

ART. VIII.—*Crackenthorpe: its Manor, Hall and the Machell Family.* By LIONEL CRESSWELL.

Read at Crackenthorpe Hall, September 6th, 1932.

ON September 24th, 1876, this Society paid a visit to Crackenthorpe Hall on which occasion a paper on "Some of the Manorial Halls of Westmorland," including Crackenthorpe, was read by Dr. Michael Taylor, who observed that it was not on account of any outstanding architectural features that the Hall claimed a visit by the Society, but as having been the birthplace and ancestral seat of Thomas Machell the Antiquary. Such architectural features as the Hall can boast of will be described to-day by Mr. Morton Rigg, whose profession better qualifies him to do this than mine. I will confine my observations to the derivation of the place-name, a few notes on the history of the manor and of the family of Machell who were lords of the Manor for many generations until shortly before 1788, when it was sold to Lord Lonsdale, bringing it down to the present day, and to a few of the stories and traditions connected with the Hall, hamlet and family. To those who desire to acquaint themselves in greater detail with the ground I cover, there are the printed *Transactions* of the Society of 1874-6, containing Dr. Taylor's paper, those of 1885 containing a very long paper by Bellasis then Lancaster Herald, of which my library contains a bound reprint by the courtesy of Lady Valda Machell, the collection in the Dean and Chapter Registry of the Antiquary's MSS. and another large collection of Machell charters and papers placed in the same custody by Lady Valda Machell. There is no lack of material for local and historiographical research in these.

First then as to the origin of the place-name Crackenthorpe. The Rev. Thomas Machell the Antiquary was under the impression that "cracken" referred to "nuts" or "hasells," of which bushes, quantities grew then as now on the banks of the river. We may dismiss this fanciful derivation, and the more reasonable one attributing the name to the number of "crakes or crows" about the place, in favour of the derivation from "thorpe" a "village" or "hamlet" or a "homestead" belonging to one "Craca," who may or may not have been aware that his name had any association with rooks any more than people called "Palmer" knew that their name once meant "pilgrim." Any association with "kraken" a "sea-dragon" or "sea-serpent," as suggested by Canon Isaac Taylor or with "craig" a rock may also be dismissed. Now for a few words about the surroundings. Some distance east of Crackenthorpe away across several fields runs an unused and enclosed stretch of the Roman road that went from Appleby to Kirkby Thore. About a quarter of a mile from the Hall in the direction of Appleby opposite Dixon's bungalow is the site of St. Giles' Chapel and a little farther on the left side of the road is the site of "Peg Sneddle's" trough. Of the chapel no remains exist. On what used to form part of Crackenthorpe Common nearer to Kirkby Thore is the site of a Roman Camp investigated and reported on in the *Transactions*.

On the other side of the river Eden lying due west from Crackenthorpe are the remains of Bewley Castle. Striking views of Saddleback, Helvellyn and the Crossfell range are to be obtained from the high ground lying between the Hall and Thornborrow's farmstead. On the slopes below the Hall are two groves called High Crow Wood and Low Crow Wood.

On the slopes of the holme park lying to the south are evidences of what some consider to be terrace cultivation. It is a subject of which I know nothing, so leave it to the experts.

I am not aware of any mention in Domesday of the Manor of Crackenthorpe, but as will be remembered that Survey did not extend regularly into Westmorland. Its emergence into local history took place in the reign of Henry II, when Halthe le Machell and his wife Eve bestowed meadow and other land in Ellerker and Crackenthorpe on the Eden banks and fifteen acres by Troutbeck on the Canons of St. Mary's Carlisle and Humphrey le Machel bequeaths to the same the third of Lowther church. In an account of Henry II's Exchequer of divers fines for the delivering up of Appleby Castle to the King of the Scots, Humphrey Machel is fined 15 marks, and later in the same reign (1182) was fined for alleging that he held "Crossebi" of another lord when he really held it of the King.

About 1154 or later William Malus Catulus granted land in Ellerker to Adam de Kirkbythore and also some of his mother's estate at Crackenthorpe to his brother Alexander.

