

ART. XXIV.—*Some Account of Sir John Lowther, Baronet, of Whitehaven, from Original Sources.* By W. JACKSON, F.S.A.

Read at Ulverston, September 13th, 1887.

SIR John Lowther, only surviving son of Sir Christopher Lowther, of Whitehaven, Lord of the Manor of Saint Bees, succeeded to the estates and baronetcy in his infancy, on the death of his father, intestate, in April 1644. He was baptized at St. Bees, Nov. 20, 1642, but it would almost appear from subsequent dates that circumstances may have delayed his baptism, unusual though it was at this period, and that he may have been a year or two old at this time. He had an only sister named Frances after their mother, who was Frances, coheiress of the Lancasters of Sockbridge and Hartsopp Halls, Westmoreland, and who married to her second husband John Lamplugh, of Lamplugh Hall. Of the infancy and early childhood of Sir John I know nothing. The earliest notice I have found of him is an entry in the “Administration Act Book of the Province of Canterbury” at Somerset House, Vol. ii., Fo. 71.

1653/4 March Sir Christopher Lowther the fourteenth day a Commission issued forth unto Henry Mill the Guardian lawfully assigned of John Lowther & Francis Lowther ye n'rall & lawfull children of Sr Christopher Lowther late of Whitehaven in y^e County of Cumberland Barr^t deceased To administer y^e Goods Chells & debts of y^e s^d decd during y^e Minoritie & to the use of y^e s^d John Lowther and Francis Lowther Minors for that Dame Elianor Lowther his mother hath renounced y^e s^d Adxon. Inventory Exted 31 March.

The manner in which Dame Elianor Lowther, (*née* Fleming), is mentioned might easily mislead ; she was the mother of Sir Christopher and grandmother of Sir John ; his mother may have forfeited her natural and legal claim

to

to the guardianship and administration by marrying a second time soon after her husband's death, and so Dame Elianor may have obtained the grant. She died Nov. 16, 1659, having survived her husband 22 years, and must therefore have attained a great age, and probably at this time her health and capacity may have been failing; and as at the period of renunciation there were still several years of the minority to run, and the estate being one of peculiar importance, it might well have been thought desirable that a more vigorous intellect should take the charge. I have no idea who Henry Mill was.

From this period till 1657 there is another blank, but in that year we find him, though very young, on the eve of taking that position to which his rank and wealth entitled him, for an entry occurs in the Entrance Book of Balliol College, Oxford, under date

Sept. 26, 1657. Dns Johan: Lowther Baronettus De Lowther in Comit. Westmorlando admissus est Socio-Commensalis.

There is a peculiarity in this entry which I shall have occasion to refer to hereafter and explain.

There is preserved at Whitehaven Castle, an old manuscript book giving an account of Sir John Lowther's expenditure for a certain period, the items of which well illustrate the prices of the time. The book is about eighteen inches long by six broad; the debit entries occupy fourteen pages, and the credit are on, but do not fill, two. Some of the latter entries have I think, from the way in which they are worded, been made by Sir John himself, but none of the debit ones, which, I believe, have been partly, if not wholly, entered by his tutor, Mr. John Good. Dress and expenses of living and, especially, of travelling, constitute the majority of the latter entries; but books, and those of solid character, were more frequently purchased than I have indicated by my extracts. I notice none of anything like loose literature, but the era for that pestilent

pestilent form of writing only commenced with the “glorious restoration.” The book begins with the entry, “Sir John Lowther’s account since Michaelmas 1657 at which time he came to Oxon”; then follow the entries of various items of expenditure from Michaelmas to Christmas including his outfit, amounting to £57 08 05. Next I abstract the sum of his expenses from Christmas 1657 to Lady Day 1658, £42 06 00, wherein is comprised a special entry

For a dinner for Dr. Langbaine, Mr. Barlow, Mr. Lamplugh and ye Mr. & Fellows of Baliol College £4 09 08.

This entry is very noteworthy in every respect. For a youth of 16 to have entertained such a company of dons would be sufficiently remarkable, but Gerald Langbaine, the then Provost of Queen’s, who may be said to have left his mark on the literature of the time, was born at Barton Kirk, in the same parish in which Sockbridge Hall, Sir John’s manorial residence, was situated. He died within two months of this festive meeting, and was succeeded by Mr. Barlow, another guest, born at Orton in Westmerland, and therefore also well known to the Lowther family. He was promoted at a later period to the Bishoprick of Lincoln, and was called by his enemies “Bishop of Bugden,” because they accused him of shutting himself up in his palace there and neglecting his episcopal duties. Thomas Lamplugh was a younger brother of Richard Lamplugh, of Ribton Hall, who had married Sir John’s sister Frances. He was Bishop of Exeter at the time William of Orange landed at Torbay, and as Macaulay says “then set off in terror for London,” when James promptly rewarded him for his loyalty by the gift of the long vacant Archbishoprick of York. Returning from this digression I abstract a summary of expenses from Lady Day to Midsummer 1658, £31 12 09 (including a dinner at Mr. Barlow’s 0 06 6); expenses from Midsummer to Michaelmas 1658, £34 00 4; expenses

expenses from Michaelmas to November 20, 1658, £31 16 02. On November 22, Sir John left Oxford, I think, finally as a student, and went to London, only remaining there until early in December when he set out for Swillington in Yorkshire, the seat of his uncle Mr. Wm. Lowther; who, together with a Mr. Busfield (probably a brother-in-law of the latter, as he had married Jane daughter of William Busfield, of Leeds, Merchant), accompanied him via Harwood, Skipton, and Meybourne, the seat of his cousin, Richard Lowther, to Lowther; reaching there probably for Christmas, for the first entry afterwards is dated January 7th. On the 17th of that month he started

