

STANSTED PARK AND ITS OWNERS.

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STANSTED PARK is situated in the beautifully wooded country on the confines of Hampshire and Sussex, extending from Rowlands Castle, in Hampshire, to Westbourne, in Sussex.

The origin of the name Stansted is evidently derived from the old English *stan*, a stone, and *stede*, a place. The story recounted in Walpoole, that the name took its origin from the words of Queen Elizabeth, when she stopped here to admire the view—"Stand, steed!"—is manifestly absurd, for we find the name mentioned in many early records. Thus, in the Pipe Rolls, 1178-1184, it occurs as Stanesteda or Stansteda, and in the Patent Rolls, 1306, as Estanestede. Other variants of the name, from the fourteenth century onwards, are Stansted, Stanstede, Standsted, and Stanstead. The most common spellings used at the present time are Stansted or Stanstead.

Little is known of Stansted in very early times, but it is very probable the site was inhabited in Roman times, as in 1893 the uprooting of a tree in Watergate Hanger, a wood on the estate, about a mile from East Marden, disclosed a Roman mosaic pavement. In 1907 and following years extensive excavations were carried out, and the mosaic was discovered to be composed of white and black tesserae, combined with red, and forming a key pattern in the form of a square.

Although not actually named in Domesday Book, Stansted was nevertheless included in the hundred of Bourne (*i.e.*, Westbourne). At this time it was in the possession of the Earls of Arundel, who held their hundred and forest courts there. In 1071 Roger de Montgomeri owned, among other possessions, "the forest of Stansted." In the Burrell MSS.

in the British Museum the date is given as 1021, which is evidently an error, as Roger de Montgomeri would have been a very young child at that date, if, indeed, he had been born.

The Norman kings frequently used Stansted Forest for hunting purposes. In the "Chronicle of Benedict of Peterborough" and in "Hoveden's Chronicle" mention is made of a visit of Henry II to Stansted in 1177. On July 9 in that year he proceeded to Stokes (which is probably identical with Stokes Bay, near Portsmouth), with the intention of proceeding to Normandy. The weather being unfavourable for a sea journey, the King went to Stansted the following day, intending to stay there till he had news from France, and until there was a favourable wind to enable him to proceed on his journey. He stayed at Stansted for eight days, during which time he transacted various matters of State. The most important of these was that on July 12th news was received that the Papal Legate threatened to place England under an interdict unless the King agreed to the marriage of his son Richard with Alice, daughter of the King of France. Henry thereupon held a consultation with those there present, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of Exeter and Chichester, and it was resolved that the Archbishop and Bishops should appeal to the Pope against the Legate. The King also confirmed an agreement between the Bishops of Lisieux and Exeter relating to Bosham. Another act transacted at Stansted granted permission to the Jews to provide a cemetery of their own in every city outside the walls.

In the Pipe Rolls the following entries relating to Stansted occur between the years 1178 and 1184:—

- " 25 Hen. II. 1178-9. Et Ricardo et Radulfo falconariis regis xxs. de procuratione sua apud Stanesteda per breve regis.
- " 27 Hen. II. 1180-1. Et in liberatione Silvestri et sociorum ejus dum custodirent aves regis apud Stanesteda xvis. per breve regis.

- " 28 Hen. II. 1181-2. Et in operatione nove camere regis de Stansteda quater *xxl.* et *xxxvs.* et *vd.* per breve regis et per visum Galfridi sacerdotis et Geruasii de la Puette et Jocel' de Meredon'.
- " 29 Hen. II. 1182-3. Et in operatione camere et coquine regis de Stansteda *xxxviii.* et *xiiiis.* et *ixd.* per idem breve et per visum Henrici de Vuinges et Geruasii de Puetta.
- " 30 Hen. II. 1183-4. Et in reparavidis domibus de Stansteda *ixl.* et *vis.* et *xd.* per idem breve et per visum Geruasii de la Puette et Henrici de [Vuinges]."

It is also recorded that Richard I journeyed to Stansted in April, 1194, to enjoy some hunting. According to King John's "Itinerary," he appears to have paid several visits to Stansted in 1214 and 1215. On January 25th, 1215, he issued a writ to the Sheriff of Sussex from Stansted to this effect:—

" We order you to pay to Simon Eynuff thirty shillings for one cask of wine, which was drunk at our house at Aldingbourn, on Sunday, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul."

