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**Society News**

**Message from the Chair**

The Society's 'virtual' 2020 AGM duly took place earlier this month, and I'm glad to report that using Zoom for the purpose went without a hitch for the 13 participants. I am very grateful to Tim Stanley-Clamp, who continues as Vice-chairman, for having organised the IT aspects. The committee's members, as elected, remain as in the previous period save that, after several years' much appreciated contribution, Richard Easton has stepped down. In his place James Lusher, who lives in High Lorton, was elected as a member. A 'virtual' committee meeting immediately followed the AGM.

The committee considered a variety of options for the resumption of a programme of Talks. Because of the

continuing Covid 19 emergency, it was felt that to hold physical meetings, albeit inevitably on a smaller scale than we are accustomed to, sadly remained largely impractical and not a particularly attractive proposition given the restrictions on how public meetings may be held. However, the decision was made to endeavour to organise some Talks using Zoom during the next few months. I am grateful to James Lusher for taking on responsibility for planning how best to organise such occasions, and as soon as arrangements for some Talks have been put in place, members will of course be informed.

*Charles Lambrick*

**Do we have your email address?**

As indicated in the message from the Chair, above, it is likely that our next talk will be held online using Zoom. We hope



**Our programme for 2020**

Events and activities for the rest of 2020 have been cancelled and 2021 has not yet been arranged. Please see the Message from the Chair in this issue

**Officers and Committee 2020/21**

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Charles Lambrick 01900 85710 <i>Chairman</i>	Tim Stanley-Clamp 01900 336542 <i>Vice-chair</i>
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The next *Wanderer* will be published on 1 February 2021. Please send items to Derek Denman, by 31 December.

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**The Wanderer**

For this edition of the *Wanderer* the assembly, pack and post of the printed copies has been done by our distributor, Pip Wise, who we thank. Copies have been posted by Royal Mail.

This issue of the *Wanderer* has again been expanded to 28 pages with many colour images, and I thank the contributors for their support. Readers who are interested in Loweswater Parish should find that they are well served by this issue. Contributions covering other townships or topics would be welcome, as would suggestions for local history topics which you would like to see covered in future issues.

*Derek Denman*

to make an announcement before the next *Wanderer* is published and to let you know about it we need an email address. Also, to participate in the Zoom meeting you will need an email address. So it is important that you let us have an email address – which is used only for Society purposes.

We send this *Wanderer* to all members who have given an email address, and so if you have received it by email then all is well. If you have received this *Wanderer* printed and by post, but not also by email, then please send an email address to our Membership secretary, Lena Stanley-Clamp, at *ldflhsmembership@gmail.com*.

Members are reminded that those who have paid a subscription for 2020 will remain members for 2021 without further payment. If you have received this *Wanderer* as a member by post or email, then your subscription is up to date for 2021.

*Derek Denman*

## Articles

### ***The Loweswater lead mine – accidents and incidents***

*by Roz Southey*

The nineteenth-century lead mine on Godferhead land has been addressed in this publication before, but the relatively new availability of historic newspapers online, in the database belonging to the British Library, allows glimpses of the impact the mine had on the lives of workers there and on local people.<sup>1</sup>

The mine opened in 1829, the lead vein that it worked having been discovered about 13 years earlier during drainage work, although there had been previous workings on the vein as early as 1811. The mine consisted of a shaft over 100 feet deep and, as water constantly filled the shaft, was drained by a large waterwheel; the wheel also worked other machinery on site. The water that powered the wheel came from a reservoir high on Low Fell that was clearly one of the first structures associated with the mine to be built; it was described by the Cumberland Pacquet on 12 July 1828 as being about fifteen feet deep, and covering one and a half acres about 300 feet above Loweswater lake. Before the mine had even opened, it caused a disaster. In early July 1828, following heavy rain overnight, the reservoir, 'much swollen', burst. A torrent of water ran down the fell, smashing into the barn and house at Crabtreebeck, and sweeping the occupant, Joseph Turrel, and his eighteen-month old son, into Loweswater lake where they drowned. Turrel's wife and a maid were in the house itself which withstood the pressure of the water; they survived.

In September 1832, an advertisement in the Pacquet advertised the lease of the mine for sale and gives a glimpse of the workings; it lists 'utensils usually employed in mining,' including a



**Moss Cottage 1971. Office top right. Forge in foreground. Photo Hugh Thomson**

water wheel 22 feet in diameter, 32 fathoms of nine-inch Pumps, an eight-inch working barrel, and winding machinery. The Pacquet said these were 'all effective, and in good condition, being almost new', suggesting that the previous lessee had not stayed long. Either the lease was not taken or the new lessee left very promptly, as the mine was again advertised almost exactly a year later. In September 1833; the Newcastle Journal described the machinery in much the same terms as before, only noting in addition that 'there is an abundant and never-failing supply of Water' to the water wheel – this was probably from the repaired reservoir on the fell above Crabtreebeck. If no offer was made within a week of advertisement, 'the pumps will be drawn' and the machinery sold. Presumably, that would have meant the end of the mine. None of this suggests that it was particularly profitable.

By 1839, the mine was being worked by a partnership of five people, who included two members of the Clements family – apparently father and son. William Clements junior seems to have been the only one of these partners who lived on site and worked in the mine. He was listed on the 1841 census as being only 25 years old; most, though not all, of the ages on the census are rounded down to the nearest five, so he may have been as old as 29. Given that the census does not list places of birth, his origins are not clear. The census describes him simply as 'lead miner' but newspaper reports make it clear he was more than that. Under these lessees, in 1840, a horizontal level was driven eastwards about 300 feet to exploit a further small vein of good-quality ore.

More details can be gleaned from the census. Clements and his family lived at Netherclose; the mine office was off a track opposite the farm – it is not clear whether this latter was an already-existing building taken over, or one especially built. It still exists as Moss Cottage. A carpenter's shop was also associated with the mine and at least some of the five joiners living in the parish may have worked there. A smithy and explosives store were also close to the mine office.

Clements was lessee when local newspapers noted two significant incidents in quick succession in the autumn of 1839. The first was in August, when the twelve-year-old son of one of the miners, Joseph Fearon, was killed in the mine. The Carlisle Patriot noted that 'The ill-fated boy was employed by the water wheel, and accidentally coming in contact with it whilst in action, dashed his head against a post with so much violence as to occasion death'. An inquest recorded a verdict of accidental death – the newspaper afforded the event one small paragraph, suggesting it did not find it particularly unusual.

Shortly afterwards, a second incident took place at the mine, coming to court in Cocker mouth only two months after the boy's death. Two miners, brothers Stephen and John Thomas, were charged with damaging a pump used for draining the

mine on 18 October. The Patriot also reported this incident (as did other local papers), at great length, detailing the evidence given in court, thus allowing the course of events to be pieced together and throwing some light on working conditions and practices at the mine.

William Clements testified that the elder brother, Stephen, had been working at the mine for around two years, and that the younger brother, John, had been there six or seven weeks. He said he had had no argument with John who was very quiet (although he admitted that he had had words with him twice in the past), but that he had quarrelled with Stephen on a number of occasions. The point at issue was Stephen's unreliability – he had, according to Clements, been working short shifts. On 7 October 1839, Clements had refused to give Stephen his monthly wages of £4 10s, giving him only £4 1s, because, he said, Stephen had been absent from work for several days. (Payment was in the form of a note which the worker had to take to Cocker mouth to convert into coin.) According to the Patriot, Stephen was alleged to have said: 'Damn you, ... I will have my money or knock your head off.' When Clements prudently tried to retreat to the carpenter's shop, Stephen followed him and threatened him again.

The incident involving the wages was clearly the latest in a series of arguments between the two men. Apparently, Clements had previously been warned that Stephen might try and damage the mine's machinery. Clements took the information seriously, asking the mine manager, William Jeffrey, to keep an eye on the machinery. (Clements referred to Jeffrey merely as 'a workman', a term which Jeffrey also used for himself.) This warning had apparently been given five days before the damage to the pump, which itself had happened about a week before the case came to court. Jeffrey outlined in court a sequence of events he had witnessed on the morning the criminal damage allegedly took place.

<sup>1</sup> [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)



**The former forge in 1971. Photo Hugh Thomson**

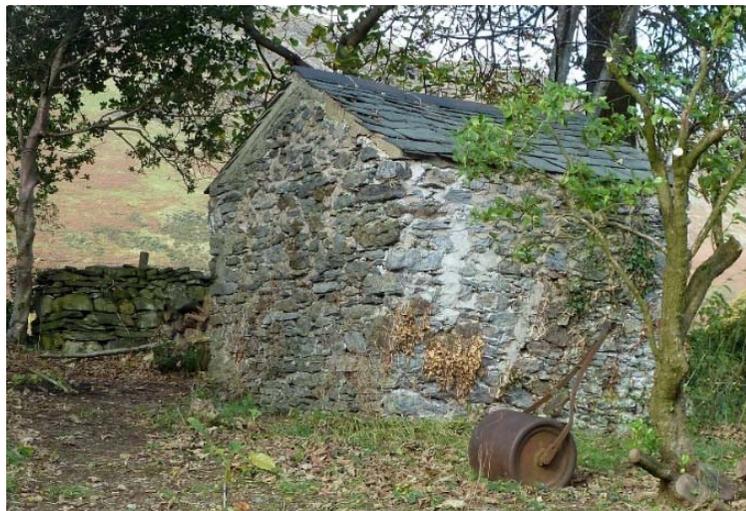
*On Friday morning, about half past eight o'clock, I saw the prisoners [Stephen and John] talking to John Harker [one of the other miners], about twenty yards from the pump. I next saw Stephen coming from the top of the shaft; he was three or four yards from it. The wheel then was going as if it was going to tear itself to pieces, and I told Harker to stop it. In a minute or two afterwards, I tried the wheel again and found it would not work. I told Mr Clements and he sent for men to go into the mine to see what was the matter. We went down and examined and found that two pieces of iron had been put into the pump by some one, which prevented it working.*

Jeffrey stated that the wheel had malfunctioned less than ten minutes after he had seen

Stephen near the shaft and that it would have been easy enough to throw a piece of iron down from the top of the shaft into the pump. Another miner, Thomas Beck, testified that he had earlier seen two pieces of iron (both about a foot long) lying on the ground not far from the shaft, and in court identified a piece taken from the pump as one of them. The miner to whom Jeffrey had referred in his

evidence, John Harker, said that he too had seen Stephen coming from the shaft not a second or two before the wheel started to malfunction and that he had seen no one else. All this, however, was undeniably circumstantial, and Thomas Beck had, under cross-examination, admitted that the two brothers had helped to repair the pump after the incident, which did not suggest any malintent on their part. John Harker too, under cross-examination, said that he had known

**The powder house in 1971. Photo Hugh Thomson**



Stephen Thomas for twelve years and 'never knew anything against him'. After the defendants' legal counsel had addressed the jury, the jury ('almost immediately', according to the Cumberland Pacquet) found the two brothers not guilty.

