

## LAWTON, OF LAWTON, CHESHIRE

THIS SHORT GENEALOGICAL HISTORY OF HIS FAMILY WAS PRESENTED TO WILLIAM J P LAWTON ESQUIRE, ON HIS 24TH BIRTHDAY, BY HIS MOST AFFECTIONATE FRIEND AND WELL-WISHER, FRANK RENAUD MD

Explanation of the **Lawton** quarterings

1. **Lawton**, as borne since prior to the days of Edward the 4th, argent, on a fess between three cross-crosslets fitchee sable, a cinquefoil of the field.
2. **Lawton**, as borne in the early part of the 13th Century, or, a chevron between three Dolphins gules. Shortly after the shield was altered to or, a chevron between two cross-crosslets in chief gules, a Dolphin in base azure.
3. **Bellot of Moreton**, argent, on a chief sable, three cinquefoils pierced of the field.
4. **Dutton**, quarterly of four, 1 & 4 argent, 2 & 3 gules a pet or.
5. **Wood of Balterly**, argent, a wolf rampant sable.
6. **Macclesfield**, gules, a cross..... ermine.
7. **Sneyd of Keil**, argent, a scythe with sneyd ... sable, the fess point a fleur de lis of the second.
8. **Longueville** of Wolverton, Bucks. Gules, between a fess dancette ermine, six cross-crosslets fitchee sable, three and three.
9. **Montague**, quarterly of four, 1 & 4, argent, with a bordure sable, three lozenges in fess gules, 2 & 3, or, a double eagle displayed ve..., beaked and membered gules. 1 & 4 are for Montague, 2 & 3 are for Monthermer.
10. **Crewe of Crewe**, of Warminchaw. Azure, a Lion rampant argent.
11. **Legh of Adlington**. Azure two bars argent, overall a bend composee or and gules.
12. **Erskine**. Azure, three garbs or.

Crest of **Lawton** - a demi-Wolf argent, licking a wound on the shoulder guttee gules.  
/The ...

The **Lawtons of Church Lawton**, or Lawton-under-Lyme, as it was anciently called, in the county of Cheshire, descend in the female line from Richard, a younger grandson of **Adam de Lawton**, who lived in the latter part of the 12th century, as owner of a moiety of Lawton. The other half was held by the Abbot and monks of Saint Werburg's monastery in Chester, till the dissolution in the reign of Henry the 8th, when the manor in its entirety came to the Lawtons' by purchase of the ecclesiastical half from the king. (Deed of grant penes Lawton.)

The coat armour known to have been borne by the Lawtons since the days of the Plantagenets is sufficient evidence that a very early union of this family with the Davenports took place; and that the alliance was effected by a cadet of the house of **Davenport of Davenport**, else the chevron would not have been changed to a fess, neither would the fess have been further differenced with a cinquefoil.

The arms borne by the early Lawtons, in direct descent during the 12th, 13th and part of the 14th centuries, were or, a chevron between three Dolphins gules, (see Mss penes A Wood, Manchester, into which ancient heraldic visitation is copied); and this fact supplies additional evidence that the direct male descent failed, and that it has been continued through a female member of the family, who married a Davenport.

The Chastulary of St Werburg's, preserved in the British Museum, contains several deeds of grant etc. from the early generations of the Lawton family, which make it practicable to trace them through six generations, beginning about the year 1200, and ending in the first part of the 14th century. Thus:

**Adam de Lawton** had three sons, viz: **Adam, Robert and Richard**, all of whom had some territorial interest in the land of Lawton. **Adam**, the first born was living in 1236. He married and had a son, **William**, who was also married, and who is distinctly referred to as Lord of half Lawton. Late in life he became an ecclesiastic, and was Chaplain of Lawton Church. He gave considerable gifts to the Abbot and monks, with limitations, as stated in the deed.

**William Lawton** had four sons, viz: **William, Adam, Henry and Ralph**. Of William's descent, no mention is made. Adam had a son of his own name, who was living in 1312 and was a monk. Henry is called, of Snape, and he had a son called **Philip Lawton of Snape**. The Lawtons of Snape continued to reside on their patrimony until recently, as yeomen.

**Ralph**, the fourth son, had an interest in Lawton, as he quitclaimed his share in /the ... the millstream, to the Abbot. He had a son, **Malke**, and two daughters, **Matilda** and **Cecily**. **Malke** married and had a son, **William**, of whose descent no mention is

made. **Cecily** was married to **Roger de Crossleghe**, and, by him had four sons, viz: **Roger, Ralph, Robert (a priest) and Thomas**.

Having now traced the elder branch of **Adam de Lawton's** progeny, to the full extent permitted by the Chantulary, I turn back to his second son, **Robert**, who is undoubtedly the individual whose name is appended to the deed in which **Randle Blundeville** grants to **Robert de Davenport**, the Grand Sergeancy of Macclesfield hundred in exchange for the park and vivaries of Macclesfield; and who has been thought to be the ancestor of the present family of Lawton, most erroneously.

**Richard**, the younger son of **Adam de Lawton**, possessed lands in Lawton, near to the Audley boundary, which is on the way going up to Talke village, and adjacent to Snape. He quitclaimed to the Abbot and monks all his right and interest in the mill aqueduct. Beyond this, the Chantulary makes no mention of him: but copies of two deeds yet exist, in one of which he is a signatory, and in the other a principal person. The first is as follows, and is affixed to Glovers' pedigree of Lawton: "Seiant omnes quod ego Galfrid de Moreton dedi Letici filio med pro homagio el servicio suo et heredibus suis de **Adam de Moreton** et dedi **Leticio** filio med exeurtibus totam meditate de Hulnsley. In testibus, **Rad. de Moreton, Ric. de Rode, Ric. Starkey, Will. de Estbor (Astbury), Ric. de Lawton.**"

The Moreton pedigree shows that **Letitas** brother, **Galfrid**, was married about 1280, and this event affords a proximate date to the above deed.

The second, and by far the most important deed is copied into an Elizabethan M.S. in the possession of Mr R Wood of Manchester: "Seiant .. quod ego **Ricardus de Lawton** dedi .. **Thomas filio Jordani de Davenport** et agneto filio **Ricard Lawton** fillii m..., totum illud messuagium meum .. - testibus **Galfridus Byron, Robertus Tucker Jun, William de Astbury, Ada de Knypsley, ..**" This very opportune deed not only establishes the fact that there were three generations of a younger branch of the family of Lawton, living in the reigns of Edward the first and second: but it further shows that the third generation was represented by a female, to whom, and to whose husband, jointly, **Robert**, the elder, made a grant of his Lawton possessions, and so established them on the property.

Whether **Thomas Davenport** immediately came to be called **Thomas de Lawton** or whether the change was made a little later on cannot be determined, as there is a hiatus in the descent of **Thomas Davenport and Agnes** his wife for the space of one generation.

/About ...

About the year 1360, the descent was known by Flower the herald, to be renewed in the person of **Hugh Lawton**, who married the widow of **Bekynge Berys**, and daughter of **John Maddock**, by whom he had two sons, viz: **Hugh** and

**John**. He predeceased his wife, who also survived both her sons, and retained possession of the Lawton estate till her death.

**Hugh**, the eldest son, died unmarried.

**John**, the second son, acted as bailiff, to the Abbot and monks of St Werburg, from the tenth of Henry the 5th to the third of Henry the 6th, as his compotus shows, which is the oldest piece of documentary evidence preserved at Lawton. Whilst he held this office he married **Beatrice**, the widow of **Thomas Maddock, or Madyoke**, - vide compotus - by whom he had a son, **Richard**, who succeeded to the Lawton estate on the death of his grandmother.

The compotus of **John Lawton** is especially valuable, as it serves to date the re-commencement of the pedigree as early as the year 1378, or even earlier. Thus, **John Lawton's** marriage shows that he had more than attained to his majority before he accepted this office, and, as he was the second son of **Hugh Lawton**, who also came of age before his marriage with Bekynge Berys' widow, there need be no hesitation in accepting the above date as coming within the pate of base probability only.

1422, 10th Henry 5 - 44 yrs = 1378.

