

# WOKING DE LA ZOUCH

Iain Wakeford 2014

A few months ago, whilst looking at the early manorial history of Woking, it was suggested that Woking could legitimately claim the suffix of 'Bassett' (as in Royal Wootton Bassett), following the successive ownership of Alan, Gilbert, Fulk, Philip and finally Aliva Bassett in the late 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Whilst we are at it, we could possibly make a claim for the 'Royal' preface with all the Tudor Kings & Queens taking ownership of what became Woking Palace following the accession of Lady Margaret Beaufort's son, Henry VII in 1485. Indeed Woking appears to have been one of Henry VIII's favourite residences, with him visiting the palace almost every year of his reign.



This early 18<sup>th</sup> century map shows Zouch's Monument on the hill overlooking Hoe Place on what is now the Hoe Bridge Golf Course.



The Monument before it was destroyed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century

But with James VI of Scotland coming to the throne (as the First of England), Woking could claim another place-name suffix with the granting of the Manor of Woking to Sir Edward Zouch (as in the place-name Ashby de la Zouch in Leicestershire).

Woking Palace by this stage was well and truly out of fashion. Whilst Henry VIII was on the throne repair work had continually taken place at the site. In fact, it is remarkable if you look at the dates when Henry remarried, how building work at Woking seems to coincide. It is almost as if the new queen came along and said 'well, that might have been good enough for your last wife, but I want something much better!' And Henry being the obliging fellow that he was called in the decorators and re-built the queens chambers, or even the apartments belonging to her friends and relatives.

But Edward and Mary it seems never visited Woking, and Elizabeth although paying for major restoration work here preferred to visit the homes of nearby courtiers, letting them pay the not inconsiderable bill for hospitality. By the time James came to the throne Woking was old fashioned and falling apart.

It wasn't just the palace that was decaying. In the spring of 1609 Simon Basil of Salisbury carried out a survey and estimated the cost of

building a new bridge over the river at Woking 'deemed necessary by Sir Edward Zouch, the keeper'.

The term 'keeper' shows that Sir Edward didn't own the Manor of Woking at that stage – he was just the keeper of the king's deer park here – but he was working on it, and already he had built himself a new residence for himself beside the Hoe Stream at what became known as 'Hoe Place'.

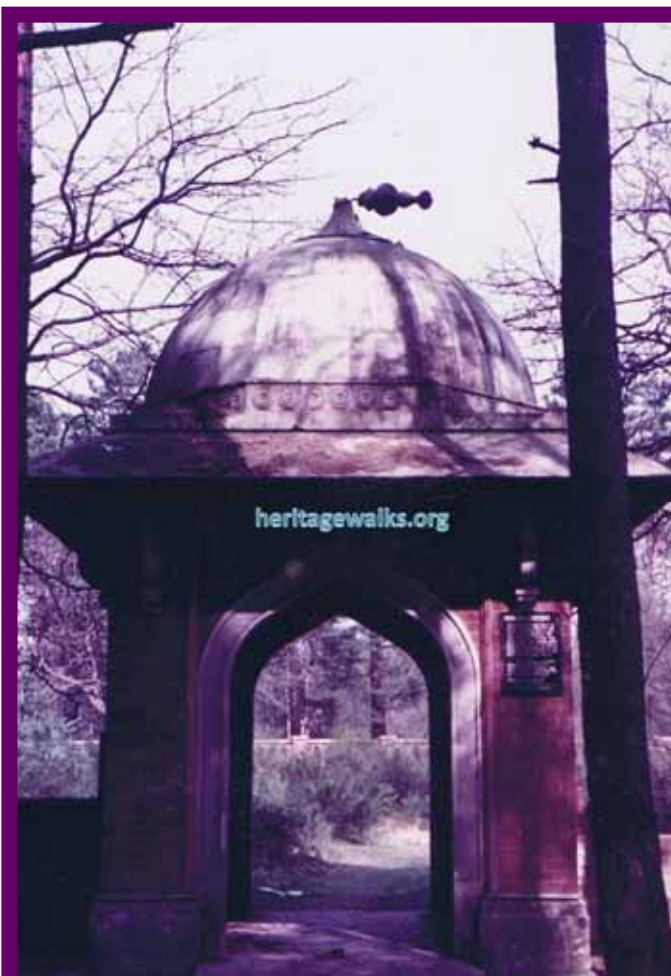
Sir Edward knew how valuable the Manor of Woking was, so by entertaining the king (some say by acting the fool), he gradually got more and more into royal favour, with the result that in 1618 James I granted his favoured courtier the lordship of Woking. There was a small price to pay. On the Feast of St James (25<sup>th</sup> July) every year, Sir Edward had to carry to the king's table the first dish of the feast, and pay £100 in gold coins to the exchequer.

