

ART. XXVII.—*Aikton Church.* By HENRY BARNES,
M.D., LL.D.

Read at Aikton, June 27th, 1912.

ALTHOUGH this is the first visit of the Society to Aikton, its antiquities have not escaped the notice of our members. Chancellor Ferguson says the long straight piece of road through Aikton, which if produced both ways would lead from Old Carlisle to Drumburgh, seems to be an old Roman road.* Mr. Whitehead has described the Church Bells,† Canon Bower has given an illustration of the Piscina‡ in the south aisle of the Church, and also of a grave slab,§ and Down Hall has had its story told both by Chancellor Ferguson|| and Mr. T. H. B. Graham.¶ There are, however, many other matters of antiquarian and historical interest connected with the parish and church which are deserving of attention, and it seems desirable that some connected story of these should be placed before you. As a native of the parish and, consequently much interested in it, I desire to submit the following observations:—

The Parish.—The early history of the parish is connected with the De Morville family, the manor of Aikton being in the Barony of Burgh. The extent of the parish from N. to S. is about five miles, and from E. to W. one mile and a half. John Denton who wrote an account of the most considerable estates and families in the county of Cumberland since the Conquest till the year 1610 gives a long description of the parish. He says:—

* Ferguson's *History of Cumberland*, p. 45.

† These *Transactions*, o.s., viii., p. 505.

‡ These *Transactions*, o.s., xii., p. 210, plate xi.

§ These *Transactions*, n.s., ix., p. 17.

|| These *Transactions*, o.s., vi., p. 194.

¶ These *Transactions*, n.s., x., p. 112.

Aikton *Villa Quercum* is a manor town and parish in the Barony of Burgh by Sands, and was the principal seat of Johan de Morvill, the 2nd daughter and one of the two co-heirs of Sir Hugh de Morvill, Lord of Burgh. A little hamlet (now called Downhall and ever so named after the Scots burnt it), was the capital messuage of Aikton where the said Johan Morvill and her husband Sir Richard Gernon dwelt.

Denton proceeds to describe the various changes in the ownership of the manorial lands of Aikton from the death of Johan* until the reign of Henry VI., when they were sold to Lord Thomas Dacre, and thereby became united to the ancient seigniorship of Burgh, from which it had been separated by the partition of the two daughters and co-heirs of Sir Hugh de Morvill.† At a later date it became vested in the Earls of Lonsdale, who are now lords of the Barony of Burgh.

The following hamlets in the parish are described by Denton, viz. : Gamelsby, Biglands, Drumleyning, Whitriggles, Lathes, and Wampool. Gamelsby he quaintly tells us "was so called of one Gamel that first builded there," and "before Gamel built there, it was a woody waste haunted with deer." Biglands is "so called of that kind of grain called beer or barley which plentifully grows there, which Cumberland men call *bigg*, and thereupon the hamlet is called Bigglands." Wampool or Wathompool "lyes next to Biglands and Gamelsby and is so called of the river Wampool upon the banks whereof it standeth." Whitrigg or the White Ridge is "a great long white rigg upon the banks of Wathinpool and was so called of the waste ground there fashioned like a corn rigg. It was first inhabited by the Brunnes, who were antiently a great family." Lathes is a hamlet next unto

* Johan died in the 31st of Henry III. (1246-7).

† Chancellor Prescott in his Register of Wetherhal, p. 191, gives some particulars of the de Morvill family, and says that the manor of Aikton in the Barony of Burgh which fell to Sir Richard Gernun and Johanna his wife was said to be their chief residence.

Wampool and the Lord of Whittrigg had a farm or grange there. Drumleaning, Denton says, is corruptly called Drumleyning, the right name thereof is the Myre-Dromble-Heyning, Myre Dromble being a bittern and Heyning the fryth or freed spring of the place.*

Among the early references to the Parish which I can find is that contained in *Taxatio Ecclesiastica P. Nicholai* (circa 1291), where it appears as under :—

	Taxatio.			Decima.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Aketone	14	13	4	1	9	4
Vicar Ejusdum	9	6	8	0	18	8
	S̄ma taxacōis			882	10	4

In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus Temp. Henr. VIII.* (26th year of his reign), *Auctoritate regia institutus*, vol. v., p. 280, Johēs Robynson, Prior de Lan'cost is described as "Rector ejusdem eccl'ie de Ayketon," particulars are given of the value of the mansion and glebe, etc., and after deductions the total value is stated as £ xiiiij s. xiiij. In Ecton's *Thesaurus Rerum Ecclesiasticarum* (1742) the value of Aikton is returned as £14 13s. 1½d., and the same value is returned in the *Liber Regis* of John Bacon (1786).

