

## Bassano's Church Notes.

A FORGOTTEN FACT OF DERBYSHIRE HISTORY.

By J. PYM YEATMAN, Barrister-at-Law.



VERY lover of Derbyshire history and heraldry knows and values the volume of Derbyshire Church notes deposited in the College of Arms, known to the Heralds as "Bassano's." It is unique in character; for although several counties can boast of fair accounts of the coat armour exhibited in their churches, and taken note of by divers Heralds, yet few, if any, can claim to possess so complete a collection as this, of the date from 1686, or a little earlier, to the year 1706. As this collection is more complete, and contains an unusually large amount of general information, including, evidently, every scrap of genealogical information to be derived from monumental inscriptions or heraldic furniture of any kind—banners, coat armour, or carvings—it is most clear that it is the work of a thorough and devoted herald and antiquary.

Now, the book in the Heralds' College is written by the same hand throughout, and that a poor hand, and it is known only as the work of "Bassano," a coach-painter of Derby of a somewhat later date. It is very doubtful whether such a handy-craftsman could have compiled such a volume himself; \* but all doubt ceases when the original work from which the Heralds' copy is taken comes to sight; and I claim to have discovered it amongst the MSS. of the late Daniel Dakeyne, of Holt House, Darley Dale,

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\* *Vide* Addendum.

who flourished as an antiquary about a century later than Brailsford. From a comparison between my own copy of Brailsford and that of Bassano in the College, I am satisfied that they are from the same source, and that the newly discovered volume is the original. So far as I know, Brailsford's MSS. have perished; but Daniel Dakeyne copied many of them, and in this case, fortunately, he possessed the original papers.

When recently I had the privilege of examining and copying Dakeyne's MSS., which are still at Holt House, under the care of the worthy holder thereof, the Rev. J. D. Cannon, who married the last heir female of the family, I found, bound up with other papers in Vol. I. of the Dakeyne Collection, a single sheet in a very remarkable handwriting of the old legal order, from which I opine that the writer himself was a lawyer; it was not merely an account of the coat armour and monumental inscriptions in the church, but it contained some genealogical and topographical notes, and a few anecdotes relating to the persons and places of Ashover. Amongst these notes was a short account of ancient buildings in the parish, with a reference to Stubbing Edge, and a pedigree of the Dakeynes of that place, brought down to Frances, daughter of Arthur Dakeyne, then (1685) aged about eleven, of Digby, Charles, and John, who were living 1685. "Henry and Trigot lost their lives in the sea fight when Obdam, the Dutch Ad<sup>m</sup>, was sunk in the time of Charles II., and Gregory lost his life in the present King's service in the West Indies, and John and Charles are now in the military service under our present King James II."—*Daniel*. Is it not probable, by the way, that the curious motto used by this family, "Strike Dakeyne, the devil's in the hemp," may have had its origin in a sea fight, when some Dakeyne, possibly one of these sons, was attempting in vain to sever the grappling ropes which bound his ship to the enemy, possibly a fire ship? The captain or admiral may well be excused for using such an expression at such a moment, and Dakeyne may have proudly adopted it in memory of a successful achievement. Daniel Dakeyne himself did not know the writer of this sheet, but he records that it was formerly in the possession of

Thomas Blore, the historian of Wingfield Manor, and of Rutlandshire, and who, had Derbyshire men of his date been sensible enough to appreciate his learned works, would, doubtless, have been the historian of the county.

Thomas Blore apparently did not know much about the author, but he recorded the fact that he believed it was part of a collection by one Brailsford. Subsequently, I found loose, amongst the Dakeyne MSS., a large number of sheets in the same handwriting, and Mr. Cannon, having with great kindness allowed me to carry them off, I have sorted and arranged them, and now they form a most valuable volume in the Dakeyne Collection, compared to which the copy in the Heralds' College is of comparatively small importance.

I make no doubt of this, because amongst them are little notes relating to the writer, which indicate from internal evidence, that they were made at the time of the compilation, and, besides this, the information is much more explicit than that contained in the Bassano volume, which is simply an abstract of the contents, such as a mere painter would require for his work ; but these notes make us acquainted with the author, and we feel that he was a good and kindly man. His handwriting is that of a past age in the time of Charles II., and is probably that of the time of James I., retained by one who was a stickler for old forms. There is a note under Matlock which gives the writer's age approximately. He writes—"I well remember Mr. William Woolley, of Riber ; my first acquaintance with him was when I was about twenty years old, in the time of the grand Rebellion, who had the character of an honest worthy gentleman ; his hospitality and charity, his keeping of a pack of hounds for his own pleasure, and of giving thereby a sociable entertainment to his neighbouring gentlemen that loved that recreation, was well deserving. I never heard that he married. Anthony Woolley was his brother and next heir."

