ART. X.—Calees: a Cumbrian farm and its owners. By D. J. W. MAWSON.

Read at Cockermouth, July 14th, 1972.

UNTIL the sale of the land in recent years, Calees was a small north Cumbrian farm of just under seventy acres. For much of its history, the property was merely the nucleus of a somewhat larger holding, the extent and identity of which changed as constantly as the competence of its occupiers or the prevailing prosperity of agriculture demanded. It lies three miles north north east of Brampton, within the ecclesiastical parish of Lanercost, and historically is part of the Manor of Walton Wood.

To judge by the ruins of other houses nearby, the dwelling in the 17th century, although probably stone built, had but one storey and was roofed with thatch.¹ However, the probate inventory set out below indicates that by 1719 the tie beams of the roof had been boarded over to form lofts. In 1790 the walls were raised to accommodate upstairs bedrooms,² while sixteen years later there existed an extensive range of outbuildings including a lofty seven-bay barn.³ Next to this, by the middle decades of the 19th century, stood the gin gang,⁴ a small round shed which sheltered the driving gear of the threshing machine and circular track for the horse which powered it.

Constructed in part with stone pillaged from the Roman Wall, the house at the present time has an appearance of solid strength which a coating of white limewash does little to conceal. Formerly flanked by stables at one end, it is still sheltered by the large barn at the other and from the latter extends at right angles a squat range of stone buildings once used as byres,

calf-boxes and pig sties. Within these two arms there lay, until recently, the farmyard, midden and stack-yard, while at the end of the stables was a sheltered garden for vegetables, pot herbs and fruit trees.

The steading is four hundred feet above sea level, and from the pastures adjoining the house the land rises in a gentle gradient towards the north, where a century ago were to be found thirty-four acres of arable land, partly protected from the prevailing wind by oaks and beeches growing in the hedgerows. Here, too, there was once a stone-built cottage named Craigsyke.

This account covers the years from 1603 to the present day, for although the names of the occupants during the reign of Henry VIII are known, 6 there is no clear pattern of previous ownership. The probability of a much earlier habitation is nevertheless apparent from inspection of the Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1332, which show that John Kay of Walton Wood Manor owned goods worth £1. 14s. 4d.

It is significant that Calees often appears in the early records as Caleys, Caylees and Kayleas, as well as in its modern spelling. The second element of this name certainly signifies "pasture". There were two Old English words which over the centuries grew together so that ultimately they had the same meaning: - "lāes", which has always meant grazing land and generally preserves the 's' and ''leah'', which originally meant "a clearing in the woods" and survives very commonly as "ley". The latter, in the course of time, also came to mean "grassland". As to the first element, the old Norse "ká" meant a crow or jackdaw, and in the north of England it is the usual derivation of the surname Kay. By the 14th century the use of such names was already becoming hereditary, and it would be reasonable to deduce that in the year 1332 Calees formed part of John Kay's pasture. Indeed, since his

name continued to attach to this part of his lands, his dwelling may well have been on the present holding.

The first detailed description of the property is to be found in the Survey or Field Book which Lord William Howard had prepared in the year 1603, shortly after he came into possession of the Barony of Gilsland.⁸ There were then two holdings at Calees, each having an area of a little less than twenty-seven acres, and respectively occupied by Joseph and Christopher Bell. With the exception of 8 a. o r. 23 p. allotted by the Enclosure Award in 1807,⁹ and some earlier trivial encroachment of the adjacent common, the boundaries of these accord closely with those of the farm in the present century.¹⁰

Joseph and Christopher Bell held Calees in Border tenure, a customary estate of inheritance peculiar to the northern counties.11 Following the accession of James I some measure of peace came to the troubled borders, and with their tenantry no longer being required to undertake military services, the Barons assumed that this brought Border tenure itself to an end. In the Barony of Gilsland, the tenants were prevailed upon to surrender their estates in return for leases, but in 1625 the Courts decided that Border tenure was in no way conditional upon the performance of such services12 and, no doubt as a result of this ruling, Lord William set about re-granting the customary estates in his Barony. By reason of the altered circumstances, however, the estates which he now conferred merely obliged the tenants to suit of court and to meet annual payments and fines on the occurrence of specified events.13 The process was far from complete at the death of Lord William in 1640 and it seems that Calees remained in the lord's hands throughout the Civil War and the Commonwealth which followed. 14

Charles Howard, the great-grandson of Lord



CALEES.

