

DRAYTON BEAUCHAMP.

MANORIAL HISTORY, (*Continued from Page 245.*)

THE CHEYNE FAMILY.

William Cheyne, who succeeded to the last-named Thomas, is supposed by Willis, to have been his son. He was, more probably, his brother. For there is reason to believe Thomas was not married, as we find no mention of his wife, or issue. And if he were the Thomas mentioned in the preceding document from Rymer, he is expressly named as the brother of John and William Cheyne. But John being named before William, suggests that he was the elder; and if so, it may be asked, why did he not succeed to Drayton rather than William? At the period referred to we find a John Cheyne, lord of Isenhamsted Chenies, and this was probably the John Cheyne mentioned in Rymer. And if so, it plainly suggests that John, being the eldest brother of the three, had inherited the family property of Isenhamsted, and therefore Thomas bequeathed that which he had himself acquired to his younger brother William. There is, however, a difficulty to this proposition. In Drayton Church is a memorial brass which is supposed to commemorate this William Cheyne, but it is dated 1375, which is three years before the date of the document from Rymer, in which William Cheyne is spoken of as then living. Now the brass in Drayton Church had lost the christian name of the person commemorated even before the time of Browne Willis, who has supplied it from a manuscript account of the monuments taken in the reign of Elizabeth. It is therefore possible that Willis may have incorrectly transcribed the manuscript. It is certain that William Cheyne was dead in 1381, for in that year Joane "his widow," presented to the Rectory, from which also we learn his wife's name, and from a family document examined by Willis, we find that, as early as 1356, he had a daughter named Margaret. He was succeeded by his son, Roger Cheyne, who in 1385, is styled lord of Drayton

Beauchamp.* In 1398 he presented to Drayton Rectory, being then styled "Domicellus."†

In 1404, Roger Cheyne was one of the Knights of the Shire for Bucks.‡ He appears to have died in 1414, (2 Hen. V.) for in that year an inquisition of his property was taken, when he was found to have held the following extensive possessions :— §

"In London :— One messuage and three cottages, in St. Michael's Parish, Paternoster Church in Bow-lane.

Oxfordshire :— Cassington Manor, held as of the Honor of Wallingford.

Hertfordshire :— In Bovendon, four messuages and one hundred acres of land. In Berkhamsted, two messuages, two cottages, and sixteen acres of land. In Wyvelsthorpe (Wilstone), a portion of land. In Pottenham, land. In Longmerston (Long Marston), three messuages, and forty-six acres of land. In Trengre (Tring), a mill, land, and other possessions.

Buckinghamshire :— In Drayton Beauchamp, the manor, the advowson of the church, and other possessions; together with Helpesthorpe and Chelwoldesburye (Cholesbury), members of the manor of Drayton Beauchamp. In Masseworth (Marsworth), land held as of the Honor of Wallingford. In Saunderton, land. *Wivelesgate* in Wendover. In Wendover, a mill and land. In Chesham, the manor of the Grove; and land in Whelpele, under the vill of Chesham."

In this inquisition Roger Cheyne is styled Armiger, whence it is probable that, notwithstanding his extensive possessions, he was never knighted. Browne Willis states that he died in 1415, and was buried in the Tower of London. If so, the foregoing inquisition must have been effected previously to his death; and in consequence of some offence involving the forfeiture of his possessions. And this is not very improbable; for about the time the

* "Willis's MS.

† Willis supposes this word, Domicellus, means "young gentleman," and Lipscomb conjectures that it may mean a "young nobleman, or perhaps, a gentleman in his minority." Selden, in his "Titles of Honour," page 773, gives this meaning to the word, but I cannot find it in Cowell's Law Dictionary, or in any other within my reach. Yet it is certain this cannot be the meaning here, for Roger Cheyne, when so styled, had a son thirty years old at least, and must himself have been an old man.

‡ Willis.

§ Cal. Inq. Post mortem. Vol, iv, 7.

inquisition was taken, his son Thomas and the Rector of Drayton Beauchamp were committed to the Tower for Lollardism; therefore Roger Cheyne might have been imprisoned there for the same cause, and have died during his incarceration, but Willis gives no record of such an occurrence, nor have I found any elsewhere. There is however, reason to believe that he was buried in the parish church of Cassington, in Oxfordshire, where there is a memorial slab to a Roger Cheyne, an illustration of which is here given. In the Oxford "Manual of Monumental Brassess,"* this memorial is thus described:—

"C. 1420.

