

NOTES ON
CHALTON AND CATHERINGTON.

CHALTON.

The earliest Lord of the great manor of Chalton of whom we have any record was Earl Godwin, the virtual ruler of the country during part of the reign of Edward the Confessor. This great estate comprised the five manors known now as the parishes of Chalton, Clanfield, Idsworth, Blendworth, and Catherington. It was consequently known as the Five Manors, and comprised the southern half of Finchdean Hundred. In the time of King Edward the Confessor its annual value was £56, but in the next reign at the time of the survey it was valued at £80, but actually paid £110 and a mark of gold. It was one of the wealthiest estates in Hampshire at the time of the Domesday Survey. It had a Church, was occupied by 55 inferior tenants or villeins, with whom were 27 borderers or cottagers, and it had also 22 slaves. These, with their families, made up the population in 1086. It was given by William the Conqueror to Earl Roger, Earl of Arundel, one of the King's most trusty friends. He held it as part of his great lordships, and he was also Earl of Montgomery and Shrewsbury. He was succeeded successively by his sons, Hugh de Montgomery and Robert de Belesme, on account of whose treason his earldoms were confiscated by Henry I. Before 1151 this family of the Earls of Arundel had ceased, and William de Albiney was at that date in possession of the earldom. Then came a change as far as Chalton was concerned, for this manor became part of the honour of Leicester. Robert, Earl of Leicester, 1191—1206, married Lourette or Laurentia, daughter of William Lord Breus of Bramber, and the Testa de Neville informs us that Chalton was held by Laurentia Countess of Leicester, and that her land here was worth £50 annually. Chalton thus passed into the possession

of the Earls of Leicester; first, the Beaumonts, and subsequently the de Montforts, who have left their mark on English history, one of whom, Simon de Montfort, the leader of the barons in the wars of Henry III's reign, was more instrumental than any other man in preserving the liberties which had been granted by Magna Charta in the struggle which ultimately led to the establishment of parliamentary institutions in England. Simon de Montfort was slain at the battle of Evesham, 1265, and his sons Simon and Guy were deprived of their estates and exiled. Then came another change as regards the lordship of Chalton, for it was granted by the King to the Earl of Cornwall. The *placito de quo warranto* rolls show that about 1280 this manor was held by Edmund Earl of Cornwall, Edmund of Almaine (the nephew of Henry III. and son of Richard Earl of Cornwall, the titular King of the Romans). He died in 1300, and the manor again came into the King's hand, and appears to have reverted to the honour of Leicester. Edmund, second son of Henry III., was made Earl of Leicester about two months after Simon de Montfort had been slain at Evesham, and he was created also Earl of Lancaster, in 1267. By the beginning of the next century, when Chalton was again part of the honour of Leicester, the earldom of Leicester had become merged in the earldom of Lancaster. There is a charter still existing dated 5th Dec., 1330, referring to an earlier charter dated 12th July, 1266, conveying the honour of Leicester to Edmund Earl of Lancaster. His descendant Henry was made Duke of Lancaster, and his daughter Blanche became his heiress. She was married by John of Gaunt, son of Edward III., who thus became Duke of Lancaster in right of his wife, and superior Lord of this manor. John of Gaunt's badge or crest was the Red Lion. I have been informed that the red lion is a very old inn sign in Chalton, that early in this century it was here, and that a story is current of a man who had drunk there too freely seventy years ago shouting, with a crowd outside the inn, "Come down, old red lion, come down." The old red lion sign has not come down yet, and is older than that date. I have no doubt it is 500 years old, and that the knights and men-at-arms of this place understood its meaning, seeing that they mustered under it for war, for it is none other than the

badge of "Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," as Shakespeare has styled him, the most renowned of the Dukes of Lancaster, the superior Lords of Chalton, and I see no reason why parts of the inn itself should not be as old as John of Gaunt's time. Whatever legislation may in the future do for inns such as this I hope the old Red Lion sign in Chalton, so intimately connected with its history, may long survive. Chalton was held by many knights in succession as part of the honour of Leicester, or honour and Duchy of Lancaster, as tenants under earl or duke. The family of Lestraunge or le Strange was long in possession here. The name occurs in the early records under the Latin equivalent "Extraneus." John Extraneus was sheriff of the County in the 31, Henry III. ; Hamo Lestrangle was Lord of Chalton in 56, Henry III. ; Fulco Lestrangle and John Lestrangle temp Edward II. and Edward III. ; and John Lestrangle under the Duchy of Lancaster, 1376. The Duchy of Lancaster became ultimately merged in that of Cornwall. In the time of Henry VIII. some dispute arose concerning the title to this manor, and it was granted by Henry VIII. to William Earl of Southampton. The windmill on Chalton Down, on the left as we leave the village, has been a mill for many centuries, or has succeeded an older one. The earliest record I have of it is 1342, when the tithes payable by the mill at Chalton on corn ground in it, with other small tithes, oblations, and mortuaries due to this Church of Chalton, amounted to £7 1s. 5d. per annum. The revenue of this church in 1290 was £20 annually, and there was in addition £6 per annum paid to a chantry priest. The income consisted of land, rent, pasture, great and small tithes, rectory house, etc.

CATHERINGTON.

The oldest name of this place I have met with is Kateringeton, and apparently it had no connection with St. Catherine, a guess of later date. Like Chalton, Kateringeton belonged to the honour of Arundel, and being part of the greater manor of Chalton, one of the "Five Manors," it became, later on, part of the honour of Leicester. Kateringeton is not mentioned in Domesday Book. At that time it was probably reckoned

as part of the Five Manors Estate of Chalton, and included under the record of that place. The Testa de Neville of the time of Henry III. states that Katerington was held by Thomas Tyrel as a military feod of old feoffment at one knight's fee of the Earl of Arundel, and the same of the king. The words "old feoffment" refer to the period before the close of Henry I.'s reign. Later on it was held in the time of Henry VI. by Thomas Sandes, and in the time of Queen Elizabeth it belonged to Lord Sandes. The Church of Catherington belonged to the Priory of Nuneaton, and this Priory belonged to the Abbey of Fontevrault in Anjou. The cross or rood, the remains of which are in the churchyard, was probably set up by the Abbess of Fontevrault, for the Priory of Nuneaton was a cell of Fontevrault. The properties of the alien priories such as Nuneaton were vested in the parent Abbey. Fontevrault Abbey was established for monks and nuns of the Benedictine Order. It was founded A.D. 1100 by Robert de Abriselle, and placed by him under the supremacy of an Abbess. Nuneaton and Amesbury in England were cells of this Abbey. King Henry II. was a great benefactor to it. He was buried in the choir of the church, also his wife Eleanor, King Richard I., and Isabel d'Angouleme, the wife of King John. Henry III. bequeathed his heart to be buried in this Abbey. Until the Revolution in France its revenues were immense, and it was successively governed by many Princesses of France as Abbesses. The order was Benedictine with a variation, and was known as the Order of Fontevrault. Robert, Earl of Leicester, was witness to Henry II.'s Charter to Fontevrault. The Charter of Henry II. recites that Robert, Earl of Leicester, gave the church of Nuneaton to this Abbey, and with Nuneaton went, either at that time or subsequently, the church of Catherington, the date of which is about the time of Henry II., transition Norman.
