

THE PICTURES AT CLANDON PARK.

BY

THE EARL OF ONSLOW, P.C., F.S.A.

President of the Society.

I HAVE been asked to write a few lines descriptive of the pictures at Clandon, and I find myself in some difficulty to know quite how to proceed, because the collection there is not of very outstanding value, and even if it were the object of articles in these transactions is to record matters of mainly Surrey interest.

The pictures consist of portraits, sporting pictures, and a few pictures of topographical interest which perhaps, for the purposes of this article, are the most important of all.

Although not the oldest picture the earliest portrait is that of Richard Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons in 1566. It forms one of four full-length portraits. The latest of these is a picture by Stewardson of George, 1st Earl of Onslow, a replica of which hangs in the County Hall at Kingston. The other two are Speaker Arthur Onslow by Huyssing, the Swedish artist, and a companion picture of Speaker Richard Onslow, the uncle of Arthur.

Sir George Scharf, who many years ago came to inspect the Clandon pictures and to give an opinion on them, thought that the picture of the Elizabethan Speaker was painted for the series of three Speakers from the effigy on Richard Onslow's tomb in the Abbey Church at Shrewsbury. A half length replica of the Clandon picture hangs in the Speaker's House at Westminster.

Richard Onslow's son, Sir Edward Onslow, is represented by a portrait by the Dutchman and early rival of Van Dyck, Cornelius Janssen, dated in the early seventeenth century.

The other seventeenth-century pictures are not numerous, and in only four cases is the artist known. These are by Sir Godfrey Kneller—Sir Richard and Lady Onslow on the occasion of their marriage, and Lady Onslow's father and mother, Sir Henry and Lady Tulse. The picture of Tulse must have been painted during his year of office as Lord Mayor of London, as he is seen wearing the jewel of Lord Mayor. These are obviously early examples of Kneller's brush, and one of his latest pictures must be the same Richard Onslow as an old man when he became Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Perhaps among the seventeenth-century pictures should be included those by Francis Barlow. These are interesting from an artistic, sporting, and topographical point of view. They apparently belonged to Denzil Onslow of Pyrford, because Evelyn in his diary remarks in 1681 when dining with Denzil at Pyrford that "the hall was adorned with paintings of fowl and hunting, etc., the work of Mr. Barlow." The most generally interesting of these pictures is a long frieze-like painting of harriers hunting a hare. Perhaps this is one of the earliest if not the earliest hound picture in England. According to Blome, in *The Gentlemen's Recreation*, 1686, these heavy, rather small hounds were known as the Southern-mouthed Hounds. They are long-eared, blunt-headed and very slow and clumsy, but I imagine must have been tremendous stayers, and have had wonderful noses.

The Barlow pictures at Clandon have been described at length by Mr. Sparrow in his work of *British Sporting Artists*, and it is a matter of considerable interest to know that Mr. Sparrow discovered in the Ashmolean at Oxford an original drawing by Francis Barlow in which five of the Clandon hounds are reproduced. It is quite a different picture, but the hounds are obviously the same as those in the painting at Clandon. Three other very large pictures by Barlow also hang at Clandon. They are "The Decoy at Pyrford," "The Farmyard," and "Sunset after a Day's Fishing." They are all interesting from the point of view of paintings of animals, but the one which, from the Surrey point of view, most deserves description is that of the "Decoy at Pyrford." Many of us driving to Old Woking pass across the Broad Mead. In the days of Denzil Onslow the Broad Mead was undrained

and was known as Lake Sheerwater. It must have been very shallow and really the over-flow from the River Wey which winds round the Broad Mead. Often, doubtless, it was nothing but a marsh, but when the river was full it became a lake, and here Denzil Onslow established a duck decoy. There are still a few of these decoys existing in the Eastern counties and very interesting they were in their working. It would, however, be too long to describe the way a decoy was conducted, but from the point of view of Surrey topography it is interesting to have a picture of the decoy on Lake Sheerwater as it existed more than 200 years ago. Another noteworthy fact in the picture is that Barlow evidently excelled in drawing herons, because the same heron appears in this picture entitled "Shooting Plover," belonging to Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake of Shardeloes. I noticed this picture in the Exhibition at Lord Allendale's house some time ago and observed that the two birds were identical. The picture of the "Day's Fishing" is full of life, and so is that of the "Farmyard." All kinds of fish are represented in the one, and all kinds of farmyard animals in the other, but curiously enough the peacock in the farmyard picture is considerably larger than the turkey. His tail must be several yards long! A photograph of the pictures was taken in a certain light, and I noticed that the fishing picture was a palimpsest, and underneath Barlow's painting there appeared the ghost of a life-size horse. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries it seems to have been the fashion to have your horse painted life size. But canvases were very expensive, especially large canvases such as these of Barlow's, and it was quite a common thing that when the owner of the horse died and interest in him ceased that the paint should be scraped off and the canvas used again. This seems to have been the case here.

