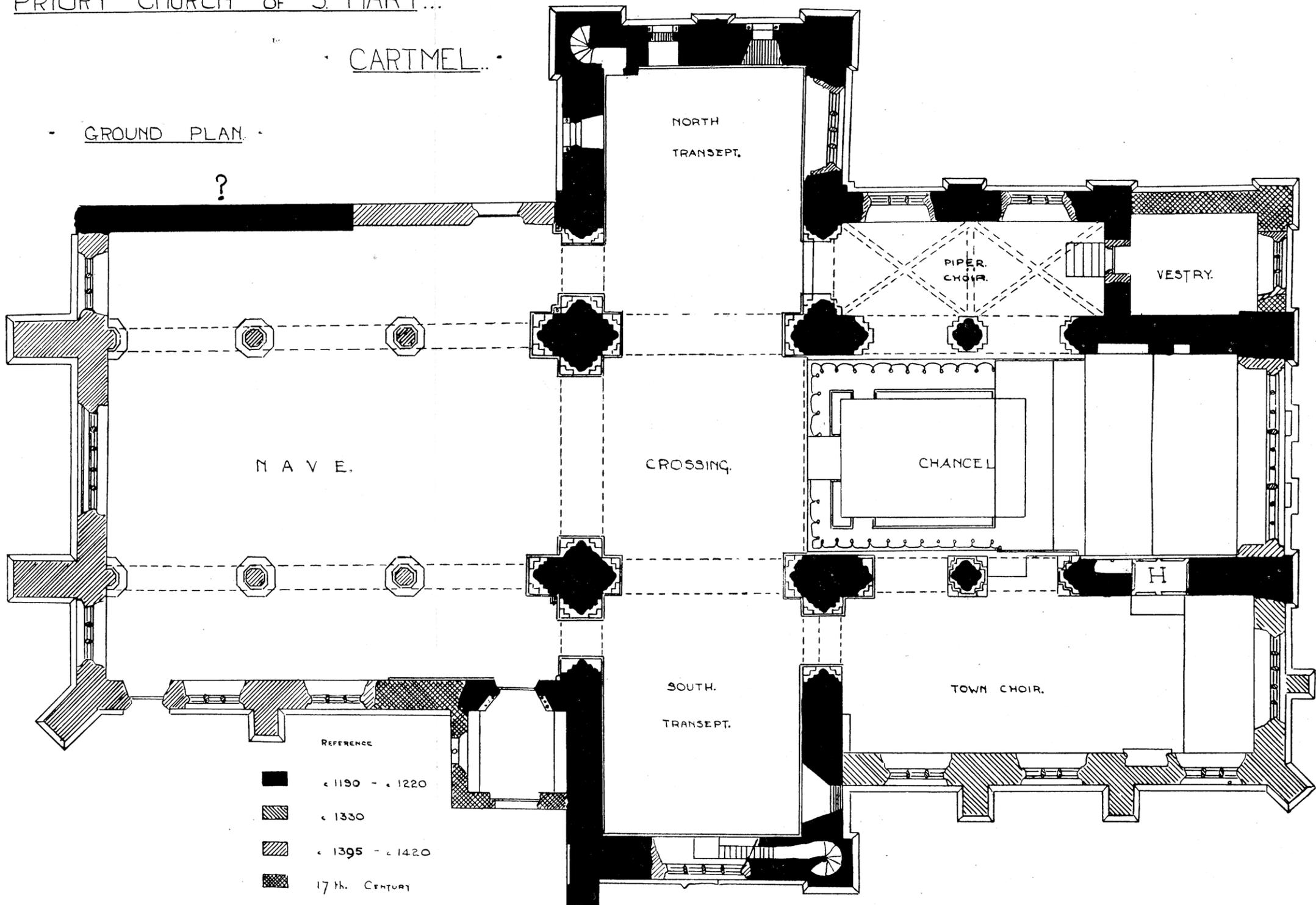


PRIORY CHURCH OF S. MARY...

CARTMEL..

