

ART. XI.—*Some Extinct Kendal Customs.* By
EDWARD MERYON WILSON.

Read at Kendal, September 8th, 1937.

I PROPOSE in this paper to describe some old customs that used to take place in Kendal. It is not my intention to write about more general customs which prevailed in a wider district, but about a few which were peculiar to Kendal, or which seem to have taken a special form in Kendal. I owe a debt that will be obvious enough, for I can remember none of these customs myself, to the late Mr. Curwen's invaluable *Kirkbie Kendall*, to the files of the local newspapers, and to my conversations with various older natives of the town.

Kendalians have continued to keep up a number of old customs until recent times. The children still roll their pace-eggs on the Castle Hill at Easter, and still blacken their faces and dress up to collect pennies during the previous week: the much debased remnant of the pace-egging of a couple of generations ago. Our local authors tell us also of such customs as the school cock-fights on Shrove Tuesday, the drinking of Spanish and Water on Ascension Day, the decoration of the town with oak boughs on Yak Bob Day, the closing of schools and shops on Nut Monday (in September) and of the old bonfires and fireworks of Guy Fawkes' Day. These, however, were general customs celebrated in other parts of the county; these are not the subject of my paper.*

* This list is probably not exhaustive. Here are my authorities: Cock-fighting and cockpennies on Shrove Tuesday, cf. *Records relating to the Barony of Kendale*, Vol. III, by John F. Curwen, Kendal, 1926, p. 69; *Kirkbie-Kendall*, by John F. Curwen, Kendal, 1900, p. 172-3; "Ascension Day is known in Kendal amongst the Juveniles as Spanish and Water Day; and

In his general account of Westmorland, which Briggs published later with extensive notes in the *Lonsdale Magazine* Hodgson says that on Good Friday the lads of Westmorland used to drag "the bones of horses and other animals about to the tune of 'Trot herring, trot herring, trot herring away.'"* As far as my reading goes I have not met with any other account of this interesting custom: Briggs who usually added to Hodgson's information added nothing more here. Something like this custom survived into 20th Century Kendal, but not, I think, in the country districts round about. In Kendal the custom took place on Maunday Thursday, not on Good Friday, and tin cans replaced the horses' bones which must have been more difficult for town boys to come by, and anyway, did not make nearly so much noise. The lads collected the tin cans from rubbish tips, tied them together, and while one pulled them after him along

the custom of shaking the Spanish and Water bottle and sucking the froth, seems as much in favour at the present time (1888) as when I was a boy." K.K. in *The Westmorland Note Book*, Vol. I, Kendal and London, 1888-9. (A collection of reprints from the *Kendal Mercury and Times*); "A day still known locally as Holy Thursday." J.F.W. *Ibid.* pp. 259-60; "Kendal people have made sad work this year with oak trees to decorate their doors on Royal Oak Day" (1816). *Local Chronology*—being notes of the Principal Events Published in the Kendal Newspapers since their Establishment. Compiled by the Editors. Reprinted from *The Kendal Mercury and Westmorland Gazette*, Kendal, 1865. "The Restoration was observed in the town on Thursday," (1834), *ibid.* pp. 12 and 97; "In Kendal the school-boys who meet with those who do not shew the oak, cry out 'A Tom Painer,' and set upon them and beat them with branches of oak." (1888). D.B. in W.N.B. p. 254; Nut Monday "was however, kept so recently as 1861, when Sept. 12th was held in Kendal, almost every shop being closed. Possibly the failure of the nut crop in several successive years was a factor in changing the holiday to another time, and thus the day losing its distinctive character." *Bygone Cumberland and Westmorland*, by Daniel Scott, London, 1899, p. 225; Thomas Hill, the Kendal schoolmaster, wrote in his journal in 1864: "These holidays (Easter) are proposed to be discontinued as well as the Nut Monday in September, and two days in August to be substituted for them." Reprinted in the *Westmorland Gazette*, 25 Nov., 1933; for a description of the Kendal Guy Fawkes Celebrations in the 18th century, see L.C., p. 121.

