

# William, Earl of Lovelace, 1805–1893

by STEPHEN TURNER, BA, MLitt.

## THE MAKING OF A LANDED ARISTOCRAT

William King, the eldest son of Peter, 7th Lord King, Baron of Ockham, was born on 21 February 1805, in Great George Street, London. His father was a direct descendant of that Peter King who, born the son of an Exeter grocer, albeit the relative of John Locke the philosopher, rose to become Lord Chancellor of England during the reign of George I. This first Peter King was elevated to the peerage in 1725, and he chose to be known as Baron King of Ockham in view of the fact that he had cemented his early successes as lawyer and Member of Parliament by purchasing the Surrey estate of Ockham in 1707. Lord Chancellor King had four sons and, curiously enough, each in turn succeeded to his father's title which, in 1779, ultimately devolved upon his eldest grandson, Peter, 6th Lord King, William's paternal grandfather.

On the other side of the family, William's maternal grandfather was Hugh, 1st Earl Fortescue, a wealthy Devonian landowner and a close neighbour of the Kings who, besides their Ockham property, also held extensive estates in Somerset. The latter's eldest daughter, Hester, married William's father on 26 May 1804.

The 7th Lord King was in the process of carving out a distinguished political career for himself when he died suddenly at the comparatively early age of 57, on 4 June 1833. True to the traditions of his family he had been a staunch Whig, closely associated with the famous Holland House circle, and had supported such causes as Catholic emancipation and the commutation of tithes, as well as emerging as a decided opponent of the Corn Laws of 1815.

William, like his father, was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. He then entered the diplomatic service and acted as secretary under the governorship of Lord Nugent, Lord Commissioner of the Ionian Islands. He spoke modern Greek fluently, as well as French, Italian and Spanish, travelled much in Arabia and Egypt, and held frequent conversations with the legendary Mehemet Ali, pasha of Egypt. A promising career in the diplomatic service ended with his recall to England on the death of his father in 1833, his assumption of the title as 8th Lord King, and his appointment, on 15 October of the same year, as a Justice of the Peace for the County of Surrey. He was then aged twenty-eight. Two years later he made the move which was to have as much impact on the King family fortunes as the career of the 1st Baron. He married Ada Augusta, the only daughter of George Gordon, Lord Byron, the romantic poet who had died while fighting

in the Greek War of Independence, some eleven years earlier. The new Lady King brought with her not only thirty thousand pounds in ready cash, but also the promise of vast estates in the midlands and, in some ways most important of all, the eye and ear of her cousin, Lord Melbourne, the Whig Prime Minister of England, who had formed his second Administration some three months before the King marriage. Lord Melbourne, whose former wife, Lady Caroline Lamb, had been an ardent admirer of the poet, was favourably disposed towards the young couple who had thus united Byronic glamour with Whig solidity. Hence, five years later, on 30 June 1838, William King, in recognition of the services he had rendered whilst in the Ionian Islands, was created Viscount Ockham and 1st Earl of Lovelace, one of those elevations or creations made to celebrate the coronation of the young Queen Victoria, who had succeeded to the throne the previous year. It was a title chosen to mark the fact that Lady King was, through the families of Byron, Milbanke, Noel and Lovelace, a descendant of the Barons Lovelace of Hurley.

Fortune, in the guise of the Prime Minister, continued to smile on the newly created Earl. In the spring of the following year, 1839, he undertook 'not without the utmost diffidence' the moving of the loyal address in answer to the Queen's speech from the throne at the opening of the new Parliamentary session.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, on 25 November 1841, possibly again for his work in the Middle East, he was created a Fellow of the Royal Society. Finally, on 10 August 1840, sandwiched between his maiden speech in the House of Lords and his Fellowship of the Royal Society, one must mention that honour which was to be of most practical use to Lord Lovelace. For in that year he was created Lord Lieutenant of the county of Surrey, the highest social and political position to which a man could aspire in the field of English county society in the first half of the nineteenth century. The following year the government fell and, for the next five years, the Tories held office under Sir Robert Peel. Melbourne was never again to become Prime Minister but, as far as the Earl of Lovelace was concerned, the Whig leader had already done more than enough to secure the former's position as the leading figure in Surrey for the bulk of Queen Victoria's reign.

England, on the accession of Queen Victoria, was still very much an agricultural community. Despite the immense changes which were taking place in the industrial field, and which were placing economic power in the hands of men inhabiting the new, smoke-ridden towns of the north and west, social and political power and prestige still remained, and was to remain for the greater part of the century, in the hands of the traditional landed classes. Nevertheless, life in the countryside itself had also been transformed by equally far reaching changes. During the reign of George III (1760-1820) over 3, 500 Enclosure Acts of Parliament had enclosed five and a half million acres of land. The economic results of this revolution were advantageous in that increased quantities of better quality food became available for the expanding population of the industrial towns, but the social results were catastrophic. The substitution of a small number of large holdings for a large number of scattered strips resulted in the creation of a much smaller, yet infinitely richer and more powerful landed class. It was this

class which was to dominate Victorian England until late in the 1880s, and it was this class which was to profit from the labour of the vast number of landless workers created by the selfsame agricultural revolution. Both outdoor and indoor servants were available in large numbers for the large estates and impressive mansions required by the landed rulers of Victorian society.

Lord Lovelace was playing his part in this trend even before his financially advantageous marriage in 1835; for example, the Hautboy and Fiddle public house in Ockham was acquired on 26 October 1833 when the previous owner, Robert Whitburn, went bankrupt.<sup>2</sup> However, during the later 1830s this process intensified as he made judicious purchases both in Ockham and in the neighbouring parishes. 1838 was a particularly impressive year, and the Earl bought fields in Pyrford from Richard Bonsey, land on Wisley Heath from John Penn, leasehold premises in East Clandon from Mrs Jane Parsons, two houses and land in Pyrford from Philip Cooper, a house and land in Ockham from Messrs Kaye and Bonsey, another house and land there from Mr and Mrs Budgett, and a house and land in East Clandon from Thomas Simmonds.<sup>3</sup> The list of his acquisitions in the 1830s is extensive and, although it runs mainly to cottages and fields and seems comparatively trivial when compared with the farms and estates he was buying in future years, one can see quite clearly the way things were to go and can appreciate just how the vast estates of Victorian England were created in the early days of the nineteenth century.

Paradoxically, no sooner did it appear that a class was coming into existence which had the means to dominate English county society to an extent never before possible, than at the same time there appeared the means to dilute that domination. Travel, in a word, was beginning to open up what had previously been a tightly knit and insular rural world, and the coming of the railway and the consequential improvement in methods of communication—from the introduction of the penny post in 1840 to the increased accessibility of newspapers—meant that, inevitably, the heyday of the local giant was to be of a relatively short duration.

As far as the county of Surrey was concerned, the main arteries connecting it with the outside world were the Brighton and Portsmouth Roads. The latter was a short ride from the Earl of Lovelace's seat at Ockham Park, and from the nearby staging point at The Talbot, Ripley, to the White Horse Cellar at Piccadilly, was a three hour run. Ironically, again, the roads of England had undergone an amazing transformation, associated with the engineers Telford and Macadam, since the days of the first Royal Mail Coach in 1784 until the last of H.M. Mails went by coach in 1842. Yet the long distance coach was doomed from the opening of the Liverpool-Manchester passenger railway in 1830, and when, in 1838, the London & South Western Railway Company opened its station at Woking, Lord Lovelace had a quicker and more efficient means of reaching his West End clubs or his town house in St James's Square than had previously been the case.

It would be a mistake, however, to over-emphasise the effect of either the



Fig. 1. The First Earl of Lovelace. Reproduced from J. Davis: *Historical record, etc.*, 1877.

proximity of London or the arrival of the London & South Western Railway, when one considers life in central Surrey during the 1840s. It was to be some thirty years before the Bank Holiday Act came to be passed, and in 1840 only the wealthy had either the time or the money to take advantage of the new travelling opportunities which had come into being. For the most part the inhabitants on the Earl of Lovelace's Ockham estate lived out their lives totally unaffected by the fact that they were within 20 miles of the capital of an empire, and within four miles of a main line railway station.

The system of life which had come into being in rural England as a result of the agricultural revolution was a paternalistic one and only worked if and when the landlord accepted the fact that he had responsibilities towards the class of landless labourers whose existence made the system possible. Lord Lovelace accepted these responsibilities from the start and emerges from the records as an 'improving' landlord, both as regards the condition of his estates and as regards the condition of the people living on those estates.