GROUND PLAN.



- REFERENCE
- c. 1190 - c. 1220
  - ▨ c. 1330
  - ▩ c. 1395 - c. 1420
  - ▧ 17th. CENTURY

H Herrington Tomb

ART. V.—*The Architectural Development of Cartmel Priory Church.* By J. C. DICKINSON, M.A., B.Litt., F.R.Hist.S.

THE present paper does not attempt to add to the many existing descriptions of the priory church of Cartmel, but seeks to discover, as far as may be, the chronology of building operations there during the middle ages. That this has not been hitherto attempted is doubtless due to the disheartening lack of written evidence on the question. The archives of Cartmel priory seem to have vanished almost without trace. Fairly extensive searches in London, Oxford and Cambridge have failed to locate a cartulary of the house or any hint that one survived the Reformation, and indeed no medieval manuscript of any kind can definitely be connected with Cartmel (cf. N. P. Ker *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*, 1941). There is little concerning it in the registers of the medieval archbishops of York and those of the Archdeacons of Richmond are almost all lost. Under the circumstances it is not possible to study the architectural development of the priory with any approach to finality. Yet a close study of the surviving fabric in the light of such documents as remain makes it possible, in the writer's opinion, to reconstruct the main outline of its development, even if it leaves obscure not a few points on which we would fain have light.

#### I. THE CHURCH BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE PRIORY.

The only known reference to Cartmel before the Norman Conquest occurs in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*

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ascribed to the early twelfth century writer Simeon of Durham.

“ After saint Cuthbert raised a boy from the dead in the vill which is called Exanforda, king Ecgrith gave him the land called Cartmel and all the Britons in it and the vill called Suthgedluit and whatever pertained to it.”\* It is most likely that the Anglian chapel in Cartmel stood, not on the site of the present church, but at the southern tip of the valley on the ridge below Allithwaite known as Kirkhead. From hereabouts have come most of the known scanty relics of pre-Conquest occupation of Cartmel, and in the eighteenth century relics of a chapel and some skeletons were found here.† Further the earliest known charter referring to the Allithwaite area mentions a Kierkepoll or “ Churchpool ” which must have been in the Kirkhead area.‡ How long this chapel survived will probably never be known, but after the Norse invasions of these parts it may well have been replaced by another higher up the valley where the later priory was to be erected. Such a position is likely enough since the Scandinavian settlements in these parts moved up on to fellsides which their Anglian predecessors had left untouched and Cartmel is the natural centre of the valley whose name it shares.§ Moreover there is no good reason to believe that the site of the church was changed in post Conquest times and a late but probably reliable papal bull informs us that the parish church of Cartmel “ stood formerly where their monastery now is ” (Cal. Pap. Let., iv, 366). There is some slight architectural confirmation of this. When a medieval monastery was built on the site of a pre-existing parish church it was usual to erect temporary buildings to the south of the latter and

\* Opera Simeonis Dunelm. (Rolls, Series i, 200).

† J. Stockdale, *Annals of Cartmel*, 505.

‡ Rotuli Cartarum, i, 8; it is mentioned in connection with land at Humphrey Head.

§ See W. G. Collingwood, in these *Transactions*, n.s. xxiv, 288-9.

employ it as a chapel until the conventual church was ready, finally incorporating it into the southern side of the conventual church. This almost certainly happened at Cartmel. For probably before the fourteenth century and certainly later the parish altar was in the south choir aisle despite the considerable inconveniences to the convent which this must have caused. (On this see below). However this may be no trace of an Anglian church in Cartmel village has survived.

## II. THE FOUNDATION OF THE PRIORY.

About 1190 William Marshall first earl of Pembroke founded a priory of Augustinian canons at Cartmel.\* Of the existing church the eastern limb (except the south choir aisle) both transepts, the crossing (slightly reconstructed) the south east and probably the north doors of the nave belong to this period (see Plan); almost all the windows of the church are of later date. Of the nature or length of the original nave nothing precise is known; it was almost certainly short and unimpressive.

