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B L A C K E R

O F

IRTON, THORPE, EAST AYTON, SEAMER, SNAINTON,
WORSBOROUGH, CRIGGLESTON, SKELMANTHORPE,
DURKAR, DARTON, BALLYNAGHIE, BROOKEND, CARRICK-
BLACKER, BALLYTROAN, ELM PARK, GRACE HALL
RATHESCAR, CASTLEMARTIN, GLENKEEN, LISHAHANNA,
WOODBROOK, GLANMORE CASTLE, TULLAHINNEL,
CLAREMONT, COLDHAYES and NETHERBURY.

P R E F A C E

During the last half century, research has been in progress of which the fruits are many fresh facts which confirm, corroborate and substantiate the ancient and unwavering tradition of the descent of our family from Blákkar Godfreysson, known in Irish as Blacaire Macgodfridhe Macimbhair, the son of that Godfrey who was King of North England and of much of Ireland, as were his brother, cousins, uncle and father.

Of merely indirect interest to us is the discovery that the country which the translators of the Annals of Clonmacnoise and of Chronicum Scotorum call Taprobane is not, as they fantastically suggest, Ceylon, but that region situate on the narrow and well defined corridor of the migration of the Aryo-Scythians, called Atrobatene, after one of Alexander's generals, corrupted now to Azerbaijan. The same remark applies to Iberia, which we know to have been the name of that country in the South East Caucasus, in which the Scoti later sojourned, rather than Celtiberian Spain.

Of more proximate interest to our narrative is the unearthing of two deeds of Canute dated 1027, and witnessed by Earl Sihtric. Clearly, no other Danish family could have had the effrontery to assume a forename associated with mighty King Sihtric Gale Caoh, therefore we can be persuaded that this Earl is no other than Sihtric Macblacaire, who was a blood relation to Canute, and indeed from a senior branch of his family.

A further discovery is that the score of localities in Yorkshire called Blacker, or Le Blackerre, nearly all lie in a zone of obvious military importance, stretching from the Pennines on its right, or western, nearly to the Don on its left, or eastern flank. This zone covers the river crossings and approaches to York, the Danish capital. Its own left was covered by the ancient swamps which are now Hatfield Chase.

Yet again we have secured access to an original manuscript of the Twelfth Century Whitby Abbey Chartulary, in which are deeds which not only carry the names of Blacre, of the Pickering Wapentake, of three of his sons and two of his grandsons, but afford us accurate dates, down to 1223, when Godfry and Walter, the grandsons, were alive.

Further again, the manuscripts of the celebrated genealogist the Rev. Joseph Hunter, have recently been compiled and published by Colonel J. W. Walker, FSA. These have given us a detailed, fully dated and documented pedigree from 1250, when Henry de Blakker of Worsborough, lived there, down to present memory.

The gap between Worsborough in the West, and Pickering in the North Riding has been bridged by a most fortunate discovery. This is, that in the American and French Revolutionary Wars, no less than four young men of the Armagh, Derry and Tyrone branches held commissions in the 65th Foot. Old Army lists prove that in those days this was the North Riding Regiment. Not one served in any other Yorkshire Regiment.

So much for the actual chain of descent. More modern inquiries remind us that Sir Louis Cavagnari, who was descended from a daughter of the family, was brought up as the ward of its head at Carrickblacker.

The son of Anna Blacker was Walter Hamilton, V.C. who commanded Cavagnari's escort of the Guides, whose defence in 1878 of the Kabul Residency remains, after two World Wars, the finest feat of arms of any Regiment and of any Army.

CHAPTER ONE
THE ARYANS DRIVE TO THE OCEAN

For a good many years past, the word Aryan has been sadly misused by both fools and knaves.

Nevertheless, in a century about the fifteenth before Christ, a nation, indeed nations, flourished to whom the name rightly belongs.

At that time, the countries which we now call Balkh and Herat, were Ariana, and they had reached a high state of civilization.

Its city itself was a great one, the centre of a prosperous agriculture, and of a people who had developed, amongst other things, the ox-cart.

An attack came against it from two enemies. One of the periodic changes of climate to which the world, in every few centuries becomes subject, caused dessication of the land and a consequent diminution of rainfall, followed in turn by death of much of the vegetation.

Hand in hand with these stresses came a human pressure from the North and North East, from nomadic Mongolian nations of Turanian types.

The result was a great migration, or rather two, migrations of Aryan peoples, the one over the mountain passes into the Punjab, who became the Rajputs, and the other which moved roughly west north west across Khorasan, Samnan, Kazvin and Azerbaijan.

The reason why the latter group of tribes or nations took this trail is easily understood by those who have traversed and studied the ground.

The migrants were being forced away from the north by the pressure of the Mongols, who were turning the rapidly drying up cornfields of the Aryans into grazing and ranching prairies. They could not move toward the North west partly because, from Sarakhs almost to the Caspian, stretches a line of cliff escarpments impassable to covered-wagon folk, but more especially because, in that age, the great Oxus flowed not, as today, into the Sea of Aral, but into the Caspian. It has twice since changed its course.

The Aryans could not move towards the South west because of the immense Kavirs there, quite impracticable for wheels, and which in any case, can and do, at times engulf entire caravans which may be caught in storms on them.

To the Southward, there was no attraction but only more and more saline deserts, barren mountains and the unknown sea.

A small section seem to have branched off and founded the strange isolated colony which still exists under the name of Seistan. Some geographers consider this a corruption of Sakistan, named from the Sakae, who may be ancestors of the Saxons.

There remains only the West north westerly route which eventually led them, in about 1550 B.C. to what is now called Azerbaijan, a corruption of the classical Atrobatene, or

(1) Taprobane.

These Aryans regarded themselves as one of the many branches of the Scythians.

At this time their chief was Gallo the son, according to the Annals of Clonmacnoise, of one Billus who was surnamed Miletus or Milesius for his great military exploits.

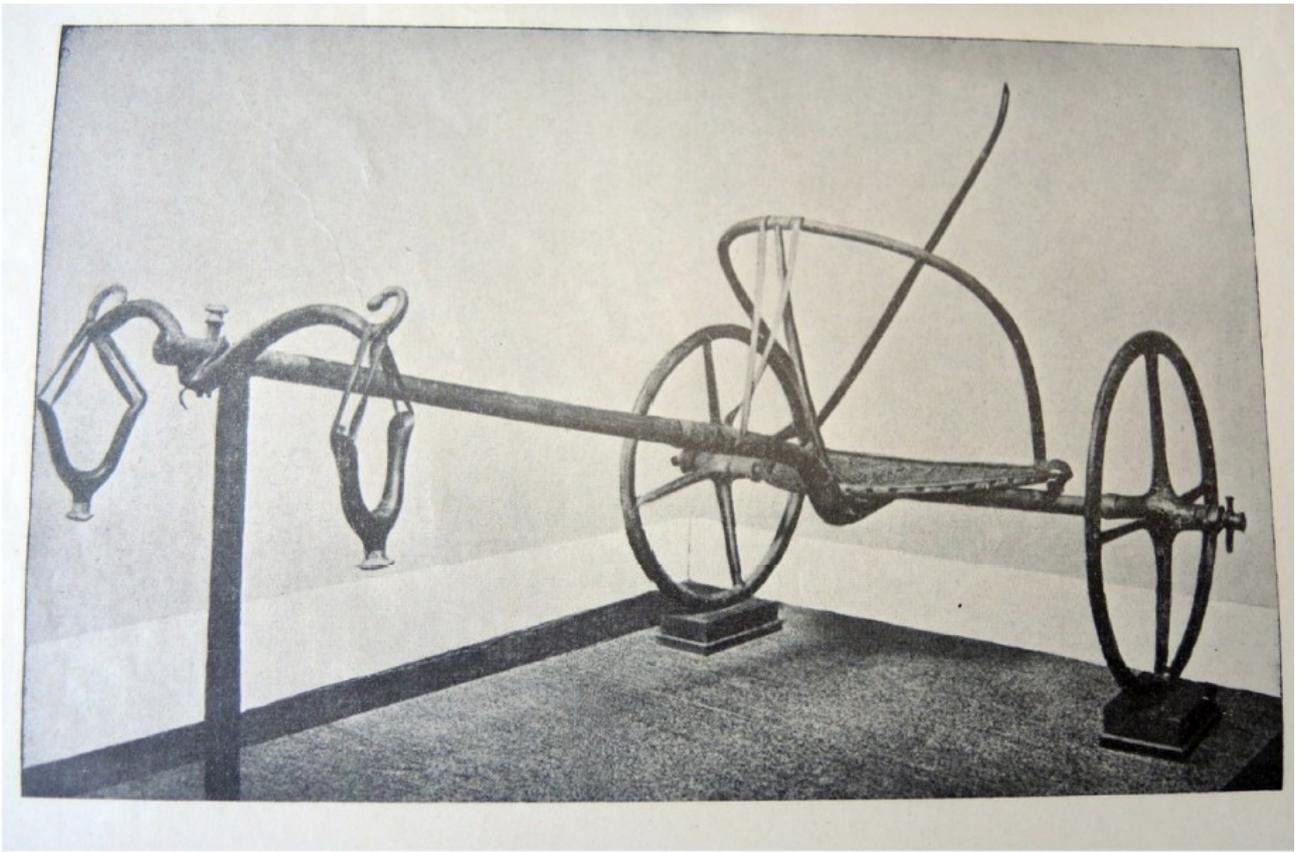
Whilst this migration was in progress from the East of the Iranian lands, the Pharaohs of Egypt had extended their dominions up into the north of Syria.

Here their newly conquered territories came into contact with an Aryan Kingdom.

This was that of Mitani, or Naharini, which occupied Northern Mesopotamia, lying athwart the Euphrates, from the Orontes to the Tigris, that is to say, it was adjacent to the territory occupied to the East by Milesius and his Aryo-Scythian people and separated by the Zagros.

Menkhepervra-Thothmes IV who reigned from 1425 to 1415, inaugurated a practice then novel in the house of the Pharaohs. He married a princess who was a foreigner, namely the daughter of Artatama the King of this realm of Mitani.

She was, it is believed, the mother of Amenhotep III who reigned from 1415 to 1380 who showed peculiarities which the Egyptians ascribed to his half Aryan origin, and handed them on, in exaggerated form, to his half-mad son Amenhotep IV or Akhenaton.



King Tushratta of Mitani is reported to have declared that a daughter of his grandfather Artatama had been given to Thothmes IV only under compulsion, and in like manner his sister Gilukhipa had been sent to Amenhotep III.

Towards the end of the reign of Amenhotep III relations with Babylon had become strained.

A demand was then made that the Egyptian monarch who desired a Babylonian bride should give one of his own daughters in return. Egypt retorted that "a royal princess of Egypt had never yet been given to anybody".

However, a generation or so later the situation became altered. Miletus, or Milesius, suffering from internecine strife in his own territory of Atrobatene, which as we have seen, adjoined Mitani, passed out of Scythia with a number of his friends, kinsmen and followers into Egyptian held territory, as is recounted by the Annals of Clonmacnoise. He was kindly entertained by the Egyptians and did so well in their service that he was made "General of their Armies, and withall married Scota the daughter of Symedes, then the greatest prince in Egypt".

After a sojourn of 6 years in Egypt, and when all was quiet he moved on with his wife, Scota, towards Parthia, of which the North Caucasus is a portion. In Sala VIII of the Archaeological Museum in Florence is at this moment an Aryan-Scythian chariot of the XIV century BC. It came to

Florence from Thebas and is reputed to have been taken there by the Egyptian forces. Possibly it may have been Milesius' own command vehicle. However, this Milesius had three wives in all. The first was the daughter of Seang Rifflar, a Scythian by whom he had two sons, Don and Heragh Feura. By Scota he had, according to the Clonmacnoise Annals, four sons, Heber, Avirgin, Ire and Colp. By this third wife Savia, he had two more sons, Here-mon and Herenan. This move into Parthia brought him into Iberia, where he met Savia.

The translators and annotators of the various Irish histories jump to the conclusion that this Iberia was Spain. A sudden bound of an entire nation from Atrobatene, which is Azerbaijan, to northern Spain is too much for the most gullible chronicler to swallow.

The Iberia to which Milesius and his followers went must obviously have been that other Iberia, described by Strabo, which is in the south eastern Caucasus, and which has been called (2) Iberia or Avaria by Russian writers, notably Tolstoi, within living memory.

A straightforward trail, passable for wheels, leads from (3) Persian Azerbaijan into this Iberia. In fact, this route, by which the railway goes today, is the only road which traverses the Caucasus at all, with the exception of that through the gorge of Dariel, which was constructed between 1850 and 1860, and an even more recent one.

Further confusion is caused by other annotators of the annals, especially of Chronicon Scotorum, who inform their readers that Atrobatene, which by innumerable recopyings, they have corrupted into Taprobane, is, forsooth, Ceylon. Gibbon refers explicitly to Taprobane as being Atrobatene, the Azerbaijam of to-day.

Furthermore Strabo himself states that Taprobane, that is to say this other North Persian Taprobane is Atrobatene called after Alexander's general Atropaten. It is on the direct line of march of the Aryans, who then betook themselves during their seasonal migrations of many years across the narrow straits of Azov, across the Dneiper and the Dneister, through (4) the narrow space which we call the gap of Rowno, or Ostrog.

The Ostrog gap is bounded on the north, their right flank, by the vast marshes of Pinsk or Pripet, and on the South their left hand, by the densely wooded spurs of the Carpathians. Both are utterly impassable to such transport as they possessed.

They are still moving on the straight and direct "great circle" track to their final goal.

The chroniclers describe how, on their journeys they battle their way first through the Goths, the Lombards, the Burgundians, and later the Frisians. Their next opponents were the Brigantes. Again the Irish translator of the Chronicles succumbs to the temptation of taking them on a fantastic journey to Spain, where there is, in fact, a Brigantium. There is, however,

another country of the Brigantes, which was in South Yorkshire, and which is again on the shortest direct line from Frisia to their objective, especially if one remembers that, in that era, perhaps 1000 or 1200 B.C. Godwin's land still lay above water.

After their battles with the Brigantes, the Milesians landed in Ireland in about 600 B.C. and subjugated the Belgae, who then held the country, and who are to this day, designated Fir-Bolg. We may disregard the Tvatha De Danaan episode. The conquering Milesians called themselves Scoti, from their Egyptian ancestress Scota, consort of Milesius who had rescued Moses from the bulrushes.

The Annals of Clonmacnoise set out the pedigrees of the three races descended from Milesius and Scota. Avergin had no issue, but from Heremon are descended the O Nials, Kings of Ailech and Earls of Antrim, from Heber, the O Briens, Kings of Dalcassia, Earls of Thomond and Inchiquin, and from Ire, or Erenann the Macinnes, Viscounts of Iveagh. Thus the island which now goes by the Norse name of Ireland became Scotia Magna.

Some eleven centuries later, in 503 A.D. Fergus Mor McEarchar led an expedition from Antrim into a south western peninsula of what was then the land of the Picts, and colonized it with his own followers. Thus Albany or Pictland became by 844 A.D. what we now called Scotland, and that south western peninsula is called Argyll, derived from Ard-Gael, or the hill country of the Gaedhil.

The family whose history is about to be set down here are not themselves Scoti, but it is necessary briefly to expound the story of that nation because the later migrations from East to West across Iran, of the ancestors of the Scandinavians

(5) correspond almost exactly with those of the Scoti.

Both are branches of the great Scythian race. In fact some authorities hold that the word Skyth, spelt in Greek with a Sigma, a Kappa, an Upsilon and a Theta, is identical with Scot, whilst as lately as 937 A.D., according to Cockburn, the Saxon chroniclers were referring to their Norse opponents of Brunanburh, as Scythlings.

Another reason for joining the family history to that of the Scoti, is that on innumerable occasions, its young men have married daughters of the Scoti. Outstanding examples are the marriage of the princess, the elder Donnflaith, daughter of the O'Nial to Sitric ^G gale; ^{and again} of the sister of Brian, the ^{was married} Emperor Scottorum to Sitric II; and of the daughter of Constantine II, King of the Scots, to Olaf (or Anlaf) Cuaran. The last named also married successively the junior Donnflaith daughter of Muirheartach, O Nial and then Gormflaith daughter of the King of Leinster. More recently instances are beyond counting.

The ancestors of the Northmen, just as those of the Scoti, according to Wheaton, who expounds the Ynglingasaga, were to be found in Svithjod, of Scythia Magna, north of the Black Sea, and in the Don basin, as early as 500 B.C. when

their predecessors, the Scoti, had already reached Ireland.

Led by a warrior-king bearing the semi-divine name of Odin, this people, now called Sviar, the Suiones of Tacitus, after wars with the Vanir of Russia, migrated by way of Gardariki and Saxland across the Sound into Jotunheim, now southern Sweden. Odin must have lived in 237 A.D. which makes him a
(6) contemporary of the Roman Emperor Maximin.

The original and greater Svithjod was now called Godheim, whilst the new homeland in Scandinavia, also Svithjod, received the name of Mannaheim.

Wheaton is quite explicit in stating that Odin at first
(7) held lands beyond the mountains, in Tyrkland, that is Turkistan, which contained Asgard, and which he relinquished, on moving westwards.

Odin's people drove the aboriginal Finnar or Lapps, to the arctic north, and acquired too, an ascendancy over a
(8) somewhat earlier Indo-European nation, the Goths, in Gothland, to the South. The Goths, who had earlier subjugated the Finns, or Celto-Finns, impressed their national mythology on to the northern lands, that of Wotan, Freya, and Thor which they derived from their Aryan ancestors of the Sanskrit culture. Nevertheless, the Goths were destined to change the face of Europe.

In the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era, a return wave, or back wash of Goths is to be found in Dacia,

and in conflict with the Roman empire. They had adopted the new Christian faith, in a somewhat heretical form. What, however, was more significant for the making of history, was that they had learned the use of stirrups, probably from their ancestors' migration through Tyrkland. Possessing stirrups, they were then able to fight mounted, in scale armour, and to wield lance and sword from the saddle.

With these tactics and weapons, they met and utterly routed the decadent Roman legions at Adrianople in 378 A.D. killing the Emperor Valens. This was the end of Roman Infantry, of Roman religious beliefs, and of the Roman Empire.

