

ART. V.—*A Sketch of the Church of Askham, and some Account of the early Parish Registers.* By MISS NOBLE.

Read at Carlisle, April 30th, 1903.

THE parish of Askham, anciently written "Ascome,"* extends for something over three miles along the west bank of the river Lowther, between Barton on the north near High Field and Bampton on the south at Beckfoot. The English family descended from the de Morvilles were large landowners in the district, and emparked land at Satron, at the southern extremity of the parish, in 1338. From them the Sandfords, an ancient family, who were lords of the manor of Warcop in the reign of Richard I., acquired Askham Hall and manor by the marriage of Edmund de Sandford with Idonea, co-heiress of Sir Thomas English, in the reign of Edward III.; and at the Dissolution the Sandfords also bought the advowson and the tithes, which they held till 1680, when William Sandford, Esq., sold the manor and tithe to Sir John Lowther.

The church lies close to the river Lowther, and was enumerated by Grose amongst the remarkable edifices in Westmorland.† It is said to be dedicated to St. Peter, but I saw a paper at the Record Office in which it was spoken of as the church of St. Kentigern, so that there is either a later dedication, or the earlier one may have been lost sight of.‡ Be that as it may, it is doubtless a very ancient foundation. Pope Innocent II.,

* Ascome, *Magna Britannia*.

† Hodgson.

‡ Unfortunately I only noted the dedication, not the paper.

in the second year of his pontificate, confirmed this church to the canons of Wartre Priory in Yorkshire, and they also held half a carucate of land in the parish. (*Noticia Monastica.*) Two of the priors of Wartre were called Holme, Henry de Holme in 1380, and William Holme the last prior before the Dissolution. What makes this noteworthy is that in 1375 Henry de Holme, a canon of Wartre, was vicar of Askham, and that there is a family of Holme living in Heltondale, running through the earlier register, in which both these names are usual. The church is thus described by Bishop Nicolson in 1703:—

The Church yard, wherein there are no Monuments, is but ill fenced; and the entrance into the Southern Door of the Church (seldom used but when they bring in a Corpse, or by some pre-scribers of Helton), is almost grown up. The walls are very low and crazy. In the Quire the Communion-Table is well rail'd in and very decent. Both y^e Lady Lonsdale (in whose hand the Impropriation is at present) and M^r Sandford, who sold the Tithes to the late Lord, have Seats here. Before the latter of these, in the Entrance into the Chancell, lyes a large Gravestone (under which was lately discover'd a great lead Coffin) thus inscribed:

HŌHS DE CLAYWORTH.*

The Womens seats in the Body of the Church (which wants whitening) are without Backs; but those for the men well enough. They have two pretty good Bells, and a convenient Font.

M^r Sandford has a large Isle in the South; which wants beautifying as much as any other part. No other use has been made of it (in appearance), since the Impropriation came first into the hands of that Family, save for y^e Burial of their Dead. The present Patron's former Wife lyes here interr'd: and over her Grave, on a Black Marble Monument in a Table of White, is this Epitaph.

Underneath an Arch in the same Isle is an old Monument, whereon is now onely legible

WILL. S . . DE SANTONE

* Hodgson says "Johes de Claworth."

B. Oley's Books,* given to this parish are all safe in Mr Seed's hands, never having had a Repository in y^e Church. A Commutation of Pennance assign'd, this Summer, for the beautifying of the Body of the Church.

Nicolson and Burn say :—

The church is a small old building, with two little bells. Upon the timber in the body of the church are the letters "ED, TS, 1593; for Edmund Dudley and Thomas Sandford, who probably gave timber for the repair thereof. And upon one of the coupling beams are the letters JB, supposed to mark the timber contributed by John Bradley of Knipe.

From the register we learn :—

Memorandum that in the year 1735 the whole roof of the north side of the parish church of Askham was taken down and repaired at a very great expence and the tax was laid according to the Book of Rates the lordship of Hilton paying equally and raising the like sum with the lordship of Askham for the defraying the expence of this Repair.

June the 13. 1734 there was given to me William Milner vicar of Askham the sum of seven pounds Commutation money by the Bp's Secretary by order of the Chancellour w^{ch} was laid out for the use of the parish thus.

	li	s	d
To M ^r Thomas Corney of Penrith for a new Bible and Comon prayer Book w ^{ch} were entered upon opened and made use of for y ^e first time on Xmas Day 1734	3	15	0
W ^m Skilbeck for making a case for these books and finding wood for it	0	1	3
W ^m Setree for a lock and key for y ^e case	0	0	9
Joseph Brown of Penrith for a yard of green cloth for covering y ^e Reading desk	0	1	0
To the same for coddin† 3 ^d to W ^m Setree for Brass nails for nailing y ^e cloth 3½ ^d	0	0	6½
For a skin for covering the Common Prayer book	0	0	9
To Allan Sandford for fitting y ^e skin to y ^e book	0	0	4
To W ^m Lowess and Richard Bowman Ch-wardens	3	0	4½
	7	0	0

* Bishop Oley's gift of books, the rules, a list of books, with the churches to which they were assigned, is to be found on page 7 of Bishop Nicolson's Visitation.