The liberties of the Forest of Stansted are contained in a document of 11 John, which reads:—

" Coram justic' itinerant. Mem. quod. dominus de Stanstede potest fugare, bis in anno, omnia animalia, ferat' inter Manningbourn et Horslegh usque Stanstede, et delinquentes ibidem punire'."

In the leet of Fines for Sussex, temp. Rich. I—Hen. III, it is recorded:—

" Inter Radm. Sansaueir pet' et Willm. fil' Ilberti ten'—De duabus hidis terre in Rakinton et in Stanstede; unde recognicio magne assise sum' fuit inter eos."

The manor of Stansted, together with the hundred and manor of Bourne, was assigned to Isobell, Countess of Arundel, for dower in 1243, under the Vexon Clause, Close Rolls of

27 Henry III. Isobell was the daughter of Hugh de Warren, and wife of Hugh d'Albini, Earl of Arundel, who predeceased her. She died in 1282, and the estate passed to Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, who at this time was a minor and a ward of the King, who thereupon took entire charge of the estate. Intrigues appear to have been rife at Court during this time to obtain possession of Stansted, as during 1283 there are four orders relating to this recorded in the Patent Rolls. Thus, on April 22nd, 1283, the Abbot of Vale Royal, in Cheshire, was appointed to the custody of the estate during the minority of Richard Fitzalan in aid of the works of the above Abbey. Then, on June 5th in the same year, the King appointed his Queen, Eleanor, to the manor of Stansted. About a week later the manor was again transferred to the Abbot of Vale Royal!

In 1302 an Enquiry before the Escheator was held at Westbourne, in which it is stated that "there is in the said manor a capital messuage which is called Stanstede which is worth nothing beyond reprisals [*i.e.*, charges or payments, such as annuities, rent charges, etc.] and maintenance of buildings." Other surveys were made in 1327 and 1330 respectively, which give interesting particulars of the estate and mansion at that time. The 1327 Survey runs:—

" . . . and there is at Stanstede a hall, two chambers with a chapel, a kitchen and a chamber over the gate, a stable and cowshed, worth nothing beyond reprisals. And there are 60½ acres arable, worth £10. 12. 6. at 6d. the acre; and 9 acres of meadow worth 11/3 at 15d. the acre. And there is at Stanstede a park in which can be raised from the dead wood and undergrowth, beyond the expenses of the foresters and the fencings of the park, 10/-. And pannage in the said park is worth in ordinary years 6/8. And the pasture if it were not preserved for game would be worth 20/-."

This is the earliest reference we have of a house or mansion at Stansted, but it is probable that a much older building had occupied the same site. The house as described in the

1327 Survey would be but a small one, and could not have been, as Dallaway says it was, the principal residence of the Earls of Arundel; it would surely have been much too small. It is much more probable that it was used simply as a hunting box, and the lovely wooded country which comprises the estate certainly supports this view. The house was entirely rebuilt in 1480. The Survey of 1330 shows:—

“ And there is a park with game of which the herbage is worth 40/-; and the pannage when there is any 33/4. And the wood of the park is worth 20/- yearly. And there is another wood which is worth in herbage and pannage 20/-.”

In the Patent Rolls, under date January 1st, 1306, we find that Edward I authorized a “ grant to Edmund de Arundel, at his request, of a fine or forfeiture, appertaining to the King, for the trespass of William de Whitewey in the park of Estanestede, whereof the said William was convicted before the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer.” William de Whitewey was Parker at Stansted. Madox, in his “ History of the Exchequer,” mentions the case, and says that Whitewey was “ committed to the Tower of London, and had lain there in prison for about four years, and was still there ”; this would be in 1309. In 1335 Richard, Earl of Arundel, made two complaints of trespasses committed on his property—viz., (1) “ That divers persons had broken his parks at Stansted, hunted and carried away deer ”; and (2) “ That the Dean of Chichester and others cut down his trees at Stansted, and carried them away with other of his goods.”

