

would be on account of this very designation. A thwaite, from its meaning, a clearing, or land reclaimed from the forest, must necessarily have been not only rural in character, but also of not wide extent; probably a few hundred acres, at most, would be all we should be justified in assigning to this thwaite from which we take our name. Just here is our best warrant for believing Hugo the proprietor of Goldthwaite. "In numberless instances," says Mr. Lower, "the founder of a surname was merely a resident at the place from which it was borrowed, and not its feudal proprietor. This is especially the case in names derived from considerable towns. . . . It may be observed, as a rule, that the more trivial the locality which has given rise to a surname—a poor hamlet, perhaps, or a farm of small dimensions—the more likely the first assumer of the designation is to have been the owner of such locality." Similar names to that of Hugo de Goldthwaite in the Wapentake of Claro are *Johannes* and *Willelmus de Brathwait*, *Robertus de Wallerthwayt*, *Johannes* and *Thomas de Grysthwayt*,¹ who, in a subsidy of 1378-9, are taxed four pence each. All of these and many more, at that day similarly designated by their various places of residence, with *de*, were, without doubt, of that large and best class of English yeomanry—freeholders, next in order of rank to the gentry, so called—from which, as we shall see hereafter, have been descended, in this part of Yorkshire, some of the most distinguished men of recent times.

Four years after the date of the researches in England, the results of which I have so far recounted, there was published in London a valuable work on the particular region in which

¹ "To bear the denomination of one's own estate—to write himself 'of that ilk'—was anciently, as it is still, considered a peculiar honor and a genuine mark of gentility; . . . it must not be inferred that all families bearing local surnames were originally possessors of the localities from which those names were borrowed. In all probability a great number of such names were never used with the *De* at all. In Germany and Poland they discriminate in this respect by using the word *of* when possessors of the place, and *in* when only born or dwelling there. 'The like,' Camden tells us, 'was formerly done in Scotland.'" (M. A. Lower, "English Surnames," Vol. I, p. 47.)