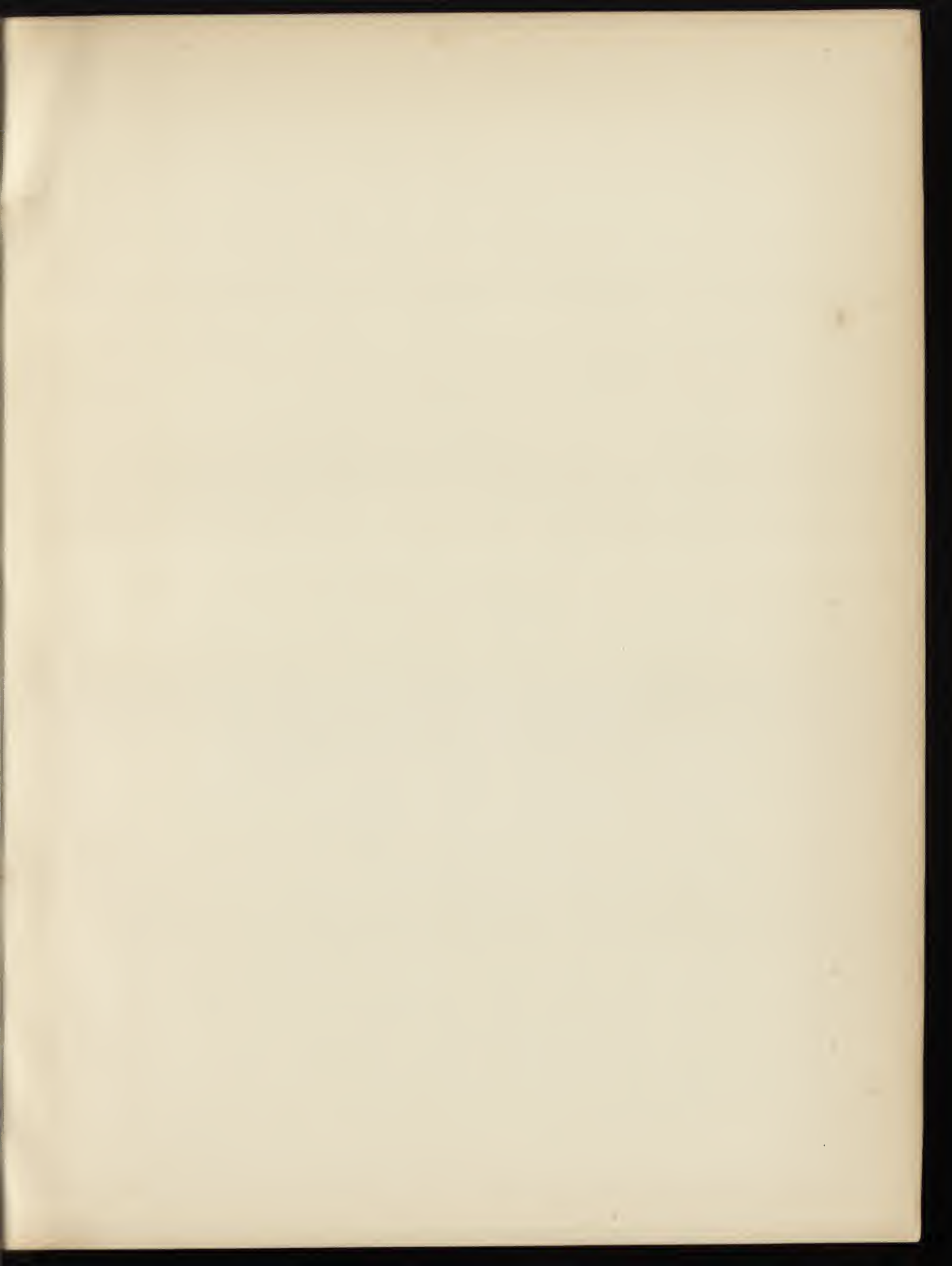




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[ Prospectus ]

The  
Gresleys of Drakelowe

An Account of the Family, and Notes of its  
connexions by Marriage and Descent,  
from the Norman Conquest  
to the present day

*With Appendixes and Illustrations*

COMPILED BY

FALCONER MADAN, M.A.

FELLOW OF BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION

1897

## CONTENTS

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### INTRODUCTION.

- CHAP.
- I. The Norman Family of De Toeni, and its settlement in England.
  - II. The early Gresleys, to the alliance with the De Wasteneyes.
  - III. The Gresleys in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.
  - IV. The line of Baronets from 1611 to 1837.
  - V. The Baronets from 1837 to the present day.
  - VI. The collateral branches, from the seventeenth century.
  - VII. Drakelowe, the chief seat of the family.

### APPENDIXES.

- A. Gresley Castle and Priory.
- B. Notes on the manors and possessions of the family.
- C. The Gresley arms, seals, motto and crest, with miscellaneous memoranda and pedigrees.
- D. The Grellys, Barons of Manchester, and other unconnected families of similar name.
- E. Account of authorities used (the Gresley Cartulary, the Drakelowe muniments, the Rev. J. M. Gresley's collections, &c.).

### INDEX.

*[The above divisions are subject to modification in detail.]*





THE Gresley family is probably unique in combining a proved succession in the male line from the eleventh century to the present time, with the occupation for the last seven hundred years of a manor which was held by an ancestor at the time of the Domesday Survey. The property and influence of the Gresleys have been almost equally divided between Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and Leicestershire, Drakelowe lying in Derbyshire near the point where the three shires meet; and in each they have held a high position. Among the families connected with them by marriage are Astley, Aston, Bakepuiz, Blount, Bowyer, Burdet, Camvile, Churchill, Clarell, Coventry, Darrell, Drummond, Dudley, Dyott, Ferrers, Gernon, Giffard, Grammer, Harpur, Heathcote, Inge, Leigh, Madan, Montfort, Montgomery, Morewood, Mulsho, Proby, Reid, Somerset, Somerville, Stafford, Stanley, Swinnerton, Thorpe, Vavasour, Verdon, Vernon, Vincent, Walcot, Walsh, Walsingham, Wasteneys, Williams, Winter, Wrottesley, and Wynne.

The compiler has endeavoured to unroll the history of the family from documents at Drakelowe and in the British Museum, the Public Record Office and the Bodleian Library, with the aid of wills, parish registers, monumental inscriptions, and all available printed matter. Authorities are cited, and attention is drawn to inferences as distinguished from proofs. He has been helped by the extensive and valuable collections of the late Rev. John Morewood Gresley, M.A., Rector of Seile, Leicestershire—who evidently contemplated some such book as the present—and by Mr. Jeayes' recent *Descriptive Catalogue of Gresley Charters*, as well as by papers in the possession of the Dowager Lady Gresley, and of Charles Gresley, Esq., of the Close at Lichfield.

The present head of the family, Sir Robert Gresley, Bart., of Drakelowe, gives his personal help and support to the scheme.



## Terms of Subscription

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THE volume will be an octavo of about 300 to 350 pages, bound in cloth. The number of illustrations must depend to some extent on the list of subscribers, but it is hoped and expected that there will be at least a view of Drakelowe, facsimiles of early seals, and one other plate, as well as a map and pedigree.

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There will be a special edition in quarto, limited to fifty copies, with extra illustrations, partly from family pictures at Drakelowe, the Gresley jewel, coats of arms, facsimiles, &c., and suitably bound. The price of these copies will be three guineas.

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*December, 1896.*

<sup>c</sup> R.S. lx.  
2. 386.

<sup>d</sup> Ibid. 562.

<sup>e</sup> Prerog. Ct.  
of Cant.

<sup>f</sup> Ibid., and  
Bodl. Dodsw.  
xxii. 90<sup>v</sup> from  
York Reg.

<sup>g</sup> but see  
Index Libr. x.  
239.

<sup>h</sup> Staff.  
Visitn., 1583,  
Nichols.

others received a commission<sup>c</sup> to provide archers from Derbyshire for service in Brittany against France. Twice he was Sheriff of Staffordshire (5 Hen. VII=1489-90, and 13 Hen. VII=1497-8), and on the former occasion, in Mich. T. 1490, received £100 by writ of Privy Seal<sup>d</sup> as a reward for services as Sheriff. His will is dated 'Jan. 25, 1503<sup>e</sup>,' and was proved on 'Apr. 26, 1503<sup>f</sup>': on the whole it is probable that the former date represents 150 $\frac{3}{4}$ , on this occasion, and not 150 $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>g</sup>. His body was to be buried before the High Altar at Gresley Priory, and there are several bequests to that house.

His wife was **Anne**<sup>h</sup>, daughter of Sir Thomas Ferrers, of Tamworth Castle, she being a first cousin of her husband's step-mother (see p. above). It is interesting to see the ancient connexion between the families of Gresley and Ferrers thus renewed. She was alive on April 26, 1503, when she proved her husband's will. Their issue was:—

**William** (eldest son), see p. .

<sup>i</sup> Parker's  
Colton, 63, 114.

<sup>j</sup> Bodl  
Blakew. 2  
from Dugd.  
E. i.

**John** (second son), born in 1481 or 1482, a clerk in Holy Orders, made Rector of Colton in 1498<sup>i</sup>. In 1499 he, being then aged 17, received a papal dispensation to hold benefices without stint, but resigned the rectory in the following year<sup>j</sup>; and on April 12, 1512, was presented to the living of Norton in Hales, co. Salop<sup>j</sup>. A John Gresley took the degrees of B.Civ.L. and B.Can.L. at Oxford on July 8, 1507, and was Warden of Ruthin Hospital, co. Denbigh, in 1512: one of the same names 'of Stapnell' helped to draw up an inventory of Anne Gresley's goods in 1555, see p. .

**George** (third son), see p. .

<sup>k</sup> Gr. Charter,  
463.

<sup>l</sup> Harland  
Ch. 83.

<sup>m</sup> Gresl. Reg.

**Robert** (fourth son) occurs as a trustee<sup>k</sup> on Feb. 10, 1510<sup>l</sup>; and in 10 Hen. VIII (1518-9) received the manors of Kethorpe and Donisthorp<sup>l</sup> from his brother George. It appears that he was married and had a son George, for the will of dame Katharine Gresley, his sister-in-law, dated 1572, and proved in 1574 (see p. ), mentions 'George Greisley, son to Robert Greisley': a George Gresley also was buried at Gresley cum Membris<sup>m</sup> on October 8, 1591. Robert, not being mentioned in the will, was probably dead in 1572.

<sup>n</sup> Duc. Lanc.  
i. 194.

**James** (fifth son) does not occur in the Derbyshire Visitations, but is known as the defendant in two law-suits, one in 11 Hen. 8 (1519-20)<sup>n</sup> about lands at Scropton, co. Derby, &c., the other in 23 Hen. 8 (1531-2)

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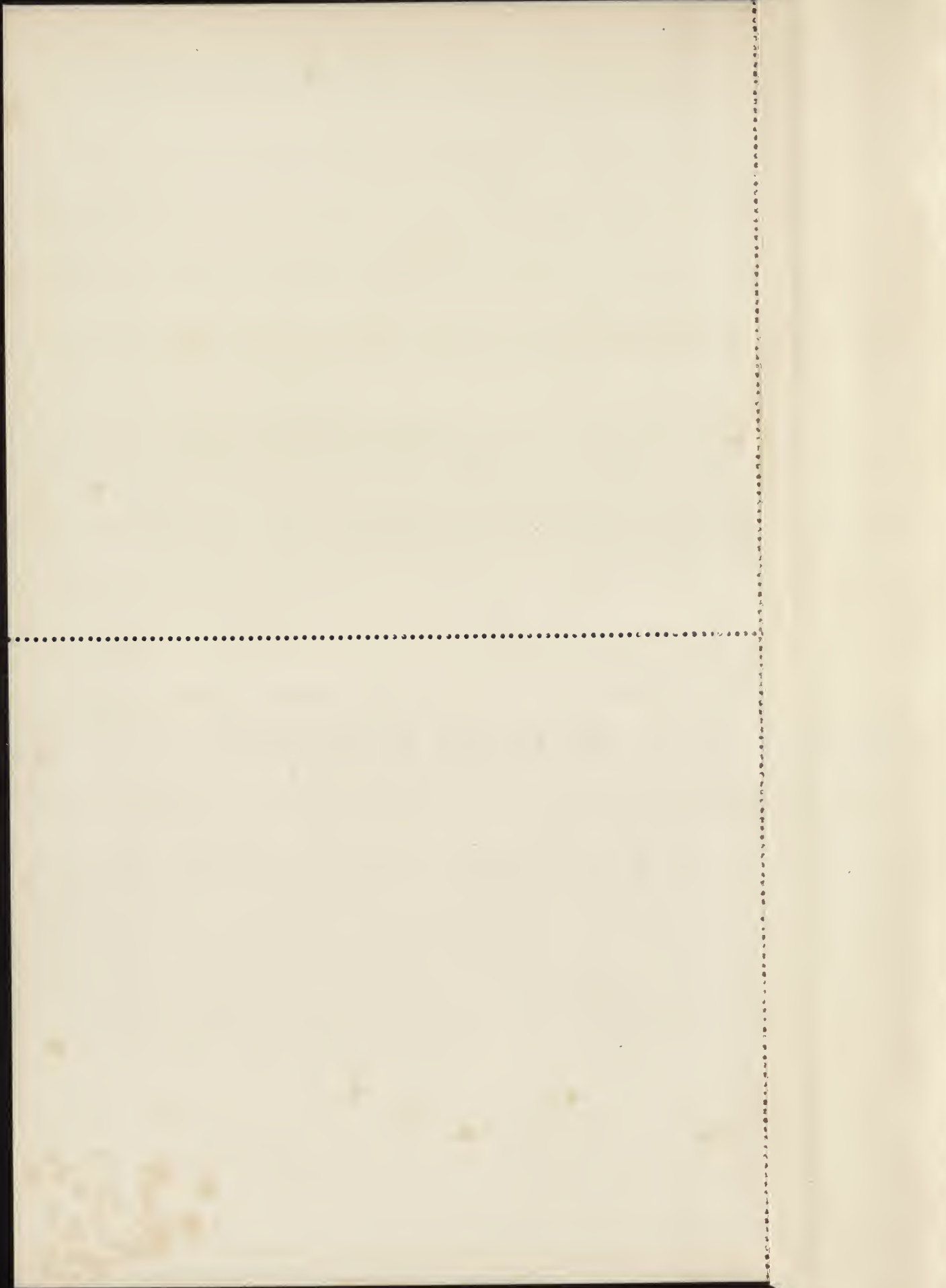
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Oxford

HORACE HART, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

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*Meliorè Fide quam Fortuna*

GRESLEY MOTTO.

*More Faithful than Fortunate.*

In what old story far away,  
In what great action is enshrined,  
The sad sweet motto which to-day  
Around the Gresleys' name is twined?

Was it for country or for crown  
They played a grand tho' tragic part?  
Or did they lay their fortune down  
To strive to win one careless heart?

We cannot tell: but this we know,  
That they who chose in that dim past  
Those noble words—come weal come woe—  
Stood by them stedfast to the last.

And this we feel, when deep in dust  
Lie earthly hopes and worldly state,  
In that far Land where all is just,  
The *Faithful* will be *Fortunate*.

FLORENCE SEVERNE.

