

ART. XVII.—*Ann Crackanthorpe: Wordsworth's great-aunt.* By C. ROY HUDLESTON, F.S.A.

Read at Kendal, April 21st, 1960.

CLOSE to the lower path in St. Oswald's churchyard, Durham, leading to the Banks, is a large white headstone. The inscription is now almost illegible, but enough of the wording remains to see that the stone commemorates Ann Cracanthorpe [*sic*] and that her husband's christian name was James.

Fortunately the inscription was copied many years ago by C. M. Carlton and published by him in his valuable book, *The Monumental Inscriptions of the Cathedral, Parish Churches and Cemeteries of the City of Durham* (1880), at p. 223. As long ago as that the inscription on the stone — Carlton calls it a flat stone, but it is now upright — was almost illegible, but Carlton made it out as follows:

*Here lieth interred / the body of / Ann Cracanthorpe,
wife of the late / James Cracanthorpe / of Newbiggin, in
the County of / Cumberland, Esquire / and Daughter of
the late / George Vane Esquire of / Long Newton in this
County, / and Ann his wife / She died the 18th day of
December 1790 / aged 65.*

There are at least three errors in the above, due either to the stonemason making mistakes, or to the difficulty of reading a worn inscription.

Apart from her marriage to a member of an old Westmorland family, Anne Crackanthorpe has another claim to be included in our *Transactions*. Her grandfather, Lionel Vane of Long Newton, married Catherine,¹

¹ Surtees, *History of Durham* iii 29 prints the monumental inscription to her, on a white marble against the south wall of the chancel of Sedgfield church, Co. Durham. It is as follows: "Here lieth interr'd the body of Mrs Catharine Vane, relict of Lionel Vane of Longnewton in the county of Durham Esq. by whom she had six sons and five daughters; she was

daughter of Sir George Fletcher, second baronet of Hutton-in-the-Forest, and sister and co-heiress of Sir Henry, the third and last baronet.

Her father's brothers, Henry and Walter, succeeded in turn to the Hutton-in-the-Forest estate, each taking the surname of Fletcher. Walter's son, Lionel Wright Fletcher-Vane of Hutton-in-the-Forest, was created a baronet on 27 June 1786, the baronetcy becoming extinct on the death of his descendant Sir Francis Patrick Fletcher-Vane, fifth baronet, in 1934.

Anne's father, George Vane, was born on 18 September 1685 (Surtees, *History of Durham* iii 214-215) and married at Durham Cathedral on 27 September 1722 Anne, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Gilbert Machon of the city of Durham. They had a large family of four sons and four daughters, beginning with a son George, born on 30 June and baptised at Long Newton on 29 July 1723. He died and was buried in St. Oswald's Church, Durham, on 24 May 1734 (Carlton prints at p. 140 the inscriptions to him and to his little sister Elizabeth who died on 28 April 1733 aged 9 days). Anne was baptised at Long Newton on 19 February 1727/8, so that she cannot have been more than 63 at the time of her death. The next child in the family, Henry, baptised at Long Newton almost exactly a year later, became a prebendary of Durham, married the heiress of the Tempests, was created a baronet in 1782, and died in 1794. His descendant is the Marquess of Londonderry.

On 11 November 1752 James Crackanthorp, bachelor,

daughter of Sir George Fletcher of Hutton in the county of Cumberland Bart., she departed this life upon the 14th day of January Anno Domini 1735 in the 83rd year of her age. Here also lieth interr'd the body of Mrs Alice Vane, her second daughter, who departed this life upon the 19th day of Nov^r Anno Domini 1733 in the 50th year of her age." Catherine Fletcher married Lionel Vane at Hutton-in-the-Forest on 20 January 1680/1 (*The Flemings in Oxford* ii 304). At page 379 of his *History*, Surtees prints the monumental inscription to Catherine's sister, Lucy Bowes, in Coniscliffe church. This states that she died on 11 October 1683 at the age of 27, after a married life of eight years and twenty-three days with Francis Bowes. (*The Flemings in Oxford* i 477 records that the marriage was at Hutton on 19 September 1675.)

of Newbiggen Hall, co. Westmorland, aged 27, entered into a bond at Durham, to obtain a marriage licence to wed Ann Vane, aged 21, spinster of Long Newton, the marriage to be there or at Elton. It is recorded in the registers of neither church, but the *Newcastle Journal* of 6 January 1753 recorded:

“We hear from Appleby, that James Crackenthorp, Esq.; of Newbiggin, was lately married to Miss Vane, of Long Newton; an agreeable young Lady, with a handsome Fortune, with every Accomplishment to make the married State happy.”

The bridegroom, born on 24 July 1725 and baptised at St. Benet's Church, Paul's Wharf, London, on 4 August following,² was a son of Richard Crackanthorpe, who married at that church on 24 August 1712 Dorothy Crewe, and in 1731 succeeded to the family estates. He died in April 1752.

