

CHAPTER VII

SIR HUMPHREY PESHALL AND THE PESHALLS OF KNIGHTLEY

SIR HUMPHREY PESHALL, second son of Sir Richard de Peshall, Horseley and Chetwynd, settled at Hopton, which he had acquired through his marriage with Matilda (or Maud) Swynnerton. Matilda was the daughter of Sir Robert de Swynnerton of Swynnerton, by his first wife Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Nicholas de Beck, and heiress of Hopton and Teyne [now Tean], upon whose marriage with Sir Robert, the Beck estates and most of the Swynnerton estates were settled upon their issue. On the death of her mother, between 1369 and 1375, Matilda entered into possession of Hopton and Teyne. Sir Humphrey appears to have died in or before 1388, leaving his wife Matilda still a minor, and in the custody of his father Sir Richard Peshall at Chetwynd. Their son, Richard, succeeded to the estates, and married one, Elizabeth, who occurs later as the defendant in law-suits with the Savages for possession of her estates.

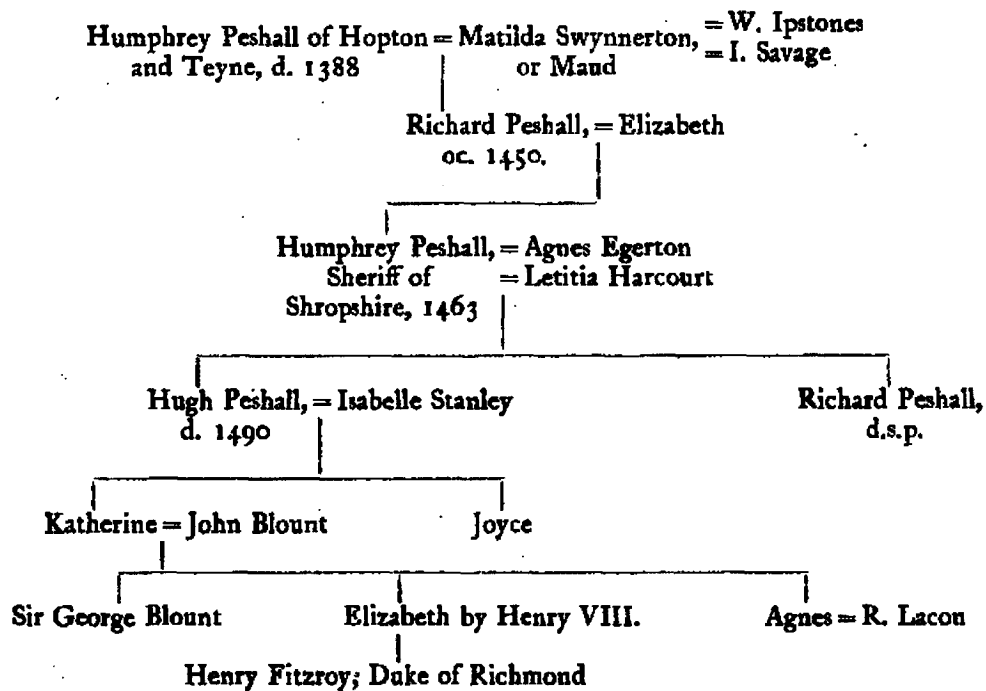
These were days of great licence, and during the reign of King Richard II. neither person nor property were secure from violence and rapine. While Matilda, Richard's mother, was thus residing at Chetwynd, in the year 1388, she was forcibly abducted by Sir John de Ipstones and married to his son, William, after signing away her estates to Sir John, who died seised of Hopton and Teyne in 1394.