Thomas Denton in his Perambulation of Cumberland (MS.) in 1687-8 says the parish of Aikton is a Rectory and the benefice is one of the best in Cumberland, being worth £160 a year. Bishop Nicolson in his Visitation in 1703 describes the living as the second in value in the Diocese. Hutchinson in his History of Cumberland (1794) records that it is about £200 a year in value. According to Whellan (1860) it was worth £650, but in

* Mr. T. H. Hodgson, F.S.A., writes to me in reference to this derivation as follows :—"John Denton has gone out of his way to find a most improbable derivation for Drumleaning. There can be no doubt that it is from the Keltic 'drum' or 'drom' = a ridge, a common element in place names. It occurs often in Scotland and very frequently in Ireland, but Drumleaning and Drumburgh are the only instances that I know in England."

1868 it had dropped to £580, and in 1912 it is returned as worth £393. In 1730 there were in the parish 128 families, of which Quakers 4 and no other dissenters.* In 1811 there were, according to Lysons, 129 inhabited houses and 614 inhabitants. The population of the parish, according to the census of 1901, was 721, but in 1911 it had fallen to 620.

The Advowson.—The right of presentation to the benefice is now vested in the Earl of Lonsdale, Lord of the Barony of Burgh. The history of the advowson is interesting. In the earlier records it was presented to in moieties, a circumstance which historians regard as due to the fact that the property of Sir Hugh de Morville was at his death divided between his two daughters, Ada who first married Rich. de Lucy and afterwards Thos. de Multon, and Johan the wife of Richard Gernon. The list of known rectors dates back to 1304, when, on the death of William de Aldewerk, Thomas de Multon of Gillesland presents William de Somerset to a moiety of the church of Ayketon, whereupon an inquisition was held *de jure patronatus*, and one Richard de Ayketon protested that there was no such vacancy for that he himself was rector of the whole. Towards consolidating the said rectory Richard de Ayketon resigns, and presently there follows a mandate for induction to the said moiety of William de Somerset.† In 1306 Thomas de Multon again presents to a moiety. In 1339 Margaret de Dacre presents to a moiety, and upon an inquisition the jurors found that such a right was vested in her. In 1362 Ralph Lord Dacre presents to a moiety, and again in 1373. In 1378 Hugh de Dacre, Lord of Gilsland presents to a moiety. In 1465 a writ of *quare impedit* was brought by Sir John Savage, Knight, claiming the right of pre-

* Terrier, 1730.

† Full particulars of these proceedings will be found in the recently published Register of Bishop John de Halton, p. 226, *et seq.*

sentation against the Bishop and Richard Morland, Rector of Aikton, but the latter continued possessor, as it seems, of the whole rectory, for after this there is no mention of moieties. In 1563 William, Lord Dacre presents. In 1572 Queen Elizabeth presents, and again in 1583, 1591, and 1592. In 1642 Thomas Dennis, a mercer of Oxford, has the presentation. In 1694 the patronage fell to Sir John Lowther, and has since that date been in the Lowther family.

List of Rectors.—The following list is compiled from local histories (Nicolson and Burn and Whellan), and is brought up to date :—

William de Aldewerk—; Richard de Ayketon (also called Richard de Multon)—; William de Somerset 1304; Richard de Askelly or Richard de Askeby 1306; Robert de Halghton—; Thomas le Spencer—; William de Salkeld 1339; William Beauchamp 1362; William Chamberlayne 1364; Robert de Kirkby occurs in 1371; Thomas de Hutton—; Thomas Roke 1373; John de Midylton—; John de Kerby 1378; Richard Morland occurs in 1465; Christopher Caunefield—; Robert Lowthe occurs in 1509; John Robynson occurs in 1535; Nicholas Crawhall 1542; John Blyth died in 1563; William Lowden died in 1563; Robert Allanby 1572; Roland Hauxbie 1583; William Lowson 1591; Edmund Hewitt 1592; Thomas Blayne 1598; Thomas Head 1642; Mr. Lampit ejected in 1650; Rowland Nichols 1650; R. Threlkeld 1694; Richard Holme 1707; William Lindsey 1739; Henry Lowther 1753; Dr. Lowther—; Dr. Satterwaith 1814; Richmond Fell 1828; Samuel J. Goode-nough 1845; Joseph Stordy Hodgson 1858; Joseph William Hodgson 1871; George E. Hasell 1872; William Jefferson 1911.

