

V.—THE PERCIES AND ALNWICK CASTLE,  
1557-1632.<sup>1</sup>

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ABBREVIATIONS OF REFERENCES.

Aln. MSS.—Alnwick MSS.

Aln. MSS. L. & P.—Alnwick MSS., Letters and Papers.

C.P.R.—*Calendar of Patent Rolls*.

Fon.—E. B. de Fonblanque, *Annals of the House of Percy*  
(2 vols., privately printed, 1887).

James—M. E. James, *Estate Accounts of the Earls of Northumberland, 1562-1637*, Surtees Society, vol. CLXIII (1955).

S.H. MSS.—Syon House MSS. at Alnwick Castle.

For twenty years before 1557, the Percies had not been in possession of either their family titles or Alnwick Castle, their northern stronghold which they had bought as long before as 1309.<sup>2</sup> The *interregnum* had come about because of the attainder of the heir to the sixth earl of Northumberland, Sir Thomas Percy, in 1537; the title had become extinct and the lands of the family had passed into the hands of the Crown. Alnwick itself had been granted in 1552 to John Dudley, who had been created Duke of Northumberland, though he was to enjoy its possession only a few months. Now, with Catholic Mary on the throne, the eldest son of Sir Thomas, another Thomas Percy, was restored to

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the University of Sheffield Research Grant Committee for financial aid; to His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, the Lord Leconfield and John Wyndham, Esq., for access to the MSS. at Alnwick and Petworth.

<sup>2</sup> *Arch. Ael.* 4, XXXII, 309-19.

the earldom and to the family estates spread over no less than eight counties of England and Wales.<sup>3</sup>

This is not to say, however, that the new earl came to live at Alnwick. Indeed, at no time in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries did the Percies use Alnwick as one of their normal residences. In the early sixteenth century, up to and including the time of the seventh earl, it was the Yorkshire houses of the Percies, Leconfield, Wressill and Topcliffe, which were the principal residences of the family. The Percies had founded their fortunes in Norman times on a nucleus of Yorkshire holdings; Yorkshire throughout the period with which this paper is concerned yielded more revenue to them than any other county, and it was from Topcliffe that the seventh earl was to take part in that Rebellion of 1569 which was to prove his undoing.

Soon after his restoration, the seventh earl was appointed first joint and then sole Warden of the East March, so that official business would have brought him to Alnwick upon occasion during his brief tenure of the office. But when one of his successors as Warden, his uncle by marriage, Lord Grey of Wilton, wanted to use Alnwick as his seat in 1560, it was found that the earl "had carried away the most part of the stuff there, and broken up the brewing vessels and other necessary implements of household". He explained that he had to have certain repairs carried out to preserve the castle, and a couple of years later we find that he has appointed masons to his service and that work on putting the castle in order has begun—a man has been hired, for instance, "to clean the lead-roofs of all the turrets and dwellings of the said castle, and to root out and destroy grass and underwood growing upon the stone walls and in diverse garrets of the said castle". Even so, when the earl paid two short visits there that year, "great pains and labours" had to be expended to prepare for his arrival.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *C.P.R.* Edw. VI, iv. 185 and P. and M., iv. 179.

<sup>4</sup> *Fon.*, ii. 14; James, xvii and 46.49; *C.P.R.*, P. and M., iv. 194 and *Eliz.*, i. 56, 58.

We know that the earl was contemplating the possibility of "continually lying" at Alnwick in the 1560's; a survey of his lands and of the castle was taken with this in view, George Clarkson's survey of 1567. Probably the earl considered this as a measure to counteract the intrigues of the group of Northumbrian gentry—the Forsters, Greys and Carnabys at their head—who had benefited from the *interregnum* in Percy power and who were still opposing Percy interests in the area. In the event, no more than minor reparation occurred at Alnwick for more than sixty years. The seventh earl was one of the leaders of the Rising of the North in 1569, he was attainted in 1571 and executed at York in 1572. A second *interregnum* was upon the Percies and local influence again largely passed to this group of Northumbrian gentry. They were not slow to seize their opportunity; Sir John Forster was reported in April, 1572, to have control of the Percy lands in the area and to be plundering the castles—"it is great pity to see how Alnwick Castle and Warkworth are spoiled by him and his", Lord Hunsdon wrote to Cecil.<sup>5</sup>

