



Swallowfield and its Owners.

By Lady Russell.

(Continued from page 117, Vol. III.)

On November 15th, 1708, Robert Pitt writes from London to his father, "My wife intended to have written to you this day, but early in the morning was suddenly prevented by the birth of another son." (William Lord Chatham.) This settles the question of the birthplace of the great Chatham, a distinction which has been claimed both by Cornwall* and Wiltshire, as well as Middlesex. Two months later Robert Pitt says, "Cousin Pitt and General Stewart are god-fathers of your youngest grandson, who has been named after the latter." He was christened in Wren's newly-built church of St. James, in Piccadilly, where the entry in the Register is as follows: "1708; Dec. 18, William of Robert Pitts, Esq., and Henrietta, born Nov. 15; baptized."

Governor Pitt seems to have been reconciled to his son's marriage soon after his arrival in England, for in 1711 Lady Grandison writes to her daughter, Mrs. Robert Pitt, "I am pleased to hear my dear daughter was so well received by Governor Pitt." In 1715, Robert Pitt was made one of the Clerks of the Green Cloth to the Prince of Wales. His father writes to him that the salary is £500 per annum, "with advantages," and he advises him to "shun the company of his old comrades as he would the plague, most of 'em in actual rebellion, or abettors, or those of avowed indifference."

On May 2nd, 1726, Robert Pitt wrote, as we have already said, to announce to his son Thomas the death of Governor Pitt, and went on to say: "His estate, by his Will, is all left to me, in all places, and in all kinds, subject to the payment of his debts, legacies and some annuities, one whereof is an annuity to yourself, from

* No doubt the following entry which is in Robert Pitt's handwriting in a large family Bible at Boconnoc gave rise to the claim of Cornwall: "This day Nov. ye 15th, 1708, Munday morning, about eight o'clock my son William was born." But Boconnoc was not purchased by Governor Pitt till about ten years after this date.

your age of 21 years of £200 per annum till your age of 25 years, and then it is to augment to £500 per annum during my life ; after which the real estate (I mean the land) is to descend to you under a strict entail. However, I am willing to forgett your past slighting and disobedient conduct towards me, under the hopes of a thorough amendment for the future ; and as an instance thereof, I here enclose to you a letter of credit from Messrs. Benjamin and Henry Hoare att the Golden Bottle in Fleet Street, the most eminent bankers in London, for £700 per annum to enable you to pursue your travells as was before intended, with positive orders to you not to exceed that sum on any account. The moment you do, I will recall it." This threat was actually carried into effect.

The following month Robert Pitt writes to the same son to say that he and his family have removed to Swallowfield, and alludes to "your brother William, and your sisters Kitty, Nanny, Betty and Molly." William (afterwards the great Lord Chatham) was now 18 years old, and had entered at Trinity College* as a Gentleman Commoner, the previous January.

In September, 1726, the whole family went for three weeks to Brussels, "to see the court and make a little tour in the country." In October they were back at Swallowfield, and Robert Pitt seems never to have left it again. We find enumerable letters written from there during the next three months by him and his secretary, John Sutton, respecting family feuds. The frequent severe and complicated attacks of gout and other maladies from which he suffered, no doubt added to the constitutional irritability of temper which Robert Pitt seems to have inherited from his father. In November he filed a petition in Chancery against the Earl of Londonderry, Robert Cholmondeley and William Chapple, his father's executors.

1727. On May 20th, 1727, Robert Pitt died, leaving by his wife Lady Harriet (Villiers)† two sons and five daughters ; Thomas Pitt who succeeded him ; William afterwards Earl of Chatham ; Harriet married to Sir William Corbet, Bart., of Stoke, and died sp in 1748 ; Catherine married to Robert Needham ; Anne, maid of

* His admission is thus registered : "Ego Gulielmus Pitt filius Robto. arm de Old Sarum in Com Wilts, natus Londini in Par, Sancti Jacobi, annorum circiter octodecim admissus sum primi ordinis, commendalis sub tutamini, Magti. Stockwell, Janni. decimo die anno Dom 1725."

† Lady Harriet Pitt at the death of her husband settled in Queen Square, London. She died in Paris 21st Oct., 1736, and was buried at Blandford St. Mary.

honour to Queen Caroline and Privy Purse to Caroline Princess of Wales, she died in 1781* ; Elizabeth Villiers Pitt who married John Hanham and died in 1770 ; and Mary Pitt died unmarried. Thomas Pitt thus became the third member of the Pitt family who owned Swallowfield. We have seen that he was educated at Eton, and was afterwards at Utrecht. He spent the winter of 1726 at the Academy at Luneville, and was probably still there when his father died. He seems chiefly to have lived at Boconnoc, and was made Lord Warden of the Stanneries and Steward of the Duchy of Cornwall and Devon to Frederick, Prince of Wales.

1734. In 1734 he was returned member both for Old Sarum and Oakhampton, but having elected to sit for the latter, his brother William, who was destined to make such a great figure there, entered Parliament in 1735 for Old Sarum in his stead.

Thomas Pitt married Christian, eldest daughter of Sir Thomas Lyttleton, Bart. (father of the first Lord Lyttleton), by which lady, who died 1750, he had one son and two daughters. His daughters were Amelia Pitt, married to William Spry, LL.D., and Christian Pitt, married to Thomas Saunders, Governor of Fort St. George. His son Thomas Pitt was created Lord Camelford in 1783, and died 1794, leaving a son, the second Lord Camelford, an eccentric young man who was killed in a duel with Mr. Best in 1804, aged 30, when his estates devolved upon his sister Anne Lady Grenville, who left Boconnoc to the Honourable George Fortescue, father of the present owner.

