

ART. VII.—*The origins and early pedigree of the Lowther family.* By the Rev. C. M. LOWTHER BOUCH.

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THE first scientific pedigree of the Lowther family was compiled by F. W. Ragg and printed in these *Transactions*;¹ though based on the Lowther muniments its results are disappointing and puzzling. Ragg begins his pedigree with a Geoffrey de Lowther, father of the first Sir Hugh, who only left his son land worth one third of 2d. As can be seen from the pedigree at p. 168 of his article, Ragg found evidence of the existence of many others of the name, but was unable to fit them into a pedigree. There is nothing to suggest that any of these men were people of any substance; they held no land in chief of the lords of the fee, nor owned the advowson: indeed they look like small tenant farmers. Yet the family took its name from the place, were de Lowthers. Further, the first Sir Hugh held important offices under the Crown—but in the time of Edward I the picture of the village lad making good does not fit in, except perhaps in the Church.

The object of the first part of this paper, then, is to offer a tentative solution of these problems. Ragg's paper was almost wholly based upon the Lowther muniments; other records give a rather different impression. There was, for instance, a Sir Gervase de Lowther who held "a knight's service of King Henry III, 1217" (*Collins Peerage*, Bridge's ed., v 696, quoting Dugdale's *Monasticon* iii 46); he also occurs as a witness to a charter now at

¹ CW2 xvi 108-68.

Lowther (CW2 xvi 135) and to one at Sizergh of the time of King John. A generation later there was another of the same name who, as archdeacon of Carlisle c. 1228-38, occurs frequently in local records (CW2 xi 95). Contemporary with him was a Sir Thomas de Lowther who occurs in two unprinted Lowther charters, in one of which his sale of eight acres of land in Lowther is mentioned (*L.O.* 25 and 16); he also witnesses a charter of about 1244 (CW2 xii 349-50).

In the theory advanced in the present paper this Thomas holds a key place, because at that time there was one of this name who married Beatrix, daughter of William de Apelthwayt, lord of Alwardby in West Cumberland (CW2 xvi 168, pedigree, and xxi 161), before 1234-5 (CW2 vii 222-3). It seems clear that he settled there and founded a family that survived till towards the end of the middle ages (CW2 xiv 84); he occurs in the Crosthwaite neighbourhood, where his wife's family also owned land, as a witness to several charters, in one of which he is called knight (*Charters of Fountains Abbey*, ed. W. T. Lancaster, *passim*). Now we come to the crux of the matter: can he be identified with the Sir Thomas de Lowther who was noticed above as selling land in Lowther? I believe that he can, and further that in this identification some of the problems mentioned above can be solved.

It is suggested that in the individuals named above—Sir Gervase, the archdeacon and Sir Thomas—we have the original main Lowther line, people of knightly rank, who were the family of the place. The history of this branch of the family has never been investigated. According to the addition made in 1275 to the *Chronicon Cumbriae*, "Uchtred, son of Liulf, was enfeoffed by Alan, son of Waldeve, with the vill of Aylewardby which Thomas de Lowther and Peter de Dayncurt now hold" (CW2 xxxii 37), but the heirs of these two also held the

“ hamlet of Crosseby ” of the manor of Derwentwater in 1303 (CW2 iv 293). Now this is clearly the Crosby, there described as Little Crosby, which with Appelthwaite, Langrigg and Brigham, was given by Waldeve aforesaid to Dolfin, son of Aylward (CW2 xxxii 36). Further proof of this is given by Beatrice de Lowther’s gift of her part of the rectory of Brigham to Isabel, countess of Albemarle in 40 Henry III (Denton 36); but Denton also states that “ Ailward his (i.e. Dolfin’s) father seated himself at Ailwardby, naming the place after his own name.” Several problems arise: one, where was the Little Crosby in question? It is venturesome to disagree with so great an authority as T. H. B. Graham, who identified it with Cross Canonby (CW2 xxxii 36), but this latter place was retained by the lords of Allerdale, passing in due course from the Lucy to the Percy family (Nicolson & Burn ij 158), hence it is difficult to see how it can have been held of the manor of Derwentwater. I suggest that our Crosby is more likely to have been somewhere in the Crosthwaite (Keswick) neighbourhood. Another difficulty is the apparently contradictory statements of the *Chronicon* and of Denton; on the whole it seems probable that the latter is correct.

The later history of this branch of the family still awaits a proper investigation. Ragg (*loc. cit.*, pedigree at p. 168) gives a descent to a man living in 3 Edward III—they all bear the name Thomas. One result of the recognition of the importance of this branch of the family is that in constructing any pedigree they have to be taken into account. It is now probable that most of the Thomases that occur, including the man who was justice of the King’s Bench in 5 Edward III (Collins, *op. cit.* v 396), belong to that branch. It may be worth noting that the Porters of Allerby, who married their heiress, quartered the undifferenced arms of Lowther; they also quartered the shield of a junior branch of the Thornboroughs, but in

this case duly differenced the coat. May we draw the inference that this was because the All'erby Lowthers had themselves used these undifferenced arms? If so, it is further evidence that they were, and by the use of this coat claimed to be, the senior branch of the family.

