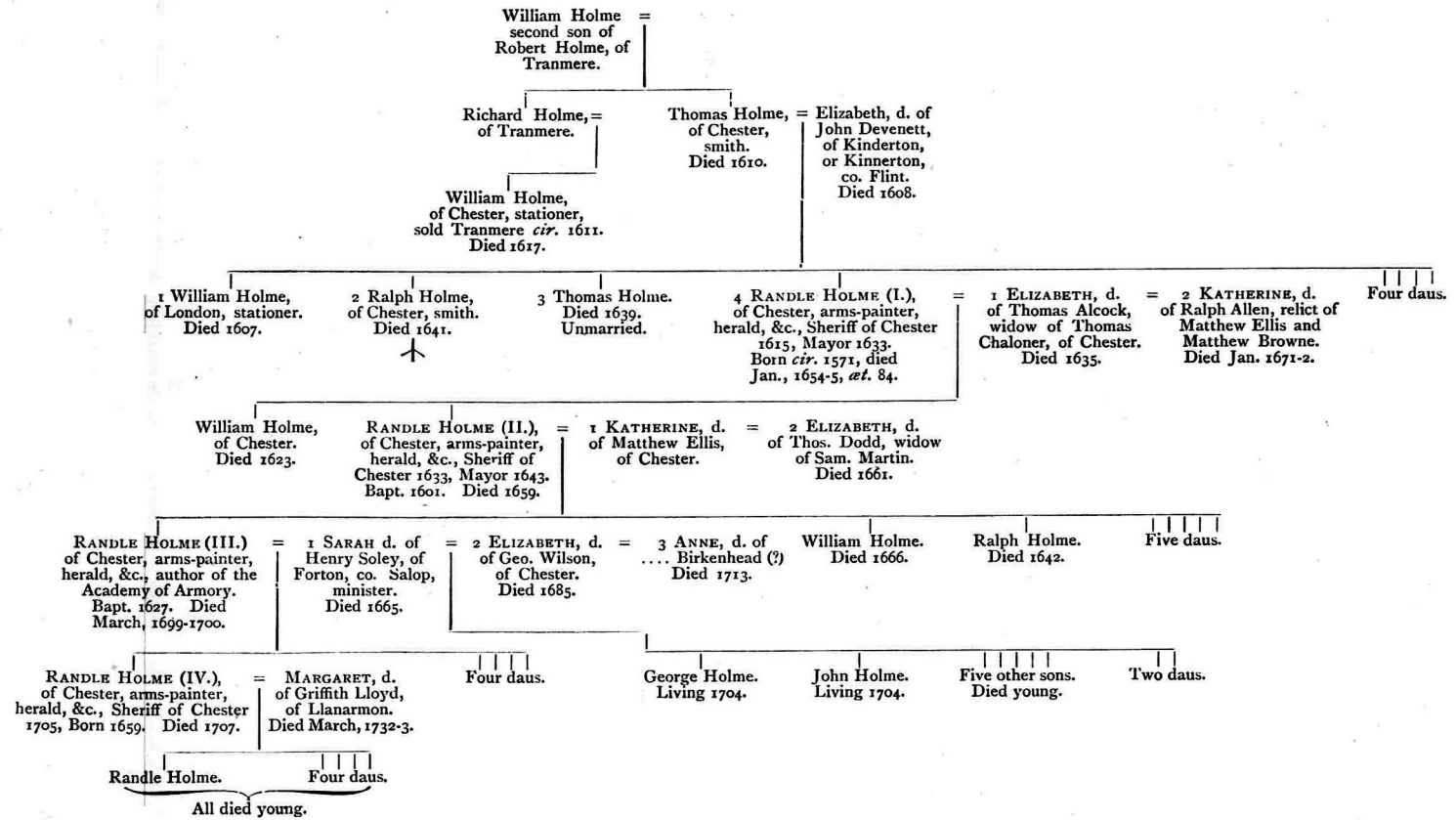


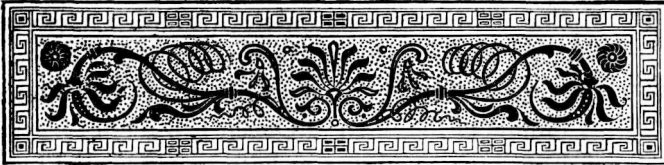
ARMS.—Barry of six Or and Azure on a canton Ermine a rose Gules, seeded Or, bearded Vert.

CREST.—An arm couped and embowed, vested as the coat and cuffed Ermine, grasping a rose branch proper.

“This cote was augmented by S^r Rich: S^t George, Norroy, at his Visitation 1613 and confirmed for Randle Holme, senior, and his heirs.” (Harl. MS. 2161, f. 117.)

SKELETON PEDIGREE OF HOLME OF CHESTER.





THE FOUR RANDLE HOLMES, OF CHESTER,

ANTIQUARIES, HERALDS, AND GENEALOGISTS,
c. 1571 TO 1707.

BY J. P. EARWAKER, M.A., F.S.A.

(Read 17th November, 1890.)

TOWARDS the end of the fourteenth century a moiety of the manor of Tranmere, Tranmore, or Tranmole, in Wirrall hundred, co. Chester, was acquired by ROBERT DE HOLME, on his marriage with Matilda, one of the two daughters and coheirs of William de Tranmole, lord of that manor. His descendants for some eight or nine generations continued to hold and occupy that estate till the reign of James I., when it was sold by William Holme,¹ of Chester, who had succeeded to it on the death

¹ This William Holme, of Chester, "stationer," who was about fifty-eight years of age in 1611, married Anne, daughter of William Nicolls, of co. Devon, and was buried in Trinity Church, Chester, on the 3rd August, 1617. He left issue. From the books of the Chester Stationers' Company it would appear that he was admitted into that Company on the 12th June, 1592. See also Harl. MS. 2054, f. 92b, where it states: "1591 this yeare Wm. Holme stationer came [to Chester], no mention of any before." This William Holme, "the sonne of Rychard holme of tranmoore in the Countye of Chester yeoman," had been apprenticed in 1569 for eleven years to John Harrison, citizen and stationer of London. He was admitted a freeman of the Stationers' Company of London in 1580, and to the Livery in 1604 (Arber's Transcript of the Stationers' Register, vol. i., p. 396, &c.).

of his young nephew, John Holme, who died in 1611. The father of this William Holme was Richard Holme, of Tranmole, gentleman, whose younger brother, Thomas Holme, was the first of his family, who settled in Chester, about the middle of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

This THOMAS HOLME¹ was a smith by trade, and lived in a house in Bridge Street. By his wife Elizabeth, the daughter of John Devenett, of Kinderton, co. Flint, he had a family of at least four sons and four daughters.² He was buried at St. Michael's, Chester, on the 28th May, 1610, his wife having been buried there on the 23rd December, 1608. His eldest son, *William Holme*, who became a "stationer,"³ was resident in Chester in 1604, but subsequently went to London, and died there before his father in 1607, and was buried at St. Dunstan's, Fleet Street, leaving issue. Thomas Holme's second son, *Ralph Holme*, remained in Chester, and continued his father's trade of a blacksmith. He married Ellen, daughter of Richard Sneyd, of Hope, co. Flint, by whom he had four daughters,—Elizabeth, who died young, Anne, Grace, and Elizabeth, who all married and lived in Chester.⁴ His third son was *Thomas Holme*,

¹ Thomas Holme, the brother of Richard Holme, of Tranmere, was the third son of William Holme, the second son of Robert Holme, of Tranmere.

² His daughters were Ursula, married to Richard (or Rafe) Shurlock, of Chester; . . . married to Edward Smyth, of Chester; . . . married to . . . Chersley, of London; and Anne, who was married at St. Michael's, 3rd May, 1588, to Richard Powell, of Chester (see also Harl. MS. 2161, f. 117).

³ In 1581, "William Hulme, son of Thomas Hulme, of Chester, smythe," was apprenticed to "William Hulme Cytizen and Stationer of London." He was admitted a freeman in 1589 (*Arber's Transcript*, vol. ii., p. 110, &c.).

⁴ Elizabeth (who died young), the eldest of these four daughters, was baptised at St. Michael's, 10th June, 1610; Anne married Thomas Harrison, of Chester; Grace, baptised at St. Michael's, 2nd February, 1611-12, married there 4th February, 1633-4, to Gerard Mercer; and Elizabeth, baptised at St. Michael's, 6th September, 1615, married Richard Bridge, of Chester.

who was living unmarried in 1628, and who died in 1639 without issue.¹ His fourth son was *Randle Holme* (I.).

RANDLE HOLME, THE FIRST, BORN *c.* 1571, DIED 1655.

RANDLE HOLME, the first of the four Cheshire anti-quaries and heralds who bore this distinctive name, was the fourth son of Thomas Holme, and, as he is described as dying in the eighty-fourth year of his age in 1655, was probably born about the year 1571; but the existing registers of St. Michael's do not begin so early. He took up the trade of an arms-painter,² and was enrolled as a member of the Company of "the Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers, and Stationers"³ of Chester, of whom not only he, but his son, grandson, and great-grandson were all distinguished and influential members. About the year 1598 he married Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Alcock, of Chester, and then the widow of Thomas Chaloner,⁴ of Chester, a

¹ Letters of administration were granted to Randle Holme, senior, alderman, of the goods, &c., of Thomas Holme, his brother, of the city of Chester, deceased, dated 11th March, 1638-9 (Harl. MS. 2022, f. 128).

² As specimens of the character of the "painting" which he undertook, the following entries from the old churchwardens' accounts of St. Michael's, Chester, will be found of interest:—

1606. Item payd to Rondulphe Holmes for paynting ye place
for ye sword - - - - - vjs
1609. Itm payd to Randle Holmes for guilding and payntinge
the Stondart for Mr. Maiors sword - - - - - vs
" Itm payd to Randle Holmes for laying the pullpytt and
the cover in colors and guildinge the bobbes - - - - - xs^s iiii^d

³ He was apprenticed on the 10th January, 1587, to Thomas Chaloner, of Chester, arms-painter, for the term of ten years, and some eleven years later married his master's widow.

⁴ Very little is known of this Thomas Chaloner and his family. He died on the 14th May, 1598, and was buried at St. Michael's, Chester, where on the second pillar of the nave there was formerly a tablet bearing a short Latin inscription to his memory. He is also stated on one of the Randle Holme monuments, subsequently to be described, to have been at one time Ulster

distinguished antiquary and herald, who had been at one time Ulster king of arms. By this marriage he succeeded to the papers of his wife's late husband, and it is very probable that the possession of these collections led to his taking up the study of genealogy and family history as a profession, in conjunction with his other business as an arms-painter.¹ It is probable that Thomas Chaloner had held an official position as deputy to the Heralds' College, in Chester, in which he was succeeded by Randle Holme, for in March, 1600-1, William Segar, Norroy king of arms, appointed "Randall Holme resident in the citty of Chester" his deputy, to keep a "regester booke of Funeralls" in "the countyes of Chester Lancaster and North Wales," wherein "I will that he shall truelie enter, from time to time, the Armes and Creastes, Match, issue and decease of all such persons of Coate

king of arms in Ireland. He is said to have had a son Jacob Chaloner, and a grandson James Chaloner, who appear to have lived in London and followed in his footsteps as professional compilers of genealogies. Many of their pedigrees are to be found in the volumes of the Randle Holme collections among the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum. By some writers this James Chaloner has been confused with another James Chaloner, of the Gisborough family, who wrote the treatise on the Isle of Man appended to King's *Vale Royall*, printed in 1657. Thomas Chaloner had another son, Daniel, who was bound apprentice to "Maximilian Poutrain, *alias* Colte, of the parish of St. Bartholomew the Great, beside Westminster, London, stone carver," on the 15th May, 1607, by "Randle Holme, of the city of Chester, servant to Henry, the most illustrious Prince of Wales" (see Harl. MS. 2022, f. 183). A volume of pedigrees by the Chaloners was, in 1817, in the hands of the Rev. Hugh Cholmondeley, Dean of Chester.

¹ I have, for instance, a short pedigree, on vellum, showing the descent of "Thomas Marbury, now Bachler of Arts in Brasonnose Colledge 1632," which is signed as follows: "That this descent is trewly sett downe, and Justly proved by record and other Authentick matter I Randle Holme of ye City of Chester Alderman and Deputy for ye office of Armes doe testifye the same vnder my hand the fourth day of September Ano Dñi 1632. (Signed) RANDLE HOLME." Many similar documents, long pedigree rolls, &c., drawn up by him and his successors, are still to be found amongst the muniments of many old families in Cheshire and the neighbouring counties, or are copied in the Randle Holme MS. collections now among the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum.

Armor and worship as it shall please God to call out of this transitory life, and shall receive worshipfull enterment according to their estates and degrees." He was also to demand and collect the "due fees" as stated in the schedule, and to account for the same to the said Norroy king of arms.¹ This appointment was confirmed by Richard St. George, Norroy, on the 20th May, 1606.²

In the year 1604 he and his elder brother, William Holme, who had not then left Chester for London, are mentioned as being aldermen of their Company, his brother being a "stationer" and he a "painter."

In 1607 he is described as "Randle Holme of the city of Chester, servant to Henry the most illustrious Prince of Wales" (Harl. MS. 2022), and in 1613, at the heraldic visitation of Richard St. George, Norroy king of arms, the confirmation of his coat of arms and his crest was granted to "Randle Holme of the city of Chester gentleman" (see Harl. MS. 2161).

In October, 1615, he was elected one of the two sheriffs of Chester, and in 1622 he rebuilt or enlarged his house at the Bridge Street end of Castle Lane, subsequently to be referred to.

In 1625 he was one of those in the city of Chester who were asked to contribute to the exchequer of Charles I., the "loan," as it was termed, demanded from him being £10. He has preserved a note of the "privy seal" sent to him about this loan, which is as follows:³

To our Trusty and well beloved Randle Holmes of
Chester, gent.

By the King.

Trusty and welbeloved having observed in the presidents

¹ Lansdowne MSS., No. 879, British Museum.

² Harl. MS. 2041, printed on p. vi of the Introduction to *Cheshire and Lancashire Funeral Certificates*, Record Society, vol. vi., 1882.

³ Harl. MS. 2022, f. 183.

and customs of former tymes that the Kings and Queens of this our Realm upon extraordinary occasions have used to resort to those contributions which arise from the generality of subjects or to the private helpe of some well affected by way of loane &c, the summe which we require is ten pounds &c, the person to collect it is Sir George Booth Knt and Bart,¹ with promise to repay it within 18 months &c.

Given under our privy seale at Hampton Court 19 November in the first yeare of our reigne, 1625.