Richard's will, dated 11 April 1752, was proved at Carlisle by his son James on 27 December following. The provisions of the will could hardly be simpler, yet they led to years of litigation, as will be seen. He left an annuity of £50 to his wife Dorothy, in lieu of dower, one of £5 to his sister Mary Crackanthorpe, and an annuity of £15, payable quarterly, to his daughter Dorothy Cookson,

² Registers of St. Benet, Paul's Wharf, London, published by Harleian Society, R.S. vol. xxxix (1910) p. 103. The bridegroom was of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, London, a bachelor and the bride a spinster. (CW2 xxxiii 69 says she was daughter of Edward Crewe. Mr James Crew of Newbiggin Hall was buried at Newbiggin on 28 October 1751.) Col. Haswell's MS. pedigree of Crackanthorpe, now in Tullie House, Carlisle, gives useful extracts from the unprinted registers of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West. (I am grateful to Mr Kenneth Smith and Miss Snaith for providing me with copies.) These show that Richard lived in Fetter Lane, London, and his large family was as follows: Richard, born 10 October, bap. 25 October 1713; Christopher, born 17 February, bap. 26 February 1715/16; Mary, born 11 March, bap. 31 March 1717; Susanna, born 13 March, bap. 1 April 1718; Dorothy, born 16 October, bap. 16 November 1719; Ann, born 8 March, bap. 4 April 1721; Katharine, born 16 August, bap. 12 September 1722; James, mentioned above, Thomas, born 7 May, bap. 4 June 1726. CW2 xxxiii 69 adds another son, John. Of these children, Richard, the eldest, apparently died while on a visit to Newbiggin, since he was buried there on 5 July 1727, as son of Richard of London; Christopher, the second son, was buried at Newbiggin on 31 May 1744; and Mary was buried there on 30 August 1739. The other children, with the exception of James and Dorothy, all appear to have died before 1752. Dorothy married at Newbiggin on 9 December 1741 William Cookson. Her daughter Anne married John Wordsworth, and by him was mother of the poet.

stating that he intended this as the interest of £500, which sum he gave to the children of Dorothy, payable within six months after her death. He gave £500 to his son-in-law William Cookson, and £50 to his "niece Mary, the daughter of my sister Buck." The witnesses were George Carlyle, William Donkin and Thomas Whelpdale.

Four days after the funeral his son and successor James gave to Appleby Grammar School (which he had left at Michaelmas 1743) twenty volumes of *The Universal History*, the value of which was £5. 10s. (CW1 xiii 28).

As we have seen, on 11 November 1752, James applied for a marriage licence for Anne Vane and himself, and on 13 and 14 November the marriage settlement was signed. This settled the manors of Ousby, Bank, Hardendale and Wasdall, Culgaith Parks, lands and premises called Hatfield and messuages called Black Leazes and Birks. The trustees were Henry Fletcher and Adam Askew.³ The marriage took place in December 1752,⁴ but within a few months James's reign as squire of Newbiggin was over — and before he had fully carried out the trusts reposed in him by his father's will.

The *Newcastle Courant* of Saturday 22 September 1753 has this melancholy paragraph about him:

"Last Monday [17 September] died at Durham of a lingering illness greatly lamented — Crackingthorp Esq. of Newbiggin in Westmorland from which Place he arrived the Day before in his way to Newcastle; he was on Wednesday carried in a Hearse to be interr'd in the Family Vault at that Place."

The *Newcastle Journal* in its issue of the same date calls him James, and the registers of Newbiggin record that he was laid in his last resting place on 23 September 1753. (The Rev. Dr C. Moor in CW2 xxxiii 69 wrongly says that he was buried on 23 September 1758).

On the day of his arrival in Durham (16 September) — i.e. the day before his death — he signed his will, which

³ P.R.O., C33/443.

⁴ *Ibid.*

was witnessed by two local men — William Fetherstonhalgh Mowbray and Richard Wetherell. The third witness, George Skilbeck, was almost certainly a Cumberland or Westmorland man, and probably was James Crackanthorpe's man-servant. Richard Wetherell was a well known Durham attorney and Mowbray was also a lawyer. Presumably one or other of them drew the will for the dying man.

The will bequeaths all the testator's messuages and lands in Westmorland, Cumberland and elsewhere, to his wife Ann for life, and then to her heirs, failing whom the estates were to pass to testator's sister, Dorothy, wife of Mr William Cookson of Penrith, mercer, and her male heirs. In default the estates were to go to Adam Askew, second son of Ann, wife of Adam Askew, of Newcastle upon Tyne, doctor of physic, and daughter of Richard Crackanthorpe, an earlier owner of the Newbiggin estate.

The testator directed that any possessor of the estate after the death of his sister should be a member of the Church of England, and should assume the surname of Crackanthorpe. The will concludes with the testator's desire that if a lawsuit between himself and his tenants of Ousby, Bank and Newbiggin,⁵ was not concluded in his lifetime, it was to be continued by his wife. To her he left the residue of his estate, appointing her executrix. She duly proved the will at York on 5 June 1754.

Presumably in her widowhood Anne Crackanthorpe went to live with her widowed mother and unmarried sister in the house in the North Bailey, Durham,⁶ a lease of which her parents had taken on 12 February 1737/8.

Newbiggin Hall, it would seem, was occupied by Anne's mother-in-law and by her late husband's aunt. The latter died in 1761, the former in 1763, and thereafter the Hall appears to have been tenanted by a family of

⁵ The lawsuit was over the general fine payable by the tenants on the death of his father.

