



Ch 1399-36

1.—BROUGH HALL, NEAR CATTERICK: THE NORTH FRONT

Ch 1399

BROUGH HALL, YORKSHIRE—I

THE SEAT OF SIR RALPH LAWSON, BT. *except* ⁽²⁾ ⁽³⁾ By JOHN CORNFORTH

The late-16th-century house of the Lawsons was classicised about 1730 and extended in the 1770s by Thomas Atkinson. It is one of the oldest Roman Catholic houses in the north of England still occupied by descendants of its original builders.

BOROUGHBRIDGE, Catterick Bridge and Scotch Corner are familiar names on the Great North Road as it streaks across the Yorkshire plain towards the Durham border, but the road has changed so much in recent years that the landmarks have altered, too. At Catterick it no longer goes through the village and past the racecourse to the old bridge over the Swale, but now plunges down into a cutting and then crosses the river a little farther upstream, towards

Point in Passes. No way.

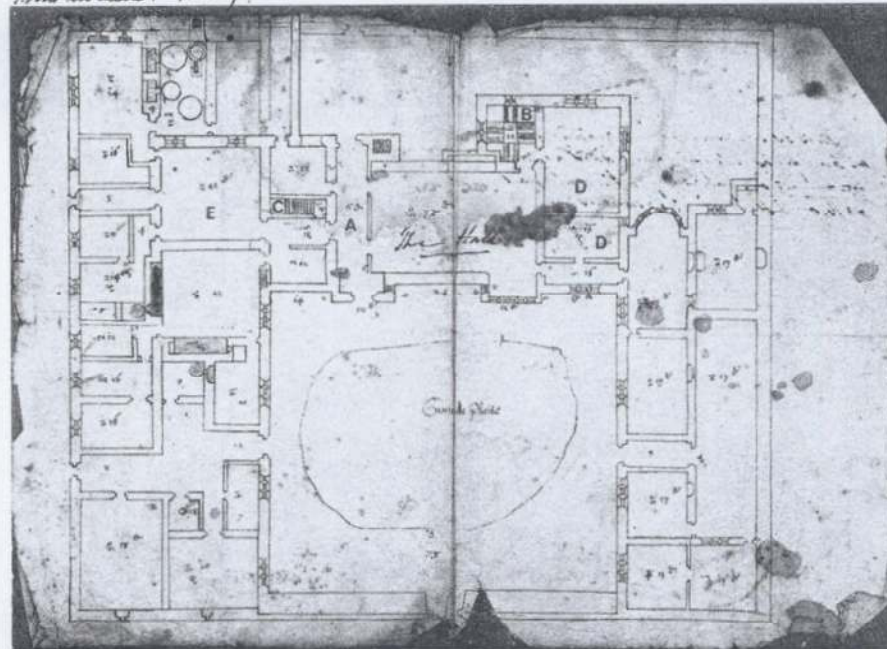
Richmond. Inevitably this new route seems to divide the history of Catterick and Brough, which lies about a mile to the south-west, and makes it more difficult for a stranger to grasp the Lawson family's ancient connection with the village.

For centuries they and their medieval and Tudor predecessors, the de Brughs or Broughs, maintained the bridge and were buried in the church that Katherine de Brugh and hers on built in 1412; and it was to the Lawsons,

probably to the 1st or 2nd baronets, that Catterick owes its racecourse. But the coming of the military camp and the new road has made Brough retreat into its park: even the old drives have dropped out of use, and fine Adamesque gate-piers now lead only into fields. The present way to the house is from the north, down a lane that brings one into the park close to the great Victorian chapel. In a sense, this is a very suitable approach because it is a reminder that Brough is one of the oldest and most loyal of northern Roman Catholic houses.

There is no fuss of lodges or blaze of heraldry at the entrance to the park, and the drive winds towards the house in an exaggerated reversed S that gives delightful glimpses of it through the trees. One expects to find it austere and grey, but instead one's first impression is of its warmth and friendliness. Like most houses on a medieval site it sits down snugly in the landscape, hiding from the wind, and the tiers of round-headed windows with their crisp white astragals seem to beckon one across the park; and, most important for a north-facing house, the stone is not chilly, but a lively pink, purple brown. It is only when one gets to the pretty classical bridge over the beck that the view becomes clear of big trees and the effective grouping and movement of the building becomes apparent (Fig. 1). The flanking wings are reassuringly straightforward mid- to late-Georgian and pose no problems, but the upright central block does not fit into any preconceived picture of an 18th-century house, and immediately one starts to wonder about its true age and the course of its history.

However, before attempting to trace that, it is necessary to explain how the Lawsons came to Brough in the second half of the 16th century. Henry (Maire) Lawson, who inherited in 1811, traced his ancestors back to Leonard Lawson of Burwell, *alias* Bywell, 13 generations back from the Ralph Lawson who acquired Brough. This Leonard Lawson appears to be the same man as Lawrence of



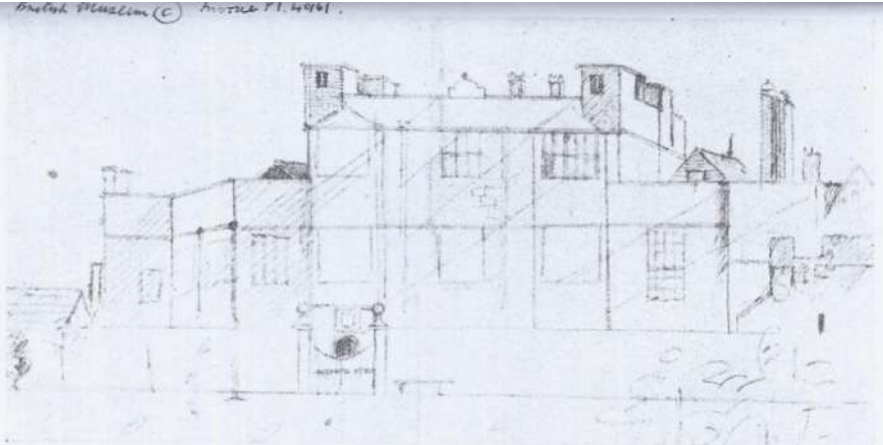
2.—A PLAN OF THE HOUSE, ABOUT 1630. The layout of the middle fits in with the arrangement of the rooms today. A. Screens Passage. B. Oak Staircase. C. Stone Staircase. D. Drawing-Room. E. Kitchen Court

