

THE COBHAMS AND MORESBYS OF
RUNDALE AND ALLINGTON.

BY G. O. BELLEWES.

RUNDALE in Shorne was one of the most ancient seats of the Cobhams. Weever writes in 1631: "Scarce the ruins appear to direct one where the house stood." Hasted in 1778 confesses that he does not know where it was situated, but Thorpe writes ten years later: "There are yet vestiges of the foundation of the manor-house . . . The house stood in the south-east corner of Randall wood, about half a mile south or south-west of Shorne-street, and there is still to be seen a large square fishpond about half an acre, but now dry."*

I. Sir Henry Cobham, "le uncle," with whom the pedigree of the Cobhams of Rundale as a separate family begins, was the second son of John Cobham, of Cobham and Rundale. In 1287-8 his brother John Cobham gave him in exchange for other lands all their father's lands in the parish of All Saints of Hoo, "which is called Euere."† He married Joan,‡ born in or before 1269, one of the two daughters and coheirs of Stephen of Penchester§ by his first marriage with Roese de Basevile. By a fine levied in 1309 she became the owner of the manors of Tunstall, Allington, and Elmele, and of the advowson of the church of Allington, a rent of £28 being reserved to Alice, widow of John de Columbers, the other daughter of Stephen of Penchester, and her heirs. From

* See Weever, *Funeral Monuments*, p. 329; Hasted, *Kent*, vol. i., p. 509; Thorpe, *Custumale Roffense*, p. 247.

† *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. vii., p. 330.

‡ See inquisitions *p.m.* on her grandmother, Hawise de Basevile, 1270, and her stepmother, Margaret of Penchester, 1309.

§ Cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*, sub "Pencester." There is a description of the stone figure of Stephen of Penchester in Peshurst Church in *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, No. 6, Part I.

this time the Cobhams of Rundale and their heirs were the owners of Allington Castle.*

Henry and Joan Cobham had issue:—

1. John Cobham, to whom by a fine levied in 1313 his father granted the manors of "Cumbe" and "Euere." Died before his father *s.p.*
2. Sir Stephen Cobham the elder (II.).
3. Thomas Cobham. Owned lands in Hollingbourne and Chafford.† Married and had issue.‡
4. Sir Stephen Cobham the younger. Married Margaret before 1323, in which year his mother Joan, as daughter of Stephen of Penchester, granted to him by fines, subject to the payment of life annuities to herself, the manors of Rodmeregge and Tunstall. He and his wife were both living in 1342.§ He is said to have left a son, Henry Cobham "of Dunstall."||

Sir Henry Cobham died about 1316. His cross-legged effigy in Shorne Church bore the following inscription:—

"SIR HENRI DE COBHAM LE EINE, SEIGNOUR DE ROUNDALL
FUST APELE, GIST ICY, DIEU DE SA ALME BIT MERCY."¶

Joan, his widow, died in 1324.

II. Sir Stephen Cobham the elder, knighted (with the first Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward II.) in 1306. According to Sir Edward Dennis's *Discourse of Arms*** he left his father's and took his mother's arms, viz., *Gules, a cross argent*. He married Isabel before 1309, in which year his father and mother granted to him the manor of "Heure" by a fine bearing an endorsement that "Alice, who was wife of John de Columbariis, asserts her claim." Perhaps the Cobham manor of Hever in the hundred of Hoo had been pledged in some way to the Columbers

* See Sir Martin Conway's Paper on Allington Castle in *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XXVIII.

† See Add. MS. 16,279, f. 367, and Holinshed, *Chronicles*, 1808 edition, vol. iv., pp. 804—6. Holinshed's account of the Cobhams was made, according to a note by Dr. C. S. Perceval in *Surrey Archæological Collections*, vol. ii., p. 291, by Francis Boteville, otherwise Thynne, *Lancaster Herald*, in 1586.

‡ See the Heralds' College pedigree in *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XI., p. 82.

§ Calendar of Close Rolls, p. 683. || Add. MS. 16,279, ff. 398-9.

¶ *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. vii., p. 253.

** Add. MS. 16,279, ff. 398-9.

family. He afterwards married Avice . . . ,* who joined with him in levying a fine of the manor and advowson of Allington in 1325, and by her had issue :—

1. Sir John Cobham (III.).
2. A second son, Robert Cobham, is mentioned in Dennis's *Discourse of Arms*, but no other reference to him has been found.

Sir Stephen Cobham was summoned to Parliament by writs from December 3rd, 1326, to (posthumously) January 20th, 1333-4.† He died in 1332. Avice, his widow, died in 1340.

