

The Origin of the Shirleys and of the Gresleys.

BY J. H. ROUND, M.A.



TO all who are interested in the history of our old "Conquest" houses the names of Shirley and Gresley are, or should be, familiar. For these families, which both derive their names from Derbyshire manors, and the ancestors of which were knightly tenants of Ferrers, Earl of Derby, enjoy the very remarkable distinction of holding at the present day manors which belonged to their Domesday ancestors. I am in a position to show, beyond dispute, that the attacks on their pedigrees contained in the work styled *A Feudal History of Derbyshire*, are wholly without foundation. That well-known writer on feudal genealogy, the late Mr. Eyton, described the pedigree of the Gresleys as "a genealogy second to none among the commoners of England," and the singular attempt to prove that the early Gresleys, of Gresley, were identical with the contemporary Albinis, of Cainhoe (in Bedfordshire), and not with the later and modern Gresleys, is a mere dream, for which there exists no ground whatever. I propose to prove this in detail in the next volume of this *Journal*, and shall hope at the same time to throw a little fresh light on the feudal history of the county and the records on which it is based. I may perhaps be permitted to add, as I am somewhat vehemently assailed in the work referred to, that in not one single instance has my critic succeeded in impugning the accuracy of my statements or the soundness of my conclusions; this also can be proved.