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Manor of Charlton Kings, later Ashley

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THE MANOR OF CHARLTON KINGS, LATER ASHLEY

by F. B. WELCH

CHARLTON KINGS is not mentioned in history till 1160. There is nothing Roman in it, though its true Roman origin is claimed for a minor road which branches off from the Cirencester road near Seven Springs and goes down the slope below Charlton Common on to the plain where it is known as Sandy Lane. Formerly it continued across Charlton Park to Sandford Mill where it joined the Old Bath road which led from Leckhampton to Prestbury and Winchcombe. Now its Roman origin is an article of faith locally, but this is most unlikely. There are no traces of Roman settlement on the plain nearby, which till Saxon times was forest and marsh and there is no reason therefore why the Romans should have made a road here. The existence of the great royal manor of Cheltenham and of the episcopal manor of Prestbury in medieval times supplies a reason and date for the road. The lower end of the road on the plain is called 'Sandy Lane', being sandy. It has been suggested¹ that 'sandy' is a corruption of 'sarn', the Welsh word for a paved road, specifically a Roman one; this is a pleasant but rash guess for which there is no evidence whatever. It is also stated in the same paper that one could still see in 1896 pieces of paved road, and especially that the ford at Sandford was still paved. Why this should prove the road as Roman is obscure; at all times men have paved bad bits of road and fords to give a footing for beasts. Neither the Roman Britain map of the Ordnance Survey

¹ *Trans. B.G.A.S.*, xx, 251.

nor the recent paper by Mr St. Clair Baddeley² lends any support for this guesswork.

In Saxon times, at any rate since Edward the Confessor's day, Charlton must have formed part of the royal manor of Cheltenham, one of the eleven ancient demesnes of the Crown in Gloucestershire, whence the epithet 'Kings', to distinguish it from the nearby episcopal manor of Charlton Abbots. The statement in Domesday that Cheltenham manor supplied loaves of bread for the hounds is responsible for the further local legend that Charlton Park was once a Saxon royal hunting lodge.

Ecclesiastically the parish was a chapelry of the vicarage of Cheltenham and followed its fate; Cheltenham was appropriated to the abbey of Cirencester till the Reformation. An indulgence of Pope Celestine (1191-8), at Thirstaine House, Cheltenham, speaks of the 'ecclesia de Chilteham cum capella de Cherletun'.³

In the year 1159-60, the Pipe Roll of 6 Henry II (P.R.S. II, 28), amongst the usual list of grants of demesne lands, 'terris datis', gives:—'To Walter de Esselega 10 librates in Chiltehā'. A later roll of 2 Rich. I, (P.R.S., N.S. IX) says Walter paid for seisin and confirmation to the king 'de terra de Cherlinton'; this and later statements show that the 10 librates in 'Chilteham' lay in that part of the manor called Charlton. Walter was thus a tenant in chief of the king here (for half a knight's fee, we learn later). Now the Book of Fees (I, 51) gives for 1211-13 a list of tenants in chief in Gloucestershire, including Walter who 'tenet xiiij libratas terre de manerio domini regis de Chilt' de dono Comitum Milonis'. This suggests that Miles, who had been one of the Empress Maud's chief supporters, had somehow got hold of the royal manor of Cheltenham during her supremacy and had enfeoffed Walter, his follower, there, and that when

² *Trans. B.G.A.S.*, LII, 151.

³ Baddeley. *History of Cirencester*, 165.

Henry II succeeded to the throne he had taken back the manor, keeping Walter as a tenant in chief. This resumption of demesne land, granted away in Stephen's reign, was a marked feature of the early policy of Becket, the Chancellor. In the Pipe Roll of 28 Henry II (P.R.S. XXXI, 14), we find Walter paying an old debt of 5 marks in recognition of his half fee.

In 1166 all tenants in chief were required to send in to the king a list of their sub-tenants, whether of the old infeudation of Henry I's reign or of the new one of Henry II. Margaret de Bohun, daughter and heiress of Miles of Gloucester and wife of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, gave in her return for this county as follows: 'Carta Margaretae de Boun. Hos milites habet Margareta de Bohun qui fuerunt in tempore Regis Henrici feffati in feodo Milonis Gloucestriae, patris sui, quos tenet in capite de Rege',⁴ *i.e.* old tenants of Henry I's time. Amongst these is Walter de Esselega, who holds one fee. So since Henry I's reign Walter had been a sub-tenant of the de Bohuns somewhere in Gloucestershire, besides being a tenant in chief of the king in Charlton. Thus in the Pipe Roll of 6 Rich. I (P.R.S., N.S. vol. v, 239) Walter appears amongst those 'qui non habent capitales honores in hoc comitatu' *i.e.* as Bohun's sub-tenant, and also in the same roll as a royal tenant in chief. As the de Bohuns held land in Cheltenham of the king until John forced Henry de Bohun in 1200 to surrender the same as price of the confirmation of his earldom of Hereford, it is possible that Walter held this one knight's fee of them on their Cheltenham estates near to his manor of Charlton. Note that after John's reign Walter never appears as a sub-tenant in Gloucestershire; presumably he lost this holding when his patrons lost their Cheltenham lands.

