

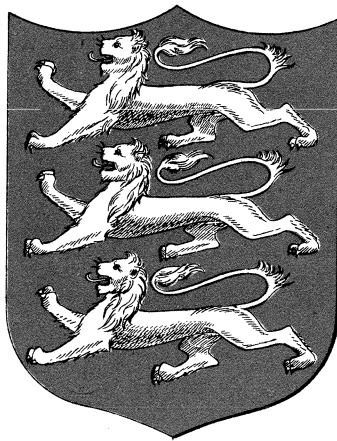
THE GIFFARDS.

PART I.

From the mine of historic information treasured in the Missenden Chartulary, two Confirmation Charters by Walter Giffard, the last of the Giffards who bore the title of Earl of Buckingham, afford a pretext, if such were necessary, for something in the nature of biographical notes on the Giffards, who were so closely connected with this county, and by three of whom, according to some authorities, certainly by two—the title of Earl of Buckingham was first borne. The family on whom the title of Earl of Buckingham was thus conferred is one that has a special claim on our attention. Any additional light which can be thrown on the Giffards, it needs no argument to demonstrate, is historically important. I shall therefore here attempt a biographical sketch of the Giffards, a task which has never, so far as I am aware, been before undertaken; but without some account of these lives I should insist that a history of Buckinghamshire would be obviously incomplete.

The two Confirmation Charters to which I have referred, with a translation, are appended to this paper. But here I will treat them, using a previous expression, as a pretext—perhaps a more appropriate term would be as an opportunity—to introduce such a striking individuality as the first Walter Giffard, so closely connected as he is with this county.

The family of Giffard dates its connection with England with the coming of William the Norman. Walter Giffard the elder was one of the foremost of the soldiers of Normandy, and of the knights who were the trusted counsellors of William, and who took a leading part in the decisive battle of Hastings. We first become



The Giffard Shield.

acquainted with him at the siege of that great fortress, the castle of Arques, a castle which belonged to William's uncle; it was at the time of the rebellion of the latter that the Duke entrusted Giffard with the command of the forces then blockading the castle, the ruins of which, with the gigantic earthworks surrounding it, are to this day amongst the most striking illustrations of a Norman stronghold in the eleventh century.

My object will be briefly to examine into the origin of one who played so leading a part in the early history of this country, and who, by favour of the Conqueror, became a great landowner in Buckinghamshire. The favour, too, of William will to some extent be accounted for on our realising the relationship which existed between the king and Giffard. Herfast the Forester was the common ancestor of both. He had one son and three daughters. The son was Herfast, Abbot of Evreux; and the daughters were Gunnora, Avelina, and Wevia. William of Jumièges, whose chronicle is an important authority for Norman history, adds yet another sister, Sainfria, and gives a romantic turn to the story of these sisters. He says that Duke Richard became enamoured of Sainfria, who was a forester's wife, whilst staying at the forester's cottage, and, after the manner of a coarse and unbridled age, solicited her embraces of the husband; in this difficulty the sister Gunnora was surreptitiously substituted for the forester's wife, and Gunnora became the mistress and afterwards the lawful wife of Richard, and this union was the foundation of the fortunes of the other sisters. So runs the story of Jumièges—he, however, admittedly writes only from hearsay and long after the event narrated. The pedigree I propose to append at the close of my biographical sketches will show the relationship which existed between the Conqueror and Walter Giffard; but it may be here explained that the latter was the son of the sister Avelina by Osborn de Bolbec, whilst the Conqueror was the great-grandson of Gunnora and Duke Richard. The pedigree is interesting, as we trace more closely the family connection between the Conqueror and Walter Giffard. Richard the First of Normandy and Gunnora, besides being the parents of Richard the second Duke, had also a daughter, Emma,

who was first the wife of Æthelred the Second of England, and then of Cnut of England and Denmark. By Æthelred she became the mother of Edward the Confessor; she was great-aunt of the Conqueror, and Walter Giffard was, on his mother's side, her first cousin. Queen Emma being sister to Richard the Second, William's grandfather, Giffard was, to put it more clearly, two generations older than William, being of the same generation as William's grandfather. He lived to a great age; an unusual occurrence in the turbulent times in which his lot was cast, as is noted by the chroniclers of the period. Giffard is introduced to us on English soil as a feeble old warrior, too infirm, according to his own allegation, to bear the standard of the Apostle at Senlac.

The name of Giffard seems to have been a not infrequent personal appellation. There are two others of the name in Domesday, evidently unconnected with Walter—Osborn Giffard, who had lands in Hants, Berks, Wilts, Dorset, and Northampton; and Berenger Giffard, who had lands in Wilts and Dorset. The name Giffard is clearly nothing more nor less than what is ordinarily known to us as a nickname; in old French it is "gifard," from "gife," a cheek, and means simply *fat-cheeked*, or chubby. "Gife"* has given place in modern French to "joue," and "gifard" to "joufflu." Had Giffard been the lawful son of Osborn de Bolbec it might have been assumed that he would have borne the surname of his father; and the probability is that he and his brother Godfrey were natural sons of Osborn, and that Walter bore a nickname in default of a lawful patronymic. It was as a warrior, distinguished for valour in the field, that he became, it would seem, advanced in wealth and importance rather than from his distant kinship and connection with William, and in spite, rather than in consequence, of the somewhat disadvantageous circumstances of his birth. He is pictured to us, in the Conqueror's time, as a veteran undoubtedly trusted and pledged to the cause of his leader, to whom he had rendered signal service as one of the foremost in his devotion at Hastings, for which he was conspicuously rewarded. There seems almost a rift in the cloud, as the grim incidents of that bloody and

* The modern word *gifter* is to slap the face.

decisive battle are narrated, when we are told of the aged Giffard's solicitude for the safety of his sovereign, as he rests after the fatigue of the contest in the very centre of the enemy's quarters, where the wounded English were lying about him ready, as Giffard dreaded, to strike William a fatal blow at the supreme moment of his victory.

There is a great deal of difficulty in clearly explaining the pedigree of the Giffards. Let us refer to the authorities, who it must be confessed are confusing in their conflicting statements. From Segar's "Baronagium" the pedigree shows that Osborn de Bolbec married Avelina, the sister of Gunnora, wife of Richard I. of Normandy, and great-grandmother of William the Conqueror. The original is in MS.: hence some of the names and references are not very legible. The son of Osborn de Bolbec and Avelina was Walter Giffard, Lord of Longueville—"omitted by Dugdale," is Segar's significant remark; he came with the Conqueror and married Agnes. His son was Walter de Bœroft (?) alias Giffard, Earl of Longueville, who also came with William the Conqueror; * he was "Earl of Bucks and Pembroke dono Conqu. 5. Will. C. 1070." † In 1103 he founded Longueville Abbey. He married Agnes, daughter of Gerard Fleitell, who was sister of William, Bishop of Evreux. He founded Crendon, ‡ in Bucks, the seat of the power of Giffard, "by which name vast estates now came to Walter Giffard at the Conquest." Here a confusion arises. Agnes is, as we shall see, sometimes mentioned as the wife of the first Walter Giffard. We refer now to Doyle's "Official Baronage of England." He says "Walter Giffard I. was the son of Osborn de Bolbec." He styles him Earl of Buckingham, Lord of Longueville, in Normandy, 1053. He refers to his having furnished thirty ships for the invasion of England in 1066; to his having been commander in the Norman

* This agrees with Wace's account of the presence of the son at Senlac. "Bœroft" is probably a misreading for "Bolebec."

† The date of the gift of the Earldom to the second Walter Giffard.

‡ Crendon was founded by Walter the second Earl of Buckingham.

army at Hastings, in October, 1066; that he was created Earl of Buckingham before 1071, and that he married Agnes, daughter of Gerard Fleitell. Doyle refers to Walter Giffard the second as the son of Walter the first Earl of Buckingham, Lord of Longueville, and as born in 1064; but Giffard's son, as Guy of Amiens tells us, was at the battle of Senlac. Here is another difficulty; and it is only by considering these difficulties one after another, as they present themselves, that we can have any prospect of coming to a satisfactory conclusion. Doyle says of Walter, the son, that he was founder and patron of Longueville priory;* that he succeeded as second Earl of Buckingham before 1084; that he was justiciar or commissioner for the survey and valuation of England in 1085, and commander in the royal army (Normandy and the Vexin) in 1097. He was witness to Henry I.'s Charter of Liberties, and married Agnes, sister of Anselm de Ribemont, and died 15th July, 1102 † But we shall find that the last of the Giffards, who died without issue, was, with Ermengard, his wife, founder of Notley Abbey. The first Walter Giffard held at Domesday 107 manors, 48 of them in Bucks; 30 in Norfolk; in Oxford, Caversham, Lachebrix (now Shiplake), Craumares, Hentone, Stockes, Lewa, Bexa, Lavelre, and Stockes; he is stated to have been made Earl in 1100. He founded the Cluniac priory of St. Faith, Longueville, Normandy, and to it he gave Whaddon tithes of demesne, wood, pannage, venison. Newington Longueville in this county had a cell to St. Faith, which might have been founded at the same time as the original house; tithes in twenty-eight manors were given to it, all named in Cart. Conq. by Walter Giffard, the son of the founder. ‡ It is recorded that in 1089 the first Walter energetically sided in the cause against Duke Robert with the Count of Eu, Stephen of Albemarle and others, *cum omnibus subditis munitionibus et oppidanis*. It does not necessarily follow that Giffard mounted his

* *Sed quære*.—Walter I. is by some authorities said to be founder of the religious house at Longueville.

