NOTES ON THE HERALDS' VISITATIONS.

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The object of this paper being to show in a concise manner how often each County has been visited, and how far the Visitations exist, in either a printed or manuscript form, I do not propose to attempt a general calendar of the numerous copies of them to be found in public or private Libraries. It will be sufficient for my purpose to indicate how many times each County was visited, and where the best of each Visitation is to be found. Various lists of Heralds' Visitations have been printed, as in Moule's "Bibliotheca Heraldica," Sims's "Manual for the Genealogist," Noble's "College of Arms," and Gutch's "Collectanea Curiosa." The latter, which is the most valuable of the four, is from a MS. in All Souls' College, Oxford, and is entitled "Nomenclator Fecialium, qui Angliæ et Walliæ Comitatus visitarunt, quo anno et ubi Autographa seu Apographa reperiuntur: Per Johannem Anstis, Garter Principal. Regem Armorum Anglicanorum." To it Mr. Gutch has added some valuable notes. I have in my own library a MS., formerly belonging to (*Sir*) T. C. Banks, entitled "Index to the Visitation Books In Coll. Armor. By Thomas Sherriff, Rouge Dragon," which gives a list of the Visitations and also of the collections by Vincent and Philpot, with the reference number of the MS. in the College prefixed to each. So far as manuscripts are referred to in the following pages my information is derived from these sources; as to printed works my own knowledge of them will I hope be deemed a sufficient guarantee for the accuracy of my statements.

It should be borne in mind that Heralds' Visitations began, pursuant to a commission given to Benolt, in 1528-9, and ended in 1686, when the powers of the Earl Marshal's Court ceased owing to there being no Constable of England. It has been asserted by some writers that a Visitation was taken as early as 1412, but this fiction has been very happily disposed of in an article on "The Earliest Heralds' Visitations," in the "Herald and Genealogist," vol. vi, p. 436. In the same publication (vol ii, pp. 185 *et seqq.*) will be found a series of very able notices of such of the Visitations as were printed up to 1865, the date of that volume, by the late John Gough Nichols, than whom no one was more competent to undertake the labour of reviewing them. To these elaborate criticisms I shall call attention as occasion requires.

Many Visitations were printed wholly or partially by the late

Sir Thomas Phillipps at the Middle Hill press. I take no notice of these, as a general rule, for two reasons, first, because they are inaccessible to the public, and second, because they are so badly edited and printed as to render them practically worthless. Moreover they are unindexed. Those who wish for information concerning them may consult the "Herald and Genealogist," vol. ii, p. 187, and Mr. Bridger's Index to Pedigrees.

It may not be inappropriate to remark, in reference to the latest Visitations especially, that copies or partial copies of many of them are to be found in collections accessible to the public although unknown to most genealogical students, consequently the popular notion that their contents can only be found in the College of Arms is to a great extent erroneous.

I take the Counties in alphabetical order for the sake of convenience. The reader will do well to bear in mind that the 'so-called' Visitations which have been printed do not as a rule tally with the documents in the College of Arms they are generally supposed to represent. Though very useful as a clue they must be received with caution, and being reproduced from sources of no value as legal evidence in no degree supersede the Records in the College, which are alone the legal proofs of the pedigrees entered at the Heralds' Visitations.

BEDFORDSHIRE.

The Visitations of this county taken in 1566, 1586, and 1634, are in the press under the editorship of Mr. F. A. Blades for the Harleian Society, and will form the xxth volume of its publications. Those entered in the lists as 1582, 1583, and 1586 appear to be all one. Gutch says the original is at Queen's College, Oxford, and Moule that Anstis had it. The Visitation of 1566 is in the College (H. 9, 15). Mr. Blades tells me that the Visitation of 1586 is, with the exception of a few extra pedigrees, the same as that of 1566. The probability therefore is that the Visitation of 1582-6 is really only a copy of 1566 with some additions. The Visitation of 1634 is in the College (C. 31), and contains 131 pedigrees. That of 1669 by Bysshe is also in the College (D. 24), and a few pedigrees from it are in Harl. MS. 1531. Moule says that the original is in the Harleian Collection, and that Sir Thomas Phillipps had a copy. I must defer making further remarks on these Visitations till Mr. Blades, who is well known as a careful genealogist, has produced his work. His preface will no doubt afford a succinct account of the Bedfordshire Visitations.

BERKSHIRE

Was visited by Benolte in 1532 (College of Arms, H. 20; Brit. Mus. Add. 12,479); in 1566 by Harvey (College of Arms G. 5), a copy in Harl. 5822 is not mentioned in Mr. Sims' List. Moule, Gutch, and Noble, state that this county was visited in 1584 by Cooke, and in 1597, and quote various MSS. as copies. It is very improbable that two Visitations were made at such a short distance of time. Camden visited

it in 1623; the original of this is in the College (C. 18), and contains 104 pedigrees. The last Visitation was made by Bysshe, 1664-6 (College of Arms, C. 12).