Thus mounted and armoured, Christianity spread itself over Europe, almost in a matter of a few generations.

In 415 A.D., the armoured Goths marched into, and sacked the very Rome.

NOTES ON CHAPTER ONE

i.

- Page 3 Note (1) See Gibbon Vol. I. Chap. XIII.
- Page 5 Note (2) Gibbon describes its cession to the Roman Empire, by the Persians in 303 A.D. It lies south of the main range of the Caucasus, North of Armenia and occupies the Kura Valley, *west of Albania, east of Isthmus*
- Page 5 Note (3) Called by the Arab geographers Bab-el-Abwab, or gate of gates.
- Page 6 Note (4) Many believe that Azof is Asof, the Asgarth of early Scandinavian history.
- Page 8 Note (5) The fact that the Danes were so much more maritime than the Irish may be due to the fact that the latter went straight across the channel whilst the former spent centuries on the shores of the North Sea.
- Page 9 Note (6) According to Sharon Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons" who suggests that it was pressure from Roman expeditionary forces which impelled Odin's people to continue their movement westwards and northwards from Azof. Emperor Maximin, indeed, made campaigns in Sarmatia.
- Page 9 Note (7) Now called Turkmenistan. The Turks did not, of course reach Turkey till several centuries later.
- Page 9 Note (8) Odin's Skiolding descendants as Kings of Denmark are given by Sharon Turner:-

Skioldr
Fridleifr
Fridfrode
Fridleifr
Havarr-Handrami
Frode
Varmundr Vitri
Olafr Utillate
Danr Mikillate
Frode Fritsami
Fridleifr
Frode Fraekne
Ingialdr
Halfdan
Helgi and Hroar
Rolf Kraki
Hraerkr Slaungvan Baugi

(Cont'd)

Page 9 Note (8)
(cont'd.)

Harold Hildetand
Sigurd Ring
Ragnar Lodbrog
Sigurd Orm, probably "Snake-eye"

His ancestors according to the Icelandic
LANGFEDGATAL were :-

Thor
Hloritha
Einridi
Vingethorr
Moda
Magi
Seskef
Bedwig
Athra
Itormann
Heremotr
Scealdna
Beaf
Godulf
Finn
Frealaf
Odin

that is 17 generations, perhaps six
centuries.

Therefore, Thor must have ruled in about
400 B.C. which is precisely the period in
which Herodotus finds the Scythians in
the North Caucasus.

We must remark that since the days of Max
Müller, it has become fashionable for
certain scholars to doubt the direction of
the Indo-European migration, and to suggest
that the Tajiks, for instance, derive their
blue eyes from the Baltic climate.

These Scholars are those who have not them-
selves travelled over the country.

On the other hand, and without any doubt,
there must often have been reverse waves or
back washes in these Indo-European tribal
movements.

Similarly we cannot doubt that a branch of
the Celtiberians left the main stream perhaps
in Burgundy and ended their migration in
Spain.

DANE DYNASTIES OF DUBLIN AND NORTH ENGLAND.

Somewhat strangely, Ireland was a country which became Christian, not by force of armed horsemen, but by virtue of peaceful persuasion and the personal charm of Saint Patrick.

The heirs of the battlefield traditions of the Goths were the Franks of Charlemagne, and his Paladins. Their zeal for the new faith led them, in 777, to attack Widdukinds's Old Saxons, on the Frisian shores, some four centuries after Adrianople. These were still pagans, near neighbours of the Jutes of Jutland, who, like the Danes and the Angles, claimed descent from the warrior king Odin of Scania, through his youngest son Balder.

From one of Odin's sons sprang the Westfold branch of the Yngling dynasty who long reigned over Sweden and Norway.

A descendant of this hero, but a Skiolding, was the famous Ragnar Lodbrog,^a Danish prince of Jutland though born in Norway, who took it upon himself to avenge the massacres of the pagan Old Saxons by the Christians of the Emperor Charlemagne.

In 794 Matthew Paris recounts an early raid by other Northmen, led by Ivar Vidfadma, who plundered Lindisfarne and subdued North England. Ragnar Lodbrog who had earlier sacked Paris, however, mounted a great expedition in two ships of unprecedented size, but against the advice of his Queen, Aslauga. He was eventually shipwrecked on the Northumbrian coast and fell into the hands of the Anglian King Aella (probably a

descendant of the Aella of 560 A.D. This potentate threw him into a pit filled with vipers, who at first did not touch him because of the enchanted garment which he wore, which Aslauga had made. Aella ordered this to be stripped off, and the (1) vipers then clung to him on all sides. Ragnar expired with a laugh of defiance saying "How the young cubs would roar if they knew what the old boar suffers".

In 867, to avenge the fate of Ragnar Lodbrog an expedition headed by eight kings and twenty jarls, amongst whom were his three sons, was mounted against England and landed at Dunsley Bay.

They defeated Aella on March 21st near York, and Ivar known as Beinlaus, was made King over Northumbria or more correctly, North England, which except for a few brief interludes between that date and 1066, the final triumph of the Northmen, appears no more as a Saxon or English kingdom.

On the authority of R.R. Lind, Norsk-Islandska Personbinamn Fran Medeltiden, we now know that Ivar Beinlaus was the son, and not the grandson, of Ragnar. His name is spelt Imbhair by the Irish, by whom his descendants are known as the Clann Mac Ivar or Mac Imbhair. The usual Saxon spelling is Ingwar.

Besides his kingship of North England, Ivar assumed royal power in Dublin, after the departure of his (half) brother, Olav (Anlaf) the White.

As Professor Shetelig says "becoming thereby the progenitor

of its line of Norwegian kings during the next hundred years". The Annals of Ulster say "Ivar rex Normanorum totius Hiberniae et Britanniae".

Ivar died in 872 in Dublin and the Annals state that he died a Christian.

He was succeeded by a son Sigfred, and then in 888 by another, Sigtrygg, or Sihtric.

In 892, the latter invaded England, not so much in order to hold down the English as to overcome his Norse rivals. Both in Ireland and England, fierce battles were fought between Norwegian and Dane, with the Scotie Irish and the Saxons now and again assisting one or the other. In 902 an Irish Fleet even attacked the Norse in aid of the Saxons in England. In 918 Godfrey and Ragnal fought a battle on the banks of the Tyne.

Sigtrygg, on 15th September 919, fought the decisive battle of Kilmashogue or Islandbridge, just South of Dublin, defeating and slaying Nial Glundubh (Black Knee) the Scotie High King. The victor became known as Sigtrygg Gale Caoch, "gale" meaning in Erse "hero" and "Caoch" one-eyed. In 920 he invaded Cheshire at Davenport and in 921 succeeded his brother Ragvald, (or Ragnald) who died in that year, as King of North England.

Ragnald had also been King of Waterford, and, according (2) to Wheaton was a relation of Rollo of Normandy, from whom sprang William I of England.

In 924 he was so firmly installed as ruler of Northern England that he was able to conclude the Treaty of Tamworth with Athelstan.

By virtue of this, Sigtrygg was acknowledged the King of all England down to the Watling Street, whilst he was to recognise Athelstan as King of the West Saxons. Furthermore, Athelstan gave him his sister Aedgitha in marriage on 30th January 926, in spite of his one eye, and agreed that the survivor of the two parties to the Treaty should become King of All England. *Aedgitha later married the Emperor Otto, of Germany.*

So matters proceeded fairly amicably until Sigtrygg died in 826, before Athelstan, and until the overweening ambition of the adventurous Anlaf Cuaran, his eldest son, otherwise Olaf the Red, induced him to form the famous coalition, which in 937 fought the great and bloody battle of Brunanburh.

Sigtrygg was succeeded as King both of Dublin and of North England by his younger brother Godfrey (Godfridhe) who was the father of Blacaire, who now makes his first appearance in history, whilst still a very young man, as the leader of a wing of the Northmen's forces in this great battle, the greatest and bloodiest ever fought on English soil.

Anlaf Cuaran's object in this campaign, was, by forming a coalition of Norwegians, of those Danes who were not conciliated to Athelstan, of the Caledonians who followed his father-in-law, Constantine II of Scotland, and of other nations, to wrest from Athelstan, the sovereignty of all England. Many

coins struck by Godfrey as ruler of North England are still extant.

Until Cockburn published his scholarly and astonishingly complete account of this campaign, much doubt existed about the details of the battle, and even about where it was fought.

However, after digesting "The Battle of Brunanburh and its Period", no trained military mind could, except on minor (3) points, retain serious doubts.

Cockburn demonstrates that the battle was fought at Templeborough, near Rotherham (now called Brinsworth) formerly Brinsford, and resulted in a reverse for Anlaf, so severe that the Danish conquest of entire England was put back for 77 years.

Athelstan moved with such unexpected rapidity into South Yorkshire that he routed Constantine's Scots before Anlaf Cuaran could bring his whole force into action.

This Anlaf, who had brought a fleet of 615 ships into the Humber, retreated to Scone, whilst Anlaf Godfreysson withdrew westwards, with his younger brother, Blacaire, to Dublin. Cockburn tells us that the latter gave his name to both Blackburn and to Blackpool, and that the Curedale treasure, now in Liverpool museum, was his, and lost during this retreat.

The respite afforded to the English by Brunanburh was a short one. Athelstan died in October 939, and both Anlafs were in power again in York in 940, where Anlaf Cuaran reigned as King of the North from 941 to 944, and from 949 to 952, alternating with Eric Bloodaxe, a cousin.

Anlaf Godfreysson, who was King in York for some time, died in 941, and his younger brother Blacaire now became King of Dublin, whilst Anlaf Cuaran in 941 defeated Edmund the Elder and came to York as King, concluding another Treaty of Tamworth.

This battle of Brunanburh gave immense but somewhat insecure satisfaction to the Saxons, who had been accustomed to seeing their monarchs pursued into remote corners of their island. Their salaried monkish chroniclers therefore let themselves go into lyrical ecstasies in laudation of those from whom they received their wages. Even Tennyson strummed his Saxon lyre to this tune. The Northmen, however, took little interest in these paper victories, but were content, no doubt, (4) to remain in possession of the battlefields.

A similar phenomenon is observable in the Irish chronicles which describe an almost tedious and incessant series of victories by the Scoti over the Danes, who nevertheless continued to hold every city that was not a mere "Rath" of wattle-and-daub, from Cork to Donegal and from Galway to Strangford, except only Armagh and Cashel.

During his absence from Dublin Ivar was succeeded there as King by Godfridhe that is Godfrey, Mac Ivar, father of Blacaire who took the city in 921. On 12th July 926, he relinquished his claim to England.

Godfrey now began the first of a series of bitter wars against the O'Neill, Muircheartach, the son of slain Nial

Glundubh and heir-presumptive to be high-king or Ard-Ri of all Ireland. He was known also by the surname of Cnut, or Canute, which name is used on his coins, minted in York.

O'Niall made his famous winter campaign of 941, through the whole island, attiring his thousand picked warrior body-guard in leather cloaks whence he drew his surname "Gochall Crockann".

Godfrey was killed in 934 at Stainmore in Scotland, and (5) was succeeded by his sons Anlaf and Blakkør Godfreysson, known (6) in Irish as Amlaibh and Blacaire Mac Godfridhe.

Early in the year 943, probably in January, the O'Nialls from Lecale, Co. Down attacked and destroyed the Norse settlement on Strang-Fiord, now known as Strangford Lough, in Irish (7) as Lough Cuan.

Blacaire was then King in Dublin and it became vital to his sovereignty to avenge this. He moved northwards from Dublin, his forces coming into collision with those of his great opponent first at Glas-Liathain, now called Greenlane, very close to the town of Ardee.

A locality near here is still called Blakestown, and no other factor is known to account for the first part of the name except the activities of Blacaire; another townland (8) there is called "Godfreydeslannde".

Glasliathian is on the north bank of the Dee in the parish of Clonkeen.

The several histories which mention this campaign do not say as much explicitly, but it is only reasonable to suppose that Blacaire, of an essentially naval nation and controlling many warships, would have sailed up to Anagassan, with the prevailing wind well abaft his beam, and disembarked his infantry at that well used Norse beach-head.

He is unlikely to have used either cavalry or the Danes' later mounted infantry technique because the embarkation of horses would have left little room in the ships for swordsmen or axemen. Moreover, by the time the horses had been swum ashore, a mounted force could have arrived by land from Dublin itself.

In any case Blacaire won a resounding victory on the Sunday of Shrovetide 943, (the 26th February) and slew, with his own axe, the O'Niall, who was not only an illustrious warrior, called "the Hector of the Western World", but the successor to the sovereignty of all Ireland, and the Kingship of Tara. All the historians agree in these matters, and in placing the encounter at Glasliathain of Clonkeen. They also tell us that, during the next day, the Norsemen reached and sacked Armagh, that famous city of the O'Nialls.

Now Armagh is some 35 miles from Clonkeen. There^{fore}/Blacaire's force, with every allowance for Norse vigour, could scarcely have disembarked, made contact with O'Niall, fought a battle, pursued the fugitives for 35 miles, and captured a city all within 36 hours, had they fought and marched dismounted.

A simpler explanation is available, which is that the main portion of the pursuit was done by sea, for, by sea, with a favouring wind, the fighting men would have been carried up into Carlingford Lough, three times as fast as if marching with their armour and weapons on foot.

No doubt Blacaire, who was now an experienced and war hardened commander, left a portion of his freshest men to pursue the beaten Scoti by land, but every Viking instinct would have impelled him to re-embark all the men he could spare, to bring them northwards, out-flank the left flank of the Scoti, and cut them off from their line of retreat, whether into Antrim or into Armagh itself. This he could best do under sail, so long as the wind held.

This hypothetical reconstruction of the last stages of the battle is supported by a family tradition, which says that BLACAIRE slew O'Niall not far from the site of Carrickblacker, in County Armagh. This, if correct, would indicate that the slaying took place on the second, and not on the first day of the battle, and during O'Niall's retreat, which may well have been directed eastwards of Lough Neagh, and into his own Lecale territories, rather than towards Armagh City, which was of ecclesiastical rather than of military importance.

The major facts remain, that in this month of March, Blacaire defeated the Scoti and slew their prince O'Niall, to whom he was, we must note, related by marriage.

He returned to resume his Kingship of Dublin which he (9) relinquished in 945, in favour of his elder cousin, Anlaf Cuaran, who returned with his Caledonian Queen from Scone. The histories are somewhat ambiguous the Archaic Irish obscure and their translators confused as to whether Blacaire merely quitted Dublin or was forcibly banished, or "ousted."

Anlaf Cuaran was prone to plots and conspiracies, as we have seen before Brunanburh. Blacaire had achieved great fame as the slayer of the mighty O'Niall, which exploit, in fact, by contemporary custom, gave him a claim to be High King of Ireland, a claim assisted by his marital connections, but hindered, no doubt, by his being still, so far as we know, a heathen.

For all these reasons Anlaf Cuaran would have wanted him out of the way, because Anlaf already aspired to rule all Ireland himself. His surname Cuaran gives a hint of this. Therefore Blacaire, in 945, appears in Yorkshire jointly with Ragnald, his brother.

His elder brother Anlaf Godfreysson died in 941.

Blacaire's presence in Yorkshire, was, in any case, of military advantage to them because they would have needed an experienced commander to organise the defence of the Danelaw against likely invasions by the Saxon Kings.

Therefore it is not at all surprising that we find, disposed in a rough crescent round about, and to the southwestward of the City, a score of localities called Blacker or Le Blackere, for centuries later and to this day. These stretch from .85

Blacker near Thornhill Lees and near Skelmanthorpe in the west to Blacker in Criglestone, Blacker near Darton and Blacker (10) near Worsborough, to BALKERTHORPE in the east. A reasonable assumption is that these constituted a line of forward (11) defensible localities, chosen by Blacaire, to cover not only York itself, but also the vital river landings and crossings south of Castleford. To that point the Viking ships could come up the Aire, which, Cockburn tells us, is the "Irishman's river", called because the Irish Vikings used it for their ship-borne penetration inland. A street in York was, for centuries, called Bleikastrete. We know of no coins struck by (12) Blacaire in York, but only by his father, cousins and brothers.

This inner line of defended localities was, of course, North of the zone of the Five Boroughs, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, Leicester and Derby; Doncaster was already an ancient fortress, and from here Blaxton lies seven miles east.

After 945 Edmund and the Wessex potentates reoccupied for a few years, the city of York itself until Eric Bloodaxe came in 952. However, their writ hardly ran far out into the Danelaw, and probably not at all into the upper Derwent Valley, where we find a few years later, large estates possessed by another Blacre.

Blacaire thus spent three years in preparing to restore his father's Kingdom of North England, and as we have seen, gave his name to nearly a score of localities, where it still persists, and all in situations well chosen tactically with

regard to the defence of York from the South and only a few hours gallop from the City. The name is an extremely rare one, unique amongst Vikings, which assists our researches. Professor Haakon Shetelig tells us that the final R is simply the sign of the ancient Norse nominative.

Blacaire's work here eventually helped the Northmen to regain and to hold their English Kingdom with a few brief Saxon interludes in the decades prior to the reign of Eric Bloodaxe and of his cousin Sweyn's invasion, and until the victory of their rival Northmen in 1066. None of the extant histories tell us the name of the woman whom he married. It is a safe surmise that she was not an Irish princess, for if so, her name would be found in Irish histories, and it is also fair to assume that in 948 she remained in Yorkshire, no doubt at Snainton.

In that year Blacaire was hastily summoned back to (13) Dublin, because his Cousin Anlaf Cuaran, allied with Congalach's Gaidhils, had sustained a reverse at Slane, at the hands of Rory O Connor, King of Connaught.

However, Congalach changed sides, and Blacaire was himself slain, and 1600 of his men killed (or captured) by (14) this Congalach, the son of Maelmith.

So ended the story of his remarkable life, but not of the line of strongholds he founded south and west of York. It is hardly necessary to add that in spite of this reverse, the dynasty returned to power, not only in North England but also in Ireland and in Man.

Anlaf Cuaran's royal house survived his own defeat of 979 at Tara, by Malachi the Great, and also that at Clontarf, on Good Friday 1014.

