

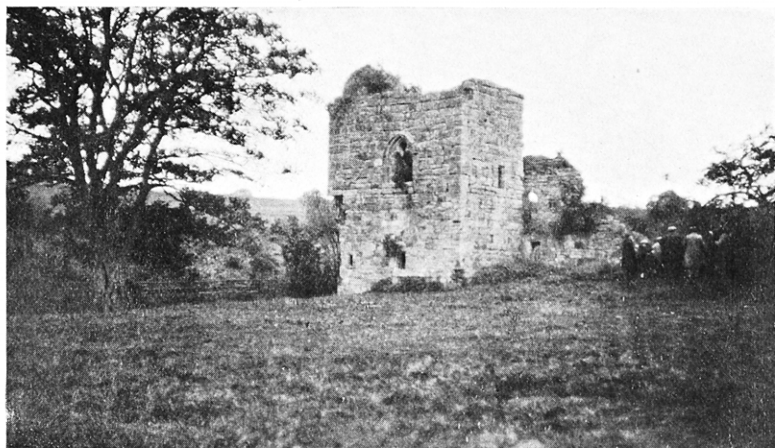
ART. XIII.—*Bewley Castle.* By the Rev. T. A. CAR-MICHAEL.

*Read at the site, September 17th, 1926.*

IN the parish of Bolton (in the direction of Colby), on the west of the River Eden and opposite the village of Crackenthorpe, may be seen the interesting ruins of Bewley Castle. They are at least half a mile away from the Eden, and stand on the bank of a small beck which runs into that river. They are the ruins of what was an episcopal residence as far back as the thirteenth century, though there is no early evidence to justify the name of "Castle."

Furnished with a chapel, where ordinations were sometimes conducted in the fourteenth century, Bewley Castle proved a convenient refuge for the bishops of Carlisle during the time of the Scottish incursions, and various confirmations of charters relating to the episcopal estates and other documents were dated from there. Bishop Strickland restored the buildings in 1402, including the chapel and the lord's chamber, which were re-roofed. In the latter part of the fifteenth century the manor was held by the family of Machell, and in the seventeenth century by the Musgraves of Edenhall. The old leases from 1678 to 1781 are in the office of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in whom the estates of the Bishop of Carlisle became vested in 1856, and by whom the castle ruins, together with some 219 acres of adjoining land, were sold in 1857.

These ancient ruins are owned to-day by Mr. John Atkinson, occupier and owner of the adjacent farmhouse. I should like to see them effectively railed round, and declared an "ancient monument," for I regret to learn



BEWLEY CASTLE.

*Photo. by Mr. W. L. Fletcher.*

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that a considerable quantity of stone has been removed for building a neighbouring farmhouse (the one by the roadside). These ruins consist of a long range lying north and south, and are traceable to a distance of 80 feet, with a transverse block or wing, 45 feet in length, at the south end. The main portion is about 28 feet wide and has pointed-arch doorways, but only fragments of the walls and two vaulted cellars now remain. The walls of the other portion, now extant, are two storeys in height, and retain on the east side a decorated window (probably belonging to the chapel) and on the south side a trefoil-headed window with stone seats.

The original name of the manor was "Fithnenin," and this tract of land was bestowed under that name to the Church in this diocese by Ucthred of Bolton, with the consent of Adam, his heir, in the middle of the twelfth century, while the bishopric was vacant (date of Charter 1175). In 1290, King Edward I conceded to Ralph de Ireton (8th bishop of Carlisle) the right of free warren "in all the demesne lands at his manor of Fytenenyn in the county of Westmorland." John de Halton (9th bishop of Carlisle) was summoned in 1292 to declare by what warrant he claimed free warren, gallows, goods of felons, and other feudal privileges "in his manor of Fytnenyn," but as the bishop pleaded the king's charter mentioned above, his claim to warren was sustained, though his claim to the other privileges was disallowed. In 1294 the same king granted to Bishop Halton all the other privileges.

