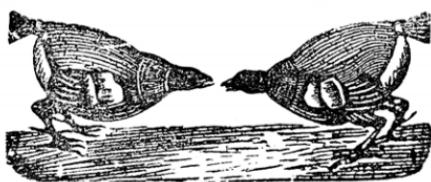


ART. XXVI.—'Αλεκτρυόνων Ἀγών. By the WORSHIPFUL CHANCELLOR FERGUSON, F.S.A., &c., President of the Society.

*Read at Ulverstone, July 13, 1887.*



THERE may be among the members of this Society eminent ecclesiologists, and architectural antiquaries, who will consider a paper on “cock-fighting” as beneath the dignity of a learned society. I do not: I have precedent to go upon: I plead the example of the Society of Antiquaries of London, in the third volume of whose *Archæologia*, is a paper entitled:

'Αλεκτρυόνων Ἀγών. A Memoir on Cock-fighting; wherein the Antiquity of it, as a Pastime, is examined and stated; some Errors of the Moderns concerning it are corrected, and the Retention of it amongst Christians is absolutely condemned and proscribed.

This paper was read before the Society of Antiquaries on March 12, and 19, 1773, and it was written by that first rate all-round antiquary, the Rev. Mr. Pegge, a scholar to whom no branch of archæology was unfamiliar. The *Archæologia* contains papers by him on every possible subject—coins, glass windows, Roman altars, cock-fighting, bull-running, horse-shoeing, charters, prehistoric implements, &c., he overflows into the Gentleman's Magazine, and he edited the *Forme of Cury, a Roll of ancient English cookery,*

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\* From a wood block by Thos. Bewick, in possession of the Hon. Secretary.

*cookery, compiled about A.D. 1390, by the Master Cooks of King Richard II.* His paper on cock-fighting is the basis of that on the same subject in the older editions of the Encyclopedia Britannica, under title “*Cockpit.*”

Much as I admire the Rev. Mr. Pegge, I am not now going to follow him into cock-fighting among the Lydians, the Dardanians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Chinese, the Persians, the Malayans, and the “still more savage Americans”: I propose to confine myself to this country, and mainly to my own county of Cumberland. I do not intend to dilate upon the rules of the game: these you will find in the racing calendars of the last century, headed RULES for MATCHING and FIGHTING of COCKS in London, which have been in Practice ever since the Reign of King Charles II.

With them is given a

Copy of an Article for a COCK MATCH.

The earliest separate treatise on Cock-fighting that I know of was published in 1674, and is entitled “*The Complete Gamester containing instructions how to play at Billiards, Trucks, Bowls, Chess, &c.* To which is added *The Artes and Mysteries of Riding, Racing, Archery, and Cock-fighting.* Printed by A.M., for R. Cutler, and to be sold by Henry Bromeat the Gun, at the west end of St. Paul’s.”

But Gervaise Markham’s “Country Contentments,” of which the 11th edition was published in 1675 contains a chapter on Fighting-Cocks, for which see appendix to this paper.

I have a copy of “Hoyle’s Games,” the 10th edition published in 1750, which says nothing about cocks or cock fighting.\* But “Hoyle’s Games Improved,” published 1814, contains an “Essay on Game Cocks” with the “rules observed at the royal cockpit, Westminster.”

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\* The Book is marked on the back “*Hoyle’s Games,*” and contains Whist, the 10th edition, 1750: Piquet and Chess, the 2nd edition, 1746: Quadrille, 2nd edition, 1746: Backgammon, the 1st edition, 1745: all paged separately. Hoyle may therefore have printed a tract on cock fighting at that date, but I fancy not.

Till

Till within a few years previous to 1824 there was a *Cockpit Royal* in St. James' Park :

but as the ground belonged to Christ's Hospital, that body would not renew the lease to a building devoted to cruelty: A more commodious Cockpit has since been built in Tufton street, Westminster; where, also, dog-fights take place, and badgers and bears are bated. \*

Drury Lane theatre, by the way, commenced life in the 16th century as a cockpit.†