Stansted appears to have become an independent manor in the fifteenth century. According to a Subsidy levied 13 Henry IV (1411-12), “ Thomas, Earl of Arundel and Surrey, has Arundel Castle, and has manors, lands, etc., viz., the manor of Borne with Stanstede, Waldirton and the hundred, members of that manor £53.” The only other reference to Stansted in the fifteenth century we have been able to trace is that William, Earl of Arundel, settled the estate on his son, known as Lord Maltravers, who, in the year 1480, entirely rebuilt the house

and made it his residence. There is very little known of Stansted during the next hundred years. Queen Elizabeth was entertained at Stansted during one of her royal progresses. The date is not definitely known, but as far as can be ascertained it was about August or September, 1591. She probably stayed here either on her journey to Portsmouth from Chichester or on the return journey from Portsmouth. No particulars seem to have been preserved of this royal visit. It is also known that Stansted remained in the Arundel family until the death of Henry Fitzalan, twenty-second Earl of Arundel, when it descended, with the manor of Westbourne, to Joan, his eldest daughter, who is the twenty-fourth in the descent of the manor. She married, on March 4th, 1552, John, Lord Lumley, and died without issue in 1576. He died on April 11th, 1609, and was succeeded by his cousin Sir Richard Lumley, who in 1628 was created Viscount Lumley of Waterford, Ireland. He married Frances, daughter of Henry Shelley, of Warminghurst, by whom he had three sons and two daughters, as recorded in the registers of Westbourne—viz., John, born (?); Anne, 1620; Richard, 1622; Julia, 1624; and Thomas, 1626. Lady Lumley died in giving birth to Thomas, and was buried on March 10th, 1626, her child Thomas being buried four days afterwards. Viscount Lumley married again, his second wife being Elizabeth, widow of Sir William Cornwallis.

The elder sister of Lady Cornwallis married Sir John Danvers, and their son Henry, the founder of the Botanic Garden at Oxford, was created Earl of Danby. He, being first cousin to Lady Lumley, had a charge of £1,200 on the Stansted estate. Lord Lumley was a Royalist, and during the Civil War Stansted was the scene of one or two fights. In December, 1643, Hopton sent some cavalry to attack the house, where the Royalists who held it seem to have been repulsed at first, but afterwards regained possession of it. Then, in 1644, Sir William Waller, according to a Civil War tract of that date, sent "2,000 horse and foot with two drakes to besiege my Lord Lumley's House," on which occasion it at once

surrendered. Stansted House at this time was a castellated building, with a turreted gateway and courtyard. Lord Lumley's property consisted of the manor and house of Stansted, and lands worth £156 6s. 8d. yearly, copyhold rents there and in Walberton, £4 13s. 4d. ; and fee rents, 5s., etc. He had debts amounting to £3,447 10s., which included one of over £1,100 for his daughter Julia.

Viscount Lumley and his son both presented petitions to the Committee for Compounding, saying that they were seized in fee of and "in the soyle of Stansted Forest and Warren ; but in respect the herbage is belonging to your petrs. the tenants, and others inhabitants adjacent, noe value was sett upon the same in their perticuler. Nowe for that yor. petrs. have some woods growing upon the said forest, to serve for fuel and reparacions for the dwelling house there. Your petrs. humby pray that they may be admitted to sett a value upon the same, that soe the sequestracion thereof may be discharged on payment of their fine for the same." This petition was, on October 1st, 1646, referred to the Sub-Committee to deal with. Viscount Lumley's fine for compounding was fixed at £1,980. In October, 1646, Lord Lumley made a complaint, stating that although the County Commissioners had been notified of the order of suspension, pending the payment of his fine, they were "carrying away his woods, formerly felled, and by proclamation in church and market, give all who have contracted for any woods, liberty to do the like." His son John petitioned for his reversion in his father's estates, and the fine for such reversion was in his case £1,800. John Lumley married Mary, the daughter, and subsequently one of the heirs, of Sir Henry Compton, of Brambletye ; he died in the lifetime of his father. Stansted must have been a place of some importance about this time, as we find it mentioned in Blome's "Britannia," 1676, as one of the recognized post towns.

On the death of Viscount Lumley the estate passed to his grandson, Richard Lumley, who in 1681 was created Baron Lumley of Lumley Castle in the peerage of England, made a

Viscount in 1689, and in 1690 created first Earl of Scarborough. In 1684 he succeeded Lord Clarendon as Treasurer to the Queen. Soon after Monmouth's rebellion broke out, and he at once organized a troop of horse in Hampshire and several troops of Militia in Sussex, and marched to Ringwood, Hants. It was a party of his men who captured Monmouth on July 8th, 1685. The Earl of Scarborough built a new mansion at Stansted, which was commenced in 1686. Walpole says that "the elegance of this edifice is by no means proportionate to the prodigious expense which the raising of it cost his lordship." The architect was William Talman, who superintended its erection. It was built of brick, and had four fronts facing the four cardinal points. These fronts were connected by Ionic colonnades, the wings being crowned by cupolas; while in the centre was an observatory.

