

ART. XI.—*Borwick Hall*. By J. RAWLINSON FORD,  
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*Read at Borwick Hall, September 11th, 1924.*

I do not intend to take up your time by repeating details which are contained in the *Transactions* of our Society or in such standard works as the Victoria County History, but as the history of the house before you is intimately bound up with a family who owned it for nearly 300 years, I must say a few words about the manor and the Bindloss family.

Bereuic is mentioned in Domesday as one of the seven manors grouped together with Beetham. It was taxable at two ploughlands, afterwards reduced to one. The first recorded owners of the manor are members of a family who took their name from the place.

The earliest owner of the manor so far as I have been able to ascertain is Patrick de Berewick named in a Perambulation Roll of 1228. He or another Patrick was a witness to a confirmation charter by William de Lancaster of the vill of Yealand, the date of which depends upon whether the grantor was the second or third of that name. If he was the second William de Lancaster, the date must be before 1184 in which year he died. But Colonel Parker in a paper in the *Transactions* of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, vol. xxi. suggests that the grantor was William de Lancaster III, in which case the date would be somewhere between 1220 when his father died and 1246 when he himself died. Several other members of the de Berewick family appear from time to time in deeds and public records as holding the manor until 1499 when Thomas Whittington died holding it of the king by the tenth part of a knight's fee. His brother John was his

heir, and he died in 1511 and was succeeded by his son Thomas who was then 18 years of age, and died in 1517, leaving two daughters, Margaret (then two years old) and Elizabeth. Margaret the elder had seisin of her moiety of the manor in 1532. She married George Redmayne by whom she had two sons, Thomas and Marmaduke. In 1548 she and her husband made a settlement of the manor in favour of their two sons, and in 1565 George Redmayne died.

Robert Bindloss of Kendal in 1567 acquired a moiety of the manor from Thomas and Marmaduke Redmayne, and the Hall must have been included, for in 1574 he claimed common of pasture on Warton Crag in respect of a capital messuage called Borwick Hall and certain demesne lands there. In 1590 he acquired the other moiety of the manor. He was a clothier (as we should now call him) of Kendal and probably a son of Christopher Bindloss, who was one of the twelve capital burgesses named in the charter of Elizabeth and was Alderman (i.e. chief magistrate) of Kendal in 1579 and died in 1581. The family seem to have been originally of Helsington, as they had land there and in or about 1575 "Mr. Robert Byndlose esquier" was admitted a Foreigner Freeman of the Borough of Kendal. At one time he owned the manor of Mansergh which he sold shortly after he acquired Borwick Hall. He made a settlement of Borwick and much other property in 1587, whereby after the deaths of his wife Agnes and himself Borwick was to devolve on his second son Christopher and Millicent his wife, and failing their male issue, upon Robert his elder son and heir, who was 37 years old at the death of his father in 1595. Christopher died in 1600 leaving a daughter only and his elder brother Robert succeeded. Robert's son Francis died in his father's lifetime leaving a son Robert who succeeded to the estate on the death of his grandfather about 1630. He was

created a baronet in 1641 and died in 1688 leaving an only child Cecilia who had married William Standish of Standish. Their son Ralph Standish went out in the rebellion of 1715 but the estate was saved from forfeiture on proof that it belonged to his mother Cecilia. He died in 1752, and his son having predeceased him, his daughter, another Cecilia, succeeded him and married William Towneley of Towneley. A third Cecilia carried the estate to the Stricklands of Sizergh, and in 1854 Walter Charles Strickland sold the Hall and the demesne lands to George Marton of Capernwray.

This rapid sketch of the owners of this house will, I hope, enable you the better to understand the history of the building itself. Looking at the south front it will be at once observed that the central part consists of a tower. This is undoubtedly the oldest part of the house and is really a pele tower like Arnside and Hazelslack, and such as now form parts of Levens and Sizergh; and before describing it I should like to speculate a little as to its date and the reason for its being erected here in this place. And first as to the situation. The pele towers were, as we know, simply dwellinghouses, built so as to be capable of defence. The enemies most to be feared were the Scots, who raided Cumberland and Westmorland and the northern part of Lancashire continually during the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries and the border country down to the Union with Scotland. The two main ways by which raids were made to this district were probably by the sea coast and by road over Shap Fell. Arnside and Hazelslack Towers would afford places of refuge in case of a coast-raid and Sizergh and Levens would be useful when the Scots came over Shap Fell. But if the raiders managed to get past these towers, which they could do by keeping along the east side of the Kent valley or down the Lune valley to Docker and then across to the Keer valley, there would be no place of