A list of workers at the mine at this period can be drawn from these reports and from the 1841 census, but must certainly be incomplete.

Name	Age	Residence	Worked at mine
Stephen Thomas			1839
John Thomas			1839
William Jeffrey			1839
Thomas Beck			1839
Joseph Fearon			1839
? Fearon	12		1839
John Harker	55-60 <sup>2</sup>	Thackthwaite	1841
Henry Surr	25-30	Thackthwaite	1841
William Spedding	20-25	Thackthwaite	1841
John Spedding	50-55	High Latterhead	1841
John Spedding	25-30	High Latterhead	1841
Richard Hetherington	35-40	High Latterhead	1841
William Clements	25-30	Netherclose	1841
Isaac Floyd	55-60	Mines Office	1841
Robert Parker	40-45	High Park	1841

**Table 1: Known miners working at the Netherclose mine**

<sup>2</sup> Ages on the 1841 were rounded down to the nearest 5; someone who was listed as 55, therefore, might be any age between 55 and

Name	Age	Residence	Date
Isaac Tyson	25-30	Gillerthwaite	1841
John Beck	26	Gillerthwaite	1841
George Wilkinson	40-45	Gillerthwaite	1841
Lemuel Norman	50-55	Gillerthwaite	1841
Joseph Clerk	55-60	Gillerthwaite	1841

**Table 2: Joiners living in Loweswater who may have worked at the mines**

The mine closed in 1841, a mere year after the opening of the level. An advertisement in the Carlisle Journal of October 1844, however, suggests that the winding up of affairs there took a number of years; the advertisement listed the mine's machinery for sale, no doubt to raise money to satisfy creditors. This machinery included:

- Water wheel (21 feet high by 4½ feet wide)
- Second water wheel (22 feet high by 4½ feet wide)
- Winding machine
- Iron Pumps (6 inches and 10 inches diameter)
- Capstan and rope
- Whinlass and ropes
- Iron Flat rods
- Chains
- Smith's bellows and tongs
- Iron, Brass, Miners' tools and 'sundry other ... materials'

It is clear that the mine had never been particularly successful; Bulmer's Directory of 1883 stated that the company had made a loss of £6,000 on the venture. The spoil heap can still be seen at the side of the road to Godferhead. Owing to the works quickly becoming dangerous, the workings were filled with rubble in the 1850s and 1860s.

59. The age for John Beck (and the ages of his siblings) were, however, noted exactly.

## Lost farms found hidden in Pottergill.

by Roger Asquith and Derek Denman

It is curious how historical investigations can be connected, in that when making a routine investigation of one subject, information can crop up which leads to a resolution of long-term mysteries. We are grateful for a recent interest in Pottergill, stimulated by the suggestion by Angus Winchester that the name might derive from 'a stream-side where a potter once lived or dug clay', and also requests for historical and archaeological information about Pottergill,<sup>1</sup> in the context of the current redevelopment of the parent Oak Bank farm, in Thackthwaite.

Pottergill has the appearance of a late medieval intake from the common, providing a marginal smallholding. Uninhabited for over a century it is now a ruin on the fellside, surveyed by the Society and the National Trust in 2008. The survival of the remains probably results from a rebuilding by John Marshall after his purchase in 1824, which provided a farmstead also for his adjacent Rigbank land, which had no farmstead when sold in 1807. A later combination with Oak Bank removed the need for Pottergill farmstead.

A brief historical study of Pottergill from the manorial records and rents seemed

to show that it was mostly unchanged from 1619, until sold to Joshua Lucock Bragg of

Lorton Hall in 1807. However, a key piece of information from Roz Southey, the expert in all things to do with Oak Bank/Cold Keld, indicated that the make-up of Pottergill tenement was more complex, and possibly related to lost farms which we have been trying to locate for some years. This led to a more thorough study by the authors.

### The lost farmstead(s) of Six Acres and Irdales Land.

Loweswater and Thackthwaite, as agricultural villages, have naturally lost many farmsteads and mills, reflecting the combining of farms when mixed farms became just pastoral. Some of these lost farms have been previously discussed.<sup>2</sup> Some lost farmsteads, such as Pottergill, are easily found as ruins, and others, such as Stockbridge and Steelbank, are gone but marked on old maps. The difficult ones are those which appear fleetingly in old documents, in wills, registers and manorial records, their whereabouts unknown. Two are of interest here – John Iredale of



L&DFLHS members survey the ruins, 2008  
Photo L&DFLHS

<sup>1</sup> Angus Winchester, *The language of the Landscape*, 2019, p.26.

<sup>2</sup> Roz Southey, *Life in old Loweswater*, 2008, p 84.  
Winchester, *Language*, p 68.

'Iredales Land' was buried at Loweswater in 1732.<sup>3</sup> Thomas Iredale of 'Sixacker' left a will and inventory in 1612.<sup>4</sup> Did 'Iredales Land' signify a location other than Iredale Place at Waterend or High Iredale near High Nook? The name 'Sixacker' (i.e. Six Acre) itself offers no clue at all, though Thomas Iredale's 1612 will suggests it was near Pottergill. (John ffysher of Rigbank was a supervisor of the will and an appraiser of the inventory; a debt of 2s 6d was owing to Peter Burnyeat of Pottergill; of the other names arising most - Pearson, Jackson, Harrison and Wood - were consistent with families in this part of the township.)

The 1839 Loweswater Township map shows 'Ardle Lands' as a Pottergill field name, 'Ardle' being one of a number of corruptions of 'Iredale'.<sup>5</sup> The manor court records (recording tenants' surrender of, and admittance to, their messuages and tenements, as well as other day-to-day matters) allow Iredale Lands to be located.<sup>6</sup> To summarise several transactions, John Allason of Fouslyke was admitted tenant of 'Ardles Lands alias Ould House Lands' in 1683 at an annual rent of 1s 6d. In 1686 Thomas Iredale exchanged with John Allason his Church Style (Kirkstyle) holding (annual rent 5s 2d) for the above 'Ardles Lands' and 'four parcels of land adjoining thereunto Thackthwaite Lees, Dove Kell, Wood and Far Ing'. This exchange (effectively swapping Mayfair for Old Kent Road) was clearly incentivised by Thomas Iredale's need to pay off debts and mortgages. Locating the 'four parcels of land' on the 1824 map of Pottergill (page 9) confirms that the field named 'Ardle Lands' was the site of the holding known as 'Iredales Land' (alias 'Old House Lands'). The entity that was Pottergill in 1824 had formerly been two separate holdings. The amalgamation came about

<sup>3</sup> Cumbria Archive Service, Whitehaven, Will of John Iredale, Loweswater, 1732.

<sup>4</sup> 15 Cumbria Archive Service, Whitehaven, Will of Thomas Iredale, Loweswater, 1612.

<sup>5</sup>

<http://derwentfells.com/images/publications/TownershipLoweswater1839.jpg>

for two reasons, one being the need for greater acreage to make a farm viable, the other being down to family trees and inheritance, as summarised on page 10.

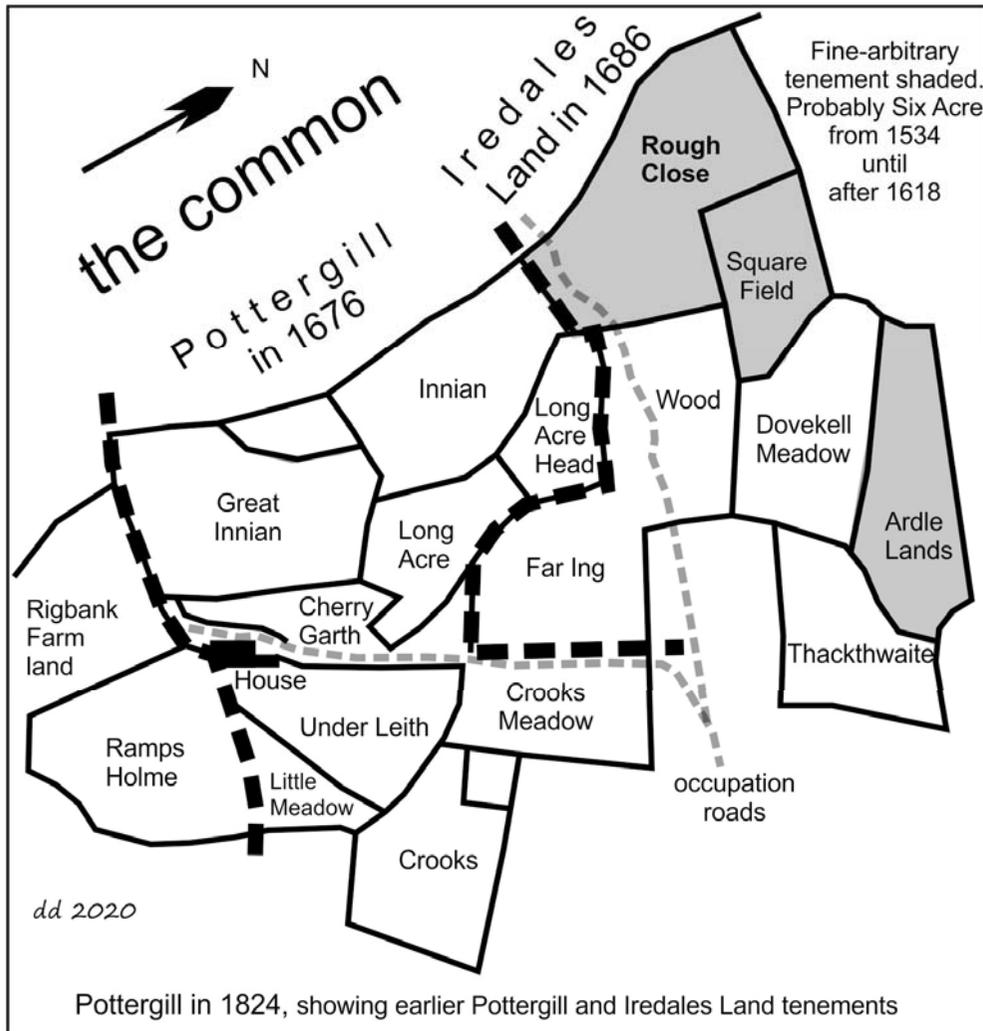
Burnyeats were at Pottergill in 1576, holding it until 1660 or later.<sup>7</sup> Nicholas and Peter Mirehouse were admitted as joint tenants in 1676. Establishing family connections in seventeenth century Loweswater is uncertain due to gaps in the Parish Register and name repetition; it seems likely however that Nicholas and Peter were of the Mirehouse family at Sosgill. While Peter became a smith, living at Mockerkin, Nicholas stayed at Pottergill marrying Jenet Iredale of Latterhead in 1681.<sup>8</sup> She would appear to have been around 14 years old - he being considerably older, marrying his servant girl perhaps. Their first surviving son was Thomas baptised in 1684, and he was to hold Pottergill until his death in 1770. By the time Nicholas died, only one year later, William Mirehouse had moved in, presumably to assist the ailing Nicholas with the farm work, marrying his widow in 1687. Practicality and necessity were the order of the day. In the manor court register of tenants William was listed as 'William Mirehouse alias Nutt' i.e. illegitimate. He attended the manor court alongside John Nutt of Askill, maybe his father or half-brother. On the death of Thomas Mirehouse (1770) his granddaughter, Jane Peile, inherited Pottergill, having previously inherited Iredales Land from her mother Ann Peile (nee Mirehouse). The two properties were thus brought together as shown in the plan.