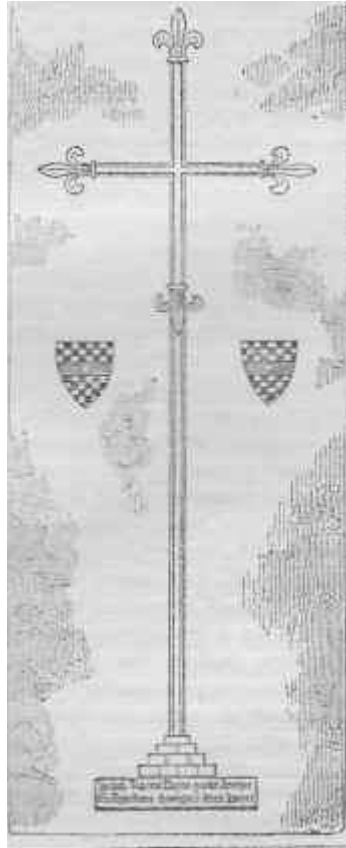
ROGER CHEYNE, ESQUIRE.

St. Peter's Cassington,
Oxon.

A plain cross fleury of elegant proportions, and resting on four steps. At the sides are two shields, bearing chequée or and az. on a fesse gu. (?) a lozenge (?), Cheyne.

**Hic jacet Rogerus Cheyne
quond^am Armiger dni
Regis cujus anime
ppiciet, Deus Amen."**

As Cassington belonged to Roger Cheyne of Drayton Beauchamp; as the date assigned to the memorial is within five or six years of his death; and as the armorial bearings, so far as they can be perfectly distinguished, agree with those of the Drayton family, it is highly probable that this monumental slab was designed to com-



memorate Roger Cheyne of Drayton Beauchamp. It may also be remarked that his having been Armiger (Esquire), to the King is another evidence to the same effect. For this office, though not hereditary, is often found in the same family for many generations, and it was certainly held by our Roger Cheyne's uncle or grandfather, and also by his son, and some of his descendants. Roger Cheyne married Agnes, daughter of ----- Carleton, of Swakely, near Uxbridge, by whom he left two sons: John, who succeeded him, and Thomas, of whom a few notices shall be first given.

In 1382 this Thomas Cheyne is styled by Richard II. *Armiger Camerae nostrae*.^{*} The next notice is of an interesting character. He appears to have become attached to the doctrines of the Lollards, and on this account was imprisoned in the Tower; and when a general pardon was granted, in 1414, by Henry V. to the Lollards then in the Tower, a special exception was made to the persons of "Thomas Cheyne, the younger son of Roger Cheyne; Thomas Drayton, Rector of Drayton Beauchamp; John Oldcastle, Knt.; and several others."[†] From this notice it is evident that Thomas Cheyne must at this time have been considered a zealous adherent of the "new doctrines;" we also learn from it that he was really the younger son of Roger Cheyne, a point often disputed by County historians. Shortly after this, he must have been liberated; for in 1416, he occurs as possessed of the manor and advowson of Hawridge, in right of his wife, Elinor or Alianora, the widow of Sir Thomas Penyston, lord of Hawridge.[‡] In 1433 he occurs as *armiger*, among the gentlemen of Buckinghamshire returned by the Commissioners appointed by Henry VI.§ In 1441 he presented to the Rectory of Hawridge. In 1445, Thomas Cheyne, Esq., and Alianora his wife, were parties to a fine of the manor and lands at Princes Risborough, &c.|| In 1446 he became possessed of the manor and advowson of Chesham Bois, according to some accounts by purchase, but more probably in right of his wife, who was the daughter of Sir John Chesham, Knt.,

^{*} Rymer, vol. vij. p. 374.

[†] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 120.

[‡] Lipscomb *in loco*.