The Visitation of 1566, as given in Harl. MS. 5867, is now appearing under the editorship of Mr. Walter C. Metcalfe, F.S.A., in the GENEALOGIST.

Some pedigrees from the 1566 Visitation will be found in the third volume of Ashmole's "Antiquities of Berkshire," and an account of them in the "Herald and Genealogist," vol. ii, p. 520.

The Visitation of 1664-6 from Harl. MSS. 1483, 1530, has been printed in the GENEALOGIST, and was edited by Mr. Metcalfe. Some copies of this were struck off separately, uniform in size with the publications of the Harleian Society, and entitled:—

"The Visitation of Berkshire 1664-6. By Elias Ashmole, *Windsor Herald*, for Sir Edward Bysshe, *Clarenceux*. (*Harl.* MSS. 1483, 1530.) Edited by Walter C. Metcalfe, F.S.A." Exeter, 1882, 8°, pp. iv. and 126.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

A Visitation of this county which all the authorities say is *sans date* is in the College (H. 15). I apprehend the date is 1532. It was next visited by Harvey in 1566 (College of Arms, H. 9, 15), and again in 1574 by Cooke (College of Arms, F. 1); also by Cooke in 1580, according to Noble, Gutch, and Moule, but I should think it more probable that the 1574 Visitation was finished or copied in that year. The original Visitation made by St. George in 1634 is in the College (C. 26), and contains 136 pedigrees. This county was visited by Bysshe in 1669, and the Visitation finished in 1675 (College of Arms C 2, 26).

The Visitation of 1566 has been printed in the GENEALOGIST, and some separate copies issued uniform in size with the publications of the Harleian Society, with this title:—

"The Visitation of Buckinghamshire In 1566, by William Harvey, *Clarenceulx Rex Armorum*. (Harleian MS. 5867.) Edited by Walter C. Metcalfe, F.S.A." Exeter, 1883, 8°; frontispiece, pp. iv. 56, and slip of errata.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

Moule, Noble, and Gutch, state that there is a Visitation of this County in the College (G. 14, 18), *sans date*, and Mr. C. H. Cooper in a paper read before the Cambridge Antiquarian Society also refers to it. Visitations were taken in 1575, 1619, and 1684. The reader can consult the "Herald and Genealogist," vol. ii, p. 202, and the references there given, for a more particular account of them. I need only add that that portion of the 1684 Visitation copied by Mr. Cole from the original in the College (K. 7), has been printed in the GENEALOGIST, vol. iii, pp. 231, 296.

CHESHIRE.

On the three first Visitations of this County 1533,[1] 1566-7, and 1580, any remarks by me might be deemed superfluous, as they have been very

[1] The fragment which remains of this Visitation was also printed by the Chetham Society, vol. cx, almost simultaneously with the issue of the Harleian Society's volume. A very useful note on Genealogical MSS. relating to Cheshire will be found in Moule's Bibliotheca Heraldica, p. 566.

ably edited for the Harleian Society (vol. xviii.) by Mr. J. Paul Rylands, F.S.A. His preface to this volume affords all the information to be desired concerning them. The title is:—

"The Visitation of Cheshire in the year 1580, made by Robert Glover, Somerset Herald, for William Flower, Norroy King of Arms, with numerous additions and continuations, including those from The Visitation of Cheshire made in the year 1566, by the same herald. With an appendix containing The Visitation of a Part of Cheshire in the year 1533, made by William Fellows, Lancaster Herald, for Thomas Benolte, Clarenceux King of Arms. And a fragment of The Visitation of the City of Chester in the year 1591, made by Thomas Chaloner, Deputy to the office of Arms. Edited by John Paul Rylands, F.S.A." London, 1882, 8°.

Cheshire was also visited by St. George in 1613 (College of Arms C. 6), this contains 150 pedigrees; and in 1663 by Dugdale (College of Arms, C. 38).

CORNWALL.