The earlier history of Iredale Lands is relevant when considering the possibility that this was the location of 'Six Acker', the home of Thomas Iredale in 1612. The name 'Ardle Lands alias Ould House

<sup>6</sup> Cumbria Archive Service, Whitehaven, D/WM11/121 & 122, manor of Loweswater court books.

<sup>7</sup> CASW/DWM/11/172; CASW, will of John Fisher of Rigbank, Loweswater, 1660

<sup>8</sup> Loweswater parish registers.



Lands', as noted above in 1683, shows both a preceding Iredale connection and that it existed long before that date. From the Manor Court records Peter Burnyeat of Pottergill was one of the Loweswater tenants who, in 1619, paid the Lord a premium for rights including fixed fines on change of tenant.<sup>9</sup> Pottergill was henceforth 'Fine Certain' land. Iredales

Land (not including 'the four parcels of land adjoining thereunto') remained 'Fine Arbitrary' from 1619 – payments being at the will of the Lord. These closes amounted to 8.9 statute acres in 1824, consistent with the six customary acres of Thomas Iredale's 1612 holding. Confirmation of its early origins is provided by a manor court entry of 1685, to the effect that William

<sup>9</sup> CASW/DWM/11/160/15 Loweswater and Thackthwaite Fines Certain Tenants 1619.

### Pottergill - absorbing Iredales Land

1676 Surrendered by John Allason, Nicholas and Peter Mirehouse admitted

**PG1 Nicholas Mirehouse** (1) = Jenet Iredale of Latterhead = (2) William Mirehouse  
 bd 1685 1681 1667-1741 1687 alias Nutt bd 1703  
 held with Peter to 1683



**IL4 John** 1709 - by 1739    **IL6 Ann** 1711- Dec 1742    =    Jonathan Peile **IL5 James**  
 of High Park    1741    1715- by 1740

John Payles of Dean (1) = **IL7 PG3 Jane Peile** = (2) Joseph Fearon of Gilcrux  
 1764    bp Nov 1742    1768

1779 Pottergill and Iredales Land surrendered by Jane Peile  
**IL8 PG4 Richard Fearon** of Gilcrux admitted

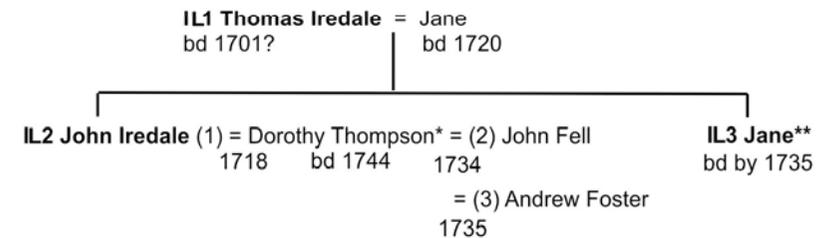
1807 Pottergill (combined) surrendered by Richard Fearon  
**IL9 PG5 Joshua Lucock Bragg** of Lorton Hall admitted

1824 Pottergill sold as freehold to John Marshall

### Iredales Land - prior to absorption

1683 John Allason admitted as tenant

1686 Thomas Iredale surrendered the Kirkstyle tenement in exchange for Iredale Lands



\* Dorothy, wife of John Iredale, had occupancy of Iredales Land for her lifetime, died 1744.

\*\* After Jane Iredale's death the customary tenancy of Iredales Land passed to the heirs (grandchildren) of Jenet Mirehouse (nee Iredale), hence to Jane Peile. Jane Peile also inherited the customary tenancy of Pottergill on the death of her grandfather, Thomas Mirehouse, in 1770.

PG1, IL1, etc. indicates the sequence of holders of the customary tenancies of Pottergill and Iredales Land.

Harrison of Latterhead was presented for denying John Allason his 'ancient way' to and from Iredales Land. The right of way being 'ancient' in 1685 would make it possible for Six Acre to be an old name for Iredales Land, the earliest reference to which was John Bell of Six Acre on the Loweswater court jury in 1534. An entry in the previous year, 1684, reads: 'Nicholas Mirehouse presents William Harrison for stopping him of his highway with a scythe when he was leading his hay'. Old Nick meets the grim reaper! The jurors confirmed that Nicholas Mirehouse had a right of way 'for any cart or carriage' from Pottergill to Latterhead.

The location of Iredales Land (alias Ould House Lands) is certain. All the available evidence indicates that it was formerly known by the name Six Acre. From his inventory Thomas Iredale of Six Acre would seem to have been getting by on a limited amount of marginal land, providing for wife Jenat and sons John, William, Thomas and Peter.<sup>10</sup> In August 1612 he had a mare, a pair of oxen, two or three milk cows with calves, a pig, bees and a few hens, 95 sheep and 20 lambs. Corn and hay were in the barn, bigg (barley), malt, meal and grottes were stored in his 'arks and chists', along with 6 stones of wool. While son John was heir, Thomas was destined for an apprenticeship – perhaps with William Burnyeat, the local tanner. How these Iredale sons figured in the later history of Iredales Land, Kirkstyle, Latterhead and the connection to Jenet Mirehouse, nee Iredale, of Pottergill, is obscured by the confusion of Iredale names.

#### The possible meanings of 'Pottergill'

The name 'Pottergill' is a seemingly unambiguous indication that there was in the vicinity the home or workplace of a craftsman throwing and firing clay pots. However 'Potter', as part of a Lake District place name, has also been interpreted as

'the shieling by the pool' from ME potte (pool, pot, deep hole) and Gaelic-Norse aergi/erg (shieling).<sup>11</sup> Early name forms such as 'Pottehergh' and 'Pottskailles' (relating to the non-local Potter Fell, Potter Tarn and Potts Gill) point to pool/pot/shieling name origins. In the local area, Mosser (historically 'Mosergh') means 'the shieling by the bog', a shieling being a summer pasture. The ON skali, becoming skaille or scale, means shieling with hut or, later, a hut in other contexts. Sosgill (formerly Solrescales, Saurescoles – 'the muddy shielings') is a local example where the scale/skaille element, has become 'gill' over the centuries. The name therefore has to be weighed up in context to pick the right, or more probable, derivation.

Had Pottergill (i.e. the banks of the beck, or even the site of the buildings) been the workplace of potters some confirmation would be expected in local records or in the landscape. To provide a time frame in which to search for potting activity in Loweswater, in 1576 Thomas Burnyeate of Pottergill participated in a riding of the bounds of the manor.<sup>12</sup> Earlier still, in 1488, John Peirson of 'Bottgill' was in trouble at Loweswater Manor Court for having 2 pigs on the common, probably without rings.<sup>13</sup> Almost certainly 'Bottgill' is



The possible 'pot' site at Pottergill. Photo Roger Asquith

<sup>10</sup> CASW, Will of Thomas Iredale, Loweswater, 1612.

<sup>11</sup> Diana Whaley, *A Dictionary of Lake-District Place-Names*, 2006.

<sup>12</sup> CASW/DWM/11/172.

<sup>13</sup> CASW/DLec./299T, fol.153, Loweswater Court, 29 Jul, 3 Hen VII.

Pottergill, either misheard by the clerk or a later transcription error. While other trades appear in the Parish Registers and wills (smiths, wrights, weavers, tailors, tanners and shoemakers, slaters and wallers) there are no potters (and no-one named Potter). There are no licences to dig clay, no-one is taken to task for doing so without permission and there are no issues regarding fuel for a pottery-firing kiln. Could the potter(s) of Pottergill predate written records? Neither local knowledge nor a landscape survey has highlighted clay pits or kilns.<sup>14</sup>

It is relevant to consider whether there was the need for a potter within the largely self-sufficient community. Would there have been demand for his output? Inventories and contemporary descriptions of life in sixteenth Century point to the use of 'treen' (i.e. derived from trees) plates, bowls, cups, spoons, etc., with increasing use of pewter.<sup>15</sup> Due to trifling values, treen items were not often listed in inventories. Cooking pots were of iron; dairy and brewing activities required 'vessels' of wood (cooper/barrel construction) and, at greater cost, pewter. 'Earthen' vessels came later, mentioned in Loweswater inventories from the later seventeenth Century (with one early date of 1646). 'Pottergill' was named in a period in which pottery manufacture in Britain took place in a handful of centres, usually in urban locations, providing decorative higher status products.<sup>16</sup> Only with the Industrial Revolution (from the early eighteenth Century) did mass produced pottery become more widely affordable and change the predominance of wooden and pewter table/kitchenware.

Considering the position of Pottergill within the landscape - does 'Pott-erg-gill' fit the situation? Over much of its length the stream itself is insignificant.

<sup>14</sup> Oxford Archaeology North, 'Buttermere, Cumbria. Historic Landscape Survey Report' Vols. 1&2 Feb. 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Susan Denyer, *Traditional Buildings & Life in The Lake District*, 1991; Jasper Ridley, *A Brief History of the Tudor Age*, 2002; F.G.Emmison, *Elizabethan Life: Home, Work & Land*, 1976.

Immediately next to the ruined farm, however, there will have been a 'pot', or pool, beneath the small waterfall by the present access track. The form of the 'pot' has evidently been modified in past times to suit the practical water-supply needs of the inhabitants and, latterly, for maintenance of the track. Pottergill stands at the boundary between the enclosed fields in the valley bottom and what was the open fell side common grazing. The 'erg' name for summer pasture, referring to 'lower-lying shieling grounds quite close to the home farm' would appear to fit.<sup>17</sup>

The 1840 map of the Township of Whinfall shows a field named 'Potter Close', part of Birkbank farm.<sup>18</sup> Pottergill and Potter Close had characteristics in common. Both bordered on the common grazing land, both had a stream with a 'pot' or pool. Both are prime candidates for the 'Pott-erg' name.

