

# THE PARSHALL FAMILY

A.D. 870-1913

A COLLECTION OF HISTORICAL RECORDS AND NOTES  
TO ACCOMPANY THE PARSHALL PEDIGREE

BY

HORACE FIELD PARSHALL, D.Sc.



LONDON  
FRANCIS EDWARDS

1915

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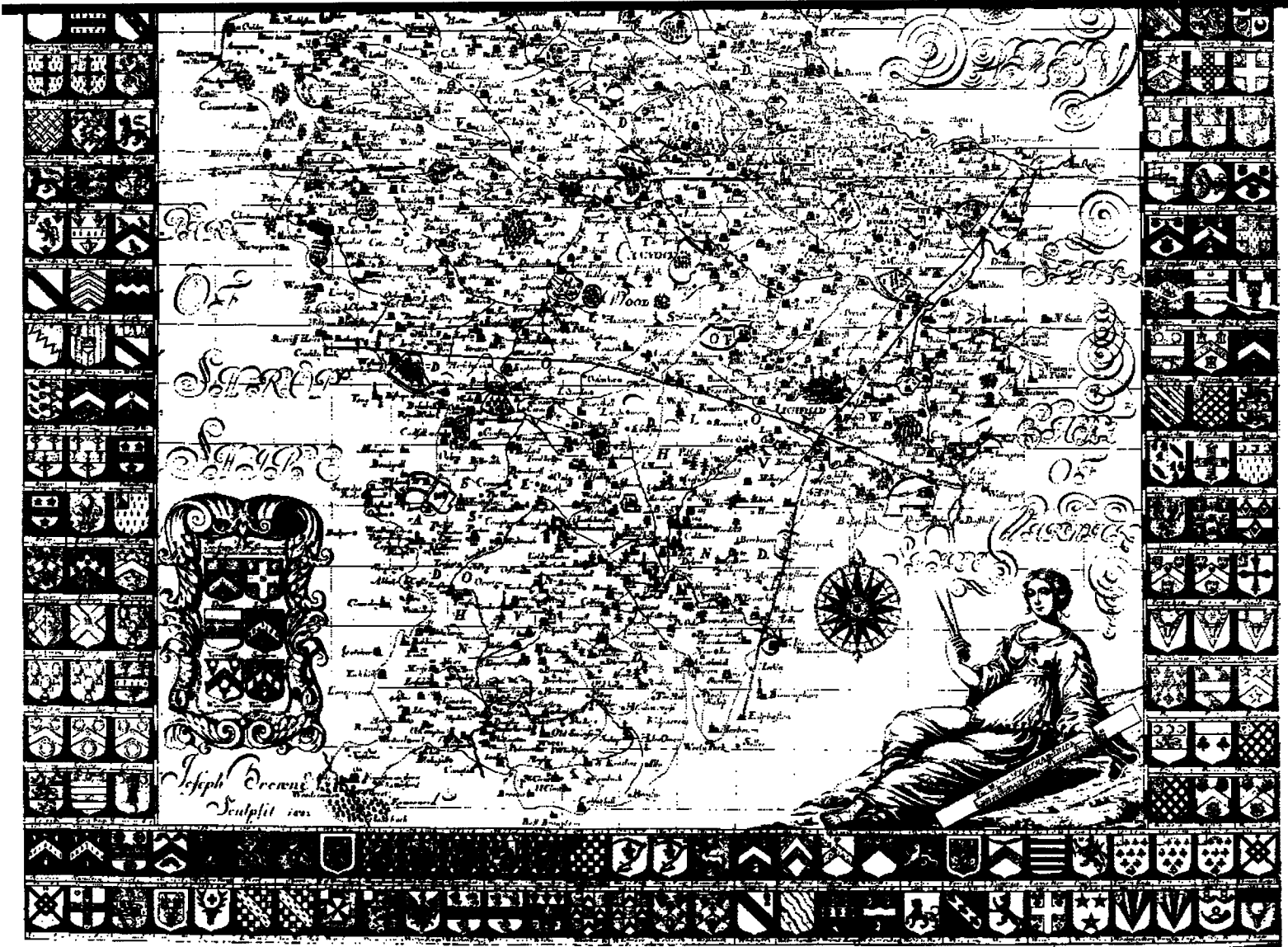
**THE PARSHALL FAMILY**

*Plot's Staffordshire, page 269, Anno 1686.*

*'Man the subject-matter of the following chapter being but a single species of the animal kingdom and that too which the logicians call Specialissima whereof there is no variety of inferior species that can be hoped to be found into which it may be subdivided so as to advance any matter, one would have thought at first sight should have been so narrow a theme that it might well have been considered in the former chapter among the other animals without danger of prolixity. But man being appointed by the Creator the lord of all below having the ordering and disposing of all things here, both in relation to himself and the inferior animals ; and not living so much within bounds as he should but debauching his constitution with too many sensual delights of all kinds ; has rendered himself liable in the management of all of these policies to so many unusual accidents and distemper in the course of his life that I guess I may find the relation of them together with those of his birth and death that have happened within the narrow verge of this county sufficient to supply another chapter "Of Men and Women."'*







MAP FROM FLOT'S 'STAFFORDSHIRE,' 1684.

## INTRODUCTION

'Chronicles of True Reporte wether of Christian Realms or no are matier of pleasaunce, fruite and comfote and for a thousand causes and mo Diligently to bee attended unto.'

HARDYNG, *English Chronicles*.

IN my American home the fireside discussions often centred about those events inseparably associated with the lives of Washington and Lincoln. The events of the Revolution were a never-ending subject of conversation, and the battles of the more recent Civil War were fought over again and again. I had been named after an uncle who had lost his life in a vain effort to rescue a wounded comrade from across the lines. He was one of a long line of that name who had given their lives to their country, and a not too cheerful hope was sometimes expressed by my worthy grandmother that I might be the exception and live out my days as had few who had borne the name before me.

