

A SHORT HISTORY OF  
THE OLD HALL, HIGHGATE VILLAGE,  
LONDON

By *C. R. Osborn*

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THE Old Hall, together with St. Michael's Church, Voel, and South Grove House, occupies the site of a famous mansion in which Sir William Cornwallis lived during the later part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth and up to the year 1610. This Sir William Cornwallis was the son of Sir Thomas Cornwallis, Comptroller of the Household to Queen Mary I. In the year 1610, the property was conveyed to Thomas, 2nd Earl of Arundel, and became known as Arundel House. It was at one time believed to have occupied a site on the Bank in Highgate Hill which lies in the Borough of Hornsey. Its story, however, is to be found, not in the records of Hornsey, but in the Court Rolls of the Manor of Cantlowes. The frontage of the Arundel House estate extended from South Grove House to The Lawns, No. 16 South Grove.

The present building contains some parts of the early fabric. The basement of the east wing has brickwork of English bond, and discovery has recently been made of the original wood-framed structure. There are sections of panelling of Jacobean date re-used in the basement and there are 17th-century beams.

The structure which now survives consists of a central block of three storeys, with a one-storey building on its eastern flank, and an addition on the west side, built on in the late Regency period. Earlier evidence is provided by an engraving in the Potter collection in the British Museum, another engraving of Ashurst House, and a plan of 1804; these show that the east wing was only part of a whole range of buildings lying to the east of the centre block. There seems no reason to doubt that the buildings shown in these drawings, Elizabethan in style, were indeed part of the original Arundel House. The engravings do not, however, show all the buildings of the Arundel House estate. On the site now occupied by St. Michael's Church, Lord Arundel built an elaborate Banqueting House. This building seems to have been altered by a later tenant, Francis Blake, in the 17th century, and

was rebuilt later as Ashurst House by Sir William Ashurst, towards the end of that century. Thus it is that the engraving of Ashurst House, referred to above, includes also the original buildings of Arundel House.

To return to the Old Hall as it now stands, there is on the north-west corner of the centre block a rainwater head bearing the date 1691 and the initials W. E. and A. The initials refer, no doubt, to Sir William Ashurst and his wife Elizabeth, and the date records the rebuilding of the house at this time. The Hearth Tax Rolls show that twenty years earlier, the building then standing on the site had been divided into two tenements representing the centre portion and the east wing of to-day. The centre portion of the Old Hall, then, dates from the rebuilding of 1691, but it has been re-fronted at a later date with stock brickwork, with red brick dressings to the windows and external angles. The east wing has not been re-fronted. Two string courses relieve the face of the centre block, one above the ground floor windows and another above the second floor windows, the latter forming a slight cornice with a plain parapet above. The front elevation of the west wing was altered in 1946. The back elevation has been changed by the introduction of projecting bays of later periods, but several original windows with curved heads can still be seen.

The main entrance-gate dates from the 18th century, although the pillars and stone caps have been recently renewed. The iron work with its elaborate scroll-work panels each side and ornamental overthrow is a very fine example of work of this period. A pair of wrought iron gates to the west wing which bear the initials C.R.O., were erected in 1946 at the same time as the ornamental railings to the entrance doorway of this wing, and it is interesting to note that a notice served in 1954 by H.M. Government which included Old Hall in the list of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest (Class I), makes special reference to these railings. The wrought iron gate to the east wing was also installed in 1946.

Regarding the interior, the central staircase was replaced by a new one in the later Regency period, but that adjoining the east wing has spiral balusters, plain newels and continuous strings of the late 17th century. There are also typical 18th-century panelled rooms.

In 1922, Lord Rochdale, who was then owner of the house, introduced into it two magnificent oak-panelled rooms which were incorporated within the circular bay rooms on the first and ground floors. The first floor room came from Castleton Manor, near



THE OLD HALL. Back Elevation. (January, 1956)

Rochdale, and is a very fine example of Jacobean panelling. Castleton Manor was rebuilt in 1719 by Samuel Chetham, who purchased it in 1715 from the Holt family; the Holts had owned the property certainly since 1523, and parts of the house no doubt dated back somewhere near then. In the ground floor room, the rich wood carving over the fireplace bears the date 1595. This noble room, with its splendid panelling, wide oak boarded floor and magnificent modelled plaster ceiling, came from a house on the South Quay, Yarmouth. It has an interesting link with one of the great events of the 17th century. Oliver Cromwell was a frequent visitor here, at the house of his Presbyterian friend and counsellor, John Carter. This fine Elizabethan mansion formed part of the precinct of the Grey Friary, granted at the Dissolution to Thomas, Lord Cromwell. At one of the meetings held here by Cromwell and his officers, the death of the unfortunate King is said to have been determined upon, and this room used to be pointed out as the place in which this act was contemplated. C. Cromwell, lineally descended from the Protector, died here in 1750. During World War I, this house was demolished and the ceiling, panelling and floor of this room were sent out to America. When the war was over, Lord Rochdale had it all sent back to England and erected in Old Hall. It is an interesting coincidence, that over three hundred years previously, Oliver Cromwell's grandfather, Sir Henry Cromwell, owned land in Highgate, which was acquired in 1588 by Sir William Cornwallis to add to his estate on which Old Hall now stands.

