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THE FAMILY AND ARMS OF GILBERT  
OF COLCHESTER.

BY SILVANUS P. THOMPSON, F.R.S.

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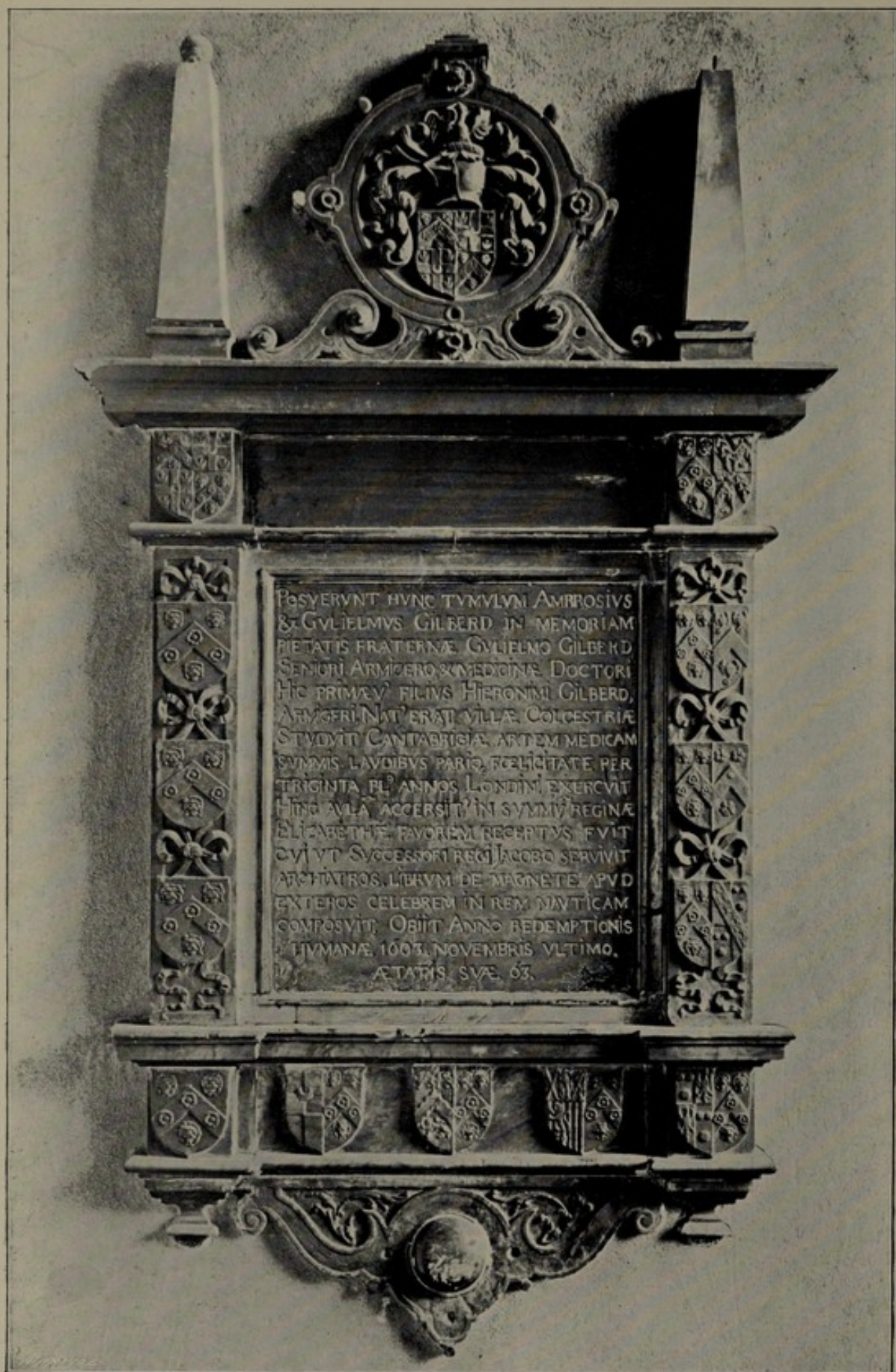
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THE MONUMENT TO DR. WILLIAM GILBERT IN HOLY TRINITY CHURCH.



## THE FAMILY AND ARMS OF GILBERT OF COLCHESTER.<sup>1</sup>

BY SILVANUS P. THOMPSON, F.R.S.

ASSEMBLED as we are to-day in Colchester where repose the remains of Dr. William Gilbert, we are naturally more immediately interested in the personality and family history of that great man than in any record of his professional or scientific achievements.

Permit me then to pass these by with the brief summary of his life: how, born and schooled in Colchester, he went to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he spent over nine years, taking both M.A. and M.D. degrees, and acting as examiner and senior bursar to his college. After about four years of foreign travel, of which nothing is known, he settled, in 1573, in London as physician, a calling in which he rose to the highest eminence: being chosen as physician to Queen Elizabeth and afterward to King James, and occupying the position, during the last four years of his life, of president of the Royal College of Physicians. His chiefest glory was, however, his life-long study of magnetism, which science he advanced by laborious and ingenious studies, in which, proceeding by the method of experiment, he made extraordinary advances, and published in 1600 in his famous book *De Magnete*. He laid the foundations of terrestrial magnetism by his discovery that the globe of the earth itself acted as a great lodestone. By a few pregnant experiments he also laid the foundations of the science of electricity. Moreover, he advanced astronomical science in several directions, and was the first to advocate in England the astronomical doctrines of Copernicus. Of such a man—a man whose true greatness transcends that of Galileo or Bacon, and who is worthy to be set beside Newton or Shakespeare in the memories of his countrymen—the parentage and local environment can never fail to be of interest.

How little the world has known of either may be seen from the very scant notices in the cyclopedias and dictionaries of biography: the scantiness not arising wholly from indifference on the part of biographers, but from the very fragmentary nature of the materials at their disposal. Historians have indeed been far too prone to follow the trumpet and the drum, to chronicle battle and murder

<sup>1</sup> Read before the Society at its Jubilee Meeting at Colchester on 25th June 1903.



and political intrigue, rather than to record the quiet discoveries of unambitious investigators of truth. From this neglect of the historians the memory of William Gilbert has suffered sorely.

