

ART. XIII. – *Newlaithes Hall, Carlisle: The evolution and extinction of a Cumbrian courtyard farm*

By BLAKE TYSON

**I**N Cumbria, farm buildings were arranged round a courtyard most commonly on farms with large acreages of arable and meadow and were either deliberately planned on freshly enclosed land or evolved by accretion as more land was bought or enclosed.<sup>1</sup> As few studies have examined how such courtyard farms actually developed in the county,<sup>2</sup> this article will explore details of a comparatively well documented example at Newlaithes Hall (NY 386 546), sadly demolished in 1958. Manuscripts in the Lawson archive at the Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle show that, in 1807, the farm comprised nearly 318 acres,<sup>3</sup> leased from the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle by the Lawsons of Brayton Hall near Aspatria. Along the north-west side of the farm, the Lawsons owned a further 121 acres of freehold land run from another courtyard farm at Morton Head (Fig. 1.). Since both farms were managed by the same estate, the way in which their land was accumulated from various sources will be considered first. Then, as few details of the buildings at Morton Head have been found, the study will focus on evidence for the development of its larger neighbour.

Newlaithes stood about a mile south-west of Carlisle cathedral, near the road to Rose Castle where the Bishops of Carlisle have lived since 1230. No doubt it was a monastic grange, allegedly built between 1423 and 1430<sup>4</sup> by Thomas Elye, the 25th Prior of Carlisle, whose name was said to be still legible on its walls in 1777.<sup>5</sup> At the Dissolution, the priory was surrendered to the Crown in 1540 and its many properties, including Newlaithes in the manor of John de Chappell, were granted by Henry VIII in 1542 to the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle,<sup>6</sup> who would have leased it to persons unknown. However, during the Civil War, Parliament passed two Acts to abolish Deans and Chapters and to sell off their lands. Thus Sir John Wollaston and fourteen other trustees of the Acts, sold Newlaithes, with other estates not mentioned, to Richard Sykes of the City of London for £4811 8s. 3d. on 28 October 1650.<sup>7</sup>

The property, described as “the village or Grainge of Newlaithes . . . with Certain Greeneries thereto adjoining”, had been sub-divided by leases since 1630 when a Rowland Toppyn took an eighth part for 21 years. In 1638 a quarter was leased to Thomas Craghill on 15 October, an eighth to “Mary Slee, later wife of the said Thomas Craghill” on 17 August and a half to William Lowther, gent., and his sons Thomas and William on 15 September. The multiple occupation is not explained. Sykes extended Toppyn’s lease by eight years so that all would lapse in 1659 and then, on 19 May 1653, sold Newlaithes to his brother John Sykes, of Burdon, near Sunderland. In turn, he sold it on 15 January 1656/57, for £670, to Sir Wilfred Lawson (a Parliamentarian) of Isel, near Cockermouth. In 1650, a Parliamentary Survey of the Dean and Chapter properties<sup>8</sup> described William Lowther’s holding as having a “house, beinge builte of Lyme and stone, aboute twentye foure yards longe and Nine yards wyde, all Lofted, with a Byar and A Stable, a kilne: (ther were twoe faire barnes, but they [were] pulled down and burnt by the souldiers in

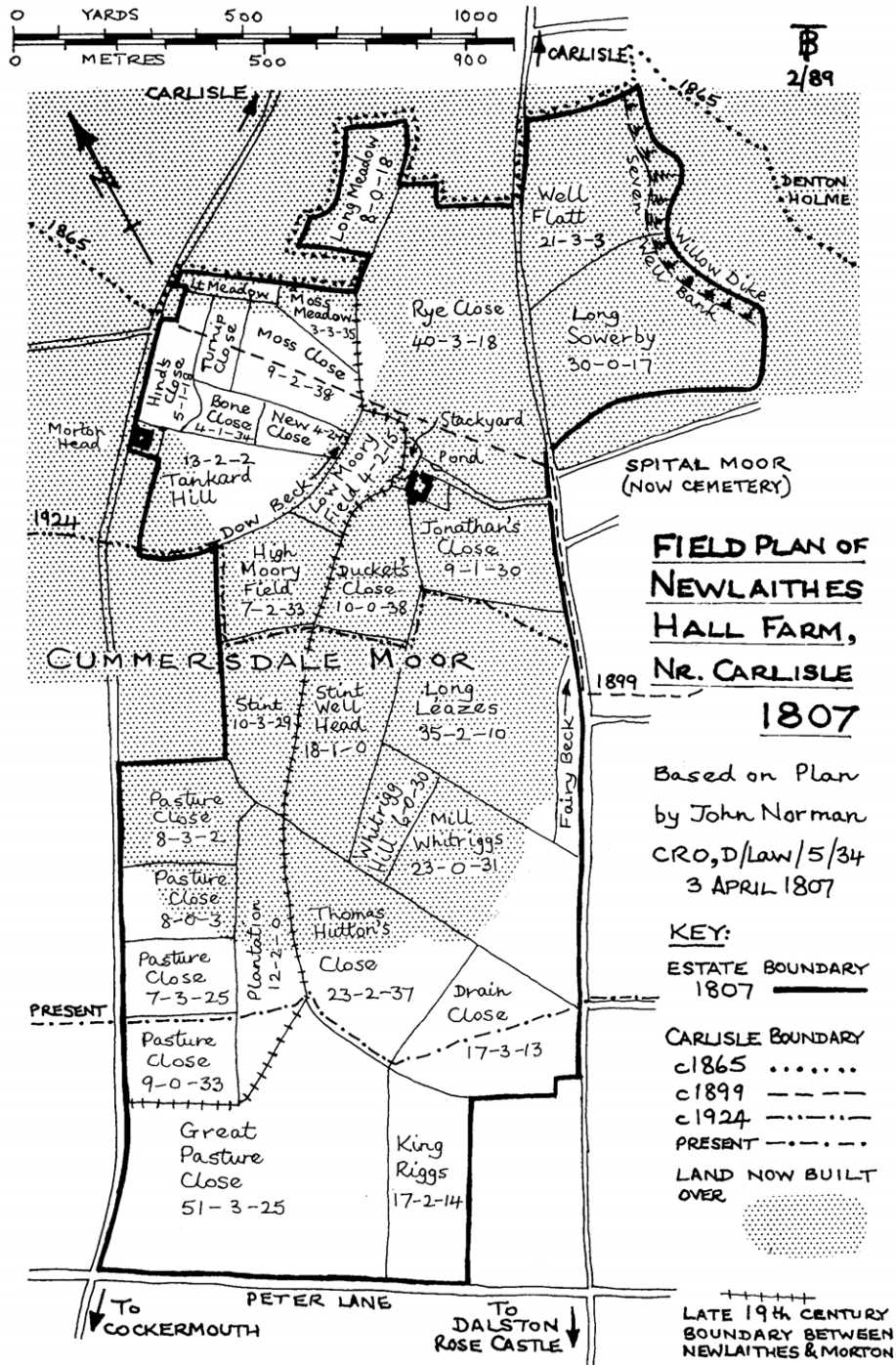


FIG. 1. - The fields of Newlaithes Hall and Morton Head farms in 1807. The encroachment of the Carlisle City boundary and modern housing is shown also.

