

ART. XVIII.—*Some Early Sporting Notes relating to Cumberland.* By the Rev. J. Wilson, M.A., Vicar of Dalston.
Read at Grasmere, June 25th, 1891.

IF precedent is needed to justify the subject of this paper, I may put in the plea that more blame should not be attached to a country parson for recording some fugitive notes on the pre-historic turf of the county of Cumberland than there was to a high ecclesiastical official when he became the historian of its cockpit.* My function is similar to his on a kindred subject and on the same plane. He went upon the sod; I go upon the turf. As far as providing materials for writing the history of a British sport is concerned, the race-course is as respectable and as harmless as the cockpit. But I think there is no cause for alarm; though the study of Xenophon might have made Scipio a hero, there is little fear that cocking or horsecoping will result from a perusal of these pages.

It is no part of my purpose to enter into the very accident of horse racing in England, or to trace its affinities to the ancient sport of the Olympic turf. Nor is it material to inquire into its origin. Like every other popular custom, it had its days of infancy and growth till it eventually assumed the character of an institution established all over the country. It is quite natural to suppose that as soon as the horse was tamed and as his value began to be recognised, the amusement of horse racing would arise: not perhaps racing according to the rules of the Jockey Club in 1891, but still racing of some sort from which the modern turf originated. Those who wish to go more fully

* See 'Αλεκτρούωνων Ἀγών ante vol. ix, p. 366.

into

into details, must be referred to the usual sources* of information, where plenty of allusion to the matching of horses against each other as a test of swiftness will be found in the earlier periods of its history. But some difference of opinion exists among the authorities as to the commencement of a regular organised turf in England, the preponderance of opinion fixing it in the reign of James I, when the first public races are supposed to have come in vogue in different parts of the country. However that may be, we have enough proof that, in our north-western county, horse racing was a popular pastime and that there were at least two notable race-courses during the reign of Queen Elizabeth—Langanby Moor for the people of the country, and Kingmoor for the burghers of Carlisle.

Of whatever character the turf had been in these early days, whether scientific or otherwise, it may be taken that the moor near Langwathby, or, as it is traditionally known, Langanby,† is the oldest and most famous horse-course of Cumberland and Westmorland, rivalling Garterly in Yorkshire as the historic race-course of the north. If we believe the narrative of Sandford,‡ whose MS. has been recently published by this Society, we can put our finger on the date its history begins. The account is so curious and so full of interest that it must be given in his

* Books on the history of horse-racing are numerous, but among others I may mention James Christie Whyte's *History of the British Turf*, 1840: James Rice's *History of the British Turf*, 1879: the volume on *Racing* in the Badminton Library, and of course Strutt and Hone *in locis*.

† Now fertile fields o'erwrap thy moor,
Once horse-course—battle ground of yore,—
Vague rumour saith.

MARY POWLEY.

‡ For a portrait of this jovial, inquisitive, gossiping squire, a man fond of field sports, and acquainted with the *inside* of every stable, cellar, and larder of note in the two counties, consult the opening chapter of *The Cumberland Foxhounds*, where his lineaments are drawn with a friendly hand. Though published anonymously, the author of this *brochure* is known!

OWN

own language, specially as it was "writt about the year 1675," a period of ultra-sporting notoriety.

The most famous horse course ther for a free plate on midsomer-day yearly: And the first founder thereof: Sq^r. Richard: Sandford: yonger brother of Thomas Sandford of Askame in Westm^rland, was bred vp with the Earle of Northumb^rland M^r of this horse, and a braue Horsman: p^suaded the Lord Wharton, And the Cheuilleir Musgraues who had braue breed of horses: And many of the contry gentry to contribute to a prise of plate of 20^l yearly, and the famous horse course of England, and Scotland: the quondam Duke of Buckingham had horse called Conqueror: And the Earle of Morrayes wily horse ffox: runing heer for 100^l but the Conqueror conquest him & won the money: though the night before Ther was the terriblest blast was ever blowen: churches towers trees steeples houses all feling the furie of the furies thereof for without ~~Ph~~adventure The diuell a stir whether of England or Scotland I cannot tell but the English horse got the prise: The great ffores of woods was so blowne donee cross the way as we had much adoe to ride thorow them yet not so bad a blast as vsurping Oliver had, when the deuill blew him out of this world, God kowes (*sic*) whither.*

Langanby was a famous horse-course in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and racing possessed the same peculiarity then, as it is supposed to have now, that it outweighed every other attraction. It has been pointed out as a sign of the degeneracy of the time that the great Thoresby† was unable to muster a quorum to transact the business of a charity committee on account of the absence of the neighbouring gentry at a horse race. But even a century earlier we find in Cumberland a Justice of the Peace refusing to meet the Queen's Commissioners on public business on account of his engagements at Langanby.

