TWICKENHAM AND ITS WORTHIES.

By C. J. Thrupp, Esq., Barrister-at-law.

The pleasant and salubrious village of Twickenham, situate some ten miles from London on the Middlesex bank of the River Thames, is probably known to most people; though perhaps few, if questioned, know more about it than that Eel Pie Island and Pope's Villa and Strawberry Hill are there. But for more than four hundred years Twickenham has been a favourite place of abode with very many famous and illustrious personages, besides Pope and Horace Walpole, whose memories are so inseparably connected therewith as to invest the place with an adventitious renown that will possibly endure for all time; and a sketch of these worthies and their residences (many still extant) may contribute towards the topography of this part of Middlesex, whilst others may be interested in the meaning of the name of Twickenham and in the history and annals of the parish and its church.

The meaning and derivation of the word "Twickenham" has aroused much speculation. Norden, in his Speculum Britanniæ, says the place is so called "either for that the Thames seems to be divided into two rivers by reason of the islands there, or else of the two brooks which neere the town enter into the Thames, for 'Twicknam' is as much as 'Twynam,' *quasi inter binos amnes situm*, a place seytuate between two rivers." Upon this it may be remarked that to any Latin scholar this twisting of Twynam is too

tortuous and far-fetched; that though there are or were two i lan ds there, there are not nor were there two brooks between which Twickenham is or was situate; and moreover that in no document, contemporary or otherwise, has Twickenham ever been called "Twynam." In records anterior to the Conquest we find the place called "Twitham" or "Twittanham" or "Twicanham." Sometimes, as on an alms-dish in the church of unknown date, it is called "Twitnaham." Pope called it Twitenham, Horace Walpole called it Twit'nam—

> Twit'nam the Muses favorite seat,
> Twit'nam the Graces loved retreat.

In the Parliamentary Survey of 1649 it is called Twicktenham. Others have given it an Anglo-Saxon derivation, viz., from "Twy" two, "ken" to look, and "ham" a village, *i.e.*, a town or village which has two views from it—one up and the other down the river. Upon this it may be remarked that so has every other town on the river.

Again, it is suggested that it is a corruption of Twyggenham, *i.e.*, "the town amongst twigs, boughs, or trees," from the many willows that once grew on the banks there; but, considering that before A.D. 1227 one vast forest or warren extended from the River Brent to Staines, one does not see why Twickenham alone should have been singled out as the town among trees—to say nothing of the fact that before Pope's time there were no willows there at all.*

* It is asserted that the first weeping-willow known in this country was planted in Twickenham Park in the early part of the eighteenth

Again, it is supposed that the place was "Gwickenham," *i.e.*, "the town built on windings or bays of a river," and modified by use into Wickenham and Twickenham, just as Gissleworth (in Domesday) got modified into Thistleworth and Isleworth. But Twickenham is not the only village in this neighbourhood built on a bay of the river; on the contrary, nearly all the towns on the river are so built. Another suggestion is, that, as Chiswick is the "wic" or village of cheeses, Twickenham may have been the town or "wic" whence the cheese came.

Another suggestion is that Twickenham means "the two islands home," from "Twy" two, "igge" an island, and "ham" a home. If Ickenham, also in Middlesex (about six miles off as the crow flies), could be shown to have or have had an island, this last derivation might have some air of plausibility about it, as there used to be at Twickenham another island besides Eel Pie Island; but I have been unable to

century by a Mr. Vernon, who had been a Turkey merchant at Aleppo, and who then resided at Twickenham Park. He is said to have imported a graft of willow which became the original of all the weeping-willows in our gardens. Those who are of this opinion say that Pope's celebrated tree was one of the earliest scions of Mr. Vernon's. Others, however, maintain that Pope's willow was the eldest and first; and their account of its origin is that a present came from Spain to Lady Suffolk, of Marble Hall, and that Pope was in the company whilst it was being unpacked. Amongst the contents he noticed some pieces of stick which appeared to have life in them; and, fancying that they might produce some horticultural novelty, he planted them in his garden, and thus the willow was produced.

As regards other willows or osiers this part of the Thames is singularly bare of them.

ascertain that Ickenham is or has or had in it any island, and moreover in Domesday Book Ickenham is called Ticsham.

