

ON SOME OLD PAPERS FOUND IN A TOWER OF COWDRAY HOUSE.

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COWDRAY HOUSE, with its former possessors, has already supplied materials for two papers in these Collections (vols. v. and vii.). The subject is invested with no ordinary amount of interest: the calamities and extinction of a titled family of this county—of considerable political importance at one period of its history—and the destruction of a palatial residence, in point of architecture the pride of Western Sussex, can scarcely fail to prove attractive to the readers of these volumes.

On the right side of the now desolate Buck Hall, approaching the ruins by the principal entrance, there stands a tower, which once formed the S.E. external angle of the quadrangle, and whose massive masonry gives one the idea that it would defy for ever the attacks of time. The fire, which must have been raging on both sides of it, apparently found no ingress here, but years, and damp, and neglect have done their work, however insidiously; and although this tower can still boast of the only remaining floor and ceiling and stairs, yet the whole fabric has been pronounced to be so extremely insecure, that the entrance-door at its base, for prudential reasons, is now, and has been for several years, kept under the assurance of lock and key.

The construction of this portion is curious; it appears more ancient than the rest of the building, and may be the remains of the old Bohun edifice. The walls are of great thickness at the bottom, and are reduced gradually towards the top. The buttresses at the foot seem to have been added subsequently to the fire, and also the strong external iron band which girds it near the top. The base is hexagonal; out of it spring four octagonal towers, which, with three stacks of chimneys, rise some height above the roof. The Great Kitchen, of which there is a coloured drawing by Grimm in the Burrell Coll. (B. Mus: Add. MSS. 5699),

occupied the whole of the base up to a height of more than 30 feet; the remaining portion of the tower was occupied by an apartment 22ft. in diameter. At some period after the fire, an intermediate floor was introduced by taking off a portion of the height of the kitchen, and the space above was converted into an Audit-room, where the Tenants for many years dined at the half-yearly Audits, the dinner being cooked in the old kitchen below, and then hoisted up through an aperture still existing in the modern floor; the room was externally lighted by the upper parts of the four great mullioned windows, which originally were wholly in the great kitchen. The upper chamber has all the appearance of having been the house-steward's office, from the shelves and cupboards which are affixed to the walls.¹ The spiral stairs from the ground led to it and the roof only.

When, some years ago, I visited this room, the floor was strewn with parchments and papers; some had been thrust by handfuls into the cupboards, and many were gathered in little heaps in corners where gusts of wind had probably driven them, and where the damp had caused them to adhere in masses, rendering many of them illegible, for small traces of glazing remained in the wide casements, consequently the rain could penetrate from any quarter; the ivy, moreover, had thrust its way to the ceiling, and jackdaws had evidently learnt to look upon this apartment as their own, and one well adapted for the education of the young. Under such circumstances it was "hard lines" with the poor documents. But more ruthless still than the rain, or damp, or jackdaws, had been the spoiling hands of casual visitors, before the door had been closed to the public. The collectors of autographs and seals had in frequent cases torn off these appendages; doubtless many documents had been carried away wholly, but generally they were thus mutilated, and then flung down on the floor as valueless.

The collection was of a most miscellaneous description, any paper of importance to the estate having been of course previously examined and disposed of.² It consisted chiefly

¹ The great library of the house was in the S. angle of the west front.

² Mr. Alexander Brown (agent to the Earl of Egmont) informs me that he had all the papers cleared out soon after the sale of the estate. To this gentleman

my thanks are due for assistance on several archæological occasions; and the Society is indebted to him for the loan of Sir David Owen's Will (see Vol. VII.), and Lord Montague's Household Book.