* *The Remains of John Briggs*, Kirkby Lonsdale, 1825, p. 205. (Reprints from the *Lonsdale Magazine*).

the streets the others followed, beating the cans with their sticks. They all shouted out the rhyme:

Trot 'eerin',
Trot 'orn,
Good Friday
Tamorn.

(Trot herring, trot horn, Good Friday to-morrow). What the horn was I cannot say—perhaps the bones that the tin cans had replaced—but the herring looks like a survival of pre-Reformation days: the boys were celebrating the end of the medieval Lenten fast and fish diet. John Aubrey, writing in 1678, tells us of another custom which, in a different way, also trots out the herring; he says “The first dish that was brought up to the table on Easter Day was a red-herring riding away on horseback; i.e. a herring ordered by the cook something after the likeness of a man on horseback, set in a corn salad.”* Our custom and this are similar in origin and are to be associated with the Carnival Customs of Latin countries and the Medieval battles between Lent and Carnival. The survival into 20th century Kendal is a remarkable one; the boys were keeping up a custom that enabled them to make a great noise but the meaning of which was quite unknown to them. The nuisance and motor traffic probably explain the disappearance of the custom.†

The two other customs that I shall describe are connected with Kendal's civic life. All over the country the municipal government of towns such as ours was profoundly changed by the passing of the Corporation Reform Act of 1835. The change affected even the date of the Mayor's taking office: before 1835 the new Mayor was sworn in on the first Monday in October, when he often gave a banquet, and the old Mayor also gave a banquet on the last Monday in September. There were not always

* Quoted in Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, London, 1841, Vol. I, p. 96.

† Details from Mr. Darwin Leighton, Cliff Terrace, Kendal, and Miss Ellen Whiteside, Gibson's Place, Kendal.

two banquets, but there were in 1818, 1819, 1823 and 1825, etc. It was in 1825 that the *Westmorland Gazette* lyrically exclaimed: "May we annually have two Mayor's feasts as long as the Kent rolls its stream to commingle with the Ocean". Associated with these two days are my two customs: the scramble for apples which generally took place on the old Mayor's Monday, and the sports on Far Cross Bank which always happened on the other.

"By the charter of Elizabeth the aldermen and burghesses were empowered to have two sergeants-at-mace (servientes ad clavas). A like privilege was accorded to the Mayor appointed under the charter of Charles I and is repeated in the charter of Charles II."* The sergeants no longer exist, but because of them the last Monday in September and the first in October was called Sergeant Monday. The old Mayor's day was "usually held as a holiday by several schools in the town," and fruit was thrown to the children to be scrambled for.† Sometimes though, the scramble took place also, or instead, on the following Monday when the new Mayor took office; thus in 1823 and 1829 it happened on the old Mayor's day, in 1827 on the new Mayor's. Of this last we read as follows in the *Westmorland Advertiser and Kendal Chronicle*: "On Monday last, the new Mayor for this burgh, Joseph Swainson, Esq. was sworn into office. In the morning the children of all the schools assembled in the streets and accompanied by the Mayor's Sergeants, proceeded to the residence of the worthy gentleman where a very large quantity of apples, etc. were distributed among them. In the "scraffle" for the fruit several of the boys displayed great adroitness and dexterity." In 1829 the *Westmorland Gazette* tells us that on the last Monday in September "The Sergeants paraded the streets with myriads of children in their train, after which apples in pecks were

* *Kirkbie-Kendall*, p. 51.

† *The Westmorland Advertiser and Kendal Chronicle*, Sat., Sept. 29, 1827.

showered upon their heads from the windows in the Town Hall, while hundreds of urchins below scrambled, shouted and seemed happy."

