

REVOLUTION HOUSE.
(From Hall's History of Chesterfield.)

DERBYSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

The Revolution House at Whittington.

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ALTHOUGH it was only two years since his accession, James II. in 1687 had already forfeited the affection of his people. The revival of the High Commission Court, the attacks upon the Anglican Church, the favour shown to Roman Catholics, both at Court and in the Army, arrayed against him all the power of the Church and the Protestantism of the nation, whilst his arbitrary action and lawless encroachments alarmed all who upheld the Parliamentary liberties of England. He had dissolved Parliament, which had refused to carry out his wishes; but he persuaded himself that what one Parliament had refused another might grant, if only the influence of the Crown could be brought to bear so as to obtain the return of members subservient to his desires. So instructions were sent to all the lords lieutenant of counties to the following effect:—

1.—To make out lists of persons devoted to the King, and on that account to be appointed mayors and sheriffs, that the returning officers might be in the interest of the Crown; and

2.—To assemble their deputies and magistracy, and to put to each individual the three following questions:—

- “(1) Whether if he be chosen knight of a shire or burgess of any towne, when ye King shall think fit to call a Parliament whether he will be for taking off ye penal laws and ye tests.
- “(2) Whether he will assist and contribute to the election of such members as shall be for taking off ye penal laws and tests.
- “(3) Whether hee will support the King’s Declaration for liberty of conscience by living friendly with those of all persuasions as subjects of ye same Prince and good Xtians ought to do.”

The answers to these questions given by Derbyshire men are to be found in the Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MSS. No. 139, and were as follows :—

“In obedience to the King’s instructions I caused the Deputy Lieutenants and Justices of the Peace within the County of Derby whose names are underwritten to be summoned to meet me at Derby January 18th and required of them that appeared their opinions to the three questions relating to the Penal Laws and Tests to which they made severally the following answers.

“These gentlemen answered in the affirmative to all the three questions—

Sir Henry Hunlocke Bart.

Thomas Gladwin Esq.

Thomas Eyre de Rooter Esq.

Thomas Eyre de Hassop Esq. a Catholic but absent

Basil Fitzherbert Esq. of Norbury a Catholic but absent

Arthur Warren Esq. absent but answered in the affirmative in Notts.

Richard Pinder Esq. resident in Gloucestershire.

Roland Okeover Esq. resident in Staffordshire

Sir Edmund Abney Knt. absent

Sir Henry Every to the 1st, 2 and 3 he cannot promise

“ These gentlemen to the 1st and 2^d say they cannot promise to the 3^d yes—

Sir William Boothby	}	Knts.
Sir Simon Degge		
Sir Gilbert Clerke		
Robert Burdett		
Godfrey Meynell		
Gilbert Thacker		
Henry Cavendish		
William Fitzherbert		
William Allestre		
John Every		
John Lowe		
Henry Kendall		

“ Robert Willmott Esq. to the 1st question he answers that if he be chosen a Member of Parliament hee will not bring with him any prejudging of obstinate humour or temper but such as shall yield not only to the information, but the conviction of the best reasons that shall bee offered to the House. To the 2^d question that hee will not use any interest hee may have for the election of any person of a prejudging or obstinate temper or humour but for such if att all as of the temper expressed in the answer to the 1st question. To the last hee answers affirmatively.

John Stanhope an officer in the army.

Wm. Barker Esq. There is no such man.

“ Henry Every and Henry Balguy Esq^{res} have not returned their answers, they never acted as Justices of the Peace.

“ The Earls of Chesterfield and Scarsdale are both in the Commission of the Peace, but I sent not to them because I suppose His Majesty is already informed of their opinions in this matter.

“ Persons fitt for Justices of the Peace

Sir John Gell Bart.

John Morewood

John Spateman¹
 Sam Sanders jun.
 Wm. Fitzherbert of Norbury
 Henry Heveringham²
 George Vernon
 Cornelius Clarke
 Thomas Woodhouse
 Wm. Eyre of Highlowe
 John Burroughs

“Persons proposed for Parliament were: In the county Sir John Gell Bart.; Cornelius Clare Esq. In the towne Geo. Vernon Esq.; Anchitall Grey Esq.

“Att my coming to Derby I found the Corporation new regulated but none amongst them proper to stand for Burgesses for quality fortune or interest, especially in a county where there are so few elections.”

