



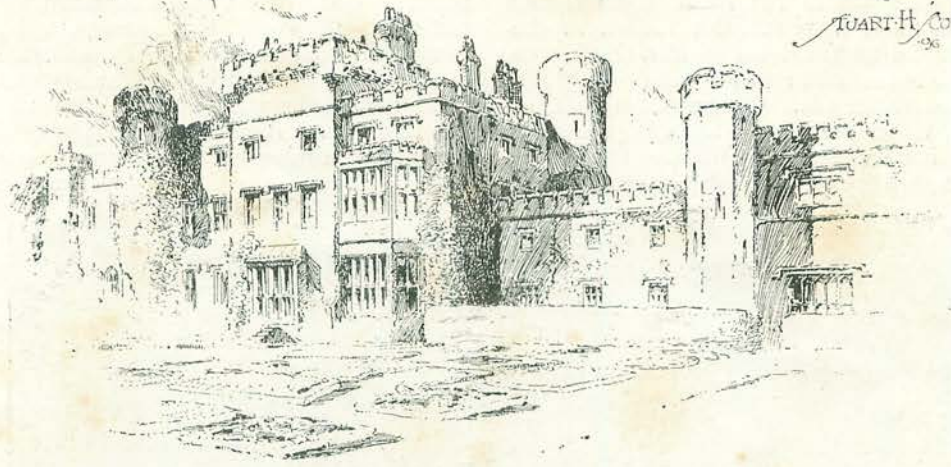
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MR. GLADSTONE.

[F. Rowlands, Hawarden.

HAWARDEN Castle.

WALTER H. SCOTT
1896



HAWARDEN, THE HOME OF THE GLADSTONES.

BY ARCHIBALD CROMWELL.

Illustrated by S. H. SCOTT; and from Photographs.

“**E**VER from youth up the beloved and admired of many personal intimates, always the foremost man, warm-hearted, earnest, hard working and religious, he had a following even in his teens.” That is a description of William Ewart Gladstone culled from the autobiography of an opponent. None of his countrymen, whether they differ from or agree with him on great political questions, will probably deny the truth of this portrait or rebuke the interest which is naturally felt increasingly in Mr. Gladstone and all that concerns his life.

And so I am venturing to give an impressionistic sketch of my visits to Hawarden, the village whither the thoughts of the nation have been directed so often as the home of the Gladstones. Of course this title to fame has only belonged to Hawarden since the marriage of Mr. Gladstone, for Liverpool was his birthplace.

Sixty years ago “the beautiful Miss Glynnnes” were well known in society. They were the daughters of Sir Stephen Richard Glynnne, of Hawarden Castle, Flintshire. The eldest daughter, Catherine, became Mr.

Gladstone’s wife on July 25, 1839, and has been, through all the strenuous years of his long life, the loving helpmeet of the great statesman. She has been linked with him in the affectionate regard of millions, and has accompanied him on his campaigns with an enthusiastic interest truly remarkable. The



Glynnne family can boast of an ancestry dating back a thousand years. The elder branch settled at Hawarden, the younger

gave London Richard Glyn, the eminent founder of the famous bank.

The present Hawarden Castle was built in 1752; part of the ruins of the former castle make a picturesque feature in the park. After the death of Mrs. Gladstone's brother the estate was bequeathed to Mr. Gladstone for life. Owing to the death of Mr. William Henry Gladstone, the next heir is the latter's son, William, of whom a portrait is given herewith. This little lad

bookcases are thousands of volumes all ready to the hand of their owner. In commemoration of the golden wedding the porch in front of the Castle was erected. It has greatly improved the entrance, and is furnished with lounge seats. In the south-west wing is the handsome drawing-room, from the windows of which a fine view is obtainable. Here again are plenty of volumes, testifying to the literary tastes of the Gladstones, and many portraits of



Master William Gladstone.
(Heir to the Hawarden estate.)

Miss Constance Gladstone. Miss Evelyn C. Gladstone.

THE CHILDREN OF THE LATE MR. W. H. GLADSTONE AND THE HON. MRS. W. H. GLADSTONE.

has already made one appearance in public, when he was the train-bearer to the Prince of Wales at the recent opening ceremony connected with Aberystwith University. He and his sisters live with their mother, the Hon. Mrs. W. H. Gladstone, in a house not very far from Hawarden village. Hawarden Castle had originally a brick exterior, but it was subsequently cased in stone and castellated. A block was added, and in this portion of the building is Mr. Gladstone's study. On the shelves of the

political friends and opponents. Just as Lord Salisbury has on his drawing-room table a carved figure of Mr. Gladstone, so in the Hawarden drawing-room stands an excellent autographed portrait of Mr. A. J. Balfour, who has been a guest here more than once.