This county was visited in 1530, 1573, and 1620. All these have been printed,[1] and so carefully edited as to render any observations on my part entirely unnecessary. It is noteworthy that the attempt of Sir Harris Nicolas to bring out the 1620 Visitation ended in failure, 28 pages only being printed, *sans* title page and date. An account of it will be found in the "Herald and Genealogist," vol. ii, p. 195, in which Mr. Nichols observes, "The present Garter [Sir C. G. Young] is the only owner that we can hear of, that can show a copy of these—now possibly unique sheets." Since this was written the stock has come into the hands of the second-hand booksellers, and the readers of the GENEALOGIST are doubtless familiar with the work. The Visitation of 1620, edited, with a very good preface, by Col. Vivian and Dr. Drake, is vol. ix. of the publications of the Harleian Society, with this title:—

"The Visitation of the County of Cornwall in the year 1620. Edited by Lieut.-Colonel J. L. Vivian and Henry H. Drake, M.A., Ph. D., member of the Royal Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland." London, 1874, 8°.

Col. Vivian, whose indefatigable energy is worthy of all praise, has nearly completed,

"The Visitations of Cornwall, comprising the Herald's Visitations of 1530, 1573, and 1620, edited with additions by Lieutenant-Colonel J. L. Vivian." London, ——, 4°.

In this book each pedigree is extended as far as possible, many to the present day, and it appears to be the most complete and exhaustive work of the kind hitherto undertaken.

CUMBERLAND.

Cumberland has been thrice visited. In 1530 by Tong (College of Arms, D 4); in 1615 by St. George; and in 1665 by Dugdale (C. 39). There is no copy of the 1615 Visitation in the College, and the statement of Moule that the original is in the Harleian Collection appears to be without foundation. The only copy known is Harl. MS., 1536, a copy in the handwriting of Richard Mundy, which has been edited for the Harleian Society (vol. vii.) with this title:—

[1] To be exact, I should say "will have been printed" when Col. Vivian's work, 520 pp. of which have been issued, is completed. Mr. W. Pollard, 40, North St., Exeter, is the printer.

"The Visitation of the County of Cumberland in the Year 1615. Taken by Richard St. George, Norroy King of Arms. Edited by John Fetherston, F.S.A." London, 1872, 8°.

Some remarks, worth reading, on the Cumberland Visitations, will be found in the "Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Archaeological Society," vol. i, p. 300.

DERBYSHIRE.

Derbyshire was visited in 1563-9 by Flower (College of Arms H. 19); and if we may credit a statement made by Moule, Gutch, and Noble, who say that a copy was in the hands of Mr. Ames, in 1596 also. I find no confirmation of this assertion. St. George visited this County in 1611 (College of Arms C. 4), and again in 1634 (College of Arms C. 33), when 118 pedigrees were entered. The last Visitation was taken in 1662-4 by Dugdale (College of Arms, C. 34); an abstract is in the Harleian Collection, MS. 6104; this has been printed in the GENEALOGIST, and also separately (100 copies), with this title:—

"The Visitation of Derbyshire, taken in 1662, and reviewed in 1663. By William Dugdale, Esq., Norroy King at Armes." London, 1879, 8°, pp. iv. and 42.

DEVONSHIRE.

The Visitations of this county have all been edited by the Revd. Dr. Colby; that of 1620 for the Harleian Society (vol. vi.), and those of 1531 and 1564 printed by subscription. In reference to them the readers will do well to consult the notes of Gutch, and Moule, as well as the prefaces of Dr. Colby, and also a review of Mr. Tuckett's Devonshire pedigrees, (an unsuccessful attempt to bring out a series based upon the Visitations), in the "Herald and Genealogist," vol. ii, p. 197. A notice of Dr. Colby's edition of the 1564 Visitation appeared in the GENEALOGIST, vol. v, p. 219.

The titles of these works are:—

"The Visitation of the County of Devon In the Year 1620. Edited by Frederic Thomas Colby, B.D., F.S.A., Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford." London, 1872, 8°.

To render this volume complete it should have "Notes and Corrigenda to the 'Visitation of Devon in 1620,' published by the Harleian Society," 2 pp. 8vo, privately printed; and "Errata and Notes for Visitation of Devon," 1 page, 8vo, privately printed. Further errata will be found in "Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica," New Series, vol. iii, p. 287.

"The Visitation of the County of Devon in the year 1564, with additions from The Earlier Visitation of 1531, Edited by Frederic Thomas Colby, D.D., late Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and member of the Council of the Harleian Society, London." Exeter, 1881, 8°. pp. vi. and 249, and slip erratum.

Westcote's View of Devonshire in 1630 contains a series of pedigrees compiled after the manner of a Visitation.

"The Visitations of the County of Devon. Edited with additions by Lieutenant-Colonel J. L. Vivian," are being published by Mr. Eland, bookseller, at Exeter, in 4°. Three parts, comprising 120 pages, have been issued. This work is done upon a plan similar to the "Visitations of Cornwall," by Col. Vivian, mentioned above, and so far as can be presumed from the pages already in type bids fair to be of equal value.

(To be continued.)