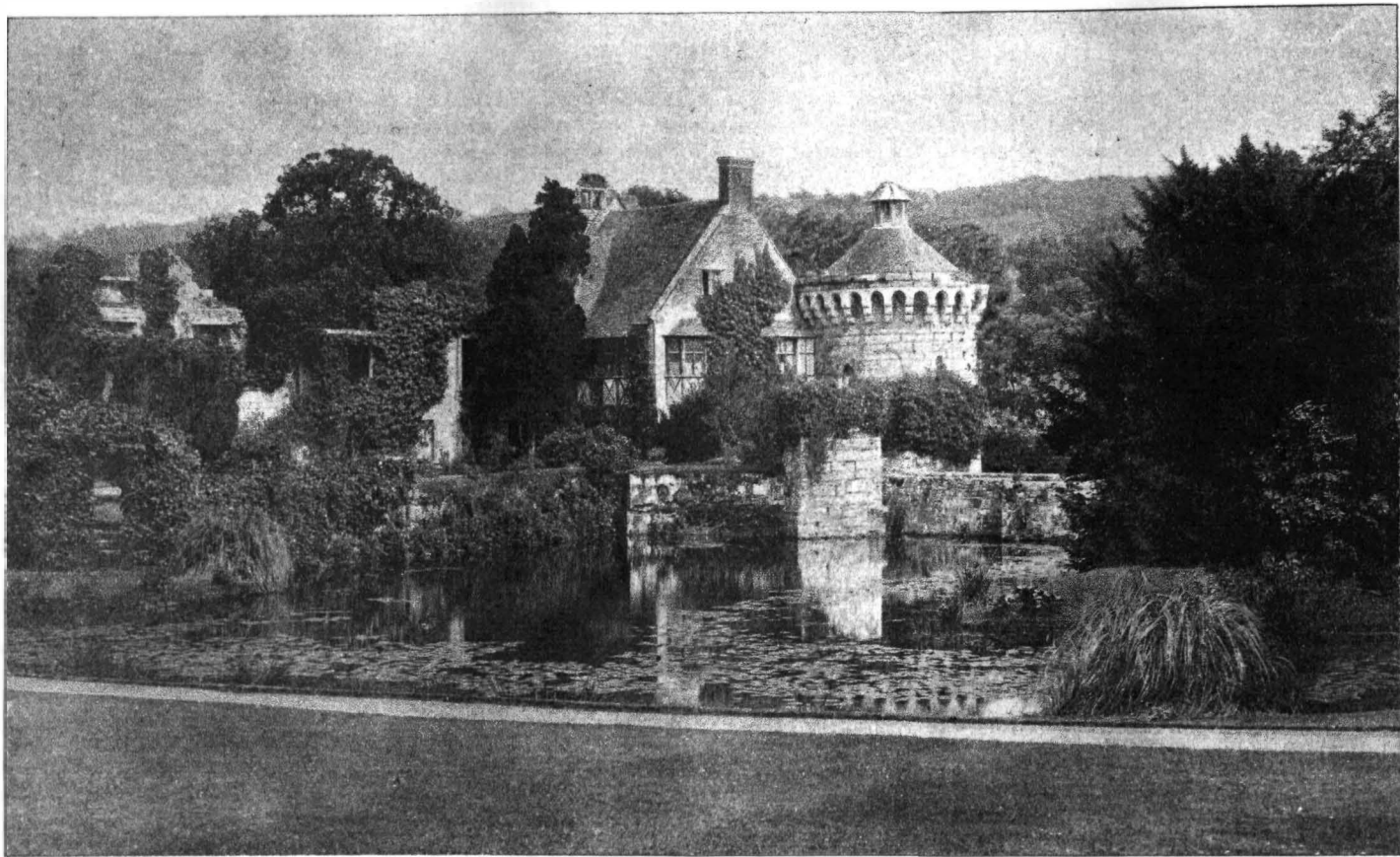


SCOTNEY CASTLE.

BY EDWARD HUSSEY, OF SCOTNEY.