Hogarth's celebrated picture of the Cockpit at Newmarket about the middle of last century, gives an idea of the motley company to be seen at one of these places, including peers (there is one in a garter ribbon and stars, and the blind Lord Albemarle Bertie is the central figure of the picture,) pickpockets, butchers, jockies, rat-catchers, gentlemen, and gamblers of every description. A picture of the Royal Cockpit, in Tufton Street, Westminster, to which we have alluded, is given in that wonderful record of manners and customs "Life in London,"‡ and shews Tom, Jerry, and Logic backing a feeder called Tommy the Sweep. Another picture in this work shows the dog-pit in the same building, and "Tom and Jerry sporting their blunt on the phenomenon monkey, Jacco Macacco," in his great fight with the zolb. dog. These two pictures by Cruikshanks, and that of Hogarth, give one a better idea of what cockpits and dogpits were really like, and of the company that resorted there, than pages of writing would do. In both Hogarth and Cruikshanks' pictures of a cockpit, the birds fight on a raised circular platform in the centre of the building: on this are the feeders, or setters:§ part of the spectators

\* Leigh's *New Picture of London* 1824-5.

† Mr. Fairman Ordish in the Antiquary for March, 1887.

‡ *Life in London, or, the Day and Night Scenes of Jerry Hawthorn, Esq., and his elegant friend Corinthian Tom.* By Pierce Egan. London, 1822.

§ In the last century the same person fed the cocks, and set them in contest; afterwards the professions of "feeders" and "setters" became distinct; women were sometimes "feeders."

crowd

crowd round this platform, others are accommodated in a gallery. In Hogarth's picture the shadow of a man suspended from the ceiling in a basket, shows the penalty imposed on those who did not pay their debts of honour, —their bets on a cockfight.

Whatever may have been Mr. Pegge's opinions as to the heathenishness and barbarity of cock-fighting, those opinions were far from being shared by his brother christians in this country. A boy's amusement in ancient Rome, it was in many instances in this country the sanctioned Shrove Tuesday sport of public schools, the master receiving on the occasion a small tax from the boys under the name of *cock-penny*.\* William FitzStephen, who wrote the life of Archbishop Becket some time in the reign of Henry II., describes cocking as a sport of school boys on Shrove Tuesday.

*Præterea quotannis die quæ dicitur Carnilevaria [Shrove Tuesday] (ut a puerorum Lundoniac ludis incipiamus, omnes enim pueri fuimus) scholarum singuli pueri suos apporunt magistro suo gallos gallinaceos pugnaces, et totum illud antemeridianum datur ludo puerorum vacantium spectare in scholis suorum pugnas gallorum.†*

"From this time at least" writes an eminent county historian :‡

this diversion however cruel and absurd, was continued in many of the schools in this kingdom; in that of Wimborne in particular, where it annually took place till the beginning of the present century, when it was very properly abandoned. The theatre (the cock pit) it seems was the school, and the master the comptroller and director of the sport. The master presided, having the names of the boys inserted in paper billets and huddled together in his hat. The names of any two boys being first drawn and announced, their respective cocks were brought into the pit and fought until one of them was dead: a second couple was then drawn, then a third, and then a fourth, till

\* Chamber's *Book of Days*, vol. i., p. 238.

† Cited by Mr. Pegge, *Archæologia*, vol. iii., p. 147.

‡ John Hutchins in his *History and Antiquities of Dorset*, p. 197.

such

such time as one half of the original cocks lay dead; when the remaining ones, were, in the same manner as before, brought to a second contest, till one only of the whole was left alive, the owner of which was distinguished by the glorious name of victor, with many other privileges annexed to it, and never to be subjected himself, during the whole time of Lent, to the disgrace of flagellation; but, what was still more, when any other boy was on the point of undergoing that punishment, he was at liberty, if he pleased, to exempt him from it by only clapping his hat on the culprit's posteriors, and thereby saving him from the lash.

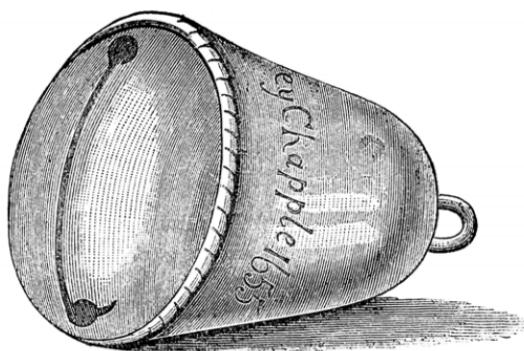
The same custom prevailed at a place so far distant from Wimbourne as Wreay in Cumberland, where the prize was a silver bell, of which an engraving is given with this paper, taken from a drawing in a portfolio in the library of my friend Mr. Arlosh, at Wood Side, Wreay; the bell itself disappeared,—lost or stolen,—about the year 1882. The following account of this bell comes from Carlisle's *Endowed Grammar School*.\*

