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Some Miscellaneous Bristol Deeds.

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SOME MISCELLANEOUS BRISTOL DEEDS.

By LEWIS JOHN UPTON WAY, F.S.A., F.R.G.S.

ALTHOUGH, owing to the utilitarian spirit of the age and the apathy of her rulers, the fair city of Bristol has lost most of the houses of her princely merchants which, in bygone days projected their emblazoned gables over her cobbled streets, while practically all the mansions of the great religious foundations which once encircled her walls, have fallen beneath the hand of the spoiler, so that not one stone remains upon another, yet the antiquary delving amongst the records preserved in the archives of her ancient families, can, to a certain extent, recover and unfold before the eyes of present-day Bristolians a little of the history of her buildings and a little more of that of their owners. In this paper I propose to take various dwellings and places of note in and around Bristol, which have been more or less described by past historians, and to enlarge their accounts with hitherto unrecorded charters, deeds and letters drawn from the muniment room at Ashton Court. Some of these concern my family, while others are extraneous and have found a place I know not when or how amongst the Ashton archives.

We shall deal first with the Hospital of St. John without Redcliff Gate. This small though useful institution was much resorted to by pilgrims on their way from Glastonbury to the Chapel of St. Anne in the Wood at Brislington, and is also said to have been the lodging of King Henry VI. when he visited Bristol in 1446, the year after his marriage to Margaret of Anjou. The right of appointment to the mastership of the hospital lay

with the Corporation of the city. Queen Anne Boleyn in 1534, requested that body to confer the next presentation upon two nominees of her own, together with one David Hutton of Bristol, grocer: these to be trustees to appoint a fitting person at the next vacancy. The Corporation, courtiers ever, did not fail to grant her request. A few years afterwards (1544), the hospital was dissolved. No trace of it now remains. John or Jones Street, opposite to the church of St. Mary Redcliff, perpetuates its name and marks the approach to its site, which was actually within the Quakers' burial-ground beneath the Red Cliff.

The Corporation left no stone unturned to obtain a grant of the hospital and its lands from the Crown, but to no purpose, as the king bestowed the whole estate upon his physician, George Owen, who was also successful in obtaining grants of other church property both for himself and his friend John Smyth, alderman and merchant of Bristol, first of his name to own the Long Ashton estate. The last master of the hospital was Richard Bromfield, by whom it was surrendered with all its privileges and estates on the 4th of March, 1544, into the hands of Thomas Powell, clerk, and John Smyth, who no doubt acted as Owen's local agents.¹ Latimer tells us that Owen dealt most generously with part of his plunder, granting the Corporation a 99 years' lease in numerous houses in Bristol and in 130 acres of land at Chew Magna, in trust to maintain ten additional inmates in Foster's Almshouses. Later on his representative sold the fee simple of this estate to the Corporation; and in recent years the rents have brought in £1,500 per annum to the Charity Trustees, one sixth of the proceeds being credited to Foster's Almshouses and the remainder to the Grammar School..

There was another estate belonging to the hospital at Farmborough, midway between Bath and Wells. This

was called Fryenborough Manor now changed to Barrow Hill Farm. These lands Owen did not devote to charitable purposes, but sold them in the 38th year of Henry VIII. to John Bush, Esq., of Wiltshire. The Royal licence from the king permitting the sale is preserved and follows :—

Henry the viiith. by Grace of God, etc. To all to whom, etc.

Know ye that we of our special grace and for twenty shillings paid to us in our hanaper, have granted inasmuch as in us lies, to our beloved George Owen Esq. that he may be able to give and grant his Manor of Fryenborough in Farnborough with all its appurtenances in the County of Somerset, lately the possession of the Hospital of St. John without the Gate called Redcliff Gate in our City or Town of Bristol and the County of the same, dissolved, which are held "in capite" from us, to John Bushe Esq. and likewise we have granted special license to the same John to receive the aforesaid manor etc. from the said George Owen, and to hold them without molestation from us our heirs or servants.

In witness whereof we have caused these letters patent to be made. Witness I myself at Westminster on the 25th day of May in the 38th year of our reign. Southwell.

The Great Seal of Henry VIII. is appended.

The estate of Fryenborough remained with the Bush family until the 5th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when John Bush grandson of John Bush sold it to Matthew Smyth, Esq., of Long Ashton, whose great grandson Sir Hugh Smyth, Bart., conveyed it with his estate of Compton Dando, in the year 1664, to Alexander Popham, in whose family it was vested when Collinson wrote his history of Somerset in 1791.¹

Our knowledge of George Owen is but scanty. Would that we knew more of a man who must have been possessed of no ordinary measure of tact and courage to grapple successfully with the humours both mental and bodily of so formidable a monarch as Henry the VIII. One letter only from him remains, which, though it

¹ Collinson's *Somerset*, vol. ii., p. 424.

does not touch upon the hospital lands nevertheless affords us a curious glimpse at a scene of Court life of a subsequent reign. This is the only record we have of what must have been a pretty quarrel between Hugh and Matthew, the high-spirited sons of John Smyth, and Master Carew, a gentleman of the court who may have been Carew of Camerton in Somerset, but since his christian name is not given us, it is impossible to identify him. It would seem that Owen's tact was tried to the uttermost and would have availed nought, had it not been backed by the long purse of the Bristol alderman.

To the Ryght worshippfull Mstr. John Smyth, marchante in
Bristow.