ARMS AND CREST OF THE PESHALLS OF KNIGHTLEY



SIR HUMPHREY PESHALL AND THE PESHALLS
OF KNIGHTLEY



The story is told in certain pleadings in a suit prosecuted at the Stafford Assizes in 2 to 4 Henry IV. In this suit Elizabeth, who had been the wife of Sir Richard de Peshall, is sued by John Savage and Matilda his wife for land in Hopton, Knighton and Tillington in Staffordshire. It appeared that 'on Dec. 8th 1388, Sir John de Ipstones took Matilda by force from Chetwynd to his castle of Ipstones, and imprisoned her there until she granted Hopton to him; and that he afterwards married her to his son William de Ipstones then only 15 years old, who thereupon entered into possession of Hopton. William had issue Christiana and Alice, and after his death the said Matilda came to his daughters and sought to be re-ensfeoffed of the said manor of Hopton, etc., and on their refusal, the said Matilda entered the manor and received the rents until she was dispossessed by force by the said Elizabeth, who had been the wife of Richard.' The jury found for Matilda, with damages of 40 marks. A compromise between the Peshalls and Savages must have eventually taken place by which such of the old Swynnerton estates in Cheshire as were inherited by Matilda under her father's marriage settlement passed to her son Sir John Savage¹ of Rock Savage, co. Cheshire, Knight; and Erdeswick states that the Savages also received, by way of compromise, a moiety of the manor of Teyne which was afterwards called Nethertheyne; while the Peshalls retained Overtheyne with Hopton, and the other estates in Staffordshire, which included a third of the manor of Alstonfield, and advowson of the Church of Checkley, etc.

It appears from the following record, in the Plea Rolls, Stafford Assize Court, 9 Henry IV.,² that Christiana, the eldest daughter of William de Ipstones by Matilda, married a Sir John de Arderne. 'Staff. : John Savage and Matilda his wife, sued John de Arderne, Kt., Christiana, daughter

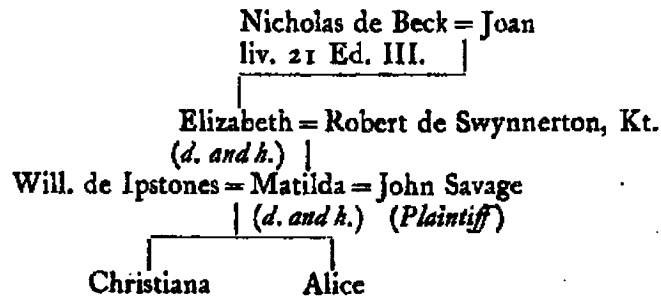
¹ *Staff. Hist. Coll.*, vol. xviii. New Series, p. 181; and *Staff. Hist. Coll.*, vol. iii. New Series, pp. 171-177.

² *Ibid.*, vol. xv. New Series, p. 210.

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of William de Ipstones, and Alice her sister, and others, for unjustly disseizing them of the Manor of Teyne.' The following pedigree is given :—



‘In 16 Ric. II. 1393-4, Roger de Swynnerton waylaid and slew John de Ipstones, kt. who was on his way to Westminster as knight of the shire, and it was ordered by the Parliament then sitting that he (“one Roger Swynnerton”) should not be released from the prison in which he had been immured, by bail, mainprise, or any other manner, until he had answered the said charge, and legally obtained his release.’ Canon Bridgeman is of opinion that this act of violence was committed by Roger de Swynnerton to avenge the above outrage perpetrated by John de Ipstones on his young cousin Matilda Peshall.¹

Richard Peshall, therefore, came into possession of the Manor of Hopton, and is referred to in an Inquisition of Knights taken in 1428 as ‘Richardus Peshall of Hopton.’ He was knighted, and in 1436 received the title and arms of Knightley by special grant from his cousin, Joan, daughter of Roger de Peshall by Joan de Knightley. The actual document making the grant reads as follows :—

‘Noverint universi per presentes me, Joannam nuper uxorem Willelmi, Lee de Knightley, dominam et rectam heredem de Knightley, dedisse, concessisse, et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse Ricardo Peshale, filio Humfridi Peshale, scutum armorum meorum ; Habendum et tenendum ac portandum et utendum ubicunque voluerit sibi et heredibus

¹ *Staff. Hist. Coll.*, vol. xviii. New Series, p. 182.

suis imperpetuum ; Ita quod nec ego nec aliquis alius nomine meo aliquod jus vel clameum seu calumpniam in predicto scuto habere potuerimus, sed per presentes sumus exclusi imperpetuum. In cujus rei testimonium sigillum meum apposui. Datum apud Knightley die Mercurii proxima post festum Paschae anno regni Regis Henrici sexti post conquestum quarto-decimo.¹

(*Translation.*)

‘ Let all know, by means of these presents, that I, Joanna, lately wife of William Lee of Knightley, lady and rightful heiress of Knightley, have given, granted and confirmed by this present document, my coat of arms to Richard Peshall, son of Humphrey Peshall ; to be held, preserved, worn and used wherever he wishes by himself and his heirs for ever. Therefore neither I nor anyone else in my name can have any just right, claim or pretension to the said coat of arms, but are excluded by these presents for ever. In witness of the matter I append my seal. Given at the house of Knightley last day of Mercury after the feast of Easter, in the 14th year of the reign of King Henry VI. after the conquest.’

