

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

The Bray Family in Gloucestershire

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1933, Vol. 55, 293-315

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THE BRAY FAMILY IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

by REV. A. L. BROWNE, M.A.

WHEN the Plantagenets under the kindly but feeble Henry VI finally failed to implement a claim to the French crown, and with France no longer available for military adventure, English nobles and knights diverted their energies to killing one another at home in the Wars of the Roses. With the close of that bitter strife and the coming of a fresh dynasty in the person of Henry Tudor, a way was opened for capable and ambitious men of the middle class to found new groups of landed gentry. Such were the political and social conditions which conduced to the advancement of Reginald (or Reynold) Bray, son of a Worcester surgeon[1]*, who, like Robert Burnel, the famous Chancellor of Edward I, built up a fortune in manors and lands to the ultimate profit of nephews and nieces. Of this man, founder of the family fortunes, much has been written, so for present purposes it will suffice to note that endowed with the temper and mentality of a diplomat, the success of the Red Rose was more than a little due to his skilful negotiations with Morton, bishop of Ely and other notabilities. Thus when Bosworth was fought to a finish, this wise, discreet and well-witted man reaped a rich reward.

Sir Reginald Bray, K.G., K.B. [3] had married Katharine (the faithful friend and attendant of that unhappy lady Elizabeth of York) the younger daughter of Nicholas Hussey,¹ lord of Harting, Sussex, and dying s.p. in 1503

* The numbers within brackets refer to names in the pedigrees.

¹ His forbears held the Gloucestershire manors of Sapperton and Great Rissington between 1234 and 1439.

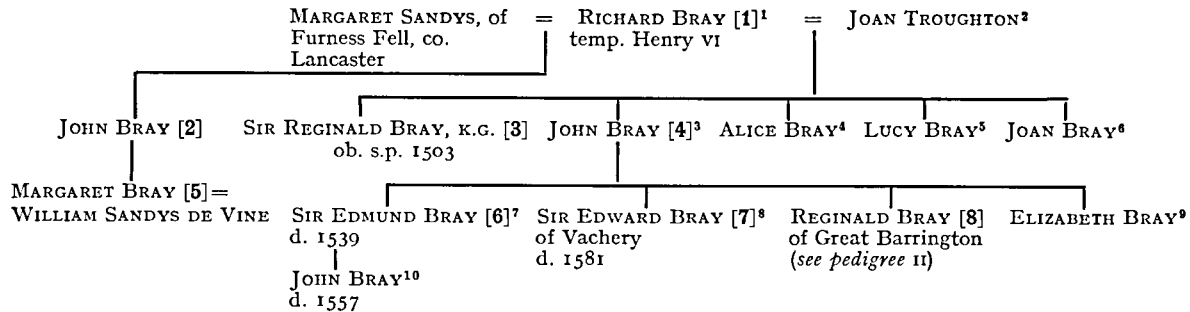
was buried at St. George's Windsor. By will² dated 4 August 1503 he demised his manors 'except such as my wife hath for life (to) be estated on my nephew Edmund [6], son of my brother John Bray [4], and his heirs, when he cometh to the age of twenty-one years . . . with remainder to my niece Margery [5] wife of Sir William Sandys,³ knt., and the heirs of her body'. It is commonly assumed that Margery Sandys was a principal beneficiary under the will, but an investigation of its terms does not allow such inference, and any expectation the Sandys may have, and no doubt had, entertained would be quickly dissipated when Sir Reginald's disposition of his estates became known. An acrimonious wrangle then ensued between the sons of John Bray [4], uterine brother of the testator on the one part, and the husband of Margery only child of John [2], half-brother of Sir Reginald on the other part. The feud persisted until the accession of Henry VIII, with whom Sir William Sandys proved *persona grata*, when the dispute was submitted to the arbitration of William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor, Sir John Fineose, L.C.J. of the King's Bench, and Sir Robert Rede, C.J. of the Common Pleas. The award of the arbitrators set forth in a document dated 4 May 1510 proved advantageous to Sir William Sandys and his lady.

While the bulk of Sir Reginald's acquisitions were willed to his eldest nephew Edmund [6], created Lord Bray in 1529, ample provision was made for the younger nephews Sir Edward Bray [7] of Vachery (Surrey) and Reginald [8] of Northmoor, Oxfordshire, progenitor of a branch of the Bray family which ultimately settled in Gloucestershire. With an eldest brother under age in 1503, the last named must have been but young when as

² P.C.C. Blamey, 26.

³ Second son of Sir William by Edith daughter of Sir John Cheyney, held the manor of Great Rissington in 1510; ob. 1541.

BRAY PEDIGREE (I)



NOTES

¹ Only one wife and five children were commemorated on his monument in Worcester cathedral. The inscription is given by Leland (*Itinerary*, Hearne's ed. VIII, 106) as 'Richard Bray, armiger, pater Reginald Bray, fuit medicus, ut quidam ferunt, Henrici 6'. ² Joan was buried at Trinity church, Guildford. Sir Reginald bequeathed £200 for masses and prayers for the souls of his father and mother.

³ John, uterine brother of Sir Reginald, buried at Chelsea.

⁴ 'Alice my sister, wife of Richard Hyde'. (Will of Sir Reginald).