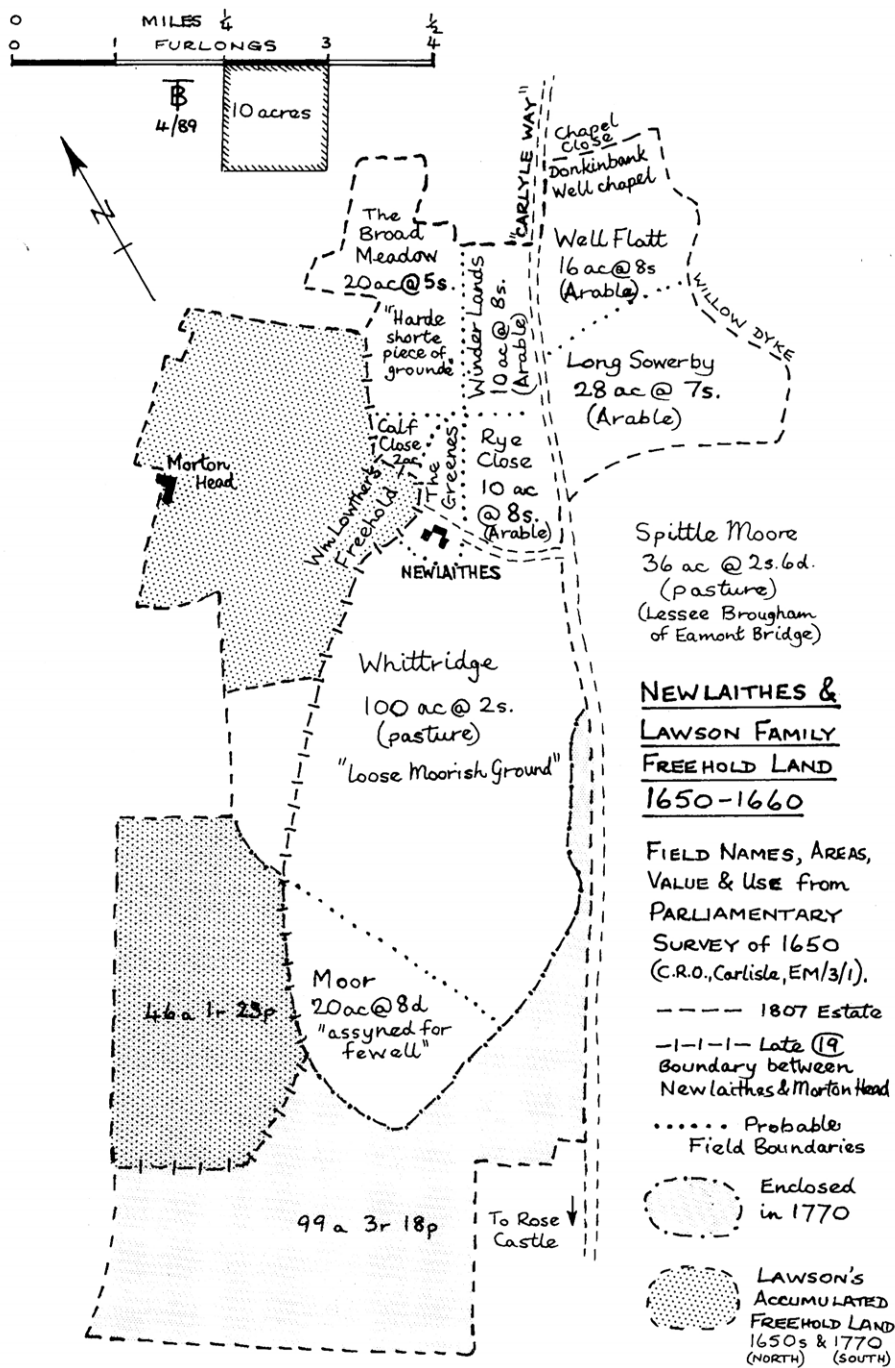


FIG. 2. - Map showing the value, use and approximate position of Newlaithes Hall fields mentioned in the Parliamentary Survey of 1650. The freehold land accumulated by the Lawson family in the 1650's and the additions by inclosure in 1770 are also shown.

the tyme of the firste leager of Carlyle) . . .".<sup>9</sup> All the fields in which Lowther had a half interest were then listed and are summarized in Figure 2.

On 5 August 1657, Sir Wilfred gave the half "lately occupied by William Lowther, deceased" and the reversion of the Craghill interest to Wilfred his second son. His gifts of other Dean and Chapter land near Newlaithes can be traced. For a tenement and close called Moodyfield or Bacon Place, Sir Wilfred paid Thomas Lowther of Newleathes and his wife Alice £60, on 5 October 1657.<sup>10</sup> A Thomas Lowther had bought it on 16 June 1603 from Leonard Moodie "late of Newleathes", yeoman, and his wife Agnes. Also, Sir Wilfred paid £6 for the assignment of a 15-year lease, granted on 25 November 1656 by John Sykes of Burdon to Robert Wilson of Caltcoats near Carlisle, "since deceased".<sup>11</sup> This concerned a one acre field called Well Chapel Close and Well Chapel Bank in the manor of John de Chappell lying between "Newleathes Grange" on the south and a field to the north called Donkinbank, a 1.5 acre "parcel of Boggage Pasture Ground"<sup>12</sup> also bought by Sir Wilfred (for £20). Both plots seem to have become part of the north end of Well Flatt by 1807, when several other fields still had names used in the Parliamentary Survey of Newlaithes (Fig. 2.).

In 1650, "The Greenes" adjoining Newlaithes lay west of the southern part of Rye Close. Further west "William Lowther's Freehold" seems to equate with Low Moory Field of 1807 (=Moodyfield?). Other properties added to the freehold area included Morton Head, in the Manor of Dalston, bought from John Robinson by Sir Wilfred and given to the latter's son in 1659.<sup>13</sup> His son used trustees to buy more estate for himself. On 18 September 1657, Thomas Tengage of Newleathes, heir of Richard Tengage deceased, sold him a customary tenement "*adjoyning neare* a place called Newleathes Grainge" for £75 and, on 19 March 1663, Wilfred bought a house and peat moss for £24.<sup>14</sup> Both were in the Manor of Houghton, owned by Sir Edward Musgrave (of Hayton Castle near Aspatria), whose daughter Jane married Sir Wilfred Lawson. These properties were then combined into Morton Head farm. In addition to the properties mentioned above, Sir Wilfred gave his son the manors of Bassenthwaite, Hesketh, Hensingham and Loweswater as well as Brayton, where the main estate became established.<sup>15</sup> Having acquired a considerable estate, young Wilfred, on 23 January 1664/5, included the whole in his marriage settlement with Sarah, eldest daughter of Dorothy James, widow, of Washington, Co. Durham.<sup>16</sup> Then, on 2 February 1666/67, Lawson leased his *customary estate* to William Twentyman and Mary Nixon (widow) for 3 years at £10 10s. a year, and promised to "bould a Leath [barn] with one pare of Siles [crucks] at tengat house and . . . Repaire the dweling house at Morton Head".<sup>17</sup>

