



Lowther Castle, 1806-14: plan of the ground floor, central block, as to the designs of Robert Smirke.
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Great Britain.]

Read at Lowther Castle.

LOWTHER has been in the same family for more than six hundred years since the manor was emparked by Sir Hugh Lowther, under Edward I.¹ By 1630 the manor house consisted of an ancient peel of three storeys on the east; a hall, great chamber and “sevrall Low ould roomes”, extending about sixty feet; and at the west end a tower built by Sir Richard Lowther and his wife in the 1570s. Behind, to the south, lay the domestic offices.² In early Caroline times some of the Cumberland gentry, benefiting from the peaceful conditions near the Border, set about beautifying and enlarging their houses. The Lowthers, already important, were emerging as major gentry, thanks to considerable land purchases enabled by profits from mortgages, demesne farming, legal practice, and, from 1630, trading ventures.³ Sir John Lowther (d. 1637) rebuilt the central range and offices here in 1628-30, buying the roof of the great hall of Kirkoswald Castle from Lord William Howard for £140 to re-use the lead and timber.⁴ This work included the construction of a central tower.⁵ A late seventeenth-century drawing by the antiquary Thomas Machell shows a three-storeyed, five-bay facade between the two towers, the three central bays somewhat higher and with elaborately carved battlements incorporating the date 1630.⁶ The windows are of a cross pattern, with a single mullion and high transom. Behind rises a low central tower surmounted by an ogival dome topped with a ball and weathervane.

At his father's death in 1637, Sir John Lowther (d. 1675), (1st baronet of Lowther, 1639) came into a landed revenue of about £2,000 gross p.a. which by 1672 he had increased to about £5,200 p.a., irrespective of his trading and money-lending.⁷ As he increased his wealth, he improved his house. Between 1640 and 1664 he transformed the north side of Lowther Hall, building a new porch, new wings, a gatehouse and loggia, and created an outer court by building new stables. Although he left a quite detailed account of his work, some obscurities remain. His first undertaking in 1640-1 was a new west wing of stables with garner above, and a gatehouse and “clostered walke”.⁸ With “leade Cutt woorke etc.”, these works cost over £400. It would seem that the gatehouse and cloister would have closed the courtyard from the north, but no such feature is shewn in late seventeenth-century views or plans.⁹ Next, Lowther beautified the hall porch, “which was only playne formerly”, with “Pilosters and other cutt woork” carved in white stone (quarried in the bank at Clifton) by Alexander Pogmire.¹⁰

The years of civil war proved expensive to a Royalist, but after his second marriage Lowther resumed building. A new east wing – a gallery with rooms “under and above it”, distinguished with a canted bay window carried on pillars – was begun in 1655, replacing a cowhouse and stables.¹¹ Lowther contracted with Pogmire for workmanship only, supplying all the stone, lime and sand himself.¹² Drawings of the wing shew that it closely resembles that constructed by Pogmire in the 1640s at Hutton-in-the-Forest for Sir Richard Fletcher, father of Lowther's first wife.¹³ Since Lowther congratulated himself that the new wing would make his house “much more uniforme”, we may assume that it

was similar to the west wing of 1640-1, which we may also ascribe to Pogmire.¹⁴ The east wing incorporated a chapel on the ground floor, a closet off the gallery enabling Lowther to overlook his worshipping domestics in the manner of that day.¹⁵ A wet summer hindering the quarrying and transport of stone in 1655, and the mason employing insufficient men, only the window sills of the gallery were reached that year; it was a further two years before the external walls were finished and slated. In 1657 Lowther also “new laid and cast the leade gutters” for the west or garner wing, as well as adding to the old (east) tower a closet for his wife and rooms for her maids.¹⁶

The west wing was presumably converted into domestic offices after 1663, when Lowther built a new coach house with stables in the end at a cost of £80. The first baronet’s new stables almost certainly occupied twin blocks lying to the north of the old courtyard, forming a wider outer court that gave great depth to the house.¹⁷ Represented rather schematically in a “survey of Lowther Parke, taken in April . . . 1683”,¹⁸ their life was short, for Sir John Lowther, second baronet, who succeeded his grandfather in 1675, spent £1,500 on building new stables.¹⁹ These were sketched by Machell, and represented in an important late seventeenth-century plan now in the Drawings collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects.²⁰ These drawings shew twin I-shaped blocks, 160 ft long and standing 272 ft apart, with north and south wings of four bays and a gabled central feature on the court front. The second baronet later extended the stabling to form an open quadrangle behind the eastern block; and by the early eighteenth century the western block was used as domestic offices.²¹

The RIBA plan, probably prepared when the second baronet was contemplating further building works *c.* 1690, also shews that the wings of the inner court, of ten unequal bays, were slightly splayed out (142 ft apart at the north end), at an obtuse angle to the main house, exaggerating the perspective effect.²² Quadrant features connect them with the stable wings. In the body of the house proper, the two original towers are clearly indicated by their massive walls; between them lie a hall and staircase; and contiguous with the western tower lies a 13-bay block of apartments or offices enclosing a rectangular area.

The 2nd baronet who inherited a noble estate, became an active politician, was a minister in several of William III’s cabinets, lord lieutenant of Westmorland, and was created Viscount Lonsdale in 1696. Like his colleague Lord Nottingham, further enriched by the profits of court and ministerial places, he set about building a seat becoming his rank and station. He confessed to his son that in his building he had “committed an Excesse”, though in defence he asserted that “our estate had exceeded our house, and that a good house is a debt owing to a family”. The disagreeableness of the old house and its site (it stood, he declared, “in the Middle of the Village”) might have inclined his sons to live constantly in London, so the rebuilding would be a lasting advantage to his posterity. The greatest part of our lives, moreover, he argued, is spent in our houses, which therefore ought to be made pleasant and easy to us. Furthermore, nothing could be a greater relief to the poor of the neighbourhood. To achieve his object, he moved the old village, diverted the high road, and levelled “mighty irregularities of the ground, and all that rock”, persisting in his task because “when executed the Place would be as pleasant as so Northern a Climate was capable off”.²³

As early as 1679 Sir John II was consulting the scientist and architect Robert Hooke about rebuilding the church at Lowther.²⁴ His cousin had already embellished Hutton with a “very stately” centrepiece, in the new “regular” style of architecture employing a

classical vocabulary, executed by Edward Addison, a local mason.²⁵ Lowther first made improvements in his old house, and then in 1692-3 embarked on "such a palace-like fabric as bears the bell away from all".²⁶ The old house was demolished, except for the inner wings.²⁷ Lowther, in an abstract of his "charges in building" dated 11 September 1697, stated the cost of the offices as £1,200, that of the stables at £1,500, and that of the "square and other courts with the stables" as £500.²⁸

For a design for his new house, Lowther, a minister and courtier, naturally turned to the king's Office of Works – not to its head, the fully-occupied surveyor-general, Sir Christopher Wren, but to his deputy, William Talman, then at the height of his reputation as a country-house architect.²⁹ He appears previously to have consulted Hooke about refronting the house,³⁰ but in 1690 as First Lord of the Treasury it was natural for him to look to an architect in his own department. A design formerly in the Lonsdale papers³¹ may well be Talman's response: it bears little resemblance to the executed work, but Lowther himself explained the cause.

