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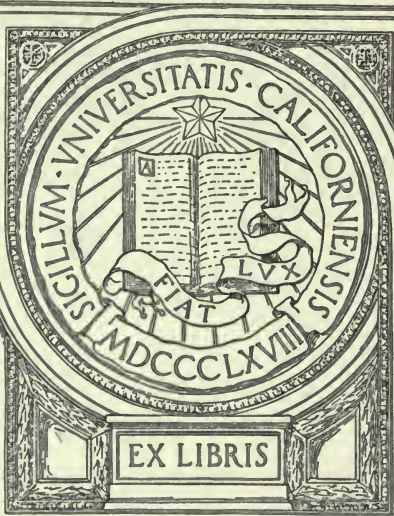
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HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF
Stokesay Castle

SALOP.

By the late THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq., M.A., F.S.A.,
Hon. M.R.S.L.



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HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF
STOKESAY CASTLE
SALOP.

By the late THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq., M.A., F.S.A.,
Hon. M.R.S.L.



Photo by Frith & Co.

STOKESAY CASTLE—Gateway.

Ludlow .
Published by G. Woolley, Corve Street,
1921.

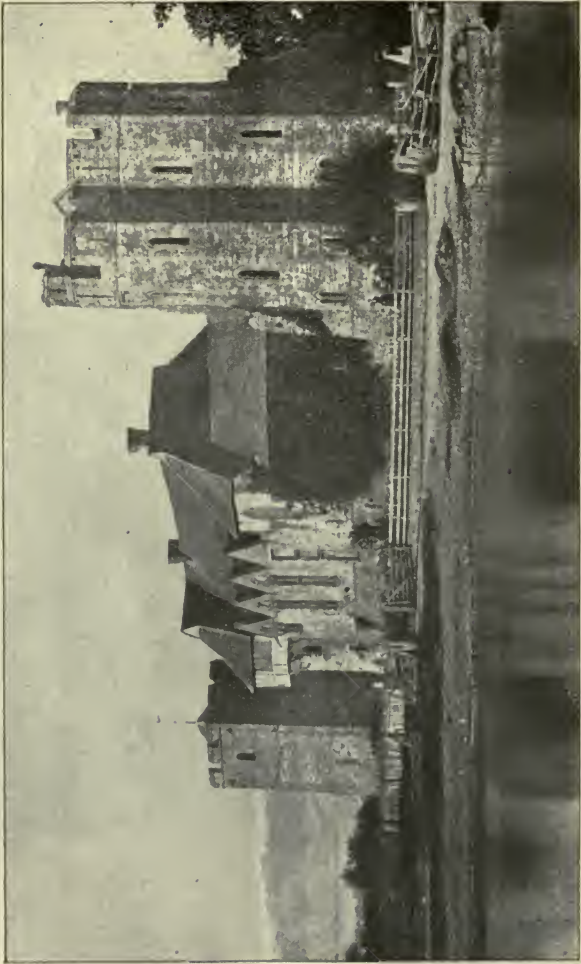


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STOKESAY CASTLE.

Gift of Dr. Anne S. Jaffe

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STOKESAY CASTLE.

STOKESAY CASTLE (as it is commonly, though erroneously called) is one of the most perfect and interesting specimens of an early fortified mansion in England; and from the beauty of its situation, in a valley bounded by steep and richly wooded hills, at whose base the river Oney flows through luxuriant meadows, it forms an object as interesting to the artist as to the antiquarian.*

At the time of the Norman conquest the manor of Stoke was held by Ældred, a freeman, under Edric Sylvaticus, a powerful Saxon thane; but on the wild Edric joining in a revolt of the Welsh, his estates were seized by the king, and in 1070 the earldom of Shrewsbury, with three hundred and fifty seven manors in Shropshire, were conferred by the Conqueror on his kinsman Roger de Montgomery.