A singular donation was made by a Mr. GRAHAM of a *Silver Bell*, weighing two ounces, upon which is engraven “Wrey Chapple 1655”, to be fought for annually on Shrove Tuesday by Cocks. About three weeks previous to that day, the boys fixed upon Two of their Schoolfellows for CAPTAINS, whose parents were able and willing to bear the expence of the approaching contest, and the Master on his entering the School was saluted by the boys throwing up their hats, and the acclamation of “*Dux, Dux.*” After an early Dinner on Shrove Tuesday, the two Captains, attended by their Friends and Schoolfellows, who were distinguished by blue and red Ribbons, marched in procession from their respective homes to the Village Green, when each produced Three Cocks, and the Bell was appended to the hat of the Victor,—in which manner it was handed down from one successful Captain to another. About thirty years since,† this barbarous custom was superseded by a HUNT,—a *Mayor* being elected, and the Bell graces his rod of office.

\* Vol. i, p. 205.

† Carlisle's “*Endowed Grammar Schools*” was published in 1818; and thirty years from that gives nearly 1790, which was the year of the election of the first Mayor of Wreay.

The first person elected Mayor of Wreay was the Duke of Norfolk,\* a staunch frequenter of the cockpit at Westminster, and the custom is still kept up, but Carlisle publicans rather than dukes now grace the civic chair of Wreay. The bell was pear-shaped and the description in the portfolio, where is the drawing, states it to have been of coarse workmanship, and to have weighed



about an ounce and a half. † All efforts to trace this interesting relic have failed. Spite of what Mr. Carlisle says, the public cock fighting at Wreay was not suppressed until 1836; I fancy it goes on now on the sly.

The date of Mr. Graham's donation, 1655, is curious, for cock-fighting was prohibited by Cromwell in one of his acts, March 31st, 1654. Graham was a cavalier, and probably the laws were a long time in arriving in Cumberland during the Commonwealth.

A similar custom prevailed also at Bromfield in another part of Cumberland. As the account of it in Hutchinson's *Cumberland*, is written by no less a person than the Rev.

\* See Lonsdale's *Cumberland Worthies*, vol. iii, p. 60. London: Geo. Routledge.

† It should be compared with the Carlisle horse and nage bells, engraved in *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxxvi., p. 383.

Jonathan

Jonathan Boucher, a native of the parish, once tutor to Washington's children, and afterwards vicar of Epsom ; it may well be transcribed :

Till within the last twenty or thirty years (Mr. Boucher is writing about 1794,) it had been a custom, time out of mind, for the scholars of the free school of Bromfield, about the beginning of Lent, or, in the more expressive phraseology of the country, at *Fastings Even*, to *bar out the Master* ; i.e. to depose and exclude him from his school, and keep him out for three days. During the period of this expulsion, the doors of the citadel, the school, were strongly barricaded within ; and the boys, who defended it like a besieged city, were armed, in general, with *bore-tree*, or elder, pop guns. The master, meanwhile, made various efforts, both by force and strategem, to regain his lost authority ; if he succeeded, heavy tasks were imposed, and the business of the school was resumed, and submitted to ; but it more commonly happened that he was repulsed and defeated. After three day's siege, terms of capitulation were proposed by the master, and accepted by the boys. These terms were summed up in an old formula of Latin Leonine Verses :\* stipulating what hours and times should, for the year ensuing, be allotted to study, and what to relaxation and play. Securities were provided by each side, for the due performance of these stipulations ; and the paper was then solemnly signed by master and scholars. The whole was concluded by a festivity ; and a treat of cakes and ale, furnished by the scholars. One of the articles always stipulated for, and granted, was the privilege of immediately celebrating certain games of long standing ; viz., a football match, and a cock-fight. *Captains*, as they were called, were then chosen to manage and preside over these games ; one from that part of the parish, which lay to the westward of the school ; the other from the east. Cocks, and foot-ball players, were sought for with great diligence. The party, whose cocks won the most battles, was victorious in the cockpit ; and the prize was a small silver bell, suspended to the button of the victor's hat, and worn for three successive Sundays. \* \* \* \* It never was the fortune of the writer of this account to *bear the bell*, but he well remembers when he gazed at it with hardly less admiration than in other times others contemplated crowns and sceptres.†

\* It is a pity Mr. Boucher did not preserve these ; one wishes they could be recovered.