The approximate date of this first build can be established with reasonable certainty. Building presumably began about 1190 but the monastery was probably not completed for some decades. Mr. Curwen has very rightly stressed the importance in this connection of the indult of archbishop Walter Gray of York of 1229, whereby he granted an indulgence of twenty days pardon to those who should charitably relieve with their goods the fabric of the church of St. Mary of Cartmel; in this document the poverty of the house is stressed.† This taken along with existing architectural remains make it clear that building was not yet finished at the priory. It

\* For the foundation charter and other allied documents see W. Farrer, *Lancs. Pipe Rolls*, 342-4.

† . . . cuius loci res et possessiones adeo sunt raræ et tenues quod vix canonicis ibidem commorantibus cum hospitem susceptione sufficiant . . . .  
Reg. Gray (*Surtees Soc.*, 56, p. 31).

is not certain whether the church as distinct from the conventual buildings had been completed by this date. It may well have been, though not if, as is possible, the north door was part of the original nave for this is probably of a rather later type of Early English with none of the Transitional influences to be found in the transepts and chancel.

The structure shows clearly that from the first the builders at Cartmel had to work to none too grandiose a plan, almost certainly for financial reasons. Thus the arches of the choir arcade have richly moulded orders next the choir but only plain chamfered ones on their outer sides. Similarly, with the arches leading from the transepts to the aisles, those to the choir have plain chamfered orders on the east those to the nave chamfered ones to the west, with moulded orders on the inner sides in both cases (a fact which, one authority considers, suggests that the nave was not likely to have been a long one the more elaborate side of the arches leading into it would have been to the west). The triforium has an open arcade in the choir but lacks this in the transepts (apart from a few halfhearted and unmoulded arches in the south wall of the south transept), a change in plan which was also probably due to financial stringency. The triforium terminates at the western side of the crossing, and as the filling of the arches through which it would continue into the nave is evidently contemporary with the transepts, it seems that by the time the nave was reached the builders had no immediate hope of continuing the triforium into the nave, but constructed arches in case their successors were more fortunate. In the easternmost bay of the nave aisles they also included responds for vaulting ribs, but it is most unlikely these were ever used.

The architectural features of the building, which it is unnecessary to describe in detail, fully accord with view

that the church was not completed till the early decades of the thirteenth century. This view receives some slight support from the fact that the Cartmel evidently did not secure the customary papal confirmation until 1233 (printed in Baines Hist. of Lanc., ii (1870), 677-8) though it seems to have been the contemporary practice to secure this as soon as the new monastery was adequately established. (A papal bull of 1391 which states that Cartmel priory was founded "over a hundred and sixty years ago"\* i.e. about 1230 is probably relying on this confirmation). Thus though the indications are by no means as full as could be wished such evidence as there is, suggests fairly strongly that the building of the priory took nearly half a century and that the existing remains of the original conventual church may be assigned with fair degree of confidence to the period c. 1190-c. 1220.† That the monastery took so long to build is not surprising. It was never a rich house and belonged to a disturbed area distinctly deficient in the wealthy gentry from whom alone important benefactions could be expected.

### III. THE TOWN CHOIR.

It has long been realised that the first part of Cartmel church to be rebuilt was the Town Choir, that the present building there belongs to the second quarter of the fourteenth century and that the original chapel was exactly similar in shape and size to the remaining chapel of the north choir aisle (known as the Piper Choir). After some years study of the church the writer has come to the

\* Cal. Pap. Let., iv, 366.

† It is hoped to publish in a later number of these *Transactions* notes on the scanty remains of the domestic buildings of the Cartmel, the earliest traces of which belong to the middle of the thirteenth century—as might be expected, seeing that they would not be built in any permanent form until the church and cloister was completed. To the mid-thirteenth century also belongs the fine door later rebuilt in the north wall of the nave.

conclusion that it is possible to make a reasonable conjecture as to how the chapel came to be rebuilt.