1889.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	vii
CHAP.	
I. THE NORMAN FAMILY OF TOENI, AND ITS SETTLEMENT IN ENGLAND . . . . .	I
II. ROBERT DE STAFFORD AND NIGEL DE STAFFORD . . . . .	16
III. THE EARLY GRESLEYS . . . . .	24
IV. THE GRESLEYS IN THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES . . . . .	52
NOTES . . . . .	74
V. THE LINE OF BARONETS FROM 1611 TO 1837 . . . . .	80
NOTES . . . . .	84, 95
VI. THE LINE OF BARONETS FROM 1837 TO THE PRESENT TIME . . . . .	129
VII. THE COLLATERAL BRANCHES, FROM THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY:— . . . . .	134
A. THE WORCESTERSHIRE AND BRISTOL GRESLEYS . . . . .	135
B. THE AUSTRALIAN GRESLEYS . . . . .	142
C. THE NORTH WALES AND LIVERPOOL GRESLEYS . . . . .	146
D. THE FAMILY OF RICHARD GRESLEY . . . . .	148
E. UNIDENTIFIED GRESLEYS . . . . .	153
NOTES . . . . .	157
VIII. DRAKELOWE. BY SIR ROBERT GRESLEY, BARONET . . . . .	161
NOTES (LIST OF PORTRAITS, ETC.) . . . . .	165

## APPENDIXES.

	PAGE
A. GRESLEY CASTLE, PRIORY, AND CHURCH . . . . .	171
B. NOTES ON THE MANORS AND POSSESSIONS OF THE FAMILY . . . . .	182
C. THE GRESLEY ARMS, SEALS, CREST, AND MOTTO . . . . .	205
D. THE GRELLYS, BARONS OF MANCHESTER, THE GREASLEYS, AND OTHER FAMILIES OF SIMILAR NAME BUT UNCONNECTED WITH THE GRESLEYS . . . . .	208
E. ACCOUNT OF THE MSS. AND AUTHORITIES USED (THE GRESLEY CHARTULARY, THE DRAKELOWE MUNIMENTS, THE REV. J. M. GRESLEY'S COLLECTIONS, ETC.) . . . . .	212

## PEDIGREES.

TOENI (i) . . . . .	223
GRESLEY (ii-vii) . . . . .	224
FAMILIES WHICH HAVE INTERMARRIED WITH THE GRESLEYS, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER (viii-lxxiii) . . . . .	235
INDEX . . . . .	301

## ILLUSTRATIONS

I.	SIR PETER DE GRESLEY, <i>d.</i> ABOUT A. D. 1310 . . . . .	<i>to face title</i>
II.	SIR GEORGE GRESLEY, K.B., <i>d.</i> 1548 . . . . .	<i>to face page 65</i>
III.	CATHERINE (ASTON), WIFE OF SIR WILLIAM GRESLEY, <i>d.</i> 1585 . . . . .	68
IV.	CATHERINE (WALSINGHAM), WIFE OF SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, <i>d.</i> 1585 . . . . .	71
V.	WALSINGHAM GRESLEY, <i>d.</i> 1633 . . . . .	72
VI.	SIR GEORGE GRESLEY, FIRST BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1651 . . . . .	80
VII.	KING JAMES I, <i>d.</i> 1625 . . . . .	81
VIII.	THOMAS GRESLEY, <i>d.</i> 1642 . . . . .	89
IX.	BRIDGET (BURDET), WIFE OF THOMAS GRESLEY, <i>d.</i> 1685 . . . . .	90
X.	SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, SECOND BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1699 . . . . .	92
XI.	SIR WILLIAM GRESLEY, THIRD BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1710 . . . . .	100
XII.	THOMAS GRESLEY (?), OF NETHER SEILE, <i>d.</i> 1743 . . . . .	102
XIII.	SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, FOURTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1746 . . . . .	104
XIV.	SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, FIFTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1753 . . . . .	109
XV.	SIR NIGEL GRESLEY, SIXTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1787 . . . . .	110
XVI.	ELIZABETH (WYNN), WIFE OF THE SIXTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1793 . . . . .	112
XVII.	ANNE (GRESLEY), LADY HEATHCOTE, <i>d.</i> 1797 . . . . .	112
XVIII.	ELIZABETH (VINCENT), WIFE OF DR. THOMAS GRESLEY, <i>d.</i> 1769 . . . . .	114
XIX.	SIR NIGEL BOWYER GRESLEY, SEVENTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1808 . . . . .	117
XX.	DRAKELOWE, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST . . . . .	118

	<i>to face page</i>
XXI. WILMOT (GRESLEY), WIFE OF THE SEVENTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1790 . . . . .	119
XXII. REV. WILLIAM GRESLEY, OF NETHER SEILE, <i>d.</i> 1829 .	121
XXIII. LOUISA JANE (GRESLEY), WIFE OF THE REV. WILLIAM GRESLEY, ( <i>d.</i> 1806), AND HER NIECES, MRS. LEVETT AND LADY HEATHCOTE . . . . .	122
XXIV. LOUISA ELIZABETH (GRESLEY), MRS. MADAN, <i>d.</i> 1861 .	122
XXV. SIR ROGER GRESLEY, EIGHTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1837 . .	124
{ XXVI. SIR ROGER GRESLEY . . . . .	} 127
{ XXVII. THE LADY SOPHIA (COVENTRY), WIFE OF THE EIGHTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1875 . . . . .	
{ XXVIII. REV. SIR WILLIAM NIGEL GRESLEY, NINTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1847 . . . . .	} 129
{ XXIX. GEORGINA ANN (REID), LADY GRESLEY, WIFE OF THE NINTH BARONET . . . . .	
XXX. SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, TENTH BARONET, <i>d.</i> 1868 . .	131
XXXI. LAURA ANN (WILLIAMS), LADY GRESLEY, WIFE OF THE TENTH BARONET . . . . .	132
XXXII. SIR ROBERT GRESLEY, ELEVENTH BARONET . . . .	133
XXXIII. THE LADY FRANCES GRESLEY, NÉE SPENCER- CHURCHILL, WIFE OF THE ELEVENTH BARONET . . . .	133
XXXIV. DRAKELOWE, FROM THE SOUTH-EAST . . . . .	161
XXXV. DRAKELOWE, ENTRANCE GATE AND GRASS WALK IN GARDEN (FROM THE WEST) . . . . .	162
XXXVI. DRAKELOWE, ENTRANCE GATE AND GRASS WALK IN GARDEN (FROM THE EAST) . . . . .	162
XXXVII. DRAKELOWE, DINING ROOM . . . . .	163
XXXVIII. THE GRESLEY JEWEL . . . . .	164
XXXIX. DRAKELOWE, FROM THE NORTH . . . . .	165
XL. DR. EDWARD REYNOLDS, BISHOP OF NORWICH, <i>d.</i> 1676	167
XLI. MRS. REYNOLDS, WIFE OF THE BISHOP . . . . .	167
XLII. GROUND PLAN OF GRESLEY PRIORY . . . . .	174
XLIII. GRESLEY CHURCH . . . . .	179



## PREFACE

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THE present volume is the best description which the author is able to give of the successive generations of a remarkable family. An ideal family history would require historical genius in the writer, leisure for research, a lavish outlay, and plentiful material. In the present instance the last of these conditions is the only one of which fulfilment can be claimed. The late Rev. John Morewood Gresley, a trained antiquary, amassed a large number of Gresley records from authentic sources, and the contemplation of these, late in the year 1895, was the cause of the present endeavour to raise a memorial both of Mr. Gresley's labours and of the ancient family to which he belonged.

The Gresley family is perhaps unique in combining a proved succession in the male line from the eleventh century to the present time with the occupation for the last seven hundred years of a manor which was held by an ancestor at the time of the Domesday Survey. The property and influence of the Gresleys have been almost equally divided between Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Leicestershire, Drakelowe lying in Derbyshire near the point where the three shires meet; and in each they have held a high position and have formed connexions by marriage with the leading families. Their antiquity and local fixity have attracted the attention of Sir Henry Ellis (*Introd. to Domesday* i. 346-7), the Rev. R. W. Eyton (*Salt Society's publications* i. 223), and other antiquaries: while, if the link with the Norman family of Toeni holds good, the pedigree in the male line is continuous for nine hundred years.

The story begins with the prominent Norman family of Toeni, the head of which was hereditary Standard-bearer of the Dukes of Normandy. At the Battle of Hastings, however, Ralph de Toeni asked permission to fight in the ranks, and his services and those of his brother, Robert de Stafford, were rewarded with broad lands in England after the Conquest. A Nigel de Stafford who also appears as an extensive landowner at the time of the Domesday Survey, was in all probability the son of Robert, and was certainly the father of the first who bore the name of Gresley. The curious legend of the Devil of Drakelowe supplies the reason why the family name was Gresley rather than Drakelowe.

The Gresleys thenceforward seem to have lived for some years at Gresley Castle, and, as holding their lands *in capite*, ranked among the *Barones minores*. They took their full share of military service as knights: indeed one generation, the family of Sir Peter, was so exceedingly militant as to deserve a less honourable appellation. The family steadily increased in wealth until a marriage with the heiress of the Wasteneyes of Colton, in the middle of the fourteenth century, raised it to a leading position in the county—a position retained more by diplomacy than force through the Wars of the Roses. In Elizabeth's time the head of the family incurred debts which caused the sale of Colton and several other manors, and the baronetcy conferred on Sir George Gresley in 1611 was not accompanied by any retrieval of these losses. In the Civil War the first Baronet was a Parliamentarian, but his grandson, Sir Thomas, was in favour after the Restoration, and by his marriage recovered an important part of the property which had been sold at the beginning of the century.

At this point the family divides into two branches, the eldest son William carrying on the line of Baronets and residing at Drakelowe, while the younger, Thomas, became the progenitor of a line of Squires and Rectors of Seile, residing at Nether Seile. In 1837 however, with Sir Roger Gresley, the elder branch died out, and the Rector of Seile

at that time, who was Sir Roger's first and fourth cousin, became the ninth Baronet, and was the grandfather of the present Baronet, Sir Robert, whose two sons augur well for the continuance of this wonderful pedigree.

The present volume is not published. Every member of the William Salt Archæological Society receives a copy of the ordinary edition, as do subscribers before issue, a list of whom is subjoined. The special edition is limited to fifty copies, which have all been subscribed for.

The author has to offer his best thanks to many welcome helpers. The present head of the family, Sir Robert Gresley, Baronet, of Drakelowe, Burton on Trent, has taken a warm personal interest in the scheme, and has himself contributed chapter VIII; and Major-General the Hon. George Wrottesley, who is the life and soul of the William Salt Society and an indefatigable historian, has given most valuable help, especially in the earlier chapters: while Mr. J. Horace Round, Lord Hawkesbury, Miss Agnes Gresley of Barton under Needwood, Mr. Nigel Gresley (for the Australian branch) and Miss Govett (for the Bristol Gresleys), with others too numerous to mention, have supplied valuable information.

Notes and criticisms of the present book will be gladly received, in view of the possible issue of a few pages of Addenda at some later period.

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Ὅπου ποτ' ἄν ὤσιν ἄνδρες,  
... ἔνταθα τείχη καὶ πόλεις.

ARISTIDES.

The Knights' bones are dust,  
And their good swords rust;  
Their souls are with the Saints, we trust.

COLERIDGE.



*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate I*

SIR PETER DE GRESLEY

d. about A.D. 1310

(From Brit. Mus. MS. Harl. 4205, fol. 112, of the 15th cent. : see p. 43)







*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate II*

SIR GEORGE GRESLEY, K.B.  
d. 1548  
(By Taddeo Zuccherò)

Wood. 42 x 30 1/2

1931 Sue 1627



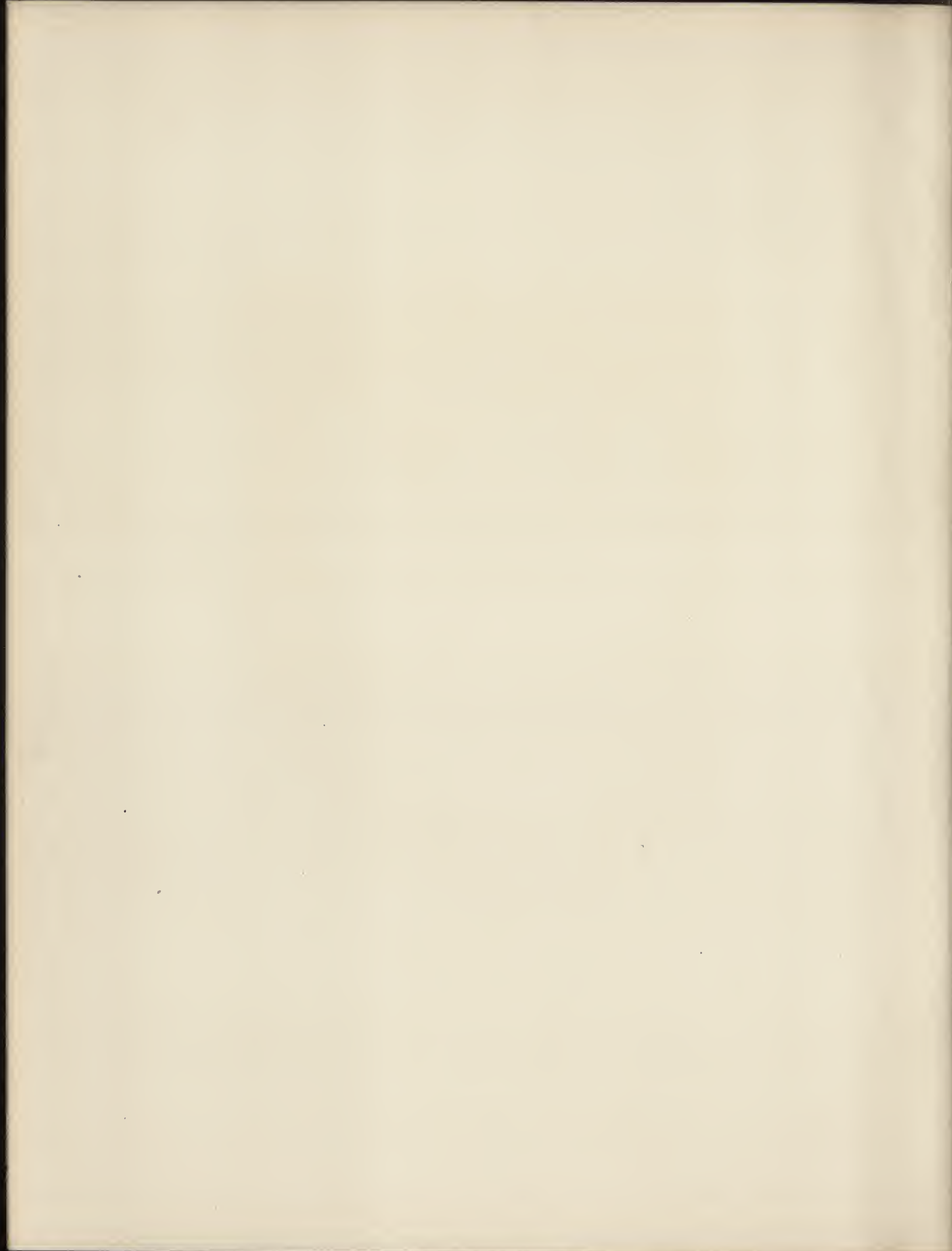


*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate III*

CATHERINE (ASTON), WIFE OF SIR WILLIAM GRESLEY  
d. 1585

*Birmingham Alley  
(now wholly modern)*





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate IV*

CATHERINE (WALSINGHAM), WIFE OF SIR THOMAS GRESLEY

d. 1585

*Wood: 22x18*

*1931 sale (838)*





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate V*

WALSINGHAM GRESLEY, YOUNGER BROTHER OF THE 1ST BARONET

d. 1633

(By Cornelius Jansen)

Wid: 29" x 24 1/2"

1931 sale (886)







*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate VI*

SIR GEORGE GRESLEY, 1ST BARONET  
d. 1651

Wood: 42" x 29"

1931 sale (819) at Zuccheru

Sold Christie's 29 Jan 1943 (37)  
27 June 1980 (100)





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate VII*

KING JAMES I  
d. 1625

Wood: 22" x 17"

1931 sale (889)





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate VIII*

THOMAS GRESLEY, SON OF THE 1ST AND FATHER OF THE  
2ND BARONET  
d. 1642

29" x 23"

