

A history of the hamlet of Aldcliffe

Introduction

Time moves on and technology improves and, in light of this, I have scanned Mr Robert Bellis's manuscript to computer in order to make it more readily available to today's reader.

Unfortunately, Robert's early word processor was set with unusually narrow margins and the relatively faint dot matrix print made it very difficult for my optical character recognition software (OCR) to easily translate his story into Microsoft Word parameters. However, with perseverance, and after three proof readings, I feel I have re-set his work as accurately as possible to the original.

Because it does not see letters as we do but analyses shapes, the OCR software sometimes misreads juxtapositions of certain letters, e.g.: cl may be reproduced as d, ln as h etc. Throughout Robert's manuscript the OCR software has also struggled with the two ffs in Aldcliffe, often translating the word as Aldcli+fe – I think I got them all but....

In addition, the OCR software mischievously translated dates like 1807 into 1907 or 1007 – again, if I missed some...

Finally, I hope Robert will forgive my presumption in adding to his admirable work of scholarship my memories of Aldcliffe Hall and its surroundings as it was before the bulldozer and the builder destroyed it forever.

If you care to, you will find my notes in file B on the disk.

Nicholas Webster.

April 2006



FOREWORD

After twenty years' residence in, and study of, the Hamlet of Aldcliffe, and acting under the spur of a computer word processor, I have set out in a more orderly fashion the files and notes I have acquired, to make known the story of Aldcliffe.

Robert Bellis

Aldcliffe June 1987.

Robert Bellis
With acknowledgements to help
given by Reference Library Staff
J.

LOCATION AND DERIVATION OF NAME

Aldcliffe is a small hamlet, now incorporated into the city of Lancaster, situated on the eastern bank of the River Lune, and one and a half miles south west of the city centre. The river hereabouts is flowing north - south and its widening estuary is salt marsh, making the river some half mile wide at high water.

From the marshes the land rises and within half a mile the 100 feet contour is crossed and then the land undulates in a pleasing fashion to a valley through which the Lancaster-Preston canal has been cut, and then rises again through Haverbreaks and on to the Ashton Road. It is from this ridge of high ground, stretching south from the old city boundary at Brookholrne, through Aldcliffe and on towards Stodday, that the village derives its name.

Most authorities on the place names of Lancashire are agreed that the two elements ; "Ald" + "clif", making up the modern name come from Old English. "Ald" may loosely be translated as "old" but it also carries the connotation of "long used" or "formerly used", whilst "clif" means "high land", which is certainly a reference to the ridge, already mentioned, and which is particularly striking when seen from the river. When therefore we find "Aldeclif" so recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, we can presume that there had been a long established settlement here .

Other suggestions about the derivation of the village's name deserve a mention. It has been stated that the first element of "Ald" may be derived from the Old English personal name "Alda", but the second element "clif" is rarely found in association with personal names. Other suggestions include the "Alder-clif"- the high ground where alders flourished or even more simply - "Old-cliff".

Like so many other English place names there has been a rich variation in the way that the name has been both pronounced and spelled. Here are some of the variations I have encountered through the ages ;

1086 - Aldeclif	1094 - Audecliva
1190 - Audeclyviam	1212 - Aldeclive
1341 - Aidedyf	1577 - Aucllyff
1577 - Awcliffe.	

The registers of the Lancaster Parish Church for the two centuries from 1599 to 1782 contain the following examples, the spelling of the village name changing with the clergyman or clerk making the entry :

Adclife, Aldcliffe, Alclife, Aldclif, Aldclife, Aldclyffe, Altlife, Auldcliffe, Auckliff, Aucli+f, Aucliffe, Aukliffe.

These are perhaps the most deviant "- Ocliff and Oakley.

The variations in the spelling highlight a problem that still puzzles many inhabitants today. What is the correct pronunciation of the village name? The traditional form is 'Awcliffe', where the "l" and "d" of the first element are not sounded. This leads to some difficulty, particularly if the listener wants to write the word down, so more and more, and especially amongst the many newcomers into the village in the last decade or so, every letter of the village name is being sounded- A l d cliff e. This may reflect how the village name sounded a thousand years ago, but it certainly does not reflect the accepted pronunciation of the last three hundred years.

A PERAMBULATION OF THE ANCIENT MANOR OF ALDCLIFFE

From early medieval days it has been customary every seven years or so, to mark the boundary of a parish, borough, or city by having a ceremonial "riding", when officials would perambulate the district, checking the boundary markings and fixing these marks in the minds of the younger generations in a variety of ways. What better way for us to start our tour of Aldcliffe's boundaries by quoting from the Lancaster Boundary Riding, where it runs alongside the Aldcliffe boundary, for the year 1682 ;-

".....down the midie of the Loyne untill you come to a poole called Blackpoole foote wch devideth Heaton and Oxcliffe overwhart Loyne unto the Earnestone, from thence on the outside of Soul ram to Ongell Beck at the foot of Aidcliffe Brow in Aidcliffe Lane and from thence on the outside of Haverbreaks until you come to the Brigg Head along the Brooke or Running Water....."

Because many of the names have changed and because some of the features mentioned in this description have now disappeared it is not easy to follow these instructions, so perhaps it would be helpful to look at the 1865 Boundary Riding, which is for exactly the same common boundary of Lancaster and Aidcliffe. It reads ;-

".....overthwart the R. Lune, by the South side of Freeman's wood, unto a place near where there was formerly a large stone called the Earn Stone on the north side of a hedge or fence in Aidcliffe Hall Grounds, from thence by the East end of Freeman's wood and by Lucy Brook to a place west of the Footbridge over the same and from thence in a southerly direction on the outside of Lower Holme otherwise Sower Holme, to Howgill Beck at the foot of Kill brow in Aidcliffe Lane- from thence crossing the Lancaster Canal and on the outside of Haverbricks until you come to the Brigg Head or place near the Brook or running water, then re-crossing the Canal in a southerly direction to a place opposite the entrance of the said brook into the Canal, again crossing the Canal and along the said brook to Ashton Lane"

This report was written over 100 years ago, but already it contains names of features which even old residents of the village cannot recall. I have asked about Howgill Beck and Kill brow but both names have been lost! Howgill beck must have gathered its waters from the Haverbreaks slopes, before the drainage hereabouts was disturbed by the building of the canal. I had hoped the name might have survived in a house name in the area, but I have not found it. Kill brow in these days of cars is no longer a hill to be feared.

Our 1987 perambulation will also start in the North-west corner of the village, at the mid point of the R. Lune between the Salt Ayre tip and the western end of the footpath through Freeman's Wood. The boundary follows this path, in a south

easterly direction, crossing over the now disused Glasson Dock railway track, then alongside the new playing fields on Willow Lane, to the Lucy Brook. The brook now becomes the boundary, flowing past Brookside Farm, Aldcliffe's most northerly homestead. The boundary leaves the Lucy Brook where it is crossed by the Kendal Pad, a narrow hedged pathway, going southwards for a field's length. The boundary turns sharply east to a marker pillar, hexagonal in section, with a rounded top, some 2 feet high, 80 yards in the field and marked vertically - ALDCLIFFE and LANCASTER. From this marker, the boundary swings eastwards and can be seen as a low ridge crossing the field known as Sourholrne, which lies to the north of the footpath coming out into Aldcliffe Road near East Lodge. There is another marker column indicating the boundary, 30 yards from the gateway, standing 3 feet high, in the boggy ground just over the roadside wall.

The boundary crosses the road and canal to the bottom of the gardens on Haverbreaks Estate, taking a narrow strip off the easterly bank of the canal. Emerging into the open fields after the last house, the boundary meets the valley of a now dried up watercourse, turns west and crosses the canal. It now keeps to the tow path side and for three fields follows the valley southward, turning westwards and eventually is picked up as a field ditch, just north of the sewerage enclosure on the Lunecliffe Road. The boundary crosses the road and emerges as a dry ditch running slightly south of west, through a small copse and crossing the Stodday road (south of Aldcliffe Green) and entering the field, where it soon becomes a small brook (with water cress), following the field boundary and turning south at the corner. The lodge for the former Snuff/Corn Mill was in this field and the embankment enclosing it can be seen. The brook and boundary continue south to the roadside, opposite the mill building (Ivy Cottage) and then turn to the west to the sewerage works. The brook flows to the south of the Plant, is piped under the former railway line (now a linear park) and out into the mid-Lune. The boundary is now mid stream, returning in a mainly northerly direction up stream, passing the Golden Ball Inn ("Snatchem's") on the return to the Salt Ayre/Freeman's wood start.

The unclassified road from Lancaster to Stodday passes through Aldcliffe? and in spite of its twisting, narrow character is the main road. This traditional "hollow-way", formerly a sunken cart track with raised banks planted with hedgerows has two offshoots; a branch to the river leaves at the "Y" junction at Bank Farm and is known as Shore Road or Railway Crossing road, the second branch leaves at Aldcliffe Green, skirts the Lunecliffe estate and joins the main Ashton Road, and is sometimes known as Green Lane. There is an occupation road off the Stodday Road leading to Arna Wood and Low wood Farms. There are few footpaths in the district. One leaves the Cannon Hill area to Lucy Brook, then by Sourholrne to East Lodge and is named Kendal Pads; a second footpath takes in by Hill Farm, becomes a cart track sunken between hedgerows, emerges across open fields to the former rail track and the river. The Glasson Dock rail line has been transformed into a linear park and following the line of the estuary is

also a well used cycle way. The length from the old level crossing to Freeman's wood is called Mile Lane, being an ancient straight "green" road marking the medieval right of access to the former marshes for the carriage of turf, hay and rushes. There are also rights of way along the top of the Embankment and along the Canal tow-path. The former hall drive has now, through common usage, become a right of way for walkers.

ROMAN AND ANGLO-NORSE TIMES.

The story of the hamlet throughout the period prior to the Norman Conquest must be largely a matter of conjecture, for unlike larger settlements along the River Lune, we have no Roman fort(not even a Roman road!), no Anglo- Saxon cross shaft, and no Norse field system to offer as evidence of early settlement. Little in the way of casual archaeological finds from these times have been reported within the village boundary. However, the river would have been the main line of communication in those early days, and this linked with the derivation of its name as an "old settlement" in the tenth century, leads to the conclusion that the early inhabitants saw this river activity - the supply and victualling of the Roman forts at Lancaster, the growth of the Anglian settlements in the new villages higher up the river valley, the visits and growing influence of the Irish Christian Church in the centuries after the decline of the Roman power and the Norse/ viking settlers as they established themselves in the remote places "up river".

This historic panoply would have been watched, if not comprehended, by these pre-Conquest folks, and much as I watch the tide daily overflow the marshes and see the occasional boat making its way up river from Glasson, so they from the fields overlooking the estuary would pause and look or from the shelter of their hovels would wonder what it meant.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST - DOMESDAY SURVEY

After William of Normandy had landed to claim the throne of England, in 1066, and had defeated Harold at Hastings, it took him nearly 20 years before he could make a full survey of his new kingdom. As with so many other places in the country it is with this record that we first meet with Aldcliffe". It has a mention in the Domesday Book.

From 1067 to 1083, for several reasons, the North of England had been devastated and a trail of waste and uninhabited villages was left behind. Uprisings against the newcomers, threats of a Danish invasion, resistance by Hereward the Wake, uncertainty about the northern limits of his lands, had all combined to give William sufficient reason to make a careful study of his territories and to see how they could be assessed for a "Danegeld". This the surveyors and compilers of the work sought to do and have handed down a document of unique value.

In 1083, Lancashire did not exist as a separate county, and as the survey was carried out county by county, the entries for the north west are in two sections. That part of the old(pre 1974) Lancashire County south of the River Ribble is found under the heading; "Inter Ripam et Mersham" whilst the area north of the Ribble is in the Yorkshire Folio. The entry is in the abbreviated Latin shorthand found throughout the work and reads;-"

...M[anor]

In Haltun h'but Comes Tosti vi car t're ad g'ld. In Aldeclif ijc; Tiernum i_jc; Hillun ijc;
 Loncastre vjc; Chercaloncastre ijc; Hotun ijc;
 Newtun ijc; Ouretun iiijc; Middeltun iiijc;
 Hietune iiijc; Hessam iiijc; 0;-;enclif ijcs Poltune ijc; Toredholrne ijc; Schertune vjc;Bareijc;
 Sline vjc."

From this we learn that Earl Tosti held the Manor of Halton and that he had 6 carucates of land there assessed for geld tax and that there were 17 other villis belonging to the Manor and variously assessed at from 2 to 6 carucates, of which one was Aldcliffe. It is worthy of note that in Lancaster two assessments were made- one for 6 carucates for Lancaster and one of 2 carucates for Church Lancaster - and that Halton was the centre of manorial administration.

The information given is of the briefest, but at least it indicates that the area had come through the troubles of the past 2 decades better than other parts of Lancashire, for we learn that of 62 vills around Preston in the Hundred of Amounderness, 46 were waste and 16 had few people, and so were not assessed for the tax. What then does this mean? It is difficult to state what a "carucate" meant, for throughout the survey various measures of land area are used, often varying from region to region as to the exact size, for these were days well before standardisation. The term "carucate" is often used to denote a ploughland that a team of eight oxen could work in a season, but there are so many variables in this description, such as the nature of the terrain and the heaviness of the soil, that it is only possible to estimate the area, which is variously quoted as from 80 to 100 acres. Later in the reign of Richard 1, in 1195, a carucate was fixed by law as being 100 acres and a permanent tax was laid on it.

Aldcliffe, then, pre-Conquest, formed part of the estate of the Halton fee of Earl Tosti(g), who was killed at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, 25 Sept 1066. William, after his victory at Hastings, divided his English territories amongst his Norman knights. He gave much of what we now know as Lancashire to Roger of Poitou, a member of the Montgomery family, who were powerful land owners in Southern Normandy. Roger "Pictavensis" as he is referred to in the old documents, decided to move the manorial headquarters from Halton to Lancaster, where, on the site of the Roman fort of Castle Hill, he set up his "castle".

We can only surmise at the reasons for this move and what prompted him to move down river a couple of miles. Strategically Lancaster is better situated to guard the north/south road, it is at the highest tidal point on the river and also the southern end of the Morecambe Bay crossing is covered from here. How far he was able to use the substantial remains of the last 4th Century Roman Fort and its "Wery wall" defences we do not know, but it is hard to visualize a traditional Norman "motte and bailey" being erected in wood and soil/turf when so much stone would be so readily available.

Aldcliffe soon after 1066 passed into the hands of Roger of Poitou.

The next reference to Aldcliffe occurs in 1094, in the Foundation Charter of the Priory of St. Mary of Lancaster. Roger of Poitou, following in the custom of the day, granted to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Martin in the town of Sees (Seez), now in the Departement of Orne, S.Normandy, the newly founded Priory. The chartulary of the Priory, which is preserved in the British Museum on 82 pages of vellum, sets down the grant of land that Roger gave to endow the new religious house. A translation of the Latin text would run :-

".....with a portion of the land of that town (Lancaster) between the Old Wall and the orchard of Godfrey and the Priest gate; the two "mansiones" of Aldcliffe and Newton with whatever pertained to them and the wood as far as the Freybrook or Frithbrook"

This was only a small portion of a large bestowal covering churches and lands throughout Lancashire from Croston through Preston to Poulton-le-Fylde, with tithes from 20 other named places in the north west.

"Mansione" is usually translated to mean a manor house, so we can infer from this that there was in Aldcliffe by this time a Hall with its manorial lands. It is from this evidence that Hewitson in his book "Northward" is able to write :- "Aldcliffe Old Hall was built in the days of William Rufus (1087 - 1.100) and was , it is conjectured, enlarged about the time of Henry vii(1485 -1509)". and for Edward B. Dawson at the end of the 19th Century and for later newspaper reports to assert that the first Hall was built in the time of William II.

The site of this first hall was within the walls of the later ornamental and kitchen gardens which were developed for housing in the 1970's to form Oaklands Court and Craiglands Court. It is regretted that no archaeological remains of this medieval structure were found.

Another interesting feature arising from the granting of tithes in the Priory Charter of 1094, was that when I came to live in Aldcliffe in 1966, a steward from the Priory Church made an annual visit to collect the tithe apportionment from the land on which my bungalow had been built. A tithe, which had been paid either in cash or in kind, from 1094, was finally ended when I was asked "to buy it out" in 1970.

EARLY MEDIEVAL TIMES 1100 to 1350 A.D.

No records seem to have survived to indicate if there was a resident Lord of the Manor, in the early 12th century, but in 1133 and 1143 the foundation charter of the Prior was confirmed by the Pope. A little later, between 1149 and 1188, there is evidence that Gilbert, son of Roger Fitz Reifrid, had interests in Aldcliffe commensurate with him being Lord of the Manor. The Fitz Reifrid family were great land owners in

North Lancashire as well as holding the Barony of Kendal. They also held Mourholrne Castle, Dockacres and there is some evidence that a little later they changed the family name to Lancaster.

The document is published in the Chetham Records 26 and its Latin text translated by W. O. Roper reads :-

"Let all as well present as to come know that I Gilbert, son of Roger fitz Reifrid, for the grant which the Abbot and Convent of Sees have made to me of forming and raising the causeway of my pond upon their land of Aldcliffe, have bound myself and my heirs to pay to the Prior and monks of Lancaster one pound of pepper at the feast of St. Michael annually for all service. Moreover by the assent and will of my heirs from a love of charity, I have given and granted to them the tithes of my mills which are enacted upon the aforesaid pond and likewise the tithes of the fishes of the aforesaid pond and that this may remain, settled and unchanged for future times, I have strengthened it by setting to my seal.

These being witnesses-

Ralph de Brueria, Lambert de Busseto, Adam son of Roger, Richard son of Alan, William of Windsor, Gilbert de Lancaster, Stephen de Yolton, Clement Cook, Henry de Alnon(?)...."

This document raises many queries, the most important being to try and identify the location of the "mills", "the causeway" and the "pond". Some help in this search is given in another document, a generation later, involving the son of the above Gilbert, now using the family name of "de Lancaster" and concerning his "mill of Stodday".

In summary the document reads :-

"To all the sons of the holy mother church ... William de Lancaster.... Let all of you know that the Lord Prior of Lancaster...have granted to me that I may have my chapel in my manor of Ashton..

And I William de Lancaster and my heirs seeing the uprightness and goodness of the Lord Prior of Lancaster.....have granted to them for ever an annual rent of twelve pence to be received from our mill of Stodday at the feast of St. Michael.....".

Reading these together, the mill could well be on the site of the present day Snuff Mill-Ivy Cottage which lies on the boundary of Aldcliffe and Stodday and where the embankment of the old mill lodge can be seen, alongside the unnamed stream, marking the boundary.

At this time, 1193, Lancaster was granted its first charter and its burgesses were freed from compulsory use of the lord's mill, freed from ploughing and other servile customs, granted pasturage as far as the cattle can go and return in a day, allowed to collect dead wood for fuel, given quittance from tolls and other levies, allowed to set up guilds and could hold land in free burgage tenure. This shows how the townspeople were more and more throwing off the stricture of the feudal system and seeking to be more independent of the manorial rule. However, this would not apply to the villagers of Aldcliffe, where the few serfs, villeins, cottars or bordars would still give their feudal service by work on the land, by the river and in the mill.

In 1337, Edward III was waging war against the French and as much Church wealth went from England to mother religious houses in France, he seized the property of Alien houses and made it the property of the Crown. So the dues from the Priory at Lancaster, which for nearly 250 years had gone to Seez, were now used by Edward to help the work of the Bridgettine House at Isleworth, Middlesex, more usually known as Syon Abbey. Aldcliffe tithes thus found their way to London !

LANCASTER

Some interesting social and health obligations can be found in the CONSTITUTIONS AND ORDERS used in Lancaster borough in 1362 (26 Ed.III), some of them coming from the devastation and high mortality arising from the Black Death 1348-49. Below are some of these constitutions set down in an abbreviated form.

CONSTITUTIONS AND ORDERS OF LANCASTER 1362

1. A weekly court to be held every Thursday, with two annual head courts.
2. Procedure for choosing mayor.
- 3 -4 Appointment of Bailiffs.
5. Keys to Common Chest. 4 keys to be held by Mayor, Bailiff, and two burgesses.
8. Proving of bread and ale at least once a month.
15. Passage and market tolls to be taken by bailiffs.
16. Control of bear wardens and minstrels.
17. Bailiffs' Shrovetide and Easter banquets to be charged to the town at audit.
20. These constitutions to be read every quarter.
21. Persons to leave town within 3 days of discharge from gaol for felony.
23. Mayor, bretherem and bailiffs to have gowns.
28. sale of grass in town forbidden. The Mayor to name convenient sale spot.
31. One "cobbler" to amend old shoes.
32. A swineheard to look after all swine upon the Moor, called Whernmore, above the Moor yeat (Moorgate).
34. Qualifications for burgess and freeman.
35. Freemen to pay scot and lot.
50. Any person making a brawl or hubleshaw to be fined 3s.4d.
54. No man shall talk in Court. Forfeit 2d., then 4d. and doubling.
63. No person to take any inmate, or suffer to dwell upon their backside – forfeit of 10s.
65. No stranger to settle in town until allowed by Mayor and to what science or craft they will take to.
66. Every inhabitant to keep watch and ward.
68. No victuals or wares to be bought before the market bell has been rung.
71. The tolbooth to be used for punishment/imprisonment of freemen, whilst the stockhouse to be used for drunkards and disordered persons.
74. No innkeeper shall refuse to lodge a stranger seemingly honest and able to pay.
75. No bridal dinner to cost above 4d. the piece.
77. Refusal to sell available ale - a forfeit of 6d.
78. No alehouse to be open on Sabbath during Divine Service.
79. Malt is bought as seen ~ no remedy for a bad buy ~ the precept given; "let their eye be their chapman"

80. All common ovens to be licensed- for every de-fault 3s. 4d fine.
82. A ship must be in sure haven for two days before goods are bought or sold.
84. None to buy corn, grain, malt or salt before the common bell is rung.
- 85-87. Precautions to be taken by butchers on selling meat.
88. vagabonds or idle young persons to be carted or scourged forth of the towne.
89. A common eavesdropper, standing under any man's eaves, walls or windows to be fined 3s.4d. and then expelled of towne
91. No idle person to be kept or resetted.
92. All unlawful games to be laid away and young men commanded to buy bows and arrows.
93. Apprentices, servants or children not to play at dice, cards or games for silver - fine 6s. 8d.
94. No suspicious persons to be lodged.
95. Common hedge breakers to be put forth of the towne.
96. Land abutting common pasture, the king's highway, the Marsh or the Moor shall be hedged and ditched sufficiently all the year.
97. Every man to repair his own hedge.
98. Two supervisors appointed to see that every man has sufficient fuel.
100. None shall get any rushes upon the Marsh, but only to freemen's houses.
101. No man shall shear or mow any grass of his neighbours or come in the fields belonging to the town, 105. None shall dry or rate any hemp upon the common pasture.
107. No man shall make any path over his neighbour's ground.
109. None shall carry or worry any wain, laden or unladen, trees or other carriage over Lancaster bridge above the draught or carriage of a horse.
110. The occupiers of Girsgarth cleanse ditches so that the great water standing in the Cheney lane may descend and have its course thro' Thos. Singleton's plot.
111. Water in the Castle Ditch not to be let down for clay or thatch for more than 45 minutes at a time.
112. The Castle Ditch to be kept for the use and profit of the town.
117. Leather for use in shoes is to be sufficiently tanned and curried.
118. None shall, drive horses or beasts loose through fields.
124. None shall winnow any corn upon the pavement or in the street.
125. No man shall break open the pavement without licence.
126. Every person shall keep clean the street and pavement anent (about) his own front.
127. No person shall sett any cart or carr in the open street.
128. None shall suffer whins or moins to be anent their doors above the space of two days together.
129. No man shall lie, draw or cart any dead beast or carrion afore any man's dore.

130. No butcher shall cart bowells, blood or such like corruption into the street.
131. None shall lie any donge in the street upon the pavement but shall remove the same at all times upon six days' warning.
133. None to lay dong, worthing or compost in Chainey Lane, Penny Street nor in any other street.
135. None shall put ditching or feying in the street, but everyone shall take away the same anent his own front.
136. That none brew, wash clothes or any vile thing either beast inmates or do any unwholesome or filthy thing in or about the Stonewell, the ware (weir) or any other common well about this town.
137. No person to get clay before the Castle gates.
138. No man shall take his neighbours stones being in the quarries.
139. That sheep shall be kept forth of the -fields from the feast of St. Andrew yearly until the corn be inned.
140. That geese shall be kept forth of the fields from Easter day yearly until the corn be gotten in.
141. That calves be kept forth of the fields from Hallow Thursday to corn be gotten.
142. That swine shall be yearly kept of the fields from the beginning of seed time until corn be inned.
143. Much of the foregoing I have abbreviated and put into modern day spelling, but here and there I have retained some telling word or spelling - such as "anent", "be inned", "amend old shoes", "gotten" and "above 4d. the piece".

Although Lancaster had been a chartered borough for two hundred years when these "bye-laws" were accepted, most of its inhabitants lived "close to the land" and were engaged in farming and agricultural pursuits, just as much as their slightly more rural neighbours in Aldcliffe.

In the opening paragraph of this section I mentioned the Black Death and that perhaps some of the hygiene regulations such as attempting to keep the streets free of "bowells, blood or such like corruption" and forbidding "unwholesome or filthy thing" in or near the common wells, could have been as a direct result of the pestilence and the overwhelming effect it had on the population.

The Black Death had started on the south coast in July/August 1348, by November it had reached London and within twelve months the pestilence had spread to Lancashire, where its effect was as devastating as elsewhere in the country. It has been recorded :-

" in 10 Lancashire parishes for which records survive there were 13,180 dead between September 1349 and January 1350. There were 3,000 dead in Preston, another 3,000 in Lancaster, 2,000 in Garstanq and 3,000 in Kirkham"

THE YPRES FAMILY - 1359 to 1400

For two generations the Ypres family, who resided at 'Aldcliffe, were a very important part of local, county, national and even international affairs. Then they depart from the scene as dramatically as they appeared.

In August 1360, Duke Henry of Lancaster (John of Gaunt's -father in law) appointed Ralph of Ypres his valettus as parker and keeper of Quernmore Park at a wage of 1½d. a day, which appointment he was to hold for life. Along with the chief forester, Adam of Houghton, he was to seize malefactors and wrong doers who were accustomed to hunt and do damage in the forest. In the previous year, 1359, John of Gaunt had married Blanche of Lancaster, and with the close association of John's appellation "of Ghent" with Ralph's "of Ypres", it seems that John knew Ralph and recommended his appointment as forester to his father-in-law.

