



HALTWHISTLE CHURCH, FROM THE S. E.

BEFORE AND AFTER RESTORATION.

XII.—THE CHURCH OF HALTWHISTLE.

BY THE REV. C. E. ADAMSON.

[Read on the 31st day of May, 1893.]

THE church of Haltwhistle is a good and thoroughly characteristic work of the early part of the thirteenth century. Unfortunately it has been very badly treated at various times, but, indeed, considering its proximity to the Border, it is wonderful that it has come down to us with so little serious injury. At the beginning of this century (as the picture in Hodgson's *Northumberland* shows) the aisles had eighteenth century sash windows and the roof was of a very low pitch, but sufficient traces remained to enable the late R. J. Johnson, in 1870, to restore the original lancets and the original pitch of the roof. The plan of the church is peculiar. The nave and aisles are so wide in proportion to their length that they appear to form a square, while the long chancel seems almost as long as the nave. The actual dimensions of the nave and aisles are, however, 64 feet by 44 feet, and of the chancel 46 feet by 19 feet.

A Haltwhistle gentleman lately visiting at Crail, in Fifeshire, noticed that the church there was very like the church at Haltwhistle, and when the minister of Crail afterwards paid a visit to Haltwhistle and inspected that church, the two gentlemen agreed that the two churches were as nearly similar as could be. The abbey of Arbroath, to which Haltwhistle belonged, had property in 'Karale,' and thus it would appear that both churches were built from the same or a similar set of plans; and at Haltwhistle there are details about the mouldings, etc., which, in the opinion of Mr. W. S. Hicks,¹ speak of a Scottish origin.

The nave has lofty and dignified arcades of four arches, and doors, north and south, opposite to each other. The bases of the pillars, as existing before the restoration, showed that the floor line must have

¹ I visited the church with the vicar, the Rev. Canon Lowe, and Mr. W. S. Hicks, the architect. Canon Lowe carefully watched all the work done during the restoration in 1870, and I am therefore greatly indebted to him as well as to the technical knowledge of Mr. Hicks in my description of the building.

been, where they stand, about one foot higher than the floor where the responds, east and west, stand. These responds have fillets of an apparently later date than the general appearance of the building would indicate. The label moulding of the nave arcade has a dog tooth ornamentation. The capitals of the pillars have attracted some notice. The bell of the capital, which is circular at its base, gradually changes into a very irregular octagon. The abacus follows the shape of the bell and the members of the arch seem to spring from the edge of this curious irregular octagon. The west end of the church was rebuilt in 1870.

The chancel contains several objects of interest. The east window consists of three lofty lancets of great beauty, with richly-moulded trefoil inner arches and delicate shafts. It is now filled with excellent glass by Morris. The reredos is a representation of the Visit of the Magi. The piscina is said to be an exact reproduction of the original work. The sedilia have been very beautiful, though there is a very curious admixture of bold and delicate work in the mouldings. In the south wall is a fifteenth century low side window of two lights, square-headed, now blocked up, and at the restoration traces were seen of a former window in nearly, but not quite the same position. There are four ancient grave-covers within the altar rail, two bearing the arms of Blenkinsop, two those of Thirlwall. On one of the former lies a recumbent effigy, possibly that of Thomas de Blenkinsop, who died in 1388. The shield, which is very small in proportion, with the arms containing the three well-known garbs, is fastened to the knight's left arm, and therefore, as the effigy lies, it is almost out of sight. The other grave-cover bears, besides the arms, a beautifully flowered and traceried cross, a sword, a staff, and a scrip. These two stones are probably *in situ*. The other two were found buried under the eastern arch of the south arcade of the nave. During the restoration, marks were found indicating that an altar had been attached to the east wall of the south aisle, and there is a broken piscina with a drain on the south side of the aisle. It seems not unlikely, therefore, that this was a chantry of the Thirlwalls. The grave-covers have each floriated crosses of a similar character to that on the Blenkinsop stone, and the arms within a bordure a chevron between three boars' heads. On the south side of the chancel is the tombstone of John Ridley of Walltown,

brother-in-law of Dr. Nicholas Ridley, bishop of London. It formerly stood on two dwarf pillars in the middle of the chancel. Under two coats of arms placed side by side one showing a wall with three turrets, the other a chevron between three falcons with jesses and bells, is the following inscription (in capital letters and lines as shown):—