April 13, 1585. Yanwith—Richard Dudley to ——. He cannot meet Commissioners from Yorkshire concerning Rothay Bridge on the 26th instant, for he has a horse to run in the race at Langwathby (Langanby)‡

* Sandford MSS. p. 43.

† Diary, vols. i. 129, 169; ii. 9.

‡ Historical Manuscripts Commission: Twelfth Report, Appendix, Part vii. (Rydal MSS.), p. 11.

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The date of the Langanby races seems to have varied in these infant days of the turf, but when the day was fixed the gentry of the county had their stable appointments looked to and every preparation was made for a start to the race course. There is no indication that Lord William Howard patronised Langanby in person, but the young bloods of the Howard family* were ever to the front.

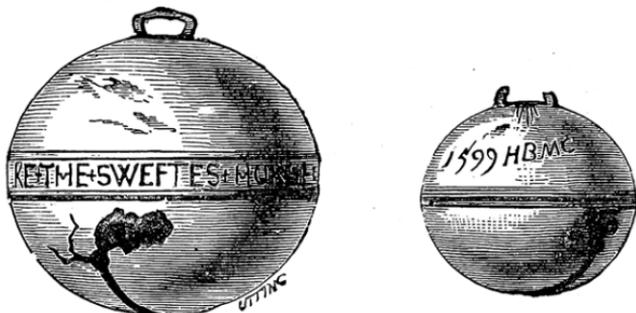
1612 June 24, Mr. Charles his horse meat at Langomby race	.....	.....	.....	.....	v ^s ix ^d
July 13, Mr. Francis his horses charges at Langomby					xiii ^s
April 28, To Mr. Francis by bill for his horses charges at Newbiggin at the race at Langomby				.....	iiij ^{li} iiij ^s
May 9, Wm. Grame's charges sent into Northumberland	.....	.....	.....	.....	ij ^s ix ^d
May 16, His charges at Langomby by my Ladies allowance	.....	.....	.....	.....	v ^s iiij ^d
June 14, The gentlemen's charges at their coming from Langomby	.....	.....	.....	.....	v ^s
June 17, The little gentlemen's charges to Dallston and Warnell	.....	.....	.....	.....	xviiij ^s vi ^d
Drink at Carlyle there				.....	xij ^d
June 25, Their charges againe at Kirkoswold going to the race and for drinck by the way				.....	vij ^s v ^d

But the racing annals of the county of Cumberland are enriched by the possession of a relic in the shape of racing bells which is unequalled in point of interest with any other survival of the ancient history of the turf. If Langanby Moor afforded scope for the exercise and amusement of the people living in the country, Kingmoor was the trysting place for the citizens of Carlisle. The moor, an ancient estate of the Corporation, given to the city of Carlisle by a charter of Edward III, is situated within easy distance and has been associated with racing transactions from an early period. These bells, one of which

* Lord William Howard's *Household Books*; *Surtees Society* vol. 68, pp. 49, 51, 52.

bears

bears the date of 1599, were exhibited before the Archæological Institute which met at Carlisle in 1859, and were pronounced as "possibly unique" in their catalogue to the museum collected together for that occasion. As racing bells, they have very recently called forth a large amount of controversy* throughout the country and various claims were made by other places for first place on the roll of



fame. As these bells are of singular interest, extending beyond the limits of any county and illustrating a peculiar feature in the history of the English turf, I cannot do better than adopt the account of them as given by the late Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt, F.S.A., who was well qualified to form an opinion of their rarity and value. It is taken from the *Art Journal* of April, 1880.