Syr, my hartly commendations delyvered, you shall understand that Mstr. Carew and I be att a poynt thys present, and that Fryday in the morning which ys ix of Marche my servante ys gone to hym with 40lbs. and with a relese of and for all actes and quarells from hym to both yor. sonys and farder he doth sele to an obligacyon of a c. lbs. nott to brek the pece or unquyett or troble, or pyke any quarrell, or in any wise moleste yor sayd 2 sonys and in lyke bond yor. sonys be bound to hym for kepyng of the pece agaynst hym as he ys to them, and so it ys to be trusted that they both shall hereafter be frynds and lovers, which ys to be wished. I am as glad that the matter ys brought to a good pass for yor. quyet and for yor. 2 sonys safety as you yourself and for God's sake give them advyse to be ware of such lyke myschance, for there ys no man so strong nor so hardy but he may meet with hys match. My servant Martyn now cometh to Bristow to purchase that I will give the Quen att her going to Oxford, wherein I pray you to lett me have yor. helpe. And nowe with ixlbs. receyvd of John Twytt and xl lbs. payd to Mstr. Carew I remayne yor. debtor 2 c lbs. besyde yor. fyn for Keyshal, the which I hasten to dispatch, praying you to forbear me a lyttel wylle.

Newes here be onely that the Lord Privy Sele with others doth take ther voyage thys next weke in the west partyes to fetch the Prynce of Spayne, God send hym well to arryve ther and send us pecc. We are lyke to fall oute with the French, God send us well all to do. And thus for thys present I take my leve, from the Cowrt ixth day of Marche.

Your assuryd

GEORGE OWEN.

Thys letter was wrytten thys Fryday att vii of the cloke in the morning att what tyme I dyd send my servant to Mstr. Carew and att xi of the cloke Mstr. Carew came to my chamber to dyner, who hath receved the xl lbs. and selyed to a relese for all quarells and to an obligacyon the which I have sent you here by my servant and I am bound to hym that yor. two sonys shall sele the lyke bond and obligacyon to the sayd Carew for the pece, nowe it ys done I would say to you I had never so moche to do for any on matter in my lyfe.

Leaving the outskirts for the centre of the city, we proceed to Broad Street, and pause before the Grand Hotel, which occupies the site of two ancient mansions formerly known as the White Lion and the White Hart. I am able to produce a lease of the White Lion which is not only the earliest document concerning that afterwards famous house that has as yet been brought to light, but contains also the names of two members of an illustrious family whose connection with Bristol has hitherto been but lightly touched upon. A summary of the deed follows:—

24th. Henry viiith.

Thys Indenture made the viiith daye of Maye in the xxiiiith yere of the reign of our soveraigne lorde kyng Henry the viiith. Bytwene the Ryght Honorable Arthur Plantaganett Knyght Vicomitie Lysle and Syr John Dudley Knyght on the oon partie, and John Ware of the town of Bristowe the elder and Emotte hys wyff on the other partie. Wytnesseth that the sayd Arthur Plantagenett Vicomitie Lyssle and the sayd Syr John Dudley have dimised sett and to ferme lett unto the sayd John Ware and Emott hys wyffe all that theyr house or tenement called the Whyt Lyon lyinge and being in Broadstrete wythyn the town of Brystowe whych house extendethe in length from the strete called Brodstrete lying forwardys towardys the west and extendyth from thens bakewarde unto a lane called Tower lane towarde the est and so abbuttyth upon the house of Wauter frampton the which house the sayd John Ware nowe dwellyth yn lying unto the southe syde and extendyth in brede unto oon other house of the sayde Vycomitie Lyssle wherin dwellyth oon Wyllyam Glaskaryon pewterer on the north syde. TO HAVE AND TO HOLDE the sayde house and tenement to the sayde

John Ware and Emotte hys wyffe for terme of theyr lyves and the longest lyver of eyther of them, yeldyng and paying therfor yerely unto the seyd Vycomitie Lyle during hys lyffe iii lbs. of lawful money of England. Also the seyd John and Emotte covenant that they wyll fynde suffycent ledde and tulle for the reparacyon of the same house at theyr own proper cost and charges. Also the seyd Arthur Lord Lyle and Syr John Dudley covenant to fynde all manour of other necessaries for the reparacyon of the seyd house and suffyciently to repayr the same when it shall be requyred of them.

In wytnes wherof the parties aboveseyd to thss presentys Indentures interchangeably have set to theyr seales, yeven the daye and yere above wryten.

ARTHUR LYSLE.

Arthur Plantagenet, born about 1480, was the natural son of King Edward IV., by Elizabeth Lucie. In 1511 he married Elizabeth, widow of Edmund Dudley, and daughter of Edward Grey, Viscount Lisle, and obtained in the same year a grant of lands in Dorset, Sussex and Lancashire which had come to the Crown on the attainder of Sir Richard Empson and Dudley in 1510. On February 8th, 1513, he obtained a protection (from his creditors) on going to sea with the expedition into Brittany. His ship struck a rock, when in extreme danger of being drowned he called upon Our Lady of Walsingham for help, vowing that if she would hear him he would taste neither fish nor flesh until he had seen her. She heard him. He obtained leave of absence to fulfil his vow. In the summer he crossed the sea with Henry VIII. and probably won his spurs in the ensuing campaign, being henceforth spoken of as Sir Arthur Plantagenet. In 1519 he and his wife had livery of the lands of Edward Grey, Viscount Lisle; John Grey, his wife's brother, and his daughter the Countess of Devon having both died without issue. He accompanied Henry to the Field of the Cloth of Gold and to the meeting with Charles V. On April 25th he obtained a grant of the title of Viscount Lisle with remainder to

his heirs male by Elizabeth his wife, on surrender of a patent conferring that title on Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. On April 23rd, 1524, he was elected Knight of the Garter, and in November, Keeper of Clarendon Park. In the next year Henry made his natural son, the Duke of Richmond, at the age of five, lord Admiral of England, and the boy seems to have nominated Lisle his Vice-Admiral. His wife had died after 1523, and in 1528 he married Honor Grenville, widow of Sir John Basset. In 1540 he was sent to the tower on suspicion of being implicated in a plot to betray Calais to the Pope and Cardinal Pole. He remained in prison until 1542, when the collar of the Garter was restored to him and the king sent him a diamond ring in token of forgiveness and liberated him. His excitement and joy at the news were so great that he died in the Tower the same night, and was buried there. His wife on his arrest fell distraught of mind, and so continued many years. Fox (p. 505), describes her as an utter enemy to God's honour and in idolatry, hypocrisy and pride, incomparably evil. Lord Lisle left three daughters by his first wife. The title, owing to the failure of heirs male, fell into abeyance and was conferred by the Crown upon the eldest son of his first wife by her first marriage.¹