III. Sir John Cobham, born in 1319. In 1342 he served in the French expedition.‡ By deeds enrolled July 15th, 1344, and May 21st, 1345,§ he was released from the rent of £28 that had been reserved to Alice de Columbers and her heirs. He was knighted, presumably between 1342 and 1346. In the latter year he paid an aid|| of 20s. in respect of Allington, and was then and on some subsequent occasions described as *miles*. He married and had issue :—

1. Sir Thomas Cobham (IV.).
2. John Cobham "of Hever" (*i.e.*, of Hever in the hundred of Hoo. He must not be confused with John Cobham of Hever near Chidingstone, and of Devonshire, one of the Sterborough Cobhams, who died in 1399).

In 1351-2 John Cobham joined Robert de Parys, Thomas Pronere, William Fifacre, William Filepot and John Colyn in granting to Stephen Fynamour, chaplain, and his successors in the chapel of St. Laurence at Longselle (Longsole) messuages and land in Aylesford and Allington.¶ Thorpe** says that "the proprietors of the castle and manor of Allington seem to have been the general, if not constant, patrons of this chapel," which was situate towards the south-west limits of Allington parish.

Sir John Cobham died in 1362.

IV. Sir Thomas Cobham, born in 1343. It was agreed in 1362 that he should have his father's manors of Rundale, Allington, etc.,

* She is described as mother of John Cobham in a deed enrolled May 21st, 1345. (Calendar of Close Rolls, p. 568.)

† G.E.C., *Complete Peerage*, sub "Cobham of Rundale."

‡ Cf. Calendar of Close Rolls, p. 683.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 387, 568.

|| *Feudal Aids*, vol. iii., p. 42.

¶ Inquisitions *ad quod damnum*, p. 457.

** *Customale Roffense*, p. 63. On p. 62 Thorpe gives a south-west view, taken in 1782, of this chapel.

and that his brother should have the manor of "Heuar" and all their father's lands in the hundred of Hoo.* He married, firstly, Maud,† daughter (and probably sole heir) of Thomas Morice, a wealthy pleader in the King's Court. Thomas Morice, in his will,‡ dated June 4th, 1368, left to Thomas de Cobham his leasehold interest in the manor of "Rondal" and all his armour. Thomas and Maud Cobham had issue:—

1. Sir Reynold Cobham (V.).
2. William Cobham of Staplehurst. He acquired the manor of "le Columbe" (Combe?) under his brother's will in 1405, and sold lands in Shorne in 1434.§ Died *s.p.* before 1458. The manor of "Combe" in the hundred of Hoo, said to have been bought of him, was the subject of a suit brought, probably between 1456 and 1460, by John Clerk, executor, and John Ingoldesby and Marion his wife, executrix, of Richard Smyth of Shorne, against Richard Brune (Bruyn?), feoffee of Richard Smyth.||

A brass in Cobham Church bore the following inscription:—

"ICY GIST DAME MAUDE DE COBEH'M QE [FUST LA FEME SIR THOMAS DE COBEH'M QE DEUIA LE IX JOUR DE AUERIL LAN DE GRACE MCCCCLXXX. . .]"¶

Sir Thomas Cobham married, secondly, Beatrice He died in 1393-4 and was buried within the monastery of Burle (Birling?). Beatrice, his widow, sued her stepson Reynold for dower in Allington in 1395.**

V. Sir Reynold Cobham, over twenty-one in 1393-4, acquired the manor of Milton-next-Gravesend in exchange for lands in Stepney, Hackney, Stratford and elsewhere, that had belonged to his grandfather, Thomas Morice.†† He married Elizabeth, daughter

* *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. vii., p. 335.

† Hitherto erroneously supposed to have belonged to the Pimpe family, probably because her brass is next to that of Lady Pimpe.

‡ Calendar of Wills, Court of Hustings, vol. ii., pp. 107—9. Thomas Morice may probably be identified with Thomas Moricz, who was Common Serjeant between 1356 and 1360. (*Letter Books of the City of London*, G., pp. 79, 107, 114.)

§ *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. vii., p. 340.

|| Early Chancery Proceedings, b. 26, No. 347.

¶ *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XI., p. 69. The words in brackets have been restored from Glover's MS. of 1574. According to Add. MS. 16,279, f. 367, she was buried in Christ Church, Canterbury.