defence till Lancaster was reached; and it may therefore be that the Lord of Borwick finding that he could not sufficiently defend himself and his tenants in his wooden mansion house, even with its stockade, built himself a house of stone. The highroad along the east side of the Kent valley lies a little to the west of the house and leads from Lancaster through Nether Kellet to Burton. It is a very old road but not much now used since the turnpike road was made further to the west. It is, I believe, on or near the site of the Roman road from Lancaster to the fort near Kendal. There is also an old packhorse track leading from Old Capernwray, which must have passed quite close to the house.

But this tower is clearly not the first dwelling place of the Lords of Borwick, and some earlier building must have been their home, perhaps a wooden one on this site. My suggestion (which I make with great diffidence) is that the first manorial lords had their dwelling on the top of the hill opposite to you. It is just such a site as was so often chosen for that purpose, and as you have seen on previous excursions at Hornby overlooking the Lune, and at Halton, Melling, Arkholme and Kirkby Lonsdale. The northern end has been artificially levelled and the motte, if there was one, cut down. There are no remains of an encircling rampart, nor (as far as I have been able to see on a casual survey) of a ditch below; but the west, north and east sides have, I think, been artificially scarped. This hill is prolonged to the south by a ridge, at the end of which is another small hill on which are now the remains of a building which was the dove-cote, (as Lucas says in his MS. History of Warton) but which seems to me to stand on an artificially raised mound. If I am right, then there was a wooden dwellinghouse or castle surrounded by a stockade on the summit of this hill and there the de Borwick family dwelt till the demand for greater convenience and comfort made a more commodious stone

residence necessary. I suggest therefore that the site was in the first place determined by the hill which afforded a convenient spot for the erection of a stronghold, and that when a stone building became desirable the ground below with a stream of water running through it formed a suitable position.\*

The age of the present tower must be a matter of guesswork. There is no documentary evidence, and little to be gathered from the structure and appearance of the building itself. None of the original windows remain. The newel stair has disappeared and the entrance doorway has been altered. Moreover the outside is covered with rough-cast and the structure of the walling cannot be examined. But so far as one can see there is nothing but its size to distinguish it from Arnside tower, and it may only have been built when the urgent need for defence was passing away and be merely a dwellinghouse of a type which persisted so late in the north of England.

The towers of Arnside, Dallam and Kentmere are dated by Mr. Curwen in his "Castles and Towers of Cumberland and Westmorland" as circa 1375, but I suggest that Borwick may be earlier, and may have been built shortly after the Great Raid in 1322, when no doubt

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\* Since writing this paper I have had the advantage of examining this hill with the help of Mr. John F. Curwen, the leading authority on the Castles and Towers of Cumberland and Westmorland, and we came to the conclusion that there was little doubt about its being the site of a motte and bailey dwelling. The axis of the hill runs from north-east to south-west, and its length is a little over 150 yards. At the south extremity stand the ruins of the dovecote which has evidently been built upon an artificial mound of older date where the Lords of Borwick may have erected their wooden stronghold and which must then have been a good deal higher than it is now. It commands the whole country to the south from east to west. At the north-east end of the hill is a level area now a little lower in height than the other end, but which has obviously been much cut down for modern purposes. There may have stood a larger wooden building which would be used as a residence in peaceful times, and it might also serve as a grange or store-house. Each of these buildings was no doubt surrounded by its own strong wooden palisade and perhaps a ditch, and both of them with the bailey between them defended by another palisade erected round the top of the scarp of the hill so as to enclose them both.

the wooden home of the Lords of Borwick was burned by the Scots on their way to Lancaster. If their house was destroyed, a new one would be erected as soon as possible, and stone would be used rather than wood.