The name Machell in earlier times occurs as Malchien or Mauchell which was possibly a nickname of some sort equivalent to "bad lad" or the like, "cheil" is a Westmorland dialect word for "young fellow" and Burns' "chiel amang ye takin' notes," and Byron's "Childe Harold" are familiar to all. "Mauchell" or "Malchiel" became Latinised as Malus Catulus (mischievous whelp) whence the canting arms of sable three greyhounds courant argent that is three silver greyhounds running across a black shield. The Antiquary Thomas Machell contended for descent from the Roman Catulus, a cognomen of the gens Lutatius, a gens that gave two consuls to Rome. His argument was briefly this, Whelp Castle (now known as Kirkby Thore) is hard by Crackenthorpe, Ulf (Wolf) and Whelp (Catulus) are synonymous (we read in Domesday "In Lonesdale et Coceham habuerunt Ulfet Machel duas carucatas terrae ad gel-

dum, the Machell and Whelpdale arms are similar, Malus Catulus and Mauchael appear indiscriminately in the deeds and Kirkby Thore was a Roman Station.”).

Catulus was supposed by Machell to have married the heiress of Crackenthorpe and declined to return to Rome in the year 409 A.D. on the Roman withdrawal. It is well to be precise in the matter of dates!

“The evidence seems inconclusive” is Lancaster Herald’s terse comment; who also adds that there is no authority for any crest of Machell of Crackenthorpe by grant seal or otherwise. The motto “Winnefield” recalls some traditional run with buckhounds over the region now called Whinfield, lying between Temple Sowerby and Clifton. The Antiquary refers to a dog belonging to his father called “Winfield” and a run with it over Marton Dufton and Cross Fell. The greyhounds remind one also of the coursing that takes place annually on Whinfield.

Matilda wife of William Mauchell was living in 1206 and Galfridus Malus Catulus gave lands in Crackenthorpe derived from the aforesaid William to Alexander de Crackenthorpe and his two sons Henry and Thomas confirm the estate granted by their father.

Roger Malus Catulus, Vice-Chancellor in Richard I’s time is claimed as one of the family. It was usual to consider the Great Seal as inseparable from the person of the Chancellor; when the king went abroad the Chancellor sometimes accompanied him with the Great Seal, a duplicate being left with the Vice-Chancellor, or the Vice-Chancellor might go with the king. William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, King Richard I’s Chancellor always had Vice-Chancellors. The second of these was Roger Malus Catulus or Malchien. He attended Richard in Sicily on his way to Palestine and was drowned near Cyprus, toppling overboard with the seal suspended round his neck. The crusade voyage of Richard and his

wife Berengaria and shipwreck of the Chancellor's vessel were done into rhyme by Piers of Langtoft.

There are also said to have been several aldermen and sheriffs of London called Machell.

In 1266 litigation is recorded in a plea moved the Thursday next before the feast of Pope St. Gregory in the Court at Westminster by writ from the king to bring a suit between William de Crackenthorpe, plaintiff and John Mauchell, defendant upon a promise that John had given to let William grind all the demesne corn at his mill. An agreement was come to. I may here remark that this was the beginning of many law suits by a race more than usually litigious and quarrelsome in and out of the courts. The mill no longer exists—presumably it may have been a "soke" mill where the lord had the sole right of grinding the corn. The site is now occupied by a turbine house used for generating electric light for the Hall from the mill-race. An old oaken mill-wheel axle and a few old and gnarled apple trees are all that is left of the mill and garth. This John was probably he who figures among the jurors in a dispute between King Edward I and the Abbot of St. Mary's, York, over the Bongate Advowson, decided in favour of the latter. He was living in August, 1298 and in July, 1311, his widow bestowed her lands at Lazonby on her son Thomas.

Thomas lord of Crackenthorpe in 1309 owed knight service, wardship and cornage* to the great house of Clifford. For many generations we find Machells closely connected with the Cliffords, both by knight and personal service.

