

PUBLISHED ANNUALLY.

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THE
COUNTY FAMILIES
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM
OR
ROYAL MANUAL OF THE TITLED AND UNTITLED ARISTOCRACY
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

By EDWARD WALFORD, M.A.

from "The Times."

IT IS TOLD of King James I. that, when his old nurse entreated him to make her son a gentleman, he replied that he could make "him a lord, but that it was out of his power to make him a gentleman." But what our first Stuart King found it so impossible to do, Mr. Walford does wholesale with the utmost ease. Witness this formidable volume, which sweeps the Three Kingdoms with a net of the finest mesh, bringing in fish of all sizes and ages, some of which, had he been liberal, he would, in imitation of good fishermen, have tossed back again until they had grown older and of a more legitimate weight and size. In this country, however, the possession of land is a passion. The successful lawyer, physician, manufacturer, or merchant, after the toil of life is over, seeks to build up a family that shall flourish and hand his name down to posterity. The titled, or landed, aristocracy are recruited from these sources. New men invigorate the blood of the old families. Were it not for this arrangement, nobility would speedily die out from among us. For it must be remembered that it is not with us as with many foreign aristocracies, which transmit their titles to all their children indiscriminately. Here the grandchild of every Duke, Marquis, Earl, &c.,

becomes a plain untitled gentleman, falls back into the mass of Commoners, and becomes incorporated with them. It is only necessary to compare the editions of these volumes year by year to see the numbers of names that drop out in every new issue, to be as often replaced by perfectly new men. It is this constant circulation of human atoms which keeps the Upper Ten Thousand from degenerating into a mere caste, with interests antagonistic to those of the other sections of the community. This is the best excuse for Mr. Walford's liberal admission of names that seem to push for places in his social Valhalla with a too vulgar earnestness.

It is curious to note the successive enlargements of late years with respect to the make-up of our Golden Book. The old Peerages gave only the Peers; Sir B. Burke added to them the Baronets; Dod descended to the Knights; and in this volume titled and untitled are mixed together in one alphabet. We all of us respect any name that is to be found on the Roll of Battle Abbey, but it is well known to genealogists and heralds that even that noble roll was adulterated, the monks of that age having felt no more compunction of conscience at slipping in a name to please the powerful and great of the day, than would the seal-engraver at giving a *parvenu* any number of quarterings on his coat-of-arms he may be willing to pay for. We are afraid the desire to strike a deep tap-root into past ages is too tempting an occupation to be confined to any age or class. How many of our leading Peers, for instance, have managed to graft themselves on to ancient stocks? The Percy is a Smithson, Paget is a Baily; Marlborough is a Spencer, not a Churchill; Coke, Earl of Leicester, is not a Coke, but a Roberts. The Wellesleys were Colleys until 1728; Earl Ducie is not a Moreton, but a Reynolds. We could go on with scores of names. If we take a survey of the landed gentry, and try them by even a moderate test, we shall find the list shrink up in a marvellous manner. Mr. E. P. Shirley, in his *Noble and Gentle Men of England*, cannot find in England and Wales above 500 real County Families, including Peers and Commoners, who have held their lands by an unbroken tenure in the male line from before the dissolution of the monasteries.

It may be asked, if this is really the case, how have they swelled into the tremendous list which Mr. Walford presents to us? The fact is, the Revolution of 1688 inaugurated a total change in our national feeling as regards heraldry, such as no fresh revolution could undo. This fact Mr. Walford has wisely acknowledged. His book, while it admits every one who has a right to be ranked among our County Families, also gives place to those who are slowly making their right good. While, however, it must be admitted that names at times appear strangely side by side, in alphabetical arrangement, it must be remembered that, as far as noble blood is concerned, the Commoner is often of better descent than the Peer. The Scropes of Yorkshire are but Commoners, but they can show a

