

## A HISTORY OF NEWPORT PAGNELL.

By F. W. BULL. (Kettering: Goss.)

Mr. F. W. Bull's History of Newport Pagnell deserves a prominent notice in The Records of Bucks, and we proceed at once to make some remarks on the special points in the volume to which we think attention should be called. The book is divided into different conveniently-arranged subjects, the first being "The Town." There was originally a Castle here. Leland speaks of it, but there is no mention of it in Manorial documents. The visitation of the plague in 1666 resulted in great mortality in the town, as the burials recorded in the parish registers disclose. Events important to the community are noticed, as they should be. For instance, on the subject of education we learn that in the autumn of 1809 Mr. Joseph Lancaster delivered one of his lectures on Education at Newport, and as a result the inhabitants, at a public meeting held in October, 1809, resolved on establishing a school for the instruction of the poor of Newport and the adjoining villages. A school seems to have been soon afterwards organised, although the British School was not opened till 1811. In the early part of the last century lace appears to have been a considerable industry. One authority says that "a greater quantity of lace is made here by hand than in any other town in England," and a market was held here every Wednesday for its sale. We find what is supposed to be the last reference to the stocks in Newport, when a presentment was made, 28th October, 1826, by the Jurors that the stocks were out of repair, and that they ought to be kept in repair by the Lord of the Manor. The following chapter is devoted to the history of the Manor, to the antiquary the most important chapter in the history of any ancient town, since it is most likely to disclose that which would otherwise often baffle explanation. Mr. Bull commences his history of the Manor with a reference to Domesday. It was in the ancient hundred of Sigelai, held by William Fitz Ansculf\*, a

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\* Ipse Wills: ten: Newport—In Segelai Hvnd:



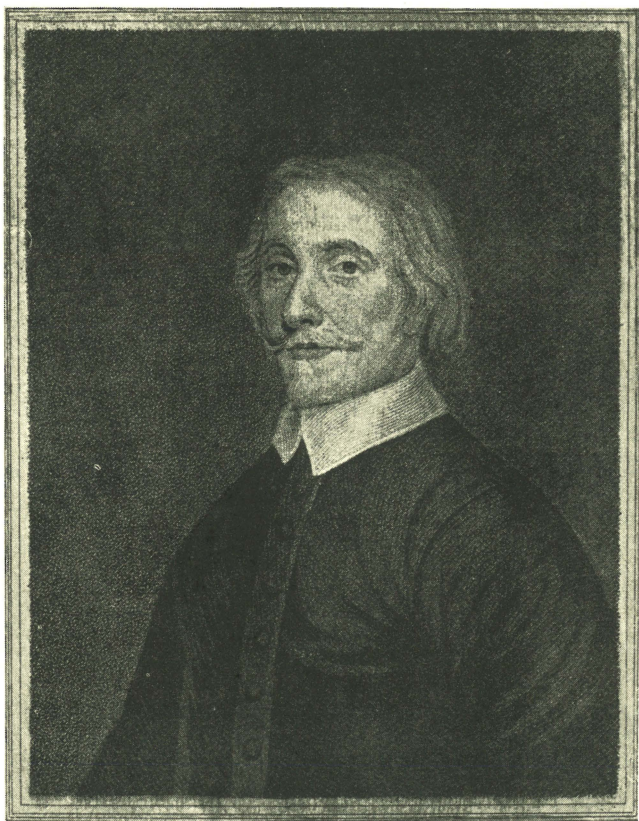
From print "Engraved by T. Tagg from an Original Drawing by I. Walker.

Published Feb. 1st, 1793, by I. Walker, No. 16, Rosemans Street, London."

NEWPORT-PAGNEL.



powerful Baron, through whom Mr. Bull conjectures, though no authority is given, it passed to the Paganel family by the marriage of Fulc Paganel with Beatrice, the only daughter of Fitz Ansculf. Willis, however, was inclined to believe that on the death of Fitz Ansculf the lands came to the Crown, either through want of heirs or by forfeiture through rebellion, and passed to the Paganels by a new grant in the reign of William Rufus. However this may be, we find the second name of the town owing its origin to an ancient family, the possessors of the Manor from the days of the Red King. Fulc or Fulcodius Paganel was the first of the family bearing the name of Paganel who possessed the Manor, and was, too, the founder of Tickford Priory. The Manor passed to his granddaughter Hawyse, who carried by her marriage the Barony of Dudley, of which Newport was a member, to John de Somery. The Manor remained in the male line of the family of de Somery till 15 Edward II, when, on the death of John de Somery, it passed to his sister Joan, the widow of Thomas Botetourt. The heirs of the Botetourts passed a fine in 9 Henry V. conveying their estates and interests in the Manor of Newport to William de Birmingham and Joan his wife, so that the connection of the Paganels, however remote it may have been, was not actually severed till the passing of the fine referred to. It is not here intended to trace the different possessors of the Manor. It was once held by Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the king maker, by a grant from Edward IV. Charles the First, for valuable consideration, granted the Manor to Sir Francis Annesley, who was afterwards created Baron Mount Norris and Viscount Valentia. Mr. Bull, in his Biographical Sketches (Part VIII.), gives some account of the Annesley family, and in them of Sir Francis, who, and whose family before him, we are informed, were inhabitants of Newport Pagnell. As Sir Francis was the predecessor of those who have for generations borne the title of Viscount Valentia, and have been prominently associated with the northern part of Buckinghamshire and neighbouring shires, we are grateful to Mr. Bull for presenting to this publication his portrait, which accompanies this review.



