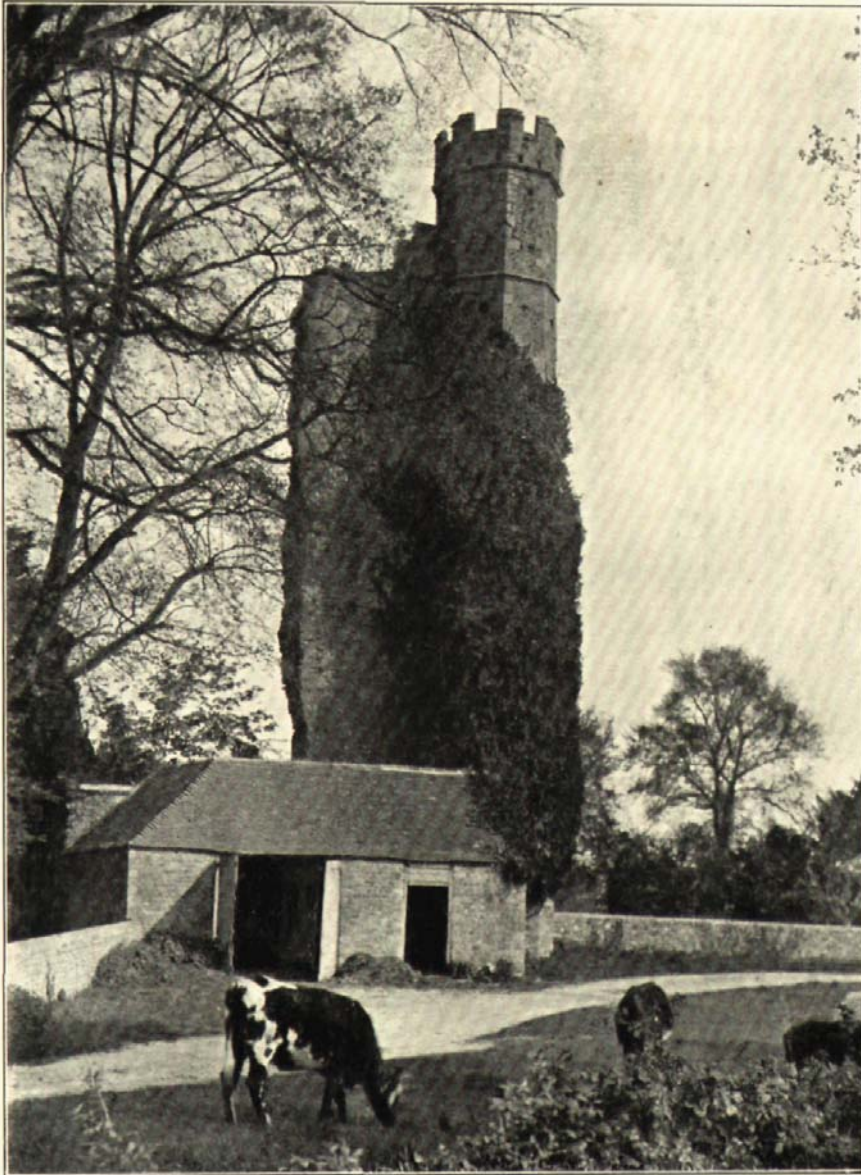


HANTS FIELD CLUB AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.



WARBLINGTON CASTLE (HANTS), 1904.

NOTES ON WARBLINGTON.

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A Paper read at Warblington, July 21st, 1903.

On a brief visit such as this, to one of the most interesting of the parishes in the south-east of our county, the time at our disposal allows us to discuss only a few of its archæological and historical associations. We can see in the ancient parts of this church the remains of succeeding ages. We can trace here probably Saxon, as well as later work. The historical records relating to Warblington of the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries may be read in connexion with its archæological remains. As far as the later mediæval parts of the church are concerned, and the ruin of the Castle, or mansion, the records give to these relics a human element that adds greatly to their interest. Those relating to the manor certainly begin as early as the 13th century. In 1231 Henry III. granted to Herbert, son of Matthew, for his sustenance in the service of the King in parts beyond the seas, the manor of Warblington with its appurtenances, which Matthew, father of the said Herbert, held during his life as bailiff of King John, in exchange for, or in place of, certain lands he had lost in Normandy. During the latter part of Edward I.'s reign the manor appears to have been held by knight's service under Gilbert de Clare Earl of Gloucester, and the superior lord in the 8th year of Edward II. was also Gilbert de Clare, apparently the earl who was killed at the battle of Bannockburn.

In the taxation of Pope Nicholas, 1291, the church is entered as having an annual revenue of £25 6s. 8d. This was the value of the rectory. There was a vicar at that time, whose revenue was £4 6s. 8d. There was also a pension connected with the church, amounting to 10s. annually, probably paid to a chantry priest. We see in the church remains of chantries, and this 13th century record may point to an early endowment of this kind. The church must have been enlarged by benefactors of some kind, and they may be looked for among the early lords of the manor.

