

THE FAMILY OF LINGEN.

BY J. TOM BURGESS.

“The glory of children are their fathers,” we are told in the well-known motto of the Harleian Society, and the men and women of Herefordshire may be fairly congratulated on their glorious ancestry, and the long array of noble and historic names they have added to the roll of fame and the annals of our common country. If our pride of ancestry gives place in any degree, it is to that courtesy and “simple faith” of which the Laureate sings as being superior to “Norman blood.” In Hereford we have met with courtesy, and have seen so many manifestations of simple faith, that we may fairly say that the fathers of the land are not disgraced by their children, who have received us so hospitably during the present Meeting.

It is not my purpose to give a general disquisition on the fathers of Herefordshire, but to trace out the stream of life of one family as far as possible, and to show how it has had its volume increased by other streams, and how it in its turn has lost to a great extent its distinctive name, which, though not unknown at the present time in our midst, is no longer associated with the historic sites, lordly castles, and baronial halls which once resounded with their names and were filled with their retainers. Many families of renown yet quarter the white roses on the red bend crossing the gold and azure barry of six of the family of Lingen, and consider it a honour to do so. The Princes of Powis no longer wage war against the Lords of Sutton Walls, for in the veins of the descendants of Sir John Lingen, living when Hereford gave a title to the reigning king, the blood of both families flow in harmony and in peace. The story of the family of Lingen, with its loves, its tragedies, and romances, can hardly be separated from

the places which they made their own, and some of which are included in the programme of the Meeting.

At a time when the City of Hereford was in its infancy, and its distinctive name was hardly known, a family of some importance resided in the chattellany of Wigmore, a place afterwards renowned as the seat of the Norman family of Mortimer. Their early history is involved in doubt, but at the time of the Domesday survey one Turstin (the Fleming) de Wigmore, who married Agnes, daughter of Alured de Merleberge, held the manor of Lingen, on the borders of Shropshire, under the Mortimers. It is worthy of note that many Flemings had settled in South Wales previously to the Conquest, and in the course of the next fifty years large colonies were formed in Pembrokeshire. This Turstin is admittedly an ancestor of the Lingens, who assumed that patronymic in the reign of the first Richard (circa 1190), when Ralph de Wigmore founded the Priory of Limebrook. This adoption of a fresh surname is not uncommon, a well-known instance occurring in the case of Turchill, the Sheriff of Warwickshire at the time of the Conquest, who, on being dispossessed by the Conqueror, retained certain manors under the Norman earls, and assumed the surname of Arden, from the forest land in which the estates were situate. The coat armour of the early Lingens was argent, charged with three chevronells sable; or, as an old pedigree has it, three greyhounds; but a change of coat armour was not uncommon, for the ancient family of Shirley changed their simple pales of or and sable in the same manner, when the distinctive lines of Norman and Saxon became merged into one general English nation, and the laws of heraldry better developed.

By his marriage with Agnes Merleberg, Turstin acquired the manor of Much Cowarne, and his son Ralph appears to have married Joyce, the daughter of Sir Jasper de Croft, of Croft Castle, a family long and honourably distinguished in Herefordshire history. He appears to have left two sons, the first Sir William Wigmore, who, like his father-in-law, became a knight of the Holy Sepulchre, and married Rose, the daughter of Sir Walter Pedewardine, but left no descendants. His brother Ralph