SIR FRANCIS ANNESLEY, BART.,

From the original in the possession of Fras. Annesley, Esq.

Published by E. Jeffery, No. 11, Pall Mall, 1809.



SEAL OF TICKFORD PRIORY.

*From sketch of impression at the British Museum.*

Tickford is in the parish of Newport. It is a separate Manor, and passed to the Paganels. Fulc Paganel founded there a Priory or cell of Cluniac Monks, reference to which has already been made, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and subordinate to the Abbey of *St. Martin Majoris Monasterii*, commonly called Marmonstier at Tours. From the extracts given from charters and other documents under the heading of Tickford a light is thrown on the doings and disputes of the monks of Tickford Priory which will afford interesting reading. In the first year of Henry IV. this alien priory was subjected to the priory of Holy Trinity at York, and the years are given in which the priors of that house presented the priors of Tickford. At the suppression of this monastery its revenues were applied for the founding of Cardinal Wolsey's College at Oxford. Mr. Bull gives a description of the seal of the priory, a print of which he has kindly presented for this review. He suggests, from its being a late 14th Century seal, that the priory acquired it when it was severed from the Monastery of Tours.

A chapter is devoted to Newport Church and its chantry. Fulc Paganel, the founder of Tickford Priory, gave this church to the priory, and we find in the list of Vicars, with some interruptions, that the Prior and Convent presented the Vicars up to 1501, when John Blot was presented. Mr. Bull has given a description of the edifice taken from the "Ecclesiastical and Architectural Topography of England," probably the best extant description that may be procured, but we should have been glad if he could have obtained a description of this building in detail, supplied by an expert for the purpose of his history. A description of most of the Buckinghamshire churches by competent writers is greatly needed, both to bring before an inquirer their architectural features and to elucidate their history. Lipscomb's work was written at a time when there was a mere superficial knowledge of mediæval architecture, so that it is quite hopeless to turn to his volumes for information on a building which is, after all, the one object of the greatest historical interest in any parish, and probably, from the revelation afforded of the periods of its architecture



and its memorials of the dead, the one abiding evidence of the history of the parish itself. There is a careful account given of the different Nonconformist bodies of the town. It seems to have been a stronghold of the Society of Friends. Several instances of the persecution of the Friends are given, amongst them the setting of one of them in the stocks in 1659 for riding to meetings on Sunday, and refusing to pay a sum ordered by a certain Justice Benson. In 1661 Henry Cunningham Butcher is committed to prison for refusing to give bond not to kill meat in Lent.

Newport was looked upon as a town of some note during the Civil War, for though, as Mr. Bull remarks, it was not the scene of any particular battle or even skirmish, it was a place of strategic importance. It was first held by the Royalists, and then came into possession of the Parliamentarians, and was fortified with moles and bridges by Skippon. Sir Samuel Luke, the original of Butler's Hudibras, succeeded Skippon as Governor of Newport, and continued to fortify the town, employing at one time between three and four thousand labourers. In December, 1644, Newport is mentioned in the State papers as having been one of the strongest places in the kingdom, and until fifty years ago the remains of the embankments were to be seen. Some interesting notes are given in the chapter on the Civil War. As an instance, an old muster roll shows that John Bunyan was one of the Newport garrison for two or three years, and it has been inferred that he gained his conceptions of a fortress in his "Holy War" from his experiences at Newport.

Space will only allow of a few words upon the Hospital of S.S. John the Baptist and Evangelist, since known as Queen Ann's Hospital referred to in that part of the volume devoted to the endowments and charities of Newport, on which and the town lands it should be said that much valuable and important information is given. Some mystery attaches to the foundation of this Hospital. By an injunction taken in the reign of Elizabeth it was presented that the Hospital was founded in or before the reign of Henry III. It seems to have been originally a hospital for lepers,

and consisted of a master, brethren, and sisters. Elizabeth's commissioners report on a serious misappropriation of this charity, and a further inquisition was held in the fifth year of James I., the result of which was the granting of a charter by the King and his Consort, Queen Ann. This charter is set out. Thereafter the Hospital is known as Queen Ann's Hospital. Mr. Bull gives an account of how the properties of this charity were subsequently dealt with, and appends a list of the masters, taken from the Lincoln register and Willis's list. There is, what is not always found in a topographical history, a carefully-arranged index to the volume.

It may be inferred from the quotations given that Mr. Bull has collected together a great amount of information in compiling his volume on Newport. He has displayed much industry and research, and we welcome his book as a valuable contribution to the history of Buckinghamshire, since in a comprehensive manner it treats of the history, carrying it down to more modern times, of one of the principal towns of the county.—ED.