

Topographical Collections of John Aubrey 1659-1670 Bishopstone

Corrected and enlarged by John Edward Jackson, M.A. F.S.A. 1862.
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RAMSBURY HUNDRED ¹

This place as the name imports, belongs to the Bishopric of Sarum ². The mannour is now leased to a Layman, and he again lets estates to his Tenants, who all do him yearly this service for their lands as followeth.

Every plow or teame at three dayes warning, makes, in the husbandman's phrase, three journeys, *i.e.*, plougheth three days for the Lord, at 2d. a day, and bread and cheese *gratis*, At wheat harvest every messuage is bound, likewise at three days warning, to maintaine a reaper. These breake their fast at their owne and afterwards are entertained at the Lord's, charge, *viz.*, at dinner every man hath a pound of beefe, a pound of mutton, a handfull of salt, and fower pound of bread, and among all a barrell of beer. This is brought to them into the field; at evening they all come to the mannour house, and again every man hath four pounds of bread, one pound of cheese, and a candle (? caudle), or a cuppe of beare. Here is an old seate, called "Hocker bench", hewn out of the side of a banke near the Maypole where they keepe their revelling. It is probably so called from the ancient Saxon custome of Hocking at Hocktide, for joy at the death of the

¹ The name of Ramsbury is a corruption of Raven'sburg; in Anglo-Saxon "Hræfens-byrig". During the 200 years (from A.D.705 to A.D. 909) that the Bishops of Wiltshire had their See at Ramsbury it was called, "Ecclesia Corvinensis". The lordship of the Hundred was given to the Nishop by King Offa. [Hundred Rolls]. He was a king of Mercia, and died A.D. 794.

² This Bishopston belonged to the See of Sarum; Bishopston in South Wilts to that of Winchester. At the Muster in 1538, the archers, &c., from this parish were supplied by the Bishop of Sarum, Lady Darrell and William Wroughton. When Church property was confiscated in 1647-51 the episcopal Manor was sold to John Oldfield and Matthew Cendrick for £2261 16s. 2d. The Lordship of the Manor is now in Lord Holland's family. An old Manor House was taken down in 1860. The Vicarage was a Peculiar in the gift of the Prebendary of Bishopston., now in the gift of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. Of the early Prebendaries there is a list in the "Antiquities of Salisbury, and Bath Abbey Church, p. 315".

Tyrant Hardicanute the Dane ¹. Hither the ancient and graver men, calling themselves Aldermen of Hocker-bench, resort to keep good order and be spectators of the dancing and pastime of the younger. *Mem.* There is a Hocker-bench likewise at Hartwell in Barkshire: ideo *quære*.

Near unto this place, as the *indigenæ* informe me, was sometimes a *Sanctuary* called *Paradise* whither whosoever fled he was free from all arrests.

In the Church here hath been very fine painted glasse, but all broken by the Parliament soldiers in the late evil warres; one window only, viz., that in the east end of the north aisle, escaping the fury of the puritanical zealots. In it are three women saints, each standing in a nich of curious architecture. That in the first colunne holds a sword reversed in her right hand, a book expanded in her left. That in the middle I suppose to be the B.V. On an escroll at her feet . . . Sacred Mar. ora pro nobis. . . . The figure in the third colunne holds two baskets in her right hand, and a booke as aforesaid in her left. In the limbe of the same windowe . . . say qui istam fenestram fieri fecit . . . At the top of the third colunne of the same window this coate [PL.xxix. No. 437]. Some *device* in a shield at the top of the first colunne, viz., *Argent*, over a starre of 6 points proper, an Eagle rising *Argent* [No. 438], Another broken in the middle colunne. In the third colunne of the last window in the same aisle, a saint's head broken off, the upper garment is seminated all over with these letters, H within a circle Or [No. 440]. On both sides of the same saint, these words counterly varied *thu merci*; at the foot of the same saint, M on a shield within a circle Or [No. 441]. Some *device* in a shield in the East window of the south aisle, *Argent*, some birde rising . . . in base, but metall upon metall. ²

¹ Hampson (*Mediæv. Kal.*, I., 204), pronounces this to be a popular error, but knows of no satisfactory origin of the custom. At some places it consisted in catching passengers by a rope and making them pay forfeit: at others, in "heaving or lifting" them. Hock Tuesday was the 2nd Tuesday after Easter.

² *i.e.* False heraldry. The remark applies to shield 438. In the South Aisle window the *device* described by Aubrey, and some other portions of stained glass remain. The three figures &c., which he saw in the North Aisle, have perished.

In the south aisle is an opening through the wall into the Chancell; over it winds up a small pair of stairs, at the top of which is a (diamond shaped) peepe-hole into the Chancell [No. 442].

In the nave of the Church, beneath his picture on a brasse plate affixed to a marble, this following inscription : Of your charite pray for ye sowl of Harry Preci, which Harry deceasid the day of Juli, the yeare of out Lord God M. Vc.XXIII, on whose soule Jhu have merci, Amen.

This on a marble near the altar:

"Having finished her course, here resteth the body of EDITH, wife of CHRISTOPHER WILLOUGHBY of London, Merchant late Sheriffe of this Countie, who deceased this life the 15th of August 1670".

