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978-1-108-06716-4 - *Memoirs of Dr. Richard Gilpin, of Scaleby Castle in Cumberland and of His Posterity in the Two Succeeding Generations*

William Gilpin Edited by William Jackson

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A physician and nonconformist minister who was active in the north of England, Richard Gilpin (1625–1700) was a popular preacher, leading large congregations, yet he faced opposition from Quakers and was ultimately unable to unite various dissenting factions. Including details about his descendants, the present work sets his story within the wider context of the Gilpin family history. First published in 1879, it was written in 1791 by fellow clergyman William Gilpin (1724–1804), an enlightened schoolmaster and writer on aesthetics. As well as covering his ancestors, William appends here his own life story, discussing his career as a teacher and his literary calling. He touches on his journeys during summer vacations when, with notebook and sketching materials, he would explore picturesque features of the British landscape. His volumes of *Observations*, based on these travels, are also reissued in the Cambridge Library Collection.

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MEMOIRS  
OF  
DR. RICHARD GILPIN,  
OF SCALEBY CASTLE IN CUMBERLAND;  
AND OF  
HIS POSTERITY IN THE TWO SUCCEEDING  
GENERATIONS;  
WRITTEN, IN THE YEAR 1791,  
BY THE  
REV. WM. GILPIN, VICAR OF BOLDRÉ:  
TOGETHER WITH  
AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR,  
BY HIMSELF:  
AND A PEDIGREE OF THE GILPIN FAMILY.

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EDITED BY WILLIAM JACKSON, F.S.A.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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These Memoirs, and the Record which follows, were written solely, as the author has himself stated, for the entertainment and instruction of his descendants.

Being favoured with the loan of the manuscript copy several years ago, I have not ceased to solicit that the public should be allowed to share the delight which I had felt in its perusal. The natural hesitation of the owner at last yielded to my persistent persuasions to the effect, that the publication of the work was calculated to widen the sphere of pleasure and instruction it was so well fitted to afford, and the Cumberland and Westmorland Archæological Society have been kindly permitted to add it to the number of their publications.

Although our Literature is by no means poor in the fascinating department of Family History, yet it is believed that this volume is unique in the nature of its contents.

The only two works that we possess at all comparing with it are “The Lives of the Norths,” by Roger, the surviving brother, and “The Lives of the Lyndsays,” by

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Lord Lyndsay; but when closely compared, the distinctions are more patent than the resemblances. The former work is at once an Apology and a Eulogy, and the scene is that of the Great World. The latter has some special points of similarity, for it was written for family perusal only, and its standpoint is Christian and instructive; but the Lyndsays are a family of historic renown, and their deeds have been performed on the World's Stage; whilst our Memoirs and Record are so domestic as to speak to the heart and understanding of every well-disposed Englishman, without that parade of pious verbiage which renders so many books, carefully prepared, as it is thought, to do good, eminently distasteful to the general reader.

Galton, in his work on "Hereditary Genius," with singular penetration, whilst adducing Bernard, George, Richard, and William Gilpin, as examples of the truth of his theory, expresses regret that he knows so little of the Family History, and feels assured that if his information were more extended, he should therein find additional illustrations of its truth.

The Pedigree will sufficiently show that all-pervading as the literary faculty is, the artistic is even more so, for Benjamin West perhaps owes his celebrity to his Gilpin descent; but most of all would I claim for those of the blood—and I have good reason for doing so—a spirit of loving kindness, which is as manifest in the living as it was in the deceased members of the Family.



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As the work is intended primarily for the members of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archæological Society, though I hope and believe that its circulation may be more extended, I have striven to add to its local interest by such notes as appeared to me to be fairly illustrative of the text; but I trust the reader will not break the even tenour of his way, by casting his eye downward, but yield to the fascination which I feel assured will seize upon him, and leave the notes to a second perusal.

