THE subject of this paper is the family history of Sir Nicholas Longford of Longford and Withington, in the barony of Manchester, who appears with Sir Ralph Stanley in the roll of the Sheriffs of Lancashire in the year 1413. He was followed in 1414, according to the Hopkinson MSS., by Robert Longford. This may be a misprint for Sir Roger Longford, who was alive in Lancashire in 1430, but of whom little else is known except that he was of the same family. Sir Nicholas Longford was a knight of the shire for Derbyshire in 1407, fought at Agincourt and died in England in 1416. It might be thought that the appearance of this name in the list of sheriffs on two occasions only, with other names so more frequent and well known from the reign of Edward III onwards—Radcliffe, Stanley, Lawrence, de Trafford, Byron, Molyneux, Langton and the rest—denoted a family of only minor importance, suddenly coming into prominence and then disappearing. But such a conclusion would be ill-founded. The Longford stock was of older standing than any of them, and though the Stanleys rose to greater fame and based their continuance on wider foundations, at the point when Nicholas Longford comes into the story, the two families were of equal footing and intermarried. Nicholas Longford’s daughter Joan was married to John Stanley, son and heir of Sir John Stanley the second of Knowsley. Thomas, first
Lord Stanley, was a younger son of this Sir John Stanley, while the other sheriff of 1413, Sir Ralph, was fourth son of the first Lord of Man, who died in 1414. On Sir Nicholas Longford's death, the second Sir John Stanley was left his son's guardian. It was this Sir John's granddaughter who married Sir Richard Molyneux of Sefton.

The reason why the name of Longford appears so rarely in the Lancashire records lies in the fact that after the earlier part of the twelfth century—from the reign of Henry I onwards—their chief interests and their chief estates came to lie in the neighbouring shires of Derby, Nottingham, and Stafford. In these counties their chief public duties were rendered as sheriffs, and later on as knights of the shire. It was an early marriage that determined this position, just as marriage later brought the Stanleys from the Midlands to importance in Lancashire. The Longford connection with Lancashire goes back to the reign of William I. Nicholas FitzNigel held Longford in Stretford at the time of his marriage to Margaret de Bubden, daughter and heiress of Ralph FitzErcald. His son eventually adopted the name, though using that of Bubden at the outset, and the name Longford has continued since. Nicholas FitzNigel was a younger son of Nigel de Gresley. His brother, William FitzNigel, was ancestor of the Gresleys of Drakelow. Nigel de Gresley himself (otherwise known as Nigel de Stafford) was the younger son of Robert de Stafford, Constable of Stafford, by his wife Avice, daughter of Richard Fitzherbert, Earl of Clare.

It is almost certain that Nigel who appears in Domesday Book as the chief holder under Roger of Poitou in the Salford Hundred and who was in fact Baron of Mamecestre (Manchester), is identical with Nigel de Stafford. Farrer, in the Domesday chapter, in V. H. Yorkshire (vol. i) holds to this identity, despite the contrary opinion of
Round and Tout. It may have been unknown to any of the three that a younger de Gresley was actually holding land in the barony, at any rate in the opening years of the twelfth century. There seems small reason for his presence there, with an estate guarding one of the fords of the Mersey over against the barony of Stockport, unless Nigel de Gresley his father was the Nigel who held the chief estate in the hundred. The de Trafford archives show that they became sub-tenants of Nigel de Longford in Stretford in the twelfth century.

It is owing to the kind assistance of Mr. G. H. Abrahams, Town Clerk of the new borough of Stretford, that the mystery of the name of Longford connected with a prominent Norman family in Derbyshire has been solved. Hitherto all sorts of guesses have been made as to the origin of a name which did not appear as a manor in Domesday, but which takes the place of the name of Bubden, or Bubenton, in subsequent records. J. C. Cox, though he knows that Nicholas de Gresley, son of Nigel de Stafford, was the ancestor of the Longfords, was led to believe that Longford might have been a small village in Bubden, the name of which was adopted by the family in place of the ancient name. Thoroton, in his history of Nottinghamshire, thought that possibly Langford near Newark, for some reason unknown, gave a name to a family which certainly never possessed land there. It was thought that the Longford connection with the Manchester barony began with the possession of the extensive manor of Withington in the thirteenth century. It was not realised that by marriage with the co-heiress of Matthew de Hathertage the Nigel de Longford of that day was adding to his estate in the Stretford fee. The present writer thinks that the conjecture of Farrer that Withington was part of the 3 hides and 1 carucate held by Nigel in 1086 may have to be revised in favour of Stretford. Longford is not in Withington, and nobody
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seems to have enquired how it was that Longford Hall belonged to the later Longfords of Withington, or how the de Traffords from the second Henry de Trafford, were sub-tenants of the Longfords in Stretford from the second half of the twelfth century till 1449. The original estate of Longford was sold to Nicholas Mosley in the reign of Elizabeth. It was sold again by the Mosleys in 1772 and after various adventures was bought in 1855 by the famous John Rylands. It was in Longford Park that the new borough of Stretford was inaugurated in 1933 by Sir Edward Stanley, K.G., seventeenth Earl of Derby. Just over five centuries previously his ancestor, Sir John Stanley, had been guardian of the heir of that property, and administrator of its revenues.

