

FIG. 4.

FORD HALL: THE SOUTH-EAST FRONT.

Ford Hall, Chapel-en-le-Frith, and Banner Cross, near Sheffield.

BY W. J. ANDREW, F.S.A., AND ERNEST GUNSON.

FORD HALL.



AT a distance of about three miles to the north-east of Chapel-en-le-Frith is the crossing of two of the most ancient and, consequently, the most interesting roads in the county. The one known as the Bye Flats leads from Yorkshire by that well-known stronghold of the Bronze Age, Mam Tor, in a westerly direction to the Crossings by Lydgate, where it branches over Eccles Pike towards the Mersey and into the plains of Cheshire. The other, in its later days known as the Pack-Horse Road, winds its way north-westwards from the Roman Bathgate, or Bathamgate,¹ at Peak Forest, and no doubt beyond, over the southern slopes of Colborne and Kinder to Hayfield. That this road also dates from the Bronze Age is proved by the fact that it was the approach to the ancient stone circle of Ford, an account of which is in preparation for a future volume of this *Journal*. Prior to the great turnpikè movement in the eighteenth century, these roads bore much of the pack-horse traffic of the district, and when, probably at the close of the twelfth century, Chapel-en-le-Frith began to assume some importance, they, with an old road known as the Old Gate or Stonygate, of possible Roman origin, comprised the main roads on that side of the then village until, in 1757, the

¹ This is the alternative form adopted by Dr. Haverfield in the *Victoria History of Derbyshire*, who states (vol. i., p. 249): "As we have no instance of the name Bathgate older than 1572, and no instance of Bathamgate older than 1767, certainty is unattainable." I would, however, call attention to a charter of Henry IV. to the nunnery of Derby, *Monasticon*, vol. iv., in which the word is spelt *Bathmegate*.—W. J. A.

first turnpike road through Sparrowpit to Sheffield was formed and diverted the traffic. In so doing, however, it has left us the old British way much as it was ages ago, when the sumpter horses, so often mentioned in Doomsday, carried the salt from the plains of Cheshire along the narrow paths, such as the Bye Flats, winding over hill and down dale, leaving traces of the custom in the constant place-names of Saltersford, Salters' Knoll, and Saltersbrook, until you can trace the Flats far into Yorkshire, often sunk by wear and weather deeper than its riders' vision.

The line of the Bye Flats approaching from Mam Tor joins the modern road from Chapel-en-le-Frith to Sheffield, which for five hundred yards hides its tracks. It then passes to the south, and after nearly half a mile falls into and is covered by the later Stonygate. From this point to the Crossings the original way remains in doubt between two routes of seemingly equal antiquity—the one through Bagshaw and Chapel-en-le-Frith by Back Lane, and the other along Stonygate by Bowden Head, and this is the more direct.

From this latter road at Slack Hall, on the Stonygate, soon after the Bye Flats joins it, is a bye-road, or near way, northward to join the pack-horse road on its way towards Hayfield, and thus avoid two sides of the triangle formed by the Bye Flats and it. This cross-road makes a steep descent and crosses the stream in the valley, which contained the old deer park of Ford, by a bridge below the hall, and thence through Malcoff.

The bridge referred to has replaced the ancient ford which, even as long ago as in 1222, had already given its name to the hall. Hence, as the place was named after the ford, there must have been a road through the stream before the hall was built, and therefore the cross-road could not have been a mere way to and from it, but must have been a thoroughfare then, and probably long before. We may almost assume, therefore, that it was the ancient British bye-way connecting the Stonygate with the Pack Horse road.

To-day man chooses the site of his house according to his liking, and brings way, water, and lighting to it. But our forefathers usually built their habitations where two of these necessities already existed. Water was essential, and had more to do with the mapping of old England than even the exigencies of political economy. The method of bringing the supply into the mediæval house was as simple as it was effective. A deep stone trough was set through the outside wall, so that within it was available for domestic purposes, and without the spring water flowed in on the one side and out on the other, thus supplying a constant whirl of fresh water within the trough. Such a trough, though of rather later form, still remains, but long disused, at Ford.

The site of Ford was well chosen. A perennial and plentiful spring flowed down to the ford below; main roads, even then, led in every direction; the great hills of Kinder and Colborne sheltered it from the north and east, and the Royal Forest of the Peak around found occupation for its owner; for whosoever the founder of Ford was he must have been a forester-in-fee.

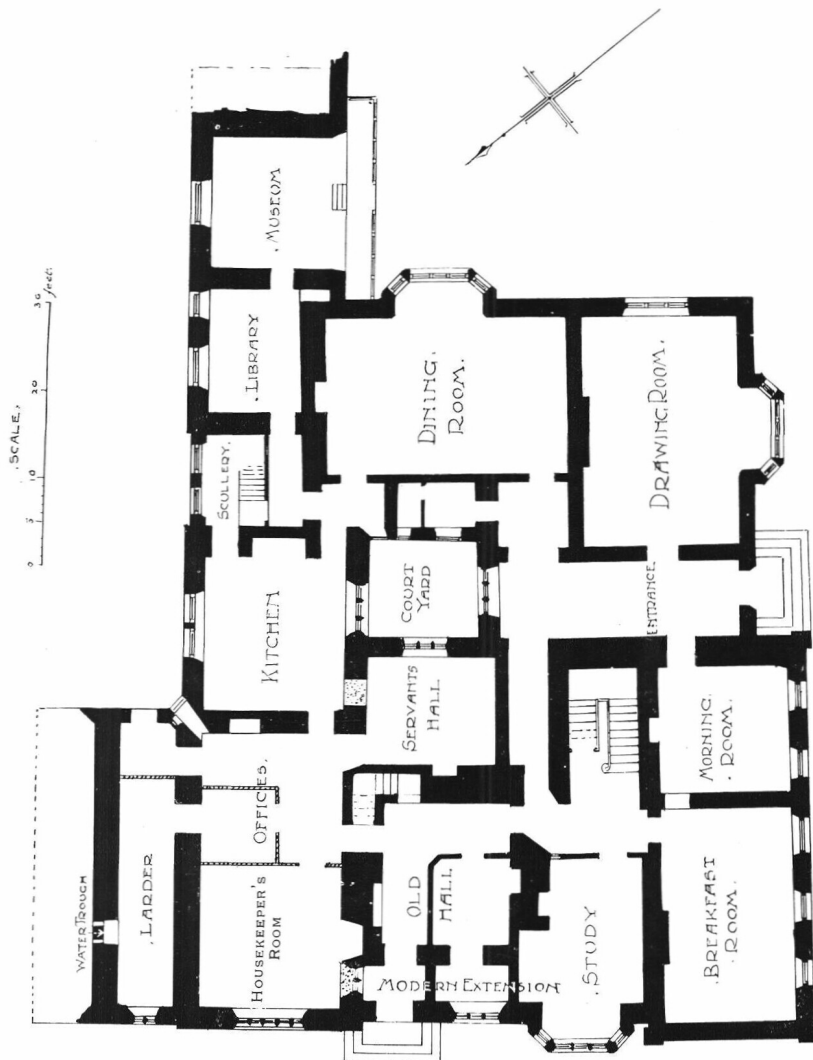
When was Ford founded? We know that it already existed in 1222, but our records are imperfect, and its origin is lost in antiquity. But when first it is mentioned its owners were men of importance, and in those days lands made the man, and lands were rarely acquired otherwise than by descent, marriage, or special grant from the Crown. How long, therefore, the family de-la-Ford had held the site must remain a matter for conjecture.