On his first journey to Cumberland,

after an entry of what he gave to the servants at Lowther for vales, as such donations were called, and were then looked upon even more as a right and were infinitely more exorbitant than they are in our own day. Sir John travelled, I presume, on horseback, the usual mode in those days, via Keswick to Whitehaven, whence he proceeded to Lamplugh where his mother, then the wife of John Lamplugh, lived. We next find him again at Meyburne, where he "paid to servants 4/." On February 7th he was at Hartsop, of which manor he was Lord, and on the 11th at Sockbridge Hall, also, as above stated, his own property. On March 19th, having again returned to Whitehaven, there occurs an entry "to ye Clarke at St. Bees for drink 6d." March 21st he was at Lamplugh, whence that day he went to Cockermouth and on the following to Ripton, the seat of Richard Lamplugh, his brother-in-law; "to ye servants at Ripton 4/." From thence he went to "Pereth," and on the 29th, "to the servants at Lowther 15/6." Ever on the move, he was at Brugh on the 30th, and thence, by Katrick, Kerthington, Wetherby, Tadcaster, Yorke, and Leeds, came again to Swillington where he remained

remained till April 21st, when on leaving he gave "to the servants at Swillington 11/." Once more on the 27th he was at Whitehaven, where his stay was brief, and after being at Lamplugh and Lowther, on May 6th, the entry "to the servants at Meybourne 3/," and on the following day "for a grey horse bought there £09 00 00," shows another visit to his cousin Richard. On the 12th his bill at Sherburn was 6/, on the 14th that at Pontefract 7/6, and on the 17th, "To ye servants at Swillington 8/." He left there, in the hands of Will Jackson to pay for a mare, "a Balance of £8." He was at Doncaster the same day, and there occurs an entry then "for a girth and an Almanack there 1/2." Proceeding by way of Bawtry, Newark, Grantam, Wansford, Huntington, Cambridge, and Waltham, on "May 21st this day returned to London." During all this time, and through all this wandering, every expense of the most minute nature is carefully entered and summed up nearly monthly though not always strictly to the month. The expenses seem to have been paid by Sir John's servant, Sam Henning, on whose account an entry frequently occurs ; "for Sam's weekly board wages 6/." To resume somewhat in point of time but to change the character of the extracts,

June 14 Tobacco &c and for a letter to Mr. Lamplugh 1/3. 17th Epicurus's Morals 30^d. Road's Anatomy 2/. 31st for Castellio Armesius, Verstegan 00 09 08.

About the end of July Sir John went into Norfolk, no doubt to visit the Hares, relatives of his future wife.

Oct. 12, to Mr. Torriano Italian Master £01 00 00. To Mr. Bettie Dancing Master £01 00 00. Nov. 2, For Daniel & Trussel with Bacon's Henry VII., 11/. 28th For Grotius de Studiis 3/. December ye 5th Cookes Institut 4th part 7/. 26th Cooks bill for Christmas Day 6/.

Rather a curious conjunction of cooks. On the 27th, Sir
John

John was at Hatfield, at Grantham on the 30th, and at Swillington January 5th, where he remained till the 19th, then giving

To the servants at Swillington £01 00 00.

quite an extraordinary donation. Omitting much we come

March 30, 1660, To the men servants at Akeron Bank 9/.

Acorn Bank in Westmerland was the seat of John Dalston, Esq., a distant relative. Thence he went, by way of Kendal and Amblestead, to Ireby in April and returned by Amblestead.

April 29th, The Catalogue of the Compounders 1/6.

This was a list of individuals, and fines levied, which would come very closely home to him; for his uncle Sir John of Lowther was down for a fine of £1,500, his uncle William of Swillington had paid £200, and his relation Richard Lowther of Ingleton, who had bravely defended Pomfret Castle, suffered more than either. Sir John's minority during the troubled period had saved him from such inflictions in the King's cause. The next book mentioned is "Sanderson's King Charles, 15/." "May 20, Catalogue of the King's Judges, 2/2." Note the fact that the restoration was imminent, and Sir John's mind, like that of every one else, was engaged on the execution of Charles and the expulsion of the Royal Family. Feb. 6th Sir John was at Lowther, 16th at Whitehaven, 21st at Lamplugh, then at Ripton and Workington, and in March at Kendal and Ireby. The last entry on the debit side is

1661, April 11. To my Lady Lowther to be sent for London £100 00 00.

The entries on the credit side, if not numerous, are more important in amount; and as specimens I select the following:

1659, Jany 19. Received from my Aunt Lowther at Swillington £20.

Could this be a present in view of his approaching marriage? This was evidently his last visit to Swillington before that event, which may account for the extraordinary vail given to the servants when he left.

Received in Westmorland & Cumbri. as p. page £270 12 4. Received a Legacie left my wife by her grandmother £10. Received of Sir Ralph Hare in part of my wife's portion £300. Borrowed formerly of my mother £23. 1659, 8ber. Received of father Lamplugh formerly lent him £10.

There are various receipts from his cousin North Leigh, and a further payment on account of his wife's portion, apparently credited in Sir John's mother's handwriting. The credit entries, like the debit ones, finish about April, 1661.

I have thought it well to continue my extracts from the manuscript till its termination, but I believe it makes no distinct relation of an event that occurred during the period which it covers, that is the marriage of Sir John, though it mentions his wife at a later date. That ceremony took place at Lowther, as the Parish Register informs us by the following entry,

1659, March 6, Sir John Lowther of Whitehaven and Mrs. Janne Leigh of Lowther married.

This union is a curious instance of how such affairs are brought about. Sir John's uncle, Sir John of Lowther, married to his second wife, subsequent to 1646, Elizabeth, daughter and co-heiress of Sir John Hare, of Stowe Bardolphe, Norfolk, and Widow of Wooley Leigh, of Surrey, who died c. 1642, leaving two children, Thomas and Jane. The latter, at any rate, naturally lived at Lowther, where Sir John and his sister, as wards of their grandmother, probably resided, and even after her death continued to reside with their uncle, and as a result an attachment was formed which led to this early marriage.

In

In 1660, Sir John petitioned for a confirmation of a grant for a market and fair for Whitehaven, in the prosperity of which town he had already begun to interest himself keenly. The grant had probably been made during the Protectorate, and Sir John may have doubted its legality. I subjoin the petition, to which I have failed to find any reply, but there is no doubt that the required confirmation was obtained. It is a curious fact, which almost proves the previous existence of both, that no day for either is suggested in the petition.

State Papers, Domesticks, 1660 Aug. 22 Chas. II, Vol. xi N° 22.
(Petition of Sir John Lowther junior of Whitehaven.)

