

G. C. MILLER'S
HOGHTON TOWER IN HISTORY AND ROMANCE

MR. G. C. MILLER originally published *Hoghton Tower in History and Romance* in 1948. In 1954 the *Guardian Press*, Preston, published a revised edition, and in November 1954 Mr. Miller spoke to the Society on Hoghton and the Hoghton family. Those members who heard him will recall the occasion with pleasure: those members who were not present can find compensation in the pages of his book.

Hoghton Tower has played a representative part in the history of Lancashire. When it was built at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth I its owner, Thomas Hoghton, was a Catholic recusant, who eventually found it wise to flee to the continent. This was at the time when most of the Lancashire gentry, because of their unrepentant support of the Catholic cause, were a sharp thorn in the side of Elizabeth's council. But like the Derbys the later Hoghtons attached themselves to the Crown, and in 1617 Sir Richard entertained James I to a magnificent banquet at Hoghton Tower. Sir Gilbert, Richard's successor, was a strong supporter of Charles I in the early months of the Civil Wars, but his own son, another Sir Richard, supported the Parliamentary forces. Like the Hoghton family, Lancashire too was bitterly divided during the long struggle, and the county suffered some of the most bitter fighting of the war.

Sir Henry Hoghton, who conducted the defence of Lancashire in both the 'Fifteen and the 'Forty-five was a Whig loyal to the Hanoverians. It was owing to such men as he that the Jacobites failed to gain the active support of many of their sympathisers among the Catholics and High-Churchmen in the North and especially in Lancashire. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century Hoghton Tower became less used by the Hoghtons, and Walton Hall near Preston began to take its place as the family home. The Industrial Revolution, which was changing the mode of life in Lancashire was also changing life at Hoghton Tower. After the death of Sir Henry in 1768 the Tower was completely abandoned by the family and the place became inhabited by handloom weavers, those displaced persons of the Industrial Revolution whose plight was so well portrayed by Disraeli in *Sybil*. It was reported that there were no less than three firms of manufacturers operating from Hoghton Tower in 1824. During this anonymous period of its history Hoghton Tower fell rapidly into disrepair and it was left to Sir James de Hoghton, father of the present baronet, to restore and rehabilitate the ancestral home.

A. J. BAGLEY.

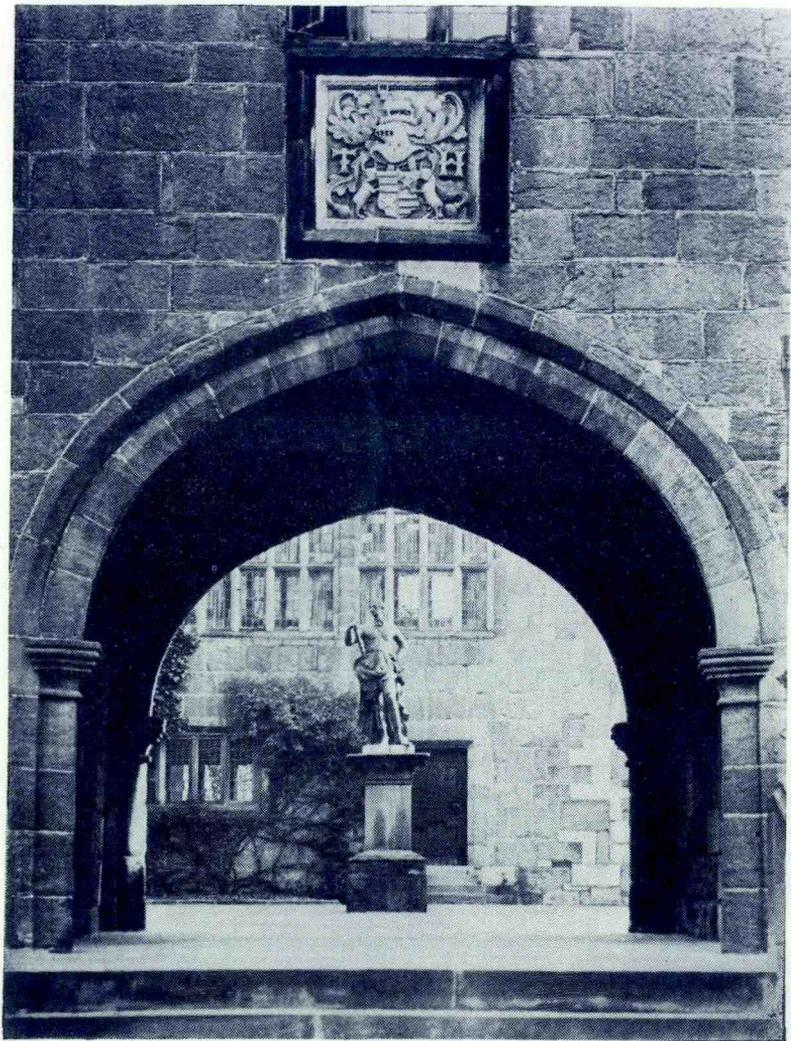


PLATE 12 : HOGHTON TOWER: ENTRANCE TO INNER COURTYARD