What I have done [he related to his son] was it is true Principallie my Own thought because the Inequalitie off Ground and many other circumstances made it impossible to be judged off at a Distance. But for my Hous after I had directed Mr Talman the Kings Comptroller off his works to Draw me a Design such as I thought convenient for me, I had the Correction and Approbation off Sir Samuell Morland. A Man surpassing most if not anie off the Age in Mechanical and Mathematicall knowledge.³²

Whether Lowther experienced Talman's cantankerousness we do not know; but he did not employ him as superintending architect. At some stage in the design process Lowther had a model of the proposed house constructed by Alexander Fort, the Office of Works' Master Joiner,³³ before contracting with Edward Addison (whose work at Hutton I have already referred to) for the pulling down of the old house and performing all the mason's work of the new, executed in 1692-4.³⁴ Such a design-process was no uncommon story.³⁵

In so proceeding, Lowther was following closely the advice given by Sir Roger Pratt, a notable gentleman-architect of the 1660s, to "resolve with yourself what house will be answerable to your purse and estate . . . get some ingenious gentleman who has . . . been somewhat versed in the best authors of Architecture . . . to give you a design of it in paper, . . . shew this afterwards to men of ingenuity, but withal well capable of judging . . . and after you have had the advice . . . of many such, according to what you shall then be convinced of, get a model of wood to be most exactly framed accordingly".³⁶ Pratt also advised that building should be by contract, i.e. at a predetermined price, a practice Lowther recommended to his son, "since the charge would be Endless if you should trust to the consciences of Artificers in performing their Daye Work".³⁷

I have consulted strength as well as Ornament [Lowther told his son], suitable to the coldnesse of our Climate, and Necessarie to defend us from the Rigour off the Winters. Some Object that tis too lowe, but when tis considered that this is Westmerland not Italie or France, and that nothing is handsome but what is convenient, perhaps it will not be thought an objection. Should wee not think that Merchant mad that should cloth himself and his Familie in thin silks and calicoes, because he had seen the people so habited in India. Noe doubt it would appear deservedlie Ridiculous. Noe less ought it to doe so to build loftie Piles, to be tossed and Battered with the Storms becaus such houses are Frequent in the Warmer countries of Italie and France. Mine looks what it is and what it ought to be Substantiall and Warme, and yet hath as much Respect to Regular Architecture as is consistent with those two more Necessarie Qualities off a Northern hous.

The result was a double-pile house of 13 bays with small lateral projections, extending some 220 feet from east to west; a centre broken forward on both north and south fronts, and marked with pilasters on the north; and shallow wings to the south. In elevation, an exposed rusticated basement was surmounted by a principal floor of full height, the mullioned and transomed windows adorned alternately with segmental and triangular pediments, and a range of square windows in the upper storey, above which a balustrade concealed the roof.³⁸ All this cost Lowther some £7,000.³⁹ To the north stretched the wings built by his grandfather and the stables and offices he had rebuilt himself, giving a depth of about 330 ft to the inner and outer courts.

That intrepid traveller Celia Fiennes came to Lowther in 1698, and described the Hall and its surroundings:⁴⁰ the stables and offices built “very uniform, . . . like two wings . . . each like a fine house jutting out at each end and the middle is with pillars white and carvings like the entrance of a building”, on either side of a court approached through iron gates at the head of a broad flight of steps. The court was crossed by two paved walks dividing it into four grass squares, each adorned with statues; further steps brought one to the inner court, crossed by several paved walks to the various doors, and embellished with more statues. This description corresponds closely to the view drawn by Kip for *Britannia Illustrata* (1707). The house itself, she noted, was flat-roofed and of the “red sort of stone of the country”.

Fiennes’s description of the interior is less easy to relate to existing plans of the Hall, drawn several decades later, which agree with Kip in showing an external flight of steps giving access direct to the principal floor.⁴¹ Fiennes, however, refers to entering “a porch with pillars of limestone . . . Below-staires you enter a space that leads severall wayes to all the offices and on one side is a large parlour which lookes out on these green plotts with images [statues]; the staircase very well wanscoated and carv’d at the top; you are landed into a noble hall very lofty”. This was the hall of which the ceiling and walls had been painted by Verrio (“the best hand in England”, Fiennes called him) with a Feast of the Gods and the Four Seasons, at a charge of £400 in addition to gold leaf, presents and his diet “for near nine months”,⁴² and presumably was the central room on the north front. But the stairs shewn on the plan are at the east end of the front, where there appears to be a door at ground level; they rise into a gallery which occupies the five eastern bays of the front. The internal planning is, save for a slight variation in the south front rooms, symmetrical on either side of the entrance axis. Fiennes writes of passing from the hall

thence into a dining room and drawing-room well wanscoated of oak large pannells plaine no fretworks nor carvings or glass work only in chimney pieces; 3 handsome chambers, one scarlet cloth strip’d and very fashionably made up the hangings the same, another flower’d damaske lined with fine Indian embroidery, the third roome had a blew satten bed embroider’d, in this roome was very fine orris hangings in which was much silk and gold and silver; a little roome by in which was a green and white damaske canopy bed which was hung with some of the same hangings – being made for the Duke of Lauderdale . . . the roomes are all well pitch’d and well finish’d . . . a good gallery so adorn’d [with paintings] which leads to a closet that looks into the Chappell, all things very neat tho’ nothing extraordinary besides the hall painting; the chimney pieces are of a dark coulloured marble which is taken out of the ground just by, its well polish’d, there was some few white marble vein’d but that is not dug out of this country.⁴³

This seems to describe the eastern parts of the house; it is unlikely that Fiennes saw Lady Lonsdale’s apartment, as “it was so early in the morning that she being indisposed was not up”.

