

Dalton Mausoleum

The chapter house is octagonal, 27' 6" wide: the central pier supports an ingeniously articulated rib-vault. According to the plan and model of the excavated abbey, the chapter house was always D-shaped. In the early 19th century the lower parts of the three eastern windows were filled in, and the top parts fitted with windows in wooden frames, one of which survives. Fleetwood-Heskith says the east side was refaced, perhaps c.1820. The VCH says the building was re-roofed in slate c.1859. Inside, also in the early 19th century, heads were added at the ends of mouldings, and missing details were filled in, all in plaster. The coffins were placed beneath the stone-flagged floor (mostly smashed up by recent treasure-hunters).

Cockersand Abbey
Thurnham
Lancashire
LA2 0AZ
England

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Architects

Not known

Year Built

1749

Style

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Listing

Grade I (England and Wales)

Condition

Fairly good. Re-roofed with EH grant, but now needs some re-pointing (2002).

History

This mausoleum is the former chapter house of the Premonstratensian abbey founded in 1190. Pevsner dates it to c.1230. It was converted to a burial chamber by the Daltons of Thurnham Hall. According to the Victoria County History, the earliest burial recorded on an inscription was in 1749. The only surviving signs of the building's use as a mausoleum are two inscribed floor-slabs (one 'R.D. Sen.', the other 'Lucy Bushell') and the slate tablets set within the north and south window openings. The one to the north commemorates Robert Dalton (d.1785) and other members of his family. According to Mr Dennis Kellet, who now owns the building, there were 26 burials in all, the last being that of Elizabeth Dalton, who died in 1861. Her funeral procession, which came along the sea-bank, had a man on horseback for every year of her life.

Sources

BoE: North Lancashire, 105;

VCH: Lancs, 7 (1914), 105-6;

J Swarbrick, 'The Abbey of St Mary-of-the-Marsh at Cockersand', Transactions of The Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquaries Society, 40 (1922-3);

A Hewitson, Northwood (1900);

P Fleetwood-Heskith, Murray's Lancashire Architectural Guide (1955), 5, 175.

Photos



Location

SatNav Co-ordinates: 53.97679223735455, -2.8750498602903787