The *raison d'être* of the enclosures of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had been agricultural improvement and, following in the footsteps of Jethro Tull, Robert Bakewell and Thomas Coke of Holkham, the Royal Agricultural Society was set up in 1838 for the purposes of propagating and disseminating words of wisdom concerning the efficient running of agricultural estates. Lovelace became a governor of the Society, wrote letters to its Journal, gave talks to its meetings, and published pamphlets on subjects of agricultural interest. In April 1843, for example, he wrote a letter to the editor of the Journal 'On the culture of mangold-wurzel', in which he gave details of crop rotation supported with facts and figures from his farm at Ockham.<sup>4</sup> Then, the following year, he backed it up with a second letter on 'Method of growing beans and cabbage on the same ground'.<sup>5</sup> In 1848 he gave a talk 'On climate in connection with husbandry' in which he referred to a work on a similar theme by the French Comte de Gasparin.<sup>6</sup> Lovelace praised the Frenchman for being 'a man of science, an accurate observer, and a practical agriculturalist', and it would be no exaggeration to say that the Earl displayed exactly the same characteristics himself in his approach to farming and estate management.

Whilst obviously absorbed by the problems of estate management and agricultural improvement Lovelace, as has been hinted above, was equally aware of his responsibility towards his tenantry, and this sense of responsibility manifested itself in 1836 with the creation of the Ockham Schools. Far in advance of their times, the schools illustrate not only radical educational ideas, but also emphasise the Earl's agricultural and, in particular, arboricultural interests, and, finally, from the architectural point of view, they anticipate his grandiose creations of the 50s and 60s in East Horsley.

Despite the work of radical colleagues of Lord Lovelace on the Whig benches of the House of Commons, it was not until 1870 that a national system of elementary education was to come into existence in England. Up to that date, the only organised form of elementary education available to the mass of people was that supplied by the voluntary Anglican and Nonconformist

Societies aided, after 1833, by a national grant in aid of private subscriptions for the erection of school buildings. Moreover, in the main, the bulk of these schools did little more than attempt to teach the basics of the three R's, reading, writing and arithmetic, and there was little attempt to 'civilize' in the wider sense of the word. Lady Byron, Lord Lovelace's mother-in-law, was one of those educational reformers who was dissatisfied with a system which did little more than deal with the 'mere technical aspects of instruction'. This being the case, she established a school at Ealing in 1834 which was inspired by the doctrines and practice of the Swiss reformer Fellenburg. The latter's 'educational theory was primarily a social one in which the full development of the individual was related to his probable future role in society'.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, Fellenburg had made as his ideal 'an agricultural community where people could pursue an unsophisticated, pastoral, and religious existence'.

The 1830s saw considerable interest in these 'agricultural schools' as they were known, and the school at Ealing obviously had an effect on Lord Lovelace, whose school at Ockham was run on similar lines. Apart from acquiring 'a plain yet sound elementary and religious education', pupils could go on to gain a knowledge of 'the rudimentary principles of grammar, English composition, simple mathematics, linear drawing, history, geography and the theory of music; together with some instruction in natural philosophy'.<sup>8</sup> Added to this, 'Three and a half acres of land were set aside for agricultural work and two acres of this were devoted to a small experimental forest where curious specimens of forest trees were grown, in order to discover varieties that would best be suited to English conditions'. Moreover, 'Lord Lovelace, wishing to afford the youth attending this school the means of improving their corporal as well as intellectual facilities, has added a Gymnasium, for the development of muscular power, a printing press; and small workshops, fitted with carpenters', turners', basket makers' and other tools'. These, coupled with an organ, a pair of globes, a magic lantern, a barometer, several busts, and a well stocked library, meant that, all in all, the 140 or so children who attended the Ockham Schools in the 1840s were receiving an elementary education which could hardly be bettered throughout the land.

The Earl obviously had himself in mind when he spoke on the educational question during the course of his maiden speech in the House of Lords in the spring of 1839.<sup>9</sup> The speech as a whole was really an assessment of the current situation in the country, a consideration of the improvements effected by the various Whig reforms of the 1830s, and a mention of reforms which could well be implemented in the future. Like his father, for example, Lord Lovelace deprecated 'the unfortunate operation of laws affecting the importation of corn'. He had, from an early period, felt the injustice of these laws, and he was convinced they were injurious to agriculture itself. As with the question of the Corn Laws, that concerning education was dear to him, and he submitted 'that education . . . must be viewed not as a boon to the members of the Established Church'. He regarded it as unwise 'to limit education within any narrow or exclusive grounds' and

saw the educational process as one which would implant 'principles of honesty, and instil habits of self control and reflection' in those who benefited from it. Lord Lovelace concluded by pointing out that he appreciated that 'it was not desirable, in the deficient state of information in which they were, to legislate on this subject, yet it might be hoped, from the number of experiments that were being made throughout the country, that no long period would elapse before their Lordships were in possession of sufficient information to warrant them on conceding some comprehensive plan of education'. It was a far-sighted statement of intent, but it was to be over twenty years before anything approaching such a situation was to come into being.

Educational theory and practice were not the only things which the Earl of Lovelace was able to filch, albeit indirectly, from Switzerland. Obviously attracted by the Swiss style of architecture, with its steeply sloping roofs and its overhanging eaves, he built the schools at Ockham 'according to the Swiss plan', a scheme he persevered with in the 1860s when he embarked upon a large building programme in Ockham, and a plan which one noticed again at Ashley Combe (now demolished), Lord Lovelace's home in Somerset.<sup>10</sup>

The means by which the vast estates, created during the early years of the nineteenth century, were allowed to remain in existence, was a legal device known as 'strict settlement'. It differed from the perpetual entail upon male heirs which had been the case in Scotland since 1685, but although land, according to English law, could only be tied for three generations, the land was usually re-settled in each generation. That is to say, the original heir, who would have had the chance to break the entail and gain absolute possession, in return for a guaranteed income, while his father, the life tenant, still lived, agreed to carry out a further re-settlement. The latter was usually made on his marriage—hence the settlement was usually known as the marriage settlement—and the family estates were thus earmarked for his as yet unborn heir.

This procedure had been carried out at the time of Lord Lovelace, or rather Lord King's, as he was then, marriage with Ada Augusta Byron. Hence the King estates in Surrey and the west country, and the promised Wentworth estates, which Ada Augusta was to inherit, in the midlands, were earmarked for the young Viscount Ockham, born in 1838.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, as tenant for life, Lord Lovelace had considerable powers over the properties, and could, with the consent of his fellow trustees—his uncle, George Matthew Fortescue and the Viscount Barrington—'sell, exchange, enfranchise, or make partition of the settled estates'. Naturally enough, the money received from such transactions was 'to be invested in the purchase of freehold, copyhold or leasehold estates in England and Wales (and were) to be settled to the uses declared by the settlement', namely to give security to the existing family, and to preserve the estate for future generations. The Wentworth estates did not come his way until the 1860s, but Lovelace was able, in the 1840s and 1850s, to sell off outlying portions of his Surrey and west country

estates in order to consolidate his holding in Central Surrey. Thus it was that, on 7 & 8 May 1840, he acquired the manor of East Horsley, and other lands in Clandon, East Horsley and Ockham, from William Currie, a London banker, for the sum of £78,285 15s 6d.<sup>12</sup>

The story goes that Lovelace was staying at East Horsley as the guest of his neighbour, William Currie, and, while the two men were out riding, Currie mentioned that he intended selling the estate. Lovelace expressed an interest in buying, and the property, which ran to some 2,215 acres, was soon his. The central feature of the estate was the Currie home, East Horsley Place, which had been built by Sir Charles Barry in the period 1820-34. The style was plain Tudor revival, and the result was 'a sober, dull design in flint with stock-brick dressings and the same complete lack of enthusiasm that taints many of Barry's non-classical buildings'.<sup>13</sup> Lovelace appears to have let his new acquisition to Sir John Kirkland, who was the tenant in the early 1840s, but in 1846, or thereabouts, he made it his principal seat, and Ockham Park—apparently in a somewhat dilapidated condition—was let to Dr Stephen Lushington, the legal adviser of Lady Byron. It was a tenure which was to last until Lushington's death in 1873.

### **PRACTICAL GAINS AND PRIVATE LOSSES**

East Horsley Place, when Lord Lovelace first bought it, was, as has been pointed out above, mock Elizabethan. It may have been 'revival' but it was 'conservative revival', although Brayley, in his contemporary history of Surrey, noted that it had 'square headed windows, gables terminating in pinnacles, and an ornamental porch'.<sup>14</sup> The earliest improvements carried out by the Earl were fanciful in comparison with what had gone before but a far cry from the future extravaganza he was to create. His first addition was the stuccoed tower at the west end of the building and, at ground level, a great banqueting hall which was noted for the fact that the arched trusses in the collar roof had been bent by the application of steam heat. The process was one on which Lord Lovelace was an authority and on which he delivered a paper to the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1849, two years after his banqueting hall was built.<sup>15</sup>

The Earl, who was an Associate of the Institution, explained how 'the roof of this hall, which covers a space of 56 feet by 24 feet, is sustained and tied by four arched trusses, springing from stone corbels placed 8 feet below the wall plate. The ribs, instead of being constructed in the usual method by carpentry, are formed of separate, though parallel, longitudinal timbers, bent to the requisite curve by steam heat'. His explanation and description of the process met with universal acclamation from the members of the Institution. Indeed, the leading engineer of the day, the famous Isambard Kingdom Brunel, 'could not conceive how the advantages of such a construction could be at all questioned'. Mr Brunel went on to say that he 'thought the roof he had constructed over the Bristol Station of the Great Western Railway was an improvement on the ordinary system, but he preferred this system to that

which he had adopted . . . In fact, he had seldom seen so simple and useful a roof, possessing such an amount of stiffness, and at the same time avoiding all thrust upon the walls'. This was praise indeed from such a quarter, especially in view of the fact that Lovelace was an amateur and, as far as can be ascertained, self-taught engineer.