Another instance of a palimpsest is a picture of the Guildford racecourse situated on the Merrow Downs, which Mr. Sparrow thinks may be either by James Seymour or by Tillemans. Seymour was one of the primitive sporting artists and never seems to have had much technical training, for he adheres to the "rocking horse" gallop, that is to say all four legs stretched out and pressed to the ground. The picture is interesting in a way because it shows something of the lay-out of Guildford

racecourse as it was in those early days. The canvas is not large, so it is curious it should have been used twice and for much the same subject (Plate I).

Two other pictures by Barlow perhaps merit remark, namely "The Ostrich" and "Cassowary"—three-quarter life size. Mr. Sparrow thinks these birds were both painted from nature. That Barlow should have had an opportunity of painting ostriches was not odd, because doubtless they were imported into Europe, but a cassowary in Europe in the eighteenth century was rather a rarity, and one wonders where he saw his model.

For those who are interested in sport and natural history Barlow's paintings are of great value. They are true to life and of great vigour in the drawing. Barlow seems always to have looked for some incident in his pictures, because even in the farmyard scene there is a hawk stooping to a pigeon in the background.

Coming now to the early eighteenth century we have an interesting topographical picture by Knyff, who drew pictures of country places at that date which were subsequently reproduced by Kip in Volume I of his *Britannia Illustrata*. The Knyff picture is more like a plan and is certainly much out of proportion, but it is very interesting because it is the only portrait of the old house at Clandon built, I believe, about the same time as Sutton. It is quite easy to trace the gardens, woods, etc., and the Dutch Canal, which was altered in the late seventeenth century by "Capability" Brown to an imitation river, though it is still called "The Canal." The old house was pulled down and the new one built in 1731. There is also a picture of the new house as it was when first built (Plate II), so that these two are, from a topographical point of view, not without Surrey interest.

Among the eighteenth-century portraits besides the picture by Kneller of the 1st Lord Onslow when Chancellor of the Exchequer, that I have already mentioned, is another a little earlier by the same artist of the same man in a brown dress, flowing wig, and white cravat, seated at a table holding a scroll. There is also a picture of his son, riding a white horse, with his groom also on horseback. This is really an interesting example of Wootton and a very charming picture in every

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The Guildford Racecourse.
(?) By James Seymour or Peter Tillemans.

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The New House at Clandon, c. 1731.

point of view, in spite of the fact that the subject was notorious for his plainness. However, we do not see much of his features but more of the landscape. He is riding his favourite horse, and a full-sized picture of that horse hangs at Clandon, which has also been attributed to Wootton, but I am rather doubtful whether he was the artist. Here the horse is being held by what appears to be a jockey, because he wears what is apparently a red silk jacket. The Onslows had some horses on the turf in the eighteenth century, but I had always supposed that their racing colours were red and white. They certainly were later on, but it is possible that this Lord Onslow's colours were red.

Besides the Huyssing picture of Arthur Onslow, there is a combined picture by Thornhill and Hogarth of the House of Commons. The print is fairly well known. The Speaker, Arthur Onslow, is in the Chair, talking to Sir Robert Walpole, who is depicted as usual bluff and smiling, with the Order of the Garter over his shoulder. The Clerk at the table sits below the Speaker, and on the left hand side we see the rows of members. All are portraits, and among them is that of General Richard Onslow, brother of the Speaker, who was at the time member for Guildford.

Sir James Thornhill was the father-in-law of Hogarth and at the time a member of Parliament. The principal figures were painted by him and the rest by his son-in-law. It appears that a replica of this picture was painted for Lord Hardwicke, and there was some discussion as to which was the original, but it seems to be clearly proved by a letter from Lord Hardwicke to Lord Harcourt that the picture at Clandon is the original and the other a replica.