The John Dudley associated with Arthur Plantagenet (Lord Lisle in our deed), was no other than the famous Duke of Northumberland father of Sir Guildford Dudley, husband of the ill-fated Lady Jane Grey. He was son of Edmund Dudley, Privy Councillor to Henry VII., who was beheaded in the first year of Henry VIII., by Elizabeth Grey, daughter of Sir Edward Grey, Lord Lisle. In 1540 he was appointed master of the horse to Anne of Cleves, and at the meeting of that Princess with the king at Blackheath, he led her spare horse

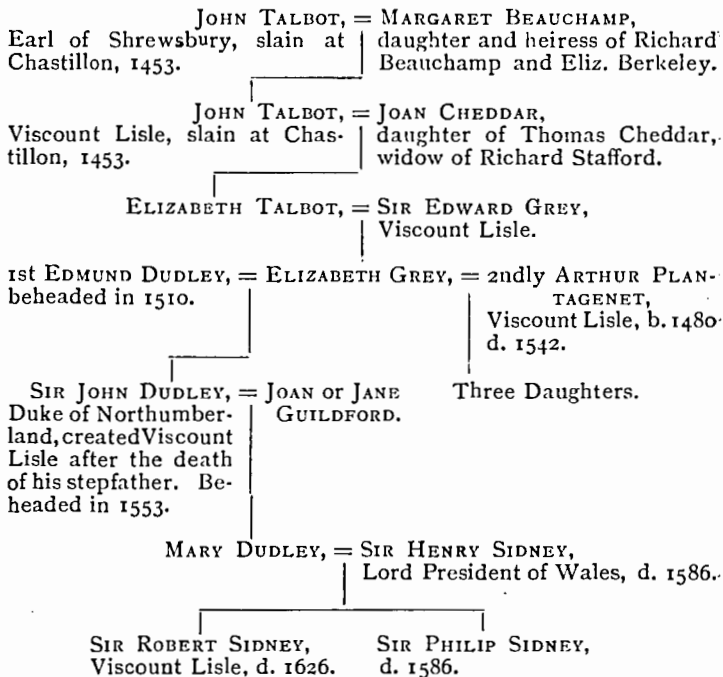
¹ See *Dictionary of National Biography*.

trapped to the ground in rich tissue. In 1540 he was appointed master of the horse, warden of the Scottish Marches and raised to the peerage as Viscount Lisle and made great admiral for life. On the death of Henry VIII. he was found to be one of the executors of his will. In 1547 he was created Earl of Warwick and high Chamberlain of England. In 1551 he attained the highest dignity destined for him, namely the Dukedom of Northumberland. On the death of Edward VI. Dudley caused the Lady Jane, wife of his son Sir Guildford Dudley, to be proclaimed queen, and himself took the field on her behalf against the Princess Mary. The attempt failed, he was captured and executed on Tower Hill on August 22nd, of the same year. His wife, was Jane, daughter and heiress of Sir Edward Guildford, by whom he had five sons and two daughters. One daughter, Mary, married Sir Henry Sidney and became mother of Sir Philip Sidney. The title of Viscount Lisle passed to the elder son, Sir Robert Sidney.

The relationship between Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle and Sir John Dudley is here shown. Plantagenet married Dudley's widowed mother and so became his stepfather. This connection is not alluded to in the deed. The pedigree is copied partly from the programme of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society drawn up for the Warwick meeting, and partly from notes kindly supplied by Canon Bazeley.

This deed should be of interest to Bristol, not only because it connects the name of the head of the great Dudley family with their city, but also because members of their Archaeological Society were in 1914 the honoured guests of the city of Warwick, whence Dudley derived one of his titles, and in which was situated his stately home.

DESCENT OF THE LISLE PEERAGE.



On looking at the pedigree you will see that the first Lord Lisle's wife was Joan, widow of Richard Stafford, and daughter and heir of Thomas Cheddar, a wealthy Bristol merchant. We may fairly assume that the White Lion formed part of the Cheddar inheritance which had passed from Joan to her granddaughter, Elizabeth Grey. Arthur Plantagenet as Elizabeth's husband acted in conjunction with John Dudley her son and heir, by her first marriage, in selling the White Lion to John Ware and Emotte his wife. The remainder of the Cheddar-Dudley estate passed into the hands of the Corporation in 1542, and was known as Lord Lisle's Lands.

Latimer in a few words gives us the ultimate fate of the White Lion.

“On January the 18th, 1690, a fire broke out in the White Lion Inn, by which that long famed hostelry with an adjoining house was burnt to the ground. The Chamberlain of the City disbursed £7 8s. 6d. amongst those who strove to quench the flames. A new White Lion afterwards arose and was much used as a meeting place by political bodies in the 18th century. This in turn gave place to the existing masterpiece known as the Grand Hotel.”

Leaving Broad Street we proceed to Small Street its near neighbour and erstwhile rival in popularity with the plutocracy of the city.

Here John Smyth, alderman and mayor of Bristol, owned a mansion, the site of which we are unable to identify. It was no doubt a typical home of a wealthy merchant of the period and architecturally in keeping with its surroundings. Many of us can remember some of these stately relics of old Bristol, which are becoming fewer, alas! as the years roll on. Such houses in ancient deeds were often termed mansions and were well worthy of the name. As to their interiors, they were replete with every comfort known to Tudor England. The living rooms often displayed richly moulded ceilings and elaborately carved chimneypieces, while the stone mullions of the projecting windows not infrequently supported heraldic devices, exemplifying either the coat of arms of the merchant himself or that of the guild to which he belonged. The rooms were not over furnished, that which they contained was massive and handsome. Cupboards and sideboards of oak were laden with plate, both plain silver and parcel gilt. The bedrooms, if they shewed nothing in the shape of modern toilette accessories, could always boast a fourpost bed, hung with silk or tapestry, in accordance with the wealth of the master and the taste of the mistress of the house. On the ground floor was the shop and countinghouse of the merchant,

where he would be accessible to all and sundry, either to transact business or to indulge in friendly gossip. Beneath the shop was ample cellar-accommodation for the storing of heavy goods; in many cases these cellars still remain. Of the sanitary arrangements of these houses the less said the better, the open gutter which ran down the centre of the street was all that our primitive ancestors required in the way of drainage.