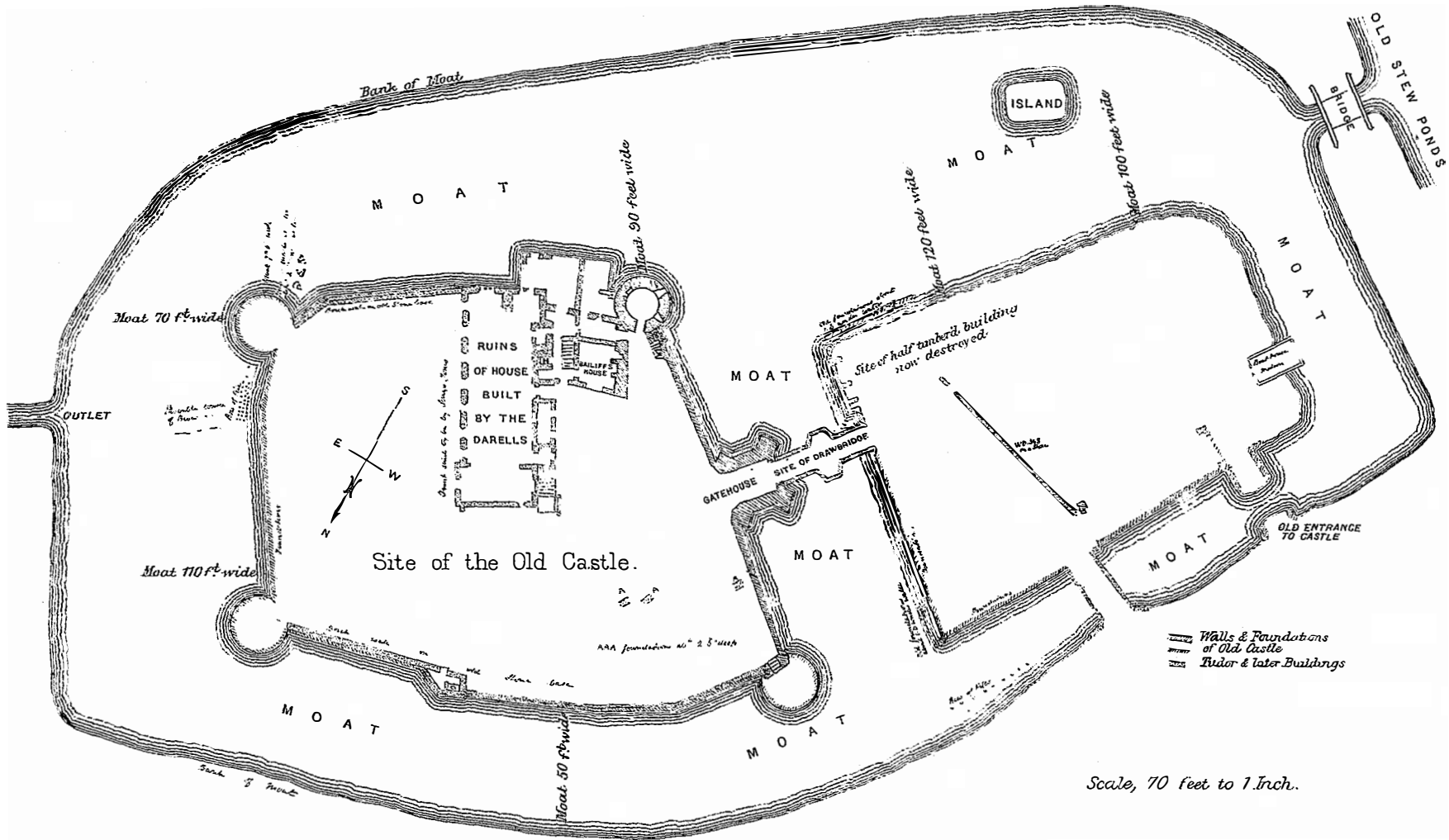
THE ancient Castle of Scotney was one of those small fortified dwellings, which were not uncommon in the maritime counties of Kent and Sussex. They seem to have been erected to resist the sudden attack of lawless and turbulent neighbours, or marauders from the coast, rather than for defence against a siege by more organized enemies. At Scotney, as at Bodiam Castle about twelve miles distant, the moat is only separated by an embankment, a few yards wide, from a river on so much lower a level, that a few men with spades could, in a short space of time, drain all the water from the moat. They would be protected, during the operation, by the high banks of the stream, from any missiles which the defenders of the castle might send forth.

It is situated on the borders of the parish of Lamberhurst, the church of which is in Kent, but much of its land is in Sussex, and it adjoins Goudhurst, in Kent. Tradition states that the site of the castle is partly in Kent and partly in Sussex; the little river Bewl or Beaul (which now divides the counties) having formerly flowed through the site, now occupied by the castle and its surrounding moat. This seems probable from the appearance of the ground; for the stream now runs parallel to the moat, for about 200 yards, and this is almost the only straight portion of its very tortuous course. During some alterations made in 1863, a row of piles was discovered on each side of the western embankment of the moat, where, from the lie of the ground, it looked likely that the river once flowed through, thus rendering necessary such a protection of the bank. Some years ago, when a servant was drowned in the moat, there was grave doubt whether the Sussex or the Kentish coroner should hold the inquest; and early in this century a member of the family, having to prove which county he was born in, found much difficulty in doing so.



INK-PHOTO, SPRAGUE & CO LONDON.

REMAINS OF SCOTNEY CASTLE



PLAN OF THE RUINED CASTLE AT SCOTNEY, IN LAMBERHURST.

