

ART. XIX. *Piscinas in the Diocese of Carlisle.* By the Rev. R. Bower, Vicar of S. Cuthbert's, Carlisle.

Read at Grasmere, June 25th, 1891.

IN travelling about the diocese for the purpose of sketching piscinas, I have been so often asked what the piscina was used for, that it may not be out of place first of all to give a few definitions of the word.

The piscina is an arched recess, very commonly found in the south wall, near the altar, the lower part being hollowed like a basin and with a hole in the centre to let the water run into the ground, but probably supplied with a plug. Here the priest "anciently" washed his hands at the "lavabo" of the mass, and in old rubrics it is directed that if a fly should fall into the chalice it should be burnt "super piscinam." In more modern times a moveable basin has been used for the lavabo. Piscinæ are sometimes double with a beautiful foliated capital on a shaft in the centre, as at S. Mary's Church, Ely. Occasionally the piscina is supplied with shelf in the middle to hold the cruets of water, &c. This is the case at Littleport Church, five miles from Ely.—*Hart's "Ecclesiastical Records."*

Piscina. The Latin rendering of the pools of Siloam and the five porches: from the curative nature of their water, baptism was symbolically called the piscina of regeneration and the vessel into which the water of the font was poured took the same name; per-fusorium was the name of the drain for ablutions. The priest at the lavabo still washes the tips of his fingers in a piscina, a small vessel placed near the tabernacle: but the Carthusians and bishops wash their whole hands during the recitation of verses from Ps. xxvi. The remarkable piscina of Rothwell had drains for all the purposes.—"*Sacred Archæology*," by M. E. C. WALCOTT, B.D., 1868.

Piscina (Italian), a water drain sometimes termed a lavatory, consisting of a shallow stone basin or sink, commonly circular, with a hole in the bottom, to carry off the water. It is commonly found in England under an arch in a recess on the south side of the sanctuary, so placed that it may conveniently receive the water in which the officiating priest washes his hands before the celebration of the Holy Communion, or after the offertory, or in which the sacred vessels are finally washed at the close of the service, before they are put away. Sometimes the credence ledge for the cruets is likewise placed under
the

the same arch, by means of a narrow stone bracket. Several Norman or Romanesque piscinas exist, *e. g.* at Towersey, Bucks; Ryarsh, Kent; St. Martin's, Leicester; Cromarsh, Oxon; and in the crypt of Gloucester Cathedral.—“*Glossary of Liturgical and Ecclesiastical Terms*,” by Rev. F. G. LEE, D.C.L., 1879.

Piscina (Lat.=a reservoir of water), originally the reservoir and filter connected with the aqueducts of Rome, but long applied to a water-drain formerly placed near to an altar in a church; this consists of a shallow stone basin, or sink, with a hole in the bottom, to carry off whatever is poured into it: it is fixed at a convenient height above the floor, and was used to receive the water in which the priest washed his hands, as well as that with which the chalice was rinsed at the time of the celebration of the mass: it is placed within a niche, though the basin very frequently projects before the face of the wall, and is sometimes supported on a shaft rising from the floor: in many instances, particularly in those of Early English and early Decorated date, there are two basins and drains, and occasionally three; within the niche there is also often found a wooden or stone shelf, which served the purpose of a *credence table*, to receive certain of the sacred vessels that were used in the service of the mass, previous to their being required at the altar; sometime there is room at the bottom of the niche for these to stand at the side of the basin; in this country the piscina is almost invariably on the south side of the altar and usually in the south wall (though sometimes in the eastern), but in Normandy it is not uncommon to find it on the north side, when the situation of the altar is such as to render that more convenient than the south. No piscinas are known to exist in this country of earlier date than the middle of the twelfth century and of that age they are extremely rare; of the thirteenth and succeeding centuries down to the period of the Reformation they are very abundant, and are to be found (or at least traces of them) in the chancel of most churches that have not been rebuilt, and very frequently at the eastern ends of the aisles of the nave also: their forms and decorations are very various, but the character of the architectural features will always decide their date.—“*Concise Glossary of Architecture*,” by J. H. PARKER, F.S.A.

