

ART. XVII.—*The oldest parish registers of Bassenthwaite.* By the Rev. F. B. SWIFT.

Read at Penrith, July 9th, 1965.

THE ancient parish church of Bassenthwaite stands in a secluded position near the east side of Bassenthwaite lake with the massive and majestic bulk of Skiddaw in the background. It has the unusual dedication of St Bega,¹ which suggests that the foundation of the church is pre-Norman, possibly 9th or 10th century. St Bega² is said to have been the daughter of an Irish king, and her name appears in another form in the place-name St Bees, the church of which has the double dedication of St Mary and St Bega.

Owing to its dedication Bassenthwaite church was sometimes called Beghokirk. It was given to Jedburgh Abbey³ by Waldeve, first lord of Allerdale, at the beginning of the 12th century and was shortly afterwards appropriated to that monastery, but as a vicarage was not instituted the duties must have been carried out by paid chaplains. The benefice was a perpetual curacy from the 18th century until 1868 when, under The Incumbents Act of that year, it became a vicarage benefice. The Dean and Chapter of Carlisle have for long been the

¹ N. & B. ii 94 and Hutchinson ii 236 in their county histories give the dedication erroneously as St Bridget. That it is St Bega is confirmed by the way the church is referred to in the following records:

Taxatio Ecclesiastica, 1291 : Beokirke.

Reg. Bishop de Halton i 196 (1302) : Bechokirk.

Ibid. ii 193 (1318) : Boghokirk.

Testa. Kar. 22. In the will of Adam de Bastenthwayt, 1358, it is mentioned as: the parish church of St Bega of Bastenthwayt (ecclesie parochiali^l See Bega Bastenthwayt).

² The theory that St Bega is mythical and that the name is derived from a sacred bracelet is examined and rejected by the late Canon C. E. Last in his informative article *St Bega and her bracelet* in CW2 lii 55-66. Canon Last convincingly supports the belief that St Bega of Cumberland tradition was a real person. See above, Art. VI.

³ N. & B. ii 94.

patrons, though it is not clear when and how this right came into their possession.

The church contains some interesting features which include a Norman chancel arch, a medieval grave-slab of the Highmore family and an iron stand for an hour-glass, but the "Gothic" appearance of its exterior is due to a drastic "restoration" carried out in 1873. Before that date the outward form of the church was in keeping with the traditional Lakeland style associated with such churches as Uldale and Castle Sowerby.

In 1471, owing to the distance of the parish church from their homes, the parishioners successfully petitioned the bishop for permission to build a chapel-of-ease.⁴ The church of St John the Evangelist on the main Carlisle-Keswick road, built in 1878, is the successor of at least two older chapels-of-ease, the last of which (a plain and rather utilitarian 18th-century building, probably never consecrated) still stands at the cross-roads nearby and is now used as a church hall. This part of the parish has for long been known as "Chapel".

The earliest volume of the parish registers has been provided with a serviceable leather cover, and an inscription inside records this praiseworthy act of preservation in the following words:

Bound in 1902	
G. Kenworthy Vicar	
T. Hartley } A. Arnott }	Churchwardens

The volume contains the remains of three parchment registers, the leaves of which have been stitched together at some time. The writing is for the most part well preserved and quite legible.

The years covered are:

Baptisms	1608-1630; 1680-1701
Marriages	1687-1701
Burials	1573-1593; 1602-1634; 1664-1701

⁴ *Ibid.*

It will be noticed that the baptisms begin later than the burials, and the marriages later still, and that there are some unfortunate gaps. The missing years are not in any other volume, but the entries for most of the years from 1663 onwards can be found in the bishop's transcripts at the Carlisle Record Office.

No doubt this is the volume (without its present covers) which Bishop Nicolson says he did not see when he visited the church on 24 August 1703. Mr Todd, the curate (1687-1705), told him that it was very old (*Miscellany* 80).

It will be convenient to describe briefly the three parts of the volume separately.

Part I.