Sometimes the conversation turned to ancestry. Both sides of the family were proud of their Norman lineage. My mother, through the Windsors of Buckinghamshire, traced her lineage to Walter Fitz-Other, the first Castellan of Windsor. My father, through his Staffordshire ancestors, went back to the Earls of Corbeil and Rollo the Viking. Had he been so inclined, he might have claimed lineage from the Saxon Kings, since the first Norman Parshall married Ormonda, a descendant of Ethelred the Unready, but those ancestors whom he chose to accept and call his own were the descendants of the

## THE PARSHALL FAMILY

Christianized Rollo or Robert, first Duke of Normandy, in whose sterling character he found more to admire than in the vacillating Ethelred, one of the few kings in whom the historian has been unable to discover any merit to hold up for the admiration of succeeding generations. It is true his marriage with Emma, daughter of Richard the Fearless, led to the Norman Conquest, but this was an unforeseen result and led to the overthrow of the English and the English line of Kings.

Another reason for the Norman preference, and probably the real one, was that there lived in the hearts of those families who had been through the revolutionary struggle, a profound sense of gratitude to the French, and the Normans were regarded not only as Frenchmen, but the makers of France, which was regarded as a Gallish province until Normanized. Still another reason may have been that "Saxon" had a German sound, and the memory that the Hessians had given themselves for money to fight England's battle, brought contempt, especially as the Hessians had not shown the magnanimity of a fair foe, and had behaved as mercenaries are wont to do when either conquerors or conquered.

In a life devoted to science and engineering, I have found time to consider those broader problems relating to our social existence. The theory I have long held is that the character of a given individual might be predicted with reasonable accuracy, accidents and change of environment excepted, if the character of the ancestry were known. My American ancestors were all puritans. They left England during the reign of James I. in search of a home where they could enjoy their newly formed puritanical views with full freedom. What puzzled me as a youth was that they should be such vigorous warriors, leaving all, forgetting all, to vindicate some principle, as in the Independence and Civil struggles, then returning to their fire-sides to preserve with equal energy and ardour an odour

of sanctity. I could only attribute it to the survival of ancestral traits, and the present history establishes that, making allowances for the different moral conditions obtaining in the different periods, the characteristic of these puritans finds its parallel in the character of Rollo, William Longsword, the Corbeils, the early Peshales and Swynnertons to a marked degree.

The chronicle begins with Rollo the Viking who, as will be seen, was an ancestor of the first English Parshall, as was also Foulges, Count of Anjou, since the second Earl of Corbeil was his son.<sup>1</sup> This Earl of Corbeil had a daughter Germaine, who married Maugis, son of Richard the Fearless. The latter on his marriage became the third Earl of Corbeil. Rollo is described as having been engaged in the calling of a Viking, both in Gaul and Britain, for nearly forty years before his final occupation of Rouen. Rollo had figured in the sieges of Rouen and Paris and in the occupation of Bayeux. At Rouen he had been defeated by Rudolph of Burgundy and Robert of Paris, but this victory, like most victories over the Northmen, had no lasting effect. Rollo was not dislodged from Rouen, and his career of devastation and conquest was not checked. His disposition to settle in the country was taken advantage of to change him from a devastating enemy to a peaceable neighbour. By the peace of Clair-sur-Epte a definite district was ceded to him. He was admitted to baptism, and King Charles' natural

<sup>1</sup> It will be seen in the genealogical chart that Osmond the Dane and Foulges or Foulk, Count of Anjou were the ancestors of the first and second Earls of Corbeil respectively. Osmond was the grandson of Richard the Fearless who had been left an orphan of ten by the murder of his father, William Longsword. Arnulf had designs on Duke William, which were frustrated by Osmond. Osmond had carried Richard from Laon in a truss of hay, and carried him for safe keeping to his great-uncle Bernard of Seulis. Of the Counts of Anjou, Ingahar was the first. His advancement was due to Charles the Bald in 870. Ingahar was father of Fulk or Foulges the Red, who defended Anjou against the Normans and Britons. He was succeeded by Foulges the Good, renowned for almsgiving. Foulges the Good was succeeded by Geoffrey, who was father of Foulges the Black. The latter was a warrior, and is recorded as having twice made the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. He was the first prince of the name to come into the general history of France.

daughter was given him in marriage. Once settled in the land, he seemed as eager for its welfare as he had been before for its devastation. He is chronicled as a stern, impartial and speedy administrator of justice, and as having promoted the general adoption of religion, speech and manners, and to have laid the foundations of what Normandy later became.

The aged Rollo died in the odour of sanctity. His son, William Longsword, had become before his decease second Duke of Normandy. In his pirate days Rollo had taken Bayeux, and had carried off Popa, daughter of Count Berenger. She both preceded and followed Gisla, Rollo's consort of royal blood. Gisla bore him no children. William Longsword, second Duke of Normandy, was the son of Rollo and Popa, his consort by Danish marriage. William Longsword was of religious temperament, and desired to retire to the monastery he had founded; yet the progress of the Norman Dukedom sufficiently proves his ability as an administrator and soldier. The third Duke of Normandy was Richard the Fearless. He was son of William Longsword and Sprata. Of Richard the Fearless one great fact stands in the foreground. Unlike his predecessors, his power in his dukedom was absolute. He was subject only to the God of his fathers, and not second in his realm to the King of France.

Maugis, third Earl of Corbeil, was son of Richard the Fearless by Gunnor, as was also Richard the Good, fourth Duke (grandfather of the Conqueror and uncle of Edward the Confessor).

