

the houses of the retainers, and that it was specially fashioned for their protection against invasion and attacks by the Norsemen. In support of this theory, there are other cases of twin moats of the Helmingham type in existence in the eastern counties, but it is believed that none has been discovered elsewhere in England. Another theory is that, in Catholic times, ponds were required to supply the family with fish on fast days, but there are plenty of fishponds in the park, sufficient for all their needs, which were certainly in existence in those days.

Helmingham, since that day, has been the home of the family. Bentley, which had been their home for three hundred and fifty years, was used by the eldest son for a few more generations, until other houses and large estates were added to the Tollemache possessions; but the family interest in their ancient property gradually faded. Slowly, with the passing of time, Bentley was allowed to decay, and all that remains at the present day is one small lovely side with an ugly but well-built Victorian farmhouse at the back. The woods at Bentley are all that remain of the original estate. A spendthrift descendant is reported to have attempted to recoup his fortune by a big bet, in which he staked all that part of the Bentley property over which the plough could go. He lost, and the unploughable woods, which still belong to the family, are the only territorial relic handed down from its early days.<sup>1</sup>

Lionel was wrapped up in the improvement of his estates, but he also took an active part in the affairs of the county. He was a Commissioner of the Peace from 1509 to 1514, and a Commissioner for Gaol Delivery in 1514. (In 1512 his name, with two others, is on the Sheriff Roll, and though Sir Richard Wentworth was appointed Sheriff in that year, Lionel Tollemache held office the one following.) His brother, Robert Tollemache of Otley, and John Goldingham of Belstead, whose family had been friends of the Tollemaches ever since the regrettable raid on their property two hundred years before, were his sureties. Robert had also been surety for Sir Richard Wentworth when Sheriff in the previous year, and later both of them, with Humphrey Wingfield and Alan Goldingham, acted as trustees for the settlement of the Helmingham Manor.

In 1521 Wentworth and Lionel acted with Sir Philip Tilney in an inquiry as to the metes and bounds of the town of Ipswich and the places in which the Corporation claimed to have special liberties. A warrant of 1522 states that William Tollemache, the third brother, was attorney for Wentworth. All this suggests a good deal of intercourse between the families, and it is not surprising that we soon hear of the engagement and marriage of Lionel Tollemache's eldest son, another Lionel, to Sir Richard Wentworth's daughter Dorothy.

This marriage opened up a wider career for young Lionel, as his father-in-law was well known in influential circles, and had spent much time at Court. Sir Richard had accompanied the King both to the Field of the Cloth of Gold (so named owing to the

<sup>1</sup> The manor was purchased in 1895 by the Hon. Stanhope Tollemache, son of the first Lord Tollemache.