succeeded to the estates and founded the Priory of Limebrook as before mentioned. His eldest son, Sir John Lingen, first bore the Lingen arms, barry of six or and azure, on a bend gules, three roses argent. We have no record of who his mother was, or whom he married. His brother Brian became a secular canon in the monastery of Wigmore. We have no record of the doings of the Lingen family during this period (circa 1086—1250), but as the Lingen estates were held of the Lords of Wigmore, and the Mortimers were busy now against the Welsh, and now opposing the Empress Maud, these feudal vassals would follow their fortunes and engage in the crusades. This Sir John Lingen appears to have left four sons and one daughter—a daughter renowned among the romances of Herefordshire, and whose name in the family pedigree is surrounded by a gilded band. Constantia Lingen married in 1253 Grimbald, son and heir of Richard Pauncefort, a name not unknown in Leicestershire pedigrees, and her marriage settlement is dated 1253, by which John de Lingain gives to the bridegroom's father, Richard de Pauncefort, "sexies virginti et decem marcas, duodecim boves et centum oves" and the manor of Much Cowarne. Richard de Pauncefort gives his son Grimbald "centum solidates terræ in maneris de Hatfield de quibus dictus Grimbaldis dictam Constantia dotabit ad ostium Ecclesiæ quando ipsam desponsabis;" he also promises to settle further property as a jointure. This dower shows the wealth and position which the family had acquired. This lady is said to have been not only very beautiful, but noted for her conjugal attachment, which is vouched for by the following anecdote:— "In 1720 Grimbaldis Pauncefort joined Prince Edward, son of Henry III, and Louis IX in the ninth and last crusade. He does not appear to have reached the Holy Land, but to have been captured by the Saracens at Tunis, about the time that Louis IX was struck down by the plague. The infidels demanded for the ransom of their captive no less a price than a limb of his wife Constantia, of whose beauty and constancy they appear to have heard. The present rector of Much Cowan, the Rev. J. G. Graham,¹ has thus embodied the incident in

¹ Formerly Curate at Holy Trinity, Coventry.

his memoir of Much Cowarne Church :—

No sooner hears Constantia that no less
Will free her husband than her sever'd hand,
At once she decides with love's promptitude
To fulfil the hard condition. O when
Did hardness e'er deter woman from deed
Of kindness? The hardness which others see,
She sees not; or rather heeds not: true love
Shall conquer all. Like the fair Godiva
She laughs at hard conditions which depend
On her alone. Or, like that lady brave
Who gave her arm to serve for bolt to guard
The precious lives of those she lov'd so well.

But to our tale. The limb is lopp'd and sent;
The captive is set free, How can we think
But that he hastens home as fast as horse
And ship can bear him? Let Prince Edward¹ win
His bootless honours—love is more to him
Than aught on earth—though he be belted knight,
Honour lies now in speeding to his home.
We can almost mark the spot—almost track
The winding lane 'long which Grimbaldu's rode—
The very spot on which these lovers met.
For who henceforth would love as they?

We may smile at this legend, romantic though it is, notwithstanding that Duncumb, in his *History of Herefordshire*, tells us that Constantia Pauncefort's heroic conduct is confirmed and proved by the fact of her husband's altar-tomb, with their recumbent effigies, once existing at the east end of the south aisle of the church, the latter cross-legged, and habited like a Norman knight, the former exhibiting her left arm couped above the wrist. The battered and defaced remains of Grimbaldu's effigy have alone survived the ravages of time, and now lie on the north side of the chancel, a precious relic of the past. When and why it was placed there the writer has been unable to ascertain. Duncumb informs us that the dispersed fragment (alas! we have now to use the singular number) of the effigies and monument were examined in the sixteenth century by Mr. Silas Taylor, and the following is his account in his own words (MS. Harl. Bibl.) :—“To gainsay the report about it, I diligently viewed the record which might have been between the two figures: the female laid next the wall of the south aisle, on her right side, by which means his left side might be

¹ Two years afterwards King Edward I.

contiguous to her right, the better to answer the figure ; also, the stump of the woman's arm is somewhat elevated, as if to attract notice ; and the hand and wrist cut off are carved close to his left side, with the right hand on his armour, as if for note." In Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments*, part ii, vol. i, ccxxviii, 1796, there is an allusion to this monument, but the account is evidently taken from Duncumb, and contains no new particulars. The story may have some foundation in fact, but it probably arose from the mutilated effigy.

Passing from the realm of fable, we know that the text of the marriage settlement of this memorable pair is preserved by Blount.

