

The Vernons of Haddon Hall.

JOHN PYM YEATMAN, Barrister-at-Law, F.R.H.S.



MUCH has been written respecting this branch of the illustrious family of Vernon which will vanish into thin air on the application of the truer tests of historical accuracy. It is from no captious and with no capricious feeling that this subject is approached, and it matters little to the ducal family who now hold this ancient Barony—a Barony though still in abeyance—how this inheritance falls to them, whether through one or through two heirs female; but if the truth must be told, the Vernons of Haddon of the time of Queen Eliza, beth, who are now represented by Lord Vernon, were not true Vernons; they were a family without a patronymic, and they were probably called “le Franceis” from their nationality; but this sobriquet had attached to them at a very early period—at a time indeed, when surnames were not fairly introduced; when they were seneschals for part of the dominions of the great house of Richmond; and it was in the weak and calamitous days of King Henry III. when a member of that family, who was so obscure that his place in the family history can hardly be ascertained, (though he was certainly the head of it), married a daughter of the Vernons, who were banished through their political intrigues. The Franceis family, who succeeded them, in some way acquired their patrimony in this country, and by degrees assumed the name of Vernon. Many writers have essayed to explain this strange descent, and most of them (General Wrottesley has followed the example even in our own day) have not hesitated to claim Gilbert le Francis as a true

Vernon by descent ; in truth, he was no more a Vernon than the Peverels of the Peak of Sir Walter Scott were descendants of the great Peverels of the time of the Conquest. It is only due to General Wrottesley, to whom the historian, and especially the Staffordshire archæologist, is so deeply indebted, to record that, although very recently he has published in the "Derbyshire Archæological Journal" his disbelief in the theory propounded by the writer, yet still later researches of his own have satisfied him of their correctness, and he has most handsomely withdrawn his criticisms, and it is with something like certainty, that, now still further light has been thrown upon the subject by further researches in the muniment-room of Belvoir Castle and the British Museum, it can be positively stated that all doubt is set at rest, and that *the families of Vernon and Francis are distinct*. The writer is indebted to Her Grace the Duchess of Rutland for being able to throw quite a new light upon the question, as a recent search in the magnificent muniment-room of Belvoir Castle, which perhaps stands first in the kingdom for the extent and value and variety of its historical possessions, has brought to light a great number of charters of the earliest settlers of the Vernons at Haddon, which hitherto apparently have never been examined, and with them, almost of still greater interest, some of the charters of the Avenels who preceded them ; but of the highest interest of all is a series of charters of the de Insula family, which not only help to illustrate and to indicate the history of the Avenels, but to give the true origin and the true house of this family of Vernon. For many generations the Heralds have endeavoured to connect the Vernons of Haddon with the great Cheshire family of that name. The writer, many years ago, pointed out that it is rather to the houses of Vernon and de Insula held by the Earls of Devon that we should look, and this was the view published by Her Grace the Duchess of Rutland in a recent sketch of the Vernon family. The records recently discovered leave no reasonable doubt that this view is the correct one, and the following pedigree will show at a glance how the idea is arrived at. It requires little ingenuity to discover that this theory easily accounts for the

presence of all these records at Belvoir Castle. The accompanying pedigree will illustrate the family history :—

The learned reader must (for want of space here) be referred to the writer's "History of the House of Arundell" for the early history of the families of de Vernon, and of the Vernons Earls of Devon, and of their connection with that of Roger de Albini, the progenitor of the Earls of Arundel and of the Lords of Belvoir.

So very little is known of the history of the younger members of the family of de Insula of the house of Devon, that the following charters, found by the writer amongst the Belvoir muniments, will be read with the deepest interest, the only wonder being how they should have strayed there :—

Gauf de Insula, and Matilda his wife, with William, Robert, and William his sons, confirmed the grant of Hugo de Well to the Abbey of St. Mary of York, of his land of Svera with the mill. *Witnesses* : Guarilio de Aula, Will. fil Scur, Wm. fil Gug, Robert de Parc, William de Sorwell, Jordan Forester, Adam de Copt. *With fine seal.*