In 1946, Old Hall was converted into six self-contained residences, three of which are in the centre portion, two in the east wing, and one in the west wing. These alterations have been so carried out that the grace and dignity of this historic mansion have not been impaired in any way.

The Old Hall stands in an old world garden with wonderful views over London. Writing of it in 1596, in his *Speculum Britanniae*, John Norden said, "At this place . . . Cornwalleys, Esquire, hath a verie faire house, from which he may with great delight beholde the stately Citie of London, Westminster, Greenwich, the famous river Thamyse, and the country towards the south verie farre". A fair house it must have been, indeed, and in a fair setting, for it faced the village green and behind it the view spread out down over the slopes of Highgate Hill, through four miles of open country to where the spire of old St. Paul's rose over London, and on across the river.

The village green has disappeared, but Highgate Village retains

its delightful old world atmosphere, and the Old Hall still has the splendid panorama over London, "and the country towards the south verie farre".

It is a tradition of Old Hall that this is Steerforth's house in *David Copperfield* and the following passage is certainly apt. "It was dusk when the stage coach stopped with us at an old brick house at Highgate, on the summit of the hill. It was a genteel, old-fashioned house, very quiet and orderly. From the windows of my room, I saw all London lying in the distance like a great vapour, with here and there some lights twinkling through". Charles Dickens worked closely with Baroness Burdett Coutts of Holly Lodge, Highgate West Hill, in her philanthropic ventures, and was a frequent visitor to this part of Highgate.

1588-1610.

As already stated, the site of this fine old mansion was occupied in the 16th century by an estate belonging to the Cornwallis family, which passed later to the Earls of Arundel and became known as Arundel House.

The Cornwallis family established a considerable tradition of service to the Crown during the reign of Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth and James I. Sir Thomas Cornwallis, K.G., was the Comptroller of the Household to Queen Mary, and seems to have been a resident in Highgate as early as 1554. It is possible that the Princess Elizabeth may have lodged with him on her way from Ashridge to London when summoned to Court after Thomas Wyatt's rising. Sir Thomas Cornwallis was one of the messengers sent on this occasion to bring the Princess to London.

In 1588 comes the first association of the Cornwallis family with the property later known as Arundel House. In this year, a messuage, barn, stable, orchard and three acres of land forming part of this estate was conveyed to William Cornwallis, Esquire, by Henry Draper.

William Cornwallis was the eldest son of Sir Thomas. In the year 1591 he became governor of the Grammar School. As well as the property above mentioned, William Cornwallis also acquired in the same year 1588 some adjoining property belonging to Sir Henry Cromwell.

This Sir Henry Cromwell was the grandfather of no less a person than Oliver Cromwell, himself. Sir Henry Cromwell was married to the daughter and heiress of Sir Ralph Warren, Lord Mayor of London in 1536-37 and in 1544. Certain records of legal proceedings

regarding this property bought by Sir William Cornwallis from Sir Henry Cromwell suggest that it may have originally been owned by Sir Ralph Warren.

According to John Lloyd's well-known History of Highgate, Queen Elizabeth I stayed here with the Cornwallis family on her visits to Highgate on 11th June, 1589, 7th June, 1593, and in 1594.

In the service of the Queen, William Cornwallis accompanied the Earl of Essex to fight against the Irish rebels in 1599, and in Dublin on August 5th, of that year, he was knighted.