About 1225—to quote Dr. Cox's words¹—"the foresters and keepers of the deer became so numerous that they purchased a portion of the Crown lands held by William de Ferrers, and built themselves a chapel for divine worship, which they called the Chapel in the Forest." As the de-la-Ford of that day would be one of these, Ford is at least older than the church two miles away, which gave its name to Chapel-en-le-Frith.

¹ *The Churches of Derbyshire*, vol. ii., p. 139.

The then hall would be of the long, low, and barn-like type of building, constructed of half-timber work so universal in the homesteads of mediæval times, and preserved to us almost intact in the naves of our few remaining wooden churches. Indeed, the simile with the nave of a church does not end there, for each had a way through near the lower end, represented in the church by the north and south doors, and as additions were made to the house of God by the adjuncts of chancel and vestry, always below the level of the nave roof, so to the house of man were usually added "outshuts" or lean-to buildings for the butteries at one end and the withdrawing chambers at the other. In either case, if additions were made to the sides they were termed bays, and from these names we to-day derive our withdrawing rooms, outhouses, and bay-windows. The chancel step even was present in the daïs of the great hall.

Such, probably, was mediæval Ford; but of that timber building nothing remains, except the traces of inference always more or less present in the consideration of ancient structures. The most conservative of these are the position of the water supply and the levelling of the ground. The former would rarely be deviated, and we may therefore infer that the site of the old trough already mentioned defined the outside wall of the butteries, and, consequently, the end of the row of buildings. Old halls, like old churches, which have from time to time been rebuilt in sections on the same site, usually follow as nearly as possible the original lines. The reason for this is that the foundations were there, and were already tried; therefore, although one or more walls might be pushed forward or backward, the others would usually serve the new purpose on the old foundations. Turning now to the modern ground-plan of Ford (fig. 2), and noticing the position of the trough, we may infer that the present larder and housekeeper's room replaced the old culinary outshuts of the mediæval building, and that the old hall, passages, and study represented its



ERNEST GUNSON,
ARCHITECT,
MANCHESTER.

GROUND PLAN.

FIG. 2.

great hall with its two opposite "north and south"¹ doorways, that to the north being still in evidence as the entrance to the old stone staircase,² and, finally, that the original withdrawing chambers occupied the site of the present breakfast room.

Another inference from the study of ancient buildings—and it is not entirely confined to ancient buildings—is that the culinary offices first fall to ruin or are rebuilt. The reasons for this are that they are neither so well built nor so carefully planned as are the more important portions, no costly decorations are destroyed, and, lastly, the advance of sanitation sooner renders them obsolete.

Originally the retainers slept in the outbuildings and the great hall, but the family retired to the withdrawing chambers. These conditions were probably continued at Ford until the reign of Henry VIII., when we have the earliest direct evidence of existing structural alteration. Possibly the old butteries had given out; possibly the march of progress required sleeping accommodation to be provided for the retainers. Be that as it may, a stone building was erected on the site of the old butteries, offices, and present housekeeper's room. It was three storeys high, and against its northern side, again an outshut, was the present long larder. The evidences of this are, that although the adjacent wing to the north-east, marked kitchen and library on the plan, is itself Elizabethan, the division wall between the offices and kitchen is an outside wall in character, and has early Tudor windows through it on both existing floors, now built up; there are the remains of the ancient staircase continued from the present upper floor, but now cut off by the roof; and, finally, we have the early planned larder as an outshut, with a barrel roof of stone below its lean-to protection. In this is the water trough so often referred to, and its thick walls are recessed in the old custom of providing larder receptacles. That this

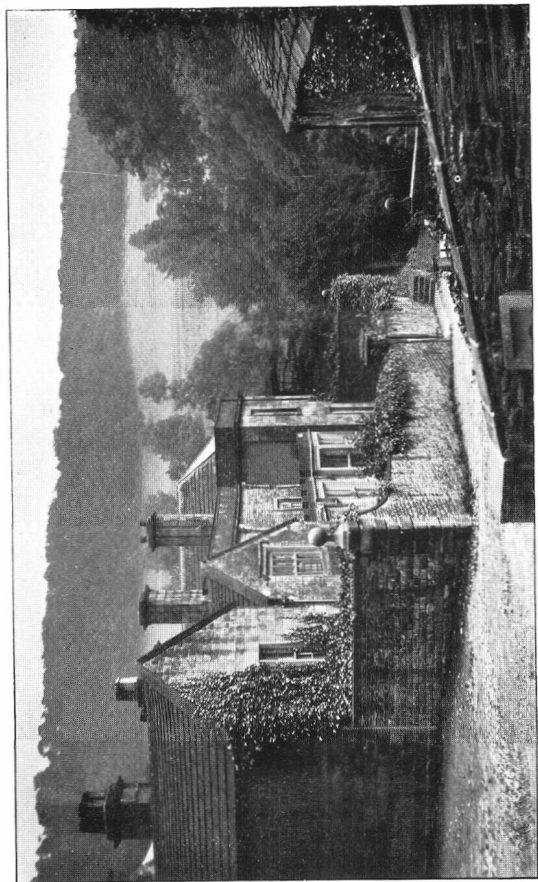
¹ The term is merely used to preserve the comparison between a church and a mediæval hall, for, strictly, the doors here were north-east and south-west.

² Now cased in oak of, probably, the time of Elizabeth.

three-storeyed building merely replaced the ancient butteries, and that the original timber hall still remained, is proved by the careful manner in which the new building was planned to preserve both the "north and south" doors of the hall, for the new building stopped just clear of the usual position of both; that to the "south" would be retained as the main entrance, but the "north" doorway was converted into the approach to a staircase built within the thickness of the then new wall, which is nearly six feet thick, and contained also the great kitchen chimney, now that of the housekeeper's room.

The timber hall in the reign of Elizabeth had probably served its day and borne the brunt of nearly four centuries. It would be older, possibly far older, than the withdrawing chambers at its south-east end; for whilst the hall and the butteries were no doubt the original structure, the chambers would only be added when custom or fashion was no longer content with the privacy of an apartment, separated from the hall by mere hangings drawn across the dais by night. Possibly these chambers were still in good condition and may have been retained, for we have no remaining evidence to show what occupied their site between this date and the year 1728; but it must be remembered that they formed mere outshuts to the parent hall, and it is unlikely that they would be again pieced up to a new building. Moreover, at this time the block of buildings must have presented a very unfinished and irregular appearance—an early Tudor gable of three storeys, a long and low hall of timber, and, finally, a lean-to adjunct still lower.

It is a curious fact in the history of architecture that from its dawn to quite modern times, no idea of conforming with an older style ever entered the minds of the builders. Each built in the style of his day as strictly as modern society adheres to the current fashions; hence the charm of our early cathedrals and old parish churches is their honest story in stone of the changes and vicissitudes of centuries. Therefore, when, about the year 1580, it became necessary to rebuild the



Sharples, Marble.

FORD HALL: THE SOUTH-WEST SIDE.

FIG. 3.

hall at Ford, the Elizabethan style had perforce to be adopted, and instead of the new work being harmonized with the existing stone gable, the old had to be remodelled to suit the new.