In 1473, ie 12th Edward 4th, whilst **Richard**, son of **John Lawton**, was in possession, an award was made by **Thomas Swetenham, of Swetenham**, of a piece of land and tenements in Bartholmey concerning the possession of which a dispute had arisen between **Richard Lawton of Lawton, and Hugh Pole**. The award was adverse to **Richard Lawton**, but a money compensation was made to him of thirteen marks - less than \$10 - not, as the award states, as a matter of profit, but as a mark of the inward love and faithful friendship, they swore to bear toward each other. Nevertheless, in case **Hugh Pole** failed to pay the money by stated installments, **Richard Lawton** was empowered to distain. In conclusion they were again ordered to be full friends. The disputed possessions had previously belonged to **Sir Richard Wicke**, priest. The award was made at Lawton and the seal of **Thomas Swetenham** was affixed to it there on the 6th of January, 1473.

It is not known who **Richard Lawton** married, but he had a son, **John Lawton**, who succeeded him and who married **Eleanor**, daughter of **More of**

/Hall ...

**Hall o'Heath**, in Cheshire. Hall o'Heath, now a farm house, was anciently a residence of the Heaths. It passed from them to the Mores' through marriage. In the reign of Elizabeth it again passed to **Alexander Walthall**, through marriage with Cicely, daughter and heiress of **Randle More**, in which family it remains (Ormerod

History of Cheshire). The arms of More of Hall o'Heath were ermine, a fess gules, between three Moorcocks proper, and not, as has been supposed, argent, a moor's head in fess, between three fleurs de lis sable.

**John Lawton** had three sons, the eldest of whom, **William**, succeeded. **William Lawton** married first **Mary**, the daughter of **Ralph Birkenhead of Crosston** by Margaret the sixth daughter of **Sir Richard Grosvenor of Eaton**. By her he had no issue. He married second **Catherine**, daughter of **Thomase Bellot of Moreton**, by whom he had four sons and five daughters. The arms of Bellot of Moreton are argent, on a chief sable, three cinquefoils of the fields.

**William Lawton** was in possession of Lawton before 1542. When Henry the 8th dissolved the monastery of St Werburg in Chester, **William Lawton** purchased the ecclesiastical moiety of Lawton from the king, and by so doing became Lord of the entire Manor.

The King's letters patent, sealed with the Great Seal and dated at Westminster on the 10th of May in the 33rd year of his reign - 1542 - are preserved at Lawton. By them, the King granted to **William Lawton** and his heirs the whole of his house, Manor and ville, of Church Lawton lately held by the monks of St Werburg, then dissolved, together with the patronage and advowson of the Church of Church Lawton, also Courts Leet, views of franc pledge, the assizeing, assaying, and levying of fines on bread, wine and wheat, with right of free warren, heriots, etc, for the sum of two hundred and thirty two pounds, fourteen shillings and two pence, to be held in chief by military service, and the tender of the twentieth part of a Knight's fee, by paying into the King's exchequer annually twenty four shillings and four pence at the feast of St Michael the Archangel, and by the further payment of seven shillings annually to the rector of the Church of Church Lawton for the time being. A messuage of 80 acres of land in Alsager previously possessed by the Bostocks of Bostock, became part of Lawton Manor in **William Lawton's** lifetime, either by purchase or otherwise. In the 6th Henry 6, **Ralph Bostock'** post mortem record shows that, inter alia, he died seized of 100 acres of land in Alsager and the messuage and 80 acres of land in Alsager of the King in Chief, as Earl of Chester. Five years later **Ralph Bostock**, son of the foregoing, was found to have held lands and tenements in Church Lawton.

**Sir John Savage**, Knight, succeeded to the possessions of **Ralph Bostock** through marriage with **Ann**, daughter and heiress of **Ralph Bostock**. In the long post mortem inquisition of **Sir John Savage Senior** (penes Lawton) /no ... no mention is made of any lands etc in Lawton, and so, by implication, he had alienated them, through purchase, or otherwise, to **William Lawton**. The existence of the Savage post mortem inquisition is, to certain extent, evidence of this alienation. The possession in Alsager descended to **Sir John Savage's** son.

In Dr Ormerod's history of Cheshire, Vol 3, p 135, **Sir Ralph Bostock** is said to have married **Isabella**, daughter of **William Lawton** of Wigland (jure uxoris) in the Barony of Malpas. In the 2nd Vol of the same history, p 366, the following extract of pedigree is given, as extracted from the Harleian Mss -

<b>Hova de Hampton</b>	= .....
<b>Second son of Philip Goet</b>	
<b>William de Wigland</b>	= .....
<b>David de Wigland</b>	= daughter & heiress of <b>William Golborne Bellean</b>
<b>David de Wigland</b>	= .....
<b>Margaret Wigland daughter and heiress of David Wigland</b>	= <b>William Lawton of Wigland (jure uxoris)</b>
<b>Isabella de Wigland</b>	= <b>Sir Ralph Bostock</b>

**William Lawton** died in 1551. In his post mortem record dated the 5th Edward 6th, he is stated to have held the manor of Church Lawton, with appurtenances of the King, in Chief, by military service, and the twentieth part of a Knight's fee. He was succeeded by his son, **John Lawton**, who married first **Hannah**, daughter of **Richard Corbet of Haderton**, by whom he had no issue. He married second **Margaret**, daughter of **Sir Fulke Dutton**, and by her had issue six sons, and one daughter.

In 1553, the first of Philip and Mary, **Thomas Trubshaw of Trubshawe Hall** mortgaged to **John Lawton** for forty pounds, in the lordship of Tunstall, in Staffordshire, for the term of twenty one years, and for a further term of nine years, during all which time a yearly rent of one mark was to be paid by **John Lawton** at the feast of St Martin in winter. Housebote and haybote were to be allowed, but all waste was prohibited (deed penes Lawton).

Trubshaw estate was not redeemed. For what length of time the /conditions ... conditions were observed is unknown: but 17 years later **John Lawton** changed his trustees for this possession, and replaced **Alfred Mosley, Thomas Booth** and **John Twemlow**, with **Edward, Robert and Thomas Lawton**. These three latter were empowered to hold Trubshawe Hall and lands, in trust, for **John Lawton** for

the term of his natural life, and afterwards for his son **William**, and his heirs, for ever (deed penes Lawton).

In the 29th of Elizabeth, after the majority, and marriage of his eldest son with the daughter and heiress of **George Wood of Balterley**, **John Lawton** re-settled his estates. These included the manor of Lawton and Balterley, the Trubshaw estate, and rents, reversions and premises in High Holborn London, now St Giles' in the Fields in Clement Danes without Temple Bar, also freeholds in Littleton, Laleham, and Brixton in Middlesex.

The settlement is, first, in favour of the eldest son **William Lawton**, and his heirs male: failing him and his heirs male, to **Robert** the second son, with like conditions: failing him, to **Thomas** the third son, with like conditions: failing him to the heirs male of **Anthony** Lawton, brother to John, lately deceased: failing these, to **Augustine**, brother of John Lawton and his heirs male: failing him, to his brother Ambrose and his heirs male, and failing these, to the rightful heirs of **John Lawton**, for ever. Provision for an annuity of twenty pounds is further made for **Margaret and Mary Lawton**.

**John Lawton** died in 1598, and was succeeded by his eldest son **William Lawton**. A special livery (penes Lawton) sets forth that Queen Elizabeth by her letters patent, under the Great Seal, signed by the Lord Keeper Egerton, granted peaceable possession of the manor and appurtenances of Lawton to **William**, the son of **John Lawton**, lately deceased, on his performing the accustomed homage and service.

**William Lawton** married first **Maria**, daughter and heiress of **George Wood of Balterley**, by whom he had no issue. He married second **Mary**, daughter of (fnu) **Maxfield, of Macclesfield**, of Chesterton in Staffordshire. By her, who died in 1604, he had two sons and one daughter. The second son was rector of Lawton, judging by the following entry in the parish register: "**Gulismus Lawton**, dum vixit Rector de Lawton" - a.d.1640. **Eleanor**, the sister, married **George**, brother of **John Bellot of Moreton Green**, and died in 1640.

**William Lawton's** second marriage took place sometime before 1589, the 31st Elizabeth, as is shown by the will of **Roger Mainwaring of Nantwich**, of this date, wherein he bequeathed to his younger son the lease of a wicke (salt) house with ground etc, holden of **William Lawton Esquire** and **Mary** /his ...

his wife, and paying thirty six shillings and four pence for the same (Piccope's Cheshire Wills, published in the Cheetham society transactions). In the same collection it appears that **Dame Mary Egerton of Astbury**, by her will dated 1597, left to her "cosyn **Mary Lawton** one crucifix of gould, her second gowne and kyrtle, and her best petticoate".