Domesday Book speaks thus of Stokesay:—"The same Roger holdeth Stokes. Here are seven hides geldable. The arable land is sufficient for fourteen ox teams. In demesne are five teams, and sixteen among the male and female serfs; and there are twenty villeins with eight teams, and nine female cottars. Here is a mill yielding nine quarters of wheat yearly, and here is a miller and a keeper of bees."

After the death of Roger de Montgomery and of his eldest son, his estates were forfeited and Stoke again fell to the crown, in consequence of Roger de Belesme the younger son, having espoused the cause of Robert, Duke of Normandy, in his attempt to obtain the English throne. The greater part of his Norman followers returned to their own country; but Walter de Lacy having

* Stoke is considered by Mr. Parker and other high authorities to be one of the best specimens in England of a fortified mansion as distinguished from a castle.

speedily resumed his allegiance, obtained a pardon, and was allowed to hold Stoke and other estates from the king *in capite*.

In accordance with the feufal customs of the time, the manor of Stoke, during the tenure of the Lacys, was bestowed by them, as superior lords, on a branch of the family of Say, Lord of Clun and Richard's Castle, of whom Theodoric de Say, in 1156, gave the advowson of Stokesay (the first time so called) to the abbey of Haughmond, confirmed by Hugh de Laci as chief lord, and he also gave some land at Stoke to the abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul at Shrewsbury.

Hugh de Laci, in making a return of the knight's fees of his barony, states that Helias de Say acknowledges a service of three knight's fees; the knights to be between the ages of sixteen and sixty, and be furnished with horses. Helias de Say died soon after this, and was succeeded by his son Hugh, who died 1194, and was succeeded by a second Helias, who gives "to Andrew Fitzmilo of Ludlow, for his homage and service, and for twenty-three marks, the mill of Stoke and Wettlington, with suit of his men, and a messuage and meadow to be held in fee for a rent of one pound of pepper."

Though the name of Say has been retained, the manor does not appear to have been long held by that family, for it had reverted to the Lacys before the accession of Henry III. and continued in their holding during several generations, till on the death of Walter de Laci, in 1240, his estates were divided between two grand-daughters; Maud, the eldest, married Geoffrey de Genneville, and had the castles of Ludlow and Weobley, and other estates, and Margery, the youngest, married John de Verdun, and received Stoke as a part of her portion.

This John de Verdun had considerable estates in Leicestershire; but in the forty-sixth of Henry III, being one of the Barons marchers, he and several others were ordered to reside on their border properties, to check the incursions of the Welsh. He was active on the side of the king during the barons' wars. In the fifty-fourth of

Henry III. he was signed with the cross, together with Prince Edward, to go to the Holy Land, where he went accordingly. He married Margerie, daughter of Gilbert de Say, by whom he obtained the manor and castle of Weobley, in Herefordshire, and a part of Ludlow. He died in 1274, and the feoffee of Stokesay at that time was Reginald de Gray; but it does not appear how he became so, and in 1281 he sold the manor and lands to John de Ludlowe. A rent of eight shillings *per annum* is reserved to John and Matilda de Gray, his wife, in lieu of all services, reliefs, aids, etc.; and for this John de Ludlowe was to give a hen sparrow-hawk.

In the *Fadera*, under the date of 1284, Laurence de Ludlow (the son of the purchaser of Stoke) is said to hold the manor of Stokesay for one knight's fee, under John de Gray, who held it under John de Verdun.

The family of Ludlowe sprung from the town of that name, and seem to have been of some importance, several of them having filled the office of sheriff of Shropshire. William Ludlo (father of the Laurence who, in 1290, obtained a licence to embattle his mansion at Stokesay), was governor of Montgomery castle, and perambulator of the forest of Morse. One of the family, according to Speed, was, in 1349, the founder of St. Mary's White Friars, at Ludlow, which Leland describes as "a fayre and costlie thinge, outside Corve gate."