⁵ Lucy married (A) Richard Andrews, of Fryfolk manor (Hants, by whom she had issue. Grant to Sir Thomas Wriothesley, of wardship and marriage of Katharine, Constance, and Ursula, daughters and co-heirs of Richard 'and where it is supposed that Katharine widow of the said Richard was *enceinte* and may yet bear issue by him, the said Wriothesley is to have the wardship and marriage of such issue'. (*Letters and Papers*, Henry VIII, 1542, XVII, 567 (51). (B) Roger Walwyn. (Visitation of Bedfordshire, Harleian Society).

⁶ Joan married Isaac ap Rees of Washingley, Northants (*ibid.*). Their monument in the chancel of Luddington in the Wold church has a long inscription (taken from Brydges, *Northants*, II, 466) of which the following is part:—

Piae Memoriae Roberti Aprece . . . cui Pater Nobilis Wallus, mater Johanna Soror Reginaldi Bray, Millis. et a secretis consiliis Henrico 7.

⁷ Edmund, created lord Bray 1529, married Jane daughter and heir of Richard Haligwell; died 1539, buried with his father at Chelsea.

⁸ Ancestor of the Brays of Shere.

⁹ Elizabeth married Sir John Norris, knt. (Visitation, Bedfordshire).

¹⁰ John, 2nd lord Bray o.s.p. 1557. The barony then fell into abeyance between his six sisters. Revived in 1839.

the record runs ' Master Bray kinsman of Reginald Bray, knt.', was admitted in 1505, ' a member generally of the Middle Temple '.⁴ A later entry in 1519, which registers the admission of Reginald Bray to the ' clerks commons ', justifies an inference that the Master Bray of 1505 and the Reginald of 1519 were one and the same person. He then disappears from the records until his appointment in 1550 as a collector in Bedfordshire of the third relief granted to Edward VI, in which county he appears to have settled and where⁵ he married Ann [9] daughter and heir of Richard Monington, lord of Great Barrington, by Elizabeth his wife. Of this Richard Monnington the identity is obscure. The Monningtons⁶ settled at Sarnesfield, co. Hereford, from 1340 onwards and though each generation appears to have its own Richard, neither of the two bearing the name at this period can safely be identified with the purchaser of lands in Great Barrington in 1542. But that he belonged to the family can be inferred from Sir Giles Bray quartering on his seal the arms of the Monningtons of Sarnesfield.

At the dissolution of Llanthony abbey, the monastic manors of Great and Little Barrington were appropriated by Henry VIII, who in 1540 exchanged with Sir John Guise⁷ of Elmore, the manors of the two Barringtons and Brockworth for that of Apsley Guise in co. Bedford.⁸ The annual rent of the three estates is given as £51 16s 3d,

⁴ Middle Temple Records, vol. 1, by C. H. Hopwood, Q.C. A student if admitted 'generally' paid a fee of 5 marcs, if 'specially' £5. Dugdale's Orig. Jur. p. 201.

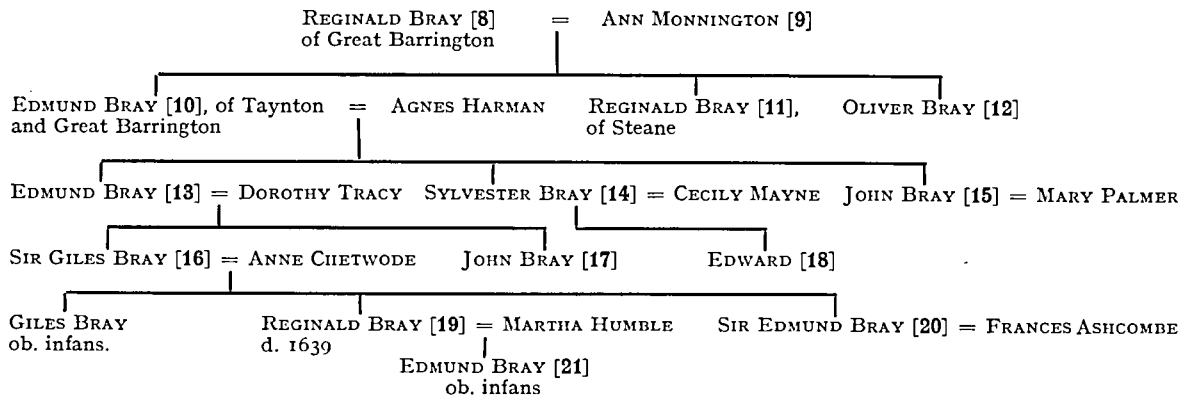
⁵ Rawlinson MSS in the Bodleian Library, B. 429, f. 83. 'Reginald Bray married a daughter of Monins co. Bedford'. Also Harl. Society vol. XIX, Visitation of Bedfordshire.

⁶ *Genealogist*, XII.

⁷ Sir John aged 16 on succeeding his father Sir John of Apsley Guise, after purchasing Brockworth he there resided until his death 20 December 1556. Anselm his son and heir died s.p. 9 May 1563.

⁸ Patent Roll.

