

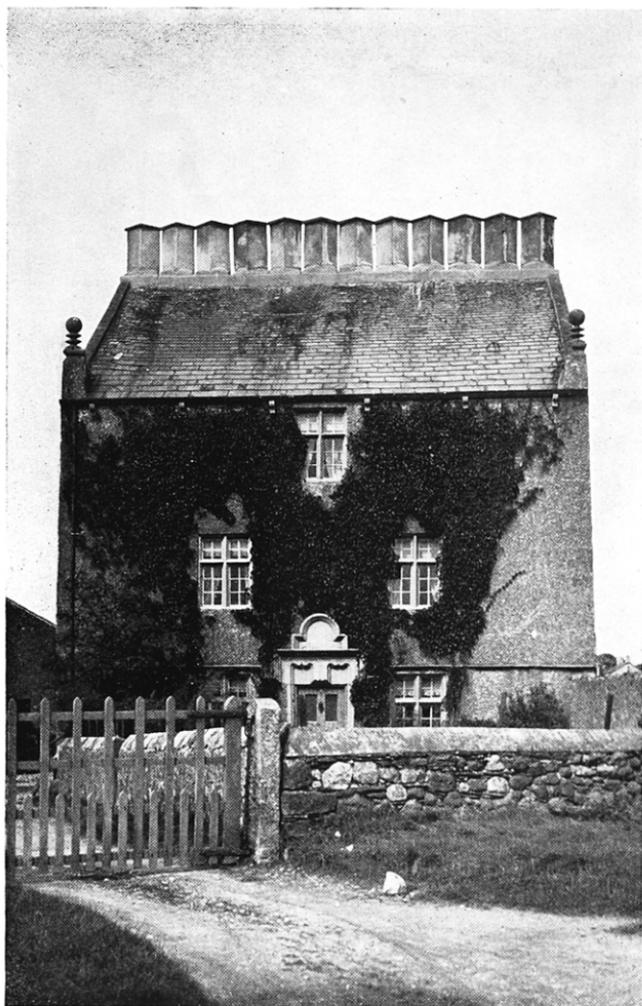
ART. XIII.—*Rampside Hall*. By C. P. CHAMBERS and HARPER GAYTHORPE, F.S.A.Scot.

Read at the Site, September 9th, 1909.

I.—DESCRIPTIVE. By C. P. CHAMBERS.

THE plan of this interesting old hall is a simple rectangle, having a somewhat greater depth than length, and its front faces almost exactly due south. As far as can be ascertained there does not appear to have been any extension of the buildings in any direction, the present porch over the kitchen door and the back premises being later erections. Any outoffices, therefore, which may have belonged to it have probably been separate buildings. The masonry is of random rubble work with red sandstone quoins and facings, the latter in after years having received many coats of paint. The rubble is composed of the rounded stones of the boulder clay in the district or from the neighbouring sea-shore, mixed with more angular pieces, which may have been derived from previous buildings near the site, or from the larger boulders broken up; the walls have subsequently been covered on the outside with roughcast. The foundations, as far as can be seen, are of massive boulders.

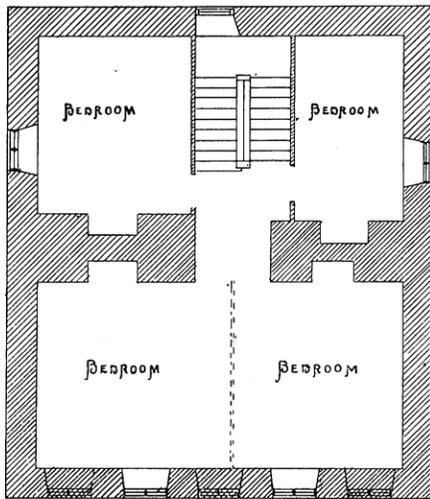
The building consists of three main floors with an attic in the roof, the eaves of which reach down to the floor level; there is also a small cellar, partly under the staircase and partly under an adjoining small room, which we may call the buttery. This cellar is reached by a flight of red sandstone steps now boarded over. There is a well under these steps which maintains a constant supply of spring water. The house is centrally divided by an enormously thick wall into front and back halves, with large openings through this wall, immediately opposite



