

ART. V.—*Gerard Lowther's House, Penrith (Two Lions Inn): Its purchase by him, Descent, and Social Life associated with its subsequent Owners.* By GEORGE WATSON.

*Read at Carlisle, 20th June, 1900.*

IN Vol. IV. of the *Transactions* of this Society there is a paper, the joint production of those two eminent and ever-to-be-lamented antiquaries, the late Mr. Wm. Jackson and Dr. M. Taylor, on the "Two Lions Inn," or Gerard Lowther's House in Penrith.

Without recapitulating the leading facts adduced in that valuable paper, I now offer some additional data as supplemental to it, which I have been enabled to do; having been favoured by the then owner of the house, Mr. Jas. Dixon, with the perusal of the ancient deeds of the house and the lands originally appurtenant thereto.

Mr. Jackson, after detailing much interesting historical data of Gerard Lowther's lineage and career, gives an extended pedigree of the persons whose arms are placed in the panels of the plaster rib-work.

The following is my description of the ceiling, explaining the accompanying drawing of the heraldry of the shields:—

The group begins with Henry Lord Clifford, the shepherd lord of Wordsworth's beautiful poem, "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle," and his wife Florence Pudsey, from whom, through their daughter Dorothy, married to Hugh Lowther of the second shield, descended the eight Lowthers, who with John Lowther (shield No. 3), the father of Hugh Lowther, make the nine represented on the ceiling, who, however, comprise only four generations. Christopher Lowther, son and heir of Richard of

the fourth shield, alone represents the fourth generation. This Christopher, who died 1617, married again, as Sir Christopher Lowther, the widow of Robert Burdett of Bramcote, Mary, daughter of the Rev. Thomas Wilson, D.D., Dean of Durham and Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth. Mrs. Burdett was mother of Sir Thomas Burdett, and brought with her to Lowther three daughters—Elizabeth, Lettice, and Bridget. Elizabeth, while at Lowther, was married February 9th, 1613, to Mr. Anthony Hutton of Hutton Hall, Penrith, when she became for 60 years a power in the parish of Penrith. On the death of Sir Christopher in 1617, Lady Mary, and her daughters Lettice and Bridget, came to reside with her daughter and son-in-law at Hutton Hall, Penrith, from where Lettice was married at St. Andrew's Parish Church, June 9th, 1623, to Richard Skelton, Esq., of Armathwaite. Bridget was married to William Whelpdale, of Penrith; her six children were baptised at Penrith Church, where also she was buried November 28, 1636. Lady Mary Lowther died June 1, 1622, and was buried in St. Andrew's choir of Penrith Church, the burial place of the Penrith Huttons. All these events are recorded in the Penrith Registers.