That it has been my good fortune during the past few years to recover some of the missing fragments from the life history and ancestry of the man is the reason for my troubling you to-day with any discourse.

The family name of Gilbert, variously spelled also as Gilberd, Gylberd, Gilbard or Gilbert, is found in many parts of England: in Devon, Cornwall, Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk. Certain features in the armorial bearings give reason for thinking that the Gilberts of Devon, the most famous of whom was Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the half-brother of Sir Walter Raleigh, were connected with the Gilberts of Suffolk and Essex. It is with the Gilberts of East Anglia that we are concerned to-day. There was a Gilbert treasurer of Lincoln Cathedral in 1215; a Gilbert archdeacon of Stow in 1240; a Robert Gilbert precentor of Lincoln in 1414. There appear to be three distinct East Anglian families, viz., the Gilberts of Cantley and Burlingham (Norfolk); the Gilberts of Great Finborough (Suffolk); and the Gilberts of Clare and Colchester. To each of these families there appears to have been an independent grant of arms—totally different in their blazon—during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. With the Gilberts of Cantley and Burlingham, and the Gilberts of Great Finborough, we have nothing to do.

The furthest back that we can actually trace the genealogical table of the family of Dr. Gilbert is to the fourth preceding generation, when, in 1428, one Thomas Gilbert, himself a free burgess of Colchester, was living at Hintlesham in Suffolk. His son, John Gilbert, mentioned in one of the Stow charters in 1499, appears to have resided at Clare, possibly as a weaver. He is buried in the church at Clare. His son, William Gilbert of Clare, who also held property at Chilton, emerges more clearly into cognizance. His will, dated June 1st, 1548, proved Jan. 31st, 1549, shows him to have been a man of substance, employing weavers and spinners, and probably following the trade of a clothier, nevertheless recognized as a gentleman and bearing arms, as duly recorded<sup>1</sup> in the visitations of

<sup>1</sup> Note added May, 1904. The confirmation, mentioned below, to Dr. Gilbert in 1577, of the arms of *Gilbert de Clare* suggests that the ancestry of the Gilberts must have been held by the Heralds' College to have been definitely established. Cox's *Magna Britannia* (article *Suffolk*) pp. 207 and 237, refer to Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester in the reign of Edward I. Cox declares that this Gilbert de Clare dying without issue male, his estate at Clare was divided between his three sisters, and that "the Honour *de Clare* became extinct, and was not revived till some years after."



the Heralds, as those of *Gilbert de Clare*. He bore on a shield argent, between three leopards' faces azure, a chevron sable charged with three roses of the first, piped or; crest: on a mount vert a demi-eagle displayed argent. He held messuages and tenements in Clare and Chilton, demesnes in the manor of Arbury with various lands, tenements and hereditaments in Suffolk and Essex, mansion houses in Clare, and the "newe hall in Clare aforesaid in the strete called the Market." The mansion house in Clare is probably the "gentile equipage" described by Fuller as the residence of the Gilberts for some "centuries of years." His wife Margery, who survived him, died in 1577. Her maiden name is unknown; it may have been Coggeshall.

William Gilbert of Clare seems to have had younger brothers, one named Robert, or Roger. Possibly a younger brother was the Ambrose Gilbert, a reader in Lincoln's Inn, who achieved some eminence in the law. He was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1538, appointed reader in 1556, and read lectures (the MSS. of which are in the Bodleian Library) in 1568. It is needful to be careful about names and dates, as there are some fifteen or sixteen William Gilberts, and some seven or eight Ambrose Gilberts, found in the years from 1550 to 1650, of whom only about half have been completely identified and finally placed in the Gilbert pedigree.

The inheritance of the land of Gilbert of Clare passed to his son, Ambrose Gilbert of Clare, whose will was proved in 1558. He left to his mother Margery, for her life, the farm, lands and tenements in Suffolk, and after her to his wife Grace . . . . till his heirs should be of age. He mentions his ownership of crops in Clare, Arbury and Cave Croft. To his son Thomas and his daughters he left his manor of Swanborne, and his lands, tenements and hereditaments in the county of Bucks.

The eldest son of William Gilbert of Clare was Hierom Gilbert, of whom presently. There appear to have been at least one other son, a William, and several daughters, Elizabeth, Margaret, and Agnes, with perhaps two others. It is conjectured that this William (mentioned simply as "William" in the will of 1558 without naming relationship or habitation) is the William Gilbert who was Esquire Bedell at Oxford in 1553, and whose son (also named William Gilbert) was, from 1590 to 1597, vicar of Fingringhoe (Suffolk).

Another Gilbert—George—born 1555, died at Rheims 1583 a Jesuit and founder of the Catholic Association,<sup>1</sup> was possibly son<sup>2</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> See More's *Hist. Missionis Anglic. Soc. Jesu.*, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> I have since ascertained definitely that George Gilbert was second son of Ambrose Gilbert of Clare, whose wife was Grace Townsend of Ludlow.



Ambrose Gilbert. At any rate, as shown by the scant pedigree of Robert Cooke, Clarenceux Herald, made in 1577, and recorded in Vincent's *Old Grants*, ii., p. 380, in the Heralds' College, George Gilbert was a grandson of Gilbert of Clare, and bore arms charged with a difference showing he belonged to a younger branch.