I HON		REDLE
THAT	[Agnus Dei.]	SUM
TIM		DID BE

THEN LORD OF THE WALTON
 GON IS HE OUT OF THES VAL OF MESERE
 HIS BONS LIES UNDER THES STON
 WE MUST BELEVE BE GODS MERSE
 INTO THES WORLD GAVE HES SON
 THEN FOR TO REDEM AL CHRESNTE
 SO CHRIST HAES HES SOUL WON
 AL FAETHFUL PEOPLE MAY BE FAEN
 WHEN DATH COMES THAT NON CAN FLE
 THE BODE KEPT THE SOUL IN PAEN
 THROUGH CHRIST IS SET AT LEBERTE
 AMONG BLESSED COMPANE TO REMAEN
 TO SLEP IN CHRIST NOWE IS HE GON
 YET STEL BELEVES TO HAVE AGAEN
 THROUGH CHRIST A IOYEFUL RESURRECCION
 AL FRENDES MAY BE GLAD TO HAER
 WHEN HES SOUL FROM PAEN DID GO
 OUT OF THES WORLD AS DOETH APPER
 IN THE YEER OF OUR LORD
 A: 1562
 X X

In the soffit of the chancel arch are two square holes evidently for the rood beam, and above are hooks for the chains or rods which supported the arms of the cross. On either side of the arch are small brackets for figures.

The font which stands at the west end of the church is very remarkable. The bowl only is ancient, the pedestal having been renewed at the restoration when it replaced one of similar form, which itself was comparatively modern. The exterior of the bowl is altogether of the rudest character and uneven in form. The shape is hexagonal. On one side is a representation of a face surrounded by rays which is evidently intended for our Lord; next to it an intricate knot is carved; on the third side is a group of thistle heads; the fourth has a Maltese cross; the fifth a *fleur de lys* with the letters IS; while the sixth has another knot. At some period it has had a fixed cover as the holes made in the rim for its support clearly indicate.

Near the upper edge, the following has been incised: 'R.P. July the 27th 1676.' R.P. are no doubt the initials of Robert Priestman who was the vicar at that date. The interior of the bowl, however, and the moulding round the top are carefully and accurately worked, and moreover show signs of considerable wear and tear, while the outside is as sharp as if it had been recently cut. Can it be that the old font was recut in 1676 by some unskilful mason who incised upon its new sides imperfect copies of ornamentation which he had seen elsewhere?

There is in the churchyard what appears to be a holy water stoup. It consists of a very roughly cut semi-circular bowl fixed upon a short round pillar, and looks as if it had originally stood against a wall.

The following inscription on a tombstone in the churchyard deserves mention on account of the pathos which it expresses:—

D. O. M.

Post Vitam Brevem

Difficilem Inutilem

Hic

Quiescit in Domino

Robertus Tweddell

De Hazleton Monac

in Com Dunelm Gen

Salutis 17 35

Ætatis 32.

The vicar finds this entry in the Register of Burials for 1735 :—

'Nov 22 Mr. Robert Tweddell Gentⁿ of Monkhasleton in the County of Durham.' He was no doubt connected with the family of that name at Unthank.

The exterior of the church is severely plain but very dignified, and it is beautifully situated to the south of the town. The chief entrance in former days would appear to have been the very richly moulded door on the north side now covered by the modern vestry.

To the south-east of the older portion of the churchyard stands the picturesque old vicarage house against whose northern walls the soil

has been allowed to accumulate until half its height is buried out of sight. It has been supplanted by a more commodious house a little to the east of the church.