#### Conclusion

The Pottergill tenement of 1824 contains earlier tenements, Pottergill to the south and Iredales Land, alias Ould House Lands, to the north, which were combined in the eighteenth century. The Ould House, last inhabited in 1744, has been lost. It is probable that the core of Iredales Land was known as Six Acre, the name changing in the seventeenth Century. Six Acre may be identified as the six customary acres of fine-arbitrary land within Iredale Lands, and would have contained the farmstead. It is likely that both Pottergill and Six Acre were small late-medieval intakes from the Loweswater common.

Although it cannot be proved, it would appear that the name Pottergill is unlikely to be derived from the activity of a Potter, and much more likely to be derived from a summer pasture and a convenient water supply.

<sup>16</sup> Lloyd Laing, *Pottery in Britain 4000BC to AD1900*, 2003.

<sup>17</sup> Angus Winchester, *Landscape and society in medieval Cumbria*, 1987, p.93.

<sup>18</sup> <http://derwentfells.com/images/publications/TownshipWhinfall1840.jpg>

## **Robert Eaglesfield; from Anthony de Lucy's valet to the household of the Queen**

by Hugh Thomson

As Derek Denman reported in the August Wanderer, the young man named Robert Eaglesfield, who in 1316 received, from Anthony de Lucy's manor of Balnes, a salary of 20 shillings a year and a coat of the pattern worn by de Lucy's valets, went on to have a remarkable career. Robert was 21 years old in 1316, old enough to have already been of service to Anthony; the grant was made 'in return for services rendered and to be rendered.' Anthony had been present at Bannockburn in 1314, and subsequently held for ransom; perhaps Robert was involved with him in this military adventure and its aftermath!

The Eaglesfield family was relatively obscure, minor landowners based in what was, then, as now, a small settlement in a remote part of the country. In February 1307, when Edward I asked for 1,000 men out of Cumberland, Robert's father, John, was responsible, with Thomas Musgrave, for selecting 60 of them from the Cockermouth area, but there is no indication that any of Robert's direct ancestors were of more than local consequence – and Robert was the third son of a third son. His prospects, even with the patronage he secured in 1316, would seem to have been quite limited.

But one member of the family, Robert's uncle Adam, evidently pursued a radically different path.<sup>1</sup> Adam, described as *clericus*, was presented in 1306 to a church in the diocese of Worcester. In the same year he was sent, with the constable of Dover Castle, on a royal mission to Gascony. In 1310 a letter addressed to Adam as 'king's clerk' ordered him to report to the Exchequer on 30 September



Medieval knight and squire, from Wolfram de Eschenbach

in order to be in Bordeaux on 12 November.

Adam de Eaglesfield was clearly no ordinary parish priest; he had become a senior civil servant, trusted by Edward I and by the royal family. By 1313, he had added two other churches to his portfolio, and in 1315, he was nominated as one of two attorneys responsible for looking after the affairs of Edward II's mother, Margaret, queen of England.<sup>2</sup>

The connection of the young Robert to a relative who had access to the Royal family would not have escaped the attention of Anthony de Lucy. If all went well, it could yield benefits more than sufficient to cover the cost of a coat and 20 shillings a year!

(1921), vol.1, pp.2-13 also deals with Robert Eaglesfield's career.

<sup>2</sup> The other of these attorneys was Henry of Ludgershall,

In 1317, Edward II agreed to Adam's nomination as Warden of the Hospital of St. Katherine by the Tower. Adam died in the following year (1318). His executors were Henry of Ludgershall and William de Muskham.<sup>3</sup> His nephew, Robert, acquired lands in Middlesex, held of the king, presumably part of his uncle's estate.

On 23 February 1328, Robert Eaglesfield was able to exchange the property he had acquired in Middlesex for the Cumbrian manor of Renwick, north-east of Penrith.<sup>4</sup> On 28 March, Edward III, referring to Eaglesfield as a king's clerk, ordered the chancellor to present Eaglesfield to the first void benefice in the King's gift worth more than twenty marks.<sup>5</sup> In April, Eaglesfield, a knight of the shire, attended the parliament held at Northampton.

At this point in the story, another influential name appears in Eaglesfield's story. Robert Parving, a Carlisle lawyer, had built a reputation working for Ranulph de Dacre and Walter de Kirkbride. Parving found time to serve as a knight of the shire in the parliament called by Edward III in 1327 and at the first parliament held in 1328, in January; this parliament broke up in disarray.<sup>6</sup>

Robert Eaglesfield, 33 years old in 1328, took Parving's place at the second parliament of 1328. The king, in agreeing the exchange of property and granting the gift of a benefice, may well have intended to influence his parliamentary vote. Parving, who resumed his parliamentary place in the third parliament of 1328, may well have been instrumental in making these arrangements.

In any event, the second 1328 parliament was more successful than its predecessor. It concluded what was intended to be a final peace between England and Scotland, and ratified Edward II's decision to protest the coronation of

<sup>3</sup> William de Muskham plays a part later in Robert Eaglesfield's story.

<sup>4</sup> Renwick had come into the king's hands as a result of the arrest and execution of Andrew Harclay, following his arrest in Carlisle Castle by Anthony Lucy

Philip VI of France, the first step towards the conflict which became known as the Hundred Years War.

Robert's Parliamentary career was over, but his career in the royal service was just beginning. In July 1332 Eaglesfield was instituted (by proxy) as the rector of Brough. He was ordained deacon in December 1332, and priest in February 1333. In 1335 he was commissioned, with two other priests, to 'make a visitation of the King's hospital of St. Nicholas', Carlisle, reported to be 'much decayed through misrule' and to have been mostly absent from his parish on minor duties in royal service. By 1340, Robert Eaglesfield was one of the chaplains of Edward III's queen, Philippa of Hainault.

Philippa, crowned Queen of England at Westminster Abbey in 1330, at the age of sixteen, was a young woman unlike any other Robert might have known.<sup>7</sup> She was the grand-daughter, niece and (from 1328) sister of kings of France, a grand-daughter of the king of Naples and Albania, a niece of the kings of Hungary, Aragon, Naples, Majorca and Sicily, and the half-sister of two empresses. Her marriage had been arranged by Edward III's mother, in exchange for the promise of ships and mercenaries to be used against Edward's father.

The royal marriage had taken place in January 1328. Philippa had no income of her own until 16 April 1329, fifteen months after her wedding, when she was granted an annual income of 1,000 marks (£666) from the Exchequer. How soon after this Eaglesfield became one of her chaplains is not known.

Robert Parving may well have been influential in securing this royal appointment for Eaglesfield. A sergeant-at-law in 1330, Parving served in 1331 on a commission of oyer and terminer dealing with complaints against the officers of the

<sup>1</sup> J.R.MaGrath, 'Fresh Light on the Family of Robert de Eglesfeld', *TCWAAS* 1916 vol 16, 254 et seq. J.R.Magrath, *The Queen's College*

<sup>5</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

<sup>6</sup> J.R.MaGrath, 'Sir Robert Parvyng', *TCWAAS*, vol 19 (1919) 30- 77 covers Parving's life.

<sup>7</sup> Kathryn Warner's book *Philippa of Hainault* (2019) is the only modern biography of Philippa.

king, and robberies, felonies and homicides committed in the counties of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancaster. Before 24 June 1333, Parving had been appointed one of the king's serjeants-at-law.<sup>8</sup>

Philippa's 'household', by 1330, included at least six and possibly eight clerks of her chapel, who worked on a rotation, a week at a time, so Robert would have had time available for other activities. Literacy, in Latin and French, equipped the clerks to take on a broad range of administrative tasks, but nothing in his past would have prepared him for his new relationship, with a woman who was nineteen years his junior.

Philippa was conventionally devout; in 1332 she founded a chantry with three

chaplains to celebrate mass daily for the soul of her aunt Alix. She interceded on behalf of petitioners, including Agnes of Penrith, imprisoned in 1328 for robbery when she was less than eleven years old.

In 1339 Parving, with Sir John Stanford, decided a case brought before the council of the Queen. In 1340 he was one of twelve persons empowered to borrow money for the king to pay the large sums incurred for the wars and other matters ... (protection from invasion) in which the king was engaged.<sup>9</sup> On 15 December 1340 Parving was appointed Treasurer.<sup>10</sup>

**Philippa at sea**



<sup>8</sup> Cal. Close. Rolls, Edward III, 1330-4, 454

<sup>9</sup> *Sir Robert Parvyng*, Magrath, 70

<sup>10</sup> The expedition did not in fact take place, but the planning document is remarkable.

Edward declared war on France in 1337, and he and Philippa spent most of the period from mid-July 1338 until the end of November 1340 outside England.

It may have been during this period that Eaglesfield developed his ideas for the establishment of a new collegiate hall in Oxford. There was a reasonably recent precedent, in the foundation in 1326 of Stapeldon Hall (now Exeter College) by the brothers Walter and Richard de Stapeldon; William was the bishop of Exeter and Richard a justice of the King's Bench.

Once the King and Queen had returned to England, it did not take long for Eaglesfield to secure royal approval for his plan. Edward III granted him a charter to establish the Hall of the Queen's Scholars in Oxford on 18 January 1341.

In 1340 Parving was a member of Queen Philippa's council, and in the following year he received from her treasury £1 6s 8d for his robes as Queen's serjeant.<sup>11</sup>

It is not difficult to believe that he may have had a hand in securing the rapid approval of Eaglesfield's ambitious project. Its objective, to improve educational opportunities for young men from the north of England, were consistent with his own interests.

A surviving document setting out a detailed plan for a major royal military expedition in 1341 has been suggested to be Parving's work.<sup>12</sup> The document sets out the forces to be provided by the royal household and details of the retinues of various magnates who had undertaken to assist the king. It includes carefully worked out costs for the army and the fleet of ships needed to transport it, and outlines a method of meeting the bill through a levy on wool.

By 1341 Eaglesfield had progressed from the obscurity of a Cumbrian village to

<sup>11</sup> CPR 1340-3, 572 records the delivery by the prior of St. Bartholomew's Smithfield of a sealed chest to the council. The chest was opened 'in the presence of Queen Philippa, Robert Parvyng, the chancellor, and William Cusancia, king's clerk, the treasurer.' Cusancia

a position at the court of a young and glamorous Queen of England; he had succeeded in securing Royal approval for the foundation of an Oxford college intended to assist in the education of his fellow native Cumbrians.

I hope, in a future article, to cover the remaining years of Robert Eaglesfield's extraordinary life and to follow the story of the implementation of his vision for the institution he founded.



**Wooden effigy of Queen Philippa.**  
From Magrath, *The Queen's College*, vol 1

('de Coutances') was a member of a family of lawyers and ecclesiastics from Burgundy.

<sup>12</sup> Discussed by Michael Prestwich in 'English Armies in the Hundred Years War: a scheme in 1341' *Historical Review*, May 1983.

