ART. XXI. *The Parish Registers of Orton, Westmorland.*

By J. Holme Nicholson, M.A.

*Read at Orton, July 3rd, 1890.*

It would, I fear, be indulging in a too sanguine hope to look forward to a day when the registers of every parish will be printed. Here and there, notably in one parish within the range of this Society's investigations, viz: Ulverston, there has been sufficient public spirit to undertake such a work. I suppose when "time's effacing finger" has completed the work of destruction, there will be a general feeling of regret that the opportunity has been lost of preserving these interesting records of our forefathers, not a few of which afford glimpses of local customs, modes of life, and noteworthy events. Failing a realization of such a desirable work, the next best thing I think is to make a systematic investigation of the registers in each parish, draw up an analysis of their contents, and record the result in the Transactions of our local Antiquarian Societies. A considerable number of parishes in Cumberland and Westmorland have been thus dealt with by our Society, and I hope the work will be prosecuted until, in time, we have an authentic account of all the registers in the two counties.

Far removed from the busy world, in a wild secluded district, with a sparse population scattered amid the bleak Westmorland fells, or in small hamlets along the valley of the Lune, the inhabitants of the large parish of Orton were little affected by stirring public events, and it occasions no surprise therefore to find that there are no allusions to these in the registers. We should have been glad however of even the slightest reference to such events as the passing through the parish of Charles II and his army.
army of Scots, who, after refreshing themselves at the "Black Dub" on the Crosby Ravensworth fells, moved southward towards the fatal field of Worcester, or to the incident recorded in a letter from Richard Braithwaite to Col. James Grahme of Levens, in the following terms:—

Lord Lonsdale's father would not have made so great a figure in life if I had not largely contributed to it. At the time of the Revolution, Sir John Lowther wrote a tragical letter to me late one night, saying that the disbanded Irish were coming upon us, and desiring me to meet him at Orton the next morning. I marched to that place with about 500 horse and foot, and so to Kendal, while Sir John was at Kirkby Lonsdale. So again at the regulation of the coin [in 1696], the mob at Kendal threatened to burn Lowther, which put him in great fright. I then joined him at Rownthwaite [near Tebay], with above 200 horse to supress the mob, he having not above forty.

Or again to that "Sunday Hunting" on the 15th of December, 1745, when the advanced guard of Prince Charlie's Highlanders, consisting of above 100 hussars under the Duke of Perth, attempting to make their way into Scotland by the eastern bank of the Eden, were met on Langwathby moor by the Penrith men, who mobbed them out of Cumberland and into Westmorland, when they made their escape over Orton Scar, and first drew rein and refreshed themselves at Orton, from whence they rejoined the main body of the army at Kendal.*

The Orton registers indeed contain nothing but a bare record of christenings, weddings, and burials, in good preservation, methodically kept, and quite lacking in material for an entertaining paper. I must therefore content myself with a mere description of the books and their contents. Dr. Burn, the historian of the county and vicar of this parish from 1736 to 1785, makes no mention of the registers, indeed he curiously enough seems to have

*These Transactions vol. x, p. 196, n.
ignored such records all through his history of Westmorland. The only reference to them in print, as far as I know, is that made by Bishop Nicolson in his visitation in 1703. Under date of July 12th, he says:—

The register book begins the 28th of Mar. 1654 which is said to be A° 6 to Car. 2, and so it goes on, 1655, A° 7 to &c., Mr. Fothergill, a true cavalier, being then vicar.

The bishop seems only to have been shown the volume then in use, and to have been ignorant that there was a still earlier one in existence. The earliest volume is a long narrow book measuring 15\frac{3}{4} in. × 5\frac{1}{2} in. and about \frac{3}{4} in. in thickness; it is in full brown calf binding, which, judging by the style, I should take to be of the time when Dr. Burn was vicar. Probably when the bishop was in Orton it was a loose collection of paper and parchment leaves. In its present form it consists of both paper and parchment leaves much intermixed. The first page of the book contains the following entry;—