In the 38th Elizabeth, 1596, **William Lawton** purchased the Oldcote and Bresehurst properties, in the manor of Tunstall for \$300. By a decree of the Court of Chancery, in the 31st of Elizabeth, **Lawrence Loggyn of Longden** in Staffordshire, gentleman, was declared to be possessed of one messuage, three cottages, and forth three acres of meadow land and wood in the hamlet of Oldcote and Bresehurst, which was late in possession of **John Swinnerton** (deed penes Lawton). By another deed (penes Lawton) dated 1598, and signed by the Lord Keeper Egerton, and sealed with the Great Seal, **William Lawton** is declared to be the possessor of Oldcote and Bresehurst, in consideration of a money payment of \$300, to **Lawrence and William Loggyn**.

In the 13th James 1st, 1615, **William Lawton** mortgaged half of his manor of Lawton and his possessions in Middlesex and Staffordshire for 21 years to **John Maxfielde of Wolstanton, John Jardley of Rushton and Nicholas Trubshaw**, to raise portions for younger children, reserving to himself powers of redemption on payment of a fine. The mortgages were required to pay the younger children's portions at stated times at, or in, the porch at the south side of the parish church of Lawton. The mortgage deed was cancelled the following year, and the fine paid. The name of **Ralph Sneyd** is appended to the cancel (deeds penes Lawton).

In 1609 **William Lawton** purchased lands known as "Kent's lands" from **John and Urian Moreton of Congleton**, for \$173.5.8d which were at the time in the tenure and occupation of **Catherlne Kent**, widow, and **Ralph Kent** her son, both of whom were tenants within Lawton manor and probably held their land in socage, or by the payment of a small yearly chief rent. (Indenture penes Lawton.) There were other lands in Lawton known as Kent's Lands, either then, or subsequently, situate in the ground known at the present day as the "Home Farm", mention or which will be made later on.

The extent of **William Lawton's** possessions in the year 1615 are set forth in an indenture of this date (penes Lawton). They embraced the manor of Church Lawton, the manor of Balterley, the Middlesex property and the original lands held by the Lawtons in Church Lawton. And, inasmuch as this indenture is important in several ways, it is given in full.

"This indenture made the 10th day of May in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord James, by the Grace of God of England, France and Ireland, /King ...  
King, Defender of the Faith, of England the 8th and of Scotland the 48th.

Between **William Lawton of Church Lawton** in the county of Chester Esquire of the one part, and **Richard Henshawe of Moreton**, yeoman, and **John Mills of Truffield** in Staffordshire, yeoman, on the other part, wittneseth that



whereas it is covenanted, granted, concluded and agreed, by and between the said parties in manner and form following:- that is to say before the 1st day of February next several recoveries shall behad by several writs of entries etc, against the said **William Lawton** of the manor of Balterley with the appurtenances and hereditaments hereafter mentioned, wherein the said **Richard Henshawe and Jonn Mills** shall be dependants and demand the same against the said **William Lawton** by the name of the manor of Balterley with appurtenances, two messuages, two tofts, two gardens, 60 acres or (arable) land, 24 acres of meadow, 46 acres of pasture, 4 acres of wood, 50 acres of fues of turbary, 8 pounds of rent, and view of francpledge and whatsoever to the view of francpledge both appertain and belong, as waifs, strays, freewarren, goods and chattels of felons and fugitives, ward marriages, releases, heriots, excheat fines, and wandering fairs, markets and tolls, with their appurtenances in Balterley and Tunstall in the county of Stattord. And also of two messuages, five tofts, one watercourse mill, seven gardens, 50 acres of (arable) lands, 100 acres of meadow, 300 acres of pasture, 40 acres of wood, 12 acres of land covered with water, one coal mine, 160 acres of moor and turves, 100 acres of heath and furze, and three shillings rent with appurtenances in Church Lawton. Also the manor of Church Lawton with appurtenances, and 16 messuages, 20 tofts, one watercourse mill, one dovecote, 36 gardens, 1030 acres of (arable) land 200 acres of meadow, 1000 acres of pasture, 60 acres of wood, 60 acres of land covered with water, 1000 acres of moor, 500 acres of fues and heath, and 8 shillings of rent, and view of francpledge, wards, marriages, releases, heriots, excheat fines, and wandering fairs, markets, toll, waifs and strays, freewarren, goods and chattels of felons and fugitives, with appurtenances in Church Lawton and Alsager, or Alger, and the advowson of the Church of Church Lawton in the county of Chester. And also of ten messuages, 10 tofts and 10 gardens 14 acres of land, 2 acres of meadow, with the appurtenances, in Sheppton, Littleton, Laleham, Holborn in St Giles and St Clement without the new Temple Bar in the County of Middlesex. Whereunto the said **William Lawton** shall appear and vouch to warrant the common vouchees who shall appear, etc etc etc."

This indenture proves indisputably that Balterley manor with its feudal rights, belonged to the Lawtons', and that Lawton manor, and Lawton, though then united under one owner were prior to the reformation two distinct places and possessions .

Balterley manor was at one time a possession of the Lords of Audley. In /the ...

the 10th Henry 4, **John Lord Audley** died seized of it. In the 16th of Henry 8, according to Yardswick (history of Staffordshire) **Sir Thomas Blount** died seized of it as did his son and heir, **Sir John Blount**, in the 23rd of Elizabeth, leaving one daughter who was married to **John Purslow**. The same author then says that in the 5th of James 1st, 1608, **William Lawton** died seized of it, and that **John** his son and heir succeeded. There is discrepancy about these statements, and indeed

it is difficult to unravel real, or apparent contradictions in several statements made regarding Balterley. To begin with, the date assigned by Yardswick for **William Lawton's** death is wrong by seven years. Balterley manor was claimed by the family of Wood as early as the middle of the 16th century, and the validity of their claim is established by the documentary evidence just quoted, (penes Lawton). In the face of this fact, the family of Thickeness claim to have been Lords of Balterley for 500 years without break in succession, ie from the days of Edward the 1st until **Dr Thickenesse** sold it in 1747 (Burke's Landed Gentry). The family of Wood was settled at Balterley as early as the reign of Henry 6th, when **Maude**, daughter of **Ralph Wood of Balterley** married **George Wodenote**, son and heir of **Robert Wodenote of Shavington**. **Robert Wood of Balterley** had a grant of the hospital of St John the Baptist, at Shrewsbury, in 1549. He had four sons, viz: **Thomas, George, Richard and ????**. The eldest succeeded to Balterley manor. He sold the hospital of St John at Shrewsbury in 1555, and dying without issue, was succeeded by his brother **George**, who was a judge at Chester. He married **Margaret**, daughter of **Richard Grosvenor of Eaton**, by whom he had an only daughter and heiress, **Mary**, who also inherited her uncle's wealth. **George Wood** died in 1558. Upon the marriage of **Mary Wood** with **William Lawton**, the manor of Balterley passed to the Lawtons, and the manorial right remained in this family till 1800, when they were sold for \$300 to **George Jollet of Betley** by **John Lawton**.

**William Lawton** died in 1617, and was succeeded by his son **John Lawton**, a minor at the time of his father's death. During the term of his minority, **Ralph Sneyd of Keele** managed the estates, and received the courtesy title of Lord of the manor, in the court leet records (penes Lawton). **John Lawton** married **Clare**, daughter of **Ralph Sneyd of Keele**, in Staffordshire, by whom he had three sons and one daughter.

The arms of Sneyd are argent a scythe armed with sneyd, in the fesspoint a fleur de lis sable. He lived in the time of the Civil Wars: but before the formal breakout in 1642 he had compromised himself, and broken his military service to Charles the 1st, as indeed, his father had done before him to James the 1st, though in what particular manner details are wanting. All the circumstances of breach of military service are set forth in a special livery dated 19 June 1632, 8th Charles 1. A special livery signified the delivery of possession to tenants who held of the King in Chief by military service, and, if a tenant failed in his lawful /service ...

service, or acted contrary to it, the confiscation of his landed property followed, as a natural consequence, unless he could obtain the royal pardon for his breach of homage.