Photo: D. J. W. Mawson

William, was summoned to Cromwell's House of Lords as Viscount Howard of Morpeth and Baron Gilsland, but following the Restoration readily served Charles II, who in 1661 created him Baron Dacre of Gilsland, Viscount Howard of Morpeth and Earl of Carlisle.¹⁵

The first Earl was a career diplomat and can have spent little time on his Cumbrian estates, the management of which he delegated to his eldest son. It was the latter who, on 28 November 1672, granted the property at Calees to James Bell of Corby Castle upon payment of £70 and with the reservation of an annual fineable rent of 2s. 6d. and 2s. od. for service money. 16

James was described in 1676 as a "gentleman". ¹⁷ Apparently he already had farming interests in the neighbourhood, since the Quarter Sessions records show that in May 1668 two of his oxen were stolen from Snowdon's Close, a farm in the adjoining Manor of Triermain, and it was ordered that he receive £6 compensation from the money collected for Border service. ¹⁸

One would like to imagine that there was some measure of justice in the selection of the new proprietors and, although there is no certainty that James was a direct descendant of either Joseph or Christopher, the owners in 1603, it is evident that Bells had continued to live at Calees during the intervening years, for Christopher was still there in 1633¹⁹ and by 1641 William Bell was the occupier,²⁰ as was Ann Bell at the time of James' purchase. During the last decades of the 17th century the property was probably let. Certainly this was so in 1690, in which year William Blailick was tenant.²¹

When James died Calees was inherited by his eldest son, Henry, who had left the north to live in London and was then in business as a perfumer in Drury Lane. The ownership of a farm in the remote fastness of Cumberland can have held little appeal, and in 1699 he sold it for £100 to a namesake, Richard Bell. Richard was a yeoman, then living nearby at Bankshead in the same hamlet. He was at Calees three years later but the parish registers which disclose this contain several references to another occupying family during the first quarter of the 18th century, indicating that there were then two dwellings on the farm.

Richard died in June 1719, having in the same year made a will, by which, after providing for his wife and daughters, he left the remainder of his chattels to his only son George, who, as heir at law, also inherited Calees.²² An inventory of Richard's personal estate, prepared at his death, reveals the extent and value of his stock and gives some indication of the manner in which his land was farmed in the years immediately following the first Jacobite Rebellion:

A true Account of Richard Bell goods and Chattles Late Deceased.

	£ s. d.
Horse purs & Close	05.00.00
Six Cows with 2 Calfs	13.00.00
two heffers Two Steers	01.10.00
Two Steers & one heffer	02.00.00
Two Steers more	02.10.00
fifteen Sheepe and Seaven Lambs	03.00.00
Corn and hay Now Growing	12.00.00
Rent for Davids Cloce	05.00.00
Goods in the Low Roome	05.00.00
in the forehouse	02.00.00
Goods in the high Loft	02.00.00
Goods in the Low loft	00.10.00
Plows Carts harrows Straw hay & Plough gear	01.06.08
Total	54.16.08

July 1st 1719.

The tenancy of Bankshead appears to have been retained by the family, for George was living there when his father died,²³ and although no doubt he took

over the land at Calees, he never occupied the farm-house. This his mother continued to use, according to the custom of the manor. In 1725, with her concurrence, George borrowed £230 on the security of the holding from Isaac Dean, a merchant whose nephew John, an attorney, was to provide lodgings for the Young Pretender during the latter's stay in Brampton twenty years later.²⁴ Two years after raising this loan, George sold Calees to John Elwood, and it must have been a vastly improved property to that which James Bell had bought for £70 fifty-five years before, since it now cost the buyer £300.

Brampton parish registers show that John and his sister Margaret were the only children of John Elwood, a local carpenter.²⁵ On the death of the latter, his widow married again and had several children by her second husband, George Wright, one of whom, namesake of his father, was later to inherit Calees.

