THE CREFFEILD FAMILY.

The notes which follow relate to a family of some interest to genealogists, not only on account of their singular arms, but also from the fact that they were believed—apparently on excellent grounds—to be immigrants from Flanders, although they were, beyond question, of an old English stock.

In Le Neve's *Knights* (Harleian Society) Sir Ralph Creffield is the subject of a longer notice than usual :—

Ralf Cresfeld esq^r of Colchester in St. James' parish. Knighted at the same time[1] the arms he bore were these he was said to have been of Foreign extraction from Flanders or Heynoult & came over about the Duke D'Alva's time vsed (the clothing trade) with the Reboes Davalls Greets & other familys in that town. Quarterly Arg. Sable in 1 q^r & 2^nd^ two sinister hands coupt & erected & 2 legs coupt at thighs in the 2 lower quarters counterchanged in the center a humane heart Gules.

Md. I Peter Le Neve Norroy A.D. 1724 saw this coat in an Attchevem^t^ set vp for the son of this K^t^ & the church hung round with escocheons thereof. See for the arms my little octavo book of Arms collected by . . . writt at the beginning G. J. ex dono F. H., p. 109, where is set down another coat for the same name, Gules a fess bet. 6 fl. de lis Or. Crest, a demy Lyon Rampt, Sa. holding in dexter paw a cinqfoil slipt or. (pp. 507-8).

Dismissing for the present the sketchy pedigree which accompanies these remarks, we find the theory of a Flemish origin remarkably confirmed by the fact that the Creffields figure in the register of the Dutch Church, Colchester.[2]

And yet their English origin must have been always known. Morant, the historian of Essex (1768), was himself the son-in-law of a Creffeild, and therefore took an interest in the family. He distinctly asserts that the Colchester branch sprang from the Chappel house, which was "formerly considerable at Fordham." At Chappel, they were yeomen, owning Popes, originally a good estate, and I have found them entered there, under Elizabeth, in the lay subsidy rolls. Mr. Sperling has ascertained from wills and the parish register the descent of the Colchester branch from the owners of Popes.

Two miles from Chappel is Fordham, where, as Morant mentions in a note (ii, 229), there formerly existed :—

"In the east window of the south (a)isle of the Church this inscription in old English letters "Orate pro animabus Johannis Creffeild et Margerie uxoris ejus, qui istam fenestram . . . In the north (a)isle also, in old letters ; "Orate pro animabus Johannis Creffeild et Alicie uxoris ejus. In the east window of the north (a)isle, Creffeild's Arms : Or, a heart gules between 2 hands couped at the wrist argent and 'Orate pro animabus' etc., as before," Symonds' Collect, vol. 1, f. 309. Their arms are now quarterly argent and sable, a Heart, between two left hands, and two legs, coupées.

Some three miles, again, from Fordham lies Little Horkesley, where the family is found in very early times. Alan de "Crepfeud" held a tenth of a knight's fee there from the Crown *temp.* Hen. III,[3] and he is

[1] "At Kensington 19th of June 1713."

[2] So I am informed by Mr. Moens, the greatest authority on the subject, who is editing the Register as an extra volume for the Huguenot Society.

[3] *Liber Rubeus*, p. 739

clearly identical with "Alan de Cresfeld, son of Henry de Cresfeld," who "grants to the church and monks of St. Peter, Horkesley, one piece of his land in Horkesley (c. 1240)."[1] Other charters of Alan and his relatives are preserved in the Bodleian Library,[2] and he himself, as Alan "de Crepfeld" or "de Crefeld," is witness to three charters relating to the adjoining parish of (West) Bergholt.[3]

In the following century we find a writ of 9 Nov. 1307 for "Andrew de Crefeld of Horkesleye, son and heir of Robert de Crefeld, to have seisin of the lands that his father held in chief of the late king."[4] There can be little doubt, from the older form of the name (which had by no means been forgotten in the eighteenth century)[5] that it was derived from "Cressfield," Suffolk, which a Bodleian charter of 1397-8 mentions in conjunction with Creeting, Stonham and Codenham.[6] This would surely be Crowfield (the "Crofelda" of Domesday), which lies just between Stonham and Codenham. Crowfield is about twenty miles (as the crow flies) from Horkesley.

