

ART. XLI.—*Church Bells in the Deanery of Brampton.*

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*Communicated at Keswick, Oct. 5th, 1882.*

### BEWCASTLE.

IN Cumberland, as a rule, though not without exceptions, the nearer the border the fewer the church bells. The border parish of Bewcastle for an unknown length of time had no church bell. Bishop Nicolson, who visited this parish on July 30, 1703, states in his *Miscellany Accounts of the Diocese of Carlisle* (p. 56) that he found

“no Bell, to call them in to Divine Service.”

Some fifty years later, in a marginal note to the bishop's MS., on the page relating to Bewcastle, Chancellor Waugh says:—

“Nor have they yet any Bell.”

The terrier of 1828 informs us when the want was supplied :

“There is a good Church Bell, purchased by the parish about the year 1785. Prior to that time the Church had no bell.”

The same story is told, with a sequel, in the terrier of 1868 :

“A Church Bell was purchased by the parish about the year 1785, before which there appears to have been none. This bell was broken and a new one purchased by the parish in 1845.”

The new bell, which is still in use, is blank, *i.e.*, without inscription, date, stamp, or mark of any kind. It is 19 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter, and therefore weighs nearly 2 cwt., the weight of a bell being approximately known from its diameter at mouth (Taylor's *Bell Catalogue*, p. 25).

One would like to know whether Bewcastle prior to 1785 had always been without a church bell. On this point the experienced archæologist who drew up the terrier of 1868,  
the

the late Rev. J. Maughan, rector of Bewcastle from 1836 to 1874, doubtless suspended his judgment. All he would say was :—"There *appears* to have been none." Even had he been aware of the testimony of Bishop Nicolson and Chancellor Waugh on the subject he would probably have said that he would be glad to know what Edward VI.'s commissioners had reported concerning the church goods of Bewcastle in 1552. Unfortunately the Cumberland portion of Edward VI.'s Inventory of Church Goods, still preserved in the Public Record Office, is in this condition :

"The original MS. consists of 20 leaves, ten pages, each leaf being destroyed for about  $\frac{1}{4}$  on the inner side, so that the pages are alternately deficient on the left and right hand side; in the former cases the names of the churches are all lost."—(*Old Church Plate in the Diocese of Carlisle*, p. 314.)

In every case where the name of a parish in Brampton deanery has been preserved the information given by the inventory concerning the bells will be noticed in this paper. Bewcastle, however, is among the missing names.

### BRAMPTON.

Brampton has six bells, the only ring\* in the deanery, and one of the few rings in the county, consisting of—

			ft. in.			cwt. qr. lbs.
Tenor	...	diameter	3 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	...	weight	9 1 5
No. 5	...	"	2 10 $\frac{1}{4}$	...	"	7 0 14
No. 4	...	"	2 8 $\frac{1}{4}$	...	"	6 1 7
No. 3	...	"	2 6 $\frac{1}{4}$	...	"	5 2 14
No. 2	...	"	2 4	...	"	4 3 0
Treble	...	"	2 2	...	"	4 0 0

The weight of the tenor is taken from the founder's account; the other weights are reckoned from the diameters. On each bell is inscribed

T MEARS OF LONDON FECIT,

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\* A set of bells is properly called a "ring;" a performance upon them a peal (*Church Bells of Rutland*, by T. North, F.S.A., p. 16.)

and

and on Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5,

EX DONO THOMÆ RAMSHAY

BRAMPTON VICARII

MDCCCXXVI.

Mr. Ramshay, vicar of Brampton from 1795 to 1841, gave these four bells on the occasion of the enlargement of the church by an extension to the east and the addition of a tower at the west end. The church thus enlarged was consecrated on July 21st, 1828. The tenor, as shewn by Mr. Mears's account, still remaining in the parish-chest, was bought by the parish, an allowance being made for "old bell, 126lbs." The treble is said by some old inhabitants to have been given by Mrs. Ramshay, the wife of the vicar. But in Parson and White's Cumberland Directory for 1829 (p. 414), Brampton church is noticed as having

"six bells, five of them being the handsome donation of the Rev Thomas Ramshay, vicar of this parish."

Therefore, as this directory was compiled at a time when it was easy to ascertain the facts of the case, it is probable that the treble, though not inscribed with his name, was the gift of the vicar. This bell has always been called by the ringers, and is still called, the "church bell," because formerly, before the new church was built in 1878, it was the bell used for the week day services, the vergers ringing it with a rope which descended through the floor of the ringing chamber to the basement of the tower. The name may outlive the remembrance of its origin. The traditions of the belfry should be collected whilst veteran past-ringers, amongst whom are two of the original band of 1828, Mr. Lee of West Hill, and Mr. J. Armstrong of Denton Nook, still survive to relate them. It would be well, for instance, if the names of all past-ringers, with the period of each one's service, could be recovered and recorded on the walls of the ringing chamber. Such a record, we may be sure, would in time to come be interesting to generations of  
ringers

ringers yet unborn, and not to them only, but also to all the parishioners. Bell-ringers have too often been regarded as of little or no account. Hence the uncomfortable, dark, and sometimes even dangerous chambers, to which they have been relegated. Bishop Nicolson, writing of Dalston church, as it was in his day, says (p. 19) :—

“The ringers are in continual hazard.”

