

ART. XIX.—*Reminiscences of Lamplugh Hall.* By W. DICKINSON, Thorncroft, Workington.

Read at Egremont, August 30th, 1881.

FEW people are now living who can remember seeing the remnant of the old tower at Lamplugh Hall, standing in the early years of the present century. I have a good recollection of it during my school days of, say, 1808 to 1810, and it behoves myself or some one to jot down a few memorandums of its then appearance, as I think none have yet been in print, and my many inquiries have failed to make out any drawing or picture of it. As part of the parish history it may interest some of the youngsters of the present day, when they become aged, to read what I happen to know respecting Lamplugh Hall, and a little of what I remember to have heard from my parents and others. On my father's side, a part of the property of his ancestors was held by feudal tenure under Lamplugh Hall, and had to furnish a man and horse, with equipments, for forty days service if needful, and three days provisions, when called up to join the Lamplugh troop to repel the Scotch incursions. My grandfather was once called out, with many neighbours, and rode to Carlisle. On reaching there they found the rebels had fled, and they quietly returned home. Some of the foot people were armed with scythes straightened out at the ends of the shafts. Some had pitchforks; some had flails; others had clubs or staves; and all were armed and provisioned to the best of their ability. I well remember a large pair of jackboots, which fastened at the sides, which had been worn by my ancestor for these occasions, and his sword as well, and which I eventually got made into a capital carving knife.* I hardly think it had

* Many of the old mostroopers' swords have been thus converted, and the well-known "wolf" or "fox" mark may occasionally be recognised in Cumberland farm houses on some well-worn carving knife.—R.S.F.

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ever been fleshed in a human being, but I know it sliced a round of beef exceedingly well. At that time Lamplugh and Murton, with the greater part of the townships of Arlecdon and Whillimore, were held under Lamplugh Hall by suit and service, &c., and nearly all have been since enfranchised with the exception of some small dues. Formerly, boon-days of various kinds of labour were paid to the Lord of the Manor, and a plough was required to go seven times about per day, on Lamplough Hows. The plough draught usually consisted of two or four longhorned oxen, one leading horse, two or more callers or drivers, one man or woman leaning upon the beam to keep the plough acting, and another to re-turn the stiff furrows which in old ley ground were apt to roll back into their places after the plough. All this is now done by one man and pair of horses, and much better.

The old tower was a bulky square building, and stood high. Other buildings of much lesser height were in part connected with it, and all were roofless. From the uneven top of the tower walls it must have been higher, and part had been thrown down and the battlements wilfully demolished, for the standing part seemed sound and without cracks. It stood at the right hand of the entrance to the present farmyard; and the long, low, stables for twenty horses, with cow-sheds, &c., on the opposite side of the public road, along the west side of the churchyard wall, were mostly thatched. The walls of the tower were nine feet thick, and so well cemented together that they had to be blasted down for the stones to be used in the erection of the new farm buildings. Thus was ruthlessly destroyed the finest old tower of this part of the county. The windows of the tower were few and small, and none were near the ground on the exposed sides facing the west and north. There were loopholes and arrow slits in the walls, at varying elevations, and all very narrow. It is reported that the original hall stood where the garden now is, and where
terraces

terraces were formerly visible: and it, of course, adjoined the tower. At the time previously mentioned, the farm house, or more modern hall, was where it now is, having undergone several mutilations and alterations. And in its spacious hall was an oaken table, about 24 feet long, and four feet in width, the top of which was of one plank cut out of a tree said to have grown on Blakefell Screes. Of course it would be on the lower part of the Screes. The half length of that table, much reduced in breadth, now does good service in the kitchen. The very handsome gateway, dated 1595, with the Lamplugh Arms sculptured over the entrance arch, remains in excellent preservation—thanks to the ivy, in part. Within the gate leading to the hall stood a noble avenue of venerable yew trees, a few of which are still there. The three or four fish ponds may yet be traced, but are not reserved for their original use. There was a square building, with pointed windows, on the opposite side of the road from the old parsonage, and near the east end of the church, in which one of the last of the family name, in their declining fortunes, taught a school; but whether owing to the circumstances, or to a taste for the occupation, or to a charitable feeling for the dependants of the house, is not recorded. In old days it was the fashion for the lord to keep a stud of race-horses; and, by way of exercise, the grooms were directed to take the horses to St. Ringan's, *alias* St. Ninian's Well, in Fang's Brow, in Loweswater, to be watered there. This exercise, with an occasional gallop over the benty race-course on Mockerkin Howe, together with the pure water they drank at the well, kept the horses in fine training; and so successful were they with it, that whenever they were taken to run on a distant course, a supply of water from St. Ringan's was taken for their use. A spring called Houndy Well on the estate, near the present lime-kiln, was noted in former days for its astringent effects on "beast and body," as the saying used to be. Whether real or
imaginary

imaginary then it is now hard to say ; but no such property is attributed to its waters of the present day. It is beautifully clear and pleasant to drink.

The family lost its name through the want of male heirs ; but the property remains with the descendants, of whom the present representative is Walter Lamplugh Brooksbank, Esq. It is on record that Lamplugh of Lamplugh was at the battle of Agincourt, on the 15th October, 1415. Lamplugh of Lamplugh Hall waited upon and attended Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, from Workington to Cocker-mouth, &c.