To anyone familiar with the medieval history of the North country it is a matter of some surprise that this fairly elaborate piece of architecture should be built at a time when the financial fortunes of this district were at their lowest ebb. The possessions of Cartmel had been so cruelly ravaged by the appalling Scotch raids of 1316 and 1322 that the assessment of its rectory had been reduced by over eighty per cent—from £46 13s. 4d. to £8 (V.C.H. Lancs., ii 145). This chapel being the place of worship of the parishioners the care of the fabric was legally theirs, but it is inconceivable that the parishioners as a whole could have afforded to rebuild it at this time. It is true that some old ashlar has perhaps been re-used, but against this must be set the four large and fine traceried windows, the neat new sedilia and other evidences of considerable expense. It is the writer's contention that this rebuilding was due to Sir John Harrington (d. 1347), for the following reasons:—

(i) The date of the chapel would admirably agree with this theory.

(ii) Sir John Harrington was one of the greatest magnates of southern Lakeland at this time and held the nearby manor of Allithwaite, making a settlement concerning it in 1334 (V.C.H. Lancs. viii 266), so would be a very likely benefactor.

(iii) It has now been established that the noble remains of a great table tomb in the north wall of this very chapel is that of this Sir John Harrington and his wife Joan (these *Transactions*, N.S. xxv, 373). Although older antiquaries have urged that the tomb was brought here from some other church there is not the slightest reason to suppose that this is so, apart from the badly damaged state of the tomb which may equally well be due to Reformation iconoclasm at Cartmel. We may thus with

some confidence postulate a special connection between the priory and Sir John for no other members of his family are known to have been buried here.

(iv) Although the early entries in Cartmel Vestry Minute Book refer to the south choir aisle as "the Town Choir" an entry in the second volume of 1674 calls it "Lord Harrington's Queare" (Stockdale, *Annals of Cartmel*, 108). It is of course conceivable that the name came from the tomb, but there is at least nothing to disprove the equally likely theory that the chapel was so-called because Sir John Harrington had built it.

(v) Finally there is the inherent improbability that this chapel was erected by anyone but the most affluent individual or individuals.

In the nature of things it is unlikely, if not impossible, that the circumstances which led to the rebuilding of the Town Choir will ever be known. But the scanty evidence which remains is remarkably consistent and presents a strong case for holding that the present Town Choir was the work of Sir John Harrington. Whether or not the Harrington tomb originally belonged to this chapel is of no moment, so long as it is admitted that it belonged to Cartmel church. It has recently been urged that the male effigy of the Harrington tomb was made c. 1310-25 (*Antiq. Journal*, xxiii, 1943, pp. 26-31). Our district was by no means in the forefront of fashion and so we ought possibly to postdate this by a few years. In any case it suggests that Lord John Harrington had ordered his tomb before his death (as was not uncommon in the middle ages), at a period which is precisely that to which the fabric of the Town Choir is universally assigned on architectural grounds.

#### IV. THE PERPENDICULAR WORK.

In considering the Perpendicular work in Cartmel priory church we are impeded by the fact that, as is well

known to medieval archaeologists, work of this period can be dated on architectural grounds alone with anything like the same precision possible in earlier times. Let us first of all see what work belong to this age.

Close examination shows that a fairly extensive restoration of the church took place probably beginning at the east end and working west. The great East window has distinct reminiscences of the so-called Decorated style and is probably to be assigned to the first years of the fifteenth century. The clerestory windows and battlements of the whole church are of an indeterminate Perpendicular type which cannot be dated at all exactly, nor can we get any nearer with the unique diagonal lantern tower added at this period. If was presumably to support this adequately that the arches of the crossing were repaired, the capitals of the eastern side having been reset at a higher level than those of the other arches and its arch repaired with the pink millstone grit used in the nave. (This is sure sign of Perpendicular work here, all the previous work being of local yellow sandstone). Equally uncertain is the date of the Perpendicular windows in the north choir aisle and transepts though these are possibly earlier than those of the nave. The most considerable late Gothic work at Cartmel is the nave of the church which is all of this date save the two doors already mentioned. Here two points are worthy of note. In the first place the nave was clearly built at a time when economy was essential; it is of only three bays, its arches are chamfered not moulded and the walls are of uncoursed rather crude rubble which compares most unfavourably with the neat ashlar of the chancel and transepts.\* The four-pointed windows in the south wall of the nave are