William de Insula, with Cecilia his wife, William his heir, and his other sons gave the fee of Becham, which Picot rented ("empasterat") of him to the church of Lund. *Witnesses* : Gauf his chaplain, Cecilia his wife, and his sons Robert de Insula, and Thomas de Insula, Robt. Dárraci and his son Robert and John his son (Robt. Dárraci et fil, ej. Robtus, et Joh. fil. ej.), Walter fil Alured, Rad. de Bosco, William fil. ej., Walter fil. Odo, Rich. de Cnieshale, Ralf fil Gaufred Pinzun, Wm. de Lincoln, Ranulf (*cognatus meus*), Hervy (*consanguineus*) (et de Ipsa Provincia Lund), Bernard, Prior of Dunstable, Robt. de Cornhill, David fra ej., Maur. Leswinus, Presb., Norman Pictor, Leving, Pres., Wm. Miles, Wm. Clic, Jordan fil Edgar, Adam, Robt., and Rich. Armig.

William de Insula to the Canons of St. Trinity, Lund. Grant of Wm. Ulculf his man, with the lands of Becham and the land of Lund which Saeval Halbgarus held. *Witnesses* : Otiwell de Insula (*frē meo*), Wm. de Insula, Thom., Robert de Corz Avenello,

Wm. Ulculf, Rad. Cap, Ogero Dapifer, Will Faceto, Robert de Cornhill, and David his brother.

Herveius fil Eustace released the services, etc., of Simon Camerarius, which he bought of Wm. fil Levesune. *Witnesses*: Simon de Insula, Baldwin Blanquiere, Gilbert de Brad, Alan de Fittone, Maier Raffo, Robert Serda, Wm. fil Edward, Will. Clic, Roger Plessus. *Seal, a knight on horseback.*

Warin de Insula inspected a charter of Baldwin his brother of his grant of Wm. Bogenhard, of Parva Buckenham, and of the lands which he held of Waren de Insula, his brother, in Chatig in Insula Eliensis. *Witnesses*: Henry de Walpole, Fulc Baynard, Kt., Bald. de Cotten.

Robert de Insula, Lord of Hayford Waryn, Knight, inspected charter of Maud de Cheysneto to the Canons of Burnecestre, which also Warin her son on his part confirmed, and he also inspected the charter of Isabella de Fortibus, Countess of Albemarle and Devon, and Lady of Insula, who confirmed to the church of St. Marie and St. Edburga, the Virgin, of Burnecestre, the grants of Matilde de Cheysneto (*p'avia mee*). *Witnesses*: Sir John de Elena, Richard de Asseton, Roger de Insula, Kts., and others.

Witnesses to Robert's confirmation—John de Clavering, Walter de Shobington, Peter dict. 'le Blount,' Alan de Hastifield, John Bevis, Robt. de Cromford, Walter Clic. de Burnecestre.

4 E. I. Isabella de Fortibus, Countess of Albemarle and Devon to her tenants of Worth and Crikelad: grant to Adam de Stretton of her land of those places.

There are several charters of Philip de Insula of a later date.

The Chartulary of Monteburg (*Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, No. 10,087*), has many charters which throw a light upon this pedigree.

Folio 6. Henry I. confirmed the charter of Richard de Redvers (Earl of Devon) of land in Dorset and in the Isle of Wight to Monteburg, and this charter was attested by Baldwin and Wm. (de Vernon) his sons.

Folio 8. Henry II., King of England, inspected the last charter and confirmed it as well as certain other grants of the said

Richard de Redvers and William de Vernon his son, and Rich. (of Haddon) his son, and a grant of Richard Avenel to the same monastery.

Folio 31. H. Constantine Eccles confirmed same grant, and what William de Redvers his grandfather, and Richard de Redvers his father, and Beatrice his mother, had granted in the year 1270; he also confirmed the grant of Juliana de Vernon, daughter of William de Brionis, formerly wife of William de Vernon.

Folio 69. 1165, William de Vernon with Gilbert and Richard his sons made a charter to Monteburg.

Folio 70. Richard, son of Wm. de Vernon, with Drogo his brother, Herbert de Morville, Walter de Insula, Nigel de Mortimer, Lucia his mother, and Baldwin his brother confirmed same grants.

Folio 72. There is a charter which seems to identify Juliana de Vernon or Vernois with Lucia de Vernon wife of Wm. de Vernon.

