

HAMPSHIRE CASTLES.

I. Warblington Castle.

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LITTLE remains to be seen of Warblington Castle except the ruins of the Tudor gatehouse, which is built of brick, faced with Isle of Wight stone. For the mouldings and ornaments, Caen stone was used. In addition to the gatehouse, there are the foundations of some buildings surrounding the Courtyard. These are of stone, dating possibly from the fourteenth century, on the top of which are from one to four courses of Tudor bricks.

In the mid-fourteenth century the castle was in the possession of the family of Monthermer. Ralph de Monthermer, Earl of Gloucester, married Joan of Acres, sister of Edward II, by whom he had two sons, Thomas and Edward. The castle is said to have been built, or, as is more likely, a licence granted by the Crown to "Crenelate" the existing Manor, in *circa* 1340. Thomas succeeded to Warblington sometime after 1330. His widow, Margaret, held the castle in dower till her death in May 1349. From her it passed to the family of Montague, Earls of Salisbury, through her daughter Margaret who married Sir John Montague. Her grandson, Thomas, Earl of Salisbury was killed at the siege of Orleans in 1428, leaving a daughter Alice. Alice married Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, and through their daughter Isabel, Warblington passed to Edward, Earl of Warwick, and later to his sister, Margaret, Countess of Salisbury.

Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury,¹ the daughter of Isabel Neville and George, Duke of Clarence, is perhaps the outstanding figure in the history of Warblington. Edward, Earl of Warwick, being a minor, the castle was placed in the custody of Edmund Mille, Groom of the King's Chamber. In 1499 Warwick was executed. In 1514² the castle and lands were restored to his sister, the Countess of Salisbury, by King Henry VIII. The Countess became Governess to Princess Mary to whom she was also godmother. Sometime between 1514 and 1526 the Countess Margaret rebuilt Warblington Castle in brick. King Henry VIII visited Warblington in July 1526. It was his intention to have stayed at "Stanstyd" and "Southwike"—"but as the parish in which the former stands is infected with plague, he will go to Warblington, a home of my lady of Salisbury, two miles distant".³

1. Created Countess of Salisbury 14th Oct., 1513.

2. L. & P. Hen. VIII, I, 4848.

3. Cal. Hen. VIII, IV, No. 2343.



WARBLINGTON CASTLE
S.E. TOWER OF THE 16TH CENTURY TUDOR GATE HOUSE

The Poles gave but half-hearted service to the Crown, during the dissolution of the monasteries. Reginald Pole, later to become a Cardinal and a Papal Legate, went abroad to Italy and remained there. Frequent messages were sent by Countess Margaret's son-in-law, Lord Montague, Henry, another of her four sons, and others, from Warblington to Reginald Pole in Italy, by the hand of Hugh Holland of Warblington, a man who had already been convicted of piracy. They hoped to obtain from Reginald the Pope's view on King Henry's attitude towards religion and marriage. Reginald was sufficiently indiscreet, however, to write a book entitled "*De Unitate Ecclesiastica*" in which he said that Henry VIII's theological opinions were wrong, and that he should repent and return to the Church of Rome. Countess Margaret, realizing that disaster would fall upon the family, wrote in haste from Warblington to Reginald in a furious outburst against his book; but this strategy was too late, for her downfall and that of her family had already begun. There appeared before Thomas Cromwell, the King's Secretary, at Lewis, Gervase Tyndall, a spy in the Countess' household. He reported a number of circumstances about the escape of John Helyar, Chaplain to the Countess and Rector of Warblington, from Warblington, and about various messages sent abroad by Hugh Holland.

In 1538 FitzWilliam, Earl of Southampton, and Goodrich, Bishop of Ely, were sent to Warblington to examine the Countess. This they did with great zeal, questioning her all day and far into the night; but without finding out anything. FitzWilliam writes from Warblington on November 13 to the Lord Privy Seal saying what an obstinate old lady she is, and that she will disclose nothing. FitzWilliam, determined to fulfil his mission and extract a confession, carried the Countess off to his home at Cowdry and there interrogated her in writing and forced her to sign the document containing her answers. During this time Warblington was well searched, and some letters and Papal Bulls were found. In 1539 the Countess of Salisbury was sent to the Tower and there attainted without trial. The old Countess, who was well into her sixties, was executed in 1541 on Tower Green, the second of the six personages who were granted this privilege, a public execution on Tower Hill being the normal procedure. Thus died "the last of the proud race of Plantagenets" as Macaulay described her.

Warblington was temporarily granted to FitzWilliam, Earl of Southampton, and Sir Thomas Wriothesley, after which it passed to the Crown. In 1551 Warblington was entailed on Sir Richard Cotton,⁴ Comptroller of the King's Household. This Knight received King Edward VI when he visited the Castle in the following year. The King wrote: "We went to Halvenaker, a pretty house

4. Pat. 5, Edw. VI, M. 5.

beside Chichester. From thence we went to Warblington, a faire house of Sir Richard Cotton's". Sir Richard was succeeded by his son Sir George Cotton in 1556. Sir George was a recusant as is testified by a list of recusants, dated 1606, whose fines are required, and amongst them "Cotton of Warblington, Co. Hants".⁵ He died at Warblington in 1609-10. Sir George Cotton had a brother, Henry, whose Godmother was Queen Elizabeth.⁶ On making him Bishop of Salisbury she remarked that "formerly she had blessed many of her Godsons but never before had a Godson who could bless her".⁷ Sir George Cotton was succeeded by his son Richard, who died in 1635, leaving a grandson and heir of the same name.

Sir Richard Cotton was a strong royalist, but during the parliamentary Civil War he was finally obliged to compound for his lands after the capture of Warblington by Colonel Norton, early in January 1644. At this time Sir William Waller was besieging Arundel Castle. Lord Hopton made an unsuccessful attempt to relieve the garrison; but as Norton's garrison at Warblington was doing much damage to the surrounding country, he retired towards Warblington, sending out a detachment of dragoons to invest the Castle. Warblington was taken; but according to contemporary writers, after unnecessary loss of time and men. "After long siege and loss of more men than were there in the garrison"⁸ says one writer, and another says "Sir Ralph Hopton has spent his time frivolously against Warblington House, betwixt Winchester and Portsmouth, where we leave him till divine justice finds him".⁹

By 1695 the Cotton family had retired to a farmhouse on their land at Bedhampton: but were still keeping up a connection with Warblington in that year. This suggests that the castle was then uninhabitable. It may perhaps be said in conclusion that as no mention is made of the castle after the siege of 1644 it was probably dismantled.

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5. State Papers, Vol. XXXVII, 74 Addenda, 1580-1625.
6. Queen Elizabeth is said to have visited Warblington. This is not improbable as she was on progress in the Southern Counties in 1586.
7. Francis Grose, *Antiquities of England and Wales*, Vol. VIII, p. 80.
8. Quoted by G. N. Godwin, *The Civil War in Hampshire 1642-1645*, chap. xvii, p. 158.
9. *Ibid.*