¹ There is but little known about the Spateman family. The first notice of them that I have found is in the Court Rolls of the Manor of Baslow, where John Spateman is entered as tenant of a cottage and two acres of land at Baslow. He died in 1369, leaving a widow named Joanna. We also find a William Spateman who died in 136½, leaving two sons, William and John, the former dying in 1378. I cannot trace the family pedigree, but in the reign of James I. there lived a John Spateman, who had a son John born in 1638 and baptized the 18th October. This John I take to be the John Spateman mentioned above. He built Roadnook Hall, and was evidently a man of substance. In 1663 he obtained a grant of arms from W. Dugdale: Ermine on a fesse gules double cotised sable three gryphons heads erased or. Crest: a gryphon's head erminois out of a mural cort argent. He died at the end of the seventeenth century, and was buried January 2nd, 1707. In Dugdale's *Visitation*, 1662, two generations of Spateman are entered in the following meagre form:—

John Spateman=
 |
 John

The estate was apparently divided between two co-heiresses. Henry Wigley, of Middleton, married Mary, daughter (sister?) and co-heiress of John Spateman, and George Clarke, Gent., of Chesterfield, married Sarah, another daughter and co-heiress of John Spateman. She died on the 8th April, 1717, æt. 49. Mary Spateman, presumably a sister of John Spateman, was wedded to Stephen Flamsteed in 1645.

² Was a lieutenant of the Gentlemen Pensioners and a nephew of Sir William Heveningham, of Ketteringham, Norfolk, who was called “the regicide” from his having been one of the judges at the trial of Charles I. His nephew's connection with Derbyshire was through his marriage with Frances, Countess Dowager of Bellamont, one of the sisters and co-heirs of Charles, tenth Lord Willoughby, of Parham.

The answers received from the various counties were so unsatisfactory that James postponed the calling together of a Parliament to a more favourable opportunity. The birth of a Prince of Wales, whose legitimacy was doubted, the trial of the seven bishops, and the formation of a large camp at Hounslow Heath of regiments principally officered by Roman Catholics, aroused the nation to the peril offered to their liberties and religion, so in 1688 all eyes were turned in expectancy to the Prince of Orange as the deliverer of the country.

In 1688 the little village of Whittington, in the north-east of Derbyshire, was slumbering peacefully, little thinking that a meeting was to take place therein which would make it famous throughout the English-speaking world. Behind it stretched the moor, a waste, open space at that time unvisited and untenanted. Thither in October, 1688, William Cavendish, Earl of Devonshire, rode from Hardwick to meet the Earl of Danby, Mr. John Darcy (son of the Earl of Holderness), and possibly other gentlemen, to consider how they could defend the civil and religious liberties of England. The conspirators, for they were nothing else, who met on Whittington Moor, were only a few amongst many; but someone must make a start, and none had more authority in England than the Earls of Devonshire and Danby. The name of Cavendish has been associated with the cause of civil and religious liberty for more than two centuries, and William, fourth Earl of Devonshire, was worthy to maintain the noble principles of his house. He was a strong, self-reliant man; aristocratic, skilled both with sword and tongue; fearless in danger, he knew that he was starting on a perilous enterprise, wherein a false step might be fatal. Danby, who had been a successful minister under Charles II., although politically an opponent of Devonshire, was now united together with him for the great deliverance.

A meet of the harriers was the alleged excuse for the rendezvous on Whittington Moor, but as the hunt swept away in the distance the conspirators drew together to consider a mightier

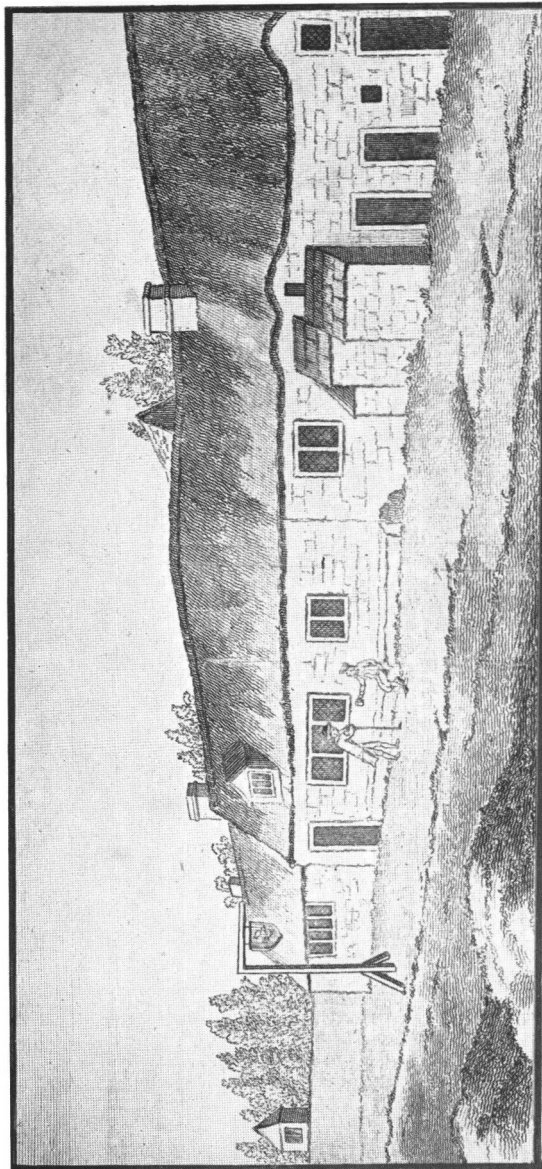
hunt—they were hunting a king. The moor was bleak and desolate, swept by squalls of rain, so an adjournment was made to a small inn on the outskirts of the village known as the Cock and Pynot,¹ where accommodation was found for them in the best parlour. This lowly inn, or rather cottage, for the license has long been transferred, was isolated from the rest of the village at the junction of the Sheffield and Rotherham roads. The room in which the conspirators met was very small, only fifteen feet by twelve feet ten inches; but lowly as is the "Revolution House," as it has been called, it has excited the interest of the American, the Australian, and the Hindu student of history. A Yankee globe-trotter is reputed to have exclaimed, "I calculate we would gladly give you White House at Washington for this doll's cottage," but that surely is a legend void of truth. Chilian patriots have visited the old cottage with admiration, but the Chilians are always studying revolutionary methods.