We shall now turn to the first of two deeds dealing with such a house as this, in which John Smyth and Joan his wife secure certain properties to their second son, Matthew Smyth of the Middle Temple, London.

To all Christ's faithfull ones to whom this present indented writing shall come, John Smyth of the county and city of Bristol, Alderman, health in the Lord everlasting. Know that I have given, granted and confirmed to Matthew Smyth of the Middle Temple, London, my son, all that my principal messuage with the appurtenances in which I the aforesaid John Smyth now dwell, situate and being in the parish of Saint Warborowe in the county and city of Bristol aforesaid, in a street there called Small Street, and all my Manor of Sturdon with the appurtenances in the parish of Winterbourne in the county of Gloucester, and also all that manor or farm of Stanshawes in the said county, and also all my other lands, tenements and rents lying and being in Winterborne or elsewhere in the county of Gloucester, to the use of me the aforesaid John Smyth and of Joan my now wife for jointure for the full term of our life, and after the death of us to the use of Matthew Smyth and the heirs of his body lawfully begotten. And for default of such issue to the use of Hugh Smyth another of my sons and the issue of his body lawfully begotten. And for default of such issue to the right heirs of me the aforesaid John Smyth for ever.

This deed is undated. It settled the ownership of the house in Small Street after the death of John Smyth and Joan his wife: we do not, therefore, find it bequeathed in his will. Matthew Smyth, upon whom it was settled, was a barrister and for many years lived in London, in fact up to the time, when, by the death of his elder brother Hugh without sons, he became owner of the Long Ashton

estate. He therefore had no use for a great Bristol residence, and accordingly sold it after his father's death as the following deed tells us :—

This Indenture made the seventh daye of July, in the thirde yere of the Reigne of our soveraigne Lady Elizabeth, etc. Betwene Mathew Smyth of the Myddell Temple of London gentillman on th' one partie and George Hyggyns of the Citie of Bristol Marchaunte on th' other partie witnesseth that the said Mathew in consideration of the some of two hundreth and fowrscore pounds of lawfull money of Englande to him payde hath bargained and sold unto the sayde George Hyggyns and his heires absolutely forever all that his greate Capitall Messuage or Tenemente with th' appurtenances sett lying and being in Small Streete within the Citie of Bristowe late in the tenure or occupation of John Smyth deceased late father unto the sayde Mathewe and nowe in the teanure or occupation of the sayde Mathew Smyth or his assigns and also all and singular howses buyldinges shopps cellars warehowses yardes easements commodities lande soile grounde and all other hereditaments whatsoever they be to the sayde Capitall Messuage belonging and also all deds evidences charters writings and mvnyments or as many of them as the sayde Mathew may have or may lawfully come by without sute in the lawe and farder that the sayde greate Messuage or Tenement above bargayned and solde shall be clerely acquitted and discharged of and from all former bargaynes sales or graunts made by the sayde Mathewe or by the sayde John Smythe his late father and farder that the sayde Mathewe the daye and date hereof ys very true and onely owner of the sayde great Mesuage or Tenement and that the same George Higgyns by reason of this present bargayne shall lawfully have holde and possess the sayde greate Messuage to the onely use of himself and his heires forever. In witness whereof the sayde parties to theis presents Indentures interchangeably have sett their seales Yeven the daye and yere first above written.

GEORGE HYGGINNS.

The further history of the house, or of Higgins its purchaser, is unknown, and will so continue until somebody discovers the deed by which Higgins or his heirs passed the house on.

Next in order we shall take a notable house whose site is now occupied by the Colston Hall. Here once

stood the Carmelite Friars, with extensive grounds stretching up the present Park Row. After the dissolution, the Corporation of Bristol bought the house and part of the grounds, selling it with some of the grounds shortly afterwards to Thomas Chester, alderman of the city.

Early in the reign of Elizabeth one John Young settled in Bristol and having taken up his residence in the Friary, determined to build an imposing mansion on the site. Therefore in 1568 he bought from Chester the old building, and erected the house to be known for so many years afterwards as the "Great House, St. Augustines Back." It was here that in 1574 he entertained Queen Elizabeth, for which hospitality he was accorded the honour of knighthood. Under date November 17th, 1575, John Saunders, merchant, assigned to him a garden belonging to the premises, which had been demised to him by John Pyne, prior of the monastery.

Dying in 1589, he was succeeded by his only son Robert, who turned out a spendthrift and squandered his inheritance. In order to protect himself from his creditors, he made over the Great House in trust to Nicholas Strangeways, and went overseas to the Irish wars, whence he returned a knight. On June 10th, 1612, in conjunction with Strangeways he sold the estate to William Claxton, who, during the next year entertained Queen Anne of Denmark in the Great House, the portentous dunghill in front of it having been first removed.¹ Claxton on September 11th, of the same year (1613), resold to Sir Hugh Smyth, knight, of Long Ashton and to Dame Elizabeth his wife. After Sir Hugh's death in 1627, his widow married her cousin, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, grantee of the State of Maine in America, as his fourth wife, and resided with him partly at the

¹ Latimer's *Annals 17th century*, p. 48.

Lower Court, Long Ashton, and partly at the Great House.