pedigree which they believe places them in a higher position than the Earl of Shrewsbury; the Earldom of Wilts, created in 1397, which they claim, and which claim is now being tried, if successful, will place Mr. Scrope in the position of Premier Earl. There are, again, many plain Mr. Howards who come of the Norfolk stock. Mr. Walford, in including the Commoners with the Peers in this volume, has therefore by no means encroached upon the privileges or social position of the latter. The Grosvenors were eminent in Normandy before the Conquest, yet 110 years ago they were not Peers, but they were none the less noble on that account. In an heraldic sense the unbroken tenure of land is the basis of true nobility; and the last of the Hampdens, who could proudly write on his tomb, "twenty-third Lord of the Manor of Hampden," needed not the honours of the Peerage to aggrandize his position. On the other hand, we have the authority of Sir B. Burke's *Vicissitudes of Families* for the knowledge that some of the proudest names of the Peerage may now find their representatives among the lower orders of the people. A descendant of the Plantagenets was a short time ago living as a labourer at Kettering. The grand old kingly name has now been shortened to Plant. The descendants of another Royal stock, the Earl of Kent, sixth son of Edward I., are to be found in very humble occupations. One was a butcher at Hales Owen—a Mr. Joseph Smart; the other, Mr. George Wilmot, kept the turnpike-gate at Cooper's-bank, near Dudley. Another descendant of a Royal line was to be found a short time since in Mr. Stephen Penny, the late sexton of St. George's, Hanover Square, who came of the blood of the Duke of Gloucester, fifth son of Edward III. There are numbers of the representatives of fallen greatness we could add to this list.

Taking into consideration the possible claims of many Commoners to Peerages, a record of their descent, such as this book from year to year affords, may be of the utmost importance in a legal point of view. For instance, if the *County Families* had been published 200 years ago, and been continued from year to year, there would have been no Shrewsbury case; for the pedigree of those Talbots who passed into the ranks of the untitled gentry would have been carefully recorded. We may add, too, that the appearance of this volume will render the trade of dealing in false arms and false pedigrees, of late so notorious, a very unprofitable business. A simple register will supersede the action of the law, which in 1597 cropped one W. Dakyn's ears for so offending, and in the Percy case pasted up the Dublin trunkmaker, like one of his own trunks, with a placard denouncing his impudence in falsely claiming the Earldom of Northumberland, in which unpleasant confinement he had to stand in Westminster Hall as a warning to others.

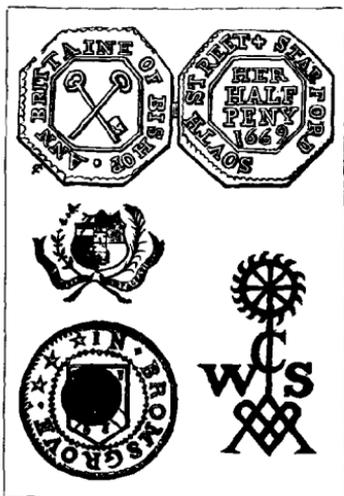
Mr. Walford is evidently as well aware as anyone of the imperfections of this voluminous work, the entry of every name in which involves a statement of from five to fifty facts, and we fully sympathise

with him when he asks pardon of the public and subscribers for any *errata* which may appear. We observe a cross to too many names, denoting that he has not succeeded in obtaining from those sources returns of matters which, it is unnecessary to observe, are even more important to the owners than to the public. The editor is, at least, entitled to this assistance. The yearly issue of the volume gives every facility for correcting these *errata*, which must involve enormous labour, inasmuch as fluctuating fortunes, births, marriages, and deaths, &c., require the supervision of nearly every line of the one thousand and ninety-seven closely printed pages of which it is composed. In the preface the editor remarks:—

“I am well aware that such a book as this must always remain, in one sense, imperfect in a country like our own, where, mainly owing to the influence of trade and commerce, individuals and families are continually crossing and re-crossing the narrow line which severs the aristocracy from the commonalty. But I can safely promise that, as often as a new edition of *The County Families* shall be called for, the book shall be found in a state more nearly approaching completion by the constant addition of fresh families to the roll of its contents, and by carefully noting the various changes wrought day by day by the silent operation of births, marriages, deaths, and preferments in the families whose names I record.”