⁶ The house still stands and is number 38 North Bailey. It is now the office of the Council of the Durham Colleges in the University of Durham.

farmers named Dobson. In *The Old Manorial Halls of Westmorland and Cumberland* (1892) Dr Michael Waistell Taylor, obviously relying on information given to him by the family, says that Newbiggin Hall "fell into great dilapidation" during the period when the family were not resident.⁷

As we have seen, James Crackanthorpe died before he had carried out all the provisions of his father's will, and his widow made no attempt to pay the legacies left by Richard to Dorothy Cookson and her husband.

In 1767 matters appear to have come to a head, and Mrs Cookson called in her son-in-law John Wordsworth to advise her in his professional capacity about the personal estates of her father and brother. For drawing a case about the Newbiggin estate, and the wills of Richard and James Crackanthorpe Wordsworth charged £1. 7s. 6d., and for the "fair copy" on seven brief sheets for Counsel a further 17s. 6d.

On 8 February 1769 Wordsworth went to Askham to consult William Tatham, described on his monument in Askham church as "an eminent & learned Counsellor," and to obtain his answer to Mrs Cookson's case. Mr Tatham, however, declined giving any opinion because he had already been consulted by Mrs Crackanthorpe. Charging Mrs Cookson 6s. 8d. for this expedition, Wordsworth triumphantly adds "But I collected from him several pieces of useful and material information." A fee of a guinea had already been sent to Tatham; this he afterwards returned. Wordsworth's next step was to lay the case before Mr Perryn⁸ in London. Counsel's opinion — it cost two guineas — was duly sent down to Wordsworth, who was not altogether satisfied with it, for he instructed his London agent to ask Perryn to reconsider "the Case about the Lead mines he being very concise in his Answer to that Query."

⁷ Mr J. F. Curwen reproduced this information (without, however, giving its source) at p. 186 of his *Later Records of North Westmorland*.

⁸ Of the Inner Temple, made a judge in 1776 (*D.N.B.*).

At the same time Wordsworth was very busy considering a proposed bill for the enclosure of Culgaith commons. The beginning of this affair he sets out thus:

“The Land Owners in the Manor of Culgaith having a design to apply to Parliament the next Sessions for leave to carry in a Bill to inclose their Commons whereby they meant to exclude the Crackanthorp Family from any Portion or Allottment notwithstanding their large Property in Culgaith Parks and other Parts of the Manor & notwithstanding their large Proportion paid to the Purvey . . .”

He saw his father-in-law on many occasions about the proposed bill, but made no charge. For

“perusing several Old Deeds & Writings particularly the articles for Purchase of Culgaith Parks the conveyances thereof by Bargain & Sale enrolled and by Feoffment and the conveyance of the manor of Culgaith from M^r Vaughan to four customary tenants,”

Wordsworth charged 6s. 8d., and a further 13s. 4d. for “Drawing a state of the Case of the Crackanthorp Family and their Rights in Culgaith and upon the Commons thereof two Brief sheets which was to be transmitted to Mrs Crackanthorp by her agent that she as immediate Tenant for Life and in Possession might do every requisite on her part to secure the Interest of the Family.”

A copy was made and sent to Mr Robinson — presumably John Robinson, then Member for Westmorland and Wordsworth’s cousin — for which 5s. was charged; the long letter which accompanied it was not charged for, but Mr Garforth, who went to see Robinson, and also called at the House of Commons to see if the enclosure bill had been brought in, was paid 13s. 4d.

On 14 February Wordsworth sadly noted that on “Mrs Crackanthorp having given us reason to believe that so far from doing her part towards preserving the Right of the Family she would encourage & forward the Inclosure,” he was obliged to write with full directions to Garforth “about petitioning and giving Notice of our claim.”

No answer having been received from Mr Garforth by

4 March, a further letter had to be written to him. Wordsworth then drew up a notice to be served upon the agent for the Bill, "when he should go about for the Consent of the Landowners expressing our Right the value of the Estates and Purvey paid to the Land Tax." A copy of the notice went to Mr Garforth, who was paid 13s. 4d. for many attendances at the House upon Mr Robinson, upon Mr Carleton of Monument Yard, and searching to see if the Bill had been brought in.

In the 1770 Session Wordsworth learnt that the promoters of the Bill intended to renew their application to Parliament "upon the like unreasonable Terms as were before proposed." On 14 February he sent Mr Robinson another copy of Mr Cookson's case, "he having mislaid the former copy."

Mr Garforth was found not to be depended upon for attention to business, and a new agent was appointed in the person of Mr Pearson, who seems to have been more reliable. At least he was zealous in his attendances upon Mr Robinson and at the House when the Bill was finally brought in.

Wordsworth next went over to Lowther to see and make a copy of the heads of the Bill, and Sir James Lowther's objections. Next he got Mr Barnes to search in the Registry at Carlisle for an old deed of composition for the tithes of Culgaith Parks. For searching at Carlisle and Rose Castle Mr Barnes was paid 3s.

The next step in the business followed upon a letter from Mr Robinson, asking for a petition to be sent to him at once. Wordsworth drew it up, setting forth the right, estate, value and purvey, "praying that Provision might be made in the Bill to secure your Interest or that the Bill might not pass into a Law." For this 5s. was paid, and 1s. for the parchment, and 2s. 6d. for ingrossing it. A draft letter was prepared for Mr Cookson to write to Sir James Lowther, seeking his assistance, and also one to Mr Robinson, to enclose with the petition:

"The Bill being ready to be brought in paid Mr Anthony Parkin whom Col. Robinson ordered to attend to and watch the motions of the Bill his charge for attending Col. Robinson consulting with him and perusing a state of your Right.

