

THIRD MEETING.

Collegiate Institution, 12th January, 1854.

JOHN POOLE, Esq., in the Chair.

PROCEEDINGS.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Certificates of two Candidates for Membership were read for the first time.

The following gentlemen were duly elected Members of the Society:—

John Clements, Colquitt Street, Liverpool.

William Harrison, Galligreaves House, Blackburn.

The following DONATIONS to the Society were laid upon the table:—

From the *Society*.

Memoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie, deuxième série, tom. 2, Amiens, 1853; Bulletin de la Société, année 1853, Nos. 1, 2, 3, Amiens, 1853; Programme du Concours pour la Construction du Musée Napoléon, Amiens, 1853.

From the Rev. H. Tudsbury Turner, through the Rev. Dr. Thom.

The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the Primitive Episcopal Church, revived in Liverpool in the Year of our Redemption 1831.

From the Rev. A. Hume, D.C.L., &c.

A large representation of the French Raft at Boulogne, prepared for the French "Army of England," and intended for the invasion of England, 1798.

From Thomas Moore, Esq.

Report of the Town's Meeting on the subject of Decimal Coinage, 28th December, 1853.

From the Writer.

Letter on the subject of the Decimal Coinage, by Samuel Richardson, Esq., December 26th, 1853.

From Jas. Boardman, Esq.

The original "Proposals for a Charity School among y^e Protestant Dissenters. Liverpool, February 4th, 1739-40."

The following articles were EXHIBITED :—

Mr. Mayer exhibited three views of the Ancient Font in Walton Church; twenty drawings of Shaw's Brow and the vicinity; illustrative of a work on Pottery in preparation for publication; and four woodcut views of Shotwick Church, Cheshire.

The following books were handed round :—A MS. volume of Precepts, Forms, &c., customary in Courts of Law; and extracts of decisions in curious Trials; exhibited by Joseph Guyton, Esq. Wilkinson's Classical Atlas; by Mr. Andrew Green.

Mr. Clements exhibited two ancient panels of oak with peculiar carving. At the request of the meeting, he promised to give a detailed description of them at some future meeting of the Society.

In illustration of the first paper to be read, the following articles were exhibited :—

By the Misses Cort;—A miniature of their father, the late Rev. Robert Cort, Incumbent of Kirkby; drawing of Kirkby Chapel, previous to 1812, by the Rev. Robert Cort; the Ancient Parsonage, used till January, 1850. By the Rev. Dr. Hume;—Separate Diocesan Maps of Lichfield and Chester, previous to 1848; St. Chad's cross emblazoned. By the Rev. Thomas Moore;—A coloured Map of England and Wales, showing both Dioceses and Counties.

A Communication was read from Mr. James Boardman, mentioning some particulars respecting the last hours of Wedgewood. It was an extract of a private letter to Mr. Bentley, from Mr. Byerley, Wedgewood's nephew, dated 8th January, 1795, announcing the details of his illness, and his death on Saturday the 4th.

PAPERS.

I.—SOME NOTES, HISTORICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL, ON THE CHAPELRY OF KIRKBY, WALTON-ON-THE-HILL, LANCASHIRE.

By the Rev. Thomas Moore, M.A.

I.—INTRODUCTION.

Though there are nineteen different places of the name of Kirkby mentioned in Dugdale's *Monasticon*, yet the subject of the present remarks has not the honour to be of the number. The Kirkby of which we speak is the north-east portion of the extensive parish of Walton-on-the-Hill, and the Chapelry consists of the two townships of Kirkby and Simonswood. It is bounded by the parishes of Huyton, Prescott, Halsall, and Sefton, and is situated about half-way between Prescott, which is its post town, and Ormskirk, being about six miles from each. It is eight miles from Liverpool, in a north-easterly direction. Simonswood is on the remote side of Kirkby from Liverpool, and borders on Bickerstaffe.

The district is of a flat character, with gentle undulations, but is relieved by the low range of hills immediately adjoining, which extend from Prescott, in the direction of Ormskirk. Till within a very recent period it was a very retired country district, though in the neighbourhood of so many towns, and even within the last hundred years, must have been a dreary enough sort of place, as a considerable portion of it consisted of bog or moorland. The names Kirkby-moss, Simonswood-moss, and the neighbouring Gill-moss, Windle-moss, and Barrow-nook-moss, sufficiently indicate its former condition. Cultivation has done much to improve this state of things, and at the present time there are few purely agricultural districts which present more pleasing features; and the numerous plantations and orchards attached to the farm-houses, diversify a prospect which would otherwise possess too much sameness.

A small stream, a tributary of the Alt, and called variously Simonswood river, and Kirkby river, runs through both townships. By the darkness of its waters, it betrays its mossy origin. Trout, dace, and jack, are found in it.

Kirkby has of late become easy of access by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway; and the Kirkby station is 5 miles from Liverpool. The railway occupies twenty-one acres of the township. The Liverpool and Leeds Canal also passes Kirkby, but includes only one acre of it.

The number of acres in Kirkby as given in the Census Returns is 3,920, and of Simonswood 2,862.

II.—POPULATION.

The population of the township at various times has been as follows :—

KIRKBY.....	In 1801,	males 422,	females 411,	total 833.
	In 1811,	„ 474,	„ 438,	„ 912.
	In 1821,	„ 518,	„ 517,	„ 1035.
	In 1831,	„ 607,	„ 583,	„ 1190.
	In 1841,	„ 741,	„ 735,	„ 1476.
	In 1851,	„ 773,	„ 687,	„ 1460.

Houses in 1811—	Inhabited 138,	uninhabited 1,	building 0.
in 1841	„ 293,	„ 3,	„ 0.
in 1851	„ 235,	„ 4,	„ 1.

SIMONSWOOD...	In 1801,	males 140,	females 134,	total 274.
	In 1811,	„ 194,	„ 170,	„ 364.
	In 1821,	„ 220,	„ 170,	„ 390.
	In 1831,	„ 230,	„ 181,	„ 411.
	In 1841,	„ 267,	„ 226,	„ 493.
	In 1851,	„ 257,	„ 213,	„ 470.

Houses—In 1811 there were 54; in 1841, 71; and in 1851 there were 73.

It will be seen from these returns that the population of both townships had a steady increase up to 1841, but since that period a decrease. This arises, not from the fact that the population increases less rapidly at the present time, but from the fact that so many leave the neighbourhood, or send their children to settle in Liverpool; and the great diminution in the number of inhabited houses in Kirkby, being 58 in ten years, confirms the statement.

III.—ORIGIN OF THE NAMES.

Kirkby is a word of Danish origin, from “Kirkja,” Church, and “by,” a fixed residence, equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon “bidan,” to abide, whence our “abode.” The name of this township, therefore, is one of the many which prove the settlement of the Danes in Lancashire. The names

Ormskirk, Kirkdale, Formby, Crosby, and the name of the hundred itself, West Derby, are further proofs of the same statement.*

The origin of the name Simonswood is thus given by tradition:—"King John had a famous runner, who had gained the prize from all comers. He was in consequence very vain of his success, and bore himself with proportionate insolence. His fame was so well established, and report spoke of him so universally, that his name and his challenge to all England reached even the obscurity of Kirkby. A certain Simon dwelt there, and he felt a great desire to match himself with the King's runner. He at length mustered courage to go to Court, a day was fixed for the trial, and to the astonishment of all Simon proved the victor. The King was so pleased, that he offered him great advantages if he would enter his service. Simon, however, preferred his former retirement, and requested to be appointed the keeper of the forest. The boon was granted, and ever after it was known as Simon's-wood.

IV.—THE MANOR.

Kirkby is noticed in Doomsday Book. We find that in "Derbei Hundret," Uctred held six manors, viz.: Rabil (Roby), Chenueslei (Knowsley), *Cherchebi* (*Kirkby*), Crosebi (Crosby), Magele (Maghull), and Achetun (Aughton). There were two hides, a wood two miles,† and two æries of hawks.