BRAY PEDIGREE (II)



Daughters not given in the pedigree are referred to in the text

being the estimated difference in the yearly value of the lands exchanged. The Guise lordship however proved of short duration. In 1542 Sir John and Richard Monnington obtained a pardon for conveying ' without licence lands held in chief, i.e. one messuage with a water-mill⁹ called Woodesmyll and a close called Doddes-close in the lordship of Magna Barrington '. The sale of these parcels was but a step preliminary to Monnington's acquisition of the manors, in association with his son-in-law Reginald Bray. On 1 February 1553 to ' John and Ancelm Gyse ' leave was granted authorizing the sale of the lordship of Great and Little Barrington¹⁰ in Gloucestershire and Berkshire ' . . . and all their lands in the same with fishery rights, free warren and view of frankpledge to Richard Monnington, gent., Reynold Bray esq., and his wife Alice (? Ann) and their heirs and assigns '. By this transaction, which excluded the advowson retained by the Crown, the youngest nephew of Sir Reginald Bray became established among the landowning gentry of Gloucestershire. From Barrington parish register¹¹ we learn of Richard Monnington's burial on 4 July 1557 and that of his wife on 4 October 1553, while the Bray monument in Great Barrington church records the interment of Reginald at Taynton, but with the fact unnoted in the register of that parish a precise date cannot be quoted for his death. That he died before 1567 is clear from evidence to be presented hereafter, and had left three sons, Edmund [10] the heir, Reginald [11] of Hinton Steane, and possibly the elusive Oliver Bray [12].

REGINALD BRAY [11] may be identifiable with an undergraduate of that name who from co. Bedford

⁹ The old water-mill known today as Doddesmill exists in ruins.

¹⁰ Barrington Park, vicarage and some of the houses in the village was formerly a Berkshire islet in Gloucestershire.

¹¹ For access to the Barrington and Taynton registers, thanks are due to the Rev. G. R. Parkinson, M.A. who holds the parishes in plurality.

matriculated at Corpus Christi, Oxford in 1552 (Foster's *Alumni Oxon.*). After leaving Oxford he was admitted to the Middle Temple on 24 May 1560, and was deprived of his chamber and fined 20s in December 1568-9 'for not being in commons one month last year, a negligence repaired by payment of a 45s fine to secure "the chambers of Messers Greaves and Spachurst in expectancy"', *i.e.*, in reservation. Called to 'le Utter Barre' (the outer Bar) in 1574 he became qualified to practice in court,¹² and his arms, gu. 3 bendlets vair, are to be seen in the fifth window of the hall of the Inn.¹³ To Reginald was demised the manor of Steane in the parish of Woodford, Northants, which his father acquired from William, Lord Sandys, husband of Margaret Bray.¹⁴ He died 18 October 26 Elizabeth, leaving five daughters co-heirs.

OLIVER BRAY [12], is difficult to place in the Bray pedigree. He is mentioned as a godparent with Reynold and Ann Bray at a baptism in Great Barrington church on 25 August 1558, and designated 'brother of Reginald Braie' in a fine executed by Edmund his eldest brother in 1567-8, a designation which seems to give him a place amongst the sons of Reginald Bray and Ann Monnington. He was possibly father of the Michael Bray, mentioned as a tenant of Taynton in an indenture (M.T. 3 Jas 1), who married Katharine, an elder daughter of Sir Richard Chetwode and was slain in Gray's Inn by John Skeffington.¹⁵

'EDMUND BRAY [10] and Agnes Harman were married on the Monday being the 23 day of October, 1559'. So runs the entry of the marriage of this great-nephew of Sir Edmund Bray, K.G., in Taynton register, an Oxfordshire parish situated between the two Barringtons and

¹² M.T. Records, vol. 1, p. 202.

¹³ Middle Temple Bench Book, by A. R. Ingpen.

¹⁴ Chancery Proceedings, undated, temp. Eliz. W, w. 2 no. 17.

¹⁵ *Herald and Genealogist*, ser 2, 1.

Burford where a small priory or hospital dedicated to St. John the Divine, under the rule of Austin Canons, had been established. At the dissolution of the Order its properties in Burford, excluding bells, leads and advowsons, were acquired by John Barker of London,¹⁶ and by him conveyed in 1543 with the manor of Fifehide *alias* Fyfold¹⁷, and lands in Widford, Sherburn and those within the tithing of Rissington for £196 6s *od*¹⁸ to the king's surgeon Edmund Harman, allied to a noted burgher family in Burford by his marriage to Agnes Sylvester. Among the many benefactions Henry VIII conferred on his surgeon was the manor and advowson of Taynton, a parcel of the suppressed monastery of Tewkesbury. After the king's death Harman appears to have settled at Taynton and on 10 April 1577 he 'lord of the manor' was buried there.¹⁹ That a numerous progeny was born to his marriage is clear from a monument still at Burford church, bearing an inscription evidently drawn up by Harman himself. John, the eldest surviving son and heir, sold Taynton manor to his brother-in-law Edmund Bray, and removing to Middleton (Oxon) improved and enlarged the manor house. Rather curiously no mention of this John Harman is made in the Heralds Visitation of the county in 1634 nor is his death recorded in either Taynton or Middleton registers. A brass plate dated 1607 in the chancel of the latter church is inscribed, 'here lyeth buried Elizabeth, the wife of John Harman, lord of this town . . .'. Nicholas, last male descendant of the king's surgeon died 11 April 1668, aged 80 years and upwards.²⁰

¹⁶ *Letters*, Henry VIII, xvi, 726 (46).

¹⁷ Fifield Merrymouth, an Oxfordshire parish, a corruption of a family named Murimuth. Adam de Murimuth, chronicler of the time of Edward III, belonged to the village.

¹⁸ Cal. of Patent Rolls.

¹⁹ Parish Register.

²⁰ Middleton reg.

When Edmund became lord of the Barringtons is rendered uncertain by an inability to give a precise date for the death of his father. However when challenged in Sept. 1567-8 to prove his title, he replied that Reginald his father, was seized thereof, that he and his wife levied two fines²¹ to themselves for life with remainder to their sons, with remainder to Oliver Bray brother of Reginald Bray.