This second *interregnum*, however, was to prove short. The title and lands of the family had been entailed to the seventh earl's brother, Sir Henry Percy, under the patent of 1557. Sir Henry had taken no part in the Rising and early in 1571 had petitioned the Queen for the Percy lands and title, emboldened no doubt by such assurances of continued favour as this from the Queen in November, 1569: "Considering your fidelity to us, we would have you well assured that, continuing your service and duty, we will have regard to have the continuance of such a house in the person and blood of so faithful a servant as we trust to find you." He had carefully cultivated the good opinion of the Queen and of Cecil. Yet in 1571 he was foolhardy enough to enter into the Ridolfi Plot to free Mary Queen of Scots and he was fined 5,000 marks in Star Chamber the next year for it. The

<sup>5</sup> James, xvi-xxiii; Aln. MSS., A.I. 1 a, pt. i.

confidence of the Crown in him was shaken, and, although he was allowed to take possession of the bulk of the Percy lands in 1574, including both Alnwick Castle and Petworth House in June, he was not allowed to sit as earl in Parliament until February, 1575/76, and he was required to live in the south.<sup>6</sup>

From this time, for nearly two centuries Petworth, the Sussex property of the family, became the principal residence of the Percies. They had held Petworth since 1150, fewer than a hundred years short of the time that they had held Spofforth and Topcliffe in Yorkshire which may be regarded as the nucleus of their lands and more than 150 years longer than they had held Alnwick. Henry, eighth earl, restored the house at Petworth and wrote that he was "living like a rustic and very well content therewith, for although it is solitary, yet it is quiet". He was never allowed to return to the north. For years he was suspected by the government of Catholic sympathies and more; at the last, in December, 1584, he was arrested on suspicion of complicity in the Catholic plots to restore Mary Queen of Scots and placed in the Tower, where he died under mysterious circumstances in 1585. His son, the ninth earl, once forestalled a suggestion that he should be made Warden of the Marches; though not a Catholic like his father (he had been brought up by a Protestant parson from Egremont, Cumberland), he favoured toleration for the Catholic faith and became suspected of some knowledge of the Gunpowder Plot, in which his distant cousin and confidential servant Thomas Percy was a principal conspirator. The result was that this earl spent sixteen years in the Tower (1605-21) and that, even after his release, he was not allowed to go north. In all probability, the ninth earl never visited Alnwick, despite the statement of the family historian, De Fonblanque, that "he was the first of his family to make Alnwick Castle his chief residence in the north". How little he knew the district, save from that

<sup>6</sup> *C.P.R.*, P. and M., iii. 495; *Fon.*, ii. 145 *et seq.*; *Aln. MSS. L. & P.*, vol. 3, ff. 32-35, and *S.H. MSS.*, P. II. 2b.

meticulous study of plans and accounts which he applied to all that he owned, may be judged from his commenting in 1611 that he did not know "the place called Chevillingham", i.e. Chillingham, Grey property hardly more than a dozen miles from Alnwick. It was not Alnwick, but Petworth that the ninth earl made his chief residence; while in prison, he planned a most ambitious rebuilding of Petworth, though in the end his contribution was confined to a considerable extension of the main house and to the building of the famous large stables. In the right of his wife, the ninth earl became the first Percy to live at Syon, Middlesex, and later, by a grant from the Crown, the first Percy owner of Syon; here, too, he carried out extensive rebuilding.<sup>7</sup>

So it was 1630 before Alnwick saw one of its lords again, when Lord Percy, who was to succeed in 1632 as tenth earl, visited the northern estates—and the efforts of this earl at restoring Alnwick were doomed to frustration by the disturbances of the Civil War. So it is that Alnwick Castle must be seen in these years, not as a residence for a feudal family, but as part of the national organization of a great landowning family, with estates which extended over much of England and Wales, with concentrations in Yorkshire, Cumberland and Sussex as well as in Northumberland. By the 1590's, the Percy council in Northumberland had disappeared, so far had their feudal power declined. Alnwick became important as the administrative centre for the Percy estates in the county, as the place of audit and as the place where the earl's chief officer in the north, the constable of Alnwick, had his lodgings and his prison.<sup>8</sup>

