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A Visit to Sutton in the Parish of Llandow

In May we shall be visiting the house of Sutton in the parish of Llandow. Sutton is listed by the RCAHM(W) in their *Great Houses* and I shall at the meeting distribute photocopies of the relevant pages. It is there described as a late 16th-Century house (the date 1580 is used) comprising two self contained wings built at right angles to each other. In other words it appears to have been built to accommodate two households and, furthermore, was altered in about 1600 when each wing was enlarged and provided with separate doorways. In the early 19th-century, when the house had become a tenanted farmhouse, it was structurally divided into two separate dwellings.

I will say no more than the above about the structure as described in *Great Houses* partly because its impossible to do so without having seen the building, but more importantly, because the owners have probably made discoveries they can tell us about which amplify or maybe amend the RCHAM conclusions based on visits made well over 15 years ago.

What I propose to comment on is the history of the family who built the house complementing what is written in *Great Houses*.

I have decided to issue this in the society Newsletter Series because Thomas Bassett of Miskin lived in Sutton from about 1580 to about 1610 in right of his wife and it was while he was here that he built the Bassett house at Miskin which preceded the present Miskin Manor, so called. This Nl. will therefore serve as a background introduction to a forthcoming Nl. on the Bassett estate in Broviskin. It is appropriate to include a 'health warning' insofar as I venture into territory in the Vale with which I am un familiar.

I suspect that Sutton is one of the least known of Glamorgan's great houses and, indeed, Llandow parish is not a place much visited or passed-through. To the older generation it is best remembered for the tragic air-crash in which the entire Llanharan Rugby Team perished on their return from an international in Dublin. And its the redundant Aerodrome that continues to keep the ancient parish in the public eye by virtue of the various uses to which it is now put.

Llandow is a small parish of 1086 acres in the Hundred of Ogmere which had a population of 133 in 1871. In fact it was largely an abandoned medieval village by then with no more than the Church, Great House, medieval parson house and scattered farmhouses. The Great House, Llandow was the home of the Powell family, lords of the manor of Llandow, but as we shall observe below, it is far from being a 'great house' in the sense that the much larger Sutton is. In recent times I understand that a new village has been built around this older nucleus.

Llandow was one of the early enfeoffed manors of Glamorgan held, of the chief lord, for one knights fee by the de Winton family, originally de Winchester, by the 18th-century Wilkins, but now, since about 1820, settled in several seats in Breconshire under the name of de Winton again. The fleeting association of this family with Berthlwyd in Llantwit Fardre was noted in Nl. 91. Later in the middle ages the manor came into the hands of the Nerber family whose final heiress in the 15th-Century conveyed it to the Powell family who were subsequently resident in Llandow until the 18th-Century when their own final heiress was also heiress of Sutton.

A castle-ringwork, almost totally ploughed out, was recently discovered about 100m. S.W. of the Church. At the same time traces of the medieval village were found. RCHAM(W) *Early Castles Glamorgan Inventory* Vol. III Part Ia., p.106.

The parish church is dedicated to The Holy Trinity and the patrons were the Fellows of Jesus College Oxford.

I turn now to Sutton which lies about a mile S.E. by S. of the Parish Church. The probable builder of this house is identified in *The Greater Houses* as Edward Turberville a younger son of James Turberville of Llantwit Major, who d. 1560, himself the son of Thomas Turberville of Llantwit Major who was a base son of Jenkin Turberville of Tythegstone.

I cannot quarrel with this identification, but it does seem an odd pedigree for the builder of one of the great houses of the County. Old James Turberville, who died in 1560, left a will which gives us some idea of the extent of his wealth. He left donations to the parish churches of Llantwit Major, Llanmaes, Eglwysbrewis and Llandow from which we may infer that he held land in these parishes. From his bequest to his eldest son Thomas he evidently also had land in Llanishen in Kibbor, in 'Neffrisland' and Kenfig. His estate included freehold, customary, patent, stint (extent), rack rent and demesne lands and there were also Chantry lands which were assigned to his son Edward together with the tenement of Sutton in the parish of Llantwit(sic), the latter being 'my wife's jointure'.