Walter Mauchell son of Thomas married Elizabeth Beauchamp of Lazonby. He had a law suit with his sister Johanna and her husband William de Stirkeland in 1356. It ended amicably by the service of a Rose—a form of petit serjeantry.

* See *Trans.*, N.S. xxviii, p. 78.

John Mauchell, his son, was lord of Crackenthorpe in 1369 and also mayor of Appleby. In 1428 John Mauchayle of Crackenthorpe, senior, granted his estate there to Roger de Crackenthorpe, rector of Kirkby Thore and on St. Andrew's day, 1448, "our dear John Machell and Katherine his consort receive a grateful communication from the Franciscan Chapter at Carlisle."

The earliest existing Court Roll is dated 9th January, 1476, in the reign of Edward IV and includes rents from Kirkby Thore, Bolton, Colby, Appleby and Long Marton. Among the tenants' surnames the following are a few still existing in the village or neighbourhood. Addison, Atkinson, Bird, Chapelhow, Crackenthorp, Dent, Furnass, Gibson, Harrison, Hatton, Herd, Markham, Nanson, Nelson, Parkin, Pattinson, Pierson, Rigg, Strickland, Thornburgh, Williamson and others.

At the Manor Court of 1603 a Barnabas Maychell was presented for language towards Isabella wife of John Maychell, further Isabell Maychell ye wife of Richard Maychell and Henry son did take one "gimer" lamb, of whose goods and cattales it is not known, about 4 years since and are therefore guilty of "petit mycherie" to the value of 11d. "Petit mycherie" meant petty theft or larceny. The term recalls Shakespeare's expression "miching mallecho."

Lingard mentions in his History, as also does Agnes Strickland in her "Lives of the Queens of England," that Henry VI was frequently concealed in the house of John Machell of Crackenthorpe after the battle of Hexham. When King Henry fled from the lost battle of Hexham (1463), he gained an asylum among his loyal subjects of Westmorland and Lancashire, where he was many months concealed, sometimes in the house of John Machell at Crackenthorpe, sometimes like a hermit in a cave. There are even now traditions of his residence in several of the northern halls and castles. The glove, boot

and spoon he left with his kind host Sir Ralph Pudsay at Bolton Hall, are still preserved. It is recorded that John Machell received a pardon from King Edward IV in 1466 for having sheltered the late King Henry VI.

There is a room in the Hall known as the King's Bed-chamber, and the garden on the other side of the road opposite the entrance gates is known as the King's garden wherein traditionally the young king was hidden disguised as a labourer when the Yorkist troops came in search of him. This John married Catherine Huddleston.

An important personage at the commencement of the Tudor period and clearly one of the family was the Reverend Harry Machell of Thirsk Hall, Donnington and Prebendary of North Newbald, in the Cathedral Church of St. Peter at York. In 1515 he acted as referee in a dispute between Guy Machell of Colby Laithes, gent. and Sir Richard Garnet, vicar of St. Lawrence Appleby. Colby Laithes is a farm on the bank of the river opposite to Chapel Wood.

Guy and Hugh Machell joint lords of Crackenthorpe, sons of John, held a court 11 December, 1511 *temp.* Henry VIII. Hugh had a yearly pension of £6. 13s. 4d. for assisting Sir Thomas Wharton, Warden of the West Marches. A muster roll shows 50 men serving under Hugh in border service, that is to say, 25 from Hilton, 6 of horse and 19 of foot from Appleby. Against each is noted his equipment. There is an interesting agreement in 1513 between Hugh and Guy previous to their going to the "Kings Warres" in case, either be "spendit" and for the sake of their "pure" children. But this did not save them from later quarrels about that old bone of contention, Crackenthorpe Mill. In 1509, a lengthy pardon was granted by the king to Hugh Machell for all done or perpetrated before the 23rd of April last. In the same year, sad to relate, Hugh Machell had beaten, hurt and maimed Sir Henry Smythe, the chantry priest

of Appleby. It cost him 40s. a year for Sir Henry's life "or until something better be provided for Sir Henry by Hugh." Let us hope Sir Henry received the annuity regularly. Guy and Hugh Machell and Guy's son Thomas were involved in protracted litigation too tedious to recite. It has been supposed that the cause of it all was a wicked uncle who seized the estate, suppressing the claims of an infant nephew.

