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HISTORY OF THE COMPTONS OF COMPTON WYNYATES

BY WILLIAM BINGHAM COMPTON
6th MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON

LONDON
JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED

First published in 1930

Printed in Great Britain by Richard Clay & Sons, Ltd., Bungay, Suffolk
Photogravure plates by the Nicholoid Electrotype Co., Ltd.

Preface

HAVING noticed that the bulk of the information contained in the family papers at Castle Ashby was not available in convenient form for the use of any who might be interested in the history of the Comptons, and having also chanced upon many documents of whose existence my father, for instance, was entirely ignorant, I have been gradually drawn into compiling this book for the benefit of generations who come after me.

It does not set out to provide good reading, but rather to be a useful book of reference for the family. And with this object in view many dry facts, immaterial to the main story, have been included, and much space has been given to accounts of successive additions and alterations to the family residences. On the other hand, many seemingly unimportant, and distinctly personal, extracts from letters have also been included, in an attempt to give some idea of the character of our predecessors and of the lives they led in the homes we love so well.

In the story of past Comptons there seems to be much of which to be proud, and I hope that this pride will beget in us the determination to follow their example in quietly doing our duty to all around us, whatever may be the new difficulties to be faced.

NORTHAMPTON.

Castle Ashby, 1929.

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The initials "F.D." in the footnotes refer to the Family Documents catalogued at Castle Ashby.

CHAPTER I

COMPTON WYNYATES AND EARLY COMPTONS

(1204–1493)

THE name "Compton Wynyates" has come down to us from Saxon times, "cwm" in the British, and "cumbe" in the Saxon meaning "valley"; the word Compton thus meaning "a ton, or hamlet, in the valley." In several thirteenth-century documents belonging to the family a particular field is called "Le Cumbe," which is almost certainly the same field that is now known as "The Combe."

The word Wynyates is, in various documents prior to 1500, spelt in the following ways: Windgate, a-la-Wyngate, atte Wintthat, ate Wydiate, Wyndeate, de la Wyndhyate, atte Wyntthate, atte Wynyates (first in 1318), Wyntgate, Wynneyate, Wyndegate, Wyddeyate, and once Vyneyate (in 1512). From 1500 onwards the name appears to have come to be spelt more like "Vinegates," though as late as 1658 it was spelt Wyndeatts. Dugdale in his "History of Warwickshire," presumes that the word is derived from the cultivation, in very early times, of vines on the steep banks facing south. And the 5th Marquess concludes that the hamlet must have stood at the entrance or gate of the vineyards. It may perhaps here be mentioned that there is still, about six miles from Compton in a similar combe, a gorse covert called Horley Vineyards. That vines existed and required pruning in 1665 is shown by the labour sheets of that date. Even so late as 1758 £2 was paid as rent for the vineyard by the Long Pond.* Nevertheless neither Dugdale nor the 5th Marquess had seen the early documents belonging to the Compton family,† and Mr. Jeayes,‡ who went through them in 1920, is of the opinion that the name was originally Wind-gates and in no way connected with Vine-gates. He mentions the same place-name in other parts of England, generally situated where the wind blows through a gap in the hills. Upper Compton Wynyates must have lain very much where the house stands at present; the site is at the bottom of a cup in the side of the hill, whose perimeter is broken only on the north-west side, in which direction the land slopes away rather rapidly into the valley called the

* F.D. 1036.
† Proved in the Introduction to Mr. Jeayes' Catalogue.
‡ Of the British Museum MSS. Department.

Vale of the Red Horse. When a north wind is blowing, it seems to be diverted by all the neighbouring hills into this one small gap, through which it blows very strongly.

The position of the house was, no doubt, chosen for its abundance of water, both for household use and for the replenishing of the moats, which were a very necessary defence to all houses before Tudor times. The 5th Marquess says * that he once saw an old engraving showing the house with large ponds, far exceeding in size anything that exists now; and he also thought that the water supply had decreased during the twenty years previous to 1904.

In Domesday Book (1080), Compton Wynyates parish was held by three separate tenants of "Turchil of Warwick." This Turchil held before the Conquest, by inheritance from his father Alwyne, enormous possessions of land in Warwickshire, including the Castle of Warwick. Dugdale, in 1656, says that after the Conquest "the Castle properly belonged to the Earl of Mercia, if not to the King, as a special stronghold for the defence of all these parts, and wherefor the said Turchil, being in the nature of a Governour, as his ancestors were, had his denomination, viz. 'de Warwick,' attributed to him by the Normans, who first introduced such surnames of places here amongst us." Turchil gave no assistance to Harold in his struggle with the Normans, and consequently he was permitted by William the Conqueror to retain his possessions for life, including the lordship of Compton and forty-seven other manors. But at his death his son was allowed to keep very little of them, and held that little from the new Norman Earl of Warwick, Henry de Newburgh, instead of directly from the King. Turchil's eldest son assumed the surname of Arden, "from those woody parts wherein he lived," † and is the ancestor of the present Arden family.

There is very little doubt that the original ancestor of the Compton family took his surname from Compton Wynyates when he came to settle in the parish. The identity of this original ancestor cannot, however, be established. The earliest Compton of whom there is documentary evidence is Philip de Cumton, who was living in the parish in 1204, when he was witness to a lease of land in Tysoe.‡ And he is mentioned in 1236 as being lord of the manor.§ He held half a Knight's-fee in the parish from the Earl of Warwick; ‖ but his son is mentioned as holding the

* In "Compton Wynyates."
N.B.—The fishpond nearest to the electric-light house has been filled up by domestic rubbish since 1890. The one immediately above the Long Pond has been filled in since the 1760 map, at a date not recorded.
† Dugdale's "Warwickshire."
‡ Dugdale's "Warwickshire," quoting Reginald de Kennilworth, p. 158.
§ Dugdale's "Warwickshire," quoting Testa de Neville, 1242.
‖ In 1235–36, "Aid to marry the King's sister . . . one mark from the half fee of Philipp de Cumpton of the fee of the Earl of Warwick" ("Book of Fees," Vol. I. p. 512, in Record Office. See F.D. 1368).

same from Thomas de Arden, who in his turn held it from the Earl of Warwick, so it seems probable that Philip, too, really held his land from the de Arden family. This has been taken as evidence to support the contention of the eighteenth-century genealogists that Philip de Cumton is the same man as Philip de Arden shown by Dugdale as a grandson of Turchil, the Saxon Earl of Warwick. The pedigree on page 9 shows that Turchil, by his second wife, Liverunia, had a fourth son, Osbert de Arden, who had three sons, Osbert, Philip and Peter. It has been suggested, without any documentary evidence, that this Philip de Arden settled at Compton, styled himself "de Cumton," and is the Philip who first appears in the family documents. It is stated alternatively that it was his father Osbert who originally settled at Compton and took his surname from that place. And some pedigrees show two successive Philips, father and son, as it seems to require more than three generations to cover the period 1080 to 1240.

Before giving an account of the family from 1200 to 1500, it will be best to mention the sources from which the information is derived. There are forty-five family documents relating to Compton Wynyates prior to 1490. They are most of them ordinary leases of land in the parish, and the earliest of them, though undated, are said to date from the beginning of the thirteenth century. No. 479 is thought by Mr. Jeayes to be the earliest of those connected with Compton Wynyates, and is a lease by Philip de Cumton and Basilia, his wife, of eleven strips of land in Cumton Fields. Though evidence is only occasionally given by these documents as to the dates of the deaths of the Comptons mentioned, the documents at any rate prove the existence of each man at various dates, and it is satisfactory to find the evidence agreeing entirely with that given by Dugdale, as these two sources of information are completely independent of each other. Dugdale gives further particulars about some of the Comptons, and in each case quotes the authority from which he has derived his information. He also quotes from Episcopal Records the various presentations to the living of Compton, which gives further dates on which each man is proved to have been alive. Lastly there are a few extracts from documents at the Record Office, translations of which have been catalogued as F.D. 1368.

Dugdale mentions Arnulph and Osbert de Comton in 1170, and several other de Comtons during these early times, but there is no evidence of their connection with the family.

PHILIP de Cumton has already been mentioned as holding half a Knight's-fee in the parish in 1236. In earliest Norman times a Knight's-fee was an area of land to whose tenant had been allotted the duty of providing for his lord, at the tenant's expense, the service of one fully armed horseman for a period of forty days in every year. There was no definite rule as to area, which was settled in each case at the time of the grant, but the average Knight's-fee appears to have been about five hides.

Very soon, however, the Knight's service ceased to be taken literally, and even by 1100 the expression "Knight's-fee" meant a unit of land valued at £20 a year. In addition to this holding from the Earl of Warwick, Philip and Basilia, as has already been mentioned, leased a further eleven selions of land in the fields of Cumton at a yearly rent of 16*d*.* Philip and Basilia had three sons, Thomas, William and Robert,† but little is known of them or their life, though it is interesting to notice in the leases of their time the names of fields which still exist, and which almost certainly refer to the same fields as now. It is interesting, for instance, to think that Broomhill had by that time already taken its name from the gorse, which probably grew on it then as sturdily as it does now, in spite of the efforts of succeeding generations to destroy it.

Philip had a brother Peter, who with his son Robert is mentioned in the family document No. 556; this document refers to Peter's house in Tysoe. A Philip de Cumton is mentioned by Dugdale ‡ as owning in 1216 the Manor of Widenay near Hampton-in-Arden, but there is no evidence of his being the Philip of Compton Wynyates.

In 1242 THOMAS de Cumton had succeeded his father, and is mentioned as holding half a Knight's-fee in the parish of Cumton Wintace from Thomas de Arden, who in his turn held it from the Earl of Warwick.§ Thomas had three sons, Philip, Henry‖ and William.¶

It was about this time, namely in 1274, that a John de Cumton, a priest, held two yardland in the parish of Long Compton. And about the same time two yardland in the same parish was given to the Hospital of St. John in Oxford by one William de Cumton, a priest. But these may well have had no relation to the Compton Wynyates family.**

In 1279 PHILIP had succeeded his father, and was lord of the manor of Compton Wynyates, which he held by half a Knight's-fee from Thomas de Arden, who held it from the Earl of Warwick. Philip, by an undated family document,† granted to his brother, William, "for his service and for five silver marks," a messuage in the vill of Cumton, which their uncle, William, had recently held from their father, Thomas, and so probably also from his predecessor; and also six acres of arable land in the fields of Cumpton (specified by name) at a yearly rent of one penny. By another document (witnessed by "Philip, lord of Cumton," but undated)‖ Richard de Geydun, chaplain, granted to Henry Cumton, brother of Philip, four acres of arable in the east field of Cumton-a-la-Wyngate and one "smaydole" of meadow.

* F.D. 479; witnessed by Robert de Cumton, possibly Philip's third son.
† F.D. 486.
‡ "Warwickshire."
§ "Book of Fees," Vol. II. p. 956, in Record Office. (See F.D. 1368.)
‖ F.D. 483.
¶ F.D. 485.
** Dugdale's "Warwickshire."

In 1279 a Robert de Cumpton held the manor of Weston-sub-Wethele,* just north of the present Leamington. This may have been Philip's uncle Robert, though there is no evidence that he was a member of the Compton Wynyates family.

Sir ROBERT I next succeeded his fathers, and he is mentioned as "lord of Cumpton-ate-Wydcate" in a document † dated March 25th, 1296. By another and undated document ‡ John Poer granted to the lord of Compton a rent of twopence halfpenny for the tenement he held of him, and a yearly rent from the four fixed tenants of three halfpence, a bunch of gillyflowers, and a rose. It appears that Robert was knighted at some date before 1303,§ and presumably was the Parliamentary representative of the Shire. In 1304 he presented a deacon, Thomas, to the living of Compton Wynyates.

Many documents of about 1324 refer to land in Chelmscote and Whatcote, granted to or by "John de Cumpton, chaplain," who was probably Sir Robert's brother.

In 1307 the Knights Templars owned land in the parish of Compton Wynyates, but in 1311 the whole order was condemned by a General Council at Vienna under Pope Clement V, and their possessions being thereupon seized into the King's hands, what they had in Warwickshire and Leicestershire was committed to the custody of Alexander de Compton, who in 1315 answered Lx.li. (£60) to the King for the issues thereof; "but 'tis plain that the heirs of the Donours came to enjoy them again."*

ROBERT II succeeded his father, Sir Robert, before 1316. The Inquisition at the death of Guy Earl of Warwick on January 12th, 1316, shows Robert de Cumberton as holding from the Earl half a Knight's-fee in Cumberton Wingate,‖ and several family documents mention him as lord between 1316 and 1324,¶ while one of 1328 is witnessed by him as "Dom. Robert, lord of Compton." We are told that in 1321 he was commissioned to negotiate certain affairs for Mary, Countess of Fife, and had the King's letters of protection therefor, requiring all officers not to stay, molest or injure him.** In 1322 he took part in a military expedition to Wales. In 1330 he presented to the Compton Wynyates living. By his wife, Margaret, he had two sons, Thomas and John,†† both of whom became persons of importance in Warwickshire.

THOMAS appears in family documents as lord of Compton over the period 1340–

* Dugdale's "Warwickshire."
† F.D. 485.
‡ F.D. 487.
§ F.D. 1081 says in 1302.
‖ See F.D. 1368.
¶ F.D. 382, 389, 492–97.
** Collins.
†† The eighteenth-century pedigree (F.D. 1081) differs in some respects from this description, and states that Robert I and not Robert II was in the Welsh Wars, and married Margaret. It also gives John as a brother to Robert I; and instead of John, son of Robert II, it gives William.

1379.* He presented to the living of Compton in 1343 and 1347. He was Coroner † of Warwick Shire in 1344 and from 1350 to 1377, "an office of very great account"; † and in the year 1350 "he was also joyn'd in Commission with sundry other persons of quality for assessing and collecting the XVth and Xth." ‡ It is this Thomas's silver seal which is preserved in the Miniature Cupboard at Ashby. It was found uphill from the Long Pond in the year 1845, and is described on page 16 below. Besides his successor Edmund, Thomas is doubtfully said to have had a second son called Robert.§ Thomas must have died between November 1379 and October 1380. His widow, Christina, was still alive on December 6th, 1386, when she made a Covenant with her son and heir, Edmund, whereby she leased to him for the term of her life her whole manor of Comptone Wynzates, "except the 'selarium' (cellar or lower room) under the high 'solarium' (upper room) over the hall of the said manor." Edmund in return was to find her in "food and drink . . . linen and woollen (things) for her bed, and shoes. Also clothing twice a year, viz. at Christmas a fur tunic with doubled hood . . . a linen shirt or chemise (*camisiam*) and a short doubled cloak (*clocam*) . . . at Midsummer, a furred gown (*gounam*) with doubled hood, an undertunic, and a shirt . . . and a piece of linen ribbon (*flammcol de lino*) . . . with a rent of 6sh. 8d. a year." ‖

Thomas's brother, John, was in 1324 one of the four chaplains to Chelmescote Chapel; and Document 389 may mean that in that year he returned to secular life. At any rate, in 1333 we find Sir John de Cumpton a Knight in Parliament at Westminster for the Shire of Warwick.¶ The allowance for his and his colleague's expenses for an attendance of ten days was £6; but in the following year for twelve days' attendance they received only £4 16*s*. In 1335 Sir John married Margaret, the widow of Robert Morin, of the manor of Bearly near Snitterfield. Three years before a John de Compton had paid a lay subsidy in respect of land in Bearly, so he may have lived there before his marriage.**

EDMUND was lord of Compton Wynyates on October 28th, 1380,†† and had five sons by his wife, Agnes, viz. William, Thomas, Robert (died before 1409),

* F.D. 498–508.
N.B.—F.D. 508 is witnessed by "Thomas de Compton atte Wyntzate," which is presumably the above Thomas, since the document is a grant of land to his grandson Thomas.
† The County Coroner, along with the Sheriff, was responsible for keeping the peace. The appointment was for life, with certain exceptions. Originally only Knights were eligible, but by 1350 the ownership of sufficient land to be made a Knight (*i.e.* of value of £20 a year) was accepted as qualification. ("Encyclop. Brit.") From this it would appear that Thomas (above) and his son Edmund each held the office for many years, if not for life.
‡ Dugdale's "Warwickshire."
§ F.D. 1081.
‖ F.D. 512.
¶ Dugdale.
** F.D. 1368.
†† F.D. 509.

John and Edmund.* He was Coroner of Warwick Shire in 1389,† and in 139 and 1406 he presented to the living "de Winzate." Document 513 mention Edmund de Cumpton in 1393 as "the Reverend man," and Document 514 a leasing in 1396 for seven years the church, rectory and glebe, at a yearly rent o eight marks, from Dom. John de Etyndon, Rector of Compton Wynyates, whon he had presented on October 7th, 1395. Probably Dom. John de Etyndon con tinued to do his pastoral duties, as he reserved to himself the "hall and chambers o the Rectory." Perhaps he had difficulty in collecting the tithe, and preferred tc commute it for a cash payment of £6 a year. He may have been an old man, as h was replaced after ten years.‡ Edmund must have died between 1409 and 1411 for in the latter year his widow, Agnes, presented her fourth son, John de Cumpton to the living of Compton Wynyates.§

On December 8th, 1414, Agnes made a Covenant with her son, William, and others, very similar to that made by her mother-in-law. By it she leased to them the manor of Compton Wyntzates, which she held for life, with reversion to the said William; to hold to the latter during Agnes's lifetime at a yearly rent of £8, the lessees to keep the manor, etc., in good repair, and keep her harmless against the King in respect of fifteenths, taxes, etc. In case of non-payment of rent, Agnes was to have power to distrain and, if necessary, retake possession of the manor, and to be allowed yearly accommodation for three days in a chamber at the upper end of the hall of the manor, with free entry and exit for the keeping of the exequies of the aforesaid Edmund.‖

WILLIAM, Edmund's son, presented four times to the living of Compton Wynyates, in 1413, 1414, 1415 and 1416; he is entered in the episcopal register as "Armiger," *i.e.* Esquire.¶ On November 10th, 1429, William paid to Lord Richard de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, 10*s*. due for half a Knight's-fee in Compton Wynyates, on the occasion of Henry Lord Spencer, the Earl's son and heir, being Knighted.** William married Joan, daughter of John Hobby of Etyngdon,†† probably in 1418, when Hobby settled on them land in Lower Shuckburgh and Lower Etyngdon. William probably died in 1432.‡‡

In 1459 "Thomas Compton held half a Knight's-fee in Compton Wyndyate, worth 50*s*., of Humphrey Duke of Buckingham as fee of his barony of Stafford." §§ This must have been William's brother Thomas.

ROBERT succeeded his father, William; and, *venerabilis vir*, he presented to the Compton Wynyates living in 1452, 1460, 1462, 1463, 1465 and 1468.

* F.D. 508 and 516. Collins and F.D. 1081 mention a sixth son, Richard, who must at any rate have died before 1409, or he would be mentioned in F.D. 516.
† Collins says 1377 and 1399. See footnote opposite.
‡ By this indenture Edmund undertook to maintain the chancel of the church and "repair all the houses (? pews) being in the church" during the term of the lease.
§ Dugdale.
‖ F.D. 518.
¶ Or possibly "the possessor of Armorial Bearings."
** F.D. 520.
†† F.D. 552.
‡‡ F.D. 1081.
§§ Inquisitions P.M. Chancery, File 180, No. 59. (See F.D. 1368.)

His wife's name was Agnes,* and he evidently had a daughter who married a man called Appleby, for Sir William Compton, in his Will,† dated 1523, left her daughter 100 marks to her marriage. Robert died in 1481, about the month of September,‡ and was succeeded by his son, Edmund, but Agnes survived her son.*

EDMUND, who succeeded his father in 1481, married Joan, daughter and heiress of Walter Aylworth, by whom he had a son, William, and a daughter, Elizabeth. This daughter in July 1511 married Sir Walter Rodney, Knight, and received 6*s.* 8*d.* as a wedding present from Henry VIII.§ In a lease of 1488 Edmund is called a "gent," ‖ and in 1489 he is called "*discretus vir*," when he presented to the living of Compton Wynyates. It was this Edmund who pulled down the old manor house, and on the same site built the new one of red brick, which still stands as the main part of the present house. He must have been a man of wealth and fashion to build in so modern a material as brick; and his wife, being an heiress to the Arms of Aylworth and Wykwan,¶ may have brought money to her husband. He must also have been a person of considerable influence, for at his death on April 21st, 1493,** his son became a ward of the King, and was at the age of eleven made a page to Henry, Duke of York, afterwards Henry VIII. Edmund was buried at Compton Wynyates; but Joan must have been originally buried elsewhere, for by their son's Will her body was to be moved and buried with her husband, and a suitable alablaster (sic) monument was to be placed over them.††

Edmund's estate.

At his death Edmund owned the following land in Warwickshire :— **

"The manor and advowson of Compton Wyneatys, the said manor being worth 100*s.*, held of the manor of Brayles, co. Warwick, now in the King's hands, by fealty, for all service.

"2 messuages and 2 virgates of land in Lapworth,‡‡ held of the manor of Lapworth, worth 30*s.*

"A messuage and a virgate of land in Etendon, worth 20*s.*, held of Ralph Shirley, Knt, as of the manor of Etendon."

* P.M. Inquisitions at Record Office. † See page 21. ‡ F.D. 521.

§ Foreign and Domestic State Papers, 1451. ‖ F.D. 524.

¶ See illustrations of coats of arms in Appendix I. The only contemporary mention of Aylworths in the Midlands is a P.M. Inquisition on the death of a John Aylworth in 1476. (See F.D. 1368.) He owned land in Aylworth in the parish of Naunton and in other neighbouring parishes in Gloucestershire. The 5th Countess, in her pedigree, gives the descent of Joan Aylworth from the Wykwan family; but I have not been able to ascertain where that family lived. The name is another form of "Wickham," and there were many ecclesiastics of the name in early centuries. There were in the late fifteenth century Wickwans in the neighbourhood of Evesham (see Coram Rege Rolls Trin., 29 Edw. III. m. 44), and it is just possible they may have originated at Childs Wickham near Broadway.

** P.M. Inquisitions at Record Office. †† See page 21.

‡‡ It seems to be a mere coincidence that a "William Compton, son and heir of Joan, daughter and heiress of John Marchal of Lapworth," made a grant of land in Lapworth in 1420 (see Record Office Catalogue of Ancient Deeds, A. 4271, Warwickshire), because the mother of the only Compton Wynyates William of that date was called Agnes.

PEDIGREE OF EARLY COMPTONS

1. ALWYNE (contemporary with King Edward the Confessor, *c.* 1042) had large possessions in Warwickshire.

First wife = 2. *Turchill*, Saxon Earl of Warwick at time of the Conquest, was seated at Arden, now Arden, Com. Warwic. = Second wife Leverunia, dau. of .....

.....dau. of .....

Siward de Arden, from whom the family of Arden derive their descent.

Peter de Arden, a Monk at Thorney.

Ralph de Arden.

3. *Osbert de Arden*, only son by second wife. = ...dau. of.....

Osbert de Compton.

4. *Philip de* COMPTON (*c.* 1200–1240) Lord of Cumton Wynyates. = Basilia, dau. of ....

Peter de Compton.

Robert de Compton.

5. *Thomas de Compton* (1242–1251). = ...dau. of .....

William.

Robert.

6. *Philip de Compton* (1278–1295). = ...dau. of .....

Henry de Compton.

William de Compton.

7. *Sir Robert de Compton*, Knighted 1302. = Margaret, dau. of .....

John de Compton, Chaplain.

8. *Robert de Compton*, only son (1316–1340). Fought in Welsh Wars in 1322. = Margaret dau. of .....

9. *Thomas de Compton*, Coroner of Warwickshire 1344 (1340–1379). = Christina, dau. of .....

Sir John de Compton, Kt. of the Shire. = Margaret, widow of Robert Morin of Snitterfield.

10. *Edmund de Compton*, Coroner of Warwickshire (1379–1411). = Agnes, dau. of .....

Robert de Compton.

11. *William de Compton* (1411–1432). = Joan, dau. of John Hobby of Etyngdon.

Thomas. Robert. John. Edmund. Richard.

12. *Robert de Compton*, only son (1432–1481). = Agnes, dau. of..... (*d.* after 1493).

13. *Edmund Compton*, only son (1481–1493). = Joan, dau. and heiress of Walter Aylworth, Esq.

Daughter = Appleby.

14. SIR WILLIAM COMPTON, *b.* 1482.

Elizabeth = Sir Walter Rodney.

John Rodney.

CHAPTER II

SIR WILLIAM COMPTON

(1493–1528)

William at Court.

WILLIAM COMPTON was born in 1482, and at his father's death in 1493 he became a Ward of the Crown, and was appointed a page to Prince Henry, Duke of York, afterwards Henry VIII,* who was then two years old. At the age of eleven Henry succeeded his brother as Prince of Wales, and in April 1509 he succeeded to the throne, at the age of eighteen, marrying two months later his brother's widow. Before this wedding William had already become Customer of the London Petty Customs,† which sounds a lucrative job; and on June 4th had also been made Groom of the Bedchamber.‡ Fuller § says that "no layman in the Court, except Charles Brandon,‖ in whom affection and affinity met, was nearer to the King than he. He might have been for wealth or honour, what he pleased, but contented himself with what he was." Whatever his modesty, William certainly did very well at the hands of his royal patron.¶ A contemporary chronicler tells curious stories of the increasing friendship between the King and his favourite :—**

"The King kept his Christmas (1509) at Richmond. The twelfe of Ianuarie, diuerse gentlemen prepared to iust, and the king and one of his priuie chamber called William Compton, secretly armed themselues in the little parke of Richmond, and so came into the iustes, unknown to all persons. The King neuer ran openlie before, and did exceeding well. Maister Compton chanced to be sore hurt by Edward Neuill esquier, brother to the lord of Aburgauennie, so that he was like to haue died. One person there was that knew the King, and cried; God saue the king: and with that, all the people were astonied, and then the king discouered himselfe, to the great comfort of the people. The king soone after came to Westminster, and there kept his Shrouetide with great bankettings, dansings and other iollie pastimes."

* "Dictionary of National Biography."
† Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII, May 27th, 1509.
‡ Collins' "Peerage."
§ "Worthies of England" (1840).
‖ Afterwards Duke of Suffolk, married Henry VIII's sister, Margaret, widow of Malcolm, King of Scotland.
¶ See in F.D. 1369 complete list of land granted to him.
** Holinshed's "Chronicles of England," Vol. III. pp. 554 and 557 (in the Old Library).

The above incident is said to have endeared Compton all the more to the King,* who soon after advanced him to be First Gentleman of the Bedchamber (*i.e.* Groom of the Stole).

Again in the following autumn the King moved from the Tower to Richmond on November 8th, and

"willed to be declared to all noble men and gentlemen, that his grace with two aides, that is to wit, maister Charles Brandon and maister Compton, during two daies would answer all commers; with speare at the tilt one daie, and at turneie with swords the other. And to accomplish this enterprise, on the thirteenth day of November, his grace armed at all peeces with his two aides entered the field, their brass and trappers were of cloth of gold, set with red roses, wrought with gold of broderie. The counterpart came in freshlie apparelled eurie man after his deuise. At these iustes the King brake more staues than anie other, and therefore had the prise. At the turneie in likewise, the honour was his. The second night were diuerse strangers of Maximilian the emperours court and ambassadors of Spaine with the king at supper. When they had supped, the king willed them to go into the queenes chamber, who so did." †

This is a side of Henry that we often lose sight of; lanky, yet square in frame, he easily excelled among his contemporaries in all manly sports and games. Compton seems on both these occasions to have been responsible for the costumes of the King, and of the minstrels and mummers; and, in addition to blue sarcenet, crimson bonnets and girdles, and "six disguising garments set with jewels of the King's treasure," he also distributed 575 sheaves of arrows of gold and 575 castles of gold, as badges to be worn on their trappings.‡ From this date until the end of 1521 it was evidently his duty, as the King's most constant companion, to carry his pocket-money, and he frequently drew amounts of £2000 and £3000 "for the King's use." In October 1519, too, we are given an interesting list of the King's jewels, furniture and clothes in his keeping.§

Stewardships, etc.

From now until his death in 1528 William was loaded with honours, with lucrative appointments and with sporting privileges, in many counties, in the enjoyment of which last no doubt his royal friend joined. He was at different dates made bailiff, steward or keeper of the following manors, towns or forests :‖ Brailes, Whichwood Forest, Lighthorne, Moreton Bagot, Budbrook, Berkeswell, Warwick, Goodrest, Snitterfield, Kyngton, Claverdon and Barford in the County of Warwick; and constable and steward of the lordship and borough of Warwick; Stanton Harold in Leicestershire; Buckland Elmeley, Erlestrombe and Wyerpidell in the county

* Collins' "Peerage."
† Holinshed's "Chronicles of England," Vol. III. p. 557.
‡ Badges of Aragon and Castille.
§ Exchequer Accounts, Bundle 418/13 (Record Office).
‖ Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII.

of Worcester; Shipston, Chadworth woods and manor, Tewkesbury, Whittington, Lydner, Hanley, Upton-on-Severne, and Bussheley in the county of Gloucester; Minsterlowel, Cogges, Borefford, Spellesbury, Chadlington, and lands known as "Suffolk lands," in the County of Oxford; Hartford, Langley, Aston Thorold, New Compton and Denford in the county of Berks; Ditton in Bucks; Woking, Cleygate and Worplesdon in Surrey; Tatteshall in Lincolnshire; Burley in Hants; Canford, Corff, Poole, Cokden in Dorset; Stoke under Hampden, Cormalet, Tamworth, Astonthynk, Stonydelf, Wilmecote, Pollesworth, and the lands of the late Countess of Richmond and of the late Earl of Salisbury in the King's hands, in the county of Somerset; Beaudeley in Shropshire; Pleasaunce in East Greenwich, Kent; Ware in Herts; and Haverford West and Rowse in the Marches of Wales.

He was given the custody of seven castles;* Warwick, with its garden called the Vineyard, and "the fishing in the Avon from Guy's Cliff to Barford Mills, with a house and tavern beside the High Cross in the town"; Sudeley Castle, where he was also Master of the Hunt and park-keeper with £30 a year from the lordship; at Tatteshall, he was keeper of the Great Park and Chace, the little Park, rabbit-warren and Castle; he was also Constable of Gloucester Castle, of Corff Castle (Dorset), of Hanley Castle (Worcestershire), and of Killingworth (Kenilworth) Castle.*

He was Ranger of the following parks,* to each of which a salary was attached: Thundersley, Donyngton, Woking, Beaudeley, Ernewood, Ware Parks (the last with the fishing); Master of the Hunt in Ewelme Park, Conford, the Isle of Purbeck, "Salisbury's lands," Claverdon Park, Henley-in-Arden, Malvern Chace, Wedgnock (with herbage, pannage and fishery), Bussheley, Hanley and Blakemore Parks. On June 26th, 1511, he was made Keeper of the Great Park of Windsor, to which office was attached a residence which contained his own furniture at his death, and where he therefore resided at times; also of the little Park, and of Ditton Park just across the Thames. On June 30th, 1513, the actual day that he sailed with Henry to the wars in France, he was made Keeper of the Parks of Hastley, Grome, Berkeswell and Hendley. In May 1514, for his faithful services, he was made Ranger of Cranbourn Chace with accustomed emoluments, and among the family documents is the warrant signed "Katharine, Queen of England;" and bearing a remarkably fine impression of that lady's seal.† In 1521 he was granted the tenure by Knight-service to the Crown of the Manor, Castle and Park of Maxstoke, Warwickshire.

At one time he was given a commission to grant licences for the exportation of tin and lead;‡ at another he was with nineteen others made a surveyor of mines in Devon and Cornwall, "to pay yearly to the King a twelfth of the gold and silver ore when refined, and to the owners of the soil a tenth of the metals delivered above

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* Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII. † F.D. 695.
‡ Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII, Nov. 23rd, 1510.

ground."* He appears in 1514 on a list of "Pensions du Roy d'Angleterre et de ses officiers"† according to which he received 350 livres annually from the French King, while Henry VIII received 50,000 livres. In 1521 he was granted† the wardship of Francis Shirley during his minority, with land and income "and the value, or double value; of his marriage, in case of his refusal to marry, or marrying without licence during his minority"; and this is probably one of the three lucrative wardships he is mentioned as owning at his death.‡

Distinguished honorary appointments.

He was honoured with Commissions of the Peace for the Counties of Warwick, Leicester, Herts, Northants, Worcester, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Dorset.† On November 7th, 1512, he was made Sheriff of Hants, but eighteen months later was pardoned and released from this office, which he probably found irksome.† On the same day he received the "honourable augmentation of arms out of the King's own Royall Ensigns and Devices" of which mention is made in detail below. On February 4th, 1513, he was made Usher of the Black Rod "to bear the same at St. George's Feast within the Castle of Windsor," with the fee of 12*d.* a day.† On November 6th, 1513, he was appointed Chancellor of Ireland, with the power to act by deputy.§ The next day he was made Sheriff of Somerset and Dorset.† On February 5th, 1514, the University of Cambridge granted letters of confraternity to him and Werburger his wife.‖ In December 1516 he was made Sheriff of Kent and Worcestershire, which offices he held till his death.† The same month he is shown † as receiving £18 as "Verger at Windsor Castle for life," and £26 13*s.* 4*d.* as "Usher for life of the receipt, wages, necessaries, etc." On April 23rd, 1522, he was elected by the Knights of the Garter to fill the next vacancy to that Order,¶ but none occurred before his death. In 1525 he was "Bursifer Regis, otherwise called the Keeper of the King's usual money and Jewells,"** the equivalent of the present office of the Privy Purse, but in the next February he was released from the office.† On November 18th, 1527, a few months before his death, he and twenty-eight others received a Commission, stating that, "owing to forestalling, regrating and engrossing of wheat in all shires of England, more scarcity of corn is pretended to be within this our said realm than, God be thanked, there is in very truth," and authorising them to search the barns and stacks in the county of Berks, etc.†

His marriage.

On May 10th, 1512,† William married Warburga, daughter and heiress of Sir John Brereton of Brereton near Knaresborough in Yorkshire, and widow of Sir Francis Cheney, Knight, who had been prominent at Henry's Court. On the

* Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII, Aug. 1st, 1522.
† Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII. ‡ See page 22.
§ Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII. The appointment was for life, but in March 1516 it passed to the Archbishop of Dublin ("Dict. Nat. Biog.").
‖ "Dict. Nat. Biog."
¶ Collins' "Peerage of England." ** Dugdale's "Baronage."

occasion of their marriage the King granted them land in Wiltshire and Berkshire recently the property of Viscount Lovell. By Warburgh * William had two sons, Peter and Henry, and four daughters, Margaret, Mary, Catherine and Frances. Peter was born in August 1523, and succeeded his father at the age of five.† Of Henry nothing is known, but he died before 1526.‡ Margaret died an infant on June 17th, 1517, and was buried at Tottenham,§ where her father owned two residences and was probably residing at the time. Mary was christened in February 1522, and named after her god-mother, Princess Mary,‖ afterwards Queen; she also died before 1526. Of Catherine and Frances nothing is known, except that they were both alive in 1526.¶ In the Balliol window,** erected in 1520, Sir William and his lady were shown with two sons and one daughter; it is difficult to say which children are here represented.

Warburger's inheritance.

William must have rushed rather precipitately into marriage with Walberowe, or Werburger; very few months before he had been seeking leave to marry the Countess of Salisbury, whose lands were just being restored to her.†† But Warburgh too was a considerable heiress, and in marrying her William may have made the next best match he could. Not only did she bring to her husband in June 1521 the manors of Scotton and Brereton in Yorkshire ‡‡ on her father's death; but through her mother §§ (sister of the late John Berkeley, a minor) she obtained for William Compton in 1522 a third share of the manors of Beverston, Over Barowgurney, Tykenham, Wykeware, Aylburton and Cerncote, in Gloucester, Somerset and Wilts.‖‖ Warburgh's mother was the last survivor of the elder line of the Berkeleys of Beverston Castle, and Warburgh shared these manors with Sir William Berkeley, her mother's first cousin, who was the heir male of the Berkeleys of Beverston.§§ This branch of the Berkeleys was founded by Sir John, the fourth son of the 3rd Lord Berkeley of Berkeley Castle (died 1361); and besides living at Beverston Castle, this Sir John inherited Bettishorne from his wife Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Sir John Bettishorne of Bettishorne, County Southampton. Henceforward this Berkeley family styled itself "of Bettishorne," and this property likewise came to the Compton family through Warburgh. Indeed Bettishorne was one of the residences in which Sir William Compton owned furniture at the time of his death.¶¶

* The spelling is purposely varied as in contemporary documents.

† Foreign and Domestic State Papers say "six and over." But he was not born in March 1523, when William made his will, though apparently a baby was expected.

‡ The Inquisition after Werberga's death, taken on July 20th, 1526 (Series II. Vol. 45, No. 67), mentions Peter, Katherine and Frances as alive at that date (F.D. 1368).

§ F.D. 1081.

‖ Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII.

¶ The Inquisition after Werburga's death, taken on July 20th, 1526 (Series II. Vol. 45, No. 67), mentions Peter, Katherine and Frances as alive at that date (F.D. 1368).

** See below on page 30.

†† "Dict. Nat. Biog."

‡‡ F.D. 660.

§§ See Warburgh's pedigree, page 73.

‖‖ F.D. 690.

¶¶ See below, page 22.

Dame Werburga died on June 14th, 1524,* and her estates devolved on her son and heir, Peter, who was only ten months old. At some date during the remaining four years of Sir William's life he remarried. The date of the marriage cannot be ascertained, and it is remarkable that he made no fresh Will on remarrying, he settled nothing on his second wife, and she is not mentioned in the Inquisition after his death.† Nevertheless the following references in papers at the Record Office † leave no room for doubt that Sir William Compton married as his second wife Elizabeth Stonor, daughter of Sir Walter Stonor, of Stonor Place near Henley. A year after Sir William's death "Elizabeth, widow of Sir William Compton," had licence to marry Walter Walsh, page of the Privy Chamber; in March 1538 Walter Walsh died, and in a letter to Thomas Cromwell about her affairs her father still refers to her as "my pore dowter Cumton"; she next married Phillip Hobby of Wresbury in Bucks, and is still referred to as "the lady Elizabeth Compton his wife, otherwise called Elizabeth Hobby." Hobby died in 1558, leaving Elizabeth with four daughters and a Walsh son. Sir William Compton and his second wife evidently lived in Sir Walter's house at Stonor, because it was one of the residences in which Compton left furniture at his death.‡

Remarriage.

On the very day of Sir William's death there was published a "Citation by Wolsey, as legate, of Sir William Compton for having lived in adultery with the wife of Lord Hastings,§ while his own wife, dame ——,‖ was alive, and for having taken the sacrament to disprove it." We must avoid judging William in the light of our own times. Conjugal fidelity was hardly expected from husbands in his days, and certainly not at the Court of King Hal. William did his best, too, to make amends: in the two chantries which by his Will he directed his executors to found at Compton, the priests were to "do daily service in praying for the souls of the King, the Queen and the Lady Anne Hastings: for the souls of him, his wife, his ancestors and all Christian Souls." He also left Lady Hastings for her life the issues, revenues and profits of his lands called Hartishorne and Worthington in County Leicester.¶

Coat of Arms.

It has already been mentioned that, on November 7th, 1512, he received an augmentation to his Arms. The King gave him "a part of his devices as augmentation to his Arms, in consideration of the good, diligent and loyal service which his faithful and well-beloved servant William Compton esquire, has done, and also for such especial favour and love which he has towards him." The augmentation consisted of: a lion passant guardant or (that is the Royal Lion of England) to be added to his coat of three helmets; and for his crest, a demi-dragon erased gules,

* P.M. Inquisitions, Series II. Vol. 45, No. 67. See F.D. 1368.

† See F.D. 1368.

‡ See below, page 22.

§ Anne, wife of 3rd Baron Hastings, who took part in the French campaign of 1513, and was in 1529 made 1st Earl of Huntingdon.

‖ The name is omitted from the original document.

¶ F.D. 1240.

within a ducal coronet or, upon a torse argent and vert; also of another coat to be quartered with the first, argent, a chevron vert, within a bordure azure bezante (green and white being Henry VIII's colours).* The grant is signed by Thomas Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms, and hangs framed at Compton Wynyates.†

It is a curious fact that the silver seal found at Compton Wynyates in 1845, which has round a shield the words "Sg.‡ Thoma de Cumton," bears on this shield a chevron with three fleurs-de-lys, and not the three esquires' helmets, to which the above grant added the lion of England. Mr. Evelyn Shirley, F.S.A., of Eatington, in 1869 § thus explains the change from one to the other. One family of Comptons took their name from Compton Wynyates, and another from Fenny Compton. Both families originally held their lands from Turchil of Warwick, who has been assumed to be the ancestor of both families. The Fenny Compton family lived also at Howton, near Newark, and the manors of Howton and Fenny Compton were both sold in 1429 by William Compton of Howton, since when there is no trace of this family. The Howton Comptons apparently bore the three helmets as their Arms as far back as the year 1302, and these Arms are said by Robert Thoroton ‖ to have appeared on the seals of that family through many reigns. This coat is still be to seen on an effigy in Howton Church of Sir Robert Cumpton of Howton, who died in the early part of the fourteenth century. In Dugdale's time, in one of the windows of Fenny Compton Church, appeared the arms of "a fess engrailed betwixt three helmets argent," which probably also belonged to some branch of the Comptons of that place.

Again, the Visitation of Somerset of 1623 shows a family of Comptons in that county from the middle of the sixteenth century to 1623. They lived at South Pederton, or Petherton, and at Wigborough; and the marriage of one of the family with Sir Thomas Phelips of Montacute is recorded in some coloured glass in that house. Both this glass and a tomb at Wigborough bear the three helmets arms,¶ and the family may be assumed to be a branch of the Fenny Compton family.

But the seal found at Compton Wynyates in 1845 shows that the Arms borne by the Comptons of that place in the middle of the fourteenth century were a plain shield charged with a chevron and thereon three fleurs-de-lys. The same Arms are still to be traced upon the upper arm of the surcoat of the alabaster effigy of

* "Argent a chevron vert" is shown in an undated but pre-Tudor Visitation of Cheshire at the College of Arms as the Coat of "Sir Robert Compton." No information is available as to his date or domicile; but the Coat granted to Sir William, and the Coat appearing on the seal (above) both seem to be variants of this.

† The grant was given to the Compton family by a Mr. Booth in September 1897 (Lady Alwyne's notes).

‡ Sg = Sigillum = Seal of. The seal probably belonged to the Thomas who was lord of Compton Wynyates 1340 to 1380.

§ "Archæologia," Vol. 43. ‖ "History of Nottinghamshire," 1677.

¶ Information supplied in 1927 by Mr. Phelips of Montacute.

Sir William Compton in the church at Compton Wynyates. This ancient coat * was apparently sometimes quartered by Sir William Compton with his new Arms; for in the glass representation of him at Balliol College, Oxford, the third quartering of the Arms on his shoulder is the ancient coat above described. Again, the manuscript collection of Arms belonging to Mr. Shirley, written by Samuel Todde in the latter part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, shows the third quartering similarly. These Arms were thought by the family in 1723, and by Bishop Lord Alwyne Compton in the nineteenth century,† to be the Arms of Wykwan, from which family Sir William's mother, Joan Ayleworth, was said to be descended. But the Arms of the three helmets argent do not appear in the Compton Wynyates family before the grant of Augmentation of Arms by Henry VIH in 1512, and the conclusion is that the heralds inserted the Arms of the Howton family in that document by mistake.‡

In 1513 Henry VIII joined Maximilian and the Holy League against France; and, crossing the Channel in June, won the Battle of the Spurs and took Therouanne and Tournay. In the "Order of how the King's Battle shall proceed" of April 13th, Will Compton was to be in the "Middle or King's Warde." § The order of this Ward was "The King with his guard, banner of the household, squires for the body, gentlemen ushers, etc., the Bishops of Winchester and Durham, Master Almoner (Wolsey), the Lord Roos, Sir Henry Guildford, Will Compton, etc., 3100 men." And now, at the age of thirty-one, this gay young courtier was to have a chance of distinguishing himself on active service, such as none of the family had had since the Welsh Wars of 1322.‖ On May 18th he had a "Commission to retain men for the service of the King in his war" from the tenants on his own estates, from the King's lands, and from the lordships belonging to Monasteries of which he was steward.§ In the "Order of the King's Army" of June 16th,§ "Mr. Compton's Company" appears in the Vanguard; but in the King's Ward passing out of Calais the last day of June he is shown "in a manner of rereguard of the King's

French War, 1513.

* The blason is: Argent on a chevron sable three fleur-de-lis or.

† See Lord Alwyne's pedigree. I cannot trace the Wykwan family, but they may have lived at Childswykwan near Broadway. See note, page 8.

‡ Mr. Shirley mentions also that the beacon crest was first used by the Comptons at the date of the building of Castle Ashby, though he says that a little brass of a knight and his lady, said to have come from Netley Abbey, in Hampshire, bears the beacon badge, and is said to have belonged to the Compton family, though the brass is certainly not later than 1500.

A crest or badge of the Berkeley family, still on the house at Bisterne, is a Beacon somewhat similar to the present Compton crest. The appearance of the latter may be a result of the Compton marriage with the heiress of the Berkeleys.

The crest of three helmets is said by Lord Alwyne to exist on the ruins of Compton Castle in Devon. But these ruins are at present so buried in ivy as to prevent any verification. The guide-book sold there does not mention them, and there seems no reason to connect the Comptons of that Compton, who died out in the twelfth century, with those of Compton Wynyates.

§ Foreign and Domestic State Papers.

‖ See above, page 5.

battell with the retinue of the Bishop of Winchester, and of Master Wolsey, the King's Almoner, being in number eight hundred." * We get no historical record of Will's behaviour in battle, though a carved panel in the Hall screen at Compton Wynyates gives us a vivid, if somewhat crude, impression of an encounter between English and French Knights. All we know is that, after the victory at Tournay, on September 25th, the day of the King's ceremonial entry into that town, he joined with forty-four others in being "Knights made in the Church at Tourayne (Tournay) after the King came from Mass, under his banner in the Church." A Knight Banneret, as it was called, was distinguished for having won his spurs by valour on the battlefield.

On his return to England, Sir William probably set himself to beautifying Compton Wynyates house, and his work there during the next nine years will be described in detail below. But during the whole time William was never long absent from his royal master's side. He continued to be responsible for the King's pocket-money and jewellery, and State documents and correspondence were generally posted to William, for him to obtain the royal signature to them. There never seems to have been any interruption to his intimate friendship with Henry, nor to the incessant grants of land and honours. In May 1516, for instance, we are told that "the Cardinal and Sir William Compton are marvellous great with the King." †

ld of th of d, 1520.

Largely influenced by Wolsey, the King's foreign policy now began to give Francis I and Charles V, each in turn, the hope of his alliance against the other. Francis promised him the Imperial Crown, but, in view of Charles's recent succession to the throne of Austria, the latter's promise of restoring Henry's French dominion seemed more capable of fulfilment, added to which Charles won Wolsey over by promising to support his candidature to the Papacy. In May 1520 Charles landed at Dover to visit Henry, and the two rode alone to Canterbury. In retaliation Francis arranged for an interview with Henry at a camp near Guisnes, to which the display of magnificence by the two Kings gave the name of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Here Sir William was in attendance on his sovereign, having in his retinue one chaplain, eleven servants and eight horses.‡ Werberga was also among the Knights' wives in attendance on the Queen.§ But on Henry's road home in July he had a second interview with his Emperor nephew at Gravelines, where Sir William was again in attendance,§ and here a secret confederacy between the sovereigns was made, and Charles promised to marry Mary, Henry's only child, whom Henry had declared his heir.

This declaration had aroused the jealousy of Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, who was the rightful heir in tail male, and it was reported to Henry that he had openly declared his intention of seizing the throne at Henry's death. Soon

* Holinshed's "Chronicles," Vol. III. p. 577.
‡ Collins' "Peerage of England."
† Foreign and Domestic State Papers.
§ Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII.

after Henry's return from France, Sir William and two other "Knights for the Body" (*i.e.* of the Bodyguard) were commanded to take with them sufficient power and to secure Buckingham, accused of high treason. He surrendered to them at his manor of Thornbury in Gloucestershire, and they brought him to London, where, condemned as a traitor by his peers, he was beheaded on Tower Hill.*

On May 27th, 1522, Sir William attended the King at Canterbury, where the Emperor was again received, and was one of those present at a great "justs" at Greenwich Palace for that monarch's entertainment. It was on this occasion that he was sent to explain verbally to the Emperor some letters the King had received from his ambassador in France telling of Francis's declaration of war on England and the Emperor.*

Scotch Wars, and jealousy of Wolsey.

In 1523 Sir William was sent by the King to assist Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, who lay on the borders of Scotland, against the Duke of Albany ;* and before setting out he made his Will,† on March 8th, in which those of his men who survived the campaign were to receive full wages for life in the event of his own death. At his departure for the Wars, the King begged Surrey to make the more of Compton for his sake. They invaded Scotland in June, threw down several castles, burnt thirty-seven villages, "and harried the countrie from the east marches to the west, and neuer had skirmish. For the Scots, albeit they shewed themselues in plumps, waiting some aduantage, they durst not yet approch to the maine battell of the Englishmen, so that in all this iournie there were but few Englishmen lost." ‡ The consequence of this raid was that in the following year the Duke of Albany invaded the north of England, and Sir William assisted the Marquis of Dorset, who was commanding the expedition against the Scotch.* On June 29th Sir William joined in a night ride to burn Kelso, in which he himself provided 258 men.§ "He was employed in these hostile incursions by Cardinal Wolsey's means, and it was thought that the Cardinall, perceiuing in what favour sir William Compton was with the King, and doubting least the same might diminish his authoritie, deuised to send him thus into the warres against the Scots. For the said Sir William could not well brooke the cardinals presumption, in taking upon him so highlie, to the derogation of the kings supreme gouernement and therefore the cardinall in his absence thought to woorke him out of favour; but it would not be." ‡ "Sir William was so riveted in the King's good opinion, that he was soon recalled," and when writing to Wolsey in September, Surrey deplores the loss of Mr. Compton's companies.§ On William's reaching the King safe and sound, Henry wrote thanking Surrey "for his loving entertainment of Compton." §

Between 1525 and Sir William's death in 1528—the years in which Henry VIII

* Collins' "Peerage of England."
‡ Holinshed's "Chronicles," Vol. III. p. 686.
§ Foreign and Domestic State Papers, Henry VIII.
† F.D. 1240.

was obtaining his divorce from Queen Katharine—we know little of William except that, according to contemporary writers, he never stood higher in his royal master's favour. In 1526 he surrendered several manors and resigned the Groomship of the Stole; but in February 1527, and thereafter, we find him called Under-Treasurer of England, which sounds a more important office than that of Keeper of the Privy Purse, which he had held apparently since Henry's accession. It was in the same month too that he was granted leave to wear his hat in the King's presence, a striking testimony to the intimacy which existed between the two friends.*

His death. In June 1528 Sir William died of an epidemic, and the manner of his death is thus described: "In the very end of May began in the cittie of London the disease called the Sweating Sickness and afterwards went (through) all the realme almost, of the whiche many died within v or vi houres. . . . The King was sore troubled with the plage, for divers died in the Court. . . . so that the King removed almost every day, tyl he at last came to Titynhanger a place of the Abbotte of St. Albones, and there he with a few determined to byde the chaunce that God would send him, which place was so purged dayly with fyres and other preservatives, yt neither he nor the quene, nor none of their company, was infected with ye disease. Such was the pleasure of God. In this great plage dyed Sir Wyllyam Compton Knyght, and William Cary, esquyer, whyche were of the Kinges Privy Chamber, and whom the Kyng hyghly favored." † He died at Finchley on June 30th,‡ and a contemporary letter to Wolsey says that "he was lost by neclygens, in lattyng him slepe in the begynnyng of his swete." § He left an only son, Peter, aged five,‖ who became the ward of Cardinal Wolsey. In accordance with his Will, he was buried at Compton, where his marble effigy still lies, on which, though mutilated in the Civil Wars, can be traced, at the base of his surcoat the ancient Compton Arms of the three fleurs-de-lys on a chevron; and round his neck he wears the collar of SS, with a double rose dependent from it, bearing witness to the affectionate intimacy between him and his sovereign, which never diminished through all the Court intrigues of the time. Sir William was a gallant sportsman and an unassuming gentleman, and we never hear of his having made an enemy.¶

His Will. By his Testament, dated March 8th, 1523,** he directed his body to be buried at Compton, with his ancestors, appointing that his lady should be likewise there

* Foreign and Domestic State Papers. The enrolment on the patent, however, was subsequently cancelled.

† Grafton's "Chronicle," clxxvii., printed 1550.

‡ F.D. 300.

§ State Papers, Henry VIII.

‖ Foreign and Domestic State Papers, 4442 says "6." See note, p. 14.

¶ His name was not among those of the King's intimate friends about whose loose conduct the Council complained in 1519.

** F.D. 1240 (transcription of original in British Museum) and Foreign and Domestic State Papers, 4442.

interred. To his wife he bequeathed all his movable goods in London, at Bettishorne and at the Great Park of Windsor, and all the plate which lately belonged to Sir Francis Cheyney, his "predecessor," "Also if it fortune my wife to be with child with a son, and that it may please God she to be delivered of the same,"* he bequeathed to the said son, Compton, with all the household stuff there, as detailed in an attached schedule,† and including all the plate given him by the French King, viz. gilt bowls with covers, standing pots, basins, ewers, flagons, salts with covers, etc. To his daughters, a thousand marks each to their marriages, and a hundred marks in plate to each. To forty parishes in Warwickshire and Worcestershire each one suit of vestments, and to the Abbey of Wynchcombe his wedding gown of "tinsell satten" to make a vestment, that they should pray for his soul. He left also two hundred marks' worth of goods to be distributed to poor householders and to the marriages of poor maidens within the same two counties. To his sister, Elizabeth Rodney, one hundred marks of plate; to his cousin, John Rodney, twenty pounds; to his household servants one year's wages with meat and drink; to his cousin, "the daughter of my Aunt Appulby," one hundred marks to her marriage; and other bequests to William Dingley, Sir William Tylar, Sir Thomas Lynde, Thomas Baskett, John Draper, Robert Benger (solicitor), and each of his executors.

He also directed that a Tomb of Alabaster should be made upon his father, with his Arms graven upon it; and that the body of his mother be "taken up where she lyeth," and laid beside his father. He also bequeathed to the King's Highness, "of whom I have had all my preferment," a little Chest of Ivory, whereof the Lock was Gylt; with a Chess-board under the same, and a Paire of Tables upon it; and all such Jewels and Treasure as were inclosed therein; most humbly requiring his Highness to accept the same as a remembrance of him. Further he bequeathed to the King certain Specialities, to the sum of a thousand marks, being for money lent to Sir Thomas Bullen, Kt.; to the intent that the King would be a goode lorde to his Lady and Children, and to suffer his last Will to be performed. Also he willed that where the parsonage of Compton is worth ten pounds a year to the parson, there, he willed his heirs, etc., yearly to pay the same parson five marks, "to the intent that the same parson shall keep a free gramar scole there." But unless the school was well and sufficiently kept, the payment was to cease. Moreover, he appointed that his executors should found in his name two Chantries at Compton; and that every priest therein should have yearly for his salary Ten Marks, to do daylie service, in Praying for the Souls of the King, the Queen, and the Lady Anne Hastings; for the Souls of him, his wife, his ancestors, and all Christian Souls. Which Priests, and every of them, to be presented to the Ordinary of the Diocese, and he to make Institution and Induction accordingly. And if those Priests, or

* His heir Peter was born five months later.

† Described in Appendix III.

any of them should die, then the Abbot of Winchcombe, and his successors, to present convenable Clerks, within two moneths after the vacancy; and in case of failing, the Abbot of Evesham to do the same, in form as abovesaid. Failing male issue, he left his lands to Compton of Lincolnshire * and his heirs male; then to his sister, Dame Rodney.

To this Will is attached a Schedule which is an inventory of the contents of Compton Wynyates House in 1523. It is described below.† The executors appointed were Dame Warburgh, the Lord Bishops of Exeter and Canterbury, Sir Henry Marney, Sir Henry Guildford, Sir Richard Broke, Sir John Dantsy, Humphrey Brown, Thomas Lesson, James Clarell and Thomas Unton. It is interesting to note that Wolsey's power was such that Sir Henry Guildford, executor, complained in Parliament in November 1529 that he had not been able to obtain probate of this Will until he had paid one thousand marks sterling to Cardinal Wolsey and Archbishop Warham.‡

Inventories of his possessions.

On the day of Sir William's death, Wolsey wrote ‡ to the King advising him to stay distribution of Compton's offices for a time. This advice was very necessary, for Henry was inundated with applications, and ordered "a complete bill to be given him of what these offices were." ‡ Sympathy is due to those who received this order, and it is hoped their lists were more complete than the ones given above can pretend to be.§ Of the great wealth that Compton accumulated in eighteen years far the larger part he invested in land; but we have inventories of his residences which describe other possessions.‡ "In his London house" were found: "Ready money, gold and silver, £1338 7s. 0½d.; jewels of gold and silver, £898 6s. 2d.; gilt plate, £85 5s. 3d.; parcel (partly) gilt plate, £31 12s. 2d.; white plate, £90 0s. 3½d.; silks, £210 13s. 6d." = £2654 4s. 5d. A summary of his goods "at his places in London, Compton, Bittishorne, the Great Park of Windsor,‖ Sir Walter Stoner's Place. Total of movables, £4485 2s. 3½d." Wards: One ward that cost £466 13s. 4d.; another of five hundred marks land; the third, "Sir. Geo. Salynger's son and his heir." But notwithstanding his wealth, there were debts to be met: "there is at Windsor Great Park place embezzled (*i.e.* mortgaged) to the value of £579. 2s. 6d., as appeared by a bill found in Sir William's place at London." "Sperat dettes,"¶ estimated at £3511. 13s. 4d. "Chatell Royal," £666 13s. 4d. "Desperate" debts estimated at £1908 6s. 8d. Debts owing by him estimated at £1000.

* There is a mention of Comptons in Lincolnshire in the "Post Mortem Inquisitions" (Series II. Vol. 91, No. 6), dated 1552. "William Compton was siezed of the manors of South Willingham, Billingay and Walcote" in that county. He had sons Thomas (*b.* 1522), William and John, and a brother John.

† Appendix III.

‡ Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII.

§ *E.g.* mention is made on page 17 of a list of monasteries of which Sir William was steward. I have not found any record of any of them.

‖ In 1511 (see above) he was appointed Keeper of Windsor Great Park.

¶ "Sperat" and "desperate" debts may mean "good and bad" debts owing to him.

It has already been mentioned that Bettishorne had in 1522 been inherited by Sir William from Warburger's mother, Katherine Berkeley. For Katherine's great-grandfather, Sir John Berkeley of Beverstone Castle (died 1361), had married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Sir John de Bettishorne. The further history of the house and estates is given on page 72. *Bettishorne.*

"Stoner's Place" was at the village of Stonor, near Henley-on-Thames, and is still lived in by the family. *Stonor.*

There is no information as to what was his "place in London." It is known that he and his wife generally lived with the King; but they would probably have had a London house as well, unless they lived at one of their residences in the suburbs. In July 1518 William owned a house and garden near the river at East Greenwich.* He also owned two residences in Tottenham, in one of which he was living at any rate in 1516. On March 15th, 1512, he purchased for £200 the manors of Totenham, Penbrokes, Bruses, Daubeneys, and Mokyng in Totenham, Co. Middlesex, with lands, etc., there and in Edelmeton (Edmonton) and Envile (Enfield);† while in 1514 he obtained a "grant" (*i.e.* permission to purchase) from the King of the same manors, for which he of course had also to pay.‡ On Saturday after Ascension Day in 1516, King Henry VIII met his sister, Margaret, Queen of Scotland (whose portrait hangs in the Chapel Drawing-Room at Compton Wynyates), "at Maister Compton's House beside Totnam."§ In 1516 and 1519 he leased much of this Tottenham property, including his "dwelling-house, gardens, orchard, closes," etc. for forty-one years.‖ Again in the time of Sir William's grandson, Henry,¶ Queen Elizabeth ordered Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh, to carry out at the public expense repairs to "Mister Compton's House at Totneham." Now on the Tottenham estate there were two residences, Bruce Castle and Mocking Hall.** At both dates the Compton family appears to have resided only in one of them; we can only guess at which it was. Robinson assumed †† in 1840, from the style of its architecture and from the fact that the Compton Arms hung over its porch, that Bruce Castle was entirely rebuilt by Sir William, and that it was here the royal guests came in 1516. This is supported by the 1619 map in Robinson, which depicts the "Lordship House" (Bruce Castle) as a much larger building than Mockyng. However, sixty years later, in May 1578, *Bruce Castle and Mocking.*

* Foreign and Domestic State Papers. Sir William was for life Keeper of the Manor of Pleasaunce in East Greenwich, of the Great and Little Garden and the Orchard there, and of East Greenwich Park with the Tower there, so the above reference may refer to one of these.

† F.D. 219.

‡ Patent 5, Henry VIII, Pt. 1, June 30th.

§ Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII.

‖ F.D. 220–221.

¶ Letter, dated November 10th, 1568, Marquis of Winchester to Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh, quoted in Robinson's "History of Tottenham," Vol. I. p. 216.

** See Appendix VI.

†† "History of Tottenham," 1840, Vol. I.

Queen Elizabeth stayed at Lord Compton's "proper ancient house in Totnam moated about, the manor of Mockings." * And so I think, although Sir William may have rebuilt Bruce Castle, it is more likely that he actually resided in the same house in which his grandson lived in 1578, namely Mockings.

Freehold land acquired by him.

In addition to the residences mentioned above, Sir William acquired the freehold of a considerable amount of land, a list of which is set out in Document No. 1369. In 1512 † he was granted by the King (probably on payment) all the possessions of Sir Richard Empson in the county of Northampton (chiefly in the Towcester district). In May † of the same year he was granted, on his marriage to Warburger, all the possessions of the late Francis and William, Viscounts Lovell, in Wilts. and Berks. In December ‡ of the same year he purchased Castle Ashby and the reversion of Yardley Hastings and Great and Little Doddington for £1100, while two months later, in February 1513,† he was granted in tail the custody of Langford's Place, with lodge annexed, a hospice called Lovell's Inn in Paternoster Row, and the manors of Aldwynkle, Northants, and Deyncourt, Bucks. In 1514 † he successfully claimed part of the manor of Long Compton, left to him and his heirs by the nuncupative will of Lady Straunge. In May 1516 † he was granted more Lovell property. In 1517 § he bought Princethorpe in Warwickshire. In 1518 he bought for £400 from Sir Thomas Boleyn a moiety of the manor of Long Compton,‖ and for £110 10*s.* a moiety of the manor of Much Wolford.¶ In 1520 he bought for £1640, from the Duke of Buckingham, the manors of Tysoe, Wolford Magna and Parva, and Whatcote, and when this Duke was attainted for treason in 1523, Sir William's claim to them was allowed by Act of Parliament.** In 1521 he succeeded to the Brereton property in Yorkshire, and in 1523 to the property of Warburgh's cousin, Lord Berkeley, as has already been mentioned. At his death he also owned the manor of Finchley,† and land there, in Hendon,† and in many other parts of what is now Greater London. We have a list † of the stewards and bailiffs on his estates at his death. There were nine stewards and fourteen bailiffs. Among the former was "John Palmer, steward of Compton Vyneyeats, Compton Longa, Wolford Magna and Parva, Tyshoo, Whatcote and Evenlode, 53*s.* 4*d.*" In addition to all these, there were "Wm. Sambache, Keeper of Compton Park, 60*s.* 8*d.*, and Wm. Warrall, Keeper of the orchards and gardens †† at Compton, £6. 13*s.* 4*d.*"

Purchase of Castle Ashby.

The purchase, above mentioned, of the Castle Ashby estate on December 10th, 1512,‡‡ led to prolonged litigation. Sir William purchased eight manors from

* Norden's "Spec. Brit.," 1593. † Foreign and Domestic Papers, Henry VIII.

‡ F.D. 241. And in August 1513 he purchased Yardley Chace subject to reservations for the lives of the Earl and Countess of Kent. (F.D. 289 and 291.)

§ Dugdale. ‖ F.D. 464. ¶ F.D. 633.

** F.D. 598–599. †† "*Pomariis et ortis.*"

‡‡ F.D. 241. The manors were those of Castle Ashby, Yardley Hastings, Doddington, Denton, Harrold, Thurleigh and two others.

Sir John Hussey, who six years previously had bought them from Richard, 3rd Earl of Kent. This Earl Richard was a "waster," and evidently also a mug; and many of his contemporaries did not scruple to take advantage of his recklessness and acquire in payment of gambling debts portions of the family estate to which he had succeeded in 1503. Though their legal title seems to have been good, it is clear that from the beginning they were ashamed of the bargains they had made. In 1524 Earl Richard died, and his heir immediately claimed that the estates had been entailed and that their sale was therefore invalid. Sir William tried to compromise by giving up four of the manors and retaining the other four; and, failing in this, he sold four to the King, probably intending thereby to strengthen his hold over the remainder. Meanwhile, in 1523 * Sir William had leased Castle Ashby on a grazing lease, and it was not till 1574, on the conclusion of a seven years' law-suit, that his grandson, Henry Lord Compton, succeeded by a compromise in keeping Yardley Hastings and Castle Ashby.† Yardley was before 1512 the residence of the de Greys, and of the mediæval castle at Castle Ashby there was nothing left but the ruin, which had become a cattle-shelter.

Improvements at Compton Wynyates.

But amid all the gaieties of Court, though loaded with honours and owning land in eighteen counties, Sir William made the work of his life the beautifying of his old family home, Compton Wynyates. A man of taste himself, there appears so little symmetry or design in the house that it seems unlikely that any architect was employed. The absence of any Italian ornamentation, such as we find in other houses of the time, seems to show that none but local labour was employed. Yet the result as we know it to-day is the most artistic perfection that can be imagined: in its grassy hollow, entirely concealed from the rest of the world, it lies like a rich ruby on a green velvet cushion. But before we discuss Sir William's building improvements, let us picture in our minds what the house was like as he inherited it. During the time of Sir William's father, Edmund, who died in 1493, the old manor house, probably the original twelfth-century one, was pulled down and the earliest part of the present house built. Whether any of the original house was left seems doubtful, as it was probably only built of timbering and rubble plaster. It is, however, possible that the stone foundations of the Hall, which are partly seen in the cellar, and some of the largest beams in the house, which have certainly been previously used elsewhere, still remain from the mediæval house. At any rate Edmund probably built on the site of the old house, which would doubtless have been surrounded by a moat, as it would hardly have been worth while filling in one moat and digging another; nor could any more suitable site for a moat have existed at Upper Compton Wynyates, as it was originally called. An excellent plan of the

* F.D. 245. To Thomas Leeson, clerk, who was an executor of his Will.

† See F.D. 241, 696*, 698 and 698*: also pages 37–38 below.

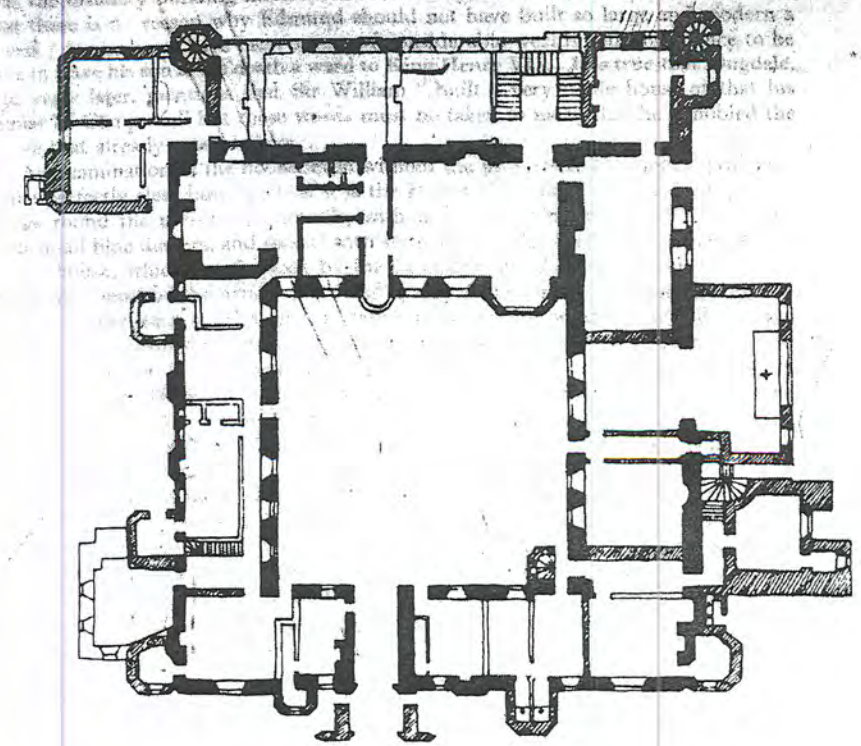
present house, included by the 5th Marquess in his book on Compton Wynyates, is reproduced opposite, and shows in different shades the parts of the house respectively built in the times of Henry VII, Henry VIII, and also later additions. There is no documentary evidence of the date of the "Henry VII" house; it may not have been built in Henry VII's time at all, but by Sir William Compton in Henry VIII's time, previous to additions and alterations that he subsequently made. From the following argument, however, it seems more likely to have been built before 1493.

Date of earliest part of present house.

To begin with, it must be noted that the earliest part of the present house is of a character very distinctive from the additions. It consists of four wings round a quadrangle, each covered with stone tiles, and it is very obvious that all the projections from this simple plan are later additions of more elaborate taste than the original house. Further, from the plan of the present house it can be seen that the outside walls of the earliest house are 4 feet thick, compared to 2 feet in the additions. A peculiar brick plinth can also be seen round what were its outside walls.

The date of the original house can next be partly decided by fixing the date of the additions. Sir William Compton was thirty-one years old when, in 1513, he returned from his foreign campaign covered with glory. It is almost certain that he can have done no building before that date: after 1509 he was much too busy amusing himself as a bachelor at the Court of his royal companion, and before that date his finances had not received that stimulus which has generally impelled men to pull down and rebuild. It seems equally certain that a great part of the embellishing additions, executed by Sir William were carried out during the period of Henry's happy relations with his first wife, Katharine of Aragon—the arms of Castile are prominent with those of the Tudor King over the Porch, and in the window of Henry VIII's Room. Those happy relations were already coming to an end in 1523; and Sir William was away on diplomatic and military expeditions from May 1520 until 1523, except for the year 1521; so that, except for 1521, no building can have been done after 1519. Would six years have sufficed to complete one distinct house and then make so many subsequent additions to it? For the additions themselves appear to have been made in different stages, or at any rate the plan of the south-west corner must have been altered several times while building was in progress. Again, Sir William was at the height of his popularity with the King in 1514, the earliest year, as we have seen, that he is likely to have done any building; and it would seem almost certain that he would therefore have displayed his royal master's Arms on the earliest building that he erected after 1514, and not only on later additions, such as the present Porch.

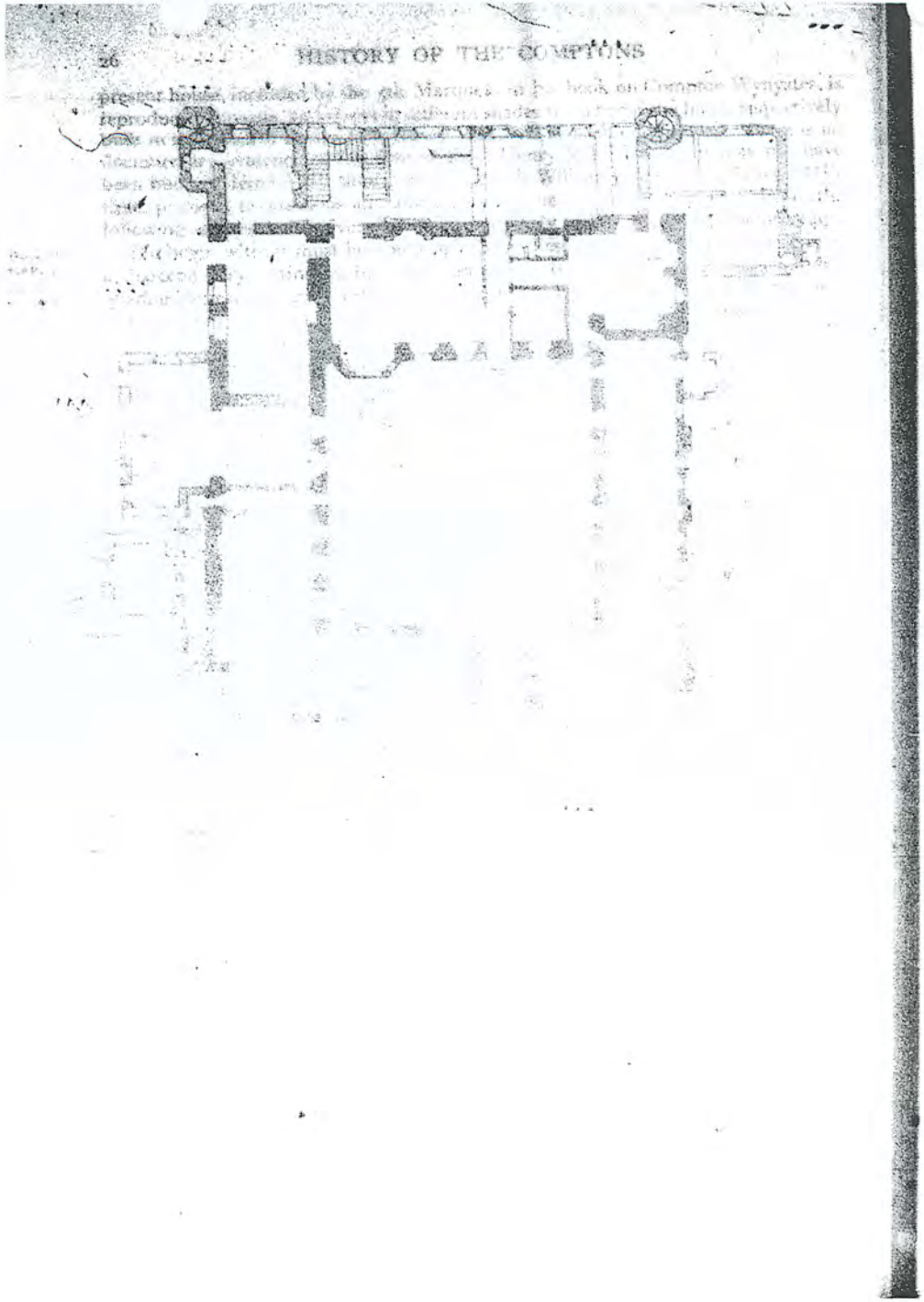
The obvious conclusion seems to be that the earliest house was built before 1514; and if so, it cannot have been built by Sir William, but was probably built by his father, Edmund, before 1493, which was the year of his death. The fact of its being built of brick shows that Edmund was a man of wealth and taste, since stone



COMPTON WYNYATES

GROUND FLOOR AS IN 1760

BEFORE 1493
1514 - 1523
1730 - 1738



was the ordinary building material of the locality, and brick a modern innovation. But there is no reason why Edmund should not have built so large and modern a house; for he must have been a man of considerable wealth and importance to be able to leave his son at his death a ward to King Henry VII. It is true that Dugdale, 150 years later, mentions that Sir William "built a very noble house at that his manor of Compton," but these words must be taken to mean that he ennobled the house that already existed there.

An examination of the house, even without the plan above mentioned, will soon make perfectly clear how much of it is the Henry VII house. It was built in four wings round the present quadrangle, with walls of red brick 4 feet thick, varied with small blue diapers, and roofed with stone tiles. The exterior of the north side of the house, which is inhabited by the caretaker, gives now the best idea of its character: most of the windows are still there, all the chimneys,* and the original eaves have not been spoiled, as they have elsewhere, by building the wall up into a parapet to collect the rain-water. In the interior, the four wings on both floors can have had few, if any, partitions; these must mostly have been inserted by Sir William. The old timber roofing can still be seen on both floors of the north wing, and on the upper floor it runs intact from the Avenue Room to the Minstrels Gallery, whence it probably continued at one time across the Great Hall on to the ledge visible at its southern end. It may also very likely have continued along the west side of the house as far as the Cavalier's Room. On the ground floor of the south wing the original wooden cornice can still be seen running throughout its length on both sides, showing probably that before Sir William's time there were no partitions there either. This south wing had always its additional floor with dormer windows in its roof; for this is proved by the survival of two windows blocked up by Sir William when he made his great addition at the south-west corner of the house. There exist six fireplaces, which appear to have been in this original house, and some of the panelling between the Butlery and the Kitchen, as also the carved window-sills under the two front gables. It is rather difficult to trace where the staircases were, but there seems undoubtedly to have been one from the Courtyard on the south side of the Porch, from which access at the top was gained, to the left into the present Housemaid's Room, and to the right into the Porch Room; at any rate, the moulding round these two doors is similar to that in the Kitchen and elsewhere, and is rather earlier in style than Henry VIII's time.

Fulbroke Castle.

Probably before Sir William started any building at all he was given the "custody" of the ruins of Fulbroke Castle † by the King, in order to make use of its materials at Compton. The original manor house of Fulbroke belonged in 1294

* The upper part of most may have been rebuilt.

† The following history of Fulbroke is taken from Leland's "Itinerary," Vol. V. p. 47–48 and Vol. XI. p. 155 (1543), and Dugdale's "Baronage" (1676).

to Nicholas of Warwick, Attorney-General to Edward I. But in 1325 it belonged to John de Hastings, Lord Bergavenny; and Joan, the widow of his descendant, William Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny, built a gate-house and a little lodge there. In 1428 there were only four inhabitants in the hamlet, and at about the same date the church was destroyed by escaped villeins, and only the manor-house remained. Five years later it belonged to John, Duke of Bedford, third son of Henry IV, who enclosed the park running down to the River Avon, and built there a "little Castle of brick and stone."[1] In 1437 it was bequeathed to Henry VI, who in 1451 granted it as a residence for life to John Talbot, Lord L'Isle. Edward IV next granted it to Richard Nevill, Earl of Warwick, for his life; and it was probably then that it was intentionally allowed to fall into ruin; for Leland tells us that it "stood bremlye in the sight of Warwick Castle and had been the cause of harte-burnynge and an eyesore to the Earls that lay in Warwick Castle, and was the cause of displeasure between each lord." At Nevill's death, Edward IV gave it to George Duke of Clarence; but on the latter's attainder in 1479 it reverted to the Crown, though the Castle and Gate-House were in ruins and only the Lodge was standing. Leland describes it as he saw it half a mile away, from Barford Bridge, and he says that "Compton of late days, seeing it going to ruin, helped it forward, taking part of it for the buildings of his house at Compton, and some part he gave away." At Fulbroke to-day can only be seen the shape under the turf of a moated heap by the roadside, and another heap on the hill behind.

The question of how much material Sir William brought from Fulbroke can only be answered by enumerating the details in the house of an earlier date than 1490. A family tradition holds that the twisted chimneys were brought thence on donkey back. Even if this were so, it seems hardly likely, in spite of Dugdale's statement, that any other of the brickwork of the house would have been brought such a long distance. There are to-day, about 30 yards west of the south corner of the Long Pond, the remains of old brick kilns with rows of steps on which the bricks were dried, and it seems probable that at various times clay was dug from the Long Pond with which to build parts of the house. More likely than the chimneys to have come from Fulbroke seem the bay window and the timbered ceiling in the Hall. It is certain that the bay window is of older date than Henry VII's time; the two carved heads terminating the hood-mould over the arched heads of the window openings have a coiffure and head-dress of an earlier date. Sir William's crest above the centre of the window, both outside and in, has obviously been added. The traceried band in which the shield occurs outside has belonged to a smaller bay window, where the wider panel was in the centre. It has now three panels on the right and four on the left. The stone jointing shows that the centre panel on the left is an addition, required for the greater width of the bay in which it is now placed.

Equally clear is it that the ceiling of the Great Hall was originally made for another house. The wooden principals do not fit in with the windows, the carving is of older date than the house, and the large frieze is a patchwork of many designs. In its original house there was probably an extra section of roof beyond what is now its south end, and the louvre was thus in the middle. The construction of this louvre can be clearly seen by crawling between the Hall ceiling and the outside roof. It consisted of an octagonal wooden funnel of perpendicular moulded jambs, filled in between with planks running from the Hall ceiling through the ridge of the outside roof into the open air, where it was covered by a turret or lanthorn. Above the roof, the sides of the turret were probably closed only with narrow sloping slats, similar to Venetian blinds, which excluded rain and snow without impeding the passage of the smoke. The remains of this funnel are still above the ceiling, though its top had to be sawn off when the turret was removed in 1855 and the main outside roof run flush through.* But these sawn-off pieces were evidently used to cover the bottom end of the funnel, and traces of smoke, if not of charring, can be distinctly seen on them now from the hall below. Not since 1730, however, has any fire in the middle of the Hall floor smoked through the louvre, for somewhere near that year the present fireplace and chimney flue were built; and it seems strange that the louvre should have been left out of action till so late as 1855.

The Hall screen likewise seems to have been brought from Fulbroke. Its panels of quaint carvings are apparently a patchwork of varying designs. The two outside panels at about 5 feet from the ground do not even appear to be English. The delicate and beautiful lacework cornice was not long enough for its present site, and the space at each end had to be filled up with plain pieces of wood. It is, however, noticeable that, wherever it was first erected, its reverse side must have been in the dark, for the carver never got further there than a general outline of the design, which was obviously intended to be finished similarly to the front. The centre panel of the screen is carved in mediæval style, and its crudeness may be intended to simulate antiquity; but it is shown to be of later date than the rest of the screen by the linen-fold work on its reverse side. It must have been carved after 1512, because it has on the Compton Arms the Royal Lion which was granted by Henry VIII in that year. Its carving depicts a fight between English and French Knights, and probably represents the Battle of Tournay, at which Sir William won his spurs in 1512.

In addition to these prominent features of the Hall, there seems little doubt that all the gargoyles and many of the stone-mullioned windows of the house also came from Fulbroke or elsewhere. And probably all the south windows of the Chapel, with the beautiful pomegranate design along their drip-moulding, also

* In F.D. 1340, XVII. Lady Alwyne tells us that she remembered the louvre being removed.

came from elsewhere: the date of the carving in the spandrels is earlier than 1500, and it is noticeable that in one of the windows one spandrel out of the six appears to have been missing and to have been replaced by one similar to those of Sir William's time. The windows in the Courtyard of the Dining-Room and Ante-Chapel seem to be of similar date, and probably were of the same origin.

