

ART. XVII.—*Calder Abbey. Part II. (1134 to 1536).* By
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WHOMO was the founder of Calder† Abbey? This query is not so easily answered as some may suppose, for should any one begin to search for the truth of the matter, it would soon be found out that the information supplied by the local histories‡ cannot always be relied upon. When a mistake has been made in one of the older ones, it has been repeated over and over again by those that have copied their predecessor's work, without any original research or enquiry. To take an example, there is one short account of this abbey, occupying only a third of a page, in which we can discover at least seven incorrect statements, and possibly there is an eighth: many of these errors could easily have been rectified by a little accuracy of enquiry.

To avoid such unfortunate and misleading statements, we must try, in this enquiry after the founder of Calder, to get at the original sources of information as far as these are attainable; and from these documents form our opinion, with as much certainty as the nature of the case admits of.

Our first authority is no less than that of a Pope, for about the year 1145 (only eleven years after the founding) Pope Eugenius III. in a charter of confirmation of the possessions of Furness Abbey, enumerates the different

* For Part I. see volume viii., p. 467.

† Sometimes also spelt Caldre, Caldera, Kalder, Kaldra, Cauder, Cawder, Calder, Chaldræ.

‡ History &c. of Westmorland and Cumb. by Jos. Nicolson and R. Burn, 1774. History of Cumb. by Wm. Hutchinson, 1794. Magna Britannia, vol. iv. Cumb. by Rev. D. Lysons, 1816. Allerdale above Derwent, Saml. Jefferson, 1842. History &c. of Cumb. and West. by Wm. Whellan, 1860.

benefactions

benefactions which had been made to that abbey, and among them we find this item : "The gift of William nephew of the noble David King of Scots, viz: Calder and its mill, or the mill in that place.* Then after alluding to some other lands part of the same gift, he mentions right of pasture over all the lands of Ranulph Mustin,† whom he adds "first granted these things to your church out of pious devotion."

We give next an extract from the registers of Furness Abbey, of which it forms the first item, "These are the daughters of Furness—the monastery of Calder, founded A.D. MCXXXIII, *quarto idus Januarii*." The date of this document is uncertain, but it may be placed here, as by it we are told the exact date of the founding; which has been repeated in every other ancient and modern authority. Next we find an account of the origin of the abbey of Calder, in the history of the founding of Byland Abbey in Yorkshire, written in 1197 (*i.e.*, 63 years after it was founded) by Philip the 3rd Abbot of Byland.‡ This document says that in 1134 a convent of monks from Furness went out, chosen by lot, to a place called "Caldera in Coupland," which was given by a certain great man of that country, that an abbey might be built upon it. (*Ex pia collatione cuiusdam magnatis illius patriæ ad abbaceam construendam*). These cautious words may apply to either of the founders mentioned by Pope Eugenius.

Our next authority is the confirmation charter of King Henry III. which we take as about the same date as that granted to Furness which was 1246.§ This deed confirms the possessions and rights of the abbot and monks of

* West's Ant. of Furness, v. p. 62, (English) Dugdale Mon, vol. i., p. 709, (Latin) Dugdale Mod. Edn. vol. v., p. 250. This William is William FitzDuncan.

† This name "Micencis" or "Mesch" was not the family name, which was Brichard or de Briquesart from Bressin in Normandy, of which his father was Vicount: "le meschyn" means the cadet or junior, Car. Handbook, p. 41, by R. S. Ferguson, from G. G. Mounsey's Gilsland.

‡ Dugdale Mon: Mod. Edn. vol. v., p. 349.

§ *Ibid*, p. 340, in original edition, Henry II.

Calder,

Calder, in it we have the words : “ The lands of Kaldra, in which the abbey of Kaldra is founded (*fundata est*) were the gift (*dono*) of Ranulph Meschin.” This perhaps is slightly different information from the others quoted, in that it speaks of the gift of lands being one thing, and the founding of the monastery another. This same charter is quoted word for word in the charter of confirmation granted to Calder by Edward III. in 1363.*

There, after a long pause, we find important information concerning its founders in the heraldic visitation of the county of Cumberland, by Tonge the herald, in 1530. He names as the founder, Ranulph Meschines Lord of Egremont, and gives as the arms of the founders, and also as those of the abbey, the three coats of the three co-heiresses of the last de Multon, of Egremont Castle.† We must now quietly come down to more troublous times for the abbey ; and in the MSS. called the “ Comperta ”‡ (compiled during the reign of Henry VIII. perhaps about the year 1539), the abbey of Calder is said to have been founded by “ the Lords of Coupland.” Here we find the information given by the herald corroborated. The founders, though unnamed, are now localized as it were ; but of this more presently. We must now quote from two more documents which though of later date, give important information bearing upon our subject.

In Denton’s MS. history of Cumberland, compiled before 1610, we are given much information about Calder and its history ; though unfortunately it cannot always be relied upon, for we cannot tell from what authors he gathered it, nor do we know if they are worthy of credit or no, for he pretends to no originality himself. He says “ the abbey of Cauder, or Caldre, as I have read, was first founded in

* From a modern copy at Calder Abbey.

† Surtees Society Papers, vol. 41, pp. 73 and 94, see Transactions vol. vi., Part i., p. 152, Jackson. (These arms were described in the account of the ruins).

‡ Transactions, vol. iv., p. 90, Canon Dixon.

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the year of grace 1134, about the last year of King Henry 1st, when William FitzDuncan was Lord of Egremont." Thus Ranulph le Meschiens is not even mentioned; but as a kind of second founder he gives a new name, that of Thomas de Multon, whom he says "finished the works, and established a greater convent of monks there."

The last authority we quote is the well-known writer Dugdale, who wrote about 1693: his "Monasticon" is the great source of information we have about the monastic houses in the three kingdoms, as his "Baronage" gives us the histories and genealogies of the great families of the land. In his former work he speaks of the possessions of Calder as the "gift of Ralph le Meschin" * without telling us which Ralph it was, for there were three. But in his latter book he is more particular, and says that the abbey was "founded A.D. MCXXXIIII, by Ranulph the first Earl of Chester of that name," † and he gives as his authority, either for the name or the date "The annals of S. Werburgh and of Parcolude." ‡ He does not even allude to William FitzDuncan. Now is it possible to reconcile all these conflicting statements about an event concerning the date of which they are all agreed? Let us sift the evidence, and we will see that two events are alluded to under the same name of founding; while possibly also there was some distance of time between them. One act is the original granting of the lands of Calder in Coupland; while the other is the building upon that land, thus given, of an abbey, or monastery. This distinction can first be seen in the wording of the confirmation charter of Henry III. which speaks separately of the gift of the lands of Calder, and of the abbey of Calder, which was built upon them.

* Vol. i., p. 774.

† Vol. i., p. 38, (Mod. Edn. Monast. vol. v., p. 339), ("Caldraensis Abbatia in agro Cumbriense.")

‡ Dean and Chap. Library, Chester.

If we keep this distinction in mind some of the difficulty will clear away, for all who mention the land, agree in saying it was given by a Ranulph de Meschines, while most of those who mention the buildings, attribute their erection to William FitzDuncan. We ask then, to what event does the date 1134 apply? Surely to the first planting of the monks at Calder, in the original settlement described by the Abbot of Byland, for he distinctly says so. So we must date the gift of the land, in which the abbey was placed, somewhat further back than the year 1134, perhaps only a year or so.