After the Restoration the Dean and Chapter regained its estates, leasing Newlaithes to Wilfred Lawson (d. 1710) for £5 3s. a year.<sup>18</sup> In 1714, his son Gilfred renewed the lease for 21 years at the same rate<sup>19</sup> and the Lawsons kept possession until Sir Wilfred (tenth and last baronet) died in June 1806. Newlaithes was advertised for sale<sup>20</sup> and applications were to be sent to the land agent at Brayton, John Norman, who drew five surviving estate plans, including Newlaithes.<sup>21</sup> A family of Normans also lived at Newlaithes from at least 1739, when Frances Norman (widow) was buried at St Mary's, Carlisle. By will in 1737, Robert Norman of Spittle Moor left £10 to his mother Frances and £7 each to his sister Jane and brothers Edward and John (died in 1770).<sup>22</sup> In 1749 John and Edward Norman were joint tenants of Newlaithes, paying £76 rent yearly "on second Rosley day".<sup>23</sup> An undated 18th century field valuation shows that they farmed



214 acres in twelve "old Inclosures" along with 90 acres of common ground.<sup>24</sup> Long Sowerby and Well Flatt were the best land worth 25s. per acre. Land was £1 an acre near the farmstead and in fields on "Wheat Rigg hill", which ran south from the farmstead towards the moor. The low-lying unenclosed common was worth only 3s. an acre but brought the total value to £223 12s. When Cummersdale Moor was enclosed in 1770, Sir Gilfred Lawson was awarded 46a 1r 23p,<sup>25</sup> which exactly matches five freehold plots shown on Figures 1 and 2. The Dean and Chapter received 99a 3r 18p and the extra area and productivity necessitated new farm buildings at Newlaithes in a few years, as will be seen.

On 23 June 1767, a charge of £110 was recorded for "Renewing New Laiths Grainge Lease, 7 years being Expired" at £92 a year.<sup>26</sup> However, on 26 November, 1770, the will of "John Norman the elder of New Leathes Hall" was proved at Carlisle. He made his brother Edward executor and left him "all my Leasehold estate which he and I lately purchased" from John Gale of Whitehaven, known as Spittle Moor.<sup>27</sup> Having no wife or children, he gave a guinea to Edward's younger son John, who was baptised on 14 March 1749/50.<sup>28</sup> This John married Ann Sewell at St Cuthbert's, Carlisle on 5 February 1774 and had children Robert (1775), Matthew (1776), Mary (1777) and Edward (March 1784) before he died intestate in 1784. Administration was granted in September to Ann, on the bond of Thomas and John Sewell. Shortly after his marriage, this John Norman played an important role in developing the new buildings at Newlaithes.

A plan of the proposed work shows the farmyard's earlier layout (Fig. 3). Old buildings stood on three sides of a rectangular yard left open to the south-west and measuring 60 by 55 feet. A typical corn barn with a high, arched double doorway of dressed stone was drawn in elevation along the yard's south-east side. Measuring about 59 by 21 feet, it was perhaps 16ft to the eaves. Opposite stood "old stabels", similar in size, but the two sections marked "Do" were labelled "Byer" on a draft of the same plan.<sup>29</sup> The corn barn was probably built after the "twoe faire barns" were destroyed in the Civil War. A calf house and pigsty at the north-east end of the stable narrowed the yard entrance. The house faced north-east, away from the yard to cut down the farmyard noise and smell. It had an "old Citchon" and "old parler" (both with fireplaces) on the ground floor and perhaps two bedrooms above. An outshut with stairs, milk house and oven house projected into the yard and probably had servants' bedrooms in the roof-space. An old carhouse occupied the angle between the outshut and the old barn. The house plan suggests a 17th century date and, by comparison with the Parliamentary survey details, it had been reduced to less than half its 1650 length. If that resulted from rebuilding rather than partial demolition, the stone with Elye's name must have been re-located. The U-shaped layout suggests deliberate planning which provided an ideal precursor for a full courtyard arrangement, as if by intent.

### Farmyard Developments 1775-77

The first signs of impending building work are contained in letters from John Norman (Edward's son) to Jonathan Potts, Sir Gilfrid Lawson's agent at Brayton Hall.<sup>30</sup> On 26 June 1775, Norman wrote seeking to renew the tenancy of Newlaithes on favourable terms (punctuation inserted):



Sir, my prepozels is this as Near as I can Calculate. The land tax, County Stock, poor Rates, dean and chapter yearly Rent and the Common Rent to the Biship is Aboute fifteen pounds a year withoute the Common Rent to the dean and chapter which I do not know what it is but I will tak in hande to Discharge it all. And over and above I will give you Ninty five pounds pr year clear of all deduction . . . [or] upon the ould tearms I will give one hundrid and ten pounds pr year. The Repairs whitch I want Is a barn twenty five yds long, a shade along parte the side of it, a milchhouse six yds and lofted for a granrey for which money I perpose paying twelve pr sent for Eleven years as Sir Gilfrid did not chouse to let a longer lease. But if you Can Consider onley tow advance other fower years whitch will be fifteen, I at my own Expençe will find all Repairs and Not put you to aney Charge and if you have aney Inclination to Deal with me I hoape for an answer shortley.

Presumably under Norman's old terms the landlord paid the taxes. On the reverse side an endorsement, dated 11 March 1776, shows that, after nine months delay, the offer had been unacceptable to the agent who forced up the rent by 58 per cent. It reads:

At the above time John Norman offered to pay for his Farm £150 a year and all Taxes provided Sir Gilfrid will build Suitable Conveniences for said Farm; Or said Norman will pay £130 a year and all Taxes and build Suitable Conveniences for himself.

*NB* Sir Gilfrid is to build a New Barn and John Norman is to be at the Expençe of Carriage of wood if got on the premises and lime also. A new Backkitchen to be builded and a shade for Catel Eight Yards long which John Norman will undertake to build for twenty pounds or an abatement of Forty shillings a year off[f] the Rent.

The back kitchen details suggest that costs incurred by a tenant paying for his own building work were discounted over a ten year period. Thus the £20 rent difference quoted for the whole farm indicates that all of the proposed barn, kitchen and other work might cost about £200 total.

