

XXI.—SLALEY.

BY THE REV. A. JOHNSON, VICAR OF HEALEY.

[Read on the 30th August, 1893.]

THE ecclesiastical history of Slaley is somewhat peculiar. Originally it seems to have formed part of the parish of Bywell St. Andrew. Along with the rest of that ancient parish, it is mentioned, soon after the Conquest, as belonging to the barony of Bolbeck. In its more prosperous days, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, we find it named as a separate parish, and holding the position of a rectory. In the time of Henry III., Gilbert de Slaley, who was living in A.D. 1239, gave to Hexham priory the church of Slaley, with one plow land of the endowment of the said church, and a common of pasture in the village for 260 sheep, and a common of pasture in Le Stele for the same number;¹ and by the great charter of *Inspecimus*, granted by Edward I. to the prior and convent of Hexham, these lands and possessions in Northumberland, after the burning of their house by the Scots, were confirmed to them.

The 'Black Book of Hexham,' giving the rental of the prior and convent of Hexham, says that they hold in Slaley divers tenements, and half a carucate of land, and certain other acres and pasturage for sheep, as in the charter of the convent are contained.² It was assessed as a rectory in pope Nicholas's taxation in 1292, and was again taxed as a church and distinct parish to the ninth in 1340. In the list of Procurations paid by the clergy of Northumberland in 1357 to

¹ Tenent etiam ecclesiam de Slaveley in proprios usus et unam carucatam terre de dote ejusdem ecclesie et communiam pasture in eadem villa ad ducentas et sexaginta oves et communiam pasture in le Stele ad ducentas et sexaginta oves in liberam puram et perpetuam elemosinam de dono Gilberti de Slaveleye et inde habuerunt cartam et confirmationem domini episcopi et capituli Dunelmensis et tenuerunt a tempore regis Henrici patris Domini regis nunc. *Ex Rot. Cart.* 27 Edw. I. 23rd Nov. 1298. In the tower of London. Hodgson, pt. III. vol. ii. p. 164. In Surtees Soc. vol. 46, p. 112, Raine gives a copy of this from what is said to be an original in the possession of W. B. Beaumont, esq. Query, can Mr. Beaumont's be an original, or is it a copy of the document in the tower of London?

² SCLAVELEYE.—Tenent etiam in Sclaveleye diversa tenementa et di carucatam terrae, et alias certas acras, ut in cartis Conventus, et pasturas ad certas oves, ut in cartis continetur. [Then follows an interesting list of the tenants, with their holdings, and quantity of land held by each in Sclaveleye, Prestplace, Lumbar'd's place, etc.] *Hexham Priory*, vol. ii. (Surtees Soc. vol. 46), pp. 27-28.

cardinal Talairand and his colleagues the rector of Slaley is stated to have paid his share :—

Rectoria de Slaveley non valet ultra iiijli xvjd & solvit ijs.

From a survey of the estates of the priory of Hexham, made at the dissolution, we learn that Slaley was no longer a rectory. It appears simply as a chapel, and the officiating minister is styled chaplain : 'Et in pensione annuali exeunde de capella de Slevele soluta abbati et conv. de Abbyland, p.a. xxiijs. SALARIA CAPELLANORUM et in salario unius capellani servientis curam animarum infra capellam de Slavele, p.a. iiij li.'³

The period of the Reformation seems to have been a trying time for Slaley. When the priory of Hexham was dissolved the endowments of Slaley fell with it into improper (*alias* impropiator) hands, and in her impoverished condition, not being able to maintain her position of independence as a separate parish, the church of Slaley was obliged to return to the old maternal fold, and had to depend upon the mother-church of Bywell St. Andrew for maintenance for a time. Randal, in his *Survey of the Churches of Northumberland*, gives Slaley as a chapelry in the parish of Bywell St. Andrew, with a list of curates from 1501 to 1756. In the *Liber Regis*, compiled by order of Henry VIII., this living is valued at £15.