After Uctred, who besides what has just been mentioned held also Kirkdale, Woolton, Speke, Skelmersdale, Litherland, Lytham, Lydiate, Altcar, &c., the next proprietors of Kirkby were those mentioned in the "Testa de Nevill," or "Liber Feudorum;" viz.: "Robertus de Rokeport Rogerus Gernet et Thom' de Bethum tenent quintam partem militis in Kyrkeby de decimo feodo."

Since the time of William Rufus these two townships have been held by the Molyneux family. The founder of the family, as is well known, was William de Molines, a follower of William the Conqueror, whose name

* See the papers of Messrs. Just and Thorner in vol. iv. of the Historic Society's Proceedings.

† This perhaps means or includes Simonswood. A hide was generally 120 acres, but according to Kelham, six carucates or 6000 acres make a hide between the Mersey and the Ribble.

stands the eighteenth in order on the roll of Battel Abbey.* The famous Roger de Poitou, having obtained the honour of Lancaster, gave to William de Molines the manors of Sefton, Thornton, and Kerdan (or Kirerdan), who took up his residence at Sefton, where the remains of the old family seat are yet visible, on the south side of the Church. Kirkby and Simonswood had been originally assigned to other Knights, but they came into the Molyneux family in the time of Adam de Molyneux, who married Annotta, daughter and heiress of the Gernetts of Kirkby; who had previously obtained Simonswood by a marriage with the heiress of Fitzroger of that place.

The name Simonswood occurs frequently in the "Forest Perambulations" which took place in early times, and is generally mentioned in connexion with Toxteth and Croxteth Parks.

In 1461 the tithes of these three townships were assigned to the Church of Lancaster. It would appear from the "Rot. Parl. vol. vi. p. 363," as quoted by Baines, that in the turbulent times of the wars of York and Lancaster, the Molyneuxes were deprived of their privileges for a time. This was the only trifling exception; and there are no other proprietors at the present day, if we except a very small portion held by Lord Skelmersdale and one or two others.

The following information we obtain from "Gregson's Fragments," in which is contained at full length an account of the various taxations of the County Palatine of Lancaster, derived from an original MS. written for the use of John Yates, Esq., Treasurer of the said county, May 16th, 1716. "One of these rates was the Soldiers' Lay or County Lay, the most usual either for mustering, arming, or furnishing of soldiers for the King's Majesty's wars, or of the trained bands," &c.

"At a general meeting of the Justices of Peace of the same county at Lancaster, at the Sheriff's table there, upon Wednesday night in the Assizes week, being the 11th day of August, anno regni Jacobi Angliæ etc., 22do, et Scotiæ 54to, anno Dom. 1624. The same Lay was holden to be the most fitting tax for the whole county."

"In James the First's time, the parish of Walton paid 9/ to this rate. The parish was divided into three parts, which paid alike. "Walton-cum-

* This is given on the authority of Sir George Dethick, Garter King of Arms, from Lodge's Peerage of Ireland, Archdall's edition, Dublin, 1789. On reference to the Roll, no such name is found, but it is found in an ancient Norman document, copied by John Foxe.

Fazakerly, Kirkby and Formby make the first quarter,* and pay 3/, as followeth, viz., Walton-cum-Fazakerly 1/, Kirkby 1/, Formby 1/. Darby, (sc. West Derby) maketh the 2nd quarter, and payeth 3/. Liverpool, Kirkdale, Bootle, Linacre, and Everton do make the third quarter, and pay 3/ as followeth, Liverpool $\frac{2}{3}$ parts or 2/—Kirkdale 9 parts of the other third part, which is $4\frac{1}{3}$ d.; Bootle and Linacre other 9 parts thereof, $4\frac{1}{3}$ d.; Everton 6 parts thereof, 3d., in all 3/."

This extract is interesting, as shewing the proportions which Kirkby and the neighbouring township paid to the County Lay more than two centuries ago; and as showing the relative importance of the townships of the parish. To us of the present generation it seems rather surprising to find Everton, Kirkdale and Bootle rated at a smaller sum than Kirkby.

The Fifteenths—which have been superseded by the Land Tax—were paid as far back as Magna Charta, being granted in return for the concessions which the King made at that time. To this tax Kirkby paid £1 16s. 4d., and for the sake of comparison may be mentioned Everton's, which was 14/, Kirkdale's 17/, and Bootle's 16/8.

With regard to the various musters of troops which took place three centuries ago, from a curious MS. part in Latin, "De Antiquitate Comit. Lancastriæ," also quoted by Gregson, we extract the following:—

"Mary, 1553—In Darby Hundred to raise 430 men: these were the commanders of them:—Edward Earl of Derby, Sir Richard Molyneaux, &c. The parish of Walton supplied 36 men out of this number: Kirkby's proportion was 5 men, Liverpool's 4, Kirkdale's 2, &c."

Among the fees paid to the various officers of the Duchy about 1588, "the maister of Symondswood forest and keeper of Toxteth Park hath for his fee £2 per annum."

Early records seem to imply that Kirkby and Walton were well wooded, and that their boundaries were in consequence not easily ascertained or well observed. "In 33 Edward I., William de Waleton impleaded Robert Byroun and forty-six defendants for cutting down oak and other trees growing in Waleton, under the pretext that the townships of Waleton and Kyrkeby were united by a wood in which they had the privilege of husbote." †

Kirkby has also been ecclesiastically connected with the family of Molyneux, for the Rectory of Walton, in which it is situated, was in their gift from

* They were divisions or thirds. This expression reminds one of Dr. Barrett's curious translation, *Omnis Gallia, &c.*, "All Gaul is quartered into three halves."

† Placit. Trinit. 33 Edward I., from Baines.

1470 till 1747. At the latter date Walton passed into other hands, the head of the house of Molyneux at that time being in orders in the Church of Rome; and the patronage of Kirkby went with it. The present Lord Sefton has lately purchased the advowson of Kirkby, which thus becomes separated from Walton Parish, and the first opportunity of exercising the privilege of presentation occurred in 1850. The small endowment which existed previously has also been greatly increased by Lord Sefton, as will be seen under the head Endowment.

V.—ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

The Chapel is dedicated to St. Chadd, which name was also given to "one piece of land called Chad-croft adjoining to y^e north side of y^e Chappell yard," and "belonging to the Parish of Walton." The name of St. Chadd, thus intimately connected with Kirkby, points to a period considerably before the Norman conquest, as St. Chadd flourished about the middle of the 7th century. St. Chadd or Ceadda from being Abbot of Lestingay monastery near Whitby in Yorkshire, was promoted to be Bishop of York and remained so for three years, from A.D. 663 to 666.

In the latter year on the remonstrance of Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, he retired from his Bishopric and became a monk in the monastery over which he had formerly presided with the greatest piety. The subject of the remonstrance was, that at his consecration, two Bishops who kept Easter after the British manner had assisted Uini, of Winchester, though he observed it after the Roman method. His merits, however, were so conspicuous that he was shortly after consecrated in the Roman manner by Theodore, as Bishop of the Kingdom of Mercia, where he exercised his office from 667 to 670.

St. Chadd, who had been the second Bishop or Archbishop of York, was the fifth Bishop of the Mercians. Christianity was introduced into this kingdom by Oswy, king of Northumbria, when he had slain Penda, the pagan king of the Mercians. Oswy founded a Church at Lichfield in 657. This see was made archi-episcopal by Pope Adrian, at the intercession of King Offa, and comprised the dioceses of Lichfield, Hereford, Worcester, Sidnacester and Legeceastre (sc. Lincoln and Peterborough), and the country of the East Angles, including the two dioceses of Elmham and Dunwich, which form the present diocese of Norwich. To Canterbury there remained only four dioceses, viz. London, Winton, Roffen, and

Selesiensis (Chichester). Lichfield, however, remained archi-episcopal, only during the Archbishop Adulph's life time, and was subsequently subdivided into five Bishopricks. The see of Lichfield was removed after the conquest by Peter, to Chester, and by the next Bishop to Coventry, as he had set his heart upon the splendid monastery which Leofric and Godiva had built there. Hence the double name for the see, Lichfield and Coventry. The arms of the diocese are St. Chadd's cross. Lancashire was a part of Lichfield diocese till the time of the Reformation; the full extent of which may be seen from the fact that it then included portions of the present dioceses of Carlisle and Ripon.