The names of the sworne men of Orto' Anno d'ni 1596.—

George Sharpp  
Thomas Birkbecke  
Edward Thorneburrowe  
Arthure Twhaite (sic)  
John Parke  
Edmound Atkinson  
Thomas Pottér  
Willia' Gawthropp  
Robert Crosbie  
Christofer Branthwait  
Jeffraye Whorton  
John Thorneburrowe  
Edward Foster  
Myles Powlaie

Imprimis that these be diligent and careful to see and provide that the people be . . . and behave the'selves honestlie . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . feare of God accordinge to the Holie Word of God and the good and wholesome
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some lawes of this land. Secondlie to see that the churchwardens be careful and diligent in executinge their office ioyned with thes in suppressinge of sinne and such as behave the selues inordinatlie to reprove and rebuke those wh be founde offendors and if they will not amend to p'sent the' to be punished. Thirdlie to see that the church and churchyd be decentlie repaired and mainteyned. Also we ar agreed y' everie p'sonnis beinge found faultie by the churchwardens and p'sented to the sworne me' shall paie xijd to the poore m'as box. And that whossoever doth not come p'sent the'selves lawfull warning beinge given eyther of the xij or churchwardens to the place appoin
ted shall loose xi[j] to the poore m'as box without a sufficient cause to the co'traire whereof thes ar to certifie the rest assembled at . . . appointed of their meetinge. Lastlie that the churchwarde's . . .
and take the sam forfat . . p'sent the offendors.

The margin at the bottom of the leaf has perished and the words which should fill the blanks are therefore missing. The clause following the third admonition is a little obscure. I take it to mean that any person being deemed by the churchwardens to be guilty of disorderly or immoral conduct should be presented to the court of the 12 sworn men [the list given comprises 14 names, perhaps the two churchwardens have been included] who should, if the accused is unable to clear himself, thereupon inflict a fine of 12d. payable to the poor's box, and that if he fails to attend and answer to the complaint, being duly summoned by either the 12 or the churchwardens, or fails to send sufficient excuse for absence, the same fine should be imposed. Page 2 commences with the following heading:—

A Register booke of all christeninges, weddinges, and burialles from the yeare of our Lord God 1596,

And the earliest entries are:

Christeninges Julii Jacob[s] filii John powley 25
Augustii Edward fili John Haisthwithe
Agnesa filii (sic) Ric. Atkinson primo die.

There
There were no manorial lords or territorial magnates resident in the parish at this or any other time. The chief personages were the substantial yeomen living upon and cultivating their own freehold or customary estates. Amongst these were the families of Adamson, Atkinson, Birkbeck, Bland, Branthwaite, Byndloss, Crosby, Denison, Fawcett, Hastwith or Haisthwith, Hayton, Holme, Overend, Park, Potter, Powley or Pulley, Sharp, Thornborrow, Wharton, Whitehead, Wilson, and Winster. Some of these may have represented the parent stems, or perhaps only have been offshoots, of well known county families, such as the Birkbecks in relation to the Birkbecks of Hornby in the parish of Brougham, the Blands to the Blands of Kippax Park in Yorkshire, the Byndlosses to the Kendal merchant, Sir Christopher Byndloss, progenitor of the race who settled at Borwick Hall, Thornborrow, sometimes spelt Thornburgh and Thornbrowe, to the Thornburghs of Selside, Whartons to the Whartons of Wharton, and Kirkby Thore. From the prominent manner in which some of the entries relating to the Birkbecks are made in the earliest volume, these being written in Old English characters, I infer that they were regarded as the most influential people. They resided in the old house in Orton which we shall visit to-day, now called Petty Hall, and at Coatflat Hall, about one mile south of Orton. That they enjoyed some social position may be assumed from the fact that amongst those who were “disclaimed” at the assize held at Appleby in 1666 for not obeying the summons of Dugdale, when he made the last Herald’s visitation of the county were—


The family of Branthwaite also enjoys the distinction of an entry of christening written in larger characters than ordinary:—
1597 Maii Richard filius Edmundi Branthwait . . . 8.

and in one or two later instances. The family resided at Carlingill near Borrow Bridge, an estate which I believe is still in the possession of their lineal descendants in the male line. The vicar from 1595 to 1643, and therefore for the whole period over which the first volume extends, was the Rev. John Corney, M.A. In recording the christenings of his children he encloses the entries within lines:—

1606 Nov. Sara filia Joh'is Corney Vicarii de Orton . . . ixth
1609 Julii Ffranccis the daughter of Mr John Corney vicar of Orton xvij.
1610 Julii Grace the daughter of Mr. John Corney, vicar of Orton xxij.