In 1642, King Charles having resolved upon war, the Marquis of Hertford, Lord Lieutenant of Somerset and Bristol, was sent into the west to secure the country for the royal cause. The Great House was offered to him as a lodging by Sir F. Gorges and Mr. Thomas Smyth his stepson, who were thanked by the Council for their love. In 1644, Queen Henrietta Maria lodged here, beds being borrowed from the landlord of the Red Lion for the accommodation of her suite. In the following year the Prince of Wales found shelter within its walls.

In the course of time Gorges, an aged and disappointed man, was gathered to his fathers (1647). Dame Elizabeth, once more a widow, determined to make some money out of the grounds and outbuildings of her town house, as we learn from the following Indenture dated January 18th, 1655 :—

1655, January 18th.

This Indenture between Dame Elizabeth Gorges of Longaishton in the County of Somerset widdowe, Hugh Smyth of Longaishton aforsaid Esq. and Ann his wife of the one parte And William Clarke of the Cittie of Bristoll carpenter of the other parte WITNESSETH that the same Dame Elizabeth, Hugh and Ann his wife for and in consideration That the said William Clarke hath undertaken and agreed to and with them to make erect, and build in and upon the land of inheritance of the said Hugh Smyth hereafter mentioned seaven or more faire and habitable messuages or dwelling houses each of them consisting of three stories and a cock loft high or more and to add to each of them one cellar or vault underground at least for the convenience of each dwelling house AS alsoe for and in consideration of the annual rent hereafter expressed HAVE demised graunted and to farme letten unto the said William Clarke his heirs, etc. ALL those the outhouses courts yeards and passages heretofore belonging to the Capital Message comonly called the Greate House scittuate standing and being on St. Augustines back in the suburbs of the Cittie of Bristoll (as namely) the stable stable court the passage behinde the stable the waishe house the chamber

over the same the bake house the room beyond together with the chambers over them the coch house as alsoe the severall passages and yeards two and beyond them and likewise such part of the lower orchard lyeing westward as is not demised to one John Knight, saveing and reserving out of the said demised premises all such passages thinges and priviliges as in and by one indenture of lease bearing date the 13th of January 1653 made to John Knight the younger sonne of Edward Knight of the Cittie of Bristoll merchant is excepted and foreprised. TO HAVE AND HOLD the said demised premises unto the said William Clarke for the tearme of one and fortie years from the date hereof. YEILDING AND PAYING therefore yeerely during the said tearme unto the said Hugh Smyth the annual rent of £20 cleere of all charges and deductions AND the said William Clarke for himself and his heirs doth covenant and promise that he will duly pay the aforesaid rent AND IF ITT shall happen that the same shall be behind hand it shall be lawfull for the same E. Gorges H. Smyth and Ann his wife to re-enter and take possession of the said premises AND the said W. Clarke doth covenant that at the end of the said tearm of 41 yeeres he will yeild up and surrender the said messuages to be built in good and sound repair to the said Hugh Smyth and his heires AND alsoe that it shall be lawfull for the said E. Gorges H. Smyth and Ann his wife twice every yeere to enter into the said premises to viewe serch and see what defaults for want of reparations shall be found defective and necessary to be repaired. IN WITNESS whereof the parties above named to these present Indentures have interchangeably sett their hands and seales the day and yeere first above written, 1655.

Signed, WILLIAM CLARKE.

L. S.

Signed sealed and delivered in the presence of us whose names are under written, Henry Flower, Francis Erith, Thomas Hagger and Henry Gwin.

Five years now elapse. Elizabeth, Lady Gorges had gone the way of all flesh, and the Great House had passed into the possession of her grandson Hugh Smyth, afterwards Knight of the Bath and Baronet.

We must presume that William Clarke, the carpenter, had not been inactive during this period, but had carried

out his part of the contract by building seven or more desirable villa residences with cocklofts and cellars all complete, and that John Knight the younger had also run up other equally desirable dwellings on the other part of the grounds secured to him in 1653. In consequence the amenities of the mansion must have been curtailed and the remaining pleasure grounds much overlooked.

Now Hugh Smyth had married Ann, daughter of John Ashburnham, Groom of the Bedchamber and faithful servant to King Charles the first, who only left his master when his royal head fell upon the scaffold at Whitehall. The Bristol house, closely built about with small tenements, would have appealed but little to her taste. We can easily imagine that she persuaded her husband to turn it into cash. Whether this was the case or not, we learn from the next deed that he did so.

THIS INDENTURE made the nineteenth day of October in the twelveth yeere of the reigne of our Sovereigne Lord Charles the second etc. and in the yeere of our Lord God 1660 BETWEENE Hugh Smyth of Longashton in the county of Somersett Esq. and Ann his wife of the one parte and Thomas Jenyns of the City of Bristoll gent. of the other parte WITNESSETH that the said Hugh Smyth and Ann his wife in consideration of the sune of £1200 well and truly paid to the said Hugh Smyth by the said Thomas Jenyns HAVE graunted bargained and sould unto the said Thomas Jenyns ALL that capital messuage and tenement with the appurtenances comonly called the Greate House scittuate standing and being on St. Augustine's back within the suburbs of the said Cittie of Bristoll As alsoe all those messuages and tenements as well antiently as newly erected in and upon the Courts and void grounds belonging to the said graunted and bargained premisses by William Clarke of the said cittie of Bristoll carpenter, Together with all stables outhouses orchards gardens void grounds cellers sollers chambers roomes gallaries wayes entries yeards pavements backsides easements buildings walls stones gutters leads pipes of lead under and above ground to convey water waters watercourses profits commodities advantages emoluments and