In 1360 also, there was made an indenture of lease by Peter Martin, Prior of the Church of Our Lady, at Lancaster, to JOHN de IPRE for the term of sixty years of the MANOR of ALDCLIF, together with the services of the free tenants, bondmen and tenants-at-will, at a rent of 20 (pounds) per annum and the services due and accustomed to the chief lords of the fee. The consequences flowing from the Black Death and the lack of labour in the countryside would be most critical at this time.

John was the father of Ralph, and both of them held other appointments. In 1361, John of Ypres was sheriff of the County of Lancashire. The son, Ralph was very much a John of Gaunt man, and as Gaunt's influence increased, so Ralph progressed. In 1364, Ralph was allowed to appoint attorneys whilst he was away, probably in Flanders, with John of Gaunt.

Back in England in 1372, Ralph was a member of a commission to examine encroachment on to the Forest and he received by the king's order two stags from Adam of Houghton, who was still the chief forester. In 1374, Ralph, now described as 'parker del park de Quernmore?', was ordered to take 6 deer from the park and distribute them to such "gents: du pays" as he thought profitable. With such patronage at his disposal he would be a most popular figure! Also in this same year, 1374, he was directed to reconstruct the decayed pale; around the two parks (both the old and the new) of Quernmore. In the next year, according to R. Cunliffe Shaw in "The Royal Forest of Lancaster", the chief forester was directed, in January, to provide Ralph de Ypres with enough oaks out of the forest to enclose the new park.

In July 1375, Ralph was made steward of Lonsdale and Amounderness. How far his duties in the forest involved him in the extensive repairs to the old bridge across the Lune, at Lancaster, in 11373 and in the felling of 260 oaks at Quernmore, for the repair of Lancaster Castle in 1377, we cannot say. In 1397 he had a lease of the herbage of the parks of Quernmore and Sealethwaite, near Caton and the watercourse called the Frithbrook, and the site of the mill on the Lune, which he had re-erected.

From the "History of the Duchy of Lancaster" by R. Somerville, we have the following

summarized information about members of the family.

1361 John de Ipre appointed Sheriff for life, by Duke Henry, and after the Duke's death he was confirmed in office.

1367 Knighted at the Battle of Najera.

1380(c) Esquire of Duke Henry in John of Gaunt's retinue as knight.

1383 Chief of the Duke's Council.

1369 and again in 1371 he was Member of Parliament for Lancashire.

1368-76 Controller of the Royal wardrobe, whilst in July 1376 he was appointed Steward.

Ralph's career, other than his involvement with the Royal Forest can be briefly set out.

1375 15th July -appointed steward of the Lonsdale wapentake.

1378 Member of Parliament for Lancashire.

1382 1385 and 1386 - abroad with the Duke of Lancaster.

Further confirmation of the Ypres family can be found in "Lancashire and Cheshire Historical and "Genealogical Notes" Notes" Ed Josiah Ross vol. July 1878-79, in which a list of list of County knights and representatives at C14th. Parliaments includes the following entries:-

English Parliaments	Lancashire representatives.
1369 June 3-11	John de Dalton
	John de Ipres -Sheriff of Lancs 1359
1371 Feb 24 – Mar 29 at Westminster	Richard de Townley John de Ipres
1371 June 8	John de Ipres was the sole representative
1378 Oct 20 – Nov 16 at Gloucester	Sir John de Boteler Ralph de Ipres
1390 at Winchester	Ralph de Ipres was again at both of these
1393 at Winchester Parliaments.	

Sir Ralph died before 1399, when John of Gaunt's son came to the throne as Henry IV. With his death no further mention of the family occurs. Few if any, in Aldcliffe's later story, rose to such eminence in the nations affairs.

THE ABBEY OF SYON

The complicated relationship, even conflict, which seems to have developed between the Benedictine Priory and the parochial duties associated with the Church, from 1380 onwards, is also shown in Aldcliffe whilst the Ypres family were at their most influential, in 1384, the then Prior, John Innocent, leased the Manor of Aldcliffe to PETER DE BOLRON, for 60 years at a rent of 10 (pounds) p.a. This lease must have been further extended for in 1482 we find that THOMAS BOLRON still held land in Aldcliffe.

During these hundred years or more, the influence of the Abbess of Syon grew in the district, and we have full reports of the Courts she held in Aldcliffe.

In 1378, four of the Norman monks at the Priory were given permission to return to the mother house at Seez, due no doubt to both the religious and political atmosphere - "suppression" and French wars appeared inevitable. The alien religious houses were suppressed in 1414 and the gift of Lancaster to the Abbey of Syon was supervised by the Bishops of Durham and York, acting as trustees, but out of regard for the incumbent Prior, the final settlement had to wait till his death in 1428.

The Bridgettine House of Syon, situated at this time in Twickenham, but in 3 years' time to move to Brentford, was the only one of this order in England. Principally it was a Nunnery and at the Suppression some hundred years later it was a thriving institution with the Abbess, 51 nuns, 4 lay sisters, 12 religious men and 5 lay brothers, and a large college of priest attached.

In 1462 the Abbess and convent granted their possessions in Lonsdale and Amounderness, which were extensive, to JOHN GARDINER, "gentilman of Ellel" John Gardiner had extensive lands and mill holdings in and about Lancaster; he was a local benefactor setting up an almshouse Charity and endowing the Grammar School. However, for our purpose, the following extract from his will dated 1472 is of interest :-

".....Also I will that Nicholas Greene may have the remainder of my terms of ALDCLIFFE to me by indenture granted by paying to the Abbess of Syon the rents therefrom accustomed ...".

Nicholas Greene was a priest and was appointed in charge of the chantry and almshouses.

Throughout this time the Abbess in charge at Syon held her Courts in Aldcliffe and so I reproduce an account of the proceedings at one of these Courts, as shown in the Chetham Records, Bk 58, by W.O. Roper.

1511 ---- Survey of the possessions of the Priory.

“The surveying of M a n o r s, Londs, tenements and other Possessions in the Countye of Lancaster perteyning to the Monasterie of Syon " 2ndo Hen '8',

First my Lady's Courte was kept at. ALCLIFF, the Monday after the Feast of Docollation of Seynt John in the second ye re of King Henry the Eighth wher my Lady's Tenents appered as haith ben accustomyd.

"The tenents claymed ther to have Tymbre of my Lady to repair their Holdyngs which was denyed them by my Lady's Councillor bycaus throweout the Contry every Tenent repaireth and fyndeth all Tymbre at his own Costs

"The water of the Lune lyeth sore upon my Lady's Ground besids Lancaster and specially uppon three Closes inthe Holdyng of I;..... land haith worn by Estimation 3 or 4 acres of Ground furth of the said closes ther, as the Fyshe were (weir) is made and daly is lyke to take away more of the said closes without there be other wers and Staks sett for kepyng the same and all that is worn and encroched ther uppon goeth to the Kyngs Tenants to a Comen that thei use ther and so my Lady losith the same Ground.

"The mylle that John Gardiner take of my Lady ther is not well repared nor the Dame mayntened, therefore the Indentur thei of must be seyn-and the-? water that goth furth of Lune to that Mylle causeth all the Breche of my Lady's Ground aforesaid, my Lady haith but 6s/Sd by yore for the Mylle and a Close called the [torn] adjoyning tothe Mylle? and the Close is worthe 5s. by yere thereof and ever will be, or better. Memorandum to enquere if it were hurtful I to my Lady to tak that Mylle or unto her tenants- for surely if the Fysche were (weir) wer not well made all the hoi Ie water of Lune would lieve his Corse to the Mylle and so take away much of my Lady's Ground adjoyning thereto. And the said were is made longur by C.....3Rode or more by Reason of the said Breche than it haith been in late yeares past.

"Also therebe two Wodds of my Lady's, on is called the Ryge (Ridge) and the other is called [.....]; as for the Ryge it is well grown with fair yong oak which will be fare Tymbre within few yeres, if it jept as it is, for ther is no great wast therin ther is Tymbre Trees in it but no great nomber also ther haith been a Lodge for the Keper of the wodde to resort to but not to dwell in, it is in Dekay and therefore George Syngleton is commanded to repair it.

"Also ther is on called Olyver or Roger Southworth which holdeth a third part of the Herbage of the said wodde called the Ryge in term and pay therefor 40d. yerely to my Lady. And the said Suthworth is discharged by my Lady's Council bycause he haith felled wode and made Distruct ion therof And claymeth to have the Pannage as well as the? Hirbage which was never in his Lease nor never had but only my Lady and soche as she suffred to have it as the Keper of the wodde. Also the said Suthworth makth not the Enclosures of the seid wods but hurteth other Tenants adjoyning(and he was agenst my

Lady's Tenants of Newton and Bulk to have enclosed their Comen from them) and he suyeth william Syghote in the Court of Lancaster for the same Pannage and not in my Lady's Court.

".....,..... ..As for the othere wadde called [.] there is neither Tymbre Trees nor yong oke likely tobe Tymbre it haith ben takyn on by T 631-1 ants that it is almost destroyed. Ther be many Scrugges therein which will help to re pare suche Tenements or 1-3 a me s as my Lady haith when neid is if they be kept from hens forth.

"And for the savegard of the seid wodde there is a Payn of Is. 3d. putte in the Courte to every Teen ant that felleth any wodds from hensfurth without Licence and divers other amerced in the Courte for such fellyngs as be made aforetyme.

"The Comyn"

"Also whereas the Inhabitants of the town of Lancaster had made a great enclosure of the Cpomen More called whermore in the 24 yere of King Henry the Seventh (1489) by Reison whereof my Lady's tenants of Newton and Bulk should have lost their Comen ther which thei have hade Tyme ou of Mynd the said Tenants in the 24 yere aforesaid pulled down all the seid enclosure and so it restith to this day - How be it the Town of Lancaster dothe pynd (impound) the Bests of the said Tenants sometyme and therefore it is provyded that thei shall make the rescous if thei so eny more from hensfurth and els sue Replevyns (?) and if any Bests of the said Inhabitants of Lancaster come into my Lady's Ground to brynge them to ALCLIF to the Pound and ther to kepe them tillthei have made amends for the Hurts thei have don.

The Chauncell of Lancaster.

"The Chauncell of the Parish Church of Lanct neid to be amended as well in Glasying as inLeds and specially the great wyndoe above the Heighe Auter (and therefore the vicar must be called upon if it is Dutye by Composition) yet the Vicar shewed otherwise to the Parishe ther (and the Parishe priest said to us that the Vicar seid he must have it delyvered to hym or he repaired it) and that it is not so for it is accept by W.J.Payn(?) his Predecessor. Also the Vicarage is dekaid and if it be not amended shortly it will fall to the ground.

"Also certain Parishens and Tenants in an Hand - complayn that thei oftyns have their Freyns dye without Rights of the Church bycaus thei be oftymes inclosd in with the See that no man can come to them and therefore thei desire that where the Vicar doth fynde a Priest to syngo at the Chapell within the said Hand every Sunday and Holiday that the

seid Priest might contynually abyde among them and thei wold to their Powere here a ley towards his salary if my Lady and the Vicar wold here some charge with them.

I have reproduced this in some detail because it brings out quite vividly some of the everyday problems that faced the local people and particularly the representatives and stewards of the Abbess. Such matters as the supply of wood both for fuel and building, the constant erosion caused by the river which we shall hear more about in the Dawson era, the friction between the Townsfolk and the tenants over the Common land, the isolation of Sunderland Point ("iland") but seemingly that Aldcliffe was regarded as a kind of local headquarters for Syon Abbey, for not only was the Court held here but the pound for the animals taken on the Moor was in the village.

Another feature worthy of comment from the above is the clash over the areas of jurisdiction between an ecclesiastical court, such as this called by the Abbess and the lay court at Lancaster where Roger Southworth was to sue William Syghote.

Finally I find the language in which the report is couched so colloquial as to be fascinating - sometimes for its use of certain words- "amends" "continually abide" and "the Hurts they have done" and sometimes for the constructions-- "There be two woods of my Lady's ...".

AROUND THE REFORMATION TIMES 1500 to 1557.

Aldcliffe during the religiously troubled times of Henry viii, Edward vi and Mary seems to have been in the keeping of a younger branch of the TUNSTALL family. The main family home of the Tunstalls was Thurland Castle, Cantsfield. During the previous century, they had become prominent in local affairs, being appointed Stewards of Amounderness, Blackburn and later Lonsdale Hundreds, and although Sir Richard was attainted in 1461, he was subsequently reconciled with the king and he, and his successors held such offices as Master Forester of Bowland, parker of Quernmore, Constable of Lancaster Castle as well as Steward of the Lonsdale Hundred.

In 1522 the Abbess of Syon leased her manors in Lonsdale, Aldcliffe, to William Tunstall for 21 years, at 100 rent. This to be upset by Henry viii's action in the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the taking over by the Crown of Church lands and property, but the Tunstall connection with Aldcliffe survived in part until 1600, when a Francis Tunstall was still a freeholder in the village.

On 24th May 1525, when Lonsdale Hundred was separated from Amounderness, William Tunstall and Marmaduke Tunstall, Esquires, were made Stewards for life, and by 1540 Sir Marmaduke was alone in office as a knight. In Queen Mary's reign Sir Marmaduke was High Sheriff of Lancashire and at the 1553 Muster of soldiers in the Lonsdale Hundred, under the command of Lord Monteagle, Sir Marmaduke raised 350 men, throughout the region, of whom "Buke and Alkelefe" raised 3.

The family found favour and preferment under Mary because they were, strong Roman Catholics but some time later when Lord Burghley made his survey of Recusants in Elizabeth's reign, we find them listed along with other local families, such as the Gerrards of Ashton Hall, the Daltons of the Thurnham and another branch the Tunstalls at Lentworth, as upholders of the old faith.

When the Suppressors visited Cockersand Abbey in May 1536, it is noteworthy that the Prior was Richard ALDCLIFFE and he was put on oath to make a true declaration of the Abbey's holdings. Was this prior a native of the village or had he assumed the name for some other reason? We do not know.

The dramatic religious changes of these years is shown in the prison records of the Castle. In 1537 John Paslew and Nilliam Trafford, Abbots of Whalley and Sawley

were executed and two monks from Furness were imprisoned, with Mary's accession and the restoration of Catholicism it is a Protestant minister, George Marsh, who is in the Castle prison, whilst at the visitation of the Bishop in 1554, at the Priory Church ;--

"... the ancient rites restored. Mass and matins were sung. The rood (crucifix) was set up in the Church, images replaced in their niches, holy water was sprinkled, solemn processions were made and confirmation of children was carried out ..".

The absentee vicar, of Salisbury in 1558, Dr. Mallet, was recommended by Mary to the Bishopric but Elizabeth on her accession rejected him, and in the following year, mass was proscribed and the rood and images were taken down, Dr. Mallet held the Lancaster living until 1566, and it was not until the appointment of Henry Porter as vicar, in 1502, that Protestantism took hold and it has been said that in the next 26 years "he laid the foundation which was to make Lancaster a Puritan town".

The effect of these changes on the ordinary folk would not be so dramatic. They would see the changes in the church and in the services but whether this altered their belief and faith is doubtful. The new religion was slow to establish itself especially amongst the influential families in the north. In 1564 it was found that out of 25 justices only 5 were favourable to the government, and there was difficulty in finding suitable Protestant justices in Amounderness and Lonsdale. The transition was slow and although the recusant fines were imposed and the non-attendance at Church service of Is.Od, per week fine seems to have been laxly applied, by 1580 it became high treason to be reconciled to the Roman Church,

With the growing severity of punishment and the difficulty of remaining a Catholic in a small country town like Lancaster, it was to the countryside round about that the priests and staunch followers resorted, Lancaster was not only an Assize town, but it also had a prison and a place of execution, and so between 1584 and 1646, 15 priests and laymen were martyrs for the Roman Church. However, in Halls and remoter farmhouses, worship in the old style continued, and as we shall see in later chapters, the Old Hall at Aldcliffe became a centre for Catholic worship and even a preparatory training centre for young aspirants to the priesthood. the following year, mass was proscribed and the rood and images were taken down, Dr. Mallet held the Lancaster living until 1566, and it was not until the appointment of Henry Porter as vicar, in 1582, that Protestantism took hold and it has been said that in the next 26 years "he laid the foundation which was to make Lancaster a Puritan town".

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In these years up to half the population died and consequently much of the land was unfilled, prices climbed higher, villeins became freer and so led to a -Further weakening in the feudal system of land tenure. At this time the influential family in Aldcliffe was the Ypres, and although we know a little about the activities of some members of this family in both national and international affairs, and in the neighbouring Royal Forest of Quernmore, there is no record of how they managed their lands and estates and what the consequences of the Black Death were in Aldcliffe.

DALTONS AT ALDCLIFFE 1557 to 1716

DALTONS PURCHASE ALDCLIFFE

After the suppression of the monasteries, the lands of the Abbey of Syon were retained for some years by the Crown, but in March 1557(8), they were sold to Robert DALTON of Thurnham. Robert Dalton had only recently moved into his new "manor", for the year before, 1556, he had purchased the Thurnham manor, for £1500, from Thomas Lonne, a London citizen and grocer, who himself had acquired it from the Duke of Suffolk, whose family, the Greys, were hereditary lords of the manor. Robert Dalton had married Elyza, daughter of William Hulton, of West Houghton, and they had lived in Bispham, in the parish of Croston.

A copy of the grant, dated 21st March 1557(8), shows how the main possessions of the Priory were sold to Robert Dalton, who is still described as "of Bispham". The certificate reads :-

"..... Aldeclyff and Bulk in corn. pd. in Wapentag de Lounesdale are stated to be *lix xi* *iiii* and hamlettes de Aldecliff, Buike Lancastre, Warton, Bolton, and Scotforde.

Memor; there are no more Landes neyther with the sayd townes nor within the sayd Wapentaye(p'cell of the said possessions). Also there is woode growings within the Township of Buike aforesayde. But what nombre of acres or of what groweth the S'eyor knoweth not.

xxii Marcii 1557 rated

for Robte Dalton Esq. at The clere yerely

xxviii yeare's p'chase value of the

the money to be pd before premises *lix* MDCLXVII

the firste of Maye ne *xi iii* which XVII

xvii die Marcii 1557. rated at IIII

xxviii yeres

p'chase amount

yth to [£1667 -17s- 4d]

The Kinge and Quenes Mats to dyscharge the p'chaser of all things and incumbrances made or done by their Mats., excepte Leases. The p'chaser to dyscharge the King and Queenes Mats of all ffees and reprices goinge out of the premisses. The tennure in Chyfe by Knight's S'vice. The p'chaser to have th'issues from the ffeaste of the³ puryfycacone of our Lade laste paste. The p'chaser to *be* bounde for the woodes. The leade bells and advowsons to be exceptyd.
Edward Waldegrave, ffrances Englyfeld,
John Bakere."

By this grant, bought on 29 years' annual rent of £59-11s-4d amounting to the sum of £1667-17s-4d paid to the Exchequer, all messuages, tenements and hereditaments in Aldcliffe and Bulk, formerly belonging to the "late" priory of Lancaster, passed into the ownership of the Daltons. This was not purely a financial transaction for the "Knight's Service" carried its obligations as well. In the Muster of soldiers for 1574, well into Elizabeth's reign, the Lonsdale Hundred, still under Lord Monteagle's command, was supplied with:-

Dimi launce -	1	Light horse	-1
Corcelett -	1	Pykes	-iii
Coats of plate or almayne ryvettes -	ii	Longe bowes	-iii
Steele cappes-	iii	Caliver	-1
Morrione {helmet} -	1,		

by Roberts Dalton.

Robert Dalton extended his interests in the town of Lancaster for in 1574 he was granted a lease for 200 years on mills and mill dam.

"...at the Green Area, part of the waste or Comon Pasure, sufficient in quantity and circuit thereupon to erect,edify and build one large house for a water mill or two mills to be made and invented within the same house..... also sufficient of the waste to make and dig up for a dam water course and stream to serve turn and suffice the said mill..... and to make wears cases and defences upon against. Excessive and boluing waters upon any part of the said Green area fit for such purpose Yielding and Paying therefore yearly[to the town] ..one peppercorn at the Feast of Easter if it be demanded...

A proviso was included in the lease that if any damage was done to the corn grain or if it were "abused", or if the charges were excessive, or if corn was stolen or purloined, then the Mill could be removed, by order of the town. In spite of this condition, however, it appears to be a lucrative and worthwhile undertaking for "Robert Dalton of Thirnam".

MARSH BOUNDARY DISPUTE 1610

For over 60 years Robert Dalton worked to establish himself as a wealthy landowner, within the city boundaries and in the surrounding countryside to the south, from Aldcliffe, through Stodday to Thurnham. This expansion sometimes led to disputes which had to be settled in Court, so we find that an action was started in the Duchy Court in 1610, between the Town of Lancaster as plaintiffs and Robert DALTON, Francis Stythe, John Stirzaker and Robert Crockell as defendants concerning - "... markes, meares and boundaries devidinge one marshe ground called Lancaster Marshe from .another marshe grounde called Awcliffe Marsh..." A Commission of 4 men was setup to examine witnesses and to look at all the evidence and if they could not make a agreement then they were to go down to the Marsh and "... there upon an exacte and dilligente viewe and survaie thereof by you to be taken to make a true and perfectte plotte of the said Marsh grounde..."

The Chancellor of the Duchy would certify the Commission's decision. On 11 Sept.1610, after a meeting at the Town Hall it was agreed that "..... the Mayor and Corporation ... shall make up and repayre the Ditch in the said Marshe grounds called the Ould Ditch, lyinge South and South west from the Greenhill and there make a sufficient fence ... to severr and keepe in severalty that parts of the saide Marshe which lieth North and North east from the said ditch, a r i d l l - i e C o r p o r a t i o n were to "have all the land which lyeth betweene the said ditch and the Inlands of the towne of Lancaster... and the sand directlie between the same and the River of Loyne without any entercomon pasture clayme or demande". Robert, Dalton, his farmers and tenants or their tenements in Awcliffe ~ "...hereafter have use occupy and enjoye all that part of the said Marshes which lyeth South and South eastward from the said Ditch called the Auld Ditch and the sand directly between the same and the River of Loyne". All parties further agreed that all shall have free passage and waye in all the usual and accustomed places of passage in the Marsh "... for the necessary gettinge, carryinge and loadinge of the Turves haye Rushes and other necessary carriages without lett stop or trouble". The Corporation was "...to permit and suffer the greatest part of the water descending parte of the Marsh.. which is... awarded to the said Robert Dalton", and if the course were altered then Dalton had the right to enter the Town marsh and maintain the flow as now.

The concluding paragraph of the agreement makes rather pleasant reading for it states that if the fences are knocked down by floods or if the "Yates" (Gates) are left open by the negligence of the carriers of turves, hay or rushes so that cattle stray from either side, then the cattle shall either "...be only re-chaste of the said grounde where they so trespasse or els there shall be convenyent recompense and amends demaunded and given accordinge to the quantity of the said trespass", but it was agreed that no acion nor suyte" should be brought.

THE LUCY BROOK

In their book - "St. Peter's Lancaster", the Rev. R.N. Billington and J. Brownbill have an interesting note on the probable derivation of this name for the stream which is the common boundary of the village and Lancaster for half a mile or so. The Miscellanea v of the Catholic Record Society shows there had been a chantry called -" St. Loye's Chapel" in existence, before the Dissolution, which had held land, known as Deep Carrs near the town of Lancaster, and this land according to Patent Roll No.1366, (33Eliz.) dated 4 March 1590/91 was granted to two men from London ~ Walter rCoppinger and Thomas Butler- at a quit rent of 3s. 4d. Nothing more is known of this St. Loye's chapel/chantry but the echo of its name in the Lucy Beck.

The Lucy Brook started in the wingate-Saul fields (now a street) and on an eastern course flowed under the present day railway line into Usher's Meadow (Corporation land to provide a salary for the Usher at the Grammar School), where a change of course took it westerly to Carr House Lane and then by "boggy" fields at the end of Cromwell road to the Kendal Pads footpath from Cannon Hill to Aldcliffe.

THE HALL OF THE CATHOLIC VIRGINS

“We are the Catholic virgins swore
To live in Christ’s great cause.
All bribes to change our Faith we scorn
And brave the force of penal law”

After his marriage to Elisabeth Hulton, Robert DALTON saw his family flourish. His son, Robert DALTON had two sons and ten daughters all of whom remained as staunch as their parents in their adherence to the Roman Church. Thurnham was the family's main residence, whilst Aldcliffe Hall was later to become the home for the daughters named ~ Margaret, Elizabeth, Anne, Jane, Catherine (who had died in infancy), Ellen, Dorothy, Catherine, Eleanor and Penelope. According to Joseph Gillow, a late 19th century local writer on Catholicism, some of these sisters may have joined convents on the continent, but others certainly remained in Aldcliffe and battled for their beliefs here.

By 1633 there were 8 sisters still alive, living at Aldcliffe Hall, their father having died some seven years previously, whilst their brother Thomas had settled in Thurnham with his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Middleton of Leighton, Lancaster. The sisters were enduring persecution because of their religious faith and in 1640, seven of them were convicted of recusancy. Jane had left Aldcliffe on her marriage to William Clayton of Calton Hall in Craven, Yorkshire. By 1643, Parliament obtained power in the Civil war period, and because of their conviction the sisters had 2/3rds of their estates sequestered. Troublous years followed for them but they hung on until the Restoration of 1660 and then their defiance grew even more strong and demonstrative, for in 1674 they had a stone tablet cut and erected. It reads;-

CATHOLISAE
 *** VIRGINES NOS
 SUMUS ; MUTARE
 VEL TEMP-ORE
 SPERNIMUS +
 ANO + DMI
 1674

Catholic [two] erased Virgins are we Even with time We distain to Change. 1647 A.D.
--

On the total re-building of Aldcliffe Hall in 1817, this stone was removed from its original site and taken to Thurnham Hall, where it was inserted into a blocked up first floor window at the end of the Hall, where Joseph Gillow states it was shown to him in 1889 by the then head of the Dalton family - Sir Gerald Dalton Fitzgerald, Bart.

By 1685 and the accession of James II. Catholics were treated less harshly and gradually were accepted into high office and this national trend was reflected even more clearly in local events at Aldcliffe. But by now, there were only two sisters alive and because of their activities over the preceding 50 years and the raising of the stone table. Aldcliffe Hall became known as "THE HALL OF THE CATHOLIC VIRGINS". By their wills Catherine and Eleanor Dalton left their portion of the Aldcliffe estate to the secular clergy serving the mission there, and the first priest to enjoy this provision was Peter Gooden, who settled in Aldcliffe in 1680. Some time later, with the more related attitude to Catholics, Mr. Gooden was appointed chaplain to the Duke of Berwick's regiment and gained some fame when he disputed in public with Protestant clergy. Public disputations, especially on matters religious, were fashionable activities of the times. Gooden returned to Aldcliffe in his later years and on Dec. 31st. 1694, his burial in Lancaster is recorded in the Parish Church burial Register

—
 1694 Peter GOODEN of Aldcliffe -a Romish Priest 31 December. During his absence, his replacement could have been Thomas Hayes, for he was another "Romish Priest", whose burial is recorded in 1692.

