

THE DOUSE FAMILY.

The following extracts are taken from the papers on Ancient Houses, by an Old Inhabitant, which have appeared in the *Romsey Advertiser*:—

We now take up the story of the Douse of Nether Wallop and Broughton, and to do so we must return to Moor Court in the 34th of the reign of King Henry the Eighth, where Richard Douse died on the 10th of December, 1543, after signing his short will in the presence of several local witnesses, among them John Calker, the cdivant keeper of Nunnery Swans. Of the two sons which he names in this will John, the younger, succeeded to Moor Court, and we have already followed his fortunes and that of his descendants. Of the elder son, Thomas, we know even less than of John: He was born about 1503, and was forty years of age at the time of his father's death, and he was then living

at Collingbourne Ducis in Wiltshire, and appears to have outlived John by four years, dying childless in the fifty-ninth year of his age in 1562. Unfortunately the parish registers of Collingbourne begin far too late to be of service as to his burial, or to unravel the history of his successor, who was (possibly) his nephew, and namesake, Thomas, the younger son of John, of Moor Court. Guessing is always hazardous in genealogical matters, but since it is stated on the authority of Woodward's Hampshire that Frances, son and heir of Thomas Douse (junior) was "of Collingbourne Ducis" at the time of his marriage with Elizabeth, the heiress of Sir Hamden Powlet, it is perhaps permissible to conjecture that Francis's father succeeded the latter's uncle at Collingbourne, and there lived with his wife, Blanche

Covert, who bore him six sons and three daughters (and of these Thomas was "under sixteen years of age" in 1571). Moreover, this supposition gains credence when we observe that another son of the same couple was baptised by the unusual name of Gabriel; and that a Sir Gabriel Pile was buried in the church of Collingbourne Ducis "early in the seventeenth century." Turning to the Heralds visitation of Wiltshire for 1623 we find that Sir Gabriel Pile, who is described as of "Bubton, County Wilts," was third in descent from Richard Pile, who married Elizabeth Horne, the heiress of that place, and that Sir Gabriel's sister was Christian; and his son, Francis Pile, aged 34, died in 1623. Of course it is mere conjecture that Christian, wife of Thomas Douse, who died in 1562, was connected with these Piles, and Thomas, the nephew, named his sons Francis and Gabriel and his daughters Elizabeth and Jane, after that family. It suffices to say that Thomas, the son of Thomas (junior, under 16 in 1571) was named as joint executor with his sister, Alice, to the will of their grandmother Alice widow of John of Moor Court. She (apparently) survived until 1580, when her will was proved, and as this grandson, Thomas, re-appears later as the occupier of an ancient house near Mottisfont, and the progenitor of another family of Douse of that place; it is as well to note this hint as to his birth, for it possibly places him as the second son of his parents, since their son Edmond, who was born in 1584, was the fourth. At present we do not know where Thomas and Blanche Douse lived in the early part of their married life. There is a note in a "Bill of Complaint" as to the Manor of Canterton in the New Forest for the year 1608 as to a "tenement called Fox Hunters," with land attached, which was then in the possession of Wm. Lord Sandys, and had aforesaid belonged to the Gauntlets and before them to "Thomas Douse." This land was at Brook in the parish

of Bramshaw, and I have another note that, in 1670, the Manor of Bramshaw was then known as "Mooze Close," which is curious. At all events Thomas and Blanche Douse appear upon the scene at Broughton in 1590, when they purchased that Manor, and presumably went to live there, since Thomas was buried in its church in 1602, and Blanche in 1608. And there, again, parish registers fail us, for we have only the inscriptions on the brass to their memory, which gives no dates, and was not erected until 1625, when their son Edmond placed the following inscriptions over their remains:—"Here lyeth interred ye bodies of Thomas Dowse, Esq., and Blanche Covert of Slavgham in ye county of Sussex ye onfy wife of Thomas Dowse. He dyed in Ano. 1602, and Blanche in Ano. 1608. This monument in memory of them both was made at ye proper cost of Sir Edmond Dowse Kt. their 4th sonne. Performed in Ano. 1625. *Qui nescit caeter aquarit.*" Sir Edmund Dowse, who was knighted in 1609, does not appear to have been married, and at the time of his death was a resident in St. Martin's in London. His will was proved on the 25th of January, 1646-7, by his brother, Capt. Richard Dowse, who also left no descendants. He deceased in 1658, when the administration of his effects was granted to "his next of kin and cousin Germain Katherine Dowse." There was another brother, John Dowse, who was apparently dead in 1658, of whom we have no further note; also a Gabriel Dowse, who graduated B.A. at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, on the 23rd of February, 1597. He was of Grey's Inn and later of Abingdon, Berks, when knighted in 1617. He married Jane, daughter of Webb, of County Wilts, but there is no mention of children. It is not a little pathetic to note that out of the four distinguished sons of Thomas and Blanche not one of them was knighted during their father's lifetime, and only Francis, the elder, in that of his mother, (that honour being conferred upon him in the first of James the First 1603). But it must have been a keen pleasure to his parents to see their first-born marry the daughter and sole heiress of Sir Hamden Pawlet, of Nether Wallop, and to welcome his two elder sons (Hamden and Thomas) before they died. On his eldest son, in 1623, "Sir Francis Douse, of

