

# NOTES ON BYFLEET MANOR AND THE MANOR HOUSE.

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IN 1905 Miss Frances J. Mitchell prepared a paper giving a very comprehensive history of the Manor House, Byfleet, and the various houses that had been erected on the same site in times past, and this was published in the *Surrey Archaeological Collections*,<sup>1</sup> Vol. XX. It is not intended, therefore, in these notes, to go over the same ground that she then so ably traversed, but to summarize those facts which can be definitely confirmed by documentary evidence, and to set out such further details and information as have since been ascertained.

It is probable that some building has existed on the site of the present house from very early times, as the surrounding lands were enclosed and formed the ancient park of Byfleet, part of which lay within the bounds of Windsor Forest. The river Wey, which runs through the middle of the park, was the easternmost boundary of the forest lands.<sup>2</sup>

In the reign of Henry III Geoffrey de Lucy possessed lands in Byfleet, holding them under the Abbot of Chertsey at half a knight's fee, as shown in a document dated 1242.<sup>3</sup> He also held (both in 1238<sup>4</sup> and in 1244<sup>5</sup>) a charter of market and fair at Weybridge. In 1267 his son, Geoffrey de Lucy, to whom the property had passed, impleaded John de Fraunceys and others because "without licence and will of the same

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 153-63. See also *Ibid.*, pp. 164-8, for notes on the architecture of the house.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Close 1296-1302, p. 394.

<sup>3</sup> Bk. of Fees, p. 687.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Rot. Chart. et Inq., p. 55.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Close 1242-1247, p. 235.

Geoffrey they entered the park and warren of the same Geoffrey of Byflete and bucks, does, pigs and horses in the same park found, took and led away and fled into the same warren and rabbits in the same took and carried away to the heavy damage of the same Geoffrey and against the peace.”<sup>1</sup> In 1279 this same Geoffrey claimed, before the King’s Justices at Guildford, his rights and privileges of the Manor of Byfleet, including assize of bread and beer and free fishery, and his claim was allowed.<sup>2</sup> At the time of his death in 1284 he was holding the manor of Byfleet with the hamlets of Bisley and Frogbury, including the advowsons of the churches of Byfleet and Bisley, a toll of brewers called “Le Schench,” a water mill, and perquisites of court of Byfleet, Weybridge, Bisley and Frogbury. These were held of the Abbot and Convent of Chertsey, by service of half a knight’s fee.<sup>3</sup> His son and heir, Geoffrey de Lucy, was seventeen years old when he inherited the property.<sup>4</sup>

A few years after he came into possession he let the manor for a period of six years to William de Monti Forti, dean of St. Paul’s, London, but in 1294, before the term elapsed, this tenant died, and Geoffrey wrongfully ejected the executors and reoccupied the manor. The executors commenced legal process for recovery, and a mandate was issued “to order the sheriffs concerned by letters under the Great Seal, to bring the executors or assigns in seisin and attach the said Geoffrey and his accomplices by their bodies, to answer before the King in the quinzaine of Hilary next.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1297 Geoffrey sold the manor to Henry de Leybourne,<sup>6</sup> but it would seem that he may have actually acquired the property in 1294, as a later document refers to the transfer having taken place at that date.<sup>7</sup> It is possible that Geoffrey took possession of the property on the death of de Monti Forti, as mentioned above, to enable him to effect a sale of it to de Leybourne at that time, but that, by reason of the

<sup>1</sup> Cur. Reg. R., 51 Hen. III, r. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Plac. de quo Warr., 743.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Inq. p.m., Edw. I, ii, pp. 313, 314.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Chanc. Warr., i, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Cal. Pat. 1292-1301, p. 300.

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Close 1327-1330, p. 292.

action which the executors brought against him, the actual sale may have been delayed until the later date, 1297.

In Bishop Stapleton's *Kalendar*, which he made in 1323, there is a reference to a charter by which Henry de Leybourne enfeoffed W. de Langeton, Bishop of Coventry, of the manor of Byfleet in 1276.<sup>1</sup> This would indicate that de Leybourne was in possession of the manor at that time, which is incomprehensible in face of the other documents referred to above, which give the owner as Geoffrey de Lucy in 1267 and 1279, and the transfer to Henry de Leybourne as not taking place until 1294 or 1297. The original document mentioned by Bishop Stapleton is no longer in existence, so it may never be possible to clear up this apparent inconsistency. It is, however, conceivable that there is an error in the *Kalendar*, and that the date should have been 1296 and not 1276.

There is an interesting record in the Close Rolls concerning this Henry de Leybourne. It appears that in 1302 he and six of his friends committed two serious offences. They were fighting in the King's army in Scotland, and not only did they leave the King's service without permission, but they came down to Byfleet and held jousts there without the necessary licence. An order was made to arrest them for these misdemeanours, as the King had lately caused the holding of tournaments, jousts and tilting to be forbidden throughout the country without the King's licence.<sup>2</sup> One can presume that de Leybourne, tired of the long-drawn-out Scottish campaign, invited his friends to come down with him to his manor at Byfleet, and there organized jousts for their entertainment, and quite probably these jousts were held on the wide stretch of grassland just outside the courtyard of the present house, which would be a likely and suitable place for a tilting-ground.

Henry de Leybourne held the manor until after 1300.<sup>3</sup> In 1305 it was in the possession of Philip de Wylughby,<sup>4</sup> probably rented by him from Henry de Leybourne, and then, for some reason which has not yet been ascertained, it passed to the

<sup>1</sup> Palgrave's *Antient Kalendars*, i, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Close 1302-1307, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Inq. p.m., i, p. 166.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196; iv, p. 182.

Crown, probably prior to 1308, as, in that year, the King granted to his favourite, Peter de Gaveston and his heirs, a charter "of free warren in all their demesne lands in Byfleet,"<sup>1</sup> which would lead one to presume that he had already been granted the manor itself previously. Moreover, the King himself was staying there in 1307, as there are records of documents being signed by him at Byfleet in that year.<sup>2</sup> The manor was certainly in the hands of the Crown in 1311, as in that year there is a "mandate to command the treasurer and chamberlains of the exchequer to pay £20 yearly to Desirre, late the wife of Geoffrey de Lucy, for her dower from the free tenement of her husband in Byfleet."<sup>3</sup>

In 1312 William de Rothynge was "bailiff of the King's Manor of Biflet," and was granted acquittance "for 15 marks of the issues of the manor, paid by him to the King."<sup>4</sup> He is also referred to as keeper of the manor in 1317-1318.<sup>5</sup> But the overlordship must have continued to be vested in Chertsey Abbey for some time after the manor became the King's property, as, in a rental of 1319, it is referred to as being held in chief of the Abbot of Chertsey by the service of half a knight's fee, and it is also there stated that before the manor came to the King, its lord did suit at the Abbot's Hundred Court of Godley, and that all the free tenants, and fifteen customary tenants, came to the view of frankpledge there.<sup>6</sup>

There must have been a house of some importance in existence in these early days, as Edward I seems to have stayed there, there being a record of a writ signed at Byfleet by him in 1274,<sup>7</sup> and he was also apparently in Byfleet in 1303,<sup>8</sup> as there appears a payment in January of that year for wine "for the King's household while at Byfleet."<sup>9</sup> Edward II was there frequently, many warrants, grants and orders which

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Chart. 1300-1326, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Pat. 1307-1313, pp. 29, 31, 46.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Chanc. Warr., i, p. 372.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Pat. 1307-1313, p. 487.

