



BROME HALL.

The Seat of LADY BATEMAN, 1911.

BROME HALL.

BY THE HON. A. ROSAMUND BATEMAN-HANBURY.

As it stands to-day it is difficult in the present Brome Hall to trace the position of the Great Hall, or Dining Room, which seems to have been one of the features of the original House. The curiously ornamented chimneys, the linen-fold panelling, the old foundations, the octagonal Tower, the $3\frac{3}{4}$ by 2 English Bond of Brick Work, and in particular, the old Bricks, although they may have been greatly re-arranged, are practically all the direct connection left with the mansion depicted in the Kyp Print, or in the earlier pictures of a Tudor House, of which a few sketches only, are in the possession of private individuals. But, as the home of the Cornwallis's, Brome will always remain of historical and distinguished interest. The first member we know of the ancient family is Thomas Cornwallis, the Merchant Sheriff of London, 1378-1389. He was born in Ireland, "from whence his surname cometh." His descendants were most honourably settled in Suffolk for more than four generations, and produced men illustrious alike in the camp, the court, the cloister, and the senate. His son, John, added to his patrimony the Lordship of Brome and Oakley, with other lands in the County by his marriage with Phillippe, daughter and co-heir of Robert Bucton (Buckton or Buxton) of Oakley, who died in 1408, and is buried in that parish Church. This John Cornwallis represented the County of Suffolk in Parliament in the reign of Richard II. His son, Thomas, married Phillippe Tyrell and his successor, William Cornwallis, a daughter of John Stamford.

Former owners of property in Brome are said to have been Bartholomew D'Avillers, in the reign of Edward I., Edmund de Barkley, in the reign of Richard II., who held the Manor in right of his wife, formerly the wife of Richard Bacon.

Mention is made of Lyng Hall as the home of John Cornwallis, Esq., 1506, the house may possibly have stood where numerous earth works are apparent in a field at the east end of the Church of Brome.

John Cornwallis, son of the above, received the honour of knighthood for his valour and conduct at the siege of Morlaix in Brittany in the reign of Henry VIII., and was made steward of the Household to Prince Edward, afterwards Edward VI. His son, Sir Thomas, whilst High Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, raised considerable forces against the opposers of Queen Mary's title, and mainly contributed to her establishment on the Throne. By Queen Mary he was nominated Privy Councillor, Treasurer of Calais and Comptroller of the Household. He married Anna, daughter of Sir Robert Jerningham, of Somerleyton, and is, perhaps, the most noted member of the Cornwallis family. There is a very fine full length portrait of Sir Thomas in a black cap and fur robes, which hangs to-day in the Hall at Audley End, and used to occupy a similar position at Brome, and it was this Sir Thomas who built Brome Hall about the year 1550. As to the erection of Brome Hall by Sir Thomas with money acquired by him from the selling of Calais, it is no doubt mere fiction, but there are some amusing old sayings with reference to this gentleman, recorded in the Fitch MSS at Ipswich and elsewhere.

“ Who built Brome Hall? Sir Thomas Cornwallis.

How did he build Brome Hall? By selling of Calais.”

Another :

“ Sir Thomas Cornwallis, what got ye for Calais ?
Brome Hall, Brome Hall, as large as a Palais.”

“ There never was a Paston poor, or a Cornwallis
a fool.”

A far better known saying is that Queen Mary died with the word “ Calais ” written on her heart, and I fully agree with the gentleman, probably Mr. Evans, of Otley, who, writing under the initials E.T.E., says :—

“ If there had been any foundation for the tale that it was Sir Thomas Cornwallis who sold Calais to France, it was hardly likely that he would have immediately secured a Court appointment.”

An extract from the Visitation of Suffolk, 1561, made by Hervey Clarenceux, edited by Walter C. Metcalfe, 1882, says :—

“ Sir Thomas Cornwallis, Knight, was Shreve of Suffolk and Norfolk at the time of Queen Mary and entry to her Crowne, and for som acceptable service done unto her Majesty in that troublesome tyme, he was called to her, of her Privy Council, and after made Treasure of Calles, from where he was not fully two months before the suppressing of the said Towne by the French, and made Controller of Her Majesty's Household, and so remained till the death of the Most Noble and Virtuous Sovereign Queen Mary.” (Norwich Free Library).