Corbridge, whom H. H. E. Craster identifies as the first of the family: he appears in a subsidy roll of 1336, and was a burgher of Newcastle and a householder in Corbridge. Craster accepts that William Lawson, who married Agnes Cramlington about 1425, was a closely related descendant of his. Through this marriage Cramlington came to the Lawsons, and the senior branch continued to hold part of it until they died out in 1791.

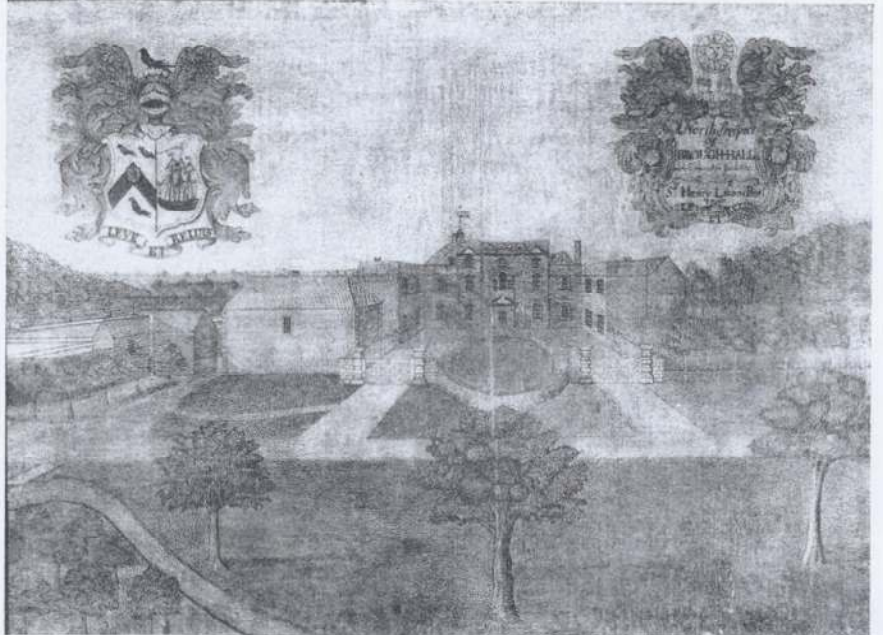
One of William Lawson's younger great-grandsons, James, was a Newcastle merchant and mayor of the town in 1529 and 1540. He bought property at Byker, just to the east of Gateshead on the Tyne, and at West Watten. Ralph Lawson was James's grandson, and acquired Brough through his marriage in 1565 to Elizabeth Brough, the heiress. The Broughs were a family as old as the Lawsons, and seem to have held the property at least since the reign of Edward II.

It is not clear when Elizabeth Brough's father died and Brough came to the young couple, but Ralph and Elizabeth Lawson were certainly the builders of the middle part of the present house. Ralph Lawson was only 15 in 1561-62 and at Douai in 1568, and so it is unlikely that they started to build until after that, probably in the 1570s or '80s. The reason for attributing the house to them is heraldic evidence on all three floors. Both the ceilings in the great hall and the present kitchen on the first floor bear their arms: two achievements occur, one showing the arms of the Lawsons quartered with those of the Cramlingtons and the Swinnows, Ralph Lawson's mother's family, together with the Lawson crest; and the other showing the arms of the Lawsons impaled with those of the Broughs, the Lawson arms quartered as before, and the Brough arms quartered with a coat I have not identified. In subsidiary panels appear the Lawson martlet, the Lawson rising sun, the Swinnow boar, and the Brough swan. Fragments of a frieze on the top floor also incorporate the complete Lawson crest, a rising sun supported by two flexed arms on a wreath.

It is not possible to determine the full extent of the late-16th-century house or how much of the earlier building was incorporated in it. The earliest plan (Fig. 2) is one of about 1630 and is puzzling because of the unexpected spread of the building to the north and east: it is not clear whether it is a survey of what was already in existence or whether it is partly a proposal for its enlargement, but the layout of the middle block fits in with the arrangement we see today. It has a strongly



3.—BUCK'S DRAWING OF BROUGH, ABOUT 1720. This shows the Elizabethan house before it was classisiced



4.—BROUGH IN 1750. Showing the Elizabethan house classisiced and the wings before their rebuilding in the 1770s



5.—THE MIDDLE OF THE NORTH FRONT



6.—PART OF THE SOUTH ELEVATION. The Venetian window lights the oak staircase, and the chapel wing lies on the right

traditional or even medieval look about it, with the hall as the pivot of the design. At the west, high table, end was a big projecting window, in the position of a hall oriel, and behind lay parlours and the principal staircase. East of the hall was a screens passage, entered in a projection matching the big window in the hall, and further east there was a kitchen court.

The arrangement of the hall and screens passage (A on plan) still survives, although the screen has gone (and by one of those curious turns of history, the Lawsons now find it more convenient to use the original door into the old screens passage than the central door leading straight into the hall). In other ways, too, the Elizabethan plan is clearly recognisable: the Georgian oak staircase has replaced the south staircase (B) and there is still a stone stair in the same position as that shown to the east of the screens passage (C). The two parlours west of the hall are now the drawing-room (D), and the narrow slip of a room at the north end is part of the corridor leading to the 1770 staircase. There is a kitchen court approximately on the site of the one shown in the plan (E).