At the Archdeacon's Visitation, held at Corbridge in 1601, it was reported of the curate and churchwardens 'that they have had no sermon this last yeare, and that they use no perambulation in Rogation weeke, and that the Register Booke is in paper.' Two years later the presentment is 'that they have no Register book, nor new communion booke.'

John Shaftoe, vicar of Warden, bequeathed by will, 13th May, 1693, an augmentation of £10 for ever to the church of Slaley, to be paid out of the mortgaged lands and estate of John Heron, bart., then lately deceased, of Chipchase.

In 1719 Slaley again arose to the rank of a separate parish. In a letter (dated 12th February, 1887) the secretary of Queen Anne's Bounty informs me that Slaley was augmented by the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty in the year 1719, that the cure was, prior to that date, an 'Improprate Curacy' or chapelry, and the effect of augmentation was to make such curacy or chapelry a perpetual curacy and

³ Surtees Soc. vol. 46, p. 169.

benefice (see 1 Geo. I. c. 10, s. 4). The benefice has (he says) been subsequently augmented several times.

A church was built at Slaley in 1812, and an indulgence of forty days was granted to those who contributed to the fabric.⁴ The present church was erected in 1832, and in the vestry is preserved the contract for the work, which is dated '24th April, 1832.' On May 25th, 1832, the foundation stone of the new church was laid by the rev. C. Bird, vicar of Chollerton, in the presence of the clergy of the neighbourhood, the principal inhabitants, and a large concourse of people. The old church had become little better than a mass of ruins, and totally unfit for the celebration of divine service. By the persevering exertions of the rev. Henry Armstrong, the curate, and other members of a committee selected for that purpose, sufficient funds were raised to rebuild and enlarge the structure, without having recourse to a parish rate. Previous to the ceremony, the rev. C. Bird delivered an appropriate address. The stone was then laid with the usual ceremonies. On the 4th of November, 1832, the new church was opened for divine service. It consists of chancel, nave, western bell turret, vestry on south of nave, with a gallery on the north side of the nave. It affords room for three hundred and fifty worshippers, whilst the old church had only ninety-four sittings.

Two bells were placed in a turret at the west end, when the church was rebuilt in 1832. They are both of that date, but bear no inscription. Registers begin in 170 $\frac{3}{4}$. The old vicarage house, now a picturesque ruin covered with ivy, is worthy of note. The Shaftoe charity is said to have been spent in buying land and building this old house. The new vicarage was built by vicar Heslop. In the church there is a 'three-decker,' with a sounding-board over, and a curious font, a stone octagonal basin, ten inches in diameter, on a wooden octagonal stem, four feet high. On the west side of the south door is a tombstone bearing the inscription:—HERE LIETH | RICHARD TEAS | DALE OF SLELEY | GENTLEMAN | DIED THE FIRST | DAY OF MARCH | ANO DOMINI | 1635.

The communion plate has been described by Mr. Blair in the *Proceedings* of the Society.⁵

⁴ Memorandum.—Quod xxij^o die Novembris, anno Domini millesimo ccc^{mo} xij^o, concessit dominus xl dies indulgentiae omnibus conferentibus de bonis suis, ad fabricam ecclesiae de Slaveley, Dunelmensis diocesis. *Bp. Kellawe's Register*, I. p. 254.

⁵ Vol. iii. p. 272.

SLALEY VICARS AND CURATES.

