



## Swallowfield and its Owners.

*By Lady Russell.*

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*(Continued from page 147, Vol. III.)*

In 1738, when John Dodd came of age he entered into possession of Swallowfield, and the next year the following announcement appeared in the *Reading Mercury* :—"Jan. 6th. On Wednesday last John Dodd, of Swallowfield Place, came to town and declared himself a candidate for the Borough at the next general election, being invited thereto by a great number of the inhabs, who, attended with garlands, colours, musick, &c., rode two and two round the town before his coach."

On September 4th of this year, when he was 22 years of age, John Dodd married at Swallowfield, Jane St. Leger, youngest daughter of Henry Lecoq St. Leger, of Shinfield, and his wife Jane Emilia Chardin, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Chardin.\* Mr. Le Coq St. Leger was a French Huguenot, and was naturalised in 1698. He was son of Theodore le Coq, Seigneur des Moulins Jousserans et de St. Leger,† by his wife Madeleine Muysson.‡ On being naturalised he assumed the name of St. Leger in addition to that of

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\* Sir John Chardin, the celebrated traveller, born in Paris 1643, naturalised, knighted and married in 1682. His wife, Esther de Lardiniere Peigné, was the daughter of a French refugee and Conseiller de Parlement. By her he had one son, John Chardin, of Kempton Park, created a Bart. in 1720, and three daughters, Julia Chardin, who married in 1711 Sir Christopher Musgrave, of Hartley Castle, ancestor of the present Sir Richard Musgrave, of Edenhall; Elizabeth Chardin, born at Holland House, Kensington, in 1684, and married Charles Parry, of Wokefield; and Jane Chardin, who married Henry Le Coq St. Leger. Sir John Chardin, in addition to his own fortune, inherited a share of the 58 millions left by his relative Jean Thierry, a celebrated merchant of Venice, who died in 1636. Sir John Chardin lived at Turnham Green, and was buried at Chiswick December 29th, 1712, where the only inscription is "Sir John Chardin nomen sibi fecit eundo."

† St. Leger is in the Dep of Les deux Sèvres, between Niort and Poitiers, and was a famous Protestant centre, the influential family there being the Protestant Ducs de Rohan.

‡ Madeleine Muysson was the daughter of Jacques Muysson (Secretary to Henry IV. of France) and his wife Anne de Rambouillet.

Le Coq, his father retaining that of Le Coq only ; thus we find that on the 7th April, 1709, a Huguenot deputation was presented to Queen Anne, headed by the Earl of Lifford and Messrs. Le Coq and St. Leger. Presumably it was at the time that Mr. St. Leger assumed the greyhound crest with motto "*Leggiero ma fidele*," which appears on some of the interesting old family plate belonging to his great-great granddaughter, Miss Dalzell, of St. Alban's Priory, Wallingford.

Henry St. Leger laid out £10,000 upon a freehold estate in the county of Berks and Wilts, and lived at Trunkwell House, which had been for four or five generations in the possession of the Noyes family.\*

Mrs. Henry St. Leger survived her husband many years, and continued to live at Trunkwell House till her death in 1763.†

From the time of John Dodd's marriage he entertained largely and extravagantly at Swallowfield, and amongst his constant visitors at this time were Sneyd Davies,‡ Dr. Thirlby,|| Whaley the poet,§ Lord Tenham, Pratt, afterwards Lord Camden, Lord Granby and Horace Walpole. In Nichols' "*Collection of Poems*" (1780) there is a poetical epistle from Whaley "to John Dodd of Swallowfield Place," dated March 26th, 1740, and "a scene after hunting at Swallowfield," by Sneyd Davies. Both these poems bear testimony to his geniality and lavish hospitality. He was also fond of racing, and in September of this year we find him running a bay mare, "*Blowsahella*," for the

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\* John Evelyn, who was a friend of Le Coq's, and stood sponsor to Sir John Chardin's son, may have suggested this purchase, as he was so much at Swallowfield. The greater part of Mr. St. Leger's estate is now in the hands of Alexander Cobham, Esq., but Trunkwell forms part of Wokefield, and belongs to Major Allfrey. The old house, which was last occupied by the Hon. John Fiennes, now Lord Saye and Sele, has been pulled down, and only a portion of the old stables remain.