Mr. J. T. Micklethwaite, in “*Modern Parish Churches*” says, from its shallowness the piscina must be a sink and not a bowl for washing the hands.

There are in this diocese about 90 piscinas, though no doubt others will be constantly coming to light as churches

churches are restored or repaired. Examples of most kinds mentioned by Mr. Parker have been found. At Furness Abbey and Ponsonby are piscinas supported on shafts. At Appleby S. Michael are two, side by side under different arches, with an aumbry to the left of them. Two basins in the same recess are at Rose Castle and Beetham. Only one original stone shelf which served as a credence table exists, viz. at Millom. Others have room for the sacred vessels at the side of the basin, very particularly at Longmarton, Newbiggin, Ormside, Bolton, Ireby Old Church. At Ormside there are two niches, one for a credence, the other for a piscina. Unless otherwise stated in the catalogue all are on the south wall of the chancel near the altar, at a convenient height for the officiating priest. The sketches are with few exceptions drawn to scale, viz. $\frac{1}{24}$ th of an inch to the foot.

The basins of the following are fluted:—S. Michael, Appleby (2); Kirkby Stephen (1 and 2); Newbiggin, Carlisle Cathedral, Bampton, Orton, Brougham Castle, Melmerby, Aikton, Furness Abbey, Aldingham, Broughton, Calder Abbey, Urswick.

LIST OF CHURCHES WITH PISCINAS.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CARLISLE, RURAL DEANERY OF APPLEBY AND KIRKBY STEPHEN.

Appleby. S Lawrence (I. 3).

— S. Michael, Bongate (I. 1); also (I. 2.) in south transept. Crosby Garret. (XII. 5.); also holy water stoup.

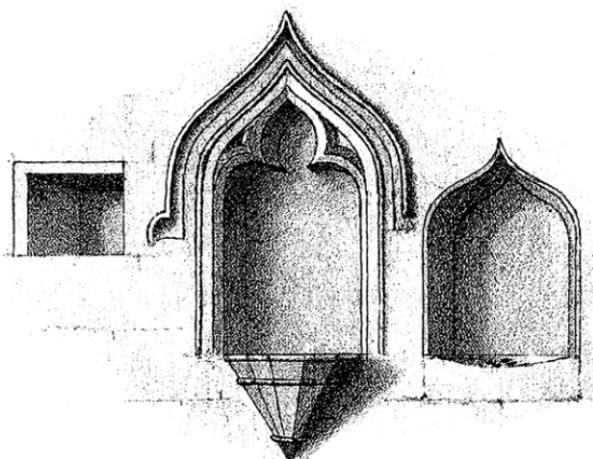
Kirkby Stephen. II. 1. in chancel. II. 2. south E. chapel, S. side
II. 3, in N. transept basin broken quite off.

Kirkby Thore. II. 4, Circular basin.

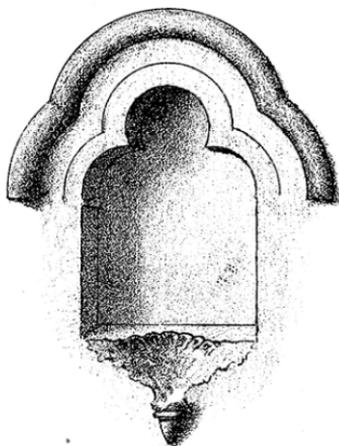
Long Marton. II. 5.

Newbiggin. III. 2. (III. 1.) A perfect Norman holy water stoup found at the rebuilding of the church in the late Mr. Crackenthorpe's time.

Ormside.



