It is sad that Lee Priory in the parish of Ickham, near Canterbury, one of the most distinguished examples of the Gothic Revival to have graced the county, should have fallen victim to the present-day difficulties of survival of large houses. It was demolished in 1952 although some of the ancillary buildings remain, converted to domestic use.

Lee, or as it was formerly spelt Legh, in the thirteenth century belonged to a family bearing that name. Subsequently the estate passed to the Stokys or Stocks and in the seventeenth century the Southlands. In 1676 Thomas Southland sold it to Paul Barrett, Sergeant-at-law, Recorder of Canterbury and M.P. for New Romney from whom it descended to his great-grandson, Thomas Barrett.

The house inherited by this Thomas Barrett in 1757, when in his fourteenth year, was an unpretentious building of seventeenth-century date. His father, also named Thomas, had been "a gentleman of great elegance and fine taste who made a good collection of paintings, books and antiquities. He had a large fortune, and lived in a very handsome manner. He married four times—all heiresses . . . Mr Barrett was the only child of the last wife".

The boy thus destined to grow up in an environment of art and culture with his early education continued at Trinity College, Cambridge, and his tastes further moulded by some considerable time spent on the Grand Tour became "highly accomplished in the arts and devoted to them", a friend of Lord Orford and so a member of the Walpole circle.

Almost certainly it was Horace Walpole who introduced the architect, James Wyatt, to Barrett when the latter was minded to improve or rebuild his home.

Wyatt produced numerous designs for the proposed work and eventually it was decided that a Gothic house with a Grecian dining-room

1 With comments on the diary by John Evans.
3 The autobiography of Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges.
4 Ibid.
should be built. The work commenced in 1783 and to be in character with the design the name of the property was changed to Lee Priory although of course there were no monastic associations with the site.

When the building was finished "at a vast expense", this seat was generally allowed to be one of the most beautiful specimens of Wyatt's architectural genius\(^1\) and Horace Walpole was moved to comment:\(^2\) "The house at Lee, which was indifferent before, has been, by the skill and art of Mr Wyatt, admirably improved in the disposition of the apartments; among them is a very beautiful Library, finished in the most perfect style of Gothic taste. The three fronts of the house convey the idea of a small convent, never attempted to be demolished, but partly modernized and adapted to the habitation of a gentleman's family; and the gently spreading trees, and the adjoining rivulet, seem to correspond with it and to form a site selected by monks with a view of retirement and meditation, while at the same time, no distant prospect tantalized them with views of opulence and busy society."

To help maintain this monkish character it is said, if tradition can be believed, that material from the demolished Worthgate of Canterbury was brought here and built into the entrance gateway of the stable yard (Plate II).

When Thomas Barrett died in 1803 he left the Lee Priory estate to a great-nephew, Thomas Brydges. His step-sister, Elizabeth, had married the Rev. William Dejoyas Byrche and their daughter, Elizabeth, became the first wife of Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges of Denton. Thomas, born June, 1789, was the first child of this marriage.\(^3\) Upon coming of age the young man took the name Barrett by signmanuel.

The purpose of this paper is to record some details concerning the Brydges family in its association with Lee Priory, particularly in respect of that accomplished scholar but eccentric individual, Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges, and the youthful writer of the diary to be quoted later.

Samuel Egerton Brydges was born at Wootton Court on 30th November, 1762, the second son of Edward Brydges and Jemima his wife, daughter of the Rev. William Egerton, LL.D., a Prebendary of Canterbury. He spent the first four years of his school life at the Maidstone grammar school and entered the King's School, Canterbury, where he remained from 1775 to 1780, no doubt laying the foundations of his later scholarship and literary taste. From Canterbury he went on to Queen's College, Cambridge, and in 1782 entered the Middle Temple.

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\(^1\) The autobiography of Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges.
\(^2\) Anecdotes of Painting.
\(^3\) Arch. Cant., XIV, 124.
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"In 1792," Brydges recorded in his Autobiography, "I had bought the old manor-house (Wootton Court) and estate of Denton of Lady Markham, widow of Sir James Markham and sister of the first Lord Clive. I married at the early age of twenty-two—much too early—without an income adequate to my habits, unless with great economy and I had no economy. In October, 1810, I removed to my son's house at Lee Priory . . . he having then come of age. Two years afterwards I was elected M.P. for Maidstone after a severe contest."

It was three years after the move to his son’s home that Brydges embarked on the private press project with which his name has always been linked. The Autobiography tells the story of this venture.

"In 1813 a compositor and a press man (Johnson and Warwick) persuaded me with much difficulty to allow them to set up a private press at Lee Priory. I consented on the express condition that I would have nothing to do with the expenses, but would gratuitously furnish them with copy, and they must run all hazards and of course rely on such profits as they could get. In defiance of these precautions on my part, they put me and my son to continual expense, by application for pecuniary assistance, though they sold what they printed, as limited to a very small number of copies, at very high prices, which book-collectors were willing to purchase for a time as curiosities. The press was not finally given up till about December, 1822 . . . These printers might have done very well if they had been decently prudent. The two quarrelled as early as 1817, and Johnson quitted."

An example of the typography produced by the Lee Priory press is the tenth quarto work to be issued. This is dated 1815 and entitled:

SPEECHES
Delivered To
QUEEN ELIZABETH
on her visit
to
GILES BRYDGES, LORD CHANDOS
at
Sudeley Castle, in Gloucestershire

With
A PREFACE
By
Sir Egerton Brydges, Bart. M.P.K.J.
A copy of this volume belongs to the present writer. The subtitle page and page number 36 of the Introduction, which referred to John Astley\(^1\), reproduced here, well illustrates the style of typography

\(^1\) See "The Astleys of Maidstone" *Arch. Cant.* Vol. LXXII.
These Astleys were not merely high in birth and station; but, what is a far better distinction, in intellect and learning. John Astley, Esq. the father, was as well the congenial as the intimate friend of the celebrated Roger Ascham: and though his writings are unknown among the modern literati, I shall prove that his fame among his cotemporaries was of the first class. This will be so new even to most literary Antiquaries, that I am anxious to establish it upon the most irrefragible authorities. I will therefore transcribe every word of the article, regarding him, in "Bishop Tanner's Bibliotheca."


Gabriel Harvey in his "Pierce's Supererogation, 1593,"

* See T. Warton's "Life of Sir Thomas Pope."