The communion plate as described by Mr. Blair² in the *Proceedings* consists of eight pieces, six of silver and two of pewter.

The history of the church of Haltwhistle should commence with the labours of St. Aidan, for Leland has preserved a tradition that 'there lyethe one of the Holy Aydans and other Holy Men in the Churche Yarde by the Chapel' at White Chapel in this parish.

But the earliest existing notice of the church seems to be contained in a confirmation of William the Lion, king of Scotland, of his grant of it to the abbey of Arbroath which he had lately founded.³ It may be translated into English thus :—

William by the grace of God king of Scotland to the bishops abbots earls barons justices sheriffs bailiffs officers and all honest men of his whole land clerks and laymen greeting Let (all) present and future know that I have given granted and by this my charter have confirmed to God and the church of Saint Thomas archbishop and martyr of Abirbrothok and to the monks serving God there in free and perpetual alms the church of Hautwysill in Tyndal with all that appertains to it in chapels in lands in tythes in alms and in all other ecclesiastical rights customs and benefits with common pasture also and all other easements of the same parish To BE HELD as fully as any parson has ever held the same church and so freely and quietly well and peaceably and honourably as any alms in the whole of my land are possessed Witnesses, etc.

This is followed in the 'Registrum de Aberbrothoc' by two other confirmations :—

Robert de Bruys to all friends and his men greeting, &c., as above, as the charter of my king witnesses and confirms * * *

To all ministers sons of holy church Robert de Ros and Isabella his wife greeting Let all present and future know that we have granted to God and the church of Saint Thomas the martyr of Aberbrothoc and the monks serving God there the church of Hautwysill with all justly belonging to it which lord William king of the Scots gave to the aforesaid monks and by his charter confirmed To BE HELD to themselves in free and quiet and perpetual alms * * *

² *Proc. Soc. Antig. Newc.* vol. iii. p. 367.

³ 'The date of the foundation of Arbroath is of some interest in church and public history. Thomas a Beckett, the high church archbishop, was slain at the altar of his own church of Canterbury on the 29th of December, 1170. Two years afterwards he was canonized; and within five years of his canonization, and not more than seven from the period of his death, in the year 1178 William King of Scotland had founded, endowed, and dedicated to Saint Thomas the Martyr the Abbey of Arbroath.' Preface to 'Registrum vetus de Aberbrothoc' published by the Bannatyne Club.

The first and second of these confirmations are dated by the editors of the 'Registrum' 1178-1180, the third 1199, that is eight years after the marriage of Robert de Ros with Isabella the daughter of William the Lion.⁴

In 1240 William de Ros the son and successor of Robert in the manor of Haltwhistle seems to have disputed this grant, for we find an entry in the Patent Roll, 25 Henry III., stating that Roger Bertram, Odinell de Fordhe, Henry de Neketon, and William de Dera are justices of assize concerning the advowson of the church of Hautwysel to be held at Carlisle in the quinzaine of St. Hilary [Jan. 28th, 1241] where William de Ros arraigns the abbot of Abirbrothe. Unfortunately the assize roll for Cumberland for this date is not now extant, and therefore we cannot know what was the exact point in dispute.

The 'Taxatio' of 1254, sometimes called 'Innocent's' or 'vetus valor,' contains the entry—'Hawtwesil' iiij-xx m^{arc}. Dec. viij m^{arc} Porcio Radulphi de Bosco xxxvj m^{arc} Dec. xlvij.

In 1306 'The Prior and Convent of Lanercost' beg the king having regard to the reduced state of their house and the damages they have suffered by the King and his attendants which a great sum would not suffice to restore without perpetuity of something that in recompense of these damages he would grant them the church of Hautwyselle which is not worth more than 100 marks a year and make allowance to the monks of Arbrothock in Scotland whose it is; if agreeable to the King and his Council.' Shortly after 'The abbot of Abrebrothok for himself and his convent replies (as commanded) to the King and Council respecting the proposed exchange of their church of Hautwyselles that the King is "fundour" of their house and they have no other head to maintain their rights than him and his council. Begs the King to examine their muniments and confirmation of the said church from Rome and then to command restitution of the church of which they have been forcibly despoiled by the bishop of Durham.'

