

HARDWICK HALL, DERBYSHIRE.

HARDWICK HALL was built, as all the world knows, by that famous lady of Elizabeth's time, Bess of Hardwick, who married four husbands, but was not a joy to all of them, who built three or four great houses, and was the custodian of Mary Queen of Scots. Her house of Hardwick stands nearly equidistant between Chesterfield, the town of the crooked spire, and Mansfield, being within about six miles of each of those places.

"Hardwick Hall,
More glass than wall,"

as the local rhyme has it, occupies a romantic situation corresponding entirely to its fine architectural features. Not long after the Conquest,

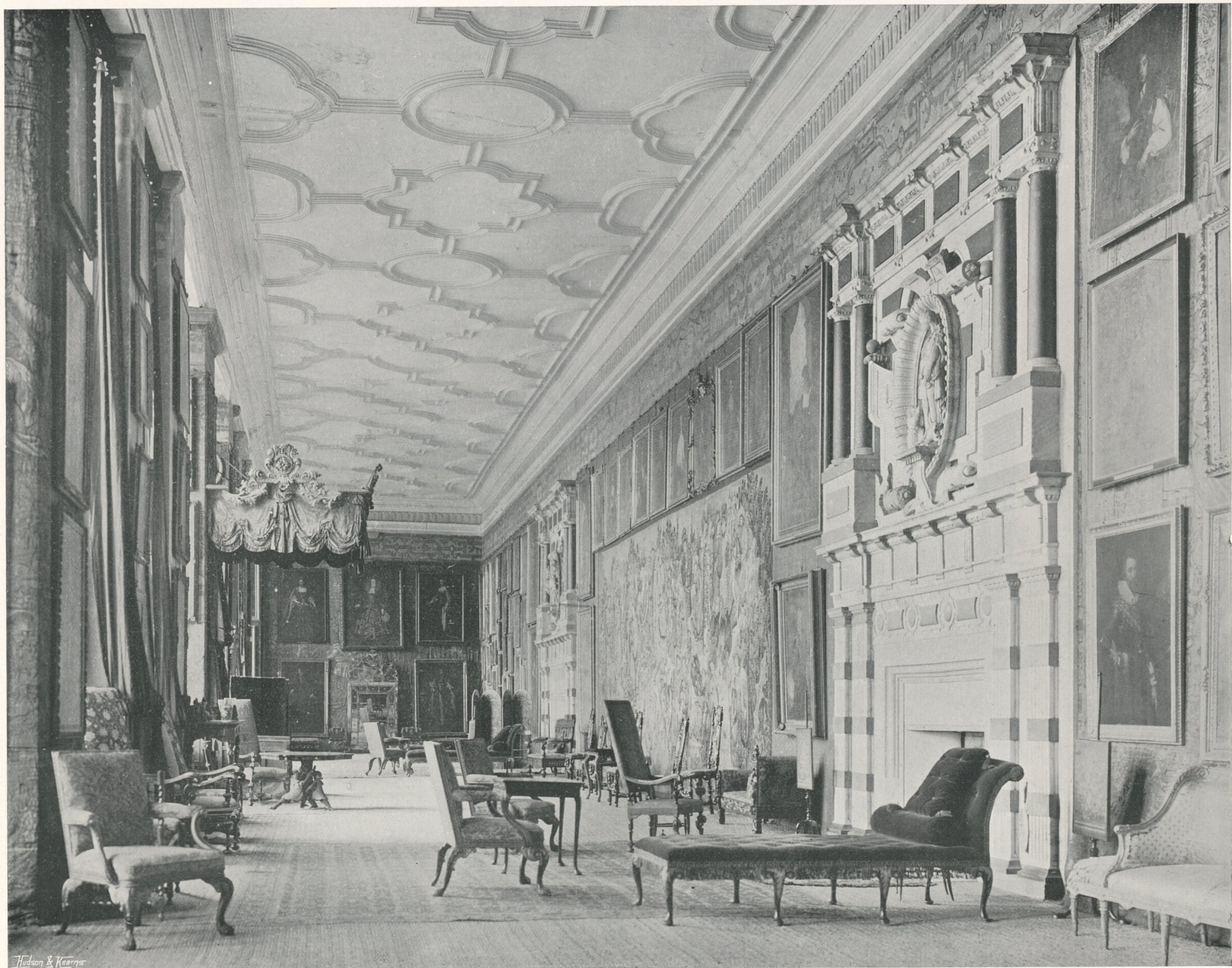
Walkelin Savage possessed three out of the four manors in the parish of Hault-Hucknall, and the fourth came to his family by marriage. One of them was Hardwick, and the Steynesbys held it from the Savages in the time of Edward I. by the curious service of rendering three pounds of cinnamon and one pound of pepper for the lord's table. From the Steynesbys the manor passed to the Hardwicks, who were established there soon after the year 1330, and continued in possession for 250 years. Their dwelling-place was not the Hardwick Hall famous for its great windows, its admirable carvings, its fine plaster-work, and its wealth of tapestry, but the older edifice which stands so nearly adjacent, and is so picturesque a