The rebuilding or reconstruction of a hall was a costly undertaking, and usually followed only on some acquisition of wealth by the family. In old Derbyshire, which then was an agricultural county far from the coasts and from the enterprise of the merchant adventurers, with a soil poor rather than rich, and, save for its lead and coal mining, void of commercial enterprise, such an acquisition of wealth must be looked for in a long minority, in the sale of other property, or in a wealthy alliance. When, therefore, the architecture tells us the approximate period, the family history often narrows the date to a definite decade. Here, however, there is little to help us, but the date of the main rebuilding of Ford may be approximated to 1575-85, or possibly a little earlier. It was at this period that the custom became general of adopting as the ground-plan of such buildings the form of a thick letter E, said to have been a compliment to Queen Elizabeth in the initial of her name; the upper and lower limbs of the letter forming the front wings of the house and the central limb the porch. This ground-plan was certainly in part, or in whole, adopted at Ford, and it necessitated remodelling the front of the stone gable erected some fifty or sixty years before. Also interior requirements necessitated alterations to its floor-levels, and the roof was lowered to the second floor; this last curtailment in turn required additional sleeping accommodation to be provided elsewhere, and it was formed by the extension marked kitchen and library on the plan, which was also a building of two storeys; but an archway, the jambs of which still remain, seems to have spanned the present scullery and left an entrance to the quadrangle. The old larder and interior walls were, however, merely adapted to their new conditions.

A reference to the accompanying photographs, figs. 3 and 4, will convey a fair idea of the façade of the Elizabethan house if we eliminate from mind the Georgian and Victorian alterations. Unfortunately, the larder, then a single-storeyed outshut, with its mullioned two-light window, is outside the limits of the photographs, but the projecting wing is shown, roofed by a single gable and lighted by mullioned and transomed windows of five and four latticed lights, with angled and moulded drip courses above; but the lower of these windows has lost its transom and two of its mullions, an alteration which was probably made in the interests of light when economies, prompted by the exigencies of the window tax, induced the blocking up of the side windows next described.

On the side of the wing facing the recess were two small transomed windows of two lights, one on the ground floor, but now within the present Victorian entrance, the other on the first floor, but both built up. A precisely similar wing would then probably form the south-west end of the block, whilst recessed between the two was the central front. This was composed of two gables, the outlines of which can still be traced in the photographs, although they have now been filled in to a straight line level with their original ridges, and part of the right-hand limit has been encroached upon by the present south-west wing. Below each gable on both floors were double windows of the same character as those already described, and between those on the upper floor; but to the right of the centre was a small oval window, which still remains, possibly giving light to a partitioned room over the entrance. In the centre was the entrance, approached by a flight of four semi-circular steps, which are now preserved in the western gardens. Whether this doorway had originally the usual projecting porch is now uncertain, but the fact that the small window above, just mentioned, was set to one side, rather points to the roof of a porch having occupied the central point. To the front, bounding the road, still remains

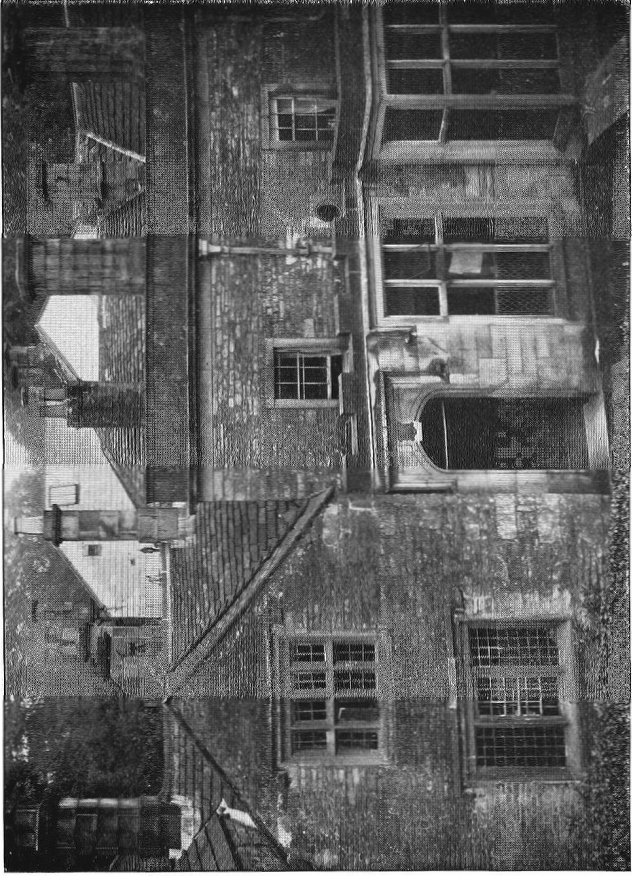


FIG. 4.

FORD HALL, THE SOUTH-WEST SIDE.

Waterhouse.

the old Elizabethan stone walling, slightly remodelled; the general effect being well maintained, and proving the central position of the original entrance.

Now the façade has lost much of its attraction; the whole of the lower storey has been brought forward half-way to the line of the wings, the entrance has been moved to the extreme left—oddly enough, to the probable position of the mediæval “south” door, and large windows occupy the rest of the front. Above, the old windows have given place to new, and a straight wall and parapet hide the picturesque gables.

The back of the hall now assumed the usual quadrangular design, though only three sides of it represented the main building, whilst probably offices and outbuildings completed the whole. As previously remarked, a north-east wing was at this date added to the gable end which had been built in the time of Henry VIII.; but the old outside wall, as high as the second storey, was not interfered with further than the filling in of the windows, now rendered useless, and the opening of doorways on both floors. This wing, however, only then extended far enough to include the library, as shown on the plan; but where the scullery now is, space was left for the entrance to the quadrangle, the quoins of which still remain, and suggest a probable archway. The kitchen and room over it still retain their Elizabethan windows, but one of those in the library has been transferred from its south to its north side. No doubt the south-eastern wing was similar in character, and of no further extension. The central portion of this side of the Elizabethan hall is more difficult to define, for it has been altered; but it has one characteristic survival. It will be remembered that the staircase of the Henry VIII. building absorbed the ancient doorway of the mediæval hall; yet the back entrance to the Henry VIII. kitchens must have been almost in the same position, namely, where the present doorway into the existing kitchen is shown on the plan. Therefore the Elizabethan

restoration preserved the same approach by leaving a short passage or uncovered porch to a doorway, now built up, into the kitchen, which was the nearest point not only to the Henry VIII. door, but to its mediæval predecessor. From the end of this short passage, which terminated at the north side of the modern window of the servants' hall, the Elizabethan wall was continued in a straight line, as shown in the plan, until it joined the south-eastern wing, and has merely been repaired.

It is therefore of interest to notice how, in the chapter of accidents, the original back approach to the mediæval house was maintained in position through the constant changes of rebuilding, and the lines of its new surroundings adapted to meet its requirements. Also it alone has retained its old oak and studded door, hanging on long hinges, bearing geometrical patterns and terminating in fleurs-de-lys. This door is certainly of the sixteenth century, and probably dates from the Henry VIII. restoration. It is now used for the modern entrance made through the eastern end of the old larder.

Let us enter the Elizabethan house as it then was. We must remember that it was early for a stone house in the Peak, and, consequently, its ceilings were low, and it was by no means large as we view a hall to-day. Indeed, one of the characteristic features of the Peak was its numerous small halls, but this is, perhaps, explained by the comparatively small holdings allowed by the Crown to the forester-in-fee, and by a conservative adherence to the use of the smaller halls of mediæval times, which lingered long amongst the contented people of a mountainous district.

Ascending by a flight of four steps from the old road we enter the porch; immediately opposite is the end of the wall containing the central chimney, in the manner seen in the plan of South Sitch.¹ Turning to the left into the hall, on the right is the stone chimneypiece, and near the left-hand corner is the arched entrance to the old staircase; again to

¹ *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, 1906, p. 4.

the left is the door leading to the housekeeper's room, kitchens, larder, and offices. The housekeeper's room, in the beams of its ceiling, bears clear evidence of the conversion of the earlier Henry VIII. building to its Elizabethan alterations, and its fine stone fireplace may also date from that early period. During modern alterations a small flueless stove was found connected with this chimney to the left of the fireplace, probably used as a charcoal heater.

