

Victoria County History of Cumbria Project.

Draft parish/township histories

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Parish/township: ANGERTON (otherwise Angerton Moss)

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ANGERTON

LANDOWNERSHIP

Angerton was never a manor. In the late-thirteenth century it was an uninhabited parcel of waste belonging to Broughton manor, within the barony of Ulverston. Around 1290, Richard, lord of Broughton, leased the moss to Ralph son of Alan of Kirkby Ireleth, but in 1292 Richard granted it to Thomas Skillar, a burgess of Dalton.¹ The lease amounted to 100 (customary) acres of pasture and 200 acres of turbary.² At the same time as the grant, Skillar was awarded seisin from Richard of Broughton of one messuage, five acres of meadow, 24 acres of pasture and four acres of wood in Angerton.³ The exact location of this land is not specified, but the messuage is likely from the context to have been Angerton Farm in Broughton, outside the extra-parochial area. Thomas Skillar granted Angerton Moss to Furness Abbey c.1299,⁴ the territory covered by

¹ TNA, DL42/3, CLXXXVI, CLXXXVII; *Coucher Book of Furness Abbey, Part II*, (Chetham Society 1887), pp. 325, 327. Richard retained from Skillar a rent of five shillings, plus rights to sufficient thatch, and sixty loads of turf per year. Ralph son of Alan of Kirkby had earlier assigned 60 loads of turf a year to John de Kirkby Ireleth, in exchange for pasture between Whelphshead and Steers Pool. The name Skillar is variously spelled Skilhar, Schillehar, Scillehare, Skelhar etc.

² TNA, DL42/3, CLXXXVIII; *Coucher Book*, p. 328.

³ TNA, DL42/3, CLXXXVII, CXCI; *Coucher Book*, pp. 328, 331.

⁴ TNA, DL42/3, CLXXXIX, CXC, CXCI; *Coucher Book*, pp. 329, 330, 331.

his grant being essentially that granted to him in 1292, within boundaries which appear to have remained unchanged and become those of the modern civil parish.

The Abbey consolidated its rights by obtaining quitclaims from the widow of Adam son of Ralph of Kirkby, Richard of Broughton, John of Lancaster and others in respect of any rights they might have had in the moss, thus giving it undisputed possession of the soil.⁵ Nevertheless, a number of individuals in both Kirkby and Broughton had held pasture and turbary within Angerton, and some turbary rights were retained even after the grant.⁶

Despite the grant and quitclaims to Furness Abbey, the Kirkby family later attempted to reassert their rights in Angerton Moss. In 1424 Sir Richard of Kirkby made claims to the freehold of Angerton, including common of turbary to the number of 270 loads of turf a year.⁷ An arbitration confirmed that the whole of Angerton Moss belonged to the abbey, but Richard was awarded 80 loads of turf a year. Thereafter the abbey enjoyed quiet possession until the Dissolution, using it as a common resource, predominantly for fuel, for all of its tenants of Low Furness. In a rental of c.1535, the moss was valued at 28s. 4d. a year less a payment of 5s. to the earl of Derby, as lord of the manor of Broughton.⁸

On the Dissolution of Furness Abbey in 1537, its estates were absorbed into the Duchy of Lancaster, which retained the lordship of Furness, although letting various estates out to farm.⁹ In 1586, 124 customary acres (c. 200 statute acres) of pasture and moss in Angerton, together with a cottage, were leased to John Richardson and Leonard Rawlinson of Furness for 31 years.¹⁰ Almost immediately the two lessees challenged the rights claimed by Thomas Preston (whose father had in 1549 leased the site of Furness Abbey and the associated estate known as The

⁵ TNA, DL42/3, CLXXXV, CXXVII, CXC11, CXCIV; *Couher Book*, pp. 324, 337, 332, 335.

⁶ See note 1, above

⁷ TNA, DL25/398 Award, Angerton Moss 1424, Transcribed in T West, *Antiquities of Furness* (1774), Appendix XI(5)

⁸ TNA SC 12/9/73 (rental, Furness Abbey, c.1535). The same figures are quoted in *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, 269-70.

⁹ TNA, E322/91 (surrender of Furness Abbey).

¹⁰ TNA, DL1/137/R 12 Angerton, 28 Eliz.

Manor), Roger Kirkby (the lord of Kirkby Ireleth) and another 24 named individuals.¹¹ A commission reported that Preston ought to have 90 acres of land within Angerton, according to his lease. At the time he was occupying just 59 acres of arable and meadow, plus 16 acres of turbary, so a further 15 acres needed to be enclosed for him.¹² However, the river Duddon had changed course since the Dissolution, exposing some 150 acres of new marshland, which was claimed by the earl of Derby, as lord of Broughton.¹³ An inquiry into ownership of the new marsh concluded that the new land belonged to the Queen, as lord of Angerton. Upon a further enquiry the whole of the area south of Whelphshead and Otter Pool was determined to be the Queen's land, with Lord Derby's land (in Broughton) to the north, and Mr Kirkby's land (in Kirkby) to the south and east of Steers Pool.¹⁴ By then there were two further significant areas of enclosure in Angerton, totalling almost 200 statute acres (*c.*80 ha), which approximates to Preston's lease of 90 customary acres. Thus at this date, all the enclosed land in Angerton was leased to Preston of The Manor, and occupied by his undertenants who also had turbary and grazing rights on the unenclosed 124 customary acres which were leased to Richardson and Rawlinson, but within which various other parties from Broughton, Kirkby and Low Furness also had turbary rights.