The great Norman families of Avenel or De Say of Biars, and of Redvers, Earls of Devon, were closely connected by feudal and by marriage ties; in Normandy, the earls of Devon were vassals of the lords of Biars, and held their lands under them long after their settlement in this country: some of the scions of the house of Avenel settled in England at the Conquest as Knights of Roger Montgomery, Earl of Arundel; and one Avenellus, who, apparently from the assumption of that name in lieu of title or Christian name, was the head of the family, settled at Haddon as a knight of Wm. Peverel, natural son of the Conqueror.

His holdings in Derbyshire were insignificant considering his high rank, and the extent of his possessions in Normandy would scarcely be more than sufficient to support him and his retinue when on hunting expeditions in the Peak and Sherwood Forests. We find no direct mention of the name of Avenel in Domesday, yet at the foundation of Lenton Priory, only some fifteen years later, "Avenellus" attested Peverel's charter as one of his knights, and he attested the charter of William de Insula previously given; he granted land out of Haddon, all Medweplac,

and Manax, which were all places of ancient demesne at Domesday, and Wm. Avenel his son attested the charter of the son of Wm. Peverel to the same foundation shortly after 1113, and we also find that the same William Avenel granted Conkesbery in Yolgrave to the Abbey of Leicester.

It is difficult to understand why the family of Avenel, so closely related to the ducal house of Normandy, should receive no recognition at the Conquest, and so little afterwards; possibly it was that they were well endowed in Normandy, and they preferred their ancestral estates to a new home in England, and certain it is, that they generally resided on the Continent, and only came here periodically, and then probably only for the pleasures of the chase. Almost immediately after obtaining possession of their property they seem to have made grants out of it to religious houses—to Lenton, Trentham, Croxton, Roche Abbey, and Leicester, of a character inconsistent with the idea that they sought to derive much income for themselves out of them.

Derbyshire records give but a poor account of the Avenel family during the reign of Henry I., no mention being made of them in the only Pipe Roll we possess for that reign. This was probably because until the lawless time of King Stephen, the rights of the Crown were more closely protected by the Barons of the Exchequer, and all the property they held was Crown property, which could only be granted out by the Crown for the use of the reigning king, and the donee therefore would pay to him personally any rent he might exact. The first roll of Henry II. records that Gervase de Avenel paid twenty marks for the land of Basilowe, formerly part of the king's ancient desmesne, but in later years wrested from the Crown in favour of the Peverels, whose head had recently forfeited it.

We find a Robert Avenel attesting the foundation charter of Welbec Abbey in 18 Stephen, and in 19 Hy. II., Robert Avenel and Gervase Avenel were chosen two knights to view the repairs of Peak Castle. In 26 Henry II., the estates of Gervase, held of the Honour of Peverel, were in the king's hands, for the Sheriff

accounts that year for 68s. for the corn on his land ; either he was dead, or in rebellion, or he had settled abroad.

This may have been the year of his death, though it is more likely that he had forfeited his lands for some act of rebellion ; for as late as 23 Hy. II., Gervase Avenel was one of the overseers of the works on the Castle of Peak.

There are but few notices of the family until the sixth year of Rich. I. Unfortunately for Derbyshire history, the Pipe Rolls for this county are lost from the 1st until the 6th year of that monarch, in the latter half of which year, William Briwere, the judge and regent of the king, was Sheriff of Notts. and Derbyshire. As this period saw many changes of ownership, the loss is the more to be regretted. Ralf Murdach had been sheriff, as he was apparently in the early part of the 6th, and the first notice we have is that William Briwere, who was sheriff for the half-year, accounts for the sale of the goods of Robert Avenel, one of the king's enemies ; probably he was the son of Gervase, and possibly he suffered for his rebellion ; however, this again is doubtful, for we know that King Richard was now in prison abroad, and the meaning of being a king's enemy at that period was probably that he was acting in the king's interest against Prince John and William Briwere. The following year Robert Avenel paid one mark for seven shillings rent in Pleslie and in Sutton. Was this some compensation for turning him out of his Haddon estates? For sure it is that William Briwere had now secured them in moieties for his kinsmen Richard Vernon and Simon Basset. Referring to the pedigree, it will be seen that Richard Vernon, if of the house of Redvers, was half-brother of his son's wife. Vernon and Basset had married the two daughters of William Avenel, and the following charter (still at Belvoir) gives evidence of the fact, though it does not supply the information necessary to account for a William, son of another William Avenel, being in possession : evidence which can only be supplied probably by the missing Pipe Rolls of 1-5 Rich. I. This record is in the form of a fine, by no means a usual means of settling estates in free marriage, but probably dictated by the necessities

of the time; Robert, the true heir, having been violently deposed, and William Avenel who was probably not the true heir even after him, was made to play this part to carry out the measures of William Briwere, and to give them a legal aspect.