He became a Christian, married two Irish princesses and one Caledonian, Hermutrude, thus setting an example which was widely followed by the Norsemen. So much was this the case that in the endless campaigns and battles after Tara, Norwegians and Danes, Munstermen and Leinstermen, Dal Cassians and O Nialls were found almost indiscriminately and indistinguishably on either side of a battle.

Thus at Clontarf Sygtrygg II "Silkbeard" did not himself take part, but watched the fight from the walls of Dublin Castle, where he endured, not quite passively, the gibes of his Irish queen, the daughter of King Brian Boromhe, when she saw the rout of the Norwegian contingent by her father's men.

Sitric founded, in 1035, the present Cathedral of Christchurch, in Dublin, and died on a pilgrimage to Rome. Finally, when the anglicized Normans of the Earl of Pembroke's followers completed the "stabbing-in-the-back" of their pioneering Viking relations, the descendants of the latter are to be found, now almost fully Hibernicized defending Waterford and Dublin to the last man, under their prince Hasculf Torquils-
(15) son, and in alliance with Rory O'Connor, of Connaught.

So ended this astonishing dynasty in Dublin.

In Northumbria as we have seen, Blacaire left his family in Yorkshire, and for some years, his cousin Anlaf Cuaran,

ruled there once more, turn about with Eric Bloodaxe who defeated Edred at Castleford, until about 952.

Now Blacaire had another first cousin, the famous Gyda, younger daughter of Sitric Gale Caoch, who married, en second noces, and in romantic circumstances, the most illustrious and Christian King of Norway, Olaf Tryggvesson.

This monarch did not, we think, hold the title of King of Northumbria but all evidence goes to show that he exercised the real sovereignty there, particularly during the times when the worthless Ethelred was King of Wessex, who met his crushing defeat at Olaf's hands, in 991, at Maldon. Gyda and (16) Olaf lived "sometimes in England and sometimes in Ireland."

The knowledge that Gyda was now Olaf's Queen accounts for the fact that the descendants of her junior cousin Blacaire, were not only able to survive in Yorkshire in the teeth of the Saxons, but were able to hold for 2 more centuries, very large estates indeed, and in the most fertile areas of the Derwent Valley. Blacaire's son and successor is given by Sir Bernard (17) Burke, as Sitric MacBlacaire. His father must have been born in 912, or possibly a year or two later. Therefore the son must have been a young child when his father was killed in Ireland, and so all the more in need of Gyda's guardianship. No doubt this was the Sitric nicknamed "the Rich" and not to be confused with Sitric Silkebeard, King in Dublin later on.

In 969, a Sitric "Cam" came from overseas to Ul Colgam, in Kildare, but was wounded and repulsed by Anlaf Cuaran.

"Cam" means "the younger" in Irish

In 1023, Earl Sihtric was witness to two charters of King Canute, one jointly with four others of the same rank, Godwine, Hakun, Wrytsleof and Hrani, all obvious Danes. This records a grant of five hides at Worthy to Bishop Lyfing of Crediton.

The second existing charter is dated 1031 but executed in 1027, the other witnesses being again Godwin, Hacun and Rani, amongst some more. By this Canute granted land at Maewi to his "faithful Thegn Athelric".

Sihtric must have been born before 948, so that he will (18) have been fully eighty when he witnessed these charters.

Most fortunately for the Yorkshire Danes although Olaf was killed in 1000 A.D. in the naval battle of Svold, the next invader, the victor, Svein, or Sweyn, Forkbeard, came as a friend. He landed from his ships, on the accustomed shores of the Humber, and made a triumphal march amongst the earlier settlers, to pave the way for the Danish dynasty over all England.

The next Blacaire (or rather Blacre) whose name we meet in written historical records, is inescapably the grandson of Blacaire MacGodfrey, and held his lands under the friendly (19) sway of Canute the Great, who was indeed a blood relation.

No available document calls him the son of Earl Sitric, but having regard to the known facts about him, nothing less than a miracle would be needed, to make him anything but the grandson of Blacaire MacGodfrey.

The Norse custom of naming the grandson, not after the father, but after his grandfather, is too well known to need remark here. What is more cogent is the fact that (20) Domesday Book tells us that Blacre, up to 1066, held no less than $14\frac{1}{2}$ carucates, probably 1700 acres, in the extremely fertile upper Derwent Valley.

The localities of Blacre's estates were Snainton, Thorpe, East Ayton, Irton and Seamer, all a very few miles inland from the well-used Viking's beach head, of North Bay, Scarborough. Thorpe is between Irton and East Ayton, whilst we have evidence that some of the Northumbrian Kings resided at Castle Hill, (21) near Snainton.

So near is the Derwent to the sea shore, now rocky, but then sandy, that the stripped ships of the Vikings could readily have been put on rollers and hauled by ox teams over the present "sea-Cut" and so floated down the Derwent to Stamford Bridge and York itself. In fact from there, they could have been navigated to the landing places at Castleford, for quick action against the Saxon. Their ships could, and did, come up to Riccall for the battle in September 1066.

This applies to small flotillas. The larger fleets, as we know, used the Humber estuary.

Cockburn tells us that both Irton and E. Ayton, as well as the River Aire, are derived from the Irish root word.

This Blacre of the North Riding Domesday Book lost most, of his estates to Percy, the follower of William the Bastard,

at the Conquest of 1066.

His grandfather had been killed in 948 and as a young man but even so, Blacre of Domesday must have been much advanced in years in 1066. However, he was involved in no wars or fighting, and enjoyed his estates peacefully under his kinsmen the magnanimous Canute and Hardicanute, and under Edgar's regime, who appeased the Danes by giving them the highest offices even in London. This period is the darkest of the ages as regards written records, but by an almost incredible piece of good fortune, an unimpeachable document survives which not only gives us the names of three of Blacre's sons, and of two of his grandsons, but explicitly describes these relationships. This is the XII century Cartulary of Whitby Abbey, which gives us also the interesting information that his grandson Walter, shortly after 1223, sold a "Toft" of land at Flor, executing a deed. Flor, was on the outskirts of Whitby, thus the deed shows that Blacre of Domesday could not have lost the whole of his lands in this period, otherwise his grandson would have had none to sell. The translated Cartulary is published by the Surtees Society, and gives the names of the 3 sons as Baldwin, Richerus and Godfrey, of whom the two latter had sons named Godfrey and Walter respectively. The name Godfrey of course, recalls that of his great grandfather.

The deed about Flor was executed during Roger's tenure (22) as Abbot of Whitby, which shows the date to be 1223, or

nearly that.

Other cousins and kinsmen of Blacaire MacGodfrey appear in the histories. For example, one of the Dublin dynasty, bearing the entirely Irish name of Gluniarann, son of Heardulf was, according to Freeman, a leader of the revolt in York against the Normans, in 1069. A Godfrey Sitricsson, possibly a son of Earl Sihtric, fought in September, 1066, at Stamford Bridge and returned to his relations who ruled in Man, after (23)that Battle.

From now on, the family story is not one of realm shaking exploits, or of princely houses, but of an impoverished line of landowners striving to rebuild what had been snatched from them. Blacre of Snainton with his 1700 acres must have been well aware of his descent from the mighty Ragnar Lodbrog, and from the royal house of Skiolding and its immense antiquity. His cousinly treatment by the great Canute must therefore have made all the more bitter the hyaena treachery of the tanner's grandson, William.

Portions of the family's great lands, as we have seen remained, until they were threatened by a new peril, not this time of wars, but of inundation.

Seamer means Sea-Mere, and by the latter years of the XIII century the sea had so encroached into the North Riding, that the upper part of the Derwent Valley became a great marsh. Blacre's descendants therefore moved progressively to the west and southwards. Between 1140 and 1150, in the Coucher

Book of Selby Abbey, we find Robert Bleik; and Matilda, daughter of Alan Bleik' (Bleik' = Bleiker) still at Thorpe, only a mile (24) or so from Irton. On page 262, of Vol.I. "Carta Roberti Bleik' de Thorpe³¹ refers to "Alanus Bleik', pater meus".

In 1202, moreover, in a deed of 24th of July in Vol.XLVI (25) of the Yorkshire Feet of Fines, is mentioned Birlecca, at Dunnington, a score of miles to the South West. A little later, on 20th October, 1251, the same documents, in the reign of Henry III, show Robert Balache at Hutton, not so far as Dunnington, but only three miles from Irton. In 1301 Vol.XXI of Yorkshire Lay Subsidies mentions Johanne and Juliana Balcker at another of the North Riding "Huttons", namely Hutton Rudby, north of York itself.

None of these documents unfortunately, tell us of the relationship of any of these persons to any other. Thus we must guess their kinship from the extreme rarity of the name, and from the close grouping of these identifications in this particular part of Yorkshire, and nowhere else in England. An exception to this lies in one or two freak occurrences of the name in Somerset and the West, possibly deriving from one of Blacaire's early piratical incursions up the Severn and a (26) local wife. However, after 1251 the name vanishes entirely from all North Riding records except at Hutton Rudby and immediately reappears in the West Riding, and in precisely those localities associated with Blacaire MacGodfrey's military control in Yorkshire.

A more remarkable piece of evidence is that as we shall see later, the young men of the North Irish branches of the family who served in the American and the Napoleonic wars, knew, without any doubt, that six hundred years earlier, their roots had lain in the North Riding.

Meanwhile the Danes continued to hold sway in all the coastal regions of Ireland. The Annals of Ulster, under the year 1012, describe the death in action of another Amlaibh, son of Sitric.

The Battle of Clontarf was fought on Good Friday of 1014.

In 1051, Edward The Confessor banished Godwin and Sweyn to Flanders and Harold, later the King, to Ireland. In 1066, (27) Godred surnamed Cronan, the "son of Harald Niger," invaded the Isle of Man, thence came to Ireland, did the like to Dublin and a great part of Leinster." In 1069 the two sons of Sweyn came up into the Humber with 300 ships, but were too late to reconquer England, even when the other Danes had recaptured York. In 1071, the Danes in Waterford and Dublin were massacred by the Norman descendants of Rollo's Norwegians.

- P.12 - Note 1. Sharon Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons "When Ivar heard the news, he gripped his spear so hard as to leave impressions of his fingers on the haft."
- P.13 - Note 2. History of the Northmen 1831.
- P.15 - Note 3. Pub. by the Sheffield Telegraph, 1931. Colonel A.H.Burn, the eminent military historian, confirms the site of the battle.
- P.16 - Note 4. Referred to in "Annals of Ulster" under year 936.
The Saxon Chroniclers include Simeon of Durham, Florence of Worcester, Henry of Huntingdon, William of Malmesbury and others.
- P.17 - Note 5. Annals of Ulster, under AD 933 say that he died of anguish. (Solore) See also Annals of Innisfallen, published in English, 1951.
- P.17 - Note 6. Annals of Ulster say that Anlaf Godfreysson was back in Dublin in 937. This is probably 938.
- P.17 - Note 7. Annals of Ulster under AD 942 say that the Norsemen of Loch Cuan were nearly all destroyed. Muircertach, son of Niall (i.e. Muircertach of "the Leather Cloaks"), King of Eilech and the Hector of the West of the World was killed by "Gentiles" on a Sunday, the 4th of the Kalends of March (i.e. by Blacair, son of Godfridh, King of the Dubh-Gaill at Glasliathan by the side of Cluain-Cain of Fera-Rois.
'Vengeance and ruin have fallen
As Muircertach does not live also!
The country of the Gaidhill will ever
be an orphan.
Ard-Marcha was plundered on the morrow,
the third of the Kalends.'
Under the year 940, the Annals describe the "hosting" by Muircertach, in mid-Winter, when he provided cloaks of cow-hide for his men. He thus acquired the sobriquet of "na g-cohall g-croicenn" i.e. of the Leather Cloaks.

- P.17 - Note 8. Letter from Curator, Armagh Museum.
- P.20 - Note 9. Annals of Ulster Vol.I under year.
- P.21 - Note 10. It is noteworthy that this zone lies athwart the Riknielldway up which Athelstan must have marched to the Brunanburh Battle in 937, the only route practicable for a large force.
- P.21 - Note 11. "Place Names of the E.Riding" P.169 connects Blake's Dale with a Scandinavian Bleike, and refers to Alan Bleik' and to Blake Street in York.
- On P.175 it shows that Belthorpe was Balchatorp in Domesday 1086, and later Belkethorpe.
- On P.224, Blacktoft was Blachestoft in 1195, (Calendar of Charter Rolls) and again derived from the old Danish personal name. See infra.
- P.21 - Note 12. Kendrick's History of the Vikings, P.256.
- P.22 - Note 13. Annals of Ulster. Book of the Four Masters.
- P.22 - Note 14. Cuaran means sandal in Irish. O'Hart states that the installation of a Scotie High King consisted in the binding on of sandals. The impression on the Coronation Stone is that of a sandal. It has been suggested too, that Sandal Castle was named after Anlaf Cuaran.
- P.23 - Note 15. The counter attack by Sweyn Asleiferson, called John the Mad, went awry in the alleys of Dublin, when the East gate took fire and the city was lost.
- P.24 - Note 16. Because of Gyda's marriage to Olaf Twyggveson young Sitric Macblacaire became a cousin by marriage to Eric Bloodaxe, who was King in York until 954. (Heimskringla, Saga vi, C.33)
- P.24 - Note 17. Sir Bernard Burke's "History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland", 1836, Vol.II, p.38.
- P.25 - Note 18. It is hardly probable that the O Niall would have accepted as a hostage from Blacaire the son of Anlaf Cuaran, knowing as he must about the rivalry. Hence the hostage must have been Sihtric Mac Blacaire "the Rich". Earl Sihtric is mentioned in Searle's Onomasticon Anglo-Saxonicum. The first charter (Kemble,

P.25 - Note 18.
(contd)

Codex Diplomaticus, Vol.4, No.743) is in the Codex Wintonensis, of Winchester Cathedral, now in the British Museum. The second charter is also in the British Museum. Having regard to the relationship between Blacaire and his son Sihtric on the one hand, and Sweyn Forkbeard and Canute on the other, there is no ground for surprise that Sihtric should have retained this rank, called "Dux" in Latin, in spite of the Edgar and Edmund interludes. Hakon, son of Eric, was Earl of Worcester under Canute, vide Stenton's "Anglo-Saxon England" p.407. Tengvik, on p.198 of his "Old Saxon by-names", mentions Aeluricus Sistrici Filius in 1087 and 1098.

P.25 - Note 19.

The attack, in 969, on Kildare, by this Sihtric is described in the Book of the Four Masters under that date. Sigurd Snake-eye (according to Marshall Smith) was the grandfather of Gorm the Old, great grandfather of Harold Bluetooth and great-great-grandfather of Canute's father, Sweyn Forkbeard. Sigurd Snake-eye was a younger son of Ragnar Lodbrog by Queen Aslauga. Therefore Blacaire was Sweyn's second cousin once removed, and his son Sihtric a third cousin to King Canute. This well accounts for the retention by the family of their large estates in Yorkshire, and of Sihtric's rank and name. It would be in the highest degree unlikely that any other Danish family (than Sihtric Gale Caoch's) would venture to use the name.

P.26 - Note 20.

It will be noted that this custom was observed by the family until 1572.

P.27 - Note 21.

Kelly's Directory of the N.Riding 1937.

P.27 - Note 22.

Surtee's Society's publications = Vol.LXIX pp.21, 28 and 40.

Cartularium Abbathiae de Whiteby

Page 40 of Surtees Society translation - Vol.69.

XLIII. Robertus de Percy super Ecclesia de Quenersuttona (M115)

P.27 - Note 22.
(cont'd)

Universis S. Ecclesiae filiis, has litteras videntibus vel audientibus, Robertus de Perci in Christo salutem. Quum quod ex bonae devotionis procidit exordio circa finem exhibendum est in opere, vobis significare dignum duxi me, Robertum de Perci, praesente haerede meo, et ipso libere annuente, dedisse, et concessisse in perp. elem. S. Petro et S. Hyldae de Wyteby, fratribusque ibid. Deo serv, ecclesiam de Quenresuttun, cum omnibus suis adjacentibus: et quam dedi, ne quorundam suceessorum meorum violetur praesumptione, praes. carta mea confirmo. Valet. Testes. Haschatinus, Prior Sancti Oswaldi et canonici sui, Thomas et Nicholas, Rogerus, clericus Comitum Johannis de Norhampton. Willielmus de Bedaforum. Radulphus Prespiter. Vivien Presbiter. Robertus, Presbiter de Lidum. Galfridus, Presbiter de Sneton. Willelmus Presbiter de Lidum. Radulphus, Presbiter de Duresleia. Ricardus, Presbiter de Haugesgard. Willelmus, Caper? Robertus de Clara. Malgrim de Beeingby. Stephanus Ramchel de Sneton. Ivo de Hugelbardebi. Willelmus de Hausgard et Roger de Normanby. Adam, Richerus filius Blacher. Thomas, frater Prioris, Ricardus de Lundon. Rand? filius Cole. Baldwinus filius Blacher.

Lionel Charlton, in his History of Whitby, published 1779, assigns the date 1144 to this. This accords with the belief that Blacher is identical with Blacre of Domesday Book.

CARTULARIUM ABBATHIAE DE WHITEBY.

Published by Surtees Society 1879.

Page 28. XXVI.

Notum sit omnibus S. Matris Ecclesia filiis, tam fut. quam praes. has lit. videntibus vel audientibus, quod ego, Willelmus de Pera dedi, c. et conf. Deo serv., in elem. puram et perp., pro D'no meo, Henlico Rege Angliae, * er pro haer. suis et pro animabus Willelmi de Perci, avi mei, at Alani de Perci, patris mei, et Emmae de Gant, matris meal, at animabus (? omnibus) parentum meorum, et pro me ipso, et pro Aliza, uxore mea, et pro haer. nostris; - videl. Whitby, ubi praed. Eccl.