Once agreement was reached, a list of building costs totalling more than £150 was prepared (Appendix 2), but this excluded the value of oak timber, which was carefully listed (Appendix 1) and probably came from the estate. Also a plan was drawn to a scale of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch = 10 feet (or 1:160) and has been reworked as Figure 3. Annotated in a truly vernacular style, it set out preliminary ideas for the "Disien of The Dweling Hous and office Houses at Newlatheshall and a Yeard 90 foots Long by 55 foots Brode".<sup>31</sup> Proposed extensions were shaded lightly. In "The New Citchon" a partition (heck) between a gable-entry back door and the fireplace might deflect draughts, as in many older traditional Cumbrian houses. Outside, "stars to the uper Roum"<sup>32</sup> suggest a bothy for workmen over the new kitchen, rather than a granary which would be inconvenient in that position. From the old barn, an open-fronted shade for cattle was to extend 30 feet to join a new barn which would close off the south-west end of the farmyard. This barn was to be 56ft long by 18ft wide internally. With projecting, porched doorways at either end of a central thrashing area and, with side walls only  $13\frac{1}{2}$  ft high, the barn was clearly intended to be only for crop storage, not animals. At its west end a three-stall stable, 20 feet long beneath a hayloft, would compensate for part of the old stable being used for cattle, while the new shade between these was for storing turnips.<sup>33</sup> Mrs Wyllie of Carwath farm, Rosley, whose grandfather John Messenger farmed Newlaithes early this century, said that the barn and stable were of the form described, until they were demolished in 1958. This is confirmed by her aerial photograph taken in 1920 and reproduced as Figure. 5.

A timber schedule (Appendix 1), filed with the plan, itemises 691½ cubic feet of oak. For the roof trusses, eight "Footing Beams" (tie-beams), measuring eight cubic feet each, would have had a cross-section about 7½ inches square. Collar beams were to link the "Principal Blades". "Forty Five pannings" (i.e. ribs or purlins, two on either side) spanned nine bays and must have included nine ridge beams also. At 2 cubic feet each their section would be about 6 x 4 inches. Stable fittings required 60 cubic feet of oak and the kitchen needed a roof truss, a chimney beam and an upper floor beam. An additional item, in the same handwriting, states that bricks would cost 8s. a thousand, made up of 1s. for coal at the pit (not identified), 2s. 6d. for its carriage to site and 4s. 6d. for making the bricks, probably of clay dug near the site. The item is dated "Novemb 17th 1776", a Sunday, and has a "Memorandum To go over to New laythes Hall on Wednesday seven Night" (i.e. 27th) when the agent probably discussed the scheme with the tenant and perhaps a builder.

Within four weeks, on 21 December 1776, John Norman wrote to Jonathan Potts at Brayton enclosing an estimate. Although the right side of his letter is missing, it is clear that preparations for obtaining materials were in hand, but that building work had not begun. It reads:

Sir the within closed Letter and Estimat is from [name missing] the Man that first v [iewed ?] the wod with you. I find [that ?] he may be agreed with. Near [enough ?] as Hodgen and No other ways. They seem to be in a haste [to make ?] the End of it on account of Ing [aging] Brick Mackors. Thay say thay [now ?] are Ingadged and allso for [getting ?] Sand out of the Runner [i.e. small stream] so I hope you will please [let ?] me know If you have [come to ?] any Notion of Twentyman

I am Sir &c

John Norman

The penultimate line suggests that the name missing from line two was Twentyman and an undated estimate from a Joseph Twentyman has survived.<sup>34</sup> He was a joiner who probably first viewed the wood with Potts, then discussed possibilities with the tenant, was competing with at least one other builder and finally got Norman to forward his estimate. With inserted punctuation it reads:

An Estemate for Buielding and ereckting a Citchen and a Baren with two Biers and one Stabel underneath the Baren At Newlase hall Belongin to Sir Gilford Lawson. The Citchen to be 16 feet long By 15 Brode and what hight is nesenary. The Baren to Be 64½ feet long by 21 wide in the clear within by 21 feet high; the 2 Biers and Stabel to be Each 21 feet long or what sise is thought most Convenient. All the walls to be 1½ Bricks in length thick Eckesept the pirtitions Betwixt Biers and Stabel them to be 1 Brick in length [thick]; to roufe all with king posts and 2 Brasces to Each with a good flore above the Biers and Stabel and Every other thing that is nesenary; to pave all the Biers and Stabel and lay all the satel stones to Biers; to Cuver the whole with goode read Slate, also to fladg the Citchen and plaster and seal the whole; to Buield a butment to the Baren so as the Carts may go on to the loft, with a stone Starcase to D[itt]o and to Citchen loft; to find good and sofishent Crooks and Bands to all the dors that is awanting. The whole that is hear menched and understod to be don of all Branches of Bisnes what ever with materials of all kinds to compleat the same to be found by the undertacker, timber of all kinds onley Exepted. The whole to be Compleat and finished in a good substaienchel and worckman licke maner for the sum of . . .

£148 os od

by Joseph Twentyman and Com.

This detail raises several points of interest, like the use of red slates (sandstone flags)

which now usually occupy only the lowest few courses of roofs where their great weight is carried by walls. Like so many Cumbrian building agreements, sizes were specified by internal dimensions as if the outside of the structure was of little consequence. A butment was a ramp giving access to the upper floor of a barn built on fairly level ground, and a pair of them would allow carts to pass through without turning. The byres would have straight settle stones separating paved (cobbled) bouses (standings) from the greap (manure channel). The common practice of not defining all dimensions leaves storey heights vague, and items like the position, size and style of doors, windows and internal fittings would have been left to local custom.<sup>35</sup> With timber provided by the estate, Joseph Twentyman's tender almost matched the earlier cost estimate, but there are important differences from the drawn scheme. The roof trusses were to have king posts rather than collar beams and the internal length was reduced from 76 to 64½ feet. However, as the building was 3 feet wider and 7½ feet higher to the eaves, the total capacity was increased by 50 per cent. This allowed space for two byres on the ground floor in addition to the stable but, as cattle were intended to use the old stables, the proposed byres were no doubt considered superfluous. The aerial photograph (Fig. 5.) shows that Twentyman's specification was not followed.

Perhaps Twentyman was copying a building he had seen or built elsewhere. Searches failed to prove whether he or a competing builder undertook the work at Newlaithes but they did reveal a later project which justifies a digression. The Wigton parish records<sup>36</sup> contain a contract, dated 12 March 1787, by which a committee of churchwardens and sixteen other men agreed with Joseph Twentyman and Daniel Pattinson (joiners of Carlisle), Thomas Holmes (joiner of Wigton) and the elder and younger William Nixon both stone-cutters of Cumdivock, "for Taking down so far as . . . necessary and Rebuilding the parish Church of Wigton" for £1,499 10s 8½d. The details are disappointing, dealing mainly with arrangements for interim payments and (significantly) for ensuring the completion of work should misfortune befall any of the builders.<sup>37</sup> This clause and the fact that the document was signed by all the parties except Twentyman suggest that he was ill. Aged 41 and of Finkle Street, Carlisle, he was buried on 11 April 1787. His will, made on 31 August 1786 and proved on 18 June 1787, shows that he owned a house in St Alban's Row, two more in Caldewgate, at least two in Finkle Street and another with lands at Spittlemoor. Joseph bequeathed one full year's rent from all the properties to his pregnant wife Isabella and then provided for his sons Joseph and George (minors) to pay £400 to each of his daughters Mary and Ann and £300 to his unborn child. Isabella was to have all goods and chattels but, if she died or re-married, then his brother-in-law Thomas Lamonby and "my friend Daniel Pattinson" were to become guardians.<sup>38</sup> As she married Thomas Anderson, widower, at St Cuthbert's, Carlisle on 15 June 1792, when the eldest son was 16, the guardianship clause would have taken effect.