The charter is as follows: "Be it known to all present as well as future, that I William Avenel have agreed with (concordavi) Ricard de Vern. and Simon Basset because they have (in marriage) my two daughters and heirs concerning all my lands and inheritance; that (regarding them) as my heirs, I have conceded and granted to them all my lands and hereditaments after my decease, so that in all things as my heirs they should divide (between them) as parceners, and so that Simon Basset, he and his heirs, should make with Rich. de Vernon and his heirs a final partition. Besides I have conceded to the said Richard a capital mansion lying towards the east, in which William Avenel my father dwells, with a garden and orchard near the chapel of St. Nicolas, to the said Simon Basset the remaining mansion, and in the west with the orchard in that part, and in Adstock (*Bucks.*), I have conceded to the said Richard de Vernon a capital mansion with two orchards, one from which a certain portion of the mansion (is divided) from the remaining portion of the mansion of Simon Basset in the same vill, a certain capital mansion of the same magnitude with the orchard of Roger. In Urcleburc also I have given to the said Simon Basset a capital mansion. To this convention and concord the said Rich. de Vernon and Simon Basset agreed to adhere and faithfully to keep. *Witnesses*: William fil Hugo de Fuletibi, William fil Hugo, Falconer (accipitar), Gerold fil Rich. Simon Agæ, Walter de Gahn."

This fine is undated, but it has always, conjecturally, been dated by the entry in the Pipe Roll of 6 R. I. before given. It is, however, most probably of the 17th Henry II.

There is a fine recorded in a Roll of the Curia Regis also of uncertain date, but attributed (probably from the date of the Pipe Roll) to the same year, between Simon Basset and Helesabeth his wife, and Richard de Vernon and Amicia his wife, concerning

Hadestock, Hurlingburc, Basselow and Haddon, in the counties of Bucks., Derby, and Nottingham, by which Richard was to have Hadestock with its appurts. ; and Hurlinburc with its appurtenances and half of what he had in Basilow, and besides 50s. which each received for the mill, and which should remain to the said Richard de Vernon and his heirs, and Simon should have the whole vill of Haddon with its appurts. and half of Basselow which he had previously held, and to hold the same to him and to his heirs ; and a day was given in the octave of Easter for receiving the charters because Elizabeth was absent, and Amicia placed Rich., her husband, for herself as her attorney.

Amongst the Woolley MSS. at the British Museum (*Additional MSS.* 6696, fo. 54) is a pedigree of the Vernon family which it would be very interesting to verify. It is unfortunately in fragments, which have been pasted together, and some of the notes which are of the chief value have perished. This pedigree was probably compiled in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, at all events that is the last date contained in it—whether this is the original, or a copy, it is difficult to state. It commences with a Richard de Vernon who had three sons, Robert, Walter, and Richard, the latter of whom married Avice, daughter of Wm. Avenel, and from the former descended Havise, who married Gilbert le Franceis. Richard had issue Isabel, the wife of W. de Bray and Wm. de Vernon, who died 26 H. III., who by Alice had a son Richard, who died 3 Ed. III., having had two wives—Helena, daughter of Rich. Gernon, and Isabella second wife ; by his first wife he had issue Rich., who died 16 E. II., having married Matilda, dau. and heir of Wm. de Campville.

Now comparing these with the pedigree here given, it will be seen at once that the compiler has confounded Richard, son of Wm. de Vernon, with Richard, son of Gilbert le Franceis, and he has placed Robt. as son of an imaginary Richard, instead of his being younger brother of Richard, son of William ; but the writer has been so honest as to give the proofs from which he compiles this pedigree, and these are most valuable,

since all trace of these records is lost or at least unknown at present :—

One is a short note of a fine between Sir Rich. Vernon, Kt., and Avice, his wife, of 17 Henry II.; no corroboration of this fine can be found in the Pipe Rolls, but it is a very probable date, for the marriages and fines of that period are very rarely to be found.