* The Carlisle Racing Bells, or as they are sometimes called in the Municipal Records of that city, the Horse and Nage Bells, have achieved considerable fame since they were re-discovered in an old box in the then Town Clerk's office in Castle Street. The Executive Committee of both the Sports and Arts Exhibition and of the Tudor Exhibition, held in London in 1890, applied to the Corporation of Carlisle for the loan of those bells, and the Sports and Arts, being first to ask, got them. At that Exhibition, the bells were well displayed in a case containing some hugh pieces of racing plate, such as the York Plate of 1717, the Newcastle Cups of 1810 and 1823, the Newmarket Gold Cup of 1705, and others: but the little Carlisle Bells possess an interest beyond that possessed by these ponderous specimens of the smith's craft: they are the oldest racing prize in existence. They have therefore attracted much attention, and have been engraved in several London papers. After these bells had been some time in the Exhibition, a rival appeared in the shape of a pear-shaped bell said to have been presented by William the Lion to the borough of Lanark in 1160. But the experts soon detected on this bell the mark of a 17th century silversmith, Robert Dennistoun, of Edinburgh, so that it is probably not much older than 1628, and the Carlisle Bells still hold the field as the oldest racing prizes in existence. (Cripps O.E.P., 4th edition. pp. 143, 339).

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The racing bells are globular in form, with slits at the bottom, as is usual in bells of that class. The loose ball which would originally lie in the inside, so as to produce the sound, has disappeared. The largest, which is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, is of silver gilt, and bears on a band round its centre the inscription:—

+ THE + SWEFTES + HORSE + THES +
 BEL + TO + TAK + FOR + MI +
 LADE + DAKER + SAKE.

this lady being probably Elizabeth, daughter of George Talbot, fourth Earl of Shrewsbury, and wife of William, Lord Dacre of Gillesland, who was Governor of Carlisle in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The other bell, also of silver, is smaller in size, and bears the initials H.B.M.C. (Henry Baines, Mayor of Carlisle), 1599. Horse racing was formerly much indulged in by the good people of Carlisle, the races being held on Kingmoor, about two miles from that city. On Shrove Tuesday the moor became a busy scene, and the contests created much excitement among the freemen and others. The bell was not an uncommon prize either in horse racing or cock-fighting,* and was held by the victor, as challenge cups and shields are at the present day, from one year to another, or from one race to another. To win this bell was of course a mark of honour, and gave rise to the popular expression of "to bear away the bell." At York the racing prize in 1607 was a small golden bell, and the corporation records of Chester about 1600 show that in that city a silver bell was given to be raced for on the Roodee: but I am not aware that any of these are now in existence. Probably the Carlisle examples are unique.

Kingmoor shared the honors of the Cumberland turf with Langanby as the chief centres where races were held till the present century, the guilds furnishing the prizes and the citizens enjoying their holiday. The chamberlains' accounts in the city records contain various items of money paid out for the purchase of prizes for these races. Later the prizes were given by the local members of Parliament, the guilds from time to time voting or withholding a plate when such a racing prize came into fashion. One extract may be given of considerable value in itself as indicating the favour in which horse races were

* For picture of a cocking bell, see *ante* vol. ix. p. 371.

held

held by the commonalty in the days of the first Stuart, as well as the nature of the prizes which may now be said to be extinct.

21st April, 1619. We request that Mr. Maior and his breathren shall call for the silver broad arrowes and the stock and the horse & nage bells with all expedytion to be employed for manteyning of a horse race for the cytties use (upon the kingesmoor) at such tyme yearlye as they shall thinke convenient and to article that the same cup shall be brought in yearlye as they shall thinke ffittinge.*

We have an incidental notice of the Swifts, on the south banks of the Eden near to Carlisle bridges, figuring as a race course about this time. I have to confess that I have been unable to gather much information as to the sporting history of this course. It has been generally understood that the Swifts was selected to supersede Kingmoor as the municipal race-course about the middle of the last century, and that it became a recognised place for annual meetings a few years before the grant of the King's plate in 1763.† In Heber's second volume of his *Historical List of Horse-Matches Run*‡ in 1752, the earliest Racing Calendar I have

* Municipal Records of the City of Carlisle, pp. 277-8. *et passim*.

† G. Smith's Map of Carlisle, published 1746, "The Swiftes or City Horse Course," on which are horses with docked tails and riders in jockey costume, one being flogged up for the final struggle. The starting and other posts and a judge's box are shown, evidently permanent structures. The Swifts must have been in 1746 a well established race course.

‡ It may be found interesting if I quote Heber's account of the conditions of the Carlisle races in 1752:—

On the twelfth of May, fifty pound was run for on the Swift, near Carlisle, by three year old horses, &c., the grass before, carrying nine stone, two mile heats.