From several independent sources we learn of these sisters and the religious activities centred on Aldcliffe Hall from 1640 to 1715.

The Dalton steward in Aldcliffe was Laurence Copeland. Needless to say that he was a listed recusant and in 1641 he drew up a document - "A bried relation of some particulars touching the gentlewomen of Oldcliffe, their estates, set down by me Lawrence Copland Nov 12th. 1641.". In the Burial Register of Lancaster Parish Church for 1648 Apr. Hener Ash a prisoner charged to be a Romish priest.

1662 Oct. Dorothea Daltan de Aidedife, Spinster, sepult.

In the closing years of James II's reign, as we have already noted, indulgence towards Catholics spread, and the following extracts from the diary of Dr. Thomas Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, on his visit to the Lancaster Assizes in 1687 make this even more apparent. Sir Richard Allebone, a Catholic judge and Judge Powell were sitting at the Court. The Bishop notes 3—

Aug 10th. 1687 - Sent my horses to be put up at the "Catholic Virgins".

Aug 12th. 1687 - I went with Judge Powell to the Church: Sir Richard Allebone and the Catholics went at the same time to the school house, where they had Mass and a sermon, we (in the Protestant church) had none of the best; it was preached by Mr Turner, whom I chid for his extemporany prayer and sermon, of both of which he promised amendment for the future. I heard Sir Richard Allebone give the charge(to the jury) in which he took notice that no Protestant but myself, my Lord Brandon and Sir Daniel Fleming came out to meet them (the judges), which was a great disrespect to the King's Commission.

Aug 13th. 1687 - I wrote to Doctor Johnson, dined with the Judges, went after dinner to the "Catholic Virgins", where Mr. Gooden lives, with the Lady Allebone and her friends and supped at the vicarage. Mr Tyidesley [Thomas the diarist-more of him later], whose grandfather Sir Thomas was killed at Wigan, sent me half a fat buck. Mr Molineux, Mr Branthwaite, Mr Towneley, Sir William Gerrard, Mr Poole and Mr Labourne visited me.

Rev. Peter Gooden's influence in the neighbourhood must have been significant for on Sept 1st. 1687, at a special confirmation, there were 223 recipients at Aldcliffe and 87 at Thurnham! This influential priest had associations with Leighton, with Thurland Castle, where we have records of him conducting marriages, but at Aldcliffe he kept a sort of academy or little seminary for educating youth, who were afterwards sent to Popish colleges abroad to be trained as priests. Much of this activity would be financed and helped by the "Virgins" of the Hall.

Throughout their long stay in Aldcliffe the Dalton "gentlefolk" would have seen the severe persecution under Elizabeth give way to the more relaxed attitude of the 1680"s. In their early days in Aldcliffe they would have heard stories of the martyrs who had been condemned to death at Lancaster ;~

20th Apr 1584 Ven James Bell and Ven. John Finch.

26th July 1600 ven. Robert Nutter and ven. Edward Thwing.

31st March 1601 Ven. Thurstan Hunt and ven. Robert Middleton.

16th Sept. 1601 Ven. Lawrence Baily.

18th March 1615/6 Ven. John Thewlis and Ven. Roger Wrepnall.

By the time of the death of Ven. Edmund Arrowsmith on Aug. 28th. 1628, they may have accompanied some of the villagers and co-religionists on an apprehensive pilgrimage to the Castle, or the city, or to the Tyburn, in an effort to obtain a "relic" of, and to show feeling for, these martyrs, with some of the later victims ; -

10th Sept 1641 Ven. Ambrose Barlow.

7th Aug. 1646 Ven. Edward Bamber, Ven. Thos. Mhitaker and Ven. John Woodcock,

They could have had a more personal contact, but looking up the valley from their Hall they would offer up prayers for the priests held in the Castle prison which dominated the skyline to the northwest.'

Another rich source of information a few years later, from 1712 to 1715, is the diary of Thomas Tyldesley. He was a Jacobite squire of Myerscough Hall and Fox Hall, Blackpool and for a time he had a town house in Lancaster. He was a lively personality, often went riding with "Bro. Dalton" visited Ashton Hall to pay his compliments to the widow Duchess of Hamilton, hunted extensively throughout the district, took meals at various ale houses, watched and gambled on cock fighting and horse racing, visited the coal mines and quarries at Ellel and included the following entries in his diary concerning Aldcliffe:

1712 June 8 — went with two cousins waiters to Aldcliffe for prayers.

Sept. 28 - In the morning took Aggy behind me to Aldcliffe for prayers.

Dec. 25 - Dr. Hawarden prayed and dined with us.

1713 Feb. - Mrs. and two girls went afoot to Aldcliffe being St. Matthew's Day.

March 29. - went to Aldcliffe with cousin Fletcher.

On many later Sundays and Holy days he "went to Aldcliffe", showing that Mass was regularly said there, but no priest is named until 1713 Aug 9 - went in the morning to Aldcliffe and to confession. Dr. Hawarden came back to dinner. Oct. 18 - went to confession to Dr. Hawarden at Aldcliffe. Found John Hathornthwaite there who came to dine with me. Dec 24 - About 11 at night went to Aldcliffe where Dr. Hawarden preached gloriously.

1714 Jan 17 -Dr. Hawarden prayed here [Lancaster] dined and stayed till evening. June 6 - went in the morning to Adcliffe with Mrs. Doctor and Mr Taylor [priest at Thurnham] both being there. Aug 29 - Dr. Hawarden here and he with cousin Carus and his lady, son and daughter dined with us.

Dr. Edward Hawarden was born in 1662 and through his education at Douai for the Catholic priesthood, he became a leading theologian. He was appointed a professor at Douai and retired from the post in 1707. He came to Aldcliffe and was chaplain to the Dalton family for some years. He had many works published, so that whilst here, he would have drawn many of the gentry, who were still faithful to

Catholicism, to listen to what Tyidesley describes as "glorious preaching". Dr. Hawarden left Aldcliffe soon after these diary extract dates and died in London on 23 Apr. 1735.

Only one of these ten sisters died young, which is remarkable when we compare it with the infantile mortality seen in the parish registers which will be seen in a later chapter. In the Parish records of Lancaster Church and of Cockerham Church we have recorded the christenings and the burials of many of these sisters between the years of 1600 and 1685. They were to learn of the death of their brother, Thomas, a Colonel of a Regiment of Horse, who died of the wounds he received in the second Battle of Newbury 1644, whilst fighting for King Charles I; they were to live through, for them, the harrowing years of the Commonwealth; they were to meet and be inspired by leading dissident thinkers of the day, whilst they met with and later saw their grand-nieces marry into top county families.

There are no authentic stories of the many encounters there must have been in the Hall and its grounds between persuvians paid to expose Catholic worshippers and the ladies of the Hall. Neither can we see the and contrived hiding places, where priests and their altar when unexpected guests arrived, for the old romantic hall was pulled down in 1817.

These stirring times were not to last for long however, for in a year or so, there would be a Protestant, "foreign" king upon the throne, who would not only test the religious faith of the Daltons but would challenge their very loyalty to the monarchy.

DALTONS LOOSE ALDCLIFFE.

It has been truly said that the DALTONS had risen on the ruins of the monasteries, for their lands and house in Lancaster had belonged to the Black Friars, Bulk and Aldcliffe had been in the possession of the Benedectine Order at the Priory, the Thurnham lands had derived in part from the Praemonstratensian Order of Cockersand Abbey, even the facade of the Hall at Thurnham was reminiscent of the Abbey, whilst within there was "an old ark, formerly belonging to the Abbot of Cockersand". Until times they retained the old chapter house at Cockersand mausoleum !

By the time of the Civil war the possessions and wealth of the family had reached a zenith and from Oct. 27th 1644, when Colonel Thomas Dalton was carried, wounded, from the Battle of Newbury, to die some 6 days later, aged only 35 years, at Marlborough, their fortunes declined.

In 1664, an investigation was held into the right of families to bear heraldic coats of arms and crests. So it was that Sir William Dugdale visited Lancashire to survey the local families. In 1664 and 1665, he visited Cockerham, Cockersand Abbey, Ashton Hall and Lancaster, and leading members of the gentry were summoned to "set down" their families. Robert Dalton recorded his family and although uncertain of the exact year of his grandfather's death, some 25 years earlier than his own birth, he set down with some pride, the circumstances of the death of his father, Thomas, at the Battle of Newbury, when he was only 4 or 5 years old. He also registers his daughter Elizabeth - a baby of 6 months. The family was granted the right to bear the arms :-

"first and fourth azure, a lion rampant gardant within an orle of eight crosses crosslets argent; second and third barry of six; argent and azure, in chief three lozenges gules.

Crest - A demi dragon vert winged or. "

In 1626, Robert had granted his Aldcliffe estates, in trust, for the benefit of his daughters, but even before their brother's death, they had been charged with "recusancy" and in 1640, 2/3rds of the land had been sequestered. In 1653 they had petitioned to redeem their interests and a "search of the books in his custody, relating to Lancashire... found no conviction against Margaret Dalton or her sisters", so

Daubey Williams signed a certificate and Margaret was able to lease the estate from the Lancashire Commissioners, for 7 years at 40 per year. Whatever interests and property the two surviving "Catholic virgins" had in Aldcliffe, at the time of their deaths, in 1682(c), they conveyed a moiety of their estate to their nephew Robert, and the second part, in trust, to support the secular clergy. But, this was to be the subject of an inquiry in 1716, after John Dalton had taken part in the 1715 Jacobite rebellion.

The Robert Dalton, who had appeared before Sir William Dugdale in 1664, had married Elizabeth Horner of Braithwaite and on his death in 1704, their two daughters Elizabeth and Dorothy were co-heiresses of the estates. Elizabeth had married a William Houghton of Park Hall, Charnock Richard, a well known Roman Catholic in Lancashire, and Dorothy had married Edward RIDDELL of Swinburne Castle, Northumberland. Elizabeth's son, John Houghton, became his grand-father's direct heir, adopted the name DALTON, settled in Thurnham Hall and in the 1715 rebellion joined with his uncle RIDDELL in support of the old religion and the Stuart monarchy.

The inquiry of 1716 found that Aldcliffe Hall and the tithes had been "given to Popish and superstitious uses" and that moiety left by the sisters to the clergy was confiscated. Furthermore, because of their part in the 1715 rising, both Edward Riddell and John Houghton Dalton were attainted for high treason. Eventually they were pardoned and their estates confiscated. However, after paying large sums of compensation their lands were restored to them, and we find Aldcliffe divided between Daltons, Riddells, Parliamentary Commissioners and "informers".

Further evidence of the difficulties the Dalton family were experiencing at this time is found in the Autobiography of William Stout. Stout was at the other extreme in religious belief from the Daltons; he was a Lancaster Quaker, who because of his uprightness, business acumen and standing in the town, acted as a legal, financial and commercial adviser and trustee to some of the townfolk. In settling the affairs of Henry Coward, for whom he was a Trustee, Stout had purchased a lease of a tenement in Bulk "of Esquire Dalton", and he writes in 1709 after being appointed an executor :-

" to manage the tenement intrust for her daughter Mary Coward, who was an idiot and near 60 years of age, I let the tenement to Pearce Patchet and boarded her with her sister. Elin Simpson and had much trouble with the concern, particularly in

the year 1716 about the time of the rebellion- the landlord Esqui Dalton being actually in the rebellion and convicted upon it. His estates were forfeited to the King which caused the charge and trouble to the tenants to prove their leases and as a Committy of Parliament came to Preston whither all persons in the County who were tenants or had any claime upon the persons convicted were to appear to prove their leases or claims befor that Committy. In pursuance of which I went to Preston to prove this lease and make good our claim to this tenement, which I did. Mary Coward overlived her mother about twelve years and was about sevnty years old when she died and was the last life in the lease. The other two who were near forty years younger than her died befor her and the tenement leased by Edmund Garside, a favorite of Esquire Dalton's, who after redeemed his estate which was intailed and he only tenant for his life, for which he gave the Government six thousand pounds".

THE COMMON PEOPLE

So far our story has chiefly concerned itself with the life of the land owners and those who lived in the Hall, but towards the end of Elizabeth I's reign because of the compulsory maintenance of Parish Church records of christenings, marriages and burials we are more able to follow the humbler members of society and when information from the Recusancy Rolls and from the proving of wills is added, much more detail is available about the lives of "ordinary" people.

One of the early families, which had long association with the Daltons, was the Copelands. They acted as Stewards in both Aldcliffe and at Dolphinlee, where they housed priests and encouraged Catholic worship. The names of members of the family appear on Recusant lists at all times. In 1697 Thomas Copeland's will was proved, whilst in 1717 Mary Copeland registered her estates as a Catholic non-juror.

In 1610 the will of Katherine Shierson, widow of Aldcliffe, was proved in the Archdeaconry of Richmond and in 1623 the will of Margaret Shierson, a spinster of Aldcliffe, was similarly proved.

Perhaps the most persistent family name to appear in the Recusancy Rolls is that of the Sergeants of Aldcliffe and Ellel. In 1680 for instance there were only 14 convicted recusants in Lancaster, whilst in the hamlet of Aldcliffe there were 7 named recusants -viz: EllenWhite - widow. MargaretHayes - widow
Dorothy, wife of Francis Walker. Robert Sergeant senior,
Eleanor Sergeant, daughter of Thomas Sergeant.
Robert Sergeant, son of Robert Sergeant senior.
Margaret, daughter of the same Robert Sergeant.

A most tangible reminder of these times is still to be seen in the village today. The next to the end cottage No.4 in row has a decorative door lintel carved with the initials T. H. and the date 1640. This refers to Thomas Harrison. In March 1657/8, Jaine, wife of Tho Harrison was buried and in March 1692, Ellin, wife of Thos. Harrison, was also buried. This means that either Thamas had re-married and lived in Aldcliffe for over 40 years or that he had a son named Thomas, but the records show his children as George and Elisa. Thomas must have been a man of some importance, more than a common husbandman, possibly a small landowner, for the control of the Daltons was already waning. There are many other references to the Harrison family until 1710.

The early records of the Parish Church of Lancaster do not indicate the village or part of the parish from which the people came, so it has not been possible to extract the Aldcliffe parishioners, but from 1622 it was usual to include this information, so below I show extracts from these registers as published at various times by the Lancashire Parish Record Society and some extracts from the Cockerham Parish Church Records, I have retained the spelling of the village name which often reflects a change in the incumbent and sometimes have included an item of interest not strictly relevant to the Aldcliffe story.

Burials

Although the register covers the years from 1599-1690 the village, within the parish, is not shown until 1632.

1632 John Harrison de Aldclyffe	3 july
1643/4 Ellen Shearson of Auckliffe widow	17 Jaurye
1646 Elisa. Harrison fa. Thomas of Aucliffe	30 June
1648 Richard Sheareson f. Will of Auckliffe	2 Sept
1649 Robert White f. John of Awkliffe	17 December
1649/50 Margritt Sterzaker of Auckliffe vid.	23 March
1653 William Walker of Auckliffe	11 Octo
1654 Ellinn d. of Francis Sands of Auclif	8 November
1655 Ann d. of Thomas Serieant of Auclif	27 October
1656 Catherinn Walker of Aucliff	23 September
1656/7 Robert Banton of Adclife	5 March
1657/8 Francis Hadwen of Adclife	22 January
1657/8 Jaine w. of Tho. Harrison of Adclife	5 March
1658 Robert White of Adclife	24 Sept
1659 Margritt Harrison of Aukliff vid.	6 October
1659/60 Robert Croskell of Auckliffe	4 Februarie
1660/1 Hen Harrison of Auckliffe	5 March
1662 Dorothea Daltan [sic] de Aldcliffe spinster	19 October

From 1660 to 1664 village names are often omitted.

The uncertainty about the year in the early months of the year is due to calendar changes.

1664 John Layes de Aldcliffe	12 June
1665 Ellen White d. of John of Aldcliffe	22 May
killed with a mare [Ellen was a child of 10 years her baptism being recorded an 27 Jan 1655/61]	
1665 Katherin Walker vx Francis de Aldclif	9 November
1667 Anne Harrison fa. Anthonie of Auldcliffe	30 Maye
1667 Robert Sergeant of Aldcliffe	24 August
1667/8 Jane Banister fa. Anthonie of Aldcliffe	1 March
1671 Mrs [Mistress] Elizabeth Dalton of Aldcliffe	21 Novem.
1671/2 Mrs Ellen Dalton of Aldcliffe	16 January

Ellen would be 63 years old- her christening is in the Cockerham Register for 6 November 1607. Seldom is the title "Mistress" given to any other entries throughout the whole register.

1673 Alice w. of John Harison of Altlife	1 Aprill
1673 Jann. w of Will. Garner of Altlife	2 August
1674 John Whitt of Alclife	13 September
1679/80 Ann Croskill of Aldclife	8 January
1679/80 Ann Tarvar w. of Thomas of Aldclife	26 January
1680/1 Grace Copeland of Aldcliffe	9 January
1680/1 Elizabeth d. of Tho. Whitw of Aldcliffe	11 February
1681/2 Eliz. and Ann daughters of Wm. Sargeant	12 March
1682 Ellin Harrison w of Thomas of Aldclife	15 March
1683 Tha. Walker of Aldclife	2 October
1683 Francis Styth of Aldcliffe	5 December
1684 Margaret Sergeant of Aldcliffe	12 October

Hereabouts an entry reads Tha. Rainford - a prisoner condemned for "clipping" [coins presumably]

1684/5 A female child d. of Oliver Winder of Aldcliffe	25 February
1684/5 John s. of Tho. Shaw of Aldcliffe	25 March
1685 Mrs Katherine Dalton of Aldcliffe	17 September
1685/6 A child of Oliver Winders of Aldcliff stillborne	11 February
1696 Ann'w. of Robt Banton of Aldcliffe	8 May
1607 Widdow Styth of Aldcliffe	15 May
1688 Tho. Serjeant of Aldcliffe	12 April
1608 Rob. s. of Robert Barton of Aldclif	3 Sept

From the Cockerham Parish Registers I have extracted the following entries relating to the Dalton family in the early part of the 17th century.

Christenings

1606 Katherin filia Robti Dallton de Thurnha Armgr	19 June
1607 Elin filia Robti Daltann de Thurnham Armiger	6 November
1610 Darathy filia Robti Dalton Armiger	9 September.
1616 Ellinar filia Robti Dalton Armigeri	10 April
1620 Penelope filia Robti Dalton de Thurham Armig	29 August
1609 Thamas filius Robti Dalton de Thurneham Armiger	8 May
1614 Robte filius Robti Daltan de Thurnham Esq;	25 July

"Armiger" med. Latin - a squire, but later it meant a person entitled to a coat of arms.

Burials

1625/6 Elizabeth vxr Robti Dalton de Thurnhm Armig	4 Januarie
1626 Robte Dalton of Thurneham Esquire	17 August
1636 Ellen filia Mr Dalton de Therneham Esqr	30 April
1637 Mr Tha. Dalton de Ashton	17 December
1643 Mrs Dalton de, Aucliffe	19 October.

Below are extractions from the Lancaster Parish Church records for the Dalton family.

1662 Dorothea Dalton de Aldecliffe spinster	19 Oct
1671 Mrs Elisabeth Dalton of Aldcliffe	21 November
1671/2 Mrs Ellen Dalton of Aldcliffe	16 January
1685 Mrs Katherine Daltan of Aldcliffe	17 September

All these entries show that all members of the Dalton family were referred to in the most respectful, even deferential manner, by the clergy of the established church, even though the family was so devoutly Roman Catholic.

LEIGH POSSESSION 1716 to 1742

It has been shown that many villagers up to 1715 remained Roman Catholic and generally in sympathy with the Daltons, but not all families were so inclined. After the 1715 rising, which had both religious and political causes, Robert BLACKBURN, a native of Aldcliffe, "informed" against the Daltons and was given 1/5th. of their Aldcliffe estate as a reward. There are several references to members of the family in the records, but it has not been possible to show the exact relationships. We learn that a Thomas Blackburn (a brother?) had married Mary Parkinson of Lower Wyresdale on 15th Jan. 1714/5 and that Robert himself married Mary Styth of Stodday on 30th April 1727.

The Styth family had been in the district for well over 100 years. In 1610 an earlier farming ancestor, Francis Styth, had been a co-defendant with Robert Dalton, against the borough corporation on the Marsh boundary dispute and then in 1671 Robert Styth was a member of "ye 24 of ye p^rish", representing Bulk and Aldcliffe, on what we would now call the parochial Church Council. With this affiliation it is not surprising therefore that Robert Blackburn was opposed to all that the 1715 rebellion stood for and that the further inducement of a substantial reward offered to all informants, should help him to make public all the illegal activity which had centred on the Hall for decades.

Robert settled down in Aldcliffe and raised a family of six children - Mary born 21 Jan. 1728, Thomas born 13 Dec. 1730, Elizabeth born 13 Dec 1732, John born 19 Oct. 1735 and who died in childhood on 6 Oct. 1730, another John to take the place of his brother who had died a few months earlier, born 4 March 1739 and then a sister Margaret 11 April 1742. All these entries are to be found in the Lancaster Parish Records.

Before all this and even before his marriage, Robert Blackburn had sold what many in Aldcliffe would have thought to be "his ill-begotten gains", to Benjamin LEIGH, who purchased the freehold of the 1/5th. of the Aldcliffe estate, in 1724.

After the inquiry and confiscation of the Dalton sisters' estate, Richard LEIGH, of Newton in Bowland bought the 4/5ths remaining, from the Crown in 1716. Richard's son, Benjamin, came to live in Aldcliffe and began to consolidate the property as we have seen, by buying Blackburn's portion and so making himself the sole owner of their former holding. His son Richard died soon afterwards and was buried at Lancaster on 27th Nov. 1731. Benjamin had four daughters - Isobel, Alice, Ellen and Ann. On 29 Sept. 1742, Isobel, his eldest daughter, married Robert DAWSON of Warton, and Benjamin bequeathed the estate to them, so laying the foundation of the DAWSON possession, which was to spread in the next two hundred years throughout the surrounding countryside.

The generous "dowry" which Isobel had been given did not alienate her from her sisters who continued to live with her at the Hall, long after her marriage. Her youngest sister, Ann continued to live in Aldcliffe until her marriage by special licence, at Lancaster, in 1753 to Abraham Allason of Embletan and Great Crosthwaite. The other sisters, Alice and Ellen, also married and left the district. Alice married James Ellison of London and their daughter died young. Ellen married Peter Wilson of Brigham and their son is referred to in family correspondence as Peter Wilson "of Gray's Inn", having become a barrister.

From 1716 to 1753, Leighs lived in the Hall, but from 1742 onwards it is the DAWSONS who become the family in the village, although we shall hear of members of the Leigh family and their descendants in following the Dawson story.

In the many Dawson papers, housed in the Lancaster Reference Library and donated by Miss Mary Philadelphia Dawson, there is a parchment notebook of 32 pages(ref. M.S.3131), beautifully written in small clear script, which provides us with one of these Leigh-Dawson links. It must have been a treasured Allason family document, which Ann Allason sent to her cousin, Anne Dawson. It contains religious thoughts, poems, sermons and prayers set down by Thomas Allason, her grandfather, "in the year of our Lord God 1695, in the 23rd. year of his life", together with other writings by John Allason. The Title reads :-

"A discription of the true faith..Acknowledged, meditated ,declared and steadfastly believed by me ... John Allason."

On the inside cover an inscription reads :-

For the well beloved Cousin, Ann Dawson, of Aldcliffe Hall. This manuscript of my pious projenitures is with sincere affection for your continual advancement in the Christian Life and Temper presented to you by your kind friend and wellwisher. A.A. J1

It begins with a Declaration of Belief through the Old and New Testaments. to:-

"At Death the Souls of the Faithful rest with God in Peace and Happiness and the souls of the wicked go to an endless state of misery".

In full detail it sets out the "eight infallible signs of Salvation and the eight manifest signs of damnation..

See that the Lord ye fear, For Death and Judgement draweth near. All Glory be given to God.

A poem on the "Seasons" is appreciated in fulsome words

"how affectingly does this Excellent Poet describe the various and perplexed scenes of this mutable world. Bless our hope with full fruition, Let us praise redeeming Love"

The closing pages are closely written, neat, didactic sermons on behaviour, prayer, the need to watch and constant awareness of temptation.

So the religious atmosphere fostered within the Hall by the Dalton "Virgins" is sustained, but now the emphasis is completely different -Catholicism is replaced by a Dissenting, Free Church faith, which later Dawsons will uphold with equal tenacity.

EXTRACTS FROM REGISTERS OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF LANCASTER.1691 to 1749

The register has been printed by the Lancashire Parish Society and this Volume is no. 57, published in 1920. It will be seen that from 1691 to 1717 there is only one birth recorded for Aldcliffe whilst both before and after this period, there is a steady rate of one every year or so. Perhaps they have not been identified as from Aldcliffe and have been included as part of Lancaster.

1710	Robt. s. of Tho. Blackburn of Aldclif	20 August
1717	John s. of William Thornton of Aldcliffe	4 August
1718	William s. of John Proctor of Aldclif	21 December
1720	Eliz. d. of Willm Thornton of Aldclif+e	23 October
1721/2	John s. of John Proctor of Aldcliffe	20 January
1722	Eliz. d. of Wm. Thornton of Aldcliffe	6 May

It may be noticed that William Thornton's daughter is once again named Elizabeth. The baby born in October 1720 died in December 1720 and it was quite usual to use the name again for another child - we have seen this already with one of the Dalton sisters.

1724	Mary d. of Isabel Walker of Aldcliffe	30 August
	This entry is unusual in that the mother's name is given.	
1724	Anne d. of John Proctor of Aldcliffe	13 December
1725	Anne d. of Wm. Thornton of Aldcliffe	11 April
1727	Eliz. d. of Jonathan Blearsdale of Aldcliffe	17 September.
1727/8	Mary d. of Robt. Blackburn of Aldcliffe	21 January
1729	Ellen d. of Wm. Chapman of Aldcliffe	16 June
1730	John s. of Tho. Crosier of Aldcliffe	16 July
1730	Tho. s. of Robt Blackburne of Aldcliffe	13 December.
1731/2	Tho. s. of Tho. Crosier of Aldcliffe	12 March
1731/2	John s. of Tho. Benison of Aldcliffe	19 March
1732	Elizabeth d. of Robt Blackburn of Aldcliff	13 Dec
1732/3	John s. of Alice Todd, bastard, of Aldcliff	5 January
1733	William s. of John Walker of Aldcliff	4 May
1733	William s. of Tho. Crosier of Aldcliff	29 July
1734	Thomas s. of Thos. Benison of Aldcliff	14 April
1735	John s. of Robt Blackburn of Aldcliff	19 October.
1736	Eliz. d. of Thos Crosier of Aldcliffe	18 July
	This was their fourth child in 6 years.	
1736	Jane and Mary drs of Thos. Bennison of Aldcliff	4 October
	These twins meant Mrs Crosier had 4 children under 5 years old.	
1738/9	John s. of Robt Blackburn of Aldcliff	4 March
1739	Mary d. of Ralph Brocklebank of Aldcliff	12 August
1740	Ann d. of Wm. Nuby of Aldcliff	1 June
1741	Esther d. of Richd. Caton of Aldcliff	6 September.
1742	Margt. d. of Robt Blackburne of Aldcliff	11 April

In 12 years Robert and his wife had 6 children - one only, John, is known to have died in infancy, aged 3 years.