A note to Wm. de Vernon, son of Rich., states that a fine was levied between him and Garn, and A., his wife, probably Rich. Gernon, of the date 14 H. III. (1230)

But the most important record relates to the Franceys family, which, however, is terribly mutilated. It commences with only a few letters—Ro.....nceys...filio.....yburn. Probably this relates to Robt. le Franceys and the Manor of Meaburn, a manor which records show belonged to Robt. le Franceys; and afterwards to Richard Vernon, son of Gilbert le Frances; this charter gives the intermediate holders quite a new discovery in this pedigree.

Then a grant which is quite clear if the words in brackets may be added :—

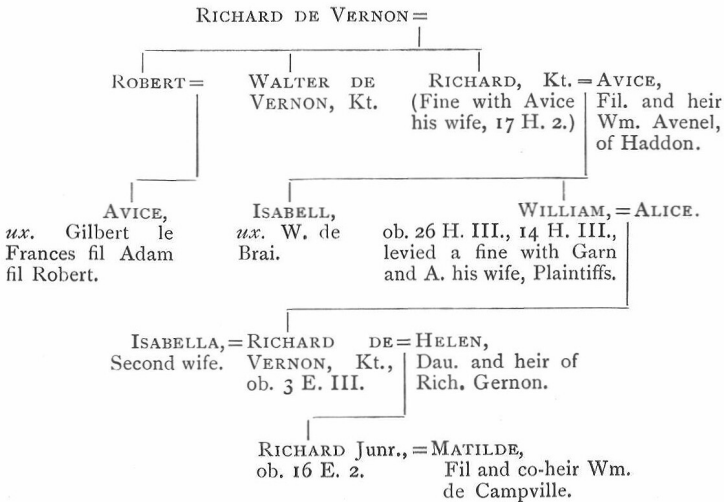
“Henr. Dei grā R(ex Angl.) Dñs Hibernie Dux Nor(man)æ Co. Andeg. conces(sit Jo.) le Franc. liber : W(arrenā) in oibus Domin : (et terris) suis in Dni : Westm : et Cumbr. A : R : sui 41.” And the following charter,

“Anno R. R. H. III., 15, primo in (festo Sci) Pet. ad Vinc. convent' fuit int(er) Jo. le Franceis ex una parte et Dñs (Rich.) de Vern ex altera, videl ipe idem (Rich.) dedit Havisīā filiā Ro(b^{ti}) nepoti eius(dem) Rici in uxorem Gilberto fil Ade nepoti eid. Johanni.”

This charter, if it can be relied upon as genuine, gives the origin of the Franceis family and their true connection with the Lords of Haddon, the fact that the father of Gilbert's wife was brother and not the son of William of Haddon, accounts for much of the obscurity that prevails respecting this family. There is little doubt that the sons of William de Vernon lost their inheritance in England through the rebellions of the period, and

that Gilbert le Franceys was a mere nominee of the crown, although perhaps his son was next heir after the expulsion of his cousins. The compiler of this pedigree was entirely at sea in drawing up this pedigree, and supposed that Rich. de Vernon, who died 3 E. III., was descended from Wm. He has honestly enough, according to his light, given what he supposed was a true pedigree of the family, and his errors help to show the honesty of his purpose, and the genuineness of his authorities; he has not suppressed one at his disposal, though they added to his difficulties.

The following is the pedigree as he gives it:—



The first Richard is purely imaginary, invented to account for charter of Rich., father of Robert de Vernon. This Robert should be the brother of Wm., who died 26 H. 3, and Rich., who died 3 E. 3, was son of Avice and Gilbert.

With the exception of one of the charters of the de Insulas to which Avenellus was a witness, there is no charter of this family at Belvoir, but there are a considerable number of Avenel charters there of a later date, which probably belong to a branch of the same family. As we have seen, "Avenellus," in the time of Henry I.,

granted Conkesbury and Meadow Ploch, both in Yolgrave, to religious foundations. It was probably as tenants to these houses that in the time of their distress the family found a refuge in Yolgrave, or they may have been tenants under the Abbey from the first. In 6 Rich. I. we find Gilbert Avenel with Amicia his wife sueing Mathew de Eston for half the villis of Normanton and Eston; and in 3 John, a William Avenel fined to recover his rights in Haddon and Basselow, but we know no more about these suits. About the same date Gilbert Avenel attested a charter of Maurice de Audele and Isabella his wife to Rich. de Vernon of Rich. de Pec's land in Chesterfield, proof that they were on friendly terms.