\* The date of the long piece of projecting masonry at the bottom of the north aisle is uncertain, and some of the south wall seems to have been reconstructed—perhaps in the seventeenth century (Stockdale, p. 47), but the rest seems to belong to the same date as the arcades and the south-west and west doorways.

unlikely to have been constructed until well into the first half of the fifteenth century. Before attempting to assign any dates to this Perpendicular work, which clearly amounts to a thorough but economical restoration of the fabric of the church, it is necessary to consider the history of the cloister buildings of Cartmel priory as it is likely that they were rebuilt as part of this same programme of repairs which included the re-construction of the nave.

#### V. THE CLOISTER BUILDINGS OF CARTMEL.

Mr. Curwen (these *Transactions*, n.s. xx, Art. X) and other writers have pointed out the traces of the cloisters at Cartmel and it is not proposed to enumerate them again. Suffice to say that the first cloisters lay as was usual on the south side, traces of them still being visible in the west and south walls of the south transept, but that at a late and undetermined date they were rebuilt on the north side—a highly unusual if not unique step in the history of English medieval monasticism. It is most unfortunate that the only existing remains of the second cloister are the dormitory door which was the original one brought across from the south transept to be reused, and the row of singularly barbaric untrimmed stones which served as corbels for the cloister roof on its south side, i.e. in the outer face of the north wall of the nave. It is thus impossible to use any of this as architectural evidence to show the date at which these rebuildings took place.

The Victoria County History remarks somewhat cavalierly that the cloisters were apparently rebuilt “in the thirteenth or fourteenth century” (V.C.H. viii 259), but vouchsafes no evidence for this none too precise statement. As we have seen the priory buildings were only completed in the mid-thirteenth century and there is certainly nothing at all to lead us to suppose that they promptly collapsed and had to be rebuilt—for no less a

predicament would be needed before so un plutocratic a house as Cartmel undertook the very considerable expense which this transference of the cloisters would entail.

The only attempt to date this of which I am aware was made by Mr. Curwen in his invaluable article on the priory in these *Transactions* (loc. cit.) where he suggested that the rebuilding was necessitated by structural damage which the priory sustained in the Scottish raids of 1316 and 1322. I owe too much to Mr. Curwen's kindness and encyclopaedic knowledge of Lakeland architecture to differ from him without reluctance, and if I do so it is because my residence near Cartmel priory has enabled me to study it much more closely than it was ever possible for him to do. Mr. Curwen's suggestion—it is nothing more—was based partly on a passage in the Lanercost Chronicle describing the raids of 1322. "Hoc tamen nonobstante fecerunt Scotti incendia in diversis locis et spolia abstulerunt. Processerunt etiam ulterius ultra sabulum de Levyn usque Kertemel et patriam combusserunt praeter prioratum Nigrorum Canonicorum et pecora et spolia abduxerunt et sic ulterius transierunt sabulam de Keent." Yet this passage surely very clearly implies that the Scots, for once observing the medieval convention that monasteries should be exempt from warfare, spared the priory when they visited Cartmel burning "the countryside except the priory of black canons."

A small architectural point confirms the view that the cloisters were still on the south side at the time the Town Choir was rebuilt (c. 1340). The east wall of the south transept was originally lighted by a single lancet window, but when the Town Choir was extended this had to be blocked up. It was replaced, as can still be seen, by a curious skew window whose northern jamb was very sharply splayed in order to clear the thickness of the new

south wall of the Town Choir. This second window is unsightly and unsatisfactory, giving very little light. The question arises as to why the additional light required in the south transept after the lancet was blocked was not secured by taking the more obvious and convenient course of piercing the south wall of the transept (the present windows of which are later). A completely satisfactory answer to this is secured if we hold that the south cloister buildings were still on the south side when the Town Choir was rebuilt c. 1340. In this case the whole of the south wall of the transept would be blocked by the domestic buildings abutting against this, and the west wall by the cloister so that the only possible way of securing the extra light needed once the Town Choir had been extended southward, was to insert a makeshift window in the scanty space remaining at the southern end of the east wall of the transept.