A good deal is known of this Walter de Esselega or Ashley. He was a follower of Miles of Gloucester, Earl

⁴ *Red Book of the Exchequer* (Rolls Series), I, 293. The text in the *Liber Niger* differs slightly.

of Hereford, and Constable, and then of his heirs, the de Bohuns. Walter seems to have come from between Tetbury and Malmesbury on the borders of Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, where probably he himself, and certainly his son, held the manor of Ashley, near Tetbury, of the de Bohuns. In the year that Walter received his lands in Charlton, the king pardoned him 20 pence in Wilts (P.R.S. II, 8), and the only land the family ever held in that county was Ashley. From this place he probably drew his name, though it is often said he got his name from his manor of Ashley in Charlton Kings. Ashley is a tithing of Charlton but the name was never applied to the manor till 1625. Walter held the manor of Charlton, not Ashley, and the whole history of the family shows they had little to do with Charlton beyond owning it.

Walter had married one Felicia de Sancto Claro in Somerset, and on her behalf he waged a long and very successful lawsuit against William de Sancto Claro (Pipe Roll 3 Rich. I, P.R.S., N.S. II, 290), as a result of which he, Walter, gained large estates in south and east Somerset, mostly round Bruton and Wincanton. Chief were Stoke Trister and Cucklington near Wincanton, Swell near Langport, North Perrott near Crewkerne and Ash Brittle near Wellington; these Somerset lands were held for 4 'small fees of Mortain'. These small fees are found in the southwest of England in the Honour of Mortain and were reckoned as five eighths of an ordinary fee. Walter held six similar small fees in Dorset and one whole fee at Wixford in Warwickshire, beside his Wilts and Gloucestershire fees. Altogether a prosperous man but clearly one whose main interests did not lie in Charlton Kings. In fact he was one of the class of knights of the shire, fostered by Henry II: a middle class of landowners whose wealth, tenure and breeding gave them a social position little inferior to that of the barons.

The manor of Charlton was a 'membrum' of the manor of Cheltenham and an inquest of 1246 (Cal. Inq. 30 Henry

III, no. 68 p. 16), shows that it contained 1 virgate (30 acres) in demesne, probably in strips in the common fields, worth with the works 20 shillings a year; also 9 virgates of land in villeinage paying yearly £7 14s 7d with the customs and works of the customary tenants and perquisites, worth £5 5s 5d; total value £14, held by the service of half a knight's fee. This gives an estate of 2½ hides or 300 acres of cultivated land, with pasture besides. The smallness of the demesne shows the owner did not reside here; it was one of a common type of estate, run by a steward or bailiff where the demesne merely served as a rent-collecting centre. The same inquest states that the manor did not pay talliage when the king talliaged his manor of Cheltenham, a fact which, combined with the smallness of the service due, would raise its value considerably. A patent roll of 1266 also mentions the 'free tenants', corresponding to the 'ceorls' of Saxon times (cf. the name 'Charlton', the 'farm of the free men'), free men who enjoyed full folk-right but who had been added by the Normans to some manor for protection or registration and whose rent would be the profit of their 'soc' in the manor courts.

In the year (1159-60) that Walter's land is first mentioned, the roll records Herbert de Maluenon (? Malvern), as holding land in 'Cherleton' to the annual value of 100 shillings; the next year he is succeeded by Bartholomew de Maluenon who holds the same land till 22 Henry II, when Masci de Maluenon takes over for one year and then disappears. It is not clear if this is our Charlton; Walter's estate did not occupy the whole parish, and the de Maluenons may have held what later became the manors of Ham or Northfield in Charlton parish.

Walter seems to have been one of the leading tenants of the de Bohuns. In 1170 he appears as witness on behalf of Humphrey de Bohun when the latter was granted the manor of Bisley in this county by the Earl

of Chester.⁵ Again in 9 Rich. I when Henry de Bohun, Margaret's grandson, succeeded to her lands and had to pay 300 marks relief, the Close Roll gives a list of four earls who each guaranteed 50 marks apiece to the king and also a list of 5 other men who each stood pledge for 20 marks each ; among the latter is Walter de Esselega.

