



Road over Sands,	-	-	-
Ancient road by Kendal,	-	-	-
Ditto. by Towtup	Witherslack,		
Amended road of 1820,	-	-	-
Railways,	-	-	-

- Red. 
- Blue. 
- Green. 
- Yellow. 

ART. I.—*The Guides over the Kent and Levens Sands, Morecambe Bay.* By John Fell, Dane Ghyll.

Read at Kirkby Lonsdale, June 27th, 1883.

IN order to appreciate the value of these ancient offices it is desirable to ask the reader of this paper to visit at some opportunity the terrace of Lancaster Castle or the churchyard. From these positions the view of a large range of country is obtained. It is scarcely an exaggeration to describe this panorama as one of the finest prospects in England. Commencing with Ingleboro on the north-east, the eye rests on the ranges of mountains which extend from the West Riding to Black Combe, the south-westerly point of Cumberland. Most of the important mountains of Yorkshire, Westmorland, Cumberland, and North Lancashire are readily recognised by those who are familiar with these districts. In the foreground lies the estuary of Morecambe Bay, distant from two to three miles, with an undulating tract of country stretching down to it from the foot of the Castle Hill of Lancaster. At high water Morecambe Bay looks like a large firth, such as that of the Clyde; at low water it displays a wide and level plain of sand, from a distance appearing to be almost free from obstacles to the traveller. Jutting out into this tract of sand the Cartmel district comes first in view from the south, while further off the long undulating promontory of Furness is seen stretching out for many miles seaward from the mountain ranges which bound it on the north and north-east. These districts, Furness and Cartmel, form that portion of the Hundred of Lonsdale, in the county of Lancaster, which is known as Lonsdale North of the Sands. From an early period this remarkable territory appears to have

have belonged to Lancashire, although the county of Westmorland and the estuary of Morecambe Bay absolutely separate it from the main body of the county. Both Furness and Cartmel are full of evidences of ancient populations. British remains, Roman works, the great Abbey of Furness, with the priories of Cartmel and Conishead, ancient towns and villages and old castles, such as Piel and Gleaston, attest the early importance of this detached hundred of the great county palatine of Lancaster. Before treating of the route over the sands, I propose to consider in this paper the other means of approach to this remote part of England until early in the present century. In the first place, I shall submit the information I have been able to obtain on the subject of the ancient roads into it apart from the passage over the sands. The evidence contained in maps or records is, so far as I have been able to investigate this question, imperfect and meagre, but the presumption is strong that between the Lancaster and Kendal districts there would be communications at a very early period. After crossing the Lune, which is fordable at Lancaster at ordinary height, the country presents no natural difficulties except the passage of the small rivers Keer and Bela and the more important river Kent. It is comparatively level, and by way of Burton and Milnthorpe the road may be considered to have been free from dangers such as swamps or peat bogs, as it is chiefly in a limestone district, with a gravelly surface; but when I come to consider the points of departure from this line of road towards Cartmel or Furness, I am met by many difficulties. If Levens Bridge be taken as the natural position at which to turn to the west in travelling to these districts the formidable obstacle of a tract of peat moss presents itself, practically encircling the base of Whitbarrow Scar. The direct line, which was ultimately adopted by the Turnpike road of 1820, was made over part of this great moss. From Levens to Lindale-in-Cartmel the distance
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is about seven miles, and in ancient times the traveller, in order to avoid the moss, would be compelled to pass along the rough base of Whitbarrow Scar, through Witherslack, to the foot of the Towtup Hill. This road would probably be practicable for horses or foot passengers only, until a recent date. In 1782, however, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher Rigge, of Wood Broughton, travelled down from London, and came to their residence in Cartmel by this road, although I find in maps of the last century no evidence of an available road leading from Westmorland into Furness except the road from Kendal, crossing the river Winster at Bowland Bridge over the very steep and lofty hill, Gunner's How, bringing the traveller to the foot of the Windermere Lake, thence to Ulverston, the chief town in Furness. If it was desired to avoid the perils of the journey over the sands, this was probably in ancient times a better route than the road through Witherslack by Bleacragg Bridge up the difficult hill of Towtup to the hamlet of High Newton from which roads into Cartmel and Furness would be available. Maps of the last century do not make the connection by this route with the road leading from Lancaster to Kendal by Levens clear. I am inclined to consider it was used principally for local purposes, until the new road across the moss was made, about 1820. My conclusions as to the road from Kendal to the foot of Windermere are I think, assured by an Act passed in the third year of the reign of George III., A.D. 1763. The preamble reads thus: "Whereas the road leading from Kirkby Kendal through Crossthwaite and over Bowland Bridge, in the county of Westmorland, and from thence over Cartmel Fell to Newby Bridge, and from thence over Elingarth Brow to the market town of Bouth, and over Pennybridge by Greenodd, a small seaport, and from thence on the east side of Arrad to Ulverston, and from thence through Lindal by Titup to Kirkby Ireleth, in the County Palantine of Lancaster, is in a ruinous condition, and, in several parts,

narrow

narrow and incommodious, and the same cannot be effectually repaired, widened, and rendered commodious by the present methods provided by law. May it therefore please your Majesty that it may be enacted, &c., &c., &c." It seems therefore a fair inference from the recital of this old Act that the road to which it applied was the best available road at that date to Ulverston and the Furness district. Under the most favourable conditions this road offered a very circuitous means of access to Lonsdale North of the Sands and the south-west district of Cumberland, passing, as it did, over some of the steepest hills of the district in order to avoid the mosses and soft ground below them. In addition to the difficulties of the circuitous approach to Lonsdale North of the Sands by any other road than across Morecambe Bay, we must not overlook the condition in former times of the surface of the roads themselves. There are no remains in Furness and Cartmel of which I am aware (except on the old Roman road) of the system of pavement which was so common in other parts of Lancashire; and until the days of Macadam without pavement roads could only be roughly formed with a surface of loose stones. In fact that condition is within living memory, and Mr. Stockdale, in his annals of Cartmel. p. 367, describes his recollections of a journey over a portion of this road in 1801. The present Mr. Machell, of Penny Bridge Hall, has a record of the journey of his grandmother to London in 1737. She was compelled to ride to Kendal to join the carriage in which she and her friends ultimately proceeded, and even then they were unable to obtain post horses nearer than Whitchurch. The following extract from a letter of Sir Thomas Lowther to his steward, Mr. Fletcher, residing at Holker, affords an excellent illustration of this part of my subject. The Duke of Devonshire has kindly favoured me with this quaint and valuable correspondence, of which I shall avail myself also hereafter.