- A.D. 1501, William Thompson.
- „ 1577, Jan. 25, Cuthbert Pattenson, Scotus. He had no letters of orders or licence. In Bishop Barnes's *Visitation* he was admonished to serve no longer till he be licenced.
- „ 1578, July 15, Edward Thompson.
- „ 1604, Peter Gillaspie.
- „ 1612, John Smith.
- „ 1662, Andrew Turner.
- „ 1671, Matthew Wrightson.
- „ 1710, John Sleigh.
- „ 1712, William Richardson.
- „ 1723, Feb. 2, John Toppling, clerk, after death of Richardson.
- „ 1740, Matthew Robinson, A.M.
- „ 1756, William Wharton, clerk, after death of Robinson. Patron, Sir Walter Blackett, Bart. The burial register states:—'1774, Dec. 27th. Then was buried the Rev. W. Wharton.'
- In 1773, Thomas Martindale,
Jonaⁿ. Jefferson,
William Dalston,
John Orton,
A. Brown, P.C. of Whitley, } All sign the registers as curates.
- „ 1775-1792, Thomas Martindale, minister. He died March 24th, 1792, aged 76 years.
- „ 1792-1811, Richard Close, curate.
- „ 1811, Jn^o. Jopling, curate.
- „ 1812-1821, W. Harrison, curate.
- „ 1821-1823, G. Thompson, minister.
- „ 1823-1830, Jos. Smith, minister.
- „ 1831-1832, H. Armstrong, curate.
- „ 1832, Richard Heslop, P. curate. The present church and vicarage were built during his incumbency.
- „ 1850, Blythe Hurst, Ph.D., incumbent. A linguist of superior attainments.
- „ 1854, W^m. Sisson, the present vicar, who is also vicar of Whitley (or Hexhamshire).

SLALEY REGISTERS.

- I. Contains baptisms, marriages, and burials, beginning A.D. 170 $\frac{3}{4}$. This consists of 9 pages on paper in poor condition.
- II. Contains baptisms, marriages, and burials, A.D. 1725 to 1752. 40 pages on parchment, good condition.
- III. Contains baptisms, marriages, and burials, also churchwardens' accounts, A.D. 1755 to 1769. 10 pages on paper, good condition.
- IV. Contains baptisms and burials, A.D. 1769 to A.D. 1812; also banns and marriages, A.D. 1754 to A.D. 1812. This and the following are on good strong paper and in good condition.
- V. Contains baptisms, A.D. 1813 to A.D. 1860.
- VI. Contains marriages, A.D. 1813 to A.D. 1837.
- VII. Contains burials, A.D. 1813 to present date.
- VIII. Contains baptisms, A.D. 1860 to present date.
- IX. Contains marriages (in duplicate), A.D. 1838 to present date.

The following are the earliest legible entries :—

BAPTISMS.

February y^e 29th, Anno Domini 1704.—Joseph Carr, son of William Carr, and Mary, his wife, were then Baptizd.

Septem^r y^e 12th, Anno Dom. 1703.—John Farbridge, son of John Farbridge, and Mary, his wife, was then baptizd.

Decem^r the 3^d, Anno Dom. 1705.—Leonard Farbridge, son of John Farbridge, & Mary, his Wife, was then Baptizd.

March y^e 5th, Anno Dom. 1705.—John Carr, son of William Carr, and Mary, his Wife, was then Baptizd.

MARRIAGES.

December the 28th, 1722.—Then was marryd by Publication Henry Carr, of this Parish, and Alice Milton, of St. Nicholas, in the City of Durham.

April y^e 23^d, An. Dom. 1723.—Then was Marryd by Publication Joseph Foster, in the Parish of Hexham, and Mary Linton, of y^e Parish of Slealey.

April y^e 24th, 1723.—Then was marry'd W^m Taylor, of this Parish, & Ann Spark, of y^e parish of Hexham, by Publication.

BURIALS.

26th [obliterated] [1720] An. Dom., Burials. . . . t Taylor was then buried.

. . . mber y^e 24th.—Gerrard Farbridge was then buried.

April y^e 12th, 1721.—M^r Tho. Teasdale was then buried.

April y^e 8th, 1725.—Then was buried a Strainger.

APPENDIX.

An Abstract of the title deeds of John Thornton, Esq. [of Netherwitton], to the Rectorys and tythes of Bywell St. Andrew and Slaveley in the County of Northumberland.

10 Oct. 5 Jac.—A Copy of a Grant from King James to Geo. Ward and Rob^t Morgan and their heirs (*inter alia*) of the Rectory and Church of Bywell St. Andrew, Count. Northumb., with its rights, members, and appur^{tes} of the yearly rent of 6li. 13s. 4d., late belonging to the Monastery of Blanchland in the s^d County, and also y^e Advowson, donation, free disposition, and right of patronage to the Vicarage Church of Bywell afores^d, with all the lands, tenements, tythes, meadows, pastures, feedings, court leets, view of frank Pledge, &c., to the said Rectory belonging, under the yearly rent of 6li. 13s. 4d., payable to his Maj^{ty}, his heirs, and successors. To be held of Mann^r of East Greenwich.

