

# 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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# Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	3
I. THE EARLS OF CORBEIL TO ROBERT DE CORBEIL OR DE PESHALE, FIRST LORD OF PESHALE - - - - -	25
II. THE EARLIER PESHALE FAMILY - - - - -	49
III. THE SWYNNERTON ANCESTORS OF THE PARSHALL FAMILY -	57
IV. SIR RICHARD DE PESHALE AND THE PESHALES OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY - - - - -	63
V. SIR RICHARD DE PESHALE AND THE PESHALLS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY - - - - -	75
VI. SIR ADAM DE PESHALE OF WESTON-UNDER-LIZARD - -	91
VII. SIR HUMPHREY PESHALL AND THE PESHALLS OF KNIGHTLEY	102
VIII. SIR JOHN PERSHALL, BART., AND HIS DESCENDANTS - -	122
IX. EDMUND PERSHALL AND HIS DESCENDANTS - - - - -	141
X. JAMES PERSHALL AND HIS DESCENDANTS - - - - -	151
APPENDICES - - - - -	171

## List of Plates

	PAGE
Map from Plot's 'Staffordshire,' 1682 - - - - -	2
Pershall Bridge and the present Hamlet of Pershall - - -	9
Pedigree of the Earls of Corbeil to Robert de Corbeil or de Peshale, First Lord of Peshale - - - - -	27
Pedigree of the Earlier Peshale Family - - - - -	51
Pedigree showing the Parentage of Ormonda, wife of Robert de Peshale, First Lord of Peshale - - - - -	53
Swynnerton Church - - - - -	56
A Swynnerton Standard - - - - -	58
Pedigree of the Swynnerton Ancestors of the Parshall Family -	59
Effigy of John de Swynnerton, in Swynnerton Church - - -	60
Arms and Crest of Swynnerton - - - - -	62
Arms and Crest of Sir Richard de Peshale I. - - - - -	64
Pedigree of Sir Richard de Peshale and the Peshales of the Fourteenth Century - - - - -	65
Pedigree of the Family of Peshall from the <i>Visitation of St. George,</i> 1614 - - - - -	70
Arms and Crest of Sir Richard de Peshale II. - - - - -	74
Seal of Nicholas de Peshale - - - - -	76
Pedigree of Sir Richard de Peshale and the Peshalls of the Fifteenth Century - - - - -	77
Pedigree of the Pershall Family from the <i>Visitation of Kent, 1619-21</i>	83
Arms and Crest of Sir Adam de Peshale of Weston-under-Lizard-	90
Pedigree of Sir Adam de Peshale of Weston-under-Lizard - - -	93

