring Justice. Justice Collins, of Betterton, always presided at the latter ordinary.

Page 60. If Eclipse was not foaled at Kates Gore, which is more than probable, certain it is that he was here in training as a yearling; and that on the neighbouring downs it was that this wonderful horse first acquired and displayed that extraordinary speed which in after-life rendered him so remarkable.

Page 61. In confirmation of the idea that this weapon was of Saxon formation, I may mention, that early writers described the hand-sæx as long, and narrow-bladed, the hilt being ornamented with gold and silver wire.

Page 61. Besides the partridge and the pheasant, the vicinity of Ilsley affords several species of game of somewhat local and no very general occurrence. The landrail and the quail abound in the open fields, whilst the dottrel and the golden plover are a source of no little amusement to the ardent sportsman. So famous have these champaign downs become for the sport of hare-hunting, that, besides several packs kept in this neighbourhood, gentlemen with harriers from Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, and other distant counties, frequently visit these parts for the enjoyment of this healthful recreation. The greater portion of this Hundred is comprised within the

Craven Hunt, but Aldworth and Compton formed part of the country hunted for many years by Sir John Cope, Bart., who has lately consigned this district to a newly-established pack.

Page 62. The parish of Compton is the most considerable in the Hundred, measuring upwards of twelve miles in circumference.

Page 63. The families of Potenger and Pottinger, although so long connected with this place, acknowledge no relationship to each other. By the parochial register, however, it appears that the name was anciently spelt indifferently; so that it seems evident these families were originally connected. Captain Potenger, who was Lord Paramount of the Hundred, and resided at the manor farm, bequeathed it, there being no issue, to his nephew, the present proprietor, after the death of his widow. Rev. Richard Potenger resides in Guernsey.

Page 63. "At the gift of Thomas the son of Richard de Bocland, that messuage, and all that land with its appurtenances, which Thomas le Boltere and Robert le Hert sometime held in West Cumptone; without any reserve, and the homages, rents, and services with all things belonging thereto, which Nicholas, Vicar of Cumptone, and Robert le Mey were accustomed, and bound to him to do; concerning the tenement which they held of him in the same village."—Dugdale.

Page 64. "Bishop's Barn" was constructed in a most singular manner, with large massive beams of solid oak, extending from the floor to the very roof of the structure, thus forming, as it were, four pointed arches of great durability. There is an ancient cottage at East Compton, as also an out-house near the Vicarage, constructed in a similar manner, both doubtless of very high antiquity.

Page 65. Richard Smith, *the parson*, seems to have

been twice married. Marian, his first wife, who died in 1606, was "buryed in Church." The following entry relates to the second wife, who died A.D. 1621: "Elizabeth Smithe, wife of Richard ye Parson, buryed ye right side of ye Chauncel. Hæc magnos ceperunt funera luctus." Elizabeth, perhaps grand-daughter of the above, married Richard Pottenger A.D. 1648.

Page 66. The present incumbent is the Rev. R. P. Jones, Rector of Charfield, Gloucestershire, and Chaplain to his Grace the Duke of Beaufort. He was inducted to this living in 1829.

Page 66. Among other similar entries in the register, is this: "A.D. 1609, Walter Poppham of Wellington in ye Countye of Somersette gentleman; and Elizabeth Dellamere, neece to Mr. Richard Bartlett, Esqre, marryed wyth license from ye Arch Bysshop: Julii 27." The title-page of the earliest Register is beautifully transcribed, in old English characters, on parchment. The annexed is an accurate translation of the Latin original: "In the name of God auspiciously begins in the year from the Incarnation of the Blessed Virgin MDCIX., on Easter Monday, April 17th; a Register of the Church of Compton of all Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, at that place from year to year: commenced from the year of our Lord MDLIII., and continued truly and faithfully transcribed from the original Manuscript on Paper of the said Church, into this Parchment record; and arranged in the handwriting, and by the labor of Joseph Nixon of London, Bachelor of Divinity; sometime Fellow of St. John Baptist's College in Oxford, Vicar of Compton."

Page 67. A few years ago, when the walls were scraped for the purpose of being re-coloured, a very curious inscription in ancient characters, which no one present could decipher, was apparent over the pulpit. On the south

wall, on the exterior, appears a small carved head, with long flowing hair, and covered with a mitre; intended probably for some pious prelate of by-gone days, who may have erected some part of this ancient structure, or at least contributed towards it. It may, perhaps, represent one of the mitred abbots of Reading, to whom the advowson belonged in early times. On the south side of the church appear a great number of very ancient and elegant grave-stones, whilst on the north side not one, excepting of modern date, is to be seen. Our superstitious forefathers considered that ghosts, fairies, and evil spirits were accustomed to haunt those spots where a continual shadow existed, so that they invariably buried on the south side of the church, and as near to the door as possible, for the benefit of Aves and Pater Nosters from the congregation. This fact is observable in the churchyard at Aldworth, and many other places. Shakespear alludes to this superstitious custom.

Page 68. During the 17th century this neighbourhood was famous for the prevalence of Quakerism, Oliver Sampson, one of the most notorious of the sect, having been born at Beedon. Persecuted and prohibited from preaching, they erected a conventicle in a secluded wood near Oare common, where their fanatical founder, George Fox, very frequently held forth. So rapid was the spread of Quakerism in these parts, that most of the farmers soon professed themselves converts; amongst whom may be mentioned the Matthews, Morrels, Lewendons, and Huets; the former only conformed to the church about eighty years ago, as is proved by the modern font at Hampstead Norreys, presented by one of this family. The old stone font, which was elaborately carved with the figures of birds, fish, foliage, &c., was decidedly the most handsome, if not the most ancient, in this county. This

curious font having been removed out of the church, was long used as a horse-trough in a neighbouring farm-yard, and afterwards conveyed to London; where, in a garden planted with flowers, it remained for some time. What had become of this desecrated relic was long unknown, till, after much perseverance, I succeeded in tracing it to a village in Bucks; where, I am happy to say, it has lately been renovated by the Rev. J. Reade; being again restored to its original purpose in his parish church, at Stone, in that county.

