

ART. X – *Sir Daniel Fleming and the Gentlemen of England*

By J. V. Beckett, B.A., Ph.D., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.¹

SIR Daniel Fleming of Rydal Hall died on 25 March 1701, which was technically, the first day of the eighteenth century in an era when New Year's Day was on Lady Day (before the calendar change of 1752). He was, therefore, a man of the seventeenth century, and particularly of the second half of the seventeenth century which was when he lived most of his adult life. When I first examined his surviving papers as a young research student working in Kendal Record Office in the early 1970s, I saw Fleming only as a man of Cumbria.² Today, after sifting the papers of numerous other families across the country, I am far better able than I was in those days to view Sir Daniel among his contemporaries, the gentlemen of England.³ In particular, how far did Sir Daniel conform to the stereotype of the post-Restoration landed gentleman, characterised in contemporary literature through fictional characters such as Sir Roger de Coverley and Squire Western,⁴ and so memorably portrayed by Lord Macaulay in a famous chapter of his *History of England*, published for the first time in the 1840s? Fleming, from the remote north-west, ought to have fallen into the bumpkin category described in some of these burlesque figures, and taken as read by Macaulay.⁵ But was he? So voluminous was the literature left behind by Sir Daniel Fleming, notably in the two great account books, one of which has recently been published by the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society,⁶ that we can try to assess him against the contemporary stereotype.

Daniel Fleming was born in 1633 at Coniston Hall. He had the conventional upbringing of a Cumbrian gentleman, eventually going to Queen's College, Oxford, in 1650, but leaving two years later without graduating, and then passing on to Gray's Inn for legal training. In May 1653 his father died, and he returned to Westmorland. In 1655 he married Barbara Fletcher, eldest daughter of Sir Henry Fletcher of Hutton-in-the-Forest. She died in 1675 leaving Fleming with fifteen children, all under the age of nineteen.⁷

Sir Daniel Fleming – he was knighted at Windsor in 1681⁸ – was a conservative, not in the political sense of the word, but in the way he lived and expected others to live. In his autobiography he adopted as his own, Lord Burghley's sixteenth century "letter to his son", a literary convention often employed by gentlemen who wanted to lay out their own philosophy of life for the benefit of their heirs. He included a passage from Burghley's original letter which to an extent sums up the whole philosophy of his caste: "That Gentleman that sells an acre of land loses an ounce of credit, for gentility is nothing but ancient riches so that if the foundation be sunk the building must needs follow".⁹ This was a sentiment with which Fleming was wholeheartedly in favour; indeed, his recycling of this sixteenth century advice a century after it was written helps to explain the way he handled his family, and ran his estate.

Fleming was a family man, and after his wife's death it fell to him to educate and set up his sons and daughters appropriately. As far as Sir Daniel was concerned,

appropriately meant traditionally and respectfully. William, his eldest son, and therefore the heir apparent to Rydal and the ancestral estates, was expected to live at home, thereby learning the business of estate management from his father. Born in 1656 he seems to have been kept at Kendal School until the age of 20, and then used as a sort of clerk-of-the-works. Sir Daniel refused him his own establishment. In 1689, apparently in desperation since he was now 33, William left home without warning and went to London.¹⁰ He returned later in the year and was subsequently allowed to live in Kendal, although Fleming remained wary of his “undutiful” son, as he called him, particularly when in 1692 he again left Rydal without offering notice to his father.¹¹

Sir Daniel was again “surprised and annoyed”, when he learnt in 1696 that William had aspirations to succeed Sir John Lowther of Lowther, recently promoted to the peerage, in the vacant Westmorland Parliamentary seat, and not best pleased when on 21 November 1696 William set off for London without even telling his father that he had been elected.¹² Despite lacking his father’s blessing, William subsequently wrote regularly to Sir Daniel on Parliamentary matters. This does not seem to have helped him financially, since in 1697 he asked James Grahme of Levens if he would intervene on his behalf at Rydal “to incline my father to afford me such an allowance as I have offered to pay dear for”.¹³ His appointment as a commissioner in the excise office in 1698 seems to have alleviated at least some of his financial worries,¹⁴ which finally disappeared only when he succeeded his father in 1701.