† Hutchinson's History of Cumberland, vol. ii. 322, 323.

Nothing

Nothing is now known of the Bromfield silver bell; it probably resembled either the cocking bell at Wreay, or the "horse and nage bells at Carlisle."<sup>§</sup> Other instances probably existed in Cumberland, but the practice was universal, as the following extract from the statutes of Hartlebury School in Worcestershire, dated in the 7th year of Queen Elizabeth, proves :

Also that the said Schoolmaster shall and may have use and take the profits of all such *cockfights* and *potations*, as are commonly used in Schools. †

The custom of cock-fighting at schools was practised also in Scotland on Shrove Tuesday, or Fasten's E'en, as they called it. Such cock-fights took place regularly in many parts of Scotland till the middle of the 18th century, the master presiding at the battle, and enjoying the perquisite of all the runaway cocks, which were technically called *fugies*. Nay, so late as 1790, the minister of Applecross, in Ross-shire, in the account of his parish, returns the schoolmaster's income as composed of two hundred merks, with 1s. 6d., and 2s. 6d., per quarter, and the *cock-fight dues*, which are equal to one quarter's payment for each scholar.‡

But cock-fighting had patrons of higher rank than *dominies* and their pupils. It was called the *royal diversion*:§ the cockpit at Westminster was erected by Henry VIII., and James I., was passionately fond of the sport.|| Foreign monarchs on their visits to this country were taken to see cock-fights, and the following address was presented to King Christian VII., of Denmark, on his entering the cockpit at Newmarket, October 1768.

<sup>\*</sup> *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxxvi., p. 383.

<sup>†</sup> Carlisle's *Endowed Grammar Schools*, vol. ii., p. 759.

<sup>‡</sup> Chamber's *Book of Days*, vol. i., p. 238.

<sup>§</sup> Mr. Pegge in *Archæologia*, vol. iii., p. 148.

<sup>||</sup> *Ibid.*

Great Sir,

Great Sir,

In 1728 your Royal Grandfather\* honoured this Cockpit with his presence, and seemed highly pleased with the courage of the British cocks. May your Majesty's Reign be long and happy ; and, when the infirmities of Nature shall pale the relish of enjoyment, may you without pain retire to the mansions of eternal bliss (like him) replete with age and glory! †

Dyer in his History of Modern Europe‡ says of this monarch :

Christian VII. married an English princess, Carolina Matilda, a sister of George III, who, in January, 1768, bore him a son and heir. In this year the young king, who had been badly educated, and whose mental weakness approached fatuity, was sent on a tour to England and France with a suite of sixty persons, while his young consort remained at home.

The tragic story of Christian VII., and Carolina Matilda is well-known : such a king in a cockpit was the right man in the right place.

If cock-fighting had royal patrons at Newmarket, and Westminster, in Cumberland it might, according to tradition, claim to be called an *episcopal diversion*: at Rose Castle, the palace of the Bishop of Carlisle, a small amphitheatre is traditionally pointed out as the cockpit, but the better opinion seems to be that it is an old fish pond. But undoubtedly cockpits occupied even more unseemly places than the episcopal *pleasaunces*: they were frequently close to the church, if not actually in the church yard, and the cocks were fought on Sundays—notably at Bromfield, and Burgh-on-Sands, and the writer's father used to tell how, as a boy, he had heard in church at Burgh-on-Sands the preacher's voice drowned by the vociferations of the “gentlemen of the sod”, as the cockers are called, crying the odds: to do them justice they generally waited to begin, until the

\* Christian VI., then Crown Prince of Denmark.

† Extract from “*Kentish Weekly Post*,” October 17, 1768.

‡ Vol. iii., p. 491.

preacher

preacher was finished, but if he was on any occasion extra long winded, their patience fell short, and they commenced.

The following extract is from "Walker's History of Penrith," 2nd edition, p. 80 :

The cockpit was on the south of the church-yard, near the old Catholic Chapel. It was properly fitted up, and every way convenient for the purpose. On one occasion, when the clergyman was reading the burial service, his voice was totally drowned by loud cheers from the pit, in token of the victory of a favourite cock.

This was not peculiar to the north of England, as an extract from the *Guardian* of Oct. 1, 1884, shows :

The Rev. T. Webb writes to "Notes and Queries" that he has received the following from the Rev. C. L. Eagles, the incumbent of the little church of Crasswall, in Herefordshire, which has just been restored :—"On the north side of the church is an old cockpit. An old man, who died in 1869, aged 96, told me he had been at many a cockfight there. 'People did come from all parts, and after service did fight the cocks. Ah, people did come to church in them days!' There were stands of gingerbread at the time of fighting, and people came from Clifford, Dorstone, and Hay, and even Talgarth—a little town ten miles or more distant. The pit remains as a memento of the past.

