

ART. XIII.—*Barton Church and Barton Kirke.* By J. H. MARTINDALE, F.R.I.B.A.

Read at the site, July 7th, 1921.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, BARTON.

OUR Society first visited Barton on the 11th July, 1879, and I am not quite sure whether we have ever been here since, except at a joint visit with the British Archaeological Association in 1908. The late Mr. C. J. Ferguson, at the '79 visit, read a paper on the architectural history of the building (these *Trans.* o.s. iv., Art. xxviii.) and I don't think very much information has been added on the subject since that time, except the references in Mr. Ragg's papers on the de Lancasters (N.S. x., Art. xxi.) indicating the importance of the parish. I may draw attention to the extent of the area of this ancient parish; its boundaries reach to Crosthwaite on the west, Grasmere and Kendal on the south, and Greystoke and Penrith on the north and east. The fact that one of the barons of Kendal obtained a grant for a market here in the reign of King John (1215-6) shows that Barton was the centre of a considerable population six hundred years ago.

The one feature which has made Barton church famous is its tower. Mr. Ferguson thought that this was always a central one. I believe, with the exception of Carlisle Cathedral and Cartmel Priory, there is no other mediæval central tower in the diocese, perfect. Of course, there were central towers to the great monastic churches of Holme Cultram, Lanercost, and Calder, but I can't remember any other to a parish church.

A central tower is the natural outcome of the cruciform plan; but in one sense this tower is not central, as the

church never had transepts, north or south, and certainly the tower was free at one time on the south side, as proved by the existing small early window. There are, indeed, examples of Anglo-Saxon churches with central tower at the junction of nave and choir, without transepts, as Barton-on-Humber, a curious coincidence in name. The building, however, dates from the Early Norman period. It is mentioned in the Register of John de Halton in 1303, and also in several of the de Lancaster charters, as a boundary extent.

There can be no doubt that the roofs of the eastern and western portions have been altered at various periods. This appears from the weatherings and other marks on the faces of the tower ; but I am not sure that these indications are always conclusive evidence of the contemporary date and existence of the buildings, and I venture to make the following heretical suggestion, namely, that the church originally finished at the tower, thus making it a western tower. The present walls of the nave overlap or enclose the angles of the tower, north, south and west, but there is only one bondstone, near the pulpit.

If my theory is correct, the nave or western extension would be the earliest in date ; then the south aisle of the nave, and possibly the south aisle of the choir ; then the north aisle of the nave, and finally, the so-called aisles to north of tower and chancel, which have not, and never had, any communication with the tower or chancel, through the north wall. I think the outline of a door may be seen in the north chancel wall, east of the tower, and this may have given access to the upper part of the tower, as at present there is no access to it except by a ladder.

The south aisle of the chancel is most interesting, with its original east window, priest's door, stoup and piscina, and these seem rather to indicate it as a chantry chapel. I believe it is known as the Winder Chapel, and Bishop

Nicolson seems to hint at this when he says the family of Davis of Winder bury in it (*Miscellany Accounts*, 1704, p. 126). The chancel now is about 38 feet in length and 18 feet in width, which Bishop Nicolson calls "vastly large." He mentions several monuments, including a brass, I think on the south side, of William Lancaster, c. 1575, but this is not now to be seen, and also several armorial stones now obliterated. Machell describes them in his day, as being the arms of Arundel, Percy, Lacy, Dacre, Lowther, Lancaster, Strickland, Threlkeld, Machel, Moresby, Orpheur, and Crackenthorpe. I think there is a grave-slab and a fragment of a second, and several matrices of brasses, and floor-slabs to the memory of the family of Wordsworth.

The nave is of three bays, about 42 feet long by 22 feet wide, with one early door on the south, not now *in situ*, but probably removed here when the aisle was built, and a later porch having an armorial shield on the east side and one over the door. The arches of the tower were originally semicircular, about 7 feet span, and these were altered probably at the time when the porch was added, by the removal of the lower portion and jambs, and the insertion of segmental arches, of a wider span—in fact, the full width of the tower. In Bishop Nicolson's account, this space under the tower was a long dark passage, crowded with seats.

The tower is about 22 feet north and south by 24 feet east and west, with walls five feet thick. This longer dimension east and west again militates against its originally being built as a central tower; the transept arches would not be wider than nave and chancel. The triple buttresses at the east end are indications of early date and give the original length of the chancel. Similar buttresses are seen at St. Leonard's, Cleator.

The plate consists of a silver cup, 1749, and a pewter flagon.

BARTON KIRKE.

This ancient mansion-house has long been known by the name of Barton Kirke, and was well described by the late Dr. Taylor, in a paper read at the visit of the Society in 1879. As we have not been here again for 42 years, I will plead excuse for drawing largely on Dr. Taylor's notes.

The present building dates from the latter part of the 15th century. The block facing west, hatched in the plan (p. 139) with broken lines, is the earliest part and is a specimen of the houses, just under the rank of manor, inhabited by the well-to-do. It was owned apparently by a family of the name of Dawes, and continued in the family for some 300 years until it came to the Hasells of Dalemain.