21 May, 6 Jac.—By bargain and sale inrolled in Chancery the said Geo. Ward and Rob^t Morgan grant and convey the said Rectory, advowson, Tythes, &c., of Bywell Andrew, as fully as his then Maj^{ty} granted the same to them (*inter alia*) by the Grant last above mentioned unto Cuthbert Radcliffe, of Blanchland, Esq., his heirs, and assigns, under the said Crown rent of 6li. 13s. 4d.

29 Oct. 9 Jac.—By Indenture reciting that Queen Elizabeth by her L^{res} Patents dat y^e 11 Aprⁱ, in the 21st year of her reign did grant to Sir Chr. Hatton, Kn^t, and his heirs (*inter alia*) all and all manner of tythes of what nature or kind soever of and in the town, fields, parish, and hamlet of Slaveley, in the s^d County of Northumberland, theretofore belonging to the late Monastery of Hexham, with all houses, buildings, barns, dovecots, orchards, gardens, gleablands, meadows, pastures, Tythes as well greater as lesser, advowson, gift, free disposition, and right of patronage to the Vicarage of Slaveley aforesaid, as fully as her s^d Maj^{ty} held the same, reserving to her s^d Maj^{ty}, her heirs, and successors for the s^d prem^{ies} the yearly rent of 6li. 13s. 4d. for the maintenance of a fit minister or Clerk in the Church or Chapel of Slaveley afores^d, which s^d Tythes and prem^{ies} in Slaveley the s^d S^r Chr. Hatton by Indre of Bargain and sale inrolled in Chancery Dat. 12 of the s^d April in y^e s^d 21 of her s^d Maj^{ty}'s reign, did grant to S^r John Foster and his heirs, who conveyed the same to S^r John Fenwicke and his heirs. He the s^d S^r John Fenwicke grants and conveys the s^d Tythes, advowson, and prem^{ies} in Slaveley afores^d to the abovenamed Cuthbert Radcliffe, Esq., and his heirs, renewing the yearly rent of 4li. towards payment of y^e yearly rent reserved by the s^d L^{res} Patents, for Slaveley, and also the s^d rent of 6li. 13s. 4d. for Ministers wages or Stipend.

(A Counterpart of this conveyance executed by Radcliffe.)

6 Oct. 11 Jac.—By Indenture reciting as in the last above-mentioned Indenture is recited the s^d Sir John Fenwicke grants and conveys the s^d Tythes, advowson, and prem^{ies} in Slaveley afores^d to John Radcliffe, of Blāchland, Gent., and his heirs under y^e s^d rent of 4li., and the said rent for Ministers wages of 6li. 13s. 4d.

(A Counterpart of this deed signed by John Radcliffe.)

29 Oct. 9 Car.—The said John Radcliffe by his last will and testament gives to his brother Anthony his Rectory of Bywell Andrew and the Chappelry of Slaveley, and to his brother William all his moyety of Corn Tythes in Chester [*i.e.*, Chester-le-Street], and makes his said brothers executors of his said will.

22 Oct. 1647.—A probate of the last will and testament of William Radcliffe, whereby he gives the Tythes of Slaveley Parish, and the Tythes or Rectory of Bywell Andrew to his sister, Jane Witham, and her heirs.