Nether Wallop," settled the manor of Broughton, at the time of Hamden's marriage with Amabel, daughter of Sir Antony Benne. He died childless, and his widow remarrying secondly Antony Fane and thirdly to Henry Grey, Earl of Kent; in 1665 as Anabel Countess Dowager of Kent passed the Manor of Broughton to Sir John Evelyn, of West Desh. Thomas, the second son of Thomas and Blanche, matriculated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, in 1620, and entering as a student of the Inner Temple in 1620 was a Benchler in 1630. Some time between these years he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Gerard Fleetwood, of Crawley, whose dower of £700 was not paid until July, 1646-7, possibly owing to the Civil War. Sir Gerard is an interesting figure in our local history. He first appears at Southampton, when, as a lad of 18, he married the mature beauty, Jane Lambert, said by the gossips of the day to be twenty years his senior, and to have married him in March, 1572, when William, first Marquis of Winchester, had not been dead a week. By the Marquis Jane was mother of three sons, all knighted, and of a daughter, Susanna Powlet, who in 1596 became the wife of Thomas Kirkaby, of Stanbridge. Her marriage settlement was witnessed by all three of her brothers, and by her stepfather. Sir Gerard Fleetwood married secondly to Mary, daughter of William Dutton, of Sherborne (Glos) by whom he had Elizabeth, born about 1600, and Dutton Fleetwood, born about 1603. Sometime before that date Sir Gerard had taken over the lease of Crawley from John Edmonds (who retired to Bossington) and was living there when, in 1643, he was cited as a delinquent by the Parliament for being in arms for King, and was fined accordingly. He was a friend of Sir Hugh Stewkley, of Michelmersh, to whose will he was executor in 1642. Francis, third son of Sir Frances Douse (born in 1602) matriculated at Hart Hall, Oxford, at the age of 17, and became a student of the Inner Temple. Giles Douse, the fourth son, born in 1606, also matriculated at Magdalen Hall on the 31st of January, 1622, aged 16, was B.A. in 1624 and appointed by his father to the living of Broughton in 1630. He was married at Winchester Castle on the 22nd of September, 1634, to Sarah, daughter, of the Revd. Christopher Hurst, Vicar of Eling, and had a daughter, Elizabeth (who later married William Uvedale, of Horton) was born to him. His living was sequestered by the Parliament in 1646. Sir Francis' other sons were Gabriel, and Edmond, his daughters Mary and Hester (apparently unmarried), while Anne married Sir Philip Casteret, Seigneur de St. Grien, and Katherine married John Cowper, of Ditcham. Sir Francis Douse lived through the troubled times of the Civil War, and died in 1649, when his will was proved by his son Thomas, on the 19th of November of that year, at which time it was described of "Berry Court, Nether Wallop." Who succeeded him at Wallop I know not, but his grandson Thomas, son of Thomas and Elizabeth Fleetwood, is described as of that place, and was buried in the church in December, 1732, at the age of 85, together with his wife Dorothy, daughter of Robert Clinton, of Stourton, who was there interred on the 4th of April, 1698. This couple, according to the inscription, had 13 children, among them Elizabeth, Gabriel, Thomas, Clinton, Diana and Thomas. Their son, Francis, is alone known to fame by the curious tomb that he caused to be erected over his remains in the churchyard of Nether Wallop. It resembles a sort of sugar loaf or tent of stone, out of which issues what is supposed to represent flames. On it are the arms of Douse impaling (?) underneath is written "Francis Douse, Doctor of Physick, son of Thomas Douse, Esq., died 16th September, 1760, aged 84. Also the remains of Anne Douse, his wife, who died in 1767, aged 75." He left money for educational purposes in rather a strange will, but there appears to be so little to be learned about him or the habitations of these Douses of Broughton and Wallop that a further search is hardly worth while for the purpose of old houses.