P.27 - Note 22.
(contd)

v.

est, et eccl. S. Mariae, ejusdem villae, et Portum maris, cum omnibus libertatibus et pertinentiis suis, et Nedrebi, Overbi, Hauchesgard, Normanibi, Fielingan, aliam Fielingan, Staupe, Snetune Uglebardebi, Sourebi Newham Duneslae, Stachesbi, Brecca, Baldebi, Floram, et Hachenessam xxxxxxxxxxxx Hii sunt testes. Gilebertus, filius Fulconis Dapiferi. Ernaldus, Presbiter de Tatecastre. Robertus, filius Pichot de Perci. Baldwinus, filius Radulphi de Irtuna. Willelmus de Hanchesgarde. Radulphus, Presbiter de Whitby. Robertus Cocus, et Walterus filius ejus. Adam, Praepositus de Whitby. Richerus filius Blacher, et Gaufridus filius ejus et multi alii

* Note:- The conclusion is that William, son of Alan de Percy executed this deed before 1135, therefore Richard, son of Godfrey, son of Blacker must have been alive at that time. This deed also was translated by Charlton in 1779.

Extracts from CARTULARIUM ABBATHIAE DE
WHITEBY.

Published by Surtess Society 1879.

Page 21 XVIII.

"Notum sit omn. tam praes. quam fut. quod ego, Walterus, filius Godfridi filii Blaker, d. et c. et hac pr. c. mea conf. Hugoni, filio Rogeri Prudume, unum toftum t'rae in Whiteby, quod videl. jacet inter t'ram Ricardi Freboys et t'ram Angnetis, uxoris Thomae Coci, in vico qui vocatur Flore: Ten. et hab. l. et qu. et honorifice de me et haer. meis, praedicto Hugoni et haer. suis, pro duabus marcis argenti, quas praed. Hugo dedit Michi prae manibus in mea necessitate: redd. inde annuatim D'no Abbati burgagium et unum denarium annuatim ad libros Eccl. B. Petri de Whiteby, pro omni serv., consuet. et exactione ad me vel ad haer. meos pertinente. Et ego Walterus et haer. mei war. prade. toftum cum omn. pert. suis praed. Hugoni et haer. suis c.o.h. et f. in perpetuum. Hiis testibus.

- P.27 - Note 22. (contd) Domino Rogero, Abbate de Whiteby. Wilkmo de Foxtone, tunc Senescallo de Whiteby. Roberto de Barneby. Andrea de Dunske. Willelmo de Waldene. Willelmo Mercatore. Willelmo Tinctore. Roberto fratre ejus. Petro de Neuham; et aliis.

Note: The name appears as BLACKER in the original.
 Roger de Scardeburg was Abbot of Whitby from 1222 to 1244.
 This deed, again, was translated into English by Charton in 1779.

- P.28 - Note 23. Kendrick's History of the Vikings.
 P.29 - Note 24. Index to Wills in the Record Series Yorks. Arch. Society. Vol. X.
 P.29 - Note 25. Pedes Finium Ebor. King John.

P.20 of Surtees Society Vol.XCIV.

XLVI. Ibid. die Mercurii prox. post festum S. Margaratae (July 24th 1202) Inter Birleccam de Dunnington, pet. Willelmum filium Leunad, et Gavfridum fratrem ejus, ten., de rationabili dote ipsius Birleccae in Dunnington Unde placitum fuit etc. scil quad. predicti Willelmus et gaufridus recognoverunt pefatam dotam esse jus ipsius Birleccae, et ei eam reddidit. Et pro hac recognitione etc. prefata Birlecca concessit prefatis Willelma et Gaufrido croppum waignenae predictae dotis de hoc anno presenti.
 (Ibid No.136)

EARLY YORKSHIRE CHARTERS. Farrar: Vol. III.

P.363. 1150-1170. A.D.

Grant by Adam, son of Peter to the Monks of Rievaulx of BLACKER in UPPER HOYLAND for the site of iron Smitties and iron ore in his part of Shitlington and Flockton, dead wood for charcoal there, 20 acres between Little Midgeley and the brook of Emley, pasturage of the above said towns and licence to construct a mill with a pool at Blacker. Chartulary of Rievaulx Jul.D.i.f. 57.d.(old f.61.d), Pd. in Chartul, of Rx, 95.

Surrender by Matthew Son of Saxe to the Monks of Rievaulx of 4 acres and $\frac{1}{2}$ perch of land in Blacker whereon to make Smithies for the manufacture of iron and utensils with iron ore and dead wood in his part of Flockton and Shittlington for the supply of those Smithies, also common of pasture in those towns for certain animals, and licence to attach the pool of their mill to be made on the stream by Blacker.

(Original in possession of Sir Francis Wortley, Bart. Dod ; Ms. lxii f.18. Chartulary of Rievaulx. Jul.D.i.f.59.d. old f.63.d.).

Flockton is 3 miles south of Dewsbury.

Note by L.V.S.B.

Cockburn points out that Blacker could not have been so named because of the colour of the soil which is all light here. He is a mining engineer. The coal was, of course, discovered much later. Iron bearing soil is usually red or yellow.

WILLIAM FARRER. EARLY YORKSHIRE CHARTERS.

VOL.III. 1916.

p.364. (After quotation of the Rievaulx charter)

ADAM son of PETER to the Monks of Rievaulx.

"Blakeker" seems to be the place in Upper Hoyland now known as Over, Middle and Lower Blacker. Worsborough adjoins it on the western side, the Dove flowing between. Consequently the ore and charcoal obtained in Flockton and Shitlington had to be brought a considerable distance to the smithy at Blacker."

Farrer dates this charter as 1150-1170.

R.A.C. 2045.

SURTEES SOCIETY. Vol.83.

CHARTULARY OF RIEVAULX pp.58-59.

Charta XCV. LIII. 1160 to 1220 A.D.

Fifth Charter of grants by Adam Fitz-Peter.

"... XV acras terrae in loco qui vocatur Blakeker ad construendas favercas suas in

P.29 - Note 25.
(contd)

quibus facient ferrum et utensilia necessaria
Domui Rievallensi
Insuper concedo eis libere et quiete firmare
stagnum suum ad molendinum faciendum in terra
mea super ribulum qui cufrit juxta Blakeker,
et deducere rivulos fontuim in stagnum
praefatum."

XCVI. LIIII. (Roger Fitz-Peter gives formal
assent to his brother's grant)

..... XV acras terrae in loco qui vocatur.
Blakeker"

p.60 CL LVIII. Grant by Maurice FitzSaxe.

"Mattaeus filius Saxi ... Noverit universitatis
me dedisse Ecclesiae S. Mariae de Rievallie
acras terrae et dimidiam percatam in loco qui
vocatur Blake-Kery ad faciendum ibi fabricas
suas in quibus facient ferrum et utensilia
et alia necessaria. Domui Rievallensi"
- "Insuper concedo eis firmare stagnum suum
ad molendinum faciendum in terra mea, si
voluerint, super rivulum qui currit juxta
Blake-Ker".

After careful examination of the volume, we
believe that they must all be early - say
1160 to 1220.

Wakefield Court Rolls. Vol.I. P.275.

Court on 25 Mar 1297 - Hiperum: Geppe le Colier
fined 6 pence for the escape of a cow in "the
Blacker"

Wakefield Court Rolls Vol II P.28 Yorks.Arch.
Society Record Series XXIX 6 Edw.II.1314.
Court on 5 Feb.

HIPERUM - William de Sunderland 6d for with-
drawing his suit against Thomas de
Waddesword, clerk, William quit
claiming all his right in 5 acres
in Blacker, to the said Thomas.

SANDALE - Court 8 Edw. II 25 Feb. 1315.
Warrener - Henry Sprigonel is
made forester of the town in
Thurstmannaghe, Southwode,
Blacker, and warrener of land and
water throughout the whole grave-
ship of Crigleston, and is sworn.

P.29 - Note 25. Court held at Rastrick on Tuesday after the
(contd) Octave of Easter 1316 - 8 Edw.II.

HIPERUM - Thomas de Waddesworth, clerk,
gives 12d to take an acre in the
Blacker from Dom. Richard de
Middleton, chaplain.

Court Rolls of the Manor of Wakefield - Vol.
III 1297-1309, taken from Vol.XXXVI of the
Record Series of Yorks Archaeological Society.
1906. Court at Rastrick, 35 Edw.I.6 June 1307.

HIPERUM p.90. "Dom Rich" de Midleton Will'de
Sunderld. give 2s. to take 10 acres
of the lord's waste in the Blacker on
Gleg Clyff. Rent 4s.2d. for all
services, Court at Wakefield p.136.
25 Jan.1308.

Thomas de Langfeud v. William 5. of
Ralph de Criglestone and Henry his
brother, says that they unjustly de-
tain 13s.4d. on Tuesday after the
Invention of the Holy Cross (3rd May)
34 Edw.1306, they bought from Thomas
the herbage of 24 acres of pasture in
the Blackerre for 13s.4d. to be paid
to William's barn (grangea) at
Criglestone, half on St.Giles (1st
September) that year and half at
Michaelmas following; they have paid
nothing and he claims 20s damages.

Court at Rastrick on 6th December 1308.
2 Edw.II.

HIPERUM. Thomas, son of Cicely de Holgate
gives 2s to take $4\frac{1}{8}$ acres of land in
le Blacker from Dom Richard, the
chaplain.

These extracts show that a locality near
Hipperholme which is a soke of Wakefield, and
near Crigglestone, was already called "the
Blacker" in 1297, 1308 and 1316.

Rotuli Chartarum ann. 5 Johann. p.116 AD1204.
allude to "terra Blachere", in a charter of
the church of the Holy Trinity.

On p.68 of W. Wheater's "Old Yorkshire, he
says that part of the supposed battlefield
of Brunan Burh was known to country folk as
"the Blackery" (This is in the edition of
1885, second series)

P.29 - Note 25. Apart from the places mentioned so early, we also have the following :-
(contd)

BLAIKESWATH, which in p.332 of Smith's Place names of North Riding, is derived from old Norse name Bleikr, in XII century.

BLAICA STREET, in York, similar derivation as early as 1108 by the English Place Name Society.

Blacker Grange, near Blacker Hill.
Mapplewell and Blacker: one mile E. of Darton.
Blacker Farm: Skelmanthorpe, still held by a Blacker.

Blacker Hill, Barnsley: 1 m. S.E. from Worsborough.

Blacker Wood: $\frac{3}{4}$ m. S.E. of L.M.S. Station.

Blacker Hill Farm: $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Dewsbury.

Blacker Lane: $\frac{3}{4}$ m. W. of Netherton.

Blacker Beck: $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S.E. of Horbury Station.

Blackham: a tract $\frac{1}{2}$ m. E. of Brompton.

Blacker Hill: } 3 m. S.E. of Centre of Barnsley.

Blacker Common: } 1 m. E. of Worsborough.

Blacker Bridge: }

Blacker Village: } $2\frac{1}{4}$ m. N.N.E. of centre of

Blacker Hill: } 2 m. W. of Darton. /Barnsley.

Blachatoft, near Howden. (Old spelling 1199, Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names)

Blacker Arms: Thornhill Lees.

Balkerthorpe, now Belthorpe, E. of York.
Belgerby is mentioned in Pedes Finium Ebor. 1204. Reg. John p.92.

Balkeholme: Yorkshire Inquisitions, Vol. II. p.159. Writ dated 6th Dec. 1293, made before the Sheriff concerning Thomas son of Peter of Balkehölme, Robert de Kriglestone and others.

(Yorks. Arch. Soc. Record Series XXIII.)

LE BLACKER: Terram Johannis filii Albredae abbuttantem in uno capite super le Blacker et in alio, super le sick - Yorks Inquisitions p.326. A.D. 1283. DLXVI. Carta Johannis filii Hugonis de ACAST'.

p.29 - Note 26. Professor Hakon Shetelig mentions Blackerne in Ayrshire but we have no evidence to connect it with Blacaire. "Viking remains in G. Britain and Ireland".

p.30 - Note 27. Chronicle of Ireland, by Hammer 1571.

CHAPTER THREE.

"HARD TIMES UNDER THE PLANTAGENETS"

As we have seen, in a very few years after 1223, the centre of gravity of the family's lands and possessions, in England, was moving some miles towards the south westward.

The move was hastened no doubt, by the great inundation which befel the "Sea-mere" area shortly before 1300, as well, of course, as by the seizure of their lands by the Percis.

We find quite numerous documents to refer to Henry de Blakker of Blakker, to this day called Blacker, in one of those defensible localities near Worsborough which we have ventured to ascribe to Blakker^o Godfreysson's tactical judgement. It is

1) already called as we see, Blacker in a Rie Vaulx Charter dated between 1150 and 1170.

To Henry, by charter, Sir Hugh de Nevile made over a
 2) messuage in Milnethorpe, formerly held by Henry de Milnethorpe, probably in 1258. Sir Hugh also made two grants of lands, in
 3) Derlay to Adam and Henry de Swathe, to which charters Henry de Blakker was a witness. Sir Hugh succeeded his father in 1285, which helps us to date these documents.

Again Henry was a witness to a lease by Henry de Brom to Robert, son of Sir John de Bosville of a Bovate of land in
 4) Worsborough called Blabirmegand. We shall meet the Boseviles

again a couple of centuries later. Robert de Bosvile was living in 1296 but one of the witnesses to this lease was Sir Robert Fitz Thomas de la Woodhall, who signed another charter in 1259. (5) Yet other witnesses were Sir Nicholas de Wortelay, alive in 1266, and Peter, son of Sir John de Bosvile, who lived till 1258.

At the great Assize of Henry III, in 1266, William de Thornhill charged Tyas and others with seizing his goods at Thornhill, Denby, Carlcotes, Blacker, etc. This confirms the Rievaulx Charter, in the matter of the place name.

Still another document in which Henry is concerned is in Pleas of the Crown, in 15 days of Trinity 21 Edward I before Hugh de Cressingham (m 34.10. Wapentake of Staincross). In this, Henry de Blacker of Wyrkesburgh together with Richard of Wolfchayt, of the same, attach Dyonisia, the wife of one Reyner of Leyes whose house was robbed by William "Le Sopere" of York and Hugh "le Mercer" of Ripon, by whom he was mortally wounded, Hugh was captured and beheaded. Dyonisia was attached because she was present.

We have up to date, found no document which tells us definitely what relation Henry de Blakker was to Bladwin, Richerus and Godfrey, the sons, and to Godrey and Walter, the grandsons of Blacre of Domesday Book.

(6) Many documents remain to be searched, so that there is still hope of written proof.

However, the strongest and strangest evidence of this relationship will come to light, as we shall see, during the American War of Independence.

- 7) A son, William, succeeded Henry de Blakker or Blakker, and he in turn was followed by another Henry. This Henry was one of the witnesses to a charter of Peter Son of William de Rokelay, to Roger son of Thomas de la Wodehall of an annual rent of eight shillings which Emma, the grantor's mother, had granted for a term of ten years for a toft and land in Wyrkesburg, also to another charter by which Emma, widow, quit claimed her right to a yearly rent of 2s. 11d. for her dower from lands and tenements in Wirkisburg other witnesses of these charters
- 8) were Richard de Rokeley and Henry de Rokelay.

- On January 20th 1334 (5), Henry, son and heir of William de Blakker, granted to Sir Adam de Everynham of Rokeley, a yearly rent of four shillings with the homages and all other services in which John de Rokeley was bound to the for a bovate of land in the Vill of Wyrkesborough, in a place called Blakker, to
- (9) which deed Henry de Rokeley, Eadmund de Perci, and others were witnesses.

This Henry de Blakker had a son Robert, who married a daughter of John le Bozock or, de Bozoche, of Doddeworth, or Dodsworth, who gave to his son-in-law a messuage with its

curtilage which the grantee had by inheritance after the death of Alice S'Ocris (or S'O'mis) in the Vill of Doddeworth, to (10) which deed Henry de Rocheley was a witness.

Soon after the marriage Robert de Blakker and his wife removed to Crigglestone, where they found land already bearing the name of Blacker, now in 1350 thus spelled.

They had a son Richard, who in 1371, on the Monday after Martinmas, obtained a grant for fourteen years from John Dey of Staynton son of William and Agnes Day of Crigleston, and Alice his wife of all their lands and tenements within the bound of Blacker, and a third part del Calfred with meadows woods and other appurtenances, to hold of the chief lord of the fee (the Lord of the Manor of Wakefield) as copyhold land rendering to the grantors 9s. 10d. at Whitsuntide and Martinmas in equal proportions, and if the said tenements were to be sold (11) Richard should have the first opportunity.

Between 1373 and 1382 Richard frequently acted as a juror at the Wakefield Manor Courts. On October 28. 1382, he was a witness to a grant by William Coke of West Bretton, to John Dronsfield of all the messuages, lands and tenements which he held in that Vill. Other witnesses were John Staynton, of Woolley Moorhouse, who in 1368 had been nominated by the Prior of Monk- (12) bretteon as his attorney and John de Amyas, of Horbury, who died in 1395.

Richard Blakker's son John married Alice, daughter of this John Dey, who on 8th May 1394, granted to his son-in-law a moiety of a holding "called Blakarre, with all lands, meadows and appurtenances in Crigullston". To this deed Thomas, and John (13) Andrew, of Chapel Thorpe and Thomas de Sylkeston were witnesses.

In the next year, 1395, John Dey died on July 18th and his widow, Alice, quit claimed to her son in law, John de Blakkare, of Crygelyston, all her right of dower in the place commonly called Blackare, in Crygelyston, and in Chapel Thorpe and in (14) Wacfeld.

At this epoch, we come to a turning point in the history of the family.

John Blakker became the owner of Blakker Hall and its surrounding land. This is to say, that on two successive occasions at 140 years interval, we find the head of the family who had quite unmistakably adopted as their surname, the name of their mighty ancestor, had, moreover, settled themselves, by purchase, to live on lands identified for many years earlier, by his name.

We may remark that it has been suggested, contrary to Professor Hakon Shetelig's opinion that, the name is derived from two, not one, old Norse words, that is Blakk and Kjarr, meaning "dark copse". Possibly such a copse may have existed

near Criggleston in ancient times, but an inspection of the topography round about the present village of Blacker, near Worsborough, shows that such an explanation of the name is inappropriate. Nearly all the localities named Blacker are on fairly high ground having obvious tactical advantages.