FIG. 2.

adopted by the Press. Twenty-five pages of the long Introduction are devoted to the history of the Chandos family and only seventeen to the title matter which suggests that the author was as obsessed as ever by
the desire to substantiate his claim to the Chandos Barony, the story of which is now to be recounted.

In 1789, the year the barony of Chandos became extinct, Brydges, who for some time had been interested in the study of genealogy, turned the knowledge he had gained to practical account. The original holder of the Chandos title, John Brydges, was created a baron by Letters Patent in 1554. At his death he left three sons, Edmund, Charles and Anthony. Edmund, the eldest, succeeded him but upon the failure of heirs male of his line, the barony passed to the heirs male of Charles, the second son. In 1789 this line failed also and Samuel Egerton Brydges conceived the idea that his elder brother, the Rev. Edward Brydges, then squire and rector of Wootton might claim the title as the lineal descendant of Anthony, the third son of the first baron.¹ The claim was duly put forward and came up for hearing before the Committee of Privileges of the House of Lords on 1st June, 1790.

The case became a cause célèbre. There were more than twenty-six hearings, at which, from time to time, fresh evidence was produced and the matter was not finally settled until June, 1803, when a majority of the Lords resolved that the just claim to the title had not been substantiated.

During these long-drawn-out proceedings Sir Egerton Brydges was the driving force which kept the case going and the failure of the claim was a lifelong disappointment to him. In 1831 he wrote a book² in an attempt to prove that by Common Law he was not bound by the peers' decision and still retained the right to resort to a legal trial by jury. After his brother's death in October, 1807, he invariably styled himself "Per legem terrae Baron Chandos of Sudeley".

The evidence produced at the many hearings was voluminous and involved. The Brydges traced their descent through the Bridges of Wootton to Edward Bridges of Maidstone who had been baptized there on 25th March, 1603. This Edward, it was contended, was the grandson of Anthony, the third son of the first Baron Chandos.

The opponents to this claim strenuously denied this contention and learned counsel for the Crown maintained throughout the hearings that the claimant was, in fact, descended from an obscure yeoman family of Harbledown, near Canterbury, of the name of Bridges. Moreover, it was further suggested that certain parish registers and other documents had, to use the modern idiom, been "cooked" to support the claim. No steps were ever taken, however, to press a charge of falsification against any particular person.

¹ See Arch. Cant., LXXII, 17.
² Lex Terrae, a Discussion of the Law of England regarding Claims of inheritable Rights of Peerage.
When, nearly at the end of his life, Sir Egerton Brydges published his *Autobiography* he still maintained the rightness of his claim but this was shatteringly confuted by G. F. Beltz, the Lancaster Herald of the day in *A Review of the Chandos Peerage Case* which appeared in 1834, in which it was shown that Sir Egerton's great-grandfather, John Bridges, was a grocer in Canterbury and both his wives were grocer's daughters.

Some years ago there came into the possession of the present writer a thin folio volume of manuscript memoranda and letters bearing the book-plate of our Society's onetime member, William John Mercer, of Margate. On the binding it carries the title "Barony of Chandos of Sudeley" and comprises besides some printed material concerning the Chandos case, manuscript pedigrees, Counsel's notes and a series of letters written by a certain John Boys of Margate. The first of these letters is dated 16th January, 1835, and addressed to G. F. Beltz, Esq., Lancaster H(erald), Heralds College, London.¹

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Dr. Sir.

The Purpose for which I collated a Transcript of the Register of Ore (olim Owre) for the Years 1637/8-9-40 & 41, was to assist me in obtaining Proof (if possible) of the Forgery, or Fraud which in my Opinion had been practiced on the House of Lords on occasion of the Chandos Peerage Claim; but which Deception seemed to me to have escaped Detection at that Time—I annex a Copy of the last years Register which is collated from a Transcript in the Canterbury Register and which I believe to have been produced before the Peers on that occasion; but the Charge is so serious a one, that I have been waiting an Opportunity of some further Research for additional corroboration or Proof of the Accuracy of my conclusions upon this Branch of that Evidence, before I could submit it to the Public.

For many years I have been confidentially employed by the Crown-Solicitors in obtaining Evidence upon great Crown-Proceedings and I should consider myself as most unfortunate to advance a charge or cast any Imputation which I could not very strongly sustain; or in Failure of so doing, which at the least I could not show to have originated in very strong grounds for conscientious Belief.

I have no Interest in this Matter beyond a wish for historical accuracy and should be very happy to render to you all the Information I can obtain on the Subject, as soon as I have satisfied myself upon one further Point.

¹ George Frederick Beltz, for many years employed in the Office of the Garter King of Arms, was born in 1777. In 1834 when he was Lancaster Herald he published an octavo volume *A Review of the Chandos Peerage Case, adjudicated 1803*. He died at Basle on the 23rd October, 1841.
It is a rather curious circumstance that my Investigation of this Point originated in a Feeling that Sir E. Bridges had been calumniated in the Newspapers and not fairly dealt by, in consequence of the Loss and Deficiencies of original Registers & Documents for which he was not blameable; but on Enquiry a very different Result followed.

The annexed was obtained before I had heard that you published a Book on the Subject of the Peers' Decision; and it was my Intention after I had acquired all the Evidence in my own Way and without being led or influenced by any other opinion to obtain a sight of your Book, which, at present, I am a stranger to.

I have not been in London since last Summer, but I am in daily Expectation of being summoned there & if it will give you any Satisfaction I will endeavour to call, and will as freely communicate to you as I have done to Mr Streatfield all the Information I possess upon any Point enquired of me.

I am, Dr Sir
Yours faithfully
John Boys.

OWRE A coppie of Bill of Register of all such Christings Marriages and Burials as happened to be in the Parish of Ore in the Archdeaconry of Canterbury from the Feast of th' annuntiatiation in the Yeare 1640 to the same Feast Anno 1641 viz:

Bapt. Richard the Sonne of John and Elizabeth Lawrence Julie 19
Bapt. William ye Sonne of Samuel—Alice Luson Julie 26
Bapt. Elizabeth ye Daughter of Matthew and Anne Dickson Aug. 9
Bapt. John ye Sonne of Ralph and Anne Peeson Decem. 6
Bapt. Thomas the Sonne of Thomas Pile and Barbara his wife Decem. 13
Bapt. Elizabeth ye Daughter of Andrew and Anne Winne Jan. 17
Bapt. Richard ye Sonne of John and Katherine Philpot March 9
Bapt. Asteley the Sonne of Mr William Best and Anne his wife March 14
Bapt. Philip the Sonne of Thomas and Susan Daman March 19

Married. William Best Gent and Anne Bridges of Maydeston May 1
Married. George Finch and Anne Upton June 30
Married. Abraham Luson and Mary Taylor Nov. 26
Married. Samuel Thomas and Amie Howell Jan. 14
Married. George Iles and Elizabeth Green. Jan. 14
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Buried. John Thomas
Buried. John the Sonne of John and Isabel Haman
Buried. Thomas Okeshott
Buried. John Howell
Buried. William Penial
Buried. Elizabeth Okeshott
Buried. Samuel ye Sonne of Amie Howell
Buried. John Bird

Buried. April 12
Buried. May 17
Buried. May 24
Buried. Oct 11
Buried. Octob 13
Buried. Octob 24
Buried. Novemb 15
Buried. Decceb 24

(signed) Rob Milles. Curat ibit.