In 1173 Walter paid up an old debt of 5 marks for recognition of his lands incurred soon after Henry II's accession (P.R.S. XXXI, 14). On Richard's accession, Walter owed 40 marks for seisin and confirmation of his 'terra de Cherlinton' (P.R.S., N.S. I, 58), and other money for his wife's fees in Somerset and Dorset, which debts he subsequently paid. In 1195 he died. In the escheats for that year (P.R.S., N.S. VI, 55) the sheriff paid in 66 shillings and one penny for Charlton and 107 shillings and two pence for the Dorset and Somerset lands for a quarter of a year, *i.e.* till his heir succeeded. The Charlton revenues work out at £13 4s 4d a year, very nearly the £14 of the Pipe Rolls.

Walter left a son, also named Walter, and a daughter Mabilia, of whom more later. The son owed 200 marks relief on his lands in Somerset, Dorset and Gloucestershire (P.R.S., N.S. VI, 234) ; his guarantor was William de Braose, nephew of his father's old patroness, Margaret. Two years later Walter paid the debt. He had married a lady, Godeheut, otherwise unknown but possibly one of the coheiresses of Henry son of Richard, lord of Weston in Dorset and Charlton Adam and other lands in Somerset.

As Walter did service for his Stoke Trister and Cucklington lands in person,⁶ he probably lived there or thereabouts and he appears several times as witness in the Bruton cartularies. He also was employed locally on various inquests and other royal service ; in the Book of Fees in 1211-13 he appears as tenant in chief in each of the three counties named above.

⁵ Stenton, *English Feudalism*, 257-8.

⁶ *Book of Fees*, Aid for 1212, p. 81.

In 1216, at the very end of John's reign, many moderate men in disgust had joined Louis of France against John. Evidently Walter was one of them as in that year⁷ the sheriffs of Somerset, Wilts, Gloucestershire and Warwickshire (and doubtless Dorset also), were ordered to seize his lands. Ralph de Langetot took over Charlton into the king's hands. John died 19 October 1216, and his son, Henry III, aged 9, was crowned on 28 October at Gloucester, with William the Marshal as regent. In November a great council was held at Bristol, Magna Carta was confirmed, and most moderate men who had joined Louis came back to the side of the infant Henry against whom no crime could be, as yet, alleged. Clearly Walter was one of these repentant rebels as in 1217 (Pat. Rolls Henry III, 1216-25, p. 67), he got a safe conduct for eight days to come to William the Marshal. In the same year Walter 'returned to the King's Peace' and the various sheriffs were ordered to return his lands to him.⁸ In 1218 the sheriff of Gloucestershire was also ordered to give him back any talliage taken of the manor of Charlton when the king talliaged Cheltenham.⁹ This immunity from talliage has been mentioned above.

For the rest of his life Walter served the king in various ways, as his father had done. Thus in 1225¹⁰ with three other knights he escorted the sheriff of Somerset with the county taxes to Winchester. In 1227 the young king declared himself of age and said that all private charters granted in his minority were invalid and needed reconfirmation; consequently in 1230 Walter paid 10 marks for confirmation of his manor of Charlton 'which King Henry, grandfather of our Lord the King, had granted to Walter de Esselega, his father, by charter'.^{10*} In 1230 also Henry was raking up old debts; Walter was found

⁷ Close Roll (1833), I, 264 (b), 305 (a).

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 314 (a).

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 349 (a).

¹⁰ *Ibid.* II, 73b.

^{10*} *Excerpta è Rot. Finium* (1835), I, 197.

to owe 28 marks for 'prestita', money advanced for war-like equipment, in John's reign. Walter paid up 5 marks and was ordered to pay the rest by annual payments of 5 marks. He also fought in France and paid the Aid of 1235-6 to marry the king's sister to the emperor.¹¹

In 1245 Walter died and his I.P.M. reveals the various details of the manor of Charlton noted above.

At this time Charlton appears several times in the Pleas for the Crown of 5 Henry III, 1221.¹² Under the Hundred of Cheltenham we read:—'John, son of Abraham of Charlton fled to the Church and confessed he was a robber and abjured the Realm. Two unknown men were found killed in the fields of Homme (*i.e.* Ham); it was not known who they were or who killed them; verdict two murders. Will. le Messer who found them is dead'. At the same time one Thomas of Charlton figures with some Dowdeswell men in a case of treasure trove. They had found a 'golden penny' at Dowdeswell, which they had sold to one Alice. Alice says the sheriff has got the coin.

On the death of Walter II of Ashley, without children, his lands passed to his sister Mabilia, aged 50 'or as some say' 60.¹³ She had married Richard Revel, sheriff of Devon in John's reign and lord of Langport and Curry Rivel in Somerset, and so had brought all the Ashley and St. Clair lands to the Revels. She had been a widow since 1222 and lived on till 1252. She left an only daughter and heiress, Sabinia, who married one Henry de Ortiaco or de Lortay, head of a family at Pitney Lorty nearby, who had been employed in the royal service much as the Ashleys and Revels. Henry and Sabinia left five sons who do not concern us; to them eventually, on Mabilia's death, all the Ashley-St. Clair-Revel lands passed except Charlton, which never belonged either to Sabinia or the Lortays for the following reason. Beside sons the Lortays

¹¹ *Book of Fees*, I, 440.