Richard’s cousin Joan had married one William Lee of Boninghall, Salop, a lawyer, and after the death of her husband in 1438 she settled the manor of Little Wyrley as well as that of Knightley upon Richard.

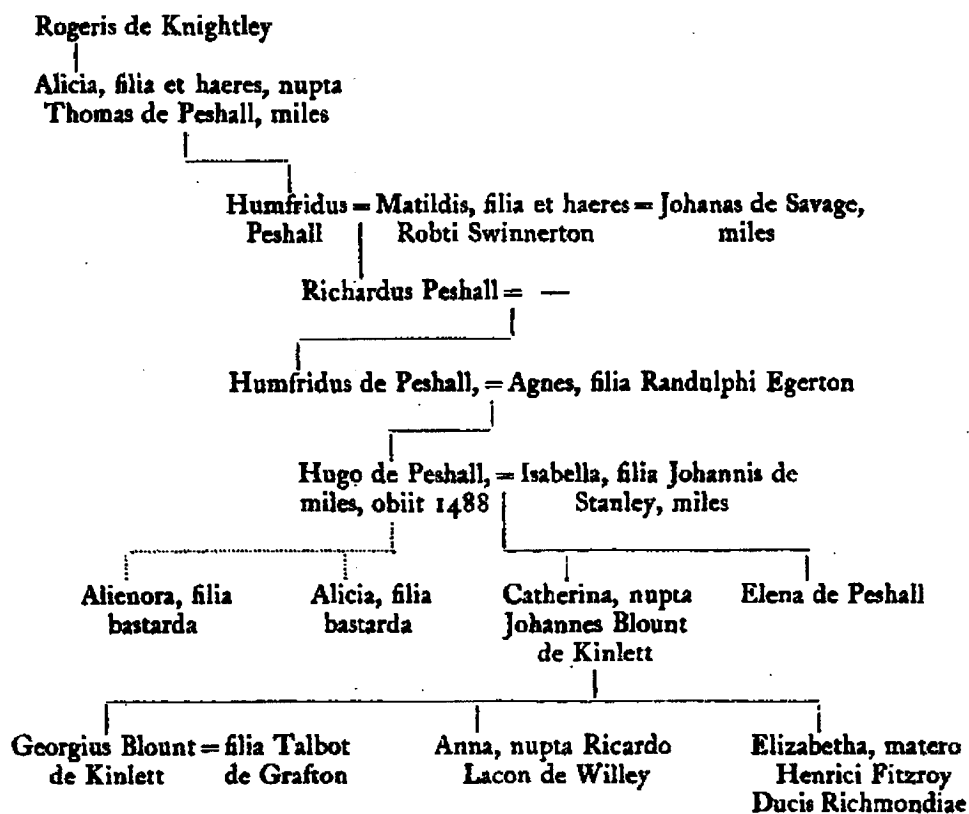
According to the Huntebach MS. at Wrottesley, ‘ the Manor of Little Wyrley was settled in 1438 upon Joan Lee for life, and after her decease to Richard Peshall, the son of Humphrey Peshall, and the heirs of his body, and for want of such issue to Richard Peshall, the son of Sir Thomas Peshall, Kt.’ ‘ This Richard Peshall, son of Humphrey,’ continues Huntebach, ‘ had issue Humphrey Peshall of Knightley, Lord of this Manor of Little Wyrley, who had

¹ *The Ancestor*, vol. ix. p. 220.

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PEDIGREE OF THE PESHALLS OF KNIGHTLEY—FROM
THE 'STAFFORDSHIRE VISITATION' OF 1583

[From Harl. MS., No. 1415, fol. 133, in British Museum.]



issue Sir Hugh, whose daughter Katherine married Sir John Blount of Kinlet, Knight.'

Richard also held the Manor of Pattleshull for the term of his life, the property reverting to the Astley family on his death. An Inquisition of Knights' Fees in 1377 mentions 'Rich. de Peshale; I f. in Patteshul,' and a later Inquisition of 1432 mentions that 'Rich. Peshale de Patteshul ten' Hopton p. I. f.'