London,

London, July 13th, 1728.

Mr. Fletcher,—I am not yet sure whether the Bishop of Chester comes directly from Lancaster or Kendal, but I fancy from the latter. You must go and meet him six miles from Holker, and let him know how sorry I am that I can't wait upon him in the country. When I last saw the Bishop he was very apprehensive of the sands, but if he goes from Lancaster to Kendall he may come landway, which he should know. Moreover let him come what way he will, do you go at least six miles to meet him. If not to either Lancaster or Kendall. When he goes from Holker you may see him safe out of Lancashire.

THOS. LOWTHER.

Honoured sir,—On Thursday, the 18th inst., I waited on the Lord Bishop at Kendall, and on Fryday he and his attendants came to Holker. On Monday his lordship set forward for Whitehaven, and passed over sands at morning tide; called at Conishead, and stay'd there three or four hours, and passed Duddon sands between 12 and one o'clock. He lodged that night at Moncaster.—I am, &c., J. FLETCHER.

About 1820 the new turnpike road from Levens Bridge to Greenodd was completed, and the facilities of communication between Lonsdale North of the Sands and other parts of the country were materially improved. The distance are as follows, taking Ulverston as the centre and principal town of Lonsdale North of the Sands in former times :—Lancaster to Ulverston over the sands, about 20 miles; Lancaster to Ulverston, by Kendal, about 40 miles; Lancaster to Ulverston, by new road of 1820, about 34 miles. The road by Kendal to Ulverston was, so far as I can learn, never used as a coach road. The local records of the coaching times are apparently lost or mislaid, both at Ulverston and Lancaster. But there can be little doubt that early in the present century, if not prior to it, there was at least one coach over sands to and from Lancaster to Ulverston.* What number of passengers availed them-

* Advertisement, Cumberland Pacquet, September 11th, 1781.—A Diligence, or Chaise, which will carry three persons conveniently, will set out from Mr. Stanley Turner's the Sun Inn, Lancaster, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, as the tide will permit, to Ulverston, over the sands, which is the nearest and direct road to Whitehaven. And the same Diligence will return to Lancaster, from Henry selves

selves of this mode of transit, or the cost of the journey, will become a matter of perfect obscurity unless some happy accident discovers the missing coaching books of the period. These coaches continued their operations until the opening of the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway in 1857, offered speedier means of communication. Mr. Stockdale, in speaking of the expenditure in widening the road from Sandgate to Flookburgh in Cartmel, which was part of the only coach road from Lancaster to Ulverston over sands, says :

“Two long coaches, then called provincially ‘Dillies,’ holding each thirteen inside passengers and a heavy load of luggage and passengers on the top, passed through the whole length of Flookburgh in my remembrance every day, I think, except, perhaps, Sundays. These coaches, it was at last found out, were too heavy for the passage over Morecambe Bay, inasmuch as they frequently got fast in the quick-sands ; so lighter coaches holding fewer passengers were substituted for the long ones.”

If we regard the great difference in distances by road and over the sands, the hilly nature and imperfect condition of the surface of the roads, and the dangers and difficulties incident to travel in ancient times, it seems impossible to arrive at any other conclusion than that crossing the sands of Morecambe Bay would be the principal route of communication between the inhabitants of its southern and northern shores. Guides, therefore, acquainted with the channels of the rivers Kent and Leven, as well as the trackless wastes of sand, would seem to have been a necessity at an early period, and I propose to make enquiry into the antiquity and duties of their office as we find it constituted. It may be that when Agricola commenced in A.D. 79 his march from Lancaster for the conquest of

Addison's, the Kings Arms, in Ulverston, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Each passenger to pay Five Shillings on taking a place for Ulverston or Lancaster.

The proprietors assure the public that they have procured a sober and careful driver, who is well acquainted with the sands, and humbly hope that their plan will meet with due encouragement, as this is the most cheap, safe, and expeditious method of crossing the sands, to and from Ulverston.

north-west

north-west Britain, a portion of his forces advancing by the coast line was guided over the estuary of Morecambe Bay by natives accustomed to its tides and fords.

It is quite clear that the Romans had a road across the Cartmel promontory "from the shore at Kents Bank or Wyke to Sandgate at Flookburgh," although this road may have been made at a later period of the Roman occupation. This road extended on the Furness side of the Leven sands from Conishead Bank, by what is familiarly known as the Red-lane, and through Dalton to the estuary of the Duddon. West, in his *Antiquities of Furness*, says :

"In the perambulation-roll of the parish of Ulverston, a record of high antiquity, the place, where the road they made use of quits the sands, is called Spina Alba, the White-thorn on Conishead bank; and in another part of the same roll the road itself is called street. (See *Camden Brit.*, p. 696.) The Roman road proceeds from the Thorn west through Street-gate to the place where it joins the new turnpike road from Ulverston (made under the Act of 1763), and forming an obtuse angle to the south-west points directly by Lindale to Dalton. At the cross at Dalton it turns up Scalegate, and slanting over the rocks by St. Helen's, crosses Goldmire, and circling a little, take its direction by Roan Head to Duddon sands."