Retracing our steps through the hall we pass by a door on the left of the fireplace into the parlour, now the study and passage, which has its fire nearly back to back with that in the hall. From the parlour opened the south-eastern wing, of which, however, we know nothing, save the lines of its foundations in the cellars beneath. It, however, would contain the large dining-room¹ and, probably in its present position, the main staircase.

Ascending the hall staircase, the lower levels of the floor again show indications of the adaptation of the Henry VIII. portion, and it becomes obvious when we notice the now useless continuation of the ascent of the stairs for a third floor, which has gone. In the room over the housekeeper's room are still some well-carved oak screen-work of Elizabethan or early seventeenth century date, and a deeply-moulded stone fireplace of Tudor days. The built-up window between the adjoining room and the bedroom over the kitchen in the wing retains its early Tudor mullions, whereas that lighting the bedroom in the wing and looking into the quadrangle has Elizabethan mouldings.

Over the central portion of the hall the rooms are now altered for passage purposes; but, as we should then see them, they were no doubt replicas of those below, and probably were also approached from the main staircase in the south-eastern wing, but our further progress would be mere surmise.

For nearly a century the Elizabethan house remained

¹ In the family correspondence of the seventeenth century, "the great parlour at Ford" is mentioned.

untouched, but in 1678 the north-eastern wing was slightly extended. This was probably for the purposes of additional offices, and sleeping accommodation over them for retainers. This building originally had its own staircase and a separate entrance from the quadrangle, over the doorway of which stood the lintel bearing the date 1678, now shown as fig. 5, the spaces on either side of the date being, no doubt, originally



Fig. 5.—Dated Lintel of Seventeenth Century Extension. *Waterhouse.*

intended for initials. Although this extension still remains, it has undergone considerable alteration, and is now used as the museum. During these alterations the doorway was removed, but the lintel is carefully preserved on the premises. This addition formed an extension of the plan of the quadrangle, and from the block plan, fig. 6, presently mentioned, it seems possible that at the same time the south-eastern wing was materially extended also. These additions did not in any way detract from the architectural interest of the old hall, which, perhaps from an archæological point of view, then looked its best, and so it remained for another fifty years.

Hitherto the hall had always fronted the old road, and its aspect was due south-west. But now came the great change in its history, and what had been the front became, by a

stroke of architectural genius, the side, so far, at least, as its ornamental character and the position of the principal

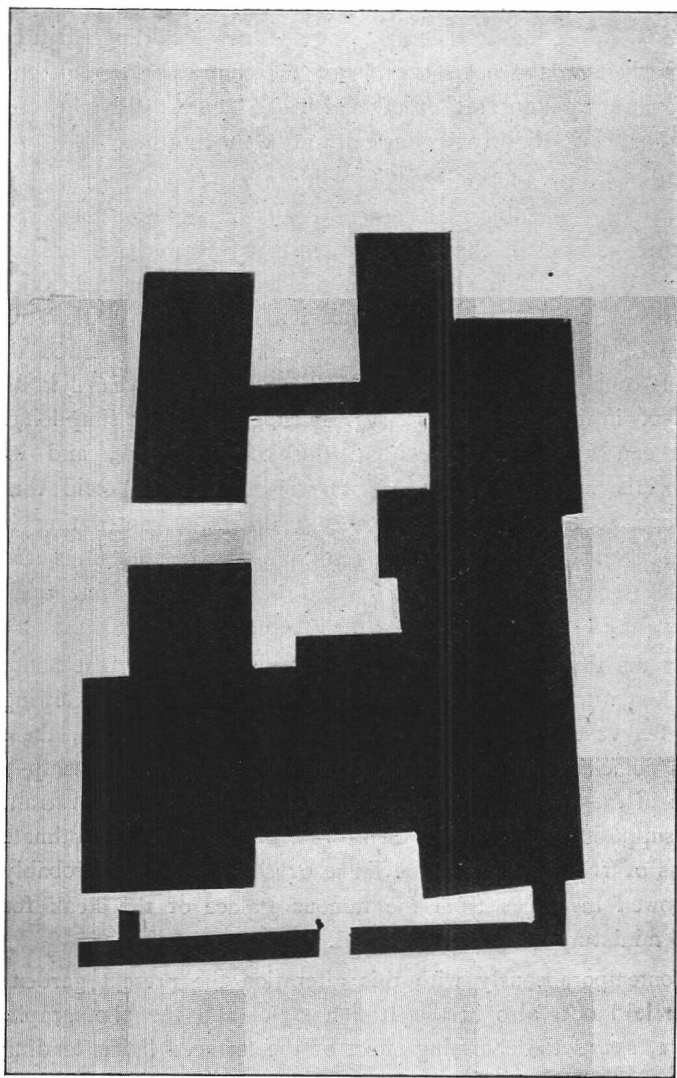


Fig. 6.—Ford Hall, enlarged block-plan of 1776.

rooms were concerned, although the main entrance was continued as before.

In or about 1728 the whole of the south-west wing was pulled down and a beautiful example of Italian architecture built in its place. This time, however, the term "in its place" is not quite accurate, for the new building slightly encroached on the nearest gable of the central portion of the hall, and was not set exactly at right angles with the old building, but slightly inclined towards the north.

Although to add an Italian wing to a Tudor hall would to-day be the subject of severe comment, it was then but another evidence of that rigid custom to which we have already referred, and which admitted of no deviation from the styles in vogue at the date of the work undertaken. We wish the name of the architect had been preserved, for, if viewed as a self-contained building, the south-west wing of Ford is as perfect in its proportions as it is elegant in its simplicity. One can say little more than this of any work, and its materials were so sound and its workmanship so solid that no one at first sight to-day would dream of antedating it more than a century or so. Within, it now contains the breakfast and morning rooms, and behind is the fine open staircase of oak leading to three rooms above.

At the time this wing was added to Ford, the great house at Chatsworth was but newly completed; but after allowing for the vast divergence in proportion between the two, there is a sufficiently close similarity in style and workmanship—even in the unusual character of the material used—to warrant the supposition that as the then owner of Ford was on intimate terms of friendship with the Duke of Devonshire, he probably borrowed his ideas from the famous Palace of the Peak for this miniature structure at Ford.

Contemporaneously with this alteration the present gardens were laid out, also in the Italian style, and the photograph, fig. 1, shows the charming effect of the terraced lawns leading up to this beautiful grey stone building, which is, of course, that to the left of the picture.

This change of front, from the south-west to the south-east, may have been the desire of the architect to obtain the very effect we have just seen reproduced in the photograph; but it is at least significant that the main road from Manchester to Sheffield was a century later to be made on the opposite hillside parallel with this façade, and to some extent overlooking it. Was the road then contemplated? The great turnpike movement commenced in 1704, and in 1724 the road from Manchester so far as Chapel-en-le-Frith was declared a turnpike highway—its continuation was therefore merely a question of time.¹

Thus Ford remained for more than a century, and thus we see it outlined in an old estate plan of the year 1776, reproduced and enlarged on p. 151 as fig. 6. Even as early as in the first half of the eighteenth century greenhouses and hothouses had been added, for in the diary of the then minister of Chinley Chapel² pines grown at Ford are mentioned under the year 1740.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century the joint hands of time and neglect fell heavily on Ford. The old deer park was forsaken in 1777, and its walls presently fell into decay. Horns of some of the last of the deer killed at Ford, among them a royal, are mounted and decorate the present entrance hall (fig. 7). These were red-deer, as we should expect them to be, for only red-deer were kept within the royal forest of the Peak, and they would naturally be the parent stock.

