

DR. DRAKE'S NEW EDITION OF "HASTED'S HISTORY
OF KENT." PART I. THE HUNDRED OF BLACKEATH.

BY CANON SCOTT ROBERTSON.

THIS handsome folio volume, of 357 pages, contains a perfect mine of information, never before brought together. It is fully worthy of the honour bestowed upon it by Her Majesty the Queen, who permits it to be dedicated to herself; and it is quite worth the large price of £5, at which it is issued.

The title-page describes it as "Hasted's *History of Kent*, corrected, enlarged, and continued to the present time, from the MS. Collections of the late Rev. Thomas Streatfeild and the late Rev. Lambert Blackwell Larking, the Public Records, and other sources. Edited by Dr. Henry H. Drake. Part I. THE HUNDRED OF BLACKHEATH. Published by Mitchell and Hughes, 140 Wardour Street, W."

Some idea of the arduous nature of the work done by Dr. Drake may be gathered from the fact that this volume has been five years in the Press. The printing commenced in 1881.

Mr. John Wingfield Larking, to whose munificent liberality the work owes its existence, has given in his Preface, addressed to the Noble and Gentle Men of Kent, an interesting description of the long-continued labours of Mr. Streatfeild and Mr. Lambert Larking in preparation for a new edition of Hasted. Their Collections, however, do not supply one-half of the additional matter which is furnished in Dr. Drake's new book. He has ransacked all the Public Records, and has printed a brief *précis* of every Will connected with the seven parishes in the Hundred of Blackheath, as well as of every useful extract from the Close Rolls, the Fine Rolls, the Parochial Accounts, Domestic State Papers, Chancery Records, and Inquisitiones post mortem, Terriers and Rentals of Manors, Subsidy Rolls, and the Parochial Registers of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials; of the last-named Registers his extracts fill nineteen folio pages, having three columns of print on each page. Of the Monumental Inscriptions, in the Churches and in the Churchyards,

Dr. Drake gives full lists; and he does not omit to describe the Stained Glass, the Church Plate, and the Bells.

To Kentish Genealogists this volume will be of great assistance. Dr. Drake prints very clearly a vast number of pedigrees which are of interest far beyond the limits of the Hundred. He has drawn up two huge "SCHEMES," each occupying two folio pages, shewing the descents of (No. 1) Eminent Norman Families connected with the Hundred, and of (No. 2) Royal and Noble Personages connected with the Hundred. These comprehensive "Schemes" contain pedigrees of the De Clares, the Magminots, the Says, of the Earls of Albemarle, Essex, Pembroke, and Devon (Redvers), the families of Montfichet, De Valence, and De Vesci; Castillon, De L'Isle, and Holland; of Stafford, Neville (Abergavenny), and Courtenay.

Any one desiring to ascertain how far, beyond the Blackheath district, the interest of this volume extends, should open the large plate of two pages, which immediately precedes the Index at the end of the book. It contains, in facsimile, the autographs of 158 eminent persons mentioned in this book.

It should be mentioned, *en passant*, that the completeness of the Index renders this volume doubly valuable. No less than forty-seven folio pages are devoted to the Index, each page containing three columns of letterpress.

The numerous Illustrations are drawn mainly from ancient sources, and many of them are unique, being copied by Dr. Drake from rare old drawings and prints in the British Museum.

Most remarkable of all is the reproduction, on a large scale, of Antony Van Wyngaerde's sketches, made in 1558, of (i) the Royal Palace of Pleasaunce at Greenwich, and (ii) of his Bird's Eye View of the Thames taken from Duke Humphrey's Tower, which then occupied the site of Greenwich Observatory. Modern readers are much indebted to Dr. Drake for his careful copy of these admirable and spirited sketches, made during the last year of Queen Mary's reign. He has likewise copied for us Plans of Deptford and its Dockyard in 1623, in 1688, in 1698, and in 1774; a Plan of the Manor of Greenwich in 1695; a Plan of Eltham Palace in 1590; and many drawings of ships and houses made during the last two centuries. There are also six portraits in the volume.