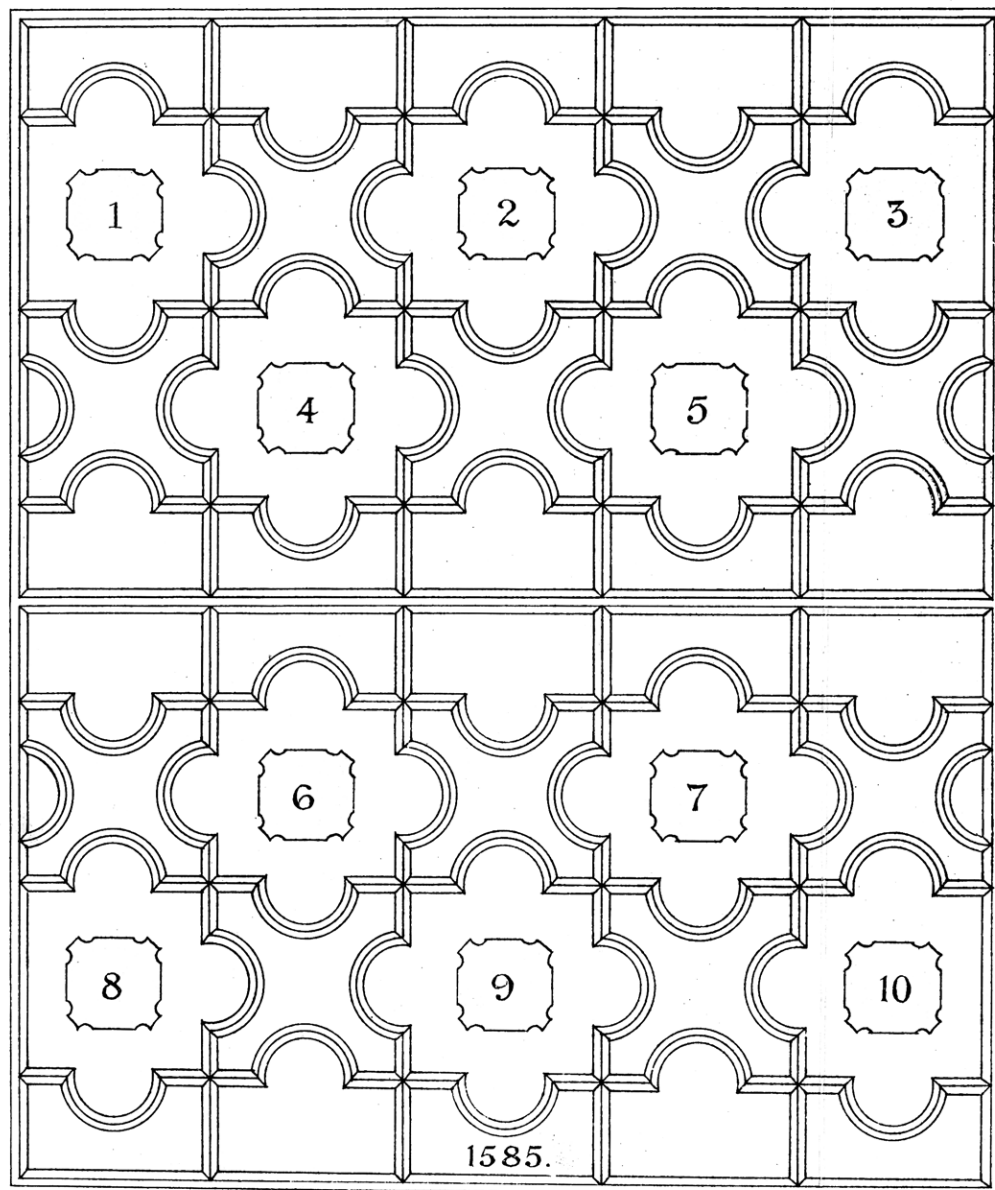
To return to the story of Gerard Lowther's house. A curious bungle has been made by the workman in modelling the shields, by which the heraldry is strangely falsified. Instead of reversing the design in the mould in which the shield was to be cast he modelled it direct, face upwards, with the result that when the shield came out of the mould the design was reversed, and the heraldry perverted, the wife's family arms "impaling" (*i.e.*, coming before) the husband's, instead of the husband's coming first; also, by reversing the "charges," changing their proper significance.

It will be observed in the accompanying drawing of Gerard Lowther's ceiling that in the tenth panel the arms of Lowther and Musgrave have the same charges—six

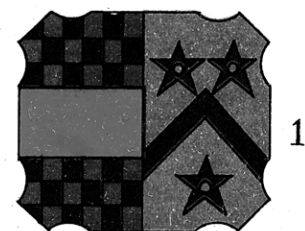
annulets (three, two, and one), but of different colours. This is accounted for by Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, in her famous journal, in which she gives a history of her ancestors, the Vetriponts and Cliffords. After stating that John Vetripont, in the time of King Henry III., sold off considerable portions of the land of his barony, thereby founding some of the now ancient families of Westmorland, she adds that "the seal of arms of the Vetriponts is still extant in wax, the impression being a man on horseback bearing a shield charged with annulets, these being the proper arms of the family of Vetriponts," adding that "the greatest of the gentry in Westmorland who obtained their lands from John Vetripont have their coat of arms charged with the like annulets, though differing in one colour from another." The Vetripont arms were the same as those of Lowther, except that the Vetripont annulets were red, those of Lowther being black.

