

Derbyshire Grammar Schools

*With a description of the seals used by those
which have been incorporated.*

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THE endowed Grammar Schools of the county fall naturally into three classes. First, those schools which are associated with municipal Corporations and have never been incorporated apart from the towns to which they belong. There are two of these in Derbyshire, Derby and Chesterfield, both ancient foundations, but neither has needed to use a common seal apart from the seal of the borough. Secondly, the schools which received a separate charter of incorporation from the sovereign. They are five in number: Tideswell, Dronfield, Wirksworth, Ashbourne and Repton. The common seal is a necessary adjunct of such incorporation: only bodies corporate have any use for a seal and *per contra* the governors of all schools which received a charter of incorporation by Royal Letters Patent would as a matter of course provide themselves with a common seal which they could impress upon such documents as were issued by them in their corporate capacity. In point of fact the Letters Patent which incorporated the school and appointed the governing body usually included a clause worded somewhat as follows:—

*Volumus ac pro nobis et haeredibus nostris per presentes concedimus praeſatis gubernatoribus et successoribus suis quod de caetero imperpetuum habeant Commune Sigillum ad negocia sua premissa ac caetera in hiis literis nostris patentibus expressa et specificata deserviturum.*¹

¹ Letters Patent, Elizabeth, 14th March, 1566/7 (Richmond School, Yorkshire).

Thirdly, there are a large number of endowed schools which were never incorporated. Some of these have ceased to exist ; others like Ashford, Hartshorne, Hayfield, and Mellor, have become elementary schools ; a few, amongst which may be named Bakewell, Risley,¹ and Staveley have 'continued to fulfill the purpose of their founders until our own day.

The seals adopted by the governors of such schools as were entitled to their use, form a series of more than ordinary interest, and some account of those belonging to the county of Derby may not be without interest to the readers of the *Journal*. The designs selected usually include a reference to one or other of the following, and frequently more than one is found in the same seal. In the first place the monarch by whom the Letters Patent were issued, represented (as in the case of Ashbourne), by a figure of the sovereign, or by the royal arms or cypher (Dronfield). Secondly, figures of the founder, or founders (as at Wirksworth and Ashbourne), or their arms (Dronfield, Wirksworth and Repton). Thirdly, some reference to education (Ashbourne) : and finally, and this is perhaps the most interesting of all, especially when we remember that these schools were founded *after* the Reformation, a figure or emblem of the saint under whose protection the school was placed. Of this last we have an excellent example in the figure of the Child Jesus on the seal of Tideswell Grammar School.

DERBY.²

This school is of very ancient foundation, though chronologically it is not justified as Mr. Leach points out in his very able chapter on Derbyshire schools in the *Victoria County History* in claiming quite so high a place

¹ The old Grammar School at Risley has been recently closed and its endowments applied elsewhere by the Charity Commissioners.

² *Carlisle, Endowed Grammar Schools*, i, 218.

as is sometimes done. Some account of Bishop Durdent and William Barbae Aprilis has already appeared in the pages of the *Journal*.¹ The school was not however definitely incorporated till 21st May, 1554, and as the bailiffs and burgesses of the borough were by Queen Mary's charter constituted the governors of the school, no distinct body corporate was formed and no seal was needed other than the common seal of the borough.²

CHESTERFIELD.³

The Grammar School was founded by the will of Godfrey Foljambe of Walton, dated 24th February, 1594/5.⁴ It would be more correct to say that this foundation was, as in the case of many other schools, a reconstitution of an earlier foundation. The charter of incorporation of the borough granted by Queen Elizabeth in 1598,⁵ placed the government of the school thus founded under the control of the alderman and twelve brethren, who thus formed the Corporation. As in the case of Derby, therefore the common seal of the borough of Chesterfield served also for the governors of the school.⁶ There is, however, one matter which is of considerable interest in connection with the history of the school. Carlisle states that the school is still called the "Chapel School to this day because it is built on the site of the Gild Chapel of S. Helen." We thus have the by no

¹ Vol. xxxii, 77, and xxxiii, 107. In the former article, p. 82, is figured the secretum of Wm. Barbus Aprilis, which may be regarded as another seal belonging in a sense to this school.

