

ART. XXXII.—*The Milburns of Talkin.* By the REV. H. WHITEHEAD, M.A., Vicar of Brampton.

*Communicated at Brampton Old Church, August 28th, 1879.*

TALKIN is a township of the parish of Hayton. But it appears, from examination of the Hayton and Brampton registers, the former of which begins at 1620, and the latter at 1663, that in the seventeenth century it was the rule for Talkin people to be buried at Brampton, and the exception for any of them to be buried at Hayton. The Talkin tradition on the subject is that the forest which formerly existed between Talkin and Hayton was infested with wolves, which funeral cavalcades from Talkin did not care to encounter. Of course, though wolves may have survived in Cumberland later than in some other parts of England, they had disappeared long before the seventeenth century. Yet I would not on that account say that the practice of burying the Talkin dead at Brampton has not come down from a time coeval with wolves in England. The forest, at that time, let alone the wolves, must have been well nigh impassable for cavalcades of any kind. In the seventeenth century it was in the same condition, *e.g.*, “March 22, 1625, Hewing a way for the coach beyond Gelt bridg ijs iiijd”<sup>\*</sup> The Gelt itself must have been no slight obstacle before the erection of the present bridge, which Mr. Cory thinks, from its appearance, was built about the middle of the last century; and if I may hazard an opinion as to the exact date, I would fix it at 1763, because the last burial at Brampton from Talkin was in May of that year.

From the beginning of the eighteenth century, however,

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<sup>\*</sup> Lord William Howard's Housebook, edited by Rev. G. Ornsby for the Surtees Society, p. 228.

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down to that year, 1763, more of the Talkin folk were buried at Hayton than in the previous century, in which, indeed, only two persons from Talkin had been buried at Hayton. The older Talkin families adhered the latest to Brampton as their burying-place. Thus, of twenty-seven Talkin persons recorded as having been buried at Hayton, from 1620 to 1763, only one was a Milburn; whereas, of eighty-seven persons from Talkin buried at Brampton, from 1663 to 1763, as many as forty-six were Milburns. The Milburns, who perhaps derived their name from a stream in Talkin, still called the Mill Beck, seem to have formerly outnumbered all the other inhabitants of the township. The name appears as far back as 1224, in which year the vicar of Irthington was William de Meleburn. In an Inquisition, taken in the thirty-first year of the reign of Elizabeth (1589), is this item:—"The late Lord Dacres and his ancestors have used to allow for a schoolemaster to teach a grammar school in the towne of Brampton the yearly stipend of £6 13s. 4d., the which hath ever since been continued and allowed, and one Jeffery Milnebourne is now the schoolemaster." In the seventeenth century the name "Milborn" was prevalent in Brampton, and several times occurs among the churchwardens. A Jeffery Milborn was churchwarden in 1673. Jefferey is not a common name in the register, and seems to stamp the churchwarden as a descendant of the schoolmaster. It also seems to connect at least some of the Milburns of Brampton with their namesakes at the Howe in Hayton, at Greenwell, which is close to Talkin, and at Talkin itself, at which three places the registers show there were Jeffery Milburns in the seventeenth century. The early Hayton register teems with Milburns of the Howe, some of them having a Christian name, Randal, also suggestive of relationship to the Milburns of Talkin. One Randal Milburn, of the Howe, is indebted for the preservation of his name, and for a brief memoir, to Lord W. Howard,

Howard, who in a report made in pursuance of a Royal Commission, entitled "A Brief Survey and Certificate of Disordered Persons in Cumberland," dated April 30th, 1618, mentioned "Randall Milburn, of the Howe in Haiton, outlawed of murther, banished into Ireland, and after returned, by what warrant we knowe not." Murder in those days did not necessarily imply all that is understood by it now. It might often have been nothing more than the untoward result of a free fight, and such we may reasonably infer it to have been on the part of Randal Milburn, as his lordship continued—"Hee liveth in a quiete fashion with his neighbours, and noe fault found with him, nor any waie suspected now to be of badd behavior." A Talkin namesake and contemporary of Randal Milburn of the Howe appears to have been a useful man to Lord William Howard:—"Tawlkin, June 14, 1612: Rec. of Randy Milburn, bayly there, as parcell of the yssues of his office, vli." He collected rents and tithes for his lordship: he bought hops for him, "D. hundred hops xxvijs;"; he bought him "suger;"; he sold him a kid, "an other kid, vjd;"; he received for him " $\frac{1}{4}$  of oligants,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of pennes,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of refined currants,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of midling currants." He had a son who fetched and carried for Lord William: "Randy Milburn's boy, xijd;"; "R. Milburn's boy, bringing a glass of rose water from Carlyle, vjd." The duties of a bailiff in those days would seem to have been of a miscellaneous character. Lord William had a number of such officers, apparently one in each parish, probably a farmer, who in his own neighbourhood was a sort of factotum for his lordship, under the superintendence of the house steward at the castle, whose name in 1618 was Widmerpoole. That Randal Milburn was a farmer is likely from the fact of his residing at Netherton. In 1623, he was probably dead, as the bailiff in that year was Robert Milburn, and the farmer at Netherton was Thomas Milburn, who held the farm with two other persons, Andrew and Henry Hodgson,

