

CARVED HERALDIC PANELS AT NEWBOURNE HALL

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At Newbourne Hall, about eight miles east of Ipswich, there are two heraldic panels carved in relief on wood. They are almost identical in general design and were almost certainly executed as a pair by the same hand. The style of the surrounding decoration suggests a date of about 1600 or possibly a little later. They measure approximately 42 inches by 38 inches.

One displays a shield with the arms of WARREN: [*argent*] a fesse chequy [*or and azure*] between three talbots statant [*sable*]. The helmet and crest have broken off. (Plate XLIII).

The other panel carries the arms of NEVILL quartering TAY or TEY: quarterly, 1 and 4, [*gules*] on a saltire [*argent*] an annulet [*sable*] (NEVILL, Lord Latymer), impaling, [*or*] fretty [*gules*] on a canton per pale [*ermine and or*] a ship [*sable*] (NEVILL of Bulmer); 2 and 3, [*argent*] a fesse between in chief three martlets and in base a chevron [*all azure*] (TAY of Brightwell). There is no crest. (Plate XLIV).

The Warren panel is almost complete and a wooden frame has been added to it at some time. The Nevill panel is not in such good condition having lost part of its lower half, but the shield is almost complete; there is no frame. Both these panels were rescued from an outhouse by the late Mr. George Denn Turner when he came to Newbourne Hall from Barnham in West Suffolk in 1896.¹ He brought them into the house, where they are now in the care of the present owner, Mr. Stuart Somerville.

By a lucky chance, William Blois of Grundisburgh (1600-1673) visited Newbourne probably between 1640 and 1660 and this is what he entered in his manuscript volume of Church Notes (p. 148):²

Newborne: Nothing in the church, but in the Hall Warren's armes & Nevil wt an annulet (& ye ship) & they qr Tay of Brightwell. Purpet's arms.³

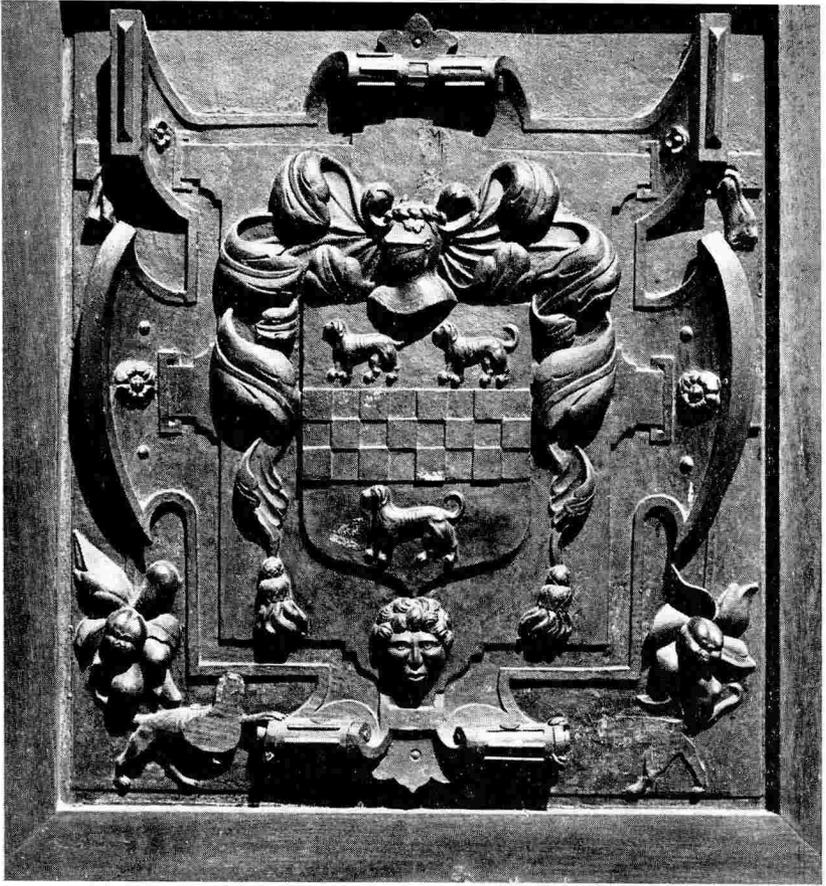
So far, then, we have identified the arms on the panels and have established the fact that they have been at Newbourne Hall certainly since about 1650, probably not long after they were carved.

¹ I am indebted for this information to Miss Dorothy Denn Turner. See also *East Anglian Miscellany*, 1910, pp. 43-52 *passim*, where there is an account of Newbourne Hall by 'Norfolciensis' [Prince Frederick Duleep Singh].

² East Suffolk Record Office, GC 17. See also *E. A. Misc.*, 1912, p. 95.

³ The Purpet arms occur in plaster on the ceiling and have nothing to do with the panels under discussion.

PLATE XLIII



Newbourne Hall, arms of Warren.

PLATE XLIV



Newbourne Hall, arms of Nevill quartering Tay.

To account for their presence there is not so easy. Although the Warrens were connected with Newbourne from an early date, I can find no such connection in the cases of Nevill or Tay. But there has always been a tradition that the panels were brought from elsewhere, possibly from Brightwell. Herein may lie the clue.

Sir Thomas Tay of Brightwell Hall had four daughters and co-heirs, two of whom married two of the sons of Richard 2nd Lord Latymer (1468-1530). Mary Tay married Thomas Neville (1502-1540) of Picott's (or Pigott's) in Ardleigh, Essex: Elizabeth Tay married his brother Marmaduke Neville (1506-1545) of Mark's Tey. The latter couple had an only daughter and heiress, Ellinor, who married Thomas Tay of Layer de la Haye, a distant relative of her mother.⁴ According to Morant⁵ this Ellinor married secondly 'Thomas Warren esquire'.

If this rather involved piece of genealogy is correct, it would account for the Nevill-Tay shield and would also support the belief that this panel, at least, was once at Brightwell. Ellinor's second marriage goes some way towards explaining the presence of the Warren panel. Further than that one cannot go.

Copinger is at his vaguest when dealing with the manors of Brightwell and Newbourne⁶ at this period, but it appears that a certain Sir William Hewitt owned both manors for a short time early in the seventeenth century. Brightwell Hall was soon to pass into the hands of the Barnardistons who rebuilt it about 1660. So the old house may have been in bad repair and it is possible that Sir William Hewitt was responsible for the removal of these panels from Brightwell to his other manor house at Newbourne.⁷ He sold both manors sometime about the middle of the century, but evidently the panels remained at Newbourne where Blois saw them about 1650, and where they have been ever since.

Much of the above is of necessity guesswork but it has seemed worthwhile to record these interesting panels. I can only echo the excuse of John Aubrey in his *Brief Lives*,⁸ 'How these curiosities would be quite forgot did not such idle fellows as I am putt them downe'.

⁴ *Visitation of Essex 1612* (Harl. Soc. xiii, 1878), p. 297; Morant, *History of Essex* (ed. 1816), I, pp. 432-3; II, p. 342; Burke, *Extinct Peerage* (ed. 1840), p. 392.

⁵ Morant, *op. cit.*, II, p. 203. I am indebted to Miss Joan Corder for help with some of the references.

⁶ Copinger, *Manors of Suffolk*, III (1909), pp. 12 and 74.

⁷ The panels are mentioned in the account in *E. A. Misc.*, 1910, p. 48, where the matter is further complicated by the suggestion that they may have originally come from another manor house in Newbourne, since demolished. I cannot find reliable evidence for the existence of such a house and, in any case, it would not account for the presence in Newbourne of the Nevill shield.

⁸ See his account of Venetia Digby.