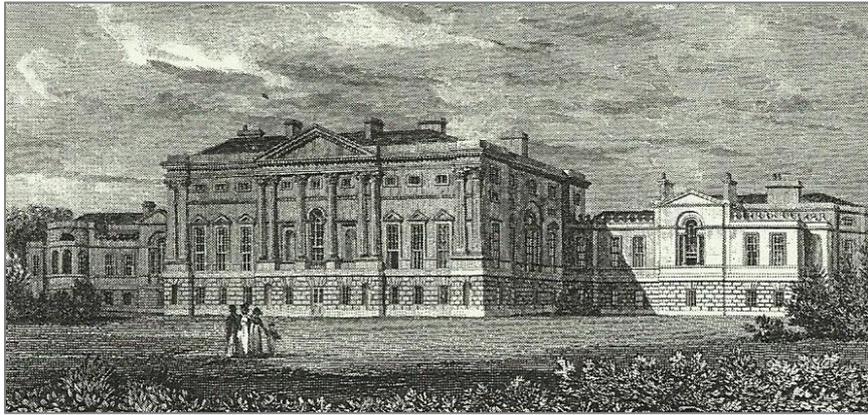


Heir's Attainment Festivities 1853



Engraving of New Wardour Castle 1828

On the 28th ult, the Honourable John Arundell, eldest son of the Right Honourable Lord Arundell, attained his majority and during the last fortnight the princely mansion at Wardour has been the scene of one unbroken round of festivities.

Two happy periods seemed to have most opportunely fallen together, for the mirth and merriment of Christmas became united to the rejoicings in honour of the Heir's entrance upon man's estate. Nor was it likely that the interest of the latter even would be confined to the family circle only, when all classes in the surrounding district were affected by it; those who would become associated with a fresh companion and friend - no less than those who would regard him as their future landlord and employer.

In the course of the first week Lord and Lady Arundell received at dinner several of the neighbouring gentry and clergy, amongst whom were Mr and Mrs Grove, Mrs and the Misses Seymour, Mr and Mrs du Boulay, the Rev R Blackmore, &c &c.; whilst the second week was devoted to the entertainment of a large circle of relatives and more immediate friends of the family who remained at Wardour. The party consisted of Lady Titchborne, Lady Doughty and Miss Doughty, Colonel and Mrs Greenwood, Colonel and Mrs Macdonnel, Sir Edward Baker, the Hon Arthur Arundell, the Misses Hussey, Mr and Mrs Whieldon and Mr Arthur Whieldon, Miss Griffith, the Rev Mr Casey, Mr Robertson and Mr Lambert. Mr Everard Arundell (his Lordship's second son) was also present, as well as the Rev J Lawrenson, the venerable and respected chaplain of the family.

The festivities within the Castle concluded with a ball, to which all the tenantry with their wives, sons and daughters were invited. Unfortunately the evening was very wet, but judging from the number present (nearly one hundred and fifty), there must have been very few who would not have braved the most pelting and pitiless storm rather than submit to the disappointment of not appearing on such an occasion.

The ball was opened at eight o'clock by the Hon Mr Arundell and Lady Arundell, and dancing was kept up with untiring spirit, under the influence of a very efficient band, led by Mr Eyers, of Blandford, until after twelve o'clock. The party then left the ball-room, and after walking through the long corridor, which was most brilliantly lighted up, they came to the large and lofty hall at the east end of the house, where supper had been prepared; and such a supper it was - barons of beef, turkies, game, poultry, jellies, blanchemanges, pastry and cakes, of every description - and all in the greatest profusion.

The hall itself was most tastefully decorated with evergreens, and at each end were two large banners displaying the family arms. It would be quite impossible, without the aid of a pictorial illustration, to give an idea of this interesting scene, which, of its kind, was absolutely perfect. After the merits of the more substantial portions of the entertainment had been discussed, the health of Mr Arundell was given with every demonstration of regard and respect.

In a speech, admirable both in manner and matter, he thanked them for the fresh proof they had given him of their kindness and esteem. He had known many of them all his life, and some only from a recent period; but he found that the better he became acquainted with them, the livelier were his sympathies towards them, and the greater his attachment for those amongst whom providence had cast his lot.

He spoke in the most feeling terms of the relationship which ought to exist between landlord and tenant, and of the duties which devolved on the former, amongst which he considered residence to be one of the most important. It was not only the great social bond which united the two classes, but it elevated the contract between them into something more than a mere money bargain.

The health of Lord and Lady Arundell were then given, and his Lordship, in the course of an excellent reply, remarked that there were two occurrences of peculiar interest in a nobleman's family - the birth of an heir and the attainment of his majority; both of these events he had now happily witnessed and he thanked Almighty God he was enabled to say that during the whole of his son's life, he had never given him one moment's pain or displeasure.

The guests in the Castle were next toasted, and the compliment was acknowledged by Sir Edward Baker, who paid a handsome tribute to the ability shewn by Mr Arundell. His future career was not one of hope and promise only, but of absolute certainty.



The Grand Staircase

After supper, dancing was resumed until an hour when neither lamp nor lantern were needed to guide the visitors home. Before the party separated they all went to the grand staircase, and after auld Lang Syne had been beautifully sung by a lady whose power and taste in rendering Scottish airs can only be appreciated by those who have had the pleasure of hearing her, the National Anthem was sung with one heart and voice by the whole assembly, accompanied on the organ by Mr H Richardson.

We must not conclude our short but imperfect sketch without adding that the mechanics and lesser tradesmen all dined at the Arundell Arms at Donhead on Thursday last, and that a plentiful supply of beef was given to every cottager and poor person on the estate; nor must we omit to echo the often repeated sentiment of every person who had the happiness of participating in these festivities, that nothing could exceed the urbanity, kindness, and courtesy displayed by the noble host and hostess and Mr Arundell throughout.

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