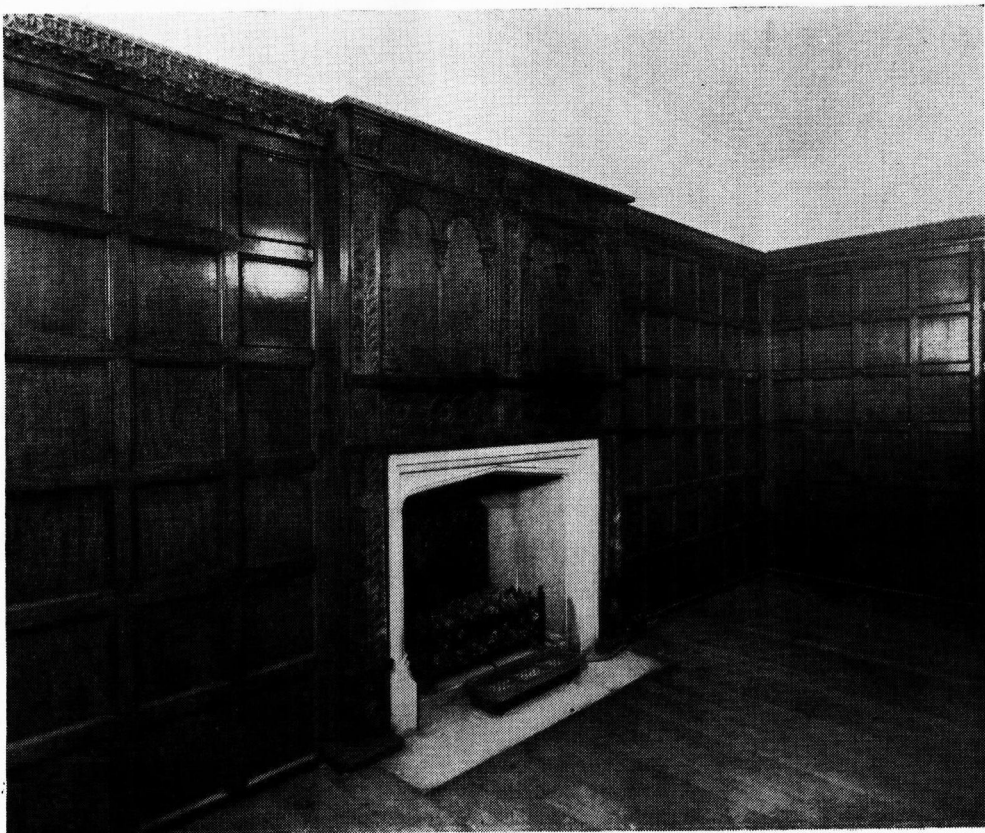
History yields one or two further glimpses of Sir William's fortunes. In 1601 come the last echoes of what must have been a troublesome misfortune. According to the Freere MSS, six gentlemen were hanged in that year for robbing "Sir William Cornwalley's". But in 1604, the memory of this tiresome affair was eclipsed by a signal honour. His Majesty King James I, on his way to London to ascend the throne, visited Highgate. On the morning of May Day Sir William Cornwallis arranged for the King and Queen a private performance of Ben Johnson's masque, *The Penates*.

Sir William Cornwallis's first wife was Lucy, a daughter of Lord Latimer. She bore him four daughters on whom the estate was entailed. In 1610, however, the daughters surrendered their rights to their father at his City premises, Brick House in Bishopsgate Without, London. Sir William then conveyed the estate to Thomas, Earl of Arundel, and his wife Dame Alatheia.

It is worth noting in passing that Sir William Cornwallis's second wife, Jane, who survived him, afterwards married Sir Nathaniel Bacon, son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, a half-brother of the great Sir Francis Bacon. Arundel House also was to have a notable link with this famous personage.

1610-1632.

Thus in 1610, Arundel House became the property of Thomas 2nd Earl of Arundel, at that time twenty-four years old. He was the only son of Philip Howard, whose mother Mary, Duchess of Norfolk, was sole heir of the Fitzalans. It will be remembered that the family of Fitzalan-Howard continues to hold the Dukedom of Norfolk and the castle of Arundel to this day. The family of Earl Thomas, despite its great possessions, was not immune from the political and religious hazards of those days; of his four immediate predecessors, two died on the scaffold, one was suspected of having been poisoned in prison and all were attainted of treason. His father, the last of



'CASTLETON MANOR' ROOM

these, died in the Tower in 1595. In view of the family's unfortunate situation, Thomas was brought up quietly at home by his mother, a lady of great and eminent virtues. By courtesy he was known as Lord Maltravers—the family titles and estates having been lost through various attainders.

In 1603 the family fortunes took a better turn. Soon after King James I's accession, the young Earl was restored in blood to such honours as he had lost by his father's attainder, as well as to the earldom of Surrey and to most of the baronies forfeit by the attainder of his grandfather, Thomas 4th Duke of Norfolk—but the family estates were not restored.