Richard the Fearless had also by Gunnor a daughter, Emma, who became wife of King Ethelred. Emma, however, was not the ancestor of Ormonda, wife of Robert de Peshale. By his first marriage Ethelred had a daughter, Elfyve, whom he gave to Uted on his succession to his father, Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland. Concerning the ancestry of Ormonda, the following taken from the *Records of Lumley Castle* is of more than usual interest:—

‘Camden, Sir William Dugdale, and other of our antiquaries have observed, that this family (The Earls of Scarborough) is denominated from Lumley Castle, situate on the bank of the river Weare (near Chester-on-the-Street) in the bishoprick of Durham, and is descended from Liulph (a nobleman of great figure in the time of King Edward the Confessor) who married Algitha, daughter of Aldred, Earl of Northumberland, son of Uctred, Earl of Northumberland, by Elgyne, youngest daughter of King Ethelred.

‘This Liulph, being stripped of his great possessions by the Normans, who ruled in all places with a severe hand, quietly withdrew into the bishoprick of Durham<sup>1</sup> where he was dearly beloved by the people, not only in respect of his high parentage, but of his many eminent qualities; whereby he grew into such familiarity and credit with Walcher, Bishop of Durham, and Earl of Northumberland, that he would do nothing in temporal affairs without his advice: but this credit that he had with the Bishop was the cause of his death; which is thus related in “*Anglia Sacra*,” and by another author<sup>2</sup> from Simeon Dunelmensis, who was a monk of Durham, and precentor of that church, A.D. 1164.

‘Leofwin, the Bishop’s chaplain, and archdeacon, finding himself not so often called to council as he was, before his Lord’s acquaintance with Liulph, conceived such envy, as that he procured one Gilbert (who had been made sheriff by his cousin the Bishop) to murder the said Liulph by night, in his manor place, not far from Durham; which the Bishop having notice of, and knowing it would be grievously taken of the people, he, as soon as he heard of the murder, sent letters and messengers into the country, offering to purge himself of being concerned in it, according to the order of the canon laws; and gave out, that he had banished Gilbert, and others out of Northumberland, who had committed the murder. But the people finding this to

<sup>1</sup> Wharton’s *Anglia Sacra*, vol. i. p. 703.

<sup>2</sup> Holinshed’s *Chron.*, vol. ii. pp. 12, 13.

be a story, and that he had not banished the murderers, but received them into his house, and favoured them as before, they stomached the matter highly; and a day being appointed by the kindred of Liulph, for a conference with the Bishop, at Gateshead, concerning the murder, and the prelate, instead of giving them satisfaction, taking refuge in the church, they threatened to set fire to the place, if the archdeacon and sheriff, who had also taken the same sanctuary, were not delivered up. At length, by the persuasion of the Bishop, Gilbert went out, and, with his associates who ventured out with him, was instantly killed by the enraged multitude. The archdeacon refusing to come out, Walcher himself stepped forth, casting the skirts of his gown over his face, and, whilst he was addressing the populace in the mildest manner, was dispatched with lances. Leofwin still continued in the church, till it was in flames, and then coming out, almost scorched to death, was hacked to pieces. This happened on May 14th, 1080, the fourteenth year of the reign of William the Conqueror.

'The said Liulph had issue four sons, Uctred,<sup>1</sup> Osbert, (whose<sup>2</sup> daughter and heir Ormonda was married to Robert de Peshale, of Peshale, in the parish of Eccleshall, com. Staff. who was a younger son of Richard, Earl of Corbeil, from which match the families and baronets of the name of Peshall descended), Adam, who had<sup>3</sup> by gift of William the Conqueror, Uldel and Gilcruce; and Odo, who being styled son of Liulph, had<sup>4</sup> also, by the gift of the said King, Talentire, and Castlerigge, with the forests between Galtre and Graeca.'

I can do no better than quote Freeman in justification of the family pride in their Norman ancestry.

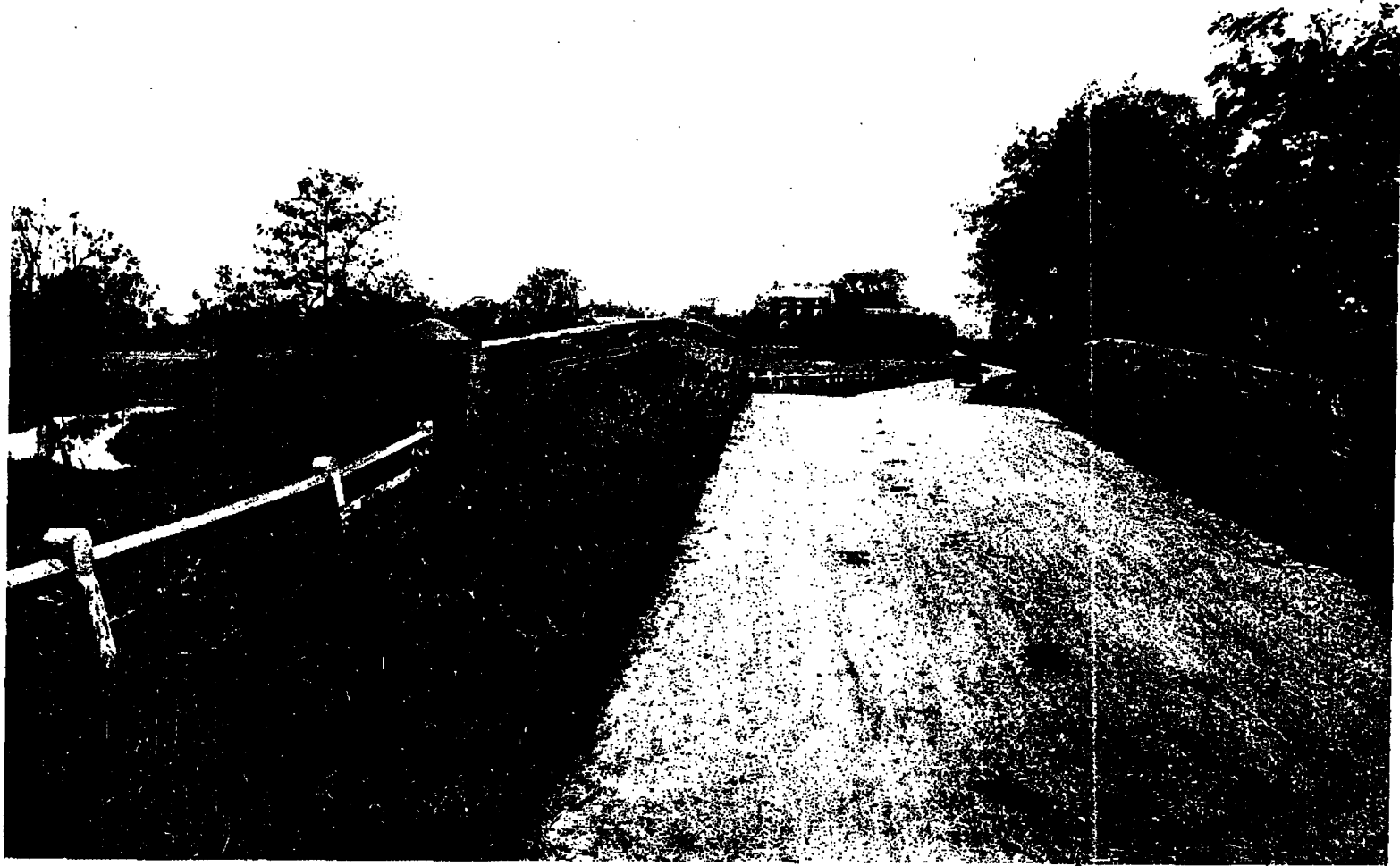
'The settlement of the Northmen in Gaul, and their consequent change into Normans, is the great continental event of the first half of the tenth century: it challenges a place