<sup>5</sup> Enr. Accts. Territorial (P.R.O.), E. 352/123.

<sup>6</sup> Rentals and Surv. (P.R.O.), Bdle. 623.

<sup>7</sup> *Chron. and Memls. of Gt. Britain and Ireland*, ii, p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> Itinerary of Edw. I (Index), Jan. 23 and 24, 1303.

<sup>9</sup> Wardrobe Accts., Bdle. 364, No. 13.



were signed by him being dated from Byfleet in 1307,<sup>1</sup> 1308,<sup>2</sup> 1318,<sup>3</sup> 1321,<sup>4</sup> 1324<sup>5</sup> and 1326.<sup>6</sup>

In 1315, Richard de Listeshull was appointed by the King Surveyor and Keeper of various lands, including the manor of Byfleet,<sup>7</sup> and in 1320 he was succeeded by Humphrey de Waleden, who was appointed steward of the manor of Byfleet, and also of a considerable number of other manors and castles in several counties.<sup>8</sup> This appointment was renewed in March 1324 in favour of Humphrey de Waleden and Richard de Ikene,<sup>9</sup> the latter being reappointed in August of the same year with Richard de Wynferthyng, in place of de Waleden.<sup>10</sup>

In 1327 Edward III assigned the manor of Byfleet, which was valued at £40 a year, together with other properties of a total yearly value of over £8,000, to his mother, Queen Isabella, as an increase to her dower for her services in connection with the treaty with France, and in suppressing the rebellion of the Despenchers and others.<sup>11</sup> But in the following year, 60 acres of land in Bisley, worth 20 shillings yearly, which formed part of the manor of Byfleet, were handed back to John Dardern and Agnes his wife, who were previously in occupation of this portion since 1318, but had been wrongfully ejected in 1324 by Thomas le Longe, who was bailiff of the manor at that time.<sup>12</sup>

Queen Isabella surrendered the manor shortly afterwards,

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pat. 1307-1313, pp. 29, 31, 46; Cal. Close 1307-1313, pp. 48, 49, 50; Cal. Chanc. Warr., i, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Pat. 1307-1313, pp. 93, 95, 137, 138, 139, 140, 143, 144, 146, 148, 165, 166, 167; Cal. Close 1307-1313, pp. 124, 125, 126; Cal. Chanc. Warr., i, pp. 279, 280; Cal. Chart., iii, p. 121; Cal. Fine 1307-1319, pp. 29, 30, 32.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Close 1313-1318, pp. 529, 531, 600, 606; Cal. Chanc. Warr., i, pp. 483, 485; Cal. Fine 1307-1319, pp. 354, 355.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Chanc. Warr., i, p. 524.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Pat. 1324-1327, pp. 30, 31, 33; Cal. Close 1323-1327, pp. 225, 227, 230, 315, 316; Cal. Supp. Close 1277-1326, p. 132; Cal. Fine 1319-1327, pp. 306, 307.

<sup>6</sup> Cal. Pat. 1324-1327, pp. 280, 283, 295, 297, 300, 310, 347, 348; Cal. Close 1323-1327, pp. 486, 487, 575, 585, 586, 587, 588, 632; Cal. Chanc. Warr., i, pp. 581, 582; Cal. Fine 1319-1327, pp. 395, 396, 403.

<sup>7</sup> Enr. Accts. Territorial (P.R.O.), E. 352/123.

<sup>8</sup> Cal. Fine 1319-1327, p. 20; Enr. Accts. Territorial (P.R.O.), E. 352/123.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Fine 1319-1327, p. 259.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295.

<sup>11</sup> Cal. Pat. 1327-1330, p. 69.

<sup>12</sup> Cal. Close 1327-1330, p. 292.

and in 1330 the King granted it to his brother, John of Eltham, Earl of Cornwall.<sup>1</sup> In 1331 this grant was supplemented by a further gift of "all corn whether sown or for seed, livery of servants, plough cattle and cart horses and all other goods which were in the manor at the time of its surrender to the King by Queen Isabella."<sup>2</sup>

At this time it had evidently become necessary to make certain alterations or repairs, as the Exchequer Accounts for 1330 and 1331 show expenses incurred in connection with works at Byfleet.<sup>3</sup>

In 1331 Richard de Bekenesfeld, for service to the late King and the King, was granted "the bailiwick of the reaper of the manor of Byfleet," which probably meant that he was appointed farm bailiff.<sup>4</sup>

In 1337, shortly after the death of the Earl of Cornwall, John de Chestre was granted the "custody of the park and warren of Biflete, with a robe worth a mark, or a mark every year, for his fee, and two pence daily for his wages out of the issues of the manor of Biflete: in fulfilment of a promise made to him by the King's brother, John, late earl of Cornwall, before his death."<sup>5</sup> As the Earl of Cornwall died without issue, the property at his death reverted to the Crown.

Later in the same year the manor and park and free warren were granted to the King's eldest son, Edward the Black Prince, on his receiving the title of Duke of Cornwall, to hold to him and his heirs, dukes of Cornwall.<sup>6</sup>

In the earlier years of the Black Prince's ownership of the manor, his father, Edward III, seems to have stayed there many times, as documents are dated from Byfleet in September,<sup>7</sup> November,<sup>8</sup> and throughout the whole of December<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pat. 1330-1334, p. 52; Cal. Chart., iv, p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Pat. 1330-1334, p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> Exch. Accts. Works. (P.R.O.), Bdle. 459, Nos. 13, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Pat. 1330-1334, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Pat. 1334-1338, p. 383.

<sup>6</sup> Cal. Chart. 1327-1341, p. 399.

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Close 1337-1339, p. 585.

<sup>8</sup> Cal. Close 1337-1339, pp. 572, 587, 592, 607, 608, 624; Cal. Fine 1337-1347, p. 107.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Close 1337-1339, pp. 568, 569, 571 to 591, 593 to 597, 601, 606, 608, 622, 623, 626, 627, 629; Cal. Fine 1337-1347, pp. 101, 107 to 112; Cal. Chart. 1327-1341, p. 460; Cal. Pat. 1338-1340, pp. 161, 163, 164, 169 to 173, 175, 183, 185 to 187.

1338; January,<sup>1</sup> February,<sup>2</sup> nearly all through March,<sup>3</sup> and in April<sup>4</sup> and September<sup>5</sup> 1339; in February<sup>6</sup> 1340, February<sup>7</sup> and March<sup>8</sup> 1343, May<sup>9</sup> 1345, and then also, after a long gap, in June<sup>10</sup> 1361, and July,<sup>11</sup> August<sup>12</sup> and September<sup>13</sup> 1375.