The character of St. Chadd, when appointed to York, as given by Bede, is deserving of notice. "He travelled about, not on horseback, but after the manner of the Apostles, on foot, preaching the gospel in towns, in the open country, in cottages, villages, and castles." Theodore insisted on his riding about when he became Bishop of the Mercians. Such was the man to whom the chapel of Kirkby was dedicated.

VI—PATRONAGE AND VALUE.

The patronage was previous to the time of the present incumbent, in the hands of the Rector of Walton. The value of the living was miserably small up to about the year 1733. Before that time it seems to have consisted merely of the following items.

1. Chad-croft, which, however, has lapsed, and has not for years belonged to the chapel.

2. "One little house and orchard situate at y^e Bottom of Kirkbie Rowe and y^e Chapell yard."

3. "One p.ccell of land called Priest's-croft situate in Kirkbie, (at the mill dam one customary acre.—Terrier A.D. 1789); and time out of mind held by y^e minister of y^e chapel from y^e Lord of y^e Mannour under y^e yearly rent of eightpence. This is valued at £5 per annum."

4. "Belonging also to y^e said Chappell, y^e yearly rent of eight shillings due on y^e feast of St. Martin y^e Bishop, in winter, from y^e ancient Inhabitants of y^e forest of Symondswood.—(Old inhabited houses; Terrier of 1789)."

These particulars are derived from the oldest Terrier in the chapel records, which bears date 4th of July A.D. 1686, and which was presented at the Triennial Visitation held at Wigan in the same year.

5. In addition to the above, the Terrier of A.D. 1733, adds—"The Hemp yard adjoining to the south side of the chappell ffield."

6. "Likewise 8s. yearly, part of the interest of £10 left by one Pickup, (Laurence, of Liverpool,) and which is now paid by the overseer, the stock being in his hands or rather in the Town's hands."—From the Terrier of A.D. 1789.

This Terrier says "with respect to Chad-croft, Hemp-yard and Priest's-croft the Lord of the Manor's steward objects to the legality of the claim.

7. From the Rector of Walton £22 10/.—(Terrier of 1789.)

The above may be regarded as the Curate's stipend up to A.D. 1733, as about that time the Old Parsonage house was built, in the Rev. Mr. Mount's incumbency.

8. The Parsonage.

9. "Belonging to the Curate, purchased about 21 years ago (A.D. 1768), with Queen Anne's Bounty by Lot and Benefaction, a house and out-housing both thatched, the walls part brick and part daub, with the several pieces and closes of Land lying in Bretherton, near Tarlton Bridge, about 16 statute miles distant and let by the present Curate (Mr. Gill) at the clear yearly rent of £23 2s."

10. "The interest on £200, appropriated by the Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne, for the augmentation of the perpetual Curacy of Kirkby."

11. "The interest on £905 4s. 8d. remaining in the Parliamentary Fund Account, to the credit of, and appropriated for the augmentation of," Kirkby.

The above was the income up to A.D. 1850, and amounted to little more than £90 per annum.

12. Lord Sefton's liberal endowment of £160 per annum, charged on his estate. The present income is represented at £259, which, with the Parsonage, makes the value of the living about £300 per annum.

VII.—INCUMBENTS.

As the Registers do not go farther back than A.D. 1678, I have been able to trace the curates of this Chapelry only up to A.D. 1686.

In A.D. 1686, William Atherton. His name is signed to the first Terrier, as Curate.

In A.D. 1689, Ralph Reeve, Curate.

In A.D. 1722, William Mount.

In A.D. 1756, or thereabouts, Thomas Wilkinson.

From A.D. 1786 to 1793, John Rigby Gill, A.B., Brasenose, Oxford.

From A.D. 1793 to A.D. 1850, Robert Cort.

From 1850, Robert Henry Gray, M.A., Student of Christ Church, Oxford.

Of Mr. Atherton, nothing is known but his name. He may have been the first Curate after the Restoration. The Rector of Walton in his time was Thomas Pawlett, presented by the Dowager Countess of Southampton, who was patron for that turn.

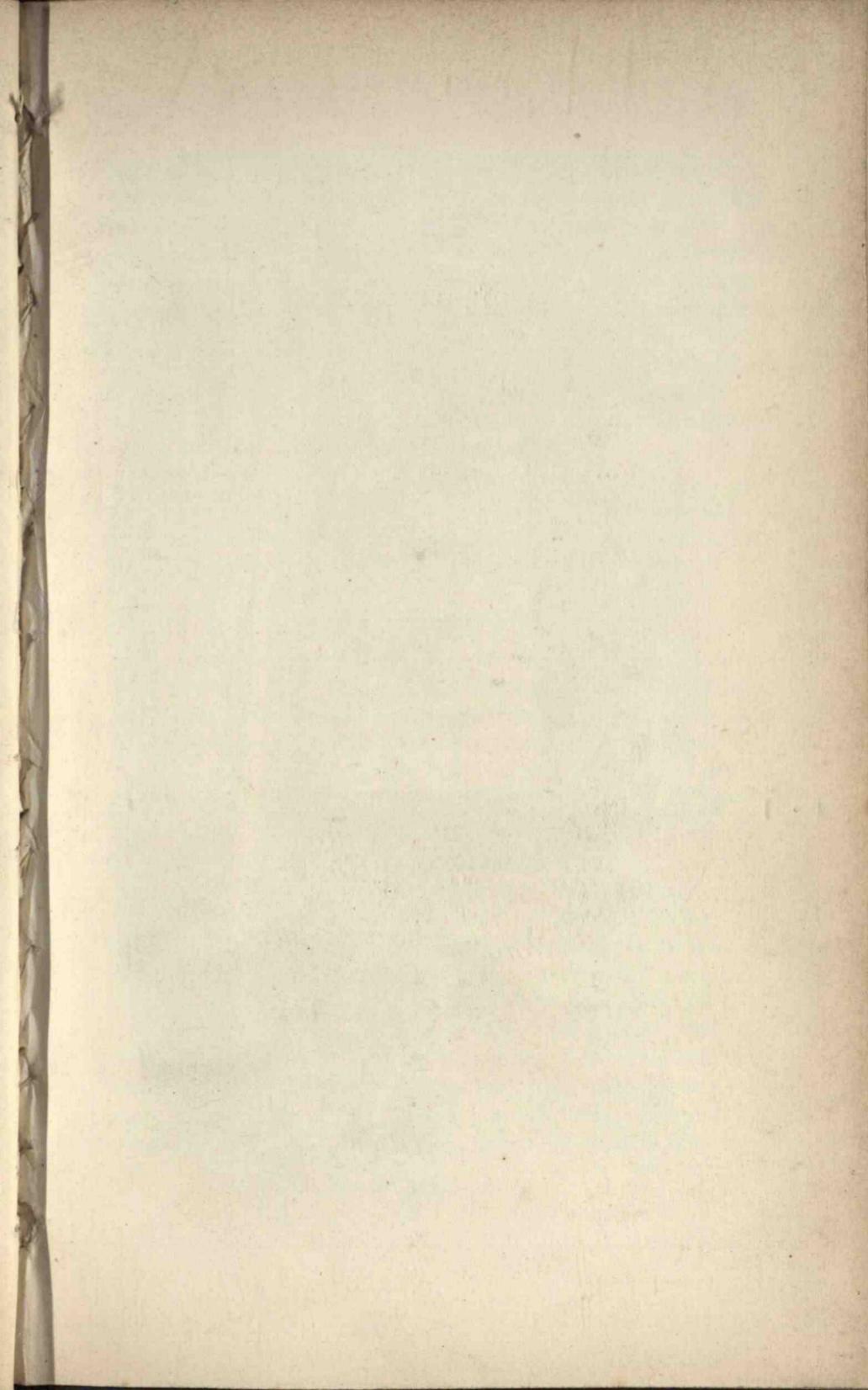
Ralph Reeve succeeded Mr. Atherton. In the register of baptisms in A.D. 1689, we find "Ann the Daug. of Ralph Reeve, Curate, born Mar. 27th; bapt. April 4th." Also in 1690, "James y^e son of Ralph Reeve, Dec. 30th." These entries fix the time of his Incumbency, but the registers do not enable us to tell when he died or ceased to be Curate, as it was not the practice for the clergymen to sign them in those days.