<sup>1</sup> *Ex Stemmate.*

<sup>2</sup> *Stemm. Peshall. Barti.*

<sup>3</sup> *Dugd. Monast.*, vol. i. p. 400.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



PERSHALL BRIDGE & THE PRESENT HAMLET OF PERSHALL.



alongside of the restoration of the Empire by Otto in the second half. Its beginnings indeed might seem small. A band of Scandinavian pirates settled in Northern Gaul, exactly as another band of Scandinavian pirates had, thirty years before, settled in Eastern Britain. In both cases the sovereign of the invaded land found it expedient to secure the safety of the rest of his dominions, by surrendering a portion of them to the invader and by requiring baptism and nominal homage as guaranties for peace and good neighbourhood. The settlement of Rolf in Neustria is exactly analogous to the settlement of Guthrum in East Anglia. Charles the Simple and his counsellors may well have justified their act to themselves by quoting the example of the Great Aelfred. But the results of the two events were widely different. The East Anglian and Northumbrian Danes were fused into the general mass of Englishmen, and they were soon distinguished from other Englishmen by nothing more than mere provincial differences. But the settlement of Rolf in Neustria had far wider results. It affected the later history of all Europe. The Scandinavians in Gaul embraced the creed, the language, and the manners of their French neighbours, without losing a whit of their old Scandinavian vigour and love of adventure. The people thus formed became the foremost apostles alike of French chivalry and of Latin Christianity. They were the Saracens of Christendom, spreading themselves over every corner of the world and appearing in almost every character. They were the foremost in devotion, the most fervent votaries of their adopted creed, the most lavish in gifts to holy places at home, the most unwearied in pilgrimages to holy places abroad. And yet none knew better how to hold their own against Pope and Prelate; the special children of the Church were as little disposed to unconditional obedience as the most stiff-necked of Ghibelines. And they were no less the foremost in war; they were mercenaries, crusaders, plunderers, conquerors; but they had changed their element

and they had changed their mode of warfare. No Norman fleets now went forth on the errand of the old Vikings ; the mounted knight and the unerring Bowman had taken the place of the elder tactics which made the fortress of shields invincible. North, south, east, the Norman lances were lifted ; and they were lifted in the most opposite of causes. Norman warriors pressed into remotest East to guard Eastern Christendom against the first Turkish invader,<sup>1</sup> and other Norman warriors were soon found to be the most dangerous enemies of Eastern Christendom in its own home. If the Norman fought by the side of Romanos at Manzikert, he threatened the Empire of Alexios with destruction at Dyrrhachion. His conquests brought with them the most opposite results in different lands. To free England he gave a line of tyrants ; to enslave Sicily he gave a line of beneficent rulers. But to England he gave also a conquering nobility, which in a few generations became as truly English in England as it had become French in Normandy. If he overthrew our Harolds and our Waltheofs, he gave us a Fitzwalter and a Bigod to win back the rights for which Harold and Waltheof had fallen. In the arts of peace, like his Mahometan prototypes, he invented nothing ; but he learned, adapted, improved, and disseminated everything. He ransacked Europe for scholars, poets, theologians, and artists. At Rouen, at Palermo, and at Winchester, he welcomed merit of every race and every language. He guided Lanfranc and Anselm from Lombardy to Bec and from Bec to Canterbury. Art, under his auspices, produced alike the stern grandeur of Caen and Ely, and the brilliant gorgeousness of Palermo and Monreale. In a word, the indomitable vigour of the Scandinavian, joined to the buoyant vivacity of the Gaul, produced the conquering and ruling race of Europe. And yet that race, as a race, has vanished. It has everywhere been absorbed by the races

<sup>1</sup> Will. Pict. 145. 'Hujus milites Normanni possident Apuliam, devicere Siciliam, propugnans Constantinopolim, ingerunt metum Babyioni.'