Altogether I am not satisfied with any of these derivations.

The tower and body of Twickenham church are of very different ages and styles. The tower is of stone in the early Perpendicular style, and is supposed to have been built about the middle of the fourteenth century. The body, however, to which this tower appertained fell down (through neglect) in 1713, and was rebuilt of brick by John James, the architect of St. George's, Hanover Square, and seemingly according to the same pattern. It is very solid and very ugly, and it is difficult to understand how Sir Godfrey Kneller, who as churchwarden employed John James, could have seen any "artistic merit" in the design. The interior has, however, within the last ten years been slightly improved by decorations in the Byzantine style. The only brass the church contains is one to Richard Burton, chief cook to Henry VI. A.D. 1443. One other interesting monument, that seems only to have lost its canopy at the time the church fell, may here be noticed. It is erected to the memory of Francis Poulton and his wife in 1643, and consists of their two half-length figures in baked clay, appropriately coloured and costumed, the man as a lawyer of the period (he was a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn), bareheaded, with a ruff and black gown tufted with velvet; whilst the wife has a wimple and gown with puffed sleeves. They each have one hand on a skull.

On the exterior of the church are votive tablets to

Kitty Clive the actress, who died here in 1785, Pope's nurse Mary Beach (1725), and Thomas Twining 1741, the founder of the well-known bankers and tea-merchants in the Strand, some of whose descendants have ever since resided in Twickenham, and to whose munificent philanthropy and liberality Twickenham owes its economic museum and hospital.

The registers of the church are very full and complete, commencing in the year 1538, 30 Henry VIII. when (as is well-known) the keeping of them was first strictly enjoined. On the last page of the first and oldest volume of these registers are two curious memoranda showing how differences were then settled without the aid of lawyers:

The iiij. day of Aprell in 1568 in the presence *of the hole paryshe* of Twycnam was agrement made betwyxt Mr. Packer and his wyffe and Hew Rytte and Sicylye Daye of a slander brought up by the sayde Rytte and Sicylye Daye upon the aforesayde Mr. Packer.

The xi. daye of Aprell in 1568 was agreement made betwyxt Thomas Whytt and James Heane, and have consented that whosoever geueth occasion of the breakyng of Christen love and charytye betwyxt them to forfett to the *poor of the paryshe* iij s. iiij d. beyng dewelye proved.

Otherwise these registers afford little interest to other than genealogists, and after all the perpetuation of the annals of families is their chief use, as indeed we learn from some lines inscribed in these very registers by a quondam curate of the parish:—

. . . . . A Parish Register;
How few exceed this boundary of Fame,
Known to the world by some things more than name!

This tells us when they're born and when they die;
What more? Why this is all their history:
Enough if Virtue filled the space between,
Proved by the ends of being to have been.

But the Minutes of the vestry and churchwardens accounts, which are for the most part in good preservation, and date respectively from A.D. 1606 and A.D. 1618, are of more public interest, and as throwing light on the events of the seventeenth century I am tempted to give some extracts. Amongst the receipts for 1631 and other years are sums, usually about 6*s.* 6*d.*, paid by other parishes (Teddington, Cranford, and others) "for the loan of the parish pewter," meaning, it would seem, the sacramental plate.

In 1632 the outgoing churchwardens made an inventory of the parish goods, which they handed over to their successors in office:—

A greater silver and gilt cuppe, with the cover given by Mr. Hollingsworth; a lesser silver cuppe, with a cover; two pewter flaggons; a greene velvet cushion for the pulpitt; greene carpett for the communion table; blacke cloth for the funeralls; one joyned chest; two joyned stooles: one little chest with two locks; one diaper table-cloth for the communion table.

It will be observed that there are no copes or other vestments.

Throughout this century there are entries of moneys paid by the churchwardens for the sacramental bread and wine, which show that the communion was then administered only five times a year, viz., Michaelmas, Whitsuntide, Bartholomewtide, Christmas, and Easter; and that the number of communicants was least at the first-named feast, and increased at each feast in

the order above-mentioned. There is a curious entry in 1657 (in the year before Oliver Cromwell's death),

That it was mooted in the vestry whether the clarke of the parishe be servant to y^e^ minister or to y^e^ parishe or noe, and whether y^e^ clarke shall sette y^e^ Psalms in y^e^ absence of y^e^ minister; as allsoe which order shall be taken for readinge y^e^ Scriptures publickly in y^e^ church.