THE CHAPEL.



THE PRESENCE CHAMBER.



HARDWICK HALL.

THE PICTURE GALLERY.

feature in that wonderful grouping of structures. It stands within two hundred yards of the gatehouse, and is now a mere shell, which, having witnessed the lives of many, is tottering to its own decay, although still excellent in construction and solid masonry, and very delightful in form and colour to behold from the windows and grounds of its more stately sister. Its immense timbers are crumbling, and trees of great age now grow up from the basement to the topmost floor. Below the ruins is the place from which the stone for both buildings was taken, and very arduous must have been the labour with which the stone was carried up the steep ascent.

A hard frost in 1607 interrupted her work at Bolsover, and the magical spell was broken. A witch's prophecy was fulfilled; she ceased to build, and accordingly she died.

The new Hardwick rose between 1590 and 1597. Gray, writing with poetic feeling to his friend Dr. Wharton, in 1762, said: "I have only time to tell you that of all the places which I saw on my return from you, Hardwick pleased me the most. One would think that the Queen of Scots had but just walked down into the park, with her guard, for half-an-hour; her gallery, her room of audience, her ante-chamber, with the very rich canopies, chair of state, footstool, *lit de repos*,



THE MINSTRELS' GALLERY.

Elizabeth Hardwick was, however, a masterful builder, and nothing deterred her from her work. She partly quarried from the walls of old Hardwick to build her Chatsworth and her new Hardwick. The former was not completed until after the death of Sir William Cavendish, her second husband, and when her third husband, Sir William St. Lo, was dead, she married that powerful nobleman, George, Earl of Shrewsbury, whose life she contrived to make somewhat unhappy. She survived him for many years, living to the verge of ninety, and even to her last hour indulging in her pride and worldly magnificence.

oratory, carpets, and hangings, just as she left them; a little tattered indeed, but the more venerable, and all preserved with religious care, and papered up in winter." This quotation is given in order to point out an error into which some writers have fallen. It is quite certain that the unhappy Mary was never confined in the present Hardwick Hall. The new house was not built until after her death, and it seems uncertain whether she ever stayed at the old Hall, although she may have visited it, because that structure was already partly dilapidated in her time. It is true that many things associate the new Hardwick



THE GREEN ROOM.