Richard Machell held three courts at Crackenthorpe in 1556 and 1557, outliving his son John, whose son Hugh was styled "Old Hugh," from the great time he lived. He was a man of great stature and surprising activity. The Dean and Chapter of Carlisle had occasion to complain to the Queen in council that he had forcibly entered upon Church land within Crackenthorpe of which they were lawfully possessed in tithe of cornage and sheavage, and had carried off two hundred sheaves of wheat and rye, 200 of bigg and barley, each valued at £20 and 200 of oat.

On the lower terrace stands an old plain red stone font with an incised inscription around the edge:—"Sybel daughter of Hew Machell was christened in this font Bongate Church March 1 1582." This was I think the above Hugh.

Hugh's sons, Lancelot, Henry and John, were "proper men of good stature" says the Antiquary "and I know not whether they be the three Machells who overcame ye three Backhouses at Bolton. Three brothers to three, all the Backhouses were disarmed. John was nicknamed "Blewcap" from having chased a great many Scots, he also drove the whole market before him on Thomas' Day, he tied up two keepers to a tree in Whinfell Park who had threatened him and his greyhound. When "Old Hugh" died, having outlived Lancelot, his grandson and heir, Hugh became the family storm centre. His Uncle Henry married him to one Margaret Beck. Francis Earl of

Cumberland, as Hugh's lawful guardian, was down on him at once, proceedings only being stayed by a fine of £200. Later in 1626 Sir John Lowther was called in to keep the peace between uncle, nephew and father-in-law.

This Hugh, lord of Crackenthorpe and mayor of Appleby (1632-8) was fined £10 by Lord Wentworth in 1630 for neglecting to attend King Charles' coronation and to receive the order of knighthood. "He was the first who gave anything to ye scholars at Appleby for performing of exercises and yt which he gave (being the mayor of the place) was a large Meddall . . . ros. in value." One of his sisters ended her days as a nun "if I may say so," says the *Chronicler*, at a great age in the hospital at Appleby.

Lancelot Machell, lord of Crackenthorpe and mayor of Appleby (1660-71) was a Governor of Appleby School, Receiver General for Westmorland, a lieutenant in Sir Richard Graham's troop of horse, 1674 and bowbearer to the Earl of Thanet. The troublous times through which he lived are indicated by a permit of 1648 "to keep one fowling piece for his pleasure." In 1656 he was summoned to London and Westminster by Oliver Cromwell. He was first mayor of Appleby after the restoration, but would not take the oath or staff of office until he had sent for Oliver Cromwell's charter and in open court cut it to pieces with his own hands "and then looking about him he espied some taylors and cast it to them saying it should never be a measure unto him." What the poor taylors had done to have this flung in their faces is not clear.

The Corporation books of Appleby it is said show that the Machells have figured as mayors of Appleby from Richard II's time. Lancelot was much in favour with Anne, Countess of Pembroke. He was a trustee of the fund established for keeping her family monuments in repair. She had a particular respect for the Machell family, "who for upwards of 500 years had served in the retinue of her family," "howbeit," she was wont to say

that she had reluctance to employ a Machell in her service, they were over "high blood." Lancelot's brother Henry was her steward. She gave this Lancelot several keepsakes including her portrait in oils that hangs in the Central hall and was presented to me by Lady Valda Machell, when I purchased the estate in 1928.

Lancelot was a tough adversary at football when young, for he never played without laming two or three. His feats in foot racing were notable. He refused to be a justice of the peace, was against the wearing of armour, backplates especially, "for armour did only load a man and he that turned his back deserved to die." He was a great hunter, it is said, and one who could put his hand to any kind of husbandry when among work folk, and behave like the best of gentry when amongst them. He preferred "aile" which he called "corn drinke" to wine and seldom went to law but always had the better. A most fortunate man!

