

**Notes.**

PLACE-NAMES.—QUARRY WOODS, BISHAM (MISS WINIFRED'S SEAT).—Extracted from a work entitled "The Thames from its source to the Sea" is the following :—

"Quarry Woods. A certain bluff in the wood, which goes by the name of Lady Winifred's Seat, is said to have been the scene of a tragedy in the days when monks still lived at Bisham. One of these holy men eloped with a lady of the district, but was overtaken by the father in the Quarry Woods. The couple took refuge on the bluff, and refused to come down at the irate parent's command; so he fired upon them and killed the lady in her lover's arms."

Excepting the words "Winifred's Seat," the foregoing is purely imaginative without any legendary foundation on which to construct it.

On the right hand side of the path from Cookham Dean to Marlow, and about midway on its course through the wood, at a distance of about one hundred yards, there is a comparatively level space on the hill side (it is now shut off from the public by a close pale fence) overhanging a deep pit or old quarry; this spot is known as "Miss Winifred's Seat." From it are some very pretty views; immediately below is the deep dell with its tangled brushwood, and clumps of trees far beneath, with glimpses of the river between the heads of them, and in the far distance the Buckinghamshire hills; on another side, through the beech trees scattered on the slope, is seen the river with its eyots and islands upstream, with Marlow Lock and the group of houses near, which includes that known as "Thames Bank." It was a favourite spot, especially when walking from Marlow, as it afforded an excuse for a few minutes rest up the steep hill.

But who was Miss Winifred to whom it owed its name? On enquiry amongst the old people in Cookham Dean they told me she was a lady who lived at Marlow, and was very often coming to the spot from which she could see her own house; they had never seen her because it was a good many years ago, but some of them had talked with old people who had known her, and "she was a pleasant spoken lady." They pronounced her name Winferd, and on saying to them you mean Winifred! they would reply yes! Winferd. This was all one could learn, and Winferd was accepted as the local expression of Winifred.

Subsequently, becoming possessed of a copy of the Diary of Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powis, edited by Mrs. Climençon, an explanation was obtained. On page 202, year 1780: "In July this year being at Mrs. Winford's near Marlow, we went to pay a visit to Lord Boston." Page 229, year 1787: "Sept. 27th, Thursday. We went to Maidenhead races, the whole of the Royal Family were there; and dined at Mrs. Winford's, Thames Bank." Page 248, year 1780: "August 21st. We went to breakfast at Mrs. Winford's, Marlow, and went on their boat to Sir George Young's (note Formosa Place)."

Our old neighbours were right in their pronunciation, and Miss Winford, not Miss Winifred, was the proper name.

Bisham Abbey was finally dissolved in the year 1540, so that more than 200 years had passed away before the legend was invented in which one of its monks was given such a foremost place.

**Pré Bridge.**

The footpath from Cookham Dean to Marlow, which has been spoken of in connection with "Miss Winifred's Seat," passed out of the wood to the Marlow Meadows by a little foot-bridge which was situated below the present brick bridge, which has superseded it, and the river.

The surroundings of the little plank bridge—the hanging woods on the one side, the wide stretch of meadow land on the other with glimpses of the river—gave it a charm for its peaceful and quiet beauty, whilst it was relieved from the charge of monotony by the shoals of fish swimming up and down the little stream, and the dragon flies and other gaudy insects hovering over it, and the kingfishers which haunted it, and the moor-hen and other water-fowl passing between the meadow bank and the islands in the river, all of which gave life and brightness to the spot.

This little bridge was known as "Pray Bridge" (so pronounced).

But how did it acquire its name? No doubt a pretty story might be woven of saintly monks from Bisham retiring to this secluded corner for devotion, and possibly ablation; but the origin or possible origin of the name remained a mystery, until one day a friend suggested that the French word for meadow was "Pré," and then it dawned on us that French prisoners had been interned at Marlow during the Napoleonic wars (or, during the "old war time," as we used to express it); and the writer of this has often heard a near relative who had been a boy at Marlow Grammar School speak of the poor fellows, and he has seen a sketch of them fishing from the river bank of the meadow. And so the word Pré (their meadow) must have been frequently used by them and its meaning then understood by Marlow people; but with time, though the name remained, its origin had been forgotten. I think it may fairly be assumed that *the mongrel French and English term Pré bridge signifies in English the Meadow Bridge.*

But no doubt on Pré bridge has been uttered the prayer of many a poor prisoner for a speedy release from captivity and return to his loved home in sunny France.—STEPHEN DARBY.

## Reviews.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF BERKSHIRE,—By the REV. WALTER W. SKEAT, D.C.L., Professor of Anglo-Saxon, Cambridge University (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press), 1911. 2s. net.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF BERKSHIRE.—An Essay by F. M. STENTON, M.A., Research Fellow in Local History, University College, Reading.

It is not often that two books appear at the same time dealing with the same subject, and that, too, a somewhat abstruse one. The volume of Professor Skeat comes with a weight of authority that can scarcely be claimed by a "Research Fellow in Local History" of Reading University College, but the latter has some advantage in knowing something of the locality of which the survey treats. Moreover, he does not attempt to interpret the meaning and origin of all Berkshire place-names, but "to consider the local nomenclature of a single county as illustrating some aspects of early English history; in particular, the first stages in the growth of the village community and manor." Useful as this object is, the plan avoids the necessity of discussing certain philological problems, concerning which we should like to have had the opinion of the "Research Fellow in Local History," and to compare his pronouncements with the conclusions of the learned Professor of Anglo-Saxon at the University of Cambridge. However, quite sufficient names are mentioned to enable us in some degree to make certain comparisons. The Professor's lack of local knowledge has led him in one or two instances into error. For example, he mentions Crowthorne as an old name, which he sets to work to explain, whereas it is a modern name given to the village that arose around Wellington College by a former Rector of Sandhurst. He states that Streatley and Stratfield are usually associated with Roman roads, and therein is correct; but he did not know that the latter is situate on the Roman road from Staines to Silchester, denominated the Devil's Highway, and that the former is on the Icknield way that then crossed the Thames. He is woefully wrong about Arborfield, connecting it with *erber* or *herber*, the old French *herbier*, the Latin *herbarium*, a herb-garden. He was ignorant of the old form, Erburgefild, which occurs in A.D. 1222 in the *Vetus Registrum Sarisberiense*, or Edburgefeld in 1220, which seems to militate against Mr. Stenton's idea of a female Hereburh. The Professor does not seem to have heard of the controversy concerning East Garston or Esgarston, and conceives it to be the "East grass town." Mr. Stenton is more correct. The Professor triumphs at Maidenhead, the Maidenhithe, whereas the Research Fellow, omitting *maiden*, gives the last syllable *hache* or *gate*, which, although used in some Close Rolls of the 13th century, is not so early or so frequent as *Maydehuth*, or *hithe*, or *hyth*. Mr. Stenton gives us a learned dissertation on *ing*, and tells us that we must not follow Professor Skeat and say that Reading