

TRANSACTIONS.

NORTH MEOLS CHURCH, LANCASHIRE.

By *F. H. Cheetham, F.S.A.*

Read 23 October, 1930.

THE history of the Parish of North Meols was written in 1903 by the late Mr. William Farrer, D.Litt.,¹ who devoted rather more than a quarter of his book to ecclesiastical matters, a description of the church and its monuments being followed by an annotated list of the rectors and the names of the assistant clergy. There is therefore no need to go over the same ground, but since 1903 a certain amount of new information has come to light regarding both the church and parish, and the church itself has been largely rebuilt. Moreover, there are a few statements in Mr. Farrer's account of the fabric, and in earlier descriptions of the building, which require emendation, or the correctness of which, at any rate, is open to question. The object of this paper, therefore, is to examine certain of these statements in the light of later knowledge, and to describe in rather greater fullness than has before been attempted the successive changes in the plan and appearance of the building from 1730 to the present time; in fact, to supplement Mr. Farrer's account of the church and to bring it up to date.

To do this it will be necessary to cite briefly what some earlier writers have said about the building, in order to point out differences and mark similarities in the statements, some of which appear to have been made without

¹ *Hist. of the Parish of North Meols* (Liverpool, 1903).

adequate authority, or at any rate without the source of information being given.

Through the kindness of the rector, the Rev. Canon R. B. Blakeney, M.A., I have been able to examine all the papers in the parish chest in the church of North Meols, and I have also gone through all the North Meols papers now in the Diocesan Registry, Liverpool, but formerly at Chester. The papers in the parish chest fall into two main groups, (i) those dealing with purely ecclesiastical matters, and (ii) those belonging to the civil administration of North Meols township in the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century. The great interest and value of the Poor Law documents were shown by Mr. Rideout in a paper read before this Society in 1929,¹ but the other civil documents are of less importance and fewer in number.² They do not in any case fall within the scope of the present paper. The ecclesiastical papers before the beginning of the nineteenth century are disappointingly few, and unfortunately do not include any churchwardens' accounts. There are, in fact, no consecutive wardens' accounts until the year 1824, though the account for 1813, on a loose sheet, has been preserved,³ and there are a certain number of churchwardens' vouchers (receipts) for the period 1832-5. The absence of any accounts during the eighteenth century is much to be regretted, as they would probably have shown the exact nature of the rebuilding of the church in 1730-9. There are, however, two receipts of the year 1730 connected with the rebuilding, one of which has received little or no attention.⁴ The earliest faculty belongs to the year 1832, and is concerned with pews and a gallery. The

¹ *Poor Law Administration in North Meols in the Eighteenth Century*, *Trans. Hist. Soc. L. & C.*, 81, 62.

² In February, 1931, the purely civil papers were transferred to the custody of the Southport Corporation, and are now at the Town Hall. They include a series of Rate Books.

³ It is printed in Bland's *Annals of Southport* under that year.

⁴ See *infra*, p. 8.

papers at Liverpool are also disappointing as regards the history of the fabric. There is nothing which throws any light on the eighteenth-century rebuilding, and in the absence of a faculty, or a copy of the brief which was issued in March, 1733-4, the reason for the reconstruction, which was of a very extensive character, must remain conjectural.

Of the nature of the building before 1730 nothing definite is known. The question of the church's dedication to St. Cuthbert has been dealt with by the present writer in the *Society's Transactions*,¹ and need not be gone into again. The church is not mentioned in Domesday Book, but its known history goes back to the reign of King Stephen, when Warin Bussel, Baron of Penwortham,² granted it to Evesham Abbey, and both church and rectory continued in the possession of the abbey until the Dissolution.³ Some light is thrown on the condition of the fabric in the sixteenth century by the records of Visitations, at which either the churchwardens or the rector were presented for negligence. The following cases⁴ occur :

1556, August. The church suffers from want of repair.

1561, February. The church lacks reparation.

1563, March 29. The chancel is not in repair.⁵

c. 1569-91. During the incumbency of Peter Clayton the rector was enjoined to repair the chancel, "ruinated in his time," but he failed to appear.⁶

1592, October 9. Sentence of excommunication was pronounced against Ralph and Stephen Clayton, executors of the will of the last rector. Subsequently the sentence was recalled and the entry appears "The church in repaire. It appeareth

¹ Vol. 76, p. 71.

² North Meols was a member of the Barony of Penwortham.

³ Farrer, *op. cit.*, 59; *V.C.H. Lancs.*, iii, 227.

⁴ Taken from Mr. Farrer's book, under the names of the several rectors during whose incumbencies the visitations took place.

⁵ Thomas Stanley, Bishop of Sodor and Man, was then rector and non-resident.

⁶ No date given.

the chancel is repaired by the executors since the presentment and further by the relation of Mr. Wierden."¹

1598, September 19. The chancel out of repair, the windows want glass, and the roof ready to fall.

These records, interesting in themselves, provide no information about the plan or appearance of the church except that (as might be expected) it had a chancel. The Edwardian inventory (October 4, 1552), however, mentions "two bells in the steeple,"² from which it may be assumed that there was a tower at the west end, as at present. The existing tower, indeed, may be a rebuilding on the foundations of an older one, or may even incorporate some of the older masonry in its lower portion,³ but the south-west angle of the nave, with its diagonal buttress, and some portion of the wall on either side,⁴ is the only part of the building which can with certainty be pronounced mediæval.⁵ No architectural fragments belonging to the mediæval church have survived, and the date of the existing buttress cannot be older than the fourteenth century, and is most likely later. Architecturally, therefore, nothing is known about the pre-Reformation building, its history in this respect being a complete blank from 1598⁶ to 1730.

The earliest printed description of the building appears to be that written by Thomas Kirkland Glazebrook in his *Guide to South-Port* (1809), but it is chiefly concerned with the monuments. Of the fabric itself little is said:

The church is a neat building, apparently erected at three distinct periods, and from the tower part of the steeple there

¹ Farrer, *op. cit.*, 76.

² *Loc. cit.*, 60, where the inventory is printed in full.

³ The rough nature of the lower part of the walling inside is sometimes pointed to as indicating older work.

⁴ The old work extends about five courses of masonry above the top of the buttress.

⁵ With the possible exception of the foundations of part of the south wall of the old nave.

⁶ The date of the Visitation cited above.

is a beautiful prospect of the adjacent country.¹ . . . On entering the church by the south door and immediately passing the pulpit, over a seat lettered "B. F. Hesketh Esq.," a marble tablet affixed to the wall has the following inscription . . .

The Latin inscriptions on this and other tablets are then given, together with English renderings of the same.² This description, slightly extended,³ is repeated in the second edition of Glazebrook's *Guide* (1826), and again, with further additions and emendations, in Whittle's *Marina* (1831, Southport portion, p. 118).⁴

In Baines's *History and Gazetteer of Lancashire* (1825) the church is referred to merely as "a small plain stone building, erected at different times,"⁵ but in the larger *History of Lancashire* (1836) a fuller description is given. This, which is the first attempt at a proper architectural description of the building, is as follows :

The present church was erected in 1571. It is a small building without side aisles, dedicated to St. Cuthbert, and is disposed in a body, chancel, north transept, and a tower and vane 35 yards high. The church is lighted by five windows, of which three are on the south, and the others, which are semi-circular, in the chancel. The north wing and wall are brick. The interior is plain, the ceiling flat, and a wing or transept on the north is divided from the body by a wide massive arch. The churchwardens' seat bears the date 1683, and in 1705⁶ a small gallery was erected on the west ; in 1730 the greater part of the church was rebuilt, as appears by a date on the porch⁷ ; and in 1739

¹ The prospect is described.

² Glazebrook's English renderings of the inscriptions were used by Farrer. The tablets are those of (i) Wm. Hesketh (d. 1703) and his posthumous son of the same name (d. 1709), (ii) Roger Hesketh, d. 1791, and (iii) Thomas Fleetwood, of Bank Hall (d. 1717).

³ The church is described as "a neat stone building," and the bell given by John and Henry Hesketh in 1750 is mentioned. It is also recorded that "the spire has lately been repaired . . . it was partially taken down to prevent accident."

⁴ Whittle's account of Southport is largely borrowed from Glazebrook : see *Trans.*, 60, 113.

⁵ Vol. ii, p. 705.

⁶ An inscription with this date and the names of the churchwardens has been preserved. It is given in Farrer, *op. cit.*, 61.

⁷ There was no porch ; the date is over the south doorway.

the tower and spire were added to the fabric; a bell was presented in 1750, and in 1831¹ the church received an additional gallery. Four marble tablets are placed upon the interior in memory of members of the Fleetwood and Hesketh families.²

This description is repeated in the second (1870) and third (1893) editions of Baines, notwithstanding the fact that the greater part of the church had been rebuilt in 1860.³

Baines's statement that the church was "erected in 1571" is difficult to understand in the light of the presentments above cited, and I have been unable to find any confirmation of it. Mr. Farrer makes no allusion to it, though quoting the latter part of Baines's description. It can, I think, be disregarded, though unfortunately it has been copied by later writers. From Baines, however, we learn that the transept was built of brick, and it is possible that the north side of the nave was rebuilt in the same material when the transept was added.⁴ At what period this took place is nowhere recorded, but the transept is shown in a drawing of the church from the north-east made in 1803.⁵ It projected from the middle of the north wall of the nave, and had a doorway at its north end and two windows in its east wall.

That the tower was "added" to the fabric in 1739 is clearly a misstatement. This date is contained within a panel on the south side now enclosing the clock-dial, and may refer to the year when a former dial was erected, though the absence of wardens' accounts makes certainty impossible. It is, however, more likely that the work of

¹ The gallery was erected in 1832, but two pews had been introduced in 1831 (see *infra*, p. 11).

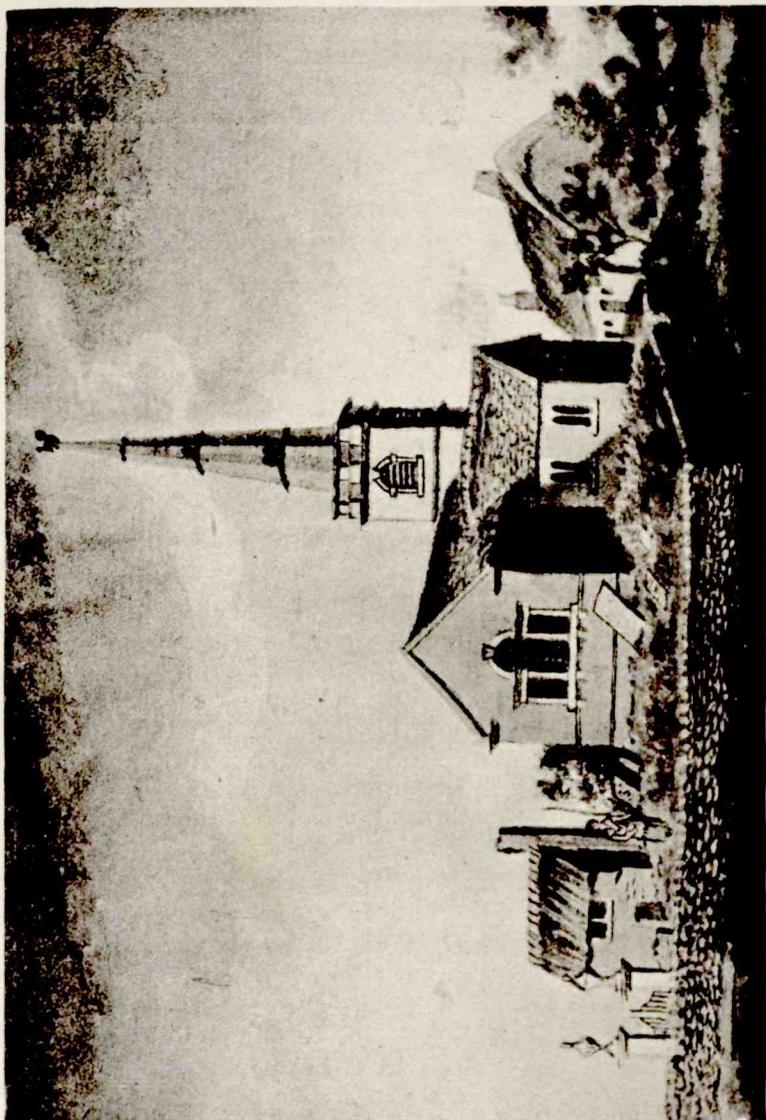
² Baines, *Lancashire*, iv, 275. The tablets are described.

³ Harland's ed. (1870), ii, 428; Croston's ed., v, 283; in the latter there is added "There is a stained window in the church."

⁴ It was, however, not unusual in the eighteenth century and later to build the north wall of a church in a plainer fashion and in less expensive materials than the rest of the building.