Longford, then, in the barony of Manchester, gives the origin of Nicholas FitzNigel de Gresley’s adopted name. This name was superimposed on that of Bubden in Derbyshire, and not very long afterwards a scion of the same family imposed the name in the same fashion on his estate near Hereford. The name in this case is now corrupted to Longworth (Longford, Longforth, Longworth). Subsequent reference will be given to this branch. The present writer is of opinion that the once-accepted theory of connection between Helbert Gresle, second Baron of Manchester, and previously co-baron of Blackburn, with the Gresley line, latterly held to be mistaken, is strengthened by the evidence suggested now. It is not a matter of importance to Longford family history; but the family connection of de Gresley’s with land in the Manchester barony is established: Nigel of Domesday can hardly escape identity with Nigel de Stafford, known as de Gresley from his chief seat near Stoke-on-Trent. Why, then, should Albert or Helbert of so similar a name, his successor, be so certainly accounted no possible connection? The name Helbert is found among the Gresley’s Norman forebears.
The origin of the family name is a matter of slight historical interest in comparison with the ultimate origins of the family itself. Reference has already been made to Robert de Stafford, grandfather of Nicholas de Gresley, the first of the house of Longford. Those who are acquainted with early medieval history will have grasped the significance of this descent; not only in regard to later English medieval history, but also in regard to earlier Norman history. From Nicholas the elder, son of Robert de Stafford, and uncle of Nicholas I of Longford, descended the great medieval house of Stafford—Barons and then Earls of Stafford, and subsequently Dukes of Buckingham. It is true that the male line broke in three generations, and was continued through a daughter Millicent, whose son continued the Stafford name. But the kinship of the Longfords and the Staffords must not be forgotten in realising the position of the family. It certainly was not likely to be forgotten by the Longfords themselves, since up to the middle of the thirteenth century the two families held moieties in the manor of Ellastone in Staffordshire, one moiety being an original holding of Robert de Stafford, the other, a FitzErcald inheritance, being held from the Bishop of Coventry by the Longfords. Again, Sir Nicholas Longford (who died in 1493) and Sir Thomas Stafford married the one Margaret and the other Alice, co-heiresses of Sir Edmund Appleby; and in the various quarrels of the baronage with and about the Crown, the Longfords are generally found following the policy of the senior house. They were still in the Stafford group of families, as we shall see, in Tudor times.

The Staffords came into the circle of the royal house in the fourteenth century when Edmund, Earl of Stafford, married Anne, daughter of Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, and granddaughter of Edward III. Their son was Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham, whose son married
Margaret Beaufort, cousin to Henry VII’s mother, and great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt and Catherine Swynford. Their son Henry, Duke of Buckingham, placed Richard III on the throne, and lost his head in subsequent rebellion in favour of Henry Tudor. The last Duke was beheaded by Henry VIII in 1521 for chattering too much about the possibility of his succession to the throne. To such a line was the family of Longford akin, and their prominence in Parliament and at Court, their selection for important office in peace and war in connection with Derbyshire and elsewhere, and the readiness of the newly emerged but powerful Stanleys to make alliance with them probably has no little relation to this position.

But to return: who was Robert de Stafford, their common ancestor? Before coming to England he was Robert de Toeni, one of a family which received from the Conqueror grants of land probably as extensive as any accorded to the most fortunate of his followers. And one reason for this will be found in the kinship of the family with him. Ralph de Toeni’s possessions were vast, so were Robert’s, and those of Berengar in Yorkshire and elsewhere were not inconsiderable. Ralph de Toeni was the eldest and had his fief in the south; Robert’s was mainly in the Midlands, and the wealth and importance of the future house of Stafford was well established with no less than 131 manors, including the greater part of Staffordshire, and 27 manors in Warwickshire, with others in Leicestershire, Worcestershire and Berkshire. Of Ralph de Toeni, whose seat was at Flamstead in Hertfordshire, Round says: “His fief was strangely divided, one portion lying in Norfolk, the other in Hereford, Worcester and Gloucester. Grandson of a Count of Barcelona, stepson of a Count of Evreux, son-in-law of Simon de Montfort, brother-in-law of the Earl of Hereford, and father-in-law of a King of Jerusalem, he
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413. 53

was no ordinary baron.” Yet neither he nor his brother Robert were raised to earldoms, probably because of the fierce and unruly temper which had characterised the family for generations, and possibly again because they could claim more legitimate descent from the original chiefs invading Normandy than that of the ducal house itself. Freeman says of the family that they were the noblest blood in Normandy, and that the descent of the dukes, proceeding through several irregular unions, was not considered comparable to their own by the de Toënis; and that with the exception, possibly, of the family of Harcourt, the large part also of the rest of the Norman nobility merely derived their origin from the amours or doubtful marriages of the dukes.

Ralph de Toëni seems to have had no surviving male issue remaining seated in England, though he is stated to have been the ancestor of the Barons de Toni, who continued in Normandy till 1310. Rather curiously, in the early lists of English armorial bearings we find recorded Sir Robert de Toni at the Battle of Falkirk 1298, at the Siege of Caerlaverock 1300 and at the first Dunstable Tournament. A daughter of Ralph, Margaret, married Walter Fitzpons, who took the name of de Clifford from Ralph’s castle of Clifford. Their daughter was Fair Rosamund, the rival of Henry II’s queen.