But although documents sealed with the Great Seal or the Privy Seal were dated from Byfleet, it must not be taken as conclusive proof that the King was there himself. In the time of Edward I and Edward II, it is probable that the seals were with the King during his journeys, and one can be fairly safe in assuming that, where a document is dated as from Byfleet during those reigns, the King was there in person, but during the reign of Edward III and subsequently, this was by no means invariably the case. For example, in 1338 there are several documents dated from Byfleet, but at the time the King was actually at Antwerp.<sup>14</sup>

The Black Prince held the manor continuously<sup>15</sup> until his death in 1376, and it would appear that he took very considerable interest in the place and made many additions and alterations to the house, as will be seen from the following extracts from Orders which he gave:

In January 1347 he issued a request to his cousin, the Earl of Surrey, "to aid the Prince with as much timber as he will . . . as the Prince has to build at his Manor of . . . Byflete,

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Close 1337-1339, p. 591.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Close 1339-1341, pp. 22, 23, 25 to 27, 100, 103 to 105; Cal. Fine 1337-1347, p. 119; Cal. Pat. 1338-1340, pp. 213, 278.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Close 1339-1341, pp. 16, 24 to 27, 31 to 35, 41, 55, 57, 58, 65, 92, 99, 101, 104, 105, 109, 110; Cal. Fine 1337-1347, pp. 123, 152; Cal. Pat. 1338-1340, pp. 208, 211, 212, 213, 216, 217, 219 to 225, 234, 237 to 239, 252, 257, 276, 277, 281.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Fine 1337-1347, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Pat. 1338-1340, p. 291.

<sup>6</sup> Cal. Close 1339-1341, p. 454; Cal. Pat. 1338-1340, p. 424.

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Close 1343-1346, pp. 15, 16, 21, 83, 88, 94, 95; Cal. Pat. 1343-1345, pp. 7, 11, 76.

<sup>8</sup> Cal. Close 1343-1346, p. 97; Cal. Pat. 1343-1345, p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Close 1343-1346, p. 581; Cal. Pat. 1343-1345, p. 478.

<sup>10</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, p. 168.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161, 239.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 408.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 162, 238.

<sup>14</sup> Cal. Pat. 1338-1340, p. 197, etc.

<sup>15</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, p. 194; Cal. Close 1343-1346, pp. 564, 669; Enr. Accts. Territorial (P.R.O.), F.1, Ric. II, B.

a kitchen and other houses, and is not provided with as much timber as he needs." As an inducement to have his request granted, he quaintly adds, "If the Earl wishes the help of the Prince's slight influence with the King, he is to let him know."<sup>1</sup>

In April 1347 there is an order to William Bynorth, bailiff of Byflete, "to repair the Kitchen in the said Manor and the other defects there . . . out of the moneys arising from the issues of the Manor by survey of Sir Richard, parson of the church of Byflete."<sup>2</sup> The Sir Richard mentioned there was Richard de Kerselow, who apparently occupied the position of Clerk of the Works, as well as carrying out his duties as Parish Priest. He was Rector of Byfleet from 1318 to 1360.<sup>3</sup>

Then in August 1347 there is an order to the reeve of the Manor of Risbergh (which Manor also belonged to the Black Prince) to pay £8 to the same William Bynorth "as the Prince has to new-make a Kitchen at his Manor of Byfleet, and divers other repairs must be done there, for which the issues of the Manor do not suffice."<sup>4</sup>

In October 1347 there was another order to William Bynorth "to pay to Benet Dyker, in the presence of . . . Sir Richard, parson of the church of Byflet, Controller of the Works there, what is due to him for making the foundation of the Prince's Kitchen at Byflet, according to his agreement."<sup>5</sup>

In March 1351 the Prince appointed Richard le Carpenter, William Pollo and John de Chestre "to take carriage for transport of the timber which the Prince has in divers places for the repair of his houses in the Manor of Biflete."<sup>6</sup>

In February 1352 he gives an order for discharge of an account which he had against William de Pollowe "because of the burning of a house in Byfleet called "la bouverie" and the plough-horse, wools, skins and other things which were burnt therein."<sup>7</sup>

In June 1352 he issues orders to William de Frammesworth, Keeper of the King's stud at Gildeford, Robert de Danhurst,

<sup>1</sup> *Black Prince's Reg.*, i, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Pat. 1317-1321, p. 102; *Black Prince's Reg.*, iv, p. 361.

<sup>4</sup> *Black Prince's Reg.*, i, p. 117.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

the Queen's averner, and to John de Colneye, Keeper of the King's carts and sumpter-horses—"inasmuch as the prince and his brother, the earl of Richmond, plan to stay a great deal at the manor of Biflete, and when he is absent his household will be there"—to prevent the taking of "victuals or other things to the disservice of the prince his brother and his household." <sup>1</sup>

In October 1357 he pardons several persons for "setting fire to the heath pertaining to the prince's manor of Biflete." <sup>2</sup>

In February 1361 there is an order "to William Bynorth, bailiff of the prince's manor of Biflete—on information that the enclosure of the prince's park of Biflete is very ruinous and greatly needs repair—to cause the necessary repairs of the enclosure to be carried out." <sup>3</sup>

In July 1362 he orders "the defects of the houses and other conveniences of the manor to be repaired . . . as the Prince has decided to stay there for a time," <sup>4</sup> and in July 1363 "the most serious defects of the houses of the manor, and of the mills, stanks and waryngs there, as well as the enclosure of the prince's park, to be repaired." <sup>5</sup>

These orders, referred to above, together with many other orders that the Black Prince made from time to time, give a good insight into the interest which he took in Byfleet during his occupation of the manor, and provide much information as to appointments, grants and other matters.

Among these records appears a gift to Sir Baldwin de Buttourt by the Prince of a destrier called Morel de Coloign,<sup>6</sup> and again in 1347 a gift of a black destrier, called Morel Sterre, to Miles de Stapelton,<sup>7</sup> both out of his stables at Byfleet. It is also recorded that £4 13s. 4d. was refunded to Sir William de Dalton who, on May 15th, 1346, lent the money to the Prince for play when he was with the King.<sup>8</sup>

In 1346 William Bynorth was bailiff of the manor,<sup>9</sup> and he appears to have continued until 1352, when William de Pollo was appointed,<sup>10</sup> he in turn being succeeded the following year by John Hardwyne,<sup>11</sup> who held the position until 1355.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Black Prince's Reg.*, i, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 376.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 459.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, p. 68.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, i, p. 17.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 83, 148.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

Following him, William Bynorth was again appointed bailiff,<sup>1</sup> continuing until some time after 1364.<sup>2</sup>

In 1352 John de Alveton was steward of the manor.<sup>3</sup> In the same year Simon, son of Simon de Biflete, and William de Cranford of Cleware were appointed Keepers of the prince's swans "in the water of Thamise and elsewhere in the streams adjacent thereto."<sup>4</sup> In 1357 this post was held by Nicholas de Medeford and Simon de Biflete<sup>5</sup> who again appear in the same capacity in 1358<sup>6</sup> and 1359.<sup>7</sup>

William de Seint Omer appears as Surveyor of the game in Biflete park in 1361<sup>8</sup> and 1362.<sup>9</sup>