Richard's son, Humphrey Peshall of Knightley, was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1463, and owned, besides Knightley, the manors of Little Wyrley, Hopton, Teyne, Little Onn, Blythewood, Caldon and Waterfall, as well as other land and property in the town of Stafford. The Staffordshire property, he held in accordance with the custom of Borough English by which the inheritance passed to the youngest instead of to the eldest son. This Humphrey Peshall was twice married. By his first wife, Agnes, daughter of Sir Robert Egerton of Wrynehill, Staff., he had an elder son, Hugh, who died before him in 1490, as related below. By his second wife, Letitia,¹ daughter of Sir Robert Harcourt, who survived him, he had a younger son, Richard (born 1495), who, as youngest son, inherited the property in the town of Stafford, but of whom nothing further is known except that he died in 1520.

Sir Humphrey died in 1498, and the following is a transcript of the Inquisition after his death: 'Inquisition taken at Stafford, 7 September, 18 Hen. 7 (1502) to enquire after the death of Humphrey Pessall. The jurors say he was seized of the Manors of Knyghtley, Hopton, Theyne, Blythwood and Little Onne and the advowson of Chekkeley Church, and Manors of Baldon, Watnefall and one-third

¹ Compare *Burke's History of the Commoners*, which states that 'Letitia, daughter of Sir Robert Harcourt (descended from the ancient house of Harcourt, from which sprang the Earls of Harcourt, extinct in 1830, and which deduces its pedigree from Bernard, a nobleman of the royal blood of Saxony, who acquired in 876, when Rollo, the Dane, made himself master of Normandy, the lordships of Harcourt, Caileville and Beauficel, in that Duchy) married Humphry Peshal.'

part of Manor of Astonfeld, co. Staff. and so seized by charter conveyed the same to trustees to the use of himself and his wife Letice and the survivor and Letice still survives. He confirms the same by his will here quoted and dated 8 April 13, Henry VII. (1498). He held other lands (named) in said county. Humphrey died 26 May, 13 Henry VII (1498) and Richard Pessall was then his son and next heir male by said Letice and was aged 3 years. Now 12 June, 19 Henry VII. the said feoffees appear in the Court of Chancery and confirm above and say that Humphrey has issue Hugh who had issue Katherin and died in the lifetime of Humfrey, afterwards at Beudeley Co. Worcs. Katherin married John Blounte Esq. and is now aged 21 and more, and said Richard was born afterwards and the lands not entailed above should descend to Katherin as daughter of Hugh son of Humfrey. John Blount and Katherine both survive.¹

Sir Humphrey's son Richard died in 1520, as shown by the following: 'Inquisition taken at Brewood, co. Staff. 17 Nov. 16 Henry VIII. (1524) to enquire after the death of Richard Persall. The jurors say that Richard Pessall was seized of a messuage and lands in Stafford borough. The said Richard died 10 August, 12 Henry VIII. (1520) and Richard Appulby, gent., son of Joan sister of Humfrey Pessall father of said Richard and Alice Lytelton, widow, daughter of Katherin, sister of the said Humfrey Pessall are next of kin of said Richard and his heirs and Richard Appulby is aged 60 years and Alice is aged 60 years. John Blunt Esq. has taken the issues and profits of the lands since Richard's death, but by what right the jurors know not.'²

Hugh Pershall, the elder son, married Isabella, daughter of Sir John Stanley, of Pype and Elford, by whom he had three daughters, Katherin, Joice and Isabelle. He died in 1490, and was buried in the Church of Grey Friars, London. His will is still preserved in Somerset House.

¹ Chancery Inquisition Post Mortem, 18 Henry VII., Series II. vol. 16, No. 9.

² Chancery Inquisitions Post Mortem, Series II. vol. 41, No. 50.

In the struggle between Richard III. and Henry, Duke of Richmond, this Hugh Pershall gave his services to Richard, the reigning king. After his death in 1490, his wife received a pardon from King Henry, and was enabled to retain her husband's property, which would otherwise have passed to the State. The letter granting the pardon is preserved in the Patent Roll of 6 Henry VII., m. 7 (13) : 'Pardon for Isabel Pershall : The King, of his especial grace, certain knowledge and meer motion, has pardoned, remitted and relaxed to Isabel, late the wife of Hugh Persale, late sheriff of the county of Stafford, administratrix of the goods and chattels which were the said Hugh's and tenant of the lands and tenements which were hers and the said Hugh's or which were the said Hugh's or otherwise granted to him or her, and all debts, accounts, profits, arrerages and sums of money whatsoever due to the said King by the same Hugh, in virtue of his office of sheriff of Stafford or otherwise, and all actions, executions and demands which may be brought against the said Isabel for the same Hugh for any cause touching the said office of Sheriff, and statute or order to the contrary notwithstanding. Witness the King at Westminster 10 March, [1491].

