

ART. IV.—*The Lords of Bewcastle.* By T. H. B. GRAHAM,
M.A., F.S.A.

ACCORDING to tradition, the first lord of Bewcastle was Bueth (father of Gilles lord of Gilsland) who built his dwelling within the ramparts of the Roman fort there, and the place became known as Bothecastre, the caster, or chester of Bueth. The stone castle, which superseded that humble dwelling, did not come into being until a very much later period. Bueth was probably in possession in 1092, when William Rufus rebuilt Carlisle and freed all English territory adjacent to it from Scottish control..

In early times, the southern extremity of Bewcastle parish, known as "Bothecastre Dale," contained the lord's residence, the cultivated field and practically the whole population. The rest of the modern parish extending northward to the very frontier of Scotland was a wilderness of unenclosed moorland or forest, affording nothing but summer pasture, and pertaining *prima facie* to the king of England.

When Ranulf Meschin created the barony of Burgh-by-Sands, he appears to have annexed the manor of Bothecastre Dale to that barony, just as he annexed thereto the manors of Kirkoswald and Lazonby, because Bueth's successors in title* held Bothecastre Dale not immediately of the king *in capite*, but mediately as of the barony of Burgh-by-Sands.

About 1177-8, Robert, son of Buet de Buchastre, confirmed to the monks of Wetheral:—

All the land, which my father gave to them in the vill of Buchastre and pasture, as in his charter is more fully contained,

* See pedigree, these *Transactions*, N.S. xxvi, p. 288.

and four acres in the same vill, lying towards the West, nearer to the sike and adjoining the land which my father gave to them, and pasture for 300 sheep everywhere in the common pasture of Buchastre, to hold in perpetual alms (Prescott, *Wetherhal*, p. 195).

At the same period, Robert, son of Buet gave to the nuns of Marrick, Yorks., land at Buthecastra, beginning at the old ford of Poltkinerum and extending eastward; the right of grinding at his mill without multure; and common of pasture for 30 cows, one bull and their young of three years (by *inspeximus*, *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 22 Edward III, p. 92).

According to Todd, the same Robert gave the advowson of Bewcastle church to the prior and convent of Carlisle (Nicolson and Burn, ii, p. 477).

About the year 1240, an under-tenant, Mabilia, daughter of Adam son of Richer [de Levington] of Bewcastle, widow, gave to Wetheral Priory 14 acres at Bewcastle, lying within the bounds (*divisae*) of Maspaynen; two tofts; and all liberties belonging to the manor of Bewcastle (*manerium de Buchecastre*) within and without the vill (*Wetherhal*, p. 199). The Dentons of Nether Denton inherited the mesne manor of Bewcastle, and seem to have given it, by way of sub-infeudation, to the de Levingtons, because Richard de Levington died in 1250, seised of "Buchecastre in the barony of Burgh-by-Sands," and Ranulf his brother was heir (*Cal. inq. p. m.*, 34 Henry III, p. 50).

In 1251, William de Poipe had the king's letters of protection, directed to the sheriff of Cumberland, concerning his church of Bodecaster, his men, lands, rents and other possessions (*Cal. Close Rolls*, p. 524). He was probably the parson.

In 1272, Helewisa de Levington, last of the family, held of the barony of Burgh, and not of the king, land at Bewcastle worth 5 marks yearly (*Cal. Doc. Scot.*, i, p. 548). The partition of her lands was a difficult task. According to the schedule drawn up in 1274, it was

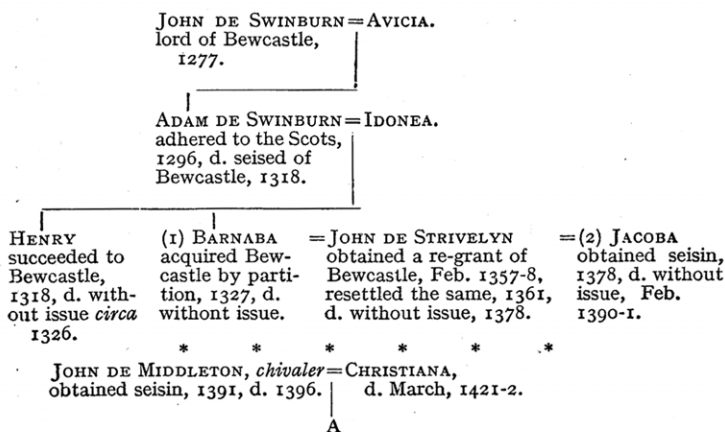
originally intended that one of the co-parceners, Walter de Twynham, should have Bewcastle, described as follows:—