1931 sale (80) on Drakelowe Vol 1623





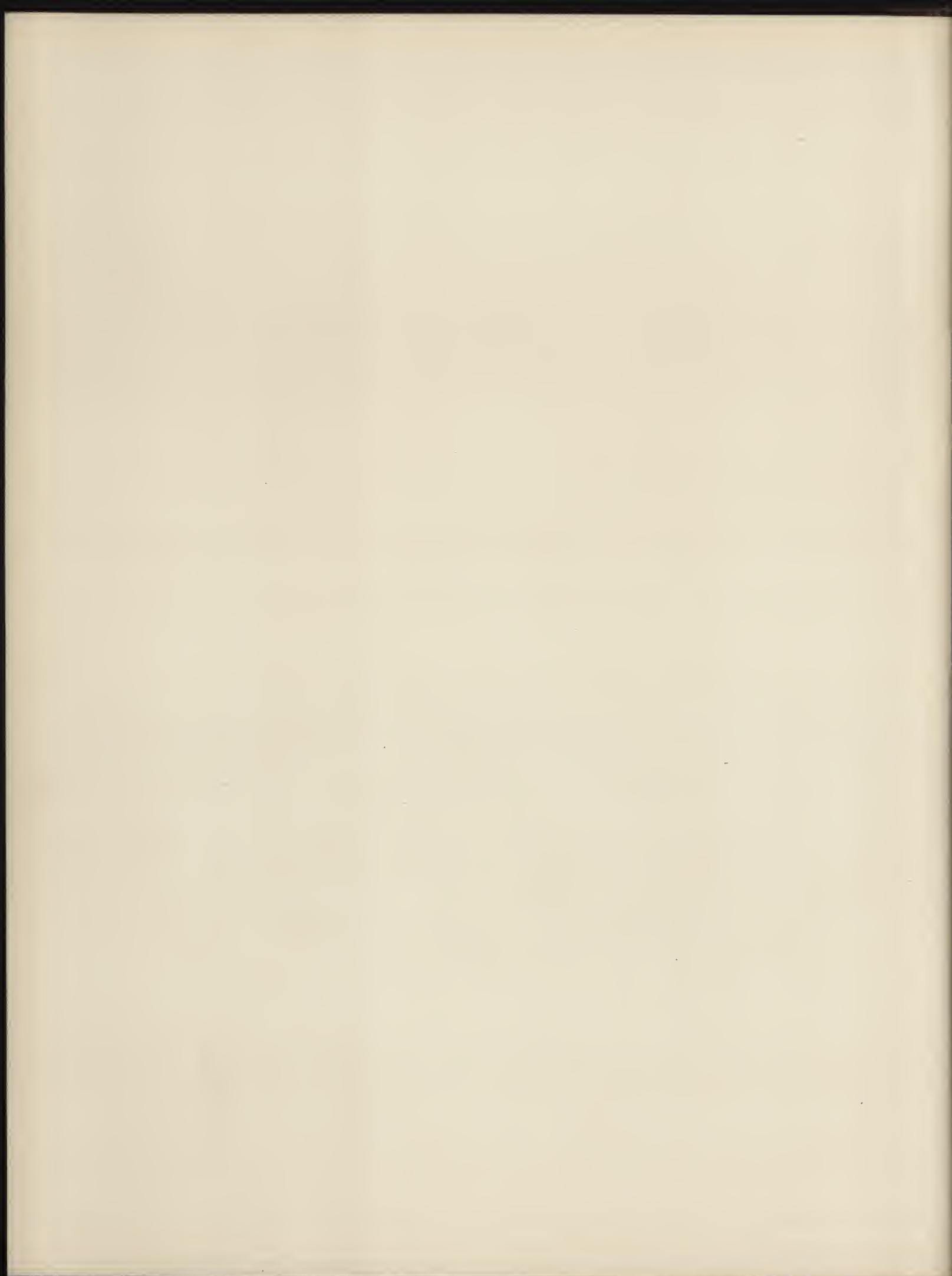
*Gresleys of Drakelow*

*Plate IX*

BRIDGET (BURDET), WIFE OF THOMAS GRESLEY, ELDEST SON OF  
THE 1ST BARONET  
d. 1685

29" x 22"

1937 sale (835) as Van Somer







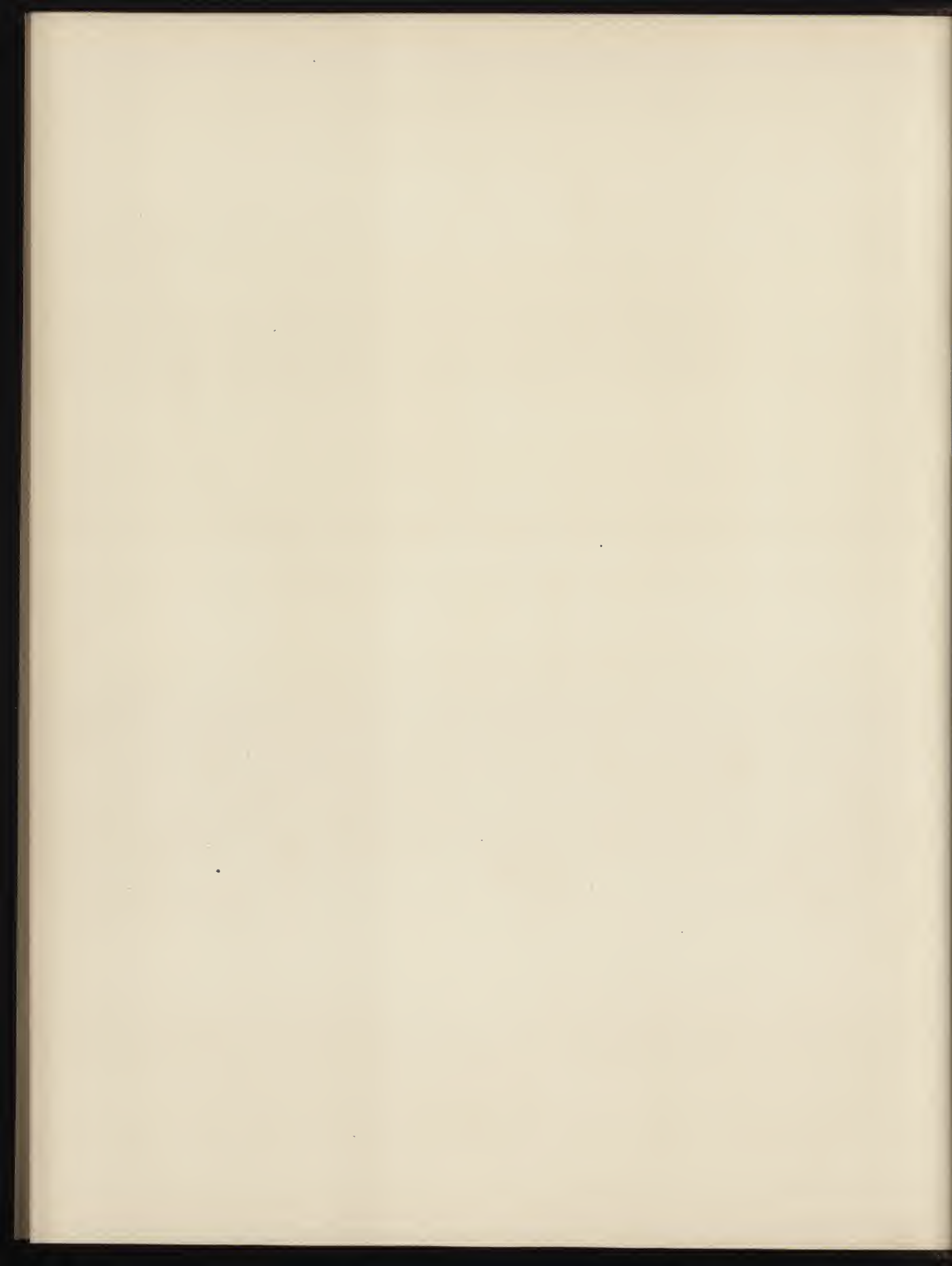
*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate X*

SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, 2ND BARONET  
d. 1699

29" x 23"