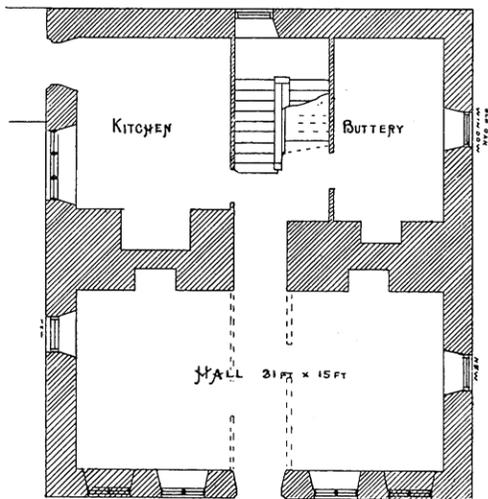
RAMPSIDE HALL.

Photo. by E. Sankey, Barrow.

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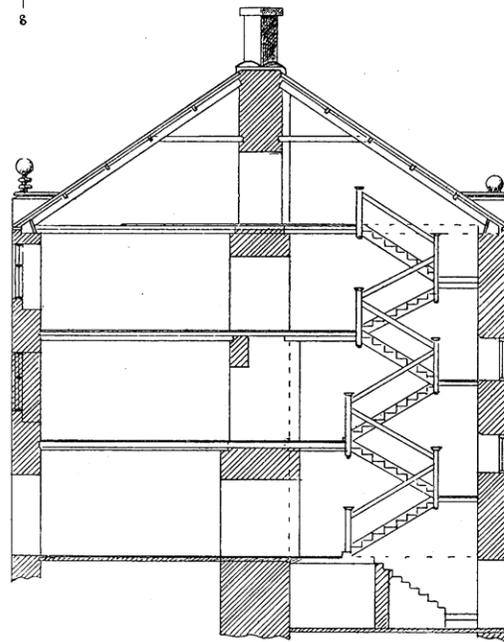
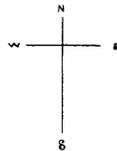
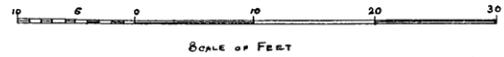


FIRST FLOOR PLAN.



GROUND PLAN

RAMPSIDE HALL
LANCASHIRE



SECTIONAL ELEVATION

G.P. GARDNER, 1909.

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the staircase, on each floor as shown on the plan. The front half consisted originally of one room only on each floor; the lower room was the hall, 31 feet in length and 15 feet in breadth; the entrance door was in the centre as now, and it was lighted by four front windows (those at the ends being of recent introduction); it had two fireplaces and a red sandstone floor, which latter, owing to its worn and uneven state, was boarded over, I believe, at the time when the present partitions across it were put up—at a comparatively recent date.

Above, there was a room of the same length as the hall, but one foot wider, owing to the diminished thickness of the central wall; this is now divided into two rooms by a modern partition. This room had five windows at the front and two fireplaces, and the room above is similar to it, and had also its five windows and two fireplaces. Thus there were originally fourteen front windows to the building, but at some period or other—probably at the time of the taxing of window-glass—nine of these windows were built up; but unmistakable traces of their openings are to be seen, especially in the internal walls of the upper room, and a cupboard in the present left-hand room on the ground floor now occupies what was once undoubtedly a window opening. There are no cornices to any of these rooms, but the beams supporting the floor above, in each case project below the ceilings.

The back portion of the house on each floor is divided into two rooms with the staircase between them, those on the left-hand side being much the larger. On the ground floor there is the kitchen, reflagged at a modern date, blue flags replacing the former red sandstone ones; the outer doorway may be noticed with its moulded jambs and lintel, and the ancient door itself, hung with rather roughly designed wrought-iron hinges, on hooks fixed in the wall. There was no doubt a large open fireplace, the opening of which can still be made out, 7 feet 6 inches in width, but it is now partially built up, and a modern range occupies the place of the old open hearth.