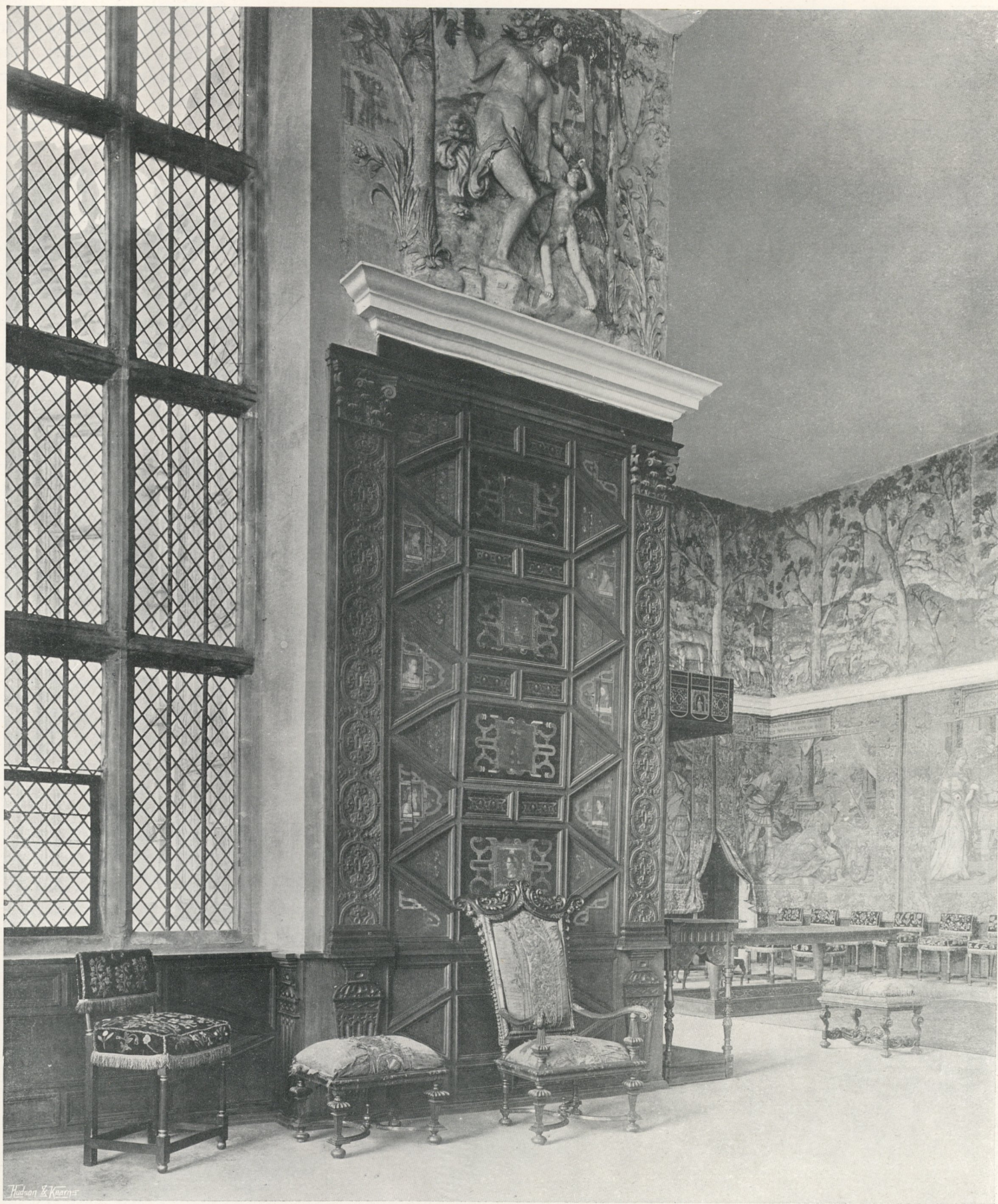
with Mary. They show her bedroom with the Royal arms of Scotland over the door, dated 1599. The door is flanked by Ionic fluted pilasters, and arms are in a lunette over it, with an inscription round the semi-circle as follows: "Marie Stewart, par la grace de Dieu, Royné d'Ecosse, Douairière de France." The bed-hangings, adorned with oak leaves, sunflowers, and other ornaments, are said to have been the work of her hand, and to have beguiled her lonely hours, which is indeed probable. It seems likely that some of these particular plenishings of the Queen's bedchamber were brought from

Chatsworth, where she spent a great deal of her time when under the charge of the Countess of Shrewsbury, and that the chamber was fitted up and designed to receive them. The tapestry is scarcely less interesting than the other features of the room associated with Mary Stuart.

The work upon the new Hall was begun about the year 1590, and it has been suggested that Gerard Christmas, John Thorpe, or the Smithsons, who built Wollaton, may have designed it. It is in the grander manner of the time, and has certainly some kinship with both Wollaton and Longleat. The style is broad and massive,



THE GREAT HALL.