Lowther enjoyed his viscounty of Lonsdale for only four years, dying in 1700. His elder son, just out of his minority, died in 1713. His second son, the third viscount, shewed his father's interest in building as soon as he attained his majority. In 1717, although a zealous anti-Jacobite,⁴⁴ he invited the Tory architect Gibbs to Lowther.⁴⁵ Their principal object seems to have been a re-building of the mid seventeenth-century wings, though Gibbs took the opportunity to submit proposals for up-dating the house too. One of his schemes was engraved for *Vitruvius Britannicus*, the collection of architectural designs of which Campbell was publishing the second volume at that time; others are now in the RIBA Drawings Collection.⁴⁶ Nothing was undertaken, however, before a disastrous fire gutted the Hall and destroyed most of the inner west or chapel wing in 1718.⁴⁷ Both Gibbs and Campbell made designs for rebuilding,⁴⁸ but Lord Lonsdale, a lord of the Bedchamber from 1717, necessarily spent much time at Court, and when in Westmorland was content to live in the adapted offices (outer east) wing, which had so impressed Celia Fiennes. In 1751 he died leaving his estates to his cousin and great nephew James, aged 15.

Five years later James succeeded to the Whitehaven estates and vast riches of another cousin, which gave him another residence, Whitehaven Castle, and great electoral influence in Cumberland as well as Westmorland.⁴⁹ Notorious for the vigour with which he exerted his political muscle (see p. 113) and the great sums he spent on elections, his tyrannical manner made him highly unpopular (see p. 119). An exacting landlord, he lived parsimoniously, sending to Penrith, it is said for wine merely by the dozen, and of very inferior quality, when entertaining the assize judges every year, although he was reported to have left a vast stock of wines worth £10,000 at his death.⁵⁰

During the 1760s, however, Sir James Lowther clearly contemplated rebuilding his ancestral home in a magnificent fashion, obtaining plans from Brettingham, Capability Brown, and Robert and James Adam. Brettingham supplied plans in 1759 for a new house lying between the ruined Hall and its wings.⁵¹ A later design proposed a house with four wings very similar to Brettingham's Holkham Hall, Norfolk.⁵² One Adam design of 1767 proposed a mansion something like Kedleston, another, an octagonal house with angle towers – the first revival of “Lowther Castle” – and an internal court of 166 ft diameter.⁵³ With lateral courts, the total extent of the proposed front was 656 ft. There were to be 24 principal bedrooms. Yet another Adam plan in 1771 was for a castellated mansion measuring 420 ft by 260 ft.⁵⁴ The main block was to contain a circular court of 125 ft diameter, in the centre of which would have stood a tower rising to form a culminating feature 110 ft high, linked to the house by corridors. No fewer than three suites of principal rooms were provided, including winter and summer dining rooms, nearly all measuring about 56 ft by 24 ft, and every bedroom on the principal storey was provided with a water closet. These grandiose schemes remained paper schemes. Sir James, created Earl of Lonsdale in 1784, continued when at Lowther to live in the old offices wing (perhaps improved by Brettingham),⁵⁵ filling most of the rooms with letters and papers of every kind.⁵⁶ In 1799-1800 estate craftsmen constructed an addition to the house, supervised by Francis Webster, a mason of Kendal who developed into an architect, an evolution common enough at that time.⁵⁷ An early nineteenth-century plan shows that a small square block of rooms had since Brettingham's survey been built behind (i.e. west of) the converted offices wing, to which it was linked by a corridor.⁵⁸ It is probably this block that was added in 1799-1800.

On Lord Lonsdale's death in May 1802 his viscounty of Lowther passed to his distant

cousin, a man of the opposite character, the affable and generous Sir William Lowther, who in 1807 was himself created Earl of Lonsdale. Inheriting at least £40,000 p.a., William, Viscount Lowther, took immediate steps to make Lowther Hall more convenient. By August 1802 men were at work digging out foundations for a new building designed by Webster, embracing new domestic offices to the south of the house. But there were clearly improvements in the house itself, as Webster in his capacity of mason supplied marble chimneypieces and there were payments for gilding.⁵⁹

Work was sufficiently advanced by February 1803 to require rope for hoisting stone, which was quarried on the estate at Fuze Cragg. In March a joiner was paid for making window-frames for the kitchen, at 5d. a foot. In June, the new kitchen, larders, servants' hall and a passage were being paved with flags. Slate for roofing was sledged down the hill from Hartsop quarry to Kirkstone foot, carted thence to the head of Ullswater, brought by boat to Pooley Bridge, and finally carted to Lowther. Bricks were brought from Crackenthorpe, laths sawn on the estate. In April 1804 Robert Watson of Kendal was paid for hanging bells with patent cranks (one of the technical advances that facilitated removing the servants to a remote quarter of their own). Meanwhile painting, gilding and glazing had been going on. In the two years from his succession Lowther spent some £4,000 on his house.⁶⁰

Whatever the extent of Webster's improvements, it is clear that Lowther was intending to build a house commensurate with his dignity and wealth. Plans, probably by Harrison of Chester, the leading neo-classical architect in Northern England at that time, show several schemes: one for incorporating the then house as the back range of a house about 210 ft by 175 ft enclosing a courtyard (which involved removing the stables);⁶¹ another for connecting the existing house and stables by rooms ranged about a huge central hall, with a block of vast state rooms projecting northwards to afford them extensive views.⁶² This plan marks the impact of Picturesque theory on house design, the house being intended to be at one with its setting, and the view from the interior being as much considered as the external views of the house. Of these designs, one offered a boldly be-towered, battlemented and machicolated castle elevation, another, an ecclesiastical façade.⁶³ Again, these were destined to remain castles and convents in paper.

Lowther was friendly with a circle of connoisseurs which included Sir George Beaumont, himself then planning to build a country seat at Cole Orton. Beaumont had asked his friend George Dance (1741-1825), surveyor to the City of London, for designs, and probably recommended him to Lowther. Dance visited Lowther Hall in September 1803, and met Lord Lowther again in London in May 1804, when he reported to his cronies that Lowther was proposing to build a house that would probably cost £80,000 – one on the grandest scale, fulfilling the aspirations of his predecessors.⁶⁴ Dance proposed a design with something of an Indian flavour, recalling the Gothic of his Guildhall façade.⁶⁵ It offered the convenience of a porte cochère, which opened into a series of halls with staircases. The state rooms would have been chiefly on the south front, including a music room, 65 ft by 24 ft, and, extending from the middle of the east and west sides, curious wings consisting in plan of octagons flanked by circles, which would have provided a library and a public eating room each measuring 78 ft by 40 ft. Quadrant corridors would have linked the mansion with the existing wings. Thus, compared with Harrison, Dance would have placed the main block of the house closer to the site of the gutted Hall, and its principal views would have been to the south rather than to the north.