As well as rejecting Twentyman's specification, the Newlaithes builders made several changes from the surviving plan. The first edition Ordnance Survey plan (1:2,500, 1865), the 1841 tithe map of Cummersdale<sup>39</sup> and Norman's 1807 plan all show the courtyard about 70 feet wide by 120 long, rather than 55 by 90 feet. They show the old barn still in position and of correct size, but the shade linking to it to the new barn was twice the proposed length of 30 feet (Fig. 4). The longer yard must have been agreed before building started in 1777. All the plans show the barn about 80 feet long externally by

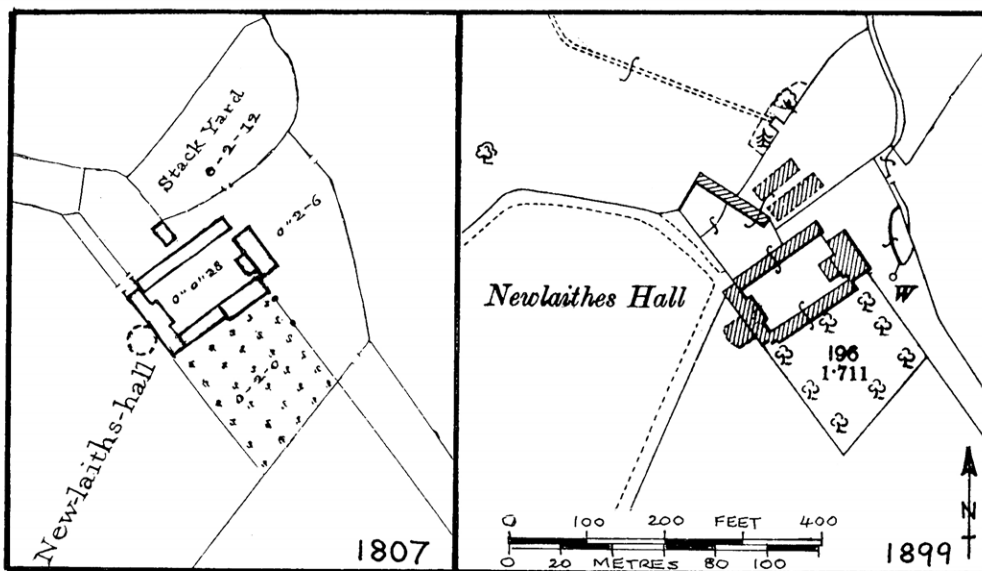


FIG. 4. – Extracts from John Norman's estate plan (1807) and the Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 plan (1899). The lengthened shade for cattle, the horse-gin and the new byre along the north-west side of the yard are shown on Norman's plan. Victorian development was centred on the stackyard.

about 20 wide but, unlike the 1776 plan, it overlapped only half of the width of the buildings along the north-west side of the yard. Although this allowed a wider yard and entrance, the old stable and the shade intended to link it to the new barn must have given way to a long, narrow byre with lofts, set back from the original alignment and shown on Norman's plan and the aerial photograph. If this alteration was made in 1777, it would have provided as much cattle accommodation as Twentyman's byres and the old stable, as well as continuous loft space above. Before 1807 a small building was put next to the stackyard behind the byre and a loose-box was set either side of the barn doors in the yard (Fig. 5.). Behind the barn an open-sided, horse-gin<sup>40</sup> probably powered a thrashing machine. A similar gin was in the stackyard at Morton Head farm.

### Later Developments

After the 1807 sale, the history of Morton Head and Newlaithes diverged until 1950. In 1847 Morton Head was the home of John Studholme, a land agent, surveyor and valuer of Finkle Street, Carlisle, who died in that year.<sup>41</sup> Except for its old house, the farmstead was entirely rebuilt and the grounds re-organized before 1841.<sup>42</sup> It was sold before 1853 to Joseph Ferguson (1788-1863), who founded Ferguson Bros., cotton spinners of Holme Head works, in 1825.<sup>43</sup> On 20 May 1853 the *Carlisle Journal* reported that new pleasure grounds at Morton Head *Mansion* had been tastefully laid out by the landscape gardener Gilpin. This work extended the gardens round the south of the house and moved the main gateway towards Carlisle so that visitors approached by a long, winding driveway set in a belt of woodland newly planted along the roadside. In 1850