† The first Walter's death is elsewhere stated as circa 1102-4.

‡ See Walter Giffard's Charter, Monast. Angl. Vol. VI., pp. 1036-7.

horse, or took a personal part in the war between the two brothers, yet at Senlac we know that Giffard is pictured to us as the veteran warrior too feeble to bear the standard of the Apostle. The question therefore that naturally occurs is, were there three Walter Giffards? In 'Neustria Pia,' the founder of the priory at Longueville, to which he gave Newington, is called *second* Earl of Longueville, is said to have died in 1102, and is mentioned as the husband of Agnes and father of Gautier Giffard, the third of the name. It must be borne in mind that it is very doubtful whether the aged warrior at Senlac was ever styled Earl of Buckingham, though so described by Ordericus Vitalis; for Ordericus lived in Normandy, and is often inaccurate in his statements about England. The many manors bestowed on the first Walter in this country, particularly in Buckinghamshire, may have misled the chronicler. It is significant, too, that Walter Giffard's name occurs as a witness to some of William's Charters, but always low down, his name sometimes being the very last, and he always describes himself simply as Walter Giffard. It may well be asked would he have done this if he was entitled to call himself "Comes Buckinghamiae?"

Ordericus, in naming the Normans who were made English Earls between the years 1071 and 1080, says the Earldom of Buckingham was given to Walter Giffard, and in summing up the honours bestowed he adds that King William conferred on other foreigners who had attached themselves to his fortunes such vast possessions that they had in England many vassals more rich and powerful than their own fathers ever were in Normandy.* It is very doubtful whether the veteran of Senlac was surviving in 1080, and therefore if it could be proved to demonstration that the Earldom of Buckingham was conferred, at all events, at the close of the period assigned by Ordericus for the distribution of the King's distinctions to the Norman leaders, all the probabilities are that the honour would have been bestowed on Walter, the son. Ordericus, as we shall have occasion to show, clearly in his history brings to

* Ord. Vit. Lib. 14, c. 7.

our notice three Earls of Buckingham, each known as Walter Giffard, father, son, and grandson; and recent writers, who have given attention to the identity of the warriors who accompanied William in his conquest of England, and have traced the history of their descendants, have relied on the authority of Ordericus for the existence of the three Giffards, however they may have questioned the honour of the Earldom having been conferred on the first Walter.

Thomas Milles, in his work on "Nobility," published in 1610, giving a short account of the Giffards, says that Walter Giffard, the second of that name, came into England with Duke William when he conquered the land, and received in gift of the king the Earldom of Buckingham. Milles altogether passes over the fact that the first Walter was the companion-in-arms of William in his invasion of England. He speaks of the son as being "in the third degree of affinity to the King, for his father, Walter Giffard the first, was the son of Dunerina, sister to Gunnora, wife of Richard the first Duke of Normandy." Milles refers to the son of Walter the second as "Walter Giffard the third Earl of Buckingham."* From the references to the evidences which have gone before and which follow, it would not appear necessary to criticise Milles's text. "Dunerina" is a mistake for "Avelina."

Malet, in a note to his translation of Wace's Roman de Rou, remarks, in reference to the allusion in the text to Walter Giffard's age, "M. Le Prevost observes that it was his son, a second of the name, who lived till 1102, having been made Earl of Buckingham."† This seems to be the only conclusion at which to arrive, for how can we believe that so aged a knight as the first Giffard was at the invasion of England, of the same generation as the Conqueror's grandfather, could have

* "The Catalogue of Honor or Treasury of true Nobility peculiar and proper to the Isle of Great Britain," London, 1610. The illustration of the coronet and shield of the Giffards which precedes this paper is taken from the above work.

† Malet's Wace, pp. 134-5. In the Norman roll of the Red Book, "De honore Comitibus Giffardi, 98 mil. et dim. et quartam partem et 2 parl. ad serv com." He is also among the knights holding of the Church of Bayeux, "1 mil."

survived for another thirty-six years, and have died in 1102! Lappenberg, in his "History of England under the Anglo-Saxon kings," translated by Benjamin Thorpe, says, "It was his, Walter Giffard's son, of the same name, who was made Earl of Buckingham." Doyle attributes the creation of the Earldom of Buckingham, as we have seen, to the year 1071. It must have been the son of the old knight who received this honour, if we are to rely on the evidence handed down to us relating to the time when the title was first borne, and to be presently referred to. The son, however, lived but a short time to enjoy his honours, for Ordericus, referring to the years 1102-3, mentions that at that time, several of the principal peers of Normandy—Walter Giffard, Earl of Buckingham . . . were dead, and were succeeded by young men. The Earl died in England, and in accordance with his directions his body was carried to Normandy, and buried in the porch of the Church of the Blessed Virgin near Longueville, and an epitaph inscribed on the wall, and decorated with frescoes, marked the spot where he rests. To this and the death of the knight we shall have again to refer. To make clear the pedigree it is necessary to anticipate events, for our task must be to identify each Walter Giffard, and when we have singled them out, to distinguish the part each took from the times of William of Normandy till the reign of Henry I., when the last of the Giffards died without issue. The birth of the second Earl of Buckingham is the next event of which we have some record. The first Earl had married Agnes, who Ordericus tells us was the sister of Anselm de Ribemont. After fifteen years of her marriage to her husband she gave birth to the boy Walter, whom, after the death of his father, till he came to man's estate, she diligently educated, and his hereditary domains she prudently managed. With her womanly affection exceedingly intensified she tenderly loved Duke Robert, and by insidious coils of love (we are following Ordericus), she illicitly allured him to herself, she promised him much help through her own influence and that of her powerful relations against all his enemies, by which she quickly aroused him from his sloth to side with her. He so entangled himself for the future—that, on the death of his wife, he would ally himself to this

woman, and would commit to her the rule of the whole of Normandy.* Not long afterwards, says Ordericus, the Duchess Sibylla, Duke Robert's wife, took to her bed infected by poison, and died in the season of Lent, 1103, to the general sorrow. According to the continuator of Jumièges the Duchess had more intelligence and capacity for business than her husband, who often entrusted her with the administration of affairs during his absence. But the disturbed state of the Duke's dominions, the outbreak and aggravation of war and tumults through almost the whole of Normandy, prevented him from actually marrying Agnes, and she, as our historian records, "continuing a widow, vainly desired to ascend the princely bed."† Ordericus, as we have noticed, describes Agnes as the sister of Anselm de Ribemont, about whom a few words may be interposed. He was a brave knight and a distinguished leader of the army in the Holy Land in 1096, who was, says Segebertus Gemblacensis, or his continuator, Robert de Monte, a very prudent man, and valuable to the army, and was a devout worshipper of St. Quintin. It is recorded of him that he was killed in 1099 by a stone before Archæ, which was "eight mansions" from Jerusalem. He had only time to cry before the fatal blow, "*Deus adjuva me.*" If, therefore, Ordericus is correct, Agnes would, it will appear, have been the daughter of Gerard Fleitell, and the sister of William, Bishop of Evreux. On the accession of Henry to the throne of England, in the year 1100, the Charter of Liberties addressed to several counties was granted by the king at his coronation, and the charter sent to Herefordshire was attested by Walter Giffard, *Comes*. Here, therefore, we have the first authentic evidence of a Giffard bearing the title of Earl in this country. It may plausibly be conjectured that one of the first acts of the king on gaining the throne was to confer this dignity on the son of one of his father's most trusted councillors.

At the death of the first Earl, the third and last of the Giffards became the second Earl of Buckingham. He was then, as we have seen, in his minority. We are chiefly

* Ordericus Vitalis, Hist. Eccl. III., xi., 4.

† "Et Agnes vidua permanens frustra concupivit principalem torum ascendere."

interested in him as the founder, with his wife, whom he calls in the foundation charter "Ermingarde," of the Augustinian Abbey of Notley in the park belonging to the demesne of Crendon. This abbey was founded, Leland says, in the thirteenth year of Henry the First's reign, and the Earl died about the year 1164 without issue. We shall have more to say about him hereafter; but we have now waded through sufficient details, it may be presumed, to establish the fact that there were three Walter Giffards, who, after the invasion of England, appear before us more or less distinctly in the history of the times of the Conqueror and his immediate successors. It will be the object of the writer in the following pages to give a sketch of each of the Giffards, father, son, and grandson, as they may be pictured to us by the rhyming chronicler, or are referred to in contemporary records.