Dance, however, in his sixties, found the prospect of building a palace three hundred miles from London too formidable. He recommended in his place young Robert Smirke, a friend's son, who in 1805 returned from a tour of classical sites in Greece and the Near East. Beaumont supported the recommendation.⁶⁶ Lowther's friend, Lord Essex, however, suggested he should employ James Wyatt, who had been working for Essex at Cassiobury Park, Hertfordshire. No one, he thought, knew "the True Gothic Taste but Wyatt". "If you could once get him to come down to you he would do more for you in one day than all other architects in one month", he told Lowther in September, 1805. But despite chasing Wyatt to Windsor, Essex was unable to drive him north. "If the Castle of the *Seven Towers* of the Grand Signior belonged to me", he wrote in December, "I would shut up Wyatt in *one* of them till he had given you the completest possible Designs for *all* yours, but with such a Fellow what is to be done in a Free Country. There is no Law existing to punish *want of punctuality, Lying, Prevaricating, shuffling, etc. etc.*"^{66a}

Lowther therefore invited Dance's protégé, Smirke, to prepare designs, on which Beaumont and Dance kept a sponsor's eye. Essex commented: "I have heard of Smirke & if you are not in a hurry and digest well his Plans perhaps he may and will answer your purpose as well as any other Person. Only let me advise you if you adopt the Gothic Style of Architecture not to suffer him to give you the *Elevations* till you have fully decided upon the *Ground Plans*." He complained that most architects went for outward show, "jumbling together the Gothic of different ages"; all should be upon one principle, and simplicity should prevail. He offered to send his plans from Cassiobury, or show them to Smirke: "all I pray for is that you would *preach* to him the *Beau et le simple*". By February 1806 Lowther had firmly commissioned Robert Smirke to design him a house. Essex was with him when he called on Smirke to instruct him to begin the building.^{66b}

Bidden to Lowther in April 1806, Smirke was directed to start work on the offices.⁶⁷ Smirke's plan* retained Webster's 1802 offices, with internal modifications, as well as the south wing and part of the west front of the old building, converted into servants' hall, butler's and housekeeper's rooms, etc.⁶⁸ The northern part and the block here dated to 1799 appear to have been demolished. Thus the castle stands north of the Hall of 1692, on the edge of the high ground that falls away to the north and west. As Lowther's great amusement was hunting – he kept about 50 hunters – it is not surprising that it was with new stables that a start was made in June, the work being executed by Webster now in partnership with one B. Proctor.⁶⁹ More slate was sent down from Hartsop quarry for the roofing, more stone quarried, vast quantities of timber sawn into laths, coal dug at Regill pits for heating the kilns for making tens of thousands of bricks or burning hundreds of baskets of lime, tons of alabaster and stone bought for grinding into plaster. Hair for the plaster, and nails and sand were likewise supplied by the estate. Cast iron was brought from Porter's foundry at Carlisle. Some of the plaster work was done by Simpson of Kendal, but it was chiefly executed by the ornamental plasterer, Bernasconi of London. Similarly, while Colvin of Penrith did some of the painting, the greater part was performed by Cornelius Dixon of London.⁷⁰

Externally Smirke followed principles of picturesque composition: a lively façade to the north, advancing and retreating, with turrets of various shapes and sizes, and a skyline similarly varied in height, but pyramidal in composition culminating in the great central tower – even in ruin it makes a superb landscape feature, dominating the scene from the north and we must be extremely grateful that Lord Lonsdale decided not to demolish it

* See plan on page 122.

entirely in 1957. Although the early nineteenth century was an age of castle-building – Brancepeth, Ravensworth, Lambton being but three contemporaneous northern examples⁷¹ – Smirke derived Lowther from a limited range of sources.

In his design he was reported to have adopted “principally” Dance’s idea for the plan of the house.⁷² For the central block this assertion is in the main true, but Smirke’s treatment of the wings is very different: he provided much more accommodation. Like Dance, he provided an entrance hall approached from a *porte cochère*, opening into a great pillared central hall, entirely of stone, from which a long flight of stairs rose to a landing where it divided into two even longer return flights. A groined roof soared 90 ft above, and large clerestory windows poured light down on the staircase.⁷³ “The entrance is like coming into the aisle of a Gothic cathedral, of which the cross or centre forms the staircase, and the apartments branch out from the side aisles . . . The staircase is magnificent”, declared Mrs Arbuthnot: it put Ashridge, she thought, completely in the shade.⁷⁴ Ashridge, indeed, built by James Wyatt for Lord Bridgewater from 1808, is a house which has considerable resemblances to Lowther, notably in the external massing of a series of turrets culminating in a grand central tower, and the correlated internal planning progressing to an impressive central staircase hall of vast height.⁷⁵ Both owe something to Wyatt’s castellated palace at Kew, begun in 1800 for King George III, which was also characterized by a central staircase hall forming a culminating feature in the external composition.⁷⁶ At Kew Wyatt also pioneered the use of iron supports, a new technique borrowed from industrial building and taken further by Smirke. But although an £8,000 bill for cast iron and smith’s work at Lowther suggests the employment of iron structurally, most if not all of the cast iron was ornamental.⁷⁷

On the north front, extending 342 ft, exclusive of stable court and office wing, Smirke created a suite of family apartments to the west: Lady Lonsdale’s room next the hall (hung in scarlet and light green satin), a dressing room, a bedroom, another dressing room and, projecting northwards, Lord Lonsdale’s spacious room, about 42 ft by 20 ft. To the east of the entrance, the first three bays of the front were occupied by the oak-lined library, and the recessed section by a bedroom and dressing room; the projecting wing corresponding to Lord Lonsdale’s room formed part of the stables. The centre of the house, right and left of the staircase hall, contained stone-groined corridors, 22 ft wide, in part used as ante-rooms, leading on the east to a gallery and on the west to a pillared hall 50 ft in length. At either end, stained glass windows formed an impressive feature. As in Dance’s plan, the principal state rooms lay on the south front, the fan-vaulted saloon in its traditional Palladian position in the centre, a vast room 58 ft by 27 ft, with an oak dado richly carved, light grey silk damask hangings and furniture; to the east, a drawing room 42 ft by 26 ft, in white satin embroidered with gold, and beyond it a billiard room; to the west, a dining room with doors and dado of oak, the walls scarlet cloth with gold enrichments, and velvet curtains; and adjoining it a breakfast room.⁷⁸

The number and character of rooms provided indicates the growing tendency towards specialization that accompanied the trend for the inmates of such great houses – family and guests – to spend much of the day together, rather than remaining in self-contained apartments, while at the same time separate quarters were allotted to the various categories – children, servants, bachelors, etc. Male and female spheres developed, the billiard room becoming a predominantly male preserve, and the breakfast room an additional drawing room for the ladies.⁷⁹ We may note that at Lowther there was no direct connection between the drawing room and the billiard room.