† Henry St. Leger made his will in 1743 ; his trustees were Henri de Massue de Ruvigny, Earl of Galway (the head of the English Huguenots), and John Wickart, afterwards Dean of Winchester. It was signed in the presence of Thomas Upton and Peter Fermagnac. The latter was brother-in-law of David Garric, grandfather of the great actor David Garrick. Henry St. Leger had an only son, who was a.d.c. to the Marquis of Granby at the battle of Dettingen, and died from wounds received there, aged 21, and four daughters—Elizabeth Dorothy, married to Solomon Blossett in 1733, and died 1796 ; Mary St. Leger, died unmarried 1789 ; Jane, who married John Dodd ; and Caroline St. Leger, who died at Trunkwell in 1805 and was buried at Shinfield. In the parish rates her name always appears as "*Madam St. Leger*."

‡ Sneyd Davies, Rector of Kingsland in Herefordshire, Archdeacon of Derby, died 1769. "*His poems*," says Nichols, "bear ample testimony to his uncommon genius and erudition."

|| Styan Thirlby, LL.D., author and commentator of Shakespeare, died 1753 ; he bequeathed all his books and papers to Sir Edward Walpole.

§ John Whaley, Fellow of King's College.

50-guinea cup at the Reading races, which then took place on Bulmarsh Heath. Towards the close of 1740 John Dodd contested Reading as a Whig, on the death of Henry Grey, Esq., but his opponent, W. Strode, Esq., was elected after a very severe contest by a majority of ten votes, the poll being 285 for Strode and 275 for Dodd, upon which the latter petitioned against the return, and Mr. Strode's election was declared void. John Dodd took his seat for a few days, when the House was dissolved. In 1741 Horace Walpole spent Christmas at Swallowfield, as we find in his letters, he being a special friend of John Dodd. In Dodsley's "Collection," published 1753, there is a poem written by Sneyd Davies called "On two friends born on the same day," in which a comparison is drawn between "Palamon" (Horace Walpole) and "Arcite" (John Dodd).

" The one of nature, easy and composed,  
Untossed by passions, and in arts repos'd ;  
T'other of eager and impetuous soul,  
Starting in Honour's race, and stretching to the goal ;  
One calm, like Theodosius, to desire ;  
The other glowing with Verrano's fire.  
This pleased to wander in Pierian glades,  
Where the rill murmurs and the laurel shades,  
That warm'd and roused by what his soul approves,  
The sport, the mistress or the friend he loves."

In 1744 John Dodd lost his wife, who died on the 13th October, aged 26, and was buried at Swallowfield. She left four children, Jane and John, of whom more hereafter, and Henry and Chardin, both of whom died within two years and were buried at Swallowfield.

John Dodd continued a widower till 1753, when he married again. He was at this time 36 years of age, and his bride only 17. The following is the entry of the marriage, which took place at Swallowfield Church: "John Dodd and Juliana Jennings of ye parish of Strathfieldsaye were married July ye 31st 1753 by me Thomas Gawton, curate of Heckfield."

Juliana Jennings was one of the daughters of Phillip Jennings, of Plas Warren, Salop,\* and Dorothy, daughter of George Clerke, of Launde Abbey, and sister of Sir Talbot Clerke, Bart., who was at this time living at Heckfield Heath.† In the marriage licence

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\* Her father, who was son of Philip Jennings, of Dudleston, Salop, by his wife Diana, daughter of Sir William Bowyer (by the Hon. Frances Cecil, sister of James, Earl of Salisbury), died at the Priory, Strathfieldsaye, on the 7th February, 1739. In announcing his death the *Reading Mercury* describes his character in the following terms: "He was adorned with all those qualifications that compose a true gentleman; by continued acts of friendship, generosity and charity he gained universal esteem, and his death is generally lamented."