The dining-room has a fine painting of Mr. Gladstone and another of Mrs. Gladstone. It is a comfortable room looking out on to the park. Upstairs, on one of the landings, you will notice an organ which the

late Mr. W. H. Gladstone was wont to play. It may have been forgotten that the eldest son of the family enriched our hymn books with some admirable tunes of his own composition. Mr. Herbert Gladstone is likewise fond of music and may be seen singing in the chorus when the Handel Society gives a concert in London.

Before leaving the house, with all its interesting contents, you will probably notice a large collection of axes and walking-sticks, presented to Mr. Gladstone by divers admirers. Nowadays he uses the walking-sticks more often than the axes.

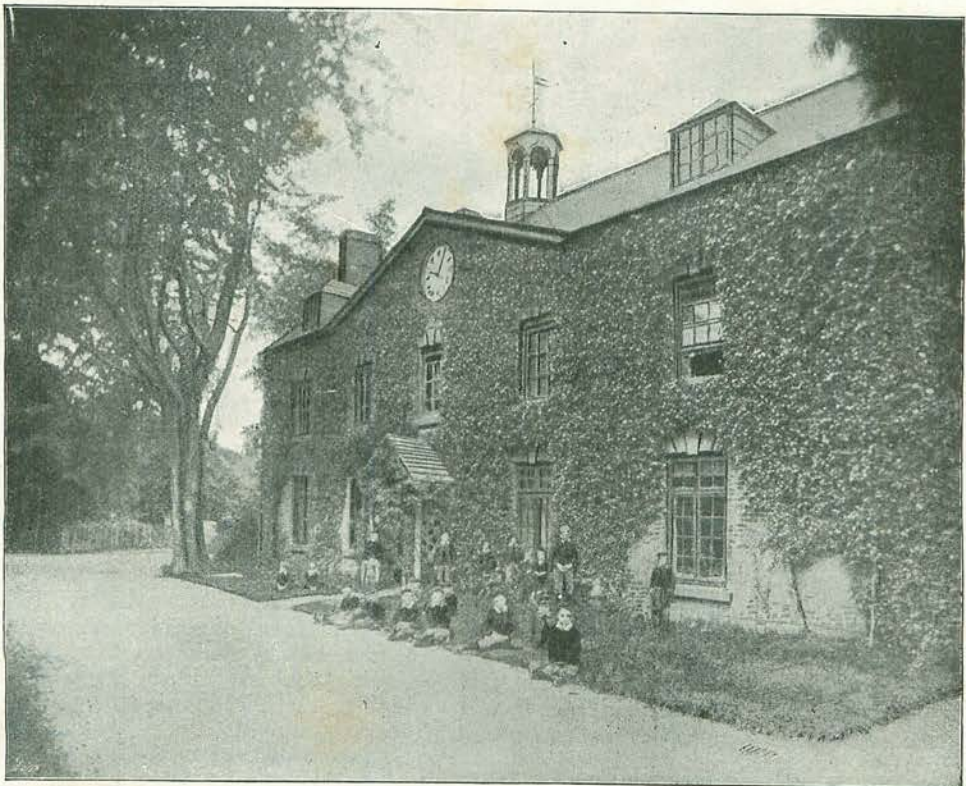
Close to the park gates are Mrs. Gladstone's home for old ladies and her admirable orphanage for boys. The visitors' book at the latter institution contains many notable autographs, and the signature of the late Sir Andrew Clark, who was physician to the family for several years, occurs more than once. The inmates of



the orphanage are trained to fill useful positions in the neighbourhood, becoming

The
TEMPLE
of Peace
THOMAS H. GOTT

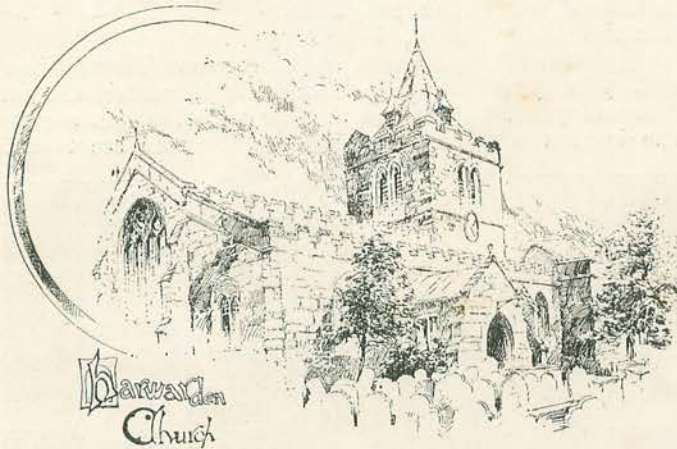
gardeners, stablemen, etc. They retain the warmest affection for Hawarden, and more than one in after years has sent a gift of money to benefit those who are receiving



MRS. GLADSTONE'S ORPHANAGE FOR BOYS, WHICH STANDS CLOSE TO HAWARDEN CASTLE.

the same advantages as have benefited him.