On the south front, arched open cloisters swept round at right angles to hide the stables and domestic offices from the view of the state rooms. Externally the 280 ft south front presented a different character from the baronial north front, towering over the park. As Wordsworth put it,

Lowther! in thy majestic pile are seen
Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord
With the baronial castle's sterner mien.

The ecclesiastical flavour of the south front was imparted by its central gable⁸⁰ and pointed-arched window, and the buttressed and pinnacled cloisters. This more pacific character was suited to the state rooms and the level lawns that spread before them.

The east wing, dining and drawing rooms and rooms over them were the first to be completed, and by February 1809 were sufficiently forward to permit the family to live there.⁸¹ Lonsdale then reduced the building activity to enable Smirke to concentrate on the rebuilding of Covent Garden Theatre.⁸² The central rooms above the principal floor, however, were finished in 1810, the staircase and hall in 1811, when Betsey Fremantle spent a night there and was taken to the top of the castle to see the mountains of Scotland.⁸³ In 1812 the saloon and bed chambers over the drawing room and library, on the east, were plastered, and in 1813 the library and west corridor.⁸⁴ In March 1811 Smirke had thought that another eight or ten years would be needed to finish the castle completely, but in May 1814 he told Lonsdale that little remained unfinished – the plasterers were still at work on the cloister ceilings, but the painters had left.⁸⁵ It is clear, however, that some parts of the castle were left in an incomplete state: mason's work was paid for in 1817, and labour at the south front in 1818; in 1826 the billiard room was reported to be still unfinished.⁸⁶

Smirke submitted his account⁸⁷ in June 1814, showing a total expenditure of £77,000 since 1806 – not an unreasonable sum for a man whom he reported to be worth between £80,000 and £100,000 p.a.⁸⁸ So much had been provided in the way of building materials from the estate that Smirke estimated that in the normal way the castle would have cost more than £150,000.⁸⁹ His generous and obviously satisfied client offered to pay him the five per cent architect's commission on the whole of this sum, but Smirke gracefully declined to charge it on more than the actual sum expended.⁹⁰

Here, then, at Lowther Castle, the Lowthers lived in more than baronial splendour: the grandest of their three country seats, with 40 grooms in the stables and troops of indoor servants – “A silent, but not scanty court of retainers” Disraeli called them⁹¹ – entertaining crowned heads; seating 60 or 70 at dinner (no problem with twelve dozen dinner plates among a collection of silver that in 1824 amounted to nearly 16,000 ozs); dispensing charity to the neighbourhood – 1,473 lbs of beef at Christmas 1823: a way of life that lasted little more than a century,⁹² to vanish with the collapse of Whitehaven coal revenues and the burden of taxation.⁹³ The fifth earl closed the castle in 1935, and in 1947 its remaining contents were dispersed in a sale lasting 22 days and including 7,820 lots.⁹⁴ The roofs were removed in 1957, the house gutted, and its bare walls left a magnificent ruin.⁹⁵

Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles,
With what ye symbolise: authentic Story
Will say, ye disappeared with England's Glory!

References

- ¹ Deed of 1283, cited in *Lowther Family Estate Books* (1979), ed. C. B. Philipps, Surtees Soc. 191 (1976 and 1977), 208 (hereafter *Lowther Estate Books*); original MSS among Lonsdale MSS in Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle (hereafter CROC).
- ² Sir John Lowther, 1st bart, "Memorable observations . . . of the House . . . at Lowther . . .", written in 1640, *Lowther Estate Books*, 233 (CROC, D/Lons/L, A1/1), quoted from Ms.
- ³ *Lowther Estate Books*, xiv-xv, 41.
- ⁴ "Memorable observations", *Lowther Estate Books*, 233; "Great Book", *ibid.*, 28. Sir John refers in 1633 to spending £1,000 in building, which probably includes his house at Meaburn (*ibid.*, 37, 25).
- ⁵ Wainscoted in 1640. "Sir John Lowther's Great Book", *Lowther Estate Books*, 59 (CROC D/Lons/L, A 1/4).
- ⁶ Machell MS, iii, f. 45r (MSS of the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle, CROC).
- ⁷ *Lowther Estate Books*, xiv-xvi.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 235. In the "Great Book", the 1st baronet recorded: "1640 I Built 2 sids of the Court viz the stable side and the gatehouse part" (*ibid.*, 59).
- ⁹ Machell MS, iii, ff. 42v-48v; J. Kip and I. Knyff, *Britannia Illustrata*, pl. 41; RIBA Drawings Collection, G 1/8 (1).
- ¹⁰ "Memorable observations", *Lowther Estate Books*, 238. This porch is shewn in Machell's drawing, iii, f. 45r.
- ¹¹ *Lowther Estate Books*, 242. Lowther removed the cowhouse and stable "to other places more decent", perhaps commencing the outer court.
- ¹² "Memorable observations", *Lowther Estate Books*, 242. "I was to give him by Artickles for Asher woorke, gettinge, settinge and woorkeinge 2s. a yard square; for window woorke 5d per foot longe for ground table 9d per yard; for Doores, playne without mould, 10s a peece; for Rigginge 9d a yard; flagginge 10d a yard square.
For raw wall against the Ashler 6d a yard; for other rowgh Wall, a yard at bottom, and 2 fott at topp; the height of the Gallery, 1s 3d a yard; for Stayres 9d a yard, and flagginge woorke 10d a yard."
He estimated that the "owte woorke" (carcase) would cost him £150, the "extraordinarie woorke about the Cante [bay] Window with Pillers the Chapell windowes intended to be tracery woorke with the Chimney peeces intended to be inlayed with marble will cost above £50 more at least." The woodwork (materials and workmanship) he estimated at £100, and the panelling and furniture another £200. He brought slate from Penrith Fell at his own charge, in addition to that saved from the old buildings, and supplied laths, nails, and slate pegs of sheep's bones at 2½d. a hundred (*ibid.*, 242).
In 1656 the masons' work, computed on the basis of the original agreement, cost Lowther £150, "and I had over paid them above £40 more then the woorke amounted to upon measure which I am like to loose [the mason] beeing but poore through imprudence." He valued the transport of stone and his own servants' labour at about the same sum (presumably £150), though it had been done at "spare tymes". *Ibid.*, 243.
- ¹³ For Hutton see *Country Life*, 4, 11, and 18 Feb. 1965; *Arch. Jnl.*, cxv (1958), pl. 26.
- ¹⁴ *Lowther Estate Books*, 242. Machell's sketches and Kip's perspective shew these wings as uniform, each with a canted bay on the court front (rather nearer the house than central in the wing), and crow-stepped gables terminating the north ends. A plan of c. 1690 shows, however, internal differences, RIBA Drawings Coll., G1/8 (1).
- ¹⁵ Cp *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes* (1949), ed. C. Morris (hereafter *Fiennes*), 200. That a chapel existed here previously is shewn by Lowther's reference to re-using slate "from the old House and old Chapell", *Lowther Estate Books*, 242. In November 1662 he wrote: "This moneth I in part finished the wainescott and woode worke in the Chapell with together with [sic] Playster woorke and the Roofe and guildinge costs about £80." The chapel was consecrated on St James's Day (24 July), 1666 (*ibid.*, 172, 178-9).
- ¹⁶ *Lowther Estate Books*, 242-4, 246. The stone was quarried near "the gate that goeth down to the Church", *ibid.*, 245.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 174 (Lowther commenting that when not in use it might serve as a workhouse. Cp. *Fiennes*, 199).
- ¹⁸ Illustrated, Anon., *Short History of Lowther and the Lowther Family*, n.d., opp. 2. Lowther also refers (above, n. 11) to moving a stable when the east wing was built.
- ¹⁹ Sir John Lowther, 2nd bart, later Viscount Lonsdale, MS book, "The Charge of Building my Hous", CROC, D/Lons/L.
- ²⁰ RIBA Drawings Coll., G 1/8 (1); Machell MS, iii, ff. 42v-43, 48v.
- ²¹ Both outer wings survived until Smirke's day, when the stables (east wing) were demolished, but the west wing partly incorporated in the new office wing; see below.
- ²² This characteristic is shewn in later plans also, cp CROC, D/Lons/L 11/2, no. 15; 11/4, no. 9 (Fig. d).