Defoe, writing in 1724, thus describes Stansted:—"From Chichester the road, lying still west, passes in view of the Earl of Scarborough's fine seat at Stansted, a house seeming to be a retreat, being surrounded with thick woods, through which there are the most pleasant, agreeable vistas cut that are to be seen anywhere in England; particularly because through the west opening, which is from the front of the house, they sit in the dining-room of the house and see the town and harbour of Portsmouth, the ships at Spithead, and also at St. Helen's; which when the Royal Navy happens to be there, as often happened during the late war, is a most glorious sight."

It is said that William III visited the Earl of Scarborough at Stansted in 1692, but no confirmation of this can be found. It is very probable he did visit Stansted, as the Earl had served with the King during his campaigns in Flanders, and had brought back from there a beautiful and valuable Arras tapestry depicting the Battle of Wymendaal. The Prince of Wales (afterwards George II) paid a visit to Stansted on September 25th, 1716, and proceeded to Portsmouth the following day, returning to Stansted the same evening. The Prince left Stansted on the morning of September 27th, 1716.

In 1722, on August 31st, George I paid a visit to Stansted. The Earl of Scarborough married Frances, only daughter and heiress of Sir Henry Jones, of Aston, Oxfordshire, and had issue seven sons and four daughters. The Earl died on December 17th, 1721, his wife dying in 1737.

By his will the Earl of Scarborough settled Stansted on his seventh son, the Hon. James Lumley, who, dying unmarried in 1766, devised it by will to his nephew, George Montagu Dunk, second Earl of Halifax, whose father, the first Earl, had married as his second wife the Lady Mary Lumley, elder sister of the Hon. James Lumley. He married Anne, daughter of William Richard and heiress of Sir Thomas Dunk, whose name he assumed. Lord Halifax built the curious structure (now in ruins) known as Racton Tower, which was used as a pleasure house. It is on the Stansted estate. He also erected a small building, known as Lumley's Seat, which commanded a lovely view of the surrounding country. The Earl of Halifax died on June 8th, 1771, and left the estate to his natural daughter, Anna Maria Montagu, who was a minor at that time. She afterwards married Richard Archdall. In July, 1781, the Stansted property was put up for sale by the Court of Chancery, to discharge Lord Halifax's debts. It was purchased for the sum of £102,500 by Richard Barwell, one of the Supreme Council of Bengal. Barwell had accumulated an immense fortune in the service of the East India Company, and on purchasing Stansted he lived there in oriental splendour. In 1786 Barwell decided to rebuild Stansted House, and employed two well-known architects for this purpose, Bonomi and James Wyatt, under whose direction the house was entirely remodelled, the work taking five years to complete. No expense was spared, and this helped considerably to exhaust the great wealth of Barwell. The wings were removed and the house cased in white brick, being finished with a lofty attic and two porticos, facing east and west.

Dallaway says: "The effect from every point of view is striking and magnificent, and nothing can exceed the graceful-

ness of the porticos, which give an air and character to the whole, peculiar to the most admired of the Italian villas in Rome and Florence." The park and gardens were then laid out in the style of those at Chantilly, then newly introduced into England. Stansted was one of the first to be laid out in this style. There were three magnificent avenues of great width and length, effected by simply clearing the trees. The central avenue is one of the finest to be seen anywhere. The gardens were laid out by Launcelot Brown, the great landscape gardener of his day. The house contained many beautiful carvings by Grinling Gibbons, a large number of articles of vertu, and some fine paintings by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Quentin Matsys, and other great masters.

Richard Barwell was a well-known man on account of his wholehearted support of Warren Hastings, thus incurring the hatred of Philip Francis. It is curious to note how each of these men regarded Barwell. Hastings said: "He possesses much experience, a solid judgment, much greater fertility of resources than I have, and his manners are easy and pleasant." Francis declares that "He is rapacious without industry, and ambitious without an exertion of his faculties or steady application of affairs. He will do whatever can be done by bribery and intrigue; he has no other resource." History seems to prove that the latter is the more accurate estimate of his character. Barwell married, in 1776, a well-known beauty of Calcutta, a Miss Sanderson, by whom he had one son. She died in 1778. There is a portrait of Barwell with his son, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which was afterwards engraved by Dickenson in mezzotint.