** Wrottesley, *Pedigrees from the Plea Rolls*, p. 197.

†† This was one of the findings at the inquisition *p.m.* on Reynold Cobham in 1406.

and (after the death of her brother Arnold in 1420) heir of Sir Arnold Savage of Bobbing, the famous Speaker of the House of Commons,* by his marriage with Joan, daughter of William Echyngham, and had issue:—

1. John Cobham, died *s.p.* before 1405.
 2. Sir Thomas Cobham (VI.).
 3. Henry Cobham, died *s.p.* before 1429, perhaps before 1405.
1. Eleanor (VII.).

Sir Reynold Cobham died on October 31st, 1405.† Elizabeth, his widow, who had a life interest in the manor of Milton-next-Gravesend, was remarried to William Clifford. She died in 1451.

VI. Sir Thomas Cobham, born in 1397, died before 1429 (probably before 1424), leaving issue only a daughter, Elizabeth, who told the following distressful story in an undated Chancery Bill:‡—

The plaintiff Elizabeth is daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Cobham of Roundale, Knight, lord of Alyngton in Kent, who enfeoffed Robert Rowe and John Ryng of Aylesford, now dead, with all the lands he had in gavelkind in the said county. By his will the said Sir Thomas devised all his lands to the said Elizabeth and the heirs of her body. But Harry Rowe and Hugh Ryng, sons of the said feoffees, have held the said Elizabeth out of the lands these twenty-four years and more, to her disherison and undoing, unless she have help and succour.

Sureties for the prosecution, Thomas Palmer and William Wytton.

In a subsequent suit with the same object Robert Wotton appears as co-plaintiff with Elizabeth.§

VII. Eleanor Cobham was unmarried in 1413, in which year Dame Savage|| left to her “a set of grey furs and a new white gown.” She married Thomas Moresby. Her brothers having died

* Cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*, sub “Savage.” His daughter is there erroneously called Eleanor instead of Elizabeth.

† See Will No. I., *infra*.

‡ Early Chancery Proceedings, b. 20, No. 3. The date must be between 1425-6 and 1452-3 or between 1465-6 and 1482-3. § *Ibid.*, b. 32, No. 304.

|| Will of Joan, widow of Sir Arnold Savage, dated 13 April, proved P.C.C. (26, Marche) 12 May, 1413.

without male issue, she succeeded to the manors of Rundale, Allington, etc. In 1424 and 1429 Thomas and Eleanor Moresby joined in levying the following fines:—

St. Michael, 3 Henry VI.* William Swillington and Alice his wife: Thomas Moresby and Alianor his wife. As to the manor of Okyngton with three acres of land and 600 acres of marsh with appurtenances in Shorne and Hoo. Thomas and Alianor have granted to William and Alice the said manor, etc., they to pay one rose at the feast of the nativity of St. John Baptist. After the decease of Alice to revert to Thomas and Alianor and the heirs of Alianor.

The Octave of the Purification of the B.V.M., 7 Henry VI.† Roger Heron, clerk, Richard Moresby, clerk, John Darell, esquire, and John Kelsham, esquire: Thomas Moresby, esquire, and Eleanor his wife. Of the manors of Alyngton, Estpreston, Ockynton, Ouenhull, Rundale, and Melton next Gravesende, and of the advowsons of the churches of the aforesaid manors of Alyngton and Melton next Gravesende and of the chantry of Alyngton, to wit, that the said Thomas and Eleanor recognized the aforesaid manors and advowsons to be the right of the same John Kelsham, from which Thomas and Eleanor the plaintiffs have the said manors of Alyngton, Estpreston, Ouenhill and Rundale, except three acres of land and 80 acres of marsh in the parishes of Hoo, Hygham and Shorne, belonging to the same manor of Rundale, and the advowsons and chantry aforesaid, of the gift of the said Thomas and Eleanor, who remitted and quitclaimed them from themselves and the heirs of the said Eleanor, to the plaintiffs and the heirs of the said John Kelsham for ever. And further they granted to the plaintiffs, etc., as above, the reversion of the said manor and advowson of Melton, which William Clyfford, esquire, and Elizabeth, his wife, held for term of the life of the said Elizabeth, and of the manor of Ockynton, and the land above excepted from the manor of Rundale, which William Swylyngton and Alice, his wife, held for life of the said Alice of the inheritance of the said Eleanor.

The plaintiffs pay 300 marks of silver.

* Feet of Fines, Kent, case 114, No. 56.

† *Ibid.*, case 114, No. 231.