With an absentee landlord, there was a clear need for a responsible officer of the earl to reside in the north and to exert the earl's influence from day to day in a way that a minor bailiff or even the earl's receiver of rents for a county could not do. The lawlessness of the area was only slowly controlled, even after the accession of James to the throne,

<sup>7</sup> Fon., ii. 156, 200; *Cal. Salisbury MSS.*, vii. 322; S.H. MSS., P. II. 2s.

<sup>8</sup> James, xxii; Fon., ii. 369 *et seq.*

and was contributed to by the Northumbrian families who were antagonistic to the Percies. There is constant mention of it in our period. In 1581, the eighth earl complained to Cecil: "My parks and chases be continually hunted, as well in the night as in the day, almost destroying all the game I have, and yet not so contented, but beat my servants and setting up the heads of deer where they have killed them." The Scots were also a constant menace until the end of Elizabeth's reign. William Wycliffe, an estate officer of the Percies, was taken prisoner by them on 19 October, 1601, and had to pay a ransom of £236; he never got satisfaction over the matter and complained for years after. As late as 1630, complaints of lawlessness in the area were being made; Robert Stevenson of Alnwick complained in that year that Robert Bradley of Alnwick Abbey had attacked him and his wife, taken church fees, locked the doors of the chancel and refused the earl's servants admission.<sup>9</sup>

In fact, as William Wycliffe put it to the ninth earl in 1606, "the chiefest occasion and use of a Constable [of Alnwick]" was "to keep your tenants in order and peace one with another, for there are daily brablings and wrangles among them" and "likewise to see that all forfeitures of felons be in due time seized and that the Justices, Sheriffs and others in the country which begin to call your Lordship's under-officers and tenants to further service than formerly has been used may by a superior officer be restrained and thereby find your Lordship's continuance and care over your poor tenants and to preserve your royalties and rights." The constable would normally also be the receiver of the earl's rents for at least the county of Northumberland and certainly one of the earl's commissioners for the audit, and so would lend his weight to the pressure upon the tenants to pay their rents properly. How necessary this ordinarily might be another officer stressed when he wrote in 1613 of the tenants in Northumberland "being for the most part both subtle

<sup>9</sup> Fon., ii. 157, 379; Aln. MSS. L. & P., vol. 7, f. 15.

and false and ready to keep money in their hands upon any advantage".<sup>10</sup>

The emoluments of the position of constable of Alnwick were proportionate to the importance in which it was held. There was normally a fee of £20 a year—twice the fee of the cofferer and as large as the fee of the steward of household at this time—and in addition there were several perquisites. The officer was customarily allowed to rent various parts of the adjacent estates on favourable terms—the east demesne at Warkworth at £5 p.a. and the park there at £8 0s. 8d., the north demesne at Alnwick at £4 and the castle close at £2. Of old, too, hay was allowed to the constable, the receiver and the auditors out of Rennington and Cawledge Parks, but this, we are told, was "of small value"—not worth £5 in all. Other small perquisites were firewood and the "rent hens", worth £5 a year by themselves; William Fenwick, constable 1590-95, successfully contended that these were "part of the commodities anciently appertaining" to the office. For each receivership of rents for a shire, the officer would have a further fee of £5 or even £10 p.a. In addition, the constable had quarters allotted him in the castle—Thomas Percy, constable 1596-1605, was given an allowance of £50 for furnishing his rooms.<sup>11</sup>

Even so, Robert Delaval, constable for some years after 1606, held that he lost money over his position. He reckoned that he had £47 income from being constable of Alnwick and receiver for Northumberland, Cumberland and Tynemouth, including £12 profits from the castle close and the north demesne. He paid his deputy, "who finds himself and his horse", a fee of £13 6s. 8d. besides his riding charges when the rents were collected; at Lady Day, the receiver or his deputy, often accompanied by other officers as commissioners for rents, had to travel round the estates and collect the earl's rents—the Michaelmas rents were usually brought in at the time of the audit by the accounting officers.