In 1659 there is an entry of 1*l.* 10*s.* paid for painting and putting up the king's arms in the church.

In 1687 there is an entry:

Paid for the book of thanksgiving for the queen's being with childe, 1*s.*

This child was the Pretender.

In April 1676 a parish officer was appointed to secure the town against vagabones, beggars, and other persons harbouring in barnes or outhouses, also to prevent theefing and robbing.

But this officer does not appear to have been very efficient, for in April 1683 a butcher was robbed of 18*l.* on his way to Brentford market; and as appears from these accounts, the hundred of Heston, Isleworth, and Twickenham had to make good his loss.

In 1698 we find,

P^d^ old Thomlins, for fetching home the church gates, being thrown into y^e^ Thames in the night by drunkards, 2*s.* 6*d.*

The churchwardens were in the habit of paying for the destruction of vermin. In 1773 and 1774 are the items respectively—

P^d^ for 54 hedgehogs, 18*s.*
,, 4 polecats, 1*s.* 4*d.*

And similar entries occur frequently from time to time until recently.

In 1790 there is an entry "that a whipping-post be erected at the workhouse immediately." Whether this was to apply Duke Humphrey of Gloucester's test of impotent folk does not appear.

The first notable residents at Twickenham that I shall mention were also the earliest in point of time —I mean the "nuns" of Syon. Syon Monastery was founded in Twickenham Park by Henry V. in 1415. By his charter of that date he "did found, ordain, and for ever establish a certain monastery of the Order of St. Augustine, called of St. Saviour, of sixty nuns or sisters . . . . in a certain forest of land of our demesne of our manor of Isleworth, within the parish of Twickenham, in the county of Middlesex, ... under the name of the Monastery of St. Saviour and St. Bridget of Syon, of the Order of St. Augustine." The nuns remained in their Twickenham abode until 1431, when by leave of Henry VI. they removed to a larger edifice built by them in Isleworth parish—the present "Syon"—afterwards called Syon House, and made the residence of the Dukes of Northumberland; and on the summit of one turret of which now stands the lion formerly over the gateway of Northumberland House at Charing Cross. Two deeds relating to the affairs of this monastery, while it was located in Twickenham, have been preserved in Twickenham parish-chest. They both bear date in the year 1444, and one of them has a richly illuminated initial letter, in excellent preservation, and

of great beauty, whilst both have the conventual seal attached.

The next illustrious resident in Twickenham Park, was Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, who lived here some years in what was then called Twickenham Park House, which stood very near the site of Syon Nunnery. Here he spent much of his leisure time; and here, in 1592, he was honoured by a visit from Queen Elizabeth, to whom he presented a sonnet in praise of the Earl of Essex. Lord Verulam sold the estate in 1596. In 1668 it came into the possession of Lord Berkeley of Stratton, so styled from his victory at Stratton over the Roundheads, to whom there is a fine monument in Twickenham church. This nobleman was of the same family as the Fitzhardinge Berkeleys. The house afterwards passed through the hands of many noblemen, but its last noble occupier was Field-Marshal Lord Frederick Cavendish, shortly after whose death, in 1803, it was pulled down, and its site sold for building purposes. Near its site was erected, by the late Lord Kilmorey, a house, which he called St. Margaret's, but which is now converted into a school for the education of female children of naval officers. I think the present use of this land is likely to be of more benefit to the community than the first use by the nuns.

Going westward we next come to Cambridge House, built about 1610 by Sir Humphrey Lynd, a zealous Puritan, but deriving its name from its most celebrated occupant, Richard Owen Cambridge, author of the Scribleriod, and many other literary

works, and the valued friend of Horace Walpole, Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Garrick, and Lord North. A pleasant story is told of him *à propos* to his contributions to a periodical of that age, called "The World," a prototype of the existing publication of that name. As Mr. Cavendish was going to church one Sunday morning, a paper was put into his hands requesting an essay. His wife observing him rather inattentive during the sermon, whispered, "What *are* you thinking of?" He replied, "Of the next world, my dear." This house was afterwards the residence of Mr. Bevan, the banker, and is now occupied by his daughter, Lady John Chichester. To a house built by Archdeacon Cambridge, Mr. R. O. Cambridge's son, in the meadows at a little distance, an observatory was added by Mr. Bishop, whose astronomical reputation is well known in these days.