† Coddin ?

NB This sum of £3 . 0 . 4½ was applied by the Ch-wardens towards repairing the roof of the parish church.

Joseph Threlkeld Church warden.

Attested by Thomas Mounsey.

Memorandum that Xmas day 1734 the old Bible was brought from the Ch: into the Vicarage House and added to the other Books belonging to ye Vicar of Askham for the time being and his successors vicars of Askham for ever.

Attested by us Joseph Threlkeld Thomas Mounsey Ch-wardens.

The following account of the rebuilding of the church at the cost of the Earl of Lonsdale was lately sent from Australia by Mr. J. Noble Wilson, a native of Askham, lately deceased:—

Memorandum made June 1832. The Parish Church of Askham falling into decay was with the consent of William Earl of Lonsdale the Patron, Percy Lord Bishop of Carlisle and churchwardens at the time, Kirkbride, Helton, and Bowman, Askham, and the mayor part of the Inhabitants of Askham Parish, did take down and rebuild on the same site, greatly improving the exterior but particularly the Interior, by the Introduction of a Galry Vestry Room and several Free sittings, also the Custom of Familys sitting together, that is Male and Female which Custom had not been practised in the Memory of Man till the rebuilding. The Foundation Stone was laid on the 28th day of June 1832 in the Preasance of James Thornbarrow Ward the Incumbent Vicar, Mawson Superintending Mason and Builder, with others of the parrish. The church when finished and made fit for public worship was opened on Sunday the 18 Day of August 1833 by the forenamed Vicar James Thornborrow Ward Text Matthew 16 chapter and 18 verse. Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.

Hodgson mentions that “the church stands upon a stratum of brownish marble, a quarry of which is sometimes wrought a little above Askham Bridge.” The manner in which the lead windows are glazed seems to me the most noticeable feature of the present edifice, if we except its very picturesque situation.

The vicarage stands on rising ground above the church, and is twice noticed in the register.

1597 October 25 The nyght before in the supp' tyme was the barn at the Vica'ag burned. April the 20th 1723 or thereabouts I William Milner AM was inducted into the Vicarage of Askham. This year May 1 I preached the visitation Sermon at Penrith it was y^e first of y^e kind in y^e new Church; the visitor was Chancellor Tully. May the 3. 1723 I came to reside here with my family, and in the year 1724 I rebuilt the Byer. Memorandum that the whole Vicarage House (the Parlour the Room above it and a little side Wall on the South Side of the kitchen only excepted, tho' the parlour and Room above it I much improved by lowering and wainscoting the windows) was rebuilt at no little expence by me W^m Milner.

June 16. 1731 I preached again the Visitation sermon at Penrith before B^p Waugh: this Visitation was that Bishop's last.

John Langton Leech, M.A., makes the following record:—

Finding from the Ancient Books belonging to the Parish of Askham that my Predecessors have made a Record of all they laid out upon the Living and Glebe House I think it my duty in justice to myself and for the satisfaction of my successors that I should make a Record of what I have expended upon the Living. In the first place I think it proper to state that I did not receive one Farthing for Dilapidations from my Predecessor the Rev. John Cautley late Vicar of this parish. Be it also remembered that when inducted into the Living I found the Parsonage House very inadequate for the Residence of the Vicar. I therefore built the Vicarage House upon the present site, being more contiguous to the church and highly advantageous with respect to situation, the expence of which amounted to the sum of six hundred and eighty pounds which I laid out without receiving pecuniary aid from any quarter whatsoever.

I also considerably augmented the Emoluments of the Living (which my successors will have the advantage of) by obtaining a Decree in the Court of Exchequer which I gained for the additional right of certain of the tithes, the numerous charges of which amounted to upwards of Five hundred pounds which I paid also entirely from my own Resources.

I think it proper also to state that the School having no endowment I obtained it by collecting and contributing to certain Donations which were liberally begun by the present Earl of Lonsdale presenting one Hundred pounds, and which was followed by myself and Parishioners to the amount of Four Hundred Pounds in the Three per cents, which sum was laid out in the purchase of six acres of land situate in the Township of Askham which the school master for the time being enjoys.