At the time of his purchase John Elwood was living at the third Earl of Carlisle's new stately home, Castle Howard. The circumstances whereby he had left Cumberland to live in Yorkshire are unknown, but obviously he prospered there, for not only did he save sufficient to buy Calees, but, as his purchase deed reveals, he now regarded himself as a gentleman.

He may have bought the farm with the intention of returning to the district in which he had spent his childhood, but if this was the case, his wishes were frustrated by his death in Yorkshire in 1730. A bachelor, his heir at law was his sister Margaret, who in 1716 had married Joseph Fawcett of Wolverhampton. By 1732, recently widowed herself, she had returned to Brampton, and in that year paid her fine of £2. 10s. and was admitted customary tenant. 27

Her lengthy widowhood was spent in comfortable circumstances, for in addition to whatever estate she inherited from her husband, Margaret not only fell heir to Calees, but also acquired John's personal estate upon her mother as next of kin renouncing her right to this.²⁸

Although the rent from the farm supplemented her income, Margaret never lived there. In the year her brother died, James Robson was the tenant and twelve years later the holding was similarly occupied by Edward Armstrong. Like their neighbours, they would till the better land, mostly for oats, but also possibly with an acre or two of rye and barley. Root crops had not vet been introduced, and the farm economy was assisted by the right to graze geese, sheep and cattle on the adjoining common. The common also provided peat for winter warmth and rushes for lights, while horses were now employed for the heavy farm work which in the previous century had been undertaken by oxen. Some authorities consider that the milk cows and a few breeding animals were the only stock likely to be wintered on farms such as this but, even if this was true of Lanercost in the middle of the century, it had ceased to be so by the end, when throughout the year, the commons in the parish supported large numbers of home-bred cattle as well as hundreds more brought in from Scotland.29

When Edward Armstrong left in the early 1760s, Calees was let to William Holmes, whose relatives then occupied several farms in the vicinity. The tenancy included freehold land nearby which Margaret also owned, 30 and this may have exceeded Calees in area, for whereas the land tax assessment for the latter was 5s. 14d., it amounted to 6s. 2d. in respect of the freeholds. 31

In 1764 Margaret settled the farm upon trust for her own benefit during her lifetime but afterwards as she would stipulate in her will. This she made five years later. Her testamentary directions included an annuity of £10 from the rent of Calees for her daughter Sarah while her younger daughter Anne was to be entitled to the rest of it. If her daughters were to die unmarried she desired that the property should pass to her half-brother George Wright, subject only to his paying £100 to her granddaughter Mary Martindale of London. She also bequeathed to Sarah two large silver spoons and two small silver teaspoons, a silver salt, a honed gold ring, a chest of drawers, one black trunk and half her linen, "the little bed as it stands with all bedding and furniture thereunto belonging", a tea kettle and an oak table. Her large Bible and two gold earrings were left to Mary Martindale and her silky stuff gown to her niece Elizabeth Wright. Elizabeth's father was directed to arrange the funeral, which was to be "without pomp but decent" and to cost no more than 4.6.

Margaret's younger daughter Anne lived in London, but her elder daughter Sarah remained at home. Both girls must have died either before or shortly after their mother, for in 1776 the settlement trustee transferred Calees to George Wright. George, a yeoman, was then farming The Abbey, Lanercost, and to pay Mary Martindale's legacy he mortgaged the farm to Thomas Ramshay, the son of Lord Carlisle's agent at Naworth. Two years later a further loan was obtained from the same source.

William Holmes had died in 1768, and his eldest son, of the same name, was now the tenant. In 1779 he bought the farm from George Wright for £180, subject to the Ramshay mortgage, upon which £300 remained owing.

Two years after William's purchase, Thomas Ramshay, being at that time in Dublin with Frederick Howard 5th Lord Carlisle, then Viceroy of Ireland, transferred the mortgage to his father, and the holding remained so encumbered until the loan was repaid in 1796.

