

ON SEDGWICK CASTLE.

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READ AT HORSHAM, JULY 12, 1855.

THIS Castle was situated about two miles and a half from Horsham, eastward, in that detached part of the parish of Broadwater which lies between Horsham and Nuthurst. It was one of those minor castellated buildings, the small dimensions of which would seem to imply that they could not have been the principal residences of their owners, but occasional places of resort only. Of these smaller castles, the remains of several interesting examples are to be found in this county, and the sites of others may be traced; the early history and subsequent descent of which, for want of that free access to public records and documents which we of the present day happily possess, have been heretofore involved in great obscurity and doubt. Our county historians have enlightened us but little on these points. The conclusion they seem to have arrived at, from an investigation of their general features and character, and from the occasional notices which they met with of them, is, that they were the original residences of the Norman barons; and that, as they obtained greater possessions and larger castles, these smaller ones were abandoned and suffered to go to decay. Altogether disregarding the fact, that upon these lordships—at all events, upon those of Pevensey and Bramber and Arundel, if not upon all—the barons, to whom they were assigned after the Conquest, found castles upon them already erected for their use, which they proceeded at once to occupy; and that these minor castles are for the most part, as far as we have a knowledge of their history, of a somewhat later date than the castles by which they are supposed to have been superseded. That some of these castles were used as hunting seats by the lords of the baronial castles to which they were known to have been appendant, there can, I think, be no doubt. These

baronial residences being situated in the southern portion of the county, and the manors attached to them running for many miles in a northerly direction, they would, as men devoted to the chase, naturally provide themselves with residences in distant manors, to enable them to pursue with greater facility their favourite pastime. Such, doubtless, was Verdley Castle, the ruins of which are still to be seen in a wood in the parish of Fernherst. Camden, speaking of the remote situation of this castle in his day, says of it, that it was "known only to those that hunt the marten cat." The Earls of Arundel had their hunting-seats in the extensive forest tracts of Stanstead and Charlton. And that the castle of Knepp also is to be regarded in the same light, the large sporting establishment of men and dogs shown, by the documents relating to this castle published in the third volume of our Collections, to have been kept up here in the time of King John, sufficiently testify. They prove it to have been used as a hunting-seat by the Braose family, the lords of the castle of Bramber, to which it was appendant. The barons of Pevensey had their hunting-seats at Hartfield and Maresfield. For though no ruins exist in either of these localities similar to those which are to be seen at Verdley and Knepp, there is a field to the north of the village of Hartfield called "the Castle Field," the unevenness of the surface of which, and a large mound standing about the centre of it, clearly show that a small castle once stood on this spot, the foundations of which might possibly, if searched for, still be discovered beneath the surface. With regard to the hunting-seat in Maresfield, traces of it may still be seen in what is now a wooded tract of Ashdown Forest called "the Vetchery." That this was the occasional residence of royalty, "the Chase of Ashdon" or, as it was called after it was enclosed by John-a-Gaunt, "Lancaster Great Park," being a favourite royal sporting district, we have documentary evidence¹ to prove. Edward II concludes a deed, "diversas concessiones abbati et canonicis de Begeham" (Bayham Abbey) "factas confirmans," as follows: "Data per manum nostram apud Marsfield;" and a writ issued by the same king, requiring the mayor and bailiffs of Winchelsea to search their ports for suspected persons, is also

¹ Monast. Angl., vol. vi, part 2, p. 914; Pat. 6 Edw. III, p. 230.

dated Marsfield.² The former of these deeds is dated the 23rd and the latter the 24th of September 1326. I have met too with charters of Edward III, dated from the same place. King John is said to have made this hunting-seat a frequent place of residence. To it was attached a free chapel, an account of which will be found among the Notes and Queries at the end of volume.

From the circumstance, that these minor castles were all of them moated, some with a single, this of Sedgwick with a double fosse, it has been farther inferred, that they were built with some reference to the personal security of their owners in times of danger. As the baronial residences, to which they were for the most part appendant, were situated near to the sea, which circumstance would render them liable to be attacked in case of foreign invasion, these minor castles would be safe places to retire to, during these or any similiar times of hostile emergency, situated as they were in remote parts of a vast trackless forest.