The origin of the name of Scotney seems to be veiled in some obscurity. Isaac Taylor, in his excellent book *Words and Places* (p. 370), includes it in the names which are derived from the Saxon word "ea" or "ey" = island; and Philipott, in his *History of Kent* (p. 209), mentions "Scotney, which hath borrowed that appellation from its local situation and the overshooting of the water." But Count Gabriel Ogilvy, author of *Les Conquerants d'Angleterre*, in some MS. notes relating to the pedigree of the Barons de Scoteni, who possessed this Castle in the twelfth century, traces the family of Scoteni or Escotigny to "Escotigny, anciennement Escotigny-Humeau, Commune de Grandcourt, près Foucarmont, Seine infre." This baronial family about A.D. 1200 possessed a demesne called Scotney Court, in the parish of Lydde (now the property of All Souls' College), and also lands at Cokerington in Lincolnshire.

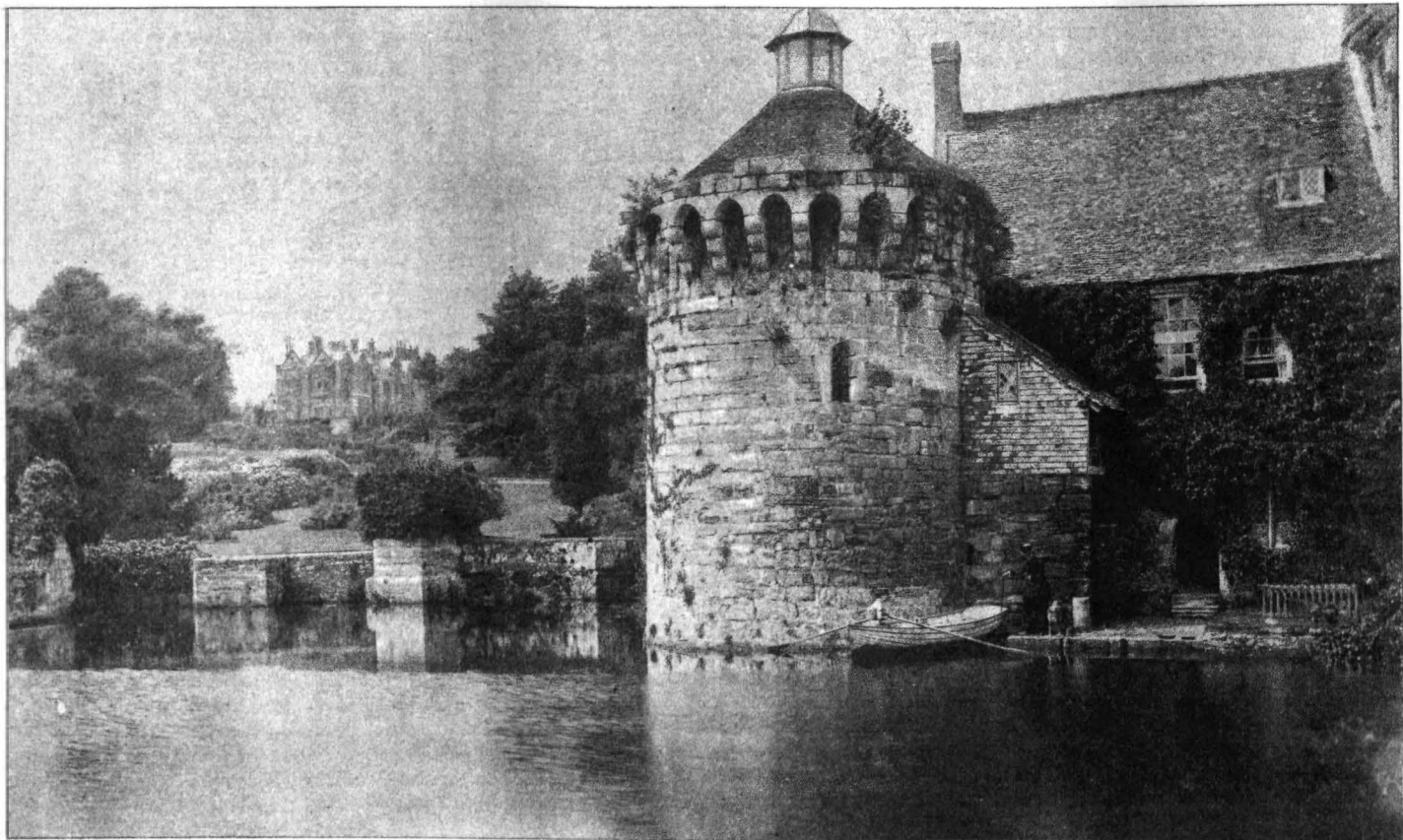
By Charters relating to the Priory of Hastings, it appears that Walter Fitz Lambert, who, at the time of the Domesday Survey, held Crowhurst of the Count of Eu, was ancestor of Walter and Peter de Scotenie, and that the arms of the latter on his seal were, On a bend, within a bordure indented, three billets. Lambert de Scotenie held this Castle during 1168-1195; but in 1259 his successor, Walter de Scoteni, was tried and hanged, at Winchester, for administering poison to Richard, Earl of Gloucester, and William de Clare, his brother, the latter of whom died. Scotney Castle seems, however, to have continued in this family until about the middle of the reign of Edward III., when it passed to the Ashburnhams of Ashburnham in Sussex. Roger Ashburnham, a Conservator of the Peace, resided here in 1 Richard II., and castellated the mansion; but his successor, in the beginning of the reign of Henry V., alienated it to Henry Chicheley, Archbishop of Canterbury, who occasionally lived here, and who dated hence one of his mandates in 1418. In that year, however, the Archbishop settled this property on his niece Florence (daughter of his youngest brother William, and widow of Sir William Peche, of Lullingstone), on her marriage with John Darell, Esq., of Cale Hill in Little Chart, Kent, second son of William Darell, Esq., of Sesay, co. York. It continued for many years in this family; and Thomas Darell had his lands disgavelled in 2 and 3 Edward VI.