The longer axis of the tower is from north to south, unlike most of such towers, the long axis of which is usually from east to west. The external measurement from north to south is 36 ft., from east to west 28 ft. and the walls at the base average 6 feet in thickness. The basement is not vaulted as at Hazelslack and Levens. The original entrance seems to have been at the north end of the east side, directly into the basement from whence probably a newel stair at the north-east corner gave access to the three rooms above, but no trace of this stair remains. On the other hand if the original entrance was into the basement, it seems curious that this room should not have been vaulted, so as to obviate the danger of the tower being burned when the enemy forced the entrance door; and it seems to me that either the basement must have been originally vaulted or, if not, the original entrance must have been into the room above reached by an outer stair which could be easily removed when an attack was threatened. I incline to the belief that the basement was originally vaulted, and that the vaulting was removed when the north wing was built. But there has been so much alteration when the later additions were made that it is impossible to speak with any certainty about the original arrangements. The room on the first floor was till the recent restoration of the house fitted up as a chapel and was no doubt used for that purpose, after the death in 1708 of the widow of the last Sir Robert Bindloss, by their daughter Cecilia who had probably become a Roman Catholic on her marriage to Wm. Standish. There was a wooden table which stood in a recess in the west wall of this room, on the top of which there was a small sunken space to hold the altar

stone. A doorway in the east wall of this room led into two small rooms in the east wing which were known as the Priest's rooms, in the floor of one of which was a trap door giving access to an empty space about four feet high between that floor and the ceiling of the room below. This was usually pointed out as a priest's hiding place, but this is not at all likely, as the penal laws against Roman Catholic Priests were not enforced during the period when the adjoining room may have been used as a chapel. The two rooms above the chapel have no special interest. The roof is not flat, but slightly hipped and is covered with Westmorland slates. The windows to the south are of course of later date than the tower itself, and may have been inserted when the north wing was built.

The next part of the house in point of date is the north wing. This is of the 16th century and was erected, I suggest, by George Redmayne who married Margaret, the daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Whittington who died in 1517. The Redmaynes seem to have been well-to-do people and as Margaret had seisin in 1532 I suggest that the north wing was built sometime between that year and 1548 when a settlement of the estates was made. It is not easy to define the original use of the rooms in this wing, as so much alteration has taken place, but the large room on the ground floor may have been the hall, with the buttery and pantry beyond. In one of the rooms above it is said that Charles II. slept, on his way to the battle of Worcester, his army being encamped on Barterholme, a ridge of glacial deposit rising out of the level ground between here and Warton.

The narrow east wing follows next. In the *Victoria History* 1550 is given as the approximate date of the north and east wings. With much hesitation I suggest that the east wing was erected by Robert Bindloss as soon as he acquired the house in 1567 and that it is

therefore about 25 years later in date than the north wing. There is little to distinguish it outwardly from that wing, but it has been pointed out to me that there are certain mason marks to be found on the stone-work which are not to be found in the north wing. These are no doubt slender grounds on which to found my suggestion and I must leave it to others to decide. The lintel of the fireplace in the Justice Room which has a mason mark identical with those in the east wing was formerly in that wing.

It is worth noting that there is no access to the second and third floors of the tower except by means of the staircase which forms part of and was no doubt built at the same time as the west wing in 1595. It would seem therefore that the original newel stair in the tower was not removed till this wing was erected.

The most important part of the house is the west wing, which was undoubtedly built by the first Robert Bindloss and finished in 1595, the year of his death. It consists of a great hall on the ground floor with two smaller rooms opening from it at the west end. The one to the south may have been used as a small dining-room and was at the time of the sale to Mr. Marton in 1854 panelled with oak, which he removed. The other room to the north may have been the Justice room. The lintel stone over the fireplace in the hall is evidently a restoration. The panelling is original. There is a good oak table 13 ft. 6 in. long, probably contemporary with the hall. Above is a fine room used as a library, 37ft. 6 in. long by 23 ft. wide (exclusive of the bay over the porch) which formerly had a beautiful plaster ceiling. There are two rooms opening out of it at the west end corresponding to those below. Above again is a long attic, at the west end of which is a small room or closet with original oak panelling which has been called Lord Clarendon's room, the tradition being that he stayed at Borwick and there wrote





OVERMANTEL FROM WOODWARD BORWICK HALL, 1595-1600.

part of his History of the Rebellion, but the story is without foundation. At the top of the stairs is a stone slab supported on pillars and bearing the inscription "Alixander Brinsmead Mason 1595." Probably he was the architect of this wing.

The arms over the entrance porch are modern and are those of Marton and Dallas impaled, and were no doubt placed there by Mr. George Marton who bought the house.

There were formerly in the house two very fine carved oak mantelpieces which it is believed were removed to Standish Hall by William Standish who married Cecilia Bindloss, though this can only have been done after the death in 1688 of her father Sir Robert Bindloss. When Standish Hall was recently dismantled they were removed and sold to America. It seems therefore desirable to give some record of them, and Mrs. Fuller Maitland has kindly shewn me photographs of them (which are here reproduced) from which I have taken the description of the arms displayed on them.