which it has conquered. From both Sicilies the Norman has vanished as though he had never been. And there, too, have vanished along with him the races which he used as his instruments, and which he alone taught to work in harmony. Greek, Saracen, and Norman have alike disappeared from the realm of Good King William. In our own land the fate of the Norman has been different. He remains in his lineage and in his works, but he is Norman no longer. He has settled in every corner of the British islands; into every corner of those islands he has carried with him the inborn qualities of his own race, but in every corner of those islands he has assumed the outward characteristics of the races among which he settled. The Scottish Bruce or the Irish Geraldine passed from Scandinavia to Gaul, from Gaul to England, from England to his own portion of our islands; but at each migration he ceased to be Scandinavian, French, or English; his patriotism was in each case transferred to his new country, and his historic being belongs wholly to his last acquired home. In England itself the Norman has vanished from sight no less than from Apulia and insular Sicily. He has sunk beneath the silent and passive influence of a race less brilliant but more enduring than his own. The Norman has vanished from the world, but he has indeed left a name behind him. Of him came Richard the Fearless and William the Bastard; of him came that Robert whose foot was first placed upon the ransomed battlements of the Holy City, and that mightier Robert who in one year beheld the Cæsars of East and West flee before him.<sup>1</sup> And of his stock, far more truly

<sup>1</sup> Guil. *App. apud Murat.* vol. v. p. 274 :

. . . . . 'Sic uno tempore victi  
Sunt terræ Domini duo : Rex Alemannicus iste,  
Imperii Rector Romani maximus ille :  
Alter ad arma ruens armis superatur, et alter  
Nominis auditi sola formidine cessit.'

Cf. Roger of Howden (404) with his wild account of Robert Wiscard, copied from Benedict of Peterborough, ii. 200.

than of the stock of Imperial Swabia, came the Wonder of his own and of all succeeding ages<sup>1</sup>—poet, scholar, warrior, legislator, the terror and the marvel of Christendom and of Islam: the foe alike of Roman Pontiffs and of Moslem Sultans: who won alike the golden crown of Rome and the thorny crown of Salem: dreaded in one world as the foremost champion of Christ, cursed in another as the apostate votary of Mahomet—the gay, the brave, the wise, the relentless, and the godless Frederick.’

By the fortunes of the Norman Conquest, the family history passed from Normandy to England. Gilbert de Corbeil accompanied his cousin, William the Conqueror, during the Conquest. What part he took I am unable to discover, but the name Pershale is engrossed on the roll of Battle Abbey. He had by Arabella Loup, sister of Hugh Lupus, a son Robert. Hugh Lupus, it will be remembered, was Hugh of Avranches. He was Count Palatine of Chester and created Earl, and is a character of whom historians have much to relate. In his old age he became a monk and retired to the monastery he had established of Saint Werburgh. Through the marriage of Arletta with Robert, Duke of Normandy, there would have been an acquaintance between the Avranches and the Corbeils. Gilbert de Corbeil had by his marriage with Arabella Loup a son, Robert, who was the first Lord of Peshale. By the service of a knight’s fee, Robert de Stafford gave the Saxon manor of Peshale to Robert Fitz-Gilbert de Corbeil. This Robert, Earl of Stafford, was a younger brother of Ralph de Toesni, who was royally descended from the uncle of Rollo, hence the de Toesnis were distant relatives of the Corbeils. This Ralph was councillor of William Longsword and one of the most powerful barons in Normandy. It was he who by tradition called to Henry in the night after the rout of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. Paris, p. 804, Wats, ‘Principum mundi maximus Fredericus stupor quoque mundi et immutator mirabilis.’ P. 806, ‘Stupor mundi Fredericus.’

Mortimer, 'Frenchmen, Frenchmen, arise! arise! make ready for your flight, ye sleep too long! Go forth at once to bury your friends, who lie dead at Mortemer.'<sup>1</sup> This Ralph de Toesni was hereditary standard bearer to his Lord, but in the battle of Hastings he would not encumber his hands with the banner, not even that of the Apostle, in order that his hands might be free to wield his sword against his enemies without mercy. For the share he took in the Conquest he was given estates in Berkshire, Norfolk and Hertfordshire. He died in 1102 and is buried in the Norman Abbey of Conches. The son, Ralph de Toesni, known as the younger Ralph, married Judith, younger daughter of Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland, and sister of Utréd from whom Ormonda had descended, the elder daughter having married David of Scotland.

The younger brother of Ralph de Toesni, Robert, was possessed after the Conquest of no less than 131 manors, and by the Conqueror was appointed first Castellan of the then newly built Stafford Castle, and became the first Earl of Stafford. Robert founded the Augustinian 'Stone Priory.' This was the repository of family records where, some centuries later, documents were found establishing the identity of the early de Peshales and de Swynnertons.

Robert de Peshale was thus connected by ancient kinship to the Earls of Northumberland, from whom had descended his wife, Ormonda, and to the Earl of Stafford, from whom he had received the manor of Peshale.

The patronymic 'Parshall' has its origin in the assumption of the Lordship of the Manor of Peshale by Robert

<sup>1</sup>Mortuum-mare in the Latin of the day. The Chronicles of Normandy and Dumoulin cite the following verses, as popular on the subject of this battle:

Réveillez vous et vous levez,  
François, qui trop dormi avez!  
Allez bientôt voir vos amys,  
Que les Normans ont a mort mys,  
Entre Ecouys et Mortemer!  
Là vous convient les inhumer.

Fitz-Gilbert de Corbeil; in the text will be found the particular spelling in vogue from time to time or adopted by different members of the family at the same time. I may, therefore, properly digress from the historical matter to a discussion as regards the origin and development of the name from the early spelling of 'Peshale,' which obtained in the time of the Conquest, to the modern method of spelling 'Parshall' adopted by all the living descendants of Robert de Peshale.<sup>1</sup>

The family name of Parshall, in common with all other British surnames, has undergone many changes in spelling and pronunciation during the thousand years of its existence. All these changes can be traced step by step in the contemporary manuscripts of each period, and, as I shall show later, are all in accordance with the natural philological laws governing such variations. In the earliest records containing references to the name and dating from

<sup>1</sup> *The History of the Worthies of England*, by Thomas Fuller, D.D. London, MDCLXII. (1662) Chap. xvii. p. 51. 'Of the often altering of Surnames, and the Various Writing Thereof.'

