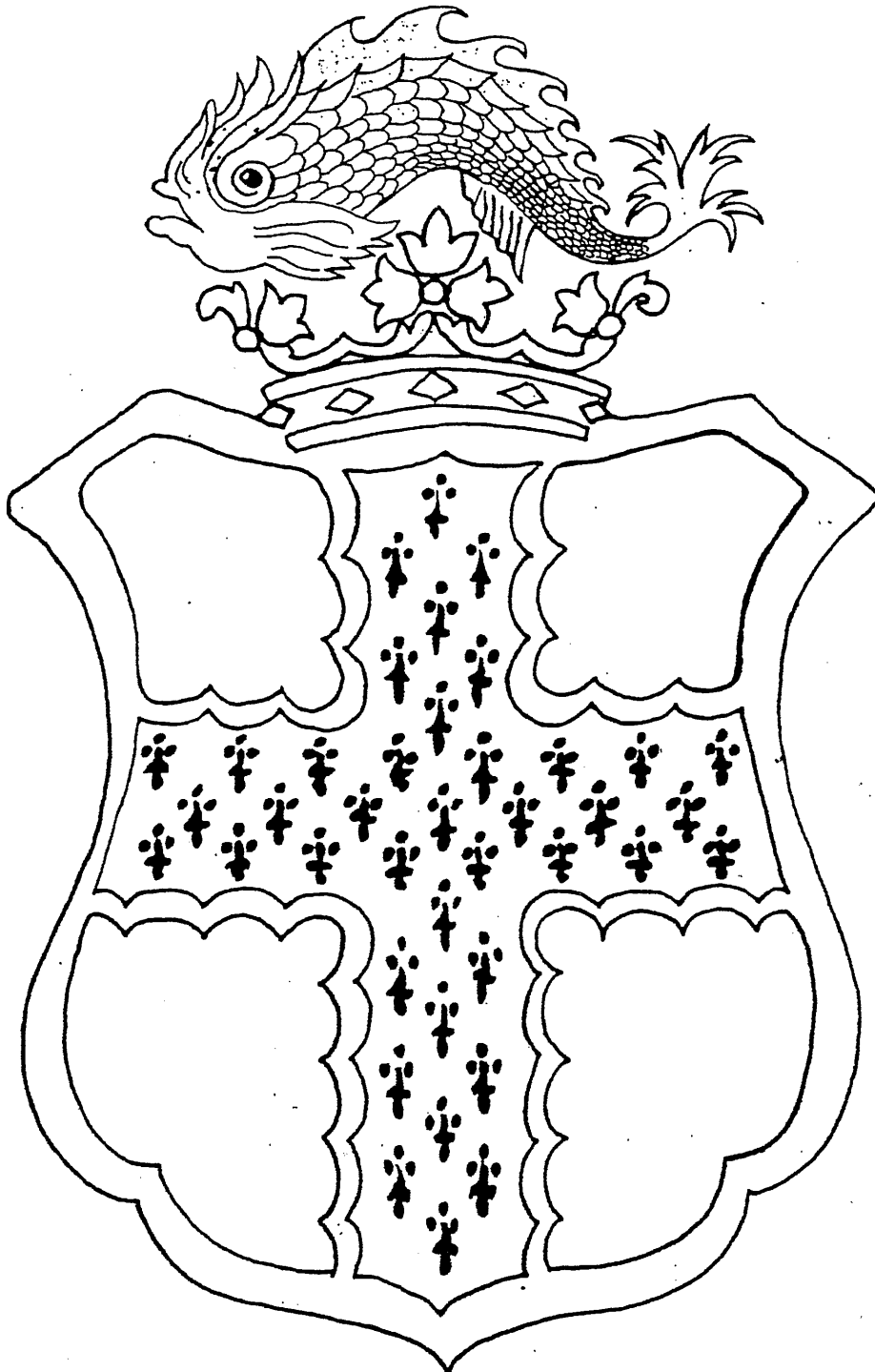
