

A SUFFOLK HERALDIC MANUSCRIPT

By L. Dow, F.S.A.

A hitherto unknown heraldic manuscript book, compiled by a Suffolk man towards the end of the seventeenth century, has recently come to light and, by a happy chance, has returned to the county, temporarily at least. Since the book contains several features of interest to Suffolk heralds and historians, it is appropriate that a description of it should be recorded in these *Proceedings*. I am therefore indebted to its present owner, Mr. Edward Elmhirst, F.R.C.S., of the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital, for permission to examine the book and to publish this paper on it.

From internal evidence it is clear that it was compiled by Dr. Nathaniel Fairfax, M.D., of Woodbridge and was completed in 1689, shortly before his death in the following year. The book measures $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches and is $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick; it is bound in half calf with marbled boards and on the spine are two red leather labels with the title in gilt letters:—‘CATALOGUE OF ARMS OF MANY AUTHORS’. At the foot of the spine is Mr. Elmhirst’s press-mark in black ink, ‘E.13’. The present binding is probably of mid-eighteenth century date and Mr. Elmhirst points out that stains on one of the end-papers may indicate that it was originally bound in whole leather.

Inside the front cover, apart from that of the present owner, are two armorial book-plates belonging to previous owners; ‘William Constable Esqr., F.R.S. & F.A.S.’ who was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, ‘of Burton Constable, Yorkshire’ in March, 1775 and who died in 1791;¹ and ‘E. R. J. Gambier Howe’, barrister of Lincoln’s Inn, who died in 1943 aged 85; this bookplate appears also inside the back cover. Mr. Elmhirst bought the book (lot 514) at Hodgson’s sale, 1 June, 1951, when books and manuscripts then belonging to Mrs. Gambier Howe were sold. He tells me that Dr. Fairfax’s books were auctioned at the Guildhall Coffee House on 3 June, 1695, but this manuscript was not included.

Nathaniel Fairfax was descended from the well-known Yorkshire family of that name and was therefore related to Thomas Fairfax, the commander of the Parliamentary forces in the Civil War. The branch of the family which settled in Norfolk and Suffolk were strong puritans, so the good doctor displayed a pleasant human inconsistency in his evident interest in heraldry. Nathaniel was born

¹ I am indebted to Dr. Philip Corder for this information.

24 July 1637 at Rumburgh, where his father, Benjamin Fairfax, was Rector until his ejection for non-conformity under the Act of Uniformity on St. Bartholomew's Day 1662; another son, John Fairfax, was likewise ejected from Barking, near Needham Market, at the same time. Nathaniel Fairfax matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, in 1655 and graduated in 1658; he was appointed Perpetual Curate of Willisham, also near Needham Market, about 1660, but two years later he suffered the same fate as his father and brother.

After his ejection from Willisham in 1662 he turned to medicine for a livelihood. It is not improbable that he already had a working knowledge of the subject and had perhaps combined the cure of souls with the cure of simple ailments amongst his parishioners at Willisham; this would have been quite usual at that period. However this may be, he obtained at Norwich, 10 June 1665, a license to practise and it is likely that about this time he settled in Woodbridge.

About two years later he evidently decided to take up medicine more seriously, because we next hear of him as being admitted to Leyden University in Holland *c.* 1667-8 when he was 31 years of age. Here he studied until he took the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1670. For his doctorate he wrote a thesis on the somewhat unpleasant subject of intestinal worms (*de lumbricis*), which he dedicated to 'Thomas Blackerby, Alderman of the City of London' who, as we shall see later, may have been the father of his first wife.² Returning armed with this new qualification, he practised medicine in Woodbridge for the remaining twenty years of his life, devoting his spare time to the study of heraldry. But he also found time to publish, in 1674, a pamphlet with the peculiar title of 'A Treatise of the Bulk and Selvedge of the World'. Of his character we know nothing except the description of him quoted by Taylor:—'an ingenious man, a good scholar and a popular preacher'. Taylor also says that he was a member of the Royal Society.