son, the three collectively paying a rent of £20 a year. In 1633, the Hodgsons had left Netherton, and Thomas, George, and Randal Milburn were paying £20 a year for Netherton and Tarne End. A later glimpse of the Milburns of Netherton is afforded by the Brampton register: — “Bartholimew Milborn of Netherton buread ye 26 Jan. 1681.” Other traces of them may perhaps be found in the Hayton register; \* for though it was formerly the rule for Talkin people to be buried at Brampton, they seem to have invariably resorted to their parish church for baptism. The only Talkin child registered as having been baptised at Brampton was “John, son of Thos. Milburn of ye Ashe, July 3, 1722.” The Ash was formerly the name of the land adjacent to the present parsonage. Tarne End has been mentioned as occupied by a Thomas Milburn in 1633, and the Brampton register shows that there was still a Thomas Milburn there in 1723.

But Tarne End, The Ash, and Netherton do not exhaust the list of farms in or near Talkin held in the seventeenth century by members of the Milburn clan. There is in the Brampton register frequent mention of Milburns at the Hillhouse in Talkin. They first, however, come under our notice in the person of one John Milburn, of Hillhouse, hanged through the instrumentality of Lord William Howard in 1618. He may have been no worse than many of his neighbours, not a few of whom in those days were “disordered persons.” Of his descendants, at all events of Milburns of the Hillhouse, many rest in Brampton churchyard. They disappear from the register with “Ann, of Henry Milburn, of Hillis,” whether wife or daughter not stated, “buried March 18, 1722.”

The earliest Talkin Milburn of whom we have any record was one William Milborne, alleged, in a memorial

\* “Elizabeth daughter of Henry Milburn of Netherton bap Oct 10, 1682,” and “Bartholomew son of Henry Milburn of Netherton bap Aug 7, 1684” (Hayton register); no doubt, grand-children of the “Bartholimew Milborn” of the Brampton register.

addressed to Queen Elizabeth in 1587, to have been turned out of his house "because that he had become tenant to Francis Dacre," which means that he had persisted in regarding Mr. Dacre as his landlord. It took a long time to root out the old feeling of allegiance to the Dacres. Even when Francis Dacre had disappeared from the scene many of the tenants raised disturbance upon their own account. "On one occasion they assembled in considerable numbers at Gelt Bridge to encourage each other in opposition to Lord William's claim to grant leases upon payment of an arbitrary fine" (Housebook p. XXXVII). This was in 1613, and the number of persons who thus assembled was 200. They chose the place of meeting as being that "where their auncestors had in tymes past fought a battel against the late Queen's forces on the parte of Leonard Dacre, thereby the rather to invite and persuade them by the memorie thereof" (Appendix p. 426). "This tumultuous assemblage was made a Star-chamber matter, and the ringleaders' were severely punished" (p. XXXVII). What happened to the rank and file we can only conjecture from a long list of items in Lord William Howard's Housebook, under the heading of "law charges" for the year 1613, one of which is:—"To Mr. Tulley for copping out totum processum versus Milburn, 1<sup>s</sup>." In the absence of Christian name or residence we cannot localize the particular Milburn against whom this *processus* was directed. Already we have found Milburns at Brampton, The How, Greenwell, Netherton, The Ash, Hillhouse, and Tarne End; to whom must be added, on the authority of the Brampton register and Lord William Howard's Housebook, the Milburns of Scarrow Hill and Kirkhouse, and, on that of the histories of Cumberland, Mr. Leonard Milburn, rector of Castlearrock from 1589 to 1636. The Housebook has also the following entry:—"Nov. 19, 1620. Payd to Sr Thomas Milburn, clarke, late Curate of Cumwhitton, for serving the cure thear since my Lord's entrance to the same xxx<sup>s</sup>" (p. 219.)

