

PROCEEDINGS, 1946.

THE SPRING MEETING of the Society was held in the Town Hall, Kendal, on Tuesday, March 26th. There was a good attendance. Routine business was transacted and the fourteen papers printed in N.S. xlv which had not previously been read (i.e. all articles therein but Nos. XIII and XIV) were reported. At the Council meeting earlier in the day it was decided to overprint copies of the Index of Subjects and Authors in *Transactions* New Series i-xlv and the thanks of the Council expressed to Dr. and Mrs. Spence for undertaking this valuable work. It was decided to recommend that the Society finance a survey of Brough Castle and Church by Dr. W. Douglas Simpson, his report to be printed in *Transactions* and overprints of it ordered; this proposal was later approved at the General Meeting.

The SUMMER MEETING was held in the North Lonsdale area on June 18th and 19th, with the Grange Hotel, Grange-over-Sands as headquarters, 119 tickets were taken. The first place to be visited was WRAYSHOLME TOWER, near Allithwaite, where the Speaker was Dr. J. E. Spence.

In 1150 the manor of Allithwaite was held by Gospatrick, Lord of Workington. Thomas, his grandson gave part of the manor to Thomas the younger son of Robert de Harrington of Gleaston about 1200, and at the end of the 13th century Alan de Copeland granted the whole manor to Robert de Harrington. In 1350 it was in the possession of Thomas de Harrington, in 1375 his son John was in possession of it. For the next 100 years the history of the manor is uncertain but it was probably during this period that the tower was built. In 1489 the main part of the manor was in the King's hands and was granted by him to George, Lord Strange. In 1521 it is recorded that the second Earl of Derby held the manor and it remained with the Earls of Derby until 1594 when it was sold to the Dicconsons, who had previously been tenants. Hugh Dicconson had taken up arms against the Parliament and his estate was sequestered but he was allowed to compound for it for the sum of £124. 10s. in 1649. It probably remained in the hands of the Dicconson family until it was sold in 1756 when the tower was purchased by John Carter.

Wraysholme Tower is one of the smaller border strongholds erected in the 14th and 15th centuries as a protection during border raids. Fire was the chief weapon of the raiders and the timber houses of the smaller land owners were constantly destroyed. The necessity of a fire resisting building capable of defence against a raid led to the construction of more defensible stone buildings, and the rectangular keep of the Norman castle was adopted as a model to such an extent that many of the remains of pele farmsteads on the border have as a core the ancient halls and tower round which the rest of buildings have been constructed.

For defence against raids the towers depended mainly on their massive construction but it is probable that they were always surrounded by a wooden palisade from which the word pele is derived. In some cases such as Burneside, Middleton and Wharton this palisade has been replaced by a stone wall with a defended gateway. The towers built in the 14th century usually had a vaulted basement, an additional safeguard against fire, and two or three storeys above; but in the case of Wraysholme, which was built during the 15th century, a wooden floor takes the place of the vaulting to the basement. Entrance to the towers was usually by a narrow door in one corner, which opened on to a passage through the thickness of the wall leading to the basement. Leading off one side of this passage was a narrow door giving access to a circular stair built in the thickness of the wall which led, in some cases, to the first floor and in others to the parapet wall with doors leading to each floor. A narrow stair such as this leading from the narrow passage way could be easily defended by one man. The entrance to the passage was protected by a stout door of heavy oak planks. Such a door however was not proof against fire and many were reinforced by iron grills built in between the layers of planking which would afford protection even though the woodwork was destroyed by fire. In 1605 James I directed that "all iron gates in houses on the borders be removed and turned into plough irons and other necessary work." A few towers have preserved the iron grills and they can be seen at Naworth, Brough tower and Great Salkeld church tower.