Robert de Toëni’s father-in-law Richard FitzGilbert, Earl of Clare, and Chief Justiciar of England in 1074, was son of Gilbert, Count of Eu, grandson of Richard the Fearless, Duke of Normandy. This Gilbert had been one of the guardians of the young Duke William. His son, Richard FitzGilbert, had married Rohais, daughter of Walter Gifford, subsequently Earl of Buckingham, and also a relative of Duke William. The offspring of Robert of Stafford were thus doubly interrelated with the Norman kings of England through their mother. But they had an even more interesting background, as
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is in part suggested by Round’s description of Ralph de Toëni. The main points may be found in Keary’s Vikings in Western Christendom, Freeman’s Norman Conquest, and in Bury’s edition of Gibbon’s Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. The family claimed to be direct descendants of Malahulc, uncle of that Rolf the Viking who became Duke of Normandy in 911. Rolf’s father and Malahulc’s brother was Rögnwald, Jarl of Mori in Norway. Rögnwald’s other brother was Sigurd, who became first Earl of Orkney, establishing it as a dependency of the kingdom of Norway in about 880. In Normandy the territorial name of the family arose from the village and lordship of Toëni on the River Seine. This lordship was alienated from the possessions of the Archbishopric of Rouen by Archbishop Hugo in favour of his brother Ralph, Viscount of Bessin, and known before the transaction (c. 980) as de Conches—a name found subsequently on occasion as an alternate title of the de Toënis. The eldest member of the family was hereditary standard bearer to his kinsman the Duke of Normandy. In this capacity Ralph de Toëni was called upon to act at the Battle of Hastings. This was a sufficiently distinguished origin, and it accounts for the special treatment accorded to the family in England by the completion of the Conquest in 1070, and as recorded over so many pages of Domesday Book sixteen years later. But on the other hand, the history of this family was sufficient to make any sovereign think twice before advancing it to further power of governmental function. The military activities of the de Toënis, and their evident determination from the early years of the eleventh century to found ruling families were sufficiently manifest, and exhibited some of the most striking episodes of the history of that time. Italy, Spain and Normandy were their fields of action. In Italy the work they commenced made a permanent
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413. 55

difference to the history of that country. It not im-
probably led to the idea of the subsequent alliance of
the Papacy and William of Normandy with a view to
the subjection of England. The future of Spain also
might have been permanently changed but for the fatal
attempt of the de Toënís in 1040 to overthrow young
William the Bastard and to take possession of the Duchy
of Normandy.

First, as regards Italy. It is generally known that
the eleventh century saw the setting up of a Norman
principality in Southern Italy. This principality became
in the event the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, afterwards
divided, and only brought into the realm of Italy in
1861. The creation of this kingdom was chiefly the
work of Robert Guiscard and his three brothers, sons
of Tancred of Hauteville. But the beginning of the
adventure was the work of a de Toën, according to the
account of that expert medievalist, Professor Tout; and
if the statement of Bury's footnote in Gibbon (vol. vi,
p. 174) is read in conjunction with Tout, it is clear that
five brothers of this family joined in the adventure some
twenty years before the sons of Tancred began to play
their hand. Bury gives the name of the eldest brother
as Rudolf, Tout as Ralph. According to Bury's note,
in 1016 forty Norman knights returning from a pilgrimage
to Palestine landed near Salerno, then being besieged
by Saracens. They delivered the town and returned to
Normandy with rich presents. Before the year was out
Rudolf with four brothers came south again with a view
to continuing warfare against the Saracens. Benedict
VIII, however, was more anxious to drive the Christian
Eastern Emperor out of Southern Italy than to be rid of
the Moslems and he brought the Normans to terms with
Meles of Bari, whom he was supporting in revolt against
Constantinople. In 1017 the Normans and their followers
overthrew the Greeks at the Battle of Civitate. But,
two years later they were disastrously defeated at Cannae, and the eldest de Toëni left Italy to seek help from the Emperor Henry II. The next brother took service under the Duke of Naples, married the Duke's sister, and received a rich fief, upon which in 1030 he built the Norman town of Aversa. This was the actual beginning of Norman settlement; and in 1038 Aversa was made into a fief of the Empire by Conrad II.

In the meantime, another de Toëni was attempting to carve out a principality in Spain, and it is with his descendants, or some of them, that we are subsequently concerned in England. In 1018 Roger de Toëni invaded the Spanish March, which nominally had been appendant to France since its conquest by Charlemagne. He married Godehildis, daughter of Raymond, Count of Barcelona, then deceased, and spent the next twenty years warring with the Saracens and building up a principality in Aragon. This Roger was son of that Ralph who received the fief of Toëni, and was therefore nephew of the Archbishop of Rouen. He is often called Roger de Hispania, and marvellous tales are told by the chroniclers of his daring and ferocity. He came back to Normandy in 1040, and scorning to accept as duke the bastard son of a tanner's daughter, he began to ravage the duchy. He was killed with two of his sons by forces led by Roger de Beaumont. This was the end of his principality in Spain, though he had sons who survived him.

