

Mr. Mayer read the following transcript of a letter, the original of which is in the possession of J. Y. Akerman, Esq., Sec. S.A. It was written by Cornet Pease to his brother-in-law, Captain Adam Baynes, of the Parliamentary Army. The brother Richard mentioned in the postscript, was a Captain Richard Pease, also a Roundhead officer. The letter alludes to the unfortunate termination of Sir George Booth's rising in favour of Charles II.

D: S:

I suppose ere this you have an acct of the the (*sic*) great victory obtained with little bloodshed upon Friday last. This day Chester was surrendered to my Lord Lambert without any termes but his own, some of the enimyes horse went hence last night and this morning to the number of 300 to chirt castle in Wales under the comand of S: Thomas Middleton, the owner of it, to which place our Troope and 3 more of my Ld^s Regim^t & some foote are march^d this afternoone, tomorrow god willing I purpose to be with them, they by this night at Rixam. L^d Kilmurrey, S: Will. Neale and many other persons of quality are taken, I desire you will please to present my chooyce respects to all your sweet babyes and my dear sister & all friends & accept the same yourselfe

Frm

Sr.

Your most affectio: & obliged Brother
J. PEASE.

Chester, Aug. 25. 1659.

S:

D: Devevier* is here and presents his respects to you and yo^rs pray remember me to Bro. Richard and his wife if they be in towne.

Mr. Gray exhibited an interesting portrait of Milton, apparently of the date 1650 to 1670, painted within the separable sides of a Spanish dollar.

In illustration of his Paper to be read, Mr. Stonehouse exhibited a view of Dalton Castle, and a plan of the Pile of Fouldrey. Mr. H. Johnson also exhibited specimens of Iron Ore from Cleator, near Whitehaven.

The Secretary announced that a room had been taken for the reception of the Society's Library and Museum, at No. 57, Ranelagh Street.

The following Paper was then read:—

A DAY IN LOW FURNESS. (Abridged.) *By James Stonehouse.*

The districts of High and Low Furness abound with objects of interest, in which the antiquarian, the geologist, the botanist, and the artist, would delight. Low Furness is bounded by High Furness on the north, by the Leven river and Morecambe Bay on the east, by the Irish Sea on the south, and by the Duddon river on the west. The boundary line between High and Low Furness may be drawn from Aldingham on the Leven to Kirkby Ireleth on the Duddon. Furness was conquered by Agricola in his second campaign, A.D. 79, and it is said that at Dalton there was a Roman Station. The Romans made a road through Furness, remains of which were first discovered in March, 1774, near Mountbarrow House, and under Bardsea park wall another portion of it was found. In 1813, an ancient road, paved with large stones, was met with at the head of Goldmire. It would seem, therefore, that the Romans entered Furness by Conishead, whence their road proceeded to Thornwest, through Streetgate, to the place where it joins the new turnpike road to Ulverstone. Hence its direction is by Lindell to Dalton. At the cross at Dalton it turns up Scalegate to Duddon Sands.

After the Romans, the Britons occupied the country; the Danes succeeded, as the numerous Danish words still prevalent in the vicinity shew. Next the Saxons, who were followed by the Normans. Though the name of Furness is not mentioned in Domesday Survey, yet numerous places in it are set down, as well as the owners

* Some letters of this individual will be found in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries.

of lands, and the extent of territory held by each. It was in a highly cultivated state, as the Survey states that sixty ploughs were owned by the chieftains and their tenants.

We first visit Walney Island, about ten miles long by one in breadth. It contains two hamlets, North Scale and Bigger, and between them is a small Chapel of Ease to Dalton. At Bigger there is an ancient dike, constructed originally by the monks of Furness, with great care, to ward off the sea. It is a mile in length, with a foot walk on the top. There are other dikes, which the islanders are obliged to keep in repair, as they hold their lands on the condition that if any are destroyed by the sea, the remainder must pay the rent of those which have disappeared, as well as their own. The sea broke over in 1774, and in 1796, and occasionally since. About fifty years ago, some curiously shaped cannons and other war implements were discovered, cast on the island probably from a wreck, in the time of Richard II.

There is a revolving light on the south end of the island. From Walney we proceed to Fouldrey, where is the fortress known as the Pile of Fouldrey Castle, constructed (Camden) about 1327, as a refuge for the monks of Furness in time of need. The published views of this ruin do not convey the best idea of what it is like. Fouldrey island has to a great extent been washed away. The castle covered about three acres, and consisted of a keep or central tower, an inner wall, a moat, now nearly filled up through lapse of time, and an outer wall. The ruins are curious, and deserve a detailed examination. Lambert Simnel landed here in 1487, and proceeded thence to Swarthmoor and Cartmel, whence he marched to Stoke-on-Trent. Of the Furness gentry he was joined by Sir Thomas Broughton, who was killed in the battle, or disappeared. Mr. Roby finds a story on this circumstance in his "Traditions of Lancashire." From the Pile of Fouldrey we proceed to Furness Abbey, which is four miles distant from the railway station on Roe Island. The ruins are said to stand on sixty-five acres of ground, and are situated in a glen called Beekansgill, or the glen of the deadly nightshade. The abbey, dedicated to St. Mary, was founded on the nones of July, 1127, by Cistercian monks, with Ewan, their first abbot. It was second in importance only to Fountains in Studley Park. At the dissolution in 1537, it had a revenue of £805 16s. 5d., exclusive of the woods, pastures, fisheries, saltworks, mills, &c. Its hospitality was great, and education was not neglected. Of the church there are remains of the chancel and vestry, the north and south aisles, the lofty arches of the nave, and the belfry or western tower, from the top of which there is a fine view of the surrounding country. The sedilia, carved, as it is supposed, by Italian artists, form some of the finest specimens extant in freestone. Our space does not admit a more detailed notice of this splendid ruin.