From the preamble to the will, 'Soul to god the father almighty, to the suffrage of the blessed virgin Mary and all the whole company of heaven' it is clear that James remained a Roman Catholic at his death in 1560. In a man of his age, so soon into the protestant reformation this is hardly surprising but it does tend to confirm the supposition by RCAHM in *Great Houses* that the Llantwit Major/Sutton family was recusant. This would have been in line with most branches of the Turberville family.

I have no inventory, but the will implies that he was farming on quite a large scale with 20 kine and a bull together with 60 yearlings and 20 ewes 'out of my dairy at Peckstone' (Picketston) being willed to his eldest son. In addition 6 yearlings and 30 ewes went to Edward and, very likely there was more stock in the residue that went to his widow.

There is no readily available evidence to show how he had acquired this degree of affluence, but certainly, Edward's share, being no more than Sutton and the Chantry lands, does not appear to justify the building of such a large house.

All I can find out about old Thomas Turberville, the base son of Jenkin, is that he was granted lands in Llanmaes by Letters Patent issued at the Chancery of Cardiff in 1522.

(Patent Lands) That was when Henry VIII was lord of Glamorgan, then still a marcher lordship and no direct part of the kingdom of England. It seems a fair assumption that Thomas and his son James were probably high officials of some kind in the lordship administration under Jasper Tudor and his nephew successively. Typically in such a position they would have exploited their opportunities to the full by granting themselves valuable leases of land in the large royal demesne lordship of Llantwit.

The pedigrees of the advenae were not, in general, as carefully preserved as ours were, largely because they held their land under English law and relied upon charters, patents and deeds and the like to back up their claims, where we had to rely on the recitation of pedigrees. This, together with the confusion arising from the use of a limited range of Christian names, means that the Turberville pedigrees are not as full and reliable as we would like. Nevertheless I have constructed a table which shows not only Edward Turberville's ancestors and descendants, but also the wider network of marriage connections and interesting links with neighbours who, in the great building period of the 16th-century, built comparable houses nearby such as Nash Manor, Plas Llanmihangel and Great House Llandow.

Old Thomas Turberville married Margaret Bawdrip who was widow of Thomas Thomas of Llanmihangel, whose son James Thomas, builder of Plas Llanmihangel was therefore half brother to old James Turberville d. 1560. And when Edward came to build Sutton he could look to his half-uncle's work at Llanmihangel.

James Turberville of Llantwit's first wife was Margaret daughter of Morgan Gamage of Coity and widow of John Vann of Marcross and it was her descendants that carried the Turberville of Llantwit line down to the final heiress, Cecil Turberville who married Illtyd Nicholl of Ham. His second wife was Agnes daughter of Howell Carne of Nash (not Richard as in *Great Houses*) and here lies the clue to the establishment of the Sutton line. This second marriage appears to have taken place in about 1536 and we have already noted that James, in his will refers to the tenement of Sutton in Llantwit, by which he must have meant the Llandow Sutton, as his wife's jointure. The Carnes were a wealthy family and Howell Carne, Agnes's father, is assumed to be the builder of the oldest surviving parts of Nash Manor, which would have provided another pattern for his grandson. Edward Turberville was clearly already of age when his father died and it looks as though he married Mary Evans daughter of David Evans of Gnoll about 10 years later. In that interval he must have elevated his status in some way and, while the assumption in RCHAM seems to be that he built Sutton ca. 1580, I would suggest the probable date was 10 or even up to 20 years earlier.

Certainly I would think a date around 1570 when he probably married is likely.