During a long life this Edmund Bray by purchase considerably augmented his estates. In 1571 he acquired from a distant relative Thomas²², Lord Sandys, 3000 acres of land in the contiguous parish of Great Rissington and in Notgrove, with the manor and advowson of Rissington church. In a terrier (*temp.* Eliz.) of Oxfordshire lands quoted by Dunkin,²³ Edmund and Agnes Bray are stated to 'hold in Taynton, the Barringtons, Burford, Fyfield, the site of the Priory and 44 messuages, 2 mills, 6 lock houses, 200 acres of land, 300 of meadow, 100 of pasture, 200 of woods, 100 of waste, all the tithes and manor and advowson of Taynton, divers lands in Rissington and Collesbourne, the manor of Fyfield Merrymouth; in Widford²⁴ 4 messuages, 2 water mills, 2 gardens, 2 orchards, 800 acres of land, 100 of pasture, 200 of waste, 10 of wood, 10 rents with the advowson and lands in Upton. Most of the properties other than the Barringtons were bought from the executors and heirs of his father-in-law in the 30th of Elizabeth'.

In view of the inevitable clash with Spain instructions were sent in 1586 to the magistrates in the various counties

²¹ Pasc. Rec. 4 Eliz.

²² Second Lord Sandys de Vine. The precise date of his death is unknown. Administration of his will was granted his widow Elizabeth of Montisfont, Hants, 21 January 1560-1.

²³ The Dunkin MSS in the Guildhall Library were compiled for a history of Oxfordshire, projected but unpublished.

²⁴ Then a Gloucestershire islet in Oxfordshire.

by their 'assured Loving Friends, Burgly, Bromly, Buckhurst' to enroll 2000 men 'and for their training to make choice of some skilful men to supply the place of muster-masters if the shire should be unable or unwilling to bear the whole cost of training; in every band of 100 men, 40 to be (armed with) shot (guns); 20 with Pikes, the rest furnished with bows and Bills. To cause a general view of the able men fit to wear armour. To take a view of horsemen; to appoint captains, allotting to every captain or Coronell, 50 horses; with several Cornetts to be cladd with cassocks of one colour; to appoint Pioneers & carriages for victuals. Also every justice to find 2 petronels on horseback. To disarm all Papists & other suspicious Personnes'.²⁵ The order is of historic interest showing the provisional precautions taken in the inland counties to meet the by no means remote contingency of an invasion. In pursuance of the instruction, among the martial men certified (June 1588) in co. Oxon, 'Edmond Bray, gent., Captain; hath had charge of footmen in the Low Countries'.²⁶ His experience on this occasion proved unfortunate as he killed a man, but 'on appearing in a good equipage at Tilbury camp was taken notice of by the Queen and pardoned'.²⁷ Alluding to this story, Atkyns, in describing Great Barrington church, remarked:—'there is an handsome free-stone monument, with the effigies of a man in armour in memory of captain Edmond Bray . . . who had killed a man. . . . He ever afterwards wore his sword on the right side, and never used his right hand, in token of his true sorrow and repentance'.²⁸

With the Spanish Armada dispersed came a disbandment of the forces assembled at Tilbury and Captain

²⁵ The mss of Sir Henry Powle in the British Museum.

²⁶ Hist. mss Com. vol. xv, app. v, Foljambe Papers, p. 41.

²⁷ Rawlinson mss. B. 328, f. 241.

²⁸ Atkyns, *Gloucestershire*, 1768, p. 131.

Edmund Bray was free to return home, where his services were invoked in a letter from the Privy Council dated 31 January 1588-9, to relieve an agriculturist distressed in the aftermath of war, even as the farmer suffers in the days following the last European war. A certain John Wheate of Walkesbury²⁹ had appealed to the Council for help ' in his greate loss & hindrance sustained by deaths of cattell & other casualties to his greate impoverishment, whereby he allegeth to be indebted to sundry persons who by extremitie of lawe seeke presente paymente of their debts to his undoing ; forasmuch as he seemeth to beare in honest respect and intendeth not to defraud anie of his creditors of such summes as he standeth chargeable withall, but by reasonable forbearance of tyme to aunswere the same and every parte thereof, which at the presente tyme he is not able to do, wee have thought good therefore to require you to call before you such as be his creditors and do your best to end the matter in question or binde them over to appear before their lordships to aunswere their contempt '.³⁰ Armed with such powers Captain Bray was doubtless able to make the farmer's creditors take a lenient attitude.

According to an I.P.M. taken at Oxford (8 Jas. 1) Agnes, his wife, died on 29 December 1594 and the jurors said that ' she held Taynton manor and the advowson and the manor of Fyfield Merrymouth ;=worth £53 ; Edmund [13] her son & heir was dead and Giles [16] aged 18 was heir of his grandmother '. Dr Johnson somewhere describes a second marriage as the triumph of hope over experience. The answer to this cynical saying is fairly obvious. At any rate Edmund risked a second matrimonial adventure, though the entry of the marriage in Taynton register is curiously contemptuous, it reads :— ' 18 Dec. 1599, Edmund Bray and Barnes nupt.'. The

²⁹ Mangersbury, near Stow on the Wold.