The livery sets forth that he, **John Lawton**, the son of **William Lawton**, and his heirs should be free from molestation in his manor of Lawton, and not be held

accountable for anything that had previously been done by himself, or his father before him, contrary to the military service owed to the King, or to his father before him.

Fifteen years later, that is, in 1647, **John Lawton** compounded for his estates, at Goldsmiths' Hall, for six hundred and eighty pounds, for which he received a further pardon from the King, under the Great Seal, for levying war against the King from 20 May 1642, and previously.

In 1642, 17th Charles 1st, **John Lawton** purchased the "Horse Coppice" from **Randle Rode and Elizabeth** his wife. for the sum of ten pounds. It formed a part of the demesne land of Rode, and had been known previously as "Houghfield".

In 1651, **Randle Rode, Elizabeth** his wife and **Thomas** their son united to sell another messuage and tenement situate in Church Lawton, for forty pounds (indenture, penes Lawton).

In 1653, **Randle, Elizabeth and Thomas Rode** sold a further parcel of their possessions to **John Lawton**, for seventy five pounds, being a part of the demesne lands of Odd Rode, and known as the "upper end of little close on Mole (or Mowlop)". The Rodes of Rode owed suit and service to the Lawtons for lands in Lawton which they held as free tenants. They rarely attended the courts leet, and, as a rule, were fined annually for their non-attendance.

The above sales were preliminary only to a final break up of the old family of Rode of Odd Rode, and before the remnant of the estate passed by purchase to Roger Wilbraham in 1672. From this time forward, the manor of Wilbraham is substituted for that of Rode as a free tenant of Lawton manor.

In 1653, **Thomas Hulme and Thomas** his son, both of Church Lawton, agreed to sell to **John Lawton**, for seventy pounds, five butts or doles of land in Church Lawton in the townfield called Surseley or Sywardsley, and four butts of land lying in a butt field in Church Lawton called the "New Intack", and a parcel of land in Church Lawton called "Little Townfield Meadow" and five butts in Church Lawton called "Harefield", and two butts in Church Lawton called "Long Croft", all of which were in the occupation of **Thomas Hulme** and his son, who /covenanted ... covenanted to hold such portions of their possession as did not then pass to **John Lawton** by livery and seisin, and delivered livery and seisin of the above-named butts etc with their own hands, by a clod of earth.

On 14 December 1654, **John Lawton** entered into an agreement with **John Lawton of Snape**, for an exchange of lands and agreed to give Saltersbathe, the Flat, the Pingle and part of another field called Clayridding, in exchange for the Great Townfield, Sywardsley and Fairfield, being all the land that **John Lawton of**

**Snape** had in the above named fields. **John Lawton of Lawton** also relinquished an ancient right of way to Clayriding; and, as the land in Snape was more valuable than that for which it was exchanged, a money payment of fifty shillings was made to **John Lawton of Snape**, in addition (indenture penes Lawton).

**John Lawton** died in 1654, and was succeeded by his son **William Lawton**, who was born in 1630. **William Lawton** married **Hester**, second daughter of **Sir Edward Longueville of Wolverton Bart.**, by whom he had a family of four sons and seven daughters. The arms of Longueville are gules, between a fess dancette ermine, six cross crosslets sable, 3 and 3. One of the daughters, named **Margaret**, married **Charlewood Lawton** of the Middle Temple, London. He was grandson to **Daniel Charlewood** whose property in Covent Garden, and St Martins in the Fields he inherited. By a settlement (penes Lawton) dated 1684, he appointed **William Lawton**, and **John Thorncroft of Grey's Inn** his executors and trustees, and settled \$120 annually on his wife in case of her survivorship, and the rest to his children.

**William Lawton** entered heartily into the cause embraced by the Cavaliers, and was a staunch royalist: but, as the King' cause and party in his day were not in the ascendant, it fared as badly with **William Lawton** as it had done with his father before him, and he had to compound with the Common-wealth parliament for his estates in the sum of \$680. **John Lawton of Snape** compounded by \$54. Before the restoration in the year 1660, Charles the Second, whilst in hiding, visited Lawton, and remained concealed in the house for some time. The King honoured **William Lawton's** eldest son, then an infant, by acting as sponsor to him. As this boy **John**, was born in 1656, his baptism fixes the time of the King's visit with sufficient accuracy. The King presented the child with his drinking cup as a christening gift, remarking at the time that he had nothing else to bestow. This cup was duly inscribed and is yet in existence, but was removed from Lawton by the boy's mother during her widowhood, and it is now preserved amongst the heirlooms of the Earl of Longford's family, into which it came by marriage.

The King likewise left behind his snuffbox, which is curiously carved out of boxwood, and ornamented with the royal arms and cipher on the lid. The arms of /Lawton ... Lawton are carved on the bottom of the box. Subsequently, the King presented his own portrait, painted by Sir Peter Lely, to the Lawton family and also that of the Duke of Monmouth by the same artist. The box, and the two pictures are yet preserved at Lawton. The foregoing narrative is the more curious as no mention of th King's wandering so far north is made mention of in the Boscabel tracts.

In 1658, **William Lawton** completed the purchase of the lands which **Thomas Hulme** and his son had partially sold to his father known as the Townfield, Surseley etc (indenture pene Lawton). He was Sheriff of Cheshire in 1672.

In 1672, the 29th Charles 2, an agreement was entered into between **William Lawton** and **Walter Cotton of Butterton** whereby the latter agreed to cede the messuage and tenement of Oldcote, to the former for a term of 99 years and 11 months for an annual payment of twenty pounds to Cotton during hi lifetime, and an annual render of a peppercorn to his executor after his death (penes Lawton). By another indenture (penes Lawton) dated 1681 **William Lawton** mortgaged his Cheshire and Staffordshire possessions to **Sir John Bowyer** of Knipersley fo the purpose of raising portions, education, maintenance and preferment for his younger children by **Hester** his wife. The amount to be raised was \$3,000, and the term was for 100 years with power of redemption at any term during his natural life.

The Staffordshire possessions included Balterley, Betley and Tunstall. No mention is made of the Middlesex property which seems to have been parted with during the Civil War, and most probably was sold to defray the heavy fine imposed for siding with the King against the Commonwealth party.

How Betley came to the Lawton's I have no means of knowing: but it was purchased by **George Jollet** in 1718, and remains with his descendants.

**William Lawton** died in 1693 and was succeeded by his son, **John Lawton**, who was 37 years old when he came into the estate. He married first **Ann**, daughter of the honourable **George Montagne**, younger son of **Henry**, the **first Earl of Manchester**, and sister of **Charles, first Earl of Halifax**, and he had by her eight sons and six daughters, all of whom, save one son, died in the fathers' lifetime. **Ann Lawton** died in 1707. **John Lawton** subsequently married **Mary**, daughter of **Edward Longueville**, and relict of **Sir Edward Longueville**, third baronet of Wolverton, by whom he had one son, **Robert**. The double marriage of father and son into the family of Longueville is shown as follows:

/Sir ...

**Sir Edward Longueville** = **Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas**  
**1st Baronet of Nova Scotia,** **Temple, Knight, by Lady Hester his**  
**temp, Ch 1 and Lord of** **wife**  
**Wolverton in Buckinghamshire:**  
**ob. 1661**

**Hester = William Lawton** **Sir Thomas Longueville = Mary, daughter of Sir**  
**ob.1703 ob.1693** **2nd Bart. of Wolverton** **Fenwick of Northum-**  
**- killed by fall from horse** **berland**

**Edward Longueville = Mary, daughter ??**  
**Sylvester of St Ives**

**Sir Edward Longueville = Mary Longueville married**  
**Lord of Wolverton, who** **for her second husband John**  
**sold Wolverton to Dr** **Lawton of Lawton**  
**Radcliffe,** and afterwards  
was killed by fall from his  
horse

**John Lawton** died in 1736.

It has always been stated that his only son **Robert**, by his second marriage, succeeded his father in the estate, but the parish register shows that **John Lawton**, a son by the first marriage, was living till 18 June 1740 and he must therefore have succeeded. He was Member of Parliament for Newcastle in Staffordshire: but, whether he was married or not is uncertain. An entry in the register of Lawton church records that "**Sara Lawton** of Lawton died on 3 April 1740", and she may have been John Lawton's wife.