Sir Daniel Fleming kept William at home because he expected him to show filial loyalty in return, eventually, for inheriting the estate. Yet William, perhaps in a show of independence, did not marry within his father’s lifetime. Sir Daniel, in his borrowed “letter to his son”, noted of choosing a wife that

When it should please God to bring thee to Man’s Estate, use great providence and circumspection in the choice of thy wife; for from thence may spring, as thy future good, so thine ill, and it is an action like unto a stratagem of war, wherein a man can, for the most part, err but once. If thy estate be good match near hand and at leisure, if it be otherwise then far off and quickly. Enquire diligently of her disposition and how her parents have been inclined in their youth.¹⁵

William had taken none of this advice by the time he succeeded his father in 1701. In fact, he did not tie the knot until 1723. He was sixty-seven at the time, but his wife was only twenty-two, causing a certain amount of outrage locally. The couple had three daughters. William, I should perhaps add, took exception to what he had been informed (I am not sure how reliably) of his brother George’s “rejoicing bouts . . . on hearing of the births of some of my daughters for their being daughters”. George was next in line of inheritance while William had no son.¹⁶

Sir Daniel’s younger boys had to be found careers, and as a country gentleman Fleming recognised that they needed education. Four of them were sent to Oxford, and three subsequently became clerics. The law, the church, and the armed forces were the traditional professions followed by the younger sons of gentlemen. Henry, the second son, went to Queen’s College, and was subsequently presented by his father to the family living of Grasmere.¹⁷ Perhaps the best known of the boys was Fleming’s fifth son, George, born at Rydal in 1667, who subsequently attended

Sedbergh School before going to St Edmund Hall, Oxford, in 1688. Fleming would have preferred Queen's, the traditional college for Lakeland boys of means, to which he sent three other sons, but was unhappy in 1688 with the political strife within the college.¹⁸ George was not expected to live in luxury; indeed, he complained to his father in February 1690 that "I am in great need of a new gown, this that I have being not at present able to hang together upon me", but all he got was 1s. 6d. to mend the scraggy robe!¹⁹ George went into the church, and with the aplomb of a well connected younger son used his influence not only to rise through the ranks to senior positions – archdeacon in 1705, Dean of Carlisle in 1727, and eventually bishop in 1734 – but undertook the same sort of patronage for his own son, who he appointed archdeacon when he himself had to give it up on becoming bishop. In 1736 George became Sir George, when he succeeded his brother William, who had been created a baronet in 1705.²⁰

What of Sir Daniel's other sons? Daniel died in his lifetime having for many years helped him with estate matters. John Banks was the estate steward when Fleming inherited the property in 1655, and he remained in post until his retirement in 1684.²¹ He was not replaced as such; rather, Fleming employed his son Daniel in the role, which he continued to perform until he died of smallpox in 1698. At his death in 1698 Sir Daniel recorded in the account book that "this morning, about half an hour before one of ye Clock, my Very Loveing, Dutifull, and Serviceable son Dan. Fleming, dyed at Rydal".²² The language is significant; this was a son who had been dutiful in a manner Sir Daniel expected to be the case – very much the patriarchal thinking of the time. Richard also helped about the estate before his marriage in 1699. Certainly Fleming expected his sons to be part of the family business.

Michael Fleming, the sixth son, followed a military career. This was not entirely with his father's blessing, partly because Sir Daniel did not believe in letting his children go far. In the letter to his son he endorsed Burghley's viewpoint: "suffer not thy sons to pass the Alps for they shall learn there nothing but blasphemy, swearing and atheism".²³ Predictably none of the boys were sent on the Grand Tour, although arguably this was still in its infancy in the seventeenth century anyway. Michael Fleming, however, he could not keep entirely out of harm's way. There among the disbursements recorded in his account book on 28 February 1693 is the following

My son Michael Fleming, being advised by some of his Elder Brothers to be a soldier, much against my inclination, hath been pressing me several years thereunto, and finding that he would steal away from me, I thought better to let him go with my consent, and the Hon. Colonel James Stanley (brother of the Earl of Derby) having proffered to make him an Ensign, he having enlisted 19 men, he and they began their march toward London this day.²⁴

Sir Daniel disapproved, but Michael was nearly 25 and even Fleming recognised that he could not control the young man for ever, and so made the best of a bad job by making sure he went away with someone reliable.

