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**A Sketch of the History of Malvern and its Owners**

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## A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF MALVERN AND ITS OWNERS.

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IT is in no spirit of flattery to a Gloucestershire society that I begin by saying: The history of Malvern starts in Gloucestershire. Rightly or wrongly, the monks of Malvern in the fifteenth century believed that the first settler on the spot and (if I may use the term) their spiritual ancestor was a Saxon martyr-hermit called Werstan. Nearly all our information about him comes from a window in the Priory Church, which is like the illustrations for a book of which the text is lost. But John Leland, who went through England collecting topographical and historical information about the time of the Dissolution (1535-43), either read or was told that Werstan went to Malvern from Deerhurst:—"Werstanus fledde thens, as it is sayde, to Malverne."<sup>1</sup> An essential part of the story was that Edward the Confessor granted some sort of endowment in his favour. That endowment was an historical fact, for when Henry I. in 1127 confirmed the gifts of land which were held by the new Benedictine Priory, he specially mentions the virgate of land in Baldenhale given by king Edward. Baldenhale was a district at the foot of the hill, in the lower part of modern Malvern, and its name survived at least till the end of the Middle Ages. I have always thought that "Balders Green," the old name of a house and property in that region, was connected with it. To return to Werstan, about whose existence some critics are sceptical. It is true that we do not hear of him before the fifteenth

<sup>1</sup> *The Itinerary of John Leland*, edited by L. Toulmin Smith, vol. iv. (London, 1909), p. 134.

century, but I do not therefore believe that he was an invention of that century. I have attempted before now to show that his story, so far as we know it, fits well into the history and circumstances of the reign of the Confessor. On one point I may insist. If Werstan fled to Malvern in the days of the Confessor, it was not (as might be inferred from Leland) to escape from the Danes who destroyed Deerhurst. That destruction took place probably in the first half of the tenth century, in which case the shell of the Saxon church which we see to-day represents the rebuilding in the latter half of the century.<sup>1</sup> There were no Danish ravages in the days of the Confessor,<sup>2</sup> and if Werstan fled from Deerhurst it must have been from some other reason. Now what we know about Deerhurst after its restoration gives the impression of a house that had seen its best days. Alphege, its most eminent member, left it, we are told, and went to Bath Abbey, because he did not find life at Deerhurst very stimulating. And Edward the Confessor actually disendowed Deerhurst of part of its property in order to give it to his new abbey of Westminster, and then handed it over with the rest to the great abbey of Saint Denis near Paris, so that for the future it was an alien priory, and a very small thing indeed. William of Malmesbury writing in the twelfth century describes it as the ghost of its former self.<sup>3</sup> Such action on the part of Edward can only be explained by some notorious degeneracy at Deerhurst. It must have been a decadent house, which was no longer performing any useful work even from the monastic point of view. And here, I suggest, we find the real motive of Werstan's retreat to Malvern. He fled, not from the Danes, but from a no

<sup>1</sup> G. T. Rivoira, *Lombardic Architecture* (London, 1910), ii., p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> See 'The Danes in Gloucestershire' by the Rev. C. S. Taylor in *Transactions*, xvii. (1892-3), p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Gesta Pontificum* (Rolls Series), ii., 76.

less dangerous enemy to the monastic ideal—the laxity and demoralization of a decaying community. And like other ardent spirits, dissatisfied with the social life and comparative luxury of a monastery, he went, not to another abbey, but into the wilderness, in search of life reduced to its simplest elements. To realise what this meant we must recall the local conditions of the lower Severn valley in the early Middle Ages. Now-a-days, fertile, well-inhabited country borders the river on both banks. But in the eleventh century and much later, things were very different. The Severn was the boundary—we may almost say the frontier, of civilized England. Behind it, that is to say on the eastern or Gloucestershire side, was one of the richest and most favoured districts in the country. William of Malmesbury, in the twelfth century, is lost in admiration of the fertility of the vale of Gloucester, where the roads are lined with fruit trees, and where the vine is more successful than in any other part of England, producing wine little inferior to that of France.<sup>1</sup> But when you crossed to the western side of the Severn you found yourself in a very different country, a forest region, where cultivation and habitation were rare or non-existent. It has been suggested that this state of things may have been kept up partly as a defensive measure, Malvern Chace with Kyre Forest to the north and the Forest of Dean to the south forming a zone of wild and uncultivated land, which might serve to keep off the Welsh marauders, who from time to time plundered the towns and ravaged the lands which lay within their reach. You will remember how the monks of Llanthony found their Welsh neighbours so intolerable that they were obliged to retreat to Gloucester and build a new house there.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gesta Pontificum*, iv., 153.