A few years later, in 1631, he was one of those selected in Chester for "obligatory knighthood,"² which was another form of obtaining funds for an empty exchequer; and he "compounded for his knighthood" by the payment of £10. A copy of the receipt given to him by Sir George Booth, Knt. and Bart., is preserved in Harl. MS. 2022, f. 128*b*, as follows:³

Com. Cest. 15 Oct. Año. R. R. Caroli Angl' &c 7 Año 1631.
Received this day and yeare above saide of Randle Holme citizen and Alderman of the said city the summe of ten pounds And is in discharge of a composition made with myselfe and other his Majesties Commissioners for his contempt in not attending and receiving the order of Knighthood at his highness Coronation according to the law in that case provided.

I say rec^d the summe of . . . x^{li} [£10]
by me G: BOOTH.

Four interesting letters relating to fees for funerals, &c., written by him to Sir Richard St. George, Norroy king of arms, and now preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford,

¹ This was Sir George Booth, of Dunham Massey, co. Chester.

² For an account of "obligatory knighthood," together with the "lists of the Esquires and Gentlemen in Cheshire and Lancashire, who refused the order of knighthood at the coronation of Charles I.," see a paper by me, contributed to *Miscellanies relating to Lancashire and Cheshire*, Record Society, 1885 pp. 193-223.

³ This has been printed in the *Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 1190 (vol. ii., p. 102)

Randall Holme

1606.

Randall Holme

1623.

Randall Holme

1630.

Randle Holme

1653.

AUTOGRAPHS OF RANDLE HOLME (I.)

(FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS' BOOKS OF ST. MARY ON THE HILL, CHESTER).

have recently been printed by the Chetham Society.¹ The first of these is dated 22nd September, 1623, the second May 25th [? 1625], and the others 2nd April, 1632, and 30th November [1619], respectively.² They show the difficulties he laboured under in collecting fees, &c., and how his business was interfered with by unauthorised painters, who, as soon as they heard of the death of any person of importance, offered to do the necessary arms painting for the funeral and to undertake the arrangement of it at lower rates than the Heralds' College allowed. In the earliest letter (1619), he says—

“The office [of arms] hath known me to be an antyent practytioner of Armory and was sworne servant to the prince [Henry, Prince of Wales, see p. 117]. I have labored heere [Chester] to mantayne the honor of the office of Armes & for their profit as it is well knowne among our gentry in these parts. I trust none can justly chardge me but that I have delt honestley carefully and trewly in everythinge whearin I have been employed.”

In October, 1633, he was elected to the highest office he could hold in the city, that of Mayor, which he retained till October, 1634.³ During his year of office an amusing incident occurred, of which he has left a full account on record, and which is well worthy of quotation as showing the manners and customs of the times. Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, Earl Marshal of England, accompanied by other noblemen and gentlemen, of whom the Earl of Derby was one, was passing through Chester on July 19th,

¹ Chetham Miscellanies, vol. v. (Chetham Society, vol. xcvi., 1875), pp. 23 to 38.

² In Harl. MS. 2180, ff. 143, 146, are two letters from Sir Richard St. George to Randle Holme (I.), written in 1619 and 1621.

³ In the churchwardens' accounts for St. Mary's, there is an entry in the year 1633-4, relating to “the ground whereon the right worshipfull Randle Holme nowe Mayor hath built his pue.”

1634, and, making a few hours' stay there, expected the mayor to wait upon him as a mark of respect, and as was then customary. But, as it happened to be a Saturday, the mayor was accidentally delayed in the market, whereupon the earl took great umbrage, and sent a messenger with a warrant to bring him into his presence at once.¹ When the mayor appeared, carrying his white staff, which he had been holding as an emblem of his office, in his hand, the following conversation took place.²

“When M^r Major was about [the] middle of the chamber the Earle of Arundell saies ys this yo^r Major and was answered by the Earle of Darbie hee was, but before M^r Major could well come nere to salute the Earle of Arundell the Earle saied M^r Major I sent for yo^a to tell yo^a yo^r offence yo^a haue comitted in not giueing yo^r attendance as yo^a ought & now doe yo^a come with yo^r authority & wth that suddenly tooke the staff out of M^r Majors hands & laid itt in the windowe saying I will teach yo^a to knowe yo^rselfe & attend on peeres of the realme, though I care not for yo^r obseruances yet because yo^a want manners I will teach yo^a some & yo^a shall further heare from mee. I would haue yo^a knowe I haue power to comit yo^a to teach yo^a [to] knowe yo^rselfe and mee and to giue better attendance. Then M^r Mayor saied yf itt like yo^r hono^r I knewe not of yo^r coming to towne till yo^r messenger came to mee, for yf I had I would wth my brethren haue attended to give yo^r hono^r entertainem^t

¹ It appears from the full account of this interview in Harl. MS. 2057, f. 33, that Saturday being “the cheefe weekly markt day in the said City,” the mayor was busily engaged between one and two o'clock in the afternoon, “according to custome,” in “the market house to see the ordering of the market,” when the messenger came to him with a warrant from the Earl of Arundel, desiring his immediate attendance “to answeare such matters as on his Majestie's behalfe should be objected against him.” The mayor immediately went carrying “his white staff in his hand.” The mayor had ultimately to pay 10s. for the warrant, and 13s. 4d. for the messenger's attendance.

² Harl. MS. 2057, f. 33. See also Harl. MS. 2125, f. 309^b, &c., where an account of this interview is also preserved.

“Quoth the Earle I neither care for yoⁿ nor yo^r brethren nor yo^r obseruances but would haue yoⁿ take notice when noble men come to yo^r towne & learne yoⁿ better manners. Then M^r Major p^tested wth theis words clapping his hand on his breast, I p^test before Christ Jesus neither I nor anie of my seruants knewe of yo^r being in towne, for who should tell mee or how should I knowe thereof & againe p^tested I drawe God to witness I knewe not of yo^r being here but by yo^r s^uuant who came to mee, I haue not beene so ill bredd to neglect anie farr inferior to yo^r worth much more to yo^r hono^r had I had knowledge of yo^r comeing. Why quoth the Earle all the towne knoweth thereof but you would not knowe, my Lord of Darbie can come, though his age requier forbearance & yet yoⁿ not knowe, but I will teach yoⁿ to knowe when I or any of the nobility come, to be obseruant and attendant.

“Then M^r Major saied, my noble lord of Darbie knowes my carriage and I am psuaded thinkes I speake truth, then the Earle of Darbie saied my lord I verily thinke M^r Major speaketh truth, and would haue beene noe way neglectiue, hee ys soe generous (or such a word) but I verily thinke y^t [he] was in ignorance.”

There is a good deal more to the same effect, but the Earl of Arundel's wrath was finally appeased, and he and the Earl of Derby left Chester that afternoon. In the course of the dispute the Earl of Arundel said: “I am tould yoⁿ haue dependency upon my office of armes, then presently M^r Major saied y^t y^s true my lord & that tyeth me in a double bond, had I knowne of yo^r comeing to haue giuen yoⁿ all dutifull obseruance.”¹

In 1635, Randle Holme lost his wife, Elizabeth, who was buried at St. Mary's on the Hill, Chester, on the 29th May

¹ The account of this interview is signed by Edward Whitby, the then Recorder of the city, who no doubt was present with the Mayor. In Harl. MS. 2125, f. 308, is an autograph letter from the Earl Rivers (signed Savage), dated 9th August, 1634, referring to this matter and saying he would see the Earl of Arundel and put it right.

in that year. He did not long remain a widower, for on the 11th September following he was married at St. Mary's to Katherine, daughter of Ralph Allen, alderman of Chester, and the relict, successively, of Matthew Ellis, of Overleigh, and of Matthew Brown, of Netherleigh, both near Chester. By his first wife, Elizabeth, Randle Holme had two sons, William and Randle, but by his second wife he had no issue. *William Holme*, the eldest son, who was baptised at St. Mary's on the 6th October, 1599, married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Edwards, of Mold, co. Flint, gentleman,¹ by whom he had one child, William, baptised at St. Peter's, Chester, on the 29th August, 1623, who died in his infancy. He died in his twenty-fourth year, and was buried at St. Mary's in July, 1623. The other son, *Randle Holme*, subsequently distinguished from his father by being called "Randle Holme the second," was baptised at St. Mary's on the 15th July, 1601.

Both these sons, when they attained to man's estate, were admitted as freemen of their father's Company, "the Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers, and Stationers," on the 17th October, 1622. In connection with this, the following entries from the Company's books will be read with interest:—

1622. Payd for Sacke and Clared wine at William Holmes
 dynner [to ye Company at his fathers new buildinge
 in Castle Lane]² - - - - - ix^s
 ,, Payd for Sacke and Clared at Rand: Holmes dynner
 [the next day for the Company and their wives at
 the same place]² - - - - - vj^s ij^d

¹ She married for her second husband, William Leigh, of Booths, near Knutsford, Esq., and died at Booths, on the 4th April, 1634 (*Cheshire Funeral Certificates*, Record Society, vol. vi., p. 127).

² These words are added in another hand, that of the third Randle Holme. They are of special interest in this instance as showing that in 1622 Randle Holme (I.) had completed his "new building" in Castle Lane.

William Holme was made "clerk" of the Company, to make all entries in the books, &c., and his untimely death in 1623 is there duly noted. His successor was his brother, who is subsequently described as "Randle Holme clerke and steward of the Company," and for many years all the entries in these books are in the handwriting of Randle Holme (II.).

When Randle Holme, senior, was elected mayor of the city, in October, 1633, his son was appointed one of the two sheriffs, and the entry in the Company's books records this double honour as follows:—

"St. Lukes Day 1633 Randle Holme Esquier, Maior of ye City of Chester, Mr Randle Holme, painter, his sonne and Mr Richard Bryd, merchant, sherives of ye sayd City."

During the early years of the seventeenth century Randle Holme's official position in connection to the Heralds' College is frequently mentioned in the various funeral certificates he had to take, as shown in the volume printed by the Record Society in 1882.¹ In these he is described as deputy to the office of arms, and after 1633 his position as one of the aldermen of the city is given as well.²

He was in Chester throughout the whole of the troublous period of the Civil War and during the long siege which that city had to undergo from September, 1645, to February, 1646. He was also one of the few residents who remained in the city during the violent outbreak of the plague which devastated it in 1647.³ When the forces of the Parliament obtained the upper hand he was charged with having taken

¹ *Cheshire and Lancashire Funeral Certificates, A.D. 1600 to 1678*, edited by J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A.

² A certificate, dated 1637, is described as having been taken "by Randle Holme of the City of Chester, Alderman and Deputy to the office of Armes."

³ One of the witnesses mentioned in the papers relating to his "delinquency" states that "he stayed in the Citie at the tyme of the Visitation [of the plague] and did the Citie good service."

the king's part, and for his "delinquency," as it was termed, was fined in January, 1646, in the sum of £160. After his death his son and successor petitioned against the payment of this large sum, and in the various documents by which this petition was supported, the following interesting notices of Randle Holme, senior, occur.

Mr. Peter Brereton in his report states:¹

"I find that the said Alderman Holme being summoned in 1651 to pay in his said fine, petitioned here, setting forth, that being about 70 yeares of age, and having lived in Chester all his tyme, was constrained to continue his habitation there when the same was a garrison; yet never acted, nor was ayding to the Kings party during the troubles but still manifested his good affection to the Parliament. In so much that at the reducing of the said Citie, he was known by all in authoritie there to stand so well affected to the Parliament, that he was by an ordinance of Parliament, continued in office in the said Citie and put in the Commission of the Peace; and after[wards], by Act of Parliament, made a Commissioner for leying severall assessments for the army."

He further adds that—

"He was never there looked upon as a Delinquent, but rather was reputed as a reall freind to the Parliament and was a Commissioner in all Acts and Ordinances for the Monthly Assessment in the Citie and was therein very painfull and industrious."

Another witness deposes that—

"He lived with his family in the Bridgestreet in Chester both peaceably and civilly and dyed very old as he hath heard about 80 yeares of age. And that before and since theise late troubles or warr the said M^r. Holme, being aged, lived in the said City where his subsistence was and was ever held a peaceable man and looked upon as the Parliament's freind and accompted to be a very good cittizen and after the

¹ Royalist Composition Papers, Public Record Office, London.

reducing of the Cittie was soe well liked of, as he was kept in his place of Aldermanship and Justice of Peace, to the day of his death, and was nominated a Commissioner for monthly assessments and other publique affaires; and did act therein for the Parliament and Commonwealth, very faithfully to this deponents owne knowledge by which he conceived he was well affected to the present government."

Further than this, another witness states—

"That after the reduceing of the Citie of Chester, Sir William Brereton then generall and Governour of the said Citie, did looke upon the said Mr Holme, not as a Delinquent but as a freind to the Parliament, and employed him as a freind of trust to repaire the Breaches of the walls and other business for the good of the State and the defence of the said Citie."

It is to be hoped that after all this evidence as to Randle Holme's fidelity to the Parliament that his son was not obliged to pay this fine of £160 for his father's supposed "delinquency."

He died full of years and honour on the 16th [? 26th] January, 1654-5, and was buried at St. Mary's on the 30th of that month.¹ In the books of the Stationers' Company it is stated: "This yeare [1654-5] Mr. Randle Holmes senior dyed, who had been Alderman of the Company 52 years"! The following monumental inscription, painted on a board, bearing the arms of Holme (quartering Tranmoll and Lymme) and impaling Alcock, was formerly in the church, but is now lost:—

Here beneath lyeth the bodyes of Randle Holme, of y^e Citie
of Chester,

Ald[erman] and Justice of Peace, and was Maior thereof 1633
died y^e 16 of Jan^y 1655, æt. 84;

¹ The entry in the register is as follows:—"Randle Holme senr. Alderman buried on the north side in the Church in Mr. Browne of Vpton pue the 30th day of Januarie" (1654-5).

Also of Elizabeth his wife,
 daughter to Tho. Alcock, and widow to Tho. Chaloner, gent.
 She dyed the 24 of May, 1635, and had yssue two sonnes,
 William Holme y^t died 1623, without yssue li-
 ving and Randle Holme, now living, who
 was also maior of this citty 1643.

His will is not now to be found either at Chester or in London, but an abstract of it occurs amongst the Randle Holme family deeds in Harl. MS. 2022, f. 148, &c. It was dated 6th August, 1648, with a codicil dated 19th April, 1654.¹ His wife, Katherine, survived him for many years, being buried at St. Mary's on the 15th January, 1671-2.²

As already stated, the Holme family originally lived in St. Michael's parish as shown by the entries relating to them in the register of that church, but about the year 1598 Randle Holme appears to have gone to live, directly after his marriage,³ in a house in Castle Lane, leading out of Lower Bridge Street. This house he rebuilt or enlarged about 1622, as shown by the entry in the Stationers' Company's books, already quoted.⁴ He thus came into St.