The basements of the towers were lighted by small loops and were probably used mainly for storage. The main hall or solar which was on the first floor was better lighted and in this instance this floor had two square headed double light windows with trefoil cusps and on the east wall there is a fire-place with a flat

arch. The floor above contained the more private apartment. Above the floor was the roof surrounded by a parapet walk projecting from the face of the tower on corbels and at each corner there was originally a small turret. At the south-west angle there is a projecting garderobe turret 7 feet square, the foundations of which have settled, causing a wide break in the masonry.

There are no traces of any later medieval extensions to the building but it is thought that there was probably a later hall where the present farmhouse (erected in 1848), now stands. (V.C.H. Lancs., viii, 266-7; Curwen, *Castles and Towers*).

The party then moved to CARTMEL PRIORY CHURCH which was described by Mr. J. C. Dickinson. There was probably a seventh century church at Kirkhead, near Allithwaite, which was replaced before the Conquest by a building on the site of the present priory church. But none of the existing remains pre-date the priory of Augustinian canons which was founded here about 1189-90 by William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke. The cloister buildings have completely disappeared but the church survived the Reformation almost unscathed. The eastern limb, transepts and crossing belong to the original church built c. 1190-c. 1220 except for the south choir aisle, almost all the windows and the clerestory. The Town Choir was rebuilt c. 1340, perhaps through the initiative of Lord John Harrington whose magnificent but sadly battered tomb remains in the north wall of the chapel. In the last years of the fourteenth century the priory was evidently in considerable need of repair, and between c. 1395 and c. 1420 an extensive restoration seems to have been undertaken beginning at the east end of the church. To this age belong the great east window, the clerestory, the nave and the curious diagonal belfry tower. At the same time the cloisters which had hitherto lain in the normal position on the south side of the church, were rebuilt on the north side, perhaps to leave the south aisles free for the parishioners whose chapel was in the south choir aisle. The church survived the Dissolution of the Monasteries though the choir seems to have suffered some damage. It underwent an interesting restoration in the early seventeenth century, of which notable evidences remain, especially the magnificent screens added to the medieval choir stalls. The Victorian restoration was less devastating than might be supposed, though much of interest was lost.

Of the furniture of the church, the Harrington tomb (c. 1340) the medieval stalls (c. 1440) and the screens (c. 1620) are especially

notable. Some fourteenth century stained glass remains in the Town Choir and a little of the fifteenth century in the Choir and north choir aisle. [See N.S. xlv Art. 5, V.C.H. Lancs. ii, 143-8 and viii, 254ff, also J. C. Dickinson, *A New Guide to Cartmel Priory Church*].

The GATEHOUSE of CARTMEL PRIORY was then visited, being described by Mr. Dickinson. He noted that it had recently been presented to the National Trust by Major R. O'Neill Pearson and his brothers. The present building belongs to the second quarter of the fourteenth century and is in good condition, though its battlemented roof and turret were removed after the Reformation. The priory grounds lay to the north and were entered through a single archway, on the east side of which was a vice giving access to the upper floors. The first floor was the Court room of the manor and had evidently a loft above it. The living rooms were on the west side and could be entered from the ground floor or by a mural stair on the north side of the courtroom.

The gatehouse was bought as a school in 1624 (when the church—where scholars had previously been taught—was being restored) and served this purpose until the erection of the Old Grammar School in 1790. Later it fell on evil days, from which it was rescued by our late member, Mr. R. O'Neill Pearson by whose care it was restored to its present sound state in 1920-2.

To the south of the gatehouse is the ancient market place. The base of the old cross and the fishstones still remain as does a short colonnade which perhaps belongs to the early 18th century. The history of a market at Cartmel is obscure, but Sir William Lowther secured a charter for one in 1730-1.

After returning to Grange-over-Sands for lunch, the party re-assembled at LOW LEVENS HALL where the speaker was the President, Lt.-Col. O. H. North, D.S.O., F.S.A. Low Levens was held in 1188 by Ketel son of Uchtred, but its later history is obscure till the opening of the sixteenth century when it is found in the possession of Thomas Preston, in whose family it remained until about 1694 when it was conveyed to Edward Wilson of Dallam Tower to which estate it has since belonged. The buildings which remain are impressive and picturesque and have been described at length in N.S. iv, 235ff. and in Westmorland (Anct. Mon. Comm.), 155-6. The central block with the fine hall, larder and parlour belong to the early sixteenth century, the north wing was added in the middle of the sixteenth century and altered a little later. The staircase is c. 1700. The ruined southern wing is now thought to be Tudor.