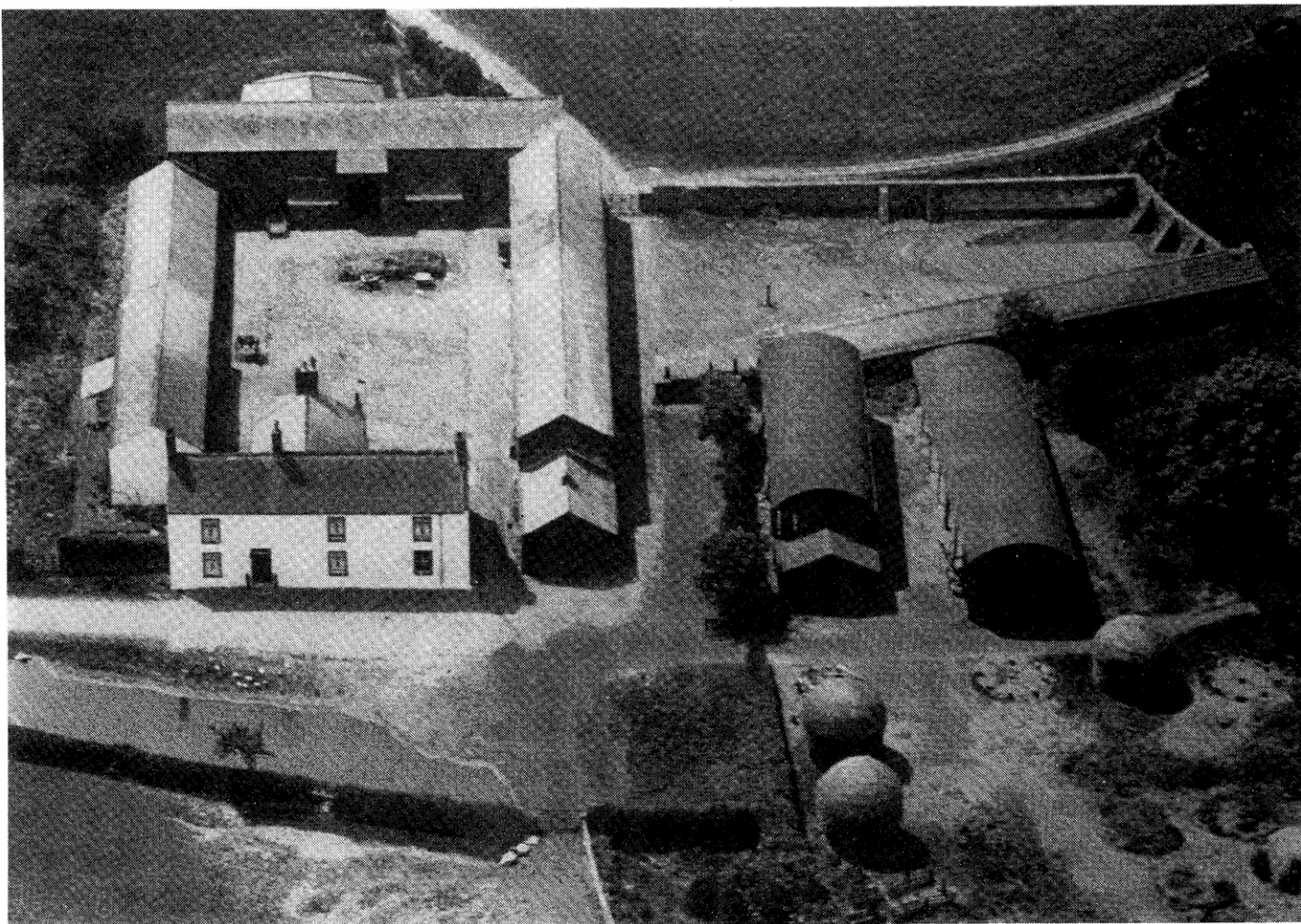


FIG. 5. – A fine aerial photograph of Newlaithes Hall taken in 1920.  
(Reproduced by courtesy of Mrs V. Wyllie of Carwath Farm, Rosley).



Ferguson's third daughter, Maria Isabella, married Edward Chance of Great Malvern and Morton Head passed to their eldest son Sir Frederick Chance, whose third son Sir Robert Chance (1883-1960) was Lord Lieutenant of Cumberland<sup>44</sup> when Morton's fate again joined that of Newlaithes.

In 1810, Newlaithes was tenanted by Mr Bowman, for the *Carlisle Journal* noted on 3 March that his servant, while going to Bolton for coal, fell down a shaft but managed to catch a rope and hold on until rescued. In 1826, the paper reported the theft of two cart loads of potatoes in November and a sheep in December from Richard Connell, the farmer. Census returns indicate that William Brown, born at Great Orton, became tenant in the 1830's.<sup>45</sup> By 1871, his son, Lowther Brown had taken over and remained till at least 1914.<sup>46</sup> By 1921, John Messenger had become tenant, was still there in 1940 and was followed by a son-in-law James Johnston, Mrs Wyllie's father. We must return to the Newlaithes buildings however.

A severe fire at Newlaithes was reported in the *Carlisle Journal* on 19 January 1839. It began in a stable at about 7 o'clock on the previous Thursday evening and was attributed to a workman smoking. By the time a fire engine arrived from Carlisle, flames had spread rapidly "to other stables, to the thrashing machine and other parts of the property". The roof had collapsed in "a long range of stabling etc. over which were hay lofts containing about 25 cart loads of hay and a quantity of wheat and barley". The horses were rescued and calm weather averted worse trouble. Fortunately the lessee, Mr Bunting of Rose Bank, was well insured but the tenant, William Brown, lost over £100 of crops stored in the lofts. The *Carlisle Patriot* offered a similar report, but with conflicting evidence that the fire fighters began by "cutting off the communication between a barn which was blazing, the roof having fallen in, and the roof of the stable which had just taken fire" and that "the fire was subdued without spreading farther". It is not clear, therefore, whether the fire started in the 1777 stable or barn, but both were repaired in their original form with a loft over the stable and no ramp to the barn.<sup>47</sup>

Later farmyard changes are seen on Ordnance Survey plans which also show the inexorable advance of Carlisle's city boundary (Fig. 1.). The outshut behind the house suffered several alterations but their purpose can only be guessed. By 1865 the small building by the stackyard had been replaced by loose-boxes and a bull-pen<sup>47</sup> and before 1899, two dutch barns with curved roofs had been erected in the stackyard (Figs. 4 and 5). In 1904 plans for a new byre were submitted to the Rural District Council but have not survived.<sup>48</sup> It probably replaced the shade and 17th century barn on the yard's south-east side. In 1914, specifications and tenders were prepared for a water supply to the house and, in 1937, sheep dip facilities were planned.<sup>49</sup> Part of Newlaithes was sold in 1884 to the Burial Board to extend Spittle Moor cemetery<sup>50</sup> and northern parts of the farm were gradually lost to housing development. On 25 March 1938 Newlaithes was transferred from the Dean and Chapter to the Church Commissioners, who then conveyed it to Carlisle City Council for £14,500 on 6 August 1952.<sup>51</sup>

Printed proceedings of the City's Finance and Properties Committee and the Housing Development Committee note some aspects of the death-throes of the farm. The volume and minute numbers are given in brackets. On 21 December 1950 (61/1512), the Town Clerk and Surveyor were authorized to negotiate for the acquisition of Morton, Newlaithes and Morton Cottage Farms to make them "available for development as and when required" for the "Morton Neighbourhood Unit". Morton Cottage was bought for





FIG. 6. – Newlaithes Hall photographed from the east early this century. The original front door was to the right of the middle window. (Reproduced by kind permission of Mr R. Clarke of Etterby Street, Carlisle).

£6,000 in 1952 (63/532). It is interesting to discover that, in January 1953, Newlaithes needed repairs costing £200, which was considered acceptable even though the farm had a life expectancy of only “3 to 4 years in view of the pending housing development” (63/1881). In 1955, the renewal of downspouts on the dutch barns was to cost £28 10s. (66/924), even though compensation of £115 had already been paid to Morton Farm for damage to crops caused by “development works now in progress”. A plan was made of 33.3 acres of Newlaithes and 15.8 acres of Morton “required for building operations by 1 March 1956”. (66/1466).

Thus, on 2 February 1956, statutory powers were used to gain possession of 33 acres at Newlaithes and the tenant was evicted from the remainder a year later, with £925 compensation (68/880). By 24 May 1957 (68/266), the premises suffered vandalism and the Surveyor was told to remove all materials of value as a preliminary to demolition. It was agreed that, if one of the dutch barns could be removed to another council-owned farm at Greymoorhill for less than £200, a similar barn there in poor repair could be declared redundant. However, on 28 June, an offer of just £45 from J. Steele of Harold Street, Carlisle was accepted for *both* dutch barns (68/460) and he paid £15 for some asbestos sheets (68/895). Development proceeded rapidly. For example, John Laing and Son Ltd won a contract to build four shops for £18,027 11s. 11d. (69/2371) and then 100 houses for £106,899 (70/113). In 1961 twelve garages were to be built in Newlaithes Avenue and land was provided for Newlaithes Junior School (71/1792-3). These names

are now the only environmental reminders of Newlaithes Hall which was obliterated by the development.