Marble Hill, or Marble Hall, may be next noticed. This was built for the Countess of Suffolk at the expense of George II., and the then Earl of Pembroke designed the building and superintended its erection. The gardens were laid out by Pope, the cellar was stocked by Dean Swift, and the poet Gay was so constant a resident there that a suite of rooms were named Mr. Gay's rooms. This house was afterwards inhabited for many years by the Marquis Wellesley, and from 1824 by General Peel. Little Marble Hill, close by, was formerly the residence of Lady Diana Beauclerk, a well-known artist, and the wife of Topham Beauclerk, Dr. Johnson's friend.

We next come to Orleans House, at present used by the Orleans' Club but formerly inhabited by Louis

Philippe, and afterwards owned by his son, the Duc d'Aumale, into whose possession it would seem, from the turn affairs are now taking in France, that it is not improbable it will revert. But it has a far earlier history. In 1650 it—as being then in the occupation of one Andrew Pitcairne, a groom of the bedchamber to Charles I.—was confiscated, and is fully described in the Parliamentary Survey of Crown property then made. It is there described as a pleasant and delightful tenement about twenty poles from the river, built partly with brick and partly with timber, and Flemish wall, with comely chambers; the gardens, not only rare for pleasure but exceedingly profitable, being planted with cabbages, turnips, and carrots, *and many other such-like creatures*, together with sixteen acres of cherry gardens. In 1694 the young Duke of Gloucester, the son of Queen Anne, then Princess of Denmark, was sent to reside there for his health. He took with him a regiment of boys, whom he used to drill on an ait then opposite the house, but which has since become annexed to the mainland. The air of Twickenham, however, failed to restore him to health, and he died there at the early age of twelve years.

In 1720 it was leased to James Johnstone, the Secretary of State for Scotland, who pulled down the old house, and erected the present structure. He built the large octagon room at the end of the house especially for the reception and entertainment of Queen Caroline, consort of George II., who visited him there. Considering that at the time of this visit she must have well known that at the distance of

some three hundred yards Marble Hall was being erected at her husband's expense, for her former lady of the bedchamber, Lady Suffolk, some curious, perhaps envious, feeling about the new house may well have had part in bringing about this visit. Mount Lebanon, so named from its magnificent cedars, and for one hundred and fifty years belonging to the Byng family, and afterwards for twenty years to the Dukes of Northumberland, was occupied by the Prince de Joinville down to the time of his return to France, in 18—. The next large house, York House, was at the same time occupied by his nephew, the Comte de Paris. This house, however, has earlier boasted of yet more illustrious inmates. It was given by Charles II., soon after the Restoration, to Lord Chancellor Clarendon, on the public announcement of that nobleman's daughter's marriage with the Duke of York, afterwards James II., and in this house were born the Princesses Mary and Anne, successively Queens of England. It was not wonderful, therefore, that the Princess Anne should have supposed that her native air might have proved beneficial to her son, the young Duke of Gloucester, whose visit to the almost adjoining Orleans House in search of health I have already noticed. York House now belongs to Mr. Grant Duff.

Opposite the church are the remains of the old manor house, called "Arragon House" and "Arragon Tower," it being reported that Catherine of Arragon lived there after her divorce; and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, I am disposed to assume that this name would not have been given to the