Of the eldest we hear in 1045, when the independence of Normandy was threatened by the invasion of Henry I of France with two great armies. Freeman gives a stirring account of the part he played in the overthrow of one army at Mortemer, and in the stratagem by which the other army was put to flight. "Of this Ralph," he writes, "we shall hear again at Senlac, how he refused like Walter Giffard to undertake any duty which kept him back from dealing blows against the English."
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413.

Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413.

Duty was to carry the Papal banner blessed for the Crusade, as standard-bearer to the Duke. Of the younger, Robert, we learn that he was a bosom friend of Duke William. He died in 1088, not long after the Conqueror.

Enough has been said to show why a family, however honoured, was not entrusted with any earldom by the cautious Conqueror; though the brother-in-law of Ralph and Robert, William FitzOsbern, who married their sister Adeliza, became a noted Earl—of Hereford. FitzOsbern was co-regent of the Kingdom in 1067 with Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, the Conqueror’s half-brother and Earl of Kent. The rebellious trait, however, was manifest in FitzOsbern’s son Roger, who lost the earldom in 1075 for conspiring against the King with Ralph, Earl of Norfolk. Enough also has been said to show the genealogical background of the Staffords, Gresleys and Longfords; and to justify the statement that the origins of Nicholas Longford the Sheriff were of older standing than those of any other sheriffs whose names may be better known in Lancashire.

Let us now turn more particularly to the more immediate ancestors of Nicholas Longford. Tilley, the author of Old Halls, Manors and Families of Derbyshire, thus apostrophises the family:

"From the reign of the first Plantagenets to that of the last of the Tudors, a period of 450 years, the Longfords have entry on all the glorious rolls of the nation; on the first inquisition ever held in the shire, on the earliest emblazoned scrolls of the heralds, on the oldest of Parliamentary representatives. In 1322 Nicholas de Longford was among those members who secured the Act which gave to them equal voice with the peers in the nation’s legislature... they held lands in all the hundreds of the county from the middle of the thirteenth century... they allied themselves with the Deincourts, Ferrers, Fitzherberts Okeovers, Poles; they had a park by Barlborough of 800 acres and another at Longford of which the licence to enclose was obtained in 1251. They were knights by compulsion of their estates, while on their Tombs they are shown wearing the collar..."
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of S.S., a celebrated Lancastrian badge, first introduced by Henry IV and conferred for some great service rendered to the Crown.”

The writer obviously manifests some enthusiasm for his subject; but the family was not without the points of distinction that he claims for it.

There is naturally not a great deal of matter available for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but there is sufficient to carry us on till the reign of Edward I. Nicholas de Gresley and Margaret FitzErcall his wife gave the advowson of the Church of Bubden or Longford, which was part of Margaret’s dowry, to the Priory of Kenilworth, in or about the year 1145. Kenilworth Priory had been founded in 1122 by the Justiciar, Geoffrey de Clinton, the builder of Kenilworth Castle. At Kenilworth, Margaret and her sister had been brought up as wards of De Clinton. Nicholas and Margaret founded also a priory for four canons at Calwich in Ellaston in 1149 and attached it as a cell to Kenilworth. This connection with Kenilworth is interesting, since it keeps cropping up until 1530, owing to frequent disputes about presentations to the rectory of Longford and the priory of Calwich. A descendant of Nicholas and Margaret became prior of Kenilworth in the next century.

Nicholas (1) died in 1166. The only notices we have of his son Nigel (1) are in 1170 and 1178 in Kenilworth disputes (vide Kenilworth Chartulary in the Harleian MSS.) and in regard to land held of him by the de Traffords. In 1197 Nigel’s son Oliver divided his grandmother’s property with the Sacheverel heirs of her younger sister. Oliver de Longford married in Lancashire Avice, daughter and co-heiress of Robert FitzAils of Goosnargh, and so brought property near Preston to the family estates. This estate was still in Longford hands in 1445, and came ultimately to the Warrennes of Poynton. Oliver died in 1242 and was succeeded by his
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413.

son Henry, who has been overlooked in the pedigrees usually given, as he himself died in 1248; but his name is noticed in the Victoria History of Lancashire, and he is recorded in Testa de Nevill as sharing with William de Molyneux and others in a fee in Eccleston, Larbreck and Catteral. His son Nigel (2) continued the process of adding Lancashire property to the estate by marrying Cecilia, daughter and co-heiress of Matthew de Hathersage; this marriage bringing in the important manor of Withington, Manchester as well as a large estate at Hathersage. The manor embraced the townships of Withington, Didsbury, Rusholme, Chorleton, Denton and Levenshulme, and was held as a knight's fee of the barony of Manchester. The younger daughter of Hathersage married Goushill of Barlborough, and the arms of Goushill and Longford are still to be seen on the church tower there, rebuilt by these two families. Nigel's second son, William de Longford, was the prior of Kenilworth already mentioned. This Nigel (2) died before 1276. His eldest son was Sir Oliver Longford (2), who married in 1260 in Yorkshire, Agnes, second daughter of Ralph de Horbury. He died in or before 1284, as in that year his widow sued for her dowry right.

We now come to Sir John Longford, and the development of a little more recorded incident. John was a minor at his father's death and was left in the guardianship of Sir John Byron, of Manchester. He married Joan, who may have been Byron's daughter, and his life, if short, was eventful. In 1297 he followed Edward I on his expedition into Flanders, and on his return was with Edward's army which invaded Scotland to subdue William Wallace, being present at the Battle of Falkirk. He was in Scotland till 1303 and died in 1304.