"On 26 February Mr Parkin attended upon Mr Robinson along with Mr Hudson when they proposed to come into our Terms."

Mr Parkin next attended "Mr White at the House of Commons the Person who had the Conduct of the Bill." Wordsworth then went through it and made several alterations on Mr Cookson's behalf. Next Mr Parkin, having made these alterations, sent him the amended bill, which he perused, made many amendments and attentions thereto, and extracted several clauses — all for 10s.

The amendments and additions were sent to Robinson and Parkin, and a full abstract of the Bill was sent to Mr Cookson. The Bill, "not getting forward this session the Amendments stand over till the next when we must Petition anew."

In the session of 1772/3 Wordsworth succeeded in getting an alteration in the Bill "in respect of the Division by Purvey rate." At Easter Term he retained James Wallace for the next Cumberland Assizes, the retainer being a guinea, with half a crown as his clerk's fee.

The account ends with the following items for August 1773: Drawing claim to be entered with the Commissioners under the Act of Parliament 1s., fair copy thereof 6d., drawing case for Mr Wallace to advise on & settle the claim & upon the merits 3 brief sheets 13s. 4d., fair copy thereof 10s.

The other case, which opened in 1767, went drifting on through the years and does not seem to have ended until 1783, the year of John Wordsworth's sudden death. His bill for £110. 7s. 1d. had not been paid when he died.

By Trinity Term 1769 a bill appears to have been filed in the suit Cookson against Crackanthorpe, and on 12 October 1769 Wordsworth wrote to Mr Fairless, a Bishop

Auckland attorney, enclosing a subpoena to be served on Mrs Crackanthorpe. Not a great deal happened in the Michaelmas Term, apart from the defendant having entered an appearance. In Hilary Term 1770 Mr Monkhouse forwarded a letter from Mrs Crackanthorpe in which she offered "some terms of Compromise," to which Mr Cookson made a verbal reply to Mr Monkhouse.

Wordsworth then perused the Bill and made an abstract of it "in order to draw out a state of the matters proper for M^{rs} Cookson to demand of M^{rs} Crackanthorp." This was followed by his "Drawing such demand of Terms upon which a compromise should take place not only with respect to the matters in contest in the present suit but also in relation to the lead mines and the rent in arrear of the Customary tenement."

Mrs Crackanthorpe's lawyer was Mr Fawcett, and in February 1770 a correspondence was opened between him and Wordsworth, who submitted his proposals for the suggested "accommodation" between the parties, the terms having been drawn up with Mr Perryn's aid.

On 20 March a letter was received from Mr Fawcett stating that, upon his recommendation, Mrs Crackanthorpe "was by no means averse" to all the matters in dispute being referred to an arbitrator; the question of the Culgaith enclosure, however, was excluded, Mrs Crackanthorpe asking for a statement "of the Facts."

In May 1770 Mr Fawcett wrote that his client was willing to agree to everything that the Cooksons proposed, but she would give no answer about the small customary tenement and the proposed working of the lead mines.

On this Wordsworth saw Mr Cookson and after a conference it was agreed that Mr Fawcett should be told that the Cooksons insisted on a settlement of all or none of the matters in dispute. At the same time a letter went to Mr John Cookson⁹ of Newcastle "who had hinted that he could be of use from his acquaintance with Fawcett

⁹ A first cousin of William Cookson.

in bringing about a Settlement of all these Family concerns." This letter emphasised "the reasonableness" of the Cooksons' case. The letter to Mr Fawcett threatened an action for rents and for waste if the arbitration was not agreed to.

Wordsworth also saw Mr Tatham at Askham to ask if he would be a referee if arbitration took place. He agreed. No reply having been received from Mr Fawcett by 20 June 1770 a letter was sent to him on that day saying that the action for rent in arrear must now proceed. It did proceed, though at a snail's pace, and in April 1772 Wordsworth went to Penrith to discuss with the Cooksons Mrs. Crackanthorpe's answers to the bill. For this he charged £2. 2s., and 5s. 4d. for expenses for "self and horse going and returning." The visit was for three days, and stabling for the horse cost 6s. 6d.

At Trinity Term 1772 the Cooksons' counsel was instructed to oppose Mrs Crackanthorpe's application that the case should be dismissed. A Court order was made "to speed the cause," but it dragged wearily on.

At Hilary Term 1773 the death of Mr Cookson's son Thomas three years earlier made it necessary to ask the Court to revive the bill, and by Easter Term a subpoena was served upon Mrs Crackanthorpe that she might appear to the bill of revivor. She seems to have been at Bath at the time. At Trinity the Cooksons' counsel had to apply for another revivor, Mrs Crackanthorpe's time for answering having expired.

The cause was revived by Michaelmas Term, and on 24 January 1775 the Master of the Rolls made a decree. In the course of this the Master summed up the evidence on both sides.

Anne Crackanthorpe maintained that Richard Crackanthorpe's personal estate had not been sufficient to discharge his debts and pay his legacies, and her husband's estate had likewise fallen short. She insisted that if the legacies were to be paid it would be necessary to mortgage part of the estate.