But the nineteenth century brought its changes and its revival. Unfortunately, these were before architecture and art once more became one and the same thing. It was in the times when the generality of architects preferred to stamp their own individuality, or style, as they termed it, upon every building they undertook, regardless of its surroundings,

¹ A turnpike highway was not necessarily a new road, but we believe that opposite Ford was newly cut about 1821.

² This remarkable diary is at Ford, and contains a complete daily record of his life from 1727 to 1755, thus supplying a wealth of social history of the district.

and the more incongruous the style the more marked they thought was their own individuality. We are speaking of exteriors only, and it is sufficient to say that these additions to Ford, which added the present main entrance and the so-called Gothic wing to its right, also incidentally completing the quadrangle and mutilating the old Tudor front, would have ruined the beauty of any other hall than Ford; but, standing as it does within many acres of the finest timber in the Peak, overlooking a rock-strewn torrent below, and surrounded by heather-clad hills above, the Victorian,



Waterhouse.

Fig. 7.—Stag's Horns.

Georgian, and Tudor pile seems to tone with its varied surroundings and claim the picturesque by its very incongruity.

In the interior, however, individuality disappeared, and utility took its place. A new entrance resulted, and the drawing-room and dining-room are models of what such rooms should be, for they harmonize with the large rambling hall which Ford had now become. As might be expected from its centuries of additions, it is a labyrinth of passages, but a comfortable and charming house withal.



FIG 8. MINIATURE OF COLONEL BAGSHAWE, ENLARGED.

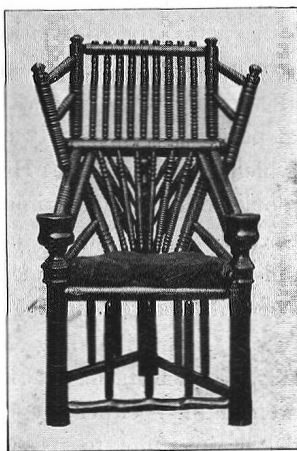
Waterhouse.

The art treasures at Ford—and it abounds with them—deserve a treatise to themselves, and this is not the time to attempt their description. Most of them have descended to their present owner from the House of Atholl or from the various other families with which the Bagshawes are allied; but one, a charming miniature on ivory of Colonel Bagshawe, who owned Ford from 1757 to 1762, we here reproduce in its original setting of gold and pearls (fig. 8) because of its associations with the old hall.

There are, however, a few objects of antiquity which we have selected from the many for illustration because of their general interest. Foremost amongst these is “The Tutbury Horn”—the feudal horn by which to-day its owner appoints the coroners for that portion of the county of Derby, including the High Peak, which is within the Honour of Tutbury, and to which no doubt other equally important prerogatives were formerly attached. It is an ox-horn, mounted with silver-gilt bands, and suspended by an ancient black silk belt, ornamented with silver-gilt buckles, uniting in a badge bearing the arms of John of Gaunt impaling Ferrers. The horn itself probably dates from Danish or Saxon times, but its silver mountings were added either by John of Gaunt or shortly after his death, in 1399, to record the fact that the horn represented the feudal powers of Ferrers, Earls of Derby and Barons of Tutbury, and of the Dukes of Lancaster, its then successive holders. But in 1886 Dr. Cox dealt with this chattel-real in volume viii. of our *Journal*, in a monograph which is as interesting as it is convincing, and which finally established the identity of the arms of the badge with those of John of Gaunt. We venture to reproduce his illustration, see fig. 9—we wish we could reprint his paper, for no story of Ford is complete without it.

Perhaps the most interesting piece amongst the earlier furniture—for the many beautiful examples of the Chippendale period must be passed by—is the “knitting chair,” illustrated as fig. 10. It is a remarkable specimen, being of a more

massive character than any other we have seen. This may, perhaps, be explained by the fact that it descended to Mr. Bagshawe from the Atholl family, and is therefore of Scottish origin.¹ Knitting, or, as they were formerly called, "turneyed" (turned) chairs have the peculiarity of being triangular in plan, and, consequently, are supported by only three legs; but, prior to the sixteenth century, a broad upright board usually formed the back leg. The throne of Edward



Waterhouse.

Fig. 10.—The Knitting Chair.

the Confessor, as represented on his money, seems to have been of this type, and that on the gold penny of Henry III. certainly was. Other examples of early date are those in Hereford Cathedral and the Chetham College, Manchester. The latter, although famed as Humphrey Chetham's chair, dates from the fifteenth century, and is very similar to an example represented in a painting of 1490. In the sixteenth century they came into general use, and the specimen before

¹ As the lower portion of the chair bears, stamped upon it in several places, the initials I.C., for Jane Campbell, of Glenorchy, who married the third Earl of Atholl about 1630, it follows that it was then in existence, and it is very possible that the upper part was added on that occasion or at a later period of her life.

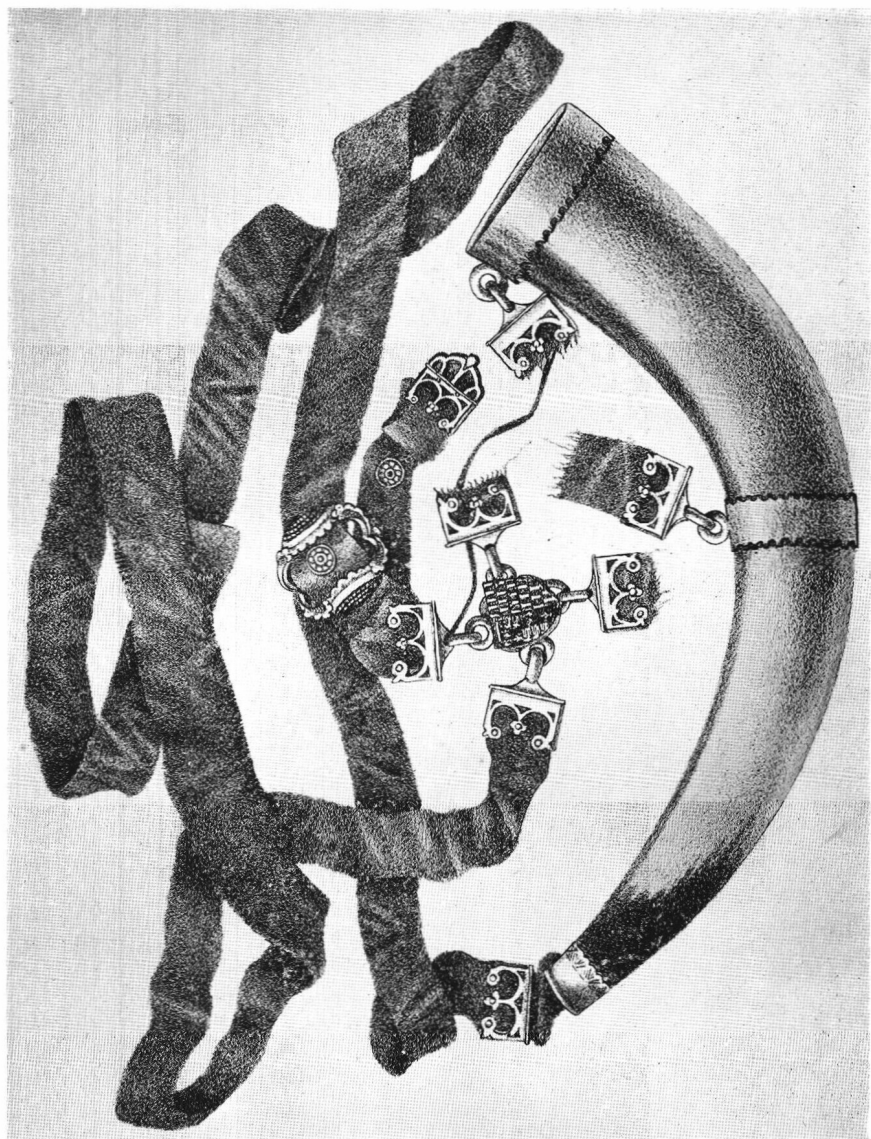


FIG. 9.