house arbitrarily, or without reason. Certain it is that this house, together with the manor, was part of the jointure of another of Henry the Eighth's queens, viz., Catherine Parr, and also of Henrietta Maria, queen of Charles I., and also of Catherine of Braganza, queen of Charles II. The last-named queen resided there occasionally. This house has been long severed from the manor of Twickenham, upon which I may here make some observations, as it has rather a curious history and incidents. It is very uncommon for one manor to be parcel of another manor, but the manor of Twickenham appears originally to have been parcel of the manor of Isleworth. In a record of 1301, Twickenham is mentioned as a hamlet "berewicus," appendant to the manor of Isleworth. There are two manors of Isleworth, viz., Isleworth Syon, belonging to the Dukes of Northumberland, and Isleworth Rectory, belonging to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. But Isleworth Syon is by far the larger and more important; and in the parish of Twickenham more land is holden of the manor of Isleworth Syon than either of the other two manors, whilst, curiously enough, Twickenham Manor extends into Heston and Isleworth. The customs of Twickenham Manor are primogeniture and an arbitrary fine, whereas those of Isleworth Syon are borough English and an extra quit-rent called "dycynge," levied from all the tenants; and it is very singular that from these two manors, originally so intimately connected, should have been evolved such diverse and discordant customs. The first mention we have of the manor of Twickenham as an independent manor is in the will

of one Warberdus, a priest, by which (A.D. 830) eight hides of land, with y^e^ manor of Twitham, in Middlesex (which had been granted to him) were given to the Church of Canterbury. The monks seem, however, either not to have obtained possession of this bequest, or to have lost it again, for we find that King Eldred, by his charter (A.D. 948), gave to the same monks "y^e^ manor of Twiccanham, in the county of Middlesex, with its appurtenances." The manor, however, again fell into the hands of the Crown, when the Church was despoiled by Henry VIII. As I have already observed, it formed part of the jointure of Queens Catherine, Henrietta Maria, and Catherine of Braganza. The last-named queen leased the manor to Lord Rochester, who assigned it to Lord Bolingbroke, on whose attainder, in 1715, it was forfeited to the Crown. Thenceforward the manor was in lease to various individuals until 1855, when it was sold to Charles Osborne, who resold it to T. Wisden, Esq. in whose family this manor is at the present time vested. Passing by Grove House,—where lived and died successively the Duke of Wharton, whom Pope describes "as the scorn and wonder of our age," possessing

". . . . each gift of nature and of art
And wanting nothing but an honest heart."

and James Craggs, who succeeded Addison in 1718 as Secretary of State, died here in 1720, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, Pope furnishing the epitaph to his monument,—we come to Pope's Villa. Pope's fame is so well established that it would be a work of supererogation to mention here more than

his connection with Twickenham. He is as Macaulay terms him "the man of Twickenham," and in his (and Horace Walpole's) time the fame of Twickenham as the abode of literary and distinguished personages was at its zenith. Pope settled in Twickenham in 1718, in the thirtieth year of his age. His father had just died at Chiswick, but Pope brought with him to Twickenham his aged mother; and began, with funds partly derived from his father's estate, partly supplied by his own literary labour,* to rebuild and improve a house and five acres of ground, of which he had taken a long lease. The grounds were laid out with great ingenuity, so as to amplify the space, and delight the eye with variety of pleasing vistas; and, as the greater portion was situate on the opposite side of the high road to the house, he formed his celebrated grotto to serve as a subterranean connection between them. He is said to have laid out 5,000*l.* on the grotto and garden alone. The grotto remains to this day, though stripped of its ornaments of marble, spar, gems, &c.; but the house has long been rased to the ground, though very near its site stands a nondescript Swiss Chinese villa, called "Pope's Villa," at present inhabited by Mr. Labouchere, M.P. In this locality Pope lived and wrote from 1718, to his death in 1744, in most congenial society. Swift, Gay, Arbuthnot, Warburton, and Atterbury were constant visitors; Lord Bolingbroke, Lord Peterborough, and, for a short time, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, his neighbours and associates. But the caricature of his

* The Iliad alone, which was begun in 1715 and finished in 1720, brought him in 5,000*l.*

house, the despoiled grotto, and the tablets in the church to the memory of his nurse, his parents, and himself, are all the relics that Twickenham has to show of her great man. The inscription on the tablet to Pope written by Warburton is very poor in style and expression, and might even now be well replaced by one more worthy its object.

ALEXANDRO POPE
M. H
Gulielmus Episcopus Gloucestriensis
Amicitiæ causâ fac. cur.
M.DCC.LXI.

Poeta loquitur
For one who would not be buried
In Westminster Abbey:

Heroes and Kings! *your distance keep*,
In peace let one poor poet sleep
Who never flattered folks like you;
Let Horace blush, and Virgil too.

Pope's monument is, however, side by side with that of one hero, Admiral Chaloner Ogle.

