

ART. XXIV.—*Communion Cup and Cover from Cartmel Fell Chapel.* By THE PRESIDENT.

IN “Old Church Plate in the Diocese of Carlisle,” published for this Society in 1882, under the head of Cartmel Fell Chapel in the Deanery of Cartmel, is the following :—

There is also an old cup of white metal, much resembling a large wine glass, and standing about 6 inches high. It has some figures of birds engraved round it, near the top. O.C.P. p. 202.

This cup, with a cover to it, was exhibited in the temporary museum, formed at Carlisle, during the visit of the Royal Archæological Institute to that city in 1882, and was described in the MS. catalogue of that museum, drawn up by Mr. Ready, of the British Museum, as

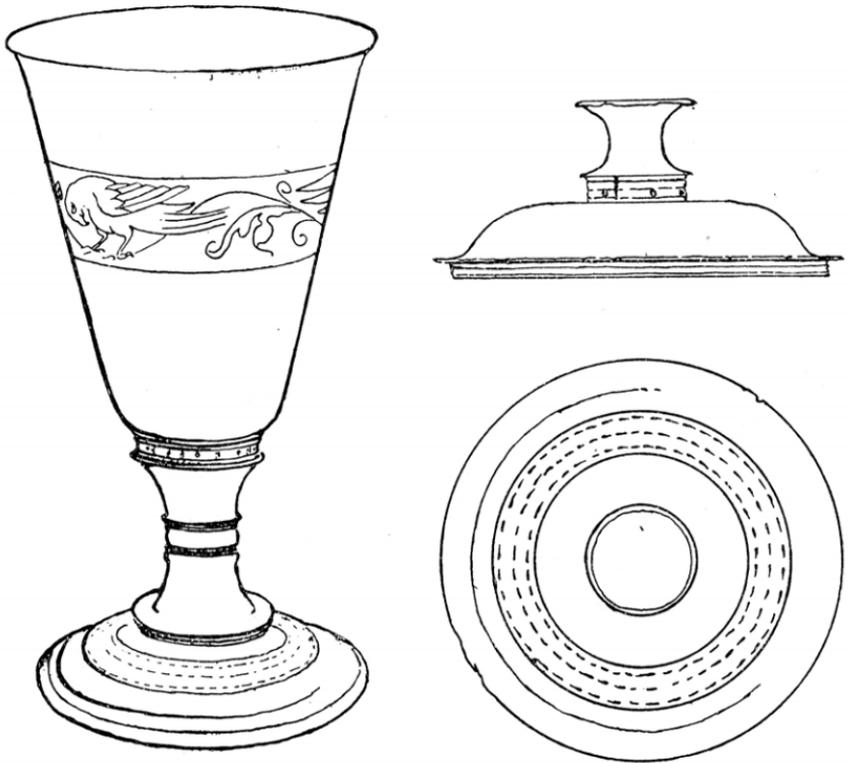
Old communion cup and cover.

A MS. note by the late Rev. Henry Whitehead in one of my copies of O.C.P. says, referring to this cup :—

A most interesting cup—photo by Scott—silver, diam. $3\frac{1}{4}$ at top and $3\frac{3}{8}$ at foot, ring knob . . . Cup has cover $3\frac{1}{2}$ diam. with button, round which are three rows of graver's dots.

It is certain that neither cup nor cover can have had any hall-marks, or such accurate observers as the late Mr. Fletcher-Rigge, who wrote the account in O.C.P., Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Ready would have noted and recorded them. In their absence Mr. Fletcher-Rigge not unnaturally supposed the cup to be of base metal, but Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Ready, both experts in silver, would have no difficulty in pronouncing that it was of the
noble

noble metal. In due course the cup and cover were returned from the temporary museum, to Cartmel Fell Chapel, when their value seems not to have been known or appreciated: they were laid aside, forgotten, and the cover mislaid. It could not at first be found in 1897, when Mrs. Ware visited the chapel and enquired for the



cup and cover: but it was ultimately found in the bottom of an old pewter flagon. Both it and the cup were in a neglected and tarnished condition, and a small square piece was missing from the lip of the cup in such a manner as, on first sight, to appear as if it had been wilfully cut out for some purpose or other—for instance, for the

the removal of hall marks to be placed upon some modern fraud with which to ensnare the careless collector of silver plate. But close inspection showed that the missing piece had been broken out, not cut: further, the missing piece was too small to have held the three plate marks of the Elizabethan period to which the cup and cover belong.

I had the cup and cover cleaned, put into proper condition, and repaired, the missing piece being replaced, but so as to show there had once been a gap there. I also exhibited the cup and cover before the Society of Antiquaries of London, where the belt of ornamentation ex-



cited much interest from its unusual and secular character, and was pronounced unique on an ecclesiastical vessel. It consists of a belt on which are four parrots or popinjays in various attitudes among conventional foliage. It is probably the attempt of some local silversmith to produce a cup and cover of the Elizabethan pattern, and it is possible also that he took the bowl with its popinjays from an older and secular cup.

It is to be hoped that now, since attention has been called to this unique and valuable cup and cover, more care will be bestowed upon it than has been done heretofore.