¹² Maitland, *Select Pleas*, 49 f. 13. Cal. I.P.M., 30 Henry III, 16.

had one daughter, Petronilla, and on her marriage to William le Marescal before 1252¹⁴ her grandmother, the old Mabilia gave Petronilla as her dowry the manor of Charlton, which thus escaped the Lortays. Fosbrooke,¹⁵ says that on Petronilla's death Charlton passed to the Lortays: 'Adam de Smethley holding one mess. and two virg. at Ashley, 5 Edw. II. of Henr. de L'Orthey, by 7s per ann'. As a matter of fact the reference, which comes from Inq. ad quod damnum 5 Edw. II, no. 67, adds that Henry de l'Orthey held the land of the abbey of Kingswood, which shows that the Ashley in question is that Ashley near Tetbury, the original home of the Ashley family (*supra*) and not Charlton, which was not called Ashley till 1625. The Lortay property is fully known from various inquests and Charlton does not appear.

William le Marescal was a man of some importance and a member of the great Earl Marshal's family. His father John was son of Anselm, a younger brother of William, Earl Marshal and regent. John was Baron of Hengham in Norfolk; escheator and sheriff of Somerset and Dorset; his lands had passed to his elder son, John, and on John's death childless, to John's younger brother, William, who now married Petronilla. Amongst other lands William had inherited the manor of Haselberry Plucknett near Crewkerne which his father, John, had illegally seized.¹⁶ Here William would be a near neighbour of the Lortays. Petronilla must have died childless and William retained Charlton 'by the courtesy of England'. Before 1264 he had married again a very highly placed lady, Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Robert (IV) de Ferrers, Earl of Derby by his first wife, Marie of Angoulême, niece of Henry III. Elizabeth brought William Folsham in Norfolk and Norton in Northants. He played a prominent

¹⁴ Cal. I.P.M. 54 Henry III, p. 242.

¹⁵ *Gloucestershire*, II, 376.

¹⁶ Pat. Roll 51 Henry III, 1266-72, p. 66.

part in the internal troubles of the reign on the baronial side, like his cousin, William de Monchensi, Lord of Painswick. William le Marescal was one of the barons' representatives at the Mise of Amiens and was captured at Northampton in April 1264, dying or being executed soon after. His lands escheated to the Crown as a rebel and next year John Giffard the Lord of Brimpsfield, a repentant rebel and therefore a man of weight, took over into the king's hands the lands of many rebels in the county; in the Hundred of Cheltenham he took over¹⁷ 'the land of William le Marschall in Cherleton', worth £15 a year with a Michaelmas rent of 30 shillings. These lands were put into the custody of Will Wyberd and Will Juvene.

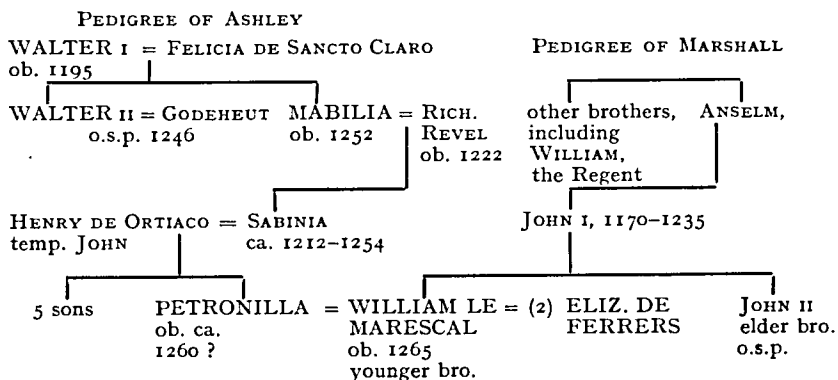
Charlton was soon granted by the king to Roger de Pedwarden, a Herefordshire man and a follower of the royalist, Roger Mortimer, but the grant was cancelled and part of Charlton together with part of Norton in Northants was given for humanity to Elizabeth, William's widow, for life.¹⁸ Elizabeth was to hold a quarter of the manor of Charlton as a free tenement, consisting of 60 acres of the demesne, a quarter of the rent of the free tenants, a quarter of the lands of the villeins with all their rents, services and customs and one-third of the whole pasturage. Her share is extended at £4 16s 11*d*, the value of the whole estate being £16 12s 6*d*.