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The other back rooms call for no particular remarks except that in each case they are lighted by the original windows, though the upper part of the one in the left hand bedroom on the top floor is built up; and that the window-frame of the buttery is of oak instead of stone, being the only original wood window-frame in the house.

The staircase is a rather handsome structure of very easy ascent, having two flights of steps and a half space landing for each floor. It is on the open newel plan, but instead of two newel posts at each landing, there is one post only, that being broadened sufficiently to receive the handrails for each flight of steps. The handrails are 6 inches deep by 5 inches broad, and are fairly well moulded. The open strings, which are 15 inches deep including the cap, are also well moulded; the balusters, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter, are well turned to a bold pattern; the newels are not turned, but have sunk panelled faces, and are surmounted with flat caps moulded on their edges. The staircase is continued up into the attic, but somewhat less elaborately, with quarter space landings and two steps between them, so arranged as to avoid the awkward position of one of the tie-beams of the roof above. The staircase does not appear to have been lighted at all from the back, the present two windows being quite modern.

The attics are only partially floored, but the old flooring boards still remain, and are in a very worm-eaten state, with many holes in them. These attics were originally lighted by two windows in each gable, but these are now built up, except that some small ventilating holes are left covered by sliding doors; the old wood lintels, however, are yet in their places, and indicate the positions of the old window openings. The central wall of these attics and the gables are not plastered; thus the rubble walling of the building can be seen. The roof is well constructed with three principals, 9 inches square, and four purlins, 7 inches by 4 inches, on each side. The principals are strapped to the tie beams with iron heel-straps, a some-

what unusual occurrence in old oak roofs. The purlins appear to be properly cogged on to the principals, and are fixed in place with strong wood dowel pegs. The spars are newer; they probably replaced the old ones when the house was reroofed a century or so ago. At that date, too, one of the principals appears to have been strengthened by a plank of pitch-pine which is bolted to its side.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the house is the exceedingly thick partition wall before mentioned. In this wall are the twelve fireplaces which the house originally contained—two each for the three front rooms and one each for the six back rooms, for though some of them are now built up, abundant indications of their previous existence may be seen. The flues from these fireplaces appear to have been carried up separately, and terminate in twelve square chimney stacks set in a row on the ridge of the roof, not, however, face to face, but angle to angle, with small spaces between them, and together they occupy the entire length of the building, the whole arrangement being very uncommon, if not altogether unique; indeed, we know of no other example, at any rate in this part of the country.

The thickness of this great central wall varies considerably. Where the kitchen fireplace occurs it is no less than 7 feet through, being 1 foot less in the eastern end of the building; in the two floors above, the thickness is reduced to 5 feet, and to 3 feet 6 inches in the attic, except where there is a projecting jamb carried up to contain presumably the large flue from the kitchen.

These various thicknesses are best understood by referring to the drawings. The kitchen fireplace is 3 feet 6 inches deep, and the fireplace of the hall, which is back to it, is about 2 feet deep, leaving a thickness of 1 foot 6 inches between the two; in the case of the other fireplaces, there is a space of two or three feet between them. Thus, after allowing all the necessary room the flues and fireplaces require, there is still a great amount

of wall thickness which has no particular structural value, and seeing that this wall is so much more massive than the external walls, which are only about 2 feet 6 inches thick, the possibility is suggested of cavities being constructed in it for hiding or other purposes, but there were no means available for making search for them.

Passing now to the exterior of the house, we may notice that all the existing original windows (except that in the buttery) are of one pattern. They have plain chamfered stone jambs, sills, and heads with a central mullion, and a transom which divides each of them into four lights—the upper ones being square, the lower ones having a greater height than width. The kitchen window, though built exactly on the same plan, has two mullions, thus in its case making six lights, and consequently a window of much greater breadth than any of the others.

There are no traces of a label mould to any of these windows excepting the lower front ones. There the label extends as a string course from either end of the building a few inches above the windows, and is returned for a short distance down the side of each one next the door, abutting on the much heavier label mould of the doorhead.