No doubt the manor was worth such a sum, but with a decaying palace surplus to requirements Sir Edward asked if he could pull the old building down and use the material elsewhere. Some was used to rebuild his house at Hoe Place, some no doubt was used on other houses and works in the town, but the most immediate project may well have been a new tower overlooking the Hoe Valley, that in years to come would be known as 'Zouch's Monument'.

The building was on what is now the Hoe Bridge Golf Course, but old maps of the area are not all that accurate and show it in various positions. The matter is further confused by the naming of Monument Hill School (on the lower slopes of Maybury Hill) and Monument Road from the Six Crossroads towards Maybury. Some people have thought that that road-name refers to the

Muslim Burial Ground in the trees beside the road, but the name pre-dates that building and instead refers to the fact that the road heads straight towards where Zouch's Monument used to be.

Place names can be very confusing – perhaps we had better stick to plain old 'Woking' and forget adding anything to the beginning or the end!



Although just off Monument Road, the Muslim Burial Ground is not the 'monument' to which the road-name refers.



# THE MYSTERIES OF THE MONUMENT

The mystery of The Monument was added to in the 1960's when there was an excavation to try to discover the foundations. They failed, although in the process they did discover an Iron-Age site – so perhaps 'fail' is not quite the right word.

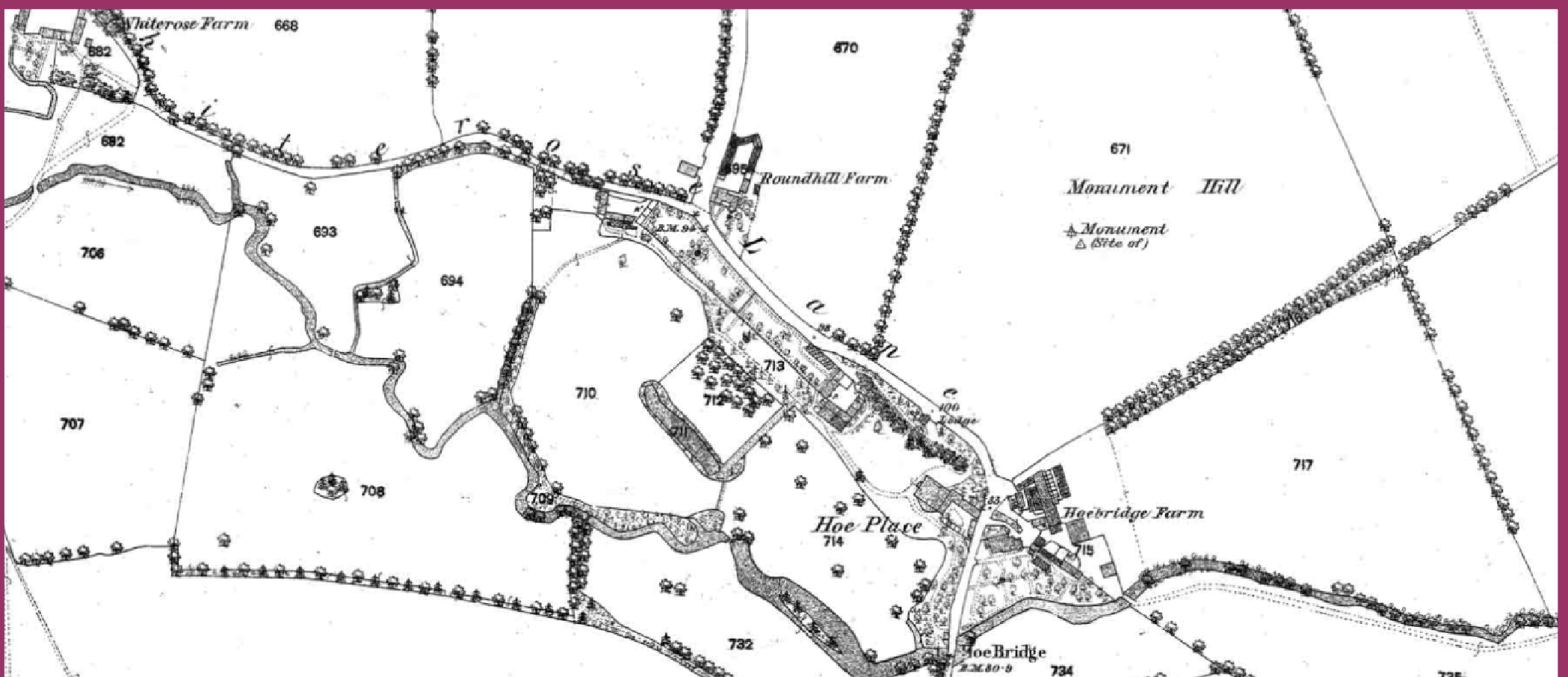
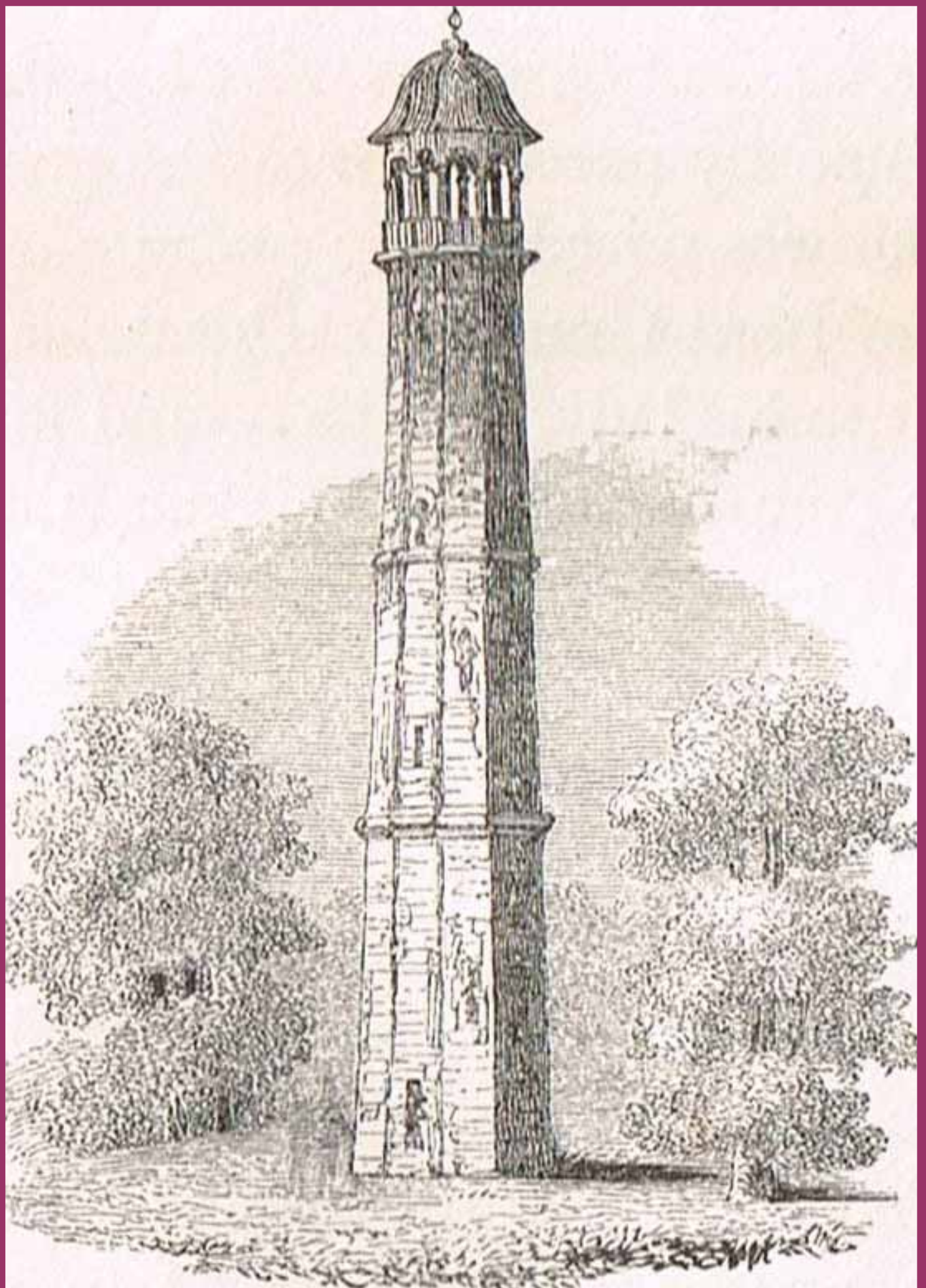
I should point out, perhaps, that although it is called 'Zouch's Monument', we cannot be certain that it was Sir Edward Zouch who actually built it. The first reference to the structure dates from the early 18th century, so it could have been his son, James, or even his grandsons Edward and James who inherited the manor, who simply built it as a folly. John Remnant's map of 1719 shows it on the edge of 'house field', whilst ten years later John Senex's map records it for the first time as 'Zouch's Monument'.