It remained in this family for many generations, till on the death, in 1498, of Sir Richard Ludlowe, whose wife was the daughter of Edward Lord of Powis, it passed to his son John, who left two daughters, both married to sons of Sir Henry Vernon; of Haddon Hall, Derbyshire, and of Tonge, in Shropshire; and the youngest, Anne, with her husband, Thomas Vernon, took up their residence at Stokesay. They were living there when Leland visited Shropshire, by whom it is twice noticed in his *Itinerary*:—"About V miles owt of Ludlo, betwixt Ludlo and Bishop Castle, Stoke Say belonging some time to the Ludlos, now to the Vernons, builded like a castell—V miles owt of Ludlo." Again he says on his way to Bishop's Castle,—“There is alsoe a bridge at *Whister* of

Stone near Oney, above Mr. Vernon hath a place, not far from Oney."

The son and grandson of Mr. Vernon made Stoke their residence ; the latter styled himself Lord Powys, as the direct maternal descendant of Edward Gray Lord Powis ; he died in 1607, leaving his estates to his sister Aleonora, wife to Francis Curzon, of Keddlestone, county Derby, but he had previously sold Stokesay to Sir George and Sir Arthur Mainwaring, by whom, in 1616, it was conveyed in some family settlement to Richard Brooke, Sir Thomas Baker, and Sir Richard Francis. Four years later it was re-sold, together with other adjoining estates, to Dame Elizabeth Craven (widow of Sir William Craven, citizen and alderman of London), and Sir William Craven her son, and it long continued in the possession of their descendants. It is now (1921) the property of the heir of the late H. J. Allcroft, Esq.

Stokesay has never been occupied by them as a residence, but was let on a long lease by the first Lord Craven to Charles Baldwin, of Elsieh, county Salop, and his heirs. During the civil wars it was inhabited by Sir Samuel Baldwyn (who, on his monument in the Temple church is styled of Stoke castle), serjeant at law, and was garrisoned for the king ; both Lord Craven and the Baldwins being staunch loyalists, and in consequence were heavily fined by the long parliament.

About the reign of Henry III we begin to hear of licenses granted to the barons, or their under-tenants, to build substantial houses for themselves ; and early in the reign of Edward I we find that " Laurence de Ludlo, tenet villa de Stoke Say, for one knight's fee of John de Gray, and the said John de Gray holds it of the king *in capite*," and that in 1291 Laurence de Ludlowe obtained a license to strengthen with a wall of stone and lime, and crenellate his mansion of Stoke-Say.*

* Rex omnibus ballivis et fidelibus suis ad quos, &c., salutem. Sciatis quod concessimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris dilecto nobis Laurencio de Lodelawe quod ipse mansum suum de Stok Say, in comitatu Salop, muro de petra et calce firmare et kernellare, et illud sic firmatum et kernellatum tenere possit sibi et heredibus suis imperpetuum, sine occasione nostri vel heredum nostrorum aut ministrorum nostrorum quorumcunque. In cuius, &c.

Teste rege, apud Hereford XIX, die Octobris.

The license to crenellate Acton Burnell is dated seven years earlier (1284) than that for Stokesay ; but the tracery of the windows is of a more florid, and therefore more recent style. If this argument is to be depended on, it would follow that Stokesay hall was in existence previously to 1284, and therefore dates much earlier than the tower, which certainly was built after 1291. A careful examination of the masonry and plan of the buildings is quite consistent with this view. A string course which runs round the moat side of the hall is continued round the tower ; but at the point where the hall ends, a slight difference may be perceived in it : besides, the walls which unite the tower to the hall have all the appearance of being designed to combine two separate designs. Whatever may be said, however, of the relative ages of these portions of the castle, there can be little or no doubt about the relative age of the northern end of the building. This consists of what would seem originally to have been a tower, of which the battlements were in later times removed to make way for the timber structure spoken of above. The lower part, which is of peculiar and symmetrical form in itself, is united with the rest of the building at an angle so small as to preclude the notion that it could have entered into the original design. It is not surrounded by the string-course which surrounds the rest ; and at the point where this ceases may be detected an upright joint in the masonry, affording clear proof that a wall has been built here to join the tower with the angle of the hall.