A little later, probably after Gilbert's death, there is a charter still at Haddon Hall, of Robt. fil Alan de Longisdon settling certain property to "Magister" Robert Avenel and Dionisia his mother, and if William Avenel survived them, then to him for life; and if Nicolas Avenel survived them, then to him for life; and after his decease, if Dionisius his brother should survive them, then to him for life; remainder to Henry brother of Robert, remainder to Richard fil Robert de Redware. *Witnesses*: Sir Rich. de Herthill, Kt., Rich. Vicar of Yolgrave, Wm. de Gratton, William de Wingfield, Simon Sele of Alport. This deed unfortunately omits to give the relationship of William Avenel to Robert; but another Haddon charter is a grant from William Avenel, son of Robert Avenel, to Robt. de Yolgrave, of his rights in land held of Wm. de Hotot in Yolgrave, with the services of Elias fil Wm. de Longisden; and by a charter at Belvoir, the same Wm. fil Robert Avenel confirms to Wm. fil. Elias Cleric of Parva Longeden, one bovate in Yolgrave, and five acres and three roods in Shonkdale, and land in Wildleye. There are several charters of a Margaret Avenel, probably widow of William, who remarried Adam fil Peter de Rowsley, and whose daughter and heiress, Havice, married John de Rowsley, son of Peter, who seems to be the last of the race in Haddon, as these are the first known of the family of de Rowsley.

We now come to a series of charters of the Vernons, from

the time of Richard I. to their departure from Haddon, in the latter end of Henry III., preserved at Belvoir Castle. There is a charter undoubtedly made to the first Richard Vernon, being a bond of W. de Brai to pay Richard de Vernon 25 shillings yearly for a virgate of land in Chersington, which Hugo Rufus held at the Piscaria of Foxwere, and for the mill upon Ripa de Bladene between Chersington and Evesham, which he gave to him with the consent of Amicia his wife, and William his son and heir, for which he should do homage to the chief lords by the hands of Rad. de Vernon. *Witnesses*: Rad. Haring, Rad. fil Galfred, Will Baviel, Robert de Vernon, Magr. Philip de Beke, Rich. de Hailsbr, Rad. de Edingshale, John Malvalet, Ric. Gigan. This charter shows the probable truth of the pedigree before cited, which makes William de Brai the son-in-law of Rich. de Vernon, a fact hitherto unknown to the writer. Another charter now at Haddon may also be attributed to Rich. de Vernon I., the first of the name at Haddon.

Maurice de Audeley and Isabella his wife, release to Richard de Vernon and his heirs the land which Rich. de Pecco held in Chesterfield. *Witnesses*: Serlo de Beley, Gilbert Avenel, Rd. de Herthul, Michael de Edensor, Adam de Stanton, Peter de Herthul, &c. *Seal, an eagle displayed.*

There is an undated charter at Belvoir, being a convention between Robert Basset and Rich de Vern. Release of the rights of the former in two bovates which Simon fil Lambert held, together with the said Simon, his chattels and sequela, and half a bovat which Alexander fil Adam held, and which the said Robt. gave to the said Richard in exchange. *Witnesses*: Thomas de Edenshour, Robert de Vernon, Rich. de Herthill, Robt. de Stanton, Adam de Edenshour, Matthew de Langesden, Roger de Bobenhill, John de Haddon, Robt. de Heynton, cleric.

If this charter is that of the first Rich. de Vernon, who married the Avenel heiress, and not of his grandson, it is some confirmation of the statement that the first Richard had a son named Robert. Thomas de Edensor, the first witness, attested a charter

in 19 H. III. ; he also attested a charter still at Belvoir, to which Jurdan de Rowlesley was a witness. He was cotemporary with the first Richard de Vernon, but not with his grandson. Both Thomas and Adam de Edensor, with the same Jurdan de Rowlesley, attested a charter of Wm. de Vernon, son of Richard. They also, with Rich. de Vernon, attested a charter of Norman de Sulney to Rich. fil Adam de Herthill, but they were both living as late as 29 H. III., as appears by another charter.

