

kinds of records, public and private, which for centuries have been hidden away in cellars or lumber-rooms, unclassified or even unknown, many of them only decipherable by experts and requiring an enormous amount of time, patience, and knowledge to make them available for purposes of research. It seems probable that amongst these may be found the information which is still lacking to make the Smythies Pedigree at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries more clear. Indications are not wanting that the Chancery Proceedings of that period, if thoroughly searched, might yield the information required, and the useful publications of The Parish Register Society might at any time give valuable help in the direction needed. For instance, no record of the marriage of Sir Arthur Smythes (32 on p. 29), Sheriff of Worcester in 1631-3, has yet been found, though it seems probable that he did marry, and that Dorothy Lady Smythes of St. Andrew's, Holborn, who died in 1713 (see pp. 77, 78), was his wife. Lady Smythes' son Ferdinand Smythes, Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, died in 1725, aged 78; he was, therefore, 64 when his mother died in 1713, and she was probably about 85. These dates suggest that she was the widow of Sir Arthur, and an examination of the Record Office documents, or parish registers, might confirm this; but as Ferdinand Smythes appears to have died a bachelor, and the main object of research in the early period—to find the father of William Smythies, Vicar of Belchamp in 1623—did not seem likely to be advanced by establishing the connexion between Dorothy Lady Smythes and Sir Arthur, investigation of this question has not been carried further at present.

Another line of research, which seems more likely to justify the time and trouble which would be required to follow it up, is that connected with William Smithes (*sic*), who was engaged in a lawsuit with Anne Wyatt and others in 1627-28 regarding the purchase of the Manors of Killingworth and Rudfin (see p. 78). This William may have been identical with William Smythes of Cardington (33 on p. 29), and William Smythes of Fleet Street (see p. 29), but on the other hand he may have been William Smythes (11 on p. 24), son of George Smythes of Wrington, about whom more information would be most interesting.

It may seem strange that these matters have not been fully investigated before the publication of this work, but to anyone who has attempted genealogical research it will be known that practically there is no end to possible sources of information, and that as each one is tried others suggest themselves. It was tempting to continue the search and delay the publication until every bit of information desired had been obtained, but had that been done, and the opportunity of publishing which presented itself not taken, it might have resulted in all that is contained in this volume being left unprinted—a mass of manuscript notes more or less unintelligible to anyone but the Compiler.