

## PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Bury & West Suffolk Archaeological Institute.

---

MAY, 1849.

---

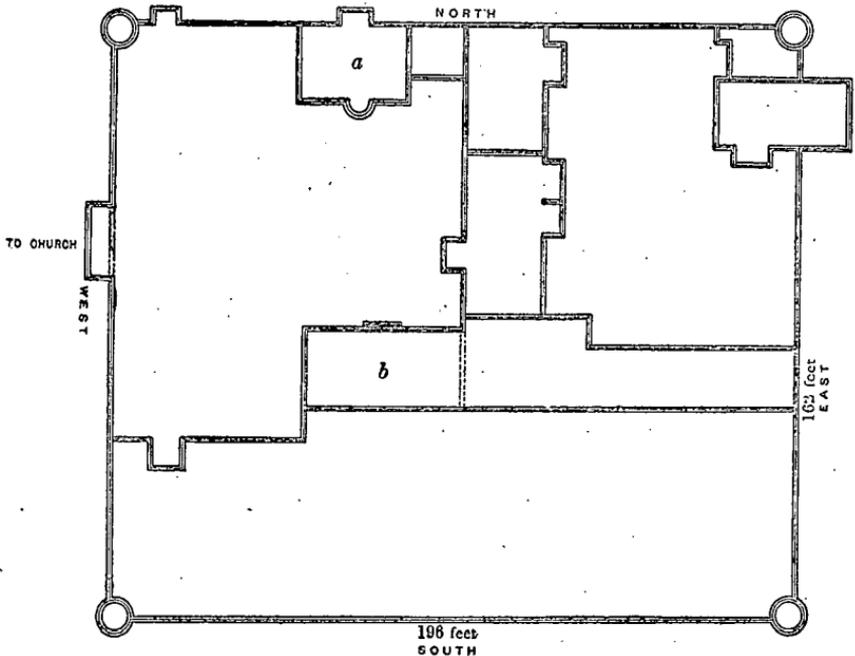
### ICKWORTH MANOR HOUSE.

[READ DECEMBER 14, 1848.]

There is a family tradition that at some time or other the old Manor House at Ickworth was destroyed by fire. The late General Hervey, who might have heard it from his grandfather, Lord Bristol, used often to speak of it, and it was always understood that the house where the family resided, called Ickworth Lodge, and now the Rectory House, was only a temporary residence—originally, to all appearance, a farm-house; and added to from time to time, as necessity or convenience required. In the first Lord Bristol's MS. letters, repeated allusion is made to his very humble dwelling, and the scanty accommodation it afforded. But I have never been able to discover any hint as to the fact of an older family dwelling having been burnt, or the period when such event took place, in his or any other family papers, or in any book.

That the tradition, however, of the former existence of such a Manor House and its destruction, is a truth, is abundantly proved by the evident remains of roads, enclosures, gardens, and foundations on the crown of the hill, immediately to the east of Ickworth Church, and close to a fine clump of old elms, which grow almost from one stem. In the dry spring and summer of 1844 the foundations were unusually plain, and my attention having been accidentally drawn to the spot, I made frequent and careful examination

of it, and had the accompanying plan made from my own drawings. In most parts the line of the foundations were



very distinct; but they were least so at the north-eastern corner, at which I conjecture were some kind of outbuildings. The circular or hexagonal turrets at the four corners of the garden wall were not all equally clearly marked. Those at the south-east and south-west angles were the most so. The two wings (a) and (b) were extremely clearly defined, and in the *door* or *chimney* and window of the room (a) both stone and brick were visible.

But further as to the fact of its having been burnt, I think I discovered some curious corroborative evidence. While I was examining the ground, I was led to look at the churchyard wall, and soon perceived that it was evidently built of old materials, and found that a great many pieces of hewn stone, of exactly similar character to what I had observed among the foundations of the house, were built in with old bricks. Some of these stones were carved or grooved, and one especially was evidently part of a pilaster, such as one sees in old porches. But amongst the hewn stone, which was of a grey colour, was some which to all

appearance had been subjected to the action of fire, and had acquired a redder hue. This I noticed especially at the south-eastern angle of the churchyard. I also learnt from one of the workmen who were employed in repairing Ickworth Church in the year 1833, that they found burnt timbers in the roof of the church. It seems highly probable, therefore, that when the house was burnt down, the timbers were used to repair the roof of the church, and the materials of brick and stone went to build up the churchyard wall.

As regards the period when this catastrophe occurred, I have not been able to make out anything certain; but the following considerations may lead to a proximate estimation.

It is known that the first Lord Bristol, who was born A.D. 1665, and became possessed of Ickworth A.D. 1694, lived in the Lodge; and as, in his numerous MS. letters, he makes no allusion whatever to the destruction of an older house, it probably did not occur within his memory. It is also probable that Sir Thomas Hervey, his father, lived in the Lodge, from the number of books in the library having his name written in them, as well as from the negative evidence of his letters and MS. poems making no allusion to the burning down of his house. Sir Thomas came into possession of the property in the year 1679. Now it appears that his father, Sir William Hervey, after his marriage with Lady Penelope Gage (1642) lived at Hengrave\*, and only came over to Ickworth occasionally for a few days†. Is it probable that Ickworth Manor House may have been destroyed about that time on account of Sir William Hervey's loyalty to Charles I.? May this have been one reason why his eldest son, Mr. John Hervey, was allowed to compound for the estate for so moderate a sum as 24 pounds‡.

It may be worth while to notice a few other circumstances which tally with the fact of the existence of the Manor House in the situation above described, and which also throw light upon the topology of the parish. I traced distinctly a road, with only two gaps of twenty or thirty yards each, from the old Chevington and Bury road, at the Morterboys or

\* Gage's Thingoe Hundred, p. 295.

† MS. Letters of Sir Thos. Hervey, about the year 1650.

‡ Gage, p. 295.

Mordaboyscottages (the present entrance from Newmarket), to the north of the rectory premises, straight up to the site of the old Manor House. Just before reaching the church, another road branches off to the west of the church, runs through the middle of the present kitchen garden, emerges on the other side of the canal, goes up the opposite slope, through New Lown Wood, leaves the obelisk several hundred yards to the right, and goes up to the park paling, on the other side of which it is obliterated by the ploughed land. That part of the road which ran between the church and the corner of the present terrace wall, is just where some old people, now dead, told me they had heard the village used to stand. Close by was the Parsonage, pulled down above 100 years ago, the situation of which is still attested by "the Parson's Pond," by some loose stones lying near it, and by a barn, which, in the memory of persons living, used to stand there. The situation of the present kitchen garden (though it has been much enlarged to the west) is also thus accounted for; and the situation of the pond called the Golden Pond, which was doubtless a fish pond; and of the Dog-kennel Park.

I think there are traces of a moat round the House, but of this I am not confident.

I have no doubt the building was of brick, with grey stone quoins, window frames, weatherings, &c., and from the shape of the windows, I should guess Elizabethan.

In the garden of the park-keeper, close to the Rectory, were found buried in the ground, some 20 or 30 years ago, two large stone balls, similar to those at Hawstead Place, which I conjecture were brought from the Old Manor House.

A curious confirmation of the line of road as I traced it, just to the north and west of the rectory premises, is in the evident remains of an old lane, with thorn and maple hedge, running at right angles to it, by which the rectory was evidently approached from the west, where the stable yard now is.

ARTHUR HERVEY.