ONE matter so far little investigated is the extent to which the families in rural parishes in the Lake Counties, during the 18th century and the early 19th, remained relatively constant in number or in proportion to population. The tendency has perhaps unconsciously been to assume that, once disturbances like the Pilgrimage of Grace had ceased, there was little variation.

It was well enough known that the number of "statesmen" continued to decline; but a change in status or tenure need not have meant a change of habitation; and, since most of the labour employed on the land was believed to be supplied by the farmers' families, there seemed to be no great reason for whole households to move out of a parish though, no doubt, sons and daughters in a large family might eventually have to do so.

Recent studies, however, have tended to cast doubt on the notion that there existed everywhere in the North a class of yeomen tilling the acres which their fore-elders for centuries before them had cultivated. Some, no doubt, there were; but it is clear from manorial customs in general that alienation was possible and from the court books that it occurred. When a freehold or a customary estate was bought by a man from outside the parish in which it lay he would bring with him workers in his own family and perhaps others. On the other hand it has to be borne in mind that the poorest inhabitants of a parish might be prevented from leaving it to seek work, or might be brought back to it, by the operation of the law relating to settlement.
In an attempt to shed some light on the matter in the following paragraphs use has been made of the baptismal registers of four parishes, i.e. of Newton Reigny and Great Orton in Cumberland and of Crosthwaite cum Lyth and Witherslack in Westmorland. The method has been to list the surnames of fathers recorded during the period 1700-1719 and then to see how many of these surnames recurred in the periods 1740-1759 and 1780-1799. During the twenty years 1740-59 a number of new surnames occurred in the registers and the occurrence of these in the period 1780-99 was traced. An imperfection, probably inevitable, in this method is that it depends merely on a count of surnames, which is by no means the same thing as a count of families, for a parish might well contain several families bearing the same surname. As a rule, however, the registers do not enable all the separate families to be entirely disentangled, and in any event the present purpose is simply to show that variation in the family make-up of the parishes occurred and to give a rough idea of its extent.

The data extracted from the registers are summarised in the table below:

1. NEWTON REIGNY
   A. In 1700-1719: 37 surnames, of which
      in 1740-1759 21 recur, and
      in 1780-1799 8 recur.
   B. 1740-1759: 21 new surnames, of which in
      1780-1799 10 recur.

2. GREAT ORTON
   A. In 1700-1719: 39 surnames, of which
      in 1740-1759 17 recur, and
      in 1780-1799 11 recur.
   B. 1740-1759: 28 new surnames, of which in
      1780-1799 7 recur.

3. CROSTHWAITE CUM LYTH
   A. In 1700-1719: 60 surnames, of which
      in 1740-1759 28 recur, and
      in 1780-1799 25 recur.
   B. 1740-1759: 50 new surnames, of which in
      1780-1799 14 recur.

4. WITHERSLACK
   A. In 1700-1719: 35 surnames, of which
      in 1740-1759 15 recur, and
      in 1780-1799 13 recur.
   B. 1740-1759: 40 new surnames, of which in
      1780-1799 16 recur.

During the first sixty years of the 18th century, it will be observed, there was little difference between Great Orton, Crosthwaite and Witherslack, in all of which something over 40 per cent of the surnames recorded in 1700-19 persisted in 1740-59. In Newton Reigny the percentage even approached 60. With regard to the new surnames recorded in 1740-59, however, there is a difference: in Newton Reigny and Witherslack 40 per cent or more of these persist in 1780-99, but in Crosthwaite and Great Orton the percentages are 28 and 25 respectively. The position may be stated in another way to show not persistence but disappearance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newton Reigny</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Orton</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crosthwaite</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witherslack</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all four parishes, it will be noted, the influx in the period from 1740 to 1759 was considerable. The new surnames in Witherslack outnumbered the old. But, compared with the surnames of 1700-19, those of 1740-59 were less persistent. More than half of them had disappeared from Newton Reigny and three-quarters had disappeared from Great Orton by the
end of the 18th century. It is clear that if there was any relation at all between the number of surnames and the number of families there must have been a significant change in the family make-up of these four parishes.

The reasons for the alteration are not at all clear. In none of the parishes, so far as is known, were the commons enclosed before 1800 and thus in the period with which we are concerned there were no great numbers of new holdings which people from outside might have opportunities to buy. It is, of course, possible that Carlisle, with a growing population, attracted some families from Great Orton and likewise that Penrith drew some from Newton Reigny, though the effect of Penrith may not have been very marked. Its manufacturing activity had hardly started by 1760 and its production of checks and ginghams, at its peak about 1788, was very soon ended by machine competition. Indeed it is conceivable that the accessibility of shops and services in Penrith, only about three miles away, may have helped to make some families content to remain in Newton Reigny. That may have been true also of Carlisle, five miles distant from Great Orton. In any event, whatever effect these two towns may have had in drawing people from Great Orton and Newton Reigny, there is still the problem of why and whence, in 1740-59 and later, people poured into these parishes. Similarly, though it is quite possible that Kendal drew part of its increasing population from Crosthwaite and Witherslack, nothing is known about the reason for the influx into those parishes in the second part of the 18th century.

It might be expected that in the 19th century, with more land enclosures, improved farming and industrial development, there would be more mobility. That this

2 W. Whellan, History and Topography ... Cumberland and Westmorland, 601; J. Walker, History of Penrith (1858), 101-102.
certainly happened in the case of Witherslack becomes clear from a study of the 1851 Census return. Of the farmers and landed proprietors therein enumerated, 16 had been born in the parish and 45 had been born elsewhere: of male agricultural servants 30 were born in Witherslack and 85 in other parishes. Most of the immigrants, it is true, had not come from very far away. Many came from neighbouring parishes such as Crosthwaite, Beetham and Heversham, but one farm labourer came from Appleby and one landed proprietor was a retired Manchester cotton merchant.

The surnames of the persons recorded in the Census as heads of families can, in regard to persistence, be classified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1671-1699</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700-1749</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750-1799</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800-1812</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not occurring</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not here suggested that persons named in the 1851 Census were lineally descended from persons of the same surname in the 17th or the 18th century though that is not impossible; but the table does show, even if that had been the case, that during the first part of the 18th century what was left of the older stock was joined by a fresh lot of families and that, in the second half of the century, these families were joined by still others.