

# The Blencowes of Blencow

Landholder, soldier & magistrate, **Adam** acquired a considerable amount of land, much of it related in some way to his military service and perhaps to his close friendship or even kinship with William Baron of Greystoke. Granted arms in 1357.

Appointed Justice of the Peace in 1404, **Thomas** enjoyed the rise in status of his family and expanded his real estate portfolio. The “gentry” status enabled him to marry “well.” Rental income, as well as services from his tenants rather than farming his lands, supported a comfortable lifestyle.

By now there were 2 homesteads, merely castellated peel towers: probably the Old Blencow Hall & the beginnings of the Peel towers of Blencow Hall. Peel towers were a feature of Boarder homes built to protect the family & their cattle from constant Scottish plundering.

Blencow Hall, had adjacent buildings added to the peel tower. **Richard** acquired more lands and buildings yet was still considered to be of the ‘lower’ gentry. This was the time leading into the civil war & Richard trod wearily acting as a courier for both sides. This earned him the reputation as being *“a man of small possessions deserving more to be hanged than to be*

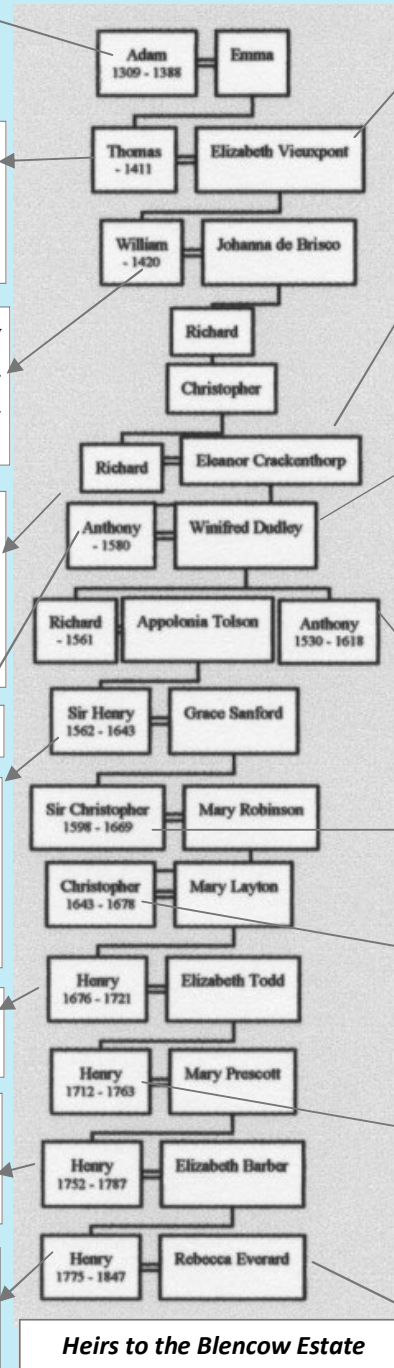
He married the granddaughter of **Lord Dudley** . He lived in Blencow Hall.

**Sir Henry** lived on rents from his tenants rather than commercial farming. He received a knighthood from James I. He served twice as High Sheriff of Cumberland. Sir Henry is best known for converting the homestead into what we now know as Blencow Hall which remained much as Henry left it until its recent extensive renovation.

**Henry** inherited the estate aged 2. First wife **Dorothy Sisson** -(page 11). He studied at Cambridge, moved to Whitehaven & leased Tangier House.

**Henry Prescott Blencowe** 1 was a Lawyer in London and later Thoby in Essex, who died at 35 leaving 7 children. The eldest sons of the last 4 generations of this line were all christened **Henry Prescott Blencowe**.

**Henry Prescott Blencowe** 2 sold **Blencow Hall** in 1802 to the 11th Duke of Norfolk who had earlier remodelled Greystoke Castle. It continued as a



**Elizabeth** heiress of **Nicholas Vieuxpont** brought into the family the benefits of an affluent Cumbrian family with interesting connections. This was a period of pestilence and bloodshed, with Blencow & Greystoke villages left in smoking ruins in 1345 due to the marauding Scots.

**Eleanor** was from a prominent and wealthy Westmorland family at Newbrigin Hall, connected by marriage to most of the leading houses in Cumbria. Her **Crackenthorp** arms are carved over the doorway at Blencow Hall.

**Winifred** was the second cousin of **Guildford Dudley**, husband of **Lady Jane Grey** who became **Queen of England** for 9 days in July 1553 .On the eve of her execution in 1554, Lady Jane wrote to her sister the words **Vivere mori, mori vitae** ( roughly translated as “live to die, dying is living” or “Live still to die, that you may by death purchase eternal life.”This quote has become the Blencowe motto. Lord Guildford Dudley was beheaded alongside Jane at the Tower of London.

**Anthony Blencowe** was Provost of Oriel College, Oxford from 1574 to

**Sir Christopher’s** lifetime spanned one of the most tumultuous periods in English History with the conflict between Crown and Parliament erupting in to war in 1642 with the **Battle of Edgehill**. In 1648 Penrith fell to the Round-heads resulting in the troops causing severe damage which may have included the gaping fissure in the south tower on Blencow Hall.

**Christopher** attended St John’s College Cambridge He was Justice of the Peace in Carlisle and died aged 34 leaving 4 children under 4..He **leased Blencow Hall** to John Jacques. (See next article on page 10).

Inherited the Blencow estate but never lived there as an adult. He was a Lawyer. His marriage to distant cousin Mary linked the Northamptonshire family back to the Cumbrian line. **Mary Prescott** was the only surviving child of **Alexander Prescott** and **Mary Blencowe** (a daughter of **Sir John**).

The Everards were a wealthy family of merchants in King’s Lynn, Norfolk and later developed the Everard’s Shipping Company. Vol.23 No.4 2008.

**Heirs to the Blencow Estate**