Another proof of the existence of a line of three Walter Giffards we may probably infer from the case of Rohais, or Roesia, a daughter of the house. In the pedigree, if we follow Dugdale,* she is presented to us as the sister of the second Earl; and her first husband, Richard Fitzgilbert, called de Benefacta and de Clare, died at St. Neots, having been slain by the Welsh in the year 1090. Now the second Earl was an infant, as we have seen, at his father's death in the year 1102-3, so that all the probabilities are that he was not born at the death of Richard Fitzgilbert. The de Clares and the Mareschals were descendants, as we shall refer to hereafter, of this Rohais Giffard; she therefore comes before us as an important member of the Giffard family. Rohais was, there can be very little doubt, the daughter of Walter the aged warrior, and sister of Walter the first Earl of Buckingham.

Dugdale mentions Roesia as one of "divers daughters" of the first Giffard without naming any of these other daughters. Lysons, however, in referring to the Manor of Wotton Underwood, as given by the Conqueror to Walter Giffard, remarks that "Isabel, daughter and co-heir of Walter the second Earl, is said to have brought it in marriage, about the year 1097, to Richard de Grenville, from whom there has been an uninterrupted line of male succes-

* Dugdale's Bar., Tom. I., p. 60.

sion through twenty generations to the present proprietor, the Marquis of Buckingham.”* This manor continued, since Lysons’ days, for three more generations in the male line, but has at last descended in the female line to Earl Temple.

Since endeavouring to unravel the complications of the Giffard pedigree, I find that Bishop Stubbs observes that this title of honour is obscure in its origin, and is probably to be referred to William Rufus.† In the creation of Earls by Stephen and Matilda, he writes, “two or three Earldoms of uncertain creation, such as those of Buckingham and Lincoln, which were possibly connected with hereditary sheriffdoms, appear about the same period.”‡ Cockayne refers to Bishop Stubbs in his work on the “Peerage of England,” and speaks of the Buckingham Earldom as one of the most perplexing of our early titles. He informs us that the Lords’ Reports throw no light upon the problem. He hints at some charter evidence of the Earldom under William Rufus without any references, but falls back on Ordericus as the main authority. Cockayne thinks Ordericus’ statement that the Conqueror conferred the Earldom is not to be relied on. Giffard is not recognized in Domesday as an Earl. In quoting the same authority, who describes Giffard as *Comes Bucchingehamensis* in 1097, and again at his death in 1102, the periods when the title was actually borne, the writer considers the subject further complicated, and expresses a doubt whether the style refers to the father or son, as it is the son who is so styled in the Charter of Liberties of Henry the First (1101). “The son,” Cockayne says, “is alluded to in the Cartulary of Abingdon (II., 133, 34) as *Walterius Comes junior cognomine Giffardus*.” On the other hand, in the same work (II., 85) writs of Henry the First are addressed to him merely as Walter Giffard. At the battle of Bennville, 1119, he is referred to by Ordericus as “one of the three Earls on the side of Henry the First.” Unquestionably at this battle the third Walter is the Earl alluded to. In these introductory notes there is

* Lysons’ Buckinghamshire, p. 673. The marriage is mythical.

† Const. Hist., I., pp. 410, 411.

‡ Ibid., p. 362.

evidently some confusion, but in the pedigree the three Walters are distinctly mentioned. There is, however, an error in the statement that Ermingarde was the wife of the first Walter and sister of William, Bishop of Evreux. Cockayne mentions 1097 as the probable date of the creation, and thinks that the second Walter succeeded his father before 1085, "when he was justiciar of England, and was probably by William the Second created Earl of Buckingham." In thus calling attention to the work on the "Peerage of England," I have referred to the most modern authority on the subject, and to the most recent investigations that have been made.

We will now pass on to the more personal history of each of the Giffards, as we are enabled to discover the part they played, sometimes in Normandy, but more especially in England, by the help of the chroniclers of the times of the Conqueror and his sons. It is, by the way, remarkable that at a period so convulsed with important wars there should have been among a few capable men an ambition to perpetuate famous battles, so that we are fortunate enough to have handed down to us details of the decisive conflict waged on the fatal day at Senlac.

I have said that Walter Giffard was entrusted with the command of the blockade of the castle of Arques, held by the Duke's rebellious uncle, Count William. The force remained before the fortress to guard the works raised by the Duke for the blockade, whilst he was conducting a military operation in another direction; the works consisted of a ditch and palisade at the foot of the hill, protected by a tower, according to William of Poitiers, which was no doubt a wooden construction. King Henry of France was at the time abetting the rebels, and attempted to relieve the besieged, but the wooden tower was too strongly defended and the courage of the besiegers was too determined for the king's attack, which he had to relinquish, and to fall back to France without accomplishing even the first object of his invasion of Normandy, the relief of the besieged Count of Arques, as Freeman understands William of Poitiers to mean.*

* See Freeman's *Conquest of Normandy*, Vol. III., p. 137.

So well did Giffard defend the wooden tower before this formidable fortress that, as we shall see, he was marked out for a more important position in the warlike progress of his great leader.

Not only, however, had Giffard distinguished himself before Arques during the invasion of Normandy, but he took his share in the discomfiture of the French in their terrible surprise at Mortemer, where, after a day of frightful excesses, they were quartered for the night. Whilst the army were asleep the Normans attacked the town by fire, and the French, awakened by the conflagration, struggled, as we are told, in dire confusion, to cut their way out of the burning town, but they found "the head of each street guarded by Norman soldiers."* It was, therefore, at Arques and Mortemer that the gallant old soldier gained a reputation, which would be enhanced as he takes his part among the foremost in support of Duke William's enterprise.

The story of William of Normandy's designs to win the kingdom of England after the death of the Confessor, and the oath taken by Harold, with all the uncertainties attending it (it was probably taken at Bayeux), to marry one of William's daughters, and to secure the latter's accession to the crown of England, an oath, as Ordericus Vitalis tells us, taken *super sanctissimas reliquias*, has often been told, but never with such fulness, with such searching and conscientious investigation as so recently by Freeman. William had, it would appear, long before the death of Edward designed the invasion of England, and among the pleas that might be framed to justify his resolve, perhaps the strongest, as an appeal to the moral sense of Christendom, was that he must inflict punishment on Harold for the breach of that most sacred oath taken in Normandy by accepting the crown as the choice of the Witan. The Duke dreaded the perils that he and his followers would encounter in crossing the sea, but he was determined to brave its dangers to encounter his foe. His first act is to call together the chief men of Normandy in solemn council to advise on the enterprise. The names of the foremost have been handed down to us—they are

* See Freeman's Conquest of Normandy, Vol. III., p. 156.

Robert Count of Ou, Roger of Montgomery,* one of his warmest friends, Fitz Osbern of Breteuil, the brave and good Walter Giffard, his two half-brothers, the famous Bishop Odo and Robert de Mortain; he summoned, too, Roger de Villiers, an aged and honoured councillor, the chief of Belmont-le-Rogier, also Ivore Al-Chapel; to all these he disclosed his plans, dwelt upon the loss of his rightful heritage through the breach of Harold's oath, and impressed on them how, by their aid and the help of the Lord, he had no fear but that he should gain his rights and take vengeance for the treachery he had experienced.

The advice of William's select councillors was that a larger meeting should be called of all the Barons of Normandy, and this assembly was convened at Lillebonne,† in the hall of the castle reared by William. The noble site of the castle, with the tower of a more recent date, marks where William's fortress stood, but the hall has long since been demolished, whilst remains of a much earlier time, of the old Roman town of Juliobona—still exist. It is not our object to follow the course of debate or the results of this great gathering; suffice it to say

* Pur conseil prendre de ceste ovre,
 Aniz k'il à altre sèn descovre,
 Manda Robert li Conte d'Ou,
 Ki marchist à cels de Vimou,
 E Rogier de Montgomerie,
 K'il teneit mult por grant ami,
 E li fils Osbern de Breteuil,
 Guillaume out non, plain fu d'orgueil,
 E Gautier Giffard a mandé,
 Ki donc esteit de grant bonté,
 L'Eveske Odun manda son frere,
 E Robert ki Moretainere ;

* * *

Roger de Vilers fist mander,
 Ki mult esteit à honorer,
 Mult esteit tenu por sage,
 Et jà esteit de grant aage.

* * *

Sire ert de Belmont-le-Rogier,
 Grant terre aveit à justicier,
 E Ivor manda Al-Chapel.