It is possible that the "gentlemen of the sod" who fought their mains on Sunday in a church-yard cockpit may have had some qualms of conscience to gulp down : if any such existed at Alston in Cumberland, the old maxim of the end justifying the means would be used for their alleviation, for there was

an endowed grammar school, rebuilt in 1828, among the holiday sports of which in the olden time was that of a main of fighting cocks for a prayer book at Easter. Some of the books thus won are yet in possession of some of the surviving scholars.\*

The governors of Greenwich Hospital, on one of their periodical visits to Alston, collected all such books they could find, and carried them away, to be preserved as curiosities.

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\* Sopwith's *Account of the Mining Districts of Alston Moor, Heardale, and Teasdale*. Alnwick, 1833, p. 27.

The

The citizens of Carlisle were by no means behind in their devotion to the sport, as the following extracts from the minutes of the Town Council prove :

March 8th, 1681. Ordered yt 3li be given in cockplates. March 10th, 1683. Ordered that 8li worth of plates to be fought for by cocks be bought whereof 4li to be given by ye city to be fought for on ye last week in April.\*

These cock plates were probably challenge plates, and replaced older ones, which had probably disappeared, as many other things did in Carlisle, in or after the great siege of 1644-5. These plates, like the predecessors I conjecture for them, have long ago gone the way of all things, and history records little or nothing of the cock-fights that in the 17th and 18th centuries were waged in the Border City. In the 18th century cockfighting had become everywhere an established concomitant of horse-racing, and the annual Racing Calendars give a list of the principal cock-matches fought in the year preceding their publication : Cheney's Historical List of Horse Races run in 1747, gives twenty-three mains as fought in that year, and a list of sixteen to come. It also gives, in addition to the rules of the time of Charles II., a very complete code of 19 rules, of which the 18th is

Item that none shall strike, or draw weapon to strike any man upon pain of every time so offending to forfeit Forty Shillings.†

The list of matches diminishes from this time, and we give the list for 1768 ; after which it increases again.

COCK MATCHES  
fought in the year 1768.  
CHESHIRE.

At Chester at the time of the Races a main of Cocks were fought between Mr. Ogden & Mr. Wynne, consisting of twenty-one battles, eighteen won by the Former, & three by the latter.

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\* Ferguson and Nanson's *Municipal Records of Carlisle*, pp. 316, 318.

† The gentlemen in Cumberland who subscribed to Cheney, in 1747, and may therefore, be considered the local sportsmen of the day, were Viscount Lonsdale, Francis Warwick, Esq., Henry Fletcher, Esq., John Holme, Esq., Mr. Graham. There were no subscribers in Westmorland.

SUFFOLK.

## SUFFOLK.

At Beccles on the 31st of May & following day, the first three mains of Cocks were fought between Suffolk & Norfolk, for ten guineas a Battle and one hundred guineas the odd, and was won by the former.

## LANCASHIRE.

At Preston, during the Races, a Main of Cocks was fought between Mr. Dickinson and Lord Strange, which consisted of forty Battles, twenty seven of which were won by the Former, and thirteen by his Lordship.

At Lancaster on the 27th of June & following Days, between Mr. Wilson & Mr. Whittington & won by the former, a Main of Cocks were fought.

## YORKSHIRE.

At York, during the Races, a Main of Cocks were fought between Mr. Hardwick & Mr. Lord for ten Guineas a Battle, and two hundred Guineas the Main, which was won by the former by several Battles.\*

The list next year is longer, and then is this notice :

## Barnet Races 1770.

Will begin the 14th of August next. Cocking at the Green Man, as usual.†

The list next year is longer again and the names of the “feeders” are given in many instances, showing the interest in the sport was growing.‡

In 1783, I find this entry :

## CARLISLE.

During the Races a main of Cocks was fought between the Earl of Surrey & A. R. Bowes, Esq., for 10 gs. a Battle, & 100 gs. the Main, which was won by the latter.§

Charles Howard Earl of Surrey was M.P., for Carlisle from 1780, to his accession to the Upper House, as Duke of Norfolk, in November 1786.|| So slovenly was this duke’s

\* Heler’s *Historical List of Horse Matches in the year 1768*, vol. 18.

