MR. LAWRENCE HESKETH PALK'S MAJORITY

Lawrence Hesketh Palk, Esq., eldest son of Sir Lawrence Palk, Bart., M.P., and heir apparent of Haldon-House, attained his majority on Friday last, the 6th of September, and the event has been celebrated on the estate by a week of festivity and rejoicing.

Sir Lawrence Palk, Bart., M.P. for South Devon father of Mr. Palk whose majority has been the occasion of these festivities, is the 4th baronet. His great grandfather, Sir Robert Palk, Governor at Madras, for Robert-vien in Ireland, was created a baronet on the 19th of June, 1772. From the slight records which remain of the family previous to that date, we find that Sir Lawrence's ancestors resided in Devonshire, and were possessed of Ambrook, in the parish of Egbeton, about the end of the 15th century. The descent is traced from Henry Palk, of Ambrook, who lived in the time of Henry VII. The Rev. Thomas Palk, of Staverton, a celebrated Non-conformist divine, author of several treatises on the religious disputes of the period, died in 1703. From him descended Walter Palk, the seventh in descent from the above named Henry Palk, and father of the first baronet. He was member of parliament for Ashburton, and married Miss Abraham. His second son, Walter, was also M.P. for Ashburton. His eldest son, Robert, by his talents and address, attracted the attention and favour of the great Sir Robert Walpole, under whose auspices he was sent to India, where he made a great fortune, and was made the first Governor of Madras. For his services to the East India Company he was made a baronet in 1763. He married Ann, daughter of Arthur Vansittart, Esq., and had one son and three daughters. In his retirement from public service in India he purchased the Haldon House Estate and Manor. During his career in India he formed a very close friendship with the famous Major-General Stringer Lawrence, to whose memory he erected, in the year 1768, a fine monument at Madras. He died in 1773, and was succeeded by his son, Sir Lawrence Palk, named after the gallant Major-General. The second baronet was M.P. for the County of Devon. He married, first, in 1769, Mary, eldest daughter of the third Earl of Barrington, who died without surviving issue; and secondly, 1792, Dorothy Elizabeth, daughter of Wilmot (Vaughan), first Earl of Lisburne, by whom he had six sons and two daughters. He died June 20th, 1813. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Sir Lawrence Vaughan Palk, who married, in 1818, Lady Eleanora, relict of Edward Hartopp, Esq., eldest daughter of Sir Bourchier Wrey, Bart. He had two sons and three daughters, and died the 16th of May, 1860. His eldest son Sir Lawrence Palk, the present Bart., M.P. for South Devon, was born in 1818. His mother died in the month of November, 1845, Maria Hartlett, only daughter of the late Sir T. H. Hesketh, Bart., of Rufford, Leicestershire. The hon. bart. takes a generous view of his duties as a landlord, and is honorably known throughout the county for the acts of charity and the public works which he has promoted and encouraged. He is an active and energetic member of the House of Commons, and a man of what we ought to be done to improve the condition and increase the comforts of the labouring class, and by the fact that he sometimes and introduced a Bill to empower landed proprietors to charge their property with the cost of improving agricultural dwellings. He is a kind and generous landlord, and is remarkable for his tenants, and especially in getting the "Masters" in the Navy relieved of serious grievances under which they laboured. His eldest son, Lawrence Hesketh Palk, the heir apparent, was born on the 6th of September, 1846. He was educated at Eton and at Christ Church, Oxford. Returning about three years ago from a tour in Europe and the East, he was appointed ensign in the 2nd battalion of the Scots Fusilier Guards, to which he is now attached. Historical and topographical works relating to Devonshire, in the records of the last two hundred years, contain numerous references to the Palk family, with particulars of the various purchases by which the magnificent estate of Haldon-House was gathered into a present fair and extensive proportions. The house is a large mansion in the Elizabethan style, it was built in 1735 by Sir George Chudleigh, the last baronet of Hayne, and one of whose co-heiresses brought it to Sir John Chichester, Bart., and it passed by successive alliances into the hands of Sir Ann Basset, John Jones, Esq., and William Webber, Esq., to the possession of Sir Robert Palk, the first baronet, by whom the house and demesnes were purchased in 1769. It contains a fine collection of pictures and an extensive library, in which are some rare and valuable works connected with the history and antiquities of Devonshire. The manor was one of the ancient estates of the Earls of Devon, and was forfeited by the attainder of the Marquis of Exeter, who was executed for his share in the Rye House Plot, in the reign of Charles II. It was afterwards in the possession of the Courtenay family, and passed by inheritance into the hands of the late Sir J. P. Acland, Bart., from whom it was purchased by Sir Lawrence Vaughan Palk, the third baronet. The neighbouring mansion of Powderham Castle, which eventful history is connected from the time of the Norman Kings to a comparatively recent date, was purchased from the Earl of Courtenay by Sir Robert Palk, the first baronet. The park at Haldon House is exceedingly extensive and picturesque. In the summit of the hill are many barrows and tumuli in which urns and Roman coins have been found. The ornamental grounds are extensive, and the plantation covers many acres. Some of the finest trees in the country are to be found there, and the grounds are delightfully arranged on the side of hills and vales. The lawns and gardens are very beautiful, encompassing the mansion on the south and east, in the distance on one side the tors of Dartmoor and on the other side the waters of the English Channel. In parts the prospect may be seen for miles over a portion of the country, and the city of Exeter, which is about seven miles distant, looks like an immoderate nest of houses in the landscape, lying much less than half-way up from the tower and the horizon. The scene is one of great beauty and interest, and the lover of nature may find in picking out the details of the wide expanse and in admiring the endless variety which it presents. It commands the whole country of the Exe, and the Exeter Canal, the ancient city to the sea, with the hills and woodlands as far as Honiton and the borders of Somerset. The eventful life of the first baronet by Sir Robert Wilson, who commenced his the career of the great man to whose memory this monument was erected, has much interest attached to the circumstances under which it was built. The pedestal of the tomb contains a colossal statue of the Major-General, in classical military attire, and on three sides of the tomb in the panels round the interior runs the following inscription, which Sir Robert Palk caused to be written to the memory of his friend:—