- ²³ CROC, John, Lord Lonsdale's MS book, "Letter" to his son. For Lord Nottingham, see H. J. Habbakuk, "English Landownership 1680-1740", *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, x (1939-40), where Nottingham's total expenditure in building, furnishing and landscaping Burley on the Hill is calculated as £30,000 or double his original estimate.
- ²⁴ R. Hooke, *Diary*, ed. H. W. Robinson and W. Adams (1935), 395, 417; cited, H. M. Colvin, *Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840* (1978), hereafter Colvin, *Dictionary*.
- ²⁵ Colvin, *Dictionary*, sub Addison. T. Machell, the antiquary and rector of Kirkby Thore 1677-98, claimed that Addison and he were "the first introducers of Regular building into these parts", Machell MS, i, 538, quoted by Colvin, *loc. cit.* Addison built the classical front of Hutton-in-the-Forest, c. 1685.
- ²⁶ *Diary of Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S.*, ed. J. Hunter (1830), i, 274-5, entry for 24 Sept. 1694. Thoresby was viewing Hutton, "by far the most delicate noble structure we saw in these parts", not having time to see Lowther.
- ²⁷ CROC, MS book of John, Lord Lonsdale, "The Charge of Building my Hous Built in 1692 and 1693". Pogmire's wings are still to be seen on eighteenth-century plans, e.g. CROC, D/Lons/L 11/3, no. 34 (dated 1764).
- ²⁸ CROC, MS book of John, Lord Lonsdale, "An estimate as near as I can guesse of my charges in building to this day [1699]". The last item probably refers to the two single-storey buildings east of the stables, forming with them an open quadrangle, which may be seen in, e.g. Kip's view, *Britannia Illustrata*, pl. 41.
- ²⁹ William Talman (1659-1719), Comptroller of the King's Works 1689-1702, was "probably the leading Whig architect of the 1680s and 1690s" (Colvin, *Dictionary*, sub Talman), but his work remains obscure. His cantankerousness alienated several important patrons.
- ³⁰ CROC, D/Lons/L 11/4, no. 1.
- ³¹ RIBA Drawings Coll. G 2/23 (1), (2). Dr T. Friedman in *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects, G-K*, ed. J. Lever, sub Gibbs, p. 23, regards this as a design for a hunting lodge or "Trianon", but there is no documentary basis for this view, or for dating the design as late as 1696. It meets, however, Lowther's requirement for a low house, and the difference between Talman's design and the executed building is explained by Lonsdale himself.
- ³² CROC, MS book of John, Lord Lonsdale, "Letter". Sir Samuel Morland (1625-95) was one of the leading engineers and mathematicians of the age, like Hooke and Wren, though he is not known to have designed any buildings; see *D.N.B.*
- ³³ P. Finch, *Burley on the Hill* (1901), 63-4, cited Colvin, *Dictionary*, sub Fort.
- ³⁴ CROC, MS book of John, Lord Lonsdale, "The Charge of Building my Hous"; and Estate and Household Accounts, 1693-99 (D/Lons/L, A 1/19), entry dated 9 June 1694.
- ³⁵ "All over England the mason-builders were busily engaged in raising houses for the nobility and gentry. Seldom were they at liberty either to present a draught entirely out of their own heads or to carry it out unaltered. Nearly all worked at the dictation and under the guidance of exacting clients" who "would perhaps rough out a scheme which the mason-builder perfected", often with the help of a French manual. J. Lees-Milne, *English Country Houses. Baroque 1685-1715*, (1970), 23. Lowther had himself spent a year or two in France, *Lowther Estate Books*, 192.
- ³⁶ *The Architecture of Sir Roger Pratt*, ed. R. T. Gunther (1928), 60.
- ³⁷ CROC, MS book of John, Lord Lonsdale, "Letter".
- ³⁸ CROC, D/Lons/L 11/2, no. 15; *ibid.* 11/4, no. 13; J. Kip and I. Knyff, *Britannia Illustrata*, pl. 41.
- ³⁹ CROC, MS book of John, Lord Lonsdale, "The Charge of Building my Hous Built in 1692 and 1693":
- | | |
|--|-------------|
| To Edward Addison the Mason for getting working carrying and setting all the Mason Work in the Hous and flagging the Court besides the advantage of the Stones of the old Hous and Pulling it down | 1031. 17. 0 |
| To Machell my Steward for Workmens wages in getting and bringing the walling stones carrying timber making lime removing rubbish &c | 1300 |
| In lead | 733. 5. 0 |
| To James Swingler* the Carpenter for all the timber work lieing the floors and wanscotting several rooms | 506. 2. 0 |
| To William Idle the Waller | 250. 11. 0 |
| For Deal Boards | 231. 15. 11 |
| For Glasse and Plaster | 120. 11. 8 |
| For Casements and some other Iron Work to George Dent of Applebie | 106. 6. 8 |

For laths	53. 14. 0
To Mackadams and Livermore Carvers [? for capitals]	84. 5. 0
To Clarkson and Shelton Joiners	392. 19. 0
For Marble Bought at London and wrought here by Garrett†	195
For Painting Wainscott	28. 13. 6
To Seignior Verrio for Painting the Hall	430
For Norway oak for floors and Wainscott	450
For locks and Grates &c	45
	<hr/>
Total	6960

Besides the materials of the Old Hous many of which were usefull I having earlie laid out in altering it near

500

* Lord Nottingham arranged to employ Swingler at Burley on the Hill, Hist. MSS Comm. *Lonsdale*, 105.