The Brampton ringers are in no such case, having as spacious and convenient a ringing chamber as they could desire. Besides the ring the parish possesses another bell from the same foundry, dated 1883, which is placed over the western gable of the ancient chancel in the burial ground. In Mr. Mears's account for this bell there is an item of allowance for “old bell 56 lbs.” There is a commonly accepted tradition that an old Brampton church bell was taken at some unknown time to Hexham, and is there still, bearing an inscription which shews whence it came. Such traditions are often met with, and sometimes have a germ of fact, at least enough to enable one to account for the legend. No church bell from Brampton is now at Hexham. But on the fifth bell of the Hexham ring is inscribed

THOMAS LESTER MADE US ALL

TOBIAS BENTON HANGED US ALL

1742.

Some one, whilst inspecting these bells, may have mistaken “Benton” for “Brampton,” and jumped to the conclusion that it was originally a Brampton bell. The only old Brampton bells which have left any trace of their course after leaving Brampton were the two, weighing 126 lbs. and 56 lbs., taken away and allowed for in 1826 and 1833 by Mr. Mears, who probably soon consigned them to the furnace in his Whitechapel foundry. They were doubtless identical with

“two bells with their frames”

mentioned

mentioned in the terrier of 1749, at which time they must both have been in the tower of the ancient parish church, a mile and a half from the town, whence the larger of the two would be removed, when the nave and tower of that church were pulled down in 1788, to the hospital chapel in the town, which in that year was enlarged and constituted the parish church. One, if not both, of those bells may have been of great antiquity. Edward VI.'s inventory mentions as belonging to "Branton" in 1552

"ij prch (parish) bells one hand bell."

The taking of this inventory was preliminary to the issue of a commission in January, 1553, with authority to collect and convert to "ye Kinges use" all church goods except such as were deemed necessary for divine service, part of the duty of the commissioners being

"to sell or cause to be sold to our use by weight all parcells or peces of metall except the metall of greate bell saunce bell in every of the said churches or chapells."

The saunce or sanctus bell was that which was rung at the elevation of the host at the parish mass; it was frequently fixed on the apex of the eastern gable of the nave, but sometimes in the tower. This, with the sacring bell, hung inside the chancel, and the hand bell, used for processions, all three probably included as "saunce bell" in the injunctions to the commissioners, would be too small to be worth selling for the king's use; though if this commission had been issued, as is sometimes supposed, for the removal of what was deemed superstitious, we might be surprised at these bells being allowed to remain. The "greate bell," for calling the people to church, was of course not considered superfluous; but we may infer from the use of the singular number that where there were two or more such bells only one was to remain. Indeed it would seem from the instructions issued to the Northamptonshire commissioners that all bells were to be regarded

as

as liable to be seized. The commissioners were directed to charge churchwardens and other church authorities

“that they and eveyre of them do safely kepe unspoiled unembesiled and unsold all such bells as do remayne in everye of the said churches and chapells and the same to conserve untill our pleasur be therein further knowne.”

We shall presently, however, see cause for believing that in some cases a pair of bells or even a ring of three or more suffered no diminution at the hands of the commissioners of 1553.

### CASTLE CARROCK.

Bishop Nicolson was here on October 29, 1703, and observed

“the font all broken, and but one Bell” (Bp. N. p. 112.)

This bell the terrier of 1749 describes as

“one Bell in good order.”

It had, according to Hutchinson (vol. i., p. 180), whose history of Cumberland was published in 1794, the following inscription :—

“Praise thou the Lord, O Castle Carrock.”

Parson and White, in their Cumberland Directory for 1829, say (p. 420) :—

“The church was rebuilt in 1828. . . . On the bell taken out of the old tower is inscribed, ‘Praise thou the Lord, O Castle Carrock.’”

Whelan, writing in 1860, says (p. 671) :—

“The bell which was removed from the old church bears the inscription ‘Praise thou the Lord, O Castle Carrock.’”

If Whelan supposed this bell to be still in existence in 1860 he probably believed it had been “removed from the old church” to the new ; but it is not there now, nor was it there in Whelan’s time, as the present bell has no other inscription than the date

1828

which

which was the year of the rebuilding of the church. There is a tradition that the old bell was taken to Hayton; but Mr. T. Armstrong, who was churchwarden of Castle Carrock in 1828, says he took it to a foundry in Lowther Street, Carlisle, to be exchanged for the bell now in use. This statement in itself is not inconsistent with the tradition, as the bell might subsequently have found its way to Hayton; but we shall find, when we come to deal with Hayton parish, that this bell never went there. Some old inhabitants say that the inscription was in silver letters. Others say the bell had a silver rim. One old parishioner maintains that it was a better bell than the one they have now. Anyhow it was a more interesting bell, probably dating from the end of the 16th or the beginning of the 17th century. Had it been a pre-Reformation bell it would most likely have had a Latin inscription. Had it been of a period later than the early part of the 17th century it is nearly certain that it would have borne a date. A likely man to have presented it was Leonard Milburn, brother of Bishop Milburn, and rector of Castle Carrock from 1589 to 1636. The present bell is  $18\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter, and weighs about 1 cwt.  $2\frac{3}{4}$  qr. It has some exceptional uses, at all events exceptional in Brampton deanery, though not uncommon elsewhere, being rung as the "call bell" to invite the parishioners to attend a funeral, and as the "after burial bell" when they are leaving the grave. Not that the "call" itself is anything unusual in these parts, since

"in many of the small towns in Cumberland the custom of 'public funerals' prevails. The parish clerk, tolling his bell at intervals, invites in melancholy notes the 'friends and neighbours to attend' the interment of the deceased. At the house of mourning bread and cheese and ale are placed upon the table, which are partaken of by the company in silence (*Poems by Peter Burns*, p. 3 n)."