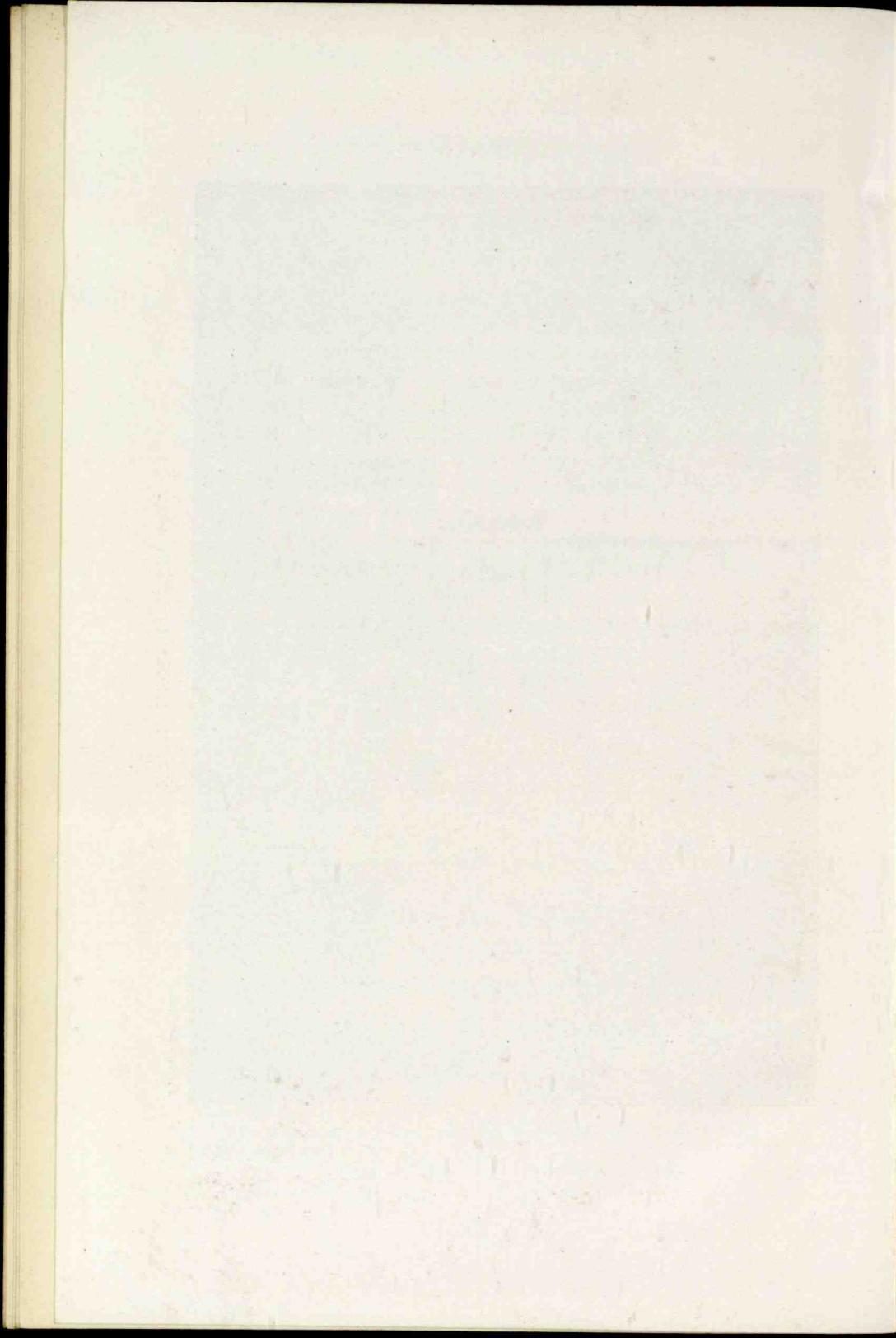
⁵ For an account of this drawing, see *Trans.*, 65, 177. The view is again reproduced here.

FIG. 1.



P. Aughton, fecit.

NORTH MEOLS CHURCH, 1803.



rebuilding the church, begun after the collection of the brief, was not completed until 1739.

In a short architectural description of the building written by Mr. C. R. (now Sir Charles) Peers for Mr. Farrer's book it is stated that "with the exception of the north aisle¹ and part of the chancel, which were built in 1860, the whole of the building dates from 1730." This, however, not only overlooks the existence of the old south-west buttress, but assumes that the work of rebuilding, begun in 1730, was completed in the same year. This, as will be shown later, was not the case; but otherwise the description is an excellent one of the building as it stood prior to the alterations and enlargement of 1908-9. Slightly altered, this description also served for the *Victoria History of Lancashire* (Vol. iii, p. 226), published in 1907, but the tower is there stated to have been erected in 1739.

THE BUILDING OF 1730-39.

The rebuilding of 1730 seems not to have extended beyond the south side. Over the south doorway are the names of the rector and wardens of that year and the date,² and the receipt already mentioned,³ dated October 10, 1730, is "in full of money due for building the said Parish Church side," i.e. the south wall of the church. This receipt, which is for £29 10s. 4d., is printed in full in Bland's *Annals of Southport*, where (under date 1730) it is stated that "during this year the greater part of the church was rebuilt."⁴ Bland styles it "a copy of one

¹ The northern extension of the nave is meant.

² Given in Farrer, *op. cit.*, 62.

³ *Supra*, p. 2.

⁴ *Loc. cit.*, 43; 2nd ed. (1903), 57. The receipt is written on a piece of paper measuring 7½ in. by 6½ in., and reads: "10 October 1730. Then rec^d of and from the Church-Wardens of North Meols the full and just sum of Twenty-nine Pounds ten shillings and four Pence in full of money due for building the said Parish Church side. I say rec^d in full of all acct., by me, GEO. MOFFITT. Test: Wm. Dickonson." Dickonson was the school-master.

of the receipts for work done," which shows that he either assumed, or knew of the existence of others. The earlier receipt already referred to as amongst the papers in the parish chest, is as follows :

8th Aug^t 1730 Then rec^d of Robert Ball, Church Warden of Nort[h Meols]¹ the sum of twenty shillings being in part of p[ayment]¹ due for the rebuilding of Parish Churchside [of North]¹ Meols afores^d. I say rec^d p. me, GE[O. MOFFITT].¹

On the back of this scrap of paper is written, apparently in Moffitt's own hand :

25th Sep^{br} 1730. Then received of Robert Ball the sum of ten shillings and 4 pence, by me GEO. MOFFITT.

It is therefore clear that the £29 10s. 4d. of the October receipt does not represent the total cost of rebuilding the south wall, as sometimes supposed, but was a payment "in full," i.e. in settlement. How much had been paid before is not known.

In all probability the rebuilding of 1730 was confined to the south wall of the church, the rest being left till later. This is supported by the fact that the Brief for North Meols Church was issued early in March, 1733-4. The charge was £1,292, but enquiry has so far failed to produce a copy of the brief itself, or the terms in which it is set out.² Farrer says that "the church appears to have been rebuilt in the year 1730 upon the site of an older building which had been destroyed by fire,"³ but he gives no authority for the latter part of the statement. There is no record of a fire among the church papers,

¹ The paper, which measures 8½ in. by 4 in., is torn at the right-hand bottom corner, and some of the words are lost. These are supplied in square brackets.

² Among the Chancery Miscellaneous Books (Bk. 3, p. 30) at the Public Record Office are entries of the receipt from the King's printers of specified numbers of briefs for distribution. The copies of that for "North Meols Church" were received March 8, 1733-4, and the brief is said to have been "lately granted to the Inhabitants of North Meeles pursuant to the petition of the said Inhabitants." Eleven thousand copies (a usual number) of the brief were printed and stamped.

³ *Op. cit.*, 61.

and some of the old seats which have survived show no signs of injury. If the church had been destroyed, or even badly damaged by fire in 1730 or earlier, it is unlikely that the grant of a brief would have been delayed until 1734. There was, however, a brief issued in March, 1753-4, for loss by fire at North Meols,¹ and two other places (not in Lancashire), and there has probably been some confusion between this and the earlier brief for the church.

The North Meols Church brief was received or collected in the following places ² at the times named :

			Collected.
1734.	Apr. 20.	Hambleton (Rutland)	0 2 9
"	June 30.	Drayton Beauchamp (Bucks)	0 0 0
"	July 28.	East Budleigh ³ (Devon)	0 0 8
"	Aug. 20.	Stanton St. John (Oxford)	0 1 4
"	Oct. 6.	Milnrow (Lancs)	0 0 2
"	Oct. 13.	Cowley (Oxford)	0 2 0
"	Nov. 7.	Ormskirk	0 15 0½
1735.	May 11.	St. Lawrence, Reading	0 10 8

Failing further evidence, it would appear that after the rebuilding of the south wall in 1730, nothing was done till 1734, when the completion of the work was decided upon. The collection of over £1,200 by brief would take some time and the further rebuilding may not have been begun till a year or more later, and extended until 1739.

As then completed the church consisted of a chancel

¹ The amount is not stated. The Chancery Miscellaneous Books show that 11,500 copies of this brief were received from the printers on March 5, 1753-4. The brief had been "lately granted to Peter Rymer and sufferers by Fire at North meols, etc., in Com. Lancaster, etc., pursuant to the humble Petition of the said poor sufferers." The other places were Yoxall (Staffs) and Worlington (Suffolk).

² No doubt many other instances occur.

³ The entry at East Budleigh is, "Collected a briefe for North Meols Church, 8d." In 1722 there was collected "a breife for the parrich of Nth. Meols in the County of Lancaster the sum of thre pens," but this apparently refers to the brief issued on account of the sufferers by the great Inundation in Lancashire in December, 1720. This brief is printed in full in Walford's *King's Briefs*, p. 44, and in it the parish of North Meols is mentioned first. The 1722 brief was not for the church as stated (in error) in Dr. Brushfield's alphabetical list (*Devonshire Briefs*, p. 139).

about 30 ft. by 18 ft. 6 in., nave 43 ft. by 19 ft. 6 in., and west tower 9 ft. 6 in. square, all these measurements¹ being internal. The chancel was lighted at the east end by a "Venetian" window of three lights and on the south side by two round-headed windows, and there were three round-headed windows and a doorway on the south side of the nave. The tower had a west doorway, its lower stage forming a porch lighted by a window on the south side. Of this building little now remains but the south wall² and the tower and spire, but the west doorway has long been blocked and the ground floor of the tower is now used as a vestry. No actual plan of the church as it existed prior to the addition of the north transept appears to have survived, but the plan attached to the faculty of 1859 shows the position of the transept and the seating of the building as it was immediately before the alterations of 1860. Though there was a slight break³ in the south wall at the junction of chancel and nave they were under a single roof,⁴ and there appears to have been no structural division internally between them, the Communion Table in 1859 occupying a space only about 9 feet deep at the east end. The rest of the "chancel" was filled with seats facing west, the pulpit (a three-decker) being against the middle of the south wall of the nave. The transept projected from the middle of the north wall to a depth of 30 ft. and was 24 ft. wide; it was filled with benches facing south towards the pulpit, and the seats at the west end of the nave faced east. A gallery occupied the whole of the western portion of the nave beyond the transept, and was approached by a staircase in the south-west corner. The date of the erection of the transept, as already stated, is not known.

¹ Taken from the plans attached to the Faculty of 1859.

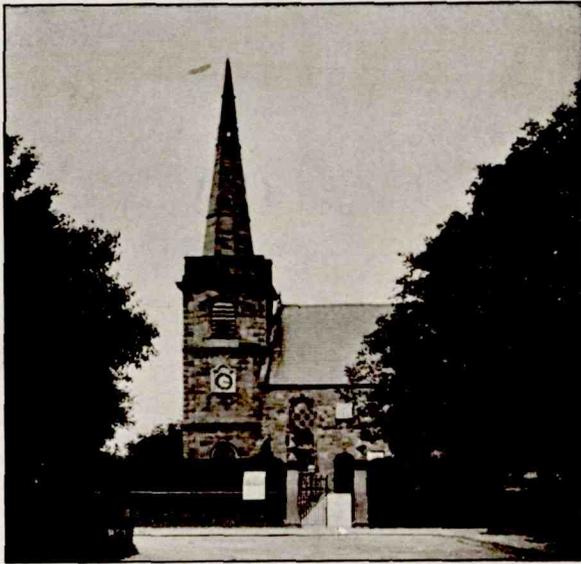
² The windows in this wall have been altered.

³ The break still remains, and probably marks the junction of the mediæval nave and chancel.

⁴ The ridge of the roof ranged with the centre line of the tower.

NORTH MEOLS CHURCH.

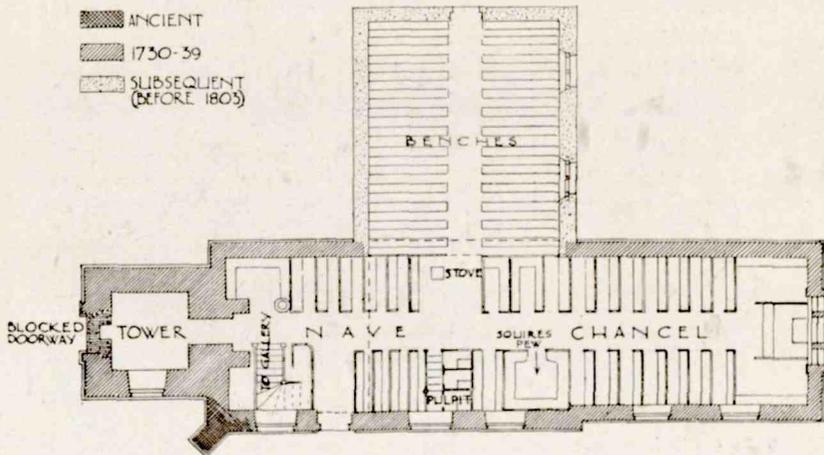
FIG. 2.