From the Land Tax Returns for 1780 it would appear that the land farmed with Calees was, for the times and locality, quite considerable. Apart from his owner-occupied property, William held tenancies of six other parcels of land in the adjoining Quarter of the Parish, having a combined assessment of 15s. 4d. (Indeed, the position was much the same ten years later, when the tenanted land was assessed at 13s. 3¼d. In both years the assessment for Calees was only 5s. 2½d.)³² He was the eldest of a large family, and clearly prospered, for during his ownership the farmhouse was enlarged and, indeed, a date inscribed on a wooden beam in the main room suggests that the greater part of the present house originates from his time.

In 1745 the Young Pretender's rapid advance into the Midlands owed much to the miserable state of the roads, which prevented Marshal Wade from transporting his army, provisions and artillery from Newcastle to Carlisle. Accordingly, following the defeat of the Prince at Culloden, the Government set about building highways where these were strategically needed. The linking of east coast to west was one of the more obvious routes requiring attention, and a new road was completed in 1758.

This improvement in communications contributed to the emergence of Carlisle as an industrial city,³³ and in the wake of its new-found prosperity there arose exciting opportunities for enterprising men such as William Holmes. It seems that the latter's brothers undertook the day-to-day management of the farm, so enabling him to engage in business as a carrier. That this venture met with success is apparent from the fact that at his death William owned not only Calees but a freehold warehouse, stables and houses in Botchergate, Carlisle, a similar freehold establishment in Haltwhistle, a leasehold house and stables

further east at Wallhouses,³⁴ while in Brampton he had held the tenancy of property in High Cross Street some years before and no doubt still possessed stabling in the town. He augmented the local trade based upon these places with a scheduled run to Carlisle every Monday, and thence to Newcastle the following day.³⁵ As an adjunct to his carrying business he kept two saddle horses for hire to travellers between these cities.³⁶

William died in 1798 at the age of 49. During the few weeks preceding his death there was a flurry of legal activity which this impending event itself does not fully explain. In March he had instructed a Carlisle attorney, Joseph Hodgson, to prepare a settlement. Within three months, however, the trusts were set aside in order to pledge Calees as security for a loan of £600. Although William had been fit enough to attend upon his attorney in Carlisle in March, in June the attorney had to travel to Calees to see him. Much business was conducted on this summer's day, for William not only revoked his settlement and executed the mortgage, but also had his attorney prepare a will. Within three weeks of these arrangements being concluded, he died.

Calees was devised to his brother Edward, subject however to the recently created mortgage. The free-hold properties at Haltwhistle and Botchergate he left to his mother for life and afterwards to his brothers Richard, John, Thomas and James equally. It appears that brother James must have helped William in the carrier's business, for he was given an option to purchase the leasehold property at Wallhouses and all the horses, carts and business equipment for the sum of £800.³⁷ James took up this option, but the business failed to prosper under his management, and seven years later he became bankrupt.³⁸

William the carrier had been a bachelor. His brother Edward, who now inherited Calees, was 46 years old and also unmarried. Edward did not farm the holding, but let it to his brother John until the latter's death in 1821, and thereafter to his brother Thomas, who paid an annual rent of £67. 17s.³⁹ John also farmed Walton Wood Head, a nearby property of 82 acres,⁴⁰ while Thomas during his tenure likewise had the tenancy of other land in the neighbourhood, albeit considerably less than that which had been farmed with Calees thirty years earlier.⁴¹

The principal activity during Edward's ownership was the enclosing of the commons in the parish. The Award was sealed on 13 January 1807 at the Bluebell Tavern, Carlisle. Eight acres and twenty-three perches to the south-west of the steading and adjoining the highway were awarded to Calees, provision was made for a public footpath across this land, and Edward was directed to divert Banks Burn, a small stream running through the allotment, away from the boundary of an adjoining property. Five perches in the nearby hamlet of Banks were also allocated to Calees but this did not devolve with the farm and there is no mention of it in subsequent dealings.

On the death of Edward in 1828, Calees passed to his nephew John, a boy of thirteen, who was to own it for 61 years, longer by far than anyone before or since. At some stage during the next twelve years a cottage was built on part of the land which had been allocated to the farm by the Enclosure Award and the ancient cottage at Craigsyke was allowed to fall into decay, although its ruins remain to this day.