To the Kings most Excellent Maj^{tie}
The Humble Petition of S^r John Lowther younger of Whitehaven in
the County of Cumberland Bart.
Humbly Sheweth,

That your Petition^{rs} father (a Collonel in his late
Mat^{ies} service, & a sufferer for his sake) haveing together with his
Grandfather, at their owne charges erected a Peare at the Towne of
Whitehaven aforesaid, off which yo^r Petition^r is owner, & bestowed
soe much charge thereupon as made the same a very convenient
Harbour for Shippinge, to the increase of Trade, yo^r Mat^{ies} Customes
& the great benefitt of the Countrey.

That Navigation & the Town thereby increasing, victualls became
scarce ; the Inhabitants therefore in yo^r Petition^{rs} minoritie, pro-
cured a Pattant for the makeinge it a Market towne, to the great
accomodation of themselves the Countrey & the shippinge.

Your Petitioner therefore humbly prayeth that your Mat^{ie} wil be
pleased to give order for granting of a Patent, for setleinge the said
Towne to be a Market & a Ffaire to be kept there in such way as
hath been formerly used or shalbe most convenient, and your Pe-
titioner shall ever pray, &c.

At the Court at Whitehall the 21st of August 1660 His Mat^y is
graciously pleased to referre this Petition unto the Examination &
consideration of Mr. Attorney & Mr. Solicitor Generall who are
desired to certify his Mat^y what they conceave fitt to be don
therein.

Edw. Nicholas.

Sir John must have resided a good deal in London, for
in the Register of St. Martin's in the Fields occur the
following entries ;

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1664. Dec^r 25 Catherine, daughter of Sir John Lowder knt. and Dame Jane (born 25 November.) bapt.

1667. June 13th Jane daughter of Sr John Lowther and Dame Jane bapt. born 12th.

And in the Register of St. Giles in the Fields we find—

1673. Augst 5th James son of Sir John Lowther Knt. and Dame Jane, baptized.

I have not as yet found any record of the birth or baptism of his eldest son, Christopher, nor of another daughter, Elizabeth. It may be well to add here that the son, then Sir Christopher, died Oct. 2nd, 1731, and was buried on the 7th, at St. Andrew's, Holborn; and I learn from Mr. Foster's Pedigree that Jane died unmarried Feby. 27th, 1730.

In 1665, Sir John was chosen one of the Governors of the Free Grammar School of St Bees, founded by Archbishop Grindal, his father Sir Christopher having been elected a member of that body in 1630, the first commencement of a long connexion of the family with that important local institution.

In the same year he alienated to the Gale family the Old Hall in the Market Place, Whitehaven, wherein, I think, he was born; and a later erected mansion, in which I think he resided, was sold to the Addison family about this period.

About this time commences a series of petitions, warrants, grants, &c., preserved at the Record Office, which, although voluminous and numerous, are incomplete, and fail to give a connected account of all that took place with reference to the circumstances. I have stated briefly in my paper on "Whitehaven and its Old Church," how the Lowther family came into possession of the Manor of St. Bees, and that disputes as to the title continued between them and the Wybergh family for many years; but in this year another trouble arose from a claim

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to the foreshore there being advanced by the Earl of Carlingford, Sir Edward Green, and William Dyke, Esq. The former was a member of a family which, like many others, had given several lives and all their property in the service of Charles 1st, and Theobald Taafe, Viscount Taafe, created Earl of Carlingford in 1662, needed something to maintain his dignity. He obtained from the easy monarch Charles II, some grants of a very far-fetched sort, and seems to have discovered that something might be made out of a grant in a locality with which, so far as I can discover, he had no connexion whatever. I subjoin the principal documents relating to this matter. I think it probable that ultimately the claim was bought off, and that subsequently the possession of Sir John remained undisturbed.

State Papers, Domestic ; Charles II. 1665, Vol 119, N^o 45.

(Petition of Sr J. Lowther about the soil at Whitehaven.)

To the Kings most excellent Mat^{ie}

The Humble Petition of Sr John Lowther, Barr^t

Sheweth That at Whitehaven in Cumberland the Soyle betwixt the high and low Water Marks has ever beene reputed parcell of that Mannor; That upon the supposition it was, your Petitioners Ancestors did erect a Peere upon the said Soile, which occasioned some buildings, upon or neare the same; That of late by vertue of an Inquisition for lands derelict by the sea etc the same are now claimed as belonging to your Mat^{ie}

That your Mat^{ie} upon the said Inquisition did order a warrant to passe for the making to certaine persons a Lease of the premisses together with several other particulars therein granted

That upon notice thereof your Pet^r did petition your Mat^{ie} that the said Peers, Buildings and Soile might be excepted out of the said Graunt, which your Mat^{ie} for the encouragement of industry and publick workes hath beene graciously pleased to doe

Your Pet^r therefore humbly prayes your Mat^{ie} that for quieting him and his posterities from the like trouble hereafter and for the further strengthening and securing his Title thereto, your Mat^{ie} would bee graciously pleased to make a Graunt thereof to your Pet^r

And your Pet^r as in duty shall pray &c.

Att ye Court at Whitehall Apr. 27, 1665,

His Mat^{ie} graciously remembering ye constant loyalty & sufferings of
ye

ye Pet^{rs} late Father & family and enclined to gratify him in this suit, is pleased to recommend it to ye Rt. honble ye Lord High Treasurer of England & ye Lord Ashley Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider of it and to report their opinions to his Mat^{ie} what may be fitly done in it for ye good of his Mat^{ies} service and the gratifying ye petitioner. And then his Mat^{ie} will declare his further pleasure.

Arlington.

May it please your Mat^y

We have heard this case of Sir John Lowther (who hath deserved well of the Crowne both in his person and family) as it was involved in those Commissions which the Lord Carlingford of the one part & Col. Grey of the other executed And upon the whole matter both in relacon to the Petitioners Interest And another of Sr (blank) Gryms we thought fit to propose to your Mat^y that both these persons Estates be exempted from further Inquisition And humbly leave it to your Mat^{ies} grace and goodness to give the petitioner such a grant and confirmation of his present Estate as may quiet the same.

13 June 1665.

J. Southampton.

Ashley.