1931 sale (80) on Kneller

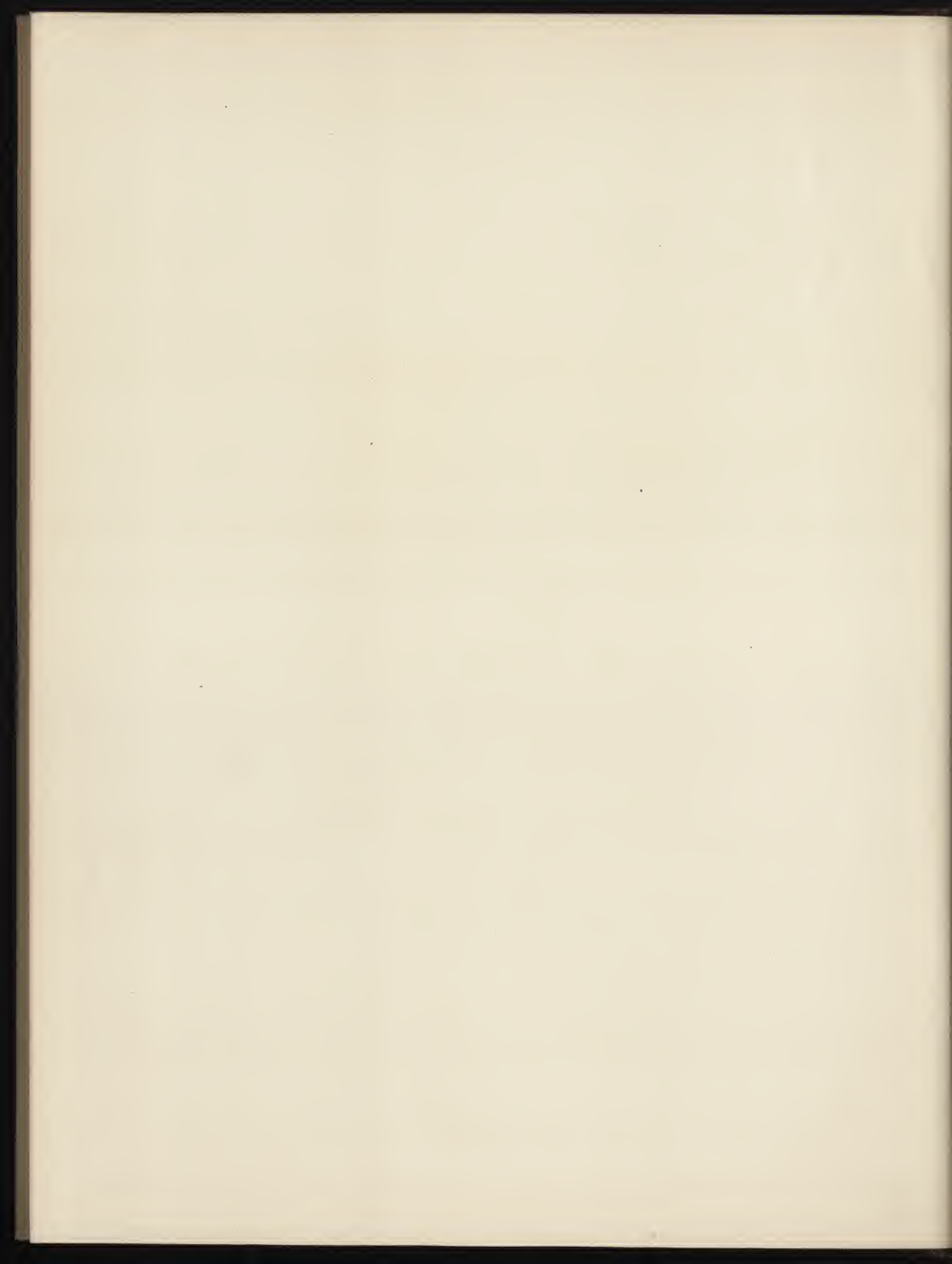




*Gresleys of Drakelow*

*Plate XI*

SIR WILLIAM GRESLEY, 3RD BARONET  
d. 1710



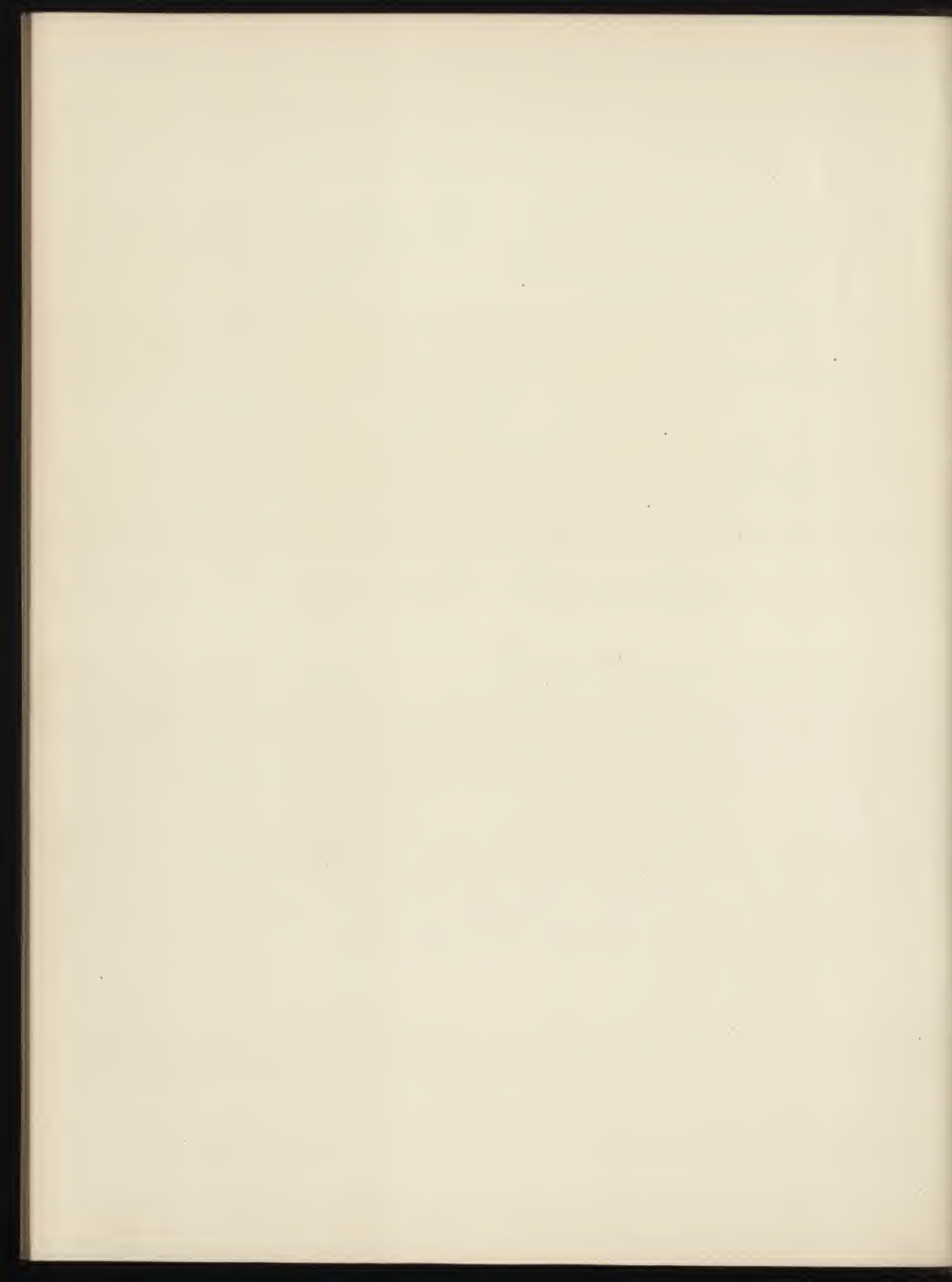


*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XII*

THOMAS GRESLEY OF NETHER SEILE, 2ND SON OF THE  
2ND BARONET  
d. 1743

*(The identity of this picture is uncertain)*

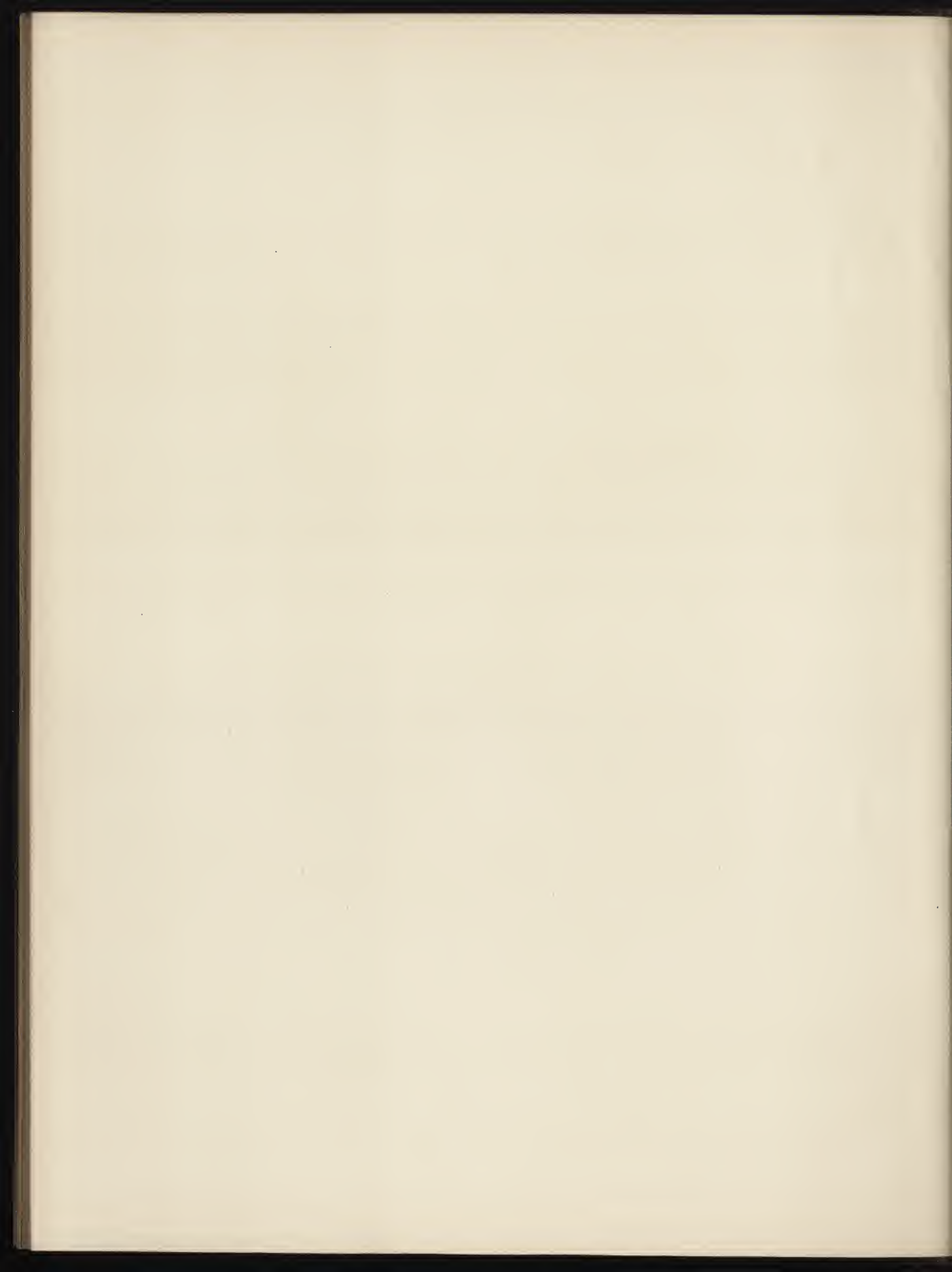




*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XIII*

SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, 4TH BARONET  
d. 1746







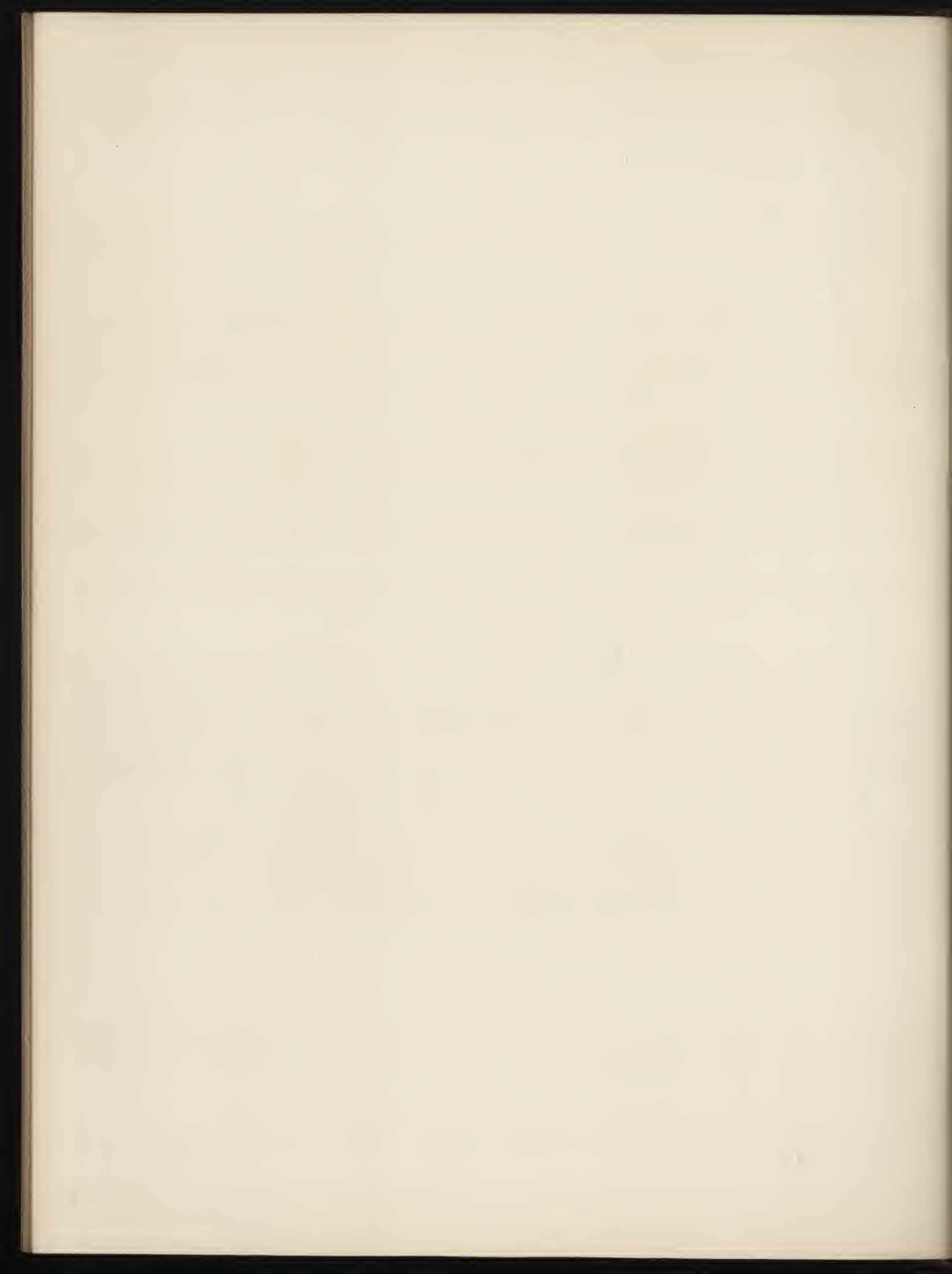
*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, 5TH BARONET  
d. 1753

*Plate XIV*

29 1/2" x 23"

1931 sale (809, an 1 (C.H.L.)  
Ann. sale, 3 June 1932 (10)





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

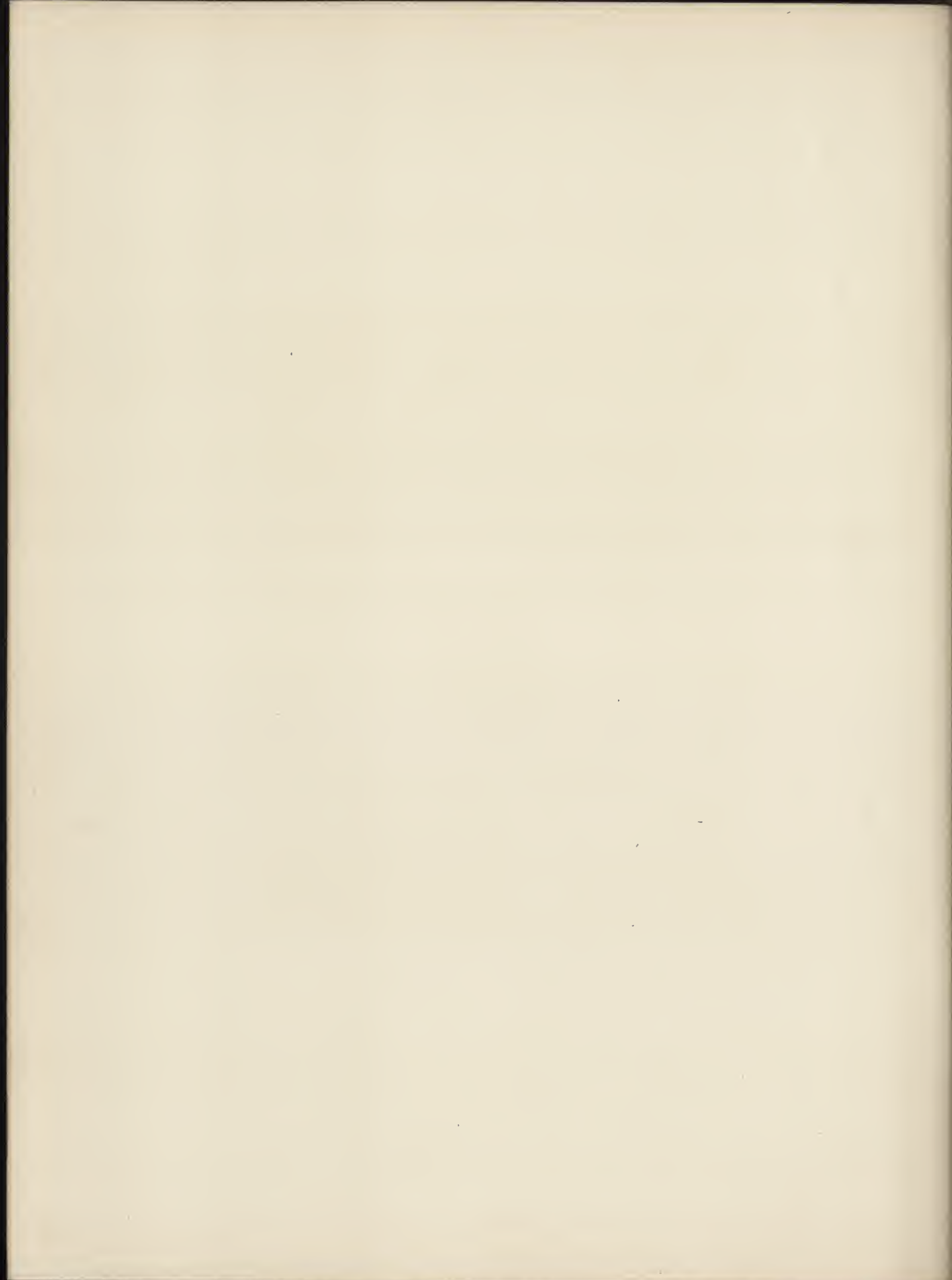
*Plate XV*

SIR NIGEL GRESLEY, 6TH BARONET  
d. 1787

5' x 15"

1931 sale (625) as H. Pickering

from Colnaghi, 1943 as R. Wilson, by  
Nat. Museum of Wales, Cardiff.





*Gresleys of Trakelowe*

*Plate XVI*

ELIZABETH (WYNN), WIFE OF THE 6TH BARONET  
d. 1793

1931 sale (526) at H. Pickering





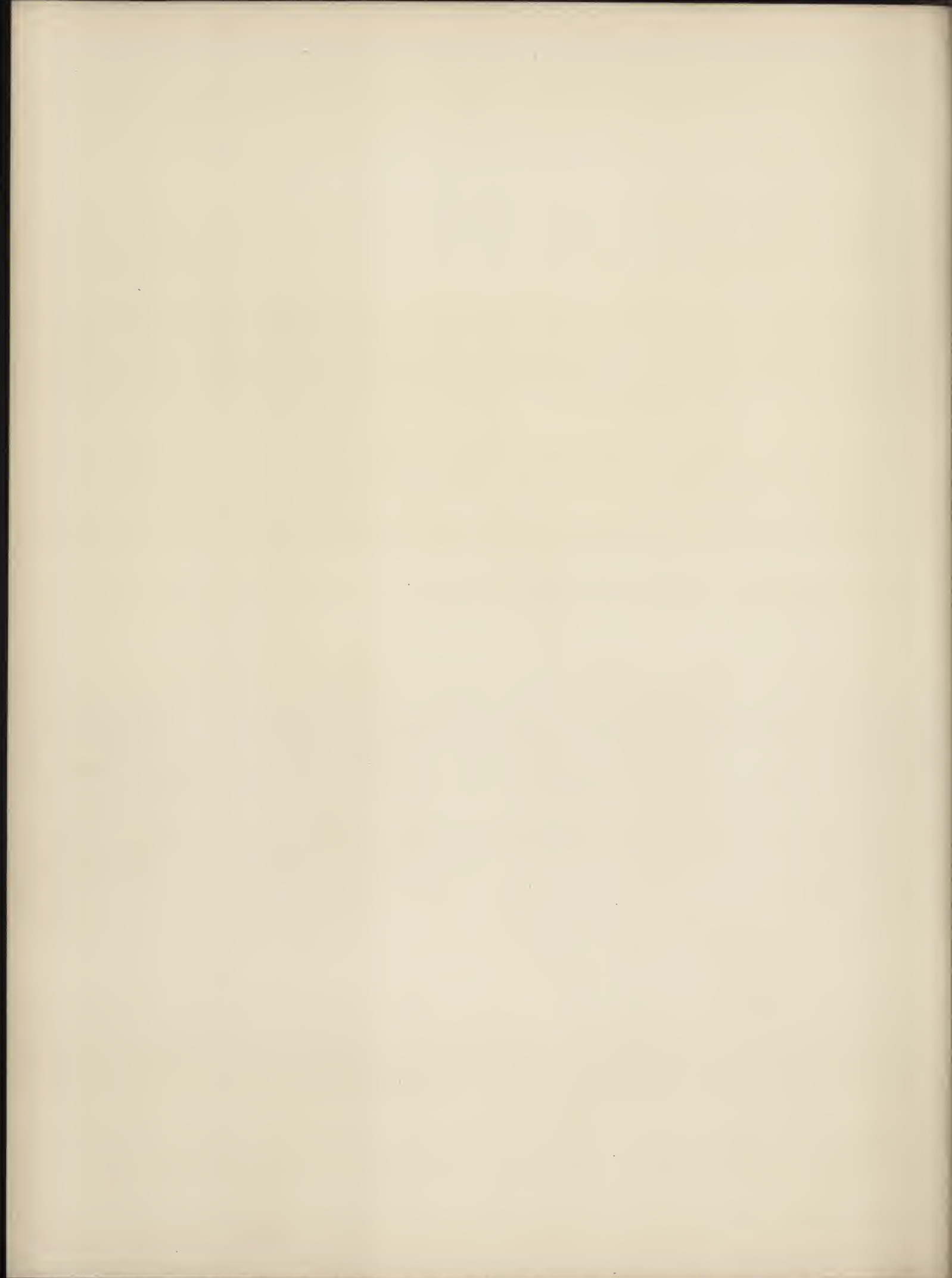
*Gresleys of Drakelow*

*Plate XVII*

ANNE (GRESLEY), LADY HEATHCOTE

d. 1797

*(From a Miniature)*







*Gresleys of Drakelow*

*Plate XVIII*

ELIZABETH (VINCENT), WIFE OF DR. THOMAS GRESLEY,  
OF NETHER SEILE  
d. 1769

*(By Sir Joshua Reynolds)*





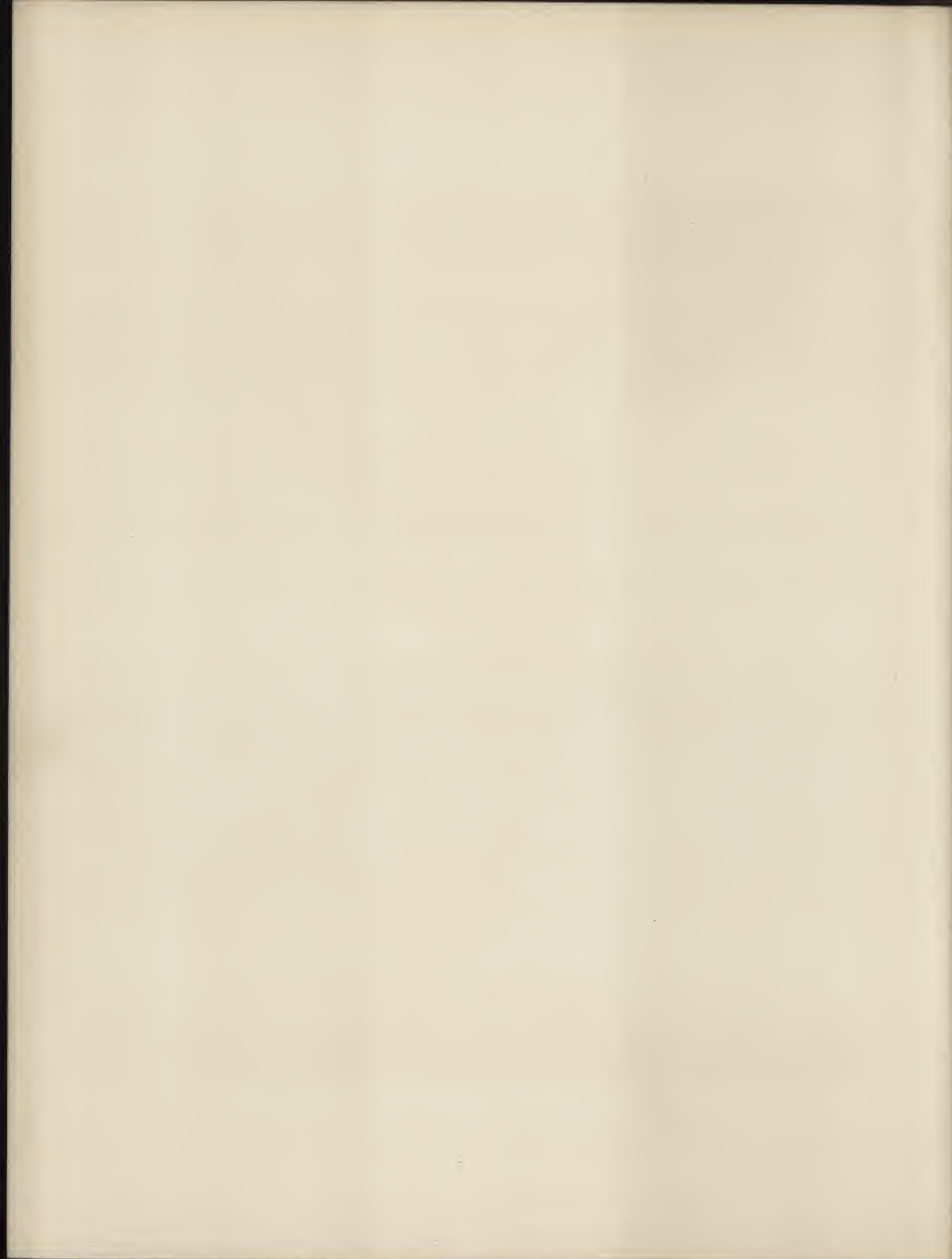
*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XIX*