The descendants of John Blakker will very often be found as "Constables and Reeves" of both Criggleston and Sandal. The latter, a castle of some importance, is believed to have been named after Blakker's cousin, Anlaf Cuaran. Cuaran is the Irish for Sandal. He was nicknamed "Olaf of the Sandal".

Blakker, in the early part of the fourteenth century had belonged to Thomas de Langfield. At Manor Court on 25th January 1308, he sued William son of Ralph de Crigeleston for unjustly detaining 13s. 4d. for the herbage of 24 acres of pasture in the Blackerre, which they bought of him.

Thomas de Langfield was dead in 1316, when his widow Ellen appeared at a Manor Court at Halifax.

At a court held at Wakefield, in Lent, William, son and heir of Thomas de Langfield, paid 12s. for relief of the lands and (15) tenements which were those of his father.

From the Langfields, Blakker must have passed to the Deys.

John, whose descendants were to hold this estate for two and a half centuries, was elected by the tenants of the manor, to be

"Constable" and Sokereeve of Crigglestone in 1393, 1396 and 1398 in which office many of his descendants succeeded him. He was juror in the Manor Courts in 1406, 1409 and 1421.

The material fortunes of the family must have sunk to a low ebb after the seizure of their 1,700 Derwent Valley acres, in 1069, by the Percies and further, in consequence of the Great Inundation.

The career of this John shows signs of an unmistakable rebuilding of their wealth. His son Robert married Alice, daughter (16) of John and Elena Boyne, of Boyne Hall, Chapel Thorpe, a prominent family whose name we shall meet again in our story. He is mentioned in various documents, particularly a quit claim relating to the manors of Sir William Dronsfield of Westbretton, on 24th (17) June 1443. He held divers lands called Blakker in Crigglestone with appurtenances in Sandall by Socage. On October 1456 he was plaintiff in an action in the Manor Court. By his will, dated 8th April 1458, Robert Blakker desired to be buried in the parish Church of Sandall. "To my mortuary my best animal. To the fabric of the Church of Sandall 6s. 8d. To the service of St. Marys 3s. 4d. For a torch 4s. To the fabric of the Church of St. Peter at York 6d. The residue of all my goods to Alice (18) my wife and Thomas my son, whom I make my executors." This was proved at York on 14th July 1458. Many descendants are buried

here too. He had two sons Thomas and John. The latter married Margaret, daughter of Richard Leeke and on 30th November 1493 she herioted for lands in Sandal, Wodthorpe and Crigelston.

(19) In 1500, John Blacker was "Grave" of Sandal.

He had two sons, Roger and Robert. The former, on 2nd May 1521 paid a heriot on the death of his father on their copyhold lands in Crigelstone and Woodthorpe. He died without issue and Robert became his heir, and he on 13th January 1530-31 paid a heriot to the Lord of the Manor.

Six weeks after the death of Robert Blakker senior, his eldest son Thomas paid a heriot on copyhold land called Thourn-
(21) rold, on 14th May 1459.

From henceforward the name is always spelled Blacker. Thomas was now the head of the family and, on 12th June 1466 John Boyne of Boyne Hill, Chapel Thorpe, his father-in-law, granted him a messuage and 30 acres in Criggleston, and a messuage and 16 acres in Cudworth. On the following day, the
(22) grantees regranted these lands to John, the son of John Boyne.

On 15th May 1471, Thomas, along with Sir John Savile and
(23) Percival Amyas, was a witness to a grant of lands in Woolley.

Thomas Blacker married Agnes, daughter of Thomas Savile of Hullinedge, and was on 21st February 1483 - 4 one of the executors of his brother-in-law Henry Savile, a Yeoman of the

Chamber of the King, who was buried in Whitefriars Church in
 (24) Fleet Street, London, and left bequests to Sandall.

Thomas Blacker died on 12th August 1486 desiring by his
 will to be buried in Sandall Church to which he made bequests.
 (25) The Will was proved on 20th August 1486.

He was probably the owner of the carved oak chest, dated 1441,
 with his initials, which is preserved at Carrick Blacker.

His brother-in-law, Thomas Savile, made a Will which was
 proved on 3rd April 1490, in which he left "lands and tenements
 in Holmfryth" to "Robert Blakker son of Thomas Blacker and Agnes
 (26) his wife, my sister to pay yearly to the support of the Chaplain.

At a Wakefield Manor Court on 7th October 1495, his four
 trustees surrendered the properties to seventeen trustees,
 amongst whom was Thomas Blacker of Blacker Hall. The trustees
 assured to his son Robert the messuage and 16 acres in the
 (27) Holme on condition of annual payments to the Chaplain of Sandal.

Thomas Blacker left two sons, Robert and Ralph, to the
 former of whom Thomas Savile left the Holmfryth property, but
 on 23rd September 1518 Robert made it over to Thomas Rydeynge,
 (28) conditionally on the payments to the Sandal Chaplain.

Robert is mentioned in these Manor Court Rolls as holding
 lands called Blacker in Crigleston with the appurtenances in
 Sandall, by Soccage.

He married Mary daughter of John Sprigonell of a very old family of Hall Green, Criggleston, and of Anne his wife, daughter of John Savile of Copley.

By her he had three sons Thomas, who succeeded him at Blacker Hall, Roger who died without issue, and Robert.

By a deed enrolled on the Wakefield Manor Court Rolls on 18th May 1497, Thomas became one of the trustees of John Cooke late Vicar of Sandal to hold land for the benefit of Sandal Church.

Again, on 1st March 1498, this John Cooke presented certain indentures to the trustees concerning two acres of land on Thurstonhagemore to be devoted to masses, candles and prayers for his soul.

Thomas was also one of the trustees appointed on 3rd September 1502 to hold some land at Boyne Hill for the use of (29) St. Mary's Chantry, in Sandal Church, and yet again, in the matter of an endowment for a Chaplain to say mass in "Our Lady's Quire" in Sandal. This was from the revenue of thirty acres in Criggleston, bequeathed by Robert Bawney. Another trust (30) was for the Chapel of St. James.

Thomas was Sokereeve and Constable of Sandal, like his father, in 1514 and 1515, and was frequently a juror at the Wakefield Manor Courts.

He married Agnes, daughter of Roger Amyas, of Sandal, by

his wife Alice, daughter of Thomas Staynton of Woolley Moorhouse, whose brother Richard bequeathed his property to her in 1485. Thomas Blacker died on 30th September 1516 and made over Blacker Hall "with all closes, meadows, land and tenements, with appurtenances and all other messuages, lands, tenements, burgages, meadows, woods and pastures with appurtenances in Crygleston, Chappel Thorpe, Heton and Wakefield, and elsewhere in County York" to William Froste of Ackton, Walter Bradford of Houghton, Ralph Amyas, his brother-in-law, the vicar, and John Frankysshe, Vicar of Warmfield. These were apparently feofees to look after his house and estate for the benefit of his widow (31) until Ralph his son and heir apparent was to succeed him. The will was proved on 22nd October 1516, and sealed with his signet.

These records tend to show that by this date the family had contrived to rebuild still more of its old position in Yorkshire.

Thomas had two sons Ralph and John. The latter died in July 1560 and was buried at Sandal. His will, in Yorkshire Deeds CII No.137, is dated 28th June 1560 and proved on 23rd (32) July at York. He leaves his property to his wife, his brother and to three sons and four daughters and to one godson.

John's son Robert was born in 1547, lived at Hollingthorpe, in Crigglestone and married Joanna, daughter of Thomas Wright,

by whom he had a son, Francis. In his turn, Francis like his ancestors became Constable and Sokereeve in 1594, for Crigglestone. He died and was buried at Sandal on 16th March 1601.

(33) His will was proved at York on 22nd April 1602.

His widow herioted for a messuage at Hollynthorp and Crigglestone, and left a son, also named Francis, and two daughters.

Various land transactions of this Francis and his son also a Francis, who again was Constable for Crigglestone in 1625 are in the Wakefield Manor Court Rolls for 1628. He was fined for minor offences in 1633 and 1634. His will was proved on 9th April 1750, and his widow Anna was buried at Sandal on 22nd January 1656/7.

So much for the younger sons. The eldest son of Thomas and Agnes, who followed his father at Blacker Hall was Ralph, who on 2nd January 1522/3, paid assessment on his lands at Criggleston in respect of the subsidy granted to Henry VIII. On 20th January 1524/5 he was appointed jointly to manage a grant to Geoffrey Shakursley and Ralph Levyrseg of their manor of (34) Bulclyff, Crigglestone and other lands in Westbretton, Clayton and Darton. Roger Blacker also paid subsidy in respect of (35) lands at Sandal.

In 1531 he and others were plaintiffs against Roger Amyas (36) of Netherton in connection with two manors and fifty messuages,

which the defendant granted to them to hold in trust on 22nd October 1532, he was one of those who sat on the inquiry post mortem of Josceline Percy youngest son of the fourth Earl of Northumberland.

The details of this not unimportant investigation are described in the Rufford Abbey manuscripts in Appendix VII, 119 of the Eleventh Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, on 8th October 1552. Ralph conducted an inquisition at the Wakefield Manor Court, and again during the succeeding four years. On 13th November 1556 he acquired land in Sandal, Wakefield Manor Court Rolls 1556, and again between 1557 and 1560 37) in Crigglestone and from Francis Woodrove of Woolley.

This Ralph, the elder of the name, married Ann daughter of Thomas Grice of Sandal by his wife Agnes, who was the daughter of William Beeston of Beeston and of Elizabeth who was the 38) daughter of John Bosville of Chevet and of Joan Radcliffe of Ordsall. We met a Sir John Bosville in 1285.

They had four sons, John, Ralph who is of particular interest to us, Robert and Nicholas, and three daughters of whom Agnes was married to Lieu, Dorothe to Thornes, and Isabel to John Leake. The elder Ralph died in March 1578 and was buried, like so many of the family, in Sandal Churchyard. His Will, made on 20th July 1562 was proved, much later, on 16th April 1578.

This Will is in Vol. 21. Folio 113, of the Register of Wills in the Probate Court of York, and includes bequests of lands and goods to his second son Rauf or Ralph, whose career initiates a turning point in the fortunes of the family.

John, the eldest son naturally inherited Blacker Hall, but Ralph succeeded to Durkar House, about a mile to the northward of it, and still in existence.

He was Constable for Criggleston in 1581, 1582, and after a significant interval, again in 1598.

39)
40) He acquired lands on various occasions, at Doncaster in 1581, at Wakefield in 1595, in Sandal of 27th May 1596, and in 1570 certain lands in Criggleston which had formerly belonged
41) to the Chantry of St. Mary, in Sandal Church.

42) On 11th October 1599, he received from the Queen, four acres in Criggleston, and on 27th May 1596, purchased other
43) land in Sandal. Other lands acquired by him, are set out in a Sandal Survey of James I in 1620.

Amongst Duchy of Lancaster records, in a Sandal Survey for the year 1608, are particulars of various lands held by Ralph in the Criggleston, Chapelthorpe, Sandal and Durkar neighbourhood.

He owned also a good deal more land in the county as we know from his Will, which speaks of thirty two messuages in Wakefield alone. This Will was proved on 14th December 1624.

Although a younger son, he appears to have died as a wealthy man, increasing the fortunes which his father brought back to the family.

We believe that this fortune which Ralph built up for himself and his sons, have been, in part, the result of venturing in Continental Wars, particularly in Portugal and Spain.

Dom João de Castro wrote a letter dated 15th October 1598 to the Earl of Essex in which he says "I am sending this by the hands of an Englishman named Blacar". This is now in the Cecil manuscripts at Hatfield House.

Essex was engaged in the capture of Cadiz in 1596.

A fair guess is that the "Blackar" in question was Ralph the younger of Durkar, and this guess is strengthened by his naming his elder son Valentine, his daughter Violetta, and his younger Ferdinando.

Several writers who have recounted the history of our family tend to jump to the conclusion that the soldier of fortune, who by his ventures made good was Valentine. We venture to disagree with this view, and to substitute Ralph in Portugal and Cadiz, for Valentine in Ireland. The arguments in favour of this view are, Valentine could not have selected from a Latin language his own baptismal name.

Valentine was the Captain of a troop of horse at an early age. Such a command then called for the possession of considerable

wealth, very probably provided by his father.

Valentine acquired an estate in County Tyrone. The circumstances of the times were such as to make it probable that this estate was a grant to him by the Crown, in reward for his father's Military services, rather than an ordinary purchase, or a part of the "Plantation". His purchase of Carrowbrack, County Armagh, came later. Valentine's son Ferdinando must have been able to call upon quite considerable inherited wealth in order to become, as early as 1645, "Captain-Leifftenant" of Sir John Savile's Troop of Horse.

Ferdinando's will as we shall see indicates that he must have been a fairly wealthy young man. Apart from mounting and arming his own following in the Troop, he had several chargers of his own and two suits of half-armor, which were costly items.

When we recollect that the naval portion alone of the plunder of Cadiz was worth twelve million ducats, this is no cause for surprise.

John, the eldest son of the first Ralph, that is, Valentine's uncle, having married Agnes, daughter of Simon Sprigonell died in 1584, seized of lands of the then yearly value of five hundred pounds, equivalent today to ten or fifteen times that figure, or possibly forty thousand a year if modern taxation be considered.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- P.31. Note 1. Hunter's Pedigrees. Harleian Society's Vol 88,
pub. 1936. pp. 19 and 20.
- P.31. Note 2. Hunter J. South Yorks II. 284.
- P.31. Note 3. Monk Bretton Chartulary 433, 434, Yorks.
Archaeological Soc. Record Series.
- P.31. Note 4. Monk Bretton Chartulary No.371.
- P.32. Note 5. Hunter J. South Yorks. II - 105.
- P.32. Note 6. Incidentally, these Whitby Abbey deeds contain
one, regarding Fyling lands, by a certain Baldwin
of Irton (p.192). We are tempted, because of the
place name to guess that this Baldwin is identical
with Blacre's son. His heirs were Radulph and
Alan, for whom see p.26.
- P.33. Note 7. Hunter J. South Yorks. II. 264.
- P.33. Note 8. Yorks. Deeds. Yorks. Arch. Soc. Record Series
XXXIX. 492, 494.
- P.33. Note 9. Yorks. Deeds. 498. Hunter J. S. Yorks. II. 264.
- P.34. Note 10. Yorks. Deeds. XXXIX. No.171.
- P.34. Note 11. Yorks. Deeds. C.II. No.136.
- P.34. Note 12. Yorks. Deeds. LXXVI. No. 44.
- P.35. Note 13. Yorks. Deeds. CXXVI. No.123.
- P.35. Note 14. Yorks. Deeds. LXXV. No.124.
- P.36. Note 15. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls, Yorks Arch Soc.
Record Series II. 136., III. 115,116,137.,IV. 65.
- P.37. Note 16. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1426.
- P.37. Note 17. Yorks. Deeds. LXXVI. 59, 60.
- P.37. Note 18. Register of Wills in the Probate Court at York.
Vol. 2.fo. 367.
- P.38. Note 19. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1493.
- P.38. Note 20. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1530.
- P.38. Note 21. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1459.
- P.38. Note 22. The history of these lands is described in the
Monk Bretton Chartulary Nos. 94 - 102.
- P.38. Note 23. Monk Bretton Chartulary Nos. 538, 539.
- P.39. Note 24. Register of Wills in the Probate Court at York,
Vol.5. fo. 214.
Test. Ebor. Surtees Soc.III.294: Halifax Wills 202.
- P.39. Note 25. Register of Wills in Probate Court at York,
Vol.5. fo. 290. b.
Test. Ebor. III. 259.n.
- P.39. Note 26. Register of Wills in Probate Court at York.Vol.5.
fo.59.
- P.39. Note 27. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1495.
- P.39. Note 28. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1518.
- P.40. Note 29. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1502.
- P.40. Note 30. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1502. Cal.Pat.Rolls 22.
James I. P.10. No.13 Exchequer Special Commission 2.
Charles I. No.5748. Yorks.

- P.41. Note 31. Yorkshire Deeds. CII. No.137.
P.41. Note 32. Wills in the Probate Court at York. Vol 16. fo.95.
P.42. Note 33. Vol. 28. folio 618 in the Probate Court.
P.42. Note 34. Yorks. Arch. Journal II. 56.
P.42. Note 35. Yorks. Deeds. LXXVI. 92.
P.42. Note 36. Yorks. Fines. Y.A.S.,II.61.
P.43. Note 37. Yorks. Fines. II. 61.
P.43. Note 38. Glover's Visitation of Yorks. 1584/5.
P.44. Note 39. Yorks. Fines. V. 163.
P.44. Note 40. Yorks. Fines. VIII. 27.
P.44. Note 41. Exchequer Special Commissioners No. 3159.
18.Eliz. m. 2 July 11th and 5748 York, 2 Chas I.
P.44. Note 42. Wakefield Manor Court Rolls. 1596.
P.44. Note 43. Duchy of Lancaster Records. Chas.II. bundle 17.

RESURGENCE IN ELIZABETHIAN DAYS.

Captain Valentine Blacker is justly regarded as the man who, after nearly seven hundred years, re-established the family in Ireland.

- (1) He was born in 1597, the son of Ralph Blacker of Durkar, a house still standing, Ralph was himself a younger son of Ralph Blacker, of Blacker Hall, a man, as his will indicates, of considerable property. This Ralph was the first whose Christian name broke the Danish custom of naming sons after their grandfathers.

We believe that Valentine's italianate name, and that of his son Ferdinando and his daughter Violetta, are connected with the military service, on the continent, of his father. These Elizabethan expeditionary forces created, as we know, a fashion in such names.

- By a deed dated 2nd February 1621 he gave his son Valentine some land lying in Newsome and Langfurley, now called Little Oliver, held by copyhold of the Manor of Wakefield, at an annual rent to the lord of 7s. 7d. as agreed upon in 1610, when his father compounded with King James for
- (2) the confirmation of his estate.

Valentine had an elder sister, Elizabeth, married to a

Clerk in Holy Orders, Richard Worrall of High Hogland, near Blacker, whose marriage settlement is dated 30th April 1611.