State Papers Domestic, Charles II. 1665, May? Vol. 122, No 106.
(Petition of Sr J. Lowther concerning his salt houses etc in Whitehaven)

To the Kings most Excell^t Mat^{ie}

The Humble Petition of Sr John Lowther Barr^t

Sheweth, That by the unjust straining of Evidence, and the cuning practice of some Comission^{rs} for enquiring after direlect Lands &c, an Inquisition was returned, whereby certain of yo^r Pet^{rs} houses, Salt houses, & Staythes at Whitehaven in Cumberland were returned to bee within the high water marke.

That at the returne thereof, upon yo^r pet^{rs} humble request of a Graunt of the premisses for the correboration of his auncient Title, your Mat^{ie} was graciously pleased for diverse considerations, to referre your Pet^{rs} suite to the Lord high Treasurer of England, and the Lord Ashley Chancellor of your Mat^{ies} Exchequer, to consider thereof and to report to yo^r Mat^{ie} what their Lordships should thinke might bee fitly done, for the gratifying the Pet^r in his suite, & the quieting from future molestations. That notwithstanding such gracious Reference, no report is yet made, whereby others became encouraged and are now Petitioning your Mat^{ie} for a Graunt of the premisses.

Your

Your Petitioner therefore humbly prayes that no such Graunt may passe till a Report bee made upon your Mat^{ies} Referrence
And your Pet^r (as in duty) will ever pray etc.

Domestic Entry Book 22, Page 177.

(Grant to Sir John Lowther)

Our Will & Pleasure is that ye forth^{wth} &c to passe our Grt. Seale cont Our Grt unto our Trusty & Well beloved Sr John Lowther Bart of all those severall messuages Houses or tenements wth all their appurtenances in the Parish of St. Bees in our County of Cumberland, now or late in the severall tenures or occupacons of Thomas Jackson, W^m Rogers, Thomas Towerson, W^m Woodall, Rob. Lashley, Thomas Britton of Hare Cragg, Oliver Wright, Rob. Branling, Tho. Gibson, Tho. Wilkinson, W^m Crosthwaite, W^m Whiteside, Tho. Britton of the hall, Rob^t Hodgson, Rowland Jackson, Jo. Lindath & Christopher Whitfield of Whitehaven or theire severall Assignee or Assignes, & the Salt houses & Staithes wth ye ground & Soyle whereon the same are situate, And also of the Peere or Key there neare unto adjoyneing and all our lands, Tenements & hereditaments lying or being between the Highg water or low water Marke, adjoynig or belonging to the Mannor or Lordship of St. Bees in the County aforesaid, And all our Estate & Interest therein and the Revercons & Remainders thereof wth the Rents thereunto Incident, To Hold to the same Sr John Lowther, and his heires for ever, in free and comon socage and you are to insert in the sd Bill all nonobstantes & Clauses requisite in this behalfe, And For soe doeing this shall be your Warrant

Given &c the 19th day of Junne 1665.

By his Maj^{ties} Comand

To Our Attorney Grall

Arlington.

A more formal grant under the Privy Seal was issued, dated Oxford, Nov. 10, 17 Charles II, but as it is in Latin much abbreviated, abounds in legal technicalities, and is, after all, exactly to the same purport as the foregoing document, it seem unnecessary to print it here.

State Papers, Domestic, Vol. 212, 1667, No. 11.

(Lord Carlingford &c).

Upon his Mat^s referrence March ye 13th, 1666, signified by Mr. Secretary Morrice upon the Peticon of Theobalde Earle of Carlingford, Sr. Edward Green, Bart., and William Dyke, Esq., praying his Matie to make good his Intendmt to them to Resume the grant to Sir John Lowther or so much as relates to Whitehaven etc., unlesse

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he will give to the value thereof to the pet^{rs} and to referr it to ye Lord Ashley to heare all parties & settle the differences, or report with his opinion &c., is Reported as followeth vizi.

May it Please yo^r Matie

In obedience to your Maties referrence of ye 13th of March 1666 upon the peticon of the Earle of Carlingford & others I have heard the case between them, and S^r John Lowther, Bart., And doe find that your Matie by Warrt under ye Royalle Signe Manuall dated the 13th of June 1664 did grant to the Pet^{rs} all such lands derelict and quitted by the sea in ye County of Cumberland as should be found to belong unto your Matie in right of your Crowne particularly menconing the towne of Whitehaven in the same Warrt upon which the petrs did (att their very greate trouble & Expence) among other things find an Inquisicon of divers and sundry houses lands staythes & salt pans at Whitehaven aforesaid of the yearlye value upon Improvemt of about 400 as is affirmed, And probably they would have been so worth to the Pet^{rs} if they had come into their hands upon your Maties title which would have avoyded severall Estates granted by Sr John Lowther and his ffather to which Sr John is now in Justice obliged, and which makes the things of ffar lesse value to him. To these houses, lands etc., Sr John Lowther made Clayme, But distrusting the validity of his title peticoned your Matie for a grant thereof, which your Matie in consideracon of the great desert of himselfe & ffamilly was pleased to make and confirme unto him under your greate Seale which hath frustrated your Maties intended grace and favour in that behalfe to ye said Earle and the rest after all their paines & Expences, All which I humbly submitt to your Maties Royall wisedome & Pleasure.

1 Aug. 1667.

Ashley.

This is a true Copy

Jo. Lynns.

On Oct. 1, 1675, Sir John bought from Sir George Fletcher, of Hutton, the mansion of the Flatt at Whitehaven; at a later date it was remodelled by Sir William Chambers and called the Castle; and ever since the purchase it has been the local residence of the owners of the Whitehaven estate.

A portrait was painted of Sir John by Sir Peter Lely, probably shortly before 1680, for in that year that well-known artist died. I am informed that it is at Lowther Castle,

Castle, and in that case it must have been taken for his cousin of the same name, for the pictures belonging to Sir John of Whitehaven, and those collected by his son, Sir James, all went by bequest of the latter to his distant relative, Sir William Lowther, of Holker, and those which escaped the disastrous fire some years ago may still be found there. A mezzotint engraving has been made from this painting by Alexander Browne, and as it has been its fate to be always ascribed to the wrong Sir John, I venture to extract the descriptions from both Grainger's "Biographical History of England," Vol. i., p. 167, and John Chaloner Smith's "Mezzotinto Portraits," Part i., p. 115, in order that I may confute their errors, and subsequently prove that the portrait is that of Sir John Lowther of Whitehaven.