SIR NIGEL BOWYER GRESLEY, 7TH BARONET  
d. 1808

35 1/2" x 27"

" (1931 sale (821) as J.R. Smith

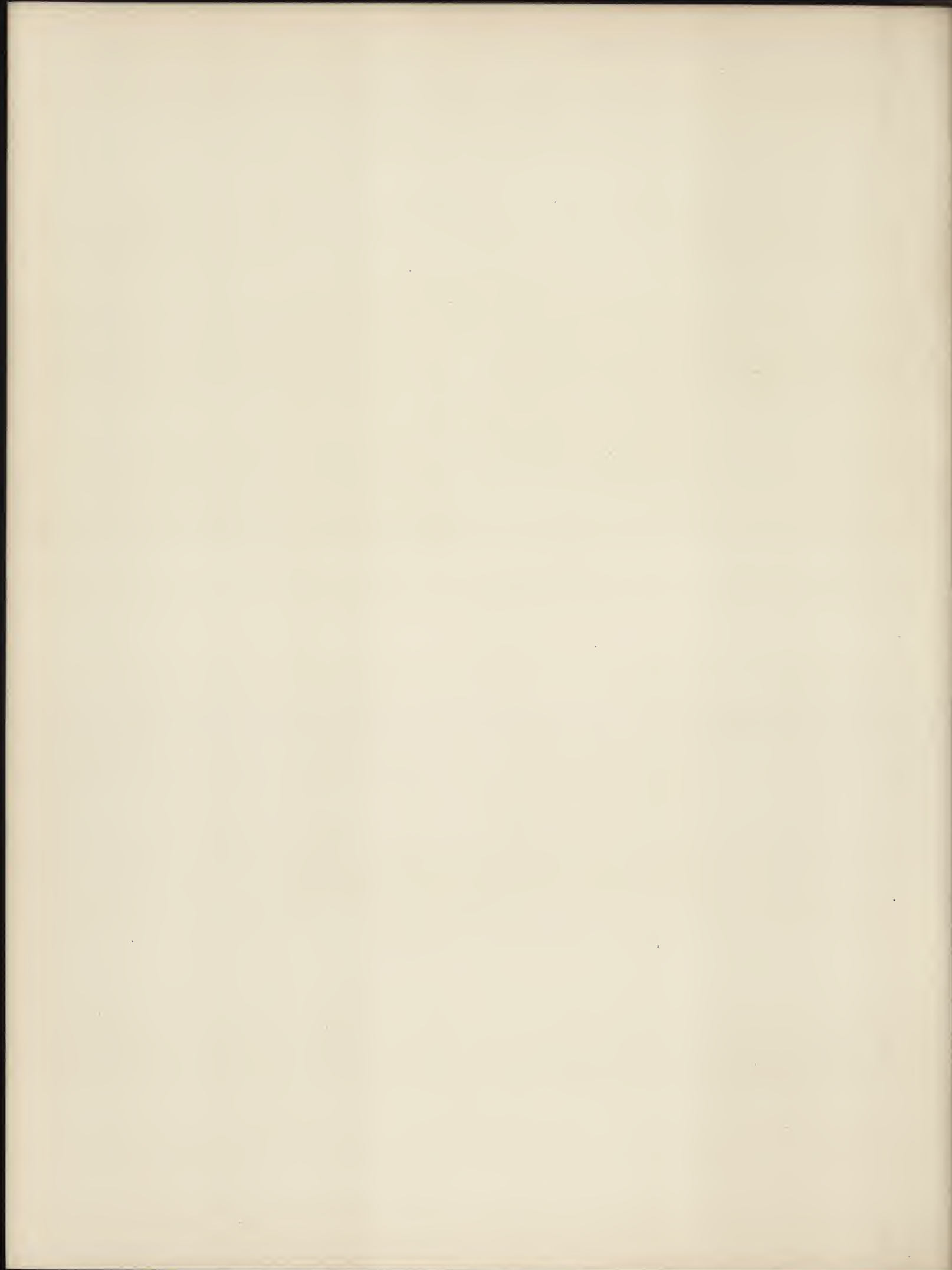




*Gresleys of Drakeelowe*

DRAKELOWE

*(From the South-west: the river front on left)*





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

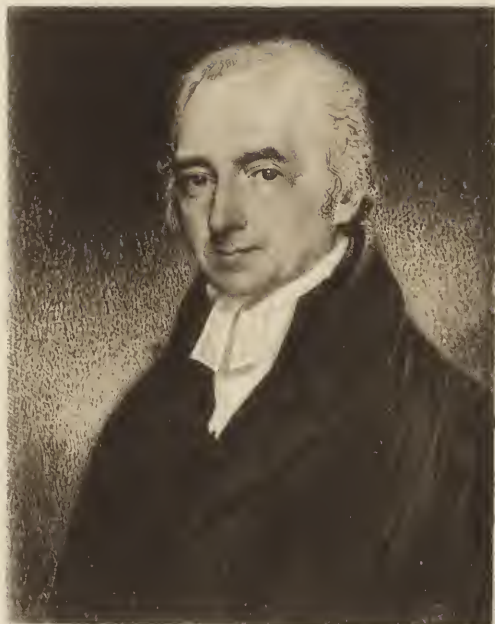
*Plate XXI*

WILMOT (GRESLEY), DAUGHTER OF THE 5TH BARONET,  
WIFE OF THE 7TH BARONET  
d. 1790

*(By Sir Joshua Reynolds)*







*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXII*

REV. WILLIAM GRESLEY OF NETHER SEILE  
d. 1829

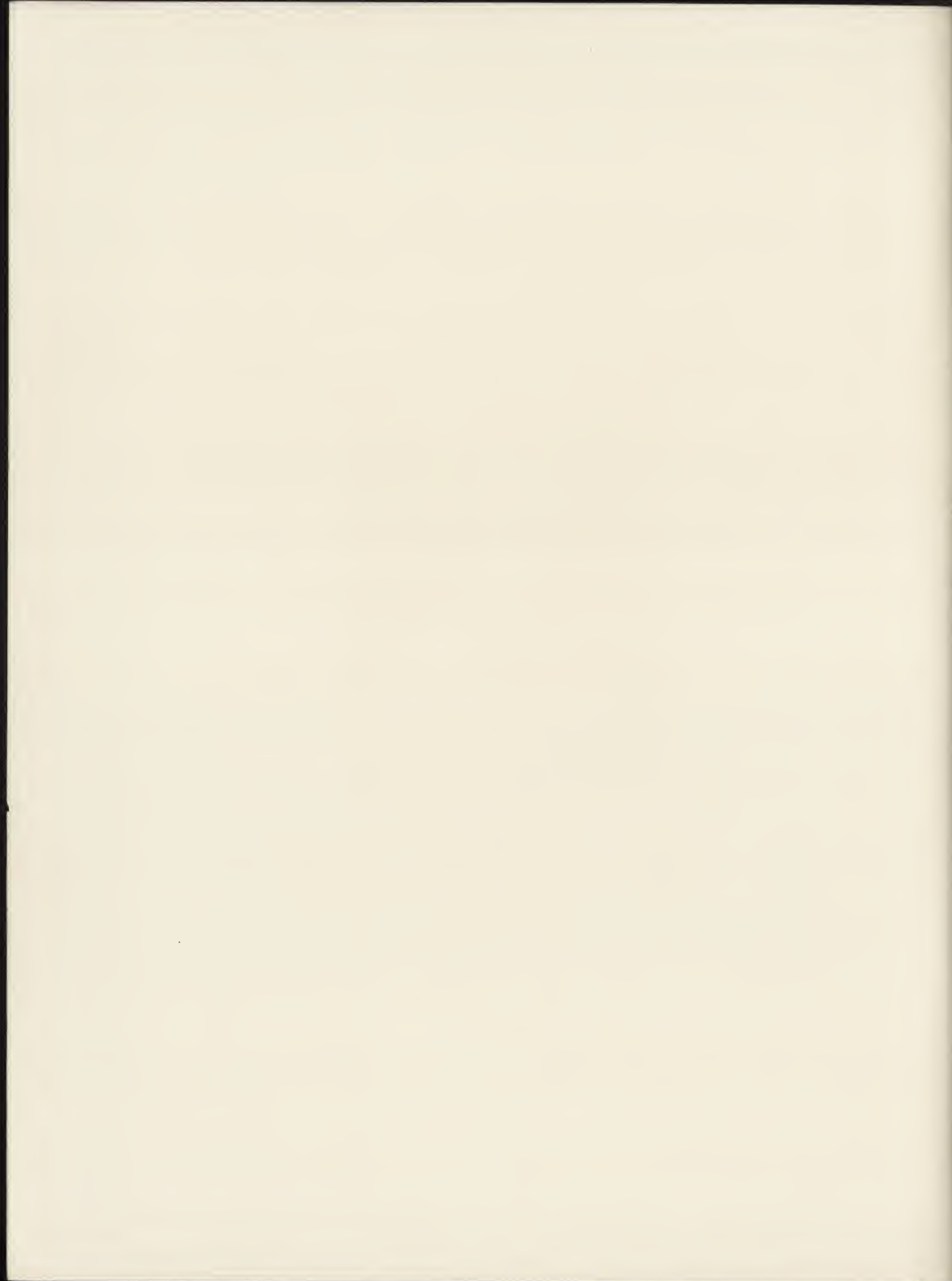




*Gresleys of Drakelozze*

*Plate XXVII*

LOUISA JANE GRESLEY (d. 1806) AND HER NIECES, MRS. LEVETT AND LADY HEATHCOTE



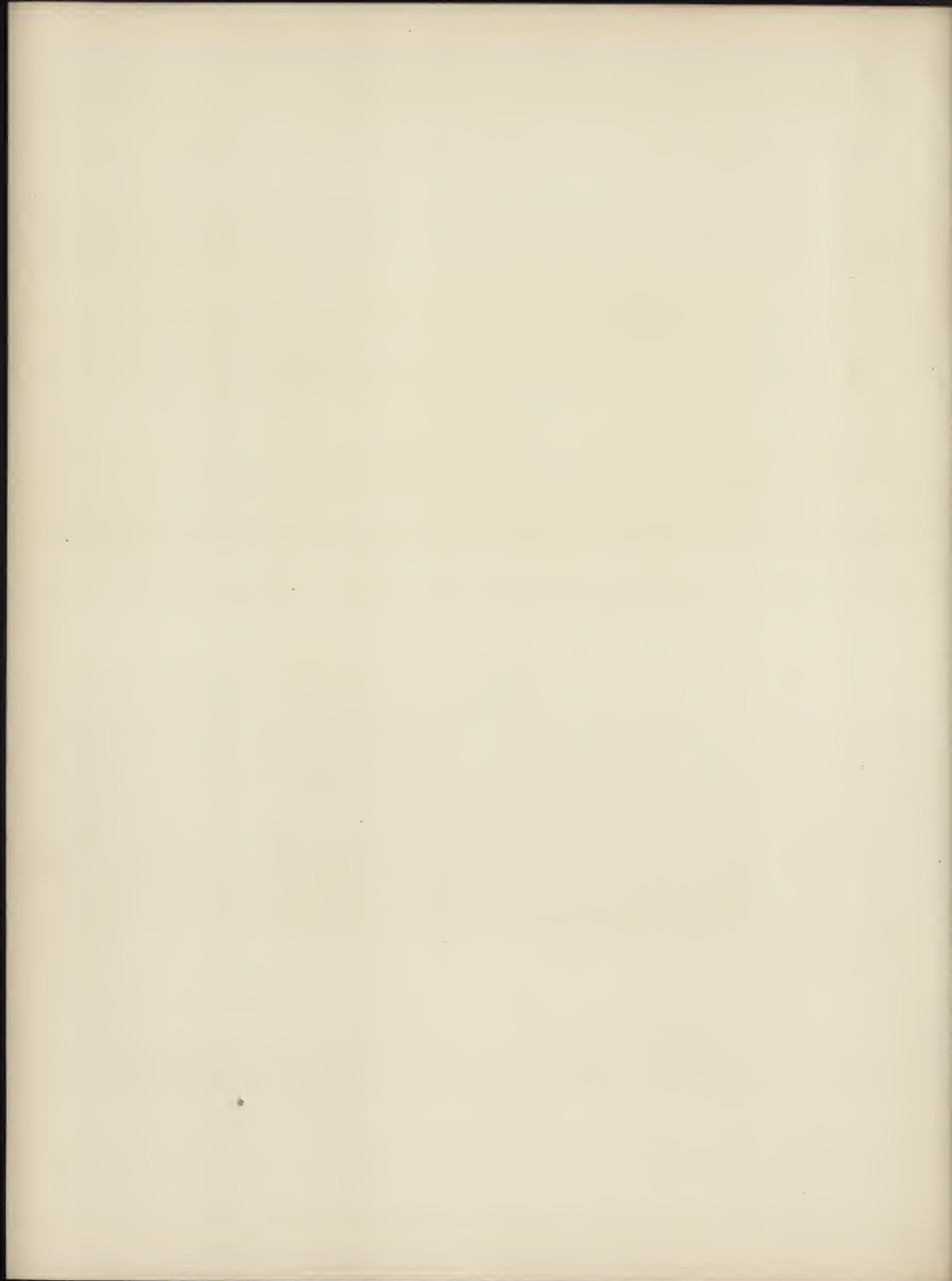


*Gresleys of Drakelow*

*Plate XXIV*

LOUISA ELIZABETH (GRESLEY), MRS. MADAN  
d. 1861

*(From a Miniature)*





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXV*

SIR ROGER GRESLEY, 8TH BARONET  
d. 1837







*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXVI*

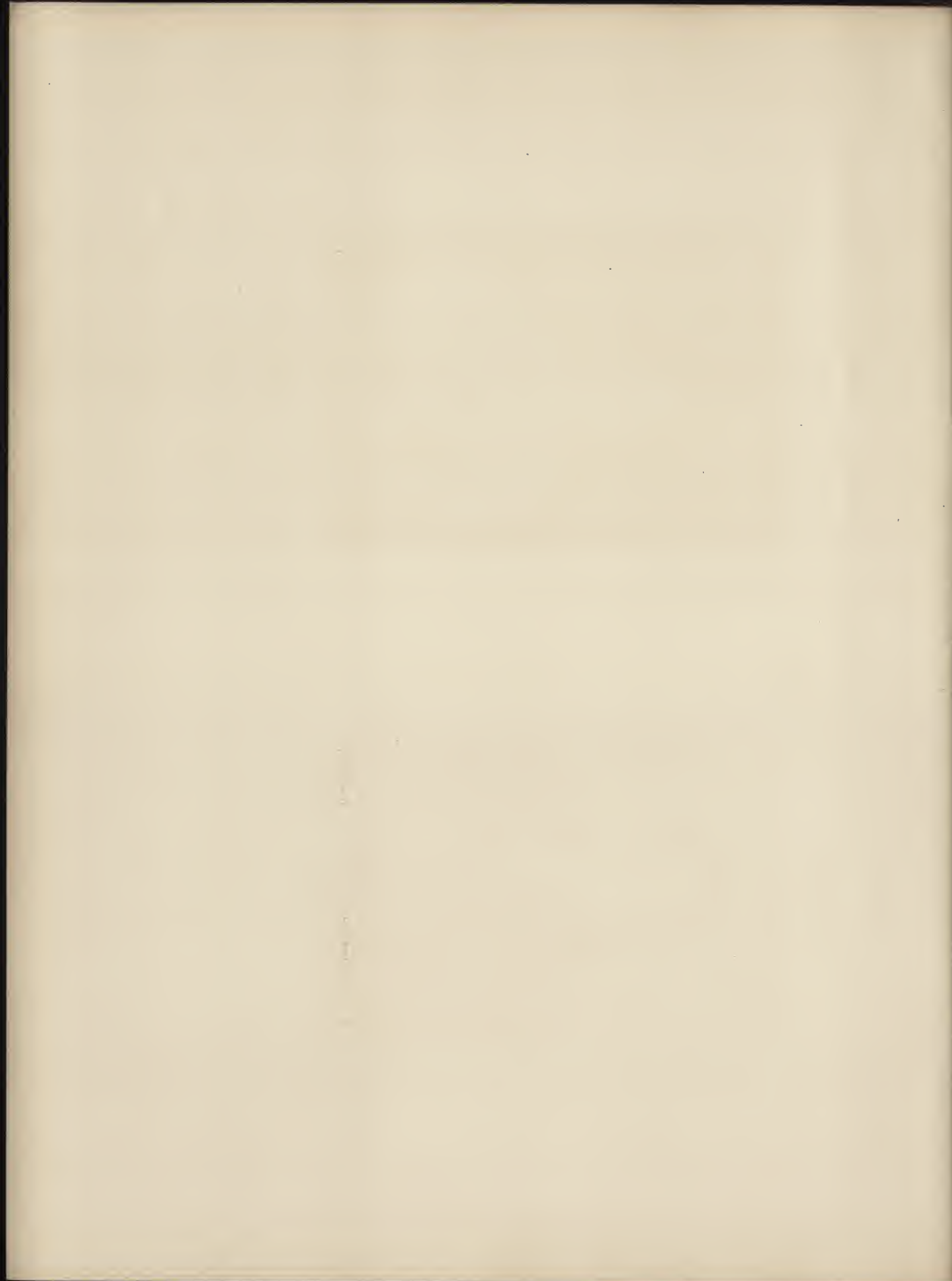
SIR ROGER GRESLEY, 8TH BARONET  
d. 1837



