



Swallowfield and its Owners.

By Lady Russell.

(Continued from page 87.)

1663. Sir William Backhouse who, by right of his wife, became possessed of Swallowfield in 1663, was son of Nicholas Backhouse, of Widford, Herts, a merchant and Sheriff of London, and Christian, daughter of John Williams, also a merchant of London. He was grandson of Rowland Backhouse, Sheriff of London in 1628, and great grandson of Nicholas Backhouse, Sheriff of London in 1577.

He was baptized on the 16th February, 1641, at St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, and lost his father in 1650. On the 9th November, 1660, he was created a baronet, in recognition of the good services of his family to the Crown. He married his cousin, Mrs. Flower Bishop, at the old church of St. Andrew's, Holborn, on the 13th November, 1662.

1664. In 1664, he was made High Sheriff of Berks and this same year the Backhouse pedigree was recorded at the Herald's Visitation. It commences with Thomas Backhouse, of Whiterigg, Cumberland, who married Eleanor, daughter of John Parkyn, of Burtlaw, Cumberland, and was great, great grandfather to Sir William. There is still a very old family of the name of Backhouse living at Whiterigg, in the township of Anthorn, in the parish of Bowness on Solway, and there is a Mr. John Backhouse living in Anthorn.

1665. Sir William and Lady Backhouse spent most of this year at Swallowfield in consequence of the terrible visitation of the plague, the parish of St. Andrew's, Holborn, being one of the first where it raged. Sir William subscribed largely for the sufferers, the King setting the good example of subscribing £1,000 weekly. Sir William was well able to be generous for he owned at least three Adventurers' Shares in the New River Water Company, one of which he represented himself, Thomas Henshaw of Westminster another, and Mr. Francis Michell the third, his wife also holding no less than eleven.

1666. In September, 1666, we can imagine Sir William Backhouse with his friend, John Evelyn, visiting the smoking remains of the buildings in which his forefathers had accumulated their fortunes. Evelyn describes "going on foote from Whitehall as far as London Bridge, thro' the late Fleete Street, Ludgate Hill, by St. Paules, Cheapside Exchange, Bishopsgate, Aldersgate, and out to Moorfield's, thence thro' Cornehill, &c., with extraordinary difficulty, clambering over heaps of yet smoking rubbish," and frequently mistaking where he was.

1669. Sir William Backhouse died at Swallowfield on the 22nd August, 1669, in the 29th year of his age, leaving no issue.

In a certificate taken by Elias Ashmole, to be registered in the Office of Arms, attested by "Dame Fflower Backhouse," 16th November, 1669, we have the following particulars about the funeral of Sir William, which took place at Swallowfield on the 28th September. "His body (accompanied with divers Baronets, Knights, Esquires and gentlemen, his neigheours, in coaches) was conveyed in a hearse covered with black cloth and adorned with escocheons, unto the Parish Church of Swallowfield, where he was solemnly interred in a vault under an aisle situate on the north side of the said church, lately built at his and his lady's costs and charges. The officers which directed this funerall and marshalled the proceeding were Elias Ashmole, Esq., Windsor Herald, Henry Dethick, Rouge Croix, and Ffrancis Sandford, Rouge Dragon, Pursuivants at Armes."

Sir William's widow had a handsome marble monument erected in the aisle over the vault. It is still there and in perfect preservation. The inscription, which is in Latin and very lengthy, is occasionally somewhat obscure in meaning. Possibly, in re-lettering it many years ago a word or two may have got altered. It states that the monument is not that of one man alone, but of a family belonging to the ancient race of the Backhouses, once lords of a large hereditary property both in town and country, and that it was placed to the memory of Lady Backhouse's grandfather,¹ grandmother,² aunt,³ uncle and his wife,⁴ brother,⁵ children,⁶ parents,⁷ and husbands.⁸

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1. Samuel Backhouse.
 2. Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Borlase.
 3. Anna Backhouse, married Thomas Chester.
 4. Sir John Backhouse, K.B., and Flower Henshaw.
 5. John Backhouse.
 6. William and Anne Bishop.
 7. William Backhouse and Anne Richards.
 8. William Bishop and Sir William Backhouse, Bt.

1670. On the 19th October, 1670, Flower, Lady Backhouse, being then 29 years of age, was married for the third time at Swallowfield Church, by Dr. Lloyd, to Henry Hyde, Viscount Cornbury, K.B., eldest son of Edward Hyde, the celebrated Earl of Clarendon, by his second wife, Frances, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Aylesbury, Bart., Master of the Requests and of the Mint. Lord Cornbury was not the first Hyde who settled in Berks; the Hydes of South Denchworth had been seated there since 1220, and a branch of that family had been for many generations at Purley. It was in the house of Francis Hyde at this latter place that the Lord Chancellor's first wife died in 1632. He was then only Edward Hyde, of the Middle Temple. His wife was Anne, daughter of Sir George Ayliffe, of Grittenham, whom he describes as "very fair and beautiful." She died of small-pox aged 20, and was buried at Purley, where there is a monument to her memory.

