



THE LEWKNOR CARPET

# Sussex Archæological Society.

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BY FANE LAMBARDE, F.S.A.

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At the beginning of the sixteenth century one of the largest land-owners in Sussex was Sir Roger Lewknor; amongst other of his possessions being Bodiam Castle, Camoys' Court, etc. The son of Sir Thomas Lewknor and his wife Katherine Pelham, he was born about 1465 (*S.A.C.*, LXVIII., 281). The difficulties of dealing with the Lewknor pedigree were noted by Durrant Cooper in *S.A.C.*, III., 90. But it seems that Sir Roger married three times. His first wife was Eleanor, daughter of George, Lord Audley; and by her he had one daughter only, named Jane. This Jane, marrying three times, had issue by all three husbands. The curious divorce suit, to which she was subjected, is noted in *S.A.C.*, LXVIII., 279; and there we read that her three young step-sisters were under the guardianship of Sir Henry Knyvett, second husband of her daughter Ann in 1546, a fact which emphasises the difference in age between Sir Roger's children by his first and third wives.

Sir Roger's first wife Eleanor died; and, for his second wife, he married Constance Hussey, daughter and co-heir of Nicholas Hussey, and widow of Henry Lovell of Brambletye. By her he had no issue, and she died in 1525.

And so Sir Roger, in or about 1532, found himself at an age approaching the allotted span of life. With no son to succeed him, his great estates must pass to the children of his only daughter Jane. Still in hope of a male heir, he decided to marry again. Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Messant, was chosen; and to them three children were born, viz. Katherine in 1533, Mabel in 1536, and Constance in 1541. To his intense disappointment, all three were daughters. And when the youngest was born, Sir Roger must have been about 76 years old. Sir Roger died in 1543, and his widow—marrying his cousin Sir Richard Lewknor as her second husband—was the mother of at least ten more children. The Inq.P.M. of Sir Roger is recorded in *Sussex Record Soc.*, XIV., 142. Elizabeth is called his second wife—Constance Hussey being ignored.

As noted above, his three young daughters were, in 1546, wards of Sir Henry Knyvett, the husband of their step-niece, Ann. These daughters grew up; and some-while about 1560, the youngest, Constance, married, for her first husband, Thomas Foster of Newnham in Worcestershire. In Worcestershire she doubtless foregathered with her cousin Jane, who married Anthony Sheldon. Anthony was a nephew of William Sheldon, famed for his establishment of the Tapestry Industry in Worcestershire. And it was through his interest, no doubt, that the "Lewknor Carpet" was woven. It is thus described in *Archaeologia*, LXXIV., 199:

A magnificent Armorial Tapestry at Chawton Manor, owned by Mr. Montagu George Knight,<sup>1</sup> measures 16 ft. 3 in. long by 7 ft. 2 in. wide. It is dated 1564, and contains shields indicative of the Lewknor marriages in the wide border. A pair of nude figures support a shield surrounded by a wreath of leaves and flowers, and in the right and left of the hanging are two shields, each similarly encircled with a wreath. The design and execution are very fine, and if the date is correct, it would point to a very high development of tapestry weaving at an early period. The hanging must be assigned to the Sheldon Looms, as apparently Barcheston was the only English factory then at work in the country.

<sup>1</sup> Now, by his nephew and heir, Major Lionel Charles Edward Knight. To the Knights descended the Lewknor estates.

By Thomas Foster, Constance had one son, Anthony, and three daughters, Elizabeth, Mary and Mabel. And after his death she married, for her second husband, Edward Glemham of Chichester. He was alive in 1588; but there appears to have been no issue of this marriage. Constance was alive in 1617 (see *Sussex Feet of Fines, Sussex Record Soc.*, XX., 446). And in the Consistory Court at Chichester, XVIII., f. 341, v. is the nuncupative will<sup>2</sup> of Constance Glemham of Trotton, Sussex, widow, "being a very aged woman," made "in or about the moneth of Aprill," 1634, before Robert Tomlinson, Clerk, Rector of Trotton: residuary legatee, Anthony Foster, her son. Afterwards testatrix in presence of Elinor Buckland, gentlewoman, and of Mr. Anthony Foster bequeathed to her grandchild, Mr. Water (*sic*) Buckland, a piece of gold, value 33s. or thereabouts. Testatrix often said that her son Anthony Foster should have all her goods. Witnesses: Ro. Tomlinson, El'nor Elfeck alias Buckland. Administration was granted 8 Dec., 1634, to Anthony Foster, principal legatee; Master Robert Tomlinson, Clerk, and Eleanor Elfecke alias Buckland having been sworn.

And so we have Constance dying<sup>3</sup> on 26th July, 1634, at the age of 93. Thus the extraordinary span of one hundred and seventy years—embracing the whole of the Tudor period—separated the birth of the father and the death of the daughter.

The following is extracted from the Camoys Peerage Case (Case of Thomas Stonor, Esq., Appendix No. II., p. 7).

Constance Lewknor had issue by Thomas Foster, a son Anthony, and a daughter whose name has not been ascertained; it appears, however, probable that she married a person of the name of Bate-man. Anthony succeeded to Trotton, and resided there. When the Heralds Visitation of Sussex was made in 1634, he was living, as was also his wife Elizabeth (Buckland), but it does not appear that they had any child or children. In 1644 administration of the goods, etc., of Anthony Foster, late of Trotton, Esquire, was granted

<sup>2</sup> Extract kindly supplied by W. D. Peckham, Esq.

<sup>3</sup> See *Sussex Inquisitions*, No. 472, Vol. XIV., p. 103.

to his sister's daughter Constance Bateman, but of Constance or of any other member of this family, no subsequent trace has been obtained, although long and laborious searches have been made both in Sussex and in London.