The writer records the burial of an Anthony Woolley. A note to the account of the monument of Sir John Stanhope at Elvaston would indicate that his admiration of the grand rebellion was of a

qualified kind. He writes—"Here was at the side of this tomb several of the children of Sir John Stanhope placed decently, which in the grand rebellion was knock'd down by that insolent party." He had lived through that period, and was probably ruined by them. He writes thus reverently of the Church of Brampton :

"The Churchyard is full two acres ; in it is a handsome cross of 2 Gerrics,\* and in the middle spire stone, a fair dial. On the outside of a pillar at the S.E. corner of the chancel, is cut fair in stone two large keys and two swords crossed.

"On the end of the south isle outwards, above the window, is the blessed Jesus cut in stone, sitting with his left hand upon his breast, and his right gently elevated or stretched, pierced, and also his side. At a little distance from his right side, is a dexter hand houlding in it a sceptre, and at a little distance also from his sinister side is also a dexter hand houlding in it a bishop's crozier.

"On the side of the window is the Virgin, Saint Mary, cut in stone, under a canopy, and on the head of the canopy is a cherub ; and on the south side outwards of the S. Isle is St. Peter, also in full proporcion cut in stone, under a canopy, with a key in the dexter hand and an unopened book in his left hand, on each side supported with two pillars ; on the head of each is a cock. On the other side of the window is St. Paul his full proporcion, fair cut in stone, with a sword in his right hand, and in his left hand a book" ; and, in referring to Pinxton Church, he records that there was an "Image of the Blessed Virgin."† His respect for earthly dignities is apparent from a note on one of the rooms in Bolsover Castle. He writes—"In this building is a famous closet built by Sir Charles Cavendish, the chimney piece of black and white marble, the floor also of the same, checky, so is the rare architecture above head ; in the time of

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\* Greeces or steps, doubtless the original word of the Grecian stairs at Lincoln.

† Mr. Yeatman infers from the tone of these extracts that the writer was a Roman Catholic.—*Ed.*

the grand rebellion did the wife of one of the rebellious party, Major Taylor, make this closet her spinning room for toe and wooll—proh dolor ! ”

The following note at Chesterfield, on the death of Rich. Flentham, shows his sympathy with those who suffer persecution :—

“ Richard Flentham, born at Plesley, a faithful servant of Charles II., and of his loving brother James II., to whom he was gentleman of the Wine Cellar, and so continued until the abdication, as it was called, of King James, who, when he was Duke of York, did attend him at sea, being with him in his flagship in that sea fight when he gave that total defeat to the Dutch, and when he went into Scotland as Lord High Commissioner for the settling of the Episcopal Church Government there with ease and much satisfaction, and content to that kingdom ; he was also one of his Royal Highness's attendants into Flanders that time what the Phanatic humour made the King so uneasy that he was constrained to send him sometime thither ; he was a faithful man to his friends, and departed this life ‘ *in carcere* ’ the 25th Oct., 1705, which confinement he had undergone from near the beginning of King William's reign—his wines and plate being all seized on (which was very considerable) for the King, and utterly ruined by the Revolution.”

It is curious that we should have only just celebrated the centenary of this great event, which is popularly supposed to have inaugurated a period of liberty and that sort of thing ; it would seem instead, that it was liberty and something more for only one party in the State.

Brailsford evidently loved to describe heraldic details. In Staveley, he writes—“ Here hangs the Pennon and Streamer, spurs, sword, gauntlets, helmet, and crest, with the tassels of silk bossed with gold, with the whole achievements of Sir Peter Freshville, who was knighted at Muslebarrow Battle in Scotland. This was fought 3 Sep<sup>r</sup>, Edward VI., by Seymour, Duke of Somerset, with 600 foot and 6,000 horse, besides 1,300 pioneers and artificers, and fifteen brass pieces of ordinance,

all because King David of Scotland refused to marry the young Queen."

Evidently he had a love for the gentle craft. He writes—"A little distance southward from Chapel-le-Frith are a few houses, or village, called Blackbrook, by which runs a little brook called Blackbrook water, which affords plenty of trout (considering the scarceness of the rivulet), that in season trouts are usually sold at Chapel-le-Frith for twopence per pound. The spring head of the rivulet is within two miles of this place, and near to the Vill is a common of pasture called Blake Well pasture."

This is his description of a scene near Glossop—"At Hayfield is a stone bridge over the river or Kinder Skowt water. The head of this small river is from a spring upon the top of Kinder Skowt Hill; part goes west to Stokport and thence to the Irish Sea, the other part falls into the Darwent. When it is a stormy south-west wind, it blows up the water with that force that it falls perpendicularly down the rocks and crags, that it seems like a thick smoke for more than a quarter of a mile."

In the same handwriting, on the back of one of the papers, is written the following petition, which tells its own tale, and proves the identity of the writer:—

"To the Right Worshipful and Honourable the Justices of the Peace for the County of Derby, and in this General Quarter Sessions, especially held the 17th Apl., Anno 1705.