The next place to be visited was LEVENS HALL where members were welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. O. R. Bagot. The house was described by Mr. Bagot. The manor of Levens was given by the second William de Lancaster to his seneschal Norman de Redman a little before 1184. The latter's son granted Low Levens to Ketel, the English owner of the vill. Levens remained in the Redman family until 1562 when it passed to Alan Bellingham, one of whose descendants sold it a century later to Colonel James Graham, Privy Purse to James II. A little later it passed by marriage to Henry Howard, Earl of Berkshire.

The splendour of the hall and its gardens have made Levens one of the celebrated houses of northern England. Some traces of a fortified fourteenth century house remain, notably in the drawing room wing, but the house was largely rebuilt in late Elizabethan times, the hall with its plaster friezes and ceiling being specially noteworthy. The south and east wings of the courtyard were added about 1703, linking up the main block with Elizabethan brewhouse on the south-west. The Howard tower is early 19th century. Space does not permit any adequate account of the present remains and its superb furniture which, together with fascinating heirlooms, were then inspected by the large gathering. [See J. F. Curwen, *Hist. descrip. of Levens Hall*; *Records of Kendale*, ii, 113ff; these *Trans.* N.S. iii, 272ff].

In thanking the speaker for his illuminating talk the President expressed the Society's very deep appreciation of Mr. and Mrs. Bagot's great kindness in opening their house so freely to so large a gathering at a time when post-war conditions created so many difficulties.

The following morning, coaches left Grange-over-Sands for HEVERSHAM CHURCH, where the Society were welcomed by the vicar, the Rev. W. A. Cleghorn who described the church. Heversham is known to have been the site of a monastery in late Anglo-Saxon times and to this period belongs the very fine 8th century cross-shaft now preserved in the porch. The earliest part of the present fabric is part of the south arcade which dates from the late twelfth century. The south aisle is 14th century, the rest (apart from the Victorian tower) mostly much restored Perpendicular work. The north chapel is perhaps early Tudor. The church underwent a very drastic restoration in 1868-9 and suffered from a serious fire in 1601 which have much detracted from its interest. The most notable of its furnishings is the grand fifteenth century chest now in the vestry, but the screens of the Bellingham chapel (1605) are worthy of note. The 14th century

sedilia is not in its original position and was perhaps moved after the Reformation. The old Church plate and registers were displayed. After the President had thanked the Vicar and Churchwardens, the party moved to

BEETHAM HALL where Mr. J. C. Dickinson was the speaker. The manor of Beetham is found in the possession of one Ralph de Beetham, c. 1195, and remained in his family until the late fifteenth century when it passed to the Middleton family and soon after to the Earls of Derby. In 1815 it became part of the Dallam Tower estate. The de Beethams were of considerable local importance. Their first residence was probably on an unknown site in Arnside but was certainly moved to its present position by the middle of the thirteenth century. The existing remains constitute the major part of an important fortified hall of the second half of the fourteenth century. The original hall and the domestic wing adjoining it on the north and including the chapel, remain to roof level and retain various easily identifiable signs of their original purpose. The kitchen wing on the east has largely gone. Some fine remains of the original curtain wall can still be seen. The hall was perhaps dismantled in the Civil Wars and the adjoining farm house built soon after. [*Records of Kendale*, ii, 211ff; these *Trans. N.S.* iv, 225ff; Westmorland (A.M.C.), 40-1.]