² Figured Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*, ii, 24; Glover's *Hist. of Derbyshire*, ii, 432; described also in the *Brit. Mus. Cat. of Seals*, ii, 4863-4; see *Notts. and Derby. Notes and Queries*, i, 143. Derby School was taken from the direct control of the Municipal Corporation by order of 29th March, 1840.

³ *Carlisle*, i, 215.

⁴ Sir Godfrey Foljambe, who was buried at Chesterfield, 14th Jan. 1595, married Isabel, daughter of Sir Christopher Wray, of Glentworth, co. Linc., Lord Chief Justice of England, but left no issue—his heir being his uncle, Francis Foljambe (w. p. 23rd August).

⁵ Letters Patent, 21st April, 40 Elizabeth.

⁶ Figured Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*, i, 403; Glover, ii, 164; *Records of the Borough of Chesterfield* (Yeatman); and described in the *Brit. Mus. Cat. of Seals*, ii, 4814-5. See *Notts and Derby. Notes and Queries*, i, 142.

means unusual association of a *post*-Reformation Grammar School with a *pre*-Reformation religious foundation. In the same way the school at Pocklington in Yorkshire was associated with the Guild of St. Mary in that town. In the same county we have further examples in the connection of Doncaster Grammar School with the Friary Church of St. Mary Magdalene, and the adoption by the governors of Richmond School of the figure of St. James the Great to mark the association with the Chapel of St. James in that town.¹

TIDESWELL.

The Grammar School at Tideswell was founded by Robert Purselove, Bishop of Hull, 18th June, 1560.² The reader is again referred to the pages of the *Journal*³ for an account of its foundation. The seal which has been frequently figured,⁴ shows the Child Jesus, clothed to his feet: round the head is a nimbus, the left hand holds an orb surmounted by a cross, the right is raised in Benediction. The figure stands within an arched canopy and below His feet is a star. Round the seal, which is oval in shape and measures $1\frac{5}{8}$ by $1\frac{1}{4}$ ins., runs the legend: SIGILLV̄ . CŌE . SCOLE . GRAM̄ATICALIS . DE . IESV . IN . TIDWAL .

The Child Jesus was a natural and not uncommon figure to place upon a school seal and it appears not

¹ Hall's *Chesterfield* states more definitely—"Another chapel was dedicated to St. Helen, which after the Reformation was in 1594 appropriated to the use of the Grammar School." Mr. Leach points out that this school, apparently a Chantry School, was in existence in the reign of Henry III. In addition to Derby and Chesterfield there was perhaps only one other Grammar School in the county in pre-reformation times. Sir Ralph Thirley, kt., by will 10th March, 1513/4, founded a Grammar School to be attached to the Chantry of St. Catherine in the parish church of Melbourne. When the Chantries were suppressed this school also disappeared. Ashbourne may be an early foundation, and possibly there were others of which no trace survives.

² This is the date of the deed. The Letters Patent incorporating the school are dated 18th November, 1559.

³ Vol. xxxii, 19.

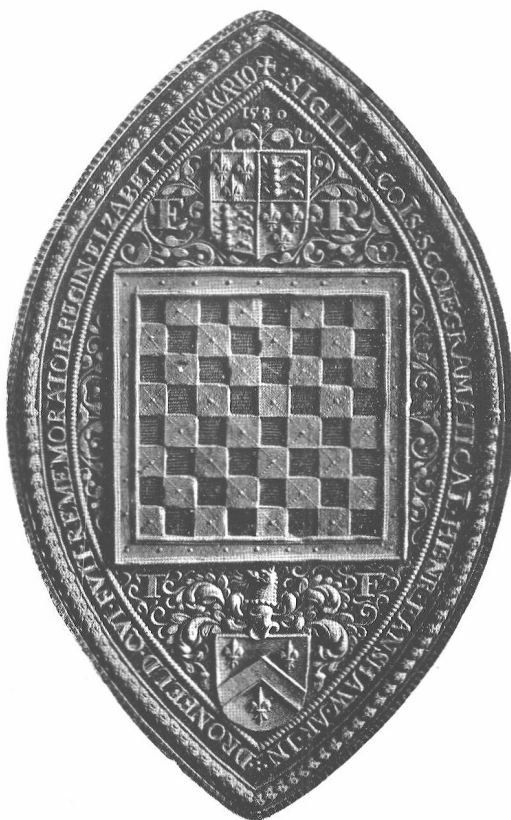
⁴ *Old Yorkshire* (Smith), v, 153. *Journal*, xxxii, 32. The original seal is still in the possession of the governors to whom the society is indebted for an impression, from which the accompanying illustration is taken. The Corporation was dissolved by the scheme of 25th May, 1876.