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Of Leonard Milburn, Rector of Castlecarrock, the only circumstance recorded in the histories is that of his selling, in 1624, a coach and four horses to Lord W. Howard, for £30, of which transaction the editor of the Housebook has the following explanation:—“We may fairly presume that Mr. Leonard Milburn was selling the coach and horses, which had belonged to his brother, Bishop Milburn, who died in 1624.” Richard Milburn, the bishop, had formerly been rector of Sevenoaks, in Kent, and chaplain to Henry, Prince of Wales, eldest son of James I., who “affected and respected him above all the rest of his chaplains for his learning, good carriage, and profitable preaching” (Wood’s *Athenæ*). Of his preaching there may still be extant a specimen, since in 1607, whilst rector of Sevenoaks, he published a sermon, preached at a “metropolitan visitation,” on the subject of “The Imposition of Hands,” from the text, “Lay hands suddenly on no man” (I. Timothy v. 22). But as no copy of this sermon is in the Chapter Library at Carlisle, or in the Library at Rose Castle, we must take Prince Henry’s word for the profitableness of Richard Milburn’s preaching, which we may safely do, as the Prince was an able and good man. In 1611, in which year Prince Henry died, Richard Milburn was appointed Dean of Rochester. In 1615, he became Bishop of St. David’s, and in 1620, Bishop of Carlisle. He was educated at Winchester school, and at Queen’s College, Cambridge, and is stated in Nicolson’s History of Cumberland to have been “born at Utterbank in Gilsland.” There is no such place as Utterbank in Gilsland; but there is in Talkin, in the barony of Gilsland, a place now called Hullerbank, but formerly Ullerbank, which may easily, by a writer unacquainted with the locality, have been corrupted into Utterbank. If Bishop Milburn was born at this place, we should expect to find it connected with the name of Milburn in the Hayton and Brampton registers; which is what we do find; *e.g.*, “Christopher, filius

filius Roberti Milburn de Ullerbank, bap Oct 1632;" "Thomas, son of Randolph Milburn, of Ullerbank, bap Sept. 1640;" and "Estor, daughter of Leonard Milburn, of Ullerbank, bap Jan. 24, 1665" (Hayton register). This Leonard Milburn, probably a brother of Christopher, had a son Robert, who by an indenture, dated March 10th, 1687, in which he describes himself as "sonne of Leonard Milbourne late of Hullerbank carpenter," releases for the sum of £13 all his interest, right, &c., in the property at Hullerbank to Randall Milbourne, of Hullerbank, carpenter, apparently the above-mentioned Randolph, father of Thomas, and probably a brother or cousin of the elder Robert. What became of Randolph, is not recorded; but his wife "Saray," in 1669, and his son Thomas, in 1701, were buried at Brampton, where three of Thomas's children also were buried in 1696, 1699, and 1700. Thomas Milburn is described in the Brampton register, by the vicar, Mr. J. Cockburn, as a Quaker, which was perhaps the reason why Mr. Cockburn registered the burials of his three children without any Christian names, though "Randall, son of Thomas Milburn, of Ullerbank," was baptised at Hayton in 1686. The last of the Milburns of Ullerbank, whom we can trace in the registers, was "Thomasin Milburn, buried on May 4, 1723;"\* soon after which date the farmhouse which they had occupied must have passed into other hands, for on the lintel of its front door are carved the initials "I. H." and the date 1739, in which very year the Brampton register introduces to our notice "Isaac Holme of Ullerbank," whose son John was buried at Brampton on December 1st in that year.

The Milburns gradually disappeared from all the outlying houses in Talkin, and are now represented only by a single

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\* But *where* buried, it is difficult to say, as the registers would lead us to infer that she was buried both at Hayton and Brampton:—"Thomasin Milburn, of Hullerbank, buried May 4, 1723" (Hayton Register); "Thomasin Milburn, widow, buried May 4, 1723" (Brampton Register).