Page 69. In 1634, Nicholas Pottenger bequeathed 10*l.* to the poor of Compton, the interest to be annually distributed; but it has long since been lost. John Cray, in 1723, bequeathed 14*l.*, with the interest of which he directed a great coat to be annually purchased for some indigent pauper. William Allen, in 1744, left 5*l.* for educating certain poor children; but the inheritors of the property refuse payment, under the Mortmain Act.

Page 70. A tradition that Oliver Cromwell halted one night at Compton, is still preserved.

Page 71. However absurd this tradition may be, certain it is that some subterraneous hollow exists at this spot; for as a shepherd was pitching his fold, a few years ago, he lost his iron crow-bar, which suddenly disappeared through the hole he was making, as though it had fallen into a well! This cavity may be similar to the deep pits that have often fallen in at the Slade. Diodorus Siculus says, the ancient Britons were accustomed to stow away their corn in such subterranean granaries.

Page 72. When the manor of East Compton was inclosed, about the year 1750, a portion of land was allotted to each householder, in lieu of his right of commonage on the Cow-down; which was then annexed to the estate

called Cold Harbour Farm, now the property of J. T. Wasey, Esq., Lord of the Manor.

Page 73. There were two mills at Compton as early as the middle of the 13th century. Ralph at the Mill is mentioned temp. Edward I. One of these may perhaps have been a water-mill, at the spot called to this day "the weir," otherwise the utility of a lasher at the mouth of the dyke is scarcely obvious.

Page 74. The stag was turned out near the Cross barrows, but a deep snow much marred the pleasures of the chase. As his Majesty rode up towards the house, the village choristers struck up "God save the King." One of them rather vociferous in his inquiries as to the identity of royalty, was overheard by his Majesty; who, in his usual familiar manner, exclaimed, "I am your King; I am the King." The stag, when discovered, was found admiring himself in a large mirror at Roden House.

Page 75. A curious copper medal in admirable preservation, having on one side the head of our Saviour, and on the other the Virgin Mary, was ploughed up in Compton Field some years since. It was formerly worn as an amulet, having a small hole for the insertion of a string, so that it might be suspended from the neck.

Page 75. At the top of Shepherd's-hill is a spot called Tom's Grave, where a suicide of that name was buried many years ago. It is said, however, that his friends attached so much importance to consecrated ground, that they exhumed him in the night, and carried his remains to Chieveley churchyard! The peasantry also state that a disreputable character, a native of Hampstead, having died at Compton, neither of those parishes would allow him the right of Christian burial. At length, however, it was agreed that his corpse should be interred on

the confines of the two parishes, near Flood-cross; where an elder tree, said to have sprung from a stake thrust into his body, is still pointed out by the credulous villagers!

Page 75. On the confines of East Ilsley and Compton, is a spot called "No man's land," or "Lawless plot;" which is said to belong to neither of those parishes, nor any private individual. Many years ago, a troop of equestrian mountebanks having been disallowed to display in this neighbourhood, here fixed themselves, and setting the local authorities at defiance, exhibited with impunity.

Page 75. The parish of Aldworth measures three miles in length from north to south, and about nine miles in circumference.

Page 76. John de Wynkelee, or Winklegh, resigned this living A.D. 1305. In 1382, Henry Goudman, Vicar of Aldworth, exchanged livings with Thomas Brut, Rector of "Leynetone."

Page 77. The name of John Cyphrewast occurs in the List of Berkshire Gentry, temp. Henry VI.

Page 78. A few years ago, B. Monk, Esq., of Coley Park, liberally offered to give 200*l.* towards purchasing a peal of bells, provided the parishioners would subscribe the remainder of the sum required. An architect who surveyed the church, having stated that the present tower was inadequate to the weight, and that a new structure would be required, this project was abandoned. It was then proposed to expend the money subscribed in a far more useful manner, by purchasing a public tank to supply the whole village with water; but this scheme, being unsupported by those who possessed wells, also proved a failure.

Page 79. On a large slab in the pavement, is this inscription: "Here lieth the body of John Whistler, Gent: interred here Ianvary ye 9th, 1669." John Whistler, Esq.,

" in whom a family became extinct, which for many generations possessed the manor of Whitchurch," died in 1780, as appears by his monument in that church. The Whistlers also possessed the estate of Pibworth, in this parish, where they resided many years.

Page 79. In the chancel is a neat mural tablet, to the memory of the Rev. Henry Hetley, B.D., Rector of Wilton, Wilts, who was Vicar of Aldworth during the long period of 50 years: he died A.D. 1832, aged 88. I may here mention that this parish is noted for the longevity of its inhabitants. A family of six persons, all of whom were born here, and were living in 1840, averaged upwards of 80 years. This village "is distinguished by its connection with traditionary stories of giants, by which the fancy for ages has been amused, and credulity imposed upon." So superstitious are the lower orders in these parts, even in this enlightened age, that they verily believe in witchcraft, and other absurdities; indeed the terms "Alder giants," and "Alder witches," have long been proverbial.