1743	Mary d. of John Woodhouse of Aldcliff	15 May
1745	Agnes d. of Wm. Thomas of Aldcliff	10 March
1745/6	Mary d. of Richd. Caton of Aldcliff	16 March.

BURIALS 1691 to 1749

Burials registered by John Horsfall. and as the spelling of the village name is now more standardized, I have omitted it.

1691 Catherine d. of Tho. Copland of A	27 May
1691 James Wilson of A.....	7 September
1692 Robert s. of William Serjant	13 July
1692 Elizabeth White	23 October
1692/3 Anne White	8 February
1693 William Asley	7 April
1693 Oswald Whaley	28 November
1694 Anne Crompton	2 December
1694 Peter GOODEN of Aldcliffe, a Romish Priest	31 December.
1695 Margaret d. of Tho. Copland	6 August

The Copelands, who acted as stewards to the Daltons in Aldcliffe, were devout Roman Catholics and the juxtaposition of these two entries would have been of some comfort!

1696 Margaret White	28 July
1696 Francis Croskell	29 July
1696 Thomas Parkinson	30 November
1697 Elizabeth d. of Thomas Edsforth	14 September
1697 Alice Edsforth	26 September

For nearly two hundred years this family had associations with, and held land in, the village.

1697 Thomas Copeland	26 October
1697 Robert Sariant	21 December.
1697/9 John s. of Thomas Copeland	31 January
1700 Ellen d. of Willm Harrison	29 October
1700 Ellen w. of Willm. Harrison	6 December

This double loss of wife and daughter within 6 weeks of each other would have been hard to bear, but William in the 8 or 9 years he had before his own death, would have received comfort from his grown up children and also from other members of the family, for at this time the Harrisons were far more numerous in Aldcliffe than any other family.

1704 Frances Walker	30 Aprill
1706 Christapher Croskill	2 April
1706 James Athrick	1 September
1707 Walter s. of Thomas Cooperthwait of Aldcliff	8 June
1707 William Masey of Aldclif buried at Cockerham	13 June
1707 Dorothy d. of Thomas Edesforth of Aldclif	11 July
1707/8 Dorothy relict of Francis Walker	9 January
1709 Mary relict of Thomas Walker	11 October

relict = widow

1708 Frances d. of Robert Ball	21 October.
1709/9 Mary Anderton	22 February
1709 William Harrison	29 March
1709 Ann w. of Thomas Hodgson	23 October
1710 Wm. Harrison	5 September
1711 John s. of John Crowdson	23 August

BURIALS(cont)

1711 Michael s. of Hen Cawpland senr	26 October.
1712 A poor traveller Aldcliffe	2 Aprill
1713 Mary w. of Tho. Blackburn	22 September
1716 James s. of Thomas Shawe	19 May
1716 John s. of William Thornton	5 June
1716 Entries often read ..." a rebel prisoner.. from, "Inverness...Perth... died in the Castle."	

This is a reminder of the 1715 rebellion, which also led to misfortunes for the Daltons.

1716/7 Thomas s. of Willm. Walker	5 January
1717 Ellen d. of Richard Taylor	5 February
1717 John s. of John Crowdson	19 March
1717 Thomas Dunderdale	13 July
1719 Anne w. of John Tharnton of Aldclif.	11 August
1720 Mary Copeland of Aldclife	19 April
1720 Alice w. of Richd. Greenwood	19 August
1720 Alice w. of Henry Copeland	21 November
1720 Eliz. d. of Willm Thornton	30 December
1721 Anne w. of Tho. Shaw	9 December

1723 Anne Kew of Aldcliffe	15 December
1724 Tha. s. of Tha. Startephant	14 October
1724/5 Anne d. of John Proctor	2 February
1725 Richard Greenwood	5 May
1725 Margt d. of John Crowdson	16 September
1725 John s. of Tho. Shaw	12 October
1726/7 Tha. Shaw	7 March
1727 Eliz. w. of Robt Somner	24 August
1727 John s. of Richd. Fisher	2 September
1727/9 Mary d. of Wm. Walker	7 February
1728 Eliz. d. of Tha. Shaw	1 April
1728 Mary d. of Henry Copland senr	22 August
1729 Mary w. of John Crosier	28 August
1728 Dorothy d. of Tho. Edesworth	5 December.
1728 Margery relict of Wm. Walker	22 December
1729 John Crosier	29 March
1729 Henry Copland senr.	17 August
1729 Jennet Thompson	7 September.
1729 Jannet relict of Oswald Whaly	24 September
1729 John s. a+ Tho. Shaw	14 November.
1729 Tho. s. of Hen. Copeland	11 December
1729 Anne Edesforth	17 December

7 deaths are recorded in this year but no births.

1731 Marqt d. of Tho. Benison	2 September
1731 Ja. s. of Hen. Copeland .. senr	11 October
1731 Richad. s. of Ben. Leigh	27 November.

This is the first reference to the family which took over from the Daltons at Aldcliffe Hall-
see next chapter.

1731 Tho. White	26 December
1732 Thomas s. of Tho. Crosier	28 March
1732 Thomas Edesfarth	30 March
1732 Isabel w. of Henry Coopland of Aldcliff	7 September
1732 Robert Turner	19 September
1733 John Swinlehurst	26 September
1733 Thomas Holme	17 October
1733 Thomas s. of Francis Eadsforth	24 October.
1733 John s. of Willm Thornton	5 November
1733 Alice w. of Thos. Shaw	21 November
1741 Esther d. of Richd. Caton	6 October
1743 John Taylor	6 June
1745 Chara Shaw d. of Thos Shaw	9 July
1745/6 Dorothy d. of Francis Eadsforth	10 March
1746 Henry Copeland of Aldcliff	22 September

During the period 1691 to 1748, there is a striking difference between the number of christenings and the number of burials. Only 34 baptisms as against 96 burials! It would seem as though the children were not being baptised or else the older people were returning to Aldcliffe to die.

MARRIAGES – 1675 TO 1753

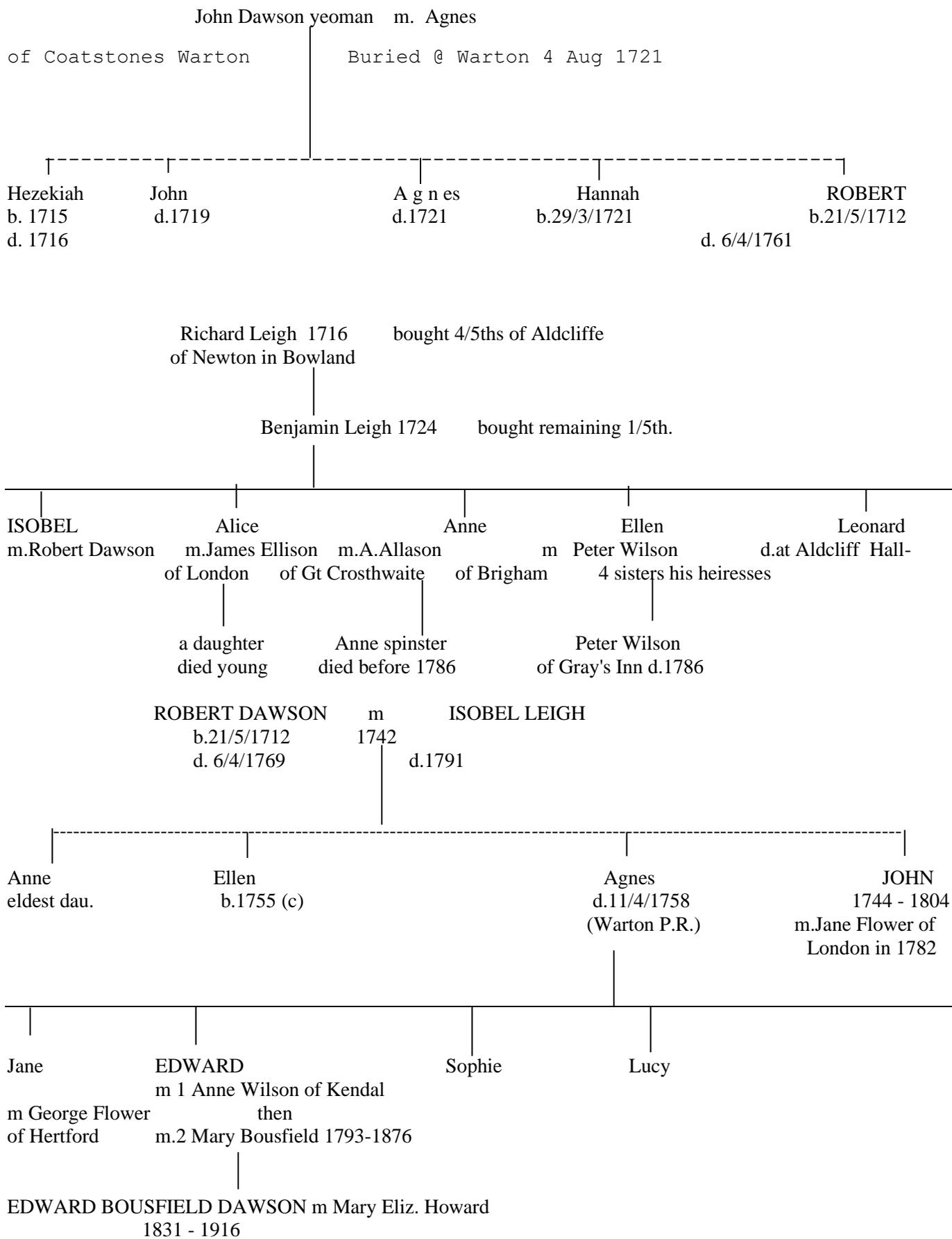
The record of marriages in the village is not so well attested, for it was not usual to publish the names of the villages from which the bride and groom came, until 1674 or 5. I have extracted the following and as we would expect we find that in most cases the partners were from nearby villages.

1680	William Sargeant de Aldclif and Ann Richardson of Cattrall, the one of Lancr. and ye other of Garstang	19 September
1681	Thomas Torver and Mary Penny both of Aldcliffe 2 years later they had a daughter, Jaine.	6 May
1684	Wm. Lund and Dorothy Eskrigge of Aldcliffe	2 July
1714/5	Tho. Blackburn, Aldcliffe to Mary Parkinson of Lower Wyersdale .	15 January
1721	John Thornton Aldcliffe to Anne Mackerall ...	7 November
1722/3	John Bell Aldcliffe to Mary Jackson of Heysham	2 February
1723/4	Henry Townson, Wyersdale to Mary Warbreck Aldcliffe	9 Feb
1727	Robt Atkinson Ellet to Mary Fisher, Aldcliffe	8 April
1727	Jonathan Blearsdale, Aldcliffe to Hannah Fisher-	24 April
1727	Robt. Blackburne Aldcliffe to Mary Styth Stodday..	30 April

There are 3 village marriages within a month and then there is a long wait of 15 years before the next is recorded.

*1742	Robt DAWSON Warton to Isobel LEIGH, Aldcliff Lic	29 Sept
1742/3	John Woodhouse to Ann Crowdson both Aldcliff Lic	19 Feb
1747	Robt. Fletcher Aldcliff to Agnes Wilson, Scatforth	26 Oct
1749	Willm Hancock of Stodday to Margery Ward, Aldcliffe.	10 June
1751	Robt Huntington to Hannah Allanby, Aldcliffe	30 Nov
1753	Abr. ALLASON of Embleton to Ann LEIGH, Aldcliffe	28 Feb

LEIGH DAWSON FAMILIES



ROBERT DAWSON 1712 - 1769

ROBERT DAWSON was the eldest son of John and Agnes Dawson, of Coatstones, Warton. The house they occupied still stands on the edge of the sea marsh, off the Silverdale road from Warton. John was a yeoman farmer of some standing in the early years of the 19th. century. He had two daughters, Agnes and Hannah, and three sons, Hezekiah, John and Robert.

The records of Warton Parish Church detail a rather sad story, for within five years, whilst Robert was between four and nine years of age, his brother, John, and his baby brother Hezekiah died, as did his sister Agnes. Perhaps the most cruel blow was the death of his mother in 1721, a few months after the birth of his youngest sister Hannah. Robert, who was born on 21st May 1712, remained at home with his father for the next 21 years.

It is of interest to note that these same Warton records also carry unusual spellings, reflecting the pronunciation of Aldcliffe at this time. The entries, under Baptisms, read :-

1621 Thomas, son of James Stirsacre of Oclyfe.
1681 15 Jan. Mary d. of Oldfield of Oclife.

On Sept 29th. 1742, Robert Dawson, then aged 30 years, married Isobel LEIGH, at Lancaster Parish Church and left Coatstones (sometimes called "The Cotestones") Warton and settled in Aldcliffe Hall, where he lived until his death on 6th. April 1769, when he was returned to Warton for his burial.

Robert Dawson maintained an interest in the Dawson estates in and around Warton, although now his main activity was the management of his newly acquired lands in Aldcliffe, for he had gained much by his marriage. His father-in-law, Benjamin Leigh, had acquired Aldcliffe in 1716, with all its customary liberties, including a baulk to take salmon from the River Lune, a perquisite later lost through non-use. Benjamin Leigh was a Dissenter and his family had founded a Dissenting Chapel in Newton-in-Bowland, so when his eldest daughter Isobel married into another Dissenting family his pleasure was such that he bequeathed Isobel and Robert his Aldcliffe lands.

In these years, Lancaster was thriving, and although I have seen no record of Robert engaging in trade (as did his son, John, who is later described as a merchant of Lancaster") he must have been a busy and successful estate farmer, for by the time of his death in 1769, he is described as possessed of very considerable real and personal estate". He had by this time inherited his father's Warton lands.

In April 1769, Robert Dawson, after a short illness, was on his deathbed, unable to draw up a will, but was able to make his final wishes clear and these are set down in a parchment document, 18" by 30", in 36 closely written lines of an ESTATE SETTLEMENT. (Lan. Ref.MS 7538). The articles of the agreement were between

1. Isabel - widow of Aldcliffe Hall, who was granted an annuity of £50 (pounds), choice of rooms to live in at the Hall and certain household goods,(see later schedule)

2. John - only son of Robert, aged 21 or upwards, a merchant of the town of Lancaster, was left the remainder of the estate.

3. Anne - spinster of Aldcliffe Hall, aged 21 or upwards, the eldest daughter, was left £1000(pounds)

4. Ellen - aged 14 years or upwards, was left £1000(pounds). The Rev. Abraham Allet was appointed her guardian.

The schedule for the widow Isabel, who lived on until 1781, gives us an insight into the old hall for it details the rooms she decided to occupy.

They were - one large room at the stairs head, one small room at the stairs head, and the yellow room, with the use and privilege of the kitchen for washing and brewing and the garden or court before the door for herbs and flowers and also the necessary ways and conveniences. Also listed are the goods she was to have :-

7 mahogany chairs,	one looking glass with gilded frame,
1 mahogany stand,	one mahogany dining table,
6 oak chairs,	one set of oak chest of drawers,
2 large silver spoons,	one silver cup,

one yellow bed in the best room, one bed in the room adjoining and one bed in the large room at the stairshead, together with the bedstocks, hangings. sheets, blankets, quilts to the beds respectively belonging.

The two daughters were still living with their mother in the Hall, whilst John had already set up his household in Lancaster. It was therefore necessary for the mother to have three beds to accommodate Anne and Ellen. It was customary to itemise beds and bedding in wills of this period. Another feature of the schedule is the use of "mahogany" in some of the furniture, for the local firm of Gillow's was already established and making use of this new fashionable timber.

Considering that his wife had brought a handsome dowry on their marriage, the settlement of a £50(pounds) annuity does not seem over generous, but she had the security of her rooms at the Hall, and the £1000(pounds) apiece to the two surviving daughters was attractive when prices and wages of the time are considered. Robert and Isabel had had a third daughter, Agnes, but she had died in 1750 and was buried at Warton.

An example of prices for 1754 is shown in this account (Lan.Ref.MS3010):-

.Mr. Robt Dasonto Richd. Pooler Dr.

May 18	making a coeat	4s	6d
June 2	Making coeat and a		
waistcoeat for son		3s	6d
Buttons	10d, thred and tape 2d		
twist and fustins		<u>1s</u>	<u>6d</u>
		9s	6d

June 21st 1754 then received the contents above in full by Richd. Pooler.

Our final memorial to Robert Dawson is to look at and comment on the sermon which was preached at his funeral service, at Forton. It is Written in a hand-sewn parchment booklet, 10" by 6", (Lan.Ref.MS1937) in neat manuscript of 24 lines to each of its 24 pages. Robert was to be buried at

..... Warton, but the sermon which was preached at the funeral of Robert Dawson of Oldcliffe Hall, who departed this Life April 3rd. 1769, was preached at the Dissenting Meeting at Forton". This unusual document in its foreword warns that usually in sermons of this nature too much room is often taken up in wild extravagancy in commendation of the deceased, but this sermon is aimed at the good of the survivors. Throughout its many pages the need for watchfulness, for readiness to be judged at any moment and for continued prayer and observance of the Lord's way is re-iterated. There is no personal reference to, or mention of, Robert Dawson.

For another 12 years after the death of her husband, Widow Dawson continued to live at Aldcliffe Hall, with her son, John. She seems to have found further consolation in her chapel work, for we read of her walking to the Forton Dissenting Meeting, each Sunday, accompanied by her dog. For well over 100 years after her death, a painting of her "in full dress, holding a little dog", hung in the Hall and we are told that the dog was buried "under a tree in the Hall grounds". There is a tablet to her memory in High Street United Reform (formerly Congregational) Chapel - a chapel which was completed a few years before her death and which she was able to support in her later years.

An insight into her domestic life can be seen by reading through a series of books from the Hall's "kitchen" library, which have come down to us. One of these reference notebooks is worthy of detailed attention, for it contains recipes, household hints, medical treatments and practical tips on running a household, at a time when professional help was not readily available and when food and other necessities had to be prepared in the home. Every worthy housewife would therefore prepare herself and see that her staff were also capable of performing well in all aspects of family life. I have chosen to look at one, which if not a wedding present, was given to Isabel a few months after her marriage. (Lan.Ref.MS2922)

****Isobel Dawson's Household Book 1743 ****

This is a 58 page, hand sewn booklet, in a patterned red, blue and yellow cover. The handwriting is beautifully cursive, with flamboyant flourishes and is entitled :-

"Receipts in Cookery, Pickleing, Preserving, Surgery and and P. Cakes &c In all 98 "

It is signed on the back inside cover -- Wm. Richardson

July ye 15th. 1743

and an elaborate pen scroll borders the page.

The whole collection of recipes, cookery hints, domestic cleaning tips, medical advice and prescriptions is a hotch-potch of sound common sense, of herbal treatments and folklore remedies, mixed up with what to modern thought is arrant nonsense and superstition. The opening recipe is gloomy - "Mrs. Ashe's Sear Cloth" - being a description of how to make a shroud, by waxing a sheet, prior to enfolding the corpse.

Most medical care was "home-based" so we find treatments for stomach pain, Talpitation of ye heart", bite of a mad dog, gravel or stone, a cancer, burn or scald, to stop bleeding, for the chalick, sore throat, to prevent or cure ye Plague, for a bloody flux, to cure a pimpled face and for the toothache. Mixed in with these medical treatments we find how to make ink, how to wash and save soap and haw to make lime water, which will keep fresh for 20 years. Then there is another list of treatments for colic, jaundice, costiveness and to increase mill in Nurses. No doubt many of the suggestions have a sound herbal value but others are bizarre to modern minds , for eg:-

To clear the eyes:

Take ye white of hen's dung, dry it well and beat it to powder: stir it and blow it into ye eyes when the party goes to bed.

To stop bleeding at mouth, nose or eares :

In the month of May take a clean linnen cloth and wet it in the spawn of frogs, nine days and dry it every day in the wind: lay up that cloth and when you have need hold it to the place where the blood runs and it will stop.

To cure jaundice: Take a live tench, slit it down the belly, take out the guts and clap the Tench to the stomach as fast as possible and it will cure immediately.

Another for eyes : Take the first snow that falls, gather it in the fields where no smoak comes, in a clean, earthen pan and let it dissolve itself ...

Many home made wines are listed- cowslip, lemon, currant, and birch - to drink with the main dishes such as - stewed carp, Westphalia bacon, pickled oysters, "potted" swan, "ragoo" of breast of Veale, pickled and dried tongues, jugged hare, pickled sparrows, squab pigeons or larks, and collared salmon. The sweets are equally rich and varied - a hasty pudding, New College Pudding, a Marron Pudding, Bread and Butter Pudding, light "wigs" (a small bun or cake) and strawberry or raspberry fool.

A Fine Caudle is recommended. A caudle was a thin gruel drink, laced with wine, usually given to women in childbirth.

This collection of "kitchen" books would be cherished in the years down to 1810 for each booklet is numbered in sequence, numbers 21 to 24 being especially interesting. Copies of the contents have been made, often in poor writing and with gross spelling errors, but the impression of a well maintained household is built up. Booklet No. 22 in the internal classification,(MS2920) is one such, with writing in differing styles, with no orderliness and rough presentation and sometimes with spellings more suggestive of local pronunciation - "lagge of porke", pomatam", "collops", "apricocks",:ffrecafoy of chickens", "to stew carpes in there on Blood". Some of the recipes are very rustic and do not appear in the "better" books, as for eg; pickling elder buds and ash keys.

JOHN DAWSON 1744 to 1804

When his father, Robert, died in 1769, John Dawson, aged 25 years, had begun to build a life for himself away from Aldcliffe. He had set up a house in Lancaster and according to the estate settlement he was a merchant. His family had gained standing in the neighbourhood for his father's burial entry in the Warton Parish registers is the only one to be prefixed with "Mr".

There is a Furnishing Account booklet of 12 pages, (Lan. Ref. M92925), which covers the years 1765 to 1813, but with long gaps, which probably belonged to John Dawson. It starts in the year he attained his majority and it opens with "...in furnishing my house in the passage leading into Broad St.", in a bold clear hand, but later the writing changes and entries jump from 1772 to 1813. The first few entries read:-

Aug 2nd. 1765	Bought of Peter Burrell	£	s	d
	A carpet, a pier glass, 1 jack compleat	6	8	0
Nov. 14	Bought of Wm. Wright			
	A kitchen fender weigh		13	6
	2 wooden chairs for the kitchen		4	6
	A pair of strong spit racks		7	0
	A strong trivett with 4 spreaders		4	6
	3 Pot hooks 3s6d an iron candlestick 7d		4	1
	A brass fender 10s6d An iron ditto 3s0d		13	6
		£2	7	1
	Furniture already in possession before accounts started			
Dec. 1765	A pier glass in a walnut tree frame	2	12	6
	2 walnut tree chairs, a mahogany claw table, a pair of high wainscot drawers and a check window curtain			
		1	11	6
	In the dining room.			
	A mahogany desk compleat	3	13	6
	In the drawing room.			
	A mahogany four post bedstead to turn up into a book case	7	7	0
	A goose feather bed, bolster, 2 pillows, 3 blankettes, a quilt and silk mohair curtains in blue			
		6	6	0
	Carved mahogany elbow chair with black leather. 3 ditto chairs with black leather seats			
		3	3	0
Dec 1st 1767	An eight day clock japan'd case	8	8	0

By the time of the following entry John Dawson had settled in Aldcliffe Hall and the quality of the furniture detailed would suit well the venerable building which now housed it.

Sept 15th.1772	A book case bed with brass wier front	£14	0	0
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This document is interesting in that it shows how the "new" wood mahogany, widely used by the local firm of Gillows was becoming fashionable, the prices paid for these pieces of furniture and the craftiness and skill of the makers in producing a bookcase which would also serve as a bed!

JOHN DAWSON MARRIES JANE FLOWER

One of the most impressive documents pertaining to John Dawson is his marriage settlement. In the summer of 1782, he proposed to marry Jane Flower. John was a mature 38 year old (the Dawson males tended to marry rather late in life), whilst his bride-to-be was a well-to-do 22 year old Londoner. Marriage settlements in 19th century England were commonplace and these parchment sheets, 30” by 20” in dimension, with red edged double margins, complete with seals and signatures, seek to establish certain financial arrangements about the proposed union. It is a long and complex document but when shorn of its legal verbiage and simplified would read :-

...This Indenture of three parts made the 6th.day of Aug. in the 22nd. year of our sovereign Lord George the Third, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty two,

Between 1. John Dawson of Aldcliffe Hall
 2. Jane Flower of Cannon Street,London. Spinster
 and 3.Alexander Duncan of Essex
 Joseph Marryat of London
 William Flower of London (stationer)
 and Benjamin Flower of Cornhill London (grocer);

Whereas a marriage is shortly intended to be solemnized between John Dawson and Jane Flower and as Jane Flower has the principal sum of £2000(pounds) capital Bank Stack and also the principal sum of £4000(pounds) Consolidated Bank Annuities and it has been proposed by John Dawson and Jane Flower that these sums should be transferred to them, but the trust, the four names in Part 3, will keep the capital sums in their names, but shall suffer and permit John Dawson to have the interest for Jane's life. Should he die first, then Jane will be given the capital amounts: should she die first then the trustees will pass on the principals to whom she has willed it. If she dies without leaving a will then the trustees will divide the money amongst the persons to whom it would have been legally belonged if she had remained a spinster. She could further instruct the trust into how the principal was to be invested.

This settlement illustrates the care that the Flower Trust took to ensure that if anything amiss happened, Joan Flower (Dawson) retained control of these large sums of capital. The £6,000(pounds) would have to be multiplied by a factor of about 100 to find its present day value!

John and Jane married in that same year, 1702, and she came up to Aldcliffe to take on the role of mistress of the Hall, a role which had been unfilled since the year before, when Isobel, John's mother had died. They had three daughters and one son. Jane, the eldest daughter was baptised in the High Street Chapel in 1785, married George Flower (perhaps a relative on her mother's side) of Hertford an June 10th. 1809, from whom she had a deed of separation in 1830. Lucy, the second daughter, married and Sophie, the youngest girl was baptised at High Street Chapel, in 1792. Edward their only son was born in 1793. We shall follow his life later.