In 1835 the provisions of the Corporation Reform Act began to take effect and the Sergeant Monday scramble played its part in the struggle between old and new, Tory and Radical. The change over was certainly a difficult one, and the new elections were delayed until after Christmas, the new Mayor being elected on Jan. 1, 1836. The *Gazette*, which of course represented the Conservative anti-Reform party, at first tried to make political capital out of the non-observance of the day. "Sergeant Monday. This day, once so famous in our annals, passed away unnoticed and unheeded, and the apprentices may thank the trumpery whigs that they had no holiday, as may also the once happy little urchins that they have neither nuts nor apples to scramble for. The destructive broom, not Brougham, of innovation has swept all these things away." So it wrote on Oct. 3. Old customs are symbols of the past and the Tories must have looked on the disappearance of Sergeant Monday with regret.

The radicals on the other hand looked on these customs as typical of the reign of privilege. Their reforms abolished gowns for the aldermen and the equestrian procession to open the November fair on Beast Banks.* The Sergeant Monday procession, however, was something that must have appealed to both sides. Many of the lads who scrambled were children of the radicals, and at the same time the *Gazette* was right when it pointed out that

* In 1823 we read of the proclamation of the November Fair on Beast Banks, which the Mayor and his retinue attended on horse-back; in 1824 "our worthy Mayor made the usual equestrian procession from the Cold Stone (*sic*) to Kendal Fell, attended by a numerous cortege of aldermen (in gowns), burgesses, constables with staves, etc. to proclaim the fair, after which his worship entertained the party at an elegant cold collation at the King's Arms Inn." This the Mayor did until 1835, see L.C. *passim*. In 1836 the *Gazette* hinted that the custom was discontinued because the new corporation would not be very good horsemen!

the radicals had abolished the old day, a treat for the apprentices and working-class children. The change in date was probably the main cause for the non-observance, and old customs are difficult to maintain when such a change has taken place. So there was no celebration of the old Sergeant Monday. However, on the next Monday the radicals held a Sergeant Monday scraffle of their own; probably they felt that it was a shame to stop the lads having a bit of fun. Consequently, Sergeant Monday changed in the eyes of the Tories from being a lively old custom to being a symbol of bloody revolution. Here is the *Gazette's* report (only a week later than the other which I have just quoted): "SCRAMBLE OR SCRAFFLE. The *elite* of the *emeute* or movement party were astir on Monday last, and had a scraffle or scramble for apples among the boys. The apples, 3s. 4d. worth, were thrown from the radical newsroom in the Market Place. Among the leaders were those who are prepared to scramble or scraffle for something more substantial than apples—those who have not to take by hook or by crook from those who have . . . The thing was intended for quite a radical flare up, but it ended in a poor concern, second only to Dicky Doodle Races." (Oct. 10).

So was Sergeant Monday observed in 1835 and the Kendal lads were determined it should be a feature of the new, as of the old, régime, for it was observed again in 1836. Of this we have a first hand account from Thomas Hill who started to teach at the newly built British School in Castle Street in October 1835 (just after the radical celebration). His account is worth quotation in full, although unfortunately he does not tell us the date on which the event took place: "A bad custom had existed in the town for I do not know how long on the occasion of the going out of the old Mayor and in the incoming of the new Mayor. The boys of the town paraded the streets in a tumultuous manner for several hours and then the

members of the Town Council gave them a grand "scraffle" for nuts thrown from the upper windows of the Town Hall. A lot of the roughest boys in the town used to assemble about 9 a.m., and their business was to go to all the schools for boys, and 'batter them out.' They would rush into a school and strike the children with their caps, and so drive them out. The school-children did not by any means resent the indignity practised on them. During the whole of Sergeant Monday the town was a scene of noise and rudeness. All kinds of objectionable practices were allowed, and the evil effects of them did not terminate with the day.

"I was not aware of the custom until, one Monday morning, the boys assembled in school at nine, and the teaching began and was going on as usual, when suddenly a strange noise of shouting was heard in the yard. On opening the door to ascertain the cause I found a tumultuous rabble of boys in the yard. I advanced towards them, and called to some of them to come to me and tell me what they wanted. No one ventured to come near, so I went back into the school and asked some of the older boys what it all meant. They told me. When the outside boys saw me return to the school and shut the door they increased their noise and threw stones at the front door. Some of the stones were so large as to make deep dents in the wood which remained for years.