On this annexed sheet the relative entries have been underlined

Dear Sir, Margate, 18 Jan\(^{v}\) 1835.

I beg you to accept my Thanks for your Attention in sending me your Book of the Peers' on Sir Egerton Brydges' Claim. I was an entire Stranger to the Contents of his Work & of your own; but your Note accompanying the latter, having referred me to your printed Acc\(^{d}\) of the Ore Transcript-Register, my Curiosity was sufficiently excited to induce me to go farther than I otherwise intended to do previous to my Enquiries, & I am quite surprized at the Extent of the Exposure. In short my own Intention of similar Public Exposure as to the Ore Register becomes abandoned; & in order to contribute if possible to your more able & more active Endeavours to bring darkness into Light, I shall be most ready to make any Search or Enquiries upon any particular Point you may suggest when I next go to the Canterbury Registry.

My Plan is, on Receipt of my Summons to London (& which waits only the Detention by Gout of a Friend in Staffordshire) to go to Canterbury at Night for the Purpose of Research there of two or three hours on the following Morning; & being at the Registry once more to inspect the Transcripts of the Parishes surrounding Ore, I could possibly be useful in obtaining for you Inform\(^{n}\) on Points which may escape me.

It may not have occurred to you that the (fabricated as I think) Transcript for 1640/1 of which I sent you a Copy containing 22 Entries is in Addition to another Return in the same year for the same Parish in which there are only 12 Entries—the year 1639/40 cont\(^{d}\) only 7—1638/9 only 8—1637/8 only 13—and that all those years, omitting the fabricated one, contains not one marriage, whilst the fabricated one contains no less than 5 marriages!—The Village is very small, poor, most unhealthy & without the Remnant or Record of a good House which Mr W™ Best or Anne Bridges could have been likely to inhabit—if such a Marriage took Place, it was most likely a stolen Match; but then surely there would have been a License & not a Public\(^{n}\) of Banns—I shall search the License Book of that Period,
shall also obtain the Handwriting of Mr Milles the Minister & of Price the Churchwarden of Ore to compare with the fabricated Transcript— one Return from Luddenham (the adjoining Parish) of that Date, signed by a Robt Milles differs entirely from that which is attached to the fabricated one; but I shd not rely on this alone; it is a suspicious circumstance, but nothing more.

The orig1 Register of Luddenham prior to 1654 is gone; as is Ore prior to 1714; but with a little Trouble I may obtain sev1 original Signatures of Mr Milles when I can spare the Time, in Davington which begins in 1549 & I think I shall find something there, as it is the nearest Parish to Ore—One strong Fact in Proof of the Fabrication, (in addition to the increased Number of Entries) is that it purports to have been signed by Richard Price, Churchwarden & in the genuine one of 1640/1 we find Richard Price buried 28 August before the Return was made— Here may arise a Question of Identity; but it was most improbable that there were 2 Richard Prices’ adults in that small Parish—My Impression is this, as far as I have gone, that the Fabricator of that Transcript by some Means got possession of the original Register, & from the Entries therein (subsequent to 1640/1) transcribed as many following Entries as would enable the Interlopation of the two false Entries which bore upon the Chandos Question—Milles was the Curate & Price the Churchwarden of that Year, but as the fabricated Trans- script was, of Names & Entries subsequent to those already delivered in to the Registry it might easily escape the Notice of the Copy-ist that Price died in the middle of his Year—I have been led on to these Remarks, to guide you in suggesting to my Attention & further En- quiry Points that may strike you & which may escape me. I have seen continually so much false Colouring & Perversion of the Truth, be- tween opposite Parties, & Injustice done, that I have a real Pleasure in a Case of this Kind, which I consider one of Magnitude & Importance, to sift the Truth which ever Way it may turn:—and therefore, hesitate not to make use of me.

The Transcript should have been dated 1641/2 or 1642/3 but this would have made a discovery perhaps of the fraud, as the Returns from Parishes then ceased from the disturbances. There ought to have been a duplicate of this fabricated Registry in the other Court (Consistory).

I am

Dear Sir

Yours very faithfully

John Boys

Df Sir

I yesterday on receipt of your Letter and being at Leisure, proceeded to Canterbury and there obtained much confirmation of the Deception practiced on the House of Peers as to the Ore Register on the Claims of the Chandos Peerage.
The following Statement is such as I would give in any course of judicial Enquiry and it is at your Service in furtherance of your Endeavours to rescue from calumny the just Judgement of the Peers on that occasion.

In the Canterbury Registry, from all the Parishes in the Diocese (except the exempt Parishes and of which Maidstone is one) there are Duplicate Returns of Transcripts annually, they appear to have been regularly returned, and amongst them are Duplicates of the Ore Register, that is to say; one returned into the Archdeacons Court and one into the Consistory Court: but a strange event is attendant on the Ore-Returns; the Duplicates are perfect in their series and in Pairs from an early Date down to 1640; but, in that and the following year 1641/2 there is no Transcript in the Archdeacons Court; consequently, either it must be supposed that no Transcript was delivered into that Court for those two years; or, they must have been abstracted from the Registry: I cannot believe that no Transcript was returned, because being perfectly well acquainted with the State of the parochial Returns in that Registry (from the Fact of having devoted at least 40 Days in the course of the last 5 years to searching them & having obtained more than 100 Extracts of Registers prior to 1670) I can truly aver that I have never yet found a Transcript in one Court, without finding the Duplicate in the other for each Parish (except where it was an exempt Parish) until the present Instance.

I cannot say there is no such Deficiency; but only that I have not before met with it.