The exceptional character, then, of the "call" at Castle Carrock is its being given by the church bell, instead of by a hand bell "toll'd" by the clerk. The Castle Carrock church

church bell is also one of only three bells in the deanery which toll the "death knell." Probably in few parts of England could such an employment of a church bell be spoken of as a peculiar usage. Of peculiar uses, in the recognised sense of the term, such as the "curfew," the "gleaning bell," "pancake bell," "morning bell," &c., there are none nor any traditions of such throughout the deanery.

### CUMREW.

In 1552 the royal commissioners found here

"ij bells one litill bell."

The "litill bell," whether sanctus or sacring, though spared by the commissioners, whose instructions did not require its removal, and perhaps again brought into use in Mary's reign, most likely disappeared in the Elizabethan warfare against "monuments of superstition."\* But one of the "ij bells" remains to this day. It is 13 inches in diameter, weighs about 62 lbs., and has, just below the canons, running quite round, in Gothic capitals, the following inscription, with the letter N upside down:—

AVE · MARIA · GRACIA · PLENA.

In the space between the last and first words is an initial cross, with each of its four arms spreading out into a *fleur de lis*, the whole surrounded by a circle; and a *fleur de lis* is in each of the three other spaces. These marks may lead to the identification of the founder; but there is nothing exactly resembling them among the founders' marks engraved in the only two books on church bells which I have yet seen, viz., "*Rutland Church Bells*, by T. North, F.S.A.," and "*Cambridgeshire Church Bells*, by J. J. Raven, D.D." A rubbing of this Cumrew inscription was exhibited in the temporary museum during the visit of the Archæological

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\* Among the "relics and monuments of superstition" belonging to Crosthwaite (Keswick) church in 1571, and ordered in that year by Bishop Barnes to be sold, were "three hand bells." (*Whelan*, p. 334).

Institute



Institute to Carlisle, and the antiquaries who examined it assigned the bell to the 14th or 15th century. So it may be 500 years old; and let us hope, its tone being still unimpaired, that it may keep its place in the church tower at Cumrew for centuries yet to come. It had, as we have seen, a companion in 1552, doubtless a twin sister. It has a companion now; on which is nothing but the date—

1750.

Nor was it alone in 1749, the terrier of that year having this item:—

“Two bells thought to weigh half a hundredweight.”

This, if it be not a mere guess, must mean half a hundredweight each, the “Ave Maria” bell being itself about that weight. The bell dated 1750, which having the same diameter is of about the same weight as the ancient bell, if cast and hung before March 25th, may be identical with the second bell of the terrier of 1749, since March 25th, on which day the terrier was signed, was until 1753 the last day of the civil and ecclesiastical year, whilst the historical year ended then as now on December 31st, so that the months of January and February, and the first twenty-five days of March, were common to the ecclesiastical year 1749 and the historical year 1750. This bell, however, whether identical or not with the second bell of 1749, had probably an immediate predecessor, as it appears from entries in the churchwardens’ accounts and the parish register that Cumrew church had more than one bell at the end of the 17th century. Was the second bell of these entries identical with the second bell of 1552? Not if the commission of 1553 was strictly executed. But we find Bishop Nicolson in 1704 recording at Skelton:—

“In the Tower there are two pretty good Bells: on the larger whereof is *Sancte Michael* (ye Church’s Saint) *ora pro nobis*: and on the lesser *Ave Maria Gracia Plena*” (Bp. N., p. 245).

From which it appears, as both of these Skelton bells must have

have been mediæval, that the injunctions of 1553, in the matter of bells, were not in all cases strictly carried out. The Skelton mediæval bells, as I am informed by the rector, no longer remain, their places being occupied by two bells dated 1717 and 1844. But there were in 1860, and may be still, two pre-Reformation bells at Renwick (*Whelan*, p. 619), and four at Greystoke (*ib.*, p. 543); and there still remain two such bells at Edenhall, and two at Langwathby. Mr. North says:—

“I incline to think the bells were too popular with the people to allow of their being seized with impunity” (*Church Bells of Rutland*, p. 27).

He laments, however, that the mediæval bells have mostly disappeared; for which he assigns other reasons besides spoliation at the time of the Reformation, such as

“ordinary wear and tear, accidents to the fabric of the church entailing injury to the bells, the remodelling of rings of bells to adapt them to change-ringing. . . . and the poverty or parsimony of churchmen in post-Reformation times” (*ib.*).

The way in which parsimonious churchmen have diminished the number of mediæval bells has been by selling them to obtain money for repair of the churches. But Cumberland church bells have mostly been too few and too small to incur much risk of decrease in number from that cause. The Cumrew bell, for instance, is not larger than some sanctus bells. The inscription on this bell perhaps settles the question of the dedication of the church, which in the ordnance map is called St. John's, in the parish register (by Rector Watson) St. Michael's, and in the local histories St. Mary's. Cumrew is the second of the three parishes in this deanery which have the usage of the “death-knell”. Neither here nor at Castle Carrock, however, does the bell indicate, as in many other places, the age and sex of the deceased, the age by the number of tolls, and the sex by thrice three quickly repeated tolls, called the “tellers”, for a man, and thrice two for a woman, before and after  
the

the knell ; whence the saying “ Nine tailors make a man,” a corruption of “ Nine tellers mark a man ” (*North* p. 92).