† George Clerke's wife was Dorothy, daughter of Charles Pearse, of Oakfield, Berks, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Rowland Johnson.

Juliana Jennings is described as "of Coley," no doubt because at this time she was residing with her brother, Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, of Dudleston, Salop, and of Laverstoke, Hants, who married Ann, daughter and co-heir of Col. Thompson, of Coley Park.\* And she was described in the parish register of Swallowfield as of "ye parish of Strathfieldsaye," as her father had lived at the Priory, Strathfieldsaye, now the property of Mr. Beauchamp.

In Nichol's Collection of Poems, there is a short ode by Whaley on John Dodd's marriage to Miss Jennings. This same year John Dodd again contested Reading, William Strode and Lord Fane† also being candidates. Man, in his "History of Reading," says "this was the strongest contested election that occurred for many years, corruption was got to such a height that towards the close of the Poll from thirty to forty guineas were given for votes." When the poll was declared the numbers were: Strode 324, Fane 296, Dodd 295, and on the announcement Mr. Dodd fainted away on the hustings.

On March 1st, 1754, Mr. and Mrs. John Dodd attended at St. Martin's Church, London, the marriage of Frances Jennings (one of Mrs. Dodd's sisters) to James Edward Colleton, Esq.,‡ of Haines Hill, Berks, M.P. for Lostwithiel, and about the same time Ann Jennings, her other sister, married James Hayes, Esq., of Holyport, near Maidenhead, Recorder of Wokingham and Abingdon, one of the Justices for Wales, and M.P. for Downton, who was one of John Dodd's trustees.§

In 1755, John Dodd was returned for Reading vice Strode deceased.

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\* Col. Thompson, of Coley, was grandson of Sir Samuel Thompson, Sheriff of London, who was nephew of Sir John Thompson, Bart., created Lord Haversham in 1696. After the Vachells held Coley Col. Thompson bought it. Besides Lady Jennings-Clerke, Col. Thompson had two other daughters who never married, and in 1748 the Misses Thompson "made a title for sale." In 1792 Mrs. Anne Jennings Clarke executed a release to Will Chamberlayne, Solicitor to the Treasury. Mr. Bradford bought it of Mr. Chamberlayne, and in 1802 O'Connell bought it, but sold it in 1810 to Mr. Monck, father of the present owner, and at that time Mrs. Frances Jennings, amongst others, covenanted to produce deeds. She was still living in 1818 at Whitley.

† William, Second Viscount, Fane married Frances, sole daughter and heiress of Francis Hawes of Purley and widow of Lord William Hamilton.

‡ Mr. Colleton's first wife was Lady Ann Cowper, daughter of Earl Cowper, but he had no children by either wife and left his property to his relative Charles Garth, M.P. for Devizes.

§ James Hayes, M.P. for Downton, was son of James Hayes of Holyport and Hill House.

In the *Oxford Gazette* and *Reading Mercury* for June, 1759, the following announcement occurs: "The company of Berks Militia, commanded by John Dodd, Esq., Major, was drawn up at Whitley Wood, near Reading, where they were exercised for the first time and received their arms, cloathing, etc."

In 1760 John Dodd and Sir Francis Knollys were returned for Reading.

In 1762 John Dodd was tried at Reading by Court Martial on the complaint of William Mackworth Praed, Esq., Captain in the Berks Militia, for unsoldierlike behaviour and for endeavouring to impede him in his succession to the majority in the said regiment. The finding of the court was as follows: "The Court Martial, upon due consideration of the whole matter before them, is of opinion that Lieut.-Col. Dodd is not guilty of the charge exhibited against him, or any part thereof and therefore the court doth acquit him with honour."