**Robert Lawton**, only son of **John and Mary (Longueville) Lawton**, succeeded to the estates on the death of his half brother. He was born in 1723, and consequently would be a minor of 17 years of age, when the above event happened. He married **Sarah, the daughter of John Offley of Crewe and Madeley** by whom he had three sons. His wife died in 1770. He was twice Sheriff of Cheshire, and served this office in 1754 and in 1777, and whilst acting as steward of the race course for Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1777 he was killed through the kick of a horse whilst conversing with a group of friends.

This fatality is the more remarkable, seeing that his wife's first husband shared the same fate as did his father before him, through falls from their horses. **Robert Lawton's** portrait hangs in the dining room, as does that of his

/mother ...

mother, and of her first husband. **Robert Lawton's** portrait was a full length one, but was reduced to make it hang over the mantelpiece. His wife's portrait is painted with powdered and ruffled headdress. She is habited in a stiff pink dress and has a black velvet bracelet on the wrist.

**Robert Lawton** was succeeded by his son, **John Lawton**, who was born in 1746. In 1770 he married **Ann, daughter and co-heiress of Charles Crewe**, who was a younger son of John Crewe of Crewe, and grandson of John Offley of Madeley manor, whose arms are azure a lion rampant argent, and by whom he had five sons and a daughter who died in her infancy.

The following sketch of pedigree best explains the Crewe alliances with two generations of Lawtons.

**John Offley of Madeley**, = **Ann**, eldest daughter  
Staffs, ob.1711 & co-heiress of **John  
Crewe of Crewe**

**John Offley of Crewe = Sarah Price**

John Crewe of Crewe MP Cheshire Charles Crewe of Warmincham & heiress of John Bourne of Chell Sarah, daughter & heiress of Sarah Crewe=Robert Lawton ob.1770 Lawton ob.1777

Robert Glyn=h'band Sarah Crewe=William Swinnerton of Butterson. 2nd husband Ann Crewe=John Lawton 1st daughter ob.1804 & co-heiress of C. Crew ob.1810

**John Lawton's** carelessness of his interests, coupled with the dishonesty of his steward, led him into very serious embarrassments, which ended in the alienation of some portion of the landed property, and the deterioration of all. For some years before his death he was unable to live in his ancestral hall, and he finally died, in 1804, in the house of his steward, who lived at the "Bridge Farm". In a farm lease dated 1796, **John Lawton** is said to be ...., or late of Lawton Hall. It is the renewal of a lease for 21 years that had been made to

/Robert ...

Robert Cox, the steward, in 1770, ie shortly after **John Lawton's** marriage, of Lawton Green, and Linley Lane farm. In 1809, however, the steward was found dead in his office chair and, this fact being communicated to **John Lawton's** widow, she forthwith proceeded to the Bridge Farm, and, locking herself in the room, secured all the papers and documents necessary to the unravelling of all nefarious practices. Having so done, she left at four o'clock in the morning, and walked to her then residence at Linley Wood. A thorough investigation of paper and documents followed which led to the recovery of certain rights which are recorded on a scroll which **Ann Lawton** in her portrait holds in her hand. It was found, inter alia, that fraudulent clauses had been introduced into colliery leases which had been signed unread, or unexplained.

**Ann Lawton** died at the age of 63 in November 1810. The farm rents of "Ash Bank" had been left to her for life under the will of **Mary and Judith Alsager**, the joint owners. This farm, which is of 64 acres, yielded an annual rent of as many pounds. \$700 of timber were cut away from it after the death of Miss Alsager. By the joint wills of the Misses Alsager' made in 1792, the rents of Ash Bank were ordered to be equally divided between the younger children of **John Lawton**, after his wife's death. These younger children were two in number, viz:  
**Charles Bourne, and John.**

John was at the time a clerk in Holy Orders, and resident at Leek, in Staffordshire. By a further provision the annual rent was to go to the children of either of these younger sons. During his mother's lifetime, **Charles Bourne Lawton** sold the reversion of his interest in Ash Bank to his brother **John**, for a money payment of one thousand pounds, which was to be paid to him out of a provision already made to **John** of \$2,600, secured to him under his father's marriage settlement. This happened in 1799.

Ash Bank remained with **John Lawton's** children till 1844 when it was sold, and the proceeds divided. **Mr Wilbraham of Odd Rode** was the purchaser.

Lands and tenements in Penkull, in Staffordshire, were also left by the two **Miss Alsagers'** to **Sarah, the sister of Ann Lawton**, who was the widow of **William Swinnerton of Butterley** with reversion to the two younger sons of **Ann Lawton**.

In 1809 **Charles, and John Lawton** enjoyed the rent issuing out of this bequest, and they received notice from thee trustees of the **Miss Alsagers'** that, unless certain claims on the Penkull property were discharged, a portion of it, at the time held by **Mr Minton**, would be sold. (ride will, and other papers, penes Lawton.)  
/William ...



**William Lawton** succeeded to the Lawton estates on the death of his father in 1804. He purchased "Kents" lands from **Mr John Gilbert of Clough Hall**, in 1811, for \$2,500, which contained nearly 30 acres. Shortly afterwards an additional 28 acres were bought, adjoining to the above, and which belonged to the vicarage of Middleswick. These two purchases constituted what is now known as the home farm. What is now the farm house was formerly the residence of **Andrew Lawton**.

The history of Kent's lands is as follows:- In the reign of Charles the 2nd, 1660-1665, **Andrew Lawton**, who was a free tenant on Lawton manor, with the consent of his wife, an eldest son and heir apparent, sold their possessions in Lawton which consisted of a dwelling house, barn, stable, two gardens and 45 acres of land, to **Nathaniel Kent of Warmincham, yeoman**. **They afterwards went to live in Montgomeryshire. In 1740 Nathaniel Kent** settled this property on **Nathaniel his son**, who also had a son, **Samuel** by name, and who made his will in 1781 together with a codicil dated 1784, by which latter he left the chamber over the parlour to his daughter Elizabeth for her life, if she cared to occupy it.

In 1799 **Samuel Kent** mortgaged these possessions to **James Colclough and Charles Staton** for \$900. In 1800 Colclough bought Staton out.

In 1803 **John Gilbert of Clough Hall**, purchased it all from **Nathaniel and William Kent** for \$900, at the same time that he paid off Colclough's mortgage of \$600.

When **William Lawton** purchased Kent's lands from **John Gilbert**, there were four houses and gardens, and 29 acres, 3 woods and 32 perches of land, extending up to the Trent and Mersey navigation canal.

In the valley where Lawton mere now lies, a brook ran and, by the side of the stream, the manorial mill used to stand.

By effecting this purchase, **Mr William Lawton**, aided by the advice and assistance of **his brother Charles**, was enabled to construct the lake at present lying on the south west side of the Hall. The mill used to stand about one half way up the lake on the Lawton side. On a fine day, when the water is smooth one of the manorial mill stones can yet be seen beneath the water. When the lake was formed, the mill was pulled down and part of the stones were used to construct a wall in the Church Lane. One of these stones bears the date 1707. The valley was now dammed up, and the materials used were got from cutting through a bank situate between the Hall and the lake. This embankment sufficed to allow the rivulet and spring waters to accumulate behind it, and made a carriage drive practicable between the Hall and the "Top Lodge" on the Congleton road.

**William Lawton** died a bachelor in 1831, and was succeeded by his brother **Charles Bourne Lawton**, who was 61 years old at this time. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge and married for **his first wife Ann**, daughter of **Henry Featherstonehaugh of Tooting in Surrey**, who died in childbed in 1814, her child dying with the mother.

**Charles Bourne Lawton** married second **Marianne, sister of Dr Belcombe of Co. York**, who also died without issue in 1868 when 80 years old.

**Mr Charles Bourne Lawton** was a man of large stature being six feet four inches high, stout and strong in proportion: besides which he was a man of strong will and determination.

During the long tenure of the Lawton estates, first by his brother, and afterwards by himself, every outstanding embarrassment was adjusted. **Charles Lawton** purchased the "Grove House" and farm, which he left as a life inheritance to **his nephew Robert Lawton**, with remainder to his own heirs male. The Grove farm and house became an integral part of Lawton manor when **Robert Lawton** died in 1868.