* * * * *

The letter is endorsed 'Ponatur inter dormientes.'

⁴ This grant of Hautwysill church is also mentioned in a general confirmation [1211-1214] by the same king, and in a great confirmation of King Alexander [1214-1218]. There is also a confirmation of Pope Honorius [1220].

⁵ From the Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland, vol. II. Lanercost had been pillaged and burnt by the Scots in 1291 and again in 1296, and it never recovered its prosperity. Edward I. visited the priory in 1280 and 1307.

In 1309, on the feast of All Saints, John resigned (or was removed from) the office of abbot, and in 1311 the church of Hautwysel was assigned to him as a pension by his successor Bernard de Linton and the convent. The grant, however, was revoked the next year, and a loan was raised to redeem him from captivity as a prisoner of war in England.

In 1311 the vicar of Haltwhistle, one Robert de Pykwell, was carried off by the Scots, and the bishop of Durham wrote him a letter of sympathy, allowing him to raise money on his living for his ransom. Shortly afterwards the bishop reports that he can levy nothing towards the king's subsidies on the vicars of Norham, Bywell St. Peter's, Haltwhistle, Ilderton, or the parson of Ovingham, because all their goods as well as the churches and villages in their parishes were entirely burnt and destroyed by the Scots. The present condition of Haltwhistle church shows that the word 'entirely' does not apply to that building, though it may have been rendered unfit for use.

In 1329 there was held an 'Inquisicio ad quod damnum'⁶ about this church. The abbot of Aberbrothok claimed the church as having belonged to him and his predecessors before the war between England and Scotland, and Edward III. appointed three commissioners to enquire into the justice of the claim. These commissioners held their enquiry at Newcastle, and reported that witnesses had said on oath that John the predecessor of the abbot had last held the church of Hautwysell, and that his predecessors had held it of the gift of William formerly king of Scotland, and by the bull of a certain pope Alexander and by the grant of Robert de Isle formerly bishop of Durham; and that Edward the king's father during the war had appointed his clerk Robert de Dyghton, who had been admitted and instituted, and still held the church as parson. In accordance with this report, Edward III. ordered the church to be restored to the abbot and convent of Aberbrothok, but he seems afterwards to have resumed it as an escheat; and eventually it was granted by a deed⁷ dated 13th July, 1385, to the convent of Tinmouth, the patronage being reserved to the bishop and a settled portion to the vicar. After the dissolution of the monastery, Edward VI., by letters patent 5th July, 1553, gave

⁶ 2 Edw. III., No. 11, m. 1, and m. 2, Patent Roll, 3 Edw. III., part 1, m. 16.

⁷ Quoted at length in Hodgson's *Northumberland*.

to John Wright and Thomas Holmes 'the whole rectory and church.' In 1585 Nicholas Ridley died possessed of the church; and afterwards (*temp.* Chas. I.) it was forfeited by R. Musgrave and granted to the Nevilles of Chevet by whom it was sold to the Blacketts who now possess the great tithes.

Walter de Merton, chancellor of England, who died October 27th, 1277, left 25 marks to Haltwhistle as being one of the places where he had held preferment. Bishop Hobhouse (*Sketch of the Life of Walter de Merton, Lord High Chancellor of England, Bishop of Rochester, and Founder of Merton College, Oxforā*; Oxford, 1859, page 45) quotes the will, and to 'Hautwyse' he adds a note—'Supposed to be Haltwhistle in Northumberland in the patronage of the bishop of Durham. No evidence exists, except this bequest, of the founder's having held this living.' The writer has here fallen into the very natural mistake of supposing that Haltwhistle has always been in the patronage of the bishop of Durham, but as at the time of Walter de Merton the patronage was really in the hands of the king of Scotland or of his much favoured abbey of Aberbrothoc, and as a letter from the Scottish queen asking a favour of the English chancellor shows that these personages were on very friendly and intimate terms, it is therefore not unlikely that Walter de Merton held this benefice by the good will of his friends, and it may be that the church was built during his incumbency. Two other vicars of some note were Rotheram⁸ (1768-1789) and Hollingsworth (1809-1829), the first an ex-professor of Codrington college in Barbadoes, and the latter an author and a poet.