THE RECESS IN THE PRESENCE CHAMBER.

with a lower open colonnade at the front of the house, bold projecting wings, and the huge windows which have become almost famous. The initials of the foundress are in the open work of the parapet, much after the manner adopted at Wollaton, Temple Newsam, and Castle Ashby. The high stone wall of the garden and the gateway are in the same style, and the masonry is both solid and good. The building was completed in or about 1597, and was the constant residence of the Countess of Shrewsbury until her death. It may be interesting to note that in the Caven-

dish mausoleum at All Saints' Church, Derby, is a splendid monument of the Countess, constructed during her lifetime and under her own directions. Her effigy lies in a recess in the lower part, with hands uplifted in prayer, and the inscription records that, after building Chatsworth, Hardwick, and Oldcotes, she died at the age of eighty-seven, "in the expectation of a glorious resurrection."

The internal fittings of the house are mostly coeval with the building itself, or were added shortly after its completion. There are massive carved chimney-pieces reaching to the ceiling, and

narrow passages leading to grand and stately apartments. The tapestry is almost as famous as the windows, and clothes the walls with great richness. The interior of the house is in some respects unusual. There are very wide stone stairs, and plaster and stone walls, and the floors also are of stone or concrete, but are covered with plaited rush matting, so that they are silent to the tread. The great size of the windows gives the interior a pleasant and lightsome aspect. The panelling and woodwork are of the best, although plain, and there is comparatively little carving; but some of the doors are painted in characteristic fashion. Plaster reliefs, such as are seen in the chapel, are common in the house, and over one is the date 1588, other plaster-work being dated 1597. The wonder of the tapestry has been



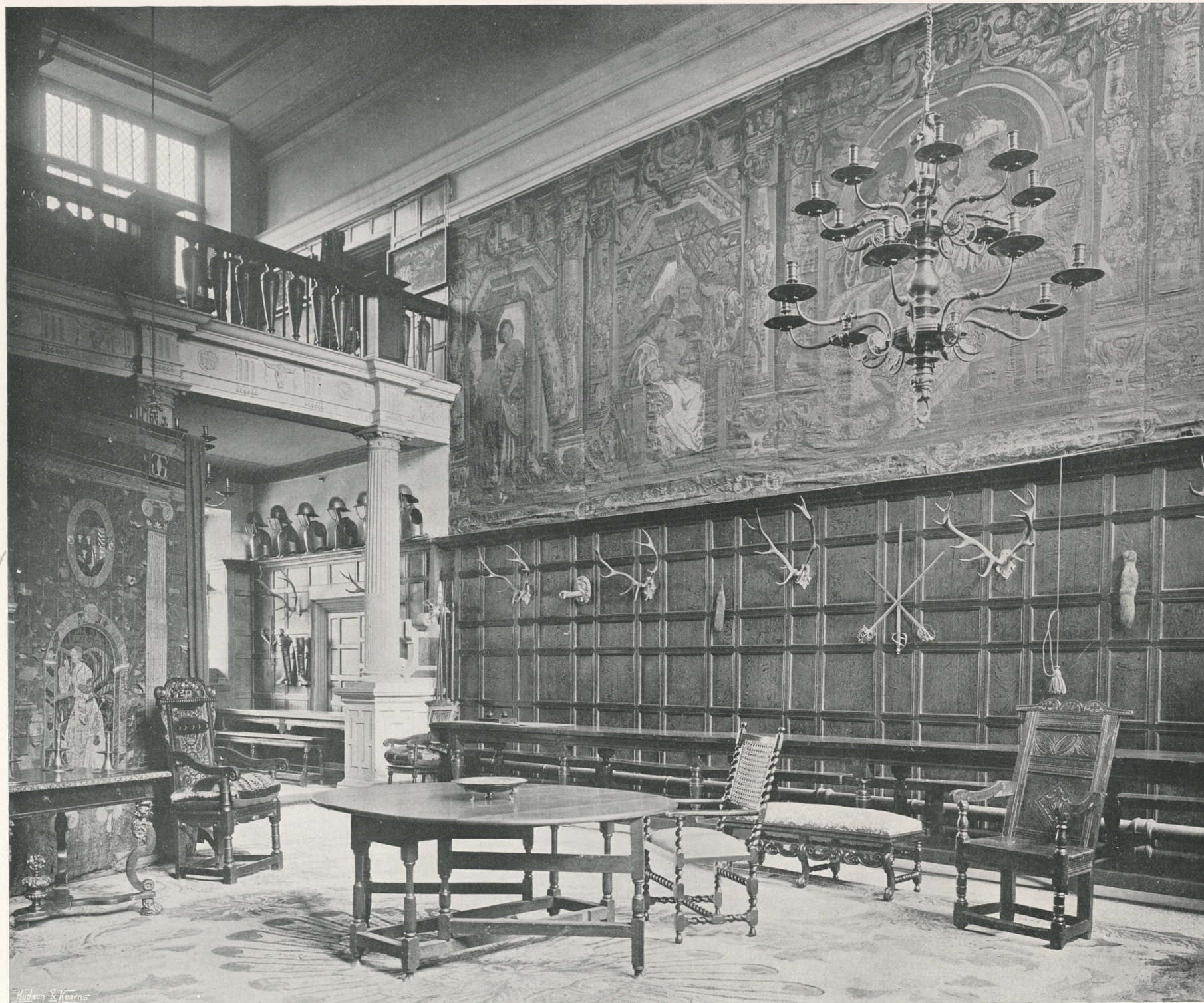
TAPESTRY ON THE STAIRCASE.