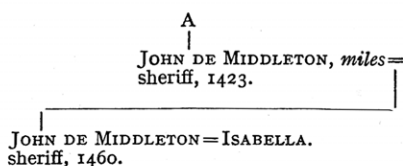
Botecastre. John Hom Hodde holds of the demesne 7 acres of land and 2 acres of meadow for 9s.; John, husband of Mabbe, 26 acres of land and 4 acres of meadow for 2 marks; John the clerk 3 acres for 2s.; Adam the reeve a bovat for 4s.; John, son of Adam, a bovat for 6s.; Hugh a bovat for 4s.; William Wytepping 6 acres for 3s.; David, son of Eda, 5 acres for 4s.; Eva le Sangstere 2 acres for 2s. 7d.; Robert Mouning a messuage and curtilage for 1s.; Thomas the miller a messuage and curtilage for 1s. 4d. The mill renders 5 skeps of flour at 4s. a skeep (*Cal. Close Rolls*, 1274, p. 133).

Reckoning 8 acres as a bovat and 8 bovates as a carucate, the de Levingtons' manor of Bewcastle comprised one carucate and a quarter. No account is taken of land held in mortmain.

It appears from the inquisition held at the death of Richard de Levington's widow, Sarra, who survived her husband nearly half a century, that the Dale of Botecastre was eventually allotted to two of the co-parceners, namely, Matilda and Emma de Carrick, who sold it to John de Swinburn (*Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, p. 362).

PEDIGREE.





Accordingly, the king, in 1277, granted to John de Swinburn and his heirs free warren in all his demesne lands of Bewcastle (*Cal. Charter Rolls*, p. 203).

In 1278, Sandres, servant of John de Swinburn of Bewcastle, was in amercement, for not attending on the first day of the assizes (*Cal. Doc. Scot.*, ii, p. 34).

The king, in 1279, further granted (at the instance of Robert de Scardeburg, king's clerk) to John de Swinburn and his heirs a weekly market, on Monday at his manor of Bewcastle and two yearly fairs there on the vigil, feast and morrow of the Nativity of St. Mary (September 8th) and two days following; and on the vigil, feast and morrow of St. Barnabas (June 11th) and two days following (*Cal. Charter Rolls*, p. 213). What, it may be asked, was the reason for holding fairs in this desolate border manor? The wealth of its inhabitants consisted of cattle, turned out in summer time upon the adjacent mountain pasture, and it was convenient that those cattle should be bought and sold upon the spot. The lord of Burgh too, in exercise of his seigniorial right, would send his own herdsmen and cattle to Bewcastle waste for the grazing season.

About 1290, Ranulf, son of Adam de Buchcastre, quitclaimed to the monks of Wetherhal all the land with buildings and pasture in the vill of Bewcastle, which he lately held for life of the monks, and which Adam, son of the parson, once held of them. Adam de Swinburn attested the deed (*Wetherhal*, p. 201) and Juliana, daughter of Adam, "son of the parson of Bewcastle," widow, quitclaimed to the same monks, her right to all land in

the vill of Bewcastle, which her father formerly held of them (*ibid.*, p. 200).

The sheriff, in 1291, had taken into the king's hand 10 acres at Bewcastle, belonging to John de Fulwode, because, while John was quarrelling with another man, Robert de Greneheved tried to separate them and was fatally wounded in the thigh by the arrow which John held in his hand. At the inquest, held by the bailiffs of Tyndale, a verdict was returned that Robert died by mischance, so the king, by letters patent, pardoned John and restored to him his land (*Cal. Close Rolls*, p. 164).

John de Swinburn was still alive in November, 1292, and claimed assize of bread and beer in Bewcastle (*Placita de quo waranto*, 20 Edward I, p. 128).

The valor of Pope Nicholas, compiled in 1291-2, contains a note that the church was not taxed at all, because it was "totally destroyed"; and, as regards the prior of Carlisle's pension therefrom "there is none at this day" (*Taxatio Eccles.*, *P.N.*, Rec. Com., p. 332).

Shortly before Pentecost, 1296, the escheator seized Bewcastle, because Adam de Swinburn had become an adherent of John de Balliol (*Cal. Doc. Scot.*, ii, p. 172). On the border, acts of rebellion were sometimes from motives of expediency overlooked, and, if the rebel came to the king's peace and did homage, his lands were restored to him. Instances occur in the history of Levington.

