

## Victoria County History: Cumbria. Draft parish/township histories

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Parish/township: MOSSER

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### MOSSER

#### LANDOWNERSHIP

The origins of the manor of Mosser can be traced to a grant from Richard de Lucy, lord of Egremont or Copeland barony, to Adam de Mosser c.1200 x 1203, by which Adam received a bounded block of land comprising the later township of Mosser together with the land between Whittern Gill ('Raysethwaytbec' in the charter) and Crabtreebeck, later in Loweswater township.<sup>1</sup> Adam, his heirs and their men living in Mosser were granted freedom to cultivate, assart and build on lands within the bounds of the later township but were only granted pasture rights over the land later in Loweswater. In recognition of the grant, Adam and his heirs were to pay an annual money rent of one mark (13s. 4d.) and a cluster of services common to subinfeudated estates within the barony of Copeland: bearing witness against wrongdoers to Richard's foresters, giving hospitality ('puture') to his landsergeants, paying market tolls and rendering so much foreign service as pertained to one-third of a vill in Copeland.<sup>2</sup> The site of the manor house is not known but probably lay in the vicinity of Mosser Mains, the name of which suggests the location of the demesne land ('mains').

The manor probably passed to Adam's descendants: John of Mosser was lord in 1290 and Joan of Mosser in 1322.<sup>3</sup> Joan had married John de Pardshaw by 1334; on the partition of Egremont barony between the heiresses of John de Moulton in 1338, the rent and service of John and Joan for the manor of Mosser were assigned to Elizabeth wife of Walter de Bermingham.<sup>4</sup> John de Pardshaw and Joan his wife seem to have been alive in 1353, when the manor was granted by Gilbert Chappell and Adam Eaglesfield, apparently trustees, to them and William Aykenheade, parson of Workington, for their lives, with remainder to John of Pardshaw's son, John, and, failing his heirs, to Beatrix, sister of John de Pardshaw.<sup>5</sup> On the death of John son of John de Pardshaw without heirs the manor came into the hands of the Salkeld family though Beatrix.

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<sup>1</sup> Original: CRO, D/Lec, box 301; printed in *Reg. St Bees*, pp. 544-6 and W. W. Farrer, 'An early Mosser charter', *CW251* (1951), 89-91.

<sup>2</sup> These services were confirmed in 1203: *Abbreviatio Placitorum*, p. 42 [reprinted *Reg. St Bees*, pp. 546-7].

<sup>3</sup> Lucy Cartulary, no. 62; *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, VI, no. 331.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, VII, no. 628; *Cal. Close Rolls 1337-9*, p. 496.

<sup>5</sup> The grant is recited in TNA, C1/1463/33 (answer of Richard Salkeld, c.1558).

Hugh Salkeld, son of Beatrix, was lord in 1418,<sup>6</sup> and the manor descended through Hugh's heirs to Thomas Salkeld (d. 1555), whose son Richard Salkeld (c.1516-1575) held the manor c.1558.<sup>7</sup> His daughter Barbara (1540-1626) married her kinsman George Salkeld (d. 1597) of Rosgill and Thrimby (Westmorland); she held the manor of Mosser in 1578.<sup>8</sup> Their son, Thomas Salkeld (1567-1639) of Corby enfranchised his tenants in Mosser in a series of sales between 1602 and 1612, by which he conveyed the fee simple of their holdings to individual tenants.<sup>9</sup> After a dispute in 1614, arising out of Salkeld's claim to have retained his right in the residue of the commons,<sup>10</sup> Thomas Salkeld and his son and heir apparent, Richard, sold the manor in 1623 to two of the tenants, Richard Norman and John Hutchinson, as trustees to the use of the rest, for £120. Norman and Hutchinson then released their interest in each holding in a series of quitclaims dated 5 May 1625.<sup>11</sup> As a result of these transactions, the manorial rights were effectively extinguished. The free rent of 13s. 4d. payable to the baron of Egremont was apportioned between the tenants, who continued to pay it and to perform suit of court to at Egremont, sending a 'turnsman' each year to the court leet for Egremont Lordship, at which changes of ownership were enrolled until the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> The performance of suit of court at Egremont was declining by the 1770s.<sup>13</sup> In the absence of the immediate lordship, it appears that the overlords of Egremont barony came to be regarded as lords of the manor: when the township proposed enclosure of the commons in 1758, they addressed their request to purchase the wastes to the earl of Egremont, whose son, the 3rd earl, was said in 1827 to claim lordship over the commons and wastes, despite never having exercised any manorial rights.<sup>14</sup> Thereafter, his successors were regarded as lords: General Wyndham, was said to be lord of Mosser in 1847 and Lord Leconfield was deemed to hold the manorial rights in 1910.<sup>15</sup> Despite this, on the eve of enclosure in 1863, the surviving commons at Mosser were deemed not to be waste of any manor, suggesting that any claims the overlords might have had were negligible.<sup>16</sup>

After enfranchisement in 1625, ownership of land in Mosser was fragmented into small freeholds. In 1910 there were eight landowners in the township, the largest holdings being those of Henry Peacock at Mosser Mains and Gillbrow (413 acres) and Thomas Robinson, who owned the farms at Bramley, Graythwaite and Whinnah (291 acres in all).<sup>17</sup> More significant concentrations of landownership occurred in the later twentieth century, when the owners of surviving farms accumulated the lands of former holdings.

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<sup>6</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, XXI, no. 72.

<sup>7</sup> TNA, C142/102/13 (I am grateful to Robert E. Salkeld for this reference); C1/1463/33. For the Salkeld family, see *CFH*, p. 290; *AWL*, p. 259.

<sup>8</sup> CRO, D/Lec/301 (Percy Survey, 1578). For Barbara Salkeld see *CFH*, p. 290.

<sup>9</sup> CRO, D/WM/11/405: list of deeds from Salkelds to Mosser landowners, drawn up 1827.

<sup>10</sup> TNA, C2/JAS1/B31/62.

<sup>11</sup> CRO, D/WM/11/405; CRO, DX/127/8-11.

<sup>12</sup> CRO, D/Lec, box 247: Egremont Lordship court leet verdicts, 1677-1845. Fletcher, *Diary*, pp. 17 (18 Oct. 1756), 36 (15 Oct. 1757), 402 (n. 24)

<sup>13</sup> Fletcher, *Diary*, pp. 308 (17 Oct. 1775), 326 (15 Oct. 1776), 384 (29 Oct. 1780), 399 (19 Oct. 1781).

<sup>14</sup> Fletcher, *Diary*, p. 55 (28 Oct. 1758); CRO, D/WM/11/405: case and instructions for brief (1827), pp. 11-12.

<sup>15</sup> Mannix & Whellan, *Dir. Cumb.* 1847, p. 529; CRO (Carlisle), TIR/4/106, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> *Special Report of the Inclosure Commissioners, 1863* [HC 1863 (347)], p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> CRO (Carlisle), TIR/4/106, pp. 5-7.