The classical appearance of the house today is thus but skin-deep. This becomes even clearer if one compares Fig. 5 with the 1630 plan and with Buck's view of about 1720 (Fig. 3). Buck's drawing from the Warburton MSS in the British Museum shows the Elizabethan fenestration and the original treatment of the single bay projections that seem so puzzling now. A picture at Brough dated 1750 (Fig. 4) shows the next stage, with the Elizabethan house as recased in classical dress by Sir John Lawson, the 3rd baronet, who inherited in 1725 and died in 1739. Lower wings are shown extending to east and west, and the stables lie in front of the east wing. When the wings were rebuilt in 1772-75, their height was dictated by that of their predecessors, and one suspects that some old walling was retained behind the new façades.

On the south side of the house (Fig. 6) no attempt was made to order the work of several centuries, and, indeed, without extensive additions, which never seem to have been contemplated, it would have been impossible. The most prominent feature is the staircase tower with its Venetian and Roman windows inserted about 1730. To the right of this, and

although Roger spent part of the year in London at the Inner Temple. Although Catholics were supposed to be barred from practising law, it seems the penal statutes were not watertight and Roger Lawson may have been able to undertake certain legal work without conforming. Certainly he died a Catholic in 1612 or '13. Several years before this Brough had already become too small for all his children—suggesting it was smaller than the house on the 1630 plan—and in 1605 he and Dame Dorothy moved to Heaton in Northumberland, where they lived until after his death. In 1614 his widow moved to St. Anthony's, at Byker on the Tyne to the east of Gateshead, because her father-in-law wished to sell Heaton. According to her chaplain and biographer (whose MSS is still at Brough) it was "a place more advantageous for her designs . . . a seat incomparably more pleasant, but no house unless shee would erect one at her own charges. Hope and confidence in God gave courage to commence a new building, and charity facilitated the work; first, because the place was holy, dedicated in Catholic times to St. Anthony, his picture being decently



7.—A DETAIL OF THE ELIZABETHAN FRIEZE ON THE SECOND FLOOR. It incorporates the Lawson crest

set back, is the Elizabethan house, where rubble walling and blocked windows appear through the rough casting put on in 1833. The low arched door to the left of the massive buttress leads into the screens passage. At right angles to the Elizabethan building lies the chapel, basically of about 1730 but perhaps altered about 1770 by Thomas Atkinson. At the west end of the house the main feature is the shallow bow that houses Atkinson's elegant staircase.

As early as the second half of the 16th century restrictive legislation forced Catholics to go abroad for their education, and Ralph Lawson appears to have been among the first students at Douai when it was founded in 1568. There is a record of this at Brough in the form of a book of miniatures with the arms of his contemporaries there, together with a portrait of himself inscribed "For Ralphe Lawson Esq an English Young Gentleman & bright with ye Riches of Virtue & ye Nobleness of his Pedigree, These were taken care to be Painted by Felix Lewis at Douay in the Year from Christs Nativity 1568 & of his Age ye 24th." He was knighted in 1603 and died in 1623.

When his son, Roger, married Dorothy Constable, a daughter of Sir Henry Constable of Burton Constable, in 1597, Ralph Lawson settled Brough on them, and for the first years of their marriage they lived there,



8.—THE HALL. The ceiling bears the arms of Ralph Lawson and Elizabeth Brough, the builders of the house

ca ↓

plac'd in a tree near the River Tine, for the comfort of seamen; secondly, for that it was more private than Heton, and free to frequent her chapell." On the gable end of the house she set up the word JESUS "large in proportion and accurate for art, that it might serve the mariners instead of St. Anthony's picture," and each room was "nominated and publicly known by the name of some particular saint." During her years in Northumberland she brought about many conversions and was even protected on occasion by a well-disposed mayor of Newcastle. When she died in 1632 she was given a public funeral and buried in All Saints, Newcastle, according to the full Catholic rite.

Her eldest son had died in 1612, and Henry her second son in 1635, but the latter left a 12-year-old son, also Henry, to inherit. Henry the younger married Catherine Fenwick and had a daughter, but no son, and so after he was killed at Melton Mowbray fighting for the King, Brough passed to his younger brother, John. The years that followed were particularly difficult for the family because of John Lawson's youth, the claims to the property advanced by Catherine Lawson on behalf of her daughter, and sequestration. Little could be proved by the Parliamentary committees against John himself,



9.—THE DRAWING-ROOM. It is formed from two rooms panelled in the late 17th or early 18th century



10.—PART OF THE STAIRCASE. "A typical piece of York work, with excellent joinery, crisp carving and good plaster-work"

who lived quietly at Brough after serving for a few months in the Royalist army before he was of age, but even so his losses were heavy. His mother's house at St. Anthony's had been fired by the Royalists in 1644 out of fear that the Scots might occupy it; in 1652 it was sold for the use of the navy and never recovered by the Lawsons. Cramlington was leased to George Moor in 1652, but John Lawson did manage to recover part of the purchase money in 1653. According to a family tradition other Northumberland property and Brough itself were recovered through the influence of the Cromwell ladies, with whom the Lawsons were friendly.

After the Restoration, John Lawson's wife, Lady Katherine Howard, a daughter of the Earl of Carlisle to whom the Lawson lands had been charged for safety, petitioned Charles II for assistance to recover lost lands, claiming "it has reduced us to a low condition having a great charge of children [they had 12 in all], yet we endure it cheerfully nor can I still repine at my suffering it being so noble an account and so just a cause." King Charles could not and would not answer such pleas, but he did recognise the Lawsons' sacrifices by conferring a baronetcy in 1665.