Page 80. The parochial registers, beginning A.D. 1556, are, with few exceptions, in a very perfect state of preservation. Although in this Hundred the proportion of births to deaths is as two to one, the entries of burial in the Aldworth register are far more numerous than those of baptism. These, however, are not altogether for the inhabitants; this church-yard, for some superstitious reason, having ever been a favourite burying place. So general is this custom throughout the neighbourhood, that in the registers, separate entries for this and the surrounding parishes have been made.

Page 81. Speaking of the third statue, a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine says: "This one in particular, in the north aisle, claims all our attention, and is in the most graceful reclining attitude that can possibly be imagined;

shewing the reposed state of an heroic and dignified warrior, after having quitted the theatre of the world for the calm retreat of peaceful vales and sequestered mansions." The same writer, speaking of the female statue under the south wall, exclaims, "This is loveliness itself! and excepting the right hand, is in as perfect a state as when it came from the artist's hands."

Page 82. The following quotation from Hearne is dated 1716: "Just after I set out beyond St. Clement's Church, Oxford, I overtook an old man whom I had often seen before, and who is a very great admirer of antiquities. He went part of the way with me, and took occasion to speak of Aldworth, near Ilsley in Berks; where is a very old church, but small, in which are many ancient monuments bigger than life, without inscriptions. They are commonly called Gyants, though they are only monuments of some of the De la Beaches, a knightly family extinct before Edward's III. time, so the church must be very old. They had a Castle here, but I have not yet seen the place. The old man talked much about them, and seemed so pleased," &c.

Page 83. Pensile tables, containing genealogies of illustrious personages interred in the vaults below, with some historical account of their family and performances, were not uncommon in our churches in ancient times.

Page 84. It appears by the Register that the Rev. John Grace, from whom Captain Symonds derived his information, was inducted to this living in 1619, and died A.D. 1658.

Page 85. Fuller, in his "Worthies," speaking of the De la Beches, says, "their seat was at Aldworth, where their statues on their tombs are extant to this day, but of stature surely exceeding their due dimensions. It seems the Grecian officers have not been here, who had it in

their charge to order tombs and proportion monuments to the persons represented. I confess, corps do stretch and extend after their death, but these figures extend beyond their corps, and the people their living extend their fame beyond these figures, imagining them giants, and fitting them with proportionable performances. They were indeed most valiant men, and their male issue was extinct in the reign of Edward III.; whose heir general (as appears by the Herald's Visitation), was married to the ancient family of Whitelocke."

Page 86. According to De Candolle, the yew increases at the rate of one line in diameter per annum, but this is certainly too high a calculation for this country: for if this theory were correct, the Aldworth tree would be 1,080 years old! whereas, two-thirds of that period is probably about its real age.

Page 87. King Edward II., in 1319, granted by charter to John de la Beche, the right of holding a weekly market at Yattingdon, with an annual fair on the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul. The family of De la Beche bore, at various periods, three different coats of arms; but that generally adopted was, "Or, on a bend, three bucks' heads;" the two other coats were, "vairee argent and gules," and "three bendlets."

Page 89. Besides those already mentioned, Sir Nicholas possessed the following manors in Sussex: "Chetingely, Idenne, Wilington, Gevington, Claverham, Walderne, and Wretelings." John de Sutton sold Bradfield to Sir Nicholas for an annuity of 50 marks.

Page 90. In 1337 Sir Matthew Fitzherbert sold the manor of Leckhampstead to Sir Nicholas de la Beche. "In this story," says Kennett, about the king coming to the Tower at midnight, "he is called Matthew De la Beche, by Walsingham, which must be a mistake."

Page 90. The *marches* of Wales were so called because on the frontier of the kingdom; from a Teutonic word signifying a boundary: this officer (Sir Nicholas) was equal in dignity to a marquis, a title derived from this honourable post.

Page 91. John Langford, Esq., who died in 1509, "covenanted," says Lyson, "that Ann, his only child, then nine years of age, should, when she came to years of discretion, marry either Walter, son and heir of Henry Smith, or Thomas, son and heir of John Spencer: perhaps death relieved her from making the choice, since it does not appear, at least from records, that the manor of Aldworth was ever in the families of Smith or Spencer."

Page 93. "The mansion-house of the Beches," says Camden, "stood on a hill, and here was a fort or castle on the north-east side of it. Several very old beech-trees grow at the top of the warren." The castle appears to have fallen into decay after the extinction of the Langfords, for, according to an author who wrote about a century later, it was then merely a heap of ruins: between the time of the civil war and the year 1678, even these remains had been destroyed. A new farm-house has lately been erected on the original site.

Page 94. Lyson supposes that Sir Nicholas de la Beche, "who built the church," erected some of these monuments to "his ancestors, who had not actually been buried at that place; since their number seems too great for the successive possessors of Aldworth, who were of the De la Beche family." I have, I think, identified these effigies clearly enough with certain members of this illustrious family, and shewn that it is more than probable many of them are actually interred in this church, or at least in the church previously existing on the present site.

Page 95. These weapons, one of which is now in the possession of Mr. B. Sellwood, are of such remarkable shape, that they may be pronounced as perfectly *unique*. Notwithstanding they were discovered in an ancient British road, I am rather inclined to consider them of Danish or Norman formation.

Page 96. The author of the "Spiritual Quixote" describes Charlotte Woodville (the fictitious name of his wife) as attending a village school about two miles distant, which, I am creditably informed, was at Compton. He also mentions their going on a visit to a relation of Mr. Bartholomew; the road, as he describes it, passing through two or three villages to a lonely farm-house, situated in a very retired part of the country, with a small chapel adjoining. The name of this place is not mentioned, but it seems to correspond exactly with Catmere.