"The number of boys had now increased to between two and three hundred. Not liking to be bearded in my own den in that way, I armed myself with one of the 2 ft. pointers then in use and rushed out at the enemy. Directly they saw me thus armed and meaning mischief they made for the gate. The hinder ones came in for a few strokes from me, and when they were all outside the gate I closed it and returned across the yard. The gate, was soon burst open and many stones were thrown at me, one big stone passing within a few inches of my head. I

got inside the door unhurt, but in increasing numbers the rabble rushed into the yard once more, shouting louder than ever and battering the door with stones. One of the top windows being open, presently a dead rat came tumbling among the boys, and the young rascals were really more delighted than displeased at the indignity.

“ I drove the rebels out of the yard once more, but the gate had only a latch, so I could not fasten it, and they streamed in again. During this time I got a few of the boys together again and sent them to tell the outsiders that I was determined not to yield to them; but that I desired them to leave the yard and I would let my boys out in half an hour. This seemed to satisfy them, and they left—I dare say to practise on other schools. I let the boys out of school as I had promised. I don't think there was another Sergeant Monday gathering after that, for the doings in the British Schoolyard in 1836 did much to bring about its suppression. I believe that some years before I came to Kendal the boys were led around the streets by the town crier.”*

Hill's account not only describes the custom in detail but tells us why it came to an end. It shews us that the custom survived the change-over to a new system of municipal government, a change which had been expected to kill it. However the end came soon after, for it only seems to have survived the change for a year because of his protest against lawlessness. The Sergeant Monday “battering out” is to be connected with the “barring out” frequently described by local writers,† and this survived in some Westmorland Schools on Yak Bob Days until the eighties of last century. Most schoolmasters—the majority perhaps were local men—had

* Authorities: *Westmorland Advertiser* and *Kendal Chronicle* for 27 Sept., 1823; 29 Sept. 1827; 6 Oct., 1827; *Westmorland Gazette*, 3 Oct., 1829, 1 Oct., 1831, 3 Oct. and 10 Oct., 1835. Thomas Hill's *Journal*, W.G. 5 Oct., 1935.

† See Hodgson's account in *The Remains of John Briggs*, p. 209; *Kirkbie-Kendal*, p. 172; *Windermere Grammar School, A History*, Kendal 1936, p. 63.

accepted such local customs,* but Hill, a south-countryman, set himself against it. His doing this caused the riot, and, we must suppose, the authorities then suppressed it. Such customs in small towns are likely to become rough and riotous, but if Hill had had more understanding of local usage and if the authorities had had more control in the streets, the custom might have survived.

The last custom that I am to describe was known as the Dicky Doodle Races, held annually on the first Monday in October on the Far Cross Bank. Before considering it in detail it is well to remember that social life to-day is very different from what it was in the past. Off-comers still sometimes think Kendalians clannish, or that they are too absorbed in their own local life; in the past Kendal was not only more absorbed in its own affairs than it is to-day, but each district in Kendal considered itself as a more or less separate unit in the community. (This feeling is still very noticeable in Spain). The feeling was strongest of all on the Fell side, where, within living memory, the boys used to march about singing to the tune of "For he's a jolly good fellow":

Touch us if ye dar' ;
 We live i' Grandy Rah—
 We er a lot o' Fell Siders,
 We er a lot o' Fell Siders,
 We er a lot o' Fell Siders—
 Sa touch us if ye dar'. †

The growth of factories in Kendal, the increasing number of strangers living in the town and, more recently, slum clearance, have greatly weakened this extremely parochial feeling. The Dicky Doodle Races before 1835

* See for instance the Rev. Thomas Clarke's dialect account in *Sammy Woer et Lile Toon, an his Nebbers*. The passage is too long for full quotation. (*Specimens of the Dialects of Westmorland*, Part Second, Kendal, 1894).

† Details from Mr. Darwin Leighton.

were partly the manifestation of this kind of local life, partly a parody (which was not without political significance) of the civic life of the town, partly an excuse for drunkenness, and partly a relic of traditional custom. The proceedings are worth a fuller account than they have received hitherto.

