

The Rev. Kerry in his History of the Municipal Church of St. Laurence, p. 139, also copies it.

In the Reading Records, Vol. 2, p. 440, under date 3 Dec., 1628: "At this Court it was agreed that Mr. Anthony Mason shall be sworn an Attorney of this Court."

Is anything further known of Anthony, who was his wife, had they children?

In the Richards MSS. in the British Museum (Berks. add. MSS. 28660-677), p. 275, under Sandhurst: "The manor of Sandhurst which was sold by Anthony Mason, alias Weekes, father of said John Mason, Proceedings in Chancery, John Mason, alias Weekes, Esq. John Mason, and John Mason his son, they also were of Hartley Wintney." Again, p. 404: "Sutton Courtney was held by Sir John Mason and Elizabeth his wife, reversion came to Anthony Weekes, alias Mason, Esq., afterwards Elizabeth, widow of Anthony Mason."

The D.N.B., Vol. 36, p. 425, states that Sir John Mason's nephew, Anthony Weekes, assumed the name of Mason and had a considerable progeny. Was the Anthony of Reading a descendant?

In the Will of William Fynmore, dated 25 July, 1646 (126, F. Wisse), of St. Giles, Oxford, occurs this bequest: "To my two grand children by law, Anne and Jane Mason, daughters of Mr. Anthony Mason, deceased, each £30 when of age." W.F. was a native of Reading. I imagine that Anne and Jane would be his wife's grandchildren, she being a widow when married to Fynmore.

In the parish register of North Hinksey, Berks, is the following entry: "Christian ffynmore ye wif of William ffynmore was buried, decimo die Novembris 1619." Her maiden name is not known.

The register of St. Mary Magdalen, Oxford, has the marriage 7 Aug., 1621, of "Mr. William Finmer of Hinkesey to Mrs. Linke of this Parish." And in the burials of St. Mary Magdalén; "20 April, 1622, Mrs. Finmer, in the Minister's Chapel." Apparently her former husband was buried there 27th January, 1617-18 (Mr. Robert Linke, M.A.). The solution would be that Anne and Jane Mason were daughters of a daughter of either of the wives of William Fynmore. Am desirous of proving the exact relationship.—R. J. FYNMORE, Sandgate.

WHOSE is the stone coffin lid now in the "coal hole" under the tower of White Waltham Church?—A.F.P.

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## Proceedings of Societies.

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BERKSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On Monday, July 21st, this Society made an expedition to Hanney, Lyford, Denchworth and Charney Bassett. All these places were described in a lecture by our President on April 4th 1913, which is published in this Journal of October of last year, so that there is no need to repeat what has already been so eloquently told.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY. EXCURSION TO WALTHAM ST. LAWRENCE, SHOTTESBROOK, WHITE WALTHAM AND HAINES HILL.—On Saturday, October 4th, a joint excursion of the Berks Archæological Society and the members of the Reading Literary and Scientific Society, to the number of 86, visited the above named places; this was the last excursion of the year.

At Waltham St. Lawrence Church the party was met by the Vicar, and architectural features of the church were ably described by the President (Mr. Keyser) who pointed out that the church had been somewhat drastically restored, but retained much that was interesting. The eastern arcades of the nave were Decorated work, but the two western were Norman, and he accounted for this by suggesting that the church had at one time a central Norman tower, which may have fallen in the 14th century, destroyed the eastern portion of the arcade, and necessitated the reconstruction of those arches. The low western tower belonged to the same period, and had a Decorated west window and a bold stair turret. In the north-east side of the choir is a chantry chapel, now used as a vestry. It has a three-light square-headed perpendicular window, in one corner of which there is a bit of ancient ruby glass and an interesting 15th cent. piscina. Mr. Keyser pointed out the tomb of Sir Henry Neville, who was the builder of Billingsbear, and a number of votive crosses on the east pier of the eastern of the Norman arches of the south Nave Arcade.