This has seven pages of 14 sides, measuring about 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 9 in. wide and covers the years:

Baptisms	1608-1630
Burials	1573-1593; 1602-1609

It is bound together in two leaves of an ancient missal, though part of the second leaf is missing. The lettering has suffered badly from damp but enough remains to show the beauty of its execution, and the red and blue colours of its design are still well preserved. No doubt the two leaves were part of a missal formerly used in the church and in this curious way have survived, a mute reminder of the wanton and foolish destruction of the medieval service books that took place in the troubled years of the Reformation.

The use of similar leaves for binding registers is also to be found at Edenhall, Crosthwaite (Cumberland) and Gosforth.

The question arises as to whether that part of the registers covered by the years 1573-1603 is original. In 1597 an act of the convocation of Canterbury, approved by Queen Elizabeth I under the great seal, directed that

all parish registers were to be of parchment, and parchment copies were to be made of all existing paper registers; the minister and churchwardens were to sign every page on its completion, and copies of all entries were to be sent to the diocesan register after Easter every year. Similar directions were embodied in canon 70 of the canons of 1603; all paper registers were to be copied into parchment books, "but especially since the beginning of the reign of the late Queen" (i.e. 1552). A large number of pre-1603 registers were paper⁵ and therefore had to be transcribed, but the absence of signatures at the bottom of completed pages in parchment registers for years before 1603 does not necessarily mean that these registers are original. All the pages in this volume of Bassenthwaite registers are parchment and, though none is signed at the bottom, those belonging to the years 1573-1603 are probably a copy made in 1603 in accordance with canon 70 of that year.

Part II.

This has four pages of eight sides, the same size as those of Part I, and contains the burial entries for the period 1609 to 1634.

Part III.

In this portion there are 12 pages of 24 sides, measuring about 11¼ in. by 7½ in. wide and covering the years:

Baptisms	1680-1701
Marriages	1687-1701
Burials	1664-1701

We can now consider the contents as a whole, and though there are no references to topical events there is much of general interest in what may seem at first sight to be just a list of entries. One item of local information occurs in 1694 and reads:

⁵ There is an original paper register, 1580-1597, at Holm Cultram parish church, Abbeytown. It is printed as vol. xxxiv of our Society's Parish Register Series, and is described in CW1 x.

Memorandum that there is due to the Rector or Curate 3s-4d for all Buryed in the body of the Church and 6s-8d for those buryed in the Chancell beside the usuall ffee for Burying tho(ugh) I usually abated them near one half

John Todd Curate
 John Cape } Churchwardens
 Jos: Studdart }

Against the signatures has been entered in a different hand:

pd 2s 6d p keeping the Register
 12d p pound for offerings

All entries up to 1687 are in Latin, and the burials and baptisms begin as follows:

1573 Sepultus fuit Margareta Willson 6 Die mensis Junij
 1608 Baptizatus fuit Jacobus Stubb filius Jacobj Stubb decimo
 quarto die februarij.

Among the entries of general interest are those of the Highmores who for a long period had their seat at Armathwaite near the north end of the lake, and whose pedigree, as registered 31 March 1665, is given in Dugdale's Visitation of Cumberland and Westmorland, edited by Joseph Foster. A medieval grave-slab in the church has the inscription:

Hic Jacet Robertus de Hehmor cujus Anime Propicietur Deus
 (Here lies Robert de Hehmor on whose soul God have mercy).

In front of the altar-rails is a much worn slab, and although the inscription is almost obliterated the word "Hymor" and part of "propicietur" can, however, be made out.

Another family of long standing in the parish was that of Wane of Scarness, and as they and the Highmores are of special interest, all entries in connection with them have been extracted from this volume of the registers. They are given below verbatim except for the dates which, though correct, have been put in regular order and into English where necessary.

Three memorial stones in the church commemorate

various members of the Wane family. One in front of the altar-rails has an inscription with remarkably fine, slender lettering reading:

Here Lyes the Body/of (Matt)hew Wane/who dyed the 2/Day of August/Anno Dom 1725/Age 81 years

Another stone, a tablet, in the south aisle records the deaths of Joseph Wane of Scarness on 7 February 1788, aged 90; his first wife, "Grace the daughter of Charles Highmore of Armathwaite", in December 1735, "about the fiftieth year of her age" and their great-grandson Peter, son of Joseph and Amy Pearson of Bawness (*sic*), on 15 February 1870, aged 47 years.