Constantia's brother, the second Sir John Lingen, received a grant of free warren of Lingen, in the 40th year of Henry III. He lived during the long and troublous insurrection of Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, and appears to have been one of the Commissioners, with Roger de Mortimer and the Earl of Gloucester, appointed to settle terms with the discontented Welsh, for the injuries done to Prince Edward. In these disturbances we find the name of Peter de Montfort of Beaudesert, in Warwickshire, a follower of his namesake, the great Earl of Leicester, and the first Speaker of the English Parliament. This Sir John de Lingen was, in the year 1260, one of the witnesses to a grant from Walter de Clifford, Lord of Corfham, to Sir John de Haleton, of six acres of his "bog" (?) at Cleobury, to be measured by the royal perch, and with license to dig coals within the Forest of La Clie, to sell or *give away*. One of the first records of coal in Shropshire. He appears to have fought with the Mortimers against Simon de Montfort at Evesham.

A third John de Lingen was knighted by Edward the First, according to Ashmole, "at a great solemnity, in order to a royal voyage against the Scots." The family was becoming more influential in the county, for Ralph, son of this Sir John, became M.P. for Hereford in 1374, and married Margery, sister of Sir Robert Pembrugge, of Tong Castle, Salop ; and his second son, Richard de Lingen, married Isabel, daughter of Philip Holgate, 4th of Henry IV. This Richard appears to have been entrusted with some special powers by the king. A

warrant is extant and printed in Blount's *Law Dictionary*, of such an unusual nature that I give it in full:—

“Richard de Lingein, Emprover desueti commission. Nostre ne dont Seigneur le Prince deins le Comte de Hereford et le Marches ad joygnant a toutry y ceux qui cests letters verront ou orront salutez. Sachery moy aver grant a une Ianin de Brompton, loyal et leige nostre Seigneur le Roy et ses servantes de vendre et le Marche ad joygnant sans empechment ou arrest de nulluy come loyal et leige hommes a son propre use et encrese *sans refreshment des Rebels de gales*. Et cest mon lettre serra son garrant. En temoinage de quel chose a y ceste jay mise mon seal. Don a Lemestre le 11th jour de Jules le Ann de Rege 6 Roy Henric le quart apres le conque quarte,” 1403. Owen Glendower being then in arms against the king.

Long before this Ralph Lingen, the nephew of Richard and son of the first Ralph Lingen, had succeeded his father in the representation of Herefordshire. He sat in the Parliament of 1382, and married Jane the daughter of John Russell, presumably judging from her arms of the Strentham family in Worcestershire. We no longer find the Lingens identified with the manor from which they took their name. This Ralph Lingen is styled of Sutton, or of Sutton Freene, a place historically interesting from its connection with the seat of the Mercian kings, and the site of the palace where the tragedy took place, which disgraced Offa's name, and induced him to found, as some retribution, the grand cathedral of Hereford, of St. Alban, and made a pilgrimage to Rome in expiation of his crime. The event is noticed by Phillips in his *Georgic Cyder*:—

“And Sutton acres drench'd with regal blood
Of Ethelbert, when to th' unhallow'd feast
Of Mercian Offa, he invited came
To treat of spousals; long connubial joys
He promis'd to himself, allur'd by fair
Elfrida's beauty, but deluded, dy'd
In height of hopes—oh! hardest fate to fall
By shew of friendship and pretended love.”

Sutton appears to have remained in the possession of the Crown until the Conqueror granted it to Nigel, the physician to the king. Henry I. granted free

warren of this part of Sutton, then known as Sutton St. Nicholas, to Alexander the Secular, whose daughter married Walter de Freene, Lord of Moccas (circa 1290). Two parts of it became the property of the Talbots, but were sold by Sir John Talbot to Clementina, daughter of Stephen Weite, who married Richard Walwyn, of Hellens, 1420, whose descendants sold it to the Lingens, who held the other portion of the lordship. As early as Henry III the Lingens held the royalty of fishing and fowling in the king's manor of Marden, adjacent to Sutton.