John de Cestre was still parker in 1362,<sup>10</sup> Thomas Gerveis was steward in 1363,<sup>11</sup> while in 1365 John Allissaundre was appointed steward.<sup>12</sup>

In 1372 the Prince's butler, Thomas Tyle, was granted the office of parker of Biflete park with 2*d.* daily wages,<sup>13</sup> which grant he held until 1387,<sup>14</sup> and in 1376 he was granted £10 yearly out of the issues of the manor.<sup>15</sup>

During his occupation of the manor, the Black Prince also owned the patronage of the living, and he appointed several Rectors of Byfleet during the period.<sup>16</sup>

In 1375, the year before his death, he seems to have stayed at Byfleet for some time, as documents were signed by him there in July, August and September of that year.<sup>17</sup> On his death, the manor passed to his young son, Richard, who confirmed grants to, and appointments of, old retainers of his father at Byfleet. Among these was a grant to Walter Payn of 2*d.* a day out of the issues of the manor which he had been receiving for the past thirteen years,<sup>18</sup> and a grant to Thomas Tyle referred to above.<sup>19</sup> The latter in 1379 was also appointed Keeper of the lands of the manor and was given a tenement

<sup>1</sup> *Black Prince's Reg.*, iv, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 527.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 333.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 376.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 416.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 473.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 491.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 550.

<sup>13</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, pp. 216, 236.

<sup>14</sup> Cal. Pat. 1385-1389, p. 276.

<sup>15</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, p. 236.

<sup>16</sup> *Black Prince's Reg.*, iv, pp. 361, 393, 526.

<sup>17</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, pp. 161, 162, 172, 238, 239, 408; Cal. Pat. 1399-1401, p. 153.

<sup>18</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, p. 194.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.

called "Swiftlake," together with certain perquisites, including timber for "housbote" and "haibote,"<sup>1</sup> which he appears to have retained until his death, about 1390.<sup>2</sup> He also made a grant to Cok Ferour, an old retainer of his father, of 10 marks yearly for life from the manor of Byfleet.

These grants were confirmed when Richard became King in 1377,<sup>3</sup> and also in 1378 and 1380.<sup>4</sup>

In 1377 Thomas Illeston was appointed steward of Byfleet.<sup>5</sup>

In Richard II's time, much work seems to have been carried on, but as to whether it was only in the nature of repairs, or an entire rebuilding of the house, it is difficult to decide. There are a great number of documents in existence, referring to works at Byfleet at that time, and appointments of controllers, clerks of the works, etc.

In April 1378, John Blake was appointed clerk of the works to the manor of Byfleet and other places, "with power to take stone-masons, carpenters and other labourers therefor, to punish the refractory and to enquire touching the removal of necessary stone, timber and tiles, and cause the same to be restored, with 18*d.* daily wages,"<sup>6</sup> and in August of the same year, Hugh Swayne was made his deputy.<sup>7</sup>

In 1380, William atte Noke was bailiff of the manor,<sup>8</sup> and in the following year a writ of aid was issued to him and others "to cut and sell a portion of the underwood in the King's park of Biflete to the value of 20 marks and deliver the proceeds to John Blake, clerk of the works," to assist in defraying the expense of works in certain of the King's manors.<sup>9</sup>

A few months later, Arnald Brocas was appointed clerk of the works in place of John Blake,<sup>10</sup> with Hugh Swayne as his deputy,<sup>11</sup> and at the same time William de Hannay was appointed to keep the accounts in connection with the works which were being carried out at Byfleet and elsewhere, receiving 18*d.* wages daily.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Fine 1377-1383, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Pat. 1388-1392, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, pp. 194, 225, 216, 236.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Close 1377-1381, p. 400.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>8</sup> Memoranda Roll, 4 Ric. II, Rot. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Pat. 1377-1381, p. 614.

<sup>10</sup> Cal. Pat. 1381-1385, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

In 1387, Robert Hertele was made controller of the monies expended on the works of renewing the fence of Byfleet park,<sup>1</sup> and Thomas Tyle was appointed to carry out the work.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year Thomas de Walton was granted the office of parker of Byfleet park with 2*d.* a day for wages, in place of Thomas Tyle,<sup>3</sup> and this grant was confirmed in 1399<sup>4</sup> when Henry IV came to the throne. The following year, 1388, Roger Elmham was appointed clerk of the works,<sup>5</sup> with Hugh Swayne as his deputy,<sup>6</sup> and William de Hannay as his controller "in respect of all the purchases, expenses and payment of wages of workmen and other outlay upon the works ordered at the manor(s) of . . . Byflet . . . the gardens, vines, mill pools and fences of the said park(s) . . . belonging to the premises, and also to survey and control all sales of branches, bark and other remnants from trees provided for the said works"; receiving from the clerk of the works 12*d.* a day for his wages.<sup>7</sup>

In the next year, 1389, there appears the appointment of Geoffrey Chaucer (the poet) as clerk of the works (presumably as successor to Roger Elmham) in charge of operations at Byfleet and other manors,<sup>8</sup> and there is also an interesting document of about the same date signed by him in this capacity, relating to these works at Byfleet and elsewhere. This document is displayed in the Museum at the Public Record Office.<sup>9</sup> At the same time that he was made clerk of the works, Geoffrey Chaucer deputed Hugh Swayne to be Surveyor under him,<sup>10</sup> a post which he was apparently still holding in 1391.<sup>11</sup>

In 1389 the manor and park of Byfleet was granted for two years to the Earl of Northumberland, for his abode, without paying rent.<sup>12</sup>

In the following year a grant was made to Sir Peter de Courtenay, Constable of Windsor Castle, appointing him for life keeper of the King's manor of Byfleet and the park and

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pat. 1385-1389, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Pat. 1399-1401, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Pat. 1385-1389, p. 379.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 379.

<sup>8</sup> Cal. Pat. 1388-1392, p. 82.

<sup>9</sup> P.R.O. Museum, Ped. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Cal. Pat. 1388-1392, p. 86.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 463.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 477.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.



venison there,<sup>1</sup> and he was also deputed to repair the lodges, stanks, bridges and fences of Byfleet and other manors.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year (1390) a grant for life was made to John Maudeleyn, yeoman of the wardrobe, of the demesne lands, meadow and pasture of the manor of Byfleet, with a tenement called "Switlake," which had previously been in the occupation of Thomas Tyle (see *supra*) at a yearly rental of £10,<sup>3</sup> and furthermore, the grant of £10 a year which Thomas Tyle used to receive was, on his death, transferred to Maudeleyn, so that he held the premises, in effect, rent free.<sup>4</sup>

In the following year both these grants were extended to also include his wife, Alice.<sup>5</sup>

In 1391 the manor was granted to the Treasurer, John, Bishop of Salisbury, for a period of ten years "for his easement and abode whenever he chooses to go thither."<sup>6</sup>

He does not seem, however, to have held it long as, in 1393, a grant for life, without rent, of the manor and park of Byfleet was made to the King's kinsman, William, Duke of Gueldres, son of the Duke of Juliers, who had become the King's vassal and done homage.<sup>7</sup>

After holding it for about six years, the Duke granted the manor and park to Roger Walden, Dean of York and Treasurer of England, and John Walden his brother, for their lives, conditionally on his being allowed to lodge there with his household whenever he should come there.<sup>8</sup> Round about this period, extensive repairs or alterations to the house seem to have been in progress, as the following appointments would indicate.