TManning & Bray tell us in their history of Surrey that 'tradition says it was used as a beacon to guide messengers to King James I at Hoe Place' from Oatlands in Weybridge, which may support the idea that it was the first Sir Edward who was responsible.

James I is said to have visited Hoe Place on a number of occasions and the Monument was supposed to be a beacon tower lit at night so that messengers' from Weybridge could find their way to the king over the hostile heath land of north west Surrey.

I should also note that we don't exactly know when the monument fell down (or was pulled down) as various accounts suggest that it was destroyed in a storm in the 1880's, was demolished by the Earl of Onslow in the 1860's when it became unsafe, or simply fell down of its own accord in about 1858. The latter two are probably the more credible, given that the 1870 Ordnance Survey map shows the 'monument (site of)' rather than the building itself, with perhaps most of the building falling down in 1858 and then finally demolished two years later by the Onslow's (as recorded in their papers now held at the Surrey History Centre).

So although we don't know exactly who built it, what it was built for, where it really was or when it was destroyed, we definitely do know that it existed – and we have drawings and photographs to prove it!





# ZOUCH'S MARKET

It was Sir Edward's grandson, Sir James Zouch, who turned Woking into a Market Town, although as we have learned already, when looking at local roads, the writer Daniel Defoe didn't think that the market was particularly well-known.

The market charter was granted in 1661 (for a market on Tuesdays) with a market cross apparently being erected at the junction of Church Street with the High Street in what is now Old Woking. Having said that, it appears that a cross had existed at this junction for many years, so it might just have been a convenient spot for the stallholders to congregate. The site was very small by neighbouring town's standards, so Sir James apparently paid for a new Market Hall to be built across the road - jutting out half-way into the road in fact.

The building was still being used as a storeroom into the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but with road widening (as discussed last week), the front of the building at least was demolished and the site turned into housing – known to this day as the Market Cottages.



This Ordnance Survey map dating from 1870 of the junction of Old Woking High Street and Church Street shows where the market would have been. The building jutting out on the north side of the High Street (above the second 'e') was the Market House shown below on an early 20th century postcard.