Had it had been compulsory for every threatened building to be *properly* surveyed (surely not too much to demand of planners or developers), much more detail might have been salvaged for the history of Newlaithes Hall. From the surviving evidence, there are several enigmas which might never be solved adequately. For example, Mrs Wyllie remembers that the kitchen was at the *north-west* end of the house. It opened onto the yard entrance and the parlour was next to the orchard. Clearly, this arrangement was opposite to that of the 1776 plan and probably arose from a need to have the kitchen in a more convenient working location and a wish to keep the 'polite' end of the house away from farmyard activity. As Figure 6 shows typical Victorian sash windows in the front elevation with the scar of a blocked doorway where the front door was located before 1776, opposite to the stairs, the re-organisation might have passed unrecorded in the 19th century. Alternatively the changed layout could have been agreed along with various known alterations to the 1776 plan. It would have been as easy to make the new front door and entrance hall in the brick extension to serve a new parlour in 1777 as later. If the "old parlar" did become a kitchen in 1777, the old front door might have been retained to serve that end of the house. Above that doorway, a disturbance in the stonework perhaps indicates the position of the stone commemorating Prior Elye.

Unrecorded changes in the farm buildings have been discussed already and would have been difficult to identify without such good documents. It is essential to note how misleading the plan and Twentymann's specification might have been if a photograph and reliable maps had not been found to counteract the severe disadvantages of demolition. Despite obvious gaps and uncertainties, it has been possible to examine the development of a typical Cumbrian courtyard farm in unusual detail and expose a number of problems which might well be overlooked in studies of the vast majority of farmsteads for which no documentary evidence survives. Although this study concentrates on technical aspects of traditional building activity like the planning and modification of a design and the extent to which this came to fruition, it also highlights social and economic factors which are too often ignored in vernacular building studies. For example, the family circumstances of participants or the contrasting literacy of a tenant, builder and land agent are no less important and instructive than the supply, price and use of building materials. The interaction of several individuals, who appear above the threshold of history for the first time, is as revealing as details of the unfulfilled projects of a hitherto unknown builder. Clearly more research will be needed to fill gaps left by this study but, if the incompleteness of historical detail only thirty years old stimulates others to record, discuss and publish more modern affairs in these *Transactions*, this article will have served a useful purpose other than merely charting the evolution of a lost part of Cumbria's heritage.

**Appendix I**

*Details Accompanying the Newlathes Farmyard Plan of 1776 (Source: D/Law/3/4)*

“Oak Wood necessary for the New buildings intended to be erected at New-laythes Hall”.

	Ft
For the Roof of Barn and Stable -	
Eight Footing Beams at 8ft each	64
Principal Blades Eight pair at 8ft each	64
Forty Five pannings at 2 [ft] each	90
Rafters for both sides	112
Collar Beams Eight at 1ft each	8
For Hayloft Floor over Stable -	
Two Beams at 8ft each	16
For Joists over Stable	27
Divisions of Stalls - Soal Trees 6ft,	
Hind Posts 6ft, Hand Rail 4½ft	16½
Oak Boards for the three Divisions in Stable	15
For Manger of D[itt]o Oak Boards	10
For Rack and Boards up to D[itt]o from Manger	15
For Stable Door	3½
For Back Bands for both Barn Doors	5
	<hr/>
Oak Timber for Barn and Stable	446
	<hr/>
For the Shade tow'd South East adjoining Old Barn	
Three Footing Beams and three pair of principals	21
For the King posts three of D[itt]o	3
For pannings twelve	24
Rafts for D[itt]o	18
For the Shade on the other side of yard adjoining	
Byer - same with the above	66
For the Division of stalls of One of the shades	12
For a Gate and Rails to one of the shades	6
	<hr/>
Total of the Oak wood for Shades	150
	<hr/>
For the Kitchen	
A Footing Beam and a pair of principals	15
For pannings to D[itt]o	22½
For Rafters	22
For Beam for Floor and D[itt]o for Chimney	12
Joists	16
For two Window Frames and a pair of Stairs	8
	<hr/>
	95½
	<hr/>

Note: In all cases ft represent cubic feet.

## Appendix 2

### *Estimated Building Costs (Source: D/Law/3/4)*

	£	s	d
Walling and Materials	60	12	0
Slate and laying on 5 Roods at £3 16s od.	19	0	0
D[itt]o for Shades 1 Rood	3	16	0
Carpenters' Work	5	0	0
Ridging Stones Table Stones and Springers	1	6	0
Flooring 42 [square] yards at 2s a yard	4	4	0
Great Doors for Barn	4	4	0
For stones to hang the Doors to Bands Crooks Lead &c	4	0	0
For paving and fitting up Stable	4	0	0
For Leading Wood, cutting down D[itt]o &c	8	8	0
For Building Kitchen	30	0	0
Footing Trees and Beams	6	6	0
	150	16	0

### *[Additional Note]*

Mr Twentyman's Calculation of the Floors -

[for] wood and workmanship			
Floor of Stable and Kitchen 68½ yds [at 2s]	6	17	0
Two Great Doors wood Nails and workmanship 17 yds at 3s per yd	2	11	0
Crooks and Bands for D[itt]o Doors also for Stable Door 108lb at 4d per lb	1	16	0
For Locks and Bolts	1	0	0

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I am grateful to Bruce Jones for drawing my attention to the Newlaithes plan and the Lawson archive, to Norman Nicholson of the *Cumberland News* for locating photographs of Newlaithes and to Mr R. Clarke of Etterby Street, Carlisle for permission to use his photograph as Figure 6. Mrs Vera Wyllie, of Carwath farm, Rosley, gave most generous hospitality, very helpful recollections of the farm and permission to use her superb aerial photograph. Above all, I owe a great debt to Denis Perriam, for supplying many invaluable details from his own research and for taking such an interest in my work through his inspiring correspondence. The continuing support of my wife Margaret and the archivists at Kendal and Carlisle is greatly appreciated.

## Notes and References

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Brunskill, *Vernacular Architecture of the Lake Counties*, (1974), 82.

<sup>2</sup> See P. Messenger, "Lowther Farmstead Plans", CW2, lxxv, 327-351; B. Tyson, "Skirwith Hall . . .", CW2, lxxxi, 93-112.

<sup>3</sup> Cumbria Record Office (C.R.O.), Carlisle, D/Law/5/34, Estate map by John Norman, 3 April 1807; and D/Law/3/4, field valuation in 'Mixed Deeds 1603-1900'. Hereafter the Lawson archive is simply D/Law . . .