WACE'S ROMAN DE ROU.

† The authority for the meeting taking place at Lillebonne is William of Malmesbury.

that more was done to promote the enterprise by William's individual influence with the Barons than by the conflicting opinions of the assembly.

There is nothing to raise a doubt, however, that Giffard was amongst the foremost of the chief men of the Duchy who furthered the Norman Duke's designs and plans for the invasion of England. The Bayeux tapestry pictures to us the activity displayed in the building of the fleet for the transport of the army across the Channel, for this was the most formidable difficulty in the invasion of England. We see the felling of the trees, the shaping of the planks, and the busy construction of those small open vessels, only suited for a single mast and sail, and then the hauling the ships to the sea shore. "*Hic trahunt naves ad mare*" is the significant inscription above the scene. After William had overcome all obstacles to his plans in the minds of the foremost men of his Duchy, there was no stint among them in their offerings of ships and men. From an anonymous manuscript, supposed to be of the age of Henry I., a list is given of the offerings of the Barons and Bishops, and in that list we find that Walter Giffard's gift was thirty ships with a hundred warriors;* in all, the contingent of ships, as noted, made a total of 781.

We pass to another scene; William's army is face to face with Harold and the English on the heights of Senlac. Everything is minutely described on the eve of the decisive battle, but the part that Giffard played is all that concerns us at the present. The Duke was fully armed, and called for his war-horse, a noble steed, the gift of King Alfonso of Spain. Giffard had performed a pilgrimage to the much-frequented shrine of St. James of Compostella, sent thither by the Duke that he might bring back with him the royal present. This horse Giffard now leads to the Duke, who sprang to the saddle, ready for the momentous struggle.† But there was another incident before the battle that must not be passed over.

* The same list, with some variations, is printed in Sharon Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons, and in Littleton's History of Hen. II., vol. 1. See also Ellis's *Domesday*, i., 1227. See note from Malet's translation of Wace's *Roman de Rou*, p. 43.

† "Galtier Giffart l'out amené,

Ki à Saint Jame aveit esté."—ROMAN DE ROU.

It was the unfurling of the consecrated banner, at the sight of which the invasion of England was felt to be a sacred cause by every soldier in William's army. William had sent as his ambassador to Rome, Gilbert, Archdeacon of Lisieux, a clerk fluent of speech, to gain the papal sanction to the enterprise. He had represented the case to Pope Alexander the Second. William asserted his rights to the crown, the usurpation of Harold, and the perjury he had committed in breaking his solemn oath; and if England were gained William only asked of St. Peter the right to reign. Hildebrand the Archdeacon, then rising in influence at Rome, warmly espoused the Duke's cause. The mission was completely successful. The Pope sanctioned the invasion; and as a pledge of his approval and apostolic patronage sent him as a gift a precious ring with a hair of St. Peter under the stone, and a consecrated banner.

We return to the scene at Senlac. The barons and knights were now fully armed, the host was arrayed in three bands, with seigneurs and captains presiding over each corps: all was in order. The men had been prompted not to play the coward nor spare the foe. Then, at the Duke's bidding, the standard blessed by the Holy Father was brought and unfurled; the Duke raised it, and called on Ralph of Conches to bear it, but he claimed quittance of such service. He expressed himself as confident that in the thick of the battle he would be worth twenty of the English. The Duke, then looking round, caught sight of Walter Giffard, called him by name to come to his side, and committed to him the standard.* But Giffard appeals to his baldness, his grey hairs, and his age. He tells the Duke that it is fitting the banner of the Apostle should be entrusted to a young warrior full of endurance, and then he shows by his words that his blood kindles to distinguish himself in the fight by a more active service in the cause of his leader. None would be more zealous, and as long as his strength was maintained none would enter upon the encounter with more

* "E li Dus guarda d'altre part,
Si apela Galiter Giffart,
Cel gonfanon dist-il, pernez,
En la bataille le portez."—ROMAN DE ROU.

deadly resolve. The Duke receives this second refusal to bear the standard with an exclamation of impatience: he is betrayed, every man fails him at this supreme crisis; but Giffard can convince William that there was no baseness, no treason in that refusal of his. He calls to witness that he has brought with him a strong contingent of knights and feudal retainers, who look to him as their leader and chief, and never before had he such an occasion as this to show how he could render true service and loyal devotion; nay, his very life on that day he was prepared to sacrifice for that of the Duke's. This was his devotion if it so pleased God.* The speech completely softened the Duke. He exclaimed that never before had he felt such love for Giffard, and that if he escaped the perils of that day, Giffard should be richly rewarded during the remainder of his life. The sacred banner was then entrusted to Tostain Fitz Rou-le-Blanc, who eagerly accepted the office of standard-bearer, and gallantly, it is said, he bore the banner of the Apostle through the battle. Great feudal privileges did that knight and his posterity gain by accepting the office, for he and his were freed from the payment of feudal service, and held their Norman lands by grant of free heritage. There is a signal proof that Giffard carried out his pledge of devotion, if Benoit de Ste. Maure is to be relied on, who tells of his being unhorsed in the field, and of William coming in person to his assistance. Wace does not mention the incident, but the rhymers of these and subsequent times, whether by contemporary hearsay or by after-tradition, were strongly impressed with the bravery of the aged lord of Longueville.

The early records of the battle give precise details of the English army. According to these records it was made up of a motley gathering; from all parts Harold's summons was obeyed by the great ones of the land—the denizens of castles, of the cities and ports, as well as by the peasants from the villages. Their arms were in many cases grotesque: some hurried to the summons with clubs or long stakes, and others with forks and poles tipped with iron. These accounts of Harold's army reach

* "Or se Dex plaist vos servirai,
Se mestier ert, por vos morreie,
Por vostre cor li mien metreie."—ROMAN DE ROU.

us from a Norman source, the rhapsody of a Norman rhymer, and therefore must be accepted with some reserve. There is no doubt, however, that the forces came from every district in England, from as far north as Yorkshire, and it is interesting to be told that Buckinghamshire contributed its contingent. I quote a passage from the "Roman de Rou" to establish this:—

" Venuz furent delivrement,
 Cil de Lundres è cil de Kent,
 Cil de Herfort è cil d'Essesse,
 Cil de Surée è de Sussesse,
 De Saint Edmund è de Súfoc,
 E de Norwis è de Norfoc,
 De Cantorbriere è de Stanfort,
 E cil vindrent de Bedefort,
 E cil ki sunt de Hundetone,
 Venu sunt cil de Nathantone,
 D'Euriowic* è de Bokinkeham,
 De Bedfort è de Notinkeham,
 De Lindesie è de Nicole,†
 Vindrent qui sorent la parole."

The oft-told tale of the day of Senlac is over, and the victory is won, and Duke William's distinguished gallantry, as William of Poitiers relates, is hailed with applause and "delightful songs."‡ He gives thanks to God, and bids that his banner should be planted at the very spot where Harold's standard was found. There in the midst of the dead he bade that his tent should be pitched and his supper prepared. In haste, it seems, Walter Giffard came up to the Duke and remonstrated with him on the rashness of his act; the spot he had chosen was full of peril. Many English, he tells him, were lying there bespattered with blood, who at nightfall might rise, and be ready to wreak vengeance for that day's disaster. He advises that another spot on the field be chosen for the Duke's tent, and that a watch of a thousand armed men should be provided during a night so fraught with suspicion and danger. The Duke realises Giffard's solicitude for his safety; and in his answer to him gives God thanks for that day's success, and then hopefully asserts his trust in God's guidance in his future progress. Then turning from Giffard his faithful

* York.

† Lincoln.

‡ Plausibus et dulcibus cantilenis efferebant.

attendants relieve him from his armour; they see the thrusts made on his shield and the dints on his helmet, and they praise his valour as the first and bravest of knights. The Duke thanks the chiefs of his army who surround him. He laments the brave who had fallen, and in the midst of the slain at the spot he had originally chosen, where the banner of his vanquished foe fell to earth, meat and drink are brought for his refreshment. The accounts of the death of Harold are ghastly indeed. Freeman gives details of the indignities that were heaped upon his mutilated body. It is painful to the historian to have to record that the son of the high-souled Giffard, the son to whom I shall afterwards have to refer, as so intimately connected with Buckinghamshire, was one of those who shared in the shame of heaping cruel vengeance on the fallen King of England.* We have thus followed the description of the part that Walter Giffard took in the events which led up to the great struggle at Senlac, and of his bearing in the battle itself. We now will endeavour to trace his career on English soil.