Doodleshire is that part of Kendal which lies over Stramongate Bridge, from Wildman Street to Far Cross Bank and the Duke of Cumberland Inn, where the Shap and Appleby roads divide. It includes what is now the Railway Station and the beautiful Castle Dairy. The local newspapers have left us several accounts of the festivities in early days, but these accounts do not tell us all that we should like to know. The early reporters were more anxious to write the show up than to describe it, and they wrote it up in punning nineteenth century journalese. Here is the most detailed account of the sports that I have been able to discover; it is from the *Westmorland Gazette* of Oct. 10, 1829:

“DOODLESHIRE MAYOR CHUSING, ETC. On this day the sons of fun met at Far Cross Bank, to choose the Mayor of Doodleshire, when — Hudleston, Esq., tailor and citizen, appeared to resign the seale of office. Our respected friend James Wiggins Esq., weaver and citizen, accepted office for the ensuing year, so that he is now both Mayor and Recorder of this ancient borough. Soon after two, in a *red-brown wig* (not *whig*), puffed and powdered, with the staff of office surmounted by a narrow strip of blue ribbon, James mounted a tall horse and rode the liberties; but the action of the air, or some other heavy wet cause, had such an effect upon him, that on his return from his equestrian tour he was compelled to vacate the chair, and was led or carried to bed to sleep off the chill air, or warm head muddled with *max*. Mr. Nuper, or the ex-Mayor was now to exhibit and ride the boundaries. A white grey Rozinante, belonging to Henry

Slee was laid under contribution, after a hard chase, and Mr. Huddleston mounted; it was not like death upon the pale horse, but Grizzle (Neddy) and the blackamoor; for some wags, with candlefat and soot, had besmeared the ex-mayor's face and his appearance was rather queer; but on dismounting he discovered the trick, rolled in wrath upon the floor, and swore that he would be mayor no more. But fun was the order of the day, and it must be kept up without Mayor or ex-Mayor, and there were now boys' races for shillings, men's races for hats, and women's races for chemises, with wrestling in the evening; but about this they could not agree, and it was postponed till the following morning. About nine in the evening our friend James shook off the drowsy fumes, rallied, rejoined his pot compeers in fun and frolic, swore that he would be mayor and discharge his duties with independence. The night was glorious, uproarious, full of character, fun and incident. It was kept up next day, James was chaired and is now installed Mayor and Recorder of the ancient Borough of Doodleshire for the ensuing year."

Previously the *Gazette* had described the sports as "this annual exhibition of fun and frolic in the first instance, but commonly of drunkenness, row, riot and disorder before the close," and it is difficult to discover how much of the exhibition above quoted was traditional custom and how much mere horse-play. However it is reasonable to suppose that the election of the mayor, his being accompanied by a recorder, and the riding of the bounds from the Cross Bank to Stramongate Bridge were traditional; at least they took place regularly as far as we can tell. The *Chronicle* tells us that in 1827 "bedizened with a three-cocked hat, a cloak of many colours, and wand of office, the Lord of Misrule mounted his rozinante, led by gentlemen of the *bed-chamber*, and as the most important act of his lawful reign, proceeded to perambulate the boundaries of his vast domain—which extend from the

Cross Bank to Stramongate Bridge." Later we are told that the mayor blackened his face, but this does not appear to have occurred before 1833. The equestrian procession was probably a direct parody of the real Mayor's opening of the November Fair on Beast Banks as well as riding the boundaries of the town.* The day of the sports was the day on which the new Mayor came into office. The mock mayor was chosen for only a year, but the mock recorder was chosen for life, like the real Recorder of Kendal.† Perhaps the granite boulder, which formerly stood in the road at Far Cross Bank,‡ was the equivalent of the old Call Stone from which Royal Proclamations are still read out.