³⁰ Hockaday Transcripts in Gloucester Public Library.

transcriber not only omitted the Christian name of the bride but also inserted a wrong surname. From other sources the errors can be corrected. Rawlinson, that tireless antiquary, copied out the entries in the then existing register³¹ at Taynton and his transcripts are conserved amongst his MSS in the Bodleian Library. His version runs (under the same date) 'Edmund Bray arm. & Maud Barnard nup.'. The accuracy of Rawlinson is confirmed by a list of Oxfordshire recusants in 1 James I, which appeared in the report of the County Archaeological Society for 1924. 'Matildis Bray uxor Ed. Bray arm., de Teinton, £260'. In 23 Elizabeth there was passed an 'Act to retain the Queen's subjects in their due obedience whereby a penalty of £20 was imposed for any lunar month on any one who failed to attend church after due warning'. The Recusant Rolls at the P.R.O. however show that few of the fines were collected. By the year 1633 nine-tenths of those fined in 1604 had not paid a penny, and it is not certain that the other tenth was paid. It is acknowledged by all parties that, from 1592, the fines for recusancy were only stage thunder; they were not collected.

By Agnes Harman, Edmund Bray had the following issue:—

- (1) Edmund [13], baptised at Taynton, 7 August 1560.
- (2) Sylvester [14], baptised at Taynton, 12 October 1561.
- (3) Sara, baptised at Taynton, 27 March 1566.
- (4) John [15], baptised at Taynton, 4 October 1579.
- (5) Dorothy, baptised at Great Barrington, 14 August 1564.

³¹ Taynton church and vicarage were both burnt out in the civil war and with the registers housed in one or the other they would be more or less injured in the conflagration. The unknown transcriber less experienced than Rawlinson evidently found the task of copying the damaged folios beyond his ability.

(6) Elizabeth, baptised at Great Barrington, 24 November 1567.

Edmund [13], the heir, predeceased his father having married at Toddington on 9 October 1580, Dorothy, daughter of John Tracy,³² knt., and by her had issue. The erratic transcriber of the Taynton register follows the entry of the marriage with the record 'christened Giles Bray [16], son of Edmund Bray, gent., on the 14 day of September 1580, and there stood godfather & m^r, William Knowles³³ esq., & Anne Bray', and thus by a confusion of dates he casted an unwarrantable aspersion on the moral character of the parents by making the birth of the child precede their wedding by some three weeks. Previous to his marriage he had matriculated at Hart Hall, Oxford in 1579 and in the same year paid a fine of 30s for admission to the Middle Temple, being described as 'late of Clements Inn, gent., son & heir of Edmund Bray late of Baington,³⁴ co. Gloucester'. His I.P.M. taken at Gloucester 19 August 1623 is of interest by its illustration of the marriage settlements of the period. The jurors say that he was seized of the manors of the two Barringtons and of the manors of 'Cokeseyes and Niles'³⁵ commonly called Rissington magna with the advowson. 'He being seized thereof by indenture dated 1 March 23 Eliz. (1581) made between John Tracy of Tuddington and Edmund Bray of Tainton in consideration of the marriage then solemnized between Edmund Bray deceased and Dorothy daughter of John Tracy as of

³² Sir John Tracy, son and heir of Henry by Elizabeth, daughter of John Bridges Lord Chandos of Sudeley; knighted 1574; sheriff and M.P. for the county 1578; buried at Toddington 1591.

³³ Master of the wards; privy councillor; lord-lieutenant of Berkshire and Oxfordshire; created Viscount Wallingford.

³⁴ M.T. Records, p. 229.

³⁵ Cokesay, *alias* Sir Hugh Greville, a former lord of Great Rissington. Niles is said to be an allusion to the moiety of the manor held by the de Lisle family for nearly 200 years. (*Trans. B.G.A.S. L.*, 187).

a certain sum paid by John Tracy for the advancement of his daughter's marriage and in consideration of the lands etc., which were assured to Edmund for the maintenance of himself and his wife . . . to the use of the said Edmund and his heirs male by Dorothy ; for default to the use of Sylvester, second son of Edmund Bray (the elder) and his heirs male ; and for default to John, the third son ; for default to the use of Oliver brother of Edmund Bray. Edmund Bray (the younger) had issue by Dorothy—Giles Bray now knt.—and died at Rissington 15 October 1584. All the premises are held in chief by knights' service, but by what part of a fee the jurors know not ; the manors of Barrington Magna and Parva are worth per ann., clear £10 14 4 and that of Cookseyes and Niles £6 13 4. Giles Bray still survives and was 26 or more on the death of his grandfather'. An abstract of the indenture of 1581 follows.

'Morrow of the Holy Trinity . . . Edmund Bray and Ann his wife levied a fine before the justices (named) at Westminster between Thomas Throckmorton³⁶ and John Tracy esqs. plts and themselves defts. of the manors of Broderysynton and Barrington Magna and 40 messuages, 20 tofts, 2 mills, 10 dovecotes, 40 gardens, 2000 acres of land, 600 of meadow, 1000 of pasture, 40 of wood, 200 of furze and heath, 40s rent, common of pasture for 400 sheep and free warren and V. of F. in the two Barringtons Sherborne and Brode Rysynton. The said Edmund and Anne acknowledge the premises aforesaid to be the right of Thomas and John who remised the same and quit-claimed them for ever'.

SYLVESTER [14], the second son, transformed by the Taynton transcriber into Christopher, married 13 October

³⁶ Thomas Throckmorton son of George of Rollright ; knighted at the coronation of Mary Tudor ; sheriff of Gloucestershire 1587 ; ancestor of the Throckmortons of Tortworth.