We must now consider the early pedigree of the present Lowther family. If the theory advanced above is correct, they represent a junior branch of the original knightly family of the name. It is now possible to take the pedigree further back than Ragg could do: in a De Banco Roll (roll 21 Easter 5 Edward I M 31) there is a record of an action which Hugh de Lowther brought against John, parson of Lowther, for a message in Lowther which Robert, son of Hamon, grandfather of the said Hugh, had granted to Gervais de Lowther. Then, in a Fine of 1202, concerning land in Lowther, reference is made to land there belonging to Hamon, son of Dolfin (*Yorkshire Fines*, Surtees Society xciv 61). Thus we can now take the pedigree four generations beyond the first Hugh de Lowther. The name Dolfin, though its bearer cannot be identified with any of the famous men so named, is interesting as suggesting that the family were of English and not of Norman ancestry. The reference to Gervase de Lowther is also of interest, but we have no sure evidence of the relationship of these worthies to the knights mentioned above. It is clear, however, that Hugh de Lowther I had kinsmen of some social standing and was not the friendless peasant suggested by Ragg's article.

From this point the pedigree as set out by Ragg is quite clear, and so need not detain us, until we come to the parentage of Sir Robert Lowther (c. 1365-1430). Most of the pedigrees make him son of Hugh IV and Matilda Tilliol, married in 1338; Ragg, however noticing the difficulty of dates (Sir Robert is a generation after his alleged parents' marriage) and that in Sir

Richard Lowther's book, a Preston shield took the place of a Tilliol one, suggested here a lost Hugh who died in his father's life-time.² But Ragg was unaware that Sir Daniel Fleming and Collins insert here a Sir John Lowther as father to Sir Robert. Further, an entry in the papal registers of 5 May 1361 (" Hugh de Lowther, the younger, and his brother Peter, legitimate sons of Hugh de Lowther, for a benefice apiece with a cure of souls when they shall be twenty years old ") proves definitely that the heir of this generation was not a Hugh. Thus there seems little, if any, doubt that the John, son of Hugh de Lowther, who was M.P. for Westmorland 1377-80, was the eldest son of Hugh IV and the father of Sir Robert. The cause of the confusion in the pedigree at this time seems to be due to both Hugh IV and his son John having died *c.* 1380, leaving Robert as a minor to succeed.

All the pedigrees agree that there were three Hughs between Sir Robert and Sir John, *n.c.* 1488. There is no doubt that Sir Robert's eldest son Hugh was born in 1395 or earlier, married ante 1412 and still alive in 1448; but was he, as has been assumed, the Hugh who died in 1475 leaving a son aged forty (*n. c.* 1435) and a grandson, also Hugh, aged fourteen? If he was, then who was Hugh Lowther, father of both William Lowther (appointed forester of Inglewood in 1442) and of Hugh Lowther, the younger, who was escheator in 1447? These dates suggest a man who had children at a date corresponding with the marriage of 1412, but in that case he was clearly a different person from the Hugh with a son born *c.* 1435 and a grandson born *c.* 1461. These facts, it is suggested, prove that there were four and not, as has been supposed three Hughs in these generations.

Something obviously affected the family fortunes at this time. There was no Lowther sheriff between 1455 and

² The evidence for this and all subsequent statements will be found in the pedigree section of the present article.

1516, no M.P. after 1448-9,³ and the head of the family between Sir Robert and Sir Hugh VIII was not knighted. It is strange also how Hugh VI seems to have lived at High Head. These were the years of the Wars of the Roses; the Cliffords, the Lowthers' overlords, were strong Lancastrians: this may well account for the decline in the family's fortunes. It is noticeable that when the Tudors ascended the throne, the Lowthers soon received their accustomed honours, and that Hugh VI married a daughter of the tenth Lord Clifford, the "Shepherd Lord" who suffered much in the cause of Henry VI.

At this point, which may be said to mark the second stage (Hugh I's career was the first) in the family's ascent, we will take leave of them for the present. At some future date some more details of the pedigree may be offered.

In the pedigree that follows no attempt is made to give a full account of the various individuals, but I state such facts as are needful to put them in their correct place in the family tree. A name *in italics* shows that the descent is unproved.