Page 96. With respect to the *milliaria* between Aldworth and Streatley, I have been lately informed that one of these stones of gigantic size was formerly to be seen in the middle of a field near Kiddington, about a mile west of Streatley. The occupier of the farm removed this immense stone, with a team of eight horses, to a more convenient spot about a quarter of a mile distant, where to this day it still remains. The story that it was thrown hither by one of the Aldworth giants is still told, and as implicitly believed by the common people; who say, further, that the print of the giant's hand, made when he grasped the stone, may yet be distinctly seen! A very ancient road (the Icnield Street), extending near this milestone, directly from Westridge to Streatley, was destroyed at the time of the inclosure.

CROSS BARROWS.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE CROSS-BARROWS EXAMINED JANUARY, 1843.

These tumuli, four in number, were situated within the manor of West Compton, about a mile east of Ilsley, on a conspicuous eminence, converted from an open down into arable land about thirty years ago. The constant irruptions of the plough threatening the total demolition of these ancient tombs, I determined, with the consent of the occupier of the farm, to ascertain, and, if possible, rescue from oblivion, their contents. In the first barrow that was examined, which was composed of a stiff reddish clay, quite foreign to the locality, we discovered the perfect skeleton of a man, deposited in an oblong cist or excavation cut in the solid chalk. The head was towards the north-east, the legs being crossed and drawn up in a contracted position towards the chest: the individual to whom these remains belonged, was evidently a hero of no ordinary power, his *femur* being upwards of nineteen, and his *tibia* nearly sixteen inches in length; the whole of the bones being of a corresponding magnitude, evinced that this warrior, when living, measured at least six feet three inches in height. Fixed in the left *ilium*, on the inner side of the *pelvis*, was a small iron weapon resembling the blade of a clasp knife, which seems to have formed the head of a javelin, as portions of the wooden handle were still extant.

The skull was unusually thick and strong, the teeth extremely peculiar, being conical in form and remarkably flat on their surface, so that very little, if any, difference

was apparent between the *incisores* and *molares*. Near the feet was an interment of small bones, as the *vertebræ*, teeth, skulls, beaks, &c., of hares, ducks, and rabbits. We are informed by Cæsar, that the ancient Britons held these animals in the highest reverence and esteem; facts convincing enough to prove, that the interred was one of the early aborigines of this island.

On opening the second tumulus we observed six human skeletons, extended side by side near the summit of the mound. A small brass pin, some fragments of coarse pottery, several ochre beads, &c., with the teeth of a horse, but no military weapons, were discovered. These skeletons averaged upwards of six feet in height, the legs were crossed, and the skulls (all of which had been fractured) pointing towards the south-east; the teeth were so perfect that not one was found missing from the jaws of either of these six skeletons, which, indeed, considering they had been interred upwards of two thousand years, were existing in admirable preservation. In the third tumulus we discovered a single skeleton deposited in a cist, in a manner precisely similar to that previously described: a buckle, two spear-heads, somewhat resembling the weapons before mentioned, with a quantity of unbaked pottery, pieces of metal, yellow ochre, charcoal, &c., were deposited near the skeleton; at the feet of which we discovered a beautiful iron boss, or umbo of a shield, proving that the interred was an ancient British chieftain, slain on these downs in some intestine conflict long antecedently to the Roman invasion.

It is, however, unnecessary to notice more fully these discoveries, as by a reference to Plates I. and III., the reader may form a far better idea of the relics exhumed than from the most elaborate description.

The fourth barrow, which was by far the largest, and, according to popular tradition, the sepulchre of a *king*, was found, on examination, to contain no interment whatsoever, being nothing more than a cenotaph.

A more full and detailed account of these interesting and satisfactory operations may be seen by a reference to three letters on the subject in the *Reading Mercury* for January, 1843.

APPENDIX.

TRANSLATION of so much of the *Nonæ Rolls*, temp. Edward III., as relates to the Hundred of Compton: being the report of a commission for ascertaining the true value of the taxes, arising from the ninth part of all sheep, corn, and wool, A.D. 1340.

CHILTONE.

In answer to the commissioners, Richard de Cherdesle, William Seward, Walter Sampson, and Andrew Seward, being sworn before the prior of Wallingford and his brethren, said, that the ninths of this parish were worth 9 marks per annum, and that 2 virgates of land, valued at 13s. 4d., belonged to the church. They said also, that the tithes of milk, porkers, and the oblations were this year worth 20s., in witness whereof the seals of the jury are hereunto affixed.

COMPTON.

Robert de Torbevyle (Turville), Ralph at the Mill, Robert Bachells, and Richard Bermyngham, being sworn, said, that in this parish the true value of the king's ninths was this year £10 8s. 9d.; they also stated that the dues of the church, with the tithes of two mills, and other small tithes, were worth 12 marks per annum.

FARMBOREWE.

John at Bury, Henry le Nywe, Roger ate Bour (Bower farm), and Thomas at Dene, being sworn, said, that the value of the king's dues was this year 12 marks, and no more. Also they said, that the tithes of pigs received by the Abbot of Abingdon amounted this year to 2 marks.

ALDERWORTH.

John at Leye, William at Wyche, Robert Skylet, and John le Franklyn, said, that in this parish the annual value of the king's ninths was 66 shillings; and that the 3 virgates of land belonging to the church, with the dues, oblations, and small tithes were that year worth 24 shillings.

EAST HILDESLE.