However, soon after he came of age, Earl Thomas married Alathea, third daughter of Gilbert Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, whose noble revenues ultimately devolved on her. With the help of her fortune, Lord Arundel, as he was now, gradually bought back some of the family property. In 1611, he escorted the Elector Palatine and his bride, the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I, to the Elector's dominions and remained on the Continent for some years. It was at this time that he laid the foundation of his magnificent collection of art treasures which became famous. His interest in art and learning was lifelong. Horace Walpole called him the "Father of Vertu" in England, and twenty-odd years after his first travels on the Continent, we hear of him, while on a mission to the Emperor on behalf of Charles I, spending £40,000 on enriching his library and private study. The Arundeleian Marbles presented to the University of Oxford by his grandson perpetuate his name.

It is interesting to note that though bred a Roman Catholic, Lord Arundel embraced the Church of England in 1614 or 1615. Though he experienced little favour in the reign of James I, having little in common with that monarch's coarse manners and corrupt court, he held the high offices of Earl Marshal and High Steward in the reign of James I and Charles I. Having received more marks of grace from Charles than from his father, Lord Arundel was the more disappointed at the failure of the petition he brought in 1641 to be restored to the Dukedom of Norfolk. The king would grant no more than a patent creating him Earl of Norfolk.

The Earl retired to Padua where he died in 1646. His body was brought home and buried at Arundel.

It is not surprising that a man of such artistic and literary taste should have counted among his friends, Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam. Curiously enough the first mention of the Earl of Arundel at Highgate,



in 1617, is connected with Bacon. The King was in Scotland where the Earl had accompanied him. Bacon, as Lord Keeper, was left at the head of the Privy Council and while the Court was away, the Lords of the Council were entertained in turn at each other's houses. In Whit-week the Countess of Arundel "made a great feast at Highgate to the Lord Keeper, the two Lords Justices, the Master of the Rolls, and I know not whom else. It was after the Italian manner, with four courses and four tablecloths, one under another; and when the first course and tablecloth were taken away, the Master of the Rolls (Sir Julius Caesar) thinking all had been done, said grace (as in his manner when no divines are present) and was well laughed at for his labour".<sup>1</sup> This Sir Julius Caesar was a very remarkable man. He was a son-in-law of Sir Nicholas Bacon, the half-brother of Sir Francis. Some curious connections can be traced between the occupants of Lauderdale House, Highgate and Arundel House. For instance, Sir Julius Caesar had as one of his wives (he married four times in all) the sister of Richard Martin, of Lauderdale House. Bacon himself, when he became Attorney-General, succeeded Sir Henry Hobart, another owner of Lauderdale House. Lord Arundel, as we have said, was friendly with Bacon, and in 1621 he used his influence to protect Bacon by recommending that he should not be called before the Bar of the House of Lords, nor deprived of his peerage, when he was accused of taking bribes during his Lord Chancellorship. To digress for a moment from the history of Arundel House to that of Lauderdale House, it is interesting to trace its connection with a great figure of our own time. Sir William Bond, who owned the house from 1599-1617 had a sister who married Sir Henry Winston of Standish, Dorset. Winston's daughter married John Churchill of Winton, Dorset, grandfather of John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough and ancestor of Sir Winston Churchill.

Returning to Arundel House, we find King James I, sleeping there in 1624. He "went on Sunday 2d June toward evening to Highgate and lay at the Lord of Arundel's to hunt a stag early the next morning".<sup>2</sup>

Two years later Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, came once more for the last time to Arundel House, which he had known at the height of his success. Now, fallen from his high estate, he was brought by a curious twist of fate to end his days there of pneumonia, brought on by lying in a damp bed. Bacon died in the arms of Sir Julius

<sup>1</sup> P.R.O., S.P. Dom., Jas. I., vol. 92, No. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Nichol's *Progresses of James I.*