Isabel, the sister of this Ralph Lingen, who died in 1446-47, married her cousin Fulke de Pembrugge, and the last male of his line. She was busy in the twelfth year of Henry IV (1410) in the foundation of the religious establishment since known as Tonge College. In the chancel of the college are the arms of Lingen and the arms of Ludlow empaling Lingen, a lion rampant double queued empaling Lingen (Dudley or de Montfort), which Blakeway, in his *Sheriffs of Shropshire*, does not say. She appears to have married three times—first, Fulke de Pembrugge; second, Sir John Ludlow; third, Sir Thomas de Peytevine, whose arms I have not been able to discover.

The first time the name of Lingen occurs in the roll of the Sheriffs of Herefordshire is in 1470, when Sir John Lingen, knight, of Sutton and Lingen, held that office. We find him holding it again in 1476. In 1486, in 1495, and in 1522, and for the next century, the name of Lingen is conspicuous in the sheriff roll. This Sir John Lingen married Isabella, the third daughter and coheir of Sir John Burgh, knight, Lord of Mawddwy, who died in 1471, the last heir of the princes of South Wales, Lords of Powis. The de Burghs exercised great power during the reigns of the Lancastrian princes. Sir John was four times Sheriff of Shropshire, and was a person of great magnificence. He had greatly "increased the family estates by marrying Joane, the younger daughter and coheir of Sir William Clopton, of Radbroke, knight, whereby he acquired the manors of Radbroke and Clopton, in the county of Gloucester, and divers other lands and manors, in the counties of Warwick and

Gloucester.”¹ The other coheir of Sir William Clopton married first, Roger Harewell, of Wotton Wawen, in the county of Warwick, and secondly, Thomas Herbert. As the descendants of the coheiresses of Sir John de Burgh still exist, I may briefly here mention that Elizabeth, the eldest, married William Newport, the ancestor of the Earls of Bradford; Ankaret, the second daughter, married John Leighton, of Leighton, Salop; Isabella, the third daughter, married Sir John Lingen; and the youngest daughter also named Elizabeth, married Thomas Mytton, of Shrewsbury, a well-known family in Shropshire annals.

The property of Sir John de Burgh does not appear to have been divided for several years after his death. Among the Loton papers is preserved a singular letter on the subject of this partition from Sir John Lyngen to Sir Thomas Leighton, written in 16th Henry VII:—

“To my ryght worshipfull cosen Sir Thomas Leghton [be] this delivered in all haste.”

“Right worshipfull Syr,—I recomaunde me unto you desyryng to hear of your prosperitie, whiche J’hu p’serve, Amen. Lettyng you to underston that my brother Mytton and my nevow John Newporte hath wryttn unto me to have partyc’on of all the londs that wher my fader in law Sir John de Bourgh’s, and my lady hys wyff; and I have wryttn unto them under this form; that we should have a mettyng, and there to have a comynycac’on for the partyc’on of said londs, and to put the 4 partyse of the londs equally devydyd in waxe, and so to take the parts thereof as fortune comythe: yf so be that they fynde any defaute in the mackyng of the books of partyc’on lett them amend hytt. Also I have poynted the plase of mettyng at Lodlow, the 7th day of the monythe of May, and yf so be that ye wylle be greable therto, praying you to sende me in wrything under yo^r seale whether ye wylle be greable or no, by my serv^t, the whyche shalle bring you answeere betwixte this and Estyr, as avoute the maryage betwixte my cosyn Acton, and my dortyre Jane. No more unto yow at this tyme, but J’hu p’serve, Amen. Yo^r lovyng wncull, John Lyngen, knight.”

This meeting apparently tock place on the 12th of May, 1501, thirty years after the death of Sir John de

¹ Bridgeman’s *Princes of South Wales*, p. 275.

Burgh, when Sir John Lyngen and Isabel his wife received "the lordships and manors of Yocelton and Stretton, with the mill and the park, part of the forest of Cawes, Kynnerton, Sturchley, Wentnor, with the advowson of the church Gravenor, Overs, Shelve, and the fourth part of Walton, with the appurtenances in the said county," as the portion which fell to the said Isabel, as daughter and heiress of Sir John de Burgh, and of her mother's inheritance; "the lordships and manors of Rodbroke, Gretson, Wykelford, Upton Haselor, Exhall, Binton, Barton, Betford, Benhall, and Mickleton, within the co. of Warwick; lands and hereditaments in Rodbroke, Gretson, Wikelford, Upton Haselor, Exall, Binton, Barton, Betford, Benhall, and Mickleton, with the appurtenances."

