

WOKING MANOR.

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THE excursions of Archæological Associations such as this have for their object not only the observation of what may not have been previously noticed, but also that of enabling those who have an interest in such studies to become acquainted with what has already been described : the interest attaching to our visit here to-day is of this latter kind. Woking, with its various historical associations, is a profitable piece of study as regards county topography, as it brings before us in the persons of its possessors a long array of the names of those who have figured in the history of the country.

In July, 1864, we met at the old mansion of Sutton Place, and then visited the remains of Newark Abbey. To-day we complete the History of Woking Parish, of which Mr. Manning has given a very full account (*History of Surrey*, vol. i.), which must serve as our guide in this part of our day's proceedings, which I will make as short as I can, consistently with justice to the subject.

Woking was a royal manor in the time of Edward the Confessor, and so continued through the reigns of William I., William II., Henry I., Stephen, and Henry II., 1087—1199.

King Richard I. gave the manor to Alan Lord Bassett of Wicomb. There were four successors to the estate of that family, when the inheritance went to a daughter,

Aliva, in 1272, whose first husband was Hugh Despenser, Chief Justice of England, who died at the battle of Lewes, seven years before her father. She married with Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk. Aliva died in 1281, whereon the Earl of Norfolk, in order to make himself tenant for life, pleaded issue by her. A jury was impanelled to inquire as to such issue, whether born alive, whether male or female, at what house born, in what church, at what time, and in whose presence baptized. The Earl declined to meet the inquiry, and withdrew his plea before the trial came on.

He surrendered the estate to Hugh Dispenser, the son and heir of Aliva by her first husband, usually known as the elder Spenser, executed at Bristol in 1326.

He was succeeded by his son, the younger Spenser, executed at Hereford later in the same year; on whose attainder the manor reverted to the Crown (1327), after a period of 112 years in the Basset family. In the same year King Edward III. gave Woking to his half-uncle, Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent, who held it for four years, when, on his attainder and execution, it again reverted to the Crown. Roger Mortimer then obtained a grant of the estate for Geoffry, his younger son, but Mortimer was himself executed in November of the same year, when the manor reverted to Edmund, the eldest son of Edmund of Woodstock, who had been restored in blood, but who died a minor, and was succeeded by his next brother, John, Earl of Kent, who held it for twenty years (1353). The heir of John was his sister Joan, the "Fair Maid of Kent," wife of Sir Thomas Holland, Knt.

The succession to the demesne is for some time after this rather intricate, and need not occupy us, but Edward IV. seems to have resided here, as in 1486 Henry VII. repaired the mansion, and settled it on his mother, Margaret, Countess of Richmond, who occupied it till her death. During that time the king was frequently a visitor at Woking. Henry VIII. used it as an occasional summer palace: it was here in September, 1515, that he received Wolsey, Archbishop of York,

"whom he heartily welcomed, and showed him great pleasures"; and it was in the course of this visit that the letter was brought from Rome certifying how he was elected to be a cardinal.

King Edward VI. was here in August, 1550.

It is suggested by Mr. Manning that the frequent visits which Queen Elizabeth paid to her Latin Secretary, Sir John Wolley, who lived close by at Pirford, make it probable that she was in the habit of occasionally residing at her Manor of Woking.

King James I., in the 18th year of his reign (1621), granted the manor, with all its appurtenances, to Sir Edw. Touch, and his heirs male by the following service: that every holder on the feast of St. James should bring up the first dish to the king's table, and at the same time pay one hundred pounds of the coined gold of the realm.

The Touch family became extinct in the male line in the person of James, who died in 1708, having held it eighty-seven years.

The next owner of Woking Manor was Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland, in trust for herself and her children by King Charles II., for a term of 1,000 years. She held her first court in March, 1708-9, and died in the October following. The trustees held the estate till 1715, when they sold it to John Walter, of Busbridge, in Godalming, whose son sold it to Richard D. Easton in 1752, in which family it still continues.

There are several surveys of the Manor of Woking given by Mr. Manning subsequent to that in Domesday, and in nearly all of which there is special mention of a residence.

In that made on the death of Philip Bassett, 1272, it is called the "Capital Mansion House."

In the survey on the succession of Hugh Dispenser, 1282, it is noticed as consisting of a capital house, out-houses, easements, courtilage, and gardens.

The fullest particulars are to be found in the survey made when the estate reverted to the Crown in 1327, 20 Ed. II. There are there noticed: "A capital messuage,

surrounded with moats, containing a hall, chapel, two chambers, with a pantry and buttery adjoining the hall, a kitchen, larder, bakehouse, brewhouse, poultry-house, laundry. A chapel for the household, an apartment of three lodging-rooms for the knights and esquires, treasurers, and other great officers. Two other apartments for knights and esquires, under another roof. A gate and a drawbridge."

On the outside of this first moat was an apartment, with two others adjoining on each side, a reservoir, with a water-wheel for filling the moats, a courtilage, and gardens with fruit-trees, all inclosed with another moat, having a gate and drawbridge over it, on the south side of the garden.

Adjoining to the premises, on the outside of the second moat, were a large stable for the lord's own horses, a barton, with two granges for corn and hay, a stable for cart-horses, an ox-stall, cow-stall, cart-house, and sheepcote.

There was an outer gate, with a chamber over it for the a stable for his horses, and a dwelling-house for his family.

All the buildings were covered in with tiles.

The observation which arises from these surveys is that the manorial residence of Woking was of considerable extent and importance. There was a great hall, with pantry and buttery adjoining, as is so commonly to be seen now in all old manorial and baronial residences, as well as in college halls. The two chambers probably indicate a state reception-chamber, and a state bed-chamber for the lord.

