

REPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

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AT ITS TWENTY-FOURTH GENERAL MEETING,

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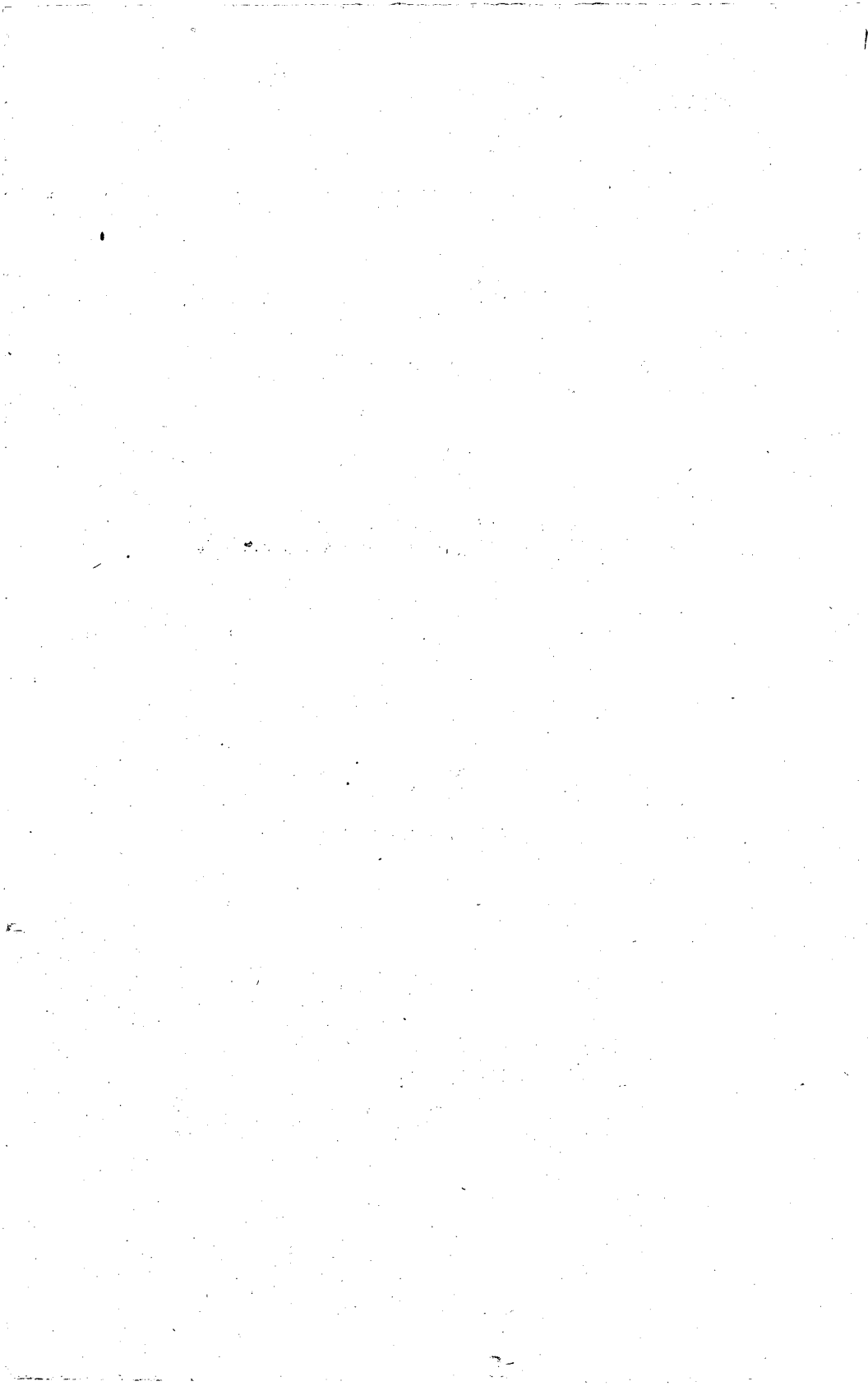
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XXVII. ON AGNES LADY WENMAN, TRANSLATOR OF
ZONARAS. BY CHARLES HENRY COOPER, F.S.A.

[Read 16 Nov. 1863.]

IN the University Library are two large folio MS. volumes (Dd. 1. 18, 19) having at the beginning of Vol. I. this title:

The Historyes and Chronicles of the world. By John Zonaras. Contayneing all the most memorable actions happened in the world in the revolution of sixe thousand sixe hundred yeares and more. Digested into three Books. Done out of Greeke into French with annotations in the margeant, vpon the diuersitie of the Greeke copies; with aduertisements, and Index of the most memorable things. Paris. for John Parent in Saint James Streete, M.D.LXXXIII. And done into English, by the noble and learned Lady, the Lady Agnes Wenman, sometime wife of the Right honourable Richard Lord Vis-Count Wenman deceased.

These volumes appear to have been transcribed from Lady Wenman's autograph of which a portion (corrected by the person who made the transcript) is contained in another MS. in the same Library (Mm. 3. 32).