### CUMWHITTON.

The terrier of 1749, signed by “ Thomas Ritson, curate,” says :—

“ Two bells with their frames. We know not their weight.”

Mr. Ritson perhaps thought it unreasonable that he should be expected to know their weight ; and it may be admitted that Chancellor Waugh, who prepared the form for the terriers of 1749, scarcely showed his usual sagacity in asking for the weights of the bells. Had he asked for their inscriptions, with what extra fervour would Mr. Ferguson have exclaimed—“ Antiquaries owe a debt to Mr. Chancellor Waugh ! ” (*Old Church Plate in Carlisle Diocese*, p. 6.) The terriers would then have thrown much light on the history of the bells in many places. We should have known, for instance, whether the Cumwhitton bells of 1749 were identical with

“ ij prch bells ”

found here by the royal commissioners in 1552, or whether one or both of the ancient bells were confiscated in 1553. Such knowledge is now beyond our reach. Early in the present century the tower fell, and with it, of course, the bells. Perhaps they were injured and rendered useless by the fall. Anyhow they disappeared, and were succeeded by the present bell, which is 24 inches in diameter, weighs about 3 cwt., and is dated

1818

It was procured, from what foundry is not known, by Mr. Blacklock, a former parishioner of Cumwhitton, then resident in London, who contributed liberally towards defraying its cost. Among the parish documents there is extant a printed copy of the sermon preached by the vicar, the Rev. E. Anderson, B.D., on June 20th, 1819, the day on which this bell was first used. Text :—

“ In

"In that day shall be upon the bells of the houses, Holiness unto the Lord."—Zechariah xiv., 20.

Cumwhitton is the third and last parish in this deanery to be noticed as having the usage of the "death knell". But, whilst at Castle Carrock and Cumrew the bell in no way indicates the sex or age of the deceased, at Cumwhitton it does indicate the sex, not however by triplets or doublets before and after the knell, but by the knell itself, with nine tolls for a man, seven for a woman, and five for a child. It is worth while to remark that the three parishes of Castle Carrock, Cumrew, and Cumwhitton, lie to the south of all other parishes in the deanery. In parishes nearer the border the death knell is unknown. On behalf of which border neglect of a custom prevalent throughout the rest of the country it may be alleged that the tolling of a single bell after death is in accord neither with the letter nor the spirit of the injunctions of the Church, as laid down in the 67th canon, which authorizes no tolling but that of the "passing bell"—

"When any is passing out of this life a bell shall be tolled, and the minister shall not then slack to do his last duty. And after the party's death, if it so fall out, there shall be rung no more than one short peal, and one other peal before the burial, and one other after the burial."

Note the deviations of modern usage from these instructions. The "passing bell", dating from remote antiquity and retained at the Reformation, was discontinued about the middle of last century. The "short peal" after death, now no longer rung even in parishes which have bells enough for the purpose, the object of which was to call upon friends to "give thanks for the deliverance of a soul from the miseries of this sinful world", cannot be said to have been canonically superseded by the tolling of the "death knell". Nor is the original intention of the "peals" before and after burial fulfilled by the now general tolling before or by the occasional tolling after interment.

FARLAM.

## FARLAM.

Among the church goods of "ffarlam" in 1552 were

"ij bells",

which in 1749, according to terrier of that year, had dwindled to

"one bell".

There are now again two bells here. On one of them, diameter of which 19 inches, weight 1 cwt. 3 qrs., and note B, is inscribed, with the royal arms beneath—

JOHN WARNER AND SONS, LONDON, 1858.

The other, 18 inches diameter, weight 1 cwt. 2 qrs., note E, is from the same foundry, but dated 1859, and without the royal arms. Both were given, on the occasion of the rebuilding of the church in 1860, by the late Mr. John Ramshay of Naworth Barns, steward to Earl Carlisle, and son of the donor of Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5, of the Brampton ring. Messrs. Warner, who have the Crescent Foundry, Cripplegate, in answer to inquiry as to what inscription or marks were on the old bell, write that they can find no entry in their books of any transaction with Farlam parish, and therefore conclude that the new bells must have been supplied through some local bell-hanger; in which case they would not know in what church the new bells were hung, or what became of the old bell.

## HAYTON.

The terrier of 1749 mentions

"two small bells with their frames".

The church has now but one bell,  $29\frac{3}{8}$  inches diameter, weight about 4 cwt. 1 qr., on which is inscribed—

BURGESS AND HAYTON

CARLISLE A.D. 1830.

We seem to have here a clue to the origin of the tradition that the old Castle Carrock bell was taken to Hayton. If  
this

this firm supplied the new bell to Castle Carrock in 1828 the old bell doubtless went to Hayton, but to the man and not the parish of that name. In 1828, as already mentioned (*ante*, p. 423), one of the churchwardens took the old Castle Carrock bell to Carlisle, and left it at a foundry in Lowther Street; the proprietors of which foundry we identify in the following entry in Parson and White's Cumberland Directory for 1829 :—

“Burgess and Hayton, iron and brass founders, Lowther Street.”

Their foundry in Lowther Street, as may be seen by reference to the Ordnance map of Carlisle, was known as the “Cockpit Smithy”, so called from its occupying the site of the old Carlisle cockpit.\* They cast the present Wetheral bell, 33½ inches diameter, weight about 8 cwt., dated 1833; between which year and 1837 the name of Hayton disappeared from the firm. Steele's Carlisle Directory for 1837 has this entry :—

“Thos. Burgess, iron founder, Water Lane, and 8 Botchergate.”