If this is the case, it is plain that the land could never have been given originally, as Dugdale says it was, by Ranulph the first Earl of Chester of that name; for in 1120 he resigned to King Henry II the Earldom of Carlisle, or Carleolium. He may also at the same time have held the Barony of Coupland; though not as forming part of his Earldom, for it is described in the Saxon Chronicle as "land between Kendal barony and the Earldom of Carlisle." At this same date this Barony of Coupland was given by the King to Earl Ranulph's brother William.

Ranulph could not possibly have given this grant of Calder before 1127, as the gift was made to the Abbey of Furness,* which was not founded till 1127. He died in 1129.

Of course if Ranulph, the first Earl of Chester of that name, had not this land to give away after 1120, neither had his son Ranulph de Gernonys who was Earl of Chester after him,† for his uncle William de Meschines and his descendants continued to hold Coupland from 1120.‡

We are thus compelled to search for another Ranulph, Randolph, Randulph, Randle or Ralph; who will, in him-

* Pope Eugenius' letter to Furness "*ecclesiae vestrae concesserat.*"

† Dugdale Baronage, vol. i., p. 3.

‡ Tanner, p. 75, says, quoting Dugdale's Baronage "that it was founded by Ranulph second Earl of Chester and Cumberland for Cistercian Monks."

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self, fulfil the different requirements we have found to be necessary in the original grantor of the manor of Calder. He must be a Lord of Coupland dwelling in Egremont Castle, and living between 1127 and 1134. Now in the charters of St. Bees' Priory, which is situated within seven miles of Calder, we can find the name we are looking for; and in the length of his name, as given in a deed at York, we may find his claims to this distinction set forth in order; in full it is "Ranulphus Meschinus filius Willielmi filii Ranulphi."^{*} Here then is the very man we require, having all the requirements belonging to the missing "founder" of Calder. His name has been omitted in all the modern histories, no doubt because Denton says that his father William Meschines "left no issue at his death but a daughter." And also because Dugdale says of his father that "this William had two sons, Ranulph and Matthew, and a daughter Alice, both of which sons pre-deceased their father. We are not given any authority for either of these statements, which are manifestly untrue, for he must have lived at least some short time after his father, for besides joining with him in the founding of St. Bees' Priory, when he gave land for this purpose to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary at York, we find him, by himself, granting the manor of Ennerdale to St. Beest a "very unlikely donation to have been conferred during the life of his father."

Here then we have the donor of the lands of Calder. Ranulph Meschins, son of William, was Lord of Coupland, and therefore of Egremont Castle the seat of that barony. Possibly he may have lived to see the first temporary wooden buildings erected by the Benedictine monks of Furness in the beautiful vale, which his piety

* Exauhographo in Turri Beatæ Mariæ Ebor.

† See Transactions, vol. vi., part i. p. 152. Mr. Jackson agrees with the writer of this paper, who came to the same conclusion without knowing of Mr. Jackson's opinion.

had

had dedicated to God for the promotion of religion in its manifold good works, throughout his broad domains.

We must look at such gifts of the olden time, not so much as an endowment of the church; for this it only very indirectly was, as the regular clergy of the monastery had very little connection with the secular clergy of the parish; but as the founding of a charitable institution; for the feeding and clothing of the poor; the tending of the sick; and the teaching of the young; besides the unceasing round of worship, which would be carried on within its walls. In such sheltered cloisters alone could such good deeds be performed, without let or hindrance from the fierce turmoil of the world, that then raged around them.

The same Archbishop of York, Thurstan,* was living before the site was granted by Ranulph, and after the first buildings of the abbey were erected, for he was mentioned in the deed by which the Priory of St. Bees' was founded by Ranulph's father, William of Egremont Castle. And also, in 1138, four years after the first founding of the abbey of Calder, he was most kind in his reception of the monks in Yorkshire when they fled from an incursion of the Scots.

We have seen that some of the earliest records state that William FitzDuncan was the founder; but this will not clash with the fact that this second Ranulph granted the land originally, this grant being confirmed, as was usual, by the next owner of the barony, William Fitz-Duncan, who was Lord of Coupland by right of his wife Alice, sister of Ranulph.[†] William FitzDuncan may have erected the first buildings in 1134. And no doubt he did rebuild them, when they were destroyed soon after, as we shall see further on.

* He was 27th Archbishop from 1114 to 1144.

† Some authorities give another Alice married to Robt. de Romili as sister to Ranulph, and mother of Alice FitzDuncan.

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We are fortunate enough to have extant a graphic account of the first settlement of monks here, who came to found an abbey on land given for the purpose; even the names of the men forming this first colony are on record. For this narrative we are indebted to Philip the Abbot of Byland, from whom we have quoted before. From this account we learn that the first monks, chosen by lot, came from Furness abbey in Lancashire, which had been founded by Stephen Count of Blois, afterwards King Stephen, for Benedictine monks who came from Savigny, in Normandy, fourteen years after the rise of the Cistercian order.* This reformed order they afterwards joined, following the example of their mother house in Normandy. So in their turn the monks of Calder, as members of a daughter house of Furness, also became Cistercians. This rule was very severe and ascetic, being even in some particulars more strict than the original rule of the Benedictines, which it professed to revive, after a period of greatly relaxed discipline. The Cistercians took their name from Citeaux, which was anciently spelt Cisteaux, in latin *Cistercium*. For it was at this monastery that, in 1078, the new order took its rise, though it did not spread much until 15 years afterwards, when S. Bernard embraced the reformed rule. By his extraordinary abilities, and his great renown for sanctity, in a short time it became the most popular of all the monastic orders, and quickly spread throughout Christendom.

Thus, though it is a mistake to say, as many have done, that Calder was founded for Cistercian monks, it became connected with that order in 1148.†

Cistercians wore (as they no doubt still wear), a white woollen cassock, with a narrow scapulary; and over that a black gown when they went abroad, but a white one when they went to church.

* West. Ant. Fur. p. 11.

† Dugdale Mon., Mod. Edn. vol. v., p. 219.

Of the many abbots who ruled the monastery we know but little, we can only give with certainty the names of nineteen. The first abbot was Geroldus, or Gerald as we spell it now; the names of his companions who formed the first convent of monks are Robertus de Insula, Jocka de Loncastro, Johannes de Kynstan, Theodoricus de Dalton, Hormi de Eadem, Rogerus subcellerarius, Alanus de Urcewyk, Wydo de Bolton, Willielmus de Eadem, Petrus de Pictaviis, Ulfus de Ricomonte, Bertrannus de London.* No doubt these names were simply Robert, John, Peter or Roger, and their designation in each case, which looks like a surname (very rare indeed in those days), was merely an addition taken from their birthplace, or former residence, added to prevent confusion. Thus we find that the two superiors of the little company, "the abbot" and the "subcellerarius," have no addition given to their "Gerold" and "Roger," the designation of their office being sufficient.

In looking over these distinguishing terms applied to these monks, we find from them that they were mostly natives of Lancashire, and the district of Furness. But there are some remarkable exceptions.