In 1396 John Bernard was appointed clerk of the works,<sup>9</sup> followed in the next year by Master William Bulcote,<sup>10</sup> with the King's Esquire, John Draper, as controller.<sup>11</sup> The latter was succeeded as controller in 1398 by John Saperton,<sup>12</sup> and in the same year William Dionys was appointed clerk of the works.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pat. 1388-1392, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 398.

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Pat. 1391-1396, p. 315.

<sup>8</sup> Cal. Pat. 1401-1405, p. 30.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 256, 323.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 467.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Pat. 1396-1399, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 345.

On the deposition of Richard II, all his existing grants and appointments were cancelled. In 1400, the new King, Henry IV, granted the manor and park to his young son, Henry, as hereditary Duke of Cornwall,<sup>1</sup> and some of the old appointments were now confirmed, including that of William Dionys as clerk of the works.<sup>2</sup>

In 1401, Peter Stonherst was bailiff of the manor.<sup>3</sup>

Very shortly after Roger and John Walden acquired the property, they surrendered it for £100 to Sir Francis Court and Joan his wife. Both these transfers of property were effected without the King's licence, but these offences were pardoned and in 1401 Sir Francis and his wife received from the King confirmation of the grant to hold the manor and park (which was valued at £30) for life, together with fees, liberties, warrens, etc., and also the advowson of the church, which had, since about 1307, belonged to the Crown.<sup>4</sup> During their tenure, Sir Francis and his wife presented two rectors to the living of Byfleet, John Gamelyn in 1402<sup>5</sup> and John Colet in 1404.<sup>6</sup> But towards the end of that year they apparently ceased to possess the property, as in November 1404 another rector was appointed, but this time on the presentation of the King,<sup>7</sup> since when the patronage of the living has remained in the gift of the Crown to the present day.

More repairs seem to have been carried out about this time. In 1404 John Sapurton was again appointed controller<sup>8</sup> and Henry Nerston was made clerk of the works.<sup>9</sup> In 1411 a commission was issued to John Herteshorne, serjeant-at-arms, and William Balne, to take stone-cutters, carpenters and other workmen and labourers for the repair of the manor,<sup>10</sup> and a similar commission was issued to the same two individuals in 1413.<sup>11</sup>

In 1409 Richard Parker, yeoman of the Kitchen to the

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fædera*, viii, 93.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Pat. 1399-1401, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Memoranda Roll, 2 Hen. IV, Rot. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Pat. 1401-1405, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> Wykeham's Reg. 1366-1404, i, p. 238.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>7</sup> Archbishop's Registers, Arundell, 1397-1414, i, p. 215.

<sup>8</sup> Cal. Pat. 1401-1405, p. 351.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Pat. 1401-1405, p. 476.

<sup>10</sup> Cal. Pat. 1408-1413, pp. 269, 315.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 478.

Prince of Wales, was granted, in reward for good service, the office of parker of the park of Byfleet for life in place of Thomas Shank who had previously held the position,<sup>1</sup> and in 1414, shortly after the Prince had succeeded to the throne as Henry V, Parker was granted in addition 5 marks yearly out of the issues of Byfleet manor.<sup>2</sup> Both these grants were subsequently confirmed by Henry VI when he became king.<sup>3</sup>

Only a fortnight after the accession of Henry V, the King appointed John Straunge clerk of the works,<sup>4</sup> and in the same year John Skipton was appointed surveyor,<sup>5</sup> and John Hertishorne was granted the office of controller of the works being carried out at Byfleet,<sup>6</sup> but a few months later this latter grant was extended to include all the King's works within the realm, and his wages were increased to 12*d.* daily.<sup>7</sup>

In 1418 John Clypsam was appointed steward of the manor.<sup>8</sup>

The records relating to the manor during the reign of Henry VI which have so far come to light are meagre.

In addition to the confirmation of the grant to Richard Parker, referred to above, there appears a grant in 1430 to Thomas Haseley of the office of steward and surveyor of Byfleet manor.<sup>9</sup>

In 1434 John Penycok, who was King's Serjeant and Yeoman of the King's robes, was appointed collector and approver of all the rents and profits of the manor,<sup>10</sup> and in 1436 he was also granted, in conjunction with the King's Serjeant, Richard Parker (presumably the individual previously mentioned), "the keeping of the park of Byflete."<sup>11</sup> In the following year this same John Penycok, who is now referred to as one of the yeomen of the Crown, was granted for life "the keeping of the lordship, manor and herbage of the park of Byflete, and of the conies thereto belonging within and without, with other appurtenances in Byflete, Waybrigge" and other manors belonging to the duchy of Cornwall, for which he was called upon to pay £10 a year, and was also obliged to keep up the premises.<sup>12</sup>

In 1438 a further grant for life was made to him and Joan

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pat. 1422-1429, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Pat. 1413-1416, p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> Cal. Pat. 1422-1429, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Pat. 1413-1416, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>8</sup> Cal. Pat. 1416-1422, p. 172.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Pat. 1429-1436, p. 80.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 443.

<sup>11</sup> Cal. Pat. 1436-1441, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

his wife of a pipe of Gascon wine yearly in the port of London at Christmas, and in addition to his other emoluments which are enumerated as "6*d.* a day for his fee of the Crown, the office of parker of Epechylde in Essex and the keeping of the manor there, with wages of 3*d.* a day, a joint tenancy of the park of Byflete, with wages of 2*d.* a day, £15 a year out of the lordship of Walton-on-Thames, and the office of searcher of nets upon the river Thames between the bridge of Stanes and the town of Circestre." <sup>1</sup>

These details are also recited in a confirmatory grant three months later,<sup>2</sup> and again in a further confirmatory grant twelve months afterwards.<sup>3</sup>

In 1440 there was granted to the King's Serjeant, William Clarence, maimed in the service of the King's father in France, 10 marks a year out of the issues of the manor, to continue until he be provided for in other ways, this grant being by way of compensation to him for the loss of the office of warrener of Sutton and Potton, of which the King had otherwise disposed.<sup>4</sup>

In 1442 there appears a "grant in survivorship to Richard Parker and John Penycok, yeoman of the crown and robes, of the office of parker of the park of Byflete, with the keeping of the warren there," with the usual wages, fees and profits, together with 5 marks yearly out of the issues and profits of the manor.<sup>5</sup>

On the same date there is a grant for life to "Thomas Scargill, yeoman of the crown, of the keeping of the lordship, manor and herbage of the park of Byflete and of the conies within the same and without, with any other appurtenances within the parishes of Biflete, Waibrigge, Effyngnam and Bisseley . . . with all rents and profits thereto belonging," paying to the duchy of Cornwall £10 a year and keeping up the repairs. But this grant was only to take effect after the death of John Penycok who was still in possession.<sup>6</sup>

In 1447 £64 7*s.* 4*d.* was paid out of the Exchequer to John Penycok "for repairs done in Byflet park and to a certain bridge within the said park ; also for repairing a certain lodge

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pat. 1436-1441, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 376.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 388.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Pat. 1441-1446, p. 57.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

there to keep rabbits within the said park.”<sup>1</sup> The bridge referred to is probably the one shown in Norden’s plan of the park in 1607, which is near the house and not the main Byfleet bridge on the highway, as that was outside the bounds of the park.

