

## HACKWOOD

**I**N the year 1223, that is, during the Regency of Henry III, after King John's death, Henry de Braybœf had licence to inclose his wood of "Hagwode" with its timber within the forest of Pamber and Eversley, otherwise described as "Hacwode in foresta de Everley." Before that time it was probably wild woodland appurtenant to Braybœf's manor of Eastrop. (The Manor of Eastrop lay on the East side of Basingstoke and probably comprised what is now the ecclesiastical parish of Eastrop.) An object of the enclosure was "so that the King's deer could not enter and depart without hindrance," and the enclosure was "with a trench."

The old Harroway, or Hoary Way, part of the ancient "Tin Road" from Cornwall to the East coast of Kent, for some 1500 years before this, before, during and after the days of the Roman occupation, had run from West to East along the Northern boundary of what was to become Hackwood Park. In the Tumuli to the South West of the present Bridge Lodge, ancient British chieftains had been buried in the two mounds. The land to the right of Dickens Lane and adjoining the Tunworth Road was the site of a battle between the Danes and the Saxons in 871.

A long stretch of this Harroway remains practically intact, slightly sunk, with a mound running along each side of it, parallel with the Tunworth Road, from the North East corner of Hackwood Park, towards Tunworth. There is a trace of it inside the present Park wall a short distance from the Basingstoke Lodge.

That portion of the Basingstoke By-Pass road which runs westward from the Golden Lion Hotel towards Winchester and which follows the approximate track of the old Harrow Way has now been officially named "The Harrow Way" to perpetuate the old name.

The further privilege was granted to William de Braybœf (son of Henry) of "imparking his wood with the lands adjacent amounting to 40 acres within the metes of the forest of Pamber and Eversley." The entry from "Calendarium Inquisitionum Post Mortem" in records at the Tower of London is—

*Anno 8 Edw. I (i.e., in 1280) 78. Will'us Braybuf. Hacwode in foresta de Everleg de parco faciendo. Suth'.*

From these old records it would appear that there have been deer in the Park for over 800 years. Much of the place was at one time forest and the rising ground to the North East is named on old maps as "Hunting Park Hill."

The derivation of the name is probably the Anglo Saxon, "Haga," or Old English, "Hag" or "Hacga"—Haw, fruit of the hawthorn. In "The Beauties of England & Wales," published in 1805, the historians, Brayley and Britton, speak of the area being "interspersed with thorns of extraordinary size and luxuriance." This authority attributes the name to a corrupt abbreviation of Hawking Wood, but the record just quoted seems to dispose of the point.

The History of Basingstoke (Baigent and Millard) records that on 15th February, 1274/5, in the third year of the reign of King Edward I, an Inquisition for the Hundred of Basingstoke, was taken at Winchester, before William de Braybœf and William Gereberd, "deputed by the lord King." There follows the entry:—

"The Earl of Hereford holds Estrop of the King in chief for half a knight's fee; and William de Braybœf holds it of the Earl."

It is probable that the area "appurtenant to Braybœf's Manor of Eastrop" was a tongue of land which included most of what is now Spring Wood, and part of the ground on which the house stands, extending North West to the Garage block on the Alton Road. This area is still for tithe purposes a detached portion of the Parish of Eastrop. The remainder of the land on which Hackwood now stands was in the Parish of Winslade, and the History of Basingstoke records—

"Winslade was held by the ancestor of the Tichborne family at the time of the Domesday Survey, and continued in their hands until the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the manor was sold to the Paulet family, the owners of the fee."

A quotation from the Basingstoke Court Rolls dated 12th May, 1470, records the following fines:—

"William Rooke, keeper of Prevett park, 12d., because he continues without licence to take and carry away the rabbits of the tenants of the lord King at Basingstoke. Richard Wylkyn, keeper of the park at Hakkewode, 12d., because in a similar manner he takes and carries off the rabbits of the aforesaid tenants."

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In the 16th century Hackwood first appears in the possession of the Paulet family, of which the most famous member was Sir William Paulet, created first Marquess of Winchester by Edward VI in 1551. He presumably bought both the Eastrop and Winslade portions from the descendants of William de Braybœf and the Tichborne family, the North Eastern part of the Park being already his by inheritance.

The date of building of the first house at Hackwood is not known, but it is certain that one was there at the time of William, fourth Marquess of Winchester, who succeeded to the title in 1598, and entertained Queen Elizabeth at Basing House in 1601. It is recorded that he died at Hackwood on 4th February, 1628, and was buried at Basing.