Richard Moresby, who apparently afterwards became the sole feoffee of the manors of Rundale, Allington, etc., may probably be identified with Richard Moresby, LL.B., who held some benefices in the diocese of London, and was Prebendary of Hoxton in St. Paul's Cathedral from 1427, and Archdeacon of London from 1430-1 until 1442-3, when he resigned his London preferments and became Rector of Bringhurst in the diocese of Lincoln.* One of his name died in 1462, being then Archdeacon of Huntingdon.

Thomas and Eleanor Moresby left a son and heir :—

Reynold Moresby (VIII.).

VIII. Reynold Moresby married Alice, daughter of Robert Chaldesworth (Cheldesworth)† of Sandwich. He died between 1453 and 1458, leaving issue (of whom the sons, but not the daughter, may have been by an earlier marriage) :—

1. John Moresby, succeeded to the manor of Milton-next-Gravesend, but not to the manors of Rundale, Allington, etc., in which the widow Alice had a life interest. In 1458 he and his brother William sued‡ Richard Bruyn as heirs in gavelkind for the manor of "Coumbe," which, together with the manor of "Evere," Henry Cobham had granted to John his son and his heirs. In support of their claim they set forth their descent from Henry Cobham with general accuracy, but they err in tracing it through his son John, who died *v.p.*, instead of through his surviving son Stephen. John Moresby died *s.p.* on July 10th, 1464.
2. William Moresby, died *s.p.* before 1465.
 1. Joan (IX.).

Alice, the widow of Reynold Moresby, was remarried to . . . Raynford. Between 1459-60 and 1465-6 she appears as plaintiff in the following Chancery Bill :§—

Alys Raynford, widow, late the wife of Raynold Moresby, and daughter of Robert Chaldesworth, sometime of Sandewyche.

* Hennessy, *Novum Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Londinense*.

† Robert Cheldesworth was plaintiff and Thomas Motte defendant in a suit relating to land near Sandwich. (Early Chancery Proceedings, b. 7, No. 289.)

‡ *De Banco*, Easter, 36 Henry VI., m. 440 dorso. The same manor was, as has been shewn above *sub* William Cobham of Staplehurst, claimed about the same time by other plaintiffs in a Chancery suit.

§ Early Chancery Proceedings, b. 27, No. 210.

Whereas Richard Moresby, clerk, was seised in his demesne as of fee of the manors of Alyngton, Rundale and Estpreston, co. Kent, and by his dedez of quete trust therewith enfeoffed John Kelsham, John Oxynden, Thomas Yong and Richard Smyth, to the use of the plaintiff for her life. Kelsham and Smyth are dead, Oxynden so aged and feeble that he cannot assist the plaintiff. Yong has given out to the farmers and tenants that the issues, rents, etc., are for his livelihood, not hers, so that she may not have the same, as she has been used to do these twenty years past.

Pledges of the prosecution, John Ingollesby and John Bagot.

IX. Joan Moresby, apparently the last descendant of Stephen of Penchester who occupied Allington Castle, was born in 1454, and found to be heir of her brother John in 1465. In 1470 she was a ward* of Nicholas Gaynesford of Carshalton, Surrey. She married, firstly, John, eldest son of Nicholas Gaynesford by his marriage with Margaret Sidney, and had issue:—

1. Robert Gaynesford, born 1476.
2. John Gaynesford.
1. Margaret, married Andrew Ferby of Paul's Cray Hill.

John Gaynesford, who is represented in armour in the well-known family monument at Carshalton,† died *v.p.* before August 10th, 1486. His widow was remarried to Robert Brent of Wilsborough, a widower,‡ who died in 1491.§ She died on July 16th or 17th, 1492.|| A brass in Carshalton Church (now lost) bore the following inscription:—

“HIC JACET D'NA JOHANNA NUPER UXOR JOHANNIS GAYNESFORD
AC FILIA ET HERES RAYNOLDI MORESBY DE COM. CANT. QUE
QUIDEM JOHANNA OBIIT XVIIJ DIE MENS. JULII A'O D'NI
MCCCCLXXXII CUJUS ANIMÆ PROPICIETUR DEUS. AMEN.”¶

* Court Roll of Melton-next-Gravesend, R.O.

† See *Notes and Queries*, 10 S., xi., 208.

‡ Robert Brent had previously married Joan, daughter and heir of Gregory Wyneday and widow of John Crekyng (Early Chancery Proceedings, b. 81, No. 291), and had issue by her two sons, John (died *v.p.*) and William, and a daughter Ellen, who became a nun. (*Visitation of Kent*, 1619, Harl. Soc., vol. xlii., p. 211.)