<sup>2</sup> See 'The Story of the two Lantonys,' by Mr. St. Clair Baddeley in *Transactions*, xxv., pp. 212-29. It may be noted that Robert de Braci, the third prior (1131-37), under whom the removal took place, was probably a member of the family seated at Madresfield, now represented by Earl Beauchamp.

We will imagine, then, that on some fine morning Werstan crossed the Severn, entered the forest which extended along the western bank of the river, and made his way towards the highest point of the range of hills on which he must often have looked from Deerhurst. Even a hermit had the sense not to fix his residence among the swamps and thickets of the lower ground, and he looked for a favourable spot, where the hill began to rise steeply, where the air was purer, and the prospect clearer. For some reason he passed by the great spring which issues from the hill above Malvern Wells, and chose the opening of a gully containing a more modest fountain, now known as St. Ann's Well, at the foot of the Worcestershire Beacon. Here, as the fifteenth century window in the church tells us, he built a chapel, and perhaps gathered some disciples around him. His fame may well have reached the ears of the king at Gloucester, where we know that he regularly resided during part of the year.<sup>1</sup> And so it would come about that the same hand that despoiled Deerhurst rewarded the faithful monk who had abandoned it for a hermitage not far away, where he had received special marks of divine favour.

We will not dwell on the end of Werstan's story. It is likely enough that he perished in one of the Welsh raids which occurred in Edward's time. The worst was in 1055, when Hereford was sacked, the cathedral burned, and several of its clergy killed. In any case the hermitage was ruined and deserted. There was an interval, and then we come to the foundation of the Benedictine Priory in 1085.<sup>2</sup>

The earliest account of that foundation, and, I believe, the true one, is to be found in William of Malmesbury,

<sup>1</sup> E. A. Freeman, *The Norman Conquest*, li., p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> The date is given in the Worcester Annals: *Annales Monastici* (Rolls Series), iv., 373.

who was almost a contemporary.<sup>1</sup> He tells us that Aldwin, who had been made a monk by Bishop Wulstan of Worcester, retired to the solitudes of Malvern Chace as a hermit, was encouraged by the bishop to persevere, and collected a small community around him. The result was the Benedictine Priory of Great Malvern, erected under the auspices of the bishop, as the architecture of the oldest part of the church shows. Benefactions flowed in, and both William the Conqueror and Wulstan made or confirmed grants of land to the new house. If Werstan came from Deerhurst, he belonged to the order of St. Benedict, so that there would be no difficulty about transferring the land in Baldenhale to his Benedictine successors. No doubt this would be effected by a confirmation from the king.

Later, there seems to have been some uncertainty, both in the priory and outside it, as to its origin and history; and various inconsistent stories were put forward. They agree in one point, that Malvern Priory was subject to Westminster Abbey; and it seems to be a fact that this connection existed from the twelfth century onwards. One of these stories says that Urso d' Abitot founded a hermitage, and later, with his consent, an abbot of Westminster set up and endowed a prior and monks.<sup>2</sup> This, together with considerations based on local conditions, has suggested to Mr. Willis Bund, who is sceptical about what he calls the "legends" of Werstan and Aldwin, the theory that the real founder of Malvern Priory was Westminster Abbey. As a great non-resident landowner in Worcestershire, Westminster wanted a resident agent to look after her interests on the spot, and Malvern Priory was established as a cell for

<sup>1</sup> *Gesta Pontificum* (Rolls Series), iv., 145. The work was finished in 1125. (v., 278).

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, *Antiquitates Maj. Malverne*, p. 190, from Dugdale, *Monast.*, ii., 876. See also A. C. Deane, *Great Malvern Priory Church* (Bell's Cathedral series, 1914), p. 6.

this purpose.<sup>1</sup> The obvious criticism of this theory is that, if such a simple arrangement was a fact, why should it have been concealed, and other stories put forward in its place? Westminster was next-door neighbour to Malvern at Powick, and among the earliest benefactors of Malvern we find the name of Gilbert Crispin, abbot of Westminster. The head of a mother monastery would hardly appear as an outside benefactor ; but it would be quite natural for the abbot to take interest in and help a new house of the same order, which was a Worcestershire neighbour. This neighbourhood is sufficient to explain why Malvern Priory placed itself under the protection of the powerful abbey founded by St. Edward, from whom its own earliest possessions came. By this means it probably secured more real independence than if it had been dominated by the bishop and cathedral priory of Worcester.