Both the road across the Cartmel promontory and that from the White-thorn on Conishead bank imply the use of the sands by the Romans practically in the same line as was adhered to till the construction of the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway in 1857. In Close's edition of West, 1805, there is an additional proof of this ancient Roman road.

"In the month of May, 1803, two labourers, in making a deep capacious drain, discovered an ancient road paved with stones at the head of Goldmire. It extends across the meadow about fifteen yards to the north side of the present road, and may be easily traced with an iron rod. In some places it is sunk two to three feet below the surface of the soil."

West also states that

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“This road from the Thorn continued the only great road through Low Furness till the dissolution of monasteries, when hospitality ceasing at the Priory of Conishead, which was situated by the great road, and at the Abbey of Furness, not far from it, houses of entertainment were opened for the traveller at Ulverston, and a road from thence to the sands laid out, by which means the ancient route through Low Furness was abandoned.”

Having now discussed the means of entrance from the south by road or bridle-path to Lonsdale North of the Sands, I shall proceed to describe the passage of the sands and the value of the office of guide, with its duties and emoluments. Looking again from Lancaster to Furness, it might be said that the natural route was to pass much more directly over the sands, and without touching the promontory of Cartmel, than by the route which seems to have been followed. But there is little evidence that the road across the sands varied materially in its direction. From Lancaster to Hest Bank, which is at a short distance to the westward of the road between Lancaster to Kendal, is about three miles. From Hest Bank to Kents Bank, or Cart-lane, on the Allithwaite shore, the distance does not much exceed in a straight line seven miles; but as the crossing was more or less circuitous, two or three miles would have to be added to the length of the passage over the Kent sands. Then came the short journey on dry land over the Cartmel promontory, through the hamlets of Allithwaite, Flookburgh, and Carke, of about three miles to the Ulverston or Leven sands. The distance over these sands in a direct line from Carke to Hammerside Hill is three miles, and possibly nearly four to Sandside, where the residence of the guide over these sands seems to have been since the dissolution of the monasteries, and the change of road from the White-thorn and Red-lane to the new approach from Ulverston to the sands. From Sandside to Ulverston is about a mile. The time available for crossing on both sands extended from two to three hours before

before low water until about the same period before the next high water, altogether about five hours. This depended somewhat on the question of spring or neap tides, and also on the condition of the weather. In Morecambe Bay the rising tide flows for about five hours, and the falling tide about seven, so that the movement and operations of the flood are much more expeditious than those of the ebb. In high springs it is by no means unusual to see the tide advancing with a considerable head, and with rapidity. If under these circumstances the traveller had failed to cross the channels before the tide began to make in this manner, it would become not only exceedingly dangerous to attempt the crossing, but even retreat inland involved difficulty and risk. Ordinarily speaking the journey was simple and pleasant. To those who have driven or ridden across from Lancaster to Ulverston in fine weather there could be few more enjoyable sensations. Both under carriages and under horses' feet the greater part of the sands had a sound and even hard surface. They were almost level, and except at the fords or occasional places where either the flood-tide or river freshets had caused breaks, there was nothing to interrupt progress at a good speed. The scenery in crossing may be said to be almost unequalled in Great Britain, as the lake mountains have their proportions much enhanced by the variety and beauty of the foreground of the Furness and Cartmel shores. But with the sunny side of the picture the reverse must also be contrasted. Until an advanced period of the present century, when the traffic marked almost a defined road, in dull thick weather, or in the duskiess of winter evenings, the wayfarer had little to guide him, and might become absolutely lost, not knowing in which direction to seek the guide and the ford. Even the ancient practice of "brobbing," which consisted of sticking pieces of broom into the sand at intervals, as a guide to the road over them, was ineffectual in thick weather

weather. For the danger was not that of the quicksands or the flowing tide alone, but an absolute uncertainty where you were going, and the serious risk of deep water or holes if the guide and ford were missed. A large number of accidents which occurred, and they were annually numerous even as recorded, arose from travellers losing their way and being unable to discover the roads to the fords. I find the following entries as old examples of loss of life in the Cartmel Registers through crossing the sands.

1576. Sept. 12. One young man buried, which was drowned in the brodwater.

1582. Aug. 1, was buried a son of Leonard Rallinson, of Furness Fell, drowned at the Grainge, the 28th daye of July.

1610. Feb. 4. John fell, sone of Augustine, of Birkbie, drowned on Conyngsed Sands.

1633. Aug. 10. Wm. Best, gent., drowned on Milthorp sands (upper part of Kent sands).

There are also numerous instances of accidents to persons in carts, coaches, and carriages. Probably every year could give illustrations of them; I have selected a few examples. Letters from Sir Thomas Lowther, of Holker, to Mr. Fletcher, attest the anxiety felt as to a safe passage across the sands of Morecambe Bay.

London, July ye 11th, 1727.— . . My cousin, James Lowther (who stands member of Parliament of Cumberland), sets forward for Whitehaven this morning, and goes the Lancashire road, and according as he computes the days he will be upon the road, he will reach Lancaster next Monday or Tuesday morning at furthest. I therefore desire that you will without fail go over to Lancaster on Monday, and stay there till he comes, and then conduct him over the sands to Holker, where, I believe he will rest one night. . . . Put him into a bed well air'd; as he is so good a friend of mine, I cannot show too much respect to him; so be sure you go next Monday to Lancaster to meet him, and carry him to Holker safe over the sands. You will receive this letter either Friday evening or Saturday morning, so pray as soon as you receive it, hire a messenger or send George Rigg to the mannor with the enclosed letter, which is to desire Robert Atkinson to come over to Holker and stay there, because John
Dean

Dean will be set forward for London. Robert must wait of cousin Lowther over Cartmel sands, through Furness, and see him safe over Millom sands. Pray fail not meeting my cousin Lowther next Monday at Lancaster. If Robert Atkinson should any way miss of Mr. Lowther, you must see him through Furness, for he goes down in a chaise rather too broad for those narrow roads. Pray peruse the enclosed letter, seal it, and give proper directions to Robert Atkinson. I hope my cousin Lowther will not attempt going over Lancaster and Furness sands at one tide, which you may let him know would be too hard. From Holker he may go over Furness and Millom sands. I would have him see Holker.—Yours, THOS. LOWTHER.