The building forms the western side of an irregular oblong court, about one hundred and thirty feet long by seventy wide, surrounded by a wall and moat about twenty-two feet in width, and consists of a hall and some other apartments, having at the south end a singular tower, which was connected with the main building by a covered passage, two stories high.

The south tower was probably built by Laurence de Ludlo. At this time the rest of the buildings to which it is attached, are, in the opinions of those most competent to judge, of an earlier date ; and this is confirmed by the

fact that Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford, in a visitation of his diocese two years earlier (April 27, 1290), rested ten days at Stoke, with a suite of between thirty and forty horses, and men in proportion.*

The tower is of a very unusual form, its base forming an irregular polygon of twelve sides and about thirty feet in diameter, and presenting externally the appearance of a double octagon tower, surmounted by a battlemented parapet pierced with loop holes; the whole of these apertures have had interior shutters, the hinges and fastenings still remaining in many of them. The roof is conical, and some years since was covered with wooden shingles instead of tiles; an original double chimney rises above the battlements on the east side, and a look-out turret on the north-west angle. The tower is lofty, and is divided into three stories; the lower one is low, and is entered from the court by an arched doorway, between two widely projecting buttresses, it is lighted by small windows placed obliquely to the wall, so as to prevent, as far as possible, the shooting of arrows into the interior. The rooms above have lancet windows, both single and double, and have seats in the sills, and shutters inside.

The upper room was divided into three by timber partitions; these, as well as the floors and wainscoting of this, and of the room below, were destroyed by a fire which occurred in 1830 (when the lower room was used as a blacksmith's shop), and in the late repairs it has not been thought necessary to restore them. Both the lower rooms have large original stone fire places.

A narrow stone staircase in the thickness of the wall leads from the lower story to the roof, and reduces the internal angles of the tower to eleven. The view from the summit is rather beautiful than extensive; north and south it is bounded by the Longmynd hills, near Church

* Roll of the household expenses of Richard de Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford, during part of the years 1289 and 1290, edited by the Rev. John Webb, and published by the Camden Society from the original in the possession of the late Sir Thomas E. Winnington. This opinion of the date of the dates of the different parts of Stoke has been given by Mr. Parker, Mr. Cockerell, and Mr. Blore.

Stretton, and the Brindgewood range, near Ludlow. The western side of the valley is formed by a richly wooded hill called Stoke wood, and the eastern by Norton on the summit of which is an ancient entrenchment.

Connected with the tower in the manner before described, and communicating with it by a door in the second story, under a covered passage (of which the only remains are marks of gables on the walls) is an apartment measuring twenty-nine feet by nineteen; the walls are covered with an oak wainscot, the pilasters of which retain traces of gilding; the chimney-piece is a superb mass of carved oak of the age of Charles II, surmounting a stone arch similar to those in the tower. The wood-work extends to the ceiling, and is divided into compartments by grotesque figures, with masks on two of the panels. The chimney above is of brick, and of late date, and this heavy mass of stone and wood is entirely supported on large pieces of timber in the room beneath, which has led to a conjecture that this chamber was originally built without a fire-place, but the similarity of the timbers to those in other parts of the building, render it more probable that this unusual construction formed part of the original design. This room is lighted by no fewer than eight windows, two principal ones having two lights, with a plain circle in the head, look east and west, and between that which looks into the court and the window of the hall, are two small ones—one a trefoiled lancet, and the other ogee headed, the uses of which it is difficult to imagine. The ogee window is of later date, and may perhaps have been made for the purpose of obtaining a view into the court, and to the gate, when some timber buildings were erected outside, which blocked up the other east window externally, as the wainscot did inside. These buildings had become decayed, and were removed some years since, but the foundations have been lately uncovered. Two little openings into the hall and a small window on the other side of the door completed the number.