Having discussed in detail what materials in the house were brought from Fulbroke, let us now describe all the additions made by Sir William to his father's house. Soon after his marriage in 1513 he must have built the Chapel, which is shown to have been built with three outside walls by the plinth which runs round the outer side of them. Dugdale tells us * that he erected therein "a costly window towards the East (*sic*); and therein represented, with rare workmanship in Glass, the Passion of Our Blessed Saviour; and in the lower part himself and his Lady, kneeling in their Surcotes of Arms." It is said to have been a replica of this window that was presented by him to Balliol College,† Oxford, and is illustrated in Drummond's "Noble Families." An inscription in the glass said that that window was given in 1520, and Dugdale tells us it was set up in Sir William's time.‡ The figures of Sir William, his lady, two sons and one daughter are depicted by Drummond in contemporary dress, and not, as Dugdale shows them, in Puritanical garb. Balliol Chapel was entirely rebuilt towards the close of the nineteenth century, and in the present Chapel only a very small piece of Sir William's window has been replaced. It is in the north window, second from the east, and shows Sir William and his two sons on their knees.

At Compton Wynyates during the years following 1513 Sir William added three main flat-roofed towers at three corners of the house, and innumerable turrets elsewhere, which are seen very clearly on the plan opposite page 26. His building ended, at latest by the end of 1521, with the addition on to the flat roof of the South-west Tower of the Priest's Room, which in the inventory of 1523 is called "The New Tower Chamber." In sum, all the charm of the irregularity of the present house, and of its twisted chimneys, is due to Sir William, as also is the battlemented parapet, intended to convey the importance of a fortress in days when fortifications were no longer required. But some important features of his building have since disappeared. The present moat continued all round the house, close under the walls and as wide as the flat lawn. It was crossed by a drawbridge at the Porch, but was reached in several other places by staircases, at the foot of which boats may have been kept for use when the bridge was up. The present Porch Room must have contained the mechanism for raising and lowering the drawbridge, and

* Baronage. The window was destroyed by the Puritans in the Civil Wars.

† Sir William's name is read annually at Balliol on Founder's Day in a list of benefactors to whom the College is indebted. Werburga was descended from John de Balliol.

‡ One edition of Dugdale gives 1530 as the date on the window, but this does not accord with the statement in all editions that it was set up "in his time."

the notches worn by its chains in the stone arch of the Porch still remain. In those days one passed out over this bridge into a larger court "without the moat," which corresponded very much to the present front lawn in extent. According to the 1523 inventory, it was surrounded by stables and cowsheds containing horses, sheep and "mylche Kyne," barns filled with grain and straw, a brewhouse no doubt full of ale, and sleeping accommodation for the outdoor servants and the family priest. What remained of these buildings at various dates is shown by a plan and sketch of 1771,* the description of Howitt's visit in 1839, and photographs of about 1835 † and 1855.‡ At the time of the Civil Wars this court also was completely surrounded by a moat, or a fosse, which no doubt existed in Sir William's time. It could only be crossed by a second drawbridge, near the foot of the present Avenue, which was large enough to carry heavily laden farm-carts. It is difficult to believe that the lie of the ground can have been so different in those days as to allow of a moat round this great court being on the same level as the moat round the house; nor is it easy to understand how any moat on a higher level could have been filled with water. It seems most likely, therefore, that the ditch round the outer court was dry, though it was certainly deep enough to be impassable except across the drawbridge. This view is supported by the expression, quoted above from the 1523 inventory, which describes the Great Court as being "without the moat."

Contents of Compton House.

We have a list of stained glass surviving in the house in about 1723.§ That in two rooms showed quarterings of Henry VIII and Katharine, of which one set still remains in the present Henry VIII's Room; that in another two rooms displayed quarterings of Sir William and Walburgh Brereton. We have also an inventory of the contents of Compton Wynyates made in 1523, and forming a schedule to Sir William's Will.‖ It is interesting in many ways, but perhaps what strikes one most in perusing it is first the large amount of embroidery and tapestry hanging on the walls even in the servants' rooms, and secondly the paucity of furniture. In 1523 Sir William must have been a very wealthy man; he had travelled widely and seen beautiful things, and his country residence had been honoured with visits from his sovereign. It is strange, then, that he had not better furniture as we know it now. The Big Hall and its contents are not mentioned in the inventory. But the Parlour (present Dining-Room) had two long tables of oak and elm, together valued at 5*s.*, supported by oak trestles, each on a carpet of coarse verdure 12 by 1 yards; it had five forms and three stools bearing six fat cushions embroidered with the Compton Arms; and a cup-board with two Almerys ¶ at 4*s.* 6*d.* completed the furniture,

* Capability Brown's Survey. Old Library Shelf, S. 6.

† In Lady Alwyne's Album.

‡ In F.D. 1364.

§ Described below on page 172.

‖ This inventory is given in greater detail in Appendix III.

¶ Open at the bottom shelf for the display of plate, but enclosed at the top shelf with doors.

while the walls were hung with tapestry imagery worth £11. 3s. 4d. The present Drawing-Room and Combe-Room, forming at that time one room, had furniture exactly similar in character. Every other room in the house, except the Armoury (now the Barracks) and the "new Tower Chamber" (the present Priest's Room), contained at least one bed, and generally little else except perhaps an "old broken carpet." No mention is anywhere made of washing utensils. The best four bedrooms were the "Chapel Chamber," Henry VIII's Room, the "White Chamber" (? now the Cavalier's Room) and "the Chamber over the Cellar" (? where now is Henry VIII's Dressing-Room). These were all tapestried, and all had "little window curtains of Dornyx"* (Tournay), which material Sir William had perhaps brought back from the Wars. But their main feature was the magnificent hangings of their oak bedsteads. That in the last-named room, for example, had a "Celour and Tester of checked velvet, red and green, and paved with silk bawdekyn (embroidery) wrought with White and Red Roses and sunbeams of white cloth of silver . . . with curtains, counterpoynt, tappetts and a long cushion of the same." But the Cavalier's Room appears to have been Sir William's. It had "a Sparver (canopy) of Cloth of Gold, trailed with Yellow and violet sarcenet, embroidered with roses and letters of gold of his name and his cognisance," and was also peculiar in containing the only ornamental table in the house, "a little folding table with trestle of Spanish making," and also an expensive (6s. 8d.) "trussing (folding) bed of wainscot in leather case," which no doubt travelled with Sir William both at home and in foreign campaigning.

Among the Chapel's most valuable contents were three vestments, "of white damask embroidered with flowers, 40s.," "of bawdekyn (embroidery) 20s.," and "of course Russet damask embroidered with Copper Gold 8s."; also five rich "awter clothes," of which one was "of white satin embroidered with fleurs de lys in gold"; and finally "3 small images of timber gilted" and a "Tablet" (panel picture). The Storehouse (unidentifiable) contained curious odds and ends: four old tablets of Our Lady (the B.V.M.), one "embroidered with gold veins"; a great Steel Mirror; "a glass of pomander (scented ointment), fashioned round, garnished with damask gold with a tassel, at 20s."; "a middle standard (? furniture or armour) covered with leather with small ribs of iron;" and "a piece of beyondsee Say" (? foreign serge). What is now called the Barracks, owing to its use in Civil War times, was in 1523 called the Armoury. It contained twenty-four sets of "standards, aprons and gussets (for protecting armpits) of mail, cankard" (rusted); "72 rusty saletts" (light helmets); "20 pairs of rusty plints" (for protecting elbows); "20 pairs broken brigandirons" (suits of armour for light infantry); and "12 rusty bills and halberts." I think we may almost assume that all the

* Doornyk is the present Flemish name for Tournay, where in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the best known tapestry looms.

serviceable armour had been removed to equip Sir William's retainers for the coming Scotch campaign. Among the kitchen utensils are "a pair of great Racks of Iron at 20s.," "8 great square spits, 8 round spits, a Gridiron and a Skymmer." The Nursery was in the present Still Room,* as it was again in 1694, but little Peter was not yet born, so that we do not find there "a drum and pair of drumsticks," such as were enjoyed there by his descendants, children of the 4th Earl.† The Priest's Chamber was "W'out the Moat" (in the outer court), where also lived the "Cattles," consisting of "9 Mylche Kyne at 10s. and 200 wethers at 2s. 8d." The inventory closes with a list of twenty-one pieces of plate which were given to Sir William by the French King.

Compton Park.

In April 1520, when Sir William had practically completed his beautiful new house, he obtained royal license to impark an additional two thousand acres of land in OverCompton and NetherCompton,‡ thus further adding to the importance of his home. No doubt the Park would have been surrounded by a wall,§ and would have contained deer; and at that early date the privilege was not a common one, for in South Warwickshire, at any rate, the Park at Ettington was the only other.

There can be no doubt that during Sir William Compton's life some area would have been set aside as the Tilting Yard. It need not have been very large, and this may have been the occasion for the first levelling of the present Best Garden. It is unlikely that any garden existed outside the Moat.

The 5th Marquis in "Compton Wynyates" tells of a match at skittles on June 21st, 1644, between Sir William Compton and Sir William Dugdale the historian. The triangular field at the top of the hill south-east of the house is still called the Bowling Green, as it is in the 1760 map; but the length of ground halfway up the hill above the Best Garden certainly looks as if it had been levelled for some such purpose.

* Below Henry VIII's Room.
† See Inventory of 1694 (F.D. 1069).
‡ NetherCompton must have been at the Compton Wynyates Farm near the Tysoe-Shipston road.
§ I have sometimes wondered whether the low wall, which can be traced now in an almost continuous course, marks the boundary of this old Park.

CHAPTER III

PETER COMPTON

(1528–1544)

PETER COMPTON was born in August 1523 * during his father's absence in the Scotch Wars. He was therefore not quite five at his father's death, and he then became the ward of Cardinal Wolsey till the latter's death in 1530.† On May 28th, 1531, his wardship and marriage were given to George, 4th Earl of Shrewsbury, Steward of the King's Household, who was "to hold, during the said Peter's minority, the lordships or manors of Maxstoke, Wolfords Magna and Parva, and Long Compton, with all liberties, etc. in the same, and in Nether Pillerton, Kynton, Derset (Dasset), Shockboroughe and Herbury, Co. Warwick." ‡ Lord Shrewsbury died when Peter was thirteen, but an intimacy had sprung up between the latter and Shrewsbury's daughter, Lady Anne, that ended in their marriage on May 29th, 1537. Through Anne presumably came to the Compton family the portraits of the 1st Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury,§ her great-great-grandparents, which hang now at Compton Wynyates. Anne's

* The Inquisition taken at Peter's death mentions that he was aged twenty years and seven months at his death, and so still a ward of the King (F.D. 1368).
Sir William's Will shows that in March 1523 he had no son yet, though a child was at that time apparently expected.
N.B.—Foreign and Domestic State Paper No. 4442 states erroneously that Peter was "six and over" at his father's death.

† Collins' "Peerage." *N.B.*—In 1528 Wolsey let the manor of Harrold (Beds.) for the period of Peter's nonage (Foreign and Domestic State Papers).

‡ F.D. 697.

§ Sir John Talbot was born in 1390, and married first Maud, daughter of Lord Furnival, and secondly Margaret Beauchamp, daughter of the Earl of Warwick. The portrait is of his second wife. Shakespeare calls Talbot "the great Alcides of the field." Under Henry V he in 1420 besieged and captured Meaux and Paris, and in 1422 was present at the King's death-bed. Under Henry VI he won victory after victory, his name becoming a terror to Frenchmen. At Patay, in 1429, his army was routed by Joan of Arc, and he was himself captured; but he was soon exchanged, and resumed his command energetically. He again was carried by his victories to the capture of Paris, and was in 1442 created Earl and made a Marechal of France. After a few years as Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, he again went to France, where, advancing to the relief of Chatillon, he was mortally wounded on July 20th, 1453, and died, aged sixty-three. He had won over forty different engagements, but his death was the end of English dominion in France (Burke). In his portrait he looks more like a priest than a soldier.

mother was Elizabeth Walden, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Richard Walden, Knight, of Erith in Kent. The Erith residence and property passed at her death to her son Henry, Lord Compton, for in 1606 we find them belonging to the 2nd Lord Compton.*

On Shrewsbury's death in July 1538, Maxstoke was granted for life during Peter's minority to Sir William Paget, Secretary of State, and afterwards 1st Lord Paget.†

Peter died on January 30th, 1544,‡ and was buried in Westminster Abbey,§ leaving a posthumous son who was born on July 14th. At his death the Castle, park and manor of Maxstoke were granted by the King to Lord Clinton "supposing he (Peter) had left no issue male, so that the inheritance of this Castle had again returned to the Crown." ‖ His widow, Anne, married as her second husband William Herbert, 1st Earl of Pembroke, who died in 1570; and she died and was buried at her home at Erith in Kent with great solemnity in 1588 † only one year before the death of her son Henry.

* See F.D. 732*. And see pages 105–6, below. † Collins.
‡ P.M. "Inquisition," II. Vol. 73, No. 9.
§ F.D. 1081; Dugdale. (There is no record in the Abbey Registers as early as this date.)
‖ Dugdale.

CHAPTER IV

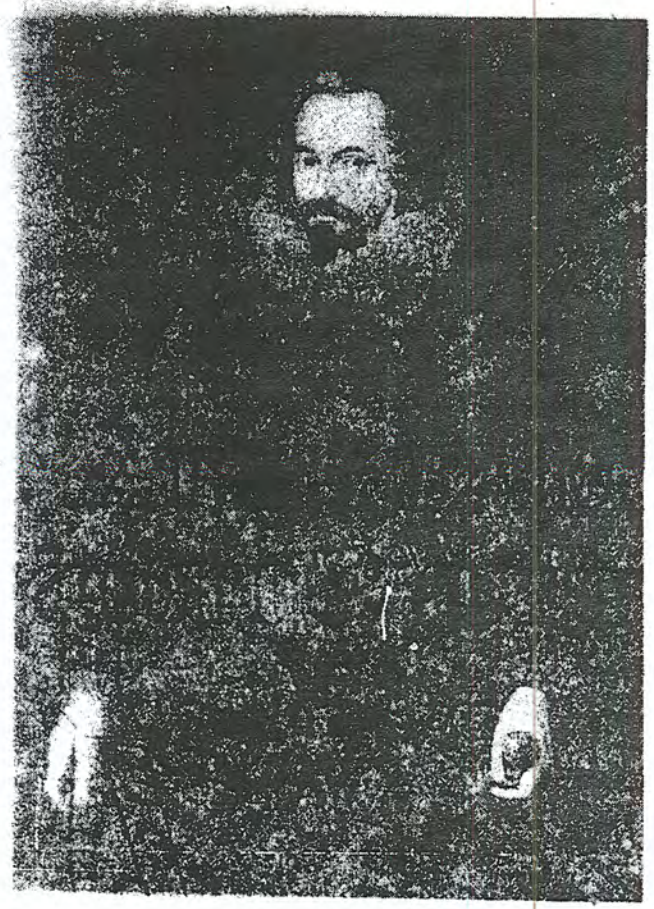
HENRY, 1ST LORD COMPTON

(1544–1589)

HENRY was born at Finchley on July 14th, 1544, six months after his father's death, and was brought up by his mother.* He received a legal training such as was becoming usual among the nobility since education had brought to the fore in public life so many men of lesser birth. On March 1st, 1563, he was admitted to Gray's Inn, and in the same year he was elected M.P. for Old Sarum, for which he sat until 1567.† On February 10th, 1567, just before his twenty-fourth birthday, he was knighted at Arundel House by the Earl of Leicester.‡ What was his claim to this distinction at so early an age we can only guess. He was connected through his mother with two families very influential at Court; her second husband, Pembroke, and her nephew, Shrewsbury, were both men of great consequence. Pembroke is said by Burke to have been one of the most powerful noblemen of his time, and four years later was to be honoured with burial in St. Paul's; while Shrewsbury was shortly to become Lord High Steward and subsequently Earl Marshal. Henry must therefore have been known at Court at an early age; and on May 8th, 1572, he was summoned to Parliament as Baron Compton, which summons he received to every Parliament until February 1589,† the year of his death.

He married, first, in about 1568, Lady Frances Hastings, daughter of the 2nd Earl of Huntingdon, by whom he had four children, (1) Margaret, who married the son and heir of Lord Mordaunt of Turvey,§ and was mother of the 1st Earl of Peterborough, (2) William, who became 1st Earl of Northampton, (3) Thomas, who married the widow of Sir George Villiers, but had no issue, and (4) Charles, who died unmarried.‖ An account of Sir Thomas is given in Chapter VI. Lady Frances's mother was granddaughter of the Countess of Salisbury, who was sole heiress of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV, and whom

* The Inquisition at Peter's death (F.D. 1368).
† "Complete Peerage." ‡ Collins' "Peerage."
§ This Lord Mordaunt sat along with Lord Compton at the trial of Mary Queen of Scots.
‖ Lord Alwyne's pedigree.



Sir William Compton had wished to marry. This royal blood was the cause of a proposal of marriage with Lady Mary, sister of Lady Frances, by the Emperor of Russia, which is thus described: * "John Vassilivich, Grand Duke and Emperor of Russia, having a desire to marry an English lady, was told of the Lady Mary Hastings, who being of the blood royal, he began to affect; whereupon making his desires known to Queen Elizabeth, who did well approve thereof, he sent over Theodore Pissemskoie, a nobleman of great account, his ambassador, who, in the name of his master, offered great advantages to the Queen in the event of the marriage. The Queen hereupon caused the lady to be attended with divers ladies and young noblemen, that so the ambassador might have a sight of her, which was accomplished in York House Garden, near Charing Cross, London. There was the envoy brought into her presence, and casting down his countenance, fell prostrate before her, then rising, with his face still towards her (the lady with the rest admiring at his strange salutation), he said, by his interpreter, 'it sufficed him to behold the angelic presence of her who, he hoped, would be his master's spouse and empress.'" † The alliance did not, however, take place, and the lady died unmarried. Lady Frances died in 1574.†

The Queen's visit.

Camden says ‡ of Compton that "he was a person of fine wit and solid judgement," but, judging from the following incident, he must have been a somewhat truculent person. On August 12th, 1572, on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth visiting Warwick, "he processed next before Her Majesty as High Shiref of the Shire." And we are told that "he wold have carried up his rod into the Towne; which was forbidden him by the Heralds and Gentlemen Ushers, who therefore had placid the Bailiff on the right hand with his mace." § When we look at the determined expression in his portrait at Compton, we can well believe that even "the bailiff with his mace" may have had little terror for him.

On Saturday, the 26th of the same month, the Queen journeyed from Kenilworth, by Charlecot, to the Lord Compton's at Compton Wynyates, whence Lord Burleigh wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury, Compton's first cousin, "Surely the entertainment is very great, and here have I wished you." §

Litigation as to purchase of Castle Ashby.

Between the years 1567 and 1574 Henry Lord Compton was defendant in a law suit by which the plaintiff, the 6th Earl of Kent, tried to re-claim the manors of Castle Ashby, Yardley Hastings, and others adjoining, which had been sold by Richard, 3rd Earl of Kent, in 1506, to his brother-in-law, Sir John Hussey, who on December 10th, 1512, sold them again to Sir William Compton for £1100.‖

It has already been explained how the "waster" Earl of Kent came to part

* Burke's "Peerage," p. 1053.
† Collins' "Peerage."
‡ "History of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth."
§ Nichols' "Progresses."
‖ F.D. 241.

with his family estates † And though his successors had apparently made no objection to the sales during his lifetime, they took steps after his death to annul them by trumping up a story about a second Will said to have been made verbally by George, 2nd Earl of Kent, on his death-bed, entailing the family estates.‡ There seems no ground for the validity of this Will, as the testator had, on December 18th, 1503, three days before his death, made a Will in which no mention is made of entailing the family estates, which was properly delivered to the Chancery Court immediately after his death as his last Will. Two exemplifications of this latter Will are among the family documents: the first (F.D. 696*) in 1524 by Sir William Compton, when Earl Richard's heir commenced the dispute, a few months after his death; the second (F.D. 698) by Sir Henry Compton in 1567, at which date the law suit commenced.§ The explanation of the delay in bringing this action against the Comptons appears to have been that Earl Richard's heir, the 4th Earl of Kent, was confined as a lunatic during some of his life, and that he had the most influential people of the Court against him; and he would have been unlikely to obtain a judgment, however good his title.

The law suit of 1567 never actually came into Court, but was finally settled in January 1574 by a composition which is described in the family documents Nos. 34 and 249. By this compromise Lord Compton ceded the manors of Harrold and Bowells (alias Thurleigh), Co. Beds., and paid £1400 for retaining the manors of Castle Ashby and Yardley Hastings.

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Immediately following the final establishment of his claim to the estate, Henry must have commenced the building of the present Castle Ashby house, although it was not till ten years later that the sixty-one years' grazing lease of the estate to Thomas Leson, clerk, expired.‖ In the spandrel of the doorway arch at the foot of the west turret we find the arms of Henry and his first wife, Frances Hastings. As she is said by Collins to have died in 1574, we may reflect sadly that, very few months after the completion of the plans and the commencement of their execution, he was deprived of her advice, and the stone carving, which had been intended as a boast of their architectural accomplishments, became a memorial to her whom he had lost.

† See p. 25, above.

‡ This Will is quoted by Robinson in his "Vitruvius Britannicus" as being given by Nichols in his "History of Leicestershire" from a MS. of Dr. Zachary Grey (no doubt a descendant of the Earl of Kent) in the collection of Mr. Isaac Reed of Staple Inn (*d.* 1807).

§ The pleas of the lawyers of both sides are shown in family document No. 698*, which is a transcript of two documents among the collection of Lady Lucas (heiress of the Earls of Kent), and numbered in her catalogue "Appendix 101." Notes summarising the main points in the case have been added.

‖ F.D. 245.

Early Histo Ashby paris

A few words should perhaps here be said of the previous history of Castle Ashby :— *

Castle Ashby is first mentioned, as "Asebi," in the time of Edward the Confessor, when it was rated to the value of 20*s.* yearly. The name of its Saxon lord is not recorded.

At the time of Domesday Survey (between 1083 and 1086) it was held by Hugh from the Countess Judith, to whom it had been presented, along with the manor and chase of Yardley and innumerable other estates, by her uncle, William the Conqueror. These estates became the honor of the Earldom of Huntingdon, which title was conferred on her husband by William the Conqueror. Hugh's holding is thus described :—

"The same (Hugh) holds of the Countess in Asebi two hides less one virgate; and it was assessed for as much in King Edward's time. There is land for five ploughs. In demesne there are two (ploughs); and twelve villeins with six bordars have three ploughs. There (is) a mill rendering six shillings and eight pence, and twelve acres of meadow. Wood one furlong and eleven perches in length, and one furlong less five perches in breadth. It was worth twenty shillings; now (it is worth) four pounds."

This Hugh also held land of Judith in Scaldwell, Houghton, Holcot, Moulton and Grendon.

Yard Hast

Judith's husband, Waltheof Earl of Northampton, Northumberland and Huntingdon, was beheaded in 1075. But she probably continued to live at Yardley, which seems to have been the residence of the Earls of Huntingdon. Her daughter and heiress, Maud, married (*c.* 1114) David, brother of Alexander, King of Scotland, who became Earl of Huntingdon and eventually King of Scotland (*d.* 1153). King David and Maud were succeeded by three grandson brothers, Malcolm (*d.* 1165) and William, each in turn Kings of Scotland and Earls of Huntingdon, and David, the third brother, who succeeded as Earl of Huntingdon but not as King of Scotland. Earl David died at Yardley in 1219, and was succeeded by his son, John le Scot, who died in 1237 (or 1244) without issue. John's sister Ada married Henry de Hastings, and with her three elder sisters shared "Judith's lands"; her share included Yardley and Asebi, and henceforward Yardley was distinguished by the designation of "Hastings." It was probably this Henry de Hastings who built the Manor House at Yardley, of which a part still survives. The main hall has gone, but the part remaining contains what probably constituted: the buttery and pantry on the ground floor with the cellar below; the solar, bedroom and privy on the

* The authorities for the following history are often given in Robinson's "Vitruvius Britannicus."

first floor; and a windowless bedchamber (probably for servants) in the roof.* It has been much neglected since its possession by the Comptons, but an attempt is now being made to restore it, since it has been scheduled by the Office of Works as a monument of historical interest.

John the Scot, evidently between 1219 and 1237, gave a charter † to the Hospital of St. John in Northampton confirming his father David's grant of thirty loads of free firewood from Yardley Chase in memory of David's brothers, Malcolm and William, formerly Kings of Scotland. John's charter added another five loads to these, and these thirty-five loads remained a charge on the owners of Yardley Chase until, in 1694, the 4th Earl of Northampton commuted it for a monetary payment of £10. It is interesting to note that the present Lord Northampton still pays annually to the same hospital £10 " in lieu of firewood."

Yardley Chase.

A few words should here be interposed describing the early history of Yardley Chase. It is not known whether Judith had any special rights of a Chase there, though the tree now known as Cowper's Oak was previously known as Judith's tree.‡ But her son-in-law, David King of Scotland, was granted by Henry I " liberties, acquittances and free customs " in all the lands in the honour of Huntingdon, which grant was renewed to his grandson David, Earl of Huntingdon, by Henry II in 1190. This latter document and the others mentioned below were transcribed in 1635 from " the records of King Charles in the Receipt of the Exchequer "; and the transcription is catalogued with the family documents.§ By the charter Earl David and his heirs were to have " their enclosure of Yardley, their Brushwood of Barton and Dodington, and their hunting and warren in them "; while their men had rights of grazing and many other liberties, free of the " view and livery of the King's foresters." In 1237 a similar grant was made by Henry III to John Earl of Huntingdon (elsewhere called " le Scot "), and in this too was mentioned the " enclosure of Yardley." Then in 1287 a Plea of Venery was presented before the King's Justices, which explains more what the " enclosure " was in the time of John de Hastings :—

" It was presented that John de Hastinges holds a certain chase at Yerlede (*sic*) within the bounds of Salcey forest which is to the great detriment and destruction of the wild beasts of our lord the King, inasmuch as he takes all manner of beasts at

* See Paper read in December 1904 to the Northants Archæological Society by Major C. A. Markham. In a forty-one years' lease of the manor and farm by Sir William Compton (see F.D. 247) the landlord agrees " to repair the hall, chamber and kitchen of the manor." Major Markham mentions that the kitchen would have been a separate building at the back.

† This charter was produced by the Hospital as evidence in 1565, when a survey was made of the estate, which had recently been bought by the Comptons, and is transcribed therein. See F.D. 247.

‡ It is impossible that the present tree should have been a conspicuous one in her time, and it is probably the successor of a tree of her time which marked an important boundary.

§ F.D. 1210, vii.

his will, with dogs and greyhounds, bows and arrows, and nets, and holds a certain park there by what warrant it is not known, in which he has a certain deer-leap to the great detriment of the said forest,* and because the herbage is enclosed within the chase and in the aforesaid park, the said beasts congregate there and the lord of Yerdeley and his familiars fix nets in the same chase towards the forest and take the wild beasts alive and put them into the said park and also of the dead ones they do what they will, and it is the Kings forest on either side of the said chase. It is ordered to summon the said John to respond to the said charge."

And in an undated Inquisition made at Mallegrene in the Forest of Salcey we get further enlightenment on the difficulties of the King's foresters and regarders in other parts of the forest. They complained of " trespasses by malefactors, such as thefts of underwood in the King's enclosures, the taking of hares by night in nets, the felling and the carrying off of oaks, and of chasing a deer with bows and arrows and assaulting the Keeper who intervened." But in spite of these accusations Edward III in 1341 confirmed to Laurence de Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, the charters to his predecessors of 1190 and 1237. And four years later Laurence de Hastings, late Earl of Pembroke, granted " to his body-servant, Robert Wyard, the bailliwick of his manor of Yardley and the custody of his Chase there for his life, taking for his wages a penny a day, an esquire's robe yearly, hay and litter for his horse, etc, with the fees pertaining to his office." The last of the documents transcribed in 1635 is a Perambulation of 1299 of the Forests of Salcey and Whittlewood, which describes in detail their boundaries at that date. For a description of the bounds of Yardley Chase reference should be made to the Post-Mortem Inquisition made in 1545.†

The Survey ‡ of 1565 gives us the following further details about Yardley Park and Yardley Chase at that date. Yardley Park was three miles in circumference, containing in itself 300 acres and feeding 100 does, 40 beast and 20 horses. One part was well planted with oaks and another part lightly planted. It contained four coppices : Collyers Hyerne (46 acres), Le Copice near the gate of the Park (30 acres), Ferne Hills (44 acres), and Rootyepytt Copice (50 acres)—a total of 170 acres of coppice. The lord of Yardley Manor had also within the manor Yardley Chase, which was seven miles in circumference and moderately filled with deer ; he held pleas of forest within the chace each year at his Swanmote. The Chase contained the following coppices : Blyndley (48 acres), New Haye (56 acres), Allness (56 acres), Grymsee (22 acres), Holbrook (40 acres), Church Slade (40 acres), The Seene (60 acres), Le Over Hey (50 acres), Le Nether Hey (36 acres), Raunson Roade (18 acres), Lykley

* This deer-leap was probably constructed like a contemporary one at Preston, so that the deer could jump into the enclosure, but could not get out.

† Transcribed in F.D. 1368.

‡ F.D. 247, and Appendix I to the Document Catalogue.

(48 acres), House Wood (18 acres), Short Wood (56 acres), Middle Copice (30 acres), and Spottlowe Copice (35 acres)—a total of 613 acres of coppice, all planted also with " great trees."

The above-mentioned charter of John the Scot to St. John's Hospital was witnessed, among others, by David de Essebi, who is shown by other evidence to have been at this time lord of the manor of Castle Ashby. The recumbent figure of a Crusader in Castle Ashby Church is supposed to represent this David de Essebi; and, if it does, the Crusade in which he took part would be that of 1240, and he would have served in the train of his overlord, the Earl of Huntingdon, whose predecessor had in 1190–92 accompanied King Richard I to the Holy Land with 500 men in his train.

A few other names of lords of Ashby occur between Hugh in 1066 and David de Essebi, but no connection between them can be traced. This David de Essebi forfeited his lands in the reign of King John for adherence to the Barons, but in 1217, on his return to fealty and service of King Henry III, they were restored to him; and in 1219, on the death of Earl David, he had the honour of being one of the three individuals the custody of whose lands was committed to him during the Royal pleasure. In 1242, in the Testa de Nevill, he is certified to hold " one fee in Esseby and Grendon of the fees of the honor of Huntingdon of the purparty of Henry Hastings." In 1264 he and his son Stephen are reported to have taken part in the rising of the Barons under Simon de Montfort against the King, and in the Battle of Lewes, where Henry III was defeated by the Earl of Gloucester and taken prisoner. The next year, however, Prince Edward defeated the Barons at Evesham, as a consequence of which the lands of David de Essebi were confiscated along with those of other offending Barons. In 1268, when the confiscated lands came to be redeemed, it appears that David had enfeoffed a Jew of the manor of Ashby, who in turn had sold it to Alan la Zouche.* In 1295 the Zouches were still in possession of the manor, but we find that by 1306 Walter de Langton, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, had become possessed of it, for in that year he had licence to " embattle " his mansion at Ashby David. The Latin word used is " *kernellare*," which gives us some idea of the crenellated character of the building which existed here at that time, and from which the parish was henceforward known as Castle Ashby. The Bishop died in 1321, but in 1315 he had apparently given the manor of Ashby to his sister, Alice, whose husband, Robert Peverel, was in that year certified to be lord. In 1349 the Peverels' daughter, Margaret, wife of Sir William de la Pole, succeeded to the manor and castle, and in a document of 1358 appears for the first time the name of " Castel Assheby," though the name of Ashby David continued to be used occasionally as late as the reign of Elizabeth. Two generations later marriages of two Pole ladies with members of the family of Braybrooke were

* The Zouche family lived at one time at Little Houghton.

the reason for a deed dated at Ashby David in 1392 entailing the castle and manors of Ashby and Chadstone upon the Braybrookes. It was in 1423 that this family sold the property to the Greys of Hastings and Ruthyn, who had lived in the neighbouring village of Yardley Hastings since the first Baron Grey (*d.* 1353) married Elizabeth, daughter of the 2nd Lord Hastings, the direct descendant of the Countess Judith, niece of William the Conqueror. Although other Hastings property descended through the male line, the residence, manor and forest of Yardley apparently passed through this daughter to the Greys. In 1465 the Greys were created Earls of Kent.

As was common in those days, the De Grey family were jealous of the near proximity to them of Bishop Langton's castle, and they probably bought it with the idea of pulling it down. At any rate it was not long afterwards (between 1533 and 1539) that Leland described Castle Ashby as " where hath been a castle that now is clean down, and is made but a septum for beasts." In the survey * made for the Compton family in 1565 it is described as " the manor and farm of Ashby David with all the demesne lands, meadows, feedings and pastures, whereunto pertaineth the old ruined castle and a building called Le Porter's Lodge or Le Gate House, and an enclosure called Le Castell Yarde containing by estimation two acres of pasture, worth 2*s.* 6*d.* each per annum, and another enclosure called Le Parke containing by estimation 14 acres, of which 8, each worth 3/4 per annum, was mown each year, and another 5 acres, each worth 12*d.* per annum, were pasture, and the residue namely 2 acres well planted with trees and the herbage of it worth 4*d.* per annum. And one other enclosure called Fyshe Poole contains by estimation 2 acres of meadow, each worth 5*s.* per annum." The site of Bishop Langton's castle cannot be absolutely established; the site of the present castle on the top of the hill would seem the most natural one, but massive foundations of some ancient building were found north of the church in 1860, when the lower terrace there was being levelled.†

Building of Castle Ashby before 1603.

After his first wife's death, Henry Lord Compton continued building the present house. How much he completed before his death in 1589, and how much was carried on by his son William before 1603, we can only surmise. But we have the following testimony as to its constituting a completed building of some importance before 1603. Firstly Camden ‡ in 1610 tells us that " Henry Lord Compton began to build a faire stately house there "; then the Family Document No. 313 refers to his " capital house " there; again Queen Elizabeth, who died in 1603, almost certainly stayed in it; and again it is referred to as " Lord Compton's princely mansion " § in 1605, when King James and his Queen first stayed there. So

* Appendix I to Document Catalogue.
† Richard Scriven in " Castle Ashby."
‡ " Britannia," Vol. I. p. 519, ed. 1722. The 1586 edition does not mention Castle Ashby.
§ Nichols' " Progresses."

whatever share of it was executed by Henry and William, Lords Compton, respectively, we may conclude that the earliest part of the present house was certainly completed in Elizabeth's reign, while the evidence is quite consistent with its having been built by the 1st Lord Compton before his death in 1589.

Like other Elizabethan houses, Henry built it in the shape of the letter E, a porch or front door steps probably forming the centre stroke of the E. All three wings had indentations in their outer faces, which have since been filled up, and which are clearly shown on the plan opposite. The Elizabethan part of the outline of the present house can be easily recognised by a prominent plinth, which is absent from the portions which at later dates filled in the indentations. We are thus able to trace that the indentations in the east front coincided exactly with the present three drawing-rooms; and at the junction at its northern end between the addition and the original face are clearly seen the ironstone quoins, where was originally the break in the line. The indentation in the northern front went in depth to the wall of the Great Hall, whose row of windows must have given it a fine view to the north; while it stretched in length from the present Dining-Room door (under which, in the cellar, an outside doorway is plainly seen) to the west wall of the present Servants' Hall. The indentation in the western front stretched from the Agent's Office to the back door inclusive, as can be seen clearly now from the absence of any parapet along that section.

There seem to have been two periods of the building of this Elizabethan house, one in hewn stone with red sandstone quoins,* and a subsequent one in sawn stone with grey quoins; and, further, it is noticeable on the south ends of the two side wings that decorated mouldings executed in the former period were not reproduced in the latter. It is just possible the two periods were separated by Henry Lord Compton's death.

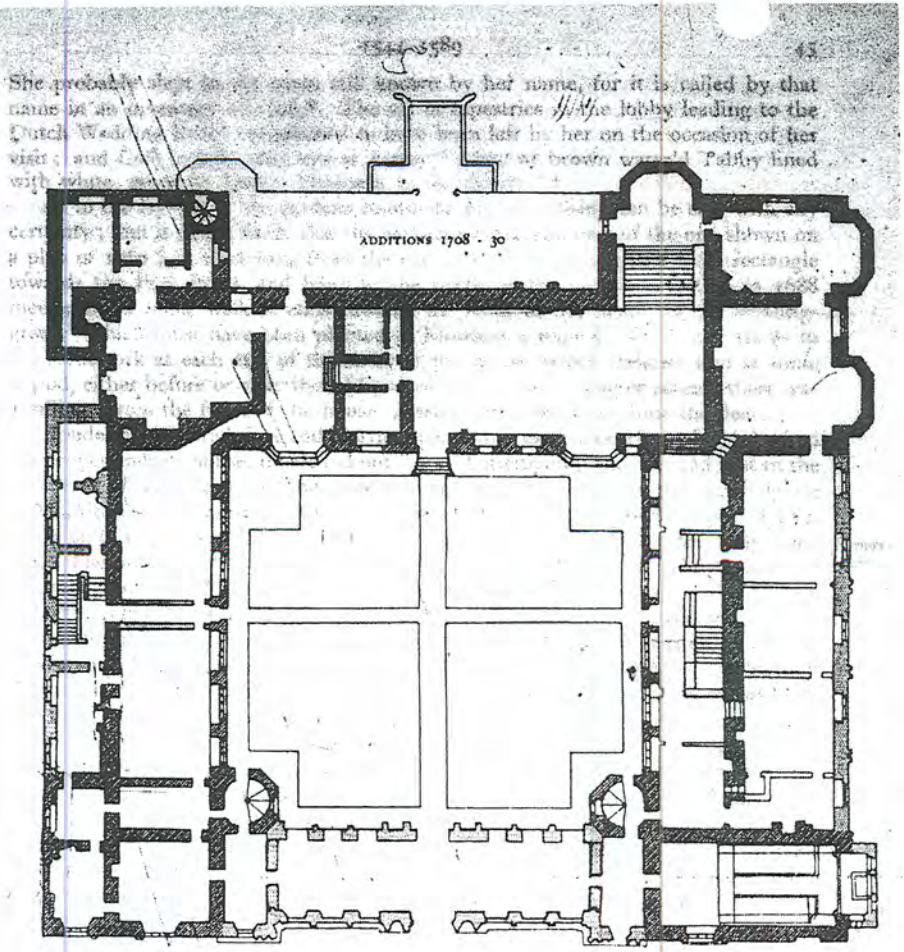
The original Great Hall was described and greatly admired by Horace Walpole when he visited the house in 1763.† It had a wide oriel window looking into the Courtyard, a fine Gothic timbered roof, and at its west end, dividing it from the Buttery, a beautiful Ionic oak screen. At the eastern end of the Hall, under where is now a gallery, were the steps descending, like the present ones, to the passage along the east wing. But on the north side opposite was added, in James I's reign,‡ another broad flight of stairs leading up to a landing in the bay window where the billiard table now stands. These stairs are shown on Campbell's plan, and until 1771 were the main approach to King William's Room.

As has already been mentioned, Queen Elizabeth stayed in this original house.

* Mr. Scriven liked to think this red sandstone came from the Denton farm near the Whiston boundary.

† Cole MSS., British Museum, Vol. XXXIII. p. 44, etc.

‡ The present Billiard Room must have been added to the Elizabethan house, for the door of the Wine-Cellar looks like an outside door.

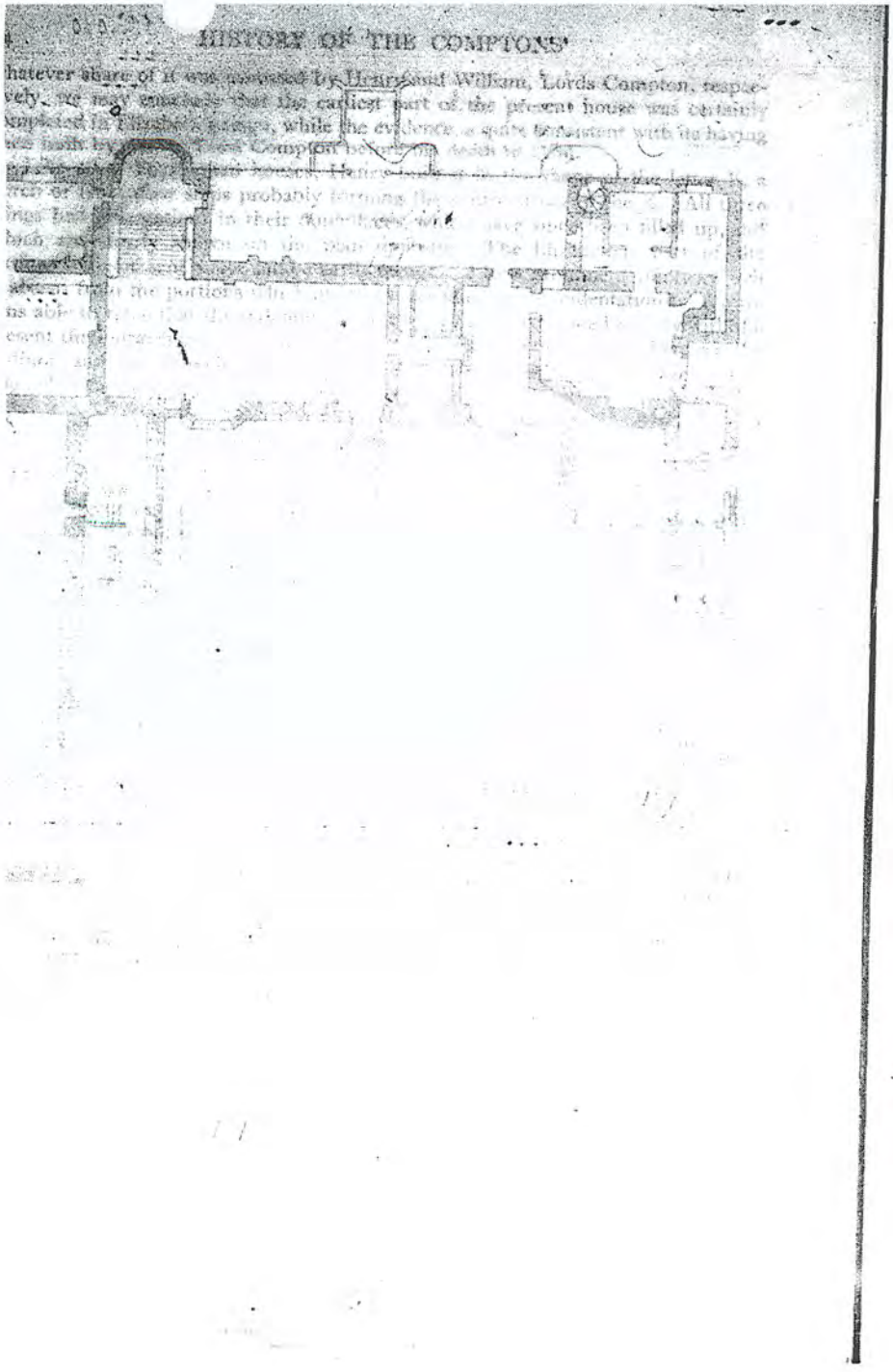


CASTLE ASHBY

GROUND FLOOR AS IN 1700

BEFORE 1603

1624 - 1635



She probably slept in the room still known by her name, for it is called by that name in an inventory of 1706.* The set of tapestries in the lobby leading to the Dutch Wedding Room is supposed to have been left by her on the occasion of her visit; and Cole in July 1763 saw at Ashby "a bed of brown water'd Tabby lined with white, given by Queen Elizabeth to the family." †

As to the lay-out of the gardens round the house, nothing can be said with any certainty; but it seems likely that the earliest garden was part of the one shown on a plan of 1760 ‡ as stretching from the east side of the house, in a large rectangle towards the Park Pond, and lying to the north of the church. Evelyn in 1688 mentions "a noble walk of elms towards the front of the house by the bowling-green," which must have been planted in Elizabeth's reign.§ There are marks in the stonework at each end of the front of the house, which indicate that at some period, either before or after the addition of the southern wing or screen, there was a railing across the front of the house, possibly intended to exclude the deer.

Besides his Warwickshire and Northamptonshire residences, Henry had inherited "a proper ancient house, moated about," ‖ at Tottenham; and we read that in the first week of May 1578 the Queen went to stay with him there in the manor-house of Mockings. The subsequent history of this residence is described in Appendix VI.

Remarriage.

It must have been after 1581 ¶ that he remarried, while still under forty years old. The object of his affection was Anne, fifth daughter of Sir John Spencer of Wormleighton and Althorp, whose former husband, Lord Monteagle, had died in 1581.** This Sir John Spencer must not be confused with the man of the same name whose daughter was to marry Henry's son about fifteen years later. Sir John of Wormleighton was a rich wool merchant at Snitterfield near Warwick, who built a residence at Wormleighton and bought the old moated house at Althorp which is still the residence of his descendant, Earl Spencer. He married Katharine, daughter of Sir Thomas Kitson of Hengrave in Suffolk. The innumerable yeomen farmers in South Warwickshire to-day bearing this name may all be descended from the same stock; and since both the Sir John Spencers were wool merchants, they may possibly both have been related by blood, though there is no evidence of their ancestry. However that may be, Anne's memory is perpetuated as the original of Charillis in Spenser's "Colin Clout's Come Home Againe," and also as the object of the dedication of his "Prosopopoia." Anne had a son by Lord Compton, who

* F.D. 1070.

† Cole MSS., Vol. XXXIII. p. 45.

‡ See page 188.

§ Evelyn's "Diary." The "walk of elms" no longer exists, and should not be confused with any present avenues.

‖ Norden's "Spec. Brit.," 1593.

¶ On May 20th and 24th, 1584, various lands were settled on Henry and Anne his wife and their heirs male (P.M. Inquisitions, F.D. 1368). So this may well have been the year of their marriage.

** Burke's "Peerage."

afterwards became Sir Henry Compton, Knight of the Bath, and inherited from his mother a residence at Bramble Teigh, near Withyham in Sussex, of which the ruins are still to be seen. His portrait as a jolly old man with a grey beard wearing the riband of the Bath hangs at Compton Wynyates. Further mention of him and his descendants is made in Chapter VII.

d of y m cots.

We know little of Lord Compton's work in politics, but he was selected, probably by Cecil, to be one of the Commission of peers who judged Mary Queen of Scots at her trial at Fotheringay on October 12th, 1586.* Many of the leading men in the country had taken up the cause of Rome, or of Protestantism, with excessive ardour, and we may infer from Henry's being chosen that, though a Protestant, he was without religious bigotry, and owing to his legal training he was no doubt gifted with a judicial turn of mind.† It will be remembered that Mary had been under restraint for sixteen years; in despair of ever gaining her liberty, she gave her approval to a conspiracy among some young Catholics in Elizabeth's household to assassinate her. Her trial for treason was a prolonged one, and when the verdict of "guilty" was eventually given, bonfires were lit in the streets of London and church bells pealed throughout the country. Elizabeth was driven by public opinion to assenting to her execution. At her funeral on August 1st, 1587, in Peterborough Cathedral, Henry took part in the procession as one of the four "principal assistants to the corpse."*

th Will.

Two years later Henry himself died on November 1st, 1589, aged forty-six, and was buried at Compton on December 10th. The chief mourner was his son and heir, William; the pall-bearers were Lord Strange, Lord Windsor, Sir George Hastings, Sir Henry Lea, Mr. Francis Hastings, and Mr. Walter Hastings. By his Will, dated May 17th, 1589,‡ he ordered "his body to be buried at Compton in such sort as should be seemly to his calling, and that a tomb should be made for him with his picture and both his wives." This tomb is mentioned by Dugdale as among those in the church at Compton which were "utterly razed and knocked to pieces" by the Cromwellians during the Civil Wars. The three mutilated recumbent figures were among those recovered from the moat where they had been thrown, and they are now preserved in the church. That they all three belonged to the same monument is shown by the lace on their pillows being identical. Henry bequeathed :—

* Nichols' "Progresses."

† The Commission consisted of *nine Earls:* Oxford, Kent, Derby, Worcester, Rutland, Cumberland, Warwick, Pembroke, Lincoln; *one Viscount:* Montagu; *fourteen Barons:* Abergavenny, Zouche, Morley, Stafford, Grey of Wilton, Lumley, Stourton, Sandys, Wentworth, Mordaunt, St. John of Bletsoe, Burleigh (Lord Treasurer), Compton and Cheney. Also *The Lord Chancellor* (Sir Christopher Hatton); *six Privy Councillors:* Hatton, Walsingham, Crofts, Sadlier, Mildmay and Paulet; *two Chief Justices:* Wray and Anderson; the Chief Baron Marwood and four Judges (Froude's "Elizabeth," Vol. VI. p. 281).

‡ F.D. 1241.

To his wife, All jewels, apparel, plate; and 500 sheep, one half of the mares and colts, 2 black nags, 3 coach horses, 2 nags and all my ambling nags with the coaches and harness. Bedsteads, bed covers, etc., at Tottenham, for her life and to be left there at her death. Household linen to be shared equally between her and his son William, and one third of pewter and brass to her whereas two thirds to William.

To his son William, 500 sheep, all armour, pistols, muskets, etc. steel saddles, velvet saddles, my great horses and 10 trotting geldings. The white bed given by Lady Huntingdon, the other half of the mares and colts, 12 livery beds and their furniture, and my cloth field bed.

To his son Thomas, a white silver bason and ewer graven, two little flaggons with the Compton coat etc, all the household stuff at London.

To his son Henry, a double salt guilt, a guilt horse, and a bason and ewer the Lord Chancellor gave at his christening.

All the residue to his eldest son, William.

Widow remarriage.

His second wife survived him, and for a few months at least lived at Stoneleigh.* She married as her third husband on December 4th, 1592, Robert Sackville, 2nd Earl of Dorset,† who dying left her a widow for the last time on February 27th, 1609. She died September 22nd, 1618.‡

In April 1610, when her step-son was in danger, during a mental lapse, of being robbed by the Earl of Suffolk, she "played the valiant virago" and saved him. She seems to have been regarded as a nuisance at Court, for an amusing story is told how in May 1610 she "found her way to the Fleet again, where she lay 6 or 7 days for pressing into the Privy Chamber and importuning the King contrary to commandment."§

* P.M. Inquisitions. See F.D. 1368.

† Burke's "Peerage." Whose first wife had died in 1591.

‡ "Complete Peerage."

§ Nichols' "Progresses."

CHAPTER V

WILLIAM, 1ST EARL OF NORTHAMPTON

(1589–1630)

HENRY was succeeded by his eldest son, William, who was twenty-one years of age.* He had had early experience of Court life, and was destined to enjoy its favours more than did any of his predecessors. He was fond of outdoor sports, and made full use of his privileges as Master of the Leash during three reigns of training his sovereign's and his own greyhounds, hounds and beagles in the Crown forests. He added to his family's considerable wealth by marrying a rich wife, and he spent much of their combined incomes in extravagant living, in gambling, and in adding to Castle Ashby house. He must have possessed administrative ability, for at one time of his life he was Lord Lieutenant of South Wales, North Wales, and of five other counties, an appointment to which was then attached more responsibility than at the present time.

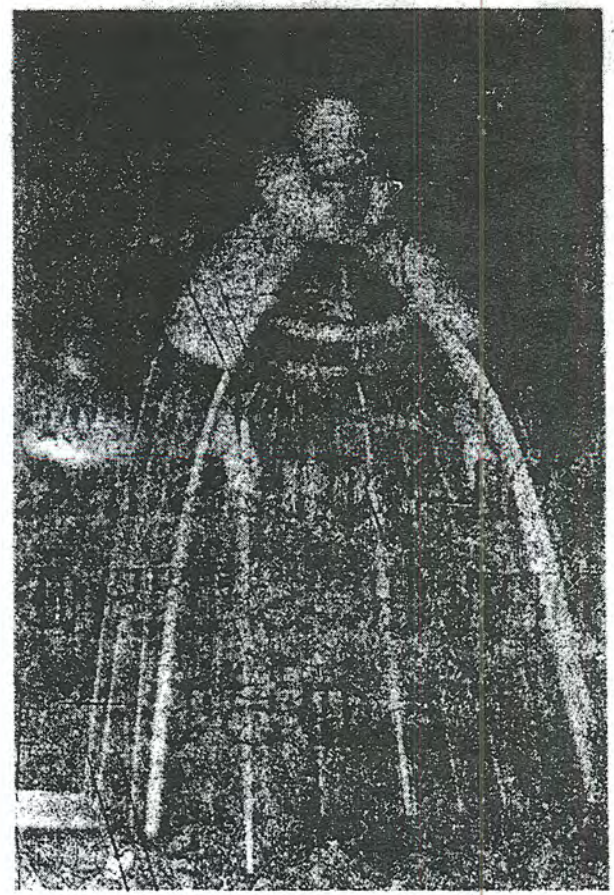
He was early in life appointed a member of Queen Elizabeth's Privy Council,† and the Master of the Leash ;‡ and on February 19th, 1593, he was summoned to Parliament as Lord Compton, a summons which he received every subsequent Parliament up till that of April 5th, 1614. He had probably been given some education at Cambridge, for on February 20th, 1595, he became an M.A. of that University, while ten years later the same honour was conferred on him by Oxford.

But he was also of an adventurous spirit ; for we are told that on June 11th, 1597, there were prepared for a sea voyage fifteen of the Queen's ships, besides two captured Spanish ships which had been remodelled, twenty-two Dutch ships of war, and twenty-four transports, with 4000 prest men, 1200 Dutch musketeers, and 2000 English volunteers. It was thought at the time they were intending to set upon the King of Spain's navy or to meet with the Indian fleet, and several of the young nobility, including Lord Compton, aspired to join the expedition, but did not get leave.§

Sir John Spencer.

Across the fields from Lord Compton's residence in the village of Tottenham lived Sir John Spencer at Canonbury House. He was a son of Richard Spencer

* P.M. Inquisition. See F.D. 1368. † Nicholas' "Peerage."
‡ First mentioned August 28th, 1596 (Calendar of Domestic State Papers).
§ Chamberlain's Letters.



of Wadingfield in Suffolk,* and was a cloth merchant and an Alderman of London.* He had amassed a fortune which had become fabulous all over Europe, and in this connection a curious story is told:— †

"In Queen Elizabeth's days, a pirate of Dunkerk laid a plot, with twelve of his mates, to carry away Sir John Spencer; which if he had done, fifty thousand pounds had not redeemed him. He came over the seas on a shallop with twelve musketeers, and in the night came into Barking Creek, and left the shallop in the custody of six of his men, and with the other six came as far as Islington, and there hid themselves in ditches, near the path in which Sir John came always to his house; but, by the providence of God, Sir John, upon some extraordinary occasion, was forced to stay in London that night, otherwise they had taken him away; and they, fearing they should be discovered, in the night-time came to their shallop, and so came safe to Dunkerk again."

In 1570, on February 1st, he had bought Canonbury House from Lord Wentworth for £2000,‡ and from 1581 onwards the Queen is said to have visited him there frequently.* He was also intimate with Lord Bacon, who in a business letter to him in 1593 signed himself "Your very loving friend."* He was elected Sheriff in 1583–84, and was made Lord Mayor and knighted in 1594–95.* We are told that during his tenure of the latter office there was grave shortage of corn in London, and that he displayed great powers of organisation in obtaining supplies of it and distributing them. He also showed courage, on the occasion of a riot in 1595, in going out in person to quell the disturbance, which he successfully did by arresting twenty or more of the rioters and committing them to custody.* Immediately he knew he was to be Lord Mayor, he evidently bought Crosby House in Bishopsgate Street, "made great reparations and kept his Mayoralty there."§ Thenceforward this house, which in former days had been for some time the residence of Richard III when Duke of Gloucester, became Spencer's London house; and it was here that, in 1603, he lodged and splendidly entertained the French Ambassador, M. le Marquis de Rosny, Great Treasurer of France, and all his retinue.§ He also built a "most large warehouse" near to the house, where he no doubt conducted his business.§ The buildings were demolished in 1908, but by private subscription the banqueting hall was re-erected on a less valuable site in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, where it may now be seen.‖ It must not, however, be imagined that Sir John neglected his country house at Canonbury for his new London one. It was probably earlier than 1594 that he rebuilt what had been the Canon's house of the old Priory of St. Bartholomew. But much of the interior decoration still remained to be done;

* Nichols' "Bibliotecha Topographica," Brit. 1782.
† A pamphlet entitled "The Vanity of the Lives and Passions of Men," by D. Pappilon, 1651.
‡ F.D. 7348. § Stowe.
‖ For the further history of Crosby House, see Appendix VII.

and the two dates which appear on the present parlour ceiling and on one of its chimney-pieces (now at Castle Ashby) are respectively 1599 and 1601.

A full history of the Manors of Canonbury and Highbury is given in Appendix V, and includes a description of the building by Prior Bolton before 1532, and of the additions made by Sir John Spencer. In their original state the coloured ceilings and panelling made a vivid impression on the minds of contemporaries, though unfortunately the Comptons in the eighteenth century do not appear to have appreciated their beauty.

Eliza Spencer.

By his wife, Alice Bromfield, Sir John had one daughter, Elizabeth,* and between Elizabeth and their neighbour, Lord Compton, an attachment grew up which culminated at the New Year 1599 in an engagement of marriage. But "Rich Spencer," as he was popularly called, did not approve of this extravagant young nobleman as a fitting heir to his own vast wealth, nor probably did he enjoy the rumour current in London in January 1599 that as a wedding present he was giving Compton £10,000 ready money, and redeeming mortgages on his land for a further £18,000.† Poor Sir John! public opinion was evidently against him, and probably also the Queen's influence. We are told on March 3rd † that he "was the last weeke committed to the Fleet for a contempt, and hiding away his daughter, who, they say, is contracted to the Lord Compton; but now he is out again, and by all means, seekes to hinder the match, alledging a precontract to Sir Arthur Henningham's sonne. But upon his beating and misusing her, she was sequestred to one Barkers, a proctor, and from thence to Sir Henry Billingsleyes, where she yet remaines, till the matter be tried. If the obstinate and self-willed fellow shold persist in his doggednes (as he protests he will) and geve her nothing, the poore Lord shold have a warme catch." But love laughs at locksmiths, and we have it as a tradition ‡ that Lord Compton carried Elizabeth out of Canonbury House in a baker's basket, himself being disguised as the baker's boy. The story has been improved by the further tradition that Sir John met them on the stairs and tipped Compton for being so early at his work.

William's marriage.

Sir John's fury on discovering the truth can well be imagined. But the couple were married, on April 18th, 1599, at the Church of St. Catharine Colman, Fenchurch Street, where it is entered in the register "being thrice asked in the Church." They had three children, (1) Spencer, born 1601 (afterwards 2nd Earl of Northampton), (2) Elizabeth,§ who married Robert Maxwell, 1st Earl of Nidesdale, and

* Nichols' "Progresses."
† Chamberlain's Letters.
‡ Nichols' "Bibliotecha Topographica," Brit. 1782.
§ Anne is the only granddaughter mentioned in Lady Spencer's funeral certificate. Nor was any daughter Elizabeth mentioned as alive in 1610, when a Settlement was made of Sir John's estate. Nor was Elizabeth mentioned in the Earl's Will of 1613. But see page 112 below.

(3) Anne, who married in December 1622 Ulick, son and heir of Richard Burgh, Earl of Clanrickard. We are told on May 5th, 1601, that "the younge Lady Compton is brought a-bed of a sonne, and yet the hardhead, her father, relents ne'er a whit." * But Sir John's displeasure was overcome by the Queen's diplomacy. She invited Sir John to stand sponsor with her for a baby; she gave the child the Christian name of Spencer; and she then persuaded Sir John to adopt him as his own son, only afterwards telling him that he had adopted his own grandson. The reconciliation was complete, for we find that four years later the baby daughter, Anne, baptised on September 6th, 1605, was born in its grandfather's house at Canonbury.†

Lord Comp in po

In February 1601 the Earl of Essex, who had completely lost the confidence of the Queen, thought to regain it and obtain the dismissal of her present advisers by seizing the Royal Palace of Whitehall by a *coup d'état*. The co-operation of emissaries from Scotland was to be obtained by promises of the recognition of that King's succession to the English throne. Essex and his 300 men were prevented from approaching the Palace by a number of Elizabeth's friends, including Lord Compton. The insurgents were dispersed, Essex was arrested and tried for treason, and Compton officially witnessed his execution on February 25th.‡

The Queen death.

During the next two years Elizabeth's health was obviously failing, and members of her Court were already scheming how to secure their own advancement when the change came. At Christmas 1602 Compton was staying with others at Sir Walter Raleigh's house at Sherbourn,* but he was in London again when the Queen's end came. On March 22nd she was understood to appoint James of Scotland to be her successor, and early on the 24th she was dead. Compton was one of the Regency who immediately signed a letter to James informing him of his accession to the throne of England,§ and a month later, at Elizabeth's funeral, he officiated as one of twelve who carried bannerols.§ His wife, Eliza, was also present,§ wearing, according to family tradition, the lace collar now hanging framed at Compton Wynyates.

Comp at Co

Compton had every opportunity of early ingratiating himself with the new King and Queen. Not only was he one of the Regency who officially invited them to the throne, but he was also one of four lords sent to escort the Queen from Scotland to London. Meeting her at Berwick, they progressed through the country, welcomed at innumerable country houses (including Althorp), till they joined the King at Easton Neston.‖ In October William was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire,¶ and we find him holding musters of men in his county to inspect the condition of their arms and equipment.¶ On the 9th of that month he was also granted by the

* Chamberlain's Letters.
‡ "Complete English Peerage."
‖ Collins' "Peerage."
† Parish Register.
§ Nichols' "Progresses."
¶ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

Queen the Stewardship of the manors of Henley, Hampton and St. Needs. He seems generally, however, to have been in constant attendance on the King, and, on January 5th, 1605, he was created Knight of the Bath, after signing as a witness, along with other Privy Councillors, the patent bestowing the same honour on Prince Charles, Duke of York.* On August 13th of the same year the King and Queen visited Castle Ashby, "the princely seat of Lord Compton," and remained there till the 16th.* A fortnight later Compton accompanied the King to Oxford, where he was made a Master of Arts on the 30th.* In the following year the King of Denmark, brother of the Queen Anne, sailed over to the Thames on a visit. Lord Compton went with the King and Queen in the Royal barge from Greenwich to Gravesend, where they dined on the Danish ship; and next day they spent the morning hunting in Eltham Park and the afternoon and evening in feasting.* In the same year, 1606, he had the honour of officiating as Carver at the State Banquet at Windsor Castle, following the installation of Frederick Prince Palatine as a Knight of the Garter before his marriage to the Princess Elizabeth. And again in 1611 he was present when Prince Henry was made Prince of Wales, and on this occasion too he was a witness to the patent.†

Compton and sport.

As Master of the Leash, Compton had had licence in Elizabeth's time to "seize all hounds, beagles, and greyhounds which may be offensive to the game," and train them "for the Queen's disport." ‡ In applying for the same permission from her successor, he says: "My meaning is that I would have liberty to take both hounds and beagles, and that no man should keep greyhounds but by my leave and licence, which will be a great preservation unto my game, as well as unto the King's. I pray you, therefore, let this be written accordingly, and I doubt not but to get the King to sign it before he meets the Council." ‡ It will be noticed that his own sport came quite frankly in his estimation before that of the King. He got his licence all right; and in addition he and his son, Spencer, were granted the "Keeping" of Olney Park (1604),§ and later (1610) ‖ both shared the office of Great Forester of Whittlewood Forest, in both of which they could enjoy a day's sport from Castle Ashby. However, there is an interesting account of a day's hunting at Houghton on August 6th, 1617, in the King's company: "The King hunting; a great companie, killed affore dinner a brace of staggs. Verie hott; so hee went in to dinner. Wee attend the Lord's table, and about four o'clock the King went downe to the allome-mynes, and was ther an hower, viewed them precisélie, and then went and shott at a stagg, and missed. Then my Lord Compton had lodged two brace. The King shott again, and brake the thighbone. A dogg long in coming, and my Lord Compton shott again and killed the stagg. Late in to supper." *

* Nichols' "Progresses."
† Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
‖ F.D.'s 778–79.
† Collins' "Peerage."
§ *Ibid.* For Olney Park, see note on page 102, below.

Even in the King's company Compton was evidently not ashamed to take the best of the sport, and there is something rather pointed in the following message, dated July 28th, 1623: "The King thanks the Earl of Northampton for his present of heath poults and wishes that kind of game carefully preserved for his own pleasure and use." *

Spe dea

On March 30th, 1610, his father-in-law, Sir John Spencer, died, followed a week later by his widow, "Dame Alice." According to the lowest accounts, he left to his son-in-law £300,000. He was buried in the Church of St. Helen in Bishopsgate, where his tomb remains, "50 yards from his house." †

The following is a description of Sir John's funeral, written by Mr. John Beaulieu on March 22nd/April 2nd, 1610:—‡

"Upon Tuesday the funeralls of Sir John Spencer were made, where some thousand men did assist, in mourning cloakes or gowns, amongst which there were 320 poor men, who had every one a basket given them, stored with a blacke gowne, foure pounds of beef, two loaves of bread, a little bottle of wine, a candlestick, a pound of candles, two sawcers, two spoons, a black pudding, a pair of gloves, a dozen points (sort of buttons), two red-herrings, four white-herrings, six sprats, and two eggs. But to expound to you the mysticall meaning of such an anticke furniture, I am not so skilful an Oedipus, except it doth design the horn of abundance, which my Lord Compton hath found in that succession. But that poor Lord is not like (if God do not help him) to carry it away for nothing, or to grow very rich thereby, being in great danger to loose his witts for the same; whereof being at the first newes, either through the vehement apprehension of joy for such a plentiful succession, or of carefulnes how to take it up and dispose it, somewhat distracted, and afterwards reasonably well restored, he is now of late fallen again (but more deeply) into the same frenzy; so that there seemeth to be little hope of his recovery. And what shall these thousands and millions avayle him if he come to lose, if not his soul, at least his wits and reason? It is a faire and ample subject for a divine to course riches, and a notable example to the world not to wooe or trust so much in them. It is given out abroad that he hath suppressed a will of the deceased's whereby he did bequeath some £20,000 to his poor kindred, and as much 'in pios usus'; for the wich the people do exclaime that this affliction is justly inflicted upon him by the hand of God, for a punishment of such an impious deed. But whether that suppression be true or not, it is yet very constantly reported." ‡

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

† In 1811 Sir John's tomb was entirely obscured by a coat of white paint (Nelson's "History of Islington," 1811). But when in 1867 St. Helen's Church was restored, his monument was cleaned of its paint and moved from its original position in the northern arch of the south transept to its present one near the west entrance. In 1892 a leaden shroud, partly moulded to the body, was found 12 feet below the floor of the monument's original site, with an inscription identifying it as Sir John. A photo of this is now in the church vestry. It was replaced, arched over, and concreted up. No trace of his widow was found (notes from Church Guide). During the 1914 War the tomb was protected by the Compton family from splinters of possible bombs by the erection of sandbags.

‡ Nichols' "Progresses."

In a subsequent letter of March 29th/April 10th, the same writer says :—

"Here is dead within these two days the old Lady Spencer, following the heels of her husband; who gave away amongst her kindred £13,000 of the £15,000 which she was to have of my Lord Compton; who is now altogether distracted, and so franticke as that he is forced to be kept bound. The administration of his goods and lands is committed to the Lords Chamberlaine, Privy Seal, and Worcester, who, coming the last week into the City, took an inventory (in the presence of the Sheriffs) of the goods, amongst which (it is said) there were bonds found for £133,000." *

Another writer says :—

"The Lord Compton hath been so transported with joy for the great fortune befallen him by the death of Sir John Spencer his father-in-law, as the overworking of the same in his mind did hinder him from taking any rest, whereby he was grown half distracted, but now he is reasonably well recovered again." †

It is also recorded by John Pym † that during Lord Compton's mental affliction "the Erle of Suffolke havinge begd the keeping of him would have seized upon his money and jewelles at Islington; my Lord Compton's mother the Countesse of Dorset playinge the valiant virago, withstood him, and he was thereby defeated; my Lord Compton, being kept in the toure a little while, recovered."

Lord Compton appears rapidly to have recovered his senses, for on April 19th, 1610, he was living in Bishopsgate Street, "transferring his late father-in-law's house into a gay court, the old usurer himself being forgotten." ‡ And on April 24th he is mentioned as tilting with other noblemen on "the King's Day, which passed over with the ordinary solemnity of running and ringing." *

Nor was he long at a loss for how to spend his inheritance. "My lorde Compton at the first cominge to his great estate after the death of Sir John Spencer did within lesse than 8 weekes spende £72,000, most in great horses, rich saddles, and playe." † No doubt his wife helped him in this reckless extravagance, for the following letter shows that she was a lady of expensive tastes. The letter also shows that she was expecting him soon to become an Earl, and it was therefore probably written shortly before 1618.§

"My sweet Life,

"Now I have declared to you my mind for the settling of your State, I supposed, that that were best for me to bethink or consider with myself what allowance were metest for me. For considering what care I ever had of your

* Nichols' "Progresses."
† "Memorable Accidents," by John Pym.
‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
§ Original is in the British Museum. Additional MSS. No. 4176, fol. 57.

estate, and how respectfully I dealt with those, which both by the Laws of God, of Nature, and civil polity, Wit, Religion, Government, and Honesty, you my Dear, are bound to; I pray and beseech you to grant to me, your most kind and loving Wife, the sum of £1600 per annum quarterly to be paid.

"Also I would (besides that allowance for my apparrel) have £600 added yearly (quarterly to be paid) for the performance of charitable Works, and those things I would not, neither will be countable for.

"Also I will have three Horses for my own Saddle, that none shall dare to lend or borrow; none lend but I; none borrow but you.

"Also I would have two Gentlewomen lest one should be sick or have some other Lett. Also believe, that it is an undecent thing for a Gentlewoman to stand mumping alone, when God hath blessed their Lord and Lady with a great estate.

"Also when I ride a hunting or a hawking, or travel from one House to another; I will have them attending. So for either of those said Women I must and will have for either of them a Horse.

"Also I will have six or eight Gentlemen: And I will have my two Coaches, one lined with Velvet to myself, with four very fair Horses; and a Coach for my Women, lined with swett Cloth; one laced with Gold; the other with Scarlet, and laced with watched Lace and Silver, with four good Horses.

"Also I will have two Coachmen; one for my own Coach, the other for my Women.

"Also at any time, when I travel, I will be allowed not only carroches and spare Horses for me and my Women; but I will have such carriages, as shall be fitting for all, orderly; not pestering my things with my Women's nor theirs with Chambermaids, nor theirs with Washmaids.

"Also, for Landresses, when I travel, I will have them sent away before with the Carriages, to see all safe. And the Chambermaids I will have go before with the greens * that the Chambers may be ready, sweet and clean.

"Also, for that it is undecent to croud up myself with my Gentleman Usher in my Coach, I will have him to have a Convenient Horse, to attend me either in City or Country. And I must have two footmen. And my desire is, that you defray all the Charges for me.

"And for myself (besides my yearly allowance), I would have twenty Gowns of apparrel; six of them excellent good ones, eight of them for the Country, and six other of them very excellent good ones.

"Also I would have to put in my purse £2000 and £200; and so you to pay my Debts.

"Also I would have £6000 to buy me Jewels, and £400 to buy me a pearle chain.

"Now seeing I have been and am so reasonable unto you, I pray you do find my Children apparrel, and their schooling, and all my Servants, Men and Women, their Wages.

"Also I will have all my Houses furnished, and all my Lodging Chambers to be suited with all such furniture, as is fit; as Beds, stools, chairs suitable; cushions, carpets, silver warming-pans, cupboards of plate, fair hangings, and such like. So

* *I.e.* rushes for the floor.

for my Drawing Chamber in all Houses I will have them delicately furnished, both with hangings, couch, canopy, glass, carpet, chair, cushions, and all things therunto belonging.

"Also my desire is, that you would pay your Debts, build up Ashby House, and purchase Lands; and lend no Money (as you love God) to the Lord Chamberlain, which would have all, perhaps your Life from you. Remember his son, my Lord Walden, what Entertainment he gave me, when you were at Tilt-yard. If you were dead, he said, he would be a Husband, a Father, a Brother, and said he would marry me. I protest I grieve to see the poor man have so little Wit and Honesty to use his Friend so vilely. Also he fed me with Untruths concerning the Charter House: but that is the least, he wish'd me much harm; you know him. God keep you and me from him, and any such as he is.

"So now that I have declared to you what I would have, and what that is that I would not have, I pray, when you be an Earl to allow me £1000 more than now desired, and double Attendance.

"Your loving Wife,
"ELIZA COMPTON."

King James had paid his second visit to Ashby from July 27th to 30th, 1612;* and the year 1616 was that in which he paid his third visit, from July 26th to 29th.* Plans for another visit between these, from July 27th to 29th, 1614, had at the last moment to be cancelled owing to the unexpected arrival in London of the King of Denmark.* It is interesting to note that in alternate years James seems to have repeated the same Progress, staying at the same places on the same dates to a day.

Among the family documents is a list † of Lord Compton's household servants and retainers at Castle Ashby in the year 1616. The "household servants" included Mistress Hester Savill (probably the housekeeper), nine "Misters," forty-one other menservants, and only four maids divided between the "laundrie" and "Kitchine." The "Misters" were what are now called "upper servants," and one was attended by a man and three others each by a boy from among the above-mentioned forty-one menservants. The list of "Gentlemen and Yeomen Retayners" includes four Chaplains, eighteen "Misters" not otherwise designated, five other men, and "The Gardiner of Ashebie." The list totals eighty-three.

An interesting document,‡ entitled the "Customs of Yardley Hastings set down in 1607," is given in detail in Appendix VIII. The Customs are of great antiquity, and have often been quoted by historians.

On November 4th, 1616, Lord Compton officiated as a Server at the State Banquet given at Whitehall on the occasion of Prince Charles, afterwards Charles I, being created Prince of Wales.* And on September 5th of the following year (1617), James paid his only visit to Compton Wynyates, where he stayed but one night.*

* Nichols' "Progresses." † F.D. 1084-5. ‡ F.D. 1210, ii.

On November 16th of the latter year Compton was made Lord President of Wales,* in the robes of which office he appears in a full-length portrait at Castle Ashby. To this title was added on the same day Lord Lieutenant for South Wales, for North Wales (excepting the counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth), and for the Marches and Counties of Worcester, Hereford and Salop.† And five years later he was made Lord Lieutenant for the County of Gloucester.* These offices were granted in consideration of his wisdom, discretion, dexterity, fidelity, courage and integrity in the executing of justice without respect of persons.‡ In a history of Worcestershire there is an account of a visit he paid to Sir John Pakington at Westwood, near Droitwich, when he was Lord Warden of the Marches. Being a "jovial companion," he was accompanied by a train of a hundred Knights and Squires, who said they were so well entertained that they did not know "whether they possessed the house or the house them." §

On August 2nd, 1618, "with a great deal of ceremony, and in a solemn manner," he was created Earl of Northampton by King James at the Bishop's Palace, Salisbury. Three others were created Earls at the same time, and the ceremony was followed by a Banquet.‖ Among the meritorious deeds mentioned in the Patent of his Earldom, which hangs framed at Castle Ashby, is that of quelling an insurrection in Warwickshire without effusion of blood.¶ But this may have been one of the many titles granted by the King for a monetary consideration, a habit which increased his unpopularity in the country. However, whatever his claim to the honour, we find him in the following May among the Earls in the Queen's funeral procession.‖

From July 25th to 28th, 1619, the King was again at Castle Ashby, whence he went to dine one day at Easton Maudit.‖ Mr. Chamberlain describes the visit as follows:—

"Mr. Attorney (Sir Henry Yelverton, Attorney-General) likewise for one dinner entertained him and all the Court very bountifully, which made the Earl of Northampton's penury the more misliked; and gat Archie (the Royal Jester) a better audience, who, upon an old grudge, told the King, that, now the Earl had obtained what he sought for (his Earldom), he might see what account he made of him with the mechanical (mean) usage at Sir Noel Caron's (the United States of the Netherlands Ambassador, whose house was at South Lambeth), so that he could not forbear to tell him openly what favours he had done him, and how ill he was requited." ‖

It may have been good taste that prompted the new Earl to curb his extravagance. The Queen had only been dead two months, so perhaps he did not expect the King to live up to his ordinary standard of magnificence. In any case his Royal Master

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
† All "in succession to Lord Gerard" (Calendar of Domestic State Papers).
‡ Collins' "Peerage." § Lady Alwyne's Notes, F.D. 1340, XII. p. 8.
‖ Nichols' "Progresses." ¶ "Complete English Peerage."

was not so dissatisfied as to refuse subsequent offers of hospitality, for he paid his fifth and sixth visits to Castle Ashby on July 26th, 1621, and on July 23rd to 26th, 1624.*

ditions Ashby use.

We have already seen † that in his young days William may have completed the Elizabethan house begun by his father, and we have concluded that that building was at latest finished by 1603. It is certain that before his death in 1630 he added considerably to the house, in compliance with the wishes of his rich wife expressed in the letter already quoted ;‡ and it is also certain that more building was carried on immediately after his death by his son, Spencer, 2nd Earl. Before inquiring into the more difficult problem as to which built what, let us describe the points that appear certain from direct evidence.

he East ront.

A parapet of stone lettering runs round the top of the house, commencing on the front of the West Wing, running round the three original sides of the Courtyard, then round the front of the East Wing, and finishing just short of the bay-windows in that wing. The inscription runs as follows :—

NISI DOMINUS CUSTOS CUSTODIVERIT DOMUM FRUSTRA VIGILAT QUI CUSTODIT EAM : NISI DOMINUS AEDIFICAVERIT DOMUM IN VANUM LABORAVERUNT QUI AEDIFICANT EAM : 1624

Bridges mentions the same inscription in the same position, and we may conclude that this is its original position. § The date 1624, then, not only dates the lettered parapet, but also indicates that by 1624 the indentation in the East Front between the Chapel and the Dining-Room had been filled in as it is at present, except, of course, for the ground floor, which formed a loggia with archways open to the flower-garden, in which my lady and her guests could sit cool on hot summer days. Such loggias were commonly built in James I's reign, and the filling in of the arches with the present sash windows was done at a later date.

The two turrets so prominent in the front elevation bear in their lettered parapets the dates 1624 on the East Turret and 1635 on the West Turret. The tops of both turrets were " pulled down " and " altered " in July 1704,‖ but the Jacobean stone lettering is sure to have been replaced in its original position. The two dates, then, probably represent the completion of two periods of building, one by the 1st Earl and one by the 2nd. The date 1624 being on the East Turret may signify the completion in that year of the East Wing, which, as has already been said, itself

* Nichols' " Progresses."

† See page 43.

‡ It was in 1610 that William and Elizabeth presented two of the bells to Castle Ashby church.

§ The fact that the section of this parapet along the north side of the courtyard is different in style, and is dated 1771, will be explained later.

‖ F.D. 1012.

bears the same date ; while 1635 on the West Turret may be intended to date the completion of the West Wing, in which it accords with the architectural evidence. An alternative suggests itself, that 1624 and 1635 indicate the beginning and the end of one long period of building, planned out gradually by the 1st Earl, but only finished by his son ; but there must be some significance to account for the dates on the turrets not being in the natural order of the earlier one on the left. There remains the question of the date of the South Screen, which should probably fit in between the building of the other two wings.

The S Screen

The South Screen was, of course, thrown across the open side of the Courtyard for the convenience of making the two wing extremities more accessible to each other. The only evidence for dating it, other than its style of design, is the coat of arms over the main entrance. The quarterings on this are exactly similar to those on the shield in the middle of the Old Library ceiling, which is otherwise dated as of the time of the 1st Earl. None of the quarterings, however, illustrates any marriage later than that of Peter Compton, grandfather of the 1st Earl, which seems rather slovenly heraldry ; and, thinking it an unlikely coincidence that father and son should each be guilty of the same carelessness, Mr. Avray Tipping (in *Country Life* of September 18th, 1926) argues that the South Screen must have been planned by the 1st Earl who died in 1630, even if he did not witness the completion of it. Mr. Gotch, on the other hand, in his monograph published by the Northamptonshire Archæological Society, regards the 1635 on the West Turret as dating the Screen.* Conclusive evidence, however, is lacking, and since the question has been narrowed down to a period of five years, perhaps we may leave it there, and turn to the further question of what architect designed the Screen.

Colin Campbell, in his " Vitruvius Britannicus " of 1730, had no doubt that Inigo Jones was employed at Ashby to rebuild it, " and finished one front ; but the Civil Wars put a stop to all Arts." He gives an illustration of " that front by Inigo Jones," but the design shows more than was actually carried out, for it shows the ends of the two wings altered into keeping with the Screen between them. Many original drawings exist of the work of the great master, and of his son-in-law, Webb, who worked in his office ; but among them is no trace of any work at Castle Ashby. Finally, Mr. Gotch considers that in 1635 " it would only have been Jones, *or* his pupil John Webb, who could have designed anything so distinctly classic." But he concludes that " the conception and the detail hardly show the vigour and the nice sense of proportion which characterise the known work of Inigo Jones. Perhaps we may leave it at this—that if Jones did not actually make the design, it came from his office."

The Front

The filling in of the West Front is shown by the gap in its lettered parapet to

* Still another consideration is that building operations would probably have been completed before Charles I stayed four days in the house in July 1634.

have taken place after 1624.* Mr. Gotch assigns it to the Restoration period, but, as Mr. Tipping shows, there are good reasons for dating it about 1635, the date on the West Turret. The interior of the addition is almost entirely occupied by a handsome carved oak staircase, and the only other ornamentation is in the stone pediments over the doorways which seem to have been designed by the same man as the staircase. Mr. Tipping points out that the breaking of the architrave of these pediments at the top and the supporting of the projection with a console, as is done on both sides of the doorway approaching the foot of the staircase, are thoroughly characteristic of the work of John Webb. Of the staircase it may be said firstly that its strapwork motif is characteristic of the first quarter of the century, and secondly that the dress of the sportsmen and their retainers, in the charmingly vivid hunting scenes carved along and below the balustrade, is undoubtedly that of Charles I's time. Though the 3rd Earl certainly enjoyed hunting of all sorts, it will be remembered that the 1st and 2nd Earls were successive Masters of the Leash, and as such were responsible for training the King's dogs and organising his sport. They must themselves have enjoyed more sport than anyone in the kingdom. The staircase is therefore thoroughly applicable to either of them.

is terior.