<sup>10</sup> S.H. MSS., Q. I. 23 and 42.

<sup>11</sup> S.H. MSS., Q. I. 23; James, 154. See plate I.

Delaval had also a clerk; the clerk had a fee of £6 13s. 4d. p.a., his riding charges, and his diet whenever the constable was in Alnwick. The horsekeepers accounted for £10 more for their wages and diet, provision of oats and straw for the horses cost £13 6s. 8d. a year and necessaries for riding a further £5. So, Delaval calculated that he spent £46 6s. 8d., without reckoning his diet, the charges of his manservant, or anything for apparel or for buying horses. The earl admitted, in a letter to Sir William Muschamp, who accepted the constableness and the receivership for Northumberland in 1629, that "the profit be not great", but there was no dearth of candidates for the position and one suspects that Delaval's account was in the nature of special pleading.<sup>12</sup>

The constable had a good deal of assistance in his tasks. The annual audit, held in the autumn soon after Michaelmas Day, "commonly no sooner than 20th of October", was conducted by a commission, headed by the earl's auditor, and consisting of four or five high estate officers, usually including all the receivers for the northern counties. The commissioners generally stayed at Alnwick for six or seven days—there was a special Exchequer House in the Outer Ward—and then the constable and a number of servants would convey the Northumberland rents to Topcliffe, where the pack-train would assemble to take the money to London; at London the earl himself normally supervised the accounting and would want full explanations. At any rate, the ninth earl did. The cofferer in 1602 begged an officer to bring up all his documents; commenting pointedly, "you know what has been said and can imagine what will be if you should not have them ready to shew". The typical taking of the audit at Alnwick is reflected in these expenses in 1586: Expenses of William Stockdale, Auditor, and his servants riding from Cockermouth to Alnwick, £1 14s. 6d.; the diet of William Stockdale and the other officers at Alnwick for seven days, taking the audit, £8 13s. 10d.; horsemeat, £3 6s. 10d.; the smith, 5s. 3d.; links, payments to their hosts

<sup>12</sup> S.H. MSS., C. VIII 1 q, P. I. 3 n, f. 32 recto.

and the servants, 14s. 4d.; candles and fire, 5s.; to the groom of the officers' horses, 1s. 8d.; to the poor, 1s.; carriage of coal and firewood, 8s. 8d.; the total £15 18s. 11d. The costs of carrying £676 from Alnwick to Topcliffe the same year, by the constable, Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, and six servants, was £4 12s.<sup>13</sup>

The constable had a number of subordinate officers at Alnwick Castle, of course, and the Crown survey of the castle upon the occasion of the seventh earl's attainder sets out for us a statement as to the duties of each of these officers. The porter of the castle had the custody of the gate of the Outer Ward and of all offenders committed to ward for any offence; his fee in 1570 was £5 but after the 1580's this seems to have been reduced to £2. The castle greave had "among others to attach all offenders either for trespass, debt or otherways by commandment, and to see them safely conveyed to ward until they be delivered by order of law", for a fee of £3 0s. 8d. At times, too, we hear of a keeper of the lord's armoury (with a fee of £5, 1562) and of a keeper of the lord's garden (with a fee of £1, 1562). These officers were in addition to the officers of the Barony of Alnwick, the feodary, the learned steward, the clerk of courts, the foreign bailiff, officials that one would find on any large manor.<sup>14</sup>

The position of the constable was an honoured one, and it was invariably filled by men of good family who had already proved themselves in the service of the Percies. Such a man was Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, a member of a well-respected local family, who became constable in 1580. Of him the eighth earl wrote: "If her majesty lose that man, I speak it without affection or partiality, she loses the truest gentlemen, and one of the most able to serve her, that is [in] that country." Collingwood was dismissed by the ninth earl when he succeeded to the title at the age of twenty-one in 1585. One imagines that it is to him that the ninth earl

<sup>13</sup> S.H. MSS., Q. I. 45; Leconfield MSS. at Petworth, D 22/2/1; James, xxx and 94.