In 1456 a grant of 100s. yearly out of the issues of the manor was made to the King’s Serjeant, William Clarence, to take the place of a similar grant made to him four years previously which was annulled by Parliament.<sup>2</sup>

In 1460 the John Penycok before mentioned was granted a pardon for, presumably, certain treasonable offences, and his property and appointments were restored to him, which had been previously forfeited at the time when the offences were committed.<sup>3</sup>

King Henry was deposed in 1461 by Edward IV, and fresh grants and appointments by the new King were now made. It would also seem that he visited Byfleet, as a document dated from there was signed by him a few weeks after his accession.<sup>4</sup>

In the first year of his reign an Act of Parliament was passed forfeiting the lands and rights of those who had fought against him in support of the late king. Amongst those who were attainted of high treason appears the name of John Penycok who, with others, aided the Frenchmen and Scots in battle at Tawtonfield, near York, on March 29, 1461. The office of keeper of the manor and park of Byfleet therefore passed out of his hands.<sup>5</sup>

In the same year a grant for life was made to the King’s servitor, William Pault, of the custody of the King’s park of Byfleet and his warren there, with the accustomed fees from the issues of the manor,<sup>6</sup> and this grant was confirmed the following year.<sup>7</sup>

From now onwards, until Henry VIII came to the throne, there seems to be scanty reference to Byfleet in the records. In 1485 when Henry VII became King, a grant for life was made to Sir Thomas Boughchier of the office of keeper of the

<sup>1</sup> Issues of the Exch., Hen. III to Hen. VI, Devon, p. 458.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Pat. 1452-1461, p. 293.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 629.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Pat. 1461-1467, p. 310.

<sup>5</sup> Act of Parl., 1 Edw. IV; Cal. Pat. 1461-1467, p. 484.

<sup>6</sup> Cal. Pat. 1461-1467, p. 127.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

park,<sup>1</sup> and a few years later (1512) John Stoughton appears to have been bailiff of the manor.<sup>2</sup>

During this period the manor continued to be held as part of the duchy of Cornwall by the eldest sons of the reigning sovereigns until 1540, when it was attached to Hampton Court, which had been newly constituted as an honour by Henry VIII.<sup>3</sup>

In 1513, John Wheler was appointed keeper of the park for life as a reward for his services to the Queen.<sup>4</sup> He surrendered this position in 1527, and the office was then granted to Sir William Fitzwilliam and his half brother, Sir Anthony Browne, jointly.<sup>5</sup>

Among the Privy Purse expenses in 1529 there appears an item of 6s. 8d. paid as a reward to the keeper of Byfleet park,<sup>6</sup> and there is a similar payment in 1531.<sup>7</sup>

There is a tradition, and it has been so stated by many of the historians, that Henry VIII spent much of his early childhood here, but there does not appear to be any documentary proof of this. He certainly visited Byfleet occasionally and possibly stayed at the house which was on this site at that time. There is a letter written in September 1546 by Sir Philip Draycot to the Earl of Shrewsbury, in which he says: "The King went to Oatlands where was great killing of stags . . . in the meadow under Chertsey. On Thursday last the King hunted at Byfleet. From Oatlands he goes to Chobham or Woking, and thence to Guildford and to Windsor, staying at each place about four days.<sup>8</sup> It seems probable that he only visited Byfleet and did not stay there, on this occasion.

It is questionable whether the house then was the same as that which existed in Richard II's time, or whether it had been rebuilt at some intermediate period. It is quite probable that the house was rebuilt during Henry VIII's reign by Sir Anthony Browne. He certainly built some house in Byfleet, as a portrait of him which hung in Hengrave Hall, Suffolk, and of which there is a copy in the British Museum, bears at

<sup>1</sup> *Materials for a History of the reign of Henry VII*, i, p. 50 (Campbell).

<sup>2</sup> Cal. S.P. (L. & P. Hen. VIII), i, Pt. 1, p. 820.

<sup>3</sup> Stat. 31 Hen. VIII, Cap. 5.

<sup>4</sup> L. & P. Hen. VIII, i, p. 731.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, v, p. 751.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 753.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, p. 1506.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi, Pt. 2, p. 10.

the foot of it an inscription stating that "He died at Byflet House by him builded."<sup>1</sup> But there is a local tradition that Sir Anthony Browne's house was on a site near Plough Bridge about half a mile distant. On the other hand, there are letters written by him dated from "Byflet Lodge"<sup>2</sup> which is probably the house on the site of the present Manor House. It is possible, however, that Sir Anthony Browne, although he might have lived here for a time, especially as he was appointed keeper of Byfleet Park,<sup>3</sup> may have built another house "Byflet House," some distance away, and that it was that other house at which he died.

In 1539 Newark Priory, about three miles distant, was granted to Sir Anthony Browne,<sup>4</sup> and he was apparently instrumental in the demolition of most of it, and probably used the stones and other materials in the building of houses elsewhere. Considerable quantities of stone, both scattered and in heaps, have been found in the Manor House garden, some of it of a distinctly ecclesiastical type, and there is a tradition that this stone was brought here by water, down the river Wey which runs past Newark Priory. This would lend colour to the theory that the house was rebuilt by Sir Anthony Browne, and the materials of the old Newark Priory utilized in the making of it.

From existing letters, it would appear that Sir Anthony Browne was living in Byfleet at "Byfflet Lodge" in 1534.<sup>5</sup> He was appointed Master of the Horse to Henry VIII in 1539, and was continued by Edward VI in the same office<sup>6</sup> until his death in 1548. He was also Chief Standard Bearer of England, Lieutenant of the Forest of Windsor, a member of the Privy Council, and a Knight Companion of the Order of the Garter. He first married Dame Alice, daughter of Sir John Gage, by whom he had seven sons and three daughters, his second wife being Lady Elizabeth Garret, daughter of the Earl of Kildare, and afterwards Countess of Lincoln, by whom he had two sons, both of whom died in infancy.<sup>7</sup> His first

<sup>1</sup> Manning and Bray, Ex. Illus. Ed. (B.M.).

<sup>2</sup> L. & P. Hen. VIII, vii, p. 464; xi, p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, p. 1506.

<sup>4</sup> S.A.C., Vol. XL, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> L. & P. Hen. VIII, vii, p. 1198.

<sup>6</sup> Haydn's *Book of Dignities*, p. 208.