In general, the parochial Returns in this Diocese cease from 1640 till 1662: there are Returns from some of the small-country-Parishes (such as Ore) in 1641, but they are very few in number; & what adds to the Mysterious absence of the Ore Transcripts in one Court & not in the other, is, that the Returns for those 2 years are both amongst the Transcripts of the Consistory Court, altho' the Return (the fabricated one) for 1640/1 is entitled as belonging to the Archdeacon's Court.

Now in further proof of the Fabrication, beyond the Evidence which you already have, I submit the following

This document purports to be signed by

"Rob* Milles, curat ibit"
"Richard Price, Churchwarden"

The handwriting of the whole Transcript is a close Imitation of Mr Milles's Writing, as I will further presently explain; & therefore I conclude, that it is copied from a genuine Transcript drawn out & delivered to the Registry in 1640/1 by Mr Milles himself, and as such original must have been taken away from the Registry, to enable the Copyist to fabricate another (unless he was in Possession of the original lost Register) this circumstance no Doubt gave rise to intitling it, as of
the Archdeacon's Court and returning it by Mistake among the Consistory Court Transcripts.

Richard Price was undoubtedly Churchwarden of Ore in 1639/40 and I have no Doubt that his Signature to the Returns of that year into the Consistory Court is genuine; it is in a very good & free handwriting for that Period. He continued Churchwarden in the following year, but the Signature put for him to the Return for that year, is a very bad imitation of the preceeding year's Signature. Richard Price was buried on 28 Aug 1641, and not in 1640 (as I had at first been led by the Registrar to suppose) and a very minute Examination of Documents at the Registry yesterday shows, that his Will (dated only 3 days before his Burial) is all in the Handwriting of Mr Milles, it contains a full sheet closely written. Price was in extreme Illness and (no doubt from that cause) only affixed a Mark. Mr Milles has written his own name on the Will at 2 Places, and the fabricated Instrument has imitated Milles's signature very well in general appearance, but there are 2 betraying Signs of its Forgery. 1. Mr Milles's signature is at all Times & in all Instances at full Length, and not "Rotf". 2. He always made the Letter e thus £ or ø. In Prices Will there are about 200 of these Letters, and it is a remarkable Fact, that in no one Instance has he ever used the modern e, as it is in the fabricated Transcript, and you will not fail also to bear in Mind that the Will and original Return were both written by Mr Milles within the same year. The fabricated signature is so well done in general appearance that it would deceive any superficial Observer, but as certainly, the Deception completely vanishes upon a close Inspection.

But if any further Proof were wanting I would refer to the State of the Ink on the Paper; the comparative Freshness of which strongly marks the Transcript as of modern Performance; the whole sheet has evidently been dipped in some fluid before the Ink was sufficiently dry; for almost every Letter is run in a manner which only occurs when writing becomes wet before the Ink has become thoroughly dry;—and under all the circumstances I do consider it so clumsy an attempt at Imposition, that I am surprised the House of Peers did not detect it.

If you contemplate to make any addition to your Work I feel that it would only be a measure of Justice to the Memory of the Father of the present Registrar who held the Records when such tricks were played with them, to state that (however unequal he may have been at that Time to guard against such exceeding Dexterity & art as was practiced), yet there is no similar Registry Office in the 5 Home Counties, and I have searched in all of them, in which the Records are better arranged or in better Preservation or more perfectly kept than at Canterbury; and I can personally bear Witness that amidst all my
own Researches and attendances at the Office I have constantly observed an undeviating course on the Part of the Registrars towards all Persons to prevent any Mutilation or Mischief to the Records under Inspection.

I shall call on you when I come to Town which I still am in daily Expectation of doing. I am

P.S. I have made full & examined Copies of the Ore Returns from 1637/8 to 1641/2 which I will bring and leave with you

Yours very faithfully

John Boys

The two letters which follow were written to Beltz by W. F. Boteler.

William Fuller Boteler, 1777-1845, was the only son of William Boteler, F.S.A., of Brook Street, Eastry, Kent. He was educated at Charterhouse and Kings College, Cambridge. He became a student of Lincoln’s Inn and was called to the Bar in 1804. He became the leading tithe lawyer of the day. In 1807 he was made Recorder of Canterbury and subsequently of Sandwich, Hythe, New Romney and Deal and also high steward of Fordwich. In 1831 he became a K.C. He died on 29th October, 1845 as the result of a railway accident at Masborough.

Dear Sir,

I send you my father’s copy of the Oare duplicate register, from Lady day 1640 to Lady day 1641, in the Archbishop’s Court at Canterbury, & his copy of the Owre duplicate register from Michaelmas 1639 to Michaelmas 1640 in the Archdeacon’s Court. As to the former return he mentions, “that it was found by him in the Registry Office amongst a great number of other returns, chiefly damaged & tattered, which seemed to have been laid aside by Mr. Bunce, when he was arranging them for the purpose of future examination” My father’s observations upon this paper I will take an opportunity of shewing you. He notices the want of the entry of the marriage of William Best & Anne Bridges in the return in the Archdeacon’s Court, which comprizes the period at which the marriage is stated in the other return to have taken place. I have ascertained that Craiges returns were in general incorrect, & if the return in the Archbishop’s Court were not open to objection on other grounds, I should hardly think the want of the entry of the above marriage in the other return fatal to its Credit. It is a strange circumstance coupled with other circumstances touching the papers in question. You will observe a variation in the two returns in the entry of the baptism of the child of Matthew & Ann Dickison or Dickeson, Augt 9.

There is no return from Ore in the Archdeacon’s Court from
Michaelmas 1640 down to the time of the Restoration. The returns from Ore in the Archbishop’s Court go down to Lady day or Easter 1642 & then break off.

I send you copies of the Ore returns in the Archbishop’s Court from Lady day 1639 to Lady day 1640, & from Lady day, or Easter 1641 to Lady day, or Easter 1642.

I have spent a good deal of time in comparing these various returns together. The course of deaths & marriages in the parish of Ore at this period was certainly remarkable; but (saving the entries of the marriage of Wm Best & Anne Bridges & of the baptism of their son) I can from the particulars of the returns discover no entry in the return in the Archbishop’s Court from Lady day 1640 to Lady day 1641, which may not have been the true entry of a baptism, marriage or burial actually happening in the parish.

The return in the Archbishops Court from 1641 to 1642 shows that Richard Price was buried Aug 28 1641. Probably this applies to a part of Mr Boys communication to you which you noticed this morning.

I am much obliged to you for the Minutes of Evidence, & references to the Harlean Mss.