<sup>14</sup> Public Record Office, E 164/37, ff. 93-94.

refers in his *Advice to his Son*, when he speaks of how his servants contrived at the time "to serve their own turns, one excepted, whose humour was a little sourer than the rest, thinking to gain by good desert of me, not considering that the disability of my judgment in those matters could minister but weak understanding, to make true distinction between plain dealing and flattery", a weak understanding which the earl attributed to his being kept ignorant of estate affairs in his father's time, partly by the same officer's counsel.<sup>15</sup>

In 1596 the ninth earl appointed his own distant cousin, Thomas Percy, to be constable. The appointment, to say the least, proved unfortunate. There is little doubt that he was the embodiment of the unjust steward. Complaints of his conduct were received by the earl from many quarters well before the revelation that he was a principal conspirator in the Gunpowder Plot. Robert Clerke, for instance, a tenant in Long Houghton, told in 1602 of how he had been forced to pay Percy £20 for having a sheep which did not belong to him, though he had had it in all good faith; he had been put in the prison at Alnwick Castle and obliged to pay the bailiff of Long Houghton £2 "to bring him to the agreement with Thomas Percy". A neighbour of his, who lived in Denwick, had found a stray sheep and proclaimed it on the market days in Alnwick but had none the less been taken and put in the castle prison until he paid £10. Moreover, Clerke complained that the carriage of wood and corn into the castle was so great that the tenants were "utterly undone by it". Another man, James Dunne, had had the wardship of a boy in Long Houghton for three years and had given Percy £1 for his "goodwill" when he had been deprived of it and not allowed to "mow his meadow nor shear his corn, until he was enforced by the order of two spiritual men to pay Mr. Percy £4". When he had gone into Alnwick, Percy "took the said Dunne by the collar and pulled him off his

<sup>15</sup> Fon., ii. 158; G. B. Harrison (Ed.), *Advice to his Son by Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland* (1930), 78.

horse, bidding him walk like a knave". But these complaints did nothing to shake the confidence of the earl in Thomas Percy. That very year he was using him as his confidential messenger to the King of Scotland with secret correspondence and the next he gave him the receivership of Northumberland and Cumberland; soon, Percy was, at the earl's instigation, a member of the corps of Gentlemen Pensioners, personal bodyguard to the sovereign.<sup>16</sup>

When the Plot was out, a story emerged of treachery not only to the King but also to the earl, and further complaints of ill-treatment came to the earl from the tenantry. This latter evidence must be accepted with caution, since there was no possibility of Percy's replying (he had been killed resisting arrest), but much of it rings true. Take for example the story told by Hugh Armorer to the earl in 1606. He had had the lease for 21 years of Brizlee House, Alnwick, on payment of £16 fine. "About xiiii years now past" he had gone into the Low Countries and had made over the lease to his brother Cuthbert, on the understanding that he would not let or sell it without Hugh's permission. However, Cuthbert found himself in Alnwick Castle dungeon. He was imprisoned, according to Hugh's account, "the space of viii days and had not in three days and nights as he saith a bit of bread or any other sustenance allowed him. And Mr. Percy about midnight sending for him to his chamber did threaten that if the said Cuthbert would not deliver up unto him all this petitioner's right in the said lease he would thrust him in the head with his dagger whereupon for safety of his life he did as much as in him lay". Reading such stories as these, one doubts whether the tenantry of Alnwick would have agreed with a fellow-Catholic's description of Percy as one who, "though grave and notwithstanding the boldness of his character", had "gentle and quiet" manners. On the other hand, one must see these stories in their true perspective. The Border country at this time, as we have seen, was

<sup>16</sup> *County History of Northumberland* (Newcastle, 1893-1940, 15 vols.), ii. 374-5.

given to rough methods and the Alnwick people do seem to have been a quarrelsome lot. There were constant disputes between the burgesses and the bailiffs of the earl in the 1590's and 1600's, and stories of ill-treatment were to be told the earl against one of Thomas Percy's alleged victims, Robert Clerke, only three years later. When Clerke was bailiff of Alnwick, the townspeople complained that his exactions were so great that he had forced some men who would normally have come to Alnwick market to go to Morpeth, a few miles distant. "Thomas Watson," we find them writing to the earl in 1608, "was sore wounded by your said Bailiff and his brother Mathew Clerke lying in wait for the poor men at Harbottle Ford where they also threw down divers of these men's loads of corn and made them such open trouble as that thereby he and his said brother urged the Justices of the Peace in their open sessions to exclaim against your town for this abuse in your said officer."<sup>17</sup>