'It is necessary to observe that Surnames of Families have been frequently altered, some families deposing their *old* and assuming *new names* on several occasions: But chiefly for, (1) *Concealment* in time of Civil Wars . . . (2) *For Advancement* when adopted into an estate . . . Besides the same Surname continued, hath been variously altered in *Writing*. First, because Time teacheth *New Orthography*, altering *spelling* as well as *speaking*. Secondly, the best *Gentlemen* anciently were not the best *Scholars*, and (minding matters of more moment) were somewhat too incurious in their *names*. Besides, *Writers ingrossing deeds*, were not over critical in spelling of *names*, knowing well where the person appeared the same, the simplicity of that age, would not fall out about *misnomer*. . . . Hence it is that the same name hath been so often disguised unto the staggering of many, who have mistook them for different.

*'Idem non Idem, quærantque in Nomine Nomen.*

The *same* they thought was not the *same*.

And in their *name* they sought their *name*.

Thus I am informed, that the Honourable Name of *Villiers* is written fourteen several ways, in their own Evidences, and the like (though not so many) Variations, may be observed in others. I insist the longer on this point, because in our *Catalogue of Sheriffs*, the same surname is variously written, which same (without cause) may impute to my *carelessness*, being the effect of my *care*, conforming the Orthography exactly to the Original, where such variation doth plainly appear, and however such diversity appeareth in the Eye of others, I dare profess that I am delighted with the *Prospect* thereof.'

## INTRODUCTION

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the eleventh century, the spelling is generally Peshale, but Pesehale and Peashale also occur.

The last named is probably the oldest form, and I conclude it to be derived from an Anglo-Saxon compound 'Pēashealh' or 'Pēashale,' signifying 'The home of the Peacock.' The Anglo-Saxon for peacock was pāwa, or pēa, the latter being a late contracted form. This noun, being weak masculine, normally took the weak genitive inflexion of 'n' becoming pēan, but to form the compound 'pēashealh' it must have taken the strong inflexion of 's.' The explanation of this is that the word pēa was in this case the name of a man, and so would take the strong inflexion in the genitive like other proper nouns.

The second syllable 'healh' is an Anglo-Saxon word, the exact meaning of which is still doubtful. It is very common in place-names, shortening to -hale, -ale, -hall and -all. Sweet's Anglo-Saxon dictionary gives the meaning as hiding-place, while that of Clark-Hall gives mansion, abode, house or hall.

I thus reach the conclusion that the land and manor handed over to Richard de Corbeil in 1086 was formerly the property of an Anglo-Saxon Chief named Pāwa or Pēa, 'The Peacock,' and that his home received the name of Pēashealh or Peashale.

The contracted form 'pēa' for 'pāwa' was quite common, especially during the later Anglo-Saxon period. It occurs in the name of an early burial mound called 'Pēa Low,' in the Parish of Alstonfield, Staffordshire, and it is quite possible, though I have nothing in further support of the idea, that this mound marks the last resting-place of our Anglo-Saxon Chief Pēa of Peashale.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the name shortened somewhat, in accordance with the usual custom, to Pesale, Peshall and Pesall. It was generally spelt Peshall during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but a few lengthened forms such as Peishall and Peyshall are found, this change

being in accordance with certain laws recognised by students of early middle English Philology.

The first instance of the insertion of the 'r' in the first syllable is in a State document giving a list of the soldiers at Agincourt in 1415, where I find 'Nicholas Pershale,' who, as stated in Chapter V., represented the Staffordshire family at that battle. The second instance is that of 'Sir Hugh Persall' in a list of Sheriffs for 1488.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1611 and 1762, the Baronet branch of the family used the spelling 'Pershall' exclusively, with the exception of Sir William Peshall and his sons. The Knightly branch of the family, however, retained the spelling 'Peshall' without the 'r' until the extinction of this branch in the reign of Henry VIII.<sup>2</sup>

James, son of Jonas Pershall, the founder of the American family, is recorded as 'James Pershall,' in the Southold Census of 1698, but he is referred to in other instances as James Parshall. Many changes in family spelling occurred during the colonizing period in America. It was a period of adaptation. Literary accuracy counted for little, and the spelling was adapted to the pronunciation. Hence the transition from Pershall to the more euphonious Parshall. This has been the spelling of the name in America ever since the time of James Parshall of Southold.

The name of the hamlet itself, the original home of the Parshall family, retained the seventeenth-century spelling of Pershall, and the hamlet is still marked as such on modern maps of Staffordshire.

This broadening of the vowel sound from Peshale to

<sup>1</sup> In his Lists of Sheriffs for Shropshire and Staffordshire, Fuller gives the following variations in the spelling of the name: In Sheriffs of Shropshire, 1334, Richardus de Peshal; the same in 1335 and 1338; in 1342, Adam de Peshal; 1377, Richardus Peshall; 1398, Adamus de Peshal; 1419, Adam Peshal; Mil; and in a list of the Gentry of Staffordshire in 1433, Richardi Peshale. In Sheriffs of Staffordshire, he gives 1334, Richardus de Peshal, the same in 1338-1341; Adam de Peshal in 1342; Richard Peshale of Horseley in 1436; in 1465, Humfrey Peshal; in 1489, Hugh Peshal; and in 1616 John Peshal, Mil & Barr.

<sup>2</sup> The spelling on the title page is taken to agree with the spelling in the text.



Pershall and from Pershall to Parshall is quite in accordance with the usual rules of Philology. An excellent parallel is afforded by the name of a village near Croydon. The modern spelling is Carshalton, whereas the old spelling had no 'r.' The modern pronunciation is cár-sháwl-tñ or ě-sháwl-tñ, and sometimes cáse-hául-tñ.