His son and successor, Sir Nicholas Longford (2), had an even more eventful career, and an exceptionally long life for that age, since he survived till 1356. He was one
of the barons who rose in 1312 under Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, against Piers Gaveston and put him to death. Nicholas received pardon for this at Westminster in October, 1313. In 1321 he again joined Lancaster against Edward II's favourites, the Despencers. He fought at the Battle of Boroughbridge, but escaped Lancaster's fate, and again received pardon. He was elected a knight of the shire for Staffordshire in 1324, and was sent to Aquitaine on the King's business in that year. Protections were issued for him in 1324, and in 1325 "staying in Aquitaine on the King's business." In the first year of Edward III he was Commissioner of Array in Lancashire, and in 1333 he held the same office for Derbyshire, and he took the shire force to join Edward III at the siege of Berwick. He was at the Battle of Halidon Hill. In 1334 he is noted as being present at the 2nd Dunstable Tournament. In 1336 he was back again at Berwick with a force of archers; this time to assist Edward Baliol, whom the Scots had deposed. Ten years later in 1346 this warrior went through the Creçy campaign, sailing in company with Stephen Curzon of Kedleston, from Southampton. He was knighted in 1347 at the siege of Calais. He died in 1356, and his alabaster effigy is in Longford Church. His wife was Alice, daughter of William Boteler, Baron of Wem, Salop—possibly one of the Botelers of the barony of Warrington. His daughter Alice married William Fitzherbert of Norbury, a family with which there will be further alliances.

Sir Nicholas (3) was 33 on succeeding his father. Apart from the fact that he got a licence for an oratory at Withington in 1360, little seems to be known of him, except that he made an important marriage and acquired thereby considerable further estate in Derbyshire. His wife was Alice, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Robert D'Eyncourt, of ancient Norman lineage. He appears, from evidence given in Cox's Churches of Derbyshire, to
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413. have married Helen Bagpuize as a second wife. He died in 1373, and his inquisition post-mortem is given among the Lancashire inquisitions in Gregson’s *Fragments*. He was succeeded by Sir Nicholas (4), who married Margaret, daughter of Sir Edmund Appleby, whose sister and co-heiress Alice married Sir Thomas Stafford. Sir Edmund’s daughters inherited also their mother’s property. She was daughter and heiress of Sir Alured Solney, and in this way Newton Solney and other manors were added to the Longford estates. This Sir Nicholas Longford (4) was knighted by Henry IV on 1 July, 1403, on the morning of the bloodthirsty battle of Shrewsbury, where he had come to support the King against the rebellious Percies. He was slain on the field. His effigy is among those in Longford Church, and carries the collar of S.S.

We have now reached Sir Nicholas Longford (5), sheriff of Lancashire with Sir Ralph Stanley in 1413. He married, firstly, Joan, daughter of Sir Lawrence Warrenne of Poynton, Cheshire. In 1407 he represented Derbyshire in Parliament. He accompanied Henry V to France, with a contingent, it is stated, of 500 archers. He was present at Agincourt in 1415. Some account of this is found in Harleian MS. 782. He died in September, 1416, probably from the effects of that campaign. His effigy, also with the S.S. collar, is in Longford Church. Of his daughters, Joan married John Stanley, Elizabeth married Sir John de la Pole in 1411, and Helen, Sir Henry Pierpoyn. He had several brothers: Robert or Roger, who succeeded him as Sheriff; John, born in 1377 and presented to the rectory of Longford at 16 years of age (a dispensation having been obtained from Pope Boniface IX for institution, which provided that he should not reside till he was 18, and that he was to spend the interval at Oxford); Alured, who was rector from 1401 to 1420. John does not appear to have taken orders, and is possibly the ancestor of the family noted as of Shrewsbury in the
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Salop Visitation, 1623. A not inconsiderable list of younger sons of Longford could be compiled who were presented to one or other of the rectories in the gift of the head of the house during the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Nicholas Longford left a widow Alice, a second wife, who married subsequently a William Chanterel. His estates, besides those near Manchester and Preston, in Nottinghamshire and in Staffordshire, included in Derbyshire the manors of Longford, Newton Solney, Parkhall and Alfreton, with moieties of the manors of Pinxton, Normanton, Bakewell, Barlborough, Killamarsh, Whitwell, Hathersage, Bubton, Hollington, Rowsley, Morton, Pilsley, North Wingfield, Hasland, Duckmanton, Ashover, Brampton and Boythorp. In him the family was at the zenith of its power, and signs of crumbling do not begin till after the Wars of the Roses, when a tendency to sell an estate here and there discloses itself; a tendency which became a habit in the subsequent Tudor period.