Passing reluctantly from Hawarden Castle and its precincts, the village next engages attention. It consists of a single street half a mile in length. At the further end is the church, which is about one hundred and twenty years old. Part of its roof was destroyed by fire in 1857, causing a restoration scheme to be undertaken by Sir Gilbert Scott. Its list of rectors goes back as far as 1180, and the parish register to 1585. The Bible from which Mr. Gladstone has so frequently read the lessons is an old volume, which, by its quaint type, must please such a connoisseur every time he peruses it. It stands on the brass lectern so familiar to those who have seen Mr. S. P. Hall's famous picture. Among the memorials in the church is one to the late Mr. W. H.



Gladstone, and another is to a faithful matron of the orphanage. The rectory is near the church and lately possessed a mournful interest as the place where Dr. Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury, died last October, after removal in an unconscious state from the church.

The Rev. Stephen and Mrs. Gladstone and their family have so often been included in photographic groups of the Gladstones that their faces are very familiar to the public. After attending service on Sunday morning it has been the custom of Mr. Gladstone to retire to the rectory in order to avoid the crowds which always await his departure from the church. Wagonettes bring numbers of sightseers from Chester and other parts of the district on purpose to catch a glimpse of the ex-Premier. Many of these visitors are unable to be accommodated in

the church, and content themselves with the prospect of seeing the Gladstone party after the congregation has been dismissed. If Mr. Gladstone is visible, hats are raised as he passes—a compliment which he invariably reciprocates. During the last year it has been his habit to attend a service at the church each afternoon during the week at five o'clock. Formerly he would walk through the park to early celebration when most people were only rising for the day. Sometimes he would be the only participant in the service save the clergy. But now these early attendances have been suspended owing to advancing years. No inhabitant of the village is more punctilious in church-going than Mr. Gladstone, who, moreover, takes a thoroughly lively interest in every portion of the service, joining in the hymns, uttering the responses, and listening to the preacher with unvarying attention.

I noticed in the church a brass in memory of a bell-ringer who had lived to over ninety years of age. In the neighbourhood you will see many aged people, whose looks advertise the healthiness of Hawarden. One old dame with whom I conversed spoke cheerily of being as old as Mr. Gladstone, but added, "There, I'm not near as wonderful a woman for my age as Mrs. Gladstone! Our lady's wonderfuller than Mr. Gladstone himself, and so good!"

The example of activity in old age set by Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone inspired this veteran to run to the gate when I said good-bye, while her fluency in conversation was perfectly alarming. The inhabitants of Hawarden, while alive to the importance of the Gladstone family, cannot be called very alert politicians. They do not touch the outside world at many points, and often the stranger can inform them of incidents at Hawarden of which they are unaware. Despite the fact that many thousands visit the village, the provision for refreshments is ludicrously meagre. In some of the cottage windows the legend, "Hot Water," suggests either preparations for shaving, or a belief in this cure for dyspepsia! But you can hear a good deal of gossip if you take a modest meal of bread and jam and tea in one of these homes. On the mantelpiece and the walls are sure to be



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MRS. GLADSTONE.

[P. Rowlands, Hawarden.

portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, and these are soon pointed out to you with pleasure and pride.

The iron buildings of St. Deiniol's Library, which stand not far from the church, are of recent construction and interest. They are painted a rather sickly yellow colour, and have a neat entrance gate and path leading to them, with a well-kept lawn on one side. Entering the library you are confronted at once with several notices neatly written and signed by the Rev. Harry Drew, Mr. Gladstone's son-in-law, who acts as the warden (if one may use that title) of the hostel. Let me remove any misconceptions as to the purpose of this library. It is in no sense a public institution, but is intended to afford to clergymen or ministers an opportunity of quiet study under the happiest of conditions. Here are gathered thousands of volumes, carefully



selected by the most distinguished bookman living, representing an eclectic field of thought ranging over the whole area of human interests. The eye rests one moment on the familiar back of a Murray's Guide, and next it discovers that Doric classic, "Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk," by the late Dr. Wm. Alexander, of Aberdeen. The latter volume is adorned with Sir George Reid's admirable illustrations. By the side of some erudite work by a Churchman like Pusey you will discover a book by a Nonconformist like Dr. Dale, and no student in this library could complain of narrowness of choice when he can glean from such diverse literary harvests.