An old manuscript book, containing notes relating to many places in Shropshire, was, a few years since, picked

up at a book-stall in Shrewsbury, and gives some further account of the decorations of this apartment about seventy years since, when there appears to have been the arms of the Ludlow's, or a lion rampant sable in the circle of glass of one of the windows.

“ In Stoke castle, in the dining room, is a handsome curious carved chimney piece, The picture of Theodoric Vernon, alias Vernon with the red hand, alias the proud Vernon with a gold chain about his neck, with a medal at the bottom. 2^d Ye picture of Charles ye first. 3^d Ye picture of Charles ye 2nd. Also, two more pictures *witch* there is no account of.” The pictures of Charles I and of Theodoric Vernon were declined by the late Lord Craven either on the ground of a legal claim, or as a purchase ; and on the change of the tenant some years ago, they were offered for sale, and purchased in a most dilapidated condition from the off-going tenant. The one of Theodoric Vernon is now in the possession of one of his descendants at Conover Hall. The same manuscript also mentions divers shields of arms that were displayed in this room, viz., Baldwyn quartering Wigley—Childe of Kinlet—Acherley and Holland. These must have been the bearings of Charles or Sir Samuel Baldwyn, who held Stoke under a long lease from the first Lord Craven, during the civil wars. The latter died in 1683, and is styled of Stoke castle, on his monument in the Temple church. By one of them it is probable that this room was fitted up. Another shield is thus described, “ Crest, an oak issuing out of a coronet. Quarterly 1st and 3rd. Gules, 3 cinquefoils ermine. 2nd and 4th. Argent, a ship sable. A coronet and garter with ye motto Honi soit, &c. Ye motto below the garter Through—Supporters, 2 Unicorns.” These were probably the arms of James I, Duke of Hamilton, who was a patron of Charles Baldwyn, and like him, a strenuous adherent to the royal cause, to which his life was forfeited, being beheaded by order of the parliament three days after his royal master. The other arms were Powis quartering Littleton, of Henley and Talbot, of Worfield, impaling Shelton, of Broadway.

Underneath this apartment are cellars and two small rooms, outside of which was a staircase, which formed the communication with the covered passage that led to the door of the wainscotted apartment, and to the tower ; and at the foot of them, under two flat trefoil-headed door-ways, is an opening to the hall, which has its principal entrance by a pointed arch from the court. It is lighted on the west side by four large windows over the moat, and on the east by three similar ones and a shorter one, now blocked up externally ; they are transomed : of two lights, with a circle in the head ; the upper lights are trefoiled, with early soffit cusping, and they appear to have been glazed, while the lower lights had only shutters. The windows have all seats like those in the tower, and externally above each is a gable.

The hall is fifty-three feet long by thirty-one feet wide, is lofty, and covered with a very strong double-collar beam roof, having carved collar braces resting on large upright stone corbels, with good early English moulding. It appears to have been warmed by a brazier or dogs, the hearth of which still remains, probably similar to the one preserved at Penshurst in Kent. The buttresses were added some years since, in order to counteract the pressure of the heavy roof on the walls. At the north end of the hall is a staircase of solid blocks of oak, which gives access to two small rooms in the tower, and forms the northern termination of the building. In one of them is a floor of tiles. Above these is another story of timber resting on the solid masonry of the tower, and projecting beyond it, supported by brackets of wood, resting on stone corbels. In this room is an original stone fire-place, consisting of a projecting flat top, supported by corbels and pillars originally surmounted by a hood. It has also several large windows. The ground floor of this tower is occupied by a cellar, which opens under an arched door from the hall ; it is many feet below it, the walls are very thick, and, as well as the rooms above, is lighted by narrow windows, or loops, evidently intended for defence. In a projecting portion of this cellar is a well, and on the walls are some

traces of painting, representing the rose, portcullis, and other Tudor badges. A door once opened from this into a range of timber building facing the churchyard, of which the foundations have been lately uncovered.