In the interior of the house little remains of the Elizabethan except the cellars under the Hall and under that part of the Dining-Room which was the Stone Parlour, which date from the very beginning of the house in 1574. There are also the stone doorways opening off the two turret staircases, and that in the passage outside the Drawing-Room. Of the time of the 1st Earl, however, who died in 1630, we have the ceilings of King William's Room and the Old Library. Both these are dated by the equal prominence given to the Arms of Compton and Spencer of Canonbury. During the same period the 1st Earl must have added what is now the Billiard-Room (excluding the adjoining Smoking-Room) with its large bay window. Into this space he built a broad stairway, leading, without any doors, from a landing in the bay window where the billiard table now is down to the Hall.† From 1624 till 1720 that stairway constituted the main approach from the Hall to what was called the Great Room until King William banqueted there in 1695. We also find two rain-pipe-heads of original design on the east side of the Courtyard dated 1626, and the

* No one has yet tried to account for the FICANT EAM on this wing. Before the filling in of the indentations in the North and West Fronts, there would just have been room in their parapet for a repetition of the whole inscription which exists now, and its final letters FICANT EAM would have come where they are now. But such repetition would have been meaningless, and its removal would have been mentioned by Bridges. More likely is it, perhaps, that these final letters were put in as a blind, when, after the completion of the main inscription, it was found that the absence of lettering from this particular section of the parapet was very noticeable from the main front of the house.

† This part may be Elizabethan, but the doorway into the Wine-Cellar seems to have been originally an outside door.

door of a cupboard in the passage outside the Italian Room which must be pre-Civil War. Everything else has been removed in the series of so-called improvements carried out by its wealthy owners.

Alterati at Com Wynya

There are several small details at Compton Wynyates which from their style may be said to date from the time of the 1st Earl. The ceiling of the Dining-Room resembles the one in the Old Library at Ashby; that in the Drawing-Room, though much restored, is probably of the same date; that in Henry VIII's Room is of Charles I's reign; and the sundial over the big Chapel window is Elizabethan in style. Though the Earl's duties of Lord Lieutenant must have taken him to Warwickshire, we know nothing of his living at Compton; and we may infer that the magnificence of Castle Ashby had more attraction for a Lord Mayor's daughter.

Willia in Wa

In November and December 1624 we find Northampton occupied in the counties under his administration in preparations for the war in Ireland. First, he requests the permission of the Privy Council to train volunteers at Shrewsbury, and to have £1200 to furnish volunteers in the counties of Wales with arms; then he levies 800 men in North Wales and 200 in Warwickshire for services in Ireland; and, lastly, he reports to the Council that he has received a letter saying that "a great and mightie navie," far greater than that of 1588, is gathering in Spain, and is believed to be intended for Ireland.*

Funer James

At the funeral of James I, on May 7th, 1625, Northampton was one of the fourteen Earls who acted as "Assistants to the Chief Mourner (King Charles)." They proceeded in procession to the Altar to offer "for the defuncte." A chair was then provided for His Majesty, on which he received the hatchments, which were each offered by a pair of the chief mourners, namely, the coat of arms, the sword, the target, the healme and crest, the gauntlets, and finally the spurs offered by Northampton and Warwick; and then the banners, standards and bannerols were offered by other persons who had borne them in the procession.†

Acce of Char

Upon the accession of Charles I, Spencer Lord Compton began to enjoy the privileges of his Royal friendship, and Northampton continued in most of his appointments, though surrendering that of Master of the Leash to his son,‡ who was now more of an age to enjoy it. Northampton continued as Lord President of Wales, and was also reappointed Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire,§ while in 1629 we still find him still mentioned as a Privy Councillor.* We learn that from now onwards he was to be paid £1106. 13*s.* 4*d.* annually by the Receiver of South Wales for the diet and expenses of the President of Wales and his Council; ‖ and we find three months later he is already reporting to the Privy Council on musters of trained

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
† Nichols' "Progresses."
‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers, May 1628.
§ "Complete English Peerage."
‖ Calendar of Domestic State Papers. Northampton is also mentioned on October 11th, 1630 (after his death), as having been First Steward of Norwich Cathedral, with the yearly stipend of 20 nobles.

bands he has held in the counties of Pembroke, Carmarthen and Cardigan ;* and in the next January he reports considerable difficulty in obtaining certificates, from the various counties of which he is Lord Lieutenant, of those able to lend money to the King.* Nor was he completely debarred from sport in his principality ; for in 1628 the Earl of Totnes was ordered to send two falcons to him at Ludlow Castle,* the official residence of the Lord President. One more note we find connected with Wales. In September 1629 the Deputy Lieutenants of Anglesey report to him on "the military condition of the county. It is much impoverished, but there are in the island 800 able men, whereof 400 are trained, with 100 corslets, 100 muskets, 150 calivers, and 50 pikes, burgonets and swords."*

iam G. On April 20th, 1629, William, 1st Earl of Northampton, was installed a Knight of the Garter, having been elected on September 25th, 1628. A plate bearing his name and the date of the installation still remains in the thirteenth stall on the Sovereign's side in the Chapel of the Order (St. George's) at Windsor. His garter, collar and badges of the Order are still heirlooms in the family. From motives of economy, restrictions had been made in James I's reign on the dress and the attendants of a Knight-Elect, and the number of attendants had been limited to fifty. But this number was exceeded by William "to the number of four score, who began his Cavalcade to Windsor from Salisbury House † in the Strand ; and certainly would have exhibited a more glorious show had not the continual rain for three days space together impeded." ‡ So brilliant, however, was his display that a vote of thanks was decreed to him by the Chapter of the Order. §

"The order of riding to the Installation" included "Trumpets, whose Banners were of Damask, and thereon the Earl's Arms with a Garter, with his Crest and Supporters ; Grooms and Yeomen, in Blue Coats two and two ; Gentlemen, Esquires, and Knights two and two ; two Secretaries ; his Steward and Controller ; two Pages ; his spare horse ; his Chaplain to distribute his Alms ; Pursuivants at Arms two and two ; Heralds at Arms two and two ; the Gentleman Usher, bare-headed ; the Senior Herald, covered ; the Earl, accompanied by the Earls of Salisbury and Berkshire ; Noblemen, Knights, Esquires and Gentlemen, each two and two ; and followed by a procession of their attendants.

"At Slow (Slough) they all made a stand, and being put again into order,

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

† Built by the 1st Earl of Salisbury, it was let in two parts in about 1626. It was inherited by the 4th Earl of Northampton. See below, page 138.

‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers. Also William Lake to Sir Henry Vane, April 20th. "The E. of N. is gone this day to Windsor to be installed, if the great waters do not stop his passage by reason of the excessive rain for three days."

§ Burke's "Peerage."

proceeded to Windsor Castle, where alighting in the lower Court the Knight-Elect was conducted to his Lodgings. The Knights of the Order proceeded with fewer attendants but similar splendour to Windsor. Arriving there in the afternoon they put on their Mantles and entered St. George's Chappel to offer Gold and Silver at the Altar, followed by Vespers with each sitting in his Stall. This was followed by a Supper at night in the nature of a private meal, which was prepared in the Dean's House. The Installation took place the following morning with great pomp at the Altar of the Chapel, and was followed by a grand Feast at the Sovereign's charge. During this meal the Knights disrobed themselves, and the ceremonies were considered ended." *

In June 1630 Northampton was sixty-two years old, and had reached an age when he should have taken care of himself. But, oblivious of this, he went out with friends in a boat one evening, after he had waited on the King at supper and after he had supped himself, to wash himself in the Thames. No doubt it had been a piping hot day, but old gentlemen can only bathe after a big meal at considerable risk. "So soon as his legs were in the water but to the knees, he had the cholic, and cried out, 'Have me into the boat again, for I am a dead man' ; and he died a few days after at his lodgings in the Savoy,† within the suburbs of London, on June 24th, 1630,‡ and was buried at Compton with his ancestors." § *William's death.*

By his Will,‖ dated June 26th, 1613, he left money to the poor people of the parishes of Tysoe, Whatcote, Brailes, Wolford, Long Compton, Ashby David, Yardley and Denton.

To his beloved Wife : All the jewels in her keeping, and "all the plate and furniture that usually she useth or keepeth in her chamber for her use." Also all household stuff, mentioned in an annexed schedule, during her widowhood.

To his daughter Anne a portion of ten thousand pounds.,

To his son Spencer, who was sole executor, all his goods, "chattells, leases, jewels, money and debts."

"Then I desire a tomb may be made ¶ by my Executor for me and my loving wife at Compton, where I desire my said wife shall be buried by me when it shall please God to take her out of this transitory life."

The widowed Countess died on May 8th, 1632, and Sir John Spencer's estates, which had at his death been settled jointly on William and Elizabeth, then passed to the 2nd Earl. Details of this inheritance are given in the Inquisition

* Ashmole's "Order of the Garter."

† See Appendix II for residences of the family.

‡ F.D. 1227.

§ *Universal Magazine*, Vol. XLVI. (Jan. 1770.)

‖ F.D. 1242.

¶ The achievement banner of the 1st Earl hangs in Compton Church, but no record exists of a tomb having been erected. It was probably destroyed in the Civil Wars.

made at her death,* and show land of some sort in each of the following places :—

LONDON : Crosby Place.
MIDDLESEX : Canonbury, Cutlers, Clerkenwell, Islington, Kentish Town, Tottenham, Highbury.
ESSEX : Eastwood.
HUNTS. : Fenny Stanton, Hilton, Alcombury, Fendryton, Conington, Bagworth, Elsworth.
CAMBS. : Abbington (Magna and Parva).
BUCKS. : Wolverston, Moulsoe.
SUSSEX : Middleton, Adrington, Tortington, Bynstead, Trynbarne.
SOMERSET : Henford, Kilmarsdon, Charlton, Lippiat, Colford, Walton, Long Sutton.
BEDS. : Newnham in Goldington, Bedford, Cardington.
OXON : Wardington, Henley-on-Thames.

The 1st Countess must have been a religious woman in spite of the luxury she lived in, for her son Spencer was brought up a man of strict principles.†

* F.D. 1368. But other properties are omitted from this list, though mentioned in family documents as inherited from Sir John Spencer. See in F.D. 1369.
† See quotation from Lloyd's "Memorials, etc." page 88, below.

CHAPTER VI

SIR THOMAS COMPTON, K.B.

(1572–1626)

LET us now learn what we can of Sir Thomas and Sir Henry Compton, brother and half-brother respectively of the 1st Earl of Northampton. Sir Thomas, it will be remembered, was the second son of Henry 1st Lord Compton by his first wife, Lady Frances Hastings. He must have been born about 1572, and the first we hear of him was in June 1599, when, at the age of about twenty-seven, "Tom Compton and Mackwilliams have fought upon an old quarrel; Mackwilliams was killed, and Compton much hurt." * Duels were not common before the reign of James I, and Sir Thomas may have been a quarrelsome person. The next we hear of him is that on March 4th, 1607, he was made a Knight of the Bath at Whitehall,† two years later than his brother William.

Countess of Buckingham.

We hear more of Sir Thomas after his marriage. His wife, Mary, was born in 1570, the daughter of Anthony, third son of William Beaumont, of Cole-Orton Hall in Leicestershire, and was probably a year or two older than Thomas. She had first married, at the age of twenty, Sir George Villiers, of Brooksby, and in 1605 was left a widow with a boy of thirteen. She educated him to the life of a courtier, and with such success that on his arrival at Court in 1614 he won praise on all sides, and especially from his Royal Master, who in the following four years knighted him and made him successively Viscount, Earl and Marquis. He subsequently became Duke of Buckingham, and long remained the intimate friend and adviser of James I and Charles I. A portrait of him by Vandyke, after his death by assassination in 1628, hangs at Castle Ashby. But to return to his mother; between her first husband's death in 1605 and 1617, the year in which we first find her married to Sir Thomas, she had married as her second husband Sir William Rayner. Lady Compton is continually mentioned as attending banquets at James I's Court, where apparently she was a great favourite with the King, as witness the following extract from a letter of Chamberlain :—

"15th Nov. 1617. The Lady Hatton's feast was very magnificent, and the King graced her in every way, and made four of her creatures Knights. . . . But

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers. † Nichols' "Progresses."

the principal graces and favours lighted on the Lady Compton (Villiers) and her children, whom the King praised and kissed, and blessed all those that wished them well. There were some errors at the Lady Hatton's feast. . . . But the greatest error was, that the good man of the house was neither invited nor spoken of; he dined that day at the Temple." *

From the date of their marriage favours were showered on them, as a result of the King's affection for "Steenie," as Buckingham was called by James and Prince Charles. In January 1617 Thomas was appointed for life Master of the Privy Harriers,† an appointment which can have left very few branches of Royal sport out of the hands of the Compton family. On March 16th, 1618, Lady Compton was given by the King a lease of the Duchy House of the Duchy of Lancaster in the Strand.† On August 8th, "the Lady Compton is made Countess of Buckingham, and hath got a start of these states (*i.e.* four creations of Earls, including the Earl of Northampton on 2nd August), her Patent bearing date 1st July. But it doth pose our Heralds how her husband should have no part in this preferment." * Her husband, however, possibly preferred to be rewarded by a twenty-one years' monopoly of logwood for dyeing, in return for which the King only asked a very small commission :—

"29th February, 1620. Proclamation prohibiting the general import of logwood, but permitting Sir Thos. C. to import fifty tons yearly, to be used in dyeing mean commodities only. All other logwood imported to be seized, half of it burnt, and the other half delivered by the informer for £6 per ton to Sir Thos. C." †

"2nd May, 1621. Petition of the Wardens, etc. of the Dyers' Company to the House of Commons, against the licence granted to Sir Thos. C. to import 50 tons of logwood, the colour being deceitful, and much more imported on the pretext of these 50 tons." †

"24th June, 1622. All Mayors, Justices, Admiralty and Custom House Officers instructed to assist Sir Thos. Compton in executing his patent for searching for and seizing logwood, which is forbidden to be used in dyeing." †

"March 1625. Licence to Sir Thos. Compton to import yearly 50 tons of logwood for 21 years to be used in colouring haberdasher's wears, and not in dyeing cloth, reserving to his Majesty £50 per annum." †

The Countess seems to have had great political influence too. On March 22nd, 1622, we are told she "sways much at Court"; she made Sir Henry Montagu Lord High Treasurer, and then unmade him again a year later, though he had paid £20,000 for the office.‡

She was certainly on very intimate terms with King James, and nursed him when on his death-bed. We are told she "applied a plaister at the outside of his

* Nichols' "Progresses." † Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
‡ Howell's "Familiar Letters."

stomach," which was not approved of by the Scotch doctors attending him. Indeed her action aroused much suspicion, and was later referred to by Elliot in his attack on her son in the House of Commons.*

Meanwhile Sir Thomas Compton was in bad health. In July 1623 the Duchess of Buckingham reported him as "getting worse and worse"; † and in April 1626 ‡ he died at the age of fifty-four, leaving no issue. In July 1628, Mary, his widow, surrendered the unexpired twelve years of Thomas's monopoly, and in return was granted "108 tons of logwood, brought in among His Majesty's reprisal goods." § She was residing at Whaddon in Bucks in April 1631; and on April 19th, 1632, she died, in her sixty-second year, and was buried two days later in Westminster Abbey.‡

His d

* Howells' "Familiar Letters." † Goodman, Vol. II.
‡ "Westminster Abbey Registers" (Mr. Chester, 1875).
§ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

CHAPTER VII

SIR HENRY COMPTON, K.B.

(1585–1648)

HENRY COMPTON was the only child by his second wife, Anne Spencer, of Henry 1st Lord Compton. His parents probably married in May 1584,* and so Henry cannot have been born before 1585. He cannot therefore have been more than four when his father died, and seven when his mother married the 2nd Earl of Dorset and lived at Buckhurst. The chief part he plays in the history of the Comptons is that of starting a branch of the family which lived at Brambletye in Sussex till 1660, and at Bisterne, Hants, till 1724.

The first we hear of him is when, at the age of barely eighteen, he was made a Knight of the Bath at the Coronation of James I on July 24th, 1603.† This honour was no doubt conferred on him to give pleasure to his half-brother, who was at the time very influential owing to his having been one of the Regency who invited the King to the throne. Sir Henry's picture hangs at Compton Wynyates,‡ and represents him as an old man with a grey beard, with a very kindly, jovial face, and with the riband of the Bath across his chest.

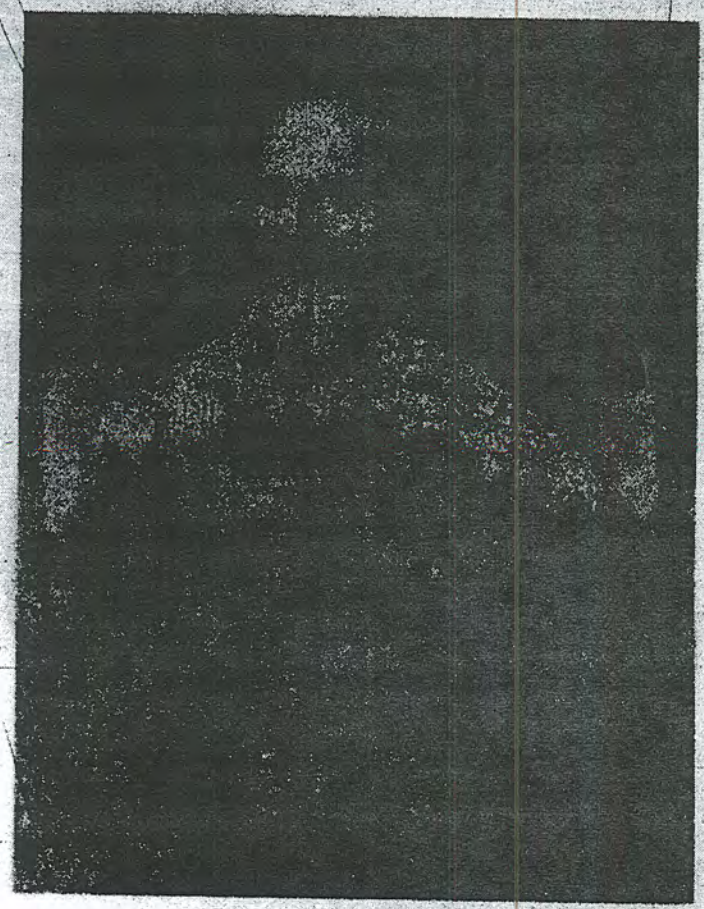
About this time he was elected M.P. for East Grinstead, which he represented till 1640. And on December 8th, 1604, he received a grant, in reversion after Thomas Spencer and Sir Richard Spencer, of the office of keeping writs and rolls in the Common Pleas, for life, with reversion to a son of Sir Richard Spencer.§

st
rriage.

He married firstly Lady Cecille Sackville, who was a daughter by a former wife of his mother's second husband, Robert Sackville, 2nd Earl of Dorset. Cecille bore him two sons and three daughters ‖ :—

1. Richard, who was born in 1604, succeeded his father. He died in 1684.
2. William, who lived at Gersby in Lincolnshire.¶
3. Cecilia Compton, born 1608, eldest daughter, married (1) Sir John Fermor ** of Easton Neston, (2) Henry, afterwards 3rd Lord Arundell †† of Wardour Castle in Wiltshire. In March 1643 she and her mother-in-law defended this Castle for nine

* See note on page 45, above. † Nichols' "Progresses."
‡ It was bought from the Townshend family by the 5th Marquis.
§ Calendar of Domestic State Papers. In his Composition Petition Sir Henry claimed that before the Civil Wars this office was worth £2000 a year. F.D. 1083/41.
‖ F.D. 1081. ¶ F.D. 1083/41. ** Collins' "Peerage." †† Burke's "Peerage."



PORTRAIT OF SIR HENRY COMPTON, K.B., OF BRAMBLETYE.
FROM THE PICTURE AT COMPTON WYNYATES.

days against Parliamentary troops, in the absence of their husbands, with a garrison of little more than their household servants, and then surrendered it only on very honourable terms. Her father-in-law died of battle wounds two months later; but her husband lived to be a Privy Councillor, etc., in the reign of James II, after whose abdication he retired to Wiltshire.

4. Margaret Compton, second daughter, married Colonel Thomas Sackville, of Sedlescombe in Sussex.

5. Anne.

The 3rd Countess of Dorset, sister-in-law of Lady Cecille Compton, and by birth Anne Clifford, has left us a very accurate diary* of some part of her life, which gives us information of Sir Henry and Cecille. Lady Dorset was continually at loggerheads with her husbands, and during 1616 things were so difficult that her baby daughter, Margaret, was entrusted to the care of the Comptons who were at that time "keeping the house at West Horsley."† During her quarrels, she tells us, she continually wrote to her "sister Compton," and met her several times at dinner in London; and on one occasion she even lent her ten twenty-shilling pieces, "I being desirous to win the love of my Lord's Kindred by all the fair means I could." But in February 1617 "my sister Compton and her husband were now upon terms of parting, so as they left Horsley, she lying in London. It was agreed she should have a £100 a year, and he to have the child from her." This separation seems to have lasted nearly two years, but on January 22nd, 1619, they supped with the stubborn Anne, who says, "I brought them to sup here on purpose, hoping to make them friends," and "my sister Compton was reconciled to her husband, and went to his house in Finch Lane, where they stayed ten or twelve days, and then he brought her into the country to Brambletye." This is the first mention of Brambletye, which was to be the home of this branch of Comptons till about 1660. Sir Henry's mother died in September 1618, and evidently left the place to him.‡ At her death it was hers absolutely, and had probably therefore been Sackville property and had been left her by her third husband, the 2nd Earl of Dorset, who had died in 1609.§ On June 30th, 1619, Sir Henry visited his wife's

* "Diary of Lady Anne Clifford," by Vita Sackville West (1923). A copy of the original is at Longleat.

† This house had been granted by Henry VIII to Sir Anthony Browne, his Master of the Horse. In 1592 the Brownes were created Lord Montague, and the house belonged in 1616 to the 2nd Lord Montague, brother of Sir Henry Compton's second wife. It is not clear why Compton was keeping house here with his first wife.

‡ Nor probably did Henry inherit Bisterne or any of the Berkeley property till his mother's death.

§ At the beginning of the nineteenth century the ruins of two houses were to be seen there. Horsfield's "Sussex" (1835) says the old moated one was that inherited by Sir Henry, while the one with the date 1631 and the initials of himself and his second wife over the main entrance was built by him after his second marriage. Two views of the latter ruin are given in that book. See also Horace Smith's novel "Brambletye House" (1826).

people at Knole," and all his mother's place was delivered to him; so after dinner he returned to Brambletie, where his wife lives with him, but with many discontents." How long this unhappy married life lasted, we know not; but it was ended by Cecille's death.

On July 12th, 1624, he was made a Deputy-Lieutenant of Sussex.* On December 8th, 1627, he and twenty-one others were commissioned to use martial law in the punishment of offences committed by soldiers billeted in Sussex.* In July 1640 he is mentioned as a Director of the Westminster Soapmakers' Company.*

Sir Henry is also mentioned as having been Ambassador in Spain and Portugal,* and there is at the British Museum a cipher for the use of Sir Henry Compton when Ambassador to Portugal.† His signature in 1641 is among the family documents,‡ and an impression of his seal which bears the "demi-dragon within a ducal coronet" given as a crest to his great-grandfather Sir William Compton.

At some unknown date about 1624 Sir Henry married as his second wife, Mary, daughter of Sir George Browne of Wickham in Kent, and widow of Thomas Paston Esq., of Thorpe in Norfolk. It was in her brother's house, West Horsley, that we have already seen Sir Henry and his first wife keeping house. Dame Mary bore to Sir Henry four sons, by name Henry (born 1625), Peter (born 1628, died same year), George (1629–1674) and John (1630–1659), and two daughters, Mary § and Frances. Dame Mary and all her children appear to have been Roman Catholics, and she herself was convicted of Popish Recusancy in June 1640. Curiously she appeared in these proceedings and in subsequent lists of Recusants under the name of "Ursula, wife of Sir Henry Compton, late of St. Bride's Holborn, K.B." But ten years later she failed to establish that this was any other than herself.‖

In 1631 Sir Henry must have built the second Brambletye House, for in 1826 over the principal entrance were carved the Arms of Compton impaled with Spencer, and the date 1631 with the initials of himself and of his second wife in a lozenge. Perhaps the old moated house he inherited from his mother was destroyed by fire.

When the Civil Wars began Sir Henry and his family were at Brambletye. He himself immediately took up arms for King Charles, and laid himself open to the two charges, both of which he stoutly denied in his Compounding Petitions, of sending certain plate to the assistance of His Majesty in 1642, and of taking part against the Parliament in an engagement at Bramber ¶ Bridge. All his estates in twelve different counties** were confiscated, and he was deprived of his life

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

† Eg. MSS. 2550, f. 34.

‡ F.D. 1085/9.

§ Mary married John Lumley, who died in 1658, son and heir of Lord Lumley; their son was created Earl of Scarbrough.

‖ See Sequestration Papers (F.D. 1083/41), and Sessions Rolls of May 19th, 1641 (Middlesex Records, Vol. III.).

¶ In Domesday Book Brambletye is called Brambertye.

** See F.D. 1369.

appointment of Custos Brevium in the Common Pleas. But in March 1645 he took the National Covenant in London; and in December 1646 he made his first Petition for a composition of his estates. On February 28th, 1648, in his absence abroad, his wife compounded for his delinquency at a fine of £1460. But he did not live to see the final settlement, for he died in Paris on December 24th, 1648, in the presence of his youngest son, John, and was buried there.*

Dame Mary Compton was left a life interest in the Brambletye and East Grinstead property, with remainder to her eldest son Henry. The Caton estate in Lancashire was settled on George, the Jenken Maulden estate in Essex on John, and the Paston estates in Norfolk no doubt went back to that family. The remainder seems to have been inherited by Richard Compton, who a month earlier had taken the National Covenant. Young Henry seems to have travelled from 1641 till his father's death. His estates were then sequestrated for supposed recusancy, and at the end of 1649 he was given a pass "to go beyond sea, provided he take the test before going, and gives security (for £500) not to return without leave." But a year later he returned home, and in November 1650 took the Oath of Abjuration, when his estates were discharged.* Papists were going through trying times; in September 1650 Lady Compton had to have a licence "to come to London for 21 days on her own sequestration business." † Her son George, too, was in trouble. His estates were sequestrated and he was imprisoned for "being in the Scots army last time they came to England against the Parliament." But, as the result of a petition from his mother, he was released in December 1651 as being "a man of distempered brain and a lunatique" as certified by his physicians.* He was "delivered over to his mother for recovery of his health, she giving security in £1000 that he shall be forthcoming on summons at any time within six months." †

At the end of November 1650 one of the Messrs. Comptons was challenged to a duel by a Mr. Thomas Howard. They were both ordered to appear before the Council, and "Mr. C. was committed prisoner to the Tower, for accepting a challenge from Thomas Howard, in contempt of this government, and tending to a breach of the law; to remain there until further orders." † Mr. Howard was also committed for sending the challenge. But twelve days later "Mr. C. was set at liberty, on recognizance of £1000 to be of good behaviour, and appear when summoned, and upon passing his word and engagement that he will not do anything upon the challenge in which he was engaged." † We do not know to which Compton this anecdote refers; but eighteen months later "Colonel Harry" tragically met his death in another duel. "In 1652 George, 6th Lord Chandos, had a difference with him about a Lady he recommended to the Colonel, whose person and fortune were below few matches in the kingdom; which unhappily ended in a duel in Putney Marsh, on May 13th, when Mr. Compton fell by his Lordship's hand, which

* F.D. 1083/41.

† Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

was a great affliction to him, as he was his intimate friend, and brought him into some trouble." * A letter † to the 3rd Earl of Northampton from Stewart Walker, second to "Harry Compton" in this duel, explains that the seconds had agreed to stop the fight between the two friends on the first sign of drawn blood, but that none had been seen before the fatal thrust. On the same day letters were sent to all the ports, "desiring them to examine all persons taking passage, and endeavour to apprehend Lord Chandos, Lord Arundell of Wardour, Hutton Rich, Stewart Walker, and —— Compton, for being engaged in a duel between Lord Chandos and (Hen) Compton, in which the latter was slain, and if found, to send them up in safe custody to Council." ‡ They were evidently caught, for Lord Chandos and Lord Arundell were imprisoned, tried in the Upper Bench on May 17th, 1653, and found guilty of manslaughter. As punishment they were burned in the hand,§ and Lord Chandos died of small-pox the following February.* Colonel Henry was buried at East Grinstead.‖ His youngest brother, John, died at Bramble Teigh in July 1659 and was buried at Withyham.¶ Dame Mary Compton must have died about the same time, and George must have sold the Brambletye and Grinstead property; for the last Court of the Manor of Brambletye held by the Comptons was on January 13th, 1660.‖ George died in 1674.

It has already been said that the bulk of Sir Henry's property went to Richard, his surviving son by his first wife. Richard had possessed no real or personal estate before his father's death,** but thenceforward he lived at Bisterne near Ringwood, in the county of Southampton. This Bisterne is the same as the manor and residence of Bettishorne, which Sir William Compton inherited through his wife Warburgh, to whose Berkeley ancestors it had belonged for several generations as a result of their marriage with the daughter of Sir John Bettishorne †† in the fourteenth century. The Compton Arms still remain over the front door of Bisterne House, where Comptons lived from 1523 till 1741. They are accompanied by the date 1652, which is no doubt that of the completion of Richard's additions and improvements. Richard Compton now married Amy Warre of Horton, Somerset; and, after losing a son, Richard, at seven months of age, in 1665, they had another son, Henry, whose education was superintended by Bishop Compton in Fulham Palace. Richard himself died at Bisterne on July 29th, 1684, at the age of eighty, and his tomb is still to be seen in Ringwood Church. In 1690 his heir married Elizabeth Hoby, and had two sons, Hoby and Henry. At his death in 1702 he left the reversion after his mother's death of the manor house and farm of Bisterne, with the manors of Bisterne and Crow, to his wife for life, and then to his son Hoby. Hoby died

* Collins' "Peerage." † F.D. 1086.
‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
§ Letter 13/6/1653 Hyde to Rochester in Clarendon St. Papers.
‖ "History of East Grinstead." ¶ See inscription on his tomb there.
** See Compounding Petition. †† See Pedigree opposite.

PEDIGREE OF THE OWNERS OF BETTISHORNE, NOW CALLED BISTERNE

Margaret de Bettishorne (*d.* 1349). — Thomas 3rd Lord Berkeley of Berkeley Castle (*d.* 1361).

John de Bettishorne (*d.* 1380).

Sir John de Bettishorne (*d.* 1399). — Direct line of the present Earls of Berkeley.

Elizabeth Bettishorne = Sir John Berkeley of Beverstone Castle 4th son by second wife (1351–1427).

Sir Maurice Berkeley (styled) of Bettishorne *m.* Lora Fitzhugh. (*d.* 1459).

Sir Maurice Berkeley (jun.) of Bettishorne. — Sir Edward Berkeley, Kt.

Sir William Berkeley (*d.* 1485). — John Berkeley (*d.* a minor).

Sir John Brereton (*d.* 1521). = Katharine Berkeley. (*d.* 1522). — Sir William Berkeley

(First cousins and co-heirs who divided the property.)

Sir William Compton of Compton Wynyates (*d.* 1528). = Warburger Brereton.

Peter Compton (1523–1544) = Anne, dau. of 4th Earl of Shrewsbury.

Frances, dau. of Earl of Huntingdon (1). = Henry, 1st Lord Compton (*d.* 1589). = (2) Anne, dau. of Sir John Spencer of Althorp.

William, 1st Earl of Northampton, ancestor of Comptons of Compton Wynyates.

Ciceley Sackville (1) = Sir Henry Compton, K.B., of Bisterne (*d.* 1648) = Mary Browne (2)

—Henry.
—George.
—John.
—Mary and Frances.

William
Cecilia
Margaret
Anne

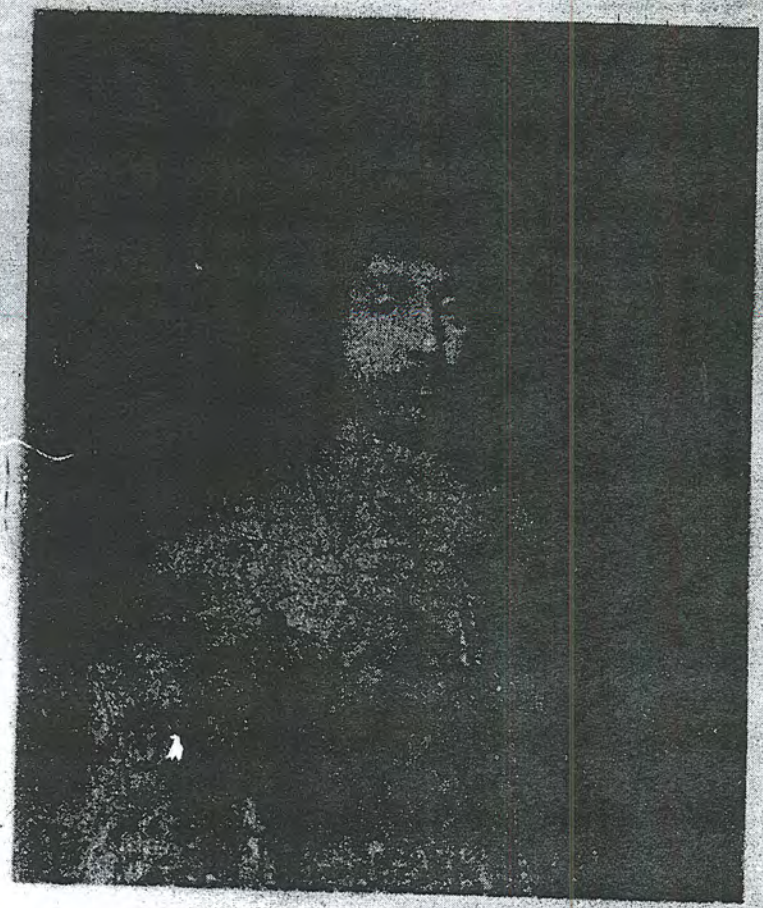
Richard Compton of Bisterne (1604–1684) *m.* Amy Warre.

Richard (*b.* and *d.* 1665). — Henry Compton of Bisterne, *m.* 1690 = Elizabeth Hoby.

Hoby Compton of Bisterne (*d.* unmarried 1714). — Henry Compton of Bisterne (*d.* 1724). = Eleanor Willis (*d.* 1742), leaving Bisterne to her nephew, Henry Willis, who took name and Arms of Compton, and is the ancestor of the Comptons living at Minstead.

unmarried, and left all his estates to his brother Henry, who was still a minor. They consisted of the manors of Bisterne and Crow, Exbury and Leap, Totten and Berkeley, Minsted and Brooke, with several farms in the Counties of Southampton, Dorset and Wilts. Henry married Eleanor Willis, of Ringwood, and died without issue in 1724. All other male heirs of this branch of the family predeceased him. His widow left all the estates, by a Will dated October 27th, 1741, to Henry Willis, second son of her brother, on the condition that he and his heirs took the name of Compton in the place of Willis.* His descendants still live at Minstead House.

* *Gentleman's Magazine*, Jan. 1789, Vol. LIX.



CHAPTER VIII

SPENCER, 2ND EARL OF NORTHAMPTON, K.B.

(1630–1643)

Education.

SPENCER was born at Compton Wynyates * in May 1601, and at his christening in London Queen Elizabeth and his grandfather, Sir John Spencer, were sponsors. He was educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, and abroad. He was a clever boy, for we are told that on March 8th, 1615, when a comedy called "Ignoramus" was being acted at Cambridge before the King, there were many excellent actors, amongst whom, though Spencer was the youngest, he was by no means the worst. In this performance, at the early age of thirteen, he played the three parts of the Prologue, Vince a boy, and Surda a girl, volunteering to undertake the last in place of his Puritan tutor, who, "judging it unlawful for a man to wear women's apparel, even in a Comedy," had begged to be excused.† We are elsewhere ‡ told that "his parts were so great, and his appetite for knowledge so large, that it was as much as four several tutors, at Home, at Cambridge, and in France and Italy, each taking his respective hour for the art and science he professed, could do to keep pace with his great proficiency." It must have been owing to this mastery of languages that in after life he was several times appointed, both in the reigns of James I and Charles I, to receive and conduct foreign Ambassadors to their public audiences.§

Marriage.

On November 11th, 1616, he was created a Knight of the Bath, at the early age of fifteen, on the same occasion that Prince Charles † was created Prince of Wales, etc. And on December 30th, 1619, he was granted Royal licence to travel abroad for three years.‖ But in 1621 he had returned, and was Member of Parliament for Ludlow.¶ It was in October 1621 that he married Mary, daughter of Sir Francis Beaumont, of Cole-Orton, King James being present at the wedding.‖ Sir Francis was brother to the Countess of Buckingham, who had married Lord Compton's uncle, Sir Thomas Compton.** Together they led a life of gaiety and great luxury at Court, which was cut short by the tragedy of "the accursed rebellion." They had

* Collins' "Peerage." † Nichols' "Progresses."
‡ "Memorials of those personages that suffered for the Protestant religion, and allegiance to their Soveraigne, in our late intestine wars, etc." (1668). David Lloyd, Canon of St. Asaph.
§ *Univ. Magazine*, Jan. 1770, Vol. XLVI. ‖ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
¶ "Memorials of Old Warwickshire." ** Lodge's "Portraits of Illustrious Personages."

six sons, James (born August 19th, 1622), Charles (born 1623), William (born 1625),* Spencer (born 1629), Francis (born 1629), and Henry (born 1632); and two daughters, Anne (born 1638) and Penelope.† Of the sons much will be heard later in these pages; but let us take this opportunity of telling of the daughters.

There is a portrait of Anne at Castle Ashby, on the West Staircase; and there is another (said to be by Lely) at her husband's home at Howsham, but it does not bear so much resemblance to portraits of her brothers. Anne was born in 1637–38,‡ and married on February 19th, 1666, Sir Hugh Cholmley, Bart., of Whitby Abbey and Howsham Hall, in Yorkshire.§ Sir Hugh's father, another Sir Hugh, had at the outbreak of the Civil Wars been very active as a Commander on the Parliamentary side. But in February 1643 his Royalist inclinations had got the better of him, and he was made General of the North and Governor of Scarborough Castle. For more than a year he defended the latter, and only surrendered it in 1645 on very honourable terms. His estate was sequestered, and he went into exile until his composition in June 1649. He was succeeded in 1657 by his elder son William.

His second son, Hugh, who married Lady Anne Compton, was born on July 21st, 1632, and in March 1663 was made Governor of Tangier, which town Portugal had given to England on the marriage of Charles II with Katharine. From 1663 till 1672 Hugh Cholmley spent much of his life out there as Surveyor-General of the building of a mole round the harbour, of which sort of work he had had previous experience at Whitby. He succeeded to the baronetcy in July 1665, and married Anne in the following February; we are told that they were "first at Ashby" together on March 2nd, 1666, less than three weeks after their marriage.‖ From 1669 to 1672 he seems to have had his family continuously with him at Tangier; and in the latter year the construction of the mole was apparently completed, though Sir Hugh unfortunately lived to see its subsequent destruction by the Fleet in 1684, when the town had fallen into the hands of the King of Morocco. Sir Hugh was elected M.P. for Northampton in 1679, and represented Thirsk from 1685 to 1687. He died at Whitby, aged fifty-six, in January 1689, and his wife, aged sixty-seven, in 1705; they are both buried in the chancel of Whitby Church. There are many portraits of Comptons of that date at Howsham Hall, which now belongs to Mrs. Tatton Willoughby, a descendant of the Cholmleys.

* Lloyd (in "Memorials of those that suffered" —1668) says Charles and William were twins.

† Collins' "Peerage."

N.B.—Petition for Composition of April 30th, 1646, says that "both daughters were about eleven" at their father's death. Anne's tombstone shows she was born in 1638.

‡ National Portrait Gallery reference to portrait at Howsham.

§ These facts about the Cholmleys are taken from Cokayne's "Complete Baronetage," and Clarendon's "Rebellion," and *Gentleman's Magazine*, July 1788, Vol. LVIII.

‖ F.D. 1001.

Lady Penelope Compton

Lady Penelope* married Sir John Nicholas, of West Horsley, near Leatherhead. With his father, John had attended Charles II in exile, and after the Restoration was made Knight of the Bath, and appointed Clerk of the Council, which office he retained until his death in January 1704, at the age of eighty-one. He inherited West Horsley from his father on the latter's death in 1669. Lady Penelope Nicholas was killed at Horsley by the falling of a chimney during the dreadful storm of November 26th, 1703. Sir John thus describes it: "This night was the dreadful storm and tempest wherein my wife was killed in our bed by the fall of the chimney, and I was wonderfully preserved by God's providence." Another account says that "Sir John was taken out of the rubbish very dangerously hurt;" and that the chirurgeons who viewed her body gave their opinion "that her Ladyship, being between 80 and 90, was killed by the fright of that most terrible storm, and though her leg was broke, yet no blood nor matter flowing from it, she was dead before the fall of the chimney." Their daughter Penelope married her first cousin, Hatton Compton.† The Nicholas family became extinct in 1749.‡

The East at Court

At the beginning of 1622 Spencer Lord Compton had become a great favourite of Prince Charles,§ and on March 1st he was granted the office of Keeper of the Wardrobe to the Prince.‖ One of the duties of this appointment was evidently paying the expenses of the Prince's "running at Tilt." On March 24th Spencer was to have performed at a tilting, "but in regard of the King's indisposition (he was suddenly taken with the gout or some such infirmity in the knee), and the foulness of the weather, the solemnity was deferred" repeatedly, "till at length it was not at all performed."¶ On May 21st he received a Warrant (signed "Charles P.") for the payment to him as "Master of our Wardrobe and Roabes" of £235 6*s.* 7*d.*, "the remayne of our intended runninge at Tilte," over and above the sum of £3000 assigned for that purpose.**

In Spain

At the beginning of 1623 George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the intimate friend of the Prince of Wales, and first cousin of Lady Northampton, persuaded King James to allow him to negotiate a marriage between Charles and the Spanish Infanta, hoping by Spanish interference to restore peace in Europe and to influence the Emperor to restore the Palatinate to James's son-in-law, the Elector. Although a marriage with a Roman Catholic Princess was odious to the country, Buckingham expected to force the King's hand by getting Prince Charles and the Infanta to meet in Madrid.¶ On February 8th Buckingham and Charles started out, disguised with beards, and with the borrowed names of Thomas and John Smith, to travel, attended by three others, across France to Madrid. They sailed from

* A good portrait of her is in the Miniature Cupboard at Ashby.

† See page 118–119.

‡ Brayley's "History of Surrey," Vol. II.

§ *Univ. Magazine*, Jan. 1770, Vol. XLVI.

‖ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

¶ Nichols' "Progresses."

** F.D. 953.

Dover on the 19th,* and after an adventurous journey reached Madrid, where they had several private audiences with the King and Queen of Spain and their daughter, though they still maintained their incognito in public. Their reception at Madrid on March 7th is described in a joint letter addressed to "Dear Dad and Gossope" (King James) and signed by them both. On a sheet enclosed is a note signed by Buckingham only, and probably written unknown to the Prince; in it he writes of the Princess, "without flattery, I think there is not a sweeter creature in the world. Babie Charles himselfe is so touch'd at the hart, that he confesses all he ever yett saw is nothinge to her." † However, after months of negotiations, the Spaniards confessed that under no circumstances would Spain ever fight against the Emperor, and Prince Charles and his retinue came home in disgust, vowing war against Spain and an alliance with France by the marriage of Charles with Henrietta Maria, sister of the French King. During March 1623 * Lord Compton had received various articles of jewellery, whose value was computed at £64,000,‡ from the Tower of London, and conveyed them to the Prince in Spain. These were probably given as presents to the Infanta and to members of the Spanish Court, and eighteen months later, on December 30th, 1624, when the Spanish marriage was no longer thought of, Lord Compton was ordered to appoint a time for the re-delivery of the jewels from Spain.§

On the accession of King Charles I to the throne, Lord Compton was immediately made Master of the Robes, in succession to Lord Carlisle,* and as such was one of the two to hold the King's train at the Coronation.‡ In August he was in this capacity paid £1000 "for provision to be made in France of necessaries for his Majesty's use and service;" and at the end of September we are told that the expenses of the necessary provisions made by him "for robes, wardrobe, and stables, from Lady-day to Michaelmas" amounted to £11,086 6s. 1½d., while on October 30th he was to have "custody of the King's best jewels, for the King's own use and wearing." * On the 25th of the following March he was made Gentleman of the King's Robes, with a yearly allowance of £5000, "to the end that Provicions incident to that place may be provided more husbandlike and better cheape."‖ The Family Documents Nos. 997 and 998 are two large rolls of accounts of the expenses of Lord Compton's office from 1626 to 1630. Some of the items give an idea of the elaborateness of their Court clothes, viz.

"One peache coloured Satten Suite and Cloake raced in rich workes, cutt with and uppon straw coloured Taffeta laced with lxvi yards of peache coloure imbrodered

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers. † Nichols' "Progresses."
‡ *Univ. Magazine*, Jan. 1770, Vol. XLVI.
§ Calendar of Domestic State Papers. A bundle of his account books as Master of the Wardrobe in 1623 is at the Record Office (Exch. Accts. 435/14–16).
‖ F.D. 997–8.

lace, the lyning of the Suite being of chaungeable Taffeta and ye Cloake lyning of Peache coloure Satten cutt and raced with work—£60. 17. 7."

"Garters and Tyes.

Xiii paire of rich gold and silver garters and tyes at £4. 10sh. the pair—£58. 10sh.

A paire of rich garters with iiii paire of tyes to them at Cx. s. the paire—£11.

ii paire of byas silke garters green and orange colour purled, at xl. s. the paire—£4.

One paire of Tennis garters—10sh.

In all £74."

In January 1628 he was paid a further £500 "for providing eight masquing suits," * but in June 1628 he resigned his appointment, and in a letter to the King * he made the following "statement of things which he prayed His Majesty to do for him on his resigning his place."

1. That the bills due to tradesmen may be paid.
2. That he may have a quietus for jewels delivered, according to the King's command, both in Spain and elsewhere.
3. That £5500 due from Buckingham, but the payment of which the King took upon himself, may be paid, part being for land by Burley, which the Duke has, and is to have assured upon his son.†
4. That, in token of the King's satisfaction with the service of Lord Compton, he may be joined with his father in the lieutenancies of Warwickshire and Gloster.
5. That he may be continued in the privilege of access to His Majesty.

His account as Master of the Robes was not closed till December 1st, 1634, when £8448 19s. 9d. was paid "to divers tradesmen belonging to the King's Robes, appearing due in his account as late Gentleman of His Majesty's robes, ended at Michaelmas 1630."*

We do not know the reason of his resigning this appointment, for he evidently had not fallen from Royal favour. The previous month he had succeeded his father as Master of the Leash,* and perhaps his love of sport appealed to him more than life at Court in London. Or he may have been kept busy by Parliamentary duties, for on April 1st, 1626, he had been summoned to Parliament during his father's lifetime as Baron Compton.‡ Or again, he may have wished for a closer connection with his native counties, which the joint Lord Lieutenancy would give. At any rate, we know nothing more of him until he succeeded his father on June 24th, 1630.

But yet another very possible reason for Spencer resigning his Court appointment is his financial embarrassments. A family document § gives us his yearly revenue

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
† Calendar of Domestic State Papers, Oct. 18th. "Warrant to Attorney General Heath to prepare a Privy Seal to pay to Spencer, Lord C., as of his Majesty's free gift, the £5,500 payable by Sir William Courteen for the before-mentioned fee farm granted to him."
‡ Nicholas' "Peerage." § F.D. 1085/7. See summary in F.D. 1369.

in 1631 as £6336. Other documents * refer to his debts in 1640 and 1641; and it is evident that the debts had been accumulating for years before his father's death. It was no doubt difficult to restrict one's expenditure to his income in the Court life of those times. Three years after his father's death we find that he was compelled to mortgage to Sir Henry Compton of Brambleteigh the manors of Erith, Clerkenwell, Canonbury, Cutlers and Crosby House, etc., to pay his personal debts amounting to £5668. And on July 16th, 1634, he was further compelled to sell some jewellery for £500, though he was afterwards able to buy it back.† Again in compounding for his sequestered estates, we shall see his successor claiming that Spencer's debts in 1642 were about £50,000. It has often been suggested that Elizabeth Spencer brought great wealth into the Compton family. Whatever it amounted to, it must have been spent by her and her husband, for none of it seems to have been inherited by her son.‡

But if the Earl was encumbered with debts in 1628, he was not incapacitated from entertaining his sovereign. In July or August 1634,§ King Charles and his Court spent four nights at Castle Ashby, which must have been a costly pleasure for Spencer. And this visit was probably the climax of a large expenditure in completing his father's scheme of rebuilding Castle Ashby, which has already been described.‖ But there remains one improvement in the house by Spencer which must be mentioned. The Arms over the fireplace in the Bower record his marriage with Mary Beaumont, and the ceiling and panelling of this room must have been executed as a sitting-room for her. The palm-leaves surrounding them have been said to signify widowhood, and if so, either the painting must have been done during her widowhood, or it was done before, and the palm-leaves were added later; the latter alternative seems the more probable. The style of painting is Dutch, and throughout the decoration recur the heraldic lions of Compton (passant guardant) and Beaumont (rampant), together with Compton helmet and Beaumont fleur-de-lys. The colouring was freshened up in the nineteenth century by Lady Marian Alford.

Campaign against the Covenanters.

After his father's death Spencer continued in the Lieutenancies of the Counties of Warwick and Gloucester,¶ which he had for two years shared with him; and from 1635 to 1639 we can imagine him living at Court or at his country homes. In 1638 Crosby House again became a family residence, on the termination of a lease to the East India Company. On Spencer's death five years later it was mortgaged to help pay his debts, but it was probably in the interval the scene of much gay entertainment.** In 1639, however, he was called from this life of luxury and

* F.D. 1085/8 and 9.
† F.D. 1085/3–6.
‡ Except, of course, some land which only brought in a few hundreds a year. See F.D. 1369.
§ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
‖ See pages 58–59.
¶ Calendar of Domestic State Papers, March 11th and April 5th, 1639.
** "Crosby Hall," by Philip Norman (1908).

pleasure to join in two campaigns, "with a great train of his own dependents," against the Scottish Covenanters.* The events that led up to these insurrections make a long story. In 1592 James VI of Scotland, afterwards James I of England, was compelled by the Covenanters to abolish Episcopacy and establish Presbyterianism. But in 1610, for political reasons, he succeeded in restoring it. In 1636 Archbishop Laud tried to destroy the remains of Presbyterianism, and to restore the supremacy of the Crown in the Scotch Church, by introducing a new Prayer Book and a new Book of Canons. After much heated argument the remonstrants renewed the Covenant with God of fifty years before, and with intense fervour swore to maintain their old religion and defend the same. Though very short of cash, Charles I began to collect an army at York. The whole of Scotland rose in arms, and 20,000 well-equipped men under General Leslie met Charles on the Border near Berwick. Charles had to temporise, while Strafford came over with reinforcements from Ireland; and he meanwhile summoned the "Short" Parliament, hoping for its financial support; but it refused him any funds, and was dissolved in three weeks. The Covenanters seized Newcastle, and, while praying that their grievances should be considered, prepared to advance on York, where the King was. We may picture Spencer, through all these exciting incidents, brave, impetuous and always ready to draw his sword in defence of his master; we can, however, imagine him counselling moderation, when Strafford arrested, and proposed to shoot as mutineers, two peers who petitioned the King to compromise with the Scots.

Meanwhile England, which had been growing more and more exasperated ever since the first introduction of Ship-money in 1635, was on the verge of revolt. Charles was reduced to summoning the Parliament known as the "Long Parliament"; and, led by Pym, its members quickly showed their spirit by impeaching Strafford of high treason. His trial did not begin till March 1641. The Commons were resolute, but a majority of the Peers was a restraining influence on them. Spencer voted against the Bill of Attainder passed by the Commons, and his name was therefore posted on the list of Straffordians in Old Palace Yard. His eldest son James, who was nineteen and M.P. for Warwick, also appeared on the same list.† To save Episcopacy and Strafford's life, Charles assented to the Government being entrusted to the leaders of Parliament under the Earl of Bedford. But the discovery of a plot for Charles to march his army on London drove the populace to frenzy, and on May 8th the Lords passed the Bill of Attainder, and Strafford was beheaded. The Grand Remonstrance followed, and then the final climax, when Charles tried in person to arrest the Five Members in the Commons. War alone could save England's liberties; and both sides hastily raised armies, the Parliament by calling out the Militia, and the King by appointing Royal Commissions of Array.

* Warburton's "Prince Rupert." † Burke's "Peerage."

CHAPTER IX

THE CIVIL WARS

(May 1642–May 1646)

ON the breach between King Charles and the Parliament in May 1642, the King fled to York, where he was joined by thirty-two Peers, including Northampton, and sixty-three members of the Commons, including James Lord Compton, M.P. for the County of Warwick. They immediately petitioned the King to be reconciled to the Parliament; * but in spite of this moderation they were all expelled by Parliament from their seats, and Northampton was one of the nine Peers who were impeached for refusing to return.* This judgment was repealed by the House of Lords in May 1660.* Again on June 13th Northampton showed his moderation by signing the Declaration of that date disavowing any intention on the part of the King of raising war, but engaging to defend his person from all violence. On the 22nd of the same month he was appointed by the King to execute the Commission of Array in the Counties of Warwick and Gloucester,† of which counties, it will be remembered, he was Lord Lieutenant. And he was also head of the four Commissioners appointed in Northamptonshire in August 1642.‡

The Warwickshire Commission he first put into execution at Coleshill near Coventry; and on July 10th was ordered to execute it notwithstanding the Sheriff's refusal. The same Warrant § authorises him to proceed, as against rebels, against seditious preachers, and such as presume to execute that "pretended Ordinance"; also to receive subscriptions from faithful subjects as by Men, Horses or otherwise.

It will be well here to describe the respective positions of the two sides in the areas of Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Gloucestershire. The strong Castles of Banbury, Warwick, Northampton and Broughton were in the hands of powerful Parliamentary adherents, and this part of the Midlands was therefore, at the beginning of the Wars, the stronghold of their forces. On the other hand, Oxford soon became the headquarters of the Royalist army, and Northampton's area was therefore a very important one strategically. He found himself living in the middle of

* Collins and Burke's "Peerage."
‡ Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 29548, f. 12.
† F.D. 1087.
§ F.D. 1083/2.

Parliamentary country whose whole population soon took a strong side against the King. Indeed, we are told that the people were so disaffected to the King that they concealed from his foraging parties all their provisions, and the smiths hid themselves to avoid being compelled to shoe the Royalist horses; whereas the Parliamentary troops had everything brought to them without their seeking it. As further evidence of this, a letter may be mentioned, of a few months later date, in which Northampton complained that the districts allotted to him were not sufficient to support the four regiments with which he garrisoned Banbury and its neighbourhood. Out of the five hundreds allotted to him by the King's order, the most he could raise was £450 a week, whereas the maintenance of his troops came to £536.* Again we are told by Clarendon that after the Battle of Edge Hill such of the wounded Royalists as straggled into the villages for relief were "knocked on the head by the common people." †

Fighting in Warwickshire.

In these difficult circumstances Northampton showed great energy. In July he made a bold attempt to take Warwick Castle by surprise in the absence of its owner, who was commanding the Fleet for Parliament. The attempt is described by the historian Bulstrode, who took part in it: "Our endeavours for taking the Castle were to little purpose, for we had only two small pieces of canon, which we brought from Compton House, and these were drawn up to the top of the Church steeple, and were discharged at the Castle, to which they could do no harm, but only frighted them within the Castle." However, Northampton followed up this failure on July 30th by a diplomatic success over the Lord Brooke, whom he met fetching six pieces of ordnance, granted him by Parliament, from Banbury to the defence of Warwick Castle. He persuaded him, rather than shed blood over so small a matter, to leave the ordnance at Banbury, and that neither should remove it from there without giving the other three days notice. On August 7th some other Royalists obtained the ordnance by threats and took them to Compton. This breach of the pact was doubtless unknown to Northampton, though an "Account of the Earl of Northampton's foote company, consisting of 100 men at the least," from August 8th for fifteen days, describes the dates as "from the tyme his Lordsh. went to fetch the Ordnance from Banbury." ‡ This "foote company" no doubt formed the nucleus of the "Regiment of one thousand foote," which on August 6th Charles signed a Commission for him to raise and command.§

On August 19th the King reached Stoneleigh, and by messenger announced to the Corporation of Coventry that he proposed to dine with them on that day. Northampton was also sent forward, and "vainly endeavoured to inspire the Citizens with a loyalty that was out of fashion, but he was treated so roughly by the people that he was fain to escape and rejoin his forces at Southam." He is

* F.D. 1340, Book 12, p. 13. Lady Alwyne's Notes.
‡ F.D. 1083/4.
† Clarendon's "Rebellion."
§ F.D. 1083/3.

said to have made his escape from the back door of the "Black Bull Inn," where the barracks now stand.* On the King's approach, the gates of Coventry were closed against him, and he rode off, "very melancholy," towards Nottingham.† While at Stoneleigh on the 22nd the King signed another Warrant for Spencer to raise "one thousand Foot Volunteers . . . for the defence of our Person, ye two houses of Parliament, the Protestant Religion," etc.‡

On arrival at Nottingham, Charles took the extreme step of raising his standard there, and on August 25th, Northampton joined him "with 2000 of the best disciplined troops in his army," § and on September 15th was given £150 for the use of his Regiment.‖ The results of the King's action were very disappointing, and when the Earl of Essex mustered his vastly larger Parliamentary force at Northampton, it was generally thought one engagement would end the struggle. However, at the beginning of September Charles retrieved his cause by retreating to Shrewsbury, in which neighbourhood the whole population rallied to him, even from the neighbouring counties and from Wales, until he had collected an army of about the same numbers as that under Essex. The King's object was now to reach London as quickly as possible, and in order to effect it, it was necessary either to defeat Essex, or to avoid fighting him by going round his flank. He chose the latter course, when he left Shrewsbury on October 12th.

On the march down from Shrewsbury to Edgehill, Bulstrode was "with the Earl of Northampton in his own Troop, which consisted of One Hundred Gentlemen of Quality. The Lord Compton was the Right-hand Man; and Charles Compton was Cornet." On the night of October 22nd the King was bivouacking near Cropredy, with Prince Rupert's cavalry at Wormleighton, and orders had been given for the siege of Banbury on the following day. But at three in the morning he heard that the Parliamentary army was at Kineton in his rear, and he ordered the return of his troops to hold the ridge of Edgehill against them. The morning was spent in disposing the two armies, and the King's line extended from Bullet Hill to Sunrising. At 3 p.m. the artillery of both sides opened fire, followed by Royalist cavalry charges from either flank. That of Prince Rupert on the right was successful in breaking up the enemy's left flank; but he then made the mistake of pursuing without orders too far into the plain, so that it happened that, while the Royalist infantry was being attacked by fresh reinforcements and was being beaten for lack of his support, Rupert was allowing his men to loot the enemy's baggage in Kineton. When night fell both sides lay exhausted, but they withdrew from contact before morning. At this battle were knighted by the King, James, Charles and William, the three eldest sons of Spencer. William is not mentioned

* Beesley's "Banbury."
† Warburton's "Prince Rupert."
‡ F:D. 1083/5.
§ Lodge's "Portraits of Illustrious Personages," Vol. II.
‖ Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 5752, f. 211.

PORTRAIT OF SIR WILLIAM COMPTON, 3RD SON OF 2ND EARL OF NORTHAMPTON.
(FROM THE PAINTING AT THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY).

by Bulstrode as serving in his father's Troop, and this was probably because at the age of seventeen he was not given the responsibility of any command. We are told by Sir Philip Warwick that Spencer, the fourth brother, who was not yet able, at the age of thirteen, to grasp a pistol, cried in indignation that he was not exposed to the same hazard as his brothers were.*

On October 27th the King attacked Banbury Castle, and Sir William Compton on this occasion led his men to three attacks on the Castle, and had two horses shot under him.† The resistance made, however, was so brief as to give ground for the suspicion that the place was surrendered by treachery. The adherence of the garrison of 800 to the Parliamentary cause must have been only lukewarm, for at its surrender two regiments and one troop joined the King's side.‡

Arrangements for the winter.

On October 28th the King marched to Oxford for the winter, giving the custody of Banbury and the surrounding country to the Earl of Northampton, who was for that purpose commissioned to raise a Regiment of Horse, whose command was given to Lord Compton, while Sir Charles was made Lieutenant-Colonel of it. To Sir William was given the Castle of Banbury, under whose governorship it remained from this date a stronghold of the Royalists for the remainder of the Wars.

On September 9th Spencer had been granted a Warrant to receive all money, plate or other contributions subscribed in the County of Northampton and City of Peterborough. On November 25th he was commissioned to seize (and give a receipt for) all money, plate, arms, ammunition and horses from any person who had contributed to the Parliamentarians.§ And on November 26th he was also authorised to take charge of "all the trained band horse" in Northamptonshire.‖

On December 11th the Earl was authorised to raise in Warwickshire "a body of Dragoons, that is to say, men armed with a Musquet, or other good Gun, on Horseback, trained and ready prepared to be drawn together for prevencion of plunder."¶

Fortifying of Banbury.

The winter was spent at Banbury in putting the place into a state of defence. On December 20th the Earl was instructed to "call for the Maior and his subordinate officers, to cause to come in such a number of sufficient labourers with Shovells, Mattocks," etc., to finish the work for the strengthening and defence of the town, which have been much "foreslowed by the great neglect and backwardness of the Maior." A postscript, initialled "C. R.," runs: "I desyre you to Vitale the Castell with all expedition, and for this service, if the country will not fech it in, you must make your Horse doe it."** The Warrants dated December 25th and 27th, order him to "furnish and put into the Castle of Banbury good quantitie of all manner of provision of victuals as likewise bedding and firewood," which he shall

* See "Evelyn's Diary." † Chalmer's "Biography." ‡ "Microchronicon," 1647.
§ F.D. 1083/7 and 8. ‖ F.D. 1083/8. ¶ F.D. 1083/11.
** F.D. 1083/12. The postscript is in the King's writing.

take out of the town or where else he thinks fit. Also to send back to their quarters at Woodstock the 200 musqueteers of the Lord Lieutenant's Guard Regiment. Also to "cause all such Houses, Buildings and other obstacles to be with all diligence pulled down and removed, whereby he may the better defend the Castle. . . ." Also to see that the Mayor and Corporation assist him in the same.* He is further instructed on January 2nd to seize a quantity of wood lying near Stratford, the property of Sir Edward Peto, "now in Actuall rebellion against us." †

On January 10th the King is sending him Colonel Wentworth and 200 musqueteers from Woodstock, the former to advise him of an attempt on Daventry.‡ On the 16th, "for the better security of the garrison, Charles sends one regiment of foot under Colonel Herbert," and hopes the Earl may be able to find them in food and lodging, and some spare ammunition.§ On the 24th the Earl is to "make speedy order" for further contributions from the Counties of Warwick and Northampton for the maintenance of the garrison.‖

On February 7th he was commissioned "to be our Colonell, Generall and Commander in shiefe of all our forces both of horse and foote, either of the trayned bands or other volunteers in our counties of Northampton, Warwick, the city of Coventry and the city and soke of Peterborough.¶

On February 28th the Earl appealed from Banbury to all his tenants in Warwickshire, exhorting them to assist him by their contributions to maintain the King's service. A certain Colonel Croaker was sent round the district, and as a result contributions were apparently made and promised. On May 8th, Earl James, writing to Prince Rupert, complains of the exorbitant levies that have been raised on his tenants at Brailes and Long Compton, and asks that protection should be sent them.** But in spite of this, on May 25th the King asks that his subjects of Long Compton and Brailes should pay up the arrears promised.††

There is a Warrant‡‡ from the King dated Oxford, December 9th, 1642, of which copies were circulated, that to Grevill Verney, Esq., still being in possession of Lord Willoughby. It demands the recipient to furnish forthwith "such Horse, Armes, Amunition, Plate, money or any other Provisions as your Love to Us and your Country shall persuade you to. And to deliuer the same to Our Right trusty and right Welbeloved Cousin Spencer Earle of Northampton, whom wee have constituted our Governour and Commander in Chieff in our Towne of Banbury; and that you persuade all your Neighbours, Tenants and Friends to the lyke contribution."

Hopton Heath. In February 1643, Lord Brooke besieged Lord Chesterfield in Lichfield and took the town. Lord Northampton reported to Sir Edward Nicholas at Court on

* F.D. 1083/13 and 14.
§ F.D. 1083/17.
** Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 18980, f. 58.
† F.D. 1083/15.
‖ F.D. 1083/18.
†† F.D. 1083/20 and 21*a*.
‡ F.D. 1083/16.
¶ F.D. 1083/19.
‡‡ F.D. 1083/10.

March 2nd that he had received an express messenger from Lady Chesterfield asking for help.* He, however, arrived just too late to relieve Lichfield, and so marched to Stafford to defend that. On Sunday, March 19th, was fought, near the latter town, the Battle of Hopton Heath, at which Spencer Earl of Northampton was slain.

According to Clarendon, the enemy at Hopton Heath were 3000 foot and horse, with a good train of artillery, and the Earl of Northampton marched out of Stafford to meet them, his whole number being under 1000; but in horse they were about equal, and the heath being suitable for a cavalry charge, he charged their horse with great success twice, "and so totally routed and dispersed them, that the enemy had scarce a horse left upon the field; and took likewise from them eight pieces of cannon." In the second charge the Earl of Northampton had his horse killed under him, and "what his behaviour was afterwards, and their (his enemies) carriage towards him, can be known, only by the testimony of the rebels; who confessed that, after he was on his feet, he killed with his own hand the colonel of foot who made first haste to him; and that, after his headpiece was stricken off with the butt-end of a musket,† they offered him quarter; which, they say, he refused, answering, 'that he scorned to take quarter from such base rogues and rebels as they were.' After which he was slain by a blow with a halbert on the hinder part of his head, receiving, at the same time, another deep wound in the face."‡ *2nd Earl's death.*

Thus died "a perfect Cavalier, brave, generous, faithful to death to his King, and of remarkable talents." § "The truth is, a greater victory had been an unequal recompense for such a loss. He was a person of great courage, honour and fidelity, and not well known till his evening; having, in the ease, and plenty, and luxury of that too happy time, indulged to himself with that license which was then thought necessary to great fortunes: but from the beginning of these distractions, as if he had been awakened out of a lethargy, he never proceeded with a lukewarm temper. Before the standard was set up, he appeared in Warwickshire against the lord Brook, and as much upon his own reputation as the justice of the cause (which was not so well then understood), discountenanced, and drove him out of that county. Afterwards he took the ordnance from Banbury Castle, and brought them to the King. As soon as an army was to be raised, he levied with the first, upon his own charge, a troop of horse and a regiment of foot, and (not like some other men, who warily distributed their family to both sides, one son to serve the King, whilst his father, or another son, engaged as far for the Parliament) entirely dedicated all his children to the quarrel; having four sons officers under him, whereof three ‖

* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 18980, f. 23.
† Writing to his mother, the 3rd Earl says, "his armour was so good that they could not hurt him till he was down and had undone his headpiece."—"Battle of Hopton Heath" (1643), in the Ashmolean Library.
‡ Clarendon's "Rebellion." § Collins. ‖ "James, Charles and William."

charged that day in the field: and, from the time he submitted himself to the profession of a soldier, no man more punctual upon command, no man more diligent and vigilant in duty. All distresses he bore like a common man, and all wants and hardnesses, as if he had never known plenty or ease; most prodigal of his person to danger; and would often say, 'that if he outlived these wars, he was certain never to have so noble a death.' So that it is not to be wondered if, upon such a stroke, the body that felt it thought it had lost more than a limb." *

Lloyd † tells us of the 2nd Earl that "he could not endure jesting with religion, there being no people of what Religion soever, but has serious and great thoughts of their Numen; nor an oath on any, except Judicial and Solemn occasions, often repeating that of Prince Henry, that he knew no game or value, to be won or lost, that was worth an Oath."

James Lord Compton, who succeeded him, and who had received a shot in the leg in the battle, wrote three days later to his widowed mother, complaining that the enemy had refused his request to give him his father's body, or to allow his "Chirurgeons" to go and embalm it, except on the unreasonable terms of returning to them all the ammunition prisoners and cannon he had captured in the battle. His letter ends: "Pray'e, Madam, be comforted, and think no man could more honourably have ended his life (fighting for his Religion, his King, and his Country) to be partaker of heavenly joies. We must certainely follow him, but can hardly hope for so brave a death." ‡

Sir William Brereton says in a letter that he "saw Lord Northampton's body naked and spoiled that night as they were carrying him away." § He was buried by the enemy at All Hallow's Church at Derby, in the vault with the old Countess of Shrewsbury.‖ No monument was ever erected to him.¶

The new Earl was appointed to succeed his father as Governor of Banbury, by his own request to Prince Rupert.** In his letter he mentions that his father raised three "troupes," besides his own of a regiment of horse, and also a foot regiment.

On Saturday, May 6th, the young Earl inflicted a severe defeat on the enemy at Middleton Cheney, where he killed 217, took about 300 prisoners, their "brasse peece," all their ammunition, 416 muskets, 150 pikes, and almost 500 sword; himself losing only three men.†† A Parliamentary account says that three shots from their drake killed thirty of the enemy and unhorsed a gallant sparke whom men supposed to be the young Earl of Northampton. Clarendon observed that most of the

* Clarendon's "Rebellion."
† "Memorials of those that suffered, etc." (1668). Lloyd.
‡ "Battle of Hopton Heath" (1643), in the Ashmolean Library.
§ Warburton's "Prince Rupert."
‖ Collins' "Peerage." The Townshend Pedigree says the vault belonged to the Duke of Devonshire's family.
¶ Lady Alwyne's Notes. F.D. 1340, XI. p. 13.
** Brit. Mus. Add/MS. 18980, f. 28.
†† "Mercurius Aulicus."

prisoners were "shrewdly hurt, the young Earl that day sacrificing to the memory of his father." *

At this time the Queen landed from Holland, and sent to Newark about forty cart-loads of arms and ammunition, which were handed over on their arrival at Banbury on May 13th to the Earl of Northampton, who conveyed them safely to Headquarters at Woodstock.

On September 8th a party of horse sent from Banbury by "Serjeant Major Compton, brother to the noble Earle of Northampton," captured two officers acting as messengers from London to the Earl of Essex.†

On December 12th of this year Sir Charles had a most remarkable adventure in the surprise of Beeston Castle in Cheshire. This he effected with six men in disguise, under pretence of bringing in provision, of which an intercepted letter had apprized him that the garrison were in want. In this action he was in great danger; two pistols were snapped in his face; but both fortunately missed fire, and he immediately killed those who held them.‡

On March 5th, 1644, Sir William Compton issued out of Banbury with about eighty men, and had a successful scrap in Radway Field.

On April 18th some Roundheads were sent by the Governor of Northampton to Canons Ashby to collect money in that neighbourhood. A force was at once sent after them from Banbury Castle, which besieged them in the church steeple and took them prisoners to Banbury. But on the 26th another force was sent from Northampton, which succeeded in rescuing the prisoners.†

On another occasion at Canons Ashby, the Drydens had placed a row of dinners along their wall for the refreshment of a Parliamentary party they were expecting. Some Comptons, however, arrived first, and enjoyed the hospitality which was certainly never intended for them.§

On April 18th Sir William was authorised to take for his garrison "50 Round of nine pound bullet of Iron" out of a convoy of iron shot being moved from Evesham to Oxford.‖

Capture of Compton House.

On June 12th, 1644, "Major Bridges with his forces from Warwickshire and Coventry, having lain before Compton House on Friday and Saturday last, on Sunday morning (June 9th) took it, and in it the Earl of Northampton's brother ¶ with about 14 officers more, and 120 common soldiers, 80 good horses, with all their arms and ammunition, and sent them to Warwick." ** Vicars, in his "Eng-

* Clarendon's "Rebellion," Vol. II. p. 245.
† "Mercurius Aulicus."
‡ Lloyd's "Memorials, etc.," and "History of Royal Horse Guards."
§ Dryden family tradition.
‖ F.D. 1083/29.
¶ Probably Francis or Henry. Why are not the two daughters mentioned? Perhaps they and one brother had been moved to a safer place; they were with their mother and two younger brothers at Oxford later on. Or perhaps lady prisoners were not counted.
** "Letter-book of Sir Samuel Luke," Vol. I., among Egerton MSS. 785, Brit. Museum.

land's Parliamentary Chronicle," states that "Colonel Purefoy came to this attack on Compton with his own Warwick forces and some strength added from Coventry: and that besides 120 prisoners, he took £5000 in money, sixty horses, 400 sheep, near 160 head of cattle, and eighteen loads of other plunder; besides five or six earthen pots of money which he afterwards discovered in the fishpond." Dugdale, in his Diary, says: "The rebels with 400 foot and 300 horse forced Compton House, droye the park and killed all the deer, and defaced the monuments in ye Church." There is a family tradition that when the house was handed over to Colonel Purefoy, Lady Northampton remained in the house, and, unknown to the Parliamentary troops, kept concealed in the roofs a number of Cavalier wounded, whom she tended until their recovery, and then contrived their escape.

Cropredy Bridge.

On June 29th was fought the Battle of Cropredy Bridge, at which the Earl of Northampton was commanding his brigade of horse, and "finding that the Rebels were come over the pass below to follow him in the rear, presently faced about with his own, and three other, regiments of horse, and forced the Rebels to a speedy flight over the pass, but with little loss, they being not willing to abide a second charge." Indeed some of them continued their flight never again to return to the wars.*

During the year 1644 the above Earl of Northampton's brigade was one of five which formed the King's Cavalry; the other four were commanded by Lord Willmot, Lord Cleveland, Lord Wentworth and Colonel Bennet. And in September the Earl and his command were protecting the rear of the King's army as far afield as Plymouth. Among numerous other anecdotes we are told that on the 10th of that month they were attacked by "the rogues, with little or no hurt, only the basest language." †

First Siege of Banbury.

On July 19th, 1644, began the great defence of Banbury Castle by Sir William Compton, and on August 27th Colonel John Fiennes arrived with large reinforcements to conduct the siege. He at once "sent a trumpeter to summon the garrison; who brought an answer from that gallant knight Sir William Compton that 'they kept the Castle for his Majestie, and as long as one man was left alive in it, willed them not to expect to have it delivered.'" ‡ Repeated attacks were made on the garrison which were successfully repelled, and on September 5th, we are told, "The garrison souldiers are exceeding hearty, much heightened by the exemplary carriage of that valiant young knight Sir William Compton." ‡

On September 16th "Master Fines" sent another trumpeter to summon the Castle; Sir William said that "he formerly answered them, and wondered they would

* Sir E. Walker's "Happy Progress," pp. 31–33.
† "Marches of Royal Army (Camden Papers)," by Richard Symonds (London Library).
‡ "Mercurius Aulicus."

send againe," commanding the trumpeter instantly to be gone. We are also told that the garrison had countermined the enemy eleven times; and that for thirteen weeks Sir William did not go to bed.* Three breaches had been made in the wall of the Castle, so wide that twelve men could march through abreast, and they had partly drained the outside moat.*

On September 17th Lieut.-General Cromwell arrived with 2000 horse to ward off the relieving efforts of another force under Prince Rupert near Evesham.

On October 22nd the King, at Newbury, received pressing requests for help from Banbury, which was on the point of surrendering for want of food, the garrison having already eaten most of their horses. The King sent off the Earl of Northampton with three of the King's best regiments of horse; and thus weakened, the King was immediately attacked and defeated at Newbury on the 27th, and obliged to retreat to Oxford. Meanwhile Lord Northampton had reached Adderbury on October 24th, and the next morning defeated 800 rebels between there and Banbury, who were made to stagger by "two or three shot made by two drakes," and retreated disorderly to the north. The remainder of the Rebels (about 700) then ran out of Banbury, having sent away their cannon and baggage the night before. They were pursued and routed in some fields near Hanwell. Thus was raised on October 25th, 1644, the first siege of Banbury, which had lasted about thirteen weeks. In the Castle there were only two horses remaining, all the rest having been eaten by the garrison.

Night attack on Compton House.

The following three months were probably spent in restoring the defences of Banbury. But on the night of January 29th, 1645, the Comptons and about 300 of the garrison of Banbury made a surprise attack on Compton Wynyates by moonlight, killed the sentinels, and possessed themselves of the half-moon,† stables, etc., but were afterwards repulsed with severe loss. The fight is described in the following letter ‡ of January 30th from Serjeant Major Purefoy to his Colonel, Colonel Purefoy:— §

"Sir,

This night, about 2 of ye clock, about a 1000 or 1200 horse and foot of ye enemies, fell upon me at Compton, stormed my outworks, gained my stables, and cut down my great drawbridge, possessed themselves of all my troop of horses, and took about 30 of my foot souldiers in their beds, who lay over ye stables, and all this was done almost before a man could think what to do. We received this fierce alarm, as we had good cause, and presently made good ye new sconce before ye stone bridge, and beat them out of ye great court, there being about 200 men entered, and ready to storm ye sconce. But we gave them so hot a sally, that we forced them to retreat back to ye stables, barns, and brewhouse, where from ye

* Chalmer's "Biography."
‡ "Mercurius Civicus," No. 89.
† Perhaps temporary earthworks.
§ The Purefoys lived at Adlestrop and at Coventry.

windows they played very hot upon us. I then commanded Lieutenant Purefoy and my Quarter Master, having no other Officers of Quality at home, ye rest being abroad with about 300 of my best troopers, to sally upon ye enemy with a party of some 40, and so attempt the regaining of the Brewhouse and ye rooms above, which instantly they did with ye most gallant resolution and courage. Serjeant Bird was one that came not short in bravery of any. This party, I say, fought thus with ye enemy, and came to push of pike, nay, to ye swords point, and laid about them so bravely that they forced ye enemy to fly from chamber to chamber. Whereupon I presently sent out my younger brother ye Ensign, with 3 corporals of horse, and about 40 more men to relieve ye first party; and I assure you, Sir, ye boy fought well, and led on his men most bravely, and relieved his brother, by which means all ye upper rooms were regained. And now ye enemy kept only ye stables and ye barns, which they held stoutly, but my resolute soldiers did so thunder their horse and reserves of foot, that stood within pistol shot, that Sir William and Sir Charles Compton, who were then present, began to give ground, which my souldiers easily perceiving, some leapt out at ye windows, and so into ye outworks, by which means I recovered my outworks again, and made a sally port, by which ye enemy endeavoured to retreat at; but finding they were frustrated of their hopes, and that my musketeers did play so hot upon ye great drawbridge that they could not be relieved: and withal we having beaten ye enemy out of their work, which we stormed when you took ye house, I had time thereby to recover fully ye great drawbridge, and instantly got new ropes and new locks, and drew it up again in spite of them all. Now by this means all those whose names are here with enclosed to you, are all in Cob's pound, having no means in ye world to retreat. Whereupon they fought desperately for ye space of 3 hours, and ye valiant Comptons perceiving their extreme loss, attempted three several times to storm and regain my outworks, but all ye three times were beaten off with as much resolution and gallantry of my souldiers, as could be expressed by men. Ye enemy within set fire to all ye hay, straw, and all ye combustible stuff, to smother my men out of ye upper rooms, which did indeed much annoy them; and ye enemy without threw at least an hundred hand grenades on ye houses, so as they set them on fire in 3 several places: whereupon Sir Charles and Sir William, thinking all their own, sent a trumpeter to parley, but I commanded that none should parley, nor would I permit ye trumpetter to speak at all unto me; and fain he would have said something to my souldiers, but I commanded him upon his life to be gone, and not to return any more upon his peril, and we continued to fight still: and ye aforesaid fire did so encrease, that I thought it fit to offer quarter to those that were in ye stable for their lives only: but they would not hear me. Upon which I drew all my men together and fell violently upon them, in which assault were slain and taken prisoners all those whose names are in ye ensuing list. This did so dishearten ye Comptons and all their forces, that they presently drew off all their foot, and only faced me with their horse, and sent another trumpetter to parley; but I commanded to give fire upon him, that he returned with no other answer but what a musket could speak. And thus by God's providence and mercy we were clearly rid of them. Sir, this is as true and short a narration as I can conveniently give you.

We recovered all our men again that ye enemy had taken.

A list of ye Officers and souldiers slain and taken prisoners. Captains 3. Lieutenants 2. One Ensign, One Quarter Master, One Cornet, 5 Corporals, 3 Serjeants, Troopers and foot souldiers about 50: besides 6 cart loads of wounded men carried off, and near upon 40 common souldiers left dead behind them in and about ye garrison. Of mine own men both horse and foot only One man was desperately wounded, and another was slightly hurt, but no one I say was slain; A rare and even wonderful providence indeed. We took of ye enemies horse and foot arms etc. 150 muskets, 40 pistols, and about 20 hand grenadoes."

The following account, which appeared in the Court periodical of Saturday, February 1st,* tries to explain away the reverse suffered:—

"The Rebels tell us they have taken above 100 officers and souldiers from the garrison of Banbury: Indeed on Tuesday last, his Majesties forces from Banbury went within the out-workes of Compton House, and took 44 horses out of the stables, most of which the Rebels regained with a few Banbury men, surprized in their quarters coming home from Compton; but for those officers whom the Rebells mention in print, they having taken a Banbury Quartermaster with his rolle, were thereby enabled to take so many named prisoners, the men themselves being safe in Banbury."

The account of this fight is most interesting for the details it gives us of the outbuildings which have since disappeared, and also for the measures taken in those days for the defence of the place. It would appear that in front of the present porch there was a stone bridge across the first moat, guarded by a "sconce," and leading out into the "great court," which contained stables, a brewhouse and barns. This great court was apparently surrounded by an outer moat, crossed over the front, by a "great drawbridge," and protected on the outside by outworks which were probably only temporary. It would therefore seem likely that all these buildings originally reached to the foot of the present avenue; and perhaps the ground in front of the house, where at present there is lawn, was at that time much more level, so that the second moat was on a level with that against the house.† The present slope of the ground may have been given to it after the Restoration, by stones and rubbish from the ruins of the buildings of the outer court. But, although they were partly destroyed by fire in this night attack, and partly demolished in the following year, when, on June 16th, the Parliamentary troops were finally withdrawn and the moats filled up, nevertheless a plan of 1771 shows a number of buildings standing,‡ and a photograph of 1855 shows that certainly the stable between the Dovecot and the drive bore in its design every Tudor characteristic.

* "Mercurius Aulicus," p. 1363.

† Or the Great Court was surrounded by a dry Fosse. See p. 31, above.

‡ In the "Survey of the Warwickshire Estates" (Old Library, S. 6).