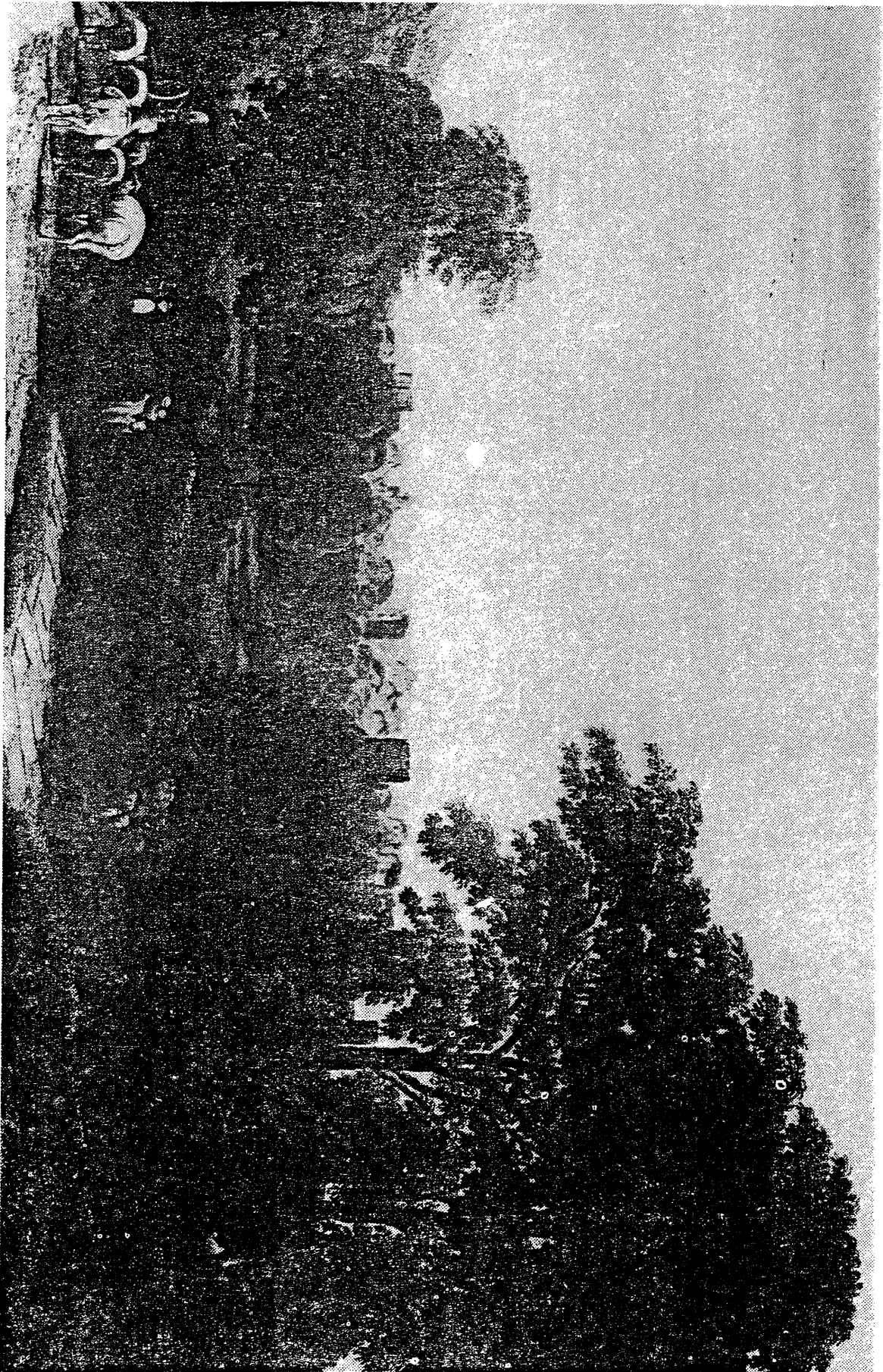