In a book, edited by John Morris, Priest of the Society of Jesus, in 1872, entitled *The Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers related by themselves*, there is an interesting account, gathered from contemporary papers in the *Archives de l'Etat*, at Brussels and at

Stonyhurst College, of the escape of Father Richard Blount, Vice-Prefect, and afterwards First Provincial of the Jesuits in England, from Scotney Castle, where for eight years he secretly resided, and perhaps a summary of these documents, which throw some light on the state of the castle in those days, may be worth recording. It appears by these extracts that there were then many buildings of which no traces now remain, and there is indeed a vague tradition that the father or grandfather of a very old tenant on the estate, who died several years ago, remembered the time when the men-servants slept in a chamber over the gateway, and that the drawbridge was raised every night. The late house is said, but we know not on what authority, to have been built from a design by Inigo Jones. The plan was that of a large mansion, extending from the south to the north bank of the moat, but only the centre and one wing were erected; and it is said that the stones of those parts of the old castle which were taken down were employed in building the Court Lodge at Lamberhurst, now the property of Mr. Morland. The only parts of the old castle left were one machicolated tower, the doorway of another, the lower part of the entrance gateway, and some fragments of the old walls. These extracts also bear remarkable testimony to the state of the roads in this district, an evil which, from the difficulty of procuring hard material to mend them with, still existed in some places in the memory of old men yet living. Mr. Collins of Lamberhurst, mentioned in Mr. Darell's paper, may perhaps have been ancestor of Samuel Collins, a Roman Catholic stone-mason, who died there in 1830, aged 78, and was reputed to have been the last person baptized in the private chapel of Scotney Castle.

This property remained for many years in the possession of the Darells; but it appears that this branch of the family, like many others, fell somewhat into decadence. A rather singular story is related respecting the funeral of one of its members, possibly that of Arthur, *last** son of William and Elizabeth Darell, whose burial is recorded on December 12, 1720. It is said that when the mourners were assembled around the grave, a tall figure, muffled in a black cloak, whom no one recognized, was observed among them; and as the coffin was being lowered into the grave, he tapped his neighbour on the shoulder, and said, "That is me they think they are burying." He soon afterwards disappeared,

* The word "*last*" is evidently an addition to the original entry of burial.



INK-PHOTO, SPRAGUE & CO. LONDON.

OLD SCOTNEY CASTLE,
WITH THE NEW HOUSE IN THE DISTANCE.

and no clue was ever found to the occurrence, but many years afterwards, John Bailey, who was sexton in the parish from about 1816 to 1867, having occasion to prepare a grave in the south-east aisle of the church which belongs to Scotney, came upon a very solid and heavy oak coffin, studded with large iron nails, and from curiosity, which its peculiar make excited, he raised the lid, which was partially decayed, and to his astonishment found no remains of a skeleton, but only heavy stones apparently put in to give it weight. This account, which is remembered by the present Vicar, Mr. Hawkins, and probably by others, gives some confirmation to the foregoing story, which otherwise might have been treated as one of the many similar myths that tradition records, one of which is that a secret passage once existed from Scotney to Bayham, and that a dog being put in at one end came out at the end of a week at the other much exhausted, and with the hair rubbed off his back. It is almost needless to say that no foundation for this tale was ever discovered.