On the ceiling of the parlour is the date "1585," which Mr. Jackson pronounced to be the date at which the house was built by Gerard Lowther, whom he described at the commencement of his paper as "the builder and original inhabitant of the dwelling." The ancient deeds, however, tell a different tale. I find by the earliest deed, dated August 21st, 1584, that Gerard Lowther then purchased the house called Newhall, situate in Dockray, from Mr. Thomas Brisbie, the ornamented ceiling of the parlour, bearing the date 1585, being put up the year following; and that of the bedroom over it, containing the arms of Gerard Lowther and his wife, with the letters "G. L. L.," for Gerard and Lucy Lowther, in the next year (1586). Thus the lawyer's deeds prove the futility of assuming that the date of a plaster ceiling, without historical evidence to confirm it, is the date of the erection of the house. It may be suggested that the house as it came into Gerard Lowther's hands was an insignificant one, and that he rebuilt it. The reasons against this are,

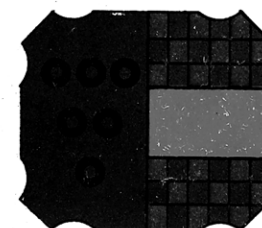
# FIRE PLACE.



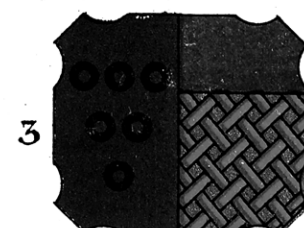
— PLASTER CEILING OF PARLOUR GERARD LOWTHER'S HOUSE TWO LIONS INN PENRITH —  
CEILING 19 FT. BY 16 FT.



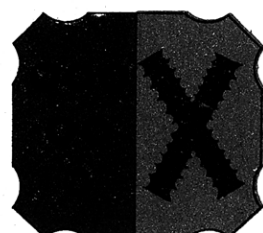
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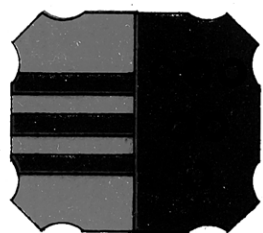
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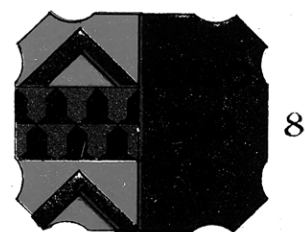
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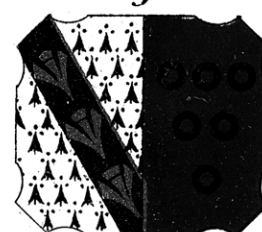
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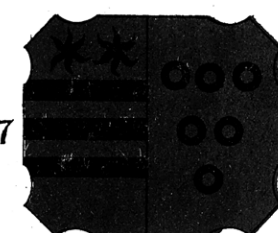
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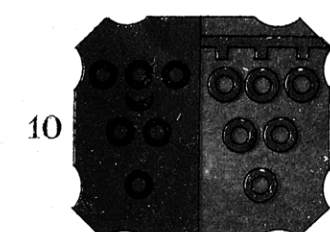
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7



10

No. of  
Shield.

1. Henry 10th Lord Clifford the "Shepherd Lord" of Wordsworth's beautiful poem = Florence Pudsey.
2. Sir Hugh Lowther son of John Lowther of shield 3 = Dorothy daughter of Henry Lord Clifford of shield 1.
3. Sir John Lowther father of Sir Hugh of shield 2 = Lucy Curwen.
4. Richard Lowther son and heir of Sir Hugh of shield 2 = Frances Middleton.
5. Gerard Lowther second son of Sir Hugh of shield 2 = Lucy Dudley 2nd daur of Thos Dudley and widow of Albany Fetherston.
6. John Richmond = Margaret Lowther daur of Hugh Lowther of 2nd shield.
7. Thomas Wybergh = Ann Lowther daur of Hugh Lowther of 2nd shield.
8. Henry Goodyer = Frances Lowther daur of Hugh Lowther of 2nd shield.
9. Thomas Carleton = Barbara Lowther daur of Hugh Lowther of 2nd shield.
10. Christopher Lowther 2nd son and heir of Richard Lowther of 4th shield = Eleanor Musgrave, daur of Sir Wm Musgrave.

COATS OF ARMS ON CEILING restored to their proper BLAZONRY.

first, it does not appear possible that a house of that size and importance could have been erected and finished, to the elaborate ceilings, between August 21st and any part of the year following; and, secondly, that if Gerard erected the house, he would not have been likely to have adopted its former name of Newhall.