MAXFIELD



MACCLESFIELD



MAXFIELDS OF ANCIENT TIME

by Helen A. Maxfield

The rays of the sinking sun flooded Salt Lake Valley with golden light and lingered caressingly on the dark ringlets of the tiny girl who slowly traced with her finger the names of the valiant men engraved on the bronze plaque. Lifting her head she solemnly said, "Tell me about my an-ces-tors."

MY ANCESTORS

Where did they originate? What were their names? Were they interested in civic affairs? Were they religious? Can their lives be an inspiration to me when I grope, falter, and grow discouraged in this battle of life?

MAXFIELDS IN ENGLAND

Here, on the shelves of the library, among thousands of volumes, is an old and worn book. On its yellowed pages are written the histories of those who lived centuries ago. Are the histories of my ancestors listed among them? Ah yes! The family name instantly meets my eager gaze. The language is quaint and archaic and frequently the words are in ancient Latin. I earnestly study the phrases to understand their meaning.

The time is 1086 and the place is Macclesfield in the County of Cheshire, which county has seven divisions called "Hundreds," of which "Macclesfield is the largest and most interesting." I learn that the name of my ancestors was originally spelled "Macclesfield," later "Macclesfield," and now "Maxfield." The word, "Feld" originally meant a clearing in the forest and with the passing of time became known as "field." According to one genealogist, the name, "Maxfield," means "Snare in

field." A "hundred" division in England was large enough to contain a hundred families or "Free men." In the above-mentioned year, Macclesfield was held by the Saxon earl, Edwin, and he most probably held court there. He was succeeded by the Norman earl of Chester. In 1237 it was held by the Prince of Wales who passed it on to his various relatives and friends.

This extract from Domesday, exhibited an interesting picture of the State of Macclesfield before and after the Conquest (Norman Conquest).

The mill appropriated to the use of the court was remaining, with the pasture for kine (cows) which probably stretched along the bank of the Bollin, and there was woodland containing six enclosures for taking the deer and wild goats, but the ravages of the invaders had reduced the value of the Manor. In a short period Macclesfield was restored to its former consequence.

The Macclesfields lived in Macclesfield centuries before the conquest and for many generations afterward.

In 1086, William the conqueror who was King William 1 of England from 1066 to 1087, took a complete census known as the Domesday Survey, which he made the basis of a uniform system of taxation. He set up courts of law, which, while they diminished local self-government, enabled the poor and weak to get "the kings justice" against the strong.

Ref. Chesh 2 Vol. 3 pt. 2
Pages 748, 749
Volume Library 639

WHERE DID THEY ORIGINATE?

"There were five principal families in Macclesfield, of these the Macclesfield were the most interesting and ancient." There were three distinct branches of the family, but two branches became extinct for want of male heirs.

WERE THEY INDUSTRIOUS?

The third branch was connected with Macclesfield for several generations. This branch of the family prospered and became possessed of much land and other property. As early as 1402, John de Macclesfeld built a mansion, or castle, well fortified with walls which contained openings through which war could be waged.

So turbulent were conditions that, in 1442, Ralph de Macclesfield quit claim to "Humpfry, Duke of Buckingham," title to his home and lands in Macclesfield, and ye manor of Christleton (Manor being the land belonging to a lord or nobleman with the residence annexed). Having exchanged these possessions for land in Mere or Mear, Staffs, England, he took residence there and in Mear his descendants held land for many generations. One of his descendants, also named Ralph, died leaving several small children, among whom were Ralph Junior and his brother, John. In 1693, Ralph, Jr., being ruined by having spent large sums in lawsuits in an endeavor to retain his inheritance, was forced to sell his property. It may have been his brother John who settled in Salisbury, Massachusetts in 1652. Descendants of that John now reside in several eastern states and as far west as Illinois. Those in Rhode Island became famous for the quality of Maxfield Ice Cream, which they manufactured in large quantities.

WERE THEY INTERESTED IN CIVIC AFFAIRS?

Thomas de Macclesfield, Earl of Stavely, was bailiff. Jordan de Macclesfield was one of the justices and also mayor.

WERE THEY RELIGIOUS?

"John de Macclesfield was parson of the Church of Durham." Several books have been written on the history of Thomas Maxfield, a priest of the College (English) in Douay about the year 1616. We quote from history contained in the Utah Genealogical Library concerning him.