Believe me,
Very truly yrs,
W. F. Boteler

Dear Sir,

Gower Street

Feb 10. 1835.

I send you back the minutes of evidence in the Chandos Peerage Case.

On p. 186 you will find a question asked as to “Extracts found relative to the Indre of 1659 in the Fine & Recovery Office.” I am not sure whether this was not a mere random question of Lord Talbots. I do not see that any such Extracts were produced.

The parishes within the Diocese of Canterbury are now subject to the Archdeacon’s jurisdiction, others exempt from it, called at the Registry office “Exempt Parishes”. The Exempt Parishes make returns of baptisms, marriages & burials to the Archbishop’s Court (the Consistory Court) only, at Lady day; the other Parishes make returns to the Archbishop’s Court at Lady day & to the Archdeacon’s Court at Michaelmas; in each case for the whole year preceding. For the parishes subject to the Archdeacon’s Jurisdiction there are therefore double returns. Maidstone is an exempt parish, Ore & Harbledown are parishes subject to the Archdeacon’s jurisdiction. The returns to
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the Archdeacon's Court from Harbledown are perfect from 1600 to 1620, with the exception of the year in which the baptism of Edward Bridges would appear. The returns in the Archbishop's Court for the same period are too irregular to lead to any conclusion. That for the year in which Edward Bridges' baptism should appear is wanting. All this I think I have mentioned to you, but I write this Memorandum of it.

The father of John of Harbledown (1) is said to have been John Bridges, Rector of Harbledown & Vicar of Herne, & afterwards Vicar of Monckton with the Chapels of Birchington & Wade in Thanet. I think he had been Vicar of Snave. Now John of Canterbury grocer, son of Edward of Ospringe appears by his Will to have had property in Chislett an adjoining parish to Herne, & to have purchased property at Birchington. He had also lands in Romney marsh, altho' not very near to Snave, which is a parish in the Marsh. John of Canterbury's property in Chislett was at Upstreet, the furthest part of the parish from Herne. Monckton & Birchington & St. Nicholas at Wade are adjoining

parishes, See the sketch
below for view of the
localities of the Case.

Believe me
Yours truly

W. F. Boteler

Appended below the signature is a rough sketch map showing the location of the places mentioned.

The last letter of the series is from Boys to Beltz.

Dear Sir

Margate 15th February 1835.

I have read your Book a second time. I have since read the Autobiography: it is a specious work, and calculated to make a strong Impression on those who may never see its Antidote. The Peers, or rather I should say the public at large, are much indebted to you, and as one Member of the Community I thank you for your Labours.

If you contemplate to add to your disclosures, any account of the Ore-fabrication, allow me to suggest that it should be given to the Public in a manner the most calculated to excite attention and Investigation. It is not an ordinary affair.

I had originally imbibed, as a great Majority of uninterested Readers have probably done, an Impression, that the Chandos Claimant had been dealt with not quite fairly: the Dexterity displayed in the Autobiog: would have confirmed that Impression, but for my discovery relative to the Ore-Transcript, which at the Moment quite confounded me; and my first Notions have subsequently been entirely removed by
the Perusal of your Book. The Insinuations & Imputations of Injustice are ingeniously interwoven in Sir E. B's Work, at Intervals well chosen, by Language well directed, and by Argument and Touches to the feelings impressive. With great Tact he places in a strong, but false Light, the smallest Irregularities of his Judges; and to which, the irregular Meetings of a Committee of Privileges can scarcely fail to be subject. He mystifies or magnifies all that can be made convertible to his object, but (in my Judgement) seals his own Condemnation, by avoiding in a most extraordinary Manner, to touch any Part of the Evidence! and why is this? but to nine out of every ten Readers, the cause of its studied absence would never occur, without such a publication of the Evidence as you have given; and in its Absence the consequences would have been a Stigma upon the Peers-Judgement.

It is now 36 Years since I was initiated in the System of judicial Enquiries, and it has fallen to my Lot to be a Partaker of no small share upon divers important occasions; but I can truly say, that I remember no case at all to be compared with that of the Chandos claim, where so much System of Criminality has been so long and so deliberately pursued, in the Fabrication of Documents, without a probability of bringing the Offender or Offenders within the Reach of Justice.

The whole case is one which every Peer and judicial Person ought to read and understand; and it is scarcely less important to every Member of Society and to the Historian, in its aim, in its End, and in its consequences; especially if the Claim should ever be revived.

I remain

D'd Sir

Yours very faithfully

F. G. Beltz Esq.

John Boys.

P.S. Has it never occurred to you that when the now living Witnesses at the Canterbury Registry (who were present at Sir Egerton's search) and the Man at St Nicholas (who copied the Harbledown Register) shall be gone; and to which let me suppose the Ore-Transcript destroyed by Fire or otherwise, The Question might be put in Jeopardy before a Jury. The Lords vote of Censure on the Letter of Canvas would have better followed than proceeded their Judgement & the Language of it has not closed the Door against a future Claim: I think it by no means unlikely that it will be revived, it might be exceedingly difficult to prove the Maidstone Entry a Forgery to the Satisfaction of a Jury: its suspicious Appearance would be no Proof; and the Ore-Transcript at present stands admitted in Evidence.

Equally vital to the successful outcome of the claim was the necessity of proving that such a person as Anne Bridges, in fact, existed. The evidence advanced was an entry in the Maidstone registger for the
"The great gateway into the yard." Lee Priory, 1952.

Lee Priory. The south (garden) front in 1952.
Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges.

from a pencil drawing by Benjamin Birinell, July, 1817.
Reproduced by permission of the Director of the National Portrait Gallery.
The Ore Transcript for 1640-41 marked as belonging to the Archdeacon's Court which has been claimed to be a fabrication.
The Ore Transcript for 1639-40.
May 3rd, 1828. Saturday.

I got up about 4 minutes before eleven, about 20 minutes before those my Father drove me charity out in the powder chair, and returned about 9 minutes before first. The evening about eight I went out at the west. My brother having come down in the Coach coach to Canterbury I walked with him about 10 minutes before nine. Charlotte arrived with two of her being come from the change. I went to bed about one.

May 4th, 1828. Sunday.

I got up about 4 before eleven. This morning between eight & nine gentleman went rode his own horse to Eton for duty. There is at springfield he intends to sleep at Eton about 4 before three. Anthony then walked to Whipsnade returned about 5 last time.