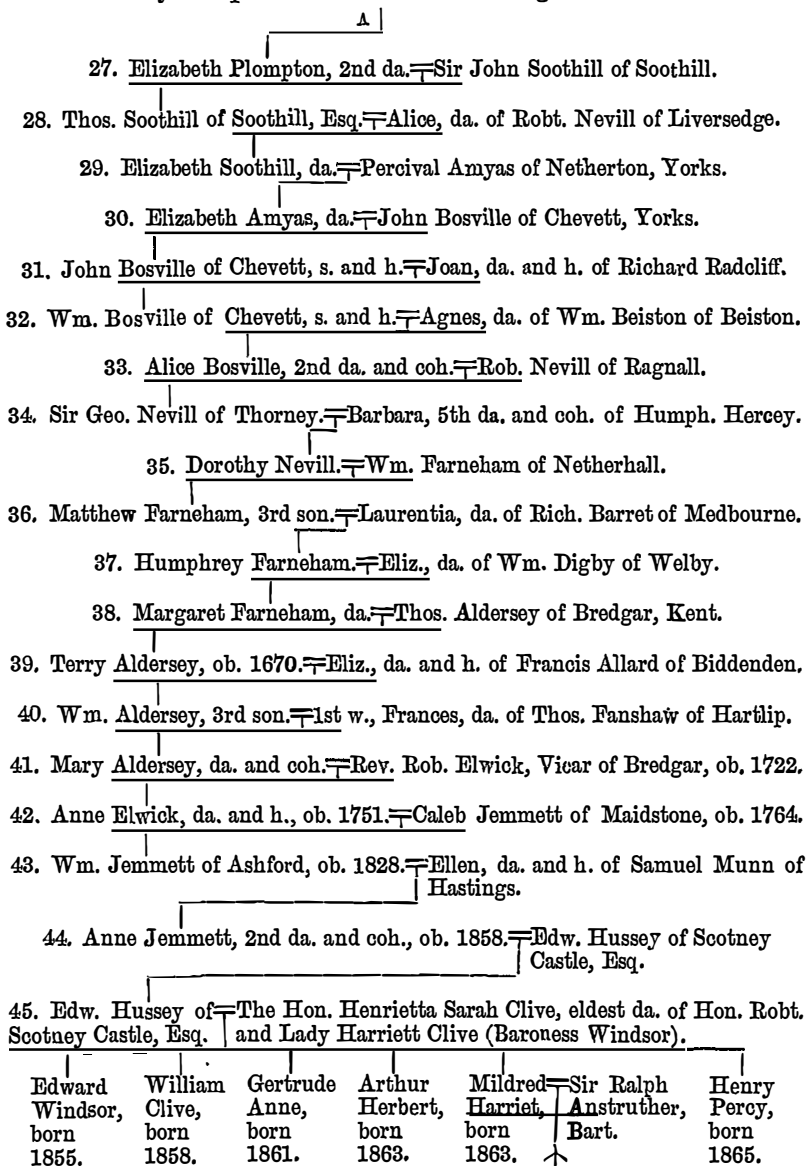
In 1774 John Darell conveyed the house and part of the estate to one John Richards of Robertsbridge, who has been variously described as a dancing master, a quack doctor, and a mountebank ! But whoever he was, he, in 1778 and the following years, resold it to Edward Hussey,* the grandfather of its present owner, who, a

* Mr. Edward Hussey's brothers were clergymen; one, the Rev. John Hussey, died in India; the other brother, the Rev. William Hussey (born 1752), was Rector of Sandhurst from 1781 to 1831; he married Charlotte, daughter of William Twopeny, Esq., of Rochester, sister of William Twopeny of Woodstock in Tunstall, and aunt of the late Edward Twopeny, who died in 1887, aged 92. Mr. Hussey had five sisters, Mrs. Streatfeild, Mrs. T. Rutton, Mrs. Jno. Austen, etc.

The present owner of Scotney Castle is forty-fifth in direct descent from Charlemagne. We append the last twenty-six descents.

20. Edward III., King of England. — Philippa, 3 da. of Wm., Count of Hainault.
 |
 21. Lionel, 3rd s., Duke of Clarence, ob. 1368. — 1st w., Eliz., da. and h. of Wm. de Burgh, Earl of Ulster.
 |
 22. Philippa Plantagenet, da. and h. — Edmund Mortimer, 3rd Earl of March, ob. 1381.
 |
 23. Elizabeth Mortimer. — Henry Percy (Hotspur), s. of 1st Earl of Northumberland.
 |
 24. Elizabeth Percy, ob. 1447. — John, 7th Baron Clifford, ob. 1423.
 |
 25. Thos., 8th Baron Clifford, ob. 1454. — Joan, da. of Thos., Baron Dacre of Gillesland.
 |
 26. Elizabeth de Clifford, 4th da. — 2nd h., Wm. Plompton of Plompton.
 A |

