

## **The Harrington Family, The Stanley Family and ownership of Wraysholme from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.**

The early history of Allithwaite is difficult to piece together because of the lack of documents. The following is a summary of some of the information that relates to the Harrington family of Aldingham and Gleaston who were owners of Wraysholme from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. One of the problems encountered is that families usually use the same first names each generation and it is difficult to work out who is being talked about when dates are not given with events.

J Melville writing in the Barrow Evening Mail on 7 July 1967 stated that the manor of Allithwaite was held by Gospatrick, Lord of Workington in 1150 and in about 1200 part of the Manor was given to Thomas younger son of Robert de Harrington of Gleaston. Towards the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Alan de Copeland gave the whole manor to Robert de Harrington. This information comes from the Victoria County History entry for Lower Allithwaite (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol8/pp265-268>).

In a history of the Harrington family (Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser *01 March 1884* – Old Country Houses of Lancashire and Cheshire, The Harringtons) it was stated that the second Robert de Harrington married Agnes Cansfield and she inherited the Aldingham Estates when her brother was drowned in the River Severn. They moved to and lived at Aldingham on the shore of Morecambe Bay until their deaths, Agnes in 1293 and Robert in 1297. Their oldest son was Michael and he was granted free warren in Alinthwaite (Allithwaite in the parish of Cartmel) in 1314-15 which gave him the right to hunt on the land. Michael's estate passed to his brother John and his descendants. John married Joan de Dacre, a wealthy heiress born in about 1283, the daughter of Sir William de Dacre and Joan Gernet. The Harrington tomb at Cartmel shows the carved effigies of Sir John Harrington, who died about 1347, and his wife Joan (nee Dacre). It is not known if Sir John and Joan ever lived at Wraysholme or why they chose to have such a grand tomb placed in Cartmel Priory as there was an ancient church at Aldingham where the family originally lived. Gleaston Castle, inland of Aldingham, became home to the Harrington family at an unknown date.

Wraysholme is not mentioned again for nearly 150 years and it is not clear which branch of the family it belonged to but the Harrington's of Hornby Castle were the most likely owners. The Harrington Family and the Stanley Family were large landowners in the north west and a feud started between them following the Battle of Wakefield on 30 Dec 1460 (<https://mattlewisauthor.wordpress.com/2013/04/05/hornby-castle-the-price-of->

power-2/). The Stanleys wanted to own Hornby Castle as they owned much of the land around it. The feud between the families centred on which member of the Harrington family (Sir William or his son Sir John) died first in battle because this had an affect on who inherited Hornby Castle. One report says that John, the son died the day before his father, William. Two young Harrington girls, Anne and Elizabeth, daughters of Sir John Harrington, would have been John's heirs, if he had died after his father, and the castle would then have passed to whoever they married. Because their father had died and they were not adults, their wardship passed by law to Edward IV (1461-1483), of York, who then gave it to Thomas Stanley, the first Earl of Derby. Members of the Harrington family, however, seized the girls and withdrew to Hornby Castle. Earl Stanley laid siege to the castle in 1470 while petitioning Parliament for redress. In 1472 the Harrington's relented and Anne was married to the Earl's second son, Sir Edward Stanley of Hornby Castle.

Victoria County History (VCH 1914 A History of Lancashire Vol 8 <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol8/pp265-268>) records that in 1489 Wraysholme and other Harrington lands were in the king's hands because Henry VII (1485-1509) had confiscated the estates of Sir Thomas Harrington of Brierley, Sheriff of Yorkshire, following Sir Thomas's conviction for treason in about 1485. He had supported Richard III (1483-1485). Sir Thomas was the brother of Sir William who had died at the Battle of Wakefield on 30 Dec 1460 and an uncle of Anne and Elizabeth, and had possibly argued that he was person who should inherit Hornby Castle.

The King granted the confiscated Harrington lands and estate to George, known as Lord Strange and his male heirs, and George was the eldest son of Thomas, the first Earl of Derby, the title bestowed on the Stanley family by the King. Therefore the former Harrington Estate now came under the control of the first and second sons of the first Earl of Derby, the Stanley family, at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century either by marriage or forfeit but definitely not by a sale.

I		I
William Harrington		Thomas Harrington
I		I
John		I
I		I
I	I	I
Anne	Elizabeth	Harrington Estates
married		granted by King to
Sir Edward Stanley		George, Lord Strange
second son of		eldest son of
Thomas, first Earl of Derby		Thomas, first Earl of Derby

Stockdale, on page 482 of *Annals of Cartmel*, published in 1872, is sure that Wraysholme passed to the Stanley family by the marriage of Anne because of some painted glass that was in the parlour window of the farmhouse.