† *The Sporting Calendar*, Tuting & Fawconar, vol. i.

‡ *Ibid*, vol. ii.

§ Weatherby’s *Racing Calendar*, vol. x.

|| Ferguson’s *M.P. of Cumbd. and Westd.* p. 386. This was the Duke, who has already been mentioned as the first Mayor of Wreay.

dress

dress that on one occasion he was taken at the royal cock pit for a butcher, and his bets refused.

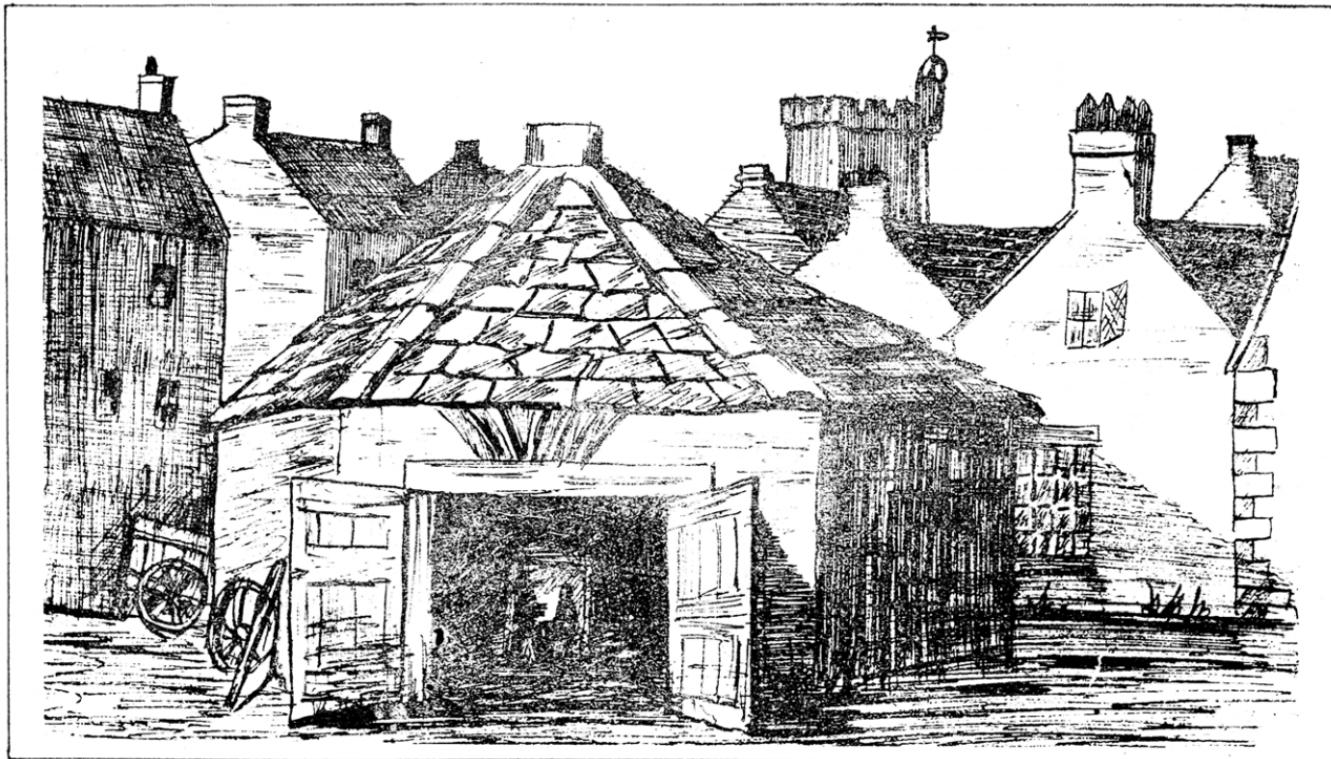
It is said that he and Sir James Lowther, in 1785, erected the cock pit, which up to 1876 stood in a court on the west side of Lowther Street, Carlisle. At that time these two eminent personages were quarrelling over Carlisle elections as bitterly as they could, and their combining to do anything is, to my mind, very odd\*: probably they each gave a handsome subscription, by way of influencing the cock-fighting interest at some election. Mr. Fisher, of Bank Street, Carlisle, possesses a picture of it in oils painted by H. St. Clair, in 1873, and an interesting model to scale, by Bellamy. It was octagonal, 40 ft. in diameter, the walls 12 ft. high, and it was 45 feet in height to top of the octagonal roof. In 1829, it was occupied by Messrs. Burgess and Hayton, as a brass and iron foundry, and afterwards was well-known as Dand's Smithy.†