Returning to Hierom Gilbert, eldest son of Gilbert of Clare, it appears that he was brought up to the law, and migrated about the year 1528 to Colchester, where he became a burgess, was in 1553 chosen recorder of the city, and died in 1583. He is buried in Holy Trinity, where there was formerly a brass inscription<sup>1</sup> to his memory. The house in which he lived is in Trinity Street, almost opposite Holy Trinity church. This house, known as Tymperley's, and, according to a manuscript note by Morant, previously known as Lanseleys or Stampes, came to the Gilbert family in the following way. Frances, daughter of Roger Tymperley, was married to George Horseman. They sold this house, with a croft of land adjoining in Trinity and St. Mary's, to Richard Weston (of Prested Hall) in 1540. Richard Weston died in 1541 (Morant, ii., p. 171), and he gave it by his will to Elizabeth, his wife, whose maiden name has not yet been ascertained. It may have been Eden, or possibly Coggeshall. About two years later—the exact date has not been ascertained, but presumably it was in 1543—Hierom Gilbert married Elizabeth, widow of Richard Weston. They lived at Tymperley's, and there, in May 1544, was born to them their eldest son, who became the famous Dr. William Gilbert. Until a few weeks ago the date of Dr. Gilbert's birth has always been given in his biographies as 1540, on the strength of the inscription on his monument, which states that at his death in 1603 he was in his 63rd year. This is certainly an error. On the portrait of him painted in his life-time, and by him presented to the University of Oxford, was the date 1591 and the inscription "ætatis xlviij." According to this he must have been born between March 26th 1543 and March 24th 1548, and not in 1540. But all doubt has been set at rest by the finding in the Bodleian Library amongst the Ashmolean manuscripts a nativity<sup>2</sup> of Dominus Gilbertus Medicus, which specifically gives as the date of his birth the 24th of May 1544, at 2 hours 20 minutes p.m.

The family of Hierom Gilbert was a large one. The second son Robert lived to manhood, but died early, leaving one child, Thomas

<sup>1</sup> Davy's *Collections*: Add. MSS. 19,151, p. 273—"In the Church of the Holy Trinity. Here lyeth the Body of Iherome Gilbert sometime Recorder of this town of Colchester, and Elizabeth his first wife, and Margaret his daughter. he dyed 23 May, 1583."

<sup>2</sup> As evidenced by a passage on p. 142 of *De Magnete*, Gilbert, in spite of his detachment from the fatuities of alchemy, and his scorn of metaphysics, gave credence to judicial astrology.



Gilbert. After Robert Gilbert comes a daughter Margaret, who married William Harris of Colchester, and bore him a son, William Harris, jun., and a daughter. The third son was Hierom Gilbert, jun., who married a widow, Margaret Segg or Segges, and who died in 1594 without children. Hierom jun. lived at Dovercourt and at Ramsey. Elizabeth, wife of Hierom Gilbert, died about 1549, and was buried in Holy Trinity; and Hierom Gilbert took as his second wife, Jane, daughter of Robert Wingfield of Brantham Hall (Suffolk). The Wingfields are a well-known family. Robert Wingfield had married Bridget, daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Pargiter, Lord Mayor in 1530. His father, Sir Humphrey Wingfield of Brantham Hall, whose wife was a daughter of Sir John Wiseman of Great Canfield (Essex), was the twelfth son of Sir John Wingfield of Letchingham. By his second wife Jane, Hierom Gilbert had seven children: three sons, Ambrose, William, and George, and four daughters, Anne (or Marianne), Agnes, Elizabeth, and Prudence. It seems strange that with William Gilbert as the oldest son of the first wife's family, a son in the second wife's family should also be called William. For distinction he is sometimes called William Gilbert<sup>1</sup> of Melford; but more often William Gilbert the Younger. There appear to have been some reasons connected with the inheritance of property to make it desirable to keep the name of William Gilbert alive in the family. William Gilbert the Younger took Holy Orders, and was in 1599 appointed by Queen Elizabeth to the living of Long Melford (Suffolk). He owned Badley Hall, Ardley (Essex). He is erroneously stated in the visitation of Essex<sup>2</sup> of 1634 to have been a Procter in the Court of Arches, a statement repeated by various later writers. Dr. Gilbert himself never married. At his death his landed property, which was extensive, passed to his brothers and sisters, nephews and a niece (see Appendix II.).

At the date of Dr. Gilbert's death in 1603, on November 30th old style, or December 10th new style, the state of the Gilbert family

<sup>1</sup> This William Gilbert, who died in 1618, edited the unpublished manuscript of Dr. William Gilbert's second and posthumously published book, the *De Mundo Nostro Philosophia Nova*. In a preface to this work he describes himself as *Guilielmus Gilbertus Melfordiensis, Novæ hujus Philosophiæ Authoris Frater*; to which description a later editor, probably Gruter, added the following note:—"Mirabitur fortasse Lector fratrem utrumque vocari Guilielmum. Sed quandoque id fieri apud Anglos, nec sine causa ad rationes æconomicas spectante, et ab iis etiam qui ordinis in populo non infimi sunt, sciunt Anglicarum rerum periti, et author mihi est G.B. vir longiore vita dignissimus, qui nuper concessit ad plures."

<sup>2</sup> *Harleian Soc.* xlii., p. 405, or *Harl. MSS.*, No. 1,542. There are many errors in this pedigree. It calls Hierom Gilbert the Recorder and husband of Jane Wingfield, "William." It calls George Gilbert, who was Procter of Arches, and who married Elizabeth Stephens, "William." It makes Anne Gilbert, who married ..... Barrett, to have married Wm. Smyth of Peperharow, whereas it was her younger sister Agnes who married Wm. Smyth. It makes out that Dr. Gilbert and his brother Hierom were sons of Jane, second wife, whereas they were sons of Elizabeth, first wife of Hierom Gilbert.



was as follows. His own brothers Robert and Hierom were deceased. His own sister Margaret was deceased. Robert's son Thomas, and Margaret Harris's son and daughter were living. His step-brother Richard Weston was rector of Shotley (Suffolk), the advowson of which Dr. Gilbert had inherited from his father Hierom. His half-brothers, Ambrose, William the Younger and George were living, as were all his four half-sisters, Anne, Agnes, Elizabeth and Prudence. All of them had married. Ambrose, who lived at Orsett, on a property presumably inherited from the Wingfield family through his mother Jane, had married Jane, daughter of William [? Cole], by whom he had children, including another William Gilbert (William Gilbert,<sup>1</sup> of Orsett, D.D.), and another Ambrose Gilbert (Ambrose Gilbert, of Orsett, B.D.). William Gilbert the Younger, of Melford and of Badley Hall, had married Agnes [Waltham], and they had children, including another William Gilbert who in turn became owner of Badley Hall and of Melford, and another Ambrose Gilbert. George Gilbert, who was brought up to the law, was a Procter in the Court of Arches. He had married Elizabeth, daughter of Mathew Stephens of Colchester, who brought to him a house in the parish of All Saints. They had no family. Of the four half-sisters, Anne (or Marianna) was married to . . . Barrett; Agnes to William Smyth of Peper Harow in Surrey; Elizabeth to John Jones (or Jones), alderman of Gloucester; and Prudence to Anthony Millington. Except Anne, all the sisters had children.

