

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *North-Country life in the 18th century, Vol. II, Cumberland and Westmorland, 1700-1830.* By Edward Hughes. 426 pp. (University of Durham Publications. Oxford University Press. 50s.)

Within a week or so of the appearance of this book the author's friends were mourning his sudden passing. That we shall have no more books from his pen is indeed a saddening thought. No one wrote in more lively style than Professor Hughes, and he had a genius for making everything he wrote interesting. Certainly this, his last book, is never dull and interest is maintained from first to last. It may be that some will complain that the book's contents do not live up to the title, and certainly there is not a great deal about Westmorland in its pages. That criticism apart, it may safely be predicted that very many will find this the most readable of books. Its emphasis is heavily on West Cumberland, and the chapters on the coal trade, shipping, farming and politics could not have been better done.

The author relied a great deal on the muniments of two well-known Cumberland families, the Senhouses of Netherhall and the Christians of Unerigg, and his use of the material is an object lesson in the art of selection.

It is no secret that for years Professor Hughes had hoped to draw on the massive muniments at Lowther, but this did not prove possible, and his book had to be written without a study of them. No doubt in the fullness of time more than one book will emerge, based on that vast collection, but meantime, Professor Hughes has given us this fascinating account of life in the 18th century, a period about which he wrote with loving understanding.

His hero was John Christian Curwen, whose career is faithfully traced here, with accounts of all the movements he was so zealous in promoting.

Of particular interest is the account of schools and colleges, drawn chiefly from the Senhouse account books, while the chapter on farming is among the best things in the book.

2. *The Howe, Applethwaite, Windermere, and its owners.* By B. L. Thompson. 16 pp. (Privately printed by Titus Wilson, Kendal.)

This is a delightfully written and produced monograph on an

interesting family, and its Lakeland home. John Wilson, who was born at The Howe in 1741, went to school at Staveley, and had a brilliant career at Peterhouse, Cambridge, was the most famous member of the family. A brilliant mathematician, he went to the Bar, going the Northern Circuit, and becoming K.C. in 1782. Four years later, when he was relaxing at Troutbeck, word was brought him that he had been appointed a judge. He died suddenly in Kendal in 1793. His portrait by Romney is in the Mayor's parlour in Kendal Town Hall.

The judge's only son became an admiral and spent much of his time at The Howe, dying nearly 80 years after his father. The Howe was then sold, and eventually it was almost entirely pulled down, and a new house, incorporating some of the materials was built on a slightly different site.

Our member, Mr Bruce Thompson, owned the estate from 1946 until 1964, and the writing of this pleasant monograph has clearly been a labour of love.

3. *John Thompson of Nether Compton, Dorset and Philadelphia, Quaker schoolmaster and merchant, and his Philadelphia descendants. (Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine, xxiii, no. 3 (1964).)*

This 20-page article may be described as a happy sequel to the melancholy finale of "Farmanby and the Thompson family" (CW₂ lv 179-190). It is a genealogical description of that which became the senior branch of the Farmanby family, indicating how they "made good" in more respects than one, through six generations.

The author, Professor D. G. Brinton Thompson, Director of the Department of History at Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., is the only male descendant in that sixth generation.

John Thompson was the son of Jonah, the most energetic and intellectual of the sons of Isaac, the last holder of Farmanby. Jonah, like his mother's father, Thomas Lawson, was a Quaker schoolmaster and minister, eager also to travel, though not on botanical quests, but as a "Gospel preacher".

Since Jonah is the connecting link between the American family and its origins in Cumberland and Westmorland, his career will be enlarged upon in this review of the paper and a few omitted details will be added. Jonah's school education ended under Thomas Reynold in Kendal. Had he abjured Quakerism, his uncle, vicar of Broadchalke, would have sent him to Oxford. Until 1727 he taught at a Quaker school in Grayrigg. While there he received his call to the Ministry. Then,

leaving the North, he proceeded on a preaching tour in the company of another minister, Samuel Bownass, throughout the eastern counties. His MS. diary, outlining this itinerary, still exists. Jonah's next post as a schoolmaster was at Yatton, Somerset, where he taught from 1728 to 1738. It was at the end of that period that the courtship referred to in Dr Brinton Thompson's paper took place. Unfortunately, its humorous aspect, authenticated from many sources, has not been included.

The Quaker maiden in this amusing romance was Mary, daughter and heiress of Samuel Beaton, yeoman, of Nether Compton, Dorset. "Seated one first day in the Minister's gallery of Sherborne Meeting House" Jonah sees Mary entering the Meeting with her parents. "Immediately it was forcibly impressed upon me that she was to be my wife." On confiding these feelings with a fellow preacher there came pithy and portentous advice — "What thou doest do quickly." So, "at earliest dawn", Jonah sets forth from Yatton on horseback on what turned out to be a race across Somerset against a Quaker merchant starting from Bristol. There must have been something very personable about the schoolmaster, because, when the merchant learnt who his rival was, and that he was far ahead on the way to Nether Compton, "he turned his horse homewards disconsolately".