During much of his life the extent of the land which John farmed was sufficient to justify the employment of two agricultural workers. ⁴³ That Calees did not escape the general agricultural depression of the 1880s, however, is apparent from the fact that upon his death in 1889 the value of his estate (apart from Calees which itself was heavily mortgaged) was a mere £165. 13s.

A survey undertaken a few years later shows that the buildings contained accommodation for sixteen milk cows, their calves, and several pigs, stabling for four horses, and a spacious barn,⁴⁴ while surviving correspondence indicates that the farm was made up of arable, meadow and old pasture "the greater portion being old land".⁴⁵ The cottage, by then no longer used for a worker, was let at a yearly rent of £5 to a joiner, who used part of it as a workshop.

John left all he had to his wife Jane for her life, and afterwards, subject to payment of a number of legacies, to his son William, who was a butcher. Even before his father's death William owed £300 to Thomas Holmes, a distant relative, and shortly afterwards he borrowed another £100 from the same source. Thomas, prudently insisting on some security, took a mortgage on William's reversion, and it was well that he did, for within twelve months William was bankrupt.

In 1895 Jane Holmes died, and her late husband's trustees tried to sell Calees. Rosalind, Countess of Carlisle, was sufficiently interested to commission the survey mentioned previously. This showed that "the buildings are sadly out of repair and will require considerable outlay to renovate and restore . . . the roofs will require new covering and the timbers will not be in a condition to remain . . . the farmhouse is in a dilapidated condition and will need to be reconstructed . . . estimated cost of repairs — £392".

The property remained unsold, whereupon Thomas Holmes foreclosed on his mortgage and came to live there. Although he died four years later, Calees was retained by his family until 1947.

On I January 1926 all customary estates were converted by statute into freeholds, the Lord of the Manor being entitled to compensation for the loss of his rights. On 3 December 1935 the appropriate compensation agreement was signed, and in return for a payment of

f,27 the 11th Earl of Carlisle consented to the extinguishment of the Lord's rent reserved in the time of the 1st Earl, on the sale to James Bell in 1672.

From 1947 to 1963 Calees had a succession of owners, few of whom owned the property for long. In the latter year the land and farmhouse were sold separately, and the history of the place, as a farm, has thus run full course.

Acknowledgements.

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References.

¹ Cottage at Hare Hill (565646) 400 yards S.W. and at Craigsyke (text para. 4) both of which appear to date from this period.

² Date carved on a beam in the farmhouse.

The map prepared for the Enclosure Award of 1807 clearly shows the outline of the farm buildings to be similar to those existing today.

4 Ordnance Survey Map 1st edition, 1862, 25-inch Sheet XII-14.

5 Ordnance Survey Book of Reference, Lanercost Parish, Eskdale Ward,

Cumberland, 1864.

Cumberland, 1864.

6 Rental of the Barony of Gilsland, Henry VIII (1536), Howard of Naworth C201/6, Department of Palaeography, University of Durham, showing William Bell and Geoffrey Bell as tenants.

7 Compare the derivation suggested here with the reference in EPNS, The Place-Names of Cumberland, xxii, pt. iii, lxxviii.

8 T. H. B. Graham, The Barony of Gilsland, CW (Extra Series) xvi 23.

9 Enclosure Award, Askerton, Troddermain, Walton Wood and Lanercost, 13 January 1807, R.O., Carlisle, Q.R.E./1/75.

10 The author has been unable to reconcile the acreage given in different

10 The author has been unable to reconcile the acreage given in different surveys. Lord William Howard's Survey of 1603 gives the area as 53 a. 2 r. o p. The 1807 Enclosure Award added 8 a. o r. 23 p., thus making 61 a. 2 r. 23 p. The boundaries of Calees shown on a map accompanying a survey of 1828-30 accord very closely with those described in the verbatim description of the 1603 Survey, with the described in the verbatin description of the 1003 Survey, with the addition of the Awarded land. In 1895 the area of the farm, calculated from the Ordnance Survey Book of Reference, was stated to be 69 a. 3 r. 9 p., and if the individual O.S. numbers are plotted on the map, the farm boundaries are revealed as being identical to those shown on the map of 1828-30. The author can only conclude that the discrepancy

arises through inaccurate measurements in the earlier surveys.