Nathaniel Fairfax married, as his first wife, Elizabeth Blackerby. I have not been able to find the date of this marriage, but it must have taken place before 1668 because a child was born to them in that year; it may even have been while he was at Willisham. As for Elizabeth, it is possible that she was the daughter of 'Thomas Blackerby of Stowmarket and of Shakerly Hall in Badwell Ash', who is the only Blackerby entry in the 'Catalogue'; I have not been able to identify this Thomas with the Alderman Thomas Blackerby to whom the thesis was dedicated, but it is perhaps a permissible supposition. Nathaniel and Elizabeth had altogether

² According to *Records of the Skinners' Company*, Thomas Blackerby was Alderman of Vintry 1666, Master of the Skinners' Company 1668, and died in 1688.

eight children, but four of them—three sons and a daughter—died young and their names are not known. The others were Blackerby, the only surviving son; Priscilla, who married Thomas Smith of Woodbridge and who died a widow and apparently childless in 1746; Catherine, who died unmarried in 1750; and Sarah, who married Robert Hall, a widower and merchant of Ipswich (she also seems to have left no children). Blackerby Fairfax, who was baptised at Woodbridge, 16 February 1668 and was admitted to Woodbridge School in 1677, followed in his father's footsteps, first to Cambridge and then to Leyden University, where he took his M.D. in 1696; he is said to have entered the Navy as a physician and to have retired from the service by 1717; in 1728 he took the degree of M.D. at Cambridge. The last we hear of him is when his sister Sarah (Hall) left him 20/- in her will dated 27 January, 1730; he would then have been about 62 years old.

Evidently his first wife died before 1683, in the latter half of which year Nathaniel Fairfax, then aged 46, married, at St. Margaret's, Ipswich, for his second wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Nathaniel Bacon, the Recorder and historian of Ipswich, and widow of Frances Willard, she being some four years older than him. Dr. Nathaniel Fairfax died 12th June, 1690 and is buried at Woodbridge; he was only 53, but his widow survived him for more than 30 years, dying in 1723 aged ninety. The doctor, his two wives, all his children and his two sons-in-law are commemorated on an inscribed stone partly covered by the font in Woodbridge Church; the writing is now worn away but a full transcription was printed by Dallenger in 1875. Taylor states that his will is to be found 'in the Archdeaconry of Suffolk' and Davy—who wrongly gives the date of his death as 12 January, 1695—says that his will was dated 13th September, 1686; but diligent search at Ipswich, Norwich and the P.C.C. has failed to reveal either will or administration.³

The 'Catalogue' consists of about 360 leaves of coarse paper, which are unnumbered; the writing is good and the ink has not faded; in a few places it has soaked through from the other side of the leaf, but otherwise there is no difficulty in deciphering the contents. The writing is similar throughout and was evidently written by the same hand; it gives the impression of having been executed in one continuous operation and not added to from time to time. The first entry, which occupies one page, is a list of sources from

³ The above particulars of the Fairfax family are mainly taken from: *D.N.B.*, xviii, p. 137; Venn, *Alumni Cantab.*; A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, (1934), p. 189; Edgar Taylor, *The Suffolk Bartholomeans*, (1840), pp. 64-66; Smith & Comrie, *English Speaking Students of Medicine at Leyden University*, (c. 1932); Dallenger, *Woodbridge Parish Church*, (1875), p. 69; and from various wills of the family amongst the records of the Archd. Suff. (now at the County Record Office).

which the catalogue or dictionary of arms was compiled; this is of considerable interest and will be dealt with in some detail below. This is followed by a table of precedence, 'The Order & Degrees of the Nobility & Gentry of England' (one page); a list of High Sheriffs from 1552 to 1661 (four pages); 'Coats of Arms of Kings, Queens and Princes' (two pages); the arms of the Cambridge colleges (one page); and the arms of various cities and towns, mainly East Anglian and all English except for 'Norimberg in Germany' and 'Toledo in Spaine' (one page). These lists of arms are all descriptive blazons with no tricks or drawings; there are in fact no such drawings in the book, except a few thumbnail sketches, in the catalogue itself, to clarify a difficult or unusual charge. A few blank leaves or pages occur between these various items and lists.