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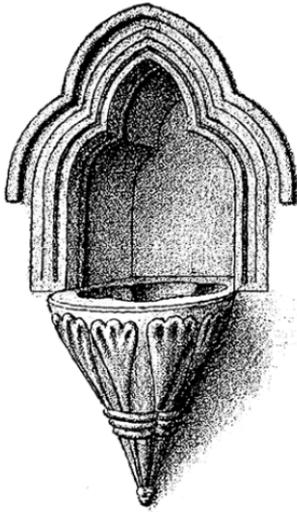
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1. 2. APPLEBY, S. MICHAEL

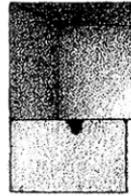
3. APPLEBY, S. LAURENCE



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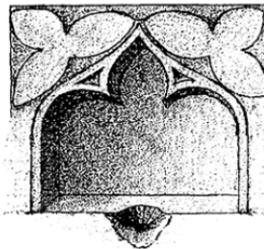
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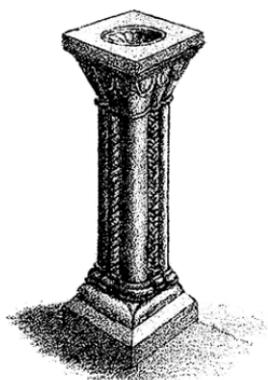


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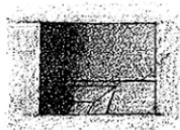
1, 2, 3. KIRKBY STEPHEN 4. KIRKBY THORE
5. LONGMARTON



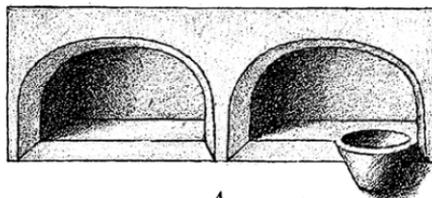
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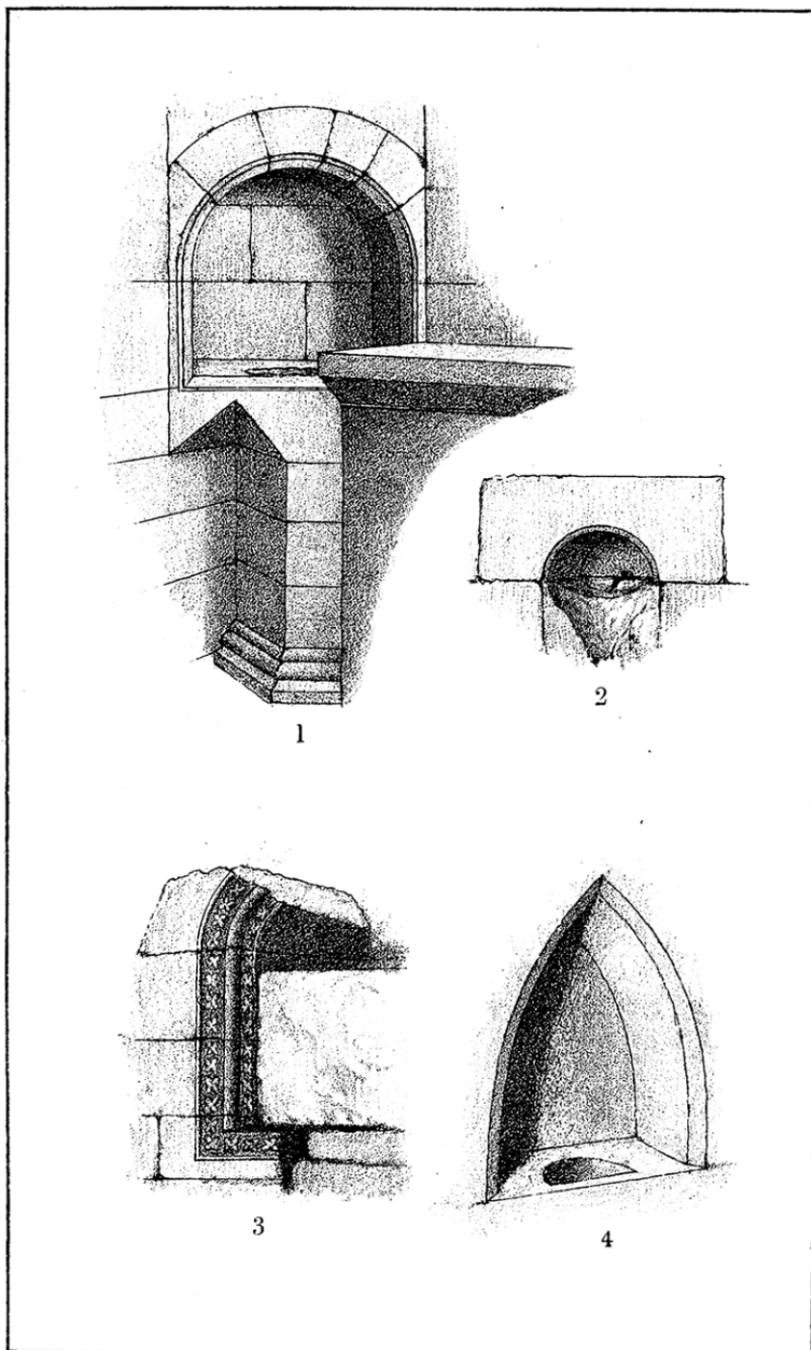
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1, 2. NEWBIGGIN