But, to come to the more immediate subject of my present memoir. The castle of Sedgwick differs in this material respect from the other minor castles of Sussex, that it was not, as far as I have been able to discover, originally appendant to any other castle, but an entirely independent residence. For rather more than two centuries and a half after the Norman conquest, it appears to have belonged to a family known by the somewhat opprobrious title of "le Salvage," "Salvagus," or in plain English, "the savage," a title probably derived from the wild and erratic, not to say ferocious, dispositions and habits of him to whom it was first assigned. The term Salvagus is not to be found in any classic writer that I am acquainted with; nor does Ainsworth condescend to notice it. For its meaning I am indebted to the charter rolls of the 1st of John, where a wild cat is called "Salvagus Catus." And this is the only instance of its use that I have met with, except as ignobly connected with these Sedgwick lords.

But from whatever cause this family obtained this unenviable designation, they were the early lords of Broadwater; and appear to have had considerable possessions in the rape of Bramber. The Robert of Domesday, who is represented

² Rymer's *Fœd.*, vol. xi, p. 642; Cooper's *Winchelsea*, p. 66.

as holding Broadwater and Ordinges (Worthing), was, there can be little doubt, Robert le Savage; and it is equally probable that the same Robert is alluded to as holding Lancing and Ashington of William de Braose, with whom he might have been connected by birth or marriage, and whom he probably accompanied from Normandy to this country. The similarity of their coats of arms³ seems to imply a relationship by blood or alliance. Of the first three of his descendants—all of them Robert le Savage—I have been able to find no other mention than is to be derived from the early charters of the lords of Bramber, particularly those relating to the Priory of Sele; among the attesting witnesses of which their names occur. Of the fifth Robert le Savage, Maddox, in his *History of the Exchequer*, states, that in the year 1197, he gave 20*s.* to King John to be allowed to have his plaint in the King's Court against John le Combe on account of the marriage of his daughter Agnes, which this Robert claimed to be in his gift:⁴ a singular feudal privilege.

The only child of this Robert was a daughter named Hawisa, who married—1st, John de Gaddesden, who appears to have been a resident of Shoreham, and to have had property in different parts of the rape of Bramber, and who was for three years sheriff of Sussex during the reign of Henry III; and 2dly, a de Nevill. In an early document⁵ relating to Sedgwick, Hawisa le Savage is described as having carried this manor to the former of these two husbands. In 1268, William de Braose, being from his unthrifty habits in need of money, determined to supply his wants by exonerating various estates held under him from the claim of murage.⁶ And this led to a final concord between her and this William, by which, for the sum of 96 marks, which was rather less than one-third of the whole sum he was empowered to raise, the lands of her manor in Broadwater were to be acquitted of this charge upon them for ever. In this deed⁷ she is described as “Hawisa de

³ I am indebted to Mr. Ellis, of Hurst-perpoint, for this suggestion.

⁴ Mag. Rot. Ric. I, Rot. 18 b. Sussexia, Maddox Exc. In this and all the earlier deeds relating to this family, they are called “le Salvage.”

⁵ Placit. de Jur. et Assis., 7 Edw. I.

⁶ Ped. fin., 52 H. III. Murage was the right which the lord possessed of taxing estates held under him for the repair of his castle.

⁷ The deed is in the Chapter-house, Westminster.

Nevill, quondam uxor Johannis de Gatteden." She died, according to the Tower Records (in what year is not mentioned, but from the *Inquisitio Post Mortem* No. 84, we learn that it was towards the close of the reign of Henry III), seized of the manor of Broadwater, valued at £52. 0s. 2d. per annum; also of the manor of Halkesbourne, now called Hawkesbourne, in Horsham; Goring, or Garinglea, in Shipley; and South Lancing and Lyons, near Broadwater; as well as of the advowson of Itchingfield. What is now the manor of Durrington⁸ also belonged from an early period to this family; a moiety of the tithes of which were conferred by Robert le Savage on the Priory of Sele about the year 1130. Robert, the father of this Hawisa, is described in the *Testa de Nevill* as possessing four knights' fees in Broadwater. That this family held an important position in the rape of Bramber is, I think, shown by the fact, that this Robert was selected by the guardian of William de Braose, during his minority, under an order of Henry III, as custos of the castles of Bramber, Knapp, and Pevensey, which were supposed to be placed in jeopardy by the breaking out of a war with France. He had also the charge of the honour of Knapp and Bramber, belonging to John de Braose.⁹