The baptism of the above Joseph Wane appears in the register on 12 April 1698 and that of his wife, Grace Highmore, on 12 March 1684.

The third stone is near the vestry door and commemorates Mary, second wife of Joseph Wane and daughter of Charles Irton of Threlkeld, died 17 May 1741, aged 30; their eldest son, Matthew, died 7 February 1774, aged 34, and their second son, Wilfred, who died in the East Indies 5 May 1770, aged 29.

Highmore Entries.

Baptisms

21 Sept.	1608	Dorathia heighmore filia Robt.
31 Dec.	1609	Johes heighmore filius Roberti heighmor.
10 Feb.	1610	Barbaria heighmore filia Robti.
5 July	1612	Willfridus heighmore filius Roberti.
5 Dec.	1613	francisca heighmore filia Roberti heighmore.
12 Mar.	1684	Grace filia Caroli Highmoore armig.
10 July	1686	Charles son of Charles Highmore.
3 Nov.	1687	Richardus filius Caroli Highmoore armig.
24 Apr.	1689	Robt son of Charles Highmore Esq.
13 Aug.	1693	Patricius son of Charles Highmore of Armathwaite.
21 Feb.	1694	John the son of Mr. Charles Highmore.
13 May	1696	Elizabeth the daughter of Mr. Charles Highmore.
30 Nov.	1698	Joseph the son of Mr. Charles Highmore.
11 Apr.	1700	Michael the son of Charles Highmore Esq.
4 Nov.	1701	Benson the son of Mr. Charles Highmore.

Burials

2 Jan.	1574	Thomas Highmer.
10 Mar.	1582	Esabella Highmer uxor Roberti.
15 Mar.	1605	Richardus heighme. filius Robt heighme.
4 Aug.	1606	Josephus heighmo. filius Roberti.
5 Aug.	1611	Johes heighmore filius Robti heighmor.
16 July	1612	Barbara heighmore filia Robti.
11 Feb.	1613	francisca heighmore filia Roberti.
10 Mar.	1614	Wilfridus heighmer filius Robert heighmer.
2 Aug.	1615	Robertus Heighmor generosus.
5 Jan.	1616	Elizabetha Highmore vidua.
23 Apr.	1667	Mr. Robertus Highmoore sen.
28 Apr.	1680	Josephus Highmoor.
3 Jan.	1691	Mrs. Barbara Highmore widow.
23 Feb.	1691	Mrs. Grace Highmore of Armethwt widow.
14 Sept.	1696	Patricius the son of Mr. Charles Highmore.
14 Feb.	1698	Joseph the son of Mr. Charles Highmore. ⁶

Bishop's Transcripts.

Baptisms

12 May	1669	Lancaster heighmoore sonne of Robert heighmoore.
25 July	1691	William son of Charles Highmore Esq.
6 Dec.	1702	Barbara daughter of Mr Charles Highmore.

Wane Entries.

Baptisms

24 Apr.	1693	Jane daughter of Matthew Wane of Scarnes.
30 June	1696	Mary daughter of Matthew Weane of Scarness.
12 Apr.	1698	Joseph the son of Matthew Wane of Scarness.
13 May	1701	Daniel the son of Matt: Wane.

Marriages

21 May	1689	Thomas Thwaite & Mary Wane.
11 May	1692	Matthew Wane of Scarnes & Jane Watson late of Cockermonth parish.

⁶ Charles Highmore was an attorney-at-law and had a large white-fronted house in English Street, Carlisle, which became associated with the Jacobite rising of the '45, for it was in this house that Prince Charles Edward had his quarters after the occupation of the city by his forces. This information, an engraving of the house and other details are given in *Authentic Account of the Occupation of Carlisle in 1745*, edited by George Gill Mounsey (James Steel, English Street, Carlisle, 1846), p. 101 f. By an irony of fate the Duke of Cumberland lodged in the same house during his stay in Carlisle after the city's capitulation (*Ibid.* 156). The site of the house is now occupied by a branch of Marks and Spencers, and inscriptions over the two main doors commemorate its association with Prince Charles Edward and the Duke of Cumberland.