The favourite residences of royalty at Greenwich and Eltham, and the royal dockyards at Woolwich and Deptford, make the history of the Hundred of Blackheath of far greater interest than

that of the majority of its compeers. Dr. Drake describes minutely the Palaces at Greenwich and Eltham. The frequent presence of the Court brought into connection with this Hundred many families whose homes were elsewhere, and Dr. Drake has with untiring industry recorded all that can be ascertained respecting each. To our surprise he has made Deptford the fruitful source of a vast amount of information of general interest. He tells us much about Chaucer the poet, Grinling Gibbons, Admiral Chastillon, and the stay of Peter the Great in this Kentish dockyard. His information respecting the ships built there and at Woolwich is voluminous and exhaustive. His pedigree of the Evelyns is admirable.

Dr. Drake's industrious elaboration of research is not reserved for royal and noble families merely, nor for manors and great estates alone. He covers all the ground equally well. He corrects Hasted's errors of omission and commission with respect to small estates, as well as larger manors.

We open his volume, for instance, by haphazard, at page 124, and find him devoting much research to the elucidation of the descent of Wricklemarsh, a small estate in Charlton, and to brief notices of its successive owners. Hasted is here utterly at fault. Dr. Drake, however, shews that the estate passed from John Fulthorp (who died in 1493, and of whose will a *précis* is given), through the families of Sparke, Purflow, Greay, and Ball, to Edward Blount, who acquired it, not (as Hasted says) from Sir Wm. Garway, but from his own mother, the widow of its former owner Laurence Ball. Dr. Drake has hunted out and inserted in a note the will, the pedigree, and many interesting particulars of Robert Vere, third son of John, Earl of Oxford, who died at Wricklemarsh, but who did not possess it (as Hasted supposed).

Incidentally we also get, in a note, interesting information respecting Alex. Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's (whose will, made in 1591, is epitomized), because he was the third husband of the widow who possessed Wricklemarsh, through her first husband Laurence Ball.

A portrait and a pedigree of Sir John Morden, Bart., are inserted by Dr. Drake, together with an engraving of Morden College as it appeared when first founded. A note gives lists of the Chaplains, Trustees, and Benefactors of the College, and in the text is an epitome of the Monumental Inscriptions in the College Chapel.

Of the Rectors of Charlton, Dr. Drake gives names, dates, and

other particulars respecting thirty-nine; while Hasted mentions only thirteen.

With regard to the Clergy Dr. Drake’s researches, greatly assisted by those of Mr. E. H. W. Dunkin, have been very thorough. For example, he furnishes particulars respecting sixty-eight Rectors of Woolwich; while Hasted mentions only five.

Hasted gives the names of fourteen Vicars of Eltham; but Dr. Drake supplies notes respecting forty-five. He also has traced and printed the names of fourteen Incumbents of the King’s Free Chapel, in the Manor of Eltham, of whom Hasted knew only three. Dr. Drake describes forty-eight Rectors of Lee and thirty-three Vicars of Lewisham, amongst whom were Adrian de Saravia, Abraham Colfe (founder of Colfe’s Schools), Dean Geo. Stanhope, and Bishop Legge, whose careers are fully sketched.

As an instance of the way in which families in East Kent are brought into view we may notice the mention of that of Lord Sondes. Lee Manor, now Lord Northbrook’s, was bequeathed by Alderman Freeman to his grandson Freeman Sondes. Dr. Drake does not simply mention this fact, but gives many interesting particulars respecting the Sondes family.

Again, the Abels, of Hering Hill, in Erith, who held much land in the Cray parishes, also held the manor of Catford in Lewisham. Dr. Drake prints all that can be traced in the Public Records respecting this family; to which, as will be seen below, he supposes that one of the leaders in Wat Tyler’s rebellion may have belonged.