1580, ' Cecily Mayne of Sherburne, daughter-in-law (step-daughter) to Thomas Dutton, gent. Solemnized by Thomas Clark,³⁷ then Vicar of Teinton in the presence of those whose names are underwritten, master Edmund Bray & John Bray'. This conjectural identification is confirmed by the will of Margaret (ob. 1583), widow of Thomas Dutton, which recites ' I will and devise all my lands, customary and copyhold excepted, to my son Edward Hill and my son Silvester Bray, who have married my daughters '. Like his brother Edmund, Sylvester matriculated at Hart Hall, Oxford in 1579, arm.fil. co. Oxon, aged 18,³⁸ and on the death of his father inherited the manor of Fyfield, which his son Edward [18] sold to his uncle John Bray.³⁹

JOHN [15] the third son married Mary, daughter and heir of Thomas Palmer of Donnington and by her had a numerous issue commemorated on their mother's brass tablet in Fyfield church.

Of a daughter named Anne, whose baptism is not recorded in either the Barrington or Taynton registers, the latter contains an entry of her marriage, ' 1581, 19 November Edward Ayleworth de Nanton (Naunton co. Glouc.) et Anne dau. of Edmund Bray nupt.' and as wife of Edward Ayleworth is mentioned in the Visitation of Gloucestershire in 1623. By deed poll 28 December 1609 Edward Ayleworth granted to John Bray in trust for Anne his wife a jointure of £100 per ann. to be charged on his manor of Ayleworth. Anne died at Ayleworth in 1635 and her husband in 1640. Their son and heir Bray Ayleworth,⁴⁰ executed a similar deed in favour of his wife, Lucy, daughter of Sir Paul Tracy, bart., with remainder to John Bray of Fyfield.

³⁷ Owen Thomas in the Rawlinson transcripts.

³⁸ Foster's *Alumni*.

³⁹ Dunkin MSS.

⁴⁰ Inq. p.m. April 10, 1640. Bray aged 40 years or more son and heir.

I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr Aubrey Toppin, Bluemantle Pursuivant, for an abstract of the only extant funeral certificate—interesting but inaccurate—of a Gloucestershire Bray, taken from the original document in the College of Arms.

FUNERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDMUND BRAY [10], son and heir of Reignold Bray and Anne his wife, daughter and heir of Monington of Great Barrington in the county of Gloucestershire which Reignold Bray was 3 sonne of John, lord Bray. The said Edmund departed this life 29 November 1620 at Fifield co. Oxon., and buried at Great Barrington. He married Anne daughter of Edmund Harman esq., by whom he had issue 3 sonnes & 4 daughters, *videlicet*, Edmond, Silvester 2 sonne, John 3; Anne first married to Edward Aileworth; Dorothy unmarried; Sara first to Thomas Reynold of Burford and after to James Hall of London; Elizabeth the youngest to Simon Chadwell of Risington. Edmund eldest son and heir married Dorothy, daughter of John Tracy knt., by whom she had 2 sonnes and one daughter *videlicet* Giles, John, Anne, unmarried; the said Sir Giles married Ann daughter of R. Chitwode, by whom he had issue one sonne and 4 daughters, Reinold, aged 3 years; Dorothy and Anne both died young; Jane and Mary living. Silvester 2 sonne married Cecily daughter of Manye of Kent, by whom he had issue Edward and Richard, Margaret and Anne.' etc.

SIR GILES BRAY [16], born c. 1580, inherited the greater part of the estates acquired by his forbears. Previous to the death of his grandfather he had been dubbed knight at Oxford in 1607 and sometime before 1611 had married Ann third daughter of Sir Richard Chetwode, of Warkworth (Northants) by Jane, daughter and heiress of Sir William Drury, knt. In the meantime his mother Dorothy (Tracy) contracted a second marriage with Edward Conway (son of Sir John Conway) one of

the principal Secretaries of State under James I and Charles I, created Viscount Conway. The correspondence of this statesman in the Calendar of State Papers (Domestic) contains sundry allusions to his stepson, beginning in 1623 with an order for Giles to be kept out of the list of potential sheriffs⁴¹ for co. Oxford, and 'that he be not excluded from a deputy-lieutenancy in the same county'. An almost contemporaneous statement of the charges attendant on the office makes intelligible the distaste of country gentlemen, with limited incomes, for accepting a commission at once costly and thankless. In another letter the President of the Council is in a complimentary mood, describing Sir Giles as 'a wise, honest and valiant gentleman', and hopes that 'he may not be discarded on account of his absence at Spa', but from what he might be discarded or the reason for the visit to Spa does not appear.

The political and dynastic troubles of Elizabeth, daughter of James I, married in 1613 to Frederick the Elector Palatine leader of protestant Germany, had their repercussions in Gloucestershire. By Calvinistic nobles the elective crown of Bohemia had been offered to and accepted in 1619 by her husband. In the result defeated in battle, the Elector lost not only his new kingdom but his hereditary possessions as well, and to help a son-in-law in his evil plight James appealed to the deputy-lieutenants and magistrates of Gloucestershire and other counties for voluntary contributions. The appeal appears to have fallen on deaf ears and the scribe in making his record pathetically noted on 29 July 1622 'nothing reached Whitehall from Gloucestershire'. Such irresponsiveness would hardly predispose authority to lend a favourable ear to Sir Giles' petition on behalf of a

⁴¹ A sheriff was required to appear before a Baron of the Exchequer and deposit £120, the usual security for the exercise of his office (Powle MSS).