As the eighteenth century progressed pictures became more common. There is an interesting little picture by Hudson of Thomas 2nd Lord Onslow as a boy of about four years old, with a mouse on his finger tied round the neck by a little gold chain. One of Richard 3rd Lord Onslow, by Alan Ramsay, two small ones of the sons of the 1st Lord Onslow, by Moriance, and one of Henrietta Lady Onslow, by F. Coates. But the most curious is a portrait of an old man by an unknown artist. He is standing against a wall in which the initials R.O. are depicted, and in the background is the kitchen garden at

Clandon. The scene is quite recognizable. Who or what he was is unknown, but he holds a garden implement in his hand, so he must have been one of the outdoor servants. At his feet are a number of broken clay pipes. He looks as though he were preaching. Perhaps he was an old "character," possibly an early anti-tobacco crank.

Next come the pictures by Russell, the Guildford artist, whose father was four times Mayor of Guildford. Russell is mainly known as a pastellist, but he also painted in oils. There is an oil painting by him of Henrietta Shelley, wife of George 1st Earl of Onslow, as an old lady—and also a pastel of her, but unfortunately the latter is in a very decayed state. Dr. Williamson, who has written extensively on Russell's works, has inclined to the belief that a picture of an undergraduate in a gown and a mortar-board with a gold tuft represents George 1st Earl of Onslow as a young man. This could hardly be the case, as George was born in 1731, so this picture must have been painted about 1750. As Russell was born in 1745 the late Mr. Avray Tipping, who described the Russell pictures at Clandon in *Country Life*, points out that either the picture must be of some one else or have been painted later from a drawing. I think myself that it is no doubt that the picture is of Thomas, George's eldest son. The shape of the nose seems to make that clear. I have compared the picture with others of George and Thomas, and it seems to me that clearly the likeness indicates it to be the latter, who was an undergraduate at Cambridge (Plate III).

Moreover, the young man, through wearing powder, does not seem to be dark, and George was known as "Black George" from his swarthy complexion. There are five other pastels by Russell. Thomas (the above) and his second wife Charlotte, daughter of William Hale of Kings Walden, Herts., and another picture said to be that of Frances Shelley, aunt of Henrietta Onslow. There is some doubt about this picture. Frances Shelley married Richard 5th Viscount Fitzwilliam in 1703. A picture of her at Wentworth, which the present Lord Fitzwilliam was good enough to have compared with the Clandon picture, certainly shows a considerable likeness—but that may be a family resemblance. Lady Fitzwilliam died in 1771, aged ninety-nine. This portrait is one of a young woman, and if



Thomas Onslow, afterwards Second Earl of Onslow, as an Undergraduate.
By John Russell.



By permission of "Country Life."

Arabella, First Wife of Thomas, Second Earl of Onslow.
Attributed to John Russell.

[to face Plate V]



[By permission of "Country Life"]

Arabella, Wife of the Second Earl of Onslow, with her Sons.
Attributed to Daniel Gardner.

to face Plate IV]



[By permission of "Country Life,"

Lord Onslow, Lord Fitzwilliam and Lord Pembroke,

By *David Gardner*.

she were Lady Fitzwilliam was too young for Russell to have painted her. She is more likely to have been one of Henrietta's younger sisters—either Elizabeth, who married James Cameron, or Tryphena, the wife of Charles Polhill.

In addition, there are two much larger pictures of Nathaniel Hillier of Stoke and his wife. These are later examples of Russell's art and were painted in 1801. Nathaniel Hillier's daughter married Col. Thomas Cranley Onslow, and it is presumably through her that they came to Clandon. There are three other pastels—two of them attributed by Dr. Williamson to Russell; but other critics have thought them to be by Daniel Gardner, a contemporary of Russell, who was born in 1750 and died in 1805. The two doubtful ones are both of the first wife of the above-mentioned Thomas 2nd Earl of Onslow—Arabella, daughter of Eton Mainwaring Ellerker, who appears to have been a singularly beautiful woman. One is a small picture but full length; in the other she is seated surrounded by her two children (Plates IV and V).

The picture undoubtedly by Gardner is a "Conversation picture"—of Lord Fitzwilliam and Lord Onslow playing chess with Lord Pembroke looking on. The stake was said to be a negro servant who stands in the background, and the story goes that there was a terrible quarrel over the game and Lord Onslow and Lord Fitzwilliam never spoke again to one another—but this is probably mere gossip (Plate VI).

Coming to the mid-nineteenth century the most interesting pictures are those by Ferneley of horses belonging to my grandfather. John Ferneley was born in 1782 and died in 1860. He studied under Ben Marshall, a celebrated painter of horses at the time, and from 1814–1860 Ferneley lived at Melton Mowbray, busily painting the horses of those that hunted there. My grandfather must scarcely have owned a horse that he did not paint, and certainly Ferneley knew how to paint a horse. They are not just fine animals but live portraits. Those depicted in the stables ready to go out hunting and on the pillar reins are obviously in the tip-top of condition, well-ribbed up, full of muscle and hard as nails—while those turned out for the summer look what they are—hunters turned out to grass or brood mares in the park.