Barred from public life, several of Sir John's sons went abroad, at least for a time. William became a Benedictine monk, and Thomas a Jesuit priest; Charles was a captain in the Duke of Monmouth's regiment and was

killed later in Germany; and all five daughters became nuns at Ghent. William and Thomas both served as chaplains at Brough, William apparently succeeding his uncle, Francis, who was also a Benedictine and Provincial of York from 1677 to 1686. Thomas was minister at the English College in Rome in 1692-93 and came back to Brough in 1700; a few years later he went over to the Stuart court at St. Germain's and for a time was confessor to the Old Pretender.

There is no record of any alterations at Brough in the late 17th or early 18th century, but the two parlours to the west of the hall that now form the drawing-room (Fig. 9) must have been panelled in the 1st or 2nd baronet's time. The classicising of the house, as I have already suggested, was probably carried out by Sir John, the third baronet. Although there are no accounts to support this, and no evidence as to who directed the work, it is conceivable that William Wakefield may have been responsible for the design, but discussion of this will have to be held over until next week when the chapel will be illustrated.

Apart from refacing the Elizabethan house, Sir John made the chapel in the south wing, inserted the oak staircase, and altered both the hall (Fig. 8) and the great chamber over it. He did not disturb the hall ceiling, but I think he rearranged the panelling to make it appear more classical, inserted the niches at either end and was probably responsible for

painting the panelling a light colour, a state in which it remained until Sir Ralph and Lady Lawson stripped it in the 1950s.

The oak staircase (Fig. 10) is a typical piece of York work of the second quarter of the 18th century, with excellent joinery, crisp carving and good plaster-work. The balusters are of a favourite pattern in the region and are comparable with those in certain houses in York and at Brandsby Hall (to be described in *COUNTRY LIFE* next year) and apparently at Gilling Castle, too. The ceiling, as Dr. Eric Gee has pointed out to me, has similarities to the one formerly in the Gallery at Gilling (the room is now in the Bowes Museum but the ceiling was not saved when the room was dismantled in 1930) and it also resembles parts of the ceiling in the Gallery at Bedale Hall.

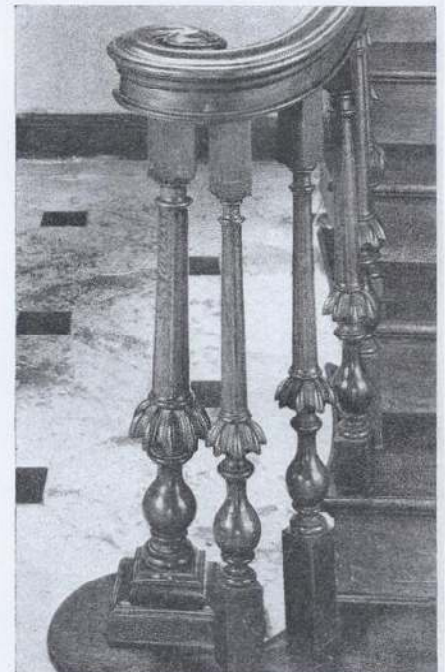
At the head of the stairs lies the old great chamber, which was the library until 1939 and is now the dining-room. From its north windows there are attractive views across the park to the Victorian chapel. But it is the grand pair of portraits by Nicholas Maes that face each other down the length of the room that really hold the eye.

The only 16th-century decoration on this floor is the ceiling of the adjoining room to the east, which is now the kitchen. The decoration is of a similar type to that in the hall and, as mentioned earlier, bears the Lawson and Brough arms. What is more remarkable is to find a fragment of a late-16th-century frieze (Fig. 7) incorporating the Lawson crest on the top floor.

One of the rooms over the great chamber was used as a chapel until the mid 18th century, but no special decoration survives there, and the only clue to its old use is the hook for the sanctuary lamp. Rather oddly there is no old church plate in the house, and the most telling signs of pre-Georgian catholicism are the priests' hole beneath a cupboard on the first floor (above letter X on the 1630 plan) and a beautiful pre-Reformation embroidered chasuble. Nothing is known of the history of the chasuble, but one would like to think it had belonged to the Broughs before the Lawsons and that it stands for the seven or eight centuries during which Mass has been celebrated in the house.

(To be concluded.)

Illustration 3: British Museum.



11.—DETAIL SHOWING THE DESIGN OF THE BALUSTERS AT THE FOOT OF THE OAK STAIRCASE

BROUGH HALL, YORKSHIRE—II

THE SEAT OF SIR RALPH LAWSON, Bt. *○* By JOHN CORNFORTH

About 1730 the Elizabethan house was classicised, possibly by William Wakefield, and a chapel was fitted up in the south wing. Thomas Atkinson rebuilt the east and west wings in the 1770s. In the 1830s William Lawson, assisted by Ignatius Bonomi, built an ambitious chapel in the park.



*All Except Hols Ch. (C)
13999-38.*

1.—THE NORTH FRONT FROM THE NORTH-WEST

IN the 18th century, after 100 years of intermittent persecution and uncertainty, life at Brough evidently became more settled, but the atmosphere of the house at that time is one very difficult to sense today. On the one hand, the Lawsons must have felt the effects of official restrictions and discrimination in the form of ineligibility for office and double land tax payments, and yet

on the other hand it is equally clear that they were in much easier circumstances than they had been in the previous century. Again, according to the law their priests could still be the victims of an informer, but in practice they were left undisturbed, provided they did not draw undue attention to themselves.

Apparently their only chaplain to get into trouble was Father Knatchbull, who in the

mid 1760s was charged with making a considerable number of conversions and had a brush with the Vicar of Catterick over the baptism of a child. The end of the incident was typically Georgian; Sir Henry Lawson, the 4th baronet, went to see Archbishop Drummond at York, who merely advised him to change his chaplain, which he proceeded to do.