SEAL OF
WIRKSWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



SEAL OF
TIDESWELL GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



SEAL OF DRONFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

only upon the seal of Purseglove's sister foundation at Guisborough, but on the interesting seal of Pocklington School, in the latter instance in conjunction with St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children.¹ Doubtless Purseglove was influenced in the selection of a dedication for his two schools from the fact that St. Paul's School, London, where he was educated, was placed by Dean Colet, the founder, under the same protection.

DRONFIELD.

The school in this place was founded in 1580 by Thomas Fanshawe, Remembrancer of the Court of Exchequer, in accordance with the terms of the will of Henry Fanshawe, his predecessor in that office, by Letters Patent of Queen Elizabeth, dated 3 Jun., 1579. The seal² is a pointed oval and of a very striking design, measuring $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The whole of the middle is occupied by a square diced board in a frame consisting of 64 "checks" in alternate colours, recording the office held by the two Fanshawes in the Court of Exchequer. Above this are the royal arms (*France and England Quarterly*), with the initials E . R . (Elizabetha Regina), on either side, and over the shield the date 1580. Below the "chequer" are the arms of Fanshawe *or a chevron between three fleur-de-lys sable*, surmounted by a helmet and the crest, *a dragon's head erased vert, flames issuing from the mouth* with mantling. On either side are the initials T . F . (Thomas Fanshawe). Legend: † SIGILLV̄ . CŌIS . SCOLE . GRAM̄ATICAL . HENR . FANSHAW . AR . IN . DRONFELD . QVI . FYIT . REMEMOR . REGIN . ELIZABETH . IN . SCACARIO .

Thomas Fanshawe of Dronfield and Ware Park (co.

¹ *Yorks. Arch. and Topog. Soc. Journal*, xvii, 254.

² Figured *Carlisle*, i, 221. Described in the *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe*, p. 269. Through the courtesy of Mr. C. C. Baggaley, the Head Master, an illustration has been prepared from an impression in his possession. The scheme, under which apparently the Corporation was dissolved, is dated 17th May, 1888.

Hertford), son and heir of John Fanshawe of Fanshawe Gate, succeeded to the office of Queen's Remembrancer on the death of his uncle Henry Fanshawe in 1568. He was a baron of the Cinq Ports and M.P. for Arundel. He died in 1600, when he was succeeded in the representation of his family and in the office of Queen's Remembrancer by his son, Henry Fanshawe, the father of the first Viscount Fanshawe of Donamore.¹

WIRKSWORTH.

At Wirksworth we have the anomaly of a school mentioned and receiving a benefaction ten years before it was founded. By will 14th July, 1574, Agnes Fearn left a house and other property to Anthony Gell for the benefit of the school and Bede House which the latter was about to found. Anthony Gell of Hopton, barrister at law, by his will actually founded the Grammar School and almshouses at Wirksworth, leaving it to his brother and executor, Thomas Gell, to obtain the Letters Patent incorporating the governors (27th October, 1584).

The seal, which is oval and measures $2\frac{3}{8}$ by $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, shows a full length figure of the founder in a flowing gown, ruffle and square cap. His right hand is raised and in his left he holds what appears to be a pair of gloves. He wears a characteristic Elizabethan beard and if, as the legend tells us, it is meant for his portrait, Anthony Gell must have been a short stout man. Below his feet is a shield bearing the arms of Gell, *per bend azure and or three mullets of six points in bend pierced and counter-changed*, and surmounted by the crest, *on a wreath—a greyhound statant sable collared or*.³ The legend round the seal runs : ◦ IMAGO ◦ ANTHONII ◦ GELL ◦ DE ◦ HOPTON ◦ ARMIGERI ◦

¹ *Journal*, xxx, 180.

² Figured *Carlisle*, i, 239. Described *Brit. Mus. Cat. of Seals*, ii, 3516-8; *Notis and Derby Notes and Queries*, i, 143.