THE TUTBURY HORN.

us probably dates from its close or the commencement of the seventeenth, for it has a second or raised back, the usual and earlier type finishing at the first tier, which is here retained in a complete form where the arms join the central main cross-bar, and the addition is continued behind it to the seat. At the present time these chairs are the most sought for by collectors, but there are few examples known. The demand is, no doubt, in some measure due to their popularity in America, owing to the incident that in 1620 a chair brought over by the Pilgrim Fathers in the *Mayflower* was of this class. In Derbyshire a debased form continued to be manufactured until comparatively recent times.



Fig. 11.—A "Shovel-board" Table.

Waterhouse.

A massive oak table, supported on six legs, tied by heavy foot rails,¹ is nearly, if not quite, as old as the Elizabethan portion of the house (fig. 11). It is 9 feet 6 inches in length, but only 2 feet 4 inches in breadth, following in its dimensions the proportions of the old trestle tables which in its day were still in use. Tables of this class were called shovel-boards, for they formed a convenient board on which the game of that name was played—by those who could afford it, with the broad crown or half-crown pieces of Edward VI. and

¹ The shelf on the foot rails is a later addition.

Elizabeth, and by those who could not, with discs of metal. These broad pieces in turn took their name from the game, and half-crowns of Edward VI. are referred to by Shakespeare in the *Merry Wives* as "Two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shillings and twopence a-piece."¹ A line was chalked across one end of the table, over which the player might not reach, and his aim was to "shovel" or slide his disc as near as he could to the opposite edge of the table, but if it fell over the edge it was counted "off the green."



Waterhouse.

Fig. 12.—The Sedan Chair.

In these, the early days of the motor, the hansom-cab is already passing, and few of us remember that it is but a Sedan chair mounted on wheels, and with the addition of a "perch" for the driver. Still fewer have ever seen a Sedan chair in daily use, yet Mr. Bagshawe well remembers his mother at Banner Cross being carried to and from church in her chair, which is illustrated as fig. 12.

Sedan chairs were introduced into England in 1634 by Sir Saunders Duncombe from Sedan, whence their name, and it

¹ Probably they were worn specimens, and therefore light in weight, hence their depreciated value.

is curious to notice that they always followed the fashions in costume, not of the ladies who were their principal patrons, but of the men who were not. In the eighteenth century, when men wore coats of many colours, the chairs were resplendent with paint and gilt; but when, in the nineteenth, sombre broadcloth and brass buttons became the order of the day, the chairs were content to appear clad as this—in black leather and brass nails. There is no reason why the Sedan chair should have so totally disappeared, and in these days



Fig. 13. *Waterhouse.*
Pulpit of "the Apostle of the Peak."

of revivals we shall probably at no distant date see them re-introduced by some fair copyist of her early Victorian grandmother in bonnet, shawl, and Pekin petticoat.

Fig. 13 represents an old pulpit¹ of "the Apostle of the Peak." It is a well-preserved specimen of late seventeenth century design, probably of about 1690, but it has just one touch of that conservatism to custom so marked in hilly districts, especially in this county, and to which we have already referred. In the latter half of the seventeenth century the beautiful carving of the Early Renaissance had become

¹ It was brought from Malcoff to Ford in 1711.

tame, fulsome, and monotonous—art was tired of it, and when Dutch influences followed William of Orange, extremes met, and carving disappeared as rapidly as any other unpopular fashion. True, under the Commonwealth a similar movement had been commenced, but it was short-lived and but half-hearted. This pulpit was, no doubt, a labour of love; its purpose suggested simplicity of design, and it was therefore probably an early example of that plainness of art which characterised the church-work of the eighteenth century. But it is curious to notice that the cross-rails have central mouldings, and are exact replicas of a rail which was in

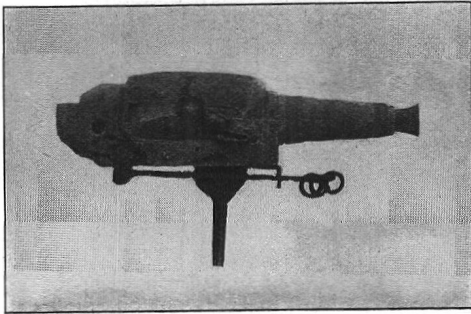


Fig. 14.—Spring Gun. *Waterhouse.*

vogue at the close of the reign of Elizabeth, and common in that of her successor. In the south of England it had certainly long been forgotten, but in the Pennines it survived here and there until, in this particular instance, we probably see the very last of it. Similarly in an inn at Edale is a fine court-cupboard of the art of the time of the first James, yet of a date about 1680.

Spring guns and man-traps in this humanitarian age are classed as relics of barbarism, yet it is only forty-eight years since they were so prevalent that an Act of Parliament¹ was needed to abolish their use in the open country; but even then

¹ 24 and 25 Vic., c. 100, s. 31.

it was specially provided that we may still use them within our own houses. The former was set on a swivel, with connecting wires leading in three or four directions, the principle being that whichever wire was touched by the trespasser pulled the gun in his direction and fired it. The illustration of the Ford example, fig. 14, shows three rings for these attachments. That they were sometimes effective we know, for the special incident which led to the passing of the Act was the shooting of an innocent caller who ventured to take a short cut through his friend's plantations.

The man-trap at Ford, fig. 15, has lost its teeth, and is

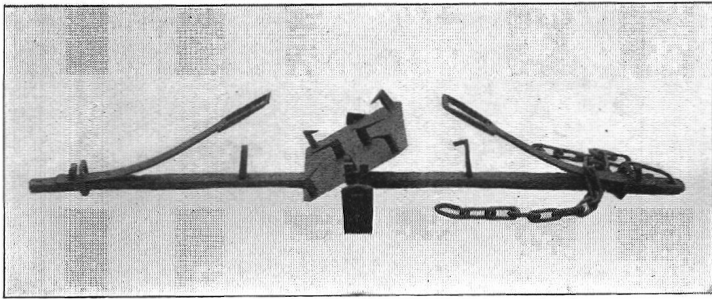


Fig. 15.—Man Trap.

Waterhouse.

now harmless;¹ but this engine—a huge spring rat-trap in design—was the more vicious of the two, for when set in a likely spot and covered with leaves it patiently awaited its victim, whether he came then or years hence. Dr. Johnson accepted them as a matter of course, for he quaintly defines the word “trap” as “a snare for thieves or vermin.”²

The last of our illustrations of Ford, fig. 16, is that of the finely proportioned sun-dial, the date of which we approximate at 1760. It originally belonged to Lord John Murray, whose arms it bears on the dial, and was brought to Ford from Banner Cross in 1860. This photograph was not taken for

¹ We are told that it was never actually set.

² *Dictionary*, Ed. 1755.

our purposes, but its subject is pleasing, and, like Ford itself, blends the past with the present, reminding us, in its touch of animal life, that it is not always safe to quote,

“There is no new thing under the sun.”