Finally, of the sons who survived childhood, two of the youngest were set up as local yeomen. Richard, born in 1669, was left the Kentmere estate bought by his father in the 1690s.²⁵ Fletcher, the youngest son, was also found some land at Rydal, which he subsequently sold to buy Fellfoot in Little Langdale.²⁶

None of the sons, it is perhaps worth noting, were permitted or encouraged to enter trade or business. Fleming was clearly a rigid man, who expected his sons to

do as they were told, and to toe the proverbial line in terms of their careers – of which only the church was really “suitable” in his view. In the seventeenth century this still seems to have been possible, but in the eighteenth the situation began to change. Patriarchal fathers were less able to determine the interests of their sons, either in family or career terms.²⁷

The idea of daughters as dutifully doing the will of their parents, is another concept which does not seem to have survived into the eighteenth century. Certainly Sir Daniel’s daughters were not given much independence. Alice, the second daughter, born in 1658, became her father’s housekeeper. The three other daughters all married, but they were clearly not allowed a great deal of leeway. Again we know of Fleming’s thinking: “Marry thy daughters in time lest they marry themselves”.²⁸ It was his responsibility as their father, in other words, to make sure they married appropriately. Catherine, the eldest, born in 1657, married Edward Wilson of Dallam Tower in 1677. This was a classic piece of dynastic thinking through marriage, making sure that the eldest daughter found a suitable partner among the local gentry, as a way of bolstering the group. Both Barbara and Mary also married local gentlemen: Barbara in 1687, aged 23, married John Tatham, only son of William Tatham of Overhall, Ireby in the parish of Thornton-in-Lonsdale; and Mary, in 1689 aged 24 married Henry Bouch of Ingleton. These were entirely “proper” matches – the Bouch family were always described in the accounts as cousins – and Fleming was undoubtedly heavily involved in their planning and execution. He certainly treated the alliances as business deals. On the very day of Mary’s marriage to Henry Bouch, 27 June 1689, Fleming gave his new son-in-law £200, as part-payment of her portion. The remaining £300 was paid on 4 June 1690.²⁹ Many an aristocrat never got around to paying his daughters’ portions at all.

By the eighteenth century, especially towards its end, historians now accept that most daughters were allowed a reasonable choice in making their marital alliances.³⁰ We do not have supporting evidence for Fleming, but the timing and nature of the three alliances looks very much as if they were determined by Sir Daniel. That does not mean the girls were unhappy, but it does have echoes of Squire Western, who expected the absolute obedience of his daughter in matters of marriage. This very definitely was a seventeenth century family, although I do not think Catherine, Barbara and Mary were treated in quite the manner of Squire Western’s Sophia, who he attempted forcibly to marry to the man of his choice.

If Sir Daniel Fleming was conservative in his approach to family matters, and therefore displayed, perhaps, some of the bumpkin-like features parodied in the literature of the time, the same can hardly be said of his approach to business. The Squire Western and Sir Roger de Coverley figures were so busy hunting, feasting and drinking, that they had no time for such menial tasks as the upkeep and control of their estates, which they either neglected or left to their lawyers who, so it was argued, systematically fleeced them.³¹ Sir Daniel kept careful records, in two major account books covering 1656-88 and 1688 until his death in 1701. For forty-five years he detailed his income and expenditure, usually on a daily basis, leaving only a few small gaps when he failed to copy up his vouchers after absences from Rydal on business.

Fleming’s accounts were not quite what we might anticipate today. He did not need to calculate profit and loss on an annual basis, since he was not beholden to

the Inland Revenue, or even in need (as a tenant farmer would be) of compiling the information needed to understand his financial position in order to appreciate whether or not he could pay his rent. In addition, since for much of his life he used his sons as stewards on the estate, he did not use either the simple master and steward system of bookkeeping using charge and discharge, or the more complicated double entry system which operated on some large estates. Since Fleming had no need to check up on his steward there was no necessity for complex accounts. In addition, there was no appreciation (at least in the accounts) of capital depreciation or even of profit and loss in the longer term. Consequently the two account books are of little use in calculating the value of his estate.³²

Fleming primarily used the accounts as a record, writing down information about loans, debts and repayments, household expenditure, estate rents, sales of produce, and other things which came to his notice. In this sense they are more like memoranda books than accounts, as we would recognise them. They were a record kept for his own purposes and designed to ensure that he could, if he needed, work out where he stood financially. Consequently, interspersed with financial matters are entries such as “this even was due a total eclipse of the moon” on 25 March 1689, and on 1 January 1695 “Upon Friday ye 28th of December last past, about one in ye Morning, our late Most Gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Mary died at Kensington”.³³ But this was not untypical of a seventeenth century gentleman’s accounts, and the very fact that he maintained such detailed records, and that he was so careful in recording his financial position, marks Fleming out as different from many of his contemporaries who often kept little more than peripheral accounts, relying on memory and guesswork rather than anything more formal.³⁴