Now the period immediately before 1835, during which we have all these reports of the Doodleshire sports, was a time of great political unrest in Kendal.§ Nearly every Saturday the *Kendal Chronicle* published the praises of liberty, reform and the new era of enlightenment, while the *Gazette* pointed out in reply that no reform was necessary and vigorously denounced Brougham, Cobbett and others who allied themselves with the rabble to oppose law, order and property. The radicals were determined to abolish the old order in municipal, as well as in national, life and they banded together to attack Kendal's corporate body which typified for them the reign of privilege. A few

* The Court of Survey rode the boundaries of Kendal on April 3, 1821, L.C. page 46.

† Cornelius Nicholson (*The Annals of Kendal*, Second Edition, London and Kendal, 1861, pp. 176-7) gives a list of the Recorders of Kendal. He adds: "The Council appointed under the Corporation Reform Act, not having deemed it necessary to make application to the king in council to have a Recorder for this Borough . . . the office of Recorder . . . consequently ceased."

‡ "About one hundred years ago (i.e. in 1800) a very large granite stone, about 1½ yards cube, was placed in the centre of the street (Far Cross Bank) in front of what is called "Salt Pie." It was the resort of all lads and news-mongers of the neighbourhood (their cauld-stane in fact). At last, becoming a nuisance, it was buried beneath, where it still reposes unknown to the lads of to-day as they pass over and over it." K.K. p. 424.

§ See for instance K.K. pp. 66-71.

years before the old régime came to an end the Mayor was compelled to make his treat a private affair for his own friends because radicals disturbed the harmony of the party. It would have been strange if the "Mayor Chusing" on Far Cross Bank had not become a means of satirizing the old order.

The proof that it did lies in the fact that Jimmy Wiggins was the recorder for life of Doodleshire. Mr. Curwen has told us much concerning this once famous Kendal character, poet and radical, who said shortly before he died:

Had I but served my God as I served Harry Brougham,
The workhouse never would have been my doom.*

He carried an alpenstock with him, tipped with blue ribbon—the liberal colours in Westmorland—and this was probably the wand of office of the Doodleshire mayor. Doubtless there was also much satire of particular mayors, etc., but the newspapers are silent on this point.

To the other side Doodleshire seemed to represent the radicals as they really were. For this reason the *Gazette's* reports which emphasize the drunkenness and horseplay above all else, are not perhaps entirely trustworthy. (The whig *Chronicle* sometimes gave the names of prize-winners in the sports and twice commented on the good standard of the wrestling.) The Tory attitude comes out openly in two comments made by the *Gazette*. In 1833 the radicals issued a circular inviting the townsmen to assemble "in the Market Place News Room on Monday afternoon at four o'clock (Sergeant Monday) to partake of wine and a dessert to commemorate in anticipation the dissolution of our corporate body." Calling attention to the wording of this circular, the *Gazette* headed the paragraph: "*A Second Doodleshire, or the Blue Mayor's Feast.*" The other occasion I have already quoted: the radical Sergeant Monday of 1835, which it called "a poor concern, second only to Dicky Doodle Races."

* K.K. pp. 63-4, 67, 370.

The races survived the Corporation Reform Act. We are told that in 1835 "although we are no longer to have Sergeant Mondays and Mayor's treats, all being swept away in the revolutionary whirl, yet these races were celebrated according to custom and with great eclat at Far Cross Bank on Monday last, where fun and frolic succeeded each other fast and furious." Old people in Kendal can still remember something about them, but after this critical date they must have had less point. Jimmy Wiggins, the moving spirit died a pauper in 1837; those who had taken pleasure in mocking the unreformed Corporation would not wish to satirise the new one. And so the races lost their importance in the political life of the town.

