

## NOTE ON A PORTRAIT AT CROSBY HALL

ON page 19, Vol. 117 (1966) of *Transactions* there is a photograph of a portrait at Crosby Hall, which is said to be of William Blundell of Crosby, 1620–1698. Miss Rosamund Meredith<sup>1</sup> has pointed out in *Derbyshire Life and Countryside*, January 1968, that it is in fact a portrait of Col. Rowland Eyre of Hassop, Derbyshire, 1600–1672, father of Mary Eyre who married William Blundell's son.

It is one of three contemporary copies of the original half-length portrait which was at Hassop until 1919 and can now be seen at Sawston Hall, Cambridgeshire. Probably in the eighteenth century (to judge from the lettering) this Hassop portrait was inscribed with the name of the sitter. Early in the same century the artist Charles Jervas painted an adaptation of the original, showing Col. Eyre full length. This was also at Hassop until 1919 and is now, we understand, at Sawston. The three half-length copies are all in the possession of families which were related by marriage to Rowland Eyre. A reproduction of one of these, from Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk, appeared in the *Derbyshire Life and Countryside* article.

When Miss Meredith visited Crosby Hall with me early in 1968 she was struck by the resemblance of another portrait in the gallery to one known to have come from Hassop, a half-length of Mrs Eyre, wife of Rowland Eyre (*Derbyshire Countryside*, April 1962). The elderly lady shown in the Crosby portrait, full length, with a large crucifix, bore such a strong resemblance in features and dress to the Hassop portrait that Miss Meredith was of the opinion both were of Mrs Eyre. She was Anne, daughter of Sir Francis Smith of Ashby Folville, who married Rowland Eyre in 1625, and her youngest daughter was Mary, who married William Blundell, junior. Mrs Eyre is known to have been at Crosby for over a year at the end of her life. Colonel Rowland Eyre and his wife Anne were the maternal grandparents of Nicholas Blundell the Diarist, their daughter Mary being his mother.

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