The christenings go on continuously until November 1643, and then two leaves of parchment are inserted containing in another handwriting the christenings for the years 1644, 45, 46. The last of these entries is

1646 Februarii Robertus Jacobi Adamson filius, de Roundthwaite, xxij

This may perhaps be the Robert Adamson who founded the school at Tebay in 1672. Opposite the entries in April 1597 the following marginal note occurs “Hec (sic) in curia' data sunt,” and again in May 1600 “Hec in curia’ exhibit.” Similar entries occur repeatedly in this volume down to May 1643, and also in Vol. 2 as late as the middle of the last century. The books seem to have been produced annually, generally in March or April, but occasionally in other months.

I am not aware that any order was ever made that parish registers should be produced in any Court, but it was ordained by the archbishop and clergy of Canterbury, 25th October, 1597, that transcripts of the parish registers,
to be examined and their correctness certified at the bottom of each page by the clergyman and churchwardens, should be forwarded annually within one month of Easter by the respective churchwardens to the registrar of the diocese, that they might be faithfully preserved in the episcopal archives. This constitution was approved by the Queen under the great seal of England, and ordered to be observed in both provinces of Canterbury and York. As this order imposed unprofitable labour on uninterested parties it is not surprising that it was frequently disregarded. If the marginal notes refer to this order it was better obeyed here than in many places.

Following the christenings comes the heading

Weddings 1596, Anno Regni Reginae Elizabethæ xxxviiith

The number from the 15th of June, 1596, to the 15th of November, 1598, is 14. Amongst the familiar names the following occur:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1599</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Christopher Thornbrow and Syccill Bland</td>
<td>xxiiijth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Robert Thornbrowe and Isabell Whitehead</td>
<td>xxvijth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>James Birkbeck and Isabella Bland</td>
<td>.... xviijth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1601</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Phillippe Thornbrowe and Genet Watters</td>
<td>.... vth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leonard Birkbeck and Genet Thornbrowe</td>
<td>.... xvjth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1602</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Robert Birkbeck and Isabella Houlme</td>
<td>.... xxiiijth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1603</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Michaell Branthwaite and Elsabeth Winster</td>
<td>xxiiiijth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1604</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Richard Barlowe and Isabella Birkbeck</td>
<td>.... ji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1611</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>William Thornbrowe and Jane Skaiffe</td>
<td>.... vijth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1614</td>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>Cuthbert Thornbrowe and Margret Powsen</td>
<td>xxiiijth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feb.</td>
<td>Robert Lademan and Mabell Thornbrowe</td>
<td>ij thd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Richard Tubman and Elizabeth Willson</td>
<td>xvjth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June</td>
<td>William Thornborowe and Agnas Hewitson</td>
<td>xxiijd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>Leonard Thornborowe and Elizabeth Whitehead</td>
<td>.... xxiijd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Richard Barlow and Isabel Birbeck mentioned above were the parents of Thomas Barlow who was born at Langdale (not Lang-hill as stated by Mr. Atkinson in his "Worthies of
of Westmorland") in this parish, and who in the course of
his career attained to the following honours—Fellow and
Provost of Queen's College, Oxford; Keeper of the Bod-
leian Library; Commissioner for restoring the members
ejected from the University in 1648; Doctor of Divinity,
and Lady Margaret Professor; Archdeacon of Oxford;
and finally Bishop of Lincoln. Though undoubtedly a
man of great learning, I dont think Orton has much
reason to be proud of him if all that is said of him is true.
Like the vicar of Bray, let who will be king, he did not
intend to give up the good things he had got. The fol-
lowing entries relate to the christening of the Bishop and
his brother:—