To the memory of Major-General Stringer Lawrence, who for the space of 30 years commanded the British forces in India, and by his superior genius, commanding skill, and unwearied fortitude, conducted to a prosperous issue, under the auspices of the Government of France, restored the glory of the British army, and, by repeatedly defeating the Mahomedan Armies of Aly Cawn Betandee, the distinguished son of Anaverdee, in happier times the rightful sovereign of the Carnatic, established the Empire of Britain in Hindostan. Nor were his talents in war more eminent than his amiable virtues. He adorned the military profession with every glorious than conquer. He was the deliverer of India. At his approach every fabric gained strength. At his departure it fell. He greeted with attention on his person, and he secured, while blessings he diffused in one family (of which he was the common father) the native of Europe and the inhabitants of Asia.

The reverse side of the pedestal is in superior being, and to the end of his life their testimonials of affection were accessing. The following inscription from the pedestal of the tomb, which perpetuates the gratitude of the Nabob of Arcot:—"To the memory of Major Stringer Lawrence, the Nabob of Arcot, Mahomed Ali Nawab Walajah Ameer Al Hind, Sepai, Sanlar, Prince of the Carnatic, and the ally of His Britannic Majesty has caused this inscription to be placed in gratitude of his friendship and in proof of the sense of the importance of the important services rendered by the General to himself and to the Carnatic, and to the Nabob, and to the Prince, the founder of English power in Hindostan." The opinion entertained by the East Indian Company of his services is shown by the inscription on the monument which, at the public expense, they caused to be erected to his memory in the Fort of Madras, commemorating his discipline established, fortresses protected, settlements extended, French and Indian armies defeated, and peace concluded in the Carnatic."

His excellent man was born at Hereford in the year 1697. His early days were devoted to that service of which in the following year he was so bright an ornament. He served against the rebels in 1745 as aide-de-camp to Lord Tyrconnel, and was present at Culloden, and much loved patron of General Wolfe. At the solicitation of the East India Company he accepted the command of the forces in the East India, and after having saved and extended the dominions of the East India Company, he died in the prime of life, and was buried in the capital of the British possessions, in the year 1759. He