³ These arms appear to have been granted to Anthony Gell in 1575.

Anthony Gell was the eldest son of Ralph Gell of Hopton, who died in 1562. He succeeded his father and died unmarried 12th November, 1583, when he was succeeded by his brother Thomas Gell.¹ The latter in accordance with the terms of his brother's will (29th February, 1579), obtained the Letters Patent for the foundation and incorporation of the school.²

ASHBOURNE.

The school at Ashbourne was incorporated by Letters Patent, dated 15th July, 1585, on the petition of Sir Thomas Cokayne, kt., of Ashbourne, William Bradbourne, Esq., of Lee, Thomas Carter, gent., of the Middle Temple, Thomas Hurte and William Jackson, gents., of Ashbourne, and other principal inhabitants of the town,³ under the title of THE FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL OF QUEEN ELIZABETH IN THE TOWN OF ASHBOURNE IN THE COUNTY OF DERBY. The charter provided for a somewhat unusually complex system of school government. Besides the master, who must hold a master's degree at Oxford or Cambridge, and the undermaster or usher, there were three governors: Thomas Cokayne, son of Sir Thomas; John Alsoppe, of Alsoppe en le Dale, gent.; and Robert Hurte, vicar of Ashbourne; and twelve assistants: Thomas Whithall, gent.; Thomas Alsoppe, of Alsoppe en le Dale, gent.; Roger Hurte, John Cloves, sen., George Jackson, Nicholas Hurte, Gervase Prince, Andrew Milward, Jacob Milward, Robert Hollis, Ralph Burche, and Richard Radclyffe, of Ashbourne. Yet in spite

¹ *Journal*, xxxiv, 148; xxxv, 105 and 106.

² *Journal*, xxxviii, 147-158. The scheme under which the Corporation was dissolved is dated 13th May, 1887. The original seal appears to be lost. The illustration which accompanies this article has been prepared from a plaster cast of an impression in the British Museum, generously furnished by Mr. D. T. B. Wood, of the Department of Manuscripts.

³ Mr. Leach shows that there is some evidence that this was not an original foundation, but the reconstitution of an existing school. It is quite possible, especially in view of William Bradbourne's association with the foundation, that the original Grammar School was attached to the Chantry of St. Oswald in the parish church founded c. 1483 by John Bradbourne.

of this formidable array of governors, the original petitioners, as long as they lived, were to have the appointment of the master!¹ The seal is vesica shaped and measures $3\frac{5}{8}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches.² The design is divided horizontally into two portions. In the upper half the Virgin Queen appears seated upon her throne, with crown, sceptre and orb, within an elaborate baldachino. Kneeling on either side of the throne appear the petitioners, three on the left and two on the right, clothed in long robes and wearing beards. They are of course bare-headed in the presence of their sovereign, and the foremost of them, on the left (presumably Sir Thomas Cokayne), holds a book in his hand. One of the figures on the right holds a purse, which probably represents the local subscriptions by means of which the school was endowed.³ In the lower compartment we have a view of the school itself: two boys are seated on a form conning their lessons under the eye of the master, who wears a cap and master's gown. Behind the boys, in what looks like a church pew, the usher is assisting two younger children in their lessons. The whole scene is being supervised by some half dozen robed figures who may be taken to represent the governors. Legend: + SIGILLV . LIBERAE . SCHOLAE . GRAMATICALIS . ELIZABETHAE . REGINAE . IN . VILLA . DE . ASHBORNE . IN . COMITATV . DERBIAE .

The excellent workmanship and striking design make this one of the best school seals in the country⁴; of the

¹ Glover, ii, 37.

² *Brit. Mus. Catalogue of Seals*, ii, 4591 and 4592; *Notts and Derb. Notes and Queries*, i, 142. The seal is figured in *Carlisle's Endowed Grammar Schools*, i, 206; the *Ashbourne Telegraph*, 29th April, 1910.

³ "Divers well disposed citizens of London desirous as yet not to be named, being borne in or near Ashbourn in the Peak" also contributed to the funds of the school.

⁴ The Corporation was dissolved by the scheme of 28th October, 1879. The beautiful seal is however still in the hands of the clerk of the old trust. It has not, however, the appearance of being the original seal of 1585. A comparison with the great seal of Anne, with which it has several points of similarity, would seem to date it late 17th or early 18th century.



