

CHENEY OF SHURLAND, KENT, AND OF TODDINGTON, BEDS.

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I SHOULD like to add a little to the account of the Cheney family given in the article "Shurland House," Vol. XXIII., p. 86, and to correct one or two inaccuracies in it.

The fact is generally overlooked that Sir Thomas Cheney, K.G., by his first wife Fridwith (daughter and coheir of Sir Thomas Frowyke, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas) had, besides three daughters married, and eventually coheirs, a son John, who lived to manhood and married Margaret Nevill, daughter of George, Baron Abergavenny. This son is curiously ignored by Dugdale, who represents the above Margaret as one of *four* daughters of Sir Thomas Cheney, and marries her to Lord Abergavenny, really her father!* Banks follows Dugdale, and this although Cooke in his Visitation of Kent had noted this elder son. He died early, but not, as just said, before arriving at a marriageable age, and in Berry's pedigree of Cheney he is said to have been "slain at Mutterd." The identity of the place has puzzled me, but a clue is found in Daniel Rowland's account of the Nevill family (1830). He notes the marriage of Margaret Nevill with John Cheney, whom he represents as "slain at Bologne," and on reference to Hall and Holiushed for the account of Henry VIII.'s expedition to Boulogne in 1544, it appears that when that place was attacked, siege was also laid by part of the English forces to "Muttrel" or "Mutterell," which name, on consulting the later historian Lingard, is found to be a barbarous Tudor rendering of Montreuil, twenty miles south-south-east of Boulogne. At that siege the Duke of Norfolk commanded, and among other notables with him

* *Baronage*, vol. ii., p. 290.

was "Sir Thomas Cheineie, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports," and also, though not mentioned by Holinshed, his son John, then perhaps not much less than 30 years of age.*

But it would appear that the young man's career was cut short by death, and that he fell in one of the skirmishes which, as the historian relates, "occurred daily between them that sallied forth of the gates and the Englishmen that watched and warded in the trenches, insomuch that divers lost their lives, and some were irrecoverably wounded." John Cheney, however, is not one of the few named, nor is the manner of his death noticed in any of the Kent Visitations which mention him. Thus I had almost given up search for evidence supporting Berry and Rowland when, happily, it appeared in an old pedigree of Cheney in Harl. MS. 1233, fol. 93 (or 40). Here the record is "John Cheney, eldest son, slain at y^e siege of Muttrull," another spelling of the town's name. The fact is surely of interest in the Cheney history, and it would be well that the deficiency should be supplied in the account of Burke and others. Rowland says that John Cheney's widow, Margaret (Nevill), married for second husband Henry Poole of Ditchling in Sussex.

Sir Thomas Cheney, K.G., of Shurland, married as his second wife Anne, daughter and eventually coheirress of Sir *John* Broughton of Toddington, Beds (died 1517), whose immediate heir was his son John Broughton. The latter died s.p. in 1529, and on his death his sister Anne—whether then or later married to Sir Thomas Cheney is not discovered—succeeded to the Toddington estate, which thus by marriage came to Cheney as similarly, about a hundred years before, it had come to Broughton by marriage with the heiress of Peivre. Sir Thomas Cheney died 8 December 1558, and his widow Dame Anne survived him two years and a half. Her son Henry, "the extravagant Lord Cheney," alienated the Kentish estates to which his elder half-brother's death had made him heir, and established himself on his mother's property at Toddington. Thither, to her old home, she

* Rowland gives the will of Lord Abergavenny made in 1535, the year of his death, in which he mentions his son-in-law John Cheney, who, if no more than 20 in 1535, must have been 29 in 1544.

appears to have accompanied him, for when she died, 16th May 1561 (eleven years before her son became Lord Cheney), she was buried in Toddington Church. Her altar-tomb with effigy, all sadly mutilated, is in the south transept, the inscription, fortunately almost perfect, reading thus:—

[Here liet]h Dame ANNE CHEYNE, Daughter
and Heyre of Sr JOHN BROUGHTON, Knight,
Marryed to Sr THOMAS [CHEYNE, K]night, L.
Warden of the Cinq Ports, Treasurer of Her
Maiesties Householde, of the Order of the Garter,
and one of Her Maiesties Privee Counsell.

Who had but one chylde,
the same beinge the Lord HENRY CHEYNE.

And she died the 16th daie of Maie,
the thyrd yeare of Q. Elizabeth her raigne,
Anno Dni. 1561.

As Henry, Lord Cheney (or Cheyne), did not get his title until 1572 it is evident that he erected this monument to his mother a good many years after her death, possibly at the same time preparing the altar-tombs of himself and his wife, presently to be noticed. The two latter tombs, however, may have been raised by Lady Cheney when widowed, or even by the heir, Lord Wentworth.

Lord Cheney, not content with the old house of the Broughtons, and before them of the Peivres, pulled it down, and raised on the same site a mansion which seems to have been famous for its magnificence. It was finished in 1563, or was then at least in a fitting condition to receive the Queen during one of her royal progresses.* On this occasion she dubbed her loyal host Knight, a forestalment of higher honours to come nine years later. In 1576 he, as Lord Cheney, was again visited by Her Majesty.† We may suppose that the building of the mansion and the royal entertainments largely led to the profuse expenditure we hear of, and to the impoverishment which involved the sacrifice by Lord Cheney of his paternal home and estates in Kent. It cannot, however, be thought that his new house at Toddington was

* Nichols, *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. 1823, vol. iii., p. 660.