Another sign of official recognition for Lord Lovelace, in the practical field, came in 1851 when, at the famous Crystal Palace Exhibition of that year, he won a medal for brickmaking.<sup>16</sup> This was approval indeed for the Earl's efforts in East Horsley and in the Ockham brickyards, and it was a symbol of approbation which he was to treasure for the rest of his life. However, at the same moment that Lord Lovelace was making his mark in the fields of agriculture and engineering, when he was in the process of building up his estates and was making the first of those architectural changes which were to revolutionise the village of East Horsley, disaster struck him as regards his private life.<sup>17</sup> A satisfactory and steady marriage underwent a severe strain, and, before it had recovered from that strain, Lady Lovelace died of cancer on 27 November 1852.

Ada Byron, Countess of Lovelace, had inherited something of her father's genius, although, in her case, it had manifested itself in the field of mathematics, and therein lay the cause of her ruin. Fired by her talents, the Earl and his wife turned their attentions to an 'infallible' system for backing horses. The inevitable happened but, unlike her husband who quickly backed out, Lady Lovelace was soon deeply in debt and, frightened to inform her husband, she turned to her mother, Lady Byron, for help. The latter settled her daughter's immediate debts but, wracked by the pain of the cancer which was to kill her, Ada made a full confession to her husband. The result was the destruction of what had hitherto been a staunch relationship. Lady Byron distrusted her son-in-law whom, she supposed, had allowed her daughter to slip into the clutches of unscrupulous gamblers. Lord Lovelace was angered at the revelations which had been kept from him, whilst at the same time he was forced to untangle the financial web which still enmeshed his dying wife.

It was a bitter moment in the Earl's life but worse was to follow, and the good fortune which Lord Lovelace had originally gained through his marriage now disappeared. Following the loss of his wife and the alienation of his mother-in-law, the next thing to go was the affection of his children. Lord and Lady Lovelace had three children: Byron, born in 1836, who was known by his father's second title as Viscount Ockham, Anne Isabella, born a year later, and Ralph, the youngest, who was born in 1839. The eldest, Viscount Ockham, reacted violently and at an early age to his typically Victorian and aristocratic upbringing. However, the results of rebellion were, in his case, severe. Sent to join the Royal Navy, Lord Ockham deserted his ship whilst *en route* for the Crimea, and a return journey from the Black Sea, working 'before the mast' on a small trader, did permanent injury to his health. Still determined to renounce his aristocratic heritage, the Viscount worked for a short time in a shipbuilder's yard under the name of John Okey, but

the damage had been done, and he died in September 1863 at the early age of twenty six.

The other two children were fifteen and thirteen respectively at the time of their mother's death, but the youngest, Ralph, had been handed over to the care of Lady Byron some four years earlier. She had 'undertaken to make him her principal heir and to provide entirely for his education and maintenance', and, as a result of this, 'all control over him was surrendered to her'.<sup>18</sup> Not unnaturally, the quarrel between his father and his grandmother left the young boy firmly on his grandmother's side and, although he paid occasional visits to his father's home, all real contact between the two of them was lacking, and Lord Lovelace had no say at all in the upbringing of the boy who, one day, was to be the second Earl. Little is known of the upbringing of Anne Isabella who may well have lived with her father until 1869, when she married Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, then in the diplomatic service and later renowned for his poetry. Nevertheless, it would seem that her reaction to her father's autocratic temperament was similar to that of her brothers, for the effect 'of his total lack of comprehension and sympathy for ideas other than his own, upon the three children of his first marriage, was to make them all their lives unable to appreciate the better aspects of his character'.<sup>19</sup>

In 1856, the death of an obscure aristocrat, Lord Scarsdale, meant that the Wentworth properties, earmarked for Viscount Ockham by the King-Byron marriage settlement of 1835, were on the move. Now that her daughter was no longer alive to enjoy the estates, Lady Byron deeply regretted the existence of a document which would give the tenancy for life to her unpopular son-in-law. 'It is not a pleasant position for me', she remarked, 'to be the only intermediate heir to the property'.<sup>20</sup> Her death, in 1860, came two years too soon for her to realise that her favourite grandson, Ralph, then at Oxford, would be the ultimate heir. In 1861 the latter exchanged his surname for his grandmother's maiden name of Milbanke, as instructed by the terms of her will, but his brother's death the following year resulted in yet another change, for Ralph had now inherited the Wentworth title which had passed to Viscount Ockham on Lady Byron's death. Whereas Ockham was only a courtesy title, Wentworth was one which he held in his own right, and so, having established his claim before the Committee of Privileges in the House of Lords, Ralph took his seat there as 'Lord Wentworth, thirteenth of that name; and for thirty years was in the somewhat unusual position of sitting in that assembly contemporaneously with his own father'.<sup>21</sup> A final point to note about the Wentworth fortune is that with it came the Wentworth family name of Noel. Hence the name was assumed by Lady Byron's father, Sir Ralph Milbanke, when he inherited the estates through his wife, it had been assumed by Lady Byron herself, and, now that he was life tenant of the Wentworth properties in right of his dead wife, it was assumed by the Earl of Lovelace. Thus, from September 1860 he was known as William King-Noel, 1st Earl of Lovelace, while from November 1861 his son was known as Ralph Milbanke, 13th Baron Wentworth. It was a strange and somewhat curious situation.

## LORD LOVELACE AND EAST HORSLEY

After the death of his first wife, Lord Lovelace travelled abroad for a time before returning and directing his architectural and engineering mind to his home at East Horsley. Gothic was the accepted style of Victorian England, and Lovelace, in common with the many Victorian peers whose fortunes had increased during the early years of the nineteenth century, was determined to give his Surrey estates the Gothic face lift deserved by properties owned by the county's most important inhabitant. In 1858 he designed and built for himself at the east end of his house a tall, steeply roofed tower in flint and polychrome brickwork, the style being vaguely Rhenish Gothic. The following year, still working with the same materials and in the same fanciful style, he built a system of cloisters at the back of Barry's original building. The cloisters, which were enclosed and at first floor level, led to an ornate and stylized chapel which was decorated with blue and white tiling and which contained the arms of various branches of the Lovelace family, inlaid into the floor below the altar, and a memorial tablet to his first wife. Not content with this, the Earl then imported an Italian artist to further embellish the chapel with paintings which were contained within the spandrels. The polychrome brick vaulting ribs were ridged with iron rods, and, as a further salute to the technological achievements of his age, the Earl used drainpipes to act as the columns supporting the vaulting over the chapel entrance. Meanwhile, beneath the cloisters, he displayed his engineering skill in constructing a tunnel which passed under a section of the gardens to the west of the mansion. It connected with the servants' entrance in the courtyard surrounded by the cloisters, which in turn led to the back drive and the village, and was a feat of engineering of which Lord Lovelace must have been justifiably proud.

Having dealt with the house, and made sure that it lived up to its new and more appropriate title of Horsley Towers, Lovelace then turned his attention to the village of East Horsley.<sup>22</sup> During the 1860s what had been an inconspicuous Surrey village was totally changed, and it was a transformation which was not to the liking of early twentieth-century topographers. Lord Lovelace renovated St Martin's church, redesigned Barry's original village inn (1864), built a village school (1860) and a village shop (1862), rebuilt or built afresh innumerable cottages and houses which stretched from the edge of his Ockham estates in the north to Ranmore downs in the south. One of the most attractive of the cottages, which he built adjacent to the church in 1866, he humorously and very aptly named 'Sartor Resartus', the tailor re-tailored, presumably after Carlyle. Virtually all these buildings carried the Lovelace arms inlaid somewhere into the brickwork, but really this signature was unnecessary. All Lovelace's creations have 'slight variations on the same unmistakable style: usually flint with bands of brick quatrefoils, often with machicolations and polychrome round headed windows'.<sup>23</sup> North Forest Lodge (1874), now in a derelict state on the borders of East Horsley and Ockham, affords an excellent example of banded brickwork and machicolations, whilst particularly fine neo-Norman windows and doorways are to be found at the Manor House (1868), at Bishops Gate (1860), and at



Fig. 2. Horsley Towers. Photo: J. Frith & Co., Reigate,

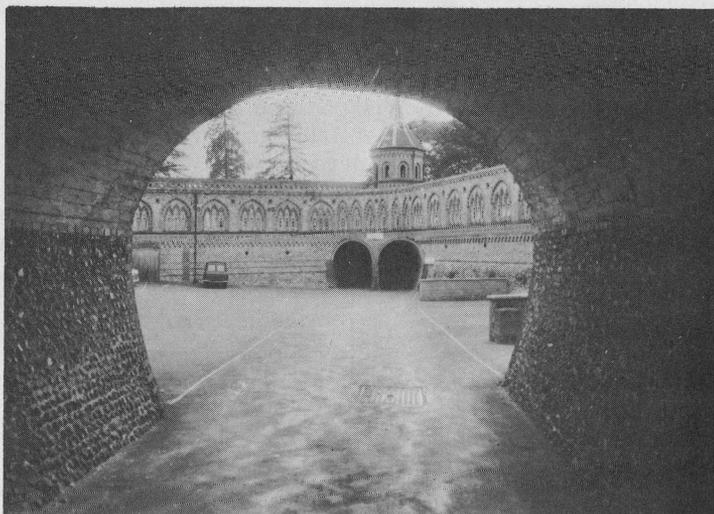


Fig. 3. Horsley Towers, the tunnels. Photo: I.C. Macpherson



Fig. 4. Horsley Towers: the banqueting hall. Reproduced from the sale catalogue of 1920, by permission of Geo. Trollope & Sons.