Caesar, "on the 9th day of April, in the year 1626, in the early morning of the day celebrated for our Saviour's Resurrection, in the 66th year of his age, at the Earl of Arundel's house in Highgate near London, to which place he casually repaired about a week before; God so ordaining that he should die there of a gentle fever, accidentally accompanied by a great cold, whereby the defluction of Rheume fell so plentifully upon his breast that he died of suffocation".<sup>1</sup> The cause of his death was as follows. "His Lordship was taking the air with Dr. Witherbourne, physician to the King, towards Highgate. Snow lay upon the ground, and it came into his lord's thoughts why flesh might not be preserved in snow as in salt. They were resolved they would try the experiment; they alighted out of the coach and went into a poor woman's house in Swine's Lane (now Swaines Lane) and bought a hen, and made the woman excenterate it, and then stuffed the bodie with snow; and my lord did help to do it himself. The snow so chilled him, he immediately fell so ill that he could not return to his lodging, but went to the Earl of Arundel's House, at Highgate, where they put him into a good bed warmed with a panne; but it was a damp bed, that had not been layn about a year before, which gave him such a cold that in two or three days he died of suffocation".<sup>2</sup> Bacon on his death bed sent to the Earl of Arundel and Surrey the following letter. "My very good Lord,—I was likely to have had the fortune of Caius Plinius the elder, who lost his life by trying an experiment about the burning of Mount Vesuvius; for I was also desirous to try and experiment or two touching the conversation and induration of bodies. As for the experiment itself, it succeeded excellently well: but in the journey between London and Highgate, I was taken with such a fit of casting, as I know not whether it were the stone, or some surfeit, or cold, or indeed a touch of them all three. But when I came to your Lordship's House, I was not able to go back and therefore, was forced to take up my lodgings here, where your house-keeper is very careful and diligent about me, which I assume myself your Lordship will not only pardon towards him, but think the better of him for it. For indeed your Lordship's house was happy to me, and I kiss your noble hands for this welcome which I am sure you give me to it. I know how unfit it is of me to write with any other hand than mine own, but, by my troth, my fingers are so disjointed with sickness that I cannot steadily hold a pen".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rawley's *Life of Bacon* 1671.

<sup>2</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine* 1827.

<sup>3</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine* 1827.

1632-1641.

In 1632 this estate was disposed of by Lord Arundel and his wife, Dame Alatheia, being conveyed to one Thomas Gardner of the Inner Temple and his wife, Rebecca. The year 1630 saw Thomas Gardner appointed a Governor of the "Free School and Chapel" at Highgate, as the School was then called, and in 1636 he became Recorder of London. In the troubled politics of the years that led up to the Civil War, Gardner continued to be well thought of by the King and by those in opposition to the Court. On 6th October, 1640, he was made a Freeman of the City, which sided with the Parliament, and six weeks later, he was knighted by the King. Clarendon, the great courtier and historian of the Civil War, speaking of King Charles' intention that Gardner should have been made the Speaker of the new House of Commons after the election of 1641 (a post for which Clarendon thought he would have been well suited) describes him as "a man of gravity and quickness, that had somewhat of authority and gracefulness in his person and presence". But Gardner was not elected to the new Parliament. Not long afterwards, before the end of 1641, he sold his estate in Highgate to Sir Robert Payne, a man whose sympathies, like his own, lay with the cause of the King. It was not long before these Royalist sympathies resulted in Gardner being impeached in the House of Commons. This was on the 22nd March, 1642-43, but the bitter political struggle in which Gardner's impeachment was but an incident now gave place to actual civil war, and in this rush of great events the proceedings against him went no further. Before the end of the year he was with the King at Oxford, and the Court of Aldermen of the City had discharged him from his post of Recorder. For Gardner as for many more, the die was cast, and though he himself being now middle-aged and not a soldier, was to survive the war, both his sons were to die in the King's cause.

1641-1658.

Sir Robert Payne, despite his royalist sympathies, does not seem to have been too much disturbed in the enjoyment of his Highgate property. From 1644-45 onward there is a steady record of entries concerning his family in the Register of Highgate Chapel. Sir Robert came of a Hampshire family which already owned some property in Highgate. His father was William Payne of Barton Stacey, a man of standing in the County. Robert inherited his property and position and in due course became Sheriff of Hampshire; he was knighted in 1632. After a long residence in Highgate he died

on 15th September, 1658, and was buried in a vault in the yard of Highgate Chapel.

1658-1670.

William Payne, Esquire, inherited the estate from his father Sir Robert Payne. In Watford Parish Church, an inscription on a monument shows that William Payne married Mary, daughter of Samuel Blackwell of Watford; she died at the age of twenty-one on 27th July, 1669. Perhaps William Payne had no heart to go on living in the old house after this bereavement. Within a matter of days, on the 2nd August, 1669, he obtained a licence to lease the Highgate property to his father-in-law and in 1670 he ceased to be connected with it at all, the estate itself being conveyed to Francis Blake, Esquire, of Highgate. Its description then ran as follows:—"a capital messuage etc., and two other messuages etc., late in the occupation of William Payne and late of Samuel Blackwell, Esquire, and formerly belonging to Thomas Gardner, Esquire, Recorder of London, and Rebecca, his wife".

In 1665, the Hearth Tax Assessment shows a house of 23 hearths, in the occupation of "Baron Turner". This gives us the name of an interim tenant. The "Baron" was Christopher Turner, Sergeant-at-Law, son of Sir Christopher Turner of Milton Ernest, Bedfordshire. He was made third Baron of the Exchequer on 7th July, 1660.