referred to. It covers the walls in nearly every room, excepting one side only of the Green Room. Even the staircases are thus clothed.

The State Apartment, or Presence Chamber, is 65ft. long by about 31ft. in width, exclusive of the large recess; a peculiar frieze surrounding the room is 11ft. deep, and the effect is very imposing and attractive. The adornment is unusual, and represents in one part Diana and her attendants hunting, with very curious animals, including stags, lions, elephants, and some that are nondescript. There are also men bear-hunting with dogs and spears. Magnificent furniture is in the room, and there is a noble fireplace, with strapwork ornamentation over it, and the Royal arms. The pictures are of Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary, Sir William Cavendish, Elizabeth



THE GREAT STAIRCASE.



HARDWICK HALL.

THE NORTH SIDE OF THE HALL.

Hardwick, Arabella Stuart, and others, besides many portraits of relatives and connections of the Earl and Countess. Queen Mary's bed-chamber has already been described. The Gallery is 166ft. long and 22ft. broad, not including two large bays, which give a fine outlook. It is a most imposing apartment, quite characteristic of the time, and very beautiful in some of its details.

So imposing and stately a house must needs have a history, but the events that give it fame are mostly those associated with the great lady who built it. She was not only the guardian of Mary Queen of Scots, but afterwards of Arabella Stuart, who certainly was with her at Hardwick Hall. After the Gunpowder Plot, the Council sent instructions to the sheriff and officers of the county, enjoining them to be very strict in suppressing disorder. As the Dowager Lady Shrewsbury, living at Hardwick, was a widow and solitary, they were required to have a care for her

safety and quietness, and if Lord Cavendish had occasion to ask for assistance on her behalf, it was to be rendered to secure her safety. These veiled instructions for action were given, not so much out of love for the aged Countess, but owing to renewed fear of seditious movements in favour of Arabella Stuart, who was then her ward. Hardwick, at a later date, had another interesting inhabitant, in the person of Thomas Hobbes, the philosopher, who lived for twenty years there and at Chatsworth, and died at Hardwick in 1679.

The Duke of Devonshire has several fine houses, and Hardwick Hall is one of the most interesting of them. His Grace does well to preserve it, and to safeguard the ruins of the venerable structure which was its predecessor, and is now one of the oldest houses in Derbyshire. There are not many places in England where the original mansion and its successor stand together, each the exemplar of a different age.



THE GATEHOUSE AND THE OLD HALL.