Conisbee's, the family butchers (1861) in the Ockham Road. Windows which are more Tudor in conception are common to many Lovelace cottages, and another feature of the Earl's work, dominant chimneys, is illustrated by Sheepwash Lodge (1852), at the junction of Ockham and Forest Roads. The curious stylistic mixture, in fact, tells its own story: 'having seen one of these cottages, one can always tell the Earl of Lovelace's land; they are similar all over the property', wrote one commentator, over twenty years after their creator's death.<sup>24</sup>

Horsley Towers itself stood within a well wooded and extensive park of some three hundred acres. The park was renowned for its beech trees, but the Earl of Lovelace was personally responsible for planting several magnificent and rare conifers in the immediate vicinity of the house. Lord Lovelace was an enthusiastic forester and 'it was no uncommon thing to see the venerable peer wearing a tunic and engaging with great zest in woodman's work on his extensive domains'.<sup>25</sup> In order to facilitate travel in the woods to the south of Horsley Towers and not, as legend would have it, because he was deformed and wished to travel away from Horsley without using the main road and thus risk detection by the villagers, he built fifteen horseshoe shaped bridges, of which ten still stand. The bridges span gulleys in the ground and range from about six feet wide (Meadow Plat) to the eighteen foot span of the Dorking Arch which crosses the main road leading to Ranmore Common. The style is again unmistakable, although only Oldlands (1869) seems to have carried the name and date plaques which are ever present on Lovelace buildings. The park itself was entered by no less than five separate carriageways, each guarded by its own lodge. The most impressive scenically was the drive from Sheepwash Lodge on the Ockham Road, which passed lakes and a coppice before reaching the house, but the main driveway from the Guildford Road, with its twin-towered Gothic lodge, gave the visitor best warning of the architectural feast to come.

It is interesting to note that Lovelace, whose work at Horsley clearly marks him out as Surrey's most spectacular neo-Gothic architect, was aware of the great weakness which existed in the field of Victorian art and architecture. While speaking to the members of the Surrey Archaeological Society on 28 June 1855 he had referred to a decline in the field of the fine arts 'in which the artistical feeling was superseded by the mechanical excellence of workmanship; and our buildings, our statues, our paintings at last lost distinguishing and purpose-like expression, however successful they might be in copying and imitating'.<sup>26</sup> Like so many other nineteenth-century architects, the Earl had seen the fault but had been unable to break free from a need to copy, however extravagantly and outlandishly, a style of architecture which had been suitable for a non-technological age. Yet, to give him his due, Lord Lovelace used the Gothic style with a flare which few of his contemporaries could match, and the Guildford Lodge, small as it is, must surely rank as being one of the extravaganzas of its time.

In March 1865, Lovelace married as his second wife Jane Crawford, the daughter of a Calcutta auctioneer, and the widow of Edward Jenkins of the

Bengal Civil Service, whom, the story goes, he had met on board the ship which was carrying her home from India. With her, to live at Horsley Towers, came her three sons by Edward Jenkins, and, 'as Lord Lovelace allowed them to keep race horses and brood mares, The Towers was again a hive of activity.'<sup>27</sup> The three Jenkins brothers were Edward Boycott who was born in 1849, Herbert Charles who was born in 1851, and Atherton Edward who was born in 1859. The younger two rose to become colonels in the British Army, and all three had a reputation in East Horsley for being keen sportsmen and hard riders. Edward Boycott Jenkins, the eldest, was a contemporary at Oxford of the 4th Earl of Onslow. 'In the evening went to dine with Jenkins at the Mitre, ' the latter wrote in his diary on Saturday, 22 April 1871, and, on 13 May, 'To Hare's rooms where I met Jenkins and others; at 4 o'clock to the Liddell's croquet party. . . after the croquet to the races with Jenkins and on to the Ch(rist) Ch(urch) barge.'<sup>28</sup> It was a friendship which was to outlast dining at Oxford and shooting at East Horsley for, in later years, when Edward Boycott Jenkins was a respected Barrister at Law, and the husband of a daughter of the Earl of Norbury, the names of Mr E Boycott and Lady Margaret Jenkins appear regularly in the Countess of Onslow's visitors' book.<sup>29</sup> Jane, Countess of Lovelace, nicknamed 'the Indian widow' by her husband's first family, had one son by Lord Lovelace. He was christened Lionel Fortescue King-Noel, and his birth in November 1865 was the occasion for a supper party given for the tenants on the Earl's Horsley estates, the baby being brought into the hall on a cushion and being introduced as the heir to Horsley Towers.<sup>30</sup> Four years later, his half-sister, aged twenty-eight, married and went to live in Sussex. Lovelace, age sixty-four, had only his estates left as a tangible reminder of his first wife and her family.

Lord Lovelace had been building up his Surrey estates throughout the 1850s and 1860s at the occasional expense of his outlying properties in the west country and in the midlands. Two important purchases had been the large 346-acre estate of Henry Weston in West Horsley, which he had bought in October 1855, and the extensive lands of Miles Stringer of Effingham, which included the rich Indian Farm, and which he had acquired by 1869.<sup>31</sup> For nearly forty years the Earl had been consolidating in Surrey, and one of the main reasons for his success in doing so lay in the lack of any serious rival. The only neighbouring landowner with the means to challenge the growing Lovelace holding was Arthur George, 3rd Earl of Onslow, who lived in Clandon Park near Guildford. Luckily, however, for Lord Lovelace, Lord Onslow, who had inherited the title and Onslow estates in 1827, was a misanthropist and semi-recluse. He chose not to live in the family home, but spend his days instead in a grotesque and tasteless house in the village of West Clandon. For nearly forty years the great Palladian mansion stood derelict and forlorn, and for that space of time Lord Lovelace had had a free hand as regards buying and selling in central Surrey. Indeed, in the 1860s, Lovelace had so far encroached upon traditional Onslow territory, that he was even building in Clandon itself, and the spectacular brick and flint New Manor House (1866), together with the small farm of Lower Clandon

(1863), both in East Clandon, still stand to bear witness to the fact. The situation was to change in 1870 with the death of the old Earl, and the accession of William Hillier, the young vigorous 4th Earl of Onslow, but until that date Lord Lovelace brooked no rival.

In 1873 Lord Lovelace, with 9,957 acres, was by far the most important landowner within the county.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, with a total estate of 16,994 acres, he ranked as a great landowner in national terms as well. Other great national landlords also held estates in Surrey, but their properties within the county amounted to a very small proportion of their total holdings. The Duke of Northumberland, for example, was a giant in national terms, and the aggregate of his estates amounted to nearly 200,000 acres, yet within Surrey his lands, centred upon his secondary seat at Albury Park, amounted only to some 3,765 acres. Apart from Lovelace and Northumberland, there were a further fifteen landowners whose estates in Surrey amounted to over 3,000 acres, yet in the main these were estates of between 3,000 and 5,000 acres, whether they were held by great national landowners like the Duke of Norfolk (4,849 acres) and the Earl of Egmont (3,297 acres), or by figures of little national although great local importance. Among the latter could be numbered William Evelyn of Wotton Park near Dorking (3,601 acres), his close neighbours the Hope family of the Deepdene (3,931 acres), and the Rt. Hon. George Cubitt, M.P. for West Surrey, who lived at Denbies and whose Surrey estates totalled 3,989 acres.

A similar story held good ten years later, but there was one very significant change.<sup>33</sup> In 1873 the Onslow estate of 6,562 acres was one of three which could be regarded as challengers to the Lovelace interest. (The others were the Leveson Gower estate at Titsey, which totalled 6,930 acres, and the Clayton estate at Marden, which totalled 6,505 acres). However, in 1883, whilst Lovelace's holdings had crept up to 10,214 acres, those of the Earl of Onslow had overtaken, and now totalled 11,761 acres. The young William Hillier was proving a worthy rival of his elderly neighbour.