The Rectory.—This is known and has always, within living memory, been known as Aikton Hall. Why it is so called I have been unable to ascertain. The front of the house is of stone, but the remainder is, of brick, and above the lintel of the front door is the inscription "Richmond Fell, Rector, 1828," which probably fixes the date of the present building. Bishop Nicolson in his

Visitation (1703) says "the house was built by his (*i.e.*, Rector's) predecessor of brick, and he has lately rebuilt some of the Out-Houses of Clay," but there are no traces of clay buildings at the present time, and the house which existed in Bishop Nicolson's time was probably destroyed when the present house was erected.

In the grounds to the east of the Rectory the foundations of some older buildings may be traced. Near to those foundations there is a deep ditch, which has suggested to some local antiquaries that we have here a moated rectory, and there is a distinct depression leading in a southerly direction from the ditch towards Down Hall as if the defensive works of the rectory at one time had been connected with the moated stronghold of the De Morville family. Tradition states that there was at one time an old fortified parsonage house at Bowness-on-Solway; and if the ditch at Aikton has been at one time a moat it will furnish the only evidence of a fortified rectory in Cumberland with which I am acquainted.*

Terriers.—Bishop Nicolson in his Primary Visitation in the month of May, 1704, gives details of a Terrier of the glebe lands which he describes as "written by ye (Lazy) Parson: But given in upon two several loose papers; neither of which are subscribed by himself or the Church Wardens." Mr. C. W. Ruston-Harrison has

* Mr. T. H. Hodgson, F.S.A., writes to me as follows:—"I don't know why this Rectory is called Aikton Hall. It very probably was a place of strength in early times, though I do not think the pond in the garden ever formed part of a moat. It seems more likely that after the destruction of Down Hall the Rectory being the principal house in the parish, there being no manor house, acquired the name of 'Hall.' The Rector has no manorial rights." Mr. R. Blair, F.S.A., who was present at the meeting when this paper was read informed me that in the parish of Elwick in the Diocese of Durham the Rectory has always been known as Elwick Hall, and he has since kindly forwarded me a paper published in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, vol. vi., pp. 177, 182, in which the Rector, the Rev. R. G. W. Reynolds, in giving an account of the parish, says:—"This name seems to show with great plainness the condition of the parish in Saxon times. The Saxon Lord owning the estate, which in due time became the parish, bounded for the most part by becks, had his hall on the site of the present Rectory, which has always been known as Elwick Hall." This seems to me a very probable explanation of the name of Aikton Hall.



CHANCEL ARCH WITH HARVEST DECORATIONS, AIKTON CHURCH.

Phot. by C. F. Martindale.

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kindly looked up the Terriers in the Bishop's Registry, and in addition to the above named there are Terriers on parchment with the dates 1730, 1749-50 (2 copies), 1750, and 1777, and on paper one dated 1740 and signed by Wm. Lindsey. One of the Terriers has this note:—
 “That ye Font will not hold water nor will ye Parishioner give a Bason we have no pulpit cloth nor cushion. Ye Roofe and Windows of ye Church are out of repair.”

The Church.—Writing in 1860 Whellan describes the church as “a very ancient structure the architectural features of which are almost entirely gone in consequence of the numerous alterations which succeeding ages have rendered necessary.” The church* at present consists of a nave 52 feet 8 inches long, and 20 feet 6 inches wide; south aisle (separated from nave by pointed arches) 7 feet 5 inches wide; chancel 18 feet 5 inches long by 13 feet 1 inch wide; vestry on north side of chancel; and south porch in second bay from west end. The porch and vestry are both modern additions. The first church probably consisted of simply nave and chancel. The west wall of nave is original and of twelfth century date. The north and south walls have been rebuilt or refaced. The east wall of nave above the chancel arch is original, and has many stones on its external face with the Roman cross tooling. The quoins at the north-east angle prove the original width of the nave. The chancel arch is Norman, semicircular, 7 feet 3 inches span, of two plain square orders. The jambs have had nook shafts, which are now gone, but the caps and bases remain. The bases are 2 feet 3 inches above the present floor of the nave. The shaft is 4 feet 6 inches high, and the caps are 1 foot 6 inches deep, with heavy abacus mould 7 inches deep. The original nave had apparently no west window; the present one is an insertion of 1732,

* For the measurements and the description of the architectural features of the church I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. J. H. Martindale, F.R.I.B.A.