The lintel of the door is of one stone, 21 inches deep, and is cut away on its face into two sunk panels about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep with no bottom sides to them, and the other three sides moulded. This lintel has a label, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, projecting nearly 7 inches from its face, and is returned down its ends and again returned for a short distance horizontally, and stops with a square end a few inches from the window on either side. Centrally over this lintel is set a somewhat shorter one, and above this another stone with a semicircular top, which has a diameter 12 inches less than the lintel on which it rests. These are surmounted by another label mould of the same pattern as the lower one, but slightly less; the face of the upper lintel projecting a little over the face of the lower one. The whole forms a rather effective door-

head, but there is no date or emblem of any sort. The only cutting besides the mouldings is a narrow panel, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in depth, extending the length of the lower lintel on its upper side, and containing a train of grapes and leaves cut in relief, but with not much attempt at modelling. It is interesting to note that there is rather more skill shown in the arrangement of these leaves and grapes than there is in moulding them.

It may be mentioned here that the old oak bedstead in one of the back bedrooms has a similar pattern of grapes and vine leaves carved on its panels, but rather more elaborate both in cutting and arrangement.

We may now notice the ornaments terminating the coping of the gables. These consist of a base and two square stones moulded on their edges; they are placed one above the other with narrow necks separating them from each other and from the base, and these are surmounted in each case by a stone ball, the square stones being placed anglewise to the front like the chimney-stacks. At the back of the house the balls rest upon a base only, without any intervening stones.

The coping on the slope of the roof is of plain flat stones only, but where it runs out horizontally at the foot and supports the ornaments it is heavily moulded. This moulded coping was doubtless originally carried all along the front of the house as a parapet, and it might possibly have been battlemented. But however this latter may have been, the parapet was cut away when the house was reroofed, on the occasion before mentioned, in order possibly to save the lead work which would have been required behind it. At any rate, the new roof was made with projecting eaves as we now see it, and the present corbels carrying the eaves' gutters were then inserted.

Down in the cellar may be seen a moulded stone of the same pattern as this moulded coping, and though now doing duty as the support of a milk bench, was doubtless once a portion of the old parapet.

II.—HISTORICAL. By H. GAYTHORPE.

Dr. Close of Dalton, editor of West's *Antiquities of Furness*, in his unpublished MS., written c. 1810, states

Near the beach is a large old farmhouse called Rampside Hall, built upon a square plan with the sides towards the four cardinal points, and the angle of its roof with the corners surrounded by a long row of 12 square chimnies, very near each other, and its front originally perforated with 14 windows, of which 10 have been walled up in some recent alterations. This place appears to have once been embattled or topped by a parapet.*

As there is now no dated stone over the front doorway an exact date when this hall was built cannot be stated, but the records of an old Catholic family named Knype, who lived at Rampside during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, afford some help.

William Knype, born 1553, lived at Rampside. He was a cousin of Francis Sandys of Hawkshead parish, who, by his will in 1586, bequeathed to him "one kolte of two yeares old."† This William Knype married Dorathye Richardson at Dalton Church on February 2nd, 1580, and died April 9th, 1599, aged 46.‡ They had eight children. She was probably a daughter of John Richardson, bailiff of the Liberty of Furness in 1594.

In 1583-4 Queen Elizabeth granted to William Knype the herbage of Rampside Wood. This wood was originally imparked under royal license by John Bolton, abbot of Furness in 1398.

In 1596-7 William Knype and Dorothy, his wife, are referred to in the Duchy Records for wrongful possession of Ronhead.

It is most probable that William Knype lived in an older house, built either on the site of Rampside Hall or

* *Transactions of the Barrow Naturalists' Field Club*, xvii., p. 115, 1909.

† Chetham Society, 28, p. 141, *Lancashire and Cheshire Wills*, iii. Proved at York, May 3rd, 1586.

‡ Dalton registers.

at some distance to the north-west. An old farmhouse formerly stood on the latter site, but was pulled down some years ago.

In 1603-4 Thomas Preston of the manor of Furness, Esq., bequeathed to James Knype, second son of William Knype, and Elizabeth his wife, or either of them, "a nagge of the prise of fyve markes." This James Knype of Rampside was a man of positcion, for by his will* he bequeathed his tenements at Rampside to John Knype, his son, then a minor, aged six years, and also his lands at Blawith, Newland, &c., to his wife Elizabeth, sister of Thomas Curwen of Roose; to his daughter Anne Knype, £100; to his daughter Ellen Knype, £200, when 18 years of age. He appointed as supervisors John Preston of the manor, Esq.; Francis Preston, his "unkell;" Thomas Curwen of Roose, his brother-in-law; and Nicholas Boulton.