Lord Cornbury at the time he married Lady Backhouse was 32 years of age, and a widower, having married first in 1660 Theodosia, daughter of Arthur, Lord Capell,* by whom he had one son Edward, aged at this time 9 years.

He was M.P. for Wilts and Lord Chamberlain to Queen Catherine, for which office he received £160 a year, as we learn by an entry of the salaries paid to the officers of her Majesty's household found among the Strickland papers at Sizergh Castle; Sir Thomas Strickland then being Keeper of the Privy Purse to the Queen.

1671. Lord and Lady Cornbury were thrown into mourning in 1671, by the death of his sister, the Duchess of York, on the 31st March, followed the same year by the death of one of the duchess's daughters and her sole remaining son. Mary and Anne, who alone of her children survived, successively ascended the Throne of England. It has been frequently stated that Queen Anne was born at Swallowfield, but this was not the case. She was born in February, 1665, more than five years before the Hyde family had any connection with Swallowfield. She probably did visit her uncle there and the long gallery in the house still bears her name, being called Queen Anne's Gallery to this day.

* One of Sir Peter Lely's best pictures represents two sitting figures of Henry, Lord Cornbury, and Theodosia, his wife. This picture belongs to the present Earl of Clarendon and is at The Grove. A small copy by Russell is at Hampton Court. Another picture by Sir Peter Lely of the same two persons is in Lord Essex's Collection at Cassiobury.

At the time of Lord Cornbury's marriage his father was living in exile at Montpellier, having been banished by Act of Parliament in December, 1667. He remained there three years and then went to Moulins. In 1671 he was very anxious to visit his son at Swallowfield and wrote to the King informing him of the completion of his History (the Rebellion), and entreated him "that an old man who had served the Crown above 30 years, in some truth and with some acceptance," might be permitted to end his days in his own country. He wrote also to Swallowfield on the same subject but his request was not granted.

1674. Towards the end of the year 1674, Lord Cornbury was sent for to Rouen in consequence of the critical state of his father and remained with him till he died on the 19th December, in the 65th year of his age.

Lord Clarendon's body was brought to England and was buried in his family vault on the north side of Henry VII.'s Chapel in Westminster Abbey. The date of the burial, as appears from the Register of the Abbey, was the 4th June, 1675. No monument was ever erected to his memory and no inscription marks the place of interment, but Dean Stanley says "Lord Clarendon's name was added in 1867." It has often been stated that Lord Clarendon wrote part of his History of the Rebellion at Swallowfield, but this is clearly not the case; he died four years after his son had married the heiress of Swallowfield, and those four years were spent in exile in France.

The year of his father's death, Edward, second Earl of Clarendon, was made High Steward of Reading.

1675. In the next Session of Parliament, he persistently opposed the Court and even signed a protest against an address voted to the King, being greatly angered at the way in which his father had been treated, but he continued to be Chamberlain to the Queen, "who" (says Bishop Barnet) "thought herself bound to protect him in a particular manner, his father's persecutions having been on account of her marriage."

1677. In 1677 Lady Clarendon was chosen as governess to Princess Anne, who, though she had not yet completed her fourteenth year, had her own establishments in her father's palaces at St. James' and at Richmond.

Sarah Jennings was the Princess's favourite playfellow. She was already courted by, if not clandestinely married to, the handsome Colonel Churchill, and her marriage was shortly after declared. The

ceremony had taken place in the presence of Mary, Duchess of York, who gave the bride presents of considerable value, and placed her about Princess Anne's person, and we then hear, that much to Lady Clarendon's disgust, Mrs. Churchill and the Princess spent most of their time including Sundays gambling at cards, greatly to the neglect of the Princess's education.

1680. On the 14th June, 1680, we find in Evelyn's Diary the following: "Came to dine with us the Countess of Clarendon, Dr. Lloyd, Deane of Bangor (since Bishop of St. Asaph), Dr. Burnett, author of the History of the Reformation, and my old friend Mr. Henshaw. After dinner we all went to see the Observatory, and Mr. Flamstead, who shew'd us divers rare instruments, especially the greate quadrant."

Lord Clarendon was made this year Keeper of Denmark House (afterwards called Somerset House), Treasurer of the Queen's Revenues and a Privy Councillor.

1681. The next year, however, the prevailing party in the House of Commons, unable to carry the Exclusion Bill, shewed their resentment by voting an address to the King to remove from his Councils Henry, Earl of Clarendon, Lawrence Hyde, his brother, and others who had opposed the Bill.

In April of this year Lord Clarendon lost his youngest brother, James Hyde, who was drowned off Yarmouth in the *Gloucester Frigate*, in which he was accompanying the Duke of York to Scotland.