25 May, 1649.—By Indenture John Witham and the s^d Jane (his then wife) grant and convey unto John Thornton, of Netherwitton, Gent., and his heirs all their messuage or tenement called Hassewell, alias Hassiwell, in the County of Northumb^d, with a pasture there called Wāttefield, alias Watchman's Bogg, and all that Rectory and Church of Bywell Andrew, the free gift, and right of patronage of the Vicarage of Slaveley, one rent charge of 8li. per annum issuing out of West Calecoates, one other rent charge of 12li. out of the Mann^r of North Charlton, one other of 40li., out of Great Swinburne, West Swinburn, Cockwell, Whiteside Law, and Holmes Haugh, one free rent or White rent of 40s. out of Great Framlington and Little Framlington, one other of 40s. out of Todburne

and Horseley, and one other of 39s. 11d. out of Riplington, and also the Moyety or one half of the Prebend, Rectory, and Vicarage of Chester in the Street afores^d. To hold to the s^d John Thornton and his heirs, to the use of John Witham and Jane, his wife, for the life of the s^d Jane, then to the use of the s^d John Thornton and his heirs, Provided the s^d John Thornton, after the death of the s^d Jane, did pay to his brother Henry Thornton and his heirs the yearly rent of 30li. per annum, if the s^d Henry did pay to Margaret Thornton, his sister, 100li., and the further sum of 200li. if the s^d Jane did appoint and declare the same by her last will and testament.

A Copy of the Capcōn of a fine of the s^d prem'es from the s^d Witham et Ux. to the s^d John Thornton.

1 Apr. 1653.—By Indenture the s^d John Thornton covenants to stand seized of the Rectory and Tythes of Bywell Andrew and Slaveley and the advowson thereof, and of one moyety of the Prebend Rectory and Vicarage of Chester to the use of himself for life, then to the use of Henry Thornton and the heirs of his body. In default of such to the use of William Thornton and the heirs of his body, and for default of such, to the right heirs of him the said John Thornton.

3 June, 1659.—A Copy of the said Jane Witham's will, whereby she constitutes her son, Henry Thornton, sole executor of all her estate, real and personal, provided that he pay to her daughter, Marg^t Thornton, sister to the s^d Henry, the sum of 300li. pursuant to the deed of the 25 of May, 1649, above-mentioned.

1 and 2 Oct. 36 Car. 2.—By Indentures of Lease and Release, the release being 3-partite and made between the s^d Henry Thornton of the first part, Edward Burdett and Anthony Anderson of the 2^d part, and Richard Pepper of y^e 3^d part, the s^d Henry Thornton grants and conveys the s^d Rectorys, Tythes, advowsons, and prem'es of and in Bywell and Slaveley, the s^d moyety of the Prebend, Rectory, and Vicarage of Chester, to the s^d Burdett and Anderson and their heirs to make them tenants of the freehold, in order to suffer a recovery thereof. The uses whereof is thereby declared to be to the use of such person and persons for such estates charged with such annual paym^{ts} and with such sums of money as the s^d Henry Thornton should by any writing or last will in writing direct or appoint, and subject thereunto To the use of the s^d Henry Thornton, his heirs, and assigns for ever.

Hil. Pro. 36 of 37 Car. 2.—An Exemplification of a recovery of the prem'es pursuant to the deed last abovementnd, wherein Richard Pepper is demant. against the said Burdett and Anderson on Tenants and the said Henry Thornton le Vouchee..

14 Mar. 4 Jac. 2. 1687.—A Copy of the last will and testament of the s^d Henry Thornton, whereby he gives and devises the s^d moyety of the s^d Prebend, Rectory, and Tythes of Chester in the street, with the appurtenances, to his nephew, Nicholas Thornton, and his heirs, and gives to his cousin, Marg^t Sackville, an annuity of 10li. per annum for her life, chargeable on the Rectory

of Bywell Andrew and tythes of Bywell Andrew and Slaveley afores^d, payable half-yearly at Pent. and Martinmas; and devises the s^d Rectory, advowson, Tythes, and prem'es of and in Bywell Andrew and Slaveley aforesaid to his sister, Marg^t Thornton, for her life. Then to her executors for 7 years from her death for payment of her debts, subject to the s^d 10li. per annum given to Sackville, and after the expiration thereof gives the s^d tythes and premises to his s^d nephew, Nicholas Thornton, and his heirs, subject to the s^d annual payment of 10li. above-mentioned, and further devises to his s^d sister Marg^t and her heirs an annual rent charge of 8li. issuing out of Shelley, one other of 6li. per annum out of one messuage or tenement in Kirkley, and out of all other the lands late of Sir Nicholas Thornton in Northumberland, and makes the said Margaret, his sister, executrix of his said will.