of obsolete leases and other parchment indentures. Some of these latter made me wonder why they should have been there at all. Of the former, I think that the oldest I saw was not earlier than the reign of Elizabeth. One indenture bore the date 1594, and retained the signatures of "W. Burghley" and "Richard Kyngesmyll." Some of the papers have already been noticed. A fragment, throwing light on the history of one of the Lord Montagues, is referred to in *Suss. Arch. Coll.*, vol. vii., p. 179, and a Roll of the Gentry and Magistrates of the County in 1727, in vol. viii., p. 336. Rolls of Courts Baron, of the numerous surrounding manors held of Cowdray, were in abundance. "A Particular of suche thinges" (armour and military stores) "as weare ceassed upon in the Earle of Warwycke's Howse in the Strand, the 22d August, 1642." A copy of the temporary discharge from the tender mercies of the Committee of Sequestration on "Viscount Mountague giving a security of the thirde parte of his estate," signed by three members of the Committee, May 16, 1649. Receipts of several "Compositions" for various Recusants. A certificate on oath by the minister (J^o Mathewes) and Churchwarden (J^o Peto) of Steyning, that "John Lancaster of Beeding did receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, after divine service and sermon, on Sunday, 6th Oct. 1728;" witnessed by John Ingram of Buttolphs, and Thos. Gates of Pulborough. "Moneys expended in the Borough of Midhurst from 1749 to 1754." A Bond for £1,783 16s. 2d. (paid) of Lord Montague's in 1789, to "Sir Herbert Mackworth, Bart., George Dorsett, John Johnson, and John Wilkinson, Esqrs., of New Bond Street, Bankers, &c." As for small bills, they ranged from receipts for work done upon the estate, from A.D. 1500, to "Boxes of Strasbourg Paste, bought of L Wetten, Confectioner at the Three Balcony's, Bruton Street, Berkeley Square, in 1783." In forwarding an account to Lord Montague, who, it appears, was then living in St. James' Square, London, the agent, Mr. Morrell, takes the opportunity of appending the following melancholy announcement: "Mr. Denham, whom your Lordship was lately become acquainted with, was last night cruely murder'd. Mr. Wrench and his niece had been to dine with him, (it was intended that he should marry the young woman soon,) and between

five and six o'clock parted with them in a furze field, near half way to Mr. Wrenches house; in the same field his Brains was Dash'd out, and a Violent Blow upon his arm, and then dragg'd into a Ditch, and at three o'clock this morning, (Dec. 4, 1757) was there found; he was a good Natur'd Charitable Man, and I think beloved by every body, except the Murderer, which I hope will be found out."

There were piles of letters to and from different members of the family down to the last young Lord, who was drowned at Schaffhausen. The bearers of the title signed themselves "Mountague," with the exception of Francis, who died s. p. in 1708, who wrote "Montaigu." After him the signature adopted was "Montague." Most of these letters contain nothing remarkable, while some disclose sources of personal anxiety and family distresses. The broad acres of Cowdray could not keep their possessors from dealings with the Jews.

The following specimen, selected for present publication, bears a general as well as a local interest. It may prove some consolation to us, complaining of 9d. in the £ Income-tax in 1863, to be reminded how heavily oppressed our less capable predecessors were in 1666.

In that year the foreign relations of this country presented a most unsatisfactory aspect. England was at open rupture with the States of Holland and France combined, Denmark had played her false, and there was not a single ally who could or would give her assistance. As the emergency kept the King and Parliament on good terms, no wonder that an extraordinary subsidy was voted for the occasion. An Act was passed (18 and 19, Car. II. c. i.) "for raising Moneys by a Poll, and otherwise, towards the maintenance of the present war." It contained a grant to the King of 20s. in every £100 of personal estate. Servants, men and women, were to pay 1s. out of every 20s. they received in wages; and every person was to pay 1s. above the other rates, paupers alone excepted. Aliens were to pay double what they would have been liable for had they been natural born subjects. Payments were to be made in addition according to rank. A Duke £50; a Viscount, £25; the eldest son of a Viscount of 21 years of age, £17 10s., &c.

The following gentlemen were appointed Commissioners for

Sussex under this Act:—"John Ashburnham, Edward Blaker, Henry Brunhard, Esqrs., George Edmonds, Captain John Eversfield, John Backshall, gent, Edward Cooper, Esquire, John Mitchell, Francis Gratwicke, Esquires."

Here is the assessment of the Cowdray establishment under this Act:—

COWDRY.

A noate of the names and sirnames of the persons inhabiting or resideing within the saide howse of Cowdry, belonging to the Right Honoble. Francis Lord Viscount Mountague, according to an Acte of Parlament entituled The Pole Bill, made Feby^e y^e 28th 1666.