"Although the words uttered at the social conference must ever remain a secret, it is not difficult to surmise the nature of their deliberation. The tankards would be refilled, the landlord bowed out, and the door closed, Darcy perhaps with his back to the keyhole to guard against anyone spying. The Earl of Devonshire, sitting upright and stately in the historic chair still preserved at Hardwick Hall, would say how he was prepared to imperil his head for the sake of his country's freedom, and that he was willing and anxious to lead the true-hearted Derbyshire men. Danby, probably stretched on a rude bench by the wall, would thrill at the Earl's words, and say that he was ready to give the signal for the rising in the North, and fight to the death, if need be, for liberty."²

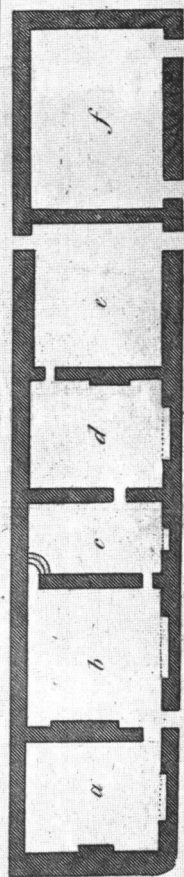
When the conference broke up, which was to have such vital effects on the destinies of England, the old Cock and Pynot was deserted, to fall into neglect and decay. Its weather-stained walls were fast crumbling to ruin; moss and grass grew

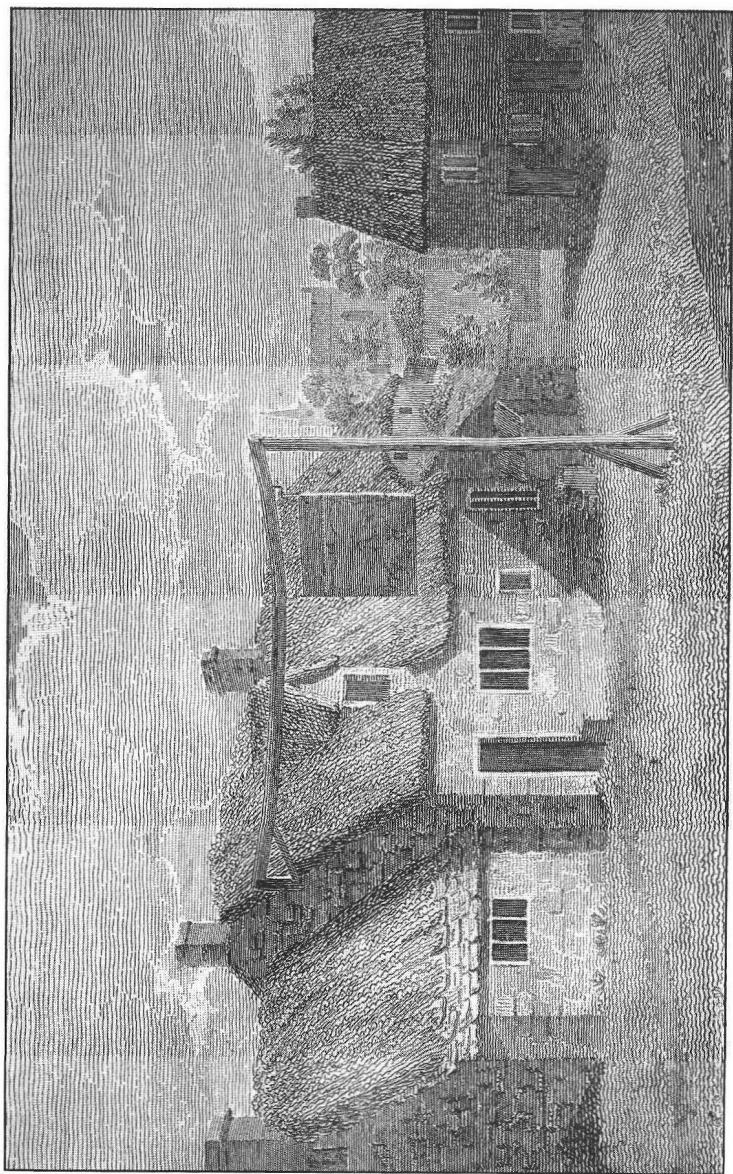
¹ Pynot is the local name for magpie.