Having reached this point, the subject of the paper might possibly be held to have been dealt with. But family, given offspring, goes forward as well as backward, and to conclude at this point would leave the subject incomplete. Ralph Longford (1), the heir, was aged 15 and upwards, and was, as we have seen, under Sir John Stanley’s guardianship. He was already married, his wife’s name being Margaret, but of what family it does not appear. The Harleian MS. pedigree, founded on the Visitation of Derbyshire, 1569, gives the surname of Melton. This, however, is one of the many mistakes of this pedigree, which goes on to miss out one whole generation and makes Ralph Longford’s grandson his son. Ralph Longford’s grandson married Margaret Melton fifty-six years later. (Elizabethan heralds, as Round has shown, were far from careful and often quite unscrupulous!)
Sir John Stanley took his guardianship seriously. He belonged to a race very determined to prosper, as the Wars of the Roses showed. In this case, whatever gain Sir John may have made out of the properties elsewhere, we find that at Withington he did not disdain it. Though the manor certainly was not held of the King, but originally in sub-feudation in the honour of Lancaster, Sir John professed to discover that "Sir Nicholas de Longford, recently deceased, held the manor of Withington from the King in capite, which right of the King had hitherto been concealed." The King, in recompense of the labour and trouble of Sir John in that behalf, committed to him the custody of the said manor, except lands and rents secured to Sir Nicholas's widow, her dower, and lands and rents secured to the heir and his wife; Sir John to hold the same until the heir reaches full age and pay the King an annual rent of 35 marks.

Ralph Longford (1) was with John, Duke of Bedford, in France, and was knighted in 1424 after the Battle of Verneuil. Either he, or an uncle given in the Visitation pedigree, became a Knight of the Bath in 1426. He died in 1431; his heir, Nicholas Longford (6), was 13; and there were other children, Edward, Richard and Joan. Edward Longford is afterwards of Longford, co. Lancs., and of Melbourne, co. Derby, and was succeeded by a son John, mentioned later. His daughter Amphillis, married Sir Robert Lawrence of Ashton.

Nicholas Longford (6), born in 1418 and succeeding in 1431, is somewhat of a difficulty; and so is the family during the period of the Wars of the Roses. He does not appear in the Visitation pedigree, and in Fortescue's pedigree he is confused with his son. There is no marriage record, except possibly a shield of Longford impaling Bradburne in the south transept window of Ashbourn Church. In that case he may have married a sister of John Bradburne of Hulland, whose son afterwards married
Some Notes on the Family History of Nicholas Longford's daughter. I can find no record of him till 1470, and it would look as though he occupied his whole time in war. His mother and her second husband presented to the rectory of Longford not only during the minority, but also in 1442 and 1456. In 1442 war was still raging in France. In 1456 the Wars of the Roses began. In 1467 the Bishop collated, as evidently no presentation was made within the prescribed time. In 1469 the presentation was made by John Curzon of Kedleston, and others, as trustees of the lordship of Longford "ad usum Nicholas de Longford." We find in the de Trafford records during the Wars of the Roses a resignation of estate to a son, with the apparent purpose of saving it, in case the owner should find himself on the defeated side. The Longford case may be similar; it could hardly be a question of such a thing as trusteeship in lunacy; for Nicholas was sent for at Withington in 1470 by the restored Henry VI to answer for rebellion before the King and Council at Westminster. John Gresley, Sheriff of Derby, was instructed to summon him, and he did so by his servant, Christopher Langton. Here is the record of the subsequent complaint.

"Sir Nicholas had suddenly departed and hidden himself in the Park (i.e., of the manor house of Withington), and his servant threatened to kill Christopher unless he left, for fear of which he departed, but returned next day and, sitting on his horse, had placed the Privy Seal letter on a seat near the hall door of the manor, and John Longford (son of Edward), late of Longford (i.e., Lancs.) had collected 20 servants with sword and lance, some on foot, some on horseback, and followed him and taken him near the park gates, beaten and ill-used him and tried to make him eat the King's letter, and then tore the letter in pieces and took him back to the Manor and put him in the stocks, and led him to John Warrenne's house at Poynton, co. Cheshire, and kept him in prison; who with 100 armed men took him to Longford and there Will Vernon, late of Netherhaddon, and Will Bonynton and others had insulted him and kept him two nights in prison."
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413.

The King commanded Gresley to send another letter. What was the issue? Did Nicholas suffer capture and lose his life? His son had succeeded by 1473, and probably in 1471, as we shall see. Nicholas's daughter Margaret married Humphrey, son of Sir John Bradburn of Ashbourne, and Ann, daughter of Sir Richard Vernon. Another daughter married Nicholas Montgomery of Cubley. An interesting indenture of 1480 reciting the terms of the foundation of a Bradburn chantry contains information of this interrelation of Longfords, Bradburns and other Derbyshire families, and is found in Cox (Vol. ii, p. 412). It corrects some given pedigrees of Longford, which had made Nicholas (6) and (7) identical.