<sup>7</sup> Manning and Bray, Ex. Illus. Ed. (B.M.).

wife's mother seems to have stayed with him frequently at his house at Byfleet.<sup>1</sup>

Catherine of Arragon was in possession of the manor for a time, as it was granted to her in 1533, just after her divorce,<sup>2</sup> and it is possible that she may have visited there. Catherine Parr also seems to have stayed there, as amongst the Queen's payments in 1544 appears the item "Mr. Marmaduke Nevell, with 4 yeomen, 2 grooms, and 1 page . . . preparing for the Queen's coming to Byflete, 29 Aug., 7s. 4d." <sup>3</sup> and there is also another item of 3s. paid to Edward Fox for riding to London from Byfleet with "the Queen's clocks to be amended." <sup>4</sup> In 1547 the royal expenses include an item in "Robert Chylldern byll" of 9d. for a "new bolt in plate with staples tinned set on at Beefflete." <sup>5</sup>

Queen Elizabeth used to visit Byfleet for stag hunting,<sup>6</sup> and she probably stayed in the house, as in a letter from the Earl of Lincoln to Sir William More in 1576, it states "that the quenes maiestie doothe remove uppon Mondaye nexte to Byflett and will tarrye tues-daye all daye and on wens-daye to youre house at Loseley, but howe long her hyghnes will tarrye there I can not yet learne." <sup>7</sup>

Among the Loseley manuscripts there is a letter written by the Earl of Lyncoln to Sir William More in 1581 in which he refers to "the misconduct of certain persons who have hunted unlawfully in the Queen's park of Beflett." <sup>8</sup> And in another letter which he wrote a few months later to Thomas Leyfeld, he begged that the latter would "award proper punishment to the persons who have unlawfully hunted in Beefflet Park." <sup>9</sup>

There is also a letter dated 1591 from Robert, Earl of Leicester, to Sir William More and Thomas Lyefeld, requiring the examination of one Nycholas Wodde of Cobham as to his disorderly hunting and killing of conies and deer in Byfleet Park.<sup>10</sup>

In 1604, shortly after James I came to the throne, a grant was made to Sir Edward Howard, one of the King's cupbearers,

<sup>1</sup> L. & P. Hen. VIII, xvii, pp. 976, 1028.

<sup>2</sup> State of the Realm, III, 485.

<sup>3</sup> L. & P. Hen. VIII, xix, p. 405.

<sup>5</sup> L. & P. Hen. VIII, xxi, p. 404.

<sup>6</sup> Hist. MSS. Com. Rep. VII, App. 1, 629.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, App. 1, 636.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 405.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 649.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 637.



of the keeping of the park for life,<sup>1</sup> and in 1606, Charles Howard was appointed warden of the park.<sup>2</sup>

In 1607, a survey of the park was made by Norden, who describes it as containing 380 acres, and with a circumference of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles. He also prepared a detailed plan which shows the house in the centre, called "The Lodge" and five gates to the park "Townegate," "Smythes Gate or Bridge Gate," "Cobham Gate," "Guildford Gate" and "Church Gate."<sup>3</sup>

In 1608 a further grant was made to Sir Edward Howard of the office of steward of Byfleet and other places for life in reversion after the Earl of Nottingham, who was presumably holding the position at that time.<sup>4</sup>

In 1610 the manor of Byfleet was granted to the King's eldest son, Henry, Prince of Wales,<sup>5</sup> but he only held it for two years, as he died in 1612.

In 1613 a grant was made to Sir Charles Howard in reversion after Sir Edward Howard, his brother, of the office of keeper of Byfleet Park.<sup>6</sup>

In 1616, the Queen Consort, Anne of Denmark, was granted a lease for 80 years of the manor and park,<sup>7</sup> and a year later the reversion of the manor and park after her death was granted to Sir Francis Bacon, Sir James Fullarton and others in trust for Charles, Prince of Wales, for a term of 99 years.<sup>8</sup> Anne was very extravagant, especially in her latter years, and was continually spending money on repairs and building.

She commenced considerable building operations on her Byfleet property very shortly after she acquired it, as in 1617 a warrant was issued to pay out of the Exchequer £250 "for the reparations to be done in and about the lodge and parke of Byfleete . . . for the providing of timber and other necessities for the reparations aforesaid."<sup>9</sup> It also appears that she renewed or repaired the park paling, as in a letter which

<sup>1</sup> Cal. S.P. Dom. 1603-1610, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Palmer's Indexes, cx, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Harl. MS. 3749, fo. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. S.P. Dom. 1603-1610, p. 422.

<sup>5</sup> Palmer's Indexes, xviii, pp. 343, 344.

<sup>6</sup> Cal. S.P. Dom. 1580-1625, p. 535; Cal. S.P. Dom. 1611-1618, p. 202.

<sup>7</sup> Pat. 13 Jas. I, Pt. xxix, m. 10.

<sup>8</sup> Pat. 14 Jas. I, Pt. xx, No. 2; Exch. L.T.R., Orig. R., 14 Jas. I, Pt. iv, Rot. 126.

<sup>9</sup> Sign Manual viii, No. 54.

she wrote to Sir George Villiers in 1616, she says: "I thank you for your paines taken in remembering the King for the pailing of me Parke."<sup>1</sup>

Aubrey, in his *History of Surrey*, referring to Byfleet, wrote as follows:

The old Manor House, beat down, as they say, when Newark Abbey was, stood between the house and the mill of the Earl of St. Albans, where is a noble house of brick begun by Queen Anne, who lived not to finish it; but this was done by Sir James Fullarton. The length is 60 yards and breadth almost as much.<sup>2</sup>

Nearly all the subsequent historians have quoted this comment of Aubrey's as to Queen Anne of Denmark beginning to build "a noble house of brick," but there do not appear to be any documents referring to this, or any authoritative evidence to bear out this statement, which would seem in all probability to be incorrect.

Evelyn, in his *Diary*, mentions that in 1678 he went to "my Lord St. Alban's house at Byfleet, an old large building,"<sup>3</sup> and in 1686 there is a reference to "a great old messuage or house called Byfleet House, which is in so much decay that the revenue of the Park will not be sufficient to maintain the same."<sup>4</sup>

In both these cases, the building is referred to as old, and in one case as in very bad repair, and it does not seem likely, if the house had been rebuilt in 1617 or shortly after, that it would have been referred to as old and in such bad repair only sixty or seventy years later, although this possibility cannot altogether be ruled out, as, during the troublous times of the Commonwealth, many properties fell into a sad state of ruin and disrepair.

Aubrey is, it would seem, an unreliable authority, so far as Byfleet is concerned, and one is forced to the conclusion that he never visited the place himself, but wrote what he did from hearsay. He was incorrect in many points, and it is probable that he was incorrect in his statement as to the "noble house of brick."

<sup>1</sup> *The Progresses of King James the First*, iii, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> Aubrey, *Nat. Hist. and Antiq. of Surrey*, iii, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> Evelyn's *Diary*, 24th August, 1678.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. S.P. Treas. Bks. 1685-1689, p. 576.

In Aubrey's comments on Byfleet, he states :

By the wharf is a house called Dorney House, where King Henry VIII was nursed.

He has confused this with Weybridge, as Dorney House is in Weybridge, and near what used to be a wharf which is frequently referred to in old documents.

He also says, referring to Byfleet :

My Lord High Marshall, the Duke of Norfolk, has a pretty seat here and garden.