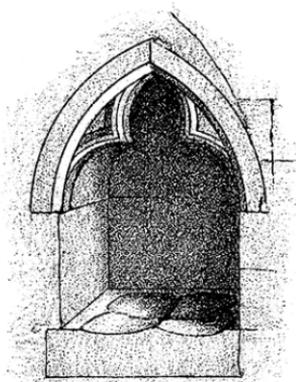
3, 4. ORMSIDE



1, 3. LANERCOST ABBEY

2. BRAMPTON OLD CHURCH

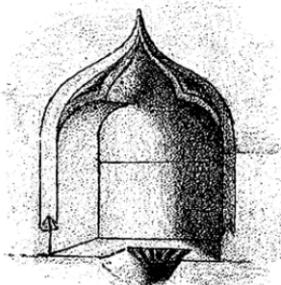
4. BEWCASTLE



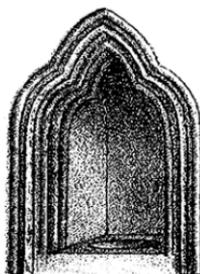
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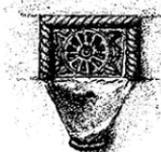
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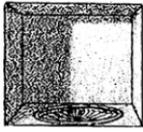
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1. CARLISLE CATHEDRAL

2. GREAT ORTON

3. 4. PLUMBLAND

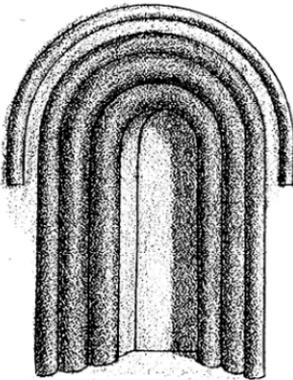
5. 6. TORPENHOW



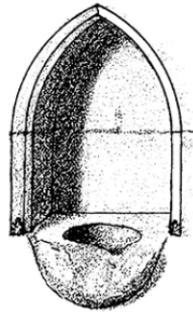
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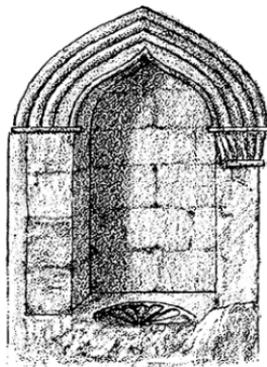
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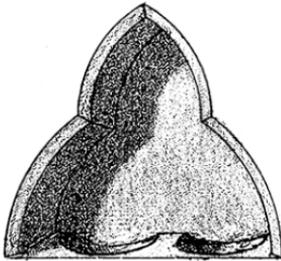


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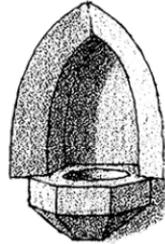