Sir John Lingen died in 1522, and was buried at Amestry church, near Lingen, by the side of his wife, and their beautiful monumental brass yet remains on their tomb. The sisters of Sir John married well. Isolda espoused Brian Harley, an ancestor of the Earls of Oxford; Matilda married Thomas Devereux, ancestor of the Earls of Essex.

The fortunes of the family still continued to rise: the son of Sir John and Isabel, the second Sir John Lingen, of Sutton, was sheriff in 1505, 1516, and 1520. He married in 1512 Eleanor, daughter and heiress of Thomas Milewater, of Stoke Edith, and acquired thereby that beautiful and picturesque estate. Stoke Edith is supposed to take its name from the Saxon Saint Editha, daughter of King Egbert, whose story I have told in my *Historic Warwickshire*. It was the property of Ralph Toderic (the king's standard bearer at the battle of Hastings), at the time of the Domesday survey. Like Sutton, it came into the hands of the Walwyns. It continued in the Lingen family till the Restoration, when it was permanently alienated. The Lingen family now seemed to have attained the height of their prosperity. A third John Lingen succeeded his father in 1530, and married Margaret the daughter of Sir Thomas Englefield, of Englefield, co. Berks, K.B., Speaker of the House of Commons and Chief Justice of Chester. In his time Catherine of Arragon held Marden (p. 28) during her

forced widowhood. There seems to have been many disputes between the Lingens and the Crown, according to Lord Coningsby's *History of the Manor of Marden*, judging from the Inquisition printed in page 30, which recites the previous agreement between the Crown and the Lingens. John Lingen seems to have taken part in the conspiracy to put Lady Jane Grey on the throne at the death of Edward VI. (p. 42), and he died the same year that Mary came to the throne, 1544. He was succeeded by the fourth John Lingen, who married a daughter of John and Sibell Ruynton, co. Hereford. He represented the city in 1523. His daughter Jane married William Shelley, described in the *History of Marden*, as of Clapham, Surrey, but in the Bridgeman pedigree as of Michelgrove, co. Sussex. It would appear as if the Shelleys had conformed to the old religion, and were connected with the various conspiracies to release Mary Queen of Scots, and with the projected invasion under the Duke of Guise. He was attainted in 1583 and executed in 1597, and his property confiscated to the Crown. Mrs. Shelley was also imprisoned, but was subsequently released and permitted to enjoy for her life the estates she inherited from Sir John de Burgh. These passed away at her death (childless) by the grant of King James I. to Sir Richard Preston, Lord Dingwall.

The male branch of the family was continued by William Lingen, uncle of Mrs. Shelley, who married Cicelia, daughter of Anthony Ingram, of Wolverhampton. Their son Edward succeeded to the estates of Sutton and Stoke Edith on the death of his cousin. He appears to have been mixed up in the troubles of the previous reign, for in the manor of Marden he is spoken of as "the traitor." He was, however, sheriff of Herefordshire in 1618, and married Blanch daughter of Sir Roger Bodenhams, of Rotherwas, co. Hereford. Edward Lingen left two sons; from the youngest, Roger, who purchased the ancestral manor of Radbroke from Lord Dingwall, the the Lingen-Burtons of Longner, Salop, are descended. The eldest stands forth prominently in the Lingen annals as the last male Lingen of Stoke Edith and Sutton, and a famous cavalier. The manor of Lingen had been given by King James to Sir John Peyton, nor