It was to this year that Dugdale, in his "History of Warwickshire," referred the destruction of Compton Wynyates Church, but perhaps it is more likely to have suffered damage when the Cromwellians seized the house in 1644. At any rate, when he wrote in 1657 the "fabric thereof was totally reduced to rubbish." The family have always laughingly said that the church was destroyed accidentally by a cannon-ball aimed at the house, but it seems more likely that the building was intentionally destroyed by religious fanatics of the Parliamentary army. The church was rebuilt at the Restoration.

There are many records * by Parliamentary spies of the dispositions of the Banbury forces. During February and March 1645 the Earl of Northampton seems to have been at Adderbury with a regiment of horse, of which two troops were in Banbury under Sir William Compton and Sir William Fermor, one at King's Sutton, one at Bodycott, and one, about eighty strong, under Sir Charles, in the Cartwright's house at Aynho, which they had strengthened by a moat and drawbridge. They were making continual raids on similar forces of the enemy under pretence of punishing them for looting, an offence that they were not innocent of themselves; for on June 22nd, Sir Samuel Luke, the Parliamentary commander, says: "It is thought hee (Northampton) is come to fall upon his old sport of plundring for recruiting both of himself and of his men." While later we read in the Royalist journal that the Earl of Northampton had so cooped Serjeant-Major Purefoy up at Compton "that his cummings abroad are more like a theife than a souldier, creeping sometimes in the darke, where he steales contribution to keepe himselfe in heart to pen blustering warrants." †

There are many mentions of great plunder having been made by the garrison of Banbury, and in October 1645 the inhabitants of Banbury were still loud in their complaints to Parliament, while on April 27th, 1646, a petition from them was read in the House of Lords, "desiring to be recompensed for the great losses they had sustained for adhering to the Parliament, out of the Earl of Northampton's Estate, or other Delinquents." This was ordered to be recommended to the House of Commons.‡

Occasionally, however, Northampton's raids professed a nobler object. On February 26th, 1645, about 400 Parliamentarians descended on Daventry, and under pretence of contribution robbed many poor people. On hearing which, Earl James sent Sirs Charles and William with 300 men, and they routed the enemy on Borough Hill (near Daventry) and, pursuing them towards Weedon, killed thirteen, wounded over 140, and brought thirty-six prisoners back to Banbury, along with above fifty horses and a good store of arms gathered up in the chase.§

* "Letter-book of Sir Samuel Luke."
† "Mercurius Aulicus," p. 1513.
‡ Lord's "Journals."
§ "Mercurius Aulicus," p. 1387.

During this early spring the spies also report that the Comptons were hard at work rebuilding the fortifications of Banbury Castle.*

Another typical and profitable scrap by a party under Sir Charles took place on March 6th. He had gone on the 4th with a regiment of horse from Banbury to gather contributions in the Ilmington district. And "on the morning of the 6th he fell in at Halford with 120 of the Rebels' horse, coming to convoy near 80 pack-horses laden with much of the Gloucester Rebels' wealth going to Warwick; six or seven of which packs got over the narrow bridge at Halford, but 72 were seized by the Royalists, and were found to contain broad-cloth of 20s. a yard, in which were concealed money, plate, fine linen, and rich apparel. In charging this convoy Sir Charles's forces killed 12 of the Rebels and took near 70 of them prisoners, including one lieutenant and one cornet with his colours, and almost six-score horses. Sir Charles had one man hurt, but not one slain." †.

Sir Charles and Sir William seem always to have fought together in these raids, and the Court paper of March 18th, 1645, describes how, in a scrap near Northampton on that day, the Banbury forces were in great danger. The Earl of Northampton had his head-piece beaten off; Sir Charles escaped death only by the pistol of his adversary missing fire; Sir William's horse was shot under him; and Sir Spencer was at one time surrounded by eight adversaries. All the four brothers, however, escaped without personal hurt; though it is said they "charged and rescued one another so often, that if any of the foure had beene absent some one of them might have fallen, which would have made it an unhappy victory for us, for . . . you will scarcely match these four brothers in His Majesty's dominion." ‡

On March 28th, 1645, Sir William Compton wrote from Banbury Castle to Sir Samuel Luke, quartered at Newport Pagnell :— *

"Sir,

The Countesse of Northampton (my Mother) desires your passe for herselfe, and these subscribed servants to Moulsoe neare your Garrison, whereunto for ye present her urgencyes invite her. In your passe if you please to graunt her a limitacon of 6 dayes and safe conduct to Banbury with her retinue, it shall bee (if occasion offer itselfe) more than ye tye of a retaliacon from

"Your Servant
"Wm. Compton."

The names of four servants follow.

In various replies Sir Samuel reports that he has communicated his request to his "Committees," who have in turn recommended it to the Earl of Essex; but

* "Letter-book of Sir Samuel Luke."
† "Mercurius Aulicus," p. 1399.—After the Wars the 3rd Earl was obliged to pay compensation for this raid. See F.D. 1087.
‡ "Mercurius Aulicus," p. 1513.

in fact he reported that he suspected Sir William's messenger of being a spy, and there is no trace of his having sent the permission requested.*

On May 7th, 1645, the King left his winter quarters at Oxford, attended by Prince Rupert, Prince Maurice, the Earl of Lindsey, the Duke of Richmond and the Earl of Northampton. The cavalry, excluding the King's Lifeguards, was divided into four brigades, two southern and two northern; Lord Northampton's brigade (strength 950) consisted of the following four regiments :—

The Queen's Regiment, commanded by Sir John Campsfield (strength 150).
Prince Maurice's Regiment, commanded by Lt.-Col. Guy Moulsworth (strength 150).
Earl of Northampton's Own Regiment (strength 250).
Sir William Vaughan's Regiment of seven troops (strength 400).

They marched on Leicester, and there, one night in the month of May, "The Earl of Northampton's horse about one of the clock were let in at the ports, and they scowred the lyne and the towne. In the meantime the foot gott in and fell to plunder, so that ere day fully open, scarse a cottage unplundered. There were many Scots in this towne, and no quarter was given to any in the heat." †

On June 14th was fought the Battle of Naseby, on which day "by one of the clocke in the afternoone there was not a horse or man of the King's army to be seene in Northamptonshire but the prisoners." The King himself returned to Oxford, escorted by Northampton and 300 of his horse.‡

On October 6th the Earl held a court-martial at Banbury on a certain Captain Tyrwhit, who had spoken in a derogatory manner of himself. In spite of Sir William Compton's protests, the Court cashiered Tyrwhit without hearing any evidence, and merely on the Earl's word of honour. The Earl was subsequently asked to account for his conduct by letter to Lord Hatton.§

About October 18th six troops of the "Banbury Horse" were escorting the Princes Rupert and Maurice to join the King at Newark when they were defeated near Belvoir, and about sixty gentlemen were taken prisoner." ‖

On January 23rd, 1646, began the second siege of Banbury Castle by Colonel Whalley. Sir William Compton was assisted in the defence by his brother, Sir Spencer. The garrison was well provided with food, and in reply to a summons on March 18th to surrender the Castle, Sir William replied :—

"Sir,

I have received (by your Drum you sent to me) a letter, wherein you demand this Castle for the use of the Parliament, to whom I returne this answer;

* "Letter-book of Sir Samuel Luke."
† "Diary of Marches of Royal Army," by R. Symonds (London Library), pp. 180–2.
‡ "Mercurius Brit.," p. 104. § Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 29570, f. 55 and 57.
‖ Vicar's "Parliamentary Chronicle."

that I shall never be so false to my King, as to deliver up the trust I have from him to Rebels: I shall therefore desire you to forbeare any further frivolous summons; for I thanke God, I have a loyall hart, as I shall make you sensible of in defence of this place (by Gods assistance) if you make any further attempts upon it. All the Officers and Souldiers now here with me, returne the same resolutions, rather choosing to lose our lives in the defence of this place, then deliver it up without his Majesties command: I rest,

"Yours in what I may,

"W. Compton." *

The siege continued; many attempts were made by sapping and mining, but the garrison resisted by countermines, and, "by flinging down stones and hand-grenadoes, mightily annoyed the enemy." † The serious damage to the walls of the Castle must have required constant restoration, as is shown in the following order :— ‡

"To the constables of Bandicott :—

"Thes are in his Majesties name streightely to chardge to commande you That you bring before me to the Castle of Banburye tomorrow morninge by the seaven of the clocke All the masons, carpenters and sawyers with your Towneshipp and all their working Tooles ther to be ymploied in his Majesties service. Hereof faile you nott uppo paine of Death, dated at Banburye Castle the 9th day of February 1645 (*i.e.* 1646).

"W. Compton."

After fifteen weeks' operations the besiegers had advanced close to the wall of the Castle, and yet the defenders were full of confidence. When, however, the latter heard that the King had left Oxford on April 27th and surrendered to the Scotch Army at Newark on May 6th, further resistance was useless. The honourable terms which they secured bears witness to their gallantry and the unwillingness of Colonel Whalley to risk the chance of an assault. These terms are said to have been arranged by Sir Charles, who during this siege had with his mother been at Oxford with the King. By the terms § Sir William, Sir Spencer and the Major, each of them with one servant and six horses, were allowed to march away with their arms. The remainder, without arms, were given passes to any place in the kingdom to which they wished to go, and were given a complete amnesty. Colonel Whalley undertook to endeavour to procure passes to go beyond the seas to any of the garrison that desired the same. Joshua Sprigge ‖ says that Sir William and Sir Spencer were to have "two moneths liberty to goe beyond sea." The garrison marched out

* "Perfect Occurrences of Parliament." † Heath's "Chronicle."
‡ This order was found in 1844, in a cottage which was being demolished at Bodicote. It has now been placed with F.D. 1086a.
§ Broadsheet in British Museum. ‖ "Anglia Rediviva," 1647.

on May 8th about 400 strong, "with great content; not so much as a bad look, much lesse a word past from each other, they protesting they never knew nor saw more fair dealing." * The list of arms, ammunition and provisions, which follows, seems to show that the garrison only capitulated because of the King's surrender, and not in any way because it was in difficulties: "500 musquets found in the Castle, many pikes and other armes, 9 colours, 10 piece of ordnance, 12 barrels of powder, almost a tun of match, good store of bullets; the Castle strong for offence and defence, 200 quarters of wheat and malt, many hogs-heads of beef, many thousand weight of bisket, 20 live cows and oxen, 60 sheep, and all this preserved." *

In May 1648 Banbury Castle was demolished by order of the Commons, and £2000 was paid to Lord Saye and Sele for loss of it.

On June 16th, 1646, the Roundhead soldiers removed from Compton Wynyates, and Parliament ordered the Coventry Committee to have the works there slighted.†

* "Moderate Intelligencer," No. 62.

† Dugdale's "Diary."

PORTRAIT OF JAMES, 3RD EARL OF NORTHAMPTON.
(FROM THE PAINTING AT CASTLE ASHBY).

CHAPTER X

THE COMMONWEALTH

(May 1646–1660)

WITH the surrender of the King, the Civil Wars ended and, until the "glorious Restoration," Royalist families were in low water. Especially was this so with the Comptons, who scorned the worldly wisdom of many other families, which took care to have representatives on each side, so that, no matter which side won, they should be assured of influential friends. Let us now trace the doings of each member of the family through this unfortunate period of fourteen years.

3rd Earl's Composition.

We have seen how Sir William and Sir Spencer were given two months in which to clear out of England. No doubt James too would have preferred to do the same, for the life of a Royalist commander during the following months was hardly worth living. But James had too much business to attend to in England. On the outbreak of hostilities all the family estates had been sequestrated by Parliament to the use of the State, and on surrendering to Parliament the Earl was obliged to compound for them by payment of a fine. Besides petitioning for the moderation of this fine, there were many other claims by and against private individuals to be dealt with, and the Petitions and Cases recorded at the Public Record Office commenced in April 1646 and continued till January 1660. A long list of these records, and full transcripts of some of the Petitions, are with the other family Composition papers,* and it is sufficient here to trace the main steps in the family's return to normal life from virtual outlawry.

In one Petition † James recites the successive attempts he made to surrender to Parliament. He was no doubt making the most of the point, but he claims that as early as August 1645 "he laid down arms, resolving to submit himself unto the Parliament." This would have been soon after the defeat of Naseby, and long before the gallant second defence of Banbury by his brothers. He next claims that in November 1645 "he earnestly desired a worthy member of Parliament to procure him leave to come in," but unsuccessfully; and it was not till he got a

* F.D. 1083, 41.

† May 11th, 1647. Original in British Museum, Add. MSS. 34253, *f.* 42.

pass from the Committee of both Kingdoms in April 1646 that he was able to come in. The actual facts were that "on April 25th (1646) the Earl and his servants and others that came with him from Oxford, were ordered to depart the Kingdom before the 1st day of May, otherwise they would be prosecuted against as spies." He immediately made his application to compound for delinquency on April 30th,* and on May 2nd took the National Covenant and the Negative Oath before the Earls of Kent and Bolingbroke. On July 4th he was given a pass to go into the various counties where his estates lay for "perfecting his particular." He was also in immediate need of funds, and the Committee allowed him to accept the sums of money which many people in his neighbourhood were willing to lend him, until he was again allowed the income from his estates.†

His fine was fixed at £21,455 12s. 11d.‡ and on May 11th, 1647, he petitioned for moderation of this fine on the following grounds :—

1. His not yet being nineteen years old when he engaged himself in the wars.
2. He engaged himself by his father's command, obedience to which was exacted by necessity of livelihood as well as by filial duty.
3. The penalties he and his family had already suffered.
4. His early endeavour to surrender, and the importance of it in view of his military commands.
5. He applied to be included under the special terms of composition of those who surrendered with the Court at Oxford, since his command was in that county, though he came in two months earlier than they.

He further complained that :—

1. Though he had tried through the House of Lords and the Court of Chancery, he had failed to recover his family documents from his father's solicitor. And he was thereby much handicapped in preparing his particulars; and especially had been unable to prove that he was only a tenant for life of his estates, whereas he had been assessed at the highest rate as a tenant in fee.
2. His estate was not £3000 a year, and was heavily burdened.
3. He had not been allowed the usual fifth, or any, part of his income since the time of his coming in.
4. No consideration had been taken of his father's pre-war debts, amounting to £50,000, and of his own of £5000, for which a great part of the estate had been mortgaged by his father. Interest on them for five years was now due.
5. Another part of the estate was out in joynture; and he had five brothers and two sisters wholly left to his provision.

* F.D. 1083/41. † F.D. 1083/40e. ‡ State Papers, March 17th, 1662.

In October 1648 the Committee certified that there had been "no neglect on his part in the prosecution of his composition." But it was not till March 1650 that his fine was next fixed; and this time apparently at one third, or £5738. But six days later, "on reviewing the case," the Committee decided they had "no power to compound with him, he having elapsed the time limited," and the above fine was voided. On May 23rd his fine was set at £20,820 10s.; and on the 28th he remonstrated against having to submit to a new composition, and stated "he had made hard shift to pay £15,000 which he hoped would put an end to his troubles." On this day the fine was finally reduced to £14,153 6s. 8d.; and we know that James and his family were satisfied with this amount, for in her diary on July 15th, 1650, his mother-in-law mentions: "General Cromwell hath been very kind to Lord Northampton about his composition." On August 30th, 1650, he paid the first moiety of his fine, and the sequestration of the manors of Canonbury, Clerkenwell and Highbury, value £600 a year, was discharged, and the manors enjoyed by the Earl.* The final payment was made on March 20th, 1651.† It was on December 9th, 1651, that all the County Committees were notified of his sequestration discharge and he was at last allowed the income from his estates.

Damage to his Estates and Residences.

The damage done to his two residences by Parliamentarian soldiers and by unknown looters must have been considerable. In his Petition of 1649 he complains that his "houses have been defaced, wasted and spoyled, not to be repaired for twenty thousand pounds"; and since his submission to Parliament he had had to buy "household stuff" worth £400 to replace what had been taken from Compton, Ashby and his London house. On June 16th, 1646, the Roundhead soldiers had removed from Compton House, and the Committee of Coventry had, in obedience to Parliament, ordered the works there to be slighted.‡ These "works" were probably earthworks built up for the defence of the house during the war; but family tradition holds that Compton House was returned to the family only on condition that the moats were filled in and the battlements destroyed.

In July 1646 the Warwickshire Committee were ordered to restore to him "his brewing vessels, tables, bedsteads, books and timber, worth £150," which they had seized; § and we shall see later that much of the furniture from Compton House had been looted by the Parliamentary garrison and was not recovered till the Restoration.

In June 1646 he applied that his timber should not be cut or carried away, nor his estates spoiled any further, pending his composition, and the Committee acknowledged that timber had been felled without authority, and ordered that he might take legal proceedings against offenders in this respect. In his Petition of 1649 ‖

* Public Records. † Calendar of Domestic State Papers, March 17th, 1662.
‡ Dugdale's "Diary." § Record Office Proceedings of Compounding Committee.
‖ F.D. 1083/37.

he claimed that at least £12,000 worth of his timber had been cut down and converted to the use of the State; and he complained that "since these times" £50,000 value of his property had been seized and taken. On November 14th, 1646, he successfully applied "that he might have possession of his houses at Castle Ashby and Compton, which are daily falling into greater decay, and of his Chase and Park, to put them in repair that thereby he might better make his composition."

As to the damage suffered by Castle Ashby in the Wars, it may here be said that, from a document among the family papers,* it appears that "the said James, Earl of Northampton, having had his mansion house burnt and destroyed in the said Rebellion, did for some time (with his family) live in a lodge in Olney Park." † This evidence is supported by a declaration ‡ of the son of a servant of the Earl's during his sojourn there. No other information is available as to a fire at Castle Ashby; but a local tradition, mentioned in Lady Alwyne Compton's notes, says that there was a fire there in 1624, immediately after the completion of the house, which was detected by an old woman living in the room over the church porch. In winter time, when the creepers are not in leaf, red stains of flames are quite distinctly to be seen on the stone lintels over all the windows of the State suite; and the idea that these (whether in 1624 or during the Wars) were the rooms burnt, is borne out by the fact that the whole interior of this wing, and no other part of the house, was completely renovated after the Restoration.

Filed with the Composition Papers is also "A Particular of the Manor of Newnham Abbey,§ Bedfordshire, sold by James, Earl of Northampton, to pay his composition in the cursed rebellion." It included the Manor House "worth 1000 lbs." (leased out) and Goldington Rectory, and the "fishing and game of swans, 6 lbs. per annum." There is also mention of the sale of jewellery for the same purpose, and it is very probable that, as was the case with other Royalist families, all the Compton plate was melted down in aid of their cause. It is for that reason that plate dating prior to the Restoration is now so very rare.

With both Petitions of 1647 and 1649 we find detailed Particulars of his estate, which give details of tenancies, rents and charges. The whole property in twelve counties seems to have brought in an income of £3693, excluding mortgages; that in Warwickshire was more than twice the value of that in any other county. Extracts from these Particulars are given in the Family Document No. 1369.

The Dowager Countess.

James's mother similarly had to compound for her estates,‖ for delinquency in

* F.D. 721 E.

† This lodge is almost certainly the present farmhouse of Olney Park Farm, on the Olney side of Olney Lane End. Lord Basset emparked Olney Park in 1374. The present building bears the date 1610, and has a porch of that date. Its site was formerly moated. It has always belonged to the Duchy of Lancaster. (See further note on page 175, below.)

‡ F.D. 721 A.

§ F.D. 1083/37.

‖ Probably included Moulsoe (Bucks.) and Abbington (Cambridge), which were her joynture. See particulars of James's Estate in F.D. 1369.

going to Oxford, the Royalist Headquarters. On September 2nd, 1646, she petitioned to compound on the Oxford Articles,* and stated that, being refused her joynture, she was forced to fly to the nearest garrison. She also stated that "she had not contributed to this unhappy War." † Her fine of £990 was reduced to £495 on her settling £170 a year for the establishment of a Puritan minister. Payment was made on March 1st, 1647,‡ but, owing to renewed discussion, her estate was not discharged finally till April 7th, 1648.

We have no consecutive story of James's mother's widowhood. We have seen how she is said to have stayed on at Compton after its occupation by the Roundheads. In April 1645, however, she was apparently living at or near Banbury, for she was requesting a safe conduct to her property at Moulsoe from Banbury and to return to Banbury.§ She must subsequently have moved to near Oxford, for in her petition to the "Committee compounding for delinquent Estates" she states that in the beginning of these sad distractions she lived not far distant from Oxford, "and the outrage of the souldiers in those parts grew so high that your petitioner, being a woman and destitute of former friends, with four small children, conceived herself not to be safe, etc. Whereupon she was necessitated to make her abode in Oxford." ‖ The four children must have been Francis, Henry and Anne, whose ages in 1646 were respectively seventeen, fourteen and eight, and Penelope, who was younger.

There was unfortunately a dispute between the 3rd Earl and his mother as to which should keep the documents relating to the money affairs of the younger brothers and sisters. It was referred to the King, who, while declining to intervene, suggested that the documents should be kept by a third person and a copy retained by each disputant. The four documents dealing with the quarrel date between February 1645 and October 1646. We do not know how it was settled, but we may hope that no bitterness remained.¶

After compounding for her estates, she is said to have spent the remainder of her life in retirement at Grendon Manor House, near Castle Ashby, which belonged to her son Charles. It is possible, however, that before retiring to Grendon she may have lived for a short time in the south-west corner of the house at Castle Ashby. From the fact that the coat of arms of her husband and herself, painted over the fireplace of the Bower in that house, are accompanied by black palm branches, it has been surmised that this room was painted for her sitting-room during her widowhood; but the palm branches may have been then added by her to painting done in her husband's lifetime. She also owned a London house, "one of the new-built houses in Queen Street," where she died on March 18th, 1657.** We are told that

* See the Earl's 1647 Petition, page 100, above.

† Public Record Office.

‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers, March 17th, 1662.

§ See page 95, above.

‖ "Compton Wynyates," by 5th Marquess.

¶ F.D. 1084/11.

** "Anne Clifford's Diary."

she was "buried awhile in Compton Church," * though, as this was in ruins, the "churchyard" would probably express it more accurately.

Sir Charles.

Sir Charles spent some time during the Commonwealth with his mother and sisters in his manor house at Grendon. On September 24th, 1643, six months after the 2nd Earl's death at Hopton Heath, his widow and her eldest son James had settled divers messuages, lands and tenements in that village, of the yearly value "before these troubles" of £84 15*s.* 6*d.*, on Sir Charles and his heirs. The property, which had recently been brought from Philip Willoughby, gent., of Grendon, must have included the manor house, because thereafter Charles styled himself "of Gryndon." The property was immediately sequestrated because he was in arms against the Parliament, and after the surrender of King Charles he probably went abroad for two years. But on December 4th, 1648, he took the solemn League and Covenant for the Reformation and Defence of Religion, and the Negative Oath; and on the 11th he petitioned for a composition. After Charles II's flight abroad, Sir Charles spent some of the later Commonwealth period abroad with him. He is said to have been in great favour with him, though he did not live long enough into the Restoration to benefit by the friendship. He married firstly in about 1654,† Mary, daughter of Sir Hatton Fermor of Easton Neston, by whom he had three sons, Hatton, James and Charles,‡ and two daughters, Mary, who married on May 15th, 1676, James Lane, son of Viscount Lanesborough,§ and Anne, who married Sir Thomas Dumville and was mother of Sir Compton Dumville.‖ Sir Charles's first wife died in 1660.¶ There is a small portrait of her brother Sir William Fermor, in the Entrance Hall at Ashby. He has already been mentioned as serving in the Earl of Northampton's Regiment in March 1645.**

Henry Compton and the younger children.

Lady Northampton's youngest son Henry was sent to a Grammar School †† soon after the end of the fighting, but no doubt spent his holidays with his mother at Grendon. In 1649, at the age of seventeen, he was sent to Queen's College, Oxford, where he remained three years.†† On February 9th, 1652, he was given a pass to go beyond the seas,‡‡ where he is said to have spent most of his time for the remainder of the Commonwealth, and where perhaps the most valuable part of his education was obtained. Of his brother Francis, who was three years Henry's senior, and of the two sisters, we know nothing before the Restoration; but we may assume that, except for periods of the boys' absence at school, they all lived quietly with their mother. They had taken no part in the Wars, and apparently they took no part during the Commonwealth in the plotting for the Restoration. Their names do not appear among those constrained to live abroad.

* "Anne Clifford's Diary."
† It is unlikely that he was married when in July 1654 he visited Skipton Castle alone (see page 111). ‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers, August 29th, 1664.
§ F.D. 1081. ‖ See Townshend Pedigree of 1733. ¶ Collins. ** See page 94.
†† *Universal Magazine*, June 1770. ‡‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

Sir Spencer.

Sir Spencer evidently remained abroad after the surrender of Banbury till his death at Bruges on October 6th, 1656, at the age of twenty-seven. He seems to have lived at Charles's Court in Holland until a fortnight before his death, and Charles makes the following mention of him in a letter to Bennet, afterwards Earl of Arlington, in 1655: * "I will try whether Sir Spencer Compton be so much in love as you say, for I will name Mrs. Hyde before him so by chance, that except he be very much smitten, it shall not at all move him." Mrs. Hyde was the daughter of Clarendon, and was afterwards Duchess of York, Queen of England, and mother of the Queens Mary and Anne.

Spencer's dying words to his two friends, Bishop Morley and Dr. Erles, were, "O be good and keep close to the Principle of the Christian Religion, for this will bring a man peace at the last." † There is among the family papers a long letter ‡ from Dr. Morley, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, to the 3rd Countess of Northampton, describing his death. On his journey from France a fortnight before his death his horse fell with his whole weight on him and then dragged him a good way. A post-mortem examination revealed that a bruised lung had caused his death, though the symptoms sound as if the lungs may have been tubercular. Morley had long, serious talks with him during his illness, and "wondered any man of his age and quality, especially in these times, could be so innocent." He also speaks of the "comeliness of his shape, the loveliness, modesty and ingenuity of his countenance, his free and open . . . courtesy and affability . . . his great courage . . . his great wit . . . and his great zeal to piety . . . in so much that I never heard him say, or saw him do, anything that he or any of his friends had reason to wish either undone or unspoken." The letter goes on to tell how a few days after his death he was carried to "a frontier town of the States, called Sluys, being attended by betwixt 20 and 30 gentlemen of our own nation, and is there deposited in a vault within the Church, ready to be disposed of according to such orders as his friends shall be pleased to send from England." The actual place of his burial is not disclosed. A portrait of Sir Spencer hangs in the Dining-Room at Compton; it has been much restored, but is probably by Cornelius Jonson, and may have been painted before the Wars, at the same time as that by Jonson of the 2nd Earl.

Sir William.

Of all the family James and William seem to have been the only two who could not keep clear of politics during the Commonwealth, and we several times find mention of their being imprisoned, though we do not always know of what they were guilty. Sir William after the surrender of Banbury "did for about two years travel beyond the Seas." § During his absence he came of age, and in March 1648 he returned to claim his property at Erith. It will be remembered that the 1st Lord Compton's maternal grandmother inherited her father's property and residence at

* Quoted in "Evelyn's Diary." † Lloyd's "Memorials of those that suffered, etc." (1668).
‡ F.D. 1084/19. § Sequestration Petition.

Erith in Kent.* These were passed on to Lord Compton's son, the 1st Earl of Northampton;† and in about 1629 the latter settled "the manor, demesne, etc. of Erith" on his third grandson, William, who was then about four years old. But, until William should come of age, his father, the 2nd Earl, had enjoyed the income, which before the troubles had been £270 3s. 4d. a year. And so in 1642 the property had been sequestrated for the 2nd Earl's delinquency, and in March 1648 Sir William, who was twenty-two years old, came home and had to petition for a composition of it. No sooner, however, had he made his Petition than he was persuaded to take up arms once more for the rescue of his sovereign. In the spring of 1648, during King Charles's imprisonment, the Earl of Holland received a commission from Prince Charles to be General of an army to be raised for the redemption of the King from prison, and to restore the Parliament to its freedom. James, 3rd Earl, with all his family, readily engaged to serve under this Earl, though it is doubtful whether they actually did so; for the project soon ended in Holland's capture and decapitation by order of Parliament.‡ But the failure of this venture did not deter Sir William. While he was occupied in May 1648 in preparing particulars of his estate, the gentlemen of Kent raised an army with the intention of marching through the city of London to Westminster, and there releasing the King and subordinating Parliament.§ On May 27th they made rendezvous at Maidstone, and their Council of War elected the Earl of Norwich General and Commander-in-Chief, Esquire Hailes Lieutenant-General, and Sir William Compton Major-General. The very next day they were attacked at Maidstone by Lord Fairfax, and pursued through Rochester to Greenwich Park. Here a gentleman from Essex met them with the news that there were 2000 men in arms about Bow or Stratford, and more at Colchester, ready to join them. Whereupon on June 3rd Norwich was ferried across into Essex, alone with his horse, to arrange co-operation between the two forces. Sir William was left in charge at Greenwich, and had great difficulty in getting bread, beer and cheese brought into the Park. There had been 300 casualties at Maidstone, and desertion became rife during the uncertainty caused by their General's prolonged absence looking for an army which did not in fact exist. A panic started in the middle of the night, and the greater part of the Foot and a few of the Horse transported themselves over the river, where, to their surprise, they found themselves "under the Hamlets of the Tower," and surrounded by an armed regiment of Hambleteers. "But Sir William Compton (a man truly noble, and more compleat in gallantry, virtue and honour, than years), perceiving the ruin we were running blindfold into, treated with them for the whole Party," and, under that pretence, marched his force clear through the Hambleteers, taking their com-

* See page 35, above. † F.D. 732*. ‡ *Universal Magazine*, 1770.
§ For this story see "Carter's Expedition, 1648," and "Civil War Pamphlets, 1377." London Library.

mander and many of them prisoners within a mile of London, to the general astonishment of the whole city. They proceeded to Stratford, where they enlisted many recruits from that neighbourhood and from London. They were then rejoined by Norwich, who marched them in five days to Colchester; and there the garrison of 3526 held out from June 13th till it was reduced by hunger to submit on August 28th. Sir William was sent to negotiate the terms of surrender, and it was as a result of his behaviour on this occasion that Oliver Cromwell called him "that sober young man" and "the Godly Cavalier."* He was in prison for some time after this escapade, and he was perhaps lucky to escape the death penalty, which was suffered by three of his companions by order of Parliament. In the following spring (1649) he was, however, free again, and on April 3rd he was again petitioning for compounding his Erith estate, which was this time under sequestration, for that he was "unfortunately engaged in the late war at Colchester against the forces raised by Parliament." His fine was fixed at £660, and we must imagine him for the next two years living out of politics and probably at Erith

Sir William and the Sealed Knot.

In 1651 Sir William married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Lionel Tollemache,† and widow of William, Lord Alington, of Horseheath Hall, near Cambridge. They had no children. On October 15th of the same year, Prince Charles went into exile in Holland, and from that moment Sir William seems to have schemed for his return. He was one of the six called the "Sealed Knot" from their secrecy in organising the eight attempts made between 1652 and 1659.‡ It was no doubt this scheming that got him into trouble, for we find him in prison again in 1655,§ while again in May 1658 he was committed to prison on a charge of high treason against Cromwell.‖ There are two autograph letters¶ in the Clarendon State Papers from Prince Charles to Sir William recommending agents, and in one he desires him to procure loans for the expenses of messengers to and from England. In other various letters Sir William is always referred to by his pseudonym, "Boutell." But William's influence over the plotters was a restraining one. In a letter** from his cousin, John Mordaunt, to Prince Charles, dated July 10th, 1659, we learn that "now there are so many considerable persons entered into it, that your Majestie's affairs cannot well miscarry, if private piques and emulations divide us not; . . . I have many good witnesses with what willingness I courted Mr. R. (Russell) and Sir W. C. (Compton) to it. But, Sir, they refused too long to accept it when so fairly offered. And, though they seemed to approve of what we did upon the account we gave them, yet in private I am assured at that very time they lessen'd and dis-

* "Chalmer's Biographical Dictionary."
† The Pedigrees F.D. 1081–2, say that Lady Alington whom he married was born Juliana, daughter of Baptist Noel, Viscount Campden. But this must be confusion with the 3rd Earl's marriage.
‡ Collins. § "Dict. Nat. Biog." ‖ "Mercurius Politicus."
¶ 22/9/1654 and 30/7/1657. ** Historical MSS., Report X, Appendix VI.

paraged both the persons and proceedings. The reputation of these gentlemen is great, and the youth of the town are led wholly by them. So that wee may discourse what wee please yet in an houre these gentlemen shall sway them against what wee agree of as necessary to your service. And the people of quality, finding they will own no trust nor power from you are uncertaine who to follow, either those, out of esteem and kindnesse to them; or us, out of the authority your trust places in us . . . I think it my duty to represent that, by our confusion and devotion, we expose not your Royal person to hazzards." And Mordaunt is of opinion that, with under 7000 men, the King ought not to land, etc. Sir William was, however, evidently won round, for the letter no doubt refers to an attempt made on August 20th, 1659, when a force of 1500 Royalists marched from Holyhead to Chester, one party of which was to have been commanded by Sir William. His brother James was evidently also implicated, for we find both their names among those against whom Parliament issued a Proclamation.*

Earl James's first marriage.

To return, however, to Earl James. In the midst of all his sequestration business he fell in love; and on July 5th, 1647, he was married at Clerkenwell to the Lady Isabella Sackville, who was born October 6th, 1622.† Her portrait hangs in the dining-room at Ashby; it had been much damaged and over-restored before the 3rd Marquess had it cleaned.‡ Isabella was the daughter of Richard 3rd Earl of Dorset, whose portrait hangs over the Gallery in the Great Hall at Castle Ashby, and of Anne Clifford, daughter and heiress of the Earl of Cumberland. Portraits of Anne Clifford (at the age of thirteen) and her mother hang in King William's Room. The Earl of Cumberland was a wild character, who lived the life of a sea-pirate, and was only tolerated by Queen Elizabeth because of his giving her a fair share of his plunder. Anne shared her father's character, and stubbornly refused to hand over the vast estates which she had inherited to either of her husbands, as was the custom at the time, and as she was urged to do by successive Kings and the whole of their Courts. Being aged thirteen at Queen Elizabeth's death, she was indignant at not being one of the pall-bearers. She owned the five Castles of Skipton, Appleby, Pendragon, Brough and Bardon, vast acres of land and other houses. Her attitude to those living on her estates is illustrated by her well-known letter to the Earl of Arlington, who had nominated a candidate for Parliament for Appleby against her own nomination. It runs, "My Lord, Your man shall not stand, I have been frowned upon by a King (Charles I), oppress'd by an Usurper (Cromwell), but I'll ne'er be hectored by a subject. Anne Dorset Pembroke & Montgomery." § She died in March 1676 at the advanced age of eighty-six.‖ Her second daughter,

* "Clarke Papers," Vol. IV.
† Collins.
‡ Lady Alwyne. F.D. 1340, XII, p. 18.
§ "Diary of Anne Clifford" at Longleat and Knole.
‖ "Dict. Nat. Biog."

PORTRAIT OF LADY ISABELLA [SACKVILLE] 1ST WIFE OF 3RD EARL OF NORTHAMPTON
(FROM THE PAINTING AT CASTLE ASHBY)

Margaret, co-heiress with Isabella, married the Earl of Thanet. The following quotation from the mother's diary shows her approval of Isabella's marriage :—

5th July, 1647. "About this time for some years before happened a great cause of anger and falling out between my Lord and me (her second husband, Earl of Pembroke), because he desired to have one of his younger sonnes (by his former wife) married with my daughter Isabella, which I could no way remedie, my daughter being herself very averse from that match, though he believed it was in my power to have brought it about, being so persuaded by some of my enemies. But at length it pleased God that on the 5th July this younger daughter of mine, Isabella Sackville, was married to James Compton, Earl of Northampton, in the Church at Clerkenwell, but I was not then present at the marriage for many reasons, in which Church my mother and I had been Parishioners for some 7 years together in my childhood." *

3rd Earl's home life.

Among the family papers is a protection,† dated January 15th, 1649, and signed "O. Cromwell," ordering all officers and soldiers to allow James, his Lady, and all his servants "quietly to reside in London . . . and to pass from thence to any place . . . and return, without offering violence . . . and without seizing their horses or other goods . . . as you will answer for contempt at your utmost perils." And the Northamptons went up to Canonbury. A few extracts from Anne Clifford's diary ‡ gives us some idea of the home life of James and Isabella at this time. In February 1649 Isabella writes to her mother at Appleby that they "put on mourning within four days of (her step-father) Pembroke's death, and went not out of the house till we had it." She invites her mother to Canbury, and promises her the use of half the house.§ On June 3rd this visit was fulfilled, and is thus described in the diary :—

3rd June, 1649. "I went to my daughter Northampton's house at Islington, which was the first time I was in any of her lord's houses, nor have I been in any of them since, and methinks the Destinie is remarkable that she should be settled at Islington so near Clerkenwell, where my mother and I lived long in my childhood, and that her lord's chief house at Ashby should be so near Lillford in Northamptonshire, where both my mother and myself in our younger years had our Breeding . . . . and the 10th day of July having taken leave of my two daughters and their lords . . . did I go out of London . . . towards Skipton."

Though the fact is not mentioned in the diary, Isabella had recently lost her first baby boy on May 22nd, when he was only a few weeks old. This was the first of

* Her mother's house was in Augustine Friars. See Harl. MS., 6177, p. 124.
† F.D. 1083/36.
‡ "Diary of Anne Clifford" at Longleat and Knole.
§ Williamson's "Life of Anne Clifford."

a series of similar tragedies which continued till her own death in 1661. James and Isabella had six children, only Alathea, the youngest growing up. They were :—

Lord Compton. 1649, died May 22nd, a few days after his birth.
William, Lord Compton. May 27th, 1653, to September 1661.
Lady Anne Compton. July 14th, 1655, to 1660.
Lady Isabella Compton. December 16th, 1656, to March 3rd, 1657.
James, Lord Compton. 1659 to 1662.
Lady Alathea Compton. 1660 to 1678. She married Sir Edward Hungerford,* but died at the age of eighteen.†

Whatever was the negative oath which James took, he seems to have given nearly as much trouble to the Protector as did William. Soon after Prince Charles's embarkation for abroad in October 1651, James was imprisoned,‡ probably owing to his implication in some Royalist plot. Again in June 1653 he was imprisoned for refusing to meet a claim for compensation for the action of a subordinate during the Wars.§ Again in 1655 he was committed for refusing to pay taxes, but on July 5th he was allowed to go to "his house at Banbury" (? Canbury,‖ where his daughter Anne was born that month, and where we soon afterwards find him) under bond not to remove without licence.‡ But he must soon have been imprisoned again, for he was released just before October 9th.¶ He made petition on December 25th, 1655, to the Protector against the demands of Major-General Butler, and this question was decided in his favour by the Council on February 1st, 1656.‡ But none of these imprisonments seems to have been due to complicity in Royalist plots, and the Earl evidently resigned himself to the Protectorship after 1651, until Cromwell's death on September 3rd, 1658. But the chaos that followed that event encouraged Royalist hopes. And, though the Earl deprecated any risk of further bloodshed, and was at the head of the King's friends who subscribed to a declaration to that effect immediately after Cromwell's death, he missed no opportunity of abetting the restoration of the monarchy.** Thus he was concerned in Sir George Booth's insurrection, and was a prisoner in the Tower on September 24th, 1659, when the County Sequestration Committees were ordered to seize his estates and employ agents to preserve them. But the estates were allowed him on security in October, and were released in January 1660.††

But in addition to all these worries, James had a great many family ties to occupy him. In May 1653 their second child, William, was born at Canbury House, and soon afterwards, from June 15th for a fortnight, James was staying alone with his mother-in-law on his first visit to Appleby Castle; and, as was usual in those days,

* *Universal Magazine*, 1770.
‡ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.
‖ *I.e.* Canonbury.
** *Universal Magazine*, June 1770.
† "Complete Peerage."
§ See footnote, page 95, above; and F.D. 1087.
¶ F.D. 1084/20.
†† Public Records of Sequestration Committee.

took the opportunity of visiting friends for two nights at Naworth Castle. On the 29th she took him "to her Castle at Skipton and decayed tower of Bardon and her house at Sittenden and the most peaceable places of her inheritance in Craven." On July 2nd he started back for Canbury to rejoin his wife.

On May 26th of the next year Isabella, James and their baby son, William, paid their first visit to Skipton, and were accompanied by Sir Charles Compton. James and Isabella slept "in the round chamber above mine, and the little lord in the chamber next the old Castle." On July 5th they left, and returning by way of the "Countess of Cumberland's almshouse at Brambley," Lady Corke's house at Bolton, Bardon and Ottley, they reached Castle Ashby on the 17th. Later in this same month, July 1655, they were at Canbury, when their third child, Anne, was born.

The affectionate relations that existed between James and Isabella after eight years of married life are delightfully illustrated by a letter to her "at Stanhop House neere Charing Cross" of November 21st, 1655, which he begins with "Sweetheart," and ends "Yours for ever, Northampton."* But evidently he habitually called her "Sweetheart" in conversation too. Her mother, writing to her in October of this same year,† says: "It is a great comfort to me to hear that the little lord (Compton, now aged two and a half) is such a Discourser at Table, and that he calls you Sweetheart because he observes your Lord his father does so; and it is a witty device of a child as is possible, I persuade myself he will have his father's wit aright." In the same letter she says she has a "Terra Lemnia (?) Cup for Baby Anne," which is an equal rarity with the "Cristall Can" she has given Lady Thanet's baby. She was evidently determined there should be no jealousy between her daughters.

James and Isabella were at Castle Ashby in July 1656, and again in December, when Isabella, their fourth child, was born. Then they were in the Dowager Lady Northampton's house in Queen Street when the latter died in March 1657. But it was from Castle Ashby again that they travelled on June 9th, 1657, when James, Isabella, little William, and uncle "Mr. Henry Compton," went to Skipton Castle for four nights, returning again to Castle Ashby on July 4th. Three weeks before this visit Lady Dorset had written ‡ to Isabella,

"I was much overjoyed to heare you intended to be here with me this summer, but I will neither parswaid nor diswade you either to bring annoy of your Deare children withe you, or to leve them behind you, but I will pray to God to directe you to doe thatt whiche may bee best for them and yourselfe. And for your Lord I should also thinke myselfe very happy to see him here, but if his occasions stande so as it will not be convenient for his Lo^p^ to come, I will noe way urge him to the

* F.D. 1086. † F.D. 1084/20*. ‡ F.D. 1186/1.

journey. I desire you to write me worde as soon as you can when you thinke to be heare, where you shall be extremely welcome to

" Your affectnatt Loving Mother,
" ANNE PEMBROKE.

Skipton Ca; this 20: of May 1657.

"Present my love, service and blessing to your noble Lord, and my deare blessing to yourselfe and Y' 3 Children must alwayes be remembered."

Isabella appears to have had some influence over her masterful mother. In November 1657 her first-cousin Richard, 5th Earl of Dorset, wrote * to thank her for her favour in desiring her mother not to take any more fines upon her joynture in Sussex to the prejudice of his reversion in the same. He had been informed that her endeavours had had some good effect; he bemoans the extravagances of his predecessors, and acknowledges her noble and kind offices.

Deaths of Isabella and her children.

In 1660 Isabella and her two babies (presumably James and Alathea) visited her mother at Bardon, travelling from and returning to Compton Wynyates. Their child Anne had recently died, and her death was now to be followed by that of most of the remainder of the family. In September 1661 William Lord Compton died at Castle Ashby, at the age of eight, and on October 14th James lost his beloved Isabella. She died, aged thirty-nine, in their house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and was buried at Compton, excepting her heart, which was buried in the Sackville Chapel in Withyham Church.† Finally, in August 1662, James, the only surviving boy, died at Compton, aged three, and was buried there; so Earl James was now left alone with his baby daughter Alathea. In the autumn of this year he and his cousin, John Mordaunt, visited Skipton Castle, where his mother-in-law had, no doubt, to be told the details of all the sadnesses of the last twelve months. They then went on to visit his aunt,‡ Elizabeth Countess Nithsdale, at Edinburgh.

The last extract from Anne Clifford's diary describes how in 1669, Alathea, aged nine, travelled from Castle Ashby to her grandmother at Pendragon in her coach, attended by four gentlewomen, a gentleman, and many servants; on the journey they were also joined by Colonel Carr, whom Grandmamma had sent to meet and protect her. She spent thirty-three days at Pendragon and visiting neighbours, and then returned again to Castle Ashby.

Some signs of the hardness of the times can perhaps be traced in the faces of James and Isabella as painted at about this time.§ The portrait of Isabella with her

* F.D. 1084/21.

† Williamson's " Life of Anne Clifford."

‡ Sister of the 2nd Earl of Northampton.

§ Evelyn's " Diary " records a visit to his house on April 5th, 1659, of James and the famous painter Mr. Wright. Are either of these portraits to be attributed to this artist at this date? On the other hand, Lady Pembroke writes to her daughter on October 14th, 1655, " I will write to Mr. Marsh to pay for the pictures when they are finished, because you think you shall be out of town before that time."

hand on a nigger's head shows a very well-bred woman, but one suffering from bad health, and of a melancholy nature. That of James in armour with one hand resting on the head of a dog shows a handsome young man, but too pensive for his years. We are fortunate in having a later portrait of him as a jovial old boy who has obviously come upon more prosperous times.

Inclosure at Yardley Hastings 1655.

There is a document * at Ashby entitled " Yardley Improvements— Proposicions concerning the Inclosure of the Common Fields of Yardley Hastings. 1655 "; but it is not known what steps were taken to put the principles into practice. Freeholders and copyholders could either sell their land and rent grazing in the new Inclosure, or could exchange it for land in Denton with compensation for disturbance. The Earl's tenants were to receive land of equal value and on the same terms, but nearer their houses and enclosed from their neighbours. Cottagers with rights of grazing in common fields or woods were to have common grazing inclosures set apart for them. No tenant was to be moved from his house. A piece of land was to be laid out as a beastcommon for the poor who had hitherto had no common rights. The parson was either to receive a rent for his present separated strips, or land of an equal value laid together for him; he was also to receive a fixed annual commutation for the profits from his tithes and his courts. From these " Proposicions " it is evident that until 1655 there had been common rights of grazing in the woods; but there is no mention of any rights of firewood.

* F.D. 1084/18*.

CHAPTER XI

JAMES, 3RD EARL, AND THE RESTORATION

(1660–1681)

THE complete reversal of public opinion towards the monarchy between Charles I's execution in January 1649 and the return of Charles II in May 1660 needs a little explanation. Firstly, whatever were their grievances against Charles I, people were shocked at his execution and not at all prepared for a Republican form of government which they did not understand. Secondly, Cromwell never got on with his Parliaments, and without their support the country had to be governed by a class of preaching colonels; neither the system, which was too despotic, nor the individuals, who were too hypocritical, could be popular in England. Thirdly, the Puritans had to make a dead set against the religion of the majority of the people, because it was associated with the Stuarts. Fourthly, Cromwell was not without jealous enemies even among the leaders of his armies.

The outcome was that the more moderate of the Puritan party came to the conclusion that a monarchy was necessary, and shortly before Cromwell's death were trying to persuade him to crown himself King. Richard Cromwell's personality did not encourage the same suggestion, and a state of anarchy arose in which regiment rose against regiment and general fought with general. In these circumstances it was entirely due to General Monk, the leader of the moderates, that the eighteen months of anarchy was terminated without any bloodshed by the disbandment of the armies and the restoration of a Monarchy somewhat more limited by the authority of Parliament than its predecessor. For it was the essence of the new Monarchy that it was founded not so much on the doctrine of Divine Right as on the vote of both Houses of Parliament after a General Election.

Lord Lieutenant in Warwickshire.

Under the new régime the Comptons took a prominent part in the counties with which they were connected, as was perhaps only to be expected, seeing how much the family had suffered from their devotion to the Monarchy. On May 29th, 1660, on the magnificent entry of King Charles II through his city of London, the Earl of Northampton led a troop of 200 gentlemen clothed in grey and blue.* And on June 21st he presented to the King at Whitehall a Congratulatory Address on his Accession from Warwickshire gentlemen. All the shires and chief towns

* *Universal Magazine*, 1770.

in the country did the same at various other times.* On July 7th was signed the patent making James Lord Lieutenant of the county of Warwick and the city of Coventry;† but he had already been doing the duties for some months, and before Charles's landing in May. He must have been provisionally appointed before the end of 1659, for on January 8th, 1660, he received a warrant signed by Edward Hyde, Lord Chancellor (afterwards Earl of Clarendon), and other Lords of the Council and State Secretaries, ordering him to disarm all persons known to be disaffected, and administer to them the Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance.‡ Likewise, on the 22nd of the same month, he was told to increase his watchfulness, in view of rumours on all sides "of some horrid designe intended" against the King. The period of rumours and precautions continued into the year 1667, and may be interesting to trace. On July 17th, 1662, he was instructed to execute speedily the powers given him by the Act of Ordering the Forces; and on October 31st he was "speedily to settle the Militia under his Lieutenancy." § On September 1st he was commissioned to "form and list" a Regiment of Horse of which he was to be Colonel; it was to consist of six troops of 100 men each, besides officers,‖ and was probably to be raised from Warwickshire. Apparently in this year the whole country was valued and assessed "for defraying the cost of the Militia"; but, though the money was collected by county organisation, it was paid into a national fund kept at the Tower by the Paymaster-General, Sir Stephen Fox.¶ In one document it is called "his Majesties money out of Warwickshire"; in another it is called the month's "war tax."** The national fund was expected to total £70,000.

On June 30th, 1662, James, as Lord Lieutenant for Warwickshire, received the following letter in the King's name:—††

"The strength of Coventry is so considerable, by reason of its walls and fortifications, that it is an invitation to mutinous and turbulent spirits to seize upon the town for disturbance of the peace, of which there has been evidence in the late desperate design of some disaffected persons to possess themselves thereof; these mischiefs must be prevented, either by putting a garrison there which would be an expense to himself, and a great uneasiness and inconvenience to the inhabitants, or by slighting the walls, to take away all cause of apprehension. The King has resolved on the latter expedient, and wishes him to draw as many of the forces of Warwickshire as he thinks fit into Coventry, to inform the mayor and magistrates of what is to be done, and to cause the gates, walls and fortifications to be razed and demolished, by means thought best on conference with the Duke of Albemarle, and the materials thereof used for the benefit of the town. He is to be there in person till the walls are totally demolished, His Majesty taking on himself the expense."

* Evelyn's "Diary."
† F.D. 974.
‡ F.D. 1088/1.
§ F.D. 1088/3 and 4.
‖ F.D. 1089a.
¶ F.D. 1088/9, 11, 18, etc.
** F.D. 1088/16 and 18.
†† Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

Between July and September amounts totalling £600 were paid to James out of the Privy Seal Dormant for "secret service (demolishing the Walls of Coventry)."*

On August 5th, 1665, the Earl received a letter from Monk, now become Duke of Albemarle, asking him to "bee careful to keepe the Trained bands in good order and to have the officers to bee in a readinesse uppon any occasion."† This was followed ten days later by a Royal Warrant, setting forth the extremely disaffected condition of London and the country, and ordering that he require in the county "particular and extraordinary care and watchfulness over those persons . . . who, by their former practices, shall give you just ground of suspicion."‡

In October 1665 James stayed one night at the "Swan Inn" in Warwick, "to attend the Duchess of York," and immediately afterwards he attended her at Banbury also.§

In June 1666, as Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, he was instructed "to promote loans there on credit of the Act for raising £1½ millions."* On July 2nd he received a Warrant informing him that it had been resolved, "in view of a possible invasion by enemies, to raise three Regiments of Horse (apparently from any County), of 500 men in each regiment, and to be commanded by himself, and the Earls of Lindsay and Cleveland.‖ Three days later the Earl of Northampton's troop was filling slowly; "all pretend willingness to oppose an invasion, but wait for others rather than set an example." However, before the end of the month his "regiment of horse mustered complete—three companies with six captains, including himself."* These were busy months, for in September we find him holding a Muster at Warwick of the Volunteers and trained bands. "The Lord Lieutenant came into Warwick, and was met by all the principal gentry of the county in arms, who ride as volunteers in his Lordship's and Sir Rob. Holt's troops and had a very gallant appearance, as also the trained bands, viz. 4 troops of horse and 6 companies of foot, all completely accoutred, of whom a general muster was taken, to his Lordship's high satisfaction." The two days following were spent in exercising and skirmishing, and then they were dismissed.*

On June 18th, 1667, James was at last told that, in view of the "apprehension of danger being for the present somewhat allayed," he may dismiss and send home the Trained Horse and Volunteer Troops of his Lieutenancy, keeping only such as he may think necessary for security against any "intestine" dangers.¶ The Earl must have thanked God that here was peace at last. But no; exactly ten days later he is informed that "as the dangers from the enemy abroad are becoming imminent," it is necessary to keep up "a great army." He is therefore to use his utmost endeavours to induce persons in the county to "make voluntary loans for the cost thereof."**

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers. † F.D. 1088/13. ‡ F.D. 1088/14.
§ F.D. 1001. ‖ F.D. 1088/15. ¶ F.D. 1088/19. ** F.D. 1088/20.

Sport.

But with all his work, James managed to fit a little sport into his busy life. As early as August 1660 he asked to be given Warrants, like those granted to his father, as Master of the Game in Whittlewood Forest, to apprehend and punish deer-stealers who have taken great liberty, and to seize on greyhounds, etc., for the King's recreation.* In March 1665 he was appointed Chief Ranger of Whittlewood and Saulcey Forests, of which woods there is a Perambulation of this date in the family papers.† And in May 1666 he was made Deputy-Keeper of the Hawks in Saulcey Forest, and Gamekeeper within twelve miles of Castle Ashby. In Warwickshire, too, he must have had some appointment connected with royal sport. On May 30th, 1661, he commissioned Ralph Sheldon to seize greyhounds for the King's use.‡

Compton in Parliament.

Three of James's brothers, all except Henry, were members of the 1661 Parliament. Charles was returned unopposed for Northampton Borough, but it was in a bye-election late in the year, and he died in November before taking his seat. William was elected for the town of Cambridge, which he represented till his death in 1663. Francis was Member for Warwickshire from 1661 till 1679.

Compton in the Blues.

Again three of the brothers, this time all except William, were together associated in the formation of the Royal Horse Guards. Soon after Charles II's return, the Marquis of Worcester had proposed to him that he should ask the Lords to offer the King a present of an auxiliary troop for His Majesty's Life Guard. He proposed it should consist of "an hundred horse, and an hundred meistres; that is each cavalier to keep a servant with a led horse as well as his own, and one of them to be worth 100£. . . . And that most worthy nobleman, the Earl of Northampton . . . is desirous and willing to be but Lieutenant to the said Troop." (Worcester himself was to be Captain.) "But the whole troop, consisting of such persons qualified as above mentioned, volunteers, and not serving for pay or gain, will deservedly require not to be put upon common services, and not to be commanded but by his Majesty or his most deserving general the Duke of Albemarle, and they themselves not to be tied to daily duties, but to have liberty to substitute some gentleman of quality, or an experienced officer, to serve for him at any time when his Majesty requires not his personal appearance, and that the captain of the troop gives way unto it."§ This proposal was not carried out in detail, but a body, known before the Commonwealth as the Earl of Oxford's Blues, was now revived as a regiment of the King's Bodyguard, and one Troop of it was officered by Comptons. The First Muster of the Royal Horse Guards was at Tuthill Fields, Westminster, on February 16th, 1661, and at it was present Sir Charles as Captain commanding a Troop, assisted by Sir Francis as Lieutenant, and Henry as Cornet.‖

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers. † F.D. 1227.
‡ Birmingham City Library MS. 167964.
§ Warburton's "Prince Rupert," Vol. III., Appendix A.
‖ Packe's "History of the Royal Horse Guards."

Sir Charles and his descendants.

Sir Charles lost his first wife in 1660,* and in the following year, leaving Hatton and his younger brothers at Grendon, he married the widow of Mr. Wilmer of Sywell, and went to live there. By his second wife he had a daughter Elizabeth, who eventually married a Mr. Jones of Sywell.† She was probably born after her father's death, for in November 1661 he was killed by a fall from his horse in Northampton at the age of thirty-eight, and was buried at Sywell. Lloyd mentions ‡ that Sir Charles "excelled in Music and Mathematicks, without the first of which he would affirm a man was no company and without the second of no use."

SIR CHARLES COMPTON, KT. (1623–1661)
and his descendants of Grendon.

(1) Mary Fermor (*c.* 1654, *d.* 1660). = SIR CHARLES (*d.* 1661). = (2) Mrs. Wilmer of Sywell.
Elizabeth, m. Jones of Sywell.

HATTON = m. Penelope Nicholas | James (d.s.p. 1672). | Charles. | Mary, m. Visct. Lanesborough (*d.* 1733). | Anne, m. Sir Thomas Dumville.

William (*d.* young). | CHARLES (antiquarian). | EDWARD (Paymaster) m. Walker. | James | Mary, m. Bishop Gooch.
Penelope, m. Lord Muncaster.
Maria, m. 1811, Earl of Crawford.
Dr. W. Compton, LL.D. (*b.* 1732, alive 1812, d.s.p.).

There are duplicate portraits of Sir Charles aged about twenty at Ashby and Compton, which are apparently copies of the head and shoulders of a three-quarter-length portrait at Howsham.§ There is another portrait, said to be by Dobson, at Ham House, Richmond. Of his sons James and Charles we only know that the former died in August 1672.‖

Hatton Compton of Grendon.

Of Hatton, however, we know more. In 1687 he is first mentioned as a Cornet in the Blues under the command of his uncle, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Francis. On November 13th, 1688, three Regiments of King James's cavalry attacked the Prince of Orange's forces near Axminster, and were badly beaten, largely owing to the disaffection of some of the officers and about 200 of the men. These, however,

* Collins. † Townshend Pedigree of 1733.
‡ Lloyd's "Memorials of those that suffered," etc. (1668).
§ In the Estate A/cs (F.D. 1001) appears the entry in January 1667: "Pictures of Sir Charles Compton, copied."
‖ F.D. 1003.

were not of the "King's Regiment of Horse," from which "only Cornet Compton, with two or three subalterns and about ten troopers deserted," and joined the side of Prince William. Hence the verse in the Jacobite song of 1692 :— *

"O Compton, Langston, and the rest,
who basely from him ran,
your names for ever be accurs'd
by every Englishman."

Hatton married his first cousin, Penelope,† daughter of Sir John Nicholas, and had four sons, William, Charles, Edward and James, and a daughter Mary. He rose to be a General in the army, and was made Lieutenant of the Tower of London on July 26th, 1715.‡ He died, aged upwards of eighty, at his house in Marlborough Street on January 22nd, 1741.§

Charles Compton of Grendon

His last surviving son, Mr. Charles Compton of Grendon, was "long Treasurer of an Antiquarian Society in London, and Honorary Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge; he was an easy, quiet, good-tempered man, and had an estate of £600 or £700 per annum." ‖ A portrait of him as a cheery boy of about twenty hangs in the Entrance Hall at Ashby. Hatton's second son, Edward Compton, was cashier of the half-pay officers, and was in May 1741 appointed Paymaster of the Troops about to go abroad, including the Dutch and Hessian mercenaries.‡ The last of the Grendon Comptons was a Dr. Compton, who on the 8th Earl's death in 1796 threatened to claim to be his heir.¶ With his death this branch of the family is said to have died out.** Hatton's daughter, Mary, married Bishop Gooch, as his third wife in 1748, when he was seventy-four years of age. "A thing that was looked upon, even at that time of day, when things of that sort were not much considered, as very extraordinary, not to say indecent, for one of his character, and at that very advanced age. But I verily believe this match was contracted by his Lordship more to gratify his favourite passion of vanity than for any other reason; as by it he allied himself to the noble family of Compton, for the lady had but one eye, was horridly plain, and immensely ill-tempered. When Bishop Gooch came to Court the first time after he had been married, the King very kindly wished him joy, but asked how it could come into the head of an old Bishop turned seventy to think of matrimony, to which the Bishop very pleasantly as well as respectfully replied that he married at seventy for fear if he had not done so then, he might

* Packe's "History of the Royal Horse Guards."
† Collins says the only daughter was Penelope, and married Dr. Mawser, Bishop of Ely.
‡ Collins.
§ Lord Crawford, descended from Lord Muncaster, has several portraits of General Hatton Compton at Haigh.
‖ Cole MSS., Vol. XXVII. ¶ See page 207.
** There is a Charles Spencer Compton (*b.* 1768, *d.* 1858) and many other Comptons in Paignton churchyard. And this family, which still lives in the town, claims to be descended from Sir Charles. See also on page 232, below.

have committed the same folly at eighty."* The Bishop died five years later, and his unattractive widow lived till 1780.†

Meanwhile Sir William at the Restoration was a person of some consideration in national affairs, in addition to his work in Parliament. He was in 1660 admitted a member of the Privy Council,‡ and in June of that year he was appointed Master-General of the King's Ordnance.§ It must have been in execution of the duties of this latter office that he raised a Company in the same year for the defence of the Tower.‖ On July 3rd, 1662, Pepys says he "dined with the officers of the Ordnance, where Sir William Compton, and other great persons were. After dinner was brought to Sir William Compton a gun to discharge seven times; the best of all devices as ever I saw . . . it is much approved of, and many thereof made." Again in September of the same year he heard Sir William talk with great pleasure of the superiority of the Fleet then over that in Queen Elizabeth's days.

On December 1st, 1662, Sir William was appointed a Commissioner for Tangier. The Queen had in this year brought the possession of Tangier to England as her dowry; and the Commissioners sat in London, and were still doing so on August 10th, 1663, their duty probably being to report how the place should be governed and developed. William's brother, Henry, was sent there for six months in August 1662; and his brother-in-law, Sir Hugh Cholmley, it will be remembered, went out there in the spring of 1663 to start building a breakwater to the harbour.¶

On October 18th, 1663, Sir William died very suddenly in Drury Lane, and was buried in the north aisle of Compton Church, and not in the family vault in the south aisle. A small brass is let into the tombstone, which is flush with the floor, and in the north wall is erected a monument of fitting importance. Pepys says of him in his Diary: "All the world said that he was one of the worthiest men and best officers of State now in England; and so in my conscience he was; of the best temper, valour, ability of mind, integrity, worth, fine person, and diligence of any one man he hath left behind him in the three kingdoms; and yet not 40 years, or if so, that is all." His actual age was thirty-eight.

Lloyd** tells us, writing after his death, that he was "of such temperance from his youth that he seemed to be the St. Nicholas of our Church, of whom the report is, that when an infant, hanging on his mother's breast, he fasted Wednesdays and Fridays and would not suck." And he mentions that during the second siege of Banbury "he had Prayers four times every day, the spiritual armes seconding the temporal, so eminent his piety."

* Cole MSS., Vol. XXVII and XXXII. † Betham's "Baronage."

‡ As a Lord of the Privy Council, Sir William's signature appears on a Warrant to the 3rd Earl of 1663 (F.D. 1088/6).

§ Monument in Compton Church. ‖ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

¶ See page 76, above.

** Lloyd, "Memorials of those that suffered, etc."

There are several existing portraits of Sir William. That by Dobson at Ham House and that in the National Portrait Gallery give us a remarkable impression of strength and refinement, brilliant intelligence and absolute integrity. There is another portrait of him at Compton as a boy. But the fine picture by Dobson at Ashby, which was bought by the 5th Marquess from the then Duke of Sutherland, and whose frame is inscribed as Sir William, I take to represent the 3rd Earl, to whose other portraits it appears exactly similar.

Sir Francis Compton.

On Sir Charles's death in November 1661, his brothers Sir Francis and Henry were promoted Captain commanding the Troop, and Lieutenant, respectively. They had neither of them the experience of the Civil Wars that Charles had had, but, in the course of a long life, Francis was to reach an important position in the army. From August 1666 his Troop was quartered at Yarmouth, till the following April, when it moved to York;* and for some years he lived entirely with the regiment, with no other address.† At the beginning of 1678 war with France was expected, and an expeditionary force from the Royal Horse Guards of three Troops of sixty men each was ordered to embark for Flanders under Major Sir Francis Compton. For the arming of this party, the requisite number of "carbines, and suites of arms, to wit, Backs, Breasts and Potts, were ordered to be delivered unto our trusty and well-beloved Sir Francis Compton, Kt., Major of the Regiment."‡ But peace was subsequently made, and the expedition did not sail.

On July 5th, 1685, he commanded a Squadron of the Royal Horse Guards and about fifty Dragoon Guards at the Battle of Sedgemoor. In this battle he was first of all sent out as an advance guard to reconnoitre the enemy's routes of approach; he then formed up on the right of the infantry; and he subsequently took part in the pursuit and rout of Monmouth's army.‡

On November 13th, 1688, three regiments of King James's cavalry attacked the Prince of Orange's forces near Axminster, and were badly defeated, largely owing to the disaffection of some officers and about 200 men. It will be remembered that this was the occasion on which Hatton Compton deserted and joined Prince William. It was believed at the time that his Lieut.-Colonel, Sir Francis, would have liked to do so too, but had not the courage to go forward, and feared the Major would place him under arrest; "so he returned to the King, and Clifford brought off the body of the Regiment."‡ One can well imagine the perplexity he was in between the rival claims of his duty as a soldier and his sympathy with the cause of William, the latter of which was no doubt influenced and intensified by the uncompromising attitude of his favourite brother, Bishop Henry. However, in December

* Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

† In Blome's "Britannia," 1673, he is shown on a list of the Warwickshire County Gentry, but with no address. But as M.P. he must sometimes have lived in London.

‡ Packe's "History of the Royal Horse Guards."

the King fled to seek the protection of Louis in France, and the Revolution was complete; the army was never again asked to defend the Stuart cause.

The last incident we hear of Sir Francis's life in the Blues was on July 12th, 1689. William was still trying to suppress the Jacobites in Ireland; and at a battle at Aghrim, "Sir Francis Compton, with Lord Oxford's Regiment, being one of the first that could be in a posture to engage, fell in at random amongst the enemy, and charged them briskly; and though his men were once or twice repulsed, yet they charged along the edge of the bog, and routed the enemy from their intrenchments."* We are told that he was about this time dismissed by William from his command of the Blues, though he was at one time Lieut.-General of the Horse.† When he died, at the age of eighty-seven, he was the oldest Field Officer in Great Britain, and "had acquitted himself with honour and fidelity." The only other mention of him is in April 1697, when he petitioned the King for the £1200 promised for the setting up of two lighthouses near Harwich; the Petition is minuted, "To have £1200 if he can gett it, and his Majesty to have the overplus if any." ‡

Sir Francis's matrimonial history presents some difficulty owing to the many differences in the accounts. It seems, however, to be agreed that he married four times, though the following further information must not be relied on. He married, firstly, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Capell Bedele of Hamton, Hunts, and had no issue. Secondly, Jane, daughter of Sir John Trevor, Knight, and widow of Arthur Elms of Lilford, and had two sons, James and John, who both died unmarried, and three daughters, Mary, who married Sir Barrington Bouchier, Frances, who married a Mr. Saint John, and Anna, who died unmarried. Thirdly, he married a wife by whom he had no issue. And fourthly, Sarah, his last wife, was buried with him. She is shown on the tombstone to have been forty-eight years younger than him, and to have survived him thirty-one years; their daughter Mary (born in 1703, when her mother was twenty-six and her father seventy-four) died unmarried and was buried in their grave.

Sir Francis died on December 20th, 1716, aged eighty-seven, and was buried near his brother Henry (who had died three years earlier) in Fulham Churchyard. There is a portrait of Sir Francis at Compton, in which he is seen as a rather delicate-looking boy. A portrait at Ashby of an unattractive woman is said to represent one of his four wives.

Henry Compton.

We have already seen that on Sir Charles's death Henry was promoted to be Lieutenant in the family Troop of the Blues. But in August 1662 his regimental duties were interrupted by his being sent for six months on full pay, with two servants and a horse, on the King's service to Tangiers.§ On his return his connection with the Regiment was not long to continue. According to his own statement, his

* Packe's "History of the Royal Horse Guards."
† Collins.
‡ "Calendar of Treasury Papers."
§ Calendar of Domestic State Papers.

commission had only been procured in the first instance "on Hobson's choice." He soon became disappointed at the slowness of promotion,* and left the army to enter the Church, after taking a M.A. Degree at Cambridge. He was ordained a Deacon, and it is said that by the help of Court influence he might have been made a Bishop at once; yet he preferred to do so by ordinary advances. In 1666 he was admitted Canon-Commoner of Christchurch Oxford, and on April 7th became a Master of Arts at Oxford.† In the same year he was given the Rectory of Cottenham in Cambridgeshire, worth about £500 a year. In 1667 he was constituted Master of St. Cross Hospital, at Winchester, "a fit preferment," as Dr. Gooch ‡ rightly observes, "for him whose house was always a constant hospital." By this appointment his income was considerably increased, and he had greater opportunities of enjoying his greatest pleasure, that of doing good to others. On May 24th, 1669,§ he became Canon of Christchurch, Oxford, and on June 28th was made a Doctor of Divinity. In December 1674 he was consecrated Bishop of Oxford, in the Archbishop's Chapel at Lambeth.§ In July 1675 he was made Dean of the Royal Chapel, and at the end of this year was transferred from the See of Oxford to that of London, which he held till 1712. It was during his time as Bishop that the present St. Paul's Cathedral was erected.‖ Anthony Wood tells us that "this translation was much promoted by some of the politic Clergy, because they knew him to be a bold man, an enemy to the Papists, and one that would act and speak what they would put him upon; which they themselves would not be seen in, as many Prime Papists used to say." At this time he never ceased complaining to the King, and often in council, of the insolence of the Papists, and thus earned the undying hatred of the Duke of York.

On January 22nd, 1676, he became a member of the Privy Council, and at this time the educating in the doctrine of the Church of England of the King's two nieces, the Princesses Mary and Anne, was committed to his care. They were both confirmed by him immediately afterwards; and on November 4th, 1677, he married the Princess Mary to William, Prince of Orange, and on July 28th, 1683, he married the Princess Anne to George, Prince of Denmark, thus ensuring a Protestant succession to the throne. He later christened William, Duke of Gloucester, son of Queen Anne.¶

In 1679 he held three conferences with his clergy, and a similar number in the following year, with the idea of securing unity in the Church on dogmatic questions of the day. He used to tell them, "the churchyard for the dead, the Church for the

* Packe's "History of the Royal Horse Guards."
† In November and December 1666 and March and April 1667 he was sent from Compton Wynyates over to Oxford, the cost being entered in the estate accounts (F.D. 1001/19).
‡ The Dr. Gooch who married Henry's great-niece, Mary Compton.
§ Collins.
‖ Burke.
¶ "Warwickshire Worthies," by Rev. F. L. Colville.

living," meaning the church should play just as much part in a man's life as the churchyard does after death.

In April 1673 Evelyn heard him preach. He says: "This worthy person's talent is not preaching, but he is like to make a grave and serious good man."

So far his work had run smoothly; but we shall see later how fortunate the Church was in the reign of the Catholic James II in having such a bold champion of its rights.

3rd Earl at home.

Mention has already been made of James, 3rd Earl of Northampton's doings in 1660, and of the sad bereavements he suffered in 1661 and 1662. It must have been during these years that he put new glass into the Chapel window at Ashby, and probably as a memorial to his beloved wife Isabella. The three lights of this window each contained a large armorial shield; the first shield giving fifteen quarterings of the Compton Arms, the second Compton impaling Sackville, and the third Compton singly.* There was much damage by the wars to be restored at Compton and Ashby, and some of the contents of both houses had been looted. James took early steps to recover his property. Among the family papers † there is an Order to him from the Clerk of the Parliament authorising him or his agents to make diligent and narrow search for any of the goods and household stuff removed from Ashby since these unhappy times. They "are impowered, upon resistance made, to break open in the day time with a lawful officer any door, trunk, chest, box that shall not have been opened in obedience to this order." He was probably given a similar order to search the neighbourhood of Compton, for there is a list,† made in August of the same year, of "goods found, restored, and agreed to be restored" at Etington, Warwick, Coventry, and at Major Purefoy's house at Aderstone. The list includes "a great gilt bedstead," which was probably the one slept in by Henry VIII and various other sovereigns; and also tapestry, embroidered stools, chairs, carpets, books, etc. It is also mentioned that on August 18th one of his agents was denied admission in spite of the order, and was "thrust forth of doors" by the wife of the householder.† The amount recovered does not seem large, but, then, we do not know how much had been looted.‡ When he was not in London, he apparently lived largely at Compton during the first years after his wife's death.

The Earl's second marriage.

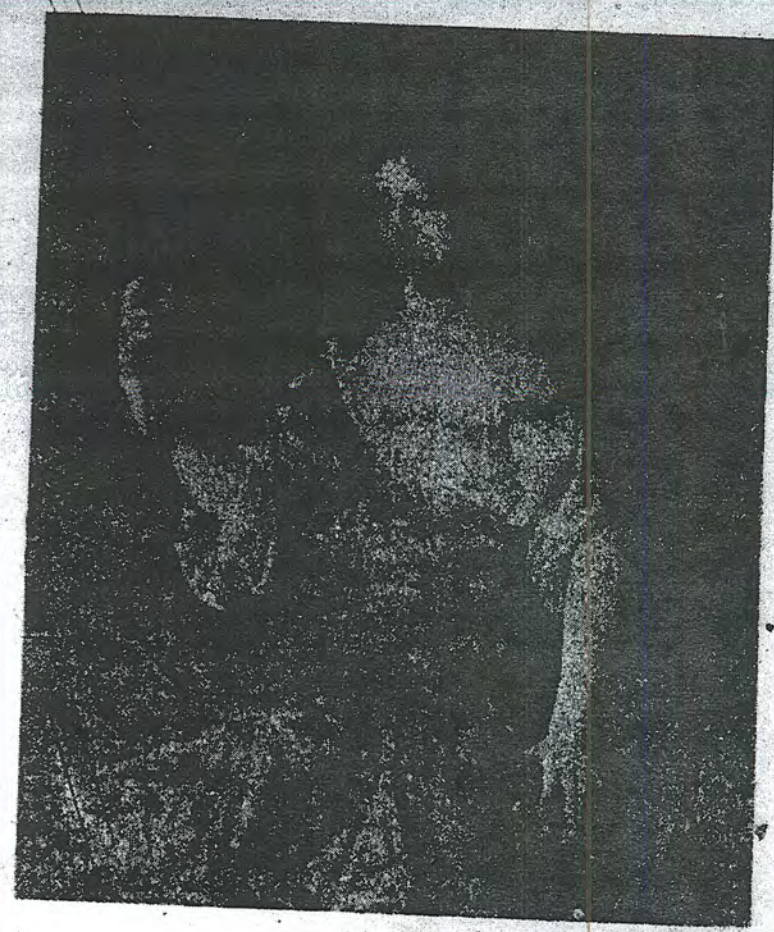
In January 1663 James married again.§ His second wife was Mary Noel,

* Cole MSS., British Museum, Vol. XXXIII. 1763.

† F.D. 1083/38.

‡ An Ashby Inventory of the year of his death values its contents at £2086 (see F.D. 1319).

§ By their Marriage Settlement (F.D. 1220), Mary brought £11,000 as her portion, and James made her joynture Moulsoe, Canonbury and all other manors in Middlesex (including the field called the Wrestling Place or Ducking Pond and Ferny Field in St. James's Clerkenwell).



PORTRAIT OF MARY (NOEL) 2ND WIFE OF 3RD EARL OF NORTHAMPTON.
(FROM THE PAINTING AT CASTLE ASHBY).

daughter of Baptist Noel, 2nd Viscount Campden, of Chipping Campden, twelve miles from Compton. Mary's mother had inherited the title and property from her father, the 1st Viscount, who was a rich wool merchant named Hicks. When the Civil Wars broke out, the 1st Viscount had recently completed building a magnificent house at Campden; and he had the mortification of having it burnt to the ground by order of Prince Rupert on May 10th, 1645, sooner than let it fall into the hands of the Roundheads.* Chipping Campden to-day is the most untouched of all the villages in the Cotswolds, but of the house only the entrance gates and two charming garden houses remain intact, the ruins of the house and terraces being now covered with turf. In the church is a very fine canopied tomb with alabaster recumbent figures of Mary's grandfather and grandmother. A portrait of Mary, dressed as a very saucy and *décolletée* shepherdess, hangs in the Great Hall at Ashby, next to one of James at a slightly later date, in armour, with a burning Castle (perhaps Banbury) in the background. Mary looks a very healthy, cheery, buxom girl, and her high spirits seem to be reflected in the face of her middle-aged husband.

They had three sons and two daughters. George, who afterwards became 4th Earl, was born on October 18th, 1664; † Lady Juliana, born 1665, died young; Lady Mary, born about 1666, afterwards married Charles, 6th Earl of Dorset, and died August 6th 1691.‡ James died young on August 20th, 1672; § Spencer, born in 1673, was afterwards to become Prime Minister and be created Earl of Wilmington.

Restoration at Compton.

James and Mary must immediately have gone to Compton Wynyates and set about removing the debris of the Wars.‖ The moats were probably by this time filled in; but the church had to be rebuilt, and probably most of the buildings in the Great Court. In June we find labourers "making of the borders about the house in the great garden."¶ These borders would not have been flower-beds, but probably hedges or paths round the present terrace, or round what is now called the Best Garden. On April 1st, 1665, the rebuilding of the Church was begun,¶ and varying numbers of men were continually at work until December, "wheeling rubble out of the Churchyard," and "forth of the Church."¶ The accounts for the work between April 1665 and April 14th, 1666, total £358 17*s.* 3*d.*, and may be divided into the following heads :—

* Described in Sir T. Slingsby's diary, which quotes Lord Compton as saying the house cost him £30,000 in building and furniture.

† Burke's "Peerage."

‡ F.D. 1081. There is at Knole a portrait of Lady Mary, and a set of fourteen silver sconces with the Compton Arms impaling Sackville.

§ F.D. 1003.

‖ The Chapel window had been destroyed by the Puritans (Dugdale).

¶ F.D. 1001.

	£	s.	d.
Masons and Labourers (about twenty men) April 8th to September 30th	138	4	0
Carpenters (three to five men) April 15th to September 30th	20	15	11
Lead, stone, lath, nails, etc.	92	8	5
Slaters (two to seven men) August 5th to September 30th	7	16	4
Masons and Labourers (five to seven men) October 7th to April 14th	36	8	10
Plumbers	25	6	8
Carpenters (two or three men) October 7th to January 27th	5	14	10
Stone, etc.	32	2	3
	£358	17	3

But the work continued in church and garden well into 1667 :— *

1666. Feb. to May. "Plastering and seleing of the church" (total cost £122).

April to Dec. "Wages to Carpenters for work in erecting the Scaffolds about the Tower, "trestle-making," "laying down the roof of the Tower of the Steeple," "making and setting up the frame of the bell,† hanging the bell and the steeple door," etc.

April to Nov. Wages to Masons (£25 19s. 8d.) for work in "hewing stone, wheeling stone, driving the oxen, feeding the oxen Sundays and holy days, laying and heweing pavar for the Church," etc.

Nov. to Dec. "Planting young trees in the Park" (Several times this entry is followed by "and one man going to Ashby one day." Can the trees have come from there?)

Dec. "Wheeling away the rubble from the Washhouse, and digging and laying by the old foundations of the walls . . . cutting by the new Close . . . cutting by shovels (?) about the moat and fagotting."

1667. "Hewing stone . . . for church" and "churchyard wall" (stone and materials came from "Brayles, Chepin Norton and Rolerite"). Also "stone for the repair of the Condete in the Parke."

Feb. "Pruning the vines and the wall trees, and replanting some young ashes," digging up foundations of old walls and wheeling away rubble.

April. "Dressing up the borders in the garden."

* F.D. 1001 (19).

† The Bell was given to the church by the 1st Earl in 1628. See inscription on it.

"Dressing up the hopyard and 3 days about mending the stoves, killing moles, mending the seats about the house, making up the Garden wall, making a pen for the colts for the Great Stable, . . . the Walnut trees standing by the Churchyard side."

March to Aug. Churchyard wall work (includes 2s. given to the Masons for drink when their work on the wall was ended).

These accounts give us very little information about work to the house, and we must infer that repairs to it had been completed before 1666, when the accounts begin. In view of the extent of the work necessary to the church, it is perplexing to remember that in the last three years both Isabella and Sir William had been buried "in Compton Church." It is possible they may have been buried originally in the churchyard, and moved in as soon as the new church was completed.* It is interesting to note that in these Accounts Compton was for the first time spelt Vyniats. It was probably so pronounced also; and it is possible that the practice was started by Sir William Dugdale telling everyone, as he wrote in his book, that the name was derived from vineyards, whereas earlier documents (which Dugdale never saw) spell it more like Windgates.

Among the estate disbursements of 1666 appears: "£100 given by his lordship unto the tenants of Tysoe, and £50 unto the tenants of Winterton, in respect of their loss in their Corn by a storm of Hayle." "Nicolas Stilles," ancestor no doubt of the present tenant, appears, too, as paying £3 rent for the "Mills," which seems to prove that the present windmill already existed in 1666 as well as the water-mill.

Compton Pike too, like the windmill, probably dates from before the Civil Wars. Standing at the top of the hill 400 yards south-west of the house, it constitutes a landmark which, before the days of hard roads and accurate maps, must have been very necessary for guiding strangers to the house. It has an iron hook at its top, which probably held a blazing fagot as a signal by night, either for communication with other beacons on distant hills, or to belated travellers.†

3rd Earl at Ashby.

After several years of restoration work at Compton, James and Mary found much to be done at Ashby. When James claimed in one of his Petitions that the house "had been burnt down," he was guilty of exaggeration; but, as has been described in an earlier chapter,‡ there is conclusive evidence that a serious fire made it necessary to rebuild the interior of most of the East Wing. The opportunity was taken of putting the present Grand Staircase into the rather narrow space between the Loggia and the Courtyard; and it now makes a very important addition

* Or they may temporarily have been buried in the ruins of the old church, which is said to have been to the south of the new one.

† I have sometimes wondered whether this monument was the origin of the beacon crest assumed by the family in Elizabethan times. See note on page 17, above.

‡ See above, page 102.

to the dignity of the house, with its low steps and panelled rises, and with its richly floriated balustrade so typical of the date. Then in King William's Room and all the State Rooms, there is the panelling with its great outstanding bolection moulding, there are the important doorways with their brass box-locks all so typical of the date, and there is the elaborate carving over the fireplaces in the State Bedroom and the Dutch Wedding-Room, which is so reminiscent of the work of Grinling Gibbons. The fireplace in the State Room is dated heraldically by the display on two shields of the Compton and Noel Arms, and this was no doubt their bedroom. Mr. Tipping thinks the carving would not have been done before 1675, when first Gibbons was beginning to have an influence on the work of his contemporaries. There is another small addition of theirs to the house that we know of; under the pediment on the courtyard side of the South Screen they hung a wooden shield carved with their Arms; the hooks which supported the shield are still there, but the shield was removed as being dangerously decayed in about 1880.