Grainger describing it, says,

Sir John Lowther, Bart., Lely.—Sir John was a gentleman of a very ancient and flourishing family long seated in Westmerland. He was father of Sir John Lowther who in 1695 was created Viscount Lonsdale and was afterwards Lord Privy Seal to William III. This family has been greatly enriched, by the Colliery at Whitehaven which has proved an inexhaustible fund of wealth. The present Sir James Lowther does not only carry on a very lucrative trade to London but he also employs a considerable number of vessels to supply the city of Dublin with coals. Ob. 1675 at 70. He was created Baronet 1642.

John Chaloner Smith correctly describes the engraving in the first place, and in his subsequent ascription recognizes that his predecessor has fallen into error, but he is as far as ever from ascertaining the true subject ; he says :

Sir John Lowther, Lely. Three quarters length, sitting at base of fluted pillar to left, directed to right, facing and looking to front, wig, lace cravat, scarf across right arm, hand pointing, paper in left hand, sea view and harbour in distance to right.

Then follow some minute artistic details which it is unnecessary to quote ; he adds :

Grainger

Grainger calls this Sir John Lowther who died 1675 aged 70, but as this print does not represent an old man, it is probably that of his grandson, born 1655, who succeeded on his death as second Baronet to the great estates in Westmerland and Cumberland, including the Whitehaven Collieries, and M.P. for the former county from that time to his being created Viscount Lonsdale. Married Catherine daughter of Sir Frederick Thynne, and died 6th July, 1700.

And now for the facts and the identification. I entirely accept the correctness of the description of Mr. Chaloner Smith so far as it goes, but I must disprove both his and Grainger's ascription. Sir John Lowther, of Lowther, created a Baronet in 1640, died in 1675; his son John predeceased him, and the son of the latter, also called John, born in 1655, succeeded his grandfather, was created Viscount Lonsdale, and died in 1700. Not one of these owned the Whitehaven estates, which had passed to Christopher, (younger brother of the first named Sir John), who had been created a Baronet in 1642, then to his son, Sir John of Whitehaven, and next to his son, Sir James, who died in 1755; covering a period from 1637 to the latter date, during which time the Whitehaven family and estates were distinct from those of Lowther.

But the portrait is that of a man of middle age, and that Sir John of Whitehaven was about 1680, for he was, as I have said, baptized in 1642; in the picture also is represented a harbour, a sea view, and, I may add, in the distance over the sea a mountain; now Sir John planned the town and harbour of Whitehaven, (he holds a plan in his hand), and looking across the Solway from there the mountain of Crifell in Scotland, shaped as given in the mezzotint, is a conspicuous feature. I hope I may be excused this elaborate statement, and, I believe and I hope, convincing proof that the portrait must represent Sir John of Whitehaven, and cannot be that of any of the other Sir Johns living about the same time.

Macaulay

Macaulay gives an elaborate sketch of a Sir John Lowther, made up from the two Sir Johns who both took part in the Revolution, meaning to describe that one who was subsequently Viscount Lonsdale, and he does not appear to have understood that there was another Baronet of that name; but it is not to be wondered at that there should have been great confusion, for from 1655 to 1675 there were no less than four contemporary John Lowthers, the two Sir Johns surviving from that date living, the one to 1700, the other to 1705.

The extract from the Balliol College Entry Book, which I have given, would again to one unacquainted with the Lowther pedigree offer another stumbling block; the "Sir John of Lowther" was Sir John of Lowther by residence but not by title; the Sir John, Baronet of Lowther, was at that time an elderly man.

Towards the end of the miserable reign of James II., when parties which had been bitterly hostile to each other for generations were uniting to resist the arbitrary acts of a fatuous tyrant, Sir John took an active part in endeavouring to heal a family quarrel which had occurred between his namesake of Lowther and Sir Daniel Fleming, whose aunt was the grandmother of Sir John of Whitehaven, and the great grandmother of Sir John of Lowther. In this he was a successful peacemaker, and the result was that the three were agreed with the great majority of magistrates and deputy lieutenants in returning replies to the three questions put to them by the Lord Lieutenant by command of the King; which answers were apparently composed by Sir John Lowther of Lowther, adopted throughout the kingdom, and are declared by Macaulay to have been drawn up "with admirable skill." They are given in Lord Lonsdale's "Memoirs of the Reign of James II.," and in Nicolson and Burn's "History of Westmerland," with some merely verbal differences. Sir John of Lowther had as early as 1685 expressed himself

in

in parliament in very forcible language against the abuse of “ obliging boroughs to accept charters which vested the power of election in some particular people named for that purpose.”

But if the Sir John of Lowther distinguished himself in the struggle for freedom by his speech and by his pen, his cousin of Whitehaven put his life and estates in peculiar jeopardy by a daring act, which has been scarcely sufficiently dwelt upon, and certainly imperfectly understood. In the Hudleston pedigree, as given in Jefferson’s “ Leath Ward,” it is stated that Andrew Hudleston, of Hutton John, great-nephew of the priest who absolved Charles II. in his last moments, “ in concert with Sir John Lowther marched their tenants to the coast during the night, in October 1688, to seize a vessel laden with arms and ammunition for the garrison of Carlisle, then lying in the harbour of Workington.” It being assumed, as is evidently suggested, that the march was from Hutton John, this would be a march very wonderful and very inexplicable to any one who knows the country, and very puzzling to all who are aware that the Hudleston tenants could not be very numerous. The fact is, that Andrew Hudleston was certainly very shortly after, and most probably at that time, Collector of Customs at Whitehaven, and in that capacity would be acquainted with the movements and lading of every vessel on the coast, Workington being what was called a creek of Whitehaven. Now Sir John Lowther of Whitehaven was Lord of the Manor of St. Bees in which Whitehaven was situated; he was the person to whom every one in the neighbourhood looked up; he was the patron of Mr. Hudleston, for his family from their first connection with the port and for two centuries after, as is matter of notoriety, virtually appointed all the officers of the crown. Without therefore at all desiring to detract from Mr. Hudleston’s merit, it is evident that Sir John would be the leading man on the occasion,