From the surviving documents we know little of how John Dawson fared in the next twenty years. He, and his wife, interested themselves in the new Dissenting chapel built in High Street, Lancaster and he was a shareholder in the Canal Company, which in the 1790's built the Preston- Kendal canal, which skirted the eastern boundary of the estate. Whether he continued to be a merchant, as his "in-laws" were in trade as stationers and grocers, or whether he devoted himself to managing the extensive estates he had received from his father, is uncertain. He still had responsibility for the Dawson family home -Coatstones- in Warton, for in 1706 he paid 3-4-11d, to Thos. Nicholson, the Bailiff of the Manor of Warton, for "customary rent for Coatstones.... due to the Crown.

The Lancaster Gazette for 12th May 1804 (p3col2) carries a brief announcement of his death. It is the first item under "Died"-

On Wed. last 19th May 18043 aged 60, John Dawson of Aldcliffe Hall, near this town. Esq.

John Dawson died intestate and although he possessed the leasehold on lands in Aldcliffe, and goods, chattels, personal estate and effects there, he had outstanding debts to several people, which were far greater than his assets. I have not been able to find the reason for this decline in the family fortune - undoubtedly he had inherited much from his father. Perhaps his merchant trading had led to financial trouble, or poor management of his farm lands or some personal weakness or indulgence. In hindsight the Flower trust placed on the marriage settlement, allowing him the interest only on his wife's fortune, was wise and prudent. No documentary evidence showing a reason for this financial failure has come to my attention, but the speedy recovery of the Dawson fortunes through the efforts of his widow and especially his son, make the decline even more difficult to understand.

Jane Dawson came to Aldcliffe Hall from London a year or so after the death of her mother in law. Had Isabel Dawson lived she would have had much in common with Jane, particularly in matters spiritual and religious. She was to carry on the Dawson Dissenting tradition and help in establishing the recently completed High Street Dissenting Chapel, in which work she was helped by John, her husband, who in the middle 1770's, before his marriage, had helped to found the chapel. She remained a steadfast, religious woman, especially in her later widowhood after she had left the new hall and settled in Great Queen Street, Lancaster. For 10 years before her marriage Jane had kept over 20 notebooks, detailing the need for a spiritual life and all these together with her more mundane household books have been retained in the Dawson Papers.

Jane Dawson, if one judges from the many religious notebooks and varied account books which have been retained, was an exact, methodical and even zealous record keeper. To refer to only one (MB2924) of many available.

This 24 page booklet, 6" by 9" is home stitched, with a grey sugar paper backing. For two years from Jan. 1801 to Dec. 18021 usually one month per page it sets down, in a fair hand, the comprehensive, itemized expenditure on household goods and services.

A typical page reads

September 1801. ½ in these accounts means a halfpenny.

1 Bread 1/2½, Butter 6, Porter 1/1½, Flower 1/2½, Fruit 6	4s 8½
.....3do	1/2½,
Butter 8, Potatoes 6, Turnips 3, Lamb 3/6, Brush 1/-	7 -2
.....5	1/4,
Beef 1/10, lamb 6/6, Turnips 3, Butter 1/40, Baking 3	11-6½
Waterman 6, Wood 6, Porter 2/3, Pidgeons 2/9, Watchman 6	6 -6
7 1/1, Potatoes 1/3, Butter 9, Biscuit powder 4, Beef 1/4	4 -8
9 1/0½ Porter 1/1½, Butter 1/4½, Flower 1/2, Suit 2jaking 2	4 -11
11 1/0½, Veal 6/3, Bacon 2/2, Waterman 6, Porter 1/1½	11 -1
12 1/0½, French roll 3, Damison 8, Bathbrick 4, Porter 1/	3 -5
14 1/0½, Candles 5/0, Taper 5/2, Butter 1/4½, Lamb 4/0, Ale 7	17 -2
16 1/0½, Mutton 1/3, Apples 3, Baking 2, Porter 2/7½	4-9½*
17 Pyes 2, Wood 6, Oatmeal 4, Blacklead 2, Nett 3, French roll 3	1-8
10 Bread 1/0½, Lamb 5/6, Turnips 3, Butter 1/4½, Biscuit powder 4	8-6
19 1/0½, Waterman 6, Watchman 6, Cheese 2/1, Porter 2/7½	6 -9
21 1/0½, Mutton 11, Suit 3, Flower 1/0½ Butter 1/4½.	4-7½
23 1/0½, Park 1/3, Mutton 2/0, Damisons 4½, Baking 1	4-10½.
24 --- 1/1½, Beer 11/6, Gardener 1/6, Butter 1/4½, French roll 3	15- 9
27 1/1½, /29 Bread 1/1½, Apples 6, Beef 3/0, Suit 3	6 -0
30 1/1½, Mutton 4/1, Coles 2/1½, Milk 5/2, Baking 1	12 -7
Pepper 2½, Currants 40, Salt 10½, Crumpits 3, Porter 2½	1-11
	£6-18-5

**The only slight error in the addition, for the accounts have been kept meticulously.

From this month the page is not totalled, whereas in previous months the totals are as shown

Jan 1801	£ 5	- 7	-10	Feb 1801	£ 9 - 1	- 0
March	9	10	1	April	8 17	6
Play	11	11	6	June	7 3	3½
July	8	16	7	Aug	5 16	11

From the frequency or regularity of certain items, the routine of domestic life can be seen. Mangling and baking usually cost 2d. everyfortnight, so these were days set aside for these chores. Bread was the staple food, with potatoes not yet so common. The drink of beer, ale, wine, but chiefly porter was an expensive item. The chimney sweep seems to have called every 6 months, whilst the watchman the waterman and the lamplighter had regular payments. Other interesting items are – shoo blacking at 6d., hearthstones 6d, a "sausepan" cost is 6d, rum was 13s4d. but mending socks cost only 1d.

When looking at these prices it must be remembered that they are pre-decimalisation, when 240 pennies made one pound. Fortunately we can compare them with the wages given to the workmen employed on the estate at this time. A skilled workman would earn up to 3s Od or even 3s 6d per day, whilst a general labourer was an 2s Od. per day. The question naturally arises as why was it necessary to keep such careful accounts. Was the household already alerted to the circumstances of John Dawson's financial troubles?

LANCASTER PARISH CHURCH RECORDS 1749 TO 1786

Whilst the Dawsons are establishing themselves as the chief landowners in the village and becoming "Lords of the Manor" in everything but name, it is fitting that once again we look at the names and lives of the villagers, who worked for them on the land, in the quarry, on the river and especially in the "big house" and its surrounds.

It must be remembered that these extracts are taken from the complete record of the whole extensive Lancaster parish, and sometimes the clerk will not have included the village name, at other times he has abbreviated the entry, so a more exhaustive search would reveal more Aldcliffe information.

BAPTISMS

1749/50	Jan 21	Ellen d. of William Thomas
1754	Apr 7	Sarah d. of Anthony Helme
1756	March 21	Anthony s. of Anthony Helm
1760	Apr 13	Ann d. of Chris Smith
1761	Feb 20	Else d. of Richd. Greenwood
1761	Oct 23	Willm. s. of Margt. Lonsdale **b..d**

In these years several adult negroes are shown as having received baptism. These entries confirm that Lancaster was now a trading port with participation in the West African and New World colonies and that the fashionable fad of having black servants had been accepted by some of the local well-to-do.

1762 Sept 19 Mary d. of Peggy Band bastd.

These two entries of bastard births, within a year, reflect a life of frolicsome rusticity !

1763	June 19	Catherine d. of Richd. Greenwood
1713	Oct 23	Betty d. of Chris Smith
1764	June 24	Sarah d. of Jas. Hancock
1764	Oct 7	Nancy d. Richd, Ridge
1765	Mar 3	Jane d. of Chris. Smith
1765	Nov 3	Thos. S. of Richd. -Greenwood
1766	May 4	Jennet. d. of Jno. Varley
1766	June 5	Ann d. of Wm. Woodhouse
1767	July 12	Betty d. of Tobit Crosfield
1769	Feb 14	Margt. d. of Chris Smith
1768	Oct 9	Mary d. of Jno. Varley
1768	Nov 6	Jno. s. of Richd. Greenwood
1769	July 9	Eliz. d. of Richd. Ridge
1770	Oct 7	Ralph Brockbank s. of John Varley

This is an unusual entry, for John Varley in accepting paternity of Ralph, whilst raising another family in the village, as shown in preceding and following entries. The Varley family held land in Aldcliffe and almost 100 years later three fields are still in its possession.

1771	Feb 10	Abraham s. of Richd. Greenwood
1771	Feb 29	Thos. and Mary s. and d. of Thos. Reeder

BURIALS 1749 to 1786

In recording the burials of children the father's name is included in the entry, but with an adult no antecedents are mentioned. When taken alongside the recorded baptisms interesting relationships and family groupings can be formulated.

1749 Dec 13 James s. of Thomas Brade
 1753 Apr 10 Eliz. Hodgsan
 1754 Sept 20 Christopher Greenwood
 1755 Apr 10 Ann d. of Francis Eadsforth
 1755 Nov 16 Elisabeth d. of Anthony Helme
 1756 Aug 31 Eliz. d. of Francis Edesforth

Two young sisters buried within 10 months of each other.

1759 Jan 27 Margt. Greenwood
 1760 Apr 15 John Crowdson
 1760 July 24 Jennet w. of Ralph Brocklebant
 1761 Jan 6 John Shaw
 1761 Feb 20 Willm. Thornton
 1762 Nov 28 Eliz. r. of John Shaw

After two years' widowhood.

1763 Feb 9 Catherine d. of Thos Pennington
 1763 Nov 13 Betty d. of Chris Smith
 1764 Feb 13 Ellen d. of Chris Smith

Betty was only a month or so old. Two sisters die in the same winter.

1764 Mar 9 Alice d. of Richd. Greenwood

Alice was 3 years old - her christening was Feb. 20th 1761, when she was registered as "Else"

1766 Mar 12 Abraham Pennington
 1767 Mar 13 Fra.s. Stythe
 1767 Apr. 15 Grace r. Jn. Crowdson

"r" = "relict" an archaic word for widow.

1769 Feb 27 Mary d. of Jno. Varley
 Mary had been christened 4 months earlier in Oct 1769.

1770 Apr 30 Thos. Greenwood
 1772 Jan 31 Margt. d. of Chris. Smith

Margaret was nearly 4 years old.

1772 Mar 13 Rosealind Stirzaker,
 1772 Apr 2 Thos s. of Thos. Reeder

Thomas was one of the twins born in Feb. 1771

1772 May 6 A stranger unknown from Aldcliffe.

From June 1772 the cause of death is often inserted but this practice ends in Dec 1772, and we have only the one Aldcliffe entry in these months. The more usual causes are :- decline, old age, (but as no age is given it is difficult to state what was judged as old), measles, small pox, convulsions...

LAND PRICES IN 1771

The value of the Dawson estates during the next difficult phase is hard to assess, but the following transaction gives some indication of local land prices.

(MS 3028) Lancaster 4th Dec. 1771

An agreement made between John Kettlewell, the younger of Lancaster butcher, and Wm. Paley of Lancaster, sadler - for Kettlewell to sell to Paley, 2 enclosures in Aldcliff, called Longlands, estimated at 6 acres and in the tenant possession of Robert and Rihard Coats for the sum of four hundred and fifty pounds of lawful money.

This values the land at almost £80 pounds an acre and as the Dawson lands would be measured in hundreds of acres, for not only had John Dawson the Aldcliffe estate, but Warton Lane End Estate, Coatstones, Bite Riggs, Riddle potts, Barwick Gates, Waithman's lands, Dugdale meadow, Scout meadow and about 30 more holdings, from half an acre up to 6 acres each, with holdings in Silverdale and the Kelleets. With so much collateral available it is hard to understand how he became so heavily indebted.

JANE DAWSON'S WIDOWHOOD 1904 to 1926

When her husband died, Jane Dawson was 44 years old, with three teen aged daughters and one son aged 11 years. They may have lived in straitened circumstances because of their father's debts, but they were far from poverty. The marriage settlement trust had protected her own personal fortune and with the death of her husband, not just the interest was available, but the 6,000 (pounds) capital was now available. Nevertheless, it must have been a time of anxiety for her. John Dawson had already started on re-building Brockholme, the farm on the northern extremity of the manor, he had been involved in the Canal Company which had over stretched its finances and was unable to complete the planned link with industrial South Lancashire with an aqueduct over the River Ribble at Preston, and he had begun a Tithe investigation which would take over 40 years to resolve.

Judging by the many bills from local workmen and suppliers, which came in the year of his death, Mistress Dawson was soon involved in her husband's unfinished activities. Most of the following invoices (MS3012 to 3027) deal with Brookholme. I have retained the original spelling and job description, which adds to their value as indices of living standards and prices.

Mrs. Dawson to Thos. Taylor	---	Dr.[in bold, clear writing]		
9th May 1304 To 1 & 314 days at 3s/8d per day				
setting up cheese pris at New Building			6s	5d
to new oak head stack 3½ feet at 1s. per ft.			3	6
22 June To 5 days at 3s/8d, 3 days at 2s/8d				
building wing walls at Barn doors	£1		6	4
5 July To 21 days at 3s/8d boaring and laying				
suff basons, setting 2 trofs and jobing			9s	2d
30 July To ½ day at 3s/8d lengthening suff and				
altring bason etc			1	10
			£2	7s 3d

Recd. the above by me Jane Taylor

To James Lord for paving at the new Building

July 1804	653 yards	at 2d. per yard	5	9s	8d
to Sept	½ days and full days reckoned to ½d's		2	5	4½.
			<hr/>		
			£7	15s	0½d

James Lord acknowledges with his mark.

Mrs Dawson to Thos. Barrow		June 22nd. 1804
To axling wheels	6s	6d
To cart repairs	1	6
To felling wheels	£1	1 0
To 8 spoaks		7 0
To paint		<hr/> 3 6
	£1	19 6

John Dawson Esq. to Parkinson and Braithwaite

June 1802	Sparr nails- lath	nails- rose nails- spikes
	stock lock - sprigs-	hinges - thumb latches -
	brass butts - screws -	sheets of sand paper
	brass nobs	- large backing plate - boiler- bars

All the above ironmongery was for the New Farm House to a

total of £7 5s 0½d.

Settled this account July 28th 1804.

£10- 0 -0

[Was a 10 pound note offered for there is a little sum:-

7- 5 -0

Mrs Dawson to Isaac Story Dr.	10 Sept	1804	
Laying on 1 rood 0 yards of slate at 21s/-			£1 4s 5d
½ day's Work			1 9
			<hr/>
			1 6 2

from dimensions given 28½ft by 19ft - John Thompson

Mrs Dawson to Thos Holden Dr

July 4 To 4 days work hanging gates, laying hearth,
fixing grates and sundry jobs at Willm Parris

at 3s/6d [at Brookholme]

£0 14s 0

Aug 25	To 18 days taking down barn, building up wash house at Aldecliffe,	at 3s/6d	£3	3	0
	To 10 days daubing garden walls at 3s/6d		1	15	0
	to 2 days taking down and setting up boiler at 2s/Od			4	0
			<hr/>		

To daubing Barn yard walls at new Building	£5	16	0
--	----	----	---

			4	8	8		
<hr/>					£10	4	8

++ Thos Holden
put his mark

John Thompson - note on outside
"for work at Hadwen's tenement and daubing walls at Brookholme"

Lady Jane Dawson to the Lancaster Canal Co. Dr.

21 Dec 1804 for stones					
725 loads of waling stones	£18	2s	6d		
46 feet of ashlar [dressed stone]			15	4	
250 throughs	1	11	3		
79 corners	1	6	4		
26 3/4 of cam stones			14	5	
			<hr/>		
	£22	9	10		

Settled 27 Dec Thomas White.

13th Nov 1004. Bill for work done by Thas. Holden for Mrs. Dawson
In Daubing barn yard walls at new Building near Aldcliff:-
Front Barn, back barn, south gable end, north gable end,
peaks, pig coat, wall, wing and barn door, yard wall,
front wall 7090 yards at 1½d per yd.
Measured by John Thompson £4 8s 8d.

These accounts, all within a few months of her husband's death, remind us of the everyday activity which was going on in the village. This work would be supervised by Mr. Thompson, who seems to be acting as her agent at this time and no doubt she would have to rely on him for some years.

BROOKHOLME

As some of the above quoted invoices show, there had been much activity and work done at Brookholme around 1804, so it is not surprising to see the following advertisement appearing, in the local Gazette of the time:-

Sept 29th 1804 Brookholme
To be let by ticket

A very compact and desirable FARM called Brookholme House, situate in Aldcliffe, one mile from the town of Lancaster, consisting of a good new built dwelling house and out buildings and 45 acres and 2 roads, customary measure, of rich meadow and pasture, the whole of which, except for 5 acres is tithe free. Also 80 sheep gates upon Aldcliffe Marsh, now in the possession of Robert Fort.

Mrs Dawson, at Aldcliffe Hall, will cause a person to show the premises and for other particulars apply to her or at the office of Mr. Baldwin, solicitor, in Lancaster.

Brookholme was to have several tenant farmers in the next decades for we know in 1904 Robert Fort was the occupier, in 1814, William Parr gave up the tenancy and from 1814 to 1822 Robert Bond and Edmund Chatburn held it jointly.

We have already noted that the Eidsforth and Varley families had land in Aldcliffe and this Lancaster Gazette advertisement of 4th May 1811 confirms the Varley possession :-

At Miss Noon's the Royal Oak, Lancaster

7th May next, at 7 o'clock in the evening.

All that valuable close or enclosure of land, situate in Aldcliffe, near Lancaster, called RYE CLOSE, containing 4a. 2r. 8p. or thereabouts now in the occupation of Ralph Varley. The said premises are leasehold under a peppercorn rent for the remainder of 1000 years, which commenced on the 14th Aug 1626.

The purchaser will be required to pay the purchase money as soon after the sale. The tenant Laurence Hothersall of Aldcliffe will shew the premises and further information from Wilson and Jenkinson attorney in Lancaster. April 17th. 1811.

Within a few months, however, we find that Mrs. Dawson has an interest in Rye Close for she has the following in the Gazette on Jan 11th. 1812:-

To be let by private contract for a term of years to be entered into at Candlemas next [2nd. Feb.]

Two fields situate in Aldcliffe known by the names of Rye Close and Town End Field, containing by estimation seven acres of land, customary measure, commodiously situated for Lancaster.

The premises may be viewed and other particulars may be had by applying to Mrs Dawson of Aldcliffe Hall.

Amid all these business deals it is pleasing to be able to record the wedding of Mrs Dawson's daughter as shown in the Gazette announcement:--

June 10th 1309 On Tues, last at St. Mary's Church, Mr George Flower, eldest son of Richard Flower of Hertford, Esq to Miss Jane Dawson, eldest daughter of the late John Dawson of Aldcliffe Hall, near this town.

Her only son, Edward attained his majority in 1814 and was soon to make extensive changes in Aldcliffe and especially at the Hall. During this time Mistress Dawson moved out and spent her last years living in Queen Street, Lancaster, where she died in Dec. 1826.

EDWARD DAWSON 1793 to 1976

As a young boy of 11 years, on his father's death, with three older sisters and a newly widowed mother, Edward Dawson stood in danger of being emotionally smothered and indulged, but he was soon to prove that he was a capable, resolute and far-seeing estate manager and developer, for in the next six decades he was to transform the hall, the village and the local environment.

Within months of attaining his majority, he signed a lease for the letting of Brookholme for 7 years at an annual rent of £215- 0- 0 pounds, to Robt. Bond and Edmund Chatburn (more about farm lettings will follow). This lease (MS7541), a most impressive 8 page document, deals with farming details, but also with an old manorial right of a fishery baulk in the River Lune.

Two years later, in 1816, Edward Dawson has decided to sort out the financial problems left by his father. The decision he and the family took is beautifully set out, in italic script, with copperplate "inserts", in a 30" x 20" document (MS1939). This indenture released John Dawson's estate from Jane, Sophia and Lucy Dawson and assigned it to Edward. In summary it reads :

.....“ Between Jane Dawson, executrix and widow of John Dawson deceased, and Sophia Dawson, spinster, daughter of John Dawson, and Lucy Dawson, spinster, another daughter of John Dawson, all of Aldcliffe Hall, and Edward Dawson, son of John Dawson,

Whereas John Dawson departed this life on or about the ninth day of May 1804, intestate, and whereupon the administration of all his goods, chattels and rights was only granted by the Consistory Court of the Archdeaconry of Richmond in The Diocese of Chester, kept at Lancaster, to the said Jane Dawson his widow.

And whereas the said John Dawson died possessed of certain leasehold premises in Aldcliffe for the residue of a term of one thousand years which commenced on the 14th day of Aug 1626.. and also possessed of divers goods, chattels and personal estate and effects,

And whereas the said John Dawson at the time of his decease stood indebted to divers persons in various sums of money upon bonds, notes and other securities to a far greater amount than his personal estate and effects would extend to pay and satisfy,

And whereas the said Edward Dawson attained his age of twenty one years on or about the nineteenth day of July 1814 and hath since paid or given his security for the payment of all debts of his late father remaining unpaid by Jane Dawson, she, Jane Dawson, Sophia Dawson and Lucy Dawson have respectively agreed to assign, transfer, release unto Edward Dawson all their right interest claim and demand whatsoever in the estate of John Dawson.

Now this indenture witnesseth that for and in consideration of the sum of five shillings of lawful money of Great Britain, to each of them at or before the sealing and delivery of these presents quit claim, right, title or interest to all the leasehold hereditaments and premises situate in Aldcliffe and in the household goods, furniture, plate, linen, china, pictures, cattle, chattels and other personal estate belonging to John Dawson.”

BUILDING THE NEW HALL 1817

Within a year of shouldering his new responsibilities as head of the family and asserting its good name in the clearing up of all his father's troubles, Edward Dawson decided to demolish the Old Manor House and to build a new home a short distance away up the hill slope. This was a worthy and ambitious project but it meant the end of a house which went back to early medieval times and which would have been redolent of not only his Dawson ancestry, but of the Leighs, the Ypres, the Tunstalls and above all of the Daltons! Did the old manor house have its chapel? How many priest holes were hidden in its chimney breasts? What relics of recusancy did it retain? How much of the early medieval house remained or had it been replaced by a reported re-build in Tudor times? These are questions we are not able to answer.

Hewitson in "Northward" claims the old hall was built in the days of William Rufus, about 1100, and enlarged in Henry vii's reign and that the New Hall was built on a better site, 50 yards from the ancient structure and 48 feet above sea level. E. Twycross in "Mansions of England and Wales' Vol ii, pub. 1847 states:- It [the New Hall] is in Elizabethan style and stands near the site of an ancient manor house...".

The re-building is the subject of an opening article in "The Lonsdale Magazine" Vol ii, No xxiv Dec 1921, written within 4 years of its completion, and despite the romanticism, the article gives one or two new facts :-

"Aldcliffe Hall was a fine remain, built as an appendage to the numerous monasteries with which this country abounded. Because of its exposed position it was found necessary to rebuild it, which has recently been done by the present owner, with great taste and strict fidelity to the original style". After further reference to it being on a monastic site a claim, I have not met elsewhere, it suggests that it was seven hundred years old, contemporary with Lancaster Church. From the tower on the north west, the scene is magnificent" and in fulsome praise of the panorama across the Bay, of Grange, of Humphrey Head, of Flookburgh and Cark to a detailed listing of the High Fells of Lakeland round to Crossfell and Ingleborough, the article ends this is something particular as Aldcliffe Hall does not stand more than twenty or thirty feet above the high water mark".

One or two features, other than the general plan, from the old hall were incorporated in the new building. Portions of the old oak beams were re-fashioned to make a hand-rail for the principal staircase and a window from the ancient structure was built into the back of the new hall. Also at this time, the tablet of the "Catholic Virgins" was removed to Thurnham Hall..

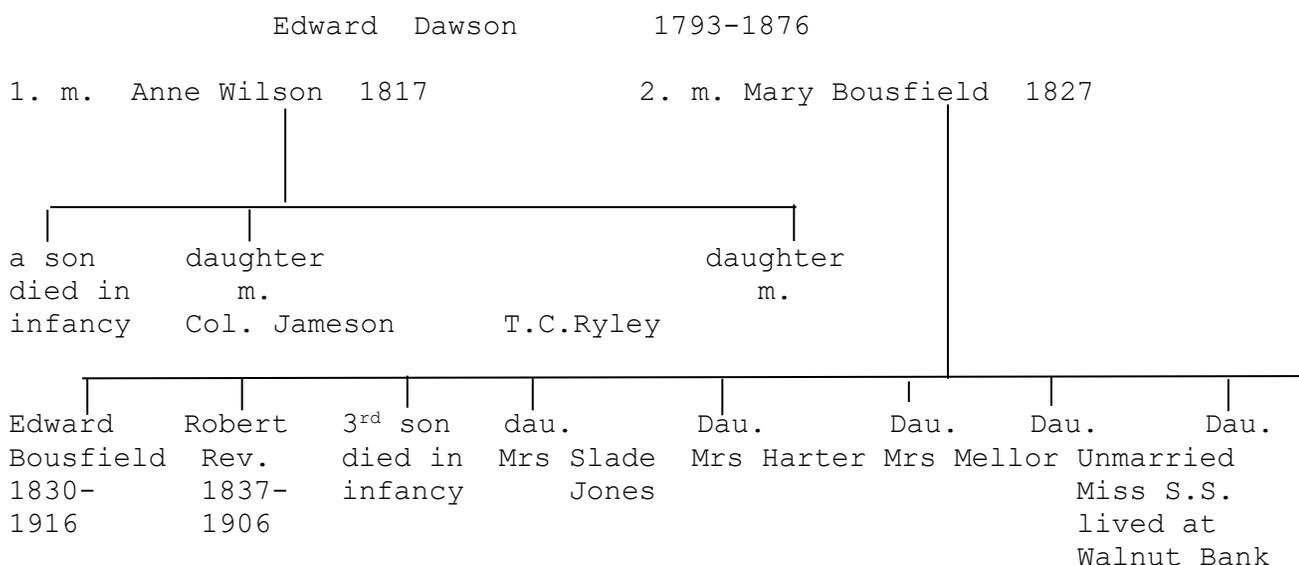
The illustration shows the hall in the early days, before the surrounding trees had grown and when the scene described above was open to view. However, later landscaping of the neighbourhood, did not shut off the distant vistas and along the valley Lancaster Castle and Church can still be seen.

EDWARD DAWSON'S MARRIAGES

This year, 1817, was an extremely busy year for Edward Dawson, for even as he was supervising the construction of his new home, he married. On the 23rd Sept. 1817, at Kendal, he married Miss Anne Wilson, a daughter of Chris. Wilson Esq., of Abbott Hall, Kendal, a banker. How far was she involved in the planning of this new home, one wonders! It is also a matter of speculation as to how far Edward's confidence was boosted in having a banker father-in-law, who was able to help him to set to rights the problems he had inherited.