Returning now to the history of the English family, from Robert de Corbeil's marriage with Ormonda there descended five generations of Peshales in the male line. Robert de Peshale of the fifth generation died without issue. His sister and heiress, Eleanor, married John de Swynnerton, who became Lord of Swinnerton and Sugnall. Sir Richard de Peshale, a younger son of this marriage, became Lord of Peshall. His arms were those of the Swinnerton family, differenced by an escutcheon bearing on it a lion salient, the device of the early Corbeils. The common ancestors of the later Parshalls and Swinnertons were thus Eleanor Peshale and John de Swinnerton, son of John de Parva Sugnilla (Little Sugnal). It was the uncle of this John de Swinnerton who won the family motto in the Crusades by slaying a Saracen in single combat. A few generations before this, John de Swinnerton would have been called Fitz-Alen (Alan). He is the Swinnerton of the stone effigy in the Swinnerton Church illustrated on p. 60. This Lord of Sugnall and Swinnerton was of the fifth generation descended from Alen, a Norman nobleman and cousin of Robert, Earl of Stafford, from whom he held the manor of Swinnerton in 1086. There were no heirs in the second generation from the second marriage of John de Swinnerton. The present Swinnertons are descended from Stephen de Swinnerton of Isalwell, and the present Parshalls from Sir Richard de Peshall, both sons by the first marriage of John de Swinnerton to Eleanor Peshall.

This Sir Richard Peshall was the first to receive knightly distinction, and he was the progenitor of that family, to quote Burke's *Royal Descent*, which in succeeding ages rose

## THE PARSHALL FAMILY

to very great eminence and esteem in Staffordshire and neighbouring counties. Many of the Pershalls were soldiers in early life and won knightly distinction. Nicholas was at Agincourt in 1415 under Henry V. Sir Hugh was knighted on the Bosworth field in 1485. Many Pershalls were Sheriffs of Staffordshire and Shropshire. These early Pershalls were Sheriffs when the office took with it the unlimited jurisdiction of Saxon times, when the Sheriff was under the Earl and, next to the Bishop, the chief man of the Shire. The office was later shorn to a great extent of its judicial functions, but at that time its holder was the first gentleman of the county. He was the sovereign deputy and was answerable to the crown for the peace of his bailiwick during his year of office. He had the right to call out the militia and as in *The Armada* :

‘Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall ;  
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe’s lofty hall ;  
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,  
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.  
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes ;  
Behind him march the halberdiers ; before him sound the drums ;  
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space ;  
For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.  
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,  
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.’

The following is an official list of Sheriffs in the family :

*Staffordshire.*

|                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Nov. 14th, 1380. | Adam Peshale, Kt.            |
| Nov. 7th, 1435.  | Richard Peshale.             |
| Nov. 5th, 1463.  | Humphry Peshale.             |
| Nov. 4th, 1488.  | Hugh Persall, Kt.            |
| Nov. 12th, 1608. | Thomas Persall.              |
| Nov. 6th, 1616.  | John Pesshall, Kt. and Bart. |

*Shropshire and Staffordshire.*

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Feb. 3rd, 1333.  | Richard de Peshale. |
| Jan. 28th, 1338. | Richard de Peshale. |
| Jan. 8th, 1391.  | Adam de Peshale.    |

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### *Shropshire.*

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| May 25th, 1373.  | Richard Peshale.  |
| June 20th, 1373. | Richard Peshale.  |
| Jan. 26th, 1376. | Richard Peshale.  |
| Nov. 3rd, 1397.  | Adam Peshale, Kt. |
| Nov. 4th, 1418.  | Adam Peshale.     |

An early writer has somewhat ungraciously remarked that the Pershalls were better known by the heiresses they had contrived to marry than by their own personal abilities. This amiable virtue was equally notable in the marriages of the early Dukes of Normandy, but with the difference that many of the progeny of the dukes were not the issue of these marriages. While the Parshalls added many illustrious quarterings to their arms, they were not guilty of the immoralities of their Norman progenitors. The nearest approximation was that of Elizabeth Blount—granddaughter, not of the Sir Hugh Peshall who was knighted on Bosworth field, but of another Sir Hugh, often confounded with that one—who bore by Henry VIII. Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond.

It might be argued that in so long a time the Norman blood had become exceedingly diffused, but most of the marriages, from the Conquest down, have been with those who have descended from Norman nobles. Prior to the emigration of Jonas, I find record of no less than four such marriages in this county (Bucks), three prior to 1600 with the Harcourts, and one about 1620 with the Windsors, from whom my mother had descended. Of earlier marriages history records<sup>1</sup> that Sir Adam de Peshale, through marriage with the Botteliers, inherited the manor of North Marsden, Bucks, which subsequently reverted to the Earl of Ormond. Records of marriages such as these serve the double purpose of showing the wide acquaintance of the family, as well as proving the continuance of the practice of marrying those of Norman descent.

<sup>1</sup> Lipscomb's *History of the County of Buckinghamshire*, vol. iv. p. 590 and vol. i. p. 333.

## THE PARSHALL FAMILY

The heraldic history of the Parshalls is of some interest when considered in all its bearings. The art of heraldry did not assume much importance in England before the middle of the twelfth century. The cross of the Swinnertons comes first in evidence with Robert Fitz-Aelen of the third generation, Lord of Swinnerton, 1154-1189. The escutcheon of pretence borne by John de Swinnerton after his marriage with Eleanor de Peshale, heiress and sole survivor of her line, bore a lion salient. These arms, so differenced, were also borne by Sir Richard de Peshale and his heirs until the end of the fourteenth century, when Sir Richard de Peshale, the head of the family, adopted the wolf's head, the device of Hugh Lupus. The last Peshale to bear the lion salient was Sir Adam de Peshale of Weston, his younger brother. Sir Adam is the hero of the battles with Sir Hugh Wrottesley, and a man of many activities.