There was a Robert Basset of Wolsthorpe at a very early period, who had a grandson Robert, so that little can be obtained from this clue, and a Robert of Haddon living 8 E. II.

The charters of and to William, son of Rich. Vernon (I.), are much more numerous. Amongst them is one of Alice, widow of Peter de Raland, of her rights in land in Raland for ten marks, attested by Jo. Gubald, Constable of Peak (19-21 H. III.) ; another of Rich. de Hesterbury of a meadow in Westanton ; another of Galfred Parator, with the consent of Siereda his wife, of land in Newhall in Basslow, which he had of the grant of Osbert of Chesterfield attested by Sir Robt. de Esseburn, Constable of Peak (one of the Cokayne family), Sir Wm. Bassett, and others.

In the same repertory is a deed of Siereda, widow of Galfred Parater, confirming the same property ; but perhaps the most interesting and puzzling of Wm. de Vernon's charters is one by Robt. fil Robert de Stockport, warranting to him the vill of Lostock which he held of his (grantor's) father and of himself, and if he could not warrant the same, William Vernon should have in exchange as much land in half of the vill of Basselow ; namely, the half which John Basset held.

This important charter was attested by Hamond de Mascy, Galf de Dicecery, Rd. de Bromhall, Wm. Bassett, Robt. de Vernon, Robt. de Hyde, Robt. de Stokpord, Rich. de Heriz, Stephen de Bredbury, Rich. de Hyde, chiefly knights of Cheshire.

There is an earlier charter by which Robert de Stokport granted to William, fil and heir of Rich. de Vernon, the land of Basselow and Bubnel with Margerita his daughter in free marriage, and if

the said William should not have an heir by the said Marguerite, then the said Rich. de Vernon should hold half the said land of Basselow to him and his heirs, of the grantor, and his heirs doing the services of half a knight's fee. This is also attested by a number of Cheshire knights, by Richard fitz Roger, Will. de Bray, Robt. de Meviewariis, Tomas de Nortburie, Walter de Stockport, Math. de Brohelle, Will fre suo, Simon de Stokport, John de Bredbury, Jordan de Bredbury, Robert fil Bernard, Robt. fil Rahenild, Matthew de Stokport, Rich. fil ejus Gilbert de Louthern, Walter de Parles, Hugo fre ej., Roger de Estna, Jo fre ej., Herico de Tideswell.

Wm. Bassett confirmed to Sir Wm. Vernon half an acre of land in Haddon which adjoined land concerning which a convention was made between him and Ralf Gernon. *A fine seal with a stag.*

William fil Wm. de Chattesworth granted to Wm. de Vernon the lands which Robert Seladon held in Chatsworth. Attested by Sir Robt. de Esseburn, Constable of Peak.

Thomas Bland granted a lease of land in Holm by Bakewell, which Rich. le Green had held for twelve years, from the 20th of King Henry (III.) Attested by Mathew de Reyndon, the King's Sergeant.

Wm. Basset released to William de Vernon his rights in Simon fil Lambert with his offspring. *Witnesses:* Robt. de Vernon, Robt. de Staunton, Hy. de Hotoft, Robt. Avenel, Wm. de Bekeley, Thom. Basset, Rich. de Tambery, Roger de Basselow.

John de Aston released to Wm. de Vernon half acre of land in Upper Haddon, at Smalgreaves. *Witnesses:* Robt. Toke, Robt. de Vernon, Robt. de Staunton, Robt. de Hoto, Wm. de Paries, Snil, chapl., Henry Tuchet.

There is a charter of Robt. de Aston to Ralf Draycote of land in Bakewell, which he bought of Robt. le Franceis, son of Bruno of Tadington, to which Wm. Vernon, Kt., was a witness.

The writer is indebted to General Wrottesley for many notices relating to this family; one notice is very puzzling. He states on the authority of the Staffordshire Pipe Rolls, that Rich. de Vernon

forfeited his estates in that county in 6 & 7 Rich. I., and he adds that he obtained the king's favour, and that his estates were afterwards restored to him : and certainly Derbyshire Pipe Rolls show that he was assessed down to 16 John, though his name may have been kept up after his death, as was often the case in subsidies. We have no proof in English records of his death, from the fact that he selected a Norman domicile on the separation of Normandy from England, as the Quo Warranto Rolls for the Channel Islands cited by General Wrottesley prove, and probably his son William retired to Normandy on his death, though we have no proof of it.