About 20 minutes after twelve I went into the castle room, where with other spiders to my Father. I left went out soon after & about 20 minutes afterwards I went out & saw fifty in the walk opposite the great gateway into the yard. Accompanied him up the walk towards the road which leads to the coal yard. Left him there (the general to towards his house) at about 20 minutes before one.

I went to bed about one.
year 1603 which purported to record the baptism of "Edward and Anne son and daughter of Robert Bridges Esquire". Was this an interlopation? Beltz certainly considered it so. The accompanying photograph (Plate VI) shows that the words occupy one line and because they refer to a dual baptism the numbering appears as 116 and 117. In the appendix to his book Beltz commented:

"The former entries, 116 and 117, have evidently been erased in order to admit the adscititious entry upon the space which they had occupied; and the relative numbers, 116 and 117, together with the original bracket, were left to denote that two individuals were baptised at the same time. The name of the minister having probably been also erased, the space of the erasure is further filled up by these words:

Finis istius anni 1603."

That the reader may be better able to follow the chequered story of the Brydges family life at Lee Priory during the late 1820s it is now necessary to enumerate, with some biographical details, the members of Sir Egerton's large family. The children of his first marriage were:

1. Thomas who inherited Lee Priory from Thomas Barrett and changed his name to Barrett being known as Brydges-Barrett. He became a Colonel in the Grenadier Guards.
2. John William Egerton, b. Nov. 1791. He held a commission in the 14th Dragoons.
4. Jemima Anne Deborah. Married Feb. 1817 to Edward Quillinan, Lieut. 3rd. Dragoon Guards and had issue Jemima Quillinan, b. Oct. 9th. 1819 and Rotha Quillinan, b. Sept. 1820. Immediately after the birth of this second child her mind became deranged but by the following April she had recovered and the family took up residence in Ivy Cottage at the foot of Rydal Mount to be near the Wordsworths, Edward Quillinan having become a friend of the poet. In a tragic accident a few weeks later she was frightfully burned when her clothes caught fire. Mary Wordsworth and Dorothy, destined years later to become Quillinan's second wife, nursed her devotedly and for a time she seemed to be recovering but there was a sudden relapse and in June 1822 she died.2

1 To the present writer, who has closely examined the register, there would seem to be little doubt that the entry is fraudulent, while the penmanship is markedly different from the other entries.
5. Charlotte Catherine, married C. J. Swann. Issue Fanny and Edward.¹

The children of the second marriage were:


9. Egerton Anthony. bapt. Denton Feb 2nd 1802. When he went up to Cambridge it was with a reputation for "wild politics."² Became rector of Denton in 1827 but does not appear to have officiated there after 1831 although his successor was not inducted until 1849.


15. Jane Mary. There is no record of her birth, which may have occurred at Lee Priory, or her baptism in the Denton register.

In 1812 Sir Egerton stood as a candidate and was elected a Member of Parliament for Maidstone. At the next election in 1818 he again stood as a candidate but was not returned. During these years he was becoming increasingly financially embarrassed. In addition to the small fortunes left to him by both his father and his mother he had acquired valuable estates through his two marriages and to a large extent the income of Lee Priory was under his control. But he was continually running into debt through extravagance and mismanagement. About 1811 still obsessed, as in fact he was for the rest of his life, by the Chandos claim he had bought the ruined castle of Sudeley and during his years at Westminster he maintained an elaborate establishment at Grosvenor Square. Expenditure on the Lee Priory Press and the purchase of valuable antiquarian books to augment his collection added to his difficulties. Faced by a financial crisis he left his affairs to be sorted out by his Bedford Row solicitors, Messrs. Brooks Grane and Cooper, put the two elder boys, Egerton and Anthony in school, and with his wife and the seven younger children, departed for the Continent.

For several years the family resided first in Geneva and then in Paris, Sir Egerton making one extended tour through Italy in 1820 and subsequently occupying himself with a vast amount of literary work.

By 1826 the realization came that his lawyers had completely failed to retrieve his distressing financial position and that in fact he was

¹ Boyles Court Guide, 1830, gives C. J. Swann as of 24 Lincoln's Inn Fields.
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completely in their hands. Accordingly he returned to Lee Priory, a dejected and embittered man.

Following the death of Jemima, Edward Quillinan with the two young children, had left Ivy Cottage and established a home in London at No. 12 Bryanstone Street. On numerous occasions in the years which followed he stayed at Lee Priory with Mima and Rotha as guest of his brother-in-law, Captain Brydges-Barrett. Many letters addressed to him there from Mary and Dorothy Wordsworth are included in Mary E. Burton's *The Letters of Mary Wordsworth, 1800-1855*. In July, 1823, Wordsworth and his wife visited Quillinan while he was at Lee as one of these letters records. Wordsworth had promised in the previous year to write a suitable inscription for a proposed memorial to Jemima Quillinan in Grasmere Church and this matter forms the subject of other letters.

Some years ago a chance purchase from an antiquarian bookseller brought into the present writer's possession a diary closely written in a slim notebook. This proved to have been kept by a member of the Brydges family who was, almost certainly, Ann Mary and covered the period from 29th March to June 7th, 1828. It was probably about this time that members of the family, perhaps inspired by the lawyers, Brooks Grane and Cooper, first conceived the plan—essentially dishonest in character—whereby the trust estates left by Thomas Barrett might be so dealt with so as to yield a large capital increase.

Colonel Barrett, as he had then become, arranged for other members of his family to be made trustees of the estate and, to quote the account given by Mary K. Woodworth in her *Samuel Egerton Brydges*,\(^1\) "obtained by Act of Parliament the permission to sell certain lands which he represented as distant from Lee Priory and less desirable than others close by. The Courts of Chancery, therefore were paid the sum of £30,745 from the disposal of Lee Priory estates. The next step in the scheme was for Colonel Barrett and Sir Egerton Brydges to pay off the mortgages and turn over to Edward Quillinan some of their own property valued at £7,596. He in turn sold them to Colonel Barrett for £22,600, but only after a surveyor had assessed them at such value. The whole affair was planned so carefully that it passed through the Courts of Chancery without arousing any suspicion. The £15,000 thus obtained was divided among the participants: Sir Egerton Brydges, Colonel Barrett, Brooks, Crane and Cooper, Quillinan, and Brydges's other sons. Unfortunately, however, the mortgagees of those lands sold originally for £7,596, heard that Quillinan obtained almost three times that sum for their sale. The complaints entered in 1831 started investigations which brought on a law suit of nine years duration. In March, 1842, for twelve days, all the time of the Vice-Chancellor's

\(^1\) Basil Blackwood, 1935.
Courts was taken up with inquiry into the details of this scheme of fraud”.¹

The diary now to be considered is in every way a most extraordinary document to have been produced by a twenty-eight years old woman of education, extraordinary as much for what it omits as what it includes. The comments which follow, interspersed between a number of extracts from the diary have been made by John Evans. The initials J.E. appear against these comments. Because of the wearisome repetitions in the same phraseology the reader would be irritated if the whole were printed.