Another of the Brough chaplains always wore coloured clothes and never appeared when strangers dined at the house. Perhaps this seems over-cautious, particularly when it must have been widely known that Sir John Lawson, the 3rd baronet, added a large chapel on to the house. Previously a room at the top of the house had been used for Mass, but Sir John built the new one a few years after he inherited in 1725. Its exact date is not known, but it had probably been in existence for more than 20 years when the register was started in 1758.

Sir John not only felt secure to furnish and decorate a permanent chapel, but evidently he was not so worried by possible enquiries from tax assessors as to be put off an extensive remodelling of the house. Again no precise date is known, but evidently it was done at the same time as the chapel, and various clues both in the design of the work and its decorative detail permit one to make a tentative attribution to the gentleman architect William Wakefield and to William Ety, the York builder who was apparently his partner.

Wakefield's style was compounded of Vanbrughian and Palladian elements and he seems to have had a particular fondness for round-headed windows of the kind found at Brough and doubtless inspired by those at Castle Howard. The refacing of the old house at Brough has a marked individuality that suggests the liberating influence of Vanbrugh, and yet it has a lightness that is not present in either of Wakefield's best-known works, Duncombe Park or the engraved design in *Vitruvius Britannicus* for Rokeby. Perhaps, the difference in weight could be explained by

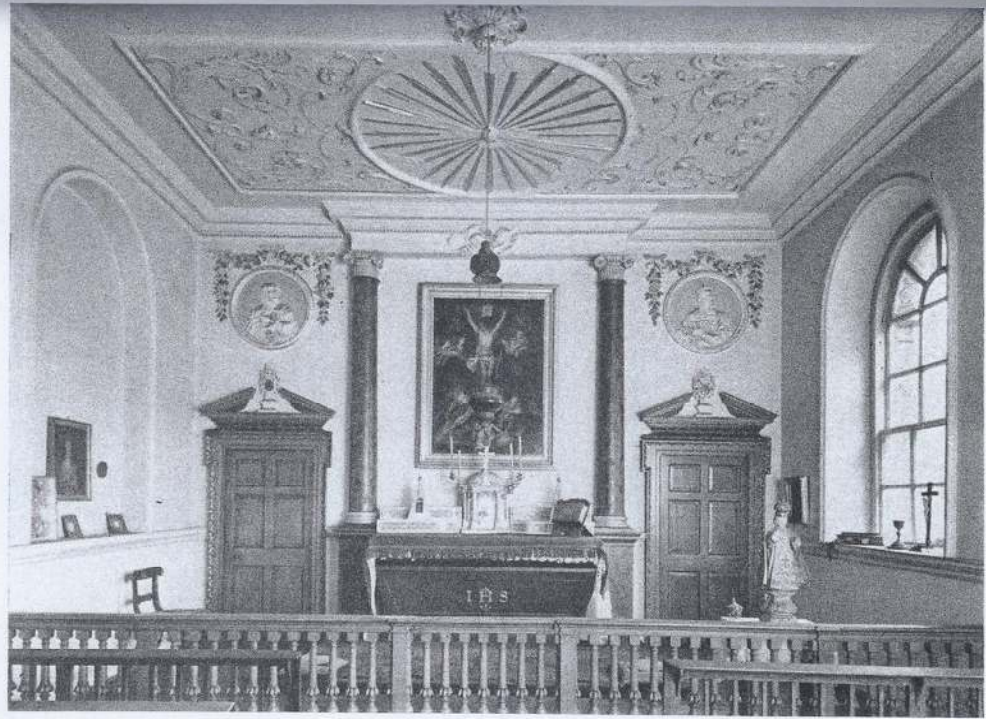


2.—THE CHAPEL OF ST. PAULINUS IN THE PARK. It was copied from the Archbishop's Chapel at York, and was opened in 1837

the much earlier date of Duncombe, which is supposed to have been begun in 1713, when Vanbrugh's massy style was high fashion.

We still do not know much about Wakefield, but he had quite a reputation in his lifetime, and Mr. Howard Colvin in his *Dictionary of English Architects* quotes a letter from Sir Thomas Robinson to Lord Carlisle sent in December, 1730, which refers to "the many alterations he has made in the old houses of his friends, [where] we shall always find state conveniency with good economy in separable companions." In considering Wakefield for Brough one question that immediately comes to mind is whether he would have been prepared to work for a Catholic family like the Lawsons. This would seem to have been no problem; among his identified patrons are Lords Langdale and Fairfax, who were both Catholic. Wakefield died about 1729 or 1730, but it is quite possible that he provided Sir John with a design for Brough a year or so before this, and that the work was not actually completed until the early 1730s.

The excellent joinery and carving in the chapel and on the oak staircase (illustrated last week) is typical of the York school about 1730, but the plasterwork is difficult to attribute with any degree of certainty. The trouble is that only a little is known about a great number of men working in the region, and although comparisons are possible, nothing very definite emerges. All the chief Italian *stuccatori* were in Yorkshire in the second quarter of the century: Artari putting in for work at Castle Howard in 1736 and possibly working at Bedale Hall, about ten miles south of Brough; Vassalli at Aske Hall, about five miles north west of Brough, in 1730, and a few years later at Castle Howard; Serena at Bramham in 1727 and 1728; and Cortese at Studley Royal in 1745, at Gilling in 1747 (in the hall) and at Newburgh Priory about 1750. The Brough plasterwork could well be by one of these Italians, and Dr. Gee has pointed out similarities between the staircase ceiling and the reliefs in the chapel (Fig. 4) and parts of the gallery formerly at Gilling. Comparisons can also be made with details at Lumley and Bedale.