Soon after Elizabeth married again, this time to the Welsh Prince, David, brother of Llewellyn, Prince of Gwynedd, and probably on this occasion Charlton was taken over again by the Crown. At any rate in 1270 an inquest was held in Cheltenham, touching the manor of Charlton and the finding was that the manor had been given in free marriage to Petronilla la Marechale as her own dowry and did not belong to William, her husband. Such an inquest would seem to show that the descendants of

¹⁷ Inquis. Misc. 49 Henry III, 1265, 1, 209.

¹⁸ Patent Roll, 50 Henry III, 1266, p. 602.

William were claiming the manor and such a finding would clearly favour the rejection of their claim. In 1278 an agreement¹⁹ was arrived at between Elizabeth and David her husband on the one hand and John le Marescal, elder son of Elizabeth by her first husband, William le Marescal, as to her dowry, and Charlton does not figure in the division of property nor does it appear in John le Marescal's I.P.M.²⁰



(Names of lords of the manor are in capitals)

Some years later the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1 Edw. III, 1327, gives in the list of those who paid the subsidy in the Hundred of Cheltenham the names of 44 people who paid the tax in 'Cherleton cum Homme et Nortfeld'. The latter two places are two small manors in the north part of Charlton parish. Among the 44 names we note those of Forty, Whithorne and Goodrich, which still survive.

Nothing is heard of Charlton for 131 years. Various documents in the Close Rolls of 1234 and 1364-8 speak of certain members of the great family of Mortimer as

¹⁹ Close Roll, Edward I, 1272-9, p. 491.

²⁰ Inquis. Edward I, vol. II, p. 471.

holding, *inter alia*, the manor of Charlton, and the editors identify it with our village, but one document speaks of it as 'Charlton by Tetbury', showing it to be another manor of that name.

At last in 10 Rich. II, 1386-7,²¹ we learn that John de Ros, knight, son of James de Ros, knight, of Gednay in Lincolnshire, sold his 'manor of Charlton by Cheltenham' to William Grevel of Campden and he instructed his agents, Thomas Bradewelle and Thomas Cole to transfer it. The family of Ros of Gednay and Wyville (Lincs.) were a branch of the great Yorkshire and Lincolnshire family of Ros of Hamlake, but how they got Charlton is quite unknown. In the I.P.M. of Robert de Ros of Gednay,²² father of Sir James de Ros, there is no mention of any lands in Gloucestershire and so the acquisition of the manor must be posterior to this date.

After the purchase of Charlton by William Grevill another long period of uncertainty sets in, but at length a little light appears. The Heralds' Visitation of Gloucestershire in 1623 contains the pedigree of Grevill of Charlton Kings, which family is traced back to one 'Richard Grevill of Lymington, co. Glouc.'. The same pedigree is repeated in the later Visitation of 1682-83, but at the beginning of this Richard is given as son of John, about whom there are no further details; also 'Sir Edw. Grevill of Charlton Kings, temp. H.8' is inserted without however being definitely connected with anybody. Now Fosbrooke, writing of Charlton,²³ after tracing the earlier descent of the manor to William Grevill, has the following, which he bases on title deeds in the Prinn MSS and which is presumably based on Prinn's own investigations:—'Sir Edm. Tame married Agnes, d. of Sir Will. Greville, and aliened to Westby, in exchange

²¹ Close Roll, 1385-9, p. 319.

²² Cal. Inquis. Edward II, vol. v, no. 252.

²³ *Gloucestershire*, II, 376.

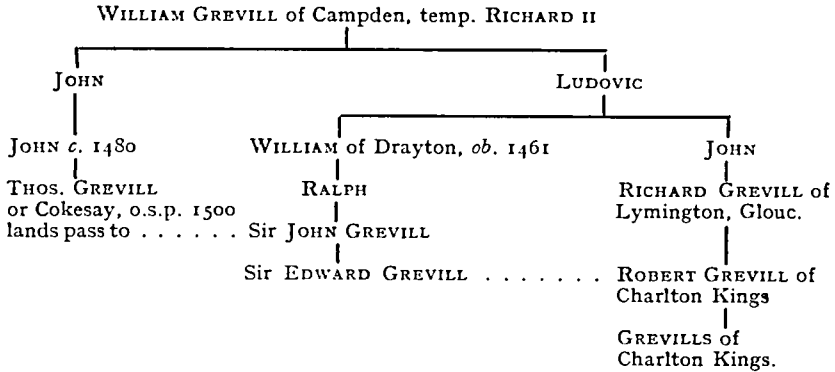
for Rendcombe, who aliened to Sir Edw. Greville, who aliened to —Wells, who aliened to John Palmer, who married Mary, d. of Judge Grevill, of Arle, who aliened in 1542, to Rob. Greville who was fath. of Francis'. Robert was the son of Richard Grevill, founder of the Charlton branch of Grevill according to the two Visitations. Commenting on Fosbrooke's statement we note first that on William Grevill's death, his property descended through his eldest son, John, from father to son down to Thomas Grevill or Cokesay, who died childless in 1500. The family lands then went to Sir John Grevill of Drayton, representative of William Grevill's younger son, Ludovic, and from John to his elder son, Sir Edward Grevill. Edward was a well known military figure, knighted in 1513 and died in 1529. His elder daughter, Agnes, married Sir Edmund Tame, son of John Tame of Fairford and lord of Rendcombe and Dowdeswell manors, *inter alia*, both near Charlton. Clearly this is the Edward Grevill of the pedigrees and we may suppose then that Charlton descended to him in the usual line of descent. Dugdale²⁴ states that John Grevill grandson of William, lived at Charlton till he obtained Milcote (the family seat). As for the others named by Fosbrooke I cannot trace Westby; the name of Wells is common in the district at the time but we cannot identify the particular holder. The Visitation of 1623 gives the pedigree of Palmer, the founder of which, John Palmer, was born at Charlton and married Mary, daughter of William Grevill, the judge, as Fosbrooke says. Bigland has much the same story.²⁵ Fosbrooke says that Richard Grevill, who finally obtained the estate, was son of John, younger son of Ludovic Grevill and this agrees with the pedigree in the Visitation of 1682-3. His home, Lymington, is now called Lemmington near Campden and has the memorials of two later Grevills. Richard may be the