I have peculiar satisfaction in reflecting that by my own exertions the Living was thus augmented and the School made permanently advantageous to the Parish.

Attested by me this sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one Thousand Eight hundred and Thirty.

Askham Vicarage

John Langton Leech M.A. Vicar

Besides the parish church there was in Askham a chapel near the Hall, to which reference is made in the will of Dame Idonea, who bequeaths

To Robert Sandford her heir those 8 oxgangs of land and half of the mill in Ascome which her father bought of Sir Hugh de Lowther; upon condition that he find one chaplain to celebrate mass for the soul of her father and her ancestors in the chapel of St Mary of Ascome: and if he find one, then a certain distribution of 10^s for the soul of her father aforesaid and their ancestors: but if he will not so do, then, the said oxgangs to be sold and the money thence arising to be applied for the finding a chaplain and making distribution as aforesaid. — Which chapel then stood nigh unto the Hall distinct from other buildings. 7 Henry 5. (Nicolson and Burn.)

It has now been incorporated with the Hall and is used as a dairy, Dr. Taylor mentioning that the site was verified by the discovery of a piscina and a pointed arched doorway still to be seen on the south side; and Machell refers to it in his MS.—“The chapple window has two lights with coloured glass of our Saviour and Virgin Mary.” The numerous entries in the register seem to confute Dr. Taylor’s further statement that “the Sandfords were attached to the old religion to the end of their race in Askham,” which certainly did not “terminate in 1680.”

The list of vicars taken from Nicolson and Burn and the register goes back to 1295, when Richard de Seterington was vicar of “Ascom,” and he was succeeded by William de Matson, who took it on the condition that he should always have another brother of the same order resident with him.

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- 1346 John Claworth, vicar of Askham, died; and Robert le Dale, canon of Wartre, was presented by the prior and canons.
- 1359 John de Wynteringham succeeded, then Robert de Ferriby, and in 1375 Henry de Holme was vicar.
- 1380 John de Merton was presented.
- 1437 John Danby was vicar.
- 1448 Robert Wresyl, afterwards vicar of Barton.
- 1563 Thomas Watter died, and John Ayray was presented by Thos. Sandford, Esq.
- 1573 "Dec viij Sir John Ayray vicar of Askham was buryed. Sic vita vacat." (Reg.)
 "John Simpson vicar of Ascome begonne the 21 day of March Anno Dom 1574 and in the sixteenth year of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth. (Reg.)
- 1604 "On Aprill 15 was Sr John Symsonne Clarke and Vickar of Ascham buryed, being Low Sunday, Anno Dni 1604, and M^r John Hastye preached." (Reg.)
 Thomas Warwick was collated by the Bishop.
- 1611 John Hutchinson.
- 1635 Lancelot Hutchinson, who was ejected by Cromwell, and Christopher Langhorne was appointed, to be in turn ejected after the Restoration, when Lancelot Hutchinson was reinstated, 1662. He died in 1678.
- 1678 Joseph James, M.A., Scotland.
- 1681 Thomas Bell, M.A., Scot., who was deprived for not taking the oath of allegiance to William and Mary, and David Bell, his brother, was instituted.
- 1695 John Sisson, B.A., who died within the year, and was succeeded by Jeremiah Seed, 1696.
- 1707 Archer Chambers, M.A.
- 1711 Lancelot Sisson, followed same year by Jeffrey Bowness, B.A.
- 1723 William Milner, M.A., Scotland, was the ninth vicar presented by William Sandford, Esq.
- 1776 John Cautley succeeded; and, dying in 1792, the living was sequestrated for three years, during which period the officiating clergyman was the Rev. John Bowstead, master of the Bampton Grammar School.
- 1795 John Langton Leech, M.A., was instituted.
- 1832 James Thornborrow Ward.
- 1863 Joseph Bland.
- 1872 Charles H. C. Baker, who exchanged with
- 1878 The Rev. Stewart Holland, Bury St. Edmunds, who exchanged with
- 1885 The Rev. C. C. Southey; and, on his death, the present vicar
- 1889 The Rev. W. G. Freeman was presented.

On January 15th, 1578, Henry Wilkinson was buried; he left the following bequest:—

Henry Wilkinson of Scale w^{thin} Heltendale has by his last Wyll and Testamēt ordeainyd and Bequythed y^t v mark of his debts be taken up and letten out yearlye to the power w^{thin} the pth according to the statute after viij^d a nowbyll and so an alwayes at the yeares end wth the increase thereof w^{ch} increase shalbe distributed to the powere and the stock letten furth yearlye as is abovesayd for ever bye the discesion and at the sugg^t of his supervisors and the vicar there and after three deaths at the sugg^t of the nyest of his kynsfolke and the vicar or minister there.