Most of the possessions of the priory, never a rich house, were at a distance, and its Malvern estate was of a limited nature. Apart from what is described as ' the site of the monastery,' it consisted mainly of that ancient property in Baldenhale, and of Newland. The rest of Malvern belonged to the Crown as part of the royal forest. Later it appears as a separate manor, which followed all the changes in ownership of Malvern Chace and Hanley Castle throughout the Middle Ages. When Joan, daughter of Edward I., married Gilbert de Clare, eighth Earl of Gloucester, in 1290, she brought Malvern Chace with her as her dowry, and thenceforward it formed part of the " Honour of Gloucester," and passed by the marriage of heiresses, first to the Despensers, and then to the Beauchamps, Earls of Warwick. You may see the arms of all these families recorded on the tiles or in the glass of the Priory Church as the lords of the place,

<sup>1</sup> J. W. Willis Bund, ' Worcestershire and Westminster,' in *Associated Architectural Societies Reports*, &c. (Worc. Arch. Soc.), xxxiv (1918), p. 329.

and chief patrons or benefactors of the monastery. Anne, the heiress of the Beauchamps, married Richard Neville, who became Earl of Warwick in right of his wife, and is commonly known as the king-maker. When he fell on the field of Barnet in 1471, he left behind him his widow and two daughters, and their vast inheritance was regarded as the spoil of the victors. The two co-heiresses were married to the two brothers of Edward IV., and, in the great partition of 1474, the bulk of the Beauchamp-Despenser estates, including Malvern, went to the elder, Isabella, and her husband, George, Duke of Clarence. They were both dead by 1478, leaving behind them an unfortunate little boy, Edward, who should have been Earl of Warwick; but owing to his father's attainder his position was doubtful, and his lands were kept "in the king's hands." There is no evidence that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who had married the other co-heiress, Anne, succeeded to his brother's possessions; but it is remarkable that, somewhere about this time, he and his wife gave the west window to the Priory Church, and thus posed as the representatives of the great families which had for so long been lords of Malvern. It is difficult not to think that they were in *de facto* possession of the estates, and the most likely moment, I think, is that interval between the death of Edward IV. in April 1483, and his own accession on June 26th, when Richard was in supreme power, and could do what he liked. The window was not given later than the second date, because in it Anne Neville's paternal arms were not impaled with the royal arms of England, as they were after she became queen. However this may be, Anne and her child died not long before Richard III. fell at Bosworth, and now there were only two persons left who could claim the great Beauchamp inheritance as against the Crown—Edward, titular Earl of Warwick, and his grandmother, the Countess Anne, widow of the

king-maker. It seems that, at the beginning of the new reign, Edward was recognized as Earl of Warwick and owner of the vast estates accumulated under that title, that is to say, they are spoken of as "in the hands of the Crown owing to the minority of Edward, Earl of Warwick."<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that at this time Henry VII. had no son, and Edward, the queen's nephew, was the next heir to the throne. But in 1486 Arthur was born, to be followed by Henry in 1491: the succession was secured, and Edward's position was altered for the worse. He spent the rest of his life in the Tower, while in 1487, with all the forms of legality, the whole of the Beauchamp estates were restored to the Countess Anne, only that she might at once convey them to the king, with the exception of one manor (Erdington in Warwickshire) which was reserved for her maintenance.<sup>2</sup> But so long as Edward lived there was always a possibility that he might be reinstated in his lawful inheritance, and it was only after his execution in 1499 that Henry can be said to have been undisputed lord of Malvern. It was to emphasize this fact, I believe, that at the end of 1501 he gave the great transept window to the Priory Church.

Thus, at the end of the Middle Ages, the distribution of properties in Malvern was substantially that which we find to-day. On the one hand there was the manor with its lands, and on the other there was the priory with its lands. But the priory lands have been split up among various owners, whereas the manor has been kept more or less intact. It remained in the Crown till Elizabeth sold it to a successful lawyer, Sir Thomas Bromley, who became Lord Chancellor in 1579, and presided over the Court which tried Mary Queen of Scots in 1586. He never lived at Malvern, and built himself a house near the old

<sup>1</sup> *Materials for a history of the reign of Henry VII.* (Rolls Series, 1873), I., pp. 78, 210.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, II., p. 211.