Rudimentary accounts were likely to be kept on estates where the owner was usually present. This was only partially true of Sir Daniel. As we have seen he was not one of the increasing number of gentry who preferred the delights of the growing London season to the rather more pedestrian entertainment to be found on their own estates or in the local market town. But he did prefer, following the retirement in 1684 of John Banks, to keep management of the property in the hands of himself and his sons. In the seventeenth century only the aristocratic and larger gentry estates tended to have a paid management structure, unless the owner was regularly absent.³⁵ Men like Fleming were likely to do the work themselves or use a bailiff (often a tenant farmer) as their steward. But they could not avoid employing a lawyer because of the extensive survival of customary tenure and the need to hold manor courts. Cumbrian gentlemen usually employed a lawyer part time to run their courts and then increased his workload by expecting him to collect the rents. Fleming had to have legal help, and he used local farmers as bailiffs on some of his outlying properties, but he clearly preferred to be the hand on the tiller. If, for any reason, his hand had to be temporarily removed, then it was to his sons that he looked for support.

So what sort of an estate was it, how was it run, and what do the accounts tell us of Sir Daniel Fleming the gentry landowner of Cumbria? Sir Daniel Fleming’s property at his death in 1701 consisted of the manors of Beckermet, Skirwith and Kirkland in Cumberland; Coniston in Lancashire, and Rydal in Westmorland. He also owned property, but was not the lord of the manor, in Barton, Westmorland, and Kentmere in the parish of Kendal. In addition he was the tithe holder of

Addingham in Cumberland, and held the fee farm rents of Crosthwaite, Cumberland. He also had the patronage of Grasmere church.³⁶ He owned two houses: Coniston Hall, where he lived until he moved in 1656 to Rydal. Coniston subsequently became the home of his brother Roger.³⁷

In view of the way in which Fleming kept his accounts it is not really possible to say how much income he derived from all this property. He apologised for the estate in his will

I hope that all my children will thank God and be content with what I am able to give them; and if they shall consider that my estate is not great; that I have paid near £5000 in debts and portions; that I have brought up and educated many children so that I have been at great charge in acting publicly and in maintaining a great family; they will not accuse me of being wasteful.³⁸

This was, to a significant extent, an unnecessary apology because Fleming was, at his death, and had been through his adult life, a man of considerable means by local standards. A list of 1660 suggested he was worth about £1,800 a year, and second only to the Lowther family in terms of income. This must be an exaggeration. The family income was £595 in 1633, and although it was in excess of £2,000 by the 1740s this could have included some of Sir George Fleming's salary of £1,200 as Bishop of Carlisle.³⁹ Even so, the simple fact that in 1660 Sir Daniel was chosen Sheriff of Cumberland indicates that he was perceived among his fellow gentry to be of substantial means: he was certainly among the more substantial of the Cumbrian gentry.

The other point which comes over from the accounts and accords with the view he expressed in his will, is that Fleming was wealthier towards the end of his life than in earlier years. This was not surprising given the costs incurred in bringing up and educating his children, and then marrying off his daughters. Catherine received a portion of £1,000, Barbara £600 and Mary £500. Fleming paid these sums in instalments, suggesting that ready cash was not always easy to come by. Catherine's portion was paid in five instalments over four years.⁴⁰ Those of Barbara and Mary were paid in two instalments each.

There are also other indications that Fleming had spare money towards the end of his life. By two purchases in 1695 and 1698 he bought for £1,300 the manor of Kentmere,⁴¹ and since this property was not part of his estate settlement he gave it to one of his younger sons, Richard. There were also purchases in the manor of Skirwith in 1697.⁴² The fact that he was purchasing at all suggests surplus income, although there is also evidence in the accounts of him selling significant quantities of woodland between 1689 and 1693, which might also have been a way of raising capital for land purchase.⁴³ In addition to buying Kentmere, in the last years of his life Fleming was also lending money: more than £200 to Sir Christopher Phillipson in 1698,⁴⁴ and £100 each to John Persevil and William Green in 1699 and 1700 respectively.⁴⁵

Sir Daniel, as far as we can see, owed no money at his death, and since he had kept to the principle that selling an acre was devaluing an estate, he was clearly a man who lived well within his means. In terms of the management of his estates and finances, Fleming was a man of financial integrity and rectitude. His sons may have been kept short of cash when at Oxford, and he may have been happy to remind them that money did not grow on Westmorland trees, but parsimonious though he

was he ran a carefully managed and financially prosperous estate. Bequests in his will, totalling £6,396, also point to a man of means.⁴⁶

What about the way the estate functioned? Again the archetypal landed gentleman of the seventeenth century was pictured as being too busy riding to hounds to worry about farming. Hardly surprisingly, Fleming's accounts suggest a man of business about the estate who looked carefully into the running of his property. He maintained a home farm at Rydal, and let the rest of his land on leases. The home farm was primarily a sheep-cattle enterprise in the hands of John Banks until 1684, and subsequently Fleming's son, Daniel, who attended all the local cattle fairs to buy animals. The cattle were generally fattened through the summer and sold on, at a profit, in the autumn. He bought significant numbers at Ravenglass Fair in July each year.⁴⁷