¹ He mentions that he had settled all his estate, except one message in the Eastgate Street, on his son Randle Holme and the latter's son Randle Holme, and that the message in the Eastgate Street had been settled on his wife, Katherine, for her life, with remainder to his five grandchildren, William, Katherine, Elizabeth, Amy, and Alice Holme, to receive the profits thereof for ten years, and then to his grandchild Randle Holme and his heirs for ever. All the goods in the house in which he lived to his son Randle Holme. In Harl. MS. 2016, there are interrogatories relating to the inventory of the goods of Randle Holme, deceased, dated 23rd June, 1655.

² Her will, dated 12th March, 1670-1, is also copied in Harl. MS. 2022, f. 148, &c. One of the bequests was, "to Katherine Parker my virginalls and 5 shillings to put them in order."

³ See the lease referred to in Harl. MS. 2022, f. 182, "for the lives of Randle Holme, Elizabeth his wife, and Jacob Chaloner," which must have been about 1598, directly after his marriage to Elizabeth Chaloner, and before he had any children of his own.

⁴ In the accounts for that year there is the record of the two sons of Randle Holme (I.) being admitted as freemen in 1622, and the "dinners" they gave to the Company were held in their "father's new building in Castle Lane."

Mary's parish, with which he and his descendants were so long subsequently identified. The baptisms of his children were recorded in the register there, and his signature appears in the churchwardens' books as present at a meeting of the parishioners in 1606. From Easter, 1607, to Easter, 1609, he filled the office of churchwarden there.

The house in Castle Lane which he occupied has quite recently (since this paper was read) been identified by Mr. E. W. Cox, who has written an interesting account of it, which will be printed in the next volume of the Society's *Journal*, illustrated by sketches. It stood at the corner of Castle Lane and Bridge Street, and is now partly used as a public-house. In one of the rooms are three coats of arms relating to Randle Holme, but now covered with whitewash.

The site of this house, which was then two gardens, having Bridge Street on the east side, and Castle Lane on the south, was sold on the 1st April, 15 Henry VIII. [1524], to Randle Brereton, of Chester, and as recorded in Harl. MS. 2022, f. 182, &c., "on these garden places Randle Brereton, Esq., late Vice Chamberlain of Chester, built severall houses now inhabited by Will. Ball, Ran. Holme, Thomas Wright and Margaret Hooker." This property was subsequently sold on the 4th November, 22 Elizabeth [1580], by Richard Brereton, of Eccleston, Esq., to Robert Ireland, of Halewood, co. Lancaster, gentleman. On the 7th July, 12 Charles I. [1636],¹ John Ireland, of Halewood, gentleman, leased one of these houses to Randle Holme for the term of three lives, himself, Randle Holme his son, and Randle Holme his grandson, in consideration of the

¹ Harl. MS. 2022, f. 182, &c. This MS. contains a number of early deeds relating to this property.

surrender of an earlier lease made by George Ireland (father of John), for the lives of Randle Holme, Elizabeth his wife, and Jacob Chaloner.¹

RANDLE HOLME, THE SECOND, BORN 1601, DIED 1659.

RANDLE HOLME (II.), the second of that name, was, as already stated, the second son of his father by his first wife, and was baptized at St. Mary's, on the 15th July, 1601.² He followed his father's business of a "painter," and was also a partner with him in his official duties in connection with the Heralds' College. On the 29th September, 1625, he married Katherine, eldest daughter of Matthew Ellis, of Overleigh, near Chester, gentleman, by whom he had a family of three sons and five daughters. After the death of his first wife he married secondly, in September, 1643, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Dodd, of Chester, and the relict of Samuel Martin, of Chester, merchant, but had no issue by her.

In 1629 he was elected one of the two churchwardens for St. Mary's, and he held that office from Easter in that year to Easter, 1631. The accounts for those two years, in the old churchwardens' book of that parish, are in his clear and beautiful handwriting (*see facsimile*).

¹ A new lease was granted by Mr. George Ireland to Randle Holme (III.) on the 11th September, 1660 (Harl. MS. 2082, at the beginning), and it is probable that he lived there till his other residence, "Lamb Row," in Bridge Street, was built by him about 1670.

² This date is taken from the pedigree of the Holme family drawn up by Randle Holme (I.) in 1628, and now contained in Harl. MS, 2161, f. 117, and is most probably correct, but it cannot be verified, as the early register of St. Mary's church is now unfortunately lost. It does not, however, agree with the age of Randle Holme (II.) as given on his monument (*see postea*), where he is said to have died in his sixty-third year, in 1659. This would make him to have been born in 1597, which is impossible, as his mother's first husband, Thomas Chaloner, did not die till 1598.

These be the Accounts of M^r Randle
Holme y^e yonger & Richard Muchell Church=
wardens of this Parrish of S^t Maryes for
the yeare past 1629. & first of our Receiptes

Rec: of Thomas Holme, with^m Willigins, George Fletcher
or Richard Bridge for Ground to build a pen, at ye^r ¹⁶³³ ⁱⁱⁱ 3
lower end of y^e Church 2

Rec: of m^r Randle Holme Junior, m^r Randle Hunt
of y^e Castell, m^r John Tyer, m^r William Ball & m^r
Lawrence Fletcher for the Ground where the built
there pen 2

Randle Holme

Randle Holme Jun

(1632)

(1647)

SPECIMENS OF THE HANDWRITING AND SIGNATURES OF RANDLE HOLME (II.).

In 1632-3 his name occurs as one of the treasurers of the city,¹ which office he held for several years, as in 1641 he is described as "Randle Holme, jun., Alderman and one of ye Threasurers of ye sayd citty now clarke of y^e Company aforesayd," that is of the Company of "Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers, and Stationers" of Chester. When his father was elected Mayor of Chester, in October, 1633, he was appointed one of the two sheriffs of the city, and subsequently one of the aldermen.

In October, 1643, during the troublous times of the Civil War he was elected to the responsible office of Mayor of his native city.² This event is thus chronicled with very pardonable pride in the books of the Stationers' Company as follows:—

1643. St. Lukes Day. Randle Holme, jun., Esquire, Maior of ye City of Chester.

Mr. Randle Holme y^e yonger now Maior and Mr. Randle Holme y^e elder his father Alderman and Justice of Peace, both Painters and now Aldermen of this Company.

Written by the sayd Randle Holme maior.

Bestowed on Mr. Maior from ye Company [as a gratuity from them]³ - - - - - iiij^{li} [£4]

Giuen unto maister maiors cooke ij^s vj^d and to the Porter and [the] maiors maydes iiij^s vj^d on St Lukes day when the Company and their wives dynded at m^r maiors [house in Bridge streete]³ - - - - - vj^s

In the following year this entry appears:—

¹ See the *Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 443, January 1st, 1879.

² The speeches which he made "publicly at his entrance into the office of his maioralty in 1643 and upon his going out in 1644, written by himself," are preserved in Harl. MS. 2125, f. 318. In the same MS. f. 319, is his copy of a speech "made to Prince Rupert at his coming to Chester 11 March 1643-4."

³ The words in brackets have been added in the original MS. in the handwriting of the third Randle Holme.

1644. Mr. Randle Holme sen. and Mr. Randle Holme jun. both Aldermen and Justices of Peace and both paynters and Aldermen of this Company. Written by Mr. Holme jun. late maior.

The year 1643-4 was an eventful one in the annals of Chester, and the mayor no doubt found his time well occupied in attending to the affairs of the city. The Civil War had already commenced, and, as Chester had declared for the king, the mayor was the recipient of numerous official letters from the chief commanders on the Royalist side. These letters and other similar documents he seems to have carefully preserved, and about the year 1669 they were bound up by his son and successor Randle Holme (III.), and are now preserved in the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum. These letters bear the autograph signatures of King Charles I., Prince Rupert, the Earl of Ormonde, Sir John Byron, Sir Robert Brerewood, Sir Francis Gamul, and others, and are a very valuable as well as interesting collection.

In Harl. MS. 2002 is a copy of "the Commission of King Charles I., empowering Randolph Holme, Mayor of Chester, Sir Robert Brerewood knt., Recorder, Sir Orlando Bridgeman knt, Attorney of his Court of Wards and Liveries and Vice Chamberlain of Chester, Nicholas Ince, Richard Dutton, Charles Walley, Randulph Holme senior, Colonel Francis Gamull and Thomas Thorp Aldermen of the said city, to seize upon the effects of absent rebels, within the city of Chester, or within five miles of it. Dated at Oxford 1 Jan. 19 Charles [1643-4]."¹

It may here be mentioned that another volume of the

¹ The original of this with "the broad seal and under the hand of King Charles," was lent to Mr. Daniel King on the 26th July, 1663, to show to Charles II. for the benefit of the loyal sufferers in the city of Chester, but apparently to no purpose.

Harleian MSS. contains a full account of the siege of Chester, September, 1645, to February, 1646, with the chief events which preceded it, drawn up by some one who had access to the papers of the Randle Holmes.¹ Amongst other previously unrecorded incidents, it is stated that King Charles I. watched the battle of Rowton Heath from the tower of the cathedral, "St. Werburgh's steeple" as it is called, as well as from the Phoenix Tower, and that he was nearly killed on the former tower, a captain standing at his side being shot through the head.

Reference has already been made to the active exertions which this Randle Holme (II.) made, after the death of his father in 1655, to get his father's fine for his supposed antagonism to the Parliament either lessened or done away with altogether. What his success was does not now appear to be known, but I much fear his labours would be in vain. He did not long survive his father, being buried at St. Mary's, in September, 1659,² when, according to the inscription on his monument, he was in the 63rd year of his age.³ His widow survived him for a few months, being buried at St. Mary's, on the 26th March, 1661. The handsome monument now on the north wall of St. Mary's church was placed there to his memory by his son and successor Randle Holme (III.), and in the long Latin

¹ There is a reference under March, 1643-4, "to Randle Holme Esq then Mayor of the City (the father of Randle Holme from whose study . . . I have for the most part gathered this history)."

² The entry in the St. Mary's register is as follows:—"1659. Mr. Randle Holme Alderman was Buried in the north side within Mr. Browne's pue on the first Day of September;" and yet on his monument he is stated to have died on September 4th!

³ This is, I think, a mistake, and that he was in his fifty-ninth year only. The date of his baptism, as recorded by his father, was the 15th July, 1601, which is probably correct (see p. 128, note 2). His elder brother William was baptised at St. Mary's 5th October, 1599, "being Friday about 7 o'clock in the evening" (Harl. MS. 2161, f. 117).

inscription which it bears his ancestry is set out in very great detail. This inscription, the contracted Latin¹ being extended, is as follows:—

Hoc monumentum in memoriam ponitur Ranulphi Holme aliquando aldermani et justiciarii pacis hujus civitatis Cestriæ majoris ejusdem anno MDCXLIII. Qui quidem Ranulphus filius et heres fuit Ranulphi Holme, aldermani et justiciarii pacis et majoris anno MDCXXXIII ejusdem civitatis Cestriæ prædictæ (qui etiam fuit servus domini nostri Henrici principis, filii primogeniti Jacobi Regis piæ memoriæ, ac etiam deputatus fuit pro officio armorum in comitatibus palatinis Cestriæ et Lancastriæ et vi comitatum Nord Walliæ) per Elizabetham uxorem ejus, filiam Thomæ Alcock de civitate Cestriæ et relictam Thomæ Chaloner, de eadem civitate, quandoque Ulster regis armorum pro Hiberniæ regno. Ille fuit filius et heres Thomæ Holme de Cestriæ civitate prædictæ per Elizabetham uxorem ejus, filiam Johannis Devenett de Kinderton, in comitatu Flynt, generosi. Filius fuit ille Gulielmi Holme, domini medietatis villæ de Tranmore per Margarettam uxorem ejus filiam Ricardi Caldý de civitate Cestriæ prædictæ, [ille fuit]² filius et heres Roberti Holme de Tranmore alias Tranmoll prædicta per Janam filiam Thomæ Poole de Poole armigeri; [qui fuit]² filius et heres Gulielmi Holme, qui obiit anno 1 Henrici VIII.;² filius et heres Roberti Holme, qui obiit 14 Edwardi IV.; filius et heres Thomæ Holme qui vixit 24 Henrici VI.; filius et heres Johannis Holme domini medietatis villæ de Tranmoll, qui obiit 4 Henrici V.; filius et heres Roberti Holme, domini medietatis villæ de Tranmoll, jure uxoris ejus Matildæ filiæ et unius coheredum Richardi de Tranmoll, domini [de] Tranmoll, filii et heredis Gulielmi de Tranmoll per Matildam filiam et unam coheredum Petri de Lymme, filii Gilberti, domini de Lymme qui vixit tempore Edwardi I.

¹ The Latinity of this inscription is very bad, being apparently a translation of an English epitaph into most wretched "dog Latin."

² Rather than put a number of genitive cases, I have taken the words "ille fuit" or "qui fuit" before each "filius," &c., as understood.

Ipse Ranulphus superdictus tempore vitæ ejus duxit in uxorem Catherinam filiam Matthei Ellis de Overlegh in comitatu civitatis Cestriæ generosi, per quam habuit 3 filios et 5 filias, post cujus mortem duxit in uxorem Elizabetham, filiam et heredem Thomæ Dodd, de civitate Cestriæ, relictam Samuelis Martyn, mercatoris; ille in anno 63 ætatis suæ obiit, die dominica 4 Sept. XI Caroli 2^o, annoque Domini CIOCLIX.¹

Neere to this place lyeth interred the bodyes of Sarai, eldest dau'r of Henry Soley, minister of y^e Gospell at Forton in y^e county of Salop and late wife to Randle Holme, Sworne

¹ The following is a translation of this inscription:—

This monument is placed to the memory of Randle Holme, formerly alderman and justice of the peace of this city of Chester, mayor of the same in the year 1643. The which Randle was son and heir of Randle Holme, alderman and justice of the peace, and mayor, in the year 1633, of this city of Chester aforesaid (who was also servant to our lord Prince Henry, eldest son of king James, of pious memory, and was also a deputy for the office of arms in the counties palatine of Chester and Lancaster and the six counties of North Wales), by Elizabeth, his wife, daughter of Thomas Alcock, of the city of Chester, and the relict of Thomas Chaloner, of the same city, and formerly Ulster king of arms for the kingdom of Ireland. He was the son and heir of Thomas Holme, of the city of Chester aforesaid, by Elizabeth, his wife, daughter of John Devenett, of Kinderton, in the county of Flint, gentleman. He was the son of William Holme, lord of the half of the township of Tranmore, by Margaret, his wife, daughter of Richard Cady, of the city of Chester aforesaid. [He was] son and heir of Robert Holme, of Tranmore, *alias* Tranmoll, aforesaid, by Jane, the daughter of Thomas Poole, of Poole, esquire, [who was] son and heir of William Holme, who died in the first year of Henry VIII. [1509]; son and heir of Robert Holme, who died 14 Edward IV. [1474]; son and heir of Thomas Holme, who lived 24 Henry VI. [1446]; son and heir of John Holme, lord of the half of the township of Tranmoll, who died 4 Henry V. [1416]; son and heir of Robert Holme, lord of the half of the township of Tranmoll, in right of his wife, Matilda, daughter, and one of the co-heirs of Richard de Tranmoll, lord of Tranmoll; son and heir of William de Tranmoll, by Matilda, the daughter and one of the co-heirs of Peter de Lymme; son of Gilbert, lord of Lymme, who lived in the time of Edward I. [1272-1307].