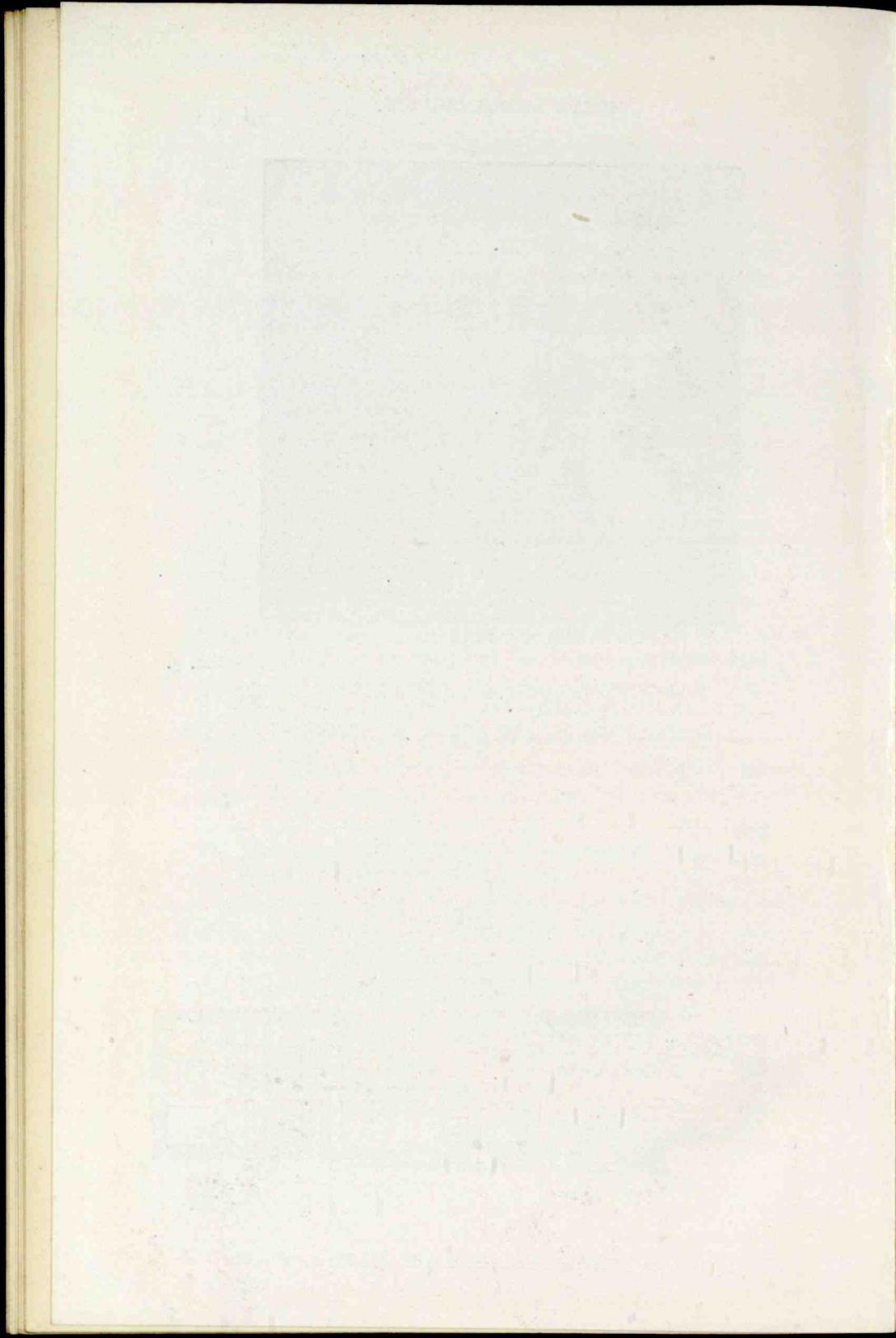
TOWER AND SOUTH DOORWAY, 1903.

FIG. 3.

NORTH MEOLS PARISH CHURCH
AS EXISTING IN 1859 PRIOR TO RECONSTRUCTION



SCALE OF 0 5 10 20 40 FEET



LATER CHANGES. THE ENLARGEMENT OF 1860.

At the Consistory Court, Chester, March 15, 1832, a faculty was granted to John Spencer and Thomas Baker, churchwardens, confirming the erection of two pews, nearly opposite the reading-desk, one for the use of strangers and the other for the churchwardens,¹ and authorizing the erection of a gallery in the north aisle or transept.²

In 1835 the Rev. Charles Hesketh became rector. He was the younger brother of Peter Hesketh Fleetwood, Esq.,³ one of the Lords of the Manor and patron of the living, and he himself, by purchase, became Lord of the Manor eight years later. It was during his long incumbency (he died in 1876) that the church was enlarged and took on the form that it retained until 1908, though some internal alterations, involving the re-arrangement of seats, etc., were made by his immediate successor. Charles Hesketh was a man of strongly marked individuality, and in his dual capacity of squire and parson achieved great influence and popularity. The success of his ministry necessitated the enlargement of the fabric, the church being found "greatly insufficient for the accommodation of the parishioners," and at a parish meeting held on July 29, 1859, it was resolved that the building be enlarged and "that such enlargement be made at the north-east and north-west portions of the church and should cover and enclose (certain) parts of the churchyard."⁴ The

¹ The pews are described as "lately erected"; that for the use of strangers measured 6 ft. by 5 ft., the other 6 ft. by 4 ft.

² The gallery is described as "of the dimensions and according to the plan deposited," but no plan accompanies the faculty. The expenses attending the erection of both pews and gallery were to be defrayed by a rate or rates to be assessed upon the Ley payers.

³ Created a baronet in 1838. He represented Preston in Parliament from 1832 to 1847, and was the founder of the town of Fleetwood.

⁴ The alterations were to be carried out with as little interference with the graves as possible, and in each case where a grave should be closed or interfered with, a fresh grave in the new portion of the churchyard was to be assigned to the owner.

faculty authorizing this enlargement was decreed on December 1, 1859, and the work was carried out during the years 1860-61.¹ Its extent is shown on the accompanying plan, taken from that attached to the faculty. Briefly it consisted of taking down almost the whole of the north wall and building it further out, in a line with the end of the transept, the side walls of which were, of course, removed. Actually this meant increasing the width of the nave by 30 ft. (the depth of the transept), and extending it eastward so as to cover about half the length of the old "chancel." The faculty describes the process of enlargement as "adding an east and west aisle" to the transept, which in a sense it did, but actually the "aisles"—each about 17 ft. wide—were merged in the body of the church which thus became a rectangular space measuring internally about 61 ft. by 48 ft., though technically it might be styled a nave with wide north aisle² covered by a roof of single span. The ridge, or centre line of the new roof, was consequently some distance north of that of the chancel, which now appeared merely as a small projection³ or excrescence at the south-east angle of the building. The covering of the widened nave by a single roof had also the effect of throwing its ridge far north of the centre line of the tower, and by its increased height of spoiling the proportions of both tower and spire.⁴ The enlargement entailed no interference with the then existing pews and sittings or of the general internal arrangements of the church, but

¹ The church was closed in May, 1860, and reopened June 13, 1861. During the rebuilding Divine Service was performed in the newly erected School (1859). On June 6, 1860, a marriage took place in the open air in front of the altar of the church, the ground having been cleared for the occasion: Bland, *Annals*, 131; 2nd ed., 154.

² But without structural division.

³ About 12 ft.

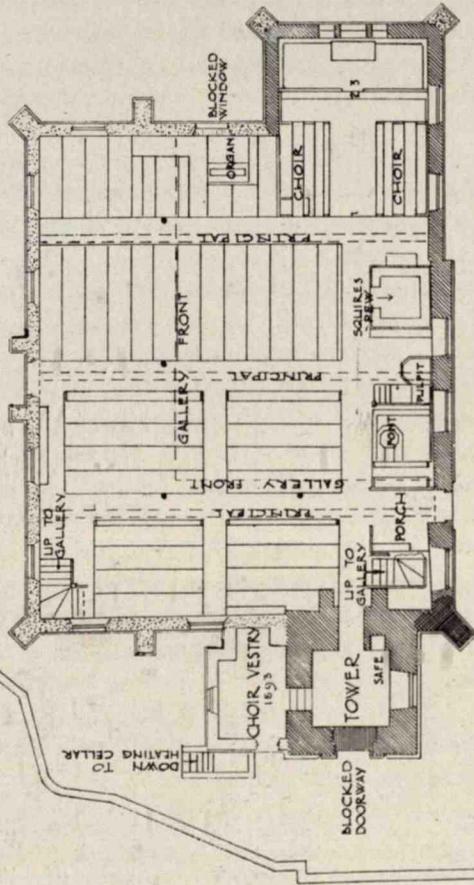
⁴ The spire had been rebuilt in 1850. The wardens' accounts for the year ending Easter, 1850, include "Scaffolding and taking down the spire of the Parish Church, estimate £30," and in the following year "Rebuilding the Church spire, estimate £60."

FIG. 4.

THE HESKETH
VALLT

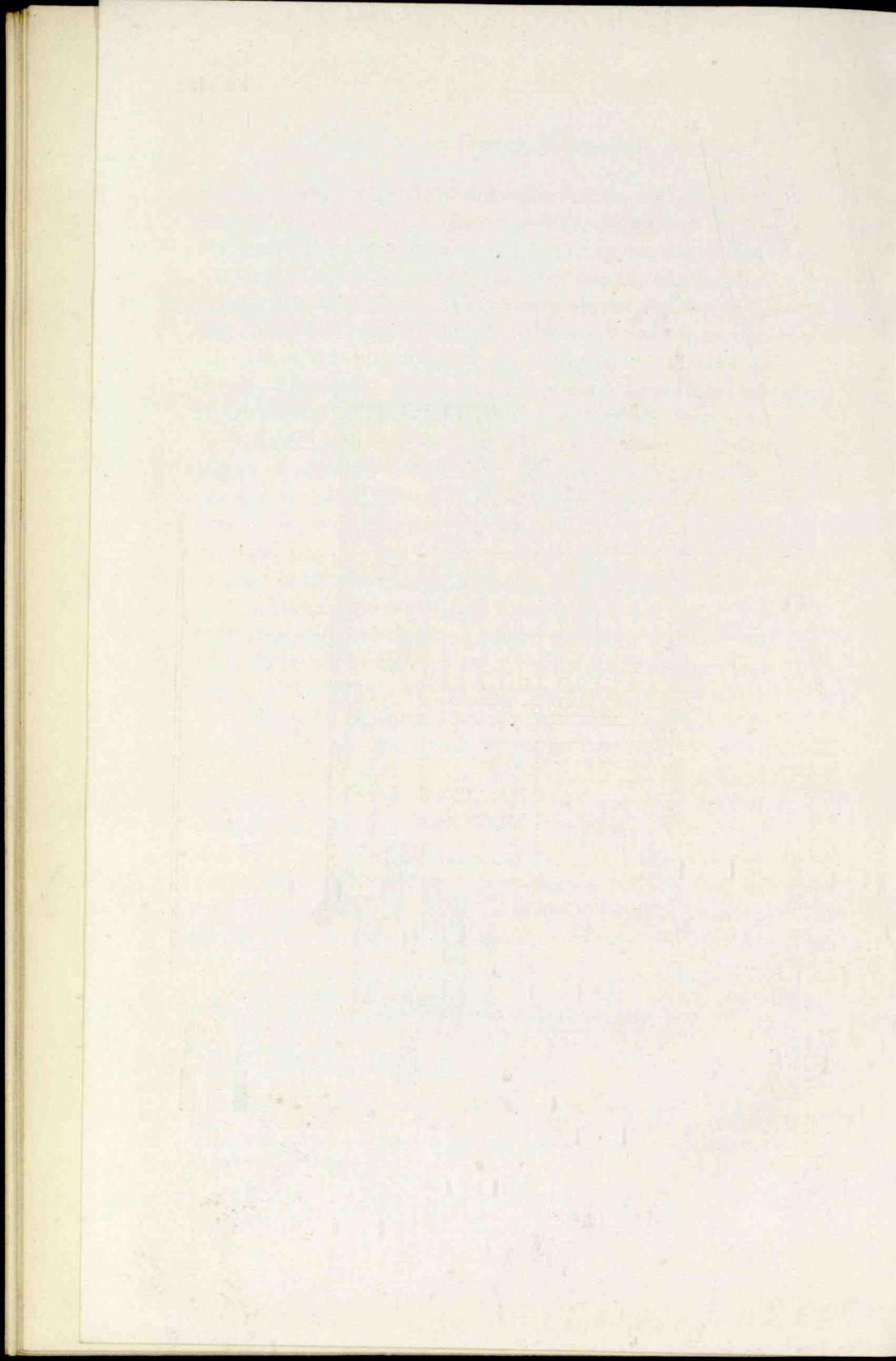
NORTH MEOLS PARISH CHURCH
AS EXISTING IN FEBRUARY 1908 PRIOR
TO RECONSTRUCTION

RETAINING WALL



- ANCIENT
- ▨ 1730 - 59
- ▩ 1860

SCALE OF 0 10 20 30 40 FEET



a new gallery 17 ft. wide was erected along the north side, and the west gallery was extended northward to meet it, access to which was by a new staircase in the north-west corner. These two widely-projecting galleries covered more than half the total floor space of the nave.¹ By this enlargement² the seating capacity of the building was increased by 300, the total accommodation being 900. The east window was filled with stained glass, and a new three-decker pulpit was erected in the old position as a tribute of respect to the rector.

ALTERATIONS IN 1887.

The building remained without further alteration during the incumbency of the Rev. Charles Hesketh, but after his death in 1876, his nephew and successor, the Rev. Charles Hesketh Knowlys, sought to "render the church more comely and convenient for Divine Service,"³ by modifying certain of the internal arrangements. The old rector had been an uncompromising Protestant Evangelical, untouched by either the Oxford Movement or the Gothic Revival, and Mr. Knowlys, being of a somewhat more "advanced" school of thought, found his efforts meet with considerable opposition. At a largely attended meeting of the parishioners held September 16, 1886, the rector brought forward his proposals and submitted plans, but he failed to secure the approval of the meeting. He was opposed by Mrs. Hesketh, patron of the living and Lady of the Manor (widow of the late rector), and her son Colonel E. Fleetwood Hesketh,⁴ and also by two of the three churchwardens, Mrs. Hesketh putting forward a scheme of her own. The rector, however, proceeded

¹ About 1,564 sq. ft. of a total of 2,928 sq. ft.

² No rate was laid for the purpose of this enlargement, the whole expense, which is stated to have been £1,500, being met by voluntary subscriptions.

³ Terms of application for faculty.

⁴ Colonel Hesketh, however, died on October 18 following.

to apply for a faculty,¹ supported by his own warden,² and eventually, after "having heard, seen and understood, and fully and materially discussed the merits and circumstances of the cause," the Chancellor (Rev. T. E. Espin, D.D.) gave judgment at a sitting of the Liverpool Consistory Court held at St. Nicholas' Church, March 8, 1887. The case was reported at some length in the Liverpool press next day, and from one of these reports the following particulars are, in the main, taken.³

The litigation, it was said, had been before the Court for some months. The case was a complicated one. The rector had applied for authority to make very extensive alterations throughout the church, and though supported by his warden and some parishioners he was opposed by others. Moreover, the patron, Mrs. Hesketh, objected strongly to certain portions of the proposed alterations, and had propounded other plans as regards the nave and the position of the pulpit,⁴ etc. The parishioners who objected to the rector's proposals were understood to be ready to agree to those made by Mrs. Hesketh, who, moreover, was willing to bear the expense of carrying them into effect.⁵ There were thus before the Court

¹ The citation to lead to a Faculty "for reseating and otherwise altering the Church, and for confirming the removal of a certain pew" is dated September 17, 1886.

² For the appointment of Churchwardens, see *infra*, p. 26.