3rd Earl in Northamptonshire and London.

On May 15th, 1671, Lord Northampton was appointed Custos Rotulorum of Northamptonshire,* and presumably this carried with it the Lord Lieutenancy of the County. In the same year there was a contest for the Recordership of Northampton between the two great Earls of the County, both of them celebrated Royalists. The post was first conferred on the Earl of Peterborough, but, within eighteen months he apparently gave offence to the Burgesses, who on October 14th, 1672, unanimously elected the Earl of Northampton. This election was subsequently confirmed on December 12th by the Crown and Privy Council, after special inquiry, and James held the post till his death in December 1681.†

On March 7th, 1672, the Earl was made a Privy Councillor.*

On June 25th, 1675, he was appointed Constable of the Tower,‡ and a month later Lord Lieutenant of the Tower Hamlets.‡ His staff of office, bearing the Arms of Compton and Noel, is still kept at Castle Ashby, and was probably used by his son when filling the same office in Anne's reign. On August 10th, 1675, he appointed Sir John Robinson, Bart., to be Deputy Constable of the Tower, and on his appointment Sir John bonded himself in £10,000.§

In this year, 1675, the town of Northampton was almost consumed by a disastrous fire, and for many months the Earl was in continual correspondence,‖ with the Mayor on the subject of rebuilding it. When the King came to the House to prorogue Parliament, James prevailed upon him to wait awhile, till a Bill for rebuilding the Borough could be prepared to receive the Royal Assent. It is said His Majesty expressed on this occasion some surprise at his generous regard for a place which had offered great indignities to him and to the Earl his father.¶ James

* "Complete English Peerage."
‡ F.D. 976.
‖ Family documents.
† Northampton Borough Records.
§ F.D. 977.
¶ Bridge's "Northamptonshire."

appears to have been a fairly regular attendant at the House of Lords, and in 1666 appears in the family accounts the entry: "Christmas box to doorkeeper of the House of Lords, £1".*

James had always had his London house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, but we are told that in 1677 he was residing in the old Manor House of Clerkenwell, at the corner of Northampton Square.† There are engravings of "Northampton House," as they called it; and a plan of 1803 in the estate office shows that it stood on the site of the present Rectory and Schools of the Martyrs' Memorial church in Northampton Square. The carriage drive occupied the site of the church, and the gardens lay behind the house as far as the present Smith Street. One nineteenth-century historian refers to the house (on I know not what authority) as the "old Manor House of the Spencers,"† but nothing is now known of its history. The lordship of the manor of Clerkenwell, and land in Holliwell and St. John's there, were inherited by the Comptons from Sir John Spencer,‡ who bought them from Queen Elizabeth in 1599,§ but there is no record of his ever living in the manor house. It was in the year 1673 that James, 3rd Earl, handed over the Clerk's Well in Clerkenwell for the use of the poor of the parish of St. James. It is mentioned by Fitzstephen in 1174 as a place of refreshment on summer evenings, and by Stow in 1603 as the place where of old time the parish "clerks" used yearly to act some Bible story.‖ It has recently been rediscovered in 1923, and can be visited at 14 Farringdon Road.

Clerkenwell.

There is a bundle of letters to James, dating between March 20th and October 27th, 1681, from Sir William Howard, mentioned in a letter of Mary Lady Northampton as a friend of the family, telling of the Rye House Plot and other London gossip.¶

On June 3rd, 1681, the 3rd Earl had a heavy fall downstairs at Compton. He was laid up for some time, and it was not till November that he moved to Ashby. He was apparently suffering from gout as well, and the Compton Wynyates steward "wishes Your Lordship would be in love with a Fontanelle" as a cure for it.¶

3rd Earl's death.

He died, "full of honour," at Castle Ashby on December 15th, and was buried at Compton.** He was in his sixtieth year.

Mary, Lady Northampton, survived her husband. She probably lived at Ashby with her younger son Spencer till the 4th Earl's marriage in 1686. She then lived in London, and when her daughter, Lady Dorset, died in August 1691, and her son-in-law soon afterwards remarried, she was allowed to take her little grandson, Buckhurst, born in January 1687, and be responsible for his upbringing. We are

3rd Earl's Widow.

* F.D. 1001.
‡ F.D. 1218 and page 63 above.
§ Patent Roll 1514, m. 30–40, at Record Office. See transcript with F.D. 1368.
‖ Fitzstephen in his preface to the "Life of Thomas a Becket." Stow in his "Survey of London."
¶ F.D. 1092.
† Thornbury and Walford's "London Old and New."
** *Universal Magazine*, 1770.

told that "she being acceptable to Queen Mary, that Princess commanded her always to bring her little grandson, Lord Buckhurst to Kensington Palace." And on the occasion of one of these visits King William had a romp with the little boy down one of the galleries.* In her old age she used to send clothes to Ashby to be distributed by the Rector to the poor widows. On March 3rd, 1714, she enclosed with them some Communion Plate which she presented to Ashby Church. It consisted of: "Silver Guilt: One flagon, One Bason, One large Salver, Two smaller Salvers, Two Cups."† Lady Alwyne says she also presented the altar rails to the church, but they have since been replaced by others. Lady Northampton died on August 22nd, 1719, and was buried at Compton.‡

The Portraits of James, 3rd Earl, are as follows: §

1. A portrait of a boy of about ten, said to be James, over the fireplace in the Billiard Room.
2. A head and shoulders signed "Gerard Honthorst 1643," and inscribed "Jacobus Baro Cumton," over the fireplace in the Dining-Room at Compton.
3. As a young man in armour, during his first married life, in the Big Hall Gallery at Ashby.
4. A full-length by Dobson, during the Commonwealth, inscribed "Sir William Compton" on the frame, but almost certainly James.
5. As a middle-aged man in armour, in the Big Hall at Ashby.

* "Knole," by V. Sackville, 1923.

† F.D. 1330. All complete in 1929. They are the work of the celebrated silversmith Paul Lamerie "att ye Golden Ball," Windmill Street, S. James.

‡ F.D. 1081.

§ Walpole says (in his "Painters," p. 299, 4th Edition) that Vertue mentions a half-length of the 3rd Earl, copied from a head by Vaest (died 1697). A miniature at Ashby is said by Lady Alwyne to be copied from this picture.

PORTRAIT OF GEORGE 4TH EARL OF NORTHAMPTON.
(FROM THE PAINTING AT CASTLE ASHBY).

CHAPTER XII

GEORGE, 4TH EARL

(1681–1727)

GEORGE was born on October 18th, 1664,* and succeeded his father, at the early age of seventeen, on December 15th, 1681. He was very methodical and business-like, and in addition showed great energy in all the various interests with which he was connected. Besides earning respect in London for the soundness of his opinion at the Privy Council, and taking a prominent part in the counties with which he was territorially connected, he also devoted much of his energy to estate management, to forestry and book collecting. Both the last tastes he doubtless learnt from his uncle the Bishop, from whom, and from his father-in-law Fox, he was always ready to take advice. Nor must we omit, among his activities, the very considerable improvements made by him at Compton and Ashby.

Education.

The first we hear of him is when, at the age of eight, he was present at a Muster of the Warwickshire Militia as its Colonel.† When he succeeded his father his education was being completed at Christchurch, Oxford, and in February 1682 he took a M.A. degree. On this occasion the public orator made a speech to him setting forth the services his ancestors had done their country and the honour the University had had in his education.

Succeeds as Earl.

At his father's death he was made Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, but during his minority Edward Earl of Conway, and afterwards Robert Earl of Sunderland, were appointed to act for him until his return to England.† This was necessary, since George spent much of the remaining four years of his minority completing his education abroad. The bills of his expenses in 1685 show that he was in Paris till September, when he went to the Hague, Amsterdam, etc.; and then from October to December travelling in France and back to Paris.‡

Sister's marriage.

It was in March 1685 that he suddenly received in Paris the following letter from his mother.‡ It is not dated, but is sealed with her seal, bearing the Compton and Noel Arms, and is directed :—

" A Monsieur le Comte de
Northampton Singeur Englois
a l'Hostell de Tour dans la rue de Paou,
A Paris."

* Burke's " Peerage."

† F.D. 1094.

‡ F.D. 1110.

It runs :—

" Deare son,

I have received a letter from Monsieur St. Helene dated $\frac{31 \text{ Ja.}}{10 \text{ Fe.}}$ wherein I perceive you have received the bill of exchange I have sent. By the next Post I hope to gitt another ready to send you. I rejoyse to hear from Mr. St. Helene that you are so much improved in all your excersieses, which I hope you will still persue for the Littell time you are like to staye in France. I have at this time a very considerable match offered for your sister which I canot conveniently conclued without your particular kindness to her, in giveing (or rather conferming to her) 2 thousand pound. I have consulted several people in the affere of her portion, and all conclued that 10.000 pound is her dew, and sume ware of opinion that the whole twellve thousand was hers, but to avoide all disputes, if you will conferme it, she shall receive it as an absolute gift from you, considering how much this may be for your sister's advantage at this time, and how much it is desired by me I doe not dout but in this you will give a ready complyance to the great satisfaction of

" Yr. ever affecte mother.
" M. Northampton.

" I desire you to signe and seall this inclosed, and returne at the next post. I wright no newes, for I suppose the great los this nation has sustained by the death of our good King is by this time knowne in France."

With the letter is the following memorandum carefully made in George's handwriting :—

" A Copy of what I signed March 7 1685 for the augmentation of my sister's portion.

" I very well aprove of your Lp. augmentation of my Sisters portion to two thousand pounds more, which I humbly request you to procure and lay down, and I will allow it out of the Personall estate, which is in account betwixt your honour and myself, in witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seale the seventh day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and eighty five."

His sister, Lady Mary, whom this letter concerns, married in this year Charles Sackville, 6th Earl of Dorset, K.G. There is at Castle Ashby a Prayer Book,* with the inscription " Mary Compton " on the flyleaf, which must have belonged to her as a girl, and which is covered with a piece of embroidered silk, probably worked by her. She cannot have been more than nineteen at the date of her wedding,† and her husband was a widower of forty-eight. They had a son (born in January 1687),

* Bought by the 6th Marquis along with some letters at a sale at Sotheby's of Townshend papers.

† For George and Juliana were both older than she.

who was in 1720 created Duke of Dorset, and they had a daughter born April 28th, 1688.* There is at Knole a complete set of silver for her bedroom, including dressing-table, mirror, candle-sconces, etc., each displaying the Sackville and Compton Arms impaled.

On September 2nd, 1682, George was appointed Master of the King's Leash.† *Sport.* His grandfather and great grandfather had each held this appointment, and it seems strange that George should have been given it so early if his father had not enjoyed it throughout his life ; but there is no record of this. The Earl had no doubt been brought up to take an interest in hunting, and in 1686 he was employing a huntsman, a foot-huntsman and a boy. In the year 1695 we have the first record of hounds being kept at Castle Ashby. There is among the family papers ‡ an agreement between the Earl and a Mr. Valentine Budd dated December 4th, 1695, in which Budd agrees :—

" To keepe five & twenty couple of his Lo^pp^. Hounds for the ffox Chace in the most huntsman like manner, & to provide and keepe three good & suffitcent hunting horses for himselfe a Huntsman & boy, & with the said hounds and horses to meet & attend his Lo^pp^. in any County or place w^ch^. his Lo^pp^. shall order, and appoint at his the said Mr. Buds own proper cost & charges. And he will make good any damage w^ch^. the said Hounds shall doe to any person, & shall not give away or exchange any of the said hounds or reward any Bitches w^th^out the consent of the said Earle. And shall and will breed such a number of Whelps yearly as shall be required by the said Earle. And attend his Lo^pp^. in Buck hunting during the season.

" In consideration of w^ch^. the said Earle doth promise & agree to pay to the said Mr. Bud yearely the sum of two hundred pounds. . . . . And shall allow to the said Mr. Bud three months grass yearely for his said three horses."

It is not quite clear from the above what constituted the " buck hunting," but it seems probable that the Earl had a second pack of hounds for hunting deer in the Chace. On March 14th, 1698, Budd writes to the Earl's steward in London :—

" Pray will you aquaint my Lord that the hounds are all very well, and that on thursday last I found a fox at Plumten wood which made a very good chase, and we killed him at Stowe wood ; and I did desire to have hunted againe on Satterday, but the weather, proveing very bad we ware forsed home againe, and tomorrow I am to meet a great dell of company at the same plase againe if the wether will give us leave ; the Hounds which ware bit doe continue very well as yet and I hope they will stand which is All from your

" Humble Sarvant
" Vall Budd.

" Pray my servis to all our frinds."

* F.D. 1091. † F.D. 978. ‡ F.D. 1084/33.

In the following month Budd was apparently blamed for turning his horses into the Chace too early in the year, and he excuses himself by saying that "all hunting horses are taken up againe from grase in the middle of July," and he will not therefore get his three months grazing unless he turns them out early. He also reports that

"I have got all the Whelps out of Worrick Shier, but the number faleth very short for theare is but five left and fore of them are very fine ones and doe enter very well. I dare not medell with any from Yardley as yet for they have bin all bit with mad doges. So wishing you a Good Jorny into the Contery. I rest your Sarvant to command.

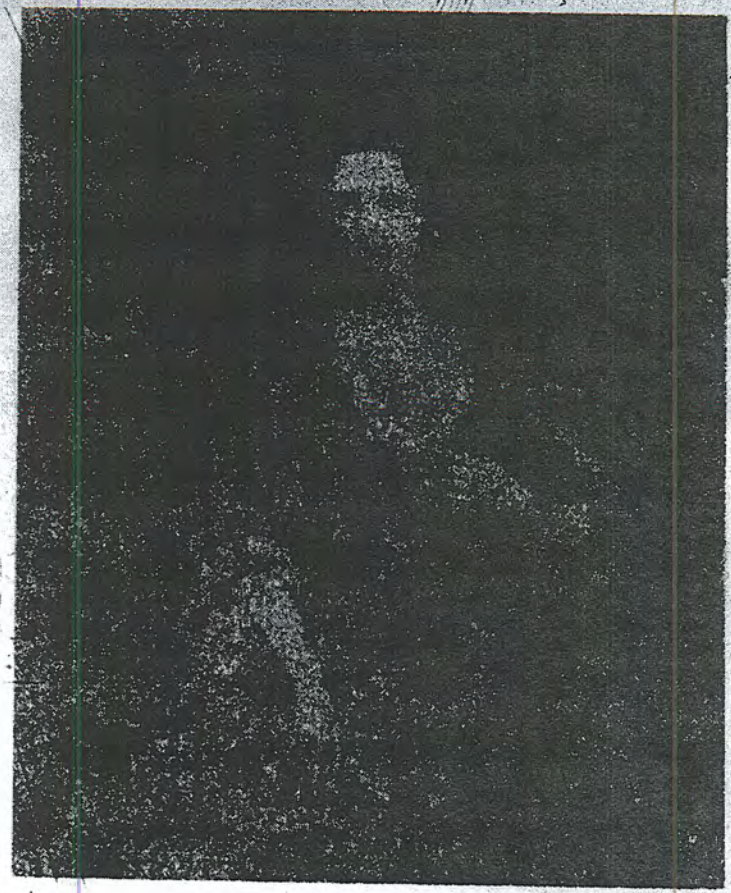
"V. BUDD."

In 1686 the Earl married Jane, youngest daughter of Sir Stephen Fox, Knight, by whom he had four sons and six daughters. Their happy married life ended after thirty-five years with her death on July 10th, 1721.* There is a pair of portraits of them at Ashby, in which they appear bursting with good health and spirits out of rather tight clothes.

There is also a portrait of Jane's father at Ashby; he looks a prosperous, middle-aged man, with the full wig of the date, and is seated, in a brown suit with a white cravat. Sir Stephen was born in 1625, and after the Battle of Worcester he fled to France, and regulated Prince Charles's household with "honesty, discretion, industry, modesty and prudence." By this "discretion" he is said to have amassed a fortune by doing rather discreditable work for his Royal master. On the Restoration he was made Clerk of the Green Cloth and Paymaster-General, and the latter lucrative office he somehow contrived to retain first under James II and then under William. With advancing years he was seized with the desire to do something for veteran soldiers in their old age, perhaps as a sop to a guilty conscience, and he founded Chelsea Hospital, one of the most notable of Wren's masterpieces. He died in 1716. There are at Ashby two duplicate three-quarter length portraits of Lady Fox, Jane's mother. One is over the stairs in the men-servants' quarters; the other, which hangs in the Armoury, was sent to Lord Northampton by Lord Holland in 1873 with a letter in which he said, "As she is you ancestress and not mine, and uncommonly ugly, I send her to you"! There is also a picture of Charles Fox, Jane's brother, hanging next his father; he is sitting, in a drab coat and lace cuffs and cravat. He was born in 1659, was made Paymaster-General of the Forces (? jointly with his father) at the age of twenty-five, and died before his father in 1713.

After the first Lady Fox's death, it is said, Jane, Lady Northampton, kept a sharp eye on her father to prevent his marrying again. But in this she was thwarted.

* Collins.



PORTRAIT OF JANE (FOX) WIFE OF 4TH EARL OF NORTHAMPTON.
(FROM THE PAINTING AT CASTLE ASHBY).

When she came down to breakfast at Ashby one morning, with a lady companion whom she used very much to snub, she found a letter addressed to "Lady Fox." "Who is Lady Fox, I should like to know?" asked Lady Northampton with indignation. "I am Lady Fox," replied the humble companion, to her step-daughter's surprise, and she was subsequently the mother of two sons, one of whom became Lord Holland and the other Lord Ilchester.*

Evelyn paid an afternoon call on the Northamptons at Castle Ashby in August 1688. He drove over with the Countess of Sunderland, with whom he was staying at Althorp, and her daughter, Lady Arran. He thus describes his visit :—†

"My lady carried us to see Lord Northampton's seat, a very strong large house, built with stone, not altogether modern. They were enlarging the garden, in which was nothing extraordinary, except the iron gate opening into the Park, w^ch indeede was very good work, wrought in flowers, painted with blue and gilded. There is a noble walke of elmes towards the front of the house, by the bowling greene. I was not in any roome of the house beaides a lobby looking into the garden, where my Lord and his new Countesse (S^r. Ste. Fox's daughter, whom I had knowne from a child) entertain'd the Countesse and her daughter the Countesse of Arran (newly married to the son of the Duke of Hamilton) with so little good grace, and so dully, that our visite was very short, so we return'd to Althorp, 12 miles distant."

The lobby in which they sat was probably the loggia which has already been described, and which three years later was enclosed as rooms, which now form the three drawing-rooms. Evelyn evidently did not enjoy his call, and perhaps the Northamptons did not do so either; as George was only twenty-four and Jane probably younger, they are not likely to have had much in common with Evelyn.

Their household.

We have a list of the household kept by George and Jane in this year, together with their names and the wages paid to each :—‡

Coachmen.	Tho: Perte	£9.
	Robert Strutton	£5.
Postillion.	Willm. Edwards	Joined establishment since Lady-day.
Footmen.	Patrick Clark	£5.
	Tho: Evens	£5.
	Ben: Exall	£5.
	Henry Powell	£4 16s.
	Hanthorn	£1 10s.
Porter.	Robert Ball	£5 8s.

* F.D. 1340, Vol. XII. Lady Alwyne's notes. † Evelyn's "Diary," Vol. I. p. 652.

‡ F.D. 1202. The wages shown above have, to facilitate comparison, all been altered to the total paid to each annually. The total of wages for the year amounts to £392 14s.

N.B.—Another list of wages in 1721 is F.D. 1335.

Butler.	Tho: Catterton	£10.
Baker.	Wm. Hulett	£8.
Groom of Chambers.	Mr. Fisher	£15.
Cook.	Mr. Spurll	£25.
Scullion.	Wm. Randall	£4.
Women Servants.	Mrs. Mary Beyen (My Lady's Chambermaid.)	£6.
	1 Housemaid	£5.
	1 Nursery-maid	£5.
	2 Laundry-maids	£5 each.
	1 Kitchen-maid	£5.
	Mrs. Haral (My Lady's woman.)	£20.
	Mrs. Kirby (Housekeeper.)	£10.
	Mrs. Roberts (My Lady Betty's nurse.)	£20.
Chaplain.	Mr. Whitfield	£30.
Gent: Horse	Mr. Snowe	£30.
My Ld's Gent.	Mr. Palmer	£15.
Cl: Kitchin.	Mr. Wenman	£20.
Accomptant.	Mr. Paske	£30.
Grooms.	1 Groom at	£7.
	2 ditto at	£6 each.
	1 boy at	£1 10s.

Paid these wages following at Ashby.

Ashby		
Housekeeper.	Mrs. Jeffery's	£8.
Housemaid.	Sarah Crane	£5.
Dayry-maid.	Hannah Gridgfield	£5.
Poultrey woman.	Margarett Hallum	£5.
Gardeners.	James Glasford	£20.
	Wm. Bates	£7.
Huntsman.	Tho: Gilloway	£8.
Foot Huntsman.	Wm. Davys	£4.
	One boy	£1 10s.

George and Jane's ten children were born to them as follows :—*

James, born May 2nd, 1687, succeeded his father as 5th Earl.

Lady Elizabeth (Betty), born March 30th, 1688, lived with her parents † till her father's death, and then probably with her step-mother at Northampton House in Bloomsbury Square. Wherever they were, the four unmarried sisters probably lived together. She died unmarried in 1743, and was buried at Compton.

Lady Mary, born April 14th, 1689, married in April 1709, William Gore of Tring Park, at one time M.P. for St. Alban's. She died at Tring in 1737.

George, born 1692 (?), succeeded his brother as 6th Earl.

Lady Jane was born September 1693. Until her father's death she and her other three unmarried sisters lived with him. From August 26th to November 7th, 1724, Jane and Anne went for a holiday to Bath. They slept nights on the way at Banbury, Burford, Cirencester, Dead Martin, and we have Jane's account of her expenses "at the Bath": ten weeks' housekeeping £20; travelling £32; £10 each for pocket money; lodging £15; three servants' tips 3 guineas; and 1 guinea given at the Pump.* After her father's death she lived with her step-mother in London. She died unmarried on May 8th, 1749, and was buried at Compton.

Stephen, born probably in 1694, died young.

Lady Anne, was born shortly before June 20th, 1696.† She married on October 16th, 1729, Sir John Rushout, Bart., brother of her father's second wife. A daughter was born in Bloomsbury Square in December 1730, ‡ and their son John became the first Lord Northwick. Lady Rushout died in December 1766.

Lady Penelope (Pen) was born on January 16th, 1697.§ She probably spent the first thirty years of her life at Ashby. She and her sister Margaret worked the embroidery covering the walls of King William's Room, but Pen died before its completion in 1772, when, according to an inscribed board left behind the hangings, it was presented to their nephew, the 8th Earl, by Margaret, the survivor of the two sisters. She died in January 1763, and was buried at Compton.

Charles was born on January 30th, 1698. A chapter below is devoted to his life and that of his family. His two sons became in turn 7th and 8th Earls of Northampton.

Lady Margaret was born in 1704. Judging by the size of her work, she must have spent most of her life at Ashby embroidering with Pen. When in 1774 the contents of Castle Ashby house were sold to pay its owner's debts, Margaret bought some pieces of furniture with her own money, in order to keep them where she had known them so long. Her last years were lived alone in her house at Richmond, where we shall see her later in this

* Most of these particulars, where not otherwise stated, are taken from the Pedigree F.D. 1081; or from Collins.

† In 1714, 2s. was "paid a Tailer for mending ye Hangings in my Lady Bettyes Chamber" at Compton.

* F.D. 1189. † F.D. 1010. ‡ F.D. 1112. § F.D. 1094.

narrative.* But she evidently moved in fashionable society in her old age. Horace Walpole mentions meeting her at balls and dinner-parties between the years 1776 and 1781, and she appears to have been a frequent guest at Princess Amelie's house. Whenever he met her, she seems to have provided Walpole with gossip worth retailing in his letters, so even at her advanced age she by no means lived only on reminiscences of the past. She died in 1786, at the age of eighty-two, and was buried at Compton on June 1st.†

rtraits their ldren.

There are many portraits of these children. To begin with, at Compton, in the Queen Anne passage, there are four pictures, three of them groups of children, and the fourth a portrait of a young lady. Lady Alwyne thought this last was Margaret, though it is said she declared she was too ugly to be painted. As all the four pictures were painted at the same time, in about 1700, Margaret would not have been born, and the picture must be of one of the elder sisters. On the Grand Staircase at Ashby is a portrait of the eldest boy, James, in the same fancy dress as he wears in one of the above group pictures. Again, there are portraits of all the sisters except Margaret, when they were just grown up, about the year 1714, in the Entrance Hall at Ashby. That of Lady Mary is signed with a monogram G K intertwined, that of Godfrey Kneller (who can surely hardly yet have developed his great gifts), and in view of their similarity it is probable that the other four are by the same artist or his school. Though their father evidently greatly admired his daughters, it is also evident that the world in general did not do so. Whether it was because of their looks, or whether because they inherited the dullness that Evelyn noticed in their mother, four of them never married, and of the other two one not till she was thirty-three, and then an elderly widower.

Of the two sons, George and Charles, there is a pair of portraits as young dandies in the Drawing Room at Ashby. They are painted in identical clothes and coiffure, except for the colour of their coats, and might easily be taken for twins, though there was five years between them in age. A curious fashion in the dress of the time (about 1717) is illustrated; both brothers have the ends of their lace cravats pulled through a button-hole of their coats. Another picture, hanging on the West Stairs, is said to be of George; it is a three-quarter length of a very weedy-looking boy in a blue coat; and we certainly owe George an apology for leaving his name on it without any better evidence.

esidences London.

On succeeding his father the Earl had inherited Salisbury House in the Strand, where his grandfather had at one time lived, though his father seems to have lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Correspondence‡ shows that when his uncle the Bishop came down to Ashby on December 21st, 1686, he was going to discuss with George

* See page 205. † Compton Church Register. ‡ F.D. 1093.

the convenience of Salisbury House as a residence, and the desirability of buying another. On March 14th, 1688, he removed to his new house, "Northampton House," in Bloomsbury Square, the corner house near Russell Street.* His letters were often addressed to "Southampton Square," which was its alternative name. This remained his London house till his death, and was then left to his widow. Meanwhile Canonbury House was never lived in by the family after the Restoration.

The Earl on his estates.

After his marriage in the summer of 1686, George's mother, and his brother, Spencer, who was now sixteen, must have left Ashby, and probably lived in London. From August 2nd till September 23rd, 1686, Sir Stephen and Lady Fox stayed at Castle Ashby† with their daughter and son-in-law, and from now onwards Sir Stephen's name is continually mentioned in estate affairs, and George evidently valued his opinion as that of a man of experience in business. This is the earliest year of which the estate accounts survive, and it is probably due to Sir Stephen that George has left us such a complete dossier of business letters, each with a copy of his own reply. The Foxes were evidently much pleased with Jane's new home, and Sir Stephen wrote in December urging George to spend more money on the upkeep of the place, and "make the garden an addition of satisfaction to the other pleasures of the great and good seat of Ashby."‡ Sir Stephen had been through the estate accounts for 1686, and he estimated that George would have a "clere income of £4000 from the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire estates, and £400 out of Somersetshire, besides interest of money which, after the garden is paid for, should remain £900 and the other work will not exceed £600."‡

They were not slow to follow his advice. In May 1687 they were "arranging to build a new Garden Wall"; § and in July 1688 they were "enlarging the garden."‖ This enlargement extended east from the house, beyond the Elizabethan garden in the direction of the present Park Pond; the line of its boundary wall is shown on the map of 1760 reproduced opposite page 188, and at the centre of its end furthest from the house was the new "iron gate opening into the park," which Evelyn thought was "indeed very good work, wrought in flowers, painted with blue and gilded." In spring every year, before the grass begins to grow, it is easy to trace the line of the wall across the avenue just beyond the path. It encloses where before the Great War stood apple and walnut trees which were the remains of an orchard in the north-east corner. Nearly all these trees have fallen quite recently, and the present walnuts are newly planted.

The Almshouses at Ashby.

Then in May 1689 they got a licence¶ from the Bishop of Peterborough to take

* F.D. 1095. This house was purchased for £4500 from Sir John Brownlow on February 9th, 1687 (see F.D. 1111 f).
† F.D. 1253. ‡ F.D. 1093. § F.D. 1095.
‖ Evelyn's "Diary." ¶ F.D. 1247.

into my Lord's garden part of the churchyard at Ashby, laying as much ground to the churchyard. This was to enable them to carry out a project of building a greenhouse on the south side of the churchyard, which was begun in 1695 and of which we have detailed measurements.* The site was partly covered by almshouses, and these had to be cleared away and the present ones erected in the village. A tattered document † dated July 1699 tells the following story to justify the alteration :—

"Whereas there was a long stone building near the South side of Ashby Church, supposed to be designed for an Hospital or Alms house, tho' never endow'd nor any Rules set for admitting or governing of . . . . . People of any . . . . .; insomuch that it became a Receptacle for such idle persons as intruded there and a Harbour for strumpets with th. . . . . woodstealers and vagabonds who can give no good account of themselves ; so that the neighbourhood justly suspect that pilferings and thefts might be practised by such ungoverned people ; and the . . . . . was nearest to it being particularly annoyed thereby ; it seemed necessary to remove those few inhabitants out of the Building. But that they nor any other Poor People (might not suffer, I, George, Earl) of Northampton thought fit (to erect an Almes) House in a much better place within the village of Ashby ; which being now finished and laid for six poor people, I do Direct that it be filled and governed by the Rules & Orders following,

1. That they be persons Faln into Decay and past Lab(our).
2. That they be chosen chiefly out of the parish of Ashby.
3. That none be admitted without my particular . . . .
4. That these six places be always kept full.
5. That these six poor go constantly to Church on Sundays & (Christmas ?).
6. That they live (quietly ?) together upon pain of Expulsion without Quarrelling or Scolding.
7. That each of these six poor be paid monthly in money five shillings, and the 1st Payment to begin this month. July 1699."

A second licence, making a further adjustment of churchyard land, was obtained in April 1702, but this was probably to improve the shape of the new kitchen garden they were then planning to make, where now is the Italian Garden. On the last day of the Foxes stay the Bishop of London arrived. He had recently been suspended from his duties, and, with five weeks interval, he now stayed at Ashby till February 9th of the following year. There can be no doubt that such an enthusiastic gardener as the Bishop had a great influence on his nephew's schemes.

In January 1687 was born George's nephew, Lord Buckhurst. George was a godfather, but being at Ashby he asked his first cousin, Mr. H. Cholmeley, to represent him at the christening, and subsequently heard from him that he had

* F.D. 1096. The piers of its southern side still remain.
† F.D. 1326. The blanks are illegible.

"afterwards performed all you should have done, for I kissed the Godmother (George's mother), the midwife and nurse, and once or twice the young lord." *

Financial embarrassments.

In 1688 George seems to have been very short of money. Mr. George Paske, who as Accountant or Secretary travelled everywhere with the Earl, repeatedly makes piteous appeals to Mr. Middleton, the agent in Warwickshire, to hasten in the rents. On the day of their moving into "Northampton House," in Bloomsbury Square, he says : "You cantt but be sensible of our extraordinary disbursements at present, and therefore will I hope make what return you can." † On April 11th "My Lord to Ashby to-morrow (from London where Betty had just been born), where I suppose he will divert himself for a fortnight." He makes his usual request for money to pay bills, and cautions him not to send bad money, "especially if crackt, they being more scrupulous" in London than in the country. It is difficult for us to imagine the inconvenience of having no banking account or cheque-book, and a very limited postal service. At Ashby in 1699 £2 was paid to Mr. Houghton in consideration of the Post coming through Castle Ashby,‡ but barrels of drink ordered from London in April 1721 were delivered at the "Coach and Horses" at Horton, where a wagon from Ashby met them.§ The annual cost of money bags too was quite considerable. In Warwickshire in 1696 the shortage of coin seems to have become acute. The Justices made a report to the Earl of the unemployment and distress due to it ; and the following is extracted from a letter to him in May from Mr. Henry Parker at Honington :—

"My Lord. The Country in these parts are in great distress that money will not pass ; there are frequent tumults in the markets ; the poor not employed ; no trade, so the markets not supplied with korn. We have accounts that in severall places new money is sent down to exchange for other money, to appease the people. Since the 4th of May, if the money is the least clipt, no tradesmen or countrymen will take any for corne ; the poor for want of work and bread are in a miserable condition. If your Lordship pleases to use your interest that we may have but £1000 or less, for the Corporations and Towns in these parts, 'twill be a particular kindness to the country, and a particular service to your Lordship for the tenants will pay their money. . . . ." ‖

The tradesmen's bills in London in 1688 became so critical that for fear of the creditors the departure of the household to Ashby had to be continually postponed from May until they could be paid at the end of July. Though we do not know the details of the bills, we can guess the amount of entertaining they did in London from a list we have,¶ entitled "An accompt of goods that was sent to London from Castle Ashby." Some of the items of 1689 follow : "102 chickens £1.14.0 : 23 Pullets 17/6 ; 1600 eggs £2 : 6 Quailes 4/- : 2 flitches of bacon, one weight 46 lbs. and

* F.D. 1108. † F.D. 1091.
‡ In 1920 a Mr. Houghton was doing "carrier" into Northampton for the village.
§ F.D. 1105. ‖ F.D. 1094. ¶ F.D. 1014.

the other 48 lbs—£1.19.2 : 62 lbs of Butter at 5d. £1.5.10 : 2 butter pots at 5*d*. 10*d*." In 1690 : 2 pheasants (in month of May) : 2400 eggs : 158 Capons and Pullets : 109 Chickens : 7 Turkeys : 15 Pigeons : 21 Rabbits : 3 wild goose : 3 wild ducks : 6 goose : " and so on. Wheat too was bought as a luxury for my Lord's use, " 9½ qrs for £10.16.0."

In April 1693 George wished to let all land in hand in Warwickshire, " seeing how little taking in cattle pays, so that it may be ploughed next year." * At the end of May he had spent a week at Compton, and he writes reporting to Sir Stephen Fox that he suspects the Steward, Middleton, of dishonesty in keeping land unlet, and " joicing " his own stock on it to the exclusion of everyone else's.† The result of this suspicion is that Mr. Henry Parker ‡ is asked as a friend to keep an eye on the Warwickshire property.* And in the following January Middleton is succeeded by Maunder; and Mr. Parker (for his services, perhaps) makes so bold as to ask leave to draw the pools at Compton for ten or twelve carp to stock his own pool.* It is interesting to note that in 1693 Henry Styles was tenant of the Mill below the Long Pond at Compton; the family have been the local millers ever since, though when the water-mill was abolished about 1860 they moved to their present home in Tysoe, and made use only of the windmill, and have now degenerated even to using an oil engine. Among the tenants at that time appear the names also of Middleton and Tarver.

Structural alterations at Ashby.

It may have been as a result also of the visits of the Bishop and the Foxes that there occurred to the 4th Earl at about this time the idea of filling in the loggia in the east front of Castle Ashby overlooking the garden. It was probably the " lobby " in which Evelyn was received by them in 1688, and the alteration, which was carried out in 1691, is described § as : " Alteration of the lower Apartment next the Garden." It included three marble chimney pieces, five sash windows and 130 plate glasses; also slabs of marble to match the chimney-pieces " for windows." Deal boards had been brought from Lynn to Bedford by water; and the rest was fetched from London by " my Lord's Wagon." The total cost of material and transport was £629 8*s*. 1*d*. Two of the chimney-pieces are described : " one black and yellow and the other white veined " ; the former is that still in the North Drawing-Room. On July 7th, 1693, the Bishop again stayed at Ashby, after a tour of ten days from London to Hereford and other places; and George and Jane had his sisters, the Ladies Anne Cholmley and Penelope Nicholas, to meet him.† These ladies, who both had places and gardens of their own, must have been most interested in their young nephew's alterations and schemes.

The Revolution of 1688.

Let us now describe the troublous political times after the death of Charles II, and the parts played by the Earl, and still more by his uncle the Bishop, in the Revolution of 1688. Charles II died in February 1685, and five daily bulletins of

* F.D. 1094. † F.D. 1093. ‡ Who lived at Honington.
§ F.D. 1198.—N.B. The windows did not reach to floor level till 1805. See page 227 below.

PORTRAIT OF HENRY COMPTON, LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.
(FROM THE PAINTING AT CASTLE ASHBY).

his illness and death, addressed to Lords Lieutenant by the Privy Council, are at Ashby, along with instructions as to precautions against riots, etc.* His brother James II, who succeeded him, was universally suspected of wishing to subject the Church and country to Roman Catholicism; and in order to dispel this suspicion James had to act discreetly. Lord Lieutenants such as Lord Northampton were continued in their offices; and in June, when news first came of Monmouth's rebellion, they were instructed by the Privy Council to raise the militia and arrest all suspicious persons, together with their arms and horses.* In July, two days after the news of Monmouth's defeat at Bridgewater, the militia was to be discharged, and suspected persons were (16th) to be released.* But unfortunately James was enraged by this rebellion, which was backed by all the Dissenters. Encouraged by Parliamentary support in suppressing it, he outraged public opinion by the barbarity of his retaliation, and during 1686 and 1687 he flouted the laws of the country by packing with Roman Catholics, first the army, and then the Church. In doing the first he even resorted to shipping large numbers of ignorant Catholic peasants over from Ireland; in doing the latter, he revived the Court of High Commission, turned Magdalen College, Oxford, into a Catholic seminary, and ordered all the clergy to read from their pulpits his illegal Declaration of Indulgence. On December 5th, 1687, George was removed from the Lord Lieutenancy of Warwickshire for refusing to carry out his instructions for enforcing the repeal of the laws against Catholics.†

Bishop Henry Compton's Suspension.

Henry, Bishop of London, had meanwhile been dismissed from the Privy Council immediately on James's accession,‡ and on December 16th, 1685, had been removed from being Dean of the Chapel Royal. On June 14th, 1686, the King sent him a letter, requiring him immediately to suspend a certain Dr. Sharp for preaching against conversion to the Roman Church. Compton four days later replied to the principal Secretary of State, that, though he would always obey the King in commands he could perform with safe conscience, he was obliged in this case to proceed according to law, and it was therefore impossible for him to comply with the King's commands. On August 3rd he received a summons to appear on the 9th before the new Ecclesiastical Commission for not having observed his Majesty's commands.§ In reply to this he applied for a copy of the Commission and also a copy of the charge, and, when these were refused him, he desired time to advise with counsel, which was given him till August 31st. On his appearance on this day he pleaded the illegality of the High Commission Court, and, when this plea was overruled, he pleaded that he had a right as a Bishop to be tried first before his Metropolitan. He then pleaded that the Act of Suspension was a judicial Act,

* F.D. 1091. † *Universal Magazine*, June 1740.

‡ The story related in the following pages has been taken from the *Universal Magazine*, June 1740, and from Macaulay's "History of England."

§ The lengthy narrative of the Proceedings before the High Commission is to be found in Brit. Mus. Add. MSS. 25899.

ıd could only be executed after hearing the two sides of the case. He also pleaded ıat he had complied with the King's letter in that he had showed that letter to Dr. harp, and advised him not to preach till he knew further His Majesty's pleasure. Notwithstanding his various pleas, he was suspended on September 6th "from the 'unction and Execution of his Episcopal Office" and from all "Ecclesiastical urisdiction during His Majesty's pleasure." But the court did not think fit to neddle with his revenues, because the lawyers advised them that to do so the case would have to be tried before the King's Bench, where the legality of their suspension would probably have been questioned.

It will be remembered that the religious education of the Princesses Mary and Anne when they were girls had been entrusted to the Bishop; and he had subsequently confirmed and married them both. During this trial the Princess of Orange wrote to the King, earnestly begging him to be gentle to the Bishop, who she could not think would offend willingly. She also wrote to the Bishop, expressing the great share she took in the trouble he was fallen into. The Prince of Orange wrote him a similar letter. King James replied to his daughter, reprimanding her for meddling in such matters.

Before the end of the year the Bishop made another stand against the King, as a Governor of the Charterhouse, into which institution the King tried to obtain the admission, as pensioner, of a Roman Catholic, contrary to the rules of the Hospital. The spirit of the Bishop is well illustrated by the following remarkable story:* "King James, discoursing with him on some tender point, was so little pleased with his answers, that he told him he talked more like a Colonel than a Bishop. To which he replied, that His Majesty did him honour in taking notice of his having formerly drawn his sword in defence of the constitution, and that he should do the same again if he lived to see it necessary." This threat he almost literally put into execution at the time of James's downfall.

When, as has been narrated above, the King ordered his Declaration of Indulgence to be read from every puplit, seven Bishops, headed by Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, protested in a petition to him. He immediately had them tried for seditious libel, and on June 30th they were acquitted by a jury. That same night an invitation to accept the throne was sent to William of Orange, in Holland; it was signed in cipher by two Tory leaders, by four Whigs, and by Henry Compton.

When the Prince of Orange made his Declaration of his reasons for assuming the Crown, he mentioned the Bishop's suspension as a flagrant piece of injustice; and as a result of this, on September 23rd, King James restored Compton to his Episcopal function. But the Bishop took no steps to resume his duties, or to thank the King for his restoration; and on October 3rd he waited upon the King, with the Archbishop of Canterbury and seven other Bishops, when they suggested to His Majesty advice which they thought suitable to the political situation. But it was too late. On November 5th William landed at Torbay; and during the following week London was violently agitated. On Sunday the 11th a rumour was circulated that knives, gridirons and caldrons, intended for the torturing of heretics, were concealed in the monastery which had been established under the King's protection at Clerkenwell. Great crowds assembled round the building, and were only prevented from demolishing it by the arrival of military force. On December 17th William reached Westminster, and agreed to King James withdrawing to Rochester at once, whence he fled to Paris for protection. In February 1689 both Whigs and Tories came to a settlement without bloodshed, by which William and Mary were to be crowned jointly and the executive power was to be allowed to William.

* Granger's "Biographical History of England," Vol. IV. p. 283.

Meanwhile on November 25th, "when the news came to London* of Prince George of Denmark's having joined the Prince of Orange (twenty days after the latter's landing), the Princess (Anne) was so struck with apprehensions of the King's displeasure, and of the ill effects it might have, that she said to the Lady Churchill, that she could not bear the thoughts of it, and would leap out at a window, rather than venture on it. The Bishop of London was then lodged very secretly in Suffolk Street; so the Lady Churchill, who knew where he was, went to him, and concerted with him the method of the Princess's withdrawing from the Court. The Princess went sooner to bed than ordinary; and about midnight she went down the back stairs from her closet, attended only by the Lady Churchill, in such haste that they carried nothing with them. They were waited for by the Bishop of London, who carried them to his nephew, the Earl of Dorset's, whose Lady furnished them with everything. And so they went northward as far as Northampton, the Bishop preceding the Princess's carriage in a buff coat and jack boots, armed with sword and pistols. At Northampton that Earl (of Northampton) attended on them with all respect, and quickly brought a body of horse to serve for a guard to the Princess. And in a little while a small army was formed about her, who chose to be commanded by the Bishop of London, "of which he too easily accepted."† Their escape terminated at Nottingham, where the Princess gained the protection of an insurgent army. It seems very likely that the 4th Earl welcomed her at Castle Ashby, and not in Northampton town.

Princess Anne's escape from Court.

On December 15th, after the flight of James II, the Princess Anne proceeded to Oxford to meet her husband, and made a splendid entrance into the city. The Earl of Northampton, with 500 horse, led the van; Her Royal Highness was preceded by the Bishop of London at the head of a noble troop of gentlemen, his Lordship riding in a purple cloak, martial habit, pistols before him, and his sword drawn, and

Entry into Oxford.

* The story of this escape is quoted from Bishop Burnet.
† This conduct is said to have given grave offence to rigid churchmen.

his cornet had the inscription in golden letters on his standard, "Nolumus Leges Angliae Mutari." * The Earl's "500 Horse" were probably the Warwickshire Mounted Militia, for an unsigned letter from Nottingham at this time informs the 4th Earl that the Princess Anne will pass through Warwickshire, and desires him raise the Militia to protect her.†

The Bishop's prominence in the Church.

On December 21st the Bishop waited on the Prince of Orange at the head of his clergy, and even attended by some of the Dissenting ministers; and thanked the Prince "for his most hazardous undertaking, for their deliverance, and the preservation of the Protestant religion, with the ancient laws and liberties of this nation." On the 30th he administered Holy Communion in the Royal Chapel to Prince William; and in the debate in the House of Lords on January 29th, 1689, "Whether the throne, being vacant, ought to be filled up by a Regent, or a King?" he was one of the two Bishops who voted for the King. On February 14th he was reappointed to the Privy Council, and remade Dean of the Chapel at Whitehall. On April 11th he was chosen by the King and Queen to perform the ceremony of their Coronation, assisted by the Archbishop of York. And in September he was empowered to act as Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Sancroft having refused to take the oath of allegiance, and having shut himself up at Lambeth.

During this summer he was constituted one of the Commissioners for reviewing the Liturgy, and worked with great zeal to reconcile the Dissenters to the Church. He was also President of the Convocation that met in November, and addressed it in Latin, appealing for religious tolerance between all religions, including the Romans. In the House of Lords also he strongly supported the Earl of Nottingham's Toleration and Comprehension Bills. But in spite of his efforts at moderation, the majority of the House of Commons were decided not to compromise in any way with the Dissenters.

His claims to the Primacy.

"During this summer of 1689, several high ecclesiastical dignities became vacant, and the King decided that whenever Sancroft should cease to hold the position of Archbishop of Canterbury, Tillotson would succeed to it, much to the latter's astonishment and sorrow, for his nature was quiet and unambitious and he was beginning to feel the infirmities of old age. The news caused cruel mortification to Compton, who not unnaturally conceived that his own claims were unrivalled. He had educated the Queen and her sister; and to the instruction which they had received from him might fairly be ascribed, at least in part, the firmness with which, in spite of the influence of their father, they had adhered to the established religion. Compton was, moreover, the only prelate who, during the late reign, had raised his voice in Parliament against the dispensing power, the only prelate who had been suspended by the High Commission, the only prelate who had signed the invitation to the Prince of Orange, the only prelate who had actually taken arms against

* Ellis's "Correspondence," 1827, Vol. IV. p. 177. † F.D. 1108.

Popery and arbitrary power, the only prelate, save one, who had voted against a Regency. Among the ecclesiastics of the Province of Canterbury who had taken the oaths, he was highest in rank. That the Government should put over his head a priest of his own diocese, who was the son of a Yorkshire clothier, and who was distinguished only by abilities and virtues, was provoking; and Compton, although not a badhearted man, was provoked. He refused to take any part in Tillotson's consecration ceremony, and during the elections of 1695 it was probably because of this that he canvassed openly against the Government." * It is difficult to say what was the reason for his not getting the Primacy. It was said that his preaching was without much learning, for, according to Bishop Burney, "he had not gone through his studies with the exactness that was fitting." But, on the other hand, Dr. Whitfield says "He spoke with the affection and authority of a spiritual father, and in the power of the Spirit and primitive simplicity." The real reason is probably deeper; in spite of his popularity at Court, he seems to have made many enemies by his high-handedness. Dr. Gooch observes that "then was the time for the most artful management. Honesty and integrity will always stand in some men's way. The Bishop of London could neither be corrupted nor removed."

Missions and arbo culture.

At the end of 1689 he was appointed one of the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations for the settlement of English colonists in the North American continent; and he even declared his resolution of going over himself to settle the Christian Church in those plantations; but owing to lack of time his energies were restricted to sending over pastors, with whom he carried on a voluminous correspondence in his own hand. In addition to their pastoral duties, these missionaries were encouraged by Henry to send him home trees and shrubs likely to flourish in the British climate. In his garden at Fulham he got together the most extensive collection that had hitherto been seen in the British Isles, comprising probably some 400 new species, among which perhaps the most interesting of the American introductions were the spruces, red oaks, hickories, walnuts, magnolias, thorns, maples and the tulip tree.†

Influenc in Anne reign.

At the beginning of the year 1691, at his own charge, he attended King William to the famous Congress at the Hague, where the Grand Alliance with Holland against France was concluded. But for the remainder of William's reign he seems to have confined himself to diocesan duties. With the accession of Anne, however, in May 1702, he continued a member of the Privy Council, and gradually became all-influential at Court, though we read that he looked upon power only as an accidental attendant of his office, and not as an essential part of it. In 1702 he was a member of the Commission for the Union of England and Scotland. In 1704 he did much to introduce the "Act for the Augmentation of the maintenance of the poor Clergy, etc." He also worked to improve the

* Macaulay, "History of England." † Bean's "Hardy Trees and Shrubs."

opinion among foreign Protestant Churches of the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, as is shown by his correspondence with the University of Geneva. In 1709–10 he was one of the Lords who opposed the prosecution of Dr. Sacheverel; he declared him not guilty, and protested against the course taken in the action. In 1711, in the absence of Dr. Tennison, the Archbishop, he was again commissioned to preside over Convocation.*

His death. But the Bishop was getting an old man, and during his last few years suffered much pain from gout and stone. His bodily activity was also much handicapped by a heavy fall in his Palace at Fulham. But in spite of his pain, Dr. Gooch † tells us he was never heard to complain, and was "firm and constant, quiet and good-natured to the end." He died at Fulham on July 7th, 1713, in his eighty-first year. By his own directions, he was buried in Fulham Churchyard under the east window (on the 15th), and over his grave lies a handsome tomb, surrounded with iron rails, and bearing the Arms of Compton and of the Bishops of London impaled, and this short inscription, "H. LONDON. EI ME EN TO STAURO. MDCCXIII" ("Save in the cross," part of the verse, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.")

A biographer in 1770 says of the Bishop :—†

His piety and charity. "He was in all respects one of the best-bred men in his time; courteous and affable; not full of words, but very conversable, . . . always easy of access, and ready to do good offices. In his friendship he was constant, or rather inflexible. He was a man of the largest and most public spirit; and he liked nothing that looked narrow or stingy. He had no little, artful, selfish designs. He was never seen to be afraid, or concerned, at danger. In the midst of storms he himself was calm . . . a person of singular modesty and humility . . . of exemplary piety . . . his whole family began the day with the Litany, and ended it with prayer, apart from the public services in Church. He was most particularly eminent for his unbounded charity and beneficence . . . and had divers ancient people, men and women, whom he supported by constant annual pensions; and several children at school at his own cost; besides those whom he had sent on to the Universities. Most particularly generous was he to poor clergymen and their widows, but he also helped French refugees, and the Irish and Scotch during their persecution, as well as the poor of his parish, who attended every morning at his gate. He bequeathed his famous library in three equal parts to the Corporation of Colchester, St. Paul's Cathedral, and Sion College."

The 3rd Earl's public life after the Revolution. Meanwhile George, 3rd Earl, was also taking a part in the Revolution of 1689. On March 16th he was again made Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire; and three days earlier he had been elected Recorder of Northampton. The latter post was from that date held continuously by the Earls of Northampton down to the year

* Collins. † Quoted in *Universal Magazine*, June 1770.

1828—that is to say, for 139 years without interruption. The Recorder's chief duty seems to have been to provide annually a most lavish entertainment for the numerous members of the Corporation, while the Deputy Recorders did the work for which they were paid, and for which the Recorders were not. On September 16th, 1705, George appointed Knightley D'Anvers, Esq., to be Deputy Recorder;* and in July 1727 he made a further appointment.†

At the coronation of William and Mary, on April 11th, 1689, he carried the King's Sceptre and the Cross.

There is a large file of letters from the Privy Council to him as Lord Lieutenant during the years 1689–98. They give instructions as to calling out the Militia in case of French invasion; searching for seamen and watermen to be impressed into the Navy (though this can hardly have met with much success in such an inland county as Warwickshire); and compiling lists of Papists in the county. February to May, 1696, seems to have been a period of special emergency, there being rumours of an intended invasion by the French, and "a horrid and detestable conspiracy to assassinate and murder his Ma'ties Sacred Person."

There are also lists at different dates of Deputy Lieutenants and Justices, all of which contain names still prominent in the County.‡ One of 1697 here follows :—§

Deputy Lieutenants.

Sir William Boughton, Bt.	Sir Richard Verney, now Lord Willoughby.
Sir Charles Shuckburg, Bt.	Andrew Archer, Esq.
Sir John Clopton.	Henery Parker, Esq.

J.P's.

Rawlins.	Sir Thomas Wagstaffe.
Feilding.	Robert Somerville.
Charles Newsham.	Simon Biddolph.
Richard Newdigate, Jnr.	William Dugdale.
John Stratford.	William Colemore.
Wm. Palmer.	Robert Harvey.
Edward Bentley.	

Militia Officers.

John Williams.	Richard Lane.
John Combe.	Sir Wm. Underhill.
John Andrews.	Capt. Lucy.
Will. White.	John Appletree.

* F.D. 979. Evidently connected with two well-known Northamptonshire families.
† F.D. 980. ‡ F.D. 1088–90. § F.D. 1091.

There are also several curious reports made to him as Lord Lieutenant. One of April 5th, 1690, from Sir Charles Holt, of Aston Hall,* a Deputy Lieutenant for the County, states that two vagrant seamen have been arrested, one a Florentine and one a Fleming. They had come over from Holland to fight for William in Ireland, and from there had been evacuated sick to Chester; they had then apparently wandered into Warwickshire (perhaps trying to work their way back to Holland), and were now to be marched back to Ireland, which can hardly have satisfied them.† Another report says that on April 11th a mercer of Birmingham was found illegally exercising forty men in a military way with muskets, pikes, drum and colours; the man refused to be disarmed and his company shouted defiant acquiescence in his refusal.†

In July 1690 King William was returning from his Irish campaign, and passed through Warwickshire on his way to London. The Militia was raised for twelve days to arrest all Papists disaffected; and on the 29th George went over from Ashby to Coleshill, and, placing himself at the head of the three troops of Militia and the Gentlemen of Warwickshire, congratulated William on his happy return. On August 12th George disbanded the Militia from Ashby. From now onwards the Militia seems to have been called out for a few days annually. Their centres were at Stratford-on-Avon, Warwick and Coleshill; and each place seems to have been the Headquarters for one Troop of horse and two Troops of foot. They wore buff coats and blue cloaks.†

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George had occasional business, too, with the Mayor and Corporation of Northampton. In January 1690 the Mayor asks him to speak to his uncle the Bishop about a dispute in Northampton regarding the presentation to the living of All Saints.† In March 1693 the Mayor asked him to get the troops withdrawn from the town (where they were quartered) during the Assizes and Ladyday fair; the Earl speaks to the King, and replies that the three Companies of Foot shall be withdrawn till April 1st.† On the death, in February 1694, of Sir Thomas Samuell, M.P. for Northampton Borough, George wrote to the Mayor, recommending Sir Justinian Isham, and earnestly desired the Mayor's assistance in promoting his interest; he adds a postscript, "Pray communicate this to the Aldermen and the rest of the Corporation." The day before he had absent-mindedly promised his support to Mr. Christopher Montague, and he now had to write to him explaining that he had remembered his previous promise to Sir Justinian, "but at any other time I hope to be at liberty to serve you." The Corporation write again that Mr. Montague had agreed not to stand, for which they have thanked him.†

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eign.

On Queen Anne's accession the Earl was sworn of the Privy Council, and continued in the appointment of Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire. In 1712 he was made Constable of the Tower of London and Lord Lieutenant of the Hamlets of

* Now in the centre of Birmingham. † F.D. 1091.

the Tower.* It will be remembered that his father too had held these two offices, and George may have used in his turn the Staff of Office now at Ashby.

George I's reign.

On George I's accession in August 1714 he continued in all the above appointments.* But in 1717 he resigned the two connected with the Tower.

King William and the Queen at Ashby.

In October 1695 King William and his Queen stayed at Castle Ashby in the course of one of their Progresses, during which they also visited Althorp and Burleigh. The visit must have been a great occasion for everyone on the estate; and we read that for a week before their arrival Thomas Wooden and forty other workmen, twenty of whom had been taken on specially, were employed in "doing several things in the house and yard in order to the King's coming."† There are only two facts we know about this visit. One is that, instead of dining in the Big Hall, which would have been the most convenient and usual place, they banqueted in the large Parlour, which has ever since been known as King William's Dining-Room.‡ It may be that the Hall was too draughty at the end of October. The other incident of this visit which had important results was the advice the King gave George about improving his country seat. Macaulay says: "William was fond of architecture and of gardening; and his nobles could not flatter him more than by asking his opinion about the improvement of their country seats." He was accustomed in Holland to long, straight vistas or avenues running up to big houses; not only did it add to the importance of the architecture of a house when seen from a distance, but it also greatly added to the pleasantness of the outlook from its windows. George no doubt thought it politic to follow this advice, as did many others of the nobility at this date; but he must also have been bitten by the idea, for he carried it to such great lengths. He immediately set to work to plant four large avenues north, south, east and west from the Castle, of which two still remain.

Avenue planting.

The south avenue started from a semicircle of limes, which can be easily traced at the present day; and this idea must have been directly copied from its contemporary at Hampton Court Palace. The Estate accounts show that the planting began in the autumn after the King's visit:— §

1696.	November 14th.	7 men "digging holes for trees, in Church Croft."
	21st.	Ditto.
	28th.	12 men "digging holes and taking up trees to plant them."
	December 5th.	7 men "planting and filling up holes."
1697.	November 13th to 20th.	8 men "digging holes for trees."
	December 18th.	13 men "planting lymes and elms and filling in some holes of trees that had been planted last year."

* F.D. 1111 g. † F.D. 1008. ‡ See the Inventory of 1705 (F.D. 1070). § F.D. 1010.

1698.	December 17th to January 7th, 1699.	10 men "digging holes for the new avenue in Chadston Ground."
1699.	March 4th.	11 men "making ready of holes to plant the lymes."
	11th.	11 men "planting of lymes."
	18th.	10 men "staking of lymes."
	June 3rd.	1 man "laying dung about trees in the avenue."
	October 14th to 28th.	12 men "digging of holes for the great avenue." Labourers making new plantation.
1700.	February 17th to 24th.	9 men "preparing the holes for planting the lymes."
	March 2nd.	9 men "planting the lymes."

After this the work seems to have been stopped for a while, but Lord Northampton was himself at Ashby throughout the years 1705–6,* and in May 1705 we find four men employed for a fortnight "scouring ditches at the ovall † in the great avenue and mulching the lyme trees there"; and on November 30th, 1706, and up to January 25th, 1707, eleven men "planting trees in Parke." In the spring of 1709 we find again, from January 22nd to March 17th, three men employed in "taking up elms in the riding to plant," and "digging holes to plant trees." In 1710–11, ten men were employed from December 2nd to February 10th, "digging round trees in great avenue." In 1711, March 10th to April 21st, "filling carts with earth and making seats round the trees in the great avenue." In 1715, October 29th, "helping to take up and plant trees in the park and great avenue." Then in December 1715 a great piece of work was begun which employed the men and the carts for the whole of that and the following winter, and part of the winters of 1718 and 1719, viz., the "levelling of the ground before the house and in the great avenue." In its natural state the ground sloped gently from west to east, so a portion of the centre of the avenue was hollowed out and the soil heaped up on the eastern side in a bank about 8 feet high and about half a mile long, in order that the trees on each side might stand on the same level, the hollow centre also adding greatly to their effect. For this purpose there was continual "filling carts with earth and turfing the slopes in the avenue." This portion of the avenue had to be replanted, and accordingly in November 1721 we find in the Accounts six men employed for several weeks "filling carts and taking up trees," and in December and February 1722 "planting trees." The summer following one man was employed for several months "watering." Then again from 1718 to 1721 incessant levelling was done in the Parke and Little Park, north and east of the Castle, and in the autumn of

* F.D. 1100.

† The oval was round the intersection of the Avenue with the Yardley-Chadston Road, and consisted of upright stones connected by chains. See the 1760 Map (F.D. 1348) reproduced opposite page 188.

1718 twenty men were "levelling and making a new Pond in the Park." Some futher planting was done in the three following years, the last entry being on January 16th, 1725, when we may consider that the work of planting the avenues at Castle Ashby was completed. From the time when it was begun in 1696 it had been nearly thirty years in progress.

The result is well seen in the map of 1760 (reproduced opposite page 188), which shows the four great avenues extending north, south, east and west, with the house as a centre. The South Avenue, which reached to the Castle Ashby parish boundary near the top of the hill, had four rows of trees on each side, of which the two outer rows have almost entirely disappeared. The inner rows consisted of limes and elms alternately, and, though in the nineteenth century many of the limes were cut out, they are now being replaced. Where the avenue crosses the Yardley-Chadstone road there was a ring of stone posts connected by chains which must be the "ovall" referred to in the above extracts.

Ponds and gardens.

In addition to the avenues, the Earl did much other planting, and much enlargement of streams into ornamental ponds. In 1701 men were employed making "a new Pond in Little Park," * which is, I think, the one shown on the 1760 map as being of an ornamental shape, and as extending the width of the East Avenue.†

‡1704.	April and May.	Labourers "levelling the Garden."
	December 16th and 23rd.	"Levelling walks cut through the wood in the Greenhouse Garden."
1705.	April 28th.	"Digging gravel for the new garden."
1706.	April 6th.	"15 men wheeling in sand and gravell into my Lady's new garden."
	27th.	"4 men building a wall by the ice-house."
	May 4th.	"3 men making two seats for the bottom of the garden . . . and setting down posts for a place in the garden for Orange trees."
1708.	May 21st to June 4th.	"Men sawing out timber for the Arbors and getting ready the seats."
	October 2nd to November 20th.	"Men making a new bowling green."
1709.	October to March, 1710.	"Men levelling in the forecourt before the house, and in the new Kitchen Garden."
1710.	September.	"Setting down rails in the forecourt." §

It is difficult to say where some of the above work was done. But "my Lady's new garden," containing seats and arbours, was probably the Greenhouse Garden,

* F.D. 1011.

† This seems in 1782 to be the one called the "Little Park Pond" (F.D. 1043).

‡ The following particulars are taken from F.D.'s 1012, 1013, 1014, 1015.

§ Perhaps the holes in the stone work (already mentioned on page 45) date from these railings and not from Elizabethan ones.

while the "new Kitchen Garden" became in 1868 the Italian Garden. The "new Bowling Green" was on the North Front, for in 1727 two pairs of iron gates were bought for the "Bowling Green at the North Front" for £39.* As an old man George must have taken to bowls, for two years before his death they report to him in London, "We have got a great deal of the mold out of the Bowling Green." † The new Bowling Green was no doubt necessary owing to the alterations in front of the house having interfered with the Elizabethan one there.

For a few years after this the Earl seems to have been preoccupied with work in the house still to be described, and some work on the Great Avenue already described. But in February 1718 he started making a road through the village.

1718.	February 1st.	"3 men throwing down the ridges in the new highway."
	May 17th.	"3 men levelling the new highway."
1719.	January 3rd to 31st.	"Filling carts with rubbish and making a Causeway in the Towne." . . . "Levelling a highway in the Towne."
	November 14th.	"11 men making a way across the Avenue at the head of the Cemicircle," which probably means the road from the present Schools to the Gardens." ‡

In November and December 1720 we find seven men walling up a pond head. And finally, in the autumn of 1725, an entry found by Mr. Scriven § of seven men "taking up chestnuts in the nursery and planting in the Park," which may be the chestnuts still standing on the south side of the East Avenue. He also draws attention to the wages of that date, which were fourteen pence a day for masons and carpenters and eightpence for ordinary labourers. Wheat, a luxury, was about thirty shillings a quarter; barley and beans sixteen shillings; oats twelve shillings. Butter was fivepence a pound, and eggs were fourpence a dozen.

Alterations to the Castle.

Let us now return to 1695, the year of King William's visit, and trace the alterations made by the 4th Earl to the Castle and outbuildings. In August he had received an estimate for rebuilding part of the North Front of the house. It is entitled "Mr. Talman's Estimate concerning ye Hall at Ashby." ‖ It was proposed to pull down "about 100 square on the flatt" and rebuild it. The scheme included "the continuing such ashler and ornamentall work next ye garden (as is already done) to the North east corner of ye house with a front of ashler and an ornamentall stone door-case with windows over itt on ye hall side next ye Court, with a compass roof and lanthorne over the hall, and a freestone door-case on ye North front, All

* F.D. 1022. † F.D. 1102. ‡ F.D. 1016–1019. § Paper on "Castle Ashby."
‖ F.D. 1084/34. Talman was Comptroller of the Office of Works, and was at this time building at Chatsworth, and under Wren's directions at Hampton Court Palace also.

which building is to bee cover'd with lead and cellars to be sunk and vaulted, All to bee done according to desyne allready made." But these plans no longer exist. The work was to cost £5920, including "the wainscott of ye hall, vestibule and other Roomes," and "£100 for marble chimney peices." When, ten years later, the rebuilding of the North Front was begun, these plans do not appear to have been followed, except possibly in the spacious cellarage that was laid out.

At Christmas 1703 carpenters and plumbers had just finished renewing a large section of the roof of the Castle, and were ready to "alter the Turrets" if the weather continued good.* From April 1704 till April 1705 they were "pulling down the top of the Turritt," "altering chimneys and windows," "taking down a staircase and partition," "setting up a pertition," altering rooms, chimneys and windows, "mason making a chimney piece for the nurserie," "breaking a window into a passage in the house." † It is very likely that the top storey of the two turrets were entirely redone at this time and the Jacobean stone lettering replaced on their top; from the exterior it is clear that they have been at one time restored, and from the style of the bannisters in the interior corroboration is found that this was the actual date.

Filling in of North Front.

In December 1705 began the 4th Earl's great addition against the north wall of the Great Hall, which by 1723 had completely filled in the recess in the North Front of the house. The first stage, which is illustrated in Campbell's plan ‡ published in 1731, was the building in of the present Smoking-Room and North Hall with the Cellars below. The "old Servant's Hall" mentioned probably lay between the door of the present one and the present pantry windows. Alterations were made at the same time to the "back yard," which was immediately outside the Kitchen, and not to be confused with the "West Yard," which was probably the yard that now encloses the Gun-Room, etc. The work is thus described by extracts from the Estate Accounts :— §

1705.	December 15th.	"10 men taking up paveing in the servants' Hall and sinking it for a Cellar."
	December 22nd.	"9 men digging a Cellar under the Servants' Hall and filling carts."
1706.	January.	"Filling carts with earth out of the new Cellar."
	March 23rd, etc.	"Making a new wall by the back Kitchen door."
	April 6th, etc.	"7 men paving and pitching and laying a pair of steps in the back court by the Kitchen door," also "pitching in the middle Court," "laying down turf in the fore Court . . . and inner Court," "building a wall by the Icehouse." ‖

* F.D. 1097. † F.D. 1012. ‡ In his "Vitruvius Britannicus."
§ F.D. 1013. ‖ Possibly that between the Water-tower and the Dairy.

May 4th, etc. "Pitching the back Court," "pitching the back-yard."
May 18th to September 21st. "Making Centers for a new Seller," "breaking windows into the new seller," centres and "doorcases for the new vault," "altering a passage and the cellar stairs," "paving the back Hall" (? the North Hall), "3 men paving the new cellar" and "making beer stalls for the new cellar." In April 1707 3 men were "sawing boards and making a bottle-rack.

The front of the house and the outbuildings were also receiving attention :— *

1706. September. 8 men were "levelling in the Court before the house."
1707. April. "3 men sawing out timber and making a pair of gates before the house," and July 5 "making a new door for the forecourt."
1708. May 13th. "Paid for stone and workmanship in the great Court before the House. £147."
1709–10. Continual "levelling in the forecourt before the House," and "setting down rails" there.
1710. April. "Making a new Coach-house."
August. "Paving two rooms in the house."
1711. March 16th. "Setting up a pair of Piers in the Great Court, and coping there."
1711–12. Timber and freestone work "for the new Rooms in the Riding House," and "hanging doors there."
1713. March to May. "Fitting up the Old Dairy in the Kitchen Garden as a dwelling house." †
June. "Building a new wall at the end of the old Dairy in the Kitchen garden." †
August to October. "Building a bakehouse at the end of the Riding House."
1714. June & July. "2 men making a new House of Office."
1715. January. Altering larders in the house.
April. Levelling and walling in the new Back Court.
April. £11 17s. was paid "for setting up a pair of Piers and for paving the Kitchen."
December. Paid a carpenter for "new roofing one Oile of Ashby Church, £3 10s." And another bill for a drain from the cellar at the Falcon Inn.

And on October 14th, 1718, £39 was paid "for two pair of Piers in the great Court," stone, work, etc. The last stage of filling in the recess in the North Front

* F.D. 1013, 1014, 1015 and 1016.
† The "old Dairy" is probably the little apple-house with Jacobean mullions still standing in the bothy-yard. The "new wall" may be the brick one pierced by many arches, between the Greenhouse Garden and the Roundhouse.

took place between February 1719 and July 1723, and consisted of the adding of the present Servants' Hall and the floors above it, and the bow window containing the Back Staircase. These and the 1705 additions were so skilfully made, and the Elizabethan masonry was so carefully copied, that they would escape attention if not carefully pointed out; and in examining this front it should also be noticed that the new *œuil-de-bœuf* windows were repeated in the Elizabethan part of the front. The stone was brought almost daily from August 1719 till December 1720 from Weldon Quarries.* The work is thus described in the Estate Accounts :— †

1719. February 7th. "4 men taking down a stack of chimneys in the house."
February 7th to 28th. "10 men pulling down walls in the house and wheeling out rubbish" . . . "4 men putting up a beam in the house."
March 7th to June 13th. Continuously from 4 to 14 men "altering parts of the house."
May 30th. 7 men "altering the Laundrie chimney and hanging a copper in the Brewhouse."
July 4th to August 1st. 7 men "building new larders" (the present ones).
August 8th to November 1st. 8 men "building a bow window to the House."
December to February 27th, 1720. 5 to 11 men "sinking Cellars" . . . "and filling carts with the rubbish." During the same winter also "2 men altering the Almhouses."
1720. March 5th to October 8th. 7 to 10 men "new building part of the North front of the House."
March 12th to 30th. "New laying the floor *over* the Kitchen and putting up partitions there." Lathing the rooms over the kitchen and the larders, "paving the new larders."
May to December. Partitions, doors, an oven, paving, a new wall in the West Court, an Arch for a new cellar, new chimneys, etc.
1721. "Sawing timber and framing a roof for the House." (March) walling and plastering, etc. "20 men working at the cellars," etc.
1722 to January 12th, 1923. "6 masons at the new front," etc.
1725. May 2nd. "Nixon has finished the Steps . . . is he to prepare any stone for the Piers." ‡

The only other items of work at the Castle were in respect of interior decorations. In the winter 1724–25, "the room in the South-west corner of the house, the

* F.D. 1105. † F.D. 1018, 1019 and 1020.
‡ F.D. 1102. The steps of the North Entrance.

passage and passage room, 2 pair of Stairs and the Billiard Room" were painted for £4 10s. And the "Dining Room, Alcove Room, etc." were painted for £6 15s.

ventories. If further evidence of the 4th Earl's methodical energy were required, mention should be made of the numerous inventories he had made of his belongings at Ashby. In the year of his succession a complete list was made of all the goods at Ashby.* In 1701 a list was made of the saddles and harness. In 1702 one of the Nursery plate and another of the other plate; and also in 1702 a list of goods in the Wardrobe; while in 1705 a complete list was made of the linen, which mentions two pairs of sheets to cover goods in the "New Rooms." It is hard to say what rooms these can have been, unless they were those built in 1691 in place of the old Loggia. There is mention of "my Calimanco Bed," and of two pairs of hanger sheets for the "Wilton Bed." In 1694 and 1705, too, there are complete inventories of the contents of Compton Wynyates. And there are several other lists ending in 1715.

ibrary. The Earl was also a book-collector, and nearly all the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century books in the Old Library are marked as having been bought by him by his elegant book-plate, which is dated 1703. The Old Library shelves, too, appear to date from this time; and when in 1753 carpenters were "making Library shelves," † others than those must be meant.

lterations ompton. As for work at Compton Wynyates, there is mention of laying the "little Hall" floor in 1699,‡ and three new chimney-pieces, costing £9 3s 6d. were put up in April 1721.§ In February 1701 the stables there seem to have been rebuilt, and the estimate shows the cost to have been £694.‖ These stables were of course in front of the house, and a sketch of them is in the 1766 survey.¶ This may have been their first rebuilding since the Civil Wars. The Earl's son and heir James, married in 1716, and probably very soon afterwards went to live at Compton with his Warwickshire wife, for the agent there was expecting them at any rate on a visit a few months after their wedding. Between that and his father's death James made many additions and improvements at Compton, which will be described in the next chapter. In the same week as the mantelpieces were put up, seven shillings was paid "for two duz Pigeons for the Dufhouse." The coincidence may signify that James and his family took over the house about the year 1720, though, as has been said, they had lived in the house earlier.

South Sea Bubble. It may perhaps here be recalled that the year 1720 was the beginning of the bursting of the South Sea Bubble. Among the family papers are some letters** on the subject to the Earl from his son-in-law Gore. During the month of August Gore could not understand why the stocks had, as he thought momentarily, depre-

* F.D. 1069, 1070 and 1319. See Appendix III. † F.D. 1033. ‡ F.D. 1010.
§ Possibly those in the Dining, Morning and Combe Rooms (F.D. 1019). ** F.D. 1106.
‖ F.D. 1056 and 1097. ¶ Library Shelf, S. 6.

ciated; but he was taking the opportunity of increasing the holding in them of Lord Northampton and of his young son Charles, who was at the time travelling with his tutor abroad.

Ashby Charity School. Another idea of the Earl was the setting up of a Charity School in Castle Ashby for the benefit of daughters of the inhabitants.* In 1711 a collection was made towards the total cost of £129, of which £87, the cost of the building and fitting up, was paid by the Earl, the other £42 being required for "household goods and clothing." Donations were received from Sir Stephen, Lady Fox, Mr. Charles Fox, Mr. and Lady Mary Gore, etc., and £1 18s. 6d. was collected in the Servants' Hall. It was furnished and "all materials for spinning was provided," and on August 24th, 1712, twelve girls were put into it with a mistress and maid. Annual subscriptions were paid by Lady Northampton, the three sons James, George and Charles, and by all the daughters except Mary. But at midsummer 1718 it was closed down for the two reasons, that "I was every year considerably out of Pockett, besides ye great uneasiness of ye Parents with ye Mistresses made it impossible to go on with it, since it would never have turned to ye doing any manner of good by such continual disention." However "it was designed to provide for" the girls that were in it.

It was in February 1694 that commutation was made for £10 annually † of the thirty-five loads of firewood from Yardley Chace left in his Will to St. John's Hospital at Northampton by David de Essebi in about 1229. It will be remembered that this was a charge on the estate when the Comptons bought it in 1512, and the commutation is still paid annually in 1929.

There is a curious document,‡ called "The Yardley Men's Petition," in which they beg the 4th Earl, in about the year 1702, "not to exempt the Keepers of his Chace from all Parish levies," etc. The Keepers' duties were to ward off poachers and keep the Castle larder full. The parish levies must have been a form of rate levied for the benefit of the parish; and since George seems to have had the power to exempt people, it was presumably the Lord of the Manor who made the levy.

Poaching. Poaching was a common occupation in those days, and one in which apparently even prominent men took part. There is a correspondence in March 1725, between George and his brother Spencer, in which Spencer is thanked for getting a certain Johnson removed from the Bucks Commission of the Peace. The Earl hopes "that an end will be put to Deer stealing, when he is convicted of being the person that chiefly set them on, as several of them now say; the ease and quiet, which is expected to be for the future in the Chace, will be owing to you."§ It may have been exceptional for a J.P. to steal deer, but it was very common among men of lower social position. There is a large bundle‖ of bonds at Ashby, by which various

* F.D. 1252. † F.D. 1091. See also page 40. ‡ F.D. 1109.
§ F.D. 1188. ‖ F.D. 1229.

persons, caught stealing deer or wood between 1656 and 1750, bound themselves in sums varying from ten shillings to £100 not to do so again. The bonds were additional to the fines they had to pay for their offence, which sometimes amounted to £33 for deer-slaying. There are also a few fines and bonds for destroying fish; and round about 1750 there were several cases of men destroying fences and hedges, which was no doubt a common way of protesting against the enclosures of that date. Among these bonds is a paper that tells a curious story: The Earl's workmen on February 2nd, 1686, were cutting turf "upon the Woodlea(? st) being within the Ringmound of the Chace of the said Earl, called Yardley Chace"; and 6 Denton men interfered with them under pretence that their right of Common precluded the Earl's men. But on February 7th they signed the document declaring themselves to be "in great error." *

Deer-keeping.

There are lists of deer killed every year in the Chace by the Keepers of the several "Walks" there.† The Walks or Keepers beats were in 1705, Biggen Walk, Yardley Park, Denton Walk, and Roundhay; ‡ and in 1732 as many as forty and a half brace of bucks and twenty of does were killed. They were sent to the Earl's larder, or as gifts to county gentlemen, or to the Mayor of Northampton and the Lord Mayor of London. An occasional one was killed by the fox-hounds. It should be remembered that in those days beef and mutton were cured in the summer for winter consumption, and fresh venison was a great luxury in winter as the only fresh meat available.

Hounds.

There are also lists of hounds in the years 1725–28, with their names and their breeding, but there is no mention whether they were fox- or stag-hounds. They were almost certainly the former, and a continuation of the pack of 1695 already mentioned. In 1725 there were forty-two couples of hounds and eighteen and a half of puppies; and we are told that the puppies were "sent out to nurse" locally, and especially in the Moulsoe district. In April 1726 six couples of hounds were "sent to Warwickshire," probably for Lord Compton to hunt there. They were no doubt kept in the Kennels, which have since been pulled down, on the right of the road beyond the reservoir.

The Earl remarries.

It has already been mentioned that George's first wife, Jane, died on July 10th, 1721. This was while he was still in the midst of planting avenues and making alterations to the house. Five years later, on July 2nd, 1726, he remarried, at the age of sixty-one. His second wife was a daughter of Sir James Rushout, Bart., of Northwick, Worcester, who had in 1697 been made Ambassador to Constantinople; and she was the widow of Sir George Thorold, Bart., of Bloomsbury Square. The picture on the Grand Staircase of a lady holding out a flower is supposed to be of

* F.D. 1229. † F.D. 1228.
‡ Biggen Lawn and Lodge is the farm at Cowper's Oak. Yardley Park was the present Deer Park.

her. On June 7th he wrote to James at Compton, and to Betty at Ashby, telling them of his approaching marriage. He asks the latter to inform her brothers and sisters, and assures them that he is marrying entirely for their good. He also asks Betty to write him "a handsome letter wherein you desire me to acquaint Lady Thorold (by name) of your dutiful and respectful behaviour towards her. . . ." By way perhaps of sweetening the pill, he also promises the daughters "I will add a Quarter more to what is due at Midsummer, towards supplying what ye may want upon this occasion"; to which Betty replies, "That which your lordship designs we shall lay out on this occasion, we shall get as soon as we can from London." * The letter from Betty to Lady Thorold is very stiff and formal, as only would have been thought proper in those days. Lady Thorold paid £20,000 into their marriage settlement,† and the Earl handed over: Chelmscote Ground in the Manor of Compton Vineatts (rent £80) and all property in the Manor of Burmington (rents total £273 2s. 10½d.), in the Manor of Long Compton (rents total £430 2s. 5d.), in Great Woolford (rents £135) and in Little Woolford (rents £80 13s. 4d.). Also Canonbury House (rent £191) and the Manor of Clerkenwell (£9 12s. 7d.).

His death.

Nine months after his second marriage, the 4th Earl died at his house in Bloomsbury Square on April 15th, 1727, and was buried at Compton.‡ By his second wife he had no children, and she lived on in the Bloomsbury Square house till her death on January 15th, 1750; and no doubt some of the unmarried daughters, Betty, Jane, Penelope and Margaret, kept her company there. After two years of widowhood she married Anne to her brother, and on December 15th, 1730, the Rushouts were staying with her when a daughter was born to them.§

Four years later the Dowager Countess was laid up in her house with the gout, and the following anecdote is given us by a letter of January 2nd, 1735, from Lady Betty to her sister-in-law, the 5th Earl's wife: ‖

"The Countess Dowager of Northampton (the writer's step-mother) was yesterday morning much surprised at a message of a New Year's gift from Her Majesty, concerned at her being so long confined by the gout. She sent her such a wheeling chair as she had so often found of great service to herself, she hoped she would do the same. My Lady was in great fuss last night to know which way she was to return so great an honour, not being able to go out, whether by letter to the lady of the Bedchamber or how. At last it was determined that Lady Jane as living with her was the properest person to make her compliments. So this morning she was to go to St. James."

By his Will the 4th Earl evidently left the following properties to his two younger sons, from whom, however, they were destined shortly to return to the Earldom.

* F.D. 1107. † F.D. 1234. ‡ Church Register.
§ F.D. 1112. ‖ Extract from Townshend letters not bought.

George got the three Manors of Long Sutton, Pitney and Werne,* in the county of Somerset; and Charles got the Manors of Fen Stanton in the county of Hunts, which had originally been bought by Sir John Spencer in 1600.† Among the family papers there are several rental lists of all these manors, chiefly at the beginning of the seventeenth century.‡

* See F.D. 1007 for Surveys of 1687.

† F.D. 703.

‡ F.D. 732, 810–814, 825, 1025–1027; also 206 and 207 (1476–79), 209 and 213 (1508).

PORTRAIT OF THE EARL OF WILMINGTON, K.G.
(FROM THE PAINTING AT CASTLE ASHBY).

CHAPTER XIII

SPENCER COMPTON, EARL OF WILMINGTON, K.G.

(1673–1743)

SPENCER, brother of the 4th Earl of Northampton, was born in 1673, and was only eight years old at his father's death. He probably lived at Ashby with his mother till George's marriage, and by that time he must have been at school and afterwards at the University, and either spent his holidays at Ashby or with his mother in London. There is a dreadful picture of him as a little boy in the Servants' Hall at Ashby. Spencer must have been serious-minded without any taste for sport; and, having little quickness of brain, he owed his success in life to plodding stolidity, and perhaps also partly to the coincidence that the mentality of the Hanoverian dynasty was not unlike his own.

While finishing off his education travelling abroad, he was elected M.P., in July 1698, for the Borough of Eye in Suffolk, and shortly afterwards changed from the Tory to the Whig Party. He sat continuously for this Borough till 1710; and during that period, in 1705 he was Chairman of the Committee of the House for settling the articles of the Union with Scotland, in 1705 and 1708 he was Chairman of the Committee of Privileges, and in December 1709 he was nominated one of the Committee appointed to draw up the articles of impeachment against Dr. Sacheverell.* So that at an early stage of his political career his opinion seems already to have carried weight. And he soon gained royal patronage too, perhaps by the influence of his uncle the Bishop, for in 1707 he was appointed Treasurer to George, Prince of Denmark, and Paymaster of Queen Anne's Pensioners; while on the accession of George I in 1714 he became Treasurer to George Prince of Wales, afterwards George II, with whom he remained on terms of intimate friendship for the remainder of his life.