3.—THE CHAPEL IN THE SOUTH WING, ABOUT 1730. The ionic capitals suggest an alteration in the 1770s made to accommodate the painting

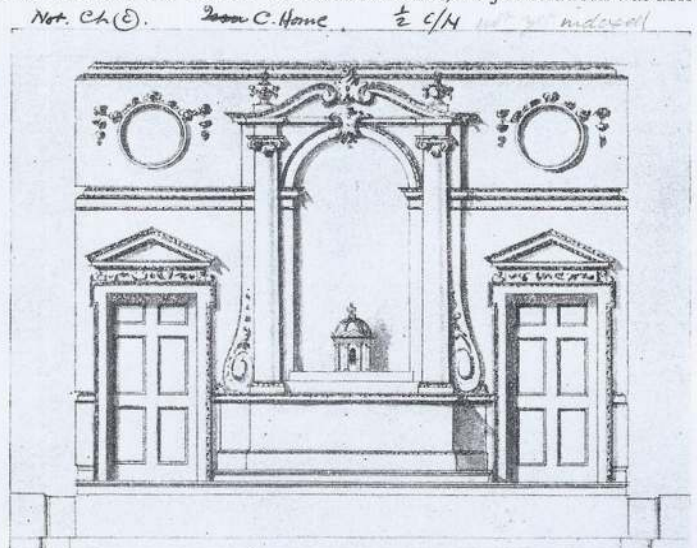
Two drawings connected with the chapel survive at Brough, one a variant design for the ceiling, and the other for the chapel itself. Here only a detail of the latter is reproduced (Fig. 5); it shows the liturgical east wall, and confirms a suspicion that the reredos was altered about 1770 to make room for the altarpiece. The ionic capitals have a thin Adamesque look about them which suggests an alteration by Thomas Atkinson.

The altarpiece (Fig. 7) has been attributed by Mr. Michael Jaffé to Jakob Van Oost, a Flemish artist working in the second half of the 17th century. If I am correct in thinking the reredos was altered to take it, the picture may have been acquired by the 5th baronet, also called John, in Flanders, where he had a number of connections. He had been educated at Douai, and he had two aunts and a sister who were nuns in Bruges. He was certainly in Brussels on one occasion, because we know he was very ill there. Sir John may also have bought in Flanders the marble

Madonna and Child (Fig. 8) traditionally attributed to Rubens, but identified last year by Mr. Jaffé as a lost work by Lucas Faydeherbe, the leading Flemish Baroque sculptor after the death of Duquesnoy and a former pupil of Rubens. The marvellously tender group is clearly the lost marble from which the *modello* in the British Museum (see *Burlington Magazine*, June 1962) was made about 1670.

The chapel also contains two much earlier pieces of sculpture, both Nottingham alabaster reliefs, one of *The Entombment* from the old chapel on Catterick Bridge and one of the *Deposition* from Hardwick (Fig. 6), a property that belonged to the Maires of Lartington, related by marriage to the Lawsons.

Although the chapel was probably opened in the 1730s and a register was kept from 1758, it was not legally recognised until 1791, when under the terms of the second Catholic Relief Act, Sir John Lawson was able



4.—THE HEAD OF ST. PETER. A relief to the left of the reredos. (Right) 5.—A DETAIL OF A DESIGN FOR THE CHAPEL. This is thought to show the original treatment of the reredos



6 and 7.—THE DEPOSITION, AN ALABASTER PANEL IN THE CHAPEL, AND (right) THE ALTARPIECE, ATTRIBUTED TO JAKOB VAN OOST

to obtain a licence for it. According to the Act a bell or steeple was still forbidden and not more than five outsiders were allowed to attend Mass, but even so the congregation seems to have been about 30 strong.

Sir John did not actually succeed to the baronetcy until 1781, when his father, Sir Henry, died, but Brough seems to have been made over to him some years before this, and it was he who gave it its present form, part of the money being provided by Sir Henry's mother-in-law, Mrs. Maire of Lartington. According to an account book, £4,176 16s. 6d. was spent between February 2, 1772 and May 5, 1775 on new buildings, which not only included the east and west wings, but also considerable remodelling of the kitchen regions. The architect, as Angus in his *Views of Seats* (1787) tells us, was "Mr. Atkinson of York," that is to say Thomas Atkinson, who died in 1798. He was Archbishop Drummond's architect at Bishophthorpe but also has a considerable practice among the Catholic gentry of Yorkshire. This has always seemed puzzling, and I am grateful to Father Hugh Aveling OSB for telling me that he was a Catholic. He must have had a close connection with the Lawsons because Dr. Gee has discovered that both John Lawson and his wife Elizabeth were sponsors at the baptism of his daughter, Mary, in 1776, and Elizabeth Lawson was a sponsor for his daughter, Isabella, in 1780.

Atkinson's west wing contained a drawing-room 38 ft. by 22 ft. and a dining-room 33 ft. by 25 ft. as well as the staircase and gallery, but, sadly, both rooms with their pretty Adamesque decoration were virtually destroyed when the RAF occupied the house during the war. The dividing walls have gone and the wing is now one vast ball-room. The staircase and gallery, fortunately, were not damaged. The north wall of the latter is treated as a blind arcade, with three recesses separated by bookcases inset in the wall. The



8.—MADONNA AND CHILD: A MARBLE STATUE BY LUCAS FAYDEHERBE (1617-97)

central recess is a shallow apse, with a clock incorporated as part of the decoration. Its mechanism was worked from the other side, but was irreparably broken in the war. Above the bookcases are a series of grisaille roundels, survivors of the drawing-room decoration. The staircase (Fig. 10) faces the central recess and climbs in a long, slow curve of great elegance towards an upper gallery and suites of bedrooms.

A few years after completing the wings, John Lawson built the stables and also the delicate classical bridge over the beck in the park (Fig. 2) to the designs of a local architect, John Foss of Richmond, who also worked at Swinton. Various proposals, presumably all by Foss, survive for the stables, and so does his agreement whereby he undertook to complete them for £600 before Martinmas, 1780. The stable court still exists and its main, north, range consists of a seven-bay building in the manner of John Carr, with a central arch and three round-headed windows either side set in blind arcades and with small circular windows above. According to some notes made in 1875, there was once a small village by the beck and this was swept away as part of the landscaping of the park. Also a lake was formed to the east of the house, but this disappeared in the 1930s, and its two-storey fishing pavilion and boat-house is now in ruins.