On the thirteenth ditto, fifty pound was run for, by four year olds, the grass before, weight nine stone, three mile heats.

On the fifteenth ditto, fifty pound was run for, free for five year olds, the grass before, carrying nine stone, six year olds, nine stone nine pound, and aged horses &c., ten stone, four mile heats.

All horses &c. that run for these prizes were to enter on the sixth day of May, the owner of each horse &c., to subscribe and pay at or before entering, three guineas towards future plates. Three each day to start or no race.

No horse, &c. (except the horses, &c., of such as shall from henceforth constantly subscribe two guineas or more), will be allowed to run at the said races, unless they stand at the houses of such Innkeepers, as subscribe two guineas or more, three weeks before the said races (Heber's *List of Horse-matches in 1752*, pp. 18-20.)

been

been able to consult, the Swifts appears as the only race-course in Cumberland, that at Egremont excepted, "which was not run for, for want of a sufficient number of horses, &c., to enter for the same." But it appears that the Swifts was connected with racing for a much longer period. The Duke of Devonshire possesses amongst the archives of Bolton Abbey a survey of all the Crown lands in the neighbourhood of Carlisle made in 1612 by Mr. Anthony Curwen, agent of the Crown property. In speaking of the Swifts, he indulges in this singular reminiscence:—

Many old men and women about Karliell do well knowe and rememr. that all the grounds was one contynuse ground, and when I was a scholler at Karliell no hinderance to the footeball play nor to the essayes of running of naggs, men and women leaping dauncing &c. upon every Shrove Tuesday.

This note in the absence of further evidence is so vague that it need not perhaps disturb the ordinary opinion as to the antiquity of the Swifts, for after all he may only mean that the green sward around the city was used by the inhabitants for the exercise of their horses as well as for games and recreation.

As time went on, race-courses multiplied and interest in the sport became more general. After the Restoration it would seem that Cumberland like the rest of England had gone into excess when "the King had come into his own again." It is true that many of the leading families in the county had been either beggared or impoverished by the consequences of the Civil War, but notwithstanding these disadvantages racing and field sports came into greater prominence and were more widely practised after the strictness of the puritanical days of the Commonwealth, like a stream rushing with greater force after a temporary confinement. If we return to the pages of Sandford, we get frequent peeps into the stables of the country gentry, as well as a vivid picture of the state of society during his time. I might bring him up in evidence *ad nauseam* that every

every gentleman in the county who could afford it and perhaps who could *not* afford it, was in the habit of keeping open house and dispensing hospitality as occasion offered, the corollary being usually appended that he was not without a running horse or two in his stables. Sir George Fletcher, a man of great local repute as well as a member of Parliament, who could resist the blandishments of his King with as much spirit as he could order the repair of a bridge or disturb the calm of a Quaker meeting, is described as "a very braue monsir, great housekep^r, hunter and horse courser never without the best running horse or two, the best he can gett," a portrait of Sir George which squares with everything else we know of him. A like account is given of old Sir John Dalston and Sir George of Dalston Hall, "both braue gentile gallants and justiciers, great gamesters, never without two or three running horses, the best in England." The Dalston family were ever great patrons of the local turf, so much so indeed that the air of the parish from whence they derive their patronymic is still impregnated with tenacious traditions of their sporting celebrity. Though Dalston Hall has been shorn of its old associations for over a century, it is still said of one of the last scions of this ancient house that he possessed a pair of running horses which were such a match in swiftness that the weight of the stable key would be sufficient to decide the race. Facts go to show that Cumberland, however backward it may have been in other matters, was pre-eminent as a sporting county, exposed to all the abuses which had so early crept into horse-racing and which have been inseparable from it ever since. It would appear that the history of the Cumberland turf at this period affords sufficient justification for the remarks of Burton that

horse races are the desports of great men and good in themselves though many gentlemen by such means gallop themselves out of their fortunes.*

Anatomy of Melancholy, pt. ii, sec. 1, cap. iv, ed. 1660.