† Was he the Garratt who in 1710-11 carved the pediment on the west side of the quadrangle at Queen's College (Lowther's own college), Oxford? (W. Hiscock, *A Christ Church Miscellany* (Oxford, 1964), 43.)

In addition to the above sums, Lowther spent some £3,200 on the stable and office wings, £1,500 on the gardens, £2,500 on furniture, £800 on silver, and £1,600 on paintings. His total expenditure for Lowther – house, park and village – to September 1697 was well over £19,000 (MS book).

⁴⁰ *Fiennes*, 199-201.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 200; CROC, D/Lons/L 11/2, no. 15.

⁴² CROC, MS book of John, Lord Lonsdale.

⁴³ *Fiennes*, 200.

⁴⁴ G.E.C., *Complete Peerage*, sub Lonsdale; Hist. MSS Comm., *Lonsdale*, 121. The third viscount also entertained Lord Burlington at Lowther in 1713, Hist. MSS. Comm. *Portland*, v, 343.

⁴⁵ Hist. MSS Comm., *Stuart*, iv, 568.

⁴⁶ C. Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, ii (1717), 78-80; *RIBA Drawings Catalogue G-K*, Gibbs [4] 1-4, and plates 22, 23.

⁴⁷ Hist. MSS Comm., *Polwarth*, i, 483; CROC, D/Lons/L 11/2, no. 15.

⁴⁸ *RIBA Drawings Catalogue, Campbell; ibid.*, G-K, Gibbs [4] 5-17. One of the Gibbs' designs is illustrated in J. Harris, *Georgian Country Houses* (1968), pl. 12.

⁴⁹ B. Bonsall, *Sir James Lowther and Cumberland and Westmorland Elections, 1754-75*.

⁵⁰ *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, ed. K. Garlick and A. Macintyre, vi (1979), 2433 (hereafter, *Farington*).

⁵¹ CROC, D/Lons/L 11/4, no. 13. For further details concerning these successive schemes see H. M. Colvin, J. M. Crook and T. Friedman, *Architectural Drawings from Lowther Castle, Westmorland* (1981).

⁵² CROC, D/Lons/L 11/1, nos. 1-11; 2, nos. 20-4.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3, nos. 17-19, 20-4.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, nos. 29-33. The principal floor plan is reproduced, James Macaulay, *The Gothic Revival 1745-1845* (1975), 86 (captioned "Whitehaven Castle").

⁵⁵ CROC, D/Lons/L 11/2 contains plans of the office wing (nos. 2-4), which appear to offer alternative treatments. No. 4 is similar to Brettingham's survey plan (*ibid.*, 11/4, no. 13), having a "gallery" or corridor on the west side, evidently added since the fire (cp *Vitruvius Brit.*, iii, 76). In 1772 William Gilpin noted: "Lowther-hall . . . It is only a temporary house, the old mansion having been burned in the time of the late lord. But materials are now collecting for a grand structure". *Observations . . . on the Mountains, and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland* (cited, Macaulay, 299), ii, 149.

⁵⁶ *Farington*, vi, 2433.

⁵⁷ CROC, Lonsdale MSS, Accounts for 1799-1801, which shew that four or five carpenters were at work in the first six months of the year, 13 new doors were paid for in August, 23 sash frames in October (more in 1800), and four garret rooms were formed in the later part of the year (see 2, 9 Nov.). Although a plumber was paid in August for leading the roof at the new building, a slater was paid in December for slating the roof and inside walls.

For Webster see Colvin, *Dictionary*, and J. P. Haworth & A. C. Taylor, *The Websters of Kendal* (1973).

⁵⁸ CROC, D/Lons/L 11/5, no. 1. Webster's account for "drawing plans for Buildings and Journeys to Appleby and Whitehaven and many Journeys and Attendances at Lowther, between the 8th Augt 1796 and the 3rd of Novr 1800" (Lonsdale MSS, Accounts 1803-4) was £67.10s., which even at the lowest conceivable rate of commission does not indicate a very large potential expenditure.