²⁴ *Warwickshire*, p. 530.

²⁵ *Gloucestershire*, 1, 299.

person mentioned in the Patent Roll 10 May 1499 (*Calendar, 1494-1509*, p. 173), which states that Thos. Lygon, Richard Grevill and William Grevill enfeoffed John (father of Sir Edward Grevill), of Milcote.

A skeleton pedigree of the earlier Grevills may make things clearer.



Richard's eldest son, Robert, married Margaret, daughter and heiress of John of Arle, whereby he obtained the Arle Court property on the other side of Cheltenham. Robert's younger brother, William, became a well known judge of Common Pleas and his brass is in Cheltenham parish church; William lived at Arle Court while the elder brother, Robert, lived at Charlton. Robert Grevill was followed by Francis, then came Giles, then another Francis and four more Giles, all equally obscure, down to 1682. The second Giles is named as lord of the manor in the Act of 1 August 1625,²⁶ settling the rights of the copyholders of the manor of Cheltenham with its 'member' Charlton. He was also fined £10 for not taking knight-hood at the coronation of Charles I.²⁷ Sir Robert Atkyns²⁸

²⁶ Norman, *Hist. of Cheltenham*, ed. by Goding, 48-9.

²⁷ *Trans. B.G.A.S.*, ix, 352.

²⁸ *Glostershire (1712)*, 328, misprinted 'Parker'.

says that in 1608 Arthur Packer (Bigland says 'Walter') was joint lord with Giles. There is an inquisition (12 June 1610) of Arthur Packer, lord of the manor of Ham (the north part of the parish of Charlton, 'situate in Hame, Charlton Kings and Cheltenham', and held of the king as of his manor of Cheltenham'.^{28*} These Packers were a branch of Packer of Cheltenham. Another inquisition,²⁹ dated 1638, is of Alexander Packer, seemingly son of Arthur. He held Ham and Northfield (also in the parish of Charlton) of John Dutton, lord of the manor of Cheltenham; Alexander's wife was Rose Grevill, one of the sisters of Giles Grevill, and this may be what Atkyns refers to.

Other Charlton families whose pedigrees are recorded are Goodrige (*i.e.* Goodrich, a name which goes back to the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327), Brereton, Atkins, Cartwright and Whithorne. We may note that these same heralds rejected the claims of Richard Pates of 'Carlton Regis' to bear arms and declared him to be 'no gentilman'.

The Act of 1625 mentioned above is interesting in that for the first time in history we hear of the manor of 'Ashley or Charlton Kings'. Hitherto we have always read of the manor of Charlton Kings. Whether the two names connote the same property is not clear; at any rate Ashley manor is identified with Charlton Park. Atkyns³⁰ notes that 'Ashley is holden of the Mannor of Cheltenham, and within the same Mannor, but does not take in and comprehend all the Town of Charleton, but one Tithing thereof, which is called Ashley Tithing; and the Tithings of Charleton and Bafford in Charleton, are parcels of the Mannor of Cheltenham distinct from Ashley'. So too Bigland.³¹ Certain volumes of surrenders of the manor of Ashley, dating from 1696 to 1860, now in

^{28*} Gloucs. I.P.M., Charles I, pt. 1, p. 148.

²⁹ *Ibid.* Misc. Ser. 1625-42, p. 119.

³⁰ *Gloucestershire* (1712), 328.