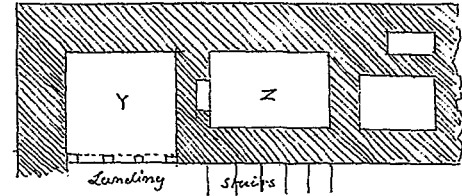
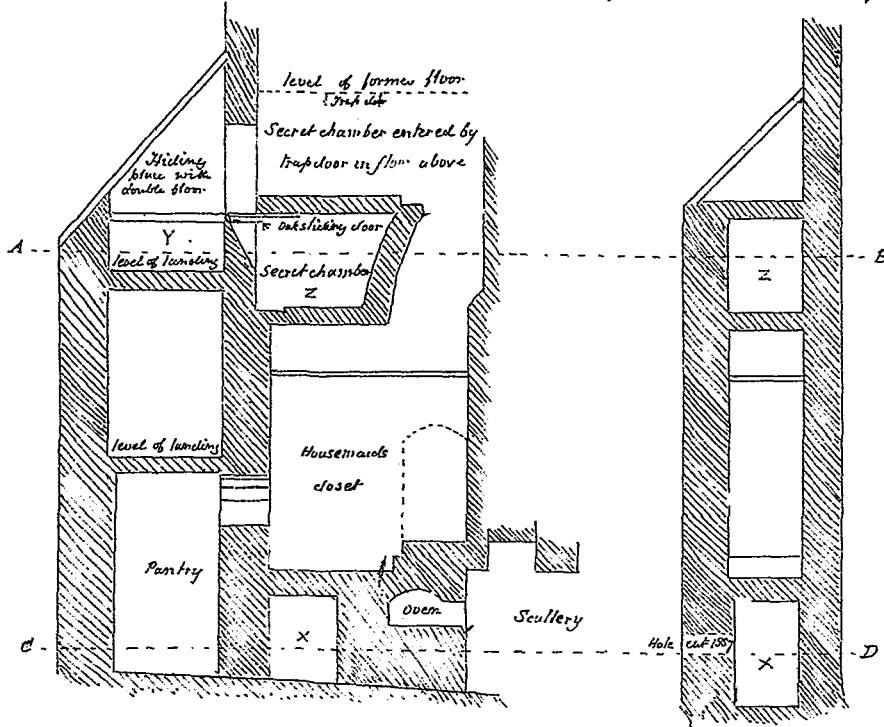
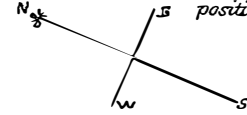
few years later, bought the remainder of the property from the Darells. Mr. Hussey already possessed, by inheritance, a small property in Goudhurst, Kent, adjoining the northern end of the Scotney Estate, and also another in Ticehurst, Sussex, more than two miles off, adjoining the southern extremity of Scotney, both of which were by this purchase included in a ring fence.



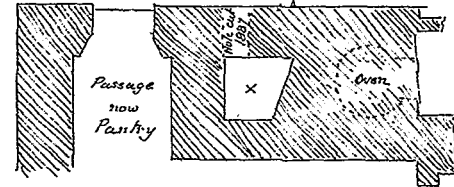
Part of OLD SCOTNEY East of the OAK STAIRCASE



Part of large plan to show position H of Secret Chamber.



Horizontal Section on AB



Horizontal Section on CD

Vertical Section north and south

Vertical Section east and west

Feet 10 0 10 20

SCALE

SECTIONS SHEWING THE POSITION OF SECRET CHAMBERS IN OLD SCOTNEY CASTLE.

In 1837 a new house was erected on higher ground according to the plans of Mr. Anthony Salvin, the able restorer of Alnwick Castle, Brancepeth, and many other ancient buildings, and a great part of the Jacobean portion of the old mansion was taken down. Some curious discoveries then came to light.* A secret passage was found, in the thickness of one of the internal walls, divided into two parts by a strong oak door with iron bolts. In 1887, in making some alterations, in that part of the old house which remains habitable, a secret small room, entered by a sliding panel, was discovered under the stairs, which probably formed the hiding-place of Father Blount and his companion in their first concealment. When the moat was emptied in 1837, a portion of chain-armour found near the gateway was evidently a relic of some early assailant of the castle; numerous wine bottles of peculiar shape, likewise found then in the moat, were said to be German Hock bottles, and one had a seal on the glass with the crest and coronet of a Duke of Beaufort, surrounded by the garter. These bottles, by the oxydation of the lead contained in the glass, or other causes, are covered by a film of various colours, similar to, but more brilliant than the specimens of Roman glass so common in museums. It may also be noted that pieces of the iron work used in the old building, on being tested by the village blacksmith, were found to be considerably tougher and stronger than ordinary iron, being probably smelted with wood at the neighbouring furnaces, possibly at the Gloucester Furnace in Lamberhurst, where the iron railing for St. Paul's Cathedral was afterwards cast.