I have mentioned the "black reads" of Dalston, and the greys of Caldbeck, as famous Cumberland breeds of fighting cocks: I now exhibit a portrait of the famous "black read cock" Achilles trimmed and spurred for fighting. The Romans, Mr. Pegge is of opinion, did not trim their cocks, but fought them as nature made them: they are so depicted on the gems engraved to illustrate his paper in the *Archæologia*. I also exhibit some of the spurs used in cock-fighting, one of which is of silver: at most cockpits the cocks were required to fight "in fair silver spurs." This spur is a simple polished spike or goad of silver, slightly curved: it has a ring, which fits on the stump of the natural spur: and is provided with a leather,

\* The Duke had a white horse which defeated one belonging to Sir James Lowther, in a match at Carlisle or Penrith. He employed Thomas Carlyle an organ builder and carver at Carlisle, to make him a wooden statue, life size, of the white horse. This he placed on the top of a lofty barn so as to be conspicuously visible to Sir James at Lowther Hall. It is now down, but the platform on the barn still remains.

† *Transactions Cumb. and West. Antiq. and Archæ.* vol. vi., p. 430, vol. viii., p. 528.

which



THE COCKPIT SMITHY, CARLISLE.

which is lashed round the bird's leg. Another spur is similar, but of steel. In each case the spike is about one and a half inches long, and these I believe to be "fair spurs." The other two spurs I exhibit are sold now as "cock spurs," and are miniature scimitars, or curved blades, three inches in length; I doubt if these clumsy weapons would have been tolerated in a respectable (if such a word can be allowed), in a respectable cockpit.

There was great art in putting the spurs properly on a bird: a game cock's object in fighting is to seize his foe by the hackle, hold him down and spur him on the head: to do this he must kick, or spur close past his own head; and hence, if the spur is not set at the proper angle, is apt to dig it into his own head. Much has been said about the additional cruelty of fighting cocks in artificial spurs, but with injustice; a fair silver spur, such as exhibited, inflicts clean wounds that heal easily, and a game cock, in training, after receiving several such in his neck, will be all right and well in three or four days, whereas the natural spur inflicts bruised wounds, that, like those made by horn of hart, are slow to heal: the silver spur too kills at once, if it enters the brain, while the natural bruises and inflicts a lingering death. The game cock's habit of seizing his adversary by the hackle is the reason why it was always stipulated that cocks were to fight "with a fair hackle," that is it must not be so trimmed away as to afford no hold.

Here is the announcement of a cock-fight from the *Newcastle Chronicle*, of December 1, 1770.



To be Fought for, at Mr. Mordue's New Pit in the Flesh Market, on Monday, the 31st of December, FIFTY POUNDS, by Cocks and Stags, 3lb. 14oz.

On Tuesday the 1st of January, ONE HUNDRED POUNDS, by Cocks and Stags, 4lb. 2oz.

On Wednesday, the 2nd, by Cocks Stags and Blenkards, 4lb 2 oz.

To

To weigh the Saturday before, between Ten and Twelve o'clock, and fight with fair Silver Spurs. The Stags for the Monday to be allowed one ounce; Tuesday, the Stags to be allowed one ounce and a half; and on Wednesday the Stags will be allowed one ounce, and Blenkards one ounce and a half.

N.B.—Whereas there have been many complaints made by the Gentlemen of the Sod in regard to their Cocks fighting with Candle Light, to prevent which for the future Mr. Mordue is determined to have a pair of Cocks upon the sod precisely at Ten o'clock each Day.\*

“Stags” are young cocks, and “Blenkards” are one eyed ones, veterans.

Cock-fighting, bull-bating, and badger-drawing were made misdemeanors in 1835, by the 5 & 6 Will. IV, c. 59, an Act which was repealed in 1849, and fresh enactments made by the 12 & 13 Vic., c. 92, amended by the 17 & 18 Vic., c. 60, but the sport was hard to kill. A friend tells me that he saw a main fought at the Raffles, near Carlisle, in 1842, the setters being Dick† and Davey. Another was fought at the Dandie Dinmont, in 1846, without much pretence of concealment, a coach and four taking the sportsmen out from Carlisle: another Dick, Dick the Daisy, was one of the setters on that occasion. Within the last ten years, a gentleman in Carlisle, now dead, kept his cocks in a sodded attic in his house, and fought them within the city; while in Newcastle, a well-known knight, alderman, and magistrate, who died in 1871, had a cockpit at the back of his house, where frequent fights took place, and one of My Lord the Queen's Justices, Baron ——, was a frequent spectator. Cock-fighting, however, goes on to this day to a great extent in the northern counties, but I must not say where.