The Water Lane premises, known as the “Waterloo Foundry,” eventually passed into the hands of Mr. Daniel Clarke, who, when the site was taken by the railway companies for enlargement of the station, transferred the name “Waterloo Foundry” to new premises which he built in St. Nicholas Street, Botchergate. In what year the foundry was removed from the cockpit has not yet been ascertained; but the present foreman of the Waterloo foundry, who was in the employ of Burgess and Hayton, says that the Wetheral bell, which is dated 1833, was cast in Water Lane. The Hayton bell was the gift of the late Mr. Thomas Henry Graham of Edmond Castle, and perhaps contains the metal of the “two small bells” of the terrier of 1749, one or both of which may have been of mediæval

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\* It occupied not merely the site but the cockpit itself, a circus-like structure, which was still standing until the year 1875. A model of it is in the possession of Mr. Fisher, of Bank Street.

date

date. A bell at Edmond Castle, 18 inches diameter, cast at the Whitechapel foundry, is inscribed—

C. & J. MEARS, FOUNDERS, LONDON, 1847.

In illustration of the way in which bells are sometimes condemned without cause, it may here be mentioned that the Hayton school bell, which had been supposed to be cracked, was found, when recently taken down for repair of its woodwork, to be perfectly sound. The fault had been in the gear, and not in the bell.

### IRTHINGTON.

The commissioners' report on the church goods of this parish in 1552 is now in this condition :—

ETHRYNGTON: { One chales of silvr ij veste . . . .  
ij litill bells.

There was room where the paper has been torn off for one other item, which may have been "ij bells" or "ij prch bells"; and, if so, the "ij litill bells" were probably the sanctus and sacring bells. But if the missing item were a "surpclothe" (surplice) "alterclothe" or some such other article, then the "ij litill bells" had to do duty as parish bells. Two bells were here in 1703, as Bishop Nicolson, who visited Irthington in that year, says:—

"One of their bells has long been burst" (Bp. N. p. 52).

There were still two bells here in 1746, on Dec. 7th of which year it was ordered at a parish meeting

"yt ye Churchwardens do take the proposels of Workmen for removing ye Bells to ye West End of ye Church and deliver ye said proposels at ye next parish meeting".

No record of the delivery of "ye said proposels" is extant. The terrier of 1749 has this entry :—

"Two bells with their frames thought to weigh each about two hundred."

As the weight of these bells seems to exclude the notion of their having been the "ij litill bells" mentioned in

Edward

Edward VI.'s inventory it becomes more probable that the missing item of that inventory was "ij prch bells", which may have been identical with the two bells seen a century and a half later by Bishop Nicolson, and may still have been here in 1749, it being by no means unlikely that a bell which in 1703 was still remaining, though it had "long been burst", was in those days allowed to remain for an indefinitely longer period. At what time these bells disappeared is not known with certainty. But Mr. Thomas Graham of Beanlands, who is a depository of much local tradition, his ancestors having owned Beanlands for nearly 300 years, says that the present bell was fixed when alterations were being made to the church at some time towards the close of last century. Perhaps the time in question is indicated in the following entry in the churchwardens' accounts:—

"1788—To pay Lachlan Murray for drawing a plan for a new church Writing out Rates Advertisements &c for letting the repairing of the Church £4 4s 0d."

The reader may be surprised to learn that Lachlan Murray was the parish clerk. But Lachlan Murray was a mysterious man, of whose antecedents Mr. Graham says that nothing was known beyond the fact of his having come from Scotland with Prince Charles Edward Stuart in 1745. Tradition is silent as to whether he remained in Irthington instead of going on with the prince to Derby, or left the army during its retreat. Certain it is that he did not return to Scotland, but settled himself at Irthington, where he kept a school, taught land surveying, and about the year 1755, as shewn by the register, became parish clerk, in which capacity he must have gained great reputation for versatility of talent, seeing that he was entrusted with the duty of "drawing a plan for a new church". Nor is it necessary to suppose, because no new church was built, that he proved himself unequal to the occasion; for the prudent vestry, whilst preferring on second thoughts a  
more



more economical plan, shewed unabated confidence in Lachlan Murray by requesting him to prepare "rates advertisements &c. for repairing" the old church. The bell, as nothing is said about it in the churchwardens' accounts, was probably a gift. Like most of the bells in this deanery it is rather small ; but, as it is placed where it is difficult to reach, its diameter, apparently about 17 inches, has not been ascertained. Nor is it worth while to make any attempt to reach it, since by the aid of an opera glass it is seen to be blank.

### LANERCOST.

The churchwardens here in 1688, in their "answers to articles of inquiry", still preserved in the diocesan registry at Carlisle, reported everything, including "the bells", as "in good order as becometh the house dedicated to ye publick worship of God."

The terrier of 1749 tells us their number :—

"Two bells."

That of 1777 reduces them to

"One bell."

This is the fourth instance we have met with in this deanery of a church which had two bells in 1749 having at a later period only one bell. Bishop Nicolson in his account of "Milburn Chapple", which he visited on August 19th, 1703, says :—

"They have a couple of small pitiful Bells, both miserably crack'd ; and, some time agoe, petition'd for leave to have them both founded into one good one. This I assented to ; but I do not see that anything is like to be done in it, without some sharp Treatment of the Churchwardens in the next year's Visitation" (Bp. N. p. 65).