By memorandum the s^d Henry Thornton wills That his s^d sister Margaret enjoy Chester Tythes for her life, and in defect of such enjoyment gives a rent charge of 20li. chargeable on Bywell Andrew and Slaveley Tythes to the s^d Margaret and her heirs, But in case the s^d Margaret enjoy Chester Tythes for her life, then all his said tythes to come to his s^d nephew, Nicholas Thornton, and his heirs.—Hodgson's *MS. Materials*, M. p. 100 and S. p. 101.

John Thornton, whose name stands at the head of these abstracts, was son and heir of the above-named Nicholas. By the marriage of his grand-daughter, Margaret, to Walter Trevelyan, the Slaley tithes passed into the hands of the Trevelyans of Netherwitton. Two fields near the church, still known as Glebe Fields, belong to that family. The tithes, passed by sale into the hands of the Silvertops, and are at present held by Mr. Witham, of Lartington, who pays to the vicar of Slaley the annual sum of £6 13s. 4d., and provides wine for holy communion. The patronage of Slaley is now in the hands of Mr. W. B. Beaumont.

MERCHINGLEY OR MARCHINGLEY HERMITAGE IN THE PARISH OF SLALEY.

In the thirteenth century a hermitage existed at a place called Merchingley or Marchingley, in Northumberland, on land belonging to Walter de Bolbeck, and granted by him to two monks from Kelso, about the year 1280. From the names of places and the boundaries mentioned in the following charters I have come to the conclusion that the hermitage and church of St. Mary must have been situated within the parish of Slaley, and not far from the borders of the present parish of Healey; somewhere near the burn now called March burn, which forms the boundary. Unfortunately, the name Marchingley has entirely disappeared, and no traces of the hermitage or of the church now remain to mark the spot. It has been suggested

that Slaley church (of which the dedication is lost) may have been the church of St. Mary, mentioned in the charters. That could not have been the case, for the church of Slaley was given to the priory of Hexham by Gilbert de Slaveley, who was living in 1239, and Slaley was assessed as a rectory in 1292. Further investigation may throw light upon this subject, but at present the exact site of the hermitage is unknown.

The following is a summary of charters in the Kelso Register, *Liber de Calchou*, respecting Merchingley :—

No. 264. Walter de Bolbech, &c. I have conceded to God and St. Marie and brother William de Mercheleye and all his successors a certain hermitage [*heremitorium*] which is called Merchingleye, and formed 'de vasto meo,' out of my waste near Merchingburn, with the church of St. Marie there constructed, with all appurtenances, &c., in wood and in plain, in meadows, in waters, in dams and mills, and in common easements, & in all common pastures through the whole of my land and my forest, & free exit & entry to their men and their animals through the whole of my land from whatever of the aforesaid places they wish; and they shall receive beyond their marches of my green wood to build, & of dead to burn as much as they wish; and they shall be quit of punage, 'de dominicis forcis suis.' This hermitage he concedes for ever to the aforesaid brother William & to all the men of religion his successors, for his soul & that of his wife Sibille, & for the souls of his heirs, his ancestors, & successors, to be held as a free alms gift. Witnesses—Sibilla de Bolbech, Reginald de Kennebelle, Osbert the monk, Wdard the parson, Symund de Kent, Robert de Grej & others.