In the accounts of the custodians of the temporalities after the death of Bishop Ireton (1292), this estate is scheduled as "Bellus Locus." After 1300, the name, "Fithnenin," disappears and "Bellus Locus" or "Beaulieu" comes on the scene. This last was gradually corrupted into "Bewley." In documents recording the transactions of the bishops with the king and his courts

the name "Fithnenin" would of course continue as the name of the manor, because the lawyers would have nothing to do with fanciful names (such as "Bellus Locus") applied by bishops to their possessions.

To seek the origin of the name "Beaulieu," we must travel 1000 miles from the valley of the Eden, and go back in time more than 1000 years. In 855 Rodulfe, Archbishop of Bourges, founded an abbey in an obscure village of Limousin in France called Vellinus. And from the beauty of its situation he gave it the name of "Bellus Locus" (=fair place), from which was ultimately derived the modern "Beaulieu." This abbey, after being magnificently endowed by its founder and others, and receiving various benefits and privileges, had attained by the end of the tenth century a remarkable degree of prosperity, and acquired an extended reputation and influence.

The name "Bellus Locus" was specially favoured by the Benedictines, and afterwards by the Cistercians, but in course of time it was adopted by other religious orders. Various religious foundations bearing this name existed in different parts of England and France. For instance, in 1204, the abbey of Bellus Locus Regis (Beaulieu) was founded by King John in the New Forest in Hampshire, and was placed under the rule of the Cistercians. About the year 1264, the prior of the Benedictine convent of Durham gave the name of "Beaulieu" to the manor-house of the convent in the parish of Billingham in Durham. There was a priory of Beaulieu in the diocese of Lincoln in 1349, and another priory of the same name in the county of Inverness in 1411.

So this name was not in every case given to the situation as a lovely place; it was often adopted through its association with great religious houses and influential monastic orders. In some cases it was attached to a manor or manor-house belonging to a religious foundation.

Beaulieu in Worcestershire, within which the town now known as "Bewdley" stands, was at one time a manor belonging to the Benedictine priory of St. Mary's, Worcester.

There are circumstances that suggest that Bewley Castle was built during the episcopate of Hugh, 3rd bishop of Carlisle, who was consecrated on January 24th, 1218. He was formerly abbot of the monastery of Bellus Locus Regis (Beaulieu) in the New Forest in Hampshire. He died in 1223.

We may then reasonably conclude that "Bellus Locus" (or "Beaulieu") became the name of the first official residence of the bishops of Carlisle, because it was hallowed by its connexion with the Cistercian and Augustinian Orders, and was specially endeared to Bishop Hugh from former associations.

Ultimately "Beaulieu" became changed to "Bewley," and in the Ecclesiastical Survey of King Henry VIII (1535 A.D.) the lands attached to Bewley Castle appear amongst the temporalities of the See of Carlisle as "manerium de Bewlyeu." In the eighteenth century, Bishop Douglas raised £381 from timber sold from the demesne lands of Bewley, towards the cost of repairs to Rose Castle.

A mistaken notion as to the derivation of the name "Bewley Castle"—for which Sir Daniel Fleming seems responsible—has led several writers to spell the name "Builly" or "Buley." The county histories connect it with John de Builly, whose daughter, Idonea, was married, in the reign of King John, to Robert de Veteriponte. But the statement that Bewley Castle had belonged to John de Builly is a mere guess, without a shadow of foundation. As a matter of fact, this man was a well-known Yorkshire baron, and had no property in either Westmorland or Cumberland; nor is there any evidence to show that the manor of Bewley was ever in the possession

of Robert de Veteriponte. The manor belonged to the Church in this diocese long before Robert's day—in fact, before 1175. Chancellor Ferguson accepted the “Buley” legend; but it has been left to the late Canon James Wilson (Vicar of Dalston, Carlisle) to bring to light the interpretation herein adopted.