After this comes the 'Catalogue' itself, which occupies the bulk of the volume, about 180 leaves including a few blanks between some of the letters. It is headed 'Coates of Familyes' and is arranged alphabetically under the names of the families, each followed by a description of its arms. Each letter is divided into sections, CA, CE, CH, CI, CL, etc. and within these sections the entries are not strictly alphabetical. Nearly always a reference is given to the source from which the entry has been taken. Geographically the scope of the catalogue is a wide one, families from all parts of the kingdom being included, but there is a very strong Suffolk representation, as is to be expected from the number of local heraldic manuscripts which are named as sources. In a few cases the name only is given but no arms; 'Cave, Sr Tho. of Stanford Northamptonsh. Bart. 1641'. But in others, fairly full genealogical information is included, as well as the arms; for instance:—

Bloys or Blois, Wm. of Grundisburgh Suff. Esqr, his son
 Sr Wm Knt, his son Sr Charles (now 1689) Bart.
 G. a bend verrey B & A betw. 2 flowers de luce A.

Throughout the catalogue the phrases 'now 1689' or 'this year 1689' occur fairly frequently in the Suffolk entries, showing that the book was presumably compiled in that year.

Following the catalogue are about forty blank leaves and then two lists of justices of the peace for Suffolk, the first dated '16^o Jac' (1618-19) and the second '1660 after y^e restoring, y^e secluded members'; these occupy three pages and are particularly valuable as the names of justices are not usually very accessible; they are frequently of use in dating official documents. The second list suggests that a new Commission of the Peace was appointed after the dissolution of the Long Parliament in March 1660.

After several more blank leaves these items complete the book:—

- i. An alphabetical list of names headed 'In y^e Church of Preston in Suff. are y^e Coat armour of these Gentⁿ of Suff. set up in Glass by y^t Pious, learned & accomplishd Gentleman M^r Robert Riece Patron of y^t Church who had part of his education in the hous of M^r Theodore Beza at Geneva'.
- ii. 'Collections of Badges 3^o Edw. Reg. (Til 2^d)'.
- iii. 'Notes out of a Book of W. Tilletson Gent. which he saith is a Copy of a Book called y^e Barons Book written by Clarenceaux Cooke contening y^e Names of the Nobility from K.W.1 till about y^e 12th of Eliz. He added of his own some Notes which he says he had from M^r Segar Garter Pr. K. at Armes. M^r Matthias Candler added (as he could get them) to xxth year of K. Ja.' This section consists of a six-page index of peers, followed by a chronological list of the monarchs, from William I to James I; under each is given a list of the titles created during that reign, the whole thing occupying some forty pages. Evidently this copy is an abridgment of the original because about half way through the Elizabethan entries is this note:

'Huc usq. Robert Cooke Clarenceaux composuit,
An^o 1572 R.R. Eliz. 14^o. (saithe mine Author).
I have onely taken some short notes out of his'.

The last entry is 'Sr Edw. Mountague Kn^t Cr. L. Mountague of Boughton in Northamptonshire 19 Jac. A. 3 fusills in fess g. & a bord^r S.'

- iv. A list of 'The vj Circuits of y^e Itinerary Judges of England' and 'The Judges who usually ride these Circuits'.
- v. Finally, on the last page is copied out an epitaph 'In St Clements Church Ipsw^{ch} upon a stone for D^r Ro. Norton sometimes their Towne Preacher who dyed 1587'. This is followed by an extract from the will of Wm. Firmage of Barnham, a shepherd; 'Item I give & bequeath unto y^e said James Bland to keep my dog & to use him well so long as he shall live the Sum of ten pounds'.⁴

It remains now to deal with the list of sources from which the catalogue was compiled and to which references are made after most of the entries in the catalogue. The list occupies one page in the book and is printed in full below; the abbreviations in the column at the left are those used as references in the catalogue.

1 In the Ensuing Catalogue, There is made use First of y^t of y^e Dukes, Marq^{ss}, Earls, Viscs, Barons, Bart^s & Collected by T. Walkeley, printed 1652. It contains also all y^e Kn^{ts} made by K : Cha :

⁴ Archd. Sudbury, bk. 'Whitney' (1598-1601), f. 204.