Mr. Mount's name, which is the first signed in the registers, is found at the bottom of the page which contains the baptisms of A.D. 1722-3. In his time and after, till the Act passed in Geo. III.'s time on the subject, the Curate signed his name at the foot of each page, the previous practice appearing to be for the Clerk or Sexton to sign his name at the end of each year. Mr. Mount built the old Parsonage House, and presented the Communion Plate, and left the interest of £20 to the poor. He resigned the Curacy of Kirkby several years before his death as the inscription on his tomb shows:—"The Rev. Mr. Wm. Mount, late Curate of Kirkby, died 22nd of April, 1765, aged 80 years." On the same stone is also "Ann, wife of William Mount, Curate of Kirkby, departed this life December 23, 1747." He was buried in St. Nicholas' Church yard, Liverpool, and his tomb is the tenth from the most westerly window on the south side.

Mr. Wilkinson succeeded Mr. Mount and was minister for about thirty years. He had a strong mechanical turn of mind, and invented the gold balance which was once the only one in use, and which was extensively manufactured at Ormskirk and Prescott. It is still made at the former place. He also invented several other machines which exhibited great ingenuity. In his later years he suffered much from asthma. He died in his 65th year, on a Sunday afternoon during service, while a neighbouring clergyman was officiating for him. He expired in the porch of the parsonage and the old servant went to the chapel and proclaimed aloud, "Parson's dead," on which the congregation was immediately dismissed. He was buried in Kirkby. Besides building the present chapel, he procured the Queen Anne's Bounty.

Mr. Gill, who was for six years Curate, was the eldest son of Thomas Gill, Surgeon, of Prescott, who was the son of Robert Gill of Hale, proprietor of the Dungeon Salt Works, where his family had been settled for several generations. A Robert Gill of Hale was summoned on a jury as a freeholder, to try a cause between the crown and the lord of the manor of Hale, in the reign of Henry VI. Mr. Gill took his degree of A.B. and was ordained in the year 1777. He accepted the Curacies of Preston and Chaldron, Dorset. He removed to Kirkby in 1786, where he died 11th Sept. 1793, in the fortieth year of his age; and he was buried at Prescott. He left a widow and six children, of whom Robert Gill, Esq., of Woolton, one of our members, is the only surviving one.

Mr. Cort was born at Arkholme, near Lancaster, but from his eighth year he resided at Kirkby with Mr. Wilkinson, his maternal uncle. By him he was prepared for the ministry and sent to St. Bees. In due time he was ordained at Chester, and shortly afterwards held the perpetual cure of Formby. On the death of Mr. Gill who had succeeded his uncle at Kirkby, Mr. Cort resigned the more valuable cure of Formby for that of Kirkby, as his heart was fixed there, and there he lived during the remainder of his days, exercising the duties of his office for upwards of fifty-six years. He entered formally on the duties of Kirkby on the 12th of December, 1793. Mr. Cort was a man of talent, and celebrated as an instructor of youth. He was a strict disciplinarian, and most accurate in the discharge of every duty. He catechised the children publicly in church each year, on the last three Sundays in Lent, thus acting in accordance with the rubric and Herbert's precept, "the country parson values catechising highly." He had also a taste for painting which descended to his son the late John Cort, an Attorney in Liverpool, who accumulated one of the finest private collections of paintings, prints, &c., to be found in the County. These still remain in the old Parsonage house, where Mr. Cort's two daughters, the sole survivors of the family, still reside. Mr. Cort's second son entered the ministry. Mr. Cort himself died in the 88th year of his age, having discharged the duties of his office till within a few days of his death. He officiated at the burial of the dead on the 6th of January, 1850, and caught a cold which proved fatal in about a fortnight's time. He was interred on the 23rd. A neat tablet has been erected in the chapel to his memory by his daughters. For a few years before his death he ceased to discharge the Sunday duty. The writer of this paper entered the ministry under Mr. Cort's auspices,



and had thus an opportunity of knowing and appreciating his merits and worth. He ever regarded him as a fine specimen of a clergyman of a past age, but who still held his place with the present. He attended our present Diocesan's first visitation in 1849, held in Liverpool. Mr. Cort was most munificent in his charities. To Arkholme, his native place, his daughters in fulfilment of their father's known wishes, have given £15 per annum, secured on their property in that place, for the education of ten poor children. To eight poor persons in Kirkby and six in Simonswood, £10 per annum have been assigned in the proportion of three-fifths to the former and two-fifths to the latter. In addition to the above, they gave £1,000 to the Liverpool Charities.

To some future writer we must leave the task of recording the good acts of the present Incumbent. The writer of these remarks begs to thank him for his courtesy and kindness in giving him access to the registers, from which he derived much valuable information.

VIII.—THE CHAPEL.

The present chapel is built on the site of a more ancient one, which was taken down A.D. 1766. I have been informed that the ancient one had a "Rood-loft." There can be little doubt that there was a place of worship even in Saxon times, as the dedication to St. Chadd and the age of the Font would perhaps prove. The present edifice which is of the plainest possible character, was built A.D. 1766, by the Rev. Thomas Wilkinson. He obtained a Brief for the purpose, dated March 5th in that year, which raised upwards of £1,043.*

The half of the North side is occupied by a "lean-to," which formerly served for a School-room, before A.D. 1806, and also as a Vestry. The old school-room now serves as the entrance to the North Gallery and Vestry, and is called the "Bier House," as the bier for funerals is kept there. The Chapel was enlarged A.D. 1812 by the Rev. Mr. Cort and T. Robinson, Esq., agent to the Earl of Sefton, at their joint expense. This was effected by prolonging the side walls and building a new gable end. The North Gallery was added at the same time, and as the pulpit was in the middle of the south side, the gallery was made rather large. It was probably conjectured that it would then suffice for all the wants of the town-

* Baines' Lancashire.

ships. The present Incumbent, however, has found it necessary to add a South Gallery, the entrance to which is by stone steps outside. Additional accommodation is thus provided for above 100 persons; and there is now seat room altogether for about 600. The access to the little gallery in the West end is from the inside of the Church. Mr. Gray has also replaced by subscription an old worn-out organ by a new one, by personal donation has added a clock, and Lord Sefton presented the new bell.

It may be expected that ere long the present chapel will be exchanged for such a structure as the ecclesiological taste of the present age would suggest, as the munificence of the Earl of Sefton, in Church matters is so well known.