## LIST OF PLATES

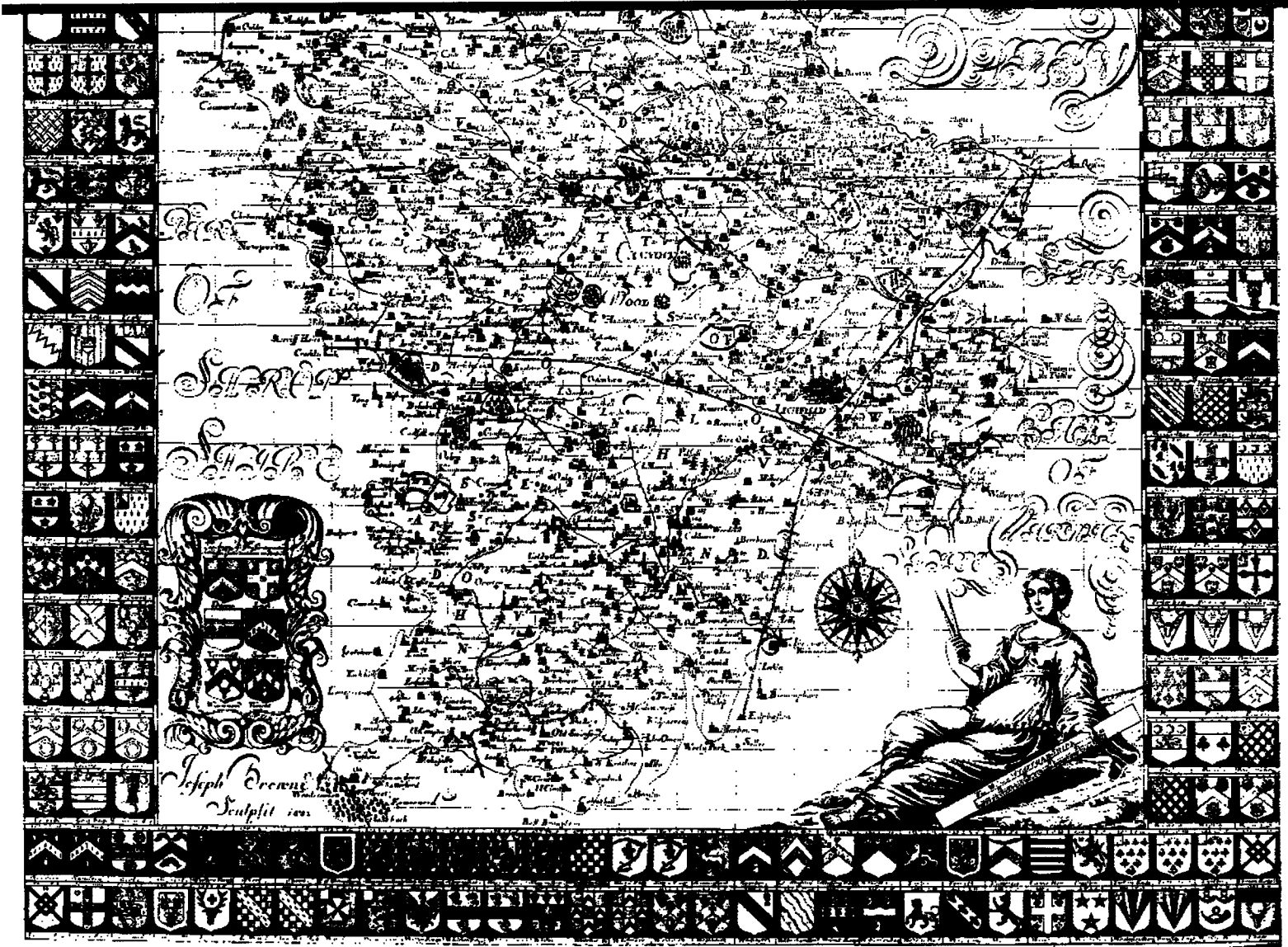
	PAGE
Adam de Peshale's Petition to Richard II., 1377 - - -	94
Endorsement of Petition by King's Chamberlain - - -	94
Pedigree of Peshale of Weston from <i>Staffordshire Historical Collections</i> - - - - -	95
Arms and Crest of the Peshalls of Knightley - - -	102
Pedigree of Sir Humphrey Peshall and the Peshalls of Knightley -	103
Pedigree of the Peshalls of Knightley, from the <i>Staffordshire Visitation of 1583</i> - - - - -	107
Arms and Crest of Sir John Pershall, Bart. - - -	122
Pedigree of Sir John Pershall, Bart., and his Descendants - -	123
Chancel of Eccleshall Church before the Restoration of 1867 -	126
Armorial Tablet to the Memory of Bridg. Pershall - - -	130
Prayer Book presented to Eccleshall Church by Bridget and Anne Pershall, 1686 - - - - -	132
Pedigree of the Peshall Family from <i>Staffordshire Pedigrees, 1664-1700</i> - - - - -	135
Pedigree of Edmund Pershall and his Descendants - - -	143
Arms and Crest of Edmund Pershall of Bromley, Kent - -	144
Pedigree of James Pershall and his Descendants - - -	153
Pedigree of the present Parshalls - - - - -	160
Arms and Crest of the present Parshalls - - - - -	162
Dr. H. F. Parshall, Son and Daughter - - - - -	164
Laboratory at Penbury Grove, Bucks - - - - -	168
Pedigree of the Windsor Family, showing intermarriages with the Parshall Family - - - - -	176

**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.