This sum was increased by Michaell Langhorne of Helton, who was buried August 6th, 1614.

The said Michaell Langhorne hearebefore written bequethed by his last Will and testam^t v marks to be letten fyrth in this p'eshe after viij^d a noble and the increase to be given yearely to the poore of this p'esh at the same day y^t his father in law Henry Wilkinson's increase comes in at the discretion of Rychard Mounsey and Richard Langhorne and ther successors wth the Vicar then being."

Many papers at the end of the first volume of the register are filled with the accounts of this charity, the names of those to whom the money was lent each year, and the sums paid by them as interest—all entered with a care which shows how thoroughly trustees in those days discharged their responsibilities. I can now learn nothing of this fund.

The register is generally well kept, and commences on April 2nd, 1566; but as several of the early pages are detached and the front cover is gone, probably the first part has been lost, and from 1670 to 1679 there is a break in the register, which I have filled from the abstracts at Carlisle. The first legible entry is the burial of Cr— Sandforth, and the next names are those of John Holme, Jane Collinsonne, Annas Tinkler, Thomas Jameson, Wm. Bowman, Margaret Lancaster, &c., some of whom belonged to families still to be found in Askham. The number of surnames ending in "son" is quite remarkable. I have counted thirty-two in the first

- volume, and the list is probably not nearly exhausted. Other early entries include the families of Muncey, Wilkinson, Hogert, Clerke, Noble, Langhorne, Lawe, Salkelde, Cowper, Myddletowne, Kendall, Stely, Gibsonne, Bewsher, Wilson, &c. The following are a few of the Sandford entries and their connections, but there are obviously two families of this name running through the register, who do not appear to have any connection, one living at Helton :—
- Julie 1574 The sixth day was M^r Thomas Sandfoord Esquier buried.
 1576 The tenth day was M^r John Myddletonne and Mistress Anne Sandforth wedded.
- 1580 Aug 30 was Richard Threlkeld gent and Anne Mydleton wedded.
- 1582 July 17 Edmund Bradley gent and Jane Midleton wedded.
- 1587 Uppon Weddensday the 11th of this month was Margaret daughter of Thomas Sandforthe esquier borne and christened the 22 of same being Sounday; her godmothers Margaret Lady Scrope by her deputy M^{rs} Parkinson and M^{rs} Mary Hudleston and M^r John Mydleton esquier her godfather.
- Nov 1588 The 9 was An' daughter of M^r Thos Sandforth esquier borne and chrystened the 14 of same by M^r Edmund Dudley M^{rs} An' Sandforth of Howgyl and M^{rs} Rebecca Wytherington.
- Oct 1592. 20 was Thomas the 5th chyld of M^r Thomas Sandforth esquier borne and chrystened the first day of November 1592 being All Saints day, his godfathers was Thomas Lord Scrope by his substitute M^r John Mydleton Esquier and M^r Thomas Salkeld esquier his godmother was M^{rs} An Bellinghā.
- June 5 1593 was M^r John Conniers and M^{rs} Alā Mydleton weddyd.
- 1711 Sept 49 M^r William Tatam and M^{rs} Mildred Sandford of Askham Hall were married.
- 1712 July y^e 29 William son of M^r William Tatham of Askham Hall was baptised, borne July y^e 11.
- Dec 25 1721 M^r Henry Marston of y^e p^{sh} of Gisburn in Yorkshire and M^{rs} Elizabeth Sandforth were married.
- 1773 M^{rs} Catherine Sandford Daughter of the late William Sandford Esq^r of Askham was Buried December the 11th aged about 77; she was the last of the ancient family of Sandford in this Country.

Other entries of some interest are :—

- 1597 Jan 26 was Thomas Warwyke gent and M^{rs} Margaret Mydleton weddyd.
- 1575 The twenty fourth day was Bridget Huddelstonne the daughter of M^r Andrew Huddelstonne esquier christened.
- 1616 October the xvj day was Thomas the sonne of Thomas Hilton baptized his godfather's were Sir Ephraim Widdrington knight M^r Francis Hiltō Mary Lady Dorret his godmother.
- 1635 The xxiii day of Aprill was Luke the son of Allan Bellingham of Carleton buried.
- 1769 M^r Benjamin Foxcroft Master of Whites in St James Street London was buried October 2^d.

Evidently an Askham man.