It is worthy of note that Sir Thomas was a Catholic Recusant (see Dictionary of National Biography) which means that in Elizabeth's reign he paid the fines rather than profess the tenets of the Protestant Faith.

At any rate, Sir Thomas at this time could not be very rich, for he says in one of his letters to his wife at Brome, of Lady Bath, his daughter, who lived

over the river at her house by Thorpe Abbotts, and who was so cruelly treated over her marriage. "My daughter, of Bath, hath made her a new straight-bodied gown of black velvet. It becometh her person well, but it becometh not my weake purse to be at this charge, etc." No doubt it was the continual payment for recusancy that made his purse so weak.

In his old age he is said to have been rather corpulent.

Among the MSS. at Hengrave Hall, a copy of which is among the Jermyn MSS. in the British Museum, there is a letter written from him to his loving wife, the Lady Anne Cornwallis, at Brome, giving instructions for the sending up to London of his posset cup of silver. "I do mean to make heere two newe porringers of silver Conteyning lesse than those I have at home. I am now given much to eat broth, and when it is given me in that great pece I eat too much I think that my porringer and your pece would make me two such as my Daughter Cornwallis and my daughter Kitson have. I have spoken with the Goldsmith, the Fashion shall not be chargeable unto me. I pray you send them up with other broken silver as you have, either by Norwich or by Burre Cart. I mean to make them massie and weightie because I would have them strong."

Sir Thomas was succeeded by his son, Sir William Cornwallis, of Brome, who married twice. His second wife was Jane, a daughter of Hercules Meutis. After two years married life her husband died in 1613; she then married Nathaniel Bacon, the youngest of the large family of sons of Sir Nicholas Bacon, of Redgrave; the correspondence relating to the marriage forms a large and very interesting part of the private letters of this lady, which were found among the family archives at Brome and Culford after the death of Charles Second and last Marquis, and placed by his



BROME HALL IN 1620.

daughter and co-heirs at the disposal of the editor, Lord Braybrooke, who published them in 1842. Jane Lady Cornwallis was a woman of remarkable character and a very great friend of Lucy Countess of Bedford, who was so well known in the reign of Charles I. for her artistic taste, and, indeed, was quite an authority on these matters, besides being one of the leading beauties of the Court. The Cornwallis monument in Oakley Church was carried out after the death of Lady Bacon, and was ordered in her will (see *Private Correspondence of Jane, Lady Cornwallis.*)

Nathaniel Bacon, Knight of the Bath, 1625, was the celebrated artist, whose portraits by himself, are now hanging at Gorhambury and Raveningham. He was rather skilful in delineating still life and possibly many of his pictures may be in Suffolk Country Houses at the present day.

Culford Hall was the portion given him on his marriage by his father, Sir N. Bacon, and about this period it became at times the family residence. Sir Nathaniel died and was buried there in 1627. His widow, living on, till 1659, was buried in the same place. This rather points to the idea that from this time Brome became a secondary residence of the family, and was not kept in the same grand fashion, and began to fall into disorder. To mention briefly the remainder of the family, Frederick, son of Sir William and his wife, formerly Miss Meutis, was created a baronet in 1627. He distinguished himself at the Battle of Copredy Bridge, when he rescued Lord Wilmot, who had fallen into the hands of the enemy under Sir William Waller, and, in reward for his services for having accompanied him into exile, Charles II. made him Treasurer of his Household, Privy Councillor, and created him a Baron of the Realm, 1660, by the Style and Title of Lord Cornwallis, of Eye. He died, 1662, and was followed by

his son Charles, the second Baron. The son of the latter was Charles, third Baron, Lord of the Admiralty and Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk under William III.; he was succeeded by his son, Charles, fourth Lord, who had a numerous family, of whom Edward became Governor of Gibraltar, 1762. Frederick, Bishop of Lichfield, 1750, translated to Canterbury, 1768. William, the fourth son, was the celebrated Admiral, and Charles, fifth Baron, Controller of the Tower of London. Lord Lieutenant and Custos rotulorum of the Tower Hamlets, was created in 1753, Viscount Broome and Earl Cornwallis, in addition to his former title.

His son, Charles, the second Earl, in consideration of his splendid services as soldier and statesman, was in 1792 advanced to the dignity of Marquis Cornwallis. His eminent talents caused him to be selected for various appointments of great difficulty and importance. He crushed the rebellion in Ireland and negotiated the peace of Amiens, and was twice Governor General of British Possessions in the East Indies.