In 1306, William, prior of Carlisle, and his convent presented Magister Robert de Suthayk to the vacant church of Bewcastle and desired the bishop to institute him as rector thereof (*Halton Register*, edit. Thompson, i, p. 251). The usual inquisition was held concerning vacancy and other matters, custody of the church was committed to Robert, and the archdeacon of Carlisle received the customary letter of induction (*ibid.*, p. 253).

Master Robert de Suthayk, rector of Bewcastle, was ordained deacon on March 6th, 1310-11 (*ibid.*, ii, p. 30) and, in 1314, was nominated procurator to represent the bishop in Convocation (*ibid.*, ii, p. 97). The prior of Carlisle was entitled to a pension from the church of Bewcastle (*ibid.*, ii, p. 185).

Adam de Swinburn died in 1318. There was the usual order to take all his lands into the king's hand (*Originalia*, Hodgson, *Northumb.*, part III, vol. ii, p. 296). It should be observed that at this period Adam was not charged with having committed any act of rebellion, and, thirty years later, one of the co-parceners of his estate deposed that "the said Adam bore himself faithfully to Edward I and Edward II, and died in fealty of the latter, without any suspicion of evil" (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 32 Edward III, p. 140).

Adam de Swinburn died seised of Bothecastredall, held of Ranulf de Dacre and Margaret, his wife, by service of 2d. cornage yearly. The manor was worth 40 marks a year before the war, but was then worth nothing, because it was being destroyed by the Scots. Henry, his son, was heir (*Ch. inq. p. m.* Ed. II, file 61, no. 24).

Henry died without issue, and it was probably in consequence of that event that further inquisition was made in 1326-7, when it was found that the said Adam de Swinburn held the manor of Bothcastel of Ranulf de Dacre, lord of Gilsland, as of the manor of Burgh,* by service of homage and fealty. It was "partly destroyed" by the Scots. Adam's daughter, Barnaba, was one of the co-parceners of the family estates (*Cal. inq. p. m.*, 20 Edward II, p. 473).

So, in 1327, the escheator was ordered to cause Barnaba to have seisin of the manor of Bewcastle, of the yearly value of £17 2s. 6d., which the king had assigned to her

* Ranulf de Dacre was chief lord of the baronies of Gilsland and Burgh, in right of his wife, Margaret de Multon.

as part of her share, and rendered to her after taking her homage and security for payment of her relief at the exchequer (*Cal. Close Rolls*, p. 8).

By means of a fine levied in January, 1329-30, the manor of Bewcastle was settled upon, John de Strivelyn* and the said Barnaba, his wife, and their issue in tail, to hold of the chief lords of the fee, by the services pertaining to the same, with remainder to *Barnaba's* right heirs (*Feet of Fines Cumb.*, C.P. 25, case 35, file 9, no. 8).

In February, 1338-9, Edward III granted to John de Strivelyn, then in the king's service in parts beyond the sea, respite until Michaelmas following for the *two reliefs*, which were exacted from him after the death of Adam de Swinburn, father of Barnaba, John's wife, and after the death of Henry de Swinburn, her brother (*Cal. Close Rolls*, p. 93).

In 1345, Richard de Denton, chivaler, granted to John, son of John de Denton, chivaler, a messuage, a carucate of land, 100 acres of meadow and 200 acres of pasture in Bewcastle, to hold to John de Denton and his issue in tail, of Richard de Denton and his heirs, rendering every year to Richard, during his life, £10 sterling, and to Richard's heirs a rose at the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, and doing, *for Richard and his heirs*, all services due to the chief lords of the fee, and, if John should die without such issue, the premises were to revert to Richard and his heirs (*Feet of Fines, Cumb.*, C.P. 25, case 35, file 10, no. 42).

This family transaction suggests that the Dentons, ancient denizens of Bewcastle, had never parted with this carucate of land, but retained it in hand and continued to hold it as a separate fee of the barony of Burgh-by-Sands.

* John de Strivelyn was constable of Edinburgh Castle in 1337 (*Cal. Close Rolls*, p. 68) and was summoned to parliament as a baron from February 25th, 1341-2, until January 8th, 1370-1 (Dugdale, *Summons*, pp. 219 and 278).

In 1355, the prior and convent of Carlisle had a pension of 6s. 8d. from Bewcastle (*Vict. Hist. Cumb.*, ii, p. 136).