Basing House was the palatial seat of the Marquesses of Winchester until its destruction by Oliver Cromwell in October, 1645, after a siege lasting two years and eight months, and said to be the longest siege in English history. Extensive ruins of this stronghold, which covered 14 acres, still remain in the village now known as Old Basing.

A description of Hackwood is to be found in a title deed dated 12th July, 1652, to which the fifth Marquess and his son, Charles Lord St. John, were parties. It reads as follows:—

“All that parcel of pasture ground enclosed with a Turfe bank and a dead hedge called by the name of Hackwood Park lyeing and being in the parishes of Clidsden, Basing, Winslade, Easthorpe and Basingstoke in the County of Southton bounded with the lands of Daniel Stott called Harmand on the East, Hackwood land on the South, and the lands of Henry Audlyn on the West, and the fields of Basing and Basingstoke on the North, containing by estimation foure hundred and eighteen acres, and also all that Capital Mansion House standing and being within the said Park and all Buildings, yardes, courtes, courtilages and gardens, orchards, proffits and commodities to the said Mansion House belonging,” etc.

On the earliest map extant of Hackwood Park, dated 1683, made by Thos. Smith in the year the present house was started, there is shown a substantial house in elevation, situated near to the present position of the Garage block. This house appears to be of two storeys, with an attic gable in the roof; there are six windows and a door indicated in the breadth of the house, and there are two other detached constructions in elevation. On the spot where Hackwood now stands is shown a ground plan indication only. It seems reasonable to suggest that the earlier house was situated to the West of the present Drive in the neighbourhood of the old Stable block.

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Charles, Lord St. John (who in 1674 became the sixth Marquess) had on 12th February, 1654, married as his second wife, Mary, natural daughter of Emmanuel Scrope, Earl of Sunderland, who had no legitimate heir, and with her had inherited the Yorkshire Estates of the Scropes. He became later described as a “voracious builder.” He set about building three large country houses—Bolton Hall, in Wensleydale, Yorkshire; Abbotstone, near Alresford; and a new house at Hackwood.

The present Hackwood was built during the closing years of the reign of Charles II and the troubled years of James II. It was commenced in 1683, and apparently took four to five years to complete. This house was about half the size of the existing one. It consisted of the Southern half of the basement, the line of rooms over it, with narrower East and West wings connected by open corridors on the ground floor only. There is a sketch of the house on an old undated map, showing the North Front—basement, two storeys and an attic; six windows on each side of the small front door with porch.

Still in the house are several firebacks cast for the sixth Marquess, apparently about the time the house was finished. They bear the Marquess's coronet, the coat of arms—three swords in pile—and the date 1687. A rainwater head, formerly on the house, is in Basingstoke Museum; it has the coat of arms, and the date 1688.

Of this sixth Marquess there is recorded in "The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby"—

"28 August 1687. The next day we went to see the Marquis of Winchester at Rufford, he having borrowed that house in his journey to London, where he rested ten days. This lord had a vast estate and his extravagance was as great in his way of living as his plenty. He travelled this time with four coaches and a hundred horse in his retinue. His custom was to dine at six or seven at night, and his meal lasted till seven or eight in the morning. Sometimes he drank, sometimes he heard his music, sometimes discoursed; sometimes took tobacco, and sometimes ate; whilst the company did what they pleased. They might do the same, or rise; go or come, sit down or sleep. The meat and bottles continued all the night before them.

"In the morning he would hunt or hawk, if the weather was seasonable; if not, he would dance, go to bed about eleven, and sleep till the evening. The man all this time was not mad, but had good sense, and most thought he counterfeited this that he might be free and unconcerned from affairs of that age, not caring to be under censure that his estate might be safe, which he studied and managed exactly in all this seeming disorder."

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On 9th April, 1689, two days before the coronation of William and Mary, Charles, sixth Marquess of Winchester, was created first Duke of Bolton. He died on 27th February, 1698.

He was succeeded by his son, Charles, second Duke of Bolton. This was the man who, as Lord Wiltshire, had accompanied William of Orange on his journey to England to depose James II. He became Vice-Admiral, Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum (keeper of the rolls) of Hampshire and Dorset, and Warden of the New Forest, and was instrumental in bringing about the succession of the House of Hanover to the English Crown in 1714. Letters passed between him and the Elector of Hanover, who became George I—

"The Duke of Bolton to the Elector, sent by Lord Halifax.

"London. April 12, 1706.