And who was Dicky Doodle? Mr. Curwen gives us the following account from some late nineteenth century source, perhaps the *Kendal Chronicle*:

"In the time of Richard Coeur de Leon, the heroic Dickey Doodle left the Far Cross Bank for London. At once Dickey's rosy cheeks and curly wig seem to have attracted the attention of the Royal Monarch, who took him as a page to the seat of war. But after returning, his polished manners, downy moustache and soft lips seem likewise to have proved too great an attraction for the court beauties of the day. Poor Dickey, however, overshot his mark, and the King wishing to send a Royal Charter to the Burgesses of Kendal, seized the opportunity of banishing this winsome lad from court by sending him on that perilous journey to the far-north of his realm. Dickey Doodle . . . set off from London astride his horse on November 18th, 1196, and reached Kirkland on the evening of the 28th. But alas, the Cock and Dolphin came in view, and after drinking several flagons of nut-brown ale, the poor youth became oblivious, his horse was taken from him, and he was consigned to the custody of the watchman and his shins to the wooden

stocks, until he was sober. Upon his liberation, the crowd threatened to be rough with our page, and Dickey had to seek safety in flight up Highgate, down Finkle Street, and over the fields to the ford across the river, where Stramongate Bridge now stands. But his pursuers dared not follow, as the dwellers on the east bank were at enmity with those of the west. So Doodle received a warm welcome and a change of raiment. The *Book of the Chronicles* then further goes on to state that the ambassador besought his Royal Master on a *post card* to so alter the charter as to make it only apply to that portion of the town on the eastern bank of the river; whereupon His Majesty not only at once agreed, but sent a *telegram* suggesting the name of Doodleshire and Dickey as its first Mayor."

This may be just the invention of some nineteenth century humourist but it has a resemblance to local tales such as that of the Cork Lad of Kentmere.* It may be based on a folk parody of such folk-tales.

We do not know how old these sports were. The earliest record that I have been able to trace is of the year 1826; probably they had then existed for a long time.

Other parts of the district boasted their "mayors" who were elected for some special reason or to regulate a day's sport. The Troutbeck hunt-mayor still an annual appointment, is the most well-known, but they also chose hunt-mayors at Windermere and at Cartmel Fell. The *History of the Windermere Grammar School* contains the record of a (presumably) mock-mayor in the eighteenth century, who presided over the erection of the Bowness Market House. The mock-court at Outgate, recorded by Mr. H. S. Cowper, provides another possible parallel. Further research and description are necessary before we can discover whether these customs are related and if so, how they are related.†

* *A Survey of the Lakes*, by James Clarke, London, 1789, pp. 136-7.

† The hunt-mayor's charter for Windermere is in the possession of Mr.

This concludes our account of these extinct Kendal customs. They had not the charm of, say, the Grasmere Rushbearing—but the Traditional English amusements were not entirely confined to such mild diversions as the Maypole or the Morris Dance. Law and order certainly suffered from these Kendal customs, but we must remember that some of our accounts date from a time when life was less orderly than it is to-day. Modern conditions are unfavourable to such noisy sprees; in the days when many men were their own masters, and each town more of self-sufficing group, the journeyman could make up for lost time in his own time and traffic did not suffer, as it would to-day, because there was less of it. In spite of the obvious lawlessness of these customs I do not think that their disappearance has necessarily made Kendal a more civilized town.

The Maundy Thursday custom is an interesting survival from medieval times. The two mayoral customs shew how old customs could reflect aspects of contemporary life. The study of folk custom should not be confined to bare description and a more or less plausible guess at origins; it should also try to see the importance of such customs in the community they survive in. That is what I have tried to do in this paper.

William Barker of Craig Walk, that of Cartmel Fell in Mrs. Brunskill's collection at Hill Top, Crosthwaite. For the eighteenth century mayor of Bowness see *A History of the W.G.S.*, Kendal, 1936, pp. 18-19. Mr. Cowper's record is contained in these *Trans.*, o.s. xiv, 377-8.

Authorities for Doodleshire, K.K. pp. 000,000; *Westmorland Advertiser and Kendal Chronicle*, Oct. 7, 1826, Oct. 6, 1827, Oct. 10, 1829; *Westmorland Gazette*, 7 Oct., 1826, 10 Oct., 1829, 9 Oct., 1830, 5 Oct. 1833, 10 Oct., 1835. I am grateful to the officials of the Kendal Library and to the *Westmorland Gazette* Office for allowing me to see old numbers of local newspapers in their possession.