Robert "*de Insula*" probably came from the Isle of Man, Jocka "*de Loncaster*" came from Lancaster, but we cannot tell from his name what was his nationality. No doubt John "*de Kynstan*" had come from the lovely lake of Coniston, not far from his first cloistered home at Furness. Next Theodoricus and Hormi both hail from the town of Dalton close by; the name Theodore is un-English, not to say Greek, and seems strange for a north country monk, while the name Hormi is no doubt the same as Ormi, which was that of one of the land owners of the Furness district at an early date. Roger the subcellarer was afterwards promoted to be abbot of this same community

* Abbot of Byland in Mod. Edn. Dugdale, vol. v. p. 349.

in their exile at Hode, after the death of Gerold : we find the name of his office still kept up in the Oxford colleges where it signifies a kind of steward. Allan “*de Urcewyk*” was a native of a chapelry in the parish of Dalton. And both Wydo and William had come from Bolton. But the next two, Peter “*de Pictaviis*” and Ulphus “*de Ricomonte*” Peter a Pict, from Scotland, and Ulphus from Richmond in Yorkshire, from their designations seem to have come from a greater distance ; the second name “*Ulphus*” sounds very like Saxon, or Scandinavian ; Ulpha is the name of a parish between Furness and Calder. The name of the last monk surprises us ; we wonder how Bertram “*de London*” liked these uncivilized parts, in which his lot was now cast ? He must have often sighed for the city which was great even in his time. No doubt he would be one of the first to be terrified by the reports of the Scots, the “*Galeweciae*” as the abbot of Byland terms them in 1137, when, about four years after they had taken up their abode in the valley of the Calder, the whole community fled from their new buildings, and taking with them but a few clothes and books in a wagon with eight oxen,* they left Calder never to return.

We do not wonder that these poor helpless defenceless monks left their sheds and wooden hovels, which soon were burnt to ashes by the fierce northern horde that swept over the land in an irresistible torrent, taking advantage of the confusion which accrued as to the crown of England on the death of Henry 1st. No wonder they were horror stricken, for the abbot’s description of the conduct of these barbarians is quite borne out by other witnesses, they were indeed “raving and thirsting for the blood of Englishmen” (“*debacantes et sanguinem Anglorum sientes.*”) They had burnt and destroyed all before them for more than 50 miles before they had penetrated into

* “*In quodam plaastro cum octo bovis.*”

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this quiet valley, which was just beginning to shew the result of the painful industry and laborious care of the monks. Perhaps it was for this reason made more worth their while to visit it, that they might carry off, not only their usual booty of cattle, but perhaps also the flocks of sheep now for the first time introduced into the country from foreign lands, by the Cistercians, who originated the wool growing industry which, in time, developed into a great branch of commerce.

We need not translate the further description given to us, by the same narrator, of these marauders, led by the kinsman of the founder of this abbey. But we must agree with him in his description of their conduct as being that of an impious race (*nephanda gentis*).

The poor homeless ones, after a brief consultation, decided to make the best of their way to their mother house at Furness, and there they hoped, like a flock of wandering sheep, to find shelter from the winter's storm once more in their secluded fold. But it was not to be, this refuge was denied them. The abbot and convent of Furness would only open their gates to them on the condition that abbot Gerold would absolve his monks from their allegiance to him, and once more enter their community as a simple monk, as he was before he left the parent house four years before.

We feel sorry for these poor forlorn wanderers in their sorry plight, but at the same time the condition imposed upon them, before the seemingly inhospitable gate, was a very reasonable one. Two queen bees cannot at the same time occupy the same hive. That one which has gone forth and taken with her a young swarm, to form a new colony, never can return; she must seek elsewhere a home for her progeny. So the twelve monks with their abbot, finding it useless to delay, set out for Yorkshire, hoping through the pity of Thurstan the Archbishop, to find another home where they might prosecute their peaceful work

work of busy rest, and again build a house of God in which to raise their chant of prayer and praise. They were successful in their expedition, and by the kind intercession of Thurstan, a worthy baron ("frugalis animi"?) gave them alms for their present need, and leave to settle on his lands. There they founded the abbey of Hode, which afterwards they changed for Byland, where they remained.

In the mean time, the next year it seems, the abbot of Furness sent off again another colony of monks, under Hardred, as their abbot, who took possession of the old site and lands of Calder, in the year 1138.

The abbey buildings no doubt were now rebuilt by William FitzDuncan, Lord of Egremont. Some progress had been very probably made in supplying the necessary buildings, though only to a small extent, during the short tenure of abbot Gerold; for when he and his companions fled, the historian said it was from the abbey "lately begun or undertaken." (*nuper inceptam*).

William FitzDuncan seems to have cared more for the cause of his royal Scotch relative, in his claim upon Cumberland, than for the cause of religion and charity; for he led his uncle's people in their terrible raid upon the dominions of King Stephen. He seems even to have permitted them to devastate the possessions and lands of his wife's family, (if he was then married to her), in both Cumberland, and Craven in Yorkshire. There is no doubt that he burnt and destroyed the infant settlements at Calder, and terrified the monks so lately settled there. But this is no conclusive evidence that he had not himself erected these very buildings, for 200 years later King Robert Bruce burnt down Holm Cultram abbey, near Carlisle, over the tomb of his own father who lay buried there. The rebuilding of the abbey, and the reestablishment of the monks, would doubtless, be counted in those times, a sufficient act of reparation and atonement for his former cruelty and sacrilege.

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In 1150 Hardred claimed jurisdiction over the abbey of Byland, as superior of the monastery from which it sprang. But his claim was very justly disallowed by the chapter of Cistercian abbots, convened for the purpose of hearing his claims.*

In the existing ruins of the abbey of Calder, we cannot trace any of William FitzDuncan's building; as the earliest portion, the west door of the church, does not seem to date earlier than 1180.

We do not hear anything of Calder for the next 30 years, nor do we know how long Hardred lived, nor even who was his immediate successor; for the next appointment we can find took place in 1211, and it is not probable that his rule would have lasted over 60 years. We learn from the Chronicle of Melrose† that in the year 1211, upon the feast of S. Lucy, *i.e.*, on the 13th of December, an abbot of Calder, with some others, received the benediction from "our Lord Robert Bishop of Down," at the abbey of Melrose; unfortunately this abbot's name is not given. This ceremony taking place here, seems to have been an exception, as most of the other abbots went to York to be inaugurated by the Archbishop, which rite was variously described as "receiving the hands of blessing" or "swearing obedience."‡ There was no bishop of Carlisle from 1184 to 1220: hence the resort to Melrose.

Abbeys were not only extra parochial, but also extra diocesan, some great houses having even a bishop resident within their walls, to perform the necessary episcopal functions. The brethren not only performed all the services of the abbey church, but also served other churches and chapels depending upon them for clerical duty. Very probably S. Bridget's and S. John's (Beckermet),§ as well

* Abbot of Byland.

† Chronicle of Melrose, by Rev. J. Stevenson.

‡ "Recepit manus benedictionem," or "jurat obed."