"Sir,

"I am glad of this favourable occasion to write, by this noble lord, to give your Electoral Highness an assurance of my zeale for your service, and the interest of your family, which I shall always take hold of all opportunity to demonstrate, whenever I think it may tend to the establishing your succession to the crown of this kingdome. There is none that can inform you better how all things are here, and who they are that do trewly embrace your interest than my lord Halifax, to whome you may give entire credit, he being very sincerely a trew servant of your most serene family. I depend upon it, that he will assure your Electoral Highness, that no person living can be with greater truth and respect than myselfe, &c.

Bolton.

leave her, she knelt and sang "O ponder well" in a style so tender that he had not the heart to do it. She survived her husband till 1760, after behaving, according to Walpole, not so well in the character of widow as wife."

There is in Spring Wood at Hackwood, slightly to the South East of the centre, an area called "Polly Peachum's Garden." In 1805, there was a building (it has since entirely disappeared) of which Brayley and Britton say—

"It consists of four equal fronts with a central dome, having somewhat of the heavy character that marked the general style of its architect, Sir John Vanbrugh. The apartment within is spacious, and is handsomely stuccoed, and paved with marble. This is said to have been used as a music room, during the time of the third Duke, and was then devoted to the vocal exercise of the celebrated Polly Peachum."

According to an old book on Hampshire history, Spring Wood has the reputation of being haunted by "a woman clothed in grey" who wanders about unlike ghosts in general surrounded by a brilliant light. Local tradition has it that the lady is the ghost of Polly Peachum returning to her old haunts.



rung "on 28th August, 1722, when George I was staying at Hackwood." Further entries read—"Paid for beer for the ringers when King George was at Hackwood, 2s." and "paid the ringers when the King was at Hackwood, 6s."

The statue on the North front of the house is of George I, and was presented by him to the third Duke. It was first placed at the Southern extremity of the reservoir (later filled in), on the South Front, but in September, 1810, it was removed to its present position.

In July, 1713, Charles, third Duke of Bolton (then Marquis of Winchester) had married Lady Anne Vaughan, daughter of the Earl of Carberry. It is said that they separated soon after the marriage. Afterwards he formed an attachment for the actress known as Lavinia Fenton, who came into prominence in "The Beggar's Opera" by John Gay, first performed in London in 1728.

Miss Fenton was the daughter of a naval lieutenant named Beswick, and on his death her mother married the keeper of a London coffee-house. His name was Fenton. The girl was 18 years old and had appeared on the stage but four times before she leaped into fame as "Polly Peachum." William Hogarth (1679-1764), father of the British School of Painting, painted "The Beggar's Opera" in 1729. An etching of the picture is in the British Museum, to which the key is as follows:—

"Performers—Macheath, Mr. Walker; Lockitt, Mr. Hall; Peachum, Mr. Hippisley; Lucy, Mrs. Egleton; *Polly, Miss Fenton*, afterwards Duchess of Bolton.

"Audience—*Duke of Bolton*; Major Paunceford; Sir Robert Fagg; Mr. Rich, the Manager; Mr. Cock, the Auctioneer; Mr. Gay; Lady Jane Cook; Anthony Henley, Esq.; Lord Gage; Sir Conyers D'Arcy; Sir Thos. Robinson."

In the National Portrait Gallery is the oil painting by William Hogarth—Portrait of Miss Fenton as Polly Peachum.

The third Duke's wife died on 20th September, 1751. A month later, on 20th October, he married Lavinia Fenton at the British Embassy at Turin. He had previously had three sons by her, but no children were born of the marriage. The Duke died on 26th August, 1754.

Leigh Hunt, in "Men, Women and Books," comments—

"We now come to one who was first a mistress, though subsequently a wife—Lavinia Fenton, otherwise called Mrs. Beswick. This actress was married in 1751 to Charles, third Duke of Bolton, on the decease of his Duchess, with whom he is said never to have cohabited. The Duke had three children (all sons) by his mistress previously, but he had none when she became his wife, so that on his death in 1754, the title went to his brother. He was then sixty-nine. He is described in his latter days by Horace Walpole, as an old beau, fair complexioned, and in a white wig, gallanting the ladies about in public. The Duchess was the original Polly in the Beggars Opera, and so much the rage in that character that it was probably thought a feat in the gallant Duke to carry her off the stage. Her good qualities appear to have fixed a passion, created perhaps by vanity. It is said that on his once threatening to

leave her, she knelt and sang "O ponder well" in a style so tender that he had not the heart to do it. She survived her husband till 1760, after behaving, according to Walpole, not so well in the character of widow as wife."

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Having no legitimate heir, the third Duke was succeeded by his brother, Harry, fourth Duke of Bolton, who enjoyed the title for five years, dying on 9th October, 1759.