This early block has some rather peculiar features. The entrance was, I think, always in the porch in the east wing, which seems to have led into a hall, now divided. There is a large projecting chimney-breast on the west, and the remains of mural chambers in it are shown by the external loops. The windows are of several lights and have well-moulded jambs and mullions. The heads have good label moulds. One two-light window has been cut down and forms the present entrance-door to the house on the north side. There is a semicircular stone stair in the angle formed by the two wings. The porch has two storeys, and the old door and ironwork remain. Over the door is the panel stone, set up by Launcelot Dawes, when he extended the east wing, hatched in the plan with horizontal lines, about 1628. He was fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, and vicar of the parish, and although he lived in the family house, he built the old vicarage to the east (hatched with crossed lines), and placed over the entrance-door "L.D. NON MIHI SED SUCCESSORIBUS 1637." The panel over the house door has this: "L^D_A NON EST HÆC REQUIES 1628," and also an addition, "T^D_E 1693,"

probably by his nephew, Thomas, who succeeded to the estates.

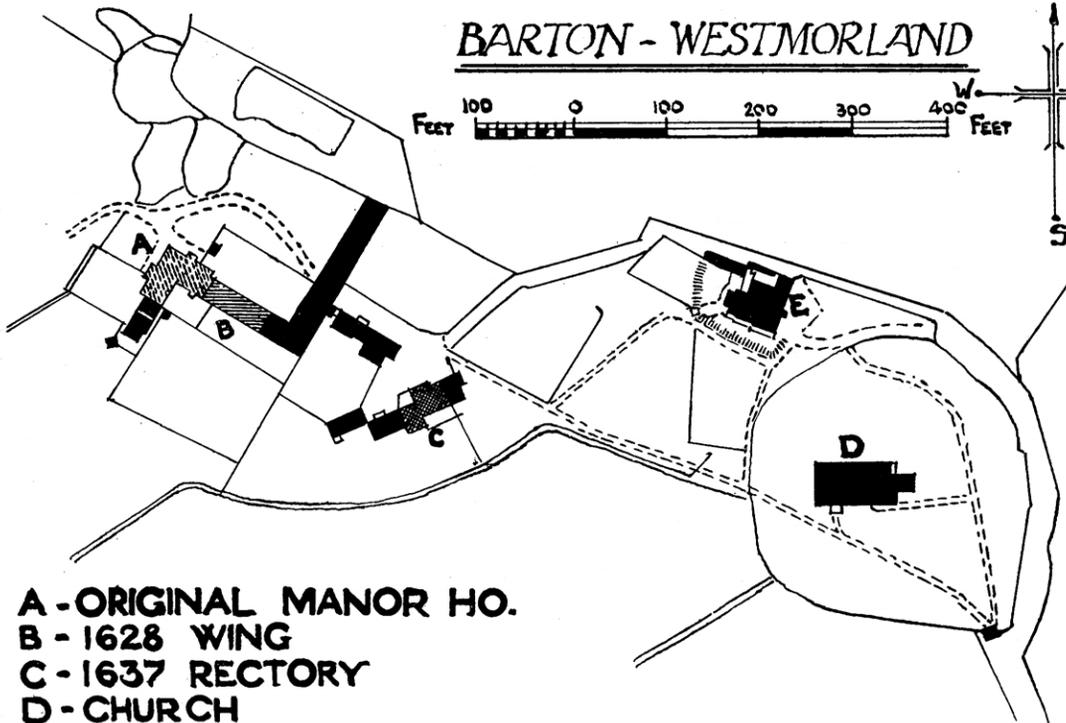
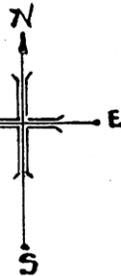
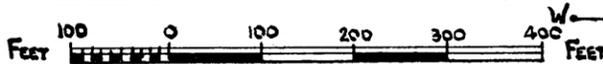
On the first floor was the drawing-room, but I am sorry to see that very little of the fine plaster ceiling, frieze, and beam which Dr. Taylor describes and illustrates, and which was existing then, now remains. Nearly all the divisions on this floor are made out of the old oak panelling.

There was a second storey in the roof and portions of the old gypsum floors remain.

There is an armorial stone over a door in the out-buildings, supposed to be the arms assumed by the Dawes.

I think it is very well we should visit these smaller houses and try to preserve a record of them. This house is about the same period as Bellbridge and Warnell, which we saw two years ago (these *Transactions* N.S. XX., 236—239), but I can't find any trace here of the curtained court-yard and entrance-gate. Are we to attribute this to the greater immunity of Westmorland from our friends from over the Border?

BARTON - WESTMORLAND



- A - ORIGINAL MANOR HO.**
- B - 1628 WING**
- C - 1637 RECTORY**
- D - CHURCH**
- E - MODERN RECTORY**