Lancelot's wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Sleddall of Penrith. She was the source of certain ghostly stories related hereafter. Her portrait hangs in the Central Hall. Lancelot left three sons, Hugh his successor at Crackenthorpe, who refronted the Hall as it now is; Thomas the well known Antiquary, and Lancelot described as of Skipton Castle, co. York, and Bewley Castle, Warden to Richard, Earl of Thanet.

Hugh Machell, lord of Crackenthorpe and mayor of Appleby (1682) held courts of the Manor in 1681 and 1690. He is depicted as "of little stature but of great gallantry." In 1688 the Bolton men and men of Crackenthorpe came to blows over the six acres, called "Speeding Willows," at Ellerker, which had got riven from Crackenthorpe lands by the Eden when in flood forcing a new channel. The Machells, never loth to go to law, did so and won—all claim to the "Speeding Willows" being relinquished in 1706.

Hugh's brother Thomas known as "The Antiquary," followed his brother Hugh to Queen's College, Oxford. He promoted the welfare of Appleby School, was especially skilled as an artist and herald, many of his sketches and plans being of superior merit and he was a great lover of antiquities and enquirer into local history and archaeology.

It is possible, I dare say, that he painted the hunting scene over the fireplace in the King's Room or Haunted Chamber. The others in that room are apparently modern.

He was baptised at Bongate Church, 20 June, 1647, matriculated in 1663, graduated B.A., 1688 and M.A., 1671. He was presented to the Rectory of Kirkby Thore by the Hon. John Tufton, 1677 and was appointed a Royal Chaplain. He married Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of William Godson, lord of the Manor of Dogmersfield, Hampshire, and left issue, all baptised at Kirkby Thore. He was a friend and correspondent of Dugdale and Thomas à Wood. Of him it has been written that his love of his family and country, casts a glow over even the driest of his details. He seems to have been of a gentle and estimable character, well liked both as a man and parson.

The range of his interests and intellectual curiosity was extraordinarily wide. Nothing came amiss to his net, be it a Roman urn or a boys' house to house New Year's rhyme, whatever found was, as by Captain Cuttle, made a note of. I have spent imprisoned many hours in the Dean and Chapter Registry while poring over his MSS.

The present hall was rebuilt, or rather refronted, in 1685, by Hugh Machell. Of it the Antiquary wrote: "About 1 mile and $\frac{1}{2}$ N.W. from the parish Church lyth Crackenthorpe a village consisting of about 30 families, whereof 3 are freehold, the rest arbitrary to Crackenthorpe Hall wich lyth at the high end of the Towne at the west

side of it.* It is a dilicate pile of building facing to the N. —as most of the Principal houses do—having a pedament and 2 spears or cupilos at the top of the House—nothing comendeth this mansion more than its situation wch is on a plane at the foot of one hill and upon the top of a very high banke from wch. again you have a descent down a steep banke all covered with wood to the river Eden. It hath 2 courts before it and a way wch. flanketh them from the Town to the kitchen and other offices, so that none can come to the house upon any occasion but they will see the front and beauty of it.” The Antiquary goes on to refer to the distant prospect of the antique towers of Appleby Castle and Colby Hall; to the “deep poole (or “dub” as they call it) which carried a pleasure boat; of the broad bank of Chapel Wood crowned with the ruins of St. Giles Chapel and a well (the water from which still comes to the Hall for garden and stable use); and to the “Banke or Hil” lying eastwards from the high end of the Chapel Wood called Roger-Head—part of the then estate but now a separate farm. Below this lay the Ermine (? Hermit) Holme, now forming part of the picturesque Vale of Tempe named, I know not by whom, after the Thessalian Vale. “At the end of Ermit Holme is the hedge of St. Nicholas a little sike wch. runs down before it wch. springs in a mere in this lordship where ye wild ducks are wont to breed and at that beyond again in the very nib or east end of the lordship and its high domane is a place wch. is called Hangsmanclose and here following the Roman Road.”