³¹ *Gloucestershire*, 1, 299.

the Cheltenham public library, seem to deal with lands all over the parish of Charlton, except Ham and Northfield which were separate manors. There were however parcels of the manor of Cheltenham, scattered all over the manor of Charlton (*vide infra*).

Charlton church followed the lot of Cheltenham. The chantry of St. Mary had been held by a priest, William Hall, and in 1551 on its suppression he had been pensioned off with ten shillings a year, his old salary.³² The grant of the chantry to Sir Thomas Bell of Gloucester and Richard Duke of London,³³ is interesting as giving a full list of lands belonging to the church with their names, in all 13 acres of arable and pasture and half an acre of wood. The names are Ulcome, Strode, Whitefurlong, Goldfynche, Fremansbroke, Swymplow, Hobechefeld, Balsegrove and Stannotforde and most of these still remain. They were valued at ten shillings a year, which was used for the priest's stipend. There was also half an acre of land in Naunton's field to maintain 'a tap[er] to burne for ever', worth sixpence a year, and a stock of cattle worth 37 shillings for a certain light in the church; plate and jewels none.³⁴

Sir Charles Wager, a fairly distinguished admiral of the 17th century (1666-1743) is often said to have been born at Wager's Court in East End. There was certainly a family of that name here but there is no evidence whatever to connect them with Sir Charles, whose family came from the southeast of England. Fosbrooke is responsible for this statement.

In 1697 Giles Grevill, last of the name, sold the manor to Edward Michell. He appears to be the 'Edward Michell, gent' of the Cheltenham registers, born 1644 and married twice, otherwise quite unknown. In 1716 Michell

³² *Trans. B.G.A.S.* XLIX, 105.

³³ Patent Roll, 2 Edward VI, 1548-9, p. 41.

³⁴ *Trans. B.G.A.S.* VIII, 283.

sold the manor to John Prinn, the famous Gloucestershire antiquary. The family of Prynne came from Kinder-ton, Salop (*Visitation of Worcestershire*, 1569). Later several of the Prynnes went south to Bristol and appear in the visitation as 'marchants of Bristow'; one rose to local fame as Sir Gilbert Prynne (ob. 1627) of Alington, Wilts, and Fosbrooke, basing himself presumably on Prinn's own notes, says that Prinn came from this branch. John was not however the first of the family to settle in the Cheltenham district; the registers³⁵ of the town have a 'William Prynne, gent' who died and was buried in the parish church in 1680, aged 61, and John Prinn (who changed the spelling of the name) may have been his son. His grave in Charlton church shows him as being born in 1661.³⁶ In 1692 John is said (by Goding) to have bought land in the High street, Cheltenham. The same writer says that in 1690 he was steward of the manor of Cheltenham, and he signs as of the Inner Temple. From the surrenders above mentioned we learn that John Prinn the elder, as he is called, had a son and heir, also John, clerk, and of the Inner Temple, who was born according to his stone in Charlton church in 1686. The two Prinns seem to have already started early to buy land in Charlton and frequently appear as witnesses and customary tenants in the surrenders. They continued throughout their lives to buy in all directions. By 1712 the younger John had married one Katherine. In 1716 John Prinn the elder bought the manor, and several of his courts baron rolls survive. He always signs as 'Jno Prinn' while his son is 'John Prinn junior'. The next year the latter lost his wife, Katherine; the third of the Prinn lords, William, seems to have been their son, born in 1713. The elder Prinn died on 26 February 1734, aged 73, and was buried in Charlton church. The manor passed to the younger John

³⁵ Gloucs. Parish Registers, VII.

³⁶ For the two first Prinns see Bigland, *loc. cit.* I, 316 f.

who held it till his death in 1743, aged 57, leaving a widow, Mary. (These later dates are from Glouc. Parish Registers, vol. III, and from mural tablets in the south transept of Charlton church). The next lord, William, was presumably a son of the younger John and married Elizabeth Rider, and had an only child, Elizabeth. He died in 1784, the last of the real Prinns, having, it is said, handed over the manor of Ashley with his daughter, Elizabeth, on her marriage in Aug. 1771 to Dodington Hunt of the Inner Temple, otherwise unknown. Next year she died, leaving a son, William Hunt, who took the additional name of Prinn. Dodington Hunt was lord till his death in 1803, when William Hunt Prinn succeeded him, dying in 1821, aged 42. His widow, Hester, became lady of the manor for one year and died next year when the manor passed by will to a cousin, Col. George Bragge Prowse of Yeovil, who took the name of Prinn. In Dec. 1838 he died, leaving all to his widow, Jane Eliza, now lady of the manor. She re-married a widower, the first Sir William Russell, bart., a distinguished London medical man and F.R.S. She bore him a son, the second Sir William Russell. After her second husband's death, she married once more in 1841 but ten years later (1851) she transferred the manor to her son. He had a distinguished career in the army both in the Crimea and in India and took a prominent part in local politics, but eventually got into financial difficulties and about 60 years ago sold the manor to its present holders, the Brasseys.