"This man was called Thomas Maxfield, born of a noble and ancient race in the county of Stafford. His father was Catholike, a man of worthy pietie, constancie and graitutie, and who under the reign of two princes was much renowned for his patient sufferance of a long imprisonment, confiscation of all his goods and lastly the sentence of death for the profession of his faith. This Thomas was nursed and brought into the world with both parents being in prison. That prison, being of his parents' faith a witness, should give to "HIM" their sonn, both breath and life for to lay down his soul for the same faith thereafter."

Evidently his mother was released from prison and went back to her home in Staffordshire, England, but his father was put to death for not denouncing his faith. This happened during the time of the great reformation; when the Protestants were in power they put the Catholics to death and when the Catholics were in power they put the Protestants to death, all in the name of religion.

Peter Macclesfield, the eldest son and heir of the martyr's father, William Macclesfield, esquire of Mear Hall and Chester-ton Hall, County Stafford, married Joan, daughter of Thomas Levison, of Wolverhampton, Esquire, and sister of Sir Walter Levison, Knt., Mrs. Macclesfield's sister Anne, was the wife of Sir Robert Stanford of Perry Hall, County of Kent, and his son, Edward, of the same place, was father of the prioress.

The quaint English translation, now printed for the first time, was made at the request of this prioress who claimed a family connection inasmuch as the wife of his brother, Peter

Macclesfield (Maxfield) was a sister of the grandmother of the prioress. This woman, the Reverend Mother Frances Stanford, was Prioress of the English Augustinian convent at Gruges. Six of the original letters written by Thomas Maxfield are in existence today and one of them, which the Prioress caused to be translated, is quoted below:

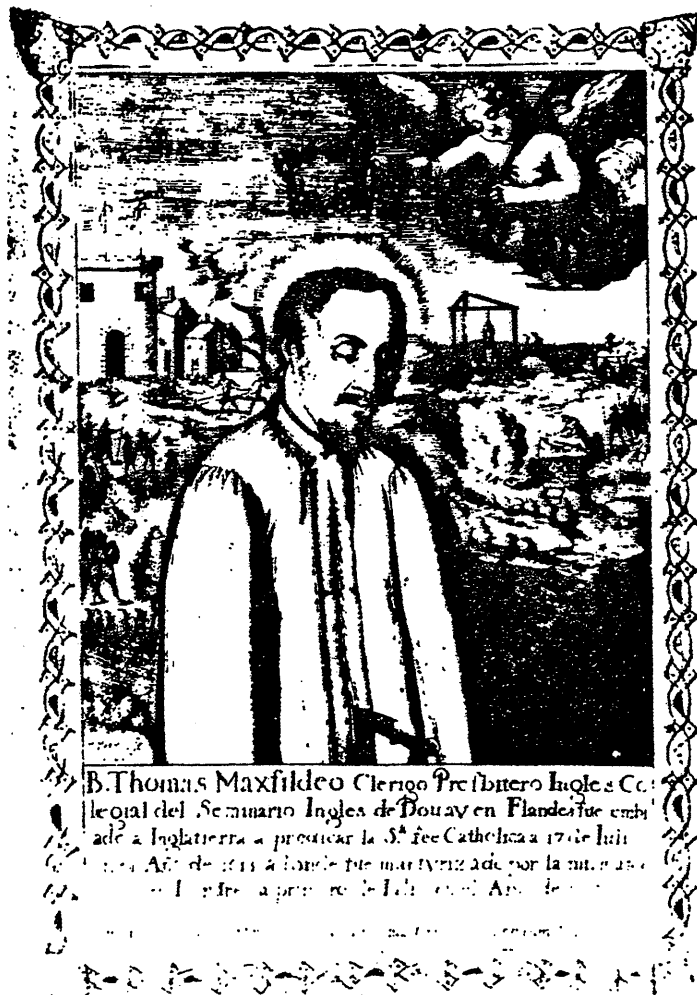
"To my most dear Mother, Bretheren and Sisters:

"When now I had bid adue unto the world, and only a few hours disjoyned me and death, thither do I bestow all my care and thoughts that those to whom I was most conjoyned by blood in this life, I might have companions and partakers with me in an eternal, unto which I now go. That therefore which I do beseech and beg of you by the bowels of love and charity and by these last words of me, your brother, now laying down his life for the faith, is, that if you love your "Soules" salvation, or have in esteem God almighties honor, ye have care so to live in this world that ye may live also eternally.