The pedigree which accompanies this paper gives some particulars as to the later branches of the family. It is avowedly incomplete: but nothing has been set down that has not been established with a good degree of certainty. Of the persons not yet definitely placed in it, the following may be mentioned. There is a John Gilbert of Woodford, to whom in 1609 the arms of Gilbert of Clare were confirmed. There is a group of three children, all baptized at Clare, named John Gilbert, baptized April 9th 1624, Alice, baptized 1st January 1627, Ambrose Gilbert, baptized November 1630, mentioned in the Additional Manuscripts in the British Museum (No. 19,131) as children of one Ambrose Gilbert.<sup>2</sup> There is a William Gilbert of Brent Ely, who bore the Gilbert arms, a widower, who, in 1629, married Mrs. Anne Colman. There is another William Gilbert of Brent Ely living in 1671, to whom the arms of Gilbert of Clare were

<sup>1</sup> Author of *Architectonice Consolationis: or the Art of Building Comfort: occasioned by the death of that religious Gentlewoman Jane Gilbert . . . by her husband William Gilbert Doctor in Divinity.* London, 1640.

<sup>2</sup> These are now identified, as a result of the examination by Miss C. Fell-Smith of the Clare registers, as descendants of Roger Gilbert or Gilbard of Clare.



confirmed.<sup>1</sup> There is a mysterious William Gilbert the Counsellor, of Colchester, who appears as trustee under the trust of Ambrose Gilbert, B.D., when he founded a free scholarship at St. John's College. The figure of William the Counsellor flits in and out in the records: our conjecture is that he was a son of William Gilbert the Younger. One thing about him is certain—that he was the father of two boys, born in 1631 and 1634 respectively, who were sent to Colchester Grammar School, and, it need hardly be added, one of these boys was called William Gilbert and the other Ambrose Gilbert. Doubtless some day the right places in the pedigree will be found for all these descendants of the Gilbert stock.

I now turn to the questions raised by the armorial bearings of the Gilbert family. What light can heraldry throw upon the problems of their intricate relations?

The record in the visitations of the Heralds establishes the lawful possession by Gilbert de Clare of the coat of arms already mentioned. Let me recall the blazon: on a shield argent, between three leopards' faces azure, a chevron sable charged with three roses of the first, pipped or; crest: on a mount vert a demi-eagle displayed argent.

Contrast this with the arms of other Gilbert families.

The Gilberts of Devon, now represented by *Gilbert* of Compton, bear the following:—Argent, on a chevron sable, three roses of the first, leaved proper; crest: a squirrel sejant on a hill vert feeding on a crop of nuts proper.

*Gilbert* of Trevissick (Cornwall) has the following:—Argent, on a chevron gules, three roses of the field; crest: a squirrel sejant gules, cracking a nut, or.

*Gilbert* of Cantley (Norfolk) bears:—Gules, two bars ermine, in chief three fleurs-de-lys or.

*Gilbert* of Great Finborough (Suffolk) was, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, represented by Sir John Gilbert, who bore as arms:—Azure, a chevron engrailed ermine between three eaglets displayed or.

The wide differences between these coats of arms show that the families were different, except perhaps in the cases of the Gilberts of Devon and Cornwall. There is also a Sussex family which bears similar arms to those of Devon.

What may be the precise significance of the circumstance that the Gilberts of Clare and Colchester had three leopards' faces while the

<sup>1</sup> I have since seen in the College of Arms a record of this grant, made during the visitation of 1664. It is accompanied by a partial pedigree, and signed by the William Gilbert in question. He was born in 1631, and was the son of William Gilbert the Counsellor (Lincoln's Inn), of Colchester and Bury St. Edmunds, owner of Badley Hall and of lands at Long Melford, and who married (as her second husband) Anne, daughter of Samuel Coleman of Brent Ely. The William who thus signed the pedigree married Mary, daughter and only child of Jo. Alabaster of Hadleigh.



Gilberts of Devon had none (the shields being otherwise identical) does not appear. It is, however, significant that the Earls of Suffolk at that date bore three leopards' faces. Perhaps it is too far-fetched to suggest that the Gilbert arms with leopards' faces might be read to mean Gilberts of Suffolk. But again, it must be remembered that in heraldry the leopard stands along with the lion as a symbol generally for courage, and a device of three leopards' faces was quite a common one. Besides this, there are several well-known coats of arms that strikingly resemble those of the Gilberts of Clare. The Wentworth family (Earls of Strafford) bear on a shield sable a chevron between three leopards' faces or. The family of Farrington of Chichester bears argent a chevron gules between three leopards' faces erased sable. The civic arms of the town of Shrewsbury are azure, three leopards' faces or. But the most striking case is that of the arms of the Weavers' Company, of London, which existed back in the fifteenth century, and had a grant of arms in 1487, had confirmed to it in 1590, and again on August 1st 1616, the following coat: on a shield azure, on a chevron argent between three leopards' faces or, each holding in his mouth a shuttle of the last, as many roses gules.

The similarity is striking; the principal difference—the weavers' shuttles in the leopards' mouth—is self-explanatory. But can the similarity be a mere coincidence? Remember that Gilbert of Clare was a master-weaver. And the Weavers' Company had intimate relations with East Anglia, as attested by the circumstance that its arms, just described, are amongst the coats emblazoned in the glass windows of the Moot Hall at Colchester. Three roses on a chevron, and three leopards' faces—the combination must have had some significance. Why should the same combination occur for Gilbert of Clare and for the Weavers' Company? I leave the enigma for those wise in the perilous wisdom of heraldry to solve.