We have here a probable explanation of what happened at the four above-mentioned churches, including Lanercost, in Brampton deanery. In each case the two bells may have been cracked, or if not cracked may have been very small

small, and were accordingly "founded into one". The bell now at Lanercost is inscribed :—

PACK AND CHAPMAN, LONDON, FECIT, 1773.

This firm, predecessors of Messrs. Mears at the White-chapel foundry, supplied a bell to Holme Cultram in 1771, and recast the Crosthwaite (Keswick) ring in 1775 (*Crosthwaite Parish Magazine*, October, 1882). At the same foundry, when in the hands of Lester and Pack, the Penrith ring was recast in 1763. Thomas Lester, when sole proprietor, recast the Hexham ring in 1742 (*Antiquities of Hexham*, p. 100). His predecessor was Richard Phelps, the founder of the old great bell of St. Paul's, from whose time Dr. Raven traces the foundry back, through the Wightmans and the Bartletts, to

"Robert Mott, or Moate, the first artificer at this very important place of whom we have any note, who died in 1608" (*Cambridgeshire Church Bells*, p. 96).

Pack and Chapman's Lanercost bell is 24 inches in diameter, and weighs about 3 cwt. It is to be regretted that Lanercost Abbey is one of the churches the names of which have been torn off from Edward VI.'s Inventory, as it would be interesting to know what church goods at Lanercost survived the dissolution of the monastery in 28 Henry VIII. There is at the Record Office the MS. of a long report drawn up by commissioners appointed in 3 and 4 Philip and Mary, to inquire at Shap, Carlisle, Wetheral, Appleby, and Penrith, concerning spoliation of the monasteries at those places in Henry's reign. The lead from Shap, it appears from this document, was taken by Lord Wharton. As to bells the commissioners reported :—

"The inhabitants of Carlysle dothe well remember the ffreers howses in Carlysle but what became of the bells ther they knowe not And as towching the foure bells of the saide late ffreers in Carlysle weing D cwt weight there was none remayning in Carlysle at mighell-mas anno xxxviii. nuper reg. H viij And for anye other knowlege we can get none,

"Lancelot

"Lancelot Saulkelde clark Deane of the Catherall Church of Carlysle saythe that one of the thre bells pteyning to the layte sell of Wetherell came to Carlysle which bell was hanged uppon the wall called Springoll Tower in Carlysle to call the workmen to worke at the making of the new cytydale in Carlysle and mending of the castell ther And for the other two bells the said Lancelot Saulkelde doth confesse him self that they remayne in a house in Wetherell for the Quenes mats use unbroken to be delyvered when yt shall pleas her grace to comaunde anye of her counsell to call for the same two bells.

"John Harper srvante unto Xpofer Crackenthropp of Newbigging esquier decessyd deposythe and saithe that his master Xpofer Craken-throps dyd gyve hym liijs iiijd in sylver to pay master Grene for the bell of the layte ffreers in Applebye.

"Jeffrey Thomson Stephen Robinson and Anthonie Robinson of Penrithe yomen saythe that Richarde Wasshington besydes Kendal bought the late house of the ffreers in Penrithe and hadd the bell of the sayde ffreers."

Neither in the instructions issued to the commissioners, nor in the report made by them, is there any mention of the Shap bells. Local tradition says that one of them is now at Kirkbythore (*Whelan*, p. 753) and another at Orton (*C. and W. Transactions*, Vol. vi., p. 84). If Henry VIII. allowed the Shap bells to be distributed among neighbouring churches, the knowledge that such had been the case would render it unnecessary for Philip and Mary's commissioners to make any inquiry as to what had become of them. The omission of Lanercost and Holme Cultram from the list of places to be reported on by these commissioners shews that Lanercost and Holme Abbeys were not supposed to have been despoiled of lead or bells in Henry's reign; which was doubtless owing to their having been allowed to remain as parish churches. At Holme Cultram in 1552, according to Edward VI.'s inventory, there were "iij bells", probably the original number. One of those bells, dated 1465, remains to this day, and will be found, when the time comes for fully describing it, to be a bell of exceptional interest. Meanwhile it points to the inference that one or both of the Lanercost bells of

1749,

1749, which probably supplied the metal for the present bell, were of mediæval date.

### NETHER DENTON.

This church in 1552 had but a poor show of goods to present to the notice of Edward VI.'s commissioners, sioners, who reported :—

“NETHER DENTON: Itm one chales of tyn ij altercl. . .”

The missing item, if there be one missing, may or may not have been “ij bells” or “one bell”, but there may be nothing missing, as the list may have ended with the “alterclothes”. In 1689 there was a bell here which did not give satisfaction, as the churchwardens in their “presentments” for that year say :—

“We have a very bad bell.”

In 1719 they say :—

“The steeple of our parish church is not in good repair. Neither have we any bell.”

Bishop Nicolson was here in the interim, on May 7th, 1703, but says nothing either about a “bad bell” or the lack of a bell; which seems odd, especially as he found a good deal of fault in other respects. But his attention may have been diverted from the bell by the complaints of the parishioners about another matter, seeing that they were as dissatisfied with their newly appointed rector, Thomas Pearson, as they were with their bell; on which matter the bishop says :—

“Mr P will do well enough: all they complain of being onely his Reading too fast” (Bp. N. p. 1).