- Y 2 Book of Ja: Yorke of Lincolne, Blacksmith, concerning ye Nobility & Genty of Linc:
- Pech: 3 Peacham's Compleat Gent^a
- Rem: 4 Camden's Remains
- He: 5 Heylin's Cosmography
- Sp: 6 Speed's Chronicle
- Tyl: 7 Book of Wm Tylletson Gent: it conteynes all ye Nobility of Eng: according to ye time wherein they were created. (Of wch I take a short Abridgm^t near ye end of this Book). Mr. Tylletson (in this) onely copys out a MS left by . . . Cook Clarenceaux K at Arms. The other part of his Book is such short snatches as he has taken heer and there from some Notes of ye worthy Gent^a Rob. Riece of Preston Esq; the most of them concern ye Gentry of Suff. (This MS of Tylletson I borrowed of Fra: Bacon Esqr).
- Guil: 8 Guillam's Display of Heraldry.
- Lei: 9 Gerard Leigh.
- Den: 10 MS of ye Pedigrees of Sundry of ye most Eminent families of ye Genty of Suff: by Mr Wm Denney. (Lent me by Hen: Wingfield of Crofffield Esq and
- 11 Another collected by ye same. Lent by Wm Blois Esq.
- Lev: 12 Some Bookes of Mr Leverland of Framlingham, who hath bin a Diligent searcher after Antiquityts.
- Tyl: 2^d 13 Another Book of Mr Tylletson's (who as appears by this Book, was somtims Minister in Ipsw^{ch} & Curate at Capell) 1594. Borrowed of Coll^l Bloys. (Noted Tyl: 2^d)
- Re: 14 Book of Mr Revett's of Bildeston wherin are Alphabetically set down ye names & armes of many Eng: Genty Calld: ye Alphabet of Honor. (Noted Re:
- Chesh: 15 King's Description of Chester, vale Royall of Eng. (Noted Chesh:
- St: 16 An Alphabetically Book wch had bin transcribed by Mr Leonard Staveley somtims of Petistree in Suff: finisht May 14, 1618.
- D.W. 17 Dugdale's description of Warw^{ck}sh.
- W.D. 18 Another Book lent by H. Wingfield of Crofffield Esq, wch by comparing it with the other I find to be written by ye hand of Mr Wm Denney. (Noted W.D.)
- G. vel Ca: 19 Additions by ye Revnd Divine & Industrious Antiquary Mr Matthias Gillet als Candler vicar of Codenham Suff:
- 20 Additions by ye Revnd & Learned Mr Phil: G. als Candler his son, sometime Minister in Ipsw^{ch}, after Schoolmastr in Woodbridge,
- N.F. 21 Additions by Nath: Fairfax, M.D. of Woodbridge.

The authors mentioned in nos. 1-6, 8, 9, 15 and 17 are well-known and particulars of them and their works can be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, but I add a few notes on the others, who are all local antiquarians, although in some cases very little is known about them; they are arranged here alphabetically.

Francis Bacon. Evidently owned Tylletson's book (no. 7). There is no indication of his identity, but he may have been the Francis Bacon who was M.P. for Ipswich c. 1640.

William Blois. Also referred to as 'Colonel Blois'. He was of the Grundisburgh family, born 1600 and died 1673; he was father of Sir William Blois, Knt. who died in 1675. Our William Blois, the elder, compiled the *Blois MSS.*, which are in the library of the Institute at Bury, and which were fully described and indexed by the late Edmund Farrer in these *Proceedings* (vol. xiv. (1912), pp. 147-226). There is no evidence that Fairfax used these manuscripts, but he borrowed from Blois one of Denney's books and also Tyllotson's second book, before his (Blois's) death in 1673.

Matthias Candler. Also known as Gillet. He was Vicar of Coddendam from 1629 until his death there in 1663. His well-known manuscripts are now at the British Museum (Harl. MSS.) and others are among the Tanner MSS. at the Bodleian, Oxford.

Philip Candler. Eldest son of the above, headmaster of Woodbridge School 1670, died at Woodbridge 1689. He added to his father's manuscripts and compiled some of his own. These two prolific antiquarians and their various manuscripts are somewhat confusing, but a useful note on them will be found in *East Anglian Notes and Queries*, new series, vol. i (1885-6), p. 313. See also *Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.*, xiv (1912), p. 180.

William Denney. There is no indication of who he was; but there was about this period a William Denney of Bungay (see *Visit. Suff. 1664-8*, Harl. Soc. lxi (1920), p. 170).