This Randle, aforesaid, in his lifetime married Catherine, daughter of Matthew Ellis, of Overlegh, in the county of the city of Chester, gentleman, by whom he had three sons and five daughters, after whose death he married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Thomas Dodd, of the city of Chester, the relict of Samuel Martyn, merchant; he died in the sixty-third year of his age, on Sunday, 4th September, 11 Charles II., in the year of our Lord, 1659.

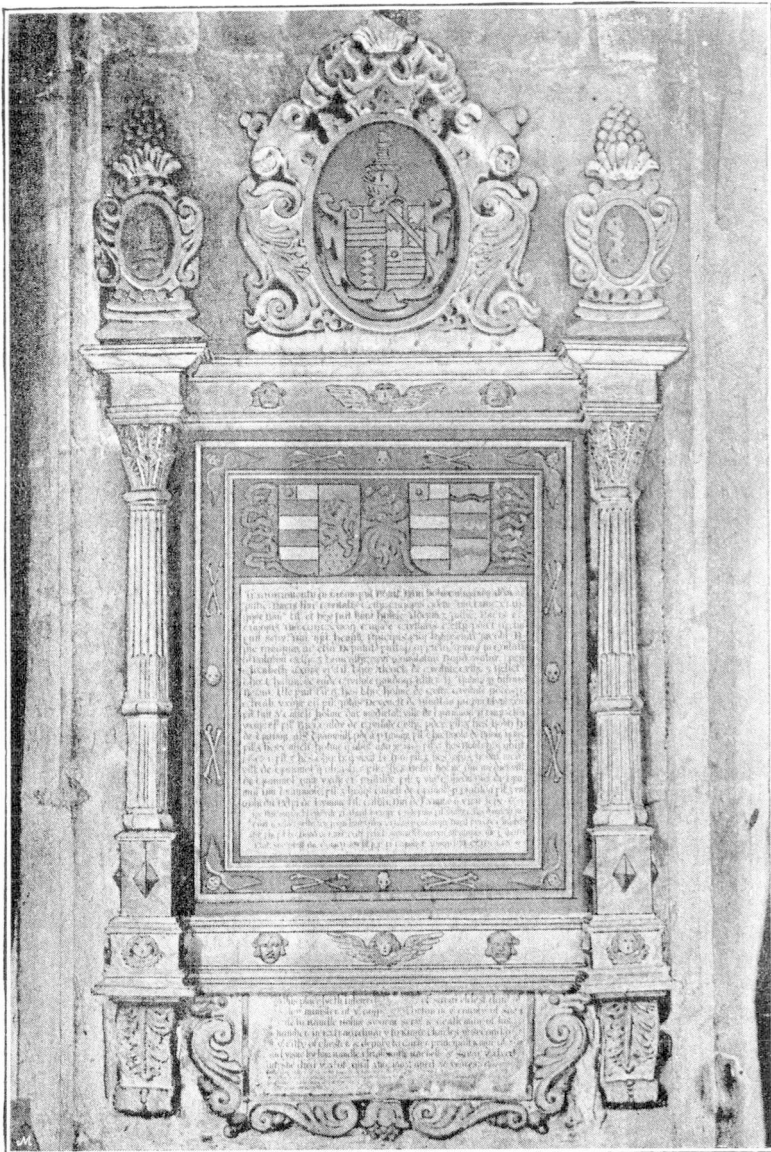
Serv^t & Gentleman of his Ma^t'ies Chamber in Extraordinary to Kinge Charles y^e Second, one of [the coun]cill of y^e citty of Chester, and deputy to Garter principall Kinge of arms; she had yssue by him Randle, Elizabeth, Kath. Rachell and Sarai y^t died an infant; she died y^e 5th of April, anno 1665, aged 36 yeares; and Katherine, sister of y^e s^d Randle and late wife to Benj. Harpur, of London, gent., she died the vii of July an'o 1664, aged 34 yeares; and alsoe William Holme, brother of the said Randle and 2nd son of Randle Holme, alderman, died the xxvi day of Aprill anno Dⁿⁱ 1666 and y^e 35 yeare of his age; and Rafe y^e yongest sonne of Randle Holme, alderman, died y^e day of anno 1641, aged 4 yeares.¹

At the top of this monument is a large shield of arms, as shown in the illustration, 1st and 4th Holme, 2 Tranmoll, 3 Lymme, with the Holme crest.² On either side are two crests, Holme and (?) Tranmoll. Lower down, just above the inscription, are two other coats, Holme impaling Ermine a lion rampant Azure for Ellis and Holme impaling Argent on a fess Gules, between two barrulets wavy Sable, three crescents Or for Dodd, referring to the two marriages of Randle Holme (II.).

After his second marriage in 1643, Randle Holme (II.) lived in a house in Watergate Street, which, I think, came to him with his second wife, Elizabeth, the relict of Samuel Martin, or was hers for her life only. There are several references to the Martins in the assessment lists copied into the churchwardens' accounts of Holy Trinity parish, but in the list made April 30th, 1644, the first name there entered is "Mr. Randle Hoolmes Maior," and his name occurs regularly in subsequent years. The meetings of

¹ The latter part of this inscription is now very much worn and nearly illegible.

² The coat of Tranmoll or Tranmere is Argent a cross engrailed Gules, over all a bend Azure and that of Lymme is Gules a pale fusily Argent. The ancestors of Randle Holme married the heiresses of each of these families.



MURAL MONUMENT TO RANDLE HOLME (II.)
 IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CHESTER.

the Stationers' Company, usually held in the "Golden Phœnix," one of the towers on the city wall (now known as the Phœnix Tower), could not be held in the years 1643-1646 owing to the Civil War and the siege of Chester, and so on the 6th April, 1643, the meeting "was houlden at Alderman Holme's howse in respect the Goulden Pheonex was at that tyme taken to be a house for the service of the citty for the plantinge of severall ordinance for the defence of the citty agaynst the Enimieys of the Kinge." And so also on St. Luke's day, October 18th, 1645, it was again held "at the Alderman's howse" because "the Golden Phenix was employed for service for the defence of the garrison of Chester the enimie in close seidge about the Cittye." The locality of this house is shown in the entry for the following year when the meeting was held "at Alderman Holmes junior's house in Watergate Street."¹ This was also the case in 1651.

As already stated (see p. 128), Randle Holme (II.) was twice married, and he had three sons and five daughters by his first wife, Katherine Ellis, and none by his second. In Harl. MS. 2161, f. 117, the births of these children are recorded by him at some length with their respective godfathers and godmothers, and these entries seem worth printing.

1. "Randle Holme, born 24 Dec. 1627, bapt. in St. Mary's church 30 Dec. His godfathers were Randle Holme his grandfather and Francis Gamul son and heir to the late Recorder of Chester and the godmother was Elizabeth his uncle Williams wife." [This was Randle Holme (III.).]²

¹ In 1647 there is this entry among the payments:—

For three quarts Clarett wine and 4 pottles of beere, salmon and
bread at our Aldermans viij^s

² I have added the words put in square brackets in order to give the later history of the persons here mentioned.

2. "William Holme, 2nd son, born 19 Dec. 1631 being Monday, christened on St. Thomas' day [21 Dec.], M^r W^m Brock of Upton and M^r W^m Edwards Alderman godfathers and M^{rs} Recorder Whitbye godmother." [This William was buried at St. Mary's, 30th April, 1666, unmarried.]¹
3. "Rafe Holme 3rd son, born . . . May 1638 and bapt. 29 May, M^r Rafe Holme my uncle and M^r Rafe Hilton and Anne Coules my uncles dau. gossips." [He was buried at St. Mary's, 22nd March, 1641-2.]¹
1. "Katherine Holme, born 11 May 1629 being Monday, christened on Ascension day [14 May] my brother Peter Ince, my mother Browne my aunt Hurlston witnesses." [She married Benjamin Harper, of London, gentleman, and died 7 July, 1664.]
2. "Elizabeth Holme, born 25 Nov. 1630 being Thursday and bapt. the Sabbath day following [28 Nov.], my cousin Thomas Urmes (?), my mother Holme and sister Ellis witnesses. Died that day 3 weeks." [Buried at St. Mary's, 15 December, 1630.]
3. "Elizabeth Holme, born 15 Jan. 1632[-3] bapt 18 Jan. M^{rs} Letitia More dau. and heir to Sir Tho. More and M^{rs} Mary Grosvenor dau. to Sir Richard Grosvenor and M^r Tho. Berington gossips." [She married at St. Oswalds, Chester, 23rd August, 1655, Thomas Simpson of Chester, and died 3rd June, 1669. M.I. formerly at St. Bridget's.]
4. "Amy Holme, 4th dau., born 26 Jan. 1633[-4] bapt. 31 Jan., M^{rs} Amy Bryd [Bird] my sister in law and M^r Jo Lynialls wife and M^r Sheriffe Bryd [Bird] gossips." [She died in London before 1664.]
5. "Alice Holme, born Aug. . . 1636, bapt Aug. . . [should be 13 Sept.], my brother in law M^r Matth. Ellis, M^{rs} Alice Birkenhead wife to Tho. [Birkenhead] and my sister in law Alice Browne gossips." [She married Peter Stringer, of Chester, and died 1st December, 1670. M.I. in the cathedral at Chester.]

¹ I have added the words put in square brackets in order to give the later history of the persons here mentioned.

No will of Randle Holme (II.) is now to be found either in London or Chester, and I have not met with any abstract or any reference to it among the notes of the Holme family deeds in Harl. MS. 2022.

RANDLE HOLME THE THIRD, BORN 1627, DIED 1700.

RANDLE HOLME the third may be said to be, in some respects, the most distinguished of the four persons, who successively bore that name. Although, for the reasons subsequently to be explained, he never held any office in the corporation of his native city, he was highly respected there, and, independent of his labours as an antiquary and herald, his name has come down to us as the author of one of the most voluminous as well as one of the most extraordinary books, "The Academy of Armoury," ever written. He was the eldest son of his father, and was baptised at St. Mary's on the 30th December, 1627. Little is known of his early life, but when old enough he took up the business of his father and grandfather, and in due course was admitted a member of the Company of Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers, and Stationers. His very characteristic and ill-formed writing occurs in the minute book of the Stationers' Company in 1648, but the first "accounts" entered by him are those for the year 1656 (after the death of his grandfather), when he, described as "Randle Holme jun painter" was one of the stewards of the Company. In 1658 there is in his handwriting the accounts for the rebuilding of the Phoenix Tower, on the city walls, which had been "ruinated in the late warrs."

In October, 1659, after the death of his father, it appears from the minute book of the Company, that—

Mr. Randle Holmes [*sic*] sonne and heire to the late Randle Holmes [*sic*] Alderman of the Cittie of Chester and

Justice of the peace, who formerly was Alderman many yeares of this Company,

was duly elected an alderman of the Company in the place of his father.¹ As was then customary, he entertained the members of the Company to a dinner, and the following entry speaks for itself:—

1659. Spent for beere and Tobacco at Alderman Holmes his house, he being at great chardges in giuing the Company a dinner - - - - - 5^s 6^d

In 1663, William Holme, the younger brother of the alderman, was clerk of the Company, and wrote up the minutes and accounts in a good hand. He died in 1666,² when Randle Holme became the sole male representative of his family.

In 1674, for some reason or other, he ceased to be elected alderman of his Company; but he was re-elected to that position in 1679 and held it till his death in 1700. In 1695 he entered up the Company's accounts after a long interval, and also recorded the account of the repairs to the Phoenix Tower, &c.

At Easter, 1657, he was elected one of the two churchwardens for St. Mary's, which office he held for two years. The accounts for those years, in the old churchwarden's book, are entirely in his handwriting; and in various other places in that volume are many notes and memoranda made by him. During his first year of office a new tower or "steeple" to St. Mary's was erected, and a new peal of bells provided, and the list of those who contributed to

¹ It is noteworthy that, at this time, amongst the widows of the members of the Company the names of "Widow Holmes senior" and "Widow Holmes junior" (the step-grandmother and the stepmother respectively of the newly-elected alderman) occur.

² This William Holme was baptised at St. Mary's 21st December, 1631, and was buried there on the 30th April, 1666, unmarried.

Memorandum m^r Randle Holme Jun: butler in law to m^r Mathew
 Elliot one of the Surveyors of his Highness and Sheriff of
 Dorset who gave him some Surveyors wages to the
 year of 1600 some cost a new red velvet cushion to be for the
 pulpit in respect he saw how wanted one to be more pendant
 to the pulpit cloth being lately the gift of m^r Alice wife

Memorandum of a gift to St. Mary's Church, in 1632, by Randle Holme (II.),
 in the handwriting of Randle Holme (III.).

this 17th day of April ano 1659
 Randle Holme Jun:

1659.

Randle Holme.

1675.

SPECIMENS OF THE HANDWRITING AND SIGNATURES OF RANDLE HOLME (III.).

them, as well as the lists of all the persons in the parish who were "assessed" for that purpose,¹ are duly recorded in his handwriting. These bells are still in the tower, and bear the initials of the churchwardens, and the date, thus: "C. W. G. C. R. H. 1657,"² and the bellfounder's mark, J. S. standing for John Scott, of Wigan.³

In the year 1664, by some Court influence, Randle Holme (III.) was appointed to the office of "sewer of the chamber in extraordinary to his Majesty" King Charles II. To us at the present day this word conveys no meaning, but it was well known then, and is to be found in the writings of Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, and others. A "sewer" was an officer of any large household, whose duty it was to place the various dishes on the table and to remove them afterwards,⁴ and also it is thought to taste them, to see that they were properly cooked. The "sewers" had also to bring water for the hands of the guests.⁵ Chamberlayne, in his *Magnæ Britanniæ Notitia*, in describing "the Officers and Servants in Ordinary above stairs," in the reign of George I., mentions the four gentlemen cupbearers, the four gentlemen carvers, and the four "gentlemen sewers,"

¹ In this list his father, Randle Holme (II.), and Lady Gamull have the two highest assessments for Bridge Street, each paying £2, whilst no one else had to pay more than 12s. Mrs. Holme sen. widd. (the widow of Randle Holme I.) was assessed for her house in Castle Lane at 10s.