At what time they procured a bell there is nothing to show; but it must have been before 1749, the terrier for which year reports

“one Bel, the weight uncertain.”

In 1868, when the church was rebuilt, a new bell was  
given

given by Mr. C. Taylor of Low Houses. There is a prevalent belief that the old bell went to some other church, but to what church no one can say. The present bell, 19½ inches diameter, is inscribed—

J TAYLOR AND SONS  
LOUGHBOROUGH, 1868.

Messrs. Taylor, the founders of "Great Paul", are the present representatives of the ancient bell-founders of Leicester, for an interesting account of whom, beginning as far back as the 15th century, see Mr. North's book on *The Church Bells of Rutland* (pp. 49-63).

### OVER DENTON.

That a bell may easily get a worse character than it deserves is shown by what befel the old Over Denton bell, thus described in the terrier of 1875 :—

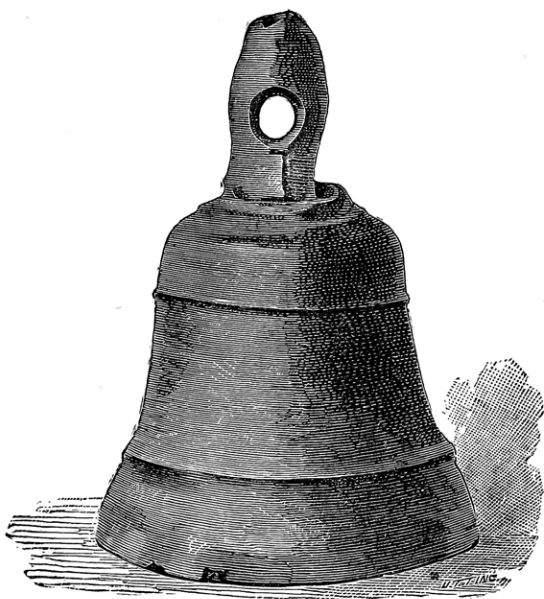
"One bell cracked and unfit for use."

In 1881, when the church was restored, a new bell was got, 14½ inches in diameter, weight 93 lbs., on which is—

JOHN TAYLOR & CO., LOUGHBOROUGH, 1881.

The old bell, when removed to make way for the new, was deposited in the ancient pele tower near the church, the vicar very properly desiring to preserve it as a venerable relic of the past. Its supposed crack was sought for but not found, nor was there now anything the matter with its tone. Yet for several years it had undoubtedly sounded as though it were cracked. Here, as in the case of the Hayton school bell (*ante* p. 431), owing to some loosening of its gear, the bell at every swing had touched the wall by the side of which it was fixed. It is only 7½ inches in diameter, and weighs but 16½ lbs. Unfortunately it is blank, so that there is nothing but its appearance to indicate its age; but if it be as old as it looks it is very ancient. Antiquaries  
who

who saw it in the temporary museum of the Archæological Institute at Carlisle were of opinion that it has come down from mediæval times, but in the absence of marks or inscription they abstained from assigning it to any particular period. Its canon, like the west door of Lanercost Abbey,



is not in the centre, a probable sign of antiquity. Everything connected with Over Denton church, prior to its restoration in 1881, was ancient. Mr. C. Ferguson, writing in 1877, said :—

“ The church at Over Denton is built of stones evidently taken from the Roman Wall, and is remarkable among the churches of Cumberland in retaining so much of its original character untouched, presenting a curious example of what was the early type of church in this diocese ” (*C. and W. Archæological Transactions*, Vol. ii., p. 157).

In

In the churchyard is the tombstone of

Margaret Teasdale of Mumps Hall  
who died May the 5th 1777  
aged 98 years

What I was once some may relate  
What I am now is each ones fate  
What I shall be none can explain  
Till he that called call again.

What she was once has been related to some purpose by Sir Walter Scott. What she is now was feebly proclaimed by the old Over Denton bell\* when it sounded the funeral knell of the hostess of Mumps Ha'.

### STAPLETON.

Here, as at Nether Denton, Edward VI.'s commissioners were able to complete their report in a single line :—

“STAPPLETON: Itm one chales of tyn one veste. . .”

Perhaps even the single line afforded more space than they needed, and their report may have ended with the now missing syllable of the “vestment”. Bishop Nicolson, who was at Stapleton on July 30th, 1703, says :—

“Nor did they ever hear that they had a Bell.”

Doubtless both here and at Bewcastle he left strict injunction that a bell should be procured. But the men of Bewcastle, as we have seen, were slow, and their Stapleton neighbours were still slower, to supply the want. The Stapleton terrier, not only of 1749, but also of 1828, curtly reports :—

“No bell.”

But 1828 was the year which saw the fixing of the Brampton ring, a memorable event in the history of church bells in this neighbourhood ; and in less than two years from

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\* This bell has from time immemorial been used as the parish bell ; but it is so small that one must think it was originally the sanctus bell.

that

that date, a short time on the borders in a matter of this kind, Stapleton had a bell of its own, 25½ inches in diameter, on which is inscribed

BURGESS AND HAYTON,  
CARLISLE, 1830.

This firm, as we have seen, cast the Castle Carrock bell in 1828, the Hayton bell in 1830, and the Wetheral bell in 1833. It is worth while, in connection with the long continued lack of a church bell at Stapleton and Bewcastle, to notice that the same deficiency was observed by Bishop Nicolson in 1703, and by Chancellor Waugh about fifty years later, at Kirkandrews-upon-Esk. At Kirklington, which he visited on October 6th, 1703, the bishop says :—

“They have two small Bells, which are pretty good; and a Rarity on the Borders ” (Bp. N., p. 107).