# SIR EDWARD ZOUCHE IN ST PETER'S CHURCH



In 1622 Sir Edward Zouch arranged for the gallery at the rear of the Nave of St Peter's Church to be erected (the extension into the South Aisle being a later addition). He wanted everyone to know it was at his own expense, and no doubt hoped that he would be appreciated, but it seems that other local landowners and tenants were not very happy with him, and when he died in 1634 his will (recalled below in Manning & Bray's History of Surrey) stated that he wished to be buried at night. The suggestion is that he didn't want anyone around to see where he was buried (and therefore have the opportunity to later disturb the grave).

Not that you would know how unpopular he was if you read the Latin plate on the wall in the Chancel (reproduced by John Aubrey in his History of Surrey, published in 1718). On it, according to a translation I have read, it calls him 'a most noble and glorious gentleman', a 'golden knight' and a 'princely Marshal',

ending with the note that 'the better of him has reached heaven, whence it originally came. Our sense of loss and his reputation outlive this world. His grieving spouse rightly mourns the best of husbands'. They don't write them like that anymore!

At the same time as Zouch built the gallery in the church a three-tier hooded pulpit was also apparently erected, presumably so that the preacher could be more easily seen by those seated in the gallery. For those 'normal' people seated below it probably resulted in a pain in the neck and may have been another source of ire for the locals! Thankfully the three tiers are no longer used, although the main part has survived as the current pulpit, now at a much better height for everyone concerned.

It has been suggested that the gallery could have originally come from Woking Palace, but the timbers are unable to be dated by dendrochronology so we may never know.

SIR EDWARD ZOUCHE, to whom this Grant of the Maner had been made, was, as I conceive, the great Grandson of Sir John Zouch, a younger brother (of the half-blood) of Richard Lord Zouch of Harringworth, in the time of Edw. VI. He married Dorothy, daughter of ----- and died 7 Jun. 1634. His Will bears date the 6th, and was proved on the 13th of the same month<sup>c</sup>. He "commits his Soul to his heavenly Father, by the merits of the "Blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for him, which he stedfastly believes, and that his Sins are "drowned in the bottomles Sea, and shall never rise up in judgment against him. For my Bodie " (says he) I desire to have it buried in Woking Church, by night. I give to my daughter "Sophia, 2500*l*.; to my daughter Doll, 1500*l*.; to my daughter Bess, 1500*l*.; to my son "Alan, 100*l*. a year for term of life, after Captain Barker's decease, out of Grewel<sup>d</sup>; to my son "Ned, 100*l*. out of Grewel, after Mr. Morse's decease. Item, I allow James Zouch 200*l*. a "year 'till my debts are paid, and my daughter's Portions."

In the Chancel, on the North Wall, on a Brass Plate, are these Arms, viz. Quarterly, I. Ten . . . . . a Canton Ermin. II. Three Leopards Heads jessant Fleur de Lis. III. Two Chevrans, a Labell three Points. IV. Cross Crusuly, a Lion Rampant. The Crest is a Falcon with Wings display'd, sitting upon a dead Trunk of a Tree, with one living Sprig. The Supporters two Falcons with Wings displayed. The Motto: Vincit qui patitur, and this Inscription;

Tumulus  
Nobilissimi et amplissimi Viri,  
Domini Edwardi Zouch, Equitis  
Aurati, Serenissimorum  
Jacobi & Caroli, Regum, dum  
viveret, Marescalli Aulici.

Zouchiadæ quantum fuerit mortale viator,  
Hæc cava depositi Marmora jure tenent  
Si pietas, si prisca Fides, si gratia Regum  
Vis generosa Animi, Candor et Integritas

Larga manus, Artis studium, domus Hospita,  
(flemma

Nobile cultorum, si numerosa cohors,  
Debuerant Letbi securum reddere quenquam,  
Debut hic saltem non licuisse mori.  
Haud tamen abripuit totum mors invida,

(preter  
Corporis exuvias possidet illa nihil.  
Pars melior cælum petijt, quæ venerat Orbi  
Huic desiderium, et fama viri superest.  
Marito Opt. merito  
Conjux Mæstissima.  
P.

Decessit, Anno Christi, MDCCCXXXIV.  
Mense Junii die septimo.