He died on the river in the year 1805, while proceeding to make requisite arrangements for some ceded prisoners. Lord Cornwallis was at the time Governor General of India, succeeding the Marquis of Wellesley, in 1804. The monument erected to his memory stands at Ghazepoor, in the province of Benares on the river Ganges, about 450 miles from Calcutta. It is built of stone in the form of a round Mausoleum and cost a lac of rupees, or £10,000.

Tradition says that after the death of his son, Charles, the last Marquis (who died and was buried at Culford in 1823), Brome Hall came into the market, and that in a sale in 1825, or spring of 1826, most of the beautiful possessions in the House became dispersed.

A book of plans of the present House, drawn by L. Wyatt in 1819, seem to suggest that the alterations were made in Cornwallis days, but in later years extra rooms were added and other improvements carried out.

Hanging in the Great Hall at Audley End, to-day, are eight full-length portraits, all of which are said, in the History of Audley End, to have been formerly at Brome Hall.

1. Jane, Lady Bacon.
2. Sir Thomas Cornwallis, Treasurer of Calais.
3. Charles, third Lord Cornwallis, in Coronation Robes.
4. Elizabeth (Fox) his wife.
5. Charles, fourth Lord Cornwallis.
6. Charles, fifth Lord and first Earl Cornwallis.
7. Charles, second Viscount Townsend, in Coronation Robes.
8. Dorothy (Walpole), his second wife.

To return to the House, said to have been erected in 1550, but which, from the drawings I am able to exhibit to-day, seems to have been of rather an earlier date. The following description is given in Shoberl's "History of Suffolk," printed in 1809.

"Brome Hall is said to have been erected by Sir Thomas Cornwallis, whose portrait hangs in the Dining Room there, at 74, 1590. This mansion, built of brick, with curiously ornamented chimneys, still retains its stately appearance, and though very seldom visited by the Noble Proprietor, is in tolerable repair. The Great Hall, or Dining Room, exhibits a perfect specimen of old English grandeur. It is very lofty, wainscoted with oak, to the height of about 10 feet, without ceiling; the timbers of the roof being finished like those of churches. A large

window, embellished with the various arms of the family in painted glass, occupies one end, and at the opposite end, over the entrance into the room, is a gallery. Below this gallery is the Butler's Pantry, separated from the room and having a flight of stairs on each side. Above the wainscot are whole length portraits of Queen Mary and her Consort, Philip of Spain, James I., Oliver Cromwell, Sir Stephen Fox and his lady, Lord Burleigh, and the late Duke of Grafton, and over the Gallery is a whole length Portrait of a Lady in Riding Dress, attended by several Italian Greyhounds, and her horse in the background, said to represent Anne, of Denmark, Queen of James I. On a staircase leading from the Hall to the present Dining Room are Portraits of Queens Elizabeth and Mary of Scotland, Sir Thomas Moore and his wife, Lady Bacon and three children, and a distant view of the Old Hall at Culford. The present Dining Room contains 9 family portraits, marked with the names and ages of the persons whom they represent; besides which there are several others in different apartments, as well as numerous paintings of various Dukes of merit, all more or less injured by damp. The most sumptuous remains of the former splendour of this Mansion are in the Chapel, which is on the Ground Floor, and the bay window of which looks upon the Lawn. The seats are furnished with cushions of silk; that for the Minister is a rich purple velvet, embroidered with gold, and marked with the date, 1550. The body of the Chapel is separated from the part appropriated for the servants by a finely carved Gothic screen, and is hung with tapestry, representing various scenes in the life of our Saviour. The Rev. Mr. Broome, Chaplain to the Grandfather of the present Marquis, was the last Clergyman that officiated here. Several of the out-offices of this Stately Mansion are now in the occupation of Cottagers."



BROME HALL, ABOUT 1840.

In the Cornwallis Chapel of the Church of Brome are several monuments for various members of the family.

In memory of Sir John is a marble tomb 4 feet high, upon which lies his figure in armour with a white staff in his hand, and a greyhound at his feet. Beside him is the effigy of Mary, his wife, with a hound at her feet. This tomb is really a Cenotaph, as Sir John died in Ashbridge, in Buckinghamshire, in 1554, and is interred at Berkhamsted St. Peter, County Herts.