### **LORD LIEUTENANT OF SURREY**

The power and prestige which Lord Lovelace would certainly have commanded by virtue of his extensive land holdings was immeasurably increased by his position as Lord Lieutenant of Surrey which, it will be recalled, he had held since 1840. The Lord Lieutenant of any county was that county's leading personage. His 'advice was the main avenue to the Bench, though the Chancellor retained the right . . . of independent appointment. It will be seen that the patronage placed considerable power in the hands of the Lieutenant, especially when it was added to the appointment of Deputy Lieutenant and Militia Officers', although this last privilege was severely curtailed by the Militia Act of 1871.<sup>34</sup>

The militia was, in effect, a citizen reserve which could be called upon to back up, in times of emergency, England's small professional army. It was

organized for local defence along local lines, its officers tended to be local landowners and tenant farmers, and a main consideration of its short-term training was that it should not coincide with other local needs, in particular the harvest. Unfortunately, there had been a considerable falling off since the Napoleonic Wars and, as far as Surrey was concerned, there had been no call out for training since the June of 1831. However, in view of the troubled state of affairs across the Channel, where Louis Napoleon was in the process of re-creating his uncle's empire, 'the country turned its thoughts to the long neglected Militia, and it was soon apparent that public opinion was strongly favourable to the reconstitution of that force'.<sup>35</sup> This demand led to the passing of the Militia Act of 1852 which enabled men to be raised by voluntary enlistment for a period of five years. Ballot was to be allowed in cases where the correct quotas could not be reached, and the period of training was fixed at twenty-one days. Three Royal Surrey Regiments of Militia were reconstituted, and on 14 August, following the resignation of its former commander after exactly forty years' service, the command of the 2nd Royal Surrey was assumed by the Lord Lieutenant himself.

One of the first tasks facing the new commander upon the reconstitution of the regiment was the erection of a suitable depot. It was a job well suited to Lord Lovelace's architectural talents, and the building, which stood at the lower end of North Street, was, to quote a contemporary writer, 'of Bargate stone, with ornamental brick dressings, cast in the pottery of the Rt. Hon. the Colonel, by whom the whole was designed and planned'.<sup>36</sup> Access to the parade ground was through a low archway bearing the dubious motto 'Salvam Domine Fac Victoriam' (O Lord Save Victoria), and the medieval flavour of the building was completed by arrow slits, Norman windows of the type known to the residents of East Horsley, and a portcullis 'which if let down would render access to the interior difficult'. It was a splendid monument, both to the Colonel himself and to the regiment he commanded.

Lovelace, who during the 1830s had commanded the Surrey Yeomanry, a troop of volunteer cavalry, appears to have been a popular and effective Colonel of the 2nd Royal Surrey.<sup>37</sup> It was during his period of command that England became embroiled in the Crimean War, and, as a result, the various regiments of militia found themselves engaged upon full time service. The order for the embodiment of the 2nd Royal Surrey left the Horse Guards on 8 January 1855, and the Regiment was embodied on 1 February; during the same month 'the Russian Emperor ordered the organization and arming of the entire militia of the Russian Empire for the defence of the "Orthodox Faith"'. Despite expressing a willingness to serve in the Crimea, the 2nd Surrey was never sent overseas, although several of its members did volunteer for and enlist in line regiments. 'The Drill of the Regiment was, before the end of the year, very perfect, for no pains had been spared by the Colonel and Adjutant to make it so. There were, for nearly the whole of the year, two Battalion drills a day, the morning drill being invariably commanded by the Colonel, the Earl of Lovelace', wrote the regimental historian a few years later. But there were lighter moments. 'During the

summer months of 1855, the Regiment was frequently marched out to the Merrow Downs, but the most pleasant march of the year was to East Horsley Towers, where the Regiment was entertained by the Earl of Lovelace'. During the first year of its embodiment the regiment had been quartered at Guildford, and had been prevented from leaving the town owing to a smallpox epidemic. However, on 13 February 1856, the regiment marched to Aldershot camp to take up its quarters there. 'It was a most miserable and wretched day; a drizzling rain fell the whole time', recorded one of the officers. 'The roads were so bad that the Regiment marched up to their ankles in mud. A trombone player in the band had to be fished out of a bog into which he had sunk up to his waist'. Nevertheless, two days after having arrived at Aldershot, 'Colonel, the Earl of Lovelace, informed the Regiment that the General Commanding the Camp had been pleased to state that the 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment of Militia was one of the cleanest, one of the most steady Regiments of Militia under Arms that he had inspected'. This was pleasing news, particularly as on leaving Guildford on the 13th the bells of the Church of Holy Trinity were rung in joy at their departure. Apparently it had been the action of a handful of the more rebellious of the townsfolk for many of the more 'respectable inhabitants' wrote to Lord Lovelace to protest against the action. Six days after the 2nd Surrey had arrived at Aldershot, the Queen herself made an appearance to inspect both the troops of the line and the militia. She expressed her satisfaction both then and again after a second inspection in April, by which time the peace negotiations in Paris were well under way. On 29 April peace was, in fact, announced in the streets of London, and the 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment was disembodied on 12 June, its strength on disembodiment being 577 men.

Lord Lovelace retained his command of the 2nd Surrey for the next fourteen years. The regiment was not called out in 1857, but from then on it trained regularly. In 1867 it was back for the first time since the embodiment of 1855-56, at Aldershot, where the troops were inspected by the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander in Chief. In 1868 the regiment was again at Aldershot, and on this occasion 'a ball was given by Colonel the Earl and Countess of Lovelace, and the Officers of the 2nd Royal Surrey, at the Club House, Aldershot, on Wednesday, the 20th May, to the Officers of the division, and the elite of the neighbourhood—over 200 guests—were present. The Officers of the Regiment acted as stewards, and a most enjoyable evening was spent'. Aldershot seems to have become a regular feature of the regiment's training, for the 2nd Royal Surrey was there again in 1869, once again to meet with the approval of the Duke of Cambridge. On this occasion 'a small testimonial, consisting of a handsome silver teapot, and a £5 note' was presented by Lord Lovelace, on behalf of the officers of the regiment, to Sergeant-Major Cook, whose 'great zeal, energy and tact' seems to have contributed much to the efficiency of the regiment as a whole'.

While the regiment was at Aldershot, for what was to turn out to be Lord Lovelace's last stint of training, an important change regarding the country's militia force was being acted out at Westminster for, on 13 May 1869, the act was passed which abolished property qualifications for officers. It was

to be a great step forward but, of rather more immediate impact on the 2nd Surrey, was the resignation of their commander on 15 April 1870, some three days before the regiment assembled for their traditional period of exercise. In the regimental orders of 21 April 1870, Lord Lovelace wrote that 'finding himself no longer equal to the command of the 2nd Surrey Militia, he feels it his duty to forward his resignation, which has been accepted. He remains, henceforth, connected with the Regiment as its Honorary Colonel. It is not without regret that Lord Lovelace retires from the active command in which, for 17 years, he has earnestly laboured to promote the efficiency and discipline of the 2nd Royal Surrey Militia . . . In taking leave of the Regiment, Lord Lovelace begs to apprise his old companions in Arms that he will never cease to take a warm interest in their prosperity and success'.

Nevertheless, although the Earl had given up his active command, as Lord Lieutenant of the county he was still in overall charge of the Surrey Militia as a whole. Consequently, when the 3rd Surrey Militia Regiment came in for some strong criticism from the War Office as a result of their activities during the Autumn Manoeuvres of 1871, the letters of complaint were addressed to Lord Lovelace.<sup>38</sup> The Autumn Manoeuvres were a new venture, and all three Surrey Regiments of Militia took part. Unfortunately, although the 2nd Surrey, judging from the possibly biased regimental history, acquitted itself with honour, such was not the case with the 3rd Surrey, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Terry. In a letter, sent from the War Office and dated 13 January 1872, Gladstone's active and reforming Minister for War, Edward Cardwell, wrote to Lovelace and criticised various aspects of the regiment. 'My Lord', he wrote, 'Major Evelyn and Captain and Adjutant Parratt are utterly useless and quite unfit for their respective positions'. The answer, he suggested, was speedy retirement, and he commanded Lord Lovelace to consider this remedy with the 3rd Surrey's commanding officer. Unfortunately, he gave the Lord Lieutenant more food for thought when, in a second letter, also dated 13 January 1872, he complained that Lieutenant-Colonel Terry was 'dependent on the Sergeant-Major for assistance in commanding his regiment on parade. I have therefore to request that your lordship', he added, 'will express to Lieutenant-Colonel Terry my hope that he will make himself thoroughly acquainted with the new drill, in order to enable him to command his Regiment properly'. It was shortly before this episode that Cardwell, on 17 August 1871, forced through The Regulation of the Forces Act, commonly referred to as The Militia Act, which transferred the command of the militia from the Lords Lieutenant of Counties to the Crown, a step which meant that officers gained their commissions direct from the Queen, and meant, in effect, that incompetent officers of the Lieutenant-Colonel Terry variety, despite their landed wealth and prestige within a county, would find it harder to gain commands within that county's militia force.