One of these mantelpieces bears the arms of Queen Elizabeth with the lion and Tudor dragon as supporters, but without any date, and the other bears the arms of James I., and is dated 1613. I think that the first was probably erected by Christopher Bindloss, who married Millicent Dalton and who possessed Borwick after the death of his father in 1595 and until his own death in 1600, since the arms on the right hand or sinister panel are those of Bindloss impaled with Dalton. The Queen's arms are on the left hand or dexter panel. The right hand panel has the arms of Bindloss in the dexter half viz:—Quarterly, per fesse indented or and gules, on a bend azure a cinquefoil between 2 martlets of the first, and, on the sinister half are those of Dalton viz:—Quarterly 1st and 4th, azure a lion rampant gardant between 8 crosslets argent, for Dalton; 2nd and 3rd, sable 3 bars argent, for Hoghton of Park Hall. It is not known in

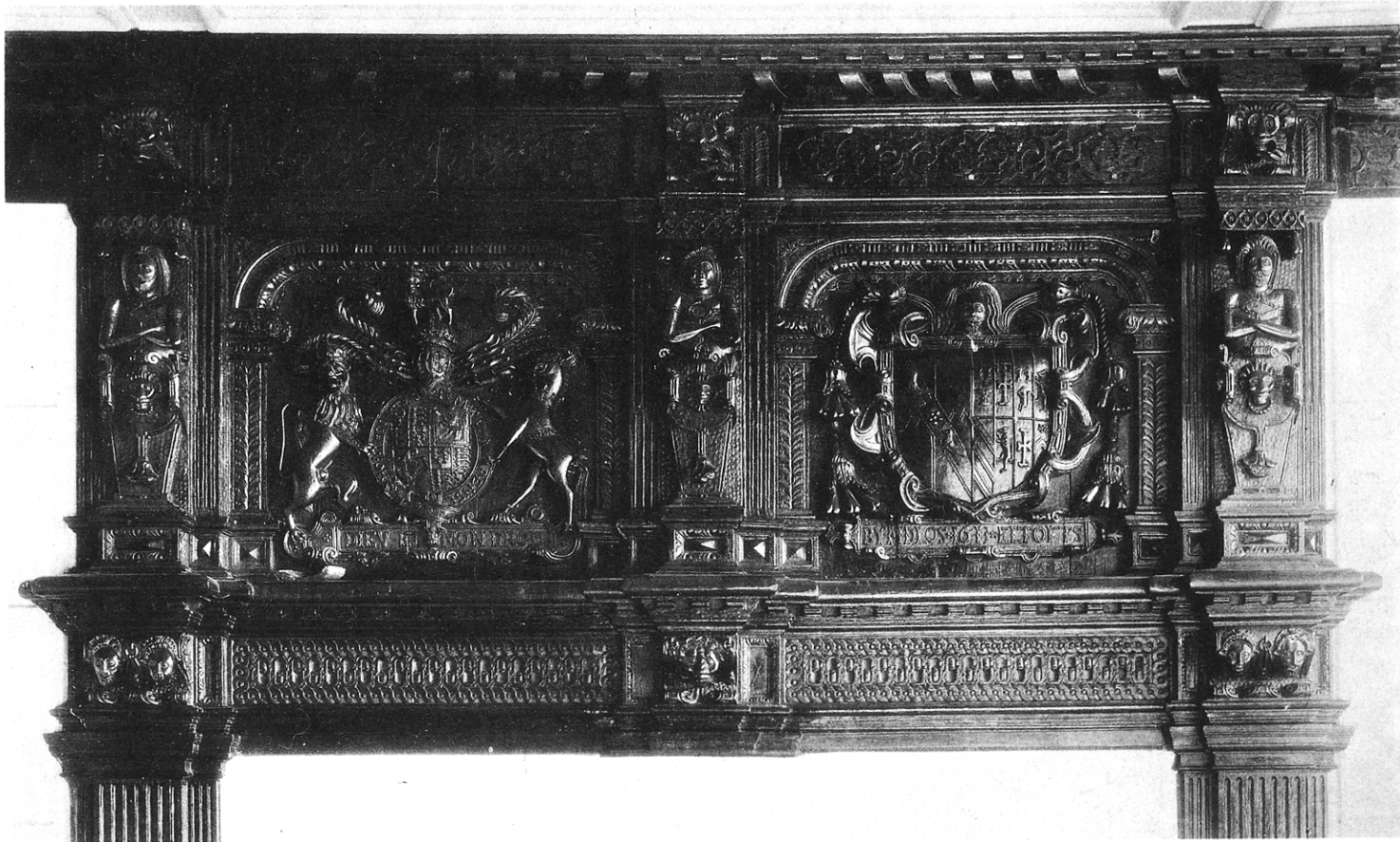
which room this mantelpiece stood, but I suggest it was in the room on the first floor of the west wing now used as a drawing-room and which opens out of the large room now the library on that floor.