He perhaps only meant that “two bells,” especially if “pretty good,” were the “rarity.” Nevertheless the instances of Stapleton, Bewcastle, and Kirkandrews, seem to show that even a single bell was formerly a rarity in the border parishes.

### TALKIN.

The chapel of this township of Hayton parish was built in 1842 by the late Mr. T. H. Graham, of Edmond Castle, who also gave the bell, 17½ inches diameter, weight about 1 cwt. 1½ qrs., cast by

THOMAS MEARS, FOUNDER,  
LONDON, 1842.

The Whitechapel foundry, at which this bell was cast, was for nearly a century, as shewn by inscriptions on Cumberland bells, in the hands of the Mears family. T. and W. Mears, the successors of Pack and Chapman (*ante* p. 434), or rather of W. Chapman, who was sole proprietor in 1781, (*Raven*, p. 152), cast a bell for Egremont in 1788; Thomas  
Mears



Mears cast the Brampton ring in 1826, the Talkin bell in 1842, and the present fourth bell of Carlisle Cathedral ring in 1845; C. and G. Mears cast the Edmond Castle bell in 1847; Mears & Co. the St. Stephen's (Carlisle) bell in 1864; and Mears and Stainbank the St. Cuthbert's (Carlisle) bell in 1876. Mr. Robert Stainbank is now sole proprietor.

### WALTON.

There is here a new bell, bought by subscription, from the Cripplegate foundry :—

CAST BY  
JOHN WARNER & SONS  
1876.

The terrier of 1878 describes it as

“One large bell weighing about 8 cwt.”

But its weight, as given in the founders' account, is 10 cwt. It is therefore the largest bell in the deanery, being heavier by one cwt. than the Brampton tenor. Its note is G. The terrier of 1749 mentions

“One bell weighing about a hundred and twenty pounds weight.”

This bell, which has been transferred to the school-room, is 15 inches in diameter, and inscribed only with date

1731.

A still earlier bell had in 1703 incurred the contempt of Bishop Nicolson, who says :—

“Here's only one little crack'd Bell” (Bp. N., p. 53).

He seems, from what he said both here and at Castle Carrock (*ante* p. 422) to have expected to find more than one bell at each church; and we have seen that at some time or other as many as seven of the churches even in this border deanery had formerly two bells. We may conclude, therefore, that when the bishop spoke of the Kirk-linton bells as “a rarity on the borders” (*ante* p. 440) he meant

meant by the "borders" only the strictly border parishes. The two "pretty good" bells of Kirkclinton have now given place to one bell; and in Brampton deanery there are now but three churches which have each more than one bell. The same diminishing process has probably been going on in other parts of the county, which may be found, when its church towers and terriers have been thoroughly explored, to possess fewer bells now than it had in 1749, and to have had fewer in 1749 than in 1552. Not that there was ever any abundance of church bells in this county, for it appears, as nearly as can be ascertained from the present imperfect condition of Edward VI.'s Inventory, that in 1552 only two Cumberland churches had 4 bells each, four had 3, seventy-six had 2, nineteen had each but one bell, and twenty had no bell, making a total of 181 bells in 111 churches, or an average of 1.6 to each church; a poor list compared with that given in the Inventory for other counties, *e.g.*, Herts with its average of 3.6 (*Church Goods in Herts*, by J. E. Cussans), Berks 3.2 (*Church Goods in Berks*, by W. Money, F.S.A.), and Kent 3 (*Archæologia Cantiana*). But, as a main reason for the present rarity of mediæval bells in England has been the recasting of rings to adapt them to the requirements of change ringing, a comparatively modern innovation, it is just possible that in Cumberland, for the reason that from remote times down to the present day its rings have been few and far between, there may yet be remaining in its church towers a greater number of ancient bells than are to be found in counties where from time immemorial almost every parish church has had its ring. Mr. North says:—

"The old rings consisted usually of few bells and heavy ones. . . . To ring the 'changes,' introduced by Stedman and his disciples, a larger number of bells were required. This want could be met in two ways, either by adding new trebles to the existing heavy rings, which was the best but most expensive way, or by recasting, say, four heavy bells into six or eight light ones, and so increasing the number without buying more metal. This was the least expensive but

but more popular plan . . . It ceases, therefore, to be a matter of surprise that it is chiefly in small rural churches, with few bells, where the temptation to change ringing could not exist, that we chiefly expect and usually find ancient bells (*Rutland Church Bells*, p. 31).

We might therefore expect to find many mediæval bells still remaining in Cumberland but for the probability that their number has been considerably lessened by a practice we have already had occasion to notice, which is exactly the opposite to that spoken of by Mr. North. The ancient Cumberland bells, if we may judge from the two surviving specimens in this deanery, and from the traces on which we have come of bells formerly existing at Brampton, Hayton, Kirklington, and Milburn, were very small, and the temptation has been to recast two bells into one. Still if there remain even as many mediæval bells in each Cumberland deanery as in that of Brampton, it will be above the average of other counties. Publicity will be the best means of saving them from the furnace.

In conclusion I beg to return my best thanks to the clergy and churchwardens of this deanery, who have kindly supplied me with much of the information contained in the foregoing paper.

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