After seeing the church the party drove to Shottesbrook House, where they were received by the owner, Mr. Guy Oswald Smith, who conducted them to the Gallery where Mr. Ditchfield read a paper describing the house and its history. He said that Shottesbrook House was built in the latter part of the 16th century, and looked more modern than it really was, on account of the somewhat drastic restoration which took place in the 18th century, when the rooms were re-decorated, sash windows substituted for the old mullioned windows and alterations made. In the last century it was Gothicized by the addition of a stucco embattled parapet, hood-moulds over the windows, a Gothic portico at the entrance and a loggia towards the garden. Originally it was in the form of the letter H, but had been much altered, and its plan has been much disguised. There was a very fine 18th century principal staircase, a fine hall and drawing room lighted by large bay windows of the same period, and an elaborate plaster ceiling and carved doorway of that date. The fire place showed good carving of the Grinling Gibbons type. After describing other features of the house, Mr. Ditchfield said that it recalled many memories of interesting personages, some of whom in the 18th century reached to historic fame. At the time of the Domesday Survey it was held by Alward the Goldsmith, and the Pipe roll of 1166 calls it *Sotesbroch auri fabrorum*. The manor was held by the serjeanty of furnishing charcoal to the King's goldsmith for the making of the King's crown and regalia. Twenty years later military service of forty days and a payment of 20s. to the Wardship of Windsor Castle was substituted for this, and in 1339 instead of this service the Lord of the Manor had to present a pair of gilt spurs. Mr. Ditchfield then traced the manor through its various owners. In 1186 the Crown granted it to Hugh de Shottesbrook, whose family held it in the male line till 1296, when it passed by marriage to William Vis de Lon, then to John de Oxonia, and in 1335 to William Trussel, the King's yeoman, who founded the college at Shottesbrook and built the present church. This college consisted of a warden, five chaplains, and two clerks to celebrate mass daily for the souls of the founder, the King, his ancestors and descendants. His son John predeceased him: so the estate passed to his daughter Margaret Trussel, who married Fulke de Penbrigg. In 1510 it passed to John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, then to "Father" Noke, and then

to the family of Powle. Henry Powle was Sheriff of Berks in 1632, and protested against the payment of Ship-money. His son Richard was M.P. for Berks in the Long Parliament, whose brother Henry became Speaker of the House of Commons and Master of the Rolls. He was a collector of valuable mss., which became the nucleus of the Lansdown collection in the British Museum. In 1698 the Manor was bought by William Cherry, whose son Francis Cherry was remarkable for his piety, learning and strong Jacobite and non-juring proclivities. He was a thorough country gentleman, a lover of manly sports, a bold rider and an elegant dancer, a man of culture and a collector of manuscripts. Mr. Ditchfield related how he hunted with William III. and how he set his horse at a difficult jump, in the hope that the King would follow and break his neck. The story is probably apocryphal, as it was totally opposed to Mr. Cherry's character. Here at Shottesbrook he entertained many distressed non-jurors, and could provide seventy beds for their accommodation. Among those who stayed with him were Dr. Dodwell, Robert Nelson, Thomas Ken, Charles Leslie, an out-law who lay hidden for months disguised as a soldier. Mr. Cherry did not favour the accession of Queen Anne to the throne, and avoided her in the hunting field. But the Queen, who knew his principles, was not offended, liked him very much, sent him presents of wine, and said "he was one of the honestest gentlemen in my dominions."

In 1716, Shottesbrook was sold to Mr. Robert Vansittart, son of Peter Van Sittart, a native of Dantzic and of a noble German family, who settled in London in the time of Charles II. He was the founder of the well-known and distinguished Berkshire family. Robert Vansittart was a Director of the Hon. East India Company, Governor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital and Christ's Hospital, a great art connoisseur, and formed a fine gallery of paintings of old masters and a splendid library which he removed to Shottesbrooke from his town house in Soho Square. His son, Arthur Vansittart, M.P. for Berks, succeeded in 1757, who was followed by his son Arthur, Colonel of the Berks Militia and M.P. for Windsor. His son Arthur succeeded in 1829, and was followed by his son, Capt. Coloraine Vansittart. On his death in 1886 the properly descended to his sister, Rose Sophia, wife of Mr. Oswald A. Smith, and is now held by her son, Mr. Basil Guy Oswald Smith.

The house contains many interesting and valuable paintings, including works by Titian, Woulvemans, Van de Velch, Veronese, Morone, Houthorst, Rosa di Tivoli, Salvator Rosa, Claude and others. The most notable are "The Fortune Teller," a large canvas by Houthorst; portraits of Charles I. with Queen Henrietta Maria, and General Monk by Van Dyck, the "Monkey Barber" and the "Monkey Regiment" by Teniers and of an Abbess and of Marie and Catherine de Medecis by Sustermann. There are several family portraits of interest, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Varsittart by Schalken, Lady Palk by Reynolds, Arthur, Robert, and Henry Vansittart by Hogarth, a delightful miniature of Miss Charlotte Vansittart by Cosway, and many others.

From the house the party adjourned to the church, which was described by Mr. Keyser, a purely decorated structure erected by Sir William Trussell of singular beauty. It is cruciform with a central spire. As it was a collegiate church the chancel is larger than the nave. The brasses are famous, including those of Lady Margaret Pennebrygg (1401), daughter of the founder; Richard Gyll, serjeant of the bakehouse to King Henry VII. and to King Henry VIII.; a franklin and a priest, and Thomas Noke.