Giffard was well requited for his faithful services to William. He held, we are told, one hundred and seven lordships in divers counties, including forty-eight manors in Buckinghamshire. His possessions, as appears by the Survey, are:—

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| In Berkshire | Two lordships. |
| Wiltshire | One ” |
| Somersetshire | One ” |
| Huntingdonshire | One ” |
| Cambridgeshire | Five ” |
| Oxfordshire | Nine ” |
| Bedfordshire | Nine ” |
| Suffolk | Three ” |
| Norfolk | Twenty-eight lordships. |
| Buckinghamshire | Forty-eight† ” |

* See (Note 2) Freeman's Norman Conquest, Vol. III., p. 499. Guy of Amiens (537) gives their names. Eustace had already been mentioned.

“Alter ut Hectorides Pontivi nobilis hæres,
Hos comitatur Hugo promptus in officio,
Quartus Giffardus patris a cognomine dictus,
Regis ad exitium quattuor arma ferunt.”

† See Dugdale's Baronage, p. 60.

We will now refer to Domesday, which gives us the authoritative particulars of Walter Giffard's lands in Buckinghamshire; their situation can be traced at the present day. The following table is constructed from the Survey, showing the various Hundreds in which the lands were included with the addition of the modern names of the places referred to.

WALTER GIFFARD'S LANDS IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, from
Domesday.

AYLESBURY HUNDREDS.

| IN STANES HUNDRED. | STONE HUNDRED. |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Part of Herdewelle | Hartwell. |
| Chenebella | Great Kimble. |
| Missedene | Great Missenden. |

CHILTERN HUNDREDS.

| IN DUSTENBERG HUNDRED. | DESBOROUGH HUNDRED. |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Falelie | Fawley. |

ASHENDON HUNDREDS.

| IN TICHESHELE HUNDRED. | TICKSHILL HUNDRED. |
|------------------------|--|
| Credendone* | Crendon. |
| Eddingrave | Addingrove or Arngrove (in Oakley). |
| Ciltone | Chilton. |
| Hesintone | Easington (in Chilton). |
| Dortone... .. | Dorton. |

* The Crendon Survey is here set out:—"Credendone pro XX. hidis se defendebat. Terra est XXV. caruc. : In dominio X. hidæ et ibi sunt V. caruc. : et LIII. villani cum X. bordar. habent XX. caruc. : Ibi x. servi et I. Molin. de sol. XVIII. Pratum X. caruc. : Silva C. porc. Et parc. ibi bestiarū silvaticarū. In totis valent : val. XX. lib. : Quando recept : et T.R.E. XV. lib. : Hoc Manerium tenuit Seric Alueue filius."

Crendon was taxed for 20 hides. The arable is 25 plough lands. Ten hides are in the demesne, and there are five ploughs, and 52 villeins with 10 bordars had 20 ploughs. There are ten serfs and one mill of 18 shillings rent. Pasture for 10 plough teams, woods for a hundred hogs and a park for beasts of the chase. Altogether worth 20 pounds. When received [by Walter Giffard] and in the times of King Edward fifteen pounds. Seric, son of Alweva, held this Manor [before the Conquest].

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| IN ESSEDEN HUNDRED. | ASHENDON HUNDRED. |
| Policote | Pollicott (in Ashendon). |
| Part of Assedone (8 hides) ... | Ashendon. |
| Part of Cerleslai (8 hides) ... | Chearsley. |
| Wichendone | Lower Winchendon. |
| Oltone | Wootton-under-Wood. |

COTTESLOE HUNDREDS.

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| IN COTESLAI HUNDRED. | COTTESLOW HUNDRED. |
| [A nameless estate held by two Englishmen.] | |
| Wicherche | Whitchurch. |
| Part of Litecota (2 hides) ... | Littlecote (in Stewkley). |
| Part of Bristoch (1 hide) ... | Burston (in Aston Abbot's). |
| IN ERLAI HUNDRED. | ERLEY HUNDRED. |
| Part of Pincenestorne (5½ hides) | Pitstone. |
| IN MUSELAI HUNDRED. | MURSLEY HUNDRED. |
| Part of Soenberno | Swanbourn. |
| Herworde | Great Horwood. |
| Sinleberia | Singleborough (in Great Hor- |
| Wadone | Whaddon. wood). |
| Part of Muselai (5 hides) ... | Mursley. |

BUCKINGHAM HUNDREDS.

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| IN STOWFOLD HUNDRED. | STOWE, or STOWFOLD, HUNDRED. |
| Part of Lanport | Lanport (in Stowe). |
| Achelei | Akeley. |
| Lelinchestane | Lillingstone. |
| Part of Mortone (2 hides) ... | Maids' Moreton. |
| Part of Mortone (4 hides) ... | Maids' Moreton. |
| Part of Lechamestede (2 hides) | Leckhampstead. |
| IN ROVELAI HUNDRED. | ROWLEY HUNDRED. |
| Part of Becentone (5 hides) ... | Beachampton. |
| Burtone | Bourton (in Buckingham). |
| Part of Edingeberge (clearly a mistake for Ledingeberge) ... | Lenborough (in Buckingham). |
| Ulesdone... .. | Hillesden. |
| IN LA MUE, or LAMUA, HUNDRED. | "THE MEW" HUNDRED. |
| Ahecote. | Edgcott. |

NEWPORT HUNDREDS.

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| IN SIGELEY HUNDRED. | SIDGLEY HUNDRED. |
| Part of Ulfestone (3 hides) ... | Great and Little Woolston. |
| Part of Ulfestone (5 hides) ... | Great and Little Woolston. |
| Neutone | Newton Longville. |
| Part of Lochintone (4½ hides) | Loughton. |
| Part of Bradewelle (1½ hide)... | Bradwell. |
| Part of Linforde (2 hides) ... | Great Linford. |

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| IN BONESTOU HUNDRED. | BONSTOW HUNDRED. |
| Ravenston | Ravenstone. |
| Part of Lawedene (2 hides) ... | Lavendon. |
| IN MOSLAI HUNDRED. | MOULSHOE HUNDRED. |
| Part of Horelmede | Hardmead. |
| Moleshou | Moulshoe. |
| Part of Brotone (4 hides) ... | Broughton. |
| Part of Middeltone ($\frac{1}{2}$ hide) ... | Milton Keynes. |
| Part of Brichelle (5 hides) ... } | Bow Brickhill and Little |
| Part of Brichelle (4 hides) ... } | Brickhill. |

On a careful examination of this table, it will be seen that in the distribution certain manors were in close proximity with each other. This is particularly noticeable in the Ashendon Hundreds, in which Crendon, where the castle of Giffard stood, is situate, and this is as might be expected. The same proximity of manors is also to be remarked in the Buckingham Hundreds, and it has been sometimes supposed that at Buckingham Giffard possessed another castle.

As Browne Willis says of the Hundred of Buckingham, it was "originally before the uniting or contracting of it, about the 9th Edward the Second, 1316, under these three several divisions, viz., Rovelai, Stodfield, and Lamua," but "Buckingham was surveyed distinct by itself."* This is clear by a reference to Domesday; a difficulty therefore arises as to Giffard's supposed castle at Buckingham. Willis falls into the common error of assuming that there were only two Giffards in this county after the Conquest, for he says of Buckingham that soon after the survey it became the property of its first Earl, viz., Walter Giffard, and on his death, which happened A.D. 1103, descended to his son, Walter Giffard, the second Earl of Buckingham, who died A.D. 1164.† Willis gives no authority for his assertion that Buckingham became the property of the Giffards, except mentioning from Domesday that Bourton, a hamlet of Buckingham, was then part of the possessions of Giffard,‡ and quotes from

* History and Antiquities of the Town, Hundred, and Deanery of Buckingham, by Browne Willis, p. 2.

† Ibid., p. 26.

‡ Idem Hugo tenet Burtone de Walterio. Pro I. hida se defendebat. Terra est II. car: in dominio est una et II. vill: cum II. bord: habent: IIII. car: Prat: II. Valet et valuit XXX. s. T. R. E. XX. s. Hoc M. ten: Alricus Teignus regis E. et vendere potuit.

the "Monasticon"* that Walter Giffard, the second Earl of Buckingham, between 1153 and 1163, endowed the convent of Newton Longueville with two-tenths of his demesnes in Bourton as well as Buckingham.

Browne Willis has very little definitely to say about the castle at Buckingham. He concludes that it was "the ancient place of commitment of malefactors within this shire." He cannot meet with the names of any of the constables, except Elias de Camvill, who was so styled in 1280, tempore Edward I., nor when the castle was assigned to the sheriff of the county. He is unable to refer to any histories which mention its erection, or when it was suffered to fall into ruin. It is not mentioned in Domesday, and Willis commits himself no farther than by presuming the castle to have been erected by Walter Giffard, the first Earl of Buckingham, and to have been built on the fortress raised by King Edward, the elder, A.D. 918, Giffard making this the capital of the barony within the town. Willis dates the total neglect of the castle to the time of the attainder of the Duke of Buckingham, in the year 1521, 13 Henry VIII. From that date it appears to have been reduced to a farmhouse, for by letters patent, 16 Elizabeth, 1574, the Queen granted to Edward Grimston, senior, and Edward Grimston, junior, the Castle Farm, in Buckingham, and two mills called Castle Mills, with other properties "lately parcel of the possessions of Edward, late Duke of Buckingham, attainted." Willis gives a further account of the site of the castle and of its successive owners, and in referring to the uses to which it was applied, remarks that he had heard that on the site of this castle the assizes for the county had been held in booths erected for that purpose.† Whatever may be the history of Buckingham Castle, it is probable that it is of later origin than the days of the Giffards, of whose estates Crendon was the *caput* and the chief fortress.