The manor and castle of Sedgwick continued in the family of le Savage till the year 1272, when John le Savage exchanged them with William de Braose for other lands¹⁰ held under the honour of Bramber; and this exchange was subsequently confirmed by his son Robert le Savage. The value of the manor at the time this exchange took place was £17. 12s. 2d. The manor and castle had previously been the subject of a dispute between this John le Savage and William de Braose. By some means or other, probably during the confusion occasioned by the prosecution of the Barons' war, they had fallen into the hands of John de Maunsel; on whose death abroad, William de Braose claimed them as having thereby escheated to him.

⁸ As this is not mentioned as a separate manor for two centuries after the Conquest, it was probably included during that period in the manor of Broadwater.

⁹ See Knep Castle Documents; *Sussex Arch. Collections*, Vol. V, p. 144.

¹⁰ What lands these were I have not been able to discover; but as I find a

Thomas Savage described, in 1334, as of Burbuck (Beubush?), one of two parks in the neighbourhood of Horsham belonging to the lords of Bramber, we may reasonably conclude that the lands included in this park are the "other lands" here alluded to.

This led to a suit¹¹ between them in 1266, which was decided in favour of John le Savage. Our honorary secretary,¹² speaking, in his history of this war, of this John de Maunsel, and the circumstances which led to his dying abroad, says, "The fate of this man is as remarkable an instance of fallen greatness as the Wolsey of later times. He who had often refused bishopricks, both on account of the greater value of the benefices which he held, and also because it would have interfered with his free manner of living, now, after all his splendour, died abroad in the greatest poverty and wretchedness. All his property, including the mansion of Sedgwick, which he had license to embattle in 1259, was granted to Simon de Montfort, jun. After the battle of Evesham, Sedgwick was again claimed and repossessed by John le Savage."¹³

At the death of William de Braose in 1290, the manor and castle of Sedgwick, with other manors and estates, passed to his son William by Isabel¹⁴ the first of his three wives.¹⁵ At the death of this second William without male issue in 1326, the Sussex estates were divided. The honour and castle of Bramber descended to the elder of his two daughters; and the manors of Sedgwick, Washington, and Findon were settled on the issue of Mary,¹⁶ his father's third wife. Under this arrangement Sedgwick descended to Richard de Braose, the eldest son of this Mary; and, as he died without issue, it then passed to his brother Peter. From this Peter it descended to his son Thomas; whose son of the same name inherited it of him; as his children died during their minority without issue, Sedgwick went through the heirs of the Says, Herons, St. Pierres, Cokeseys, and Grevilles to the De Mowbrays, as descended from Aliva de Braose, who in 1298 married John de Mowbray; and it continued in the families of de Mowbray and Howard until the attainder of Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk of the Howards, in 1572.

Chesworth, in the parish of Horsham, had been one of the

¹¹ Placit. Abrev., 51 Hen. III.

¹² Blaauw's Barons' War, p. 96.

¹³ Rot. Pat., 47 Hen. III.

¹⁴ This Isabel was the daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, and niece of Gilbert Marshal, Earl of Pembroke. The second wife was Agnes, daughter of Nicholas de Moels.

¹⁵ See Pedigree of Braose, post.

¹⁶ This Mary was the daughter of William, Lord Roos of Hamlake, and after the death of Braose she remarried a Plantagenet, viz. Thomas de Brotherton Earl of Norfolk; subsequently to the death of her second husband she married, thirdly, Ralph de Cobham.

residences of the Braose family.¹⁷ Here died, in the year 1395, Thomas Lord Braose, whose infant children were the last of the possessors of Sedgwick of that name; he was buried in Horsham church, and his monument, surmounted by a full-length figure of him in the military garb of the reign of Richard II, is noticed in a subsequent article in this volume. There is an excellent engraving of the figure, from a drawing by Sir S. Merricks, in Cartwright's *History of the Rape of Bramber*.