From here to White Waltham Church which Mr. Keyser described. It has suffered much from over restoration, but it retains some of the old Norman work

viz., one of the tower arches, and, part of a doorway, and good early English piscina in the chancel. Mr. Ditchfield then told the story of Thomas Hearne, the antiquary, who was born in this village. His father was parish clerk, and the speaker thought that if the vicar and churchwarden. would consent to the proposal of the erection of a memorial to this worthy man, the Society might obtain subscriptions for the purpose and place a tablet to his memory. Mr. Ditchfield then told briefly the story of Hearne's life. His father kept a writing school at White Waltham. but could not afford to give him a good liberal education, so the poor boy went as a day labourer. However Mr. Francis Cherry rescued the boy from a life of toil and sent him to the free school at Bray to learn Latin. He went to Oxford, became assistant keeper of Bodleian Library and spent his days there, refusing many posts that were offered to him, " preferring a good conscience before all manner of preferment and worldly honour." The memory of such a man should not be forgotten in his native place and county.

After a drive of about half-an-hour Haines Hill, the seat of Captain Godsall, was reached. In the Gallery Mr. Ditchfield told the story of the old house. The older portion was Elizabethan or Early Jacobean, and the estate was held by William Hide, who died in 1589. It was then acquired by the Windebank family. Thomas Windebank was living in the parish in 1593, died in 1607, and left his estate to his son, Sir Francis Windebank, Secretary of State to Charles I. He was a friend of Archbishop Laud, who often stayed here and recorded his visits in his diary. Sir Francis was an ardent royalist; he was arrested by the Parliament in 1640, escaped, crossed to France, and died six years later. His estates were sequestered, and passed into the hands of Richard Bigg, son of a merchant tailor, of London, and a partisan of Cromwell. At the Restoration he contrived to retain the property, and obtained a pardon from the King, which is still in the room in which they were assembled. The Biggs retained the property till the middle of the 18th century, when it was acquired by James Edward Colleton, who married Lady Anne Cowper, daughter of the first Earl Cowper. After his death it passed to the Garth family, his cousin, Mr. C. Garth, taking the name of Colleton. Captain Thomas Garth succeeded in 1818, and was followed by his son, Mr. Thomas Colleton Garth, the famous and much-beloved squire and M.F.H., founder of the Garth Hunt in 1852. On his death in 1907 his sister, Mrs. Shifner, succeeded, and was followed in 1910 by her nephew, Captain Godsall. The old part of the house was built in the reign of Elizabeth, but the windows and walls of the ends of the Gallery were rebuilt in the style of Queen Anne in 1716 by the Biggs. The front of the mansion was built by Mr. Colleton about 1760, replacing two wings resembling those now existing at the back. It was formerly H shaped in plan. Most of the internal ornamentation is of Queen Anne date and the front interior portion Mid-Georgian. There are some interesting pictures by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Lily, Kneller, and other masters, including one of Sir Samuel Garth, which was originally in the Kitcat Club. Mr. Ditchfield, on behalf of the members, expressed the thanks of the Society to Captain Godsall for so kindly welcoming them and entertaining them so hospitably.

BERKSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—The first lecture of the Winter Session was given by Mr. J. Hautenville Cope, on Nov. 7th, who lectured on Winchester: the lecture was illustrated by a very fine series of slides, some of which are the property of the Corporation of the City of Winchester. Mr. Cope described some of the well known places in the city, the Old Gild Hall, the

West Gate, the Castle in which is preserved King Arthur's "round table" and then took his hearers to the Cathedral and explained by a series of excellent photographs all about the recent restoration. In the unavoidable absence of the President the chair was taken by Mr. Ditchfield.

The second lecture was on Nov. 24th, when the Society had the pleasure of listening to a lecture from Mr. Arthur W. Sutton, on "My Camel Ride from Suez to Mount Sinai." The lecture was illustrated by 100 photographs taken by Mr. Sutton during this ride.