By Constance Glemham, the Carpet was bequeathed to the then head of the Lewknor family, Sir John of West Dean. That he set a high value on this piece of work is shown by a document, dated 1662, in which Sir John Lewknor gives the following injunction:

Remember to keep safe y<sup>e</sup> Carpet of Armes, now aged about 100 yeares w<sup>ch</sup> in y<sup>e</sup> failure the elder house totally consuming itselfe by daughters and heires and passing into other names, was sent hither by Constance Glemham of Trotton, who was one of those heires, for record to the younger house and whole name. (See *Chawton Manor and its Owners*, by W. A. Leigh and Montagu G. Knight, 1911.)

The Coats of Arms, which record some of the Lewknor alliances, may be attributed as follows:

KEY PLAN.

	10	9	8	7	6	
11						5
		B	A		C	
12						4
	13	14	1	2	3	

A. LEWKNOR impaling MESSANT.

Azure three chevrons argent

LEWKNOR

impaling

Quarterly Or three lozenges gules, and gules,

three fleurs-de-lis or

MESSANT

This records the marriage of Sir Roger Lewknor to his third wife Elizabeth (mother of Constance), daughter of Thomas Messant (*S.A.C.*, III., 96). Nowhere are the Arms of Messant recorded; so that the proof that they are as above is negative; they cannot apparently belong to anyone else.

<sup>4</sup> It is worthy of note that the beautiful design and execution of the earlier English tapestry—as is the case with the earlier decoration of woodwork (for instance the panelling in Thame Park)—was never afterwards equalled in the later productions of the same looms.

## B. LEWKNOR impaling TREGOZ.

Azure three chevrons argent LEWKNOR  
 impaling  
 Azure two bars gemelles and in chief a  
 leopard or TREGOZ

There is no recorded marriage of a Lewknor to a Tregoz; but Lewknor quartered the Arms of Tregoz through the marriage of Sir Thomas Lewknor to Jane, daughter and heir of Sir John Doyley. See No. 13.

## C. CAMOYS impaling DE SPENCER.

Or on a chief gules three roundels or CAMOYS  
 impaling  
 Quarterly argent a bend sable and gules a  
 fret or DE SPENCER

This records the marriage of Ralph, Lord Camoys, to the daughter of Hugh de Spencer, Earl of Winchester. This is according to the Pedigree recorded in the *Visitation of Sussex*, 1634, Harl. Soc., LIII., 29. This descent is not confirmed in the *Complete Peerage*, II., 507. Sir Roger Lewknor's grandfather, Sir Roger, married Eleanor, daughter and co-heir of Sir Richard Camoys (*Complete Peerage*, II., 508). See No. 5.

## 1. LEWKNOR.

Crest. A white greyhound with a red collar.

## 2. LEWKNOR impaling LA WARR.

Azure three chevrons argent LEWKNOR  
 impaling

Quarterly of four

1 & 4 Gules crusilly fitchy a lion rampant argent  
 LA WARR

2 & 3 Azure three leopard's heads inverted  
 jessant de lis or CANTELUPE

This records the marriage of Sir Roger's uncle, Sir Roger Lewknor, to Mary, daughter of Reginald West, Lord La Warr.

## 3. MOYNE impaling HOLLAND.

Argent two bars and in chief three molets sable  
 impaling MOYNE

Azure fretty a leopard rampant argent HOLLAND

This is a very doubtful attribution, nor is there any record of the marriage that it records. The connection with Lewknor, as through a Camoys marriage, is shown in No. 10.

It has been usual to record the impaled Coat as that of Braose (azure crusilly a lion rampant (crowned) or). But the field is charged with what appears to be fleurs-de-lis rather than crosslets; and the leopard is tricked exactly as a leopard of England up-ended. The Braose charge was a crowned lion, though often enough the crown is omitted.

4. CAMOYS.  
Or on a chief gules three roundels or CAMOYS  
Usually the chief is charged with silver roundels; but here throughout they are gold.
5. LEWKNOR impaling CAMOYS.  
Azure three chevrons argent LEWKNOR  
impaling  
Or on a chief gules, three roundels or CAMOYS  
This records the marriage of Sir Roger Lewknor's grandfather, Sir Roger, to Eleanor, daughter and co-heir of Sir Richard Camoys. And through this marriage came the Trotton estate, which descended to Constance Glemham.
6. CAMOYS impaling MEULX.  
Or on a chief gules three roundels or CAMOYS  
impaling  
Azure three pales or on a chief gules three  
crosses patty argent MEULX  
Of the marriage here, there is no record; and the attribution of the impaled shield is doubtful. The Meulx were a well-known Hampshire family. See *Vis. of Hamp.*, Harl. Soc., LXIV., 134, where the field is paly or and azure, and the crosses are or. See also *The Oglander Memoirs*, p. 90.
7. LEWKNOR impaling TREGOZ.  
As "B."
8. LEWKNOR impaling MESSANT.  
As "A."
9. LEWKNOR impaling PELHAM.  
Azure three chevrons argent LEWKNOR  
impaling  
Azure three pelicans argent PELHAM  
This records the marriage of Sir Roger Lewknor's parents, Sir Thomas and Katherine, daughter of Sir John Pelham.
10. CAMOYS impaling MOYNE.  
Or on a chief gules three roundels or CAMOYS  
impaling  
Argent two bars and in chief three molets  
sable MOYNE  
There is no record of any such marriage in the Camoys Pedigree, and the attribution to Moyne is doubtful. See No. 3. The Moyne's were a Dorsetshire family of long standing—see *Heraldic Notes* at the end of Prideaux's *Dorsetshire Manor Houses*.