The marriage was to last for less than six years, for in May 1823, Anne died, having had three children in that short time - one son, who died in infancy and two daughters, who survived their mother's death and grew up to marry, one to Colonel Jameson and the second daughter became Mrs. T. C. Ryley. Anne Dawson then did not live long enough to see her new home and its grounds come to maturity. Edward was left a widower of 30 years, with two very young daughters, who were no doubt looked after by their aunt and grandmother during the next 4 years, before their father married for the second time.

On the 5th. May 1827 Edward married Mary Bousfield of London and eventually she was to bear a family of 3 sons and 5 daughters, but even the children of the well-to-do did not always reach maturity, for yet another son was to die in infancy.



THE EMBANKMENT 1820

Even before the mortar had fully dried in the New Hall, Edward Dawson had turned his thoughts to another project. He wished to drain and reclaim the Aldcliffe Marsh from the floods of the River Lune and as early as 22nd Nov 1817, he had called in William Miller of Preston to give expert advice and costing on building an embankment to control the river. Many documents (MSS 2654 to 2665) tell the story of how, in the next three years, he was busy consulting, seeking advice from near and far and working for this.

22 Nov. 1817	in a letter from Wm Miller
Excavation -35800 cubic yards	£596- 13- 4
Sodding slope to waterside and top	56 - 10- 0
Diverting Bridge Pool & laying a Trunk	200 - 0- 0
Two occupation bridges over	20 - 0- 0

	£873 - 3- 4
To contingencies 15% an estimate	<u>126 - 0- 0</u>
	£999 - 3- 4

[A trunk" was a wooden drain, to be kept moist and away from the sun]

The rise and fall of the tides along the shores of Morecambe Bay, from Greenodd and Haverthwaite and as far south as the estuary of the Ribble were reported on; even he wondered how the Dutch set about draining their lowland; deciding the best slope for the embankment was problematic- 1 C.1 5 was considered dangerous, 1 in 7 would be better; drawings of sections with various slopes were studied, with calculations as to cubic yardage, whilst the qualities of various people to employ were discussed. Throughout 1819 and 1820 the correspondence continued - should Marl from Cockerham be used, what part should straw, stakes, wattling, gravel oilstones play in the drainage, what height should the embankment be to combat what height of tide? Who should carry out this work -- "Croasdale of Cartmel is a good honest man and a diligent workman".

The building of the Embankment and enclosing of the marsh was done in the summer of 1820. A bank of earth, 2010 yards long, varying in height from 5 to 14 feet high and with a base from 50 to 130 feet wide was erected. The embankment covered an area of ten and a half acres.

Section through the Embankment -

"Dawson's Bank



EMBANKMENT (cont)

Although it has been breached on several occasions in its 167 years, and its lines have been masked by silting and erosion on the river side, essentially it is the same graceful curve which follows the river from Freeman's Wood, passing the Golden Ball Inn on the opposite bank and continuing for a mile or so to a point 200 yards south of the level crossing road. Today its top forms an exhilarating footpath walk.

What was to be gained from such a huge expenditure? The gold medal Edward Dawson received from the Society of Arts and Sciences for this work expresses this most succinctly in its inscription, which reads

MDCCCXXI
for
embanking
166 acres of
marsh at the
mouth of the
River Lune.

By adding over 160 acres to his demesne, at a cost of less than £10 pounds an acre, was achieved through planning and application, but he had further problems. How could this saline marsh be brought into worthwhile cultivation? Once again he looked around for advice and by Feb. 1921 he had written to John Sinclair of Edinburgh, an expert agriculturist of the time, asking technical questions. Sinclair complimented him on building the embankment and referred him to his book, "Code of Agriculture" (price one guinea) on how to crop such new land.

Further problems were encountered, for Mr. Stockdale of Cark, in Feb 1922, in answer to a letter from Mr. Dawson writes :-

"We are indeed fellow sufferers in the storm of 3rd April last, but I hope the damage with you was, as with us, much less than reported"....

He then passes on as to how he intends to improve his drains. From this it can be inferred that the storm of 3rd April 1821 had threatened the newly built embankment.

When he first thought of carrying out the embanking, Edward Dawson was not the lord of the manor, for this title as well as much land, was still retained by Ralph Riddell, of Felton Park, Alnwick, Northumberland descendant of the Dalton family. The public notice issued by Riddell in 1814, emphasizes this, and although he in a distant absentee landlord, he gives warning to poachers and trespassers and asserts his manorial right to "wreck". [The notice also reminds us that vandalism is not purely a phenomenon of the 1980's]

Edward Dawson enters into correspondence with Riddell, seemingly with the intention of purchasing the whole of the manor, for he had the Riddell land, buildings and rights valued by the same Wm. Miller of Preston, who had been working on his embankment scheme. The assessment of the Riddell's estates was...£15,432-13s-4d. and an added note:-

"your share of the Marsh after certain	4,456 -6- 8
embankments against the sea and	-----
improvements are made (but which we	£19,889 -0-0
consider. speculative)".	

Edward Dawson also requests permission to divert a footpath from the front of his house and also wishes to arrange an exchange of land, which is intermixed and which would be to their mutual advantage if it were better arranged.

Later, another hand has added that a second valuation of Mr. Riddell's estate in its present situation is £630 pounds per annum, which at 27 years' purchase is £17,010 - Os - Od.

Within a short time the proposal foreshadowed by this valuation led to Edward Dawson purchasing the Riddell estates and establishing himself as the chief landowner and lord of the manor.

LEIGH - WILSON INHERITANCE

Even whilst he was completing the final stages of the embankment, Edward Dawson was involved in another business deal across the Pennines. Through his grandmother's sisters, Alice, Anne and Ellen Leigh, and their brother Leonard, all of whom had lived at Aldcliffe Hall around 1730 - 1740, and who, by 1820 had no living issue, he had become the inheritor of three quarters of the Wood Mills estate, in the Meanwood district of Leeds. To substantiate his claim, his mother Jane, then aged 60 had to testify to the family relationship to the Leighs and the Wilsons and their ownership of the Wood Mills lands, and Eliza Day of Lancaster, spinster, then aged 80, added her testimony of remembrances of the Leigh family at Aldcliffe and of their subsequent marriages.

Edward Dawson decided to capitalise on this inheritance, sold the Wand Mills estate to James Martin for £3,600 (pounds) and used the finances to consolidate his position locally.

MOTHER'S WILL 1827

In Dec. 1826, Jane Dawson, Edward's mother died and in an Office copy of her will (MS7542), written out on 27 Mar. 1827, in a long and detailed 9 page document, the main provisions read:-

.....having already given to my daughter Jane Dawson the sum of £1,800 pounds

Bank Stock, I now bequeath to her the sum	
of £20 pounds and bequeath the following legacies,	
To my son Edward Dawson of Aldcliffe Hall -	£50 pounds
Tomy executor Lazarus Threlfall	£20
To the British and Foreign Bible Society	£30
To the London Missionary Society	£20

The messuage or dwelling house with the garden, I now occupy, situate in Great Queen Street and all my household goods, furniture, plate, china, linen, wines, liquor and effects in and about and generally all my personal estate (except the monies, stocks, securities hereinafter bequeathed for the benefit of my daughters Sophie and Lucy and their children unto and to the use of my son Edward Dawson and Lazarus Threlfall upon trust that the said trustees shall sell the house and goods in Queen Street house (unless my daughters wish to retain anything at an agreed valuation) to be equally divided between my daughters Sophie and Lucy for their sole use.

“... I give and bequeath £2,750 pounds Bank Stack, £3,000 pounds 40per cent Government annuities to the trustees to apply the interest to my daughter Sophie for her sale use, exclusive of her husband... “,

Conditions from here become complex, but essentially if Sophie dies without child or husband then the interest goes to Lucy and her husband and children. Failing all else, if there are no heirs from the daughters then it goes to her son Edward. The trustees are allowed rights to invest in safe Government Stock and should one trustee die provisions for a new appointment are set out. Sophie was now 35 years old and unmarried, whilst both the older daughters, Jane and Lucy were married.

Jane Dawson had come through whatever difficulties she had had to face on her husband's death, with the Flower marriage settlement intact. She had also remembered two religious societies, with whose work she would have been familiar, in London, when she had packed her "spiritual notebooks" 40 years before to come to the north.

Her retirement from the Hall to her house in Queen Street gave her more time to reflect upon the spiritual matters which had so occupied her many years before and she became the subject of a book, written by Rev. W. C. Wilson, M.A., Rector of Whittington entitled, "The life and writings of Mrs. Dawson of Lancaster".

Mrs. Dawson had been most generous in helping Edward overcome the estate's problems, for as early as 2nd.Aug. 1814, she had re-conveyed the hall, lands and other interests, which had been so heavily mortgaged to Abram Rawlinson by her late husband to Edward and then on Aug.10th. 1814 she had released her marriage dower to him.

Edward could now feel more assured that after a dozen years of accepting family responsibility and dealing with his father's problems, with two sisters married and spinster Sophie well provided for, with his new hall furnished, perhaps, with some of his mother's mahogany furniture, and his re-claimed acres safe behind his embankment and bearing good crops he could develop his estate even more. In 1827, he had East Lodge built, flanking the new drive which it guarded, with trees; he landscaped the rolling countryside with groves of trees, making a parkland which is still, 150 years later, attractive and pleasantly wooded. This landscaping was carried out in such a way that when he looked north westerly along the valley, from the terrace of the new Hall, he was able to see the Castle and Priory Church on the skyline.

Six months after his mother's death and with these developments taking place Edward Dawson decided to re-marry. His second wife was Mary Bousfield of London.

Several years later, on 14th. Jan. 1836, he was appointed a County Magistrate.

THE TITHE WAR

In the early years of the 19th. century, the commutation of tithes, even the payment of tithes, became a national issue, and as a strict Dissenter, Edward Dawson decided to enter the fray and if some of his extensive land holdings could be declared free so much the better. The Church Authorities were also anxious to see the old tithes, formerly paid in kind merged and transformed to an overall financial charge. The vicar of Lancaster had to have a tithe barn capable of housing tithes of calves, corn, hay, green crops, lambs, pigs, geese, milk, wool, butter, pullets, ducks, doves, apples, salt, garlic, onions, leeks and salmon, to mention some of the dues his parishioners owed him.'

Owing to the chequered history of the Manor of Aldcliffe, owing to the uncertainty of the Parish Church's role in medieval times with that of the Abbess of Syon, owing to the sequestration and subsequent re-purchase of various parts of the manor by different families, owing to certain tithes never having been paid and the collection of others fallen into disuse and finally owing to new lands having been brought into cultivation, as well as the separate issue of finding a just valuation if tithes were to be paid, meant seeking the opinion of the highest counsel in London. To untangle all the legal niceties was to take over 40 years and many of the documents have survived.

As early as 1800, John Dawson began to query the payment of tithes and was making inquiries of Josh. Potts from Knutsford. By 17th May 1823, Edward Dawson is in full consultation with W. Boteler, of Lincoln's Inn, and after giving him a full history of the manor, Edward states :- "From certain papers it appears that Sir Robert Bindloss having purchased the Rectory of Lancaster, claimed tythe of Mr. Dalton for the demesne of Aldcliffe No tythe however was paid either then or since".

Further questions follow about the Marsh, "which is now enclosed and in arable state", and which "never paid tythe of lamb or wool". The vicar insists on taking tythe of milk, agistment [price paid for cattle pasturing] and green crops. Edward Dawson wants to know how best to oppose these claims by the Vicar. Counsel's opinion is very qualified "...the demesne lands of Aldcliffe cannot be exempt from the payment of tithes by proscription. If the rector is not entitled it must be because they are a distinct portion from the rectory...documents must be searched.. do the title deeds convey the tithes of the land..." Boteler is unhappy because he finds Dawson's letter did not, "enter enough into particulars", and in MS 1905 and MS1906 he gives a most contorted opinion.

By Jan.1824 the Lancaster Tythe Commutation Committee met at the King's Arms to come to some agreement with the Patron and Vicar on the changing of the tithes in kind to a cash equivalent. The Vicar agreed to take no account of green crop and milk tithe in certain places, and as money payment would be to the Vicar's advantage he further agreed to a one third reduction in the valuation made by Hall and Lamb. The Vicar was able to show from the Church Book that for 36 years, from 1697 to 1723 Aldcliffe hay rent (i.e. a tithe) was paid at 10s-0d per annum. [By 1724 the Leighs family had complete possession of Aldcliffe and as strong Dissenters had they refused to pay or had the collection not been made?]

There are many lists of "modus" paid between the years 1229-1835, which not only show the amounts paid but also the wide extent of Dawson lands. The grain tithe in Siverdale and Lindeth averaged £106 - 14s 30d; for green =raps £3 -18s~6rd, whilst full figures are given for lambs, pigs and geese. There was a hay and hemp tithe collected from the tenants which) ranged from 2d. to 3s-Bd. Further lists for Yealand, for Warton, for 3orwick, for Waithman's, Yealand Conyers, Yealand Redmayne, Hutton and Tarnforth have been assiduously kept for the years 1229 to 1043, showing That they met the responsibility where the tithes were not disputed.

Demesne lands outside Aldcliffe are listed in MS2690. and include 9orwick Hall, Patrick Holme, Up hall, Kellet School lands, Yealand Hall, Leighton Hall, Tewitfield, Whitbeck Meadow, Yealand Redmayne, Storrs, fatham Old Fields and three parts in Hyning.

The tithe problem still continued through the 1830's and the Commission was politely insistent in its civil service manner on its resolution, for in Nov. 1838 they sent "enclosed circulars, showing the mode of proceeding, which is adopted by the Commission% and suggested Mr. Dawson called upon them. By 1043 matters were beginning to finalise and small details like the Eidsforth family holding were being dealt with. Edward Dawson had now to decide how to apportion his tithes and he is advised in his choice of surveyor/mapper and apportioner by the London Tithe Office to 'appoint Mr. John Watson of Kendal - "... considerable experience as a surveyor and Mapper and his work has stood the test. I consider him a painstaking and deserving young man".

But by 8th Sept 1847 there is still some doubt as to whether a Valuer had been appointed and the Commissioners were asking whether they should appoint one. During the whole of this period Edward Dawson was also involved with the Warton Tithe Commutation Commission.

By 24 th Sept 1847 (MS1912), the long confrontation was settled and Edward Dawson stated to the Commission that " the corn tithes of the township of Adcliffe were merged by a deed under the signature of the Commission on 13th. March 1843, with the exception of 13 acres 1 road 8 perches". This exception, I take to be the Eidsforth property, which "is small and involved in debt".

The legal fees involved in the searches, opinions and meetings are sometimes mentioned, the services of the land surveyors and valuers and the time spent, by the land owners and their agents is echoed in the closing sentence of one of Mr. Dawson's letters - I trust no further expense may be incurred

It is uncertain where victory lay in this prolonged dispute, for the Church still claimed its tithe, as I have noted earlier, until 1970.

F A R M L E T S

Throughout the 19th century almost every one in Aldcliffe, if not working "at the Hall", was actively engaged in farming. A census return of 1811 shows that of 13 households in the village, 12 were in agriculture. At this time the Dawson Farms were let for a period of seven or ten years and the detailed leases show how controlled the farming operations and even planning, were by the landlords. Brookholme, Arna Wood, Hill Farm, Low Wood and "Cottage" Farm each have separate leases.

Brookholme Farm

This farmhouse and its outbuildings had been completely rebuilt in 1804, and its 45 acres and 80 sheepgates on the Marsh, was being farmed by Robert Fort, then by William Parr and from 1914 to 1822 by Robert Bond and Edmund Chatburn, both of Thurnham.

On 10th Oct. 1814 the following lease was drawn up, (large Bpp MS7451) by Edward Dawson to Robt. Bond and Edmund Chatburn, for a 7 year term, to begin on Mayday 1814 and expire in 1822, at a rent of £215 pounds, payable an 24th. June yearly

All that messuage, tenement and farm consisting of a 'Dwelling house,

Barn and other outbuildings, orchards, gardens and several closes containing 46 acres more or less, now in the possession of

William Parr as tenant...together with a fishing in the River Lune, and also 100 sheep gates or grasses upon Aldcliff Marsh.

E. Dawson reserved the right to all the trees, to the mines, minerals, delfs and quarries, to free warren and beasts and fowls, pheasants, partridges and other game now existing to hawk, hunt, course or chase. yielding and paying therfor yearly and every year two hundred and fifteen pounds net clear rent. Bond and Chatburn to pay any rates taxes or impositions on the land, and to keep the stiles, hedges, ditches, wells, gates, drains and water courses in good condition ... the dwelling house to be kept in good and tenantable repair hay, straw, manure, dung, soil or compost not to be removed the soil to be kept in good heart according to the rules of good husbandry.... the following not to be ploughed, delved or dug or converted into tillage- Mill.

Dam Meadow, Pit Field Road Meadow, Pool Foot Meadow, Hadwen's Meadow ... all other land to be limed and manured, if ploughed, every three years and to be returned to ley land which is now meadow, when the seven years lease ends... Other clauses cover the surrender and gathering of part crops and the housing and watering of horses and cows.

Both Robert Bond and Edmund Chatburn signed their names with good, clear signatures.

Hill Farm

This was then the main farm in the village, but became derelict in the 1960's, and later in the 1970's the outbuildings were developed to become "The Mews and the dwelling house was rebuilt and retained its old name. Stodday Lodge is now known as "Lunecliffe". In this lease a more precise and detailed schedule of cultivation is set down; each field has its name, often reflecting some physical aspect or having some past significance. A few names are still used, but because the field system has changed and many of these small crafts have been amalgamated to cope with modern machinery methods, it is not possible to locate each one. Occasionally as one tramps these larger fields, low ridges and shallow hollows, or lone trees indicate where grubbed out ancient hedgerows once ran.

Agreement for the letting of Hill Farm, Aldcliffe [MS2012)

1830. Edward Dawson to Henry Borran Fielding of Stodday Lodge, at a rent of £292 pounds for a term of 9 years commencing in 1830. 69 acres situate in Aldcliffe, called the Hill Farm ...game reserved to Ed. Dawson ... all buildings to be kept in good order

...not to sell any clover, corn, hay, grass but consume the whole on the premises and leavethereon all dung as shall be... keep

the land free from all thistles, docks, briars and shall pull

up and destroy all such noxious plants... The rotation of the crops in each field is strictly controlled as the ..Plan for the cultivation of the said Farm, shows :-

Field	Acres	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	
Marsh Allot	8.0	fallow	wheat	barley	Wclover	oats	fallow	wheat	barley	
Little Arna										
Calf close	6.2	oats	fallow	wheat	barley	Wclover	past.	oats	fallow	
Little Town end										
Hazlegreave	4.1	oats	fallow	barley	pasture to the end of term					
Stoney										
Foreland	8.0	pasture		oats	fallow	wheat	barley	past.	past.	oats
Well flat	4.	wheat		Rclover		oats				
Town end field	3.2	wheat		barley	pasture to the end of term					
Longrigger										
Chapel										
Meadow	6.1	pasture	past.	pasture	oats	fallow	wheat	barley	pasture	
Sandside	2.2	barley		pasture	past.	past.	pasture	oats	fallow	wheat
Toadpots	4.0	pasture	

Arna Wood Farm

The two leases relating to the Arna Wood Farm cover the years 1820 to 1840 and as both are made out to William Brotherton it can be presumed that he was a good tenant farmer - more accustomed to handling a plough than a pen, for an each occasion he made his mark on the agreement.

The first lease, (MS2003), is a full 8 page parchment.

...Lease of Arna Farm by Edward Dawson to William Brotherton husbandman ... on 31st day of January, 1820 .. of 63 acres .. at a yearly rent of £250 pounds. Set out in full are details for the care of thee land, of the buildings and of the hedgerows... dunging and manuring as set down .. lime to be scattered..the good condition of the pasture to be ensured at the end of the eleven years of the lease - except that the close,called Longlands was for nine years, it having a two years later start date... at a clear yearly rent of £250pounds.

In the second lease for this farm, it is now called "Arna Wood", the tenant is still William Brotherton and an the previous lease had still two years to run the reason for its premature closure may be that Mr. Dawson wanted to have mare control over the cropping as shown in the schedule andas the rent has dropped from £250pounds to £220pounds, WM. Brotherton was agreeable to accept the new conditions. This lease starts in 1829 and runs through to 1838, covering the same 63 acres or thereabouts, on the same general rules as previously, but with this schedule of rotation attached :--~

AcR P Field name	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837
6 2 35 Smallstones									
and Hod	oats	fallow	wheat	barl.	past;	past.	Oats	fallow	wht
3 1 32 Pit field									
4 0 7 Far Longlands }	past	oats	fallow	wht	barly	past	pasture	oats	fall
2 3, 2 Arna									
2 2 33 Far Bastewood	past.	pasture	cats	fall.	wheat	barley	past.	past.	oats
4 0 8 Highwood	pas/wt	past.	Past	oats	fall.	wheat	barley	past.	past
4 0 34 Far Highwood }									
3 3 7 W.Bastewood }	bar/wt	past.	past	past	oats	fallow	wheat	barl.	past.
3 2 20 Great Arna	fallow	wheat	barley	past.	past	oats	fallow	wheat	barl
1 2 0 Little Lolands	past.	past.	past.	past.	past.	oats	fallow	wheat	w.clo

Low Wood Farm

Edward Dawson by 1830 had decided that all his farms would be cropped in accordance with a set programme which he would give to the tenant farmers, so another lease (MS2013) was drawn up in a 4 page document, signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of John Higgins, for the lease of Low Wood Farm, Aldcliffe, by Edward Dawson... to Richard Dobson, husbandman .. for a nine year term beginning in 1831 and ending in 1940. There follows the conditions for the maintenance of the buildings and the fences, the care of the land ... where 100 tons of best horse or cow dung to be spread in each of the first seven years .. and shall deliver the tickets of the weight thereof.. Although there is no mention of potatoes in any of the leases examined, this lease has this injunction- "...shall not plant more than one acre of potatoes in each year.

The 41 acres or thereabouts have a yearly rent of £180 pounds and must be cropped as in the schedule :-

A R	Field Name	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	1838	1839
	{Sergeant's Close	oats								
7	O {Near Hoat {Higher New Close	beans fallow wheat barley past. past. oats fallow wht.								
8	O {New Close Greaves {Mill Hill	past.oats fallow wheat barley past.past oats fallow								
7	21 Little Mill Hill	past. past. oats fallow wht barley past. past oatsi.								
5	Far Hoat									
6	O {Highwood	barley past. past. cats fallow wht barley past.past								
7	1 Heys	wheat barley pasture past. oats fallow wht barl past								
5	0 Lower New Close	fallow wheat barley past.past.oats fallow wht. barl.								

Beans are mentioned for the only time in any cropping rotation.

Cottage (later Bank) Farm

In Feb. 1827, Edward Dawson drew up a set of conditions for the letting of a cottage and 6 closes of land in Aldcliffe. I have seen later references to Cottage farm and this, I think, developed and changed into Bank Farm. This document (MS2010) is not a formal lease and a note states "...if either party wants a full lease then they will share in the cost of drawing one up. These conditions are in place of a pricey legal document.

The cottage, with a shippon and 6 closes is to be let to James Towers as tenant, for a term commencing in Feb. 1827 and ending in 1834, at a yearly rental of £100 pounds. The fields are:-

Little Rye Close	Great Rye	Close
Great Hill Close	Near Fingulands	Far Fingulands

And a close lying on the South-west side of the pool on Aldcliffe Marsh.

Although no rotation is set down, there are safeguards as to the types of crops so as not to overhaust the soil, how the ditches, fences and buildings are to be kept in good order and then a new condition is imposed, reflecting the struggle with the payment of the tithes detailed in a previous section. The condition reads :- "The taker is to pay all rates and taxes (except a certain rate paid to the Vicar of Lancaster, in lieu of tythes, which shall be paid annually by the owner for the first four years of the term and afterwards by the Taker.."

The final lease to be examined is for a close of land on Aldcliffe Marsh, together with some fishing rights. The conditions (MS2014) were drawn up on 8th. Dec. 1837 and by them Edward Dawson lets to Edward Singleton, husbandman, all that close of land, being No. xi, situate on Aldcliffe Marsh, consisting of [blank] acres or thereabouts. E. Dawson reserves the right to cut hedges, hunt ... all game... the lessee has to pay all rates and taxes.... to dress, scour and maintain the ditches... and the close has to be cultivated as per the schedule. Also the lessee ..is to hold the Right of Fishing the River Lune within the Manor of Aldcliffe, belonging to the Lessor and to fish the same by Baulk or otherwise as has heretofore been the usual custom and to discharge all persons trespassing in the said Fishery. Edward Singleton of Carr House in the township of Lancaster having offered the sum of sixteen pounds ten shillings as the yearly rent of the close and fishery and provided that should the said Baulk and Fishing in any year make the sum of Twenty pounds, the sum of five pounds, or if the sum of fifteen pounds then the further rent of three pounds ten shillings, he, the said Edward Singleton is hereby declared the Taker of the said close and Fishery.

Close	£	14	-	0	-	0
Fishery	£	2	-	10	-	0

	£	16	-	10	-	0

Here we see, that now he has acquired the manor from the Riddell family, Edward Dawson is claiming the ancient manorial fishing privileges and that it is his neighbour across the Lucy Brook who takes up the lease.

Field Names

In the previous section many field names were mentioned, most of them sadly, have been lost. Some of them had a charm - Pool Foot Meadow, other names described the nature of the soil- Stoney Fore lands, whilst other names gave information about the location - Town End Close. Often however it is difficult to get at the significance of the name, for it may go back: generations and reflect an activity, incident or person long forgotten. In the correspondence concerning the tithe dispute, the following list of field names came to my notice.

Knight's Close	6	3	19	Stony Forelands	7	3	
18							
Brackey Meadow	2	2	32	Long Rigg higher	4	3	
20							
Brockey	6	3	37	Long Rigg lower	5	2	
30							
Farther Fourtop	4	2	16	Calf Close	2	0	
30							
Nearer Fourtop	5	0	32	Seaside	2	1	
13							
Farther Sea Brow	7	3	17	Town end Close	3	2	0
Nearer	6	1	20	Arney	2	3	2
Will Flatt	4	0	9	Long lands	1	3	8
West 5 acres	4	3	16	Longlands Meadow	1	0	29
East 5 acres	4	1	36	Mill Dam Meadow	3	2	3
Broad Meadow	5	1	28	High Wood	5	3	
8							
Stone Close	3	1	12	Jenkinson Fold High	1	3	9
Grap Garth	1	2	11	Jenkinson Fold Low	2	1	12
Homestead	2	3	35	New Closes Higher	3	0	22
Barn Fold	3	1	10	New Closes Lower	3	0	35
Coat Fold	5	2	20	Pool Fact Meadow	0	2	3
				Pool Foot Meadow	1	3	16

As can be seen from the areas of these fields, given in acres, roads and poles (perches or rods) they are very small by modern standards.