Sheep were also significant in the family economy. The Flemings kept over 870 sheep at Coniston in 1632, and nearly 700 on the edge of the Pennines at Skirwith in 1641.⁴⁸ There seem to have been about 1,200 sheep on the farm in 1653, and purchases and sales appear regularly in the accounts. The sheep were kept for their wool. Although traditionally sheep shearing was one of the great social events of the agricultural calendar Sir Daniel seems, perhaps predictably, to have been anxious to keep things low key. Mind you, this is not really surprising after events in 1693:

This day a great fire being in the kitchen at Rydal-Hall for the Clippers Supper, it Fired the Chimney, which being very foul Blazed a great height above the top of the chimney, and much fired-sout falling into the gutter towards the court, fired the moss therein so, as it flamed a yard high, which we got soon quenched with water, and, the Lord be praised, there was no more harm done.⁴⁹

Tenants holding farms on the Rydal estate were encouraged through their leases to follow the course of good husbandry, and to leave the land fallow every third year. The new agricultural techniques which were already widely used in Norfolk were a long time reaching the north-west, although the practice of liming the land was clearly designed to improve fertility.⁵⁰ The main crop was oats. Sir Daniel, it would seem, was a traditionalist in his approach to agriculture, but through efficient management got the best possible returns from his land and his tenants.

Sir Daniel was well aware of the financial possibilities likely to arise from mineral extraction on his estate at Coniston. Almost immediately after he inherited the estate, in March 1657, the accounts show him spending on "the mineral men four days looking for lead ore", but it was the copper mines which were most profitable, and it was Fleming's brother Roger, who lived at Coniston Hall, who was left in charge of production. Copper had been mined at Coniston since the mid-sixteenth century, and Fleming was keen to exploit the resources. From the accounts it looks as if it was not until the 1680s that any progress was made. In 1686 a John Blackwall wrote to Fleming saying he had been and examined the ground and was prepared to reopen the mines "if terms can be agreed upon". Terms seem not to have been agreed, because in 1691 Richard Patrickson wrote "to propose the leasing of the copper works at Coniston or elsewhere in your liberties . . . if you please to accept there are some other persons will join with me in it". Something clearly was started since the Coniston parish registers have three miners named between 1677 and 1695, but Fleming may not have been all that keen to become involved in

enterprises which would, potentially, have anticipated him putting up some, if not all of the capital. We do know, however, that he built a new iron forge at Coniston in 1675 for which his brother William paid him £30 rent in 1690, although it was taken over by Charles Russell in 1694.⁵¹

Sir Daniel was a man who ran his estates efficiently and effectively, but without much sign of innovation or experiment. Perhaps the difficult years when he was bringing up a large family on what he perceived to be a small income convinced him of the need to take care of his resources, and he never really changed subsequently. But did he have any of the sins attributed by Macaulay to the squires of post-Restoration England?

Macaulay claimed that the gentlemen of England in 1688 were Tory in politics, Church of England in religion, and “local” in attitude, seldom travelling to London let alone further afield. Fleming was never clear about his political position, although his family were staunch Royalists in the Civil War, and he was clearly no radical. He was certainly a loyal supporter of the church. Several of his sons became clergymen, and George rose to be Bishop of Carlisle. He was also local in his attitudes. We know he spent five months with his wife in London in 1662, but he was reluctant to become an M.P. Before the Restoration he refused all political office, and in 1660 he turned down an invitation from the Lowthers to stand for Westmorland.⁵² His only spell at Westminster was in the reign of James II, when he sat for Cockermouth in the Parliament of 1685. Although the election was contested, Fleming kept his expenses to a mere £10 5s. Having finally succumbed to the flattery of his friends and entered Parliament he was active in the Commons, sitting on no fewer than eighteen committees, the most important of which considered the naturalisation of Huguenot refugees. However, he still preferred life in his native Cumbria, and when in 1687 Lord Thanet offered him a seat at Appleby he declined, citing his brood of children: “absence from home in London is very prejudicial to [my] large family of young children”.⁵³