Lamberhurst Church is within the county of Kent; and in its south chancel or chapel, which appertains to the owners of Scotney Castle, there is an archway on the north side, adjoining the altar, the base of which is about two feet below the present pavement. This probably is a remnant of the building mentioned in the *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, vol. ii., p. 144, where it is related that King Edward I., on Sunday, June 21, 1299, in his journey through this district, "made an oblation of 7^s in his chapel at Lamberhurst for the good news he had heard from France." He also went from Goudhurst to Lamberhurst on Tuesday, June 29, 1305.

* Beneath the floor of a hiding-place, which was entered by a trap door, in the oak floor of the upper gallery, the situation of which is shewn in the accompanying plate, were found a printed proclamation "by the Lord Protector" (Oliver Cromwell), "Declaring his Highness pleasure and command for putting in execution the Laws Statutes and Ordinances made against Jesuits and Priests, and for the speedy conviction of Popish Recusants," and some other papers of little interest.

EXTRACTS from the account of FATHER BLOUNT'S escape from Scotney Castle, in *The Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers*, by JOHN MORRIS, Priest of the Society of Jesus. 1872.

In the year 1598, or in that next before it, Mr. Darell's house in Sussex (Scotney Castle) was twice searched, Father Blount at each time being in the house; the first time by two Justices of the Peace with a Pursuivant, and such as they brought with them to watch and beset the house; who, at their first coming, sent Mr. Darell to London, prisoner, his wife to one of the Justices' houses, and most of the servants to the county gaol; suffering one maid to stay with the little children, and the searchers having the house.

During the space of a week Father Blount was in a secret place under the stair, having one man with him with very small provision; and when it seemed they could subsist no longer, Father Blount sent out his man who offered himself to the searchers, feigning that he came out of another hole which he shewed them, and was carried away for a priest, and the other escaped.

About one year after, one Henberry, a fallen Catholic, formerly a servant at Scotney, plotted to betray the house, and Sir George Rivers and two other Justices of the Peace, with Pursuivants and their retinue, beset the house in the dead of the night, about Christmas, and seized a maid-servant the next morning before day, going out on some special business. They commanded her to carry them to her master's chamber, and to light them a candle, but she discreetly told them she would not light a candle, framing some excuse, and instead she stood at the bottom of the stairs calling aloud, "Mistress, here is Sir George Rivers and two Justices (naming them) come to speak with you." Whereupon they knew that the house was both beset and taken, so that with all convenient speed they gave him notice, who incontinently, with his man Bray, with all possible speed they could, made haste to the place of refuge; and Father Blount, who had been awakened by the noise, putting on nothing but his breeches, got with his man into the secret place, digged in a thick stone wall, carrying with him some church stuff and books, some of which things were afterwards a hindrance to his saving himself by swimming.

The gentleman of the house [Mr. Darell] was carried to London and committed close prisoner to Newgate. Being possessed of the house, they go searching generally over all the house, but most punctually. They performed that task in the night twice, with candles, having for that purpose both bricklayers and carpenters always at hand.

At that time Mrs. Darell was shut up in one room over the gate with her children, and the searchers had possession and liberty of the whole house for the space of ten days; Father Blount and the man having no other sustenance but a little bottle of wine and a little loaf of bread, and no other clothes but their breeches and a priest's cassock. During this time they searched and found nothing.

About the end of this time Mrs. Darell found means to go sometimes out of her chamber, and at the last got to the door of the place, where finding the end of a girdle used at mass to be shut out, hanging on the outside of the door of the hiding place (strange Providence!) she cut it off, but yet not so close but that some remained which she thought might betray them, whereupon she called to them within, "Pull in the string," which presently they did. Those, that it seems, watched her, came presently to her, and asked her to whom she spake, and of what string. She answered that the door by which she meant to pass being shut, she heard somebody in the next room and called to them to open the door, which was done by pulling the string of the latch. This answer not satisfying them, they fell to search about the place, which was a little court with stone buildings about it, beating with a beetle upon the stones, and many times upon the door of the place, which was a stone in show not differing from the rest; but one, a bricklayer, marked the stones exactly, and fastening his eyes on a broad stone, perceived it not placed as the others, according to the mason's art and rules, and presently says, "This stone was never put in when this wall was

built," which said, he sounds it with his hammer, and perceiving it hollow, says, "Here is the place," whereupon all shouted, and after many great blows, the hinges of the door began to yield, at which they within set their backs to the door to support it against the blows what they could, but it was so much moved as that they saw the candle light of the searchers, and could hear all they said.

It grew late in the evening, and it rained extremely fast, and the gutters poured down upon the searchers; and one of the company, Mr. Collins of Lamberhurst, a great enemy to that house, swore a great oath that they would have the priest to-morrow; whereupon they left the place, and not so much as left a guard to guard it, which is to be wondered at; and making a good fire in the hall, they sat there drying themselves and drinking. And soon after the Justices went to bed, and most of the rest sat by the fire, drinking, and for joy drunk deep.