The Patent Rolls for 1287 show that Matthew, the son of John, who held the town and castle of Devizes and many manors, including Warblington, had a certain dispute with the Crown concerning his tenure. This was settled by his recognition in the King's Court that a number of these manors, including Warblington, were of the King's right, and in return for this recognition the King granted him Warblington manor and others for his life. In 1308 the Patent Rolls showed that a licence was issued upon fine for Matthew, son of John Ude, to grant to his father, and Christina, his wife, and their issue, with remainder to his father's right heirs, to hold of the grantor, and after his death, of the King, a messuage and a vergate of land at Westbrooke, near Warblington, held of the Manor of Warblington, which manor was granted to him for life by the late King. The same rolls show that in 1309 the King granted to Robert le Ewer, described as king's yeoman, the reversion of the manor upon the death of Matthew, son of John, tenant for life.

Some of those who held the manor appear to have been called after it—de Warblington—as was customary. The Close Rolls show that in 1309 the King made an order to Walter de Gloucester, escheator this side Trent, to deliver to Eleanor, late wife of Matthew (son of John), in dower, the advowson of the church of Warblington, of the yearly value of fifty marks, which, with the advowson of the church of Okeford, co. Devon, and other possessions, the said Matthew had been enfeoffed by the late King, who granted them to him for his life. In 1310, as the Patent Rolls show, an

important grant relating to Warblington was made. This was to Ralph de Monte Hermerii and his sons, Thomas and Edward, the king's nephews, and to the issue of Thomas with remainder over to the issue of Edward, of the reversion of the Manor of Warblington upon the death of Robert le Ewer, tenant for life. A mandate was issued at the same time to Robert le Ewer to do fealty to them. As Robert le Ewer had possession for his life, the king granted to his nephews, A.D., 1311, the Manor of West Tytherley, in Hampshire, to hold until the reversion of the Manor of Warblington should fall in to them (Patent Rolls A.D. 1311).

An early reference to the church occurs in the Patent Rolls dated 1313, when the presentation of Robert de Audeleye to the Church of Warblington is mentioned. One of the old hamlets in this neighbourhood, Esteneye, formerly belonged to the Manor of Warblington. In the Close Rolls, 7 Edward II., there is an order for the restitution of Estney to this manor, it having been held in the name of wardship during the minority of the heir to the manor, and not delivered up at the expiration of his minority (A.D. 1314). In the year 1315 an important petition was heard by the King and his council from Isabella, late wife of Hugh Bardolf, concerning certain lands in Erapnesworth and Warblyngton, which she had held by heirship, and which had been taken from her. The charters relating to this claim were exhibited before the King and council, whereupon, as the close rolls of this year tell us, the King, by the advice of his prelates, earls, barons, and others of his council before whom the matter had been fully discussed and examined in Parliament, ordered the restoration of the lands to Isabella, together with the dominion of the villeins belonging thereto, and also the fishery appertaining to the same.

The manor of Warblington, which had been held by Matthew, son of John, and others of that family, apparently later on known as Johnson, reverted to the Crown, and in 1325 was confirmed by the King to Edward de Monte Hermerii, by agreement with his brother, the deed being enrolled in the close rolls of that year. Thomas de Monte

Hermerij certainly held the manor in the 14, Edw. III., *i.e.*, in 1340, after its reversion, although we read of a John de Warblington and Margaret, his wife, who had it in 1332. In the next century we find there is an entry in the Patent Rolls, dated May 20th, 1427, of a licence for Thomas Earl of Salisbury and Alice, his wife, for £20 paid in the hanaper, to enfeoff certain persons for life in the manors of Ringwood and Warblington, which shows that at that date Warblington was part of the earldom of Salisbury.

Later on this manor was certainly much concerned in the results of the Wars of the Roses. In the latter part of the 15th century the records mention a grant to Edmund Mille, one of the grooms of the king's chamber, of the offices of keeper of the park of Warblington, Co. Southampton, and bailiff of the king's lordships there, during the minority of Edward, son of George, late Duke of Clarence, with the accustomed fees at the hands of the farmers of the lordships—(1478, Patent Rolls, 18, Ed. IV.). In 1480, two years later, there was a grant to Edward Berkeley, Esq., of the office of steward of the manor of Warblington during the minority of Edward, son and heir of Isabel, late wife of George, Duke of Clarence, with the accustomed fees from the issues of the manor and other profits. Isabel was a daughter of the Earl of Warwick, the King Maker—(Patent Rolls, 20, Edw. IV.). This duke was the brother of Edward IV., and, as is well known, was put to death in the Tower. The records show an entry relating to Warblington in Richard III.'s reign. This is a grant during good behaviour to John Bulle, one of the servers of the king's hall, of the offices of bailiff of the lordship of Warblington and keeper of the park there, with the accustomed fees, from the issues of the lordship and all other profits (Patent Rolls, 2, Rich. III.). After the execution of the Duke of Clarence the manor appears from these records to have been retained by the Crown under Edward IV. and Richard III.