**Mr Charles Bourne Lawton** further purchased the tenement in Hall Green known as the "Bleeding Wolf Inn", together with 60 acres or land. These he left to his widow for her life, with a proviso that, after her death the lands and tenement should be burdened with a yearly grant of \$50 towards the furtherance of education within the manor and parish of Lawton. Through some legal flaw this instruction was frustrated, and the \$50 a year were settled on **Miss Crewe, a daughter of Henry Crewe, son of Willoughby Crewe**.

During **Mr Charles Bourne Lawton's** life, an exchange of lands was effected between him and **his younger brother John**, at that time rector of the church of Church Lawton, whereby the "Snape House" and adjoining lands were constituted the parsonage of Globe; and the former parsonage - now the "Limes" - and equivalents of land, were added to Lawton manor. **Mr Charles Bourne Lawton** died in 1860 when he had nearly completed his ninetieth Year.

He was succeeded by **his nephew John Lawton, second son of Revd John Lawton** above named. The **revd John Lawton** married **Elizabeth, daughter of John Carter of Liverpool**, merchant, by whom he had three sons and three daughters. He died suddenly in the year 1831. His eldest son and heir presumptive to the Lawton estates, died in his 17th year through being accidentally caught and crushed in a bone mill, whilst pursuing his studies at Shingley parsonages in 1835. His **second son John** who succeeded his uncle **Charles**, was born in 1821. He married **Emily Anne, daughter of Thomas Crosslegh of Adlington, in Cheshire**, and by her had two sons, and four daughters.

/John ...

**John Lawton** died in 1864, and was succeeded by his son **William John Percy Lawton**, who was a minor at the time of his father's death, and who attained his majority in 1870. He married in 1872 **Mary Maud, daughter of the Honourable Edward Erskine**, and brother of Thomas Americus, third Baron Erskine in descent from Lord Chancellor Erskine, who was third son of Henry David, fifth Earl of Buchan of that name.

During **William Lawton's** minority, the "Mere Cottage" and two acres of land, were purchased and added to the estates with the consent of the Court of Chancery, of which he had been made a ward. By his wife **Mary Maud** he had a son, **John William Edward**, who was born 24 June 1873.

**William Lawton** purchased the Little Mop farm from Messrs Williamson, in 1871, for \$3,500. It consists of 18 acres of land and 4 cottages. In the following year he became possessed of "Ouse Hollow" farm, of 15 acres, with farm house, by purchase, for \$2,020.

**John William Edward Lawton** married first **Ellen Cary Browne** by whom he had 3 sons, **James (ka Jim)** b.1897, **John Frederick** b.22 Aug 1899 and **Richard Geoffrey** b.12 June 1903. **James** married twice, first to **Daisy (nfd)** and secondly to **Beatrice**, by neither of whom did he have issue. **Jim** died in Torquay in ?

**John Frederick** married **Janet (nfd)** in 1926 but there was no issue. She was an epileptic who was mistakenly committed as a result of her illness and lived virtually the whole of her married life in an institution. She died in hospital in December 1996. **John Frederick** died in Deal, Kent on 15 Sept 1977.

**Richard Geoffrey** married Emma Goodway (b.6 Feb 1901) on 22 Sept 1928. By her he had two sons, **John Alistair** (b. 1 Oct 1929) and **Paul Erskine** (b. 9 Aug 1935). By this time the Lawtons had virtually vacated Lawton Hall and the two boys were born down in Somerset. **Richard** remained Squire of Lawton all through the war when the Hall was commandeered for military use and Nissen huts were erected in the grounds. **Richard and Emma** spent some time in Southern Rhodesia where their son **Alistair**, found employment with the Rhodesian government. He returned to England in ? and married **Iris Lilian Barthorpe** (b. 5 March 1931) whom he met whilst she worked at Rhodesia House on The Strand, London. They married on 14 June 1952 and lived in Blackheath, London until 1956 when they moved down to Deal in Kent. They had three children, **Carolyn Anne** (b. 10 Aug 1955), a Civil Servant, **Alison Jane** (b. 3 July 1958) and **John Richard** (b. 21 May 1961). **Carolyn** is currently unmarried whilst **Alison** married, on 10 Jan 1981, **Boaz Ron**, an Israeli. They moved out to and settled in Ein Gedi, Israel and

produced 3 children, **Natalie Ann** (b. 17 Mar 1983), **Daniel Giora** (b. 19 Sept 1985) and **JohnAdam** (b. 22 Oct 1992).

**John** married **Julie Cordes** (b. 25 Feb 1964) and they have two sons, **Richard Charles John** (b. 20 Feb 1992) and **Edward Phillip** (b. 6 Dec 1996). They live in Egerton, nr Ashford, in the county of Kent. **John Richard** succeeded to the Lawton estates during the lifetime of his father, with his father retaining a financial interest in the sale of land and property, although by then both the building and surrounding lands were in a dilapidated state. The Home Farm was sold in 1995 to the then tenants, **Austin Fernihough** and his wife for the sum of £150,000.

**Paul Erskine** meanwhile was married on 1 July 1961 to **Deirdre Shankey**, whose family came from Ballymena in Northern Ireland. They had 3 children, 2 girls and a boy, **Deborah** (b. 12 Sept 1962), **Christopher** (b. 17 Mar 1964) and **Tanya** (b. 25 Sept 1967). Of these 3, **Deborah** is the only one to have married and she attained this state on 28 May 1988 when she wed **Kim Bridgeland**. **Paul and Deirdre** currently live in Hythe, nr Folkestone, Kent where **Paul** has recently retired as a general practitioner.

The following is a translation of the compotii made on four separate occasions to the Abbot of St Werburg at Chester. Thomas Eardley was abbot from 1413 to 1434; and Richard Eardley was probably his brother, or his near relation.

First Compotus

The yearly account of all monies received and paid by John Lawton, Bailiff of Lawton Manor, from and to Michaelmas, in the 10th (and last) year of the reign of Henry the Fifth (1422).

Receipts	\$ s d
Received in rents and fines from the several tenants of the Lordships together with a free rent in the same, and the rent of the Water Mill farmed out to Richard Erdeley, payable at Martinmas, and paid, as appears from the rent sheet of Richard de Ravenscroft the late steward, exhibited and balanced on this account . . . . .	10 14 10

Payments	\$ s d
Paid to the Lord Abbot (at Chester) through his appointed messenger, and receipt taken . . . . .	9 0 0
Ditto Ditto . . . . .	6 8
The Bailiff's annual stipend . . . . .	6 8
The Rector of the church for the Dyches	6 8
For Edward Legh's contested rent . . . .	3 0
Beatrice Madyowe for conservancy of the Mill race running through her land .	1 0
The heirs of Thomas Wolfe, pending legal proceedings . . . . .	4
Rent of two tenantless and ruinous houses . . . . .	4 6
Two caretakers. . . . .	1 8
	-----
	10 10 6 10 10 6
	-----
Balance due to the lord on this account	0 4 4
	=====

/Second ...  
Second Compotus

The yearly account of John Lawton, Bailiff of Lawton Manor, from and to Michaelmas in the first year of the reign of Henry the Sixth.

		\$ s d
Balance due to the lord on the last account		0 4 4
 Receipts		
Received in rents and fines from the several tenants of the lordship, less the rent accruing from the Water Mill farmed out to Richard Erdeley for twenty shillings, which used to be rented at forty shillings, also a free rent in the lordship payable at Martinmas yearly, exhibited on this and on preceding account . . . . .		10 14 10
		-----
Total receipt . . . . .		10 19 2

		\$ s d
 Payments		
Monies sent to the lord Abbot through his selected messenger, etc	8 6 8	
Paid to the Rector of the church for the Dyches . . . . .	6 8	
Paid Bailiff for yearly stipend . . . . .	6 8	
Edward Legh's rent, as before . . . . .	3 0	
Beatrice Madyowe and John Lawton for the conservancy of the Mill race in her lands . . . . .	1 0	
The heirs of Thomas Wolfe for an undetermined law suit . . . . .	4	
Two empty cottages . . . . .	4 6	
Two caretakers . . . . .	2 0	
	-----	
	9 10 10	9 10 10
	-----	
Balance due to the lord . . . . .		1 8 4
		=====
		(or, as written in the compotus, \$1.8.5)

/Third ...

Third Compotus

The annual account of John de Lawton, Bailiff of Lawton Manor of all receipts and payments made by him from and to Michaelmas, in the second year of the reign of Henry 6.