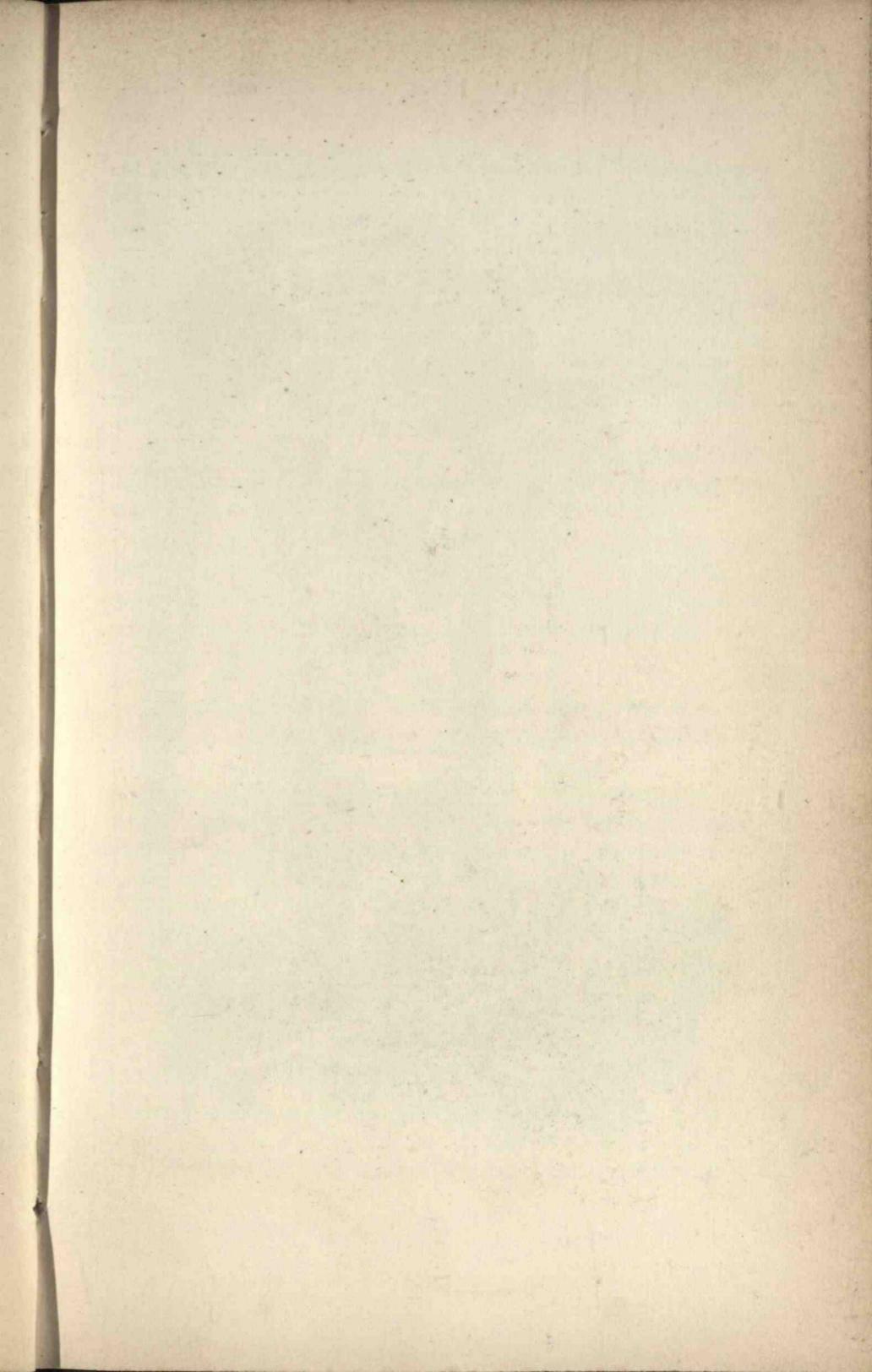
There is a grave yard which contains about half an acre. An addition was made to it during Bishop Sumner's time. The tombstones and inscriptions are of the usual rustic character.

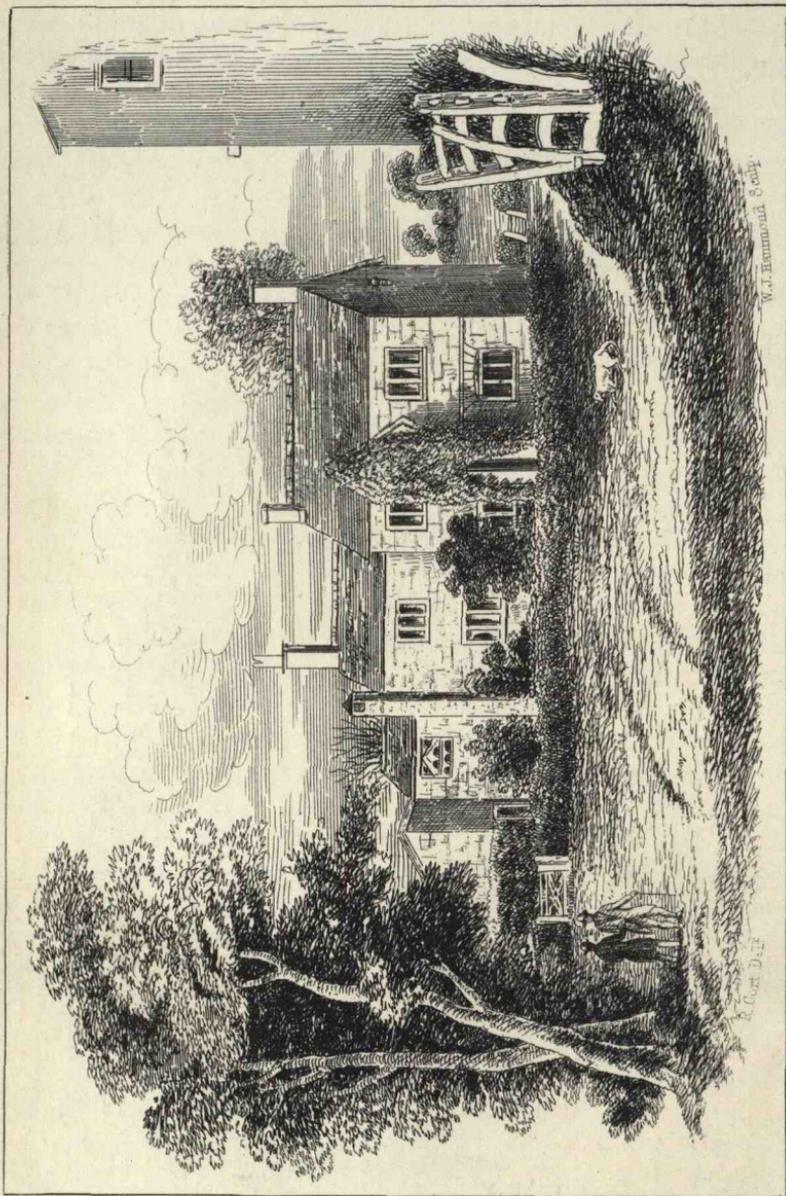
IX.—THE FONT.

The only remnant of antiquity is the Font, which is generally supposed to be as old as the time of William Rufus. It is not proposed to enter into the discussion of this question, as it forms the subject of a distinct paper in the present volume. The author of that paper is of opinion that it is Saxon; and if this be true it will confirm a remark made above, that a chapel must have existed at Kirkby from a very early period. The font, being of red sandstone, is rather defaced by time, so that it requires very great care to make out the various figures which are carved upon it. The hand of time however has not been so rude as that of man. The font lay neglected in the Church yard under the spout, by the old school-room door, and the pupils used to sharpen their knives and pencils on it, and the only wonder is that it is in such good preservation. Mr. Cort at last had it removed into the "Bier House." The basement, which is of the double-cable form, was for many years in the old parsonage garden, supporting a sundial. Mr. Gray has had the Font restored to its place in the Church and has supplied a new pedestal. It is of large dimensions, sufficient for the immersion of such infants as are required to be baptized in that manner.

X.—THE PARSONAGE.

The old Parsonage house was erected about A.D. 1733, of which





KIRKBY OLD PARSONAGE.—A. D. 1790

the Terrier of A.D. 1789 gives the following account. "Also, belonging to the Curate a dwelling house and stable both of brick, and slated. They were built by the contribution of the inhabitants about 56 years ago, on a small piece of waste, granted by writing from the Lord of the Manor for that purpose, under the yearly rent of 4d. Another piece was added to increase the garden thereunto belonging. The yearly rent of this was 2d. But he had no power to give it only for his life, therefore the present Lord about 14 or 15 years ago laid claim to these premises and insisted on taking a lease of three lives in trust, for the use of the curate. The yearly rent for these premises is three shillings. The house contains two parlours, a lobby, kitchen, pantry, and cellar below stairs, five rooms above, and a closet over the porch," (which, though exceedingly small, was used by Mr. Mount for a study.)

Mr. Cort built a new kitchen and other offices at a considerable outlay. He also enclosed the small piece of ground attached to it and planted those trees, under the shade of which he used to sit in his old age.

The present Parsonage is a very fine building, completed A.D. 1848. Its grounds join the Chapel yard on the east side, and are neatly laid out and adorned with rising plantations, which are growing well, though suffering somewhat from the sea spray, which is carried to that distance in stormy weather.

XI.—THE SCHOOLS.