There can be very little question that the gifts of the different manors to Giffard were bestowed on him as a

* Monasticon, Vol. III., p. 111.

† For further information on the subject of the Castle of Buckingham, see Browne Willis's History, &c., of Buckingham, pp. 49-50.

trust to defend the rich plains and the most populous parts of the county; to secure that which William had acquired by the sword. It needs only a comparison of the map of Buckinghamshire with the list of Giffard's possessions from Domesday, to be convinced that this must have been the object of the king's grants. The manors of Great Kimble and Great Missenden are in the Chiltern district; but only one manor in the Chiltern Hundreds is Giffard's, and this is Fawley, which may have been a position of importance in guarding the passage of the Thames. To secure by the judicious distribution of the conquered land a localised soldiery under the command of trusted military leaders was the main principle on which William conferred his favours.

Such was the plan followed in the bestowal of the Conqueror's favours; he not only awarded valuable possessions, but he selected them, after a studied outlook, in positions of consequence to himself, giving his foremost chiefs the command over important tracts of the conquered country in anticipation of future risings. Credenon was the chief seat of the honour of Giffard—his castle was there; it was a position of great strategic importance, as we shall see if we follow the Conqueror's course after the battle of Hastings. William's policy was to subdue England by gradual means. After Canterbury and the other Kentish towns had submitted, and the citizens of Winchester, the ancient metropolis of England, had done homage, he marches towards London; here he encounters resistance, and does not venture to make any direct attack on the city. Leaving London, he keeps on the right bank of the Thames through Surrey, Hampshire, and Berkshire, till he reaches Wallingford.* He had more than one reason for making Wallingford a point to reach as well as a halting-place on his march. It was the border town between Wessex and Mercia, it was in the earliest times of our history known as the ford of the Wealhas or Welshmen, and Green in his "Making of England" traces the present name of the town to this origin—Wéalhingford, in

* "The Duke, next going forward, which way soever he pleased, crossing the River Thames by the ford, as well as the bridge, he came to the town of Wallingford."—William of Poitiers, 141.

modern spelling Wallingford. This important ford and bridge at the time of William's march afforded him, as he well knew, a safe passage for his army. The Confessor had created Wallingford a royal burgh, and Wigod, the Sheriff of Oxfordshire, who had his abode there, was known to William in his visit to England fourteen years before. He was then cup-bearer to the Confessor, and a friendship had sprung up between Wigod and William. This led the latter to march to Wallingford; the visit resulting in the powerful thane throwing all his influence into the hands of the Conqueror. How clearly does William's march to Wallingford show his knowledge of England, and that his invasion had been long premeditated and carefully planned. He crosses the Thames, and now with his army in Mercia, he passes through Bensington, one of the ancient British towns that had witnessed the early struggles between the Celt and the Saxon invader; and thence he must have marched, as Freeman says, "beneath the hills so marked in the distance by their well-known clumps" onwards to Thame and through Buckinghamshire, by Aylesbury into Hertfordshire, to Tring, till he reaches the castle of Berkhamstead, where he awaits another great surrender. Now, whilst his army was passing over the ford of the Thame river, William and his foremost military knights had probably been struck with the importance of the situation, and the strong position of Crendon rising above the river, and commanding an extensive view across the Vale of Aylesbury as far as the Chiltern Forest, Bernwood Forest being at the rear, where the prospect of ample sport in times of peace would be afforded. To Giffard, the aged warrior, and one of the Duke's most trusted companions, was assigned this strong position, this spot of singular advantages. It was here that he should build his castle, and should guard for leagues the land which was by slow, yet sure, degrees succumbing to the Norman's yoke. Crendon was the *caput* of the vast estates of the honour of Giffard. In entrusting his valiant follower with a position so commanding, William was but carrying out his determined policy to secure the lands he was subduing by the erection of castles at every important point in the open country, and on the most elevated site in every conquered town,

to overawe alike both rustics and citizens. These fortresses, as Freeman says, "became in truth the fetters of England."* Rochester, in its ruins, gives the most vivid picture at the present day of what such fortresses were, as its towers rise above the ancient city, whilst the grand position and vast proportions of Windsor impress us with its unrivalled strength and the importance of its situation to dominate over a widely extended district.

In referring again to the forty-eight Lordships in Bucks held by Giffard, according to the Domesday Survey,† I would point out that the grant of the manors scattered over the whole vale of the county was a part of William's scheme, namely, that the landowning should be essentially for military purposes. Judging from these numerous grants and the situation of the lands in the march of William, after crossing the Thames at Wallingford on his way to Berkhamstead, and considering the strategical aspect of the military approaches to London, as previously mentioned, it may be confidently concluded that it was intended to make the first Giffard responsible for a military occupation through his feudal tenants of the Vale of Aylesbury generally; and in this sense he may have been *de facto* "Comes" of Buckingham, though not so styled, and not so designated when summoned (if ever he was so summoned) by writ to the *Curia Regis*. Camden says the Conqueror gave this dignity of Earl in fee as an hereditary title to his nobles, annexing it to this or that county or province. "Formerly," says Cowel, "one

* See Freeman's Norman Conquest, Vol. IV., p. 66, quoting Ordericus Vitalis, 511 c.

† He retained in his own hands, I quote from Lipscomb, Crendon, Chilton, Dorton, Policott, and Winchendon lying contiguously. Also Whaddon, Horwood, and Newton - Longueville, consisting of eighty-five hides, but the lands held by his subfeudatories exceeded 213 hides in Ashendon, Chearsley, Easington, Addengrave, Wotton, Hartwell, Kimble, Missenden, Fauley, Akeley, Leckhampstead, Longport, Lillingstone, Morton, Bourton, Beachampton, *Edinberge* (qy. Edlesborough), Hillsden, Edgcott, Whitchurch, Lidcote, Burston, Pyhlllesthorpe, Singleborough, Mursley, Swanbourne, Bradwell, Woolston, Linford, Lavendon, Loughton, Ravenstone, Hardmead, Moulsoe, Broughton, Middleton, Brickhill, &c., which constituted the honour of Giffard.—Hist. of County of Buckingham, Vol. I., p. 198.

Earl had divers shires under his government, and had lieutenants under him in every shire, such as are now sheriffs, as appears by divers of our old statutes." The creation of the Earl must have been at the time of the Conquest *by tenure*. Camden remarks that for the maintenance of the dignity, a certain portion of money arising from the prince's profits, for the pleadings and forfeitures of the provinces, was allotted to him. Another authority states that the *Comes* was an official of the King's Exchequer, and to some extent responsible for the pecuniary returns to it from his county, to some share of which he was himself entitled.* Again referring to Camden, writing of the times of the Conqueror, he says: "Afterwards it appears by ancient records Earls were created, with the addition of the name of the place, and had a third penny of the county assigned them;" and he quotes from a Charter of the Empress Maud, which was before him ("now in my hands") which grants to Gaufrid de Maynavilla for his services and to his heirs for ever the Earldom of Essex, and to have a third of a penny in the Sheriff's Court issuing out of the pleas, "as an Earl ought to have from his county in all things." "This," says Camden, "is the most ancient Creation Charter I ever saw." An old book belonging to Battle Abbey (I am still quoting from Camden), explains that "it was an ancient custom throughout England that the Earls of England should have the third penny for their own use, from whence they are called *Comites*." An anonymous writer explains more distinctly as the privilege of the *Comes* or Earl, that he enjoys in every county the third part of the profits arising from the pleas, but yet all Earls do not enjoy them, but such only who have them granted by the king hereditarily or personally.†

Bishop Stubbs has given his attention to the creation of Earls, and affords some important information on the subject in his "Constitutional History." He remarks that "the conspiracy of the Earls in 1075 opened William's eyes to the danger of creating Earls, and from that time onward he governed the provinces through sheriffs immediately dependent on himself. He was,

* "Dialogus de Scaccario."