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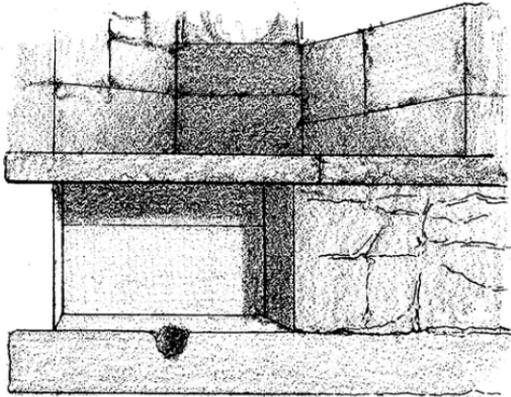
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|------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. BAMPTON | 2. ASKHAM HALL |
| 3. WARGOP | 4. CLIFTON |
| 5. BROUGHAM HALL CHAPEL | |
| 6. BROUGHAM CASTLE (ORATORY) | |



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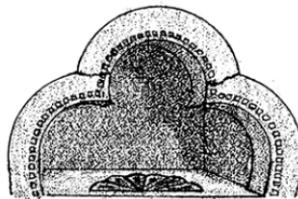
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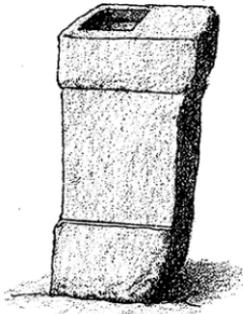


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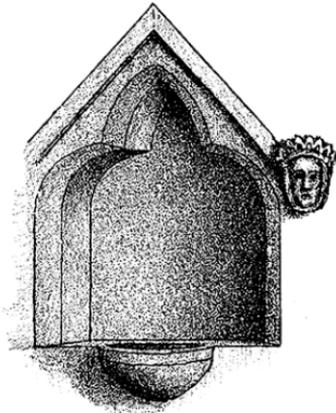


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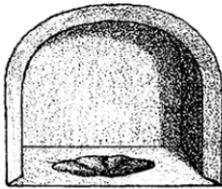
1. ROSE CASTLE 2. CASTLESOWERBY 3. DACRE
4. BARTON 5. ORTON



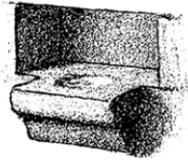
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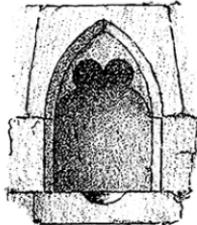
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1. GREAT SALKELD

2. OUSBY

3. MELMERBY

4. ADDINGHAM

5. KIRKLAND

6. BROUGHAM CASTLE

Ormside. III. 3. South wall of aisle : also III. 4, in chancel.
 Warcop. VI. 3, S. Chapel, basin gone.

DEANERY OF BRAMPTON.

Bewcastle. IV. 4. Basin semi-circular.
 Brampton. Old Church, now used as mortuary chapel, IV. 2.
 Lanercost Abbey. IV. 1. in S.E. corner of N. chapel. IV. 3. S. side
 of choir.

DEANERIES OF CARLISLE, N. & S.

Cathedral. V. I. in east wall.
 Great Orton. V. 2.

DEANERY OF LOWTHER.

Askham Hall. VI. 2. The residence of the Rector of Lowther.
 The old chapel is now used as a dairy.
 Bampton. VI. 1.
 Clifton. VI. 4.
 Orton. VII. 5. South wall of S. aisle.

DEANERY OF MARYPORT.

Plumbland. V. 4, in chancel. V. 3, in vestry.
 Torpenhow. V. 5, in chancel. V. 6, south wall of nave, near
 chancel arch (Norman).

DEANERY OF PENRITH.

Addingham. VIII. 4.
 Brougham Castle (ruins of). VIII. 6, near Sedilia but out of reach
 for measurement ; also VI. 6, in oratory at the top.
 Brougham Hall Chapel. VI. 5, probably an importation from abroad.
 Kirkland. VIII. 5.
 Melmerby. VIII. 3.
 Ousby. VIII. 2.
 Great Salkeld. VIII. 1, a Roman altar, supposed to come from Old
 Penrith. It must have stood against a wall as there is a drain
 cut out behind. The top served as a piscina and credence
 table.