[§] Fuller's Worthies of Bucks.

|| Lipscomb *in loco*.

and, as before stated, the widow of Sir Thomas Penyston. He appears to have died about this time, and left a son, John Cheyne, who is styled *armiger* in 1433, in the list of County Gentlemen referred to above. He succeeded his father at Chesham Bois, which had now become one of the principal seats of the family. In 1457 he is named as one of the executors to the will of Edmund Brudenell, of Shardeloes, who bequeaths "*his Bibles to the University of Oxford*, and his other books among his four sons as his executors shall think fit."* He married firstly, Perinda, daughter of Sir Robert Whitney, by whom he had a son, John, of whom hereafter. He married, secondly, Isabel, daughter of John Frome, lord of Buckingham, who previously had been twice married, first, to Sir Bernard Missenden, and subsequently to ----- Mortimer.† This John Cheyne died in 1459.‡

We now return to John Cheyne, the eldest son and successor of Roger Cheyne.

In 1398-9, according to Bridges§ and other authors, this John Cheyne was lord of the manor, and advowson of Cogenhoe, Northamptonshire, in right of his wife Agnes, daughter of William de Cogenhoe, and after the death of her brother, who died in 1398, aged 10 years, sole heir of her father. There is, however, probably, some mistake here, for Agnes Cogenhoe was the second wife of Sir John Cheyne of Drayton, whose first wife did not die till about 1445. Possibly he became guardian of Agnes Cogenhoe on the death of her brother, which is the more probable, as there was a previous connexion between the families of Cheyne and Cogenhoe. John Cheyne, lord of Drayton, was elected a knight of the shire for Bucks, in 1413—1421—1424—1429—1436. He was also Sheriff of Bucks in 1423—1425—1430. Probably he was the person named in the following notice, dated 1414.

"Item legimus Johanni Cheyne, et Rogero Salvayn et" Johanni Steward, et Lodovico Robessart Armigeris pro corpori nostro cuilibet ipsorum C. libras auri." ||

* Lipscomb on Shardeloes in Amersham.

† Lipscomb on Quainton.

‡ Ibid, on Chesham Bois.

§ History of Northamptonshire, *in loco*.

|| Extract from the will of Henry V. (Qu. iv.) in Kvmr's Foedera, vol. ix. 289,

In 1116 he was summoned to serve the king with four men-at-arms and eight archers.* In 1424 he is styled Chevalier. He is mentioned in the list of Buckinghamshire gentlemen, in 1433. He presented to Drayton Rectory in 1435—1441—1459. In 1444, he joined with others in a fine passed on lands in Great and Little Kimble.

He carried on for many years a dispute with the Abbey of St. Albans, respecting a virgate and half of land in Chalfont, St. Giles', which he held under the Abbey, at 40s. per annum, but for which, from some unknown cause he refused to pay the rent. But in 1457, this dispute was brought to a close by Sir John Cheyne promising to pay the rent in future, provided all arrears were remitted.† In this notice he is mentioned as of Isenhamsted, (Chenies), to which manor and advowson he had succeeded on the extinction of the branch which had previously held them. In 1458 he presented to the living of Cogenhoe in *jure uxoris*. And in 1461 he presented to the Rectory of Chenies. He is frequently mentioned in Rymer's *Foedera*, and, while his brother became imbued with the doctrines of the Lollards, he appears to have been zealously opposed to them. From his epitaph we learn that he was a man of great strength, that, animated by his ardent faith, he went to the Holy Land, and endured great hardships among the Saracens; that, amongst other triumphs of his warfare, he fought a huge savage giant, (*immanissimum Gigantem*), whom he slew and beheaded; that on account of this victory near the sepulchre of Christ, he was distinguished, as his character deserved, with the honor of knighthood;‡ that, having obtained this honor, he passed fifty-five years ruling well his numerous dependants, and died, aged about a hundred years, on the 15th of August, 1468.

By inquisition, dated 8 Edw. IV., he was found to have died possessed of the manor and advowson of Cogenho; the manor and advowson of Isenhamsted Cheyne; the

* Willis.

† Newman's History of St. Albans Abbey.

‡ The words of the epitaph are "*insignitus est militari*," which Lipscomb translates, erroneously, as I believe, "was made a banneret,"

manor and advowson of Drayton Beauchamp; and the manor of Grove.*

He was buried at Drayton, in the chancel, by the side of his first wife, under a very large slab, with brasses of her effigy and his own, surmounted by a double canopy, and decorated with armorial bearings and other devices, all of which have been destroyed.†