§ In 28 Henry VIII. Robert a monk was curate of S. John's *justa* Calder.

as S. Michael's Arlecdon, were thus supplied when their endowment of tithe was afterwards swallowed up by the abbey, and made to form part of its revenues. Cistercian abbey land was specially exempt from tithe. Some of the monks were in secular orders,* as priests, deacons, and subdeacons. These would require episcopal ordination, and we find entries in the York archiepiscopal registers recording such. Besides these choir monks, as they were sometimes termed, there were included in the establishment, a number of lay brethren called "*Conversi*." To these were confided most of the secular work connected with the convent, such as the management and working of the home farm around the precincts; and of the different granges situated at a distance, upon the fells, included in the abbey lands.

The old form, with its quaint spelling, which was used when a brother was admitted into the monastery is interesting. His first petition, to be received on probation, was as follows:— “Syr I besyche you and the convent for the luff of God, our Lady, Sanct Marye, Sanct John Baptiste, and all the Hoyle Cowrte of Hevyne, that ye wolde resave me, to lyve and dye here among yow in the state of a monke as prebendarye and servant unto alle, to the honour of God, solace to the company, prouffet to the place, and helth unto my soule.”†

His second petition is equally touching and quaint; in it he says:— “Syr I have beyn heyr now this twell month nere hand, and lovyde be God me lyks right well, both the order and the company; whereapon I besyche yow and all the company for the luff of God that ye will resave me unto my profession at my twell month day according to my pitycian whyche I made when I was fyrst resaved heyr amongst yow.”

We do not wonder that in those troublous times, many thus joined together in societies, for mutual edification,

* The monks were called regulars.

† Dug. Mon. vol. i., p. 1.

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and mutual help. A monastery was the only place where works of learning or charity, arts or labour, could be carried on, without a certainty of molestation or hindrance, from either lawful conscription levied for ceaseless wars, or the lawless marauding of hostile troops. There was danger, no doubt, as we have seen, when the Scots came down upon the border country, sparing nothing secular or religious. But such disturbance was only an occasional misfortune, and not the common lot of such recluses, while it was the daily misery of the most wretched inhabitants of the county, villages, and hamlets; they had no certainty that if they sowed their fields, they would ever live to see them bear their fruit ; or if they collected a few cattle together, they would be allowed to possess them for many months, not to say years. Then besides this secular motive of safety and quiet, there was the religious side, which, specially when this house was founded, formed a great attraction for well disposed, though perhaps ignorant and unlearned men. Many considered such a life the only alternative to a life of wickedness and debauchery. And no doubt at this time a wave of earnestness, and a desire for a more spiritual life, was passing over Christendom. S. Bernard intended the Cistercian order to be the means of deepening the spiritual life, and no doubt for a time it did so among those who joined his order, and kept the spirit, as well as the letter, of his elaborate directions for living a holy life. His motto for this order gives us an insight into the constant hope, and joyful trust, which inspired these earlier inhabitants of the cloister. Translating* this motto it reads thus :— “ It is good for us to be here, for here a man

Lives more purely, falls more rarely,
Rises more swiftly, walks more carefully,
Rests more securely, dies more happily,

* Archdeacon Farrer's translation in “Saintly Workers.”

Is cleansed more speedily, is rewarded more abundantly.”*

There is no doubt that as time rolled on, abuses of all kinds crept into these abodes of peace. So that in some of them, all the strict rules were relaxed, and the pious intentions of the founders frustrated. But in spite of our 19th century enlightenment, it does not seem fitting that we should look too closely into the records of every act and motive of the brethren, that we should find the abbey a subject for unqualified condemnation ; but let us act on the principal laid down by our blessed Lord, “ Him that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.”†

The fourth abbot of Calder, (the third in direct succession) that we know anything of, was Ralph, who professed obedience before Archbishop Walter of York, in 1220. This Archbishop was Walter Grey, who filled the chair of York between 1216 and 1256.

It was probably during the rule of abbot Ralph, that the chief part of the present ruined buildings of Calder abbey were finished ; the smaller Norman church, which had not yet stood a hundred years, being nearly all removed to make room for the new buildings. The lower part, at least, of the west gable of the nave was spared ; as it contained the beautiful, though small, west doorway which still remains.

Thomas de Multon of Egremont Castle is said to have been the benefactor who erected this beautiful church ; which includes a central tower, supported upon exquisite early English arches, which are still all perfect. If we may believe Denton, these works were undertaken because of the enlargement of the original foundation of an abbot

* In Latin :—

Bonum est nos hic esse quia homo,
Vivit purius, cadit rarius,
Surgit velocius, incedit cautius,
Quiescit securius, moritur felicius,
Purgatur citius, premiatur copiosius.

† S. John, viii., 7.

‡ Harl. MS. 6972 fol. 49.

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and twelve monks, to a greater convent of monks, probably including a great number of *conversi*, or lay brethren as well, to till the lands, which now began to be given to the community, by many benefactors besides the members of their founder's family.

Thomas de Multon had become Lord of Coupland through his marriage with Ada, widow of Richard de Lucy, whom he married in 1215, two years after her husband's death. He also became guardian to her two daughters, whom in time he married to his two sons by a former wife. Amabel de Lucy brought Egremont, in the next generation, to his son, another Thomas de Multon.

Richard de Lucy had been a benefactor to the abbey himself, so it is very possible that both Lucy and de Multon were influenced of their wife Ada, in their gifts to the abbey. She was a daughter of Sir Hugh de Morvill,* who was Justice Itinerant in Northumberland and Cumberland, where he inherited the barony of Burgh-on-Sands.

In 1230 Calder abbey received a deed of confirmation from Henry III. of her lands and rights received from different donors, from the time of her founding to that date.† Most of these we can identify, though in some few cases, we cannot even be sure what are the modern names of the benefactions.

Besides the gift of the land of "Kaldra," upon which the abbey was built, the founder, Ranulph de Meschines, gave also "Bemertone and Holegate."‡ Where Bemertone is we cannot say, but Holegate may be a close of land called later on "Hallgate," or Hallgate Fell, included in the farm of Thorneholme, though we would have thought that this was included in the gift of the manor of Calder. He gave also a house in the town of Egremont, "*in burgo de Egremunt*;" the original is interesting, not only from

* Foss' *Judges in England*, 1 p. 279; Stanley's *Mem. of Canterbury*.

† Dugdale, Mod. Edn. p. 340, vol. v., Num. i.

‡ Dugdale Mod. Edn. p. 250, vol. v., Num. xii. "Dermerton and Floligate" it is in an earlier document, (West has it "in Foligate.")

shewing the spelling “ Egremunt,” but also from the term burgh, shewing us that it was a place of some little importance in the 13th century. Its ancient dignity as a borough, has been lately immortalized by its giving the alternate name to the west division of Cumberland, in the parliamentary representation scheme.

The founder gave also two salt pits in “ Withane ;” in the older account of this gift to be found in the letter of Pope Eugenis III. this name is given as “ Withofhd.” He also gave to the abbot and monks, besides many common and other rights upon his lands, divers fisheries, in the river Derwent, and in the “ Egre,” or as it is now called the Ehen. This river rises in Ennerdale, and flowing past Egremont, falls into the sea within a few yards of the mouth of the Calder, at Sellafield. These gifts were confirmed or regranted by William FitzDuncan.

The next donors in point of position in the charter, and therefore, no doubt, in point of time also, were John and Matthew sons of Adam. This Adam was most probably the son of Lyulph baron of Greystoke.* The land they gave, was called Stavenage, or as it is also found written Stovenerge. There is a farm now belonging to the Calder abbey estate in the same district, extending out of the valley of Calder towards Haile, called Stephney; it may possibly be the same, but it is not enumerated in the list of the possessions of the abbey made by Henry VIII. nor was it tithe free, as the other lands are; it was redeemed in 1839.