The following letter, written in April of this year, may serve to bring this paper to a close :

\* We are indebted for this to the first number of *The Monthly Chronicle of North-Country Lore and Legend*; Newcastle-on-Tyne.

† When this Dick died, a few years ago, his admirers subscribed and put up a monument to him in Carlisle cemetery, on which were graven the tools of his art, a pair of cock spurs. I regret this interesting tomb has been defaced, and the spurs chiselled off.

April 2, 1887.

Dear ——

I am in receipt of yours, not being a cock fighter, only being led into by knowing Dick—— so well and finding him money and being fond of sport, on two occasions I made a Main for him for £100 a-side, shew 21 Cocks in, for also £5 per battle, the weights 4lb 4oz up to 5lb 4oz two days fighting: out of the 21 Cocks 17 caught, we fought 9 battles one day and eight the other. The first Main was a draw, the second we won by three, the Cocks were weighed on the Pit ready for work, they fought in *Silver*.

Now these Cocks were taken from their walks say to day, Friday and fought about Monday or Tuesday week—say the Cock was 5lbs. weight or a little under at the time he was taken up, he would fight 4lb. 4oz. or so. On the first part of their training was cut a little of their wings and tail, then Senna tea to drink until say Tuesday cut their spurs short and spar them every day with small boxing gloves tied on their heels—On Tuesday they get their medicine—the very best Turkey rhubarb and magnesia about the thickness of your first finger, in fact more than would quickly operate on you or me, next day senna tea again and sparring. They get very much reduced by Friday, all the fat out of them—after that they give them new milk and bread made of eggs loaf sugar &c., in fact every thing that is good, the very best malt barley and so on—you would be astonished how they thrive each day after. For the Old Cockpit they used to feed at different public houses, one was in Pack Horse Lane another in the Castle Lane in fact in all the Lanes in English Street [Carlisle]. They fought single battles for 5 or 10 £ and what they call 4 mains that is 4 cocks—of course the winner had to get 2 battles.

\* \* \* \*

Yours truly,

To ——

We have reserved to the last, proof that in Cumberland the old connection between education and cockfighting is not yet wholly severed: the seal of the Dalston School Board displays a fighting cock, a Dalston “black red,” but they have omitted the ringing motto

“ WHILE I LIVE I’LL CROW ! ”

\* “ Instructions on Cocking ” will be found in the Sporting Magazine of September, 1826, they contain directions for feeding.

## APPENDIX.

Mr. Hartshorne kindly furnishes me with the full title of the Markham's book mentioned on page 367.

Country Contentments  
or, the  
Husbandmans  
Recreations  
Containing  
the wholesome Experience, in which  
any ought to Recreate himself, after the toy  
of more Serious Business.  
As namely,  
Hunting, Hawking, Coursing with  
Grey-Hounds, and the Laws of Leash, Shooting in  
the Long-Bow or Cross-Bow, Bowling, Ten-  
nis, Baloon; The whole Art of Angling;  
And the use of the Fighting Cock.  
By G. Markham.  
The eleventh Edition.  
Newly Corrected, Enlarg-  
ed, and adorned with ma-  
ny Excellent Additions, as may appear by this mark.   
London.  
Printed for George Sawbridge, at the Sign of the Bible on  
Ludgate Hill, 1675.

The book is dedicated to Sir Theodore Newton, Knight, by Gervaise Markham. Chap. XIX treats of the choyce, Ordering, Breeding, and Dyeting, of the Fighting-Cock for Battel.

Since there is no pleasure more Noble, Delightsome, or void of conzenage and deceit, then this pleasure of Cocking is; and since many of the best Wisdomes of our Nation have been pleased to participate with the delights therein, I think it not amiss, as well for the instruction of those which are unexperienced, as fortifying of them which have sound knowledge therein, to declare in a few Lines the Election, Breeding, and Secrets of dyeting the Fighting-Cock, which having been hitherto concealed and unwritten of, is (for our pleasure sake) as worthy of a general knowledge as any delight whatsoever.