occasion, and his Whitehaven tenants and retainers, who could be very numerous, with Mr. Hudleston in his official capacity, might well march eight miles to Workington during the night and with ample authority seize upon the vessel; and it may be noted that one reason why a ship with such a lading would prefer to discharge her cargo in Workington harbour would be the fact that Mr. Henry Curwen, then Lord of the Manor of Workington, was a Roman Catholic, and was so much attached to the person and cause of James that he followed him to France and resided many years in that country. This deed was probably the first overt act of rebellion against James, and had William of Orange failed to land, or been unsuccessful afterwards, the heads and quarters of Lowther and Hudleston would have been long visible over the gates of Carlisle. The more this act with all its possible consequences is considered, the higher will be our estimate of the courage and resolution manifested by Sir John at this important juncture.

After the Revolution, on the 8th March, 1688, Sir John was appointed one of the six commissioners of Admiralty, and in this capacity he had an interesting correspondence with Samuel Pepys, who, as his biographer says :

Had been too much personally connected with the king (who had been so long at the Admiralty,) to retain his situation upon the accession of William and Mary, and he retired into private life accordingly but without being followed thither either by persecution or ill-will.

A statement abundantly corroborated by the ensuing correspondence :

Correspondence relating to Sir John Lowther extracted from Pepys' MSS. in Rawlinson Collection at Bodleian Library, Oxford. A 170, 66, 71, 119, 124, 126.

A 170, 71.

Channel Row the 9th March 1688.

Sr

Sr

His Mat^w haveing by his Letters Patent bearing date ye eighth instant, constituted and appointed us to bee his Comss. for Executeing the office of Lord High Admirall of England, Wee doe hereby desire, that soe soon as possible you will deliver, or cause to be deliver'd to M^r Phineas Bowles (whome wee have appointed Secretary for the Affaires of that Office) all Bookes, Papers, Ac- counts, Registers, Preecedents, or any other thing whatsoever relateing to ye Affaires of the Admiralty and the Execution of that Office which has at any time been delivered to, and received by you, or any other person by your appointment, for and concerning this office as well in the times of your own being Secretary formerly, as of others preceding and succeeding in ye Affaires of the Admiralty and Navy, and alsoe since your last being impowered in the Adminis tracon thereof.

Wee desire you allsoe that every Appurtenance and Thing what soever, that hath been fitted and provided at the publick charge, for the more regular keeping and preserving the said Bookes, Papers, &c., and performeing the Office relating thereto, may bee delivered to our said Secretary M^r Bowles and every other matter and thing relateing to ye King's Service (wch in yor discretion you know ought to be intrusted to our Secretary) tho' not here particularly recited; and his receipts and Certificates thereof, in the same manner as you have discharged others in the like case shall sufficiently discharge you from all things which at this our instance for his Mat^s Service, are hereby desired you thus to putt into ye charge and custody of the said M^r Bowles; and soe wee bid you heartily fare-well.

Sr

yor^r affectionate Friends

Ar. Herbert

Carberry	J. Lowther
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M. Warton	Tho. Lee
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Jn Whicherly

M^r Pepys.

Letter addressed

To Samuel Pepys Esq.

These

Endorsed—

Channell Row March 9, ⁸⁸
 The Comiss^r (new Comission
 of ye Adm^{ly}t^y to M^r Pepys
 desireing him delivering
 over all ye Books, Papers

And

And Moveables of his Office
(belongeing to the King) to
their Secretary M^r Bowles.

Letter in the handwriting of Sir John Lowther, A. 170, 66.

Sr

The Com^{rs} finding their Affaires w^{ld} not bear ye want of a House, for so long time as you required to remove, have agreed for a House elsewhere, w^{ch} I intended to have acquainted you psonally this morning but yt I was prvented by other Business.

I am

Sr
y^r most humble
Serv^t

Ap. 12th. J Lowther.

89.
Addressed— For Samuel Pepys Esq^r
at his House in
York buildings

Endorsed— April 12, 1689
Sir Jno. Lowther to Mr. Pepys
Signifying Com^r of ye
Adm^{ly} their haveing
agreed upon a house for the
holding their Office at.

Copy of Letter from Sam^l Pepys to Sir John Lowther, A. 170, 126.
Yorke buildings, May 9th, 1689.

Sr

I have not beene in a Condition since yo^r late favour to mee in yo^r Kindnesse to my Brother, to wayte upon you wth my thankes on that behalfe, nor indeed yet am, but shall doe it at my very first going abroad. In ye meane time I take ye liberty of doeing it by him who allsoe prays leave to doe ye same for himselfe & repeeteing to you my most earnest desires of ye countenance of yo^r advice & support to him in ye calamitous state whereinto without it he & his family must inevitably fall after soe long a service to the Crowne I doe with greatest respect kisse yo^r hands & rest

y^r most faythf^{ll} obed^{ht} Serv^t
S. Pepys.

Endorsed—

May 9, 1689 Copy
of Mr. Pepys Letter to
S^r Jno Lowther
in favour of Mr. St. Michel.

Copy

Copy Letter from Sam^l Pepys to Sir John Lowther, A. 170, 124.

Wednesd. Evening

Nov. 13, 1689.

S^r

Knowing very well to what importunitys you are expos'd on every hand & have in particular sustain'd from mine on behalf of my Brother St. Michel, it is quite agst my intention to give you any new interruption. But ye Case of ye Mast^r Joyner of Chatham (my poore kinsman Charles Pepys) does in pure Justice & Charity touch me so near, that being but just now inform'd of ye Endeavours on foot to supplant him in his Employment & not knowing but it may be upon ye brink of being Executed, I cannot but interpose my present Prayer to you (for fear of wanting an opportunity of doing it more orderly) that as farr as you reasonably may, you will require other crimes to be alledged & prov'd agst him (& such I never yet heard of) besides that of his name & Relation to

y^r most faithf^l humb Serv^t
S. Pepys.

To S^r Jno Lowther.