Rampside Hall is referred to in 1634, when John Knype, then aged 26, and his wife Jane (or Jenet), née Thornburgh of Cartmel, were living there. His estate was sequestrated in 1634. The hall may have been built sometime between 1580, when William Knype was married, and 1614, when his son James died, or by John, son of James Knype, who died in 1651, aged 43 years.

In 1649 the lordship or manor of Furness was surveyed by order of Parliament,† and the dwelling house of Mr. John Knype of Rampside, a papist under sequestration, is referred to as adjoining Rampside Wood, which contained forty acres of ground enclosed with a good hedge. This John Knype was a captain in the royal army, and was slain at Brindle, near Preston, on August 23rd, 1651. His son, James Knype of Rampside Hall, married Susan,

* Proved at York, March 29th, 1615-16.

Thomas Preston's will, Chetham Society, 28, p. 162, January 5th, 1603-4. 1 Jac.; proved at Richmond, 1604. James Knype's will, Chetham Society, 28, p. 184, February 28th, 1614-15. (This should be February 18th.—Dalton register.)

† Close's ed. of West, 1805, p. 241; West, *Antiquities of Furness*, 1774, p. 177.

daughter and co-heiress of Henry Butler of Hackinsall Hall. His will was proved in 1694.* The Knypes of Woodbroughton, in the parish of Cartmel, were their kinsmen, one of whom, John Knype, in 1652 threw George Fox the Quaker headlong over a stone wall after his attempt to preach to the people at Staveley Chapel.†

In 1639 Thomas Knype of Greenhaume was a party to an indenture with John Preston of the manor, Esq., relating to the relief of the poor of Dalton parish, and in 1658 Thomas Knype, gentleman, then living at the manor, was one of the witnesses to the will of Judge Fell, who gave his "old true friend twenty shillings to buy him a ring therewith as a small token of the remembrance of my love unto him" (*The Fells of Swarthmoor Hall*, p. 143). At the end of the seventeenth century Roger Knype was living at Rampside.

In 1682 Thomas Bibbie was living at Rampside Hall. He was one of the sidesmen, or "four and twenty," of Dalton in 1697.

Built into the attic walls at Rampside Hall are some moulded red sandstones of debased Gothic form. These stones point to the existence of a still older building, probably on the site of the present hall. On one of the oak purlins are carved initials "I W" in seventeenth century letters. The four windows formerly in the east and west walls of the attics must also have been built up, c. 1810, to avoid the tax on light, at which time the hall was re-roofed and the parapet removed. The original red sandstones which formed the floors of the hall and kitchen were probably brought from Furness Abbey, and were boarded over or re-flagged in 1885. The mullions of the windows are of the same kind of grey sandstone and form as those at Ormsgill Farm, Barrow, built in 1605, and at Swarthmoor Hall. The head of the seventeenth century

* Catholic Record Society, *Miscellanea*, v., p. 238.

† Fox's *Journal*, i., 125.

oaken bedstead in the bedroom over the buttery is panelled, and the upper portion carved in a design similar to that over the front door, but more elaborately.

Formerly on Christmas morning it was the custom to have all the chimneys smoking at the top, and the tradition still exists that the hall was used by the owner as his residence, while the old farmhouse at the north-west end of the Bull Coppy was occupied by the hind who managed the farm. In the springtime snowdrops appear on the spot where the garden adjoining the old farmhouse stood, and there are remains of a terraced garden near the front.

Evidence of the earthquake at Rampside on February 15th, 1865, may be seen in the cracks in the west wall of the hall, and also in the attic.

I have made no investigation of the history of Rampside Hall during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but there is in the yard at the back of the hall the stone of an old cheese press dated "R . . 1724," which tells us that cheese-making used to be carried on there—now almost a forgotten art in Furness.