In 1806, a School was built by Lord Sefton, which he endowed with £40 per annum for the Master. There had previously been a small sum of £8 per annum from the "Billinge Charity." On an old table is recorded "the moiety of a yearly rent from Nehemiah Cowley's freehold estate in Billinge, left to the School, poor, &c."* In expenses, 10s.; to the poor and to the Schoolmaster, £8. The School was enlarged in 1851, and one of equal size built for girls, to which subsequently an Infant School has been added. There is a residence for the Master, and his house separates the Boys' and Girls' Schools. The average number of pupils is—Boys 60, and Girls and Infants 110.

XII.—THE CHARITIES.

The following is a copy of the Benefaction Table:—

William Fleetwood has left yearly	2	0	0
-----------------------------------------	---	---	---

* Baines' Hist. Lanc.

Thomas Asp,* once in two years	10	0	0
Nehemiah Cowley, yearly	10	0	0
Rev. Wm. Mount, the interest of	20	0	0
Rev. R. Cort, (for 56 years minister of this chapel) for eight poor people in Kirkby and six in Simonswood yearly)	10	0	0

On an old table we find Lawrence Pickup of Liverpool to the Curate and Poor £10. It also states that the Cowley Charity is to the School and Poor yearly.

XIII.—THE TITHEBARN, &c.

There is a large Tithebarn in Kirkby, but it is no longer used for parish purposes, as the tithes were commuted for a rent charge of £465 10s.

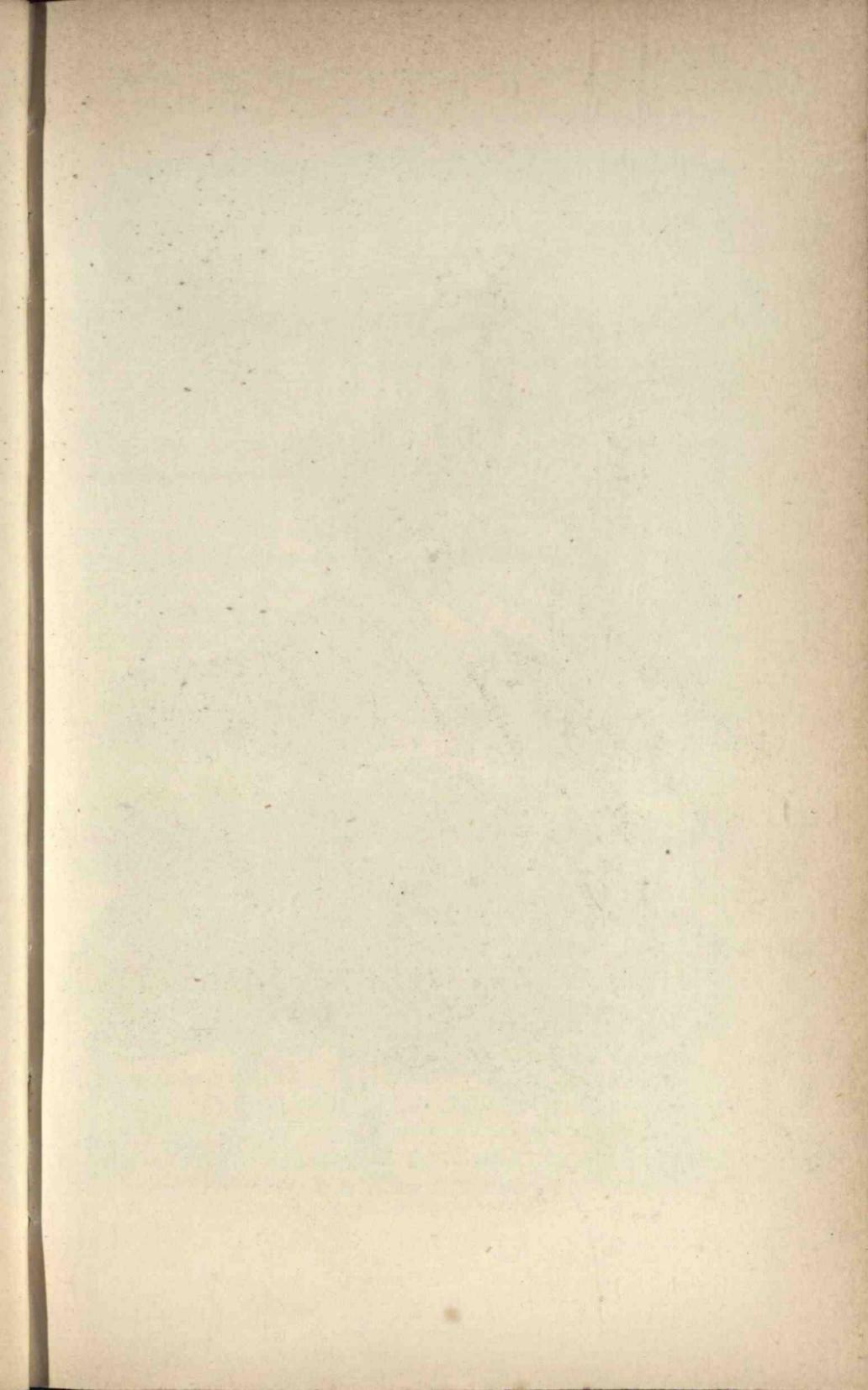
As the district is nearly altogether agricultural, only 24 families out of 154 being engaged in trade, and none in Simonswood, and as no proprietor has resided within the limits of the two townships for centuries, there are no remarkable houses calling for notice. Kirkby Hall may be mentioned, which is a farm house in Kirkby, and one in Simonswood, dated A.D. 1687. There is also a good house of modern structure in Kirkby, called Whitfield House. Lord Sefton has since 1850 removed to Kirkby his extensive works, in which the tiles and other requisites for his estate are prepared.

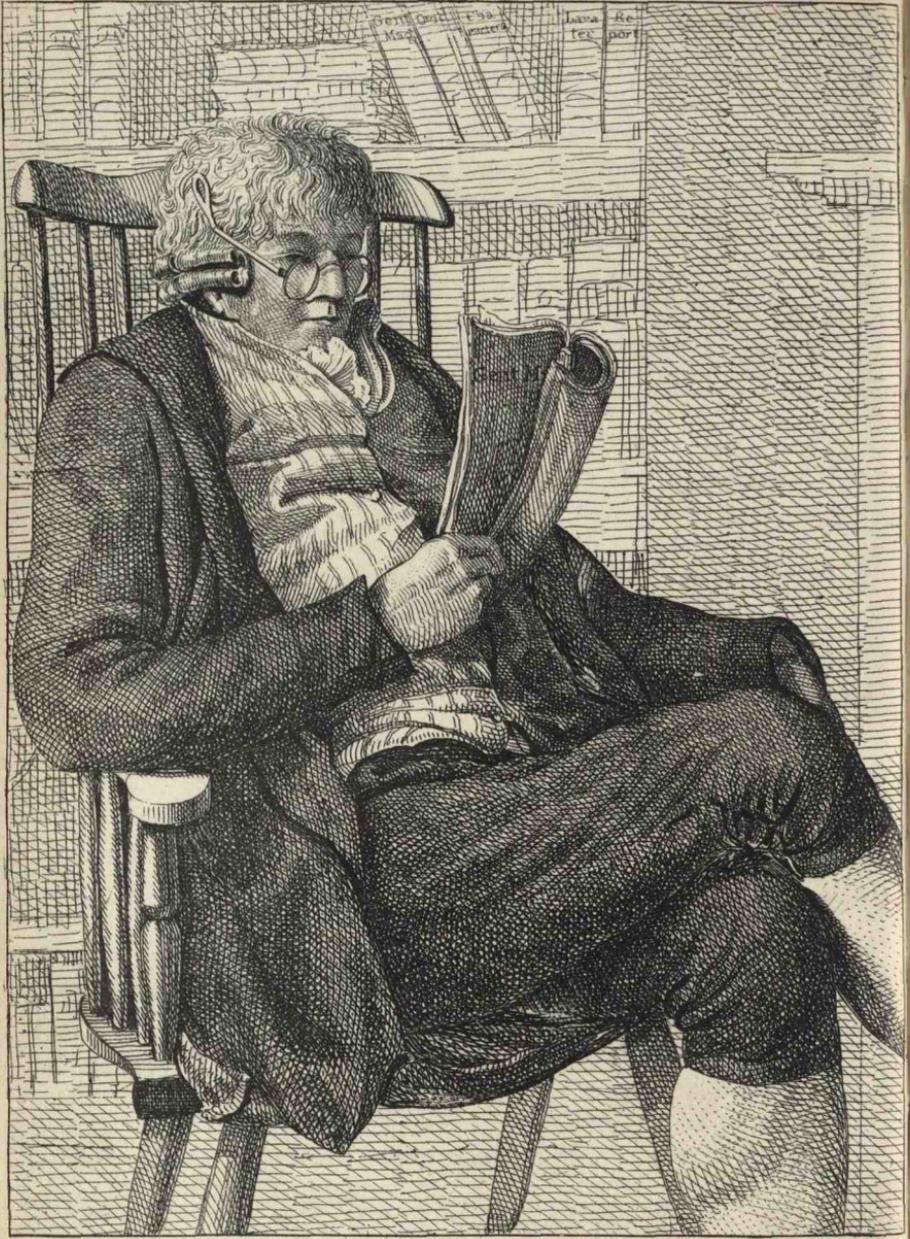
XIV.—REGISTERS.