The genealogical entries which follow relate to Sir Ralph Creffeild's son, of whose "Attchevement" Le Neve speaks. It is (or was recently) hanging in St. James' Church, Colchester. I found the entries on a flyleaf of Poole's *Commentaries* in the library of Mr. Round, M.P., Ralph Creffeild's descendant and representative. Of all the sons mentioned only Peter survived: his daughter and sole heiress married James Round, of Birch Hall in 1758.

"Ralph Creffeild[7] & Sarah Webster were married att Camberwell in y^e^ County of Surry on Monday y^e^ ninth day of July 1711 by Mr. Robt. Rogers, Minister of Dedham in y^e^ County of Essex.

Issue of their Bodies: Ralph Born 16 May 1712 att London baptized 29 May 1712 died 2^nd^ March 1712 aged 9 months and 2 weeks, buried att Camberwell.

Ralph Born 2^nd^ June 1713 att London baptized 12 June died 4 May 1715 aged 1 year 11 months and 2 days buried at Camberwell.

Elizabeth Born 12 September 1714 died 26 September 1714 aged 14 days buried at Camberwell.

Elizabeth Born 30^th^ October 1715 att London baptized 4 November 1715 died 13 November 1715, aged 14 (*sic*) dayes buried att Camberwell.

Hannah Born 22^nd^ Aprill 1717 att London baptized y^e^ 26 of Aprill 1717 Registered in the Register of the parish of Abchurch, London.[8]

Ralph Kersteman born 19 June 1718 att Colchester baptized 24 June 1718 died 30 July 1718 aged 6 weekes buried in St. James Church in Colchester.

[1] *Calendar of Bodleian Charters*, p. 70.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 73, 74.
[3] *Cartulary of St. John's Abbey* (Roxburghe Club), pp. 411, 414, 416.
[4] *Calendar of Close Rolls* 1307-1313, p. 7.
[5] As in Le Neve *supra*. It is "Cresfeild" in Mr. Peter Kesterman's will (1714) and in the Dedham Hall Court Roll, 1723/4.
[6] *Calendar*, p. 466.
[7] Described in marriage settlement (2 June 1711) as of the Inner Temple.
[8] Mar. George Wegg, Esq., of Colchester (*Genealogist*, N.S., xi, 19).

Peter Born 10 August 1719 att Colchester baptized 14 August 1719 Registered in the Register of y^e^ parish of Ardleigh.

Sarah Born 22nd October 1720 att Colchester baptized 2nd November 1720 Registered in the Register of the parish of Ardleigh.[1]

Joseph Born 11 January 1722 att Colchester baptized 4 February 1722 Registered in the Register of the Parish of East Mersea and West Mersea died 8 May 1723 aged 17 weekes and 5 dayes buried in St. James in Colchester.

Ralph Creffeild jun^r^ Esquire dyed the 12 December 1723 buried in St. James' Church in Colchester aged 36 years & near 4 months born 17 Aug^t^ 1687.[2]

Ralph Born 1 May 1724 att Colchester baptized 29 May 1724 Died 10 June aged 5 weeks and and 5 days, buried in St. James' Church In Colchester."

The mention of "Camberwell" leads me to speak of Mrs. Creffeild's connection with it, which introduces an interesting group of refugee families. Her pedigree was as follows :—

Peter Kesterman "bapt. 20 Sept. 1622."[3] Of St. Lawrence Poulteney Lane[6] and afterwards of Camberwell; Deacon of Dutch Church, Austin Friars, 1661; Elder 1670. Bur. there 8 Dec. 1715. Will dated 22 Nov. 1714. Proved 31 March 1716.[7] = Sarah Tayspill,[4] dau. of George Tayspill senr.,[5] of Colchester, bur. Austin Friars, 7 March 1704.