## From Balnes to Loweswater: an outline of the manor.

by Derek Denman

There has been no published reconstruction of the historical geography of medieval 'Loweswater', as has been provided for us by Angus Winchester for Lorton, Buttermere and other places.<sup>1</sup> There are no surveys or accounts before 1437, and in particular the detailed surveys of the oft-confiscated Percy lands, in 1569 and 1578, post-dated the loss of Loweswater and Thackthwaite, denying that end point from which to look back in time, except in Mockerkin. However, there is much information published, and available from sources, which has been used for this account of the manor known as Balnes for a short period around 1300.<sup>2</sup>

Medieval 'Loweswater' requires some advanced disambiguation, because the name can be used for a civil parish, an ecclesiastical parish, various manors from the twelfth Century to the twentieth, or a court for a group of manors. Or the name of the lake, from which we assume the hamlet took its name, even though the early and unrecorded occupants of Loweswater hamlet had their open arable fields near Crummock, not Lauswater – as the lake was recorded circa 1202.<sup>3</sup>

This article spans the twelfth to sixteenth centuries and is mainly concerned with the current area of Loweswater parish as manorial property, which at first included both the land and the service of the unfree people tied to it. The intention is to give an outline of the manor of Balnes, which was created in 1230 by the de Multons but not given a name in records until the 1290s. This manor's geography is remembered in

Loweswater's curious civil and Church of England parishes.

In the sixteenth Century Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, once the intended husband of Anne Boleyn, gave all his lands, including Balnes/Loweswater, into the grasping hands of Henry VIII. Henry later supplemented this with the Balnes/Loweswater property of the dissolved Priory of St Bees. The Balnes/Loweswater property did not come out of crown in the same form in which it entered. This article identifies those changes to the property, and the key role of Richard Robynson in re-creating the manor.

### Loweswater before 1230

The previous Wanderer gave an account of Ranulph de Lindesay and the earliest records of the hamlet of Loweswater.<sup>4</sup> Before 1138 Loweswater was sufficiently large to have a chapel, most probably on the existing site, though we do not know if it served a wider population. Also, before 1138 Loweswater was a hamlet in the forest of Coupland, directly held by William Meschin and then by his son Ranulph Meschin, at Egremont Castle as part of their barony of Egremont. There was no intermediate lord, or mesne lord, until circa 1138, when under Scottish rule the hamlet of Loweswater was given as a manor to Ranulph de Lindesay and his wife, Ethereda, in a process known as subinfeudation. The inhabitants of Loweswater were the vassals of the knight Ranulph, who was the vassal of the baron of Egremont, his superior lord, who was in turn the vassal of the King, which was David I of Scotland at this time. Ranulph de Lindesay gave the chapel to the Priory of St Bees and, circa 1160s, his widow gave to St Bees some freehold land in Loweswater plus rights on the common,

<sup>1</sup> Angus Winchester, *Landscape and society in medieval Cumbria*, 1987, Appendices.

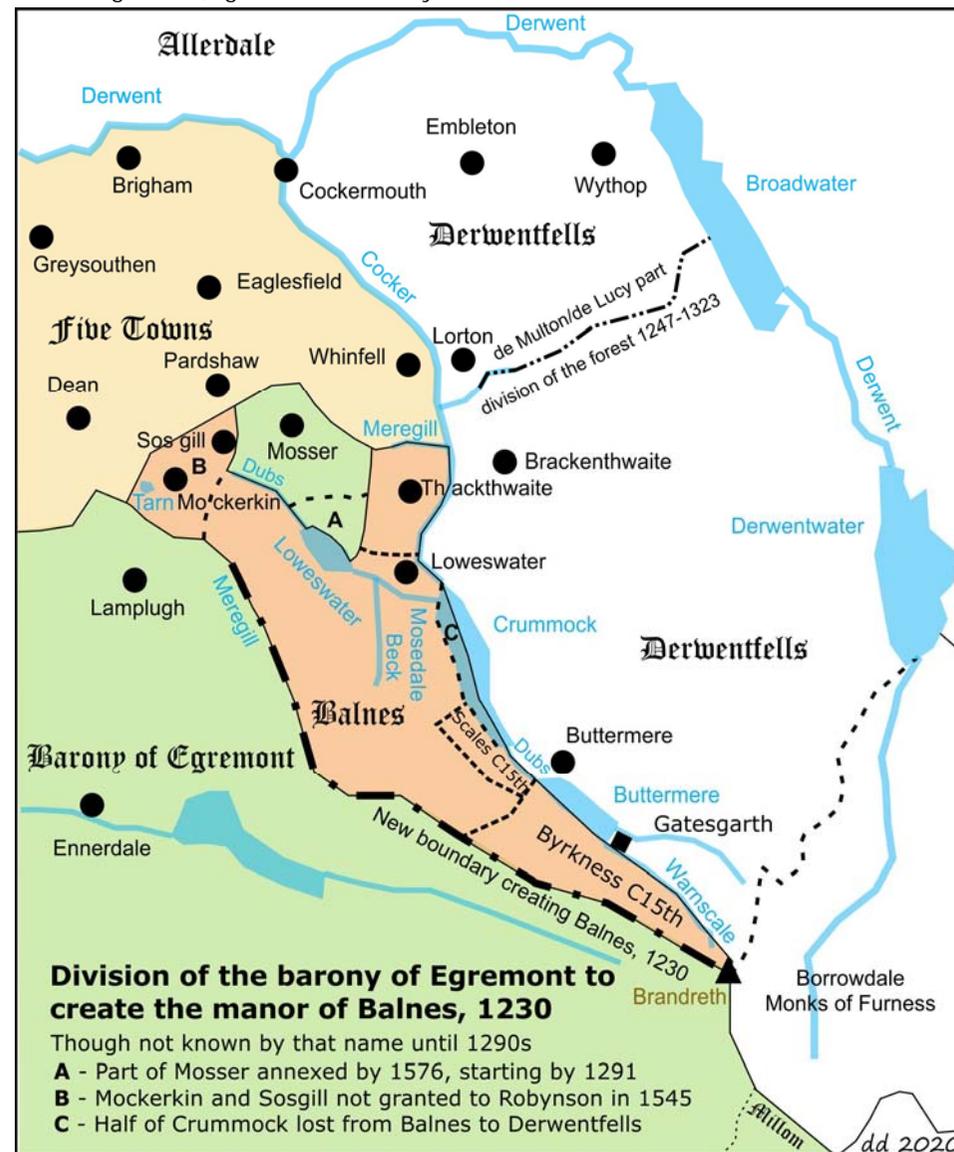
<sup>2</sup> For example, Angus Winchester, *Landscape and Society: John Denton's history of Cumberland*, 2010; *The language of the landscape*, 2019; James Wilson, *The register*

<sup>3</sup> W W Farrer, 'An early Mosser Charter', *TCWAAS*, 1951, p.89

<sup>4</sup> <http://derwentfells.com/pdfs/wanderer/wandereraug20.pdf>

which allowed the monks to establish their grange there, now the Kirkstile. After the death of Ethereda, Loweswater manor probably escheated back to the barony of Egremont. Circa 1200 Richard de Lucy, as lord of Egremont, granted the Priory a

further small extension of land and other rights on the moors at Loweswater, to establish a vaccary of 20 cows.<sup>5</sup> Loweswater had grown in size and importance.



<sup>5</sup> Wilson, *St Bees*, pp.57-8

### The division of the barony in 1230

In 1230 the barony of Egremont was divided between the two daughters of Richard de Lucy, Amabilis and Alicia, and their husbands. After Richard de Lucy's death, the justiciar Thomas de Multon had purchased the wardship of those two heiress daughters from the king, and had married them to his two sons, Lambert and Alan. For good measure he also married their widowed mother and controlled her dower. In 1230 her dower was released and the de Lucy inheritance was divided between the two couples.<sup>6</sup> Lambert de Multon and Amabilis received the barony of Egremont, but because that was more than a half share of the inheritance a small portion of the barony was detached for Alan de Multon and Alicia. That portion was later called the manor of Balnes, roughly equalling the current civil parish of Loweswater, and was held directly of the king for one twentieth of a knight's service, which would be commuted to a variable amount of money when that service was required.

It is important to recognise that the new manor, later called Balnes, was no longer a part of the barony of Egremont. This was a division of the barony, not a freehold grant or subinfeudation, and both parties held directly of the King. So that that status of Balnes was the same as that of the adjacent Five Towns and Derwentfells. The manor of Balnes was not the manor of Loweswater, and the name Balnes will be used here for the new manor, even though we have no record of that name until the 1390s.

The new manor remained forest, providing a hunting resource for Alan and Alicia. They also held a half share in the forest manor of Derwentfells, including the superior lordship of Lorton. In the Five Towns they held the service of a freeholder in Whinfell. This was all part of the divided Honour of Cockermouth, meaning that the decision to divide Balnes from the Barony of Egremont would make sense in terms

both of the geographical grouping of the lands of Alan and Alice and of a focus on Cockermouth Castle, rather than Egremont Castle. The de Multons coveted Cockermouth Castle.

### The extent of the manor from 1230

The detail of the sharing of the inheritance between, nominally, the two sisters and of the division of the barony of Egremont, is contained in two independent transcriptions, in the Lucy Cartulary and the Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland. Together these give a good definition of the content of the manor and its boundaries, as illustrated on page 18.

This separated part of the barony included 'the whole hamelet of Waurescales [Sosgill], and the whole hamelet of Morcorkin within the metes and bounds of old made there, and the whole hamelet of Loweswatre, with the lake of Loweswatre, and the lake called Thermeran [Mockerkin Tarn] and the moiety [half share] of the lake of Crumbokwatre; and the whole service of the tenements of Thatthwayt, which Roger de Lindeby and Agnes his wife held; and all the wood [forest] pertaining to Loweswatre as the march [boundary] extends ...'.

So that, at this time Sosgill, Mockerkin and Loweswater were directly held by Alan and Alicia, while Thackthwaite had been subinfeudated to a mesne lord who now owed service to them, rather than to the lord of Egremont. Half of Crummock was included, which shows that the old division between the barony of Egremont and Derwentfells, created in the early twelfth century, ran through Crummock, but along the shore of Buttermere, which was wholly in Derwentfells. Where boundaries were already established, they were not repeated, but the document defined only the new boundaries being created to divide the barony. Mockerkin had formerly been subinfeudated and had boundaries, as had Lamplugh. The Mosser charter of circa 1202, defined its

contiguous boundaries with Loweswater and Thackthwaite, which latter had clearly been subinfeudated with its common.<sup>7</sup>

Only the long southern boundary was newly defined, from Lamplugh along the mountain watershed to Brandreth. It is important to note that this new boundary, defined in detail, was now the new boundary of the barony of Egremont. Previously the boundary of that barony had contained Mosser and Thackthwaite, reaching the Cocker, and Derwentfells via Meregill. Meregill was now the boundary between Five Towns and Balnes, and the boundary between Balnes and the barony of Egremont now joined Derwentfells at Brandreth.