The Cooksons claimed that Richard's personal estate was £2,000 and upwards, and that James's personal estate was twice that amount.

The Master of the Rolls ordered that the case be referred to Mr Leeds, a Master in Chancery, who was to take account of Richard's personal estate which came to James, and to compute the interest on the legacy of £500, given by Richard to Dorothy Cookson's children after her death, at the rate of 3% per annum. The Master ordered that the principal of the legacy should be paid into the Bank, with the privity of the Accountant-General of the Court, and placed to the credit of the cause, the money to be laid out in the purchase of Bank 3% annuities in the name of the Accountant-General in trust, the interest to be paid to William and Dorothy Cookson during Dorothy's life, and on her death any persons claiming to be entitled to the Bank annuities should be at liberty to apply to the Court concerning the same.

Even then the cause does not seem to have been finally concluded, and shortly before his death John Wordsworth paid the clerk in Court 13s. 4d. for perusing the papers, pleadings, decree, etc., "in order to advise what steps were necessary to be taken . . . to get an examination and report being long and intricate and taking up much time."

One can well understand that relations between Mrs Crackanthorpe and her sister-in-law, Mrs Cookson, were not likely to be wholly agreeable. After less than a year of married life, Ann Crackanthorpe, at the age of 25, became the tenant for life of the Newbiggin estate, which she enjoyed for close on 40 years. She also appears to have neglected the property, and it is small wonder if her sister-in-law, the last of the Crackanthorpes, begrudged her the possession of the family estate for so long.

The *Newcastle Courant* of Christmas Eve 1790 may have been sincere in its obituary notice of Mrs Crackan-

thorpe, but one wonders if there was much regret in the Cookson household in Penrith. The *Courant* said:

"Sunday at Durham much regretted M^{rs} Crackenthorp relict of J. Crackenthorp Esq of that city & sister to Sir Henry Vane, Bart., one of the Prebends of Durham."

It was Sir Henry who wrote to Mrs Cookson's son, Christopher Crackanthorpe Cookson, to announce the death of his sister, and from Penrith on 27 December 1790¹⁰ Cookson wrote to his nephew Richard Wordsworth (the poet's elder brother) as follows:

"Dear Rich^d

"It is now some time since I had the pleasure of hearing from you. Pray what progress do you make against Lord Lonsdale, and is there any probability of your making a final end with him in any reasonable time. I rece^d a Letter a few days ago from Sir Hy Vane giving me an acct. of the death of M^{rs} Crackanthorp, by wch your Grandmother comes into the possession of the Newbiggin estate, wch I sincerely wish she may live long to enjoy, she is in as good health poor woman now as she has been for some time past. pray do you mean to cutt down any wood at Sockbridge this year if you do it is certainly high time you should give orders about it. M^{rs} Cookson has been confin'd for this three weeks by an inflamation upon her eyelid but hope she is now getting better. Your cousin Wm grows a very stout boy¹¹ & wishes very much to run alone w^{ch} I hope he will be enabled to do before he is a year old. We all join in every good wish to you and am D^r Rich^d

Yours affectionately

C. C. Cookson."

On 10 January 1791 C. C. Cookson wrote from Penrith to Richard Wordsworth:

"I have been busy assessing the Fines upon the Tenants last week the amount of w^{ch} is near £1,200 and have had the satisfaction of gaining the hearts of the whole of them."

On 26 April 1791 he writes:

"Your Grandmother was very ill yesterday, but thank God she is very much recover'd this day, and am in great hopes she

¹⁰ The letter, postmarked De 30. 90, was addressed to Richard at Messrs. Parkin & Lambert's, Gray's Inn, London.

¹¹ William Crackanthorpe, who died in 1888 in his 98th year. He was born on 25 February 1790.

will be much better to-morrow . . . I'm fitting up a room or two at Newbiggin as we mean to spend 2 or or 3 months [there] this summer."¹²

Later that year (7 December) the poet's sister Dorothy wrote to a friend:

"My Grandmother, you may have heard, has had possession of a very handsome estate about a year."¹³

Alas, the old lady (she was 71 now) was not destined long to enjoy the long delayed possession of her ancestral estates. The last of the Crackanthorpes died on 11 June 1792 and was buried at Penrith on 14 June. The news of her death is contained in a letter written by her son on that day to Richard Wordsworth:

"Penrith 14 June 1792.

"My Dear Richard

"It is with great concern I sit down to inform you of the Death of my Dear Mother, who was seiz'd extremely ill last Saturday morning, and continued in almost a state of insensibility till Monday when it pleased God to relieve her from all her miseries, for in truth for some time past her life must have been a great burthen to her, as she was constantly in pain. Your Brother is now with us and I expect Christofer the beginning of next week. We all join in our Love to you and believe me Dear Richard

Your affectionate Uncle
C. C. Cookson."

The next letter from uncle to nephew is dated Newbiggin Hall, 31 July 1792, and C. C. Cookson has become C. C. Crackanthorpe. *An Index to Changes of Name, 1760-1901*, by W. P. W. Phillimore and E. A. Fry, records at p. 76 that he took the name of Crackanthorpe on 17 July.