Let me return to the known facts of the arms of Gilbert of Clare.

In the manuscript room of the British Museum, in one of the Heraldic MSS. attributed to the Clarenceux Herald Cooke is the book called "Clopton," containing the arms of many Suffolk families. On folio 220*b* of this book is a trick of the Gilbert arms, inscribed at the top "Gilbert de Clare," under which a later hand has written "Doctor Gilbert." The sketch shows the shield surmounted by the crest—on a mount vert a demi-eagle displayed argent. The same trick, but without the crest, appears in the manuscript visitation of 1,634, Harleian MSS., No. 1,542, p. 55*b*. And again, with the crest complete, in Harleian MSS., No. 1,560, fol. 181*b*, there is given a trick of the arms and crest of Gilbert of Clare. All these agree in



the charges and tinctures, with the detail of difference that in the book Clopton the roses argent are marked as being pipped or.

In the Heralds' College there exists a precious document, a docquet or duplicate of the official confirmation made on November 27th 1577, by Robert Cooke, Clarenceux Herald (who was a fellow-collegian of Dr. Gilbert's at St. John's College), of the Gilbert Arms to Dr. Gilbert. The issue of this document, which bears in the margin a trick of the arms and a piece of the Gilbert pedigree, is in itself evidence that Dr. Gilbert had established his descent from Gilbert of Clare, and the right to bear his arms. It may be remembered that at this date Dr. Gilbert's father, Hierom Gilbert, was still alive. In this docquet, which is unfortunately imperfect at one margin, the arms as described above are confirmed to William Gilbert of the Cittie of London, Doctor of P[hysic], and a new grant is made of a crest. The terms of this grant are as follows:— "And for as much as the said Wm. Gilbert desir[eth to hold an] achievement for creast or cognizance mete and lawful to be bor[ne by him without] offence to any other person. I, the said Clarentieux King of Arms by power and au[thority] annexed and graunted by lettres patents under the great Seale of England have assigned unto the said Willm. Gilbert, gent. for his creast or cognizance uppon the healme [a cushion argent] and sables upon a mount vert a demy Egle silver mantelled gules dubbed sil[ver as] apperethe depicted in the margent."

The crest was in fact the same as that borne by Gilbert of Clare. At the foot of the same docquet appears a note in the same handwriting, that this was also "confirmed in like manner to George Gilbert of Clare upon his pretended travayling [into] Germany Anno predicto Anno aetatis suæ 22, with a second difference." This George, as it appears from the pedigree in the margin, was first cousin to Dr. Gilbert, being the son of [Ambrose] Gilbert (who married Grace daughter of Sir R. Townsend), younger son of Gilbert of Clare. This George, born in 1555, cannot be any other than the Founder of the Catholic Association, who became a Jesuit and died in 1583.

When Dr. Gilbert published his famous book he caused his arms to be engraved and printed at the back of the title page. The engraving does not show the tinctures, but it depicts the arms of Gilbert of Clare quartered with another coat; argent a cross (sable) between four escallops sable, a crescent for difference. These are the arms of *Coggeshall*, and they indicate that an heiress of that family married into the family of Gilbert, and was ancestress of Dr. Gilbert. It is not yet known whether this ancestress Coggeshall was Elizabeth, mother of Dr. Gilbert, or Margery, grandmother of



Dr. Gilbert. The presumptions go in favour of the latter supposition. All the pedigrees are silent on the point, and the registers of parishes have been very imperfectly searched. Over the quartered arms of *Gilbert* and *Coggeshall* in the engraving in *De Magnete*, there is



THE ARMS OF DR. WM. GILBERT, REPRODUCED FROM THE CUT ON THE BACK OF THE TITLE-PAGE OF THE BOOK "DE MAGNETE," 1600.

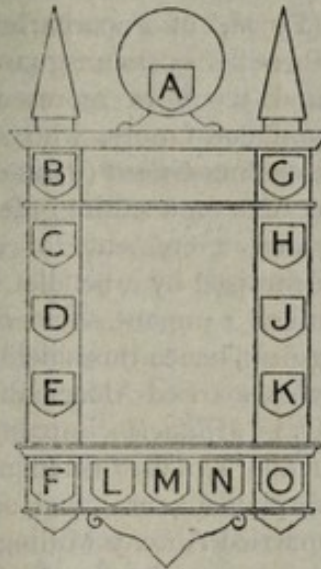
represented the helmet of an esquire, surmounted with the crest as granted by the Clarenceux King at Arms.

It may here be added that quite recently, as I am informed by Mr. C. E. Benham, there has been discovered in Gilbert's old house "Tymperley's," in Trinity Street, Colchester, a hatchment bearing



the arms of Gilbert of Clare, but with the crest imperfect. Possibly this may not be the only discovery in this ancient mansion.

Let us now turn to the memorial tablet of Dr. Gilbert on the north wall of the church of Holy Trinity, which has long presented some problems to the archæologists of Essex. It is figured, and its ornaments are partially described in Morant's *Colchester*; a small, but in some respects more correct, cut of it is given in Mr. C. E. Benham's *William Gilbert of Colchester*, p. 97; while a very admirable drawing appears in Mr. Chancellor's *Sepulchral Monuments of Essex*. But to this day no complete account has been given of the significance of the various shields and quarterings which appear upon it. With the kind aid of the Rev. H. L. Elliot, and the information as to the Gilbert family which recent researches have revealed, I am, however, able to-day to give a consistent explanation of the whole, every detail except two having been confirmed and verified. The memorial tablet (itself not correctly quoted in any work I have yet come across) is a rectangular slab set in a frame-work, on which are carved fourteen shields. One (A) is in a circular panel surmounting the monument; two (B and G) stand under the entablature left and right; three (C, D, E) stand in a vertical row on the left pilaster; three others (H, J, K) in a similar row on the right pilaster; across the bottom in a horizontal row are five more (F, L, M, N, O).