I am not going to depreciate the memory of the sporting squire of Ewanrigg Hall, who, though he engaged in all kinds of gaming, was sharp enough, not only to keep the lands he had inherited, but to make ample provision for his family and to depart this life without an enemy. Strange and piquant is the description we get of him,

Mr. Joseph Thwaits, in my Time one of the wittest braue mons^{rs} for all gentile gallantry, hounds, haukes, horse courses, boules, bowes & arrowes, and all games whatsoever : play his 100^{li} at cards, dice and shovelboord if you please, and had not above 200^{li} P an : yet left his children pretty porcions : & dyed beloued of all parties.*

It will be seen from what I have just stated that the race-course did not absorb altogether the passion for gaming and sport during the last half of the 17th century. The external features of the county, studded here and there with park and forest, mountain and glen, helped to foster the historic pastime of hunting the stag which had been considered from time immemorial a beast of the chase, and which was an object of interest and sport till the dawn of the present century. I shall not repeat the oft told tale of the famous run of the stag and greyhound from Whinfell Park in Westmorland to Redkirk near Annan in Scotland and back again, a distance of 80 miles, which has been celebrated in poetry and romance. Everybody in any way acquainted with local legends knows the story† of the "Hart'shorn tree." It will be sufficient if I give the refrain of the old rhyme which tells the result of the chase.

Hercules killed Hart-o-greese
And Hart-o-greese killed Hercules.

* Sandford p. 22. Compare the quatrain of Tom Durfey, a contemporary poet, usually but unjustly called "the Moore of the Restoration."

Another makes racing a trade
And dreams of his prospects to come,
And many a crimp match he made
By bubbing another man's groom.

† For a critical examination of this legend, refer to Pagen White's *Lays and Legends of the English Lake Country*, pp. 81-87, where the whole question is discussed.

Hunting

Hunting the stag was a favourite pastime which survived in the county till within recent years and several examples of skill and endurance might be recorded in the history of the sport. As stags were turned off Penrith fell within living memory, it will serve my purpose if I call attention to the institution of the Cumberland Gallants, perhaps the forerunner of the modern Cumberland Hunt, which from time to time went on "progress of hunting" from one park to another, enjoying the sport and hospitalities of Naworth, Appleby, and Millom Castles.

June 22 1657.—John Kirkby to his nephew Daniel Fleming at Rydal. I have had some discourse with your cousin Kirkby concerning "the intended progress of hunting" of the Cumberland Gallants. When you go to Naworth, you may tell them that Sir William Hudleston's absence need not hinder their hunting at Millom. Your cousin Kirkby, who has command of the game in Sir William's absence, will show them all sport for the killing of a brace of bucks and give them such accommodation as his little house will afford.*

Before I return to the race-course let me say one word about the fox which for its "great plentie of policie and deuices" has had a strange sporting history. The fox as a beast of venery is involved in some mystery. In the *Charta Canuti* he is classed with the wolf as *nec forestae nec veneris* and it is believed that fox-hunting is a modern institution developed within the last century. It would seem indeed that Reynard had been at one time an ish-maelite in some way or another, but it may be questioned whether he has always† been considered a beast of prey to

* Historical Manuscripts Commission, Twelfth Report, Appendix, Part vii, (Rydal MSS), pp. 22-3.

† From a passage in Holinshed it would seem that fox-hunting of some sort was practised in his day. "Such is the scantitye of them here in England in comparison of the plentie that is to be seene in other cuntryes, and so earnestly are the inhabitants bent to root them out: that except it had bene to beare thus with the recreations of their superiors, it could not otherwise have bene chosen, but that they should have bene utterlie destroyed by manie yeares agone" (*Antiquary*, vol. x. p. 256). A much earlier reference to fox-hunting is contained in the foundation charter of the Abbey of Lanercost where fox-skins and deer-skins are enumerated as part of the endowment. Prior Thomas was also obliged by the Bishop "not to frequent public huntings, or to keep so large a pack of

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be trapped as we see in one of Landseer's famous pictures, or knocked on the head according to churchwarden practice in the 17th century. But not until the close of the last century do we catch a glimpse of the rise of fox-hunting in this county. The law was dead against the fox, and popular feeling was in full sympathy with the law. We have only to look into the churchwardens' accounts of the various parishes up and down Cumberland to learn that the fox was an outlaw with a price not on his brush, but upon his head. What a revolution must have taken place in the minds of the squirearchy! It will not do to place the blame of the wholesale vulpine slaughter which was the rule of the 17th century at the door of rural churchwardens who could have no interest in the delights of the sport. In order to bring conviction home to the right door, I shall give a case where the *churchwardens* refuse the customary reward and a bench of magistrates, composed of the ancestors of more than one Nimrod, who is delighted to add M.F.H. after his name, ordered the churchwardens to pay over the head-money or incur the risk of contempt of court. Here is the damaging verdict under date, July, 1704.