On 24 August 1792 C. C. Crackanthorpe wrote to his nephew from Newbiggin Hall:

"I have Inclos'd to your uncle Wm a state of the acct w^{ch} was settled with Miss Vane in Jan^y 1791, by which you will

¹² On 9 May 1793 he wrote: "We go to Newbiggin on Wednesday [15 May] Bag & Baggage."

¹³ *Early Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth (1787-1805)* arr. and ed. by Ernest De Selincourt (1935) p. 63.

clearly see that neither your Interest nor my Brothers can be at all affected by your signing the release to Miss Vane, you and he being parties as matter of course in the suit in Chancery w^{ch} was necessary to revive in order that everything might be settled."

On 2 February 1793 Richard Wordsworth executed a release to his uncle of his third share of the legacy of £500, left by Richard Crackanthorpe in 1752. Richard left his daughter Dorothy an annuity of £15, declaring that he intended this as the interest of £500, which he gave to his daughter's children, to be paid within six months after her death. Dorothy was survived by her sons Christopher Crackanthorpe Crackanthorpe and William Cookson. Her daughter, Anne Wordsworth, having died in her life-time, Anne's share (£166. 3s. 4d.) was paid to her son Richard, who administered her effects in P.C.C.

The five Wordsworth children also received a share of the personal estate of their grandmother. Informing Richard that his share was £143. 13s. 4d., C. C. Crackanthorpe in a letter of 23 February 1794 took the opportunity of giving him some family news:

"Your aunt has presented me with a little female cousin for you, wch is called Sarah, both she and the child are well and a little thriving jade she is. Wm was this day put into Coat & Breeches and a handsome little fellow he is, he is as proud as any private gentleman need to be."

It would seem that C. C. Crackanthorpe's brother, William Cookson,¹⁴ was not altogether happy about their mother's personal estate. The undated draft of a letter written to him by Richard Wordsworth survives and is as follows:

"Dear Uncle

"I have reced your Ire of yesterday. I had not any conversation with my uncle when I was at Penrith about my Grand-mor's Personal Estate — I cannot pretend to say how much

¹⁴ William Cookson, bap. at Penrith on 26 December 1755, became tutor to the sons of George III, Canon of Windsor 1792-1820, Rector of Binfield, Berks., 1804-1820, and of Ilsley, Berks., 1808-1820, died at Windsor Castle February 1820.

money she might receive at the Candlemas before her death nor can I tell how much might be due at time of her death because I do not know the amount of the Rental of the Estates. It has been the Custom of the Family to let the Tents be half a years Rent in arrears as for Instance the Rent which became due at Candlemas was not paid till Lammas and if the 2^d of Febr'y and the 2^d of Augt. were Rent Days there would be ten Months Rent due at the time of my Grandmor's death which I imagine would amount to upwards of £400 . . . At any Rate my Uncle Kit must have a pretty considerable sum of money in his Hand — and as he has taken notice of this at the time he desired to have the Real Estates relieved of the Legacy left by M^r Rich^d Crackanthorp I shall therefore be much obliged to you for a Lre upon this subject and shall be happy to adopt any plan you may reccomend. I think it is not only your Duty but also mine to have this matter thoroughly investigated immediately."

APPENDIX.

In CW₂ xxxiii 69 the Rev. Dr Moor said that Christopher Crackanthorpe succeeded to the Newbiggin estate on the death of his cousin, Mottram Crackanthorpe, in 1726, and was buried at Newbiggin on 31 May 1744. Col. Haswell's MS. pedigree agrees, but, as I shall show, Christopher was dead long before 1744. We know from papers filed with the will (28 December 1700) of Richard Crackanthorpe, Mottram's father, that Christopher's succession to the Newbiggin estate was disputed in 1727 by Mottram's sister Anne, wife of Adam Askew, but there are not many other known facts about Christopher. In 1712 Col. Grahme recommended him as a queen's waiter or land waiter at London port,¹⁵ and it is clear from the next piece of evidence that, like his brother Richard, he lived in London.

In Lord Lonsdale's archives is the draft of an interesting letter from Henry Viscount Lonsdale to the Lord Chancellor, dated 3 August 1730:

"My Lord

"I have this Morning the Honour of Your Lordships letter with the names of the Persons recommended by the Earl of Thanet to be put into the Commission of the Peace for Westmorland who are Edward Hassel esq., who always lives in Cumberland, Williams Winder, who lives in London, Christopher Crackenthorp esq., who lives in London, Thomas Wilson of Underley esq. and Lancelot Machell esq., gentlemen of small Estates in this county, against whom I have objections, but I wou'd avoid mentioning them unless I am obliged to it & I don't think they wou'd be desirous of putting me under that Necessity, John Christopherson, clerk, Francis Thompson, clerk, & Thomas Milward, clerk. These are all clergymen & have no other Pretensions to be in the Commission of the

¹⁵ *Calendar of Treasury Books* xxvi pt. 2 308.

Peace but from their Livings which are not very considerable & I can't heard that their Predecessors have had this Mark of Distinction shown them. There are several clergymen in the County who are better entitled to it by their Preferments & many more who have an equal claim with these, which is a Reason why I can't consent to opening the way to so many applications as must necessarily follow & which, if they were complied with, wou'd, in my opinion, be very far from contributing to the Peace of the County.