On the 16th Dec., 1762, John Dodd's eldest daughter Jane, who was about 21 years of age, was married at Swallowfield Church, by special licence from the Bishop of Sarum, to Robert Dalzell, Esq. The ceremony was performed by George Talbot, Curate pro tem., a cousin of the first Mrs. Dodd, and it was thus announced in the *Reading Mercury*: "December 18th, 1762, on Thursday last, was married at Swallowfield in this county, Robert Dalzell, Esq., of Tidmarsh, one of the officers of our Militia, and grandson and heir of the late General Dalzell, to Miss Dodd, daughter of Col. Dodd, of the same regiment, and one of the members of this town, an agreeable young lady, of large fortune, and with every other accomplishment necessary to adorn the marriage state." Mr. Robert Dalzell was son of Gibson Dalzell, Esq., whose father was General the Hon. Robert Dalzell\* (of the Carnwath family) from whom he inherited Tidmarsh.

In 1768 Henry Vansittart and John Dodd were returned for Reading. At the close of the poll the numbers for each candidate were: Vansittart 401, John Dodd 396, and John Bindley 193.

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\* This eminent General was born in 1662 and died in 1758, aged 96. He served in no less than 18 campaigns. He was Town-Major of Portsmouth and married Anne Mary Gibson, daughter of Sir John Gibson, Governor of Portsmouth. He had a daughter, Frances, who married Alexander Hamilton and died in 1731. General Dalzell's portrait was painted by C. Alexander and has been engraved.

In 1774 Francis Annesley and John Dodd were the members returned, the numbers being: Annesley 326 and Dodd 302; the defeated candidate, John Walter, polled 251.\*

John Dodd lost his second wife Juliana in 1778. She died aged 42 on the 9th November, and was buried on the 17th at Swallowfield.

In 1780 John Dodd and Francis Annesley were again returned for Reading.†

\* John Walter, of Farley Hill, Swallowfield. He married Newton Walker, only daughter of Alexander Walker, of Swallowfield and of Barbadoes, Sheriff of Berks in 1751. She was born 1734 and died 1772 aged 38, and is buried at Swallowfield, where there is a marble slab erected to her memory. John Walter was one of the same family as John Walter, Esq., M.P., of Barbadoes and Burbridge Hall and descended from Sir William Walter, Bart., of Sarsden, Oxfordshire, who was an intimate friend of Henry, Lord Clarendon. Alexander Walker, of Swallowfield, was probably descended from Sir Walter Walker, of Bushey Hall, Herts, Advocate to Charles the Second's Queen, who was also a great friend of Lord Clarendon. William Walker, the second son of the Sir Walter, married Mary, daughter of Powell Price or Pryce, of Newton, co. Montgomery and Earley Court, Berks, hence no doubt the reason of the name "Newton" having been given to Miss Walker, of Swallowfield.

† Amongst John Dodd's election expenses the following items appear: "To the publick Houses £538 10s. 10d. Paid Leath at the Swan £18 7s. 2d. At the White Hart £15 3s. 6d. At the Last £15 18s. At the Feathers £19 1s. 4d. Pd. Comyns at the George £23 2s. 6d. Taylor at the Broad Face £34. For Ribbons £120 9s. For Torches 18s. 6d. Pd. the Guards, the Brewer's men £5 5s. Torchmen £2 2s. Gave away to the populace on returning thanks £9 18s. 6d. Garland women £6 6s. The Ringers of the 3 parishes on returning thanks £3 3s. For the Election chairs £6 16s. 6d. For the Sedan Chair-man £8 8s. For the French Horn men £4 4s. For the Clarionet men £4 4s. For the Trumpeters £4 4s. For the Ringers of the 3 Parishes £9 9s. and again on Election day £9 9s. more. Paid to a person to drink at the publick houses on the Canvas £4 19s."

*(To be continued.)*

**SILCHESTER PAVEMENT.**—It is interesting to note that the square of pavement discovered in the Roman Church at Silchester has been reproduced by Mr. Herbert Jones in the Church of All Saints, Blackheath. A full-sized drawing of this pavement is in the Reading Museum.

**BERKSHIRE DOMESDAY.**—In the notes on the above in the last number of the Journal "Acenge" is said to mean West Lockinge. Mr. Mount suggests that "Acenge" is "Wasing," in the Hundred of Taceham (Thatcham). Certainly this seems the correct interpretation, as Lockinge is not in that Hundred, and (*W*)*asenge* is not far removed from *Wasing*.