castle of Holt on the Severn, above Worcester. I suppose the reason why there was never a house for the lord of Malvern till modern times was that, when the old owners of the Chace came into residence, they lived in Hanley Castle.<sup>1</sup> About the middle of the eighteenth century Henry Bromley sold the property to the Foleys, a family which first comes into notice early in the seventeenth century, and made a great fortune out of iron. By the time they bought Malvern they had acquired a peerage, and there is still a Lord Foley; but he does not own Malvern, because it was left with the Stoke Edith estate by the then Lord Foley to his second son, Edward. This Edward's eldest son, Edward, who died in 1846, and his wife, Lady Emily (Graham) who lived till 1900, between them owned Malvern for nearly a century. But they had no children, and on Lady Emily Foley's death it passed to her nephew, Sir Henry Foley Lambert (afterwards Grey), whose widow Lady Grey is the present Lady of the Manor.

The Malvern estate of the Priory has been split up among various owners. In 1538, by the Act for the Dissolution of the Monasteries, it came into the hands of the Crown, but its most important part, "the site of the Priory," i.e. the cloister with the conventual buildings round it and adjacent land, was for a long time kept intact. In 1545, four years after the Priory Church had been bought by the parishioners, John Knotsford, "servant to king Henry VIII.," as he is described on his monument, acquired it from the original purchaser from the Crown. He took up his abode in the prior's house on the west side of the cloister, as being the only part of the monastery that was adapted for domestic life. He had no son, but the eldest of his five daughters, Ann,

<sup>1</sup> Thus the last male Beauchamp, Henry, brother of the heiress Anne, created Duke of Warwick in 1444, was born at Hanley Castle in 1425, and died there in 1445.

married William Savage, whose father, Christopher, had Elmley Castle under Bredon Hill, one of the old Beauchamp possessions, granted to him by Henry VIII. On John Knotsford's death in 1596, Mrs. Savage and her husband came into possession; and not long after they pulled down the old prior's house, and rebuilt it on a larger scale, and in the style of the day. Mrs. Savage also put up in the church a family monument, with recumbent effigies of her father and mother, figures representing her sisters, and a life-sized kneeling effigy of herself, a notable example of Elizabethan sculpture.

The descendants of Anne Savage continued to live between Malvern and Elmley till the latter part of the eighteenth century, when the last representative, Thomas Byrche Savage, sold his Malvern property. In this way the site of the priory, which had remained intact so long, was broken up, and now belongs to several owners. Apparently no family lived in the house after the Savages. Malvern at this time was becoming a health-resort, and the old mansion was converted into a boarding-house. Chambers says that, before the first hotel, 'The Crown,' was opened in 1796, "the company visiting Malvern were accommodated at the Abbey-house with board and lodging."<sup>1</sup> Later the Abbey House became the Abbey Hotel, and was rebuilt on a larger scale, but in imitation of the original. There are still fragments of the old house embedded in the modern building. In the course of these changes, the adjacent guest-hall of the monastery, a fine timber structure of the early fifteenth century, disappeared (1841). Drawings of it exist, and portions of the carved work are preserved in the room over the porch of the church.

A word must be said about the history of the Forest or Chace of Malvern. It was, no doubt, largely the creation

<sup>1</sup> *A general history of Malvern*, by John Chambers (Worcester, 1820), p. 92.

of the Conqueror,<sup>1</sup> and it was under the jurisdiction of a King's Forester, whose residence, we may suppose, was on the site of Hanley Hall, an old Elizabethan house in the parish. In the time of Edward I. we hear of Gilbert de Hanley holding a virgate and a half of land in the royal manor, by the service of keeping the forest of Malvern.<sup>2</sup> The office of forester continued under the De Clares and their successors. His jurisdiction is illustrated by a document of 1480 at Madresfield, in which Richard, the last Lord Beauchamp of Powick, conveys "his office and service of keeping the Forest or Chace of Malvern" to three trustees, whom he put in full possession by delivery of a horn; "and also by the name and reason of the execution of justice in the same office, by delivery of an axe; which horn and axe he delivered to them this day."