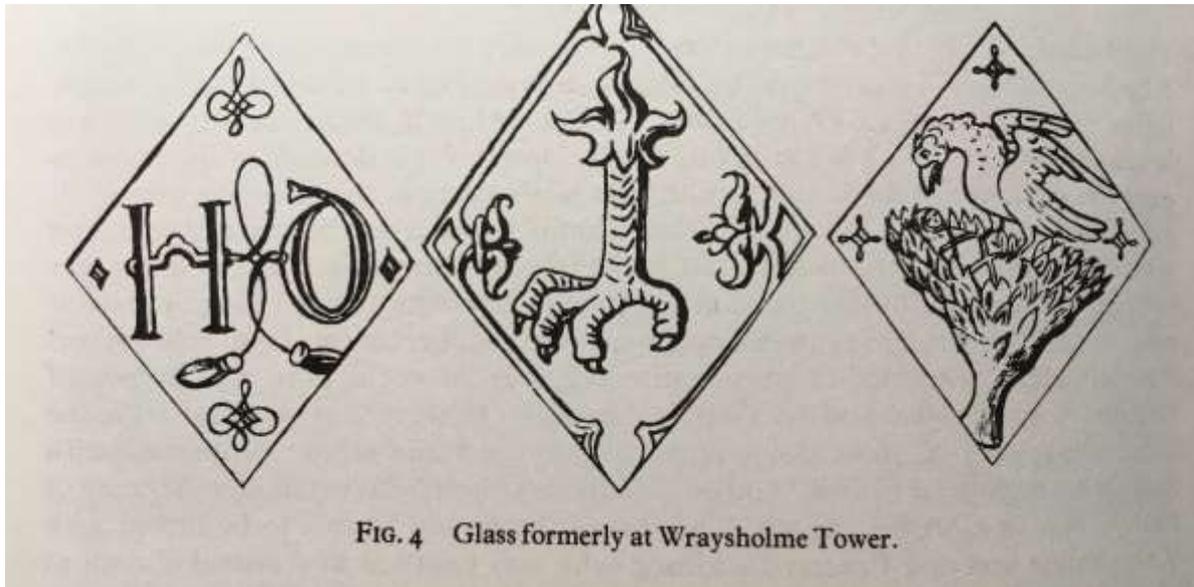


FIG. 4 Glass formerly at Wraysholme Tower.

One piece of glass contained three painted, lozenge-shaped shields. The first shield contained the initials H and Q. As the Q shape was also used for W(double U) in medieval times he considered the initials were for Harrington and William and this was supported by 'two rude Harrington knots at the top and bottom angles'. Two other shields were painted with an eagle's claw and the eagle and child crest of the Derby or Monteagles. He speculated that the glass was from the Tower and related to Sir William Harrington of Hornby Castle, standard bearer at the battle of Agincourt, who had died in 1460. Stockdale relates that Mrs Harrison moved the glass from the tower to the farmhouse in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the *Lands of Cartmel* published in 1980 Dickinson provided an illustration on page 70 (see above) and considered that the initials were HD for Hugh Dicconson, an owner in the 17<sup>th</sup> century but he agreed with Stockdale about the Stanley badge and crest. The glass was removed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by another owner, Thomas Newby Wilson, grandson of Mrs Harrison, and installed in his new property at Ambleside that he had named Wraysholme. It is not known what happened to the glass subsequently.

Thomas, George's son and the second Earl of Derby, held Wraysholme at his death in 1521, the service of one knight's fee being due for it. (*Duchy of Lanc. Inq. p.m. v, no, 68*). This meant in medieval times that the land holding was awarded by the King with the obligation that the Knight would perform military service when required. Men from Cartmel fought at Flodden (1513) and Dickinson (*Lands of Cartmel 1980 p69*) quotes from a Tudor ballad and says that men from Lancashire were led by Stanley. Wraysholme descended to

Ferdinando the fifth earl, (Inq. p.m. in Add. MS. 32104, fol. 412, 425) but a few years after his death in 1594 it was sold to the Dicconsions, who had been tenants.

Confirmation that the Dickinson's were the tenants of the Earl of Derby comes from George Preston of Holker in 1628. He stated that the manor of Wraysholme, with its demesne lands, rents, services, etc. in Allithwaite and Flookburgh, had been granted in 1597 by William Earl of Derby to Hugh Dicconson for the payment of £100 and a rent of £9 7s. 8d. Dicconson had in 1605 granted the same to Preston for a term of years (VCH Duchy of Lanc. Plead, bdle. 313.)

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