The Antiquary helped with the plans of rebuilding for his brother Hugh, being a passionate admirer and promoter of the pseudo-classic and Palladian architecture. Camden's *Magna Britannia* mentions Crackenthorpe as being famous for its manor house and moor, the pleasant

* 1932. Present area of Crakenthorpe Parish, 1338 acres land, 30 acres water, 25 houses, 24 families, 41 males, 52 females, total population, 93.

seat of the Machells from Conquest times. Reference therein is also made to the Roman Maiden Way lying some little distance east of the Hall across the fields; to the Roman Camp at Redlands Bank, and to certain antiquarian discoveries. The Antiquary sent three urns to Oxford that were discovered at Machell's Bank and described by him in a letter to Dugdale, 1684. He was elected a Fellow of the Oxford Philosophical Society for this. He was also responsible without doubt for the two Roman altars set in the east gable end of the older part of the Hall as flankers to the Machell arms carved in red stone. To the Antiquary for his help with the plans his brother wrote a Latin couplet:—

“*Aspirante Deo, Domus haec antiqua resurgit
Sumptibus Hugonis, ingenioque tuo.*”

From a letter from Dr. Hill of Queen's College, dated 27 Feb., 1720 to Lancelot Machell, Esq., at Crackenthorpe in Westmorland “By Burgh bag” it would appear there was some design of restoring St. Giles' Chapel for the convenience of the tenants. Dr. Hill suggested that the chapel should be brought down from the top of the bleak hill and placed somewhere in the village between the two “Yates” the better to avoid the storms and for the sake of old folk and young children. A little bell would hardly be enough to be heard by the villagers so far away, said he.

The Antiquary being a true Machell got himself involved in a dispute with Lord Thanet about a chaplain at Temple Sowerby. He was buried at Kirkby Thore, 5 Feb., 1698, leaving a will. Little or nothing seems to be known of his children. The history of his MSS. now at Carlisle is well known and has been recapitulated by Ferguson and Canon Dixon in the *Transactions* of the Society. There is a series of folio volumes arranged by Bishop Nicolson of Carlisle to whose care Machell bequeathed them. In his preface to the first volume the Bishop rather queru-

lously observes that "in the transcripts of Records, etc., the Antiquary had made use of other men's hands as in the 4th volume I find a good many of my own writings." "This drudgery (I remember) I was unwillingly put upon in 1678 when Mr. Machell was Fellow and I Taberdar of Queen's Coll."

The Will of Parson Machell is not without interest. It is given in detail by Ferguson as "the Will of him whom we may consider to be the father of all Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquaries." Mr. R. G. Collingwood, our President, referred to Machell's soundness as an antiquary at our meeting at Watercrock a year or two ago. The will is dated October 19th, 1698, whilst he was buried 5 Feb., 1698, an apparently impossible happening but due to the fact that before 1752 when the Calendar was altered, the year began in March, so that the Antiquary's will bears the correct date and that of his burial at Kirkby Thore, would be February, 1699 nowadays. The total value of his estate was £392 less funeral expenses £20. He left his collection of antiquarian papers to Bishop Nicolson as stated before. In the inventory of his belongings we find that "his purse, apparrell, mare, saddle and bridle were valued at £40, Kitchen utensils £7, Bedding £12, Corn in Barn, £60, 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ Stacks of hay £18, a cowe £2. 10s. a mare 10s. (poor old thing) and that there were debts owing to the deceased amounting to £153. 8s. 6d."

In saying farewell to the Antiquary, we may say of him as Goldsmith said of his parson in the Deserted Village:

"Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed nor wished to change his place.
A man he was to all the country dear
And passing rich on forty pounds a year."

The Antiquary's nephew Lancelot succeeded in due course to the estate and was followed by his second surviving son the Reverend Richard, who again was followed by his second surviving son Lancelot, who

never married and a short time before his death in 1788 sold the remnants of the manor to the then Lord Lonsdale. Thus was broken the long manorial lordship of the Machells.

Lancelot's brother Christopher the soldier whose portrait is over the Central hall fireplace was deeply incensed at the sale being effected without being given an opportunity of purchase but there is reason to believe that the letter was not delivered to Lancelot until after the sale. Lancelot resided at Edenhall on a small property inherited from his mother and probably sold because the Crakenthorpe property yielded little or nothing after payment of interest on mortgages and loans.