1. Dolfin.
2. Hamon.
3. Robert.
4. Geoffrey, witnesses a charter *c.* 1247 (*L.O.* 9); he had issue:
 5. Sir Hugh de Lowther I, knight 1291 (*CW2* xii 389), M.P. Westmorland 1299-1300, 1304-5, I.P.M. 1317; married Ivetta or Jenet ante 1286 (*CW2* xxii 308-9) by whom he had issue:
 - (i) Hugh, of whom next 6.
 - (ii) John, rector of Barton 1304, in his fifteenth year,

³ But the returns 1477-1529 are missing.

and of Simonburn ante 1321 (Halton Register i 220, ii 207).

(iii) Robert (*L.O.* 77), M.P. Appleby 1338-9.

6. Sir Hugh de Lowther II, 30 years of age at his father's I.P.M., knight ante 1316 (*L.O.* 59), sheriff of Cumberland 1325, M.P. Cumberland 1323-4 and Westmorland 1340-1; married Margaret, daughter and heiress of John de Lucy (CW2 xvi 125), and had issue:

(i) Hugh, of whom next 7.

(ii) Robert, aged 50 in 1362, aged 60 in 1366; married Eleanor, daughter and co-heiress of Sir John de Halton, and had issue: Joan, who married Henry de Engayne of Clifton in 1348.

(iii) Thomas, married Margaret, sister of the above Eleanor; died s.p. ante 1345. (Note: These Lowthers had a kinsman, Sir William Lowther, in 1384: *Northumberland County History* x 393-6).

7. Sir Hugh de Lowther III, knight ante 1336 (*L.O.* 76), sheriff of Cumberland 1351 and 1354, M.P. Westmorland 1357-8 and 1359-60, ob. 1367 (CW2 xvi 128); married Margaret, daughter and heiress of William de Whale, who died c. 44 Edward III (CW2 ii 151-4); they had issue:

(i) Hugh, of whom next 8.

(ii) John, (iii) Robert and (iv) Richard, all named in the entail of 1338 (CW2 xvi 149-50).

(v) Thomas, of Askam 1361 (A.S. 15).

(i) Joan, married Christopher de Lancaster (CW2 x 464 and *Cumb. & Westm. Visitation Pedigrees*, 1615 and 1666, ed. J. Foster, p. 75).

(ii) Alice, married Gilbert de Curwen (CW2 xiv 371).

8. Sir Hugh de Lowther IV, forty years of age and more in 44 Edward III (CW2 ii 152), knight 1363 (*L.O.* 94), M.P. Westmorland 1371-3, J.P. Dec. 1382 (Cal. of Patent Rolls 1381-5), probably died soon after; married Matilda,

daughter of Sir Peter de Tilliol, in 1338 (CW2 xvi 146), and had issue:

- (i) John, of whom next 9.
- (ii) Hugh and (iii) Peter (Cal. of Papal Petitions, 5 May 1361).
- (iv) Adam, 1363 (*L.O.* 94).
- (v) Robert (*L.B.* 11).
- (vi) William (*L.B.* 11), knight, M.P. Cumberland 1392-3 and 1403, sheriff 1400 and 1406.
- (vii) Geoffrey (*L.B.* 11), king's esquire 1415 (Cal. of Close Rolls Henry V 1413-9, 206), lieutenant of the constable of Dover Castle (*ibid.*, 1422-9, 105), married Katherine (*Y.* 26).

9. Sir John de Lowther, knight, M.P. Westmorland 1377 as John, son of Hugh de Lowther (Nicolson & Burn, ii 560) and 1378-80, tutor to Thomas de Clifford 1379 (*L.O.* 104); married Maud (Sir Daniel Fleming's MS. pedigree at Lowther) or Margaret (*Collins Peerage*, Bridges ed., v 697), who married secondly Sir Robert de Kendall (*ibid.*; according to the Lowther shields in Sir Richard Lowther's book (at Lowther) she was a Preston. They had issue:

- (i) Robert, of whom next 10.
- (ii) *William*, M.P. Appleby 1420-1.

10. Sir Robert Lowther, no certain evidence of parentage but cf. Sir Richard Lowther's book, Wythop charters (at Lowther) nos. 2, 8 and 29; knight 1411 (*Sh.* 23a), M.P. Cumberland 1391, 1393-4, 1403-4, 1406, 1414-5, 1417-8, sheriff 1407 and 1418, ob. 1430, will (CW2 xvi 158-60); married Margaret, daughter of William Strickland, later bishop of Carlisle, and widow of John de Derwentwater (*ibid.* 129-30 and pedigree at p. 168), will (*ibid.* 160-2). They had issue:

- (i) Hugh, of whom next 11.
- (ii) William, papal dispensation to hold a living after reaching his sixteenth year (Cal. of Papal Letters, 4

May 1412, 1404-15 p. 244), constable of Rose Castle. (CW2. xxxix 111-4). From him descended the Lowthers of Rose and Great Orton (*ibid.* and CW2 xl 60-98).

(iii) Geoffrey and (iv) Thomas (CW2 xvi 156).