The party next visited the ROMAN FORT at BURROW, near Kirkby Lonsdale. Mr. E. B. Birley, M.A., F.S.A., discussed the scanty evidence concerning this intriguing but grossly neglected site in a paper printed above (Art. VI). TUNSTALL CHURCH was then inspected under the guidance of the Vicar, Rev. R. Lees. The church is known to have existed in the time of the Domesday Survey. The present structure seems to have been almost totally rebuilt in the fifteenth century, perhaps c. 1415, though some earlier fragments remain. The east window contains very fine glass of c. 1500 brought from Flanders by Major Toulmin North in 1850. A badly preserved medieval effigy believed to be one of the Tunstall family still survives. Tunstall church is famous through its connection with Charlotte Bronte. She attended it when at school at Cowan Bridge which appears in *Jane Eyre* as Lowood school [V.C.H. Lanc., viii, 226-30].

After lunch in Kirkby Lonsdale, members met at PRESTON PATRICK HALL visited by kind permission of Mr. K. R. Pumphrey. This little known but impressive specimen of late medieval domestic architecture was described by Mr. J. Charlton, M.A., F.S.A., who introduced his remarks by a valuable sketch of

the developement of the house in northern England during the later middle Ages. It is hoped to print Mr. Charlton's paper in full in the next volume of our *Transactions*.

Preston Patrick Hall is, in a sense, a 'text-book example' of the northern medieval house. In essence it is not a peculiarly northern type; its plan and main features can be paralleled in the south at an earlier date; but it marks the emergence in the more troubled north of the house (as opposed to castle) type of residence. Moreover, it is remarkably little altered, apart from the heightening of the central hall-block and the insertion of an upper floor there, since its erection about the end of the 14th century.

The manor-house consisted of a hall, running east and west, flanked at either end by cross-wings, the west one (the 'solar') used by the lord of the manor and his family, the east wing containing the domestic offices. In the late 17th or the 18th century the hall was heightened and divided into two floors. It retains unaltered, however, the original doorways to the pantry buttery and kitchen passage, while a heavy, slightly cambered ceiling-beam may represent one of the tie-beams of the old hall roof. There are also, externally, some traces, in the south wall, of the opening of the original hall doorway, near the projection of the east cross-wing, while the south-west angle of the latter retains some indications of the former hall porch.

The west wing, is somewhat modified internally, but has still its main windows to north and south. The north window is particularly interesting as retaining its stone window-seats and the arrangements for shutters.

Another rare survival is the late 14th-century fire-place in one of the upper floor rooms. A small wing projecting to the west is probably also medieval in origin. It is presumably an extension of the 'private apartments,' but it is conceivable that it may have been a chapel.

The east wing was entered on the ground floor by the three 'screens' doorways to the domestic offices and has a ceiling of rubble barrel-vaults. The upper floor was reached, through a doorway in the same wall as the 'screens' doorways, by a circular stair. The upper floor room is known as 'the Court Room,' though there is no evidence that it was used as such, and has a fine open timber roof, about a century later than the original building.

There is no trace of the original kitchen, but it stood probably a little detached from the east wing, to which it was doubtless

connected, by some kind of pentice or covered way, to the east end of the through-passage from the 'screens,' This is not an uncommon arrangement—there is a probable parallel not far away at Burneside Hall. It is not unlikely that in cases of this type the kitchen was of wood, though at the fortified hall at Askham there is some medieval walling, beyond the 'screens' wing, which might be part of an original stone kitchen. We are much indebted to our members Mr. and Mrs. Pumphrey, the present owners and occupiers, for allowing us to inspect the Hall.

This concluded an extremely enjoyable excursion of pre-war dimensions and the President voiced the Society's thanks to the new Excursions Secretary, Dr. J. E. Spence for his untiring efforts which had made it so successful. The local Committee consisted of Lt.-Col. O. N. North, D.S.O., F.S.A., Mr. H. Hornyold-Strickland, F.S.A., Mr. R. E. Porter, M.C., F.S.A., Mr. J. C. Dickinson, M.A., B.Litt., F.R.Hist.S., and Mr. J. E. Spence, M.B., F.S.A.