Thomas Pronck, William Godard, William le Rop, and John Blakeman, said, that in this parish the true value of the king's ninths was £4 9s. 8d., and no more: they also said that the greater part of the sheep and lambs have died on account of the late cold winter; and that the tithes, dues, and fees of the church, with the land held by the rector, were worth 12 marks per annum.

WEST HILDESLE.

Richard le Clerk, Galfred le Baron, William ate More, and Symon Godard, said, that the value of the king's ninths was this year 9 marks, and no more: the glebe lands, tithes, oblations, and fees of the church being worth 6 marks per annum. Also they said, that there was only one plough; the third part of the arable land in this parish being barren and untilled, on account of the poverty of the tenants, who, in consequence, had gone elsewhere.

TRANSLATION of so much of the *Hundred Rolls* as relates to Compton Hundred, being the report of a commission appointed in the reign of Henry III.

The Hundred of Cumpton is in the occupation of the prioress of Kinton (Kington, in Wilts), but she neither knows from what time, nor what it is worth per annum. The commissioners said that Richard de Fukeram had *assias panis, et cerevisiæ,* at West Hildesley, and knew by what warrant, that Almaric de St. Amand had *furcas et assias panis, et cerevisiæ,* at East Hildesly, and knew by what authority: that the prioress of Kinton had had *furcas, et assias panis, et cerevisiæ,* and other royal privileges at West Compton, from time immemorial; also, that the prioress of Werewelle had lately had *assias panis et cerevisiæ,* at East Cumpton, and knew by what authority.

Concerning those who have lately appropriated to themselves the right of free chase or free warren, they said, that Almaric de St. Amand had warren at East Hildesley, for which he held the charter of King Henry's father.

Concerning encroachments: they said that Philip Basset, rector of the church of Chilton, had made an encroachment on the king's highway, by a certain wall which he had built at Chilton, to the obstruction of the king's road; and that this nuisance had existed for the last four years.

Concerning those who have imprisoned felons: they said, that a certain man had taken a mark from Roger, the priest of Compton, for which highway robbery he had been arrested and confined; but that Nicholas Sifrewast had suffered him to escape from prison, and had encouraged him in it.

Concerning those who have received any fee or bribe, whilst exercising any public office; they said, that Nicholas Oky, who had been imprisoned, had lately been liberated by Gilbert de Kirkeby; but he refused to execute the king's commands unless the said Nicholas would give him 20 shillings: also, they said, that Gilbert de Ochang, the coroner, had refused to take an inquest on the son of Galfred le Bolter, until the said Galfred had given him 12 pence: also, that the same Gilbert de Ochang, the coroner, had objected to inquire into the cause of death of one Robert de Turbervill, until his widow had given him the sum of two shillings.

They also said, that the abbess of Wherwell had taken dues in East Compton in the second year of King Edward (A.D. 1274), without licence, and contrary to the royal authority: also, that Nicholas Cifrewast had arrested Ralph Picot, and imprisoned him at Cumpton; but that he suffered him freely, and with impunity, to depart from gaol, on receiving one mark of silver.

They also said, that since the new market had been established, by Emeric de St. Amand, at East Hildesle, within the last three years; the king's market at Wallingford had, in consequence, received great injury.

Testa de Nevil, compiled in the reign of Henry III. Translation of so much as relates to Compton Hundred.

HUNDRED OF CUMPTON.

	SOL.	DEN.
Brithwalton, the abbot of Battle, for one carucate	ij	—
Cumpton, the prioress of Kinton, for two carucates	iiij	—

	SOL.	DEN.
Cumpton, the abbess of Warewell, for two carucates	iiij	—
——— John de Bakepus, for 21 carucates	xLij	—
Ferenburgh, the abbot of Abingdon, for two carucates	iiij	—
Chilton, the abbot of Oseney, for one carucate and a third part	ij	viij
——— The abbot of Abingdon, for 7 carucates	xiiij	—
Six carucates, &c.	xij	vij
West Ildesle, for 11 carucates and a half	xxiij	vj
Catmere, five carucates and a half ...	xi	—
Hodicot, six carucates	xij	—
East Ildesle, five carucates	x	—
Aldeworthe, eight carucates	xvj	—
Colrug, two carucates and a half	v	—

Valor Ecclesiasticus, compiled temp. Henry VIII., A.D. 1534.

The *tenths* of benefices in Compton Hundred.

	s.	*d.*
West Ildesley rectory	xLv	viij
East Ildesley rectory	xLv	iiij
Chilton rectory	xxvj	x
Farneborowe rectory	xxiv	x
Compton vicarage	xxiij	v
Aldeworthe vicarage	xvij	vij
Catmer rectory	x	vj

