

PROLOGUE.

THE ASHBRIDGE NAME IN ENGLAND IN EARLY TIMES.

The name Ashbridge, rare in the south of England, was fairly common in the northern counties in the 17th century, particularly in Cumberland, where between the years 1617 and 1700, some 22 wills were recorded in Carlisle. How many there may be of earlier origin I do not know.

Judging from the index to wills in Carlisle and York, the name was commonly spelled Ashbridge, often Asbrigg—the latter form being apparently dropped before 1700, while the former spelling is still followed to some extent in England.

The English abstract of the details of an "Inquisition" in Chancery taken at Carlisle, 9th September, 1618, speaks of one Christopher Ashbridge and son Robert, indicating the use then of the present form.

In Yorkshire there are traces of the name towards the end of the century—one or two wills, also fragmentary Quaker records of a marriage near Hull, in 1673, and of children of this union:

The minutes of Hull Monthly Meeting record:

- (1) "a marriage in 1673, 3 mo. 4., of Elliner Ashbridge, of Ross, to Lance Packston, of Hastrop," also
- (2) the births of two sons to "Lancelot and Elin'r,"—viz., John, born 1674, and Thomas, born 1677.

In London and Essex in the 18th century there appears to be in all not more than half a dozen wills recorded.

Curiously enough in a list of some 60 English (north country) wills none represent the last instructions of a George Ashbridge.

The name occurs however in the will of one John Ashbridge, extracts from which are given below:

- (3) In the name of God Amen I John Asbridge of Low-raw within the p^{ish} of Bromfield & within y^e County of Cumberland Yeoⁿ being of perfect mind for my freehold estate I doe give and dispose of it unto my wife untill y my eldest son be twenty-five years