Endorsed—

Nov. 13, 1689
Mr. Pepys to S^r Jno
Lowther wth relation
to Charles Pepys Ma^r
Joyner at Chatham.

Copy of a letter from Sam^l Pepys to Sir John Lowther, A 170, 119.

Feby 20, 16⁸⁹/₀

S^r

My Brother St Michel has given me occasion of troubling you with this upon a fourth Enquiry of yours touching ye House I am now in, Concerning which give me leave (as heretofore) to observe to you, that besides ye Considerations ariseing from my having accomodated it in every circumstance to my particular Occasions & method of Living (not easily to be had againe elsewhere) I have this further Disswasive from quitting it that my Charges in doing this & in ye finish & furnishing it for Ornamt as well as for use, have been such & must in some degree be againe (wheresoever I goe) that I cannot conveniently beare, nor know how to expect being borne for me by them that succeed me in it. This S^r is ye truth of ye Measures I goe by in this Matr & what I doe most willingly make you judge of. But it is not impossible, but I may at ye same time propose to you what may answer y^r occasion every whit as well wth lesse

lesse charge & much soon^r than it were possible to be done were I to remove; namely by telling you y^t I have lately heard Mr. Hewer say something of his being likely to have that House of his at his disposal at Lady day next in this very streete wherein Mr. Mountague now lives & wherein I before held ye Office of ye Adm^{ly} several years w^{ch} knowne satisfaction in every sort of Accomodation requisite thereto. If you judge it may be soe to you & shall comand me I will prevent Mr. Hewers making any oth^r disposal of it till you have refused it.

To ye oth^r Question my Broth^r askes me from you I doe not remember anything of that matt^r about 40th advanced to ye Seamen rais'd in Scotland betwn 1664 & 1667 but doe believe that what (if anything) what done of that kind was negotiated wholly between ye state here & ye then Adm^l of Scotld ye D. of Richmond This sayd pray let me once for all tell you that I doe industriously abstaine from troubling you wth my visites out of grave respect & tendernes to you undr ye circumstances of Business you now lye. Further, if I thought you did in ye least incline to make other construction of it none should oftner, for none could wth more pleasure or wth a greater sense of his obligations waite on you than

Y^r most faithfl & humb St

S. P.

Endorsed—

Feby 20 1689
Mr Pepys to Sr J. Low
ther upon his fresh
enquirys after his hous
for ye use of ye Adm^{ly}.

Sir John was reappointed Jany 20th, 1689; Jany 23rd, 1690; Nov. 16th, 1690; March 10th, 1691; April 15th, 1692; March 2nd, 1693; after which one James Kendal takes his place.

From the time when he came into authority until his death, Sir John devoted himself to the development of the town of Whitehaven and the welfare of its inhabitants, as I have attempted to shew more at large (and am therefore precluded from repeating here), in my paper on "Whitehaven and its Streets," published in these Transactions, and in another on "Whitehaven and its Old Church;" and if towards the end of his life dissensions arose in the town they apparently were due more to the acts of others than

than his own, for he was, I believe, gentle, just, and far seeing. His son, James, possessed the latter qualification in a business sense, but he was arbitrary towards those with whom he was connected, and penurious in private life. I do not know when or where Sir John's wife died but she predeceased him. He had his full share of domestic trouble, for his eldest son, Christopher, whom he vainly attempted to turn from his evil career, (as is shown in the "Gilpin Memoirs," published by this Society,) was ultimately disinherited by deeds, dated Feb. 12th and 13th, 1700.

Sir John's Will, which I append, is worthy of special attention, even of admiration. It was made by, and no doubt carefully discussed with, his friend and local adviser, William Gilpin, of Scaleby Castle, who is one of the witnesses, as is also John Spedding, the first of a family whose sons continued to serve the Lowthers during great part of the eighteenth century.

Will of Sir John Lowther of Whitehaven.

In the name of God, Amen. I Sr John Lowther of Whitehaven in the County of Cumberland Baronett Do make this my last Will and testament in manner and forme following First I commit my Soul to Almighty God And my body to be decently interred with as little ceremony and expence as may be nigh my Father in the parish Church of St. Bees unless an Isle or seperate place of Sepulture appropriated for me and my family be made at the New Chapple of Whitehaven before my decease And my Will is that my neighbours of Whitehaven only do accompany the corps without giving my relations or the gentlemen of the County any trouble upon this account And as concerning my estate my Will is that it be disposed of in this manner vizt I give the summe of twenty pounds to the Overseers of the poore of St. Bees Quarter to be by them distributed amongst the poore of the Town of St. Bees To the Overseers of the poore of Preston Quarter the summe of twenty pounds to be distributed to the poore of the Town of Whitehaven not employed in or about my Collieries and to the workmen labourers and leaders employed in my Collieries I give the sum of twenty pounds to be distributed by the Stewards of my Collyeries And I Will that no other dole or distribucon shall be made to any poore of the said Townships nor of any other parish or place whatsoever And whereas I have in and by the settlement of my reall