Upon petition of Thomas Watt setting forth that he had killed fourteen foxes and ought to have fourteen shillings for soe doing and prayeing to have the same paid him. It is ordered by this Court that y^e churchwardens and overseers of y^e poor of y^e pish of Brampton doe forthwith pay unto the said Thomas Watt the sume of fourteen shillings for killing y^e s^d foxes according to Law.

Whatever may be said of the popularity of other kinds of amusement, the race course held sway towards the close of the Stuart period and was patronised by every species of humanity from the king to the beggar. It just

hounds, as he had formerly done" (Hutchinson's *History*, vol. i, pp. 55-7; also *Transactions*, vol. i, p. 102). It would seem that the Prior and Monks hunted the fox for his skin more than for sport, though they may have been occasionally bitten with the ruling passion.

happens

happens that we have an enumeration of the different places of meeting in the county, supposed to have been written at this time, 1688, by a member of the Denton family, though neither the original MS. nor even a copy is known to exist. Fortunately the Messrs Lysons, who claim to have seen and used the account, preserve enough for our purpose. The note is important and must be transcribed.

Horse-racing appears to have been a very favorite amusement in Cumberland in the reign of Charles II. Mr. T. Denton in his MS. enumerates several horse-courses: as at Barrock-fell, in Hesket: Low-Plaines in the same parish: Harethwaite Common: Woodcock Hill in Woodside: the sands at Skinburness and Drigg: at the latter was an annual race in May, with a plate of £10, established by Sir W. Pennington. Langanby Moor is called the famous horse-course of the north: a famous horse-course in Westward also is mentioned and one at Whitrigg in Torpenhow, which "began at the foot of a hill called Car-mot, and ended upon the top of Moothay, the ascent of which being so great a climb, they called that part of the hill (says Mr. Denton) 'Trotter,' in regard that few horses can gallop up to the top thereof, but are forced to trot ere they come to the top." Sir Patrick Curwen was about that time a great patron of this amusement.*

This catalogue of race-courses can scarcely be considered exhaustive though in all conscience it is appalling enough when compared with our notions of sporting matters and the number of race-meetings which occur in our day. As it only represents the customary centres where horse-matches took place, it may well be said that racing had reached its climax at this period. But the popular appetite was not satisfied with regular meetings: there was also an occasional interchange of challenges for private trials as ambition or envy prompted the turfites of the day. From tradition and document I might instance extemporised matches both of horses and cocks

* Lysons' History of Cumberland, p. 75.

in the parish of Dalston but my respect for the memory of my predecessors ties my tongue and restrains my pen. One example, however, may be mentioned in illustration as it has already appeared in print and involves neither feeling of delicacy nor breach of confidence. It is dated May 30th, 1692, and takes the form of an agreement between a couple of statesmen for a friendly race.

Agreement between John Walton of Oston Moore, Co. Cumberland, gentleman and Rowland Cookson of Troutbeck Bridge, Co. Westmorland, yeoman, as to a race to be run by their respective mares, in the demesne of Calgarth, for the sum of twenty pounds.*

During the latter portion of the 17th century, Langanby held its own as a county meeting, though the race-courses of Workington† and Burgh were fast rivalling it in popularity. At this period we meet with a strange custom in connection with horse-racing. It was not enough for the local sportsmen to patronise the turf in their private capacities, but they must needs import it into the concerns of their public life. In fact arrangements for the next horse-race became a recognised part of the business transacted by the Justices assembled in Quarter Sessions. The extracts I shall give in their entirety as they are of amusing interest in themselves and appear to be peculiar to the sporting proclivities of our northern county.‡

* Historical Manuscripts Commission, Tenth Report, Appendix, Part iv (Browne MSS), p. 350.

Henry Curwen, who was sheriff in 1688, went by the nickname of "Galloping Harry" owing to his partiality to the turf (Transactions, vol. v. 213).

1701-2, March 9th, Monday, Woodcock Hill races (*The Booke of Robert Thomson* in *Gaitsgill Chronicle*, 1885-6, p. 99).

Another course was on Parton Sands—"and a braue horse rase along the sea-side at Parton" (Machell).