The achievement A on the summit bears quarterly the arms of *Gilbert* and *Coggeshall*, precisely as depicted in the engraving in *De Magnete*, with helmet, crest, and mantling. Shield B is a repetition of shield A, but without helmet or crest. Shield G is *Gilbert* impaling a coat of *Wingfield* and *Wiseman* quartered together. (*Wingfield*: Argent on a bend gules cotised sable, three pairs of wings conjoined in lure of the field. *Wiseman*: Sable a chevron ermine between three cronels argent.) This shield represents, therefore, Hierom Gilbert the Recorder and his second wife, Jane Wingfield. The shields C, D, E and F are simply repetitions of the arms of *Gilbert* of Clare (not quartered with *Coggeshall*), and doubtless represent four members of the Gilbert family. Shield H depicts the arms of *Gilbert* impaling *Cole*. (*Cole*: Argent a chevron gules between three scorpions sable.) This coat presumably represents Ambrose Gilbert and his



wife Jane, daughter of William [Cole]. He was the eldest son of the second family of Hierom Gilbert, and his shield therefore hangs under shield G. Shield J is *Gilbert* impaling *Waltham* (*Waltham*: Sable on a chevron argent, between three cinquefoils or, a roundle . . . .), and represents William Gilbert the Younger and his wife, Agnes Waltham (*alias* Mason). The shield K depicts *Gilbert* impaling *Stephens*. (*Stephens*: Quarterly, 1 and 4, argent and gules; in 2 and 3, three roundles, over all a bend ermine.) This shield, therefore, represents George Gilbert and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Mathew Stephens of Colchester. Shield L bears the arms of *Barrett* impaling *Gilbert*. (*Barrett*: Party per pale azure and gules.) Hence this stands for Anna (or Marianna) Gilbert, who married one Barrett of . . . . Shield M depicts *Smyth* of Peperharow impaling *Gilbert* (*Smyth*,<sup>1</sup> of Peperharow: Per pale, or and azure, a chevron between three lions passant-guardant counter-changed, a crescent for difference) and therefore represents Agnes Gilbert, the second sister of the younger family, who married William Smyth. Shield N is *Jones* impaling *Gilbert* (*Jones* or *Johnes*,<sup>2</sup> of Gloucester: Quarterly, 1 and 6, ermine on a saltire gules a crescent; 2, or a lion rampant regardant sable, a crescent for difference; 3, argent a lion rampant sable, debruised by a bendlet sinister gules; 4, or two palets gules, over all a lion rampant sable charged with a mullet; 5, paly of six or and gules), hence this shield belongs to Elizabeth Gilbert, the third sister, who married Alderman John Jones, of Gloucester. The last shield O, is *Millington* impaling *Gilbert* (*Millington*, of Chester: Quarterly, 1 and 4, azure three millstones argent; 2 and 3, argent an eagle displayed azure), and so represents the fourth sister Prudence, who married Antony Millington.

The two details which remain unconfirmed are, first, the assigning of shield H to Ambrose Gilbert, because though the arms impaled with *Gilbert* are unquestionably those of *Cole*, it is not known from other evidence that Ambrose's wife was a Cole. She is set down in the visitation of 1634 as "Jane, da. of William . . . ." Ambrose lived at Orsett. There were Coles in Orsett. Confirmation ought not to be impossible. The second unconfirmed point is the identification of the blazon of the family of Stephens. If then the three shields H, J, K represent the three married brothers and their wives, and the four shields L, M, N and O represent the married sisters and their husbands, who are the persons represented by the four plain Gilbert shields C, D, E and F. Judging by analogy, they should represent either unmarried Gilberts, or Gilberts who had married

<sup>1</sup> *Harl. Soc.* xliii., pp. 172-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xxi., p. 96.



persons not entitled to bear arms. These would appear to be Margaret Gilbert, Dr. Gilbert's own sister, who had predeceased him; Robert Gilbert, a brother who had predeceased him; Thomas Gilbert, son of Robert, who as a boy had been left a ward of Dr. Gilbert; while shield F would then remain to represent Hierom Gilbert, jun., Dr. Gilbert's own brother, who had predeceased him by about nine years.

One feature deserves consideration. Between shields B and C, across the top of the monument, is a long blank space of dark stone, which looks as though it lacked something architecturally. It seems certain that there never was any inscription cut upon it: but I do not feel so sure that there never were any shields upon it. It is, however, in just the same state as it was depicted 100 years ago by Morant, and that was previous to the removal of the monument to its present position in the church. Assuming that no shields are missing, it will be seen that every immediate member of the Gilbert family is represented, except Dr. Gilbert's own mother Elizabeth, unless she was a Coggeshall. But if she was a Coggeshall, her arms ought to have been impaled simply, instead of quartered, along with those of Gilbert in shield B. If she was non-armigerous, then shield B must be taken to represent Hierom Gilbert the Recorder alone, using the quartering of Coggeshall from his mother or other ancestress. My conviction is that Dr. Gilbert's mother Elizabeth was an *Eden* before she married her first husband, Richard Weston, and that the Coggeshall blood came in in the person of Margery, wife of Gilbert of Clare. This is a point still left conjectural.

There exists in the College of Arms, in Symond's Collections (*Essex* i.; 437, A and M), a series of sketches of the Gilbert arms from the church of Holy Trinity. They appear all to have been taken from the monument to Dr. Gilbert some two hundred years ago. They do not include a complete set of the fourteen shields, and while they confirm a number of the points enumerated above do not settle either of the details stated as requiring confirmation.

To amplify the scanty history of the Gilbert family, and to complete the pedigree, much work is needed, and there are many clues to be followed up. The registers of the following parishes ought to be searched, viz.: Clare,<sup>1</sup> Great Oakley, Little Oakley, Orsett, Fingringhoe, Long Melford, St. Osyth, Brent Ely, Dovercourt, Hintlesham, Great Yeldham, St. Mary's Bury St. Edmunds,

<sup>1</sup> Since this paper was read Miss C. Fell-Smith has searched for me the Register at Clare, with the result of fixing the date of decease of Margery, widow of William Gilbert (or Gilbard) of Clare, and the discovery of the family of Roger Gilbard. These are now added to the Pedigree in the appendix hereto. S.P.T.