of same date as present east window. All the other windows are modern. The chancel is probably the same size as the Norman one, but the walls have been rebuilt. The south aisle was added in the late thirteenth century. The arcade consists of four pointed arches, the east and west responds being moulded corbels. The columns are octagonal, 1 foot 8 inches in diameter, with plain splay bases and moulded caps 7 inches deep. The total height to springing line is 5 feet 8 inches. The arches have simple double splays. The entrance door into the second bay of the aisle is of the same period (see opposite), the moulding of the jamb being carried into the arch, indicating the date in style. The priest's door on the south side of the chancel, now walled up, is dated 1732, and is clearly an insertion of that period, the same as the east and west windows. The only trace of an earlier or original Norman window is a single stone, the *voussoir* of a Norman arch, showing the well-known chevron or zig-zag moulding. It is built into the east wall of the south aisle. If this belonged to one of the Norman windows they must have been very fine, but it is possible it may have been part of the original Norman doorway.

Bell Turret.—This is for two bells, and is of early date, but there seems to have been some reconstruction of the upper part (see opposite).

The Font.—The bowl of the font is clearly of early date and was probably the font of the early Norman church. It is square with the angles cut off. The sides are all varied, one side having shallow interlacing arches and on another are two quatrefoils. The shaft and base are recent, and were probably added at the last restoration. Mr. Francis Bond in his recent work on Fonts* says that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries unmounted fonts are less common than mounted ones,

* *Fonts and Font Covers*, by Francis Bond, 1908.



WEST END.

Phot. by C. F. F. Martindale.



SOUTH DOOR.

AKTON CHURCH.

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THE FONT, AIKTON CHURCH.

Phot. by C. J. F. Martindale.

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and circular fonts are more usual than square fonts. Among several hundreds of illustrations of fonts in various parts of England in this book there are several Norman fonts with interlacing arches; one at Crambe in Yorkshire, as regards its bowl, bears a close resemblance to the Aikton font, and Mr. Bond fixes the date of the Crambe font as about the last quarter of the twelfth century.

Monuments.—Only a single memorial exists in the church, viz., a brass 7 inches by 5 inches fixed in the south wall of the chancel by wooden plugs. It bears the following inscription:—

M. S. Gulielmi Lindsei qui A. M. Rector de Aketon & vicarius de Barton fuit. Excessit e vita anno Æ 81 & sepultus est die 15 Martii ano Dmi 1753. Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.

Parish Registers.—These date back to 1694, but many pages are much worn and barely legible. Mr. Ruston-Harrison informs me that the Bishop's transcripts begin in 1665.

The Church Bells.—These, as already mentioned, have been fully described by the Rev. H. Whitehead, and members interested will find the description in vol. viii., o.s., these *Transactions*, p. 505. The treble is cracked and is not in use. It has on its shoulder an inscription, not grouped into words, as follows:—"ANDREASIRI-STIFAMULUS." The Rev. W. F. Gillbanks who took a rubbing states that the 8th letter is undoubtedly I, and remarks that such an aggressive mis-spelling is curious. It is obvious that it must have been meant for a K, and the inscription should read ANDREAS KRISTI FAMULUS—"Andrew the servant of Christ."* The tenor is described as long, ugly and blank, and is undoubtedly a very ancient one. Canon Hasell considers

* The dedication is usually ascribed to S. Andrew, but in Ecton's *Thesaurus Rerum Ecclesiasticarum* it is ascribed to S. Michael, and Mr. Whitehead says that Brown Willis also calls the church S. Michael's.

that it dates back to the time of Edward I. The treble being disabled it has all the work to do, and Mr. Whitehead says "its functions in addition to ringing for service and tolling before a funeral are 1. Death Knell but without indicating sex or age; 2, After Burial bell; 3, After service bell on Sunday mornings; and 4, Sacramental bell rung immediately after the non-Communicants have left the church." The death knell is exceptional in this county especially in parishes near the Border. There are only four instances of its use in north Cumberland, viz., Stanwix, Cumrew, Cumwhitton, and Castle Carrock. The after burial bell is used in only one other parish in north Cumberland, viz., Castle Carrock. The after service bell on Sunday mornings is now rung in very few places in Cumberland, and the Sacramental bell is peculiar to Aikton. The present rector informs me that these uses of the bell described by Mr. Whitehead are still maintained.

The Church Plate.—This consists of an old plated cup, silvered on copper, a modern silver flagon given to the church on the occasion of the marriage of the Rev. Geo. E. Hasell, and a pewter paten, $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, marked A.C. (? Aikton Church). It has 4 small marks in shields: 1, W.; 2, C.; 3, Leopard face; 4, Thistle.