The marriage took place in 1738. Mary's inheritance was eventually to provide the means for establishing a boarding-school in Nether Compton, patronized by Quakers from all over the West Country. It was conducted by Thompsons to the third generation with an originality of thought comparable to that of Thomas Lawson, spoken of "centuries ahead of his time". Before the school came into being Jonah gained wider experience. His religious tours took him to Ireland and then to America, which he visited twice (first from 1750 to 1751 and again from 1753 to 1755). In Philadelphia he taught for a while in Antony Benezet's Grammar School. On his return, with Quaker altruism, he held the post of schoolmaster at a work-house in Bristol for three years. Ill health beset the family in that city. Jonah's eldest son, Samuel, who had also been a teacher, died. This brought about a return to Nether Compton and the shaping of the new school. There Jonah died in 1780, aged 78. Ten years earlier Abel James, a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, had come to Nether Compton to recruit Jonah's second son, John, for the post of Latin master at the school where his father had taught. Leaving behind his younger brother, Thomas, ultimately to be the schoolmaster at Nether Compton, John, aged 24, set sail for Philadelphia with

Abel James in the brig "Concord". John stayed at the grammar school for seven years. By this time British troops were occupying the city. He then turned to merchandise and his grocery business thrived considerably. In 1784 he returned the compliment Abel James had paid him when making his selection of a schoolmaster, describing Jonah as "a very agreeable young man", by selecting the hand of his daughter Rebecca in marriage.

This genealogy from Jonah Thompson to John and his descendants with brief biographies and precise annotation is presented in a manner worthy of its scholarly author and of the standard of the periodical in which it is published.

While the Thompson family maintained their Quaker principles, its members had to act against the grain of national movement when war prevailed. There were periods of militancy for the first three generations to face. John James, the grandson of the first John Thompson described as an ironmaster, in the practise of his religious views is reminiscent of the moderation and level-headedness attributed to his ancestor Thomas Lawson (*vide* DNB). Denounced by the Society of Friends for manufacturing the raw material of munitions, the ironmaster protested that as Quaker president of his firm he took no profits for himself, but as an employer of mostly non-Quakers he would continue to provide them with this work.

The paper is illustrated with copies of interesting portraits and photographs. The only errors relate to the pre-American period on the first page. Farmanby was not a manor under Thompson ownership and the loss of the family lands was only very indirectly due to a royalist allegiance in the Civil War.

Irony of fate is made evident by the quotation of a letter on the third page written by the agent of the Penn family at the instance of Jonah when in Philadelphia: "He and his brother in England are grandsons and heirs at law of the late Thomas Lawson deceased, whose name you will see the last in the City List as an original purchaser of 250 acres." Jonah's application was turned down for lack of evidence. Lawson's death had ended his project of going to Philadelphia to establish a botanical garden there. Deeds in his favour were supposed to have been retained by Sir William Penn. If Isaac Thompson, instead of his futile adventure to India to avert ruin, had turned westwards, while Sir William Penn was still alive in Bristol, he might have secured those 250 acres in Pennsylvania and retained about as many in his native parish!

Incidentally, footnotes on page 180 of "Farmanby and the Thompson family" in CW2 lv require amendment: For no. 4,

instead of CW2 xxii *read* CW2 xxi. For no. 5. There should be two references instead of the one given, which has confused the two together. Instead *read* Dean & Chapter MSS. Carlisle and P.R.O. C.5 190/26. Together they cover most of the quotations in the paper.

R.D.T.

4. *Change and continuity in the Tudor North: the rise of Thomas, first Lord Wharton*. By M. E. James. 50 pp. (University of York, Borthwick papers, no. 27. 5s.)

Our member Mr Mervyn James, who is senior lecturer in history in the University of Durham, has written a fascinating account of a fascinating personality, the first Lord Wharton, one of the "new" men who came to the forefront in Henry VIII's reign. Though of ancient family, the Whartons of Wharton, Kirkby Stephen, were no more than country squires. Mr James suggests that the family's resources were limited, and compelled the members of it to seek profitable careers. Thomas Wharton was fortunate in entering the service of the Percy family; having once achieved this his abilities took him far — to the Wardenship of the West March, and to the House of Lords.

It is an interesting story, and loses nothing in the telling. In addition, Mr James has a valuable appendix on the Dacres and their followers, and another one on the Curwens and their relatives. Clearly Thomas Wharton owed a good deal to his kinship with the latter family. Another appendix shows what a rich man Wharton was at his death. His Yorkshire rental was £234 a year, his Cumberland one £102, and his Westmorland estates brought in £364.

5. *Life in Roman Britain*. By Anthony Birley. 176 pp. (Batsford. 21s.)

It is pleasant to review this very readable book, written by our member, Mr Anthony Birley, who is clearly following in the footsteps of his father, our former president, Professor Eric Birley.

The book is an excellent jumping-off ground for the ever increasing public who are interested in Roman Britain, and Mr Birley's careful list of other books is a splendid guide.

The most successful feature of the book is the wealth of illustrations. Hardly a page is passed without an interesting plate, and these are drawn from a very wide variety of sources, covering a large part of Europe. The author has achieved a

very personal link between the people of "then" and "now" and there are many amusing quotations such as that of his Arabian accountant: "I give thanks to Serapis and Good Fortune that while other men are labouring all day long cutting stones, I, as an officer, stroll about doing nothing."