DEANERY OF PENRITH, W.

Barton. VII. 4.
 Castlesowerby. VII. 2.
 Dacre. VII. 3, under a window.
 Greystoke. IX. 1, in chancel. IX. 2, in south aisle. IX. 3, in
 estry behind this aisle. IX. 4, a holy water basin.

Newto

Newton Reigny. IX. 5, a fragment, S. aisle. IX. 6, square basin. IX. 7, E. side of north aisle, under the respond of an arch, near the vestry door. Though there is a drain now, this might have been a holy water basin near a north door.

DEANERY OF WIGTON.

Aikton. XI. 2.

Bolton. X. 1. X. 2, E. wall of N. transept. X. 3, south wall of S. transept (basin gone).

Bromfield. XI. 3. XI. 5, now in vestry.

Holme Cultram. XI. 1, now at Raby Cote Farm, built into a wall. Other remains from the Abbey abound here.

Ireby. X. 5, probably the top of a holy water stoup, like the one at Newbiggin (III. 1). X. 4, at Ireby old church, which is now restored and used as a mortuary chapel.

Kirkbride. XI. 4, on north wall of chancel.

ARCHDEACONRY OF WESTMORLAND.

DEANERY OF AMBLESIDE

Grasmere. XII. 1.

DEANERY OF COCKERMOUTH.

Brigham. XII. 3.

DEANERY OF KENDAL.

Kendal Parish Church. XII. 4. Tho' there is no basin, this may havn been a piscina (see Plate XIV. 3).

DEANERY OF KESWICK.

Crosthwaite. XII. 2.

DEANERY OF KIRKBY LONSDALE.

Beetham. XIII. 1.

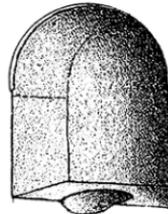
Burton. XIII. 2, 3, both in south aisle in what were formerly chapels.

Heversham. XIII. 6, S. side of chancel. The shape of the basin is distinctly seen, tho' now the piscina is converted into a credence table. XIII. 4, in Dallam Tower Chapel, S. side. XIII. 7, Howard (Levens Hall) chapel, N. side. XIII. 5, fragment of bowl of piscina.

Kirkby Lonsdale. XIV. 3, on N. side of first pillar from E. window on S. side of chancel. Basin 5 feet from the ground. The
Bishop



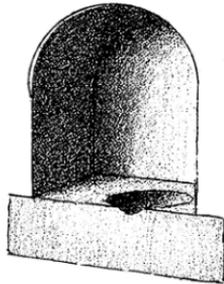
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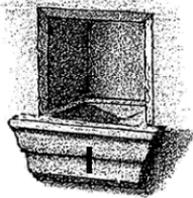
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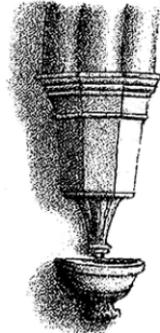
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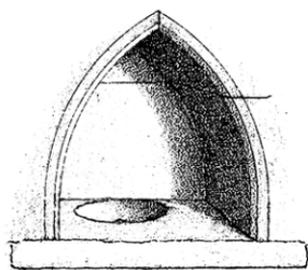


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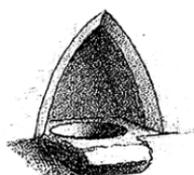


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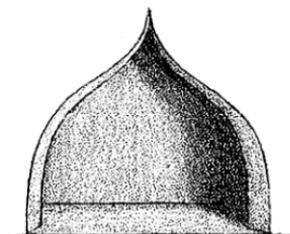
1. 2, 3, 4. GREYSTOKE 5. 6, 7. NEWTON REIGNY