Wallis mentions a tradition that the parish church formerly stood on land in Bellister haugh, which is now part of the vicar's glebe, and states that human bones have been dug up in this field, but it appears more reasonable to suppose that, if there were any such

⁸ Mackenzie, *Northd.* vol. ii. p. 263, speaking of Haydon Bridge school says:—'Rev. William Rotherham . . . had two sons who also acquired celebrity for learning and piety. Thomas, the eldest, was born in 1715, and took the degrees of B.A., 174... and M.A., 1744. In 1744 he accepted a professorship in Sir William Codrington's college, in Barbadoes, and remained there till his health compelled him to quit the island in 1753. On his return to England he accepted the curacy of Great Stainton, county of Durham; and in 1768, was collated to the vicarage of Haltwhistle, not far from the place of his birth. The venerable simplicity of his character and manners, which residence in a foreign climate had neither altered nor corrupted, rendered him an object of universal esteem and respect.'

church and burying ground, it was a chapel of ease for the benefit of the parishioners who lived on the south side of the river.

With regard to the dedication of the church there is a curious doubt. Cole says 'Hautwizzle St. Aidan q. Holy Cross q. — St. Aidan as I judge,' and in this opinion he is followed by Hodgson⁹ and Bates.¹⁰ The latter says:—'A rather obscure passage in Leland's *Itinerary* has preserved the traditionary connection of St. Aidan with that district and the name of Eden's Lawn attached to a part of Haltwhistle immediately west of the church seems to be a re-translation of the Celtic Llan Aidan. St. Aidan's well at Bamburgh had been corrupted into 'Edynwell' *temp.* Ric. II. The idea that Haltwhistle church was dedicated to Holy Cross had its origin in the erroneous notion that the fair day generally followed the feast of the dedication.' Raine in his *York* (Historic Towns series) spells the name Ædan, as if the pronunciation should be Edan.

The parish of Haltwhistle until recently was very large, extending about fifteen miles from north to south and twelve from east to west. It included, besides Haltwhistle itself, the townships of Bellister, Blenkinsop, Coanwood, Featherstone, Hartleyburn, Henshaw, Melkridge, Plainmellor, Ridley, Thorngraston, Thirlwall, and Walltown. In 1890 the townships of Ridley, Thorngraston, and a portion of the township of Henshaw were formed into the new parish of Beltingham with Henshaw; and in 1892 the townships of Blenkinsop and Thirlwall were formed into the new parish of Greenhead. The two new parishes together contain an area of about 26,000 acres, leaving the mother-church still with the large area of 32,000 acres, and a population of 4,000 within its borders.

At Beltingham there is a very fine little Perpendicular church, said to be the only building solely in this style in Northumberland. It is dedicated to St. Cuthbert. Its dimensions are 68½ feet by 18½. The east window is of five lights, and there are six windows on the south side but one only on the north. Local tradition states that it was built as a domestic chapel of the Ridleys. It was restored in 1884, and during the work a grated squint in the north wall of the chancel and a thirteenth-century grave-cover, on which is a cross in high relief, were discovered. Numerous stones have been found about

⁹ *Hist. North.* II. iii. 123. ¹⁰ *Arch. Ael.* XIII. 324.

the church or have been built into it, which indicate that a twelfth-century building once stood here. In the churchyard, in addition to the three venerable yews, on the north side of the building are an early churchyard cross and a Roman altar without inscription. The communion plate has been described by Mr. Blair in the Proceedings of the Society.¹¹

A chapel erected in 1827 at Greenhead, and entirely repewed and renovated throughout a few years ago, chiefly at the cost of the late Edward Joicey, esq., of Blenkinsop hall, is now the parish church for the western portion of the old parish of Haltwhistle.