Opposite to the hall, and forming the only external entrance to the court, is a gate house of timber, which consists of two stories, the upper one projecting; the arch, weather-boards and principal timbers are elaborately adorned with grotesque carving. This, and the timber buildings that have been removed, were probably of the Elizabethan period, and it is now impossible to conjecture what the original gate house, or the upper part of the north tower may have been. The earliest known representation of Stokesay is Buck's view, dated 1793,* which in no respect differs from its present appearance, except that the moat was then full of water, which was supplied from the adjoining pool. On the left side of the court is a well more than fifty feet deep, lined with worked stone, which is shown in a sketch made about fifty years ago, to have been canopied by an antique roof, resting on thick oak timbers, worked into trefolied arches.

There is no reason to suppose that the old mansion at Stokesay was ever more extensive than the limits of the moat: and some foundation walls that have been traced near to the farm house, were probably only those of stables and outbuildings.

The church, which stands to the north of the castle, has no marks of antiquity, except a plain circular-headed doorway.

A large circular dove-house was taken down some years since, which was probably coeval with the oldest part of the mansion.

The following account of the taking of Stoke, by a party sent out by the parliamentary committee at Shrewsbury, is copied from a quaint old work, entitled—*The Burning Bush not Consumed*, by John Vickers:

* Views of Stokesay are also to be found in Britton's *Architectural Antiquities*; in the *Beauties of England and Wales*; and in Pearson's *Etchings of Shropshire Antiquities*; and lastly, in Mr. Hudson Turner's *Domestic Architecture*.

“ There was drawn out of this garrison (Shrewsbury) by order from the Committee 500 foot and 300 horse, being part of Col : Mackworth’s regiment, and part of Col : Lloyd’s regt—Our forces marched within V miles of Ludlow, the design being to reduce that part of the Country & to secure it, by placing garrisons there to block up Ludlow. With a party of horse they viewed Holgate & Braincroft Castles both of which the enemy had demolished, notwithstanding they placed the Lord Colvine in Braincroft (Broncroft) Castle, & fell to repaire & fortify it. In the interim they sent Lieut. Riveling to view Stokesay, a garrison of the enemy. The place was considerable, therefore the next morning wee drew up to it, & summoned it, but the Governor Capt. Daurett refused ; whereupon we prepared for a storm, and being ready to fall on, we gave a second summons, which was hearkened unto, a party admitted, and it is now garrisoned for us. One of these castles command Corve Dale, a rich & varied Country ; the other secures Stretton Dale, so that Ludlow is now blockt up on this side, & hath only Hereford to rainge in.

“ Continuing in these parts for the securing of the Garrisons—

“ Sir Michael Woodhouse, one that cometh out of Ireland, & Governor of Ludlow, procured all the Garrisons for 20 miles round to turn out for his relief. Col : Lunsford from Monmouth, Col : Sandys from Worcester, Col : Scudamere from Hereford, Sir Michael Woodhouse from Ludlow, forces from Hartlebury and other Garrisons, all of which made a body of about 200 horse & foot, which, marched up near Braincroft (Broncroft) Castle & being too weak to encounter with them marched to Wistanstow, within a mile of Stoak, the better to enforce ourselves from Shrewsbury & Montgomery whither we sent for forces (but came not in time enough). The enemy contrary to our expectations judging Stoak of more consequence made haste thither to besiege it, of whose approach the Col : having intelligence with the advice of the field Officers resolving to fight, our horse made what haste they could to fight in Capt. Ffowkes

troop, to which were joined some reformatids, fell upon a body of the enemys horse, being 200, and routed them ; the foot marched on with gallant resolution, beat up all their ambuscades in the hedges for a mile together, until they came to the main body, which after an hours fight, was routed & dispersed.

“ In this business Col : Riveling deserved much honour, as much as a man could do, and also the other Col^s did very gallantly.

“ We slew near to 100 on the place, took above 300 common soldiers, about 60 officers & gentlemen, & all their Ordnance, bag & baggage, 4 barrels of powder, a good quantity of match & bullets, 100 horse. Some gentlemen of quality were slain, these being most of the gallantry of Herefordshire.