³ There were two suits to be decided, one of which, however, was a comparatively simple matter, being a complaint by Mr. Gregson (warden in 1885-6) that the rector had removed the doors of the pulpit and prayer-desk, and also a sitting in the chancel, without authority. The allegations were admitted, and the rector, being held to have acted irregularly, was ordered to pay £5 *nomine expensarum*. It was stated in evidence, however, that Mr. Gregson had himself removed from the church on his own responsibility certain decorations of which he disapproved. The Citation to lead to "Monition and Faculty for replacing a certain pew, etc. removed without authority," is dated April 1, 1886. The Chancellor termed the rector's act of removal "not itself a very considerable affair."

⁴ She objected to its position on the south wall being changed.

⁵ The expense of the alterations proposed by the rector was to be defrayed by public subscription. It was admitted that the accommodation of the church would be decreased, but there would be "ample accommodation for the congregation and parishioners."

two "somewhat elaborate plans" for the improvement of the church "in respect to its comfort, accommodation, and appearance." There was, however, no contention as regards the rector's plans for the chancel, and these, being accepted by the patron and the parishioners, were approved.

As regards the nave, the rector wished to remove the older, or south-west staircase leading to the gallery, in order to make room for the construction of an internal vestibule, and to remove the pulpit from the middle of the south wall to a place just outside the altar rails in the chancel. Neither of these alterations was allowed by the Chancellor, but a faculty was granted authorizing the proposed alterations in the chancel, the removal of the organ, or harmonium, from the gallery to the north side of the chancel, the removal of the prayer and clerk's desks¹ and the improvement of the pulpit, and the removal of the font and its replacement by one "more sightly and convenient." Fresh plans were to be submitted to the Court for the reseating of the nave and the adjusting of this seating to the position of the pulpit before the faculty was issued.²

The reason given by the Chancellor for not allowing the pulling down of the south-west staircase was that the galleries were constructed to accommodate 300 persons, and although it was admitted that the remaining stairs would usually supply sufficient facilities for the number of worshippers using the galleries, it was held to be safer that ample conveniences should be offered for rapidly emptying them in the case of

¹ This was the end of the three-decker, the upper "deck," or pulpit proper, alone remaining.

² The nave had been almost entirely filled with square pews and these, with the exception of the Hesketh family pew, the rector succeeded in removing. They were replaced by open benches. The plan and elevations were filed in the Registry and approved on May 10, 1887. The Hesketh pew was rebuilt in oak by Major C. H. Fleetwood-Hesketh in the alterations of 1909.

emergency.¹ The removal of the staircase being disallowed it followed that the vestibule² could not be constructed. There was, however, a proposal by Mrs. Hesketh to build a porch, and this the Chancellor considered would be a very desirable addition to the church. If the rector's consent to its erection could be obtained it would be included in the faculty. The porch, however, was not built. No ecclesiastical propriety was concerned about the position of the pulpit.³ It was "the convenience of the preacher and his securing command over his audience that must determine the right spot," and this being so, "the existing place of the pulpit was better adapted for the preaching business than the one preferred by the rector." The position of the pulpit would to a great extent determine the location of the seats.

In describing the seating arrangements of the building the Chancellor made use of the following words :

This is a church of very unusual configuration. Probably the original fabric was a longish narrow one, sufficient for the population of the parish as it was in old times before the flourishing town of Southport arose within its borders. When the influx came, church accommodation was apparently provided by a large oblong addition⁴ on the north side, and by the erection of galleries. These enlargements have made the shape of the church quite abnormal, and it is really useless to try to make it satisfactory from the ecclesiastical or æsthetic point of view. But it may be made fairly comfortable, convenient, and sufficient for the preaching of the word of God and the administration of the Sacraments.

As altered internally in 1887 the church remained

¹ It would not be prudent to provide only for half the numbers which the galleries were calculated to hold; they might occasionally be crowded. The Chancellor added, "It is to be hoped that they will often be so in future."

² Or wooden framing with doors constructed inside the church.

³ "One part of the church (was) in itself just as proper for the pulpit as another."

⁴ This refers to the addition of 1860. The Chancellor apparently was unaware of the former existence of a north transept.

without further important changes until 1908,¹ the interior being described in 1904 by the then rector (the Rev. Canon J. Denton Thompson) as bearing "witness to an interesting compromise between those who wished to modernise the arrangements and those who desired to retain the ancient features of the church."²

A few months' residence in North Meols made it "clear beyond dispute" to Canon Denton Thompson early in 1895 that a new church was necessary in the parish. The population was increasing with great rapidity and St. Cuthbert's could not contain the congregations. Three suggestions were put forward, (i) the demolition of the old church and the erection of a new parish church on the same site, (ii) the enlargement of the old church, (iii) the building of a new church, either in close proximity to the old church or in a more central position.³ There was strong opposition to the demolition of the old church, and eventually a new site in Cambridge Road was acquired and Emmanuel Church built.⁴ The old church therefore remained unaltered during Canon Denton Thompson's incumbency.

THE ENLARGEMENT OF 1908-9.

Early in 1906, shortly after the appointment of the present rector, the Rev. Canon R. B. Blakeney, a proposal was put forward for the enlargement of the church, and Mr. J. Oldrid Scott, architect, was consulted.⁵ The pro-

¹ In 1889 a new organ was erected near the chancel and draught-doors and a vestibule were put up at the west end (Faculty dated April 30, 1889: in placing the organ it was necessary to block one of the windows). In 1893 a small choir vestry was added on the north side of the tower, communicating with the clergy vestry (Faculty dated May 30, 1893).

² *Liverpool Dioc. Gaz.*, May, 1904, p. 51. There is an illustration of the interior looking east, and showing the pulpit and the position of the seats.

³ *Liverpool Dioc. Gaz.*, June, 1904, p. 67.

⁴ Foundation stone laid October 19, 1895; consecrated April 16, 1898; separate parish 1905.

⁵ The appeal, dated February, 1906, says: "The present church is unworthy of the position it occupies, in no sense of the word attractive to a congregation

posal was to leave the tower and south wall, but to pull down the whole of the remainder and to extend to the east and north. Eventually, however, chiefly on account of cost, Mr. Scott's plans were abandoned, and a fresh scheme was prepared by Mr. Isaac Taylor, architect, of Manchester. This was carried out,¹ the foundation stone of the new chancel being laid October 22, 1908,² by Mrs. Fleetwood-Hesketh, wife of the patron. The extent of the work then done can be seen from the accompanying plan. Briefly, the main structural changes consisted of the demolition of the east wall of the building and the merging of the old chancel into the nave, the erection of a new chancel further east with organ chamber on the north side, the removal of the galleries, and the addition of a south porch. The floor of the nave was taken up and levelled, the seating re-arranged, a new pulpit³ erected, the old "Venetian" east window placed in the north wall of the nave in the position of the old north doorway, and a new doorway was made in the west wall at its north end.

As completed in 1909 the church consists of a chancel 28 ft. by about 22 ft., nave 72 ft. by 48 ft., south porch 8 ft. square,⁴ and west tower as before. The new chancel and the porch are in harmony with the eighteenth-century tower and nave, but while following the classical renaiss-

or suitable for the holding of any important service." In a letter to the rector, dated January 2, 1906, the Bishop of Liverpool (Dr. Chavasse) wrote: "At present the church is inconvenient and uncomely. . . . It strikes a stranger as scarcely making for reverence in the conduct of public worship. I can quite understand how dear it must be to many of its parishioners in its old form, but I am sure that for the sake of the younger generation, and of Southport, they will be willing that it should be adapted to meet the requirements of modern worship."

¹ The work of preparing the foundations of the extension was begun about the end of July. The faculty for "the enlargement of the church by extending the nave and the construction of a new chancel." is dated May 27, 1908.

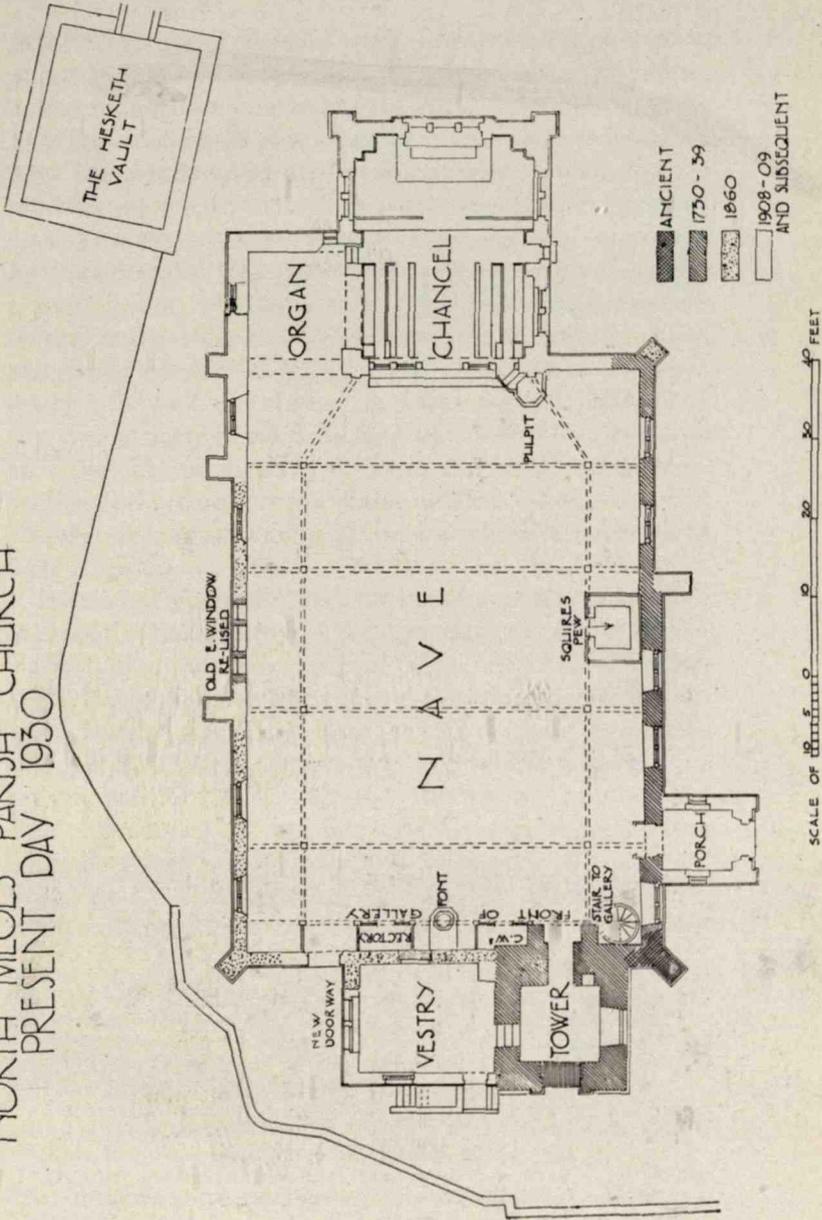
² The stone is in the end wall, below the east window.

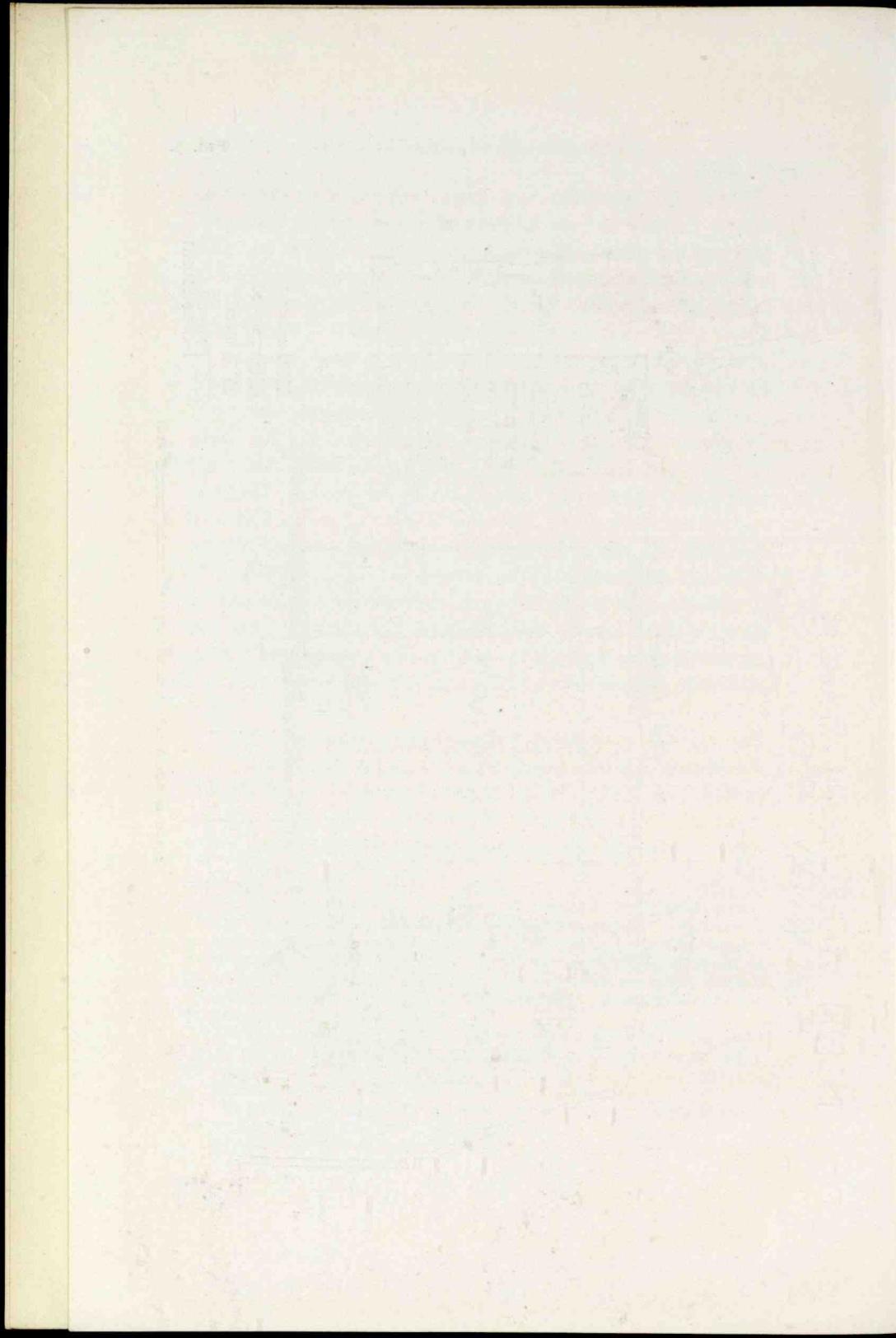
³ The pulpit was erected by his widow in memory of Colonel Anthony Sutton Beswick, who died December 9, 1907.

