

## PLEA ROLL PEDIGREES

THE Plea Rolls of all the courts contain numerous entries valuable to the genealogist, but those relating to the sheriffs are among the most interesting. Every now and then it seems to have occurred to one of the parties to a suit that the sheriff or coroner was a kinsman, perhaps a very distant one, of his opponent, and the suspicion entered his mind that the jury summoned by this official was not a fair one. Such a case occurred at Chester in 1491, when William Stanley was sheriff. He was said to be son of Sir William, son of Thomas, son of John, son of John, brother of William, father of William, father of William, father of Isabel, mother of Dulcia Legh, the plaintiff in the case, who was a sister of James Legh lately rector of Rostherne.<sup>1</sup> These Leghs were of the Adlington family (see Ormerod, iii. 661), and the descent given is of some importance as showing that John Stanley of Lathom, ancestor of the Earls of Derby, was younger brother of the great-grandfather of Isabel Legh, a point left in doubt in Ormerod (ii. 415, 416). It also makes the sheriff to be a son of Sir William Stanley of Holt, not of Hooton as in Ormerod (i. 73).<sup>2</sup> William Stanley, in right of his wife, Joan Massey, became lord of Tatton and left an only daughter and heir, Joan (Ormerod, i. 442). He was dead in 1499.

<sup>1</sup> Chester Plea Roll, 191, m. 29.

<sup>2</sup> The Record Office *List of Sheriffs* gives the following: 1463, William Stanley of Hooton; 1489, William Stanley [not a knight]; 1492, Thomas Stanley.

Again in 1496 John Ashley, coroner of Bucklow, was said to be son of Margaret, daughter of John, son of Margery, sister of William, father of Thomas, father of William, father of Thomas Venables, the plaintiff.<sup>1</sup> In 1506 Ralph Birkheved, the under-sheriff, was stated to have married Alice, daughter of John, son of Alice, daughter of Richard Donne, brother of John, father of Sir John Donne, father of Anne, wife of George Cotton.<sup>2</sup>

In a case in 1558 both officials were concerned. The sheriff, Philip Egerton, had married Eleanor, daughter of Sir Randle Brereton, son of Sir Randle, son of Sir Randle, father of Alice Brereton, wife of Edward Broughton and mother of Jane, wife of Griffith Lloyd, mother of Randle Lloyd, father of Randle Lloyd the plaintiff. This plaintiff had married Joan, daughter of Henry Hockenull, son of Margaret, daughter of Sir John Donne, father of Elizabeth, mother of Sir George Calveley, father of Christiana, who had married Richard Hough, the coroner.<sup>3</sup> This last is at variance with the pedigree in Ormerod (ii. 768); the Visitation pedigree of 1613 makes a Margaret Done the grandmother of Sir George Calveley, and a Janet Done wife of John Hockenhull, which John was, according to Ormerod's pedigree (ii. 316), brother not father of Henry Hockenhull. This last statement seems to be erroneous, but it will be seen that several confusions require to be cleared up. Sir George Calveley's mother was Christiana Cottingham, but his grandmother may have been a Done.

The Lancashire Plea Rolls contain similar fragments of pedigrees. They are of importance as containing the names of wives and mothers which are often omitted in the deeds on which the genealogist has to rely. In 1488 Henry Risley,

<sup>1</sup> Chester Plea Roll, 193, m. 36*d*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 207, m. 53.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 268, m. 10.

having to answer John Hawarden, alleged that plaintiff was a kinsman of the sheriff Edward Stanley (afterwards Lord Mounteagle) and also of the coroner Lawrence Starkey. Stanley was son of Thomas, Earl of Derby, son of Thomas, Lord Stanley, brother of Margaret, mother of Margaret, the wife of John Hawarden; while Starkey was son of Joan, daughter of Agnes, sister of John, father of the said John Hawarden.<sup>1</sup> Again in an Abram plea of 1481 it was alleged that the sheriff, Sir Thomas Pilkington, was kinsman to Henry Byrom, one of the parties to the suit, viz.: son of Edmund Pilkington, son of John, son of Roger, brother of Margaret, mother of Adam, father of William, father of Margaret, mother of the said Henry Byrom.<sup>2</sup> According to the late Col. Pilkington's account of the family, Margaret married (1) Sir John de Arderne and (2) Sir Robert Babthorpe, and had an only child, a daughter Matilda, by the first marriage and no issue by the second. The mother of Henry Byrom was Margaret Lever of Great Lever,<sup>3</sup> so that Margaret de Pilkington must have married John de Lever, father of Adam.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pal. of Lanc. Plea Roll, 65, m. 24d. For the Starkey pedigree see *Cheshire Sheaf* (3rd series), ix. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Pal. of Lanc. Plea Roll, 54, m. 10b.

<sup>3</sup> *V.C.H. Lancs.* iv. 152, n. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* v. 183.