J.E. “Short as it is, for it covers a period of less than three months, this diary is of exceptional interest for it presents many strange features. My feeling is that the diarist is certainly a woman and can be none other than Ann Mary Brydges. The internal evidence for this identification is very strong, for all the surviving children of the second marriage are mentioned except Ann Mary, while the children of the first marriage were either married or absent from the house at the time.

Ann Mary must have been a woman of strong but eccentric character and one well worthy of the attention of a modern psychologist. The reader’s first impression is in the diarist’s obsession with Time; every incident, however trivial, is timed to the exact minute. This insistence upon accurate timing becomes a weariness to the reader and partakes of the character of a madness of exactitude.”

This trait is well exemplified by the first entry in the diary.

March 29th, 1828. Saturday.
I arrived in London this morning about 25 minutes past six; and immediately went up into room No. 32, up three pair of stairs, at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross to dress. About ½ past nine I went by Cockspur Street, the Haymarket, Tichbourne Street, Savile Row, George Street, Hanover Square, Cavendish Square, Portman Square, and Portman Street to Quillinan’s, No. 12 Bryanstone Street, where I arrived about ten. I found him and the children there; and about 25 minutes past eleven, I went by Portman Street, Portman Square, Cavendish Square, and Russell Square to Brooks’s,² where I arrived about twelve. I remained with Brooks till about 16 minutes past three

² The offices of Brooks, Grane and Cooper.
when I came away, and he at the same time went in a hackney coach into the city. I then returned by John Street, Brownlow Street, Holborn, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Great Queen Street, Long Acre, St. Martin's Lane (and thro' St. Martin's Court to the corner of Castle Street, where I called at Harrison's, the tobacconist and came back thro' St. Martin's Court to St. Martin's Lane) and the Strand to Charing Cross, where I arrived about 25 minutes past three. About 25 minutes past five, while I was at dinner at the Golden Cross, Quillinan came there, and went away about 20 minutes before six. I left London by the heavy coach (it was not in fact the heavy coach but one substituted for it, the heavy had been sent down to Canterbury in the morning with extra passengers), on my way back to Lee.

March 30th. 1828, Sunday
I arrived at Canterbury this morning about four, and immediately walked over to Lee, where I arrived about 7 minutes before six by Lee time (and about 17 minutes before six by Canterbury time)."

It speaks well for the stamina and persistence of the diarist that after two night coach-journeys and walking about London all day she was able to undertake a further six miles walk through the dark countryside of an hour and twenty minutes duration. The difference between Lee time and Canterbury time should be noted. It would seem that the Brydges household anticipated Willett's gift of inspiration to modern Britain—"summer time"—by more than a century. The remarkable aspect is that, according to the diary Lee time was advanced as the summer advanced. While it was 10 minutes fast in March, the difference was 15 minutes in April and 31 minutes in May. Unfortunately there is no record for June.

J.E. "The diarist's abnormal concern with detail does not stop at time, she cannot take a walk in London without recording the name of every street through which she passes. In the course of seventy-three days covered by the diary she paid four visits to London on March 29th, April 10th, May 8th and 30th. Each visit is described in practically the same wording and her programme was the same, a visit to Quillinan followed by a visit to the lawyers. Consider the fantastic details recorded, the number of stairs she had to climb to reach her room in the 'Golden Cross', as she also does at her places of call. On May 30th she details the very rooms she entered and the times she spent in them, with every trivial incident recorded, but never a word as to the nature of her business. On each of these visits to the capital she travelled through the night to arrive about six in the morning, walks about town all day and then endures the discomfort of a second night in the heavy coach on her return to
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Canterbury. Either the business which took her to London was very urgent or, more likely, she would not stay away from home more than a day. In fact, she never slept away from Lee Priory during the period covered by the diary. Yet with all the overload of timed triviality and the absence of any hint of her purpose of making the journeys there are no feminine notes on shopping, etc, which one would expect from a county lady visiting the metropolis.

As one would expect from the diarist the times of going to bed at night and rising in the morning are meticulously recorded. She generally retires around midnight or soon after and rises between ten and eleven in the morning, but there are exceptions. For example, under the date 8th April, significantly the day before she set off on one of her London journeys, she wrote: “I went to bed about ten minutes past three having had vive discussion with my father.”

The same morning she got up “about ½ past ten”. And on another occasion: “I sat up talking with Jones (a visitor in the house) till within a few minutes of three o’clock on the morning of June 3rd., 1828. She arose “about 20 minutes before twelve” the same day. Her normal time of arising was between ten and eleven in the morning which suggests that she had no domestic responsibilities—but on two occasions she did not get downstairs until noon or thereabouts.

What is doubly astonishing is that upon returning from the London visits, all of which involved two successive nights in ‘the heavy coach’, she did not make up for lost sleep by retiring early or sleeping late; on the contrary in fact, she retired later than normal on all four occasions.”

“But the strangest feature of this baffling record is that dominant part of it which is concerned with a certain Gibbs. Who was Gibbs, and what was he to the diarist that she saw him daily outside the house, walked and talked with him, sometimes twice in one day, and even went to his house in search of him? He was obviously a social inferior, a factor, bailiff or steward to the Estate, he was married, lived in an estate house nearby and had at least one daughter.

The odd meetings with this man often took place “outside the iron railings” in front of the house, or else “in the walk opposite the great gateway into the yard”, a description of location which recurs ad nauseam, and generally sometime before or around noon. They walked and talked for between twenty and thirty minutes, at times in the open for all to see but on a number of occasions “in the

1 Could this have been concerned with legal matters? Her visits to London always involved lengthy interviews with the lawyer, Brooks.
walk towards the road which leads to the cow yard”, which was probably more secluded. At times they also met in the house, particularly in “the Star room” which seems to have been used for business interviews and as an office.

“Out of the 66 or so days that the diarist was available at Lee Priory there were meetings on 46 days and on twelve of these she met Gibbs twice and on two occasions three times. On four of the days she goes to his house in search of him and once she goes twice. On yet another day he accompanies her to Canterbury. On some days when there was no meeting visitors were staying in the house and it is clear that time or convenience prevented the pair for-gathering.”