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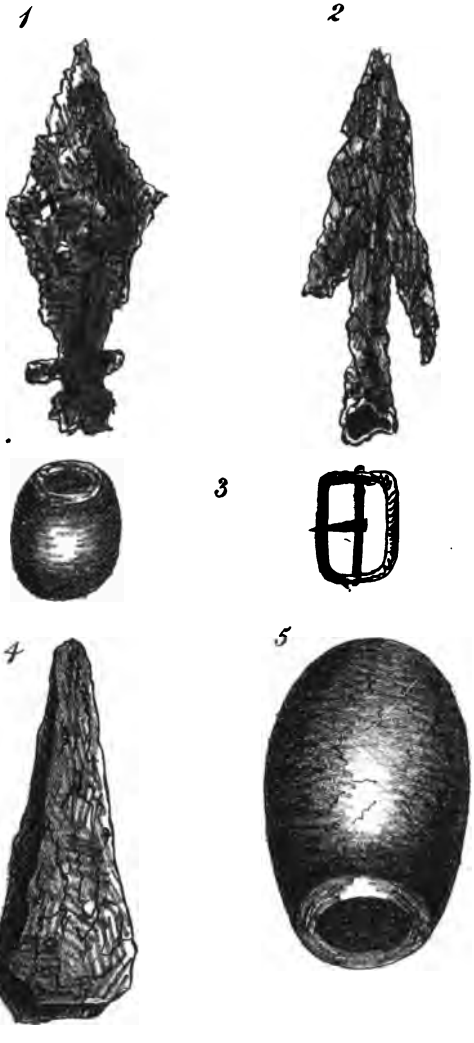
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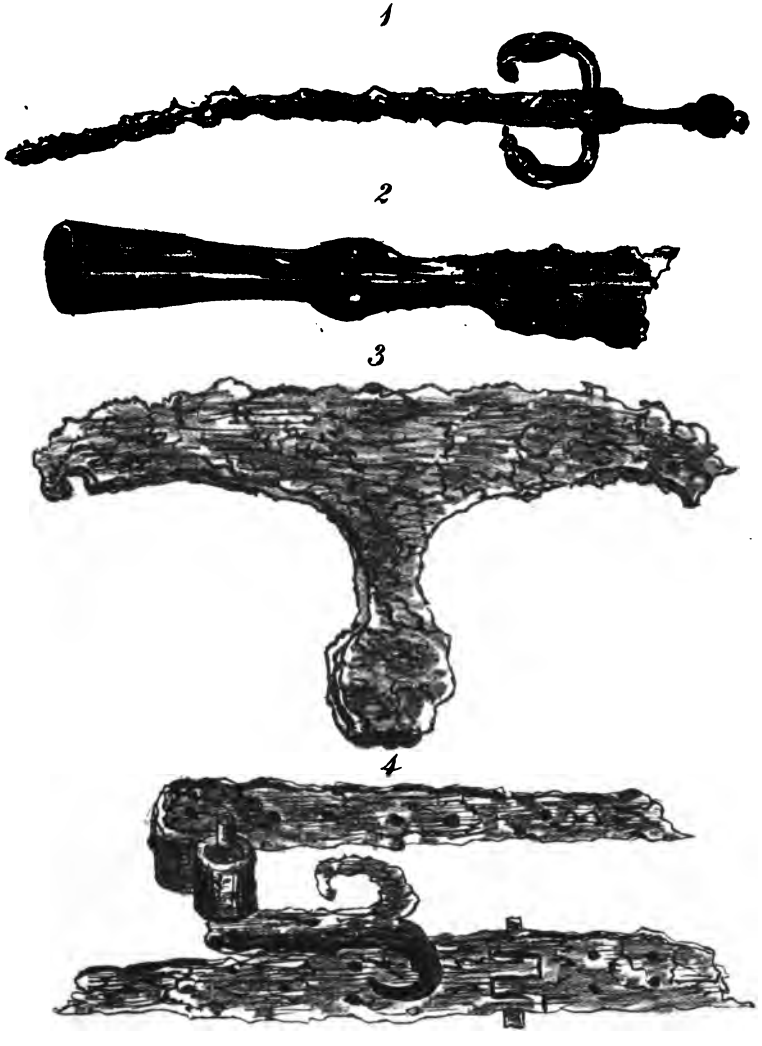
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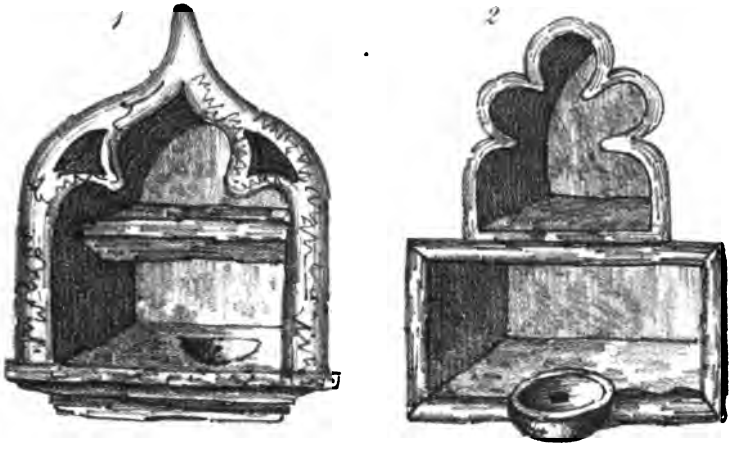