He is also referred to as being, at one time, of Nether Poppleton, in the Ainsty of York, some distance from Durkar or Crigglestone. Details are not available of this residence, but he went, however, to Ireland in 1622, at the age of 25. Some chroniclers say that he went "to seek his fortune" there, but the probability is rather that his father was given a grant of land as a reward for military service in Europe, and that he naturally made this over to his younger offspring, who was better able to develop, and take advantage of the gift.

Valentine, according to the Wakefield Manor Court Rolls for 1629, is then described as of Durker and already as of Carrowbrack, Co. Armagh, and as surrendering half an acre of land in "Dirtcarre," in a place called le Goyte, to Sir John Savile, Knight. This was he who later commanded the troop of Horse, against the Commons, of which Ferdinando Blacker was "Captain-Leifftenant," so the transfer was possibly in payment to Sir John for the equipment of his share of this troop.

At a Wakefield Manor Court, held on 15th May 1638, Valentine Blacker of Carrick, (the new name for Carrowbrack) in Co. Armagh and Judith his wife surrendered 13 acres 1 rood

of land lying in Dirkearre, Chappellthorpe and Criggleston, late in the occupation of the said Valentine, to the use of John Copley, of Doncaster.

His wife Judith, was the daughter of Sir Michael Harrison, of Ballydargan, Co. Down, by whom he had sons and daughters. She died on 27th March 1664 and is buried at Seagoe. Valentine was then evidently shifting completely to Ireland. There his earliest residence was Blacker's Bawn, Ballynaghie, which was still standing about 1838, and on the side of the road opposite Blacker's Mill. It was two stories in height roofed with small slates, was of considerable size and had many apartments of small dimensions. It was timbered throughout with white oak. The windows were in small diamond panes, but in leaden frames. There was a large stone over the door on which were the letters "G.B.", the initials of Valentine's other son who outlived him, and carried on the line in Armagh.

The house in the parish of Seagoe which was probably built in 1619, was doubtless the first permanent home of the family in Armagh. Valentine's son and grandson are, as we shall see, described in vestry rating records as of Ballynaghie, and later still, of Knockbridge House.

To revert to Valentine, we find that some years later, in 1660, after the successful conclusion of the Civil Wars, and the grim and desperate fighting on behalf of the King against the Commons in 1649, he purchased about 1500 acres of land with the manor of Carrowbrack, Co Armagh, with Courts Leet, from Sir Anthony Cope, of Loughgall, and then renamed the estate Carrickblacker. Sir Anthony had this from Charles I. Hereafter he is described in the Wakefield Manor Court Rolls as Valentine Blacker, gent., of Dirtcar and Carrickblacker.

Valentine's activities during the terrible years preceding 1649 are little recorded. The ferocious fighting in Ireland against the Parliamentarians can have left him little leisure for memoirs. It culminated in the hideous atrocities by the Commons' troops under Cromwell himself, who savagely massacred the women and children of both Drogheda and Youghal, atrocities which were left unsurpassed until those in Hindustan in 1947.

Valentine's name appears, under the year 1649, in O'Hart's "Landed Gentry of Ireland," juxtaposed with those of his sons George the elder and Ferdinand the younger. The latter predeceased his father, as we shall see, and oddly enough is shown by O'Hart as an "Ensign", whereas four years earlier, at the siege of Sandal Castle, he held the rank of "Captain-Leifftenant".

Valentine is put down by O'Hart as Sir Valentine. Very possibly this was a courtesy title accorded to him on the strength of the fact that he was a "Captain of Horse and Foot", that is the commander of a considerable body of non-ordnance forces.

Until the time of the South African war of 1899, a field officer was considered to rank with a knight and was entitled to wear the gilt spurs, the emblem of that order.

Undoubtedly, after the Glorious Restoration, Valentine was fortunate enough to receive the gratitude of his Monarch, as is shown by O'Hart on pages 374 and 375 of his 1887 edition. O'Hart gives the names, all together, of :-

Blackar, Ferdinando.
 Black r, George.
 Blacker, Sir Valentine.
 Blacker, Ensign Ferdinando.
 Blacker, Ensign George.
 Blacker, Richard.

in a list of the "Forty-Nine" officers, being "Enrolments of the adjudications in favour of the (A.D.) 1649 Officers" (formerly denominated the " '49 Lots": Preserved in the Office of the Chief Remembrancer of the Exchequer, Dublin, see Records of Ireland, marked "1821 - 1825" p.p. 610 - 637.

(3) He adds the footnotes "These adjudications refer to the arrears of the Commissioned officers who served Charles II or Charles I

in the Wars of Ireland, before the 5th day of June 1649. The Irish origin of many of these officers can be seen in the Third Edition of "Irish Pedigrees" on p.453, under Names of Persons in the Grants, Under the Acts of Settlement and Explanation, appears "Blacker, George".

Possibly the reduplication of names in the first list was to ensure that no quibbles about spelling should prevent these officers from receiving the King's benefits.

It is noteworthy that whilst O'Hart gives long lists of those settled in the Plantation of Ulster, he includes no names of the family whatever. This leads to the supposition that Valentine came to Ireland and purchased his original estate quite independently of the official settlement or "Plantation". The circumstance is noteworthy, particularly because the estate was originally granted by Charles I.

By an indenture, dated 10th April 1666, which was still in existence in 1900, Valentine made a settlement of the Carrickblacker estate, thus embodying the entail on the direct male line.

A tradition has long been held in the family that Valentine acquired the site of Carrickblacker because he

believed it to be where his ancestor Blacaire McGodfridhe MacImbhar slew, in single combat, on that Sunday in February 943, the heir apparent of the High-King, the O Niall as we have already described.

Now Blacaire is only mentioned actually by name in Irish histories, for instance the *Chronicum Scotorum*, the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, the *Annals of Ulster* and the famous *Book of the Four Masters*.

In the Saxon works, such as those of Simeon of Durham and Henry of Malmesbury, the Dublin Vikings are usually named collectively.

The ancient manuscripts from which these former histories have been compiled reposed in obscure Irish monasteries and castles, until they were translated by erudite Jesuits, in 1627, but they were not printed in English until near the close of the nineteenth century. For instance, the manuscripts of the *Annals of Clonmacnoise* lay in the castle of Lemanaghan, in Clare. The translation of it, by MacGeogahan, was finished on 20th April, 1627. Therefore, it would have been quite amazing for an English speaking Captain of Horse to have derived the idea five years earlier of the Blacaire exploit from them, rather than from an oral tradition handed down from father to son in Danish Yorkshire.

To reinforce the family's beliefs, we may note that valentine's great great grandson established himself at Ratheskar, Co. Louth, almost on the spot where Blacaire's first conflict with O'Neill came about, very close to the Blakestown and Godfrideslande of to-day.

Ancient weapons were dug up near the Limekiln Fort by Lt. Col. William Blacker, and are still preserved by the family. They consist of a spear head and a bronze sword of Punic shape, both described in Stuart's History of Armagh., p.512., and probably Goidelic.

Valentine made his will eleven days before his death in 1677 leaving chattels, money and stock to his daughter Violetta, no doubt because he had entailed the estate itself on his son George. It reads:

Prerogative Wills, Public Record Office, Dublin.

Will of Valentine Blacker, d. 1677.

In the name of God, Amen. This sixth day of August, in the year of our Lord God 1677, I, Valentine Blacker, of Carrick, in the par. of Segoe, in the County of Armagh, Esq., being sick and weak of body, but of sound mind and memory, thanks be given to God therefor, and calling to mind the mortality of my body, and

knowing it is appointed for all men once to die, do make and order this my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say: First and principally, I give my soul into the hands of God who gave it to me; and for my body, I recommend it unto the earth, to be buried in decent and Christian manner near Judith, my wife's grave, in Sego Church, nothing doubting that as the General Resurrextion I shall receive the same again by the mighty power of God: and touching such worldly goods wherewith it has pleased God to bless me in this life, I give, bequeath and dispose the same in manner and form following: Imp. I give and bequeath unto my daughter Violetta Gill, all my goods monies and chattels whatsoever, viz: horses, mares, cows, heifers, moneys, plate, bills, bonds and writing-brass, pewter, linen, apparell, and all moveable goods whatsoever to me belonging, the same to be in my said daughter Violetta's possession immediately after my decease . And I do hereby utterly disallow, revoke, and annul all and every other form of testaments, wills, legacies, bequeathed and disposed by me to my wife before this time named and bequeathed; and I do hereby make and ordain my said daughter, Violetta Gill, executrix to this my last will and testament,

ratifying and confirming this, and no other, to be my last will and testament. Witness hereof I have hereunto got my hand and seal this day and year first above written.

Signed, sealed, and published, and pronounced and declared by the said Valentine Blacker as his last will in the presence of V. Gill, Schoolmaster Canally, and James William Jamieson.

"Signed, sealed in presence of
"Valentine Gill

"Skolla X Ainli

V. Blacker.

"his mark.

"James Jamieson

Valentine died on 17th August 1677 and was interred in Segoe Church. He was succeeded at Carrick by his only surviving son, Major George Blacker, of Carrick and Ballynaghie.

A character of some importance in our story is Ferdinand, often referred to as Ferdinando, a younger son of Valentine, by Judith, daughter of Sir Michael Harrison of Ballydargan, Co. Down.

We recount his career now although he died before his father, and before his elder brother Major George.

The earliest accounts of his adventures come from the "New Intelligencer", a very early newspaper published during the Civil War.

Full extracts are given in the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal Vol. XIII, from which we learn that the Parliamentarians invested Sandal Castle in September 1645.

Blacker Hall was an outpost of this fortress, which we have associated with Anlaf Cuaran in the tenth century.

After Marston Moor, Sandal Castle was owned by Major Beaumont and was defended, for the King, by Colonel Bonivant. Pontefract Castle surrendered on 20th July, whereupon Sandal was summoned to do likewise. A preliminary bombardment was opened from four Parliamentary batteries.

During an interval in this a challenge was issued to single combat between a champion from each side.

The Royalist was our Captain-Leiftenant Ferdinando Blacker, described as of Blacker Hall, Criggleston, actually his grandfather's seat, and one Mr. John (or Thomas) Naylor, of Wakefield, who represented the Roundheads.

They fought mounted and in armour with sword and pistols, on 19th September 1645.

Ferdinando made his very interesting will just before the combat, of which the original is in Somerset House, and of which we have a facsimile.

It shows his position as second-in-command of Sir John Savile's troop of Horse, and describes his possessions, including his two suits of half-armour and his various chargers.

No doubt his grandfather's prosperity made it possible for him to keep up what must have been a costly position in the cavalry arm.

We deduce that Ferdinando was the victor in the fight, because his will was not proved until 25th February 1650/51 and in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

It is pleasant to record that the besiegers had no success, and that three weeks later the garrison marched away to Welbeck House with the honours of war.

History, in the shape of O'Hart's Irish pedigrees, next shows Ferdinand, like his father, in the wars against the savage Cromwellians in Ireland.

Although a "Captain-Leifftenant" in England in 1645, he is shown, in 1649, in Ireland, as an "Ensign".

We can find no explanation for this fall in rank. Perhaps he had lost his property in England, and at the same time the family resources, in Ireland, had to be mobilized to maintain his father Valentine as "Captain of Horse and Foot".

Very probably too, cavalry was then in less demand in Ireland than Infantry. We know that a number of gentlemen there, of whom Ferdinand was one, were commissioned, as "Ensigns", to recruit battalions for the King's Cause.

A pair of stirrups, by tradition that of King Charles I are in the possession of the present head of the family. Possibly they were given to Ferdinand after Marston Moor.

His elder brother George succeeded to Carrickblacker.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR.

- Page 47. Note 1. Will proved 14th December, 1624.
Durkar is called Manor House on the
present 1/25,000 map.
- Page 47. Note 2. Yorks Archaeological Journal - Part 139
MCMXLI, p.250.
- Page 51. Note 3. O'Hart's Irish Pedigrees.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE RETURN TO IRELAND

60.

The family line was now continued in Ireland, by Major George, who became its head. The senior branch of Blacker Hall, Crigglestone, came to an end with a daughter of another George Blacker, great grandson of Ralph the elder, and therefore a first cousin once removed to Valentine. She was Elizabeth, who was baptized at Sandal in 1606 and died in December 1653, after marrying in 1649, Henry Reyner, to whom Blacker Hall was conveyed. It thus passed, after three centuries, out of the family. For another century it belonged to the Roades, or Rhodes family. The Hall has since fallen down and been rebuilt as a small farmhouse, and belongs to the Viscount Allendale of Bretton Hall, whose family name is Beaumont.

Several junior descendants of Ralph are on record as having been baptized, married and buried at Sandal down to 1656. Much information about them is contained in J.W. Walker's exhaustive article in the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal Part 139, of 1941.

Major George was High Sheriff of Armagh in 1684, and married Rose, daughter of William Latham of Ballytroan, by Rosa, his wife, daughter and heiress of Rowland Young, of Drakestown.

He was an officer in the Royal Army of James II, and in this capacity was despatched to call upon the garrison of Derry to surrender, when the Maiden City was invested in 1688.

At this time he appears to have decided that William and not James, was his rightful monarch.

Accordingly he declared himself on the side of the former King, but his new allegiance was not immediately accepted by the Commander of the garrison, who placed him in confinement.

After some time however, he was released and then took a prominent part in that very glorious defence.

He was attainted by James, but his estates restored by King William (Vide O'Hart). These now included the present Carrickblacker which house he began to build. It is one of the very few Irish houses in the red brick Jacobean style, and is described in the guide books as an architectural gem.

Over the main door are carved the present arms of the family, a Norse Warrior in armour, on a field gutté de sang and (2) in his hand, a Danish war axe.

This, with the motto "Pro Deo et Rege" replaced the earlier charge of three Moor's heads on a chevron, which had the very strange but perhaps significant motto "Odi ingratum". We find this described under the date 1613 in Burke's General Armoury of 1873, as the date of grant.

No earlier instances can be found, although the will of Thomas, in 1516, carried a seal.

It has been surmized that, because the family had much cause to detest the Norman dynasties, its members would scarcely have applied to them or to the Plantagenets for a grant of arms.

This no longer applied when the Tudors came to the English throne, and still less to the Stewart dynasty.

Perhaps this explains why the return of the family to prosperity in this period coincides with the use of arms.

Possibly also, the change in the motto may be explained in this way and the wording of the earlier by resentment for the Normans had done in 1066 and 1069.

- (3) Major George was present at the Boyne and to him was delegated the duty of escorting the body of the late Governor of Derry, the Revd. George Walker, to Castlecaulfield, and of seeing him interred with military honours in the parish church. He served in the subsequent campaign and until the fall of Limerick.

He died on 4th February 1689, was buried in Seagoe Church and was succeeded by his eldest son William, of Carrick and Ballynaghie who completed Carrickblacker in 1692 as is shown by a date on the wall.

Valentine's sister Elizabeth married, in 1611, the Reverend Richard Worrall of High Hoyland, which is very close to Blacker village, near Worsborough.

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The Church of Segoe was built during Valentine's lifetime and principally by his means.

William's name appears in the Act of Attainder, with his father's.

(4) He married firstly Elizabeth daughter of the Honourable Robert Stewart, of Irry or Ery and Castlestewart in County Tyrone, the third son of the first Baron Castlestewart, who are descended from the Dukes of Albany.

She bore him a son and heir, Stewart, died in January 1678 and is buried at Ballyclog.

A painting of this Stewart, as a boy, is in the possession of the head of the family. It is dated 1671 and bears the present coat of arms.

George Blacker had two other sons, Legard, who died on 29th August 1686, and is buried at Shankhill and Robert, and also a daughter, Frances, who married John Tipping, died on 25th January 1689, and is buried at Segoe.

Robert's name appears in an early Irish Army list as a "brigadier" in the King's Irish Life guard with which was amalgamated "the Lord Essex" troop of gentlemen-at-arms." He is described as "Brigadier of the Guards and so Lieutenant".

(5) Later on he received a commission in Beaumont's, later the 34th, Princess Anne of Denmark's Regiment of Foot, on 8th June 1689, to be Lieutenant to Captain Holmes.

The name Beaumont is one with which the family had several contacts in Yorkshire, and is the family name of the present owner of Blacker Hall. The Army List describes Robert as having blue eyes, brown hair and having been born in Yorkshire.

We believe that he served at the Battle of the Boyne and helped to rescue the King when he was wounded by the famous round shot. For this the King gave him a pair of gloves as a token, which are still preserved by the family.

He died on 29th August, 1689, and is buried at Segoe. William Blacker married thrice, firstly as we have seen, Elizabeth Stewart and again, later in life, Miss St. John daughter of Sir Oliver St. John, from whom are descended the junior branches of the family who own Castlemartin, Co. Kildare, Elm Park, Co. Armagh, and other seats in Ireland.

Again in 1699, he married Hannah Lawrence, of that family which was to prove illustrious.

Stewart who succeeded to Carrickblacker married Elizabeth, daughter of Barbara Young, Widow and had five sons and a daughter.

Barbara Young was originally a Miss Latham, sister of William Latham, of Brookend, Co Tyrone, Off the Tyrone Coast of Lough Neagh is Blacker's Rock, near the Brookend estate.

Barbara's will was proved in 1743 and by it she bequeathed to her grandon Latham a gold Jacobus, a coin reputed to cure the King's evil.

The first half of the eighteenth century held very few outstanding events for the family, a circumstance really not surprising having regard to the grim times which followed upon the campaigns between 1688 to 1691. Every effort must have been needed on the one hand to consolidate the victory over the Jacobites and on the other to build up that good will towards the Goidelic elements of the Irish population in which the family have always taken a just pride.

The times were full of truly Irish paradoxes. When our family were heathen, they had fought furiously against the Church of Ireland. Then becoming themselves Christians, their head, Sitric II in 1035 caused his Bishop Donatus, to the wrath of Armagh, to be consecrated by Rome. A century later his Christian grandsons were fighting to the last man to resist "Strongbow" that Earl of Pembroke who brought the Church of Rome into Ireland at the point of the sword and of the lance.

Now, whilst Marlborough was fighting in Flanders to defend Protestantism, our ancestors in Northern Ireland made themselves bulwarks of the Church of Ireland which they had, in the tenth century, plundered relentlessly. However, John Blacker was commissioned on 5 September 1704 on Colonel Hans Hamilton's Regiment of Foot.