Dr. Drake’s great interest in this Hundred may be inferred from the fact that he can trace his own descent from many of the old Kentish families, and collaterally from the great naval hero, Sir Francis Drake, whose connection with this county and Hundred is vividly elucidated in the Introduction.

We shall insert some extracts from Dr. Drake’s Introductory remarks, which will give the reader some idea of the system he has pursued in this history, and of his personal interest in the work through his family connections.

On page ii Dr. Drake says: “An ordinary compiler of history . . . observes the men and women players . . . before the foot-lights. The genealogist follows them into the greeroom of private life, searches into their family history, and learns truths that were hidden from the audience.”

“Several Magna Charta Barons held lands within this Hundred [of Blackheath]. How their alliances affected history can be con-

jectured from the Genealogical Scheme, No. 1, but it is its continuous association with the revolt of the nation's conscience against priestly dominion which presaged the advance of political liberty that entitles BLACKHEATH to deliver its challenge, '*Siste viator et circumspice.*' Chaucer, who suffered for the cause, appears in GREENWICH (page 4). Wycliff's Disciple Ball, who bade 'Piers Plowman go to his work,' was probably one of the LEWISHAM Abels that had migrated to Erith (page 174, note 9)."

"Henry II. bestowed WOOLWICH and MOTTINGHAM on the foreign Abbey of St. Jean d'Angeley (pages 144, 191), which name the Sheriffs of Kent retained in the *corpus comitatus* of the Pipe Rolls to perplex the historian long after the abbey had yielded the possession to a kinsman of Henry III."

THE DRAKES' CONNECTION WITH LEWISHAM.

On page vi we read: ". . . the mansion at Rushy Green in Lewisham, belonging to Edmund Tremayne's uncle, John Fitz, had been for forty years in tenure of Mrs. Fitz, aunt not only of John Fitz, but also of Sir Henry Isley and Thomas Isley, who were executed at Maidstone in 1553 for taking part with their cousin Sir Thomas Wyatt. . . . Two fugitives from Devon, EDMUND DRAKE and his little son FRANCIS, were harbouring within reach. Drake's family and that of Fitz of Lewisham were neighbours in Devon. William Drake was in 1504 appointed an executor of the will of Walter Fitz, who died in 1505, leaving John his son and heir, a minor, aged 9; therefore William Drake or his representative in succession was interested in young John Fitz and in Lewisham for more than forty years before the birth of Francis Drake. A second John Fitz, grandson of Walter Fitz, in 1582-3, enfeoffed Sir Francis Drake, George Sydenham, and others in his Lewisham Estate. He married the sister, and Sir Francis Drake married the daughter, of Sir George Sydenham of Somersetshire."

Sir Francis Drake's father, Edmund Drake, was Vicar of Upchurch (on the Medway), near Rochester, from 1561 until his death in 1567.

Dr. Drake points out that Admiral Sir John Hawkins of DEPTFORD was the cousin of John Trelawney and of Sir Francis Drake. Trelawney was cousin to Queen Elizabeth. The fact is thus revealed that Francis Drake stood on the fringe of a powerful family organization. When reminded that Drake had compromised her, Elizabeth answered for him: "If nede be, the gentleman careth

nott yf I shold dysavowe him ;” and the Queen would converse with the bold seaman by the hour, out of earshot of her attendants.

Many other points of interest with respect to Sir Francis Drake are also given in this volume.

With respect to Hasted and the pecuniary troubles entailed upon him in old age by his great work, *The History of Kent*, Dr. Drake prints a letter written by the historian to Lord Romney, asking for assistance to obtain some clerkship in Somerset House or other Government office. It mentions his imprisonment for debt during eight years, and must touch with sorrow the heart of every antiquary who reads it. We thank Dr. Drake for printing it ; and for his labours in connection with Kentish history.

KIT’S COTY HOUSE.

Of this ancient British monument a good etching has lately been published by Mr. E. Penstone, Stanford-in-the-Vale, Berks.