⁴ All these measurements are internal.

FIG. 5.

NORTH MEOLS PARISH CHURCH
PRESENT DAY 1930





sance tradition of the old work, are treated with a commendable amount of freedom. The round-headed windows of the chancel are of two lights, with "traceries" heads, and flat tracery of a similar character was introduced into the windows of the nave, each of which by the insertion of a mullion is now of two lights. The proportions of these windows were at the same time improved by heightening the sills.¹ The porch has a simple pediment, and over the doorway a panel with inscription setting forth that the chancel was built and the nave reconstructed and enlarged in 1909. The wide-spanned queen-post roof erected in 1860 was not disturbed, but new wooden posts were wedged up under the tie-beams at a distance of about 6 ft. from the walls, in order to relieve the rather slender walls of some of the weight.² The church was reopened and the new chancel consecrated July 1, 1909.

It has been stated³ that during the alterations, when the floor was taken up, "the foundations of one of the earliest churches were found," but the architect, Mr. Isaac Taylor, informs me that he can find no note of any early foundations in his records, nor does he remember seeing any.⁴ When the chancel was rebuilt a number of graves had to be moved and the bodies re-interred.⁵ While excavating in the nave for a new heating apparatus early in March, 1909, it became necessary to remove a brick vault.⁶ On breaking through the brickwork the coffin collapsed and was found to contain only a long

¹ The original sills of the eighteenth-century nave windows are 20 in. above the plinth. In 1909 the lower part of the windows, which were very tall, was blocked, and a new sill introduced 3 ft. 6 in. above the old one.

² Information from the architect. These posts, four on each side of the nave, give the impression of forming narrow side aisles.

³ Pearce, *Spires, Towers and Choirs of Southport* (1922), p. 17.

⁴ Letter to the writer, dated February 1, 1923. The builder had died a few years before this date.

⁵ There is a mural record of names (see Appendix, p. 35).

⁶ The vault was built of 9-in. brick, covered with a heavy flag and bricked over. It had not been before disturbed. The interior was in good condition.

piece of wood, wrapped in some dark material. There was "not the slightest trace of human remains."¹ The coffin plate bore the name of the Rev. Edward Whiston Yorke, curate, who died March 23, 1815, aged 24,² and according to the register was buried on March 30. The mystery of the empty coffin has never been cleared up.

RECENT ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS.

Since 1908-9 certain additions and improvements have been made in the church.

In 1914 the east window was filled with stained glass³ given by Major C. H. Fleetwood-Hesketh in memory of members of his family. The glass is by Burlison and Grylls and has a Crucifixion in the middle light with a Last Supper below, and in the side lights are St. Peter and St. Paul, and David and Solomon. In the top lights is a figure of St. Cuthbert in the middle, flanked by St. George and St. Andrew, St. Patrick and St. David. Below the window is carved in stone a Latin inscription composed by Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson (Appendix B, p. 37).

After the closing of St. Peter's Church, Liverpool, in 1919, certain of its internal fittings and furniture were presented to North Meols, and were placed in the chancel in 1922. These consist of the carved oak altar-piece, or reredos; two carved oak panels, one from each side of the reredos; the oak communion rails; two prayer-desks from the sanctuary; and a seat, partly oak, from behind the prayer-desk.⁴ The reredos and its flanking panels have been skilfully adapted to positions corresponding to those they originally occupied, and as a result of

¹ *Southport Visiter*, March 16, 1909.

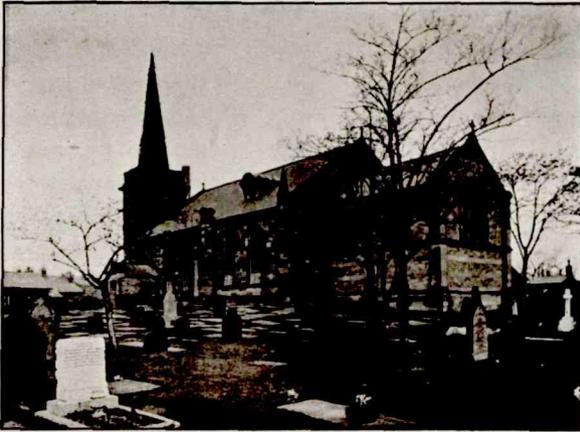
² There is a tablet to his memory in the church. M.I. in Farrer, *op. cit.*, 64. He was appointed in November, 1814. The tablet was erected by his widow.

³ Dedicated July 18, 1914. In the representation of the Last Supper the chalice and flagon are copied from the church plate (p. 22).

⁴ Peet, *Trans. Hist. Soc.*, 74, 77.

NORTH MEOLS CHURCH.

FIG. 6.

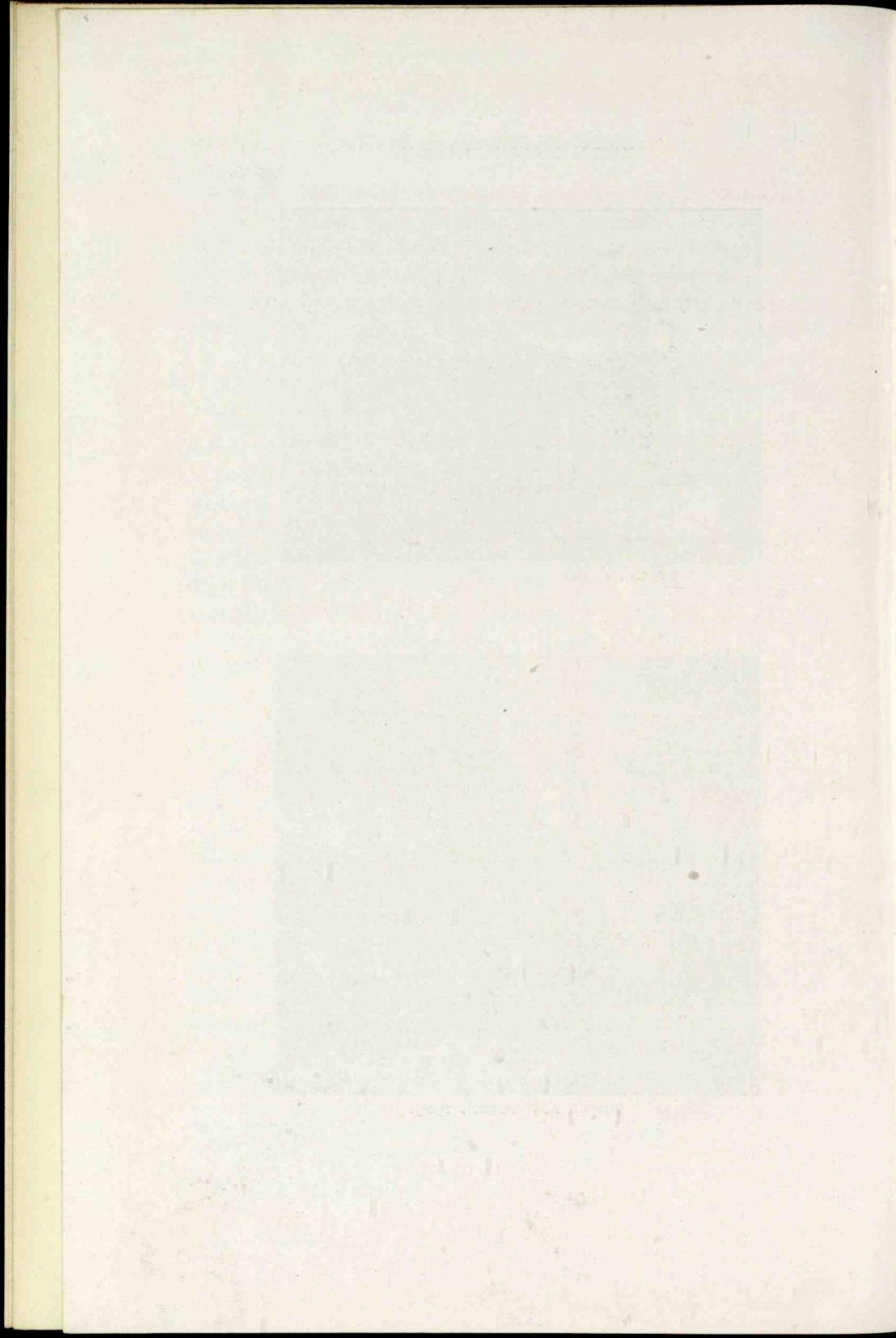


EXTERIOR AFTER ENLARGEMENT OF 1908-9.

FIG. 7.



TOWER AND PORCH, 1909.



careful cleaning¹ show to far greater advantage than they did, at any rate latterly, in Liverpool. The carving is by Richard Prescott, of Lord Street, Liverpool,² and was executed about 1704; if it lacks the exquisite delicacy of the work of Grinling Gibbons, to whom sometimes it is attributed, it is very beautiful work and harmonizes exceedingly well with its new surroundings.

In 1925 a chancel screen of oak, in character with the recently introduced eighteenth-century fittings, was erected. It has five bays, with Corinthian columns supporting an entablature, the cornice of which is broken in the middle by a low segmental pediment, within which is the shield of St. Cuthbert in silver, blue, and gold.³ Parts of the turned balusters and carved panels from St. Peter's, Liverpool, have been used in the lower part of the screen.⁴

The choir vestry was enlarged in 1929, and in 1931 the nave was panelled in oak to the sill level of the windows, a height of about 7 ft. 6 in.⁵ The interior of the church now offers a striking contrast to what it was before 1908, being a very interesting and successful example of the adaptation of an eighteenth-century building to modern requirements without change of its essential architectural

¹ They were covered with a thick coat of black paint, the removal of which revealed considerable remains of colour and gilding. This, too, was unfortunately removed.

² For this information I am indebted to Mr. H. Peet, M.A., F.S.A. "Richard Prescott, carver," was buried in St. Peter's churchyard May 21, 1747. There is some carving in the old Bluecoat School buildings, Liverpool, which may be his, and as he was patronised by Lord Molyneux, there may be some of his work at Croxteth Hall.

³ Azure, a cross paty gold, between four lions silver.

⁴ The screen was dedicated October 3, 1925. It was given under the will of Mrs. Mary Adelaide Jenkins (d. 1924) in memory of her first husband, William Henry Lovelady. It was designed by Messrs. Packer and Crampton, architects, Southport.

⁵ Faculty granted November 30, 1930; panelling dedicated May 27, 1931. The panels are each one foot in width and bear inconspicuously the names of the donors, or others connected with the church or parish, the underlying idea being that of a parochial record.

character. The eighteenth-century stone baluster font was reinstated in 1916.¹

In 1932 the easternmost window on the south side of the nave was filled with stained glass by Shrigley and Hunt, given by Mrs. Dean of Southport, and dedicated on April 24. The subject is the Resurrection and an inscription on the glass reads "To the Glory of God and in commemoration of 25 years' faithful service of the Rector, Robert Bibby Blakeney, 1905-1930. Given by a member of the congregation, Elizabeth Ann Dean."

THE BELLS.

The two bells recorded by Mr. Farrer are still in the tower. They are described more fully elsewhere.² The smaller (18 in. diam.) is without date or inscription; the larger (37½ in. diam.) was cast by Luke Ashton of Wigan in 1750, and is the largest Wigan bell in the county. The device on the waist is not the Royal Arms as stated by Farrer, but a shield with a bell between three fleurs-de-lys, supported by winged figures and surmounted by a crown. The bells were restored by Mears and Stainbank in 1881. They are hung in a wooden frame.³

THE COMMUNION PLATE.

The silver communion plate consists of five pieces as follows :

- (1) Cup. 1579-80, Lond. Height 7½ in.; diameter of bowl 3⅜ in. Date letter B four times repeated, no other mark. Floral scroll pattern round upper part of bowl.
- (2) Cup. 1607-8, Lond. Same height and diameter as

¹ It was turned out of the church in 1887, and was found in the bier-house. It was restored to the church for Easter Day, April 23, 1916. The 1887 font was given to Banks Church.

² *Trans. Lancs. & Chesh. Antiq. Soc.*, xxxii, 78; a facsimile of the inscription on the larger bell is given.

³ There are pits for two more bells. Access is by a wooden step ladder from the floor of a narrow west gallery.

preceding, and of same type, but differing from it in several details. Marks: (i) Date letter, Lombardic K; (ii) Lion passant; (iii) Leopard's head crowned; (iv) Maker's mark I.V. (unidentified), noted by Cripps.¹

(3) Paten, or bread-holder, on standing foot. 1713-14, Chester. Diameter 8 in. Height $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. Marks: (i) Maker's mark indistinct; (ii) Britannia; (iii) Leopard's head cr.; (iv) Chester hall-mark, three demi-lions with three half wheatsheaves; (v) Chester date letter, Roman capital N.

(4) Flagon. 1756-7, Lond. Height to top of lid $13\frac{1}{2}$ in. Inscribed "The Gift of Mary Hesketh 1757," and bearing her arms (in a lozenge, argent, on a bend sable, three garbs or). Marks: (i) Maker's mark, T.W., for Thomas Whipman; (ii) Lion passant; (iii) Leopard's head cr.; (iv) London date letter, Gothic A.

(5) Chalice. 1930-31, Lond. Height $8\frac{1}{4}$ in.; diameter of bowl $3\frac{7}{8}$ in. Mediæval pattern. Marks: (i) Maker's mark, J.W. & Co.; (ii) Lion passant; (iii) Leopard's head cr.; (iv) London date-letter, Gothic small p.

THE REGISTERS.

The Registers before 1812 are contained in eight volumes as under. The first two volumes, transcribed by Mr. Henry Brierley, LL.D., were printed by the Lancashire Parish Register Society in 1930,² and the earlier was restored and bound at the cost of the Society at the Public Record Office.

(1) Baptisms, March 2, 1594-5—March 28, 1596, and December 14, 1600—December 7, 1691³; Marriages,

¹ *Old English Plate*, 11th ed. (1926), 429. The same mark occurs on a cup and cover paten of 1616, at St. Andrew's, Plymouth, *ibid.*, 431.