Sir John, as he became in 1781, had no son to succeed him, and on his death in 1811, his bachelor brother, Henry, became the 6th and last baronet of the first creation. He had taken the name of Maire in order to inherit Lartington from his mother's family, but when he came into Brough he resumed the name of Lawson. He was a talented amateur artist and a man of scholarly tastes, with a particular passion for genealogy. His great work was to compile a MS for *The Genealogies of All the Catholic Families of England* which was published in 1887-92. When he inherited Brough,



9.—THE BOW OF ATKINSON'S STAIRCASE AT THE WEST END OF THE HOUSE

the property seems to have been quite heavily encumbered, and he lived quietly, gradually paying off the debts.

The baronetcy lapsed on his death in 1834, and Brough went to his great nephew, William Wright, the son of John Wright of Kelvedon Hall, Essex, and the 5th baronet's younger daughter. William Wright assumed the name and arms of Lawson, and in 1841 the baronetcy was re-created for him.

William Lawson was a man of energy, and within six weeks of coming into the place was in touch with Ignatius Bonomi, the eldest son of Joseph Bonomi, about the design of a new chapel dedicated to St. Paulinus which he proposed to build in the park about a quarter of a mile from the north of the house. Although there is no evidence to support the idea, it was surely intended to some extent as a thank offering for the Catholic Relief Act of 1829, which removed the final restrictions that had hitherto prevented Catholics from voting, sitting in Parliament and holding the great offices of state.

Dr. Nikolaus Pevsner has not only described it as "the proudest Catholic church in the county," but as "a job full of fervour." One might add that it is a rather militant building: its great height and unbroken silhouette has made it still a foreigner in the park after 130 years, and when one looks across to it from the Venetian window of the dining-room one is made strongly aware, not only of a battle of the styles, but a battle of faiths as well (Fig. 2).

Fortunately it is the one chapter in Brough's building history on which there is more than fragmentary evidence. Many of William Lawson's diaries survive, and from these one can watch the chapel going up, almost day by day and stone by stone. Recently it was spotted that the chapel was a copy of the Archbishop's Chapel at York, and William Lawson's diaries add further details. On February 18, 1834, the latter went over to Brough to meet Bonomi and discuss the site of the chapel and the stone to be used; eight days later, drawings of the chapel at York done by a Mr. Browne arrived, and on April 9 William Lawson went over to York to see the original. On July 12 the first sod was cut, and nine days later a man named Flint started as a clerk of works at 1½ gn. a week. The first stone was laid on September 2.

I could not find the 1835 diary, but that

in 1835 events had passed over the details of the building. He was worried about the dates of the building at York and early alterations to it. He was also looking for a design for the altar, but on January 21 he saw the tomb of Walter Gray in the Minster and decided to use that—the present altar and reredos is a later alteration (Fig. 12). The same tomb also provided him with a design for the "railing" that separates the family pew or tribune from the body of the chapel (Fig. 12). The next step was to arrange for stained glass for the east window, the design of which was taken from the Five Sisters at York.

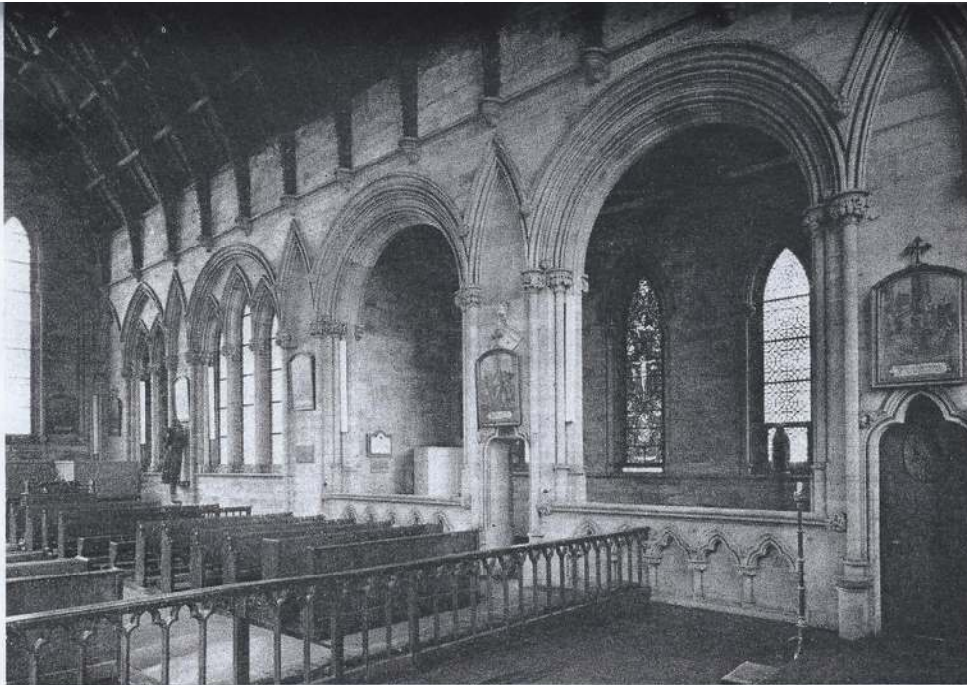
By October, 1836, the roof was going on, and on the 6th of the month a dinner was given to the 86 men who were employed on the chapel. They had boiled beef, pease-pudding, and plum pudding, with three pints of ale each, the whole meal costing 1s. 9d. a head. Afterwards a cricket match was arranged between the masons and the carpenters, and the masons won.