"The apartment of three lodging-rooms" indicates three dormitories of the better kind for the knights, treasurers, and other great officers in attendance on the court. There were also two other apartments for knights and esquires; under another roof two chapels. This group of buildings was surrounded by a moat, and the entrance was by a gate and drawbridge.

Outside this court was another, also inclosed by a moat, in which were five apartments, a reservoir with a

water-wheel for filling the moats. This court contained the gardens with fruit-trees.

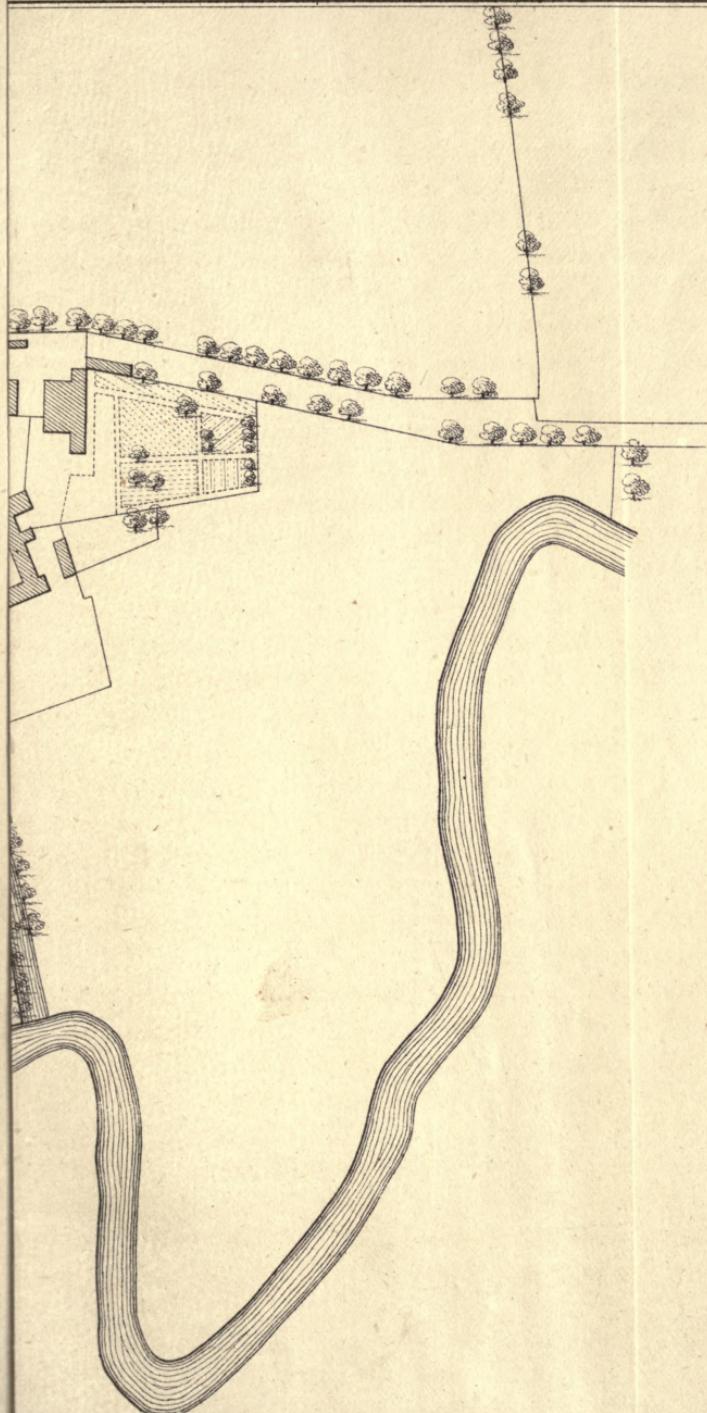
If the massive foundations which remain are to be taken as indicating the site of the buildings above described, it is clear that they were included in the first of these courts, and that the gate-house and drawbridge by which it was entered stood where is now the way into the farm premises. Such being the case, the second court must have been that on the west of the first, and in which were the gardens, stew-ponds, &c. I take the reservoir to be the square sunken area to the south-west of the second area inclosed with a moat.

The Society is indebted to Lieutenant Wynne, R.E., for the plan showing the line of the several foundations of the old buildings.

In the Survey of the Woking Domain made on the death of Philip Bassett (1272) there is not any mention of a park; but in the Survey made when Roger Earl of Norfolk yielded up to Hugh Dispenser (1282), there seems to have been "a Small Park of xl. acres of the yearly value of 13s. 4d." In the next Survey (1327) there occurs "a Park for lx head of Deer, the Pasture, if no Deer are kept, 6s. 8d." In the Survey of 1331, "Pasture in the Park 10s." In the Survey of 1411 we find "a Park inclosed, the Pasture thereof, besides feeding the deer, is worth 10s."

From this it is clear that the park, or inclosed ground, was of small extent, allowing feed for deer at the rate of one head per acre, a common calculation now; and as it is at times described as pasture, and estimated as such, it was merely so much of the meadow-land about the mansion as sufficed to maintain a small stock of deer for the supply of the table of the owner when in residence. I am informed that the grass-land of the farm at present agrees very closely with the 40 acres of the several surveys.

From the Surveys of the reigns of Edw. II., Edw. III., and Henry IV. it would appear that the extent of land inclosed as park continued the same. Subsequently, but at what time is uncertain, the extent of the park was



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To face page 48.

increased. In the Survey made under James I. in the conveyance of the manor to Sir Edward Touch, it is charged "with rent of Land enclosed in Park £2. 14s. 1d.," and with a further sum of 20s. for "lands taken into said Park"; and this must have been done before the conveyance to Touch; most probably during the occupation of the Countess of Richmond.