The following extract from a letter written by the Rev. William Gilpin to his friend the Rev. Richard Warner, given in the Literary Recollections of the latter, (from which I shall very frequently have occasion to quote,) gives a more extended account of the origin of the work, more particularly of the special copy from which this volume has been printed, accompanied by a few interesting family details.

“Pray, did I ever tell you that I had a son settled in America? At the conclusion of the American War, when all things looked dismal at home, he had a great inclination, being yet unsettled in business, to try his fortune there, chiefly by the advice of the late Leonidas Glover, who was always particularly friendly to me and mine. I consented; but I believe he would have returned, if he had not met with an object at Philadelphia, (in a very respectable family, to which he had been recommended,) who detained him. He bought a little estate therefore; and if he is not likely to be rich, he is likely to be (what you will allow to be nearly as good) very happy. He purchased also several thousand acres of waste lands, yet uncultivated. They have already risen in value; and by the time my three grandchildren, William, Barnard, and Edwin, or

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their children, are fit to cultivate them, civilization will, probably, have crept up to them : so that in a century or two, I shall, probably, enlarge myself over several leagues of the New World, and have a considerable interest both in Europe and America. May I not think myself somebody? Last spring my son came over, and paid us a short visit, and we have just heard he had arrived safely again across the Atlantic. He was always a well disposed young man ; but I think the manners of the country have given him a more serious turn ; which I was well pleased with. His chief employment whilst he was here was transcribing a family record, which I drew up some time ago, of my great grandfather, my grandfather, and father ; who were all very valuable men ; and I encouraged him in it, for the sake of William, Barnard, and Edwin, whom it may hereafter have a tendency to excite to good and honourable deeds. Indeed, I have often thought, such like records might be very useful in families ; whether the subjects of them were good or bad. A lighthouse may serve equally the purpose of leading you into a haven, or deterring you from a rock. I have the pleasure, however, to reflect, that my three ancestors, (beyond whom I can obtain no family anecdotes,) were all beacons of the former kind."

The original manuscript was taken to America by John Bernard, and the copy was left in the possession of his father, who made a few alterations and some additions, especially that of the Preface to the Memoirs ; and it is from this manuscript, now in the possession of Charles Bernard Gilpin, Esq., of Edinburgh, grandson of the author, that the work has been printed, his spelling, abbreviations, and punctuation, being rigidly adhered to.

Just as this work is issuing from the press, I have been favoured with the perusal of some letters from the Rev. Wm. Gilpin to his little grandson, William, son of the Rev. Wm. Gilpin then of Cheam, but afterwards of

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Pulverbach. The powers of fascination possessed by the author are as abundantly manifested in this difficult style of composition as in any of his other works, especially the faculty of fixing the attention of his little reader by stories of natural history, with a moral as instructive, but scarcely so intrusive, as those of the fables of Æsop. I think these letters are well worthy of being printed.

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE MEMOIRS.

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Vicar's hill July 7. 1791.

I have often thought it might be of great use in a family, to keep a record of some of y<sup>e</sup> most deserving persons, that have adorned it. Such a family-monument might both preserve many amiable characters, w<sup>h</sup> might otherwise be lost; & also raise a kind of emulation in succeeding generations. Mere tradition seldom carries us beyond a great grandfather; and of him but little descends to us from that uncertain source.

That y<sup>e</sup> remembrance therefore of some excellent persons of our family might not be lost to their posterity, but remain among them as examples, I have taken upon me to collect, & put together, y<sup>e</sup> following memoirs.

The life of Bernard Gilpin, extracted from B<sup>p</sup> Carlton's account of him, I have already given y<sup>e</sup> public. This pious, and very respectable man lived in the reign of Elizabeth. Since that time, no doubt, have lived many worthy persons of the family; whose virtues deserve to be remembred. But for want of some family-record, they are all now lost. Scarce any circumstance, relating to any of them, except their names, & date in a family-pedigree, at this time exists.

WILL: GILPIN.