

**OBSERVATIONS ON THE
ARMORIAL BEARING OF THE
TOWN OF MANCHESTER, AND
ON THE DESCENT OF THE
BARONIAL FAMILY OF GRELLEY**

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Observations on the armorial bearing of the town of Manchester, and on the descent of the baronial family of grelley by William Robert Whatton

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WILLIAM ROBERT WHATTON

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OF
MANCHESTER,
AND ON
THE DESCENT OF THE BARONIAL FAMILY
OF
Grelley.

BY WILLIAM ROBERT WHATTON, F.A.S.

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AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF MANCHESTER.



MANCHESTER:

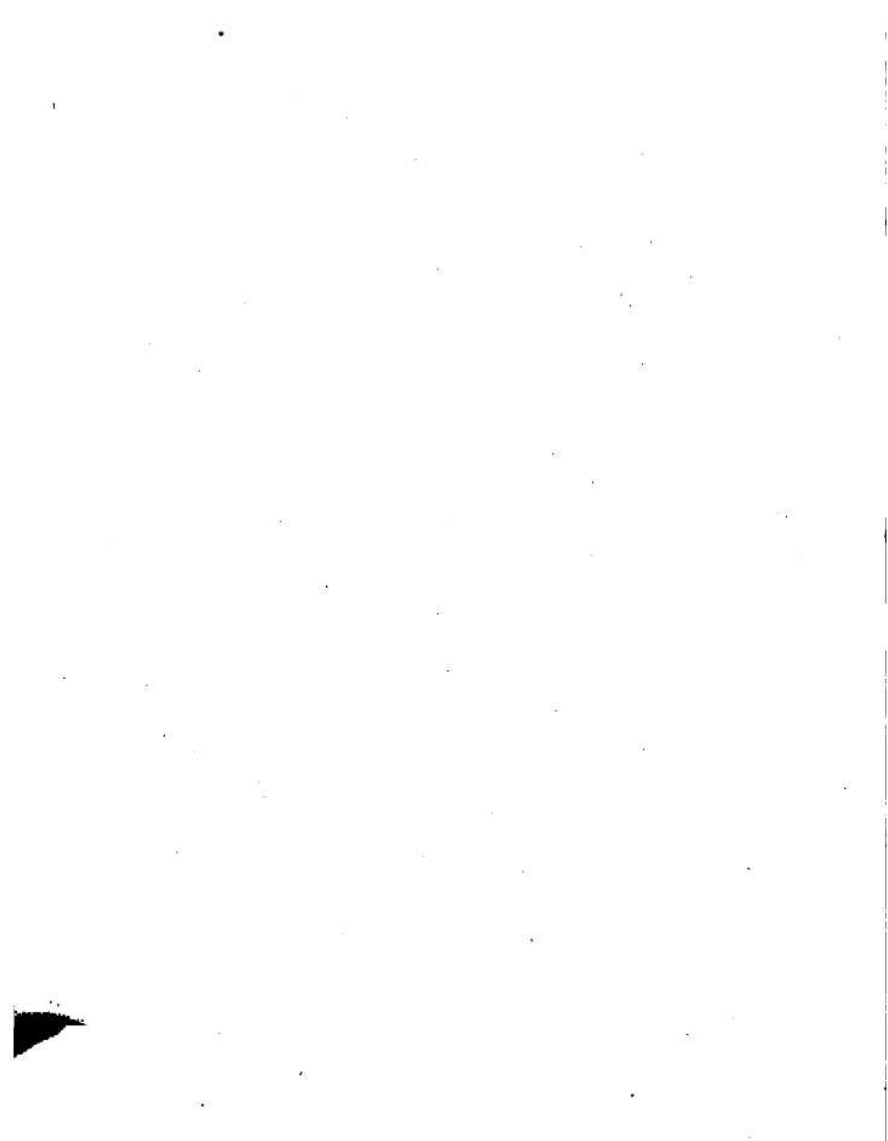
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MDCCCXXIV.

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THE following remarks on the GRELLEY FAMILY and the ARMS of MANCHESTER, were read before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, on Friday evening, the 20th of February last, and are printed in this form, separate from the Society's Transactions, for the private use of the Author's friends.

Manchester, March 10th, 1821.



OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
Armorial Bearing of the Town
OF
MANCHESTER.

IN soliciting the attention of the Society to the consideration of a question purely genealogical, it is not pretended to offer a point of any great difficulty, or to discuss a matter of much real importance. It is a subject in which the Antiquary and Herald, accustomed to pore over the dusty records of times gone by, are infinitely more interested than the Politician, the Critic, or the Philosopher.

I am desirous, however, that the Armorial Bearing of a town of such consequence in the British dominions, as

Manchester confessedly is, should be in some way explained and accounted for, and that we should no longer doubt, that in antiquity as to the origin of its Bearing, as well as in legitimacy as to right, it takes rank with the greatest cities and oldest boroughs in the kingdom.

The Arms of Manchester are **Gules, three Bendlets enhanced Or**, and have usually been attributed to a branch of the ancient family of GRESLEY of DERBYSHIRE, which has been seated in that County, and has enjoyed the same property, by grant, from the Conquest until the present time, and is now represented by Sir Roger Gresley, Baronet, of Drakelow.

Guillim, Collins, Banks, Lysons, and others, with little difference, say, that the origin of the family, denominated from the MANOR of GRESLEY, anciently written GRESELE, GRESELEI, GRESLEA, and GRISLY, &c., is derived from MALHULCIUS, uncle to Rollo, Duke of Normandy, from whom descended ROGER de TOENY, Standard-bearer of Normandy, whose younger sons, Robert and Nigel, accompanied the Conqueror to England. ROBERT, at the time of the general survey, possessed near a hundred and fifty Lordships, and fixing his residence at Stafford thence surnamed himself,

and was ancestor of the noble house of the Staffords, of which, Humphrey was created Duke of Buckingham by Henry VI. with precedency before all Dukes, the Blood Royal excepted; and from which sprung a race long eminent in the rank of Barons, Earls, and Dukes of the Realm. NIGEL, the other son, held DRAKELOW, and eleven other Lordships in Derbyshire, as appears by Domesday Book; and was the direct ancestor of the family of GRESLEY, still possessing that Lordship.

WILLIAM, the son of NIGEL, founded the Monastery of Gresley, of which little or no trace now remains.

ROBERT de GRESLEY, son and heir of this WILLIAM, founded an Abbey for Cistercian Monks at Swineshead, in the county of Lincoln, and from him descended the GRESLEYS, **Lords of Manchester**, who had summons to Parliament among the Barons of the Realm: whereof Thomas Gresley had summons from the first to the fourth year of the reign of Edward II. inclusive, and died without issue. His sister Jane married John, son of Roger de la Warre, and brought a fair inheritance to that noble family, from whom the present Earl de la Warre is descended.