For 50 years Master Robert de Suthayk continued rector of Bewcastle, but in 1356 he exchanged livings with Henry de Whitebergh, rector of Stapleton, who was thereupon instituted rector of Bewcastle (Nicolson and Burn).

In February, 1357-8, John de Strivelyn alleged that he had for a long time held Bewcastle to himself and Barnaba and *his* (*sic*) heirs and assigns, and continued in possession, until William de Nessefield, escheator, held an inquisition *ex officio* and found that, in Edward I's reign, Adam de Swinburn adhered to the Scots, rode with them, with banners unfurled, burnt the priory of Hexham, and did other damage in England; that, in Edward II's reign, he was in company with Gilbert de Middleton and other Scots, against his fealty; and that Barnaba, in Edward II's reign, stayed with Robert de Brus as one of the family; and that John de Strivelyn afterwards married Barnaba and he and she held Bewcastle as of her purparty of Adam's land. The escheator had therefore taken Bewcastle into the king's hand, and John de Strivelyn presented a petition that the manor should be restored to him. So the king, having regard to John's good services for a long period, as well beyond as within the seas, regranted the premises to him, to hold to him and Barnaba and *his* heirs and assigns, by such services as were due to the king and the other chief lords, before the same were taken into the king's hand (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 32 Edward III, p. 22).

The king evidently *disregarded* Barnaba's rights by inheritance, partition and family settlement. Nothing more is said about them. John de Bromfield was instituted rector of Bewcastle in 1360, but resigned in the following year, when Adam Armstrong was instituted in his place (Nicolson and Burn).

Barnaba died at this period, and John de Strivelyn married, secondly, Jacoba de Emeldon.

By fine levied in 1361, the manor of Bewcastle was settled upon John de Strivelyn, chivaler, and Jacoba his wife and their issue in tail, to hold of the chief lords of the fee; with remainder to John de Strivelyn and his issue in tail; remainder to John de Middleton and Christiana, his wife, and their issue in tail; remainder to Christiana's issue in tail; remainder to John de Middleton's issue in tail; and remainders over (*Feet of Fines, Divers Counties*, C.P. 25, case 28, file 46, no. 594).

Christiana seems to have been a relation, perhaps a natural daughter of the settlor, because her issue was preferred to that of her husband. It is unnecessary to enquire into the matter, for she took not by inheritance but by express gift. Adam was still parson of Bewcastle in 1367 (*Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*, iii, p. 544).

His successor was named Robert (Nicolson and Burn).

In 1371, Henry de Malton and Margaret, his wife, in consideration of 20 marks of silver, quitclaimed from themselves and Margaret's heirs to William, son of Richard del Forest, and his heirs for ever two messuages, 30 acres of land and 10 acres of meadow at Bewcastle (*Feet of Fines, Cumb.*, C.P. 25, case 35, file 11, no. 76).

John de Strivelyn died in 1378. It was found by inquisition that the *castle* and manor of Bothecastell with lands, meadows, pastures and shielings adjacent in Cumberland, were held of others than the king by the deceased jointly with Jacoba, his wife, and the escheator was ordered to remove the king's hand from the premises and to deliver to Jacoba all issues therefrom taken since her husband's death (*Cal. Close Rolls*, 2 Richard II, p. 169).

That is the first occasion on which the lord's residence is styled a castle. There can be little doubt that Bueth's

manorial mansion occupied the site now covered by the shell-keep (see Mr. R. G. Collingwood's plan, these *Transactions*, N.S. xxii, p. 171) and that the mansion was re-constructed from time to time, as occasion required. But the shell-keep can hardly have been in existence during the earlier part of the fourteenth century, because Mr. J. F. Curwen has pointed out (*ibid.*, p. 188) that it does not exhibit any architectural detail characteristic of that period, and is not once mentioned during the long war between England and Scotland.

The arms of de Strivelyn were *sable* crusily,* three covered cups *argent* (Foster, *Feudal Coats*). A rudely-sculptured stone, preserved at Bewcastle (see illustration, these *Transactions*, N.S. xxii, p. 451) bears those arms and seems to be identical with the stone which, about the year 1688, remained affixed to the gateway of the castle (*Thomas Denton's MS.*). The circumstances point to the conclusion that the construction of the shell-keep was commenced by John de Strivelyn towards the close of Edward III's reign.

John de Stapleton was rector of Bewcastle in 1380 (Nicolson and Burn).