The 124-acre estate leased to Richardson and Rawlinson passed to William Knype, then, in 1610, to the earl and countess of Derby who acquired a lease for sixty years.¹⁵ By the early seventeenth century, therefore, the extra-parochial area was held in three parts: 124 customary acres (calculated at 7 yards to the rod) in the hands of the earl of Derby, Thomas Preston's lease of 90 customary acres (calculated at 8 yards to the rod), and 150 acres of marsh (again at 8 yards) retained in the hands of the Crown, as parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster. Together they covered

¹¹ *VCH Lanc* VIII, 311-2.

¹² TNA, DL44/379 (special commission 1585).

¹³ TNA, DL1/139/D4 (bill of Lord Derby 1586).

¹⁴ TNA, DL6/34 (draft decree 23 June 1586); DL4/29/2 (commission 1587); MPC1/34 (map of Angerton 1587).

¹⁵ Thomas West, *Antiquities of Furness*, 174-77; LA, DDK 1400/1 (Angerton Marsh and Moss 1610).

c. 708 statute acres (286 ha), which approximates to the whole of Angerton Moss, excluding the sands.

The three parts descended separately for some time. At the Restoration, the Duchy interest passed to General Monk, created duke of Albermarle, and subsequently descended to the dukes of Buccleuch and Queensberry.¹⁶ The part leased to Thomas Preston was purchased from the Crown by the Prestons in 1608, and added to the Abbey (or Manor) estate, but in 1674 Sir Thomas Preston, having no sons, gave his property to the Jesuits upon his joining that order.¹⁷ This led to the whole estate, including Angerton Moss, being forfeit to the crown, from whom the nearest Protestant heir, Thomas Preston of Holker, then obtained a lease. When he took possession in 1682, Preston's share of Angerton Moss was worth £16 9s. 3d. a year, with 19 tenants paying either 8s. 4d. or 16s. 8d. each per year in rent, while a further 90 tenants paid rents for turbary, generally between ½d. and 1s. 6d. a year, although William Kirkby esq paid 8s. 0d. turbary rent.¹⁸ In 1717, Elizabeth Preston, widow of Thomas, was granted the estate in fee, in trust for their daughter's husband, Sir Thomas Lowther, through whose daughter it descended to the Cavendish family, earls of Burlington and dukes of Devonshire.¹⁹

The Derby share was presumably sold with the rest of the Broughton estate in 1653-4;²⁰ By the early nineteenth century it had been acquired by the Towers family of Duddon Hall. In 1805 virtually the whole of Angerton had been divided into a western portion held by Burlington and an eastern portion held by Towers, with a relatively small remainder largely held by the duke of Buccleuch.

In 1845, the Towers portion, by then 345 acres (140 ha) was held by trustees for Frances Esther Millers, heiress of Richard Towers of Duddon Hall, deceased, while the earl of Burlington's

¹⁶ *VCH Lancs.* viii, 300.

¹⁷ West, *Antiquities*, pp. 139-41; *VCH Lancs.* viii, 271, 312.

¹⁸ LA, DDCA/4/1 (rental Angerton Moss 1682).

¹⁹ *VCH Lancs.* viii, 271, 312; West, *Antiquities*, 141.

²⁰ *VCH Lancs.* viii, 403, 407.

portion was 296 acres (120 ha).²¹ By 1902 the Duddon Hall estate was the sole proprietor within Angerton, with the exception of a small area in the north-east retained by Buccleuch, and a strip of Bank End moss owned by Mr Wakefield.²² On the sale of the Duddon Hall estate in 1902, the Angerton area was divided into four lots: Waitham Hill (125 acres; 51 ha), Moss House Farm (90 acres; 36ha); Marshfield Farm (140 acres; 57 ha) and Moss Farm and Herd House, treated as one property (226 acres; 92 ha).²³ All were sold as freehold with sitting tenants, with different members of the Whineray family farming Moss Farm (subsequently renamed Angerton Hall at some date between 1927 and 1950), Marsh Field and Waitham Hill.²⁴ Most of the properties have since been sold and resold, Waitham Hill being bought by the Curwen family in 1948.²⁵ Joss Curwen, descended from the Whinerays on his mother's side, still occupied Waitham Hill in 2014²⁶ Part of Bank End Moss formerly held by Buccleuch, and a part of Herd House Moss, formerly held by Burlington, became part of the Duddon Mosses National Nature Reserve in 2004.²⁷

²¹ TNA, IR29/18/14.

²² LA, DDHH1/57 (Duddon Hall estate sale catalogue, 1902).

²³ Ibid. It is likely that by this date Herd House, isolated by the railway line, was no longer occupied.

²⁴ Ibid; inf. from Joss Curwen (2014).

²⁵ Inf. from Joss Curwen (2014).

²⁶ Ibid.

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<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140712082125/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/designations/nnr/1006954.aspx> (accessed 12 Dec. 2014)