1670-1691.

In place of Christopher Turner's house of 23 hearths the Tax Assessment for 1674 shows a house of 10 hearths occupied by Mr. Johnson, and one of 11 hearths owned by Francis Blake, but not occupied. This means that Arundel House was not at that time pulled down but simply divided into two houses. One of these is now represented by the Old Hall, which stands on part of the actual site of Arundel House. This house was occupied by Thomas Johnson, gentleman, and the adjoining house, a portion of the same structure, was afterwards occupied by Elizabeth Cornish. The estate also included a third house, known as the Banqueting House, which stood on the site now occupied by St. Michael's Church. In 1674, Francis Blake conveyed the Banqueting House to Andrew Campion, and in the same year he conveyed one of the two houses into which Arundel House had been divided, to a certain Elizabeth Ashby. The remaining house continued in the possession of the Blake family until 1691 when it was disposed of to Sir William Ashurst.

Although these property transactions were made by Francis Blake, the houses were actually in the hands of his son, William Blake, woollen draper, at the Sign of the Golden Boy, corner of Maiden Lane, Covent Garden. This William Blake was "a pious and quaint philosopher",<sup>1</sup> indeed one might even say an amiable eccentric. He set on foot a scheme for establishing an hospital at Highgate for the education and maintenance of about forty fatherless boys and girls, to be supported by voluntary subscriptions of ladies and to be called the Ladyes Hospital or Charity School. The boys to be taught the art of painting, gardening, casting accounts and navigation, or put forth to some good handcraft trade, and to wear the uniform of blue lined with yellow. The girls to be taught to read, write, sew, starch, raise paste and dress, that they be fit for any good service. The projector, according to his own account, had himself expended the greater part of his fortune, namely £5,000 upon the undertaking.<sup>2</sup> Blake struggled for many years to keep his school going and to get it firmly established. At one time he appears to have had 36 boys there in their blue and yellow uniform; probably a similar dress to that of Christ's Hospital. In the end the project beggared him and he was imprisoned for two years as a debtor in the Fleet Prison.

The school seems to have stood on part of the site of the Old Hall and part on the site of The Lawns, which adjoins Old Hall. Blake's own residence seems to have been the one-time Banqueting House (on the site of St. Michael's Church) which was afterwards sold to Sir William Ashurst. He also acquired Dorchester House on the opposite side of the green as a Boarding House for the girl orphans. It is not easy to know the exact success of Blake's efforts but certainly though the style of his writing suggests an excitable, incoherent, eccentric character, there is ample evidence of the noble struggle that he maintained undaunted for many years to give desperately needed help to poor and friendless children of Highgate, Hornsey and Hampstead.

1691-1724.

In 1691, as already mentioned, Francis Blake conveyed one of the two houses into which Arundel House had been divided—the western portion—to Sir William Ashurst. At the time of the conveyance it was described as a capital messuage in the occupation of Benjamin Richards, gentleman, except a garret belonging to Elizabeth Cornish.

<sup>1</sup> Prickett's *History of Highgate 1842*.

<sup>2</sup> Lysons.

On the northwest corner of the main part of the present Old Hall is a rainwater head with the letters W.E.A., and the date 1691, recording the initials of William and Elizabeth Ashurst and the date of the rebuilding of the house at this period by Ashurst. Sir William Ashurst was Lord Mayor of London in 1694, and was elected a Governor of Highgate School in 1697. In 1698, he entailed the estate on himself, Elizabeth his wife, and their heirs. A certain Lancelot Stepney, merchant, is given as the occupier at this time. Dame Elizabeth Ashurst died on 14th March, 1724.

It will be remembered that, as stated above, Francis Blake had disposed of the Banqueting House which formed part of the original estate, in 1674. In 1681, Sir William Ashurst acquired this property, and on the site he built as his Highgate residence, a fine mansion which was known as Ashurst House. In 1830 the then owner, Sarah Otway Cave, sold Ashurst House to H.M. Commissioners for the Building of New Churches, who thereupon erected the present St. Michael's Church. The building of St. Michael's Church followed the judgment given by the Court of Chancery in 1826, which restored the status of Highgate School Chapel, which had hitherto been considered as the Chapel of Ease for both Highgate and Hornsey. Beneath the Church are some foundations which belonged to Ashurst House or perhaps to the Earl of Arundel's elaborate Banqueting House.

When Andrew Campion disposed of the Banqueting House, he settled on himself at the same time, a newly erected house in his own occupation. This new house was South Grove House, built on part of the land previously attached to the Banqueting House. This fine old house was pulled down in 1934 and a block of flats erected on the site.