Again, we fail to find any record of the deaths of the three sons of Wm. fil Richard de Vernon ; probably, however, they all retired to Normandy Richard, the eldest, is lost to us after the latter part of Henry III.'s reign, although Staffordshire Plea Rolls show that he was alive in 4 Ed. I. Haddon, and the Derbyshire estates, had then for some time been in the hands of Gilbert le Fraunceis.

Amongst the Haddon charters there is one dated 46 H. III., proving that Gilbert le Franceis was then dealing with the Baslow property, possibly only as a trustee. He, with Reginald Huscota, granted to Hugo de Edinshaile a lease of the quarries of Baslow for 10 years. By another charter, *sans* date, at Belvoir, Gilbert le Franceys, Kt., granted to Richard de Bassilow the bovate which Adam Bond held in Bobenhill. *Witnesses*: Robt. de Herthill, Walter de Kent, Rd. le Ragged, Hy. de Tadington, Hy. Foljambe, and others.

No doubt Yorkshire records, as well as those of Cumberland, would give a complete history of the Frances family, but the historians of those counties are so careless of their historical documents, that none are accessible, and the only historian worthy of the name—the late General Harrison—had devoted himself to only a small portion of the county. From his work we learn that in 2 Rich. I., Roald le Franceys gave land in Dalton to Warin Travers of Dalton Travers.

23 H. III., John Franceys, probably a grandson of Roald,

claimed against Robert Travers, son of Warin, two bovates of land in Dalton, and in 30 Hy. III., this suit, after many delays, so common at that time, came to an end, and by a fine of Trinity term of that year, Robert Travers acknowledged the land to be the right of the said John, as land which Robert, father of John, had by the gift of Warin Francis, father of Robert, whose heir he is, and John gave Robert a soar-hawk.

In 7 Edward I., there was an assize to enquire whether Isolda, wife of Wm. fil Alice de Newsom, Wm. Werry and John Fraunceys had disseized Adam fil John le Frances of Dalton Travers of 10 bovats of land there, whilst he was on his journey to Jerusalem. Adam failed in his action.

This Adam was doubtless the father of Gilbert le Franceis, and the previous entry (which proves that John was the son of Robert) confirms the charter of the Woolley Collection, No. 6,696, in every particular of the pedigree.

No doubt Gilbert le Franceys was heir of his family, but being well provided for by the Vernon inheritance, Adam, his father, passed him over, and gave his lands to Grimbaldus, probably a younger son, and the following suits show that Grimbaldus and the nephew and heir of Grimbaldus were compelled to call Rich. le Vernon, who was the true heir of these estates, to warrant their title.

A. 29 E. I., John fil Ivo de Hertford sued Grimbaldus le Franceys, who 32 Ed. I. called Richard de Vernon to warranty of 1 messuage, 160 a. of land, 6 a. mead., $\frac{1}{2}$ a mill, in Barton juxta Melsonby, and he called William fil Nic. le Boteler, who was then an infant. In 10 Ed. II. John de Hertford sued Robert fil John Francis for probably the same land, though it is described as a messuage, 10 tofts, 40 a. of land, and $6\frac{1}{2}$ a. of meadow, and half a mill in Barton juxta Melsonby, which he claims as his right and inheritance, and of which William de Kendal unjustly disseized Alan de Hertford, Plaintiff's grandfather, whose heir he is. The Defendant said that Grimaldus, his uncle, whose heir he is, died seized of the land in his own right as of fee, after whose death he entered, and he is now under age.

It must not be forgotten that the *Inq. p. m.* of Gilbert Franceis concerning Haddon shows that Rich., son of Gilbert le Franceis, also called himself le Franceis after the death of his father, so that the fact that he was called to warrant the Franceis estates in Cumberland and Yorkshire proves his descent from that family beyond all doubt, and it is to be hoped that the facts here adduced prove equally conclusively the true origin of Rich. Vernon, the first of his name of Haddon.