1607 April Tho. the son of Ric. Barlow .... xxvijth
1609 July Robt. the son of Ric. Barlow .... xxvith

The mention of the name of Scaife in the foregoing list
recalls an ancient family scattered in this and the adjacent
parishes of Ravenstonedale and Kirkby Stephen, two of
whom served in Parliament as burgesses for Appleby, in
the reigns of Edw. II and Edw. III. Their later descen-
dants, among whom was Major Scaife an active officer
under Oliver Cromwell, who obtained a considerable share
of sequestered estates, resided for several generations at
Winton Hall, near Kirkby Stephen. No weddings are
recorded between 28th August, 1616, when the parchment
leaves end, and the 24th February, 1619, when the paper
leaves begin, the entries are then continued regularly up
to the 15th October, 1628, when they cease until May,
1635. A curious name occurs on the 28th July, 1636,
"Willm Prestcosine and Mabell Thompson."

The weddings and burials for the year 1644, 1645, and
1646, are contained on interpolated leaves of parchment
like the christenings for the same years. John Corney
the vicar who had held the living for 48 years, had died in
1643.
1643. The national dissensions, Dr. Burn informs us, had made themselves felt in this secluded parish, and for some time the parishioners could not agree on a successor. The entries for these three years are in a good clerical handwriting differing in character from those which precede and those which follow them. The sheet which contains the burials is signed, but in a later handwriting:

Thomas Robinson, Parish Clerk, 1742.

After the weddings come the entries of burials; the first of these is

1596 Julii Henry Wharton, ....  ....  ....  ....  xxvij

From September, 1597, to the end of 1598, is the period when the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland were ravaged by the plague. We have evidence of the visitation in Orton. I give in the following table, the number of burials between July 1596, and November, 1598:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Burials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1596</td>
<td>Mar. to 25th</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1597</td>
<td>Mar. to 25th</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1598</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average monthly burials in the ten months preceding May, 1589, was three, in the seven months May

*The paper leaves end here, and there are no burial entries until March, 1602, when they are resumed on parchment.*
to November 1598 it was 7:57. The following entries have a special mark set against their names, the first an index hand, and the others the letters ec:

1596 Dec. Uxor Richardi Blande ..... ..... xx
" " Roberte Hodgson ..... ..... xxiv
1597 May Henry son of George Birkbeck ..... xxviiij
" " Leonard Birkbeck ..... ..... xxxyj
" June Margret filia Steven Thompson ..... vij
" " Janet daughter of George Birkbeck ..... xij
" " Isabell daughter of George Birkbeck ..... xij
" July Bryan Birkbeck ..... ..... j
" Sept. Uxor Richardi Holme ..... ..... xxix
" " Robbi Atkinson ..... ..... xxix
" Oct. Rowland Thornbrowe ..... ..... xxvij
" Nov. Uxor Wil'mus Symson ..... ..... xv
" Jan. Margret filia Oliv' Whitehead ..... ..... vij

These marked names may indicate deaths from the plague and the letters ec burials in the church, in ecclesiam. Considering the great mortality in the months of May and June, 1598, there must have been more deaths from that cause which have not been specially marked. No burials are recorded after the year 1598 until March, 1602, from that time they are continued regularly until September, 1617, when a blank occurs, they are resumed again in January 1623-4 and continued until 1646. In the year 1623 the plague broke out again with great severity, in many places in Cumberland and Westmorland; the burials are not recorded for the 54 years preceding January, 1623; in the 14 months which follow, the numbers were:

1623-4 in January, eight; February, eight; March, four. 1624-5 March, two; April, five; May, one; June, nil.; July, five; August, two; September, two; October, three; November, five; December, five; January, five; February, one.—Total, Sixty-one. Comparing these numbers with those of the years preceding and following this period, for instance in 1612-24, in 1616-20,
in 1625-16, in 1635-19, it will be seen that the mortality was nearly three times the average rate. In Dr. Barnes' article on the "Visitation of the Plague in Cumberland and Westmorland," (Trans. C. & W. Antiq. Soc. Vol. XI part i.) it is stated that the mortality in the adjoining parish of Ravenstonedale was especially high in the months of June, July, and August, 1730, in Orton it scarcely exceeded the average, 1727, twenty-eight; 1728, twenty-eight: 1729, nineteen; 1730, twenty-three; 1731, thirty; 1732, twenty-eight. Amongst the burials in this volume, the following occur emphasized in one form or other:—