Heraldic writers record the lion salient as the device of Ranulph, Earl of Chester. It was, however, the device of the early Corbeils, and was brought to England by the Corbeils before the time of Ranulph. In an early description of the tombs of the ancient Earls, in the church they founded at Corbeil, mention is made of a device painted on the tombs, viz., a lion salient on a field of red. This device is still to be seen on the tomb of Haymon in that church. Hence Eleanor was correct in bringing to her husband's armory the lion salient, the device of her family. Heraldry began earlier in Normandy than in England, where it did not reach great prominence until the Crusades, and the lion was the device that had been used by the families with whom the Corbeils intermarried: hence its appearance on the differencing of the arms of John de Swynnerton after his marriage with Eleanor de Peshale. Later on, apparently, the fact was lost sight of that the lion salient was the device of the ancient Corbeils, and apparently it was assumed that it had been brought into the family arms through a misconception that the arms of Ranulph, Earl of Chester,

were the same as those of Hugh Lupus, the first Earl of Chester. The sister of Hugh Lupus had married Guilbert de Corbeil, father of Robert de Peshale, so the Parshalls were entitled to the differencing of Hugh Lupus, which is the wolf now found on the Parshall arms. The Parshalls did not derive the right to the use of the lion salient from the Earls of Chester. They were entitled, however, to use the wolf's head, which was the device of Hugh Lupus, first Earl of Chester. The lion salient is the older heraldic device of the family, and from an historical point of view, more correct. From an heraldic point of view, however, the wolf is correct, since Richard de Peshale was entirely within his heraldic rights to adopt the wolf of Hugh Lupus, whether or not his assumptions as to the origin of the lion salient were correct. From the time of Richard de Peshale, in 1350, until now, the arms have been unchanged.

Sir John Pershall added the red hand of Ulster by acquiring a Baronety of James I. in 1611, but that branch of the family became extinct in the seventeenth century. His descendant, Arabella Pershall, the last of that line, married Lord Glenorchie, third Earl of Breadalbane, through whom the manor passed to the Breadalbane family.

The Pershalls of England, in my own line, became extinct in the seventeenth century, and in the generation of Jonas the Emigrant (who had been preceded by Edmund in 1570, but who returned to England) the history of the Parshalls in America has been the subject of an ample volume.

In the text, authorities are quoted, since, in the genealogical records of families of less than paramount importance extending well over a thousand years, it has sometimes been found necessary to interpolate supposititious individuals to complete the historical narrative. The records of the Parshall family are unusually complete. From the time of Rollo, there are records proving the existence and

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parentage of each individual in the ancestral line. The Norman phase is wrapped up in the history of the old town of Corbeil founded by the Corbeils. Authoritative records are existent to prove that portion of the genealogy. The marriage of Gilbert de Corbeil to Isabel Loup, sister of Hugh Loup, first Earl of Chester, was a sufficiently prominent event to establish the identity of Robert de Peshale, the first English Parshall. The principal facts relative to Robert de Peshale are the grant of the Pershall manor to him by Robert, Earl of Stafford, and his marriage with Ormonda, referred to in the ancient records of Lumley Castle. Ormonda was a lineal descendant of Ethelred the Unready by his first marriage. His second wife was Emma, who, with the Corbeils, had a common ancestor in Richard the Fearless, which would account for the acquaintanceship between Ormonda and the Corbeils. Historical records are in agreement with the testimony of Heraldry, since the arms of the early Parshalls were identical with those of the Earls of Corbeil.

The English descent is not obscure, since there was but one manor of the name of Pershall, and the only family bearing that name was the Staffordshire family, with certain branches extending into adjoining counties, but always identified as a part of the Staffordshire family. In the twelfth century, the descent was from the female line, but this was not an unusual occurrence when the heiress represented a family of distinction. The Earls of Plymouth, who are to-day the Windsor family in England, are thus descended. The American Windsors, from whom my mother was descended, are the descendants of the early Windsors in the male line. The Parshalls being, therefore, of limited number and of geographical distinction, the English history presents no difficulties, especially as in practically every generation there were members of sufficient distinction to be historically recorded. Edmund Pershall, the uncle of Jonas, visited Virginia, and is recorded in John Smith's

travels as one of the Virginian Adventurers. Possibly his adventures influenced Jonas to establish himself on American soil. Jonas was a man of record in England: his sister is mentioned in the pedigrees of the Earls of Plymouth as having married Edward Windsor. Apparently the fortunes of the English Pershalls were not so much in the ascendant in the time of Jonas, since I have found a fragment of a lament written by one of the Pershalls of those days of how things had come to pass so that the old families under the changed conditions could not maintain their former hospitality and grandeur. Sir John Pershall was sufficiently well off, however, to be able to purchase a Baronetage in the time of James I. Jonas must have possessed some means, since his son James, the first-born American Parshall, was possessed of property. The history of the Parshalls in America since the time of James has been chronicled by another member of the family.

Should this volume be thought lacking in literary finish, it is to be remembered that the whole of the work of compilation has been done by myself and an engineering assistant. Neither of us lays claim to literary accomplishment, and in this, as in all of the ordinary pursuits of an engineer, the substance is primary and the form secondary. Some more accomplished member of the family may perhaps, at some later date, expand the present notes into the form of a finished history, although the chronicle of an historical family does not lend itself particularly to artistic treatment. The commonplace members, so essential to the continuing existence of a family, furnish so little subject-matter to the chronicle that a continuous narrative often requires a kind of literary embellishment inconsistent with historical accuracy.

The period covered by the activities of the family comprehends one of the most important epochs of history. The ultimate result of the Norse occupation by Rollo was the making of France, and that of the Norman Conquest

the making of England. The settling of the Pilgrim Fathers in America marks the beginning of the United States. The object of the first migrations was to continue an existence more congenial than that provided by the bleak and overcrowded shores of the north. The second was of conquest, influenced by a settling and organizing spirit. The third, to enjoy the privileges of individual and intellectual freedom, which, as a result of the American Revolution, is now the preponderating characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race, and a survival, in a more refined form, of the old Viking love of freedom of action and thought.

PENBURY GROVE,  
PENN, BUCKS, *June, 1914.*