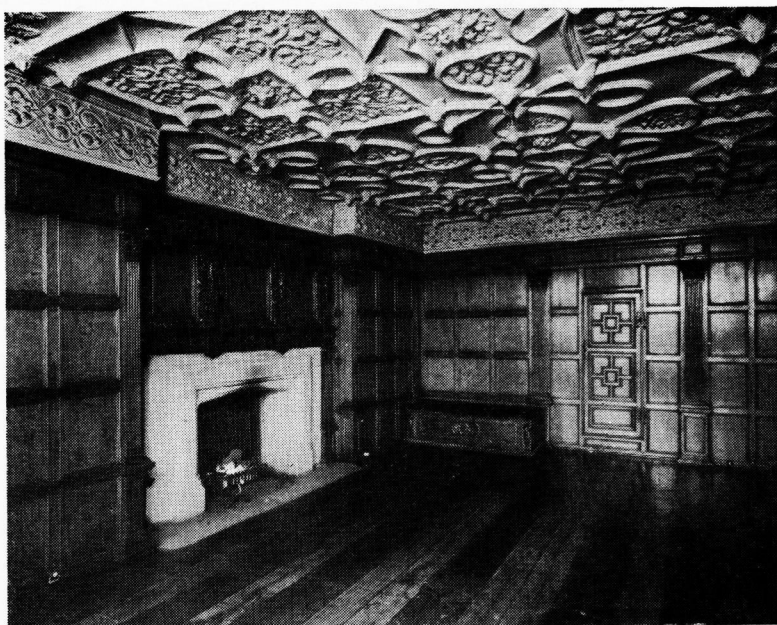
But to return to the history of Old Hall itself, the later owners and occupiers were as follows.

#### 1724-1725.

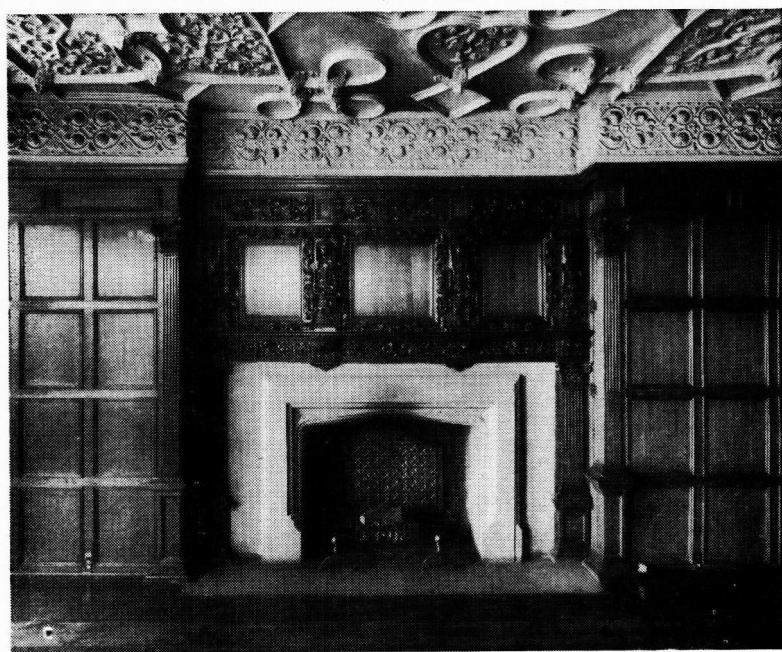
William Pritchard Ashurst inherited the house from his father and mother, Sir William and Dame Elizabeth Ashurst. He conveyed it to one Thomas Bayley. At this time the tenant was Brock Bridges, Esquire.

#### 1725-1749.

Thomas Bayley of Highgate, who was elected a Governor of Highgate School in 1728 and died on 17th June, 1749. The property was inherited by his daughter.



"CROMWELL" ROOM



"CROMWELL" ROOM—showing the magnificent carved mantel, dated 1595

1749-1775.

Katharine, daughter of Thomas Bayley. By her first marriage she became Katharine Armitage, but being left a widow, she married George Langdale, surgeon, of Queen Square, St. George the Martyr. After her death, Langdale sold the house to John Gorham, builder.

1775-1820.

During this period various changes of ownership and tenancy occurred. In 1782 John Gorham, the owner, had licence to lease the house for twenty-one years, presumably to William Newdick who was then the occupier. Later, John Gorham devised the property to his nephew Ebenezer Maitland.