The following year there was more trouble directed at Surrey from the War Office.<sup>39</sup> On 31 January 1872 Cardwell wrote to the various Lords Lieutenant and stated that new militia recruits should have 28 days preliminary

drill before the 27 days of Militia 'training and exercise' commenced. He instructed the Lieutenants to inform him when this militia training was to be carried out, a command which reached Surrey in a letter from Assistant Adjutant General Daubeny of 5 February. Lovelace was on holiday in Italy at this time and, in his absence, his brother Peter Locke King, as Vice-Lieutenant, and his right hand man, Richard Wyatt, the Clerk of the Peace for Surrey, seem to have let affairs degenerate into chaos. Moreover, in view of the fact that General Daubeny seems to have been unaware of the fact that Lovelace was not in Surrey, his irate letters of protest were directed to Horsley Towers instead of to the Vice-Lieutenant's seat of Brooklands.

Three days before General Daubeny's second letter was dispatched to Horsley, demanding a reply to that of 5 February, Peter Locke King had written, on 16 February, to the commanders of the three Surrey regiments, and had suggested 3 June as a suitable date for assembling the new recruits. The date was acceptable to Colonel Terry of the 3rd, but Colonel Sharpe of the 2nd would have preferred April or May, and Colonel Evelyn of the 1st angrily wrote back: 'I beg to say that the Lord Lieutenant usually consulted me before fixing the day for the assembly of the regiment under my command'. Locke King could hardly have recovered from this snub when he would have heard from Richard Wyatt of a letter which the latter had received from Captain Tredcroft of the 2nd, in which the Captain pointed out that the 2nd was an agricultural regiment and that a June assembly would inevitably result in absenteeism; 'Lord Lovelace therefore to prevent this always arranged for the Pre-drill and Training to take place in April and May'. Captain Tredcroft obviously persuaded his commanding officer to write again to reinforce this point of view, for Tredcroft's letter, written on 24 February, was soon backed up by a second from Colonel Sharpe, written on 26 February, in which Sharpe claimed 'there would very likely be a great many absentees on account of the hay harvest . . . the Regiment being almost entirely composed of country men'. Meanwhile General Daubeny, obviously incensed at this continual silence from Surrey, and failing to realise that it was Lord Lovelace's stand-ins rather than the Lord Lieutenant himself who were responsible for the inefficiency, wrote a third letter to Horsley Towers. Dated 29 February, and written from the Horseguards, the letter read, 'My Lord, I have the honour, by direction of the Major General commanding the Home District, to request that your lordship will be pleased to answer my letters of the 5th and 19th instant relative to the assembly of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Surrey Militia Regiments this year'. As events turned out, the 2nd Surrey Regiment were granted their training in May, but history is silent as to what Lord Lovelace's reactions were when, on his return from Italy in June 1872, he scanned General Daubeny's correspondence and learned of his brother's disastrous tenure as Vice-Lieutenant of the county.

Apart from his work to do with the militia, as Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, the Earl of Lovelace also seems to have played an active part in encouraging the revival of the Volunteer Movement, which had been occasioned by Napoleon III's aggressive Italian policy of 1859. However, of rather more

importance was the role he played in overseeing the appointment of Justices of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenants for the county. County administration, for the greater part of the Victorian period, lay firmly in the hands of the local landed gentry who acted in the guise of 'amateur unpaid administrators'.<sup>40</sup> Justices of the Peace ruled at the local quarter and petty sessions and exercised both judicial and non-judicial functions, whilst the office of Deputy Lieutenant carried with it few duties but a lot of prestige. 'The Lord Lieutenant has been kind enough to say that he will nominate me a Deputy Lieutenant and asks me to send you a "statement of my qualifications"', anxiously wrote Charles Combe of Cobham Park to Richard Wyatt, Clerk to the Peace for Surrey, on 11 April 1884.<sup>41</sup> 'I hardly know what is required', he went on, 'but presume being a freeholder of an estate in Surrey, Justice of the Peace, householder in London and retired officer in H.M.'s cavalry service is sufficient. If not perhaps you will kindly let me know what is required'. Wyatt's reply must have emphasised the land question, for, on 14 April, Charles Combe wrote again and listed the Surrey parishes in which he held his land. At all events, this second letter must have satisfied Wyatt for Charles Combe's name was duly entered upon the list of Deputy Lieutenants for the county.

The qualifications for a county justice had not altered since an Act of 1745 which laid down 'the possession for life, or for a longer term of real estate of the clear yearly value of £100 or the right to the immediate reversion of hereditaments of the yearly value of £300'.<sup>42</sup> However, this legal qualification has been described as a 'sieve . . . designed to ensure a bench staffed by men who were resident in the county and of independent means and judgement, which until after the middle of the nineteenth century was taken to exclude those with any close connection with trade or business'.<sup>43</sup> What counted, in the last resort, 'was nomination by the nobleman or the great commoner who was Lord Lieutenant'.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, the Lord Lieutenant was under no obligation to give his reasons for either accepting or rejecting potential justices. 'I cannot undertake to discuss with every, or indeed with any candidate for the magistracy, the question of his fitness according to his own view of that office', he curtly informed one unlucky applicant in the summer of 1850.<sup>45</sup>

In the same way that the landed classes had lost their control over the militia as a result of the Acts of 1869 and 1871 so, as the reign of Victoria proceeded, did they lose control of county government. With the creation of Poor Law Unions, Highway Boards, School Boards and Sanitary Districts the administrative work of the Quarter Sessions was slowly being whittled away, and although what the landed gentry lost in their capacity as magistrates they frequently regained in a new capacity as elected members of one Board or another, the writing was on the wall. The Quarter Sessions had come under considerable attack throughout the century in view of the fact that, although they levied a form of taxation in the shape of the county rate, they were totally unrepresentative in character, and throughout Victoria's reign attempts were made to enable some form of elected County Board to take over the financial and administrative work of the Quarter Sessions. Success

for the reformers came in 1888 with the County Councils Act. This transferred all powers of the Justices, with the exception of their purely judicial and licensing duties, to the new and elective county councils; the absolute power of the J.P.'s had passed away. Nevertheless, the elected members of the new councils had the right to appoint aldermen to their respective councils, and so it was that in March, 1889, Lord Lovelace made his declaration as Alderman of Surrey before two Councillors. The man who had directed Surrey local government for so long was to remain at the helm, despite the fact that the system he had controlled had now crumbled.

### THE END OF AN ERA

There remains in existence a collection of addresses delivered by Lord Lovelace in the period 1887 to 1893. Essentially speeches given on special occasions by the county's elder statesman, many of them do contain at least one pet theme of the Earl's which harked back to his early days at Ockham. Whilst re-opening the Guildford Grammar School on 10 July 1889 he spoke of 'criticisms which have been freely pronounced in regard to our national statutory education', the main one being 'that it indisposes and unfits the recipients for subsequent manual labour'.<sup>46</sup> Lord Lovelace continued, 'We in England have certainly no patent or exclusive privileges for bestowing clerkships and offices in the world of business or administration on the successful pupils who emerge annually from the examinations in the United Kingdom. The candidates far out-number any possible vacancies. Years which might be utilized in earning a competency in a lower but respectable walk of life are wasted on an ambition which can very rarely be gratified either at home or in our dependencies'. The Earl saw the introduction of technical education as an attempted answer to this problem, but felt that 'such a process would not compare for a moment with the business-like activity of the interior of a workshop. There is nothing like continued practice either in the acquisition of a language or the learning of a trade'. A final point to be made was that 'this technical instruction, if it is to be at all effectual, would largely interfere with those outdoor athletics on which we ought to insist as far as the surroundings permit. It is all the more important because circumstances, perhaps beyond our control, are essentially modifying our national bodily habits. We are', Lord Lovelace concluded sadly, 'becoming more or less an indoor, under-cover, carriage-borne, cab-riding community'. However, the Earl concluded on a more cheerful note by admitting that 'in connection with this school it is satisfactory to think that there will be ample opportunity for the pursuit of all athletic exercises'.

Lord Lovelace never featured prominently as a politician, although it was rumoured that Palmerston, presumably on the evidence of his work in the Ionian Islands, had once considered him for a post in the Cabinet as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.<sup>47</sup> The Earl remained, until Gladstone's conversion to Irish Home Rule in 1886, a staunch Whig. After that date his

sympathies lay with the Unionist Party, and he allowed the Primrose League to hold meetings at Horsley Towers.