“ In the action Sir Will^m. Croft,* the best head piece and activist man in the County, was slain on the place, the Gov^r. of Monmouth & Ludlow hardly escaped, Sir Michael Woodhouse, his horse being taken.

“ The glory of this great action belongs only to God, who was pleased to make weak means instruments to do so great a work.

“ Major Fenwick who behaved himself gallantly is wounded, but wee hope not mortally.

“ These were taken in the fight. Col : Tho^s Broughton—Capt. Walter Neale—Capt. George Wright—Capt. Tho^s Stot—Capt. Leinton Synge—9 Quarter Masters—7 Corporals—5 Waggons—3 Mattresses—Mr. Richard Richardson, Chirurgeon, & many others.”

This engagement seems to have been one of some importance, as it is noticed in most of the newspapers of

* On his monument in Croft church the date of his death is given as 1641, and as having occurred before Hopton Castle, but all the contemporary accounts give the date of 1645 (though Chirk castle and “ Mr. Whitmore’s house ” are sometimes mentioned as the place where it occurred). The monument in Croft church was probably not placed there till the civil war was ended, and to those who have in any degree searched the records of these times, and found delays and inaccuracies which attended the transmission of intelligence from one part of England to another will cease to be surprised at such a mistake having occurred.

the day, with great incorrectness both as to the site of the battle and the glory of it.*

In 1647, when nearly every place of strength had been wrested from the king, an order was issued by the Parliament that Stokesay, together with several other castles in Shropshire, should be slighted.

A letter from Sir Symon Archer to Sir William Dugdale is published in the *Diary* of the latter, mentioning a visit his "sonne Young" had paid to Mr. Baldwin at Stoke castle, "as he rod the circuit," two years afterwards, which proves that the *slighting* had not so far dilapidated the mansion as to have prevented Mr. Baldwin from residing there, and unless the top of the north tower may have been dismantled at that time, there is nothing to indicate that any extensive repairs were made soon after.

Stokesay continued to be the residence of the Baldwins for several generations, and its last occupant Charles Baldwin, died in 1706, having a few years previously removed to Aqualate, which he inherited from his elder brother.

From that period Stokesay was only used as out-buildings for the adjoining farm house; and though substantial repairs had from time to time been carried out, with a judicious attention to preserve the original character of the structure, still it was very far from being kept with the care that its singular beauty merited; but on this having been represented to its former noble proprietor, he most liberally ordered such repairs and restorations to be effected as were necessary to preserve it from future desecration or decay.

* See Appendix.



Photo by W. E. Harper, Ludlow.

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STOKESAY CHURCH.

Shownig Jacobean Canopied Pew and Chancel.



The following description of Stokesay Church is taken
from
Mr. Oliver Baker's "Ludlow Town & Neighbourhood."

"Unlike other buildings of the kind Stokesay Castle has no chapel, owing no doubt, to the nearness of the Parish Church. The latter presents externally a Norman

building, re-edified in the churchwarden era, but within has some very interesting points. The South door is plain and untouched Norman. The Nave is filled with high oak pews, many having carvings and quaint hinges, and in the Chancel is a very fine Jacobean canopied pew with arched openings. There are a few mural monuments of some age, the best being in the outside of the Chancel wall, having coats of arms and an inscription to Alice Baugh, who died 1662. There is a very good Early English tower-arch, but almost hidden by an old gallery. and there is a good carved chair in the Chancel.*

* LUDLOW TOWN and NEIGHBOURHOOD.

Tourist edition. 168 pages, 70 original Illustrations (5 of Stokesay). Cloth, 4/- net. By Oliver Baker, Fellow of the Royal Society of Painter Etchers (London).

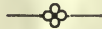
London : Simpkin, Marshall & Co., at all Local Booksellers ; and from the Publisher.

PRESS OPINION.