1603 Feb. Thomas Birkbeck, eldest of Orton  
1607 July M'ris Grace Corney the wyfe of Mr. John  
  Corney Vicar of Orton  
1624 Nov. Mr. George Birkbeck  
1626 April Philippe Winster  
1633 April Mr. Edmond Branthwaite  
1635 January Georg Whitehead de Orton (Old Eng.).*  
1641 July Edward Birkbeck the younger son of Edwd.  
  Birkbeck, of Orton Townehead (framed in lines)  
1643 July Mr. John Corney (Old Eng.) late vicar of  
  Orton  
1646 May Bryanus Birkbeck de Orton (Old Eng.)  

*I had omitted when examining the registers to search for the entry of christening of a native of the parish, George Whitehead, of whom Chancellor Ferguson ("Early Cumberland and Westmorland Friends"), says that "he was the most famous of all the early missionaries of Quakerism, and, after George Fox, the chief founder of that society, whilst from the great age he attained, and the lead he took in the society's business he might be deemed, to a great extent, its father." At my request the vicar kindly looked through the registers from 1630 to 1644 but failed to find his christening recorded. It is stated that he was born about 1635, and died in 1722-3, and was buried in Bunhill Fields, London. The entry of burial given above, which is made in Old English letters, I assume would be a member of his family, perhaps his father or grandfather. I may perhaps here be allowed to refer to another parishioner, who was noted as an almost equally zealous preacher amongst the Methodists, Stephen Brunskill. The banns of marriage between him and Sarah Hewetson, of the parish of Ravenstonedale, were published on the 5th, 12th and 19th September, 1723, the marriage probably took place at Ravenstonedale. His burial took place at Orton, July, 1836, his age being 87 years.
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The remaining portion of the volume consists of III pages of the churchwardens' accounts; they are kept with great regularity and method. I give the first as a type of the rest:

The Accompts of the churchwardens given att Easter, 1645.

Received by Edward Bland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imp'mis Ust money</td>
<td>0 11 08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm polr money</td>
<td>0 10 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for burialls</td>
<td>0 12 02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm head silver</td>
<td>0 11 00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sum'a totals 02 04 10

Disbursed by him:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imp'mis for bread and wine</td>
<td>0 11 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm prisoners</td>
<td>0 02 02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm to the glazier</td>
<td>0 01 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for work att ye porch</td>
<td>0 01 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm to Willm. Wharton</td>
<td>0 18 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm to Willm. Birkbeck for ye clock</td>
<td>0 01 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for three days to Appleby</td>
<td>0 01 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for casting the porch work</td>
<td>0 00 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm to an Irish preacher</td>
<td>0 00 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for a copy for the Register book</td>
<td>0 00 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for putting of itt into the Court</td>
<td>0 00 08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for going one day to Penrith</td>
<td>0 00 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm to the Mosse</td>
<td>0 04 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm to the Ropemaker</td>
<td>0 05 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itm for a qehcon</td>
<td>0 00 06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

l. s. d.

Sum'a totals 02 13 10

"Polr" in some places "Poulr" I take to mean hire of pall; "Ust money" use of money, i.e. interest paid on poor stock lent out, "Head silver" church rates or dues of some kind, "Tax money" in another place probably means the same thing, the last item in the disbursements is I think a "cushion" to write which as locally pronounced has
has been too difficult a tax on the writer's orthographical skill. The preceding account is out of its place, for the next dates back to 1608. I give a few items from succeeding accounts:

Received of Thomas Hasthwithe for his late cominge to
Eveninge prayer ...
Disbursed for Souldiers and prisoners ...
   For a foxe head ...
   For writing upp the accompts ...
   For oile for the bells ...
   To Georg Wilson for 5 ravens heads ...
   To John Benison for a hedgehog ...
   To Thomas Birkbeck for a wilde cat ...
   To Thomas Birkbeck for keeping the clock ...
   To Jas. fľayrey for 4 pyots ...
   To the clerk for registering ...
   For a brock head ...
   For killing of a bustard ...

1659 Itm of Anto Thornbr for his grandfather’s burial ...
   Itm of Rob Thornbr for his uncle John’s burial ...
   Itm for Ringers upon ye Coronation day ...
   Itm at Court at Appleby and his own travell ...