hereditaments whatsoever, As also the little water howse and water cesterne therein to the said Capital Messuage belonging. All which said Capital Messuage with its appurtenances are in the several tenures of John Knight the younger of the Cittie of Bristoll merchant and the forenamed William Clarke their lessees or assignes, Alsoe all manner of reversions, Alsoe all right title and claim, together with all manner of deeds charters evidences etc. to be delivered up whole safe uncanceled and undefaced as they are now TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same to the only proper use and behoof of the said Thomas Jenyns his heirs and assignes forever TO BE holden of the cheife lord of the fee by the services of right accustomed. AND the said Hugh Smyth the aforesaid premisses unto the said Thomas Jenyns against all people shall and will warrant acquit and defend forever by these presents AND that all the said premisses shall lawfully remain to the said Thomas Jenyns clerely discharged of all manner of joyntures debts etc. Saving and excepting one Indenture of Lease bearing date the 13th day of January 1653, made between Dame Elizabeth Gorges of Longashton widdowe, and the forenamed Hugh Smyth of the one parte, and the aforesaid John Knight the younger of the other parte for the tearme of 41 yeeres wherein the yerele rent of £30 is reserved. As alsoe one other Indenture of Lease bearing date the 18th day of January 1655 made between the forenamed Dame Elizabeth Gorges, Hugh Smyth and Ann his wife of the one parte and the aforesaid William Clarke of the other parte for the tearme of 41 yeeres wherein the yeerely rent of £20 is reserved which said rents are intended to pass hereby unto the said Thomas Jenyns and his heirs Excepting likewise one cheife rent of thirteen shillings and fowerpence due and payable out of the premisses to the Chamber of the said Cittie of Bristoll at our Lady Day and Michaelmas.

Then follow the usual clauses.

IN WITNESS whereof the parties above named to these present Indentures have interchangably sett their handes and seales the day and yeere first above written.

Signed, THOMAS JENYNs.

L. S.

Hugh Smyth's attornies for delivery of the premisses Henry fflower and Edward fflower his sonne.

Endorsed, signed sealed and delivered in the presence of us whose names are underwritten, John Knight Jr., Henry Flower Edward Flower and Thomas Haggar.

Who or what manner of man Thomas Jenyns may have been history does not relate, nor are there any further deeds at Ashton Court dealing with the Great House. To carry its subsequent history on to the present day we must turn for help to John Latimer.

Mr. Lane, afterwards an alderman of the city, seems to have been the next owner, as in 1688 James the second and his Consort were splendidly entertained at Mr. Lane's Great House on St. Augustine's back, the queen being presented with a hundred broad pieces of gold. Again, during the summer assizes of 1702, Mr. Justice Powell was lavishly feasted here. Lane seems to have been a sugar merchant, as references are to be found to a sugar refinery on the premises of the Great House about this time.

When in 1707 our pious philanthropist, Edward Colston, was searching for a home in which to establish the boys of the school he had just founded and endowed, the Great House was suggested to him as a suitable place. Mrs. Lane, presumably widow of Alderman Lane, was then in possession. After a deal of higgling, Colston purchased it for the sum of £1,300. Like many other Bristolians who have been benefactors to the community, he dearly loved a bargain. Having acquired the mansion at his own valuation, he appears to have pulled it down and to have started building operations with great zest. It is on record that he constantly hovered round the workmen, urging them to get on with their job, and that at times he would lend a hand himself. Colston's school when completed, stood where the Great House had stood until modern ideas of the fitness of things compelled the

removal of the boys to more salubrious quarters at Stapleton in 1861. The abandoned buildings were sold to a company which in 1867 opened the commodious, but far from beautiful, place of amusement known to us as the Colston Hall. I think that the houses erected by William Clarke stood on the ground now occupied by the offices of the Bristol Gas Company, where many of us remember an entry into a courtyard of a rather slummy nature, called, if I recollect rightly, Lady Huntingdon's Court.

We shall next turn our attention to the south side of the river, and consider a deed which deals with two houses contained within that one-time ecclesiastical domain known as Temple Fee. First of all it would perhaps be as well to briefly recapitulate the history of that part of the city.

Early in the 12th century, Robert Fitzroy, Earl of Gloucester, lord of the great manor of Bedminster, cut off and made a gift to the Knights Templars of part of the borough of Redcliff, thenceforth called Temple Fee. On the dissolution of the order of Templars in the reign of Edward II., this fee, with other of their possessions, was conferred upon the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and formed part of their Preceptory of Temple Combe. The new owners, like their predecessors, were empowered to exercise all feudal rights in their own domains, independent of any outside authority. This independence the Corporation strongly resented, and when Redcliff became incorporated with Bristol, claimed authority over Temple Fee as having been part of Redcliff. It was in fact a stumbling-block to the good governance of the city, for outlaws and rogues of all kinds, fleeing from civic justice, found refuge there, their arrest being resisted by order of the Knights of St. John. An appeal to the crown dragged on for many years and was not satisfactorily settled until the year 1541, when the order of St. John of Jerusalem was

abolished and its lands confiscated. In 1544, the Corporation petitioned the king for a grant of the lands of the fee. This they obtained for a consideration, and from that time forward Temple Fee fell into line with other parts of the city of Bristol.

This Indenture bears witness that we brother WALTER GRENDON and the BRETHREN of the HOSPITAL of ST. JOHN of JERUSALEM in ENGLAND with unanimous consent and assent have granted and to farm letten to WILLIAM SELWODE and MATILDA his wife and to THOMAS son of the aforesaid MATILDA our one tenement with two shops in front opposite the said tenement and with one garden behind and with all its appurtenances situated in a street called Temple Street in the town of Bristol in our FEE appertaining or belonging to our PRECEPTORY of TEMPLECOMBE in the county of Somerset, between a tenement in which Thomas BURGEYS dawber dwells on the south side and the shop of JOHN SUTTON on the north side extending from the aforesaid street in front to the LAWDYCHE behind.

We have granted also and to farm letten to the aforesaid WILLIAM, MATILDA and THOMAS all that our shop with a garden behind and with all its appurtenances situated in the street aforesaid between the shop of HENRY BOKERELL on the south and the tenement of JOHN FEREBY on the north and which stretches from the aforesaid street in front up to the LAWDYCHE behind, to have and to hold the aforesaid tenement with the two shops and the garden behind and also the said other shop with garden facing, to the aforesaid WILLIAM MATILDA and THOMAS for the term of their lives or of the survivor.