Chesworth subsequently became one of the residences of the Dukes of Norfolk before they married the Fitz-Alans and became Earls of Arundel. In December 1541, on the supposition that Anne of Cleves, after her divorce, had a child, and that the Duchess of Norfolk (Agnes Tilney, wife of Thomas, second duke of the Howard family) could give important evidence, Dr. Peter was ordered by the Earl of Southampton and Sir John Wriothesley to Horsham.¹⁸ On December 6th the council gave an order for locking up all things in her grace's house (Chesworth) at Horsham;¹⁹ on the 9th this order was extended to her other houses, and also to the house of her daughter, Lady Bridgewater; but the council in London subsequently wrote to the council with the King, that when they wrote that Dr. Peter should go Horsham, he being out of the town, they sent thither in his stead his Majesty's solicitor, who put all things there in order, and appointed Mr. Carell, "dwelling by, to have an eye daily to the same."²⁰ On the 3rd Nov. 1542, the duke wrote from Newcastle to Sir Thomas Wriothesley, requesting that a letter therein enclosed might be sent with diligence to his servants at Horsham, to cause them to make provision for his house (Chesworth) to be kept there that winter, "intending not to be far from the court for that winter."²¹ Here was born the fourth duke, Thomas, who was attainted in 1572; it was in this house that he was arrested; and here it was that, secreted between the timbers and the slates of the roof, the evidences of his treasonable

¹⁷ In 1281, William, the son of John de Braose, obtained a charter of free warren in all his lands at Chesworth, as well as other parts of the rape of Bramber, from Edward I, in return for his fidelity to

Henry III, during his long and tempestuous reign.

¹⁸ State Papers, vol. i, p. 696.

¹⁹ Ib. 699, note.

²⁰ Ib. 706. ²¹ Ib. vol. v, p. 216.

conspiracy, concealed probably by an accomplice, are said to have been found.²² Chesworth is now a farmhouse, retaining but few traces of the ancient edifice.

The duke's estates having been forfeited, Sedgwick was granted in 1574 to Sir Thomas Seymour, on whose attainder, two years after, it was conferred on Sir Thomas Fynes, from whom it passed to the Carrylls of Shipley and Westgrinstead; which family held it under the crown until 1705, when it was purchased by Sir John Bennet, Kt., serjeant-at-law, who, having considerably improved the estate, sold it to Charles Duke of Richmond; at whose death in 1750 it was purchased by Joseph Tudor; who, dying in 1786, bequeathed it to his nephew William Nelthorpe; whose nephew James Tudor Nelthorpe, Esq., is the present possessor.

Although the portion of the parish of Broadwater on which the castle stood consists at present of 150 acres only, it appears by a deed of the 19th of Edward II, that there was a park here of 400 acres;²³ the demesne lands of this manor, therefore, must have extended into the adjoining parishes of Nuthurst and Horsham. By a survey of the lands in the manor of Chesworth, made in 1608, Sedgwick Park is stated to consist of 624 acres.²⁴ These demesne lands were held under the barons of Bramber as the superior lords in fee.

At what time the castle was suffered to fall into a state of decay, I have been unable to discover. But it probably happened some time during its possession by the de Braose family; who, having other residences, would not be likely to keep this up. Till of late years, the ruins were overgrown by coppice wood, and quite shut out from public view. This the present possessor has, in a great measure, cleared away, and they are now in his paddock, and easily accessible. The form of the castle was circular; the outer wall being about 200 yards in circumference. It was surrounded by an inner and outer moat, the water of the inner moat washing the walls, which spread gradually at their foundation, so as to form a secure