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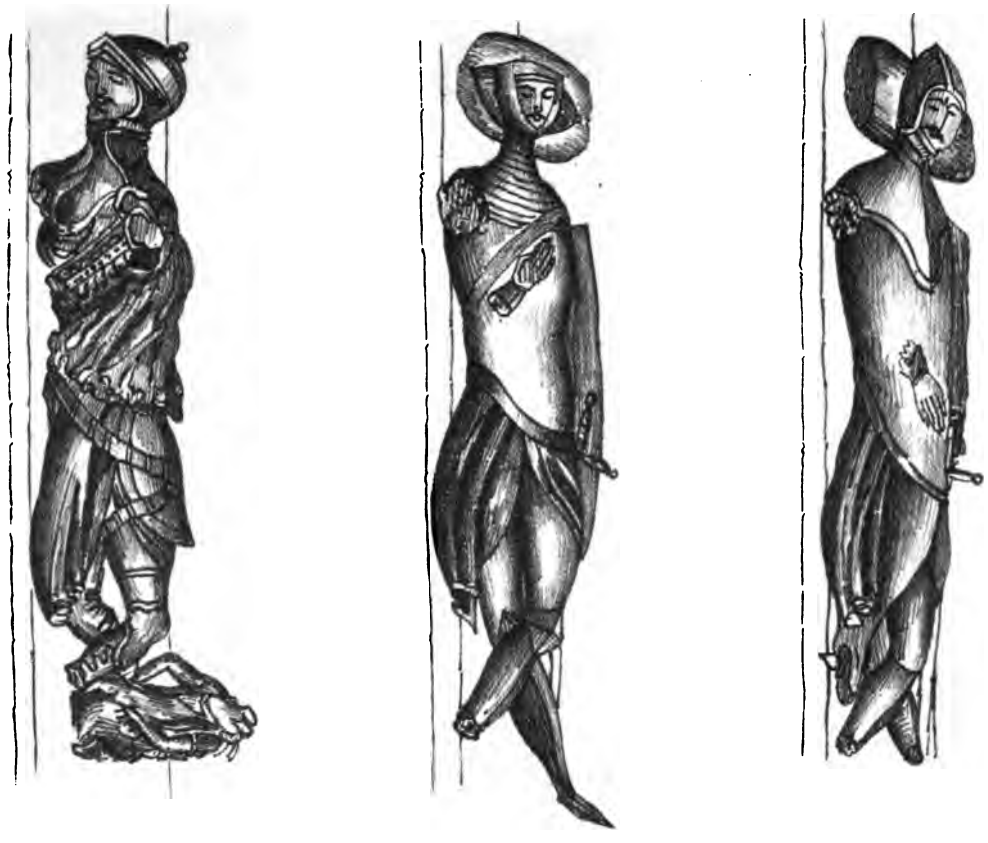

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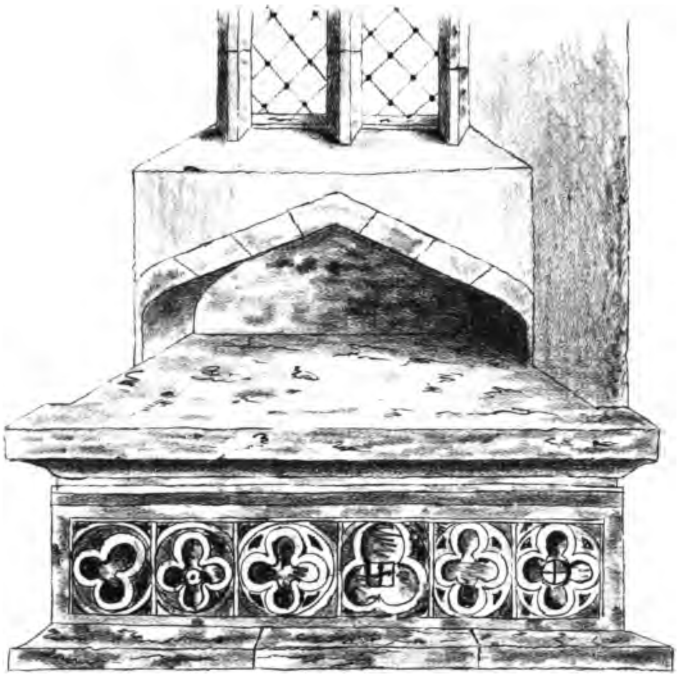

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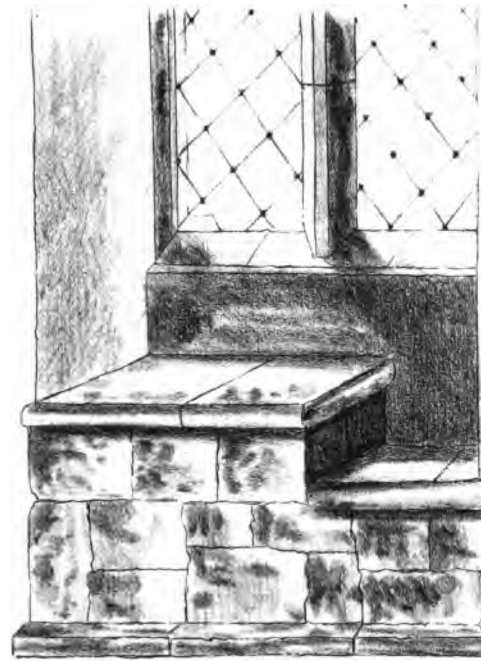

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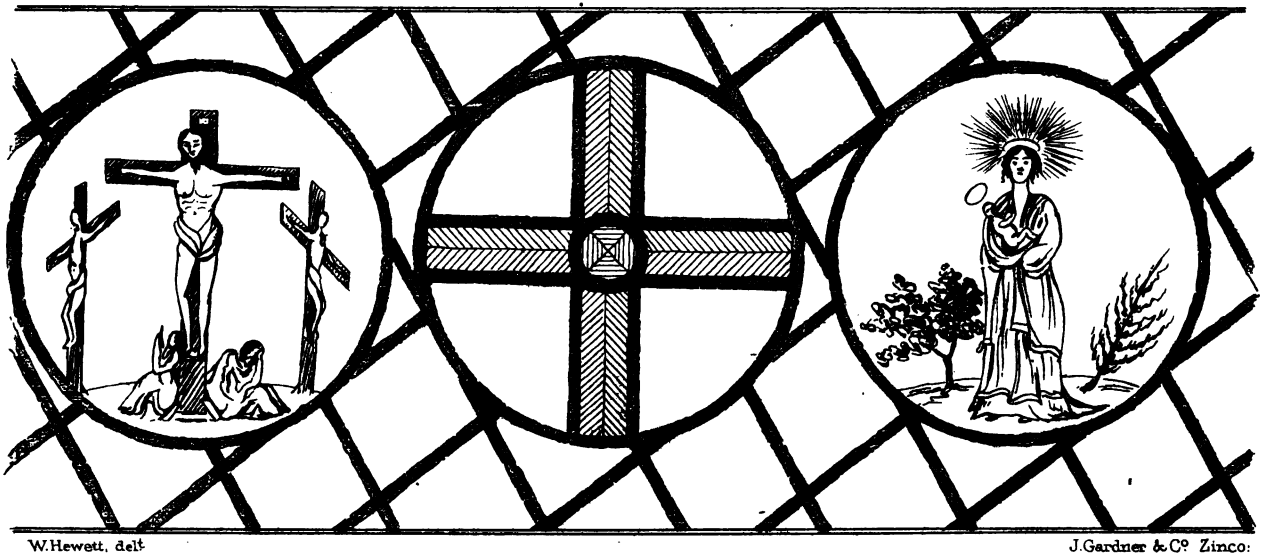