VESTRY BOOKS.

The vicar has made the following extracts from the vestry books:—

The earliest entry is a burial. George Ridley, of Henshaw, was buried the 21st of . . . (? Dec.) 1656. The earliest baptism is in 1691, and the earliest marriage in 1703 :—

The extant minutes of vestry meetings are contained in three volumes, dating from the year 1717. For the most part they consist of records of the Easter meetings of the 12 men, for settling the church accounts, the election of wardens and the laying of rates, whenever required, for church expences. Occasionally we come across matters which have a certain interest as showing the condition of the fabric and the cost of its reparation. For instance, on May 19th, 1718, the 12 men and churchwardens agreed with Geo. Kell, 'plummer' of Hexham, to keep in good repair, and keep dry, the 'leed' of the church for 7 years at £1 10 a year, to be paid at Lammass each year. This shows that at that time the outer covering of the roof was entirely of lead. The agreement was signed by all the 12 men, two of whom were unable to write their names.

In August, however, of the same year, 'the 12 men and wardens agreed with the vicar (finding our church out of repairs) to repair the roof, Mr. Pate to find all material, to cast the lead at 8 lb. per square foot, to lay gutters and to make spouts for £44. Work to be inspected by two sufficient workmen, and Mr. Pate to give security for performing the bargain.' Cautious wardens!

Non-attendance at vestry meetings is a failing of ancient date, for we have the following memorandum made at the Easter meeting, 1725 :—'It is agreed and ordered by unanimous consent of the 12 men that whosoever of us (after lawful summons given) does not attend in the vestry, and discharge the trust in us reposed by this parish, shall for his absence on Easter Tuesday forfeit the sum of 2s. 6d., and for any absence at any other time the sum of 1s. to be disposed of at the discretion of those who are present.'

In the wardens' yearly accounts we find constant entries of sums paid for killing 'vermin,' at the rate of 2s. 6d. for old foxes' heads, 1s. for young foxes' heads, and 4d. each for brocks, 'foomurts' and others' heads.

At Easter, 1726, an assessment of three and sixpence in the pound was laid towards 'whitening of the church, payment of arrears for gates to the church-

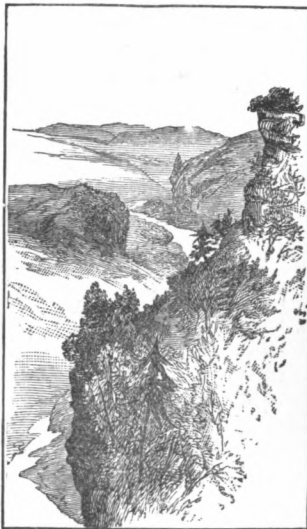
¹¹ Vol. iii. p. 367.

yard, and other uses,' and in the following year an assessment of two and sixpence in the pound is laid for 'repairing church wall and other uses.' As it appears from the accounts that the repair of the wall only cost £9 19s., one wonders why so high an assessment was required. It can hardly have been on the rateable value of the parish, as the amount realised would have greatly exceeded that sum, and yet in 1751 it was agreed by the vestry 'that all monies raised for repairing of church and other legal purposes shall be by an equal rate or assessment according to the rack rents or true legal values.'