relative which reads :—‘ This bearer, my cousin Edward⁴² (Chardwell) requests your lordship to bestow upon him some preferment in the employment now in hand (expedition to Cadiz). He would have tendered his service to you before this, only I employed him in conducting our Oxon recruits to Plymouth. He did the Queen of Bohemia some service in the Palatinate, under my uncle Sir Francis (Vere) with loss of blood’. Incidentally it was not Francis but Horace Vere who commanded the troops despatched to succour the Elector and it was Horace and not Francis who married Mary Tracy, sister to Dorothy the writer’s mother, with whom Sir Giles was staying when her second husband, Lord Conway, died in 1631 at his house in St. Martin’s Lane, London. Some complications, unrecorded, appear to have arisen over the funeral arrangements, which Lady Huncks⁴³ relieved by agreeing ‘ that the lower room of her house shall be made fit to receive the corpse’, and a Mr Case⁴⁴ undertook ‘ to make choice of the fittest place for a grave and Mr Greville,⁴⁵ Mr John Savage⁴⁶ and Sir Robert Lee⁴⁷ engaged to meet the corpse at Honeybourne’.⁴⁸

⁴² Both were grandsons of Captain Edmund Bray. Many of the men seem to have deserted en route. Of the 60 men entrusted to his charge only 47 were delivered in Plymouth. (State Papers 1627).

⁴³ Wife or widow of Sir Thomas Hunckes of Clapton, co. Glouc., knighted about 1605 (Har. 66, 132), son of Robert of Redbrooke by Elizabeth, daughter of William Gaytway. A notice of Gloucestershire Fines in vol. xvii of the *Transactions*, mentions several sales of lands effected between Grevills and Hunckes, *e.g.* p. 193.

⁴⁴ Thomas Case, vicar of Arrow.

⁴⁵ Conway’s mother had been Ellen or Eleanor daughter of Sir Fulk Grevill. The Grevill mentioned was probably ‘ Robert, Cosen and heir apparent of Sir Fulk’. (Warwick Visit. 1682).

⁴⁶ ‘ Mr. John Savage, son and heir apparent of William Savage of Elmley Castle, Wors., admitted Middle Temple 1597 (Records, 1, 374); knighted 30 January 1615.

⁴⁷ Son of Sir Robert Lee, lord mayor of London 1602–3; ob. 19 January 1637, buried in St. Andrew’s Undershaft.

⁴⁸ State Papers Dom. 1629–31, p. 498.

With responsibility discharged for the disposal of his stepfather's body, Sir Giles proceeded to negotiate a marriage between Reginald, his elder son and Martha, only child of Peter Humble a deceased Essex squire, and in due course the wedding was solemnized at Great Barrington on 20 April 1632.⁴⁹ In view of future developments some notice must be given to the history of a family which rose from the ranks (and ultimately to the peerage) in the person of a Richard Humble, a city alderman, who 'though a Vintner was also an esquire' being buried in St. Mary's Southwark, with heraldic honours. By a first wife Margaret, daughter and heir of John Peirson of Waltham abbey, he had surviving issue Peter and Elizabeth.⁵⁰ The former married Elizabeth, only daughter of John Webster of Romford, by whom he had one child Martha (aged 3½ at her father's death) inheritor of Goosehays manor in the parish of Hornchurch, Essex, and, as already related, future wife of Reginald Bray. Shortly after the marriage Sir Giles executed the following settlement:—'Agreement between Sir Gyles Bray, knt., and Sir Francis Quarles of Romford knt., and John Hide of London, gent., in consideration of a marriage solemnized between Reynold Braye esq., son and heir of Sir Gyles Bray and Martha (now wife of the said Reynold) daughter of Peter Humble of Goosehays, Essex, esq. Sir Gyles and Anne his wife graunte and convey to Sir Robert Quarles,⁵¹ knt., and John Hide all the Manc'on House of Tainton in

⁴⁹ Register.

⁵⁰ Elizabeth, ob. 23 April 1616; married William Ward, goldsmith and their son Humble Ward created Baron Ward 23 March 1643-4, was ancestor of the earls of Dudley. (Howard's Misc. Gen., new series, vol. 1, p. 61-3.)

⁵¹ Sir Robert Quarles, senior trustee, was eldest son of James Quarles of Steward, Clerk of the Green Cloth to Queen Elizabeth and Purveyor of the Navy. Of this brother, Francis Quarles wrote a curious elegy in prose, entitled 'Memorials upon the death of Sir Robert Quarles'. John Hide, the second trustee, may be identified with the 'John Hyde of London, descended from Wallingford, Berks, who married Hellen, daughter of Thomas Sanderson, vintner, by whom he had issue'. See Visitation of London (Harleian Society), 1, 410.

Oxon, . . . and all lands in Fifield (Oxon) for ninety years from the date hereof'.⁵²

Signed by Gyles Bray,⁵³ 3 May 1633.