real estate by me heretofore made by severall Indentures of Lease and Release bearing the respective dates of the twelfth and thirteenth days of February In the year of our Lord one Thousand seven hundred limited an estate in the premises thereby settled to the use of or in trust for my son James Lowther for the term of his natural life with a remainder to the trustees therein named for the life of the said James Lowther In trust to preserve the contingent uses therein limited and further remainders to the use of or in trust for all and every the son and sons of the body of the said James Lowther and the respective heirs males of the respective bodyes of such son and sons to be begotten respectively successively one after another as they shall be in seniority of age as in and by the said settlement relacon being there unto had it doth more fully and particularly appeare Now in regard that a considerable part of my said estate consists in Collieries and that the improvements as well of the said estate as the Town of Whitehaven and country adjacent in Trade and manufacture will after my decease depend upon the prudent and careful management of the said James Lowther (in case he do survive me) and for that many unforeseen occasions may fall out which may make it necessary to the ends aforesaid that the said James Lowther should have greater powers then consist with a bare estate for life And for as much as I do expect from and am entirely satisfied that he will by all prudent wayes and means apply himself to compleat those designes which I have laid and thus far carried on for the growth and improvement of the said Town and Country and for advancing the said estate which cannot turne to account by any other course and hoping that the reasonable prospects he may have of affecting the same will animate his endeavours and for that it doth not seem reasonable to lay him in whose conduct I have a perfect confidence under greater restraints than those yet unborne of whose dispositions wee can have no foresight I do therefore according to the power to me reserved in and by the said settlement and all and every other powers and authorities whatsoever which I may have in that behalfe by this my last Will and testament in writing by me sealed and subscribed in the presence of three or more credible witness revoke annull and make void all and every the said severall and respective estates so limited in and by the said Settlement to the use of or in trust for the said James Lowther for his life and to the trustees for preserving the contingent uses and to and for all and every the severall son and sons of the body of the said James Lowther to be begotten and the severall heirs males of the bodies of such son and sons to be begotten respectively And I do hereby limit substitute and declare that all and singular the premises in the said Settlement mencioned whereof the uses and trusts are hereby revoked shall in lieu and stedd thereof be to the use of or In trust for the said James Lowther and the heirs males of his body lawfully to be begotten Any thing in the said Settlement to the contrary hereof notwithstanding. And my Will further is and I do hereby devise All and singular the messuages lands tenements collieries and hereditaments what soever and wheresoever the same lye or be with their and every of their appurtenances which I have at any time or times since the making of the said Settlement purchased or taken in mortgage (in case mortgages be not redeemed) to the said James Lowther and the heirs male of his body lawfully to be begotten with remainders over to and for such respective person and persons and for such and the like limittacon of estates uses and trusts and in such course and order of succession and with such and the like provisces and powers and in such manner and forme as are limitted settled and provided as to the rest of my freehold estate in and by the said Settlement And whereas I have in and by the said Settlement made

made such a provision for my eldest son by a weekly allowance as is most suitable to his unfortunate by past and hopeless future management (which is all that I do think fit to allow him) I do hereby fully and absolutely ratify and confirm all and every other the Estates powers and clauses in the said Settlement contained not hereby revoked or altered or other wise inconsistent with this my last Will and testament Item I give to my daughter Jane Lowther (besides the provison of Two hundred pounds per annum made her in the said Settlement) the summe of two hundred pounds to buy mourning I give her also the furniture of her lodgings at London and what else she is possessed of Item I give to Mrs. Dorothy Trevisa for her long and faithfull Service ten pounds per annum during her life and mourning Item I give to my servant Lancelott Lowther (if he be with me at the time of my decease) one tenth part of the yearly produce of the one hundred pounds which I paid into the Exchequer in his name upon the Act for Survivorships to be paid him during his life as it becomes due Item I give to the rest of my domestick Servants which shall be with me at the time of my decease in manner following vizi To my housekeeper gardiner and chief groome and to such of my Servants as came from London one years wages each of them And I desire my executor herein after named to assist them by recommendacon or preferment as he has opportunity perticularlly such of them as have been longest with me To Jno. Spedding and Wm. Cuppage each of them I give two years wages and for that they are fully apprized of all the particulers of my estate especially my Collieries I recomend them both in a perticuler manner to my said son James Lowther to be employed by him in comprouling the Stewards Accounts or otherwise as he shall think fitt to the rest of my domesticks I give halfe a years wages each and for as much as it may be necessary that mourning be given to some of my domesticks and not all I give it to all to whom I have given one years wages or more but to the inferior Servants who have only half a year's wages given them I give no mourning The residue of my goods chattles rights credits and personall estate whatsoever (my debts legacies and funerall and other necessary expenses being paid) I give unto my said son James Lowther whom I do make sole Executor of this my last Will and testament Lastly I do hereby revoke all former and other wills and testaments and Codicills by me at any time heretofore made In witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seal the eighth day of October In the year of Our Lord One thousand seven hundred and five

John Lowther.

Sealed and declared by the said Testator to be his last Will and testament and every sheet hereof (being three in number) by him signed in the presence of us who at his request and in his presence have hereunto subscribed our names as Witnessess.

W. Gilpin.

Tho. Benn.

Sam. Harrison.

John Spedding.

I Sr John Lowther of Whitehaven in the County of Cumberland Baronet Do (by this my Codicill to be annexed unto my last Will and Testament and which I Will shall be taken as part of the same) give and devise all that messuage lands and tenement in Corkile in the said County of Cumberland which I lately purchased of Peter Gibson and Barbara Gibson unto my son James Lowther and the heirs male of his body to be begotten And for default of such issue to such respective

respective person and persons and for such and the like limittacon of Estates uses and trusts and in such course and order of succession and with such and the like provisoes and powers and in such manner and forme as the rest of my freehold estate is limitted and settled in and by the Settlement of my reall estate referred unto in my last Will and testament And I do hereby ratify and confirm my said last Will and Testament and everything therein contained In Witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seal this twenty-sixth day of December Anno Dm. One thousand seven hundred and five,

The sign X of Sr John Lowther he being ill of the Gout.

Signed sealed and declared by the said Sr John Lowther as a Codicill to be annexed to be his last Will and Testament in the presence of

W. Gilpin.

J. Spedding.

Sam. Harrison.

Probatum &c., cum Codicillo &c., apud London &c., 22 April, 1706, Juramento Jacobi Louther.

Very shortly after the execution of the Codicil to his Will Sir John died. As is stated in the Will, he had intended building a mortuary Chapel for himself and his family at the East end of St. Nicholas' Church, Whitehaven, but delays had arisen, and this intention was never carried out; and if his son James ever erected a monument to his memory in the Church of St. Bees, which I doubt, there is no trace of it; and the sole and final record of him is to be found in the Parish Register there, in the simple entry :

170⁵₆ 17 January. Sir John Lowther, Baronet, Interred.

I have to acknowledge my obligation to the late Earl of Lonsdale for permission to inspect, and take extracts from, the Note Book relating to Sir John Lowther.

I have also to thank Lady Louisa Egerton, Henry Fletcher Rigge, Esq., and Dr. I'anson, for information enabling me to ascertain the whereabouts of Sir John's Portrait; and the Revd. Dr. Magrath, Provost of Queen's, and Mr. J. L. Strachan of Balliol College, Oxford, for the extract from the Entrance Book of that College relating to Sir John.