The De Morvill Grave Slab.—This was dug out of the church at the last restoration in 1869, and is now placed on the east wall (outside) of the south aisle. For the purpose of preservation it would be much better if it were placed in the porch or in the church. It is 5 feet 6 inches long, 10 inches wide, and 10 inches thick. A border on both sides contains dog-tooth ornaments. The cross head is too much worn to be deciphered, but the stem is a well-defined two-handed sword about 3 feet 5 inches long, with a cross piece 8 inches long. The sides of the slab are ornamented with foliage. The sword and foliage are in high relief, and it is interesting to note that some of the leaves closely resemble oak leaves.

Canon Bower in his account of this grave slab states : " this is said to be the tombstone of Sir Hugh de Morville, one of the assassins of Thomas á Beckett whose sword is now in the possession of Sir Wilfred Lawson of Brayton Hall." There is no direct evidence connecting the tombstone with the De Morville family, but as the character of the carving fixes its date as thirteenth century work, and as the De Morvills were the most important family in Aikton at that period, it is extremely likely that the tombstone is a memorial of a distinguished member of that family. The connection of Sir Hugh de Morvill, lord of the Barony of Burgh, with the murder of á Beckett is one of the errors which has crept into local histories and has often been disproved. At a meeting of the Royal Archæological Institute, held on December 4th, 1879, Chancellor Ferguson read a paper entitled " Observations on the supposed sword of Sir Hugh de Morvill," and at the said meeting Sir Wilfred Lawson exhibited the sword in question. In regard to the murder, Chancellor Ferguson writes as follows :—" The story is worth examination for it is connected with a gross and misleading error in the early history of Cumberland, which had its origin in the *Chronicon Cumbriæ*, a brief chronicle preserved in the Priory of Wetheral, and printed by Dugdale in his *Monasticon*." Mr. Hodgson Hinde, writing on the Early History of Cumberland in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. xvi., p. 234, and exposing the many inaccuracies of the *Chronicon Cumbriæ*, says :—

Another mistake is the identification of Hugh de Morville, Lord of the Barony of Burgh with his more notorious namesake, the murderer of Thomas á Beckett. Hugh was a common name in the De Morville family, as appears by various documents in which we meet with the name of Hugh de Morville, at dates and under circumstances which show that it could be neither of the above. Hugh de Morville of Burgh was the grandson of Simon de Morville, who was probably the brother and certainly the contemporary of Beckett's assassin. The former survived

to the reign of John; whereas the latter is stated by all the biographers of the saint to have died at Jerusalem, whither he had gone on a pilgrimage in expiation of his offence, and to have been buried in front of the temple within three years of the murder. He was lord of Westmorland, and of Knaresborough in Yorkshire at the same time that Burgh was possessed by Simon, the grandfather of his namesake.

This error was repeated by Camden and was augmented and amplified by John Denton of Cardew. Camden after his journey to Cumberland (1599) inserted into the *Britannia* the following passage:—

Kirk Oswald, consecrated to St. Oswald the possession in old time of *Sir Hugh Morvill* who with his Associates slew the Archbishop of Canterbury; and in memoriall of this fact, the sword which he then used was kept heere a long time (Philemon Holland's Translation).

Denton (1610), writing of the lords of the Barony of Burgh (Burgh on Sands) in Cumberland, says:—

After Wm. Engayne succeeded Sr Hugh Morvill (as son and heir of Ada sole daughter and heir of the said William). In the time of Hen. 2nd this Sr Hugh Morvill was in great possessions. In Cumberland he was Lord of Burgh barony Lassonby and Ishall; in Westmorland of Temple Sowerby, Hoflun, &c., and about Wharton he had diverse lands. The great mountain Hugh-Seat-Morvill was called after him. He was one of the four Knights who killed St. Thomas á Beckett Archbishop of Canterbury, after which deed he came to great misery. He gave therefore the rectory of Burgh to the Abbey of Holm Cultrum, which the Bishops of Carlisle, Bernard, Hugh and Walter did appropriate to the monks. The sword that killed St. Thomas was at Ishall in my father's time, and since remaineth with the house of Arundel. He was greatly hated of the churchmen of his time; therefore they wrote many things to his dishonour hardly to be credited which I omitt. After great repentance he died and left his two daughters his heirs, Johan wife of Richard Worun or Gerun [Gernon], and Ada wife first to Richard Lucy second to Thomas Multon and third to Wm. Lord Furnival.