- <sup>4</sup> Information from Denis Perriam, quoting annotations on the copy of *VCH, Cumberland*, ii, 151 at the Record Office, Carlisle.
- <sup>5</sup> Nicolson & Burn, ii, 303; perhaps merely repeating a comment made in a late 17th century "Account of the Diocese of Carlisle" by Hugh Todd. Bodleian Library, St Edmund Hall Mss 7/3, p. 375. (Microfilm at Carlisle Library). The *VCH, Cumberland*, ii, 147a notes problems in distinguishing priors in the 15th century. The stone could have been brought from elsewhere at a later rebuilding.
- <sup>6</sup> Nicolson & Burn, ii, 245.
- <sup>7</sup> D/Law/3/16, a contemporary attested copy of a sale on 28 October 1650, signed by John Sykes 15 January 1656/57.
- <sup>8</sup> C.R.O., Carlisle, Dean and Chapter records, EM/3/1, pp. 4-12.
- <sup>9</sup> The siege lasted from October 1644 to June 1645. N & B, ii, 234.
- <sup>10</sup> D/Law/3/4.
- <sup>11</sup> D/Law/3/6 and D/Law/3/16.
- <sup>12</sup> Perhaps more like the French *bocage* = coppice woodland (perhaps wet) rather than the burgage plot suggested by the Record Office listing.
- <sup>13</sup> D/Law/3/6. Details of Robinson's sale have not been found.
- <sup>14</sup> D/Law/3/6; . . . 5/14; . . . 8/15.
- <sup>15</sup> Nicolson & Burn, ii, 96.
- <sup>16</sup> D/Law/3/7. Sarah's sister Dorothy, coheir of William James, married Sir Edward Musgrave's eldest son Richard in 1670. C. R. Hudleston and R. S. Boumphrey, *Cumberland Families and Heraldry* (hereafter C.F.H.), (1978), 238 and 199.
- <sup>17</sup> D/Law/5/14.
- <sup>18</sup> Dr Hugh Todd's 1685-86 list of 160 Dean and Chapter properties (with lessees and rents) is given in E. Hughes (Ed.), *The Fleming-Senhouse Papers*, Cumberland Record Series, ii, (1961), 69-74.
- <sup>19</sup> D/Law/3/11.
- <sup>20</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 15 August 1807.
- <sup>21</sup> D/Law/5/34. John Norman married Ann Chambers at Aspatria on 4 March 1808 and had sons John (1808) and Robert (3 April 1811) before Ann's death. (Administration granted at Carlisle, 14 December 1811). The will of John Norman of Brayton Lodge, proved at Carlisle on 20 June 1838, left his Well and High House estates at Castle Sowerby to the two sons and his share in the Carlisle and Maryport Railway to his grandson John (son of John Norman of West Bolton).
- <sup>22</sup> Wills proved at Carlisle.
- <sup>23</sup> D/Law/5/2. Rosly Fair was held on Mondays every fortnight from Whitmonday until the Autumn. Parson and White, *Directory*, 1829, 355.
- <sup>24</sup> D/Law/3/16.
- <sup>25</sup> C.R.O., Carlisle, Cummersdale Moor Inclosure Award, CQRE/1/90.
- <sup>26</sup> D/Law/3/16.
- <sup>27</sup> Opposite the Newlaithes entrance. In 1650 Spittle Moor, a 36 acre pasture and a part of Newlaithes grange, was in the possession of Henry Brougham, executor of Thomas Brougham late of Eamont Bridge who had been the assignee of Toby Eden, of Bleakehall, since a lease dated 12 September 1639, (Dean and Chapter records, EM/3/1. p. 13). This became a cemetery, opened 20 May 1855, with chapels designed by Messrs Hay of Liverpool and built by J. Creighton of Carlisle for c. £14,000. Wm Whellan, *History . . . of Cumberland & Westmorland*, 1860, 146.
- <sup>28</sup> He left £5 to his sister Jane Drape (who had married William Drape at Kirkbampton in 1738) and a guinea to Edward's older son Matthew (baptised 19 October 1742). The relationships suggest that Jane was baptised 26 August 1694, Edward (10 May 1686), John "the elder" (28 April 1687) and Robert (9 September 1688 and d. 1737).
- <sup>29</sup> D/Law/3/16. The courtyard is labelled "Fould Yard" on this draft.
- <sup>30</sup> Norman's letters are in D/Law/3/16.
- <sup>31</sup> D/Law/3/4.
- <sup>32</sup> From Mrs Wyllie's description of the house and other evidence, discussed later, it seems likely that these stairs were not built.
- <sup>33</sup> Information from attached timber estimate and scraps in D/Law/3/16.
- <sup>34</sup> D/Law/3/16.

- <sup>35</sup> For confirmation and development of these ideas see B. Tyson, CW2, volumes lxxix to lxxxiii inclusive, *passim*.
- <sup>36</sup> C.R.O., Carlisle, PR/36/47 (contract) and /119 (Churchwarden Accounts).
- <sup>37</sup> Payments were to be £32 one month after pulling down the old church and a sixth of the remainder "as soon as the Ground Base is . . . finished"; "when the Nached Gallery Flooring is Framed"; "when the walls of both Steeple and Church are completed"; "when the Roofs of both are finished"; "when the church is plastered" and "as soon as the whole work is complete". The final payment was made on 23 October 1788.
- <sup>38</sup> Our Joseph was bapt. 5 January 1745/6, the son of Joseph Twentymen of Newton and Mary Lawson who had married on 14 November 1741. He married Isabella Lamonby on 12 January 1771 and produced George (1 December 1771-26 October 1779), Mary (25 July 1773- ), Joseph (24 December 1775- ), William (29 March 1778-17 September 1779), George (20 July 1783- ), Ann (3 September 1786- ) and Elizabeth (27 June 1787- ). All at St Mary's, Carlisle.
- <sup>39</sup> C.R.O., Carlisle, Cummersdale Tithe Award, DRC/8/57.
- <sup>40</sup> Identified from broken lines on John Norman's estate plan of 1807.
- <sup>41</sup> Mannix and Whellan, *Directory*, 1847, 154b and *C.F.H.*, 329. In 1829 Parson and White (p. 158) gave his home as King Moor house, 2 miles north-north-west of Carlisle.
- <sup>42</sup> Proved by comparing Norman's 1807 estate plan with the Cummersdale tithe map (1841). Changes made in 1853 appear on the 1865 O.S. plan.
- <sup>43</sup> *C.F.H.*, 110. In 1847 Ferguson lived at 8 Fisher Street, Carlisle.
- <sup>44</sup> *C.F.H.*, 60-1.
- <sup>45</sup> His children Mary (1823) and Lowther (1831) were born at Great Orton whereas Isabella (1841) and Nicholas (1844) were born at Newlaithes.
- <sup>46</sup> Kelly's *Directories of Cumberland*.
- <sup>47</sup> Function remembered by Mrs Wyllie.
- <sup>48</sup> C.R.O., Carlisle, Ca/E4/Carlisle R.D.C./1904/24. Indexed plans missing.
- <sup>49</sup> C.R.O., Carlisle, Dean and Chapter records, EF/7/1 and 7/4. Electricity reached the nearby Low Cummersdale farm in 1956.
- <sup>50</sup> C.R.O., Carlisle, EF/7/6.
- <sup>51</sup> Copy of sale details kindly provided by the City Solicitor.