The Land Tax Assessments show that by 1795, the house was actually being occupied by one Benjamin Price. In 1802 Ebenezer Maitland and Mary, his wife, conveyed the property to Price, who thus became the owner. He died at Cheltenham on 4th November, 1820, and Old Hall was inherited by his daughter.

1820-1822.

Sarah, daughter of Benjamin Price, who was married to Sir John Maclean, Bart. Evidently the Macleans did not need the house for themselves. In 1820 and 1821 it remained unoccupied, and in 1822, Sir John Maclean and Sarah sold it for £1,850 to Sir William Domville.

1822-1833.

Sir William Domville, 1st Baronet, was a native of St. Albans. He was Lord Mayor in 1813-14 and in that capacity presided at the grand banquet given by the City to the Prince Regent and the Allied Sovereigns on the 18th June, 1814, to celebrate the victory of Waterloo. He was created a baronet on 28th July of the same year. He died on 8th February, 1833, and was succeeded by his son, who bore the same name as his father.

1833-1847.

Sir William Domville, 2nd baronet, alderman of Queenhithe Ward in the City of London. In 1837 he had licence to lease the house to Sir Robert Chester for twenty-one years. One or two of the small details about Sir Robert which have survived may be of interest. For instance, he succeeded his cousin Sir Stephen Cotterell



in the hereditary office of Master of the Ceremonies. His second son, Colonel Charles Chester was killed in the Indian Mutiny.

In 1847, Sir William Domville, then described as of Southfield Lodge, Eastbourne, and his wife, Dame Maria, conveyed the house to the Rev. Thomas Henry Causton, M.A.

1847-1870.

The Rev. Thomas Henry Causton, M.A., was Rector of St. Botolph's, Aldersgate, from 1824-38. He then became vicar of St. Michael's Church, Highgate, where he served from 25th June, 1838, until the 15th May, 1854, when he died. His connection with Highgate was of long standing before he became vicar of St. Michael's, since he was elected a Governor of the School as early as 1828.

After the Rev. T. H. Causton's death, Old Hall was occupied by Alderman Cotton, sometime M.P. for the City of London, until 1870, when Charles Causton, who had inherited Old Hall conveyed the property to Andrew Wark, Esquire, of Bartholomew Close.

1870-1911.

Andrew Wark, Esquire, Stockbroker. Mr. Wark died in 1883 and his widow, Margaret Cuthbertson Wark, on 10th April, 1911. Their lives were clouded by a great personal tragedy, when three of their children and their nurse were killed in a railway disaster at Wigan in 1873.

1911-1921.

A. B. Cloutman, Esquire, a life governor of Maples of Tottenham Court Road, London, and founder of the large Y.M.C.A. hostel at Crouch End, London, N.8, of which he was President until his death in 1933, when the Boys' Club was built as a memorial to his work. His two younger sons both had remarkable records in the First World War. Both served in the Royal Engineers. The elder, Wolfred, was killed in action after successfully rescuing men under his command who had been overcome by gas. He was recommended for a posthumous V.C. The younger son, Brett, was awarded the last V.C. on the Western Front in 1918. He swam the River Sambre into territory held by the Germans and cut the leads by which a bridge was to be blown up. He also gained the M.C. He is now the Senior Official Referee of the Supreme Court and is the only Queen's Counsel ever to have held the Victoria Cross. In the Second World War he served in the Middle East and Italy again with the Royal Engineers. He is

the present President of the Hornsey Y.M.C.A. and is engaged on a further extension project.

1921-1945.

George Kemp, C.B., the first Baron Rochdale, who served his country with distinction both as a soldier and as a member of Parliament for many years. Born on 9th June, 1866, he was educated at Shrewsbury and at Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1895 to 1906 he sat as Liberal M.P. for the Heywood Division of Lancashire, and from 1910-12 as member for Manchester N.W. In 1900-01 he served in South Africa with the Imperial Yeomanry, being mentioned in despatches, and in 1902 commanded the 32nd Battalion, Imperial Yeomanry. In 1915 he was at Gallipoli as Commanding Officer of the 6th Lancashire Fusiliers (T.F.) and was subsequently Brigadier-General of the East Lancashire and Manchester Brigades.

Knighted in 1909, he was created Baron Rochdale of Rochdale in the County Palatine of Lancaster in 1913, and was made a Commander of the Bath in 1937. Among his many honours and distinctions were an Honorary Colonelcy in the Army, the office of Justice of the Peace, and of Lord Lieutenant of Middlesex. He was elected a Governor of Highgate School in 1928.

1946 . . .

C. R. Osborn, Esquire, who converted the Mansion into six self-contained residences.