Nicholas Longford (7) was knighted by Edward IV at the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471. It would appear, therefore, that he had succeeded his father at that date. He married Margaret Melton, at Aston-on-Trent on 1 October, 1472.1 He is said to have died in the Scotch War of 1482. He was succeeded by his brother, Ralph Longford (2), who was among those chosen to be made Knights of the Bath on the Coronation of Edward V in 1483—a knighthood which did not mature owing to the usurpation of Richard III. Ralph, however, was knighted by Henry VII at the Battle of Stoke in 1487. In 1488 he was Commissioner of Array for Derbyshire, and he was Sheriff in 1501. He married Isabel, daughter of Sir Thomas Ferrers, and had a large family. Of his daughters Dorothy married Nicholas Fitzherbert of Norbury; Elizabeth married Sir Edmund Trafford, and another daughter William Trafford his brother. Nicholas Longford, his eldest son, married Margery Trafford. Henry Longford became rector of Longford, 1499–1514, and there were three other sons, Thomas, John and William. Of Thomas we shall hear again. Sir Ralph

1 Of this Melton family was William de Melton, Archbp. of York, 1317–40.
(2) died in 1513, his son Nicholas having predeceased him, and the heir his grandson was only 4 years old. Flower’s *Visitation of Derby* speaks of a window of fourteen impaled coats placed in Chesterfield Church by this Sir Ralph to celebrate the marriage of his daughter to Nicholas Fitzherbert.

From this point onwards the position and importance of the Longfords begin to decline, while that of the Trafford grows apace. It would look as though the Trafford intermixture had been an unfortunate experiment, while on the Trafford side the Longford element had been the making of the family. Two Longfords span the whole century, 1510–1610; but the stock becomes so poor that it cannot reproduce itself. Sir Ralph Longford (3), it is true, had three children, but two of those proved childless, and the third only left one daughter. His life was one long struggle against comparative poverty and debt, and all the Longford properties save Longford in Derby had been sold by 1580. Edmund Trafford his cousin, however, manifests the kind of activity which reflects much of the former history of the Longfords. He was with Henry VIII’s forces at the Siege of Boulogne, and with the Marquis of Hertford in Scotland, being Sheriff of Lancashire in 1557. His son married Mary Howard, sister of Queen Catherine Howard, and was three times Sheriff of Lancashire, in 1565, 1571 and 1580, and died in 1590. He was a fierce persecutor of recusants in Lancashire, while his contemporary and cousin, Nicholas Longford, turned obstinately to the recusant cause, and suffered heavily financially on an already over-impoverished estate. At one time he evidently also found himself in prison, and there is record of his wife and other recusant ladies being lodged for supervision in a neighbouring rectory. The Traffords continued to flourish till the Great Rebellion, but having by that time become Romanists, they subsequently
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413.

shared in the civil disabilities incurred thereby, though they never completely lost hold of their property.

Ralph Longford (3) married Dorothy, daughter of Sir Anthony Fitzherbert of Norbury. This Sir Anthony was the most famous of the Fitzherberts, and one of the greatest lawyers of the time. He had been made Justice of Common Pleas in 1522, and earned an unenviable notoriety by being one of the judges who condemned to death the monks of Charterhouse, Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More. But the strong recusant attitude which is found in his grandson, the last Nicholas of Longford, arose from this Fitzherbert connection. Thomas Fitzherbert, brother-in-law of Sir Ralph Longford, spent nearly thirty years of his life in prison in Elizabeth’s reign. Norbury was known to be used by the Jesuit Parsons; and Antony Babington, who plotted Elizabeth’s death, was cousin to Thomas Fitzherbert and to Ralph Longford’s son and successor.

Ralph Longford was knighted in 1533 at the coronation of Anne Boleyn. It would appear that the expenses of life at court, together with the great change which came over the value of money in the sixteenth century, had brought him to a sorry pass by 1543. He was Sheriff of Derbyshire in 1536 and he had been in the scramble to get hold of monastic lands. There is a long and interesting account in Fortescue’s History of Calwich of his endeavours to get possession of the property of the dissolved priory of Calwich. But evidently he was not in a position to pay the Crown for his purchase; the Calendar of State Papers of 1543 shows him in the Fleet prison for debt to the King, and using every endeavour to raise loans. His letters to Sir John Gates, a privy chamberlain, who was beheaded at the beginning of Mary’s reign, and to Lord Dacre of the Privy Council, show him at the last gasp—offering the Withington property to Gates, and saying that his position was so
bad that he would have to forsake his native country. The postscript to one letter is interesting, "Please send word by Mr. Babington, as the money (in this case £200) must be paid to-morrow." It seems that it was his brother-in-law, the above Thomas Fitzherbert, who eventually secured his release, "This Monday at the Fleet has been with me Thomas Fitzherbert, who stands enfeoffed of all my lands and has stayed my matter in the Parliament House all this time. He offers with his friends to enlarge me of my imprisonment and pay my debts. 2 April, 1543." In a deed of August of the same year he is styled Sir Ralph Longford, King's Servant; but of what ultimately became of him there appears to be no evidence. His widow married, as his second wife, Sir John Port of Etwall, Knight of the Bath, and founder of Repton School. She died in 1557.

Despite impoverishment, the family still maintained its social position. Sir Ralph Longford had two daughters. The elder, Maud, became second wife of Sir George Vernon of Haddon Hall, known as King of the Peak. She thus became stepmother to the famous Dorothy Vernon. She married, secondly, Sir Francis Hastings, son of the second Earl of Huntingdon. These Hastings were great personages from the reign of Edward IV onwards, and by marriage with Anne Stafford, sister of the Duke of Buckingham, executed by Henry VIII, George, first Earl of Huntingdon, brought his family into cousinship with the Tudors. He married as his second wife Dorothy Port, stepdaughter of Sir Ralph Longford's widow. The second Earl married Catherine, niece of Cardinal Pole, another cousin of the royal house; and the significance of the Hastings relationship may be even more clearly realised when we find Ivan the Terrible of Russia asking Queen Elizabeth for the hand of "her cousin" Mary Hastings. The request was not granted.