In the deed of conveyance from Thomas Brisbie to Gerard Lowther, the latter describes himself as of "Huttonione." That this is Hutton John is proved by the Greystoke Parish Registers of that time, when, in entries of the Hutton John family, the place-name is spelled "Huttonion" or "Huttonione." When, in 1584, Gerard Lowther describes himself as of Hutton John, that ancient house was in the possession of Thomas Hoton, the last in the male line of his race. He was childless, and his two sisters, Catherine and Mary, were his co-heirs. The former had married Edmond Dudley, of Yanwath, nephew of Gerard's wife, Lucy Dudley. The residence of Gerard and his wife at Hutton John may therefore be accounted for either as being guests of Thomas Hoton, or as temporary tenants of the house. Thomas Hoton's sister Mary, in 1564, had married Andrew Huddleston, whose son Joseph, in 1615, had Hutton John transferred to him.

By the deed of conveyance of Newhall, dated August 21st, 1584, Thomas Brisbie, of Penrith, gentleman, for the sum of two hundred and four score pounds sold to Gerard Lowther, Esquire, of Huttonione:—

A tenement and Garths called Newhall, together with land in Tyne Syke (Dog Beck), an acre of land at the south end of the town, five roods in Atkinson wife close, three roods at the Mylne Cross, half an acre upon Potter walke, and two tenements with five acres and three roods of land.

The apparently small price paid for the property is accounted for by the greater value of money at that time, it being six or seven times the value of money at the present day.

Mr. Thomas Brisbie, or Bresby, the original owner of Newhall, was of an armorial family. His pedigree and coat of arms are given in Foster's book of *Visitation Pedigrees*, and the early Penrith Registers abound with Brisby entries. Thomas Brisbie's daughter Mabel was mother of William Robinson, the wealthy grocer of London City, who so munificently endowed the charities of Penrith in the seventeenth century.

Of Gerard Lowther, the purchaser of the ancient house of the Brisbies, there are only two entries in the Penrith Registers, but they are of special interest. They stand:—

1596, December 30, Mrs. Lucie, wife of Gerard Lowther, Esquire, buried.

1597, July 14, at night, Mr. Gerard Lowther, Esquire, was buried in the south church door.

This unique burial was no doubt in the south porch of the original church mentioned in Bishop Nicolson's visitation to Penrith, A.D. 1704, while as yet the original church had not been ruthlessly demolished. This record of burial at night is the only reference in the Penrith Registers to the picturesque and sensational custom of burial by torchlight, much favoured by the gentry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Gerard Lowther died only two months before the outbreak of the terrible visitation of plague in Penrith, or, more correctly speaking, before it was declared in the Registers:—"Here began the plague, God's punishment in Penrith," for the death rates of the preceding year show that the mortality in Penrith was 200 per cent. over ordinary times, and when Gerard and his wife were buried the death-rate was as serious as it was for the next six months after the foregoing announcement of the beginning of the pestilence was made.

The next following deed shows that 29 years after the death of Gerard the elder, the house was sold by a Gerard Lowther to Mrs. Mary Grame or Graham. The deed is

dated 1626, and by it "Gerard Lowther of Dublin in the realm of Ireland Esquire, sells to Mary Grame his house called Newhall in Dockray, and a house and garden at Dockray Yeate (Gate) for the sum of two hundred and twenty pounds." According to the Lowther visitation pedigree, this Gerard Lowther was son of Sir Richard Lowther, elder brother of Gerard the elder, and styles him Sir Gerard Lowther, Chief Justice of Common Pleas in Ireland. From Sir Richard Lowther's monument in Lowther Church (as given by Hutchinson), we learn that "Sir Richard kept plentiful hospitality for 57 years, died 27th January, 1607, aged 77." This puts his birth A.D. 1530, and makes him 67 years of age when his brother Gerard died.

The Lowther visitation pedigree gives him eight sons and seven daughters, and makes Gerard, the younger, his fourth son. Mr. William Jackson assumes that Gerard, the younger, inherited Newhall from his Uncle Gerard, the elder. This may have been the case, for it is recorded in the Calendar of State papers of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, edited by Robert Lemon, Esq., that in 1580 there was "a Petition from Richard Lowther, Gerard Lowther the elder, and Gerard Lowther the younger for the lease of certain lands in Westmorland promised to them by the Earl of Leicester for their services." Now, as Gerard, the younger, was legally entitled to join his father and uncle in petitioning the Queen, he must have reached man's estate, and have been at least 21 years old, putting his birth in 1559, and making him 38 years old when his Uncle Gerard (the elder) died, and 67 years old when he sold the house in 1626. It is certain, however, that the "Gerard Lowther, of Dublin, in the realm of Ireland," who sold Newhall to Mrs. Grame, and was afterwards Chief Justice of Common Pleas in Ireland, was another Gerard Lowther altogether.