² Volume 66. It is dated 1929, but was not issued till the autumn of 1930.

³ Many gaps and irregularities recur in the first volume, especially 1640-61, but generally speaking the entries are continuous from 1600. A certain number of baptisms ranging from 1645 to 1680 are entered in a very promiscuous manner.

February 8, 1600—January 23, 1689-90 ; Burials, December 21, 1600—May 24, 1690.

(2) Baptisms, September 11, 1692—March 12, 1731-2 ; Marriages, January 26, 1692-3—February 8, 1731-2 ; Burials, March 19, 1692-3—March 22, 1731-2.

(3) Baptisms, April 7, 1732—January 30, 1791.

(4) Marriages, April 10, 1732—May 1, 1770.

(5) Burials, May 2, 1732—December 24, 1803.

(6) Baptisms, February 2, 1791—December 20, 1812.

(7) Marriages, July 3, 1770—December 21, 1812.

(8) Burials, January 18, 1804—December 28, 1812.

The first volume consists of forty-eight leaves of parchment measuring 13 in. by 6 in., and the second of twenty-nine leaves of parchment measuring 15½ in. by 6½ in. The third volume, on paper, is in a poor state and requires binding.

THE ROYAL ARMS.

At the west end of the nave are the Royal Arms of the Hanoverian sovereigns, 1801-37, with garter, helm, crest, supporters and motto, painted on a square board set diagonally.

THE RECTORS.

Mr. Farrer gives a complete list of the rectors, with some biographical notes on each, from the middle of the thirteenth century down to the time of the publication of his book.¹ It is, therefore, only necessary to add such further information as has come to light since 1903. Mr. Farrer's first "parson" is a Robert who occurs *c.* 1250, and his next is Thomas le Boteler, who is mentioned in 1281. Subsequently, however, Mr. Farrer found that Boteler was presented to the church of Meles by the

¹ He also notes "Adam the clerk of Miesles," 1178, and "Osbert the chaplain of Molas," *c.* 1190 ; *op. cit.*, 68.

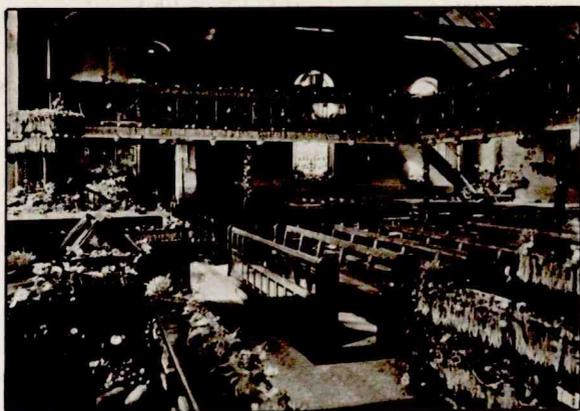
NORTH MEOLS CHURCH.

FIG. 8.

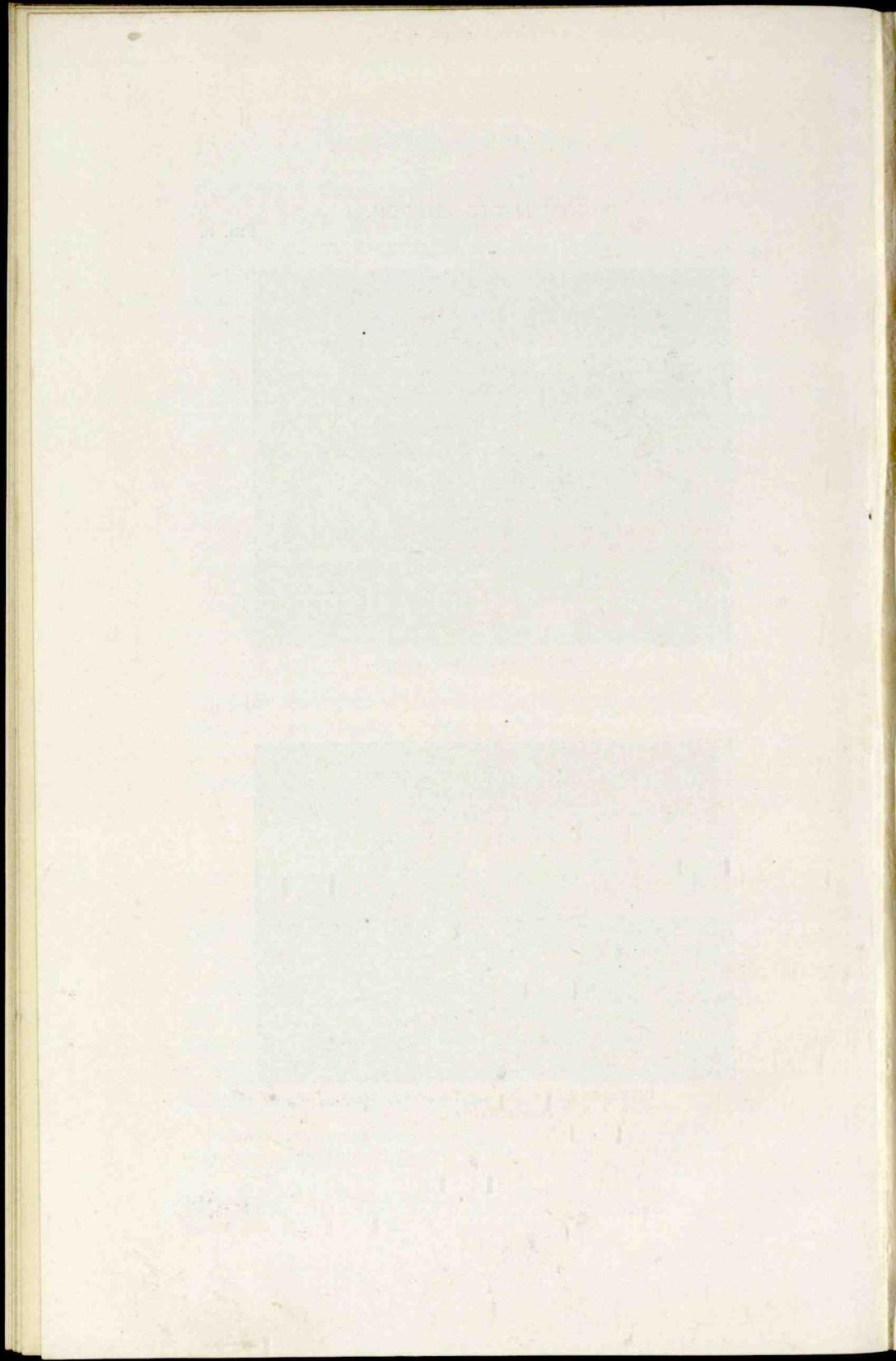


INTERIOR LOOKING EAST, 1932.

FIG. 9.



INTERIOR LOOKING NORTH-WEST, 1905.
Harvest Festival.



King on July 23, 1266, during voidance of the Abbey of Evesham.¹ His presentation is thus the earliest recorded.

The strange incident of the rectory house at Crossens having been broken into on January 4, 1397, and the rector, John de Liverpool, assaulted, is referred to briefly by Mr. Farrer,² but a more detailed account has since been given,³ from which it appears that not only was the rector assaulted and robbed of money and jewels, but that among the jewels was a pyx "in which the Body of Christ was kept," and this the aggressors "took and threw away."

It may, perhaps, be worth recording that the Rev. Gilbert Ford, rector 1793-1835, was buried in his father's vault in the north aisle of the nave of Chester Cathedral.⁴ Mr. Ford was rector of North Meols at the time that the town of Southport came into being, and was a witness of its marvellous growth during a period of over thirty years.

Mr. Farrer rightly gives the date of Mr. Ford's death as May 6, 1835 (p. 85), and of the Rev. C. Hesketh's presentation as June 11, 1835 (p. 86). But he then states that Mr. Hesketh was instituted "May 11 following" (i.e. 1836), and later, in the table of rectors on p. 90, gives the date of institution as May 6, 1835. The deed of Presentation, dated June 11, 1835, and signed "P. Hesketh Fleetwood," is amongst the North Meols papers at Liverpool, and written on the outside of it in pencil are

¹ Communication to the writer March 3, 1921, giving reference "Letters to Roger, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield" (*Cal. Pal. Roll 1266*, p. 619).

² *Op. cit.*, 71; citing Plea Roll, 2 Henry IV.

³ *Plea Rolls of the County Palatine of Lancaster, Chetham Society* (1928), N.S. 87, pp. 62, 72.

⁴ The M.I. adjoining the vault given in Ormerod's *Cheshire* (ed. Helsby, 1882), i, 300, is now at the west end of the south wall of the nave, having been displaced when the north aisle wall was covered with mosaics; there is also a tablet to Mr. Ford, and to his wife Elizabeth, who died July 22, 1811, in Ormskirk Church, on the north wall of the north aisle.

the words "instituted June 11, 1835." It would appear, therefore, that the institution took place privately at the Bishop's Palace, Chester, on the same day that the deed of Presentation was signed. The induction was on Saturday, June 27, and Mr. Hesketh read himself in on Sunday, June 28, 1835.

The Rev. James Denton Thompson, Hon. Canon of Liverpool, who was rector when Mr. Farrer's book was published, became Rector of Birmingham in 1905, and Bishop of Sodor and Man in 1912. He died in 1925. He was succeeded at North Meols by the present rector, the Rev. Robert Bibby Blakeney, M.A.,¹ rector of Wombwell, Yorks, who was collated to an Hon. Canonry of Liverpool in 1917, and was Rural Dean of North Meols, 1917-29.

THE CHURCHWARDENS.

Bishop Gastrell, about 1720-25, noted that there were "three churchwardens, two of which serve for North Meols (township) and are chosen by the two Lords of the Manor; the third serves for Birkdale (township) and is chosen by the rector."² This arrangement still subsists, the parishioners having no voice in the choice of wardens. That there are two wardens chosen for North Meols township by the Lords of the Manor probably results from the division of the manor after the death of John Aughton in 1550 between his two sisters and co-heirs.³

In a vestry minute book of 1849-82 the following

¹ Second son of the Rev. Canon R. P. Blakeney, D.D., LL.D., rector and rural dean of Bridlington, and for many years vicar of Christ Church, Cloughton, Cheshire. Born 1866; educated at St. Peter's Coll., Camb.; B.A. 1889, M.A. 1904; ordained deacon 1891, priest 1892. Presented to North Meols, June 17, and instituted July 26, 1905.

² *Notit. Cestr.* (*Chet. Soc.*, xxi), 195.

³ They married respectively John Bold and Barnaby Kitchen. The latter's daughter and heir married Hugh Hesketh of Rufford, whence the Heskeths of North Meols. The Bold moiety was acquired by Charles Scarisbrick by purchase in 1843.

formulas are used throughout, with slight variations,¹ in recording the appointment of the wardens :

(1) I, Charles Hesketh, in virtue of my right by immemorial Custom as one of the Lords of the Manor of North Meols do hereby appoint — of — to be one of the Churchwardens of the Parish of North Meols for the year ending Easter 18—.

(2) I, William Linaker,² as agent to Charles Scarisbrick Esq., and being authorized by him in virtue of his right by immemorial Custom as one of the Lords of the Manor of North Meols do hereby appoint — of — to be one of the Churchwardens of the Parish of North Meols for the year ending Easter 18—.

(3) I, Charles Hesketh, in virtue of my right by immemorial Custom as Rector of North Meols do hereby appoint — of Birkdale to be Churchwarden for the township of Birkdale in the Parish of North Meols for the year ending Easter 18—.

This third formula in 1849 and 1850 reads "to be sidesman for the township of Birkdale," and it was also so written in 1851, but was altered by the rector to read "Churchwarden," this word being henceforth used. It would appear that the fact that there were three churchwardens had been lost sight of or forgotten immediately before 1851. Down to 1866 the Birkdale warden was always someone residing in that township, but after that year the words "for Birkdale" are dropped, the third warden being appointed irrespective of locality.³ The appointment of three sidesmen, in the same manner as the churchwardens, is first recorded in 1871.

THE OLD RECTORY HOUSE.

The old rectory, or parsonage house, at Crossens, stood on a slight eminence above the marsh close to where the

¹ From 1844 to his death in 1876 the Rev. Charles Hesketh in his double capacity as squire and parson appointed two of the three wardens. Mr. Scarisbrick being non-resident in the parish acted through his agent. After Mr. Scarisbrick's death in 1860 the appointment was in the hands of his Trustees.

² Until 1864.

³ Robert Marshall, who was warden for Birkdale 1859-66, is described in and after 1860 as of "Birkdale Park." In 1867 and 1868 the third churchwarden was a Banks farmer, and in 1869 and later a Southport "gentleman."

sluice from Martin Mere discharged into the sea. The deed of exchange ¹ of the old rectory house and glebe lands in Crossens and Banks for a piece of land in Row Lane belonging to Peter Hesketh, Esq., is amongst the North Meols papers at Liverpool. It is dated September 15, 1825, and attached to it is a rough plan, which shows the house standing on the edge of the marsh close to the shore and on the south side of the sluice ² estuary. The public road passed in front of the house, and crossing the sluice by a bridge, entered that "part of the parish called the Banks." The mouth of the sluice had "mud banks" on either side, the proximity of which to the parsonage, apart from its small size and general inconvenience, goes far to explain the unwillingness of successive rectors to occupy the house. The Report of the Commissioners appointed ³ to examine the properties to be exchanged, stated that enquiry had been made into the state and condition of the buildings forming the rectory house at Crossens at the time when the rector (Rev. G. Ford, instituted November 21, 1793) entered upon the living, and it was found that the buildings "had been suffered to go into decay and that they had sustained damage from a want of common and ordinary repair."

Mr. Ford, however, had received £150 for dilapidations from the representatives of former incumbents and had expended the whole, together with further sums, upon the buildings. The house ⁴ consisted only of five rooms, a parlour and kitchen on the ground floor and three bedrooms above, all "furnished in a style inferior to most farm-houses."⁵ In front of the house was a small court and on one side of this a "barn belonging to the lord of

¹ See Farrer, *op. cit.*, 85.

² On the plan it is styled "sluice for the purpose of draining Martin Mere."