Sometime during the 1880s Lord Lovelace purchased the 36,000-acre estate of Ben Damph forest in Ross-shire. Situated on the banks of Loch Torridon, the estate enabled the Earl to entertain deer-stalking parties and to indulge in another pastime, that of pony trekking. The house at Ben Damph, like that of Ashley Combe, near Porlock in Somerset, which was his principal west country seat, was built to his own designs. Like the other great land-owners of the day, Lord Lovelace spent parts of the year at each of his seats although, judging from his correspondence, it would seem that Somerset was reserved for the late summer. Scotland was the location of the farthest flung of his possessions, but it was possibly at Ben Damph that he entertained his most influential guests for, in an address delivered to the Surrey County Council in June, 1889, on the occasion of the marriage of the Queen's daughter, Princess Louise to the Duke of Fife, Lord Lovelace referred to 'those neighbours who have, from geographical and other circumstances, been in contact with the royal circle'.<sup>48</sup>

The expansion of the railway network in England greatly facilitated travel between the Earl's various estates, and also from Horsley Towers up to London, where he possessed a town house in Knightsbridge, acquired in 1874, and was the member of two clubs, Brooks and the Athenaeum.<sup>49</sup> As has been mentioned above, Woking was originally Lord Lovelace's closest station but, in 1867, a station was opened at Leatherhead which, for nearly twenty years, was to be the most convenient for Horsley Towers. The villagers of East Horsley benefited tremendously from the proximity of the railway line, and the Crouch family, which kept the Duke of Wellington public house, drove a waggonette each morning to Leatherhead station for the use of anyone wishing to travel to London.<sup>50</sup> The standard charge was 2s there, and 2s back in the evening, but the wagonette could be hired at 7s if one wanted it to meet a special train during the course of the day. This profitable sideline came to an end in 1885 when the London and South Western Railway Company finally opened up a branch line to Guildford which passed through East Horsley. Lovelace, who had already made considerable financial gains by selling land to the railway companies in the Midlands, was able to make nearly £8,000 by selling land for the construction of the branch line and the station at East Horsley.<sup>51</sup> His landed rival, the 4th Earl of Onslow, was able to dwarf this sale by acquiring nearly £52,000 for the lands he sold to the London and South Western in the Guildford area. Nevertheless, the £8,000 was a useful perk, and the land was sold subject to sporting rights and other conditions. The railway company, for example, besides providing a 'private siding and enclosed coal depot' for Lord Lovelace, had to repair gates opening on to his lordship's land, keep fences, ditches and water courses in good order and 'as soon as practicable to plant and for ever after keep planted with firs, larch and spruce, in close and compact order, so as to present a neat, ornamental and copse like appearance, the lands belonging to them and adjoining the railway'.

Horsley Towers, surrounded by the model and polychrome village of East Horsley, remained Lord Lovelace's principal seat until the end. Virtually self-contained, the Towers possessed its own blacksmith, wheelwright, sawmill and slaughterhouse, besides the normal inside and outside staff of a large, late Victorian mansion; whilst for transport the Earl relied upon a large coach, a brougham, a governess cart and a dog cart. He continued building in East Horsley during the 1870s and early 1880s but, having largely completed his work within the village itself, he was now designing cottages and lodges in the more outlying corners of his estate. The Hermitage, built in 1877 on the edge of King's Hills, lay on the southern edge of the estate, and during the same year Lord Lovelace built Barnsthorpe's Cottage. The latter was on the northern tip of the estate, and was situated in Barnsthorpe's Wood, on the Ockham side of the London & South Western branch railway line. Both areas were, by 1890, extensively wooded. Lovelace had been planting trees in the Horsley area ever since he had acquired the estate from William Currie. Financially it was a good move and the Earl was able to sell his larch for pit props, but another reason was emphasised during the course of a discussion at the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1876.<sup>52</sup> 'The summits of the chalk hills in the neighbourhood were in places largely capped with clay', he pointed out to the members. 'This soil was not very good for tillage, and the want of water rendered it unsuitable for the pasturage of any stock but sheep. It might possibly be planted with advantage, and the result by increasing the rainfall would help to remedy the deficiency in the subterranean stores in the chalk'.

The lack of water in the chalk formation had been giving Lord Lovelace's tenants considerable problems. 'There were several instances within a few miles of East Horsley, in which great expense had been incurred in sinking wells and afterwards in pumping by steam, and where, after all, the owners had been obliged to resort to tanks and reservoirs in order to obtain an adequate supply'. However, the Earl as an enlightened landlord, had faced the problem and had 'in East Horsley and in the adjoining parish of Effingham constructed tanks in brick and cement for the various homesteads and cottages belonging to him, probably not less than fifty; and although expensive in the first instance, the result had been satisfactory and the yield of water generally adequate'. The Earl would probably have received more thanks for his tanks than for his trees for, as a local paper later pointed out, 'The most marked peculiarity of the Earl of Lovelace was his great love of trees. He was always planting on his estate near Leatherhead and would hardly permit a tree to be cut down so that the tenants used to grumble, declaring that the excessive timber kept the sun from their crops and retarded their growth'.<sup>53</sup>

The attack on the landed interest of Great Britain had been gathering force throughout the nineteenth century. Its political monopoly in a national sense had been undermined by the Great Reform Act of 1832, and its political control in the growing cities and great towns of the country had been sapped by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 had undermined the economic supremacy of the agricultural

interest, and it was only the lack of external competition, coupled with a belated attempt at scientific improvement, which delayed any form of agricultural depression for another quarter of a century. Moreover, as has already been noted, the landed interest's control of the country's militia had disappeared by the early 70's, and its political control in the counties had been relinquished in 1888. The final assault was on the existence of the great estates themselves; it was a movement for the abolition of primogeniture, entails and settlements, and it was a movement which resulted in legislation regarding such key issues as the rights of tenants and the landlord's power over settled land. It was the final blow to the existence of the landed aristocracy as it had been known in the nineteenth century, and the institution was tottering to its end long before death duties, surtax and the ravages of the 1st World War delivered the coup de grace.

The Settled Land Act of 1882, which gave life tenants like Lord Lovelace the power to sell settled lands, was the first sign that the flood gates were about to open, and, during the 1880s and 1890s, some of the great Surrey estates began to break up. Lord Grantley, who owned 2,199 acres in the county, sold Wonersh Park, his Surrey home, in 1884. Four years later Lord Monson, the owner of 2,034 acres, sold Gatton Park to the mustard magnate, Jeremiah Colman, and left Surrey to reside permanently at his Lincolnshire seat of Burton Hall. It was the beginning of the end, and a trend which was to continue with a vengeance in the coming century.

The Lovelace estate was doomed in rather a different way, for the Earl had willed that his Horsley property and Ben Damph in Scotland should go to Lionel, his younger son. Through the efforts of his own wife Jane, and his son's second wife Mary, the Earl had been reconciled to Ralph, Lord Wentworth, during the 1880's, but relations between Lord Lovelace and his heir were never particularly good, and Ralph and his sister received no more than a curt mention in their father's will. 'I make no gift or legacy to my children by my first marriage', he wrote, 'as they are already amply provided for'. It was a statement which was perfectly true, for the original King-Byron marriage settlement had, of course, settled the major portion of the Lovelace estate upon Ralph and his heirs. However, the fact that Ralph was to leave no direct male heir meant, inevitably, that on his death the Lovelace Earldom would revert to his younger half-brother, whereas the vast land holdings in Surrey, Somerset and the Midlands would devolve upon his sister or her heirs. Lord Lovelace had gained his fortune via his first wife, and it was a fortune which was to pass to the descendants of her daughter rather than his son.

Lovelace, whose way of life had always been spartan and abstemious—he was a vegetarian and touched neither alcohol nor tobacco—appears to have been an austere and unapproachable figure, at least in the later stages of his life. These were traits in his character which were emphasised by the deafness which accompanied his old age. Moreover, his speeches at those public functions which he attended whilst well into his eighties, although 'delivered with exquisite grace and diction and great intellectual force . . . were

scarcely audible a few yards distant'.<sup>54</sup> The last public function at which he played a part was the re-opening of the Guildford Grammar School in the July of 1889, but as late as May, 1893, he made a speech to the Surrey County Council on the occasion of the marriage of the Queen's grandson, the Duke of York, to Princess Mary of Teck. From then on, however, his strength failed, and for the last few months of his life his condition was described as 'precarious'. A doctor was in constant attendance, and the expected end came shortly before noon on Friday, 29 December, 1893, the Earl being then in his eighty-ninth year.

Although during his younger days Lord Lovelace had been a Unitarian, he seems to have come to terms with the established church; a move which befitted an English landowner and one who was the patron of five livings. He was a 'constant worshipper' at St Martin's Church, East Horsley, according to the rector, Freeman Wilson, and he used regularly to read the morning prayers in the presence of the household in the chapel which he had built at Horsley Towers.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, he was buried at St Martin's; his last resting place being, appropriately, a flint and brick vault which he had constructed twenty years earlier in a corner of the churchyard adjoining Horsley Towers.

The funeral, on Tuesday, 2 January 1894, was an impressive affair with upwards of three hundred people present. Apologies for their non-attendance were received from Lord Wentworth, Lord Lovelace's heir who was now the 2nd Earl; the Dukes of Northumberland and Teck; the Earl of Onslow, who was abroad; Viscount and Viscountess Midleton, who sent a wreath of mauve tinted chrysanthemums; and Lord Ashcombe, who was convalescent.