1683. On the 19th June, 1683, Evelyn writes in his journal, "I return'd to towne in a coach with the Earl of Clarendon, when passing by the glorious palace his father built but few yeares before, which they were now demolishing, being sold to certain undertakers, I turned my head the contrary way till the coach was gone past it, least I might minister occasion of speaking of it, which must needs have grieved him that in so short a time their pomp was so sadly fallen." This palace, which occupied the whole of the site of Stafford Street, Piccadilly, and the building of which cost £50,000, had been sold by Edward, Lord Clarendon, for £25,000.

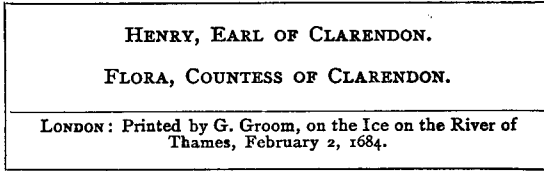
In July, 1683, Princess Anne was married to Prince George of Denmark, and Lady Clarendon was made her first Lady of the Bedchamber. Sarah, Lady Churchill (whose husband was created Baron Churchill the previous year) was by the Princess's express desire also made one of her ladies, and many years after, when she was Duchess of Marlborough, she wrote as follows: "Upon the

marriage of Princess Anne with the Prince of Denmark in 1683, at her own earnest request to her father, I was made one of the Ladies of her Bedchamber. What conduced to render me the more agreeable to her in this station, was doubtless the dislike she had conceived to most of the other persons about her, particularly to her first Lady of the Bedchamber, the Countess of Clarendon; a lady whose discourse and manner (though the Princess thought they agreed very well together) could not possibly recommend her to so young a mistress; for she looked like a mad woman and talked like a scholar," and Duchess Sarah goes on to say "soon after the decease of King Charles II. Lord Clarendon was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, to which country his lady was to go with him. The Princess received a sensible joy from this event; not only as it released her from a person very disagreeable to her, but as it gave her an opportunity of promoting me to be first Lady of her Bedchamber, which she immediately did." The editor of the Clarendon Letters observes on this abuse of Lady Clarendon, that "it was impossible for the favourite of Anne to have comprehended the virtues of a mind like Lady Clarendon's." Miss Strickland says "the style in which Lady Clarendon wrote was, as may be seen in the Clarendon Letters, superior to that of any man of her day. Her letters are specimens of elegant simplicity; therefore, the charge of scholarship was probably true." She had no doubt profited by the early teachings she had received from her learned tutor, Dr. Lloyd.

On the 20th December, 1683, Evelyn dined with the Clarendons, where he says he met "that ingenious and learned gentleman Sir George Wheeler, who has published the excellent description of Africa and Greece."

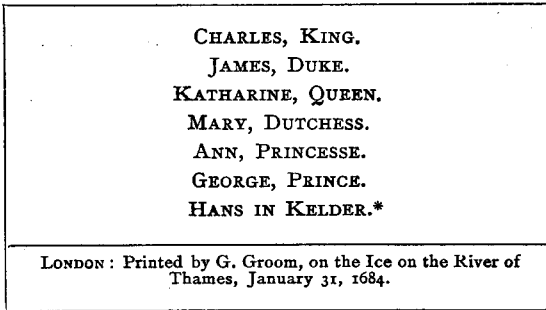
1684. On February 2nd, 1684, Lord and Lady Clarendon were present at the memorable "Frost Fair," also called the "Blanket Fair," on the Thames. Evelyn says "the frost continuing more and more severe, the Thames before London was still planted with boothes in formal streetes, all sorts of trades and shops furnish'd and full of commodities, even to a printing presse, where the people and ladyes tooke a fancy to have their names printed, and the day and yeare set down when printed on the Thames; this humour tooke so universally, that 'twas estimated the printer gain'd £5 a day, for printing a line onely, at sixpence a name, besides what he got by ballads, etc." Lord and Lady Clarendon had their names

printed on one of these cards, as follows :



Mr. William Upcott, of the London Institution, possessed this curious relic.

Lady Clarendon brought away from the fair another curious relic, namely, a fac simile of the card executed for King Charles II. and his party,



On the 26th July of that year, Evelyn writes : " I returned home, where I found my Lord Cheife Justice (Jefferies), the Countesse of Clarendon, and Lady Catherine FitzGerald, who dined with me." And on October 28th, he says : " I carried Lord Clarendon thro' the Citty, amidst all the Squibbs and Bacchanalia of the Lord Maior's Shew to the Royal Society (at Gresham Coll.), where he was propos'd a member, and then treated him at dinner."

* "Hans in Kelder" signifies "Jack in the Cellar," and was no doubt a playful allusion by the Merry Monarch to the interesting condition of the Princess Anne.

(To be continued.)