In fact, from a mass of little details, ranging from accounts of the average soldier's pay and camp-life to the modern sewerage system of the town of Lincoln, and including descriptions of the lives of the rulers and their wives, he succeeds in giving a very colourful picture of the Roman occupation in Britain.

M.E.B.

6. *The ancient stones of Scotland*. By W. Douglas Simpson. 254 pp. (Robert Hale. 25s.)

In this attractively produced and modestly priced book our distinguished honorary member, Dr W. Douglas Simpson, ranges over the widest of fields. His pages cover not only the whole of a country, but the country's history from prehistoric times until the 18th century. All who are familiar with the author as speaker and writer know that he brings to his field a lucidity and conciseness which is wholly admirable. His new book is aimed to attract and interest the general reader, and without being in the least "popular", it succeeds in every way. The rich diversity of Scotland's ancient monuments is described by Dr Simpson with a delightful enthusiasm which captures the attention from the opening pages. No doubt those who enjoy this book will resolve to visit some of the monuments of which Dr Simpson writes. A rich treat is in store for them.

7. *Living history*. By Alan Sorrell. 95 pp. (B. T. Batsford Ltd. 25s.)

What were the ruined abbeys like 500 years ago? What did Housesteads look like before the Romans abandoned it? Mr Sorrell attempts to answer questions like these in his book. On facing pages he reproduces photographs of buildings as they are today, and reconstruction drawings as he imagines they were when Britain was a good deal younger. In addition, he supplies an outline history of each building so treated. It is an interesting exercise, and Mr Sorrell's drawings are full of life and spirit. We can perceive that the book will be much in demand in the teaching of older children — and we also suspect that it will have an appeal for all who are interested in the great monuments of Britain.

8. *The earliest Washingtons and their Anglo-Scottish connexions*. By George S. H. L. Washington, M.A., F.S.A. (Privately printed for the author. Cambridge, 1964.)

Our member Mr G. S. H. L. Washington has already given our Society some of the results of his labours, in *Early Westmorland M.P.s, 1258-1327* (Tract Series no. xv) and jointly with Mr Percy Hedley on *The early Washingtons of Washington, co. Durham* (CW2 lxiv). Although the present book was not published until 1964 it would seem that it was, in fact, written before the joint work with Mr Hedley (read at Penrith, 6 September 1963), for the two contain much contradictory matter.

In the book which is the subject of the present review, the author seems to have set out with the preconceived idea or hope that the early Washingtons had a female descent from the royal family of Scotland. The fact that three generations of the family of the Hirsell in Berwickshire, descended from the earls of Dunbar and thus in all probability from the royal family of Scotland, bore the Christian name of Patric, William and Walter, has led the author to look amongst the Durham families of the late 12th century for a man called Patric who could have been father of William de Wessington and grandfather of Walter de Wessington. About the middle of the 13th century, Isabel, daughter of Walter de Wessington, married Sir Marma- duke Basset of Offerton, and the manor of Offerton was settled on their issue. Therefore, Mr Washington concludes that because a Patric de Ufferton witnesses several Durham charters in the second half of the 12th century there is "strong evidence in favour of the two families' mutual identity"; they "must, in sober fact, have been one and the same".

Much of the later part of the book may be accurate, but as the original premise is false, we can have little faith in what follows.

Such methods of drawing up pedigrees are much to be deprecated and we hoped had not survived the 19th century. What is most unfortunate is that there may be some readers who will implicitly believe the printed word. Let us hope that their numbers will be few.

9. *The Hewetsons of Ravenstonedale and North Westmorland*. An original research compiled and printed by Keith Lovet Watson.

Seven years' work went into the compilation of this interesting and valuable work, and the author is to be congratulated

not only on the careful research he has carried out, but — and this is surely unique — on having printed his bulky book with his own hands. The story of how he produced 35 beautifully printed copies of his work is a remarkable one and deserving of the warmest praise.

As early as 1332 Hugh Hughtson is mentioned in a Cumberland lay subsidy roof, and in 1366 Robert Hewetson is found holding land in Newby and Sleagill in North Westmorland. Mr Watson prints a number of Hewetson wills and inventories in full and for this service alone deserves our gratitude.

The London connections of the family are interesting. Thus Richard Huetson, a London currier, was born at Deanscales in Cumberland and at the time of his death in 1658 owned land at Dean, and a century or so later John Hewetson left Ravenstone-dale and set up in business as a cornfactor in London, while Richard Hewetson, from the same village at about the same time, also migrated to London, probably as apprentice to his uncle, Henry Knewstubb.

Richard became a gold laceman and flourished greatly, laying the foundations of a substantial fortune. His nephew, Henry Hewetson of King Street, Covent Gardens, died in 1838, leaving £800,000. The *Times* said that this was the largest fortune ever made in business by a native of Westmorland, "excepting, perhaps, the late Mr Thwaites".

Mr Watson prints a number of interesting family letters, which throw a wealth of light on social conditions. Indeed, his book will interest the social historian every bit as much as the genealogist.

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