When the coast was clear thereabouts, Mr. Blount told his man that they must now change their resolutions, that is, they must now venture to escape; if it be possible, "for if we stay here till to-morrow, we shall infallibly be taken, and then the gentleman will be undone." Father Blount (who without this act of God's Providence, which seemed accidental, by all likelihood had died in the place, as resolving so rather than to put himself into the hands of the searchers which had overthrown the house), taking the opportunity of the stormy and dark night, first sent out his man and soon followed himself.

Coming to the court they perceived two men walking and talking, and taking opportunity when they turned, passed along by the house side, and so to the moat wall, where Bray stooped and told his master to tread upon his back, that so he might reach the top of the wall, which done, he helped his man also up. Barefoot they got over two walls about ten feet high, and so to a broken tower about sixteen feet above the water of the moat which was there about eighty feet broad, and so deep as could not be waded. From thence the Father leaped into moat, by his courage outleaping certain piles which stood near the tower, and were covered with water and not known to him. He intended that his man should have leaped down after him, and so he would have carried him over, but finding himself weak, he swam over, and being on the other side said to his man on the tower [Father Blount told a friend afterwards that the moat was covered with a thin ice*], "I am so weak as if I should come back to fetch you, we should both be drowned."

His man's escape, they say, was after this manner. He, not having the art of swimming, durst not venture by water, but boldly came into the hall, where he found a great company lying asleep, and loudly cries, "Thieves, thieves in the stable! Drunken rogues, do you lie here and suffer my master Sir George Rivers' horses to be stolen?" At which they roused up, all of them crying, "Thieves, thieves in the stable," and running and crying, the two men in the court opened the gate and let them out, and Bray with them. They ran to the stable and he to the window. When they found no alterations about the stable, they asked one another what was he that called them up, and where he was. One answered he saw one man in a strange habit go to such a place, and heard him plunge into the moat, after which answer they all concluded it was the priest, and undoubtedly he was drowned in the moat. Whereupon they began to drag the moat to find the drowned priest, and so long they continued in this conceit, that Bray had time to rejoin the Father who had lost his way, and was come back to the house, and they together went to a certain house where a Catholic servant of Mr. Darell did dwell, about half a mile from the house, and there they got some of the husbandman's clothes, and each of them a pair of his hard shoes, the Father's feet being full of thorns in getting over many thorny hedges, and wounded with getting over the walls.

Thus they went fourteen miles that night in dirty ways, sometimes up to

* This was apparently inserted by Father John Darell, Rector of St. Omers, in 1757, the narrative being written by William Darell, grandson of Thomas Darell, who was the owner of Scotney in 1598.

the knees, for by reason of the darkness they kept the highway. [It is said, as from himself, that in the morning, meeting a maid with a pail of milk, he begged a draught, and she answered that he should first wash his dirty face.*] And not late in the morning they got to the house of a Catholic gentleman, where the Father lay sick three weeks, having the best care that the place could afford him. But his legs and his feet being inflamed, and growing very ill, he was removed to London, where Dr. Foster being his chirurgeon, he hardly escaped death, and ever after he had aches in his thighs from the cold taken in the stone wall.

The next morning, having found the place which the Father had shut after him, they went and got a bloodhound, which (as one of the Culpepers is said to have affirmed) could by no means be brought to follow the scent.

I thought it not amiss to mention an accident that happened at this time to a Protestant plough-boy belonging to the house, which accident by God's Providence was in cause the gentleman saved his land. This boy being frighted that morning they entered the house, ran into the barn, and hid himself in the straw, and there remained without meat or drink all that four or five days. But being extremely hungry, he came creeping out to see if he could get any meat. Just at that time they were dragging the moat for the priest, and being espied, they cried, "The priest, the priest," and then pursued him to the barn again, where he lay close until they pricked him out with prongs. This story the gentleman had notice of, and when he was called before the Council table, and it was laid to his charge how he harboured a priest which escaped, he made his case so good by telling their Lordships the priest escaped was no other than a frighted plough-boy, and so told them the story (the Pursuivants not denying it) of the boy. They presently without any more ado acquitted him.

The strange death of Henberry, the servant who betrayed his former master, was holden of all (and yet fresh in memory at Lamberhurst within which parish Scotney stands), a just punishment for his perfidious villany. God visited this Henberry with a strange loathsome disease, and so loathsome it was that they made means he might be removed to London to a hospital, but they of the hospital, not being able to endure the loathsomeness, sent him back to Lamberhurst, where he lay awhile, but so that no man was able to come near him, and in the end died, his limbs rotting and falling from him, whose death was, by the estimation of all, a just judgment of God.

* Probably inserted by Father John Darell.