Jacoba died in 1391. It was found that Bewcastle, held of others than the king, had been vested in her and her late husband, John de Strivelyn, and the heirs of their bodies; with remainder to John de Middleton and Christiana, his wife, and the heirs of their bodies; that Jacoba died without issue; and, *by the form of the gift*, the manor should remain to John and Christiana; and there was an order to deliver the same to them (*Cal. Close Rolls*, 14 Richard II, p. 254).

John de Middleton died in 1396 (Hodgson, *Northumb.*, part II, vol. i, p. 362).

* *Crusily*, in heraldic language, signifies sown or strewn with cross-crosslets, without regard to any particular number or position (Robson, *British Herald*, vol. iii). John de Strivelyn's arms and crest appear upon his seal, affixed to a document dated 1373 (Northumberland County History Committee, Vol. iv, p. 378).

In 1401, the Scots had lately, "from default of watch and good governance," captured the castle and taken Christiana and her son, John de Middleton, prisoners. By the aid of their cousins and friends (which seems to mean payment of ransom) Christiana and John regained possession. Henry IV pardoned them for their default and ordered that Christiana should hold the castle during her life, and that John, her son, should do so after her death (*Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, p. 121).

Christiana died in March, 1421-2 (*Cal. esch.*, 9 Henry V, p. 61). The following crabbéd passage mentions her son, John, and her grandson, John de Middleton:—

Christiana, quae fuit uxor Johannis Midelton, chivaler, defuncta, diu ante obitum suum, dedit Rogero de Thorneton, de Novo Castro super Tynam, seniori; Johanni de Midelton filio Johannis de Midelton, militis, filii dictae Christianae; et Isabellae, uxori suae, filiae dicti Rogeri, tertiam partem manerii de Jesmouth (Patent Rolls, 10 Henry V (406) m. 11).

Her son was sheriff of Northumberland in November, 1423; and her grandson, then knight, was sheriff in November, 1460 (*Record Office Lists*, no. ix, p. 99).

But there is no evidence that either the de Middletons or the lords of the barony of Burgh-by-Sands exercised any rights of ownership over their greatly impoverished manor of Bewcastle, so it lapsed into the hand of the king, as lord paramount.

On August 26th, 1470, Edward IV appointed his brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester, warden of the West Marches (Rymer, *Foedera*, vol. xi, p. 658) and in January, 1482-3, granted and confirmed the castle, manor and lordship of Bewcastle to the same Richard and his heirs in tail male (*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi, p. 204).

Richard succeeded to the throne in 1483, and his commissioners granted a lease of the land at Bewcastle to four tenants, Cuthbert Routledge, John Routledge, Robert Elwald and Gerard Nixon (all local surnames)

who paid no rent, but were bound to maintain the king's wars, and "pertained" to the captains of the castle under the king. Before that, the castle and all the lands belonging to the same of long time lay waste (*L. and P. Henry VIII*, vol. xiii, part ii, p. 553).

Humphrey de Dacre, lord of the barony of Burgh-by-Sands, died in May, 1485. He was seised of the manor of Burgh, including rent of a free tenant, *John de Middleton, knight*, in respect of land at Bewcastle; and of a tenement at Bewcastle, called "Poltraghaue,"* with land and meadow, worth nothing, because it was destroyed by the Scots, but held of John de Middleton, knight, by service unknown (*Cal. inq. p. m.*, 1 Henry VII, pp. 70 and 71).

But in 1493, the king made a grant in survivorship to John Musgrave, one of the knights for the king's body, and to Thomas Musgrave, his son, of the office of constable, or keeper, of the castle of Bewcastle; and (for exercise of that office and repair of that castle) a like grant of all the lands in Bewcastle Dale late of John Middleton, knight (*Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 8 Henry VII, p. 429).

In 1515, the same Thomas Musgrave was appointed constable of Bewcastle and *Keeper* of the possessions late of Sir John Middleton in Bewcastle Dale (*L. and P. Henry VIII*, vol. ii, part i, p. 285).

When Henry VIII's valuation was compiled, *circ.* 1536, Thomas Aglionby, canon regular of Carlisle Priory, was rector of Bewcastle. The rectory was worth 40s. a year (*Valor Ecclesiasticus*, Rec. Com., vol. v, p. 278).

In May, 1541, there was a grant in frank almoigne to the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle of all the possessions of the late priory of Carlisle, including the advowson of the rectory and church of Bewcastle and the pension from the same (*L. and P. Henry VIII*, vol. xvi, p. 418).

* Or Polcragane (see *L. and P. Henry VIII*, Vol. xiii, part ii, p. 554).