This manor, without a known name in 1230, contained the hamlets which make up the current civil parish of Loweswater, and provides its likely origin. A decade earlier there had been disputes between Brigham, and St Bees parishes over the tithes of Mosser and Thackthwaite. The resolution was that Thackthwaite was in the parish of St Bees, while Mosser would be within the parish of Brigham, with payments recognising its feudal relationship with Egremont.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, Loweswater chapel, as part of St Bees Parish, could embrace Mockerkin/Sosgill and Thackthwaite as a chapel in St Bees. Mosser became a part of Brigham Parish, but subject to the forest rule of the barony of Egremont, and with an independent but weak mesne lordship.

### Development in the thirteenth Century

We have no survey of the manor in the thirteenth century, but much can be deduced from various records. The hamlets of Loweswater, Thackthwaite, Mockerkin and Sosgill, this last grown from a sheiling, were well established. Loweswater's twelfth-century bounds, under the de Lindesays, are unknown, but it would have included common from which

the Kirkstile grant was made. However, the common was probably greatly extended to the south in 1230, by the inclusion of large tracts from the mountainous Coupland Forest. In time, all these elements of common were administered as one Loweswater common by one court, up to enclosure in the 1860s.

The chapel has probably always been in the same position, and the corn mill on Mosedale beck was probably in place well before 1300, though there is no record. Lorton mill had then existed for over 150 years.<sup>9</sup> The shared open fields of arable and meadow appear, from field patterns and names, to have been to the east of Gillerthwaite, bounded by the road, Park Beck and Crummock. The farmsteads would be along the road, with the Kirkstile added on new land taken in during the twelfth century. See page 22.

Before the division in 1230, Loweswater lay in the private forest of Coupland, and the inhabitants were subject to strict rules, similar to the law applying to peasants who dwelt in the royal forests. After the division Loweswater would still be forest with free chase belonging to Alan de Multon. He and Alicia also held a half share in the forest of Derwentfells, the land between the Cocker and Derwent. The other half share was held by the earls of Albemarle, who held Cockermouth Castle. They took action against alleged damage by Alan and Alicia in Derwentfells, which caused the forest to be physically divided between them in 1247.<sup>10</sup> The line of division started at Lorton High Mill and went through Lord's Seat. Curiously, Alan de Multon had the northern half, separated from his forest in Balnes and the park he created in Loweswater, south of Park Beck, while the earl of Albemarle had the southern half, distant from Cockermouth and his castle and park there.

<sup>6</sup> *Cal Doc Scot*, vol.1, no.1106; Lucy Cartulary, no.162

<sup>7</sup> W W Farrer, 'An early Mosser Charter', *TCWAAS*, 1951, p.89

<sup>8</sup> Wilson, *St Bees*, pp.142-3

<sup>9</sup>

<http://derwentfells.com/pdfs/wanderer/wandereraug20.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Lucy Cartulary, no.119.

Loweswater developed and grew in local importance after the death of Alan, circa 1269, when his son Thomas gained control, in his mother's right and taking her name of Lucy.

It would be reasonable to assume that from the 1280s the chapelry of Loweswater served Thackthwaite, Mockerkin and Sosgill. Thomas may have instigated the process through which Archbishop Wickwane was granted a licence in 1281 to raise the chapel at Loweswater to that of a parochial chapelry, including a burial ground.<sup>11</sup> Bouch and Wilson agree that this was not done until 1403, when a chapel at Loweswater was consecrated and dedicated, and the bells were installed.<sup>12</sup>

Thomas de Lucy expanded the Park, causing a dispute with the monks because the expanded park had interfered with the monks' use of the common, and of Dubwath, now Park Bridge. This was resolved in 1287 by a grant of land between the park and Mosedale Beck. This became the Shepegate, accessed at or near Kirkhead, now Church Bridge.<sup>13</sup>

#### The name Balnes, or Bal-nes

The dates of records suggest that it was Thomas de Lucy who named the manor Balnes, and that he made some sort of building there, maybe just a hunting lodge, because charters were given at 'Balneys' in 1297, 1298 and 1312/13.<sup>14</sup> This was the period of the first Scottish war of independence.

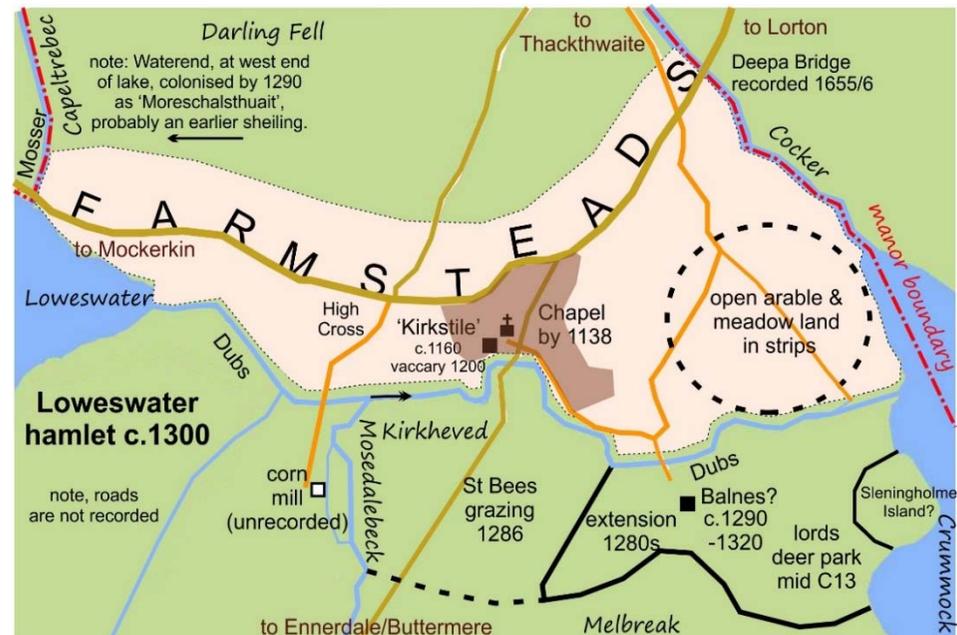
Previous work has considered Balnes to be the equivalent of Bowness, the curved promontory or headland, referring to the curve of Peel Island.<sup>15</sup> However, the 'Bal' element is present in all appearances and does not support a bow or curve. Rather, bal might simply be the middle English for ball, and might describe the appearance of Peel Island, with its moat,

as that of a wooden ball mostly submerged in the lake.

While Balnes, whatever its etymology, might describe the appearance of Peel Island from Crummock, that does not mean that the name Balnes, used for a manor and a place where charters were given, was also the earlier name for Peel Island. In the previous Wanderer, Hugh Thomson identifies Peel Island as Sleningholme Island in Crummock which was granted at Balnes by charters in 1298 and 1312/13.<sup>16</sup> This might have had wooden structures for defence, storage, and occupation – the occupation being indicated in 1312/13 by the need for the forester to supervise the use or supply of dead wood, which would be for fires. This identification places Sleningholme or Peel outside of the park, and supports the possibility that Balnes, as the place at which charters were given, might best be looked for at Low Park, the more obvious place from which to enjoy the park. Anthony de Lucy, who made the grant in 1312/13, did not acquire Cockermouth Castle, and the Albemarle half of the Honour, until 1323. Before that the Multons/Lucies would need facilities in Loweswater from which to hunt.

#### Growth in the thirteenth Century

The high medieval period, from the Norman invasion to the end of the thirteenth Century, was a period of growth in population supported by a relatively warm climate, while the fourteenth Century saw depopulation through the wars, the black death, and the consequent famines. Loweswater would be expected to grow in population and in land under cultivation during the lordship of the de-Multons/Lucies from 1230 to 1300. There is evidence of this at Waterend, that is all the settlements around the head of Loweswater Lake from the Places to Miresyke. In 1202, the subinfeudation of



Mosser had included all the land west of Crabtreebeck, along the northern shore of Loweswater and continuing along Dubs Beck.<sup>17</sup> That part between Crabtreebeck and Whittern Beck was for grazing only, and this was not part of the Balnes manor created in 1230. However, in 1290 a dispute arose because the men of Loweswater had occupied and ploughed land at Moreschalsthuait, which was in that pasture of Mosser, within modern Water End to Miresyke.<sup>18</sup> Probably this had grown from a sheiling, and enclosure may also have existed at the 'Places', which the men of Loweswater could legitimately cultivate. The disputed enclosures formed the first part of the annexation by Loweswater tenants of about a quarter of Mosser's land between Crabtreebeck and Whittern Gill, as delineated by a commons riding in 1576.<sup>19</sup> Though Mosser in 1290 was still in the barony of Egremont and part of the forest, it was detached by being

surrounded by Balnes and the Five Towns. It's tithes now belonged to Brigham, rather than St Bees. The local lord of Mosser was in a weak position to resist the ambitious Thomas de Lucy and his men of Loweswater.

Other expansions of cultivated land are not recorded in the thirteenth century, and it may or may not be that a sheiling was settled at Watergate. Similarly, the Loweswater closes along the west bank of Buttermere Dubs cannot be dated, but the expansion of Loweswater within the manor of Balnes probably reached a high point under Thomas de Lucy, who died in 1305. At that time the manor was recorded as having two forges, or iron bloomeries – which might have military application as well as agricultural.

Thackthwaite and Mockerkin/Sosgill remained discrete properties within Balnes as a superior lordship. While Mockerkin/Sosgill was held by Thomas de

<sup>11</sup> Wilson, *St Bees*, p.387n

<sup>12</sup> CML Bouch, *Prelates and People of the Lake Counties*, 1948, pp.141&150; Wilson, *St Bees*, pp.387-394

<sup>13</sup> Wilson, *St Bees*, pp.144-6

<sup>14</sup> Lucy Cartulary, nos. 63,64,65 &93.

<sup>15</sup> Winchester, *Landscape and society*, p.84

<sup>16</sup> <http://derwentfells.com/pdfs/wanderer/wanderer20.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> W W Farrer, 'An early Mosser Charter', *TCWAAS* 1951, p.89

<sup>18</sup> Lucy Cartulary, no.62; See Winchester, *Language of Landscape*, pp.115-6

<sup>19</sup> CASW/DWM/11/172.

Lucy through tenants at will, the subinfeudated manor of Thackthwaite had a complex history of purchases, exchanges and confiscation by the crown in the thirteenth Century, which will not be elaborated here. At his death in 1305, it was held directly of the King for a penny, and farmed through manorial tenants, though still a distinct manor. Thackthwaite should not be thought of just the nucleated hamlet, but all the tenements from Fouslyke northwards, and it would have been well populated in the late thirteenth century.