'By writ of Privy Seal, &c.'

The Manors of Knightley and Little Onn passed to Katherin on the death of her grandmother Letitia, as did also those of Hopton, Teyne and others which she claimed and recovered on her grandfather's death. She was married in 1491 to John Blount, Esq.,¹ the son and heir apparent of Sir Thomas Blount, Kt. of Kinlet in the county of Salop, to whom she brought her ample inheritance. The said John

¹ Vincent, in his *Visitation of Shropshire*, gives for Blount, a coat of twenty-nine quarterings, including (21) Argent, a cross patonce sable; in a canton gules a lion's head erased, argent, crowned, or, for *Peshall*; (22) azure, a chevron between three mullets or, for *Cherwynd*; (23) Azure fretty argent, a fesse gules, for *Gareswell*; (24) Quarterly, ermine and paly of six or and gules, within a bordure, for *Knightley*; (25) gules, two bars ermine, for *Pantolph*; (26) Argent, a cross patee fleury sable, for *Swinerton*; (27) gules, a cross ermine, for *Beck*.

Blount, who was afterwards of Kinlet, Knight, died on 27th February, 22 Henry VIII. (1530-1), leaving the said Katherine, his wife; a son, George Blount, who was eighteen years of age and more at the time of his father's death:¹ and a daughter, Elizabeth. Elizabeth was a lady at Court and a mistress of Henry VIII., by whom she had a son, Henry Fitz-roy, Duke of Richmond.²

The following extract from the *Staff. Historical Collections* with reference to this Elizabeth Blount is of interest:—

'Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Sir John Blount and Katherin Peshall, was a lady of great personal attractions. Lord Herbert says of her that "she was thought, for her ornaments of nature and education, to be the beauty and mistresspiece of her time." In her youth she gained the affections of the young Henry VIII., and became the mother of his favourite son, Henry, Duke of Richmond. Halle, a contemporary writer, thus relates the affair: "You shall vnderstande, the kyng in his freshe youth, was in the cheynes of love, with a faire damosell called Elizabeth Blunt, daughter to sir John Blunt knyght, whiche damosell in syngyng, daunsyng, and in all goodly pastymes exceded all other; by the whiche goodly pastymes she wan the kynges harte: and she again shewed hym suche fauour, that by hym she bare a goodly manne childe, of beautie like to the father and mother. This child was wel brought vp, like a Princes child, and when he was VI. yere of age, the kyng made hym knight, and called hym lorde Henry fitz Roy, and on Sondaie beyng the XVIII daie of June, at the manor or place of Bridewell, the saied Lorde, ledde by two Erles, was created Erle of Nothyngham, and then he was brought backe again by the saied twoo Erles: then the Dukes of Norffolke and Suffolke, led hym into the great Chamber again, and the kyng created hym Duke of Richemond & Somerset: and the same daie the lorde Henry Courtenay Erle of Deuonshire, and cösyn germayn

¹ Inq. 23 Henry VIII., No. 15.

² *Staff. Hist. Coll.*, 1912, vol. ii. p. 76.

must geve hym a hundurde pownde to thentent that I wolde marie my sonne to his Cowmfort, and so y have barginid w^t s^r John talbott, for my Sonne and have prouyded that the iiij. hundurde m^akes shalbe furth comnyng at our Ladye Daye and the hundurde pownde beside to my Lorde and I have no penye of proffet by the wardeship of my Sonne, but y^t that y have g^auntid to was to saue my Lande. And now my Lordes grace sendithe me wurde that Kytson wil have his money at Candylnas, or else to entre ynto the Lande. And so I know not what to do yn hitt, for y trustid vpon suche grauntys as wer mad to me hit ys not moche Betwixt Candylnas and o^r Ladie daye for hym to forbere his money. Werfore y must beseke yow to be good maister to me and to help me yn hit as my trust ys yn yow, as I and my sonn maye p^aie for yow wiche we ar bounde daylye to do as Knouyth God who sende you good healthe. Wrytten at Kinlett the XX daye off Januarie by yo^re

KATHERIN BLOUNT.