"Gentlemen, I humbly beg the acceptance of this to your vies and yr candours in answering my petition. Gentlemen, it is very lately since I have been informed that the High Constable for the hundred of Scarsdale proposes to leave off that piece of county service, and if you think me a fit man, and yt you will be pleased to accept of me unto yt business (my present circumstances are known to you all, and that it will give a support to your unfortunate countryman), and will execute the office with all possible care and trust, and ready to give my accounts when and as often as required, and I hope (if it be required) may give security for the management of yt trust, and no person more thankful than myself shall be for it; and further I will be very tractable and ready to

serve you and my country gentlemen upon my services to the best of my abilities, who heartily wishes your prosperity.

"Tho Brailsford."

That Thomas Brailsford was of Seyner is clear from the following document:—"We whose names are here unto being two of the Trustees of Thomas and John Brailsford, late of Seyner, in the County of Derby, gentlemen, do hereby appoint you the said C. F. to pay unto I. M. of M., in the County of \_\_\_\_\_, one of the creditors of the said John Brailsford, the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_ out of remainders of the purchase money of Seyner estate now remaining in your hands, the said sum being due to the said I. M. upon composition for the sum of £59 3s. 2d. actually due and owing by the said John Brailsford to the said I. M., and for your so doing this shall be your sufficient warrant. In witness, &c."

So that it would seem that the poor old antiquary, when over seventy years old, was honestly giving up his life interest in the family estate, to pay a composition upon his son's debts, whilst he himself was a humble suppliant for the office of High Constable of Scarsdale hundred.

The notes continue to be made for five years after this date, though we do not learn whether he was successful in his suit. Be that as it may, he had evidently learnt the stern lesson "that a heart must be tried by pain" as "gold is tried by fire."

Amongst the list of those who were refused arms in 1601, was the name of Brailsford of Senor, but they were allowed by Dugdale to be in, *or*, a cinquefoil pierced, *gules*. The pedigree given by Dakeyne, no doubt taken from the Brailsford MSS., differs considerably from that given in the Heralds' Visitations; it would seem that they were old vassals of the Savages of Steynesby, Lords of Seynour, part of their lands being held of some Abbey, which Henry VIII. sold to Thos. Goodwyn in the 35th year of his reign, it then being in the tenure of Brailsford. Goodwin sold it to Bokes, who sold it to Wm. Bole of Alfreton, who, 5 Edward VI., sold it to John Brailsford, and he died possessed of both properties in 1 Elizabeth. Those who think it wrong to enjoy Church

property, may attribute the loss of the family property of Seymour a few generations afterwards, as a natural sequence ; but we really only know the fact and not the cause of it, and possibly descendants of the family may still exist, although Daniel Dakeyne evidently knew nothing about them later than Dugdale's Visitation, whilst amongst other great services to Derbyshire history he had brought most of those pedigrees down to his own date.

### ADDENDUM.

RICHARD BASSANO.

The Editor has in his possession the original grant made by Sir William Dugdale, "Norroy King of Armes," to Richard Bassano as heraldic painter and inspector of arms within the counties of Stafford and Derby. The document, which is unhappily mutilated, obviously for the sake of its once ornate heading, bears the autograph of William Dugdale by the side of the looping-place of the seal strip. It concludes as follows :

"Know ye therefore that I, the said Norroy, for the better execution and performance of his Ma<sup>ties</sup> pleasure, in the say<sup>d</sup> Letters-patents approved and directed, have by these presents deputed and appointed RICHARD BESANO of the city of Litchfield, painter, upon occasion to paynt and set forth all Funeral Escocheons and other Armes and coats as have anciently of right been borne, or that may justifiably be borne w<sup>th</sup>in the Counties of Stafford and Derby: And to enter into any church, Chapell, or other particular place in the day time, in houres seasonable, to view and take notice of any such Armes or crests as are or shall be there paynted, graved, carved or set up: to the end that I the sayd Norroy being advertized by him the said Richard thereof, in case they be assumed, and are not justifiable by the Law of Armes, may, according to his sayd Ma<sup>ties</sup> speciall direction in such cases, deface and obliterate the same, provided always that he the said Richard Besano do not, by colour of this my deputation



paynt any penon, Standard, Guydon or any other Atchievements of Honour as are usually borne by his Ma<sup>ties</sup> officers in Armes upon the celebration of any solemn Funerall where their attendance is required to direct the regular proceeding of such funerall, w<sup>t</sup>out the speciale appointment and order of me the said Norroy. And lastly that this Deputation thus by me given to him the said Richard Besano shall continue in force untill such time as I the said Norroy shall, under the Seal of my Office revoke the same. Given at London under the Seale of my Office this eighteenth day of May in the twenty-eighth yeare of the reigne of our most gracious sovereign CHARLES the Second, by the grace of God, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland King Defender of the Fayth, &c., A<sup>o</sup>que Domini MDCLXXVI. (1676.)”