#### NEWBURY DISTRICT FIELD CLUB. EXCURSION TO CLAYDON HOUSE.—

On Tuesday, 30th Sept. 25 members of the club took part in this expedition. The first place visited was Caversfield Church, dedicated to St. Lawrence, and is a small and ancient structure, restored in 1874, when north and south aisles were added. The new south aisle may be regarded as a restoration, the two Early English arches of the ancient aisle having been walled up. The tower placed at the west end, is plain and massive, with a gable roof of supposed Saxon character and contains three bells, one of which is said to date from A.D. 1200. The doorway and porch at the north-west, are late Norman, c. 1180, and there is a piscina of this date, and a Norman font, ornamented with arcaded work of rude character. In the chancel is a high tomb to John Langston, 1487, and there is a brass consisting of three scrolls with texts, proceeding from a heart held in a hand, with a shield of arms under it: a second brass is concealed by a pew. There is an inscribed slab to Maximilian Bond. At Claydon Hall a hearty welcome was accorded to the visitors by Sir Harry and Lady Verney. From the mansion the party walked to the Church of Middle Claydon, dedicated to All Saints, the smallest of the three Claydon churches, which is quite close to the House, and there is a priest's door at the top of a flight of stone steps. The body of the church is good fourteenth-century work. Within its walls are monuments of the Verneys and the Giffards intermixed. On the north wall of the chancel is a large brass of a knight in armour, with his wife in coif and wimple by his side, thirteen little sons in gowns kneeling at his feet, seven little daughters in coifs at hers. There is an alabaster altar tomb with a female recumbent figure, also a monument of one of the Verneys and his wife kneeling one on each side of a "fald stool" their hands joined in prayer, and behind the man is a son, There is a fine monument with sculptured figures, which Sir Ralph Verney erected to his father and mother, his wife, and himself, in 1652.

The Churchyard, which has disappeared, was altered by the last Lord Verney and the tradition still exists in the village that "he never prospered after that, ye know, for why, he moved the dead. But they was all back again the next mornin' safe in their graves." "What someone carried them back, you mean?" said the hearer: "Nay, none knew how, but they all was," replied the narrator solemnly, as befitted her supernatural history. The respect for the last home of those who can no longer defend it is very deep-seated in this country.

Leaving the Church, a tour was made of the house. In the galleries are a marvellous collection of objects collected by members of the Verney family. It was in a wainscoted gallery 40 feet long that the late owner of Claydon, Sir Harry Verney, when he came to live there, found many boxes containing bundles of letters, charters and pardons with great seals attached, early editions of plays, account books, terriers and rent rolls, dating from the time of Henry VII. "Mercuries," diurnals of the period of the Civil Wars and "newes-letters." The letters related to the Verneys, who have owned the Manor of Claydon for 14 generations, beginning with Sir Ralph, Lord Mayor of London in 1465, and M.P. for London in 1472, and going down to Mary Verney, created Baroness

Fermanagh, who died unmarried in 1810. There were 30,000 letters up to the date of Sir Ralph's death in 1696.

Claydon House was rebuilt in the reign of Henry VII. replacing an "ancient seat," which was in existence in the days of the De la Zouches and Cantelupes. It was, however, just after his father's death in 1752, when the second Earl Verney came into the estates, that he pulled down the west wing of the house, and rebuilt it from designs by Adam. Three large rooms, a great hall with marble pillars, and a ball room 120 feet long, were filled with carved woodwork and plaster mouldings of great elegance and variety, the doors of the saloon were inlaid with ebony, ivory and satin-wood, under the direction of Patrioli, an Italian artist. A central staircase, with steps like marqueterie, is a beautiful feature, the wrought-iron scrolls and wreaths of wheat-ears, forming the banisters, are of such delicacy and finish as to rustle at the tread of a passer-by. The proportion of these new rooms is very fine: the library is nearly a double cube 50ft. by 28ft. and 25ft. high; the pink parlour or summer dining room, with lovely carvings gives the impression of being much higher. The pictures, the books, the furniture, were all on the same lavish scale of expenditure and taste; one bedroom was "furnisht all with silver," of which only an exquisite little mirror now remains. This Lord Verney was the first to recognise Edmund Burke's ability, and gave him a seat at Wendover; he lent money with reckless kindness both to him and to many people. The crash came only too soon. Before the house was finished, the creditors rushed in and carried off everything, even to a marble chimney-piece for the library, which had not been put into its place; the pictures were happily heirlooms. Earl Verney's wife, Mary Herring, died in the middle of their troubles, and he himself was said to have escaped in the empty hearse, which had removed her body. After a while he returned, probably to get a little money, and hid in the desolate house.

When the house was repaired 40 years ago, a small chamber was found in which 10 men could stand upright, a "priest's hole, or conveyance," the secret of which had been so well kept as to be altogether forgotten; such hiding-places were known only to the owner of a house and his eldest son, and were handed down with solemn secrecy to the next generation. It is an illustration of the probable origin of half the ghost stories "de rigueur" in old houses, that the room in which the trap door was found, was the haunted chamber of the place. The particular apparition most likely varied with the period; at Claydon the ghost of Sir Edmund Verney, the Knight-Marshal, as the most marked man in the family, was the one whose appearance had survived. He was supposed to be looking for the hand, severed from the body at the Battle of Edghill, which, according to tradition, had been found, still holding the King's standard, though the body itself was lost.

By the kindness of the owner, tea was served in the dining room, and the Club returned to Newbury, which was reached at 9 p.m.