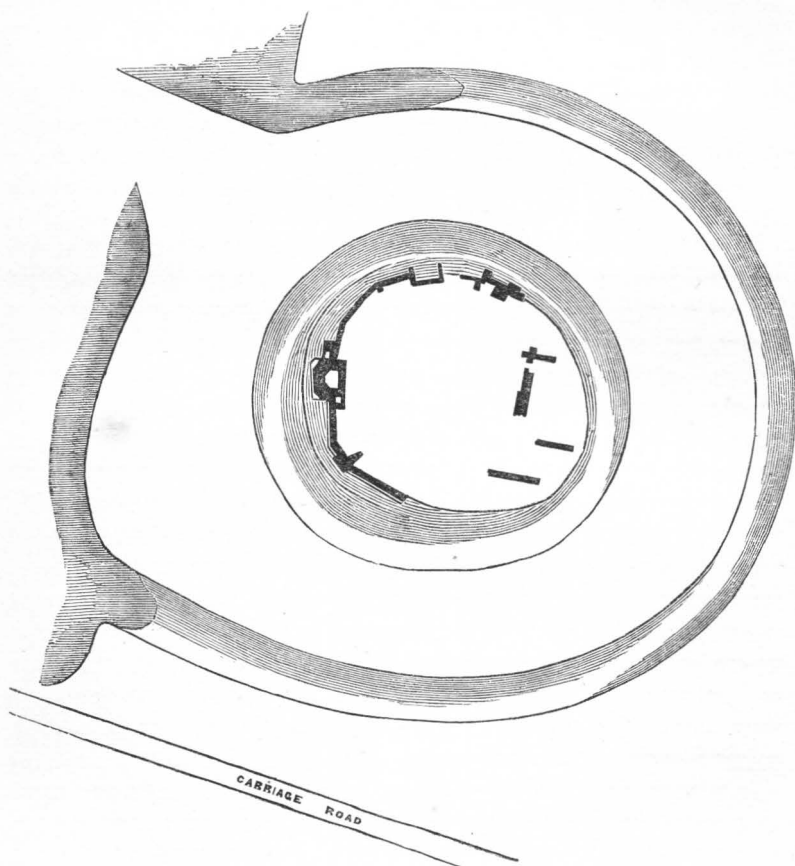
²² Cartwright's Rape of Bramber, p. 335.

²³ Sedgwick manor. 1 Molendinum, unus parvus continens 400 acras.—*Tower Records*, 90.

²⁴ This survey is in the possession of Sir Charles M. Burrell, Bart. Immediately after the completion of it, Sedgwick Park was disparked.

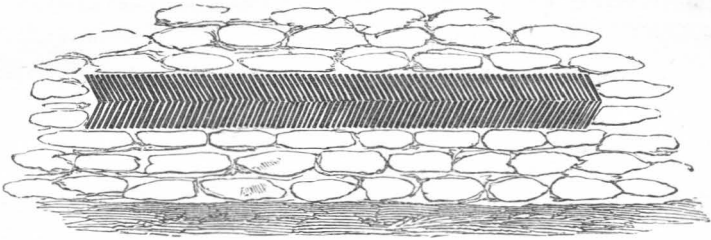
slope for the water to rest upon. The walls of this castle, for about four or five feet from the bottom of the inner fosse, are for the most part perfect, the exception being on the east side, where the ruthless hand of the road surveyor has made con-

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NUNS WELL



siderable devastation. I have known the castle for nearly thirty years, and during that time many hundred loads of stone have been taken away. The internal arrangement of some portion of the castle might, by the application of a little

pains, be satisfactorily traced, notwithstanding the mass of rubbish which has accumulated between its partition walls. In one of these walls, on the east side, there is some curious herring-bone masonry, formed of tiles about the thickness of common roof tiles, but much larger.



The approach to the castle on the south-east side still remains; and on the north-west side is an outlet which appears to have been used as a road to the well; which consists of a basin beautifully constructed of large blocks of hewn stone in steps. This well is called "the Nun's Well," why, it would be somewhat difficult to say, as the castle was never occupied as a religious house. It is also sometimes called St. Mary's Well, a name often given to fountains of pure water. This well is situated about thirty yards from the outer moat. The form of the windows of this castle might be ascertained by a careful examination of the broken pieces of stone, of which they were constructed, now lying about the castle walls. For it is to the credit of the despoilers of this interesting relic of a minor castle, that when, in breaking up its walls for the sake of the material which they so readily afford for building or road purposes, they found any wrought stone, they appear to have carefully preserved it.

I cannot conclude without an acknowledgment of the obligations I am under to Mr. Robert Shepherd of Horsham, for the very accurate plan and drawing of the remains of this castle, which he has been so good as to prepare for me, and from which the engraved illustrations of my paper are made.