was it ever restored to the family, though they were distinguished for their loyalty throughout the civil wars. Henry Lingen raised a regiment in the king's service and joined with the Coningsbys, Scudamores, Crofts, and Pyes against the Harleys, Kyrles and Westphalings against the parliament. His siege of Brampton Brian and defence of Goodrich are matters of history. In 1645 he received the honour of knighthood from the hand of King Charles, at Mr. Pritchard's house near Grosmont. He was cast into prison after the king's defeat, and fined £6,342. Besides his expenses in maintaining a regiment of horse in the king's service, it is stated that Sir Robert Harley's losses at Brampton Brian Castle were estimated to exceed £12,990, and the Parliamentary Commonwealth ordered the greater amount to be levied off the Lingen estates, but Edward Harley, Sir Robert's son, generously forgave the whole. The following curious memorandum shews the extreme distress to which Charles I was reduced for want of money March 23, 1623, and what plate was due to Sir Henry Lingen, high sheriff co. Hereford, upon a privy seal for the loan of £20 lent to His Majesty :—

“One guilt salte with a cover, one guilte salte with a cover, one guilte trencher, one great silver salte, one caudle cup, one little spoon, and one tonne or tankard.”

The caudle cup is now in the possession of Mrs. Geo. Unett, of Castell Frome, Leamington, who is one of the coheiresses of Sir Henry Lingen; for though the gallant cavalier had three sons and seven daughters, only one, Frances, had descendants as far as known, and she married John Unett, of Castle Frome, co. Hereford. His great grandson Henry Unett married Jane, the daughter of William Lingen, of Sutton Court, who was grandmother to Mrs. Geo. Unett and her sisters, the surviving coheirs of Sir John de Burgh and Sir Henry Lingen. In the *History of the Manor of Marden*, p. 537, there are some particulars of the old Cavalier, who was born at Rotherwas, near Hereford, and who died of small-pox at Gloucester, on his way from London, where he had been attending to his duties as representative of Herefordshire in January, 1661-2. The *Chronicle* says :—“Sir Henry Lingen, eldest son of

Edward the traitor, died, having been in the compass of five years a knight, and no knight, and a knight again, and after having (between the years 1647, the year before King Charles I was murdered, and the year 1660, when his son was restored) with equal vigour and zeal acted the glorious part of a loyal cavalier and a complying Round-head; the last part so near the time that it pleased the Almighty to restore its lawful prince to the throne of his ancestors, and his injured mother, the Queen, to her jointured lands in Marden and Sutton, that it could no more be covered than excused, as 'tis said, broke his hardy heart." It is said also that he was in debt to the Crown at least £400, for the rent of Sutton and his royalties in Marden. He died, however, the owner of the demesnes of Stoke Edith and Sutton Freene, with the mills there called the King's Mills; also the demesnes of Sutton St. Nicholas, Aymestry, Connop and Lye, with 500 acres of wood there, the demesnes of Burghill and Tillington, the manor of Broxwood, the demesne of Weston, in the parish of Brewardine, then in course of litigation, which terminated against his heir, who established a right to a fee farm rent of £13 6s. 8d., payable out of the manor of Weston. Sir Henry had also possessions in the counties of Salop, Warwick, and Essex. His rent roll amounted to £1250 per annum. His property was divided between his seven surviving daughters in 1670. Stoke Edith was sold to Paul Foley of Bromsgrove, an ironmaster, and a great friend of Richard Baxter, in whose family it still remains. Sutton Freene or Freene Court was sold by Mrs. Unett and her sisters in 1873. Sutton Walls is in the possession of Mr. Arkwright.

Castle Frome, near Ledbury, the married home of Frances Lingen, was a former manor of the Lacies, and passed from them to the Devereux, and thence by marriage to the Braces, whose heiress married John Unett, who then became (*jure uxoris*) lord of Castle Frome. The Unetts intermarried with nearly every family of importance in the county of Hereford, and remained lords of Castle Frome until the last century, when they made Freene Court their principal seat.

There are many collateral branches of the Lingen

family remaining in different parts of the country,—the Lingen-Burtons of Longner, the Lingens of Wytton, co. Salop, and the branch represented by the Secretary to the Committee of Council, Ralph W. Lingen, Esq., and Dr. Lingen, of the city of Hereford. Thus though the old name has like many a mighty river lost its distinctive title, it still survives in the minor streamlets, whose names are written in the *Libro d'Oro*,—the noble and gentle men of England.