Lawton	\$ s d
Receipts	
Arrears due from last account	1 8 5
Received in rents and fines from the several tenants of the lordship, less the rent of the Water Mill farmed out to Richard Erdeley for 20 shillings, which used to bring in 40 shillings, together with a free rent in the manor, due and payable yearly at Martinmas, as appears from this and former accounts declared and balanced . . . . .	9 13 4
	-----
Total . . . . .	11 1 9

Payments	\$ s d
Paid to the lord Abbot through his accredited messenger . . . . .	9 0 0
The Rector for the Dyches . . . . .	6 8
The Bailiff's annual stipend . . . . .	6 8
Edward Legh's rent, as before . . .	3 0
Beatrice wife of John Lawton for the Mill race . . . . .	1 0
Thomas Wolfe's payment as before	4
Rent of two uninhabitable houses .	4 6
	-----
	10 2 2
	-----
Balance due to the lord . . .	19 7
	=====

/Fourth ...  
Fourth Compotus

The yearly account of John de Lawton, Bailiff of Lawton Manor, from and to Michaelmass in the 3rd year of Henry 6.

	\$ s d
Balance due to the lord on the last account	19 7

Receipts

Received for rents and fines from the several tenants of the lordship, less the Water Mill farmed out to Richard Erdeley for 20 shillings, which used to bring in 40 shillings, together with a free rent in the Manor payable yearly at Martinmas . . . . .	10 15 11
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------

Payments	\$ s d
----------	--------

To the lord Abbot through his accredited messenger . . . . .	7 0 0
Ditto ditto . . . . .	1 10 0
The Rector for the Dyches . . . . .	6 8
The Balliff's annual stypend . . . . .	6 8
William Crowgate for bread bought by the lord's order . . . . .	6 8
Edward de Legh by an agreement come to for this year between him and the steward for the mill race . . . . .	13 4
Payments made by John Erdeley and the Bailiff for the lord and allowed . . . .	19 7

	-----	
	11 2 11	11 2 11

	-----
	12 7

Roger Blond's empty house . . . . .	2 0
Thomas Wolfe's house . . . . .	4
The Cottages of Beatrice Madyowe and John Sherman for the Mill race this year	6
Two caretakers . . . . .	3 0

	-----	
	5 10	5 10

Balance due to the lord . . . . .	0 6 9
	=====



From all of which it appears that the revenues of the ecclesiastical half of Lawton manor never reached eleven pounds annually: that six shillings and 8d were paid every year to the Rector of the Church at Lawton: that John Lawton was, for the time being, the Abbot's bailiff: and that during his term of office he married Beatrice, widow of Thomas Maddock.

The accounts show further that William Lawton paid a fair and reasonable sum into the Kings' exchequer when he purchased the manor from Henry the 6th, and that the principal sum was little less than what would yield interest at 5 per cent per annum. The interests of the parish church were also considered, for which seven shillings were secured instead of six shillings and eight pence.

The following record of the first court leet held at Lawton, after the manor had ceased to be a possession of St Werburg's Abbey, is given in full because it shows the general character of such local jurisdiction, the names and numbers of free tenants, tenants at will and cottagers on the estate, when the court was held: also the fines and the delinquencies to which they were imposed, and the titles of the officers who acted these several parts.

A Court Baron was an appanage of a manor, and a manor was a King's gift. The owner of a manor could exercise certain kinds of civil and criminal jurisdiction within its precincts either personally, or through his bailiff. The cases brought before such a court were for the most part either breaches of franc pledge, fines, tolls, heriots, recovery of small debts, personal assaults and such like.

As free tenants lived on all manors, the Lord of the Manor required some pledge, or security, for their behaviour. This was called franc pledge. A free tenant owed suit and service to his superior lord, just as the superior lord owed suit and service to the King. If a free tenant omitted service he was fined at the next court, or otherwise dealt with. When he died, a heriot, or fine was payable to the Lord of the Manor. Fines were likewise imposed when a free tenant alienated any part of his land. A free tenant, and a copy holder, were one and the same.

"TENANTS COURT AT THE MANOR OF CHURCH LAWTON, THE 28TH OF MAY, THE 33RD HENRY 8.

Judgement taken by Charter of Robert Lawton, John Comberbach, William Chantler, John Huls, Lawrence Lawton, Thomas Hughes, John Walton, Thomas Twemlow, Andrew Twemlow, Robert Untroyd Jr, Richard Wolf, James Berge, William Ligh, John Jallows, William Birch and Ralph Hall, inquisitors, who say upon oath that John Parkinson, William Lawton, Roger Comberbach, /Thomas ... Thomas Rowley, John Thornton Jr, William Cartwright, John Drakeford and William Twemlow Jr, are tenants and ought to serve on this inquisition, and not have absented themselves. They were fined 3d each.

And that John Ryley encroached on a certain parcel of land called a lane of this lordship, and a parcel of enclosed land belonging to the lordship, on a certain path or way, used by John Hughes, John Huls and Richard Woodall. Fined 6d.

And the said John Ryley encroached on a head land in Twysiche, fined 6d; and ploughed upon Thomas Hugh and John Huls in Twysiche meadow, 6d.

And that the village of Lawton has not had its boundaries drawn properly, and if not done before the vigil of Pentecost, each tenant will be fined one shilling.

And that Hugh Pole and Ralph Hall were found, each by himself, fishing in the waters of the Lord of the Manor, and drew fish out of the water with hooks, 6d.

And that John Drakeford holds a fee not of this court, 2d.

Assessors of the court     ) William Chauntler  
                                      ) John Walton

The names of the free tenants: Arthur Holford, Richard Lyversege, each paying 6d per year. Ralph Moreton, Thomas Lawton, Hugh Pole, John Ryley, Ralph Legh, Richard Weidgin.

Others: Thomas Kent, William Untroyd, William Riley, Margaret Hall, Thomas Ryley, Alice Walker, Richard Mosley, Catherine Smith, Hugh Pkynson, Eleanor Legh, John Thompson.

Cottagers: Lawrence Corbet, Ralph Hall, Roger Cornback, Catherine Herber, John Thornton, William Lawton, John Comberbach, Thomas Walton, Eleanor Churchley, Richard Yonge.

Tenants at will: Ralph Plynson, Robert Lawton, John Huls, Lawrence Lawton, Thomas Hughes, John Walton, Thomas and John Twemlow, and Andrew Twemlow, Robert Buwyn, Richard Wolfe, all messuage holders.

Thomas Lawton, William Chantler and Ralph Legh gentlemen: held lands. Robert Vuwyn, huntsman.

/Cottagers . . .

Cottagers: William Lawton, Lawrence Corbet, Alice Lawton - widow, Ralph Hall, John Comberbach, Roger Comberbach, Thomas Walton, Catherine Herber - widow, John Thornton Jnr.

Lawton. Views of franc pledge before the court held for the same before William Glazeor, gentleman steward of the same on Monday the next after the feast of St Lucia in the year of the reign of Henry 8, the 33rd.

) William Chantler for Arthur Holford  
Essons )  
) Thomas Kent for Richard Moreton

Church Lawton. At an inquisition taken on oath by the inquisitors Ralph Parkinson, Robert Lawton, Robert Hall, John Comberbach, William Chauntler, John Huls, Lawrence Lawton, Thomas Hughes, John Walton, Thomas and John Twemlow, Ralph Lawton, Robert Untroyd Jnr, Richard Wolfe and James Berge, who say upon oath that Richard Strakeford dug out, took and removed the fysewood beyond the common (7d). And that Robert Gandy kept unlawfully and punished youths and girls in a room of his house bearing himself dishonestly etc (20d). And that Thomas Morsley had a ditch which was not included in the fine of the house of Thomas Gibson (3d); and that if not corrected before the next epiphany (12d). And that Richard Cartwright was assaulted by William Hailey, contrary to the peace, and that William Hailey assaulted him (each fined 12d). And that William More, gentleman, assaulted Thomas Morsley (12d); and that Thomas Morsley assaulted him (7d). And that Robert Legh assaulted Roger Hughes, and vice versa (12d each). And that Robert Legh assaulted Richard Salton (12d). And that the aforesaid William More was fined 3s.4d for assaulting Ralph Kent, and drawing blood.