Many more would have come had it not been for the fact that the Quarter Sessions were being held at Kingston where the chairman noted 'that they were met in rather painful circumstances that day, for he missed from his right hand one who at the Epiphany Sessions was always in the habit of sitting there'. Nevertheless, among the attenders on a snowy day were the new Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, the Hon. Francis Egerton; the High Sheriff, Mr Jeremiah Colman of Gatton Park; Sir Richard Wyatt, the Clerk of the Peace; Sir Robert Collins, as representative of H.R.H. the Duchess of Albany; and Lieutenant-Colonel Godfrey Webster of the Royal West Surrey Regiment, of which Lovelace had been the honorary colonel. Two other mourners who had especial reason to think highly of the late Earl were Lieutenant-Colonel Tredcroft, last heard of as a Captain in the 2nd Royal Surrey Militia, and Mr Charles Combe of Cobham Park. The Hon. Mary Milbanke represented her father, Lord Wentworth; Colonel Herbert Jenkins represented his mother, the Countess of Lovelace; and, besides Lovelace's second surviving son, the Hon. Lionel King-Noel, there were also present his nephews, Hugh Locke-King and Sir Charles Crauford, his step-son, Edward Boycott Jenkins, and the latter's wife, Lady Margaret Jenkins, and many of her relatives, headed by her father, the Earl of Norbury.

'At noon', wrote the *Surrey Times*, 'the coffin was taken from the banqueting hall and placed in the closed hearse, and then the cortege wended its way

through the park to the parish church, a short distance away. In front of the hearse walked the tenantry; behind it was a carriage containing wreaths, and immediately behind that was the empty carriage of the Countess of Lovelace'. The service was conducted by the Archdeacon of Surrey, together with the Rector of East Horsley, and among the wreaths listed by the paper was one from the gardeners of Horsley Towers, given 'as a token of deep respect', and another was presented 'with deep sympathy' by the household servants. Finally 'it should be added that the bearers were labourers on the estate, with Mr Killick, the farm bailiff, as foreman'. The county had certainly paid its last respects to its former Lord Lieutenant, and to its oldest Justice of the Peace, but the emphasis, according to the *Surrey Times*, was on the Earl of Lovelace in the guise of a county landowner. 'An offer was, we believe, made', remarked the paper, 'that the funeral should be marked with the full military honours for which his lordship was entitled, but this offer was declined, and the ceremony was entirely shorn of any pomp or panoply, but was such as usually characterises the last sad rites over the mortal remains of a village squire who had lived in the affections of the people amongst whom he had moved and had his being'.

As has been intimated above, those estates over which Lord Lovelace had personal control were left to his son by his second marriage, the Hon. Lionel King-Noel. The latter, who had been educated at Eton and Sandhurst, and was a serving officer in the 9th Lancers, was a very different type of man from Ralph, his half brother, now 2nd Earl of Lovelace.<sup>55</sup> For thirteen years the sensitive and literary minded Ralph lived on at Ockham, devoting himself to the writing of *Astarte*, his life's work. This book, published in 1905, the year before his death, was a defence of his grandmother, Lady Byron, against the attacks of those who blamed her for the breakup of her marriage with the poet. It had been a scheme which had been maturing in his mind since the early 1870s, and it remains the 2nd Earl's main claim to the attentions of posterity. On his death in August 1906 the Lovelace title passed to Lionel, who was still living at Horsley Towers, but the vast estates in Surrey, the Midlands and the West Country were vested in Mary, his widow. She disposed of what was left of the Midland estates, much of which had been sold by the 2nd Earl, and those in Surrey and the West Country passed, on her death in 1941, to Judith, Baroness Wentworth, daughter of Lady Anne Blunt and thus grand-daughter of the 1st Earl. Finally, on the death of Lady Wentworth in 1957, the Surrey estates themselves were sold.

Meanwhile Lionel, 3rd Earl of Lovelace, whose estate at Horsley Towers amounted to only one third of his father's holdings in Surrey, lived on in the old family home for a further thirteen years.<sup>56</sup> His mother, Jane, Countess of Lovelace, died in London at the age of eighty-two in January, 1908. Eleven years later Lord Lovelace sold Horsley Towers, 'a valuable freehold, residential, agricultural and sporting estate', which then amounted to some 2,750 acres, to Mr T. O. M. Sopwith, the famous sportsman and aircraft designer who, in previous years, had rented one of the cottages on the estate for shooting.<sup>57</sup> The last Earl of Lovelace to live in Surrey then retired to his father's old hunting estate of Ben Damp which remains the

Lovelace home to this day. The county of Surrey and the Earls of Lovelace had parted company.

### Notes and references

- 1 Hansard, *House of Lords Debates*, 1839, vol. 45, 7-12
- 2 GMR 165/211/10
- 3 GMR 165/273/11, 165/318, 165/80/22, 165/279/15, 165/270, 165/246/5, 165/108/7
- 4 *J. Roy. Agric. Soc.*, 4, 1843, 21-23
- 5 *Ibid*, 5, 1844, 112-3
- 6 *Ibid*. 9, 1848, 311-40
- 7 Stewart, W. A. C. and McCann, W. P. *The educational innovators*, 1967, 141 et seq.
- 8 Brayley, 1850, vol. 2, 120-2
- 9 Hansard, H of L., 1839, vol. 45, 11
- 10 Brayley, vol. 2, 120
- 11 King Marriage Settlement, 7 July 1835, among papers in the possession of the Earl of Lytton
- 12 GMR 165/18
- 13 Pevsner, N. and Nairn, I. *The buildings of England: Surrey*, 1971, 204.
- 14 Brayley vol. 2, 66.
- 15 *Min. of the Proc. of the Instit. of Civ. Eng.*, 8, 1849, 282
- 16 Williamson, G. C. *Memoirs in miniature*, 1933, 16-17.
- 17 Lovelace, Mary Countess of, 'Epilogue, the next generation', a supplement to Mayne, E. C., *The life and letters of Anne Isabella, Lady Noel Byron*, 1929, 433-42; Lovelace, Mary Countess of, *Ralph, Earl of Lovelace, a memoir*, 1922, 165-6.
- 18 Lovelace, *Epilogue*, 438.
- 19 Lovelace, *Ralph*, 8
- 20 Lovelace, *Epilogue*, 428
- 21 Lovelace, *Ralph*, 9
- 22 Lovelace's address in Dod's *Peerage* during the early 1850s is given as East Horsley Park. The first mention of the name East Horsley Towers occurs in 1856
- 23 Pevsner and Nairn, 205.
- 24 Ogilvy, J. S. *A pilgrimage in Surrey*, 1914, 275.
- 25 *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 6 Jan. 1894
- 26 *Sy. A. C.*, 1, 1858, xxi-xxii
- 27 Conisbee, A. M. *More memories of our village*, privately printed c. 1942, 12
- 28 GMR 173/31
- 29 GMR 173/51
- 30 Conisbee, 12-13.
- 31 GMR 165/44/49
- 32 Parl. Papers, 1874, LXII, *Return of owners of land, 1872-3 (England and Wales)*.
- 33 Bateman, J. *The great landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1883, 280

- 34 Onslow, Richard, 5th Earl of, 'The Lords Lieutenant of Surrey', *Sy. A. C.*, 40, 1932, 44, 52
- 35 Davis, John *Historical record of the Second Royal Surrey Militia*, 1877, 220, 224
- 36 Anon, *Rambles round Guildford*, 1857, 52-3
- 37 Davis, 220-91
- 38 SRO QS/8/1/3
- 39 SRO QS/8/1/2, 3
- 40 Thompson, F. M. L. *English landed society in the nineteenth century*, 1971, 64-5
- 41 SRO QS/8/1/3
- 42 Burn, W. L. *The age of equipoise*, 1968, 312-3
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 Thompson, 110
- 45 Minet Library Southwark, S. 754/9
- 46 Lovelace, William, Earl of, *Some Surrey addresses by the Earl of Lovelace*, privately printed, c. 1893, 21-32
- 47 *Surrey Times and County Express*, 6 Jan. 1894
- 48 Lovelace, *Surrey addresses*, 17-20
- 49 Boyle's *Fashionable Court and Country Guide*, 1874; Bateman, 280
- 50 Conisbee 6
- 51 PRO British Transport Archives, LSW/3/122
- 52 *Min. of the Proc. of the Instit. of Civ. Eng.*, 47, 1876, 165
- 53 *The Dorking Advertiser*, 4 Jan. 1894
- 54 *Surrey Advertiser*, 6 Jan. 1894
- 55 *Surrey Times*, 6 Jan. 1894
- 56 Grant, J. (ed) *Surrey: historical, biographical and pictorial*, c. 1910
- 57 Horsley Towers sale catalogue, 1919

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his thanks to Mrs Peggy Aldridge of Merrow, and Mr Frank Conisbee of East Horsley, for their various reminiscences regarding the Lovelace family; to the staffs of the Surrey Record Office and the Guildford Muniment Room for their unfailing courtesy and help in unearthing the necessary documents; and finally, to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Lytton for making available the various Lovelace estate papers, now deposited at the Guildford Muniment Room and, in particular, for permission to study the King-Byron Marriage Settlement.