This evidence once again falls far short of proof, but is augmented by other points which favour the view that the cloisters were transferred and the nave rebuilt in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth century.

In 1391 a papal mandate was forwarded to the archbishop of York enjoining him to summon those concerned and to remove William prior of Cartmel "if it be found as the pope had heard that the prior had been guilty of dilapidation, of simony in the admission of persons to make their profession and of frequent visits to taverns *so that the buildings of the monastery were falling to ruin*, divine worship and hospitality neglected and a scandal caused by the prior's unworthy life" (Cal. Pap. Let., iv, 371). The fact that prior Lawrence was not removed but is found in office in 1396 when Boniface IX granted him that a confessor of the prior's choice might grant him, being penitent, plenary remission at the hour of his death (*ibid.*, v, 32), suggests that the complaints against William had been much exaggerated, and it would not be surprising

if any decay there was at the priory was due largely to the unsettled and perilous century which had included not only Scottish raids but that major catastrophe in English history—the Black Death. But it may very well be that the priory buildings were, as the papal missive suggested, in very great need of repair.

It is the writer's opinion that this enquiry here ordered may well have led to the great restoration of the buildings of Cartmel priory in which the church was thoroughly repaired, the nave rebuilt and closters removed to the north side. As a result of the papal command the archbishop of York would almost certain hold an enquiry and had he found the buildings in need of repair it was well within his rights to insist on their restoration. It is unfortunate that we have no further trace of his action hereon.

A little more evidence tends to confirm the theory propounded, which, as we have seen, is supported by the admittedly fragile testimony of architectural evidence.

In the first place it is worthy of note that some of the glass now in the great east window has affinities with that in the south clerestory of the chancel of York Minster which is known to belong to have been inserted about 1410. This confirms the architectural indications of the window's date.

Secondly there is some unnoted evidence from the stained glass now in Windermere parish church at Bowness-on-Windermere. This glass which has often been described (e.g. in the Ancient Monuments Commission volume on Westmorland, p. 46) undoubtedly came from Cartmel at least in large part.\* The glass is a magnificent medley of different dates, our concern being

\* There is no special internal evidence to link it with Windermere and various clear proofs of the Cartmel connection, e.g. the coat of arms of the priory occurs in two places as well as that of the founder's descendant Lord Grey of Ruthin (see below) and a panel inscribed *John Plo . . . . prior de Kertmel*.

with the coats of arms. Two of these can be roughly dated. The first—quarterly first and fourth argent three bars azure in chief three torteaux, second and third gules a manche or quartering barry of six argent and azure\*—is the coat of Reynold Lord Grey of Ruthin (1388-1440), (it is true that the Valence coat was barry of ten not of six but this discrepancy is due to the technical difficulty of depicting it in glass in a small quartered coat). The reason for its presence is provided by the fact that Lord Grey had inherited the patronage of Cartmel priory from his grandmother Elizabeth de Hastings and had thus a special interest in this house. Another dateable coat is that with gules fretty argent a label impaling argent a fleur de lys gules which evidently preserves the memory of the marriage of William Huddleston with Joan de Freckleton which is known to have taken place about 1427 (V.C.H. Lancs., vii, 168-9). It is well known that it was common medieval practice for benefactors to a church to display their coat of arms therein, and it is suggested that the presence of the shields in Cartmel glass of a number of coats or arms of local families, some of which belong to the early fifteenth century or thereabouts, may well be a silent relic of some extensive restoration there at this time which necessitated an appeal to the local aristocracy for their support.