To the right wurshipfull mayst^r Thomas Cromewell of the Kynge most honorable counsell be this delyuerid w^t spede.

State Papers, Henry VIII., vol. lxxiv. pp. 65-6. [1533.]

Right worshipful Sir, I recommend one (me) unto you, I must beseech you to be (a) good Master unto me as you have been at all times. Where it pleased you to take the pain to make an end betwixt Master Kytson and me for four hundred marks, and after that it pleased the Duke of Norfolk because he had my son in ward to indent with me that he would see Kytson paid at Our Lady's Day in Lent, And his Grace said that Kutson should be content to tarry until them. And so I bought my son of my Lord and must give him an hundred pound to the intent that I would marry my son to his comfort, and so I have bargained with Sir John Talbot for my son, and have provided that the four-hundred marks shall be forthcoming at Our Lady's

Day, and the hundred pound beside to my Lord, and I have no penny of profit by the wardship of my son. But that (which) I have granted to was to save my land; and now my Lord's Grace sendeth me word that Kytson will have his money at Candlemas or else to enter unto the land, and so I know not what to do in it, for I trusted upon such grants as were made to me, (and) it is not much betwixt Candlemas and Our Lady's Day for him to forbear his money. Wherefore I must beseech you to be (a) good Master to me and to help me in it as my trust is in you. As I and my son may pray for you which we are bound daily to do, as knoweth God who (may) send you good health. Written at Kinlett the 20th day of January by your Katherin Blount.

To the right worshipful Master Thomas Cromwell of the King's most honourable Council, be this delivered with speed.

State Papers, Henry VIII., vol. civ. p. 117. [1536.]

Pleasythe hyt yo' maistership to be adutysed that at the comyng downe of the Kyng wrytte in to Salop shire to the Shiryf to chose the Knyghtes for the plyament, there were of the wurshipfull of the Shyre wyth the Justices that send vnto me & wylled me to make labo' that my son George Blount shuld be one of theym & so I dyd my son beyng at the Court and more ou the sheyre labored the shyryf that theleccon shuld not be appoynted at Shewesbery because the plage reyned there so sore but in eny wyse the Shyrif wold hyt shuld be there to thentent that thenhabytante burgeses wyth the franchises of the towne shuld assemble them selfe to chose one Trentham & so they assembled them selfe ryotuosly that the wurshipfull of the shyre were not content (sayng their voyce can not be herd) & had muche to do to Kepe the Kyngs peasc wherupon the titled their names & went to the shiryf willyng hym to reto'ne George Blount for they wold have no other bat in eny wise he wold not

because the vndershiryf ys a dweller in the said towne and then the Jentilmen delyued their names to thys beyrer beyng a honest gentilman to make report who can adutyse yow more playnly then I can wryte (to whome hyt may please you to gyf credence) besekyng you to be goode maister vnto my son in thys as you have ben vnto me & all those that myn be at all tyme and we can do no more but pray for you dayly as we do as Knowyth God who send you muche comfort wrytten at Knyghtley the fyft day of June by yo' beydwoman.

To the ryght honorable Maister Secretorye to the Kyngs hyghnes thys be delyuered.

A Lre wth note any name.

State Papers, Henry VIII., vol. iv. p. 117. [1536.]

(A letter with not any name.)

May it please your Mastership to be advised that at the coming down of the King's Writ into Salopshire (Shropshire) to the Sheriff to choose the Knights for the Parliament, there were (those amongst) the most worshipful of the Shire (together) with the Justices that sent unto me and willed me to make labour that my son George Blount should be one of them, and so I did, my son being at the Court. And moreover the (people of the) Shire laboured (with) the Sheriff that the election should not be appointed at Shrewsbury because the plague reigned there so sore, but in anywise the Sheriff would it should be there to the intent that the inhabitant Burgesses with the franchise of the Town should assemble themselves to chose one Trentham. And so they assembled themselves riotously that the worshipful (ones) of the Shire were not content (saying their voice cannot be heard) and had much to do to keep the King's peace. Whereupon they withdrew (?) their names and went to the Sheriff willing him to return George Blount for they would have no other. But in anywise he would not,

because the undersheriff is a dweller in the said Town. And then the Gentlemen delivered their names to this bearer, being an honest gentleman, to make report, who can advise you more plainly than I can write (to whom it may please you to give credence) beseeching you to be (a) good Master unto my son in this as you have been unto to me and all those that mine be, at all time. And we can do no more but pray for you daily as we do as knoweth God who (will) send you much comfort. Written at Knightley the 5th day of June by your bedwoman.