In other respects he bore little relationship to Macaulay’s famous stereotype. Certainly he was no Jacobite in the manner portrayed by Macaulay. Nor does he appear to have imbibed to excess although he was certainly not entirely abstemious. The accounts record regular purchases of ale, cider and wine, but this is no surprise in a landed gentleman’s household, and he may even have enjoyed the odd night out, hence perhaps the deeper meaning behind an entry for 5 and 6 September 1688: “Spent at Kendal QS for 2 dinners for myself, Will. Dan. & 2 servants, and spent in wine, music etc in all 18s. 6d”.⁵⁴ He certainly patronised local tradesmen. We find him, for example, buying cloth and items of clothing for himself and his son Fletcher from the Kendal mercer Joseph Symson. Doubtless Symson thought himself fortunate that Fleming paid up all debts on 22 February 1701, just a month before he died.⁵⁵

Fleming does not seem to have indulged in some of the other supposed bad habits of seventeenth century gentry. There is no evidence of him hunting to hounds, although he recorded on 15 January 1690 how his sons James and Fletcher had hunted a fallow deer in Rydal demesne and killed it with two hounds, “which deer I presume came from Coniston Park”.⁵⁶

Nor was he an avid churchman in the manner of a stereotypical country gentleman, despite sending several of his sons into Holy Orders. We learn little

about his churchgoing habits from the accounts, most of the specific entries referring to churches being about funerals of friends and relations. He did, however, contribute five shillings towards the rebuilding of St Paul's Cathedral in 1678, and among many other charitable bequests recorded in the accounts was 2s. 6d. to a man at Sockbridge who had his house burned in 1657, 5s. for the London poor after the great fire of 1666 and £10 to his brother Roger in 1669 "towards his charges in going unto London to get the king's touch for the evil".⁵⁷ He thought legislation was needed to modify the law on church attendance so that the fines might be diverted from relieving the poor "who are little better for them" to the public service, "namely, four-fifths to the use of the navy or herring fishery and one-fifth to the use of the train-bands in each county, to be divided among the officers (who have now no pay) and the soldiers for their encouragement. If all conventicles were punished as rioters and their fines so disposed of, it would strengthen the King at the charge of his enemies". He also proposed, among other things, country land banks.⁵⁸

Fleming was primarily a man of Cumbria, serving in numerous local government positions in the two counties, including justice of the peace, and tax commissioner. When in 1697 he was excluded from the Land Tax commission for opposing his son William's election to Parliament, one local gentleman, James Bird, commented that his omission was "a trouble to the greatest part of the country, nor do I think that it will contribute to the King's service."⁵⁹ Bird kept him informed about Commission business, and his son-in-law Henry Bouch told him that "your country makes a great complaint for the want of your being a commissioner . . . the commissioners are much defective in their intellects how to act without your advice".⁶⁰ Fleming was reputedly "so versed in the northern laws and customs as to be constantly requested by the judges of assize to sit as their assessor on circuit".⁶¹ Alan Macfarlane has detailed Fleming's leading role during the 1680s in the successful pursuit of a gang of burglars, highwaymen and coin clippers.⁶²

Fleming regularly travelled around Cumbria visiting his fellow gentry, and he was happy to play (and perhaps even to lose) at cards when visiting. Only his meticulous nature probably prompted him to enter in his accounts for 29 and 30 December 1659 "lost by me and my wife unto my Cousin Brathwaite and my Cousin Andrew Hudleston and Cousin Senhouse, at cards, £1 16s. 6d.". "Cousin" of course, was a typical term for identifying men of the same social class with whom you had links through marriage, however distant. Nor does he seem to have been more successful with experience since on 6 January 1663 he and his wife lost "at cards with Mr Fisher and Cousin Brathwaite £1 7s.". Despite his stern and apparently unbending nature he could occasionally loosen up, as in 1666 when he gave three of his sons 2s. for "cock pennys" and 6d. "to bet". At times he had to bail out his family including £2 10s. to his wife in 1670 "lost at cards", and 3s. 6d. to his daughter Catherine in 1677 "lost at cards".⁶³ It is not clear how we should interpret the absence of entries in the receipts columns of his accounts of winnings at betting.

Sir Daniel was among the last of an old school, a gentleman who truly believed that "gentility is nothing but ancient riches", and who fervently believed that land was the basis of wealth.⁶⁴ He lived, in his later years, through the beginnings of a financial revolution, but surely he would never have been drawn into the hurly-burly of the stock market, and certainly not into catastrophes such as the South Sea Bubble, in which several Cumbrian gentry, among them the Lowthers and Lawsons,

were to lose their shirts in 1720.⁶⁵ He was loath, after all, to allow his sons out of his sight, except perhaps into the church, and then into livings in Cumbria, let alone into trade or business.