SEAL OF REPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



SEAL OF ASHBOURNE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

founders and governors of the school, Sir Thomas Cokayne, of Ashbourne, had been knighted at Edinburgh in 1544 by the Earl of Hereford; Thomas, his second son was 19 years of age at the time of the visitation of 1569, so that he would be about 35 at this time. John Alsop, of Alsop-en-le-Dale was the brother in law of Thomas Alsop, having married Thomas's sister Anne, whilst Thomas had married his sister Elizabeth. William Bradbourne was a connection of Sir Thomas Cokayne through his wife, Dorothy, daughter of Sir Humphrey Ferrers. Five members of the Hurte family are mentioned, and these four families, Cokayne of Ashbourne, Alsop of Alsop, Bradbourne of Hough, and Hurte of Ashbourne, may be taken as the four principal families of the immediate neighbourhood at the time.

REPTON.

Sir John Port, of Etwall, who died 6th June, 1557, devised to his executors and others certain estates in Derbyshire and Lancashire, to found a Hospital and Free Grammar School at Etwall.¹ This association of a school and hospital is by no means uncommon. Bishop Purseglove did the same thing at Guisborough, as did Anthony Gell at Wirksworth, and there are numerous other examples all over the country. The only unusual thing about this foundation is that the school was actually erected not at Etwall but at Repton: moreover the Letters Patent incorporating the school and hospital were not obtained till 1621, the full title of the trust being "The Master of Etwall Hospital, the Schoolmaster of Repton, Ushers, Poor men, and poor scholars." The school seal, which is circular, shows the arms of Porte, *azure a fess engrailed between three doves azure, each holding in his beak a cross formy fitchy all or*, surrounded by the

¹ W. d. 9th March, 1556-7.

legend: † S . COM . HOSPITA . ET . LIB . SCOLAE . IO .
PORT . MIL . IN . ETWALL . ET . REPTON *¹

Sir John Port had acquired Etwall by marriage with the heiress of — Fitzherbert. He left three daughters and coheirs married to Sir Thomas Gerard of Bryn, George Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon ; and Sir Thomas Stanhope of Cubley. The corporation of the Grammar School, as distinct from the Hospital at Etwall, was dissolved by the order in Council of 1874. No trace of the original seal can be found.

As has been mentioned already most of the remaining Grammar Schools, none of which were incorporated, have become, if they still exist, elementary schools. The only exceptions appear to be :—

STAVELEY.

Founded and endowed at Netherthorpe apparently by Francis Rhodes of Staveley Woodthorpe, Justice of Common Pleas by writ of 7th June, 1586. The school was further endowed by indenture of Margaret Freschville, 6th September, 1591, and by Robert Sitwell, of Renishaw, 20th April, 1598. Margaret Freschville was the wife of Peter Freschville, of Staveley, and daughter of Arthur Kaye, of Woodsome, co. York, by Beatrix, daughter of Matthew Wentworth, of Bretton, in the same county. Her first husband was Francis Woodrove, of Wooley. Her grandson, a great Royalist, was created Baron Freschville, of Staveley, in 1664, an honour which expired at his death without male issue in 1682.

RISLEY.

Originally founded 17th November, 1593,² by Catherine

¹ Figured *Carlisle*, vol. i, 126.

² W. p. 1st May, 1594. See *V.C.H.*, ii, for dates of building and endowment of the various schools. It is sad to think of this ancient foundation having ceased to exist. In fairness to the Charity Commissioners, who are generally blamed for all the evils which have befallen ancient Grammar Schools, it must be stated that the discontinuance of Risley Grammar School is to be attributed entirely to local jealousies, which made shipwreck of the scheme proposed by the Commissioners.

the widow of Michael Willoughby, of Risley, who gave 20 nobles for the purpose. Sir Henry Willoughby, her great nephew,¹ increased this to 20 marks, but it remained for the latter's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Gray, to put the school in a satisfactory condition by erecting in 1706 the picturesque building which is still standing, and will be remembered by those members of the society who partook within its walls of the hospitality of the last Headmaster in 1911. She also endowed the school with lands then worth £50 (10th March, 1718).

BAKEWELL.