Rather later, of course, in date among nineteenth-century

works are two coloured drawings for *Vanity Fair*, one by Pellegrini and the other by Sir Leslie Ward—the former is of my uncle Guildford Onslow, M.P. for Guildford, and the latter my father as quite a young man.

As regards twentieth-century pictures there are only two that need be mentioned—one a picture of my father, by Mr. John Collier, and the other one of the present Lady Onslow, by Mr. Philip Laszlo. The picture by Collier is an extraordinary likeness. I remember when it came from the studio it was placed in the hall opposite the front door. I came in with my father's dog with whom I had been out for a walk. Opening the door the light fell full on the picture which was standing on the ground against a chair. The dog saw it, thought he saw his master and rushed up to it, and when he found out what it was he gave a howl of terror and slunk away trembling with fear.

There were at Clandon until 1828 a number of pictures of celebrities collected by Speaker Arthur Onslow in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately my great-uncle sold them. They were a sort of miniature National Portrait Gallery. One came up for sale the other day at Sotheby's. This was said to be by Faithorne from its resemblance to Faithorne's engraving of Milton published in 1670. It is said that Speaker Onslow bought this picture from the executors of the poet's widow. There was also in the collection a picture of Edward IV, but that has disappeared, and I do not know where it is, but I have an engraving which is interesting, as the portraits in England of pre-Tudor days are rare. Only one picture remains of the Speaker's Collection—a "Holbein" of Chaucer.

Unfortunately under my great-uncle's will his fine collection was sold. During a long life he had collected a large number of works of art, both pictures and sculpture. Only one deserves mention, namely Paul Delaroche's picture of Napoleon crossing the St. Bernard Pass. My great-uncle, who was born in 1777, was in Paris in 1806 after the Peace of Amiens. He was a great admirer of Napoleon. He saw the well-known picture of Napoleon by David and pointed out to Delaroche that it was a fantastic representation of the scene. He commissioned Delaroche to paint a more accurate picture. The artist visited the St. Bernard, found the guide and studied the geography

of the pass. The result was this picture, and the man leading Napoleon's mule is a portrait of the guide. The picture long hung at Clandon—it is now in the Town Hall at Liverpool.

Two other pictures from my great-uncle's collection remain—both strongly "Protestant." One is a propaganda picture of the debaucheries of the monks and nuns, and the other one of the "Candle of the Reformation." A candle stands on a table, surrounding it are the Protestant reformers in their flat caps and Geneva gowns, roaring with laughter at the vain efforts of a Pope, a Cardinal, a Friar and the Devil to blow out the "candle!"

There are some other pictures. Among them a painting by an unknown artist of the School of Snyder's of hounds hunting a boar—it was given to me by a French relative of mine, Madame Arthur Onslow of the Château d'Aulteribes in Auvergne, and another of Madame Edward Onslow of Aulteribes—Marie de Bourdeilles de Brantôme with her son. This is a pleasant picture of a very beautiful woman and dates from the end of the eighteenth century. Unfortunately the artist is unknown.

Hunting pictures are fairly numerous, both eighteenth and nineteenth century—one is of my grandfather, who was Master of the H.H., and his hounds. The others are of earlier date and doubtless represent well-known Surrey sportsmen. I wish we knew their history. There are numerous landscapes—one an Italian scene said to be by R. Wilson, R.A., and the usual copies of Renaissance pictures which one sees in so many country houses. I always wonder why it was our ancestors took so much trouble to acquire rather crude copies of Florentine pictures, but the trade still goes on, for the last time I was in Florence I saw numerous professional copyists busily engaged in reproducing the masterpieces of the Pitti and Uffizi Galleries.

I fear the whole collection is but a very ordinary one which has grown up haphazard during the last 200 or 300 years, and if it were not for the Russells and the sporting pictures would scarcely be worthy of note, but as our Editor has asked me for a few words on it I have done my best. I must, in conclusion, record my thanks to Mr. Sparrow, to the late Mr.

Avray Tipping, and to Dr. Williamson, for the information on the matter which I have culled from their published works, and to the Editor of *Country Life* for permission to use the blocks of the reproductions of the Russells and Gardners which illustrated the late Mr. Tipping's article.