All the above grants were confirmed by a deed granted by Cecily Countess of Albemarle,* who seems from this deed to have called herself Lady of Coupland; though this

* Denton, p. 68.

† *Archæologia AÆliana*, vol. ii., pp. 386 and 7. The Rev. John Hodgson gives a pedigree in which Cecily is made daughter to William FitzDuncan and Alice; some authorities suppose her to be Alice's sister. In the translation given here of this deed (quoted in Jefferson), Cecily is made to say that she confirmed the “privileges granted by her great grandfather Ranulph de Meschiens;” none of this is in the original contracted latin of the charter, it simply says “*pro animo patris mei et matris mee et Regis Henrici et Salute mea,*” &c.

lordship

lordship fell to the lot of her younger sister, Amabel wife of Reginald de Lucy. Cecily was the eldest daughter and coheiress of William FitzDuncan and his wife Alice.*

We find next that Robert de Bonekill gave one carucate of land in Gilcruz, which is described as being held by Randolphus the clerk of Carlisle. (*clericus de Karl*). He also gave land in Little and Greater Gilcruz, or Gillcrux, or Gilcruch; and pasture for xx oxen, xii cows, and vi horses and their foals of one year. This Robert was descended, in the female line, from Adam the father of the last benefactors, who was given Gilcrux by Waldeof the son of Earl Gospatrick. His sons Thomas and Walter Bonekill (Denton says) gave away the rest of this inheritance in Gilcrux afterwards to this abbey, which gift was confirmed by Sir Ranulph Bonekille Kt.

The name of the next donor is one that may well puzzle us, simple as it looks, "Roger son of William;" who was this Roger son of William, surely not Randolph son of William, even if Roger and Ranulph were the same; for this would upset all our theories as to his being the founder? But the names of the lands given increase the perplexity, for the remainder of this property, "Ikelinton and Brackamton and all the part that he held of the mill in Brackamton" was given afterwards by Richard de Lucy, who we know was son of Reginald de Lucy and Amabel daughter and coheiress of William FitzDuncan of Egremont Castle. Therefore he seems to have been of their family. But this is not conclusive, it may be only a peculiar coincidence.

We now find that more land, five oxgangs, was given in Gilcrux Little and Greater, this time by "Beatrice de Moll," who very appropriately gave a share of the mill in that place which most probably was her home.

* Cecily was married in 1136 to Wm. le Gros Earl of Albermarle. In Doyles official baronage she is called "Cecilia of Scotland, d. of Wm. Earl of Moray."

Already

Already we see the abbey had possession, or part possession at least, of three mills ; Calder, Ikelinton, and Gilcrux, and soon after it possessed also the mill at Beckermet.*

Thomas son of Gospatrick gave the abbey a small portion of land, one perch in length and four in breadth, in Wirkintone. These small gifts of land, which we find very commonly made to abbeys, must have formed very much what we call burial fees, such gifts purchasing a right of burial in the sacred enclosure of the abbey cemetery ; and no doubt, a share in the prayers of the community. This same Thomas added also to the abbey supply of fish, by a gift of xx salmon yearly at the feast of S. John the Baptist (*i.e.*, Midsummer Day). And one net in Derwent, where already they had a fishing ; but this time, it was fixed as between the bridge and the sea.

Before we refer to the last gift mentioned in this charter, we must quote an ancient deed in which a gift of Beckermet is made, which may have included either one or both churches there, as soon after this the presentation to both belonged to the abbey. Its words are “ William de Esseby and Hectred his wife, for the health of their own souls, of the souls of their parents, and of their lord, William Earl of Albemarle, and of his wife Cicely, &c., gave to Almighty God and the B. Virgin, and to the abbey of Chaldra, in free alms, Beckeremet and its appurtenances, as well in waters as pastures, with the mill of the same vill, and the fishery in the Ehgena, appertaining to the same vill.” The deed is signed by the following ecclesiastics in the adjoining parishes, “ Richardus, prior de Sancta Bega ; Robertus, presbyter de Puncunesby ; Rogerus, presbyter de Egre mund ; Jurdanus, persona de Goseford ; Richardus, filius Osberti de Sancta Brigida ; Ricardus, ejusdem ecclesiae

* Jefferson, Allerdale above Derwent, p. 315.

vicarius.

vicarius. &c.* The different titles of the clergy are interesting, Ponsonby having a priest, and Gosforth a parson; while S. Bridget's has a vicar. It may have been that while Gosforth was a rectory, as was S. John's Beckermet, Ponsonby and S. Bridget's were held by their appropriating religious houses, each in a different way.

The abbey of Calder had before a fishing in the Egre: this may have been the same right affirmed, as no doubt the river is the same.

Another deed signed by some of the same witnesses, and therefore about the same date, mentions as the gift of Richard de Boisville,† "9 acres of land in his part of Caldretun, with common of pasture, and other appurtenances";‡ this Caldretun may possibly be Caldertown in Ponsonby, or even Carleton in S. John's parish on the borders of Haile.

To return to King Henry's confirmation charter, we are given as the last gift, (which fixes the date of the charter) that of Thomas de Multon, here called "Moleton," whom we have seen rebuilt the abbey about 1220. He died in 1239. He gave a moiety of the ville of Dereham in Alredale. The original has "*villæ*," which in the translation is called "town" but it is uncertain what this word exactly means, as sometimes it signifies a manor, or even a part of one, or sometimes even a parish;§ for the charter goes on to say, that he also gave the advowson of the church of that ville, (*eiusdem villæ*).

This gift brings us down to within a year or two of the time of Jollandus, who was abbot here in 1241,|| and he seems to have been Ralph's immediate successor at Calder.

The next year, Denton says, Sir John le Fleming, of

* Jefferson, pp. 315-16, from (*Archæologia Eliana*).

† *Ibid.*, p. 316.

‡ He does not seem to be a de Boisville of Millum.

§ Dr. Henderson, Dean of Carlisle.

|| Denton MS. (26 Henry iii.).

Beckermet,

Beckermet,* gave the abbey the advowson or presentation to the church of S. Michael's "Arlaughden," and lands in Great Beckermet. Probably this was not Great Beckermet which is in S. Bridget's parish, but Little Beckermet in S. John's, as it was of the latter place the le Flemings were, as they are still, lords of the manor.

Sir John le Fleming, and his son Sir Richard, are lying buried in the abbey at Calder; and their monumental effigies, though much mutilated, are still to be seen there. A stone coffin of the 13th century has lately been discovered in the chancel of the abbey church, its lid forming part of the paving of the floor; it contains a skeleton of a tall man, in wonderful preservation. Most probably one of these stone figures had lain on the top of it, until displaced by the fall of the tower immediately above; this would account for no carving or inscription being found upon its lid.

The le Flemings, Lords of Beckermet, held it under the Lords of Egremont castle. Their castle was situated close to the village of Beckermet, upon a hill overlooking it. There are now no ruins whatever of this ancient place, though on and around the hill can be easily traced the general design of a strong fortress. Its appearance 200 years ago, is accurately described in the following account taken from the le Fleming pedigree, and also to be found in Denton.