London, July ye 10th, 1727. Mr. Fletcher,—I fancy, as I wish, this, may find you at Lancaster. . . . I daresay my cousin Lowther will find it too hard for his horses to go over both Lancaster and Furness sands at one tide, it being as much as a single horse can do; as Holker is so near the sands, he may go over Furness and Millom at one tide; . . . I am not sure where my cousin Lowther will call, or whether he will stop at Lancaster or not, but if he doth, I fancy it will be at ye King's Arms.—Yours in great haste, THO. LOWTHER.

17th July, 1727. Hon'd Sir,— . . . Mr. Lowther came to the King's Arms about half an hour past seven this evening; he's very hearty, but resolved to go over the sands to-morrow morning, though the tide last but to five o'clock or thereabouts, so that we must be on horseback by two in the morning or thereabouts. He stays the tide while at Cartmel, and in the afternoon will go to Ulverstone, for he says he must be at Whitehaven on Wednesday at longest.—I am, your hon'd, most faithful, and obedient and humble servant, WM. FLETCHER.

To Mr. Fletcher. London, June ye 4th, 1728.—I am so much indisposed that I am scarce able to write. However, can't help telling you that my cousin James Lowther will be at Holker Wednesday sevensnight, ye 12th inst., and he desires that Robt. Atkinson may be there ready to carry him by way of Ulverstone to Millom, for he will not go about by Peel again. I fancy he will stay most part of Wednesday at Holker, and be sure to get word to Robert Atkinson to be there that day to attend my cousin Lowther as far as he pleaseth. Your humble servant, THOS. LOWTHER.

To Mr. John Fletcher.—Bath, June ye 11th, 1729.— . . . My cousin James Lowther will shortly be for Whitehaven. When you hear of his being at Lancaster you must meet him there and see him
safe

safe from Lancaster over Millom sands, but I hope he will call at Holker,—I am, your hearty friend, THOS. LOWTHER. Robert Atkinson should conduct cousin Lowther through Furness and over Millom sands, he knowing these sands very well.

16th June, 1729.—Hon'd sir,—. . . Mr. Lowther is to be at Lancaster next Wednesday at night, when I shall wait of him, and next day conduct him over the sands to Holker. I spoke yesterday to Robert Atkinson to do the like through Furness and over Millom sands.—. . . WM. FLETCHER.

Coventry, February ye 5th, 1730.—. . . You'll go with my wife as far as Preston or till Sparks meets her, but let Sparks know the day Lady Betty intends being at Preston, and pray tell Mrs. Humble the tides will not allow Lady Betty to go from Holker before Fryday sevensnight, the coach not to bait at Lancaster, but go to Garstang. I had almost forgot one thing. You must pay Lady Betty 30 guineas to bear their charges, viz., she will give you a receipt, and you must bear their charges to Preston. Pray don't let the coach go over the sands in bad weather, and tell Mrs. Humble from me to make the coach as little heavy in things as possible, and not to take long days' journeys, or be out late at nights. . . . I shall write to you soon again, and I hope to hear from you how everything goes, but by all means let Mrs. Humble know that the tides will not allow before Fryday sevensnight.—I am, yours very truly, THOS. LOWTHER.

London, Feb. 5th, 1730.—You'll give Sparks timely notice to meet the coach at Preston, and you must go with the coach till Sparks meets it; and pay all expenses. . . . Be sure that the coach don't cross the sands when there is any danger; Lady Betty may go very well from Holker to Garstang without bateing, which she proposeth, only may stay about a quarter of an hour at Lancaster. I would have John Dean to go all the way from Holker to London a little before the coach to observe if there be any dangerous places, and then to walk by the coach for fear of an overturn; and there is always men in Preston or Walton hired to go each side of the coach through the bad ways in Lancashire. Pray give the coachman a charge to be very careful. . . . Your very hearty friend, THOS. LOWTHER.

In 1821 a post chaise was lost close to Hest Bank after being apparently placed by the guide in safety across the river Keer. The occupant of the chaise, the post boy, and one of the horses were drowned. In 1825 Aug. 21, the
coach

coach from Lancaster to Ulverston was blown over when in mid-channel on the sands. The passengers were all saved, but one of the horses was drowned. On the 30th of August, 1828, the oversands coach from Lancaster to Ulverston suddenly sank in the sands. The passengers escaped, but Mr. Meadows, a comedian, who had been performing at Lancaster, after he had reached land, ventured back to try to save his luggage, when he sank to the armpits, and was rescued with much difficulty.

In 1846 nine young people, men and women, were drowned on the Leven Sands; they were returning to the Cartmel side to which they belonged, from the Whitsuntide fair at Ulverston. Just beyond the ledge of the rocks called Black Scar they drove the cart, in which they were riding, into an apparently small piece of water, this was however the place where a coasting vessel had lain for a tide or two and had left a deep hole or dock caused by the rush of the tide around the vessel's hull, on driving on to the side of this hole the cart at once upset into it, and all the party, as also the horse, were drowned without being perceived by the many other persons who were also at the time crossing the sand and who did not even hear a cry. They were all buried on the 4th of June, 1846, at Cartmel as the register shows, and their ages ranged from 17 to 25.

