

THE PLACE.

AT the time of the Conqueror's survey there was only one manor in Hawsted, known as Hall Place, part of the possessions of St. Edmund. It was held by Odo and two clerks Aldbold and Peter; but it appears from Abbot Baldwin's feudal book, compiled about the same time as Domesday Book, that Radulphus also held a knight's fee here. Odo, styled "the goldsmith" in a charter of a later date, was probably master of the Abbot's mint at Bury, and contributed largely to the erection of Abbot Baldwin's new church—that church the remains of which are still visible. Aldbold was a native of Jerusalem, and a man of rank as well as a clerk. As about this time an Aldbold is said to have built "a tower of no small size" at Bury, we shall probably not err in assigning to him the erection of that magnificent fabric which is known by the name of "the Norman Tower."

Aldbold was the ancestor of the Noels of Staffordshire. Nor is it any objection that he was a clerk, for, as Mr. Gage Rokewode remarks*, he might have contracted matrimony before he took orders, or he might have been clericus *extra ordines*. It is certain that he had a son who went by the name of William Noel as well as William FitzAldbold, and was possessed of Hawsted. In this family the chief manor continued for three generations, and then passed by marriage to the Fitz-Eustaces, a branch of the Northamptonshire house of Lisores. Thomas Fitz-Eustace gave to King John for his marriage with Jane Noel, daughter of Thomas Noel, Sheriff of Staffordshire and Shropshire, the sum of 300 marks, besides three palfreys and a hawk. Sir Eustace, their son and heir, married Joan la Colvile; and the effigies of a cross-legged knight in the chancel of Hawsted church is believed to have been erected by her in memory of her lord.

The family of Fitz-Eustace ceased to be lords of Hawsted in the 27th year of Edward the Third, when Sir John and

* Hist. Thingoe Hund. p. 408.

Dame Elizabeth sold it to Sir William de Middleton, of Mendham, in Norfolk; by whom it was shortly after disposed of to Sir Wm. Clopton, elder brother of Sir Thomas Clopton, of Kentwell Hall, Melford. It was again sold by the son of Sir William, but did not go out of the family, the purchaser being his cousin William, son of the Sir Thomas before mentioned. The Cloptons were not permitted to have quiet possession of their new lands. A branch of the Fitz-Eustace family not only asserted their right to the manor, but, setting aside all feelings of consanguinity, committed some outrageous trespasses upon the estate, by cutting down and carrying away corn, timber, &c., and even household furniture. The right of the Cloptons was, however, vindicated by appeal to the law; and the curious award of the arbitrators in the reign of Henry the VIth, may be seen in Gage's "History of Thingoe.*" During these contentions we find Sir Wm. Clopton, in 1402, granting a piece of ground, called Dockmeadow, for the annual payment of a rose at the nativity of St. John the Baptist, in lieu of all services; a tenure by no means difficult, as that feast was celebrated on the 24th of June, or Midsummer Day, and it is probable, as Sir John Cullum suggests†, that the rose was the common dog-rose of the hedges.

In the 20th year of Henry the VIIIth, Sir William Clopton exchanged the manor with Sir Robert Drury, for other manors and a sum of 1000 marks, of which 200 were paid down, and the remainder, it was agreed, should be paid by instalments at the rood altar in the church of the monastery of St. Edmund.

Let us now return to the second manor, which was held in the time of the Conqueror by Ralph. This family took the name of de Halsted and held the fee during the whole of the 12th and part of the 13th centuries. In the reign of King Stephen, two brothers, Ralph and Roger de Halsted, were charged before the king at Norwich with having conspired with Robert and Adam de Horningsherth to betray and kill the king. The king, therefore, commanded that the knights should be heard and justice done; but Ording, Abbot of St. Edmund's, rose and declared to the

* P. 421.

† Hist. Hawsted, 2nd edit. p. 117.

court that the accused brothers were his men within the liberty of St. Edmund, and that the plea ought to be heard only in his own court. Upon discussion the Abbot's privilege was allowed, and the king afterward coming to St. Edmundsbury, was reconciled to the knights.

In the reign of Henry the IIIrd, the manor passed by marriage to the Talmach family, whence it acquired the name of "Talmages," and in the time of Richard the IIInd was conveyed, also by marriage, to the Bokenhams; and then it acquired the appellation of "Bokenhams *alias* Talmages," under which name it passed by sale, 3 Edw. IV., to Roger Drury, Esq., son of Nicholas Drury, Esq., of Thurston, where the family had been settled for several centuries.

This Roger Drury, who died in 1495, left 100 marks by his will to the founding of a scholar of Divinity in Cambridge, for ten years, giving him 10 marks yearly if he preached once in the year during the ten years at Bury, and once at Hawsted; but if he would not preach he was to have but 8 marks in the year. He also directed 10s. to be annually spent in red herrings, to be distributed in the time of Lent among the inhabitants of Whepsted, "sume more and sume lesse, as povertie requireth;" but it is singular that the will contains no bequest either to the church or poor of Hawsted.