Dalton Castle, distant from the abbey about a mile and a half, was erected by the Furness abbots for defence and for civil purposes. It is a square block of building, and its walls are six feet thick. In front of it the market was held till it was removed to Ulverstone. Dalton is supposed to have been a Roman station, but the examination of a mound near the church did not lead to any results. Some copper weapons, probably celts, were discovered in the vicinity many years ago; and in 1804, a coin inscribed with the word SOL in Roman characters on each side. In 1799, in sinking a shaft for iron ore near Dalton, there was found at the depth of thirty feet, the trunk of a large oak tree, which had assumed the colour of ebony. The church bears date about the fifteenth century. In it there is a large stone font, curiously carved, which was brought from the abbey. Mention is made in the "Tatler" of a great festival at this place, at which a great hunt took place on the morning, and a grand ball of the neighbouring gentry in the evening.

From Dalton we proceed to Lindell, where are extensive iron mines, some of which have been worked for centuries. The Romans were acquainted with the fine iron ore of this district, some of which yields 75 per cent. of iron. The Britons, Saxons, &c., in their turn knew their value, and the abbots of Furness Abbey had the sole management and profits of the mines. At Lindell Moor, on the 28th Sept., 1643, the king's forces were beaten by the parliamentarians.

From Lindell we proceed eastward to Urswick, which consists of Little and Great Urswick. At the former is a curious place called the Stone Walls, situated in some

fields at the back of the Swan public-house opposite the post-office. Large quantities of stones are found in several fields, lying scattered about, and preserving now but little of their original condition. It is difficult to trace the plan of the structures that may have existed in bygone days. Are they druidical remains? Are they the remnants of some Sistantian village? Or some temple of a primitive race?

Urswick Church is a small edifice, erected about fifty years after the Conquest, and is dedicated to St. Mary-in-the-Field. On the western side there is a much mutilated figure of the virgin and child. The bell bears an inscription to the effect that it was the gift of William de Harrington and his lady Margaret. The interior of the church has been lately decorated. Stained glass windows have been put in the eastern end and southern side, and encaustic tiles placed in the chancel. The monks of Furness owned the advowson before the demolition of the monastery. In 1774 a curious copper vessel, weighing three pounds two ounces, was found near the church, and in 1798 a silver coin of Otho.

From Urswick we proceed to Birkrigg, a moorland overlooking Morecambe Bay—the village of Bardsea stands at its base. From the most elevated point of Birkrigg a most extensive view may be had, embracing the Isle of Man, Cumberland, Westmorland, and the mountains of Lancashire. The moor is scattered all over with stones of every size and shape, presenting a most singular appearance. Are not these stones the remains of some town of yore, whose name and inhabitants have been forgotten?

At Aldingham there is a curious remnant of antiquity, viz., a mound and ditch and an enclosure. The mound, which is about thirty feet high is to a considerable extent washed away by the sea. It has been considered to be the mote hill, or place of assembly of the lords of Aldingham. It is said that Aldingham Church stood in the centre of the village at the conquest, and that the encroachments of the sea have left it in its present position, and several villages in its vicinity are supposed to have been swallowed up in the sea. Proceeding southward we approach the ruins of Gleaston Castle, the residence and fortress of the lords of Aldingham. In the beginning of Mary's reign it belonged to the Duke of Suffolk, father of Lady Jane Grey. It well deserves a visit by the antiquary. The way back to Pile Harbour presents no object worthy of much note, except the picturesque village of Leece scattered round a large tarn.

13th December, 1855. LITERARY SECTION.

J. T. DANSON, F.S.S., V.P., in the Chair.

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

H. C. Barton, Esq., Fishergate, Preston; and F. Steiner, Esq., Hyndburn, Accrington.

James Aspinall Tobin, Esq., late Mayor of Liverpool, having signified his wish to remain a Member of the Society, was enrolled without election or entrance fee, in accordance with Law xiii.

The following Donations were laid upon the table :—

From the Society. Transactions of the Philological Society, volumes I, II, III, IV, V, and VI; Transactions eleven parts, for 1854; Transactions, parts I to 6, for 1855. Appendix, containing List of Members, Laws, &c.; Dictionary of the Dakota Language, in two parts, 1st English, Circassian, Turkish; 2nd Circassian, English, Turkish, with a preface, and a table of the alphabet adopted to express the Adee-Ghey language.

From the Society. Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, vol. XII, (second series), 1855.