No. 265. Confirmation. Walter de Bolbech, son of Walter de Bolbech, at the petition & with the consent of Hugo de Bolbech his brother & heir, confirms for ever to God & St. Mary & William & Roger, monks of the Kelso order, a certain hermitage called Merchingleie, which is founded of the waste of my father & mine near Merchingburne, with the church of St. Marie built in the same place with all appurtenances; by these bounds, to wit: whatever is contained below their enclosures [*claustras suas*, it may be cloisters] on either side of Marchinburne by the circuit of the ford of the Potters [*per circuitum de vado figulorum*], as far as the ford where Stainesden-burne descends into Merchingburne, in wood & plain, &c., & in all common easements & liberties, & in common pastures everywhere through the circuit of the aforesaid hermitage, on either side of Marchinburne through my land & my forest, & wheresoever the said William or Roger had their animals in the time of my father, & of others [as if they had squatted here

before de Bolbeck's time], & in my time, & free exit & entry to them & their men through all my land & forest from whatever side of the aforesaid place they wish. If one of these monks die, the hermitage is granted to the other of them. After the decease of both monks, the aforesaid hermitage of Merchinglee, with the aforesaid church of St. Marie constructed there & its appurtenances, is to pass to one monk or two of the habit & order of Kelso, & of no order or habit of religion unless of the order of the church of Kelso, without subjection however to church of Kelso or of any other house of religion of another order. Witnesses : Sibilla de Bolbech, Hugo de Bolbech her son, Gilbert de laual [Delaval], Robert de Insula, Reginald de Kennebelle, Robert Morell & others.

No. 266. Confirmation, by the same Walter de Bolbech in somewhat similar terms, stipulating that two monks & no more shall always have the alms gift of Mercheleye. William de fenwic appears as a witness along with some of the preceding.

No. 267. Confirmation upon 26 acres of land near Heleychesters. Hugo de Balliol concedes to God & St. Mary & Roger the monk of Merchinglega & all the monks his successors in the place of Merchingleye, who are to serve God in perpetuity, 26 acres of land near Heleychestres, which Eustace, my father, gave to him in free, pure, & perpetual almsgift. This gift Hugo de Balliol now confirms, 'with all common easements & liberties to him & his men & animals everywhere upon my land, &c. Witness : Ingelram de Balliol, Bernard de Balliol, Henry de Vi-Guidone [*i.e.*, Guido] de fontibus, Hugo de Normanvilla, and many others.

The editor of the Kelso charters conjectures that the date of these is about A.D. 1280. Hugo de Bolbeck, as appears from the *Testa de Neville*, held 'the moiety of Bywell by five fees of ancient feofment.' The manor of Merchenley, 6 Edw. II., belonged to Walter de Huntercumbe and Alicia, his wife, daughter and heiress of Hugo de Bolbeck.⁷

Merthenley, in Northumberland [misprint for Merchingley], belonging to Kelso, valued at 58s. 10d., was in the reign of John Balliol confiscated to Edward I. (May 10th, 1296) and delivered to them again.⁸ On the Healey side of the March burn there are two

⁷ *Inq. p.m.* i. p. 250.

⁸ *Historical Documents, Scotland*, ii. p. 48. An extract from the Pipe Rolls. 29 Edw. I. In it the lands held by Scotchmen in Northumberland are set out. The name of the lands, the name of the hold, and the amount payable in respect of the holding only, are given in each case. The entry referred to in the text occurs in these terms :—'Merthenley (Abbatis de Kelsou) summa lviij. x*d.*' To this there is the following note :—'Idem reddit compotum de liijs. x*d.* receptis de ij busselis frumenti j quart. multurae venditis antequam liberaret easdem terras abb. ti de Kelesou per breve regis de magno sigillo.' In a letter to the

houses, now called Hill Top and Rigg End. Formerly they were Wheat Hill and March's House.

