



THE SOUTH ENTRANCE HALL

upper portions, separating elegant carved and moulded panellings. Here, again, ancient furniture and family pictures complete the plenishing of the room.

One of the most interesting objects at Chawton House is an old armorial tapestry of the Lewkenors, which hangs in the Library, and is a very beautiful piece of ancient work, 16ft. long by 7ft. wide, bearing the date 1564. In the midst are the Lewkenor arms, elaborately worked, with supporters, and having a rich bordering of fruits and flowers. On either side of the central design are other family shields in admirable craftsmanship and characteristically designed, and the background is filled with a beautiful conventional pattern of roses and lilies. The whole design is surrounded by a wonderful border, worked with grapes, pomegranates, apples, and various flowers, and having round compartments in which are fourteen shields of arms. The origin of this remarkable example of tapestry appears not to be known. It came into the possession of the Knights through a marriage with the Lewkenors, and there is

preserved at Chawton House a memorandum, dated 1662, in the handwriting of Sir John Lewkenor, which shows that the tapestry was then very greatly valued. It reads as follows: "Remember to keep safe y^e carpet of arms now aged about 100 years, which in y^e failure of the elder house totalie consuming itself by daughters and heires and passing into other names, was sent hither by Constance Glenham of Trotton, who was one of those heires, for record to the younger house and whole name." The carpet was brought from West Dene to Chawton in 1737, and has been kept there safely ever since. The arms in the border include those of Tregos, Camoys, Culpepper and Audley, D'Oyley, De La Warr and Cantelupe, Pelham, Gournay and Moyne.

Chawton House has been fortunate in remaining through centuries in the hands of the same family, and in having thus been preserved with little change in form or detail. Indeed, it may be said that since the middle of the seventeenth century scarcely any structural alteration has passed over the place.