By 1309 the annual value of the manor of Balnes was £31 2s 6d, probably at a peak before decline.<sup>20</sup> In addition to the farm tenements there were eleven landless cottagers in 1305, each presumably having a peasant family of labourers.<sup>21</sup>

Separately, Thomas de Lucy exchanged a portion of Distington for Brackenthwaite, which at later times was managed with Loweswater, but Brackenthwaite was in Derwentfells and never a part of Balnes.<sup>22</sup>

#### **The fourteenth Century - from Balnes to Loweswater.**

The de Lucies held the manor unchanged, as far as we know, to the end of the fourteenth Century, a time of wars and depopulation, until Maud de Lucy brought all the family property by marriage to the Percies, the earls of Northumberland. After the death of Thomas de Lucy in 1305, his 24 year old son Thomas held the manor until his death in 1308. Thomas was succeeded by his brother Anthony de Lucy, who played a major role in Cumberland during the wars of Scottish independence, and who died in 1343. The success of Anthony, in achieving the objectives of the de Multons/Lucies, by obtaining the grant of Cockermouth Castle and the honour

from the King in 1323, diminished the status of Balnes within his properties.

In a surviving charter of 1316 Anthony granted one pound per annum from his manor of Balnes to Robert de Eglesfeld, his valet, but that is the last known contemporary record of Balnes.<sup>23</sup> After 1323 the manor became known in records as Loweswater, with Mockerkin and Thackthwaite usually noted as places held within Loweswater.<sup>24</sup> The inquisition after the death of Thomas de Lucy, in 1365 simply equated Loweswater with Balnes: 'The manor of Loweswater is held of the king in chief by service of a twentieth part of a knight's fee, as of the barony of Egremont.' With Anthony seated at Cockermouth and holding the park at Cockermouth and the whole of the forest of Derwentfells, Balnes might lose its role as a hunting seat, and its forest might have been managed with Derwentfells.

#### **The fifteenth Century – the earls of Northumberland.**

The Lucy heiress, Maud, was married again in 1384 to Henry Percy, first earl of Northumberland and, having no children, she settled her estates on him and died in 1398. The Percy seat was at Alwick, making Cockermouth itself less important and 'Loweswater' just a property, except that the consecration and dedication of a new chapel, with bells, in 1403 and the raising of its status to a parochial chapelry would imply some attention from the new lordship. Otherwise the change in status is indicated by the fact that before 1437, and possibly well before as a Lucy manor, the 'park at Balnes' had been let to tenants.<sup>25</sup>

Surviving accounts begin in 1437.<sup>26</sup> These have not been accessed for this study, which relies on the published work of Angus Winchester and JMW Bean, based on that material. In 1437 the manor was yielding less income than some years previously. Income from tenants of what

was once Balnes totalled £28 15s 7d, which might be compared with the value of £31 2s 6d in 1309.<sup>27</sup> This decline is worse than it seems because the 1437 figure includes an additional £8 for the 'park at Balnes', and £3 10s for the 'herbage of Buckness', discussed below.<sup>28</sup> However, the income to the major freeholder, St Bees Priory, is not visible and it is perhaps notable that in 1437 a second fulling mill, for treating woollen cloth, was to be established on Mosedale Beck, probably identified with Bargate at the extremity of the priory's Shepegate and upstream of the corn mill.<sup>29</sup> In 1439 the tenants of Loweswater paid 28s for their suit at the fulling mill.<sup>30</sup> A 'Tenters' close suggests that the first early mill was below the corn mill on Mosedale Beck, possibly re-using the same leat.

Sour Milk Gill in Loweswater, descending into Buttermere Lake, was the division between Byrkness and Buttermere Scales, or Green Lussack. Byrkness was the lord's demesne, containing the manor from Sour Milk Gill to Brandreth. It had been separated well before 1437, when its grazing was leased as the 'herbage of Buckness'. This land and forest of Gatesgarth, in Derwentfells, contained the mountainside around the head of Buttermere, and as disafforestation progressed, these lands referred to as the Forest of Gatescarth and Bryknes in 1520 may have provided the residual hunting.<sup>31</sup> Derwentfells had a forester in 1502, at which time the grazing was let to the Hudson's of Gatesgarth.<sup>32</sup> In 1578, after ownership of Byrkness in Loweswater had been lost, Gatesgarth was the only forest in Derwentfells.<sup>33</sup>

Green Lussack ran northwards from Sour Milk Gill to Scales Beck, and was the

joint customary property of stint-holders from Loweswater. Angus Winchester notes it in 1453 and states that the huts on it had much older origins, probably connected with the fourteenth-century iron forges.<sup>34</sup>

#### **Henry VIII and the reformation of Loweswater**

When Henry VIII came to the throne in 1509, the boundary of the 'Loweswater' manor remained as it had been set out in 1230, except for the annexation of part of Mosser. However, it had been managed with the Honour of Cockermouth since 1323, and in 1509 it was a subdivision of extensive lands of the earls of Northumberland. Before the accession of Henry VII in 1485, those lands had spent twenty years of the fifteenth century in crown due to the attainders of the Lancastrian Percies. There followed a period of good relations with the crown until the sixth earl, Henry Percy, inherited in 1527. He had become betrothed, briefly, to Anne Boleyn in 1523 and his story is well known. In 1531 he gave his lands into the custody of the crown, expecting his heirs to receive them. On the sixth earl's death in 1537 his Catholic brother and heir was already attainted for participation in the Pilgrimage of Grace. Henry VIII and Edward VI disposed of some property before the remaining estates were restored to the seventh earl in 1549. The sale of Loweswater and Thackthwaite to Richard Robynson in 1545 caused further changes from the manor created in 1230.

#### **Richard Robynson**

From reading his will of 1549, Richard Robynson, priest, came from a Loweswater family of Robynsons at yeoman level.<sup>35</sup> He

<sup>20</sup> *Calendar of Close Rolls*, Edward II: Volume 1, 1307-1313, March 1309

<sup>21</sup> Winchester, *Landscape and Society*, p.63

<sup>22</sup> Winchester, *John Denton*, pp.54-6

<sup>23</sup> John Magrath, *The Queen's College, Vol. 1 1341-1646*, 1821, p.2.

<sup>24</sup> IPM 39 Ed III, no.17, Thomas de Lucy

<sup>25</sup> Bean, *Percy Estates*, p.27

<sup>26</sup> CASW/DLec./29

<sup>27</sup> Winchester, *Landscape and Society*, p.48, for 1437

<sup>28</sup> Bean, *Percy Estates*, p.27.

<sup>29</sup> Winchester, *Landscape and Society*, p.118 for the date.

<sup>30</sup> Bouch, *Prelates and People*, p.29.

<sup>31</sup> CASW/DLec./299T, f.270, Derwentfells court, 18 Apr, 11 Hen VIII.

<sup>32</sup> CASW/DLec./299T, Derwentfells court, 19 Apr. 17 Hen VII

<sup>33</sup> W H Liddell, 'The private forests of SW Cumberland', *TCWAAS*, 1966, pp.106-130. Provides a study of the forests of Coupland and Derwentfells.

<sup>34</sup> Winchester, *Language of Landscape*, pp.160-4

<sup>35</sup> TNA/prob/11/32; a transcription can be read at <http://derwentfells.com/pdfs/sources/WillOfRichardRobynsonClerk1549.pdf>

appears as Richard Robynson, chaplain, in the manor court records of Derwentfells and Loweswater several times. On 28 February 1502/3 he complained of a debt owed by John Person of Caldbeck [a tenement in Brackenthwaite], and on 31 Jan 1503/4 he was one of several people falsely complained about by a notorious squatter/felon 'Jak' Newcom of Rannerdale.<sup>36</sup>

Robynson's fine, for vociferous disagreement with an inquisition of the Loweswater manor court in 1508, suggests that he was farming there, which would fit with being at the Kirkstile and being a chaplain for St Bees at Loweswater.<sup>37</sup> Assuming he was ordained at age 25, his dates would be circa 1477-1549.

Robynson became priest of the chantry in the parish church of Brigham. The chanter was a church appointment, but the patron was the earl of Northumberland.<sup>38</sup> The priest had the income from a half of the manor of Brigham, endowed in 1329 and worth £7 6s 8d in 1535, when Robynson was the priest. In 1532 he was forcibly ejected, and orders on behalf of the King for his reinstatement were unsuccessful. This led to a case in 1533 in the church courts for his dismissal, based on his non-observance of the charter requirements to lead a monk-like existence there in prayer. The earl of Northumberland had instigated these actions, and Robynson's retention of the position involved the support of Thomas Cromwell. Robynson was by now well connected. It is not known when Robynson obtained the position of chantry priest, but from 1516 the manor court recorded an absentee free tenant, 'the

chaplain of the Chantry of Brighame' who 'says he ought not [owe suit] because he holds in free alms'.<sup>39</sup> The holder claimed that position required no secular service to the earl of Northumberland. The conclusion must be that Robynson became disaffected with the earls of Northumberland and became the king's man, through Cromwell. Robynson, unlike the Percies, supported or became content with the Reformation and benefitted from it.

#### Robynson's reconstruction of Loweswater 1545-9

Robynson's position of support of and favour from Henry VIII lasted longer than Cromwell's head. For in 1545 he was permitted to purchase Henry Percy's manors of Loweswater and Thackthwaite from the Crown, plus the chantry of Brigham, for £190. The low price reflected Robynson's more valuable arrears of payments, including a life annuity, due from his tenure of the chantry of Brigham.<sup>40</sup>

Separately, in July 1549, the protectors of young Edward VI made a free grant to Lord Grey of Wilton, for his services in defeating the Scots at Musselbrough during the 'rough wooing' of Mary. This grant included the Percy manor of Brackenthwaite and the Kirkstile in Loweswater which latter had belonged to the now-dissolved Priory of St Bees.<sup>41</sup> Those properties were swiftly sold on to Richard Robynson in August, as probably pre-arranged. Robynson also purchased the remaining lease of the dissolved priory's rights associated with the chapel, from the widow of Thomas Legh.<sup>42</sup>

In the scramble to acquire position and property through this time, the

niceties of retaining the integrity of ancient manors was of little importance. Nor was consistency maintained, in that Byrkness was granted twice, both to Robynson and Lord Grey. So that when the remaining lands of the Percies were restored to the seventh earl in 1549, it was the documentation of the pre-sold or granted properties which determined the new boundaries between the lands of Robynson and the lands of the earl of Northumberland. There was no love lost between those parties.