² The two churchwardens were George Chamberlain and Randle Holme, junior.

³ See a paper by me on "Lancashire and Cheshire Bellfounders," in the *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 1890.

⁴ Thus Barclay in his *Eclogues*, book ii., says—

"Slow be the *sewers* in serving in alway
But swift be they after in taking meat away."

Again, too, Shakespeare, in the stage direction in *Macbeth*, act i., scene vii., has, "Enter a *sewer* and divers servants with dishes."

⁵ Thus Chapman, in his translation of the *Odyssey*, has—

"Then the *sewre*
Pour'd water from a great and golden ewre."

and describes these as "very ancient officers of the crown and places of honour." In addition to these four gentlemen sewers, there were eight "sewers of the chamber," who were not taken from persons of such high rank as the former.¹

In the case of Randle Holme, it is clear that his office "of sewer of the chamber in extraordinary" to the then king was a sinecure appointment, possibly not carrying any money payment with it, but having certain privileges attached to it, amongst which was freedom from arrest, exemption from serving on juries, and from holding any public office whatever. This is shown by the following document copied from Harl. MS. 2022, f. 183*b*:—

These are to certifie that Randolph Holme is sworne and admitted in the place of sewer of the chamber in extraordinary to his Maiestie. By Virtue of which place he is to enjoy [all] rights and privileges thereto belonging. His person is not to be arrested or deteyned without leaue from me first had and obtained, neither is he to beare any publick office whatsoever, nor to be impanelled on any enquest or jury nor to be warned to serve at Assizes or sessions whereby he may pretend excuse to neglect his Maiesties service but is to attend the same according to his oath and duty.

Whereof I require all persons to forbear the infringing of the freedome and priuiledges of the said Randolph Holme as they will answer the contrary at their perill.

Giuen under my hand and seale the 20 day of December 1664 in the 16 yeare of his Ma^{ties} reigne.

E. MANCHESTER.

The holding of this appointment, therefore, effectually prevented him from occupying the responsible positions of sheriff and mayor of his native city, as his father and grandfather had done before him.

¹ See also a long note by me in *The Cheshire Sheaf* (new series), No. 14, January, 1891.

About this time Randle Holme (III.) seems to have fallen into trouble with the Heralds' College, it being alleged against him that he had usurped the powers of the Heralds in marshalling funerals, preparing coats of arms and hatchments, and receiving fees for the same. Thus, in May, 1665, the cost of "the atchievements [hatchments] hung up by Holme of Chester at the funeral of Sir Ralph Ashton kn and Bart. 2 May 1665," came to £32. 13s. 4d.,¹ and with reference to them Dr. Theophilus Howorth, of Manchester, a local antiquary of repute, wrote to William Dugdale, Norroy King of arms, as follows:²

"Holme of Chester hath lately done as much worke at a funerall solemnity as hee received for his part 40l. and marshalled the busines himselfe: the spurs, gantlet, sword, coat, banners, hearse and horse in black led, and mourners to attend the solemnity and hearse, were all there, at a B^{ts} funerall. I onely give you this notice that if he have invaded your right you may doe what you thinke good to prevent future insolent intrusion of psons not legally qualified to marshall such solemnities."

In 1667-8, William Dugdale, who no doubt had corresponded on this subject with Randle Holme, determined to bring matters to a crisis, and so, as recorded in his own autobiography,³

"to vindicate the just right of his sayd Office coñenced a sute at the Coñion Law against one Randle Holme, a paynter in the city of Chester, who had boldly invaded the

¹ See the introduction to the *Cheshire Funeral Certificates*, Record Society, vol. vi., p. xx. Contrasted with Randle Holme's charges are those made by "Mr. Rooe of Manchester" for the same articles, amounting to £42. 9s. In the same volume are printed Randle Holme's rates "for the Funerall Atchevements made for the Hon^{bl} S^r Richard Grosuenor Kt & Bartt who deceased Ano 1645," amounting to £27. 14s. 6d.

² Hamper's *Life, &c., of Sir William Dugdale*, p. 364.

³ Dugdale's *Autobiography* (Wood's MSS. No. 30), printed in Hamper's *Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale, Knt.*, 1827, p. 35.

Office of him the said Norroy, by preparing Atchievements [hatchments] for the Funerall of S^t Raphe Ashton of Middleton in the county of Lancaster kn^t and giving directions for a formall proceeding at the solemnity thereof. Whereupon he had a verdict against him the sayd Holmes at the general Assizes held at Stafford in March a^o 1667[-8] and recovered good damages [£20] wth costs of suit."

In the Ashmolean MS. 7,501 (Bodleian Library, Oxford), it is further added that "divers atchievements also set up in sundry churches within his said province of Norroy, contrary to the law of armes by the said Holme the paynter, he pulled down and defaced viz. in the citty of Chester, at Budworth, Nether Pever, Hooten in Wirrall, all in Cheshire, Biddulph in Staffordshire as also Chirke in North Wales." This is confirmed by Dugdale's *Diary*, in which he writes as follows:¹

1667. April 10. Thence [*i.e.* from Manchester] to Middleton (5 miles) where I pulled down the Atcheivem^{ts} hung up by Holmes of Chester at the funerall of S^t Raphe Ashton K^t and B^t 2^o Maij 1665 and returned to Manchester that night.
1668. March 12. My Tryall ag^t Holmes, the paynter, whereby I had 20^{li} damages.
- „ March 14. I puld down the Atchievements hung up in Nether Pever Church for Mr. Cholmley of Holford, and those in Budworth Church for Mr. Merbury of Merbury and rode that night to S^t Peter Leicesters at Tabley.
- „ March 16. I rode thence [*i.e.* from Congleton] to Biddulph in Staffordsh. and puld downe the Atchievements hung up for S^t John Bowyer and his Lady.
- „ August 11. Thence [*i.e.* from Cholmondeley] to Chester where I pulld down those Atchievements w^{ch} Holmes, the Paynter, had set up again in S^t

¹ Hamper's *Life, Diary, &c., of Sir William Dugdale*, pp. 126, 128, 129, 130.

John's Church for Alderman Walley; w^{ch} I tooke downe in a^o 1644 [?] 1664]. And that night I rode to Chirke in Flintshire [Denbighshire] (S^r Thos. Middleton's house) wth Mr. Chomley of Vale Royall to view what was hung up by Holmes y^e Paynter, at S^r F. [*sic* for T.] Middleton's funerall.

Two years later when Dugdale was once more in Cheshire, he found that Randle Holme still continued marshalling funerals and putting up hatchments, &c.,¹ and he accordingly pulled them down again.

1670. August 18. Thence [*i.e.* from Dunham] to Budworth, where I puld down and defaced more Atchievements w^{ch} Holmes, the Paynter, of Chester had hung up again for Mr. Merbury (w^{ch} I puld down once before). That night I rode to Chomley, to my L^d Chomley's house.
- „ August 19. Thence to Eston [Eastham] in Wyrall, where I puld down and defac'd two penons, w^{ch} Holmes had hung up in the Church for Mr. Poole of Poole and that night lodg'd at Chester.
- „ August 20. To Chomley to my L^d Chomleys.
- „ August 22. Thence to Chirke in Denbysh, where I puld down and defaced divers penons and other Atchievements hung up by Holmes for S^r Tho. Middleton and his Son.

After this we hear of no further quarrels, and Randle Holme probably made his peace with the Heralds' College and acted as their representative at Chester, for Cheshire, Lancashire, and the six counties of North Wales.

In 1688 he issued the extraordinary book with which his name is chiefly associated, "the Academy of Armory or a

¹ In Dugdale's *Diary*, at the beginning of 1669, he refers to a letter from Randle Holme to Gregory King, the herald, in which Holme states "I shall worke any thing that gentlemen shall set me to do, and they will order their own concerns, as for example M^{rs} Frances Boothes funerall was set out by S^r John Boothe." [? Mr. John Booth, the well-known Cheshire genealogist.]

Storehouse of Armory and Blazon." This is a thick folio volume of over eleven hundred pages, very closely printed, and containing fifty full-sized plates. It is divided into four books, but of these the first two and the first part of book iii. only were published, the remainder being held over for want of funds. As this book is now of much rarity, copies fetching over £20 when they occur for sale, a concise account of it here may not be considered out of place.¹

A perfect copy should have an *engraved* title page having at the top the words, An Accademie of Armory, a little lower down, on an open book, the word or, and lower down still, A Store House | of | Armory & Blazon | Containeing all thinges | Borne in Coates of Armes | Both Forraign and Domes = | tick. With the termes of | Art used in each | Science | By Randle Holme | Donum | Tho : Simpson | de Civit : Cestr Ald^r | et just : pacis. | Printed att Chester By the Author. | In the corner on the right hand side is the engraver's name, P : Edwards Scul :

The engraved title page is followed by an engraved page containing a blank shield of arms with an esquire's helmet and elaborate mantling. Underneath this shield are these words:—

The Coat and Crest of
The ever Honored and Highly Esteemed
[a blank line here to be filled up in writing]²

¹ I am much indebted to H. R. Hughes, Esq., of Kinmel Park, Abergele, for the loan of his perfect copy of this rare book, which I was enabled to examine very carefully and to make very copious notes from. When Wanley drew up his catalogue of the Harleian MSS. he refers (under article No. 2026) to Randle Holme's book which he calls "a very curious and useful book upon many accounts, although now so much neglected and worn out of memory as to be known to few people in these parts [London] And the vile price it hath been bought at viz. eight shillings, being much below the prime costs of paper and print, shew that that diligent man must have been a great loser, after so many years pains."

² In Mr. Hughes' copy this line has been filled in with the words . . . Bromley, of Hampton, Esq^r: in Randle Holme's handwriting, and in the blank

To whom this First Volume of the Book entituled, The Academy of Armory, is most humbly Dedicated and Presented, from him who is devoted yours

RANDLE HOLME.

The printed title page is an unusually long and full one, as follows:—

The | Academy of Armory, | or, | A Storehouse | of | Armory | and | Blazon | Containing | The several variety of Created Beings, and how born [*sic*] in Coats of | Arms both Foreign and Domestick. | With | The Instruments used in all Trades and Sciences, together with | their Terms of Art. | Also | The Etymologies, Definitions and Historical Observations on the | same, Explicated and Explained according to our | Modern Language. | Very useful for all Gentlemen, Scholars, Divines, and all such as desire any know- | ledge in Arts and Sciences. | Every Man shall Camp by his Standard, and under the Ensign of his Father's House. Numb. 2. 2. | Put on the whole Armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the Assaults of the Devil; above all | take the Shield of Faith. Ephes. 6. 11. 16. | By Randle Holme, of the City of Chester Gentleman Sewer in | Extraordinary to his late Majesty King Charles 2. And some- | times Deputy for the Kings of Arms. | Chester, | Printed for the Author, MDCCLXXXVIII. |

Following the title page is a page containing three commendatory verses, headed respectively as follows:—

“In Commendation of that Elaborate Piece of Heraldry, Intituled The Academy of Armory; Published by his Loving Friend Randle Holme, Herald in Chester.” Eight lines signed H. Williamson, M.D.

“In Commendation of that Ingenious Piece of Heraldry, Intituled The Academy of Armory and Blazon; Composed by my loving Friend Randle Holme, Herald in Chester.” Eight lines signed J. Rock, Med.

shield his arms have been drawn in by hand, and his crest and wreath drawn in above the helmet. This was engraved so that every patron or subscriber to the book might have his name and arms filled in on this page in his own copy.

“In Praise of that Ingenious and Chargable Piece of Heraldry, Composed by Randle Holme, Herald at Armes in Chester; Intituled the Academy of Armory.” Eight lines signed T. Tillier, Typog.

On the back of this page is a set of verses of twenty-four lines, headed as follows:—

Randle Holmes. Anagram. Lo Mens Herald.
and at the foot

By him who Eighty four years hath out worn,
Unfit for Rime, but more fit for his Urne.

RICHARD BLACKBOURNE, Cest.

At the top of the next page is the running heading The Contents, and below this, in bold letters, The Academy of Armory, or Storehouse of Arms. In Four Books. The list of the contents of these four books fill seven pages.

At the end of the list of contents of the first part of book iii. is this note:—

Thus far have I with much Cost and Pains, caused to
be Printed, for the publick benefit; what remains
(and is ready for the Press) is as followeth in the
succeeding Contents: which if encouraged by
Liberal and free Contributors may appear
in the World, else will sleep in the Bed
of its Conception and never see the
Glorious Light of the Sun.

On the eighth page, after the contents, are more verses. The first is headed In laudem Authoris, and is signed Tho. Simpson, Jun. The next has this heading—

In Laudem operis Elaborati Patris Charentissimi Ranulphi
Holme; Nominati Academia Armorum,
and ending thus—

Go thy ways Arts Book, and Feare no evill
Envy'd by none, but Sons of the ♂ ✕
Servus humilimus & filius tuus
Obedientissimus

RANULPHUS HOLME, Jun.

After these preliminary pages, the work itself starts with page I, and the signature B. Each chapter of each book is headed with a dedication, either addressed to some well-known public body of men, or to the author's near relations, his personal friends, the principal county families, and the chief subscribers to and promoters of the undertaking. There are no less than forty-nine of these dedications, the majority of which are very interesting and well worthy of quotation did space only permit. Most of the fifty plates, too, have at the foot short memoranda showing by whom they had been presented to the work. Book i., chapter i., has this dedication :—

“To the Honourable the Kings at Arms with the Worshipful the Colledg of Heralds: R. H. Your Deputy for the County Palatine of Chester and Lancaster, with North Wales; Wisheth Prosperity and increase of Happiness.”

followed by several lines of explanation of the author's grounds for writing the work.¹

The second chapter is dedicated to the Mayor, Recorder, &c., of Chester; the third to the Bishop, Dean, &c., of the cathedral; and the fourth “to the Eminent and Learned Doctors and Practitioners of Physick,” &c., in Chester and North Wales. The fifth chapter is dedicated to Thomas Cowper, of Chester, whose “forwardness in promoting this work hath provoked many of our Citizens to the like Zeal,” &c.

