



S. W. B. Jack, photo.

MEDIÆVAL FUNERAL CHALICE AND PATEN

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FOUND AT KIRKOSWALD.
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ART. II.—*On the Kirkoswald Coffin Chalice and Paten, and others.* By HENRY BARNES, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E.

Read at Carlisle, April 5th, 1906.

THE present paper is a continuation of one I submitted to the meeting of this Society held at Conishead last June, in which I gave an account of an ancient chalice which had been found in a stone coffin on the site of the old Leper Hospital at St. Nicholas, Carlisle. The chalice had been frequently exhibited, but had never been described; and no effort had, so far as I know, been made to identify its probable date. One good result of that paper has been that both the coffin and the chalice have since been presented to the Tullie House Museum by their respective owners, and two interesting relics of antiquity so long separated have once more been brought together under the same roof.

In the present paper I propose to give some account of three other coffin chalices which have been found in Cumberland, two of which have not been previously described and the third only briefly. Of these one was found at Kirkoswald, another at Melmerby, and the remaining one at Bank Street, Carlisle.

THE KIRKOSWALD CHALICE AND PATEN.

These were found about five and twenty years ago, when some workmen were making an underground chamber for the heating apparatus beneath the present vestry of Kirkoswald Church. The late Canon Thornley very kindly placed these interesting relics in my hands for examination, and I have had them photographed, as shown in the illustration.

They appear to be of pewter. The foot of the chalice is wanting. The knop is similar to that of the St. Nicholas chalice, but the bowl is tending towards the conical shape. The two fragments on the left have been parts of the bowl, and one of them is distinctly lipped. The fragments of the paten, which is on the right of the picture, shows that its diameter has been about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, or one inch less than the diameter of the top of the St. Nicholas chalice. From its shape and appearance, I consider that this chalice belongs to the second division of the Norman type, and dates from the early part of the fourteenth century. At the same time that these relics were found an old oak coffin was found near, and a grave cover of stone carved with a cross and shears. In a paper by the late Mr. Lees of Wreay, in vol. viii. of these *Transactions*, "On the Incised Slabs of Dearham and Melmerby," the writer states that when we find the shears by which the tonsure was effected and preserved, in conjunction with clerical symbols on memorial stones, we may safely conclude that the ecclesiastic thus commemorated has either held office as a rural dean, or discharged archidiaconal functions. It is well known that this church of Kirkoswald has a very ancient foundation. Bishop Nicolson says there was certainly a church here before the Conquest, and that the saint's name to whom it was dedicated refers to the time of the Saxons. It is on record that in the year 1305 Bishop Halton held a great ordination in this church, when he ordained 17 acolytes, 26 deacons, and 21 priests. I think the chalice dates about this period.

THE MELMERBY COFFIN CHALICE AND PATEN.

These were found by the sexton when digging a grave on June 21st, 1881. The stem of the chalice was bruised and bent. It was exhibited by the vicar at the annual meeting of this Society in June, 1884, and also in the



MEDIAEVAL FUNERAL CHALICE AND PATEN
found in Bank Street, Carlisle, 1878.

S. W. B. Jack, photo.

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same year in the museum of the Church Congress at Carlisle, and in the guide to the exhibition it is entered as follows:—

Lent by the Rev. A. C. Pittar, Melmerby, Penrith.

No. 146.—Sepulchral Lead Chalice in two pieces, with paten.

Since that date these relics have disappeared, and although diligent enquiry has been made no trace of them can be found. Fortunately, however, there is a brief description of them in "Old Church Plate in the Diocese of Carlisle," p. 233. The chalice is stated to have been $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, and the diameter of the bowl was four inches at the top. From the drawing of it, which was made at the time, I should classify it as of early fourteenth century date. Melmerby Church has a very ancient foundation, and in Jefferson's *Leath Ward* a list of rectors is given dating from 1332. I am in hopes that the publicity given to the disappearance of these interesting relics may lead to their recovery, and in that event, I am sure they would be gratefully received by the authorities of the Tullie House Museum.

THE BANK STREET CHALICE AND PATEN, CARLISLE.

