

**A HISTORY OF THE
PERSE SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE**

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A History of the Perse School Cambridge by J. M. Gray

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J. M. GRAY

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PERSE SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE**



TOMB OF THE FOUNDER, DR. STEPHEN PERSE, IN THE CHAPEL OF
GOSVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

A HISTORY OF
THE PERSE SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE

BY
J. M. GRAY, B.A.
KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

WITH SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

CAMBRIDGE
BOWES & BOWES
1921

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

As the author has been unable, owing to absence from England, to see the book through the press, this work has been kindly undertaken by the Master of Jesus College and Mr. E. M. W. Tillyard, M.A., to whom our thanks are due.

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BOWES & BOWES.

August, 1921.

PREFACE

I wish to thank Dr. J. Venn, President of Gonville and Caius College, for giving me access to the college records and for imparting to me the valuable results of some of his own researches. I am indebted to the late Dr. Peile, Master of Christ's College, for useful information, both of his own and from the records of his college. My thanks are also due to the following for allowing me to look at college registers: Rev. T. A. Walker, LL.D. (Peterhouse); Mr. W. W. Rouse Ball, M.A. (Trinity); Mr. J. H. Sleeman, M.A. (Sidney, Sussex); the late Dr. S. A. Donaldson (Magdalene); Mr. D. L. Harris, M.A. (Downing).

I have made frequent use in the following pages of Cooper's *Memorials* and *Annals of Cambridge*.

J. M. GRAY.

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CHAPTER I

STEPHEN PERSE

FOR a town of its size and importance, Cambridge was signally deficient in facilities for school education in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The population was recorded in 1587 as approximately five thousand, exclusive of members of the University. At the same date, Bury St. Edmunds and Ely each had less than half that number of inhabitants. Yet each of these places had a free grammar school, which was thrown open to the sons of the inhabitants. Two small schools were attached to King's and Trinity Colleges, but were confined exclusively to the choristers on those foundations; otherwise Cambridge possessed no endowed school.¹ The wants of the town were

¹In 1443 Henry VI. established a school in connection with King's College. Provision was made therein for a master and sixteen choristers. In its origin it was a song school and was not in any way intended to provide for local requirements in education. It was by the Founder's directions confined exclusively to choristers, who were often recruited from places beyond Cambridge and its immediate neighbourhood. At the end of her reign Queen Mary