¹ It may here be mentioned that in May, 1692, Randle Holme presented a copy of his book to the Heralds' College, and wrote a letter to Gregory King, then Registrar (now preserved in Harl. MS. 6944), asking the College to grant an Imprimatur for the book as he found he had some difficulty in selling it as “our booksellers say it is not licenced.” The copy presented to the College is still preserved there, bearing the Holme arms, crest, and motto, and underneath these words, “The gift of Randle Holme of the city of Chester, Herald Painter, to the Worshipful Colledge of Heralds, Año MDCXCII.” (See *Cheshire Sheaf*, Nos. 15, 53, and 136.)

The dedication of the second chapter of the third book is so interesting as to be well worthy of quotation in full.

“To His Worthy Friend M^r Richard Brereton, of Chester; Son and Heir of George, Son of Richard Brereton of Broughton, Gent. Lineally Descended of a younger Branch of a Second House, from the Ancient and Honorable Family of Brereton of Brereton in the County Palatine of Chester. When I had finished the First and Second Books of the Academy of Armory, I then stood at a stay, to consider whether I was able to encounter with so great a Golia[t]h as the remaining part was; for the vast Expence past, and the far greater to succeed; and having so few Allies, and never a Champion to appear for my present Assistance, caused me to Despair of Victory, or ever overcoming so Potent an Enemy; till you like a little David stood up for my Cause and put life into my fainting Spirits, taking the Quarrel into your hands, and not as an Assistant Co-helper or Subscriber, but as an Undertaker, with a purpose (that if none others would) you would Tread the Wine Press alone, for the Benefit of Friends and Ages to come; which worthy Proffers and real Performances, deserves you to be Crowned with the Honor of this my next Dedication, before others who say and do not, acknowledging my self your real and obliging Servant in the highest degree.

RANDLE HOLME.”

The first part of book iii. ends on page 501 (each book being separately paged), and on the back of this, forming the last page in the volume, is the following valedictory address occupying the whole page.

To the
Reader.

Courteous Reader,

Hitherto I have through great Pains and Charges caused to be Printed The Academy of Armory; the remaining part (according to the Contents of the Chapters mentioned in the beginning of the first Book) is all ready for the Press, and wants nothing but Encouragers for the Work; for I must acknowledg my self not at present able or sufficient to carry on so great a Work without Assistance, for the Times are so

Hard, Trading so Dead, Money scarce, Paper wanting (else at Double, if not Treble Rates to that I first begun) Wages great, and daily Layings out so much, and above all Gentlemen's Coldness of Zeal in promoting the same, that amongst the many Thousands of Noble Families and Rich Estates in our parts of the Kingdom, viz. Cheshire, Lancashire and the Six Counties of North Wales, not above Twenty have advanced Money to the Work, whose Names I have Dedicated Chapters unto: Others I have mentioned, who have promised to have it when Published, but nothing to encourage it forwards; so that by reason of my own vast Layings out (above what Received, which is above Six Hundred Pounds) I am resolved to go no further, but send Pen Feathered Birds into the World, to gather Crums to Nourish and Bring up the rest, else they are like to Die in the Nest; which if the Gentry suffer, it will be more their Loss than mine; I will say no more but commit it to the censure of many, but to be Understood by few, neither indeed can it be, till it [be] arrived to its full Plumage; at which time I shall not care who Censures, but Answer such as once a Grave Senior did, Find not Fault till thou hast done a Better; or as a French General said to such as Envyed his Greatness, Do as I have done and receive my Honour. And so Farewel:

RANDLE HOLME.

Such then was the unfortunate termination of Randle Holme's labours, which had taken him all his life to get together.¹ His collections for this book together with the proofs and the unprinted materials, which, he states, were quite ready for the press, are now contained in ten small folio volumes amongst the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum (MSS. 2026 to 2035). From them it appears that he commenced collecting his materials in 1649, when he was only twenty-two years of age, although it was not till nearly forty years later that they were printed.

¹ At the end of Harl. MS. 2151, is bound up a copy of the original proposals for printing the Academy of Armory, as well as the appeal for increased support.

It has been more than once stated that some portions of the later books were set up in type,¹ but the evidence on this point has never been very clearly given. One example only is now known to be in existence, and that is bound up at the end of an ordinary copy of the Academy of Armory, now preserved in the Royal Library, Windsor Castle. With reference to this book the Librarian, R. R. Holmes, Esq., F.S.A., writes me as follows:—

“I cannot do better than transcribe part of the note written (at the beginning of the copy of Randle Holme’s Academy of Armory in the Royal Library) by Mr. J. H. Glover, the first librarian of this new collection, under William IV. His note is, ‘This copy is probably unique. . . . No copy that I am aware of possesses the “remaining part” (mentioned by Randle Holme as ready for the press) with the exception of the imperfect copy bound in this volume. Till this was discovered the MS. was always understood to be lost and never printed. This additional portion wants the following pages or leaves, 1, 17, 57, 79, 99, 113, 133 and several leaves of the Table. J. H. G.’ I may mention that this additional portion begins with Book iii., Part ii., Chap. xiv. and goes on to Chap. xix., which finishes on p. 191. After this comes the Table, unpagged, consisting of only four leaves. The last entry is ‘Tribute 333.’ The second part of Book iii. is indexed in this Table. There is no Book iv.”

Lowndes describes this curious book very fittingly as “a heterogeneous mass and extraordinary composition,

¹ Thus Wanley, in his catalogue of the Harleian MSS., describes MS. 2033 as containing the manuscript of the third book of the Academy of Armory from chapter xiv. to the end, and says, “it appeareth by many sure marks that this volume was actually printed but then why it was not bound up with the former part of the work I know not.” Of MS. 2034, which is a continuation of the previous one, he also states “the greatest part of it seemeth to have been printed but whether ever published I cannot now say.” See also *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, vol. i., p. 92.

containing a vast fund of curious information ;” whilst Dr. Ormerod, in his *History of Cheshire*,¹ refers to it at some length, and speaks of the second book as follows :—

“The author’s object appears to have been the formation of a kind of encyclopædia in this awkward heraldic form ; and in the rest of the present book he proceeds through all the range of creation, treating the reader with the strangest jumble on Natural History, Mineralogy and Surgery, occasionally diversified by Palmistry, Hunter’s terms, the Cock-pit laws, Diseases, an Essay on Time and on Men punished in Hell. Introducing each subject successively as the fancied bearing of an armorial coat.”

Several other writers who have referred to it mostly speak of it in disparaging terms. The truth is that it undoubtedly does contain much that had far better have been omitted,² much that is almost childish and absurd ; but at the same time a careful perusal of it shows that the author must have been a very industrious collector of all kinds of out-of-the-way information, and that he was actuated by a very anxious desire to make his work as full and complete as possible. In fact, it was the very wealth of his materials which embarrassed him. Had he possessed any critical judgment, or had he submitted his materials to any intelligent and candid friend, it is probable that, by greatly reducing the bulk of his book, he would have made it far more valuable and certainly far more readable. As it is now, few persons ever take the trouble to look into its eleven hundred folio pages ; but those that do so are certain to come upon some quaint and often valuable pieces of information entirely unconnected with heraldry or genealogy. To take only one instance out of many, and that one that is just now of much local interest, it is found that

¹ Vol. ii., p. 455, new edition.

² As, for instance, “the proper mode of blazoning God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,” &c., which savours much of blasphemy.

this book contains, curiously enough, many Cheshire dialect words and phrases, some of which are now quite obsolete, and of which no other examples are found in print. They were in common use at the time the book was written, and Randle Holme, as a Cheshire man "born and bred," made use of them quite as a matter of course.¹

The question whether this book was really printed in Chester or not has been more than once discussed,² chiefly on the ground that the style of printing has been considered too good to have been done in a small country town, like Chester, in the latter end of the seventeenth century. In my opinion, however, there can be no doubt that it was so printed, for not only does the engraved title page expressly state that it was "printed att Chester by the Author," but in the will of Randle Holme (IV.), subsequently to be given, this sentence occurs: "I give the bed hangings and furniture of that Room in my dwelling in the Bridge Street of the said City, which Room was formerly made use of as a Printing House or place." This seems to me to be conclusive, in addition to which it may be mentioned that Randle Holme (III.), in his final address to the reader (see p. 149), speaks of the high price of paper and "the great wages and daily layings out," which implies that he was his own printer, and had to purchase the paper and pay his men himself. Again, too, in his letter to the College of Arms, in 1692,³ in presenting a copy of his book to their

¹ See the *Cheshire Sheaf*, new series, 1891, Nos. 25, 75, 87, &c., where the list of "all the terms used by Dairy People about making of Cheese and Butter," from book iii., chapter viii., p. 335, is given. In another part of this volume is the list of things necessary for a good farm or dairy, which contains many curious words.

² See the *Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 1010, a note by Mr. W. H. Allnutt, of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

³ Printed in the *Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 15. He also says in this letter that he was not able to sell the book as the booksellers said it was not "licenced." (See also p. 147, note 1.)

library, he describes it as "my own labour and printing." His foreman printer was not improbably T. Tillier, who wrote some verses in praise of the book, and signs himself Typog[rapher] (see p. 146).¹ The *Academy of Armory*, 1688, is therefore the earliest work printed at Chester, and so is a volume of much interest, apart from its intrinsic merits, to all who are concerned with the past history of that city.² When it was printed it had no index, the work being, as already shown, not completed. An index to it, however, was prepared by the industrious author, and, having been preserved in Harl. MS. 2035, was printed in a thin folio volume in the year 1821, and this should now accompany every copy of the original work.

Randle Holme (III.) died on the 12th March, 1699-1700, in the seventy-third year of his age, and was buried at St. Mary's on the 15th of that month, the following being the entry in the register :—

1699[-1700]. Mr. Randle Holme senior of Bridgestreet
Herrald of Armes was Buryed the 15th day of March.

The short inscription to his memory on the monument in that church will be found in the account of his son and successor, Randle Holme (IV.).

His father and grandfather, as already shown, had each of them been twice married, but he excelled them even in

¹ His name also appears at the bottom of a single folio sheet, printed in 1688, "London Printed for T. Tilliar." (*Cheshire Sheaf*, No. 1010.) He had probably left Chester and gone to London when the printing of the *Academy of Armory* was finished. See also *Cheshire Sheaf*, n. s., 133, where a letter to Randle Holme from Thomas Tillier, written from Dublin, January 3rd, 1688-9, is printed, in which he asks for an apprentice "for the press," for his then master, and mentions "Will, the Welsh boy, that was with your son Randle and went after to Mr. Kenion."

² Yet, strange to say, no copy has as yet been acquired for the Chester Free Public Library; nor is there, I believe, a copy to be found in any other public library in that city.

that respect. His first wife was Sarah,¹ daughter and coheir of Henry Soley, of Forton, co. Salop, minister. He was married to her at St. Oswald's, Chester, on the 23rd August, 1655; and on the same day one of his sisters was married in the same church. This being during the period of the Commonwealth, these marriages, in accordance with an Act of Parliament then in force, were celebrated before one of the local magistrates, and not by any clergyman; the entries in the register being as follows:—

“Randle Holme of this Cittie Gent. and Sarah Solie of the same Cittie, Spinst^r Married before M^r William Ince Alder^m & Justice of peace the 23th day of Augu: 1655. Witnesses M^r Randle Holme Sani^r and Thomas Simson.”

“Thomas Simson of this Cittie Grocerar [*sic*] and Elizabeth Holme of the same Cittie spinster Married before M^r Will: Ince Ald^m & Justice of Peace the 23th August 1655. Witnesses M^r Randle Holme & M^r Richard Hunt” [rector of St. Mary's].

Mrs. Sarah Holme was buried at St. Mary's on the 10th April, 1665, leaving issue one son, Randle Holme (IV.) and four daughters.²

His second wife was Elizabeth, daughter of George Wilson, of Chester, gentleman, whom he married at St. Oswald's on the 7th July, 1666. She was buried at St.

¹ Some verses written by the elder Randle Holme, “Upon Sarah Soley, longe stayinge in the countrey and expected by my wife and me,” are printed in Halliwell Phillips' *Palatine Anthology*, taken from the Harleian MSS.

² The names of these four daughters are as follows:—

Elizabeth Holme, baptised at St. Mary's 27th October, 1654; married there 8th July, 1681, to Mr. William Probey, of Chester.

Katherine Holme, baptised at St. Mary's 11th September, 1657; married to Isaac Burrows, of Chester, and had issue.

Rachael Holme, baptised at St. Mary's 30th July, 1661; married there 30th December, 1689, to Mr. William Burganey, of Pulford, co. Chester, gentleman, and had issue. She was buried at St. Mary's 30th May, 1693.

Sarah Holme, baptised at St. Mary's 13th December, 1663; buried there 18th December, 1663.

Mary's on the 2nd April, 1685, having had seven sons and two daughters, of whom only two sons, George and John, were living at the time of her death.¹

His third wife was Anne (? Birkenhead); the settlement after this marriage being dated 20th January, 1688-9.² She survived her husband and was buried at St. Michael's 26th June, 1713, having had no issue. His will is not now preserved at Chester, and I have not found any abstract of it or any reference to it in any of the Holme MSS., now in the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum.

This Randle Holme (III.) has also of late years acquired considerable notoriety as being one of the earliest "Freemasons" whose name has come down to us, and certainly the earliest connected with Chester.³

¹ The names of these children are as follows:—*George Holme*, baptised at St. Mary's 4th October, 1667; buried there 5th October, 1667. *George Holme*, baptised at St. Mary's 3rd January, 1670-1; living in 1704. *William Holme*, baptised 1672; buried 27th November, 1672. *Ralph Holme*, baptised 9th January, 1673-4; buried 9th November, 1675. *Thomas Holme*, baptised 15th August, 1678; probably dead before 1704. *Charles Holme*, baptised 25th March, 1681; buried 28th May, 1681. *John Holme*, baptised 21st February, 1683-4; living 1704. *Amy Holme*, baptised 2nd January, 1668-9; buried 18th June, 1681. *Alice Holme*, baptised 23rd October, 1676; probably dead before 1704. Most if not all of these baptisms and burials took place at St. Mary's.

In Harl. MS. 2161, f. 121, 122, are a series of notes of the births and baptisms of these children, in the handwriting of their father, apparently the leaves out of a small memorandum book.

² This indenture made between Randle Holme, of Chester, Heraldpainter, and Thomas Birkenhead, of Chester, gentleman, after the marriage of the said Randle and Anne his now wife, was for the purpose of settling an annuity on her, arising out of the said Randle Holme's two messuages in Bridge Street (Harl. MS. 2022, f. 128). It is probable that her name was Birkenhead, but I have not met with the entry of this marriage in any of the Chester registers which I have examined.