The monks of Kelso were a reformed class of the Benedictine order, first established at Tiron, in France, in the year 1109, and hence called Tironenses. They were, in 1113, introduced by David I. to Selkirk, but that place being found unsuitable for such an establishment, the monastery was transferred to Kelso in 1128. Among the witnesses to the foundation charter of Selkirk there appears the name of Walter de Bolbec. This has led some of the Roxburgh topographers to believe that Hermitage in Liddesdale was Merchingley, and that all memory of it had been effaced. But neither de Bolbeck nor the Balliols had any land in Liddesdale. Besides, the charters show that the lands of these noblemen either surrounded the hermitage, or were in such contiguity, that common pasture for their animals was within reach. On the other hand, they both had possessions in the neighbourhood of Slaley and Healey, between which two parishes flows the dividing stream still known as the March burn [*i.e.*, boundary burn], and a small tributary which joins it a little below Slaley bears the name of Stoney burn. Here we have the more modern forms of the Marchinburne and Stainesden-burne mentioned in charter No. 265; and it is remarkable that a tradition still survives among the old inhabitants of Slaley that the neighbourhood was originally occupied by squatters. When we examine the names of places with which Merchingley was associated we find further proof that it was situated in this locality. In the list of manors of Hugh de Bolbeck it is placed thus:—‘Ridinges maner’, Merchenley maner’, Bromhalle maner’, etc.’ The March burn enters the Tyne between the townships of Riding Mill and Broomhaugh. The same may be gathered from a record of the damage done by the Scots under David Bruce, when they devastated this neighbourhood in 1346.

writer Dr. J. Anderson writes:—‘I see that in the previous April there is a list of the names of those dwelling in the kingdom of Scotland who possess lands and tenements in Northumberland which have been confiscated, and are in the king’s (Edward’s) hands. In that list the abbot of Melrose is followed by the abbot of Kelso, and in the list of the lands which I have quoted (p. 348) the lands of Trolhope are given in the line before those of Merthenley thus: ‘Trolhope (abbatis de Meuros) summa xliis. iiij*l*.,’ and there is a note in similar terms of an accounting for the price of pasture sold before the said lands were freed to the abbot of Melrose by brief of the king under the great seal; so that I have no doubt that both abbots got back their lands.’

Bain's *Record Book*, vol. iii. No. 1501, August 14, 1347, gives it as follows :—

Inquisition [in virtue of two writs tested Redyng 8th June preceding] taken at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Tuesday the Eve of the Assumption of the B.M.V., 21 Edw. III., before Hugh de Sadelyngstanes and Adam de Walton, royal commissioners, to inquire into the damages of Robert de Herle and his tenants in Northumberland by 12 jurors, who find that the lands of said Robert and his tenants at Styford, Neubigging juxta la Blaunchelaunde, Bromhalgh, Ryding, Merchenley, Shildeforde, and Shotteley, of which he owns half, and also the vill of Slaueley, of which he is sole lord, were totally destroyed and laid waste by David de Bruys, and other Scots enemies with a great host, riding over them, on Sunday next before St. Luke Evangelist's day [15th October] 1346, the houses, crops, &c., burned, and the tenants plundered of 70 oxen, 83 cows, 142 bullocks and queys, 32 avers, 316 sheep and muttons, and other goods; the said Scots riding, burning, destroying, wasting and plundering the vills. [No seals.] —*Inq. ad quod damnum*, 21 Edw. III. No. 3.

Marchingley, in this document, is clearly placed in *Northumberland*, and in the possession of Robert de Herle. Kelso lost Marchingley in the reign of Edward I., but it was restored to them again. It would be finally annexed to England in the reign of Edward III. In the reign of Richard II. it was granted to John of Creswelle. 'The king in exoneration of his father's soul, and discharge of a debt of 340 "guineas," arrears of the annuity of 40 "guineas" due by him to the late John of Creswelle, who was in his service for life, in the Castle of Bordeaux, grants to John de Creswelle his son (*inter alia*) 10 acres of land in Marchenley and parcels of a toft, and 15 acres of land which were the abbot of Kelso's in Scotland, an annual rent of 2s. for an acre in Bamburgh, which was the prioress and nuns of Caldestreme's in Scotland. To be held for life, if the King or his heirs retain them, for a white greyhound yearly in full of all services. Westminster.'⁹

On the western borders of the Slayey parish, not far from Linnels Bridge, on the Devil's Water, is Nunsbrough, the site of an old convent. For a description of the place see Hutchinson's *Northd.* vol. i. p. 172.

⁹ *Patent*, 10 Ric. II. p. 2, m. 18.—*Cf.* Bain's *Record Book*, vol. iv. No. 361. Dec. 14, 1386, Ric. II.