Referring to the above extract, Chancellor Ferguson in an editorial footnote to Denton's history, says:—

This is a dreadful muddle : Denton confounds Sir Hugh Morvill of Burgh with the murderer of Thomas á Beckett, another Sir Hugh, great uncle probably to the first mentioned Sir Hugh.

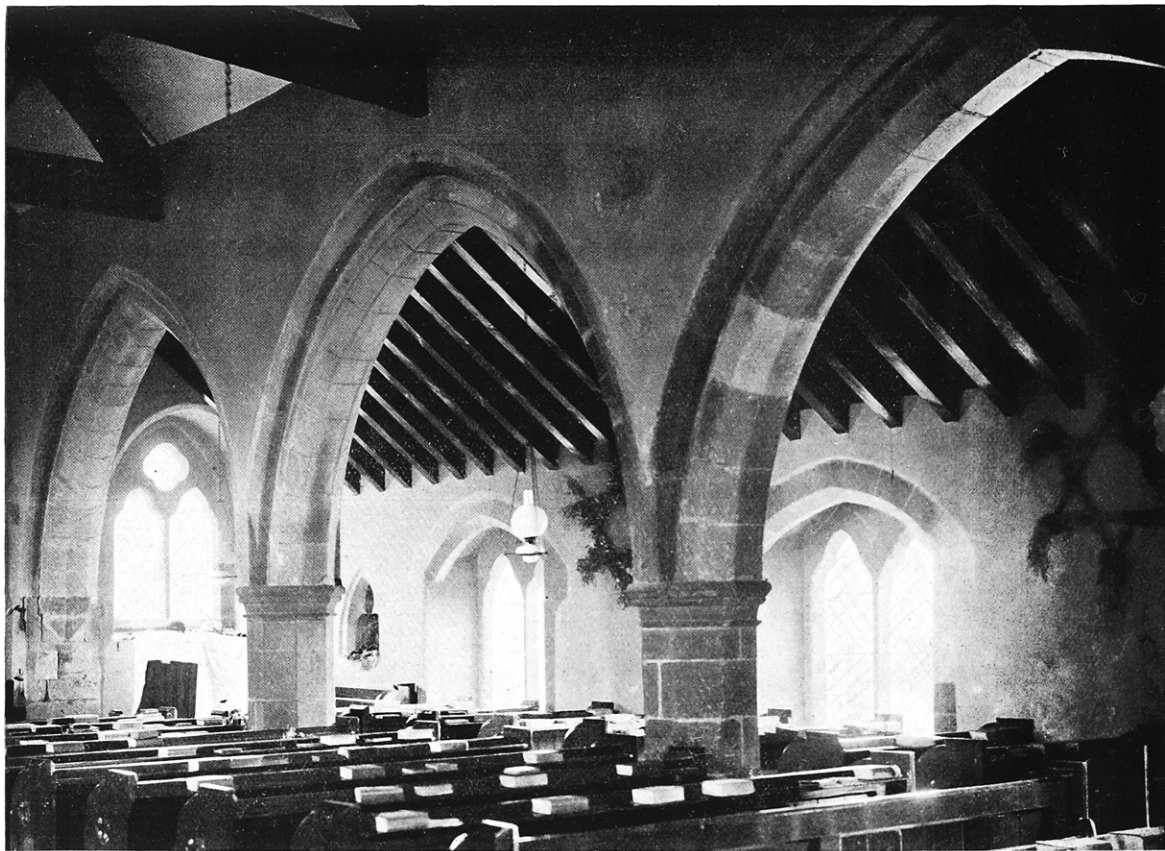
If we accept the evidence of Mr. Hodgson Hinde, and so far as I can find his conclusion as to the identity of the murderer of á Becket has not been disputed, Aikton is freed from the discredit of any connection with the murder of the famous Archbishop. A few words however may be said as to the sword, which Camden says was at one time kept at Kirkoswald, and Denton says his father saw at Ishall. It is very probable that as both these places in olden time belonged to Sir Hugh Morvill, Lord of Burgh, the sword referred to by both writers is the same sword and had been moved from one residence to the other. But what has now become of it? I have not been able to trace it. Denton says that it was at Ishall in his father's time and that it "since remaineth with the house of Arundell." It is curious that a sword with the same history should now be at Brayton, especially as Isel was the original seat of the Lawsons in Cumberland; but Chancellor Ferguson, who was present at the meeting when the Brayton sword was exhibited before the Royal Archæological Institute, said he did not think the Brayton sword came from Isel, but that it came from elsewhere, and that Denton had libelled the sword just as the *Chronicon Cumbriæ* libelled its owner. As regards the Brayton sword, it is described as a basket-hilted broad-sword, bearing the inscription "Gott bewahrt die aufrecht Schotten." The report of the exhibit says:—

This is no doubt a '45 broadsword,—not a claymore, which is distinctly a two handed weapon, and the German inscription may be partly accounted for by the fact that there were many Jacobites in Austrian regiments at the time of the Rebellion; to one of these officers it may have belonged.