In 1735 two wardens were chosen by the vicar and two by the parish. In 1733, 10s. 6d. was paid for a new font cover. In 1741 there is the following entry:—'For a spade and hack to Beltingham chapel, 4s. 6d. N.B.—The spade and hack are an imposition. Sir Edward Blackett is impropiator there.' In 1744, 8d. was paid for two otters' heads; and on August 24, 1773; Cuthbert Ridley entered to be clerk. In John Snowball's account for 1739 he charges 9d. for a quart of ale, but does not say who had it. Keeping the roof in repair was evidently troublesome, for in 1765 there is the following item:—'Agreed that Edward Robson, senior, and Edward Robson, junior, be employed to keep leads of roof in good repair for the whole year, on condition that he receives £5 in hand and £5 in Easter week, 1766. N.B.—Wardens are to take care that Edward Robson fulfil this bargain for the above term, otherwise the wardens must be presented by the vicar if the leads are not taken care of and kept free from holes and letting in rain.' In 1768 it is noted that Rev. Mr. Wilson left Haltwhistle in September of that year, and on Friday, 14th of October, the Right Worshipful John Sharp, D.D., archdeacon, visited the church and ordered 'that all the pews in the church be furnished with moveable kneeling boards, low, flat, and broad. That a cover for font be provided. That a new stone threshold for chancel door be provided. That a new bell of at least equal weight with the present one be provided. That remaining heaps of rubbish against church and chancel be removed. That one casement be made in each side of the church and chancel. That pulpit and reading desk be raised as vicar shall direct, and painted white. That a stool or moveable kneeling board, low and flat, be provided for reading desk, covered and stuffed.' Matthew Ridley and Isaac Thirlwell monished to cause them to be performed and to certify at visitation to be held after Easter next.' In 1770 it was 'agreed that a hearse be got for conveying of corps for the use of the parish, and to be kept in the church;' and it was further agreed that 'the sexton shall have from the executor or principal person that comes along with the corps sixpence for cleaning the said hearse.' There is no entry of the cost, but in 1789 there is an entry of £12 1s. 'for hearse and trappings.' In 1771, £13 5s. 5d. was paid for hearse house and other repairs. At the same vestry meeting it was agreed 'that any person who kills an old fox within the parish, and makes oath thereof before a magistrate, shall receive for the same 2s. 6d., and for every young fox, 1s. In 1771, £1 4s. 6d. was paid 'for a cloak for the sexton, and 2s. for making it.' In 1772 a weathercock was erected at a cost of £1 12s. 6d. There is no record of any stoves being purchased, but in 1776 sixpence halfpenny is charged for a load of coals. In those days it would seem that Haltwhistle church was very like one about which the parish clerk, when asked how it was warmed, as there appeared no place for a fire, indignantly replied—'We put our fire in the pulpit—that's

the proper place for it.' In 1782 it was noted that the Rev. Thos. Rotheram, M.A., who became vicar in 1768, died on the 5th of April, whilst visiting his brother at Houghton-le-Spring. He was succeeded by the Rev. Hugh Nanney, M.A. In 1783 a new bell was bought at a cost of £1 10s. In 1786 the royal arms and five texts of scripture were placed in the church. In 1792 it was decided at a special meeting 'that as the lead roof was in a ruinous state, the most effectual course will be to take it off and to put on instead a substantial slate roof, also that the west window be enlarged and the north side aisle windows be made to correspond with the south,' in which sash windows had been substituted for the ancient lancet windows. The slating was done for £55 and the roofing for £103. The west window was altered by Jas. Armstrong for £1 3s. 6d. In 1794 Geo. Biggs was appointed parish clerk, vestry clerk, and schoolmaster. In 1799 notice was given in church on two consecutive Sundays to receive proposals from masons to ceil and paint inside and outside of north and south aisles. The work was let for £40. In 1795 Mr. Wm. Saint was elected churchwarden for Haltwhistle township. In 1800 the outside walls of the church were rough cast and the inside whitewashed at a cost of £8. The following is among the entries of the Easter meeting, 1798:—'It appearing at this meeting that a very great destruction of sheep, lambs, and geese is likely to happen in this parish from an uncommon increase of the breed of foxes, it is therefore ordered that instead of five shillings now to be paid for each old fox killed in the parish, that the sum of ten shillings and sixpence be paid until Easter next. Also ordered that the several sums be paid to people that procured vermin heads at this meeting.'

One volume of the registers contains a curious soliloquy on matrimony by vicar Wilson.



HALTWHISTLE BURN.