† See Camden's *Britannia*, Vol. I., ccxxxvii.

however, very sparing in giving Earldoms at all, and inclined to confine the title to those who were already Counts in Normandy or in France.* Dr. Stubbs expresses himself as doubtful whether William founded any Earldoms at all after A.D. 1075. In the early days of his reign, the Earls whom William appointed appear to have been merely successors to the English magistrates of the same name. Dr. Stubbs gives examples in illustration of this. "Hugh of Avranches, Earl of Chester, Roger of Montgomery, Earl of Shropshire, and Alberic, Earl of Northumberland, were the only persons who in Domesday held the title of *Comes* by virtue of English Earldoms, all the rest, William of Evreux, Robert of Eu, Robert of Mortain, Eustace of Boulogne, Allan of Brittany and Robert of Meulan, were Counts simply, the first three of Norman, the latter three of French counties." And in a note to the text some important observations are made, which intimately concern our present enquiry. The accuracy of the statement of Ordericus as to the first creation of the Earldom of Buckingham has already been questioned, and we have the authority of Dr. Stubbs for believing that this writer has created a good deal of confusion on the point relating to the creation of Earldoms. Ordericus says (Lib. IV. c. 7) that the Conqueror gave the County of Buckingham to Walter Giffard, that of Surrey to William of Warren, and that of Holderness to Odo of Champagne; but Dr. Stubbs explains that in each case the *Comitatus* here given was given as a Lordship, not as an Earldom, and accordingly none of the three appear as *Comites* in Domesday. The Lordship of Holderness was held with the County of Aumâle. The Earldom of Surrey was created by William Rufus; that of Buckingham is obscure in its origin, but is probably to be referred to William Rufus.†

There was a personal as distinguished from a territorial element, as Dr. Stubbs points out, in the creation of an Earl. It was conferred by a special investiture, the girding on the sword of the county by the king himself. So far, it resembles knighthood;

* Stubbs' Const. Hist., Vol. I., p. 308.

† See note Const. Hist., Vol. I., p. 408.

yet the learned writer does not lose sight of the official position of the Earl. "Although the third penny of the pleas and the sword of the shire alone attest its original character, the question of the jurisdiction of the Earl in his shire is somewhat complicated. In some cases the title was joined to the Lordship of all or nearly all the land in the shire, in some it conveyed apparently the hereditary sheriffship, and in a few cases the regalia, or royal rights of jurisdiction."* The conclusion of so high an authority it seemed necessary to give in order to complete the information as to the knowledge that is possessed at the present time of these creations. The subject is one that cannot be dwelt upon in the space that is allowed for this paper. I may, however, introduce two more quotations, one from the *Termes de la Ley*, and the other from Lord Lyttelton, from which it will be seen that the subject is not free from difficulty:—

"Of ancient time," I am quoting from *Termes de la Ley*, "the *Countee* was *Præfectus* or *Præpositus Comitatus*, and had the charge and custody of the county, and now the sheriff hath all the authority for administration and execution of justice which the *Countee* had (Cok. Lib. 9, fol. 49), and therefore he is called Viscount."† Lord Lyttelton says in his "History of Henry the Second," (Lib. 2, fol. 217), "each county was anciently an Earldom, so that previous to the reign of King Stephen there were not any titular Earls, nor more Earls than counties though there might be fewer."

We must, in collecting the evidences of the creation of an Earldom in the eleventh century, come to the conclusion that in the natural course of things, at all events in the gifts of Lordships, the lands conferred on the subject by the favour of his sovereign that subject was to be responsible for, as a unit in guarding the safety of the kingdom, and that the grant was made to him as the person selected to protect the district where his manors lay.

The park of Crendon reminds us that the lands of the Giffards lay close to the royal forest of Bernwood, to which I have before referred, and that the deer, the

* See Const. Hist., Vol. I., pp. 410, 411.

† Les *Termes de la Ley*, p. 207.

wild boar and the wolf must have abounded in the district, affording abundant opportunities for sport in the intervals of leisure from the military struggles of the times. The tower of Long Crendon Church is a very excellent standpoint for surveying the probable site of Giffard's castle. The remarkable position of the house and grounds, the property of the late Lieut.-Colonel Robert Stone, at the south-east of the church, a high mound and fosse surrounding it, except at the north-west side nearest the church, seems to indicate that here stood the stronghold of the Giffards. This was not, however, the only stronghold, for at the western side of the village of Crendon, where stands an old manor house, the property of Mr. Herbert Dodwell, and now converted into his residence, we may reasonably conclude once stood another fortress; the site is one eminently suited, from its command of the Vale of Aylesbury, to the south and west, to overawe a large tract of country. Extensive foundations have been discovered in the grounds, and everything indicates that here were buildings of great strength and importance, and of an early date. The entrance gateway to the manor house still stands; it is a building of peculiar interest, illustrations of which accompany this paper. There remains the beam across the gateway which supported the upper chamber, the ornament at either end of the beam is preserved, a portion of the staircase to the porter's chamber may still be seen. One might imagine oneself in Normandy at the entrance to a mediæval chateau, so unusual is it in England to see an imposing gateway of this nature associated with domestic buildings.

It should be remembered that the Giffards had surrounded their castle and its outposts with a wide stretch of land from the adjoining parishes of Chilton, Dorton, the hamlet of Policott, and Winchendon, and possessed, in the park of Crendon, the only park in Buckinghamshire for beasts of the chase recorded in Domesday.

The final dispersion of manors and lands when the last of the Giffards died without issue will account for the different manors held by different owners from early times within the parish of Crendon. It would be going beyond the limits of my subject were I to trace the history of these respective manors, but I may have something more to say about them at the close of my account



Payne & Son, Aylesbury.

C. PAYNE, LONG CRENDON MANOR—FRONT VIEW.



Payne & Son, Aylesbury.

GATEWAY, LONG CRENDON MANOR—VIEW FROM COURT YARD.

of the second Earl of Buckingham. I should, before leaving Crendon, remark upon it as an old-world village, its cottages of wattle-and-daub still preserving the characteristics of a peasant's dwelling in the Middle Ages. Domesday and the records which succeed the Survey trace the names of the possessors of the lands within the parish, but the sites of Giffard's castle, and of the outposts, which must have made Crendon a position of strategic importance, can only be left to conjecture. Still there remain the fine cruciform church, and buildings here and there along the straggling roads and byeways, some converted into the barns and granaries of modern times, indicating the antiquity of the place, and furnishing objects of interest to the student of history, leaving, of course, very much to the imagination to suggest.

Whilst we have a precise account of the death of the second Walter Giffard, the last days of the first Walter are left in obscurity. Freeman assumes that the first Walter was one of the Commissioners for the Domesday Survey in 1085-6. He mentions the names of the four commissioners who took the Survey of Worcestershire:—"Remigius Bishop of Lincoln, Walter Giffard the aged Earl of Buckingham, Henry of Ferrers, Lord of Tutbury and of Fifhide, and Adam, one of the sons of Hubert of Rye and brother of the Dapifer Eudo of Colchester." It appears to me, however, very doubtful whether it was not Walter the son who was the Justiciar, or Commissioner, for the Survey; this would be so on the authority of Doyle in his "Official Baronage of England." In the record from the Worcester Chartulary, we find Walter Giffard there distinguished as an Earl, a title which the first Walter never appears to have assumed.* Doyle speaks of the second

* "Hoc testimonium totius vice-comitatus Wireceastre dato sacramento juris jurandi firmavit exhortante et ad id laborante piissimo et prudentissimo patre domino Wulfstano Episcopo, tempore Regis Willelmi senioris. Coram principalibus ejusdem Regis, Remigio scilicet Lincolnensi Episcopo et comite Walterio Giffardo et Henrico de Ferris et Adam fratre Eudonis Dapiferi Regis, qui ad inscribendas et describendas possessiones et consuetudines tam regis quam principum suorum in hac provinciâ et in pluribus aliis ab ipso Rege destinati sunt eo tempore quo totam Angliam idem Rex describi fecit."—Heming's Worcester Chartulary, in Ellis I., 20.

Walter as succeeding his father "before 1084;" and in Forester's notes to Ordericus it is mentioned that Walter the first died before 1084. I regret I cannot refer to any original authority for the statement. I have, however, little doubt that the aged warrior must have passed away within twenty years of the battle of Senlac. Whatever hesitation there may be as to the first Walter bearing the title of an English Earl, he was unquestionably Count of Longueville, a stronghold on a hill, the village lying below, between Dieppe and St. Valery-en-Caux, a Norman fortress, as Freeman says, worthy to rank with Arques and Gisors. Giffard's interests, we may conclude, were centered in the Longueville of his early days, and as Ordericus tells us, his son's remains were taken from England to be buried in the church of that Norman village. We may believe that the bones of the veteran of so many struggles were borne from English soil and laid in the same church but a few years before those of his son, the incidents of whose life we propose hereafter to consider. Walter Giffard, the second, as we shall see, founded, A.D. 1084, a priory of Clugniac monks in the town of Longueville. He is, moreover, considered to have been the second Count of Longueville, and there, according to other authorities, were buried with him his wife Agnes and his son, Gautier Giffard, third of the name;* but we are anticipating what may be said of the descendants of the friend of the Conqueror and the hero of Senlac.†

JOHN PARKER.

