

SIXTH GENERATION.

VI. Thomas Fairfax^a, sixth Lord Fairfax; b. at Denton in 1690. He retired to his estates in Virginia in 1745 and built Greenway Court, in Frederick Co., where he died March 12, 1782; buried in the chancel of the old church at Winchester. He succeeded to the title in 1710. An erroneous belief that the present Lord Alfred Kirby Fairfax is descended from this sixth Lord Fairfax, and first of the title to come to America, appears fast rooted in the minds of the American public. Thomas Fairfax, sixth baron, never married. He came of age to find that his mother had sold his paternal estates, including Denton Castle, to secure intact her own inheritance, the Castle of Leeds, in Kent, and he fell in love and all the preparations for the marriage were gayly in progress when the lady of his heart discovered his loss of patrimony and withdrew immediately from the engagement. Up to that time Thomas Fairfax had been a gay, light-hearted soldier in a swell regiment, the Life Guards, and a university man of scholarly attainments. Now, under this double blow, his life became embittered. He was obliged to ratify the sale of his property, but he never cared for the manors in Kent and estates in the Isle of Wight, inherited from his mother. He never forgave her action and when a blighted love affair was its culmination he resolved to visit America. There, within the boundaries of the Potomac and Rappahannock, he had inherited (also from his mother) a tract of land called Northern Neck, estimated to be

over 5,000,000 acres. Coming to America, he was so captivated with the climate and picturesqueness of Virginia that he resolved to remain there the balance of his life, which he did. He gave his English estates to his brother, Robert, and distributed the surplus of his American income among his poor neighbors. He designed to have a fine manor house on the slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains, near Winchester. Plans were all drawn out for Greenway Court, as the manor was to be called, but—lacking perhaps the incentive of wife and children—the palatial residence was never built. Instead, a long, low, one-story building with a roof sloping down in the old Virginia fashion into low projecting eaves that formed a veranda running the whole length of the house, became his residence, and was known as Greenway Court, and here he lived and died. His style of living, however, was in ancient English fashion, lavish and hospitable, with a retinue of servants, and Greenway Court was the scene of truly lordly entertainment for any distinguished English gentleman who came to America. He was lieutenant and *custos rotulorum* of Frederick county, and presided at the provincial court at Winchester, Va., and was one of the most beneficent of official magnates. He was the patron of George Washington in the latter's youth, and his friend through life, but, notwithstanding, remained a rigid Tory, and it is said the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown was his death-blow, since he never rallied from the shock of hearing the news.

Years after, children playing in the garden of a deserted dwelling found a parchment, musty and mildewed, which proved to be a marriage contract drawn in England when George I was king, and all ready in every detail for signatures and seals, that had never been affixed. The name of the lady had been carefully erased, but the man's name was left solitary in proud token, perhaps, of an unchanged heart, and that name, it is said, was Thomas, sixth Lord Fairfax, Baron of Cameron.

On his death his title passed to his brother Robert.

VI. Robert Fairfax⁶ (Thomas⁵, Henry⁴, Henry³, Thomas², Thomas¹), b. 1707; member of Parliament for Mardstone in 1743. Major of Horse Guards. He married twice, and d. 1793, childless. He left Leeds Castle, Kent, and the rest of the Fairfax property to his sisters. His title passed to the Rev. Bryan Fairfax, rector

of Christ Church, Alexandria, Va., who succeeded as eighth Lord Fairfax. Leeds Castle passed into the hands of the descendants of Frances Fairfax (sister of the sixth and seventh Lords Fairfax), who married Denny Martin, Esq.