What would the gossips of old have given for a book which opened to them the recesses of every County Family in the Three Kingdoms—we will not say every recess, for here and there we observe what may be termed the “Blue Beard family cupboard,” omissions which are not made, evidently, without very good cause? There are, for example, some awkward blanks of parentage to be found. Very many have no fathers; at all events, none such as they cared to name. In some places the particulars of marriages are omitted, possibly with prudence. This work, however, will serve other purposes besides those of mere curiosity, envy, or malice. It is just the book for the lady of the house to have at hand when making up the County dinner, as it gives exactly that information which punctilious and particular people are so desirous of obtaining—the exact standing of every person in the county. To the business-man, *The County Families* stands in the place of directory and biographical dictionary. The fund of information it affords respecting the Upper Ten Thousand must give it a place in the lawyer’s library; and to the money-lender, who is so interested in finding out the difference between a gentleman and a “gent,” between heirs-at-law and younger sons, Mr. Walford has been a real benefactor. In this splendid volume he has managed to meet an universal want—one which cannot fail to be felt by the lady in her drawing-room, the peer in his library, the tradesman in his counting-house, and the gentleman in his club. (*April 1, 1869.*)

LONDON: CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY, W.



IN THE PRESS.

TRADE TOKENS

Issued in the Seventeenth Century in England, Wales, and Ireland.

BY

**CORPORATIONS, MERCHANTS,
TRADESMEN, etc.**

A NEW AND REVISED EDITION OF WILLIAM BOYNE'S WORK

BY

GEORGE C. WILLIAMSON,

F.R. HIST. SOC.,

F.S.S., F.A.S., F.C.H.S., Memb. Num. Soc., Lond., Corresponding Memb. Société Française de Numismatique et d'Archéologie, Hon. Corr. Memb. American Numismatic and Archaeological Society, and of Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal.

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL COLLECTORS OF TOKENS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AS EDITORS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTIES.

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS PLATES AND WOODCUTS, AND CONTAINING NOTES OF FAMILY, HERALDIC, AND TOPOGRAPHICAL INTEREST RESPECTING THE VARIOUS ISSUERS OF THE TOKENS, AND CONNECTING THEM WITH MANY OF THE IMPORTANT FAMILIES OF THE PRESENT DAY.

THE large and rapid progress made in the science of Numismatics during the past few years has necessitated its division into distinct sections of work, and amongst such sections few have received a greater increase of interest than those relating to the Trade Tokens of the Seventeenth Century.

"Issued by the people they tell of the people, and become imperishable records of that most important estate of the realm," said the late Ll. Jewitt in his tractate on the subject; "and forming important and interesting illustrations of the life of the Seventeenth Century, they have lately received much more of the attention they so thoroughly deserve."

As memorials of a period which was perhaps more important and eventful than any other in English history, these Tokens are acknowledged to be of high value. They circulated in nearly every town in the kingdom, and they bear upon them records of families, companies, buildings, ancient inns, old customs, and many matters of topographical interest. Many of the Tokens were issued by members of the Long Parliament, by lords of manors, mayors and sheriffs, and others bear the signs by which shops and inns were distinguished in that period.

These little tokens being found constantly in all parts of the kingdom are engaging the renewed attention of antiquarian students, and the demand has been frequently made for a standard work upon the subject.

The only important work relating to Seventeenth Century Tokens, save the catalogues of Akerman and Burns, is the celebrated one issued in 1858 by William Boyne, which has become the standard work of reference, and to which all information since issued refers.

This book has been for many years out of print, and copies are both rare and costly, while to the student of tokens it is indispensable, and hence the issue of the present revised and greatly enlarged edition.

Since 1858 much pamphlet and tractate literature has been issued, and many papers have been read before the various County Archaeological Societies, describing many hundreds of tokens not named in Boyne, and giving much information regarding their issuers. The work of the editor has been to collect all this literature, and, aided by helpers in every county, to re-arrange it with the information already known.