After an interval of three years he was again elected to Parliament in August 1713, this time for the Borough of East Grinstead. And at the General Election of the following year he was returned by both East Grinstead and the County of Sussex, and chose to represent the latter; a choice which he again made eight years later, when elected by the same two constituencies. In both these two Parliaments —that is, from March 1715 till July 1727—he was unanimously elected Speaker, and we are told that his solemn manner and sonorous voice helped him in this post to

* "Journals of the House of Commons," Vol. XVI. p. 241.

secure the respect of the House. But more than this, there is no doubt that Spencer had a neat way of expressing himself; for the fashion of the times was to express absurd self-depreciation in return for any compliment, and on the occasion of his Majesty's approving of the Commons' choice of him as Speaker he commented, "that his Majesty had thus given proof that he would never deny anything that can be asked of him by his faithful Commons, because it will be impossible for them ever to make a request that could be more reasonably refused." On another occasion, when returning the thanks of the House to the managers of an impeachment, his eloquence was such that the oration was voted by the House to be inserted in its Journals.* Horace Walpole † also mentions as a famous *bon-mot* Wilmington's remark of the Duke of Newcastle that he "always loses half an hour in the morning, which he is running after the rest of the day without being able to overtake it." But according to an anecdote told by his successor, Onslow,‡ his knowledge of the duties of the Speaker was somewhat inadequate: "Sir Spencer Compton . . . used to answer any member who called upon him to silence the House for that he had a right to be heard. 'No, Sir! you have a right to speak, but the House has a right to judge whether it will hear you!'"

On July 6th, 1716, he was sworn of the Privy Council, in 1722 he was made Treasurer of Chelsea Hospital and a Governor of Charter House, and in 1725 he was made a K.C.B.

In addition to his Parliamentary duties, he was in 1722 appointed Paymaster-General, which lucrative office he held till 1730; and it may partly have been money made in this capacity that he spent so lavishly on his new house at Eastbourne. At some date about 1713 he bought an estate in Sussex, and on it built Compton Place at Eastbourne. He certainly bought the estate before 1716, for in that year he paid £200 for the augmentation of the living of Wilmington,§ from which village he afterwards took his title. The house, which with the estate now belongs to the Duke of Devonshire, is one of the most perfect specimens of the architect Adam's own work, every little corner being decorated with detailed design by his own hand. This was the period of comfort and luxury in architecture and furnishing, and Spencer probably knew how to enjoy it. He was a member of the Kit-Cat Club,‖ whose wild orgies at Ranelagh are so well known; and as he was a lifelong bachelor, Compton Place was probably accustomed to cheery evenings, such as would not nowadays be associated with a "Mr. Speaker."¶

* "Parliamentary History," Vol. VIII. † Letters to Sir Horace Mann.

‡ Townsend, "History of the House of Commons," Vol. I. p. 229.

§ Collins' "Peerage." Nevertheless as early as 1679 Wilmington had some connection with the Family, for in that year James 3rd Earl sued certain persons for certain services of the manor due to him (Exchequer Bills, Sussex No. 278. See F.D. 1368).

‖ "Memoirs of the Kit-Cat Club."

¶ "He was a most formal solemn man in the world, but a great lover of private debauchery." "Horace Walpole to Sir H. Mann," Vol. I. p. 155, note.

On the accession of his friend George II, Spencer Compton was commanded to draw up the King's first declaration to the Council, which was a duty usually performed by the Prime Minister; but owing to his ignorance of the proper forms of expression, Walpole had to do it for him. He was a great favourite with the new King, who, it was said, would have liked to make him Prime Minister in the place of Walpole. But Queen Caroline had a high opinion of Walpole's abilities as a financier, and the King's decision is said to have been largely influenced by Walpole's promise of increasing the civil list by £130,000 and obtaining a jointure for the Queen of £100,000 a year, while Compton only ventured to promise £60,000. The matter was, however, finally decided by Spencer bursting into tears of gratitude for his master's kindness, but insisting that he was incapable of undertaking so arduous a task.* In this year 1727 he was again returned to Parliament by Sussex County, and would presumably have continued in the office of Speaker, but before Parliament met he was created Baron Wilmington, as a reward for his recent self-abnegation. This honour was soon followed by others. In May 1730 he was appointed Lord Privy Seal in Walpole's Government, and created Earl of Wilmington and Viscount Pevensey; on December 31st of the same year he became Lord President of the Council; on August 5th he was created a D.C.L. by the University of Oxford; and finally, on August 22nd, 1733, he was installed a Knight of the Garter, upon his resignation of the ensigns of the Bath.

In May 1740 the King paid a visit to his Electorate of Hanover, and Wilmington was one of the Lords Justices appointed to administer the Government during his absence. During the following year Walpole, was becoming more and more unpopular; and, as he did so, more and more unscrupulously did his Ministers scheme for their own hand. Wilmington was evidently not above throwing over his leader; and on a motion for Walpole's removal at the end of 1741 Wilmington abstained from voting. On January 28th, 1742, Walpole was defeated in the House of Commons, and resigned. There were several alternative leaders in the Party, but Newcastle, Carteret and Pulteney were each too jealous to serve under either of the others. As a compromise, therefore, on February 16th Wilmington was made Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury. It may be thought a subject for pride that a member of the family should have reached the highest office in the State; but Wilmington was not a man to be proud of. Though he had had forty-four years of experience in Parliament, he was regarded by the public, as well as by his subordinates, as a mere cipher.† Possessing only very ordinary abilities, he was not suited to lead a party or anything else, because he was entirely unable to come to any

* Townsend, "History of the House of Commons," Vol. I. pp. 232–33.

† "Even the Commissioners of the Treasury used to vote for the disposal of places in direct opposition to Wilmington and his nephew George." In the Cabinet the conduct of affairs was wrested from Wilmington "by that dashing genius, the Earl of Granville." H. Walpole to Sir H. Mann.

decision. He seldom expressed any opinion at all, and was the butt of the satirists and caricaturists of the day. It seems generally to have been thought that Wilmington made a mistake in accepting in his dotage a post which as a younger man he had had the sense to see he was not fitted for.

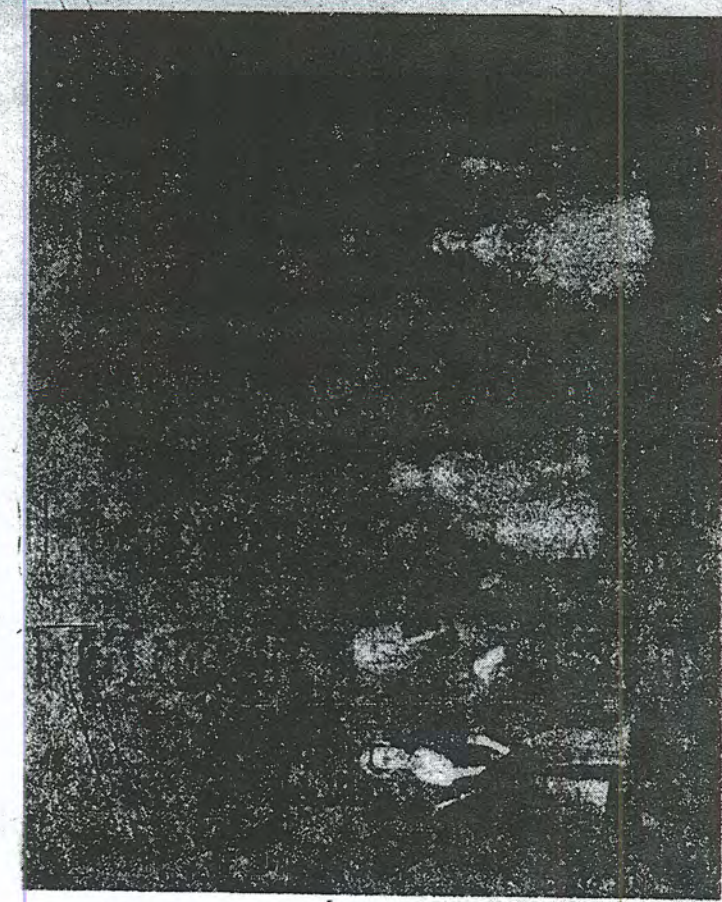
But ten months later Walpole * tells us his "death is reckoned hard upon. He is going to the Bath, but that is only to pass away the time until he dies." Wilmington died unmarried at his house in St. James' Square † on July 2nd, 1743, at the age of seventy, and was buried at Compton Wynyates.‡ He bequeathed everything he possessed to his nephew, James, the 5th Earl, but his titles, of course, died with him. When Lady Elizabeth, daughter of the 7th Earl, married Lord George Cavendish, thirty-nine years later, she took with her to that family Compton Place and the Sussex estate.

Wilmington also left to his nephew, the 5th Earl, a house at Chiswick with its contents.§ The following year a list was made of the liquors in the cellar of this house, and also a list of a collection of medallions and coins. The medallions were chiefly of the Kings and Queens of England from Charles II onward, but also included "a very valuable one" of Philip IV of Spain in 1623. At the death of the 5th Earl in 1754, his daughter, Lady Ferrers, inherited the house and its contents, and had a list made of deeds and papers in the house, which chiefly concerned Wilmington's property, but included a few connected with Compton property in Warwickshire and Huntingdonshire. The list has survived, though the deeds are lost.‖ In June 1755 Lady Ferrers held a sale of "A Curious Collection of Exotics," made by the late Lord Wilmington. It consisted of plants from America, Bengal, Malabar, China, the Cape, etc.; and at the same sale were sold orange trees, large myrtles, and bays in tubs. Perhaps Wilmington had acquired his botanical tastes from his uncle Henry, the Bishop.

Wilmington's portrait was painted by Kneller for the Kit-Cat Club; it has several times been exhibited, but I do not know where it is. A small copy of that picture hangs in the Entrance Hall at Ashby, and another three-quarter length portrait of him hangs in the Dining-Room.

* January 6th, 1743, to Sir Horace Mann.
† Collins.
‡ F.D. 1081.
§ F.D. 1115 A, U/2.
‖ It should also be mentioned that Horace Walpole's house at Strawberry Hill was described in 1763 as containing the following four pictures which had belonged to Wilmington:—

Spencer, 2nd Earl of Northampton.
Two portraits of ladies of the Court of Queen Elizabeth by Hilliard.
Lady Penelope Compton, daughter of the 2nd Earl and wife of Sir Edward Nicholas, by Cooper.



CHAPTER XIV

JAMES, 5TH EARL

(1727–1754)

JAMES, 5th Earl, was born on May 2nd, 1687, and was the eldest of a family of ten. We know nothing of his education except that when his tutor died, before James was seven, the parson of Bozeat was recommended in his place, as being "a comely, sober man, who primarily taught school at Huntingdon." * Later James was for some years M.P. for the County of Warwick; and on December 28th, 1711, he was, at the age of twenty-four, summoned to Parliament as Baron Compton.†

Marriage.

On March 3rd, 1716, he married, at St. Anne's Church in Soho, Elizabeth, only daughter of the Hon. Robert Shirley of Staunton Harrold (Leicestershire), Chartley (Staffordshire) and Ettington (Warwickshire). Elizabeth was a great heiress, and, as she was very much interested in her own descent, it will be well to say something of it here and to study at the same time the Pedigree on page 168. The Shirleys were living at Ettington ‡ at the time of the Domesday Survey, but in later times they had become possessed of the more important residences of Staunton Harrold and Chartley by marriages, in about 1450 and 1675 respectively, with the families of Staunton and Ferrers. Indeed, two years after this second marriage there was revived in them by a fresh creation the ancient barony of Ferrers of Chartley, whose original creation dated from 1219. But Elizabeth was also descended from this ancient Ferrers family through her mother, Anne Ferrers. In 1254 a branch of the family at Chartley settled at Groby; they made marriages in various generations, which brought into their possession estates at Tamworth (Staffordshire), and Walton, Bradborn and Lee (Derbyshire); and the chief residence of Anne's father, Sir Humphrey Ferrers, was Tamworth Castle.

Elizabeth Shirley was born in August 1694. In March 1698, when she was only three, her mother died, and in the following February she also lost her father. From then onwards she and her young brother Robert were brought up by "the Hon. Mrs. Shirley," who was evidently an aunt and who managed their estates and business for them.§ Elizabeth's brother Robert inherited all his mother's

* F.D. 1091.

‡ They still own it in 1929.

† See his wife's Pedigree of 1732.

§ F.D. 1115/A.

THE PEDIGREE OF ELIZABETH, WIFE OF 5TH EARL

SHIRLEYS of Ettington } married { STAUNTONS of Staunton Harrold and Lords FERRERS of Chartley.

FERRERS of Groby branched in 1254 from the Ferrers of Chartley.

Sir Robert SHIRLEY, 7th Baronet, of { Chartley / Staunton Harrold / Ettington.

Sir Humphrey FERRERS, Knight, of Tamworth Castle and { Walton / Bradborn / Lee } Co. Derby. (*d.* 1678).

b. 1650.
married twice, and had fifteen sons and twenty-two daughters.
1677, recreated old Barony Ferrers of Chartley (created 1219).
September, 1711, created Earl Ferrers and Viscount Tamworth.
December 25th, 1717, died.

—Hon. Henry Shirley, ninth son, succeeded as Earl Ferrers.

Hon. Robert SHIRLEY, eldest son (*b.* September, 1673), married 1693 = Anne FERRERS (*d.* September, 1698). (*d.* February, 1699).

ELIZABETH SHIRLEY = LORD COMPTON afterwards 5th Earl of NORTHAMPTON. (*d.* October 1754).

1694. August. Born.
1714. Inherited mother's property from brother.
1716. Married.
1717. Inherited Barony Ferrers of Chartley and property from grandfather.
1741. March. Died.

Robert Shirley
1698. Inherited from his mother.
1711. Called Viscount Tamworth.
1714. July 5 (d.s.p.).

CHARLOTTE COMPTON = HON. GEORGE TOWNSHEND.

1729. Born.
1749. Baroness Ferrers on death of last sister (*N.B.*—1741–49 title in abeyance while shared between sisters).
1751. Married.
1754. Baroness Compton.
1764. Viscountess Townshend.
1770. Died.

1724. Born.
1751. Married.
1764. Inherited Viscount Townshend.
1770. Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.
1787. Created Marquess Townshend.
1807. Died.

The Marquess Townshends of Raynham.
Barons Compton.

property, and when, in 1711, their Shirley grandfather * was created Earl Ferrers, Robert was called by the new second title of Viscount Tamworth, which was chosen to record the acquisition to the Shirley family of that residence and estate. But on July 5th, 1714, Elizabeth's brother died also, and she inherited Tamworth Castle and all her mother's property, and became heiress to her grandfather's barony of Ferrers of Chartley, though the Earldom would go to one of his sons. The Shirleys had for generations claimed the further baronies of Bourchier, Lovaine and Basset; and when Elizabeth's grandson was in 1787 created Earl of Leicester, the patent assumed that he had inherited these titles through her; but the "Complete Peerage" † shows that by the illegitimacy of a Shirley ancestor these three titles had properly died out in the sixteenth century.

On Elizabeth's marriage in 1716 her maternal estates were henceforward managed by her husband; and at the same time "Mrs. Shirley's house" in Charles Street near St. James's Square became "Lord Compton's house," though in the following January Lord Compton's house was "in St. James's Street, the corner of Park Place," while on April 24th it is described as "in Marlborough Street." On Christmas Day, 1717, Earl Ferrers died, and Elizabeth claimed the baronies of Ferrers, Bourchier, Lovaine and Basset, as has above been described.

Their children.

Immediately after their marriage James and Elizabeth were given Compton Wynyates by his father as their home; and throughout their lives they seem to have been devoted to the place. They had three sons and five daughters, but, as so often happened in those days, only one child, Charlotte, survived them. In order of their birth, they were :— ‡

A son, born 1718, died unnamed.
—George, born August 1719,§ buried at Compton 1719.‖
—Elizabeth, born 1720, died April 20th, 1721, buried at Compton.‖
—James, born July 6th, 1723, died November 28th, 1739.
—Jane, born between 1724 and 1728, died May 9th, 1749.
—Anne, born between 1724 and 1728, died December 29th, 1746, buried at Compton.
Charlotte, born August 8th, 1729, married December 19th, 1751, Hon. George (afterwards 1st Marquis) Townshend, died September 3rd, 1770.
Mary, born and died 1731, and buried at Compton.‖

Lady Alwyne remembered seeing at Compton, in about 1855, little bits of paper stuck on the wall of the small room out of Henry VIII's Dressing-Room, showing the names and heights of these children at different ages, Lady Charlotte being only

* Had been Master of the Horse to Charles II's Queen.
† Vol. II. p. 3.
‡ See the Countess's Pedigree of 1732.
§ F.D. 1187.
‖ Compton Church Register.

a tiny tot.* There are three small portraits of two girls and a boy in the Drawing-Room at Ashby who are said to be children of the 5th Earl, and may be James, Jane and Anne. There is also a delightful group in the Dining-Room of the Earl and Countess, in about the year 1732, and four children who must be James, Jane, Anne and Charlotte. We are told † that the Earl was happy in the enjoyment of a most excellent wife, and being naturally inclined to, and formed for domestic life, he entered but little into the public life of his time. Though happy in each other, they must have been sad at the early deaths of so many of their children. Yet we can hardly be surprised at the high rate of mortality among them when we read the following letter about James, Lord Compton, to his mother, from Nicholas Guilli-beau, tutor of his school at Fulham. It is dated May 7th, 1734, when the boy was not yet eleven.‡

" His Lordship took ye dose of physick last Sunday morning at six a clock with-out any difficulty. It worked his Lordship about eight times, and made him a little sick when it begun to work. But after he had flung up some phlegms his Lordship was very well . . . next Friday his Lordship is to take ye other dose . . . his Lordship has feasted to-day upon some of my Lord Gowring's venisson . . . those Heats which I thought were going in his Lordship's face continue still."

The wonder is that the boy lived for another five years.

terior prove-nts at mpton.

Three months after their marriage they were about to do repairs to Compton house, and the Walton agent wrote to Mrs. Shirley offering advice about them.§ This seems to prove that Lord Northampton had already handed the care of the house completely over to them; and we soon find them embarking on various improvements. To begin with they installed up-to-date box pews in the church, with the cipher " J.C." and a baron's coronet on the door of the family pew; and they also put in the charming oak altar-rails round the Communion Table of the same date, which must be in a unique position up against the half-column which divides the two aisles.

The work James did at Compton Wynyates house can very easily be traced from the larger bricks used at his time and by the exaggerated size of the blue brick diaper. But the dates of the work can only be guessed at from the various ones appearing on rainwater heads in different places round the house. On the earliest of these, that on the east wall of the Chapel, appears the inscription, " J.C. 1723." The next date, " J.C. 1726," is on the pipe draining the water from between the Council Chamber and the Barracks; up to this date the water had simply tumbled

† Collins.

* F.D. 1340.

‡ One of a collection of letters to Lady Northampton of 1734–35 sold in 1923 at a sale of Townshend papers, but not bought by Lord Northampton. Other letters to her were from her sisters-in-law, the Ladies Betty, Anne, Pen and Margaret.

§ F.D. 1115.

through the old Gothic gargoyles which are still there. In the next year James succeeded his father, but he continued the work of water-piping, for we find " J.N. 1727 " on the pipe draining the south side of the Chapel roof. The next date on the house is that of " J.N. 1732," on the pipe-heads all round the Courtyard. Up to that date the drip off the stone roofs all round had merely splashed into the yard below; but now James heightened the walls into a parapet, which catches the water and runs it down his leaden pipes. The picturesqueness of the Courtyard has no doubt been partly sacrificed to utility.

During the next few years he made his most important addition to Compton. In imitation of the similar alteration which his father had carried out at Ashby, he filled in the recess in the East Front, which had been a paved yard in the days of the moat, but which, unlike that at Ashby, had been divided into two by a projecting turret probably containing a staircase.* Only a small narrow yard was now left to give light to the passages, and two rainwater heads in this yard bear the date " 1738," which was probably the date of the completion of this work and of the heightening of the walls into a parapet round the North-east Tower. This addition to the East Wing blocked three windows high up in the east wall of the Great Hall, traces of which were, however, left in the plastering; and the opportunity was taken of building a new chimney flue in the wall and installing the present fireplace. Never again were the family retainers to sit round the old-fashioned fire on the Hall floor, and the louvre in the ceiling now became obsolete. Under the new part of the wing was built a crypt with the Roman cross-vaulting in brick on square pillars common at that date. The East Wing had, in its upper-floor rooms, sash windows of the period; and to make way for others of the same style, the Tudor windows were removed from the Drawing-Room, Dining-Room, Morning-Room, and Combe Room. A very good idea of the exterior appearance of these alterations is given by the framed photograph at Compton taken in about 1855.

Interior improve-ments.

In the interior of the house, Georgian panelling was inserted in the two new upper rooms and in the Combe, Morning- and Drawing-Rooms.† It was probably at this time also that the big doorway into the Dining-Room in the centre of the south wall of the Great Hall ‡ was bricked up, and the present doorway made, as well as the wooden arch into the well of the staircase. The new fireplace in the Dining-Room is probably one of the three installed in 1720, § and the panelling on each side of it was made and painted in imitation of the existing James I panelling round the rest of the room.

* Part of its wall still shows, built into the 5th Earl's newer wall. See the plan opposite page 26.

† This panelling and the broad staircase is described by Lady Alwyne (F.D. 1340). See page 277 below.

‡ This was the usual medieval door from the Dais in the Hall into the family Sitting-Room, or " Chamber."

§ See Estate Accounts.

The only other addition to the house was the extension between the two Henry VIII turrets at the north-west corner which now forms the Steward's Room and Moat Room. It was built to provide a laundry on the ground floor. The rain-water pipe on this addition bears the date "1739," which marks the completion of this extension.

Before the additions to the house were finished, it had an escape from destruction. In April 1736 a letter to the Earl from a Thomas Wycherley mentions a poor man's confessing to him that he had been offered a reward by his master, the Curate of Brailes, if he would set fire to Compton Wynyates house.*

An "Account of the painted Glass in the windows at Compton" shows how much Tudor glass has been lost since the time of the 5th Earl. It was very probably destroyed when the windows were bricked up in 1774. The Account is apparently in the handwriting of the 5th Countess, and, though undated, was bought in 1924 in a bundle of letters to her dated 1715–34.† Lady Compton was evidently learning up the heraldry of her husband's family soon after her marriage. The stained glass now in Henry VIII's Room is described as being in a room called the Dining-Room. Lady Alwyne tells us ‡ that it was moved in 1862 "to the King's Drawing-Room from the window in the Dining-Room which looks into the court." The only difficulty here is that the 5th Countess's same "Account" calls the present Dining-Room the "Parlour" when describing the quarterings of the Arms on its plaster ceiling, and it seems strange that she should call the same room by two different names in the same Account. The other three rooms with stained glass were as follows:—

"Lady's Dressing-Room. The coat of Sir Wm. Compton, Knt., temp. Henry VIII & His Wife, Werburge Brereton, viz.
quarterly of 4.
1st. Compton.
2nd. Additional Coat.
3rd. broke (but supposed to have been Aylworth).
4th. As ye first.
impaled with quarterly of 4.
1st. Brereton.
2nd. Berkeley of Beverston.
3rd. Betishorne.
4th. Brereton.
Crest. The Demi Dragon, Gules, granted to Sir Wm. Compton.
In the Bedchamber windows the same Arms impaled and Crest.
In the old Drawing-Room the rose of Lancaster Crown[d]. France & Engl[d]. quarterly impaling Castile & Leon King's Crown. The Rose & Thistle

* F.D. 1112. † F.D. 1115a. ‡ In F.D. 1340, XVII.

crown[d]. 2d. window, the Demi Dragon Crest and the Arms consisting of Quarterings as in the Bedchamber; 3d. window the other Crest of the Beacon inflamed."

On the same list are also described the Quarterings of the Arms on the "Parlour" ceiling, which is the present Dining-Room.

Their London residences.

In May 1727, a month after his succeeding his father, we find them at their house in "Grosvenor Street near Hanover Square.* They were invited to attend the Coronation of George II on October 4th, and a letter from the Earl of Sussex invited the Earl to attend at eight o'clock that morning at the House of Lords and to bear the Queen's Ivory Rod with the Dove in the ceremony.* They were still living in Grosvenor Street early in 1734;† but by November of the same year ‡ they had moved to "Brook Street, Westminster," where he continued to live till after his wife's death. It will be remembered that Northampton House in Bloomsbury Square belonged for her life to the Dowager Countess.

Throughout her married life Elizabeth kept up a regular correspondence with many of her Shirley aunts and with her sisters-in-law. Especially did she write, and send frequent gifts of venison or cider, to Lady Catherine Shirley, who lived at Edgeware. ‡

According to the estate Accounts, no great improvements seem to have been carried out by James and Elizabeth at Castle Ashby either in building or planting. But the small gate of delicate ironwork now at the bottom of the Prior's Walk has a graceful cypher of J's and E's intertwined, and is dated 1733.

The Countess's death.

On March 13th, 1741, Elizabeth died at their Brook Street house, and was buried at Compton § James was left with three little daughters, and lived in considerable seclusion for the remaining thirteen years of his life, moving backwards and forwards on his estates and occasionally staying at his house in Brook Street. He felt his wife's loss very much, and apparently became somewhat moody, for we are told ‖ that in his later years he "always lived at Ashby in the buck-hunting season and had his public hunts; he was very silent, and nobody spoke in his presence. If a question was asked his brother (George), he made no answer till Earl James had spoken. But he spent 3 months yearly at Compton, where he talked like other people."

Hunting.

James was always fond of hunting and had probably been brought up to it as a boy. We have already seen him during the last three years of his father's life borrowing fox-hounds from Ashby to hunt at Compton. He had probably started this practice soon after his marriage, and no doubt continued it after his father's

* F.D. 1112. † F.D. 1195. ‡ F.D. 1115a. § F.D. 1081.
‖ Anecdotes in British Museum by Sir Richard Kaye, Dean of Lincoln. Kaye was born in 1737, and so was only seventeen when the Earl died.

death, for on December 5th, 1729, he wrote the following letter from Ashby to Sir Henry Parker of Honington :—*

" As you intend to hunt with Mr. Sheldon's hounds,† you shall be very welcome to stop at Woolford and Long Compton Woods, which were the places where Mr. Sheldon usually hunted. The Earths in Compton Parke being so very near my house, I am desirous to preserve a fox or two there, for, unless I can have a prospect now and then of finding about Broomhill, I shall have no encouragement to bring my hounds again into that country. I hope you will not take it ill if I beg you will spare that single spot of ground. I wish you much diversion this season, and the next hope to have the pleasure to partake with you."

The Home Farm buildings beyond the Reservoir are in 1929 known as The Kennels. They are not shown on the 1765 Survey; but some buildings about a hundred yards south of them may have included Kennels where the hounds were kept at this time.

Less than two years after his wife's death Lord Northampton was offered a dukedom by George II, probably at the suggestion of Lord Wilmington; but Horace Walpole tells us that he refused it because he had no sons surviving.‡

In 1749 Lady Charlotte Compton's last surviving sister died, and she became Lady Ferrers of Chartley in her own right, for since her mother's death the title had been in abeyance while shared between the sisters. She was reputed to be the greatest heiress of her time, and would take to her husband's family upwards of 250 quarterings of Arms, including the Royal one of Plantagenet. On December 19th, 1751, Lady Ferrers married the Hon. George Townshend, son and heir of the 3rd Viscount Townshend of Raynham in Norfolk, whom he succeeded on March 12th, 1764. Besides her various titles she took to the Townshend family all her mother's property, including Tamworth Castle; and on her father's death she also carried off the barony of Compton, which also was a barony by summons, and therefore passed through the heir general rather than through a collateral heir male. It has been said to be unique that, from now till 1812, the Earldom should have had no second title, though the eldest son was always called " Lord Compton " by courtesy.

The only occasion in his last years on which we hear of James appearing in public was that of the funeral of Frederick, Prince of Wales, in 1751. He was one of the Assistants to the Chief Mourner, the Duke of Somerset, whose brother and the Earl's brother, George, had married sisters.§ But, though highly and universally respected, Earl James can never have been fond of society, and he died a lonely man on October 3rd, 1754. He was buried at Compton.‖ He was succeeded in the

* F.D. 1114.
† Probably Sheldon of Weston.
‡ Letter to Sir H. Mann dated November 29th, 1756.
§ " Complete Peerage," and F.D. 1112.
‖ Compton Church Register.

Earldom by his brother George. But he left to his only surviving daughter, Lady Ferrers, his house in Brook Street, containing the plate of which the inventory, made at his death, still survives.* He also left her the house at Chiswick, which has already been mentioned when it belonged to his uncle Lord Wilmington.†

It has already been said that the 5th Countess was a keen herald. In about the year 1732 a beautifully illuminated Pedigree of the Compton family was executed. It went to Tamworth Castle after her death, was in later years sold with the Castle to the Agent, and again later bought back by the 3rd Marquess of Northampton. The latter's brother Alwyne added four pages to bring it up to date, and had it bound by Birdsall of Northampton. An inferior copy of it was bought in 1923 by the 6th Marquess at a sale of Townshend papers, and on its fly-leaf is an inscription by her grandson saying that it is entirely the work of the 5th Countess. It seems likely that Elizabeth did them both, and in 1734 she painted a " Pedigra Schuchin " ‡ for her aunt, Lady Catherine Shirley, who wrote regarding it : " As for the manner of drawing the Arms I submit entirely to your Lady.sp's better judgement, for I really believe you are the best Herald in England." §

* F.D. 1115, A.U./2.
† She also seems to have inherited a lease from the Duchy of Lancaster of Olney Park, which does not appear to have included any residence, and which in 1758 she sublet to her first-cousin the 7th Earl, until in 1763 the Duchy let it direct to the 8th Earl (F.D. 1115 A.Y.).
‡ Pedigree Escutcheon.
§ F.D. 1115a.

CHAPTER XV

GEORGE, 6TH EARL FROM 1754–1758, AND HIS BROTHER HON. CHARLES COMPTON

WHEN the 5th Earl died, there were still alive of his brothers and sisters, George, Anne (Lady Rushout), Penelope, Charles and Margaret. He was succeeded by George, and a chapter will here be devoted to the lives of George and Charles, and the latter's family.

Their education.

George was born in 1692 or 1693, and we know little about his youth except that he must have been early in the army or militia, because in 1719 he was already referred to as "Major Compton."* "Mr. Charles" (to use the nickname by which Lady Alwyne always calls him in her notes) was born on January 30th, 1698, and except for Margaret was the youngest of the 4th Earl's ten children. We know little of Charles's education except that during the three years 1718–20 he was travelling on the Continent with a tutor, Dr. Hay, whose correspondence* with Charles's mother shows him to have been a dull companion for a boy of twenty. In the first letter, dated January 16th, 1718, Lady Northampton tells us, in a very legible, bold, round hand, that Charles had wasted his time at school and university through idleness, but if he works now he may fit himself for "some sort of business at his return." The idea of the parents evidently was that of their sons, James should fit himself for his position and duties as a landlord, George should hold the local Parliamentary seat in the family interest, but Charles must strike out on his own and make a career for himself. Dr. Hay thought it necessary to remove Charles from Montauban when the "carnaval" was about to take place; but a fixed number of hours each day was spent with the fair sex, and in Dr. Hay's opinion Charles "had improved very much in his dancing." They went by sea from Marseilles to Genoa, and Charles proved to be a good sailor; then on a British man-of-war to Leghorn, and so to Florence, to Siena (where Lord Northampton arranged for his tutor to leave Charles for a holiday) and then to Rome. In June 1719, Hay asks about coming home for Christmas, though he can think of no way of educating Charles so profitably "except your Lordship has got an extravagantly rich match in stow for him, and then he'l go all the way past." After trips to Naples and Venice they returned to Rome in November, where, in addition to Hay's teaching, Charles had instruction from three other tutors in fencing, the Italian language

* F.D. 1187.

and Italian architecture. Hay thought it a shame that his rich Uncle Spencer did not do anything for Charles, then "I believe his honourable parents should be little troubled with him." In April 1720 they were in Paris, which "abounds with cruel murders and assassinations;" and in May Major Compton was thinking of going out to Rome, and staying with them in Paris on his way; but his trip abroad did not take place.

George in politics.

In 1714 the 5th Earl had become possessed of the large Ferrers property at Tamworth; and in the Parliamentary election of 1722 Major George stood for the Tamworth constituency and was duly returned. But at the next election in 1727, immediately after his father's death, he stood for Northampton. On this occasion the result of his election was objected to by Edward Montagu, the unsuccessful candidate, and the case (of which all the particulars are at Ashby*) was tried by a Committee of the House of Commons. The election was upheld, and George represented Northampton for thirty-seven years, till he succeeded to the peerage at the age of sixty-two. The expenses of his election in 1727 came to £998, which sum probably includes the expenses of the appeal; and as they appear in the Ashby estate Account,† they were probably paid by George's brother.

Inheritance from their father.

When the 4th Earl died in April 1727, he left properties to each of his younger sons. On the one hand, George inherited from him the three manors of Long Sutton, Pitney and Werne, all in the county of Somerset, of which properties there are among the family documents many surveys at various dates and Court Rolls which show them to have been bought in 1600 by Sir John Spencer.‡ Mr. Charles, on the other hand, was left by his father the manors of Fen Stanton and Hilton in the county of Huntingdon, many records of which also appear in the family documents.§

Mr. Charles's marriage.

A month later, in May, Mr. Charles was appointed Consul General at Lisbon,‖ very likely through the influence of his uncle Spencer, whose royal patron, the Prince of Wales, had just been left as Regent while his father went abroad to Hanover. Charles probably did not go out to Lisbon till September, for it was in that month that he signed a Power of Attorney to Joseph Stevenson, the Agent at Castle Ashby, to collect the rents of his estate.¶ This delay was due to his marriage on August 14th. His wife was Mary, the only child and the heiress of Sir Berkeley Lucy,** Bart., of Broxbourne, Hertfordshire; and they had five sons (of whom

* F.D. 1057. † F.D. 1022.
‡ F.D. 331–70, 803–26, 941–43 and 1007.
§ F.D. 206, 207, 209, 213, 728–32 and 1025–29.
‖ Collins.
¶ F.D. 1012.
** A portrait of Sir B. Lucy at Cadland House, Southampton, bears a striking resemblance to the portrait of his grandson, the 8th Earl, by Sir A. West at Castle Ashby.

three died as infants), and five daughters. They were born in the following order:—*

Mr. Charles's children.

1. Mary was born on November 11th, 1728. She married firstly on February 2nd, 1748,† Mr. Richard Haddock, son of Admiral Haddock of Sevenoaks, and they had a daughter Mary. Haddock was in the Navy, and rose to be a Captain and a Knight; he died on January 4th, 1749. Two years later Mrs. Haddock married again, on January 6th, 1751, a Mr. Arthur Scott, R.N., of Scott's Hale in Flint, who also died on February 27th, 1756. We may guess that Mary and Jane met their naval husbands at Lisbon, where no doubt all the sisters had an exceptionally good time owing to its being a frequent port of call for our ships of war. There is a pleasant portrait of Mary in the Drawing-Room at Ashby as a girl in a pink dress covered with lace; it is said to be by Allan Ramsay. She died on May 8th, 1782.
2. Jane was born on January 11th, 1730. She also married a sailor on February 2nd, 1753, in Portland Chapel—George Rodney, afterwards Admiral and Lord Rodney. Rodney was born in February 1718, and at the age of twenty-one was promoted Lieutenant R.N., while serving under Admiral Haddock on the Mediterranean Station. In 1747 he commanded a ship at the Battle of Ushant. In May 1749 he became Governor of Newfoundland, and two years later became M.P. for Saltash. In this capacity he remained in London and married Jane in 1753, who, however, died in January 1757, leaving him two sons. She was buried at Old Alresford, Hampshire. A small oil portrait in the Old Library of a dreadfully ugly woman has her name written in ink on the back of the canvas. After her death he was in 1759 promoted Rear-Admiral. In 1761 he became M.P. for Penrhyn, and was in the same year appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands Station. Here in the following year he fought several successful engagements against the French, including that at the Island of Martinique, for which he was created a baronet and voted the thanks of both Houses of Parliament. There is a picture of the battle in the Drawing-Room at Ashby, in an exceptionally fine Chippendale frame, which contains every sort of emblem of ships and the sea. In 1764 he married again, and comes back into the family history as candidate for the Northampton Parliamentary election of 1768, and then again when commanding at Jamaica.‡
3. Catherine was born June 4th, 1731, at Cintra near Lisbon. She is said to

* Where not otherwise stated, these particulars are often taken from F.D. 1081.
† See Marriage Settlement, F.D. 1236.
‡ See pages 197 and 203–4.

have made a great impression at her first Ball at Holland House, and her portrait in the Dining-Room at Ashby, which is an early Reynolds, shows her in later life with a cultured and intelligent face. On January 26th, 1756, she married at Charlton, Kent, the 2nd Earl of Egmont, who was then forty-five years old, as his second wife. Her husband had been born John Perceval on February 24th, 1711, and in 1733 became Viscount Perceval when his father was created Earl of Egmont. From 1731 to 1748, when he succeeded his father, he was in the House of Commons. From 1748 to 1751 he was a Lord of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales. From 1762 to 1766 he was Postmaster-General and first Commissioner of the Admiralty. He died a Privy Councillor on December 12th, 1772, and is described as "an able and vigorous man, not without incredible absurdities of airy speculation."* On May 23rd, 1770, Catherine was created Baroness Arden of Lohort Castle, Co. Cork,† and she died at Langley, Bucks, on June 17th, 1784. Their second son, Spencer Perceval, who was born November 1st, 1762, became M.P. for Northampton in 1796, as the 9th Earl of Northampton's "man." He was Premier from 1809 till 1812, when he was assassinated on May 11th in a lobby of the House of Commons. There is a marble bust of him in the Long Gallery.

4. Charles was born December 9th, 1732; and died on December 6th, 1733.
5. Anne was born in 1733, and died in infancy.‡
6. Elizabeth was born on September 11th, 1734.§ She married on March 21st, 1761, the Hon. Henry Drummond, third son of the Viscount Strathallan who had been killed at Culloden Field. He took on the direction of the Bank at Charing Cross from his uncle, its founder, and was a M.P. His country residence was The Grange in Hampshire, which now belongs to Lord Ashburton. He died in 1795, and Lady Elizabeth died on March 25th, 1819, at the age of eighty-four. There is a miniature of her at Laverstoke House, Whitchurch, belonging to one of her descendants, Sir William Portal.‖
7. Charles, born on July 22nd, 1737, afterwards became the 7th Earl of Northampton.
8. Spencer, born on August 5th, 1738, afterwards became the 8th Earl of Northampton.

* See "Complete Peerage."
† Lohort Castle had been a residence of the Percevals for several generations.
‡ Pedigree by Lord Alwyne says Anne was born in October 1741, and died 1744.
§ F.D. 1115A.
‖ Her Drummond descendants live at Cadland, near Southampton, and still own the bank.

9. James, born on October 8th, 1744, died in November 1747, and was buried at Compton.*

10. George, born on November 12th, 1745, died in November 1747, and was buried at Compton.*

Immediately after their wedding Mr. Charles and his wife went out to Lisbon, where Horace Walpole met him when travelling abroad for the benefit of his health.† In July 1734 his brother, the Earl, invited him to return home and stand for Parliament for Tamworth, but in that month his secretary had stolen £2700 of his money, and he begged Lord Wilmington to have him left in his consular appointment. In this election Lord Weymouth ‡ was nominating the Tory candidate, and was very angry with Northampton for opposing him.§ In January 1741 Mr. Charles became Envoy Extraordinary at Lisbon,‖ but the date of his retirement and return home is not known to us. We only know that his two boys Charles and Spencer went to Westminster School, where they were boarded, aged eight and seven, at Butler's in May 1746, and where they still were in 1753.

After the death of the 5th Countess George probably lived a good deal with his brother James at Ashby, when he was not in Parliament; and we have already seen him habitually joining in the Earl's public hunts. But on March 5th, 1748, Major the Hon. George Compton, M.P., married Frances Payne, daughter of the Rev. Thomas Payne. George was fifty-five and Frances twenty-nine. There is a head and shoulders portrait of her in the Drawing-Room at Ashby, in a pale grey dress, with a string of pearls round her throat. By the Marriage Settlement ¶ George's three Somersetshire manors were settled on her and her offspring; but they had no children.

At the end of September 1753 Mr. Charles, now aged fifty-five, was living in Grosvenor Street, and must by this time have retired from the Consular Service. At this time James Mookes was appointed to be gamekeeper on his estate, and among the letters of David Foulerton, steward at Castle Ashby, is one of September 30th giving Mookes instructions. He says: "I do not doubt but that you will have some trouble at first with some of the sportsmen, who (I observe) diverts themselves so freely in Fenstanton Lordship, but if you do but take care and carry some of those unqualified persons before a Justice of the Peace and make them pay five pounds for every Hare and five pounds more for carrying a Gun, you will soon break their way of going on. . . . Send your game every week . . . sew

* Compton Church Register. *N.B.*—Lord Alwyne's Pedigree gives different dates for James and George.
† Cole MSS. Brit. Museum, Vol. XXXIII. pp. 44, 45, 46.
‡ 2nd Viscount, born 1710.
§ Quoted from letter from Lady Catherine Shirley. F.D. 1115A.
‖ Collins.
¶ F.D. 1235.

it up in a Basket and direct it For the Hon^ble^. Charles Compton Esqre in Grosvenor Street London. . . . I wish you good sport and good luck . . . by your looking sharp after potchers you will have more to send another year." Mookes got paid according to the amount of game he shot, and among other items mentioned he got sixpence for a dozen "larks" in December. He had perhaps more "sport" than "luck," for "a little bustle happened" on December 24th over Mookes pursuing a hare beyond his master's Liberty, and Mookes and his two companions "got priced £15"! In the postscript to another letter Mookes says: "If your Honour'd please to send me An old green Coat and an Old Hairey Hat, a pair of Old Buckskin Breeches, I should think it an honour if they'd gain me no Riches." *

George succeeds as 6th Earl.

In October 1754 George succeeded his brother James, and he then made a further settlement on his wife of the Compton Wynyates, Winderton and Tysoe property, whose total rents came to £2658.† Mr. Charles was promptly elected in succession to his brother to the vacant constituency of Northampton Borough; ‡ but he and his family were during the next few months continually at Compton Place, Eastbourne, which may either have been left him by the 5th Earl, or lent him by the 6th. In the following September (1755), however, "Mr. Charles and the young gentlemen" (Charles and Spencer),§ were going to stay at Castle Ashby for the Northampton Races; but at the last moment Mr. Charles was ill, and had to go to Bath instead. He died on November 20th, at the age of fifty-seven, and was buried at Compton Wynyates.‖ His widow survived him only by a few months, for, after marrying off her daughter Catherine in January, she died on May 2nd, 1756, and was buried with her husband.¶ When Earl George died in turn in December 1758, the heir, Charles 7th Earl, obtained licence by Act of Parliament for his three surviving sisters to rank as Earl's daughters and to style themselves Lady Mary Scott, Lady Catherine and Lady Elizabeth Drummond.**

Inventories.

It was on the December 5th after Earl George's succession that an Inventory was made of the contents of Compton Wynyates.†† And in the following June (1755) another was made at Castle Ashby,‡‡ which is interesting if only for the names of rooms at that date. The following extracts give the names of some of the more important rooms, and they are best studied by comparing them with the plan of 1730 in Campbell's "Vitruvius Britannicus." But it should also be remarked that almost every bedchamber was at that time hung with tapestry, much of which must have been sold in 1774.

* F.D. 1191. † F.D. 1197. ‡ Collins.
§ Their thus being called at Ashby shows that they were constantly there.
‖ By his Will, dated October 14th, 1754, he left £1800 each to Mary and Jane and £3200 each to Catherine, Elizabeth and Spencer (F.D. 1243).
¶ "English Peerage" and F.D. 1081.
** F.D. 1082. †† F.D. 993. ‡‡ F.D. 1068.

The Chapel had of course always included the Entrance Hall, while the present Chapel Room was a gallery, where the family sat during the Services. This gallery was called the "Chapel Closet" and contained 8 forms covered with red. The Chapel itself contained a Crimson Velvet Carpet at the Altar, 2 gilt candlesticks, 13 Prayer Books, a reading-desk, the full-length portrait of the Bishop of London, and four forms; while the "outward part of the Chapel" contained four more forms. The pulpit was in the Cloisters at the time of the Inventory and may only have been brought in when wanted.

The Bedchamber next the Chapel. (Now Entrance Hall?).
The Bedchamber next the Garden. (Now End Drawing Room?).
The Closet next the Bedchamber. (Part of above?).
The Little Drawing Room. (Now Middle Drawing Room?).
The Inward Drawing Room. (Now Lobby outside Dining Room?).
The Outward Drawing Room. (Now the China Room?).
The Dining Room.
The Passage to the Dining Room.
The Stone Parlour. (Now part of the Dining Room).
The Alcove Room. (Now the Serving Room).
The Little Stone Parlour, which included the bed-room and the Passage to the North Hall.
The Cube Room.
The Great Hall contained a Shovel-board table, 12 wooden chairs, iron fire-back and grate, and 5 family pictures. And on the "Great Stairs" leading up to the present billiard-table, 2 boys with branches and a wooden couch.
Pantry.
Cellars, "full of good beer."
Arch Passage, Servants Hall, etc., etc., and on the floor above "the House-maids' hole," which seems to have been the present housemaids' sitting-room with the passage alongside included.
The Billiard Room, which seems to have been in the south-west corner of the house, contained "a billiard table with green cloth, 2 pair of Balls, 2 pair of sticks, a porch, a King and 1 large Ball."

Earl George's death.

The 6th Earl had no children, and we may guess that, in the three years between Mr. Charles's death and his own, his two nephews, "the two young gentlemen," spent much of their holidays with their uncle at Ashby. Spencer seems to have been a gay lad, and his uncle and aunt perhaps allowed him too much liberty. In the summer of 1757 he made a bolt to Edinburgh with a Miss Jane Lawton, who, being thirty, was eleven years older than himself. Horace Walpole says she was an "admired beauty of the town of Northampton."* They were married in St. Paul's Chapel, Edinburgh, on July 23rd, 1757.† The marriage, we are told

* Cole MSS. British Museum, Vol. XXXIII. pp. 44, 45, 46.
† Copy of Certificate (F.D. 1131).

by Walpole, was very much disapproved of by brother Charles, and probably also by their uncle George. The latter died on December 6th of the next year, and was buried at Compton.*

His widow.

After Earl George's death his widow, Frances, married on November 26th, 1761,† Mr. Claudius Amyand, Commissioner of the Customs, who appears in some of the old letters at Ashby. Mr. Cole, a gossiping friend of Horace Walpole, writing after the 6th Earl's death, says: "The state of the late Earl of Northampton condescended also with all their family pride to marry the daughter of a Clergyman, whose name was Payne. The Earl left her very amply jointured with all his furniture at Castle Ashby, which the Countess very gentilely gave back to the family. One of her sisters is the wife of the Hon. and Rev. Lord Francis Seymour, Canon of Windsor, and brother of the Duke of Somerset. One of her brothers, bred an Apothecary in London, is now Rector of Moulsho in Buckinghamshire, of the patronage of the Earl of Northampton."‡ In spite of Mr. Cole's snobbish scorn of the "clergyman's daughter," she seems to have been a lady, and behaved like one in leaving her furniture at Ashby when she married again. Lady Alwyne says her "aunt Elizabeth" remembered her "aunt Frances" having been to see the 6th Countess in London as a very old lady. She must have shown sympathy with her nephew Spencer after his runaway marriage, because his first child, born three months before the 6th Earl's death, was named Frances, no doubt after her. She eventually died at the age of eighty-one on December 25th, 1800, and the termination of her heavy jointure was a financial relief to her great-nephew and niece Charles and Fanny.§

There are a few other disconnected facts, extracted from family documents of the time of the 6th Earl, which should perhaps be included here.‖ The number of gardeners employed at Ashby in 1757 was thirteen. In the same year on the Tysoe estate rent was received at Michaelmas "for a house called Sun-Rising £9"; in Capability Brown's survey of 1771,¶ only the buildings contiguous to this house appear to have belonged to the estate. In 1758 Nicholas Stiles, tenant also of the Windmill and Watermill, paid £2 for his "vineyard" in Compton, which was a long strip uphill from the upper Long Pond.** In May 1759, on the death of Mr. Montagu, M.P. for Northampton, Earl Charles joined in the nomination of Lord Halifax as member for the Borough.

* Compton Church Register. † Burke.
‡ Cole MSS. British Museum, Vol. XXXIII. pp. 44, 45 and 46.
§ See a letter of the 9th Countess in December 1795.
‖ The first three extracts are from F.D. 1036. The fourth extract is from F.D. 1116.
¶ Old Library Shelf, S. 6. ** See 1760 Survey Map by Capability Brown.

CHAPTER XVI

CHARLES, 7TH EARL

(1758–1763)

CHARLES was born in 1737, and probably spent his childhood at Lisbon, though, as has already been mentioned, he and Spencer were at Westminster School as boarders from 1746 to 1753. On the death of his father, he and his brother Spencer were known at Ashby as "the young gentlemen," and with their only unmarried sister, Elizabeth, they probably lived chiefly there with their uncle George, at any rate when they were not at school or university.

On December 6th, 1758, Charles succeeded as 7th Earl, and two months later, on February 24th, 1759, Lady M. W. Montagu, writing from Venice,* thus describes him at the age of twenty-one: "The young Earl of Northampton is now at Florence, and was here in the Carnival. He is lively and good-natured, with what is called a pretty figure. I believe he is of a humour likely to fall in love with many; the first agreeable girl he meets with in London." This forecast was very accurate, for on September 13th Charles married Lady Anne Somerset, daughter of the 4th Duke of Beaufort, who was four years younger than himself—only eighteen. Horace Walpole says of them: "She is rather handsome. He seems to have too much of the coldness and dignity of the Comptons." Walpole tells us that when it was all agreed the Earl suddenly refused to marry unless her dowry was increased from £10,000 to £18,000. It was evidently suspected that he found he still wanted to marry "an old flame" he had met in Florence a few months earlier, and the Duchess of Beaufort's brother hurriedly made up the deficient £8000. There are portraits of Charles and Anne on the Grand Staircase at Castle Ashby, copied from pictures by Pompeo Battone belonging to their descendant, Lord Chesham, and hanging at Latimer. Three years later, when they were both dying of consumption, Horace Walpole wrote: "I am much concerned at the melancholy accounts you give me of both Lord and Lady Northampton. They are young, handsome, happy, and life was very valuable to them. She has been consumptive for some time, but he seemed healthy and strong." †

* Letters preserved in Archives at Venice and quoted in F.D. 1339.
† Letter to Sir H. Mann of June 5th, 1763. Vol. I. p. 148.

Charles's embassy.

On his uncle's death, Charles had been elected Recorder of Northampton;* and on July 3rd he was given the degree of Doctor of Law at Oxford. In May 1761 he was appointed Special Ambassador to Venice by the Foreign Secretary, Lord Egremont. He was to be sent in return for a Venetian Embassy that came to London to congratulate George III on his accession; and etiquette did not allow Lord Northampton to make his formal entry into Venice until the Venetians had made theirs into London. The latter were already in London unofficially, and were enjoying themselves in Society; so they were in no hurry to put an end to their visit by carrying out their mission, and they reported home to the Doge on June 15th, 1762, that Lord Northampton was probably in no hurry to receive his orders to embark, as since the date of his appointment he was receiving £11 sterling a day.† And so it was that Charles and Anne were at the Coronation on September 22nd, 1761, where Charles carried in the Ceremony the Ivory Rod with the Dove,‡ and where Anne was noticed by Horace Walpole to have "a very pretty figure." Two months later, on November 28th, Walpole tells of "a very private ball at the Court, not above 13 couples." Of these all were of the Royal Household except two girls and four men. Lord Northampton was one of these latter, and evidently an intimate friend of the young King and Queen.

By October 1762 the Earl and Countess had reached Venice, and Charles was anxious to get done with his ceremony. He had to send Anne on at once to Naples for the benefit of the sea air; and thenceforward there is a tragic contrast between the letters of the Venetian Embassy, who were delighting in all the pomp and ceremony in London, and those of poor Charles, whose wife was literally dying, and who was in very little better health himself. On November 15th he threatened the Senate that, if the Venetian Ambassador did not enter London quickly, he would obtain permission to return to London without making his entry at all. This struck horror into the hearts of the Venetians, but does not seem to have had much effect on their Ambassador in London. Charles was getting weaker and weaker, till he was hardly able to stand, but he was quite determined to see his mission through. It was not till May 29th and 30th, 1763, that he was allowed to make his public entry; and it is thus described in a despatch from Venice to the *London Gazette*:—§

"About five o'clock in the afternoon of the 29th his Excellency went in private to the Island of San Spirito, where he was met by the English Noblemen and Gentlemen, the foreigners of distinction, the Consuls and British merchants, and received by the Superior and Fathers of the convent on that Island, and conducted to apartments furnished by the Republic for the occasion. In about half an hour

* F.D.'s 982 and 1204. † Italian Letters, quoted in F.D. 1339. ‡ Collins.
§ "The London Chronicle, or Universal Evening Post," Vol. XIII. No. 1015, dated June 25th, 1763, p. 609.

came a Secretary of the College to notify the arrival of Signior Ruzzini, Cavalier della Stola d'Ora, with sixty Senators, whom the Republic had appointed to attend the Ambassador in this function. His Excellency sent word back by the same Secretary, that he was ready to receive the Cavalier. The Cavalier and Senators, on their arrival at the Island, went directly to the church of the convent, where after staying some time, they proceeded to the cloister, where the Cavalier was met by his Excellency's Secretary, attended by two Gentlemen of the Chamber, and complimented by him on the part of the Ambassador. By this time his Excellency was come down into the Cloister, and advanced some steps to meet the Cavalier, as did the Cavalier to meet his Excellency. After reciprocal compliments, his Excellency took the right hand of the Cavalier, as did the English Noblemen, Gentlemen, etc., of the Senators, and proceeded to their boats. His Excellency went in the Cavalier's gondola, preserving the post of honour, and each Senator gave the same to the Gentlemen. His Excellency's state-boats, and the boats of the several Ambassadors residing in Venice, joined in the procession. On the arrival at the Ambassador's palace, the boat in which his Excellency and the Cavalier were, gave place to the other gondolas for the Senators and Gentlemen to land, and afterwards they landed themselves. His Excellency then taking the hand of the Cavalier, and the Gentlemen of the Senators, they proceeded upstairs to the audience room, at the entrance of which his Excellency and the Gentlemen gave the hand to the Cavalier and Senators. After all sorts of refreshments had been served, they took leave for that night, conducted downstairs by his Excellency and the Gentlemen, giving them the right hand.

"About nine o'clock the next morning, the Cavalier and Senators being arrived at the nearest church to the Ambassador's palace, gave notice of their arrival as the day before. The Cavalier was received at the entrance of the palace by his Excellency's Secretary, and conducted by him half-way up the stairs, where he was met and conducted by his Excellency; they then proceeded to the audience room, observing the same ceremonies as the day before. After staying some time, in which they were treated with refreshments, the Cavalier and Senators giving the right hand to his Excellency and the Gentlemen, proceeded in their boats to the College. Upon entering of which the Doge and Signoria rose from their seats; and after the usual ceremonies his Excellency sat down covered on the Doge's right hand. His Excellency's Secretary making a bow to the Doge and Signoria, presented the Ambassador's credentials, which his Excellency gave to the Doge, and the Doge to a Secretary of the Republic, who read them aloud. His Excellency then made his speech to the Doge and Signoria, in the English language; and the translation of it into Italian being read by a secretary, the Doge answered it in a proper and polite harangue. His Excellency was then conducted to his palace by the Cavalier and Senators, who, after the same ceremonies as the day before, took their leave. After the departure of the Cavalier and Senators, his Excellency received presents from the republic of a magnificent desert, and several sorts of wine and provisions.

"During the whole time of the ceremony, the Ambassador's palace was open to every body. In the evenings it was finely illuminated; concerts of music in several rooms, and a profusion of refreshments of every sort. His Excellency's state boats, magnificently gilt, and adorned with emblematical figures relating to the glorious conquests Great Britain hath acquired during the late war, were made entirely new for the occasion. The liveries were more numerous and splendid than had ever been seen on a like ceremony. His Excellency was attended in his entry by several British Noblemen and Gentlemen; among whom were the Duke of Gordon, Lord William Gordon, Lord Warkworth, Earl of Massarene, Sir Roger Moyston and Mr. Dundas; and his Excellency's magnificence, liberality and politeness gave universal content to all ranks of people."

The tragedy continued. While all classes were enjoying "his Excellency's liberality and magnificence," it took him at least three-quarters of an hour to climb the stairs to the Audience above described; and when at last he reached home, his ceremony ended, he was met by the news that his beloved wife had died at Naples. His physical condition became then even more distressing. Ten days later he is reported as having gone to Geneva to try to find some relief for the complication of disorders under which he laboured.* Fortunately history draws a veil over the following four months, which ended on December 18th in his death at Lyons, perhaps while struggling to reach home. The bodies of both Charles and Anne were brought home and buried at Compton Wynyates,† where Lady Alwyne says the keys of their coffins have been kept.

Lady Betty Compton

Their only child, the Lady Elizabeth, was born on June 25th, 1760.† She was therefore only two when her parents went abroad never to return, and she was brought up by her grandmother, the Duchess of Beaufort, possibly in the London house left her by her father. She must have inherited the good looks of her parents, and was evidently much admired in London Society. One day when she was twenty-one her grandmother took her to breakfast with Horace Walpole, who tells us jokingly that he was glad to be able to get up from his couch, "when so fair an opportunity occurred of entering the lists, since everyone is a candidate for Lady Betty's hand." There is a picture of her by Sir Joshua Reynolds as a girl of about twenty, which was until recently at Latimer,‡ and of which a copy hangs at Ashby on the Grand Staircase; it has been made very well known by the beautiful engraving of it by Valentine Green. Another head and shoulders portrait of her by Rev. Peters, R.A., of which an engraving hangs in the Morris Room, belongs to Mr. Henry Cavendish at Swallowcliff, Salisbury.

On February 27th, 1782, she married at Trinity Chapel, Hanover Square,§ Lord George Cavendish, who was fifty years later created 1st Earl of Burlington,

* "The London Chronicle," Vol. XIII. p. 616.

† Compton Church Register. *N.B.*—It records that Anne and Charles were buried on October 29th and November 29th, respectively: so perhaps he died on November 18th. I know nothing of the keys of their coffins.

‡ It has been sold to America at a price reported in the Press to have been £100,000.

§ Collins.

in 1831. They both died in 1835. Lady Betty took to the Cavendish family as her jointure Compton Place and the Eastbourne property which had been bought by her great-uncle, Lord Wilmington. And, much to the regret of subsequent generations of Comptons, she also carried off all the family plate bearing the Compton Arms, which is still to be seen on the dining-table of the present Duke of Devonshire. The Compton tradition is that her father left her his London house * with its contents, and that by mischance at the time of his death the plate was in that house, where it had been used for some function, though it was packed ready for its journey back to Castle Ashby.

Horace Walpole's visit to Ashby.

Mention should here be made of a visit paid to Castle Ashby by Horace Walpole and his friend Cole in July 1763. At this date, it will be remembered, Lord Northampton had just lost his wife and was himself dying at Geneva. In a letter to G. Montagu, Walpole thus describes it :—

"It has rained perpetually to-day, and made us experience the rich soil of Northamptonshire, which is clay-pudding, stuck full of villages. . . . Castle Ashby is most magnificently triste, and has all the formality of the Comptons. I should admire it if I could see out of it, or anything in it, but there is scarce any furniture, and the bad little frames of glass exclude all objects. There are many modern portraits, and one I was glad to see of the Countess of Shrewsbury."

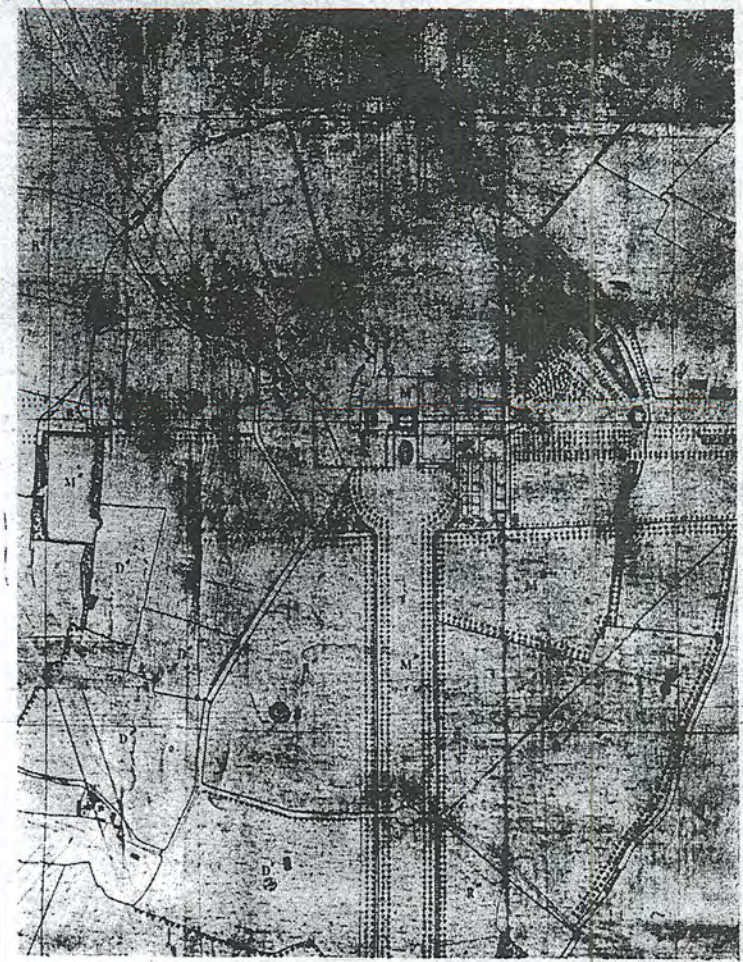
Mr. Cole, who accompanied him, also complains that he could not see out of the windows, and is still less complimentary when he says,†

"Castle Ashby is placed in a bottom without any prospect from the house, which is one of the most gloomy and melancholy, both without and within side, I ever saw, occasioned chiefly by the stone window frames and old glass, and very old furniture. The house is large, a square built round a large and spacious court, all of stone, with balustrades both within and without of monstrous large capital letters of texts of Scripture. There is a very handsome Middle Front by Inigo Jones of the Ionic Order, with two Octagon Towers in the corners by it. The Hall is a very noble room with a Screen of the Ionic Order. The Church stands at a small distance from the house, but we had no time to go into it.

We sometimes regret at Ashby all the modernising done there in about 1800. But the old diamond panes in the windows apparently had their disadvantages, though the visitors must surely have been in an unappreciative mood, perhaps because of the rain and mud. One of the present boasts of the house is its commanding position and its unequalled view across a typically English park. Perhaps the house and its bowling-green on the north side were at that time thickly planted out as protection against the north and east winds.

* According to Lady Alwyne, F.D. 1340, XII. the house above referred to was Burlington House.

† Cole MSS. British Museum, Vol. XXXIII. p. 44 (see copy F.D. 1322).



PART OF MAP OF PARISH OF CASTLE ASHBY

1760

(Before Capability Brown's Alterations)

Of the furniture Cole also says :—

"All the window seats or tables are of different sorts of make, most English, but some very fine of Vert Antique. The furniture is old throughout, and it would cost an immense sum to furnish it according to its magnificence."

The Earl's debts.

Though Charles owned the family estates for only a short time, he considerably added to the encumbrances on them. A Statement* made out on August 25th, 1762, shows that, having inherited charges from his predecessors amounting to £29,500, he increased them in five years by a further £31,500. His trustees were instructed by his Will to sell his Hampshire estate to go to payment of his debt; they did so in 1766 for £16,009.† It is difficult to account for the spending of so much money, but the preparations for his mission to Venice must have been costly. He does not seem to have spent much on his residences, but immediately before he went abroad he was re-doing the "rooms on the third floor at Ashby"; and it is amusing to read that among them my Lord's Dressing-Room was "to have a bath stove from London." ‡

Maps and Surveys of 1760.

In 1760 Surveys and Maps were made by "E. J. Eyre, Surveyor," of Yardley Chace, of Yardley Parish and of Castle Ashby Parish. Part of the last is reproduced opposite. In the same year, too, Robert Adam the architect,§ then thirty-two years old, was employed to make a map‖ of "a proposed lay-out for Pleasure Ground, Kitchin Garden and a Small Park for Deer, with the situation proposed for New Offices, Court of Stables, and Steward's House." None of Adam's proposals seems to have been carried out, unless the "Small Park for Deer" is meant when we are told elsewhere that a "Red Deer Park Wall" was built in 1761 for £51 9*s.* 9*d.*¶ The only area shown on Adam's map as surrounded by a wall is the one now occupied by the Kitchen Garden, Orchard and stone-pit field; on Eyre's map it is called the "Rabbit Warren," but on a third map made a few years later it is called "Red Deer Paddock"; it may have been used for some selective breeding.

But there is much interesting information to be derived from a study of Eyre's three maps. The one of Castle Ashby Parish** shows the Elizabethan and 1686 walled gardens stretching down the East Avenue into the Park; and from there a wall ran in a straight line to the southern end of the Prior's Walk,†† where it met another straight wall, running at right angles to it from the present head-gardener's house down by Terracotta Bridge, alongside the Nursery, to the Warren Wall. Across the front of the Castle, and about twenty yards from it, ran a railing or wall

* F.D. 1135h. † F.D. 1116h. ‡ F.D. 1333.
§ Died in 1792, and buried in Westminster Abbey.
‖ F.D. 1348, VI. Signed "Robert Adam, Architect, 1760."
¶ F.D. 1037. ** Reproduced opposite.
†† So called after Bishop Lord Alwyne Compton, who insisted on his brother making a walk there with herbaceous borders on each side.

with a gateway opposite the front door, thus enclosing what in 1710 was called the forecourt. The semicircle of limes stood, as it has done ever since 1696, gathering the eye into the main southern Avenue, which in 1760 ended at the top of the hill a mile from the Castle; from there started a narrow ride, which ran between fences to Denton Wood, then through woodland till opposite the Chace Park Farm, and then as a narrow avenue to the far side of the Deer Park. It was called "The Long Riding," a name still in 1929 given to the Avenue by some of my woodmen. What is now known as the Steeplechase Course was then called "The Wold," and seems to have been completely clear of trees, and to have included all the fields outside the Deer Park as far as Gog and Magog and the site of the present Bark Hovels. Apart from a narrow marshy space on either side of the Olney road, continuous woodland ran in 1760 from "Ranson" (Ravenstone) Coppice to Cold Oak Coppice. That part of the wood between Olney road and "Spotley Corner" was called Yardley Pasture; and the present pond in Old Pond Wood was in 1760 the New Pond, and the Old Pond was across the ride to the south. The western avenue from the Castle ran from the public road by the Home Farm across the northern end of the Engine Pond to the estate boundary. The northern avenue ran from the bottom of the hill away to the Grendon–Cogenhoe road. When the above maps were made the Earl never dreamt that about four years later his brother would be planning drastic alterations to the lay-out of the Ashby gardens and grounds.

CHAPTER XVII

SPENCER, 8TH EARL

(1763–1796)

SPENCER was born on August 5th, 1738, and, as has already been suggested, he probably spent his childhood at Lisbon. He was a year younger than his brother Charles. Mention has also been made* of his runaway marriage, when he was nineteen, with Miss Lawton.

Rules for Yardley Chace.

After their marriage Spencer obtained on September 2nd a Commission as Captain in the 31st Regiment of Foot, the East Surrey Regiment.† But they seem to have lived chiefly during the next five years in the Chace Park Farm,‡ where his brother must later have given him some occupation in the Chace, for we find him drawing £20 as Ranger's salary for the half year to Ladyday 1761.§ The following document‖ describes in detail the duties of the Ranger, Keepers and Pages in the same year:—

ORDERS to be Observed and kept in the Chace of the Right Honourable CHARLES Earl of Northampton commonly called Yardley Chace in the County of Northampton Anno 1761.

First. Lett the Keepers and Pages all meet at half an hour past Ten every night, between the Pond on the Wold and William Taylors Lodge (except some other place is appointed by the Ranger) of whom two at least to be on Horse Back and the rest to remain on foot there as the Grand Watch.

Second. Lett the Horsemen mount about Eleven and ride very gently to visit the rough Lawn the Lawn in Bigging Walk and all Suspected places.

Third. Lett every Man be armed with a Quarter Staff and a Pistoll in good order.

Fourth. In Case of any Disturbance. If the Horsemen think the Deer is not killed lett one of them give the quickest notice he can first to the main Watch and then to the Ranger and the other endeavour to keep within Sight of the Deer Stealers, But if they find the Deer is killed and any of the Rogues have horses, lett them endeavour to shoot a Horse or a Dogg but

* See page 182 above.
† F.D. 981.
‡ Which in 1699 had been the residence of the Agent, Thomas Newton (F.D. 1010).
§ F.D. 1037.
‖ F.D. 1338.

if they are not near enough or cannot get to them, lett them fire a Pistoll to alarm the main Watch who are immediately to make the best of their Way to the Report.

Fifth. Lett every Man do his Utmost Endeavour to shoot either a Horse or a Dogg, but be careful not to shoot a Man except it is in his own Defence but endeavour if possible to secure a Prisoner or two either by Chaining the Gates or by any other Means.

Sixth. The Word shall be given every after Noon att the Rangers Lodge.

THE FURTHER ORDERS ARE

First. The Ranger shall keep Six Couple and an half of Hounds. Each Keeper Three Couple and each Page One Couple for the Hunting and killing of Deer when Ordered the Hounds during the Hunting Season to be kept in one Kennal and no Keepers to have a Bitch Warded by any Dogg without leave of the Ranger or his Huntsman.

Second. Each Keeper and Page shall assist in hunting in the Outlying Deer as also in hunting the Deer out of Inclosed Coppices as well in any other Walk as in his own.

Third. The Ranger may keep in the Open Chace Twelve Cows and a Bull and Eight Horses and in the rough Lawn a Breeding Stock of Cow kine not exceeding Nine in number as also a breeding Mare and Four Colts.

Fourth. The Keeper of Bigging Walk may keep in the open Chace twelve Cows and a Bull and Five Horses and in Broadroad a breeding stock of Cattle not exceeding Six in number beside a Mare and Four Colts.

Fifth. The Keepers of Denton Walk and Roundhay may keep in the Open Chace two Horses and two Heifers beside what may conveniently be kept in their respective Walks but no cattle to be put or kept in any Inclosed Coppice Viz. Old Osway Whiston Pike Brimstons Hay Young Osway etc.

Sixth. The two Pages may keep in the open Chace each Eight Cows and two Horses as also two Heifers and no more.

Seventh. The Ranger Keepers and Pages may not buy any Hogs to put into the Woods to Acorns nor take in any ajistments but may have the Liberty of puting in the Stock of Hogs they have kept and bred the preceeding Summer provided they have only one Sow and her Pigs.

Eighth. The Ranger may kill and take to his own Use and benefit two Brace of Bucks and three Brace of Does annually, the Keeper of Bigging Walk one Buck and one Brace of Does, The Keeper of Denton Walk a Buck and One Brace of Does, The Keeper of Roundhay one Brace of Bucks and One Brace of Does and each Page a Buck and a Doe Yearly for their several Fees.

Ninth. The Ranger may have yearly out of each Sale two Acres of Underwood the one next in value to the Tith Acre Each Keeper One Acre and Each Page Half an Acre to be assigned and set out by the Woodward.

Tenth. The Ranger and Keepers may mow the Grass growing in the Ridings

of the Inclosed Coppices in their respective Walks but not in any bald Places within the Coppices.

Eleventh. The Ranger Keepers and Pages shall maintain their several Lodges and all the Outhouses and Buildings in good and sufficient repair.

Twelfth. The Ranger and Keepers shall have the Deer killed in the said Chace by turns, and the Money arising by carrying out Venison and Field Money shall be equally divided amongst them.

Thirteenth. Chance Venison to go as Usual one Half to the Ranger and the other to the Keeper of the Walk where the Deer belongs, but this is always to be at the discretion of the Ranger to judge which are Chance Deer and which are Warrantable And if any Keeper kill a Deer on purpose which is not warrantable he shall be obliged to take it for his Fee.

Fourteenth. The Skins Shoulders and Umbles may go to the Ranger and Keepers and the Heads of all Warrantable Deer to the Pages by turn.

Fifteenth. The Pages shall by turns give Notice to the several Keepers of the Times appointed for Hunting and shall also assist the Ranger and Keeper of Bigging Walk in carrying Home and Breaking up their several Deer, Each in the Walk to which he belongs.

Sixteenth. To Prevent some Inconveniencys and also to prevent any Distemper getting into the Chace among Cattle the Ranger Keepers and Pages may not take in any Ajistment Beasts or Horses to Stock their Commons but they are to Stock according to these Rules and Orders And any Beasts or Horses which shall be taken in contrary thereto are and shall be forfeited Shot and Burried or otherwise disposed of.

Seventeenth. The Ranger Keepers and Pages shall do all in their Power to preserve the Pheasants both Young and Old the Hares and all other Game which shall come into or breed in the Chace and shall not destroy any Game themselves nor suffer any other Person or Persons to destroy it.

Eighteenth. The Keepers and Pages of the Several Walks shall themselves and their Servants or some of them go regularly round their respective Walks twice at least every day to see whether all be quiet amongst the Deer and to see that no Person or Persons unlawfully Break Cut and take away any of the Hedges Mounds Fences Timber Boughs Underwood and Pales and to do all other necessary Services about the Sales in their Several Walks as good and faithful Keepers ought to do.

Spencer's children.

On September 10th, 1758, Spencer's wife bore him, in the parish of All Saints, Northampton,* a daughter, Frances, who was in later life to spend much of her time at Ashby, as she never married. And on March 21st, 1760, they had a son, Charles, afterwards 1st Marquis, who was born in the Chace Park Farm.†

The Northants Militia.

On November 25th, 1760, Spencer was made a Groom of His Majesty's Bed-chamber,‡ which post he resigned in April 1763. From March 1761 till his brother's

* Collins. † F.D. 1261 and 1335.
‡ Letter, December 12th, 1760, of Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, Vol. I. p. 9.
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death he was M.P. for Northampton Borough.* On February 18th, 1763, he received a Commission as Major in the Northamptonshire Militia,† and on December 29th in that year he was elected Recorder of Northampton in succession to his brother.‡ Spencer resigned his Militia commission the same year on succeeding his brother, but there is an amusing account of the first Inspection of the Militia at the beginning of July 1763 : §

"On Monday last the Regiment of Militia of this County was reviewed here by the Right Hon. the Earl of Sussex‖ their Colonel, and made a very genteel Appearance; the Men went through their several firings and Evolutions with the greatest exactness and applause. Most of the principal Gentlemen and Ladies of the County were present, and were politely entertained at Breakfast by the Hon. Spencer Compton Esq. Major to the said Regiment (under Tents pitched in the Field for that Purpose) where a complete Band of Musick was provided, and played during the whole time; and the Gentlemen and Ladies afterwards dined at the Red-Lion Inn in this Town, where, after Dinner, the Healths of their Majesties and the rest of the Royal Family, the Earl of Halifax, Earl of Sussex, Lord St. John, the Hon. Major Compton, etc., were drunk, between which the Men fired off in Vollies with the greatest exactness, and to conclude the firing, three Vollies were given for the Ladies. The Company were so pleased thereat, that they gave forty Guineas to be distributed amongst the Men to drink their Healths. And the Evening concluded with a brilliant Ball, given by the Colonel and the rest of the Officers of the said Regiment, at the George Inn.¶ And on the day following the said Regiment was dismissed for the present, when the Men testified their great satisfaction in the Service by loud Huzza's for the polite and kind treatment of their Colonel and the rest of their Officers."

But as Lord Lieutenant Spencer did not altogether lose touch with the Militia. In July 1772 he inspected the regiment, and after the inspection "his Lordship was pleased to order Twenty Pounds to be given to the Private Men to drink his Majesty's Health." In 1778 the regiment was embodied for active service, and several noblemen and gentlemen came forward to fill vacant commissions. The *Northampton Mercury* praised them highly, "for quitting the Ease and Elegance they enjoyed in their Mansions for the toilsome (but honourable) following of War."

Soon after his succession, too, Spencer was elected President for life of the Northamptonshire Infirmary. This Institution had been founded in 1743, and from that date till 1851 the Earls of Northampton were in turn elected its President for life.

We get some idea of Spencer's appearance at the time of his succession in 1763

* F.D. 1037. † F.D. 984. ‡ F.D. 983.
§ C.A. Markham's "History of the Northants and Rutland Militia," p. 11.
‖ Of Easton Maudit.
¶ Demolished in 1920, it stood in George Row at the corner of Bridge Street.

PORTRAIT OF SPENCER, 8TH EARL OF NORTHAMPTON, HIS WIFE JANE (LAMPTON) AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN.
(FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR BENJAMIN WEST, P.R.A., AT CASTLE ASHBY.)

whence they drove out in a hack chaise to Waterloo. At Liège Compton again drew the Cathedral, and at Aix they were most interested in Charlemagne's horn, which "exactly resembles the one at York, and is consequently like mine." After Cologne, Lucerne, Interlaken (where Margaret says she would prefer to live "if any misfortune should force her to live in Switzerland") and many other intermediary places, they reached Avenches, where "the late Lord Northampton resided 25 years." There was still standing in the garden the thatched lodge which he had a fancy to inhabit during the latter period of his life; and Lady Frances's picture was found still hanging in one of the rooms. Passing on through Geneva and Lausanne, they came to Montreux, where Lady Frances was staying with M. Dufours, an old Swiss clergyman, who had formerly been a tutor to Lord Northampton. On one of their days here, Compton and Aunt Frances made a trip to the Lac de Bré, among the mountains, where the late Lord Northampton had had a summer cottage. From Montreux they crossed the Simplon and visited palaces and pictures at Milan, Padua, etc., on their way to Venice; whence they returned to Florence, where they stayed a month from November 11th till December 12th. They reached Rome for Christmas, and remained there sight-seeing (on one occasion being presented to the Pope) till February 24th, 1817, when they started back to England.

It was this same winter that Mrs. Clephane and her two unmarried daughters also went to Rome on their first visit; and Sir Walter Scott had strongly advised them to travel with a man, saying he had found more than once a pair of loaded pistols in his pocket were "necessary to secure both respect and security. It may doubtless be better now, but the English are always unpopular on the Continent."* A month later Walter Scott wrote about Margaret to her mother at Torloisk :— †

"I lately heard her mentioned in a company where my interest in her was not known, as one of the very few English ladies now in Italy, whom their acquirements, conduct and mode of managing time, induce that part of foreign society, whose approbation is valuable, to consider with high respect and esteem," etc., etc.

A few months after their return in 1817 their first daughter, Marianne, was born, on June 21st; and fourteen months later, on August 20th, 1818, William also was born.‡

During the autumn of 1818 the Comptons were staying at Ashby with the Northamptons. In September they had a party for the Races, and a month later another one for the music meeting which evidently lasted some days. Maria describes "Our Corporation Dinner," which was an annual affair, and perhaps the one which has already been mentioned as expected from the Northampton Borough Recorder. On this occasion fifteen came, and eighteen sat down to dine, including

* F.D. 1340, XVI. p. 54. † F.D. 1340, XVI. p. 61. ‡ Baptised at Castle Ashby.

the Lords Northampton and Compton. Before dinner the Marquess showed them round the gardens, then they dined at a quarter after five in the dining-room, and came to the ladies in the drawing-room a little before nine. As hour after hour passed by, Maria and her daughter-in-law must have felt more and more uneasy; but when the men joined them, "they all appeared sober, though . . . they had 9 bottles of French wine besides Claret, Port and Madeira. They were all gone before 10."

Again Lady Northampton tells us during this autumn :—

"Margaret has chose the room over the still room what was formerly Miss Gould's room, and which we had fitted up for an additional nursery. It has two small rooms within it; the one is Compton's dressing room, the other Margaret uses as her own boudoir, for drawing, writing, teaching her boy, etc. She is much more active and cheerful than she used to be and in much better health. Expresses herself as very happy here and delighted with it; has no wish for more company and always finds the day too short, tho she rises early at 7 or 8 o'clock and then begins her painting. I am sure Compton is very happy with her. . . . The children are also quite well and very good. William has already left off his cap, as he has a nice head of hair."

Then there were the "Rent day dinner parties in the Armoury," and various county work in which Compton, as Parliamentary member, was expected to take a share.

"Thursday is our quartersessions, and Compton must of course attend them, and will sleep that night at Dr. Kerr's,* where Lord Spencer is also to be. Next week is our Assizes."

In later life Lord Compton was for many years Chairman of Quarter Sessions.

It has already been said that in the General Election of 1820 Spencer lost his seat in Parliament through neglect to show proper gratitude after the 1812 Election to those who had voted for him. At about the same time his health went wrong, and there were grave fears that he had started consumption. Margaret's eyes too were again giving her trouble, so that she could scarcely read; and on March 6th, 1821, she had had her fourth child, Spencer. In consequence they decided to go abroad for three years, for the benefit of both their healths; and they left England † on July 6th, 1821, and did not get back till June 1824. They were accompanied throughout their travels by Miss Dalrymple. In the first December Compton's health had greatly improved, but in January a letter shows that his parents were very

* Dr. Kerr was the leading physician in Northampton, and was largely instrumental in raising funds for building the Northampton Infirmary, where his portrait now hangs. He was also prominent in the Militia. Mrs. Kerr was first cousin to Anne Hougham, second wife of the 8th Earl.