Colonel Christopher Machell was a younger son of the Rev. Richard Machell, rector of Asby (a family living) where he was born in 1747. He saw service in the American War losing his arm at the Battle of New York. There is an interesting letter in the Supplementary Machell MSS. in the Dean and Chapter Library from the young officer to his father announcing the loss of his arm and the care taken of him in the house where he was lodged. On his return he settled at Beverley in Yorkshire where he died in his 80th year. He left five sons one served at Badajos, another was killed at St. Sebastian, another fought at Waterloo. All except the fifth son Robert were bachelors. Robert entered the Royal Navy early in life but afterwards went into the Church. A younger son of his, Captain James Machell, bought back Crackenthorpe Hall, restored the old portion and added the new house, the estate including Chapel Hill and Wood and part of Roger Head.

James Octavius Machell generally known as "the Captain" was born in 1837, retired from the Army in 1864 and died in 1902, aged 65. On leaving the army he embarked on what became one of the most notable careers on the British turf. As a subaltern he distin-

guished himself as an athlete, winning many regimental trophies. One of his former comrades writing in 1893 said that at that time (1856), Machell was a marvel of activity, and "never shall I forget his performing the feat of jumping from the floor to the mantelpiece and remaining there on a very narrow ledge." Indeed, this feat was said to have been the means through successful wagers of laying the foundations of his racing fortunes. In 1865 he joined Mr. Henry Chaplin (the Squire of Blankney, afterwards Viscount Chaplin) in a racehorse owning association. It was by his advice that Henry Chaplin acquired the famous Hermit, winner of the 1867 Derby and sire of a grand crowd of horses. The winnings for his stable were reputed to be £150,000 of which "the Captain" doubtless had his share. He was also the turf guide and trainer for several other patrons, namely Lord Calthorpe, the Earl of Aylesford and two Earls of Lonsdale. His was the directing spirit in many great triumphs on the turf and he also won distinctions as an owner of Steeplechasers. From 1884 to the time of his death Captain Machell won 540 races under Jockey Club Rules of a total value of £111,000. He was also one of the finest game shots of his day. It was during his time that the Hall was lent to the present Earl and Countess of Lonsdale for their honeymoon.

On his death he was succeeded by his nephew the late Colonel Percy Wilfrid Machell, who commanded the 11th (Service) Battalion Border Regiment (Lonsdale) that sailed for France in November, 1915, with the rest of the 9th Infantry Brigade, forming part of the 32nd Division. The Battalion was badly cut to pieces in June, 1916, when among those killed was Lt.-Col. Machell, who was leading an important attack. Colonel Machell married the Countess Valda Gleichen, one of the three daughters of H.S.H. Prince Victor of Hohenlohe Langenburg (nephew of Queen Victoria) by his wife the Lady Laura Seymour,

a daughter of the Marquess of Hertford. Through this marriage Crackenthorpe has an interesting connexion with Queen Victoria and the reigning family of England. It will be remembered that the Duchess of Kent, mother of Queen Victoria was twice married, her first husband being the Duke of Leiningen—one of the mediatised families of Europe—that is one of those non-reigning families with whom royalties might intermarry. There was one daughter of the first marriage, the Princess Feodora, therefore an elder half-sister of Queen Victoria. She became the wife of H.S.H. Prince Hohenlohe Langenberg and grandmother of Lady Valda Machell. One of Lady Valda's sisters the Countess Feodora Gleichen achieved distinction in sculpture. She died some years ago. Specimens of her work exist at Crackenthorpe Hall, the bronze fountain on the terrace having been designed by her as also the little faun in the basin below.

There is one son of this marriage—Roger—and I may say that I have made arrangements for the opportunity of re-acquisition of the estate by the Machell family, in the event of sale by me or my successors. There are other descendants of the Machell family, some of whom, in the female line, reside in the neighbourhood of Appleby. There are several long and full pedigrees in the Jackson Library at Tullie House, Carlisle.