The Bookseller says : " ' Ludlow Town and Neighbourhood.'—By Oliver Baker. With Illustrations by the Author.—The demand for a third edition of this excellent guide to Ludlow and the Neighbourhood shows that Mr. Baker's work has met with the full appreciation that its high merits so thoroughly deserved. In the present smaller and more convenient size it should make itself an even greater favourite with all who visit the picturesque and delightful district with which it deals. Mr. Baker's drawings have always been an important feature of the book, and his evident artistic and archæological qualifications, no less than his close acquaintance with the town and the surrounding country, have enabled him to produce a guide which is quite a model of its kind."—*September 6th, 1906.*

At present out of print, 1921.

APPENDIX.



WITH the first year of the Long Parliament, 1638, newspapers are believed to have commenced in the shape of small pamphlets ; they were published at uncertain intervals. The following accounts of the engagement at Stokesay are extracted from those of the year 1645, preserved in the British Museum.

The Parliament Post, No. 6, p. 8.

“ Wee have given the enemy a great defeat near Stoke-Say, in Shropshire, killed divers, and taken two drakes,* three hundred armes, and foure hundred prisoners.”

The True Informer, Feb. 14, 1636.

“ A party of Sir Will^m. Vaughan’s horse marched through a great part of Shropshire, plundering as they went. They went from Clun to Knighton and Presteign, thence by Brampton Bryan, and over Leintwardine bridge were proceeding towards Ludlow, but being closely pursued by Capt. Marvin, they were forced to take sanctuary in Stoke church, into which they got, and some of their horses, and stood upon their guard. Before they got into the church, we had a short conflict with them which put them to the rout, and killed a captain and lieutenant, and divers others, and took some prisoners. This being near Ludlow, it is doubted if the enemy will receive relief in the church, but they will take heede how they *strangle* again so far abroad.”

* Guns.

A Diary or Exact Journal, No. 57.

“ We likewise understood of the brave services of our men, who marching out of Shrewsbury, did fall upon the enemy, not far from Stokeney, which is a place belonging to my Lord Craven, which house the enemy is supplying from their garrisons of Hereford, Worcester, and Bridgnorth, did intend to fortifye, but our men incountering them in the field, did not only absolutely rout them, but tooke from them two drakes, foure hundred armes and three hundred prisoners.”

Mercurius Civicus, No. 8, p. 66.

“ You have already had the intelligence of the taking of many prisoners of the enemies, which was drawn from Hereford, Bridgenorth, Worcester, Derby, and Lichfield, to the number of fifteen hundred, whereof three hundred were taken prisoners, foure hundred armes, and foure pieces of ordnance. It was performed by the Shrewsbury forces under Col. Mackworth, his Lieut. Col. and other commanders at Stokesay, about three miles from Bridgenorth.”

Mercurius Belgicus, or Memorable Occurences, June 19.

“ His Majesty’s forces encountered a body of the rebels near Stoke-Say, in Shropshire, but being overpowered, were forced to retreat with the loss of Sir Will^m. Croft, a gallant gentleman, and some others.”

Perfect Diurnal.

“ June 16. Intelligence received this day that the royalists drew out their men from Worcester, Lichfield, Hereford, and other places, and went to besiege Sir William Whitmore’s house,* but the parliament forces

* The mistake in calling Stokesay Mr. Whitmore’s house, may have arisen from his having been Lady Craven’s brother and trustee.

from Shrewsbury met, and dispersed them. In this service Sir Will^m. Croft, the great Herefordshire Malignant was slain."

Mercurius Rusticus.

" Sir Willm Croft slain at Stokesay, in Shropshire, June 19, 1645."

Whitelock, in his Memorials, records the engagement at Stoke-Say as follows :—

" June 1645. Several parties of the King's joyning to besiege William Whitmore's house, a garrison of the *Parliaments*, a party from Shrewsbury encountered with them, slew, and took prisoners about four hundred, dispersed the rest, and Sir Will^m. Croft was slain in the fight."



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