Tillingham, Little Thurrock. The wills have not yet been found of Ambrose Gilbert of Lincoln's Inn, of Ambrose Gilbert of Orsett, of Thomas Gilbert of Clare, of Richard Weston, or of William Harris of Colchester. The connexions between the Gilbert family and the families of Cole, Coggeshall, Eden, Clere, Campion, Townsend, and Pearse or Peirs need to be elucidated. There cannot be found a certain manuscript called Barrett's MS., which contains on p. 122 a note of the grant of arms to Dr. Gilbert. There are several Gilberts yet unplaced in the pedigree, including John Gilbert of Woodford, who in 1609 had a grant or confirmation of the arms of Gilbert of Clare. The wills at Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds have not yet been searched, nor the mass of records in Colchester Museum, which are supposed to have been used by Morant in the compilation of his History. For use in such searches it will be useful to be furnished with a list of the landed properties in Essex and Suffolk owned by Dr. Gilbert. The accompanying list (see Appendix II.), compiled from Dr. Gilbert's will, and from other wills in the Gilbert family, show what a considerable person in the County the great Doctor must have become. The title-deeds of these several properties ought not to be beyond recovery, and would probably add much to the family history.

There is evidently ample scope for future effort on the part of the archæologists and antiquarians of Essex and Suffolk to bring to light the missing chapters in the history of one of the most illustrious names in East Anglia.



