

**JOURNAL OF A  
VOYAGE INTO THE  
MEDITERRANEAN**

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Journal of a Voyage Into the Mediterranean by Sir Kenelm Digby

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**SIR KENELM DIGBY**

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OF A  
VOYAGE INTO THE MEDITERRANEAN

BY  
SIR KENELM DIGBY,  
A.D. 1628.

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## PREFACE.

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THE family of Digby is stated by genealogists to have borne originally the name of Tilton, which is that of a parish in the county of Leicester in which they possessed lands. On the removal of their residence to Digby, which is situate in the adjoining county of Lincoln, they relinquished the name of Tilton and assumed their present name, although still retaining their property in the former parish. This change took place so long ago as in the reign of Henry III., and Dugdale\* shadows forth the descent of many generations of Digbys from that distant period. At the battle of Towton, which was fought in 1461, three brothers of the name of Digby fell fighting on the side of the House of Lancaster; and in the next generation it is said that seven brethren, sons of an Everard Digby, eldest brother of the three who fell at Towton, drew sword in the same cause on the field of Bosworth. Henry VII. acknowledged his obligations to the seven by giving them shares in the forfeited estates of the supporters of the House of York; and from Everard and Simon Digby, two of those seven, there descended two families of Digbys who established themselves, one at Drystoke in Rutlandshire, and the other at Coleshill in Warwickshire. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth these two divi-

\* Baronage, ii. 436.

sions of the family made themselves conspicuous; that of Rutlandshire by having at its head a Kenelm Digby, six times sheriff of the county, and an active, useful magistrate; and that of Warwickshire, under a Sir George Digby, one of the noble band of Englishmen who fought at Zutphen when Sir Philip Sidney received his death-wound. Sir George earned his knighthood from the hand of the Earl of Leicester for his gallantry on that occasion.\*

The reign of James I. was a period of peculiar importance to both these branches of the family of Digby. One special incident in that reign made what is called the fortune of one of them, and overwhelmed the other with disgrace. John Digby, a handsome youngest son of the Warwickshire house, was despatched to the Court by Lord Harrington to apprise the King of the design of the Gunpowder Conspirators upon the Princess Elizabeth, and of the measures taken for her security. The well-favoured messenger attracted his Majesty's attention. After a preliminary course of preferment in the royal household, he was sent to Spain as ambassador; he afterwards played a conspicuous part in the difficulties arising out of the intended Spanish match, and was created Earl of Bristol in 1622. Nor was this the only dignity procured by the Warwickshire branch of the family. The Earl of Bristol's eldest surviving brother, Robert, was knighted by the Earl of Essex in Ireland in 1596, and married the Baroness Offaley, heir-general of the House of Kildare. He died in 1618, leaving as his eldest son another Robert, who was created an Irish peer in 1620, by the title of Lord Digby of Geashill, with the condition that his mother's dignity, which had been a subject of dispute, should revert, upon her decease, to the House of Kildare.†

\* Stowe's Annals, p. 739, ed. Howes.

† Lodge's Peerage, ed. 1789, vi. 288.

In the meantime, mere hopeless ruin seemed to have overtaken the other branch of the family. Kenelm Digby died in 1590; his son, a Sir Everard, the favourite Christian name of the family,\* followed him two years afterwards, leaving his eldest son, another Everard, at the dangerous age of eleven. The boy inherited even more than the good looks which belonged to all his house. He grew up to be esteemed the handsomest man in England. He was knighted in 1603, and made a great match in marriage with Mary, daughter and one of the co-heiresses of William Mulsho of Gayhurst, or, as it was then called, Gotehurst, in the county of Buckingham. On his marriage he removed from the more distant Drystoke to the pleasant, or, as the poet Cowper designates it, the "happy," situation of Gayhurst. But during the few years of his occupancy Gayhurst, however agreeable its commanding site, must have been anything rather than a happy place. Sir Everard probably came into his wife's religion as well as her property; at any event he was a Roman Catholic. Enthusiastically anxious to promote what he deemed the interests of his Church, he entered, when little more than a boy, into the intrigues and conspiracies of the day. Tradition tells of secret chambers constructed by him at Gayhurst for concealment of priests, and of meetings held there of persons unknown, and for purposes not disclosed, and therefore deemed culpable. Once on this dangerous track, the love he bore to Catesby, who exercised a singular fascination over all his friends, not merely kept the shallow and impetuous Sir Everard steady, but plunged him, at the age of twenty-four, into the very depths of the Gunpowder Treason.

\* There were six successive Everards as the heads of the house, in so many successive generations, with the single interposition of the Kenelm above alluded to.—Lodge's *Peerage of Ireland*, ed. 1769, vi. 262.