

graphical descriptions, dated from 1715 to 1718, by the Rev Peter Walkden, Nonconformist minister, at Newton-in-Bowland and Hesketh Lane, near Chipping. The writing is generally clear, though wonderfully minute. The letters from his cousin, a student at Glasgow University, are interesting as a contemporary account of the Jacobite rising of 1715. There is also a curious arithmetical problem that requires some study to trace.

By C. T. Gatty, Esq.

Four baked clay Babylonian tablets, inscribed in the cuneiform character and dated in the reign of Nabonidus, Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, kings of Babylon.

By Mr. Potter.

A leaden object, use uncertain, but possibly a spindle whorl, shaped similarly to the pommel of a sword and ingeniously cast in open work.

By J. H. Gibson, Esq.

A bullet mould of curious construction and a hand cutting-machine.

The following Papers were read:—

I. ON THE ORMS OF LANCASHIRE IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY, AND ORM THE AUTHOR OF ORMULUM,* by *R. G. Latham, M.D., F.R.S., Hon. Member of the Society.*

II. ORMSKIRK MARKET CROSS AND WAYSIDE CROSSES IN GENERAL, by *Jas. Dixon, Esq., F. R. Hist. Soc.*

Crosses of stone were once much more common than now, amounting—as Mr. Rimmer informs us, in his work on the “Ancient Stone Crosses of England,”—to no fewer than five thousand, before the Reformation. There was one in almost every ancient town, village, or hamlet, and some of them of exquisite architectural design. Besides these there were, in this as in other parts of the country, many “wayside” and “praying” crosses; and here and there the base of one is still to be seen at the corner of a road or lying in a ditch. Inside Searisbrick park, looking from the Southport road, we see one so far intact that it might easily be quite restored, at the will of the owner. Being notably a “catholic” district, these remains are not to be wondered at. I have looked up the spots where such once existed, and of which either some small trace or at least the names yet mark the sites. And it is worthy of observation that they are generally to be met with in the districts lying seaward from Ormskirk and Lathom, favouring the impression that the early inhabitants of this part of Lancashire settled chiefly within the distance of only a few miles off the coast; and in like manner we find the more ancient churches—as Ormskirk, Halsall, Sefton, and one or two others—within the same limits of distance.

The following have their sites or fragments yet traceable:—

I. On the way from Ormskirk to Bescar; (1) one by Brooklands

* Transactions, page 91.

house; (2) another at Narrow moss, near Thurlestone hall; (3) at the turn to Heaton's bridge; (4) near the rise of the same bridge; (5) at the east lodge entrance to Scarisbrick park; and (6) at Bescar.

II. On the road from Ormskirk to Southport; (1) one at the Bird i' th' hand; (2) another at the next half-mile; (3) half-a-mile further; (4) at the "pinfold," near Scarisbrick bridge; (5) at each of the west side lodges of Scarisbrick park; and (6) Carr cross, near Snape green.

III. On the road from Scarisbrick through Halsall; (1) one near Hulme's bridge; (2) another near Halsall rectory; (3) Downholland cross; (4) Lydiate cross, near St. Thomas' Church; and (5) near Lydiate hall.

IV. (1) Newburgh cross, in the hamlet of Newburgh; (2) Dob cross, between the Three oaks in Lathom and Blythe hall; and (3) one at the Priory gateway. One near the Manor house, on the way to Rufford, at the eastern boundary of Ormskirk parish. And (5) Cromwell's cross, on the east side of Lathom park.

These twenty-two crosses are marked on the map of the ordnance survey, but doubtless many more, whose names and sites have been completely obliterated, were once to be found. To assume, therefore, that the name of "The Cross," in Ormskirk, applies simply to the crossing of the streets, and not to a former material cross, is a manifest absurdity, and shews a want of acquaintance on such matters by those who hold the opinion.

Downholland Cross.—Respecting this cross, already named, *The Tablet* of 10th December, 1870, has the following notice:—"On the 30th ult., "one of the ancient wayside crosses, with which England was formerly "thickly studded, was disinterred from its long resting-place. It was "found by a labourer, who was engaged in levelling a cop in a field "adjoining the Southport road, about half-way between Lydiate and "Downholland. The cross is one solid stone, octagonal in shape, some- "what corroded, but otherwise in much the same state as when torn "from its socket, which has existed, from time immemorial, on the "roadside about six yards in front. It must have lain in this position, "buried under the hedge, since the period when such objects of veneration were either destroyed by violent, or secreted by friendly hands. "The field belongs to Miss Balshaw of Lydiate, and is a small leasehold "in Lady Scarisbrick's manor of Downholland. The cross with its "socket was at once removed to Our Lady's church, Lydiate, where it "will be erected as a cemetery-cross. It is curious that this discovery "should have taken place on the Feast of St. Andrew, that great lover "of the cross. Such remains have been numerous in the neighbour- "hood, no fewer than five or six can be reckoned within the circuit of "one mile."

The Rev. T. E. Gibson further informs us, in his recently published valuable work, on *Lydiate Hall, and its Associations*, that "the space "immediately around this cross, now erected in the ground adjoining "the church, is to be devoted to the burial of priests, and no interments "are to take place, either in front or on the south side of Our Lady's "church."

We have proof, in this one discovery, that the burial of crosses was practised in our neighbourhood, and the ancient cross of the Ormskirk market place may yet some day come forth from its hiding-place. The erection of a new structure on the site which has so long preserved its name, as the market cross, is now a fact to be recorded; but it is nevertheless a matter of regret that the prevailing feeling of the Local Board has operated against its appearing as more than a clock tower. Elegant enough as such, and with the needlessly limited means at the disposal of the architect, who has had a laudable desire to produce something worthy of its ancient traditions, it will fail in the present as well as in an after age, to satisfy the eye of the Historian, the Antiquary, and the man of correct taste: and doubtless the mistake which has thrown away the opportunity of handing down to posterity a worthy memorial of Ormskirk's old associations, will in future be regretted.

NEW MEMBERS ELECTED.

- 22nd Feb., 1877. George Hayward Adshead, Esq., Pendleton, Manchester.
- 14th Dec., 1876. J. Eglinton Bailey, F.S.A., Egerton villa, Stretford, Manchester.
- 11th Jan., 1877. F. J. Fownes, Esq., 11, Lord street.
- 19th April, 1877. Captain Frederick Walker Gardiner, Derby street, Ormskirk.
- 14th Dec., 1876. Thomas Gibson, Jun., Esq., 3, East road, Albert park, and 47, North John street.
- 8th Feb., 1877. H. B. Gilmour, Esq., Fulwood park, Aigburth.
- 14th Dec., 1876. Rev. Canon Gray, M.A, Wolsingham Rectory, County of Durham.
- 8th Feb., 1877. Henry Heginbotham, M.R.C.S.E., F.R.G.S., Stockport.
- 14th Dec., 1876. John Laird, Esq., Oak house, Grosvenor road, Oxton, and 93, Church street, Birkenhead.
- 22nd Feb., 1877. T. J. Ridgway, Esq., Wildersmoor house, Lymm.
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