Burials

- 25 Mar. 1666 Mathias Wane filius Rogeri de Narrow (North Row).
 24 Apr. 1667 Margareta Simpson mater uxoris prima (*sic*) Rogeri Wanne de Narrow
 20 Nov. 1667 Annas uxor prima Rogeri Wanne de Narrow.
 11 Mar. 1674 Thomas Wane de Halls.
 5 Aug. 1680 Margareta filia Rogeri Wane.
 10 Apr. 1683 Mawdlin Wane vid.
 7 June 1687 Matthew Wane fil: Rogeri Wane.
 12 Nov. 1691 Margaret wife of Roger Wane oth(*sic*) Bridgend.
 17 Nov. 1691 Roger Wane of Bridgend.
 25 July 1694 Jane daughter of Matthew Wane.

Bishop's Transcripts.

Baptisms

- 22 May 1664 Mathew Wanne son of Roger Wanne of Norrow (North Row).
 9 May 1669 Isabell Wane daughter of Roger Wane, Norrow.
 15 Sept. 1676 Matheus Wanne.

Marriages

- 30 Apr. 1668 Roger Wane and Margaret Huetson.
 23 May 1669 Mathewe Wane & Janet Dover.

Burials

- 23 Aug. 1670 Mathewe Wane sonne of Skernas.
 10 Mar. 1690 Jane wife of Matthew Wane.

Miscellaneous Entries.

- 29 June 1578 Simo Bell Claricus bur.*
 24 Dec. 1578 Robertus Fisher Claricus bur.†
 29 Mar. 1592 Thomas Parker Clics bur.†
 11 Nov. 1606 Margareta Pearson filia Simonis Clic bur.†
 28 Apr. 1615 Kethra Pearson filia Simoni Pearson clero bur.†
 30 June 1616 Isabella Pearson filia Simondi Pearson clerico bapt.†
 8 Feb. 1620 Christopherus Scott in artibus Bacchalauius bur.
 23 Aug. 1670 Mrs. Doryta Gregg de Mirehouse bur.
 23 Jan. 1680 William Ardrey clerke de Bassenthwaite bur.†
 4 Oct. 1681 Mabella Ardrey bur.

- 2 Jan. 1682 Maria filia Joh: Pearson Cur(ate) bapt.†⁷
 9 Sept. 1684 Elizabetha fil: John: Pearson Cur(ate) bapt.†
 16 Apr. 1686 Interd John Pearson Clerke of the parish of
 Basinthwaite bur.†
 20 Jan. 1691 Mr. Michael Benson of Armethwaite bur.
 18 Nov. 1692 Thomas Harrison schoolm(aster) son of John
 Harrison vicar of Barton bur.

*Curate of Raughton Head. See appendix.

†Curates of Bassenthwaite. Some account of them is given later in this article.

Surnames and Occupations.

Certain family names occur repeatedly throughout the volume, and this is not surprising considering the static nature of the population in those days. Among the names appearing most frequently are Hutchinson, Fisher, Highmore, Yuddall, Scott, Dalton, Dover, Hexam, Atkinson, Caipe, Ratcliff, Buttermer and Stubb.

It is seldom that any profession or occupation is mentioned, but among the few which occur are:

Burials

- 14 Sept. 1612 Johes Fisher de halls bruister. (weaver)
 30 Nov. 1686 Johannes Wilson Faber-ferrarius. (blacksmith)
 28 Oct. 1698 John Salter of Highside weever. (*sic*)

Place-Names.

No place of residence is given until 1581 when the burial of Elene Dover of Highside occurs on 25 August. Even after that they do not appear with any great regularity, though they increase as the years go by. In fact after the above Dover entry a place-name is not given until the burial of Richard Dover of Birthat on 11

⁷ Nightingale in his *The Ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland* i 674 connects this John Pearson, curate, with the following baptismal entry in the registers:

2 Feb. 1682 Maria filia Joh: Pearson par.

This, however, is untenable because the word which Nightingale gives as "par" is really "nar" and is an abbreviation for Narrow, the contemporary spelling for North Row. The entry is given among the baptisms in the bishop's transcripts as:

2 Feb. 1682 Maria fil Johan Pearson de Narrow.

There were evidently two John Pearsons at that time, the curate and the one who lived at North Row.