Chancellor Ferguson suggests that the broadsword was very likely left in Carlisle Cathedral by some of the Highlanders who were imprisoned there in December, 1745, and considers that it is probably not much earlier in date. Dean Stanley who saw the sword at Brayton told the late Sir Wilfrid Lawson that he considered the story about the sword being the sword of á Beckett's murderer was all nonsense.

Church Restorations.—A few words may be allowed as to the restorations which have been effected, based partly on the evidence of the fabric itself and partly on historical documents. Whellan writing in 1860 says that "about a century ago the church was considerably enlarged by the addition of a south aisle in the perpendicular style." But that style of architecture was not common in the eighteenth century. Nicolson and Burn (in their History, published in 1777) make no mention of the addition of the aisle. The arches separating the aisle from the nave are very beautiful examples of thirteenth century work, and I am of opinion that the aisle was originally added as a de Morvill chapel. The fact that a piscina has been placed at the east end of the south wall strengthens the belief that this part of the church was an added chapel.

I have already referred to the restoration of 1732 when the east and west windows and the priest's door into the chancel were inserted. Probably more was done at that time, as Bishop Nicolson, in 1703, urges the rector that something should be done to the Quire as the roof is little better than that of his neighbour at Kirkbride, and the pavement though good "lyes disjointed, and shews it has a heedless owner." Among copies of other documents in my possession I have one relating to a restoration which took place in the later years of the eighteenth century (the original deed is in the rector's safe). The deed bears date 28th February, 1791, and is



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SOUTH AISLE, SHOWING PISCINA, AIKTON CHURCH.

Phot. by C. F. Martindale.

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signed by Robert Hodgson and Isaac Westmorland of Wigton, the witnesses being Joseph Jefferson and William Parkin, all well-known Wigton names. It is of interest as showing the manner in which the expenses of the restoration were met and in giving the names of parishioners, landowners and other residents in the parish at that date. It commences as follows :—

Whereas it has lately been found necessary and expedient by the parishioners of the parish of Aikton in the County of Cumberland to repair the parish Church of the said parish and to erect new pews and seats therein for the better accommodation of the said parishioners to attend divine service, and at several vestry meetings therein held it was agreed that the expense of all the repairs and the erection of such new pews, or seats therein should be defrayed and born by collections according to the ancient purvey rate each of them respectively pay towards the public levies of the said parish.

The rate which each person is rated to the purvey is set out in the deed and ranges from 1s. 4d. to one quarter farthing. The arbitrators

Order allott and sett out to each and every parishioner, proprietor, landowner of messuages, tenement, land, or parcel of land that are rated to the purvey to the assessment for the repairing of the said parish church their several pews seats or divisions according to their adjudged values, and in proportion to the rate each person is rated to the purvey aforesaid.

The first award is in favour of Sir John Briscoe, Baronet, of Crofton Place, to whom is allotted one double pew or seat number 36 for ninepence purvey, one single pew number 31 for six pence purvey, and also a share in the single pew number 17 in proportion to one penny purvey, the whole single pew being valued at the rate of sixpence, which altogether makes up his proportion for one shilling and four pence to the purvey. Among others to whom pews or seats are allotted are John Smith of Gamblesby, Reverend William Hodgson of Aspatria for his estate of