Fleming was not the hunting, shooting, hard drinking, licentious and essentially ignorant man portrayed by Lord Macaulay. Indeed, in almost all respects he was entirely the opposite. Fleming was a cultured man, a published antiquarian of standing in his own locality. He certainly did not suffer from what Macaulay termed “unrefined sensuality”, and nor was he “unlettered” and “unpolished”; indeed, his intellectual and antiquarian interests enabled him to contribute significantly to our knowledge and understanding of Cumbria in the past, even though some of his collection was lost shortly after his death.⁶⁶ His influence was gratefully acknowledged by Nicolson and Burn in writing their history of Cumberland and Westmorland, published in the 1770s.

Lord Macaulay lampooned the gentleman of the late seventeenth century on the basis of his reading of what, he admitted, was the “lighter literature” of the post-Restoration period. He established a clichéd image of the country gentleman which was repeated in textbooks until relatively recently. Yet if he had travelled to Westmorland and studied the papers of Sir Daniel Fleming he would have found a quite different country gentleman from the ignorant, Tory voting, hard drinking veteran he pictured. But perhaps it was appropriate that Fleming died on Old New Years Day, 1701. It was five days after he had made the last entry in the second account book, but it was also the end of an era. Fleming was a man of the seventeenth century. His lifestyle, his attitude to family and estate, were of a generation fast disappearing, but through his papers, perhaps none more so than his account books, we can piece together the man and his lifestyle – the archetypal English country gentleman of the seventeenth century.

Notes and References

- ¹ A revised version of a lecture delivered to the Annual General Meeting of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, The George Hotel, Penrith, 5 April 2003.
- ² J. V. Beckett, “Landownership in Cumbria, 1680-1750” (Lancaster University Ph.D thesis, 1975).
- ³ J. V. Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England, 1660-1914* (Oxford, 2nd edn., 1988). Among many other studies have been *Coal and Tobacco: the Lowthers and the Economic Development of West Cumberland, 1660-1760* (Cambridge, 1981); *The Rise and Fall of the Grenvilles, Dukes of Buckingham and Chandos, 1710-1922* (Manchester, 1994); and *Byron and Newstead* (Delaware, 2002).
- ⁴ The classic texts were the Foxhunter, depicted by Joseph Addison in his periodical *The Freeholder* (ed. James Leheny, Oxford, 1979); Sir Roger de Coverley, depicted by Addison and Richard Steel in another periodical *The Spectator* (ed. A. Ross, Harmondsworth, 1982); and Squire Western, in Henry Fielding’s novel *Tom Jones* (Harmondsworth, 1966 edn.).
- ⁵ Lord Macaulay, *The History of England*, ed. C. H. Firth (1913), I, 310-313.
- ⁶ *The Estate and Household Accounts of Sir Daniel Fleming of Rydal Hall, Westmorland, 1688-1701*, ed. B Tyson CWAAS Record Series Vol. XIII (2001). [Hereafter Fleming, *Accounts*.] The original accounts, in two volumes, are in Cumbria Record Office, Kendal, CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 119. Volume 1, which is as yet unpublished, covers 1656-88.
- ⁷ W. G. Collingwood, ed., *Memoirs of Sir Daniel Fleming* (CWAAS Tract Series, XI, 1928), 73-76. [Hereafter Fleming’s *Memoirs*.]
- ⁸ Fleming’s *Memoirs*, 79. Sir Daniel recorded that the knighthood cost him £78 13s. 4d.
- ⁹ Fleming’s *Memoirs*, 94.
- ¹⁰ J. R. Magrath, *The Flemings in Oxford*, II (1913), 263-7.