The other mantelpiece has on the right-hand panel the arms of Bindloss impaled with those of his wife Mary Eltofte of Farnhill (an old manor house in Craven between Kildwick and Skipton) which are as follows:—Quarterly, 1st, argent 3 chess rooks sable for Eltofte; 2nd, argent a cross moline sable with a label of three points for Copley; 3rd, argent three squirrels sejant gules cracking nuts or for Martheley; 4th, argent a lion rampant sable charged with a mullet argent for Stapleton; 5th, bendy argent and azure for St. Philibert; 6th, gules a lion rampant argent charged with a fleur de lys azure for Aldeburgh; 7th, ermine a cross moline sable for Goddard; 8th, argent a chevron sable, in the dexter chief a cinquefoil sable for Rempston.

This mantelpiece was probably in the dining-room which opens out of the great hall, as Mrs. Fuller Maitland tells me that a piece of the panelling close to the ceiling in the photograph is exactly like a piece left in the door of this room.

It is interesting to note here that Mr. Charles Clay, the Librarian of the House of Lords, recently shewed me the arms of Eltofte blazoned on vellum by Glover, Somerset Herald, on the occasion of his Visitation of Yorkshire in 1585. They correspond precisely with those on the mantelpiece. Mr. Clay tells me that quarters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 were acquired through an Eltofte marrying a co-heiress of Thomas Stapleton of Quarmby. The Copley quarter came by marriage of William Eltofte with Margery, daughter of John de Copley by his wife Isabel who was the heiress of John de Farnhill, and it was by this marriage that the Eltoftes acquired Farnhill.

Projecting from the east side of the north wing are



OVERMANTEL FROM BORWICK HALL, 1600.  
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the remains of some building which is said to have been a chapel, but it has been so mutilated and altered that it is impossible to say with any kind of certainty what it has been. If it was a chapel, there is no evidence of its use as such since the time when the first Robert Bindloss bought the house in 1567, and it may have been converted to other uses before his time. For my part I believe the building was used for quite different purposes and that it was erected for kitchen offices at the same time as the east wing.

The balustrade in the front of the house was formerly along the terrace across the stream on the slope of the hill, and was presumably erected in its present position by Mr. Marton, in place of a wooden palisade shewn in an illustration annexed to the sale particulars in 1854.

The gatehouse as we see it was built by the third Robert Bindloss in 1650, as appears by a panel over the gateway with his initials and that of his wife Rebecca and the date. The *V. C. History* says that there was a tradition that there was an older gatehouse built by the first Robert Bindloss, and that the stone now in the wall of the building to the south containing the initials R.B. and A.B. (for his wife Agnes) and the date 1590 was formerly set over it. The long range of buildings to the south is said to have been built to accommodate the packhorses and men on their way to London, the horses being stalled below and the men sleeping above. There was till recently a wide stone staircase in the space between the two buildings which gave access to the first floor of each, as may be seen by the doorways on either side now blocked up. These stairs were open to the sky and not as now covered by a temporary roof.

A house of this kind usually has a ghost, and there used to be a tradition that the long attic was haunted by the ghost of a young girl who was shut up there. Once, several years ago when I was going over the house, I

asked the caretaker if he had ever seen it, and he said no, and added that he did not believe in such things "for," said he, "if they had gone to the one place they wouldn't want to come back, and if they had gone to t'other place, they wouldn't be let."

Finally to those of us who have known this house in the days of its desolation when the plaster was dropping from the ceilings, the water was pouring in through the roof, and the floors and joists rotting, it is an inexpressible joy that it should have been so wonderfully preserved and restored with so much taste and reticence, taking its place once more amongst the treasure-houses of England; and we can but offer to its owners our tribute of gratitude and respect for their work.