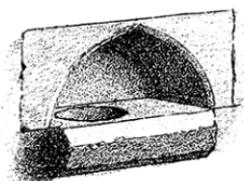
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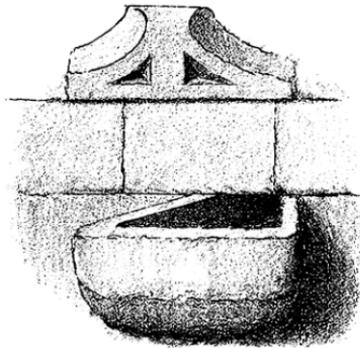
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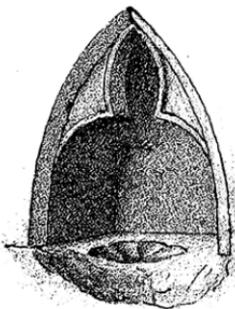
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1, 2, 3. BOLTON 4. IREBY OLD CHURCH

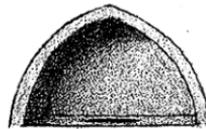
5. IREBY



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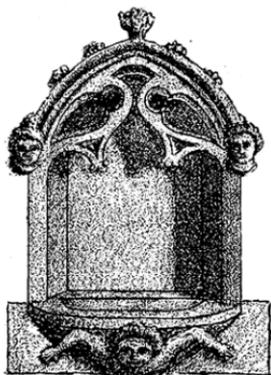
1. RABY COTE 2. AIKTON 3, 5. BROMFIELD
4. KIRKBRIDE



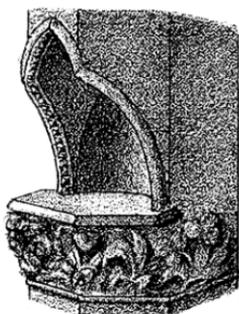
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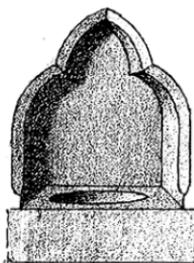
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1, GRASMERE

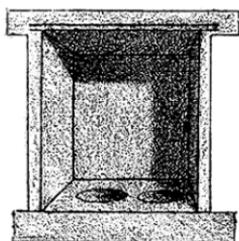
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3, BRIGHAM

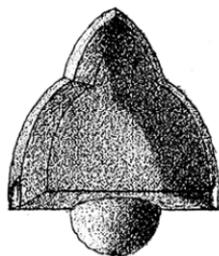
4, KENDAL

5, CROSBY GARRETT

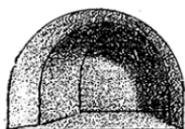
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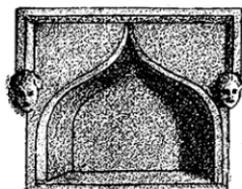
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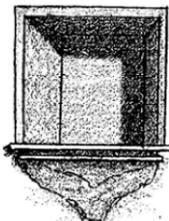
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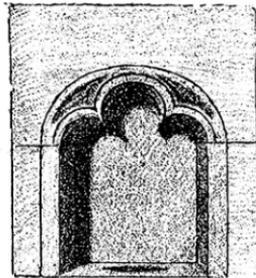


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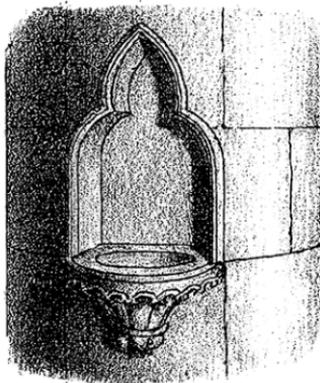
1, BEETHAM 2, 3, BURTON
4, 5, 6, 7, HEVERSHAM



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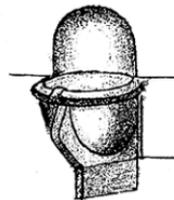
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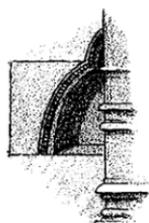


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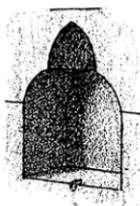