"Your Lordship must be sensible that it is a very difficult as well as a Disagreeable Task for a Custos Rotulorum to make formal objections to every man that may be recommended to the Lord Chancellor to be put in to the Commission of the Peace, especially when a Living of one hundred Pounds a year is thought a sufficient qualification for this office. Shou'd every man in England who has such an Estate be made a Justice of the Peace. I am afraid the Commission wou'd become a great Grievance & yet it is a Hardship upon a Custos Rotulorum to object against all those people one by one. Ever since I have had the Honour to be Custos Rotulorum for this County, I have always taken care to recommend all such Persons to be Justices of Peace as cou'd claim any Title to it from their Rank & Fortune & I dare be positive that there can be less laid to my charge upon that Head than to any other Person in my station in England, but I must att the same time acquaint Your Lordship that I think it inconsistent with my Duty to the King to recommend any Person to this office who I have reason to believe is no Friend to his Government.

"The only alteration I wou'd beg Your Lordship to make in this new Commission is to insert the Earl of Thanet instead of Sackville Tufton esq.

I am with Great Respect

&c., &c.

At this time Christopher was 47 years old and his relatives and friends must have looked upon him as a confirmed bachelor. Within a month, however, of the writing of the foregoing letter, he was a married man.

At Askham Hall was living William Sandford, the last of his family, an old man of 79, with only a few months of life left. His first wife, Mildred, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Sir William Rokeby, first baronet, of Skires in Yorkshire, had died 1 July 1684,¹⁶ aged 38, and he married secondly another heiress, Dorothy, only daughter of George Smalwood of Upleatham, in Yorkshire. In CW2 xliii 136 Canon Bouch stated that by his first wife he had one daughter, Mildred, wife of William Tatham.¹⁷ She was buried at Penrith on 29 August 1763, her age being given in the printed register as 75. If this be correct, she must have been born in 1688, and so cannot have been a

¹⁶ After three years and eight months of married life.

¹⁷ William Tatham was a grandson of Sir Daniel Fleming. His baptism on 24 January 1687/8 is recorded in *The Flemings in Oxford* ii 384-385. His widow lived in Bishop Yards, Penrith, and made her will on 10 January 1763 (proved at Carlisle on 15 February 1764). She mentions her deceased daughter Mildred Tatham, her sons John and Sandford Tatham, her daughters Dorothy, wife of Mr Henry Lowther, Alicia Maria Tatham and Frances Mounsey. To her son Sandford Tatham she leaves "all my family pictures and other paintings which at my decease shall be at Askham Hall upon trust that he let the same remain and continue there for the benefit of the owner of that house so long as it shall remain the property of my son William Tatham or any other of my descendants."

child of William Sandford's first marriage. The registers of Askham record the baptisms of three children, and the burial of a still-born child in 1697. The baptisms are those of Dorothy on 14 July 1692, Elizabeth on 9 August 1694, and William on 10 July 1701.¹⁸ The hopes which must have centred on this long expected heir were cruelly frustrated on Christmas Eve 1717, when the boy died, aged 16 years, 5 months and 19 days, as the tablet to his memory in Askham church records.

Of William Sandford's remaining children, Mildred had married at Askham on 19 September 1710 William Tatham, and on Christmas Day 1720 Elizabeth married Henry Marsden of Gisburn, in Yorkshire.

On 19 February 1724 William Sandford made his will and a full abstract of it will be found at pages 137-138 of Canon Bouch's paper. From this it appears that in addition to the daughters enumerated above, there was another one named Catherine, though curiously enough the will laid down that on the death of Dorothy Sandford, the testator's wife, the Askham estate was to be divided between their daughters Mildred, Dorothy and Elizabeth, Catherine being excluded. Catherine Sandford, the last of her family, was buried at Askham on 11 December 1773, aged about 77. No memorial to her survives at Askham.

In 1730, then, the household at Askham Hall consisted of William and Dorothy Sandford, and their two unmarried daughters, Dorothy, aged 38, and Catherine four years her junior. On 3 September of that year Dorothy was married to Christopher Crackanthorpe in Askham church. The marriage settlement was signed on the day before, the trustees being Henry Aglionby, and Dorothy's brother-in-law Henry Marsden.

Before the year was out the bride was a widow. On 19 April 1731 Christopher Crackanthorpe presented Richard Smith to the living of Newbiggin. On 22 July he made his will, describing himself as of London, and less than a fortnight later he was dead. His will was proved in P.C.C. on 4 August by his brother and heir Richard Crackanthorpe.

Who then was the Christopher Crackanthorpe who was buried at Newbiggin on 31 May 1744? Clearly this was the son of Richard, younger brother of Christopher Crackanthorpe the elder. The fact that the register describes him as "Mr" rather than as esquire might well have prevented Dr Moor from falling into error.