A typical record of these meetings is that for 19th May. “I got up about ten minutes past ten . . . About ½ past eleven I went by the broken ground to Gibb’s house where I saw Mrs Gibbs who told me that Gibbs was out. About 20 minutes before one I went again by the broken ground to Gibbs’s house near which I saw Gibbs. I walked back with him immediately by the broken ground where (at about eight minutes before one) I waited for 3 or 4 minutes while Gibbs went down the yard to the house to see if Solomon was returned from Canterbury (in fact Solomon returned thro’ that door into the yard while I was standing there) : as soon as Gibbs returned to me I went round by the lawn in front of the drawing room windows to the house, and at about one I saw Gibbs (who had gone into the house by the yard and the back door) for a few minutes in the Tapestry room . . . I saw Gibbs again for a minute or two about 24 minutes past three in the walk in front of the great gateway into the yard where I walked with him a short distance up the walk towards the road which leads to the cow yard and left him there.”

J.E. Consider the significant details of events on March 31st and April 1st. On the former date she gets up at noon, two hours later than usual, and, as one would expect, does not retire until after one in the morning. Yet she is up at 8.00 o’clock on the 1st., sees Gibbs for a few minutes at ten past nine, and then goes with Ferdy and Anthony to Canterbury to settle a quarrel with some Officers at the Barracks, setting out at 9.40 a.m. This suggests that she did not bother to rise at her usual time on the 31st. because Gibbs was not available whereas the day following she is up early in order that she may see Gibbs before leaving for Canterbury.

This quarrel with the Officers has curious implications. Here are the relative passages from the diary. On 31st March: “About 3 minutes past three Ferdy (i.e. Ferdinand) rode the roan to Canterbury
and returned about $\frac{1}{2}$ past five . . . Anthony and Ferdy got into a quarrel at Canterbury with some officers of the 12th Lancers. April 1st. About 20 minutes before ten Anthony rode the black poney (my Father's), and I and Ferdy went in Egerton's gig with the roan to Canterbury. On arrival Anthony and I walked to the Cavalry Barracks, where we arrived about $\frac{1}{2}$ past ten. We saw first Mr. Pale of the 12th Lancers (on the subject of the quarrel yesterday); soon afterwards Mr Vane came into the room and remained for some time, when he left us with Pale; eventually we went into another room (where there were several other officers, amongst the rest I believe Colonel Stamel—it was I believe Major Graham's room) where we finally finished the business with Mr. Pale. I then sent for two other officers, Captain Cunningham and Mr Granville, with whom we also settled the business and at about $\frac{1}{2}$ past twelve we left the Barracks and went to Atwood's where we had left the gig and horses."

The question may be asked why could not two young men in their twenties settle their own troubles rather than call in a sister to do so for them? If a mediator was necessary one might have expected Sir Egerton or the parson brother to have acted.

J.E. “Although the diarist gives the usual trivial details of times, places and routes involved in the meetings with Gibbs, she never gives one hint as to what they talked about, or why they met. What was the business with Gibbs, if it was indeed business? There is no direct hint in the record that she was concerned with the management of the estate. Indeed, quite the contrary, for Gibbs goes in to her father to do his business (presumably because of the absence of the owner, Colonel Barrett) and she makes a point of noting that at stated times she broke in on them but said nothing to them.

There can be little doubt that the meetings outside the house were pre-arranged with Gibbs, for he is for ever lurking outside the railings in front of the house about 11.30 a.m. And if her conversations with him concerned the estate why were they not carried on indoors? On one occasion it rained and the pair sought shelter under the arch of the great gateway.

*L'affaire* Gibbs is a mystery. If it was an *affaire du coeur* then there must have been incidents involved which understandably are not recorded.

The diary is particularly onesided. We have endless details of the comings and goings of a somewhat restless family, and records of visitors, but no intimate details of the family, their characters, thoughts, conversations and opinions. No mention of national,
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county or household events, and although her brothers and sisters
go to church Ann Mary never does so.

She is certainly not a diarist in the grand manner, for not one of
her circle come to life under her pen and they are but names. One
gets the impression that the diarist was a woman of remarkable
personality, although there is little to quote in support. If she had
been a country lady of education and personality who turned to
keeping a detailed record of her life and surrounding events because
she was bored with the humdrum of daily happenings she could
have done so very much better. Our diarist was no such lady. Nor,
one feels, was she really interested in keeping a businesslike
journal, with times, places and people put down merely for a
record. For again she could have done better.

There is some mystery behind this fragment and perhaps the
full diary, if there was one, would resolve the doubt. For what was
the secret of the Gibbs matter, and why the almost incredible
insistence upon minutiae of time, places, methods and routes, and
the opposite refusal to mention any matter of the slightest im-
portance, except perhaps, the settlement of the quarrel with the
officers, although this again is most unsatisfactorily dealt with, and,
while not the least odd incident recorded, is the only one which
makes one hesitate in accepting that the diarist was a woman.”

So with the back cover of the notebook in which this curious diary is
written Ann Mary fades from the picture although research amongst
the voluminous collection of Brydges papers and writings preserved at
the British Museum and at the Public Record Office might by chance
provide some details of her later life.

The temptation is strong to delve further into the history of this
strange family, to follow the fate awaiting this circle of young men and
women gathered around the disillusioned, unbusinesslike and ageing
literator, but any extension would make this paper inordinately long.

Sir Egerton Brydges returned to Geneva to live out the remaining
sad years of his life, to nurse his lasting grievance over the outcome of
the Chandos case, become increasingly more eccentric and all the while
write feverishly in an attempt to beat the advance of time. In April,
1837, he died.

Meanwhile, away in England the dishonest plot to retrieve the
family fortunes brought inevitable retribution. The cunning plan for
acquiring funds unlawfully from the Lee Priory estate was exposed.
Colonel Barrett, reduced to abject poverty, and in risk of persecution,
fled to the Continent. In 1834 he died in a fisherman’s hut on the coast
of Brittany. Anthony Rokeby was thrown into prison for debt, but
after a time was discharged as a lunatic. The firm of Brooks, Grane
and Cooper was forced to dissolve.
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Edward Quillinan, although more than a little implicated, managed to extricate himself without serious consequences, but it may well have been the invidious position in which he had become involved that caused Wordsworth to withhold permission for the wished-for marriage to Dora and delayed the union for so many years.¹