There is no lack of ghostly traditions in Cumberland and Westmorland as every one knows, such as that of the "Radiant Boy" of Corby Castle. One of the best known relates to the appearance of the spirit of Elizabeth Sleddall, the wife of Lancelot Machell of Cromwellian times and later. Elizabeth Sleddall was executrix of her husband's will and because of some real or fancied injury to her interest in the estate it used to be said that she paid the Machells ghostly visitations whenever the head of the family was about to die.

There seems to be some confusion of persons or names,

or "mixing of spirits," because the country folk hereabouts tell of one "Peg Sneddle" who was no better than she should have been during life and still more troublesome after death. So much so that when the river happened to be low they rolled aside the large boulder of Shap granite, lying in the river bed a little way below the Hall, dug a grave there, upended Peg from her resting place in consecrated ground and putting her in the new grave rolled back the boulder. The accompanying exorcism was, I am told, performed by a Roman Catholic priest, the reason, I suppose, being that the Latin tongue is the one necessary to control disturbed and unquiet spirits. Since then she only walks once a year. She has to be there 999 years. The reputed portrait of Elizabeth Sleddall or "Peg Sneddle," one or the other or neither, hangs in the Central Hall. A very buxom ghost! Her wraith from the river is said to rise once a year in September, and find its way through the blocked-up window in the King's Room. Possibly some wisp of autumn mist in the past gave rise to the vision. The country folk also say she has been seen to drive along the Appleby road at a great pace with "amber leets" in the carriage and to disappear suddenly in Machell's Wood, near the spot called "Peg Sneddle's trough." One narrator Brockham Dick (Atkinson) of the Elephant Inn, now no longer an inn, who kept the tollgate there in his youth, used to tell a thrilling story of old Mistress Machell driving through the gate in offended style when the "Helm" wind was raging. She was seated in a large old-fashioned carriage drawn by six coal black horses with long tails, with flaming eyes and nostrils. The coachman wore a three-cornered laced hat and had huge jack boots. Other attendants followed on horses. Suddenly with a wild blast the turnpike gate was burst open and with long unhallowed shrieks the unearthly team with the wan-faced apparition of Mistress Machell in the carriage

disappeared in the midnight darkness.. When the Helm wind is blowing and storms raging on the fell, "Peg" is said to be in her tantrums and in more gracious mood in fine weather. An old oak tree that formerly existed in the neighbourhood of Crackenthorpe was called Sleddall's Oak. A female figure, supposed to be that of Mistress Machell's ghost, was seen thereunder when any misfortune was about to befall any member of the Machell family.

CRACKENTHORPE HALL.

OBSERVATIONS ON ITS ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES.

By Mr. R. Morton Rigg.

The only remnant of the old Manor House is the kitchen and back part of the premises and the apartment which has been part of the old Hall, in which remains the old arched fireplace.

At the base of the exterior walls the original large boulders of the foundations of the Manor House are visible.

It appears to have been rebuilt in 1629, and further alterations were made in 1663, the date stone (L.M. 1663) at present built into the new part of the Hall is not in its original position, and no doubt refers to some additions made at that time by Lancelot Machell. In 1685, we are told the Manor House was refronted by Hugh Machell, brother of Thomas the Antiquary, the latter was a devoted admirer of the pseudo-classic and Palladian Architecture, which at that time was the fashion in this country, Wren's influence making itself felt everywhere. We have other instances of this style being adopted on Gothic buildings in this district, viz., the doorway at Newby Hall, which coincides with the date of Crackenthorpe and Penrith parish church a little later in 1722.

The Antiquary assisted his brother with the plans and details, hence we have this Classic front. The principal

features are the architrave of the doorway and the bold triangular pediment and cornice with its heavy dentil ornament.

There is a fine black oak staircase with twisted balusters and some panelling of the 17th century.

About 1880 Capt. James Machell made further extensive additions and appears to have carried out the style in accordance with the details of the original Manor House of 1629. It should be noted that the windows are a copy of the old ones, and the main staircase is a replica of the black oak staircase.