Pope died in 1744, and in 1747 Horace Walpole—the famous author, antiquarian, and dilettante—came to Strawberry Hill, then a cottage with five acres of ground attached, of which he had bought the fag-end of a lease. The next year he bought the freehold, together with some more adjoining land, and began to turn the cottage into a castle. Everybody has heard of Strawberry Hill, with its brick and mortar turrets, its Gothic windows, and its lath-and-plaster walls. It has, as a building, been warmly praised and bitterly abused; but it has been well said that

the pleasure in seeing Strawberry Hill supersedes censure, and criticism wishes to be deceived. A love for the Gothic has been carried to the length of adopting as chimney-pieces, in various rooms, copies of celebrated Gothic tombs in Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral; whilst the windows, ceilings, and doorways in many other cathedrals and chapter-houses have been extensively plagiarised. Here Horace Walpole lived chiefly from 1747 until his death in 1797. He spent the time that was not devoted to literature in filling Strawberry Hill with curios of every description—pictures, miniatures, enamels, missals, ivory, and jewelled cups and shrines, old china, old armour, old furniture, besides many *antique busts, statuary, bronze, mosaics, and lachrymatories*. Macaulay wrote of it: "Every apartment is a museum; every piece of furniture is a curiosity. There is something strange in the form of the shovel; there is a long story belonging to the bell-rope. We wander among a profusion of rarities of trifling intrinsic value, but so quaint a fashion, or connected with such remarkable names and events, that they may well detain our attention for a moment. A moment is enough. Some new relic, some new unique, some new carved work, some new enamel, is forthcoming in an instant. One cabinet of trinkets is no sooner closed than another is opened."

Lord Macaulay was, however, mistaken in his estimate of the value of this collection, for in 1842 the celebrated George Robins disposed of it, in a twenty-three days' sale, for the large sum of 33,468*l.* One suit of armour alone fetched 320*l.*; and some

twenty or thirty miniatures by Oliver Hilliard Cooper and Petitot, which then found their way at large prices into the Bale and Hamilton collections, were, at the dispersion of those collections at Christie's, in 1881 and 1882, bought at still larger prices by the late John Jones, and now form part of the collection shown in his name at the South Kensington Museum. Horace Walpole was not only a distinguished archæologist, but also a sprightly writer. Here, at Strawberry Hill, surrounded by all his archæological treasures, he produced in succession the Castle of Otranto, the Lives of Painters and Engravers, Royal and Noble Authors, and last, but not least, his Letters. Here he gathered round him a social circle, which included Garrick, Mrs. Pritchard, Kitty Clive, Paul Whitehead, the two Misses Berry, General Conway, the Ladies Suffolk and Diana Beauclerk, George Selwyn, and many other distinguished noblemen and literati of that day. He succeeded, in his seventy-third year, to the Earldom of Oxford, but he never would assume the title, nor did he ever take his seat in the House of Lords. After his death, Strawberry Hill came into the possession of the Waldegrave family, and it was the seventh Earl Waldegrave who sold its contents in 1842. His widow, however, after her third marriage with Admiral Harcourt, bought back, when and where she could, many of the articles so dispersed in 1842, and at her death in 1879 bequeathed them with the house, which she had completely renovated, enlarged, and decorated, to her fourth husband, the present Lord Carlingford. Space fails me adequately to chronicle

many other worthies of Twickenham. Henry Fielding, the novelist (whose house is still shown), wrote here Tom Jones. Dr. Donne, the poet; Robert Boyle, the philosopher; Bishop Stillingfleet, Sir John Hawkins, author of the History of Music; Hudson (who had Sir Joshua Reynolds for a pupil), Scott, and Marlow, the painters, all lived and flourished here, as did Dr. Radcliffe, the physician, and Sir Godfrey Kneller, who built Kneller Hall, now used as a Government training-school for army bandsmen and bandmasters; whilst in later and more recent times J. M. W. Turner, the painter, and Alfred Tennyson, the poet, lived and worked here for years. There have been many other personages, notable in their day, resident at Twickenham, whom I cannot even enumerate here; but I trust that this notice of Twickenham and its worthies, brief and imperfect as it necessarily has been, will not be unacceptable to the London and Middlesex Archæological Society.