We shall conclude our Notes, by some remarks on the oldest book of the Registers. It is of parchment, about the size of half-breadth foolscap.

On its first page is a copy of the Terrier, A.D. 1686. The first entry is, "Anno Domini, 1678, Burialls att Kirkby Chappell. Alice, y^e wife of Will. Kirkby, buried October 17th. Certified by Mr. Norras." The average number of deaths in 49 years, from 1678 to 1726, is 13; of births for the same period, 16. The average of marriages for the same period is only 3. The smallness of the number is accounted for by the the fact that the majority of the inhabitants were married in those days in their parish church of Walton. There are no entries of marriages from 1686 to 1687, and from 1715 to 1720. Of the names of persons that occur in the Registers, the most common are Kirkby, Litherland, Sefton, Fazakerly,

* A grave stone with the letters T. A., 1698, marks the spot where his remains are laid, on the right hand side as you approach the chapel door. The date of his interment is July the 25th.





MR JOHN HOLT.

Lidgiatt, Holland, Halewood, Frodsham, Bibby, Brownbill, Bulling, Maudsley, Mercer, Mollyneux, Spencer, Tatlock, Tyrer, Webster, Woods. Many of these names are still to be found in the townships.

II. BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF A LATE LOCAL ANTIQUARY.

By James Stonehouse.

The etching before us represents Mr. John Holt, who, somewhat more than half a century ago, resided at Walton-on-the-Hill, near Liverpool, and followed the calling of a schoolmaster. He was a man highly respected by his neighbours, and one of those who felt a pleasure in acquiring and imparting knowledge. Mr. Holt was well known sixty years ago in this vicinity, as a man, although not nationally eminent, yet provincially and locally so, and as standing out from the common herd of his fellows. He was born at Hattersly, near Mottram, in Longendale, in 1743. There is some doubt respecting this date, as we find in the obituaries of the time that he is put down as dying at fifty-nine, while his gravestone, "that mute memento of the bye-gone time," records fifty-eight to be his age at the time of his decease.

He was originally intended for the Dissenting ministry, but he appears at a very early age to have become a member of the Church of England. He settled at Walton about 1757, and in 1761 his name appears in the church register as parish clerk, where it continues until 1781. As he is said to have dwelt between forty and fifty years in Walton, he must have received the appointment soon after his settling there. If this be the case it is somewhat remarkable; because he could not have been more than twenty years of age at the time, and it would have been contrary to law, which prescribes that none under twenty-one shall hold that office. He also held the appointment of surveyor of the highways for some years.

During the first years of his residence in Walton, he occupied one of the houses north of the church, where he followed the occupation of master of the Free Grammar school. He seems to have created, during his residence in the parish, a strong feeling of regard on the part of all his neighbours; and his kindness to his family was most commendable, in

supporting, as he did, some members of it. At one time, it appears, he was elected churchwarden, and being a loyal man in disloyal times, there is no doubt that his influence was exerted, in his own small sphere, to keep people in the right path.

On the formation of the Board of Agriculture, in 1793, Mr. Holt was appointed surveyor for the county of Lancaster, and in that capacity he drew up a Report so rapidly, and containing so much and such varied information, that he was specially noticed; and his was the first Report considered worthy of publication by the government.

In 1767 Mr. Holt married Elizabeth France, spinster, of Walton; the ceremony being performed on the 30th of April, by the Rev. Myles Atkinson, curate. Mrs. Holt was a most amiable person. Their union was not blessed by any offspring.

Soon after their marriage, Mr. Holt commenced a school for young ladies, a portion of whose education he superintended. The pupils were numerous and respectable; one of the branches of education taught was equestrian exercises, and Mr. Holt in his daily excursions, as surveyor of the highways, took with him one of the young ladies as his companion.

The school near the church was erected in 1773. Mr. Holt bought the land on which it stands, taking down a large low stone building that occupied its site. A part of the back of the present school is constructed of the stones taken from the old building. The passer by will notice that there is a vane on the top of the roof, bearing date 1794, with Mr. Holt's initials; also what at that period was a novelty in science, and a profound mystery to the unlearned—a lightning conductor. This latter may be regarded as a curiosity, for it was the first that was erected in this part of the country; in fact, one of the very few that were brought into use in any part of the kingdom.

I may here mention a rather curious circumstance, that at the time created a good deal of gossip amongst the Walton quid nuncs, in which Mr. Holt was somewhat concerned, and, as far as I can learn, it has never been fully accounted for. As the old chronicler says, "I tell the tale as 'twas told to me."

The circumstance to which I allude took place about 1790. It was the custom of Mr. Holt and some of his friends to assemble occasionally at

each other's houses, to enjoy each other's conversation. On one of these occasions, several friends, five I believe, had met together in Mr. Holt's study, when the conversation, wandering from one subject to another, at length turned upon—Raising the Devil. One of Mr. Holt's guests was Mr. Wright, then curate of Walton, who affirmed, that to raise the devil was no uncommon or difficult thing, and if they would like to see him, he would do it. An offer like this was not to be refused, and some desire being expressed to be introduced to his Satanic Majesty, Mr. Wright inquired in what shape they would wish to have him present. One suggested one shape, and another another, until one of the gentlemen present said, "let us have him as old H — s." Now this was an old man who lived near Mr. Holt's, and who was well known to them. "No," said one of the party, "he lives too near, let us have old Harry P——n," another well known old man who lived at some distance. Mr. Wright agreed to raise Beelzebub in this man's form, and, after using some little cabalistic ceremonies, and uttering a certain formula usual on such occasions, to the terror, consternation, and dismay of those present, old Harry P——n, in his grey coat, familiar to them all, stood in the midst of them. A scene of the utmost confusion ensued. The figure made a rush at one of the party, or seemed about to do so; but Mr. Holt interfered, and in the act threw down the person next to him against a chair, when the figure disappeared. Each gentleman positively averred that he saw old Harry P——n, and that he neither saw the door open on his approach, nor at his departure. Mr. Holt's servant, at the time that this piece of diablerie took place, was in the cellar directly under Mr. Holt's study, and hearing the noise and confusion, so unusual, over head, rushed up stairs to see what was the matter. On the landing place in the passage, he met his master's guests in a state of the utmost alarm. The party, of course, was broken up, and one of the guests, partly with the fright he had sustained, and partly with the hurt received in falling against the chair, was confined to his house for weeks. It may be said that Mr. Holt, to astonish, and perhaps play a hoax upon his guests, had had some understanding with Mr. Wright in this matter, but so far was Mr. Holt not in the secret of the proceeding, whatever it might have been, that he forbid Mr. Wright his house, and would never allow him to enter it again. One of the party went on the following day to the Rector of Walton, to inform him of the circumstance, and, with a dismayed look, cautioned the rector as to what

sort of man his curate was. "And so," said the reverend gentleman, "he raised the devil, did he? Well, that is a very easy matter; I can do that; shall I raise him for you?" "Oh dear, by no means," responded the worthy parishioner, "I wish you good day."

