

centuries of the Lennard family, is one of those mansions of which it is difficult to say whether they partake more of the Tudor or the Elizabethan character. In its general outlines it bears a very marked resemblance to Holland House, though somewhat smaller and less highly ornamented. It is particularly rich in colour, its south front and corner turrets being built of the finest red brick, with dressings of Kentish rag stone. It stands high, overlooking a long sweep of park; and by it there nestles in a grove of elms the old parish church, of which the Lennards, as lords of the manor, have been patrons from time immemorial.

The mansion has undergone considerable alterations and repairs at different times, to suit the taste of the age; but it still retains its original form and much of its ancient character. It is a square building, with a small octagonal tower at each corner. At one time these towers were surmounted by dwarf spires, or "extinguisher" roofs, much resembling those to be seen to this day on the old *châteaux* in the north of France and on the border fortresses of Scotland; they have, however, been removed, and the parapets embattled, after their original fashion. In Lewis's "Topographical Dictionary" the mansion is described as "a curious square structure, with angular towers, of the time of Henry VIII." Lysons adds that it was "built by Sir Henry Heydon" in the above-mentioned reign; and Leyland, in his "Itinerary," says that "Henry Heydon purchased 300 marks of land yn yerely rent at Wikham, by Lewisham, in Surry, towards Croydon, where he buildid a right fair manor place and a fair chirche." The house, however, was really built in the reign of Edward IV. As rebuilt by Sir Henry Heydon—for there appears to have been a residence here before his time—it had an interior open court, now covered in, and used as a staircase. "To do honour to his king," as we learn from an article on "West Wickham Court" in the "Archeologia Cantiana," "he put up in painted glass the Royal Arms of Edward IV. and those of his queen, Elizabeth Woodville, of the Duchess of York, and of his sister, who married Lord Cobham." These coats-of-arms are now in the hall.

The principal entrance to the house is through an open paved court on the west side. In the late Sir Charles Farnaby's time a new entrance was made in the front facing the park, but the general arrangement is a return to the original plan. We pass under a portico of about the time of Charles I., and find before us a massive door, constructed of oak, studded with huge nails, and fastened by a

ponderous bolt stock, which are evidently as old as the days of "Bluff King Hal." This door bears traces of rough usage at some time or other, showing on its face the marks of bolts from the cross-bows and shots from small cannon, and in one place it has sustained severe battering. Inside the door we find a very small hall, from which a few steps on the right-hand lead up to an ante-room, whence access is gained to the library and the drawing-room, both wainscoted with dark oak and hung with family portraits. The hall retains most of its original features. In one of the windows may be noticed the initials of Anne Boleyn and her royal lover, Henry VIII., intertwined with a "true lover's knot." In another window of the hall are the arms of Sir Henry Heydon, with those of Anne, his wife, daughter to Sir Geoffrey Boleyn, and other families; and over the chimney are the arms of Lennard, quartering those of Byrde, Bickworth, and Hussey.

Anne Boleyn, it is said, was a frequent visitor here at the time when the property was in the hands of her uncle, Sir Thomas Heydon, and at the period, too, when her captivating charms had proved too much for the fickle-hearted monarch. The poets tell us there are "tongues in trees." If such be really the case, and those which surround the well-kept ancient bowling-green of Wickham Court could only speak, it is just possible that they might enlighten us on many a little amatory scene enacted there between the king and fair Mistress Boleyn.

The gallery of family portraits at Wickham Court is particularly large and varied, containing those of most of the distinguished persons who have been connected with the place, or allied by ties of blood or marriage with the Lennard family. Among the portraits here are those of Sir John Lennard, the founder of the Lennard family; Dr. Farnaby, the scholar and grammarian, who founded the Farnabies; Sir Sydney Strafford Smythe, a Baron of the Exchequer, of the Strangford family, who married a Miss Farnaby; Prince George of Denmark, to whom Colonel Sir Samuel Lennard was Equeiry; Sir Samuel himself, the Earl of Sussex; his wife, Lady Anne Palmer, daughter of Charles II.; and Charles II., on the staircase; with others unknown. It is supposed, from the stags' heads in the dining-hall being all American, and from the original full-length portraits of Sir Walter Raleigh and his son being hung on the walls, that some of the Lennard family accompanied Sir Walter in one or more of his expeditions to America.

When the house itself was rebuilt, in the