*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXVII*

THE LADY SOPHIA (COVENTRY), WIFE  
OF THE 8TH BARONET  
d. 1875





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXVIII*

THE REV. SIR WILLIAM NIGEL GRESLEY  
9TH BARONET  
d. 1847



*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXIX*

GEORGINA ANN (REID), LADY GRESLEY  
WIFE OF THE 9TH BARONET

(*From Miniatures*)





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXX*

SIR THOMAS GRESLEY, 10TH BARONET  
d. 1868





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXXI*

LAURA ANN (WILLIAMS), LADY GRESLEY, WIFE OF THE  
10TH BARONET







*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXXII*

SIR ROBERT GRESLEY, 11TH BARONET





*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXXIII*

THE LADY FRANCES GRESLEY, NÉE SPENCER-CHURCHILL  
WIFE OF THE IITH BARONET





*Gresleys of Drakeelow*

DRAKELOWE  
*(From the South-east)*



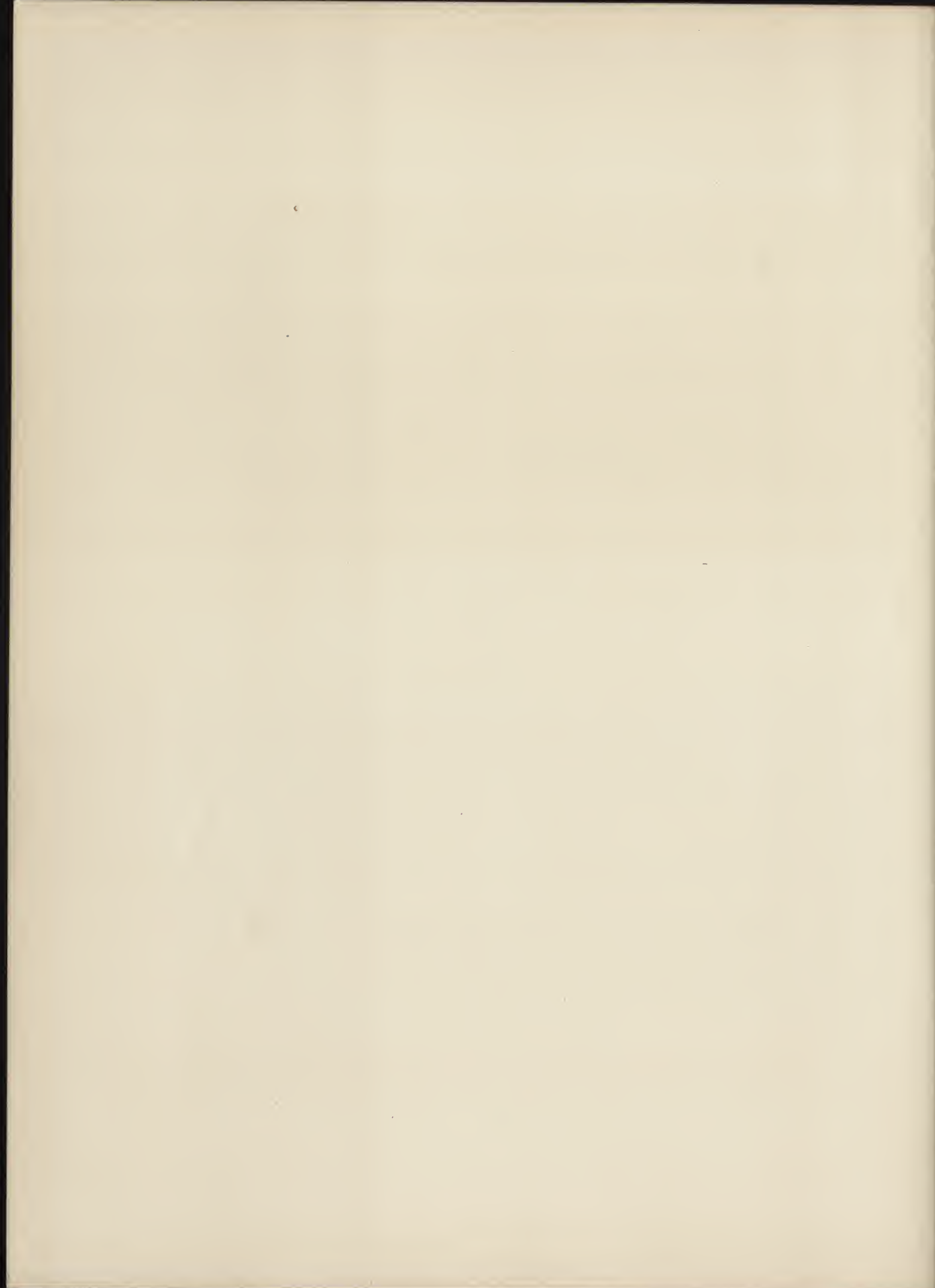


Plate XXXV

DRAKELOWE

*Entrance gate and grass walk in garden (from the West)*

*Gresteyns of Drakehowe*







*Gresleys of Drakehowe*

DRAKELOWE

*Entrance gate and grass walk in garden (from the East)*

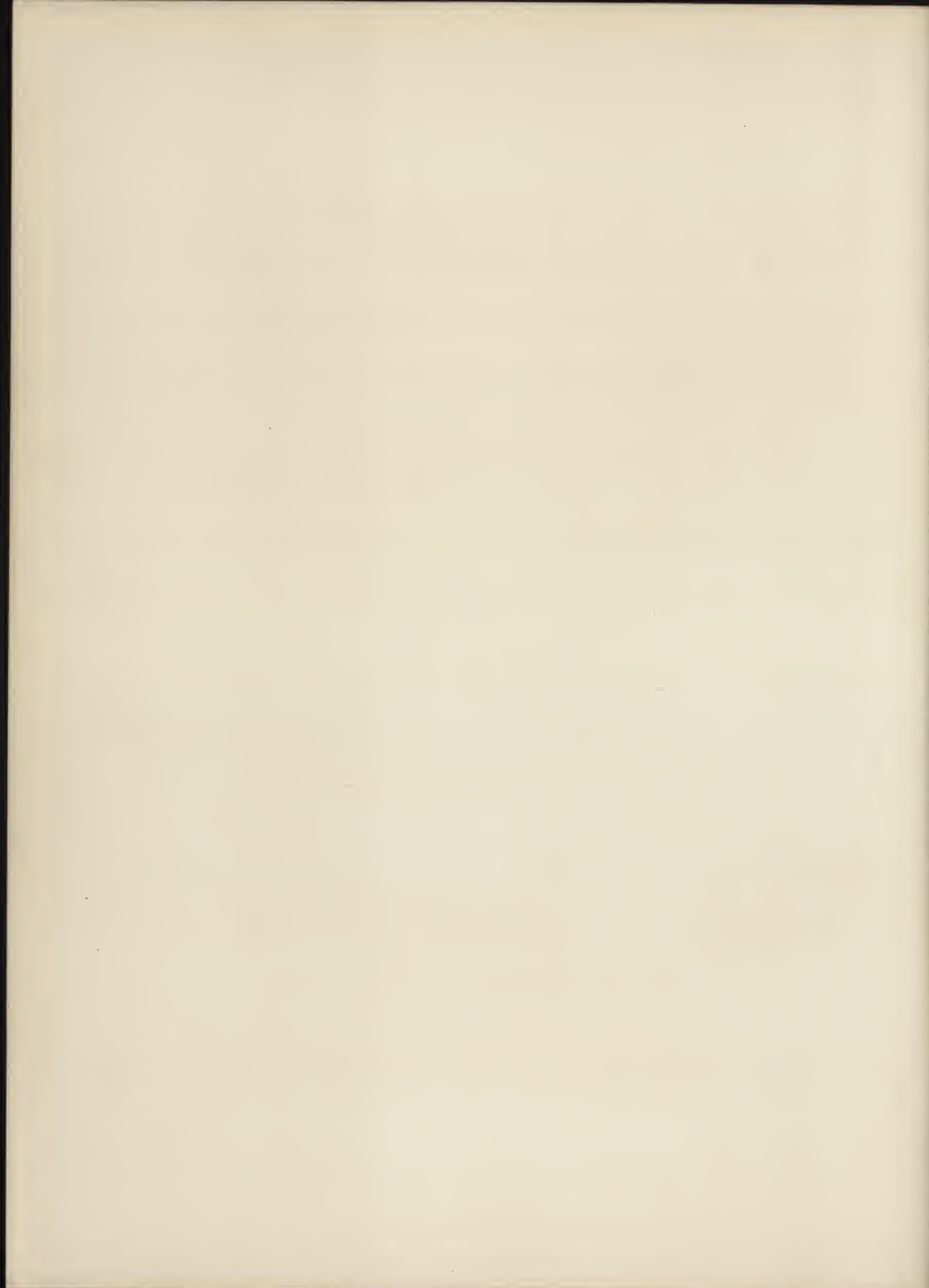


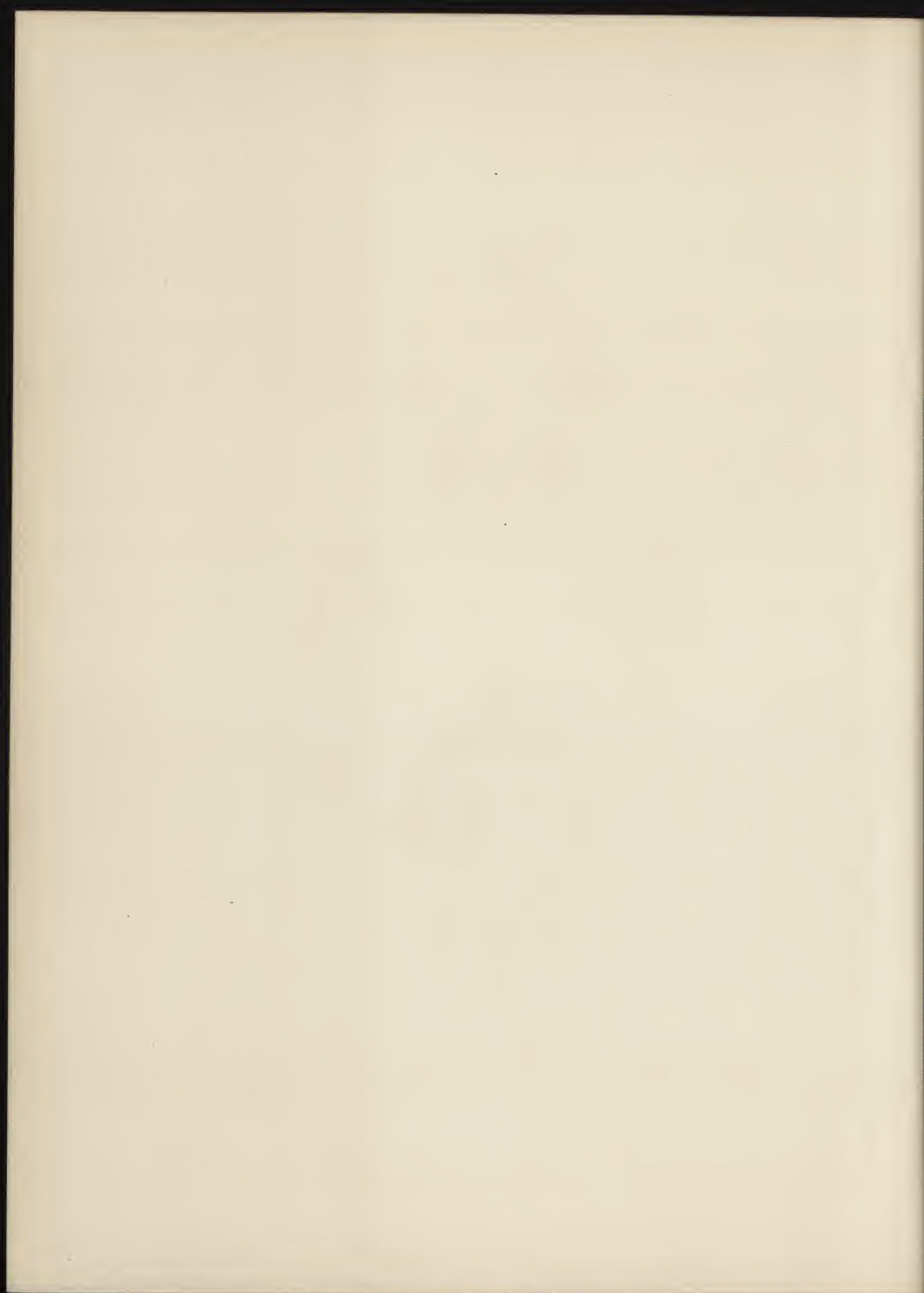


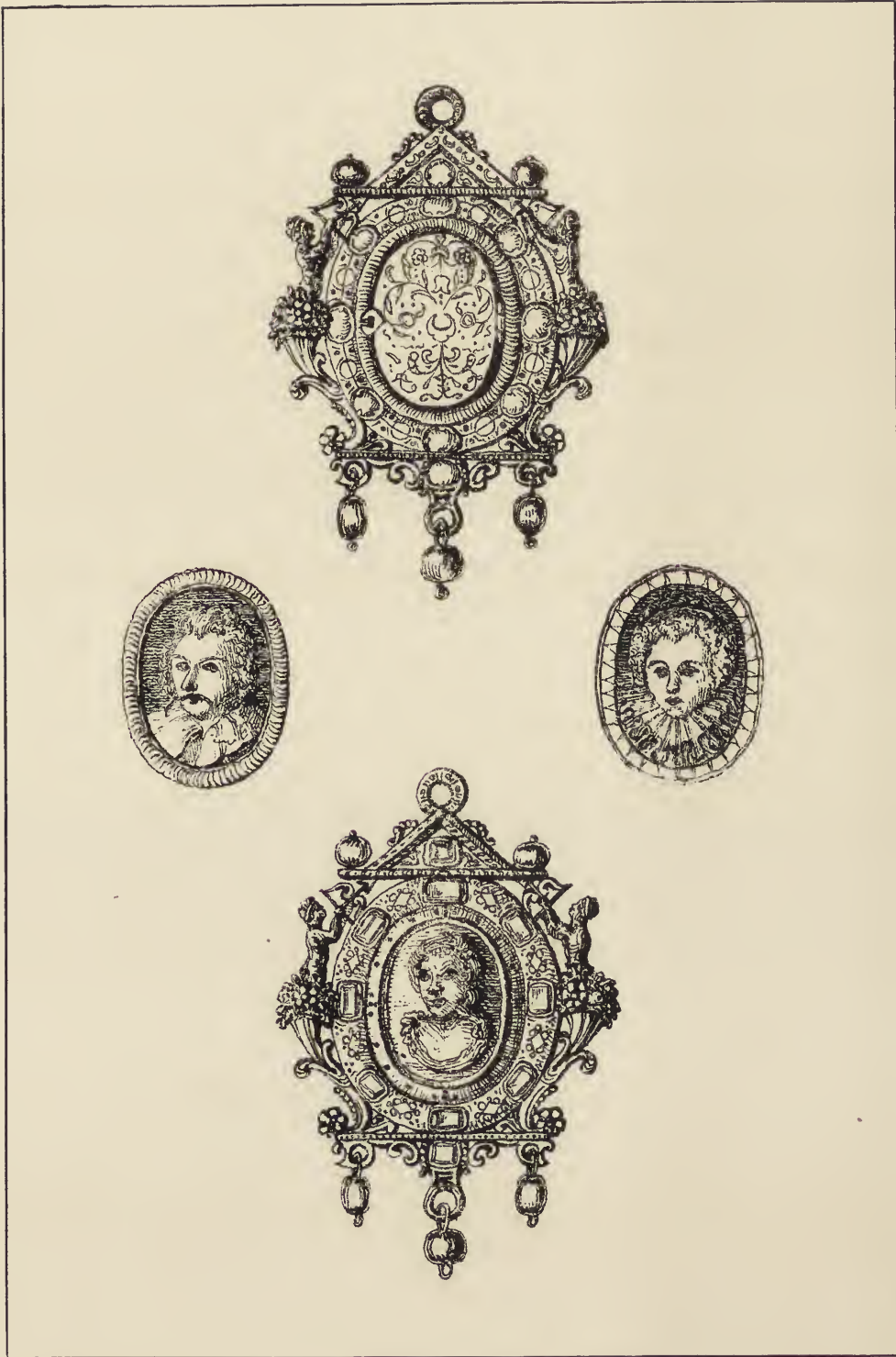
Plate XXXVII

DRAKELOWE  
(Dining Room)