- Other children whose issue became extinct circ. 1745.
- John Webster of St. Michael, Cornhill, and of Barbadoes. Died in Barbadoes. Will d. 10 June 1691. Admon. to widow 10 Oct. 1694.
- Mary Kesterman, d. 10 Feb. 1754, aged 92. Buried All Saints, Colchester. Heir there to Mrs. Cornelisen. Will d. 20 June 1751. Proved C.P.C. 21 Feb. 1754.
- Elizabeth Kesterman, Bapt. Austin Friars 16 Aug. 1663. Bur. there 27 Aug. 1719. Will dated 13 Feb. 1717 (Codicil 21 July 1719). Proved C.P.C. 29 Aug. 1719. d. s.p.
- William Henry Cornelisen of "Dupre and Cornelisen," merchants, St. Laurence Poultney Lane. Deacon of Dutch Church, Austin Friars 1688. Elder 1703. Bur. there 17 March 1715; d. s.p.

- John Webster. Living 1694. Died young.
- Sara Webster Bapt. Austin Friars 6 April 1687. Dead before 7 Nov. 1688.
- Sara Webster Bapt. Austin Friars 7 Nov. 1688;[8] d. 6 June 1751; bur. All Saints, Colchester. Will d. 16 Aug. 1743. Proved 1 June 1754. Devisee of Mrs. Cornelisen as her "niece."[9]
- Ralph Creffield Esq. Will d. 6 Dec. 1723. Proved C.P.C. 11 Jan. 1723/4.

[1] Bur. St. James', Colchester, 28 March 1737.

[2] *i.e.*, the father of these children. He was J.P. for Essex.

[3] Pedigree *penes* Mr. Round.

[4] Her (Dutch) prayerbook (as Mrs. Kesterman, 1649), Ditto.

[5] His portrait, Ditto.

[6] Little London Directory of 1677 (Ed. Hotten, 1863).

[7] Communicated by the Editor.

[8] All these Austin Friars references are taken from Mr. Moens' invaluable work on the church.

[9] After Mr. Creffeild's death she married Mr. Charles Gray, M.P. for Colchester in five parliaments, whose two children by her d. unm.

In 1717 or 1718 Mr. and Mrs. Creffeild removed to Colchester, where they lived in a newly-erected house of Mrs. Cornelisen's (now known as the Holly Trees), which figures in Pryor's view of the town (1724), as "Esquire Creffeild's."

The Camberwell property was left by Mrs Cornelisen to her "nephew" (*i.e.*, her husband's) of whom we read in Morant's *Essex*, ii, that the heirs of Peter Whetcomb a Turkey merchant —

"Sold Brackstead [Braxted] Hall manor and demesnes to Henry Cornelisen, Esq He married a daughter of Sir Richard Hoare,[1] Lord Mayor of London in 1713, by whom he had six children. After his decease his heirs sold this estate to Peter Ducane, Esq."[2]

The Camberwell register gives us three of his children :—

Henry, Bapt. 22 Nov. 1725. Jane, Bapt. 17 May 1721. Martha, Bapt. 4 Aug, 1726.

Blanch's *History of Camberwell*, though full of useful facts, is confused in its account of the family's connexion with the Green Coat School, which was built by Henry Cornelisen "to the glory of God and the honour of the Church of England" in 1721. It may be noted that Mr. William Henry Cornelisen's father-in-law and brother-in-law, "Mr. Kesterman sen." and "Mr. Kesterman jun.," attended the meeting of the charity 3 July 1709.[3]

The home of the Cornelisens at Camberwell was leased by them in 1741/2 to the old Huguenot family of the Crespignys, who purchased it of them in 1755.[4] It was there, as "Champion Lodge," that they entertained the Prince Regent in 1804; and it is now, covered with houses, the valuable property of their descendants, as Champion Hill and De Crespigny Park. Incidentally, I may note that we learn from Blanch's *Camberwell* that neither in the Parish Registers nor anywhere else was the "De" a part of the Crespigny name, even so late as 1803.

The name of the family of Creffeild has been similarly perpetuated by their descendants in Creffeild Road, Colchester, and Creffeild Road, Acton, Middlesex.

J. H. Round.

[1] Jane, married in Jan. 1719/20 (Le Neve's *Knights*, p. 482). Omitted in Burke's *Peerage and Baronetage*.

[2] Also of Flemish refugee descent.

[3] p. 255.

[4] The indenture is printed *in extenso* in Blanch's *Camberwell*, p. 320. Henry Cornelisen, the vendor, is described as then of Barkham, near Ockingham, Berks, Esq.