Rather more doubtful is the testimony of the choir stalls. These have been ascribed to the time of William de Walton but this is one further example of the errors which arise when medieval history is divorced from archaeology. There can be no doubt at all that the misericords and their benches belong to the fifteenth century. The authority for ascribing them to the earlier date is nothing more substantial than the presence of the letter W on either side of the misericord in the prior's stall. But William was by

\* See *The Complete Peerage* (Ed. H. A. Doubleday, Duncan Warrand and Lord Howard de Walden), vi, 156. It is interesting to note that the glass has *gules a manche* or which Lord Ruthen specially and successfully claimed (*ibid.*) and not *or a manche gules* as the Hastings arms are generally given.

no means the only one prior of Cartmel with a claim to this initial; William Lawrence occurs as we have seen in 1387 and 1396, another William in 1441, and William Hayle in 1497, 1498 and 1501. To which priorate do the choir stalls belong? The writer does not feel competent to settle this question but favours the second of the three. The style of the misericords seems noticeably earlier than those of the Ripon school of Carvers whose work belongs to the years about 1500 but lacks any very early characteristics.

We have seen that the Church of Cartmel was thoroughly restored in Perpendicular times by work which was probably spread over some years and began at the east end and finished with the reconstruction of the nave. It is almost certain that the cloister was rebuilt at the same time for had the nave been earlier than the last cloister there would almost certainly have remained some traces of fenestration in its north wall or of the first cloisters along its south wall. Whilst had the cloister been built first one would have expected the north wall of the old nave to have been retained though with the exception of the strip of masonry beforementioned the wall seems to be part of the same build as the rest of the nave.

Thus there is evidence of stained glass being put in the east end about 1410 and of some considerable outside benefactions in the first decades of the fifteenth century and it is possible that the choir stalls (apart from the screens added in the seventeenth century) date from about the same time. As we know that complaints were being made in 1391 that the buildings of the priory were going to decay, it seems reasonable to conclude that about now a great programme of reconstruction was undertaken at Cartmel in the course of which the church was thoroughly restored the lantern added and nave rebuilt and finally the cloisters moved from the north to the south side. We have no means of deciding how long this reconstruction took but one may surmise that it was far advanced if not

completed by the end of the first quarter of the new century.

Two further points are worthy of consideration. Firstly why did the Cartmel canons undertake the wholesale removal, of their cloister from south to north? It cannot be too heavily underlined that this was a highly unusual step—perhaps unparalleled elsewhere in medieval England. It was also a very expensive one yet carried out at a time when the canons were clearly short of money for they were unable to afford a new dormitory door (transporting the old Transitional one for re-use in the north transept), and constructed a larger window in the east wall of the north transept from the stones of a 13th century twin lancet, rather than inserting a fresh one (as might have been expected). It is possible that the nature of the site may have caused this removal. The priory stands in the bottom of a valley on a none too sound site. (Only a few years ago a considerable underground spring, found when repairing the road a few hundred yards south-east of the priory, very seriously embarrassed the progress of the work there). So it may be that the foundations of the conventual buildings on the south of the church proved unstable and that the only safe course was to rebuild them elsewhere.

But a more likely and interesting explanation is to be found. We have already seen that the Town Choir was the parishioners place of worship at least from the time of the rebuilding in 1340 (the presence of a twin sedilia shows that it was intended for public use and not for private masses) and it is legitimate to believe that this was from the first chapel set apart for the parishioners. It was much more usual to put their altar in the nave and if this was not done so at Cartmel it was probably because, as we have seen, the priory ran short of funds before the original building was complete, so economised by putting up only a makeshift nave and leaving the parishioners the south choir aisle (which may well occupy the very site of the