The American Revolutionary War makes us a gift of some family history which by a quite extraordinary piece of good luck is of the greatest value in throwing light on, and confirming what happened in those very dark years between 1100 and 1250 A.D.

No less than four young men of the family, one from the Armagh and three from the Rathescar branch between 1766 and 1812 received commissions in the 65th Foot.

This is now the first battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment, with which the family has no connection.

A puzzle seems to present itself. Why did not these young men go to an Irish Regiment? The Royal Irish Fusiliers and Royal Irish Rifles did not yet exist. The Dublin, and Munster Fusiliers, the 2nd Inniskilling and The Leinsters were not at that period in the British Royal Army. The Royal Irish is a Southern Regiment and may have had no vacancies, so the enigma remained. A flood of light was suddenly thrown on the problem by the unearthing of the fact that up to 1873, the 65th Foot was not the York and Lancaster, but the "North Riding" Regiment.

No proof could be clearer, that in a family which has always cherished its ancient traditions, these young men knew that their ancestors, five centuries earlier, had belonged to the

North Riding, in which, as our Chartulary of Whitby Abbey proves, six of them had then held lands.

This discovery, like that of the Chartulary itself, is an almost phenomenal piece of good luck for the historian. Both bridge over indisputably the two most formidable gaps in Yorkshire and in Irish history.

It will be remembered that Robert, who was in King William's bodyguard at the Boyne, later received a commission in Beaumont's Foot, whose connection with the West Riding is plain. This became later the 34th Foot. The 65th Foot did not however, exist in 1689.

Our four young officers who thus lived up to their family history were firstly William, the second son of William of Carrickblacker. He became an Ensign on 6th May 1766, transferred to the 54th Foot on 1st September 1771 and was a Lieutenant from 7th July 1775 to 1778. He died at Berville in the West Indies in 1793, having married Miss Jacob, of Woodbrook, Co. Wexford, who brought that estate into the family. His grandson was Canon Robert Shapland Carew Blacker, later head of the family.

The next, Henry, was born in 1753 and commissioned as Ensign, 65th Foot on 15th May 1771. He was the third son of Latham, of Rathesear, Co. Louth. He became a Lieutenant on

22nd November 1775, Captain-Lieutenant 31st October 1787, and received his Company on 14th April, 1795. He was wounded at wounded at Saratoga under Burgoyne and taken prisoner. He inherited Milburn, Co. Derry from an uncle, the Hon. E. Cary. but died without offspring in 1827, leaving his estate to a nephew, the Revd. R. Olpherts, a name we shall hear later.

The seventh son of the same Latham of Rathescar was another Latham, born in 1765 and commissioned as Ensign in the 65th Foot on 22nd December 1779. He became Lieutenant on 14th May 1782; again gazetted from half-pay on 1st October 1783; Captain-Lieutenant 14th April 1795 and Major from 5th June 1798 to 1800. He resided at Newent, in Gloucestershire, and married Catherine, daughter of Colonel Maddison, of Lincolnshire.

He had a son, George Latham, who was born in 1794, and received an Ensign's commission in his father's Regiment on 26th September 1812. He was promoted to Lieutenant on 17th (9) December, 1814, and died unmarried in 1821.

The eldest son of the second Stewart, the Dean, who had married a daughter of Sir Hugh Hill, was William who was born at Carrickblacker on 1st September 1777 and succeeded to the headship of the family. He married a Miss Ferguson but died without children on 25th November 1853, having achieved a certain celebrity. His memoirs, in the form of an extensive diary, are preserved in Armagh Museum and form a valuable and vivid record of that age, most momentous for Europe and for Ireland. Sir Henry MacAnally has drawn much upon these memoirs in his classic work on the part played by the Irish Militia in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The armies of the Revolution under Hobbe, Moreau Kleber and not least, Carnot, had swept all before them defeating Prussians, Austrians, Russians and particularly that expeditionary force belonging to and mis-managed by Whitehall, in the Low Countries. An unbroken tide of successes carried the tricolour through Italy by way of Toulon. These disasters to the London bureaucracy encouraged the revolutionaries to attempt an invasion of the British Isles. Ireland, partly because of the Roman faith and partly because of Presbyterian republicanism, was a bait. The first French attempt was repelled in a naval engagement off Bantry, but in 1798 a considerable force landed at Killala, under Humbert and easily routed a couple of militia battalions at Castlebar.

These were under a noble English officer who at Ballina, that evening, taunted an Irish lady about the hasty retreat of the militiamen, and received the reply "Your Lordship appears to have won that race".

Soon however, Cornwallis scraped together a force of seven battalions of Irish Militia, a couple of Regular Squadrons of the Scots Greys and a few field pieces. He met the French further inland at Ballinamuck, defeating them utterly. In this engagement, the Armagh Light Infantry, to become in our day the 3rd Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers, charged the French with the bayonet without firing a shot and captured the tricolour regimental colour of the 70th Demi-Brigade of the Army of the Revolution. It hangs to this day in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Armagh, appropriately enough, close by the resting place of the bones of Brian Boroihme. This, in 1798, was the first defeat that the French had encountered on land and so marked an epoch. In the Fishguard episode was no actual fighting.

Meanwhile the Regular Forces of Whitehall, between 1793 and that year of 1809, in which another North Irishman took them over, encountered twenty-one defeats of more or less ignominy in succession, a series broken only by Sir James Stewart's victory of Maida. Hence not much was heard in London about Ballinamuck, indeed the subject is eschewed in Whitehall

to this day.

Still the tradition and spirit remained so that many thousand Irish Militiamen were to be found in the trenches of Badajoz and Cuidad Rodrigo and a century later, in those of Flanders in 1914 and the bloody years after.

William was not, as far as records show, present at this actual battle, but soon afterwards we find him in command of the 2nd Brigade of Armagh Horse. However, his testimony about the campaign is invaluable. He was gazetted to Command the Seagoe Infantry on 31st October 1796.

He wrote two poems, one called the "Battle of the Boyne", to be distinguished from the song of that name, and another "Oliver's Advice".

His wife appeared at a 12th of July ball in a dress all of orange, which caused the deletion of her husband's name from the roll of Justices of the Peace.

After office in the magistracy and the Lieutenancy he became Vice-Treasurer of Ireland from 1817 to 1829 devoting some support to Irish art and to the Irish Piper.

A younger son of William of Carrickblacker was Samuel, who married Miss Corry. Their seat was later Elm Park, in Co. Armagh and a grandson was the celebrated Valentine II. He was born on 19th October 1778 and joined the Light Cavalry of the Honourable Company's Army of Fort St. George. He was a cornet in 1799, with a troop of the Nizam's Horse serving in Mysore against the French Army and their Afghan ally Tippu Sultan. (10)

In the next year he was employed as A.D.C. to Colonel Stevenson in the Wynaad, and later, in the South of the Presidency under Colonel Agnew, when he was thanked in despatches for surprising the enemy and charging them successfully with his troop. He then joined the Quarter Master General's Branch and became Quarter Master General himself at the phenomenally early age of 32. In those days, it will be noted, the Quarter Master General conducted the Intelligence and Operations activities now performed by the General Staff.

These campaigns associated him with his fellow countryman Sir Arthur Wellesley, whose ancestral estates in the North of County Dublin were close to those of the second branch of our family in County Louth. No one took a greater share in wresting Hindustan and the Carnatic from the French than this small band of Ulstermen of whom the first great leader was Sir Eyre Coote.

The decisive early battles for India were Buxar and Wandewash, at which he defeated the gallant and chivalrous son of Connaught, Count Lally of Tollendal, Co. Galway. A brutal revolutionary régime rewarded Lally by the knife of the guillotine, but Wellesley at Assaye crowned his compatriot's work of Buxar. He was godfather to one or two of our family. (11)

Valentine, in 1815, served in Lt. General Sir Thomas Hislop's Army of Reserve, and in 1817, as his Chief of Staff of the Grand Army of the Deccan in the culminating victory of Maheidpur. Although this put an end to the last French hopes in India, little was heard of it in England where it was overshadowed by the news of Wellesley's nearer to home victory of Waterloo, even though Maheidpur had more of our fighting men engaged. Valentine's services here, and in the reconnaissance he made before the battle, were specially brought to the notice of the Governor-General. In 1818 a C.B. was conferred on him. He returned to Ireland in 1821 and was thanked in General Orders by the Commander-in-Chief for his eminent services over ten years as Quarter Master General of the Army of Fort St. George. "Blacker's Garden" near that citadel is named after him. He was the author of the classic "Memoir of the operations of the British Army during the Mahratta War 1817-19," pub. in 1821.

He returned to India and became the first Surveyor-General of the sub-continent in 1823. In this capacity he planned and inaugurated a proper basis of triangulation for the whole of India as is shown by an able paper of his reprinted later by Major-General Sir Andrew Waugh who describes him as being, with the exception of Everest, the ablest and most scientific man, albeit a cavalryman, who ever presided over the Department. It is hardly necessary to add that Valentine's triangulation culminated in the discovery of the mountain named after his great successor.

He executed a complete map of Hindustan, preserved by his descendants at Elm Park, introduced the polyconic projection into Indian mapping and initiated the first explorations of the Dihang and Dibang. Besides this he trained the celebrated instrument maker Syed Mohsin, whom he brought from Arcot. This resulted in the foundation of the present Mathematical Instrument Department. Valentine's technical activities are more fully detailed in the General Report of the Survey of India for 1926, the centenary of his death. His monument, in the Park Street Cemetery in Calcutta bears the inscriptions :-

"Beneath are deposited the remains of Lieutenant Colonel Valentine Blacker, Companion of the Bath, of the Light Cavalry

on the establishment of Fort St. George. During ten years
Quarter Master General of the Madras Army and subsequently
Surveyor General of India.

Ob. IV February MDCCCXXVI. AET. XL."

On the reverse :- "Lieutenant Colonel Blacker was an officer
distinguished alike for professional ability, for public zeal,
for private worth, and for manliness of character. In testimony
thereof his friends and comrades have caused this monument to
be erected to his memory."

In 1926, the Officers of the Survey of India placed a
wreath on it.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE.

- P.60. Note 1. Shown by an entry in a family bible and an Indenture of 1666. He is buried at Seagoe.
- P.61. Note 2. - the renowned "perforated axe", the maker of history.
- P.62. Note 3. "Fighters of Derry" by W.R. Young 1937.
- P.63. Note 4. The first of the family in Co. Tyrone was Andrew Stuart 2nd Baron of Ochiltree, descended from the third son of King Robert II of Scotland.
- P.63. Note 5. Dalton's English Army Lists and Commission Registers 1896 Vol III. pp.13 and 50 under "List of Officers lately in the Army in Ireland and who now desire to be entertained in H.M. Service. 22nd. March 1688/89.
- P.64. Note 6. The marriage settlement is dated 1 May 1704.
(Richmond Herald)
- P.64. Note 7. He was born in Derry and entered Trinity College in Dublin on 11 June 1678.
- P.65. Note 8. Dalton, English Army Lists (1896) Vol. IV.
- P.68. Note 9. The particulars about these officers are from the Regimental Records of the 65th Foot, published by the War Office.
- P.72. Note 10. With whom was a French Sergeant of Marines named Bernadotte.
- P.73. Note 11. Colonel Adlercron, who commanded the King's forces at Plassey, belonged to a Co. Antrim family of Huguenot origin.

THE EMPIRE OF VICTORIA.

Laing, in an introduction to his *Heimskringla*, says of the Northmen "The moral power of this people ... has left deeper impressions on Society, and of a nobler character than the despotic material power of the Romans.

All that men hope for of good government and future improvement in their moral and physical conditions - all that civilized men enjoy on this day of civil, religious and political liberty - the British Constitution, representative legislature, the trial by jury, security of property, freedom of mind and person, the influence of public opinion over the conduct of public affairs, the Reformation, the liberty of the press, the spirit of the age - all that is or has been of value to man in modern times as a member of society; either in Europe or in the new World, may be traced to the spark left burning upon our shores by these northern barbarians."

Halliday puts it "Pagan and barbarian as they were, their religion was less idolatrous, their civil institutions not less perfect, and their laws more consonant with human freedom than the religion, institutions and laws of those civilized Romans who invaded Britain."

The Northmen brought this to England, Ireland and Iceland. In Ireland they had built a cathedral in every city before

William came to Hastings, and even as early as 948 they founded the Abbey of the Blessed Virgin in Dublin.

They were the greatest seamen that the world has even seen, as we now know because of their penetration to the Chesapeake under Leif Ericson, to Constantinople under Harold and to Siberia under Rurik.

We are not surprised then that the poet writes of their later achievements in Africa and South Asia. :-

"The Court house stands where the Regiment goed
and the Queen's peace runs where the red blood flowed".

The accession of Queen Victoria coincided with a great new upsurge of adventurous achievement across the seas in which descendants of our Irish Danes were not the most backward. Even before the great Queen's coming to the throne, this breed produced paladins not unworthy of their forbears of the ninth and tenth centuries. Rollo, Gillespie, of Co. Down, was called the "^BGravest man in the British Army."

We have seen how Coote of Tyrone and Wellesley of Co. Dublin drove the French out from Hindustan and Spain. In point of stark fact, except for those armies commanded by Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick in 1757, by Marshal Ferdinand Foch in 1918 and by General of the Armies Dwight Eisenhower in 1944, every successful British or Indian Army of importance since

- (1) Marlborough has been commanded by an Irishman, and an Irishman of this especial half Goidelic, half Scandinavian breed. Indeed the records of United States Armies show a surprising proportion of Ulstermen in victorious command. The list of forty-three Presidents of the United States includes fourteen North Irishmen, several of whom had led her armies to victory.

Our family took its share in this remarkable military resurgence. Many of its young men were killed in action. No less than seven of the sons of William, who married, in 1738, Letitia Cary of Dungiven Castle, and of his brothers George and Latham, were killed in action in the East Indies.

A grandson, George, Captain in the Honourable Company's 17th Infantry, died of wounds after the Battle of Kolunga, in the Nepal War. He was held in such affection by his sepoy, that in violation of all religious prescription, they carried him on their shoulders to the grave. His brother officers erected a notable monument to him at Saharunpore. His daughter Sophia was born almost on the battlefield.

A young Blacker was killed in action in Corsica, with the Royal Irish Regiment in 1794.

Whilst the younger sons led their men on many fields, great figures came from out of the family, but strangely enough from

mothers of the name, perhaps for the very reason that so many men were killed while young.

In 1772, Alicia, a younger daughter of the William who had married Letitia Cary, married, General Sir James Steuart-Denham of Coltness and Westhill, who later was the oldest General in the Army. Her portrait as "Alicia, Lady Steuart of Coltness" (2) was painted by Sir Henry Raeburn.

Many other such alliances took place, with greater results.

When the Cary line became extinct, Dungiven Castle descended to the Blacker family, in the person of Dean Stewart. He was called upon to pay a fine of £20,000 to Chancery. However, when he at last raised the sum, he was persuaded to another investment for it, and lost all.

An early example was Major-General Ross of Bladensburg, who was brother-in-law to the Revd, Samuel Blacker D.D., of Mullabrack. It will be remembered that Major General Ross was killed after his victory at Bladensburg, from which he took his title, and his capture of Washington. Thus the British command devolved on Edward Pakenham of Leinster who was defeated in 1815 by Andrew Jackson, from Ulster, at New Orleans, a battle which finally lost us North America.

We have seen the first connection as early as 1699 with the illustrious Lawrences.

John Lawrence in his subaltern days served with John Nicholson in the Bengal Army in its disastrous Afghan War. This was provoked by an early Russian thrust to Kabul, initiated by Vitkievich's mission thither. A large British and Bengal Army marched into Afghanistan and occupied the capital. Unluckily, it brought eighteen months of Bureaucracy with it, which was eighteen months too much for the freedom loving Afghan.

Besides bureaucracy it brought no rifles, but only the smooth bore flint lock and its tactical methods, too blindly copied from Quatre Bras and Waterloo.

The ghastly retreat of sixteen thousand troops through the deep snows of the Khurd Kabul canyons showed the power of the rifles which the enemy's tribesmen had manufactured for themselves, against the regulars' futile Brown Besses.

Only one man survived that retreat, but it taught Lawrence and Nicholson, serving with another column, how a war should not be managed.

Thus when Ranjit Singh, its monarch, died, the turbulent Punjab weltered in Civil war and anarchy, firstly "Paddy" Gough defeated the King-making Khalsa Barons, and then made over the Regency to John Lawrence, and to a glorious future.

The great John Lawrence's mother was sister-in-law to Anna Blacker, who married Richard Tipping Hamilton, one time of Little Clondeboye, Co. Armagh again a connection. That name we shall hear later.

George Blacker who was the fifth son of the first Stewart of Carrickblacker, was born in 1718, and married Miss Nicholson. Her grand-nephew was the immortal and valorous fellow soldier of Lawrence, revered to this day by the officers and soldiers of Pakistan, ^{and} whose tall monument towers to the sky on the crest of the Margalla pass.

Lawrence with his tiny band of British Officers made the Punjab into a miracle of stalwart patriotism, justice and prosperity. The cornerstone of this was an army whose proud (3) record has been a hundred years of unbroken victory on a thousand fields, and army which in the War of 1939 was the major component of the greatest volunteer army, with its Navy and Air Force, over two million strong that the world has ever seen.

Lawrence's first step was to direct the raising of a Corps of Guides, on a Napoleonic model, making it the senior Regiment of that pattern and exemplar the Punjab Irregular Force. Many times John Nicholson fought shoulder to shoulder with the Guides until he found a soldier's death on a stricken breach in the storm of Delhi. Another young Irish officer, Roberts of Waterford,

no less, brought in his body.

Lawrence's Punjab defeated mutinous Bengal and grew ninety years later, into the Queen's most populous dominion.

One of the great soldiers who fought against the Bengal Army was William Olphorts, eventually a Major General, and a G.C.B. He was the grandson of Barbara Blacker, daughter of Dean Stewart, then head of the family. He won his Victoria Cross in the attack on Lucknow, and also the title of "Hell-Fire Jack", a military historian has written "This was in round numbers the thirtieth time that this gallant officer had deserved the Cross." He had made a reputation as a dashing commander in Burma, in the Gwalior Campaign, in Sind and in the Crimea.