When the Bromleys acquired the manor, the forest still remained with the Crown, which took little or no interest in it. In Habington's time (he died in 1647) Hanley Castle was in ruins. Charles I., in want of money, disafforested the Chace in 1631-2; and it was divided into three shares, one for the king, the others for the commoners. Charles sold his share to Sir Cornelius Vermuyden, who, in his turn, sold it to Sir Robert Heath, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. Not long ago Malvern Public Library acquired some original papers relating to Sir Robert's arrangements for dealing with and disposing of the lands, which amounted to about 3,000 acres. He was anxious to sell part to the local squires and others, and appointed Commissioners to negotiate. Their report was not very favourable. Buyers held off because it is evident that the commoners and peasantry were restive under the new conditions, and

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History of Worcestershire*, I., p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> Habington, *Survey of Worcestershire* (Worcestersh. Historical Society), II., p. 112.

they felt doubts about the peaceable enjoyment of their purchases. The report puts it bluntly: "they fere risinge of the poore & disordered people to throe downe there fences." The enclosures were very "backward," and the Commissioners recommended the employment of Giles King, a person of great local influence, who had "the comand of all laborers in these parts . . . they all love and fere him." He had been already engaged in some capacity at a yearly salary, and now "longes for something to be done touching his £40 per ann. and desireth £10 for his quarteridge nowe ended . . . he sayth he hath spent this £10 in going from place to place to quyet the people." There is a letter from him to Sir Robert about a possible purchaser, which seems to be that of a business-like and fairly educated man. It is significant that, whereas in the Quarter Sessions Roll of 1615 he appears as "Giles King of Hanley Castle, yeoman," by 1633 he has become "Giles King gentleman of Hanley Castle."<sup>1</sup> We do not know what was the end of these transactions, and after the Civil War, when a confirmatory Act was passed (1665), the names of a different set of owners appear.<sup>2</sup> It is evident that, when the disafforestation took place, there was still a great deal of woodland. The intention was to convert this into tillage and pasture, and the process, as you may see, is complete to-day. But the final enclosings are of comparatively recent date, and there are still persons alive who can remember when it was possible to pass on unenclosed open land the whole way from Hanley Castle to the foot of the hills. One cannot help feeling that the report sent to Sir Robert Heath on the prospects of cultivation on Malvern Hills is rather optimistic. "The sydes of the hills thoughe very stepe will be perfect & rich meade for the most part by watering, and most part of the toppe of the hill as

<sup>1</sup> *Worcester County Records. The Quarter Sessions Rolls*, edited by J. W. Willis Bund, pp. 202, 504.

<sup>2</sup> *Victoria County History of Worc.*, ii., p. 320.

I am told will be very good tilth for oats or corne, therefore cannot be lesse worth than viij or x $\frac{1}{2}$  per acre." Nevertheless it is remarkable that, even to-day, productive gardens are found in the steepest places (*e.g.* at the Wyche) right up to the crest of the hill, as well as traces of old enclosures in parts which are now open.

The most interesting estate near Malvern is Madresfield—a house which, in one form or another, has been inhabited probably since the twelfth century by a family whose present representative, your president, still makes his home there. As he is going to tell you its story himself and on the spot, I will not trespass on this field. I may, perhaps, be permitted to say this much by way of introduction to the subject. As early as about the middle of the twelfth century we find the family of De Braci settled on their two Worcestershire properties of Warndon and Madresfield. How it came there we do not know, but, apparently it was of Norman origin, and in the thirteenth century its heads were people of some consideration as one may infer from the fact that their shields occur in some of those Rolls of Arms (time of Henry III.) which are among our earliest heraldic records; and also from the marriages they made with the daughters of such great houses as Warenne and Vernon. About 1420, Joan, the heiress of the Bracies, was married to Thomas Lygon, who belonged to what may be called an immigrant family in Worcestershire; and with the death of her father, William (before 1450), the name of De Braci came to an end. The Lygons imposed their name on the family, and though they themselves came to an end with an heiress in the eighteenth century, its name is Lygon still. The Bracies died out before the days of the Visitations, and the Lygons, apparently, took no trouble to record the pedigree of the family to which they owed their position. One of the last of the Bracies—perhaps the heiress, Joan, or her mother

Isabella—about 1450 put up a window in Malvern Priory Church, which was a sort of family monument with kneeling figures representing several generations, especially the two Sir Roberts who had made the great marriages mentioned above, and all the family heraldry. But very little was known about the Bracies until, recently, Lord Beauchamp had his muniments examined and catalogued. The general result was the discovery of a remarkable collection of documents, some as old as the twelfth century; and, in particular, it became possible for the first time to construct a De Braci pedigree.

