

## Victoria County History of Cumbria Project. Draft parish/township histories

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Parish/township: RENWICK

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# RENWICK<sup>1</sup>

## LANDOWNERSHIP

The origins of the manor of Renwick can be traced to a grant by Henry I to Adam de Staveley, lord of Dent and Sedbergh (Yorkshire West Riding).<sup>2</sup> The manor was sold by Thomas de Staveley and Margaret his wife to Michael de Hercla in 1297/8;<sup>3</sup> and was held by his son Sir Andrew Harcla in 1323 when he was executed for treason. In 1328/9 the manor passed, by exchange for land in Middlesex, to Robert of Eaglesfield (chaplain to Philippa of Hainault, queen of England) who used it to endow his newly founded Queen's College, Oxford in 1341 - the last occasion on which the manor changed hands.<sup>4</sup> The site of the medieval manor house is thought to have been where a three-storey building, once called 'Hetherington's', now stands on the west side of the village: it is reputed to contain medieval masonry.<sup>5</sup> The demesne was said in 1327 to extend to 20 acres: it probably included some four acres adjoining the manor house, another 15 acres called Sharehills and Woodcroft on the north and east of the village, and the mill, mill holme and all the woodland adjoining the Raven Beck - a total of about 33 statute acres (13.5 ha).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Denton's History*, 155; *Book of Fees*, 199.

<sup>3</sup> FF Cumb no. 159.

<sup>4</sup> QC, 5A-1 (1328/9), also referring to previous ownership of Harcla, and 5A-1a (1341); *Cal Pat* Ed III vol 5, pp171,191,244 (license for alienation in mortmain).

<sup>5</sup> Local inf from architect resident therein 2004; for 'Hetherington's' cf note 19 above.

<sup>6</sup> TNA C145/104(1), an extent in 1327; manor court records and Land Tax duplicate 1769 for identification of freehold land.

Of 920 acres (379 ha) used for arable and pasture before the enclosure of moorland in 1818, about 160 acres (66 ha) were held freehold, and about 760 acres (313 ha) were held from Queen's College by customary tenure. The freehold land included former demesne and glebe land, and three tenements at Scalehouses once owned by the Dacres.

One of only two freeholders in 1561 was William Lord Dacre, 3rd Baron Dacre of the North, whose grandfather had held land at Scalehouses at his death in 1485.<sup>7</sup> His land (about 108 acres, 44.5 ha) had probably been acquired before 1485 in pursuance of a Dacre policy of placing their retainers in manors which they did not own.<sup>8</sup> It was awarded in June 1569 to the sisters of the deceased child 5th Baron Dacre; was administered on their behalf until 1594 when it was forfeited to the crown;<sup>9</sup> and purchased back by nominees on behalf of Lady Anne (Dacre) Howard, Countess of Arundel, in December 1601.<sup>10</sup> By 1603 she had sold it and there were three new freeholders who held farming tenements at Scalehouses.<sup>11</sup>

During the agricultural depression of the 1870s and 1880s Joseph Nicholson (1831-1895), of Ravenwood farmhouse, Renwick, who had inherited a fortune made by his uncle on coffee plantations in Surinam and India, purchased several farm holdings and other lands and buildings in Renwick, and in the process became acknowledged as squire.<sup>12</sup> The Ravenwood estate was inherited in 1895 by Nicholson's cousin William Salkeld (1866-1935) and great-nephew George Wilfred Armstrong (1875-1956). It was broken up after the death of Armstrong in 1956.

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<sup>7</sup> QC, 5A-3, the other freeholder was Thomas Smythe for the house called Slotingsteads.

<sup>8</sup> A policy mentioned in Steven G Ellis, 'Thomas 2nd Baron Dacre', *ODNB*; cf note 5 above

<sup>9</sup> TNA LR2/212 (folios 49/50), survey 1589, describes three tenements at Scalehouses; for the forfeiture in 1594, cf *The Household Books of Lord William Howard*, Surtees Society 68 (1878), 390-1.

<sup>10</sup> TNA C66/1570 (folio 11, lines 70-80)

<sup>11</sup> QC, 5A-23 (1603); title deeds of Scalehouses End Farm (Mrs Jane Fawcett) with a 1731 reference to an 'annual free rent of one half penny to his grace the Duke of Norfolk the chief lord of the fee'.

<sup>12</sup> Nicholson/Salkeld/Armstrong family wills and admittances 1873. - CAS(C), DX1705 holds many title deeds relating to purchases by Joseph Nicholson between 1873 and 1891, both of entire farms and small parcels. The most significant was the purchase from Lawson in 1873 – cf *Religious History*. William Salkeld's vesting assent in 1931, DX/1705/16, describes the land, about 630 acres in Renwick, included in Joseph Nicholson's will trust (1895), to which had been added his brother John's land at Scalehouses in 1897 – total about 1,000 acres.