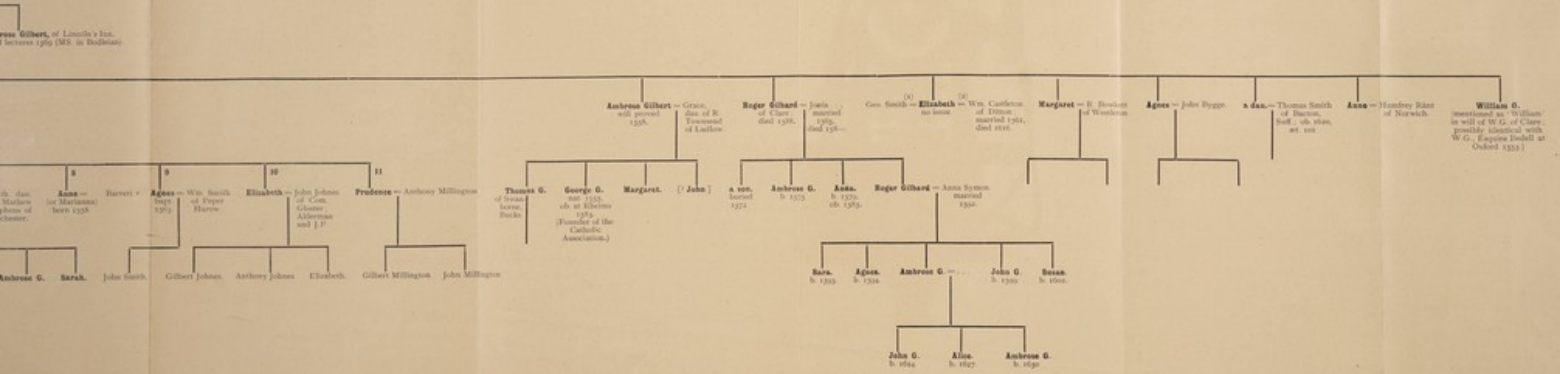




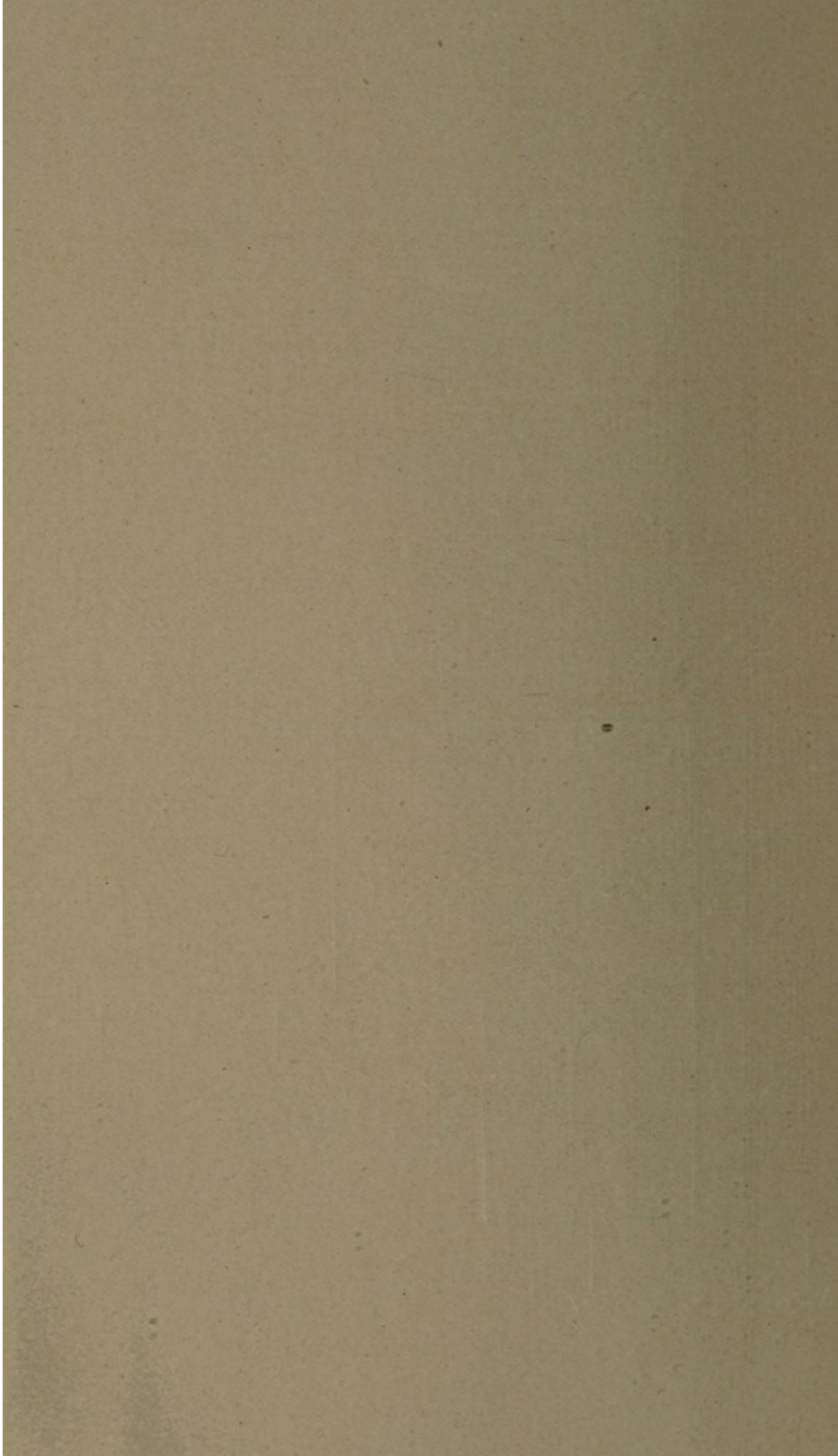




DEGREE OF THE GILBERTS OF CLARE AND OF COLCHESTER.









## APPENDIX II.

## PROPERTY LEFT BY DR. GILBERT, 1603.

		LEGATEE.
COLCHESTER: House in Trinity Parish with tenements belonging to it, orchards, gardens* ..	}	WILLIAM HARRIS.
Pasture named "Partridge" .. .. .		
Meadow by Ryegate .. .. .		
Messuage and tenements in St. Martin's Parish..		GILBERT MILLINGTON.
DOVERCOURT: House called "Pantrys" and lands		AMBROSE GILBERT.
OAKLEY, GT. AND LITTLE: Hubrich Hall ..	}	AMBROSE GILBERT.
Lease of Oakley Mill .. .. .		
ST. OSYTH: House and appurtenances .. ..		AMBROSE GILBERT.
WEELEY: "Customary lands" .. .. .		WILLIAM HARRIS.
ELMSTED: Land called "Old Hammonds" and "New Hammonds," &c.* .. .. .	}	GEORGE GILBERT.
Sempers Heath, pastures, groves and woods* ..		
Lands and tenements called "Celers" (Kelters)* ..	}	AMBROSE GILBERT.
" " " " Ricadoms"* .. .. .		
" " " " Ridelles" (in Wivenhoe)* ..		
" " " " Brookfield"* .. .. .		
GREENSTED: House and land called "Goldinges"*		"to my niece HARRIS."
House and land called "Fremans"* .. ..		ELIZABETH JOHNES.
ARDLEIGH: Badley Hall, manor house and lands	}	WILLIAM GILBERT the Younger.
Badley Meadow .. .. .		
House and land called "Parsons" .. .. .		
" " " " Crosses" .. .. .		ANNE BARRETT.
SHOTTLEY: Parcel of ground and Advowson* (apparently given during life to		Rev. RICHARD WESTON.)
MANOR OF RAMSEY, lease in .. .. .	}	AMBROSE GILBERT.
MANOR OF MICHELSTOW, lease in .. .. .		
MANOR OF FOBTON MARSH, lease in.. ..		
LAVENHAM (SUFFOLK): Lands, "bought of my cozen Eden" .. .. .		WILLIAM GILBERT the Younger.
THORPE (SUFFOLK): "Customary lands" .. ..		WILLIAM HARRIS.
House, "bought of Mr. Cotton" .. .. .	}	WILLIAM GILBERT the Younger.
Land called "Bulles," "bought of Coo and his partner" .. .. .		
Land, "bought of my cozen Eden" .. .. .		
LONDON: House on Peter's Hill, called "Wingfield House" .. .. .		AGNES SMYTHE.

N.B.—Items marked \* inherited from Hierom Gilbert (sen.).



APPENDIX II.

PROPERTY LIST BY DR. GILBERT, 1203.

LEASES.

WILLIAM HARRIS	COACHSTER: House in Trinity Parish with lease mans belonging to the outside garden.
GILBERT MILLINGTON	Parish named "Partridge" Meadow by Rygate ..
AMBROSE GILBERT	Message and tenements in St. Martin's Parish. DOVERCOTE: House called "Langys" and lands
AMBROSE GILBERT	OAKLEY: Gt. and Little; Hainich Hall Lease of Oakley Mill ..
AMBROSE GILBERT	ST. OSMY: House and appurtenances ..
WILLIAM HARRIS	WRELEY: "Commonly lands" ..
GEORGE GILBERT	EMSTED: Land called "Old Hammonds" and "New Hammonds," &c. ..
AMBROSE GILBERT	Seniors Heath, pasture grove and woods Lands and tenements called "Coles" (Koles) ..
AMBROSE GILBERT	"Kiladons" ..
not mentioned	"Ridelles" (in Wintebos) ..
"to my new house"	"Brookfield" ..
ELIZABETH JOURNE	GREENSTED: House and land called "Goldings" House and land called "Prenans" ..
WILLIAM GILBERT the Younger	ARDLEIGH: Bachel Hall, manor house and lands Bachel Meadow ..
JANE HARRIS	House and land called "Parsons" ..
	"Crosses" ..
	SHOTLEY: Parcel of ground and Meadows apparently given during life to Rev. Richard Weston
AMBROSE GILBERT	MANOR OF RAMSEY, lease in ..
	MANOR OF MICHELSTOW, lease in ..
	MANOR OF FOSTON MARSH, lease in ..
WILLIAM GILBERT the Younger	LAVENHAM (SURREY): Lands "bought of my cousin Eden" ..
WILLIAM HARRIS	THORPE (SURREY): "Common lands" ..
WILLIAM GILBERT the Younger	House "bought of Mr. Colton" Land called "Bulles" "bought of Geo and his partner" ..
	Land "bought of my cousin Eden"
JANE SWINNE	LONDON: House in Peter's Hill called "Wincind House" ..

to be inserted after the name of the person to whom the property is given.