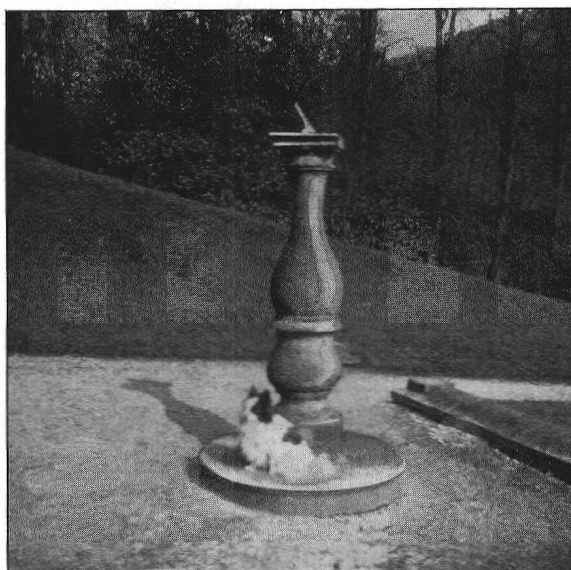


Fig. 16.—Lord John Murray's Sun-dial at Ford.

BANNER CROSS.

Sir Jeffrey Wyattville, the famous restorer of Windsor Castle, was wont to refer to Banner Cross, not only in its external design, but also in its internal arrangements, as perhaps the best specimen of his handicraft. No doubt he was right, for his great work at Windsor Castle, upon which more than a million of money was spent, has been severely criticised, and in our own county his addition of the north wing to Chatsworth has received but faint praise. But at Windsor he was restoring, and at Chatsworth adding and adapting. At Banner Cross, however, he had a free hand, and the genius of the man was unfettered. No one has ever questioned the graceful

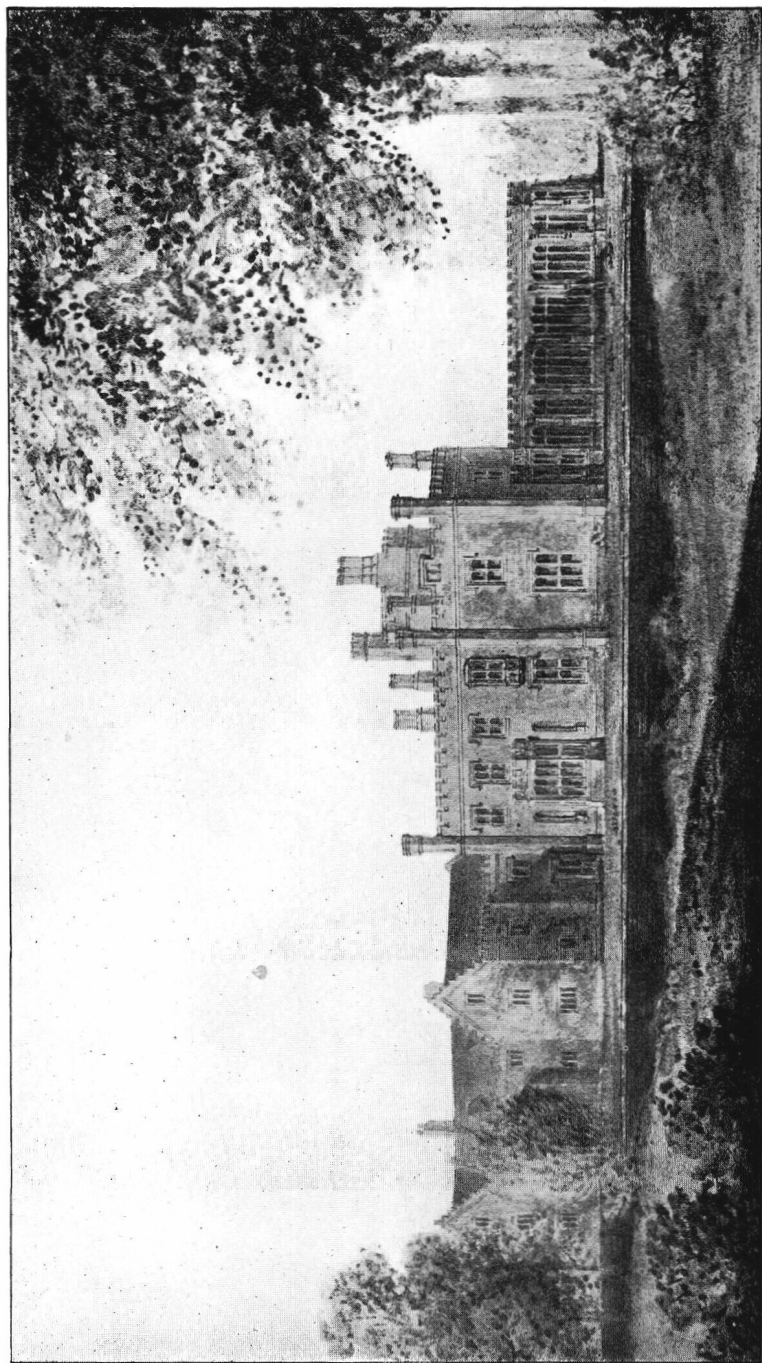


FIG. 17.

VIEW OF BANNER CROSS AS DESIGNED BY SIR JEFFRY WYATTVILLE IN 1817.

Showing the long Gothic projection, which was never built.

symmetry of art which he has here produced without any recourse to superfluous ornamentation. The result is a stately mansion, which, as an example of the Gothic revival, will compare favourably, both within and without, with anything of its class built during the nineteenth century, although that century was but in its teens when the work was commenced.

Banner Cross, which is just over the Derbyshire border where it approaches nearest to Sheffield, takes its name from the old Saxon cross, the base of which is now preserved on the terrace. In the reign of Elizabeth it belonged, with the surrounding estate, to the family of Bright. There was

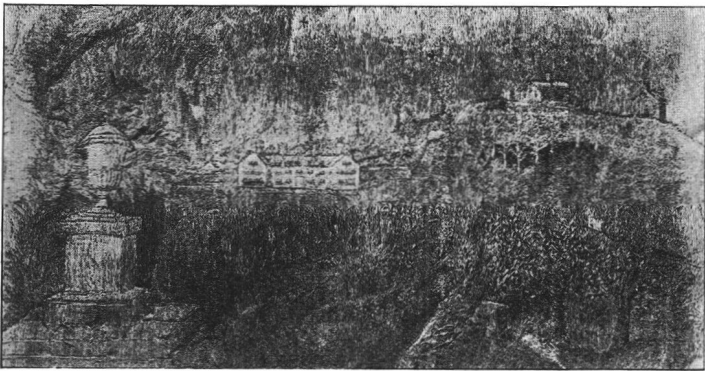


Fig. 18.—View of old Banner Cross in Needlework. *Waterhouse.*

probably an older house here then, but early in the seventeenth century this seems to have given place to the considerable Jacobean hall faintly depicted on the tapestried picture at Ford, illustrated as fig. 18, which was the work of Lady John Murray about the year 1760. In addition to this picture, we see it again in Sir Jeffrey Wyatville's design, fig. 17, but it has there been embattled and otherwise adapted to conform with his Gothic mansion. From these scanty materials it is impossible to be definite either as to the date of its erection or as to its extent, but on comparison it bears a striking resemblance to Snitterton Hall, near Matlock, one of the most

beautiful of the many smaller halls in this county. If, however, the pictures be correct, Banner Cross was the larger of the two in having double windows to the left of the entrance, instead of two to the right and one to the left, as at Snitterton. This seems to be the only variation between them, and the central front of the latter has also been embattled, as shown in Wyatville's design of Banner Cross.