1662 Itm with Webster when ye king’s Armes should have been feht [fecht] ...

Payments for the relief of soldiers and prisoners, and for destroying vermin are frequent. At the end of the first volume there is a statement of poor stock, &c. transferred from the old to the new churchwardens in 1618-19. The names of the churchwardens are appended, but all in the same hand writing, in some cases however they have attached their marks.

The second volume is bound in full calf, size 13 in. × 9 in.; the fly leaf bears the following inscription:—
PARISH REGISTERS AT ORTON, WESTMORLAND. 263

A True and p'fect Register Booke of all the Christenings, Burialls, and Weddings Att o' Parish Church att Orton alias Overton, beginning at the Twenty-eighth day of March, in the yeare of o' Lord God one Thousand six hundred and fifty flower, 1654.

Thoma' Birkbeck
(?) Churchwarden ibid.

The next page is headed

Christenings Anno Regni Caroli se'di nunc Angliae, &c., sexto Ano' dom'i 1654.

This is the volume which was shown to bishop Nicolson and which elicited the remark on the vicar's loyalty. The christenings are carried on uninteruptedly until the 3rd August 1743, and appear to be in the same hand-writing up to 1679, or perhaps later. As George Fothergill the vicar, was ejected in 1662, I think the entries must have been made by some other person, perhaps the parish clerk who might have been also the schoolmaster. The burials are from March 1654 to Feb. 1744. The letters ec appear in the margin against some of the names in 1654, and are repeated frequently afterwards. This volume contains the record of the burial of two vicars of the parish, the first of whom succeeded George Fothergill and enjoyed the living for 41 years, and the latter for 33 years.

1703 January Mr. Roger Kenyon, Vicar of Orton the 14th
1736 July Mr. Thomas Nelson, late Vicar of Orton 18th

Mr. Kenyon's death took place in 1704, as the year was then reckoned from March to March. Bishop Nicolson at his visitation on the 12th July 1703, speaks of him thus:—

The present vicar (Mr. Kennyon), is 85 years of age, and has been marry'd to his present wife, now liveing, 60 years.

The date inscribed on his tombstone in the vestry states that he

Departed
which is at variance with the register. Between July and March 1742-3, "small pox" is noted against eight of the burials, and, in some cases, the ages are this year inserted for the first time; they mostly relate to very old people, 94, 90, 88, 84, &c. The weddings from 1654 to 1744 follow, the numbers average from 12 to 15 a year. Dr. Burn's entries commence in 1736, and are in a clear bold handwriting. Volume 3 measures 13 in. × 9 in. and is about two inches in thickness. It begins with christenings 12th April, 1743, continued to 7th December, 1801. The names of both parents are now given, and beginning with 1786, the mother's name before marriage as well. A *Nota bene* states that the christenings for the year 1802, &c. are entered in the latter end of the register near the entry of burials. The weddings come next beginning May 1st, 1743, and the residences of both parties are given. With 1754 the entries are fuller, publication of banns being mentioned and the parties sign the register. This plan is continued until 1812; then follows a record of publication of banns from 1814 to the beginning of 1826. After this the book has been turned upside down and 21 pp. are filled with the christenings from January 1802, to December, 1812. Then the book is again reversed and the burials from 26th April, 1743, to 28th December, 1812, are entered. These end the 3rd vol. and what may be called the old registers. The act 52 Geo. III c. 146 (known as Rose's Act) enacts that new books of registers with new forms should be used by all parishes after the 31st December, 1812, that the baptisms, marriages, and burials should be entered in separate books, and that copies were to be furnished to the Bishop's registrar of the diocese, who was likewise to be furnished with lists of extant register books.

Whilst fully acknowledging the advantages which the more precise and methodical registration of the modern system
system has given us, the antiquary may perhaps be par-
doned a feeling of regret that it allows no scope for the
quaint details and comments on things in general, which
are to be found, not in these I am sorry to say, but in
many of our old parish registers.

I must not close my paper without expressing my best
thanks to the vicar, the Rev. Edward Holme, for his
courtesy in affording me full opportunity for making my
investigation.