Down Hall, and his estates at Biglands and Aikton, Joseph Hodgson, John Wilson, William Pearson, John Mathew, Joseph Hewson, John Sheppard, Thomas Branson, James Edgar, Francis Nicholson, John Dand, William Rook. Edward Knubley, John Hayston, Jonathan Pearson, John Reed, Isaac Mandell, Thomas Wilson, John Furnas, William Stoddart, Joseph Willan, William Skelton, John Barnes of Roblaw, Daniel Sibson, William Barnes, Thomas Twentyman, Thomas Bulman, Joseph Todd, John Barnes of Wiggonby, Margaret Reed, Williamson James, Margaret Hodgson, Samuel Brook, the Earl of Lonsdale for Gamblesby Mill, John Hayston senior of Biglands, John Stoddart, John Manduel, John Hewson, George Williamson, John Lawson, Thomas Backhouse of Whittrigg, John Atkinson of Gamblesby, and John Lawson of Bowness, Sir Gilford Lawson for Windy Hall, and George Rickerby of Wiggonby, Christopher Henderson and John Furnas Quaker, Thomas Hetherton and John Robinson, John Hayston junior of Biglands, and John Fell, Joseph Cowen, John Cowen, Christopher Borrowdale. The deed concludes by stating that taking into consideration the greater convenience that would arise to those who have small purveys as their several and district shares would be quite insufficient to accommodate them when desirous to attend Divine service, and in order to prevent the exclusion of those who may be well disposed to join in Christian worship the arbitrators ordered that seven pews or seats should be used promiscuously by those having small purvey rates. The value of these seven seats is assessed at one shilling and ten pence, and the following are the purvey rates of different proprietors entitled to use the said seats, viz., one penny halfpenny, one penny farthing, one penny, three farthings, three farthings and one half farthing, one penny, one half penny and one Bodle, one half penny and one half farthing, one half penny, one

farthing and one half farthing, one farthing, one Bodle,* one half farthing, and one quarter farthing.

The last restoration took place in 1869 and it was one of the first acts of Bishop Goodwin's episcopacy to re-open the church after its restoration. This took place on January 6th, 1870. The state of the church when the faculty was obtained showed the great need of the work being undertaken. The flat plastered ceiling of the nave was only 13 feet from the floor: the floor was flagged only and very damp; the pews were unsightly and much decayed; the south aisle was fitted up with low forms or skemmels on which the Sunday school children sat; the pulpit, a three-decker, stood in the middle of the nave; and the pillars of the arches were white-washed. The restoration, initiated by the Rector, the Rev. Canon Hodgson, father of our President, was thoroughly carried out. The north wall and the wall of the south aisle were rebuilt (the latter had been built partly of clay and cobbles and was in a dangerous condition); the plaster ceiling was removed and the original wooden beams exposed; the pillars and arches had their white-wash removed; the pews were replaced with good open benches on a wooden floor, and similar benches were placed in the aisle; the passages of the nave were reflagged; the chancel was laid with encaustic tiles; new lancet windows were inserted, and a new roof was put over the aisle. The pulpit, reading desk, communion table, and chairs were also new.

The Churchyard.—There is only one gravestone in the churchyard which has the appearance of any age. It is a grave slab of red sandstone and is much perished. It is 6 feet 7 inches long and 6 inches thick with bevelled edges. It bears on its face indistinct traces of a floriated

* Bodle said to have been derived from the name of a mint-master named Bothwell. A Scotch copper coin first issued under Charles II., and worth at that time 2d. Scotch, or one-sixth of an English penny.—Century Dictionary.

cross. There are, however, several uninscribed heavy grave slabs in the churchyard. In my early days which were spent in the parish there was a prevalent belief that the churchyard was frequented by the "resurrection men." The traffic in dead bodies before the passing of the Anatomy Act in 1832 was notorious. Not only were graves rifled but, as the revelations at the trial of Burke and Hare in 1828 conclusively proved, many persons were murdered and their bodies sold to the teachers of anatomy. I well remember the warnings which we used to receive as children not to be out after dark in the winter evenings, as we ran the risk of being seized, and having "pitch plasters" put over our mouths which would soon stifle our cries and speedily end our lives; and then we would be trussed up with ropes, put into sacks, and whisked off to Edinburgh. Owing to the close watch kept in graveyards in the neighbourhood of large towns, Dr. Lonsdale, in his life of Knox the Anatomist, says, in speaking of these resurrection men, that "these outlawed caterers for science were forced to make raids across the Border, and even to take ship to Ireland" in order to meet the requirements of their horrible and gruesome calling. Happily the passing of the Anatomy Act put an end to their trade, but the memory of its horrors still lingers in this as well as some other parishes in this county.*

* Mr. T. H. Hodgson, F.S.A., writes to me the following interesting note referring to this matter:—"Aikton churchyard must have been an ideal place for 'resurrectionists' to work in. I remember that it was often found that in old graves heavy flags had been placed over the coffins, evidently for protection. Mrs. Hasell told me in 1903 that an old resident named Barnfather, who I understood to be then living, related that when he was a boy he and another lad early one morning saw a very tall and powerful man come out of the churchyard carrying a corpse on his back by the legs tied over his shoulders. The boys hid themselves, being afraid of being murdered if seen. My own early recollections entirely agree with yours—our old nurse used to caution us almost in the words which you use. She always thought that her own husband, who disappeared, had been made away with in that way."