In the year 1857, seven young men, farm servants, set off in a cart to cross the Kent sands to Lancaster to attend the hiring fair of the next day, they started from Kents Bank and the following day their bodies were found washed about on the sands, they had probably been caught by the tide and drowned, two of them were buried at Cartmel on the 2nd of June, 1857, the others on the Carnforth side to which they belonged.

Among the narrow escapes from danger I may record that of Major Bigland, of Bigland Hall, who, when crossing alone from Lancaster in his gig on a dusky evening, missed the Cartmel promontory entirely, and found himself most
 fortunately

fortunately landing safely near Conishead Priory. The fate of a coach, if the ford was unusually soft in the bottom, became almost a matter of certainty, although its loss seldom involved any sacrifice of life beyond the abandonment of horses occasionally, if the coachman was unable to cut the harness in time. It will be easily comprehended that when a coach began to stick, the struggling of the horses soon rendered them powerless and fast in the soft sand. There was then no alternative for the passengers except to get down into the water, shoulder their luggage, if they could carry it, and make off for the nearest shore. The coach was generally found a few days after washed up somewhere near the shore, full of sand, and more or less damaged. After repairs and being fresh lined, it was ready to take its journey again as before. I have thought these illustrations of some of the dangers attending the passage of the sands of Morecambe Bay might not prove uninteresting, and they furnish, at all events, excellent examples of the imperative necessity for skilled and trustworthy persons to serve in the office of guide.

I shall now proceed to give such information as I have been able to gather as to the office and its duties. The chartularies of the Priories of Cartmel and Conishead are unfortunately not available. They were both founded in the 12th century—Cartmel Priory by William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke; and Conishead Priory by William de Taillebois, Baron of Kendal, who took the name of Lancaster, originally as a “Hospital for the poor, decrepit, indigent, and lepers of Ulverston and its environs,” being shortly afterwards raised to the dignity of a Priory, the canons of which were charged with these charitable duties. The chartularies of these Priories have not passed to the present owners of their estates, and they do not appear to have been known to Mr. West or to Mr. Stockdale. It would be interesting to learn from them whether the task of providing guides over the Kent and Leven sands was imposed

imposed upon these religious houses, as an original duty and element of their foundation, or whether they were considered by the authorities of the period the most fit and proper persons to control and superintend an office then in existence. I am sorry to say that this question must remain for the present in the region of speculation, but I consider it not improbable that there might be persons acting for hire as guides over sands even in the Roman period.

The most ancient building of which any record remains having relation to the crossing of the sands is the chapel on the island known to this day as Chapel Island, and situated on the Levens sands, about three-quarters of a mile to the eastward of Conishead Priory, and in the direct line to the ancient Roman road through Furness from Cartmel. Mr. West says, "There in former times divine service was performed at a convenient hour for such as crossed the sands." This would probably form one of the duties of the monks of Conishead Priory, as this priory was charged with the office of guide over the Leven sands. I have obtained from the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, 1535 (official edition 1825, vol. v., p.p. 271, 272,), the following extracts:—

"Prioratus de Conyngshed,"

"Repris"

Feod' viz in

Johis Harteley baltij et conduct' cuncti populi dñi

Reg per Sabulas maris voc' Kent Saunds ex fund'

fundat' xvii viijd.

Prioratus de Cartmell

"Repris"

Feod' viz in

Wiltmo Gate baltij et conduct' cuncti populi dñi

Reg per Sabulas maris voc' Cartmel Sands ex fundac'

fundat' xjli.

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In these extracts the duties attaching to the two priories are evidently confused. The safe conduct of the King's lieges over the Kent sands clearly belonged to the Priory of Cartmel; that over the Leven, or as they are commonly called, Ulverston sands, to the priory of Conishead; and that I am right in treating the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* as in error, is abundantly clear from the first patent issued after the dissolution of the monasteries by the King and Council of the Duchy of Lancaster in the 29th year of the Reign of Henry VIII. (Duchy of Lancaster Records—Patents and Leases—Henry VIII. Class lx. Vol. 3 fol. 186.) The translation of this patent is as follows:—

“Office of le Carter's office of Leven sands near Conyshed Lancashire, January 29 1548. The King &c. all to whom greeting Know ye that we by the advice and assent of our Council of our Duchy of Lancaster have given and granted and by these presents do give and grant to John Harteley of Conyshed in the County of Lancaster yeoman the office of keeper conductor and governor of our sands near Conyshed aforesaid otherwise commonly called the Carter's office of Levyn sands near Conyshed in Furness in the county of Lancaster, ‘to the late Priory of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Conyshed in Furness in the county of Lancaster.’ (These words are missing from this document, but the context requires them, and they appear in the renewed patent granted to John Hartley, Jan. 29, 2, Edward VI.), by the authority of Parliament lately suppressed and dissolved belonging and appertaining and the said John, keeper conductor and governor of the sands aforesaid we make ordain and constitute by these Presents to have occupy and enjoy and exercise the aforesaid office to the aforesaid John by himself or by his sufficient deputy or sufficient deputies for whom he shall be willing to answer to us during our pleasure. We also give and grant to the same John for the exercise of the aforesaid office the fee and wage of ten marks per annum of the issues profits and revenues of our land and tenements and other hereditaments and possessions wheresoever to the late priory of Conyshed aforesaid belonging yearly coming and growing to be paid by the hand of our receiver there for the time being at the feasts of Easter and Saint Michael the Archangel by equal portons yearly. In witness whereof, &c. Given at London the 8th day of February in the 29 year of the reign of King Henry the Eighth by the Council of the aforesaid Duchy.”