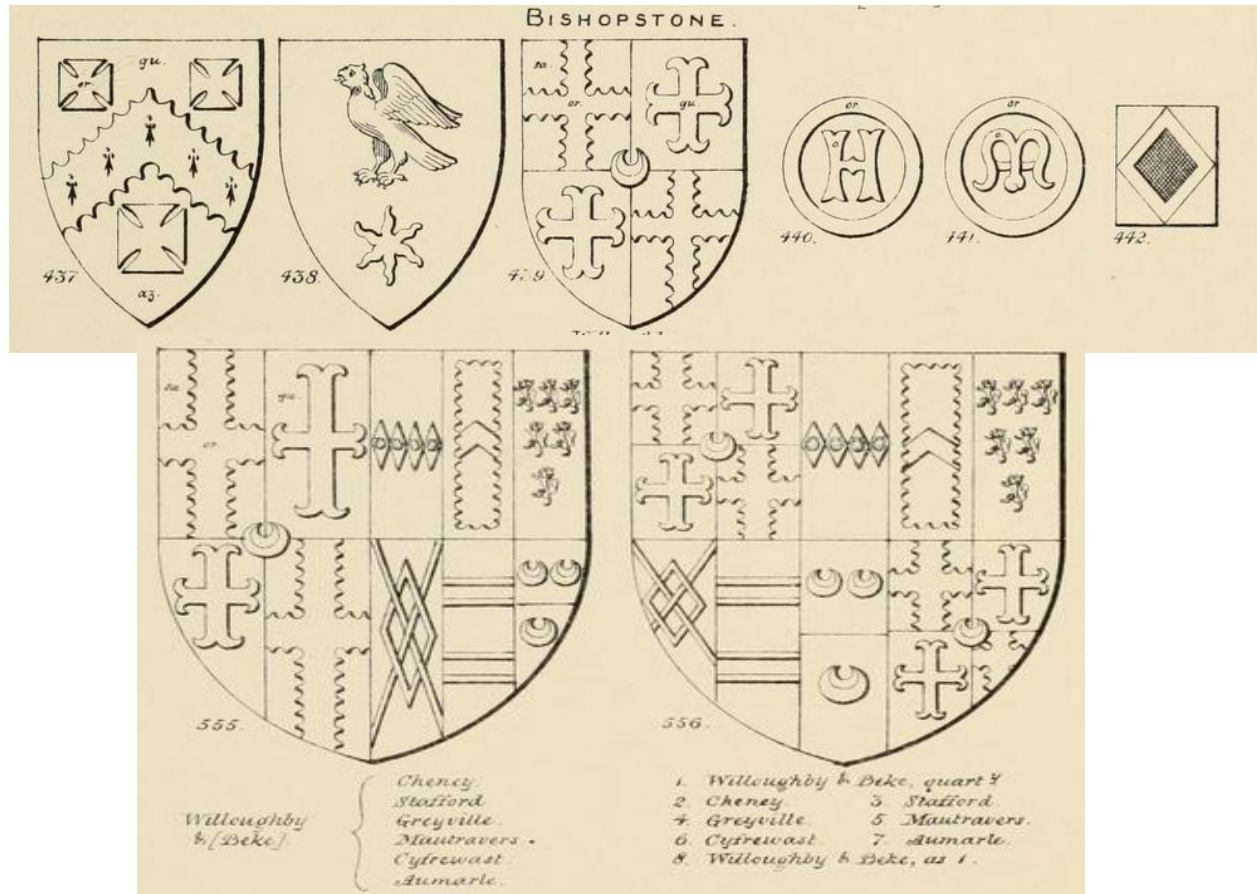
A monument likewise erected to her on the wall; the escutcheon within a mantle, thus: [No. 439] WILLOUGHBY quartering [BEKE. See "Brook House", and No. 555]

(OPC Note: see Westbury Hundred-Brook House for Willoughby lineage)

"Hic obdormiscit in pace EDRTHA Christ. Willoughby Armig; Lond: conjux charissima: apud Alvington in Agro Glocest: nata An. 1607: ubi libras annuatim solvend. Pauperibus legavit. Lond. Translata matrimonium contraxit 1634. Deponsum apud exteros (negotiis mercatoriis versantem) æquo tulit animo per Annos 6: matrimonium contarctum tunc sacrum consummavit 1640. Maritum inde ad Indos navigantem summo exectavit desiderio per Annos 6¼. Redeuntem randem (sorte suâ contentum) mutuo conjugali fruuntar solatio in vicem felices. Fœmina erga Deum pia, egenos benigna, voti conjugalis semper observantissima, amicis fidelis, omnibus dilecta: Obiit ÆRæ Xtianæ 1670, ÆTatis suæ 63. Cujus memoriæ hoc sacravit Maritus mœrens" ¹

Nota : That about An Dni 1657, Mr. Gilbert Keate, Lord of this manor under the Bishop, gave 4 pounds per annum to fower poor people: (*i.e.* to each of the four Ed.). Since the estate is sold to Christopher Willoughby, Esq., Merchant". ²

¹ From this odd inscription it appears that immediately after a contract of matrimony, Mr. Willoughby went abroad on mercantile business and was absent six year; that on his return the marriage was completed: that he then went away again for six years and a quarter more, but that upon his second return the domestic life was resumed, and continued without further interruption. . He was a proprietor in 1639 40; and by Indenture 8th June 1680, he conveyed the Tithes of Clinch in the parish of Milton Lislebonne (formerly Milton Abbott's), near Pewsey, in this county, for various charitable purposes, chiefly for the benefit of Bishopston. His own epitaph in the church mentions that he was "infelix in secundis nuptiis".



Published by the Wiltshire Archæological and Natural History Society 1862.