SIR GILES BRAY

The I.P.M. of Sir Giles Bray, taken at Woodstock 10 September 1641, with its detailed history of the descent of the manors of the Barringtons, Taynton, Fyfield and Great Rissington, is too prolix for insertion in full. An abstract must suffice for the purpose in hand: 'The jurors say that Edmund Bray, grandfather of Giles Bray long before his death was seized in demesne as of fee of the manor of Brode Rissington commonly called Cookeseyes and Nyles and of the advowson . . . in 1581 . . . when he executed a fine in favour of himself with remainder to his son Edmund and his male heirs, then in default to Silvester his second son, then to John his third son, and finally to Oliver Bray and his right heirs . . . And the jurors say that Giles was the eldest son of Edmund eldest son of the said Edmund the grandfather who died 29 November 1620. . . . And Giles Bray being seized of the manor of Brode Rissington and the other premises in the same, afterwards in Michaelmas term, 6 Charles 1 by a common Recovery between a certain Robert Tracy knt., and Antony Hungerford esq., plts., and John Moore and John Chilfaster tenants, in which Recovery Giles Bray was vouched to warrant divers lands in Brode Rissington commonly called Cookeseyes Farme containing one messuage, 30 acres of land, 80 of meadow, 80 acres of pasture, being parcel of the manor . . . which Recovery was to the use of Rice Jones esq., for the term of 80 years from Michaelmas 1632 in consideration

⁵² East Anglian Notes and Queries, vol. III.

⁵³ Sir Giles Bray died 23 March 1640-1 (Register). His will dated 26 March 1640-1 was proved by the widow Dame Ann Bray, 14 May 1641, and again on 19 November 1657 by Sir Edmund Bray of Northampton, next of kin to the testator.

of a sum of money paid to Giles by Rice Jones. By virtue of which Recovery Rice Jones was and still is possessed of Cookeseyes farme. And that Giles Bray, afterwards, 16 March, 1640-1 made his last will and testament in writing and amongst other things declared " I do will & humbly desire the right hon^{ble} the master of the Court of wards and Liverneys, That his honor will be pleased to graunte unto my Wife and to my son-in-law Rice Jones, the wardship of the body and lands of my grandchild Edmond Bray who I do assure myself will take care of my said grandchild to see him vertuously brought up. . . . The jurors say that the said Edmund heir apparent, at the time of the death of Giles was aged 14 years 11 months 7 days " '.

The inquisition also records that Giles had purchased in 1610-1 the manor of Fifield from John Bray for £2060 ' and the dominical lands were by estimation 10 virgates ' also the lease of the same manor in 1639-40 for an unnamed sum, to Nicholas Rainton⁵⁴ knt., citizen and alderman of London, for a term of 21 years rendering yearly one grain of pepper ; also the appropriation of the two Barrington manors in dower to the widow.

By his wife Sir Giles had the following issue, whose baptisms are entered in Great Barrington register :—

ANN, baptised 1610 (buried 1612).

JANE, baptised 1613, married 1634 Rice Jones of Asthall (Oxon), the second son of Rice Jones by Frances daughter of Sir Arthur Hopton, knt., of Wytham Charterhouse, Somerset.⁵⁵ They had two children Henry and Frances, the former was father of Frances, baptised

⁵⁴ Will dated 21 July, 39 Eliz. ' I Nicholas Rainton of Great Barrington in the county of Gloucester . . . ', P.C.C. Cobham, 103.

⁵⁵ Visitation of Oxfordshire 1634.

28 March 1666,⁵⁶ who married Richard Lumley, created earl of Scarbrough 15 April 1690.⁵⁷

REGINALD [19], baptised 1614; married Martha Humble; buried 23 May 1634, being followed to the grave by his widow on 7 June. They left an only child, Edmund [21], a sickly infant 22 days old at the death of his mother.

EDMUND [20], baptised 1617, of whom there is more to be written later.

MARY, baptised 1618, married Ambrose Elton 12 March 1639, and of their first-born the register records 'Christened Bray Elton, son of Ambrose Elton, gent., and Marie his wife, Oct. 3, 1641'.

ANN, baptised 1620, married Christopher Hands, gent., 24 September 1630. Obviously either the date of her birth or that of her marriage is incorrectly entered.

With the Bray lordships passing to a minor the question of guardianship inevitably arose. For some reason the Humble marriage had not commended itself to the family. In his will Sir Giles expressed a desire that the Court of Wards should raise money for the heir out of the Humble and not the Bray patrimony. That there was an atmosphere of doubt as to the goodwill of the paternal relatives towards the heir is disclosed by a petition presented by Thomas Leggat and Elizabeth his wife, grandmother of Edmund Bray, king's ward, to Francis, Lord Cottington, master of the Wards, to the effect that Sir Giles Bray died 5 days ago, seized of lands held by service of a knights fee in co. Oxon, and elsewhere, leaving Edmund his grandchild, next heir under age and in ward, who is but five years old and extremely afflicted with the King's evil in 15 parts of his body and thereby so wasted that the ablest physicians advise he is not likely to continue without special care and assistance as appears by Sir

⁵⁶ Parish Register Astall.

⁵⁷ *Complete Peerage* (G.E.C.), VII, 74, 75.

Giles' letter annexed. Martha, the ward's mother, survived Reynold Bray his father and was sole heiress of Elizabeth and Peter Humble, her petitioner's former husband, from whom greater estates came to the ward than from his father. The petitioner, Elizabeth, being his grandmother, and he sole issue of her and her former husband is more especially obligated to his care than the grandmother (Lady Conway) on the other side, who has children living and whose advancement would result from the ward's death. The petitioners therefore 'pray that for the protection of the poor diseased infant, they may be committees of his body and lesees of his lands'. Leave was given for the Petitioner to appear with others at the sitting of the Council in the Easter term.⁵⁸ The unhealthy infant however died the same year and an (uncle) Edmund to a (nephew) Edmund succeeded.

⁵⁸ Calendar of State Papers, 29 March 1641, pp. 517-18.