Rendering annually to us and to our successors at TEMPLECOMBE at the work and for the use of the PRECEPTOR or GUARDIAN of TEMPLECOMBE for the time being 13 shillings and 4 pence at the feasts of ST. MICHAEL and EASTER in equal portions and also rendering to us annually there for the said other shops and garden adjoining 5 shillings at the same feasts by equal portions Undertaking all burdens and services to the aforesaid tenements with the two shops and gardens adjoining during the aforesaid term.

Then follow the usual stipulations as to repairs and power of distraint if the rent be in arrear.

In witness whereof our common seal and the seals of the said WILLIAM, MATILDA and THOMAS are alternately affixed to

these indentures.

L. S.

Given in our house of CLERKENWELL in the celebration of our chapter there on Thursday next after the feast of ST. BAR-NABAS the APOSTLE, in the sixth year of the reign of KING HENRY fourth after the conquest (1405) June the eleventh.

One seal only is appended to this document, that of the hospital, it is in dark green wax, bears the head of St. John the Baptist with long beard, and the inscription broken away in one place which should read :

S : PRIOR : SANCT : JOHANNIS : JER : IN : ANGL :

This deed is my own property, and is translated as above from the Latin.

Of the local men mentioned in this deed the names of Henry Bokereil and John Sutton are to be found in civic records ; the former served the office of bailiff with William Draper in 1397-8, and the latter filled the same office with William Benley in 1409-10. William Selwode, Thomas Burgeys and John Fereby were simple citizens who never won, even if they sought, recognition at the hands of their fellows.

The "Lawditch" is seldom spoken of by local historians. It was one of two ancient waterways which divided the parish of St. Thomas the Martyr, respectively, from those of Temple and St. Mary Redcliff. The "Lawditch" with which we are concerned ran along the east of St. Thomas' parish, dividing it from Temple parish ; taking a turn to the north, it reached a point where Bath Street now is ; turning to the east, then sharp to the north, it finally disappeared into the Avon.

The two "Lawditches" were probably dug by the very earliest settlers in the district for the purpose of draining the surrounding swampy land. They were

similar to the "Rhines" which may be found at the present day in the Banwell and Henbury marshes. No trace of them is to be found in Temple, St. Thomas or Redcliff in these days. No doubt the digging of docks and deepening of channels has rendered them needless, and in the course of years they have become filled up. It is difficult to explain why the word "law" is prefixed to "ditch." A "Lawday" was the day on which a court was held, so a "Lawditch" might have been the boundary of the district of a court; but there is no evidence for this idea. I am indebted to the Rev. C. S. Taylor, F.S.A., for the suggestion.

We now come to a curious little document illustrating a type of crime far from uncommon in the 17th century. The Examination of Thomas Frye of Abbott's Leigh in ye County of Somersett Labourer, taken before Thomas Smyth Esq, one of his Majesties Justices of ye Peace within the aforesaid County the 12th day of Feb: Anno Domini 1633.

Who sayth, that he hath knowne one Thomas Shepheard a Cobler dwellinge in ye Castle of the City of Bristoll two years come Michaelmas next. And that his first acquaintance with him came by means hee ye sayd Shepheard had mended his examinant's wife's shoes, divers tymes. And hee farther sayth, that about halfe a yeare after his first knowledge of him, Hee ye sayd Shepheard and his wyfe and a daughter-in-law of his, came over one Sunday unto Abbott's Leigh unto his examinant's house and brought with him a Quarter of very large and fat mutton, which they dressed in his house and there eate the best part of it and the rest (which was but a little) hee left behynde him. After which about ye Easter weeke followeing, ye sayd Shephearde and his wyfe came over agayne unto this examinant's house, and brought with them a breaste of very good veale, which they there dressed and likewise did eate as aforesayd. And this examinant sayth yt. hee observed ye sayd Shepheard to be very weary in his house, and hee there told this examinant's wyfe that hee thanked God, hee could putt meate and drinke into ye bellies of his household, and lay up besides 10 shillings weekly. And after the tyme yt hee brought ye veale, hee never came more hier unto this examinant's house. And farther hee sayth not.

× The marke of Thomas Frye.

This is clearly a case of suspected sheep-stealing, a very serious crime in the eyes of our forefathers and one punishable with death. About this period the cost of living had risen by leaps and bounds, much as it has done in the present year of grace. It is stated that wheat was eight shillings a bushel and that it took five hundred pounds in 1631 to buy commodities which in 1530 could have been purchased for one hundred. Probably this was the cause of the downfall of Shepheard and his family.

It seems strange that a cobbler should have been living in the castle, but we must bear in mind that a large number of mean houses had sprung up within the castle liberties, under the shadow of the ancient fortifications, and that these were inhabited by a very far from desirable class. As to the castle itself, its days were numbered. Twenty years later, an order signed by Oliver Cromwell directed the citizens of Bristol to demolish it. By March 1655, the destruction of that which had been second only in strength to the Tower of London, was finally accomplished, and the castle of Bristol ceased to exist.

I regret that no evidence has come to light to tell us the fate of Thomas Shepheard and family.

The following indenture is of considerable interest, as it gives us the name and place of residence of a number of Bristolians of the sixteenth century. Hugh Smyth, the vendor of these house properties, was eldest son of John Smyth, mayor of Bristol, and elder brother to Matthew Smyth.

To all Christ's faithful ones to whom this present indented writing shall come, Hugh Smyth of Longe Ashton in the County of Somerset, greeting in the Lord Everlasting. Be it known that I the aforesaid Hugh have given, granted and by this my present writing have confirmed to Walter Standfaste of the City of Bristol merchant and to his heirs and assignes for ever all those my messuages, landes, tenements, houses, buildings and structures, gardens, stables and hereditaments hereafter in

these presents particularly set forth, situate and being within the City and County of Bristol aforesaid.

Namely :

All that my messuage called " The Inner Parte of the Cocke in the Hope " lately in the occupation of Michael Pepwall, grocer, situate in the High Strete within the parish of All Saints.