Turning now to the church records, we find that there are still preserved in the papal archives in Rome some documents or entries relating to Warblington. The rectory was held at one time by rectors who were not priests. Pope Clement V.

issued in 1306 to William de Bliburgo, rector of Warblington, who formerly held the churches of St. Michael Penres and Ordeable, although non-resident and not in priest's orders, a dispensation to hold certain specified churches, canonries, and prebends, in addition to the rectory of Warblington. (Calendar of Papal Letters, 1305-42, II., p. 4). Towards the end of the 14th Century the rectory was held by John Swyft, *alias* Chandeler, canon of Salisbury, a man in high favour with the Crown. In 1390 a very comprehensive dispensation was granted to him by Pope Boniface IX., under the terms of which he was allowed to hold, "any mutually compatible benefices of any number and kind, even canonries and prebends, elective dignities, &c., or offices in cathedral, or metropolitan, or principal dignities in collegiate churches, and even episcopal and other dignities, and may exchange them as often as seem good to him for other mutually compatible benefices." He was truly a highly favoured man, and must have had very great influence (Cal. Papal Letters, 1362-1404, p. 366). Under another entry in the Papal Records of the next year, viz., August, 1391, we learn who the royal friends of this rector of Warblington were, for another dispensation was granted to him, or the previous one was confirmed, and it is specifically stated in this second document that the dispensation to John Chandeler, rector of Warblington, in the diocese of Winchester, is given on the petition of King Richard and Queen Anne. It is stated that the rectory at that time was of the value of forty marks.

In 7, Henry VI. Warblington Manor and the advowson of the church are stated to have been part of the possessions of the Earl of Salisbury. A century later the manor was in possession of Margaret, the last of the Plantagenets, created Countess of Salisbury by Henry VIII. She was a granddaughter also of the Earl of Warwick, the king-maker. Here she resided, and if she was not the actual builder of the castle or mansion close by, she certainly lived in it. The State papers prove this. There is a letter preserved in the Record Office, from Fitzwilliam to Cardinal Wolsey, dated from Guildford, July 26th, 1526, in which a royal visit to

Warblington is mentioned. He says: "The King intended to have stopped at Stansyd and Southwike, but, as the parish in which the former stands is infected with plague, he will go to Warblington, a house of my lady of Salisbury, two miles distant. Thence he will go to Porchester Castle, and the next day to Winchester." In a further letter dated from Winchester, 18th August, 1526, Fitzwilliam, writing again to Wolsey, says that when the king was at Warblington, he heard from Lord Suffolk that one of his servants had fallen sick and died of plague at Woodstock, upon which the tour he was making was altered, so as to avoid Woodstock. The Countess of Salisbury, who entertained the king at Warblington in 1526, was the daughter of the Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV. About twelve years later, Henry caused her to be arrested at this place. After two years' imprisonment in the Tower she was executed. She was the mother of Cardinal Pole, and was suspected in her allegiance on account of her son.

Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton, and Goodrich, Bishop of Ely, were, in the autumn of 1538, sent down to Warblington to examine the Countess. It is recorded that "they questioned her all day from the forenoon almost till night, but could not wring from her any admission." Her house at Warblington was thoroughly searched, but no treasonable documents were found. She was, however, taken from her home here and never returned, being for a time confined in Fitzwilliam's house at Cowdry, and taken thence to the Tower, there to meet her death, as her father before her. She was buried, as so many other noble victims were, in the little cemetery of St. Peter's ad Vincula, within the precincts of the Tower, than which, as Macaulay said, "there is no sadder place on earth." It was this lady, the last of the Plantagenets, who, when led out to execution, declined to lay her head on the block, saying that "her head never committed treason, and, if you will have it, you must take it as you can." She was held down by force, and, while the executioner did his office, exclaimed "Blessed are they who suffer for righteousness' sake." These instances, as long as English history lasts, cannot fail to be remembered

here from the local association of that noble lady with this place. One of her enemies, whether a willing enemy or otherwise, succeeded her here. Later in this same year, 1541, William, Earl of Southampton, was by the King appointed to be the chief steward of the possessions late of Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, in various counties. The King also granted to the said William for the execution of his office the lordship or manor of Warblington, part of the lands of the said Margaret now in the King's hands. This order is dated from Farnham, 25th July, 31, Henry VIII. This Earl of Southampton was Fitzwilliam, the same, apparently, who wrote to Wolsey fifteen years earlier concerning the King's visit to this place. It was he who tried to wring from the countess a confession of treason.

In the Priory Church at Christchurch in this county, we may see the very fine chantry which Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, caused to be built for her own burial place, and notwithstanding its defacement in the time of Henry VIII., there to this day her motto "Spes mea in Deo est" can still be read. To that sepulchre her body was never taken. It is one of the finest of our Hampshire monuments. Here at Warblington we may see the ruin of her castellated house. One of the early Plantagenet Kings, John, had given Warblington to one of his Norman followers. The last who bore that royal name lived here. She appears to have been a good woman, and doubtless worshipped in this church.

It is on such a visit as this that some small parts of our national history may thus be seen recorded in our ancient churches, while others may be read from the ruins of castle and hall.