Zaccheus Leverland or Letherland. He was 'originally a clerk in the Heralds' Office, which being laid aside by the long rebellion, he came to Framlingham and was admitted the First Master' of Sir Robert Hitcham's School. This school, which was established under the will of Hitcham, who died in 1636, was the forerunner of the present Framlingham College. Leverland left several MSS. relating to monuments, pedigrees, arms and antiquities, 'whereof the major part were formerly in the custody of Philip Candler late of Woodbridge, clerk'. He died at Framlingham and was buried in the south aisle of the chancel 7 May 1677. Blois drew extensively on his manuscripts when compiling his own. In the present 'Catalogue' his arms are entered as 'G. 2 bends A. (in an Escoccheon in his chamber in Framlingham Castle)'. Nothing further seems to be known about him or his family, but the name survived in Framlingham certainly until 1746, when John Leverland, glazier, died; his will is in the Archd. Suff. (Hawes & Loder, *History of Framlingham*, 1798, pp. 207 and 376; *Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.*, xiv (1912), p. 182).

Mr. Revett. Presumably William Revett of Bildeston Hall, who died 1691 aged 51. (*Visit. Suff. 1664-8*, p. 59; Growse, *Bildeston*, 1892, p. 56).

Robert Reyce. The well-known author of the *Breviary of Suffolk*, who died at Preston in 1638. This MS. (Harl. 3873) was edited and published by Lord Francis Hervey in 1902. 'a learned pious and every way accomplished gentleman' (Catalogue, s.n. 'Riece').

Leonard Stavely. Another previously unknown antiquarian. He was Vicar of Pettistree from c. 1588 until his death there in 1620; a native of Yorkshire, where he was born (Par. Reg.).

William Tyltson or Tylletson. He was curate of Capel St. Mary in 1594 and 'clericus at Ipswich 1601'. At Bishop Redman's Visitation in 1597 (*Norf. Rec. Soc.*, vol. xviii (1946), pp. 143, 151) he was also curate of Falkenham; 'He sometymes serveth the Cure, but whether he a deacon or not they know not. [Said] he was ordered by my Lord of London and came into this dioces having letters dimissory or licens to serve. [Inhibited] until he bring his letters and also untill he be licensed'. Several children of 'William Tilletson' were baptized at St. Matthews Ipswich 1602-1609 and on 28 August, 1615 'William Tilletson of Lady Lane' was buried there. Since his will does not appear to be extant, it is not certain that this is the same man, although it seems possible.

Two of his manuscripts are mentioned here; of the first, no. 7 and previously, I think, unknown, Fairfax includes an abridgment at the end of his book. At that time it belonged to 'Francis Bacon Esq' (see above). His second MS. (no. 13) is a small thick 12 mo. book containing a survey of heraldry in many churches and private houses in Suffolk, Essex and a few in south Norfolk. Its early date (c. 1594) makes it a valuable document. In Fairfax's time it belonged to William Blois, who drew upon it considerably for his compilations, and from whom Fairfax borrowed it. In 1726 it was in the possession of Maurice Shelton of Barningham Hall and later passed to his widow who died in 1768. In 1771 it was presented by Peter Muilman of Kirby Hall, Castle Hedingham, to the Society of Antiquaries, in whose library at Burlington House it now is (MS. IV). (There are two short notes on Tylletson and his second book in *East Anglian Notes and Queries*, old series, vol. i (1864), pp. 7, 17, and the book itself is described *ibid.*, new series, vol. ix (1902), p. 57, and in *Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.* vol. xix (1927), p. 78. See also *Archaeologia*, vol. lxvi (1915), p. 306 and *Transactions, Essex Arch. Soc.*, old series, vol. i (1858), p. 87; *ibid.*, new series, vol. ii (1884), p. 337; *Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.*, vol. vi (1888), p. 225.)

Henry Wingfield. Of Crowfield, died in 1661; was evidently a

collector of heraldic material and owned several rolls of arms. (See A. R. Wagner, *Catalogue of English Medieval Rolls of Arms*, Harl. Soc., vol. c (1948), p. 155; also *Visit. Suff. 1664-8*, p. 129.)

What we have here, therefore, is an index of the coats of arms contained in various Suffolk heraldic manuscripts, some already well-known but others which are new to us. As such, it is of very considerable value for the history of Suffolk families, its scope being wider than any other known work of its kind. As for the accuracy and completeness of Fairfax's work, one cannot of course offer an opinion without comparing his 'Catalogue' with the original sources, but one can say that it has every appearance of being a careful and painstaking compilation. It is much to be hoped that this manuscript book will remain in the county now that it has returned here after its wanderings during the last two centuries or more.