January 1590. Among those names occurring frequently are:

Birthat (1590)—modern Burthwaite
 Tentergill (1590)
 Scarnes (1591)—modern Scarness
 Broadness (1625)
 Melbecks (1627)
 Barbeck (1630)
 Howclose (1604)
 Farrhouse (1611)
 Northrawe (1612)—modern North Row
 Myreside (1617)—modern Mireside
 Betweenbecks (1609)
 Highside (1581)
 Bawnas (1591)—modern Bowness
 Chapel (1669)

The date in brackets indicates one of a number of years in which the name appears.

The main village in the parish is called Bassenthwaite Halls (though the second of the two words is often omitted in modern usage) and is referred to in these registers simply as Halls or Hawes. Variations of spelling include Hals, Halles, Haulles and Hauls, but in 1607 there is the full name, Bastenthwaithals. The capital letter is seldom used before 1615.

The churchwardens sign the registers after Easter each year to certify that a copy of the entries for the past year had been given in at the annual chapter of visitation which was held at various centres. In some years the signatures are missing, but no doubt the copy had been given in as ordered by canon 70 of 1603. Among the references to this practice in the registers are the following:

Given in att the Visitation holden att Carlile.

July 11th 1693 Richd Pierson & John Dover churchwardens.

1696 Will Tickell & Edward Cook churchwardens last year.
 A Generall Chapter holden 21st Instant att Aspatrick.

1698 A Gen'll Chap. Holden att Wigton June 8th.
James Wood and Tho: Bell being Churchwardens for the former
year.

Gen'll Chapter Holden Aug: 1st 1702 John Turner, John Ewart
Ch: Wardens.

Curates.

It has already been mentioned that because a vicarage was not established when the rectory was appropriated the duties were carried out by paid chaplains and later by curates who by the 18th century had the status of perpetual curates. For the period covered by this oldest volume of the registers it is possible to give the names of most of them.

ROBERT FISHER, buried at Bassenthwaite 24 December 1578. His will dated 17 December 1578, proved 11 February 1578/9, is in the Record Office, Carlisle. In it he directed that he was to be buried in the "Church of St Bee in bastenthwaite". To his brother, John Blaythwaite, he left 8s. and "my great bow"; to his brother, Henry Blaythwaite, "my bow and quiver and all my books"; to his sister Janet and his god-daughter, Mrs Elizabeth Heighmore, small legacies, and the residue of his goods, etc., to his father, Richard Fisher. He evidently had a kind disposition for he bequeathed 4s. to 12 widows at his father's discretion. The witnesses of the will were Robert Heighmer, gent., John Pearson "my uncle", John Atkinson, Richard Cappe and John Wilson.

HENRY FISHER. The episcopal registers give his ordination as deacon, 12 April 1579, and as priest, 17 August 1580.⁸ As the latter entry states that his stipend of £4 was provided out of the lands and tenements of Robert Highmoore of Armathwaite, gent., it is possible

⁸ Carlisle Episcopal Registers, 1561-1643, 101, 107.

that he was assistant to the curate of the parish and not the curate himself.

THOMAS PARKER, buried at Bassenthwaite 29 March 1592.

NICHOLAS SIMSON or SIMPTON. He was curate during the period 1606-1608 and probably longer. His name appears in the list of clergy attending the sacred synod (i.e. the annual chapter of visitation) of the deanery of Allerdale, of which Bassenthwaite formed part, given in the Consistory Court Books for the period mentioned:

2 Oct. 1606 exc(used) Dms Nicolaus Simson curate de Basthenthw.

6 Oct. 1608 P(resent) Dms Nicolaus Simpton curate de Basthnthw.

SIMON PEARSON. He was officiating at Bassenthwaite for at least the years 1606-1616, for the baptism of one of his daughters and the burial of two others occur within that time. It will be noticed that his time overlaps that of Nicolas Simson so possibly he was what we now call an assistant curate. Unfortunately the Consistory Court Books are missing for the years following 1608 and do not start again until 1663, so it is not possible to find out how long he stayed in the parish by checking his attendances at the sacred synod. Oddly enough his name does not appear under Bassenthwaite in 1606 and 1608. As his burial is not given in the registers, he must have moved on to some other cure.