Since 1850 or so, the use of field names has declined, for from that time the Ordnance Survey have adopted a practice of numbering a "parcel" of land, so that even farmers refer to their fields by these numbers, thereby losing a deal of local atmosphere. In nearby Quernmore, it has been pleasing to see that not only has the naming of fields been continued but even to see the names painted on the gates.

EDWARD DAWSON - CONGREGATIONAL

Often the Dissenting background of the Dawson family has been mentioned and although Edward seems to have led such an active life, no where was he so busy as in his chapel work. In "Centenary of Lancashire Congregational Union 1806 - 1906", by B. Nightingale, alongside a photograph of Edward Dawson J.P. there appears a glowing tribute to his work, first as Secretary of the Preston District and Assistant for Lonsdale C. from 1819 to 1822, and then as County Treasurer for over 45 years, from 1831 to 1876, where his methodical collection and promptness in delivering church collections to headquarters is praised.

In the book, there is also an account of an incident at the Hall which is reproduced :-
Silver Robbery at Aldcliffe Hall May 1836.

Mr. Dawson's beautiful home at Aldcliffe Hall was a kind of open house for ministers and during the visit of Rev. George Greatbatch in May 1836 a sensational incident occurred. Mr. Dawson had gone to Kendal to the Funeral of his aunt Mrs Wilson, [see earlier references to the Leigh-Wilson inheritance] and whilst he was absent the house was broken into and robbed. Mr. Greatbatch and Mrs Dawson had had bread and milk for supper and the basins and spoons were left on the dining room table, but though the spoons were silver the thieves left them untouched. They took all the other spoons and forks in the house besides many other valuables. The thieves also left the silver candlesticks on the table though they had taken out the candle and nozzle from one of them to light themselves about the room. Mr. Greatbatch slept throughout the whole invasion, as did everyone else in the house. The dog outside had been drugged by a ballad seller the day before to make ready.

Rev. Richard Meredith Davies (1815 to 1905) was an old family friend and often conducted services in the kitchen of the hall," in the old days".
When the general account books are discussed later, it will be seen that the "cause of religion" was given large donations of up to £28 pounds in a single year.

In 1816, the Kirkby Lonsdale Congregational Chapel was opened and amongst its generous friends were the Dawsons. In its early history Edward Dawson was accustomed to ride over from Aldcliffe, on a Sunday, a distance of seventeen miles, to conduct the services and it was chiefly owing to the liberal gifts of the family in 1888 that no debts remained after the chapel had been renovated.

BOUSFIELD PRIVATE LETTERS

Robert Dawson married Mary Bousfield (1801 to 1884) and they had a family of five daughters and two sons. In a collection of private letters (MSS2503 -89) written to his father-in-law, Robert Bousfield of Newington Place, Newington Butts, London, Edward Dawson shows himself in a variety of roles - he is a good correspondent, a loving son, a hard business man, a seeker after advice and often a worried and doting father. These letters reveal how involved he was in business, in farm management, in local affairs, in chapel matters and above all with his family.

The letters, written between 1841 and 1852 have been well looked after and some are still in the original envelopes, complete with ld. stamp.

The salutation to his father-in-law is usually, "My dear Father" and he closes with "your affectionate son" or "your grateful and affectionate son". In Sept.1841, he is interested in the Ashton and Stodday lands and suggests that they will more minutely look at them when Robert Bousefield next visits Aldcliffe he tells that as he writes "our family is gone to enjoy a dip in the tide at "Poulton" [le-Sands].In a postscript his great interest in land development comes out - "...the meadow drained 2 years ago under the Crag at Warton has undergone a wonderful improvement and is at least 4 times as valuable as before.

Writing an 5 Nov. 1841, he informs his father-in-law that he has let Walnut Bank, Stodday to Mr. Pritt for £3 pounds and he encloses a small sketch plan of the improvements he plans for the scullery and pantry. One of the cottages is to be provided with a pump. There had been a great storm on 18th Oct., which had done some damage at Warton. He then reports on the opening of a new chapel by Dr, Raffles.

The letter written on 15th. July 1852 (MS2583) is particularly interesting. It is 8 pages of close written news on thick blue paper. Edward is pleased he has an hour to spare to write for, "I have long wished to devote it to you. For some weeks, what with the Building at Stodday, then the hay and the election, I have had my hands quite full. The first are nearly finished, the second is completed but for about 3 carts all got in without rain. As to the last [election] I have not taken an active part, though a conspicuous one and I dare say my conflicting opinions are formed of the conduct pursued by myself and our friend John Dodson.."

Once again his strong Dissenting views are shown - "State interference with the great concerns of religion is the work of Satan".

He takes up the matter of the election again and after going into detail about the candidates he paints an unpleasant picture of the bribery, corruption and drunkenness evident - "... the freemen, whose votes were sold as regularly as meat in the market". His concern is so deep that he has decided to leave his party over this issue. The scandal of the Lancaster Elections at this time led to a Government Inquiry which disenfranchised the borough for some future general elections.

This same letter of July 1352 turns to family news for Edward has just completed his university law examinations in London - "Edward arrived this morning at 6 o'clock looking well jaded. He intends to writ to you as soon as he hears the result of his examinations which he hopes will be favourable . The extremely hot weather has well nigh exhausted us'. In a different handwriting a P.S. has been added, which is that of Edward, the son – "I will write full particulars of my journey when I tell you how I have got on in Honours ". Edward Bousfield Dawson was successful in obtaining his LL.D degree from London University.

The letter dated 9th, Oct 1852, whilst showing that Edward Dawson is still thinking about buying Ashton Hall - " the Duke's [of Hamilton] property is again offered for sale " and of Edward's intention of visiting a chapel in Preston, deals with a servant incident" at Aldcliffe Hall, where they had been entertaining minister visitors. A man servant had been dismissed because he was offended when, at a dinner for 18, another servant had been asked to help.

Some historical matters are mentioned in a letter of 13 Nov. 1852, but first Edward has to respond to the generosity of a grandfather who has sent a hundred pound bank note to his grandchildren, by returning half of it. Then he returns to his great concern of the moment - Ashton Hall" ... your kind thoughts towards your grandchildren in connexion with the Ashton property... Ashton and Stodday are a most desirable property for any purchase, but next how far it would be wise and prudent to embark in an undertaking requiring from £70,000 pounds to 90,000 pounds. There is the problem of Robert's 5 sisters if he alone receives the property and estate... It is true in former times there lived on this estate seven virgin sisters, leaving it at their death to the priests who had controlled them during their lives but times have changed and trouble may arise to Robert [he was the second son], if his sisters marry... Mary [Edward's wife] herself is opposed to the purchase. The price could be high because many manufacturers have made large profits and there is a quantity of unemployed money about."

[This was prophetic for ultimately James Williamson, Lord Ashton, bought the estate]

The letter returns to farm management - "I am draining a field of 12 acres near John Hall's requiring 6,000 tiles [Then we are reminded of the great changes which are taking place in Stodday, for the old medieval cottages which stood on the Walnut Bank side of the road have been demolished and in a few years new property will be built opposite –..the ground about Walnut Bank is just finished where the old thatched cottages stood.It is not like the same place..."

In the winter of 1852, the Embankment which he had built as a young man, was threatened and in a letter dated 10Jan.1853 he shares his worries with his father-in-law. "...I never passed through so anxious a month in my life.... for we feared the loss of the whole Marsh ... constructing a strong dam of earth across the breach which was 10 feet high and 14 feet broad in the base. About 50 men were assembled, but they demanded an advance from 2s/6d to 3s/0d. a day, Some of them had not worked for weeks"

There was no alternative but submission, and methods of using straw, as in Holland, were used against the sea. To fill the breach was expensive but"...I was filled with gratitude to our Heavenly Father for the wonderful strength he has given me. Had it occurred a year or two ago I, could not have sustained the labour".

Robert, a youth of 16, helped in the work and this leads his father to write about him. "It is possible the disaster may give a new turn to his [Robert's] future life. He has always said his first wish was to be a farmer and next a medical man. I have always objected to the former as it is so poor a business and his mother has a strong objection to the latter, especially to the temptations connected with the students in the hospitals. If Edward is actively engaged in the law, as I hope he will, the property here and at Warton seems to require an active manager".

The letter concludes with, a business transaction showing he still retains a great interest in the mushrooming railway industry of the time.-

Railway Company to the Count of £5,542 pounds, for it is a good, secure investment for traffic is increasing ..'

The last peep we will take at these personal papers is at one written a week or so after the one already quoted - an 26 Jan 1853: In spite of..

"... the turmoils of my present circumstances... I give thanks to God for the New Year, health and prospects for the future.".. the dear grandchildren, Robert and I hope he will be spared to be the comfort of his mother in the mysteriously trying path she has been called upon to tread. In dear Edward there is a great deal to afford us lively satisfaction. Never had parents a more dutiful, thoughtful and affectionate son. Your delightful granddaughter, Mary, is a constant source of joy to us".

What parent could praise his children more fulsomely ?

The embankment is still a worry, however, for he continues :- "repair work to the embankment is nearly completed, where twenty men are at work.

After paying tribute to John Mather, who had never left the work from light to dark, he has scant praise for the other workers assembled the workmen are the worst description and would sacrifice the Estates for a glass of ale". [Gangs of itinerant "navvies" may have been diverted from the railway to meet this emergency]

Once again he comments on purchasing shares in the Preston-Lancaster railway company and perhaps we see in this sentence the morality of the strict Dissenter, familiar with the parable of the Talents, for he writes

..... "I am glad Stodday Lodge is let for a large house unoccupied is a serious evil".

MORECAMBE BAY RAILWAY PLANS

Even before the Preston - Lancaster railway had opened, Edward Dawson was drawn into the national hysteria of railway planning and development which swept the country in the 1930's and 1940's. He had ambitious plans to see the line extended to the north, crossing Morecambe Bay and via the west coast of Cumbria, heading for Glasgow.

In Nov. 1938 a report for the Caledonian, West Cumberland and Furness Railway was drawn up by John Hague on the practicality of embanking the estuaries of Morecambe Bay and the River Duddon for the purpose of forming a railway communication from Lancashire to Glasgow.

A Mr. Padley helped in the local survey which had begun in early June and after inspecting the terminus of the as yet incomplete Preston - Lancaster line [This terminus is now Nurses' Accommodation alongside the Infirmary], the intervening countryside between Lancaster and Poulton-le-Sands, taking sand tests and borings, watching the ebb and flow of the tides, he concluded " from an engineering point of view the railway is feasible. There is not any difficulty in carrying a railway across these two bays". He recommended that the track should go round the eastern side of the town of Lancaster, passing over the River Lune between the old and new bridges, near to Skerton, then in a straight line to the south of Torrisholme and Poulton to the Bay at Poulton ring.

It would cross the Bay to Leonard's Point at Newbiggin and then across the Duddon at Roanhead Point to Hodbarrow.

The embankment across Morecambe Bay would be 10 miles 51 chains and that across the Duddon estuary 1 mile 65 chains. Exact details of the piles, how they would be strengthened, distances apart, of the coffer dams, of the tide gates and bridges are all covered. The level of the railway would be 6 feet above the highest 30 feet spring tide. The whole project was estimated to take 2 years to complete and helped by "a natural build up", the embankment would require 10,453,795 tons of material at an estimated cost of £362,861 pounds -Os -10d. [Yes! the 10d. is included], but as 52,000 acres of land would be reclaimed, the sale of this would more than off set the initial outlay.

Edward Dawson considered other schemes, and with his usual thoroughness consulted a Liverpool engineer, Isaac Hadwin, and in an article in "Lancashire Life" magazine in the early 1960's, Frank Mellor gives details of this scheme and compares it with the road barrage scheme which was being mooted at the time. To carry out such a huge undertaking financial as well as local land owner support was required. This was canvassed and although Lord Burlington of Holker Hall, we are told, was in favour his wife was against it on environmental grounds.

A scheme was submitted for Parliamentary approval, but on 25th. May 1840, according to reports in both the local papers "The Gazette" and "The Guardian" it was rejected.

In all this, Mr. Dawson, now 47 was, no doubt, recalling those earlier times, 25 years before, when as a young man he had embanked the Lune. Henceforth, he had to content himself with buying shares in the Preston- Lancaster Railway Company, which he did, for on Jan. 26th. 1853 he wrote to Mr. Bousfield, his father-in-law :-

"yesterday completed the investment of £5,500 in the Lancaster and Preston Railway Company".

PROSPERITY RESTORED

There are in the Dawson collection in the Lancaster Reference Library, many manuscripts detailing the financial activities of Edward Dawson and his family from 1800 to 1095 and even a quick perusal of these shows how diligently, and successfully, he laboured to restore prestige and prosperity to the family.

These documents range from single invoices, through small pocket books, to quarter-bound ledger type account books and contain income and expenditure in full detail.

A small rental book (MS2908) begins with an 1816 valuation of a cotton mill warehouse and dye-house at £525-5s -3d, then to a valuation of Low Mills, with its engines, scribing and carding machines and spindles and the stocks at the Old Mill, coming to a grand total of £ 656 -14s -0d. These entries relate, I think, to mills at Halton. Whether they were in the ownership of the Dawsons at this time is uncertain, but as an expenditure of £ 272 -10s -6d. on building a wool warehouse is entered it appears they were involved. This small note book, only 3" by 5½", has then been used for Marts and Rents at Kendal from 1819 and continues with an annual summary until Mayday 1842 and includes rents for properties in Lancaster, Kendal, Silverdale, Lindeth and Low Mills at Halton.

Much about the family's way of life can be gleaned from the pages of a hard-backed chunky book (MS2900) in its green and yellow marbled cover, for it itemises income and expenditure, for the whole household, from 1st. Aug.1859 to 5th. May 1865. The book has been most diligently kept and at the end of each year an annual summary has been inserted, of which two are shown, in full :-

	Income for 1859			Income for 1860		
Rents,	£2191 -	16s-	3d	£ 1916 -	Os -	Od
Dividends	497	5	7	609	18	6
Farm	197	19	4	56	1	0
Sundries	59	17	8	59	12	4
	£ 2936	18	6	£ 2641	10	10

	Expenditure for 1859			Expenditure for 1860		
Buildings Improvements	£ 363	11s	3d	£91	7s	3d
Children	413	11	3	288	6	8
House Expenses	140	14	0	203	19	9
Wages and Labour	115	12	3	101	5	0
Horses -carriage	23	3	1	47	16	5
Travelling	24	11	5	27	12	10
Clothing	16	18	2	8	10	3
Furniture	10	14	9	25	17	6
Servants	50	4	2	55	11	4
Medicine -attendance	54	15	7	17	6	2
Farm	27	4	8	35	3	5
T a x e!-.:5	61	11	0	141	4	6
Railways	1303	10	0	430	0	0
Cause of Religion	270	4	1.	323	17	11
Sundries	92	4	4	49	9	6
	£ 2960	10	0	£1852	7	6

To compare the relative spending on some of these items is; illuminating, but first to put all these items into perspective we must recall that about this time, when he had workmen repairing the breached embankment they demanded a rise in pay from 2s -6d per day to 3s -0d., that is from £40 pounds a year to £50 pounds. Edward Dawson's generosity "in the cause of religion" cannot be questioned for in 1860 he spent 40 times more on that than an clothing. In 1859 more was spent on medical care and "bed-lying" than on the servants' wages. There is a large increase in taxes in 1860 as against 1859, in spite of a lower income [Income tax had not yet been introduced]. The heavy expenditure on railways is in the form of shares so in reality is savings. In the summary for 1061, Edward was repaid a loan of £760 pounds, by his son Edward Bousfield Dawson, but he made an even bigger loan of £1260 pounds to an unnamed person.

On Feb. 16th. 1961, Edward Dawson purchased land in Warton from Mr. Collins, for £2130 pounds and to show the other detailed items for that same day, he noted :

Wages	£1 - 10s – Od	Meat	£1 -9s –Od	£ 3	7	Od
Rent	£6 - Os -Od	poor	5s –Od	6	5	0
M.D.[his wife]	5s 8d	Groceries	£1 -14s-5d	2	0	1
Edward Bousfield Dawson	– cutlery			6	19	6
Wages	£2 -7s Od	meat	£2 -Os -1d	4	7	1
Poor	4s 6d	postage	2s- Od	6	6	
Carriage of posts				16	1	

The frequency of the entries varies, sometimes daily, but more often several days pass, whilst in the last days of December there are often two pages, i.e. up to 40 entries.

By 1873 another Account Book, number 4 in a series, (MS2901), was used and ran through to June 1875. This was only one year before Edward's death, and the good presentation and firm writing begin to deteriorate and as he was 83 years old, this indicates that he personally kept these records. By now the annual summary had been abandoned, but a running total for 1873 shows an income for that year of £8170 -19s-2d, a large increase on that shown previously for 1860. The expenditure for the year was less by £548 -2s 5d. The chief sources of income were from land rents and dividends from Canal and Railway companies. One item of expenditure of £2.Os -Od was an Aldcliffe Lane School, which referred to the "Lancastrian" school, situated at the junction of Queen Street and Aldcliffe Road, later used as offices for Queen St. Mill and now is the site of B & Q stores.

From these accounts it can be shown how steadily Edward Dawson added to his inherited family land and took advantage of the industrial development of Victorian England, especially in canal and railway transport, although shipbuilding, cotton and coal mining were also financed. For over 60 years he steadily increased his "empire", so that when he died in 1876 he owned practically all Aldcliffe, Stodday and parts of Ashton with further estates to the north of Lancaster, at Warton, Silverdale, Carnforth and surrounding villages. He had transformed the Hall; in 1827 he had added a drive, a lodge and a tree-lined carriageway; he landscaped the countryside with spinneys and tree plantation along the hedgerows, which with the rolling nature of the terrain, still give a park-like appearance to the village.

MEMORIAL CARD

The following is a reproduction of Edward Dawson's Memorial Card.,

In loving remembrance of

EDWARD DAWSON
of Aldcliffe Hall, Lancaster

He entered into Rest
on Wed. evening March 29th 1876
after eight months of weariness
and suffering
aged 82 years.

I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness.

Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

On 19th. July 1893, Edward Dawson was further remembered on the centenary of his birth, when his son Edward Bousfield Dawson, caused to be erected over a well on the roadside, leading up to the village from the Hall, an ornamental rusticated arch. The keystone of the arch bears his coat of arms and crest, with various devices emblematic of continuance, encircling the dates 1793 and 1876. An allusion to the transformation of the estate during his long tenure of it is to be found in the Latin "Si monumentum requiris, circumspice " which is part of the epitaph to Christopher Wren at St. Paul's Cathedral" - if you want to see his memorial, look around".

The keystone is now incorporated into the limestone archway over the side entrance to the bungalow "Manresa". (now "Melrose").

VILLAGE POPULATION 1800 to 1900

As the very existence of the village depended on the Hall, the history so far has centred on the Hall, its owners and its occupiers. Throughout the centuries, the villagers, if not working at the Hall, were employed on the land. In this section, helped by the census returns and gazeteers, a picture of the community will be drawn.

Up to 1901, the population of Aldcliffe, because of close historical links, was combined with that of Bulk, but from 1911 there are independent returns and these are set out in the graph below:-

Population

110

100

90

80

70

60

50

Year	Population	Year	Population
1811	73	1821	95
1831	96	1841	111
1851	85	1861	74
1871	68	1901	94
1901	83		

As shown the population grows to a peak in 1841, perhaps reflecting the increased activity of estate development and railway building in these decades and falls to a low of 69 in 1871, a figure more appropriate for the Dalton days, two hundred years before.

In 1811 there were 33 males and 40 females in the total of 73, living in 11 houses, which were occupied by 13 families. This gives the relatively high figure of 4 children living per family. All the houses were inhabited. Twelve of the thirteen families were employed in agriculture.

By 1822 there were 13 houses in the village – the Hall, laundry cottage, 5 cottages in the terrace and the farms of Low Wood, Arna Wood, Cottage, Hill, Home and Brookholme. In 1815 the annual value of the property was put at 1335 pounds, whilst

in the ten years between 1822 and 1839 the parochial rates had risen from 85 pounds to 139 -18s- Od.

To have a family dependant on the Parish rates would be a heavy burden for such a small community as Aldcliffe so a public notice, appearing in the Lancaster Gazette, on Oct. 27th. 1804, expressed both the family's and the community's concern to find this wayward father:-

ABSCONDED

About two years ago, leaving his family chargeable to the township of Aldcliffe, PETER THORNTON, a labourer, about 30 years of age, 5ft 6in. high, black hair, dark complexion and squints very much. He was born near Garstang and has some knowledge of the weaving business. Whoever will give information of the said Peter Thornton shall receive 2 guineas reward and all reasonable expenses by applying to

Edward Eidsforth	}	overseers of the
or Robert Fort	}	said township.

According to the list of those eligible to vote for the Knights of the Shire i.e. in a Parliamentary election, in 1035, before the days of universal suffrage, only 5 persons were qualified out of the village population of 100. They were:-

7180 Bratherton William (often this name is Bretherton or Bretherton)

Arna Wood - occupier of 50 acres of land.

7191 Bleasdale Richard

Village of Aldcliffe - occupier of 32 acres.

7182 Dawson Edward

Aldcliffe Hall. Freehold lands in the manor of Aldcliffe.

71S3 Dobson Richard

Low Wood Farm - occupier of 100 acres of land.

7194 Lewtas Thomas

Brookholme House - occupier of 100 acres of land.

By 1886 by inheritance and by purchase, E.B. Dawson, owned the whole of Aldcliffe's 934 acres, except for 3 Varley plots and one Eidsforth field. Already the farm leases have shown that the husbandman or tenant farmer had no security of tenure and after the seven or ten years' run of a lease he had to leave. So Parrs, Bonds, Chatburns and Huntingtons farmed at Brookholme; the Brothertons stayed at Arna Wood for several leases but then the Askews took over; the Dobsons were followed at Low Wood by the Dowhams, whilst James Tower was at Cottage Farm in the early part of the century and John Walker was there later.

In 1886 the various farms were tenanted by

Thomas Askew	Arna Wood
James Dowham	Low Wood
James Wikinson	Fox Hill Farm
William Huntington	Brookholme
John Walker	Cottage (Bank) Farm.

EDWARD BOUSFIELD DAWSON 1831 TO 1916

For the whole of Queen Victoria's long reign, Edward Bousfield Dawson lived at Aldcliffe Hall or Lunecliffe, and to modify Lytton Strachey's phrase he was a "local eminent Victorian" epitomising in his life many of the noble values of that period and yet, at the same time, exhibiting a narrowness of outlook and strictness of moral thought, which is hard to accept today.

It has already been noted that his father thought much of him and that he was destined for the law, to which he devoted himself wholeheartedly, serving as a professional paid barrister and as an unpaid borough and county magistrate, serving on innumerable public bodies and accepting the role as lord of the manor to which position he had been born.

Edward B. Dawson was born at Aldcliffe Hall on 16th. Aug.1830. He was the eldest surviving son of Edward Dawson and his second wife, Mary (nee Bousfield). For his early education he attended Mill Hill School, a Congregational establishment, from where he went to University College, London, to study law. He graduated in 1849 and received his B.A.degree in May 1850. He continued his studies to become a barrister and July 1852, he gained a LL.B. Honours degree. He was called to the bar of the Inner Temple in Nov. 1852 and for 25 years he served as a barrister on the Northern Circuit.

In 1861, on June 5th. he married Mary Elizabeth Howard, only daughter of Cephas Howard, of Brinnington Hall, Stockport. For the early years of their married life, they lived at Lunecliffe (Stodday Lodge) and they had a family of two sons and four daughters.

After his father's death, in 1876, he took up residence in Aldcliffe Hall, and during the next decade he became as involved as did his energetic father in development and building plans. He decided to extend the Hall by adding a castellated wing and introducing electricity by means of a generator, continuing the building at Stodday, erecting residences at Abram Heights and in Aldcliffe village, re-fashioning the field pattern of his estates by amalgamating small crofts into larger fields and then in 1880-81, working with the London and North Western Railway Company, in building the Lancaster- Glasson Dock branch railway, which, for most of its length, crossed his land.

His involvement in public affairs, in the administration of the law, with the church, with his family or with many temperance societies did not mean that he neglected the large estate he had inherited, for the Account Books, no doubt by now maintained by his agent, show the same meticulous care and exactness as in his father's prime.

A cash book started in the year after his father's death, (MS2903) covers the years 1877-1881 and its 150 pages are indexed to include

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Work at Stodday. | 2. 3. 4. Warton Hall. |
| 5. Aldcliffe Hall | 6. Lunecliffe |
| 7. Warton Lane End Farm | 8. New house at Stodday |
| 9. Aldcliffe Farms. | |

Expenses for materials, far maintenance, for workmen's wages are detailed for each location. One page is a rent book for W. Arkwright's cottage at Aldcliffe, at 3s/6d per week, in 1891. In 1879, the new house (Grange Farm) at Stodday was built and still displays its date and his wife's initials M.D. above the doorway.

From another cash book, (MS2902) covering the years 1880 -1898 it is possible to see the extent of the Dawson financial commitment in the neighbourhood. Once again the 340 pages of entries are shown in the Index:-

Stodday	pp 1 -38	pp 39 -68 blank
Aldcliffe	pp69-100	pp155- 200 then pp 135 -150
Lunecliffe	100-120	pp121 - 130 blank
1. Fox's Draining		pp 131- 132
Einsforth		151 -152
Brookholme		201 -207
Warton Hall		221 -228
Warton Lane End		229 -239
Abram Heights		240 -271
Paid on accounts		320 -324

Cash received for years 1881 -86 pp 325 to the end of book.

To follow these figures is to see what was happening and changing round about. In Stodday, the old farmhouse, with its thatched roof, was pulled down in July and August 1880, for the new one had already been erected.

However, two cottages built of shuttered concrete were added alongside. The story is told in figures and prices- earth moving, timber spars, slates, lead, cement, lathes, beams, nails, the fixing of the ridge rolls in December 1890 until an March 19th 1881 a rockery was laid. A cart load of sand cost 1s 9d, whilst the labourers were paid 3s 6d per day. The concrete was given a decorative finish and the date stone and initials above the archway leading to the back of the cottages are elaborate.

The entries for Aldcliffe are even more numerous for 80 pages are filled to cover extensions, maintenance and repairs to the Hall, to the cottages and to the farms, with sale of cattle, buying in of cart ropes and reins, intermingled with repairs to the Quarry wall, draining of ditches, tidying of hedgerows and plantations, cleaning privies and even providing netting for the peacocks at 13s Od- all is included! A running total from the years, for Aldcliffe alone, comes to the grand sum of £3923-10s-6d so when skilled masons earned 5s Od per day and labourers generally 3s6d, this sum covers a multitude of activities.