In Sir Robert Drury, the eldest son of Roger, the two manors of Hawsted and Bokenhams became united; the former as before-mentioned by exchange, and the latter by inheritance. Sir Robert Drury was a person of great learning and influence at court. He was Reader of the Society of Lincoln's Inn, Speaker of the House of Commons, and one of the Privy Council to Henry the VIIth. He formed part of Henry the VIIIth's vast retinue at the famous field of the Cloth of Gold, and was one of Cardinal Wolsey's attendants when he went to receive the Emperor Charles the Vth on his landing at Dover in 1522. He obtained a licence from the crown to impark 2000 acres of land and 500 acres of wood in Hawsted, Whepsted, and Horringer; and another from the Pope to have a private chapel, with a portable altar in it, at his mansion at Haw-

sted. He died in 1535-6, and was buried agreeably to his will in St. Mary's church, Bury, where his monument is still to be seen. He directed 1000 masses to be said for his soul before his thirty-day or month's mind, and on that day he directed 12*d.* to be given to every man and his wife and every widow dwelling in Hawsted, and 8*d.* to every man and his wife and widow in the four neighbouring parishes of Wkepsted, Lawshall, Great Whelnetham, and Nowton, such sums to be delivered to them at the time of the mass said in their towns the said thirty-day. He directed other bequests to the poor, and then adds "and I will have no common dole published in no wise;" in other words, he would have no indiscriminate distribution of alms, as was too often the case on these occasions, when the poor, who attended in large numbers, scrambled for small pieces of money or loaves of bread. His second wife, who survived him, was a Jerningham of the Jerninghams of Somerleyton, and the widow of Lord Edward Gray, son of the Marquess of Dorset.

His grandson, Sir Wm. Drury, President of Munster, achieved such great things in Ireland, that Fuller, referring to the signification of his name in the Saxon language, says he might fitly be compared to a *pearl* "for preciousness, being hard, innocent and valiant." Another grandson was the famous Sir Drue Drury, gentleman usher to Queen Elizabeth, and one of the keepers of Mary Queen of Scots.

The next possessor of Hawsted, Sir William Drury, was one of the King's train, when Henry the VIIIth went to greet his new bride, the Lady Anne of Cleves, on her arrival in Kent; and was witness of that ungallant reception which stayed the royal bride's progress, but could not induce the Council to set aside the now dreaded union with one whom, with characteristic brutality, the king likened to "a great Flanders mare." Sir William was one of the Suffolk gentlemen who espoused the cause of Queen Mary, having joined the royal standard at Kenninghall. Being at that time one of the knights of the shire, he must have carried influence with him; at the same time his own personal character brought with it the most weight, and for this it was that her majesty called him to her councils, and held him in estimation. As

a reward for his good services his royal mistress gave him an annuity of 100 marks at her accession, and afterwards, at different times bestowed upon him portions of the spoils of the church.

He was succeeded in 1557 by his grandson, Sir William Drury, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir. Wm. Stafford, a Lady of the Bedchamber and Privy Chamber to Queen Elizabeth, whom they had the honour of entertaining at their manor of Hawsted during her Majesty's progress in 1578. She rode in the morning from Sir Wm. Cordell's, at Melford; dined with one of the Drurys at Lawshall Hall; and slept at Hawsted. It was at this time, perhaps, that the royal guest bestowed the honour of knighthood upon the master of the mansion. He was sheriff of the county in 1583, and one of its representatives in Parliament in 1585; but the career of this magnificent knight, whom Camden styles *Vir genere et omni elegantia splendidus*, was suddenly brought to a close in 1589; when being in command of a regiment of 1000 men in the expedition sent to France to aid King Henry the IVth, he unfortunately fell in a duel with Sir John Borough.

Sir Robert Drury, his eldest son, was born in London, but the parish register of Hawsted contains this minute entry of particulars, probably with a view to his nativity being cast by the famous Dr. Dee, the court astrologer:

“Md. That Mr. Robert Drury, the first sonne of Mr. William Drury, esquire, was born 30th January, betwixt four and five of the clock in the morning, the sunne in Libra, anno 1574, at Durham House, within the precincts of Westminster.”

When only in his 16th year, he was at the siege of Rouen, and was one of twenty-four esquires who received their spurs on the battle field from the great Earl of Essex. This circumstance is mentioned in his epitaph as adding a lustre to his title; but Camden says that the earl was so prodigal of his knighthood as to incur the discontent of some who had obtained that honour before they set out from home, and might perhaps think that he cheapened the dignity, which had hitherto been in great esteem, and which the Queen had conferred only on a very few persons, and those of distinguished character and good family. A letter of

Lord Burghley addressed to the earl on the 22nd of October, thus alludes to this matter :

“ Your Lordship’s so liberal bestowing of knighthoods is here commonly evil censured, and when her Majesty shall know it, which yet she doth not, I fear she will be highly offended, considering she would have had that authority left out of your commission, if I had not supplied it with a cautelous instruction. But *quod factum est, infectum esse non potest*; and, secondly, hereby you have increased your state of ladyes present and future.”