His elder son, Charles, fifth Duke of Bolton, succeeded. In his time the Great Hall, or Salon, at Hackwood, which in its original state, was open from the ground to the roof, had a new floor introduced at the height of twenty feet; the space below it was, at the same period, adapted to the reception of some very fine old wainscot, that was bought from the Bolton house at Abbotstone, near Alresford, and had been enriched by a great deal of most excellent carving by Grinling Gibbons. Some of this carving remains in the principal rooms. Various other improvements were also made; the corridors to the wings were closed in, "and some good offices were erected," together with the stables, and a spacious riding school (now the garage).

This Duke died unmarried, on 5th July, 1765, aged 46. During his lifetime it became possible to re-arrange the succession of the Estates. He had a natural daughter, Jean Mary Brown, whose mother was Mrs. Mary Brown Banks. By his will, the family Estates were left to the use of his brother, Lord Harry Powlett (who succeeded as sixth Duke) for life, after that to Lord Harry's son, or in default of such issue to "my daughter Jean Mary Powlett Brown," and after to the "first son of Jean Mary Brown." This young lady, on 7th April, 1778, married Thomas Orde, a member of a Northumberland County family, who became Secretary to the Treasury in 1782, and later was sworn of the Privy Council of Ireland.

The sixth Duke had no son, consequently at his death on 24th December, 1794, the Estates went to Mrs. Orde. There was still a male descendant of the fourth Marquis of Winchester; he was George, twelfth Marquis—the eighth son of the grandson of his younger son, Henry, of Amport, Hants. Thus the Marquisate survived, and there is still a Marquis of Winchester to-day—the premier Marquis of England—but the Dukedom of Bolton became extinct.

Thus came a new regime for Hackwood. Thomas Orde assumed the additional surname of Powlett (1795), and was elevated to the Peerage on 20th October, 1797, by George III. He revived the old name as Baron Bolton of Bolton Castle.

In "The Beauties of England & Wales" previously referred to, it says—

"The mansion (of Hackwood) was found in many respects inconvenient when it came into the possession of Lord Bolton, who has in consequence, commenced the execution of a plan for essentially improving the accommodations; and which, among other objects, embraces the erection of a new front on the North, about 24 feet from the present, and to be connected with the old wings by a sweep of more grace and utility.

"By this means an excellent Entrance Hall will be formed, 40 feet by 24; several of the old apartments will be enlarged, and various new ones added, so as to render the whole a handsome and complete family residence."

The architect for the reconstructed Hackwood was Lewis William Wyatt, a nephew of James Wyatt, the most famous member of that large architectural family. The books of Henry Oliver, Clerk of Works (now in the possession of Viscount Camrose) give full details of the work carried out.



The first Lord Bolton died on 30th July, 1807, aged 60. It is noted that work at Hackwood was suspended for about a fortnight. His son, William, succeeded as second Baron. He was then 24 years old and unmarried.

Gradually, through the next three years, building and reconstruction progressed. The old portico to the South Front was pulled down, and the present columnar portico was built up. Minor buildings were also pulled down at the East and West ends of the main block, and the Ballroom and Dining-room were constructed.

On 8th May, 1810, William, second Baron Bolton, was married to Maria, eldest daughter of Guy, first Baron Dorchester. Lord Bolton was then 27, she was 32 or 33.

In the Dining-room, where there is a drop in the level of the ceiling, is the second Baron's Coat of Arms on the left, and the Coat of Arms of the Dorchester family only, on the right. The ceiling in the South Library is of a later date, as are the eleven cast iron firebacks of the Coat of Arms of the second Baron and his wife. The arms of the Dorchester side by then contain three additional quarters, which a note in Basingstoke Museum says refer to "the family of Carlisle or Carlil, one



of whose heiresses married into the Carleton family." This more complex coat of arms also appears on the archway at the entrance to the New Park, at London Road Lodge.

Lord Bolton evidently took much pride in his Hackwood Estate. As the years went by, other schemes were carried out. During 1819, 1820 and after, the archway at London Lodge was set up, the New Park laid out with the Drive through it, the brick and stone bridge across the Tunworth Road was built, and the Stone Bridge near the North East corner of Spring Wood. Large quantities of earth were excavated to form a new pond on both sides of this bridge, and water was brought by pumping, from Old Basing, along what is known as the Pipes Road, for use at Hackwood, for the new pond, and other places. The excavated earth was probably hauled to the South East side of Spring Wood, where the platform and mound for "the Cathedral" were formed; this is the avenue of beech trees which is a remarkable feature of Spring Wood.