² Pendleton's *History of Derbyshire*.



The Revolution House at Whittington near Chesterfield, Derbyshire.





REVOLUTION HOUSE.
(From *Gentleman's Magazine*.)

on its roof ; its mullioned windows, with diamond-shaped panes, were half hidden by ivy ; its tiny garden become a wilderness. But, fortunately, a sense of its former importance awoke in the neighbourhood ; the building was repaired, new rooms were added in 1769, and though considerably altered in appearance, the old inn still stands as a valuable memento of the past.

To commemorate the part which the " Revolution House " took in the events of 1688, a centenary festival was organized on the 4th and 5th November, 1788. A dinner was held at the old inn, an illustration of which is given in Plate I., at which the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Stamford, Lord George Cavendish, Lord John Cavendish, and several neighbouring gentlemen were present, and a subscription was opened to erect a monumental column. A special service was held in Whittington Church on the 5th November, when Dr. Pegge, the rector, who was 84 years of age, preached an eloquent and appropriate sermon from the text, " This is the day the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." In the *Gentleman's Magazine* of that day there is a full account of the procession through Chesterfield. Eight clubs marched with banners displayed ; the Duke of Devonshire followed in a coach drawn by six horses ; the Earl of Stamford, the Earl of Danby, Lord Francis Osborne, Lord George Cavendish, and Lord John Cavendish in coaches and four ; Sir Francis Molyneux and Sir Henry Hunloke were drawn majestically, like the Duke, each by six horses. There were forty other carriages, besides four hundred gentlemen on horseback. This imposing procession passed through Chesterfield to the castle. It may be interesting to note the bearers of banners, which were made of blue and orange silk, with appropriate inscriptions—Mr. Deakins, Mr. Bluett, Mr. Odcliffe, Mr. Barber, Mr. Valentine Wilkinson, Mr. Stubbs, Mr. Ollerenshaw, and Mr. Martingale. Descendants of these worthy men may even now exist in Chesterfield or Whittington. After their exertions, refreshments would be needed, so dinners were given in the three principal inns, when

about twenty loyal and local toasts were drunk. Fireworks followed the dinners, and a grand ball finished the day's proceedings, attended by three hundred ladies and gentlemen. "The Duchess of Devonshire, surrounded by the bloom of the Derbyshire hills, is a picture not to be pourtrayed. The warm expression of gratitude and affection sparkling in every eye must have excited in the breasts of these noble personages, whose ancestors were the source of this felicity, a sensation which monarchs in all their glory might envy."¹

A similar celebration, though not on so grandiose a scale, was held in 1888. What remains of the old "Revolution House" is now carefully preserved, and a bronze tablet has been affixed to it, on which is the following inscription: "A.D. 1688. In a room which formerly existed at the end of this cottage (what is left of the old Cock and Pynot) the Earl of Danby The Earl of Devonshire and Mr. John D'Arcy (eldest son of the Earl of Holderness) met some time in 1688 to concert measures which resulted in the Revolution of that year."

The monumental column was never raised, although rooms marked *d* and *e*, shewn in Plate I., were pulled down for the purpose, leaving the house as it appears in Plate II., and in the Frontispiece. A subscription list had been opened, limited to five guineas for each subscriber, and about £136 was subscribed, but the breaking out of the French Revolution, and its subsequent horrors, cast a damper upon all memorials of a revolutionary character, so the matter was deferred, and was ultimately abandoned. The three surviving members of the committee decided to present the money to the Derby Infirmary under certain conditions.

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine.*