The grandson of Thomas Lygon and Joan Braci made a marriage (about 1483) which was important to the family both materially and socially. His bride was Anne, one of the co-heiresses of Richard, last Lord Beauchamp of Powick, who represented a younger branch of the great family of the Earls of Warwick. This connection supplied a title for the peerage conferred on William Lygon in 1805. It is interesting to note how the heads of a family which, as we have said, was of some public importance in its earlier period, and then retired into the position of Worcestershire squires, have in modern times once more emerged into public life and taken an increasingly important part in the affairs of the nation.

It only remains to say something about Little Malvern and the history of its lands. Little Malvern in old days was separated from Great Malvern by the parish of Hanley Castle, whose western boundary ran up to the crest of the hills (now Malvern Wells). Though within the limits of the Forest of Malvern, it did not belong to the king. According to the Worcester Annals, the Priory of St. Giles was founded in 1171 by two brothers, Jocelin and Edred, who received their Benedictine habit and rules from the Cathedral Priory of Worcester; but

a charter of Bishop Simon (1127)<sup>1</sup> shows that it was in existence, perhaps in a more elementary form, nearly half a century earlier. Its endowment, as we learn from this charter, came from the bishop's land; and, in one sense, we may say that it remains unaltered to the present day. The manor which Captain Berington holds now is identical with the one created for the endowment of the priory in the twelfth century. The great event in its history is the dissolution of the monastery in 1535, when its buildings and property passed to the Crown. As in the case of Madresfield, recent investigation has thrown a great deal of light on the history of the place; but with Little Malvern this was due to a lawsuit. There was no separate parish church at Little Malvern in medieval times, and the parishioners, who were all tenants of the convent, were allowed to make use of part of the priory church. Their rights, of course, survived the Dissolution, and part of the building (the quire) was maintained for the parochial services, while the rest was allowed by the new owners to fall into ruin. In 1914 the late vicar brought an action claiming that the ruins formed part of the parish church.<sup>1</sup> He lost his case, but the care with which it was got up, especially on Mr. Berington's side, who had to defend his title, resulted in our learning for the first time, to a great extent, the true history of Little Malvern.

It appears that, on the Dissolution in 1535, the priory was kept in the hands of the Crown. At first the ex-prior, John Bristowe, was left as a sort of care-taker; but next year there appears on the scene John Russell, who was secretary to the Council of the Marches of Wales, and had married the sister of Lord Chancellor Audley's wife, so that he was in touch with Government circles.

<sup>1</sup> *Hemingi Chartularium Ecclesie Wigornienis* (ed. Thos. Hearne, Oxford 1723), ii., 532. Cf. *Victoria County History of Worc.*, ii., p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Fowke v. Berington: Law Reports, Chancery Division, 1914*, vol. ii. pp. 308-353.

He evidently set his heart on possessing the priory, and the first step was that Bristowe was pensioned off, and Russell became a yearly tenant. In 1539 he obtained a lease of the priory for twenty-one years, but died soon after. Perhaps he was too prudent to buy the property at once, or the price he offered may have been thought inadequate. Letters of his to the Court of Augmentations in 1536 and 1537, asking for the farm-stock and implements, and also for the church bells, suggest that he tried to squeeze as much as possible out of the officials. In 1543 the Crown granted the property to Richard Andrews and Nicholas Temple, but John Russell had left behind him a son, Henry, who was still the lessee of the water-mill, and, what is more, was clearly the inheritor of his father's intentions. His appointment in 1542 to be forester and keeper of the woods of the late priory<sup>1</sup> helped him to keep his footing in the place; and, moreover, his father had been one of the council of the household of Princess Mary, the eldest daughter of Henry VIII., and it seems that, owing to this connection, he had been able to make himself useful to her in her days of difficulty. Hence it is not surprising to find that, shortly after she had come to the throne, she granted (*i.e.* sold) the priory and manor to Henry Russell "in consideration of his good, true, and faithful service, in former times, in manifold ways afforded and paid to us."<sup>2</sup> Andrews and Temple's rights had been previously acquired by Henry Russell, who thus became owner of Little Malvern. It remained with his direct descendants till the eighteenth century when an heiress, Elizabeth, married Thomas Berington, of a Herefordshire family. Their only daughter married Thomas Williams, and the Williams' only daughter married William Wakeman, and had no children at all. At her death in 1828, as the descendants of the

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Priory of Little Malvern*, by D. Parsons, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Parsons, *Little Malvern*, p. 10.

Russells were extinct, she left the estate to her next-of-kin, William Berington, who was descended from the brother of the Thomas Berington who married Elizabeth Russell. The present squire of Little Malvern is his grandson.