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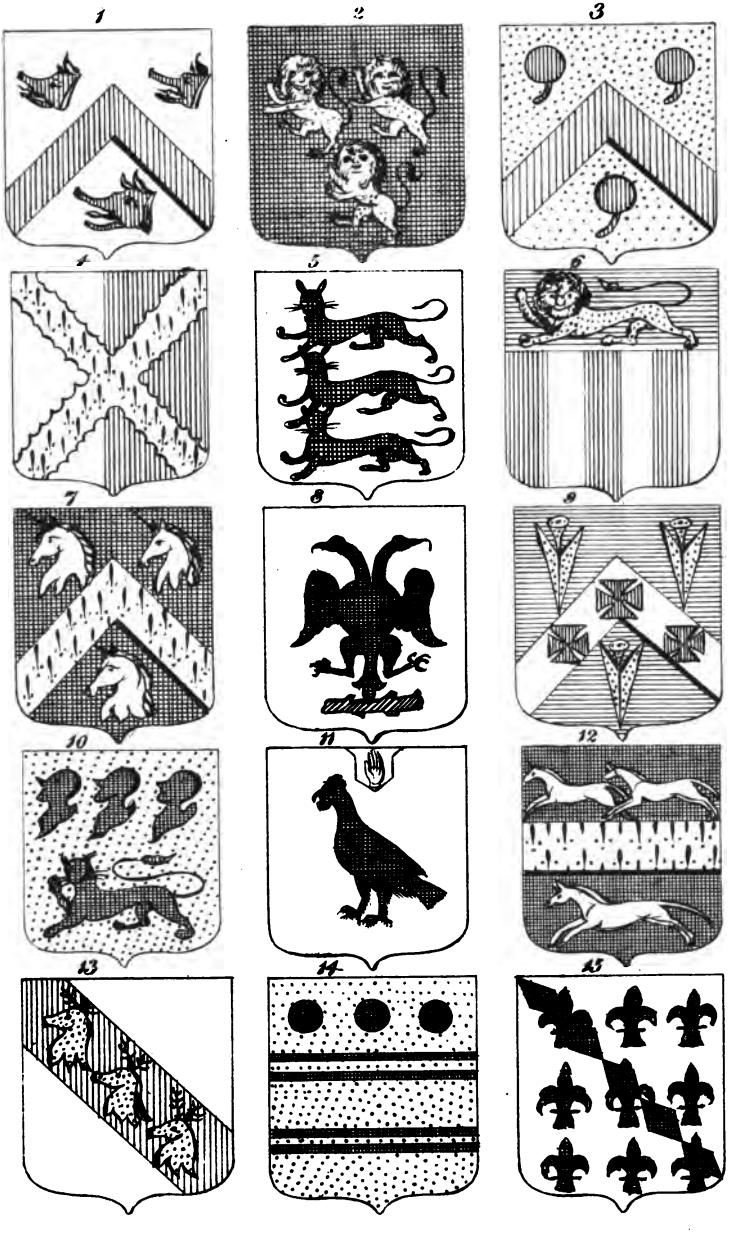

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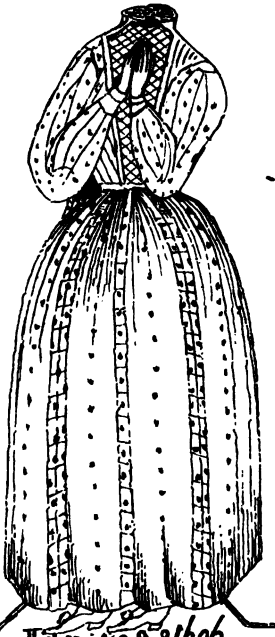

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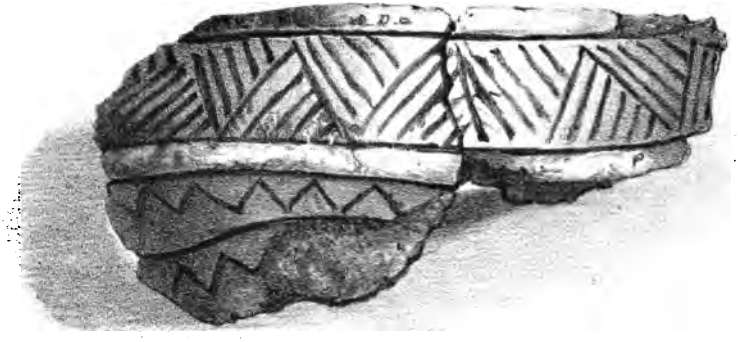

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This Plate is presented by Charles Edward Long, Esq^re