† Nichols, *Herald and Genealogist*, vol. ii., p. 136.

at his death in 1587 in the decayed condition represented in the article to which I refer. Lysons's quoted description refers to the state of things at the beginning of the present century, some 220 years since the close of Lord Cheney's career, and fifty years after the express demolition of his mansion; and that he left it intact is evidenced by the fact that in it twenty-one years after his death, that is in 1608, his widow received King James I. and his Queen.*

Jane, Lady Cheney, was not, as quoted from Collins's *Peerage*, "the sole daughter and heiress of the wealthy Lord Wentworth." She was one of his seventeen children, and the eldest of nine daughters, and having eight brothers she was very far from being her father's heir. But as her marriage with Lord Cheney was issueless, and as there was no Cheney heir to the Toddington estates, they were settled on the representative of Lady Cheney's family, viz., her great-nephew Thomas, fourth Lord Wentworth of Nettlestead, who became Earl of Cleveland. Thus it was that Toddington came to the Wentworths.

Of the three once beautiful altar-tombs in Toddington Church that of Henry, Lord Cheney, has suffered most; indeed no more remains than the upper half of his effigy. It is represented in armour excellently sculptured, and resting on a mattress now placed on a mere mass of plastered masonry, which does duty for the original tomb; the inscription is lost. Whether the deplorable destruction has been caused by the falling of the roof of the transept, as one may think—for the whole Church was for many years shamefully neglected—or by barbarous hands, I have not learnt. Lysons, at the beginning of this century, described "the mutilated effigies lying on the ground, mingled with the broken ornaments of the tombs and the dung of birds and bats."† The present owners of the estate have probably done what they could to restore order, but large portions of the monuments are wanting. The tomb of Lady Cheney has fared somewhat better than her husband's, and is nearly in equal

* Nichols, *Progresses of James I.*, ed. 1828, vol. ii., p. 201. Dugdale also, in *History of St. Paul's*, Ellis ed., p. 101, refers to a letter written by King James from "Tuddington."

† Lysons, *Bedfordshire*, p. 141.

condition to that of Dame Anne Cheney, which preserves the table and inscription, but has lost the lower half of the effigy. The figure of Lady Cheney is entire but sadly battered, the head, almost destroyed, resting on a cushion. One side and one end of the finely wrought marble tomb remains, the rest of the block is now merely rubble. The panel at the head fortunately retains the inscription :—

Here lyeth D^a JANE, late Wife
of S^r HENRIE CHEYNE, Knight,
Ld. CHEYNE of Todington, and
eldest daughter of S^r THOMAS
WENTWORTH, Knight, Lo.
WENTWORTH, and Lord
Chamberlaine to King
Edward the SIXT. Who
deceased the 16 daie
of April A^o Dⁱ 1614.

Here lies my bodie, corruption's bed,
My soule by faith and hope to Heaven is led,
Imprisoned by life, death set me free,
Then welcome death, step to æternite.*

Toddington, on the death of Lady Cheney, may be thought to have passed beyond the range of Kentish interest; yet a few lines may be allowed to the destiny of that which had been Cheney property. The heir, Lord Wentworth, either partly altered the mansion or completed a side which had not been finished, for in the hands of the present owner are drawings of the principal "elevation" in Classic style, whereas Lord Cheney's building must have been Tudor. Under his full and best known title, the Earl of Cleveland, he was a very loyal and famous Cavalier general, and sharing the misfortunes of his party, suffered great pecuniary loss in the service of his sovereign. His impoverishment, indeed, seems to have exceeded that of Lord Cheney; he, too, sold his patrimony at Nettlestead (Suffolk), but Toddington—his only son having predeceased him—descended to his granddaughter Henrietta Maria Wentworth, and her mother and

* The monuments were seen by the writer in 1890. They are described in *The Topographer and Genealogist* (J. G. Nichols), vol i., p. 156.

guardian Philadelphia (Carey), who seems to have been a clever and careful woman, did much to redeem the estate.

The story of the heiress, the Baroness Wentworth (she succeeded to her grandfather's inferior title only), as connected with that of the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, is one of the sad romances of English history. She died broken-hearted at Toddington nine months after Monmouth's execution. After her demise in 1686 the succession to the estate involves a complicated relation not here demanded.* It will be sufficient to say that in 1745 it came to one of the northern Wentworths, William, Earl of Strafford. At that time the mansion had been uninhabited for half a century, and was consequently in a ruinous condition; so the Earl, whose seat was Wentworth Castle in Yorkshire, which he had built at great expense, not willing to undertake the restoration of the Toddington mansion, demolished it, leaving a remnant only (including the kitchen noticed by Lysons) as a habitation for his steward. On this Earl's death in 1791 the oft-repeated failure of an heir male which has attended this property placed it in the divided possession of coheirs. In 1806 it was purchased by John Cooper, Esq., and the fourth in succession of that family is now the owner. A commodious manor-house was built in 1842, and with it was incorporated all that remained of Lord Cheney's mansion.

* For the course of succession, and the history of the mansion and estate of Toddington generally, perhaps I may be allowed to refer to my book *Wentworth*.—W. L. R.