Here again, he has confused Weybridge with Byfleet, as the Duke of Norfolk's house was in Weybridge—Ham House in Portmore Park.<sup>1</sup>

There are other instances of incorrect statements made by Aubrey, which have been repeated time after time by later historians.

Anne of Denmark spent considerable sums of money on her palace at Oatlands, under the supervision of Inigo Jones, whom she appointed as her architect,<sup>2</sup> and it is possible that Aubrey erroneously attributed to Byfleet expenditure that, in fact, referred to Oatlands, or he may have confused it with the Queen's House at Greenwich, which was designed by Inigo Jones. This was begun by Anne of Denmark in 1617, but was not finished until 1635 by Queen Henrietta Maria.<sup>3</sup>

Then again, the only specific reference to a grant of any size for repairs at Byfleet would seem to be the one previously mentioned, of £250 in 1617. This amount, although sufficient for considerable repairs, would scarcely have been enough for the erection of a great messuage, or a large building, as referred to by Evelyn.

Anne of Denmark, in all probability, built the beautiful stone gateway and the courtyard walls, and was also probably responsible for the panelling which is now in the hall and several of the rooms of the present house.

Some years ago portions of old foundations were unearthed in the garden on the south side of the house. It has been thought that these might have formed part of the "noble house of brick," which according to Aubrey, was begun by

<sup>1</sup> *The Author's Thames*, by Gordon Maxwell, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

Queen Anne and finished by Fullarton, but it would seem more probable that they are the foundations of the earlier house, which may have been built in Henry VIII's time, or even those of the building which existed in the time of Richard II.

In 1618, a survey of the park was made with a view to ascertaining the profit derived by Sir Edward Howard in his capacity of keeper, setting out the annual value of the different portions of land and the income received from the horses and cattle pastured there.<sup>1</sup>

In 1647 Thomas, Earl of Elgin, was keeper of "his majesty's Park of Byfleete, receiving a fee of 8*d.* a day."<sup>2</sup>

Until 1650 the property had always been held under the primary ownership of the Crown, but during the Commonwealth it was sold, in 1653, to Thomas Hammond, who bought it from the Trustees appointed by Act of Parliament, for £3,079 *os.* 6*d.* The Close Roll which records this transaction refers to it as "a park called Byflete Parke, through which parke there runneth a river called Byflete River and a manor or mansion house called Byfleete House situate in the middle of the park and upon the river of Byfleete and timber trees growing in the park in number 316 trees besides such as are marked out for the use of the navy and the materials of the messuage valued at £2,000, and deer in the park worth £40, which premises were part of the possessions of Charles Stuart, late King of England."<sup>3</sup>

The property reverted to the Crown, probably at the time of the Restoration in 1660. In this year a grant was made to George, Duke of Albemarle, of the office of bailiff of Byfleet and other places.<sup>4</sup>

In 1670 a grant was made of the offices of steward of the manor of Byfleet, of lieutenant and Keeper of the Chace, and of bailiff of the lordship of Byfleet, to Barbara, Countess of Castlemaine, to be held during pleasure, in reversion after Edward Progers and John Lightfoot.<sup>5</sup>

In 1672 the manor and park of Byfleet were granted to the trustees of Queen Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II,

<sup>1</sup> S.P. Dom. ciii; Cal. S.P. Dom. 1611-1618, p. 598.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. MSS. Com. (Univ. of Edin.), i, Pt. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Close Roll 1653, Pt. V, No. 2, m. 38, 39.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. S.P. Dom. 1660-1661, p. 174.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. S.P. Dom. 1670, p. 14.

as part of her jointure,<sup>1</sup> and in 1675 they were leased to Lord Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans.<sup>2</sup> About 1684 they were sub-leased to William Sutton,<sup>3</sup> and it was during his occupation that the old house was pulled down and the present house built.

Until recently it was thought that the older house was pulled down, and the present house erected, sometime during the second quarter of the eighteenth century, and this supposition appeared to be confirmed by the discovery, during restorations which were carried out in 1905, of a tile marked "Dadsey Kerch, 1724," which was found on the roof, and a halfpenny, buried in the mortar of the wall, which bore the date 1734. But a document has come to light which would seem to prove conclusively that the house was rebuilt in 1686. This document, dated 8th February 1686, is a petition by William Sutton, which states :

Lord Jermyn, being possessed of a great old house called Byfleet House, and of the Park there called Byfleet Park, and having leased the said house and park to the petitioner, William Sutton, and that the house is in so much decay that the revenue of the park will not be sufficient to maintain the same in any reasonable repair, the petitioner, William Sutton, prays for his Majesty's leave to take down the said house, erecting in the place thereof a new brick house of four rooms to a floor, and that he may dispose the overplus of materials of the same old house after such new house is erected, towards defraying the charges.

There is a note at the foot of this document by Treasurer Rochester that :

This petition, with the plot annexed, be referred to the Surveyor General, who is to consider the contents thereof and to view the premises, or cause the same to be viewed, and thereupon to report to me a true state of the premises, together with his opinion what is fit to be done therein.<sup>4</sup>

A letter has also been found among the Treasury Papers dated 22nd February 1686, from Henry Guy to Sir Christopher Wren, who was Surveyor-General at that time, enclosing William Sutton's petition and Mr. Fisher's report thereon, and instructing him "to prepare articles for petitioner's new

<sup>1</sup> Pat. 24, Chas. II, Pt. ix, m. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. S.P. Treas. Bks. 1676-1679, v (2), p. 1118.

<sup>3</sup> Index 4617 (R.O.).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258 (R.O.).

building the house.”<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, the report and plan referred to are missing, and have not yet been traced. If they should be discovered, they will be extremely interesting, as they will probably give considerable details as to what the old house that existed prior to the present one, was like, and the extent of it, and possibly also its approximate age.

The present house, which Sutton erected, bears out exactly the terms of the petition. It is a brick house of four rooms to a floor, and is constructed almost entirely of old material.

Mr. Edward Warren, the architect who supervised the extensive renovations and additions which were carried out in 1905, states, in an article which was published in Vol. XX of the Society's *Collections* (p. 164), that he found that the stone string-course consisted almost entirely of old window jambs and sills, the mouldings of which were turned inside, while the plain faces were shown to the outside. The staircase also has evidently been reconstituted at a different angle, and the panelling shows in places where it has been refitted—all old material used again.

The occupants during the following eighty years have not yet been traced with certainty. In 1760 the property was leased to the Earl of Lincoln, and in 1804, it was sold, by virtue of Act of Parliament to the Duke of York.<sup>2</sup> After his death in 1826 it was sold to E. Ball Hughes, and in 1829 Lord King purchased the property. It then passed to the Hon. Peter Locke King, who let it to various tenants, and it was finally bought in 1891 by Mrs. Rutson, who has spent large sums in restoring the house, which had lapsed into a dangerous condition of decay. She has also improved the grounds, uncovered old foundations, etc., and has brought to light many of the old and interesting features which were in danger of being lost.

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Treas., viii, Pt. II.

<sup>2</sup> Act of Parl., 44 Geo. III, Cap. 25.