Many hundreds of typographical and other errors in the previous edition have been corrected, and circulars have been issued to the clergy and others, resulting in the accumulation of many notes relating to the issuers all over the country.

Parish Registers, Muniments of Families, Corporation and Guild Records, Gravestones, Churches, University Records, Conveyances, Wills, Visitations, and the Documents of the British Museum, Record Office, and most local museums have been laid under requisition in order to furnish all possible information as to the family, life, business, character, arms, history, death and burial of the issuers who circulated these memorials of a past age.

In many towns information has been given as to the striking of the tokens, and much light thrown upon their use, value, and necessity. The dulness of a mere catalogue has been avoided, while careful notice of all known varieties of the tokens differing one from the other in even the smallest particulars has been taken, and it is believed that the work will form a most valuable adjunct to county topography, and be of the highest importance to the student of local manners and customs, and of village life and lore. The work has proved so onerous that but for invaluable help it could not have been carried out.

The following well-known collectors have acted as editors for their respective counties, and given invaluable information:—

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ALL THE REMAINING COUNTIES ARE THE WORK OF THE EDITOR.

While many hundreds of collectors, from all parts of the world, have sent information and particulars both of new Tokens and of their issuers.

To the compiler of family records and pedigrees, the worker in folk-lore, the local antiquarian and county archæologist, the work will prove a mine of information and a most valuable book of reference, but to the collector of Tokens it will be an absolute *vade mecum*, the *sine quâ non* of his library, and the indispensable treatise in all his researches and collections, and the student of heraldry will find in its pages numerous coats-of-arms of families, cities, towns, abbeys, traders, etc., of great interest.

The book is intended to be the standard work on the subject, and every possible care has been taken to insure its accuracy in every respect, hence the very long and, to many subscribers, tedious delay since the first announcement of its publication.

The requirement of such a book has been universally felt among numismatists, genealogists, and antiquaries, and it is the Editor's hope that the present issue will supply the need.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES, JOHN EVANS, ESQ.,
D.C.L., LL.D., Treasurer R.S., President Numismatic Society, thus refers to the work:

"I am glad to see that one of our members, Mr. G. C. Williamson, of Guildford, has it in contemplation to issue either a supplement to Boyne or a revised edition of his work. I trust that his appeal to the numerous collectors throughout the country has been met in such a manner as to encourage him to undertake the task. These memorials of a bygone generation of traders, though not of the highest numismatic interest, throw much light on the manners and customs of the time, and to the local historian are of great value and interest."—*Anniversary Address to Num. Soc., June 18th, 1885.*

"I may take this opportunity of remarking that the comprehensive work on Seventeenth Century Tokens undertaken by Mr. Williamson is now making rapid progress, and that he has found able coadjutors in most of the English counties.

"In some, however, aid is still required, and I hope that among our members there may be found those ready and able to render it.

"In many collections, no doubt, there are accumulations of Seventeenth Century Tokens, extensive or otherwise, that their owners have not had the time or, perhaps, the inclination thoroughly to examine.

"If now they can be induced to take the task in hand, and communicate their unpublished varieties to Mr. Williamson, his work will be rendered more complete, and therefore more valuable to numismatists."—*Anniversary Address to Num. Soc., June 17th, 1886.*

The late well-known Antiquary, Mr. Llewellynn Jewitt, F.S.A., took the warmest interest in the book, and had undertaken to contribute the counties of

Derby and Stafford, and to help in every possible way, and would have carried out his intention but for his unexpected illness and eventual decease in 1886.

The invaluable aid and advice of Mr. C. Roach Smith, F.S.A., Mr. H. Wickham, Mr. G. E. Pritchett, F.S.A., Mr. C. T. Gatty, F.S.A., Mr. Jos. Clark, F.S.A., Mr. R. E. D. Palgrave, and very many other Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries and members of the learned Societies, have been received in the compilation of the work, and is most gratefully acknowledged.

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