My messuage occupied by John Elton, clerk, situate in Corne Strete in the same parish.

My messuage occupied by Laurence Pyne, vintner, situate in Brode Strete in the parish of St. Andrew.

My messuage occupied by Richard Bande, tayler, situate in Brode Strete in the parish of the Holy Trinity of Bristol.

My messuage occupied by Walter Davis, cofferer, upon the Quay of Bristol in the parish of St. Stephen the Martyr.

All that my messuage with garden adjoining occupied by William Pottle clothier in Marshe Strete in the said parish of St. Stephen.

All my two messuages occupied severally by Robert Tyndall merchant and Richard Carberry, tayler, in Corne Strete, in the parish of St. Leonards.

My messuage occupied by William Wade, hallier, in a certain lane called Gropelane in the parish of St. John the Baptist.

My messuage occupied by Lewis Gryffithe in St. Nicholas Strete, in the parish of St. Nicholas.

My messuage situate in Smale Strete in the parish of St. Walburgh occupied by Anthony Dyos or his assignes, together with all and singular the Cellars, Solars, Chambers, Lights etc. to the aforesaid messuages belonging to have and to hold the same to the said Walter Standfaste his heirs and assignes for ever, paying the accustomed services to the capital lord of the fee and rendering to me the said Hugh Smyth ten shillings of lawful money of England at the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel.

Dated March the fifth in the eighth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1566.

Walter Standfast was sheriff in 1577-8 and Mayor in 1591-2. Michael Pepwall was sheriff in 1575-6, and mayor in 1593-4. Walter Davye, possibly a variant for Davis, was sheriff in 1583-4. None of the remainder appear in Latimer's Calendar of the Mayors of Bristol.

The following little document illustrates some of the

difficulties liable to be encountered by a 17th-century merchantman attempting to come up the Avon:—

To the right worshipfull the Master and Company of Marchants
The humble petition of Yvon Giott a Frenchman.

Sayth on oth that yor: petitioner being Master of the good ship called the Magdalen of Pennarth in Brittany and coming lately in hir ladne with wynes, for this Port, on this day seavenight in the afternoone, being in Kingrod, one Lyne (as he thinketh his name was) came aboard for a Pilott and took charge of hir, to bring hir up, but soe it happened that either by the negligence or ignorance of the Pilott the ship strooke on the rocks at the Ledds, broke hir keelson and some of the knees and one of hir beames and tumbled and bulged much of hir ladings of wynes, and had it been any other ladinge but wynes she had presently suncke there beinge 6 foote of water in the hould before shee gott of.

Yor: petitioner doth now in most humble manner intreat this worshipfull assembly, to take into consideration, that hee is a stranger, that his losse in repairinge the ship wil be at least 40lbs. besides for loss of freight of some wynes, and that without yor: assistance he shall be little repaired or recompensed for these wrongs, which hee hopeth you will the rather doe, in regard as he hath bin informed, all Pilotts give caution for honest and sufficient demeanor, besides an othe taken upon their admission,

And yor: petitioner shal be bound to pray etc.

Y. GUYOT.

I shall bring this paper to a close with a translation from the Latin of an interesting letter from one monarch to another.

To the most Serene and Potent Prince, Dom Alphonso by the Grace of God King of the Portugals and the Algarves on this side and beyond the sea in Africa, Lord of Guinea and of The Possessions of Navigation and Commerce in Aethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, our Brother, Cousin and Right Entirely Beloved Friend.

Charles the second, By the Grace of God King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc. to the most serene and Potent Dom Alphonso, King of the Portugals and the Algarves on this side and beyond the sea in Africa, Lord of Guinea and of the Possessions of Navigation and Commerce in

Aethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, our Brother, Cousin and Right Entirely Beloved Friend, Greeting.

Most serene and most potent prince our Brother, Cousin and Very dear Friend. Since in finishing and concluding the late war between us and the States General, in the summer being just past, a great opportunity presented itself by which the sincere and prompt work of our beloved subject John Rumsey, Sub Tribune, was of use to us. As clearly we have received abundant fruit of his industry and greatness of mind and since from his continual toil and vigilance he contracted a long and serious fever, from which he is even now enfeebled today, it could not come about as he greatly desired that he should quickly return to Portugal and as far as Nota Signa. These things duly considered together with these our letters written in his favour, we do not doubt but that on behalf of your Majesty those things will be effected, lest that brave man should feel his absence further damaging to himself, lest he should be deprived of his pay or of those other benefits and profits, which to him here detained by sickness, will manifestly be owed among the Portugese. Wherefore by the return our ablegate extraordinary Robert Southwell, Knight, so favourable an occasion having offered itself, we also add our prayers on behalf of the said man so well deserving in war of us and your Majesty and always greatly esteemed of us.

For the rest we commend heartily your Majesty to the best and greatest God.

These letters were given in our Palace of Whitehall A.D. one thousand six hundred and sixty eight, of our reign the twentieth.

Your Majesty's

Good brother cousin and friend,

CHARLES, R.

Arlington.

John Rumsey is probably identical with Colonel John Romsey, that rather mysterious person, who was implicated in the Rye House Plot and who married Ann Ashburnham, widow of Sir Hugh Smyth, knight and baronet.

Sir Robert Southwell, Vice-Admiral of Ulster, was appointed envoy to the council of Portugal in November, 1665, with the object of effecting a peace between that country and Spain. He reached Lisbon in 1666 and took part in the coup d'état that ended in the deposition of

Alphonso VI., and brought his mission to a satisfactory close by the peace of Lisbon which was signed February 13th, 1668, when he was recalled to England, but returned to Portugal later on in the same year.

In 1679 he bought the estate of Kingsweston near Bristol from Sir Humphrey Hooke, where he entertained King William the third on his return from Ireland in 1690. Sir Robert died in 1702, and is buried in Henbury Church.¹

¹ See *Dictionary of National Biography*.