"Ye hould the best forme of all, embrace it therefore, follow after justice and imitate the excellent pietie of a good Christian, abhorr all vices and sinnful staine of the minde; conserve peach in your neighborhood for whose life vertue doth accompanie, a semi-eternal glorie will follow their death. There is no need for me to pricke yee forwards with any other spurrs, then with this, which though it be a domestical, yet is it a most cleare example of pietie, our father I meane. Observe him therefore before your eyes, who suffered frequent persecutions for faith and justice did also at last undergoe with a cheerful and courageous mind the most unjust sentence of death."

Thomas, the Priest, as stated in the foregoing, was born in prison. He left Staffordshire, England, to enter an academy of Arts and Science. Upon his return as a Priest, he would not renounce his faith and was thrown into prison, where he continued to teach and write and,

consequently, was greatly persecuted. He was noted for his generosity, amability and piety. The Ambassador's son from Spain attempted to save his life, as did many other prominent people; however, he was hanged and quartered. His bones have been preserved by the descendants of the Count of Gondomar. History tells us that, as he walked to the gallows, he was held in such high esteem that his path was strewn with a carpet of flowers. There is a picture of him in book ENG PUB A J 3. It is a photograph of an oil painting. Six of the letters written by Thomas Maxfield (or Field as he was commonly called) have been preserved to this day.



THOMAS MAXFIELD

IMPORTANCE OF A COAT OF ARMS IN ANCIENT DAYS IN ENGLAND

It was said in England, long years ago, that "The well-to-do people were divided into two classes--those who had coats of arms and those who wanted them."

Each man who had a coat of arms was required to give his pedigree back to the original holder in order to show his right to the same.

The coat of arms distinguished friend from foe in battle. That was the beginning. Each knight or chieftan was granted a device of his own, a coat of arms. It was painted on his shield, it was on or near the front door of his castle; it might be put in the sleeve of his coat. His lady had the same on her dress, or on the silverware, or he might contribute a stained-glass window and show his coat of arms. The marker on his grave would show it. His descendants continued to use it. If the husband and wife each had a coat of arms the two were combined, one part of the shield being used for the husband's and the other for the wife's. Coats of Arms were granted to those who rendered distinguished service to the King and were always a mark of distinction. Until recent years, the laws of England protected the owner in his possession of his coat of arms.

"The arms of Macclesfield once figured in a window of Bosley church. The tower of St. Michael's church, the mother church of Macclesfield, is rich in armorial shields which are carved in stone. There are 16 in all and the possessors were contributors toward the erection of the church. The Macclesfield shield bears ingrailed ermine."

MAXFIELD COAT OF ARMS

Description:

"ARMS GULES, A CROSS ENGRAILED ERMINE, CREST ON A DUCAL CORONET, A DOLPHIN NAIANT PROPER."

Symbolic:

"The shield is red; in heraldry this denotes boldness, daring, blood and fire, a burning desire to spill one's blood for God and Country!

"The cross symbolizes that one of the armsbearers was a crusader who traveled to the Holy Land to battle the Turk and Sarazen for the sake of Christianity.

"Ermine in ancient times was so-called royal fur and only those of noble blood were allowed to bear it in their arms.

"The crown of the crest symbolizes the loyal attachment given the 'crown' in time of great need.

"The dolphin symbolizes speed, travel by water and is the emblem of the Prince of France."

Ref: Maxfields of Ancient Times
Visitations Staffs 1583
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Staffs 3 Catholic Record Society
Miss 3 Eng. Pub. A. j3
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Cheshire 2 Vol. 3 Pg. 748, 749
Staffs 3 b Page 337
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