To the right honourable Master Secretary to the King's Highness be this delivered.

State Papers, Henry VIII., vol. cii. pp. 68-9. [1536.]

Right wurshipful Sir I recomende me vnto yow, thank-
yng yow for yo' goodnes shewid to me and thos that myne
be, At altymes desyryng yow of contytynnance. Sir I am
boolde to wryte vnto you as toyching suche saynges as y do
here yn thes ptyes that is thys, that hit wil please the
Kynge's highenes to take ynto his handes certayne Abbes
and Pryoris to put them to other vsis. And if hit pleasid
his gace so to do I wolde desire you to be soe good m^r to me
as to helpe that I myght take some of them for my too
yong^r Sonnes I geuyng for them as an other will y^t they
maye be the more ableez to do the Kyng svyce and Daylie to
paie for you for helping them. Sir I haue a litill busynes
about writinges, As toyching the mariedge off my Sonne,
And if my suande haue nede y^t he maye be bolde to Resort
to your maistership as my trust is yn yow. As knouythe
God who sende yow good healthe Writte at my pore house
at Kynlett, the xxj daye of februarie by yo' beedwoma

KATHERIN BLOUNT.

To the Right Wurshipfull Maist^r Cromewell
this be d.

State Papers, Henry VIII., vol. cii. pp. 68-9. [1536].

Right worshipful Sir, I recommend me unto you thanking you for your goodness showed to me and those that mine be, at all times desiring you countenance (?). Sir, I am bold to write unto you as touching such sayings as I do hear in these parts—That is this—that it will please the King's highness to take into his hands certain abbeyes and priories to put them to other uses. And if it pleased his grace so to do I would desire you to be so good Master to me as to help that I might take some of them for my two younger sons, I giving for them as another will it, (that) they may be the more able to do the King's service and daily to pray for you for helping them. Sir, I have a little business about writing as touching the marriage of my son, and if my servant have need (of) it he may be bold to resort to your mastership as my trust is in you, As knoweth God who send you good health. Written at my poor house at Kinlett, 21st day of February, by your bedwoman,

KATHERIN BLOUNT.

State Papers, Henry VIII., vol. clvii. p. 62. [1540].

Advertysyng your good Lordshypp that the berer hereof Phelypp Pen bailye off Torton wich dwellyth nere vnto me is a very honest man & well belouid & accepted as well both with men of worshypp as all other honest men owr ptyes but oonly with Thomas Skremshere secondary off the Kyngs Benche wich beryth vnto hym myche malyce for a bargen made bitwene them for certen wheyte wich was more by the sekyng and pcurement of the seid Thomas then of the saide Phelypp for the seid Phelypp wold not bargen with the seid Thomas onlesse he the seid Thomas wold take a woke of respyte as hit wyll apere by wittnesse evydetly if the truthe may be knowen. Notw'standyng vppon Sainct

Stevyns day last past John Skremsherr son & heire to Thomas Skremshere knowyng that the seid phelypp with a honest man with hym went to dyner to a gentyllman cast off his gowne and toke a swerd in his hand and ronned after the said phelypp and when he outoke the said phelypp sayde nothyng to hym but Pen remebur how thow handyllyst my father and ther withall strake at his hedde And if the said honest man oone Ruchart Osborne hadde not kept of that stroke this said berer not onlyke had been slayne. And then the said Ruchard Osbo'ne toke the said John Skremshere in his armes and bade the said Phelypp gooe his way whome ageyn for he cowd not well hold hym and so the said Phelypp went his waye & mette with ij of the said John Skremshers sunts and so past by them and within a short space after the said phelypp hard oone bydde hym ronned away a pace. And then the said phelypp lokyd backe ageyn and dyd see the said John cu ronyng v'y nere him with his swerd in his hand and the said Richard Osbo'ne ronnyng aftur hym & then the said Richard beyng a lyght man in ronnyng outoke the said John orells not onlyke the said phelypp hadde byn slayn Inconsideracon of the p'misseez I beseche your lordshypp of your charitable goodnes to be good lord vnto this berer for the sewegard of his lyff, and ou that vndur the correccion of your lordshypp hit is clerely thoght in o' partyes yf Reformacon w' ponyshemet be not hadde In this behalf at the hie discrete wysedom of your lordshypp & other of the Kynge most honorable coonsell ther wylbe grett onquyettnes & myche inconvenyenc maye insue in o' partyes and not onlyke but the saide Phelypp to be made away wiche wer grett pitye for I nevyr knew nor hard of hym but lyke a honest man and no wrong dooer feyghter nor pyker of quarells but kepyth xiiij or xiiij psons daily in his house And also I beseche your lordshypp to be good lord vnto hym cocernyng the saide bargeyn wiche as I can pceyue is a very true Bargeyn as it wyll apere both by wrytyng & wittnes if ther may be a mean fownde that the