	The Right Honoble. Francis, Lord Viscount Mountague. ³			
	The Honoble. Lady Elisabeth, Viscountes Mountague	-	00	01 00
	Francis Browne, ⁴ Esqre., eldest Sonne of the saide Viscount and pole	-	17	11 00
	Mrs. Elizabeth Browne, ⁵ daughter of y ^e s ^d Viscount	-	00	01 00
Repaide	Mrs. Katherine Browne, Kinswoman to y ^e said Viscount	-	00	01 00
	William Burlacey, gent serv ^t wages per ann: x ^{lb} pole 1 ^s	-	00	11 00
	Francis Complin, serv ^t wages 8 ^{lb} per ann: pole 1 ^s	-	00	09 00
Repaide	Paule Adams, ⁶ serv ^{ts} wages x ^{lb} per ann: (sic)	-	00	10 00

³ Third Viscount. His mother was daughter of Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset, Lord High Treasurer of England. His wife was fourth and youngest daughter of Henry, Marquis of Worcester. Lord Montague is not charged in this list, his quota having probably been paid elsewhere. His wife having no property of her own, is charged only for Poll.

⁴ Francis succeeded his father in 1682, married Mary, daughter of William Herbert, Marquess of Powis, and widow of Richard, Viscount Molineux, d. s. p., 1708. This is the Viscount that signed himself "Montaigu," and was perhaps educated abroad.

⁵ Married Christopher Roper, Lord Teynham.

⁶ This individual appears in a parchment deed, dated 1664, in my possession, as "Paul Adams, Esquire, his Majesties officer for the receiving and collecting and answering the duety and revenue arising or belonging to his Ma^{ty} by Fire-hearths and stoves within the County of Sussex;" and he acknowledges himself bound in the sum of £2000 for the proper discharge of the office. The act under which he was appointed was the 16th Car. II., c. III., which recites the 13th and 16th Car. I. This inquisitorial and odious tax was of course irrespective of the burdens which have been just

enumerated. The collectors had power to enter, search, view, and number the fire-places, accompanied by a constable. All houses with more than two chimneys were liable for the duty. In default of payment distress was to issue, and one Justice might decide differences, &c.

It is somewhat remarkable that the person in question should be described as an Esquire in 1664, and plain "Paule Adams, servant," in 1666. He might have been an Esquire by office only, but unless he had resigned he was so still. There was nothing unusual in the fact of the King's officer being in the service of a nobleman. We are told that Lord Burleigh could reckon up 20 gentlemen retainers, who had each one thousand pounds a year (Strype, V. III., p. 129). The first servant on this list is W. Burlacey, a "gentleman servant." By the Poll Bill, public officers taxed in monthly assessments were to pay 1s. in the pound of the profits of their offices; officers not so taxed 3s. in the pound, so that Paul would be caught any how: but query, could his position have been omitted for the sake of the penalty it entailed? "Every person of the degree of an Esquire or soe reputed (to pay) the sume of £5, and every Gentleman or reputed gentleman the sum of 20s." W. Burlacey however is not charged in this paper as a gentleman.

Repaide	John Morison, serv ^{ts} wages x ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	11	00
Repaide	William Lufe, servan ^{ts} wages 5 ^{lb} per ann: pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	06	00
Repaide	Robert Lufe, servan ^{ts} wages 5 ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	06	00
Repaide	John Norman, serv ^{ts} wages 4 ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	05	00
	David Prother, serv ^{ts} wages 4 ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	05	00
Repaide	John Reades, serv ^{ts} wages iij per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	04	00
Repaide	John West, serv ^{ts} wages v ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	06	00
	John Mills, serv ^{ts} wages iiij ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	05	00
	Mr. Rishome, ⁷ serv ^{ts} wages vj ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	14	00
Repaide	Richard Cowley serv ^t wages 4 ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	05	00
	Lawrence, Mr. Brown's foot-boy, his pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	01	00
Repaide	Mrs. Jane Goodwin, serv ^{ts} wages x per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	11	00
Repaide	Mrs. Mary Cox, serv ^{ts} wages 4 ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	05	00
Repaide	Ann Allen, serv ^{ts} wages 4 ^{lb} per ann : pole 2 ^s	-	-	-	00	05	00
Repaide	Mrs. Elizabeth Underhill, serv ^{ts} wages iij ^{lb} per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	04	00
Repaide	Mrs Masey, serv ^{ts} wages iij per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	04	00
Repaide	Mary Nucher, serv ^{ts} wages iij per ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	04	00
					24	06	00