† Their address in December 1819 and at the beginning of 1821 was 38 Lower Brook Street (F.D. 1145 and 1914).

worried at news of his "continual spitting," though Mrs. Clephane at Torloisk pretended to be "satisfied it must be a small vessel in the throat that is liable to rupture from a cough," and Sir Walter Scott suggested * that "as he is naturally thin, his looks may make strangers think him worse than he is." In this narrative it will not be necessary to give more than the barest outline of their movements during this trip; but it is described in minute detail in Lady Compton's Diary: † From August 2nd to 7th they stayed with Lady Frances at her house at Berne. From September 6th to 15th they were at Milan with the Northamptons. Two days later the latter started homeward, and the Comptons toured round for six weeks, till on December 5th "they got into their house in Rome and hired some servants." Here they spent the winter, but when the weather got too hot they moved to Naples and "took possession of a very small and very pretty house, 43 Sta. Egeziaca falcone," on May 23rd, 1822. They returned to Rome again on October 25th until March 2nd, 1823, when they left for Palermo with Miss Dalrymple, a Mon. Bertolini and a Baron Martinez. They travelled almost continuously round the picturesque villages of Sicily till July, and then round the neighbourhood of Naples till September 27th, when they reached Rome for the winter. In the following April they left Rome, and reached England in June 1824, thus ending this tour of three years, which is illustrated by beautiful pen and brush sepia sketches by Compton, some of which are bound together in a book at Ashby.‡

Their stay in England only lasted a few months, for in November we hear of them again at their villa in Rome. Mr. Henry Fox, afterwards the last Lord Holland, lived in Rome as a cynical bachelor from 1818 to 1830, and in his Journal § he says he met the Comptons for the first time at their villa in November 1824. He describes her as a "gigantic, well-informed, hard-headed, blue Scotchwoman," and in the following July he calls her "too pedantic"; but by September he "grew to know more and like infinitely better Lady Compton. She has a good deal of sound sense and a wonderful deal of information—full of Scotch superstitions and privileges, for which I like her the better." Later again: "I like her much better than her sister,‖ to whose merits I am quite blind." He suffered from heart attacks, and Lady Compton was amazingly kind, and tried all she could to alleviate his sufferings. "Whatever her defects may be, she cannot be called either false or frivolous."

In February 1823 Sir Walter Scott had begged Mrs. Clephane to bring her two unmarried daughters more out into the world. He begged her not to be the recluse she has been of late, nor to reside so constantly on her island. "And for my two

* January 23rd, 1824, to Anna Jane. † F.D. 1340.
‡ Shelf 1/8. Others of his sketches at various dates are in the Wall Cupboard in the Entrance Hall, though many of these have been thrown away in 1928.
§ "Journal of Henry Fox," by the Earl of Ilchester (Thornton Butterworth, Ltd., 1923).
‖ Wilmina.

young ladies I think it scarce fair that they remain at such a distance from all that society of friends who love, and strangers who admire, them." She had contracted debts in the course of bringing up her daughters, and Scott begs her not to dream of repaying them out of income by living an economical life in Mull. In concluding this letter he sends "my loving respects to Anna Jane & Will: with the same sincerity as if they were my own bairns." And in a letter to Margaret he writes: "for are you not half my daughter in the old and confirmed friendship I bear you?" Indeed the friendship between Scott and the Clephanes was a very sincere one; the mother consulted him about all her family business, and he had the greatest respect for her common sense. In 1824 he wrote to Anna Jane: "What would I give for an hour of your mother and you amidst all this bald unprofitable chat" (in Edinburgh). And again to Mrs. Clephane: "But you cannot cease to be a Highlander, nor I to love and prefer my own border country, and so we must submit to be separated, though there are few or none I so often wish near me as you and my young friends." The warm friendship that existed between their two families is illustrated most strikingly in Scott's letters on the deaths of Lady Scott and Lady Northampton, in Mrs. Clephane's letter to Scott describing the confidence they all felt in his opinions, and in Miss Annie Scott's letter of August 1832 telling of her father's illness. The last letter of the series shows that Mrs. Lockhart wrote to Anna Jane as late as June 1842.*

Wilmina

So it was probably partly due to Sir Walter's influence that in November 1827 we for the first time find Mrs. Clephane and Wilmina staying at the Comptons' Villa.† Wilmina was born in Edinburgh on December 26th, 1803. The earliest account we have of her appearance is when she was fourteen, in a letter of Margaret from Torloisk:—

"If Wilmina's face and figure did not partake considerably of the faults of mine, she would be handsome. She has a fine complexion, dark blue eyes, and a very good-humoured lively expression; but her little face is too broad . . . she is more like the healthy inmate of a farm house than a well-bred little Miss."

Wilmina was twelve years younger than Margaret, and in December 1827 was therefore twenty-four years old. According to Lady Alwyne, she must have been "lovely; she had the features and colouring of a Madonna by Luini," and in addition a charming smile and plenty of life and high spirits. There are portraits at Ashby of Mrs. Clephane and her daughters. Of Mrs. Clephane there are two duplicate water-colour sketches when she was an old woman, with a very kindly expression. Of Margaret there is a small panel oil painting by Severn, sitting in a

* The 101 letters from Walter Scott are placed together and catalogued as F.D. 1357.
† Anna Jane remained at Torloisk.

black dress reading, with the Villa d'Este in the background. Of Wilmina there is a copy by her niece Marianne of a portrait by Severn, pair to the above; she is seated in a red dress writing. There is also a marble bust of Wilmina in the Long Gallery.

Fox liked Mrs. Clephane, and describes her as

"Simple, hearty and sincere in her manner. Her pronunciation is a little Scotch, but her language is well chosen and her observations just. She told me one or two stories à propos of Walter Scott with spirit and humour."

Lord and Lady Compton arrived on November 18th. "She is looking very well and is happy, which gives me the greatest pleasure. I passed two agreeable hours talking over our correspondence, etc." After this their friendship increased, and he saw the Comptons nearly every day, and describes various dinner-parties, fancy dress dances, drives to St. Peter's by moonlight, etc. In March 1820 he drove from Rome with the Comptons to Naples to see Vesuvius in eruption, "three of us, one being Lady Compton, quite filled Mrs. Clephane's chaise." They returned to Rome a fortnight later.

On June 7th, 1828, the Comptons received letters from his mother and sister announcing Lord Northampton's death at Dresden on May 24th. And on the 16th they and the Clephanes started for England, which they reached in time for the funeral at Castle Ashby, where Charles was buried in the chancel of the church. The 1st Marquis seems generally to have enjoyed good health, though between 1803 and 1805 he habitually complained to his wife of gout and rheumatism, and occasionally of lumbago. He was, however, sixty-eight when he died, and he seems to have spent much of his last eight winters abroad; for Lady Alwyne, many years later, saw annual entries during these years of the Northamptons' names in the visitors' book of an inn on the Swiss-Italian frontier, recording nights of lodging there on their journey through.

Maria soon after his death bought with her own money a charming place near Horsham called Coolhurst, where she lived till her death on March 23rd, 1843, at the advanced age of seventy-six. She added considerably to the house, and, as a frieze round the top of the walls of her additions, she placed the inscription, NISI DOMINUS, etc., with which she was so well acquainted at Ashby. She was buried with her husband at Castle Ashby, and in the following spring Spencer erected the memorial to them under the east window of the North Chantry, in which new stained glass designed by Marian had been placed three years before.

In the February after her father's death Lady Elizabeth married Mr. Charles Scrase Dickins.* Engraved portraits of them hang in the Old Library. She was thirty-seven and he was thirty-five at the time of their marriage. They lived at

* In October 1829 they were at 11, Brunswick Terrace, Brighton; and in 1831 Lord N. and Mrs. Clephane were staying in different houses in the same Terrace (F.D. 1351).

West Stoke, near Chichester, for fourteen years, until Lady Northampton's death, when Elizabeth inherited Coolhurst and they lived there. When they died Elizabeth and her husband were buried together at Coolhurst. Her grandsons, Charles and Beauclerk Scrase Dickins, live there now as bachelors; they are very knowing gardeners, and keenly appreciative of everything beautiful; they are also full of stories of the old times, and have given me much information for this history.

Improvements at Castle Ashby.

No mention has been made of various improvements carried out by Charles at Ashby in his later years. The agent Scriven's diary * mentions some:—

"The Engine Pond was cleaned out and considerably improved and enlarged during the winter 1818–19" at a cost of £923.

In 1820 a new pond was made "north of the Castle at the bottom of Lord's Pasture and Kesterton's Pasture," and a new bridge "near Mrs. Howkin's barn." Other ponds were made following the line of the brook and terminating at Grendon Lane (see p. 215, above), but these were only completed by the 2nd Marquess.

In 1826 "The New Drive was completed round the Chace at 14 miles" (course described).

In 1827 a New Turnpike Road was begun from Northampton to Cold Brafield 12½ miles (the present main road), where it joined the Olney-Bedford road. The estimated cost was £3500, to which Lord N. advanced £1000.

It was in this last year of his life, too, that he added the lettered parapet round the north side of Ashby house. It runs: BEATI OMNES QUI TIMENT DOMINUM QUI AMBULANT IN VIIS EJUS: LAUDATE NOMEN DOMINI: 1827. And over the bay windows of King William's Room it reads: SALUS EST IN DOMINO. Probably at the same time the steps leading to the North Door were altered to what they are now. A sketch † of the North Front in 1815 shows an iron railing opposite the doorway, and steps running down east and west to the gravel path.

Compton Wynyates.

It is recorded ‡ that in August 1826 Lord and Lady Northampton went over with their daughter Elizabeth to see Compton Wynyates. They must have witnessed its ruinous state with despair, but there is no evidence of any steps having been taken to repair the roofs or unblock the windows.

* F.D. 1351. † In F.D. 1364.
‡ F.D. 1356. Letter from Wilmington to his mother in Rome.

CHAPTER XIX

SPENCER, 2ND MARQUESS

(1828–1851)

AFTER the funeral of the 1st Marquess Margaret's health was not good enough to allow of a long stay in England, and on September 23rd, 1828, the Northamptons were back in Rome. Mrs. Clephane and her two unmarried daughters probably travelled out with them, but at any rate they were all one party when, on November 15th, they left Naples for a winter of seven months in Sicily. They spent most of the time at Palermo, where it must have been during this winter that Wilmina did those sepia sketches that hang at Ashby with many others by her of Torloisk, Ashby and Compton.* In May Spencer had to return to England, and was at 6 Portland Place complaining continually of a sore throat. The others moved in June to Naples, whence Margaret writes: "I am not so strong as I have been and must take care of myself." On August 1st she started from Naples to England, which she reached on the 16th. Mrs. Clephane wrote home from Naples that "Margaret has been obliged to take flight to avoid the imminent risk of being laid up with a fever . . . the summer in Italy is absolutely prejudicial to her health and strength." They were at Beaumont † at the end of the month, where the Dowager Lady Northampton describes them: ". . . the boys have been at lessons with their father; he daily has his boys there with him for an hour . . . the two eldest (Charles and William) are very rough to the youngest, and though Spencer is often in the wrong and very provoking to his brothers, yet he must not be hurt. . . . William still wishes to be a sailor and I find his mother likewise wishes it. . . . In about two years he ought to go to the Naval Academy at Portsmouth."

During the next winter (1829–30) they bought the Villa Negroni from Lady Westmorland; a sketch of it hangs in the Long Gallery. On March 21st Fox drove out to see them, and is most uncomplimentary about their taste. In Lady Westmorland's time "it looked noble, elegant, and in every room there was some

* The artist Vernet said of her sketches at this time, "Ce n'est pas la main d'une demoiselle, c'est un bras de fer" (Lady Alwyne, F.D. 1340, XVI. p. 117).

† Notes from a letter, lent by Charles Scrase Dickins, written by the Dowager Lady Northampton to her daughter Lady F. E. Dickins, dated August 29th, 1829.

PORTRAIT OF SPENCER, 2ND MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON.
(FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR H. RAEBURN, R.A., AT CASTLE ASHBY).

appearance of the good taste of its owner. Now it is far different. In every room reigns the same shabby, slovenly air for which the Marchioness' old house was so remarkable. The noisy, riotous, ill-conditioned servants playing and romping in the garden and staircase out of livery; plates and dishes, dirty napkins, etc. left on the landing place. . . . Lord N. shewed me the great room, the proportions of which are very fine. But they will soon disfigure it with their invariable bad taste." This condemnation is rather surprising when we remember that Lord Northampton sketched enthusiastically himself and was to become President of the Royal Society and a Trustee of the National Gallery and the British Museum, that his mother was an exquisite painter of flowers and shells, and that painting had all her life been his wife's chief hobby.

Death of 2nd Marchioness.

A few days later, on April 2nd, Mr. Fox tells us: "Lady Northampton expired at five o'clock in her mother's arms. Tho' weak and evidently too slowly recovering from her premature delivery,* nothing had occurred to alarm her family. Lord N. was gone to a scavo at Corneto and Miss Clephane to a party to Veii. She has been for five years my best and dearest friend, and tho' but too often, and alas very lately, we had been on bad terms, yet she was the being upon earth of whose regard and friendship I felt surest. . . . It was a dreadful month, all recollections of which I wish to dismiss if possible. The miserable family set off on April 26th for England." Lord Northampton thus announced their loss to his three sons at school:—

Rome, April 6th, 1830.

"My Dear Boys,

"I write to you all three, for you are all equally dear to me, as you were all equally dear to your poor Mother. Very dear indeed you were to her. Mr. Dickins or Mr. Everard will have already broken to you the terrible blow which has fallen on your heads and on mine. The happiness of your poor Father is blasted and he must look to the virtues and happiness of his Children as his best consolation in this world, when he is now left desolate. For you the loss of so affectionate a Mother is indeed a terrible one, but you have life before you; may your lives be happy and virtuous. May God grant this to my prayers. It is some comfort that your Mother's death, though certainly not unaccompanied with pain, was yet not on the whole a very painful one. At least so we believe, but she had so much fortitude that it is difficult to know how far she may have concealed such feelings from fear of distressing those about her. She had been going on quite well for very many days since her confinement, and all danger was believed to be so completely over that I had gone an excursion into the country for a few days, and the very day of her death your Aunt Anna Jane thought her so well that she had also gone to Veii, from whence she did not return till after all was over. The Physicians themselves had left her, expecting no danger, and only her poor Mother

* Margaret had been born on March 14th.

and Sister Wilmina and the nurse were alone in the room. When having had occasion to be moved in her bed, she complained of more pain, and then uttering the single word "Poor" fell back in what Wilmina hoped was but a faint, but Mrs. Clephane judged too truly that all means were in vain, for she was dead! alas, alas! I was sent for expressly, but did not know the extent of my misfortune till I reached the gate of Rome, for I was told merely that she was taken very ill, and I hoped that she might be better when I arrived, or at the worst that I might be in time to see her in this world. But my hopes, so deceitful, much predominated. Your Grandmamma keeps up wonderfully, but she never can recover the blow I am sure, and I believe that it is with the thought that she will ere very long rejoin her lost daughter that she consoles herself. But she does her best to keep up her strength nevertheless. Marianne is the greatest comfort to me in my affliction. She is so kind and affectionate and considerate. So are Mrs. Clephane, your Aunt and Miss Macdougal * all desire their best loves to you, my dear boys. I am wonderfully well, I think, considering what a loss I have had. But my throat plagues me a little—grief is a very bad addition to such a complaint. Indeed it was quite well before my irreparable misfortune. Your Mother's last days were very much rendered happy by Mr. Everard's report of Compton's great improvement. Let this be your reward, my dear boy, for your affectionate heart loved your Mother dearly—Give pleasure to her disembodied spirit by the same behaviour and consideration to your bereaved Father. God Almighty bless you and William and Spencer. To the two last I add the same hope that their good conduct may continue to give comfort to their Father and their friends, and may their Mother, who I trust is in heaven, receive augmented happiness even there, as assuredly she will if she is able to look down on earth, by the hope of seeing her children there also hereafter.

"We shall leave Rome immediately after the christening of your little sister, who is to be named Margaret Mary Frances Elizabeth. The first is the name by which I shall call her, after her Mother. I travel with Anna Jane, Marianne and Miss Macdougal, and shall probably reach Brighton by the end of May. If you are with poor little Alwyne, give him a kiss for me—and another in remembrance of his other parent whom he is no more to see in this world. Poor Child, he cannot understand his loss. If you are with poor Teresa,† tell her that her poor Mistress spoke of her with great regard the last days of her life, as Miss Macdougal will tell her when they meet. Your Grandmamma will bring Baby to England.

"Your ever most affectionate Father,

"NORTHAMPTON."

In 1832 Spencer had printed for private circulation, as a memorial to Margaret, the Poem Irene, which she had written in June 1814, and a few miscellaneous poems. A copy is in the Castle Ashby Library.‡ In acknowledging the present of a copy, William Wordsworth says, "They are written with simplicity, pathos and energy."§

* Marianne's governess—generally called "Midoo."
† Teresa, an Italian, became henceforward Lady Marianne's maid.
‡ Shelf 2/5.
§ F.D. 1150. 35. IV.

On September 18th, following his wife's death, Lord Northampton went abroad with his mother, now sixty-three years of age, with his children Alwyne and Marianne, and with his sister-in-law, Anna Jane. They travelled along the French Riviera to Rome, where they stayed from the end of October till April 18th, 1831. We are told by Anna Jane that at the beginning of April she and Northampton went for the day for a melancholy walk in the Villa d'Este, which, however, she enjoyed as "revisiting a place *she* loved so well." She collected some seed of the great planes there to sow at Torloisk. They got home to England by the end of May, and Lord Northampton and the boys were to visit Mrs. Clephane at Torloisk later in the summer. On their way home they spent four days at Montreux with Aunt Fanny, who did not live to see them again. It has already been mentioned that so early as just after her father's death she thought repeated bleeding was necessary to her constitution. Although she rode nearly every day for some years, her health can never have been good. In 1800 Maria says her trouble on that occasion was more a bilious than a dropsical attack; in the autumn of 1803 she "continues very indifferent . . . and cannot keep off the dreadful sickness that attacks her every morning." Soon after that she must have gone abroad, and in 1816 we already find her at Montreux, and in 1821 at Berne. We do not again hear of her in England, and it was at Montreux that she died, aged seventy-four, in 1832. She was buried at Avenches with the father to whom she had devoted all the best years of her life.* Sir Walter Scott said of her when she was fifty-seven years old:† "She is a spirited old lady, fond of dogs and horses, and had a pair of loaded pistols to defend her house in person when it was threatened in the corn bill riots."

From May 1831 onwards Northampton lived chiefly at Castle Ashby with his children, who were aged at the time of their mother's death, Charles fourteen, Marian thirteen, William twelve, Spencer nine, Alwyne five, and Margaret only a few weeks. In September he took "Compton" (Charles) to Eton, "where his poor mother would have been so happy to see him fixed and happy." It was on the 28th of this month, too, that Wilmina Clephane married Baron de Norman in Castle Ashby Church. She had met him in Rome some years earlier, and had soon been captivated by his cleverness, his poetry, and his enthusiasm, though the rest of the family thought him romantic and idle and could not bear the idea of her marrying a German. However, when he got employment in the German Diplomacy they were allowed to marry; and their marriage was followed in the following April by the tragedy of his death of scarlet fever. Her boy, Wilhelm, was born in August, and she kept him in England till he was about five or six years old, when she accepted a post as lady-in-waiting at the Court of Mecklenburg Strelitz, in order that she might bring him up a German. But they paid continual visits to Castle

Wilmina

* Lady Alwyne (F.D. 1340, XIII. p. 12), quoting notes by Lady E. Dickins.
† F.D. 1357b.

Ashby, and Willy was such great friends with his English cousins that he insisted he wished to become an Englishman, and was eventually naturalised, and, going into the English Diplomacy, became Attaché at Berlin. He joined the army for the Crimean War, but arrived there, to his disappointment, after the War was ended. In 1860 he was appointed to the Legation in China, and when, in September, Lord Elgin arrived on a special Mission, Willy was sent forward with Mr. Loch, afterwards 1st Lord Loch,* to make arrangements, and they were treacherously seized by the Chinese. Before the order for their release could be obtained from Prince Kung, Willy and others had died, after seventeen days of torture. Wilmina received handsome compensation for his murder from the Chinese Government, which she spent in 1863 in building there double cottages at Fanmore and in making additions to the Torloisk house which are shown in the architect's plans at Castle Ashby.† Lady Margaret Graham well remembers the house before these alterations. The present Dining-Room was the Drawing-Room, and the present Boudoir next door and part of the passage was the Dining-Room, while a circular turret-stair led down thence to the front door. Some of the coromandel, lacquer and cloisonné treasures at Castle Ashby are said to have been sent home from China by Willy.

After her sister Margaret's death, Anna Jane, who never married, kept house for Lord Northampton until about 1838, when Lady Marian came of age, and took her place. Anna Jane no doubt helped to bring up the children, though she cannot have been so well educated as their mother. Her long-sufferance of the "lovely noise" made by the children is described in later years by William the midshipman. He recalls the playing of "Blue Beard's March, Come Cheer up my Lads, etc., when Aunt A. J. used to take both fists to the piano, Compton with shovel and tongs, Spen thumping the table, little Margaret screaming, and your humble servant knocking tumblers together, Marian mixing all together, and poor dear old Teresa blessing herself and stopping her ears." ‡ The 2nd Marquis had a villa at Vevey in the winter of 1834–35, and had Marianne and her governess with him, in addition to his Aunt Emma Smith. In the same winter Anna Jane was with her mother at Torloisk, working at her worsted and occasionally singing.

In December 1836 the 2nd Marquis thought of putting paper on the walls of King William's Dining-Room instead of the old tapestry. Marianne objected that "it would not be so handsome as even the old tapestry. However, it will not prevent the room being hung with cut velvet when we are rich." She planned to take the tapestry for Queen Elizabeth's Room, which was her bedroom. The Marquis did not like criticism from his daughter, but he gave in about the paper.

The artistic taste of the children was probably considerably influenced by the

* Father of son-in-law of 5th Marquess. His thrilling book describing their adventures is at Castle Ashby.

† F.D. 1371.

‡ F.D. 1152 C.

Rev. G. S. Cautley. He came to Castle Ashby about 1830–31 as tutor to Charles, William and Alwyne, but in 1836 he was appointed Rector of Castle Ashby, when his youngest pupil Alwyne was about eleven, under a deed of resignation in Alwyne's favour as soon as the latter should have qualified for a living. In 1852 he accordingly resigned, and became Vicar of Nettleden near Ashridge. Those who, like Mr. Scriven, remember Mr. Cautley, can never cease to be influenced by his personality. In outward appearance he was insignificant, almost a dwarf in stature, so that he had to stand on a stool to be able to see out of the pulpit, and he was slightly deformed and spoke with a voice harsh and unpleasant. But his face was beautiful, and all who met him soon forgot his voice and appearance in the presence of a personality of such strength and charm. Besides his warm sympathetic nature, he was a lover of beauty in all its forms and had many artistic gifts. He was a clever painter in water-colour, and he and his wife, who was the daughter of an Academician, were no doubt partly responsible for the attainments of Lady Marian and her brothers. He wrote a good deal of poetry, of which he published two small volumes.* And his love of literature is shown by the interesting collection of sixteenth-century books on Emblems which he presented to Castle Ashby Library.†

After 1838 Anna Jane lived entirely with her mother at Torloisk until the latter's death in 1843; she then took a cottage with Wilmina near Horsham, to be near the Dickinses, and there she died in February 1860. Wilmina then lived in the cottage till her death in 1869 at Castle Ashby. Both sisters lie buried side by side in Ashby churchyard, at the south-east corner of the church. In 1841 Marian married, and Lord Northampton probably lived much alone with his two children Alwyne and Margaret, till in 1844 the William Comptons married and kept house with him till his death in 1851. It was during these latter years that he enlarged the Alpine Walk and planted many spinneys round the Scotland Ponds. But according to passports still surviving he spent some of the time travelling abroad. In the August following Marian's marriage he left England "with his suite," and spent from November till March 1842 at Naples, returning to England at the end of April. From July to September 1844 he travelled with Alwyne in Germany and Italy, and they were probably in Naples for William's wedding on August 21st. In August and September 1847 he travelled "with his family" through Germany to Vienna and Prague. And in the winter of 1849–50 he went to Egypt, where he went up the Nile to Assouan on a dahabeah with Alwyne and Margaret. Lord Alford and Marian, with their two boys aged seven and five and their tutor, accompanied them in another dahabeah. A book of Alwyne's sketches during this trip in France and Egypt is at Ashby.

The Torloisk Entail.

When Mrs. Clephane died in 1843, a question arose about the inheritance of Torloisk. On April 8th, 1785, Lachlan Maclean (Mrs. Clephane's father) had made

* "The After-glow" and "The Three Fountains." † In the Old Library.

a deed of entail, whose purpose was that Torloisk should always be the most important possession of any future owner. With this intent he tried to exclude the succession of a Peer, or of anyone who would not assume the name and arms of Maclean. As a result of this Mrs. Clephane always treated Lord William, her second oldest grandson, as her heir. But when she died, the lawyers said there was no doubt that Charles, Earl Compton, was the inheritor, until he should succeed his father and become a Peer.* Charles, however, who was now twenty-seven, agreed with everyone else that William had better succeed at once, and the property was handed over to him. When their father, the 2nd Marquess, died in 1851, the question of entail rose again, and, to avoid the expense of deciding the validity of the entail, Charles executed a Deed of Devolution in William's favour.†

Let us now describe the lives of each of the children of the 2nd Marquess, from their mother's death in 1830 to that of their father in 1851 :—

Charles was born on May 25th, 1816. He was privately baptised in London, and on July 14th received into the Church at Castle Ashby. A letter to him from his mother when he was thirteen shows that when he first went to school he was rather high-spirited :—

"I have only to praise you and tell you that everything we have lately heard of you has been delightful to us. You are no longer the plague of your masters and a source of anxiety to your parents, but a diligent and a good boy, giving satisfaction to the former, and comfort and hope of future excellence to the latter."

His mother died a few months later, and very soon afterwards, before he was fifteen, he had a bad accident while galloping up the Avenue at Castle Ashby on his pony, from a sheep running between his pony's legs. He had concussion of the brain, and was unconscious for ten days and kept for many months from Eton. Possibly as a result of this accident, he suffered much until the age of twenty-two or twenty-three from toothache and pains in the head, while soon after his father's death in 1851 he became partly paralysed, and began to suffer from terrible neuralgic pains which only left him at intervals during the next twenty-six years, and which he endured with wonderful patience and unselfishness.

At the age of fifteen he inherited his mother's small estate of Kirkness, which remained in the family till it was sold to a mining company in May 1900.‡ At the same time he took by Royal licence the surname of Douglas before that of Compton, and the Arms of Douglas quarterly with Compton ; and he was all his life very proud of his Douglas blood.

* F.D. 1173. † F.D. 1179.

‡ See Letter from Lochgelly Iron Company in F.D. 1355.
N.B.—In 1855 the Ironstone was leased to the Lochgelly Iron Company. In 1856 the annual rental of the estate was £1608. The house was finally dismantled in 1926.

Charles was educated at the Rev. John Wilder's house at Eton, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was reading Modern History and Geology in December 1834. In February 1835 he bought a horse to his liking and went fox-chasing on him. The following November his grandmother Clephane expostulated with him after a third fall for risking his neck. At Cambridge he was a member of the True Blue Club, and President of it in his last year. He seems to have lived a somewhat expensive life at Cambridge, but he took his M.A. degree in 1837. In 1850 he was created Hon. D.C.L. of Oxford. From his earliest years he took a great interest in drawing, and there is an album at Castle Ashby of chalk sketches on grey paper, done by him at Eton. Writing home when he was only sixteen, he says he has been working most industriously at it.* He always complained that Mr. Evans, the Eton drawing master, only taught landscape drawing, and was unable to teach figures. He continued his hobby at Cambridge, and the time he enjoyed there most was a long vacation during which he remained "up" at his College, working hard copying in the Fitzwilliam. Very soon after his education at Eton and Cambridge was completed he left his father at Castle Ashby in order to study painting abroad. He then had some lessons from De Wint in landscape, and travelled with a pupil of his in Italy, doing a lot of sketches at Venice. Again he travelled in Spain with Mr. Swinton and Mr. Campbell of Islay, where they had the excitement of being robbed, but where he worked hard making excellent copies of pictures at Madrid and Seville in water-colours. His numerous sketches of Castle Ashby, Torloisk, etc., were mostly done before 1845, when he went to settle in Rome, where he took a studio and lived a regular artist's life. He also tells his father in March 1846 that his studio was full of Old Masters which he had picked up very cheap.* Lord and Lady William Compton, afterwards 4th Marquis, spent a winter with him in Rome, and together they did a short sketching tour in Sicily. In Rome he sang a great deal, accompanying his tenor voice on the guitar ; and also singing duets with Lady William, when she was there. He returned to England in 1848, and exhibited at Galleries in London. At the Academy, his "Rizpah," which has since cracked irretrievably all over, created quite a sensation. He never returned to Italy again, but took a studio in Camden Town.

Lady Marian.

Lady Marian † Compton was born on June 21st, 1817, and was therefore almost thirteen at her mother's death. She had, no doubt, spent much time in her childhood learning painting and needlework from her mother in Rome, and developing that artistic taste for which she was to be so famous in her generation. After her mother's death and their return to Ashby her education must have been completed under the supervision of her aunt Anna Jane. It was during those years that she

* F.D. 1152, B.

† She seems to have been christened "Marianne," after her grandmother Clephane, but it very soon came to be spelt "Marian."

made the collection of Shells in the Bower, which was at that time known as the Shell-Room. They are probably those in the large Coromandel cupboard. The Bower was her sitting-room, and in it she touched up the painting on the panelling. On February 10th, 1841, she married Viscount Alford, eldest son of the 1st Earl Brownlow, who died ten years later before succeeding his father, and left her two sons: John, who succeeded his grandfather in 1853 and died in 1867, and Adelbert ("Addy") who in 1867, at the age of twenty-three, became 3rd Earl Brownlow. After her marriage and during her widowhood she was a constant guest at Castle Ashby, so that Addy saw a great deal of his first cousins, children of Lord William Compton, both at Ashby and Torloisk. It was during her widowhood that she painted so many of the water-colours at Ashby,* repaired the Jacobean curtains in the Morris Room, and embroidered the Chinese bed-cover in the Chinese Room. She will perhaps best be known to posterity for her success in founding the Royal School of Art Needlework, and the improvement in that craft which her enthusiasm inspired. She was supported by a strong committee under Princess Christian, and backed by artists such as Walter Crane, but the credit of its success was entirely due to Lady Marian. A portrait of Lady Marian by R. Buckner, R.A., hangs in the Organ Loft at Ashby. She was renowned in her generation for the beauty of her hands and feet. Walburger Lady Paget,† wife of Sir Augustus, ambassador in Rome, wrote of her: "She is the most highly cultivated woman I know. Her book upon needlework is just out. It is a marvel of industry, research and knowledge."‡ Lady Marian lived till February 1888, when she was seventy-one. Lady Paget says in her Diary:—

"Yesterday I heard the sad, sad news of dear Lady Marian's sudden death at Ashridge. She was, I feel, quite ready to go, for many of those she had loved so dearly had gone before her, and though outwardly her life seemed so brilliant, in reality she was very lonely, and she often tasted the bitterness which comes to high and noble souls when they come in contact with minds that are not sympathetic. To those who only knew her slightly she presented a combination of kindness and cleverness framed by the most refined and catholic culture which alone is found in the real great lady. Though never handsome or really good-looking, her figure was imposing, her carriage stately. It was a pleasure to watch the movements of her beautiful long white hands. I have known her for just thirty years, and we were most intimate. Our tastes and ideas seemed to suit in every way. We were in constant correspondence, and her unfilled place will leave a great blank in my life. I feel that with her a type has disappeared from the face of English society, which

* Including the Virgin with the Passion Flower, copies of a print of which were sold for the Northampton Infirmary.

† She painted the Elizabethan lady as a fire-screen in the Hall at Compton Wynyates, and gave it to the 5th Marquess.

‡ This book, of which there is a copy in Castle Ashby Library, is still (in 1928) the classic on the subject.

unfortunately has become too rare. Lady Marian was always splendid in her conceptions and splendid in what she did. She was easily imposed upon, and one of the great annoyances of her life had been, after having, during her eldest son's minority, bought from the Crown for the sum of sixty thousand pounds the common of Great Berkhamsted, in order to enclose it with the park of Ashridge and thus save many fine old trees, to find that she could not enclose it and that practically it did not belong to them a bit more than it did before. Lady Marian not only knew a great deal, for she had a wonderful memory, but she was witty and had much repartee. Her interest in good works, in art, in politics and society never flagged. She was devoted to her own family, and her second son, Lord Brownlow, has much of his mother's cleverness without her brilliancy. He was always perfect to her and she to him. Her great grief was that he was childless, but she never allowed this to come between her and the tender love she had for her beautiful daughter-in-law. She was always generous and always misunderstood."

It should also be said of Lady Marian, that for years after her death she was remembered most affectionately by the village people round Ashby, whom she visited very regularly.

Addy Brown

Her son Addy was the hero of any young boy. He was six foot three and of most handsome bearing, and an officer in the Grenadier Guards. He adored Belton and Torloisk above all places in the world; and at the latter place his first cousin Charles was his chief playmate, though the younger children of Lord William were also like brothers and sisters to him. There together they sailed the old "To and Fro" and led a life of irresponsible chaff. On one occasion when Lady William's brother, General Alick Elliot,* had been boasting of being able to shoot seals dead, his nephews placed a stuffed seal on the rocks and gave him a terrifically hard crawl up to it. At the first shot the seal remained motionless, but Uncle Alick's triumph was only short-lived. Addy hunted, too, with Lord Rothschild's stag-hounds, which he followed with great determination. He had a fine appreciation of Italian art, and was a great draughtsman with a strong sense of architectural proportion; in his last year he designed with pen and ink on a sheet of notepaper the mural monument in Compton Church to the 5th Marquis. He was M.P. for North Shropshire 1866–67, an Ecclesiastical Commissioner from 1872 till his death, a Trustee of the National Gallery for many years, Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board 1885–86, Paymaster-General 1887–89, and Under-Secretary for War 1889–92. From 1892 to 1906 he commanded the Bedfordshire Volunteer Infantry Brigade; and was honorary Colonel of the Lincolnshire Yeomanry, of the 4th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment, and of the Herts Battalion, the Bedford Regiment. He was Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire and A.D.C. to George V. He carried out his public duties to the admiration of everyone, though he disliked

* Whose nose was slashed nearly off in the Balaclava charge of the Light Brigade.

public life intensely. He loved all with whom he came in contact and was loved in return. He was especially devoted to the wild sport of deer-stalking, and was an extremely fine rifle shot. For over twenty years he leased Glen Canisp from the Duke of Sutherland, and a stalker there said he did not remember him missing a single decent chance, whereas he had made some amazingly difficult shots with deadly accuracy. Andrew Kerr, a remarkably fine old stalker there, was one day watching him through his glass striding down the hill, when he exclaimed. "There goes his Lordship, as noble in mind as he is in stature. I never walked with his equal." When Addy died in 1921, though he left few near relations, he left several counties full of sorrowing friends.

Lord William Compton, who became eventually 4th Marquis, was born on August 20th, 1818, and was therefore nearly twelve at his mother's death. We have already seen how, before he was eleven, he wished to be a sailor, and was encouraged in this by his mother. On June 6th, 1831, he joined the Navy, and went to the Naval Academy at Portsmouth. In the autumn of 1834 he went to sea on H.M.S. *Endymion*, commanded by Captain Mawnsell, and thoroughly enjoyed the life. He tells us they drank in a fortnight while at Cadiz in September 1835 eight dozen of brandy between twelve of them, yet no one was ever drunk. He was getting £30 a year in pay, and £60 allowance from his father; he assures his brother Charles "it is *not* enough to live like a gentleman." * Two years later, when he was eighteen, he wrote to his uncle Dickins, from the *Endymion* at Plymouth :—

"I am up and down early and late, wet and dry, all day long. . . . I intend to lay up in lavender as soon as I reach Ashby . . . will some day run down to Cambridge and see Compton. . . . Marianne tells me she longs to hear me sing, I shall certainly astonish her. I have a great wish to hear Compton strain his windpipe, as by all accounts it is very fine."

Marianne says of him in December 1836 "he is so good-natured and good-tempered, with thoroughly upright and kind feelings to everyone." He passed his examination in 1837, and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant on December 16th, 1839. A few days later he joined the *Melville* (72 guns), flagship of Rear-Admiral Hon. George Elliot,† on which the Admiral, with his wife and four daughters, was just proceeding to his station at the Cape. It was Lizzie, the second of these daughters, that he was to marry four years later.‡

* F.D. 1152, C.

† Second son of 1st Earl of Minto, married 1810 Eliza Ness of Osgodby, Yorks.

‡ The other three daughters married as follows :—
Georgina, 8th Earl of Northesk.
Catharine, Admiral Hon. Sir James Drummond, G.C.B., second son of 8th Viscount Strathallan.
Cecilia, Hon. William Jocelyn, C.B., third son of 3rd Earl of Roden.
His five sons were George, Gilbert, Horatio, Alexander, and Frederick.

A copy of the breezy little Memoir, printed for private circulation by Admiral Hon. Sir George Elliot, is among the family papers.* It gives a very graphic idea of the Navy of Nelson's day, in which all but a few aristocratic officers were recruited by the pressgang, and were entirely ignorant of the sea. One fact stands out clear in the pages of the book—Elliot was by nature and instincts a thorough seaman. He joined his first ship in 1796, at the age of twelve; and in 1798 was the first in the fleet to discover through his glass the French Fleet at anchor in Aboukir Bay. In the battle which followed he distinguished himself and gained the good opinion of his superiors. Promotion was rapid, and, being a better seaman than most of his contemporaries, he quickly earned the confidence of Nelson and Thomas Hardy. From 1806 to 1814 he commanded the *Modeste* in India, which he claimed to be the fastest sailing-ship of her day; and in her made a great name for himself. In 1830 he was made Secretary of the Admiralty, and in 1835 Fourth Lord of the Admiralty. In 1839 he claimed his right to a foreign command, and chose the Cape, and it was on this journey that Lord William Compton joined his ship. During an official cruise to West Africa he suffered severely from fever; and though in the following year he was appointed to the East Indian Command, where an expedition was just starting against China, his health did not mend, and he was obliged to resign at the end of 1841. Picking up his family at the Cape, he returned to England, where his wife became almost a chronic invalid. In 1855 he received an Admiral's pension at the age of seventy-two.

Meanwhile, it was on the above Chinese expedition that Lord William, aged twenty-two, distinguished himself. In February 1841 he was appointed to the *Wellesley* (72 guns) commanded by Commodore Sir James Gordon Bremer; and by his efforts, when commanding the *Wellesley's* barge and two cutters, assisted by Acting-Lieutenants George Campbell Fowler and John Astle, on May 24th he preserved that ship, then in the Boca Tigris, from a most formidable and well-planned attempt made on the part of the Chinese to destroy her by means of a flotilla of nearly twenty fire vessels, the whole of which, although in many instances chained in couples, and some even three together, were towed clear without doing the slightest injury. On October 10th he again commanded the *Wellesley's* boats at the reduction of Shanghai. He attained the rank of Commander on August 19th, 1842.†

On August 21st, 1844, he married Lizzie Elliot at Naples, where she and her family were travelling for the benefit of their father's health; and he thereupon left the Navy for a time, and they lived at Ashby with his father (except for one winter already mentioned as spent with Earl Compton in Rome and Sicily), keeping house for him until his death. Here were born, in 1845 Katrine (called

* F.D. 1341.

† O'Byrne's "Naval Biography."

Katie), in 1846 Mary (who died after seven weeks), in 1847 Margaret (called Minnie), in 1849 Charlie, and in 1851 Willie.*

The fourth child of the 2nd Marquis, Lord Spencer Scott Compton, was born on March 6th, 1821, and was therefore just nine at his mother's death. Sir Walter Scott was his godfather. When fifteen Marianne tells us he returned from school "with 30 very handsome heavy books, a good character, and a very nice looking face with a respectable nose and comfortable looking eyes." And two years later "... he draws ... and he disputes as obstinately as any of the Comptons." † He joined the 15th Light Dragoons, and served with them chiefly in Ireland. He died as a Captain in them on May 21st, 1854, and was buried at Ashby. His shabraque, lances, etc., hang at present in the North Hall at Ashby. A tinted drawing of "Spen," as he was called, hangs in the Old Library.

The other two children, who returned from Rome to Ashby with their father after their mother's death in 1830, were Alwyne, aged five, and Margaret, aged a few weeks. Alwyne was born at Ashby on July 18th, 1825. He subsequently went to Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, where in 1847 he was fourteenth Wrangler, and the first member of a noble family to attain such a distinction. He became the most scholarly of all the brothers and sisters. He chose the Church as his profession, and, having been ordained Deacon in 1850 and Priest in 1851, he was appointed Curate of Horsham. On August 28th, 1850, he married Florence, eldest daughter of the Rev. Robert Anderson and the Hon. Caroline, daughter of the 1st Lord Teignmouth. A congratulatory letter to the Marquis says that Florence "has been an excellent daughter to a widowed mother, and she bore the name, and I hope was instructed in the principles, of one of the best of men. Her late honoured father was one of my friends after his return from India." There is at Ashby a small portrait of Florence at the time of her marriage. It will be seen later that, after his father's death, Alwyne and Florence were to play an important part in the history of Castle Ashby.

Lady Margaret was born on March 14th, 1830, a fortnight before her mother's death. After Marian's wedding in 1841, she must have been a great deal alone with her father till his death. On June 1st, 1853, she married the Hon. Frederick Leveson-Gower, then thirty-four years of age, and by him she had a son George,‡ soon after whose birth she died, on May 22nd, 1858, of measles caught from her brother William. She was buried in Castle Ashby Churchyard, and there is a marble recumbent figure of her by Baron Marochetti in the church. Over the fireplace in the Long Gallery, too, there is a marble plaque of her head by Baron Marochetti. A pastel portrait of her in 1858 hangs in the maid's room opposite the White Room.

* All except Willie baptised at Castle Ashby.

‡ Afterwards Sir George, K.B.E., Commissioner of Woods and Forests. ‡ F.D. 1176.

Though it has been said that, after the death of his wife, Spencer Lord Northampton lived chiefly at Ashby with his children, it must not be forgotten that he also played a prominent part in public affairs in London. He was distinguished among his contemporaries for his taste in literature and art, but more especially for his devotion to science. From 1838 till 1849 he was President of the Royal Society. He was President of the Geological Society, and of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, while in 1844 he became a member of the Literary Society, and on May 26th, 1846, he received a Diploma as Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Science at Massachusetts.* He was also President of the Archæological Association from its foundation in 1844. And he was a Trustee of both the British Museum and the National Gallery. He published many books of science, poetry, and politics. A casual perusal of the list in the Catalogue of letters to him, still preserved at Ashby, gives an amazing idea of the many subjects in which he was interested and the many interesting people of his day with whom he corresponded. The list includes bishops, university professors in England and abroad, archæologists, the Astronomer Royal, scientists, poets, and politicians. The subjects on which his opinion was valued include Himalayan fossils, Egyptian antiquities, Neapolitan vases, the supply of churches and clergy to populous districts of London, volcanic minerals, the competitive designs for the Nelson Cenotaph in London, a collection of engraved stones, crystals, etc., a paper on Invertebrata, sponges, corals, etc., Irish affairs, a Polar expedition, an invitation to move the Address at the Opening of Parliament in 1842, Norman architecture, an Italian collection of marbles offered to the British Museum, a thesis on the planet Neptune, magnetic research, Greek and Roman antiquities, an article entitled "An Enquiry into the Nature and the Mode of Flying," lectures on the Slavonic Nations, the 1837 eruption of Mount Etna, etc., etc.†

Lord Northampton was on intimate terms with William Wordsworth, and stayed with him at his home, Rydal Mount; he also once took him "under his wing" to the Levee.‡ There are, besides, several letters § to him and his father from Sir Walter Scott, none of which, unfortunately, is dated, but all of which are before Margaret's death. In one he tells the 1st Marquis he is sending him "a specimen of our large wolf-greyhounds which are now become very rare in the Highlands ‖ ... the animal's name has hitherto been Gary, but Lady Compton wishes him to be called Yarrow." In another he thanks Lord Compton for the gift of a "scrutoire"

* F.D. 1063.

† A letter from Copley Fielding dated June 1840 reports having finished drawings at Staffa and from Torloisk; and also says the exhibition will close on July 11th, at which "Stonehenge" and "Staffa" are exhibited (F.D. 1147). All these pictures hang at Castle Ashby.

‡ F.D. 1150, 35. § F.D. 1357a.

‖ In a letter of 1816 (F.D. 1357c) Scott says his own "deer-hound, or blood-hound, or wolf-hound ... is descended of the Blue Spanish wolf-dog and the real deer grey-hound."

(writing-desk) made of wood from a ship of the Spanish Armada salved in Tobermory Bay. The other letters refer to his ward's business affairs.

In 1837 Spencer edited a collection of Poems by all the leading literary men of the day, and published them under the title of "The Tribute," for the benefit of the family of the Rev. E. Smedley, an author who had become blind and died in the same year. Among the contributors were Wordsworth, Southey, Landor, etc., and poems by Spencer and by Margaret were included. The book is at Ashby in the Library.*

Besides the many albums full of sketches he did during his travels abroad, there is also one containing sketches of fonts in Northamptonshire churches, which must have necessitated a very methodical tour of the county.

He made mineralogical and geological collections, which were kept in drawers in the Armoury, and were in 1880 presented in their cabinets to the Northampton Museum by his son William, 4th Marquis; one unique figured Starfish being called Stellaster Comptoni.† He also collected the Etruscan Vases in the Long Gallery, one of the best private collections in the world. His qualities have elsewhere been summed up in the following words: "Ardent zeal in the promotion of scientific truth, unaffected affability of manners, liberal but unostentatious hospitality." Such is the man we see depicted also in Raeburn's dignified picture, a highly cultivated but unaffected gentleman. In 1840, on no particular occasion, he was presented with a magnificent branching candlestick (41 inches in height), the inscription on which mentions him as "President of the Royal Society, Patron of Science, and the Poor Man's Friend," and it is presented "as a tribute of respect and Grateful Attachment to a Generous Landlord from his tenants in the Counties of Northampton and Warwick." In local work in Northamptonshire, too, he took a full share. He was Chairman of Quarter Sessions from 1846 till his death. As a memorial to him in Northampton after his death public subscriptions were raised to repair St. Sepulchre's Church, and a brass tablet in the church still records the fact.

It was during the Chartist riots of about the year 1848 that occurred the following incident narrated to me by "young Richard" Scriven. Lord Northampton heard that a Chartist mob was on its way to Castle Ashby, and he promptly sent Richard Scriven galloping into Northampton on the fastest horse in the stables in order to summon the military. When the mob arrived, Lord Northampton parleyed with them from the North steps until he thought the time was nearly up, when he told them the situation and advised them to be off before the soldiers arrived. And so Castle Ashby was saved from any mischievous damage by the coolness of its owner.

On the morning of January 17th, 1851, he was found dead in bed at Castle Ashby, at the age of sixty-one years. He was buried in the vault in the chancel of

* Shelf 2/5. See also F.D. 1151.

† See Deed of Gift, F.D. 1344.

the church with his wife on the 25th.* In 1836 Spencer had bricked up the arch in the church between the chancel and the north chantry, after removing the lath and plaster wall that had hitherto blocked it; and against the brick wall he put up the monument to his wife by Tenerani. Twelve years later he opened up the arch, as it is now, and moved the monument almost to its present position against the north wall of the chantry. And in the interval, on the death of his mother, Spencer had erected the monument to his father and mother under the east window of the north chantry.† After his own death the large Archangel (a copy of one in Italy) was modelled by Tenerani, and put up at the west end as a memorial to him by his son, the 3rd Marquis.

His work at Compton Wynyates.

Mention should be made of Spencer's work at Compton Wynyates. In August 1837‡ he visited the old family house, that had been so badly neglected, with Anna Jane, Marian (aged eighteen) and her Italian maid, Teresa. They found all the windows blocked to escape the window tax, as indeed they had been left in 1774, and they had to find their way about the house with candles. A tenant farmer was living in the rooms now occupied by the caretaker, but the rest of the house had been sadly neglected. The roof was very leaky, and it was difficult for them to find rooms to sleep in that were not crumbling to bits. Marian slept in the Georgian Room nearest the Main Staircase. In the middle of the night she heard stealthy steps coming up the stairs dragging a heavy weight. It turned out to be, not as she had feared a ghost dragging along a corpse, but Teresa and her mattress disturbed by rain through a leaky roof. After this visit Spencer repaired the roofs throughout, he opened many of the bricked-up windows and had them reglazed, and he renewed the plastering of many of the interior walls. He had inserted a new entrance door from the court to the Buttery; he had iron supports made to the oriel window in the Hall; he ran the passage through the South Georgian Room; and he took away wooden fireplaces from Henry VIII's Room (then called the King's Drawing-Room) and the Cavalier's Room, thereby uncovering the original Gothic ones. On the outside walls, which were quite bare, he planted creepers, of which the ivy soon seems to have predominated.§

Compton Wynyates in 1839.

Some idea of the condition of Compton Wynyates in 1839, when Northampton had done little but repairs to the roof, is given us by Howitt, who visited it in that year.‖ He walked over the hill from Tysoe past the Windmill, and approached the house from the church. He comments that "the little footpath, by which the family comes to Church, runs along amid evergreens cut into a variety of shapes." But "to reach the great entrance of the house it was necessary to hold round some

* Mr. R. Scriven just remembers the funeral and the opening of the vault.

† See page 256 above.

‡ His letter to Marian.

§ Lady Alwyne's Notes (F.D. 1340, XVII).

‖ Howitt's "Visits to Remarkable Places" (1856), Vol. I. p. 305.

offices to the left, and then I came into the front of the old court. Here a scene of ruin presented itself. The buildings on one side of the court yard were nearly pulled down; on the other they consisted of a range of stables, coach-houses, etc., in a great state of dilapidation."*

Of the interior, he says: "It is thoroughly stripped of furniture. It has not been inhabited for these more than hundred years, except the lodge in the gateway, and a portion of the east front (*sic*) which is the residence of the bailiff. There is not a bench or table, not a picture or piece of tapestry left. The rooms are all empty, excepting one or two, moderately furnished for the use of the Marquis on any temporary visit. Except in these few rooms the walls are all naked or the paper is of the most ordinary and coarse kind. . . . The place has a most forlorn air; yet it is by no means a ruin. The roof has been kept in good repair and the ceilings have evidently been cleaned at a recent period and are many of them very beautiful." He mentions that the Chapel still retained on its walls the tables of the Decalogue and Psalms; and he describes the carving on the Chapel screen and on that in the Hall, as having been painted white "in course of modern improvements."

London residences.

It will be remembered that in the summer of 1838 Spencer inherited 145 Piccadilly at the death of his great aunt, Countess Poulett, who had been left a life interest in it by her first husband, John Smith, who died in 1803.† Though it was much larger than the requirements of an elderly widower, it was here that Spencer stayed when in London on business. In March 1836 his address had been Portland Place, and in April 1837, 17 Albemarle Street.

It should also be borne in mind that it was in Spencer's time that the last of the Canonbury Estate was built over. A map of the estate in 1812, hanging at the Estate Office, shows a waterman's cottage near the New River and Astey's Row as the only building on the estate besides Canonbury House and Tavern. In January 1811 it had been proposed to make a New North Road from Lower Street Road across Hopping Lane (St. Paul's Road), through Barr's Nursery near Newington Green Turnpike Gate, northward to join the Green Lane Turnpike at the point where the New River crosses that road near Newington. Spencer's father had been advised that he should oppose the scheme in Parliament, for the protection of the public as well as of his own property.

* The southern buildings were removed by the 2nd Marquis.
† See page 213, above.

PORTRAIT OF CHARLES, 3RD MARQUIS OF NORTHAMPTON.
(FROM THE PAINTING BY H. SUNCHR[illegible] R.A. AT CASTLE ASHBY).

CHAPTER XX

CHARLES, 3RD MARQUESS

(1851–1877)

3rd Marquess at Castle Ashby.

WHEN Charles succeeded his father he gave up his studio life in London and lived at Ashby. His brother William returned to the Navy, taking his family abroad with him. But in 1852 Charles appointed his brother Alwyne to the Rectory of Castle Ashby, which benefice he held for twenty-six years; and on the marriage of their sister, Margaret, in June 1853, the Alwyne Comptons came and lived in the house with him, and Florence acted as lady of the house. Florence was considered very unconventional for those days; she was a bold rider to hounds, and she gave supper parties in the Old Library to those of her brother-in-law's guests who were her particular friends. There are in the chest in the room next the Bower two albums of photographs of house parties at which Alwyne and Florence stayed between the years 1861 and 1866. The photographs taken in 1866 include: one of King William's Room with the 3rd Marchioness standing in it, one of the 3rd Marquis in a tall hat directing alterations on the front lawn at Compton, and portraits of "Addy" Brownlow, Florence Compton and Mary Baring, afterwards 5th Marchioness.

It will be remembered that soon after his succession Charles developed partial paralysis and neuralgic pains which were only to leave him at short intervals for the rest of his life. During this time he did little painting,* but he personally supervised the cleaning and restoration of all the family pictures, and had the names painted on those that had none.

Lord William.

Lord William had in 1848 "studied steam" for three months at Woolwich, but when he returned to the Royal Navy in 1851 he got command of a sailing-ship, H.M.S. *Modeste*, which was the last wooden battleship in commission; he himself made the model of her which stands in a glass case at Ashby. She was in the Mediterranean Fleet, whose Headquarters were at Malta; and he took his family to Malta with him. There they remained during three winters, but during each of the two intervening summers they went on trips for a change of temperature. The

* A complete list of his paintings and drawings made by Lady Alwyne at the time of his death is given in her Notebook No. 14 (F.D. 1340).

naval regulations in those days allowed the captain of a ship to take on board any civilians except his own wife and family; so when they wanted to get away from Malta for these trips, Lady William's brother, Admiral Sir George ("Cups") Elliot, took her and her children on his ship, and Lord William took Lady Elliot and her children on the *Modeste*. The first summer Lady William and her children lived in a monastery at Corfu, called Palazzo Castricio, and here Willie, only just a year old, nearly died of infantile dysentery. There is a packet of letters from Lady William at Corfu to her sister Kate,* on which Willie wrote in later years, "My Mother always told me that God had spared my life to be useful." The second summer was spent at the baths of Lucca, near Florence, and it was in this year that Lord William was promoted Captain. At Malta, in June 1854, Alice was born,† but later in the same summer they all returned to England, and bought 32 Rutland Gate, where Alwyne was born in 1855, Mabel in 1861, and Douglas in 1865. There are portraits of all the children of Lord William, mostly by J. R. Swinton, a friend of Charles, 3rd Marquess, in the Nursery at Ashby. In 1866 Lord William retired on half-pay as a Rear-Admiral, and was promoted Vice-Admiral in August 1869. In this latter year he went to canvass for his brother-in-law, Leveson-Gower, in the Bodmin parliamentary constituency, and so popular was he that Freddie tells us "he almost supplanted him." It was about a year later that he had to have his left eye removed, owing to an accident while gardening at Studham; and for the remainder of his life he wore a glass eye.

On his father's death Charles gave Torloisk over to William, as has already been described,‡ in order that the second son might become a Scotch Laird and Torloisk not become a dependency of an English marquisate. Henceforward the William Comptons spent much of their time there. And in 1863, when Aunt Wilmina devoted some of the Chinese compensation for her son's death to improving Torloisk house, they made additions to it, as they did again in 1879. The plans showing the house before and after the 1863 additions are to be seen at Ashby.§

On July 9th, 1859, Charles, Lord Northampton, invalid though he was, married Theodosia, second daughter of Captain Henry and Lady Mary Vyner, of Newby Hall, Ripon. Her mother was daughter of the 2nd Earl de Grey, whose portrait hangs at Ashby on the Great Stairs. Charles and Dosia must have been a remarkably good-looking couple, judging from their portraits by R. Buckner, R.A., painted at this time, which hang in the China Room at Ashby. Dosia henceforward became the model for most of his pictures. She was devoted to her husband, and always a little jealous of Lady Alwyne, to whose housekeeping he had become accustomed, in

* F.D. 1353.

† Died in June 1862 and buried in the vault under the Chancel of Ashby Church. Her unfinished needlework kept by her mother is in Box C., with her mother's touching inscription attached to it.

‡ See page 264.

§ F.D. 1371.

PORTRAIT OF THEODOSIA [illegible] MARCHIONESS OF NORTHAMPTON.
[illegible] BY [illegible], R.A., AT CASTLE ASHBY.

spite of the fact that on their marriage the Alwyne Comptons returned to the Chadstone Rectory. From this moment Lord William and his family were much more at Castle Ashby, he, Charles and their wives being quite devoted to each other, and Lady William singing duets quite divinely with Charles, who had a good tenor voice.

Dosia at Compton.

Dosia seems to have been responsible for numerous improvements made by them during the five years of their married life. She took an especial interest in Compton Wynyates, and Lady Alwyne describes * the place before and after their alterations. The walls of the Great Hall, the screen, and the woodwork of all the doors, had been painted white. The Gallery between the screen and the Minstrel's Gallery had a white painted railing and was entered through a door from the Minstrel's Gallery; the present windows between the latter and the Hall were plastered over, as was the front side of the timbering of the whole end wall above these windows. The louvre in the Hall ceiling had only just been filled in,† probably owing to its being in a dangerous state. The Georgian main staircase had deal bannisters, which with the panelling and walls were painted white, as also were all the heavy sash-windows put in by the 5th Earl. The interior woodwork of the Drawing-Room was all painted white, and on the walls were the remains of a coarse flock paper (put on in squares) above the white dado. The ceiling was in tolerable repair, but the window into the court was bricked up, as was that immediately below it in the Dining-Room. In the Chapel Drawing-Room the ceiling was much damaged, the walls covered with pale blue flock paper, the windows into the Chapel plastered over, and all the woodwork painted white. These Georgian additions were not thought to be in keeping with the Tudor house, and Sir Digby Wyatt was called in to advise them. His designs ‡ show that only part of his intentions was actually carried out, the remainder being probably stopped by Dosia's death. His general view of his task is shown by many pompous passages in his letters to Lord and Lady Northampton, from which the following two are extracted :—

14.7.1859. "Remembering how elaborately the Hall Screen is carved, I felt that anything coarser than what I have proposed would really not do for the doors. The note pitched by the old work must I think be sustained, but of that you are quite as competent a judge as I am."

3.2.1860. "I have made a project for the greater part of what I really look upon as essential to be done before the general aspect of the house can be freed from those features which now most detract from, and interfere with its leading character of beauty."

The chief alteration to the exterior was the removing of the Georgian sash-windows on the ground and first floors from the Dining-Room round to the Servants' Hall, and

* F.D. 1340, XVII. † See pages 29 and 171, above. ‡ F.D. 1359.

the replacing of them by stone-mullioned windows in keeping with the Tudor Gothic ones elsewhere in the house. Lady Alwyne says that the windows erected by Wyatt were so unsatisfactory that Charles removed them and replaced them by the present ones designed by himself. A good idea of the appearance of the exterior before this may be gathered from a sketch and a plan of the house in 1771 attached to a Survey of the Warwickshire Estates * at that date; and from photographs taken before and during the Wyatt improvements, two of which hang at Compton. On the outside of the house great masses of ivy, planted by his father, were removed; a gravel walk and yew hedges were made along the terrace round the house; a fence was removed from the bottom of the Combes and a chestnut avenue planted along there; and the reservoir and hydrants were made as a precaution against fire. In the church, too, the family pew was lowered a foot.

In the interior of the house Sir Digby Wyatt made great changes. In 1859 he "broke up the Torture Room (in the North-east Tower, probably) into two good bedrooms and a dressing room." Then the main staircase was entirely rebuilt, the big bay window inserted, and a ceiling made of which the plaster designs were mainly copied from the Gallery ceiling at Canonbury House. Over the bay window on the outside an enormous coat of arms with supporters was let in to the battlemented parapet.† A passage was made in 1860 from the head of the stair to the Drawing-Room, without passing through the Combe Room, by knocking two doorways into the Big Hall and erecting a large balcony with a top over it that looked like a birdcage of heavy oak resting on massive ornamented stone corbels.‡ In the Drawing-Room the Georgian panelling was replaced by Elizabethan panelling from Canonbury House, including doorways and a chimney-piece.§ The Morning Room and Combe Room were to have been redone in imitation Gothic had Dosia lived longer. But on November 18th, 1864, she died of consumption, and was buried at Compton.

During these same years Digby Wyatt was called in to Castle Ashby also. His elaborate drawings exist for several designs of rebuilding the Big Hall to the full length of the Courtyard; "a very noble room" (in Wyatt's opinion), but a terribly ornate Gothic style, with dreadful wooden figures on the lowest bannister of a great stairway leading to the east gallery, representing pages in Tudor costume supporting shields displaying the Compton and Douglas Arms! Fortunately neither this, nor a design of his for converting the room next the Green Bower into an Italian Library, was ever carried out.

But Compton and Dosia were better pleased with his landscape gardening, and

* Old Library, Castle Ashby, Shelf S. 6.

† Removed as being ugly in 1926.

‡ Removed in two stages by the 4th and 5th Marquesses, and illustrated by a print in F.D. 1358.

§ Lady Alwyne says Charles disliked Wyatt's insertion of the Douglas crest over the latter (F.D. 1340, XVII).

they made vast changes in the gardens and grounds. The terraces round the house with their terracotta balustrading were laid out, where hitherto the ground had been nothing better than a hayfield; and the Italian "golden gates" at the entrance to the front drive were hung on piers designed by Wyatt himself. This work is dated by the abbreviated Latin inscription in the balustrading near the church, which translated runs: "To Theodosia, sweetest of wives, Douglas Northampton has erected this. Begun in hope, finished in regret."

After Dosia's death the work at Compton seems to have ceased altogether. Charles lived at Ashby in retirement with the Alwyne Comptons, who returned from the Rectory to the Castle to keep house for him, as has already been explained. He drove round the plantations in a pony-chair nearly every day, usually accompanied by Lady Alwyne on foot. He used to say that life would have been too happy to him if he had been well, because he had such a power of enjoying it.

Godwin at Ashby

The architect Godwin was now called in, and during 1867–68 submitted many designs, which are still preserved,* for the lay-out of the remainder of the present gardens. The old walled Kitchen Garden was converted into an Italian Garden, with a Palm House and Archway House at either end, the four sunk areas being laid out in shaped beds of various colours, each divided from the other by box edging, and the colours being given by broken brick, slate, coal and chalk. The greenhouse was removed, except for its front wall, from the Greenhouse Garden, its site being added to the churchyard. The new walled Kitchen Garden was then built beyond the Flower Garden, in part of the Upper Warren, and the two Phœnixes at its entrance were designed by Godwin's own hand. Lodges were next built to his design at the entrance to the Avenue from the Northampton road, and on the way to the Station. The former were first built in 1868, but were pulled down in the same year as being too near the centre of the Avenue, and were rebuilt in their present position in 1869. At the same time the Long Riding from the Northampton–Bedford road to the estate boundary with Horton parish was widened to the full width of the Avenue, and the road from the cricket ground to the Northampton road was made down the middle of the Avenue.† The Station Lodge was built at the same time as the planting of about 300 acres as the Station Park, and the construction of the causeway from it to the Station above flood-level.

Another great improvement was at this time also made in the water supply. Hitherto an overshot water-wheel in the basement of the cottage at the Engine Pond had pumped water from the pond up into a cistern in the roof of the north side of the Castle. A ram was in 1865 put in which pumped spring water up into

* F.D. 1327.

† Hitherto the only road had been from the gardener's house along the side of the Avenue till near the cross-road it cut obliquely across to the Oval (see a gap in the lime trees).

a new water-tower, and the old water-wheel, which may have been the "water Injon." installed about 1720, was done away with.*

One of Charles's last improvements was to remove from King William's Room the enormous soapstone chimney-piece dating from the time of the 1st Earl, and to erect in its place the present handsome Elizabethan one which he brought from the Gallery at Canonbury House.

3rd Marquess's death.

The William Comptons spent the winter of 1876–77 in Rome, where Willie † was Secretary in the Embassy under Sir Augustus Paget, the Ambassador. Willie had for years worked many hours a day training his voice, and great was his pride when for the first time he won compliments from his brothers and sisters instead of chaff. Lady Paget thus describes him ‡ in June of this year, where at Siena the Pagets had taken the Villa Gori for the summer. "We often had good music there, for M. de Keudell and Prince Teano both stayed with us, and 'Willy' Compton sang, and he had a lovely voice. During the three months he lived with us I never saw him in a coat or waistcoat except at dinner, which we always had on the Loggia. He was so hot that a pink battiste shirt and a pair of very thin grey trousers supplied all his wants." The holiday of Lord William's family was interrupted by the news of the 3rd Marquis's death on March 3rd, 1877, at Ashby, where he was buried. Dosia's coffin was then brought from Compton and buried with him.

The Alwyne Comptons now returned to Chadstone, and never again lived in the Castle. But the reign in Castle Ashby of the new mistress of the house was not destined to last long; after a few months, only one of which was spent at Ashby, Lizzie Lady Northampton died on December 4th in Florence, where she had been taken for her health. She also was buried at Ashby, under the beautiful marble angel modelled by Boehm. A portrait of her hangs at Ashby over the Grand Stairs. The cipher on the ceiling of the Combe Room at Compton was designed in memory of her by her devoted husband.

* The idea of pond water being used to pump up spring water brought from a distance was entirely an experiment in those days.

† Afterwards 5th Marquess. ‡ In her recently published memoirs.

PORTRAIT OF [illegible] 5TH MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON, K.G.
[illegible] OAKES, R.A., AT CASTLE ASHBY).

CHAPTER XXI

WILLIAM, 4TH MARQUESS, K.G.

(1877–1897)

THESE two deaths caused great changes in the life of the family. The Alwyne Comptons never again used the Castle as their home, though of course they frequently came there on visits. In 1875 Alwyne had been appointed Archdeacon of Oakham, and he then became Prolocutor of Convocation and a Doctor of Divinity. In November 1878 he left Chadstone to become Dean of Worcester; and four years later he was also made Lord High Almoner, which post he filled till his death. From 1886 he was Bishop of Ely for nineteen years till July 1905, and here, as at Worcester, they enjoyed great popularity and affection. He rendered a valuable service to historical students by collecting all the documents connected with the See, having them arranged in a catalogue by an expert, and publishing the catalogue. On the completion of his eightieth year, he resigned the See, and they settled at Canterbury. Here he died a few months later, on April 4th, 1906, and was buried in St. Martin's churchyard, which their house overlooked. Twelve years later Lady Alwyne also died there, aged eighty-eight and was buried with him on March 27th, 1918, to the accompaniment of the booming of artillery fire in Flanders. They had no children.

The Alwyne Comptons.

Lord Alwyne was very sincerely devout; and, although highly sensitive and unassuming, he shared the family characteristic of a cheerful nature and a hearty laugh. In some ways, however, he was old-fashioned; I remember being told he would think it bad manners for a school-boy to slouch with his hands in his pockets in the presence of his elders. Besides showing great energy in diocesan matters, he was scholarly, artistic and greatly interested in architecture and archæology. And, besides being an excellent draughtsman; he was a great authority in his day on tiles; and repaved the churches at Castle Ashby, Earl's Barton and Easton Maudit, in addition to the more famous Henry VII Chapel in Ely Cathedral, and many other churches in his diocese. His work in Castle Ashby church was perhaps rather too revolutionary. It is described in Appendix IX.

Lady Alwyne had an exceptional knowledge of art and an affection for beautiful things. As an old lady she had the most astounding memory for anecdotes, and

for pictures she had seen many years before. She was keenly interested in the history of her husband's family; and there was probably no document, book or letter at Castle Ashby that she had not herself read through and tabulated. Indeed the copious notes she made from them have formed the backbone of this history of the family. Although tolerant of most things, she hated the rush of twentieth-century life, and consequently abominated bicycles, motors and express trains. She would allow no motor on her drive at Canterbury; and when her nephew, the 5th Marquess, motored down to visit her, he used to leave his motor in the town and drive up to her front door in a horsed cab. There is at Ashby a small portrait of her as a schoolgirl by Buckner; and she also left to Ashby albums of photographs illustrating her life from schoolroom onwards. Of Alwyne there is a pastel portrait by Edward Clifford.

The 4th Marquess Ashby.

After the death of his elder brother, and of his wife Lizzie, in 1877, William 4th Marquess sold Rutland Gate, and divided his time between Ashby, 145 Piccadilly and Torloisk. His daughter, Minnie, now thirty, kept house for him until her marriage, and in so doing showed the usual good taste of the family. In July 1883 Lady Paget says in her Memoirs: "I had always admired Castle Ashby as a beautiful old house, but under Lady Minnie Compton's knowing régime it was a pleasure to live there, a feast for the eyes, ears and taste, for the music and the food were excellent too. Every chair and lamp stood in the right place and for every hour of the day she selected the right room. Every day the dinner table exhibited a newer and prettier arrangement than the day before. In the evening, music in a drawing-room, which was as beautiful as a dream." The Morris chintzes and wall-papers in various bedrooms were chosen by Minnie.

The 4th Marquess started improvements to the interior of Ashby house immediately after his succession. The Staircase and landing in the North Hall were changed over from the north to the south side,* which enabled a doorway to be knocked through into the West Gallery of the Hall. The Long Gallery was decorated by the architect Jackson in 1880, and none of the present decoration is anterior to Jackson; its swags of fruit were no doubt copied from those of Inigo Jones's time in the gallery of the Chapel. The ceiling and panelling of the Big Hall came next, and were barely finished in time for Minnie's wedding breakfast in December 1884. When the north wall was being redone, the spaces for two original windows were found high up in it, which had been blocked up in 1720 and plastered over; they were now bricked in. Several alternative designs were prepared for the new Hall,† but the one chosen was executed in oak timber felled on the estate, and the work was closely supervised by the old Admiral, who busily criticised and explained his own ideas on the spot with the help of pencil scribbles.

* The old arrangement is seen on the plan in F.D. 1347.
† See designs in F.D. 1362.

His children after 1851

Let us now trace the lives of each of the nine children of the 4th Marquess from 1851 onwards:—

Lady Katrine Compton.

Katrine, called Katie, the eldest, was born on July 26th, 1845, at Ashby. She was good-looking as a girl, and very handsome as a woman; a miniature on vellum of her and Margaret by Miss Dickson stands in the Long Gallery. She married on December 25th, 1870, Francis, 7th Earl Cowper, a descendant of the de Greys, Earls of Kent, who sold Castle Ashby to the Comptons. They were very much in love with each other, but it is said that, bashful by nature, it was not till it was suggested to him that he might marry Princess Louise, that he hurried up to Torloisk and proposed to Katie.* She was fond of shooting and stalking, and at Torloisk had been accustomed to accompany her brothers in their sports. She was generous and warm-hearted, but at the same time extremely practical; and, though a little shy, she had hosts of friends in every circle, and was adored on their estates. They had no children. He was born on June 11th, 1834. Educated at Harrow and Christ Church, Oxford, he took a First Class Degree in Law and Modern History in 1855. He was Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire from 1861 till his death. In 1865 he invested Christian IX of Denmark with the Garter and in August was himself made a K.G. He was Trustee of the National Portrait Gallery 1869–74; a Privy Councillor May 1871 till his death; Captain of the Corps of Gentlemen at Arms 1871–74; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland 1880–82; and a Hereditary Prince of the Holy Roman Empire. His residences were Panshanger (near Hertford), Wrest Park (Beds.) and 4 St. James's Square. In later years he was much crippled by gout and depended entirely on Katie's affectionate ministrations. He died at Panshanger July 19th, 1905, aged seventy-one, and was buried at Hertingfordbury. He is described as "a very attractive man. He had a fine head and figure, though there was a certain softness in both. . . . He had courteous manners, rather of the old school, a capable intellect with a good deal of historical knowledge and an interest in literature which made him a very agreeable companion. Besides these qualities, there was in him a sort of stately kindliness. . . . In addition he acted with coolness and courage during the trying time when he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland" (during which the Fenian assassinations took place). Though he had been a Liberal, he energetically opposed Gladstone's Home Rule schemes, and could scarcely forgive his brother-in-law, Willie, for supporting them. His widow Katie lived in solitude at Panshanger till her death on March 23rd, 1913, aged sixty-eight, at her brother Willie's Villa at Cap Ferrat, near Nice. She was buried with her husband.

* The day after their engagement another admirer of Katie came to Torloisk in his yacht, and to make an impression marched up to the house preceded by his two pipers. The boys' tutor was deputed to meet him at the door with the news that he was twenty-four hours too late, and advised him to be off!

Lady Margaret. *Margaret* called Minnie, born in 1847, kept house at Castle Ashby for her father from 1877 till 1884. In that year, on December 30th, she married Henry Graham (afterwards Sir Henry Graham, K.C.B.), Clerk of the Parliaments, a widower with two sons, Ronald (afterwards Sir Ronald, K.C.B., Ambassador in Rome), and Harry. Minnie had three children, Elsie, Alan and Marjorie, who, like their parents, have always been welcome at Ashby. For many years the Grahams lived at Marden, near Panshanger, which was a delightful place made still more charming by Minnie's cheerful furnishing and practical knowledge of gardening. A private golf course and a trout-stream kept Sir Henry and the boys fully amused. Sir Henry is an accomplished pianist, and had a great name as a drawing-room entertainer. A book of his songs set to well-known tunes is at Ashby. Harry has become a highly successful humorous writer; and indeed all the children inherit from their father an exceptional gift for music, and a delightful chaffing sense of humour. A picture of Minnie by Edward Clifford hangs at Ashby.

Earl Compton. *Charlie*, Earl Compton, whose portrait by Ellis Roberts hangs at the foot of the West Stairs, was born on July 13th, 1849. He was the fourth child, and the eldest son. He had great charm, but led a gay and somewhat extravagant life, which burdened the family estates with some mortgages; he died unmarried on September 5th, 1887, and was buried at Ashby. He was a Deputy Lieutenant for Northamptonshire.

Lord William. *Willie*, afterwards 5th Marquess, was born on April 23rd, 1851, and was educated at Eton and Trinity Cambridge, where he took a B.A. Degree. He then joined the Diplomatic Service in July 1873,* and was first at Paris under Lord Lyons and Lord Lytton, and then at Rome with Sir Augustus Paget. As Second Secretary at St. Petersburg under Lord Dufferin (1878–79), he shot the bears whose skins are at Ashby and Compton, and enjoyed many evening tobogganing and skating parties at St. Petersburg. In 1880 he left the Diplomacy and was in the Foreign Office until his marriage. From 1880 he was for two years Private Secretary to Lord Cowper in Ireland. After his marriage he went into Parliament as a Liberal, and in 1885–86 he represented the Stratford-on-Avon Division of Warwickshire, while from 1889 to 1897 he represented the mining constituency of Barnsley as Earl Compton. He at the same time took great interest in housing in London, and obtained his father's leave to visit the Clerkenwell Estate and get proper repairs done on it by the family lawyer, Boodle, who had been chiefly interested in collecting the rents, on which he got a commission. From 1889 till 1895 he was a member of the London County Council, first representing Central Finsbury, and then as an Alderman. He was Chairman of the Housing of the Working Classes Committee, and for a short time of the Public Health and Housing Committee. His enthusiasm was largely responsible for the framing and passing of the Housing Bills of 1890. A

* Letters from Lord William to his mother.

portrait of him at this date by Ellis Roberts hangs below the West Stairs at Ashby. Details of his later life will be given hereafter. He was devoted to Torloisk, to which as second son he was to succeed; and he was miserable when at Charlie's death in 1887 he became heir to the English places and Alwyne heir to Torloisk.

Lord Alwyne. *Alwyne*, third son and seventh child, was born at Rutland Gate on June 5th, 1855. He was educated at Eton and Sandhurst, and joined firstly the 31st Line Regiment at Gibraltar, commanded at the time by Colonel W. Dickins, while waiting for a Commission in the Grenadier Guards. He later transferred into the 10th Hussars, in which, on its way home from India, he served in the Soudan campaign of 1884. On July 31st, 1886, he married Mary (Mollie) Vyner, daughter of Robert de Grey Vyner, of Gautby Hall, Lincolnshire, and Newby Hall, Ripon, by whom he had two sons, Edward and Clare. In 1887 he became heir to Torloisk, and at his father's death he succeeded to it and became Deputy Lieutenant of Argyleshire. From 1895 to 1906 he was M.P. for the Biggleswade Division of Bedfordshire. In 1900 he enlisted Compton's Horse from his constituency, and commanded it in the South African War, being awarded the D.S.O. On its return, it became the Bedfordshire Yeomanry, which he commanded till his death. Soon after the South African War he became a stockbroker, and was very successful at it. From 1910 to 1911 he was M.P. for the Brentwood Division of Middlesex. He died suddenly in his bed on December 16th, 1911. Alwyne was the smartest man, and had the neatest figure, I have ever seen. He was also a good horseman, and any horse went well with him. His portrait by Ellis Roberts also hangs below the West Stairs.

Lady Mabel. *Mabel*, the fifth daughter, was born in 1861, and has never married. She has spent so much of her life reading as to have become abnormally unsociable. Yet she enjoys a good yarn or a practical joke more than anyone. Her old governess, Miss Charlotte Gaye, stayed on with her till Miss Gaye's death in 1924. They lived at Ashby until the death of Mabel's father; since when she has had a house in London of her own.

Lord Douglas. *Douglas*, youngest of the family, was born on November 15th, 1865. He was educated at Eton and Sandhurst, and joined the 9th Lancers in 1885. From 1891 to 1910 his regiment served abroad in India and then in South Africa. During this period he was at one time on the staff of Lord Wenlock, the Governor of Madras; and later he served with his regiment throughout the South African War, in which he was twice mentioned in despatches and was made Brevet Major. He commanded the regiment 1908–12, during which time it moved its quarters from South Africa to Canterbury in 1910. He retired in May 1914. During the whole of his military career he devoted his English leaves, which he generally got every four years, to hunting from Castle Ashby with the Pytchley; while his leaves abroad were spent in big-game shooting in Kashmir, Thibet and Rhodesia, on which expeditions he secured all the heads that until recently hung in the North Hall at

Ashby.* From 1915 to 1919 he rejoined the Army and commanded the Infantry Base Depot at Etaples, and was mentioned in despatches and given an O.B.E. He married in 1917 Dollie Woolf, whom he had known in South Africa, and they settled first at Delmonden Manor, Hawkhurst, and then at Biskra in Algeria. They are so devoted to each other that the rest of the family complain they do not see enough of them. They have no children.

London residences of these children.

In April 1884 Willie married the Hon. Mary (called Maysie) Baring, daughter of the 2nd Lord Ashburton; and almost at once Compton Wynyates was lent to them by his father as a country residence; they also bought a ninety-nine years lease of 51 Lennox Gardens in London, which was just being finished building. In December of the same year, as we have seen, Minnie married, and her husband bought a lease of 22 Lennox Gardens. And in the following year the 4th Marquess sold 145 Piccadilly and bought a lease of 44 Lennox Gardens, which was quite large enough for himself, Mabel and Miss Gaye. From this time until his death in 1897 these three lived quietly there or at Ashby, though a large staff of servants was kept up, and Christmas was always made the excuse for family reunions, which lasted several weeks. The 4th Marquess continued his improvements in the house, and by 1892, the date which appears in the carving, he finished the panelling in the Smoking- and Billiard-Rooms. Before his death, too, in 1897, he had almost completed the restoration of the Chapel, in which the window is from a design by his brother Charles, as also is the reredos which was modelled by G. Tyndale.

4th Marquess in public life.

The 4th Marquess was a Deputy-Lieutenant for Northamptonshire. But he took only a small part in public affairs, though he was to be seen fairly regularly on the cross-benches of the House of Lords. He was made a Knight of the Garter, and in October 1881 was sent on a special mission to Madrid to invest Alphonso XII, King of Spain, with the same Order. He took Minnie and Charlie with him, and she had a very gay time there. In return the King conferred on him the Grand Cross of the Order of Charles III, the badge and riband of which is now kept in the Miniature Cupboard at Ashby. A letter from Minnie at Madrid describes her impressions of the Spanish Court:

"Arriving we found the big staircase lined with the grooms and out-door servants . . . all in very picturesque liveries with white wigs, and all smelling of garlic! We were received by the whole court and I was introduced to many fat old ladies; and presently in came the King and Queen and we were all presented one after the other. The Queen is very nice-looking, but seemed very shy." After dinner the King carried off the men to smoke and the Queen carried her off to a most lovely room to talk; she then showed her other rooms and seemed very proud of them. "She was in fits of laughter because she said I had seen the 3 fattest women in Spain! (The Infantas) and certainly they were whoppers. They all had on

* Recently removed to the Village Institute.

splendid diamonds." Next day they called at the palace and were all given the Royal photographs;* "they were very nice and very unstiff; and they had no one in waiting."

The 4th Marquess died after a short illness on September 11th, 1897, and was buried with his wife at Ashby. William had all the good qualities of a sailor, with the added culture of that generation of the family. He was of a most cheerful and affectionate disposition, and possessed an enormous stock of sailor's yarns which were a delight alike to his children and grandchildren. He was full of common-sense and experience of the world, and was an excellent husband and father. Throughout his naval service he kept up his lifelong habit of sketching any view or subject that appealed to him; and though his many sketches in albums at Ashby are not up to the work of some other members of the family, they show a special gift for pencil work.†

His de

A portrait of him by W. Ouless, R.A., in the uniform of a Rear-Admiral hangs over the fireplace in the entrance hall at Ashby.

* In the chest in the room next the Bower. † Many have been thrown away in 1928.

