

PREFACE

THE volume now offered to those who were kind enough to be interested in my *Romance of Names* is a second offshoot of the *Dictionary of English Surnames* on which I have been engaged for some years. It differs in several ways from the former booklet. The *Romance of Names* was an attempt at a general survey of the subject, and, like all such first attempts, it contained a good many inaccuracies and dubious statements¹ of which I have tried to purge later editions. It made no special attempt to deal with the curiosities of surname etymology, and the temptation to explore by-ways was firmly resisted.

The present volume treats much more completely, and hence more ponderously, of certain groups of surnames which I have investigated with some approach to thoroughness. It includes a very large proportion of names of etymological interest,² the majority of

¹ Sometimes due to accepting definite statements of my predecessors; e.g. Bardsley says, "It is a well-known fact that *Haddock* is an imitative variant of *Haydock*." It may be, but John Haddock (*Fine R.*, *Close R.*, and *City B.*) shows that it was also a nickname c. 1300. There are so many "well-known facts" that become fictions when tested with a little evidence.

² Many of these are so odd and fantastic that I may be suspected of having invented them, but, with perhaps half a dozen doubtful