³ See a very interesting paper, "Freemasonry in the Seventeenth Century, Chester, 1650-1700," by Bro. W. Harry Rylands, F.S.A., reprinted from *The Masonic Magazine*, January-February, 1882. It was in this paper that the fact of Randle Holme (III.) having been a Freemason was first examined and explained.

In his *Academy of Armory*, book iii., chapter ix., p. 393, he writes as follows:—

“I cannot but Honor the Fellowship of the Masons because of its Antiquity; and the more as being a Member of that Society, called Free-Masons. In being conversant amongst them I have observed the use of these several Tools following, some whereof I have seen born in Coats Armour.”

He then proceeds to describe the various tools used by them, as well as “the order of columns and pillars,” &c.

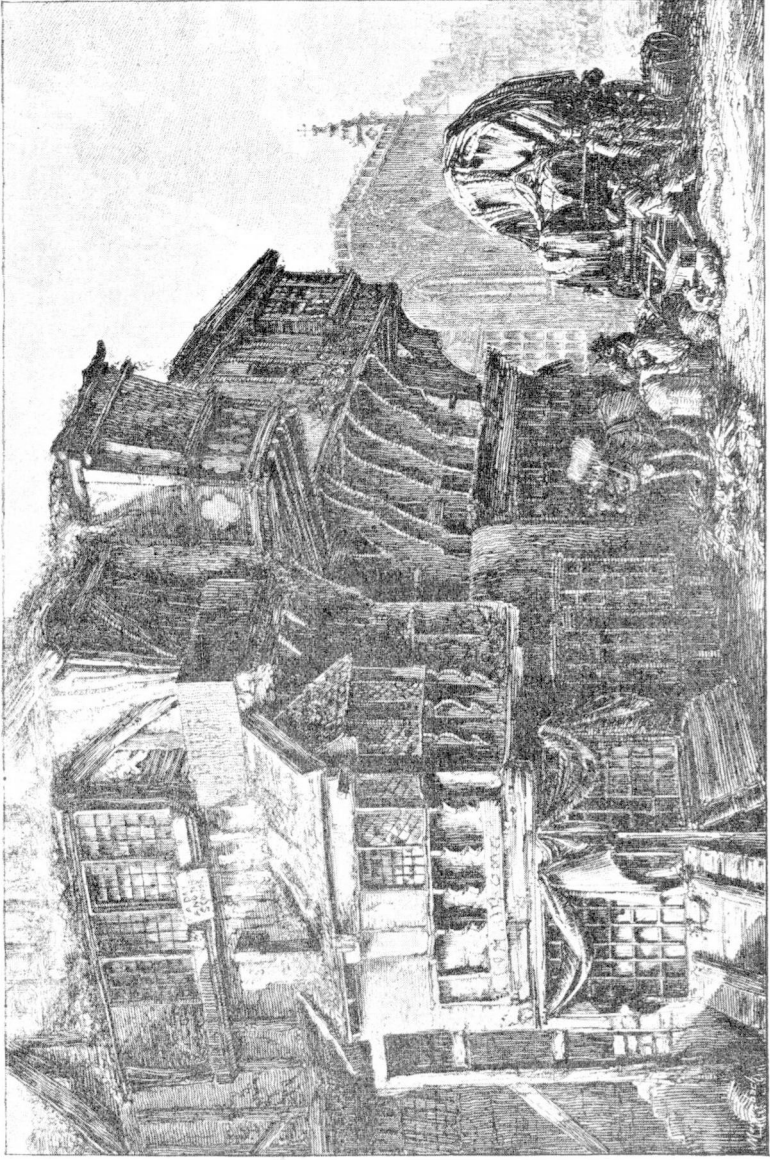
In one of his MS. volumes (Harl. MS. 2054) is a copy of the “Constitutions of Masonry” in his handwriting, a scrap of paper referring to the “words and signes of a free Mason,” and a page containing what are apparently the names of persons made Freemasons, with the initiation fees paid by them.¹ This would show that there was a lodge of Freemasons existing in Chester in the middle or later part of the seventeenth century of which Randle Holme (III.) was a member.² To commemorate this interesting fact in the history of Chester, and to keep up the connection of the family with St. Mary’s, it is proposed that the north porch of St. Mary’s (now in process of restoration) shall be rebuilt by the Freemasons and called “the Randle Holme Porch.”³

Randle Holme (III.) lived in a house in Bridge Street, which has been identified with the well-known picturesque building known as “Lamb Row,” which fell down in May, 1821. It has been engraved in Cuitts’ Views of Chester and elsewhere, and its site, at the corner of the present Grosvenor Road, is now occupied by Mr. Griffiths’ printing

¹ Facsimiles of this leaf and of the small scrap of paper have been given by Mr. Rylands in his paper previously referred to.

² The monument put up in St. Mary’s Church to the memory of Randle Holme (II.) by this Randle Holme (III.) is said to bear masonic emblems, as, for instance, the skull and cross-bones, which are thought to indicate that Randle Holme (II.) was himself a Freemason.

³ This has since been carried out in a very successful manner.



VIEW OF LAMB ROW, SAID TO HAVE BEEN THE RESIDENCE OF RANDLE HOLME (III.),
FROM THE ETCHING BY G. CUTT, 1814.

establishment, &c. This house would appear to have been erected about the year 1670, for in the Corporation records the following order of the assembly occurs in that year:¹

[Ordered] that the nuisance created by Randal Holme in his new building in Bridge-street (near to the two churches) be taken down, as it annoys his neighbours and hinders the prospect from the houses.

And again, in the following year,

Mr. Holme, painter, fined £3. 6s. 8d. for his contempt to the Mayor in proceeding in his building in Bridge Street.

The building, however, was not pulled down, but was subsequently converted into a tavern called "The Lamb," whence the name Lamb Row.

RANDLE HOLME (IV.), c. 1659 TO 1707.

RANDLE HOLME (IV.) was the eldest son of Randle Holme (III.) by his first wife, Sarah Soley, and was born about the year 1659; but his baptism does not occur in the register of St. Mary's, in which parish his father lived. Nothing is known of his early life, but in 1690, when he was thirty-one years of age, he was taken into partnership with his father in his heraldic work. An abstract of the deed of partnership, dated 22nd January, 2 James II. [1690], is preserved in Harl. MS., 2022, f. 136*b*, whereby it was arranged that Randle Holme, jun., should work for his father "what belongs to heraldry, for all which said work he shall receive the quarter or fourth part, the charges of the materials being first deducted." On October 19th, 1691, he became a member of the Stationers' Company, when there was "received of Randle Holme junior for his

¹ Hemingway's *History of Chester*, vol. ii., p. 30, published in 1831.

dinner money £1. 13s. 4d." In his monumental inscription he is described as having been "Deputy to Norroy King at arms."

About the year 1687 he married Margaret, daughter of Griffith Lloyd, of Llanarmon in Yale, co. Denbigh, gentleman, by whom he had an only son, Randle, and four daughters, all of whom died young.¹ In an indenture, dated 1693, making a post-nuptial settlement on this Margaret, the chief parties to it are described as "Randle Holme, senior, of Chester Herald painter and Randle Holme, jun^r Herald painter and Edward Lloyd of Llanarmon in Yale co. Denbigh gentleman."² Like his great-grandfather, grandfather, and father, he was one of the churchwardens of St. Mary's, holding that office for two years, from Easter, 1693, to Easter, 1695.

That the fourth Randle Holme continued to work in the footsteps of his ancestors is shown by the following entries, taken from the churchwardens' accounts of St. Mary's for the year 1700:—

	£	s.	d.
Pd Mr. Holme for Paintinge the Lich-gates	1	1	6
Pd Mr. Randell Holme for writinge of fieve Legecyes in the Ould Table [<i>i.e.</i> , adding five new legacies to the old painted Table of Bene- factors in the church]	0	12	6
Pd for paintinge the New Table and writeinge on it	0	10	6

He was appointed one of the two sheriffs of Chester in October, 1705, when he was elected an alderman of the

¹ *Randle Holme*, the only son, was baptised at St. Mary's, 26th August, 1697, and was buried there 10th May, 1698. *Sarah Holme*, baptised there 23rd October, 1688; buried 4th November, 1702. *Elizabeth Holme*, baptised 14th February, 1689-90; buried 18th March, same year. *Catherine Holme*, baptised 19th August; buried 27th August, 1693. *Catherine Holme*, baptised 18th September; buried 27th October, 1699.

² Harl. MS. 2022, f. 136b.

Stationers' Company. He died on the 30th August, 1707, at the early age of forty-eight, and was buried at St. Mary's on the 2nd September, being described in the register as "Mr. Randell Holme of Bridgstreet Harreld [*sic*] of Armes." His widow survived him nearly twenty-six years, and was buried at St. Mary's on the 13th March, 1732-3. The monumental inscription placed to his memory and that of his father, still preserved in the church, is as follows:¹

Here lyes the Body of Randle
Holme, gen^t Sewer in extraordinary
to K: Charles y^e 2^d and deputy to y^e kings
at arms, who died 12th March 1699;
And Randle Holme his son, deputy to Norroy
K: att arms, who died 30th day of aug. 1707
He married Marg^t, daughter of Griffith Lloyd,
of Llanarmon in the County of Denbigh, gen^t by
w^m he had issue Sara, Eliz. Kat. Randle, and Kat. who
died before their Father, and lye
here Interred

His will, dated 2nd June, 1704, is preserved in the Probate Registry, Chester. In it, after leaving legacies to various relations and friends, he refers specially to "his books and collections of heraldry," and bequeaths them to his two brothers. A full abstract of this the only Randle Holme will, now preserved at Chester, is as follows:—

In the name of God Amen. I RANDLE HOLME, of the
city of Chester, gentleman. My body to be buried with my
ancestors in the parish church of S^t Mary in the said city of
Chester, at the discretion of my executors. I devise all my

¹ At the top of this stone monument is a shield of arms, Holme quartering Tranmoll and Lymme (see p. 134, note 2) and impaling Alcock, Argent, on a fess Gules between three scythes. Sable an escallop Or, with an escutcheon of pretence Tenny (or brown) a chevron Or between three fishes naiant Argent [? Soley] and underneath the inscription the same coat with another escutcheon of pretence Sable a chevron Or between three antelopes' heads of the second [Lloyd of Llanarmon].

messuages and lands within the said city of Chester to my loving wife Margaret Holme, for her life and after her death to my executors to raise the sum of £300 for payment of the legacies hereafter mentioned and then their trust to cease and then I devise the same to my brother George Holmes [*sic*] and the heirs of his body, and for want of such issue to my brother John Holmes [*sic*] and the heirs of his body with remainder to my nephew Randle Burrows, my nephew William Burganey, my niece Rachel Burganey and their heirs successively. To my niece Barbara Lloyd £60; to my niece Rachel Burganey £60. To Mary and Barbara daughters of Richard Speed of Wrexham ironmonger £20 each. To my niece Margaret daughter to Robert Jones of Denbigh, gentleman, £10. To my two executors hereafter named for mourning £10 apiece.

To the poor of Saint Marys parish £10, the interest to be distributed to poor widows living within the Bridge Gate of the city of Chester every Christmas. To my nephew Randle Burrows £50. To the Mayor and citizens of the city of Chester £30 to be employed for the maintenance or education of one poor boy of the said parish of Saint Mary in the Charity School lately erected for the education of poor boys in the said city. To my cousin Elizabeth ffoulks, daughter of Peter ffoulks of Ryviat esq, £20, all which said sums amount in the whole to the sum of £300 to be raised out of the profits of my real estate from and after my wife's death.

And as for my personal estate, I give "the bed hangings and furniture of that Room in my dwelling in the Bridge Street of the said citty, which Room was formerly made use of as a Printing House or place" to my said niece Barbara Lloyd.

"I give and bequeath all my Books and Collections of Heraldry to my said Brothers George Holme and John Holme to be equally divided between them, they paying £40 that is to say £20 apiece to my executors hereafter named, which with the residue of all my personal estate (after my debts and funeral expenses shall be thereout paid and satisfied) I give and bequeath to my said loving wife Margaret Holme and I do appoint my loving brother in law Edward

Memorandum that in y^e year, 1693. Randle Holme Jun^r and
Nicholas Locker Church Wardens: Upon y^e south part of y^e
church formerly called Troutes: Bocker chappell was repaired
Randle Holme Jun^r } Ch Wardens
Nicholas Locker }

*Memorandum of the repair of Troutbeck's Chapel, in St. Mary's Church, Chester, written
Randle Holme (IV.) was churchwarden, in his handwriting.*

Randle Holme

Randle Holme Jun^r

*Autographs of Randle Holme (III.) and
Randle Holme (IV.) in 1699.*

Randle Holme

1706.

SPECIMENS OF THE HANDWRITING AND SIGNATURES OF RANDLE HOLME (IV.).

Lloyd of Llanarmon in the said County of Denbigh, gentleman, and William Proby of the City of Chester, gentleman, executors of this my last will and testament" Dated 2 June 1704
 (Signed) RANDLE HOLME

Signed sealed &c. in (Red seal with the letters R. H.)
 the presence of
 R^r: Comberbach
 G^r: Powell
 Tho: Tagg.

[Proved at Chester 22nd September, 1707. No inventory now preserved with the will.]

When first married he lived in a house described in the St. Mary's registers as "nigh y^e Nuns gate," in Chester; but after his father's death he succeeded him in the house in Bridge Street, as mentioned in his will and in the entry of his burial. There is no evidence that he was ever a Freemason, like his father.

With this Randle Holme (IV.) the history of this old Chester family abruptly terminates. From the above will it does not appear that he was at all such a poor man as has been generally supposed, and although he had no surviving issue, yet he names his two half brothers, George Holme and John Holme,¹ and makes them his heirs. No descendants of these two brothers are now known, nor are any particulars of their own lives at present forthcoming. His work as a herald painter at Chester was taken by Francis Bassano, who was admitted to the freedom of the city in 1711.²

¹ Mr. Wanley, in his catalogue of the Harleian MSS., in describing No. 2002, says: "I remember a son of the third Randle Holme, and I think his name was also Randle. He was tapster or chamberlain in the Golden Talbot Inn, in Liverpool, A.D. 1694, his poor father, the third Randle, then living." This, if true, probably refers to either the George or John Holme here mentioned, the assumption that his name was Randle being a mistake of Mr. Wanley.