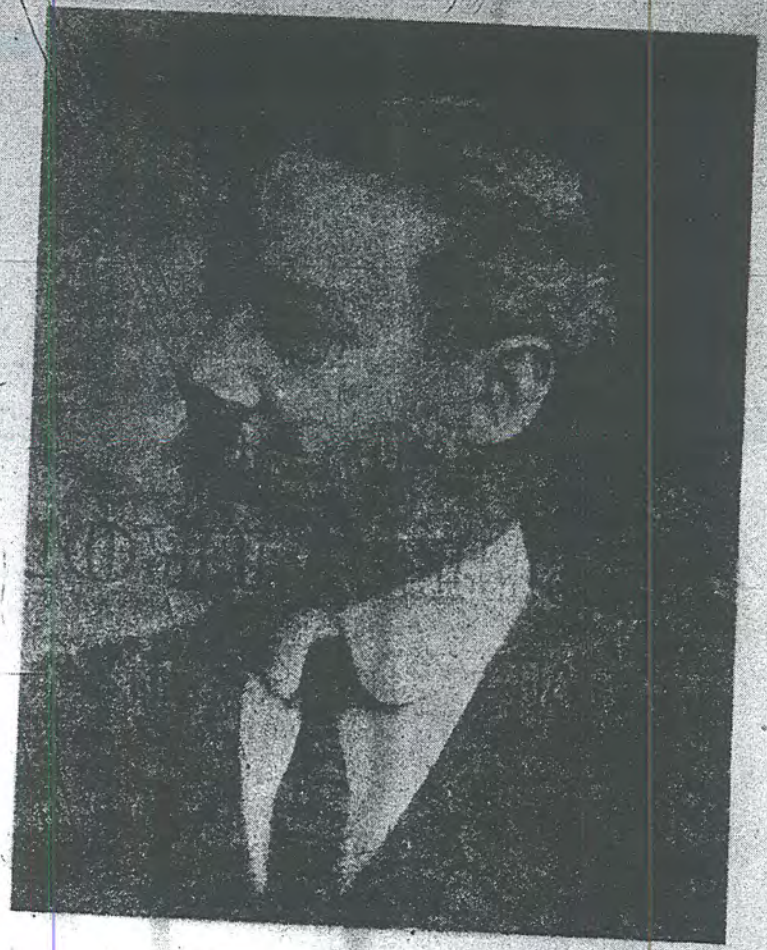
CHAPTER XXII

WILLIAM, 5TH MARQUESS

(1897–1913)

WILLIE was forty-six years old in 1897 when he succeeded his father. It has already been mentioned that he married Maysie Baring in April 1884; it will be well to say something here of her family and early life. Her father, William Bingham, 2nd Baron Ashburton, was born in 1799, and had an American mother, a Miss Bingham. At the age of twenty-one we hear the following opinion of him from a guest, staying at the Grange, the Ashburton home: "I like their eldest son very much; his understanding is excellent, and if he has faults, they only arise from modesty and shyness." * In 1823 he married Harriet, eldest daughter of the 6th Earl of Sandwich, and by her had a son who died in infancy. She died in 1857, and in November 1858 he married a young girl, Louisa Caroline, daughter of the Rt. Hon. James Stewart Mackenzie. They were married by Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, at Bath House, Piccadilly, Lord Ashburton's London residence, because of his gout. They had first met at Strathgarve, which belonged to a Baring cousin, who built it. Her Mackenzie mother, whose portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence is at Ashby, was a daughter of the last Lord Seaforth,† and Louisa had spent most of her childhood at Brahan Castle near Dingwall. On their honeymoon Louisa took Lord Ashburton driving through the Mackenzie country, and they were so enamoured of the view from the farmhouse near Kinlochluichart that they bought the estate from Sir James and Lady Anne Mackenzie of Kilcoy and turned the house into a comfortable Lodge. When they first bought it the present double drawing-room without the bay-windows was the drawing-room and dining-room; and there were two front and three back rooms above, and the offices at the back. They immediately added to this in 1860, when the servants' wing was probably added; in 1874 the tower was built; in 1876 the porch; and in 1905 the bow-window to the smoking-room. On June 26th, 1860, was born Mary, their only child, and there are pictures at Ashby by Landseer of Lord Ashburton, and of Louisa with her baby, which must have been painted in about 1862. In

* "Memoirs of Henry E. Fox," afterwards Lord Holland.
† A history of the origin of the Mackenzies is at Ashby.



1864 he died, at the age of sixty-five. He had sat for seventeen years in the House of Commons as Member successively for Thetford, Callington, Winchester, North Staffordshire and again Thetford. He was Secretary of the Board of Control from 1841 to 1845, and then Paymaster of the Forces and Treasurer of the Navy till 1846. He was a Trustee of the National Gallery and a great connoisseur in art. Having inherited from his father a collection of pictures at the Grange (which went at his death to his brother with the house), he gradually bought another large collection, which was kept at Bath House, Piccadilly, and at Melchet Court, near Romsey. Those at the former were dispersed at his death, when the house was sold, but some of the Melchet treasures found their way to Ashby and Compton, as is described below. Lord Ashburton also lived in a literary circle; and there are at Ashby a snapshot of him and his bosom friend Carlyle, and also a pair of marble busts of them both. Another bust of him as a young man bears great resemblance to what his grandson, the 6th Marquess, was at a similar age. After his death, Louisa bought Kent House, Knightsbridge, as her London residence. But her heart was always in the Highlands, and, even when in England, she generally surrounded herself with Lochluichart people. Lady Paget thus describes her in her Memoirs :—

"Louisa Lady Ashburton was a frequent visitor to Rome. She was most attractive and very remarkable. She always lived in Miss Hosmer's * house and bought her statues. Generous, violent, rash and impulsive, ever swayed by the impression of the moment, she was necessarily under the thumb of somebody. Bevies of impecunious artists hovered about her like locusts, tradespeople made fortunes out of her and adventurers found her an easy prey. Everybody thought her enormously rich, because, with princely generosity, she threw large sums away for any object that caught her fancy. Though she not infrequently offended, she always fully and graciously retracted, and her smile, with the light in her dark eyes, under the straight brows, put me in mind of lightning amongst thunderclouds. A woman of this type had, of course, staunch friends, as well as bitter foes, for she was all contradictions. She was profoundly low church and an admirer of Mr. Gladstone; at the same time she worshipped Carlyle, who did nothing but abuse the former in no measured terms. Carlyle wanted to marry her,† but this she refused to do. It is curious that he should have had this feeling for her, as she had replaced his adored Gloriana at the Grange. At her homes she varied between untold kindness and unmitigated tyranny. When she asked friends to her country houses she had either no room for them, or she made hay of their rooms, whilst they were staying there. At her dinner parties she generally had more guests than she expected and more women than men. . . . Lady Ashburton was, in some way, descended from the Spanish d'Aguilars, but she was very Scotch too. She had second sight and was a strong medium, but thought the devil must be in it all. With her engoue-

* Miss Hosmer sculpted the "Sleeping Faun" in the Dining-Room and the two boys riding dolphins in the Long Gallery at Ashby.

† Carlyle's letters to the two Lady Ashburtons are at Ashby (F.D. 1370).

ment for people and her enthusiasm for artists, a certain grim matter-of-factness ran through her, which told its story. The warmth of her friendship when you were with her, was most enchanting, but I could not take her au sérieux, though the imprévu in her character was most interesting to the philosopher."

This may be an exaggerated account, but there are certainly innumerable anecdotes surviving her of awkward situations arising, especially at Lochluichart, through her habit of verbally inviting to stay with her every interesting person she met, regardless of the number of other guests in the house. But, in spite of these comedies, she was looked up to as the most benevolent of friends by the whole of the Mackenzie country, and by countless people all over the kingdom whom she had helped when in trouble. When in 1891 she returned as a tenant for the season to Stornoway Castle, which she had lived in as a little girl, the people welcomed her, as the last surviving representative of the family of the old lairds, with fireworks and other affectionate demonstrations of loyalty.

Mary Baring (always called Maysie) must have been a clever and attractive girl. She was born on June 26th, 1860, and received a very good education, travelling all over Europe with her mother. In the circle of her mother's friends, too, she met all the interesting people of the day; Lowell, Tennyson and Carlyle in the literary world, Lord Rayleigh in the scientific, and Watts and Sir William Richmond in the artistic, were on terms of intimate friendship with Lady Ashburton, and regular frequenters of her salon. There are two early portraits of Maysie at Ashby, besides the one by Landseer already mentioned. The first is at the age of about six, and is said to be by Watts. The other is signed "G. F. Watts," and must have been done when she was about twenty. When she came out she attracted a lot of attention. The Duke of Albany and she fell in love with each other, but were not allowed by Queen Victoria to marry. Arthur J. Balfour (afterwards Earl Balfour), who, as the owner of Strathconan, was a near neighbour, and Lord Tennyson, son of the poet, also wanted her to marry them. But Maysie chose Lord William Compton, and she chose very wisely. After their marriage on April 30th, 1884, they went on a honeymoon trip to Venice; and in the spring of 1888 they travelled in the Holy Land and made a camping expedition on horseback to Palmyra, escorted by a troop of Turkish soldiers. When at home they lived much of their time at their house, 51 Lennox Gardens, so as to be near his L.C.C. and Parliamentary work. But in the summer holidays they were at Compton, to which they became quite devoted. They improved it almost beyond recognition, by removing all the thick ivy from the house, by making the Best Garden in 1895 in the field bearing that name, and by smothering the place with a wealth of sweet-smelling roses. On August 6th, 1885, was born their eldest son, William Bingham (nicknamed "Bim," an abbreviation of Bingham), afterwards 6th Marquess; and a year later, on August 9th, Margaret, who as a child was known in the family as "Mousie." In 1893, on May 3rd, was born Spencer,

called "Spenny," and from his birth a great tragedy began. Lady Compton developed paralysis combined with shaking, which in spite of treatment became gradually worse until her death. In its early stages she was able to walk about the room, though she had to be carried up and down stairs. In its later stages she could not read nor move in any way. Her many friends crowded round her sofa, full of admiration for her pluck and patience; her children read aloud to her every day; but above all her husband helped her with the most admirable devotion, never sparing himself for one moment in trying to make her sad life a little brighter for her. Throughout the summer she would lie out under the trees at Compton, and in later years at Ashby, and every winter the family went abroad to warmer climates. In 1892 and 1896 they took the Villa Almanarre, three miles west of Hyères. In 1893 they took a house (Hume Towers) in the pine woods just west of Bournemouth. In 1894, 1895, 1897, 1898 and 1899 they hired a sailing dahabeah on the Nile, and twice went above the First Cataract. Lord Cromer, Maysie's cousin, was Agent-General in Egypt at the time, and entertained them at Cairo and made arrangements easy for them. On his way out to join the family for his holidays from school, Bim too always spent a night at the Residency in Cairo. They all took a keen interest in Egyptology, and for two years the Marquess joined with Messrs. Percy Newbury and Howard Carter in excavating. There is an album of his Egyptian sketches at Castle Ashby. In 1900 and 1901 Lady Northampton was not well enough to travel, and these winters were spent at Ashby. A portrait of her during her illness was painted by Sir William Richmond, but the gloomy expression is not true to life, and the body and arms were so lifeless that the 6th Marquess had the picture cut down. He painted at the same time a picture of Bim and Mousie, aged thirteen and twelve, in the original pose of measuring their heights against each other back to back.

Death of 5th Marchioness.

After succeeding to the Marquesate in 1897 they spent more time at Castle Ashby, and he was for a short time on the Northamptonshire County Council. In 1898 Bim went to Eton, and in 1903 to Balliol, Oxford, till 1906, when he took a History Degree. Margaret had an English, French and German governess in turn. On June 1st, 1902, their mother died, and their father felt the loss of her very deeply for the remaining eleven years of his life. She was buried at Ashby, and her widower placed over her the monument of four angels praying at each corner of the grave.

In February 1903, Louisa Lady Ashburton also died, and was buried among her own people by the Kirk at Lochluichart. By her Will she left her son-in-law Lochluichart and her mother's picture by Lawrence; everything else she left to Spenny, but so large were her debts that after selling Melchet Court, Kent House, Addiscombe and Seaton, with most of their contents, and paying the debts, very little remained for Spenny. The debts were chiefly incurred in building mission-halls at the docks, and helping missions and charitable organisations all over the

world. Those of the pictures and objects of art that were not sold were housed at Castle Ashby until Spenny should marry and have a house of his own.

5th Marquess's public life.

During the remainder of his life the 5th Marquis took very great interest in his estates, especially that in London, and was very highly respected and loved by his tenants. He was very open-hearted and philanthropic by nature, and did an enormous amount of good in the world by helping others. As a result of his work on behalf of social reform, he was President of the British & Foreign Bible Society, the Ragged School Union and the Putney Incurable Hospital; and in 1900 he was made a Knight of Grace of St. John of Jerusalem. In 1904–6 he was member of a Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline. He was also for some years Honorary Colonel of the London Territorial Heavy Brigade of Royal Garrison Artillery.

His recreations.

His chief recreations at this time were deer-stalking and fishing at Lochluichart, and shooting, golf and gardening at Ashby. He was also an enthusiastic motorist, driving his own car at a reckless speed, from which he derived great exhilaration. Indeed, it was always surprising to his relations and friends that the most feeling of humans should be turned by this modern invention into the most inconsiderate of road-users. His first motor, an American with leather gear-wheels, was bought in 1903, and was delivered new to Compton Wynyates. It was a two-seater victoria with the engine behind under the hood; it was steered by a tiller, and a box in front opened to form a spare seat for two extra persons.* On its first trial the Marquess, Bim and Mousie took cold lunch and started from Compton front-door on a picnic for the day. Though they had hitherto scowled at every motor that presumed to pass them, they now dressed up with pride as motorists in leather coats and huge goggles. But after many unsuccessful attempts by the chauffeur to climb the hill away from the front gate, both forwards and backwards (the reverse gear being the lowest), they were reduced to eating their lunch at the entrance gates in full view of the household.

In accordance with the prevailing fashion, pheasants were reared and partridges preserved in enormous numbers at Ashby; and to kill them two parties were invited for each, one each first time over and one each second time over; in addition, cock pheasants were shot down by the family party at Christmas. Each party shot four days, from Tuesday till Friday, and the average weekly bag, first time over, was 500 brace of partridges and 4000 pheasants. Denton Wood (excluding Northampton Copse) was the best pheasant beat, and its record day's bag was over 1800 pheasants. In November 1907 George and Mary, Prince and Princess of Wales, joined in one of these pheasant-shooting parties for four days; and the visit was commemorated by the Prince planting an Ilex on the north side of the east avenue.

Willie also had occasional week-end parties, at which Margaret generally acted

* A photograph of it is in an album at Lochluichart.

as hostess. But her marriage in 1905, at the early age of eighteen soon left him without companion, for Bim was at Oxford or in the army, and Spenny was at school. In 1906 Spenny went to Eton, and in 1907, after three years in the Northamptonshire Yeomanry, Bim went into the Royal Horse Guards (the Blues), where he learnt to hunt and play polo. Bim occasionally visited the property in Devonshire and Cornwall which he had inherited from his mother; it was situated chiefly at Callington and Calstock in Cornwall, Cotleigh near Honiton, and Charlton and St. Budeaux in South Devon.

Lady Loch.

Margaret married, on June 6th, 1905, Douglas Lord Loch, a good-looking and charming Grenadier Guardsman of 6 foot 5 inches in height and thirty-two years of age. Born on April 4th, 1873, he was educated at Winchester and then joined the Cape Mounted Rifles. He later transferred to the Grenadier Guards, and with them served in Egypt in 1898, when he was present at Omdurman, mentioned in despatches and given a brevet majority. In 1900 he succeeded his father,* who had been firstly Governor of the Isle of Man, then of Victoria, Australia, and then High Commissioner for South Africa (1889–95). Douglas was Adjutant of his battalion 1903–5, at the Staff College 1908–9, and Lord-in-Waiting to the King and on the Staff at War Office 1911–14. They have the following children: Maysie (born 1906), Jean (1908), George Henry (1916) to whom George V was godfather, Helen (1919), and Spencer (1920).

The Marquess abroad.

In 1911 Willie was sent on a Mission of Special Ambassador to the Courts of France, Italy, Greece and Turkey, to announce the accession of King George V. He took his son Compton with him. In Paris they were banqueted by the President. In Italy they spent twenty-four hours at the King's Palace at Raconigi. In Greece they lived with the King for four days at Tatoi, his residence in the hills, where he had his meals alone with them, and did nothing but express his contempt for the Greeks, being himself a Dane and brother of Queen Alexandra. In Turkey they were banqueted by the Sultan, and shown round by Young Turks, who tried to impress on them that Turkey in two years of their régime had advanced towards civilisation by giant strides. In each of the four countries the chief formality was the presentation of an autograph letter from King George to the sovereign.

From about 1908 till his death Willie spent a good deal of the winters abroad, and latterly chiefly in his Villa Graziella at Cap Ferrat near Nice. In his absence Bim hunted from Ashby with the Pytchley, and for several years took stabling at the Swan Inn at Lamport with a brother officer, or with his uncle Douglas.

His death.

In 1912 the Marquess was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire and President of the Warwickshire Territorial Force Association. But on June 15th of the following year he dropped dead in his hotel at Acqui, where he had just arrived to do a cure for arthritis in his hip. He was buried with his wife at Ashby, deeply

* Who has been mentioned above as captured with Willie de Norman by the Chinese.

regretted all over the country. Never was there a less worldly and a more high-minded man; he instinctively shrank from what was not absolutely noble and beautiful, and found his greatest pleasure in cheerfully devoting his whole life to others and sharing in their joys or sorrows. So sympathetic was his nature that no one he came across in everyday life, no matter what their station, could help fraternising with him. His extraordinary influence for good was due to this sympathy, and also to the open nobility of his countenance and the enthusiasm in his voice. No one could help but feel the better for meeting him even for a few moments. His delivery in public speaking was most impressive, and his power of inspiring confidence made him an excellent parliamentary candidate. The friends he enjoyed most were those interested in music or gardening. He was specially attached to his sister Minnie.

Mention has been made of his singing as a young man at Rome. After his marriage he frequently sung duets with Tosti for charities, and once or twice at the Queen's Hall. His singing gave his audiences intense pleasure, even when in advancing years, for he sang with a great deal of feeling and expression.

PORTRAIT OF [illegible] OF NORTHAMPTON, IN THE UNIFORM OF THE [illegible] HORSE GUARDS.

CHAPTER XXIII

WILLIAM, 6TH MARQUESS

1913–

SPENNY had a very promising career at Balliol. He was reading for an Honour Degree in Modern History, and was fully expected by his tutor and his contemporaries to gain a First Class Degree. There was also an enthusiastic Imperial movement at Oxford at the time, connected with a journal called the *Round Table*. Spenny was largely instrumental in starting the Oxford branch, together with Bobby Palmer (Lord Selborne's second son), and Spenny was its first Chairman. He was also a promising speaker at the Union debates. *Spenny at Oxford.*

In January 1914, when he had only completed two years and four months as an undergraduate, he was given leave by the Oxford authorities to miss one term in order to be attached to the Staff of the Duke of Connaught, the Governor-General of Canada. It was intended that he should on his return complete the third year at Oxford necessary to enable him to take a degree. He was rather young in years for such an appointment, but his cousin, Alan Graham, was also on the Duke's Staff, and Spenny was a great success. There is at Ashby the autograph photograph of the Duke given him as a souvenir. Spenny returned in April, and was to have celebrated his coming of age by a party at Ashby in August, but this had to be postponed owing to the European situation which led to the Great War.

Meanwhile Bim had become Adjutant of his regiment in August 1913, which office he held when War broke out twelve months later. Spenny was a Lieutenant in the Northamptonshire Yeomanry, which on mobilisation was billeted near Dunstable; but in September he transferred to the Blues and went abroad with them. Thus for the first time since the reign of Charles II was the family well represented in this distinguished regiment. The Blues sent one Squadron to France four days after mobilisation with a composite Household Cavalry Regiment; they then formed a full war-strength regiment from reservists, which landed at Ostend on October 6th. It was with this latter regiment that Bim and Spenny landed. The original mission of the force, to which they were attached, and which consisted of the 7th Infantry and the 3rd Cavalry Divisions, was the relief of Antwerp. But when that city fell the day after their landing, they hurried to prolong the left flank of the main Expeditionary Force advancing from the Marne, and were the first to *The Great War.*

hold the line from Paschendael to Messines, which remained little altered until the last months of the War. On November 6th, 1914, Bim was slightly wounded in the hand at about eighty yards range by some Germans who had pushed through the line, and while he was trying to drag to cover an interpreter officer who had been hit in the stomach. He was evacuated to England, but returned healed in less than a month. On May 13th, 1915, Spenny was killed in a counter-attack on some trenches lost by another regiment. Half an hour before the counter-attack was timed to take place Spenny was sent forward with a patrol to reconnoitre the ground, and he returned just as the regiment advanced. Enemy machine-guns, posted in shell-holes, were covering the ground. Artillery preparation was impossible, because, owing to shortage of ammunition, each gun was limited to three shells a day.* The 8th Cavalry Brigade advanced under devastating machine-gun fire until it had got beyond the original German front line; and, when called back to the original British front line, they had suffered so many casualties (about 65 per cent.) that they could not bring back their dead with them. Margaret's German governess wrote to say that the finding of his body had been announced in German newspapers, but the family have never been able to discover the place of his burial. It is most likely that he was buried within half a mile of the line, and in this case the ground would be many times blown to atoms during the fighting of the following years. Lord Spencer's name appears on the War Memorial on the Village Green at Ashby, on that in the Ashby Church, and on that at Garve near Lochluichart. At Compton, the sword he was using at the time of his death lies in the church; it is a trooper's sword, and this was because in November 1914 his charger got loose and galloped over to the Germans, with Spenny's officer's sword on the saddle.

At the time of Spenny's death Bim had just been lent to the Cavalry Signal Service to which he had often been attached on manœuvres before the War. He subsequently commanded the Signal Squadron of his Division till May 1917, when he returned to command a Squadron in his regiment. Then when the regiment was dismounted and turned into a machine-gun battalion, he proceeded in November 1917 to the Signals of the Australian Mounted Division in Palestine, and he then commanded the Signals of the 5th Cavalry Division. He motored into Jerusalem, when off duty, the day before Lord Allenby's official entry; he spent five months of the summer in the Jordan Valley, where one day the temperature in a hospital tent reached 136°; and later on his Division took Haifa, Acre and Damascus, and marched to the Turkish frontier north of Aleppo, 420 miles from its corps at Damascus. He was

* The politicians at home were preaching "Business as usual." Kitchener was saving every man for a sensational "push" in the autumn. Deprived of ammunition and reinforcements, the survivors of the original Expeditionary Force felt bitterly that their fate was of no concern to their countrymen at home, who were thinking of nothing but maintaining their foreign trade.

mentioned twice in despatches and awarded the D.S.O. At the conclusion of the Armistice with Turkey and Germany he got leave home, where his sister Margaret had been managing his estates with great capability since 1914.

Wartime at home.

It will be hard for future generations to realise, unless they are unfortunately reminded by fresh wars of similar magnitude, what a complete disorganisation of ordinary life at home was caused by this war, in which every man who could possibly be spared from food production was enlisted in the Army or employed compulsorily in manufacturing fighting material. Most of the tenant farmers were themselves exempted, but most of their sons were taken, and nearly all the labour on the farms was done by women in breeches and high boots. Castle Ashby particularly distinguished itself in voluntary recruiting before compulsion was decreed; its proportion of voluntary recruits to its population was second highest in the county, and it thereby only narrowly missed the honour of winning the gift of a memorial cross offered by a public-spirited individual. In food production, Ashby did the usual thing: every spare patch of ground was ploughed up and sown, and even the shaped beds on the terraces were planted with vegetables. Only the minimum of repairs could be done to cottages and buildings owing to the reduced staff; and no one was left in the gardens but the head gardener, so that paths, lawns and beds were indistinguishable from one another in one large hayfield. People living in the country got enough to eat and enough firewood for heating and cooking, but those in the towns were very strictly rationed, and did not get enough for their health; Lady Loch's action was not uncommon when she went for months without meat so that her children should have some a little more often.

The Family Estates.

The problems of the estates in the post-war period were gradually overcome, in spite of the fact that no income was derived from the London estate for three years, and that a steady loss was experienced on the country estates. For a short time after the war the rates and taxes (at the highest rate) on agricultural land amounted to over 19s. in the pound. It was at this time (in 1919) that the Baring estates in Devon and Cornwall, the Doddington land in Northamptonshire, and the Tysoe and Long Compton lands in Warwickshire were sold. The following table shows the acreages and prices:—

Devon	Cotleigh	1324 acres	£33,990
"	Charleton	1042 "	£38,123
Cornwall	Callington and Calstock	2076 "	£69,388
Northants	Great Doddington	1300 "	£47,515
Warwickshire	Tysoe	1280 "	£35,339
"	Long Compton	1850 "	£47,200
	Total	8872 acres	£271,555

The prices fetched were about twenty-two years purchase of the pre-war rents, and every farm, except one, was sold to the sitting tenant.

The 6th Marquis did a course of two months in agriculture at Oxford and took a great interest in the remainder of his agricultural estates, which amounted to about 10,000 acres at Castle Ashby, including 1800 acres woodland, and another 1800 acres in Warwickshire. He also took in hand about 2500 acres of land in Northamptonshire and 1100 acres in Warwickshire; they were farmed by Messrs. Shand and Frank Taylor respectively. He also tried to develop the forestry at Ashby and to decrease the loss of about £2000 a year due to the woods being grown for beauty and sport rather than for profit; but in this he was unsuccessful, and in 1929 evaded any further losses by selling all the timber for £36,000 and leasing the woodlands for 999 years to the recently appointed Forestry Commission. Death duties being about 43 per cent., he also adopted the policy of spending what was necessary on his residences and estates as quickly as possible. During the years 1919–20 he installed central heating and electric light in Compton and largely refurnished that house. His alterations there and at Ashby are recorded in his notebooks. Having put heating into Compton, he was able to hunt from there every winter with the Warwickshire Hounds, it being a much better centre than Ashby. A picture painted of him in 1925 in the collar of the Warwickshire Hunt hangs at Compton.

His marriage. On October 15th, 1921, he married Lady Emma Thynne, second daughter of the 5th Marquis of Bath, at Horningsham Church, near Longleat. For a wedding present his sister Margaret embroidered the fire-screen at present in King William's Room. On their honeymoon trip they travelled round the Pacific. Crossing the U.S.A. they visited the Society Islands, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Honolulu, Japan and China, and returned across Canada, reaching home in July 1922. A typed diary, illustrated by his snapshots, is at Compton Wynyates.

In 1923 he sold Castle Ashby house and the agricultural land in Northamptonshire and Warwickshire to an Estate Company entirely under his own management. This was a common practice at the time by which land paid Super-Tax like any other business, only on its profits instead of on an arbitrary assessment. There were advantages, too, in becoming a tenant of Castle Ashby house, as much work in the house could be paid for out of gross income.

In 1924 he was elected a Liberal Alderman of the Northamptonshire County Council, and in 1926 became Chairman of the Roads Committee at a moment when public opinion was inclined to spend more money on road maintenance and improvement. This led to his being appointed in October 1928 to a Royal Commission on Transport, which reported, firstly on the regulation of road-traffic, and secondly on the possibility of co-ordinating all means of transport so as to prevent wasteful competition. In 1927 he changed over to the Conservative Party, though he rarely attended at the House of Lords; and in 1928 he refused a Conservative Aldermanship on the County Council and was returned at a hotly contested election against a Labour candidate for the Wollaston Division.

In 1914 he was elected Chairman of the Great Northern Hospital in the Holloway Road, which later changed its name to the Royal Northern. Largely owing to the energy of a very capable Secretary, it was a period of great expansion in the size and work of the Hospital.

On the London estates he sold a good deal of land, and spent all the proceeds in reconditioning much of the house property in Canonbury, whose ninety-nine years building leases were falling in. He started a Social Guild in Canonbury and another in Clerkenwell, under paid organisers assisted by voluntary helpers, which catered for boys and girls of all ages. He revived the window-box prizes of his father's days and started Gardens Societies, whose enthusiastic members performed wonders in the small space available.

Sport He is a very steady shot with a rifle, and very fond of the shooting at Ashby. But economies have to be made somewhere, and quite a considerable one is the letting of partridge and pheasant shooting there to a syndicate of Northampton bootmakers. He generally has three or four hunters in the stables at Compton in the winter, and in the summer his great passion is yachting. For four seasons before the War he owned the *Bunty*, a 10-ton Falmouth Quay Punt, in which he cruised about the south coast during his week-ends from barracks. In 1924 he bought the *Veronique*, a 33-ton yawl, and was next year elected to the Royal Yacht Squadron. In 1928 he sold her and bought the *Celia*, a 48-ton yawl. In 1925, 1927 and 1929 they went cruising up the west coast of Scotland, and visited nearly every little loch there.

They are both very keen sightseers, too, and have spent many odd moments visiting buildings of interest in the neighbourhood of every friend's house they stay in; while most Easters they have travelled abroad for two or three weeks, seeing pictures and churches in France or Italy.

Emma is a very accomplished needlewoman, and her beautiful embroidery is characterised by very minute and regular stitches. In 1927 she was painted by F. Elwell doing embroidery in her sitting-room, the Old Library; the picture was exhibited in the London Academy, and the Scotch Academy of 1928.

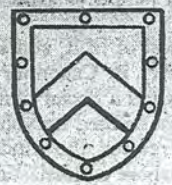
They are both devoted to Compton and Ashby, and spend every spare moment deliberating how they can still further add to their beauty. It is with the idea in their minds that not many more generations of the family will be able to afford to live at Ashby that they have decided to be buried at Compton, where it will be remembered all members of the family were laid to rest down to the nineteenth century.

APPENDIX I

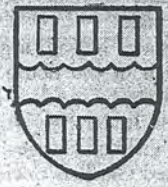
COATS OF ARMS

CONNECTED WITH THE COMPTON FAMILY, MOSTLY APPEARING IN STONE, WOOD OR PLASTER AT CASTLE ARRBY OR COMPTON WYNYATES.

1. COMPTON.



2. COMPTON.



3. AYLWORTH.

4. WYKWAN.

5. GOLOFRE.

6. BRERETON.

7. BETISHORNE.

8. BERKELEY.

9. EGERTON.

10. TALBOT.

11. STRANGE.

12. NEVILLE.

13. FURNIVAL.

14. WALDEN.

15. OGAN.

16. JOISE.

APPENDIX I

DESCRIPTION OF THE COATS OF ARMS

COATS.	BLAZONS.	CONNECTION WITH THE COMPTONS.
1. COMPTON.	Sable a lion passant guardant or between three esquire's helmets argent.	Granted in 1512 to Sir William Compton.
2. COMPTON.	Argent a chevron vert and a bordure azure besantée.	Granted in 1512 to be quartered with 1.
3. AYLWORTH.	Argent a fesse engrailed between six billets gules.	Edmund Compton (d. 1493) married Joan *Aylworth*, whose paternal great-grandmother was daughter of a *Wykwan* father but of a mother who was daughter and heiress of Sir F. *Golofry*. The coat shown as Wykwan appears on the seal of Thomas Compton of Compton Wynyates (1340–80) and was probably the coat of that family until the grant of 1512 (see 1 and 2), and not Wykwan at all.
4. WYKWAN.	Argent on a chevron sable three fleurs-de-lis or.	
5. GOLOFRE.	Barry wavy of eight argent and gules on a bend sable three bezants.	
6. BRERETON.	Argent two bars sable a mullet for difference.	Sir William Compton married in 1512 Warberga, daughter of Sir John *Brereton* of Brereton. Her mother, Katherine *Berkeley*, was co-heiress of the Berkeleys of Beverstone, who in the 14th century had married the daughter and sole heiress of the Bettishornes of Bettishorne (Co. South'ton). The Breretons had five generations back married the sole heiress of the *Egertons* of Malpas.
7. BETTISHORNE.	Argent on a saltire gules five estoiles or.	
8. BERKELEY.	Gules a chevron between ten crosses pattée argent a bordure of the last.	
9. EGERTON.	Gules three pheons argent.	
10. TALBOT.	Gules a lion rampant within a bordure engrailed or.	Peter Compton married in 1537 Anne, daughter of George *Talbot*, 4th Earl of Shrewsbury, and of his 2nd wife Elizabeth *Walden*. Elizabeth Walden was the only daughter of Sir R. Walden and Margery *Ogan*, daughter and heiress of her father Ogan and mother *Joise* (both of Wales). The 1st Earl of Shrewsbury's mother was daughter and sole heiress of Lord *Strange*. The 1st Earl's 1st wife was heiress of her father *Neville* and of her mother, who was daughter and heiress of Lord *Furnival*.
11. STRANGE.	Argent two lions passant gules.	
12. NEVILLE.	Gules on a saltire argent a martlet sable.	
13. FURNIVAL.	Argent a bend between six martlets gules.	
14. WALDEN.	Or on a bend gules cotised azure between six martlets gules three wings argent.	
15. OGAN.	Gules a chevron between three leaves argent.	
16. JOISE.	Or on a chief sable three martlets of the field.	


17. HASTINGS.


18. POLE.


19. HUNGERFORD.


20. PLANTAGENET.


21. SPENCER.


22. BEAUMONT.


23. SACKVILLE.

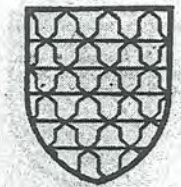

24. NOEL.


25. WOTTON.


26. HICKS.

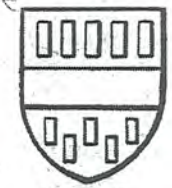

27. FOX.


28. SHIRLEY.


29. FERRERS.


30. CHESTER.

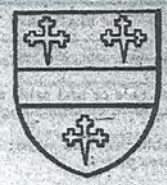

31. DEVEREUX.


32. LOVAINE.

COATS.	BLAZONS.	CONNECTION WITH THE COMPTONS.
17. HASTINGS.	Argent a maunch sable.	Henry 1st Lord Compton married in 1568 Frances *Hastings*, daughter of 2nd Earl of Huntingdon. Her mother was daughter and co-heiress of Henry *Pole*, Lord Montacute. The Earl's paternal grandmother was heiress to her father Thomas, Lord *Hungerford*. The Earl's mother's paternal grandmother, Margaret Beaufort, was with her sister co-heiress of the family by his 3rd wife of John of Gaunt, son of Edward III.
18. POLE.	Per pale or and sable a saltire engrailed counterchanged.	
19. HUNGERFORD.	Sable two bars argent in chief three plates.	
20. PLANTAGENET (Duke of Clarence).	Quarterly 1 and 4 azure three fleurs-de-lis or 2 and 3 gules three lions rampant guardant in pale or, a label of three points argent each charged with a canton gules.	
21. SPENCER.	Argent two bars gemels between three eagles displayed sable.	1st Earl of Northampton married in 1599 the daughter of Sir John Spencer of Waddingfield.
22. BEAUMONT.	Azure semée of fleur-de-lis and a lion rampant or crowned gules.	2nd Earl of Northampton married in 1621 the daughter of Sir F. Beaumont of Cole Orton.
23. SACKVILLE.	Quarterly or and gules a bend vair.	3rd Earl of Northampton married firstly in 1647 the daughter of the 3rd Earl of Dorset.
24. NOEL.	Or fretty gules a canton ermine.	3rd Earl of Northampton married secondly in 1663 Mary *Noel*, daughter of 2nd Viscount Campden. His father was Lord Noel and mother Juliana *Hicks*, daughter of 1st Viscount Campden. Mary's mother was daughter and co-heiress of Lord *Wotton*.
25. WOTTON.	Argent, a cross formée fitchée sable.	
26. HICKS.	Gules a fesse wavy between three fleurs-de-lis or.	
27. FOX.	Ermine on a chevron azure three fox's heads erased or on a canton of the second a fleur-de-lis of the last.	4th Earl of Northampton married in 1686 the daughter of Sir Stephen Fox.
28. SHIRLEY.	Paly of six or and azure a quarter ermine.	5th Earl married in 1716 the daughter of Hon. Robert *Shirley* and Anne, daughter and sole heiress of Sir Humphrey *Ferrers* of Tamworth. Robert Shirley's great-grandfather, Sir Henry (d. 1633), married a daughter and co-heiress of Robert *Devereux* Earl of Essex (friend of Queen Elizabeth), whose great-grandmother had married the Baroness in her own right of *Bourchier* and *Lovaine*. A very early Earl of Ferrers married a daughter and co-heiress of an Earl of *Chester*.
29. FERRERS.	Vairé or and gules.	
30. CHESTER.	Azure three garbs or.	
31. DEVEREUX.	Argent a fesse gules in chief three torteaux.	
32. LOVAINE.	Gules a fesse argent between ten billets or.	

33. BOURCHIER.

34. SOMERSET.



35. LAWTON.

36. SMITH.

37. CLEPHANES.

38. DOUGLAS OF KIRKNESS.

39. VYNER.

40. DE GREY.

41. ELLIOT.

42. BARING.

43. THYNNE.

COATS.	BLASONS.	CONNECTION WITH THE COMPTONS.
33. BOURCHIER.	Argent a cross engrailed gules between four water bougets sable.	
34. SOMERSET.	Quarterly 1 and 4 azure three fleurs-de-lis or 2 and 3 gules three lions passant guardant in pale or, the whole within a bordure gobony argent and azure.	7th Earl married in 1759 Anne *Somerset*, daughter of 4th Duke of Beaufort.
35. LAWTON.	Argent a fesse between three crosses crosslet fitchée sable.	8th Earl of Northampton married in 1758 daughter of Henry *Lawton*, Esq.
36. SMITH.	Ermine a saltire between three crescents, one in chief and two in fesse, and a dolphin erect in base azure, fins or, in the centre point an escallop of the last.	1st Marquess of Northampton married in 1787 daughter of Joshua *Smith*, Esq., M.P. of Erle Stoke, Wilts.
37. CLEPHANE.	Argent a lion rampant gules, in the dexter chief point an esquire's helmet proper.	2nd Marquess of Northampton married in 1815 daughter of General Douglas Maclean *Clephane*, whose mother was a *Douglas* of Lochleven, and whose wife was heiress of the Macleans of Torloisk.
38. DOUGLAS of Kirkness.	Quarterly first and fourth argent a man's heart gules ensigned with an Imperial Crown proper and on a chief azure three stars of the first; second and third argent three gules issuing from a chief gules on the last two stars of the first, all within a bordure azure charged with eight buckles or.	
39. VYNER.	Azure a bend or on a chief argent a saltire engrailed gules between two Cornish choughs sable, cadency mark of a crescent argent charged with a pierced mullet sable.	3rd Marquess of Northampton married in 1859 daughter of Captain *Vyner*. Her mother was daughter of 1st Earl *de Grey*.
40. DE GREY.	Quarterly first and fourth barry of six argent and azure, second and third, vert a chevron between three stags at gaze or.	
41. ELLIOT.	Gules, on a bend engrailed or a baton azure within a bordure vair.	4th Marquess of Northampton married in 1844 daughter of Admiral Sir George *Elliot*, son of 1st Earl of Minto.
42. BARING.	Azure a fesse or in chief a bear's head couped proper muzzled and ringed or.	5th Marquess of Northampton married in 1884 Mary *Baring*, daughter of 2nd Lord Ashburton.
43. THYNNE.	Quarterly first and fourth barry of ten or and sable, second and third argent a lion rampant tail nowed and erected gules.	6th Marquess of Northampton married in 1921 Emma *Thynne*, daughter of 5th Marquess of Bath.

APPENDIX II

RESIDENCES OF THE FAMILY

1518. *Sir William Compton* had a "place in London." In July 1518 he owned a house and garden near the river at East Greenwich. He owned two residences in Tottenham, Bruce Castle and Mockings Hall, in one of which he was living in 1516.

1528. At his death he owned furniture at Bettishorne, the Great Park, Windsor, and at Sir Walter Stonor's place near Henley-on-Thames.

1544–89. *Henry, 1st Lord Compton*, lived at Castle Ashby and Mockings Hall.

1616. *Lord Compton's* house "in the Savoy" London (F.D. 734f), where he died in 1630. (His Garter progress started from Salisbury House in the Strand.)

1619. *Sir Henry Compton, K.B.*, lived at Brambletye and in a house in Finch Lane, London.

1638. *2nd Earl* resided at Crosby House.

1649–60. *3rd Earl*, owing to damage to Castle Ashby, lived for some time with his family in a lodge in Olney Park (F.D. 721E). He also spent some of the Commonwealth in Canonbury House, which was not again lived in by the family after the Restoration. His Petition of 1649 mentions his "London house."

1661. Isabella (first wife of 3rd Earl) died in their house in Lincolns Inn Fields.

1677. 3rd Earl was residing at the old Manor House of Clerkenwell "Northampton House."

1681. *4th Earl* inherited Salisbury House in Strand.

1688. Removed to new house, "Northampton House," in Bloomsbury Square, which he had purchased in 1687.

1713. *Spencer Earl of Wilmington* lived at Compton Place, Eastbourne, a house in St. James's Square, and a house at Chiswick.

1716. *5th Earl.* "Mrs. Shirley's house" in Charles Street, near St. James's Square, became "Lord Compton's house," but in 1717 Lord Compton's house was "in St. James' Street, the corner of Park Place," and in April of that year it is described as in "Marlborough Street."

1727. "Grosvenor Street, near Hanover Square."

1734. "Brook Street, Westminster." And inherited from his uncle, Earl of Wilmington, the house at Chiswick.

1760. The 7th Earl had a house in Portman Square which he left to his daughter and which was lived in by her and her mother the Duchess of Beaufort.

1763. *8th Earl* was living at Chase Park Farm when first he married.

1768–71. 8th Earl lived in Wigmore Street.

1772. He moved into a house in Portman Square.

1772–73. House at Hendon for two years.

1777. Address à Allone, Balliage d'Aigle, Canton de Berne, Switzerland.

1781–96. Avenches, Canton of Berne, till death.

1787. 8th Earl writes to his son, Lord Compton, at "Leicester Square."

1793–94. Lord and Lady Compton lived for two winters at houses in Great George Street, Westminster.

1796. Lady Frances Compton's address, 22 Fludyer Street, Westminster.

1813. *1st Marquis* took 18 Albemarle Street from January 1st to March 20th.

1814. Hertford Street.

1815. (November). Lord Compton, (just married) "got a house in Parliament Street, open to the River."

Dec. 1819 and 1821 — Lord Compton's address, 38 Lower Brook Street.

1829 and 1836 — 2nd Marquis at 6 Portland Place.

1837. 17 Albemarle Street.

1838. Inherited 145 Piccadilly.

1851. Lord William Compton at Torloisk.

1854–77. Lord William at 32 Rutland Gate.

1877. 4th Marquess at 145 Piccadilly.

1884. Lord William Compton 51 Lennox Gardens.

1885. 4th Marquess sold 145 Piccadilly and bought lease of 44 Lennox Gardens.

1903. 5th Marquess inherited property, Lochluichart, Ross-shire.

1908–13. Villa Graziella, Cap Ferrat.

APPENDIX III

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF INVENTORIES KEPT WITH THE FAMILY PAPERS

1522.	Inventory of Compton House attached to the Will of Sir William Compton (detailed extracts below).	F.D. 1240.
1681.	Inventory of Goods in Castle Ashby (£2086). (impossible to recognise any rooms except the Great Room and the Great Hall).	F.D. 1319.
1694.	Inventory of Household Goods at Compton House	F.D. 1069.
1705.	Inventory very similar to above.	
1701.	List of Saddles and harness at Ashby.	F.D. 1070.
1702.	Nursery Plate. Other Plate. Goods in the Wardrobe.	
1705.	List of the Linen.	
1734.	Inventories of Farm Implements and Garden Utensils at Ashby.	F.D. 993.
1754.	Inventory of Compton Wynyates.	F.D. 993.
1755.	Inventory of Castle Ashby.	F.D. 1068.
1774.	Catalogue of Sale at Castle Ashby.	F.D. 993.
	" " Compton Wynyates	
1851 1858	Two lists of pictures at Ashby, and one of contents of various cupboards, etc., by Lady Alwyne.	F.D. 1017–72.

EXTRACTS FROM THE INVENTORY OF COMPTON WYNYATES TAKEN IN 1522.

In the Parlour : (? present dining-room).

2 long tables of oak and elm containing 8 yards, 2 pairs of oak trestles	5/3
2 long carpets of course verdure each 12 × 1 yards	8/–
2 staked and a little old form	–/12d.
2 short forms of wainscot	
carpet 3 yds. window carpet 3 yds.	
5 hangings of Tapestry Imagery 140 sticks square	£11.13.4
6 cushions feather-stuffed covered with verdure and his Coat of Arms,	
a cupboard with 2 Almerys (shelves) * of wainscot with an " halpace " (step).	4/6
3 joined stools	1/6

* See above, page 31.

In the Chamber over the Parlour : (? Drawing and Combe Rooms combined).
An old Table and pair of trestles of wainscot 8½ yds long.
3 old stools. 1 cupboard of wainscot
2 carpets at 3 yds and 2 yds.
6 feather cushions covered with verdure and his Arms.
6 Tapestry hangings 190 sticks square

In the Chapel Chamber : (? Chapel Drawing Room).
5 Tapestries 145 sticks square.
long feather cushion of checked velvet. 1 of blew velvet.
standing bedstead : featherbed and bolster : 2 red large Irish blankets.
a Sparver (canopy) of yellow and white satin trayled with white and yellow sarcenet embroidered with roses and letters of gold £6.
Cupboard 2 almerys of wainscot. 1 form 1 stool.

In the Chamber over the Nursery : (? Henry viii's room).
6 verdure hangings trailed with roses and fountains 190 sticks square £7.18.5.
a cupboard of wainscot. a little carpet of verdure 2 yds, a form, a stool.
a Bedstead of Oak, a Sparver of Cloth of Gold trailed with yellow and violet sarcenet.
a Counterpoynt of Tapestry 12 sticks. a Red Blanket.
1 pair of Fushyans of 4 braids. a little window curtain of Dornyx (Tournay).
1 long cushion cont. 2 yds of checked velvet.

In the White Chamber : (? Cavalier's Room).
5 Tapestry hangings 115 sticks square—3 yard carpet
Cupboard—staked formed—stool.
Oak Bedsted—white linen quilt etc. Sparver of White Damask " The trayle (wreathed pattern) white sarcenet embroidered with letters of gold of his name and his Cunysaunce." £4.
little blew velvet feather cushion—6 cushions of verdours little window curtain of Dornyx 1/4
A little folding table with trestle of Spanish making. 2/–
A trussing (folding) bed of wainscot in leather case 6/8

In the Draught Chamber next the White Chamber : (? Passage room).
a little palette (? paillasse) feather bed and bolster 6/8
a little covering of verdure 1/–
a little bedsted 8d.

The consecutive order of rooms is then as follows (almost every room containing one or two " standing bedsteds " and very little else) :—
The two bed Chamber (? housemaids room).
The Chamber over the Gate (? Porch Room).
the Chamber on the Porter's Lodge (? Avenue Dressing Room).
Master Receiver's Chamber (? Avenue Room).

the next Chamber (? caretaker's two bedrooms, but only 1 bed).
the Steward's Chamber beneath (? caretaker's parlour).
the Keper's Chamber,
the Inner Chamber,
the Nursery (? Watchman's Room).
the Inner Nursery (? Still Room) contained :—1 bedsted, 1 Sparyer of cloth of gold and grene velvet clocked (*sic*) sore worn trayled with yellow and green sarcenet £3
115 sticks of tapestry sore broken £4.15.10.
the Chappel contained :—2 lappetts (70 sticks) of verdure trailed with roses :
5 yds window carpet of verdure.
" An old vestment of white damask embroidered with flowers Deacon and subdeacon of the same." 40/–
" An old vestment of Bawdekyn with the apparell." 20/–
" An old vestment of course Russet Damask embroidered with copper gold and the apparell." 8/–
" An old awter cloth (cont. 2 yds) of White Satin embroidered with Fleurs de lys of duks gold." 6/8
" An old awter cloth with a front of silk bawdekyn cont. 9 yds." 8/4
ditto 3 yds. and 2 little do of verdure and 1 of satin figurye 5 × ½ yds : and 4 plain holland do.
" 3 small images of timber gilted and a Tablet " (picture).
the Yeoman's Chamber,
the next Chambers : contained 2 beds etc . . . verdure with Buckhorns.
the Chambers beneath
the next Chambers beneath
In the Chamber over the Pantry (? Charles I's Room) :—
1 standing bedsted " Celour Tester and Curtains of White and Russet sarcenet."
1 Flanders Chair 1 cupboard.
the Draper's Chamber
the Chamber over the Kechen.
the Glasier's Chamber
the Inner Chamber
In the Warderobe :—tapestry, hangings, carpetts, etc.
In the Chamber over the Cellar (? Henry viii Dressing Room) :—
" a Celour and Tester of checked velvet red and green and paved with silk bawdekyn wrought with White and Red Roses and sunbeams of white cloth of silver . . . curtains . . . counterpoynt . . . lappetts and a long cushion of same . . .
In the Towre Chamber over the Cellar (? Council Chamber) :—
fetherbed and rotten tapistry and carpets.
In the Armoury (? Barracks) :—" 12 old standards, aprons and gussetts (for armpits) of mail cankard." 42/–

12 more aprons and gussetts of mail.
72 rusty saletts, (light helmet).
20 prs rusty splynts (for protecting elbows).
20 prs. broken brigandyrons (suits of armour for light infantry).
12 rusty bills and halberts.
The New Towre Chamber (? Priest's Room) :—Nappery, Diaper and Palyne.
In the Garretts :—Chests and lumber.
In the Storehouse :—" 3 old tablets of our Lady,
1 large tablet of our Lady, embroidered with gold veins.
" a great Steel Mirror."
" a glass of pomander fashioned round garnished with damask gold with a tassell at 20/–."
" a middle standard (cupboard) covered with Leather with small rybbis of Iron.
" a piece of beyondsee Say (foreign Serge).
In ye Kechen :—" 7 garnishe of old pewter vessels of diverse fashions good and bad." £9.6.8.
" a great brass pot with long feet." more brass pots.
" a Fryttur Chaffer." " a Fyre Chaffer and a Collaundre of lead "
" a pair of great Racks of iron at 20/–."
" 8 great square spits of iron, 8 round spits great and small, a gridiron, and a Sykmmer of Iron. Tubbys, bolls and other lombre.
In the Buttry and Pantry :—22 candlesticks of pewter, 8 . . of latter of diverse sorts etc.
In the Courte W'out : (i.e. across the 1st Moat) ;—loads of waynscot and timber.
In the Chamber W'out the Moat :—6 standing and a Truckle bed, etc.
In the Priest's Chamber : (across the Moat) :—2 featherbeds etc.
In the Barnys : 300 loads of hay.
Catalls :—9 mylche Kyne at 10/–
200 wethers at 2/8d.
The Frenshe Plate :—* 12 bowls with a Cover, gilt with Doppys, poiz, 220 oz.
2 standing pots gilt, 132 oz.
2 basons and 2 ewers gilt. 290 oz.
2 flagons gilt 183 oz.
3 salts with a cover gilt, 67 oz.
The which plate remaineth in the hands of Sir Henry Guldeford, Knt. (one of the Executors).

* Given him by the French King (see Will).

APPENDIX IV

TRANSLATION FROM THE OLD FRENCH OF THE AUGMENTATION OF THE COMPTON ARMS

GRANTED IN 1512

TO all men present and to come who shall see or read these present letters, Thomas Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms of the English, Greeting with humble commendation.

Equity wills and reason ordains that men, virtuous and of noble courage, should for their merits and good renown be rewarded, and those also who shall issue and be begotten from their bodies. And where nobility once exists in one lineage, it cannot be lost except by a long continuance of idleness and vice. And the Doctor Barthole (Bartolo di Sassoferrato, ob. 1357) in his treatise of Ensigns and Arms, says "Arms which are once ours can in no manner of fashion, except it be by the crime of treason, be removed from us." And since it is so that no one by the ancient and laudable custom of arms can bear complete arms without due difference except the most ancient and chief of the house, lineage or name, without the one prejudicing the other. And whereas William Compton, of Compton Wyneyates, otherwise called Compton-in-the-Hole, of the County of Warwick, esquire, is come and descended from the house and lineage of the Comptons, that is to say the said William, son of Edmund, son of Robert, son of William Compton, of Compton in the county aforesaid, gentleman, who, not wishing to use or bear arms in prejudice of his blood, lineage or surname, has made request to me the abovesaid Garter King of Arms of the English, to assign and give to him such difference in his arms as may be according to right and reason, to remain firm and established, without prejudice to any one of his name, blood and lineage, or any other person. And also seeing that I the said King of Arms have seen and read certain letters signed with the sign manual of the very high and puissant and very excellent Prince, the very victorious and very Christian King Henry the Eighth, by the grace of God, King of England and France, very redoubtable and sovereign lord, given in his palace of Westminster the 7th day of November in the 4th year of his reign, by which it appears that his Grace, in consideration of the good, diligent and loyal service which his faithful and well beloved servant William Compton, esquire abovesaid, has done, and also for such especial favour and love which he has towards the said William, has given to him a part of his devices for augmentation to his arms, that is to say, a lion passant guardant or, and also to his crest a demi-dragon erased gules, within a coronet or, set on a torse argent and vert, the which devices that very high and very puissant

Prince, etc. has willed, and wills that the said William Compton and his heirs bear and shall bear in memory and remembrance of him, commanding me by his said letters, as his principal King of Arms, to set in order the said devices according to the true blazon and good order of Arms, and to make for him letters of certificate under the seals of my office of the Garter and also my own arms, And because I, Garter King of Arms of the English aforesaid, in fulfilment of the command of our very redoubtable and sovereign lord have set in order and adjusted the said devices and his proper arms in the manner following, that is to say, quarterly, in the 1st quarter sable, a lion passant guardant or, between three helmets argent; in the 2nd quarter argent, a chevron vert, and a bordure az. besante; the 3rd quarter as the second, and the 4th as the 1st. To his crest, a demi-dragon erased gules being within a coronet or, set on a torse argent and vert mantelle gules doubel argent, as the painting in the margin hereof shows.

To have and to hold for him and his said heirs and to use them for ever.

In witness whereof I, Garter King of Arms of the English abovesaid, have signed with my hand and sealed with the seal of my own arms together with the seal of my office of Garter, these presents.

Given at London the 14th day of December, in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1512, and in the year of our very redoubtable and sovereign lord aforesaid (the fourth).

(Signed) THOMAS WRIOTHESLEY.

APPENDIX V

CANONBURY AND HIGHBURY

MANOR OF CANONBURY

THE Manor of Canonbury was given in 1253 by Ralph de Berners to the Priory of St. Bartholomew of West Smithfield. And Nichols * suggests that its name, which means "Canon-mansion," was given to a Prior's house built there by that foundation. The history of the present buildings may, however, be said to open with the period between the years 1509 and 1532, when William Bolton was Prior of St. Bartholomew's. Describing his work for the Priory, John Stow, the sixteenth century historian, says: "He builded of new the Manor of Chanonbury at Islington, which belonged to the Canons of this house, and is situate in a low ground, somewhat north from the parish church there." There is at present no trace of any buildings anterior to Prior Bolton, nor does Stow's expression "builded of new" necessarily mean that such ever existed.

The position and extent of Bolton's buildings coincided roughly with the present houses on the south and east sides of Canonbury Place, and, detached from them, a further range of buildings lay on the west side of the yard towards the Tower at the north-west corner. This Tower still stands very much as it was. There does not seem ever to have been any buildings along the north side, for recent excavations have revealed no foundations there. According to Nelson (1811), an arched entrance to the courtyard separated the Tower from the remainder of the mansion,† but in 1661 the "Turret House situate at the end of the courtyard" is described as a separate tenement;‡ and even the earliest prints of 1732 show it as detached. Southward from the house sloped a large rectangular garden enclosed by a brick wall, from whose two southern corners conspicuously protruded small octagonal garden houses. Both garden houses and sections of this wall still exist, though considerably added to; and over the door of one of the former is a stone carved with the rebus of Prior Bolton—a tun pierced by a bird-bolt. In 1826 the bailiff of the Manor, whose family had lived in Canonbury Tower (on the ground floor) since 1684, still possessed the ancient key of the gate of what was still called the Prior's Park.§ Another wall surrounded a larger enclosure to the north of the

* "Bibliotecha Topographica Brittanica," 1782.

† Nelson's "History of Islington," 1811.

‡ F.D. 734*a*.

§ He also had preserved an old Notice asking ladies to remove their pattens when walking in the Prior's Park.

buildings, which sloped down to Hopping Lane, now St. Paul's Road. This contained the Priory fish-pond immediately to the north of the Tower, which, in 1811, "notwithstanding continual depredation still contained very good carp and tench." This wall ran between the present Grange Road and St. Mary's Road to St. Paul's Road, and back to the Tower along the present Canonbury Road and the north side of Canonbury Square.

If we exclude the Tower, only fragmentary walls of Bolton's buildings can be traced in the present houses. But in the Tower there is still of his time, the staircase of short straight flights and quarterspace landings which fills the whole interior; instead of an open well, it is built round a centre of timbering and plaster whose space has been converted into cupboards. Doors open into rooms off almost every landing of the stairway, so that the level of each room is different.

With the dissolution of religious houses, Bolton's successor handed the Manor and house to the King in 1539. And after belonging to a rapid succession of Royal favourites in three reigns, it was purchased in 1570 for £2000 by John Spencer, from Lord Wentworth.* Spencer added considerably to the Prior's house; he even pulled about the work Bolton had done, for in the middle of his own work he inserted an Early Tudor doorway with Bolton's rebus carved in one spandrel. The outward appearance of Canonbury House at his death can only be guessed at by prints of over a century later. The southern wing consisted of a high narrow building, over most of which ran a long pitched roof, interrupted on each side by at least seven dormer windows, and surmounted by a lanthorne. This may have been Bolton's main building, for at either end was what appears to have been additions more Elizabethan in style. The addition at the western end had four gables facing south, and Spencer's alteration of the east wing was even more extensive, for five gables appear to have faced eastward and five westward into the courtyard. During some restoration in 1926 the old timbers of three of these gables were bared, and some wooden mullioned windows with a plain moulding round their wooden frame were found. The walls between the timbering were found to be nothing more substantial than plaster.

The decoration of the interior of Canonbury House was in the rather over-elaborate style of the end of Elizabeth's reign, which must have well suited the taste of a merchant prince. It is in the east wing that three of Spencer's ceilings, though in uncongenial surroundings, still reflect some of the glory of his wealth. A Venetian contemporary describes the rooms as "long porticoes or halls without chambers, with windows on each side looking on gardens or rivers, the ceilings being marvellously wrought in stone with gold and the wainscott of carved wood representing a thousand beautiful figures." The richness of the design on the plaster ceilings was evidently enhanced by colouring and gilding; and its moulding succeeded in giving the impression of stone. These rooms were handsomely wainscotted with oak in square and lozenge panels, which together with one chimney-piece were removed to Compton Wynyates drawing-room in about 1865. Two other chimney pieces were taken to Castle Ashby in about 1877, where they were erected in King

* F.D. 734*b*.

William's Room and the Big Hall.* Of the oak carving of Spencer's time only that in the so-called Compton and Spencer Rooms, opening out of the Tower, remains; it was photographed in *Country Life* in April 1926, and makes us wish there was more of the same high quality.

After the death of Sir John Spencer, Canonbury House was occasionally lived in by the Compton family, as is recorded in Appendix II; but in the intervals it was frequently mortgaged and let,† till early in the eighteenth century the buildings seem to have been divided up and let in separate tenancies. It was at that period noted for the "remarkable goodness of its air," and for its fine view of distant London, while its quietude seems to have attracted a circle of distinguished literary men. In 1738 the poet Humphrey died there, and for the remainder of the century many others occupied its rooms, such as Dr. Oliver Goldsmith, Woodfall, Chambers the encyclopædist, Newberry the publisher, Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons, and others. We are told ‡ that Oliver Goldsmith lived from 1762 to 1764 in the old oak room on the first floor of the Tower, and slept in a large press bedstead in the eastern corner. Since his time two small sleeping-rooms have been separated from this room by the moving forward of the panelling on the north-east wall and the cutting of two doors through it with a partition between them. The window southward has also been cut through.

Between 1758 and 1761 the 6th and 7th Earls had repairs to the House done by Bricklayers, Carpenters, Glaziers and Plumbers.§ But in 1767 its ruinous condition was so scandalous as to occasion letters of complaint from the tenants.‖ In 1770 a sixty-one years lease was given to John Dawes, a successful stockbroker; and by 1788 a great part of the ancient mansion had been pulled down, and the site "occupied by elegant modern houses." Dawes built "a genteel Villa, and three other good dwelling-houses, delightfully situated near the New River, on that side of the ancient house which looks towards Lower Street (Essex Road). On another part of the old site, on the south side of the quadrangle, are four new houses fronting north; and in all 15 distinct dwelling-houses, two of which are subdivided into lodgings for private families. . . . Such of the apartments as have been spared are disguised by alterations, and the fine old panelled wainscot either daubed over with modern paint or concealed by paper hangings."

Canonbury Tavern still struggles in 1929 to preserve something of its rural amenities. In 1750 it was a small ale-house within the park wall. But in the intervening years it has passed through a period of meteoric importance. At different dates it was added to, as it became more and more popular as an excursion resort, till in 1808 it was four times its original size, with very pleasant gardens, a shrubbery and bowling-green, with Dutch-pin and trap-ball grounds, and a butt for

* That in the Big Hall is described in detail in 1811 (Nelson's "History of Islington") as being in the centre house. At that date all the oak was painted white.

N.B.—When the "Pied Bull Inn" at Canonbury was demolished in 1826, it contained an "Oak chimney-piece representing Faith, Charity and Hope, which had been there since the building was the residence of Sir Walter Raleigh (tempo Elizabeth)." This cannot have been the one in King William's Room, for the latter bears the Spencer Arms.

† F.D. 734–738 and 1218–1220.

‡ Hone's "Everyday Book," 1826, p. 638.

§ See Bills in F.D. 1221 and 1226.

‖ F.D. 1222.

the exercise of ball-firing, which had become popular with the Volunteers. The grounds occupied an area of about four acres, and were enclosed by Bolton's wall on the east and the fish-pond on the west, while they ran along Hopping Lane* on the north. The tavern stood against the eastern boundary of Prior Bolton's park, but the western wall of the latter (which originally faced Well's Row) branched off from Hopping Lane "somewhat behind the site of Compton Terrace towards Canonbury Lane." An appendage to the Tavern in 1811 was a long range of tiled buildings, which had been Sir John Spencer's stabling, and had an oak folding gate of his date. It was pulled down about 1840.†

Recent necessary restorations have been carried out by the London Estate Agent in 1908 and 1926.

Manor of Highbury

The site of the manor of Highbury, and certain demesne lands, consisting of about 300 acres, were at one time leased to Sir John Spencer, but a year after his death the leasehold of the demesne and some of the manor belonged to Lord Compton. In a survey of the manor in 1611 the premises surviving are described as "consisting of one yard or close, where antiently was a castle or mansion house, called Highbury Castle, together with two woods, called Highbury Wood and Little St. John's Wood, and other parcels of land adjoining." The estate had increased to the estimated value of £453 19*s.* 8*d.* per annum. The surveyors stated "that there had been a capital mansion, as they had heard, standing within a moat yet remaining, but that the house was decaied beyond the memory of man." In the plan attached to this survey Highbury Barn is shown as a high building within the Castle yard;‡ Highbury Wood is contiguous on the north, and St. John's Wood still further northward. In 1650 Highbury Wood was 43 acres 2 roods 16 perches; St. John's Wood 35 acres.

A few acres of ground at the corner of Ball's Pond were, in 1611, called "The Hoppinge"; and from this the present St. Paul's Road was long known as Hopping Lane.

By 1806 Lord Northampton had become the freeholder of The Hopping, which was now known as Barr's Nursery. In a survey of that year of the Manor of Canonbury, its 11 acres 37 perches are included, though it was properly within Highbury Manor.

* Now St. Paul's Road.

† Samuel Lewis's "Parish of St. Mary, Islington," 1842.

‡ Highbury Barn in 1929 gives its name to a public-house on the same site; while a house called Highbury Manor may mark the site of the old moated mansion.

APPENDIX VI

HISTORY OF MOCKING HALL AND BRUCE CASTLE*

THE Manor of Mockings is supposed to have been that third part of the Manor of Bruses, which was separated from it in 1335 and sold to John Mocking in 1347. From that date Mocking still remained subordinate to Bruses, and in 1462 all four manors appear to have been jointly inherited by the Turaunts. On March 15th, 1512, Sir William Compton purchased them from Margaret Turaunt, widow of Richard Turaunt, and in 1514 Henry VIII confirmed his purchase by a royal grant.† In 1600, William, Lord Compton, mortgaged the manors, and then sold them in 1605 to his kinsman Thomas, Earl of Dorset.

We have the following information about both houses at different dates. In 1686 Lord Colerane bought Bruce Castle, and there is a plate (Robinson, Vol. I. p. 217) showing it as he repaired it, when he says he removed Sir William Compton's Arms from outside the old porch, and placed them over the entrance inside. Colerane thought the house had been built by Sir William, though he was unable to discover for certain. In 1740 there was the detached brick tower of Tudor date which still remains in 1929; and an old painting shows two more such towers before Colerane's alterations. In 1840 the Castle showed little signs of antiquity, though the moat still remained and the Compton Arms still existed in good preservation on the outside of the north-west part. The Castle is shown as "The Lordship House" in a map of 1619,‡ and in 1840 is described as about half a mile from the High Road on the north side of Lordship Lane, and at no great distance from the parish church. In 1891 the Castle and grounds were acquired by the Tottenham Borough Council, and it is now used as an Infant Welfare Centre. It contains little of interest to Comptons.

Mocking in 1578 was "an ancient house of the Lord Compton, moated about." In 1805 the house stood on the south side of Mafsh-Lane, on the east side of the London road, nearly opposite the fifth milestone. About that time it was demolished, leaving the moat, which, however, had in turn disappeared by 1840. In 1840 Robinson describes the vanished house as having been 150 yards down Park Lane, and ten or twelve yards back from the road.§

* See Robinson's "History of Tottenham," 1840, Vol. I. pp. 170, 216, 217, and Nichol's "Bib. Topo. Brit.," 1782.

† F.D. 219. Robinson says erroneously they escheated to the Crown in 1514 on the death of Mrs. Risley, only daughter of the Turaunts.

‡ Reproduced in Robinson's "History of the Antiquities of Tottenham," Vol. I.

§ Mocking also appears in the Map of 1619 reproduced in Robinson's "History of the Antiquities of Tottenham," Vol. I.

APPENDIX VII

HISTORY OF CROSBY PLACE

IN 1466 Sir John Crosby, a citizen of great wealth and influence, obtained a ninety-nine years lease, from the Prioress of St. Helen's Benedictine Convent in Bishopsgate, of the house in which he was already living and certain extra land. Here he erected the magnificent mansion, described by Stow as being "of stone and timber, very large and beautiful, and the highest at that time in London." Crosby died nine years later, and is buried in St. Helen's Church. And in 1483 we find it in the occupation of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III, and Shakespeare, who lived in the parish in 1598, mentions it three times as that Duke's residence in his play "Richard III." From 1495 it was twice used to lodge distinguished foreign embassies, and its lease passed to several Lord Mayors: namely, Sir Bartholomew Reed, goldsmith; Sir John Rest, grocer; Sir Thomas More, secretary to Wolsey (for a few months) and Antonio Bonvisi. In 1538 Henry VIII confiscated the freehold, but the lease continued. From 1566 to 1594 it belonged to the wealthy Bond family, during whose ownership it was again several times used for the lodging and entertainment of foreign guests of the State.

EXTRACTS FROM "CROSBY PLACE,"
the ninth monograph of the Committee for the Survey of the Memorials of Greater London, by Philip Norman, 1908.*

In 1594 the Bonds sold Crosby Place to Sir John Spencer, who, according to Stow, "made great reparations, kept his mayoralty there, and since built a most large warehouse near thereunto," on the site of which now stands the Jewish Synagogue in Great St. Helens.

Four months after Sir John's death in 1610, Lord Compton, his son-in-law, bought back two of the four messuages. . . . It is, however, doubtful if he resided there more than a few months, for in a lease of 1615 . . . it is said that the house was then or later in the tenure of the Dowager Countess of Pembroke.

For some years after this the East India Company were renting the place or part

* Copy at Castle Ashby.

of it. But on May 10th to 12th, 1633, Alderman Abdy reported "that he hath been informed of a purpose in the (2nd) Earl of Northampton to resume Crosby House into his hands at the expiration of the Company's lease, which will be within four or five years, whereupon he is intreated, or any other of the Committees known to his Lordship, to acquaint him with the report and know his answer, that so the Company may prepare and settle themselves accordingly" (Calendar of Domestic State Papers).

The Earl was certainly occupying it in 1638, immediately after the Company's tenure, as is proved by a curious lease of that year for the supply of water to the house by the New River Company.

In 1643 it was mortgaged to pay the debts of the 2nd Earl on his death. But the freehold belonged to the Comptons till 1678, when it was sold to Edward Cranfield by James, 3rd Earl of Northampton.

By 1672 the hall was converted in part into a Presbyterian meeting house, of which some noblemen held the ministry.

It is difficult to say in what particular part of Crosby House was the "General Post Office" so marked in Ogilby and Morgan's map of 1677.

Before 1790 the hall was tenanted, under the Freemans, by Messrs. Holmes and Hall, packers, who, we may be sure, further mutilated it, until in 1831, their lease having run out, the site was advertised to be let for building, which meant the destruction of everything . . . public feeling was aroused against such an act of vandalism. A meeting was held on May 8th, 1832, "to take into consideration the best means to be adopted for preserving and restoring Crosby Hall." . . . A committee was formed, among its members being the Marquess of Northampton. . . . Money was subscribed, the Grocers' Company giving £100. About that time William Freeman, the owner, having attained his majority, a new lease for ninety-nine years was granted. The work of repair was then begun under the direction of E. Blore, who gave his services gratuitously.

. . . the Crosby Hall Literary and Scientific Institution began to occupy it in 1842 . . . with difficulty dragged on its existence until it gave place to the City of London evening classes, an equally unsuccessful venture. Then for seven years the old hall was used by a wine merchant. In 1868 it became a restaurant. In 1871 the whole property was put up for auction by the Freeman family . . . they bought in the hall for £22,500, but sold it privately. It continued as a restaurant until 1908, when it was sold to a bank for immediate demolition. By public subscription the Banqueting Hall was re-erected on a site on Chelsea Embankment, where it now forms the Dining Hall of a college for ladies.

APPENDIX VIII*

"THE CUSTOMES of YARDLEY HASTINGS set down by Henery Chesley the 24th day of June in the year 1609 in the seventh year of Our Lord King James by the Grace of God, etc. These Customes have been known in Yardley this hundred years and upwards acknowledged to be true upon Oath by the said Henery Chesley and Thomas Creake and proved by these Men upon Oath before Judge Yelverton at Easton House in or about the year 1607.

1. First, The Custom is that every Communicant man or woman is to give a peny for their offering a' ye communion and at no other time.
2. Secondly, that every husbandman holding land in the fields aforesaid is to pay for every yardland five pence at Easter following for the hay of the Old for the Lotts in the field and also for the hades for the Tyths of the ground for a rate according to our custom.
3. Thirdly, that every man poor and rich is to pay a peny at Easter for their garden.
4. Fourthly, that every man that keepeth a fire is to pay a smoak halfpeny.
5. Fifthly, that every man that hath a cow or more that giveth milk shall pay at Easter next following two pence a cow whether she be Earridge or Milch. If he hath a heifer that hath a calfe after Easter then he is to pay a peny for her at Lamas And if he selleth the calfe the Parson is to have the tenth peny but if he weane it or eat it then he is to pay but a halfpeny.
6. Sixthly, that look how many sheep any man hath here at Candlemas day at night so many is the Parson to have tithe of either tythe wool if he shears them or else half pence a peice if he selleth them. And every sell that falleth after Candlemas day the Parson is to have the tenth sell if there be so many if not he is to have half pence a peice for so many as he hath And further if a man buy any sheep after Easter he is to pay for every month they goe a groat a hundred and no Tythe Wool, this is the Custom.
7. Seventhly. And for the tyth Lambs our Custom is always on Black Monday or the Monday in Easter Week the Parson is to take his Tythe lambs that day and look what odds their remains of lambs at Easter the Parson is likewise to have half pence a piece for and no more Tythe lambs. Also the Tythe lambs are to suck till sheare day paying to the owners of the Ewes that suckles them pence a peice when they take them away and a peny a lamb for ye Shepherd that keeps them, this is the custom.

* F.D. 1210, ii.

APPENDIX VIII

8. Eighthly. Also the Parson is to have the tenth Pigg or one at seven and then the Parson is to give to the Owners of the Pigg farthings a peice and further If the Pigg be reared for the Parson he is to give to the owner of the Sow a peck of Barley for bringing up the Pigg seven weeks If the owner of the sow do not pay the rate then the Parson is to have a Tythe pigg the next litter.
9. Ninthly. Also the Parson is to have the tenth Goose at Lammas If he hath one at seven then the Parson is to give the Owners farthings If the owners have more than a tythe then the owners are to give the Parson likewise farthings a peice.
10. Also the Parson for every foal that falleth within the said Town is to have for every such foal a peny at Easter next following after it is foaled.
11. Also the Parson is to put in four Beasts into Yardley Park at St. George for his tyths there till Lammas.
12. And further the Parson is to pay to the Town for Mad Craft four shillings a year in the follow year and for the other years the Parson is to pay to the Town twelve pence a year for the latter crapp if he keeps it till harvest be done If the whole town have not need of it for the whole herd line of Beasts And this justified long agoe by Robert Knight and John Brown old men that when they spake it were fourscore years old this was the custom then and so it hath been ever since And these customs were received and paid by Henery Chesley in the Parishing of Yardley for Mr. Wilkinson seven years together.
13. Also the Parson is to have tythe apples the tenth according to the custom.
14. Also the Parson is to have the tythe hemp the tenth part according to the custom.
15. The Parson is to have the tythe eggs that is two eggs for every hen and three for a cock and these are to be paid at Easter according to the custom.
16. The Parson is to provide for the town always on Rogation Monday he is to bake a strike of Wheat into bread and cakes for the parish and likewise a strike of Mault to brewing drink for the Parish the same day when they go about the fields a Procession according to the Custom.
17. Also the Parson is to provide Bull and Boar at his own charge for the good of the Cattle in the Town and for himself according to our Custom.
18. The Parson is to find a heward at his own charge from Lammas day till harvest be done for the good of the grain in the field according to our Custom.
19. The Parson is to give the whole Town a Christmas Dinner according to our Custom.
20. Also the Custom is both for the Parson and his Tenants and the whole Town to put their calves into the Chase and there to be summered.
21. Also the Parson is to find a Load of Barley Straw at Christmas and likewise at Easter for the seats in the Church that Parishoners might be warm in the Church with comfort to hear Gods word."

APPENDIX IX

A. Castle Ashby Church

THE earliest record of the building and its contents appears in a Brington Chantry Deed (No. 21) of 1487. This document records the ordering for Great Brington Church of a Roode Loft "after the form, carving, making and workmanship" of a Roode loft in the parish Church of Castle Ashby. . . . "to make in the middle of the said Roode loft the iii persons of the Trinity more bowing and showing outward than it is made in the parish Church of Castle Ashby." (N.B. This Rood Loft was probably across the chancel screen).

B. Sketch of about 1810 by Miss A. J. Clephane,

(in possession of Charles Scrase Dickins, Esq., of which a photograph hangs in the Church).

C. Alterations to the Church in the Nineteenth Century

1. Notes by the Rev. G. S. Cautley, Rector 1836–51 *

Pulling down a lath and plaster screen in archway between Chancel and North Chantry, bricking it up and putting up Monument to Margaret Marchioness of Northampton	1836
Painted Glass in East window of North Chantry	1841
Removing the lath and plaster Arch inside the Chancel Arch (summer)	1843
Removing the old singers seat and putting up screen in the Tower Arch (autumn)	1844
Organ put up (Nov.)	1845
Reopening of Arch between Chancel and North Chantry; removal of monument to Margaret Marchioness of Northampton; removal of pews in Chancel; Pulpit; stone monument (Crusader); Stone Reredos put up; walls scraped and cleaned etc. Finished before the confirmation	1848 and 1849

(*Signed*) G. S. Cautley.

* These notes were copied by Lady Alwyne (F.D. 1340).

2. *NOTES by the Revd. Lord ALWYNE COMPTON, Rector* 1851–79

(Left in the Vestry)

"Before I leave this parish, I think it well to place here a record of the work done and the changes made in this Church during my time. When first I remember it, it was almost entirely full of pews; the South (? North) Arch of the Chancel was walled up and my mother's monument was under it on the North (? South) side; the Chancel Arch was filled up with an Arch of lower span,* having over it the royal arms; the Tower Arch was not shewn; the Chancel was surrounded with poor wooden panelling, and had iron altar-rails of a rather better character—not Gothic. There were many hatchments mostly large and ugly. There was no trace of the ancient Gothic woodwork. The screen across the North aisle, of which Lady E. Dickins remembers some remains, had entirely disappeared. The pulpit stood against the South-east pillar of the Nave, looking North, with the large square reading desk to the East of it. The spacious family pew filled the whole opening between the Northern group of Chancel shafts and the next pillar of the Nave.

"My father opened out the Chancel Arch and that from Chancel to North aisle, moving my mother's monument nearly to its present position; he arranged the Tower Arch so that its form and proportions might be seen, and put across and behind it an ornamental wall, supporting a bellringers' stage about halfway up the pillars; and he removed the pews and the panelling over the Chancel, shewing the piscina and the old vestry doorway; and put up the reredos. He also moved the pulpit to its present position. In his time the workmen engaged in repairing Grendon Church brought away from it the Niche which is now in the South wall of this Church.

"The complete 'Restoration' was carried out by my eldest brother,† Street being the Architect. The walls and windows needed no change; except that the ancient windows of the Tower under the Belfry storey on the E. and S. sides were restored, the former having been replaced by a ugly round window with ironwork, the latter by a sundial. But the roofs were in bad condition, and those of the Nave and Chancel were very mean and poor. These were made quite new, raising their pitch and also raising a little the walls of the Nave, the former roof having been close upon the Arches. The aisle-roofs were only restored, that of the N. aisle having its principal timbers shifted, to make them correspond with the Arches. The Chancel seats and screens were also designed by Street. The Nave seats, several of which had been placed in the Church instead of pews before the general work of 'restoration' began, were from Scott's design. The East window of the N. Aisle was—the figures—designed and painted by my elder sister.‡ The old reading desk was removed, and its three ornamental sides made into a screen for the vestry; the two

* Composed of lath and plaster. † 3rd Marquess. ‡ Lady Marian.

narrow panels being replaced by new ones a little wider, to fill the space; and small balusters copied from some in the Old Library at the Castle added at the top for height. The pavement was made by Minton from my design. The total cost was something over £4500, of which the parish raised and borrowed £300; I borrowed £500 on the Living; old lead sold for £500, and my brother paid the remaining £3200. At this time also the crosslegged knight was placed in the North Chapel; his original position is not known. The hatchments were also removed.*

"A few years later still, in my eldest brother's time,† the organ was erected, a chamber being made for the swell and for the bellows, etc. And finally the East window was filled with stained glass between the 4th Sunday in Advent and Christmas Day in this year 1879. The altar cloth was worked by my aunt, Miss Clephane ‡ in 1849, 1850.

"ALWYNE COMPTON,
"Rector."

3. *Extracts from Mr. R. G. Scriven's Reminiscences.*

(F.D. 1350, pp. 17–21).

"Castle Ashby Church as I first knew it had at the East End plain altar rails enclosing the Sanctuary. The Communion table had a crimson altar-cloth embroidered by Miss Clephane. There were two long seats, one on each side of the Chancel. The pulpit was as it is now except that the steps leading up to it were open to the Church. The reading desk, square in form, was opposite the pulpit at a distance of 6 or 8 feet, on the same side of the Church. It was raised, and had two steps up to it, and was large enough to serve both as a reading desk and as a lectern, the wide desk holding both the bible and the prayer book. Opposite the reading desk, on the other side of the nave, was the Castle pew, square like a small room, with seats all round it. The sides were low enough for its occupants to see and be seen when standing up, but it was only occasionally used while I knew it when visitors came to the Castle. The pews in the rest of the Church were arranged nearly as they are now, except that the school children sat on benches on the N. side of the nave facing southwards. At the West end under the arch was a small organ with barrels for about 20 hymn tunes. I think it had a keyboard also upon which Lady Alwyne played when she took charge of the singing. The small choir, of which I and my sisters were the principal part sat near the organ. The music of the services was very simple, only a few hymns and metrical psalms at first, to which the singing of the Canticles was added later.

"Lord Alwyne, appointed Rector in 1852, is the first I remember. He was of medium height, very dark, like most of his family, and more nearly resembling the portrait of his father than either of his two brothers. He was extremely short-

* Perhaps to Compton Wynyates Church.
† 1872 was the actual date. ‡ Anna Jane.

sighted, so that in reading he had to lean over till his eyes were almost close to his book. This was a great handicap to him, and led at times to misconception, as he was unable to recognise persons whom he did not really see. He was a High Churchman, as that was understood in early Victorian days, wearing a surplice in the pulpit when the black gown and bands were almost universal, and carrying out the rules of the Prayer Book to the letter even to the extent of holding services on all Saints days for which services were appointed. He regretted the prevalence of nonconformity in Castle Ashby and the surrounding villages. Lady Alwyne used to tell an amusing story of how he called on a parishioner to express his regret that her lately-married son with his wife were attending Yardley Chapel. The woman (Mrs. Whyman) told Lady Alwyne that she said to him, 'You need not trouble yourself about it, my Lord, for they're neither of them nothing,' and she added 'His Lordship seemed better satisfied.' Lord Alwyne had a fine voice, and his rendering of the services and his reading of the lessons was most impressive. There was nothing artificial about it, but every syllable was distinctly enunciated. He was above all things most particular that the meaning of the services should be understood. He was not a musician, but he regularly attended the choir practices and, standing at the West end of the Church, insisted on hearing every word of the Psalm and hymns which were being sung over. His sermons, which were short and simple, were carefully written out in his own hand, a script which was quite beautiful to look at, but almost indecipherable except to those who were accustomed to it. He kept his sermons in perfect order, and I have several times been to the Rectory at his request when he was away from home to find a sermon for him when he had been asked to preach elsewhere. I can imagine that he was happier during the 25 years that he was Rector of Castle Ashby than afterwards when he became Dean and Bishop. Lady Alwyne was perhaps the necessary complement to him. She had all the qualities for success in society, and was a great help to him in this respect, when, owing to his short-sightedness he was rather deficient. The Rectory was enlarged when he married, by adding a dining room opening out of the hall (now used as a study) and by lengthening the drawing room.

"During the time that Lord Alwyne was Rector of Castle Ashby, and with the assistance of his brother the 3rd Marquis, the Church underwent great changes. A new roof was erected over the nave and chancel, the roof of the nave being raised to its original height as shewn by the lines on the tower; and the roofs of the N. and S. aisles were restored with new beams and timbers as far as it was necessary. A tiled floor designed by Lord Alwyne was laid over the old stone floors the inscriptions on the old stone memorial slabs being reproduced in the tiles which cover them. The old reading desk was taken down, and the materials of it with additions in character used to form a vestry. The organ was built in a chamber provided for it, and the Choir transferred to the Chancel. The old pews were replaced by the present benches. The improvements at this time included the painted window at the East end designed and executed by Burlington and Grylls. The three other windows on the S. side of the chancel by the same firm were presented to the Church by Lord and Lady Alwyne after they left in memory of his ministry. I may also mention that the monument to Lady Margaret Leveson Gower, by Marochetti, was

erected soon after her death in 1858. The angel figure at the West end of the Church, a replica of a figure by Tenerani was erected in memory of the 3rd Marquis soon after his death in 1877."

4. *Additional Notes*

The 5th Marquis removed the Screen from the "Birdcage" (as the North Chantry was called in the 'eighties and 'nineties) and placed it between the nave and the tower.

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