The will of Christopher Crackanthorpe the elder is of some

¹⁸ He was born on 5 July 1701, and on his seventh birthday Bishop Nicolson paid a visit to Askham Hall (CW2 iv 34).

interest, and one cannot resist comparing its provisions with those made by his nephew James. In both cases the testators were married for months only, but the uncle's provisions for his wife were very different from the nephew's disposition of the estate. The uncle left the family property to his brother. The nephew gave it to his wife, who, as we have seen, lived to enjoy it for many years, to the exclusion of her husband's sitser. Christopher's will (P.C.C. Isham 205) is dated 22 July 1731, and he describes himself as of London. An abstract follows:

"Whereas my now wife Dorothy Crackanthorpp is entitled to £800 & after the death of her mother to £1,660 and whereas by articles of Agreement made previous to my marriage with the said Dorothy, dated 2 September 1730, between me of the first part, the said Dorothy my now wife by the name of Dorothy Sandford of the second part and Henry Aglionby and Henry Marsden of the third part it was agreed that within three months after such time as said £800 should be paid to me, my executors &c., I the said Christopher Crackenthorpp should settle on the said Dorothy for her life in part of her jointure an annuity of £64 out of the manor, lands &c therein mentioned and further that within three months after the above mentioned sum of £1,660 should become payable or be paid to me I my heirs or assigns should settle another annuity of £60 on the said Dorothy for life in full of her jointure to be paid from said manors & whereas the said marriage between me and the said Dorothy Sandford took effect but no part of said sums have been paid to me & whereas I have made a settlement on my said wife pursuant to the said articles by lease and release dated this 21 and 22 July instant I do hereby direct Richard Crackanthrop my brother, heir, devisee and executor, on payment of said sums to him by fine or good assurances as the councill of my wife's trustees shall direct, to settle the said annuities of £64 and £60 on the said Dorothy my wife for life for her jointure, subject to said rent charges and remedies for recovering of same. I give and devise to my sisters Cath. Taylor £20 per annum for life and Mary Crackanthorpp £15 per annum for life, payable out of the lands &c., of my late father of which he died seized or which I purchased. I give and devise the said premises to my nephew James Crackanthorpp his heirs &c., subject to the aforesaid annuities I bequeath to the three children of my sister Buck £50 a piece when 21. After payment of funeral expenses and all debts &c I give all my lands &c not otherwise disposed of & also the residue of my personal estate to my said brother Rich. Crackanthorpp and appoint him sole executor.

Witnesses James Crewe, Rich. Emerson, Jno Cuel, stationer in Chancery Lane."

On 4 August 1731 the will was proved by Richard Crackanthorpe.

After Christopher's death his widow, Dorothy, seems to have returned to Askham Hall to live with her mother and widowed sister, Mildred Tatham. The mother died on 17 October 1735 and was buried at Askham on 20 October. On 17 February 1735/6 administration of her goods was granted at Carlisle to Mildred Tatham of Askham, widow, and Dorothy Crackanthorpe of Askham, widow, daughters¹⁹ and next of kin of the said

¹⁹ This seems to establish beyond doubt that Mildred and Dorothy were sisters and not half-sisters.

deceased. (It was the finding of this administration, with its description of Dorothy as a widow that led to the disproving of Dr Moor's statement that Christopher Crackanthorpe did not die until 1744).

Our next reference to Dorothy Crackanthorpe comes from the "Minutes of evidence taken before the committee for privileges to whom was referred the petition of Francis Walter Balfour of Fernie in the county of Fife esquire late a major in the Rifle Brigade to Her Majesty praying Her Majesty to be graciously pleased to admit his right to the honor and dignity of Lord Balfour of Burleigh. Ordered to be printed 23 June 1862."

This was duly done in Sessions Papers of the House of Lords for 1862, on page 238 of which is a copy of the principal contract of marriage between Arthur Balfour of Fernie co. Fife and Mrs Dorothy Sandford, relict of Christopher Crackenthorpe esq. in the county of Westmorland in South Britain. The contract was signed at Over Rankellor on 21 February 1737,²⁰ in contemplation of their marriage, Arthur agreeing to pay Dorothy £50 a year, her portion being £3,000.

Arthur Balfour was the eldest son of Col. the Hon. John Balfour, who was out in the '15 and was found guilty of high treason at Carlisle in 1716.²¹ Though Col. Balfour was attainted and his estates forfeited, they were restored to his six children by the King on 19 July 1720. On 15 February 1723 Arthur acquired the rights of his brother and sisters, and on 3 July 1738 the King granted him a charter of donation of the lands of Wester Fernie and others.

The question one may ask is how did Dorothy Crackanthorpe meet her second husband? I fancy the answer may be found in the name of one of the witnesses to the marriage contract — Archibald Hope younger of Rankellor, a Balfour neighbour in Fife.

Hope had married at Penrith on 4 April 1725 Catherine eldest daughter of Dr Hugh Todd, vicar of Penrith,²² and niece of John Dalston of Acornbank. It is possible, therefore, that Dorothy Crackanthorpe and Catherine Todd were friends, and this may have led to Dorothy meeting Arthur Balfour.

All, however, that can be said is that they did meet and marry, and though Dorothy must by now have been 45 she had at least one child, Sandford Balfour. I have not traced the

²⁰ The year began in Scotland on 1 January and not on 25 March as in England at this time.

²¹ He was 2nd son of John 3rd Lord Balfour of Burleigh. See *Scots Peerage* i 545 and *G.E.C.* i 382. I am indebted to the Rev. D. A. L. Maclean, formerly rector of Greystoke, for help over the details of the Balfour family.

²² *G.E.C. Baronetage* ii 344. Todd, however, was never Dean of Carlisle as there stated.

death of Dorothy, but it was before 1 June 1740, on which day her husband married Janet, daughter of George Paterson of Dunmoor.²³

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²³ Minutes of Evidence on petition of Francis Walter Balfour, 240.