The manner (*sic*) and town of Beckermet are placed near the middle way between Calder abbey and Egremont, being about 2 miles from either; and the high street, or great highway leading betwixt these two places, passeth through this manor, through which also a little

* The name of Beckermet, a village within three miles of the abbey, is full of interest to the lover of local lore. There are many theories as to its origin, but there are so many different forms of the word, that it is difficult to find out what the original one was; probably all the variations we have were created by the Normans, who came into possession of the district in 1120, from their attempt to spell an earlier Saxon or Danish name: I add some of these variations: Beckeremet, Becchiremd, Beckirmeth, Bekermet, Beckermet, Beckirmit, Beckermitt, Becker-mouth, Beckermont. It is generally pronounced by the natives of the district, Beckerment.

beck.

beck, or river, called Kerbec* doth run: in this manor there is a mount or hill whereon there is yet to be seen the ruins of a notable fort or castle of an oblong square, the dimensions whereof (though now much less than what they were at first, by reason of that the earth is much shrunken down and altered by ploughing) are as followeth, viz: the length of ye castle within the ditch (from east to the west) is about 100 yards; and ye breadth thereof from north to south is near 90 yards; on either side of the ditch there is yet visible a great bank of earth, and ye ditch at the top is about 12 yards broad, and at ye bottom about 8 yards, the debth of it is about 12 foot. The main entrance into the castle hath been at ye east end thereof, there being yet visible a deep and broad way leading thereunto from ye High street, or common road, near unto which it is placed. Another entrance into this castle hath also been at ye west end, opposite to where there is near ye same, in ye edge of ye mount, a little round hill artificially raised, and now called Conygarth cop. (. . . ye grounds about it being now called Conygarth, probably from its having been anciently a conywarren), of about 12 yards now in heighth (*sic*) which at ye top is near 6 yards in breadth, and whereupon, as it should seem, some keep or watch tower hath formerly stood from whence ye watch men might have a fair prospect over all ye country about, and might easily view a great part of ye adjoining sea. By the country people dwelling thereabout the place bears ye name of Cærnarvon castle.†

Denton further states that

After the marriage of Sir Richard, son of Sir John, with the heiress of the manor of Conington in Lancashire, this castle was allowed to fall into decay, and at last was demolished. This may be true, but there seems little doubt but that this Sir Richard, lies buried in the abbey of Calder.

The next abbot we read of after Jolland, was John, whom Denton says was abbot here in the 30th year of King Henry III. *i.e.*, in 1245. We do not know his authority for this statement, nor do we know anything of John except his name.

The abbot who followed, was Nicholas,‡ who professed

* Beckermet is supposed to derive its name from this beck, Kerbeck or Kirkbeck, which flows close by the churches of Haile, S. John's, and S. Bridget's, and then falls into the Egre, Ehgena, or Ehen.

† Denton MS. addition p. 25.

‡ Harl. MS. 6972, fol. 49.

obedience to Archbishop Walter; the same Archbishop who many years before had confirmed the abbey's election of Ralph. Nicholas must have been appointed between the years 1245, the date of John's appointment, and 1253, that of his successor, and as we find his name signed as " Nicho Abbot of Calder," to a deed in 1250: * we may give that as the approximate date of his abbacy.

This deed, signed by him as a witness, was one of gift to the abbey of Furness of the pasture of Souterscales, expressly mentioned as a payment for leave to be buried in that abbey, for Alicia daughter and heiress of Adam de Stanley. The gift would probably have been made to Calder, instead of to Furness, if the good lady had known that her family would, in less than 100 years, have had their home close to the vale of Calder in the neighbouring vale of Eskdale. †

In the 40th year of Henry III., *i.e.*, in 1255, we are told by Denton that Walter was abbot of Calder. But he could not long have presided over the destinies of the abbey, for seven years afterwards, when there was a correspondence between the convent of Calder, and Godfrey Archbishop of York, there was another abbot, William by name.

In November A.D. 1262, abbot William and his monks petitioned the Archbishop to give them out and out the "churches of S. John the Baptist of Beckirmet,‡ and S. Nicholas, of Arlokedene;"§ of which churches they already had the patronage. They must have altogether possessed the church of S. Bridget, as it is not named in the petition, though it is in the Archbishop's answer, where it is alluded to as the parish in which the abbey was situated. The monks complained that not having the absolute control of

* West. Ant. of Furness, (and Harl. MS. 5855, fol. 50).

† Probably she was of the Awsthwaite branch of the family of Stanley.

‡ S. Bridget's is never called "of Beckermet."

§ The church of Arlecdon given by John le Fleming, 26 Henry iii. Nicolson, p.

the entire endowment, they were not able freely to dispense the patronage, but were hindered in their appointments by the great men in their neighbourhood, with whom, because of this, they had many disagreements and quarrels.

In the register of Godefrey Archbishop of York,* we are given in full, both this prayer of the abbot, and also the reply to it. The latter is dated *xvij Kalendas Januarii anno Dom mcclxij*. Thus it seems to have been written, according to our modern ideas of reckoning, nearly a year before the petition, of which it is the answer; the former being dated the November of the same year. But this is easily accounted for by the old style, by which the year was made to commence on the Feast of the Conception, i.e., the 25th of March, instead of on the 1st of January as with us now a days.

The abbot and monks received a gracious permission from the Archbishop to do what they desired, as to the revenues of S. John's church; but this concession was granted on the condition that the church at Arlecdon should be appropriated to the Archdeacon of Richmond. This official seems to have had and exercised much of the Archbishop's jurisdiction in this distant part of his diocese. For these parishes were, at this time, in the deanery of Coupland, which formed part of the Archdeaconry of Richmond, though in the county of Cumberland.†

The reason the Archbishop gives for appropriating the

* Dugdale, Mod. Edn. vol. v. p. 341. Ex *Registero Godefridi Ebor. Archiep.* part ii., fol. 100, and part iii., fol. 1.

† This deanery remained a part of the diocese of York till Henry viii. in 1541, added it to his new diocese of Chester. Its diocese was again changed by an order in council dated 1847, in the reign of Queen Victoria, when it became part of the diocese of Carlisle, though not transferred till the death of Bishop Percy in 1856. Long before this date the deanery had been subdivided, S. Bridget's being with S. John's in Gosforth deanery, while Arlecdon is in the deanery of Whitehaven. When it was detached from York, the deanery of Coupland was placed in the Archdeaconry of Westmoreland; but in 1885, the southern part was cut off, including S. Bridget's and S. John's parishes, and made to form part of the new Archdeaconry of Furness.

church

church of S. John wholly to the abbey, is quite a different one from that which the monks advanced in their prayer, as being the cause of this petition. He says he gives it that their charities, and the support given to their house, might be greater. This was to be done at the expense of the church which thus was for ever impoverished. After the death of William, the last rector, S. John's would be served merely by a monk, told off by the abbey, or a poor curate or vicar would be appointed to subsist on the vicarial tithe. This seems before to have been done to S. Bridget's, which became merely a chapel, quite dependent upon the monastery; thus when the abbey fell, these parishes were left nearly without resources the same also seems to have been the fate of the church of Cleator.* The church at Arlecdon was to be perpetually annexed to the Archdeaconry, after the cession or death of Alan, who then held it. This was to form some recompence for the trouble and hardship which this dignitary suffered, when he came into Coupland on diocesan business, such as seques-trations, institutions, or collations. From the great difficulties of the journey he was liable to many accidents, and would require, with his officials, a temporary abode (*receptaculum*). The account given, in this latin document, of the dangers of this journey, is very dismal, though doubtless not exaggerated, when we consider the extent and nature of the shifting sands that had to be past, when crossing the estuaries of the Kent, the Levens, and the Duddon. ("per loca sabulosa et aquarum inundationes et varias tempestates.")†

Abbot William may have lived for the next 24 years, or there may have been another appointment between his

* Henry VIII. allowed a small pension of £5 per an. to each of these parishes to support a curate, payable out of the revenues of the abbey.

