



OLD SHRUBLAND HALL PRIOR TO 1820.

## NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF SHRUBLAND.

Shrubland is written in the earliest records Scrobe-land and Scrybeland, from the Saxon words Scrobbe or Scrybe, signifying a shrub.

The first record we know of an owner is of *Robert de Shrubland* as witness to a deed without date of Hugh de Rëckingale when he granted the manor of Veyseys at Coddenham to the Prior and Convent at Royston.

In the 2nd year of Edward III., there is record of a *John de Shrubeland* being owner of these lands. It is supposed he was one of the sons of Godmanston, who either by purchase or marriage became possessor of the property and according to the practice of the time dropped his family name and took that of the estate Shrubland then passed to *Philip Oke* or *Oake* by his marriage with the heiress of William de Shrybeland, son of John.

The estate passed in the female line through the families of *Oake*, *Bothe*, *Lytton*, and *Little*, to that of *Bacon* by the successive marriages of

Catherine Oake to Richard de la Boothe or Booth, and 4 generations later of

Audrey, daughter of Sir Philip Booth with William Lytton and

Elizabeth Lytton, 2nd daughter of Sir Robt. Lytton, of Knebworth, Herts, with Sir Thomas Little, of Bray, in Berkshire.

A portrait formerly in possession of the Longes of Spixworth, shows Thos. Little of Shrubland, painted in Venice, in 1554, with the quaint rebus on his name inscribed above it.

“*To mas up treasure take thou no delight,  
Little goods well gotten are pleasinge in God’s  
sighte.*”

His daughter Helen, as heiress of Shrubland, married *Edward Bacon*, 3rd son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, of Redgrave, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Queen Elizabeth, and their tomb may be seen in the vestry of Barham Church.

The property remained in the Bacon family for 5 succeeding generations, each bearing the name of Nicholas, who married respectively

*Martha, daughter of Sir Richard Bingham.*

*Bridget, daughter of Lionel Tollemache.*

*Catherine, daughter of Edward Earl of Sandwich.*

She is mentioned in Pepy’s diary and at her husband’s death she married Rev. Balthazar Gardeman a Huguenot refugee, who became Rector of Coddendam, where many of Lady Catherine’s charities are still in existence.

*The 4th Nicholas Bacon* of Shrubland married *Dorothy Temple*, granddaughter of the famous Dorothy Osborne, who married Sir Richard Temple, and whose letters were found at Coddendam Rectory. This Nicholas it was, who, “not affecting to lie by his Puritan relations,” made the Bacon vault in Coddendam Church, where both he and his wife are buried.

The 4th Nicholas had 2 sons; the elder one was *Rev. John Bacon*, Rector of Barham, and Vicar of Coddendam, who built the nucleus of the present

Shrubland Mansion in 1772, at over  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the old site. This date can still be seen on lead pipings on the central part of the house. The younger brother, *the 5th and last Nicholas*, who succeeded him, was also a clergyman, and married Anna Maria Browne, and after his death in 1796 the Shrubland estate was purchased by *Sir William Middleton, Bart.*, of Crowfield Hall, Coddtenham.

This Sir William bought the estate with both houses, but it was not till his son's, *Sir William Fowle Middleton's*, time that the old Shrubland Hall was pulled down with the exception of the chapel and one wing, and the newer house built by John Bacon converted into a larger house in the Italian style, with gardens modelled on the Villa d'Este laid out by Barry, architect of the Houses of Parliament.

What remains of the old Shrubland Hall, the home of the Bacons, is a part of the present farm buildings, where the old gable has carved beams bearing the date 1637 and the initials <sup>B.</sup><sub>W.D.</sub>. At the north end of the old building there is the chapel which has been several times restored and altered since the early building believed to have been put up by Sir Philip Booth, who was High Sheriff in 1507.

The East window and West door show the arms of Booth, quartering Oak, Bedingfield and Tuddenham, also a decorative border in Italian style of which replicas may be seen in windows at Barking and Henley Churches. It is interesting to note that similar work is to be seen at Layer Marney Towers, Essex, and this may perhaps be traced to the Bedingfield marriage connections with both places. Alice Bedingfield, daughter of Edmund Bedingfield and Margaret, daughter of Sir Robt. Tuddenham, having married a Sir John Booth, accounts for the Bedingfield and Tuddenham quarterings, while 2 generations later the

marriage of Alice Bedingfield to Sir Philip Booth, and that of her brother, Sir Edmund Bedingfield, of Uxburgh, to Grace, daughter of Henry Lord Marney, connects old Shrubland with Layer Marney Towers.

The Middleton Crest is used in the interior decoration of the Chapel which is of comparatively recent date, also Catherine wheels, which were doubtless copied from those on the 16th cent Booth window—but their association with the place has not yet been identified. [In the house adjoining the chapel there are small panes of old Flemish finely engraved glass, the history of which is not known though it is possible that they came through the Middletons who had relations in the Netherlands.]

Near the new Shrubland house there is the remains of an avenue of old Spanish chesnuts, amongst the largest in size and girth in England.

Those who wish for further information about old Shrubland Hall in the days of the Bacons will find many interesting details in Miss Julia Longe's *Life of Martha, Lady Gifford*; and I am also indebted to Mr. Farrer for the notes on Layer Marney and the Bedingfields, and to General Mitford for his extract from Davy's *Suffolk Pedigrees*, giving 19 generations of Owners of Shrubland from tempus Henry III. to 1788.

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