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Spring Wood was a feature of the oldest existing map of Hackwood, dated 1683. Two of its features are so described by Brayley and Britton:—

"The Menagerie Pavilion and Pond.

"One of these is in a part called, and formerly used as a menagerie for aquatic birds; and there is still within its circuit a considerable sheet of fine water. This building has a very handsome front of the Doric order, with an open colonnade in the centre, and a small neat apartment on each side; the whole assuming the appearance of a vestibule." (*Illustration page Nine.*)

and of the Amphitheatre,

"The lower parts of the wood are in a state of wild and luxuriant nature, with coppice plants and shrubs, sheltered beneath great and lofty timber trees. In the midst of this wilderness is a space containing about four acres, assuming the form of a vast ancient theatre, the boundary of which is composed of elms closely planted, and rather inclined inward, so as to project their lofty heads, and extended branches, over the sides and ends of the area; the stage is a flat lawn, at the lower end, from which seats of turf gradually rise in sweeping divisions, leaving one grand broad passage in the middle, from the bottom to the top, which terminates in a large circular Grecian temple, which from the remains, appears to have been constructed with great elegance."

Spring Wood is laid out in the manner of a clock, with eight avenues meeting in the centre, the avenue pointing North and South being known as "Twelve O'clock Avenue." It is said to have been designed in the style of Le Notre, the French landscape gardener.

On a map which Lord Curzon, who made considerable research into the history of Hackwood, attributed to the year 1725, the old walled kitchen garden of 5 acres is shown just as it exists to-day. It also depicts the old barn on the Home Farm, and the two lodges which guard the entrance from Tunworth Road. The garden, however, is thought to be considerably older.

*View of Hackwood with hospital buildings  
in forefront. Taken from a Spitfire  
aeroplanes May, 1945.*

From about the year 1850 the Bolton family ceased to make Hackwood their home, and spent their time at Bolton Hall, in Yorkshire. In 1855, it was let to Mr. Richard Bethell, K.C., Attorney-General, who afterwards became Lord Chancellor, and was elevated to the Peerage as Lord Westbury. Later it was in the occupation of Mr. Charles Hoare, the banker. In or about 1900, when Bolton Hall was damaged by fire, Hackwood was again occupied by the Bolton family.

A later tenant was the Earl of Wilton, and he relinquished his tenancy to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston in 1906. Lord Curzon was much interested in the history of Hackwood; he discovered and restored the ancient Cockpit in Spring Wood (at about the centre of the North side, near the Gardens approach gate) and had a large mound of chalk which interrupted the view over the Park from the ground floor windows of the South Front, bodily removed.

Elizabeth, Queen of the Belgians, and her family spent most of the time of the War years, 1914-18, at Hackwood Park, occupying what is known as the Belgian or Queen's suite in the East Wing. The late King of the Belgians visited Hackwood in 1920, and planted a tree on the East side of the lawn to commemorate the stay of his wife and family.



Lord Curzon died on March 20th, 1925, but the tenancy was continued by Lady Curzon until 1935. In that year the estate passed out of the ownership of the Bolton family for the first time, and was bought by Lord Camrose. Later, in 1940, when Lord Camrose was created a Viscount, he assumed the title of Viscount Camrose of Hackwood Park.

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During 1936, the amenities of the house were considerably improved, the work being under the direction of Francis Lorne, Esq., F.R.I.B.A. The main structure, including all the principal rooms, was preserved intact, but lighting, heating, drainage, etc., were thoroughly modernised. The back part of the West Wing, which was the servants' quarters, was pulled down and rebuilt on modern lines; the Garage and Stables Block was also modernised and extended. A swimming pool was constructed on the South Front, a more appropriate gateway was installed at the Basingstoke entrance to the Park, and some beautiful wrought iron gates were hung there, and at the London Lodge entrance.

In 1940, Lord Camrose handed over the house and a large part of the grounds for the duration of the war to the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps for use as a hospital. It is now the Basingstoke Neurological and Plastic Surgery Hospital, R.C.A.M.C., for the past two years under the command of Col. R. M. Harvie, E.D. Much wonderful work for the wounded has been done within its precincts, and there are close on 20,000 Canadians—and people of these Islands, too—who have reason to remember with gratitude and thankfulness their stay at Hackwood.

Originally confined to the house, there is today a hospital on the lawn capable of accommodating 750 patients. Hackwood itself is the residence of the medical and nursing staffs, and it is a pleasure to record that their care and appreciation of the old Mansion by its Canadian occupants has been everything that its owner could wish.

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*These short particulars of the History of Hackwood have been compiled by  
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