- ¹¹ Fleming, *Accounts*, 156, 170.
- ¹² Fleming, *Accounts*, 231; CRO(K), Le Fleming MSS, 4982.
- ¹³ CRO(K) Levens Hall MSS, Box E, William Fleming to James Grahme, 3 October 1697.
- ¹⁴ CRO(K), Le Fleming MSS, 5311.
- ¹⁵ Fleming's *Memoirs*, 93.
- ¹⁶ C. R. Hudleston, "The Fleming family: the first and third baronets of Rydal", *CW2*, lxiv, 275.
- ¹⁷ CRO(K), Le Fleming MSS, 407; M. L. Armit, *The Church of Grasmere* (Kendal, 1912), 163-65.
- ¹⁸ Fleming's *Memoirs*, 75-76.
- ¹⁹ Magrath, *Flemings*, II, 280-1, 290.
- ²⁰ *Dictionary of National Biography*, VII (1886), 276; M. L. Armit, *Rydal*, ed. W. F. Rawsley (Kendal, 1916), 667.
- ²¹ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 119, Account Book, 1656-88, 30 April 1684.
- ²² Fleming, *Accounts*, 268.
- ²³ Fleming's *Memoirs*, 95.
- ²⁴ Fleming, *Accounts*, 165; Hudleston, "Fleming Family", 275.
- ²⁵ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 30, Sir Daniel Fleming's Will.
- ²⁶ Beckett, "Landownership", 105.
- ²⁷ R. Trumbach, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic Kinship and Domestic Relations in Eighteenth-Century England* (1978).
- ²⁸ Fleming's *Memoirs*, 95.
- ²⁹ Fleming, *Accounts*, 88, 109.
- ³⁰ Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: women's lives in Georgian England* (Yale, 1998), chapter 2.
- ³¹ John Beckett, "Estate management in eighteenth-century England: the Lowther-Spedding relationship in Cumberland", in D. Hey and J. A. Chartres, eds., *English Rural Society 1500-1800: essays in honour of Joan Thirsk* (Cambridge, 1990), 55-72.
- ³² Beckett, "Landownership", 129.
- ³³ Fleming, *Accounts*, 82, 200.
- ³⁴ Beckett, *Aristocracy in England*, 142-143.
- ³⁵ J. V. Beckett, "Absentee Landownership in the Later Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries: the case of Cumbria", *Northern History*, 19 (1983), 87-107.
- ³⁶ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 30, Sir Daniel Fleming's Will.
- ³⁷ Fleming's *Memoirs*, 82-87.
- ³⁸ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 30, Sir Daniel Fleming's Will.
- ³⁹ Beckett, "Landownership", 108.
- ⁴⁰ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 119, Account Book, 1656-88, 29 March 1679, 5 April, 21 December 1680, 1 July 1687, 31 March 1688. The practice of differentiating between daughters in this way was not uncommon at the time.
- ⁴¹ Fleming, *Accounts*, 204, 256.
- ⁴² CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 30, Sir Daniel Fleming's Will.
- ⁴³ Fleming, *Accounts*, 10, 20, 26.
- ⁴⁴ Fleming, *Accounts*, 256.
- ⁴⁵ Fleming, *Accounts*, 284, 302.
- ⁴⁶ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 30, Sir Daniel Fleming's Will.
- ⁴⁷ B. Tyson, "The cattle trading activities of Sir Daniel Fleming of Rydal Hall, 1656-1700", *CW3*, ii, 183-199.
- ⁴⁸ A. J. L. Winchester, *The Harvest of the Hills: Rural Life in Northern England and the Scottish Borders 1400-1700* (Edinburgh, 2000), 21-22.
- ⁴⁹ Fleming, *Accounts*, 171.
- ⁵⁰ Eric Evans and J. V. Beckett, "Cumberland, Westmorland and Furness", in Joan Thirsk, ed., *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, volume 5, part 1 1640-1750 (Cambridge, 1984), 3-29.
- ⁵¹ Fleming, *Accounts*, 11, 185; B. Tyson, "Coniston Forge, 14 January 1675 to 12 May 1766", *CW2*, lxxxix, 187-206.
- ⁵² Fleming's *Memoirs*, 77-78.
- ⁵³ B. Henning, ed., *The House of Commons*, II (1983), 331-333.
- ⁵⁴ Fleming, *Accounts*, 72.
- ⁵⁵ Fleming, *Accounts*, 170, 289, 299, 301. See also S. D. Smith, ed., 'An Exact and Industrial Tradesman':

the letter book of Joseph Symson of Kendal 1711-20 (Oxford, 2002).

⁵⁶ Fleming, *Accounts*, 101.

⁵⁷ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 119, Account Book, 1656-88.

⁵⁸ Henning, *Commons*, II, 331-333.

⁵⁹ CRO(K), Le Fleming MSS, 5119, James Bird to Sir Daniel Fleming, 9 March 1697.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 5137, Henry Bouch to Sir Daniel Fleming, 13 April 1697

⁶¹ Henning, *Commons*, II, 331-333.

⁶² Alan Macfarlane, *The Justice and the Mare's Ale: Law and Disorder in seventeenth-century England* (Oxford, 1981).

⁶³ CRO(K), WD/Ry, box 119, Account Book, 1656-88.

⁶⁴ Fleming's *Memoirs*, 94.

⁶⁵ J. V. Beckett, "Cumbrians and the South Sea Bubble, 1720", *CW2*, lxxxii, 141-150.

⁶⁶ CRO(C), D/Sen, Fleming of Rydal MSS, bundle 19, Will of Bishop Sir George Fleming, 1743.