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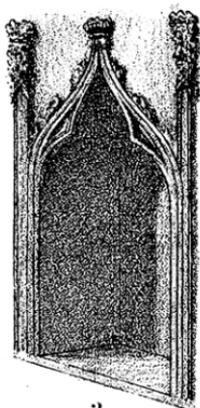
1, 4. 5. S. BEES 2, PRESTON PATRICK
3, KIRKBY LONSDALE



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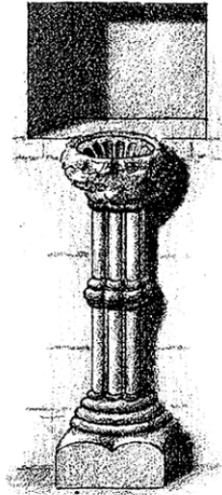
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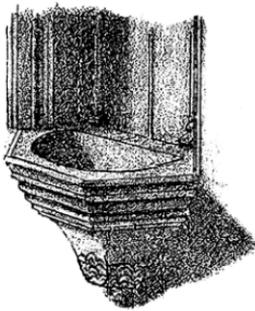
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1, 2, 3, CARTMEL
5 HARRINGTON

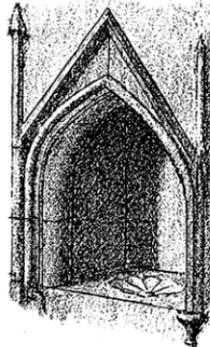
4, LAMPLUGH
6. EGREMONT



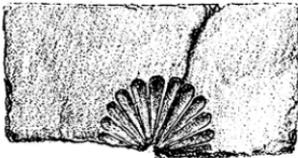
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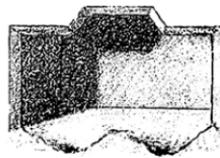
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3

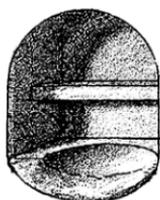


4



5

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, FURNESS ABBEY



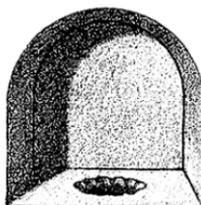
1



2



3



4



5



6

1, MILLOM
4. BROUGHTON

2. ALDINGHAM
5. CALDER ABBEY

3, PONSONBY
6, URSWICK

Bishop of Barrow-in-Furness (Transactions, vol. i. p. 192) suggests that "the high altar probably stood a little forward from the east wall and had a passage behind it, as is shown from the position of the piscina on the first pillar."

Preston Patrick. XIV. 2, an old piscina, now being built into the S. wall of a new chancel.

DEANERY OF WHITEHAVEN.

St. Bees. XIV. I, on E. wall of N. aisle. XIV. 4, and 5, fragments.
Egremont. XV. 6.

Harrington. XV. 5, no basin.

Lamplugh. XV. 4.

ARCHDEACONRY OF FURNESS.

DEANERY OF CARTMEL.

Cartmel. XV. 1, destroyed to make way for the tomb of Sir John Harrington, 1305. So much of it as remains is exactly like the one at Orton. XV. 3, is in the Harrington chapel. Circular basin. XV. 2, north side, Piper choir.

DEANERY OF DALTON.

Aldingham. XVII. 2.

Furness Abbey. XVI. 1, north chapel. XVI. 2, sacristry. XVI. 3, Abbot's Chapel. XVI. 4, Fragments which however fit the recess adjoining the sedilia in the chancel.

DEANERY OF GOSFORTH.

Calder Abbey. XVII. 5, fragments.

Millom. XVII. 1, on S. side of Huddleston chapel, both credence shelf and basin are original.

Ponsonby. XVII. 3.

DEANERY OF ULVERSTON.

Broughton-in-Furness. XVII. 4, previous to the last restoration this was used as the sill of a window.

Urswick. XVII. 6.

I must tender my sincere thanks to the clergy who always so kindly received and hospitably entertained me on my archæological visits; also to those who so promptly answered my letters and in some instances sent admirable sketches and accurate measurements.