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It may be convenient to deal now briefly with the question of the endowment of the office of guide over the Leven sands. Mr. West, in his *Antiquities of Furness*, states that

The Priory of Conyshead was charged with this useful office. The guide, besides the perquisites of office, had from the Priory three acres and 15 marks per annum. King Henry VIII, on the dissolution of the Priory, charged himself and his successors with the payment of a certain sum of money.

By the document I have recited, the King seems to have reduced the perquisite of 15 marks to ten, and no allusion is made to the three acres of land. I am inclined to the opinion that this could not be the land at Saltcoates, near Ulverston, which now belongs to the office of guide, as at that date the level tract intervening between that town and the sea was probably covered with peat moss, and not cultivable. At the same time the acreage corresponds pretty closely, and after the dissolution the road to the sands appears to have been direct from Ulverston to near Saltcoates, where the residence of the guide has been for a lengthened period. His land, which is distant only a few hundred yards from his residence, may have been reclaimed at an earlier date than the bulk of the adjacent peat moss, which existed in that condition until some years in the present century. In addition to his land, this guide has had since July 1820, a salary of £22 per annum, paid from the revenues of the Duchy. The Ulverston and Lancaster Railway Act, 1851, provides that a sum of £20 shall be annually paid for the benefit of the Leven sands guide. This sum was in compensation for the loss of fees from passengers and vehicles, and did not affect his salary from the Duchy; for the guide seldom escorted any person over the channel without receiving a small pecuniary acknowledgement for his services. In the first patent of the Duchy of Lancaster records appointing a guide for the Kent sands (*Leases and Patents*, Henry VIII, chap. xi., No.

No. 3. 186) I find that he is at first described as "keeper" of Kent sands, the guide of the Leven sands having been designated by the old title of "carter."

"Office of Keeper of Kent sands, Jan. 29, 1548.—The King to all whom greeting Know ye that we by the advice and assent of our Council of our Duchy of Lancaster have given granted and by these presents do give and grant to Thomas Hogeson, of Kenty's-bancke in Cartmel in the county of Lancaster yeoman the office of keeper conductor and governor of our sands near Cartmel called Kenty sands to the late Priory of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Cartmel in the county of Lancaster by the authority of Parliament lately suppressed and dissolved as belonging and appertaining and the said Thomas keeper conductor and governor of the aforesaid sands we do make ordain and constitute by these presents to have occupy and enjoy and exercise the office aforesaid to the before mentioned Thomas Hogeson by himself or by his sufficient deputy or sufficient deputies from whom he shall be willing to answer to us during our pleasure. We also give and grant to the same Thomas for the exercise of the aforesaid office one tenement in Kenty's-bancke in Cartmel aforesaid called the Carthouse with three closes of land to the same adjoining and with the other liberties easements and profits to the same office anciently belonging and accustomed and also the fee and wage of five pounds per annum of the issues and profits and revenues of our lands tenements and other hereditaments and possessions wheresoever to our said late priory of Cartmel aforesaid belonging yearly coming and growing by the hands of our receiver there for the time being at the Feasts of Easter and St. Michael the Archangel by equal portions yearly to be paid. In witness whereof &c. Given at London the eighth day of February in the 29th year of the reign of King Henry the Eighth by the Council of the aforesaid Duchy."

In the memorandum of particulars sent to me from the Duchy office in connection with an enquiry that I was instructed by the Chancellor of the Duchy, the Right Hon. H. C. E. Childers, to hold in 1873, it is stated

"That the Priors of Cartmel had certain revenues (including Peter's pence) allowed for maintenance of a guide stationed at the ford of the united streams of the Kent and Winster."

The Carthouse and the three closes of land are still in the occupation of the Kent sands guide. In addition to them
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he has a small meadow near Allithwaite, ten acres of enclosed land allotted to him under recent enclosures, and within a short distance of his original closes of land, and a piece of turbarry now exhausted and reclaimed near Meathop Bridge. In 1715 John Carter, who then held the office, petitioned the Duchy of Lancaster for an increase of his annual stipend of five pounds. After reciting the dangerous nature of his occupation he proceeds to speak of his salary,

"Which, by the alteracon in the value of money from what it was when the salary was established, is now become very unequal to the expense and trouble attending that business, and further showing that the petitioner's father was for many years the carter, and had patent and salary paid him, and in regard of the smallness was allowed to sell ale in his house excise free. But he being about twenty years ago drowned endeavouring to save the lives of two persons crossing the sands, the petitioner, who was unacquainted with them, succeeded in the employ,"

and he further states

"That the petitioner is obliged for managing the said employ to keep two horses summer and winter, and being necessitated to attend the edy four miles upon the sands twelve hours in every twenty-four hours, his horses thereby and by often passing the waters are starved with cold and so often thrown into distempers that thereby and maintaining them he is put under a very great charge, and that the petitioner undergoes great hardships by his being exposed to the winds and cold upon the plain sands, and being often wett and he by seeking out new ffordes every variation of the edy, and upon happening of ffogs and mists is often put in danger of his life."

In addition to these substantial reasons for an increase of salary, he states that the excise officers

"In fact for two years and upwards"

had refused to admit his exemption from duty, insisting that there was no law to support it. The result of this petition, which is addressed to the "Right Honourable Heneage Earl of Alisford Chancellor of the Duchy," was the recognition of its prayer, and an accession of salary
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by augmentation from 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, at which it is recited in the order of the Duchy, to 12*l.* By a minute of the Duchy Court of the 22nd July, 1820, this amount was increased to 32*l.* per annum, but was conditional on the payment of 10*l.* to an assistant at the crossing of the small river Keer, which had at times a difficult ford. In 1810 I find that the Duchy authorised a special payment of 10*l.*

“To the assistant of Thomas Cooper, the guide over Leving sands in the execution of his office in the course of last winter.”