This is proved by dates kindly obtained for me at the Public Record Office, Dublin, by Sir Edmund T. Bewley,

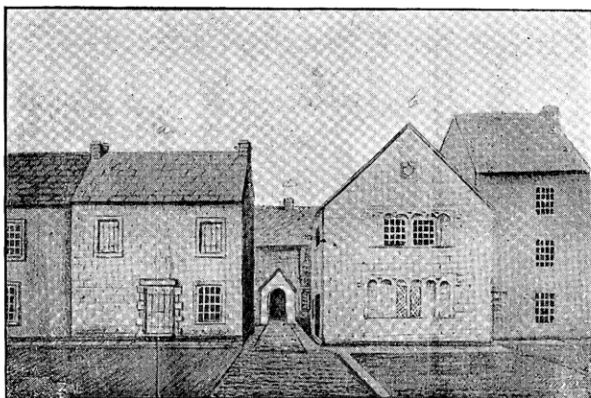
LL.D., late a Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland, which show that the Gerard Lowther who subsequently became Justice, first took legal office in Ireland in 1622, was appointed Chief Justice in 1634, died and was buried in Dublin in 1660. If, therefore, he was Gerard, the son of Richard, and nephew of Gerard the elder, as given in Lowther pedigrees, he would at death be 101 years old. This, I submit, makes it certain that the Lowther pedigrees are in error in tracing the descent from Richard Lowther to the Chief Justice of Ireland.

Gerard Lowther's house in Penrith having passed from a Gerard Lowther, of Dublin, in Ireland (whoever he was by parentage), to Mrs. Grame or Graham, was about 1656-1659 sold by her heirs to Mr. Thomas Langhorne, of Penrith, at which time the name had been changed to Dockray Hall.

In a deed of 1792, the property is described as "A capital mansion house or messuage and tenement called and known by the name of Newhall, in a street in Penrith called Dockray, and now commonly called Dockray Hall." It must have been at a much later time still when the house, having become known as the Two Lions Inn, the name of Dockray Hall was adopted by the owners of the ancient mansion of the Whelpdales, now the Gloucester Arms Inn, still called Dockray Hall.

The sign of the Two Lions, Mr. Jackson says, "owes its origin to two shields bearing the Dudley arms (a lion rampant), which once existed on the outside of the building." This is somewhat vague, since it does not appear likely that Gerard Lowther would put his wife's family arms in two places on the outside of the house. The Dudley arms are "a lion rampant, with a forked tail"—*i.e.*, the tail branches off at the middle of its length into two, but the modeller or carver of the Dudley lions in the house has forked the tail close up to the lion's back, making it appear as two distinct tails; and the popular eye, seeing two tails, has concluded there must

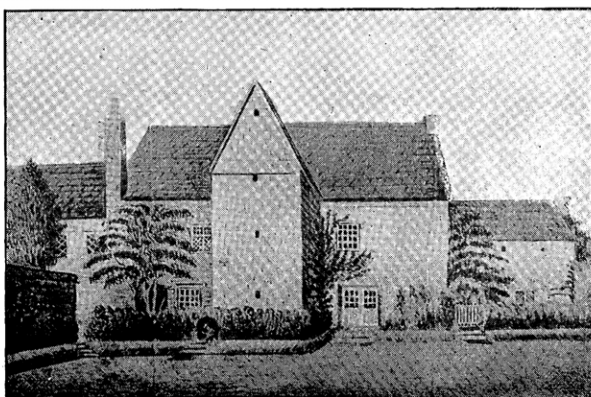




ENTRANCE FROM GREAT DOCKWRAY.



BACK OR GARDEN ELEVATION.



GERARD LOWTHER'S HOUSE, PENRITH.

(TO FACE P. 100.)

be two lions side by side. Hence, I suggest, originated the "Two Lions."