The tomb is of Purbeck marble, altar shape, in the North transept of the Church, no inscription remains and the shields on the sides are blank. Upon the flat surface of the top the upper half of a Brass with armorial bearings is still to be seen, and the arms seem to be Cornwallis. Sir John is asserted to have married Mary, daughter of Edward Sulyard, of Otes, in Essex. It is remarkable that neither here nor at Brome do the arms of Sulyard appear. The register records burial of John Cornwallis, August 28th, 1598; observes the baptism of one, William Sulyard, May 7th, 1566.

Extract from East Anglian on "Notes and Queries," Vol. I., page 417 (1864).

On the north side of the Cornwallis Chapel at Brome Church is a monument to Sir Thomas Cornwallis (Privy Councillor) and his wife, with the effigies, also a mural monument for Henry Cornwallis, Esq., who is represented in armour, without date, and this inscription:—

"Hac conditione intraivi vt Exirem
Cvi Nasci Contigit mori Restat."

"I entered only that I should go out.

He that is born must die there is no doubt."

There is a mural tablet with the Arms of Cornwallis between Ashburton his first wife, and Croft,

his second wife, and another with a very fine medallion of Elizabeth, Lady Cornwallis (a daughter of Sir Stephen Fox Knight) who died February 28th, 1680.

Colonel Kerrison, afterwards General Sir Edward Kerrison, who was in London with his regiment, became acquainted with the fact that the Brome Estate was in the market, he sent word to his father, Mathias Kerrison, of Oakley Park, who commissioned him to purchase it. Thus, in 1823 the place passed into the hands of the Kerrisons, and has continued so for four generations. This family have always been celebrated for their gallantry in the field and elsewhere, and their deeds of valour and philanthropy have been remembered by their County and Country.

Mathias Kerrison died in April, 1827, and is buried with his wife, née Mary Barnes, at Holy Trinity Church, Bungay. His will was proved 30th April, 1827.

General Sir Edward Kerrison, G.C.B., K.C.B., his son, born 1774, was created a baronet by George IV., August 8th, 1821, after the war with the Netherlands. As a colonel Sir Edward served with Sir John Moore's campaign, and in two campaigns with the Duke of Wellington. His military career came to an end after the Battle of Waterloo. A testimony of the esteem and admiration in which he was held by his brother officers is evidenced in a beautiful silver gilt two-handed cup, a copy of the Warwick Vase, engraved with Coat of Arms and the following inscription:—

“Presented by the Officers of the 7th Queen's Own Hussars to Colonel Edward Kerrison, in token of the respect excited by his conduct at the Battle of Orthes, February 27th, 1814, and as a mark of the esteem they feel towards him.—August 1814.”

General Kerrison lived at Brome while undertaking extensive improvements and alterations at Oakley

Park. He married Mary, eldest daughter of Alexander Ellice, of Pittencrief.

The General died March 9th, 1853, and with Lady Kerrison is buried at Hoxne Church.

Sir Edward Clarence Kerrison, his son, M.P. for Eye and afterwards for East Suffolk, after his marriage with Lady Caroline Fox Strangways, resided at Brome Hall for several years. He and his wife made several additions to the house, including the repairing of the linen fold panelling. It was about this time that Lady Caroline began to plan out the present Dutch Garden and Terrace, the brick work being designed by her and the bricks made in the estate kiln; a result of her artistic talent is to be seen in the topiary work which is a great feature of the present garden. Several cottages on the estates are built from Lady Caroline's designs.

The original 15th century MS., "Boke of Brome" (still preserved here) was translated by Lady Caroline, and it chiefly relates to Manors in Stuston.

Sir Edward had a master mind and a remarkable influence among his equals, some trophies of his policy and energy in the County are to be seen in the Thorndon Reformatory and Railway to Eye; he was a prominent agriculturalist. On succeeding to the estate he moved to Oakley Park, but in the prime of his life he was doomed to the restless and chafing inactivity of an invalid, and the last year of his life was spent at Brome, and it is near this Church that a beautiful monument records his death in July, 1886.

His sister, Agnes, Lady Bateman, the only surviving member of this branch of the Kerrison family inherited the estate under the will of her father, and is now residing at Brome, and like her predecessors, takes the keenest interest in everything which might tend to improve the condition of those around her.