In 1892, the Tullie House Committee acquired by purchase what is known as "The Fisher Collection." The late Mr. John Fisher of Bank Street, Carlisle, had been an ardent collector for many years, and had got together a most interesting series of antique relics. Among these were fragments of a mediæval funeral chalice and paten in copper. In Mr. Fisher's catalogue these are entered as "a bronze cup and saucer," but when the late Chancellor Ferguson got possession of them he identified their nature, and has correctly described them in his catalogue of the collection as "a sepulchral mediæval chalice and paten." The stem and base of the chalice are wanting, but the

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bowl is fairly complete. Its diameter is $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and its depth $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The diameter of the paten is $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches. There are distinct traces of gilding on the chalice, and in its original condition it must have been very handsome.*

Mr. Fisher had inscribed on both in his own handwriting "Bank Street, 1878," indicating the date and place where they were found. I have made due enquiries, but I have been unable to elicit any reliable information as to the circumstances under which the find took place. I have, however, some reason to believe that they were discovered during the excavations in connection with the building of the Clydesdale Bank and adjoining premises. In vol. iv. of these *Transactions*, o.s., p. 92, there is an account of these excavations, from which I take the following extract :—

Over the whole of the three sites there existed, first a layer of building rubbish of from one to two feet in thickness; second, a layer of black graveyard soil, thickly interspersed with bones or skeletons more or less perfect (the teeth of all the skulls found were very much ground down, but with scarcely an exception quite sound), and with a few fragments of stone crosses and monumental slabs, and nearer the surface a stone cannon ball. In one place, at about four feet below the surface, was found a sepulchral slab of red sandstone with a cross upon it in relief, but no inscription—probably of late thirteenth century date. Third, a layer of black mould containing fragments of Roman pottery, lamps, etc., of very varied character.

There is figured in the article from which I am quoting a sketch of this sepulchral slab, but it is not known what became of it. The carved capital of a column found during these excavations, and figured on the same plate, has found its way to the Tullie House Museum. It is

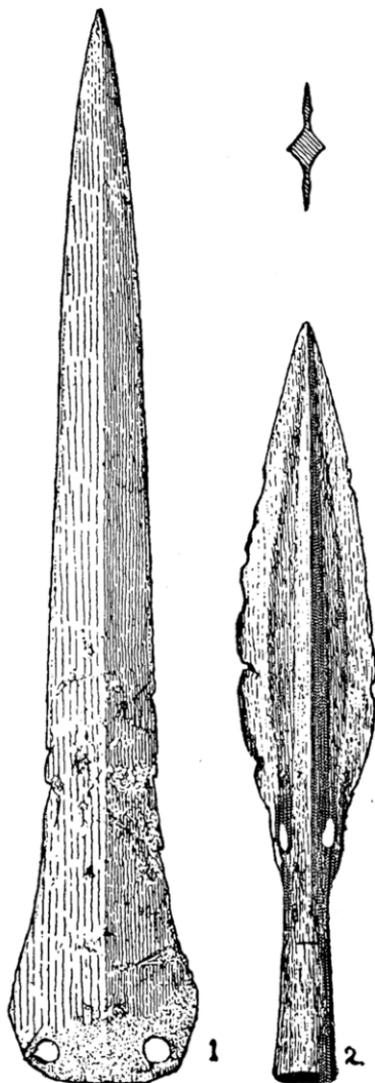
* I had a photograph taken, and the reproduction gives a good idea of the relics. The fragments below the paten are of the same material, but do not fit any part of chalice or paten. I think they have probably formed a part of the base or foot of chalice.

unfortunate that the slab has disappeared. From the drawing of it, I should put it later than the thirteenth century.

With regard to the chalice, in the absence of the stem and base, it is not easy to specify the exact date; but looking to the character of the bowl, I should consider that it belonged to the thirteenth century. It has evidently been of a more valuable character than the others I have described, and has probably been buried with some ecclesiastic of distinction. The site of the find is in close proximity to that generally assigned to the convent of the Order of Grey or Franciscan Friars, established in Carlisle in 1233, and was probably the cemetery of the Order. The convent was destroyed by fire in 1292, but was rebuilt, and is mentioned in the *Chronicle of Lanercost*, under date 1315, when the army of King Robert the Bruce besieged Carlisle. Jefferson, in his *History of Carlisle*, says that many bones have been dug up in some of the gardens on the site of this convent, and portions of the conventual buildings have occasionally been met with. It is probable, therefore, that this chalice has been buried with some ecclesiastic belonging to the Order of Grey Friars.

It is rather a singular coincidence that the three chalices now described should have been found within three or four years of each other. They constitute, with the one described last year, all of which I have any record in Cumberland. Recently, in visiting the British Museum, I found that they had only four coffin chalices in their collection, three of base metal and one of silver. The latter was the chalice of Berwick St. James, Wilts, mentioned in my paper last year, and is labelled as of thirteenth or fourteenth century. The others were a leaden chalice and paten from old Sarum, and a sixteenth century chalice of base metal from Rhos Crowther, Pembroke. These are all in the mediæval room. In the Anglo-Saxon room, I had the opportunity of examining the chalice found in 1774 at Trewhiddle, Cornwall, to

which my attention was called by Mr. Collingwood when my paper was going through the press last year. It has been restored, and bears a striking resemblance to the St. Nicholas chalice.



BRONZE DAGGER AND SPEAR-HEAD FROM FURNESS.