During the suppression of the Church of England under the Commonwealth the names of two preaching ministers are on record as officiating at Bassenthwaite: Robert Hewetson in 1649 and John Forward in 1655.⁹

WILLIAM ARDREY. The registers give his burial on 23 January 1680 and that of his wife, Mabel, on 4 October 1681. He was made a deacon on 23 May 1624 and priested 13 March following.¹⁰

⁹ Nightingale i 672.

¹⁰ Carlisle Episcopal Registers, 1561-1643, 261.

During the Commonwealth period he evidently conformed to the religious policy then in force, for he was curate at Bassenthwaite in 1655.¹¹ As he was in Holy Orders he remained undisturbed at the restoration of Charles II and continued as curate until his death in 1680. Like many others in country cures, he combined the duties of curate with those of schoolmaster.¹²

JOHN PEARSON, curate 1680-1686. An entry of 24 March 1679 in the Episcopal Registers states that he had been licensed and admitted by the Dean and Chapter "to be our curate of the Parish Church of Bassenthwaite —now in our free donacion (*sic*) by the death of William Ardrey clerk late Curate and Incumbent there."¹³

He was licensed to the curacy by the bishop 31 August 1680.¹⁴ He had two daughters baptized at Bassenthwaite: Mary, 2 January 1682 and Elizabeth, 9 September 1684. His burial on 16 April 1686 appears in the registers, but not in its proper place: with two others it has been entered before the burials for 1694 in a different hand.

JOHN TODD, curate 1687-1705. He was ordained deacon 21 September 1673, priest 6 June 1680 and licensed to the curacy 27 September 1687.¹⁵ The registers give his burial at Bassenthwaite on 27 May 1705.

Bishop's Transcripts.

As already noticed, the ordinance of 1597 and canon 70 of 1603 ordered copies of parish register entries to be sent up to the bishop's register every year after Easter. These bishop's transcripts, as they are called, are now deposited in the case of this diocese at the following places: for Cumberland at the Record Office, The

¹¹ Nightingale i 673-674.

¹² Carlisle Diocesan Visitation and Correction Books (Carlisle Record Office), 1664, 1668, 1669 and years following.

¹³ Carlisle Episcopal Registers, 1660-1683, 637.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 638.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 535, 632; 1684-1701, 135.

Castle, Carlisle; for Westmorland at the County Hall, Kendal; and for the Furness area of Lancashire at the County Hall, Preston. They are a valuable source of information supplying entries for gaps in parish registers and giving additional information about persons, places and churchwardens' presentments. Most of them date from about 1663, but there are a few odd sheets of an earlier date. The Bassenthwaite bishop's transcripts cover the period 1663-1893 inclusive, with the exception of the years 1665, 1666, 1673-1675 inclusive, 1677, 1678, 1686 and 1687. They are on single sheets signed by the curate and churchwardens, and are well preserved.

On the 1672 sheet the churchwardens have written:

We present Tho. Jackson, Rich. Attkinson, Elizb: Attkinson for not receiving the Sacrament.

We present Roger Wane for playeing at cards & exchanig (*sic*) horses on the Sabbath daye

another sheet begins:

June 4th. 1694

A true Copy of the Register-booke of the parish of Bastenthwaite Since his Grace's the Archbp of York his Visitation holden att Carlile July 11th. 1693 till this day Johan: Todd Curat ibidim

Willielmus Dover Ecclesiae
Johanes Grave Gardiani

Actually this visitation was carried out by the archbishop's commissaries and this extract gives us the day of the month and the place. These visitations by the Archbishop of York as metropolitan took place at intervals: there was one in 1592 and another by the archbishop's chancellor in 1662.¹⁶

Among the bishop's transcripts is a leaf dated a few years later than the end of the first volume of the parish registers, and the interest of its contents calls for its inclusion here. It is the churchwardens' answers to an official inquiry about the parish in 1717.

