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Hale of Alderley

by E. S. Lindley
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further significance for Richard Gorges, as it marked the beginning of a social and administrative advance which gathered momentum decade by decade, during his long life. On his father's death in 1650, he inherited the title of Dundalk; this and his useful friendships facilitated his official progress under the Corporation which was created as a result of the 1649 Act. From 1663 to 1686 he served as Surveyor-General, and as such was intimately associated with both the Latch and Jennings groups and, from his sixty-seventh year to his eightieth, he acted as Conservator, having relinquished his former post to Roger Jennings (1686-1693). He died at the age of 93 and was buried in the church of his manor of Stetchworth, which he had purchased from the Earl of Bedford.

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HALE OF ALDERLEY

The family of the future Sir Mathew Hale presented no claim to armigerous status and pedigree at the Herald's Visitation of 1623. At their visit in 1682 the pedigree did not go back further than Sir Mathew's parents. For a lawsuit on succession which ran from about 1820 to 1837, genealogical data were collected and pedigrees prepared: these added paternal grandparents, and of course later generations but with some ambiguities; they have not been published, but the papers were deposited in the Gloucester Public Library.¹ Now the Hale archives have been deposited in the County Records Office,² and from these Miss Margaret Holmes compiled a pedigree. The accompanying pedigree has been compiled from all the above, some further research, and up to date information from the family.

Sir Mathew's father and grandfather both being named Robert, there is an earlier Robert not noted before who is a

¹ *Glos. Collection* SV 9.7

² Hale papers not yet catalogued.

very likely great-grandfather, though the relationship lacks complete proof. His will of 1585,¹ the only record of his existence, does not mention a son Robert, but also ignores what seem to have been two married daughters of his: the Dursley parish registers which might have proved the point are now extant only from 1639, but the Wotton under Edge registers have a number of entries which do suggest the family connection.

The will of Robert I describes him as of Dursley, and mentions 'chattels' (which can include landed property short of freehold) at Chipping Sodbury. The will of Robert II² describes him as of Wotton under Edge: he held land in Dursley, Nibley, and Didmarton, with leases in Badminton, 'at Hill called Benworthy,' Rangeworthy, and Highwoods in Kingswood. Sir Mathew's father, Robert III,³ of Alderley, held in free socage two manors in Rangeworthy, and the Benworthy lease. So Robert I was already tending southward, and Robert II still had land in Dursley.

Robert I's will mentions only one child, a daughter Agnes, not yet of age, who may be the Agnes buried at Wotton in 1612: her legacy of £40 suggests that he was comfortably off though not affluent. As overseer of his will he appoints not one of his name, but Richard Trotman: as a Richard Trotman married a Margaret Hale at Wotton in 1580, it looks as if the overseer were his son-in-law, and Margaret a daughter not provided for in the will because she had received provision at marriage. The Mary Hale who married Arthur Crewe at Wotton in 1576 must also be of this generation: Robert II's wife was also a Crewe.

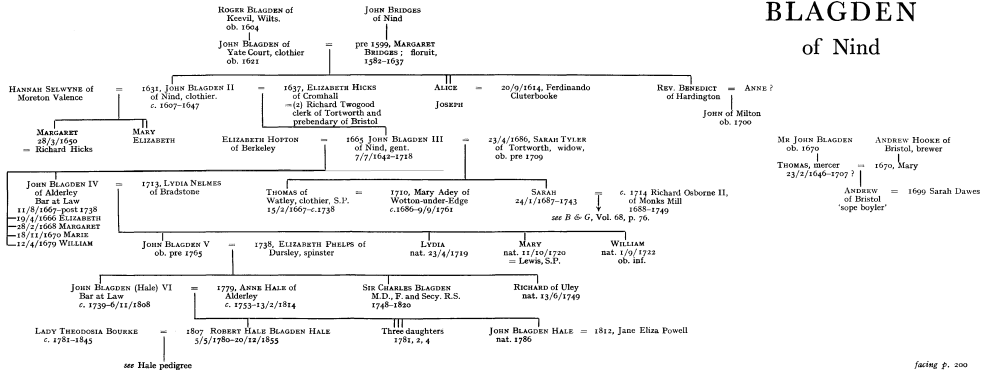
Robert I's will also mentions a sister Elizabeth Lennie: it was at Wotton that Elizabeth Hale was married to Morgan Lennie in 1581. The will mentions also a brother Nicholas: entries in the Wotton registers seem to make a rational pedigree for him as shown: Robert II bequeathed 20s to 'my poor kinsman Nicholas Hale,' and Robert III £30 in the same terms.

¹ Glos. Probate Registry.

