

AUGUST.

JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH, IN SOMERSETSHIRE,  
AUGUST, 1650.

MANY are the memorials which exist, to this day, of the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, the natural son of Charles II.; and whose popularity with the nation, still more than the presumed partiality of his father, made him a somewhat formidable competitor for the succession, in the actual circumstances of the legitimate heir.

Somerset and Dorset were the closing scenes of Monmouth's career. In 1650, he made a memorable progress, accepting the hospitality of his distinguished friends, and visiting the estates of the country party; but the gentlemen of the court shrank from contact with one whose connexion with the opposition and democratic members of Parliament was so notorious. In August, when Monmouth started on his progress, incredible numbers flocked to see this great champion of the English nation, who had been so successful against the Dutch, French, and Scots. He first went into Wiltshire, and honoured the worthy Squire Thynne, of Longleat House, with his company for some days. From Longleat Monmouth journeyed into Somerset, caressed with the joyful acclamations of the country people, who cried, "God bless King Charles and the Protestant Duke!" In some towns and parishes through which he passed, they strewed the streets and highways with herbs and flowers, especially at Ilchester and South Petherton, others presenting him with bottles of wine. When the Duke came within ten miles of White Lackington House, the seat of George Speke, Esq., one mile distant from Ilminster, he was met by two thousand persons on horseback, whose number increased to twenty thousand. To admit so large a multitude, several perches of the park paling were taken down. His Grace, his



THE CHESTNUT TREE BENEATH WHICH MONMOUTH SAT, AT WHITE LACKINGTON, NEAR ILMINSTER.

Salisbury, on the road to Blandford, turned their horses adrift; and thence crossed the country, nearly due south, to "the Island," in the parish of Horton, in Dorsetshire, where, in a field called to this day "Monmouth Close," was found the would-be king. An ash-tree, at the foot of which he was found crouched in a ditch, and half-hid under the fern, was standing a few years ago, and bore the carved initials of persons who had visited it; and it was propped up for preservation, as shown in the accompanying view.

On his capture, the Duke was first taken to the house of Anthony Etterick, Esq., a magistrate, who resided at Holt, which adjoins Horton. Tradition, which records the popular feeling rather than the fact, reports that the poor woman who informed the pursuers that she had seen two strangers lurking in the Island—her name was Amy Farrant—never prospered afterwards; and that Henry Parkin, the soldier who, spying the skirt of the smock-frock which the Duke had assumed as a disguise, recalled the searching party just as they were leaving the Island, burst into tears, and reproached himself bitterly for his fatal discovery.  
—Notes and Queries.

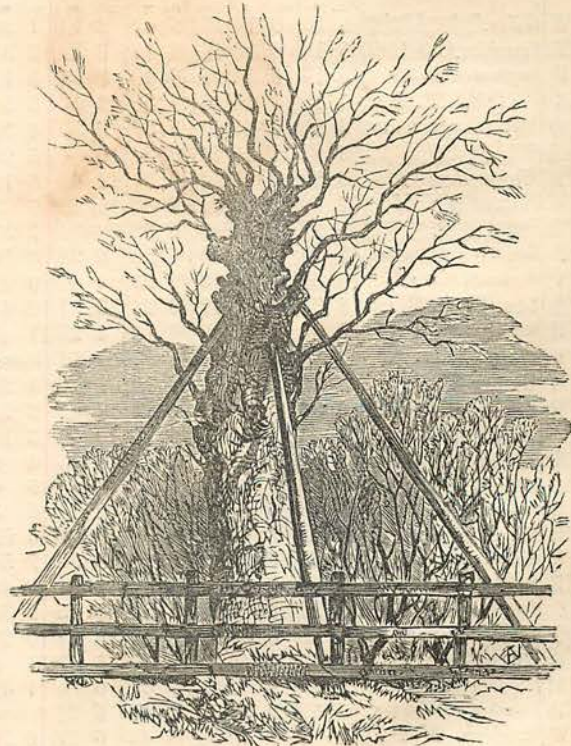


THE GEORGE INN, NORTON ST. PHILIP'S.

party, and attendants, took refreshment under the famed sweet Spanish chestnut-tree, now standing, which measures at three feet from the ground upwards of twenty-six feet in circumference. The old branches have been mostly removed by the ravages of time; but there are others attached to the stock which produce large timber, as well as a quantity of fruit every year. White Lackington House is now a farm: a great part of the house has been pulled down.

This famous tree forms the first of the accompanying illustrations. The second and third engravings carry us to Monmouth's last defeat and capture. It was in the village of Norton St. Philip's, between Bath and Frome, that the ill-fated Duke was attacked, on June 27, 1655, by the Royalists, whose advanced guard had marched from Bath, under the Duke of Grafton, Monmouth's half-brother. Colonel Holmes, who was at the head of Monmouth's army, had an arm nearly shot off in the engagement; and it is related that the brave soldier, unassisted, completed the amputation with the cook's knife in the kitchen of the George Inn, at the village. This large old mansion was formerly a granary, belonging to Hinton Abbey: its capacious porch, the designs of some of its windows, and its overhanging upper stories (upon rude corbels), and its inner gallery, leading to what once were bed-chambers,—all denote the pile to have been erected in the early portion of the 15th century.

We now approach the scene of Monmouth's capture. The decisive battle of Sedgemoor was fought on the 5th of July, after which Monmouth and his friends fled across the boundaries of Wiltshire, and at Woodyate's Inn, near



THE ASH UNDER WHICH MONMOUTH WAS CAPTURED.