The men of the family were by no means exclusively soldiers. One Stewart who died unmarried in 1826, was a Captain R.N. in 1821. His father born in 1740, also a Stewart, was Dean of Leighlin and almost the first of numerous clergymen of the Church of Ireland from this line. He died in 1826. High rank in the church was attained by his grandnephew, also a head of the family, Robert Shapland Carew, who was born in 1826, and held both Carrickblacker and Woodbrook in Co. Wexford. Priests of the Irish Church frequently interchanged with those of England, and he rose to be Canon of Peterborough, in that junior church.

St. John Blacker, who was born 28th September 1743, was Rector of Moira and afterwards Prebendary of Inver.

By his first wife, Grace, daughter of Maxwell Close, who brought Elm Park, Co Armagh, into the family, he had a son Samuel, born 1771, Prebendary of Mullabrack, an L.L.D. who first married Mary Anne, daughter of David Ross, of Rosstrevor, a sister of the famous Major General Ross of Blandensburg, whom we have met elsewhere.

His descendants by his second wife Elizabeth Douglass of Grace Hall Co. Down assumed the arms and additional surname of Douglass by Royal Licence in 1880.

The Rev. Henry Blacker was a younger son of the first Stewart and was born in 1713.

His younger brother George, born 1718, married Alicia Dowdall a relation of the Parsons family of Birr Castle, celebrated for the invention of the compound steam turbine. His son was James, a Dublin magistrate whose eldest son George was born in 1791 and took Holy Orders. He was a Scholar of Trinity in 1802, M.A. in 1858 for several years Curate of St. Andrews, Chaplain to Dublin Corporation and Rectory of Taghadoe. In 1840 he became Vicar of Maynooth and a Prebendary in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

He died at Maynooth on 23rd May 1871 and is buried in the Leinster mausoleum, having written in 1853 "Castle of Maynooth", in 1860, "Castle of Kilkea" and in 1867, "a Record of Maynooth Church".

The Rev. Beaver Henry was the son of Latham of Donnybrook, Co. Dublin, Genkeen Co. Derry and Lisnahanna, Co. Tyrone. He became Rural Dean of Booterstown, Co. Dublin and published (5) numerous works,

This spate of ecclesiastical activity helps to account for the fact that few young men of the family served either in the Russian War of 1854 or against the mutiny of the Bengal Army of 1857. In the former year, however, Latham William, born 1829, took part in the war in South Africa, and his son in the Kandahar Campaign of 1879. Again John R. Blacker joined the Royal Irish Regiment, was commissioned on 20th January 1854, landed in the Crimea in December, and then served in the late stages of the Bengal Mutiny.

Stewart, of Carrickblacker, was gazetted Commandant of the Londonderry Artillery on 20th January 1855.

Apart from the Army and the Church of Ireland, no one took to trade but the family, has been quite reasonably proud of its agricultural achievements, as perhaps might well be expected after more than a thousand years of land holding in Ireland and in England.

On 24th February, 1865, when Sir Robert Peel, the younger, was Chief Secretary for Ireland, in a debate in the English House of Commons, he was asked "Who was Blacker?" He replied that "if all Irish landlords were like Blacker there would be no Irish question."

The Viscount Lifford in 1865 published a pamphlet, entitled "Who is Blacker?" He wrote "It is excusable in Sir Robert Peel (we have no better friend) to be ignorant of the names of departed, but still unforgotten Irishmen; but I doubt whether any Irishman whose age is past thirty five, and who has taken any interest in Irish landed property, is ignorant who Mr. Blacker was. However, for those who know no better, Mr. Blacker was an Irish gentleman of good family, and good fortune, who, for some twenty years of the first half of this century, devoted himself to the improvement, moral and physical, of the people of Ireland.

His principles of farming were precisely those most calculated to check unhealthy emigration, and to promote such emigration as might be necessary and beneficial.

Mainly for those useful objects he held large land agencies in the counties of Armagh and Cavan, and so far as his influence went, he was entirely successful. His principle was, that the

system of small farms was that most suited to Ireland, and that under it, properly carried out, a greater amount of produce could be secured than in any other way; while more than that, no other system promoted, in a degree, the morality and the happiness of so great a number." This Blacker was William, the third son of the Revd. Dr. St. John Blacker already mentioned by his wife Grace, sister of Major General Sir Barry Close, Bart. He died unmarried (6) in 1850, reputedly very wealthy at the age of 75.

He had a brother the fourth Colonel Valentine, whose career we have described, and a fifth, St. John, born in 1786, who was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Honourable Company's Service and British Envoy to the Court of Persia. A still younger sister, Grace, married R. Alexander of that Caledon family which was to attain such great fame in the War of 1939.

The results of William's work for the farmers of Armagh were of no small value to England as recently as that same war when the county and its neighbours exported great quantities of dairy and farm produce across the channel by air, when England was hard pressed for food.

Also connected by marriage with the family were Sir Dighton Probyn, V.C., and Sir Francis Mac Naghten famous in the Indian Mutiny and in the Afghan War. Both were descended from the Elizabeth Blacker who became Lady Dunkin.

Yet another of Russia's thrusts against British powers in Asia came in 1878 when General Grodekov attempted to instal a nominee of St. Petersburg on the Kabul throne. The response of Whitehall was to launch an expedition against Kandahar under General Burrows. His artillery and one battalion were British but his cavalry and other infantry came from the Bombay Army. This force met the Afghans at Maiwand. The British guns were all muzzle loaders, with many of them smooth-bores. The artillery of the Afghan Army consisted entirely of rifled breech loaders, so that is it not surprising that General Burrows was utterly defeated. Readers of Conan Doyle will remember that it was here that Watson received his wound whilst assistant surgeon to the ⁹44th Foot, of the British Army.

However, Roberts, of Waterford, was the Commander-in-Chief of the Punjab Frontier Force which his fellow Countryman Lawrence had raised thirty years earlier.

Roberts stormed the Paiwar Kotal, forced the Khyber and concluded the Treaty of Gandamak. Under the terms of this, the Amir Yakub Khan was to receive a British embassy, and Her Majesty's envoy was Major Sir Louis Napoleon Cavagnari, of the Indian Foreign Service, who had signed the Treaty.

He was provided with an escort which consisted of a composite troop of the Guides Cavalry and a company of Guides Infantry, all under the Command of Lieutenant Walter Richard Pollock Hamilton of that Corps, who had a few weeks earlier won a Victoria Cross at the action of Fattehabad.

Walter Hamilton's mother was Anna, daughter of Latham Blacker of Glenkeen and Lisnahanna and great, great granddaughter of that Stewart of Carrickblacker who was born in 1671.

Stewart's grandson was another Stewart, the Dean whose daughter Elizabeth married first one of the famous Montgomery family and later in 1830 Monsieur Chompré of the Cuirassiers Du Roi. Their daughter married General Adolphe Cavagnari who had been Military Secretary to Jérôme Bonaparte, King of (8) Westphalia. His son, Louis, with his sister Berthe were brought up at Carrickblacker as wards of Dean Stewart Blacker.

So that it was a strange turn of fate which brought him from Armagh to the Kabul Residency with Anna Blacker's son in command of his escort. His ancestors were Corsicans, as were other of Napoleon's ex-officers who so admirably trained Ranjit Singh's Punjab regiments and batteries. In fact the Governor of Peshawar who handed that great walled City over to Lawrence was General Avitabile.

The Surgeon to the detachment was Ambrose Kelly, probably

not an Ulsterman.

Kabul and the Amir behaved amicably during all August but at the end of the month several Afghan regiments were moved from Herat to the capital.

For months they had received no pay, but on the 3rd of September they were called to the Treasury, only to be fobbed off with trifles. Someone called out "Go to the British Embassy; there is lots of money there."

A few minutes later this mutinous torrent burst in upon the small force of Guides. Blows soon fell followed by shots, and a bitter struggle, of a few score against thousands.

Soon Cavagnari was mortally wounded, but Hamilton fought the battle out to the end. The sole survivor was a trooper of the Guides Cavalry, a prince of the Sadozai dynasty, whom Hamilton sent out in disguise in a forlorn hope that he might conceivably reach to Peshawar.

Before long the Afghan mutineers brought a section of field guns into action at point blank range. When all the British Officers had been killed, the rank and file survivors brought undying glory on themselves, their Corps and their country.

The Afghans called on them to surrender, telling them that nothing was left to defend, as was indeed true, and promising them their lives.

It is a tenet of the faith of Islam that Moslem may not massacre Moslem who calls for quarter and repeats the Qalima.

The men of the Guides rejected all temptation to surrender, the Moslems amongst them, Pathans and Punjabis, scorning to save their own lives at the possible sacrifice of their Dogra, Sikh and Gurkha comrades. So they died to a man where they stood, swords and bayonets in their hands.

This was the sacrifice which caused General Sir Charles Macgregor, the president of the Enquiry to report "The annals of no army and no regiment can show a brighter record of devoted bravery than has been achieved by this small band of Guides. By their deeds they have conferred undying honour, and not only on the Regiment to which they belong but on the whole British Army."

This remains a plain truth even after two World Wars. Their exploit was not surpassed even in the defence of Camerone by the Foreign Legion.

Hamilton did not die in vain. Roberts avenged him, stormed the Bala Hissar, marched to battle at Kandahar, and the Russian advance was halted for many years.

On every man of the Guides detachment was conferred a posthumous Order of Merit.

The Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of Dublin have never been noted for any love towards Russia whether Tsarist

or Bolshevist. No doubt, therefore, they must have overlooked the essentially Russian character of the aggression against which fought Hamilton and his men. Possibly too they forgot that Hamilton's name is a Goidelic one.

These items of historical forgetfulness appear to have caused the transfer of Hamilton's statue from Leinster House to Belfast. A silver replica is in the Guides' mess.

Sir Henry Newbolt's poem refers to Cavagnari, Hamilton and Kelly as "Englishmen".

Castle Martin, in County Kildare, had a long history of its own from 1212, before it came into our family. The Norman Eustaces or Fitz Eustaces were seated here as early as the fourteenth century. It was the scene of a battle in 1448, between the Leinster men under O'Connor Faly and the Normans of the Pale. (9)

In 1647, the Castle was taken and burned by Parliamentarians. The present house was built in the middle of the 18th century, and purchased by Captain Carter of Colonel Irwin's Regiment. It passed to Thomas Samuel Blacker and then to his son William Blacker, a High Sheriff of Kildare, who was a Major in the 3rd Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and Master of the celebrated pack. He was killed in the hunting field. A younger brother, Frederick, served in the 4th Hussars, achieving celebrity in the polo world.

In the ruins close by are sculptures of much historical interest. Besides a monument to Sir Rowland Eustace in armour and to his wife in English attire are three figures in bas-relief which are believed to be the earliest representations of Irishmen wearing the kilt.

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the family pendulum swung briskly again from the Church of Ireland towards Queen Victoria's army. So in 1897 we find Stewart William Ward, of the Royal Horse Artillery, later the head of the family, serving as Captain of a battery in the action at Shabkadr on the Mohmand frontier, north of Peshawar, where he was severely wounded and mentioned in dispatches.

He served again in the South African War of 1899, in which also Frederick St. John, of the Castlemartin branch took part, in the Rifle Brigade.

In July 1901, Percy Valentine Henry then a midshipman in the Royal Navy, was killed by a torpedo explosion on board H.M.S. Canopus, in the Mediterranean.

Again, Frederick Henry, also of this branch, born in 1854, and a grandson of Colonel Valentine II, served in the 4th Hussars.

In the murderous fighting of the War of 1914, practically every young man of the family served in France and Flanders, and in either the Infantry or the Cavalry. Many were killed, the

first being Cecil, of the Connaught Rangers who died of his wounds shortly after the retreat from Mons. Nearly all were wounded more or less severely. Stewart William Ward, who had been in the Horse Artillery, assumed command of a battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, and later commanded an Infantry Brigade in the renowned Ulster Division.

Frederick St. John also rose to command a battalion of the Rifle Brigade, and the same rank was attained by Norman Valentine, of the East Yorkshire Regiment, in the Machine Gun Corps, William Frederick in Jacob's Horse, and Latham Valentine Stewart, in command of an Independent Force.

Of the older generation, George Francis received a Knighthood for his work in the Medical services in the Middle East.

One of the younger Robert St. John Blacker Douglass was killed as an Ensign in the Irish Guards on 10th March, 1915 and another, J.R., in the Coldstream, 28th September, 1915, both in Flanders.

Numerous decorations were conferred on the family, Distinguished Service Orders to Stewart William Ward, Frederick St. John and to Norman Valentine, besides Military Crosses and corresponding honours to nearly every other officer from the family.

A circumstance not without significance is that in this chain of Wars, three Irish Field Marshals, all of this especial breed, lost their lives in the face of the enemy. Of Lord Roberts, Kipling wrote :-

"Four hundred mile of cannon spoke
When the Master Gunner died".

On the Dublin War memorial are the names of fifty two thousand Irishmen, not needless to say, conscripts.

During the war of 1939, the blood baths of the land battles of the earlier struggle were happily not repeated.

In the years before 1914, the country owned a lowland Scotch Socialist Secretary for War, who had omitted to provide ammunition for the artillery, mortars for the infantry, armour for the cavalry or adequate aircraft for the Royal Flying Corps.

To us the reasons are clear. In place of English and Lowland generals who threw their infantry interminably against uncut wire and into infernos of fire, the high command between 1939 and 1945 was almost entirely of North Irishmen.

No less than eight victorious field marshals came from this breed, none entirely Goidelic but all of more or less Scandinavian blood. Lords Cavan and Gort, Sir Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, Sir John Dill, Sir Claude Auchinleck and Lords Alanbrooke, Alexander and Montgomery head the list, which is carried on by the names of generals too numerous to set forth.

These eight marshals contrast with two or three English and Scots, and one Dutch. Many Goidelic Irish Field Marshals have earned fame in Russian, Austrian, Prussian, Bavarian, French and Soanish armies and in those of both North and South America, and as Admirals of the United States, but never in command of British forces.

Of our family, somewhat fewer of the younger ones as might be expected had survived from 1918. One of the Castlemartin branch, Percy Valentine was killed in action as a junior officer in the Rifle Brigade in Italy, two more served in the Royal

- 11) Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, in field rank, Robert Stewart attained that of Commander in the Royal Navy, whilst George
- 12) Patrick Demayne achieved that of Brigadier, serving at a high level in the preparation for the sea assault of 1944, for which he became a Commander of the British Empire.

- 13) To make a climax, the head of the family William Desmond, who had been severely wounded during a brilliant career in North Africa, was killed in action in Normandy soon after the never to be forgotten landing. On him was conferred the Distinguished Service Order, whilst the Royal Artillery Commemoration book describes him as "one of the four greatest Horse Artillerymen in History."

CORRIGENDA - JANUARY, 1953.

- p. 6. - line 6. read Azerbaijan.
P. 8. - line 25. read "or for "of".
p. 9. - line 6. for "lined" read "lived".

Notes Chap. 1. p.i. note (2) after "valley" add "West of Albania".
" 1. p.ii.note (8) line 4. add "great grand-father to
Canute."

- p.ii.note line 28.read "Herodotus".
p.14. - line 10. read "all".
p.15. - line 1 & 2 - transfer to p.17, line 3.
p.18. - line 21 & 24, omit apostrophes, and on p.19.
p.19. - line 16. omit capitals.
p.20. - line 4. read "archaic": line 7. read "Anlaf".
p.21. - line 3. omit capitals.
p.25. - line 1. for 1023 read 1027.
p.26. - line 16. after "sea-cut" insert "the Mowborough Gap".
p.28. - line 10. read "impooverished".

Notes Chap. 2. p.i. note (3) read "Colonel A.H. Burne xxxx putting
the Saxon right flank on the Rother
and their left just S.W. of Brinsworth.

- note (5) read "dolore".
note(16) read "Tryggesson."
note(18) read "Tengvik".
note(22) - line 12. read "Successorum".
" " - line 41. read "Perci" -
" " - line 43. read "Henrico".
" " vi. line 1. read "Willelmo".
" (25) - read "Gaufridus".
" (25) X after line 40 insert BLAXTON,
7m.E.S.E. of Doncaster, probably
a Saxon name.

*

after line 41. insert, "BLACKAMORE ---- is the
old name of the big moorland between the Esk
and the vale of Pickering (companion to
N. Riding - p.93 - Ingran. 1952)

- p.31. - line 11. read "Rievaulx" -
p.32. - line 20. read "Baldwin",
p.32. - line 21. read "Godfrey".
p.45. - line 11. read "18 June 1596" -
p.45. - line 21. insert "that" before "Valentine".
p.51. - line 14. read "Blackar, George".
p.58. - line 22. read "Pedigrees".
p.62. - replace by new page.
p.63. - line 19. read "Guard".
p.64. - line 20. read "Co.Tyrone. Off xxx".
p.64. - line 23. read "grandson".
p.65. - line 8. insert last three lines here.
p.69. - line 12. read "Moreau, Kléber xxx

" p.25. - note 19. line 3, after date read -"Cam" means "the
bent" in Irish.

CORRIGENDA - PAGE 2.

Notes. Chapter V. - In heading to Chapter V. add "^bHiberniores
ipsis hibernis.

- p.77. - line 2. the bishop of York in the X Century was a
- note 11. add "from Alsace".
Scandinavian.
- p.77. - line 17. read "bravest".
- p.78. - line 15. read "thirty three".
- p.79. - line 13. add "at it is thought, Chester Races".
- p.80. - line 12. read "copied".
- p.80. - line 8. read "bureaucracy".
- p.82. - line 9. after "Jack" insert full stop.
- p.95. - line 2. add "and generals".
- p.95. - line 4. read "Spanish".
- p.95. - line 9. for "Percy" read "Ian": add "on 10 July 1944"
after "action".

Notes. Chapter VI.

- note 11. - read "born 21 Sept. 1902. m. Rosemary,
dau. of W.E. Sheepshanks, Esq. on 12 June 1948.
- note B. - read "a brother Terence Fitzroy,
born on 15 Oct. 1919, died Feb. 1931.