(v) John, papal dispensation, in his eighteenth year, of knightly birth and studying at Oxford, to hold a benefice in his 22nd year, 2 Oct. 1426 (Cal. of Papal Letters 1417-31 p. 445).

(vi) Robert (CW2 xvi 156).

(i) Anne, married Sir Thomas Curwen (Visit. of Yorkshire, ed. Foster, 8).

(ii) Isabel, married Sir William Leigh in 1424 (Cal. of Close Rolls 1435-41, 295-6).

(iii) Mary, married Sir James Pickering of Winderwath (Visit. of Yorks. 630).

11. Hugh Lowther V, escheator, as Hugh Lowther the heir, 6 Nov. 1424 (Cal. of Fine Rolls, 1422-30, 85); order to take fealty of Hugh Lowther, son and heir of Robert Lowther, Kt., 22 May 1430 (Cal. of Charter Rolls 1422-30 p. 326); M.P. Cumberland 1425-6, 1430-1, 1448-9, sheriff 1439; married Mary, ante 1412 (CW2 xvi 153-5); was she a Restwold? Cf. their son's residence at High Head, their great-grandson in Wiltshire (CW2 xii 22-6). They had issue:

(i) Hugh, of whom next 12.

(ii) William, forester of the upper ward of Inglewood Forest 1 June 1442 (Cal. of Pat. Rolls 1441-6 p. 75).

(iii) Robert, (iv) Richard and (i) Isabel (CW2 xvi 161).

12. Hugh Lowther VI, escheator, as Hugh Lowther the younger, 4 Nov. 1447, late escheator 4 Nov. 1448 (Cal. of Fine Rolls 1445-52 pp. 57-8); sheriff of Cumberland 1455; Hugh Lowther of Lowther of High Head Esq. late sheriff of Cumberland 27 Apr. 1463 (Cal. of Pat. Rolls 1461-7); bond of Hugh Lowther of High Head Esq. and Hugh Lowther junr. Esq. of the county of Westmorland

to Hugh Lancaster and Christopher, his son, 1466 (at Lowther); ob. 4 Aug. 1475 (I.P.M.); married a daughter of William Stapleton of Edenhall (CW2 xi 302-3). They had issue:

(i) Hugh, of whom next 13.

13. Hugh Lowther VII, son and heir, aged 40 at his father's I.P.M., ob. 17 Sep. 1475 (I.P.M.); married Mabell, daughter and heiress of William Lancaster of Hartsop in 1455 (marriage agreement in CW2 xvi 162-3); they had issue:

(i) Hugh, of whom next 14.

(ii) *James*, born 1463 (History of Parliament 1439-1509, Biographies, p. 558), M.P. Marlborough 1491, married Jane, daughter and co-heiress of William Collingbourne (*ibid.*).

(i) Joan, married John Fleming of Rydal (Memoirs of Sir Daniel Fleming 43).

14. Sir Hugh Lowther VIII, aged 14 at his father's I.P.M., knight of the Bath 17 Henry VII (Nicolson & Burn i 432), ob. 24 Apr. 1510 (*L.O.* 119, I.P.M.); married Anne, daughter of Sir Lancelot Threlkeld. They had issue:

(i) John, of whom next 15.

(ii) Lancelot, who founded a family at Sewborrans; he married Joan, daughter of Hugh Fleming, and had issue (Sir Richard Lowther's book, Wythop charters no. 32; Newton Reigny charters no. 13 and deeds of 1566 and 1613 at Lowther; Memoirs of Sir Daniel Fleming p. 48).

(iii) Robert (Sir Richard Lowther's book, Wythop charters no. 32).

(i) Mabel, married John Leigh (Nicolson & Burn ii 432).

(ii) Elizabeth, married William Lancaster in 1499 (CW2 xvi 163); her will (*L.O.* 122).

15. Sir John Lowther, aged 22 and more at his father's I.P.M.; knight ante 1514 (*L.O.* 121), sheriff 1516, 1542 and 1550; married Lucy, daughter of Sir Thomas

Curwen, in 1502 (CW2 xvi 165), will dated 3 Feb. 1552 (Surtees Society xxvi 73-5). They had issue:

(i) Hugh IX, of whom next 16.

(i) Mabel, married Christopher Dalston of Uldale (Nicolson & Burn ii 432).

16. Hugh Lowther IX, married Dorothy, only daughter of Henry, tenth Lord Clifford; contrary to Nicolson & Burn ii 432, he survived his father and was alive in 1554 (*L.O.* 134).

The references *L.O.*, *L.B.* etc. are to documents in the Lowther muniment room, and are given by leave of the Earl of Lonsdale and Viscount Lowther, to whom the author's grateful thanks are due. These documents are, of course, the private property of the Earl and are not available for public inspection.