His first wife was Joan (Johanna), daughter of Sir Robert Fitz Marmaduke; and, according to Willis, she died in 1445, without issue. Douglas's Peerage, and other authorities state, that she had a son, named Alexander, who died in infancy in 1445, the year in which she herself died. This statement has lately received a remarkable confirmation, A few years ago, some excavations were made in the chancel of Drayton Church, when the remains of Sir John Cheyne and of his first wife were discovered. The bodies had not been buried in a bricked vault or grave, but in the common earth, and in wooden coffins. The coffins had perished with the exception of a few very small fragments of wood, and of the metal appendages. The fragments of wood were supposed by carpenters to be mahogany, which could not have been the case; probably, they were plum-tree. The bodies had become entire skeletons, and with the lady's lay the skeleton of a very small infant, portions of which had entirely decayed. It was the opinion of a medical man, who saw it, that it had died soon after its birth. Here then, is such presumptive evidence that the first Lady Cheyne had a child who died about the same time with herself, as to afford almost conclusive testimony to the statement respecting her son Alexander.

The skeleton of Sir John Cheyne also corroborated the description given of him in his epitaph. It was not possible to ascertain his exact height, as part of the skeleton had decayed, but from the thigh bone, which measured twenty-one inches, and other parts that were perfect, the medical man above alluded to, conjectured that the person to whom the remains belonged must have been nearly seven feet in height, and proportionably large in other

* Cal. Ing. P. M. vol. iv. p. 343.

† This memorial will be more fully described in the account of the Church.

respects. It is also remarkable that this sturdy knight, who reached the patriarchal age of a hundred, possessed a complete set of teeth, sound and perfect, even after he had been buried nearly four hundred years.

He married, secondly, at the discreet age of about eighty, Agnes, daughter of William de Cogenhoe, by whom he had no issue, but became possessed of the manor and advowson of Cogenho; and whom he left in possession of the manor and advowson of Isenhamsted Cheyne. She subsequently married Edmund Molyneux, Esq., but retained the name of Cheyne; and, dying about 1494, was buried in Chenies Church, under an elegant double-canopied brass, commemorating the death of herself and of her second husband, Edmund Molyneux. The brass still exists, but the dates have been effaced. What remains of the inscription is given below—

**Hic jacet dna Agnes Cheyne quodm
uxor dni Johis Cheyne Militis q^e**

Obit die A dui M....

**Et Edtmund^s Molynux Armiger,
secund^s marit^s p' dicte dne qⁱ obiit
xxi die Jan....**

The following are extracts from the will of Agnes Cheyne, which is dated 20th November, 1494. "She desires to be buried in the chancel of Isenhamsted Church, and bequeaths 20*l.* for one thousand masses; to each of the Churches of Chenies, Drayton, and Cogenhoe, 20*s.*; and an annuity of 10*s.* to the Prior and Monks of King's Langley, and their successors for ever, according to the will of her husband, Sir John Cheyne; and the residue of her estate to her nephew Davy Philips, and her niece Anne his wife, and their heirs; and in default of their heirs to her cousin Guy Sapcote, and in default of his heirs to John Cheyne of the Bois and his heirs. And as to her manor and advowson of Cogenhoe, Co. Northampton, she wills them to John Cheyne of the Bois and his heirs, provided he let her feoffees and executors perform her last will and the will of her husband, Sir John Cheyne; but if the said John Cheyne of the Bois disturbs,

vexes, or troubles her feoffees and executors, she then wills and directs the said manor to be sold, and the money thereof coming to be disposed of for the wele of her soul, the soul of Sir John Cheyne, the souls of his father and mother, the souls of her father and mother, and for all christian souls."

Lady Cheyne's disposition of her possessions is remarkable. She leaves Isenhamsted, the ancient inheritance of the Cheynes, to her own family, and Cogenhoe, the old inheritance of her own family, to the Cheynes; thus diverting each family inheritance from its natural and long established course. Further; her apprehension lest John Cheyne, the representative of the Drayton branch, should dispute her disposal of the Isenhamsted property, is another evidence of the near relationship between the Cheynes of Drayton and those of Isenhamsted. By virtue of this will Isenhampsted (Chenies), became the property of David Philips, and Anne his wife, and of Guy Sapcote, through whom it passed to the Russell family, in whom it still continues. But it is evident that a doubt long existed as to the right of Sir John Cheyne, or his widow, to alienate the manor of Isenhamsted; for in 1560, John Cheyne of Drayton, the then heir male of the family, for greater security to the Earl of Bedford, relinquished all claim on Isenhamsted by formally conveying it to the Earl.