Lady Newdigate, a frequent visitor at Stansted, in one of her letters, tells of the unconventional manners in vogue at Stansted in Barwell's time. She writes:—"The hours of ye family are what ye Polite World wd not conform to, viz. Breakfast at 8½, dine 3½, supper at 9 and go to bed at 10, but everybody is at Liberty to order Breakfast, Dinner or Supper into their own Rooms & no questions ask'd."

Richard Barwell died at Stansted on September 2nd, 1804.

Soon after his death his trustees, one of whom was Sir Elijah Impey, sold the estate to Lewis Way for £173,000. Stansted Park then consisted of 1,000 acres, and the farms on the estate comprised another 3,000 acres. Lewis Way is said to have inherited a large fortune through an act of kindness. Way was studying for the Bar in Gray's Inn, and on arriving home late one stormy night, he found a man lying insensible at the foot of the stairs leading to his chambers. He took him up to his room, and under his kindly ministrations the stranger recovered. Soon afterwards the stranger died, and bequeathed his fortune to Lewis Way in return for his kindness.

Way was a somewhat eccentric man. He was called to the Bar in 1797, but afterwards entered the Church, being ordained in 1816, and became greatly interested in the Society for the Conversion of the Jews. In 1817 he travelled, with a number of other clergymen, to St. Petersburg to try to influence the Emperor on behalf of the Jews, but with what result is not known. He established a college at Aldsworth House, on the Stansted estate, for educating missionaries for the conversion of the Jews. The Rev. — Jacob, afterwards Principal of the College at Fredericton, New Brunswick, was its head, and among the students was the celebrated Joseph Wolff, the traveller. Lewis Way appears to have been much imposed upon by some of his so-called converts, which called forth Lord Macaulay's lines—

Each, says the proverb, has his taste. 'Tis true,
 March loves a controversy, Coates a play,
 Bennet a felon, Lewis Way a Jew,
 The Jew, the silver spoons of Lewis Way.

Way also added a private chapel, converting a portion of the old mansion to this use. This chapel was consecrated by the Bishops of Gloucester and St. David's in January, 1819. It is interesting to note that the famous Bishop Samuel Wilberforce preached his first sermon in Stansted Chapel. Another interesting item relating to Lewis Way's ownership of Stansted is the fact that he established a private

printing press there, but in what year is not known. But it was at work there in 1822, as the only known production from the press bears that date. This is a small octavo volume of poems, unpagged, in paper wrappers, and published anonymously. The title page reads: "Poems. Stansted: imprinted at the private press, MDCCCXXII." In the centre of the page is a device representing a sprig of oak leaves and acorns, with a cross and square intermingled. There is nothing in the work itself to indicate who is the author, and Stansted might be either of two places of that name—the one under consideration in this article, the other in Essex. But a copy of the little work in the Brighton Public Library is an author's presentation copy, in which it is stated that it was given to Elizabeth and Joseph D'Arcy by Lewis Way, the author, and dated "Stansted Park, 4 September, 1822," which proves that this private press was established by Lewis Way at Stansted.

Way married Mary, daughter of Herman Drewe, Rector of Comb Raleigh, Devon, by whom he had one son, Albert, born in 1805, who afterwards became well known as an antiquary, and who died in 1874. Lewis Way died in 1840, and his executors sold the estate to Charles Dixon, a wine merchant of London. There is very little of interest to record about Stansted from this time onwards, beyond showing the succession of the estate to the present time.

Charles Dixon founded, in 1852, the charity known as Stansted College, situated in the parish of Chalton, and near Rowlands Castle, for the benefit of "six decayed merchants of London, Liverpool, or Bristol," who are members of the Church of England. The building cost £6,000, and Dixon endowed it with £20,000 invested in public funds, which produces an annual income of about £588 16s. 10d. The College is administered by the Charity Commissioners.

On the death of Charles Dixon, Stansted came into the possession of his widow, Augustina Ivers Mary. This lady had been previously married, and had two sons by her first husband, whose name was Wilder. These two sons were named George and Edmond; but George died, and his mother

thereupon devised the estate in trust for the benefit of his son George, who eventually married the daughter of Admiral O'Callaghan. His son George afterwards succeeded to the estate. During his ownership the mansion was completely destroyed by fire, on July 27th, 1900, when many valuable treasures were destroyed, including the beautiful Grinling Gibbons carvings and other works of art. The house was rebuilt on the same site in 1903 by George Wilder, and in 1913 he sold Stansted to its present owner, Major Whittaker.