

The Falconry, Farleigh Hungerford

BY THE RT. REV. ABBOT E. HORNE, F.S.A.

THIS Falconry is at Lodge Farm, about a third-of-a-mile north of Farleigh Castle (O.S. 6 in., Sheet XXI, N.E.). It stands in front and to the left of the fine Tudor farmhouse, being built approximately north and south, the east side being the front.

The length of the building (outside) is 32 ft. 3 in., its width 16 ft. 10 in., and the height to wall-plate 12 ft. 6 in. It is of two stories. The entrance to the lower story was by a door in the middle of the east wall, which has long been blocked up (Plate XIX). Above this door are two large stone corbels, having a square hole in the wall immediately above them. Their purpose seems to have been to support some kind of porch above the doorway. One corbel has a bishop's head in mitre carved on it, and the other the Hungerford sickle. There were also double doors in the wall at the south end, but these are built up. At the north end there is a large open entrance so that this lower story may be used as a cart-shed.

The upper story was the falconry. It is reached by a flight of built-up stone steps, eleven in number, 4 ft. in width (Plate XIX). The doorway at the top is 5 ft. 6 in. in height and 2 ft. 3 in. wide.

The interior of this story is most carefully built, having a wooden floor from end to end with walls covered with lath and plaster. A plastered ceiling is carried across beneath the tie-beams of the roof. The windows do not appear to have held glass, but they had small iron rods running across them from side to side. There were three windows in the east wall and two on the west, and one in the south gable. The central window on the east side is of very curious 'gothic' design.¹

The last 9 ft. 6 in. of this story, towards its southern end, is

¹ In Jackson's *Guide to Farleigh Hungerford*, 1879, Plate XXI, is an illustration of the window in the east side of the Falconry which is said to have been brought from the Castle. A careful expert examination has pronounced it to have been built in its present position.

PLATE
XIX



FROM THE NORTH



FROM THE EAST

THE FALCONRY, FARLEIGH HUNGERFORD

From Photographs by Rt. Rev. Abbot E. Horne, F.S.A.

cut off with a well-made lath and plaster partition, having a door on its east side. The window contains the rod holes showing that the room was used for birds ; it looks at first good enough for a small sitting-room.

Other windows in the building in the lower story are two fairly large openings in the east wall, on either side of the door, and two narrow slits on the west side.

The old house in a line with the Falconry and about 20 yards or so to the north of it, is said to have been the place where the person in charge of the falcons lived. It is obviously of about the same date as the Falconry and has stone mullioned windows of the same design. Its length is 44 ft., its width 12 ft. and its height to the eaves is 10 ft. This building now joins on to the west side of the farmhouse and is used as an out-house.

These buildings may date from the latter half of the sixteenth century and were perhaps built by Sir Walter Hungerford, died 1596. His portrait given in *A Guide to Farleigh Hungerford*, by the Rev. Canon J. E. Jackson (1879), Plate xvii, shows him to have been a great sportsman ; the full inscription on the plate runs as follows :—

Sir Walter Hungerford, knight, of Farley Castle, A.D. 1560 ; died 1596. From a picture in the possession of Sir R. Hungerford Pollen, Bart.

Sr. Walter Hungerforde, knight, had in quene Elyzabeth's tyme the second of her raine for fouer yere to gether a baye horse, a blacke grehound, a leveratt, his offer was for fouer yere to gether to all Eynghlande not aboute his betters he that shoulde showe the best horse for a man of armes, a grehounde for a hare, a haucke for the ryver, to wine iij hundred poundes that was a hundery the poundes a pese, also he had a gerfalcon for the herne in her majesty's tyme wiche he kept xviiij yere and offered the lyke to flye for a hundred ponde, and were refused for all.

May one suggest that perhaps the piece of the upper story partitioned off was the home of the gerfalcon that lived eighteen years ?