The volumes were in many cases brought to the library by Mr. Gladstone's own hands, and their arrangement on the shelves was under his direct superintendence. Many an afternoon he might have been seen walking through the park with a parcel of books, and for an hour or two the G.O.M. would be

industrious in placing them on the shelves. The system of indexing is by means of cards, a method which I fancy we owe to America. At all events it saves a good deal of labour and permits additions to be made easily to the list. How tempting St. Deiniol's Library looked to me as the sunshine flooded the rooms, and shone on the thousands of books, making the idea of study under such conditions doubly delightful! Glancing at the visitors' book I saw the recently inscribed names of Mr. A. J. Balfour and his sister, the Bishop of Rochester, the Hon. Mrs. Henniker, Lord and Lady Tweedmouth. Already many men can look back with gratitude on happy and valuable times of study spent in the library, and as St. Deiniol's becomes better known there will be many more participants in its stores of learning. Not many paces from the library is the hostel, where students can be housed and boarded during their residence at Hawarden. The accommodation is modest but comfortable, and must add to the enjoyment of a visit.

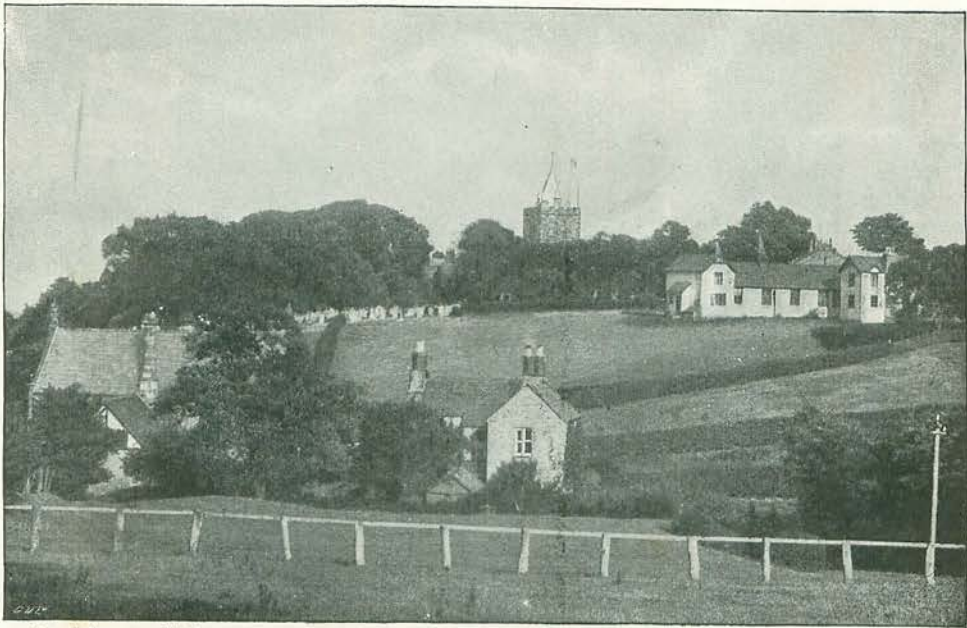
From the hostel I went down the village street to the substantial building called the Hawarden Institute. Upstairs in the library I saw two volumes with characteristic inscriptions by Mr. Gladstone. One was on the fly-leaf of a Waverley novel, and was to this effect: "No local library should be without a set of

Sir Walter Scott's novels in full. Accordingly I present this set to the Hawarden Institute." Then taking up the first volume of the "Life of William Ewart Gladstone," by George Barnett Smith, I saw these words written in Mr. Gladstone's firmest handwriting: "This work was not written by authority, but I believe it has a fair reputation; and I present it to the institute because it may be convenient to the members of that body to have at hand easy means of reference on points of detail concerning an old and attached neighbour." How characteristic of Mr. Gladstone in style and phrase! This institute has, besides many books given by the Gladstones, a host of volumes presented by the knight who prefers to sign himself "Eizak Pitman." The famous inventor of our most popular phonetic system is almost the contemporary of Mr. Gladstone, Sir Isaac Pitman being in his eighty-third year. But the institute seemed to me to

lack modern volumes, and I suggested that visitors might be asked to send such books as mementoes of their pilgrimage to Hawarden. There is a capital billiard-room, a bath-room, and a reading-room to add to the attractions of the institute. The gymnasium, I understood, was not in quite so great demand as would satisfy the athletic member for West Leeds, who has shown generous interest in it. "Mr. Herbert," as he is called in the village, has always been popular at Hawarden, and spends a good

part of his holidays at home. He may often be seen cycling in the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Drew, his sister, is likewise a cyclist.

One last look at the Castle standing in its framework of foliage and our pilgrimage to Hawarden concludes. The personality of its chief resident seems all the greater by reason of this visit. May Time touch gently the great statesman, who has so recently celebrated his eighty-seventh birthday, and permit him to enjoy the evening of his long life in the happiness of his Hawarden home.



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[P. Rowlands, Hawarden.