Elizabeth was notoriously sparing of her honours, and on this occasion she is said to have remarked that “ his lordship had done well to have built his almshouses before he had made his knights”—in allusion, it may be presumed, to the poor knights at Windsor; or perhaps to the hospital for decayed soldiers, which Essex’s step-father, the Earl of Leycester, had founded at Warwick. In making knights, however, the earl followed the precedent, not only of former times, but of the Earl of Leycester in the Low Countries; and he was not deterred from making many more in his expedition to Cadiz and in Ireland. On the former of these occasions the list amounts to 65 names; and some of them we may suppose would afterwards become candidates for such an asylum as the Queen is said to have contemplated, if we may credit the old rhyme :

A knight of Cales, a shentleman of Wales, and a laird of the North Countree—

A yeoman of Kent, with his yearly rent, will weigh them down all three.*

As soon as the young knight came of age, he connected himself with one of the best families in the county, by marrying Anne, eldest daughter of Sir Nicholas Bacon, of Redgrave, afterwards the first baronet of England; and in 1603 he was elected one of the knights of the shire; but he is better known as the patron of Dr. Donne, to whom he assigned apartments in Drury-house, London, a large mansion built by his father, Sir William Drury. Sir Robert had issue two daughters, Dorothy, who died an infant, and Elizabeth, who died at the early age of 15, and whose memory has been celebrated by the muse of Dr. Donne.

* Journal of Siege of Rouen, edit. J. G. Nichols, p. 71.

Sir Robert Drury did not long survive the loss of his only child, whose beauty and accomplishments are said to have won for her the love of Henry Prince of Wales, eldest son of James the 1st, to whom she is traditionally said to have been the affianced bride. Dying on the 2nd of April, 1615, the Hawsted branch of the Drurys, which had flourished here for just 150 years, became extinct. The Hawsted estate then passed to Sir Robert's sister, Frances, wife of Sir Wm. Wray, Bart., of Glentworth, in Lincolnshire; whose grandson Sir William Wray, in 1656, sold the united manors for 17,787*l.* to Thomas, afterward Sir Thomas Cullum, Bart., to whose family the property continues to belong; a longer establishment than any preceding lords maintained.

Having thus briefly narrated the prominent facts in the manorial history of the parish, it only remains to refer to the little that is known respecting the two demolished mansions. Of Hawsted Hall, the house of the principal manor, all that is known is that it occupied the customary situation near to the church; that it is doubtful whether the Fitz-Eustaces ever made it their residence; that it was not occupied by the Cloptons; and that its exact site is still a matter of dispute.

The house of the manor of Talmages *alias* Bokenhams, was at first called Hawsted House, afterwards Hawsted Place, or The Place. It appears to have been rebuilt by the Druries in the time of Henry VII. or VIII., probably by Sir Wm. Drury, on the site of the old house and within the old moat; to have undergone considerable alterations on the occasion of the visit of Queen Elizabeth; and to have been further altered in the time of Charles II., when it was plastered over and thickly spangled with fragments of glass, "which," according to Sir John Cullum, "made a brilliant appearance when the sun shone, and even by moonlight." A considerable portion of the house and offices existed in the time of Sir John Cullum, who has given an interesting description of it. The house was a quadrangular building surrounded by a wide moat, which is faced on all its banks with bricks, and having on the outside a handsome terrace, formed by the earth thrown up in making the moat. The

approach to the house was by a strong brick bridge of four arches, which still remains, and of which the best view may be had from the west. On this side may be seen the window of a room known as the angler's room. On the north side of the moat was a drawbridge leading to the Great Park. Its site may still be seen. The aged ivy tree on this side may have formed part of the trees and shrubs which were originally planted on the slopes of the moat.

On the west side of the Base Court, in the garden of the house occupied by Mr. Samuel Payne, are two piers of a gateway, exhibiting some excellent brickwork. In the north or right hand niche, on the east face, are two bricks with the letters W. H. P. N. and E. and C. with a heart between them; and in the corresponding niche on the other side are two other bricks bearing the initials H. C. and M. C., each also having a heart between. These initials are unnoticed by Sir John Cullum, but they are interesting as shewing that the gateway was erected on the occasion and as a memorial of the marriage, which took place in the private chapel of the mansion in 1675, between William Hanmer, Esq., and the accomplished Mrs. Peregrine North, father and mother of Sir Thomas Hanmer, speaker of the House of Commons. The other letters have reference to the lady's bridesmaids, two of whom were Mary and Elizabeth Cullum, daughters of Sir Thomas Cullum, whose lady was Dudley, third daughter of Sir Henry North, Bart., of Mildenhall, and sister of the bride.

On the south side, in a line with the old road to the Place, are three oriental plane trees, which it is believed are at once the oldest and the finest in England. As this tree was first introduced into our island by the great Lord Bacon, who, as we have seen, was so closely allied to the last of the Drurys, it is probable that they were planted by him; or were some of the identical trees brought by him from the Levant. Those planted by his Lordship at Gorhambury no longer exist.

SAMUEL TYMMS.