There can be no such qualifications made about another matter, however. "The robbing of himself [the earl] and his tenants by that unfortunate wretch", William Wycliffe, the receiver-general, wrote only a few weeks after the discovery of the Plot, was "more than almost is credible". In Northumberland alone, Percy was held to be in arrears to the earl for £1,147 16s. 11d. In Tynemouth there was £339 owing; in Cumberland, he had received £435 in rents at Michaelmas 1605 and made away with it all; and in Yorkshire he had had £31 18s. more at the previous Ladyday than he had paid into the coffers. These were the sums which became apparent shortly after the Plot and it seems certain that they are conservative figures.<sup>18</sup>

On these calculations, Percy's peculations totalled nearly £2,000. The net income of the earl from land at this time was about £6,650 p.a., as the deliveries into the household shew. How did it come about that the earl could be robbed

<sup>17</sup> Aln. MSS. L. & P., vol. 7, f. 246; S.H. MSS., Q. III. 1 c, R. II, 2m; Fon., ii. 255, 597-8.

<sup>18</sup> Aln. MSS. L. & P., vol. 7, f. 209; S.H. MSS., Q. XI. 19 i; James, 176.

of a third of his income in this way—and, in particular, that this earl, noted for his estate management, could be so robbed? It was a question which the earl asked himself of his officers, with a vigour which may be pardoned.

One way in which Percy had deceived the receiver-general Wycliffe explained to the earl six months later. When Wycliffe had found fault with the receivers for slackness in gathering fines, Percy had answered that the tenants were poor and not able to pay. For confirmation, he had produced the bonds which the tenants had entered into, but investigation after the Plot proved that he had given the tenants acquittances for their fines, pocketed the money and left the bonds uncanceled to provide the evidence with which to fob off the auditors; the tenants would naturally be content with their acquittances.<sup>19</sup>

The earl attributed much of his trouble to the methods by which his accounts were compiled. It had been customary for the auditor to draw up the receiver's view of account at the time of the audit from a series of preliminary books recording the different sources of income and types of expenditure, in which each particular item was entered. These hastily written views were only subsequently written out formally as ingrossments. At Michaelmas, 1606, the earl ordered the auditor, William Stockdale, a man who had been auditor to him ever since he succeeded to his title more than twenty years before, to send the engrossed ministers' accounts to him annually, whether he called for them or not. "You may see," the earl wrote, "what a strange arrerage you suffered me to slide into as appears by Percy's account which if I had as well known as now I should have had means to have freed myself of much loss and more trouble." On this point, however, Stockdale stood his ground and told the earl on a later occasion "that the engrossed ministers' accounts can make the Receivers' debts no more apparent than the views, by which the Receiver is charged and the ministers engrossed, for engrossments are more material for

<sup>19</sup> S.H. MSS., Q. I. 23.

matter of records, posterities, and royalties, than for any present profit".<sup>20</sup>

One can appreciate that the earl felt obliged to take sterner measures with his receivers and bailiffs after this. When in August, 1606, he made Robert Delaval, son of Sir Robert Delaval of Seaton Delaval, constable of Alnwick and receiver-general for the North Parts, he extracted a bond for £8,000 from him and his father and wrote to Mr. Wycliffe and to Delaval jointly to say that: "My pleasure is that forthwith you will that all my Bailiffs or other officers or persons that do or shall receive any money or rents for me within the County of Northumberland shall enter into Band with one surety with them for the true accounting once every year to me, or those which I shall give warrant for taking the same, of all such sums of money as they shall receive for me. And also shall twice in the year at the times heretofore accustomed pay to my general Receiver of the County of Northumberland for the time being all such Rents and sums of money as they shall receive for me." Yet all the earl's diligence was not to prove enough. In 1611, his steward of courts in Northumberland, Timothy Elks, proved "the veriest villain that ever God gave breathing unto". The words are those of Thomas Fotherley, one of the earl's most trusted estate servants, who did much of the surveying of the estates in these years of reconstruction (under the earl's guidance from his rooms in the Tower of London). Elks tried to implicate Northumberland in treason and had to flee the country when his attempt failed. Arrerages were still known in the estate accounts and from time to time the earl had to chide his officers for lack of diligence in pursuing them. In 1620, again, there was a *furor* on this very point and Fotherley himself found that the earl had a sharp pen—and this is only one of a number of such letters to various officers both in the north and on other Percy estates:

"Fotherley.

"At your last being with me, although you were stiff not

<sup>20</sup> James, xxix-xxxiii; S.H. MSS., P. II, 2p, Q. I. 31.

to come to my Auditor to pass your Accounts (which nevertheless I can enforce you unto yet to) you promised to send in your accounts to me or Taylor [the steward and cofferer of household] the next day which hitherto you have not done. It is now Audit time, the course therein held no man knows better than yourself: your not clearing the books of imprests hath given a rub to all the proceedings: And put all the accounts of the house in disorder: I wonder much at your carriage herein, unless you desire to weary out a long patience which I will assure you will quickly be spent unless you give me speedy satisfaction."<sup>21</sup>

The earls of Northumberland had not visited Alnwick for fifty years and their feudal power in Northumberland, as we have seen, had suffered a decline. But they were masters still. "I will know what I do," the ninth earl had once written to an estate officer. He did. Feudal sway was replaced in his time by estate management based on a multitudinous collection of books of survey, rentals, plots of manors, accounts, and the like and conducted by the closest supervision by word and by letter of a complex organization of estate officers. The ninth earl could truly boast to know his estate business better than any one of his officers. It was a great achievement from a place of imprisonment 300 miles from Alnwick.

## APPENDIX

### A LIST OF OFFICERS OF THE EARLS OF NORTHUMBERLAND, 1557-1632.

#### CONSTABLES OF ALNWICK.

1562	George Metcalf	1588	Henry Leigh
1578	Thomas Bates	1590	William Fenwick
1580	Sir Cuthbert Collingwood	1596	Thomas Percy
1586	Francis Slingsby	1606	Robert Delaval
1587	Roger Thorpe	1629	Sir William Muschamp

<sup>21</sup> Aln. MSS. L. & P., vol. 9A, ff. 17, 19 (bonds), 253-71 (1620 trouble); S.H. MSS., Q. II. 83 (Elks).



VIEW OF ALN Wick MANOR, FROM NORTON'S PLAN 1624 IN MAYSON'S SURVEY, ALN Wick MSS. BY PERMISSION OF THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Photo. K. Graham, Alnwick.





The constable normally had a fee of £20 p.a.; Metcalf is recorded as having only £8 in 1562 (James, 42) and the fee between 1590 and 1597 was only £10 (the warrant to increase it is in Aln. MSS. L. & P., vol. 5, f. 43).

## PORTERS OF ALNWICK CASTLE.

1562	Richard Hoker (deputy: William Gray)	1587	William Gray
1578	William Gray	1590	Richard Wydowes
1583	Griffin Butler	1596	Lionel Knockes or Knox (still porter 1607)

The fee was normally £2 after 1581, £5 before. In 1584 Butler was paid £4 and in 1587 Gray £3 0s. 8d. (James, 82, 98).

## RECEIVERS OF RENTS FOR NORTHUMBERLAND.

1562	George Metcalf	1590	Anthony Felton
1578	Robert Helme	1592	Roger Thorpe
1579	William Pulleyn	1595	Thomas Power
1581	Sir Cuthbert Collingwood	1597	Anthony Felton
1586	Francis Slingsby	1603	Thomas Percy
1587	Roger Thorpe	1606	William Wycliffe and Robert Delaval
1588	Roger Thorpe and Henry Leigh	1607	Robert Delaval

The fee was £10 p.a.

I have noted this data from the household accounts (S.H. MSS., U. I. 1-4 mainly) and from James.