- ⁵⁹ CROC, Lonsdale MSS, Accounts. As architect, Webster was paid £210 (2 Apr. 1804); if the commission were the usual five per cent, the expenditure would have been £4,200 (see next note).
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.* The total of £4,103. 9s. 6d. includes a few items in Lowther village, but the supply of materials and labour from the estate must have kept building costs unusually low. Tradesmen include John Noble, joiner; William Rook and Simpson of Kendal, plasterers; William Colvin, painter; J. Roper, glazier.
- ⁶¹ CROC, D/Lons/L 11/5, nos. 2, 3. Dr Macaulay, *Gothic Revival*, 299, dates these c. 1798, on the basis of a watermark. But the plan “showing the Situation and Aspect of the Buildings at Lowther” (11/5, no. 1) shews the new office wing of 1802-4.
- ⁶² CROC, D/Lons/L 11/5, nos. 9-10.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11-12 (castle); 13-14 (convent).
- ⁶⁴ *Farington*, vi, 2324 (16 May 1804).
- ⁶⁵ CROC, D/Lons/L 11/6, nos. 1, 2.
- ⁶⁶ *The Farington Diary*, ed. J. Greig, iv (1923), 47, 12 Nov. 1806; D. Stroud, *George Dance, Architect* (1971), 206.
- ^{66a} CROC, D/Lons/VL 4/3, Essex to Lowther, 12 and 20 Sept., 9 Dec. 1805.
- ^{66b} *Ibid.*, 9 Dec. 1805; *The Farington Diary*, ed. J. Greig, iii, 198; iv, 47.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, iii, 198.
- ⁶⁸ A comparison of Buckler’s plan (British Library, Add. MS 36390, f. 150), with one by Webster (CROC, D/Lons/L 11/4, no. 27) establishes what parts were retained, although Buckler’s dimensions do not entirely agree with those given on the small plan by Smirke (RIBA Drawings Coll. J 11/12, 5), reproduced Macaulay, *Gothic Revival*, 301. “Of the seventeenth-century building portions survive in lower walls of the kitchen-wing and two rectangular blocks immediately to the N. of it. The old parts of the kitchen-wing are ashlar-faced but the other blocks are of rubble. In the basement of the main N. range are some seventeenth-century doorways probably re-set.” Royal Comm. Hist. Monuments, *Westmorland* (1936), 161. Smirke may have rebuilt the east wall of the offices of 1802-4, and certainly altered its fenestration. The office wing was totally demolished in 1957, but photographs indicate further additions in the nineteenth century. Colvin *et al*, *Architectural Drawings* (1981), refer to works in 1866.
- ⁶⁹ CROC, Lonsdale MSS, Accounts.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.* Bernasconi’s account included making models of details of the south front gable for the masons to work from, and mouldings and ornaments for the founders to cast from, as well as in 1813 “working a rough nich in wood and fixing one of the canopys on ditto and [setting] it up to a certain height for Mr Smirke to Judge of its effects” – doubtless the terminal feature of the south front gable.
- ⁷¹ See Macaulay, *Gothic Revival*, 295-317.
- ⁷² *The Farington Diary*, ed. J. Greig, iii, 205.
- ⁷³ B.L., Add. MS 36390, f. 150; RIBA Drawings Coll., J 11/12, 5.
- ⁷⁴ F. Bamford and the Duke of Wellington, eds., *The Journal of Mrs Arbuthnot* (1950), ii, 42 (cited, Macaulay, 300). Creevey was less enthusiastic: “This place as a *castle* is a palpable failure compared with Raby or Brancepeth, but the park is most beautiful”. *Creevey Papers*, ed. Sir H. Maxwell, ii (1904), 127.
- ⁷⁵ H. A. Tipping, *English Homes*, VI (i), 339-46. The chronology suggests that Ashridge could have had little influence on Lowther, *pace* Macaulay, *op. cit.*, 302.
- ⁷⁶ J. M. Crook and M. H. Port, *History of the King’s Works*, vi, 357.
- ⁷⁷ CROC, Lonsdale MSS, Accounts. Mr John Peel, former accountant of the Lonsdale estates, informs me that he cannot recall any structural ironwork being revealed in the partial demolition of 1957.
- ⁷⁸ See B.L., Add. MS 36390, ff. 150, 159; J. P. Neale, *Views of Seats*, v (1822). Dr Macaulay objects that the staircase was a barrier to communication between the entrance and the state rooms (*op. cit.* 300); but planning should be in three dimensions: house guests would ascend the stair to their rooms and descend it to the state rooms. Disraeli in 1865 found “the house convenient, and handsome in the interior”, W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, *Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (rev. ed. 1929), ii, 154.
- ⁷⁹ See M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House* (1978), chap. 7.
- ⁸⁰ Macaulay, *op. cit.*, 302, suggests that this central feature was cribbed from the state entrance to Fonthill Abbey. Robert Knowles was paid £116. 8s. for carving pinnacles and canopy at the south front (Lonsdale Accounts, 25 Nov. 1809).
- ⁸¹ *The Farington Diary*, ed. J. Greig, v, 58 (8 May 1808).
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, 59; 112 (11 Feb. 1809).

⁸³ *The Wynne Diaries*, ed. Anne Fremantle, iii (1940), 342 (7-8 Oct. 1811). Arriving by moonlight, she was impressed by the hugeness of the castle, "which had more the appearance of a citadel . . . than a chateau de campagne".

⁸⁴ CROC, D/Lons/L, Acc. 629, Lowther Castle bills 1808-13.

⁸⁵ *The Farington Diary*, ed. J. Greig, vi, 251 (19 Mar. 1811); CROC, Lonsdale MSS, Smirke to Lord Lonsdale, 11 April 1814.

⁸⁶ *Journal of Mrs Arbuthnot*, ii, 42; Lonsdale MSS, Accounts.

⁸⁷ CROC, Lonsdale MSS, "An account of sums paid for Lowther Castle from the 24th May 1802 to 21 May 1814

To Masons and Labourers		15490.	2.	7
Webster and Proctor for masons work done by contract		14560.	13.	4
Webster for chimney pieces		1293.	4.	4
Messrs Webster, John, and Luzmore, Clerks of the Works		1679.	14.	8
Sawyers, Joiners and Carpenters		18233.	7.	6½
Simpson of Kendal for Plasterers Work	667.	4.	4	
Bernasconi of London	1911.	4.	4	
Colvin of Penrith for Painting	252.	3.	1½	
Dixon of London	757.	18.	6	
For Lead, Glass and Plumber and Glaziers Work		5235.	18.	6½
Cast Iron, other Hardware and Smith Work		8007.	5.	9
Cartage of materials		1353.	4.	7
Alabaster and plaster hair		348.	11.	5
Slate and slating		2950.	14.	4
Flagges and bricks		850.	12.	6¼
		73591.	19.	10¾

The Household Accounts for 1805-6 shew that on 30 June 1806 William Bayles & Co. were paid £10. 2s. 6d. for removing 405 yards of earth previous to laying foundations for new stables, coach houses, etc. The Northumberland Glass Co. supplied glass, and tradesmen employed included Isaac Kirkby, plumber & glazier, Ed. Gibson, slater, and R. W. & R. Porter, ironfounders of Carlisle (*ibid.* 1806-9).

⁸⁸ *The Farington Diary*, ed. J. Greig, v, 67 (19 May 1808).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, vi, 251 (19 March 1811).

⁹⁰ For his 13 journeys to Lowther Dec. 1805-Nov. 1813, he charged £216. 15s. CROC, Lonsdale MSS, account of Smirke's travelling expenses.

Smirke assured Lonsdale that the prices charged by the London tradesmen were moderate, though the totals were large; they were even, on account of the great extent of the works, less than the usual prices. The painter, for instance, charged 1s. 10d. a yard for work painted five times in oil and sanded. The plasterer charged 5s. 6d. a day for his craftsmen, labourers at 3s. 3d. and boys at 1s. 8d. – normal Office of Works prices from 1808 (Smirke employed both Dixon and Bernasconi at the Royal Mint, where he took over the re-building in 1807, *Hist. of the King's Works*, vi, 458).

⁹¹ W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, *Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (rev. ed. 1929), ii, 154. I owe this reference to Miss Helen Port.

⁹² CROC, Lonsdale MSS.

⁹³ L. Dawson, *Lonsdale* (1946), 153-9.

⁹⁴ Sales catalogues, Carlisle Public Library, M 1267.

⁹⁴ I am grateful to Mr John Peel and to Mr T. R. Riley of the Lonsdale Estate Office for information about the recent history of the building and for affording access to its immediate environs.