- 1623 Aprill the last day was our Generall Chapt^r holden at Brougham Chappell and a Coppie of our Register booke presented.
- 1693 July The Visitation court of the Archbishop of York was holden at Penrith.
- June the 12 1765 The general Chapter was holden at Appleby when Rich^d Burn LLD who succeeded D^r Waugh as Chancellor, preached from Luke the 9. 54.5.6. The discourse was not properly a sermon but a history of the Rise, Progress, and Declension of Popery.

We have a few notes of the weather :—

- Memorandum that y^e year 1739 was y^e strongest and most lasting frost y^t had happened almost in memory.
- 1767 Memorandum that in the night between January y^e 10th and 11 there happened the greatest fall of snow I ever remember; the snow was so deep that I could not go to Church January the 11th being Sunday, an accident that never happened to me before in the course of my ministry and I am now in the forty eighth of it. William Milner Vicar of Askham.
- Memorandum y^t y^e year 1739 about Michaelmas M^{rs} Tatham gave a silver salver to y^e church w^{ch} was added to y^e Communion Plate.
- In 1586 This year was the division of Askhā felde begon by M^r John Mydleton and Anne his wife and so [illegible] unfinyshed y^t year.

In 1587 This year the division begon againe by Mr Thomas Sandforth of [torn] and the end given upon the 29th of January by Edmund Tyncler and the Jurors.

1588 August This year we had the first crop after the division.

1610 October The 3 day was John Heirst and Jane Wache two poor travellers' whiped, and two poore men viz Will^m Carter and Richard Clerke being two of his neighbours had given their tesom^y full prompt before the congregacō that there was no former contract.

The following seems to be a very decided "forbidding the banns" :—

Westmorland At the generall sessions of the publike peace holden at Kendall for the saide County the 18 day of July 1656 before Robert Jackson Esq Keeper of the publike peace and Justice assigned.

Upon readinge the petition of Edmonde Araye of Askham and the reference there upon made at the last sessions at Aplebie holden the 15 day of this instant month and upon readinge the petition of Mabel Judson (Copies of both which are hereunto annexed and after by the Clerke of the Peace of this County) and upon taking the Examination of John Judson and John Slee, others remaining, upon record amongst the Roules of this Sessions It appears to the Court that the Griephions put in by the said Mabell Judson are sufficient and valued as to obstruct the further publisheinge of the Banes betwixt the saide Araye and Jane Langhorne and that they cannot by the act proceede to marriage whereof the register of the p'ish of Askham is to take notice and conforme accordinglye and to enter this order in his Registry as he will answer to the contrary.

Exmd

John ffawcet

Clerke of the Peace

The disappointed fair one seems to have soon consoled herself, and the interest of the above is enhanced if the same Jane Langhorne is the one mentioned in the following entry :—"Juely 1657 The xxij day was Edmond Gibson and Jane Langhorne married," this couple being the parents of Edmund, Bishop of London.

During the latter part of the time Lancelott Hutchinson was vicar of Askham there are many entries of collections held in the parish church, of which the following are a few :—

In 1661	Pontefract	four shillings and two pence			
	Scarborough	one shilling eightpence			
	Drayton	two shillings fower pence halfe penny			
1661	For the use of John de Kraino Kranisky	one shilling and eight pence*			
	Willm Copperthwaite	one shilling and two pence			
1662	Three shillings two pence halfe penny for his Maj ^{ties} Commissioners for fishing				
	two shillings sixpence for the use of Thomas Thornton James Nellsō and Christo Milner				
1664	2 ^s 6 ^d for y ^e use of Henry Lilse of Gisbrough				
	1 ^s 10 ^d for y ^e use of y ^e town of Cromer alias Skipden				
1665	For y ^e inhabitants of Stillingfleete	...	...	2 ^s	10 ^d
	Hartlepoole	...	...	1 ^s	6 ^d
	parish of Cluwy	...	...	1 ^s	8 ^d
1669	Burton upo Stather Linc.	...	...	3 ^s	2 ^d
	Haverhill Suffolk	...	...	2 ^s	6 ^d
	M ^r W ^m Russell and Widow Mary Symon	...	...	1 ^s	8 ^d
	For y ^e use of y ^e Captives in Algiers and Sally	...	...	2 ^s	9 ^d

There is no mention of any visitation of the plague, and there are no entries during the period the Scots were in the neighbourhood, from September 12th, 1745, till the following March.

In the diocesan abstracts are a few presentments of Quakers, &c., but none of any interest.

* The following extract from a recent number of *Notes and Queries* elucidates this collection:—Woodbury Nov 17 1661 'Collected for the helpe of the Protestant Churches in the great Dukedome of Lithuania being in number about 100 by a briefe vpon the peticon of John de Crains Krainsky minister of God's word and deputy of the national Synod there: the sum of ili. 1s. 11d.'