† These races took place on a piece of extra-parochial ground near Workington called the Cloffock, which is used for sports of a different kind still. It is situated "on the north side of the town, between the river Derwent and a small rivulet which completely surrounds it; races are held on it annually" (Parson and White's *Directory*, p. 199, 1829).

‡ I do not find any allusion to this practice in the proceedings of the Sessions in Derbyshire, Devon, or Somerset.

Cockermouth,

Cockermouth, January 169⁸.

Ordered that the High Sheriffe of this County doe give twenty pounds to be divided into two Plates equally. The one to be run for at Workington, the last Wednesday in June. And the other to be run for at Langwathby Moore the first Thursday after Apleby Assizes and pclamacon to be made a moneth before each Race.

Cockermouth, January 1699-1700.

Agreed by the Justices of the peace with the consent of the high Sheriffe That the Sheriffe give fiteene pounds towards a Plate in Liew of Dinners for the future. And to make the Plate as much more as he pleaseth to be runn for at the usuall course at Workington and Brough Marsh, the money equally to be divided, viz: halfe of it to be run for at the Race att Workington upon Wednesday the twenty sixth day of June. And the other halfe to be runn for at Brough Marsh upon ffryday the nineteenth day of July.

Cockermouth, January, 170⁰.

Ordered that the Sheriffe finde a plate what he pleaseth above the value of fifteen pounds to be all in one plate & to be runn for the last Wednesday in June, the foure miles course att Workington tenn stone weight the bridle and sadle included in the said weight, who-soever runns his horse to putt in fforty shillings saveing the Cumblnd gentlemen who are only to putt in twenty shillings if their owne horses. And the Justices putting in their owne horses to pay nothinge and the second horse to have the stakes.

Carlisle, Easter, 1701.

Whereas the Sheriffes of this county have for some yeares by past been excused from entertaineing his Ma^{ties} Justices of the peace at the gen'all Quarter Sessions of the peace for this county by reason of their findeing a ffree plate to be yearely run for at some horse course wthin the county which for sev'all reasons is now found inconvenient and p'ticularly for that the Justices at their said Sessions doe not usually meete & eate together whereby they want opportunity to conferr & consider about the business of the country. It is ordered & desired by the Justices at this present Sessions that after this p'sent yeare the succeedinge Sheriffes for this county will for the time to come expend the wages of the Justices at their gen'all Quarter Sessions in entertaineing of the Justices with a dinner that they may have the better opportunity to discourse & consult about the countryes business. And it is ordered that the said wages shall not be suspended or otherwise laid out in any wise whatsoever.

Cockermouth, January 170².

Ordered by this Cort that the order of this time twelve month concerning the Justices haveing dinners be discharged and that in lieu thereof

thereof the Sheriffe doe pay fifteene pound for a plate to be run for the last Thursday in August upon Langwathby-moore. The course to be three heats fower miles each heate. And the course to be set forth by John Dalston Esq^r high Sheriffe of the said county, each horse to carry ten stone weight besides bridle and saddle. And each horse that runns to be sold for thirty pounds after he hath runn, the Sheriffe to have the first offer and the Justices the next, And then who thinks fitt, And e'vy horse that runns to be entered with the Sheriffe one weeke before he runns. And ev'y Justice of peace horse that runns to be free, every gentleman in the county that putts in a horse to pay ten shillings, And ev'y stranger to put in twenty shillings, And the second horse to have the stakes.*

As the racing on Burgh Marsh is in full blast at the present day, little may be said about the course. The first allusion to it that I can find is of date 1672.

May 14, 1672, Cockermouth.

William Fletcher to Daniel Fleming. He is just starting to meet Sir George at Brough Marsh "where we are to have a famous race for a plate which he and I have given to make sport among the jockeys."†

To this may be added what Hutchinson‡ says in 1794 which is all that I know of Burgh as coming within the purview of these notes.