The repairs of the dwellings of both guides seem also to have been executed at the cost of the Duchy. In 1804 or 1805 Lord Bolton, as receiver-general of its revenues, paid to William Carter, of Cartlane 100*l.* for the repairs of his dwellinghouse; in 1831 20*l.* was contributed towards the repairs of the premises occupied by the “Leving” sands guide.

The only independent endowment or gift which I have been able to trace is mentioned on the ancient monument in Cartmel Church, to the memory of the Robinson family, of Newby Bridge. The inscription is as follows :---

“In the same grave lyeth the body of Geo. Robinson, 2nd son of the said Edward and Ann his wife, who died 9th of June, 1677, the 28th of his age, whose full blown youth left such a pattern of the charity and liberality as may raise emulation in some, envy in others, but be outdone by few. He having eternized his name by building the vestry at Cartmell, and giving over 100*l.* the interest of which is to be given yearly to the poor of the place. Also 20*l.* the interest of which is to be given yearly to the guide of Lancaster sands, which legacies are paid and discharged by his beloved brother and executor, Edward Robinson.”

I am not aware of any other local gift or endowment to the guides on either the Kent or Leven sands. Both the salaries of 32*l.* per annum to the Kent sands guide, and 22*l.* to the Leven sands guide, are secured from the revenues of the Duchy, in the order made under the Charitable Trusts Acts of 1853 and 1869, by which the endowments
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of the guides pass to the Charity Commissioners, with the Chancellor of the Duchy for the time being as an official trustee. In 1882, Mr. Bright being Chancellor of the Duchy, a further order under the same Acts was made for the administration of the charity "for providing guides over the Kent and Levens sands at or near Morecambe Bay, in the county of Lancaster." By this order the Chancellor of the Duchy for the time being was discharged from being trustee of the said charity, and

"John Fell, of Dane Ghyll, Furness Abbey, Esquire, J.P., D.L. Henry Fletcher Rigge, of Wood Broughton, near Grange, Esquire, J.P., D.L. and Edward Cavendish, of Holker Hall, Esquire, M.P. (commonly called Lord Edward Cavendish), who have respectively signified in writing their willingness to accept and act in the trust, were appointed trustees for the administration of the said charity."

The property embraced in this trust is described in the following schedule :—

1st Part—

1. A messuage known as the "Guide House," or "Carter House," and land adjoining thereto, containing in the whole ten acres or thereabouts, situate in Cartlane in Cartmel aforesaid in the county of Lancaster occupied by the guide over the Kent sands.*

2. A piece of land containing 4 acres or thereabouts situate in Cartmel aforesaid about a quarter of a mile to the north west of the last mentioned property and also occupied by the aforesaid guide.

3. A field containing one acre or thereabouts situate in Cartmel aforesaid about three quarters of a mile to the south west of the said "Guide House," and also occupied by the aforesaid guide. †

4. An allotment of land containing 6a. 2r. op. or thereabouts situate near Meathop Bridge in Allithwaite in the said county of Lancaster and also occupied by the aforesaid guide. ‡

5. A messuage and premises at Saltcotes in Ulverston in the aforesaid county of Lancaster occupied as the residence of the guide over the Leven sands.

* This is the "cart house with the three closes of land to the same adjoining" mentioned in the patent of the 29th year of Henry VIII.

† Possibly the investment of Mr. Robinson's bequest.

‡ Originally a piece of turbarry.

2nd Part—

1. A sum of 20*l.* per annum payable by the Furness Railway Company under or by virtue of "the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway Act," for the benefit of the Leven Sands Guide.

2. A sum of 32*l.* per annum paid from the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster to or for the benefit of the Kent Sands Guide.

3. A sum of 22*l.* per annum paid from the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster to or for the benefit of the Leven Sands Guide.

4. A sum of 90*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.* consolidated 3*l.* per cent. annuities now held by the Duchy of Lancaster and representing the purchase money produced by the sale of portions of land formerly occupied by the Kent Sands Guide to the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway Company.*

This trust is now administered by the trustees substituted in 1882 by Mr. Bright for the Chancellor of the Duchy as official trustee, and under this management steps are being taken to realise the residence of the Leven Sands Guide, and build at Sandside, near the foot of Ulverston Canal, a new house in a more useful and convenient situation for the discharge of the duties of his office. In addition to dilapidation the ancient residence of the guide had owing to railways and ironworks become unsuitable, and in its new form it should be a great public advantage so long as persons continue to cross the sands.

The office on the Kent sands seems to have been very anciently held by a family of the name of Carter. The first patent of Henry VIII. appoints Thomas Hogeson as guide. This would be in 1548. In the Cartmel Registers the first entry of the name is on the 20th of March, 1564, when Richard Carter was buried. In 1565, on March the 8th, Richard (?) Carter was christened. In 1570, January 26, the wife of William Carter was buried. In 1611, December 28th, Mabell Carter, daughter of William of Cartloyne buried. This is clearly one of the guides family. More definite entries follow, as for instance, in 1644, Dec. 14th, Edward Carter, the carter, at Cartlane, was buried. In 1706

* Foreshore at Cartlane.