David Evans of Gnoll was an important man, sheriff in 1562, and his wife was a daughter of Sir William Vaughan of Porthaml in Breconshire. His daughters were all married off to gentry families, but I think examination will show that Mary married considerably the largest house. Turning again to old James of Llantwit's will we see he provided for his widow to have possession of his 'dwelling house and all other houses, and of my free lands, customary lands ... in the parish of Llantwit during her natural life ...' with reversion to Thomas his eldest son. But Thomas was married, had been for 10 years, and may well have been keen to move into his father's house. A reasonable solution would be for her to move in, with her son, to whatever house was available on her tenement of Sutton. But with a marriage for Edward in prospect a proper house would need to be built and what better solution than to combine a new marital home for Edward with a convenient dower house for his mother. Thus we would end up with a two wing gentry house, each wing being self-contained.

It is worth noting that Mary's sister, Elizabeth Evans, also came to Llandow and married John Powell the lord of the manor. What sort of a house Elizabeth moved into is impossible to say since it would appear to have been a predecessor to the present Great House. The odds are that it was a very old fashioned hall-house. Whether it was on the site of the former ring-work castle, or on the present Great House site I have no idea, but according to the dating by RCAHM it was her son, Thomas Powell, who built the Great House as we now know it, near the Church, probably to mark his first stint as Sheriff of Glamorgan in 1596 and that was by no means as grand a house as his aunt Turberville's.

Mary bore two sons to Edward Turberville, the second being born in about 1573, I am inclined to discount the two younger sons listed in Clark's *Limbus Patrum* and since she had a further 7 children by her second husband, one of whom, a daughter was married in 1601, I am sure that Edward must have died before 1580 and perhaps earlier than that.

Mary then married Thomas Bassett, third son, but eventual heir of Christopher Bassett of St.Tathan gent. Thomas Bassett was born in about 1559, about three years before his father's death and was therefore perhaps some 10 years younger than Mary. He appears in Deeds I have found as early as 1594 living at Sutton in right of his wife, but for several reasons it seems likely they were married at least as early as 1580. He was still 'of Sutton in 1612, but by 1618 he is of Miskin. We must assume therefore that his wife had

died by then.

Meanwhile Thomas Bassett had inherited his fathers estates and, while living on his wife's estate at Sutton had accumulated enough resources to build the gentry house at Miskin (Broviskin) which housed his descendants in style for some 200 years. Having said that, however, there is nothing to suggest that he did anything to harm the estate of his step-son, the young James Turberville, who after coming of age was able to buy the Llanmaes lands from his cousins in 1605 at a cost of £800.

There is also the archaeological evidence for the extension and remodelling of Sutton ca. 1600 when both wings were enlarged and given separate entrances. The cost of this building work may have been shared between James and his mother since the need would have arisen from the twin demands of his own marriage to Catherine James of Llanedern and his mother's large family. The convenience of having a dower wing when Sutton was built was clearly a boon to the second generation and, when James's son Edward died, his widow married again and in 1670 we learn of Lewis Thomas being charged with non-payment of tithes, he having been several years living at Sutton in his wife's right. We also find this Lewis Thomas charged with 10 hearths in 1670 which, being the largest assessment in Llandow, must refer to Sutton. I have not identified this Lewis Thomas.

The third and last Edward Turberville of Sutton died in 1719 leaving a daughter and heiress Cecil Turberville who married, as her second husband, the Revd. Edward Powell of Llandow, a direct descendant of her great great grandmother's sister Elizabeth. Their daughter Cecil Powell, the final heiress of Sutton, married Thomas Picton of Poyston in Pembrokeshire. We are told the marriage took place in Reynard's cave, Tresilian, and their son was General Thomas Picton. Another son was Richard Turberville Picton who took the name Turberville and whose family still resides at Ewenny. Sutton was later sold to Lord Talbot and, later to the Thomas family of Pwlylwrach and was subsequently a tenanted farmhouse.

The foregoing is a very superficial account of Sutton and much more could be discovered about its family. There is a series of legal disputes over the years 1603-5 some of which have transcribed by David Jones of Wallington and these would repay close study. There is also, I am told, record in the Court of Augmentations of a dispute over the Llantwit Chantry lands which may be of relevance to the Sutton family. But as I have said, my main reason for making this a brief NI. is the important role Sutton played in the genesis of the Bassett Estate of Broviskin.

J.B.D.
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