

VII.—OBITUARY NOTICE OF THE LATE REV. JOHN WALKER, RECTOR OF WHALTON AND HONORARY CANON OF NEWCASTLE.

By J. C. HODGSON, M.A., F.S.A., vice-president.

[Read on the 27th July, 1910.]

On the 22nd of June death deprived this society of one of its most esteemed members—the Rev. John Walker, rector of Whalton.

Mr. Walker became a member of the society on the 25th of March, 1891, and although his professional and social duties did not permit him to attend the monthly meetings with regularity, his personality and genial presence made him welcome to his fellow members whenever he was able to do so. For a time he was a member of the council.

Born in the parish of Gigg, near Bury, Lancashire, on the 10th of February, 1837, Mr. Walker was educated at St. Bees College, was ordained deacon in 1865 on a title given him by the Rev. John Reed, vicar of Newburn, Northumberland, and was admitted to priest's orders in the following year. After serving in the diocese of Durham for five years he became curate of the parish church of Stockport in 1870, but subsequently returned to Northumberland and became curate of Ponteland in 1876 and of Whalton in 1878. Two years later he was presented to the rectory of Whalton, the advowson of which has been in his wife's family since the reign of queen Elizabeth. Here the remainder of a full and useful life was spent, and here he died.

There was apparently no limit to Mr. Walker's activity. In 1878 he became a free-mason, in which society he attained high masonic rank. In the same year he became a member of the Berwickshire Naturalists Club, of which he was president in 1897. In 1882 he became poor-law guardian in the Castle Ward Union. In 1887 he was appointed honorary secretary of the Church Extension Committee of the diocese of Newcastle—his

services in that capacity and to the diocese in other ways being recognized by his bishop, who, in 1897, made him an honorary canon of Newcastle and in 1902 rural-déan of the deanery of Morpeth—and in 1900 he succeeded the late Mr. C. B. P. Bosanquet as honorary secretary of the Poor Law conference for the four northern counties.

As was right and proper, Mr. Walker took an intelligent and sympathetic interest in his own parish church, and he was ever ready, not only to describe its features, but to extend to this society a warm welcome to his house and a genial hospitality. Only last year he procured the printing by the Durham and Northumberland Parish Register Society, of the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials of Whalton from the year 1661 to 1812. But great as was his interest in archaeology, his love of horticulture was yet deeper, and never perhaps was he happier than when pacing his old and beautiful garden and explaining his methods of treatment of rare plants; *Et disputavit super lignis a cedro . . . usque ad hyssopum quae egreditur de pariete.*

It is to be regretted that Mr. Walker did not more frequently contribute to the transactions of this society, but the following archaeological papers written by him have been printed:—

Report of a Meeting of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club at Morpeth for Belsay, 2 June, 1897, with notes on Gubeon, Ogle, etc. *History of Berwickshire Naturalists' Club*, vol. xvi, p. 137.

Report of a Meeting of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club at Kelso for the Head of Bowmont Water, 30 June, 1897. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

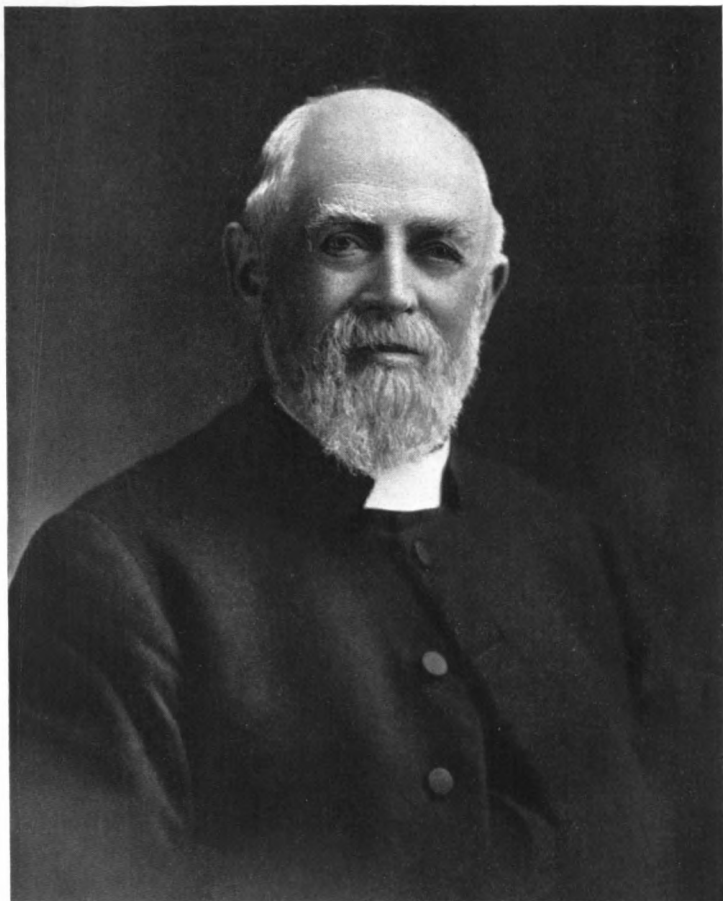
Report of a Meeting of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club at Morpeth for Kirkwhelpington, 28 July, 1897, with notes on Kirkharle. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

Report of a Meeting of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club at Reston for Dowlaw, Fast castle and Coldingham Moor, 25 August, 1897. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

'Address delivered to the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club at Berwick, October 13, 1897.' *Ibid.*, p. 133.

On 'The Midsummer Bonfire at Whalton,' read before this Society, 25 November, 1903, and printed in *Arch. Ael.*, 2 ser., vol. xxv, p. 181.

Description of 'Whalton Church,' delivered 5 Aug., 1908, and printed in the *Proceedings*, 3 ser., vol. III, p. 269.



Your sincerely  
John Walker

THE LATE REV. JOHN WALKER:  
RECTOR OF WHALTON AND HON. CANON OF NEWCASTLE.

