

**THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE SURTEES SOCIETY.
VOL. XCV. MEMORIALS OF ST. GILE'S,
DURHAM; BEING GRASSMEN'S ACCOUNTS
AND OTHER PARISH RECORDS, TOGETHER
WITH DOCUMENTS
RELATING TO THE HOSPITALS OF KEPIER AND
ST. MARY MAGDALENE**

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1896.

At a General Meeting of the SURTEES SOCIETY, held in Durham Castle on Tuesday, June 6th, 1893, the REV. W. GREENWELL in the chair.

It was ordered,

That a Volume relating to the Parish of St. Giles's, Durham, including Kepyer Hospital, be edited for the Society by the REV. J. BARMBY.

JAMES RAINE,
Secretary.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION	ix
CORRIGENDA	xxxix
PREFACE TO GRASSMEN'S ACCOUNTS	1
GRASSMEN'S ACCOUNTS, VOL. I	9
" " VOL. II	118
PARISH REGISTERS, VOL. I	123
" " VOL. II	141
" " VOL. III	148
" " VOL. IV	158
" LIBER SANCTI EGIDII, DUNELM."	161
BONDS	183
EXTRACTS FROM THE ACCOUNTS OF THE CHURCHWARDENS	186
APPENDIX A: DOCUMENTS RELATING TO KEPVER HOSPITAL	192
" B: DOCUMENTS RELATING TO MARY MAGDALEN HOSPITAL	233
" C: RELATING TO THE PARISH CHURCH AND GUILD OF ST. GILES	248
" D: I. MASTERS OF KEPVER HOSPITAL	252
II. INCUMBENTS OF ST. GILES'	262
DESCRIPTION OF SEALS	269
GLOSSARY	271
INDEX	277

1

2

3

INTRODUCTION.

THE Borough of St. Giles is a suburb of the City of Durham, lying between the upper and lower portions of the River Wear, which approaches the city from the East and, after encompassing in a loop the hill on which the Castle and Cathedral stand, flows away towards the East again. The street called Gilligate is between the approaching and retiring streams, being a continuation of Claypath in the parish of St. Nicholas, and beginning where Bakehouse Lane on the one side and the narrow Tinkler's Lane on the other separate the two parishes, and where the Leaden Cross, shown in Speed's map of Durham (see Surtees' "History of Durham," Vol. iv, Part ii, p. 31), formerly stood. Thence the street ascends eastward in two successive acclivities to the summit of the hill on which the church stands, the ground sloping steeply down on each side to the river. The church, so situated, catches the eye of visitors to Durham with a pleasing effect, perhaps suggesting the thought to some of "the decent church that tops the neighb'ring hill." Its modest low tower, according so well with the surrounding scene, has happily been left unchanged by modern restoration. East of "the street" (as Gilligate is often called in the old records) the ancient parish extended far into the adjacent country, including a moor, which comprised, at the time of its enclosure in 1817, about 235 acres.

Minds sensible of the fascination of antiquarian research, when on the look-out for antiquities, cannot but long to go back beyond the time at which any definite history of a place begins. Hence, before attempting a sketch of what is historically known for the purpose of elucidating the records now published, it may be interesting to cast a brief glance into the times, so far as can be known or surmised, before there was any suburb of a city, or city at all, in the locality. Of pre-historic occupation of the vicinity there appear, indeed, to be but

scanty traces so far discovered, though a stone axe is said to have been found at Sherburn Hospital, and two interments near Sherburn and Sacriston. There is, however, a significant intimation of British occupation in the term *Maiden*, applied to three places close to Durham, one of which was on Gilesgate Moor. This word, usually now combined with *Castle*, is believed to be British, and to denote some kind of fortified mound. The designation is not uncommon, being found in various parts. The following description by Leland of a structure so called may be cited in illustration:—"There is a Place an viii Mile plaine West from Bowis (*Bowes, on the edge of Stainmoor, in Yorkshire*) a Thorough-fare in Richemountshire cawllid Maiden Castel, where is a greate rounde Hepe a 60 Foote in Cumpace of rude Stones, sum smaull, sum bygge, and be set *in formam pyramidis*; and yn the Toppe of them al ys set one Stone *in conum* beying a yard and a halfe in length. So that the hole may be countid an xviii Foote hy, and ys set on a hille in the very Egge of Stanemore. And this is a limes betwixt Richemontshire and Westmerlande" ("Itinerary," Vol. v, p. 122). The common addition of *Castle* to the old word *Maiden* cannot be taken as proof that the Romans had used the old fort as a *castellum*, though no doubt they have done so in some cases.

The three places thus designated near the city of Durham are (1) *Maiden Castle*, on the hill so-called, which rises abruptly above the Wear between Durham and Shincliffe; (2) a mound, partly artificial, called *Maiden's Bower*, among the *Red Hills*, where the banner of St. Cuthbert is said to have been placed during the battle of Neville's Cross; and (3) another *Maiden's Bower* (or *Maiden's Arbour*, or, as appears from the Grassmen's Books of St. Giles, formerly *Maiden Castle*), all traces of which have now disappeared, on Gilesgate Moor. The earliest known allusion to the last is in Wharton's continuation of the history attributed to William Chambre, the last of the "Tres Scriptores," where, in reference to a marble cross transferred to Durham Market Place in the time of Bishop Tunstall (d. 1571), it is said, "Cruz