1737. Thomas Pitt sold Swallowfield in 1737 for £20,770 to John Dodd, Esq., an Act of Parliament having been passed to enable him to do so. The Act states that "The said capital mesuage at Swallowfield being a very large building the supporting and maintaining the same is attended with a great and constant expense, by which means a great part of the rents of the estate in that Mannor is exhausted and the clear yearly income arising therefrom is very much lessened."† John Dodd was the only son of Randall or Randolph Dodd of Chester, by his wife Margaret, daughter of William Glaseour, Esq.,‡ and great-nephew of Sir Samuel Dodd,

* Anne Pitt strikingly resembled Lord Chatham in features as well as in talents, and was remarkable, even in old age, for decision of character and sprightliness of conversation. Horace Walpole when asked by Mr. de Caraman if Pitt was like his sister, replied "Il se ressemblent comme deux gouttes de feu."

† Thomas Pitt died in 1761. In 1755 he was living at Twickenham.

‡ This family called also Glaseor and Glazeor had for arms: Vair argent and azure on a cheif or a crescent gules, sa. (Le Neve and Ormerod's Cheshire.)

Chief Baron of the Exchequer. His grandfather was Ralph Dodd, and his great-grandfather, who bore the same christian name, is described by Le Neve as "*Civis et Pellio Londini*," and was son of Randal Dod, of Little Budworth, Cheshire, who with his wife Elizabeth were buried there.*

These Dodds were an off-shoot of the very ancient Cheshire family of Dod of Edge and bore the same arms, "Argent, on a fesse between two cotises wavy gules three crescents of the field." John Dodd was born in Chester on the 5th and christened on the 6th October, 1717, at St. Nicholas Church in that city. His father died in 1721, leaving him considerable property, including land at Colham, Harefield, Moorehall, Burronge, Uxbridge, Hayes, and Hillingdon in Middlesex; Little Hampden in Bucks; Beenham, West Compton, Tilehurst, Tidmarsh, and Hampstead Norris in Berks; and also land in Cheshire and tenements in Mickle Trafford and Liverpool. Of these lands Randall Dodd inherited the greater part from his cousin John Dodd† (son of Sir Samuel Dodd), who himself had become possessed of them through his mother Isabella Lady Dodd, daughter and co-heir of Sir Robert Croke by his wife Susannah daughter and heir of Sir Peter Vanlore, Bart., of Tilehurst,‡ Sir Robert's mother being also an heiress, namely Bridget, daughter of Sir William Hawtrey of Chequers.

The executors of Randall Dodd's Will were his wife and Sir Henry Bunbury of Stanney. The trustees were the said Sir Henry Bunbury, William Stanley of Hooton, Sir Richard Grosvenor of Eaton, and Benjamin Hall of Clifford's Inn. They were directed to expend yearly the sum of 60 pounds on his son John's education until he was 15, and after that age £120 until he was 21.

In 1722, Isabella, Lady Dodd, the widow of Sir Samuel, died and left John Dodd a property at Ellesborough in Bucks and £30,000

* On an altar tomb of stone at the East end of the South aisle in the churchyard was fixed a brass plate containing figures of a man and woman in winding sheets, with this inscription: "Under this stone lyeth buried the bodies of Randall Dod of this parish and Elizabeth his wife, who lived together in holy wedlock about 80 years and at the time of their several deceases were about the age of 90 years, *Randolphus Dod filius p'dict Civis et Pellio Londini posuit 22 du Julii a D'ni 1634.*"

† John Dodd, son of Sir Samuel Dodd, was M.P. for Wells; he is described as "of Hampstead Norris," and also "of Wolverton, Dorset," and "of Oakfield, Berks." He died sp in 1719. His only brother, who was an Examiner in Chancery, pre-deceased him in 1715.

‡ Sir Peter Vanlore, Bart., was son of St. Peter Vanlore a native of Utrecht, who became an eminent merchant and Alderman of London. He married Susanna d. of Laurence Beke of Antwerp, by whom he had three daughters, Jacomina, who married Henry Zinzan of Tilehurst, Susanna Lady Croke, and Maria married Henry third Earl of Stirling.

to be invested in land. She also left him her "large crochet of diamond, a diamond ring, with one large diamond and a share of her silver dressing plate."

John Dodd was sent to Eton, where amongst his chief friends were Pratt, afterwards Lord Camden, Gray the poet, Whaley, and Horace Walpole, who was born on the same day and went on to King's College, Cambridge with him. In December, 1735, John Dodd matriculated at King's College, Cambridge, as a Fellow Commoner, but does not appear to have taken a degree. A Fellow Commoner had the privilege of dining at the High Table and of paying double for everything. It was the custom for him to present a piece of plate to the College on leaving. John Dodd presented the following, as seen in the Plate book, No. 25. iv. : "A pair of Candlesticks with Nosells, weight 68 ozs. 4 dwts., with arms of Dodd and inscription 'John Dodd de Swallowfield in agro Berch. anno 1740 Coll. Regal Cantab D.D.'" These were stolen. Also two spoons; these were exchanged in 1772. And a pair of Candlesticks and snuff dish (or pan for snuffers), weight 75 ozs. 4 dwts. Same inscription as the others. These are still in possession of the College.

(To be continued.)

Early Berkshire Wills, from the P.C.C., ante 1558.

(Continued from Vol. III., page 130.)

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The Will of RICHARD BEAUCHAMP, knyght, lord Seyntamande. 12 June, 1508.—To be buried in the church of the blake freers of London next Ludgate. My lands &c. in Bulkyngton. To the poor of Estlavington. Dame Anne my wife lady Seyntamande. Thomas Long, knyght. Richard Sacheverell, William Wrattsley, John