† The difficulties and dangers of this journey seem to have been considered very great even until comparatively speaking modern times, for Sir George Fleming who was Bishop of Carlisle from 1734 to 1747, refused the Archbishopric of York, by the advice of his daughters, who were married in Cumberland to a Senhouse, a Stanley, and a Dacre. The reason given for thus advising him was "lest they should see him no more."

and

and that of the next abbot we know the name of, but it is not till 1286, that we hear of another. In that year Warinus, abbot of Calder, executed a deed regarding some land belonging to the convent in the "ville of Dregge." One of the witnesses to this document was Alexander Sevenhouys, an ancestor of the Senhouses of Seascale.* In 1300, the abbey possessed a third of the manor of Drigg, so no doubt this is the possession referred to above.

This same year, the 15th of King Edward the 1st, John de Hudleston, who about this time became possessed, by marriage, of the Lordship of Millom, gave large rights of pasture in Millom to the abbey; where already they had salt pits. Sir John's son, another John, gave a further gift, and confirmed his father's benefactions, in the year 1291.† But in the meanwhile Warinus had died, and had been succeeded by Elias; who professed obedience as abbot of Calder, in Sept. 1289.‡

Two years afterwards, no doubt in Elias' time, the same John Hudleston son of John, executed a very curious deed, though probably not an uncommon one at the time; it was an "assignment of William, son of Richard Loftscates, formerly his native, with all his retinue and chattels, to the abbot and monks of Calder." Jefferson says this "is, in fact that species of grant of freedom to a slave, which is called manumission implied, in which the lord yields up all obligation to bondage, on condition of the native agreeing to an annual payment of money on a certain day." The words in it "so that from this day they may be free," seems very curious to us in these times. The monks thus redeemed this family from slavery, on the condition of his paying the small sum of 2d. a year.

This same year, 1291, was remarkable for the institution

* MSS. belonged to the late Sir H. le F. Senhouse.

† Jefferson's Allerdale above Derwent, pp. 316-17.

‡ Harl. MS. 6970, (Dugdale, Mod. Edn. says 1298).

of what is called the " taxation " of Pope Nicholas the IV.* It was a survey of all the ecclesiastical benefices in England, which was made with a view of granting a tenth of the annual proceeds of such benefices to King Edward I. for six years, to defray the expenses of his expedition to the Holy Land.† At this taxation the temporalities of Calder were rated at £32 per annum. But at a reassessment made in the 8th year of Edward's successor, *i.e.*, in 1314, when Richard was abbot, who had been elected in 1312,‡ the value was returned at only £5.§ : this was due to the fact that at this period the whole district, from Carlisle to York, had been desolated by the long succession of bloody wars.

At the present day in the remains of the abbey buildings we can trace the effect of this terrible time, we see it in the rebuilding of the chapter house, and in the marks that remain, still impressed upon the walls of the centre tower, of two sets of roofs ; the lower ones being built after the destruction of the higher and earlier ones. It is possible also that the groining of the aisles was then destroyed, and never rebuilt.

Edward the III., in the 37th year of his reign (1363), gave a charter of confirmation to the abbot and monks of all their lands and possessions ; it is nearly a copy of the former confirmation charter granted by Henry III., whom King Edward calls " the Lord Henry, formerly King of England, our progenitor."|| This document does not enumerate any of the gifts which had been given during the 133 years that had elapsed since the former charter was granted.

We do not know either the names or dates of the abbots, or abbot, who presided over the abbey for the 50 years or

* New Edn. Dugdale, vol. v., p. 340.

† Church Bells, May 31, 1884.

‡ Harl. MS. 6972, p. 16, (Dugdale, Mod. Edn. says Id. Decr. 1323).

§ Taxat P. Nich. N. p. 326, (*ibid.*).

|| From a copy at Calder abbey.

so, which elapsed from the time that abbot Richard was appointed, till the election of Nicholas de Bretteby, which took place about 1367.* The only allusion we can find to Calder at this time, was an order made by Bishop Strickland of Carlisle that the abbot and monks should pay the vicar of Gilcrux, of which benefice they were the appropriators, 4 marks by the year. Gilcrux, being below the Derwent, was in the diocese of Carlisle; not in that of York. It was well that the vicar had so powerful a protector, or no doubt he would have had, like other parish priests, to suffer the loss of a great part of his stipend.

About 40 years after the appointment of Nicholas de Bretby, an obituary roll† was sent out from Durham, with the name of a bishop of that diocese, who had died in 1406. It was taken round to a number of northern monasteries, that his name might be added to the lists they kept of those for whose souls their prayers were desired. As each monastery was visited, its name was duly written upon the roll; but in the case of Calder abbey, after the usual inscription, "*monasterii Beatae Mariæ de Caldre, ordinis Cisterciensis Ebor Dioc anima domini Walteri Syrlaw,*" the words "*Nicholai de Byrby quondam abbatis de Caldre,*" were added. The question then arises, was this Nicholas the same as Nicholas de Bretteby, whose name is also spelt Bretby ?‡ Or is it the name of a new abbot, who should be added as 14th on our list? This is a difficult point to decide, for though the names seem much alike, they are different, and there may have been some years between them. Still as the name Nicholas de Byrby seems to have merely slipped in here by the mistake of the scribe,§ we do not feel able to receive it, as a sufficient authority, for adding this name to our list of abbots of Calder.

* Harl. MS. 6972, p. 21.

† Surtees Society, vol. xxxi, 1856, pp. 1954, 58.

‡ Rev. W. Cole, Brit. Mus. notes on Willis, 2nd vol. His. of abbey, p. 54.

§ The opinion of the Rev. T. Lees.

In the 16th year of Richard II., (1392) there was a patent executed, which mentioned land as belonging to Calder in Gilhous, (Gilcrouse?) Seton, Bolton, and Gossford. Some of this property had been added to the possessions of the abbey, since the last confirmation deed; though we do not know by whom it was given. Soon after, we find in the Patent Rolls, further reference to these same lands, with the addition of some in Hale; under the title of 'Will'us de Bretby et alii pro abbe et conventu de 'Caldera.'* We do not know who this William de Bretby was, he may have been another abbot, or a relative of the last, if he was still alive, acting for him because of age or infirmity, for he would be, at this date, 25 years abbot of Calder.