“ By indre : bearing date 12 May 1636 ² between Grace Lady Manners widow of the one part, and John Greaves Esq. and others, of the other part ; the said Lady Manners in order to make a provision for the maintaining of a School Master for ever, to teach a free School within the townships of Bakewell for the better instructing of the male Children of Bakewell and Great Rowsley, in good learning, and the Christian Religion granted to the said John Greaves and others and their heirs a yearly rent-charge of £15 to be issuing out of lands at Elton.” (Glover).³

In the case of Bakewell a hospital was also founded, but the school and hospitals are separate foundations. The latter originated in a deed of Sir John Manners, dated 30th April, 1602, and by Letters Patent of 25th April, 1605, the Hospital was incorporated under the style of “ The Governor and Poor of St. John's Hospital in Bakewell.”

¹ Michael Willoughby left John Willoughby his nephew and heir. The latter's son, Sir Henry Willoughby, was created a baronet in 1611—extinct at his death s.p.m. 1649.

² 20th February, 1636 (*V.C.H.*, 269).

³ Not a rent charge but the full value of the property at Elton. She was the second daughter of Sir Henry Pierpont, wife of Sir George Vernon, who was the son of Dorothy Vernon of Haddon, and mother of the eighth Earl of Rutland.

BUXTON.

The Grammar School at Buxton, founded in 1647 by George Spateman of Roden oak and enlarged by Anthony Wooley of Riber in 1665, was still further endowed by the inhabitants of Buxton in 1674, who then found "£12 for the schoolmaster of the said town teaching Latin, English and Writing."¹ The total endowment was never sufficient and it soon sank to the position of an Elementary School. It has recently, however, been restored to its former dignity and takes its place amongst the grammar schools of the county.

It remains to summarize the notices which have been printed regarding the Derbyshire Endowed Schools and their foundation.

A comprehensive account of the Grammar Schools of the county will be found in the late A. F. Leach's chapter on Derbyshire schools, in the second volume of the *Victoria County History*.² Accounts of Derby, Tideswell, and Wirksworth have been given in the *Journal*. Glover describes Ashbourne, Bakewell, Buxton, Chesterfield and Derby; Potts, *Liber Cantabrigiensis*,³ Derby, Chesterfield and Repton; Carlisle, *Endowed Grammar Schools*: Derby, Chesterfield, Dronfield, Wirksworth, Ashbourne, Risley and Hartshorne.⁴ Lyson's *Magna Britannia*, vol. v, mentions most of the schools, whilst scattered notices may also be found in various local histories.

It is noteworthy how many of the principal families in the county were concerned in the foundation of these

¹ Glover ii, 177.

² Including a list of twelve schools founded as Grammar Schools, which have since become elementary. Amongst them may be named Duffield, founded in 1565 by William Gilbert; Hayfield, 1604, by John Hyde of Longlee; Ashford, 1631, John Coke; Matlock, 1647, George Spateman, and enlarged 1668 by Anthony Wolley. One or two like Glossop and Melbourne have ceased to exist.

³ "An account of the aids afforded to poor Students, etc., in the University of Cambridge," by Robert Potts, M.A., 1855.

⁴ *Carlisle*, i, 289. "There is a free school at this place founded by William Dethick, Rector of Hartshorne, in 1626, and endowed with lands now let at about £50 per annum" (Lysons). The school is now elementary.

schools. Alsop, of Alsop-en-le-Dale ; Bradbourne, of Hough ; Cokayne, of Ashbourne ; Dethick, of Hartshorne ; Fanshawe, of Fanshawe Gate ; Fearn, of Alderwasley ; Foljambe, of Walton ; Freschville, of Staveley ; Gell, of Hopton ; Gilbert, of Lockho ; Hurt, of Ashbourne ; Hyde, of Longlee ; Manners, of Haddon ; Port, of Etwall ; Rhodes, of Staveley Woodthorpe ; Sitwell, of Renishaw ; Spateman, of Rodenoke ; Willoughby, of Risley ; and Wolley, of Riber. They and many more proved themselves " Leaders of the people by their counsels, and by their knowledge of learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent in their instructions : rich men furnished with ability honoured in their generations and the glory of their times." Honoured too, let us hope, in our time, when the pious intentions of these pioneers of education in our county deserve to be remembered as much as ever in the past.