Two interesting points emerge from a study of the volumes of surrenders above mentioned.

First we find clear traces of the old common-field system surviving as late as 1860. Certain large fields are divided into selions, ridges, butts or lands; these are the strips into which the common fields were divided formerly (note that one of these fields still in 1860 retains the name of Lilley Common Field); usually in former days these strips were one or half an acre in extent but in Charlton

Kings they are of varying sizes. They lay side by side with a balk of turf to divide them, each being normally in different ownership; usually a man owned several strips lying scattered about a field. Typical cases are:— ‘ One acre consisting of four ridges in a certain field called Bareland, being ye second, seventh, eleventh and fifteenth ridges from ye Parish ground of Charlton Kings’ (in 1707); or in the same year ‘ all his arable land in Castlefield lying dispersedly’. Again a certain man owns ‘ seven selions in the tithing of Naunton–Westall–Sandford, *viz.* the 39th from Whitecrossfurlong, lying west of Naunton Elms, the 32nd and 33rd selions, part of a headland shooting on Nolty Brook, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd selions in the middle length and the 7th selion in the furlong parallel to the brook’.

Sometimes however a man owns a block of such strips: ‘ Four lands lying together in Lyefield’, and such cases become commoner as time goes on.

The small piece lying across the end of a group of strips and giving access to them was a headland; ‘ a headland in Lilleyfield, heading a parcel of short butts’.

But people had begun to enclose their blocks of strips; in 1711 we read ‘ all those two ridges of arable land in a field called Ryeworth and now enclosed together with other land of the said Will. Goodrich’. By 1860 however the system had begun to decay; we hear of a piece of land in Ryeworth field, ‘ part of the ends of two selions’, *i.e.* the selions were beginning to be cut crossways into blocks.

Fields containing such strips were:—

1. Coltham Fields at the west end of the parish along the London Road.
2. Ryeworth fields.
3. Charlton Lower Field at the east end of the village from the Herne to East End.
4. At Moorend were Moorbutts, Needlesbutts and Knavenhill.

5. The Lyefields, between the church and the Chelt.
6. Lilley Common Field, along one side of which ran the Layeshedge (this field was exactly the first half of the first hole and the last half of the ninth hole on the Lilleybrook links).
7. Flaxley under Detmore.
8. Upend Croft where Croft road now runs.
9. Pennybreach near the last.
10. Bareland or Barsland somewhere near the church.
11. Hempcroft Breach.

It is curious to note that some of these strips might belong to another manor. Thus near Ravensgate, 'Nift-nage on Horshill' is parcel of Cheltenham manor while the surrounding strips are in Charlton manor. Many such cases occur, notably in Flaxley.

The second point that emerges from the same surrenders is the growth of the two main roads in the parish, *viz.* the London and Cirencester roads. To take the London road first. About 1700 a road came from Cheltenham along the line of the present road as far as where Holy Apostles church now is. Here, keeping right along Cudnall street at the top of which it turned half right down Spring Bottom, it reached the present East End road and followed this to Wager's Court and then turned right past Balcarras round to Coxhorne and up the hill past Castle Barn to Kilkenny.

One writer³⁷ calls it a good summer bridle road and says that people from London usually left the London to Gloucester coach at Frogmill near Andoversford and then rode down our road to Cheltenham.

Shortly before 1786 the present London turnpike road was formed, still however *via* Cudnall Street and thence along the present line from Six Ways to the foot of Dowdeswell Hill where it climbed up to Frogmill.

³⁷ *A Tour to Cheltenham Spaw in 1782.*

These roads can be seen on the tithe map of Charlton Kings made by Thos. Billings in 1803.

In 1825 the Cudnall street section was given up for the modern loop forking left at Holy Apostles and at the foot of Dowdeswell Hill a new road was made as now *via* Whittington to Andoversford, avoiding the steep climb up the hill.

As to the Cirencester road, formerly a lane left Cudnall street and crossed Cudnall bridge where it turned right to the manor house at Charlton Park ; from there it went across the park into what is now Newcourt road, and then along the modern line of the road to Lilleybrook ; here it went up Timbercombe lane after meeting Little Herberts road from the village and proceeded as Ravensgate lane up onto the London-Gloucester road at Chatcomb Pitch. In 1848 we hear of this ' common road or highway ' for the last time ; by 1852 it has been replaced by a new turnpike road, the modern Cirencester road, which left the old road at Cudnall Bridge and went nearly in a straight line across the Lyefield to Lilley Brook and then, leaving the old road up Timbercombe lane on the left, went straight up the Lilley Brook valley to Seven Springs.