Pd.	Mary Turner, serv ^{ts} wages iij ^{lb} pr ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	04	00
Pd.	Jane Richardson, serv ^{ts} wages iij pr ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	04	00
Pd.	Eliz. Gates, servants wages iij pr ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	04	00
Pd.	Susan Cowley, serv ^{ts} wages 5 pr ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	06	00
Pd.	Elisa Dabins, serv ^{ts} wages xl ^s pr ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	03	00
Pd.	Anne Meare, serv ^{ts} wages xl ^s pr ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	03	00
	Richard, farrier wages iiij ^{lb} pr ann : pole 1 ^s	-	-	-	00	05	00
Pd.	Robert Willett and his wife (sic), serv ^{ts} wages iiij ^{lb} pr ann : poles 2 ^s	-	-	-	00	06	00
Pd.	John Moon and his wife, wages iiij ^{lb} pr ann : poles 2 ^s	-	-	-	00	06	00
Pd.	Thomas Haule and his wife, wages iiij ^{lb} pr ann : poles 2 ^s	-	-	-	00	06	00
					02	07	00
					24	06	00
	Sum tal.	-	-	-	26	13	00

Received this third day of April 1667 the severall sumes above mentioned of William Lucas gent for the poles assessed by the assessor according to Act of Parliament upon the severall psons above named by me John Sanders (sic) one of the Collectors appoynted by the Com^r and Assessor for gathering of the same in all amounting to the sume of Twenty six pounds and therteen shillings I say received

£	s.	d.
26	13	00

In presence of
JNO. TOURNER.

JOHN SANDERES.

⁷ Probably an alien, as he is charged double duty. (Perhaps Riche-homme, a Frenchman?)

We may presume from the "repaid" in the margin, that these persons had been charged and had paid elsewhere. The wages appear to be moderate: £10 per ann. for the "gentleman," and the

"King's officer" is decidedly cheap; of course they were all at "livery," i. e., found in everything. Lawrence, the footboy, evidently received no wages, so we must hope that his poll was paid by his employers. The names of Luff, Norman, and Mills, are still common in or about Midhurst.

The following wine merchant's bill furnishes us with the prices of wine two centuries since :

29th Novemb: 1669.

My Lord Mountagues Acc^t [with Rich. Blachford] viz—

2: hhd. of Aubryan wine	-	-	-	-	£24	00	00
1: hhd. of Sauterne wine	-	-	-	-	£12	00	00
6: terses off Clarrett	-	-	-	-	£25	00	00
One hhd. of Vinagr ^r	-	-	-	-	£03	10	00
					<u>£64</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>00</u>
Rec ^d Backe one terse of wine	-	-	-	-	4	00	00
					<u>£60</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>00</u>
Remaynes dew for Ballenge	-	-	-	-			

Under the date of 1681, March 29th, we have an undertaker's bill, which, among the ordinary items of shroud, head-cloth, &c., contains this entry: " $\frac{1}{4}$ of a pinte of plague-water when taken out of the river, £00. 00. 03." Plague-water was the "disinfectant" of the period; but the circumstances in which the deceased was "taken out of the river" are unexplained.

A much later bill of a rustic snip will finish these notings. In 1672, Gilbert Hannam founded a Grammar-School in Midhurst. It is to be hoped for the credit of that Institution, that Richard Tilbury was not one of the alumni.

THE RIGHT HONBLE. LORD VISCOUNT MOUNTAGUE.

TO RICHARD TILBURY.

		£	s.	d.
1784.				
Febr ^y 2 nd .	George the footman Pair fine Stout Doe Brichis	-	-	1 5 0
	John Benem Pair fine Stout Dito	-	-	1 5 0
	Robert Chapman Pair fine Stout Dito	-	-	1 5 0
	John Fluck Pair fine Stout Dito	-	-	1 5 0
	Postilan Pair fine Stout Dito	-	-	1 5 0
	Thom ^{as} Bucher Gamekeper Pair fine Stout Dito	-	-	1 5 0
	Edward Under Butler two Pair of Colerd Glovs to Cleane			
	Knivs	-	-	0 3 6
	Young Jacob for Mending his Brichis	-	-	0 1 6
	Master Brown for Dry Cleaning his Brichis	-	-	0 0 9
	Mending Postilan Brichis	-	-	0 2 0
				<u>£7 17 9</u>

Febr^y 25th Rec^d the Contents of this Bill in full
 ꝑ me RICHD. TILBURY.