By December both gables were finished and on January 31, 1837, the roof was completed. The chapel was opened on May



10.—ATKINSON'S STAIRCASE. "A long slow curve of great elegance"

DESTROY



11.—THE NORTH TRIBUNE. The tomb of Walter Gray in York Minster provided a design for the railing that separates the Lawson pew from the body of the chapel

15, 1837, with a service lasting 3½ hours, during which William Lawson was the first to be confirmed. It was a doubly remarkable day for him, because it was the first time that he had had an opportunity to receive the sacrament.

Sir William, as he became, died in 1865, and was succeeded by his eldest son, John. The latter died in 1918 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Henry, the father of the present baronet.

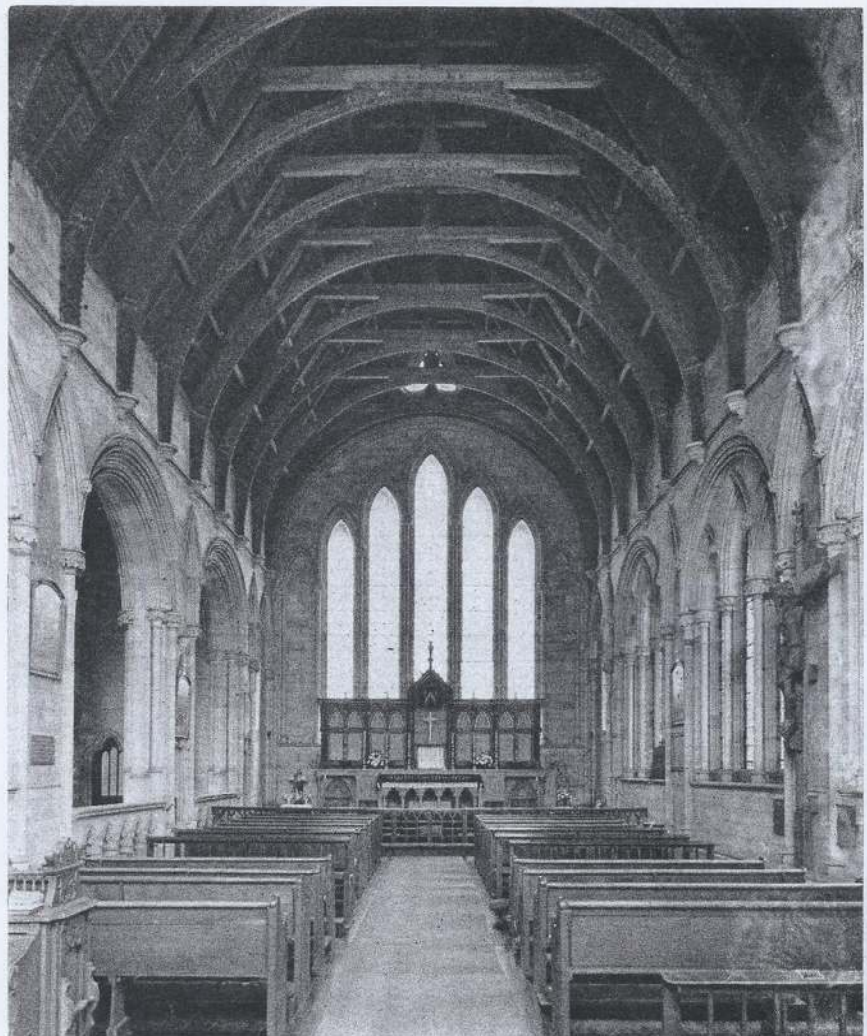
During the war Sir Henry and Lady Lawson lived in a small house close to the chapel, and they continued to live there after Brough was handed back to them in 1946. Brough had been inconvenient before the war, and it had deteriorated badly after six years of occupation: the east wing was almost derelict and part of the south front had been badly shaken by an explosion two miles away. And to add to their problems Brough was not the only large house whose future they had to consider. In 1934 Lady Lawson, who was the daughter of Philip Howard, had inherited Corby Castle, Cumberland (*COUNTRY LIFE*, January 7 and 14, 1954) and, although it was not in such a bad state as Brough, it too needed to be adapted and modernised. In the circumstances it is not surprising that Brough was more or less abandoned. No use could be found for it, and it could easily have joined the long lists of country house casualties of the post-war years.

When Sir Ralph inherited in 1947, he and Lady Lawson made the bold decision to move back to Brough. It was unthinkable to attempt to live in the whole house at that time, but by installing a heating system and moving the kitchen up to the first floor next to the old library, which became the dining-room, it became a practical proposition to use the compact Elizabethan building and the rooms immediately adjoining it. The chapel, too, was reopened, but Mass is now only celebrated in it on special occasions, the tradition of daily Mass having come to an end when the house was requisitioned. The one region of the house not tackled after the war was the east wing with the old kitchen and old servants hall. In order to preserve the north façade intact and justify the expense involved in repairing the whole range, the old kitchen has recently been converted into a

When one goes to Brough today it is hard to imagine what it looked like in the late 1930s and what faced Sir Ralph and Lady Lawson 20 years ago. So much has been done without the house losing its strong appeal or becoming self-conscious about its history. One is aware that Lawsons have lived here for centuries and of difficult times, but as names, dates and periods never mattered much in the past its history is one that is felt rather than known. Except to Sir Henry Maire Lawson, the genealogist, racing, shooting, fishing and the chapel always seem to have counted for more, and the life that goes with a tribe of dogs of all shapes and sizes continues.

They stream through the house after their master and mistress and, when not on the move, always seem to be in unlikely corners: all nine are rarely together and it is as hopeless for someone who does not know them well to try and grasp their names and relationships as it is to be sure when each part of the house was built.

I am most grateful to Father Hugh Aveling OSB for his helpful comments on these articles.



12.—THE INTERIOR OF THE CHAPEL. It occupies the upper floor of the building.

DESTROY