At Lunecliffe, where Edward B. Dawson lived, in the early years of his marriage, Suttons, the seed merchants, supplied 300 strawberry plants, as well as savoy cabbage and cauliflower seeds and peas. In 1883 the gate and stoops of the Scotforth Tollgate were bought for one guinea, This item also reflects his antiquarian interests, for from Watkin's "Roman Lancashire", we learn that the two Roman milestones, of Emperors Philip and Decius, found at Burrow Heights earlier in the century, were housed at Stoddy Lodge (Lunecliffe), where Watkins states he had been shown them a few years previously i.e.1883 circa. There was much travelling to Warton, shown by --in 1881 - "100 fares to Warton @ 1s- 1d £5- 8s - 4d."

Whilst the fare to Preston was 3s- 6d (a labourer's day wage) and to Milnthorpe cost 2s- 3d.

1. Fox's Draining refers to the scheme by the London and North Western Railway Company to link the part of Glasson Dock with the main railway line at Lancaster. The work began in 1891 and as the track entered his estate at Freeman's Wood and left it to enter the Ashton Hall property almost two miles away, crossing reclaimed marsh land and following close to the high water mark of the tide along the estuary, much thought, and work, had to be put into the drainage problem. Mr. Dawson undertook to find both the labour and the materials. The accepted price for laying the drains was 1s - Od per yard and such figures as 26,500 = tiles, 3316 6" tiles and 637 U tiles are quoted. Extra draining was required at Brookholme Farm and the "old trunk" (a wooden drain mentioned in the Embankment building) was to be opened up and cleaned. Extra care with the draining across Fox's land, who were then tenants at Hill Farm, was needed and 550 yards on Downham's land at Low Wood was again priced at 1s-Od per yard.

In early 1882, there was a valuation carried out at Abram Heights Farm, by George Corbishley of Thurnham for R. Sandham and by R. Davis of Ellel, for E.B. Dawson, of " hay at £125- 7s- Od, Dutch Barn £20- 0 -0, manure at £16 -9~ 10 and currant bushes £4- 12s- 10d. This valuation had to do with the building of Westbourne House, which was intended for his daughter on her marriage. This house, like the Stodday buildings just completed, was to be of concrete, but unlike the Stodday cottages which were completed within 4 months, it seems to have taken much longer, for the accounts carry an through 1882 and 1883 and an entry in 1887 states that a painter was paid sixpence halfpenny per hour for a 44 hour Week--£1-7s -10d. Once again his initials are incorporated in the structure, enclosed within a geometrical mosaic, with the date - E. B. D. 1882.

EDWARD B. DAWSON'S CHILDREN

Before he left Lunecliffe to live at the Hall, Edward B. Dawson's family of six children had all been born. They were -

1. The eldest daughter Mary Philadelphia, who remained a spinster and was the last member of the family to reside at the Hall.
2. Edward Howard, born in 1864, married Renee, 2nd daughter of Edward Storey J.P. He trained as an architect, designed Grange and Carnforth Congregational Churches, branches of the Lancaster Bank and Storey House at the Royal Albert Hospital.
On his death on 31st. Dec 1886, he bequeathed many of his books to the Lancaster Public Library.
3. Helen Margaret - born 1866. She married Rev. Henry Harries M.A. of Clapton and their son,
Edward Dawson Gavin Harries was the heir to the bulk of the estate left by his grandfather.
4. Alfred Cephas Howard - born in 1867 and died in 1902. He was an invalid throughout his life.
5. Lucy Evelyn - born 1872. She married S. H. Leeder of Rust Hall, Tunbridge Wells, Editor of girls' magazines and author of several was Chairman of Kiveton Park Coal Co. Sheffield.
6. Constance Isabel - born 1875. She married John William Hall, a dentist, settled in Inverlune, Aldcliffe, which her father had built for them, in 1906.

A CONCRETE PIONEER

E. B. Dawson appears to have been an innovator in the use of concrete for building houses and farm buildings.

As early as 1878 he had extended the work which his father had started at Stodday and which was to change the layout of the village. He built the farmhouse now known as Grange Farm, not of stone, but of concrete. The concrete was poured into timber shuttering, in situ. He continued the use of this same technique a few years later, when in 1881, he erected two cottages backing on to the farmyard, an which he had his wife's initials and the year - M 1881 D shown over a decorative archway leading to the rear of the premises.

Concrete, fashioned on the spot in timber shuttering, not prefabricated elsewhere and brought to the site for erection, was used at the residence an Abram Heights. Westbourne House is still an elegant structure and its three storeyed pinnacled tower is made more attractive with horizontal decorative "courses". This house is dated 1882, but may not have been occupied by his daughter until several years later.

His interest in building continued, but he turned to more conventional methods for the next house. This was West Lodge, which he had erected on the Shore Road at the extreme western edge of his enclosed walled garden. He used local red sandstone and although the records do not show from where the stone was quarried, it closely resembles the stone at the quarry on the Stodday road. A most decorative Monogram in grey, red, blue and gold mosaic with the date of 1887, enclosed in a timber surround is displayed over the front entrance.

Some years later he is building again, this time, I think, for his agent. At Inglewood, Aldcliffe, in 1892, he reverts to the concrete walls of Stodday and Westbourne. There is an even more decorative finish, for the upper storey is panelled to give a timber clad Tudor" appearance, with the interstices rough cast. A stone-like appearance is achieved through slottings and ridges. On the curved undershoot of a projecting first floor window an entwined date reads 1892. The house stands in a corner formed by the Y junction of the Shore Road and its detached wash-house, of concrete construction, and built on a lower level, made use of the rain water, which fell on the roof of the house and was collected into a large storage tank.

Later, in 1906, he had Inverlune erected - a large residence standing in grounds opposite Inglewood built of more conventional material.

Why he should have experimented with the use of concrete we can only hazard. That it was a worthy material, time has justified, for the houses have seen a century's use and the present occupiers' greatest complaint seems to be when they have to drill through the fabric for some modern installation to be fitted. There may be a reason in that the local stone, especially from Aldcliffe, is porous and does not make good building material, so E.D. Dawson experimented with concrete.

TRAVELLER AND DIRECTOR

In "Lancashire Biographies - Rolls of Honour", with an Introduction by W. Ralph Hall Caine, pub. 1917, there was a most impressive entry for Edward B. Dawson. He was described as a Barrister-at-Law, County and Borough Magistrate, Land owner and Lord of the Manor of Aldcliffe. He was listed as a Director of the Lancaster, later the Manchester and Liverpool District Bank and of the Kiveton Park Coal Company, Sheffield. His estates in Aldcliffe, Stodday and Warton district came to 2,000 acres. Amongst his interests were scientific and philosophical pursuits as well as travelling, for he had visited most European countries as well as Syria, Palestine and Egypt.

In 1899, he and his wife, visited Belgium and Germany, and in a small leather bound note book she records the following extracts, which show their interest in the arts, buildings, churches and museums, abroad:-

1889

...July 2ndleft home at 2 pm. for London and arrived 7pm off to Harwich. Embarked on "Colchester" set sail for Antwerp at 10 pm.

Fair night tho' not clear. Walked on deck for near an hour, then turned in to deck cabin. Occupied 2 top berths and had good passage tho' I only slept for an hour or two. Reached Antwerp 8.30had breakfast an board so were ready to begin exploration of Antwerp.

First to Cathedral elegant interior, spacious but disappointed in general effect.

Seen others more imposing..streets had some good shops.

.... Visited Museum saw paintings by old masters. Back to Cathedral to see Rubens celebrated "Descent from Cross". Table d'hote at hotel mediocre.

Took train to Louvain (Leuven)- walked to Hotel Saude, very hot...walked on to see the remarkable and beautiful Town Hall unique of its kind with sculptured stones. The square in front crowded with people listening to the strains of a first rate military band. The whole appearance of Louvain streets flourishing. Slept well in clean and comfortable room.

July 4th. Breakfasted al fresco, then rushed off to see the interior of Town Hall, Saw a few good ancient masters and antiquities in Museum, very handsome Council Chamber, restoration not yet finished. ..then into Cathedral walked up quickly to station, had to wait three quarters of an hour or more, heat very great. Train to Veroure, fellow passengers American. Lunched at Verours. Changed trains,...visit of douane at frontier..pretty scenery. Reached Cologne 4 pm. Hotel Disch. Went into Cathedral which I had seen unfinished 34 years before most beautiful, struck with the enormous height of Cathedral

After table d'hote at 6 pm. perambulated street till 9 pm, still fine and warm.. “

This extract reminds us that Cathedrals would draw them not only for their religious and artistic attraction, but also for a family reason in that their son Edward Howard was an architect, whilst the Museum antiquities would appeal, because whilst they had lived at Lunecliffe, Edward had collected Roman "relics" and was at this time interested in a museum at Lancaster Castle.

In the same small booklet there is a very short extract describing another continental trip. This is the enthusiastic description of Norway:

June 12th.

.....mountains partially covered with snow- had a cannon fired for the sake of the echo...spent the day amidst grand scenery, sometimes in fiords, sometimes in open sea ...delightful charming, glorious sunset most picturesque of all, effect of light and beautiful reflections

Amid all this, however, a document dated 1902, brings back the less, fortunate times, a century before, when Edward Bousfield Dawson's paternal grandfather had sailed in troubled financial waters. The document contains a number of sworn statements regarding family antecedents and is to settle affairs to do with his father's estate. In summary the statements read :-

I, Edward B. Dawson of Aldcliffe Hallsolemnly declare and affirm..

1. That I am 72 years of age and am the son of Edward Dawson, who died on 29th day of March 1876 and was buried at Aldcliffe hall and whose will was proved by me at Lancaster on 5th day of May 1876.
2. My paternal grandfather was John Dawson and he lived at Aldcliffe Hall.
3. My grandfather was married on 7th Aug. 1782 to Jane Flower and the certificate of such marriage... now produced
4. There was issue of that marriage one son, namely my father ... and the certificate of birth/baptism now produced
5. My paternal grandfather died 12 (crossed out and replaced with 9) day of May 1804 and was buried within the High Street chapel at Lancaster..and certificate now produced
6. My grandfather died intestate leaving my father Edward Dawson his heir at law, letters of Administration were granted to my paternal grandmother, Jane Dawson on 31st day of May 1804 and she by deed dated 10th Aug. 1814 ...released her dower to my father and by deed dated 2nd. of Aug 1814 re-conveyed to my father, Aldcliffe Hall and lands which had been mortgaged by my grandfather to Abram Rawlinson and which mortgage was in the year 1813 transferred to my grandmother.
7. My grandmother died and was buried in the said chapel on 11th of Dec. 1826 and certificate now produced..."

So now at long last the efforts of himself and his father had finally closed the financial mismanagement of his grandfather.

TENANTS' ILLUMINATED ADDRESS

The tenants of Edward B. Dawson's farms in Aldcliffe and Warton presented him with an illuminated address on his 80th. birthday, which is reproduced and which reads :-

TO EDWARD B. DAWSON ESQRE

J. P. LL.D

~~~~~

We the tenantry of your Aldcliffe and Warton estates heartily congratulate you on attaining your eightieth birthday.

We rejoice to know you are enjoying good health and fervently hope you may be spared and that each succeeding birthday may bring a rich measure of health and happiness

We appreciate you as a generous and considerate landlord, as a kindly neighbour and as a friend giving us a special pleasure and prompting this small token of our esteem and respect for you.

For generations your family have developed and improved these estates, and it is pleasing to know you have maintained that record and still evince a keen interest in the same.

There are many instances in which your tenants have farmed their holdings for long periods, some of them having succeeded their fathers and grandfathers and this speaks volumes for the interest you take in their welfare and for the esteem in which you are held.

ALDCLIFFE

J. W. Fox  
William Huntington  
Henry Mackereth  
James Postlethwaite  
R.M.Fox  
Joseph Askew  
J. W.Stork  
J. R.Preston

WARTON

Edward Barton  
E & J. Winnerah  
Christopher Thwaites  
William Parker.

August 16th. 1910

### E.D. DAWSON'S PUBLIC IMAGE

To understand more clearly Mr. Dawson's work and influence in the locality, I have set out some of the official positions he held in the varied fields of activity he entered.

#### In the law.

For 65 years he was actively concerned in various roles in the administration of the law.

1849 Graduated B.A. 1852 Gained LL.B.

1852 Called to the Bar of the Inner Temple.

1852 - 1877 Barrister-at-law practising on the Northern Circuit.

1871 Appointed a Borough Magistrate.

1875 Appointed a County Magistrate.

1886 Vice- Chairman of Lancaster Quarter Sessions.

1906 Appointed Chairman of joint Quarter Sessions.

1888 Member of Standing Committee for County Constabulary.

Chairman of Visiting Justices for Lancaster Castle.

Member of the Prisoners' Aid Society.

Committee member of Management of County Lunatic Asylum.

Member of Board of Guardians for Lancaster

Chairman of Board of Guardians - he strenuously resisted every effort to the reduction of their powers, particularly when the County Councils were taking over the Board functions.

1908 Constable of Lancaster Castle.

At his inauguration he presented the portcullis to the Castle and used the Constable's special room in the Gateway Tower. He was keenly interested in the Castle's history and in the collection of halberds and heraldic shields for display in the Shire Hall. He also encouraged the opening of the Castle to visitors and the display of its antiquities. In 1912 he officiated at the king's visit to the Castle, when he presented the heavy keys and His Majesty suggested he "should put them down"- for he was now 90 years old.

#### In the Congregational Church

He was a lifelong Congregationalist, first at the High Street Chapel, where his grandparents were buried in a vault; then in 1872 there was a break away and he was a leader, when 22 members founded a mission chapel and Sunday School in the Stonewell/St. Leonardgate area, where there "was inadequate provision for worship". The Centenary Chapel, with its lecture room and 5 classrooms, was erected.

1868-77 Secretary of the Preston District Congregational Union.

1873 Appointed a deacon of the Church.

1875-91 Treasurer of the Preston District.

1887 Chairman of the Lancashire Congregational Union

1907 Centenary Chairman

President of the Bible Society. The oldest and the longest serving Sunday School teacher in Lancaster. He spent the whole of Sunday according to one account – "... in church. He went to the first service, gathered with the elders, worshipped at the service and with his two aged sister had luncheon in the vestry behind. After which they went to their Sunday School. Mr. Dawson returned to chapel for evening service and then went home having spent the day in the service of the Lord".

### Temperance Work

His work in the law courts convinced him that drink was the cause of most crime and he became a total abstainer in 1857.

1861 President of the Total Abstinence Society for 50 years.

1862 – 77 Hon. Sec British Temperance League

1871 Member of the Kendal Good Templar Association.

Vice-President of Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope Union.

Turned down an invitation to fight a seat in Parliament as a Temperance candidate.

### Other public work

Member of the South Lonsdale Education Committee.

Life Governor of Mill Hill School.

Governor of Archbishop Hutton's School, Warton.

Member of the Philosophical Society and Scientific and Astronomical Society.

1863 Director of Lancaster Athenaeum.

1858 Secretary of the North Lancs. Floral & Horticultural Society.

The last Trustee of the British School in Aldcliffe Lane. Sold the property and with the proceeds set up a scholarship at the Grammar School.

Member, and later Vice Chairman of Committee of the Royal Albert Institutions for the Feeble-minded.

Director of the Lancaster Bank and after amalgamation of the Manchester and Liverpool District Bank.

Land Tax and Income Tax Commissioner for 50 years.

Vice-President of Anti- Narcotic Society.

President of Lancashire Farmers' Association.

1912 Appointed Chairman of Lancaster Rural District Council.

In his younger days especially, he was regarded as a stern and strict magistrate, but on his election to be Chairman of Quarter Sessions he observed :-“... justice to the public would be associated with mercy to prisoners.”

His death and funeral were reported in the Lancaster Guardian of May 6th. and May 13th. 1916, and even then, in the middle years of the Great War, the reports were carried across three columns. The reports state that so conscientious was he, in regard to his magisterial duties, that only a month before, at the age of 95 years, he had attended the Sessions, caught a chill, which developed into congestion of the lungs and linked with a heart condition led to his death. The funeral cortege of 10 carriages for family, close friends and representatives left the Lodge, for a service at the Centenary chapel and afterwards to return for the burial in the private cemetery in the Hall grounds. His Aldcliffe tenants attended both these services and they included Mr. Woof, the retired gardener at Aldcliffe Hall and his wife, Mr. and Mrs Mackereth, Mr. and Mrs. James Postlethwaite, Mr. Jas. Huntington, Mr. and Mrs Henry Fox, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Fox, Mr. J. Askew and Mr. James Fox, who had farmed at Aldcliffe for 38 years.

## APPRECIATION

In the preceding pages the public image of Edward Bousfield Dawson has been well documented - 60 years service to the law, administering it according to his lights in the Northern Counties but more especially in Lonsdale and the borough, worshipping at the Centenary Chapel and teaching in its Sunday School, travelling much both at home and abroad, collecting antiquities, building farms and cottages, managing his vast farming estates as well as the welfare of his family, where one daughter married a clergyman, another a magazine editor and writer, a third married a dentist and his eldest remained a spinster at the Hall.

He had a wide-ranging seemingly successful life, but there was also domestic tragedy there, for in 1894 his wife died leaving him with another 22 years of life: his two sons died before attaining full maturity, Howard in 1896 and in 1902 his second son, who was an invalid all his life. He knew disappointment in other ways. On two occasions he was a candidate at County Council elections and on each occasion he was rejected by the voters. He was not a man to court popularity and his strict moral standards and decided views seem to be reflected in the full-bearded, severe-faced, determined-looking newspaper photographs and in his portrait by R.E. Morrison, which hangs in the Grand Jury Room at the Castle.

There are Aldcliffe residents, and former residents, who have vivid memories of this last male Dawson of Aldcliffe Hall.

Numerous stories have been told by these, and others now dead, of him in his role as "lord of the manor" and of his demands to be so regarded. The challenge to the rights and privileges of "well born" landed gentry had not yet flourished, especially in a close community like Aldcliffe. When he, or his lady, walked through the village, women were expected to curtsy and the men to doff their headgear or "pull the forelock", in a respectful manner, so when a young woman returned to Aldcliffe, after marriage and a few years' absence in town, she found it difficult to conform and her father, who was an estate worker, was told by Mr. Dawson to see that she mended her ways.

Great pride was taken in village tidiness, in the annual pink wash of the cottages, in the weed-free condition of the cobbled yards and road and in avoiding litter and if there was any fall off, Mr Dawson would enter, as of right, any cottage to deal with it and even to correct some personal peccadillo. I have heard of him reprimanding smokers, particularly on the Sabbath, yet his own worshipping needs would demand long hours from his coachman each Sunday. His severity on the Bench was instanced by sending young boys to approved school training for stealing apples. Prompt attention at the lodge gates at the approach of his carriage was the rule but he could also express appreciation to a young clerk, who when presented with a £10 note in settlement of some account, "counted on" the change in approved shop keeper fashion.

Edward Bousfield Dawson saw his family's prosperity and influence attain its zenith and with his passing, Dawson influence and prestige dwindled.

MARY PHILADELPHIA DAWSON 1863 to 1945  
"MISS DAWSON"

By his will made on 11 Dec. 1907 and altered by codicils in June 1914, E.B. Dawson created trusts which eventually led to the division of the Aldcliffe estates. He left the bulk of his land to his eldest grandson, Edward Dawson Gwion Harries, son of Rev. H. Harries M.A. and a lesser portion of the Hall, gardens and immediate surrounds, an trust to his eldest, unmarried daughter, Mary Philadelphia, who continued to reside with him until his death in 1916. The heir to the large estate was an officer serving in France and was unable to attend his grandfather's funeral.

Mary Philadelphia, her married sister Constance Isabel Hall of Inverlune and solicitor Mr Swainson were the executors and trustees to the will, proved in Sept. 1917 and continued as such until June 1931, when, on the death of Mrs Hall, Mr. W.H. Satterthwaite replaced her as a trustee. In April 1933, Miss Dawson purchased the Hall and land surrounding of just over 40 acres, for £4325 from the trust, so becoming owner. She continued to live at the Hall until her death an 20th. Dec 1945.

Miss Dawson continued the evangelistic, Dissenting tradition of the Leighs and the Dawsons. She continued her father's interest in Congregationalism, in temperance and in missionary work. Much of her church work was centred on the Mission chapel which had been established in a meeting room above the outbuildings at the rear of Hill Farm. At the services she would play the organ and attend to duties with the visiting preachers. She was treasurer for several missionary charities, retained the family interest in the Centenary Chapel, where she was a lady life deacon and supported many churches and good causes, but especially the Band of Hope, the Temperance Union and Total Abstinence groups.

The Mission room was a centre not only for worship with young and old, from Stodday and even some townfolk attending, but was also used for wedding receptions and for funerals and for the tea parties and concerts which were such a feature of chapel life in those days.

During these inter-war years farming fell into decline. The estate ticked over but the days of expansion and acquisition were passed. During the next 50 years not a single house was built, though a few were abandoned and demolished. Like her father and grandfather, Mary P. Dawson lived to a ripe old age, taking a lady companion to see her through her later years, to die aged 82 years. She was regarded as somewhat eccentric in the closing years, or as a nonagenarian described her rather charmingly as a "funniosity". At her funeral service at the Centenary Chapel her old world courtesy, her direct forcefulness and strong will and convictions as well as her family bonds with the Congregational Church were mentioned. The interment was at Scotforth Cemetery where her dwindling staff at the Hall and tenant farmers attended.

Many of the family had by now, left the district, but the Halls lived at Inverlune, so it was that her nephews and niece were appointed executors of her will. Eric Edward Dawson Hall, then a mining engineer and later. H.M. Inspector of Mines, inherited the Hall and much reduced estate and in 1946 assumed, by deed poll, the name of Dawson-Hall and with the assent of the executors the ownership of his aunt's estate. Thereby the Dawson family name was maintained.

On June 28th. 1946 there was a sale of effects and contents of the Hall, when the mahogany bookshelves, library and writing tables, terrestrial globes, long-cased clocks, display cabinets, silver and glass ware, grand and upright pianos, as well as telescope and stereoscope remind us of the opulence and interests of the family. Two items listed in the impressive catalogue of the sale give a peep at the idiosyncratic collector's mania :- "Horn of a sea Unicorn taken in the Greenland Seas by the ship "Britannia" 1801 and "9ft.(museum specimen) Swordfish Walking Stick".

The sale marked the end of 204 years' occupation of the Hall by the Dawsons.

### LANCASTER TAKES OVER ALDCLIFFE

In local government administration Aldcliffe was a separate township in the Rural District around Lancaster and as previously noted, E. B. Dawson had been Chairman of this Council in 1912. As if further to emphasize the decline in these inter-war years, the borough, soon to become a city, under the Local Government Act of 1929, wanted to expand.

In May 1932, the County Council in its boundary revisions proposed that the township of Aldcliffe should be absorbed into the borough of Lancaster. The borough committee, set up to arrange the take over, decided to ask for more - to take in Stodday, more of Scotforth, Quernmore, Halton and beyond Skerton. After nearly two years of inquiry, discussion and proposals with the County Council and the Rural District Council it was finally agreed that 839 acres of Aldcliffe (that is the whole township) should be added to the Borough and become part of the Queen's Ward. The order became operative on 1st. April 1935, when Aldcliffe lost its last shred of local government autonomy, was absorbed into the City and is now a part of Castle Ward.

## POST WAR CHANGES

The fate of the Hall after Miss Dawson's death became uncertain, for applications for development to convert it to flats did not materialize and then in 1950 Lansil used it to accommodate their foreign workers, chiefly Polish girls, who came over as displaced persons, to work at their factory on Caton Road. Even more ambitious schemes for the "development" of the village were mooted for in the after war years there was a great demand for municipal housing, so a scheme for 1,000 houses was projected in 1952. It was rejected.

In 1953, Mr Eric Dawson-Hall sold his inheritance, consisting of the Hall, its pleasure grounds and gardens, Home Farm, West Lodge and Ivy Cottage- some 40 acres - to Mrs. Muriel Townley, wife of Barton Townley, of Bailrigg. Mr. Dawson-Hall retained his right of access to, and ownership of the private family cemetery in the grounds just behind Ivy Cottage. Once again housing developments were planned and although some schemes were rejected. It was from these years from 1955 onwards that the village began to grow and change its character completely. First housing developed along the western end of the former hall drive and nine houses and bungalows were interspersed amongst the trees in the next ten years.

The Hall was now disused with the gardens overgrown and was finally demolished in 1960 after a comparatively short life of less than 150 years. In 1970 the largest change yet seen in the village began, when an estate of some 32 detached red-brick houses was erected and transformed the site of the hall and its garden and removed all trace of both historic houses, so that there is now a piece of neat suburbia known as Craiglands Court and Oaklands Court, with the occasional solitary tree standing as a sentinel to what has happened. Even the private cemetery was engulfed and the remains were lifted and re-interred in Scotforth Cemetery.

Similar great changes were taking place in the Harries portion of the inheritance. He remained an absentee landlord with the farms and cottages administered by local agents. With the death of E. D. Gwion Harries estate passed through trust to Geoffrey Harries, who had a personal interest in his property and seems to have enjoyed his visits to the village and to his tenants. Hill Farm, for several generations the home of the Fox family and then of the Bennetts, remained empty, although its land and out buildings were used by Mr. Michael Bennett, of Arna Wood Farm. In the late 70's, the barns, the stables and the farmhouse were re-furbished and five new houses were created and given the name of "Aldcliffe Mews. Now in 1987 the adjacent quarry, whose past story has eluded me, has been levelled and asphalted into a tennis court.

Circumstances however have prevented Mr. Harries from retaining all his land. First Brookholme Farm was sold to its farmer tenant and then Bank Farm was put on the market. This was purchased by the Townley family, who years previously had bought the Hall and grounds, and who had now left Bailrigg. The farm-house, which had been tenanted by Mark Airey and later by his son James, since 1926, was sold in 1987. The farm buildings now stand empty and the land is portioned off into nine parcels for annual renting by local farmers. The cottages, which once housed the estate and farm workers, have been sold off so that only one remains, tenanted by the grand-daughter of Mr. Woof, once the head-gardener.

These changes have altered the village character and appearance, for there is now uncertainty about the future. The one farm still in full tenant occupancy is Arna Wood, farmed by Michael Bennett, but even here with the death of Geoffrey Harries some years ago, the second marriage of his widow, Mrs. Holden, and her recent death and the inheritance by her three children, much has yet to be settled.

Low Wood Farm lost much of its land to the Water Board when they extended the old sewerage works and installed new filtration plant throughout the late 70's. The remaining land was added to Arna Wood.

Across the river at Sunderland Point, the surviving grandchildren of E.B.Dawson, now themselves Full of years", may recall an Aldcliffe of yesteryear when change came slowly, and wonder, like we who are still resident in the hamlet, enjoying the shade and contours of the trees planted in the landscaping of the 1820's, what yet has still to come.

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