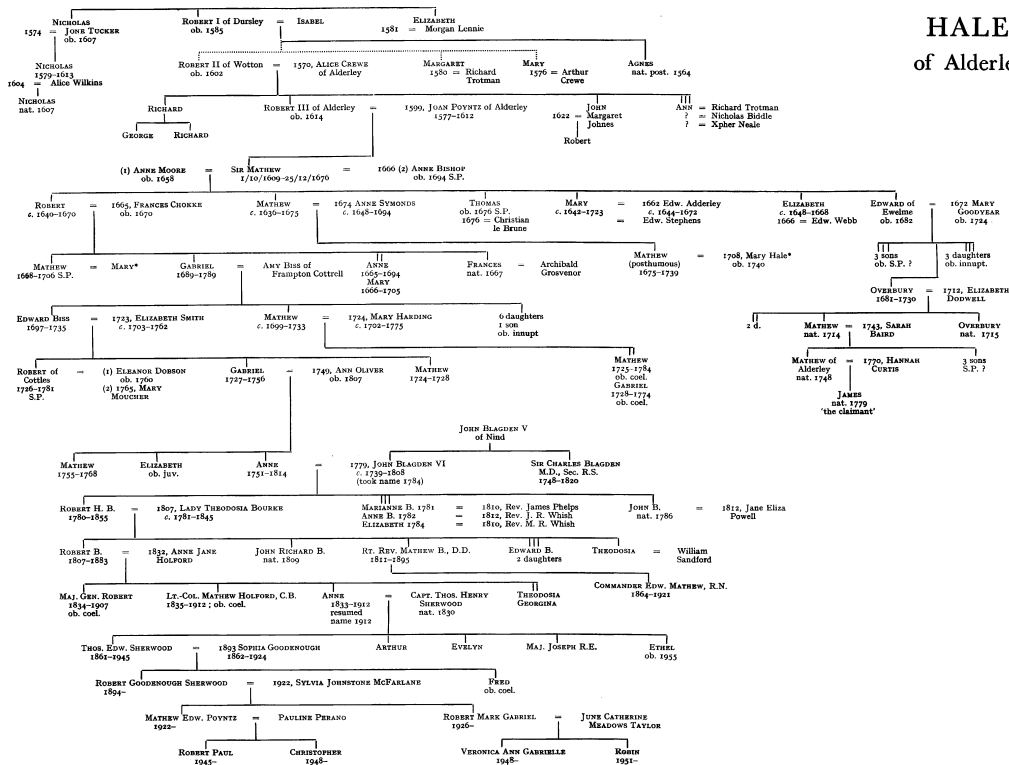
² P.C.C. 9 Montague.

³ P.C.C. 31 Lawe.

BLAGDEN of Nind



HALE of Alderley



* the same person

There are some points which do not bear on the surmised descent from Robert I. Among the few transcripts of lost Dursley registers, there is only one Hale entry, the burial of Elizabeth Hale widow in 1625: she is not identifiable. The Heralds' Visitation of 1682 notes in the Trotman pedigree that a later Richard Trotman married 'Anne dau. of Robert Hull of Alderley': mentions in the wills of Robert II and III confirm the editor's surmise that the name was Hale.

The will of Robert II describes him as clothier, and suggests more affluence than Robert I: it must have been he who was one of the subscribers of £25 to the Royal Aid of 1588¹ towards defence against the Spanish Armada as was also his brother-in-law Arthur Crewe: he had bought the land at Rangeworthy in the name of Robert III.

Robert III is said to have given up his practice of the law in disgust at being called upon to defend admitted scoundrels. Being a widower, described in his will as 'in the state of a single man,' he bequeathed the Benworthy land and his bay gelding to Mistress Mary ffild whom he purposed to marry, if not prevented by illness and death.

Of Sir Mathew only a few details need be recorded as there are ample biographies of him. He was an only child: being left an orphan at the age of 4½ he was placed under the guardianship of his puritan cousin Anthony Kingscott, son of Silvester Poyntz who was sister of Sir Mathew's mother: as tutor he had John Stanton, puritan vicar of Wotton, not to be confused with a slightly earlier rector of Alderley of the same name. His will describes him as of Acton, not Alderley: he had acquired the Alderley manor in exchange for that of Minchinhampton: it was he who built up the wide Hale estates.

In later generations James Hale, descended from the Ewelme branch of the family, laid claim to the estates as heir male, in preference to Anne who was heir in the direct line and in the absence of tail male. The Blagdens who continued the line by marrying her and adopting the name, were of good standing in Kingswood and of equal antiquity.

¹ *Glos. N & Q*, I, 440.

When John, son of Roger Blagden of Keevil, Wilts, first appears in our records in 1599, he was already married to Margaret, daughter of John Bridges of Nind. Bridges had appeared first in 1557, when Sir John Thynne renewed his existing lease of his house, mills, and property there, into which he had entered some time after the Dissolution. Bridges and his son John added largely to the property: in 1599 they sold the Nind property to Blagden, and in 1614 sold him another large block of subsequent acquisition.

At his death in 1621 Blagden lived at Yate Court of which he had a lease with option to purchase, and owned the Yate living. The six subsequent generations in each of which the heir was named plain John bought and sold properties, till in 1792 John VI who married Anne Hale became Lord of the Manor. John I and II described themselves as clothiers, John III as 'gent:' John IV and VI were Barristers at Law: the latter's brother Charles attained eminence in medicine and science.

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