* The names of the Justices who took part in these sporting deliberations on the judicial bench are as follows:—Sir William Pennington, Sir Richard Musgrave, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Sir Edward Hasell, George Fletcher, Richard Patrickson, Leonard Dykes, Robert Carleton, John Aglionby, John Briscoe, William Giplin, Thomas Brougham, Edward Stanley, Richard Lamplugh, Anthony Hudleston, and James Nicholson. There was evidently a difference of opinion among them whether the Sheriff should provide a dinner or a racing plate. On the four occasions when "the free plate" was ordered there was but a small bench with Sir William Pennington in the chair, but at the Carlisle Sessions in 1701, when the dinner was substituted, it is evident Sir William was outvoted, no less than nine Justices being present. Again when the "dinner" order was discharged in favour of the "plate" in 1702, the Sessions was attended only by Sir William Pennington, Sir Richard Musgrave, Robert Carleton, and William Gilpin. With regard to the discontinuance of silver plate as prizes it may be mentioned here that "George I. was no racer but he discontinued silver-plate as prizes, and instituted the *King's Plates*, as they have been since termed, being one hundred guineas paid in cash" (Quarterly Review, July, 1833. p. 386).

† Rydal MSS. p. 92.

‡ *History of Cumberland*, vol ii, p. 509.

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There were formerly at different times races upon the Marsh for purses of gold, and one for a silver cup, given by the lords of the manor upon their respectively coming of age, to be run for by the tenants' cart horses. The course is yet marked out by posts, and is about a mile in length. There is in the possession of Mr. William Hodgson, the present Laird of Fauld, a valuable silver cup,* which was won by one of his ancestors' horses, with the following inscription neatly engraven upon it—"The gift of the Right Honourable Richard Lord Viscount Lonsdale: run for upon Burgh Marsh the 10th of 8^{br} 1712."

Early references to Langanby and Workington, the latter of particular interest, will bring my chronicle to a close.

- 1663, May 29. Spent at Langanby Moor horse race. May 27, 1663, 00 04 06. May 29. Item paid my subscription money towards the plate unto Mr. Layton † 00 10 00.
- April 12, 1687. Henry Fletcher to Sir Daniel Fleming. There is likely to be good sport at Workington on Thursday, seven horses being to run, one of Sir John Lowther's, Mr. Curwen's, Mr. Davison's, Mr. Lowther's, Charles Bannister's, Jack Aglionby's and one from Cocker-mouth. ‡

It is scarcely necessary to say that I have confined these notes mainly to the local turf during the period of its unwritten history, that is, up to the reign of George I, when authentic information began to be recorded in the publications of Cheney from 1727 onward. Since that date

* This silver cup is now in the possession of G. H. H. Oliphant-Ferguson, Esq. of Broadfield House, a descendant of the Laird of Fauld. The same gentleman possesses another of the five Barony cups known to exist, which was won by a chesnut mare belonging to his father in 1845. It bears the inscription—"The gift of the Right Honourable William Earl of Lonsdale, run for on Burgh Marsh, April 9th, 1845, and won by George Henry Hewitt Oliphant's chesnut mare Lady Eleanor." It was of one of the Barony Cups, that won by Mason Hodgson in 1804, of which Robert Anderson, the Cumberland bard, wrote—

The cup was au siller, and letter'd reet neycely,
A feyne naig they've put on't, forby my lword's name.

For some account of the history of the Burgh Barony Cups, the *Carlisle Patriot* of August 24th, 1883, may be consulted.

† Rydal MSS. p. 373.

‡ *Ibid* p. 203.

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racing transactions all over England have been described in the usual series of Racing Calendars. If I started with an apology for touching a subject like this, I shall fortify myself with a moral in conclusion. It can be drawn from the story of a race which took place many years back at Newmarket, in the time of George I.

A match was made between the notorious Tregonwell Frampton and Sir W. Strickland, to run two horses over Newmarket for a considerable sum of money: and the betting was heavy between the north and south country sportsmen on the event. After Sir W. Strickland's horse had been a short time at Newmarket, Frampton's groom, with the knowledge of his master, endeavoured to induce the baronet's groom to have a private trial, *at the weights and distance of the match*, and thus to make the race *safe*. Sir William's man had the honesty to inform his master of the proposal, when he ordered him to accept it, but to be sure to deceive the other by putting seven pounds more weight in the stuffing of his own saddle. *Frampton's groom had already done the same thing*, and in the trial, Merlin, Sir William's horse, beat his opponent about a length. "Now" said Frampton to his satellite, "my fortune is made and so is yours: if our horse can run so near Merlin with seven pounds extra, what will he do in the race?" The betting became immense. The south-country turfites, who had been let into the secret by Frampton, told those from the north, that "they would bet them gold against Merlin while gold they had and then they might sell their land." Both horses came well to the post, and of course the race came off like the trial (Quarterly Review, vol. xlix, July, 1833, p. 393.)