³ Commission issued April 2, Report dated November 11, 1825.

⁴ These particulars are from the reference on the plan.

⁵ The kitchen was 16 ft. by 14 ft., and the parlour 16 ft. by 13 ft. 8 in.

the manor." On the other side was a yard, and beyond it a "barn built of mud and thatch."¹ The tithe-barn, also of mud and thatch, stood on the opposite side of the road, and about a quarter of a mile from the house was an acre of glebe, which included "a very small garden." There was no garden adjoining the house, and the remaining part of the glebe land (less than seven acres) was in different parts of the parish, one part about three miles from the rectory house² and the other about a mile and a half away.

Mr. Ford found the house "entirely unfit for residence" and went to live in Ormskirk, which he declared was "as near as circumstances would permit." He obtained the bishop's licence to reside out of the parish,³ but though the house at Crossens was unfit for the rector his curate⁴ continued to live there. On the appointment of the Rev. William Docker to the curacy in 1817 the bishop required him to reside within the parish, "for which purpose we do allot to you the Parsonage House of Northmeols, and the offices and gardens thereunto belonging."⁵

In exchange for this property (in all, with glebe land, 5a. 1r. 17p.), which was situated "one mile and half and 60 yards" to the north-east of the church, the rector acquired from Mr. Hesketh a piece of land in Row Lane,⁶

¹ There was also a "small building for a boat-house."

² The house was valued at £218, the barns, stables, outbuildings, fence walls, etc., at £124 11s., and the glebe land at £645: total £987 11s.

³ The licence, dated January 9, 1804, was for two years, but was renewed in 1806 for a like period. Mr. Ford's petitions for these licences, dated respectively December 24, 1803, and December 23, 1805, are amongst the North Meols papers at Liverpool. The rector, however, was required to keep the parsonage house and its outbuildings "in good and sufficient repair and condition."

⁴ The Rev. John Mawdesley, nominated curate May 8, 1780, at a stipend of £50, "with the ancient Parsonage House at Crossens"; Farrer, *op. cit.*, 88.

⁵ Bishop of Chester's Licence, September 23, 1817. Mr. Docker's stipend was £100.

⁶ The land was rather curiously described in the notice dated April 23, 1825, and affixed to the church door, as "situate in Rowe Lane in Blowick . . . now or late in the occupation of Alice Higham."

nearly opposite the end of Meols Cop Road,¹ in area 5a. 11. 19p., and distant from the church westward “ $\frac{3}{4}$ mile and 99 yards.” On this land were various buildings,² and apparently the new rectory house had been begun to be built there before the deed of exchange was executed.³ The Commissioners appointed to examine the properties reported (November 11, 1825) that they found on the lately acquired land “the outside and inside walls of an intended new large and commodious Rectory House consisting of Bricks and Mortar not in any way whatever finished, but a mere shell of bricks and mortar.” The report of Thomas Mawdesley, building surveyor, dated October 28, 1825, was much in the same terms. He described the new building as “only erected to the square; no floors laid, no staircase therein, no roof thereon,” etc., and estimated that to complete the work with necessary stables, carriage-house, fence-walls, etc., would cost £1,350.

It was decided subsequently to complete the house and licence was given to raise the required sum by mortgage upon the glebe land, tithe, rents, etc.⁴ The receipt for the full sum is among the North Meols papers at Liverpool.⁵ The house thus completed⁶ was a sub-

¹ Sometimes known as Ormskirk Road.

² A house (valued at £130), back cottages, barn, stables, etc., the total value of which was £430. The land was valued at £600 (£30 per acre at 20 years' purchase): in all £1,030.

³ It may have been begun in the spring of 1825, when the exchange was decided upon: see note 6, *supra*, p. 29.

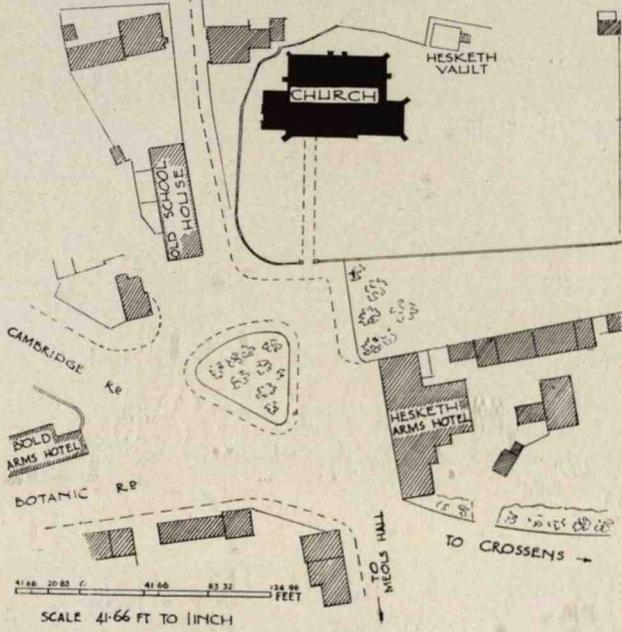
⁴ Farrer, *op. cit.*, 85. Receivers were appointed December 1, 1825.

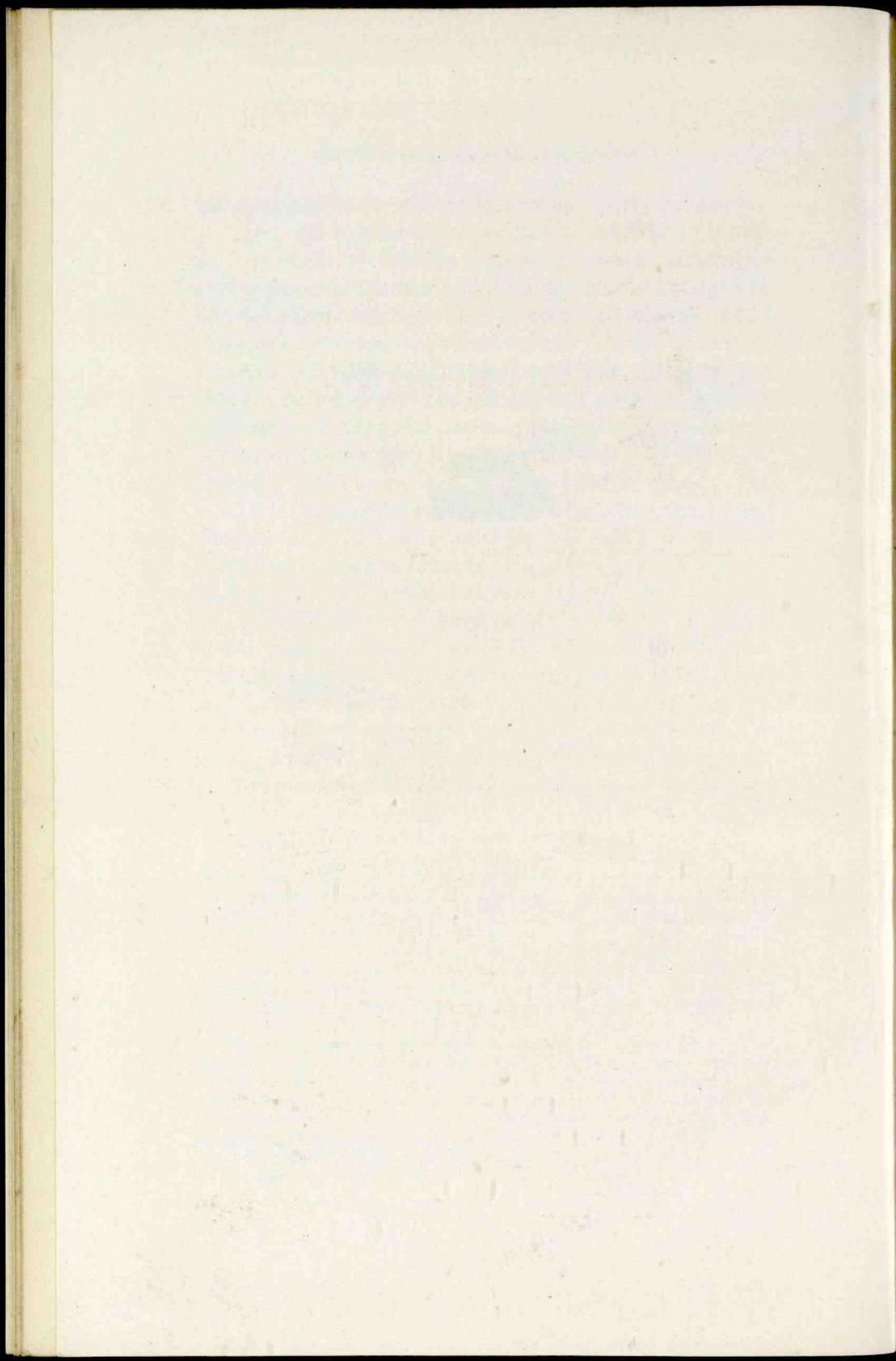
⁵ “1826. Received of Miss Elizabeth Ford the money authorized to be Borrowed on mortgage of the Glebe, Tythe, Rents, Profits and emoluments of the Rectory of Northmeols for the purpose of building a Parsonage House, Offices and Outbuildings—£1,350.”

⁶ The house appears to have been finished in the autumn of 1826 and occupied by the rector in that year. Glazebrook, in the second edition of his *Guide to Southport*, the preface of which is dated May 29, 1826, mentions “a large mansion now building for a rectory, which the visitor, on approaching Southport by Meols Cop-road, sees immediately before him as he enters Row Lane.” In the Valuation of 1831 the yearly value of the Rectory House and Offices is given as £60, and of the Garden and Fields £10 14s. 9d. (5a. 11. 19p. at 40s. per acre).

FIG. 10.

NORTH MEOLS CHURCH 1893





stantial stuccoed two-storey building of brick, and served as the residence of the rector until the death of the Rev. C. Hesketh in 1876. A new rectory house was built nearer the church in 1879, Mrs. Hesketh, the late rector's widow, continuing to reside at the old rectory, now known as The Rookery, until her death in 1898. The house was pulled down in 1924, and the site developed for building purposes.

APPENDICES

A. BRIEFS.

Amongst the Church papers are the receipts of sums collected upon a number of Briefs. There are four short lists (1751, 1763, 1765 and 1776) written on small printed forms, signed by the collector, and a further list of ten briefs (1804-5) written on the first page of a book intended for that purpose, the rest of which is blank. In all thirty-five briefs.

The lists are as follows :

(1) Received from the Minister and Church-Wardens of North Meols, May 23, 1751.

For St. Mary Magdalene the sum of	o	8	8½
„ Thur (?) Stouland „ „	1	o	9
„ Stone(y) Middleton „ „	o	2	7
„ St. Lawrence „ „	o	o	9½
„ Stone „ „	o	1	5½
„ St. Nicholas „ „	o	1	9½

per [indecipherable] Cole^{tr}.

(2) Received of the Minister and Church-Wardens of North-meols, April 28, 1763.

For a College in America ¹ the sum of	1	2	o
„ Sutton Maddock [Salop. Church] ²	o	o	10
„ Barlaston [Staff. Church]	o	1	5
„ New Brentford [Middlesex. Church]	o	3	3
„ Llansannen [Denbigh. Church]	o	1	7
	o	1	3
	<hr/>		
	1	10	4

per John Alcock, Collector.

¹ At East Budleigh (Devon) in 1763, the sum of 3s. 7½d. was collected for "Colleges in America." The charge was £12,000.

² Square brackets = supplied from other sources.

(3) Received this 31st day of Oct^r 1765 of the Minister and Church-Wardens of Northmeols.

For HAILSTORM Brief, Yorkshire, ¹	the sum of	0	1	10½
„ HAILSTORM Brief, Hampshire ¹	„ „	0	1	0
„ HAILSTORM Brief, Berkshire ¹	„ „	0	1	7
„ Halghton Fire [Flintshire]	„ „	0	5	0½
„ Sankey [Lancs. Church]	„ „	0	6	0
„ Tudeley [Kent. Church]	„ „	0	1	1½
„ Claybrooke [Leic. Church]	„ „	0	0	8½
„ Chatton [Northumberland. Church]	„ „	0	1	3½
		<hr/>		
		0	18	7½

Per John Alcock, Collector.

(4) Received the 7 Day of Nov. 1776 of the Minister and Church-wardens of North-Meols.

For Bettws, etc.	the sum of	7	0
„ Broom			9
„ East Shilton			9
„ Ipstones [Staff. Church]			9
„ Long Ditton		6	6
„ Llansaintfraid			9
		<hr/>	
		0	16 6

By W. Stevenson, Collector.

(5) 1804.	Apr. 29. ²	Houghton barn fire in Com. Stafford	2	7½
„	June 5.	Ince Fire in Com. of Lancaster	3	9
„	Aug. 13.	Newton Chap ¹ in Com. Lancaster	3	10
„	Oct. 29.	Cheswerdine Ch. in Com. of Salop	4	1
1805.	Jan. 4.	Witton Ch. in Com. of Stafford	4	2
„	Jan. 20.	Hinstock fire in Com. of Salop	1	3
„	Mar. 5.	Alderley Ch. in Com. of Salop	3	11½
„	Apr. 1.	Grindleton Chap ¹ in Com. of York	3	10
„	Apr. 8.	Marsden Chap ¹ in Com. of Lancaster	5	4
„	Apr. 22.	Bloxwich Chap ¹ in Com. of Stafford	3	1½

¹ The charges of these three Hailstorm Briefs were respectively, Yorkshire £1,030, Hampshire £1,022, Berkshire £7,040: Brushfield, *Devonshire Briefs*.

² The dates indicate the day when collected. The Houghton brief was received on April 27.

B. MONUMENTAL AND OTHER INSCRIPTIONS.

Mr. Farrer gives seven monumental inscriptions in the interior of the church, but since 1903 the positions of three of the monumental tablets have been altered. Those to Thomas Fleetwood (1717) and Roger Hesketh (1791), which were then in the chancel, on either side of the east window, are now at the east end of the nave, south of the chancel arch. The tablet to Mary Peters (1840), then on the north side of the chancel, is now on the north wall of the nave. The brass plate under the old east window is now, of course, under the same window in its new position on the north side of the nave.

Of the following inscriptions the two first were omitted by Mr. Farrer, and the others all belong to the period subsequent to the reconstruction of 1908-9.

