

ART. XI.—*Daily Life—and Death—in 17th Century Lamplugh.* By the REV. S. TAYLOR.

AT the time of an uncle's recent death the writer of this note had the duty and privilege of examining the papers of his grandfather, who was Rector of Lamplugh during the fifties and sixties of last century and at the same time was guardian to his young nephew, Walter Brooksbank, the heir to the Lamplugh Hall Estates. Among these papers there were a certain number of documents of the Lamplugh family, two of which may prove interesting to the readers of these *Transactions*.

The first is a small drawing on vellum, obviously cut from a map or plan, of Lamplugh Hall in Elizabethan or early Stuart times. This, with the editor's kind permission, may appear later, when greater facilities for reproduction of illustrations in these pages are available.

The other is a sheet of paper of foolscap size, brown with age, upon which the following statement has been written in an early eighteenth century or possibly earlier hand:—

“Deaths taken out of the Register of Lamplugh from Janry ye i. 1658 to Janye ye i. 1663,

Of a five-bar gate, stag hunting	4
Two duels, first with frying pan and pitchfork	.. .	1
Second between a 3 footed stool and a brown jug		1
Kild at Kelton fell races	3
Crost in love	1
Broke his neck robbing a hen roost	1
Took cold sleeping at Church	2
Hanged for clipping and coyning	7
Of a sprain in his shoulder saving his dog at Culgate		1
Mrs. Lamplugh's cordial water	2

Knockd on ye head with a quart bottle	I
Frighted to death by fairies	4
Of strong October at ye Hall	4
Bewitchd	7
Broke a vein in bawling for a knight of ye Shire	I
Old women drown'd upon trial for witchcraft ..	3
Climbing a crow's nest	I
Led into a horse pond by a will of the wisp ..	I
Overeat himself at a house warming	I
Died of a fright in an exercise of ye train bands ..	I
By ye parson's bull	2
Vagrant beggars worried by Esq. Lamplugh's house	
dog	2
Chokd with eating (barley?)	4
Old age	57

In the Registers of the Parish Church of Lamplugh, transcribed by Col. Haswell and printed for the Parish Register Section of this Society, it is to be noted that the registration of Baptisms became fragmentary and then in 1660 ceased altogether until the year 1686, except for one unusual entry in 1682. There are two marriage entries for 1661, then no more until 1686, while in the Burial Section the entries cease in 1660, to be resumed in 1684. In each case the Editor states that these missing entries cannot be supplied from the Bishop's transcriptions during these particular years.

The paper quoted above describes the list which it gives as "Deaths taken out of the Register of Lamplugh from Janry ye 1. 1658 to Janry ye 1. 1663."

The published Lamplugh Registers give entries of burial for three of these years, 1658-1660, 7 burials in 1658, four in 1659 and four again in 1660, the last entry being that of "John Myriell, Rector of Lamplugh, buried in London." Thus there are fifteen recorded Lamplugh burials in three years, one away from home and not one of the victims is stated to have died a violent death, such as that from

taking cold while sleeping in Church, being bewitched or from being hit on the head with a quart pot !

So much for corroborative documentary evidence. There is very little of it and what there is is not favourable to the author of our list of accidents.

Nevertheless the document is old and has the ring of truth. And it must be remembered that these particular years were years of violence and of a wild transition.

The Squire of Lamplugh Hall at the time was John Lamplugh, the tenth of his name, who was born in 1618, succeeded his father in 1636 and died in 1689. While still a young man he raised a regiment during the Civil Wars, commanded it himself in the King's cause, fought with Prince Rupert at Marston Moor and was there taken prisoner. Released from prison, he was back at Lamplugh in 1658, but a recusant and heavily fined, agitating and plotting, as were all the Squires of his views in England, for the speedy return of good King Charles. It is not surprising therefore that he gathered his partisans at the Hall to partake of "strong October" and he is more than likely to have kept more than one watch dog to protect himself and his property from "vagrant beggars," the disbanded soldiers of both parties in the state. His wife (she who kept the cordial water) was his third, the daughter of a neighbour and distant relation, Thomas Lamplugh of Ribton Hall, one of those astute men, of which there were a great number, who managed to enrich themselves and to prosper in these difficult times.

The Squire's brother George, twelve years younger than himself, became Rector of Lamplugh, at the age of 28, in 1660, the year of the King's return. His predecessor, John Myriell, who is stated in the Church register to have been buried in London on August 6, 1660, may have been the ejected Anglican Rector, waiting for the King's return to regain his living, while his pulpit was occupied by stray Presbyterian or other preachers. Whether it was he or young George Lamplugh who kept a savage bull and so

became responsible for the death of two of his parishioners we shall never know.

The ordinary folk of Lamplugh Parish, yeomen and labourers, were much as they had always been, it may be supposed, good wild Cumbrians, who hunted recklessly, drank deep and fought with frying pans, pitchforks, stools, brown jugs and quart pots, while their youngsters robbed henroosts and climbed for rooks' nests. They retained their ancestors' fears of fairies, dobbies and will o' the wisps and put down many a natural death to the evil powers of harmless old women, who doubtless were too curious about their neighbours' affairs and took to interfering where they had no business, as old women have always done in all ages. The poor things suffered for it!

And here perhaps the reason for this extra spasm of wildness and violence in these troubled years may be found.

Was it the puritanical ministers and preachers who egged the parish on to the hunt and the death of witches? Was it they who added the fears of troubled consciences to the inherited superstitious fears of witches and fairies?

The writer can remember thirty years ago a certain game of football, played in a Lakeland village between two teams of boys, when, after the game, sitting beside him on the grass, a sixteen year old remarked, "my father says that I'll go to hell if I play football." "That's a pity, because you've just played a game and a very good one too." "Aye," replied the lad, "I'll do that and a lot more than that before I'm done. If I'm to go to hell I may as well go to hell for a sheep as for a lamb!"

Between 1658 and 1663, the Lamplugh folk, suffering from the reactions of civil war, attacked by superstitious fears on the one side and by troubled, worried consciences on the other, may have decided that they may as well go to hell for a sheep as for a lamb.

And so the wheel of history turns, bringing back to men the same evils and the same virtues as it turns.