¹⁶ *Prelates and People* 285 and note.

An Answer of the Ch:Wardens of Basenthwait to the Articles of Enquiry at the General Chapter of Visitation held at Wigton May 31st Anno Dom: 1717

Tit(le) 1

We answer that our Church, Churchyard & Chappell are in the same decent repair as at the last Visitation, & Furniture are in as good order & our Assests layd as formerly.

Tit 2

We answer to the Articles under this Title that our Curate doth not observe wt is enjoyned here, for instance, he makes no yearly Perambulation, but he has promised if any Objection be made to answer for himself¹⁷

Tit 3

We answer to this, we have no Dissenter in our Parish, that we know of, but one, & we know not whether he hath taken the oaths of fidelity to his Majesty Kg George, &c: nor have we any Meeting-house in the Parish. Our Chappel-Stock is managed by two faithful Trustees & the interest pd duely to our Curate & the Parishioners in general are very Regular

Tit 4

We answer we have a Schoolmaster & Parish-Clerk that have appeared here this day, & they can better tell than we whether they be lised, as to their behaviours we know nothing agst it. One of the Ch:Wardens for the last year has been duely chosen again by our Curate to continue the yeare ensueing in the same office for Substantial reasons wch he can show to the Court, if thereto required

John Wilson
John Dover

New Churchwardens John Dover
James Hexham

(Endorsed) Bassenthwait

Register Noo p'sentmts [No presentments]
P Ao 1716

¹⁷ The Royal Injunctions of 1559 ordered the perambulation of the circuits of parishes at Rogationtide by the curate and substantial men of the parish. At certain places the people were to be admonished to give thanks to God, especially for the fruits of the earth.

APPENDIX.

Simon Bell.

Buried at Bassenthwaite 29 June 1578.

It is fortunate that his will (at Carlisle Record Office) has survived otherwise it might have been assumed that he had died curate of Bassenthwaite, whereas he was in fact curate of the chapelry of Raughton Head in the parish of Castle Sowerby. He directed that he was to be buried "in the church of St Bee in Bastingthwat", of which parish he was probably a native. "Sr. Robert fyssher my especiall friend", to whom he left some "epistles", was curate of the parish at that time, but died shortly afterwards, as already noticed in the list of burials. The title "Sir" was the usual designation for a non-graduate priest in those days. That Simon Bell had resigned his curacy shortly before he died is indicated by the endorsement of the will and by the fact that the parishioners still owed him 12s. 8d. of his "wages": this sum would be part of the ancient stipend of £3 mentioned by Nicolson & Burn in their account of the chapelry.¹⁸ The reference to a chapel house in the inventory is interesting.

Extracts from the Will and Inventory.

20 June 1578 I Symond Bell of Bastingthwat and late of Raughtonhedd do make this——.

My body to be buried in the church of St. Bee in Bastingthwate. To Sr. Robert fyssher my (?tully) epistles upon trust because he is my especiall friend.

To my son John one pare of hose and a chest. To Janet Parker my best understokens and my best chest. The residue of my goods to my father Richard Bell whom I appoint executor.

Among debts owing to him:

In primus my perishioners of ~~Basting~~ (sic) Raughtonhede behind of my wages xijs iiijd that we misreckoned of.

Item vjs viijd for chappell house & that John Halton & Anthony

¹⁸ N. & B. ii 348.

Hed promised me when I went away & in default of Anthony & John his executors must discharge it & for this last quarter from Maye to the twentye of June xs.

The will is endorsed:

The will & inventory of Dm Symon Bell clerk late curate in the chapelry of Raughton heade deceased at Bastenthwait. Proved xxix October 1578.

I am indebted to the present vicar of Bassenthwaite, the Rev. W. George, for his kindness in allowing me to examine and quote from the first volume of the parish registers.