As an author, Mr. Holt has strong claims to notice among our local "Worthies." He published several works of great utility, one of which was "The Characters of the Kings and Queens of England." The first volume appeared in 1786, the second in 1787, and the third in 1788. In this work may be found arguments in favour of Societies like our own; and if our ancestors had had such associations, many doubtful points respecting the middle ages of our history would have been cleared up. At the date 1538, Mr. Holt says:—

"Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, Vicar General of Henry, ordered 'that every incumbent minister, in all the parishes in England, should keep a register of all weddings, christenings, and burials.' This is the first institution of this useful record, and by means of which most useful knowledge and interesting evidence has since been obtained on many important occasions. Their use might be further extended, namely, by registering the remarkable occurrences relative to the public concerns of the several districts."

This work was highly esteemed at the time. It is well written, and Mr. Holt has exhibited the characters of our Sovereigns in a fair and impartial spirit.

Mr. Holt also compiled several excellent little treatises for the use of his school, and wrote two works of fiction. He was also author of a pamphlet on the "*Culture of Potatoes*," which obtained for him the medal of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Sciences. He was also one of the first who drew attention to the collecting of materials for a Guide to Liverpool. In this he made considerable progress, arranging and classifying his materials in a very excellent manner. He had collected, previous to his death, a vast deal of local information of the most interesting description. His MSS. relative to the History of Liverpool, he bequeathed to his friend, Mr. Matthew Gregson, the author of the "Fragments."

Besides constantly corresponding on matters of local interest with the local press of the day, Mr. Holt was a steady contributor to the "Gentleman's Magazine," whose word at that time "was law, and whose decree was irrevocable." His initials appear to a great number of amusing and interesting articles. The account of a ramble into Derbyshire, which will

be found in *vol. lxiii*, pp. 19 and 720, is particularly deserving of notice. He also contributed to this publication, an account of the institution of the Liverpool Athenæum, (*vol. lxx*, p. 934;) it is dated, Walton, Sept. 18, 1800. In this paper he alludes to the establishment of the Lyceum News Room. He communicated a paper (*vol. lxx*, p. 934), relative to the Botanic Garden, which was then situated at the top of Oxford-street, and extended over the space occupied between it and Myrtle-street. The conservatory stood upon the ground where now stands the Deaf and Dumb School. To this paper are appended two errata, occurring in a former one, the first to the effect that Mr. Foster, and not Mr. Taylor, furnished the designs for the Athenæum; and the second relating to a mistake about Professor Foster's herbarium.

Mr. Holt contributed also, for many years, the Meteorological Journal, which appears in the Gentleman's Magazine for the north of England, while Mr. Carey, the optician, furnished that for the south; and it is somewhat singular that after Mr. Holt's death this valuable contribution was not continued by any other hand. In the number which was issued immediately after his death, the Diary, although commenced by Mr. Holt, was finished by a friend. To these diaries he appended remarks upon the budding and blossoming of flowers, the leafing of trees, the appearance of birds, the ripening of fruit, and other interesting natural phenomena connected with country life.

In 1777 Mr. Holt undertook the great feat of a journey to London, which he appears to have accomplished in two and a half days. His diary contains some curious remarks.

Accompanied by a friend, he left Liverpool on Easter Sunday, March 30, 1777, by the "Liverpool Diligence," at three in the afternoon. They arrived at Warrington at six o'clock, where they had tea; at Knutsford at eight, and at Holmes Chapel at ten, where supper was partaken of. At two in the morning they arrived at Stone, in Staffordshire, where the landlady "got out of a warm bed, and hot us up some excellent ale." Lichfield at eight, to breakfast. Within a mile of this town the "Diligence" broke down, in the midst of a smart snow storm. Proceeding on their journey, the travellers arrived at two o'clock at Meridan, where, to Mr. Holt's astonishment, a charge was made "for fire." Daventry at six o'clock, where they stopped for the night, leaving at five the following morning.

Breakfasting at Stoney Stratford, they arrived at St. Alban's at two o'clock to dine, and at six o'clock found themselves in the great metropolis, having completed the journey in two and a half days!

Among the sights of London, Mr. Holt goes to the Public Office in Bow-street, where he sees Sir John Fielding, the brother of the author of "Tom Jones."

"Wednesday. The day of the week for transacting business at the public office, Bow-street. Called there to see the famous Sir John Fielding, whose name is so well known to us in his public capacity, as well as being brother to the immortal author of "Tom Jones," "Joseph Andrews," &c. My curiosity greatly warmed. Sir John was seated on the Bench, covered, as being Chairman. His figure venerable, not a little heightened by his fine grey locks, his person was strong and muscular, the lines of his face keen and expressive. He has a very magisterial appearance. His eyes (being quite dark) are covered by a black bandage. This is no disadvantage to his appearance, as might be expected, but to the other masterly strokes nature' has given him, presents to you a fine emblem of the figure of Justice."

He says of Bedlam Hospital:—

"The yellings and bawlings of the poor wretches under confinement, drove me from the place."

"Called at Mr. Stubbs' the celebrated horse painter, saw his inimitable productions. This was an excellent treat. Upon Romney, also, a portrait painter of high repute."

"Visited the buildings in the neighbourhood of Oxford Road; a deal of new ground has been built hereabout. Marybone Gardens at this time are in ruins, the ground intended for building upon. Walked to St. James' with an intent to see the King and Queen. Had a view of them both on the road from Buckingham House to St. James' carried in chairs, attended by a few footmen and yeomen of the guards. Not much parade or attendance. Saw them a second time, with the court officers, pass through the gallery to the chapel royal. The King is a fine person, but not a good walker: in my eyes has the appearance of majesty. The Queen seems to possess all that is amiable and agreeable, has a pleasant look; and an affectionate smile is always at the service of the gazing crowd. Yet her delicate constitution seems overpowered with something more than her strength can well support. This may probably be accounted for from her present situation, being pregnant. To the disgrace of the court, the yeomen of the guards are the rudest set of people I have hitherto met with in this town."

"After dinner took a walk to Kensington, the road crowded all the way with people going or returning. The gardens, at certain seasons, are open and free to every one out of livery, or *who does not wear leather breeches.*"

“Monday. Soon in the park again. Saw the King on horseback taking his morning ride, an exercise he is very fond of, and never, or very seldom omits when the weather is favourable. If it should rain, he takes this under cover, in a place provided for that purpose. He rises usually at seven, breakfasts, sees his family, and mounts his horse precisely at nine, upon which he continues about a couple of hours, then returns, dresses, and is ready for the dispatch of business. His dress this morning was a plain suit of red with yellow buttons, a very large hat in which was a cockade, but no other ornament. His horse, a very bony, showy black one, a bob-tail, no way decorated; a couple of footmen, and one gentleman by way of companion, were all his retinue.”

“Called on Sir Joshua Reynolds, and feasted my eyes with a sight of his excellent paintings—likewise upon Mrs. Hogarth, widow of the late famous man; saw his excellent collection of prints, and purchased a few taken from the plates of that humorous artist.”

After a peaceful, useful, and I believe prosperous life, Mr. Holt was attacked by a bilious complaint, under which he sunk. He died March 21, 1801; and if any pilgrim by the perusal of these pages, feels a disposition to stand by the good man's grave, he will find it between the old Saxon font and the door at the south-east of the church. The stone is a blue flag, broken in one portion. Mr. Holt's wife is buried in a grave by his side. The inscription on the gravestone runs as follows:—“Here are deposited the remains of Mr. John Holt, who was well known and greatly respected for the goodness of his disposition, the rectitude of his conduct, the strength of his talents, and the usefulness of his life. He was born at Hattersley, in the parish of Mottram, in Longdendale, and died 21st March, 1801, aged 58.”

In person Mr. Holt was tall, being very broad below the loins, with remarkably narrow shoulders and chest. His face was good humoured and expressive. His voice was thin, and of a remarkably high tone. He had no beard, and it has been said that he never shaved.