wittnesse darre testifye the truthe without displeas of the said Thomas Skremshere for no dowt my lord if the seid Thomas hadde suche a bargeyn of the seid Phelypp he wold leyve hym but a litle worthe for he is a very cruell & a extreme man. Forthermor I beseche your good lordshypp to be good lord to a son in lawe of myn oon Ruchard Lacon wich is wrongfully trowbullyd & vexyd by on s Richard Brerton as shall playnly apere byfor your lordshypp & other of the Kynges most honorable Counsell as knowyth o' lord god who eu p'sue your lordshypp both bodely and gostely Wryten at my pore howse of Knyghtlay the xvj daye of January by your pore Beydewoman

KATERYN BLOUNT.

To my espeshall good lord the lord p'vaye Seale
to the Kyngs highnes this be delyueryd.

State Papers, Henry VIII., vol. clvii. p. 62. [1540].

Advising your good Lordship that the bearer hereof Phillip Pen, bailiff of Taunton, which dwelleth near unto me, is a very honest man and well beloved and accepted as well both with men of worship as all other honest men in our parts. But only with Thomas Skremshire secondary of the King's Bench which beareth unto him much malice for a bargain made between them for certain wheat which was more by the seeking and procurement of the said Thomas than of the said Phillip, for the said Phillip would not bargain with the said Thomas unless he the said Thomas would take a week of respite, as it will appear by witness evidently if the truth may be known. Notwithstanding upon St. Stephen's day last past, John Skrimshire son and heir to Thomas Skrimshire knowing that the said Phillip with an honest man with him went to dinner with a gentleman, cast off his gown and took a sword in his hand and ran after the said Phillip, and when he overtook the said Phillip,

said nothing to him but 'Pen, remember how thou handlest my father,' and therewithal struck at his head. And if the said honest man one Richard Osborn had not kept off this stroke, this said bearer not unlikely had been slain. And then the said Richard Osborne took the said John Skrimshire in his arms and bade the said Phillip go his way home again, for he could not well hold him. And so the said Phillip went his way and met with two of the said John Skrimshire's servants and passed by them and within a short space after, the said Phillip heard one bid him run away a pace and did see the said John come running very near him with his sword in his hand and the said Richard Osborne running after him, and then the said Richard being a light man in running overtook the said John, or else not unlikely the said Phillip had been slain. In consideration of the promises I beseech your Lordship of your Charitable goodness to be a good Lord unto this bearer for the safeguard of his life, and, over that, under the correction of your Lordship, it is clearly thought in our parts if reformation with punishment be not had in this behalf that the high discrete wisdom of your Lordship and other of the King's most honourable council there will be great unrest and much inconvenience may ensue in our parts, and not unlikely but the said Phillip too be made away with, which were great pity for I never knew or heard of him but in the like of an honest man and no wrong-doer, fighter or picker of quarrels, but keepeth 13 or 14 persons daily in his house. And also I beseech your Lordship to be good Lord unto him concerning the said bargain which I can perceive is a very true bargain as it will appear both by writing and by witness if there may be a means found that the witness dare testify the truth without the displeasure of the said Thomas Skrimshire, for no doubt my Lord if the said Thomas had such a bargain of the said Phillip he would leave him but a little worth for he is a very cruel and an extreme man. Furthermore, I beseech your good Lordship to be (a) good Lord to a son-in-law of

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mine one Richard Lacon which is wrongfully troubled and vexed by Sir Richard Brereton as shall plainly appear before your Lordship and other of the King's most honourable Council as knoweth our Lord God who ever preserve your Lordship both bodily and ghostly. Written at my poor house of Knightly the 16th day of January by your poor bedwoman Kateryn Blount.

To my especial good Lord, the Lord Privy Seal to the King's Highness this be delivered.