The estate remained in the possession of the Brights until the middle of the eighteenth century, and John Bright, in its early years, was Sheriff of his county. After the death of his son in 1748 it passed to the latter's grand-daughter and heiress, Lady John Murray, wife of Lieutenant-General, afterwards General, Lord John Murray, eldest son of the first Duke of Atholl by his second wife. Lady John Murray died at the age of thirty-three, but her husband, who had a life estate in her property, survived until 1787. On his death it descended to their only child, the Hon. Mary Murray, married in 1782 to Captain William Foxlow, who assumed her name, and afterwards became General Murray. Mrs. Murray died in 1803 without leaving issue, and in 1811 her estates were partitioned between the then Duke of Atholl and her husband, the Banner Cross property falling to his share, and through him to his great nephew, its present owner, Mr. W. H. Greaves-Bagshawe, of Ford, who is descended from the Atholl family through several different lines.

In 1817 the old hall had served for two centuries, and not only had time told its tale, but for many years General Murray had been away on staff appointments commanding districts in Ireland and England, so it had also suffered from neglect. The measure of a poet's license is a well-known quantity, but that of a poetess passes the unknown. Hence in reading the following extract from a poem by Barbara Hoffland, every allowance must be made for the extravaganza of the early years of the romantic period of English literature :

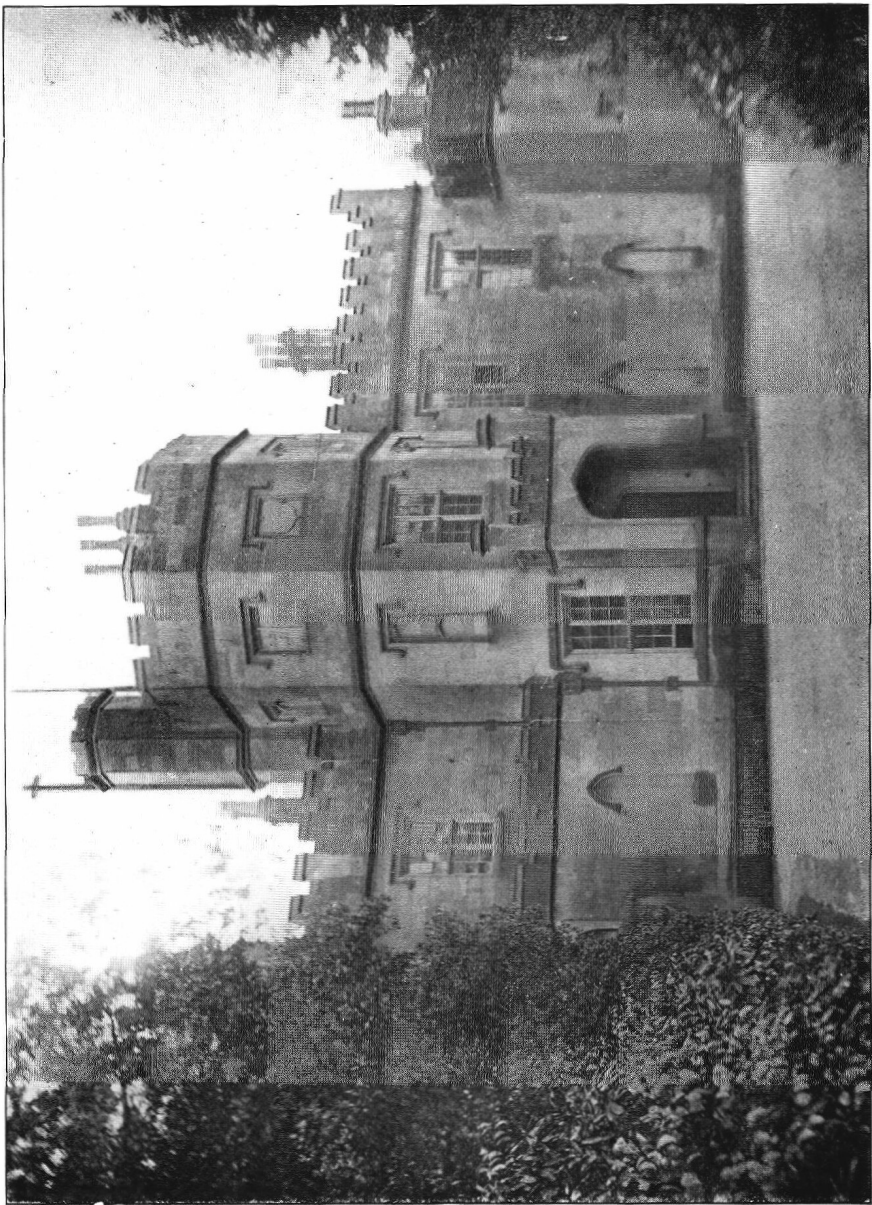


FIG 19.

BANNER CROSS : THE MAIN ENTRANCE.

Photo. by Mrs. Southford.

“A gloomy mansion, where, in empty state,
 And cobwebbed ruin, hangs a goodly list
 Of pictured lords and many a beauteous dame
 Of Atholl’s princely race’ . . .

The mouldering mansion wears
 In every view the signal of decay:
 Slow whispering winds creep through the chilling rooms,
 The tattered hangings shake with every breeze:
 Through the long passages and cold, dark halls,
 (So fame reports) the flimsy spirits glide
 In robes of white, or sweep the narrow stairs
 In all the shapes of fear-formed misery.”

Be that as it may, Wyatville, rather than destroy it, preferred to restore and harmonize this old hall with his new mansion, so ruin and decay could not have advanced very seriously on the ancient structure.

When, in 1817, General Murray had retired from active service and returned to his home, it was a fortunate circumstance that Jeffrey Wyatt—for he did not assume the name of Wyatville until his later knighthood—spent a month in the old hall recovering from an illness. Then it was that he matured the plans for the present mansion, and designed the view of the south front here reproduced as fig. 17. With the exception of the Gothic extension for a conservatory, the plans were carried out by Wyatt in their entirety; but that omission was evidently a sad disappointment to him, as the following passage from his letter to Mrs. Bagshawe reporting completion of the building operations proves: “The house is now complete, if it can be considered completed without an appendage which would add so greatly to its appearance.”

General Murray did not live to see the completion of Wyatt’s masterpiece, and it was his death which curtailed the original scheme by abandonment of the conservatory. A still greater alteration followed, for the old house was pulled down by the late Mr. Bagshawe, and a new Gothic wing of about the same size erected on its site, under Sir Jeffrey Wyatville’s

¹ These pictures are now at Ford, and include the portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Murray, by Romney, and many others of the Atholl family.

superintendence. Not a stone of the original building remains, except a chimneypiece on which the arms of Bright are carved.

To-day, as Wyatt left it, stands the Gothic pile, figs. 19 and 20, with its numerous and lofty suites of rooms, true to the design throughout—all is harmony; and when another century has learnt to see art even amongst our nineteenth century labours, it will discriminate between the hand of the master and that of the copyist of his prototypes. Banner Cross stands amidst the finest scenery in Abbeydale, surrounded by grounds replete with beech trees older than itself, and it is entirely shut out from view of the busy hive of Sheffield, although but three miles away from the parish church. The flower gardens and terrace were designed by Wyatt, and the grounds laid out by the celebrated landscape gardener, Poutey; the woods and the kitchen gardens, however, have survived from the days of Lord John Murray. Let us hope that the march of progress may pass by this beautiful combination of nature's scenery with man's art, and leave it untouched and unspoilt for generations to come.