* Some Account of the Alien Priors in England and Wales, Vol. I., p. 37, referring to "Neustria Pia," p. 666, Desc. de Norm., II., 123.

† It may be added to the remarks on Willis's assumption that there were only two Walter Giffards (p. 496), that Camden also refers to only two Walter Giffards, both Earls of Buckingham, the younger dying in 1164 (Camden's "Britannia," 3rd edition, by Gibson, Vol. I., p. 334). In Cox's work (published in 1730), p. 209, a similar reference to the two Giffards occurs.

TWO CHARTERS.

THE CHARTERS which I here append gave me the first incentive to an investigation into what may be gathered of the lives of the Giffards. It is true that they purport to be the Charters of the third Walter, but it seems fitting that they should not be withheld, but should now see the light. Copies, therefore, of the originals as they appear in the Missenden Chartulary, with a translation, are here given. The reader will have the advantage of some interesting notes upon them from the pen of Mr. E. J. Payne. J. P.

MISSENDEN CHARTULARY.

No. I.

Confirmacō Waltī Giffardi
Comitis de Buckingā de funda-
cōne Ecclie de Messendⁿ

Confirmation, by Walter Gif-
fard, Earl of Buckingham, of the
foundation of the church of
Messenden.

Sciānt om̄s homines mei qđ
ego Walterus Giffardus Comes
do et gatant' cōcedo Miloni filio
Will'i de Messendena et Ecclsie
eiusdē uille totā decimā de eadē
uilla in elemosina et cōcedo ei ecclia
dimidiā hidam terre solutam et
quietā ab oī cōsuetudine et ser-
uicō et de escoto et unū essart
quinque solidos reddentē quē
ipē Will's dedit filio suo et ecclsie
et pasturam ad decē boves cū
bovz suis et boscū ad hospitand'
et ad ignē faciend' Et ex hoc
testes sūt qui huic dono psentes
adfuerunt. Agnes scilicet mat'

Know all my men that I
Walter Giffard, Earl, give and
gladly grant unto Milo son of
William of Messenden and to
the church of the said village All
the tithe of the said village in
alms, and I grant also to him half
an hide of land free and quit
from all custom and service and
payment And one grubbing
yielding a rent of five shillings
which the said William gave to
his son and the church And
pasture for ten cattle among
his* cattle And wood for house-
building and fuel And of this
are witnesses who stood by pre-
sent at this grant Namely
Agnes my mother. Hugh
Robert and Alfred my chap-

* *I.e.*, among William's cattle—common of pasture.

mea. Hugo Robts Aluered' capellani mei. Joscelin' trunca foliū Gillebert' de Hotot. Walteri' de Maiseio. Helias de Longelio. Walterius Pipard. Johes de Herocort. Godfridus Bennenghel. Rad's Buklo.

lains. Joscelin Troncfeuille.* Gilbert de Hotot. Walter de Maisey. Elias de Longeley. Walter Pipard. John de Hero-court. Geoffrey Bennenghele. Ralph Buklow.

THIS APPEARS TO BE GENUINE. It relates to the *benefice only*, and says nothing about any abbey or canons.

The *rectory* was established by William of Missenden, who probably built the church and presented his son Milo. This deed is Walter Giffard's confirmation and grant of tithes and glebe, fully endowing the benefice.

The alleged foundation deed of 1133 purports to be a grant of the rectory and tithes and certain lands "to set up an abbey." William de Messenden obviously had no power to make such a grant—hence the alleged confirmation by Walter Giffard.

No. II.

Confirmacio Walteri Giffardi Comitis Bukingham de fundacione Ecclesie de Messenden.

Galterus Giffardus Comes Omnibus hominibus suis Normannis et Anglicis salutem. Sciatis omnes me concessisse ecclesie dei et Sancte Marie de Nemore in elemosina omnia que Willelmus de Messenden concedente Hugone filio suo concessit Ecclesiam cum omnibus decimis ejusdem ville et terram in qua sunt edificia canonicorum cum virgultis et pratis et ceteris adjacentibus infra ambitum fossarum et sepium a via Londoniensi usque ad ecclesiam et pratium quod est extra fossas secundum rivulum aque usque ad terram

Confirmation, by Walter Giffard, Earl of Buckingham, of the foundation of the church of Missenden.†

Walter Giffard, Earl, to all his men, Norman and English, greeting, Know ye all that I have granted to the Church of God and of St. Mary of the Wood in alms All things which William de Messenden with the consent of his son Hugh granted the church of the said village, with all the tithes and the land on which are the buildings of the Canons together with the coppices and meadows and other adjoining lands within the boundary of ditches and hedges from the London road as far as

* *I.e.*, "Hooper," maker of hoops for casks, out of twigs cut in the woods.

† This title is wrong. It is a confirmation of the alleged foundation deed of the Abbey.

Ricardi Archidiaconi et totam terram que est inter Ecclesiam et terram Ricardi Archidiaconi et totam terram que est inter nemus ejusdem Willelmi et terram Archidiaconi et terram ex altera parte Londoniensis vie ab occidente adjacentem Ecclesie et totam terram Radulphi presbyteri quam Willelmus dedit Miloni filio suo et ecclesie in prima die qua dedit ei ecclesiam et terram. Preterea quindecim acras in tribus culturis: videlicet, in unaquaque quinque. Preterea tres nemoris particulas unam ab oriente a terra quam Walterus de Bolebec tenet et nemus archidiaconi usque ad domum Cochvelli secundum quam signa sunt posita. Has supranominatas possessiones in terris, in pratis, in nemoribus et in omnibus consuetudinibus dat Willelmus concedente Hugone filio suo absolutas et quietas et liberas ab omni servicio sicut elemosinam.

Testibus Ricardo Archidiacono, et Waltero de Bolebek, et Radulpho de Langetot, et Roberto de Nouilla, et Gilberto de Placia et pasuagium porcis suis dominias et hoc concessit Hugo filius Willelmi. Testibus suis existentibus Hugone de Bolebec et Revening de Messendena et Andrea Reuel et Baldwino de Burton.

the church And the meadow which is outside the ditches adjoining the stream as far as the land of Richard the Archdeacon and all the land which is between the church and the land of Richard the Archdeacon* and all the land which is between the wood of the said William and the land of† the Archdeacon and the land on the other side of the London road and all the land of Ralph the Priest‡ William gave to his son Milo and to the church on the first day on which he gave him the church and the land And also fifteen acres in three arable fields, namely five acres in each And also three pieces of wood One on the east of the land which Walter de Bolebec holds And the wood of† the Archdeacon as far as the house of Cochvell along which the bounds are placed These aforementioned possessions in lands in meadows in woods and in all customs William gives with the consent of Hugh his son discharged and quit and free of all service, by way of alms.

Witness Richard the Archdeacon and Walter de Bolebec and Ralph de Langetot and Robert de Neville and Gilbert de Plessy. And also pannage for the hogs of their demesne.§ And this Hugh son of William has consented to. His witnesses being Hugh de Bolebec and Revening de Messenden and Andrew Revel and Baldwin de Burton.§

[There is no witness clause attesting execution by Walter Giffard.]

* Here some parcels appearing in the alleged foundation deed are omitted.

† "Richard" omitted.

‡ A discrepancy from the alleged foundation deed.

§ Nothing of all this appears in the alleged foundation deed.

This seems to be a forgery, like the alleged foundation deed of 1133, of which it purports to be a confirmation. The abbey was apparently founded in some irregular way upon the endowments of the rectory, and these documents show the method by which spurious abbeys, like the spurious or "adulterine" castles, of the period, were sometimes created. The deeds were forged, apparently at different dates, to support its titles. "Sancta Maria de Nemore" seems to be contrasted with "Sancta Maria de Parco" (Notley), and has a doubtful look. The frequent mention of "Richard the Archdeacon," "Ralph the Priest," and "Arnulph the Priest" as *independent* owners of land, strongly suggests that the abbey was in fact the outcome of a clerical colony which settled here shortly after the establishment of the rectory by William of Missenden. The so-called "foundation deed" assumes that a certain number of clerical colonists were settled in a collective home of their own before the "abbey" was founded, and purports to give them the rectory and certain lands as a permanent endowment.

By the fifth Charter Robert de Nevers purports to give the abbey tenths of his rents, and by the eighth, tenths of the loaves of his household. Are such grants genuine? They are very unusual. The blessing and curse in the latter Charter strongly suggest a clerical forgery here also. The grant of the village blacksmith and all his issue looks also rather suspicious.*

* See RECORDS OF BUCKS, Vol. VII., p. 137.