*Greskys of Drakelowe*

Painted end wall now installed in  
Victoria Albert Museum (1948)

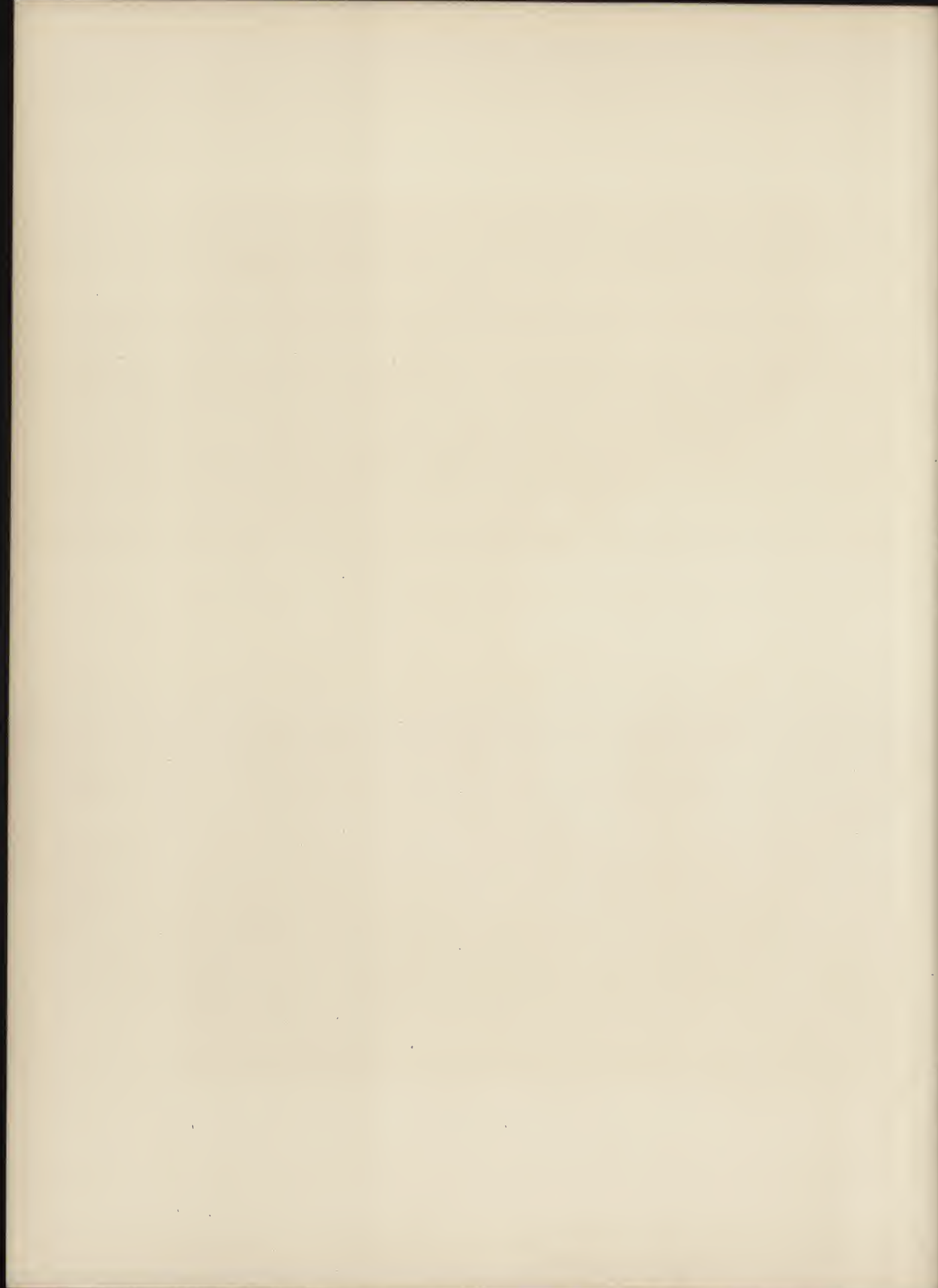




*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XXXVIII*

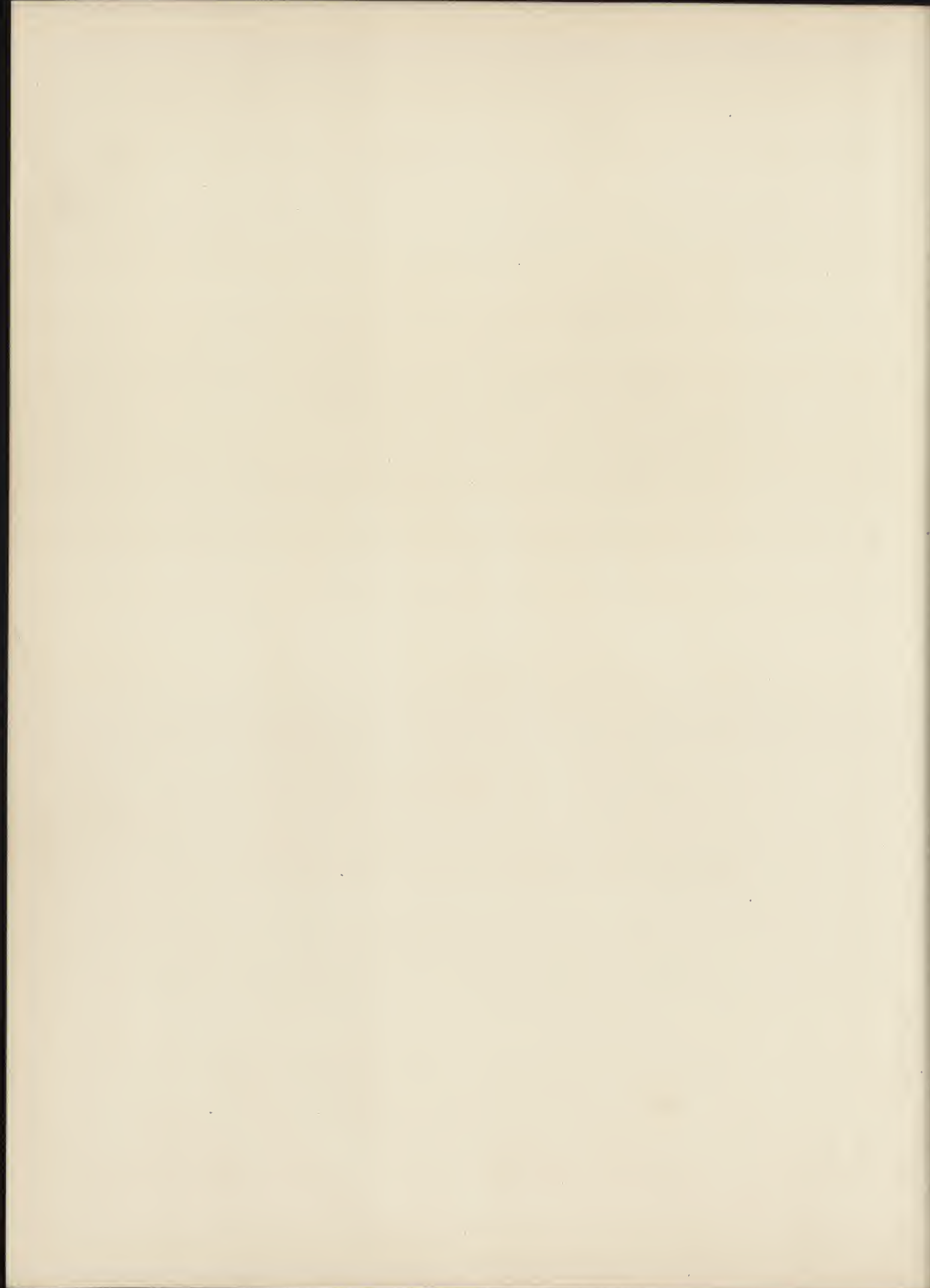
THE GRESLEY JEWEL  
*(From an Anastatic Drawing)*