Our information is very scanty about this time; but it seems possible that about the year 1450, *i.e.*, between the abbacy of Nicholas de Bretby, and that of John, the next we have any authentic record of, Robertus de Wilughby was abbot. His monumental inscription is still to be seen in the ruins of his abbey, though the monument, of which it formed a part, is destroyed.†

It was about this time, during the reign of Henry VI., that Thomas de Sevenhouse was fined for throwing a monk into the river, from the bridge over it, during a quarrel arising from a disputed right of fishing in the Calder.‡

From the Archiepiscopal register at York, we find that in the month of Sept. 1462, another John received benediction as abbot, but he only enjoyed the dignity two years; for in June 17th, 1464, John Whally professed obedience, as his successor.§

Thirty-seven years after this, a fourth abbot, of the same christian name, was confirmed in his office. John

* Cal: inq. P.M. vol. iii., p. 169, (W.J.L)

† See account of ruins for reason for this date, Transactions. vol. viii p. 467.

‡ The late Sir H. le F. Senhouse's papers.

§ Harl. MS. 6972, f. 31.

Bethom,

Bethom, or Bothome, received the blessing of the Archbishop on the 13th of May, 1501.* It is probable that he succeeded immediately to John Whally. But it is quite possible that another abbot may have come in between these two, who was confirmed by some other bishop, as was the case with some of his predecessors. Thus we would not find any allusion to him in the York registers.

On February the 3rd, 1503,† Lawrence Marre, was made abbot, for John Bothome only filled that office for two years. During his abbacy, on June 14th, (probably Trinity Sunday) 1511, we find that a monk, named William Tipping, was ordained a deacon, by Archbishop Christopher Bainbridge of York, to the titie of the monastery of Calder.‡

Five years after this, Marre was succeeded by John Parke, of whom we know nothing except his name, and the date of his appointment, the 12th of April, 1516.§ But it is very different with his successor Richard Ponsonby; from his name, we feel sure he belonged to the very ancient family of Ponsonby, of Hale Hall, in the adjoining parish, a monk of the same surname being also one of the brethren at this same time. Ponsonby professed obedience at York, in the autumn of 1525, (Sept. 23). With his name the list of abbots closes; for it fell to his unhappy lot, to surrender the abbey, with its buildings, its churches, its lands and its rights, into the rapacious hands of King Henry VIII., in the person of his commissioners. This took place, as far as we can judge from uncertain evidence, on February 4th, 1536.||

The suppression was supposed to be justified by the result of a visitation sent down sometime previously to enquire into the conduct of the monks. But when we find

* *Ibid.*

† 1513 in Rev. W. Coles list, 1503 Mod. Dug. where reference is given to Harl. MS. 6972, fol. 44, (the writer could not find it).

‡ Surtees Society Publications, vol. lxi., 1873, p. 365.

§ Harl. MS. 6972.

|| Mentioned in deed of sale to Dr. Leigh, as the date when last held by Abbot R. Ponsonby.

that

that the charge of evil living, which was brought against no less than six of the monks, was made by three visitors, the first name on the commission being that of Thomas Leigh or Legh, who probably alone visited this monastery, we naturally look upon the whole enquiry with suspicion, for within a few years, the site of the dissolved abbey, with much of its property, was granted, in reward for his services, to this same Dr. Leigh. Doubtless we have here a very close parallel to the case of Naboth's vineyard. In thus judging, we are only supposing that the daughter was treated as the mother was soon after, when the greater monasteries followed their poorer sisters. There is no doubt whatever, that in the case of Furness abbey, like charges were trumped up, to make an excuse for its suppression, but being one of the most powerful of these foundations, the nefarious business was found a more difficult matter. There is a letter extant, which was written to Henry VIII., by the Earl of Sussex his commissioner, in which he quite admitted that he was not able to find "any material things that would serve for the purpose," only two of the monks being found "faultye." So he asks, "how, and by what means, the monks might be ryd from the said abbey"?*

By the formulating of these charges against some of the monks of Calder, we become acquainted with the names of six of the last inhabitants of the abbey, as we know the names of the band who took possession of its site just 400 years before. These names are: Robert Manesti, William Car, Johannes Gisborne, Matthew Ponsonby, Richardus Preston, and William Thornton.†

In thus trying to shew that the suppression of this religious house was an iniquitous proceeding, both in its inception and in its execution, it does not follow, that

* West. Ant. Fur. appendix x., (5).

† Transactions vol. iv., p. 90, Comporta by Canon Dixon.

there

there were no abuses to be corrected, no scandals to be punished, no superstitions to be reformed ; far from it. But this is a very different matter from utter destruction of a church, scandalous appropriation of parochial tithes, total alienation of charitable bequests, complete disendowment of a hospital, and closing of a school, with poverty and probable starvation, to the legal owners. All of which took place in this case of Calder abbey.

No doubt the monastic day was over, for 150 years before this, scarcely any new abbeys had been founded, but colleges were being erected in their stead.

To quote a well-known writer, we may say of monasticism as a system, that “it did its work ; it fell into decay ; it passed from poverty to honor ; from honor to wealth ; from wealth to vice; and from vice to corruption”.

In contrast to this description of a sad falling off from a pure and noble ideal, we turn with pleasure to the words of a great modern missionary, speaking of the original use and work of the monks, Dr. Livingstone says : “they did not disdain to hold the plough ; they introduced fruit trees, flowers, and vegetables ; in addition to teaching and emancipating the serfs ; their monasteries were mission stations, which resembled ours, in being dispensaries for the sick ; almhouses for the poor ; and nurseries of learning”.*

* Farrer's *Saintly Workers*.

A LIST OF THE ABBOTS OF CALDER.

KINGS OF ENGLAND.		A.D.	ABBOT'S NAMES AND AUTHORITIES.
Henry I.	last year	1134	Gerald. He retired to Hode. (History of Byland by 3rd abbot).
Stephen	4 th ,,	1138	Hardred, 1st abbot of 2nd foundation. (Ibid).
John	12 th ,,	1211	An abbot confirmed for Calder at Melrose. (Chronicle of Melrose).
Henry III.	5 th ,,	1220	Ralph or Ranulph. (Harl. MS. 6972).
" "	26 th "	1241	Jolland. (Denton's MS).
" "	30 th "	1245	John. (Ibid).
" "	35 th "	1250	Nicholas. He was witness to a deed of gift this year. (West's Ant. of Furness).
" "	40 th "	1255	Walter. (Denton's MS).
" "	47 th "	1262	William. (Petition to Archbishop of York of this date).
Edward I.	15 th ,,	1286	Warinus. He executed a deed this year. (Sir H. le F. Senhouse's papers).
" "	18 th ,,	1289	Elias. (Harl. MS. 6970).
Edward II.	6 th ,,	1312	Richard. (Ibid).
Edward III.	41 st ,,	1367	Nicholas de Bretby or Bretteby. (Harl. MS. 6972).
			Nicholas de Byrby. (Perhaps the same as last obituary roll, after 1406).
			Robert de Wilughby. (Monument at Calder.)
Edward IV.	2 nd ,,	1462	John. (Harl. MS. 6972).
" "	4 th ,,	1464	John Whally. (Ibid).
Henry VII.	17 th ,,	1501	John Bethom or Bothome. (Ibid).
" "	19 th ,,	1503	Lawrence Marre. (Ibid).
Henry VIII.	8 th ,,	1516	John Parke. (Ibid).
" "	17 th ,,	1525	Richard Ponsonby. The last abbot. (Ibid).