² It was suggested by the Messrs. Lysons in their *Magna Britannia* that he may have married one of Randle Holme's (IV.) daughters, but this was not

No portraits of any of these four antiquaries and heralds are now known to be in existence, nor have I ever met with any mention of any. Much as they did for the past history of their native city, Chester may be said to know them no more; and it is now only by the north porch of St. Mary's Church, about to be restored by the Freemasons in memory of the third Randle Holme, that any memorial to them (beyond their monumental inscriptions) will be found.¹ Strangely enough, considering what they did for the history of Cheshire and Lancashire families, the Holme pedigree in the old edition of Ormerod's *History of Cheshire* has been well described as "about the most imperfect of the entire series;" but this, I am glad to say, has been remedied in the new edition.

THE RANDLE HOLME MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS.

Having thus given an account of each of the four Randle Holmes, who lived to man's estate, it now only remains to describe the manuscript collections with which their names will be for ever associated. But to do this in a manner at all

so. Mr. T. Hughes, F.S.A., says, Bassano "certainly possessed several of the Holmes' books, manuscripts, and drawings, some of which, passing through the hands of successive herald painters, were sold in Chester during the present generation." He died in 1747, and his will was proved at Chester on the 16th September of that year. Two or more genealogical manuscripts of his are now in the Heralds' College Library, presented by the Messrs. Lysons (see *Cheshire Sheaf*, 28th August, 1878, No. 226). Add. MS. 6032 in the British Museum (presented by the Messrs. Lysons in 1810) has Francis Bassano's signature, &c. So also has Stow MS. 540, recently added to the British Museum.

¹ It may here be mentioned that about 1822 it was proposed to print by subscription "Holmeiana or Biographical Notices of the three Randle Holmes's Aldermen and Antiquaries of the City of Chester from Anno 1592 to 1688, by John Broster, with a descriptive account of their collection of manuscripts," &c., &c., but I do not think it was ever proceeded with. (See the *Cheshire Sheaf*, vol ii., p. 28, No. 1,033).

concise is by no means an easy task, for it is impossible to overrate their importance and the great value which they possess. Fortunately for posterity they were purchased, early in the eighteenth century, by Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford,¹ and now form part of that magnificent collection of manuscripts, comprising over seven thousand five hundred separate volumes, known as "the Harleian MSS.," and now preserved in the British Museum.

The Randle Holme MSS. in that collection begin with MS. 1920² and come down to MS. 2177, thus comprising no less than two hundred and fifty-seven MSS. in unbroken sequence! In addition to this there are a few other volumes amongst the rest of the Harleian MSS.³ and elsewhere⁴ which were written by them, so that we may estimate the total number of volumes written or collected by these industrious antiquaries as about two hundred and seventy in number. As might be expected, these books vary in size and thickness, but as a rule they are folio volumes, each containing on the average about two hundred and fifty closely-written pages. Their contents are naturally extremely diversified, but it is no truism to say that to the historian and genealogist, interested in the past

¹ It is said that they were offered to the corporation of Chester but were refused by them, and that it was owing to the intervention of Bishop Gastrell that the Earl of Oxford ultimately purchased them.

² Mr. Wanley, in his catalogue of the Harleian MSS., before describing No. 1920, states, "here beginneth a catalogue of the Heraldic and other MSS. bought of the Executors of Randle Holme, late Citizen and Armes Painter of Chester."

³ Thus Harl. MSS. 7568 and 7569 are both part of the Randle Holme collection, as also Harl. MS. 5955, and others.

⁴ The Stow MS. 541, recently acquired by the British Museum, is part of the Randle Holme collection. It begins on folio 320, and contains a fine series of original letters by Sir Randle Crewe, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, addressed to the Recorder of Chester, Edw. Whitby, Esq., and an index to the contents of the book made by the third Randle Holme.

history of Chester, Cheshire, Lancashire, and North Wales, they are simply invaluable. And yet they are not nearly as much consulted as they ought to be, the chief difficulty being to know exactly where to look for any information which may be required. The printed catalogue of the Harleian MSS. describes the contents of each volume in a more or less brief manner, pointing out the special character of each; but it is only by going through the volumes, page by page, that any idea can be formed of the varied information which they contain. The third Randle Holme added to and arranged the collections of his father and grandfather, and made indexes to many of the volumes.

All the four Randle Holmes appear to have made it a rule to lose no opportunity of examining as many original records, such as old charters, family deeds and papers, &c., as possible, and making abstracts of all such that passed through their hands. By so doing they have fortunately preserved for us abstracts of an enormous number of documents, a very large proportion of which no longer exist, and of which, had it not been for their care and industry, we should now know nothing. Whenever occasion took them into the country they visited the churches and not only copied the monumental inscriptions, but also noted the old heraldic stained glass in the windows¹ and made rough sketches of the monumental effigies and brasses which they saw there. During the whole of the seventeenth century their busy fingers were at work, so that the wealth of information, which by these means they have preserved for posterity, can only be realised by those who have examined their collections, volume by volume, and page by page. I think I may say, without exaggera-

¹ Some of these volumes, notably 2151, contain notes of the old stained glass, &c., made by Thomas Chaloner and others before 1600, and arranged by the third Randle Holme.

tion, that I have examined these MSS. more carefully than most students, and have made careful notes of the contents of most of the volumes, and yet every time I consult them I am astonished and delighted at the wonderful amount of information which they contain. I wish it were only possible to print a full index to them, but I am afraid it will be a long time before that is ever done.

As already noted they succeeded to the collections of the Chaloners,¹ and being on terms of friendship with other antiquaries, they had access to many of the collections of Mr. William Vernon,² of Shakerley, Mr. John Booth,³ of Twemlow, Laurence Bostock,⁴ Sampson Erdeswick,⁵ Samuel Catherall,⁶ and many others, whence they transcribed what they considered most useful. They were also fortunate in obtaining a large number of original documents, so that some of the volumes of their collections contain original deeds, wills, inquisitions,⁷ depositions, petitions, letters, &c., &c., which would otherwise most probably all have long since perished.⁸ After the Civil War they acquired

¹ Thomas Chaloner's MSS. will be found in MSS. 1971-5, 1977, 1979, 2088-9, and in part in 2120 and 2163. Jacob Chaloner's MSS. are 2164-5, 2167, and 2169.

² Mr. Vernon's Liber P is copied in MS. 2007, and his Liber H in MS. 2008. See also deeds from Mr. Vernon's Liber C in MS. 2074, and other extracts in MS. 2022, as well as extracts from his MS. R in MS. 1967.

³ Extracts from Liber D, which was, I think, one of Mr. John Booth's MSS., will be found in MS. 1967, but he does not appear to have lent many of his MS. collections to the Holmes.

⁴ Harl. MS. 139 is a volume containing Laurence Bostock's Cheshire collections, but it does not form part of the Randle Holme MSS. See also Nos. 2059 and 2113.

⁵ See MS. 1990. ⁶ See MS. 1988.

⁷ Harl. MS. 1991 contains a number of original office copies of inquisitions *post mortem* and wills. See also MSS. 2046, 2047, 2102 and 2090, 2091, 2093.

⁸ Amongst these may be mentioned MS. 2107 containing the original "Remonstrances," signed by the inhabitants of the chief Cheshire towns and villages, in 1642, in favour of the Parliament.

the accounts of the receipts and disbursements in the several Cheshire Hundreds, as well as papers relating to the confiscated estates of the Cheshire royalists.¹

Living all their lives in Chester, and occupying positions of authority there, their collections naturally abound with references to that city. They have preserved to us most valuable information relating to the old churches, the ancient families, the city Companies, the city records, the registers, and churchwardens' accounts of many of the old parishes there, the Dec mills, &c., &c. Little of this information has ever been printed, and the rest still awaits the advent of someone, who will be at the trouble of putting this mass of material into proper order, and so writing a history of Chester, which shall be worthy of that old city and of its industrious seventeenth-century antiquaries.

It has been customary to underrate the value of these collections, even by those who have made much use of them; but with this opinion I have no sympathy. It is true that none of the Randle Holmes were good mediæval Latin scholars, that they were not able to transcribe old Latin records with the necessary critical accuracy, and that they were not skilful enough to make the best use of what they had so industriously collected. But at the same time they were honest in their work; they did what they could to the best of their ability and knowledge, and by so doing they have laid posterity under a heavy burden of indebtedness. It is not difficult to correct their faulty Latin; but how should we have any knowledge of what has long since perished had it not been for their zeal and care? I quite agree with the opinion of the late Mr. W. H. Black, F.S.A., assistant keeper of the

¹ See MS. 1999, Civil War accounts for Northwich, Broxton, and Macclesfield Hundreds; MS. 2018, Wirrall Hundred; MS. 2128, Nantwich, Bucklow, and Edisbury Hundreds; MS. 2144, Edisbury and Northwich Hundreds.

public records, who had had much experience of their collections, and who writes as follows, referring more especially to the first Randle Holme:¹

“ Clerical faults are common to all the voluminous writings of the eldest Randle Holme. He was not an exact scholar and did not know how to read ancient records critically or to copy them with technical precision nor did he thoroughly understand the meaning of their unusual words, phrases and forms. Hence what he could not copy with minute accuracy he usually *imitated* so that the sense can be easily perceived by an experienced reader. . . . In short he was an industrious and faithful copyist or collector of historical antiquities, but his philological learning was too scanty for him to use extreme accuracy on the one hand or to invent any of the documents which he professed to transcribe, extract or abridge, on the other. Therefore his copies may be always relied on as faithfully transcribed in substance.”

When this collection was purchased, the various volumes bore certain marks by which the Randle Holmes had distinguished them. These were chiefly letters, as for example, A, AA, and L, LL, LLL, and so on through a large portion of the alphabet. Combinations of letters such as Æ, ÆÆ, VN, WP, &c., &c., were also used, as well as various marks and figures, difficult to reproduce in type. These letters, &c., are constantly made use of in cross references from one volume to another,² and most puzzling

¹ See his voluminous “Reports on the Manor of Tranmere,” p. xxxv, a very valuable privately printed volume, abounding in information copied from the Harleian MSS. and the Public Records relating to that part of Cheshire. This book was drawn up in consequence of some disputes as to the ownership of the foreshore of that manor, and is very rarely to be met with. I only know of my own copy in any private or public library in Lancashire or Cheshire.

² Thus, for example, in Harl. MS. 2161, ff. 116-17, where the pedigree of the Holme family occurs, there is this note, “ancient deeds of Holme see lib. V.N. 78h, 127 b.e.,” &c., and so on. In Harl. MS. 7568 there is a sort of index to the chief contents of the various MSS., and the old notation is used throughout.

they now are, because since these MSS. have been in the British Museum so many have been rebound that the old marks have disappeared.¹ As no list of them was ever made, there is now no means of ascertaining what particular volume any letter, &c., refers to, and the officials in the Manuscript Department there are often asked to give information which they do not possess. To any one constantly working at these MSS. the impossibility of making use of the cross references is so annoying that some years ago I began to make notes of all the old marks whenever I could meet with them. By this means I have been enabled to draw up the following list in which a large number of the old marks have been identified.² Others may from time to time be ascertained, but a great number I fear have entirely perished.

THE RANDLE HOLMES' OLD NOTATION AND THE MODERN HARLEIAN MSS. NUMBERS.








Old Notation.		Modern Numbers.	Old Notation.		Modern Numbers.		
A	2153	B	...	...	(? 2079)
A A	2161	B B	...	...	—
[A]	2010	C	...	...	2146
[A A]	1998 2071	C C	...	...	2040
[A A A]	2064	D	...	...	—
				D D	...	...	1972

¹ In some cases the original volume has been divided into two smaller ones, and then the parts separately bound and placed in the modern list far apart from one another! Thus the second half of MS. 2153 is now 2161, and the second half of MS. 2146 is now 2040! Again, too, MS. 1968 begins with folio 540, and there is nothing to show in which other volumes the earlier folios are now to be found. So also MS. 2004 begins with f. 733, MS. 2003 with f. 620, and MS. 2002 with f. 236, all portions of distinct volumes!

² In making this list as complete as it is I am much indebted to Mr. Kensington, one of the oldest assistants in the MS. Department at the British Museum, who, I found, had been making notes of these marks for many years past, and who very kindly placed his lists at my disposal.

THE RANDLE HOLME MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS. 169

Old Notation.		Modern Numbers.	Old Notation.		Modern Numbers.
E ...	...	2149	TT ...	...	—
EE ...	...	1992 2037	U ...	...	—
F ...	...	2119 2120	UU ...	...	—
FF ...	...	2023	V ...	2129 2149 (2151?)	—
G ...	...	2096	VV ...	...	—
GG ...	...	2044	W (formerly S) ...	...	2057
GGG ...	...	2101	WW ...	...	2125
GGGG ...	...	2110	WWW ...	...	—
H ...	2008 2147	2187	WWWW ...	...	2133
HH ...	...	2156	X ...	...	—
I ...	...	2115	XX ...	...	—
II ...	...	—	Y ...	...	2164
K ...	...	2117	YY ...	...	—
KK ...	...	—	Z ...	...	2065
L ...	...	1987	ZZ ...	...	2066
LL ...	...	2112	Æ ...	...	2022
LLL ...	...	2042	ÆÆ ...	...	2038
LLLL ...	...	2085	ÆÆÆ ...	...	2131
M ...	...	1979	Ɔ ...	...	2094
MM ...	...	—	CB ...	...	2086
N ...	...	1974	CD ...	...	2142
NN ...	...	—	2 CH ...	...	—
O ...	...	—	3 CH ...	...	—
OO ...	...	—	CK ...	...	—
[O] ...	...	1994 2103	CO ...	...	2004 2054
P ...	...	1975	DO ...	...	1988
PP ...	...	—	EF ...	...	2063
Q ...	...	—	FL ...	...	1925
QQ ...	...	2154	GH ...	...	1969
R ...	...	1967	LC ...	...	2062
RR ...	...	—	PI ...	...	2176
S (see W) ...	...	—	PR ...	...	2072
SS ...	...	2150 2172	RT ...	...	2177
³ SS ...	...	2020	VN ...	...	2077
⁶ SS ...	...	2016	VP ...	...	2007
T ...	...	2173	WB ...	...	1977
			³ WB ...	...	1970

Old Notation.		Modern Numbers.	Old Notation.	Modern Numbers.
W P	...	1936	Liber 1 ...	1970
	...	1944	" 2 ...	—
	...	1937 2083 2099	" 3 ...	2076
1 	...	2046	" 4 ...	2092
2 	...	2047	" 5 ...	2030
3 	...	2102	" 6 ...	2169
	...	1989	" 7 ...	2021
	...	2135	" 8 ...	2106
			" 12 ...	2123 ¹
			" 13 ...	2165
			" 16 ...	1980
			" 19 ...	2088
			" 33 ...	1950

¹ Contains an index to MSS. 2170, 2171, and 2140.