Norman church which the priory displaced). If, as seems likely, this was the case, it is clear to anyone familiar with the normal lay-out of a medieval monastery that this would singularly complicate the monastic life of the convent. For the town lay to the west of the canons cloister and the parishioners chapel to the east so that it would be very difficult for the townsfolk to come to their service without infringing in some way on the area normally set apart for the canons themselves. It would be unthinkable that they should be allowed passage way through the cloister itself, which was the most private part of the monastery where silence was almost continual, and it is doubtful whether they could conveniently be allowed to enter the very short nave. The Church Book in 1624 records that it was ordered a "clock shall bee sett in the southern parte of the churche called the Parishe Quiere and two dyalls to be made to it, the one thereof to be within the church and Th'other without the church; out at the window over the Old Porche" (Stockdale, op. cit., 53). This evidently implies a porch into the Town Choir but there is no room for one or any sign of it. As there is a blocked up square aperture in the west wall of the south transept near the chief porch there, the clock was probably here and the Church Book entry misleading.

It is clear that a singularly inconvenient situation prevailed at Cartmel, the parishioners having in some way to circumvent the canons' cloister to enter their chapel which was most inconveniently placed in as inaccessible a situation as was conceivable so long as the cloisters lay on the same side of the church as the Town Choir. If, as seem to have been the case, by the end of the fourteenth century the cloisters were in a very bad condition (only this will explain their complete reconstruction at a time when the priory was clearly short of funds) it would be obviously wise to take advantage of the extensive rebuilding necessitated to transfer the cloister to the other side of the church, thus in effect leaving the

south side entirely to the parishioners and concentrating the canons on the north. Such a theory would provide an admirable explanation for the highly unusual transference of the conventual buildings from one side of the church to the other.

If may be asked why the Cartmel parishioners did not now have their altar in the nave (as was the general medieval custom). Perhaps the explanation is to be sought in the very profound conservatism of the times. The Town Choir was possibly the site of the old parish church of St. Michael which preceded the priory and had probably retained the parish altar, lack of funds first delaying and finally preventing the provision of adequate accommodation in the nave. It is clear from what we have seen that when the Town Choir was rebuilt in the first half of the fourteenth century it was intended for parish worship. When, half a century later, the great medieval restoration of the church was begun it might seem obvious to move the parishioners to the nave where at last adequate accommodation was available. But by this time the parishioners were installed in a newly restored Town Choir with an altar which had probably served them for a couple of centuries. It was probably simpler under the circumstances to leave them where they were.

The writer does not claim that he has proved to the hilt his contentions regarding the building at Cartmel priory in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. He would, however, submit that his theory covers all the known facts and is in full accord with the medieval outlook of those who undertook the work, and is therefore worthy of acceptance at least until further evidence is forthcoming.

One final note may be added. Amongst the minor architectural curiosities of Cartmel church is the presence of no less than four doorways in the nave including two in the (south) wall where one might be expected and one in the (north) wall where there would normally be two.

In the north wall there is now only a fine mid-thirteenth century door reinserted here when the cloisters were moved. Its function was certainly to communicate between the church and the cloister. It would have been in accordance with general monastic precedent—as for example at Lanercost and Bolton—to find another door some way further west in the same wall for use during the Sunday procession of the convent (in the course of which the cloister and adjacent buildings were visited). At Cartmel for some reason, the second cloister door was omitted—perhaps partly from economy partly because of the absence of the parishioners from the nave. In the west wall of the nave is a small and mean caernarvon arched door rediscovered under the great west window during the Victorian restoration. Its size makes it clear that it could have no liturgical significance, and it is possible that it provided access to the prior's lodging which, according to local tradition, stood on the site of the houses now some twenty yards due west of the church. In the south wall are two doorways. The westernmost one is contemporary with the nave and presumably gave the parishioners access to their chapel at the end of the south aisle of the choir (the old town of Cartmel lay to the south west of the church). At the other end of the south wall is a fine Transitional doorway now the main entrance to the church. It originally gave access to the first cloisters and it is not easy to see why it should have been retained here when they were transferred to the north side; it would seem easier to have turned it over to the use of the parishioners instead of constructing another door further south west.

[I should like to record my warmest thanks to Mr. T. Hardwick of Cartmel whose unparalleled knowledge and understanding of the church fabric has been of the greatest help, and to Mr. W. Roberts of Leeds for preparing the plan.]