family

family in the village, the head of which is Mr. John Milburn, joiner. The present scarcity of Milburns in Talkin is not attributable to any decay of the race, as their name still abounds in Cumberland; and it seems strange that so few of them should now be found in the township which was formerly almost entirely peopled by their clan. Under these circumstances it is interesting to be able to recognise in John Milburn a genuine representative of the original Talkin stock. His father, Robert Milburn, who died in 1861, aged 85, was the son of that Philip Milburn whose name, with several other names, appears on the tablet in Hayton church, which records the re-building of the church in 1780, and who in the Hayton churchwardens' accounts for that year is described as "Constable of Talkin." He died in 1821, at the age of 76. Turning to the date of his baptism (1745) in the Hayton register we find him described as "the son of Thomas Milburn of Talkin," who is easily identified with the original owner of a pocket-book (now in the possession of John Milburn) in which are recorded the births of his six children, viz., five daughters and one son, "Philip, born Jan. 25th, 1745." From the same pocket-book we have a glimpse of a lawsuit against the Earl of Carlisle, towards the expenses of which Thomas Milburn recorded in 1761 that he had paid his "8th and 9th assessments." The only hint we have as to the character of this suit is supplied by an earlier entry, which recorded the first collection "for to support ye Law Sutte betwixt ye Lord and ye tenins in Gilsland." Each assessment cost Thomas Milburn 25s., and the fourth and fifth collections he described as made "when gooing to London for a Tryall." The collectors of these assessments were Isaac Holme and Robert Tiniswood. In the pedigree now being traced, Thomas Milburn's pocket-book is our best interpreter of the register, which indeed informs us of the burial of a Philip Milburn in 1752, but who or what he was we should not have known had not Thomas Milburn recorded

recorded in his pocket-book:—“My dear father Philip Milbourne dyed July ye 20th, 1752, aged 86.” The longevity of the Milburns of this line should be noticed. John Milburn, still a strong man, is now in his 76th year. His father, Robert, died at 85; his grandfather, Philip at 76; his great-great-grandfather, Philip, at 86; and his great-grandfather, Thomas, the owner of the pocket-book, who came between the two Philips, reached, as shown by his burial register and tombstone at Hayton, the patriarchal age of 92; he died in 1797. Besides the pocket-book, he left behind him a document, copied perhaps from a family bible belonging to his grandfather, who had written:—“Philip Milburn, my son, and Elyzabeth Smyth, were marryed Nov. 26, 1691.” Philip the first, born in 1666, was the eldest son of Thomas, called in the said document Thomas Milburn the elder, “marryed to Mary his wife in 1665.” They were the Thomas and Mary Milburn, whose names are inscribed on a plate, now in the possession of their descendant, John Milburn, which bears the date 1671, and the Milburn arms, “a chevron between three escallops:” the same as may be seen on the wall of the corn-mill at Armathwaite Castle, which before its purchase in 1846 by Lord Lonsdale, was held by three generations of Milburns,\* having been bequeathed to them by their kinsman, Robert Sanderson, whose brother William had bought it in 1712 from its ancient possessors, the Skeltons. Thomas Milbourne the elder, “born at Martinmas, in ye 12th yeare of ye rainge of King Charles ye First, 1640,” was the son of John Milbourne who died in 1665, but where buried the family document does not state. The register supplies the omission—“John Milbourne, of Talkin, farmer, buried at

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\* I am indebted to Mr. R. S. Ferguson, for the following story:—At a public dinner at the close of the last century, Milburn of Armathwaite Castle was Sheriff, and proposed the health of the Earl of Carlisle as his “noble relative.” “How do you make that out?” said his lordship, astonished. “Why, your ancestor hanged mine,” said Milburn. From this, unless the Sheriff adopted an ancestor for the sake of a joke, it follows that the Milburns of Armathwaite were descended from the Milburns of Hillhouse in Talkin.—H.W.

Brampton

Brampton ye 25 of Aprill, 1665." He was probably the "John Milbourne at Towne End of Talkin," whose son Robert is recorded in the Hayton register as baptised March 23rd, 1652; in which case Robert must have been one of the youngest of the family of which "Thomas the elder," born in 1640, was perhaps the eldest. "Towne End of Talkin," points to residence in the village. But that does not help us to discover to which of his many contemporary namesakes the John Milbourne now arrived at was closely related. If the registers went back another hundred years we might be able to trace him and the bishop to a common origin. Yet it may be that even that period would not bring us to the stem from which they both sprang; for the further we go back, in the existing registers, the more numerous we find these Milburns of Talkin to have been. In the Hayton register, torn and mutilated as its earlier pages are, as many as ten different Milburn families may be counted as residing in Talkin between 1639 and 1663. What a colony of Milburns in that one little township! Nowhere, perhaps, now in England, could be found such a preponderance of a single name, and doubtless, in these days of easy and rapid communication between different parts of the country, no such preponderance of any name in a township or parish will again occur. The dispersion of clans is, no doubt, a benefit to the community at large, but will perhaps be found by the antiquarians of two centuries hence to have somewhat spoilt the interest of the parish register.

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