(1) Marble tablet, south wall of nave, to east of doorway.

IN
MEMORY OF
DANIEL BARRON
of Bold House, Churchtown
Who Fell Asleep In Jesus April 9th 1870
Aged 70 Years

THIS TABLET WAS ERECTED BY THE TEACHERS AND
SCHOLARS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN CONNECTION WITH
THIS CHURCH AS A TRIBUTE OF RESPECT TO ONE WHO WAS
THEIR SUPERINTENDENT FOR NEARLY TWENTY YEARS,
AND WHO LABOURED ABUNDANTLY IN EVERY GOOD AND
CHRISTIAN WORK.

(2) Brass plate on north wall of nave.

IN MEMORY OF GEORGE WRIGHT
DIED DECEMBER 28TH 1877
ALSO MARY HIS WIFE
DIED MARCH 25TH 1890
AGED 78 YEARS

(3) Large brass tablet on north wall of nave, between the two easternmost windows.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING
WHOSE REMAINS WERE INTERRED BETWEEN 1705-1901
AND HAD TO BE RE-BURIED OWING TO THE
REBUILDING OF THIS CHANCEL IN 1909.

THOMAS, JANE, MARY, ISABELLA, MARGARET AND SOLOMON
GREGSON. | JOHN, AMOS AND WILLIAM GREGSON. MARY LEAD-
BETTER. NELLIE, JOHN AND ALICE SUTTON. | RICHARD AND
BETTY RIMMER. DORIS RIMMER. WILLIAM, HANNAH, HENRY,
NATHAN AND PETER GREGSON. | ELLEN, THOMAS AND JANE
WRIGHT. JOHN AND ALICE TWIST. | WILLIAM, JANE, MARGARET,
JOHN AND REBECCA GREGSON. | PETER, ALICE AND JOHN
BLUNDELL. ELLEN WARING. RICHARD, BETTY AND ISABELLA
PEET. | ISAAC, ANN, JANE AND ANNIE BURROWS. WILLIAM,
ALICE, ISABEL AND ALICE PEET. | JOHN AND MARGARET PEET.
HUGH HOWARD. RICHARD, ELLEN AND ANN WARING. | BETTY,
THOMAS, MOSES AND LAWRENCE ABRAM. ELIZABETH, THOMAS
AND RICHARD CROPPER. | ISABELLA HOWARD. WILLIAM RYDING.
JAMES, THOMAS, ELLEN, JANE AND ELLEN BAKER. | JOHN AND
MARGERY HUNT. RICHARD, ISABEL, ALICE AND PEGGY HUNT.
JOHN AND ELLEN RIMMER. | WILLIAM, ELLEN, JANE, JAMES
AND JAMES JOHNSON. JAMES HOWARD. | ELLEN KEELING
SUTTON AND MAGGIE HODGE.

(4) Two small brass tablets on north wall of nave, on either side of easternmost window.

(a) TO THE GLORY OF GOD
and In Memory of
WILLIAM LINAKER
late of Meols Hall, died 21st October, 1864,
aged 68 years
CATHERINE
his wife died October 14th 1867
aged 70 years
WILLIAM G.
their son, died 17th May, 1826,
aged 1 year
CHARLES EDWARD
their son died April 19th 1848
aged 12 years
and GILES
their son, died 29th March 1851
aged 20 years
whose remains lie buried
within this church.

North Meols Church, Lancashire.

(b) TO THE GLORY OF GOD
 and In Memory of
 JOHN LINAKER
 of Meols Hall, died 20th July, 1846,
 aged 80 years
 JANE
 his wife died November 19th, 1841,
 aged 75 years
 WILLIAM
 their son, died November 10th, 1795,
 aged 1 year
 MARGARET
 their daughter, died Feby. 27th, 1819,
 aged 18 years
 and ANN
 their daughter, died at Meols Hall
 August 19th, 1879, aged 80 years,
 whose remains lie buried
 within this church.

(5) War Memorial. Bronze tablet on north wall of nave,
 opposite to entrance doorway.¹

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
 AND IN GLORIOUS MEMORY OF THOSE
 MEN OF THIS PARISH WHO GAVE
 THEIR LIVES IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR
 COUNTRY IN THE GREAT WAR OF
 1914-1919.
 "THEY DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE."

CAPT E. MAURICE GREGSON, 4TH L.N. LANCS.

LIEUT JOHN TODD, R.A.F.	LIEUT HERBERT L. SUTTON, R.A.F.
SERG ^T WILLIAM HUNT, R.F.A.	PTE THOMAS BLUNDELL, 7 TH KINGS
BDR W. STANLEY RIMMER, R.F.A.	PTE HARRY BURY, 7 TH KINGS
L ^C -CPL HAROLD CADWELL, 2 ND MANC ^H .	PTE REGINALD HYDE, 7 TH KINGS
G ^{NR} JAMES JOHNSON, R.F.A.	PTE JAMES HOSKER, 7 TH KINGS
G ^{NR} HARRY WRIGHT, R.F.A.	PTE JOHN WAREING, 7 TH KINGS
BDR THOMAS B. SUTTON, R.F.A.	PTE CYRIL SUTTON, 7 TH KINGS
G ^{NR} WILLIAM WRIGHT, R.F.A.	PTE JOHN CADWELL, 12 TH KINGS
D ^{VR} WILLIAM RYDING, A.S.C.	PTE JOHN HOWARD, 15 TH KINGS
PTE JOSEPH YOUNG, 18 TH KINGS.	PTE JAMES THRELFALL, LAB C ^{RS} .

¹ In the churchyard are buried five soldiers who died in the hospital at Meols Hall, 1915-18. Their names are on one of the memorial panels at the west end of the church.

- (6) Brass plate on south jamb of chancel arch, near pulpit.

TO · THE · GLORY · OF · GOD
AND · IN · MEMORY · OF
COLONEL · ANTHONY
SUTTON · BESWICK
WHO · DIED
DECEMBER · 9TH · 1907
THIS · PULPIT
WAS · ERECTED
BY · HIS · WIDOW.

- (7) Brass plate on north jamb of chancel arch.

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN LOVING MEMORY
OF
WILLIAM HENRY LOVELADY
THIS CHANCEL SCREEN
WAS
ERECTED BY HIS WIDOW
MARY ADELAIDE JENKINS
WHO DIED 25TH JUNE 1924.

- (8) Oak panel at west end of nave.

THE OAK CARVING AND ALTAR RAILS
IN THE CHANCEL WERE ORIGINALLY IN
S^T PETER'S THE PRO-CATHEDRAL IN
LIVERPOOL 1704-1921

THE MEMORIAL PANELS IN THE NAVE
WERE GIVEN WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS
BY MEMBERS OF THE FAMILIES THEY
REPRESENT BEING DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY
CONNECTED WITH THE PARISH.
DEDICATED BY BISHOP DAVID, MAY 27, 1931.

- (9) The inscription in stone below the chancel east window
is now almost entirely hidden by the oak reredos:

VITRO · HOC · PICTO · A · M · D · G · ET · IN · PIAM · MEMORIAM · SVI ·
IPSIVS · PROAVORVM · VNIVERSORVM · MANERII · DE · MEOLS ·
BOREALI · DOMINORVM · QVI · OMNES · IN · HOC · TEMPLO · DEVM ·
O · M · COLEBANT · HANC · FENESTRAM · ORNANDAM · CVRAVIT ·
ANNO · SALVTIS · NOSTRAE · MDCCCXIII · CAROLVS · HESKETH ·
FLEETWOOD-HESKETH ·

[With this painted glass to the greater glory of God and in pious memory of all his ancestors lords of the manor of North Meols, who all in this church worshipped Almighty God, Charles Hesketh Fleetwood-Hesketh caused this window to be erected in the year of grace 1914.]

The following inscriptions are on the exterior of the Church.

(1) Foundation stone, east wall of chancel :

	<p>TO THE GLORY OF GOD THIS STONE WAS LAID OCTOBER 22ND 1908 BY ANNE DOROTHEA FLEETWOOD-HESKETH</p>
---	--

(2) Over outer entrance of porch :

<p>TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE CHANCEL OF THIS PARISH CHVRCH OF S^R CVTHBERT WAS BVILT AND THE NAVE RECONSTRUCTED AND ENLARGED A.D. 1909. R. B. BLAKENEY, M.A., RECTOR A. W. POPERT, J. BAKER AND T. TWIST, CHVRCHWARDENS.</p>

C. CLERK'S BILL.

The following account, amongst the miscellaneous Church papers, is written on a piece of paper measuring 6½ in. by 4 in. Unfortunately the third numeral of the date is covered by a blot of ink. It looks like 1722, but may be 1732 or 1782.

Ouing to the Clerk by the Church Wardens for washing, scouring and writing about the Church 17[2]2

In primis :

for washing the surplis foure times in y ^e year	o 4 o
for washing the table cloath and the napkin and bleaching them six weeks to get the wine out	} o j 6
for writing two presentments	o j o
for writing a copy of the register	o j o
for weedeing and dressing the church alley	o o 4
for washing and scouring the kneeling formes one time in y ^e year	} o o 2
for scouring and rubing the Church plate foure times in the year	} o o 8

	o 8 8

D. SUNDAY SCHOOL, 1814.

The following document, addressed to "Reverend Mr Ford, Ormskirk," is apparently a Register of the Sunday School. The letters P and B probably mean that the boy or girl in question is able to read the Prayer Book or the Bible. Those with no letter after their names are learning alphabet reading. Or the letters may record the loan of Bibles and Prayer Books.

NORTH MEOLS, Jan. 30th, 1814.

REVEREND SIR,

I have put down the children's names which is instructed on the Lord's Day by me John Moss.

BOYS		GIRLS		
Peter Halsall	P. 1	Ann Robinson	P. 1	Miles Gregson
Miles Blundell	P. 1	Cathrin Hodge	P. 1	Miles Blundell
Rich ^d Jump	P. 1	Ann Wright	P. 1	Rob ^t Halsall
James do.	P. 1	Margaret Johnson	P. 1	John Wright
Thos. Rimmer	P. 1	Ellen Wright	P. 1	John Meadow
John Ball	P. 1	Mary Such	P. 1	John Blundell
James do.	P. 1	Elizebeth Johnson	P. 1	John Rymer
Rich ^d Johnson	P. 1	Ellen Barton	P. 1	Peter Halsall
Robert Halsall	P. 1	Margaret Cropper	P. 1	Robert Todd
Rich ^d Barton	P. 1	Ellen Blundell	P. 1	John Barton
James Johnson	P. 1	Margaret do.	P. 1	William Howard
Tho ^s Johnson	P. 1	Ellen Ball	P. 1	James Silcock
Tho ^s Rimmer	P. 1	Ann Halsall	P. 1	Harriet Rymer
Henry Ball	P. 1	Elizebeth Jackson	P. 1	Alice Rymer
Rich ^d Wright	P. 1	Ellen Linaker	P. 1	Margaret Barton
Henry Meadow	P. 1	Alice Brade	P. 1	Sarah Tomlinson
Rich ^d Spencer	P. 1	Ann Meadow	P. 1	
W ^m Howard	B. 1	Cathrine Rimmer	P. 1	
Edward Bolton	B. 1	Mary Halsall	P. 1	
Tho ^s do.	P. 1	Ann Silcock	P. 1	
Thos. Todd	P. 1			
James do.	P. 1			
James Halsall	P. 1			
Total of P. B. 23		Total of G. B. 20		

E. THE SINGERS AND PLAYERS, 1832-3.

NORTH MEOLS 8th April 1833.D^r The Wardens of North meols Parish Churchviz. M^r Sam^l Madock & M^r John WrightTo Tho^s Wright, Tho^s Aughton, Tho^s Howard, Ja^s
Silcock & George Farclough being the Singers,
W^m Rushton & Nich^s Wright instrument Players.¹To their customary Salary from Easter 1832 to
Easter 1833 the same for several previous years } £ s. d.
having been charged & allowed by the Church War- } 8 0 0
dens for their performances in the said Parish Church1833 May 25 Received the above { THOMAS WRIGHT
{ THO^s. AUGHTON

F. HATCHMENT.

In the south-east corner of the nave, near to his monument, is the hatchment of Roger Hesketh (1791) and his wife Sarah, daughter of John Winckley, of Preston (1800). Ground all black, esquire's helm with mantling.

ARMS: Quarterly of six, (1) Ancient Hesketh, (2) Hesketh of Rufford, (3) Rufford, (4) Fitton, (5) Fleetwood, (6) as first; impaling-party per pale argent and gules, an eagle displayed, counter-charged, for Winckley. CREST: a garb or, banded gules.

G. MISCELLANEOUS.

A silver altar cross, 30 in. high, the gift of Sir Albert and Lady Stephenson, has the inscription:—"To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Albert Frederick Stephenson, born Sept. 27th, 1876, died June 29th, 1917, and Lieutenant Selwyn Seymour Stephenson, R.F.A., born May 28th, 1891, died March 13th, 1915; erected by their parents Albert Frederick and Annie Stephenson." Marks: (i) Maker's mark J.W.B. L^D; (ii) Lion passant; (iii) Leopard's head cr.; (iv) London date-letter 1919-20.

A new sundial, with the motto REDIME TEMPUS, was placed on the south wall of the nave, above the porch, in 1932.

¹ A bassoon and clarinet are mentioned in the wardens' accounts for 1834-5.

A parish hall was erected near the entrance to the churchyard in 1912.

The Benefaction Board (Rymer's Charity) recorded by Farrer (p. 66) is no longer in the church.

The date on the brass plate attached to Thomas Rimmer's (mariner) headstone is 1713, not 1753 (*ibid.*, 66).

The gravestone of Captain John Grayson, 1749, with the rhyming inscription given in Farrer (p. 67), was one of those moved in 1908 when the new chancel was built. It is now at the west end, on the north side of the new vestry, but the inscription is partly covered.

The panel from the front of the old gallery, dated 1705 (Farrer, p. 61), is now over the south doorway.

The Church Chest, originally the Town's (i.e. Township) Chest, is a plain oak chest with panelled front, 4 ft. 6 in. long, 22 in. wide, and 25 in. high, standing on four square legs $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. above the floor. The front has five upright panels, and three of oblong shape above. It has now two locks, the older (middle) lock having been removed.