December 14th, John, son of—Carter, the carter of Lancaster sands, was christened. In 1716, May 10th, George son of John Carter, ye guide of the sands of Cartlane was christened. This is the first mention of the carter of the period as ye guide of the sands. Whether “the office of carter of the sands” led to the descendants of Thomas Hogeson assuming or being designated by the patronymic of Carter is problematical. Clearly the term “Carter” was applied in the reign of Henry VIII. to the office, for both his original patents describe the guides by that appellation. The guide on the Leven sands was equally described as “the Carter,” and yet various surnames are given to persons discharging his duties, who might as well as the Carters of Cartlane, have exchanged their family surname for that of their office. It is quite clear that this did not occur, and I am therefore inclined to the opinion that after Thomas Hogeson, some one of the name of Carter was appointed to the post of guide over the Kent sands, which has led to the inference that he assumed the title of his office as the family surname. Why the guides were described as “the Carters of the sands” is exceedingly difficult to determine. Sir Thomas Lowther, writing from Westminster, in 1728, to Mr. Fletcher says:—

To Mr. Fletcher. Westminster, March ye 28th, 1728.— . . .
 . Pray tell the carters both of Lancaster and Furness sands that the pattents for each of their sons are very near pass'd and that they need be under no concern about receiving their Lady Day sallarys which let them know. . . . I am, your hearty friend, THO. LOWTHER.

Mr. Fletcher,—. . . I have got the two carters patents now in my possession. The inclosed is a bill of charges; both the bills together don't come to more than what poor Cooper paid alone for his last patent.—I am, yours, &c., THO. LOWTHER.

Their business consisted in being in attendance at the fords, which they were bound to discover at the earliest period of each ebb tide, and conducting persons safely over. I remember that the guides used to have a cart
 frequently

frequently at the channel side, and brought across in it persons who were on foot, but the cart could have been of no use to them in their special duty of finding the best and safest ford. Probably a horse would be often dispensed with in this work, and a pole employed to feel the way, for at times they were very deep and narrow places in the channel, which at early stages of the tide must have been dangerous even for a horse well accustomed to this work. In ancient times the narrowness and condition of the roads would be a barrier to carriages of any description crossing. It is said that in the latter part of the last century Lord Frederick Cavendish, who then possessed Holker Hall, could only bring his carriage as far as Kents Bank, where it was housed in a barn or shed until he returned to the South. Probably the great bulk of the persons travelling to and from Lonsdale North of the Sands proceeded either on horseback or on foot, and by the latter, if the guides possessed carts, the passage of the channel would be comfortably effected. Wading through water with a strong current, which was often more than belly-deep of a fair-sized horse, and in winter filled at times with large blocks of ice, involved a serious task even to a strong man, and with my knowledge and recollection of the passage, to a woman it would be extremely hazardous. It was customary for the guide to have a piece of tarpaulin to cover the loins of his horse, and foot passengers frequently availed themselves of this as a seat, which enabled them to avoid being wet. Ordinary horsemen were seldom able to cross the channel without taking their feet out of the stirrups and raising them in some position to escape wetting. Those who were particular about the condition of their stirrups lifted them on their saddles, as the salt water caused rust. I am, therefore, strongly inclined to the opinion that in the monastic era, and probably earlier, the guides over the sands obtained their title of "le Carter" from the fact that they undertook the portage of persons over the channel
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in some vehicle. Before the opening of the Lancaster and Carlisle and Ulverston and Lancaster Railways the sands were much used, although the improvement of roads in 1820 had considerably diminished their use for all the better sort of carriages, as the salt water injured the axles and springs. A considerable population existed in Lonsdale North, which drew all its supplies of goods and articles of use not produced in the district itself from a distance. This traffic went chiefly over the sands in carts, and was important. In addition to it the traffic over the Leven sands was much increased by the fact that the ancient town of Ulverston was the chief centre and emporium of local business. It had also some manufactures and export of goods. The market day of this town was the gathering centre of a wide district, and caused a large traffic over the Leven sands. After the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway was completed the traffic practically ceased, although there is still an irregular use of the crossing over the sands. A connection of the Carter family obtained the office in 1867, being duly appointed by a patent from the Duchy. His mis-conduct led Mr. Childers, the then Chancellor, to ask me to undertake an inquiry, not only into his fitness for his office, the public being interested in the proper discharge of his duties, but also of a general character enabling the Chancellor to form an opinion

‘Whether any and what change in the constitution of the office, its tenure and emoluments, might be advantageously made so as better to fulfil the object for which it was instituted.’

This enquiry was held at Grange-over-Sands on the 25th day of April, 1873. It was found advisable to remove the guide of the Kents sands from his office. On the general question the evidence tended to prove that the office could not be abolished, although the crossing of the sands had fallen into great disuse compared to former times, and there was a possibility of its continuous decrease. Provision, however,

however, having been made for the public safety by ample endowments of the office of guide, and persons occasionally availing themselves of the convenience of the route from shore to shore of Morecambe Bay, it was felt that considerable responsibility would be involved if cases of drowning occurred by the withdrawal of the guides ; and it must not be overlooked that any serious accident to the viaducts at the railway might at any time compel the temporary resuscitation of his duties. My report and conference with the Chancellor of the Duchy decided their retension with their old emoluments, but a certain amount of local control was established by the appointment of a committee of three magistrates of the Ulverston Petty Sessional Division to superintend and regulate the guides, viz., J. Fell, Esq., H. F. Rigge, Esq., and Lord E. Cavendish, M.P. A report was given from time to time by them to this committee, and these reports, with other questions affecting the duties and emoluments of the guides were communicated to the Duchy office. In June, 1877, it was deemed advisable to hand over the regulation and control of this ancient charity to the Charity Commissioners, Colonel Taylor as the Chancellor of the Duchy being the official trustee, and finally Mr. Bright, while in office as Chancellor in 1882, decided to substitute three local trustees in whom the management of the office and its emoluments is vested, subject, however, to the controlling authority of the Charity Commissioners. Probably we shall eventually see the sands of Morecambe Bay entirely disused as a road for traffic of any kind, or reclaimed. When that time arrives it will involve no small consideration to what local purposes the ancient endowments in land and other investments can be usefully applied. Students of these notes may possibly devise a scheme of a suitable and permanent character.