Then follows 6 more cases of assaults, with the corresponding fines. And that Robert Gandy was fined 2 shillings for unlawfully keeping certain things in his house to gamble with, and persuading others in the lordship to play, viz: Richard Hardson, Richard Beasley, Richard Thompson and James Smith. The first was fined 1s and the others 7d each. And that Richard Mosley was fined for keeping the said sporting effects. And that Thomas Rowley was fined 4d for ploughing up a piece of land on the Common. And Margaret Drakeford, widow was fined 3d for ploughing up the Common and sowing seeds in the same. And that Thomas Riley was fined 6d for keeping and occupying to his own proper use a portion of the said Commons before their enclosure. And Andrew Hall was fined 7d for encroaching on the common way through the Commons. And Richard Legh was fined 1s because he kept and occupied a part of the Commons to himself, before their enclosure. And Thomas Walton was fined 1s and William Lawton also. And William Cartwright was fined 1s for building a cottage on the Common. And Margaret Holt was fined 3d for cutting hedges and /carrying ... carrying them away to light fires.

Thirty six of the tenants were fined 3d each for cutting turves beyond the Commons, and making use of herbage.

Lawrence Lawton was fined 8d for not placing a stone, or boundary, in the place from whence he removed it, as he was ordered to do.

And John Riley was fined 6d for encroaching on a belt of land in the lordship. And Roger Comberbach was fined 1s for having a dog in his possession called "stray". And John Riley, Richard Wearam and Jane Lawton, widow, kept a certain gate called "Beynteldgate" knowing that it was wrong. They were ordered to remove it before the next sitting of the court under a penalty of 6s.8d to each.

And Richard Leversage was fined 1s because being a free tenant, he had not compounded. And John Thornton Jnr, William Lawton, John Comberbach, Reginald Comberbach, John Thornton, Eleanor Churchles and Robert Versyn Snr were each and all fined 3d for not having compounded.

Bailiffs	)	John Huls	)
	)		) Inquisitor
	)	Lawrence Lawton	)
Constables	)	William Clayton	)
	)		) Inquisitor
	)	William Chantler	)
Assessors	)	Robert Lawton	)
of the	)		) Inquisitor
Court	)	Thomas Hall	)

Considering the number of tenants at this time residing on Lawton Manor, the above record may be taken as representing the state of society in the Tudor period; and certainly it shows a degree of combativeness, aggression, and encroachment on manorial privileges, far away in excess of anything to be found at the present day.

It shows further the need of these Courts Baron, when other tribunals were wanting, to keep in check local delinquencies. It is unnecessary and would be tedious repetition, to enter with the same minutiae of detail upon succeeding records of the Lawton Courts Baron.

/Considering ...

Considering the time that has elapsed, and the vicissitudes of families, and the carelessness with which documentary records are frequently kept, it is a matter of congratulation that so perfect a series of these papers has come down to the present day. They extend, with occasional hiatuses, from the reign of Henry 8th down to the year 1700.

In the 17th Elizabeth, ie in 1574, Richard Dutton gentleman, was Steward of the Manor; and William Leversage and Randle Rode, gentlemen, were numbered amongst the free tenants. John Lawton of Snape is further named in this category.

The Leversages were of Wheelock, and Sandbach and Hassal and were free tenants of Lawton also for several generations.

At this court four tenants were fined three shillings and four pence each for grinding their corn away from the lord's mill. Fines were also imposed for breaking the assize of bread and ale, of 6d each on three persons, and two were fined 8d each for selling ale "unbeknown".

A mill was a manorial appendage and a source of profit to the lord. It was customary for tenants to grind all the corn grown on the manor at the lord's mill and if they failed they were liable to be fined at the next Court Baron.

The assize of bread and beer was the ordinance that determined the weight, measure, quantity and quality of those articles.

The number of inhabitants who came within the view of franc pledge this year was 70. There were also nine free tenants. Amongst the free tenants were Randle Rode (of Rode), William Leversage (Sandbach and Wheelock), Ralph Moreton, Thomas Holford, John Lawton of Snape and William Lawton priest.

At this, and at most of the succeeding courts, tenants were fined for gathering turf, for encroaching on waste land, for non-attendance, and for assaults.

In 1590 the total of fines and amercements amountea to \$6.2.3d. In 1592 the "pinfold and shooting butt" on the common, were pronounced to be in good repair. In 1606 John Holford, gentleman, died, holding one messuage, mostly acres of arable land and a pasture within the manor, in socage, for which he paid 6d a year. Also a parcel of land at will in the manor called Bredleighe, paying the Lord for the same, one shilling a year. That he owed a heriot by reason of his death; and that John Holford aged 8 years was his son and heir.

/A ...

A heriot signified a tribute in goods or chattels payable to the Lord of the Manor on the death of a tenant holding in socage, or by chief rent, or by copyhold.

In 1608 the following entry occurs against gaming:

"That every person that doth play at bowles upon the Sabbath day, within the Manor, shall forfeit 8d to the Lord of the Manor. That no person within the Manor shall suffer any unlawful gameing, or play, or play at the same within their houses, under pain of 20 shillings forfeit, Christmas only excepted."

In 1611 two tenants were fined for killing rabbits in the Lord's free warren. In 1613 John Taylor forfeited all his goods and chattels to the Lord of the Manor for

stealing and concealing in his field a certain writing belonging to Hugh Rowley. From 1614 to 1627 Ralph Sneyd heled as Lord of the Manor, ie during the minority of John Lawton. During this time the bounds were walked by a jury and each absentee was fined 3/4d. The Jury gound that many encroachments were made on the wastes; after which a committee was appointed, with fine of 10s for non-attendance, to settle the bounds of the Mop, concerning which many complaints had been made. The meres of the Mop were determined and written down.

In 1632 a Jury was formed to give guidance about boundaries, when they all referred to their former depositories made in 1629, saylng that: Richard Drakeford said that about 55 or 56 years ago, as he now remembers, he was getting clay in Butt Lane in the lordship of Audley, whereupon Mr John Lawton, the Lord of the Manor, took him up for getting clay, after which he procured a licence trom Mr Lawton. And he heard his mother say that in the Abbot s time there was a meeting of the Abbot and the Lord of Audley, and that both walked the law (boundary) and had witnesses with them of both lordships. And the neighbours of Audley on the one side of the midst of the lane, as in the Lord of Audley, right for that side and the neighbours of Lawton on the other side of the midst of the lane as in right of the Abbot, and so they parted friends as having discovered both their rights as being divided by the midst of the lane.

Three tenants were finea 3/4d each for lodgng wanderlng beggars. One was finea 30s for breakng the pound, and withdrawing sheep lawfully pounded.

The following perambulation of the Manor was made in 1676:

The jury say that the manor extends from a stile at the bottom of Woodfield on the north side of the church and follows the brook on the north side up to the tail of the mill stream and so up the side of the Wade Lane into a

/field ...

field now in the possession of John Booth, crossing a croft of Richard Cartwrights, (ie towards Halegreen) and then crossing two crofts pointing upon the Little Mop, and up the little Mop to a mere stone lyng in a field of Thomas Coopers, and so continuing the bound on the north side into a field now in possession of Richard Cartwright, to the end of a field called Smedrope belonging to the Hall, and so along the hedge northwards, and so to a brook which comes from the MoLe Lane, and so along the brook eastwards to a little footbrldge, and so crossing Mole Lane to the end of a brook which comes down Cobmoor Lane and so following the brook southwards until it meets the water course coming trom Hardings wood mill, so crossing the water course southwards to a lane, and so along the lane north west to Richard Cartwright's orchard lodge at the end of the lane, and thence to a place at the lower end of Buttey Lane, and up the middle of Buttey Lane crossing Little Turback to Hey Side, and thence westwards to a water course on the side of Carters Hey Lane, and so over a valley pointing up a hedge side to a water course

in the ditch on the south side belonging to the Lord of the Manor and so westwards to Linley Lane, and so along the water to the Hough Meadows and so westwards to a meadow in the possession of John Lawton of Alsager, and so following the water to Ouse Lane, and so winding over Lawton Heath to a little ditch hard by the place called Cross Walls and so to a water place which runs northwards to Lawton brook and so following the brook eastwards to Jeremia's Bridge, and so following the brook to Barroughditch Bridge and so upwards following the brook up to the Horse Cop, and so crossing over the stile at the bottom of the Woodfields.

From this date the records are missing, though the list of the Constables who served at the Courts Baron, preserved amongst the records in the parish church, show that they continued to be held till the year 1766.