Mr. Thomas Langhorne, the purchaser of the house from Mrs. Graham's heirs, was at that time the representative of an ancient citizen family of Penrith. The marriage of his parents is recorded in the Penrith Parish Registers thus:—"1574, Oct. 17, Thomas Langhorne and Elizabeth Steinson (Stevenson) married." This Thomas Langhorne is unmistakably identified with the house at the north end of Little Dockray, belonging to Mr. Pears, by a sculptured stone tablet formerly on the front of the house, but now to be seen on the side of the house in the yard. The tablet is an interesting relic of Elizabethan Penrith.

In the centre of it is a device known as a "merchant's mark," showing that the owner was a member of a Merchants' Guild.

Merchants who were members of Guilds had their trade-marks, now known as ancient "merchants' marks," and these marks are to be met with not only in England and Scotland, but in France and Switzerland, all bearing a general resemblance, having as a central feature something like the Arabic numeral 4. Two such marks still exist in Penrith; one of these may be seen on the back wall of No. 2, King Street, in the yard, to which position it was doubtless transferred when the front portion of the premises was rebuilt.

The initials accompanying the mark are "R. B." in well-formed Elizabethan characters, and the date 1563. An entry in the Parish Registers, recording the burial in 1577 of "Robert Bartram Merchant," makes pretty clear the name of the owner of the mark. The same initials and date may be seen upon the quaint old bay window, originally part of the same premises, fronting to the churchyard.\* The other merchant mark is that of

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\* See these *Transactions*, vol xii., p. 141.

Thomas Langhorne, before mentioned, and here illustrated :—



On the sides are the initials of Thomas and Elizabeth Langhorn and the date 1586, and below is sculptured a pair of clothier's shears, showing that Thomas Langhorn was a merchant clothier. He had four sons and five daughters. His eldest son, John, died young ; his second son, Thomas, born 1578, was the purchaser of Gerard Lowther's house from the heirs of Mrs. Graham. He bought the property in two parts—the first moiety in 1656 from William Winter, son of Mrs. Graham's daughter Cecile, and the second moiety in 1659 from Thomas and Mungo Bewley.

The second moiety (£160) was repayment of money lent to Mrs. Grame when she purchased the house by George Bewley, of Caldbeck, whose son William married Mrs. Grame's daughter Elizabeth. On Mrs. Grame's death the money was collectable by Thomas and Mungo Bewley, heirs of George Bewley who had lent the money. Mrs. Grame's daughter Elizabeth, being left a widow, married Mr. Thomas Langhorne, who, by discharging the debt, became sole owner of Newhall.

At this time Penrith was under the strict Puritan rule of Cromwell's Parliament, and in the churchwardens' book the name of Thomas Langhorn is introduced as enforcing these rules. The entry stands thus:—"Received of Thomas Langhorn Esq Justice of the peace for this County, as penalties inflicted upon several offenders to be distributed to the poor." The offences were:—Sabbath breaking, 10; swearing, 10; drunkenness, 3; tippling, 1. The fines vary from 1s. to 2s. 6d., and the offenders comprise all sorts and conditions of men. Some leading men of the town appear in the list, as William Whelpdale, 1s. for swearing; Mr. Roger Sleddel, for Sabbath breaking, 1s. Five swearers from neighbouring parishes were probably "dropped upon" on market days. Consequently, under Puritan rule, the market-day people had to mind their "P.'s and Q.'s" when they came into Penrith. The ladies did not escape. One offender, Ann, the wife of William Davidson, had to pay 1s. for swearing. Now a shilling was then no trifle, for a skilled mechanic's wages for a day was a shilling, and a labourer's eightpence. Therefore, if Ann's husband was a mechanic, she would begin to think when a whole day's wages went that swearing was likely to become an expensive luxury.

Another new duty would devolve upon Justice Langhorn. He would have to marry people. The Parliament had abolished marriages in churches and constituted them civil contracts, to be entered into before a Justice of the Peace. The effect of this change is seen in the Parish Registers, in which for the last seven years of Puritan rule not a single marriage entry is to be found. It is, therefore, pretty certain that during these years the hymeneal altar was transferred from St. Andrew's Church to Justice Langhorn's house in Little Dockray, and subsequently to Gerard Lowther's house, Newhall, where the nuptial knots would be tied under the heraldic ceiling displaying the great marriage alliances of the ancient Lowthers.