The most significant change between Balnes and the manors which Robynson held was that Mockerkin and Sosgill were not included in his purchase, either by design or error. Mockerkin Tarn was specifically included, and it may be that Robynson and the scribes thought that the manor of Loweswater included Mockerkin and Sosgill, which legally it did not. Mockerkin and Sosgill were a quarter of the parochial chapelry and remained so. We have no record of the process, but the earl of Northumberland took the inhabitants of Mockerkin and Sosgill as his customary tenants, and as an expedient included the place within the Manor of Derwentfells, a part of that manor which did not lie between the Cocker and the Derwent. However, the extensive common or waste was proper to Loweswater and Thackthwaite and was retained by Robynson. So that the Earl's tenants now had rights on Loweswater common, for which small payments were made, while not being tenants of the manor of Loweswater. It is notable that when Robynson first enclosed part of Loweswater Holme for his use, before 1549, it was the distant tenants of the Percies in Mockerkin and Sosgill who threw down the fences, not Robynson's tenants of Loweswater.<sup>43</sup>

The second loss by Robynson to the Earl was the half of Crummock which had been in the manor of Balnes in 1230. This

moiety was not mentioned in the documents, and in any case would have been of no practical importance since 1323, when the two halves were in the same ownership. All that remained was that the lake still comprised two moieties when fully in Derwentfells, and curiously it was in the township of Buttermere. When the manor was ridden in 1576, the boundary of Loweswater/Thackthwaite was taken as the western shores of Crummock and Buttermere, both lakes now being in Derwentfells and the township of Buttermere.<sup>44</sup>

That boundary riding also confirmed that Byrkness, which Robynson purchased twice, remained in the manor of Loweswater, though by the eighteenth century it had moved by some unrecorded process from the Parish of St Bees and the Township of Loweswater to the Parish of Brigham, which took the tithes, and the Township of Buttermere.

That same boundary riding of 1576 also included the land between Crabtreebeck and Whittern Gill, which had long been annexed from Mosser. Though it took until the nineteenth century for the men of Mosser to be legally excluded.

#### Memories of Balnes.

The name of Balnes for the manor ceased to appear in records after the de Multons had become de Lucies and had gained the undivided honour of Cockermonth in 1323. Thereafter, Loweswater replaced Balnes where necessary. By the fifteenth Century Balnes became associated with the old park, now let to tenants. The last important occurrence was in the indenture of sale out of crown to Richard Robynson in 1545, where all sense of Balnes as a manor had gone. Loweswater as a manor did not legally equate to Balnes, possibly causing a failure to include Mockerkin and Sosgill – except for the tarn.

In Loweswater the sale included 'twenty one messuages or tenements with

<sup>36</sup> CASW/DLec./299T, Derwentfells court, 31 Jan and 28 Feb, 18 Hen VII, 1502/3

<sup>37</sup> CASW/DLec./299T, f.194, Loweswater court, 19 Sep 24 Hen VII, 1508

<sup>38</sup> M A Clark, 'Richard Robynson, clerk, chantry priest of Brigham', TCWAAS, 1988, pp.97-105. Provides a full account of the case and Robynson's interests, but Clark's assessment of Robynson is challenged in *Journal 60*.

<sup>39</sup> CASW/DLec./299T, Five Towns court, 20 Oct 7 Hen VIII, 1516

<sup>40</sup> CASW/D/WM11/160/1, Grant to Richard Robynson, 1545; D/WM11/254/12, partial translation.

<sup>41</sup> CASW/DWM/160/10, Inspeximus of grant to Lord Grey, 1549; <http://derwentfells.com/pdfs/journal/Journal6Orev.pdf>, for an account of the Priory's monastic lands in Loweswater

<sup>42</sup> <http://derwentfells.com/pdfs/sources/WilliOfRichardRobynsonClerk1549.pdf>

<sup>43</sup>

<http://derwentfells.com/pdfs/journal/Journal6Orev.pdf>, p.37

<sup>44</sup> CASW/DWM/11/172.

their appurtenances 305 acres of land one park called Balnes one close Granelopoke [Greenlussock] one tenement called Bucknes one parcel of land called Buttermyre[dubs] ... all that our wood underwood land and hereditaments called Honested Howe otherwise called Balnesparkke containing by estimation twelve acres more or less with the appurtenances ... also the soil ground'.<sup>45</sup>

It is unclear whether the 'park called Balnes' and 'Honested Howe otherwise called Balnesparkke' are two descriptions of the same close or area, but the latter will be twelve customary acres or twenty statute acres. The plan on page 28 illustrates the closes in the park area as surveyed for John Marshall's manor map in 1819.<sup>46</sup> It can be seen that there is one ring-fenced group of closes, of approximately 25 statute acres, with names all derived from Balnes. This could be considered as a long-standing subdivision of the park which retained the name in 1545, and which held memories of the name for a further 300 years.

#### Conclusion

The manor of Balnes, created in 1230, was not a natural or organically grown assemblage of land and people but was formed by a need to separate out a manor of a certain annual value from the barony of Egremont. The hamlets chosen appear to have been selected to have an affinity with the honour of Cockermouth, and the holders' interests there. They were chosen from hamlets in the parish of St Bees, which excluded Mosser, which had been taken by Brigham Parish. The selection of Mockerkin and Sosgill, presumably to make up the value, resulted in the curious shape of the parochial chapelry, which remains today in Loweswater's civil and Church of England Parishes. Mosser became a detached part of the barony of Egremont, which left it weak and vulnerable to encroachment from Balnes.

<sup>45</sup> CASW/DWM/11/254/12, partial translation of grant to Richard Robynson, 1545.

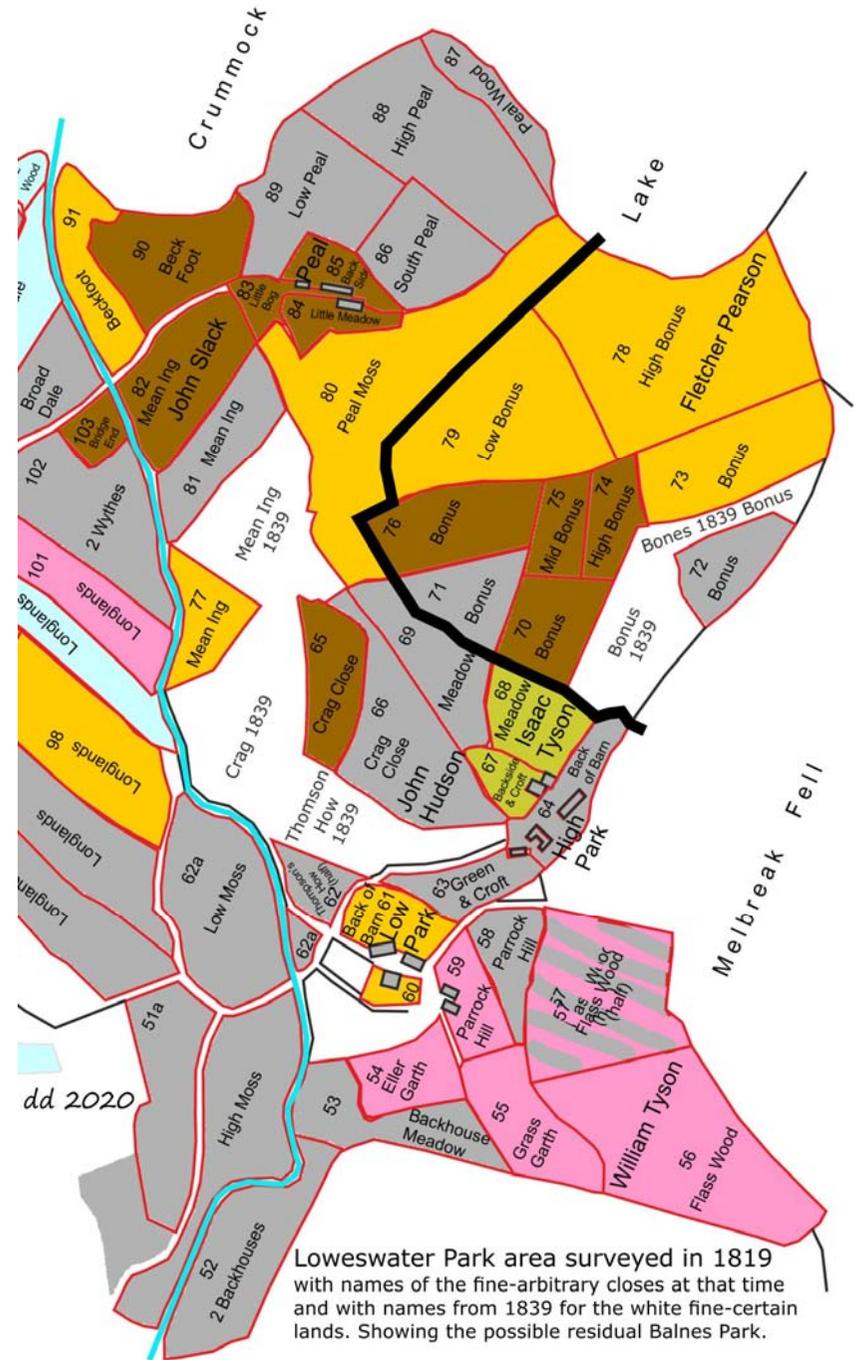
The manor named Balnes was the creation of the de Multons before they, as de Lucies, obtained the honour of Cockermouth. Balnes benefitted in status and growth in the thirteenth Century, through being the focus of their attention, not least for hunting. After 1323, when Anthony de Lucy gained Cockermouth, and during the tenure of the earls of Northumberland, the status of the manor fell, but it is likely that the monastic influence from St Bees grew.

The key figure through the Reformation and Dissolution, when both manor and monastic property was held by Henry VIII, was Richard Robynson. He was clearly intent on re-creating a manor and parish which was as independent as possible from the earls of Northumberland. The changes in the manors and property he held, compared with Balnes, were a result of the way property was sold out of crown, and involved primarily the loss of Mockerkin and Sosgill and half of Crummock, both to the earls of Northumberland.

The distinction between the manor Balnes and the manor of Loweswater is important, and they should not be conflated. For a time in the twelfth Century Loweswater was a subinfeudated manor within the barony of Egremont. The manor formed in 1230, which became recorded as Balnes in the 1290s, was a division of the barony, no longer part of it and of equal rank, if not size. It was similar to the Five Towns and Derwentfells. The manor of Loweswater was a component part of Balnes, which also contained the subinfeudated manor of Thackthwaite in the thirteenth Century.

It was only after the de Lucies had gained the prize of the undivided honour of Cockermouth, and the castle, that Balnes became less important and became known as the manor of Loweswater.

<sup>46</sup> CASW/DWM/1/105, plan of manor of Loweswater, 1819; CASW/DWM/11/249/15 valuation of customary lands, 1819.



Loweswater Park area surveyed in 1819 with names of the fine-arbitrary closes at that time and with names from 1839 for the white fine-certain lands. Showing the possible residual Balnes Park.