Elizabeth Longford, the second daughter, probably
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413.

named after Anne Boleyn's daughter, married Humphrey Dethick. She died at a great age in 1611, and it was her granddaughter who came to succeed the last Sir Nicholas Longford at Longford. Her daughter Catherine married Alexander Reddish of Reddish; and Sarah Reddish, the second daughter of this union married Clement Coke, whose father, the Lord Chief Justice, bought Longford for his son in 1613. It is interesting to note that Robert de Reddish was one of the retainers of Sir Nicholas Longford (5) and attended him at the Battle of Agincourt.

The last Nicholas Longford (8) of Longford married four times. The name of his third wife does not appear. But the first was Elizabeth, daughter of Ralph Okeover of Okeover, and the second was Margaret, daughter of Sir Robert Southwell. This Sir Robert was Master of the Rolls, and was very highly placed in the royal favour. Under Edward VI he became Sheriff of Kent, and was expected by Wyatt to join in his ill-fated rising against Queen Mary; but on the contrary he helped to subdue it. The last wife was Margaret Markham of Allerton, who survived till 1620, and managed to persuade her elderly husband to leave her his remaining property. This she sold to Lord Chief Justice Coke for £5,000.

Nicholas Longford followed his father in an impoverished estate, and he had to sell to novi homines who were building up the new families of more modern times on the distresses of the older medieval families, and on church estates. Nicholas sold all his remaining estate in Derby and Staffordshire (apart from Longford) in 1571 to John Fleetwood of Heskyn, near Preston. Fleetwood was originally servant to Sir Thomas Audley, Attorney for the Duchy of Lancaster and afterwards Lord Chancellor. He had already become possessed of a church estate at Penwortham, and he is typical of a class which rose to fortune under the Tudors. He was twice Sheriff
Some Notes on the Family History of

of Staffordshire, and later Sheriff of Lancashire, and by a lucky second marriage came into the families of Langton and Stanley, so that ultimately the Langton estate (barony of Newton) came to his grandson. His descendants were as the sands of the sea. The remaining property in Lancashire, at Longford and Withington, was sold in 1580, as we have noticed, to Nicholas Mosley, at one time Lord Mayor of London; also founder of a new family, but a family resident in the Manchester district for several generations prior to this date.

Sir Nicholas Longford died in 1610. He is styled *equester aureus* on his tomb at Longford. He does not seem to have received knighthood under Elizabeth; he may have done so under James I, when his now distant kinsman Gresley purchased one of the first new baronetcies. By a will now in possession of Earl Egerton of Tatton (but revoked in 1578) his remaining estate was left to Maud Hastings and Francis Dethick with remainder to Richard Longford and William, his brother, being near cousins. They were, in fact, sons of Thomas Longford, third son of Sir Ralph Longford, who died in 1513. This Thomas Longford had joined kinsfolk of the name of Lawrence at Withington, near Cheltenham. They were descendants of Sir Robert Lawrence of Ashton, also a Sheriff of Lancashire, and Amphillis, daughter of Edward Longford of Longford, Lancs. It is interesting to notice these Lancashire migrations to the Cotswold district. We find Molyneux, Osbaldestone and Lawrence as well as Longford migrations. Longfords of an earlier branch were there in the thirteenth century. They appear on important inquisitions from 1251, and Sir William de Longford of Lugwardine, near Hereford, who died in 1322, was one of them. Richard Longford, already mentioned, died in 1604. His son Nicholas might have succeeded to what was left of Sir Nicholas Longford's estate. This son married an Osbaldeston, and his son
Nicholas Longford, Sheriff of Lancashire, 1413. 71

Thomas Longford, who lived from 1612 to 1707, bought the Lawrence estate at Sevenhampton, Glos., for his second son, whose descendants still survive, of whom the writer is one. The elder son’s family ended in Rev. John Longford of Haresfield Court (1687–1759), and is merged in the ancient Norman family of Trye. Charles Brandon Trye, F.R.S., who has a large monument on the north wall of Gloucester Cathedral, was this John Longford’s grandson. Of the descendants of the second son, seniority is with the family of Rev. William Longford, rector of Stretton-on-Fosse, 1770–1804. The third son was Rev. John Longford of C.C.C., Oxford, mentioned by Anthony à Wood. He was successively curate and vicar of Cumnor from 1635 to 1681. There were descendants of a fourth son, William Longford of Leigh (1616–87), some of whom are probably in Ireland.

It has already been noted that the Visitation of Salop recorded a branch of the family in the reign of Charles I. The Visitations of Notts give branches at Sutton in Ashfield and Mansfield still continuing in the reign of Elizabeth. But the only branches of which there is evidence of survival are those of Gloucestershire. It is unfortunate that when Booker wrote his History of the Ancient Chapels of Didsbury and Chorlton in 1857 he should have stated that Sir Nicholas Longford, who died in 1610, was the last of his race. He was last of the senior male line; but Booker’s statement has been copied frequently and inaccurately ever since. The registers of Longford, co. Derby, show that there were still some of the name, probably descendants of some younger son or sons, till late in the seventeenth century.