The foregoing description of the noble and learned lady by whom Zonaras was done into English, although strictly accurate,

might induce the supposition that she was a noble author who has been overlooked by the indefatigable Horace Walpole. It will be seen, however, that her death occurred before her husband's elevation to the peerage, and consequently she had no claim to insertion in Walpole's work.

She was the only surviving daughter of Sir George Fermor, of Easton Neston, in Northamptonshire, by his wife Mary, daughter and heiress of Thomas Curson, Esq. It does not appear at what period she married Sir Richard Wenman, who was knighted in 1596, for his gallant behaviour at the taking of Cadiz.

It is probable that she was a Roman Catholic, for immediately after the discovery of the gunpowder plot she underwent examination, touching a letter written to her by Mrs Elizabeth Vaux, bidding her be of good comfort, for there should soon be toleration for religion. Sir Richard Wenman, her maid Margaret Pain, and Lady Tasburgh, her mother-in-law, were also examined on this matter. (*Green's Cal. Dom. State Papers. James I.* i. 240, 259, 266—268, 271).

She was buried at Twyford in Buckinghamshire, 4th July, 1617. Mr Baker, in his elaborate pedigree of the family of Fermor (*Hist. of Northamptonshire*, II. 143) erroneously states that she was living in 1634.

Her children were, Thomas, second Viscount Wenman; Edward, who died unmarried; Philip, third Viscount Wenman; Charles, who died young; Penelope, wife of Sir John Dynham; Jane, wife of Arthur Goodwin, Esq.; Dorothy, buried at Twyford, 12th Nov., 1624; and Mary, wife of Martin Lister, Esq.

Her husband, Sir Richard Wenman, who was created an Irish peer, by the title of Viscount Wenman of Tuam, 30th July, 1628; died in the 67th year of his age on the 3rd of April (Good Friday), 1640, being buried on 7th of April, at Twyford, where is a monument to his memory.

He married two other wives, namely, Elizabeth, buried at Twyford, 27th April, 1629; and Mary, buried there 28th July,

1638 (Willis's *Hundred of Buckingham*, 340). It is remarkable that no notice is taken of either of the wives in the inscription on Viscount Wenman's monument at Twyford, or in the pedigree of Wenman, given by Lipscomb (*Hist. of Buckinghamshire*, III. 131, 132).

John Lodge (*Peerage of Ireland*, II. 367, ed. Archdall, IV. 282) gives an imperfect and very erroneous account of this nobleman. He states not the date of his death; speaks of his promoting the interests of Charles I. during the civil war, and his giving a kind and generous reception to Seth Ward when expelled from Sidney College (utterly unmindful of the fact, that he died before the civil war began, and of course before Seth Ward's expulsion from Sidney). He makes no mention whatever of his second or third wives, and states that his children by his first wife were Thomas, Viscount Wenman; and Elizabeth, the wife of Greville Verney, Esq., who died 9th December, 1648; thus suppressing the names of seven of his children, and making him the father instead of the grandfather of Mrs Verney, who was really the daughter of his son, Thomas Viscount Wenman (Willis's *Hundred of Buckingham*, 330; and Bridges's *Northamptonshire*, I. 535).

Messrs. Burke (*Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies*, 557) have followed Lodge's account of Viscount Wenman, and seem not to have been aware of the more accurate biography given by Browne Willis.

It must be noted, however, that Willis makes two singular mistakes. He states in one place that Viscount Wenman was 40 years old when his father died, in 1577. If so he would have been in his 103rd year in 1640, when he himself died. His parents did not marry till 1572, and therefore it cannot be doubted that for *forty* ought to be read *four*. Indeed in another place Willis states that he died in his 67th year. He also states that Viscount Wenman's daughter Jane, the wife of Arthur Goodwin, Esq., was mother to Philip Lord Wharton. She was

his mother-in-law, Lord Wharton having married her daughter Jane (Pedigree of Goodwin in Langley's *Hundred of Desborough*, 442).

Lady Tasburgh, described as the mother-in-law of Lady Wenman, was her husband's mother, and was a widow when the examinations to which allusion has been made were taken. She was Jane, daughter of William West Lord Delawarr, and married Thomas Wenman, Esq. (the father of Sir Richard Wenman) at St Dunstan in the West, London, 9th June, 1572. His death occurred 22nd July, 1577; she subsequently married James Cressie, Esq, who was buried at Twyford, 23rd June, 1581. On 16th Jan., 1587-8, she married at Twyford, Thomas Tasburgh, Esq., who was knighted in or before 1590. After his death, which occurred in 1602, she took for her fourth husband Ralph Sheldon, Esq., of Beoly, co. Worc., who died 30th March, 1613, æt. 77 (Willis's *Hundred of Buckingham*, 327, 329, 339, 240. *Cal. Chan. Proc. temp. Eliz.* III. 161; Suckling's *Suffolk*, I. 199; *Collect. Topogr. et Geneal.* II. 9; V. 213; Malcolm's *Lond. Rediv.* II. 221).

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