§ Will of Robert Brent, dated October 30th, proved P.C.C. (2, Doggett) December 2nd, 1491.

|| See will No. II., *infra*.

¶ Manning and Bray, *Surrey*, vol. ii., p. 515.

Both her sons* settled at Carshalton, but through the marriage of her daughter Margaret with Andrew Ferby a line of descendants of the Moresbys and Cobhams can be traced in Kent for nearly two more centuries.†

ABSTRACTS OF WILLS.

I.

Will (Latin) of Reynold de Cobham, knight, son of Sir Thomas de Cobham, knight, lord of Rondale, dated at Alyngton 11 Oct. 1405. To be buried within the monastery of Burle near the sepulchre of my father. To the high altar of the said monastery 6s. 8d. annually from my lands called Brokrede in the parish of Allysford. To every monk of the same monastery 6s. 8d. To the parish church of Alyngton 40s. To the high altar for tithes forgotten 6s. 8d. To the collegiate church of Maydestone 6s. 8d. To the church of Aylesford 20s. To the fabric of the church of Burle 20s. To that of the church of Shorne 6s. 8d. To William my brother my manor called Le Columbe. To Philpott otherwise Lawrence my servant 20s. To my wife's servant 6s. 8d. Goods in hall, kitchen, etc., at Alyngton to Elizabeth my wife and my children in equal portions. Executors, Elizabeth my wife, William de Cobham my brother, John Woley and Thomas Wyk. To each of them 40s. Proved at Maidstone 7 Jan. 1405-6. (Lambeth Wills, Arundel, i., 226^b.)

II.

Will of Johanne Brent, widow, of the parish of Alyngton, dated 11 July 1492. To be buried afore the high altar of All Hallows in Kersalton, Surrey. To the mother church of Winchester 8d. To the high altar of Kersalton 12d. To the light of the image of the Holy Cross there 12d. To the new work begun at Kersalton to be builded a chapel in the honour of our blessed lady Mary called the chapel of our lady Bullen 13s. 4d. My executors to provide, etc., a marble stone, with an image and scripture after their discretion, convenient to be laid on the place

* The family of Gainsford of Skendleby, co. Lincoln (see Burke's *Landed Gentry*), trace their descent from her elder son, Robert Gaynesford.

† See, "The Ferbys of Paul's Gray Hill, Kent," *Genealogist*, N.S., vol. xxvii., July 1910.

of my sepulchre within two months of my burying. To Jeffery Broke my servant one of my white horses with saddle and bridle. To Alice his wife, my servant, my new black gown, a pair of blankets, a pair of sheets, one brass pot, etc. To Johan, wife of John Down, my white gown furred. To Margaret my servant two yards of woollen russet cloth and 12*d.* To Elene the daughter of Robert Brent, late my husband, one salt cellar of silver. To William Brent the son of that same Robert one maser harnessed with silver. To Walter Gaynesford, clerk, one pair of amber beads, and to Johan Elyngbrough my black gown furred. The residue of my raiment to Margarete my daughter. To her six silver spoons, one salt cellar of silver with a covering, one goblet of silver, and my spruce chest in my parlour of Alyngton. To the parish church of Alyngton a tablecloth of diaper with two plain towels. To the chapel of our lady of Bolen aforesaid two tablecloths and a towel. Residue to Nicholas Gaynesford, esquire, Margarete Gaynesford and Walter Gaynesford, clerk, executors. Witnesses: John Leke, clerk, vicar of Kersalton, John Bishe, John (Swende?). Will as to the disposition of all my lands, tenements, etc., in the manors of Alyngton, Alsforde, Boxeley, Byrlyng, Shorne, Cobham, Hoo, and Melton next Gravesend. My feoffees shall suffer my executors to take all revenues, etc., to the time that my son Robert Gaynesford come to 24 years. They to pay all my debts and to perform my last will, and also pay 100 marks for the marriage of Margaret my daughter, and also govern, etc., the said Robert my eldest son, and set him to school, etc., and likewise to govern, etc., John my youngest son until he is 21, etc., and also to find, etc., my daughter Margarete till she be married, and if she decease or she be married then my said son John Gaynesford shall have the 100 marks. If my son John decease before he come to 21 the 100 marks to be disposed in alms deeds for the well of my soul, the souls of John Gaynesford and Robert Brent, late my husbands, and my father and mother and all Christian souls. When my son Robert is 24 my feoffees to make a state by deed indented to him and his heirs of all the said manors, etc., and in default of his heirs to his brother John and his heirs, and in default to my heirs. (Rochester Consistory Court, v., 245; no probate act entered.)