*Gravelly of Drakeelowe*

DRAKELOWE  
*(From the North)*





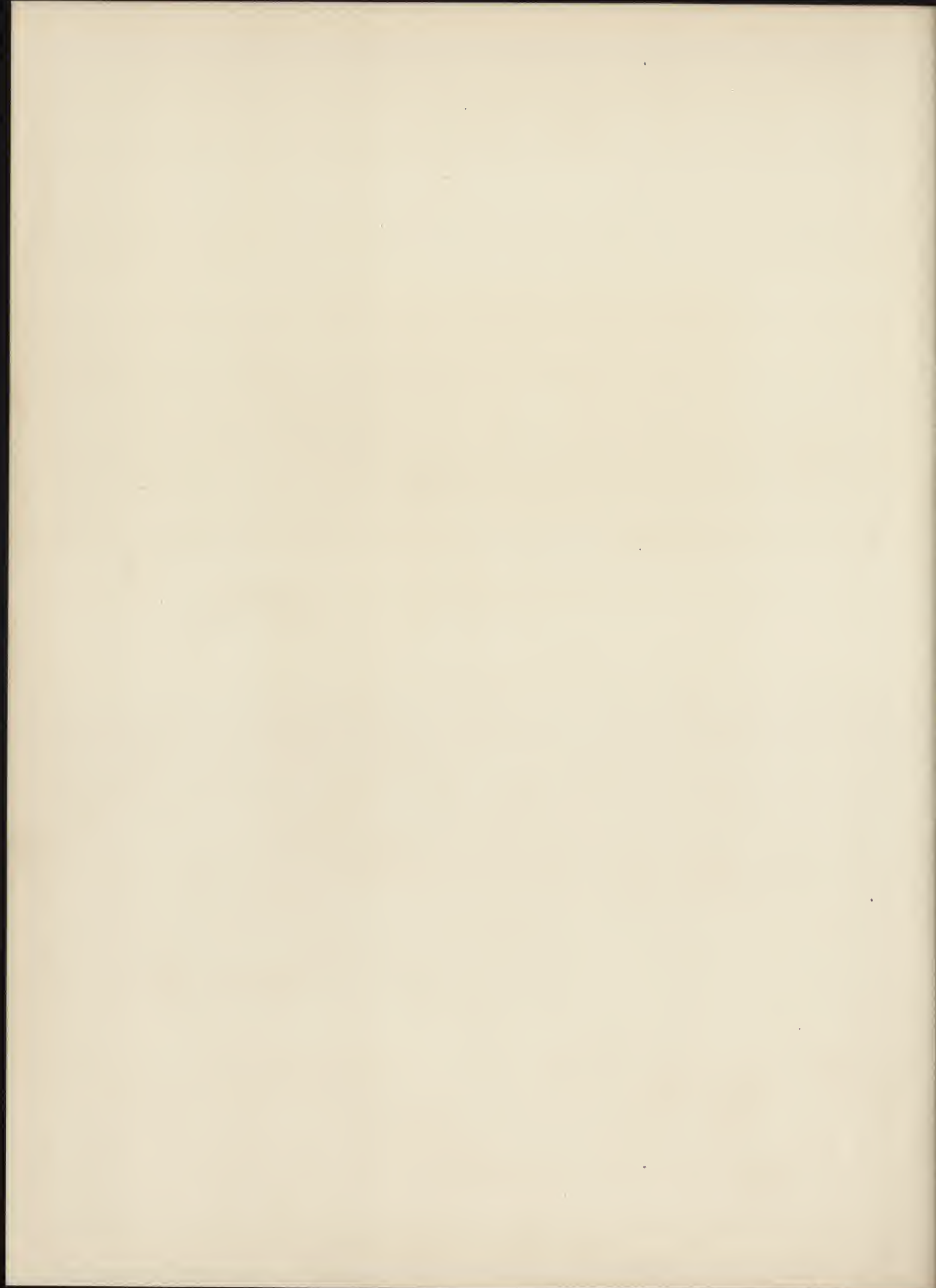


*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

*Plate XL*

DR. EDWARD REYNOLDS, BISHOP OF NORWICH  
d. 1676

*1676 d. 1676*





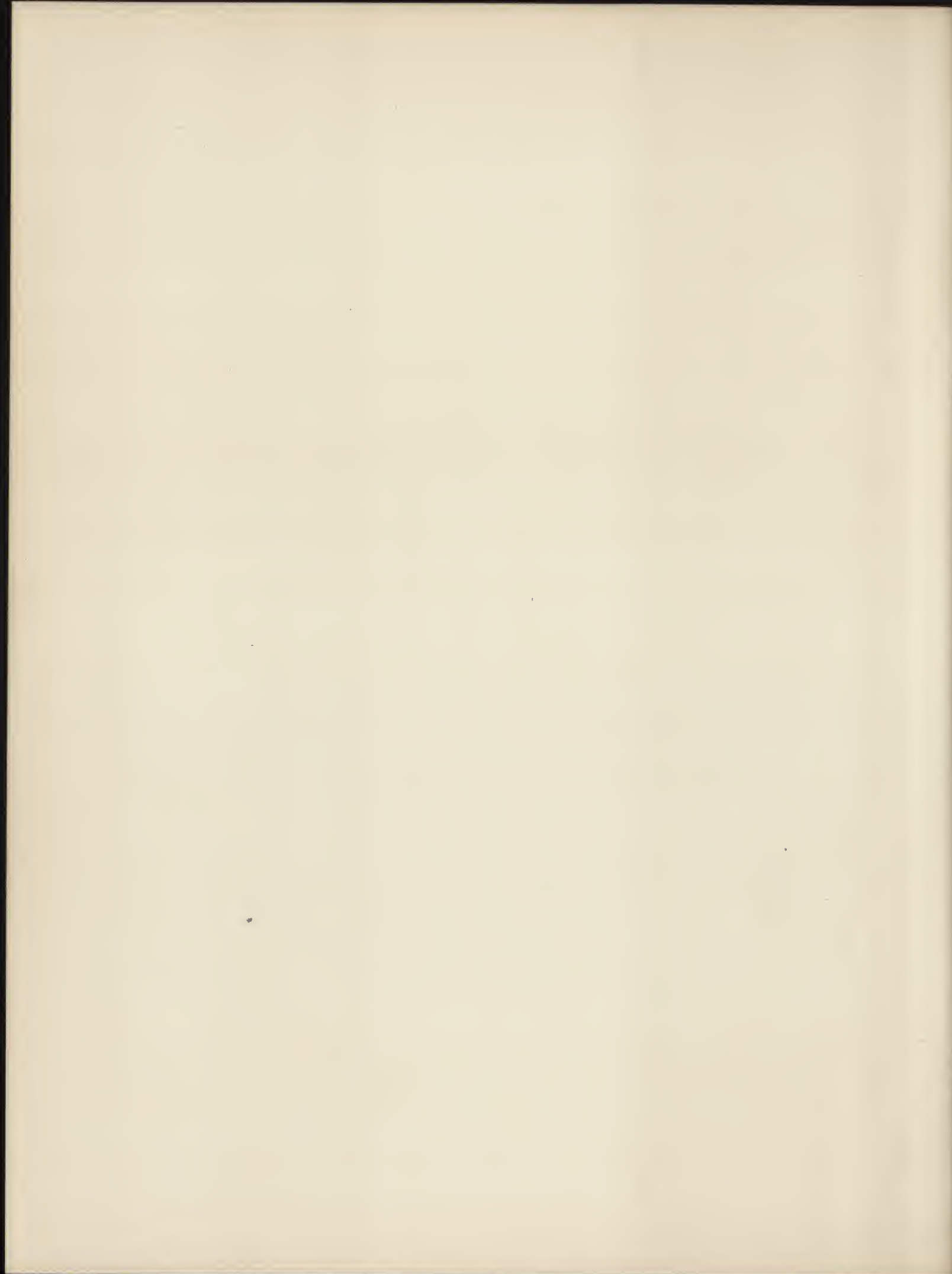
*Gresleys of Drakelowe*

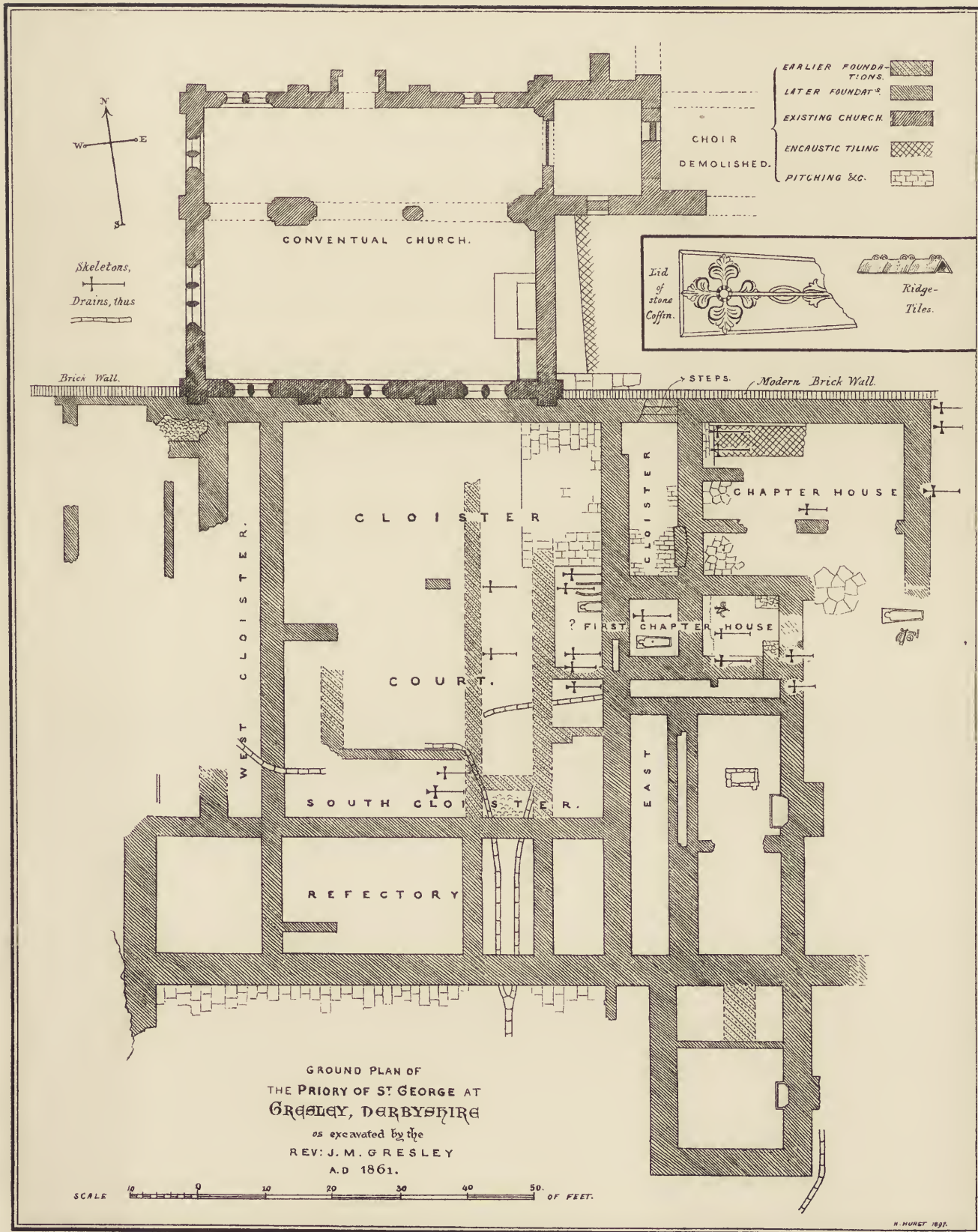
MRS. REYNOLDS, WIFE OF BISHOP REYNOLDS

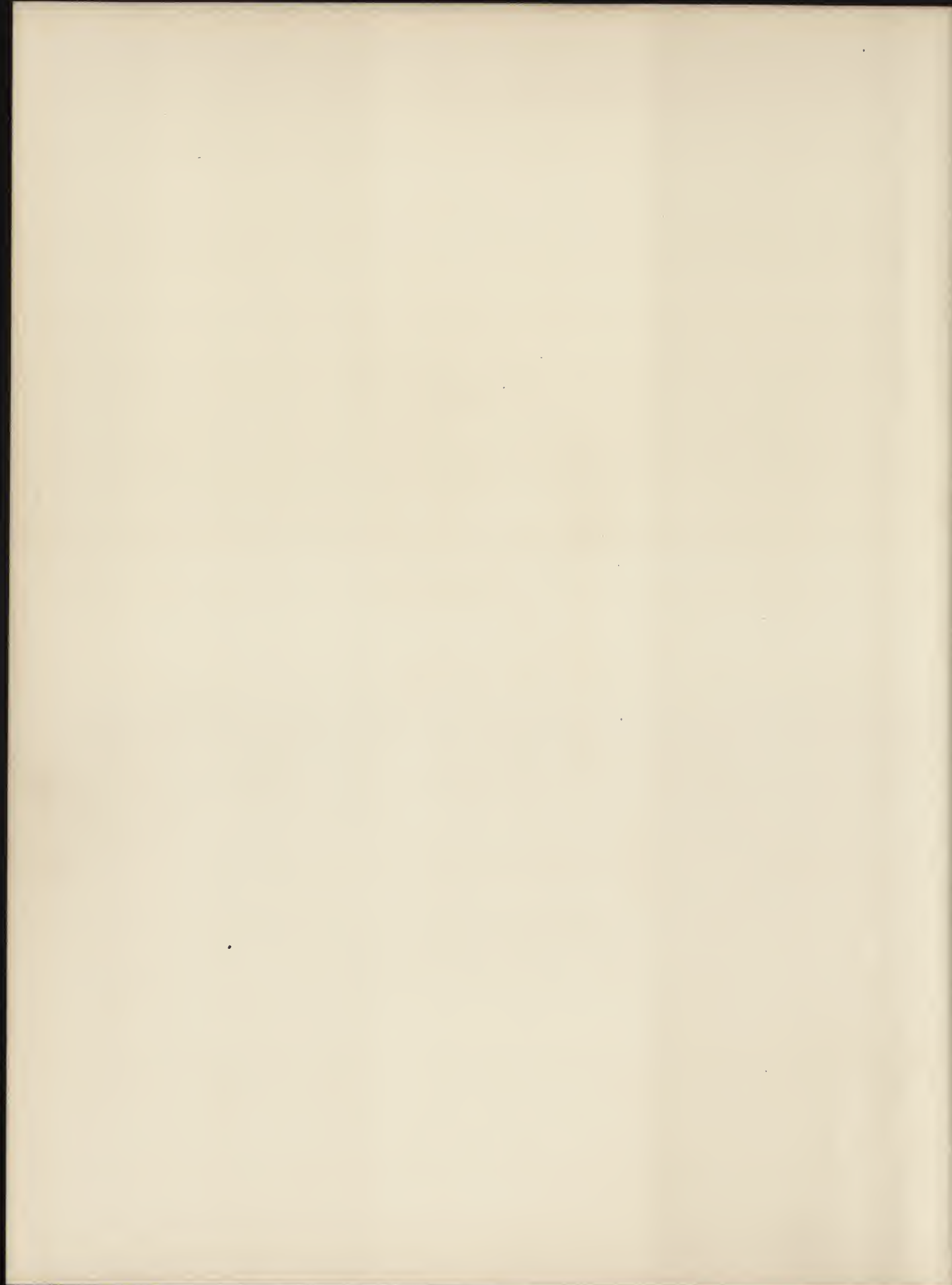
*Plate XLI*

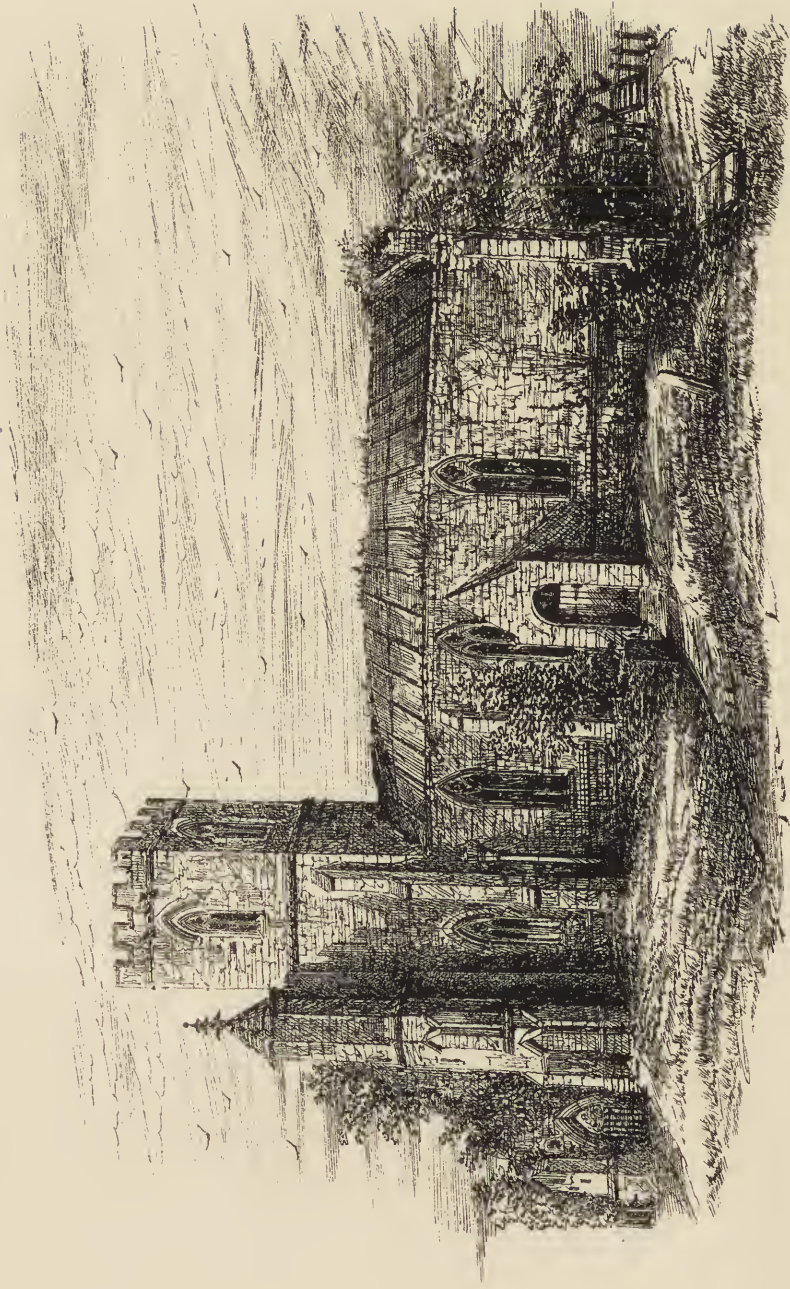
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1911-1919  
Ann sale, 3 June 1932 (4)







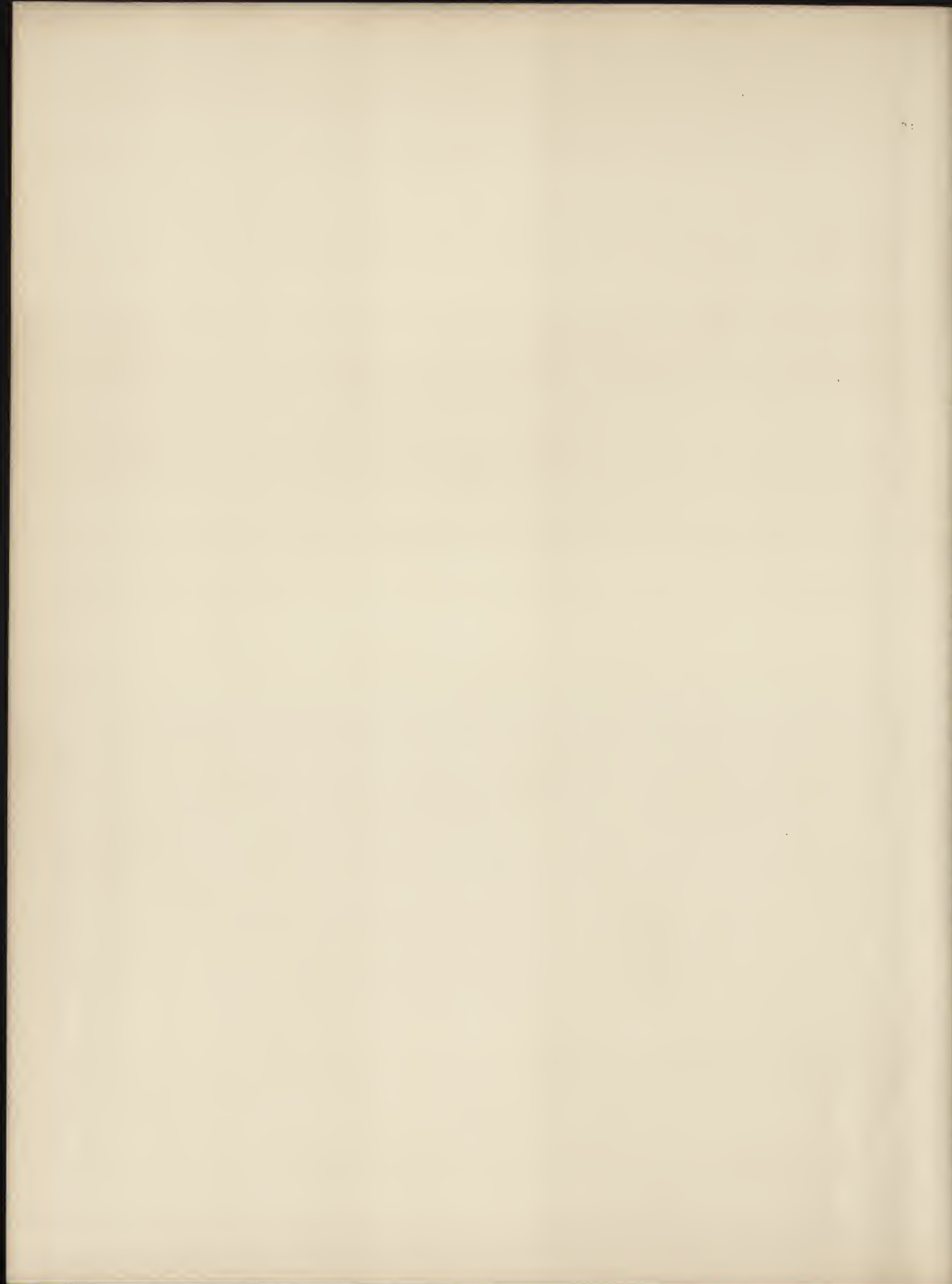


Gresley Church: Devonshire  
Drawn in Perspective by Alfred H. Clark: F.D. 1859: from a sketch by S. Shaw, engraved by Ravenhill: for the  
Topographer: of October: 1789.

Gresleys of Drakelowe

GRESLEY CHURCH

Plate XLIII















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