11 An account of Border Tenure is to be found in VCH Cumberland i,

322-328.

12 T. H. B. Graham, op. cit., ix-xiii.

13 An account of the customs of the Barony of Gilsland is to be found in Hutchinson, *History of Cumberland* (1794), i, 60, 132.

14 Barony of Gilsland Fine Book I, among Lord Carlisle's muniments,

Department of Palaeography, University of Durham.

15 GEC iii 33-39.

16 Save as otherwise indicated, this and other documents and events specific to the property, its owners and occupiers, are taken either from the muniments of title in the possession of the author or from the Lanercost parish registers.

17 R.O., Carlisle. Will of Leonard Bell of Dublin, 20 May 1676, proved

at Carlisle, 7 July 1677.

18 VCH Cumberland ii, 293-294. Border Service was a rudimentary police system cum insurance agency established for the purpose of apprehending culprits and compensating the victims of cattle raids, and should not be confused with Border Tenure referred to earlier.

19 Rental of the Barony of Gilsland 1626-1633, Howard of Naworth, C217.

20 House of Lords Record Office, Protestation Returns, Cumberland, the entry reading "Willm Bell al(ia)s Will of Kayleas".

21 Poll Tay Returns, Eskelale Ward, Walter, Wood Overter, Howard of

21 Poll Tax Returns, Eskdale Ward, Walton Wood Quarter, Howard of Naworth, C172 10(15).

22 R.O., Carlisle. Will proved 1719.

23 The Bells occupied Bankshead as tenants, and David's Close referred to in the inventory was part of that farm and not of Calees. Howard

of Naworth, C114 and C115.
24 C. R. Hudleston, Prince Charles Edward's House, Brampton, CW2 lii. 25 Brampton parish registers, vol. 1, 1663-1729, 18 May 1688 and 2 April

26 Ibid., 8 July 1716.

27 Barony of Gilsland, Fine Book among Lord Carlisle's muniments, Department of Palaeography, University of Durham.
 28 Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York, Letters of Administra-

tion, 1731.

29 Hutchinson, op. cit., i 61; Ferguson, History of Cumberland, 1890, 286-287; Agriculture in Cumberland in ancient times, CW2 ix 120; T. H. Bainbridge, 18th-century agriculture in Cumbria, CW2 xlii.

Bambridge, 18th-century agriculture in Cumbria, CW2 xlii.

30 R.O., Carlisle. Alphabetical list of Freeholders, 1794, D/Lons.

31 R.O., Carlisle. Land Tax Returns, Eskdale Ward, Lanercost, Burtholme Quarter and Banks Quarter, QRP/1/1. There is voluminous literature on the Land Tax Returns. For a critical appraisal see D. B. Grigg, "The Land Tax Returns", Agric. Hist. Rev. XI, 1963, and G. E. Mingay, "The Land Tax assessments and the small landowner", Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd ser., xvii, 1964.

32 R.O., Carlisle. Land Tax Returns, QRP/1/14 and 24.

33 Hutchinson, op. cit., ii 662. 34 R.O., Carlisle. Will of William Holmes, 7 June 1798, proved 16 July 1798.

35 Universal British Directory, 1790, 631 and Hilton's Newcastle and Gateshead Directory, 1795. The former shows that Holmes arrived at Mrs Marshall's in Carlisle every Monday; the latter that he left Snowball's warehouse, The Side, Newcastle, every Thursday.

36 R.O., Carlisle. Will of William Holmes, ante.

37 Ibid.

38 R.O., Carlisle. Addison Estate Papers, D/Cart.

39 R.O., Carlisle. Land Tax Returns, QRP/1/Eskdale Ward, 1827.

40 R.O., Carlisle. Addison Estate Papers. 41 R.O., Carlisle. Land Tax Returns.

42/ Enclosure Award, 1807, R.O., QRE/1/75

43 Unpublished Enumeration Schedules, Census of Population, 1861, Public Record Office, London. 44 Report, 25 September 1895, for Rosalind Countess of Carlisle, copy in the

author's possession.

45 Letters, 1895. Cartner and Milburn, Solicitors, Brampton, to Rosalind Countess of Carlisle, copies in the author's possession.